

University of Massachusetts Amherst  
**ScholarWorks@UMass Amherst**

---

Masters Theses

Dissertations and Theses

---

October 2019

## Reconsidering Diasporic Literature: "Homeland" and "Otherness" in The Lost Daughter of Happiness

Qijun Zhou

Follow this and additional works at: [https://scholarworks.umass.edu/masters\\_theses\\_2](https://scholarworks.umass.edu/masters_theses_2)



Part of the [Chinese Studies Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Zhou, Qijun, "Reconsidering Diasporic Literature: "Homeland" and "Otherness" in The Lost Daughter of Happiness" (2019). *Masters Theses*. 866.

[https://scholarworks.umass.edu/masters\\_theses\\_2/866](https://scholarworks.umass.edu/masters_theses_2/866)

This Open Access Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Dissertations and Theses at ScholarWorks@UMass Amherst. It has been accepted for inclusion in Masters Theses by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks@UMass Amherst. For more information, please contact [scholarworks@library.umass.edu](mailto:scholarworks@library.umass.edu).

**RECONSIDERING DIASPORIC LITERATURE: “HOMELAND” AND “OTHERNESS”  
IN *THE LOST DAUGHTER OF HAPPINESS***

A Thesis Presented

by

QIJUN ZHOU

Submitted to the Graduate School of the  
University of Massachusetts Amherst in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

September 2019

Chinese  
East Asian Languages and Cultures

© Copyright by Qijun Zhou 2019

All Rights Reserved

**RECONSIDERING DIASPORIC LITERATURE: “HOMELAND” AND “OTHERNESS”  
IN *THE LOST DAUGHTER OF HAPPINESS***

A Thesis Presented

by

QIJUN ZHOU

Approved as to style and content by:

---

Enhua Zhang, Chair

---

Zhongwei Shen, Member

---

David K. Schneider, Member

---

David K. Schneider, Unit Director  
East Asian Languages and Cultures Program  
Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures

---

Robert G. Sullivan, Chair  
Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures

## **DEDICATION**

To my parents.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would first like to thank my thesis advisor Professor Enhua Zhang at University of Massachusetts Amherst. She has inspired me a lot when I feel lost in my study and thesis and encouraged me to pursue my research on contemporary Chinese literature. She consistently allowed this paper to be my own work, but steered me in the right direction whenever she thought I needed it.

I would also like to thank Professor David Schneider and Professor Zhongwei Shen for being my committee members. I have learned how to start a thesis and find sources for it in their class during my first year of graduate study. I would not be able to complete my thesis without their advice.

I would also like to acknowledge Marc Cameron for helping my studying and teaching at University of Massachusetts Amherst. The door to his office is always open for me whether I have any questions on the paperwork I need to complete. Also, I have to thank him for his encouragement every time when I have challenges in my life.

I thank my fellow classmates Anqi Li, Yuan Ke and Jonathan Heinrichs for the sleepless nights we were working together before deadlines, and for all the fun we have had in the last two years. In particular, I am grateful to Jonathan Heinrichs for proofreading my thesis.

Finally, I must express my very profound gratitude to my parents and to my boyfriend for providing me with unfailing support and continuous encouragement throughout my years of study and through the process of researching and writing this thesis. This accomplishment would not have been possible without them. Thank you.

## ABSTRACT

### RECONSIDERING DIASPORIC LITERATURE: “HOMELAND” AND “OTHERNESS” IN *THE LOST DAUGHTER OF HAPPINESS*

SEPTEMBER 2019

QIJUN ZHOU, B.A., SICHUAN UNIVERSITY

M.A., UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST

Directed by: Professor Enhua Zhang

This thesis examines the transformation of “homeland” and “otherness” as well as the relationship between each other in *The Lost Daughter of Happiness* (扶桑 *Fusang*). I begin by exploring how the migration of Chinese to the United States is depicted as an endless trajectory in the story through a historical engagement and a dialogue between two generations. From there, I plan to point out that the story complicates the meaning of diaspora as it can not only represent a spatial dislocation, but also a temporal dislocation. Thus, I argue that it destabilizes the conventional ideology which refers “homeland” to a singular location. Contrary to “settle land”, the earlier conceptualization of “homeland” is translated by some scholars into a felicitous space of living for migrants. Reading *The Lost Daughter of Happiness*, we can find new dimensions and transformations of home. The old conceptualization of “homeland” is reversed not as a singular location, but rather as a process of (be-)coming a felicitous space of living for diasporic subjects: it is not a fixed location anymore.

Next, I explore how the out-of-border movement breeds a process of foreignization. According to Kristeva, diasporans who bear foreignness must learn how to “live with the

others, to live as others.”<sup>1</sup> I will analyze how Yan Geling invokes the portrayal of a Chinese prostitute as representative of “other” in order to deliver the philosophy of survival of diasporic Chinese females. I argue that it is the marginality of prostitute in a society-as an outsider from the mainstream culture, that builds up Fusang’s transgressive ability to survive. Being a cultural outsider, or “live as others”, according to Kristeva, is “a foreigner’s shield” for one’s cultural identity. As an outsider, Fusang is able to cross over any given borders, simultaneously being inside and outside of the culture. Thus, the story denies any inherited modes of diasporic Chinese prostitutes for the articulation of their identities, which challenges the pure culturalism and nationalism.

Last, the presence of outsider in this story becomes a tool for Yan Geling to deliberately illustrate the cultural difference through her protagonists. I argue that Yan Geling has a straightforward recognition of “otherness” and an explicit awareness of “foreignness” in this story, so she uses some Orientalist gestures to demonstrate the cultural difference. I examine an example about the technology of human disposal mentioned in the plot and analyze how it is used to highlight the cultural difference of diasporic subjects.

My goal is to seek a better understanding of the construction of home identity in *The Lost Daughter of Happiness* by examining the recognition and representation of culture particularities and difference within the story. Also, I attempt to provide a new interpretation of Fusang by analyzing her identity not only as a prostitute but also as a diasporic Chinese.

---

<sup>1</sup> Julia Kristeva, *Strangers To Ourselves* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 195.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .....	v
ABSTRACT.....	vi
INTRODUCTION .....	1
CHAPTER	
1. LITERATURE REVIEW .....	3
2. METHODOLOGY .....	7
3. NOTES ON TRANSLATION.....	9
4. MIGRATION: ENDLESSNESS, CONNECTION, DIASPORA .....	10
Introduction.....	10
Endlessness .....	11
Connection .....	16
Diaspora .....	20
Conclusion .....	32
5. PROSTITUTE: OTHERNESS, TRANSGRESSION, REDEMPTION .....	34
Introduction.....	34
Otherness.....	36
Transgression .....	40
Redemption .....	48
Conclusion .....	52
6. NARRATIVE: ORIENTALIST GESTURE IN THE STORY .....	54
Introduction.....	54
Orientalist gesture .....	55
Conclusion .....	59
CONCLUSION.....	60
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	62

## INTRODUCTION

Migrating to the United States in 1989, Yan Geling started to write about stories of immigrant and migration, an important turning point in her writing career. Her first story with the migration theme, named *Siao Yu* (少女小渔 Shaonü Xiaoyu), was published in 1992. Reflecting on her migration experience, Yan Geling examines the cultural shock between East and West, as well as the identity crisis of new immigrants. After her six years' stay in America, *The Lost Daughter of Happiness* (扶桑 Fusang) was created in 1995 which brings a broader sense of diasporic thinking to the migration theme. As for the narrative structure of this story, Yan Geling uses a dialogue between a Chinese female immigrant in contemporary time, who is introduced as a historian, and a Chinese prostitute called Fusang<sup>2</sup> in 19<sup>th</sup> century San Francisco Chinatown, invoking the history of Chinese immigrant in her narrative. In *The Lost Daughter of Happiness*, Yan Geling outlines a vision of her historical thinking: Though time passed, the past can speak to the present concern. Her cogent historical vision throughout the story constitutes cultural currency and collective memory of diasporic experiences from the geographical movement in which the writer, the narrator and the reader may all be involved. In this article, I seek to demonstrate that the story offers markedly different perspective on the ideology of "homeland" and signals important cultural attitudes toward diaspora at a time when different cultures not only conflicted with one another but also converged to produce new one. Thus, the given politics of "homeland" are problematized in *The Lost Daughter of Happiness*. It is suggested that the notion of "homeland" should be redefined. Instead of ascribing

---

<sup>2</sup> The name Fusang also refers to Hibiscus flower. It has bright red petals and is a perennial plant, which I believe is a metaphor for Fusang's vitality.

“homeland” to a worldly location of inhabitation, Yan Geling illustrates how the dynamics of culture, psychology and history can result in the perception of “homeland”. I also investigate how Yan Geling assigns value to the subjectivity of the diasporic subject by being positioned as an outsider from the mainstream. Inspired by Kristeva’s theory on “strangers”, this paper attempts to analyze the “foreignness” and cultural difference that is displayed on Fusang during her interactions with Western society. I argue this impact further enhances the floating nature of the configuration of “homeland” by adding adjustment to the dimension of “foreignness” or “otherness” in culture. The objective of this article is to show the dynamics and transformation of “homeland” in the age of global diaspora and how diasporans are situated in this background. It also aimed to create a better understanding of cultural otherness and identifying home beyond its traditional mode.

## CHAPTER 1

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Yan Geling is known for her productiveness. Since her first work was published in 1980, Yan Geling embarked upon her writing career by having conducted several novels, novellas and film scripts over the past forty years. She is well recognized both in the realm of mainstream literature and popular culture. Her migration to the United States in 1989 marks the watershed of her career- the uprooting experience provided her writing with juicy details of immigrant life, therefore, several stories of the migration theme have been published in China, as well as in the United States. Since some of her works have been translated into English, Yan Geling is now receiving more attention from Western scholars. The criticism she received from East and West varies a lot in its scopes and angles.

Yan Geling is promoted by several critics like Chen Sihe, Li Ping and Shen Hongfang for her close observation of humanity in suffering. For instance, Shen Hongfang appreciates Yan Geling's work for that she uncovers how a female could deliver the power of humanity in miserable conditions, as represented by Fusang in *The Lost Daughter of Happiness*:

Several of her works successfully portray females who take responsibility for their fates spontaneously in hardships. The mercy and generosity secure in her [Yan Geling's] protagonists enable their lives to be immortal. Meanwhile, that females could control over their own bodies expresses the idea that female could have the power to make decisions and take actions on their own. Not only does it exhibit the glory of humanities, but it also delivers Yan Geling's opinions on the value of female life and female subjectivities.

Yan Geling repeatedly create females as inferiors in a cultural discourse. They are kind and they will not fight, and they reserve kindness and a golden heart in a cruel and even barbarous society. Their humanities are so glorious that their purity and kindness undermines the humiliation they received as inferior others. Their

responsibility for the suffering, then, is where the redemption to human beings could take place.<sup>3</sup>

A lot of attention has been paid to the subjectivity of Fusang as a female. However, few of them combine it with her prostitute identity and diasporic identity, two crucial constitutions of Fusang. Most of the relevant critic center on how Yan Geling as a female writes about the dynamics between female identities and suffering through the delineation of heroine, which solely lies in a gender discourse. Meanwhile, by pointing out the dynamics between female power and hardships, a lot of reviewers fail to analyze the mechanism embedded within. Thus, we need more details for how a female gains her power by being excluded by the culture and society.

Meanwhile, in some analysis of Fusang, a prototype *dimu* (地母 earth mother) has been employed. For instance, scholar Ma Wei highlights Fusang's maternity:

Fusang and ...lacks "daughterhood" and "wifeness", which intensifies her maternity. It has been uplifted to a sort of sacrifice and redemption like a mother earth figure. *Dimu* is the mother of earth, the mother of lives. *Dimu* is a goddess originates from the land worship in agriculture era... Her mercy and generosity are the patron saint of humanity. *Dimu* is the inferior, who has to suffer from impingement from the external force. She is as humble as the ground. Because of this, she could become the superior in the universe.<sup>4</sup>

Critic Chen Sihe notices that Fusang is not completely consistent with the earth mother figure inherited from literary history, and she "has a distance from the traditional *dimu* motif because she is not a person who is only humiliated and harmed. What

---

<sup>3</sup> Hongfang Shen, "Zai kunan zhong shengteng: Lun Yan Geling Xiaoshuo zhong de nvxing yishi," *Contemporary Literary Criticism*, 2008, no.5: 135-136.

<sup>4</sup> Wei Ma, "Dimu Foxin: Yan Geling xiaoshuo zhong "Fusang" "Putao" xinxiang tanxi," *Contemporary Writers Review*, 2014, no.5 :202-203.

distinguishes Yan Geling's heroines from other earth mother figures is their willingness to sacrifice."<sup>5</sup>

Some other critics discuss the aspect of immigrant history, especially the author's response to trauma in her narrative. Lü Yan asserts there is a shift from the event trauma to insidious trauma between the two generations, when the event trauma passed by in the history, insidious trauma would be reserved in the "post-memory".<sup>6</sup> Thus, she argues the transformation of trauma is incarnated in the connection between two generations, which shows the author's deliberate effort to present a critical view of historical discourse.

The discussion of *The Lost Daughter of Happiness* in western scholarship is usually governed as a branch of Asian American studies or Chinese diaspora studies, which highlights intellectual dependence upon the nation as a stable point of reference. For instance, Sally E. MacWilliams argues Yan Geling's text "necessitates an investigation into the reconstruction of a feminist literary history and its relation to both the nation-state and current transnational practices of capitalism." Based on her discussion on the deployment of rescue narratives, the politics of interracial love affairs and the power of female gaze, MacWilliams focuses on the paradoxes and contractions that gird Chinese women's narrative.<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> Sihe Chen, "Bei wudu de renxing zhi ge: Du Yan Geling de xinzuo Fanghua," *Contemporary Writers Review*, 2017, no.5: 58-60.

<sup>6</sup> Yan Lü, "Lisan Zuyi de Chuangshang he Houjiyi: Ping Yan Geling de xiaoshuo Fusang," *Literature&Chinese*, 2012, no.1:55-63.

<sup>7</sup> Sally E. MacWilliams, "From a Distance of One Hundred and Twenty Years: Theorizing Diasporic Chinese Female Subjectivities in Geling Yan's *The Lost Daughter of Happiness*," *Meridians* 6, no.1 (2005): 133-160.

Scholar Jin Wen investigated the difference between the Chinese original and its English translation, as well as the critical response it has generated in different contexts. Her study focuses on the transnational circulation of Fusang's story, and how politics of transnationalism is conveyed through the translation.<sup>8</sup> Pin-Chia Feng tries to suggest a re-mapping of Asian American literature by using the case of Fusang. Through his investigation into the issues of gender, race and space in the story, Feng investigates its legitimacy as an exemplary text of Asian American literature written in Chinese

All these researches have shed light on the story. However, they are usually placed in a broad context, which relies a lot on conceptualization like nationalism, feminism as a point of reference. Also, a lot of research in English academia is under the control of its literary genre and categorization, such as Asian American literature, which leads to the limitation in its research scope.

Then, there is no enough research on the content of this story itself. Thus, my thesis will try to provide a detailed analysis of its theme and characters, especially the diasporic ideas they embody throughout the story. Meanwhile, since Fusang is created largely due to the narrator's imagination, I would not only examine Fusang's portrayal and subjectivities (as many researchers in China will do so), but also analyze the dynamic between Fusang and the narrator. Last, I will investigate why the author tries to emphasize Fusang's Oriental identity and how it contributes to the diasporic thinking of the story.

---

<sup>8</sup> Wen Jin, "Transnational Criticism and Asian Immigrant Literature in the U.S.: Reading Yan Geling's *Fusang* and Its English Translation," *Contemporary Literature* 47, no.4 (2006): 570-600.

## CHAPTER 2

### METHODOLOGY

This thesis centers on Yan Geling's novel *The Lost Daughter of Happiness*. I plan to explore the ideology "homeland" and "otherness" as it is demonstrated in the story. I suggest that in *The Lost Daughter of Happiness*, the concept "homeland" is not a given location. Instead, it represents a process of de-homing and re-homing. I mainly use Stuart Hall's theory of diaspora as my stance. Hall points out that the concept home and identity is not an unmoved fact, but it is "never complete, always in process, and always constituted within, not outside, representation."<sup>9</sup> I take it as the foundation of my discussion about the construction of "homeland" in *The Lost Daughter of Happiness*, because it reveals the shifting nature of "homeland" and innovates the conventional diasporic theories which are not enough to explain the diaspora trend at present.

Another theory I use in this thesis is Julia Kristeva's theory about "foreigner" and "stranger" which is indicated in her book *Strangers To Ourselves*. Kristeva explores what it means to be a stranger in one's land and the plight of stranger. Meanwhile, she calls for the acceptance of foreignness as it may exist in oneself as well. I employ her theory as it is suitable to explain Fusang's position as a Chinese migrant in the United States. However, Kristeva develops her theory from her personal experience and attempts to universalize the issue. It is not enough to explain Fusang's position as prostitute, a particularity within Chinese group as well. Thus, I also use Colin Wilson's opinion on cultural outsider, as it

---

<sup>9</sup> Stuart Hall, "Cultural Identity and Diaspora," in *Identity, Community, Culture, Difference*, ed. Jonathan Rutherford, (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1990), 222.



explores how cultural outsider could recognize their own power, which would be appropriate to explain Fusang's survival as a diasporic subject and as a prostitute.

## CHAPTER 3

### NOTES ON TRANSLATION

The English translation of *The Lost Daughter of Happiness* is provided by Cathy Silber. However, since some parts from its Chinese original have been censored in her translation, I translated those parts from Chinese into English on my own. As for the literature review, the critics in Chinese are translated by me as well.

## CHAPTER 4

### MIGRATION: ENDLESSNESS, CONNEXTION, DIASPORA

#### Introduction

Whereas Yan Geling is now generally identified as Chinese immigrant in the United States, I must clarify here that she underwent her journey from east to west by moving to the shore of the United States in her adulthood. Compared to other Chinese American authors like Amy Tan and Maxine Huang Kingston (both of them were born in the United States as Chinese heritage), who are regarded as the most influential Asian American voice at present, Yan Geling is specialized in exploring bicultural themes, by blending well her knowledge of China for over 30 years' life there and her vivid memory through her own uprooting experience to the United States. Thus, a lot of her stories critically explore the most complicated facets of Chinese-American identity, cultural conflicts as well as the dynamics of gender relationships troubled by culture and ethnicity.

Migration is a theme in *The Lost Daughter of Happiness*, a story touching upon the life of Chinese immigrant as well as sexuality, race, identity and beyond. The word migration here can be interpreted as a sort of geographical relocation, an action that could be either taken by a group or individuals. In this section, I want to examine the migration theme in the story from the perspective of diaspora. First, as multiple temporal spans as well as many historical quotes are used in the narrative structure to depict the migration experience of the protagonists, this feature becomes an effective device that successfully links the past and present. I argue that the presence of history in this story can represent the richness and complexity of "homeland" in diaspora because the migration not only involves a spatial dislocation, but also a temporal dislocation.

Furthermore, I plan to ask and answer the following questions: how does the author reconfigure “homeland”? How does it unify or bifurcate from the trend of diasporic studies historically? Diaspora is a term with multiple elements in its definition. In this part, I select the conceptualization of “homeland” as my focal point. Then, as for the first two questions, I will mainly explore how the ideology of “homeland” is performed and transformed in the story as my basic answers to them.

### **Endlessness**

The migration of Chinese to the United States in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as reflected in *The Lost Daughter of Happiness*, is a well-studied history which is coherent with the author’s own uprooting experience one hundred years later. That the author interweaves her real experience shows her deliberate efforts of inserting herself into the story. Translated into English by Cathy Silber in 2001, *The Lost Daughter of Happiness* embarked on the English book market as Yan Geling’s debut in the United States. As a former communist dancer in the performing art troupe, Yan moved to the United States in her middle-age for further education. She was a well-known author who gained a good reputation in China at that time by writing several war novels, however, upon her arrival in the United States, she had to restart her writing career from the very beginning, for instance, overcoming the language barrier, in order to adapt to the immigrant life. Yan Geling declared that the new environment did not dim her capacity as an author. On the contrary, she was quickly fascinated by the immigrant stories around her. Driven by the

hardship and challenge in her own life, she intended to know more about immigrant history and look for solutions to her concern.<sup>10</sup>

Evidently, the story has a strong autobiographical investment. The narrator in this work, apparently overlapped with the author's own identity in reality, is motivated by a wish to investigate Chinese immigrant history through reading 160 volumes of historical documents about San Francisco Chinatown in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, thus the story of a Chinese prostitute living one hundred and twenty years ago is pieced together with a historical sense through the fragments the narrator found in the documents. Emphasizing the historical documents as her foundation, the narrator attempts to reinforce the authority of the story, yet the authenticity of her primary sources has never been verified.

The story is further complicated in its literary frame by applying three layers to its narrative term, differentiating the author, the narrator and the heroine. Distinct from the prostitute Fusang's who is lured to cross the Pacific, the narrator voluntarily joins the migration as an intellectual from middle-class China and names herself as "fifth generation Chinese American", which curiously represents another sort of commensurability between the author and the narrator. Then, like many of Yan Geling's works, the narrator in the story speaks for the author's self-conscious concern.

In order to provide a metafictional, semi-historical frame to structure the story, Fusang's, as well as her generation's migrating experience is learned by the narrator from her vast readings of historical files, but it is brought to the surface and revealed to the reader with the narrator's reconstruction of these materials. The reconstruction here refers to a

---

<sup>10</sup> Yafei Hu, "Zhongguo wenxue: Bentu yu haiwai-Zuojia Yan Geling fangtan lu," *Wenxin*, November 9, 2009, [http://wxs.hi2net.com/home/news\\_read.asp?NewsID=39790](http://wxs.hi2net.com/home/news_read.asp?NewsID=39790) (accessed May 5, 2019).

process in which the narrator blends the raw materials with her elaboration and imagination on it. In other words, it is not the real history that matters. Instead, it is crucial to see how the narrator selectively makes use of her historical materials and how she reflects on it. There are several temporal spans mentioned in the story, indicating the time when the migration of Chinese to the United States begins in history: the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the life of Chinese immigrants is vastly being recorded in the historical documents with commentaries from American historians: from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and when it is eventually being read by other Chinese immigrants like the narrator-the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. The narrative of these historical events in the past is constantly interwoven with the narrator's reference to her generation in contemporary times. Read this way, readers may find that the narrative enacts a repetitive series of migration and relocation introduced in temporal terms, which is an everlasting circle crosses over one hundred and twenty years.

This is a very crucial aspect of *The Lost Daughter of Happiness's* narrative structure: the quest to find a new place for long-term habitation repeated over and over by different generations as the old places cannot satisfy them, a seemingly endless quest that still takes place nowadays. This history with different dimensions enables the narrator to dive in and look for answers to the question she cannot solve at present. The presence of history helps the narrator to travel back and forth in time. As a result, she is able to reconfigure "homeland" at a point where past and present are linked together. Then, the complexity of de-homing and re-homing is represented through the scattered history: in addition to the cross-cultural encounter, the transformation of "homeland" in diverse historical temporalities is also a part of diaspora. The so called "temporal dislocation" can

be explained as a paradoxical movement: the past, compared to the present, is involved with “homeland” for diasporans, however, it is impossible to be an inhabitance in the present.

Mingled with this iterative succession of migration is the desire to escape the unsatisfying living conditions, for instance, at the outset, it is poverty and starvation that makes the Chinese set sail.

Primarily serving as mine workers, the first generation of Chinese immigrant stepped off the boat in California in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and later flourished on the land. On the one hand, the migration of Chinese workers, exclusively referring to Chinese male workers here, was acknowledged as an infusion to the labor market in the states with a cheaper cost, and illuminated a uniquely “benevolent” sense of U.S. national character distinct from the aggression of European colonial powers; On the other hand, Chinese women had been generally forbidden from travelling overseas for a long time. However, unlike decent Chinese women who were discouraged from travelling afar, Chinese prostitutes were gradually “imported” or trafficked to the United States right after the arrival of Chinese male workers. Oversea Chinese prostitution was specialized in its role in perpetuating Chinese sojourning abroad and in its support of the migrant labor system in America.<sup>11</sup> Thus, a bloody sex trade became indispensable throughout the immigrant history, so does the eagerness of Chinese immigrant to find better settlements.

However, the hardship of the migration does not promise a bright future. Exclusion and exploitation arrive right after the landing. As a result, the desire which becomes at once

---

<sup>11</sup> Hirata L. Cheng, “Free, Indentured, Enslaved: Chinese Prostitutes in Nineteenth-Century American,” *Signs* 5, no.1 (1979): 4.

stronger due to the intuition of survival is late getting more complicated as the new settlement turns out not to be perfect at all. The variation in the temporal spans is on purpose to show the succession of the path of migration. It is indicated in the narrative that after one hundred and twenty years, the similar migration circle is still alive, along with the everlasting conflicts and struggle within it, yet there is also something changed over times, for instance, the notion of survival may be interpreted differently by two generations:

Death is like anything else; it takes on a lot of different meanings. The same can be said of survival. For over a hundred years now, the notion of survival has held special significance for people like us. You survived in your day and we go on surviving in mine.

...

We haven't changed much. We still quickly toil away, like the Chinese panning for gold in the most depleted mines, using the most primitive methods to accumulate wealth. Our wealth builds up the way dust does, barely. Your industriousness and forbearance have come right down to us, this fifth wave of yellow immigrants.

...

A cynical sneer begins in our eyes and takes over our whole disposition: So, this is the position fifth-wave immigrants are fighting for? So what? We're still isolated, as isolated as the first Chinese to set foot on American soil.

Moreover, we don't share the zeal of the gold rush nowadays. We lack our ancestors' faith in gold. Even though you had nothing, you were confident, and we no longer share that irrepressible confidence. In our inexplicable depression, our response to the attainment of any goal is: So what? This does not prevent us from trying to make money, but the passionate determination to survive is gone. (Yan, 154)

From the first generation to the fifth generation, the Chinese keep taking the path to new settlements, hoping to refresh the sense of satisfaction towards their life, which seems to have no clear end in sight. Isolation is a problem that remained unchanged in the migration, but different generations do have different expectations to what they can gain from it. The new generations look for something beyond materials such as money and gold, and the sense of satisfaction, apparently, is more difficult to be achieved. Comparing the past and present, the author enriches the migration theme by pointing out its consistency



and inconsistency between different points in history. The different dimensions of history presented in the story complicate the structure of “homeland” by expanding the diaspora to a “temporal dislocation”, which challenges the old configuration of “homeland”.

### **Connection**

Beyond the restriction of temporality, what connects the narrator and the heroine in *The Lost Daughter of Happiness* is their shared immigrant status, as well as their involvement in interracial relationships, which I will address later in this thesis. The protagonist Fusang in *The Lost Daughter of Happiness* takes the identity as a Chinese prostitute as the first generation of Chinese immigrant. When it comes to the 1980s, the narrator articulates her eagerness to know more about her “ancestor” here, though she is not the offspring of this Chinese prostitute biologically. The narrator’s motivation indicates the internal connection between herself and the immigrant history she tries to exhibit, which is something built on the shared ethnicity and gender as Chinese female along with shared experience as someone fresh off the boat. As the narrator suggests in the story, she feels like she has talked too much about her migration story, and what she pretends to do now, is to write down the “root” of her migration history. Much of the meaning of the word “root” in Chinese literature is the root in culture, or collective life which can be performed by individuals. By using the word “root” as a trope for the relationship between the narrator and the heroine, stories of two generations are connected not only by two individual experiences, but also by a shared culture and collective life.

As book reviewer Jeffrey Kinkley has argued, the heroine Fusang created by the narrator is not so much from history, but as a tool for the narrator to sort out her own life

problems.<sup>12</sup> When her life problems change, so can Fusang. Thus, the reader may find Fusang's image rather elusive and inscrutable: sometimes she seems to be rather dull, but other times she is depicted as a woman with sanity. A satisfactory interpretation and explanation of the mechanism involved in Fusang's fluctuations and displacements views them as stemming from and reflecting a cognitive or experiential displacement of the narrator or the author. Here I aim to take Klein at his words: The situation is presented as obtaining at some other than the one in which it obtains.....It is not reality which counts but the way in which the speaker, or even the protagonist at utterance, imagines or experiences it.<sup>13</sup> As I mentioned before, the authenticity of the historical document used by the narrator has never been verified, so Fusang is not a purely historical figure, and how much she is from history does not count a lot for the narrator. Yet, Fusang is a mirror reflects the cognitive change of the narrator. In other words, Fusang and the narrator are connected to each other through their psychological interaction.

Thus, instead of being the biological ancestor of the narrator, the heroine Fusang is more like a companion who shares a physical and psychological similarities with the narrator. For instance, the narrator's voice is mediately articulated by delineating the plight Fusang was faced with, when she comments on Fusang's love predicament with Chris, a local American white boy who tries to marry Fusang but still keeps a psychological distance from Fusang's inner world due to ethnic distinction, which assimilates to the

---

<sup>12</sup> Jeffrey C. Kinkley, *World Literature Today* 76, no. 2 (2002): 136-37.

<sup>13</sup> Uri Margolin, "Shifted (Displaced) Temporal Perspective in Narrative," *Narrative* 9, no. 2 (2001):197.

narrator's feeling of barriers in her interracial marriage. The narrator finds resonance in Fusang's experience, which brings the old immigrant history to the presence.

The connection between the heroine and the narrator, between the past and present is further reinforced by the narrator's frequent quotation from her history documents. A recurrent theme is indicated in *The Lost Daughter of Happiness*, that is hardship and exclusion in uprooting experience, a ubiquitous theme in many Asian American stories. As Sharon M. Tan suggest, "They [hardship and exclusion] are inseparable from the notion of 'Asian American'."<sup>14</sup> The first generation of Chinese immigrants were faced with great discrimination against their ethnic roles, being looked down on by local residents as someone inferior, symbol of corruption and morality decay. In 1882, the infamous Chinese Exclusion Act got approved which reinforced the prejudice of white inhabitant towards these "yellow slaves". The exclusion rose from the distinction of ethnicities then is clearly delivered in Fusang as well as the narrator's voice. Although the narrator does not talk too much about her experience of being excluded, she has a sympathetic response to it by her frequent quotation of history document. Historian Marianne Hirsch puts forward the concept "post-memory", which may be a profound response to the connection between the narrator and the heroine here. Post-memory signifies a "inter-trans-generational" structure of trauma, which is caused by memorizing the "result" of trauma. Thus, post-memory may occur long after the historical events. However, its occurrence is largely dependent on the mediation. In Fusang's case, it is the historical documents that activates the narrator's post-

---

<sup>14</sup> Sharon M. Tan, "Asian American Liberative Ethics," In *Ethics: A Liberative Approach*, ed. De La Torre Miguel A. (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2013), 127.

memory. As for the narrator, reading history is an approach through which she could be submerged into collective life.

For instance, the hatred towards Chinese consummates in the story when a raid floods to Chinatown, and the narrator, with a self-conscious address to this hardship, quotes the official historical document which openly brings us to the source of racist and capitalist gaze, that the raid which consists of vast rape and firing is only depicted as a tiny accident in the official document:

But what about the mob out there? I want to know what's gotten into them too. Look, it's right there in this book-can you believe it? "It was simply a few men and boys who had lost their jobs vandalizing the Chinese quarter....." I don't think it was so simple. There had to be political motivations involved, a sense of righteousness. The crowd must have felt like the armies of the Crusades. A sense of duty will sanctify the hoodlums in any crowd. This is the only explanation that makes sense. It had to be the will of them all and not just a few who happened to be playing with fire in Chinatown. That's the only way it could have taken on the momentum it did. The account I've got here reads, "Many homes and business were burned to the ground and dozens of Chinese prostitutes were dragged into the streets and raped." Could that have happened without the will of them all?" (Yan, 221)

In the official document, the ugly truth has been painted as a small attack operated by a minority. The narrator, a century onwards, appears to disagree. She affirmatively refuses the excuse and elevates the problem to a political issue: only the hatred from one race towards another could generate such havoc. Parsed through the narrator's belief in the presence of political sense in the history, the connection becomes much clearer. In her times, the similar injustice and the politics which deprive the voice of immigrants constitute new history. Meanwhile, it is important to recognize that when the narrator casts doubt on the history she has read, the author is well conscious of the pitfall which may occur when she tries to "reconstruct" the history, that is whether intellectuals, like the narrator, and the author, like those who wrote down these historical documents, could show the transparency

of truth when they take the responsibility to deliver knowledge. As the narrator declares, “It turns out that there can be so many different versions of the same historical event” (Yan, 274). For the narrator, she looks forward to integrating into Fusang’s history, and to stabilizing their connection through her intervention, thus her private desire to merge into the collective life makes her fail to produce a comprehensive revision of history: the reconstructed history becomes the object of her gaze.

### **Diaspora**

The word diaspora comes from Greek verb *sperio*, meaning ‘to sow’, and the preposition *dia*, meaning ‘over’.<sup>15</sup> The word diaspora suggests networks of real or imagined relationships among scattered people whose sense of community is sustained by various communications and contacts, including kinship, trade, travel, shared culture, language, ritual, scripture, print and electronic media.<sup>16</sup>

As for the detailed interpretation of the term diaspora, scholar William Safran defines it by listing all the following features:

1) they, or their ancestors, have been dispersed from a specific original “center” to two or more “peripheral,” or foreign, regions; 2) they retain a collective memory, vision, or myth about their original homeland; 3) they believe they are not—and perhaps cannot be—fully accepted by their host society and therefore feel partly alienated and insulated from it; 4) they regard their ancestral homeland as their true, ideal home and as the place to which they or their descendants would (or should) eventually return . . . ; 5) they believe that they should, collectively, be committed to the maintenance or restoration of their original homeland . . . ; and 6) they continue to relate, personally or vicariously, to that homeland in one way or another .<sup>17</sup>

---

<sup>15</sup> Anh Hua, “Diaspora and Cultural Memory,” In *Diaspora, Memory, and Identity: A Search for Home*, ed. Agnew Vijay (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 192.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> William Safran, “Diasporas in Modern Societies: Myths of Homeland and Return,” *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies* 1, no. 1 (1991): 83-99.

When the process of diaspora consists of geographical movement, an action which would deconstruct the concept of home and identity, the notion of “homeland” used to be fixed in the definition of diaspora as we can see in Safran’s explanation. For instance, although the concept of “homeland” can be either related to the host land at present or the land people originally came from, usually more light is shed on the later one. Thus, in a lot of diasporic studies, the scope of the notion of “homeland” is limited to the original home, a fixed physical location. Moreover, earlier versions of diasporic studies also perceive identity and exile as given notions, which further differentiates “homeland” as an “‘authentic’ space of belonging” from the current settlement as “somehow ‘inauthentic’ and undesirable.”<sup>18</sup>

However, this reading is later challenged by scholars like Stuart Hall, by pointing out the concept home and identity are not unmoved facts, but are “never complete, always in process, and always constituted within, not outside, representation.”<sup>19</sup> It is crucial to recognize that diasporic identities and communities are “not fixed, rigid, or homogeneous, but are instead fluid, always changing, and heterogeneous.”<sup>20</sup> In other words, diaspora is combined, entangled, and interwoven with both temporal and spatial shift. Moreover, we have to recognize diasporic communities are not exempted from inner struggle and power conflict produced by the discrepancies in gender, class, age, beliefs and so on.

---

<sup>18</sup> Hua, “Diaspora and Cultural Memory,” 195.

<sup>19</sup> Hall, “Cultural Identity and Diaspora”, 222.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 193.

In *The Lost Daughter of Happiness*, the author Yan Geling portrays two generations of Chinese immigrants with uprooting experiences, who are different from the later generation of Chinese-Americans who are born and rooted in the United States. For migrants, their identity and interpretation of home are constantly shaped, modified, challenged and switched. Based on the overlap of different cultures, the migration of human beings as well as their cultures, then results in the cultural globality, in which any given association of homeland, culture, and identity with one's nationality, residence and language is not enough to explain the new dimension. When Yan Geling is considering the sense of dwelling in modern diaspora, to a certain extent, she is thinking as much about it as she is about her own personal experience.

Beyond the content of this novel, the dynamics of modern diaspora can be reflected on the categorization of Yan Geling and her work as well. Originally written in Chinese, it is difficult to precisely categorize the work as well as the identity of the author. Even the definition of literature genres could be a hard nut to crack. To some, even though Yan Geling lives a bilingual and bicultural life, she was born in China and uses her mother tongue in most of her works, which attributes her to the group of Sinophone writers. Apparently, her work is supposed to be labeled as Sinophone literature. Shu-Mei Shih declares Sinophone literature to be works that focus on "the networks of places of cultural production outside China and on the margins of China and Chineseness".<sup>21</sup> Furthermore, along with the migration theme, sinophone studies belongs to the category of ethnic minority studies or linguistic minority studies across the world, announcing the possibility

---

<sup>21</sup> Shih Shu-mei, *Visuality and Identity: Sinophone Articulations across the Pacific*, (Berkeley: University of California Berkeley Press, 2007), 207.

of what can be called comparative minority studies either in one nation or across nations. The concept of Sinophone literature centralizes on the Chinese language, which seems to be a right match for Yan Geling's work.

As a Chinese American now, Yan Geling will also be defined as a Chinese American or Asian American writer. However, since she is not a writer of Chinese heritage, she is seldom grouped with other Chinese American writers like Amy Tan and Maxine Hong Kingston. Meanwhile, she is not like Ha Jin whose uprooting experience coincidentally resembles hers. Ha Jin also settled down in the United States in his middle age, but he wrote the majority of his books in English. Maybe more precisely, Yan Geling should be defined as an immigrant writer, as she often refers to herself as an author of immigrant stories. The difference and gap between the two groups is vivid. For instance, Yan Geling and Chinese heritage writer Amy Tan have very distinct interpretations concerning the relationship between China and the "homeland". For Amy Tan and many other Chinese heritage writers, their "root" in China should be traced back to their ancestors, and all their imagination of China as "homeland" is based on their ancestor's experience. The Chinese stories under their pens largely rely on the speculation and are driven by the longing to find a family mystery. In other words, many Chinese heritage writers do not experience life in China so that their "memory" about China is solely imagined and established by others. For example, in *The Valley of Amazement* written by Amy Tan, the story is set in the 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century Shanghai, a city and a time which her grandmother experienced in her youth, and Shanghai is served as the archetype of Amy Tan's Chinese fantasy and her longing for an Oriental adventure. Quite the same, Maxine Hong Kingston's collections of stories, named as *Chinese Men*, is also based on the story told by the female members in Kingston's



family. Kingston mixes the known history of her family with hypothetical imaginings and with the legal history of Chinese America, a common approach that many Chinese American writers would select if they are going to write down something about China.

Then, the best way to categorize this work, is not to attribute it to any given literary genealogy. As scholar Wen Jin posits, *The Lost Daughter of Happiness* provides a prime example of “how Chinese immigrant authors in the United States destabilize nation-based conceptions of literary genealogy, such as ‘American’ literature and ‘Chinese’ literature.”<sup>22</sup> Also, as it has been “translated into English and read in the country where most of its plot is set, the novel also resists literary categories based on language, such as ‘Sinophone’ and ‘Anglophone’ literature.”<sup>23</sup>

Despite of *The Lost Daughter of Happiness*, most of Yan Geling’s novels are set against a background in China. Many of them are combined with her own times and own experience, for instance, the Cultural Revolution and *zhiqing* (知青, sent-down youth) are common topics that would be frequently found in her novels. It is not until her launch in the United States that she starts to dip into the theme of migration and immigrant life in her works. *Siao Yu* was created in her third year in the United States, a story that centers on the struggle of identity and a girl’s odyssey to American citizenship in modern times. *The Lost Daughter of Happiness* is her second long story about the migration theme. Although identity plight is still shed light on in Fusang’s experience, Yan is much more ambitious

---

<sup>22</sup> Jin, “Transnational Criticism and Asian Immigrant Literature: Reading Yan Geling's Fusang and Its English Translation,” 570.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 571.

and critical this time by broadening this problem as a part of the transnational networks of Chinese cultural communities.

Curiously, as for the interpretation of cultural identity crisis, this story offers a very special perspective: in contrast to the migrant who assimilates into a new national culture and becomes fully a citizen of that group, the Chinese diasporan by definition remains allied to at least two national entities: the Chinese homeland and the nation of residence. Thus, instead of depicting the vacillation between two identities, Yan seems to highlight the diasporan's loyalties to "cultural China"<sup>24</sup>: the transnational networks of Chinese cultural communities that are scattered across the globe. In other words, the Chinese diasporans in this story are portrayed to have a reserve of their innate cultural identities by playing the role of "outsider" or "foreigner" in a new socio-cultural space. In *The Lost Daughter of Happiness*, the first generation of Chinese immigrants insist on the "cultural China" a lot. Fusang, as well as other immigrants in Chinatown, are quite persistent in their Chinese identity and customs, which later brings them ethnic exclusion. In Yan's depiction, Chinese customs are well reserved in San Francisco Chinatown. Males are still wearing braid, and prostitutes in the brothel wear conventional red silk blouse which is interpreted as something exotic and erotic by their white patrons. These Chinese immigrants have no determination to assimilate into the American community, instead, they act like foreigners in this country and outsiders from the mainstream culture. According to Kristeva, the "foreigner" that one plays in a certain culture is a kind of "aloofness" which later serves as

---

<sup>24</sup> Weiming Tu, "Cultural China: The Periphery as the Center," *Daedalus* 120, no. 2 (1991): 1-32.

a “foreigner’s shield”. For diasporans, this “shield” is “beyond” the reach of attacks and rejections” that one may experience.<sup>25</sup>

Represented by the narrator, the new generation, however, chooses a different trajectory. Influenced by the impact of acculturation, modern Chinese diasporans are more ambitious to integrate into the white society by deviating from their own mother culture. However, this desire usually brings up opposite results: they feel they are further alienated from the socio-cultural context which they are eager to merge into. Every time the narrator watches the eyes of her American husband, she will shrink from the inscrutability of a different culture that she can tell from his blue eyeballs. The fact that she can never be culturally the same as her husband intensifies her feeling of “not at home”. In Benzi Zhang’s opinion, this presence can be named as “the unhomeable foreignness” which “suggests a kind of cultural duality and a tension between dwelling and indwelling” and “calls for the recognition of new meanings of home outside of the conventional parameters of home identity.”<sup>26</sup>

In addition to the interpretation of cultural identity, there are more diasporic consciousness that can be employed to explain the insistence on “cultural China”. Deborah Madsen suggests, where the tourist may experience a vicarious thrill from the encounter with cultural difference, secure in the knowledge that the tour will end and a stable “home” will be available to which to return, for temporary traveler living in diaspora, the shock of

---

<sup>25</sup> Benzi Zhang, “The Politics of Re-Homing: Asian Diaspora Poetry in Canada,” *College Literature* 31, no. 1 (2004): 108.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

cultural difference and identity crisis is not so profound.<sup>27</sup> A lot of Chinese diasporans in the story consider their life in the United States as a temporary one, and one day when they make enough money, they will sail back to China. To act as foreigners with cultural difference, in Kristeva's opinion, also awakens ones "most archaic senses through a burning sensation."<sup>28</sup> For example, the archaic sense of survival. Once Chinese diasporans relocate themselves in a different culture, their survival is threatened by different cultural and political forces. These forces also readjust their sense of home as a closed and fixed structure.

According to the depiction of different Chinese immigrants in the story, we see the "old" and "primitive" China, though looks backward compared to the United States in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, was once privileged in Chinese immigrants' mind as a divine homeland. The gangster Da Yong, who seems to be sophisticated enough to do business with American and socialize with people of different races, is still longing for China. Although his memory about China is not fresh anymore, he makes explicit reference to China as his cultural home with his family relations and kinships. For instance, Da Yong misses his wife, even though they never see each other:

He didn't know why he longed for her so, He was like a drifter forced to take to the road, or a weary seasoned traveler who has stayed in too many inns and eaten to many fancy meals, who yearned for home, a place to go back to, no matter how vague or far away, no more than a distant mirage on the highway.

Ah Ding [Da Yong] believed only one person could make him nice and ordinary, and that was his wife. The day she appeared, he would roll on the ground and slough the hide from his body, like someone under a sorcerer's spell who finally turns back into himself after having been all sorts of things. (Yan, 82)

---

<sup>27</sup> Deborah L. Madsen, *American Exceptionalism* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998).

<sup>28</sup> Kristeva, *Strangers To Ourselves*, 3-4.

Da Yong's longing for China is shaped by his family, especially his wife, who occupies his mind and is his "weakness", that is "his longing for the wife he'd never ever seen" (Yan, 81). Da Yong's wife is representative of his nostalgia and the metaphor of his Chinese identification as well as his cultural home. By sending gifts back to his wife in China, Da Yong tries to maintain his own root in China. However, Da Yong has no idea about what happens in his home, for instance, he does not know his wife has been taken to the United States by traffickers. His memory about his homeland seems to be unchanged, everlasting and isolated, which is not truly fact anymore.

When Da Yong visits brothel, very interestingly, he sometimes mistakes those prostitutes as his wife in the homeland when his sanity is absent. It tells the fact that as a man who has never seen his wife before, Da Yong's memory about home is an imaginative product, just as how he imagines his wife. When he turns his gaze back, the longing and diasporic desire is transformed into his imagination of homeland, an idealized and deliberately cultivated memory that may have nothing to do with his homeland in reality. Da Yong unconsciously takes the prostitutes as his wife, or probably he is pretending to do so. In fact, Da Yong's home in his mind is reversed again and again through his negotiation between fact and fantasy. Although the fact about his home country may not be real enough, it is "real" enough for him to insist on his cultural recognition. On the other side, his current settlement in the United States is physically real enough, yet it is not real enough to create the feeling of authenticity of home. Often when an immigrant is not satisfied with his settlement and is not able to change the fact, the only desired option will be a gaze back to the origins, something left untouched ever since he left the shore. However, the efforts may be in vain. As Radhakrishnan explains: "The diasporan hunger for knowledge about

and intimacy with the home country should not turn into a transhistorical and mystic quest for origins... Feeling deracinated in the diaspora can be painful, but the politics of origins cannot be the remedy.”<sup>29</sup> Da Yong tries to seek out comfort for his predicaments by thinking about his hometown and his wife, but not for the sake of seeking his roots and identity. Meanwhile, the fantasy of homeland does not turn out to be his panacea, his imagination about his homeland is far from the reality, and his predicaments in reality are left unsolved.

While immigrants like Da Yong are longing for homeland and dream about returning to China one day, they are suffering from isolation and discrimination in the United States due to their Chinese characteristics. Those Chinese immigrant workers with a much lower cost are always silent and bear every inhuman treatment in their works, which finally irritate their white counterparts. The tolerance of Chinese then is taken as the root of “evilness”:

The white workers finally got it: These Chinese men were the root of all evil, these things that offered themselves up for exploitation. Their equable forbearance made inhuman living conditions, and wages so low they trampled all human dignity, seem reasonable. Such creatures actually existed, living off a little can of rice and a pinch of salt. (Yan, 70)

Chinese workers, albeit once indispensable to U.S. capital, will now become the ‘yellow slave’: unfree and feminized laborers who undermine white workingmen’s ownership of their “free labor”.<sup>30</sup> Chinese labor was framed as a useful substitute for a

---

<sup>29</sup> Hua, “Diaspora and Cultural Memory,” 196.

<sup>30</sup> Lily Wong, “Desiring Across the Pacific: Transnational Contact in Early Twentieth-Century Asian/American Literature,” in *Transpacific Attachments: Sex Work, Media Networks, and Affective Histories of Chineseness*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2018), 26.

waning system of slavery as well as a threat to white American men's wages.<sup>31</sup> The conflict is raised up not only due to their different ethnicities, but also the distinctions in ideas and thoughts, culture and socialization. As Benzi Zhang comments on "cultural China":

The complexity and ambivalence associated with redefining and revising home in relation to diaspora discourse present a challenging topic for our discussion, since the very term "diaspora" as we use it today, indicates not only a condition of "out-of-country" displacement, but also the mishmash "out-of-culture," "out-of-language" and "out-of-oneself" experience.<sup>32</sup>

While the Chinese philosophy educates its citizens to restrain themselves and to tolerate, justice and fight is much more valued in Western society. Because of this gap, it is even more impossible for Chinese immigrants to integrate into the mainstream society. Yan then puts forward the dilemma of migrations, that is the choice between the ties to homeland and the alienation in the new land. She deliberately creates a tension between one's cultural home and culture in the place of their physical residence. When the first generation refuses to cut their ties to their homeland, physically and psychologically, they will not be welcomed by the white community, and exclusion aroused by the ethnicity will be an everlasting barrier.

Yet the diaspora theme in this book is not simply about the longing for homeland, or homesickness. A paradoxical feeling of both homesickness and home-crisis is performed on diasporic subject. The migration from one place to a new land does alienate people from their homeland through the dislocation in geology, the poverty and backwardness in China also pull them away from their homeland psychologically. After several years' hard work

---

<sup>31</sup> Wong, "Desiring Across the Pacific: Transnational Contact in Early Twentieth-Century Asian/American Literature," 26.

<sup>32</sup> Zhang, "The Politics of Re-Homing: Asian Diaspora Poetry in Canada," 105.

in the United States, some Chinese immigrants may afford a ship ticket back to their hometown. However, in most cases, it will not be a real return, but instead, a temporal stay. A lot of them come back to stay for a short while to fulfill filial duty, for instance, impregnate their wives, and if it is a boy, a seat and a position will be reserved for him, one day when he grows up, he will be sent to reunite with his father and become a new member of the Chinese community in the United States:

Every eight or ten years, when he had earned enough for his passage, a man would come home, and when he left again a woman would be pregnant. When he went ashore at Gold Mountain, he would draw a blank line in the space below his name, for the name of the son in the womb. If the baby was a girl, that blank could be sold, not for some outrageous price but just enough for another ticket, so he could go home and try again. (Yan, 75)

In other words, for Chinese immigrants who have been abroad for years, a physical return like taking a boat back to China is a practical option. However, the return, especially a satisfying and pleasing one in a psychological sense is much harder to achieve. When homeland, in its economical term, is not compatible with the outside world, Chinese immigrants will not consider it as a satisfying settlement anymore. The book then reveals the distinction between a physical homeland and a psychological homeland, and a return in physical sense and that in psychological sense. Yet the former one is not difficult to implement, a satisfying return in psychological sense is much difficult to realize.

Reasons like poverty keep making Chinese moving to new land and export new blood to the United States. Yet Chinese immigrants like Da Yong is longing for homeland, at the same time they hold the idea that homeland may not be a satisfying homeland anymore. China is the land which gives them birth, but they can make a living and survive in the United States. The distance from the new land to homeland is further blurred. The



memory of “homeland”, combining with imagination as well as the change in their perception of homeland, finally becomes very nebulous.

“While the old world (China) pulls diasporas back to their roots, it also pushes them “en route” to the new world; likewise, the new world (America) pulls them away from their roots while also pushing them en route back to the old world. In this continuous, ongoing process, the immigrants’ home and identity are always in the making.”<sup>33</sup> By showing the fluctuating process of Chinese immigrants with regards to the perception of “homeland”, Yan Geling delivers the idea that home and identity is not a fixed notion for diasporic subject, and one should be critical of the homogenizing tendency in diasporic discourses.

### **Conclusion**

*The Lost Daughter of Happiness* opens up a repetitive series of migration that transcends the restriction of time and space. By manifesting the connection between the narrator and the heroine Fusang through their shared identity as immigrant and the psychological resonance they could find from each other, the story uses the past to speak to the contemporary issues, and it uses a fictional figure to express the narrator’s own discourse, which brings freshness to the discussion of migration experience. Although the story seemingly declares its intention to reveal the history, readers will find what really matters in it is not the migration history itself, but how the narrator reflects on it, and how she shows her control over discursive power in this history. Thus, Yan Geling is very critical of the transparency within historical reconstruction.

---

<sup>33</sup> Yunzi Li, “Home and Identity En Route in Chinese Diaspora—Reading Ha Jin's *A Free Life*,” *Pacific Coast Philology* 49, no. 2 (2014): 214.

In its narrative, the author also denies the given notion of “homeland”. Instead, the author expresses the flexibility of the concept, that homeland and settlement can be modified and reversed by individuals. Thus, as for diasporic subjects, the longing for homeland is not simply about the desire to go back to their primary settlement physically, but also about a psychological return that may fluctuate a lot depending on the circumstance individually. In other words, the author delivers the idea that homeland does not exist as a fixed location, instead, it is about a process from de-homing to re-homing in which diasporic subjects are involved physically and psychologically. Meanwhile, the floating nature of “homeland” is reflected on the tension between different cultures and temporalities. It highlights the idea that diaspora is not only a geographical movement, but also a temporal dislocation. Based on this pattern, it places in question the linearity of our inherited models of migration and diaspora.

## CHAPTER 5

### PROSTITUTE: OTHERNESS, TRANSGRESSION, REDEMPTION

#### Introduction

An important feature that makes the story of Fusang stand out among other immigrant stories is the occupation of the heroine. Prostitution has been an extremely popular motif in post-colonial literature works with its exotic charisma and sexual temptation. A question will naturally rise accompanying the popularity of prostitution in literature: Why the prostitute? As for this question, scholars of prostitute in literature have given various responses. The scholar Senkoro, whose research interest lies in the prostitute in African literature responds to this question: because prostitute has become “one of the major literary motifs in Africa. This neglected motif, a wide subject in itself, embraces all the aspects of the lives of the people in Africa, if not in all neo-colonies: social, political, economic, and, most important for our purposes, cultural.” Senkoro believes that the prostitute in literature positively contributes to the sociopolitical miasma and decay that engulfs today’s society, which implies that literature with a prostitute theme is supposed to be used to analyze social situations in a scientific manner.<sup>34</sup> Another scholar, Khalid Kishtainy, who researches the prostitute in progressive literature emphasizes on the socialist idea behind this literary phenomenon. He accepts the Marxist view of prostitution as “unnatural”: to socialist, the prostitute represents the evil brought by capitalists. Dramatist and novelists critical of society are therefore drawn to the prostitute as subject. As Kishtainy uses “progressive” as an ahistorical term, it thus can represent a writer from

---

<sup>34</sup> Femi Ojo-Ade, *Research in African Literatures* 15, no. 3 (1984): 438-440.

any era who sees the prostitute as a social problem instead of an individual.<sup>35</sup> Also, Kishtaniy suggests that prostitute used by male writers is like the crippled men written by female writers, as a medium to project their personal feelings of helpless oppression.

While Senkoro holds a belief in “scientism” in addressing the theme of prostitution, he is rather biased against works which fall short of his socio-politico-economic exigencies. Sociopsychological is the orientation and yardstick in his evaluation of novels with prostitution theme. Meanwhile, Kishtaniy also makes a mistake by embarking upon a spurious universalism in dealing with the theme, a pitfall of many Marxist standpoint.

The flaws in Senkoro and Kishtaniy’s studies reminds me of the importance of a particularity and a personality in the study of prostitute in literature. It is impossible to theorize the prostitution and comprise it by the exigencies of a world-view. Therefore, in this section, I plan to discuss the prostitute motif in *The Lost Daughter of Happiness* as an independent case. I will argue that the prostitute as a diasporan in this story is endowed with a transgressive quality, which enables the portrayal of the heroine to go beyond the restrictions of her ethnicity, cultural background and gender. Fusang shares two important identifications in the story: as a foreigner and as a prostitute. Both of these two identities contribute to her “foreignization” in socio-culture. Echoing Kristeva’s idea that to “live as others” could be one’s “foreigner’s shield”, Yan Geling gives credit to Fusang’s foreignness: she is strong enough to survive in the adverse conditions and enjoys inner freedom to find her own land. The presence of these qualities shows Yan Geling’s deliberate efforts in challenging pure culturalism and nationalism through her diasporic subject Fusang. After that, I will analyze how the given power relation between a prostitute,

---

<sup>35</sup> Sally Mitchell, *Victorian Studies* 27, no. 3 (1984): 395-397.

as enslaved woman, and her patron, as dominating man, can be subverted with Fusang's ability to cross over, which is another effort Yan makes to go beyond the patriarchy discourse in diasporic literature.

### **Otherness**

Lily Wong argues that Chinese people in the 19<sup>th</sup> century were positioned as “desired other” for the United States. When the United States implemented the Chinese Exclusion Acts from 1882 to 1943, it solidified the legal designation of Chinese immigrants as “aliens ineligible for citizenship.” Doing so illuminated the paradoxical need for the United States to exploit Chinese labor during industrialization and, at the same time, retain an Anglo-Saxon-centered exceptionalism for imperial expansion.<sup>36</sup>

Anti-trafficking laws that targeted Chinese female immigrants during this time resolved this paradoxical tension between domestic race-based exclusion and international civilizational expansion. By characterizing all Chinese immigrant women as unfree sexual labor, the United States showed Chinese moral degeneracy, but also highlighted the Anglo-American discourse of “biological threat.”<sup>37</sup> Prostitution then becomes a typical Chinese disease despite its dissipation around the world. Chinese prostitution as symbol of moral degeneracy exacerbating the antithesis to the founding values of the United States—an immoral ‘alien’ practice that posed an imminent threat to the nation’s morals, hygiene, racial purity, and freedom.<sup>38</sup>

---

<sup>36</sup> Wong, “Desiring Across the Pacific: Transnational Contact in Early Twentieth-Century Asian/American Literature,” 26.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

A “real Chinese play” titled *The First Born* mesmerized San Franciscans in 1897. The play which traced the immoralities of two Chinese women, one a prostitute and the other a woman consumed with sexual passion who abandons her child, was highly regarded as a “masterpiece” as one “full of sights and sounds and smells of Chinatown.”<sup>39</sup> The popularity of this play coincided with America’s most zealous and best-recorded campaign against prostitution. When guardians of ethics condemned prostitution as corrupting the American spirit, the wake of increasing urbanization was also calling for the nation to negotiate what appropriate sexuality and outright sex work are.<sup>40</sup> However, as this shift normalized more and more white female sexuality, Chinese female sexuality, on the contrary, becomes the center of leisure culture by being condemned as immoral sexuality.<sup>41</sup> This deviation reveals how liberatory cultural movements for whites finally became restrictive ones for people of color.

The story in *The Lost Daughter of Happiness* takes place in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, when history of prostitution in China has passed over hundreds of years, and prostitution has become an acceptable part of the society. Meanwhile, in the United States, different forms of prostitution have also been regarded as a necessary part of social organization. Yet, the arrival of Chinese prostitution in the United States is projected into a distinct picture. Although, the difference between the prostitution in these two countries is just the

---

<sup>39</sup>Amy Sueyoshi, “Prostitution Proliferates: “Mrs. Flirty” and Willing Chinese Slaves,” In *Discriminating Sex: White Leisure and the Making of the American “Oriental”* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2018), 78.

<sup>40</sup> Sueyoshi, “Prostitution Proliferates: “Mrs. Flirty” and Willing Chinese Slaves,” 78.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

form, Chinese prostitutes, as well as their owners and costumers, are considered as cultural outsider in the United States.

When Chinese immigrants brought their prostitution business onto the new land, they established a new type of commodity for circulation, which further threatens and erodes the economic foundation of the Western community. As aforementioned, rather than fighting for equality and justice, Chinese immigrants prefer to tolerate the low payment and harsh working environment, which makes the brutal business much more reasonable. Their actions greatly shake the former relation of employee and employer in the United States, a part of the foundation of their established economic systems. Their American counterparts would declare that the Chinese immigrants brings the slavery into regeneration on the new land, and so does prostitution. Chinese prostitutes, of course, are completely at the sexual disposal of their master and it is common for the owner of brothels to treat their prostitutes like their private property.

Under this circumstance, the author Yan Geling tends to portray her heroine Fusang as “others”, whose cultural models deeply differ from those proposed by her surroundings. Fusang’s otherness is related not only to her Chinese identity in American society but also to her special occupation within Chinese community. In other words, her otherness is beyond the border but also within the border. The concept of “other”, or in another word “outsider”, is promoted by Terry Eagleton as a trend in contemporary literature. Colin Wilson in his masterpiece *The Outsider* analyzed how different artists portray the alienation and existentialism in their works. Louis Simpsons argues that the concept “outsider” is “an attempt to delineate a new type of man”<sup>42</sup>:

---

<sup>42</sup> Louis Simpson, *The American Scholar* 26, no. 2 (1957): 250

A descendant of the romantic hero, the “Outsider”, in fiction or in fact, feels himself outside the petty lives, the irritations and satisfactions of ordinary men. His isolation renders him vulnerable to despair, to states of mind in which life seems unreal, to paralysis; On the hand, it enables him to know himself, to realize the power of his will, and to act on superman level.<sup>43</sup>

Colin Wilson constructs a type of human mind that can be stimulated by the isolation of being “outsider” in his life: Through experiencing the alienation in the secular world, someone can gain self-realization and senses of holiness. It is suggested by Romanticism that the sense of alienation is triggered by the character’s dissatisfaction with the lukewarm level of everyday triviality. The character Fusang, however, challenges this frame as her alienation is constructed by much more earthly reasons like geographical borders and ethnic distinction. What she attempts to do is achieve her philosophy of survival through her will that will not be restricted by her “outsider” identity in the material world. Thereby, Fusang, along with the Romantic heroes discussed by Colin Wilson, eventually arrived the same destination by being an “outsider” in their life: they become conscious of the power of their wills.

Pin-Chia Feng argues that Fusang’s “otherness” is illustrated in terms of spatial location, which brings us to the issues of space in this novel:

Throughout the text, Fusang is exoticized not only in visual codes but also in spatial terms and her otherness is always demarcated by spatial and geographic references. Even in the Chinese community she is an “other” because she comes from an inland province instead of the oceanic Canton, where most of the early immigrants came from.<sup>44</sup>

---

<sup>43</sup> Louis Simpson, *The American Scholar* 26, no. 2 (1957): 250.

<sup>44</sup> Pin-chia Feng, “Re-Mapping Asian American Literature: The Case of “Fu Sang”,” *American Studies International* 38, no. 1 (2000): 68.



Fusang's relocation path starts from Canton, where she was married to a local family from her homeland in Hunan, she is an "other" because she is not an indigenous female in Canton. Later she is lured to the United States, and as I mentioned before, she is still an outsider in the Chinese community (or the Canton community, more precisely) for the same reason. Meanwhile, most of Fusang's life is restricted to the border of Chinatown, a place that represents the "other" in the United States for its inscrutable Orient, and this is a place whose rules and ethical standards are distinct from the outside world. To Chris who is the epitome of the major society formed by Anglo-Saxons, Fusang's oriental features physically mark her "otherness" in this land of freedom: Her tolerance and silence personify the myth and inscrutability of the Orient, and her alien attachments such as red silk blouse, black hair and bound feet symbolize the mysterious Orient, that "every move of this oriental woman surprised him. She is the demonic Orient in this mind." (Yan, 101)

Thereby, throughout the text, the author portrays Fusang as an "other" who is not supposed to belong to any spatial institution in her life. However, the author does find a land that Fusang can finally belong to. It is a place where she could achieve her ultimate freedom and where she could "rise above restrictions imposed by any spatial institution"<sup>45</sup> in the physical world. Where is this Utopian? I will further analyze it in the next section.

### **Transgression**

Curiously, prostitution, the long-time disdained sex trade is highly appreciated for its literary value. The obsession of authors with prostitution and sex in general is quite remarkable and has a long history behind it. In ancient China, prostitution colors the

---

<sup>45</sup> Pin-chia Feng, "Re-Mapping Asian American Literature: The Case of "Fu Sang"," 68.

production of poetry and fills in many legends (传奇 *chuangqi*) and novels. Literature about prostitute culminates when it comes to the Tang and Song dynasties, when prostitutes and prostitution becomes the common object of depiction, for instance, famous poets like 白居易 *Bai Juyi*, 温庭筠 *Wen Tingyun* and 柳永 *Liu Yong* are said to be the frequent guests of brothels in cities, and a lot of their poems were born from their visit to brothels. Since the prostitute is a stock character in Chinese literary discourse, Paola Zamperini argues the very necessity to study the prostitute as a literary figure. She suggests that the particular figure of the courtesan, as a high-class entertainer or sex worker, has a long history of providing Chinese literature with artistic stimulus.<sup>46</sup> Zamperini explains,

The courtesan, by virtue of her multiple bodily locations, could never become a permanent *neiren* (内人 *inner person* or wife). Rather, she is always a *wairen* (外人, *outsider*), who, by virtue of her social class, lives outside the domestic realm of wifedom and motherhood but who...is not entitled to fully occupy the outside world where men of different social classes interact. So, she is located at the margins of *nei* (内 *interior*) and *wai* (外 *exterior*) but not in a static fashion...the courtesan moves in the space in-between, she is in constant transit: transgenerational, transpatial, transgressive.<sup>47</sup>

Although polarizations like East and West, interior and exterior as part of our conventions keep generating different boundaries that delineate the identity of a character, the courtesan figure is a character with mobility who constantly moves and transgresses the binaries and borders of culture, as well as nationality, which opens up an errant spaces

---

<sup>46</sup> Wong, "Desiring Across the Pacific: Transnational Contact in Early Twentieth-Century Asian/American Literature," 33.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*

on the borders of sociality, and demarcates the “domestic” in both the national and familial sense, as well as transgression.<sup>48</sup>

Sex workers with the potential to destabilize the fixed notion such as “Chinese” and “American”, thus could be read as an agent that disturbs the understandings of binaries. Furthermore, the prostitute figure is supposed to be studied as a site of transnational contact. Here I employ the word “transnational” to represent this transgressive quality with regards to diasporic issues. More importantly, I aim to use the potency of transgression to generate a critical space that is interconnected and also flexible.<sup>49</sup> As for the meaning of the word “transnational”, I borrow the definition from Lily Wong. She defines transnational as signifying a border crossing between nations as well as the affective impact of intersecting nationalistic imaginations. In other words, transnational quality is physical and affective transgressions-via-limitations. What’s more, it creates a third space of Chinese collectivity that is often overlooked by readings of Chineseness that either rest strictly within nationalistic scopes or are quick to dismantle nationalism as a mode of analysis.<sup>50</sup>

The destabilized potential of the prostitute figure is reflected in *The Lost Daughter of Happiness*. As Pin-chia Feng argues, “While Fusang has been subject to various kinds of gazes, the author also endows upon her a power to undermine prescribed boundary.”<sup>51</sup>

---

<sup>48</sup>Wong, “Desiring Across the Pacific: Transnational Contact in Early Twentieth-Century Asian/American Literature,” 34.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 29.

<sup>51</sup> Feng, “Re-Mapping Asian American Literature: The Case of “Fu Sang”,” 64.

In this story, Fusang is presented as a figure with the qualities of “Chinese and American”, as well as an archetypal figure with maternity that goes beyond the arbitrary dichotomy of chastity and wantonness, mother and whore.<sup>52</sup>

First of all, Fusang, the heroine in this story, has characteristics beyond conventional stereotype about Chinese identity. Yan Geling admits her story might irritate some Chinese readers to some extent, for its subversion in the portrayal of Fusang who is supposed to be a victim of sex trade. In Yan Geling’s interview, she summarizes her protagonist as someone who advocates freedom, enjoys pleasure from sex and is reluctant to follow anyone.<sup>53</sup> Fusang is quite deviated from the moral standard applied to a female in China, much like an antithesis to Confucian ideas and patriarchal system. Meanwhile, she also enjoys some Chineseness, for instance, her nobility in tolerance is a precious heritage from her ancestors. In some degrees, Fusang pierces the borders of Chinese characteristics and American characteristic. Here the paradox of Chineseness and Americanness that Fusang embodies serves as an affective structure, reframing identity beyond the physical and visual. By claiming Fusang’s characteristics against the conventional and unitary identification based on one’s bio-ethnicity, the author allows the prostitute figure to cross and override the visual reality of a Chinese identity.

Meanwhile, as an integral part of Chinatown, Fusang and other Chinese prostitutes cause Anglo-Saxon Americans, as well as daughters and wives from respectable families

---

<sup>52</sup> Feng, “Re-Mapping Asian American Literature: The Case of “Fu Sang”,” 65.

<sup>53</sup> Yafei Hu, “Zai haiwai xiezuo-Zuojia Yan Geling fangtan lu.” *Douban*, May 10, 2008, <https://www.douban.com/group/topic/3157380/> (accessed May 16, 2019).

to shudder at their names. They are also depicted as a big threat to white boys and then to the whole nation with their cheap price:

In a single year, over two thousand white boys between the ages of eight and fourteen entertained themselves with Chinese prostitutes. One of my books calls it “a most unusual social phenomenon...a contagion running rampant through morality and decency...Fifty percent of the boys visited Chinese brothels on a regular basis, and ninety percent used their lunch money or candy allowance...” (Yan, 16)

With transgressing quality, Fusang and Chinese prostitutes seduce white boys to a path to decay. In Zamperini’s words, they “move in the space in-between” and are “in constant transit”. The prostitute figures in Yan Geling’s work embody domestic boundaries and also their penetrability to pierce these boundaries. For those who are supposed to be secured in their Chinese or American familial framework, for those who are supposed to be sustained in white community and Anglo-Saxon ethnicity, Chinese prostitutes are such terrifying figures due to their penetrability to transcend these margins, and to stir up the reserved borders. The great impact they can generate is far beyond the singular border of Chinatown.

Another example which can show Fusang’s transgression is her rejection to the Christian church and marriage. Fusang is released by Chris from a Chinese hospital and is later brought to the Christian church, or “Rescue Society” as it is called in the book, which implies its target “customer”: those fallen woman who need to be rescued and “reformed”. The “Rescue Society” is described as an annoying institution that often interferes with Chinese business:

What’s a rescue society?

They put themselves in charge of meddling in our business. You punish a little whore by telling her to get down on her knees, they meddle; you buy a whore and sell her again to make a little money, and they meddle in that!

...

That Damned mission just opened last year and they kidnapped dozens of whores in the first month. (Yan, 120-121)

Meddling in all kinds of unethical trades, the Rescue Society represents a potential side through which all the Chinese “fallen” woman with their national backwardness can be purified—from a sex worker positioned outside of the moral righteousness in America to that of an “reformed” person entering into one alongside those missionaries in church. For young cavalier Chris, the Rescue Society here is established as a destination that could prompt the crossing of morality, class, ethnicity confines, a perfect shelter for Fusang to wash off her disgrace in life.

However, Fusang gives up the opportunity of redemption offered by the Christianity by admitting herself as a thief and volunteering to leave with Da Yong in a raid. She brings her silk blouse back, which is supposed to be banished during her stay in the Rescue Society, and she chooses to remain a sex worker in Chinatown. Fusang’s choice confuses Chris initially, but he later understands the meaning behind it:

Perhaps she had started thinking about leaving when Mary yelled at her. Or maybe it was when they threw her red blouse in the trash. Chris finally understood what had happened that day. Dragged off in chains by a gang of men, her face bloody, her hair a mess, Fusang had become a typical slave girl. Yet she had bowed her head and smiled to herself. How absurd! At thirty, at forty, for the rest of his life, Chris would keep thinking of the way Fusang smiled. Whether you set her free or enslaved her, her freedom came completely from within. (Yan, 142)

Pushing back against Chris and the Rescue Society’s wish for her vertical mobility along a Christian value. Fusang is longing for a freedom that enables her to horizontally cross culture binaries between Chinese and American, decency and indecency. Meanwhile, Fusang’s rebuff to a normal marriage prods her to betray a Confucian family structure. Yet her “husband” Da Yong takes an opposite stance. Da Yong longs to come back to China and reunite with his wife, with the promise that China and his family will be a site to clean

up his sins. He is going to ascend in class once he comes back to China, from a dishonorable gangster exiled by the mainstream to a common young man with a happy family. In Da Yong's imagination, his hometown in China will be place reserved for his social respectability. On the contrary, Fusang makes use of Confucian family forms-loyalty of a widow to her dead husband, and respect from the society to a widow with "chastity"-to break the cultural-nationally framed attachments, for instance, filial duties. Compared to Fusang, Da Yong demarcates the cultural frame between China and America, by imagining China as a site for Confucian respectability and American as a place for audacity and indulgence. Then Fusang as a prostitute figure performs her identity as a biologically Chinese echoes to some American spirit, but also against and across the polarized Chinese and American value borders.

The relationship between Chris and Fusang is another good example to show Fusang's power to cross over set boundaries. Chris's entrance into Fusang's world is intended as a mere ritual: he hopes that through the purchase of this "alien" body he could gain access to adulthood and participate in a family tradition since every man in his family has a mistress of a different race. Supposedly his needed rite of passage would have made him a man, which means a psychological separation from his mother.<sup>54</sup> However, as they interact with each other more and more frequently, Chris's sexual desire and his eagerness to taste exoticness is generally replaced by his admiration for Fusang's maternity, which means Fusang is no longer a sexual commodity for him:

When Chris was sixty, one day he recalled a moment in the past-when he was twelve. In a narrow alley in Chinatown, he saw a Chinese prostitute. Seeing from the darkened window, she looked as perfect as the bust of a goddess. Her red shirt was so close to the darkness behind her that she would have merged into that

---

<sup>54</sup> Feng, "Re-Mapping Asian American Literature: The Case of "Fu Sang"," 64.

duskiness had she just learnt back a little bit. She had a meaningless simile, but so honest and warm. That was how maternity and prostitution exist side by side in her.

There was no longer any smoke coming out of Chris's pipe; but his eyes were getting smoky. He looked at this woman in his mind and understood the reason why he had plunged into her life was none other than-maternity!

Extreme exotic imagination had lured him to study her closely. Years later he discovered that it was actually a fascination with maternity. It was an ancient sort of maternity, the specialty of an early civilization.

His definition of maternity included suffering, forgiveness and a willingness to self-destruction.

Maternity is the highest level of femininity. She opened herself and allowed you to plunder and invade her. The way she offered neither resistance nor preference was the most graceful representation of wantonness. (Yan, 104)

As Pin-chia Feng argues for this paragraph, Chris's reflections on Fusang's maternity indicates that his memory of Fusang is always "paradoxically mixed with reverence and profanity."<sup>55</sup> Although it may sound like a cliché of the Oriental female, the author does not hide her addition to the mother figure in her portrayal of Fusang, a motif that is astounding enough to blend the maternity and wantonness, holiness and decay. Fusang expressed her maternity mainly through her forgiveness and tolerance. She forgives Chris for joining the rape, like a mother forgives her naughty child, and paradoxically the button she grabbed from Chris during the rape became the symbol of their love. Meanwhile, Fusang almost passively tolerates the hardship in her life, which stands for her philosophy of survival as a sort of inner freedom. As I argued before, it is this freedom that allows her to cross physical bondages horizontally. Thus, Fusang as an enslaved woman, is engaged with the power to transform and destabilize the traditional restrictions imprisoned her.

---

<sup>55</sup> Feng, "Re-Mapping Asian American Literature: The Case of "Fu Sang"," 65.



## Redemption

Prostitution is one of the oldest professions in the world but with a short duration for individuals -a score of years at best. It is introduced in the story that only few prostitutes in China town can live after twenty, and for prostitutes like Fusang whose age is around twenty-one, she is “old enough to die”. Moreover, as readers may find, most of the prostitutes in stories are set up by their authors against a background of poverty and necessity. For all intents and purposes, prostitutes in these works are often pitied due to their ill fate, for instance, being forced to sell one’s body because of the starvation. On the one hand, a prostitute with ill fate could raise up the sympathy of males. On the other hand, presented as the symbol of decay and the corruption of purity, prostitutes, or “fallen women” are the fascination of masculinity.

In *The Lost Daughter of Happiness*, Yan Geling is conscious of both sides, and even more. Portrayed as a prostitute who is lured by the trafficker, Fusang is depicted as a sacrificial lamb of the sex trade, the instrument of the sojourning of Chinese in the United States, and a symbol of moral corruption in China town. Yet she is also idealized as a woman with maternity and a “golden heart”, features which build up her charm to “hook” males like Chris and Da Yong. In a time when prostitute is seen as the locust of human civilization, Yan Geling responds to the censure and tint her heroin with precious qualities. In this sense, the diaspora is associated with the transformation of power relation complicated by the issue of gender. Fusang is the woman who brings the men in China town into chaos, yet it is also this prostitute who turned the young boy Chris into a civilized, mature man, and a person who later gives impetus to an anti-racism campaign. In its

original Chinese version, *Tu* (土, mud) is a metaphor that shows up several times in the story as an epitome of Fusang, who is:

Such a good woman, with all her heart and honesty like mud underneath your feet. You can step on it as you wish, you can roll about on it if you want, and you can cultivate and plow it, sowing and harvesting on it...She is such a woman as genuine as mud. (多么好的女人, 诚心诚意地像脚下一杯土, 任你踏, 任你在上面打滚, 任你耕耘它, 犁翻它, 在它上面播种收获...那泥土般的真诚的女性。<sup>56</sup>

The metaphor of mud here violates the decorum of how precious dignity is. Although she is a woman without dignity, a prostitute who is as humble as mud can be appreciated for her genuineness. The fact that a prostitute can have such great qualities, strengthening the desire to redeem them from their ill fate.

With the idea of convincing prostitute as women with doomed fate (but with good qualities) came the idea of redeeming them. Yet reclaiming the fallen woman proved to be an intractable problem. The idea of whore's redemption, especially those of color, has obsessed the Western mind more than elsewhere. To some extent, it is probably due to the Christian tradition behind it. Furthermore, among those works which center on the redemption of prostitute (or other fallen women defined by the culture), male chauvinism reigned supreme, in which the fascination with chauvinism and masculinity is condescending over other factors. One good example is how Chris thinks about his proposal and accommodation to Fusang as a sacrifice:

Holding your hand with resolve, he is pulling you toward them. His resolve is meant to challenge them. And to sacrifice himself...

Chris pulls you closer to him, nearly embraces you. He hates the fact that the workers are shocked and his pale young face glows with righteousness. He is totally unaware of what he has been saying over and over again, from the moment he took your hand: Fusang, we'll marry together. I want everyone to know. I'll take you to Montana, where whites and colored people can get married.

---

<sup>56</sup> This part is censored in Cathy Siber's English translation. The translation here is provided by me. Original text is in Chapter 20.

The expression on his face and these repeated declarations of his bring to mind the self-importance of people who devote their lives to a cause. The wind is blowing this thick blond hair back, exposing his broad forehead. His face reminds me of idealists through the ages, whatever their cause: the claim that the earth revolves around the sun, the theory of evolution, the Paris Commune, the October Revolution, the Three People's Principles, communism... It is as if his being with you, Fusang, is not a matter of anything so shallow as love or happiness, but rather a grand sacrifice. Or perhaps when love reaches this stage it crowds out ordinary feelings and becomes a doctrine, an ideal, that can only be realized through sacrifice. He is using you to enact his sacrifice for the ideal of love. (Yan, 266)

The word "self-importance" illustrates the attitudes of the narrator towards this redemption. Just like the revolutionaries attempted to sacrifice their lives to bring progress to the society, Chris believes his marriage with Fusang is his sacrifice which would later overturn his community. However, he does not realize that Fusang is not the one who is simply oppressed. When Chris dehumanized Fusang with the reference to an object evaluates from his sacrifice, Fusang rebuffs the opportunity to be married to him and leaves him in shock and confusion. Only after years can Chris understand his failure in recognizing Fusang's power. The author depicts the dynamics of their power relations when Chris is watching Fusang entertain her customer and gains pleasure from it:

Chris could hardly believe what he had seen. Her skin is the finest sand on the beach that drifted along with the currents. At certain moments it was formless and dissolved by the waves...

You might think the ocean was dominating the sand with its turbulence. But you would be wrong. The sand was the master. The sand contained the ocean, no matter how expansive and tyrannical it was. Despite that the sand was formless and submerged under the water...

Suddenly he felt an overflow of tears. Because he could see pleasure in her misty eyes, the lowest kind of pleasure which had nothing to do with anything spiritual.

The pleasure was peaking.

The pleasure was not only for her. It spread to the man through her trembling body; It spread to Chris when their eyes met. (Yan, 60-61)

The metaphors of sand and ocean here, on the one hand, imply Fusang's orgasm and pleasure from her work. On the other hand, sand and ocean represents the position of

power owned by Fusang and her customer, respectively. People might take it for granted that the sand is dominated by the ocean, just as the prostitute or “fallen woman” must be the object of governing. However, the truth is the opposite. “The sand was the master”, and Fusang is barely the sexually oppressed one. The author thus casts doubt on Fusang’s apparent submissiveness and passivity. With her generosity to the physical exploitation, her capacity to transform the arbitrary bondage, and her adaptability to hardship, Fusang’s power advances the redemption project. That the position of the subject and object can be easily subverted. The Caucasian boy Chris is accused of dehumanizing and objectifying Fusang in his male gaze through aggressive possessiveness. Only after his redemption being deferred by Fusang can he gain a rendition. It is his experience with Fusang that furnishes him with integrity and helps me grow up a man:

He [Chris] hadn’t forgiven very many people in his life. He had always been so good at finding fault at himself and others and now he realized that his whole upright life had been ushered along by Fusang’s forgiveness. On this sleepless night, he found the woman in the pink blouse kneeling in the distant past heartwrenching.

He thought, what made the image of Fusang kneeling so moving was the fact that it embodied the age-old compassion of women for men. (Yan, 250)

What originally brought Chris to the path of redemption, or sacrifice as he may consider, is Fusang’s kneeling. Fusang’s kneeling, as well as her compliance and gentleness arouse the male chauvinism of Chris. However, the author endows upon new interpretation on Fusang’s kneeling. It may be as simple as a position operated by animals without too many accessory meanings. Kneeling is just a part of animal nature for her. Thus, there’s no such a condescending manner of the object she is kneeled to, and she has no shame and fear for her kneeling position.

It is important to recognize here that diaspora women, compared to diaspora men, are usually faced with twofold challenges presented by uprooting experience and the patriarchal convention within their settlement. As a diaspora female writer, Yan Geling also confronts double pressure in her writing. By subverting the patriarchal convention, the revision of power relations in this story subtly express diaspora women's desire for freedom and independence. Yan Geling attempts to break the constraints of sexuality and refuses to celebrate the patriarchal value of diaspora, which represents her longing for self-fulfillment and freedom beyond the boundary of one's home.

### **Conclusion**

Through the survival of Fusang, Yan Geling expresses her interpretation of "live as others" within a diasporic discourse. Primarily, Fusang is depicted by the author as an outsider or other who does not belong to any earthly terrain in the story. The sense of being separate from the community around, however, enables Fusang to realize the power of her own will: She is armed with the shield to protect her as a foreigner and as a cultural other. As a result, she is able to find her own land psychologically, where she could enjoy her inner freedom. Yet, being defined as "other" by the community is not the only factor which helps to build up her philosophy of survival, she is also the one who enjoys the privilege to cross over any determined bondage, which partly benefits from her social identity as a prostitute. As a result, she is not the one who is exiled by the society, but a person who allows herself to escape any restrictions put on her. In other words, this seeming object, a submissive and oppressed female is reformed by the author into a subject with one's own power.

Furthermore, Fusang's interaction with different males around her greatly challenges the mode of redemption in interracial love stories, where the power relation between the male and female is greatly subverted. The author questions the patriarchal value of diasporic discourse instead of promoting it, which unlocks new forms of this topic. It enables female consciousness of diaspora to be expressed by empowering its heroine to have positive qualities and to gain a sense of self-fulfillment and inner freedom. Reading this way, we can discern that diaspora women's sense of home and dwelling is closely connected with their desire for independence, freedom and power.

## CHAPTER 6

### NARRATIVE: ORIENTALIST GESUTURE IN THE STORY

#### Introduction

She was so encrusted with mythology as to seem almost inhuman. Even by then she was an ornament, a kind of oriental fiction. Nuns' tears and press coverage did nothing to humanize her. It was after all a set of stories so elaborately delicious: a whorish traitor, seen variously on the arms of monocle aristocrats, decorated generals, wealthy merchants, assorted handsome and altogether indecipherable foreigners (she was nothing if not heterogeneous in the enactment of her desires), a woman who exposed her buttocks, and more, to the astonished gaze of audience (who could barely endure the sexual vertigo induced by her wild cavorting and so mimed, as aesthetes will, mere scandalized delight), a dancer, an artiste, who performed generic Asia with every gestures of her body (since she was hot, glistening and steamily sub-tropical and wore a ruby in her belly to signify fabulous authenticity)-in short she was a vamp, she was a femme fatale. And she was tried and found guilty of the betrayal of a larger feminine mystique, the indefeasible mother country, la belle France. Twelve bullet holes inscribed the shape of the Eiffel Tower. Mata Hari, it must be said, was the spy they loved to hate. (Gail Jones, *Fetish Lives*)

Entitled "The Veil", Gail Jones's story on the well-known spy Mata Hari forms a part of her book, *Fetish Lives*. Mata Hari, or Margarida Getrud Zelle as her original name, is famous for her capability to function in her covert role by performing popular misconceptions about Asia. During her stay in Indonesia, Mata had access to study the Javanese dance and to read Buddhist literature. With the knowledge she gained, her dark skin and her black hair, this Dutch-born female successfully created an Oriental identity for herself. In Paris, people were informed she was born in India, and thus her performance of exotic Hindu dance was extremely popular among army officials, which later brings her to the career as a spy. Just as Mata Hari can make use of people's stereotype of Asia to fabricate an Oriental identity for herself, the author can use the same device to highlight and strengthen the Oriental feature of Fusang. Denying the hegemony and homogeny in

culture, Yan Geling deliberately employs the misconception about Asia to underline the tension between Eastern and Western culture.

In this chapter, I will explore what I see as traces of Orientalist gesture to be found in the narrative. I am going to analyze the technology of waste, a detail mentioned during Fusang's life in a Western church, as a trope of Orientalist gesture in this novel, which helps to present the cultural encounter in diasporic discourse.

### **Orientalist gesture**

Although there has been a long tradition of Chinese women living in the United States, the first sighting that American had of an “authentic” Chinese woman was probably in 1834 as a “curiosity” in New York City. Dressed in silk Qing Dynasty robes and dainty, pointed slippers, a Chinese female named Afong Moy was elaborately staged at the museum, where she was seated in a chair against an “orientalist” set decorated with carvings, lanterns, and tea accessories. Staged as a “The Chinese Lady”, Afong's real identity is not known to us, since “A” is just a prefix to address a person in Cantonese.

A few years later, a Chinese museum was opened in the New York City, featuring a Miss Pwan-ye-koo as the headliner of a “Living Chinese Family”. This museum was owned by Phineas T. Barnum, the same person who was in charge of the exhibition of Afong Moy. Promoted as a fine lady from a noble family, Pwan-ye-koo was accompanied by her maids in the museum. Some of her family members also showed up in a few weeks, however, just like Afong Moy, the real identity of Pwan and her family is still very elusive.



Anyway, the owner of this museum, Mr. Barnum did make a lot of money from their display by making use of the country's fascination with "Orient".<sup>57</sup>

As we can see in these early displays, Chinese women in their custom and dress, in this case, as cultured ladies, were not alone in being exhibited in this period as living curiosities for mass entertainment. It was in this manner as racialized and sexualized exotic others that Chinese women entered U.S. history.<sup>58</sup> Even today, this representation of Chinese female (and also Chinese American woman) with overtones of Orientalism could still be found in American culture, especially in pop culture, such as films and TV programs.

As subjects of history, Fusang resembles to Afong Moy and Pwan-ye-koo since all of these females used to be portrayed for the sake of Western societies' fascination with "Orient", and only in recent years, relevant views have been gradually changed in historical studies. The narrator in the story, who represents the contemporary efforts to interpret them, contrasts with the old ideas and projects revisionists studies on the story. In the story, the narrator attempts to center a Chinese female like Fusang in history and focus on their function as a historical subject. However, this does not mean that Fusang's national and culture identity is going to be neutralized. There are some traces could be found, for instance, the toilet motif is presented as an apparent Oriental gesture to highlight Fusang's cultural identity. During Fusang's stay in Rescue Society, Yan Geling portrays a conflict

---

<sup>57</sup>Shirley Hune, "Chinese American Women in U.S. History: Explaining Representations of Exotic Others, Passive Objects, and Active Subjects," *In The Practice of U.S. Women's History: Narratives, Intersections, and Dialogues*, ed. Kleinberg S.Jay, Boris Eileen, and Ruiz Vicki L., (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2007), 161-184.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 161.

between East and West concerning the toilet. Some girls, probably Chinese, left their body disposal in a metal pail inside their bedroom, which agitates the missionaries in Rescue Society:

They flutter in the breeze for quite some time. The missionary named Dorothy walks over. She is a fine young woman, pretty and kind.

Arms crossed over her chest, she says, Girls, something terrible has happened. You can't tell whether she is saddened or embarrassed.

She pauses and says, My children, how could you do such a thing?

Along with the girls downstairs, you crane your neck. What could have happened to hurt Dorothy like this?

Mary bellows, Say no more! Let them see for themselves!

You watch the girls darting their eyes around them in distress as they follow Mary and Dorothy inside. Twenty-four pairs of identical feet trudge up the stairs. Nothing the girls did had ever made the missionaries so mad before, not even wasting half a piece of bread or sneaking over to the walls around the mission yard to indulge in the colorful sounds of the filthy Chinese spoken outside. Whatever happened must have been terrible, you decide.

You lean out over the railing to look down the stairwell. The girls are standing outside the largest bedroom. My dear children, Dorothy says, I simply cannot believe...

At this point two girls come out with a metal pail. Mary trains her eyes on the twenty-four girls from behind her glasses. One of them had come into your room one day and asked you, Just been rescued?

You said yes.

She said, I've been a student here for ages. You've got to study a long time before you learn how to be good.

What is this? Mary asks, pointing to the pail, the very tip of her finger disgusted.

You prop your chin in your hands and keep watching.

Not one of the twenty-four girls moves or says a word.

Mary says, Who did this?

Dorothy repeats the question.

Mary says, This is not the doing of one or two girls. Is there any among you who cannot find her way to the privy? Or who feels the privy is too far to walk? How can you use the bedroom to...to relieve yourselves? I guess some people just prefer to live in a toilet or to turn any sort of place into one! (Yan, 129-130)

It is not the initiator who is distressed by her mistake to leave her waste in the pail.

It is the Western missionaries whose "very tip of finger disgusted", and who is "saddened or embarrassed". The anonymous criminal keeps silent in the crowd, she or probably they, are largely untouched by the gravity of what she has done, excluding her as a Chinese from

the community of western missionaries who do not need an explanation for the decorum of hygiene. Also, Mary's questions highlight that it is cultural rather than natural ability that causes the criminal to relieve herself in the bedroom instead of going to the privy. The dialogue between Fusang and another girl reveals the relationship between the technology of body disposal and cultural socialization: Someone's facility with a privy definitely represents she has learned to be good and has been rescued. It is interesting to note that the absence of privy in one's technology of waste is associated with the corruption of individual and backwardness in cultivation. The existence of privy is implied as a symptom of modernity in one's culture, then the waste in metal pail implied that it is a sort of primitive culture: an Orientalist gesture.

It is implied here, the Western standards of hygiene to a Chinese individual may seem to be a progressive move in his or her quality. This means a broadly pervading Orientalist assumption that a western model of progress, such as the habit to relieve oneself only in the privy, is a laudable progress of Chinese individual. However, what is implicated with this scene is the Western yardstick of civilization. In fact, Mary's complaint that how people can relieve themselves in bedroom used to be made by Chinese. Before the flush toilet pervaded in China, there was usually a communal toilet separate from all living areas and was considered more hygienic. When flush toilets start to be popular in Western society, a lot of Chinese felt scared that one could leave one's disposal in the house. In fact, Yan Geling attributes this cultural dislocation that was once experienced by Chinese to Western missionary women in this scene, which shows a paradoxical transformation from "one" to "the other" in diasporic experience.

In this respect, the culture dislocation here can be considered as the reexamination of the ideology of nationality and culture, since it dilutes what was traditionally considered as national spheres and denies the universal yardstick which has been used to evaluate different cultures. Here, Yan Geling is very conscious of the process of “foreignization” that one may experience when travelling from one socio-cultural space to another. This process is indicated as a crucial characteristic of diaspora experience. The transformation does not mean one would lose their culture and home, instead it adds a new dimension of foreignness to one’s home identity: it exists in an interaction with a wide range of cultural passages.

### **Conclusion**

By placing the western technology of waste as a romanticized symptom of progress and civilization, Chinese toilet, such as the metal pail in the narrative, is Orientalized, signifying a crudeness. Presenting this cultural translation, the author expresses her consciousness of the sense of foreignness or otherness in diasporic experience. It is highlighted that diaspora is not only an “out of border” process, but also an “out of culture” experience. The result of the encounter of different cultures gives rise to the adjustment and revision for home strategy by including otherness in its recognition.

## CONCLUSION

When we are reading contemporary diasporic literature, it is important that we have to avoid the narrowly defined cultural frontier. In the age of global diaspora, the notion of “homeland” should be considered in both transnational and transcultural senses. In *The Lost Daughter of Happiness*, “homeland” is not a rigid structure. It is indicated in the story that “homeland” is a process where different cultures, times, politics and psychologies can interact with each other. By adding the discourse of history into the plot, the story denies the old concept which refers homeland to a singular place and an affiliation of a singular culture. Instead, it demonstrates the otherness within and beyond a certain culture and the conflict between the fact and fantasy of home memory that the diasporic subject may experience in the uprooting experience, which provides revisions on the discourses of diaspora and “homeland”. Reading this story, we may have a better understanding of the complexity and changing nature of “homeland”.

Diasporic discourse can be furthered complicated by gender, ethnicity and other issues. The story depicts the survival of a cultural other: the heroine Fusang is portrayed as a person who does not belong to any given spatial community. Fusang is the representative of diasporic females who suffer from dual pressures in their lives. However, with her transgressive ability as a cultural other, she is able to recognize the power of her own will and to withstand the suffering in her life. She is portrayed as someone that benefits from the outsider identity and gains freedom to find her own land, a land that enables her to have a sense of belonging and dwelling psychologically. As a result, reading *The Lost Daughter of Happiness*, one may find that de-homing and re-homing process is closely connected to a desire for independence and freedom.

Last, in the narrative of the story, the author uses some Oriental gestures to deliberately create the tension between East and West and to highlight Fusang's identity as an outsider. The paradox that is illustrated in the cultural conflict shows the author's doubt on a universalized yardstick for different cultures. In this sense, it represents a reconceptualization of cultural identity.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Chen, Sihe. "Bei wudu de renxing zhi ge: Du Yan Geling de xinzuo Fanghua." *Contemporary Writers Review*, 2017, no.5: 58-60.
- Cheng, Hirata L.. "Free, Indentured, Enslaved: Chinese Prostitutes in Nineteenth-Century American." *Signs* 5, no.1 (1979): 3-29.
- Feng, Pin-chia. "Re-Mapping Asian American Literature: The Case of "Fu Sang"." *American Studies International* 38, no. 1 (2000): 61-71.
- Hall, Stuart. "Cultural Identity and Diaspora." in *Identity, Community, Culture, Difference*, edited by Jonathan Rutherford, 222-237. London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1990.
- Hu, Yafei. "Zhongguo wenxue: Bentu yu haiwai-Zuojia Yan Geling fangtan lu," *Wenxin*, November 9, 2009. [http://wxs.hi2net.com/home/news\\_read.asp?NewsID=39790](http://wxs.hi2net.com/home/news_read.asp?NewsID=39790) (accessed May 5, 2019).
- Hua, Anh. "Diaspora and Cultural Memory." In *Diaspora, Memory, and Identity: A Search for Home*, edited by Agnew Vijay, 191-208. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005.
- Hune, Shirley. "Chinese American Women in U.S. History: Explaining Representations of Exotic Others, Passive Objects, and Active Subjects." In *The Practice of U.S. Women's History: Narratives, Intersections, and Dialogues*, edited by Kleinberg S. Jay, Boris Eileen, and Ruiz Vicki L., 161-84. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2007.
- Jin, Wen. "Transnational Criticism and Asian Immigrant Literature in the U.S.: Reading Yan Geling's Fusang and Its English Translation." *Contemporary Literature* 47, no. 4 (2006): 570-600.
- Kinkley, Jeffrey C.. *World Literature Today* 76, no. 2 (2002): 136-37.
- Kristeva, Julia. *Strangers To Ourselves*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1991.
- Li, Melody Yunzi. "Home and Identity En Route in Chinese Diaspora—Reading Ha Jin's A Free Life." *Pacific Coast Philology* 49, no. 2 (2014): 203-20.
- Lü, Yan. "Lisan Zuyi de Chuangshang he Houjiyi: Ping Yan Geling de xiaoshuo Fusang." *Literature&Chinese*, 2012, no.1:55-63.
- Ma, Wei. "Dimu Foxin: Yan Geling xiaoshuo zhong "Fusang" "Putao" xinxiang tanxi." *Contemporary Writers Review*, 2014, no.5 :202-203.

- MacWilliams, Sally E.. "From a Distance of One Hundred and Twenty Years: Theorizing Diasporic Chinese Female Subjectivities in Geling Yan's *The Lost Daughter of Happiness*." *Meridians* 6, no.1 (2005): 133-160.
- Madsen, Deborah L.. *American Exceptionalism*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998.
- Margolin, Uri. "Shifted (Displaced) Temporal Perspective in Narrative." *Narrative* 9, no. 2 (2001): 195-202.
- Mitchell, Sally. *Victorian Studies* 27, no. 3 (1984): 395-397.
- Ojo-Ade, Femi. *Research in African Literatures* 15, no. 3 (1984): 438-440.
- Safran, William. "Diasporas in Modern Societies: Myths of Homeland and Return." *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies* 1, no. 1 (1991): 83-99.
- Shen, Hongfang. "Zai kunan zhong shengteng: Lun Yan Geling Xiaoshuo zhong de nüxing yishi." *Contemporary Literary Criticism*, 2008, no.5: 135-136.
- Shu-mei, Shih. *Visuality and Identity: Sinophone Articulations across the Pacific*. Berkley: University of California Berkley Press, 2007.
- Simpson, Louis. *The American Scholar* 26, no. 2 (1957): 250.
- Sueyoshi, Amy. "Prostitution Proliferates: "Mrs. Flirty" and Willing Chinese Slaves." In *Discriminating Sex: White Leisure and the Making of the American "Oriental"*, 74-92. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2018.
- Tan, Sharon M. "Asian American Liberative Ethics." In *Ethics: A Liberative Approach*, edited by De La Torre Miguel A., 127-42. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2013.
- Tu, Weiming. "Cultural China: The Periphery as the Center." *Daedalus* 120, no. 2 (1991): 1-32.
- Wong, Lily. "Desiring Cross the Pacific: Transnational Contact in Early Twentieth-Century Asian/American Literature." In *Transpacific Attachments: Sex Work, Media Networks, and Affective Histories of Chineseness*, 25-47. New York: Columbia University Press, 2018.
- Ya, Fei. "Zai haiwai xiezu-Zuojia Yan Geling fangtan lu." *Douban*, May 10, 2008. <https://www.douban.com/group/topic/3157380/> (accessed May 16, 2019).
- Yan, Geling. *The Lost Daughter of Happiness*. Translated by Cathy Silber. New York: Hyperion East, 2001.



Yan, Geling. *Fusang*. Shenyang: Chunfeng wenyi chu ban she, 1998.

Zhang, Benzi. "The Politics of Re-Homing: Asian Diaspora Poetry in Canada." *College Literature* 31, no. 1 (2004): 103-25.