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Sui Sin Far: Voicing Unheard Asian American Female Writers from the Nineteenth Century

Sue Ann Lee
sueann.ny@gmail.com

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Sui Sin Far: Voicing Unheard Asian American Female Writers from the Nineteenth Century



Sue Ann Lee

American Studies Thesis

Advisor: Christopher Hager

Second Reader: Scott Gac

2021-2022

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Introduction

“Fundamentally, I muse, people are all the same. My mother’s race is as prejudiced as my father’s. Only when the whole world becomes as one family will human beings be able to see clearly and hear distinctly.”

- Sui Sin Far. “Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of an Eurasian” (1909)

I was inspired to write this thesis partly because of my parents’ immigration journey. I was born in South Korea. My parents decided to move to the United States when I was three years old in pursuit of the American Dream. However, when we moved to the United States, it was an incredibly difficult struggle. My parents spoke no English. They were facing hardships finding jobs due to their inability to speak English. Since my father was extremely skilled at baking, they decided to open a bakery in San Diego, California. Shortly after, my mother decided to open a Japanese sushi restaurant in New York City, which has grown into three locations in New York City. The bakery nor the restaurants were overnight successes. There were so many nights when I was younger when overheard my parents having discussions where they questioned their decision to move to the United States. However, their persistence paid off. The bakery as well as the restaurants were flourishing, and my parents bought their first home in the United States. After years and years of hard work, my parents finally achieved what they regarded to be the American Dream they had both longed for. However, they still speak no English, so they face continue to face language and social barriers to this day. Due to my parents’ immigration experience, I wanted to research the immigration experiences through various lenses including gender, female characters, and children.

When I started to brainstorm ideas for my thesis on immigration, I wanted to focus on a topic that fused my majors in American Studies, History, English and Philosophy. Although I have taken history classes in predominantly African American and American studies, the summer before my senior year I enrolled in a class that was cross listed in the American Studies and English departments: Professor Mrozowski's 19th Century Short Fiction class. At the start of the class, Professor Mrozowski told us that we would be keeping reading journals that we would write in each week to track our progress in the class. Additionally, we selected one short story from the 19th Century to write a literature review and paper on. While browsing the list of authors, I came across many that I was familiar with such as Edgar Allen Poe and Franz Kafka. While there were some authors whose names I did not recognize, I was the most confused when I came across the name Sui Sin Far because it was distinctly Asian and female in a sea of white male authors. The summer before my senior year, I decided to write a short paper on Sui Sin Far and the idea for this thesis was born. Writing about Far and her American literature combined all my majors because I was able to do literary analyses of her short stories while also writing historical analyses of immigration laws and political cartoons produced during the time Far was writing. Though Sui Sin Far was of Chinese and white descent and was writing about the Chinese immigrant experience, she refused to abide by what was defined as Chineseness. In Far's autobiographical essay, "Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of an Eurasian," she states, "They tell me that if I wish to succeed in literature in America I should dress in Chinese costume, carry a fan in my hand, wear a pair of scarlet beaded slippers, live in New York, and come of high birth. Instead of making myself familiar with the Chinese Americans around me, I should discourse on my spirit acquaintances with Chinese ancestors" (*Mrs. Spring Fragrance*, 230). Individuals were interested in her work because she refused to conform to the Chinese

standards of dress and living, yet she wrote so extensively on the Chinese immigration experience and achieved literary success. Far's works are recognized for being romantic or sentimental in nature. Despite being fictional, the stories from Far provide a realistic image of what immigration was like in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

While Sui Sin Far's works are now gaining literary recognition, her works remained largely ignored previously. East Asian American writers of past generations such as Far have published very few literary works. In *Aiiieeee!: An Anthology of Asian American Writers*, American author and playwright Frank Chin states, "in the 140-year of East Asian American history, fewer than ten works of fiction and poetry have been published by American-born Chinese and Japanese writers" (Chin, pp. 1). Like Far, Chin is a pioneer, but a pioneer in Asian-American theatre. While there is a common misperception in modern day times that "Asians are accepted in American society, that they have been assimilated and acculturated and have contributed to the mainstream of American culture" (Chin, pp. xxv), this statement was far from the reality for Asian American writers of the early 1900s. Being a successful Asian writer in the early 1900s was a challenging, though not impossible, task due to the looming perception that Asian Americans were regarded as the "other," or strangers and foreigners in the United States who did not desire assimilation. Although East Asian American writers as well as East Asian American readership were largely absent in the early 1900s, interest in Chinese American literature blossomed during the Second World War since China was seen as an American ally in Asia. While the Japanese were seen as the enemy, the Chinese were viewed in a positive light for the first time. Hence, East Asian American readership began to increase with the publication of Asian American stories such as Pardee Lowe's *Father and Glorious Descendant* (1943) and Jade Snow Wong's *Fifth Chinese Daughter* (1950) (Elaine H. Kim, pp. 50).

Edith Maude Eaton's Biography

Despite major publications in Chinese American literature from authors such as Lowe and Wong in the mid 1900s, Edith Maude Eaton¹ has long been crowned the mother of Chinese American literature. Born in 1865 in Macclesfield, England as the oldest of sixteen children, Eaton was the first person of European and Asian ancestry to produce fictional works. Though the work of Eaton garnered recognition in the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s, her work was largely neglected by scholars from the early 1900s to the mid 1970s. Although scholars collectively agree that Eaton is indeed the first Asian American writer to highlight the Chinese immigration experience, unfortunately, not much biographical information on Eaton is available. One of the few full-length biographies on Edith Maude Eaton is Annette White-Parks' *Sui Sin Far/Edith Maude Eaton: A Literary Biography*, published in 1995. The other more recently published biography on Eaton is Mary Chapman's *Becoming Sui Sin Far*. In a similar fashion to the relatively little biographical details on Eaton's life, there are limited literary analyses from scholars on Far's short stories. Ironically, although Eaton is regarded to be the first Eurasian writer to give a voice to the Chinese community, she is a rather invisible figure in the literary world. In this chapter, I intend to first investigate Eaton's biography to see how her childhood experiences shaped her literary works. Then, I intend to provide my own close readings on her short stories that primarily focus on women as well as children. I will demonstrate that children and female characters are active agents as opposed to silent muses.

As a writer of Eurasian descent born in the United Kingdom in 1865, Far possessed a unique standpoint as an insider able to understand both the Chinese and European backgrounds

¹ Sui Sin Far is the pen name of Edith Maude Eaton. For the purposes of this thesis, I will use the name Sui Sin Far when discussing the literature and works, while I will use the name Eaton when referring to the biography rather than the literature.

as a North American writer. She reflects on her own personal experiences in her stories. Eaton was of a dual background since her mother was born in China while her father was from Britain. There is a binary relationship at play in Eaton's parental history. Considering that Chinese-Anglo relations were tense at the time due to the argument over which country would dominate resources in China's interior, it was surprising that Edward, who was a British merchant, and Grace "Lotus Blossom" Trefusis who was a Chinese missionary, would pursue a relationship and eventually wed. Lotus Blossom was a Chinese girl who was adopted by Chinese missionaries. However, the relationship between Edward and Lotus Blossom does not appear to be completely out of the ordinary despite the tension between China and Britain. Considering "the British presence in Shanghai in the early 1860s—soldiers in the military... interracial relationships obviously developed in spite of hostilities" (Annette White-Parks, pp. 13).

Eaton wrote a short autobiographical essay titled "Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of an Eurasian" (1909). The essay contains various fragments of Far's memories and conversations from her childhood and early years. The first incident of racial consciousness that Eaton chronicles is explained in "Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of an Eurasian." When she is four years old, Eaton feels something is not right when she hears her nurse "tell another of her kind that my mother is Chinese... then the two women whisper together. Tho the word "Chinese" conveys very little meaning in my mind, I feel that they are talking about my father and mother and my heart swells with indignation" ("Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of an Eurasian," pp. 1). While Eaton is fully conscious of the racial discrimination at hand, since she is young, she fails to properly communicate the situation she's witnessed to her mother in an understandable manner. Her mother is inclined to believe the nurse who is adamant that Eaton is creating stories in her head. Eaton further writes that the day she overheard between the nurses was the day that

she “first learned I was something different and apart from other children, but tho my mother has forgotten it, I have not” (“Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of an Eurasian, pp. 1). Eaton’s mother is not conscious of racial hybridity as Eaton is. Her mother is not of a mixed background, so she does not try to make much sense of the conversation that Eaton overheard between the nurses. Since Eaton’s mother did not educate her much about China, Eaton’s safe haven as a young adult was the library. At the library, Eaton read books on China. Through books, she learned that China is the oldest civilized nation on Earth. Eaton concluded that she was troubled about “not that I am what I am, but that others are ignorant of my superiority. I am small, but my feelings are big—and great is my vanity” (“Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of an Eurasian, pp. 3). Eaton may have been young, but her voice for the Chinese community and writings for local Chinese reportings was mighty. A Chinese scholar quotes that Eaton’s vocal, unrestrained voice meant the “Chinese in America owe an everlasting debt of gratitude to Sui Sin Far for the bold stand she has taken in their defense” (“Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of an Eurasian,” pp. 3).

In *Sui Sin Far/Edith Maude Eaton: a literary biography*, one of the very few biographies published on Eaton, White-Parks highlights Eaton’s childhood experiences of feeling like an outsider, or the “other,” in a predominantly white society. Eaton grew up in an environment in which she became very conscious of her Chinese identity. Oftentimes, she felt socially alienated from other students who made comments such as “I wouldn’t speak to Sui if I were you. Her mamma is Chinese” (Annette White-Parks, pp. 16). In a classroom environment that did not have other students of mixed racial background like Eaton, she was constantly the subject of ridicule at the English private school. The private school she attended instructed that China was a country being civilized by England. Thus, Eaton began to question her cultural and social identity very early on. That said, their identities were also rooted in an identity framework of

multiplicities since the Eaton family moved around a lot from the United Kingdom to Canada to the United States and each location shaped Eaton's thoughts regarding Chinese community representation and cultural perception, which significantly informed her future writing. The lack of a Chinese community in each country the Eaton family settled in resulted in the Eaton children being troubled by how "their identities hovered between hiding their Chinese ancestry and passing as English—with the continual fear of exposure—or acknowledging their Chinese ancestry and confronting the racist attitudes and actions of white society" (Annette White-Parks, pp. 17). Since there were no Chinese populations in England in 1865, the Eaton children constantly contemplated which identity to portray to the external world.

The Circulation of Eaton's Works

Moreover, Edith Maude Eaton not only made significant contributions to the sphere of being a female author of Chinese descent, but also served an integral role in contributing to the Chinese-American community through the publication and circulation of her works. Given that she suffered from major illnesses such as arthritis and rheumatic fever, Eaton was able to achieve such literary success in the publication and circulation of her works (Ling and White-Parks, pp. 3). Furthermore, Hsu points out that Edith had to stop attending school at the age of eleven years old to financially support the family. Nonetheless, she managed to achieve such literary heights despite not being enrolled in school at such a young age (Hsu, pp. 10). Eaton stood for the Asian American community. Her roles as a journalist and stenographer in the late 1800s and early 1900s respectively mark the early stages of her journey into the publication sphere.

Eaton was also raised in Canada due to her father's career moving from England to Canada. Despite that Eaton was not raised in the United States, she decided to write while living in the United States. Far moved around frequently in the United States: "she lived in Seattle, and

Boston, self-identifying as Chinese-American and writing short sketches of the ‘Chinese’ experience in North America for a number of nineteenth-century magazines, including the *Overland Monthly*, *The Land of Sunshine*, and *Out West*” (White Parks, pp. 9). However, it was not until the late 1980s through the 1990s that Eaton’s works received the level of publication and circulation they deserved. Ling remarks that Eaton’s works did not receive significant circulation until Fisher praised Eaton as a female writer in *The Third Woman* and her essay “Leaves” was published by S.E. Solberg in *Turning Shadows Into Light: Art and Culture of the Northwest’s Early Asian American Pacific Community* (Ling and White-Parks, pp. 3).

Furthermore, Scholars Ling and White-Parks state that there was revived interest in Far in the 1990s. The biography of Far was published by Annette White-Parks in addition to the upcoming volume of *American Women Writers: Diverse Voices in Prose since 1845*, which published some of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*. Hsu concurs with Ling that Eaton started gaining literary recognition in the late 1900s, but Hsu argues that the specific interest in Eaton was due to the mass circulation of Far’s writing in *Aiiieeeee! An Anthology of Asian American Writers* of 1974. Eaton’s literary recognition extended to tangible representations such as the proposed ballroom in her honor as well as a Chinatown metro station in San Francisco bearing her name (Ling and White-Parks, pp. 4).

On the other hand, scholars such as Mary Chapman offer a different angle for analysis regarding Sui Sin Far and the circulation of her works. Rather than focusing on specific magazines and anthologies that Far’s works were published in, Chapman focuses more on international circulation. Far’s works circulated widely because the United States printing culture changed rapidly. Not only did the number of newspapers increase, but archival research pertaining to Far and her works were published in various Jamaican, United States and Canadian

newspapers (Chapman, pp. 264). Far was unknown as a writer in her early days not only because she was a female in a male-dominated literary space at the time, but also because her works were not published in major newspapers, but instead, circulated in small-circulation Montreal publications (Chapman, pp. 264). The major issue that Chapman presents regarding circulation is that many titles and works that are relevant to Eaton have still not been digitized, so in examining digitized periodicals, her works do not show up unless extensive research is conducted (Chapman, pp. 267). While scholars such as Ling, White-Parks and Hsu point to the mass circulation of Far's works, Chapman paints a starkly different picture in which the works of Far have yet to be properly digitized and available in databases.

Eaton's deliberate choice to craft strong, independent characters in her short story collection *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* stemmed from independent parental figures in her childhood. Eaton's mother was considered a strong, liberated woman of her time since she did not await an arranged marriage, which was the conventional norm at the time. Lotus Blossom was independent enough to "travel and choose her own husband" (Annette White-Parks, pp. 13). Even Eaton's father, Edward, did not pursue the conventional mercantile career that his parents expected of him. Rather, Edward elected to study art in France (Annette White-Parks, pp. 12). Considering that both of Eaton's parents were very independently minded and strong willed, it is not surprising at all that the characters in her fictional short stories are forces of agency rather than passivity. Eaton's *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* is her most well-known work. *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* contains stories about characters ranging from adults to children. The stories within the collection "reflect on the collection's major themes: the assimilation experiences of first and second-generation Chinese Americans... considering *Mrs. Spring Fragrance's* diverse characters and portrayal of class relations, Eaton intends to revise for her readers the early twentieth-

century stereotypes of Asians in culture that portray Asians peoples as either a sinister mass of lower-class thugs or as a yellow peril that threaten American ways of life” (Tripp, Introduction).

Edith Maude Eaton’s Pen Name

While she was given the name Edith Maude Eaton at birth, she chose to adopt the pen name Sui Sin Far in her writings. Far sounds distinctively Chinese in comparison to the name Edith Eaton.² When translated, Sui Sin Far means “water fragrant flower,” “narcissus flower,” “pure flower,” or “Chinese Lily” (Leighton, pp. 5). Amongst Chinese people, the narcissus flower is popular, so it makes sense that Far selects Sui Sin Far as her pen name. Though there were instances in which Sui Sin Far published under her given name Edith Maude Eaton, she primarily published her works under her pen name.

Eaton’s intentions behind choosing to write under a pen name are not entirely clear. I believe that she adopted a pen name to highlight her Chinese ancestry since she was writing immigration stories. The pen name sounds far more appropriate to the genre of Chinese literature. That said, it is rather unusual the Far decided to write under a pen name considering that in her portfolio “Leaves,” she states that “another drawback—save for a few phrase [sic], I am unacquainted with my mother tongue” (Leighton, pp. 5). Edith Eaton did not speak Chinese but selects the pen name Sui Sin Far since she was fascinated by the art of fiction and the world of creation. Eaton deliberately attempts to constructing a new kind of identity for herself in the same sense that she crafts identities for her characters in her short stories. Perhaps another motivation for using a pen name is that Eaton desired to conceal her identity since she was

² Edith Maude Eaton’s sister, Winnifred Eaton also made the deliberate choice to write under a pen name. Winnifred used the name Onoto Watanna in her earlier publications, but later chose to go by Winnifred Reeve following her marriage. Because Edith received so much literary attention, Winnifred was not able to achieve the same level of literary recognition despite that she also wrote about interracial marriages and the struggle for identities.

writing during a period when exclusionary acts toward East Asian immigrants were being heavily enforced and she feared being the subject of controversy. That said, there can also be an alternate reading of the use of a distinctly Chinese sounding pen name as due to a sense of pride in her Chinese ancestry and to establish unity and solidarity with the Chinese community. The final reading for her pen name is that perhaps Far chose to write under the name because she felt like she was torn between her fragmented identity of being both Chinese and white and did not feel that she completely fit into the white world, so it did not seem proper to write under her given name.

While Sui Sin Far wrote about many different Chinese immigrants such as maids and servants and merchants, for this thesis, I was interested in exploring the connection between gender and race through female characters. Her autobiographical essay “Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of an Eurasian” focuses on the race and identity experiences she had as a child into her young adulthood. Therefore, it makes sense that Far decided to write on both children and adults. The three stories I chose to analyze are Far’s “In the Land of the Free,” “Pat and Pan,” and “Its Wavering Image.” The story “In the Land of the Free” focuses on the mother as the female protagonist as being a character of agency and force. Unlike in typical immigration stories, in Far’s stories, the mother is fiercely protective of her family and fights for unity whereas the father is more of a passive figure. While gender is initially explored in “In the Land of the Free,” the complications surrounding gender are not fleshed out until the story of “Pat and Pan” is placed alongside “Its Wavering Image.” Gender becomes more complicated with the discussion of cultural hybridity and race hybridity. Far’s stories are not just about immigration and the hardships that come with immigrating to a new country. The characters in Far’s stories deal with protagonists struggling to find their racial identities in an oppressive society. When the

characters think their racial identity is stabilized, Far creates a plot twist that leaves them questioning the racial identity they've known all their life. While some characters are strong enough to resist figures who attempt to convert their identity into the one of the dominant society, others give in. Through immigration literature, Far shows that gender identities and racial identities are fragile and constantly changing.

Chapter One: The Exclusion of Chinese Immigrants

“Human nature is the same all the world over, and the Chinaman is as much a human being as those who now presume to judge him; and if he is a human being, he must be treated like one...

We should be broad-minded. What does it matter whether a man be a Chinaman, an Irishman, and Englishman, or an American. Individuality is more than nationality.”

- Sui Sin Far, *Mrs. Spring Fragrance and Other Writings*, “A Plea for the Chinaman”

The feeling of exclusion Eaton experienced growing up is understandable since the first exclusionary act towards Chinese individuals—the Page Act of 1875—was passed when she was ten years old. The Page Act of 1875 targeted Chinese labor and Chinese prostitutes. The purpose of the Page Act was to “impose a fine of up to \$2,000 and a maximum jail sentence of one year upon anyone who ‘shall take, or cause to be taken or transported, to or from the United States any subject of China, Japan, or any oriental country, without their free and voluntary consent’” (Peffer, pp. 28). The Page Act of 1875 was deceptive. Upon first glance, the Act looks as though it was created to protect East Asian women since it discusses imposing a fine and a jail sentence upon people who taken women from East Asia without their consent. However, the Act does not have the purest of intentions because at the end of the day, its main agenda was to limit immigration from East Asia.

Far’s stories on Chinese immigration are unique for the time period since during an era in which “yellow peril” literature prevailed and dominated American literature, Far wrote with a kind of empathy that has “caused critics from her time to the present to recognize her as the first person to write from an insider viewpoint on Chinese in North America” (Annette White-Parks, pp. 1). Throughout the period of 1895 to 1920, “yellow peril” came to light and people of East Asian descent were heavily discriminated against because they were thought to be the reason for

the perilousness of the Western world. In American literature of 1882-1908 that focused on the yellow peril, fictional works portrayed Chinese immigrants as crime ridden and violent (Wu, pp. 2). Asians were thought to be threats to the Western world because they were regarded as the source of economic competition and diseases. While there were Americans who stood up for Chinese immigrants and fought for their justice, they were in the minority in the national debates about the Chinese Exclusion Act (Zhang, pp. 56). The Exclusion Act with its ban on Chinese immigration was a rhetoric that attempted to justify the exclusion of Chinese immigrants in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Despite the lack of research into the role of children in her stories and how children enhance or detract from the standard immigration narrative story arc, scholars pay careful attention to the way Far portrays the immigration experience very well with the representation of Chinatown and the immigration experience for Chinese Americans. It is striking that Far gave so much agency and recognition to female characters in her story when the reality was that there were laws that excluded Chinese women and laborers at the time. Hsu applauds Far for portraying the realities of the immigration that were tied to hardships and brutality in her story since it was reflective of the historical reality and context at the time due to exclusionary acts such as the Page Act Law of 1875 as well as the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 (Hsu, pp. 16). In depicting the immigrant experience in stories such as "In the Land of the Free," Far portrays the harsh realities that Chinese immigrants faced since white labor organizations expressed disdain towards Chinese workers because they were thought to be responsible for the poor working conditions (Hsu, pp. 17). Because of the historical context and the realities that Far portrays in her short stories, readers who are not familiar with immigration experiences are able to feel more

sympathetic towards Chinese immigrants and the brutal realities they endure when immigrating to foreign lands.

“Yellow Peril”

At the start of the European “age of exploration,” East Asians were described as white in appearance. In “Becoming Yellow: A Short History of Racial Thinking,” Keevak writes that “the surviving literature is full of references to the whiteness of both Chinese and Japanese natives, as merchants and (later) missionaries were able to penetrate into the mysterious lands of the marvelous East” (Keevak, pp. 27). Missionaries were insistent that the Chinese skin tone was white. That said, the perception of East Asians as yellow really started with references to food. Keevak writes, “at the end of the eighteenth-century Johann Friedrich Blumenbach would place East Asian skin halfway between the color of cooked oranges and grains of wheat... while in relation to other East Indians the Japanese may be white, they were both yellowish and lacking a lively color when compared to Europeans” (Keevak, pp. 35). East Asians were no longer viewed as white in appearance; they were becoming yellow. As far back as the 1700s during the time of Carl Linnaeus, the association of Asians with yellow was negative. Chinese individuals who were seen as “yellow” were “no longer as white, civilized, morally superior, and capable of Christian conversion, but instead as pale yellow, despotic, stagnant, and forever mired in pagan superstition” (Keevak, pp. 36).

As showcased in the political cartoons below, the rhetoric and language used to describe the East Asian community were derogatory in both Europe and the United States. East Asians were described as “the deluge, the tornado, and the hurricane” and by the 1870s, “China was called a ‘yellow terror’” (Keevak, pp. 125). East Asians were labeled as the “Yellow Peril” because there was a constant fear that plagued the mind of Westerners. Westerners thought the

East Asian immigrants would only provoke economic competition since they were immigrating to places such as the United States to mine gold in the mid-nineteenth century. Tens of thousands of Chinese immigrated to the United States and ultimately “became a major workforce during the construction of the first transcontinental railroad and made significant contributions to the expansion of agriculture in the American West” (Zhang, pp. 56). The performance of the Chinese immigrants’ labor was preferred over the labor of the Western individuals. The labor of Chinese immigrants was significantly cheaper for the same quality of work, so there was a fear that competition for jobs was on the rise and that eventually, the Chinese immigrants would permanently replace Western laborers. Especially since the transcontinental railroad was completed and work on the railroad was no longer necessary, it meant Chinese workers would try to compete for the jobs of white Americans in other industries. Ultimately, since the Chinese labor immigration coincided with the economic recession of the 1870s in the United States, Chinese immigrants were blamed as the source of economic troubles and thus, the “Yellow Peril.”

Due to the rising concern of “Yellow Peril” along with the economic recession in the United States, Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. The Chinese Exclusion Act—signed by President Chester A. Arthur and enacted in 1882—resulted in the prohibition of Chinese individuals immigrating to the United States and holding a job for a duration of ten years. The Chinese Exclusion Act was the first of its kind in the United States to reflect race-based immigration legislation. Painter states, “not all Chinese immigrants fell under the law—merchants, teachers, students, diplomats, and other professionals were exempted” (Painter, pp. 250). The Chinese Exclusion Act ended the American Dream for East Asian immigrants since the Act did not allow Asian immigrants who were already in the United States to apply for U.S.

citizenship. The Act was also detrimental to families since families became separated.

Immigrants who were in the United States prior to the enactment of the Act were forced to stay in the United States while their family members could not join them in the United States since the Act barred their entry.

Hence, among all the acts, the Chinese Exclusion stands out for being the “first to restrict a group of immigrants based on their race and class, and it thus helped to shape twentieth-century United States race-based immigration policy” (Lee, pp. 1). The immigration policies we see today as well as green cards are prime examples of the consequences of the Chinese Exclusion Act (Lee, pp. 37). As much as the Act was about excluding Chinese immigrants from immigrating to the United States, it also connected race with immigration policy and shaped how the U.S. would regulate immigration in the future. Even after the Chinese Exclusion Act was passed, the Chinese still faced major issues: “after the initial passage of Chinese exclusion, Indians and Asians in the West fell victim to whites lusting after their land and their jobs, as locals harried, attacked, and expelled their Chinese neighbors... all in all, questions of immigration and assimilation were a muddle between 1890 and 1914” (Painter, pp. 301).

Even though the intent behind implementing the Chinese Exclusion Act was to halt Asian immigration, immigration still took place, nonetheless. The restrictive immigration policies only drove more illegal immigration. After the Chinese Exclusion Act was implemented, the Chinese began migrating to Canada and then Mexico and then crossing the border illegally. Professor of Asian American Studies at the University of Minnesota, Erika Lee states, “an estimated 17,300 Chinese immigrants entered the United States through the back doors of Canada and Mexico between 1882 and 1920. Since the Chinese Exclusion Act was set to expire in 1892 and there were talks that the Act would expire, magazines in the United States were more receptive to

accepting immigration literature. The willingness of magazine editors to publish stories about the experiences of people of color prompted Eaton to write and publish literature that specifically dealt with critical themes such as identity and gender identity. The focus of Eaton's literature at this time was female agency and the issues surrounding female identity. After all, Eaton's literature typically focuses on "young Chinese or Chinese American female characters who face choices between following the mandates of tradition or pursuing their individual identities" (Annette White-Parks, pp. 87). Despite Eaton's difficult early childhood, Eaton still managed to take a bold stance for the Chinese American community in her literature. Eaton's early fiction pieces focus on the Chinese community, Chinese children, and Chinese females. It is remarkable that Eaton's earlier works were published in magazines in the United States in the late 1890s (Annette White-Parks, pp. 84) considering that the Chinese Exclusion Act was passed in 1882 and lasted for ten years. The restrictive policies of the Chinese Exclusion Act were continuously enforced with the Geary Act of 1892, which was an extension of the Chinese Exclusion Act.

Cartoons and Lithographs Depicting Chinese Exclusion from Europe and the United States



Figure 1³

Hermann Knackfuss' "Peoples of Europe, Guard Your Dearest Goods" (1895)

In the 19th century, East Asian immigrants were not welcomed in the United States as well as Europe because they were regarded as being threats to the Western world. East Asians were deemed the “yellow peril” due to heightened Western anxiety that East Asian immigrants were an economic threat since they were willing to work for lower wages than their white counterparts. Anti-Chinese sentiment in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries was evident not

³ Knackfuss, Hermann. “Peoples of Europe, Guard Your Dearest Goods.” *Alamy*, 1895, <https://www.alamy.com/stock-photo-volker-europas-wahrt-eure-heilgesten-guter-people-of-europe-guard-96136139.html>.

only in speeches and reports as well as literary works, but also in political cartoons and drawings. The threat of the “yellow peril” and the attempt to explain European imperialism through the term “yellow peril” is most famously depicted by the famous 1895 pen lithograph by German painter Hermann Knackfuss titled *Peoples of Europe, Guard Your Dearest Goods* as shown above.⁴ The German Emperor Wilhelm II had commissioned Knackfuss to create *Peoples of Europe, Guard your Dearest Goods*. At the bottom of the image, Knackfuss signs the drawing with the inscription “Völker Europas wahret eure heiligsten Güter.” When translated, the phrase signifies, “Nations of Europe, defend your holiest possessions!” (Keevak, pp. 127). The drawing above was a commonly depicted sight in the late 1800s to portray that Europe was in danger from people from East Asia and that it was critical for the European nations to unify and establish solidarity against outside threats. The cross that is drawn above the warriors is an indication that Christianity must be defended. It is fitting that the cross is displayed in the sky before the warriors embark for battle because Constantine I is thought to have seen the image of a cross in the sky before a battle. On the opposite side, Siddhartha Guatama, or Buddha is portrayed very small on the far right to the point that it is hard to make him out unless one is looking very meticulously. Buddha sits enveloped by fire and smoke on top of a Chinese dragon, which is a representation of destruction. Considering the Anti-East Asian hostility at the time, the interpretation that can be made from the drawing of Buddha being surrounded by fire and smoke is to indicate that the inferior and immoral East Asian community is a danger, or a “peril” that must remain apart from Western society.

⁴ While Knackfuss produced other historical paintings, *Peoples of Europe, Guard Your Dearest Goods* of 1895 remains his most well-known work.

On the other side of the image, warrior women of the nations of Europe are depicted in a determined, ferocious manner as though they are prepared to head into battle since they are well equipped with swords and shields to defend themselves. The bright white cross in the sky is shining brightly in the sky and it is drawn in stark contrast to the cloudy, dark demonic Chinese dragon as a representation of faith and purity, hence emphasizing the urgent need to protect Western values from the “yellow peril.” The warrior women are being called forth by archangel Michael—who is pointing directly at Buddha—to defend their homeland as well as their faith from outsiders who pose a threat. In short, Wilhelm’s purpose in drawing the image was to show that it was imperative that Europe defend itself from “the inroads of the Great Yellow race,” or the race that was deemed inferior (Keevak, pp. 127). That said, the image is quite ironic with its depiction of Buddha on the far right. Buddhism is a religion that is representative of wisdom and intellectual perfection, so it is quite hard to believe that Buddha is a figure associated with darkness and clouds. The European counterparts’ unawareness of the actual symbolic representation of Buddha highlights their cultural and historical ignorance and their inability to understand and appreciate other cultures that are foreign.

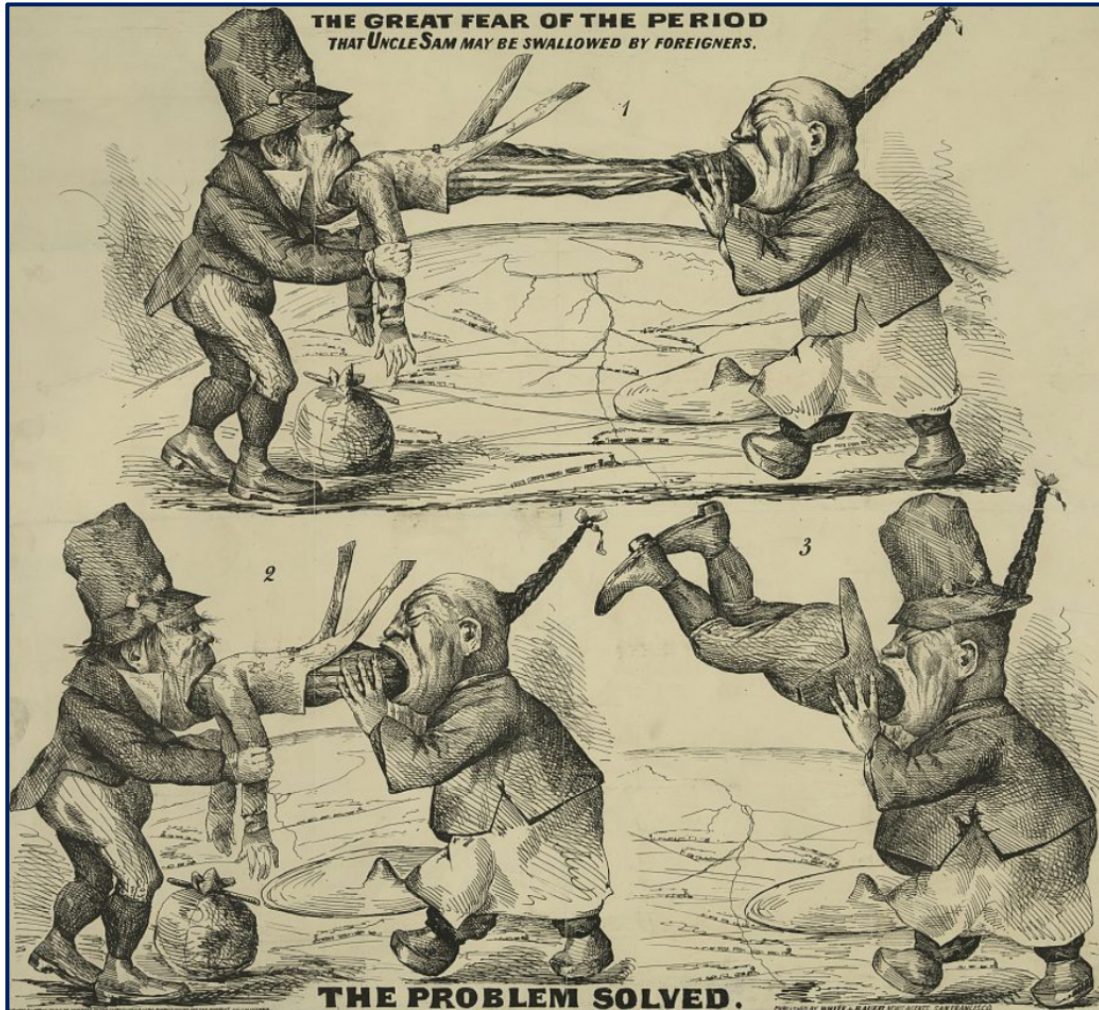


Figure 3⁵

San Francisco: White & Bauer's *The Great Fear of the Period that Uncle Sam May Be Swallowed by Foreigners: the problem solved* (between 1860 and 1869)

The next cartoon that depicts the Anti-Asian sentiment expressed by both Europeans and Americans is in the drawing titled *The Great Fear of the Period that Uncle Sam May Be Swallowed by Foreigners: the problem solved* dated sometime between 1860 and 1869. The

⁵ *The great fear of the period That Uncle Sam may be swallowed by foreigners: The problem solved.* [San francisco: white & bauer, between 1860 and 1869] Photograph. Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <www.loc.gov/item/98502829/>.

cartoon is highly problematic because it fails to express any sort of sympathy for the Chinese and Irish regarding the hardships they face while immigrating to foreign lands such as language barriers. Instead, the Chinese and Irish workers are portrayed as the evil ones for taking away the American way of life and the cartoon is drawn to try to invoke a sense of panic and fear within Americans. Unlike the previous lithograph *The Magic Washer*, Uncle Sam is not in a position of authority in the image above. There are three different scenes that are numerically labeled one through three. In the first image, Uncle Sam's head is being swallowed by an Irish man while his feet are in the mouth of an East Asian individual. In the second image, Uncle Sam's body is nearly fully consumed by both the East Asian and Irish individuals while in the third and final image, the East Asian man is depicted swallowing the Irish man. In this drawing, there is a fear among Westerners in the United States that Europeans and East Asians immigrating to the United States will take away opportunities from Americans. The term "foreigners" being used in the cartoon demonstrates that the Chinese and Irish will be viewed as outsiders and the "Other" who cannot assimilate in the United States.

While there is not much scholarly information available on the cartoon besides that the two individuals are from Ireland and China, it is plausible to infer that the image is referring to the transcontinental railroad. Although the background in the cartoon is not very clear, upon close inspection, it looks as though there are railroads and trains in the distant background. In thinking about the historical context at the time armed with the knowledge that this image is thought to have been produced sometime between 1860 and 1869, the drawing is most likely trying to reflect the period in which the first transcontinental railroad—referred to as the Pacific Railroad—was being built in the United States. The transcontinental railroad was constructed between 1863 and 1869. The laborers who were working to build the transcontinental railroad

were predominantly immigrating to the United States from Ireland and China. Consequently, there was heightened anxiety that the Irish and Chinese would dominate the labor market once the work on the railroad was completed. Due to this predicted fear of economic competition and the fear that the American way of life would be drastically altered with the wave of immigrants, it makes sense that Uncle Sam is depicted as being swallowed by both the Irish and the Chinese individuals in the first and second images. That said, the cartoon is again, problematic, because it does not display any kind of sympathy for the Irish and Chinese who had to leave their homes and endure harsh living conditions—often sacrificing their lives—for the construction of the railroad. There is no discussion of language barriers and the struggles of the Chinese and Irish. Rather, the focus of the cartoon is solely on the destruction of the American way of life.

Eaton remarks that when she is working as a stenographer in a small town, she hears terrible comments made about the Chinese laborers who are working on the transcontinental railroad. Eaton recalls hearing a white businessman stating that he “cannot reconcile myself (himself) to the thought that the Chinese are humans like ourselves. They may have immortal souls, but their faces seem to be so utterly devoid of expression that I cannot help but doubt... A Chinaman is, in my eyes, more repulsive than a (Black man)” (“Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of an Eurasian,” pp. 4). While Eaton overheard favorable impressions regarding Japanese individuals, the same could not be said for the Chinese immigrants. Still, Eaton proved that she would be a voice for the Chinese community no matter how difficult the circumstances at hand were. Upon hearing the white man remark about the Chinese, Eaton states, “the Chinese people may have no souls, no expression on their faces, be altogether beyond the pale of civilization, but whatever they are, I want you to understand that I am—I am a Chinese” (“Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of an Eurasian,” pp. 4). In this situation, Eaton interjects herself into

the conversation as opposed to being a silent muse. While the white man can never understand what it is like to be in her shoes and listen to degrading racist comments, Eaton forces the man to consider that she is full of pride of her ethnicity despite that it has been beaten down over and over. The cartoons in conjunction with the conversations Eaton overheard in her everyday life show that the terrible ways in which the Chinese were treated was an endemic problem rather than a temporary one.

The Exclusion of Chinese Immigrants

The Pacific Railroad Act was officially signed into law on July 1, 1862 during Abraham Lincoln's presidency. For the first transcontinental railroad, there were two major tracks that were ultimately assembled: the Pacific Railroad in addition to the Central Pacific Railroad. While the Irish laborers worked predominantly on the Pacific Railroad, the Chinese immigrant laborers focused on the Central Pacific Railroad. When stories are told of the construction of the first transcontinental railroad, what is "often left out of the storytelling about the effort is the labor of an estimated 15,000 to 20,000 Chinese migrants who laid the tracks of the western half of the railroad. Those workers pounded on solid rock from sunrise to sunset, hung off steep mountain cliffs in woven reed baskets and withstood the harshest winters on record in the Sierra Nevada" (Shashkevich). Most of the workers that were from China were single men from southern China's Guangdong province in the Pearl River Delta area (Shashkevich). The 15,000 to 20,000 Chinese migrants who completed the work comprised ninety percent of the workforce for the Transcontinental Railroad, so the completion of the railroad would not have been possible without the Chinese workers considering there was a labor shortage in the United States at the time. The work that the Chinese laborers were completing put their own lives at risk since it was physically taxing. Moreover, the Chinese laborers were paid significantly lower wages than their

white counterparts despite that they were performing the same kind of work and played an integral role in building the railroad.

Not much scholarly work was available on the Chinese laborers' work and everyday lives while completing their daily tasks for the railroad construction until scholars at Stanford created a project known as the Chinese Railroad Workers in North America Project in 2012. There are no major documents or letters written by the Chinese laborers that have been discovered. The Chinese laborers were not passive figures, but were actually active individuals—much like the female protagonists in Far's stories—who demanded change through a better quality of life and improved working conditions. In 1867, approximately three thousand Chinese railroad workers went on a strike due to the substantial wage differences. White laborers were paid more than double the amount that Chinese workers were despite that they were performing the same task. It is implausible to believe that they were being paid so little considering that the work conditions were extremely dangerous and Chinese workers were putting their own lives on the frontline for the creation of the railroad. Regarding the working conditions that Chinese workers were subject to, "often involving the placement of explosives used to clear a path through the granite Sierra Nevada. As many as 1,000 workers, perhaps more, are believed to have died from accidental explosions or the frequent snow or rock avalanches, according to the researchers" (Shashkevich). Ultimately, the work of the Irish and Chinese immigrants was not fully appreciated. In Painter's *The History of White People*, Painter states that immigrants were merely regarded as "newcomers to toil at hard labor and be stigmatized as racially inferior" (Painter, pp. 258). Even the American Federation of Labor deemed that the new immigrants were "beaten men of beaten races" and ultimately "pushed northern European racial superiority over new immigrant masses" (Painter, pp. 259).

Chapter Two: Binaries

“When I look back over the years I see myself, a little child of scarcely four years of age, walking in front of my nurse, in a green English lane, and listening to her tell another of her kind that my mother is Chinese.”

- Sui Sin Far, “Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of an Eurasian”

The exclusionary acts along with the cartoons spreading throughout Europe and the United States were enforced to try to halt Chinese immigration. The East Asian community was negatively portrayed as a “yellow peril.” However, Far’s stories situate the Chinese community in a positive light. She takes the tragic treatment of Chinese immigrants in the United States and the unheard experiences of Chinese immigrants to create stories that invoke a sense of compassion and sympathy towards the Chinese immigration experience. Far transforms the genre of Chinese immigration by making the protagonists in her stories female and by establishing the Chinese female adults as well as the children as forces of agency rather than silenced figures. Far’s greatest literary achievement is her short story collection *Mrs. Spring Fragrance and Other Writings* published in 1912. Within Far’s short story collection is the story “In the Land of the Free,” published in 1912. The story “In the Land of the Free” portrays the realities that Chinese immigrants faced against the backdrop of the Chinese Exclusion Act, Page Act, as well as concerns surrounding the “Yellow Peril.”

In the story, a young boy named Little One and his parents try to immigrate to the United States. There is an issue since the child does not have the proper paperwork. Hence, the child is held at customs. Even though Little One’s parents desperately plea for the officers to please permit their son to enter the United States with them, they have no luck and the customs officers insist that the proper paperwork is necessary. The child is forced to stay behind until the parents

can obtain the proper paperwork. Months pass and the mother remains very hopeful that soon, she will be reunited with her son soon. After giving up her valued possessions in exchange for legal services, she arrives at Washington D.C. and discovers that her son has been issued a new name and is happily playing at a missionary school. Rather than greet his mother, the young boy hides behind the missionary woman and tells his mother to go away. “In the Land of the Free” is an atypical immigration story because the story does not have a happy conclusion. The mother and child are not happily reunited in the new country at the end of the story nor are they united once again in their home country. The family is no longer a cohesive unit in either native or foreign lands.

By writing “In the Land of the Free,” Eaton was able to perform two critical acts from both historical and literary standpoints. She gives a voice to female literary writers of Asian descent who were historically ignored. Far also gives a voice to Chinese immigrants who were voiceless in the supposedly fruitful and blissful “land of the free.” Much like Eaton’s own personal life, which was full of binaries, “In the Land of the Free” is saturated with binaries as well. The story does not follow a typical immigration story arc since there are many different unusual binary scenarios at play: the binary of names, binary of the female in immigration literature, and binary of immigration literature. Binary tension is at the heart of the family structure and characters in the short story. Far reinvents the narrative of immigration by establishing a sense of agency within the narrative and accentuating the voice of the passive immigrant who has historically been oppressed in foreign lands. And through her use of binaries throughout “In The Land of the Free,” Far demonstrates a new representation of family in foreign lands as one rooted in ethics and morals.

Binary of the Female Protagonist: agency v. passivity

The first binary in the short story “In the Land of the Free” is the binary of the mother in immigration literature as a protagonist with a voice as opposed to being a minor character in the backdrop of the story. Far accentuates the voice of the historically passive immigrant by highlighting the verbal cues and diction of the young boy’s mother. When the first officer claims to take away the young boy from his parents, the mother protests in the following manner: “No, you not take him; he my son too... It was Lae Choo. Snatching the child from his father’s arms she held and covered him with her own” (Far 961). Language is a mode of exclusion. The mother is speaking broken language since the sentence is missing certain phrases such as “you cannot” and “he is.” Despite that Lae Choo’s English is imperfect, the depiction of her as someone who is standing her ground and strongly defending her son’s status to come to the United States reveals that familial love and ethics transcend broken verbal language and cues. The reader is forced to feel have a sense of compassion and empathy with Lae Choo because she is trying so desperately in a situation in which language barriers are making the level of communication near impossible. Although Lae Choo has no control over the immigration situation, she demonstrates a kind of linguistic and rhetorical command with her proclamation of the word “No”; the mother has found her voice, and thus, shifted to the active sphere. The son’s mother is not a passive figure who allows the customs officer to simply take away her son despite that she is not completely fluent in the English tongue. The particular use of the firm word “no” in conjunction with “not” implies that the mother is defying the image of the historically passive immigrant by displaying agency and igniting a sense of familial stronghold within herself to protect her son. The mother’s protection over her son is an indication that even broken language cannot get in the way of family bonds.

The mother's emotional love for her son and sentimental state as she pines for a complete family in foreign lands reveal that though a child may be separated from his family under incomprehensible circumstances, the family unit itself can never be broken and family values cannot be stripped. Some may interpret the mother giving away her son as a symbol of passivity, but it is not; the mother refuses to be portrayed as a silent muse. When the husband Hom Hing states that they must obey the officer and give the son to him since "Tis the Law," Lae Choo responds in a surprising manner. Lae Choo states the following: "'You too,' reproached Lae Choo in a voice eloquent with pain... accustomed to obedience she yielded the boy to her husband, who in turn delivered him to the first officer" (Far 961). The mother handing or "yielding" her son to her husband as opposed to the officer himself signifies that although she is submitting to her husband's request to turn over her son, she will most definitely not directly make concessions to and appease the customs officer. Once again, there is the illustration of the mother refusing to be portrayed as a passive, resigned figure who submits to the will and demands of the officer despite being in foreign lands and having no authority whatsoever.

The mother is not weak or feeble and she exhibits her state of mind—or refusal to pass over her son—to the officer. The use of the word "reproached" to describe the mother is telling of the disapproval and overwhelming frustration she feels toward her husband, who merely states that it is important to abide by what is proclaimed as "Tis the Law" rather than stating "No" and arguing with the authoritative figure as she does. The way the husband and wife handle the situation is alarmingly starkly different. Further, the mother is not only speaking in a reproached tone, but Far writes that her voice is undeniably marked by "pain." The pain that she is feeling stems from two very distinct emotions under the same circumstance: primarily, the pain that stems from the haunting reality of her son being taken away from her, but also the pain from her

husband's state of compliance to response the officer's demands. While the pain from being separated from her son is one that can be fixed once they are reunited, the pain she feels due to her husband's passivity is not one that cannot be quite so clearly ameliorated.

The husband is quick to comply with the officer's command and pass their son to the officer without even a short verbal confrontation. The mother's frustration by the husband's lack of agency throughout the course of the encounter highlights the emergence of a new kind of immigration story. The stereotypically passive figure is empowered and refuses to be oppressed in new territory. Far transforms the landscape for female immigrants by giving a voice to those women who were historically silenced and suppressed. In short, Far is a pioneer of female immigration literature since she manages to create a new kind of genre for binary immigration literature that did not exist previously. The genre she creates is marked by redesigning and transforming the traditional trope of the women or mother trapped in the passive sphere. Far makes women the protagonist of the story and transforms them from the stage of passivity to activeness.

Binary of the Immigration Literature

The overarching binary in "In the Land of the Free" aside from giving voice to female characters is the binary of the genre of immigration literature. Typically, when thinking about the structure of a family immigration story, the parents and the child immigrate together. There are two typical scenarios that play out: if the child cannot enter the country, the parents will wait for the child or the parents and child are both well settled in the country. However, in this story, the family's sense of wholeness and unity is completely broken. The mother has been torn away and separated from her son for nearly a month and throughout the story, there is no clear idea of when she will be reunited with her son. When asked by her husband whether or not she managed

to get some sleep the night before, the mother states in a weeping manner, “how could I close my eyes with my arms empty of the little body that has filled them every night for more than twenty moons!...I see him not; I touch him not; I hear him not” (Far 961). In this scene that details the verbal exchange between the husband and wife, family ethics and values, specifically the parent-child relationship is addressed. Parents largely influence their children and provide the foundation for learning. Historical beliefs are passed down from family to family and one’s parents greatly influence one’s perception of the world in addition to one’s moral beliefs. The mother is unable to sleep. She cries out that she cannot “see,” “touch,” or “hear” her son because the customs officer taking away her son threatens the family sense of coherence and sense of the mother shaping and molding her son’s perception of the world. In short, the customs officer taking away the son is a hazard to the family ethics and values since it strips the child of the nurturing mother-son relationship that children are dependent on.

By the end of the story, however, the restoration of family ethics and values does not go hand in hand with the mother assuming an active role. Since her husband states that it is not possible for them to pay the lawyer five hundred dollars, the wife assumes the active role in the family and offers treasured possessions in lieu of money. In describing the wife’s reaction to not having five hundred, Far states that she “slipped a heavy gold bracelet” in addition to presenting her “jade earrings...hairpins...comb of pearl and money” (Far 965). Although the husband takes a rather passive stance and claims that he does not have the money that the lawyer is requesting in exchange for his legal assistance, the wife refuses to back down despite not having the financial means. She offers her most treasured materialistic possessions such as the jade earrings and hairpins and even her special heavy gold bracelet in the hopes that they will add up to a summation as large as five hundred when they are sold. The items she is offering are associated

with femininity since they are either accessories or jewelry. That said, the mere act of her exchanging such goods in exchange for the paperwork for her son reflects a mother refusing to be forced into the passive sphere and actively working to retrieve her son.

Binary of Names: the little boy

Besides the larger binary of female agency and female passivity that runs throughout the short story, another binary at play—though more subtle—is the binary of character names. When the mother arrives at the missionary school to see her son after months, she notices the demeanor of her son has completely changed. Upon seeing the woman at the missionary school, Lae Choo is told that “little Kim, as he had been named by the school, was the pet of the place, and that his little tricks and ways amused and delighted everyone” (pp. 101). The young boy, who was commonly referred to as either Little One or Little Boy has a new identity forced upon him: Little Kim. I believe that there are three different ways to understand the renaming of Little One at the end of the story. One reading is that while it may seem as though the young boy is given an identity since he is given an actual name Kim rather than being called Boy, the act is one of erasure since the endearing connotation associated with the term “Little One” for the mother has disappeared. Another possible reading is that ironically, the boy is given an identity through the missionary woman’s attempt to integrate him into Western culture. Little Boy or Little One, as the mother refers to her son, is not an actual name while Kim is. The name Kim sounds Korean rather than Western, so in giving the boy the name Little Kim, it is as though the missionary woman was forcing the boy to partly assimilate rather than entirely assimilate the boy since the name still has ethnic undertones and reflects his Asian heritage. The third and final reading is that in taking away the name Little One, the missionary woman is attempting to erase the mother from the son’s memory. Little One sounds very endearing in nature and was most likely a name

that only the mother used to refer to her son. By replacing the endearing phrase Little One, the boy is no longer reminded constantly of the memories tied to his mother prior to immigrating to a new country.

The title that Far gives the short story is ironic. The United States is not the land of the free. If it truly was the “land of the free,” the mother would not have been separated from her child for almost a year. Through the story, Far created the character of a Chinese woman who did not fit the norm of a Chinese woman immigrating to the United States at the time. Lae Choo is not a prostitute. By creating the image of a mother who yearns to be reunited with her son, Far humanizes the process of immigration, which cannot be understood through exclusionary acts.

Chapter Three: Girlhood-Hybridity

“Now, when you look at somebody, it’s not simply, ‘are you like me or unlike me? Has your culture produced great artists? What are your rituals?’ It’s: ‘is your culture safe or not? Will it produce terrorists?’”

- Homi K. Bhabha

Another of Sui Sin Far’s short stories that contains the similar elements of family dynamics and biracial conflicts as well as bicultural identities at heart is “Pat and Pan.” While the story of “Pat and Pan” does not chronicle the story of a Chinese family immigrating to the United States, there is the same focus on finding one’s identity. The story of “Pat and Pan” adds more dimensions to the immigration narrative by adding the layer of hybridity. While Lae Choo is a fully Asian woman, the female protagonist of “Pat and Pan” is of a white and Asian background, which challenges the way we think about the framework of intersectionality when it comes to gender and mixed race, or hybridity. While there are binaries within this story as well, the focus is predominantly on hybridity. Since Pan is young, she is in the space of girlhood-hybridity. It is interesting to explore how someone so young navigates the white and Asian spaces as a girl.

The experiences of Pan are reminiscent of Eaton’s own childhood. Eaton experienced a girlhood-hybridity situation, which she writes of in “Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of an Eurasian.” Eaton states that as a child, she questioned her hybrid identity. Eaton writes, “why did God make us to be hooted and stared at? Papa is English, mamma is Chinese. Why couldn’t we have been either one thing or the other? Why is my mother’s race despised? I look into the faces of my father and mother... I do not confide in my father and mother. They would not understand... I am different to both of them—a stranger, tho their own child” (“Leaves from the

Mental Portfolio of an Eurasian,” pp. 3). Children learn from their parents and the testimony of their parents. Since the minds of children are cognitively developing, children are highly dependent on their parents. Eaton cannot depend on or “confide” in her parents the same way that most children would because she is cognizant of being in a third space of hybridity. Parents have a strong influence over children’s perceptions of the world, moral beliefs, understandings of race, and knowledge constituting as right or wrong. It must have been challenging for Eaton to suppress her questions regarding race and hybridity during an age when children are naturally inquisitive about themselves and the world around them and learn through interactions with the world and by asking their parents questions.

The story of “Pat and Pan” chronicles the lives of a white boy named Pat and a Chinese girl named Pan. The short story opens with an image of the two children sleeping together who are gazed upon by a Mission woman named Anna Harrison. The Mission woman inquires the vender, a Chinese woman, of the two children. She is curious of their relationship to one other since they are of two completely different cultural backgrounds. The Mission woman is strongly taken aback when she is informed that that the white boy cannot say his name in English. To Harrison, it is astonishing and not right that a white boy in America is raised in a Chinese household and can only communicate in Mandarin. From Harrison’s perspective, the white boy must leave Chinatown and be raised in white spaces: a white household and attend a school with other white peers.

In the second part of the story, Harrison creates a school for both white and Chinese children in Chinatown. She is insistent that the young boy attend her school and learn proper English. Pat’s father, Lum Yook was eager for Pat to learn English because Lum Yook himself spoke very little English and thinks it will benefit the family to have someone in the family who

is fluent in English. Since Pan follows everywhere Pat he goes, both the children are enrolled in Harrison's missionary school. Unfortunately, they are not in the same setting in the school since Pat engages with other white boys while Pan spends her time with Harrison. Approximately a year passes since the two children were in school. Pan is significantly better at speaking English than Pat is. Nonetheless, Pan persists in his studies in English because Harrison pushes him to continue in his studies. Pan is extremely loyal to Pat. Pan proves that sense of loyalty when she lies to Harrison and tells her that Pat is unable to make it to school due to a dog bite. Still, Harrison uncovers the truth that Pat did not make it to school because he was performing a Chinese act with five top spins, trying to impress the American boys from school. Therefore, not only is Pat punished for failing to make his appearance at school, but Pan is subject to punishment as well for having not been honest with Harrison to protect Pat.

The sense of division and the judgment of the bicultural environment that the boy was raised in come to fruition when Pat and Pan are separated from the same household. Pan's mother has the utmost love and devotion for Pat even though he is not her son by blood since he was the first child she raised. That said, she gives up Pat to a white family because many in the community strongly disapprove of a white boy being raised in a Chinese family. It was deemed that an American boy should be raised in a proper American household; therefore, Pat leaves the household despite his own remarks that he is Chinese since he spent his infancy and early childhood in a Chinese household. It is far simpler for Pat as opposed to Pan to transition into the white space. Pat appears completely white in appearance while Pan appears ethnically ambiguous, so her presence in a white space is questioned.

Ultimately, a year passes since the two children have seen one another. While Pan is overjoyed to see Pat and speak to him, Pat is rather aloof; his demeanor is not one that is rooted

in eagerness to engage with his past and the individuals from his past. Instead of acting welcoming upon the sight of seeing Pat, Pan completely ignores Pat and allows his peers to ridicule Pat. By the end of the short story, Pan does not recognize the boy that Pat has become much like the mother in “In the Land of the Free” who does not recognize the young boy that her son has morphed into while spending time apart from her. Like Little Kim is forced to integrate into the American community, Pat becomes a part of the American society and completely shed his bicultural, or Chinese identity.

The story of “Pat and Pan” deals with not only the agency of female characters as protagonists, but another multifaceted layer of girlhood-hybridity. Pan is a child who is of a white and Asian background, making her a hybrid figure and hybridity complicates her girlhood because her parents who are fully white and fully Chinese cannot comprehend what it is like to be a hybrid individual. While it may seem strange to associate girlhood with hybridity, girlhood-hybridity is not out of the question. It is imperative to understand how girls construct their gender and racial identities in light of gender stereotypes. In Dorothy Roberts’ *Fatal Invention: How Science, Politics, and Big Business Re-create Race in the Twenty-First Century*, Roberts makes it known that race is understood from a very early age. Roberts writes, “But the only way we know which racial designation to assign each person is by referring to the invented rules we have been taught since we were infants. And the only reason we engage in this exercise is the enormous social consequences of classifying people in this way” (Roberts, pp. 3). In “Pat and Pan,” Far is using the figure of Pan, who is a girl, to reconstruct gender. In taking an intersectional approach and exploring the links between agency, hybridity, girlhood, and femininity, Far sheds light on how a girl becomes a girl in “Pat and Pan.” Through Pan, Far makes readers reconsider what femininity is. Pan is the emblem of a hybrid form of femininity.

Girlhood studies examine girlhood and girl power in American society. Olga Ivashkevich, a professor in the Gender Studies department at the University of South Carolina writes in “Girl Power: Postmodern Girlhood Lived and Represented” that her aim is to “examine girl power as an artifact of postmodernity whose meanings are revealed through both popular cultural representations and contemporary girls’ practices of doing girlhood... can traditional feminine qualities and the new emancipated attitude of a power girl coexist?” (Ivashkevich, pp. 14). The purpose of girl power is to show that femininity should not be associated with weakness and passivity (Ivashkevich, pp. 16). Scholars explore girlhood through the expected ideal of femininity such as beautification and socioeconomic challenges as well as customary female activities such as making jewelry. While Women’s Studies and Gender Studies are widely studied by scholars, studies in girlhood are not common.

While my initial attempt was to analyze Pan in “Pat and Pan” through the lens of girlhood-hybridity, I realized this route was not possible. The more I tried to research the term “girlhood,” my searches were coming up empty with results that were irrelevant to immigrant literature. Girlhood is a term commonly used in American society to explain the phenomenon of dolls such as American Girl Dolls. However, hybridity implies cultural diversity. Thus, girlhood-hybridity is not a term that is used in East Asia nor America. Sociologically, the human community categorize beings as women, men, and children. While adults have gender, children are simply labeled children. The question becomes, why do children have no gender? Even Far’s *Mrs. Spring Fragrance and Other Writings* has a section titled Children’s Literature, which shows that childhood is typically not gendered in East Asian culture. That said, Far is the exception since she shows that children have gender in her writings. She makes the protagonists of “Pat and Pan” a white boy and an Asian girl to show that gender and race play roles in the

stories of children. I am lead to believe that Far assigns gender to children because children internalize roles of societal conduct and gender stereotypes even though they are young. For example, in “Pat and Pan,” Pan receives an inferior education in comparison to Pat, though her persistence in learning pays off and her English skills are superior to that of Pat. Pan is conscious that because she is a girl she is receiving an inferior education, so to her, gender does matter.

Does Gender Matter in Childhood?

The scholarship regarding whether gender matters when discussing children is split. In Deevia Bhana’s “Children are Children: Gender Doesn’t Matter” from *Empowering Women for Gender Equity*, Bhana argues that defining gender among children is irrelevant even though some may argue that children are gendered. Bhana takes a biological approach to explain that gender does not matter when discussing children. Bhana states, “Making difference biological helps naturalise and contributes to a toxic masculinity. This does nothing for reducing rates of violence. In fact biological determinism is the same kind of rationality that has been used to explain white intellectual superiority over blacks. The regulation of identity in this way invariably produces negative outcomes in the work towards equality, specifically gender equality” (Bhana, pp. 39). Bhana is stating that children are biologically different and ascribing gender to children is harmful because they will grow up to internalize stereotypes associated with each gender. Boys will grow up learning that men are by nature, aggressive and that they are naturally better at mathematics than girls are due to the left and right brain dichotomy between the genders. To do away with the impact of biological determinism on the rearing of children, Bhana is arguing that children should not be gendered. Biological determinism should not be used to explain children’s behavior. When interviewing instructors across classroom, Bhana received responses such as “actually I haven’t thought about gender. I tend to treat children as

children and not consciously think that ‘that’s a boy’ and that “I see all pupils as the same. They are all the same to me” (Bhana, pp. 41). The consensus across the teachers that Bhana interviewed is that gender is not important in the classroom and that kids are kids. However, the teachers are conscious of gender among children even though they will not admit to it because they conclude that the boys are the ones who “dominate the class” while the “girls are the shy ones” (Bhana, pp. 41). Hence, gender stereotypes exist in children. Gender power does matter in childhood. By saying that gender does not matter in childhood makes children seem invisible when boys and girls are not the same.

Perhaps gender is not emphasized in childhood to preserve childhood innocence and for girls and boys to enjoy their childhood without drawing attention to gender stereotypes. The pushback from instructors is that “these are just kids” and that “gender is more relevant in the higher standards” (Bhana, pp. 43). Is there really an appropriate age to teach children about gender dynamics when they are seeing gender differences in their everyday lives? When is the right developmental stage to teach children about differences in gender? Regardless of whether instructors claim that classrooms are gender-neutral, children are internalizing gender stereotypes in the classroom. If children are taught from a young age that gender does not matter, they are being shielded from the realities of the world. As they grow up, they will realize that gender power dynamics do play an imperative role in society. Trying to make children grow up oblivious to gender power structures is of no benefit to them, so maintaining gender-neutral classrooms is not the solution. Hence, gender in the classroom is problematic: “the teaching discourses make children innocent; construct them as unsexed, unprotesting, passive and without agency... the teaching discourses serve to perpetuate the minor status of the early years in the

bigger picture of schooling and leads to a systematic inattention to the dynamic lives of all those who inhabit it” (Bhana, pp. 44).

Considering this short story, it is important to understand the historical context of adoptions and bicultural families during the 19th century. While adoption is a commonly accepted practice in modern times since it is a solution for infertile couples to be able to have children as part of their family, adoption was not a common practice in the 19th century. The thread of otherness weaves its way from Sui Sin Far’s literature to the history of adoption. The children who are of Chinese heritage in Sui Sin Far’s literature feel like the Other among other children. Similarly, children who were adopted in the 19th Century also felt a strong sense of Otherness since adoption was not the norm at the time.

The sense of Otherness discussed in Sui Sin Far’s literature is closely tied to Edward Said’s *Orientalism*.⁶ Edward Said wrote *Orientalism* in 1978, which is much later than the period that Sui Sin Far wrote her immigration short stories. In *Orientalism*, Said focuses on the manner in which the West describes the Orient as he states that “the Other is everything that lies outside of the self. The self is the familiar (Europe, the West, “us”) and the Other is strange (the Orient, the east, “them”) (Said, 1978:43). There is a continuity in the trend of binaries through Orientalism. One major overarching binary is the distinction that Said makes between the “East” and the “West.” The second binary that operates in Orientalism is the contrast between what is the known and what is foreign. Said makes a distinction between the self, which is the known and there is fear of Other because it is the unknown. While the self is the norm, the Other is a stranger who is far from the norm. The Other does not belong with the cultural norms of the

⁶Edward Said created the term Orientalism. The field of Postcolonial studies was established by Said as well.

West. The Orient is regarded as dangerous and associated with the “Yellow Peril” due to its perception as the “Other.”

Orientalism is a construct built from Westerner’s and people outside of the Orient to cultivate an image they could use for their personal benefit. The intent behind Otherness is polarization: “the Oriental becomes more Oriental, the Westerner more Western” (Said, 1978). The Oriental and the Western are polar opposites. While the Oriental is associated with passivity, the Western is synonymous with activeness. That said, in Sui Sin Far’s immigration literature regarding both children and adults, though the protagonists are of Asian descent, the characters are not passive individuals, so the trope of the Oriental as passive is destroyed in her writings. Through polarization, the Oriental is made to feel as though they are inferior to the European culture and that the European identity yields more power. Said states that “there is in addition the hegemony of European ideas about the Orient, themselves reiterating European superiority over Oriental backwardness, usually overriding the possibility that a more independent, or more skeptical, thinker might have had different views on the matter” (Said, 1978).

Orientalism’s relationship to gender and the intersections between race and gender in Western society must be explored. In *Orientalism*, Said states, “along with other peoples variously designated as a backward, degenerate and retarded, the Orientals were viewed in a framework constructed out of biological determinism... the Oriental was linked to elements in Western society (delinquents, the insane, women, the poor) having in common an identity best described as lamentably alien. Orientals... were seen through... as problems to be solved or confined or taken over” (Said, pp. 145). The statement raises questions about the link between gender and Orientalism. How are we supposed to understand women in the orientalist’s eyes? What does the way that they are grouped within the same group as the insane or delinquents

reveal about the way women are classified and perceived in the Orient? Is there a hierarchy amongst the Orient, or are Orient men and women viewed in the same fashion? What is the role of gender in Orientalism? The political cartoons begin to answer questions regarding gender. While the image of Uncle Sam kicking male Chinese workers is approved to be circulated, there would be outrage at the sight of Uncle Sam kicking female immigrants. Therefore, the ways that anti-Chinese sentiment is expressed towards Chinese female and male starkly differ. In thinking about colonialism and gender in the East, the intersectionality promotes many questions. Colonialism is a major category analyzed by scholars while gender remains a rather minor category of study. Hence, in considering scholarly recognition, colonialism and gender are on different ends of the spectrum. Colonialism refers to hierarchies and fashioning systems of oppression. When thinking about women in relation to gender, women—especially women of color—are marginalized in a patriarchal society.

Considering the “yellow peril” as reflected through the discussion surrounding Orientalism in the 1970s, there was a growing fear of East Asians. It is significant that Sui Sin Far’s literature emerged as a voice for Asian Americans in the 1870s nearly a century after the Chinese Exclusion Act was passed. Though Far’s work was beginning to gain traction and had not quite gained full prominence when Said published his work on Orientalism, Far’s work was still useful amidst the anti-Chinese rhetoric that was fueling Orientalist stereotypes. The protagonists of Far’s stories in “The Land of the Free” as well as “Pat and Pan” do not pose a threat nor instill fear within people. They are law abiding citizens who are trying to find themselves in a foreign society. Through Far’s writing, readers are inclined to be sympathetic towards the Chinese protagonists as opposed to falling prey to the anti-Chinese sentiment. After all, the characters in Far’s stories are facing harsh realities such as immigration, language,

cultural, and social barriers in a foreign country. It is particularly useful to understand immigration stories from Far's perspective because she portrays the everyday realities of immigrant life such as the linguistic difficulties speaking to the border patrol officer in "In the Land of the Free," which paints Chinese Americans in a positive light. Readers feel sorrow for the maternal figure since the family is trying to legally enter the United States, but the mother is forced to leave her child behind.

Adoption Practices

In addition to the depiction of Otherness through Orientalism, Otherness is also intertwined with adoption and the growing rise of multicultural families. From the perspective of those looking in from the outside, children who were adopted into families with members of a different race were viewed as being Other in the family. While adoption was not a common practice in the early nineteenth century, adoption statutes came to light in the mid-nineteenth century. In "Adoption in the Progressive Era: Preserving, Creating, and Re-Creating Families" in the American Journal of Legal History, scholars Chris Guthrie and Joanna L. Grossman utilize orphanage reports and appellate court decisions in addition to trial court records to discuss adoption statutes—family preservation adoption, family creation adoption, and family re-creation adoption. The family creation adoption was prominent in the late nineteenth century, and it emerged as "the dominant type of adoption in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, gave childless couples a way to approximate the biological parent-child relationship" (Grossman, pp. 236).

In considering adoption history, Massachusetts is typically thought of as the first state in America to issue official adoption laws in 1851, though Mississippi, Alabama, Texas, and Vermont had issued precedent adoption laws prior. In states such as Massachusetts, opposition to

adoption laws was prevalent. Research consultant Susan L. Porter claims in “A Good Home: Indenture and Adoption in Nineteenth-Century Orphanages,” that “as these scholars observe, the legal practice of adoption became customary in countries that adopted Roman law, but in the United States, which followed English jurisprudence, American common law prohibited adoption, emphasizing the inviolability of (legitimate) blood claims” (Porter, pp. 28). While the benefit of adoption was that individuals could finally become parents, there was an issue at hand: since the children were not biologically related to the parents, there were questions surrounding inheritance and allocation of resources to children. In addition to Massachusetts, California had strict adoption laws that outlined that “an adult could adopt any minor at least 10 years younger than that adult. Depending upon the circumstances, several parties were required to consent to the adoption before the judge could approve it. If the adoptive parent was married, spousal consent was required” (Grossman, pp. 237). Unlike other adoption laws from other states, the California adoption law was unique in that it required judicial supervision when it came to the process of adoption. Thorough investigations were conducted to determine whether the adoption could be approved based on conducting extensive examinations on the potential adoptee as well as the child and ultimately, determining whether the adoption would be of benefit to the child. Through the judicial process of adoption, once a child was formally adopted, the biological parents renounced all parental authority and the adoptive parents had full custody. Therefore, adoption was a seriously taken process since there were several steps that had to be taken.

In *Adoption in America: Historical Perspectives*, E. Wayne Carp, who is an expert on legal issues agrees with Grossman in that there is not much information regarding the adoption process in the United States in the nineteenth century. While adoption is a commonly accepted practice today since it is a solution for infertile couples desiring children, in the 19th century,

Americans who had no tradition of adopting nonrelatives were reluctant to permit babies from different class and ethnic backgrounds to reside in their households due to issues with blood claims. Despite the issues with blood claims and a desire to maintain a pure bloodline, families still turned to adoption in the 19th century because motherhood was strongly valued at the time and adoption was a means to attain motherhood. In the Chapter “A Good Home: Indenture and Adoption in Nineteenth-Century Orphanages,” Porter states, “unrelated children could commonly be found as apprentices or indentured servants in nineteenth-century households. In the colonial period, children of all classes generally spent a number of years in homes other than their own learning the skills that would make them productive members of a family economy... but, after the American Revolution, the U.S. economy diversified, and middle-class couples, at least in urban centers on the eastern seaboard, began to conceive of their children more as objects of devotion and sentimental attachment than as potential labor” (Porter, pp. 27). The statement marks a significant transition in thought. The consensus and attitudes toward adoption drastically transformed due to sentimentality. Adoption was no longer viewed as a means to attain fruits of labor through children working as apprentices. Instead, children were presented with the opportunity to integrate properly into the family unit since they were regarded with sentimental attachment. Adoption was no longer viewed as a means of financial profit and labor.

Instead, adoption was viewed in a manner that benefited the children as opposed to the petitioners in the light of establishing a proper family unit. In thinking about the changing attitudes toward adoption, Porter remarks, “adoption was either a means of moving children from unhealthy environments into families that would train them to be productive citizens of the modern state or a means of providing innocent victims of misfortune with the advantages of middle-class family life and a secure future” (Porter, pp. 28). Children such as orphans could not

always be adopted by other relatives, so on the occasions that they were not able to find other family members to reside with, adoption was a way for them to have a secure future. As much as adoption emphasized giving unfortunate children a new start at life, adoption heavily focused on the female since it gave an opportunity for motherhood. Regarding the link between motherhood and adoption, Porter states, “families became willing to go to ever great lengths to fill their ‘empty cradles.’ As a result, poor or illegitimate children whose parents could not maintain them now had the opportunity to grow up in a complete family where they would be loved and provided for” (Porter, pp. 28). Therefore, adoption was beneficial to both the parents and the children since it not only gave a child the security of a home, but in return, also guaranteed a parent the security of motherhood. Adoption laws and welfare policies pertaining to adoption strongly benefited the interests of the children as opposed to the parents. Therefore, parents were not adopting for their own personal gain.

There was a highly romanticized view of adoption. Adoption was expected to “solve the conflict between empathy and opportunity... the adopted child would be treated and educated like a member of the family. The child’s physical and emotional needs would be served, and her parents would consider themselves amply repaid by the pleasure of having a complete family... the expectation was that the child and her new mother and father would live happily and prosperously ever after” (Porter, pp. 37). However, this romanticized view of adoption was not always a reality. The main issue that Porter points out with adoption was that the line between indenture and adoption was not clear. Because indenturing children into families was a problematic system, adoption of children by middle-class families who were willing to show utmost devotion and care for the children was preferred. When children were adopted, they

tended to be older—around the ages of seven or eight. Therefore, it was very unusual for a child to be adopted before the child was six years old (Porter, pp. 37).

While transracial adoption takes place in the story of Pat and Pan since Pan, who is white is adopted into a Chinese family, transracial adoption was not common in the nineteenth century. The kind of transracial adoption portrayed in the story “Pat and Pan” did not take place until the mid-1900s. In *The Future of Children*, “Outcomes of Transracial Adoption,” Arnold R. Silverman writes, “in the United States, the first transracial adoption placements in substantial numbers were of Japanese and Chinese children following World War II” (Silverman, pp. 104). There was a rising trend of Korean children being adopted by Americans in the late 1900s as well as African American children being adopted into white families. While there is research conducted on children of color being adopted into white families, the same cannot be said for the reverse. When scholars point to transracial adoption, they are referring to white families adopting children of color, but not parents of color adopting white children as depicted in “Pat and Pan,” making the adoption in the short story an extremely unusual binary when it comes to understanding transracial adoption.

Moreover, “Pat and Pan” has a unique place in Far’s spectrum of immigration stories. Unlike the short story “In the Land of the Free,” the children have the dominant voices as opposed to the female characters.⁷ Since Pat and Pan are both young and parents are typically the ones controlling the narrative in Far’s earlier short stories, it is an intriguing reversal that Pat and Pan, who are children, are the protagonists in the immigration narrative. There are two racial binaries at play in “Pat and Pan.” The first racial binary is that Pat, a white boy is raised in a

⁷ “Its Wavering Image,” a story that is analyzed later, is a continuation of “Pat and Pan.” The protagonist Pan is the same in both stories. Pan is no longer a child in “Its Wavering Image.”

Chinese family and viewed as an outsider in the family by the missionary woman. The second racial binary is that at the end of the play, the reversal is true. At the conclusion of the story, Pat is no longer the outsider, but Pan becomes the outsider at the missionary school that is full of white children who are ridiculing Pan for trying to speak with Pat. That said, the common thread that links “Pat and Pan” to “In the Land of the Free” is the element of recognition and denial. At the end of “In the Land of the Free,” the young boy seemingly recognizes his mother but bids her farewell and instructs her to go away because he must try to fit into the dominant society and having a foreign mother is of no benefit. In a similar fashion, at the end of “Pat and Pan,” Pat recognizes Pan, but fails to give her a proper greeting because despite being a white boy who grew up in a Chinese family, he is finally fitting into the dominant society. Associating with Pan, who is Eurasian, threatens his new racial identity and his integration into the dominant society.

While there are binaries present in Far’s children literature, the tales of children that she crafts focus less on binaries than Far’s female protagonist literature. Though one story is about the main protagonist being a mother and the other with a main protagonist who is a child, the same elements of confused racial identity as well as colonization are at the hearts of both immigration stories and even though the story is one about children, the complex themes of racial identity and integration are embedded all over “Pat and Pan.” In the article “Empire and the Mind of the Child: Sui Sin Far’s ‘Tales of Chinese Children,’” Martha J. Cutter, a professor at the University of Connecticut, states, “the child is frequently the object of the Empire’s control” (Cutter, pp. 1). After all, in “In the Land of the Free,” the young boy is colonized through the missionary school since by the end of the story, he has somewhat assimilated into the American culture with the imposition of a new name upon him.

Moreover, Cutter poses a statement that is worth pondering over: “critics remain divided as to whether Sui Sin Far’s “Tales of Chinese Children” are in fact stories *for* Chinese children or stories *about* Chinese children” (Cutter, pp. 1). Cutter argues that the stories Far writes with children as the protagonists are both *for* and *about* Chinese children. It is plausible to understand from one angle that the stories are about Chinese children. While the short story “Pat and Pan” does not appear to be straightforwardly didactic on the surface since it does not explicitly state the issues of race and identity that readers should consider as they read the story, the racial tension is laid out in the story. It is up to the readers to parse out the threads of racial complexities, binaries, and ultimately, determine what “fitting” into American society entails. The story is about Chinese children because Far expects her white audience to read the story of “Pat and Pan” and contextualize it to showcase that it is not merely female characters, but also children who are struggling with the confusion surrounding racial identities and feeling alienated from American society due to being of a different racial identity.

Therefore, through “Pat and Pan,” it becomes clear that the racial identity struggle in immigration stories is much larger than the sphere of women and their struggles to carve out their racial and cultural identities in a society that tries to force individuals to abandon their past identity and adopt a completely new one as opposed to accepting both identities. While the stories of children that Far writes are aimed at children as well, they seem to be less *for* Chinese children as they are *for* a white audience. When Far writes the stories of children, her tone is strikingly different from the manner in which she writes stories of female protagonists. Far’s tone is softer and less didactic in nature as she really tries to write from the perspective of a child as opposed to an adult. While an adult female protagonist is highly cognizant of racial hierarchies and power, a child looks to parental figures for instruction. Therefore, they are not as

familiar with structures of power and complexities of racial identities and this sense of unfamiliarity, naivety, and childhood innocence is reflected in her children literature such as “Pat and Pan.” Cutter’s argument that the children’s literature is for both children and adults is plausible. That said, considering Cutter’s emphasis on the division among scholars as to whether Far’s literature is *about* Chinese children or *for* Chinese children, I will argue that Far’s children’s literature is *about* Chinese children that is written *for* a white audience as opposed to being written *for* Chinese children. Far’s children’s literature is *about* Chinese children through the lens of hybridity and gender.

Chapter Four: Gendered Hybridity

“After all I have no nationality and am not anxious to claim any. Individuality is more than nationality. ‘You are you and I am I,’ says Confucius. I give my right hand to the Occidentals and my left to the Orientals, hoping that between them they will not utterly destroy the insignificant ‘connecting link.’”

- Sui Sin Far, “Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of an Eurasian”

In addition to the framework of older female characters as protagonists and the framework of children as protagonists, Far mixes the two frameworks and ultimately, makes girls the protagonists in her short stories in the *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* collection. Hence, the struggles of racial identities and adapting to foreign cultures impacts female protagonists across all age groups. Far’s short story “Its Wavering Image,” is a continuation of the story “Pat and Pan” since the story follows an older Pan, who struggles with her biracial identity and wonders whether she should identify primarily as an Asian female or a white female. Rather than the focus being on girlhood-hybridity, the emphasis shifts to gendered hybridity, which complicates the initial framework. Pan’s search for racial identity is more complex than Pat’s journey. The young Pan from “Pat and Pan” has continued to grow up despite the absence of Pat. Even though Pan is raised in Chinatown, which suggests that she should lean more towards her Asian background, being of both Asian and white ancestry complicates her identity. At the start of “Its Wavering Image,” Pan considers herself to blend into Asian community at Chinatown despite being of a dual heritage, or hybrid identity. It is only when Mark Carson questions her about her dual identity does Pan begin having doubts about what it means to be half white and half Chinese and live in San Francisco’s Chinatown all her life. Does she fit in the space? After all, her racial hybrid identity is a strange one to have in Chinatown. While San Francisco is a very white space

in America, Chinatown is a very Asian space and Chinatown as a space is not full of people like Pan who are racial hybrids.

At the beginning of the story, Pan's uncomfortableness around white people is conveyed. Far writes, "as to Pan, she always turned from whites. With her father's people she was natural and at home; but in the presence of her mother's she felt strange and constrained, shrinking from their curious scrutiny as she would from the sharp edge of a sword" (Far, pp. 582). Pan identifies with her Asian background at the start of "Pat and Pan" partly because her mother passed away when she was young, so she was primarily raised by her Chinese father, who crafted her Asian identity. Pan herself does not quite understand that outsiders of Chinatown and even those within Chinatown view her as a hybrid character due to her white and Asian identities. Instead, Pan views herself as an Asian woman living in Chinatown, failing to see that it is her white identity that makes her different from the other Chinese individuals living in Chinatown since she has grown up in Chinatown since she was a child. Having been raised in solely Chinatown all her life, Pan finds her white identity to be a foreign one.

In addition to the framework of gender, which Far is well known for transforming in her immigration literature, Far's "Its Wavering Image" also explores the complications surrounding the framework of racial hybridity. It is not until Pan encounters Mark Carson, someone who ultimately becomes her first white friend, that the confusion surrounding racial hybridity comes to light. Race is not stable. If race was stable, Pan would not have questioned her hybrid identity to the extent that she does. Space and the invention of a new space play a critical role in the formation and understanding of racial identity. The importance of space is depicted in Far's "Its Wavering Image." From Carson's perspective, Pan is an outsider in a Chinese space such as Chinatown because she is not fully Chinese. To Carson, it is problematic that a woman who is

not fully Chinese, but instead, a hybrid individual is living in a Chinese space and identifies as a Chinese woman. Regarding Pan's confusing yet fluid identity, Carson wonders aloud as he states, "he asked some questions concerning the girl who had puzzled him. What was she? Chinese or white?" (Far, pp. 582). As a white man, Carson is perplexed by Pan, who appears neither fully white nor Chinese since mixed individuals were not a common sight during Carson's time. Despite the dissatisfaction with the convergence of the two racial identities, Carson is struck by the fluidity of Pan's nature. Carson's acceptance into the Chinese community is depicted as Far writes, "the Water Lily Club opened its doors to him when she knocked, and the Sublimely Pure Brothers' organization admitted him as one of its honorary members, thereby enabling him not only to see but to take part in a ceremony in which no American had ever before participated" (Far, pp. 583). Carson finds it appealing that Pan can serve as a kind of portal into the Asian culture and Chinatown despite not being fully Chinese. He recognizes that without Pan's presence, he would not have received such a warm welcoming as a white male. Thus, Carson realizes that there are advantages to having a hybrid identity because it allows for fluidity. Pan's fluid identity allows her to camouflage herself and travel to different spaces without individuals native to that community questioning her identity.

While hybridity is portrayed in "Pat and Pan," the story is limited because gender is not explored. In "Pat and Pan," there is a female character, Anna Harrison who is the dominating figure, but in "Its Wavering Image," the dominant figure is a male character. Gender and hybridity are tightly interwoven in Far's "Its Wavering Image." Hybridity is gendered. It is no coincidence that Far develops the immigration narrative from focusing on gender to shifting the focus to racial hybridity in her later works. In "Its Wavering Image," it is not a male protagonist struggling with hybridity, but instead, a female character. Pan is not only having to deal with

racial dynamic issues that stem from residing in a white space, but also the struggles that come with living in a patriarchal society. While hybridity is typically understood from a transcultural and racial perspective, hybridity is less commonly understood through a gendered lens. Some questions to consider when thinking about hybridity are, how does hybridity affect females differently than males? In considering the many angles of hybridity, how does gender hybridity tie in with other forms of hybridity such as the transcultural?

To understand the link between hybridity and gender, it is important to highlight gendered identities through feminist theory. One of the most critical figures of feminist theory is Simone De Beauvoir. De Beauvoir states, “one is not born, but rather becomes, a woman” (De Beauvoir, pp. 267). The statement shows that like race, the differences between sexes is not biological, but based on cultural and social influences. Like racial hybridity, the suggestion is that gender is a construct as well and ideas of femininity and masculinity are ingrained within individuals based on what society says. The experiences of female characters in Far’s stories all have vastly different experiences despite that they are telling stories of immigration and the struggles with assimilation. The story “In the Land of the Free” is not quite as layered since the main issues dealt with are language barriers, family structures, and gender and there is no mention of racial hybridity. The stories of “Pat and Pan” as well as “Its Wavering Image” are significantly more layered and complicate the immigration story landscape. The constructions of gender vary from individual to individual. The experiences of Pan as a child v. Pan as an adult are significantly different. In “Pat and Pan,” Pan deals with issues of girlhood and the construction of identity, or the intersection between hybridity and girlhood. In “Its Wavering Image,” Pan is no longer a child, but a woman, and the focus shifts to gendered hybridity in the quest of trying to find a fixed racial identity. While Pan is conscious of racial differences as a

child, she is unable to communicate what she is seeing in an intelligible manner whereas when she is a young adult, she can express her views on race and gender in an intelligible way.

That said, Carson is still insistent that Pan is white and not Asian despite her racial hybridity. Carson tries to convince Pan to adopt her white side and abandon her Asian background. Carson tells Pan, “you do not belong here. You are white–white” (Far, pp. 583). In response, Pan remarks, “I was born here... the Chinese people look upon me as their own” (Far, pp. 583). Carson tries to reinforce Pan’s white identity. The racial situation here mirrors the situation in “Pat and Pan” since there is a white outsider telling the protagonist which racial identity to adopt. In “Pat and Pan,” the missionary woman tells Pat to accept his white identity fully despite that he has been raised in a Chinese community. Pat’s situation reflects that race is not biological. Instead, race and the construction of racial identities are social constructs. When Pat leaves Chinatown to attend missionary school, factors such as the environment along with the people in the environment he is immersed in convince Pat to completely accept only his white identity. Had Pat remained in Chinatown and continued to associate and socialize with only Chinese people, he would have retained his Chinese identity. This is because there would not have been other extraneous factors such as a new environment that are brainwashing him into accepting a completely new identity. However, the environment of prejudice that Pat grew up in impacted his perception of race. Therefore, he ultimately accepts the identity of the dominant race without question, whereas Pan can be resilient and not abandon her Chinese identity. Though the two are raised in the same household, their experiences of race greatly differ because Pan is a hybrid character while Pat is fully ethnically white.

Political Cartoon of Uncle Sam

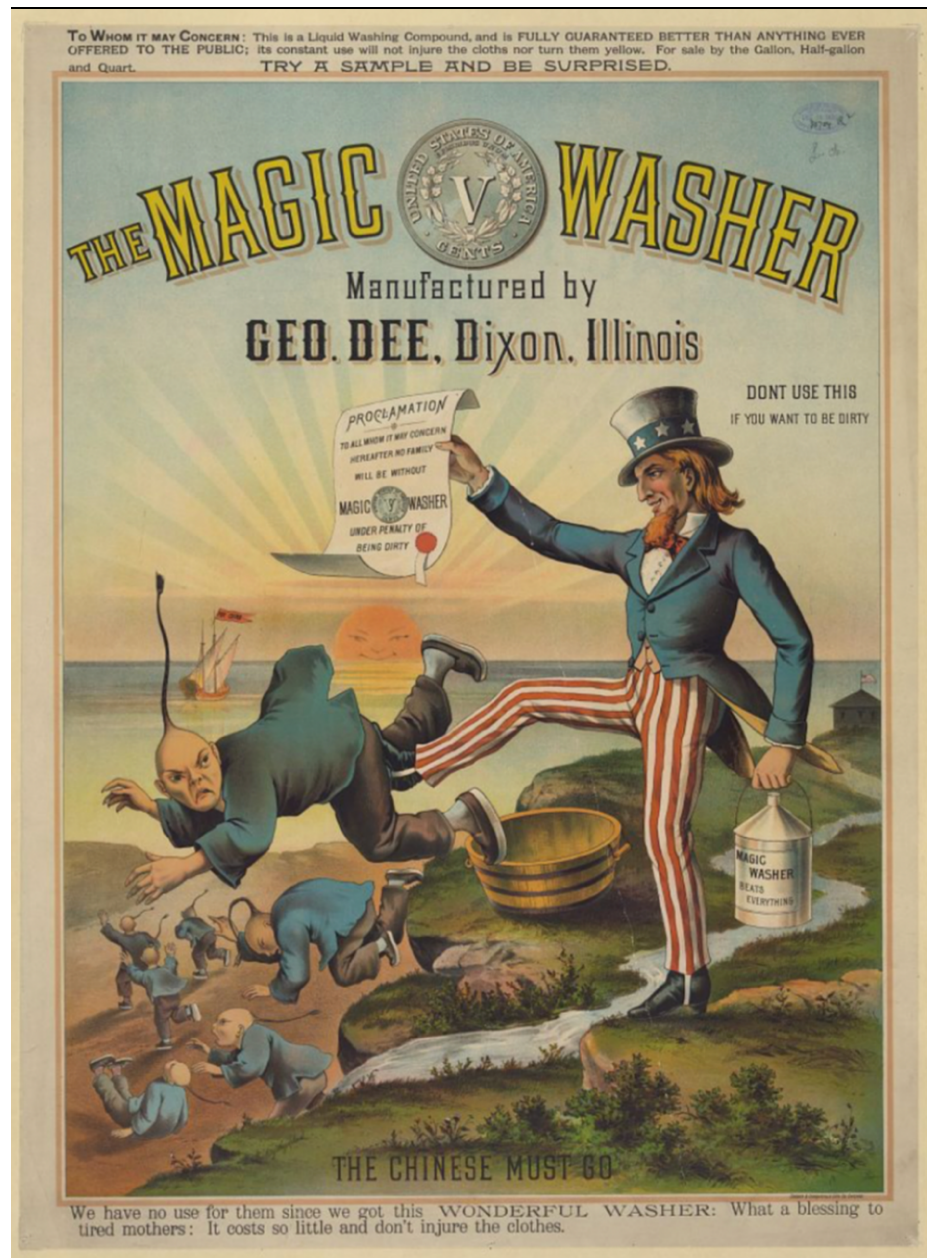


Figure 2⁸

Geo. Dee, Dixon, Illinois' *The Magic Washer* (1886)

⁸ Shober & Carqueville. *The magic washer, manufactured by Geo. Dee, Dixon, Illinois. The Chinese must go*. Chicago: Shober & Carqueville Lith Co. Photograph. Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <www.loc.gov/item/93500013/>.

The situation that Pan is experiencing is represented in an Uncle Sam political cartoon. In addition to the Anti-East Asian sentiment that was widespread in Europe, the disdain towards East Asians was equally as prevalent in the United States. The lithographs and posters from the United States that showcased the “Yellow Peril” commonly depicted Uncle Sam, who was supposed to be a symbol of patriotism. One of the common cartoons seen in the United States that highlighted the “Yellow Peril” is known as *The Magic Washer* which is dated 1886, shortly after the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act of May 6, 1882. In the image depicted above, Uncle Sam, who is a national personification of the United States is the focal point. Uncle Sam resorts to violence. Uncle Sam is kicking a Chinese immigrant off the cliff with his right leg while the Chinese immigrants who have already been kicked out are running in the opposite direction of the United States. Uncle Sam is carrying a can of Magic Washer in his left hand while he is holding a Proclamation that states “To all whom it may concern hereafter no family will be without Magic Washer under penalty of being dirty.” The statement is followed by the phrase that “The Chinese Must Go” along with the statement that “We have no use for them since we got this Wonderful Washer...” on the bottom of the image.

The phrase “we have no use for them” reveals that the Chinese are viewed as the Other instead of as humans who are deserving of the right to immigrate to foreign lands. The Chinese are viewed as merely laborers who work for the benefit of whites in the United States. The company is promoting the Magic Washer and their advertisement is problematic because it is adopting an extremely hostile, demeaning, and violent attitude towards Chinese immigrants. Uncle Sam is literally kicking the Chinese immigrants off the cliff and out of the United States because they are no longer needed in the country since the Magic Washer is an effective laundry product to clean clothes with. The Chinese immigrants are no longer needed for the manual labor

of washing clothes. The wooden bucket that is depicted in the center states the phrase that “The Chinese Must Go.”

There is also an interesting gender dynamic at play in the cartoon that is worth pondering over. All the Chinese workers in the image are male. The absence of female Chinese laborers shows that very few Chinese women were immigrating to the United States, which signifies the patriarchal nature of Chinese society. The absence of Chinese women can also be explained with the passage of the Page Law, which did not allow East Asian women to enter the United States. Though the act was implemented to stop Chinese prostitutes from immigrating to the United States, the implementation of the Page Act made it difficult for all Chinese women to immigrate because it was difficult to discern whether someone was a prostitute. Chinese immigration is therefore a man’s world. Hence, since Chinese women are largely invisible in the stories of Chinese immigration, the work of Far is significant since her stories have mainly women as protagonists.

In the cartoon, Uncle Sam has an evil grin and is dressed in patriotic clothing with a hat with stars on it as well as red and white pinstriped pants; he is decked out in red, white, and blue. He appears very well dressed and polished while the Chinese immigrants who are being kicked out are dressed in dirty working clothes. The difference in clothing signals the class difference between the Chinese immigrants and Westerners and support the prevailing thought at the time that Chinese immigrants will not be successful economically and socially in the United States because they are viewed as the Other. The sun is smirking at the sight of Chinese immigrants being forced out of the country. There is a house with an American flag on the far-right side that Uncle Sam is guarding, which shows that American territory is off limits to foreigners. The hostility towards East Asians is further amplified by the boat on the far left that reads “For

China.” Their forced removal is an indication that Chinese laborers were only in the United States for the benefits of whites and once they no longer produce fruits of labor, they are easily discarded. The image exhibits no sense of sympathy and compassion for Chinese laborers. In comparison to the drawing from Europe, the cartoon from the United States of Uncle Sam has no religious undertones. Nonetheless, the cartoon with Uncle Sam also reflects the Anti-East Asian sentiment in the United States following the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and represents that Chinese labor is unwanted in the United States and that Chinese individuals do not belong in the United States. Far’s literature is revolutionary during this period that emphasized Anti-Asian sentiment along with the concept of the “Yellow Peril” because her writing with a focus on female protagonists invokes a sense of sympathy for Chinese immigrants amongst the inflammatory language and imagery showcased in cartoons and drawings spreading throughout Europe and the United States.

The Uncle Sam political cartoon is applicable to the story of “Pat and Pan.” Carson is Uncle Sam. Pan represents the Chinese immigrant workers. While Pam is not being physically attacked like Uncle Sam is kicking the Chinese workers out of the country in the political cartoon, Carson is attacking Pam in a more subtle, yet equally derogatory way. Since even those who express Anti-Asian sentiment would be outraged at the sight of a male kicking a woman, Carson uses language to try to control Pan instead. Carson telling Pan that she is white and trying to force her to reject her Asian identity is the the equivalent of the control that Uncle Sam exerts by kicking the workers. As a white outsider, Carson, is telling Pan to accept her white identity despite that she has grown up in a Chinese community all her life and barely knows her mother’s culture. The major difference that makes it easier for Pat to accept a white identity is that Pan is of a racial hybrid background whereas Pat is fully white. Racial hybridity is confusing because

the way an individual perceives themselves is different from how others, or outsiders perceive them. Because Pat looks and is fully white by blood, he doesn't have much difficulty being a part of the American society and thus, fully rejects his former Chinese identity. On the other hand, Pan does not quite pass as Asian nor white, so she cannot be easily accepted into the American society as Pat is and therefore, cannot reject her Chinese identity as easily as Pan does. These two differing instances showcase that race is not biological, but a social construct dependent upon environmental factors that the protagonists in both "Its Wavering Image" and "Pat and Pan" learn and internalize.

Moreover, Dorothy Roberts' *Fatal Invention: How Science, Politics, and Big Business Re-Create Race in the Twenty-First Century* disagrees with Painter in that race is neither social nor biological. Instead, Roberts discusses race as a human invention that is political rather than social or biological. Roberts writes, "like citizenship, race is a political system that governs people by sorting them into social groupings based on invented biological demarcations. Race is not only interpreted according to invented rules, but more important, race itself is an invented political grouping... it is a political category that has been disguised as a biological one" (Roberts, pp. 4). Roberts is stating that it is incorrect to state that race is a social construct because to say that race is not real means that it has no meaning within society. Roberts advocates for understanding race as a political construct rather than as a social construct because separating people from one another and creating a difference in structures of power gives race meaning. Race stems from its impact on peoples' lives as well as the society we live in.

Carson insists that Pan must pick one identity instead of accepting a hybrid identity. Carson attempts to fragment Pan's identity as he states, "Your real self is alien to them... Pan, don't you see that you have got to decide what you will be—Chinese or white? You cannot be

both” (Far, pp. 584). Carson is imposing upon Pan’s racial identity, persuading her to choose one racial identity instead of opting to have one main identity—her Chinese identity—in the forefront and her other identity—as white—in the background. Like the missionary woman in “Pat and Pan,” Carson is essentially trying to impose a new identity upon the protagonist despite that Pan views herself as Chinese rather than white because all she knows is Chinatown. Again, race is a social construct because Pan maintains her Chinese identity since Chinatown is her home since she has lived there all her life and the only people she interacts with are those who reside in the Chinese community. If an alternative situation was portrayed in which Pan grew up in a suburban town in Idaho and her social group was predominantly white friends, despite being of a hybrid identity, she would most certainly identify as white rather than Chinese. Therefore, the experiences of Pat and Pan and Carson’s attempt at trying to force Pan to adopt the white identity reinforce that race is not biological, but a social construction. Carson’s attempt to convert Pan is all about power and domination much like how the colonialists destroyed the native’s way of life. Carson is trying to destroy Pan’s way of life.

Double Consciousness and Racial Hybridity

In addition to making the protagonists of her stories female, Far transforms immigration literature by introducing the hybridity as well as racial consciousness through the lens of gender in her stories. Carson’s attempt to convert Pan to accept her white identity and reject her Chinese identity is reminiscent of W.E.B. Du Bois’ concept of double consciousness. In this interaction with Carson, Pan is experiencing double consciousness with the confusion around her race in a dominant white culture. In explaining double consciousness in *The Souls of Black Folk*, W.E.B. Du Bois writes, “It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at oneself through the eyes of others, of measuring one’s soul by the tape of a world that

looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his two-ness,—an American, a (Black); two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder” (Du Bois, pp.). Du Bois is describing an internal conflict taking place within the individual; there is a two-ness or state of double consciousness at play because there are “two warring ideals” within the African American individual. While the African American individual wants to feel at peace with his identity, the African American feels an internal conflict while living in an oppressive society with multiple social identities. One identity is attempting to assert dominance over the other, so the two identities cannot exist in a state of tranquility and harmony. The competing social identities—American and African American—make it difficult for an individual to understand one’s true self. In a similar fashion, Pan is also facing the challenges and obstacles surrounding the concept of double consciousness. While she wants to be proud of her hybrid identity and accept her white and Chinese identities, instead the two identities become “two warring ideals” as Carson is insisting that she must choose one identity: the white one. Racial hybridity is not a stable identity because other individuals try to convince those of racial hybridity to pick one.

The third space threatens power structures in society because it is a space that is different from both the threat from the dominant as well as the Other. An identity stemming from racial hybridity such as the one that Pan has can be looked at in a favorable light because it allows her to move around in different spaces, or move around in the third space, where she is not so defined. In the third space, Pan is not confined to the white space nor is she tied to the Asian space, so she has the freedom and power to move—or pass—between racial identities and live in both communities should she choose to do so. Eaton describes the same kind of in-between state and the possibility of a third space in her autobiography. Eaton writes, “so I roam backward and

forward across the continent. When I am East, my heart is West. When I am West, my heart is East. Before long I hope to be in China. As my life began in my father's country it may end in my mother's" ("Letters from the Mental Portfolio of an Eurasian," pp. 7).

Hybrid consciousness allows Pan to pass as either white or Asian under differing circumstances due to her racially ambiguous appearance. Upon meeting Carson for dinner, Pan is asked, "why do you wear that dress," to which she responds, "Because I am a Chinese woman." (Far, pp. 586). Carson is bothered that the dress that Pan is wearing is a traditional Chinese outfit as opposed to an American dress. Since Carson thinks that Pan is a white girl, he believes that it is not proper for her to be wearing traditional Chinese attire. In stating "I am a Chinese woman," Pan is asserting her Chinese identity, rejecting her hybrid identity, and lastly, rejecting Carson's attempt to convert her into a white woman. In stating that she will identify as a Chinese woman, Pan is not falling into trap of the patriarchal set of male-centered standards. Her ultimate rejection of the white identity at the end of the story represents the pinnacle of female resilience when it comes to understanding gender hybridity. Pan can fully break away from Carson's spell and hold her own ground as a Chinese woman. While Pan could have passed as white in the dominant society due to her appearance, she elects not to and instead, stands for the Chinese community that she has known all her life.

Fanon's "On National Culture"

The struggles of Pat in "Pat and Pan" and Pan in "Its Wavering Image" are reminiscent of Fanon's "On National Culture" from *The Wretched of the Earth* dated 1960, which is after the period that Far wrote.⁹ There are questions regarding Fanon that must be considered. What is Fanon's definition of national culture? What does Fanon argue about colonialism and how can

⁹ Far passed away in 1914 in Montreal, Canada.

his theory on national culture be applied to Far's immigration stories? What is the relationship between national culture and freedom? *The Wretched of the Earth* describes the three stages the colonized individual experiences. The first stage is about the colonized attempting to adopt the practices and culture of its colonizer to "assimilate the culture of the occupying power" (Fanon, pp. 40). The second stage stands in opposition to the first stage because the colonized resists adopting the culture of its colonizer. The resistance of the colonized stems because "the native is disturbed; he decides to remember what he is" (Fanon, pp. 40).

The final stage is synonymous with the fighting phase. In the third stage, the colonized exemplifies a sense of agency by fighting against its oppressors—the colonizer—to develop a sense of nationhood independent of that of the colonizers. While Fanon's theory was written in the context of national culture, cultural independence and independent territory, his theory is applicable to Far's writings. Fanon's theory can also be understood under the umbrella of people of color, race and the culture of the marginalized. Fanon considers the challenges of formulating an authoritative national culture beyond the legacy of colonialism. Fanon notes that colonialism destroyed the ability to revert to a pre-colonial national identity (if there ever was one) as "[colonialism] is not satisfied merely with hiding a people in its grip and emptying the native's brain of all form and content" (Fanon, pp. 37). Fanon is arguing that the colonial mindset disables freed nations of the ability to formulate a national culture outside of their colonial history. Fanon defends fighting for freedom as the determinate approach to operate outside of the colonial authority to create a national culture. The national culture is trapped in the colonial enterprise. Will the national culture be a cog in a modern imperial machine? While Pan does not create a nation, Fanon's theory on national culture is pertinent to the story of "Its Wavering Image." Pan is not a cog in a machine. Pan has the potential to create a kind of third space

through the recognition of racial hybridity and ultimate rejection of the oppressor. She experiences all three of Fanon's stages.

Racial identity can be explained through stages in Fanon's national culture theory. Pan's initial compliance with Carson such as dressing in American clothes to please him resembles the first stage of Fanon's theory on national culture since she is adopting the practices of the white individual. After Carson sings to her, he tells her "Look up at me... Oh, Pan! Pan! Those tears prove that you are white. Pan lifted her wet face" (Far, "Its Wavering Image"). Then, Pan kisses him after he tells her "Kiss me, Pan" (Far, "Its Wavering Image"). The kiss is symbolic because it represents that her white identity has overpowered and replaced her Chinese identity. Pan is assimilating into white society. However, Pan experiences the second stage next in which she resists the colonizer. Far writes that Pan had let him "carelessly sung her heart away, and with her kiss upon his lips, had smilingly turned and stabbed her" (Far, "Its Wavering Image"). Pan recognizes that the kiss was wrong on her part and that she will not assimilate into white society. Pan refuses to wear American dress and instead, states that she will be fully clothed in Chinese clothes that are reflective of her Chinese identity. This second stage stands in contrast to the first stage. Pan shows a complete break away in the final stage of Fanon's theory. Pan manages to make it to the third stage because she "fights" Carson. She decides to create her own identity apart from the oppressor, Carson and makes her ultimate break away from Carson. She defines her identity as one in which she is proud of her Chinese background. Pan is finally free. The third stage takes place when Pan states, "I would not be a white woman for all the world. You are a white man. And what is a promise to a white man!" (Far, "Its Wavering Image"). Pan's past, present, and future blend among each other. Despite Carson's initial spell over her, Pan makes

sure that her future is not bleak, but revolutionary. Experiencing a great awakening, Pan runs back to the Chinese community and East Asian culture she has known all her life.

In “On National Culture,” Fanon writes, “colonialism is not satisfied merely with hiding its people in its grip... it turns to the past of the oppressed people, and distorts, disfigures, and destroys it... and that the total result looked for by colonial domination was indeed to convince the natives that colonialism came to lighten their darkness” (Fanon, pp. 37). In this statement, Fanon is illustrating that the colonialists destroyed the native people’s way of life. Carson is attempting to distort and destroy Pan’s previous way of life. Carson does not ask Pan what it is that she wants, but instead, tells her that identifying as a Chinese woman is wrong and that she must identify as white. Carson is telling Pan that the Chinese identity she wants is wrong and that he is helping and ultimately saving her by commanding her to accept the white identity. In a typical immigration narrative, figures such as Pan would have no voice and would not be listened to, but in “Its Wavering Image,” Carson is unable to continue unafflicted because Pan is a figure of agency. While Pan encounters all three stages and rejects the colonizer, Pat has a vastly different experience in “Pat and Pan.” Pat only experiences the first stage Fanon describes. He does not make it to the second and third stages because he elects to “assimilate the culture of the occupying power,” as Fanon states. Once he experiences life alongside other white individuals, Pat chooses to abandon his Chinese background and only interacts with the white community. While Pan is a figure of resistance, the same cannot be said for Pat, who is unable to resist the dominant power.

Furthermore, Far writes in “Its Wavering Image” that “all this Mark Carson’s clear eyes perceived, and with delicate tact and subtlety he taught the young girl that, all unconscious until his coming, she had lived her life alone. So well did she learn this lesson that it seemed at times

as if her white self must entirely dominate and trample under foot her Chinese” (Far, “Its Wavering Image”). Carson is attempting to mold Pan into a subservient figure who willingly embraces a white identity under his effort to condition her to think that being a white individual is a superior identity. That said, Pan refuses to fit into the mold of subservience. Pan takes a stance against Carson and is unwilling to comply with his agenda to make her fit into American society considering that she feels the most sense of security in her hometown, Chinatown. While Pat accepts his white identity in “Pat and Pan,” once the missionary woman comes along, Pan is a symbol of resistance and agency. She does not ask someone else what her identity should be. Pan does not turn to her parents nor to her sibling, who identifies as white, to inquire about her hybrid identity. By the end of the story, Pan is proud, as opposed to confused and ashamed of her Chinese identity. Despite that there is the outside influence of Carson, Pan manages to fully control the narrative of the story as a female protagonist and ultimately possesses the agency to conclude on her own terms that she is Chinese as opposed to white.

Gender and Racial Hybridity: gendered hybridity

The moment of female agency in “Pat and Pan” is when the female voice in “Pat and Pan” comes to light. Pan states that she will not identify as a white woman. After asserting her Chinese identity, Pan further claims, “I would not be a white woman for all the world” (Far, pp. 586). Rather than being a passive figure and continuing to struggle with her hybrid identity and adopt Carson’s mindset that she is a white woman, Pan fights for her Chinese identity. Pan has enough agency to break through the struggles of double consciousness and fight for the identity that she has known all along growing up despite Carson’s attempts to convert her. The outcome of Pat “Its Wavering Image” is drastically different from Pan in “Pat and Pan” because of double consciousness and hybridity. In “Pat and Pan,” as a white individual, Pat converts so easily from

upholding his Chinese identity to embracing a white identity because he does not experience the struggles of having two warring identities within him. Therefore, he feels no sense of loyalty to his identity growing up. On the other hand, despite being of a dual identity due to racial hybridity, Pan feels that her loyalty lies with the Chinese community and the space she is well integrated into rather than venturing into a third space. Far transforms the genre of immigration literature in "Its Wavering Image" because the protagonist, who is a female character, has the agency to overcome both the obstacles of girlhood-hybridity and gendered hybridity. When Carson tries to challenge her acceptance of racial hybridity, Far rejects the third space within racial hybridity. Far identifies with the identity that is not the dominant, but the "other." Thus, gendered hybridity has power in a patriarchal society since the female protagonist is resistant.

In Far's "Its Wavering Image," the physical boundaries of space are clear with the distinction of Chinatown located in the very white city of San Francisco. Even in "Pat and Pan," the racial boundaries are clear since Pan is not allowed to interact with the white boys at the missionary school and is instead, left to only spend time with Anna Harrison. In Far's "In the Land of the Free," there still are clear racial boundaries since the immigration officer at the beginning of the story is hesitant to let the protagonist and her family enter the United States together because they do not possess the proper paperwork for the child. It is challenge enough to navigate one's racial identity in settings where the physical boundaries are clearly laid out and racialized immigration laws are enforced. The task of figuring out one's racial identity remains an equally difficult task in situations and communities where the physical boundaries are absent and immigration laws are deracialized as they were in the mid 1900s.

Epilogue

“I have come from a race on my mother’s side which is said to be the most stolid and insensible to feeling of all races, yet I look back over the years and see myself so keenly alive to every shade of sorrow and suffering that is almost pain to live”

- Sui Sin Far, “Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of an Eurasian”

Completing this thesis was an illuminating experience because it took me on a completely different journey than I expected. When writing papers for classes, there is a clear structure for the introduction and the body paragraphs. The conclusion wraps up well and the arc of the paper typically goes as initially planned. There are not too many loose ends and questions left over when the paper is complete. This thesis made me rethink the entire process of writing and showed me the challenges of writing a two-semester research paper. Writing does not always follow the initial agenda set forth. When I first started writing the thesis, I thought that it would focus on gender in immigration stories. However, the framework became much more complicated as I thought more deeply about the issues tied to race.

I took the American Studies Seminar class with Professor Gac this Spring. The class really challenged the ways I think about race as well as the construction of race in society and race as a political rather than a social construct. As a result of that class, I became interested in exploring the link between female protagonists and agency alongside race. I decided to explore race in addition to gender in my thesis work and unexpectedly ended up delving into the postcolonial theory framework of hybridity, which manifested into an in-depth examination of hybridity through multiple lenses: racial hybridity, gendered hybridity, and girlhood-hybridity. While my original intent was to solely focus on cultural hybridity and weave in gender throughout, my thesis ended up at a drastically different point than I intended.

When I began writing my thesis, my intent was to focus only on female agency. I wanted to explore the concept of females as strong characters in immigration literature through a binary lens. By the conclusion of this thesis, however, hybridity and the different kinds of hybridity beyond just the societal and transcultural realms have become crucial parts at the heart of this thesis. Writing this thesis has shown me the power of outlining. There were so many outlines that I created. While I had a vision for my thesis ending up a certain way with all the questions I initially posed answered, it did not end up that way. By the end of this thesis, I realized that Far is not writing solely about gender, but about spaces and how gender functions in spaces. Hybridity complicates space. The work of Sui Sin Far results in the creation of many kinds of third spaces. One example of a third space she creates is a third space that fuses the fictional space with the space of reality. Though the stories she writes are fictional, they are real in the sense that they portray the realities of everyday hardships of Chinese immigrants. Far successfully manages to fuse the two spaces.

Through the creation of the third space, Far makes readers sympathetic and compassionate toward the hardships of immigration despite the widespread anti-Asian rhetoric at the time. The third space Far transforms is intersectionality. Sui Sin Far is a pioneer among Asian American authors because her immigration stories break away from racial and gender stereotypes. Her writing creates a third space for racial hybridity. Far gave a voice to Chinese immigrants when Anglo-American literature at the time portrayed them in a negative light and a threat to American society. Far's stories provide more context to understand Chinese history beyond the harsh immigration laws enforced in the United States. In short, Far is a "deus ex machina, a divine figure that enters from outside the narrative's internal structure; she is a ghost that haunts the story's scripted possibilities offering everything they might desire" (Song).

While I studied the racial, gendered, and girlhood aspects of hybridity through this thesis, many questions about the intersection among race and hybridity and gender remain. After completing the thesis, I am still left with questions about the intersectionality pertaining to race, gender, identity, and age. While I attempted to answer the questions I posed, the questions still do not remain fully answered. The question of why childhood is not gendered remains unanswered. Why is girlhood not a term used in Asian culture? What are the limits of binaries and hybridity and how do the two work together when crafting identity? Hybridity is all around us and can be approached from multiple angles. Why is it that scholars tend to focus heavily on cultural hybridity and the cultural landscape as opposed to other forms of hybridity? I attempted to answer these questions throughout the process of writing this thesis, but the questions are not fully answered. The scholarship on gendered hybridity as well as girlhood were largely absent, which made it difficult to write parts of the thesis. The thesis made me think deeply about the connection between gender and space and what it means to be a woman of a hybrid identity in a space that is dominantly white.

The works of Sui Sin Far demonstrate that identity is not fixed. Identity is fluid throughout different spaces and people can change and adopt new identities that are different from the one they had during their upbringing. Still, I do not have an answer as to why it is that gendered hybridity remains largely ignored in scholarly research when gender is fluid just as culture is. While scholars are fascinated by the changes in culture, not enough research has been done on the alteration of female identities. Although Far's works emphasize race and racial hybridity and differences in racial identities, her ultimate vision was unity. Far envisioned a world in which there were more people of racial hybridity that she could relate to. In Far's autobiography, she writes, "Fundamentally, I muse, people are all the same... only when the

whole world becomes as one family with human beings be able to see clearly and hear distinctly. I believe that someday a great part of the world will be Eurasian. I cheer myself with the thought that I am but a pioneer” (“Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of an Eurasian,” pp. 3).

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