

“I AM—I AM A CHINESE”: THE DEATH OF PLURAL IDENTITIES IN MRS SPRING FRAGRANCE

JOANNA GAO

ABSTRACT: Amidst the ubiquitous racist discourse of the nineteenth century, Sui Sin Far emerged as a pioneering Asian American writer, dedicating her life to writing fiction, essays, and journalistic articles that combatted anti-Chinese sentiment. Situated in the complex nexus of racial, religious, and socio-economic tensions, her short story collection *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* (1912) illustrates the collision between Chinese efforts to preserve their cultural traditions and Western assimilatory forces. While few scholars have commented on the role of children in *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*, this essay draws attention to this neglected subject, arguing that Sui Sin Far represents children as malleable, organic sites for anti-Chinese authorities to reinforce constructions of singular identity. Within a nation that holds no place for the existence of the “un-American,” how do the malleable bodies of children fall victim to singularity? Coupled with Amartya Sen’s identity theory, this essay features the deconstruction of three short stories—“In the Land of the Free,” “Pat and Pan,” and “The Wavering Image”—and their characters’ grappling with divergent versus singular affiliations.

Chinese civilization is “a besotted perversity”—a “disgustful... booby nation” comprised of a people of “cheerless... stupidity” (Emerson 224 qtd. Gyory 17).

Those were the inscribed words of Ralph Waldo Emerson in 1824. Sharing this sentiment, travel journalist Bayard Taylor wrote, in 1855, in one of the most popularly quoted passages of the era: “The Chinese are, morally, the most debased people on the face of the earth... [with a] depravity so shocking and horrible that their character cannot even be hinted... Their touch is pollution” (Taylor 354 qtd. Gyory 17). In all their racist iniquity, Emerson and Taylor voiced the prevailing American opinion of the Chinese in the nineteenth century. These visceral racist images sustained themselves as fuel for the nativist Progressive era and bled into the following century.

Residing in California and Washington between 1900 and 1910, Chinese North American author Sui Sin Far¹ (Chinese: 水仙花; pinyin: *Shuǐ Xiān Huā*) witnessed firsthand the travesties of the Chinese as grossly unassimilable and “fundamentally un-American” subjects in the eyes of white people (Chapman 975;

¹ Edith Maude Eaton [1865-1914] consistently wrote under the pseudonym Sui Sin Far in her correspondences and publications. In the Broadview Editions of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*, Hsuan L. Hsu mistranslates Eaton’s pen name as “Water Lily.” Sui Sin Far in actuality refers to the Cantonese name for *Narcissus tazetta*, or the perennial ornamental plant more commonly known as daffodils. Hsu most likely conflates daffodils’ other name “Chinese Sacred Lily” with an entirely different botanical species, “water lilies.”

Gyory 5). Political and religious discourses in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries racialized the Chinese in terms of their innate moral and physical impurity and the menace they posed to white American society. Deeply afflicted by such bigotry, Sui Sin Far dedicated her life to writing fiction, essays, and journalistic articles that combatted anti-Chinese racism, establishing herself as one of the pioneering voices for the Chinese experience in North America. Notably, her collection of short stories titled *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* (1912) sympathizes with the domestic struggles of Chinese women and children, a community of “impossible subjects”² “working and waiting, living, learning, fighting, failing, [and] loving” amidst vicious campaigns to erase their personhood (Ngai 5; Sui Sin Far³ 169). Sui Sin Far’s engagement with the nuanced and heterogeneous experiences amongst the inhabitants of San Francisco’s Chinatown situates the text in the complex nexus of racial, religious, and socio-economic tensions. Many of her published stories illustrate the collision between Chinese efforts to preserve their cultural traditions and Western assimilatory forces.

While Hsuan L. Hsu notes that few scholars have commented on the role of children in *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*, this essay draws attention to that neglected subject, arguing that Sui Sin Far represents children as malleable, organic sites for anti-Chinese authorities to reinforce constructions of singular identity (Sui Sin Far 15). She further suggests that the Chinese American individual’s ultimate failure to negotiate plural identities stems from the historical reality in which Americanizing forces completely determine the characters’ cultural affiliation. Consequently, within a nation that cannot conceive of “divergent loyalties,” Sui Sin Far’s characters utilize explicit verbal utterances of “singular affiliation” as the sole means by which they can resist the imperialist endangerment of Chinese culture (Sen 20).

1. “Anti-Chinese Litany”

While xenophobic stereotypes of the “Chinaman” were in pervasive circulation in the nineteenth century, the negative representations alone did not produce active political efforts to bar Chinese immigrants from entry into the United States. Images of the Chinese as “almond-eyed, spindle-legged,” and “yellow-skinned” certainly engendered a climate conducive to exclusion, but they were not sufficient to cause it (qtd. in Gyory 18). To trace causation, Andrew Gyory indicts national politicians from both Republican and Democratic parties as the “vanguard of the anti-Chinese campaign” (Hill 46 qtd. Gyory 11). The Gilded Age witnessed “an era of almost perfectly balanced party strength,” and in the

² The term “impossible subjects” was coined by Mae M. Ngai. She argues that immigration restriction—the Chinese Exclusion Act in the context of this paper—“produced the illegal alien as a *new legal and political subject*, whose inclusion within the nation was simultaneously a social reality and legal impossibility—a subject barred from citizenship and without rights” (Ngai 4).

³ Many critics have erroneously cited “Far” as the author’s last name, but according to Chinese nominal construction, Sui Sin Far is a mononym that can only take on meaning as a whole. Thus, the rest of the paper will continue to display her entire name as the in-text citation.

presidential battle for votes, politicians distorted and manipulated the reality of Chinese immigration to placate working-class voters (Gyory 15). The “yellow man” thus became the late-nineteenth-century scapegoat used by politicians to divert attention away from the glaring failure of domestic policies and the ensuing economic woes.

Trade unionists of the late nineteenth century exploited relentlessly racist and nativist sentiments, blaming Chinese laborers for unemployment, low wages, poor living standards, and the dissolution of white families. Chinese laborers, in effect, conveniently replaced industrial capitalism as the culprit for national problems. In an address delivered in 1878 to frustrated and unemployed white workers, Dennis Kearney, a leader of the Workingmen’s Party of California, condemns the figure of the Chinese “coolie”— “a cheap working slave”—for occupying American jobs and for provoking a sharp moral degeneracy among poor white communities (Kearney, Dennis and Knight, H.L.). A “national union solidarity” thus emerged and flourished against the backdrop of divisive, nativist sentiments (Mink 71). Notably, Kearney proclaims: “California must be all American or all Chinese. We are resolved that it shall be American and are prepared to make it so.” Such constructions of the America-China binary serve as the historical fabric against which Sui Sin Far crafts her characters in the thematic stories of cultural assimilation. She illustrates the Asian American’s inevitable adherence to either an “all American or all Chinese” identity amidst political rhetoric that repeatedly called for the partition of cultures.

Additionally, Christian missionaries and ministers in the nineteenth century took up the “anti-Chinese litany” in order to justify efforts to convert the Chinese in both the United States and abroad in China (Hill 46). Mission society publications, such as the *Baptist Review*, the *Missionary Herald*, and the *Methodist Review*, sustained antagonistic American evaluations of Chinese character, as they supplied news and features about quotidian habits and activities in the Far East (McClellan 475). Since conversion experiences demanded “the presence of a sufficiently depraved subject” as a precondition, missionaries promulgated the image of the Chinese in a most diabolical light, claiming that they were “vile and polluted in a shocking degree; their conversation is full of filthy expressions, and their lives of impure acts... all form a full unchecked torrent of human depravity...” (Hykes 83 qtd. in McClellan 476). By fashioning a distorted view of the Chinese, missionaries legitimized their own work as protectors of the nation’s purity against “the unblushing lewdness of old and young [Chinese]” (Hykes 83 qtd. in McClellan 476).

Missionary women strove to establish female moral authority in the U.S. through rescue narratives featuring female victims of male abuse. Unable to influence white prostitutes, missionaries targeted Chinese women as symbols of female powerlessness, magnifying instances of sexual coercion and domestic confinement among them (Yung 35). Case reports, pamphlets, and magazines submitted by missionaries religiously employed the white savior trope, often featuring missionaries who raid Chinese homes to find unhappy or “badly beaten... little girl[s]” at the mercy of their “wicked mistress” or neglectful family

members (*Register of Inmates of Chinese Woman's Home, 933 Sacramento St., San Francisco, Cal.*). Similarly, Mary Grace Charlton Edholm, a U.S. Methodist missionary, wrote an exposé littered with dramatic scenes of torture attributed to the cruelty and emotional deficiency of the Chinese:

The little girl was the slave-child of a firm on Dupont Street. The wife, a bound-footed⁴ woman, was a perfect fiend in temper. One method of punishment was to beat the little thing until she was faint, and then to catch her by the hair and drag her on the floor... But still worse horrors are in store for the little slave-girl as she nears womanhood; for then she is forced to a life of shame,—*the object of all Chinese slavery*; and, if she resists, all the tortures of the Inquisition are resorted to by her cruel masters till she gives herself up body and soul. (4)

Though Protestant missionary homes certainly offered a crucial service and place of refuge for abused Chinese prostitutes and indentured servants, Chinese women were subject to regimented Christian indoctrination that forced them to adopt gender roles highlighting “female purity, piety, and Christian home life” (Yung 36). Adorning themselves with moral superiority, Protestant missionaries privileged Victorian cultural principles and actively endeavored to estrange Chinese women from their traditional values and Chinese family life. Missionary women were convinced that Chinese marriages could only promote and preserve patriarchal control, yet their work deprived Chinese women of their community and subsequently alienated Chinese men⁵. Chinese women, then, were simply translocated from one institution of enslavement to a different kind—missionary homes as institutions of religious coercion.

Missionary rescue narratives further perpetuated negative stereotypes of the Chinese as morally debased and an unsympathetic race, but they simultaneously neglected to acknowledge the underlying hardship and cultural implications that impelled young Chinese women to toil abroad as prostitutes or servants. Since filial piety (Chinese: 孝⁶; pinyin: *xiao*) lies at the heart of traditional Chinese culture, this

⁴ White female suffragists continued to utilize the trope of bound feet as a metaphor for the oppression of Chinese women, implicitly failing to recognize the multiple, yet quiet efforts in the negotiation of agency within late nineteenth-century Chinese households by Chinese women. These suffragist discourses, whether deliberately or not, fueled existing anti-Chinese sentiments and legislations (Chapman 957).

⁵ By barring the entry of Asian women under arbitrary suspicion of prostitution, the multiple exclusionary laws in place only succeeded in creating a “bachelor community” of Chinese men, which inadvertently intensified and increased the demand for the sexual trafficking of Chinese women (Sui Sin Far 251). These federal and state laws thus exacerbated the situation of female indentured servants and prostitutes among the Chinese American population by generating a vicious feedback loop.

⁶ Inclusion of Chinese character here attempts to compensate for the loss of original meaning through translation. The limiting scope of the transliteration “filial piety” confines the cultural concept to immediate relations between parent and child, but 孝 traditionally encompasses a comparatively wider spectrum of qualities and relationships: from obedience, duty, civility, and provision to care, kindness, loyalty and love devoted to all elderly members and ancestors. Mandarin, as an ideographic language, combines a visual unit with a unit of semantics, and therefore demands a visualization of the logogram itself to fully grasp its meaning.

central pillar urged women to remain at home, as the moral duty of wives demanded they devote care to the elderly members of the family. However, for want of money, some Chinese found themselves without alternative choices except to immigrate to the U.S. as working women, periodically sending remittances back home to help support their families financially (Chan 95). Thus, missionary rescue narratives often unfairly belied the courage and cultural responsibility embodied by Chinese women working as servants and prostitutes in the U.S., reductively attributing what they considered to be lowly professions to a racialized representation of the whole of Chinese people as a “persistently servile and alien population” (qtd. in McClellan 477). While so far the discussion of historical context relates to Chinese women, it is crucial to note that missionaries utilized the same moral rationality to justify the abduction of children from Chinese families that they deemed antithetical to the American way of life. Missionary rescue homes ultimately damaged the moral psyche of Chinese women and forcefully disintegrated Chinese family units. Influenced by this historical reality, Sui Sin Far resists and reimagines these rescue narratives from the perspective of the Chinese family, highlighting the domestic fracture and familial heartbreak upon which missionary women built their supposed moral authority.

Thus, national politicians, trade unionists, and Christian missionaries as an aggregate colluded in the actualization of anti-Chinese sentiment, culminating in the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. Trade unionists held the conviction that American manhood must destroy the evil of Chinese Coolieism and responded to economic pressures by mobilizing and lobbying for immigration restriction (Mink 43). Meanwhile, Christian missionaries moralized the issue of immigration by instigating a crusade for righteousness. The Exclusion Act barred both skilled and unskilled Chinese laborers from migrating to the U.S., marking the first time that the U.S. Congress passed a law to restrict a specific ethnic group. Chinese residents in the U.S., regardless of class, were prohibited from naturalization and citizenship, drawing on the widely held belief that the “Chinese Are Not Assimilative” to U.S. nationality (qtd. in Sui Sin Far 245).

Provoked by the denigrating depictions of the Chinese, Sui Sin Far revises the image of the Chinese family to highlight the immigrant as a victim of the historical conditions of detention and the self-righteous condescension of missionaries, thereby subverting dominant white discourses that demonize the racial Other. In fiction depicting children, such as “In the Land of the Free” and “Pat and Pan,” Sui Sin Far dramatizes the danger that white or Christian intervention poses, particularly for children of color, as the former instigates and perpetuates the erasure of cultural identity.

2. The Totalization of Identity

While American government officials banned the entry of Chinese laborers perceived as threats to the welfare of the American family, Sui Sin Far counters that immigrant detention at U.S. ports and missionary homes facilitated the physical severance of links with the Chinese family, often pressuring detainees

towards a growing detachment from their ties of kinship. Sui Sin Far demonstrates this through the short story “In the Land of the Free,” which chronicles the 10-month detention of a Chinese baby on the pretext of a missing technicality in his immigration document. The Little One remains at a mission nursery school for the duration of his separation from his parents. Motivated by grief and desperation, Lae Choo, his bereaved mother, exchanges all her prized possessions for a paper that legally grants the Chinese parents custody of their own baby. The “anticipatory joy” of the Little One’s return ruptures tragically when the child, now contented under the missionary women’s care, bids his mother “Go’way, go’way!” (Sui Sin Far 128-129). The title “In the Land of the Free” implicates an extreme irony, as the literal confinement of their baby leaves the Chinese family without a trifle of freedom. Sui Sin Far contends that what the Chinese immigrant experiences is the very antithesis of liberty, and in the land of the United States, freedom is far from universal.

The short story provides a veracious account of a two-step assimilation process: 1) the customs officer’s exploitation of exclusionary laws to uproot the Chinese child from the social context through which he forms his cultural identity, and 2) the missionary woman’s remolding of the child’s cultural loyalty. In fact, the plotline of “In the Land of the Free” closely parallels interviews of real Chinese immigrants in which they reveal the discriminatory treatments suffered upon entry into the U.S. border:

My wife come over here, and you Americans cause her a lot of trouble. You pen her up in the immigration office and then have doctors come and say she has liver trouble, hookworm, and the doctor does not know anything about it, to tell the truth. When my little boy came to this country, he was kept in the immigration office for over two months. Poor little fellow—he was so homesick. That is the reason my wife hates to come over here.
(qtd. in Chan 96)

Documentation of such interviews, from which Sui Sin Far likely drew inspiration, contextualizes her short stories as partly ethnographic work, verifying her representations of Chinese American familial hardships as not merely fictional narrative. Prior to the Little One’s detainment, Sui Sin Far portrays “a lone Chinaman who had been waiting on the wharf for an hour was detained that much longer by men with the initials U.S.C. on their caps, before he could board the steamer and welcome his wife and child” (Sui Sin Far 121). Sui Sin Far’s inclusion of this seemingly random account not only foreshadows what will eventually occur to the Little One but serves as proof of the prevalence of immigrant detention. These ethnographic elements in “In the Land of the Free” allow the objective conditions, in the form of bureaucratic obstacles, as well as the subjective

sentimentality⁷ of racially marginalized characters to take on the weight of reality. The ethnographic quality of the short story also attempts to erase the American reader's incredulity and to validate the challenges of the Chinese diaspora. Moreover, the authenticity of "In the Land of the Free" must necessarily subvert the missionary's rescue narrative as untrue, because rather than imputing blame on the cruel Chinese guardian/parent—a trope central to missionary tales—the short story criticizes the complicity between mission homes and customs officials in unsympathetically estranging a child from his own mother.

While the ethnographic touches of "In the Land of the Free" ensure narrative credibility, its presentation in fictional form allows Sui Sin Far to imagine opposite extremes in which the Little One can only be of either Chinese origin or of American spirit—never both at the same time. The Little One's cultural affiliation is denoted by the female figure towards whom he expresses physical affection. The short story opens with a scene of familial intimacy between Lae Choo and her son: "The Little One looked up into his mother's face in perfect faith... [He] ducked his chin sympathetically against his mother's knee. She lifted him on to her lap" (Sui Sin Far 120). Given the limits of a child's mode of communication, Sui Sin Far allows physical touch to function as an expression of love and trust. The tactile signals conveyed through the various connected body parts—"his mother's face," "his chin," "his mother's knee," and "her lap"—thus illustrate the unity between mother and child and their shared identity as members of the same family and, by necessity, the same culture. In other words, the Little One's Chinese identity manifests through his physical intimacy with Lae Choo. However, the "perfect faith"—the trust and confidence—with which the Little One gazes into his mother's face is ultimately replaced by a different kind of faith—the Christian faith. When Lae Choo finally manages to regain custody of her child and welcomes him back with outstretched "hungry arms," "the Little One shrunk from her and tried to hide himself in the folds of the white woman's skirt" (Sui Sin Far 129). The body language of the Little One in this scene conveys a blatant aversion, even fear, of his mother, while the white woman ironically adopts a protective role, as the child hides in her garments. The white woman, here, accurately operates in accordance with the historical accounts of the white savior role taken up by missionaries. Since Sui Sin Far's larger project aimed to expose the pressures of acculturation that Chinese immigrants had to suffer, the familial and affective alienation must also extend to cultural alienation. The Little One's preference for physical contact with the white missionary woman over his own mother thereby marks a moment of conversion from Chinese to American/Christian. The missionary woman's success in planting the seed of aversion towards the Chinese confirms the identity that nineteenth-century middle- and upper-class white women had prescribed for themselves: "domestic

⁷ Sui Sin Far employs a hybrid genre of sentimental ethnography to counter the negative traits assigned to the Chinese, namely "The Absence of Sympathy," "The Absence of Sincerity," and "The Absence of Altruism" (Smith 198-202 qtd. in Sui Sin Far 256). Specifically, in "In the Land of the Free," the emotional tenderness of Lae Choo—the explicit manifestation of her tears—deconstruct those stereotypes. The creative capacity of sentimental fiction allows Sui Sin Far to posit an alternate reality than that posed by dominant white discourses.

sanitarians, responsible for the care and defense of the [American] home and of the moral and physical well-being of the family” (Shah 105 qtd. in Sibara 59). In the perspective of the missionary woman, by eliminating the element of “depravity”—his Chinese identity—from the Little One, she effectively cleanses and protects American society from the potential addition of a morally “dangerous” Chinese offspring.

In forging a mutually exclusive relationship between the missionary woman and the Chinese mother, Sui Sin Far suggests that the success of cultural assimilation rests on the total elimination of one party in favor of the other. The missionary woman thereby replaces the Chinese mother and denies her existence. Yet, the Chinese mother in Sui Sin Far’s story cannot be merely explored as the literal mother of the family, but must also be considered as a figurative symbol of one’s motherland. As Hom Hing remarks that his “fine boy” was born “in China,” the Little One’s final brusque shunning of his mother—“Go’way, go’way!”—symbolizes not only the rejection of his Chinese identity and subsequent immersion into Western culture, but the dismissal of his motherland, an entire national identity (Sui Sin Far 121). Given early twentieth-century American imperialist efforts in China⁸, “In the Land of the Free” maps the irreconcilable relationship between the missionary woman and the Chinese mother onto a national framework, in which the rise of the U.S. empire—represented by the missionary woman—is contingent upon the belittlement of the minority nation—symbolized by the Chinese mother. Ultimately, the short story necessitates that the child be subject to the unavoidable choice between two mutually exclusive alternatives—“all American or all Chinese.” Thus, Sui Sin Far’s fictional construction of the Little One totalizes identity by confining it to what Amartya Sen calls singular affiliation.

Sen argues that singular affiliation maintains a type of reductionism, “which takes the form of assuming that any person preeminently belongs, for all practical purposes, to one collectivity only—no more and no less” (20). Rather than embracing the “intricacies of plural groups,” the “formulaic narrowness” of singular affiliation diminishes the richness and complexity of any person to one identifying category (Sen 20). By this definition, the missionary woman functions as a reinforcing agent of singular affiliation, denying the possibility that the Little One might at once embrace American traits and retain his Chinese origins. She knowingly targets the mercurial temperament of children, as she explains to Lae Choo upon her visit that “[the Little One] had been rather difficult to manage at first and had cried much for his mother; but children so soon forget, and after a month he seemed quite at home, and played around as bright and happy as a bird”

⁸ The Boxer Rebellion, staged in China between 1899 to 1901, was a failed uprising against what the Chinese perceived as increasingly invasive Christian and Western imperialist forces. As a punitive settlement, the Qing dynasty government was forced to sign the Boxer Protocol, otherwise known as the “unequal treaties,” on September 7, 1901. The Boxer protocol demanded the death of eleven senior Chinese officials and a huge indemnity equivalent to \$333 million to be paid to the Eight-Nation Alliance (an international military force consisting of the U.S., Austria-Hungary, France, Germany, United Kingdom, Italy, Japan, and Russia). The unequal treaty crippled the Qing government financially, and the Chinese suffered national humiliation associated with the infringement of sovereignty (Lee, Joseph Tse-Hei).

(Sui Sin Far 128). By describing the Little One as seemingly “quite at home,” Sui Sin Far conveys the child’s fast adaptation to this new environment. Sui Sin Far argues that this very caprice renders children most vulnerable and impressionable to external influences. Moreover, after the Little One is delivered to a mission, “for one full moon he had pined for his mother and refused to be comforted [but] he was now apparently happy and contented” (Sui Sin Far 125). By quantifying the transience of the Little One’s unhappiness in the absence of his mother—“one full moon”—the passage further illustrates children’s natural fickleness as a source of their vulnerability to assimilatory forces. The Little One’s prolonged detention at the mission nursery school thus conveniently obliterates the importance of his Chinese roots while firmly embedding him in exactly one affiliation—the all-American boy.

Additionally, Sen correctly asserts that “the incitement to ignore all affiliation and loyalties other than those emanating from one restrictive identity can be deeply delusive and also contribute to social tension and violence” (21). Confirming Sen’s criticism of this reductionist perspective, the missionary woman’s singular-affiliation view indeed engenders “social tension and violence,” namely by alienating Lae Choo and subjecting the Little One to cultural conflict. The missionary woman’s previous claim that “children so soon forget” implicitly trivializes the figure of the Chinese mother as non-essential, since, according to the missionary, her existence can easily be consigned to oblivion. On top of that, when Lae Choo arrives at the mission to be reunited with her son, it is revealed that the missionary women had taken the rather impudent liberty to rename the Little One as “little Kim” (Sui Sin Far 128). Through this event, the white missionary woman further alienates Lae Choo by replacing the term of endearment used by the Chinese mother—my Little One—with a new name, in effect depriving Lae Choo of a parent’s privilege to name their child. Furthermore, since Kim is a distinctly Korean surname, the missionary woman adopts an appallingly orientalist attitude by falsely assuming, or perhaps entirely disregarding, the Little One’s ethnic identity. They commit the all-too-common offense of condensing all Asian cultures and peoples under a single, homogenous umbrella category, apathetically equating Korean to Chinese. Thus, the cultural conflict that the Little One must eventually confront is not only the erasure of his Chinese identity but also the challenge of differentiating himself from other “yellow men.” Ultimately, the scene suggests that the Little One fails to attain the uplifting conversion experience promised by missionaries because he remains captive to the missionary’s racist and reductionist perception of him, despite having betrayed his original identity for a Christian one; in consequence, he may never successfully “emerge as an individual in his own right” (McClellan 479).

3. Negotiating Plural Identities

While Sui Sin Far totalizes identity by subsuming her characters under a single cultural affiliation, she offers transient examples of plurality, including in her short story titled “Pat and Pan.” This piece focuses on a Chinese family whose

members consist of Lum Yook, a Chinese jeweler, his wife, their daughter Pan, and their adopted white son Pat. Despite his whiteness, Pat self-identifies as Chinese, fully embracing the language and world of Chinatown as his own. However, the harmony among this motley Chinese family is disrupted by the entrance of Anna Harrison, a passerby Christian missionary woman, who determines to teach Pat “his mother tongue” (Sui Sin Far 212-213). What ensues is the rapid acculturation of Pat and his immersion into American society, segregating him from and forfeiting his Chinese family for the prospect of being “raised as an American boy should be raised” (Sui Sin Far 216).

Pat, like the Little One in “In the Land of the Free,” actively resists being separated from his adopted family, expressing no interest in assimilating into the American culture that Miss Harrison deems only suitable for a white boy. When Miss Harrison first proposes to Pat the idea of enrolling in a missionary school, she asks: “Would he not like to come to her school and see some pretty pictures? Pat shook his ruddy curls and looked at Pan. Would Pan come too? Yes, Pan would. Pan’s memory was good, and so were lichis and shredded cocoanut candy” (Sui Sin Far 213). Paralleling the way in which the Little One “protested lustily against the transfer [to the government],” Pat utilizes the motion of shaking his head—“his ruddy curls”—as a bodily sign of objection against missionary efforts of conversion, which are often disguised in the language of benevolence (Sui Sin Far 123). Miss Harrison offers the act of “see[ing] some pretty pictures” as a euphemism for her efforts to re-integrate Pat into white culture through education; she masks her true intention to essentially reeducate Pat by inviting him to participate in a falsely benign activity. Sui Sin Far sets up Pat’s moment of resistance through a question-answer format, whereby Pat responds to Miss Harrison’s proposal through a physical manifestation of refusal, followed by his own set of inquiries, to which the missionary woman must reply. The act of questioning—“Would Pan come too?”—grants some semblance of autonomy to Pat, as he reasons with Miss Harrison to gauge whether he consents to being a member of her missionary school. Pat, in effect, destabilizes the power dynamic between Miss Harrison and himself, refusing to simply submit to her summons. By stipulating preconditions for his enrollment, namely the presence of his ethnically Chinese sister, Pat engages in a negotiation with Miss Harrison to maintain a plural identity. Of course, it must also be noted that Pat’s whiteness factors into his ability to re-negotiate and re-structure the power dynamic between himself and Miss Harrison’s missionary efforts.

While the Little One experiences a sustained singular identity throughout the entirety of “In the Land of the Free,” Pat begins with a robustly plural one, which he endeavors to preserve through the use of cultural objects⁹, as well as through his love for Pan. In the above scene, Pat intimates his fondness for “lichis and shredded cocoanut candy,” both of which are snacks native to provinces in

⁹ Sui Sin Far’s other short story titled “The Americanizing of Pau Tsu” also features the use of traditionally East Asian objects such as “fans, vases, Chinese matting, exquisite carvings, and antique porcelain” to formally subvert the dominant presence of the “American style” (113).

southeastern China. Lichis and shredded coconut candy thus serve as cultural objects with which Pat expresses his plurality. Insofar as Miss Harrison may conjecture “For a white boy to grow up as a Chinese was unthinkable,” Pat, in remarking on the flavor of Chinese fruits and sweets, exhibits to the obdurate missionary woman the tangible existence of multiple loyalties (Sui Sin Far 213). Despite her incredulity, he continues to demonstrate the possibility of being, at the same time, racially Caucasian and culturally Chinese.

Above all, Pat’s intimate bond with Pan remains his most effective barricade against singular affiliation. Miss Harrison reluctantly accepts Pat’s insistent request that Pan join him at school: “Of course Pan was too young to go to school—a mere baby; but if Pat could not be got without Pan, why then Pan must come too” (Sui Sin Far 213). Pat’s emotional attachment to Pan facilitates and enables his connection to Chinese culture, so by demanding his sister’s presence at the mission school, Pat effectively holds onto his plural affiliation even though he is thrust into an all-American, Christian environment. Additionally, Pat’s later truancy is rendered possible with the connivance of Pan, who fabricates an excuse for her brother’s absence. When Miss Harrison inquires the whereabouts of Pat, Pan deceives her, claiming that Pat was bit by a big dog. Her deception allows Pat to join several other boys in an alley, “busily engaged in keeping five tops spinning at one time” (Sui Sin Far 214). Although both siblings eventually face punitive repercussions for their dishonesty, Sui Sin Far utilizes the notion of children’s play—the engagement in recreational and enjoyable activities—to disrupt the narrative of cultural assimilation. The act of play enabled by Pan grants Pat momentary respite from the repressiveness of missionary conversion; it allows him to be, for an ephemeral moment, the white “China boy,” untainted by the harsh reality of a world that only accepts singularity. In fact, the siblings’ joint attendance at the mission school only fosters a duplication of that plurality, as Pan begins to acquire knowledge of the English language.

In addition to Pat, Pan embodies plural affiliation and divergent loyalties, as she demonstrates linguistic mixing as a material trace of the cultural assimilation implemented by Miss Harrison. Sui Sin Far builds up the linguistic talent of Pan: “In a year’s time, although her talk was more broken and babyish, she had better English vocabulary than had Pat” (Sui Sin Far 214). Pan’s rapid improvement in the English language expands her identity to embrace both her Chinese ancestry and her newly acquired background as an English speaker; she dips her toes into the Western cultural sphere. Intriguingly, while Pan seems to excel in the Mission school, the seemingly thorough religious indoctrination of Pan is coated with a mocking superficiality, as she “would pharisaically clasp her tiny fingers and repeat word for word the verse desired to be heard” (Sui Sin Far 215). In this scene, Sui Sin Far risks reinforcing some of the more extreme stereotypes of the Chinese as so morally depraved that they could not even be made to adopt Christian values (McClellan 477-478). The word “pharisaically” refers to a hypocritically self-righteous attitude, implying that her performative recitation only suggests she possesses more noble beliefs than actually is the case. Essentially, one could interpret the quote as insinuating Pan’s inability to truly grasp Christian values,

such as humility, despite her immersion in the mission school. On the other hand, the quote may implicate Pan's active spiritual rejection of Christian beliefs despite conforming to religious practice in outward appearance. In the latter reading, her apparently insincere engagement with the biblical verse then suggests not a denial but a downplay of missionary influences, implicitly undermining the dominance of Christianity in the context of cultural assimilation. Pan critically engages with the various cultural influences she is exposed to, making choices about which affiliations to prioritize. However, Sui Sin Far ultimately sets up this freedom of choice as a temporary illusion; the children are forced to confront the reality that their efforts to preserve plurality and multiplicity at their own will is rendered futile in the face of dominant culture.

4. The Death of Plurality

While Sen condemns the perceptual limitation of singular affiliation, she fails to account for real, restrictive circumstances in which an individual may not have the freedom to choose an identity or to reason beyond their immediate cultural influences. Sen writes:

... even though certain basic cultural attitudes and beliefs may *influence* the nature of our reasoning, they cannot invariably *determine* it fully. There are various influences on our reasoning, and we need not lose our ability to consider other ways of reasoning just because we identify with, and have been influenced by membership in, a particular group. Influence is not the same thing as complete determination, and choices do remain despite the existence—and importance—of cultural influences. (35)

Sui Sin Far introduces a complication to this claim by articulating constraining conditions in which her characters—the Little One and Pat—are deprived of the very ability to reason against the surrounding cultural attitudes because those influences are so totally consuming. Sui Sin Far theorizes that the assimilatory demands of white Christian authorities will always prevail over any form of rational resistance by members of a minority community; in other words, the white missionary's cultural dominance erases the existence of choice for those who identify with marginalized groups. Ultimately, the Chinese child must submit to the adoption of a singular identity—and all the norms, perceptions and values that come with that identity—the one prescribed to them by the missionary. Specifically, Sui Sin Far's short story "Pat and Pan" works in opposition to Sen's insistence that influence does not equate complete determination.

The story details the transference of the mother role, first from Pat's biological mother to the wife of Lum Yook and finally to Anna Harrison. This transference of mother figures equates a shuffling of dominant cultural influences for Pat. The "peripatetic vender of Chinese fruits and sweetmeats" explains that Pat's biological mother had been invited into Lum Yook's home and given "lice

and tea,” and such acts of kindness encouraged Pat’s biological mother to entrust her son with the Chinese family upon her death. Sui Sin Far demonstrates the extension of care Lum Yook’s family provides “beyond the boundaries of the traditional nuclear family” and even beyond the confines of their racial group (Sibara 58). Due to the Lum Yook family’s openness to racial mixing, they encourage a culture in which the affiliation to multiple social groups is embraced rather than shunned. Pat’s healthy development in the Lum Yook household then fosters his plurality. Additionally, Mrs. Lum Yook engages in a consensual exchange, a willful transference of motherly duties from Pat’s white mother. The Chinese American family’s system of care diametrically opposes Miss Harrison’s motives to assimilate Pat into an environment that she deems appropriate. Driven by an intolerance for the existence of “a white boy in America talking only Chinese talk,” the missionary woman removes Pat from his family to maintain the status quo—the American boy must always remain American (Sui Sin Far 212).

While Pat demonstrates an active effort to maintain his plural identity, Miss Harrison undermines his freedom of choice by subjecting him to constant scrutiny. When Miss Harrison first lays eyes on the siblings nestled against one another, “it was that white chin which caused the passing Mission woman to pause and look again at the little pair” (Sui Sin Far 211). Miss Harrison’s gaze reduces the children to objects of spectacle. Unsolicited, the missionary woman invites herself as an onlooker into their personal space, deprecating the friendship of two ethnically different children. She violates their privacy and intimate bond by explicitly judging Pat for joining so closely in happiness with an Asian girl. The white woman’s gaze serves as the initiator and impetus of the process of acculturation. For “the second time she saw him,” Pat was persuaded to attend her Mission school, a site which enables the erasure of Chinese “depravity,” only to be substituted with the ostensible so-called superiority of Christian values and beliefs. Finally, when Miss Harrison hurried “on her way to see the bitten Pat,” she sees through his trickery—a deception that had assisted his escape from the assimilatory institution. Thus, the missionary woman’s scrutinizing eye—her act of seeing—repeatedly deprives Pat of his freedom to choose. Under Miss Harrison’s strict examination, Pat can no longer act on his own desires; he cannot escape the missionary institution nor choose his social circle, confining him within the borders of Miss Harrison’s domineering influence. Through Pat, Sui Sin Far successfully exemplifies a scenario in which the cultural attitudes and beliefs of his keeper—Miss Harrison—indeed fully determine the nature of Pat’s reasoning and the choices he makes. In opposition to Sen’s argument, choices no longer remain for Pat, because his capricious vulnerability as a child cripples him under the absolute influence of the Christian authority. Despite the depth of Pat and Pan’s mutual affection, by the end of the story, Pat reasons against further involvement with his Chinese family.

Pat’s rejection of Pan marks his final withdrawal from the Chinese community. The façade of personal choice is ultimately destroyed by Pat’s alienation of Pan. As previously stated, Pan functions as the cornerstone to Pat’s Chinese identity; their love for one another drives the preservation of Pat’s plurality because so long as they are together, Pat insists on his being Chinese. However,

towards the end of the story, Pat begins to treat Pan with an air of superiority: “But, say, Pan, I learn lots of things that you don’t know anything about” (Sui Sin Far 216). By conjecturing that his knowledge exceeds hers, Pat alienates Pan as the inferior racial Other characterized by ignorance. In the final climactic scene, Pat shouts at Pan because he knows the white schoolboys, his new companions, would taunt him for associating with “the Chinese kid” (Sui Sin Far 217). His last lines to Pan “Get away from me... Get away from me!” echoes the Little One’s rejection of his mother in “In the Land of the Free” (Sui Sin Far 217). By siding with his classmates from missionary school, Pat therefore submits to a singular identity as solely a white boy. Pan’s final declaration—“He Chinese no more; he Chinese no more!”—further verifies her brother’s loss of identity and acculturation to whiteness. However, it must be noted that Pat yields to singular affiliation not by choice, but rather as a result of inequities in power. The siblings’ love for each other ultimately withers in the face of white dominance, as Pat acquiesces in the espousal of chauvinist ideas. The story “Pat and Pan” therefore denies the possibility of plurality, a critical reflection of the cultural reality of its time.

The dissolution of Pat and Pan’s relationship has deeper implications regarding the dominant culture’s intolerance of interracial unions. When the siblings are initially introduced, Sui Sin Far illustrates their tender bond: “They lay there, in the entrance to the joss house, sound asleep in each other’s arms. Her tiny face was hidden upon his bosom and his white, upturned chin rested upon her black, rosetted head” (Sui Sin Far 211). Their physical intimacy obscures the nature of their feelings for each other and may suggest the possibility of a love beyond the limits of familial bond, perhaps the blossoming of a young romance. In fact, the omniscient third-person narrator refers to Pat and Pan as “lovers” (Sui Sin Far 215). In this interpretation, the final separation of Pat and Pan, as well as the former’s ultimate rejection of the latter, extinguishes the hope of interracial relations and denies the possibility of engendering a biracial child as a more permanent model of plural affiliation. Thus, the missionary woman’s determination to separate Pat and Pan results in a premature abortion of the biracial child—*ergo* the symbolic death of plural identity. Moreover, the severance of emotional ties between Pat and Pan recalls efforts in the late nineteenth century to prevent the intermarriage between whites and “Mongolians” (qtd. in Sui Sin Far 249). Drawing on the common argument that mixed-race parents only engendered “degenerate” offspring, California legislature in 1880 forbade the granting of marriage licenses to white Americans desiring to marry any person of the “Negro, mulatto, or Mongolian” race (Sui Sin Far 249). To combat such negative perceptions of biracial offspring, Sui Sin Far wrote short stories presenting a more favorable portrait of intermarriage and mixed-race characters, including “The Wavering Image”.

“The Wavering Image” depicts a “half white, half Chinese” young woman named Pan, whom a white journalist—Mark Carson—beguiles for an article exposing the hidden operations of San Francisco’s Chinatown (Sui Sin Far 84). While they are involved in a romantic relationship, Mark imposes his Eurocentric social attitudes on Pan, fragmenting her self-cohesion. Mark’s emphatic insistence

on Pan's whiteness perplexes her self-identity, as he forces her to choose between her inward "twoness."

Mark Carson repeatedly attempts to eliminate Pan's Chinese identity, all the while masking his Eurocentric proclivities under a pedagogical approach. While Pan innocently guides him through the vibrant Chinatown streets, Mark collects the necessary details for the publication of his "special-feature" story which "cruelly unveiled and ruthlessly spread" negative content regarding the Chinese "before the ridiculing and uncomprehending foreigner" (Sui Sin Far 84). In response to such a betrayal, Pan deliberately ignores Mark's letters, but the latter assumes "[s]he would have forgotten that article by now. Why should a white woman care about such things? Her true self was above it all. Had he not taught her *that* during the weeks in which they had been so much of one another?" (Sui Sin Far 84). Mark, as a personification of cultural assimilation, insists that in order for Pan to manifest her "true self," she must privilege her white identity over her Chinese one. He frames his parochial, singular-affiliation perspective as an act of teaching through the remark "Had he not taught her *that*." By taking on the role of the teacher, Mark constructs an inherent power imbalance between himself and Pan, since the latter is unfortunately subject to his arrogant instructions. He places himself on a pedestal by presuming to instruct Pan about her own identity. Though the ingenuous Pan falters in deciding which cultural identity to prioritize, she ultimately refuses to yield to Mark's categorization of her as a white woman.

Throughout the story, Pan verbally resists Mark's contention of her whiteness by repeatedly asserting her Chinese identity. The short story begins with an explicit description of Pan's plurality: "She was born a Bohemian, exempt from the conventional restrictions imposed upon either the white or Chinese woman" (Sui Sin Far 81). Pan occupies a liminal space in which her identification with both white and Chinese ironically allows her to escape the norms of both. The entrance of Mark Carson introduces an assimilatory force, relentlessly tugging her towards whiteness and away from this seemingly ideal in-between state. In response to Mark's constant demand that she adopts one identity over another, Pan laments "...it seemed at times as if her white self must entirely dominate and trample under foot her Chinese" (Sui Sin Far 81). However, Sui Sin Far artfully renders multiple instances of Pan's powerful resistance:

"But I must," the young man persisted. "Pan, don't you see that you have got to decide what you will be—Chinese or white? You cannot be both."

"Hush! Hush!" bade Pan. "I do not love you when you talk to me like that." (Sui Sin Far 83)

Pan's imperative demand—"Hush!"—silences Mark in an authoritative reversal of the power dynamic. When obliged to make a choice between her two selves, Pan terminates Mark's continuous harassment by telling him to stop talking. Her refrainment from answering Mark's question allows her to remain loyal to plural affiliations. Pan refuses to engage with Mark's insular outlook on cultural

identity; the very existence of Pan as a biracial woman implies that Chinese and white are not mutually exclusive social groups.

Pan additionally counters racist stereotypes of the Chinese as deficient in breadth of emotional complexity. When Pan weeps upon “listening to that irresistible voice singing her heart away,” Mark claims her “tears prove that [she is] white” (Sui Sin Far 83). His statement presupposes the incapacity for Chinese people to feel sentimental over poetic lyrics. Yet, if Mark deems tenderness or sympathetic emotions exclusive to whiteness, Pan dismantles his false conviction through the manifestation of her rage as an equally valid emotion. When dovetailed with the firm declaration that she “would not be a white woman for all the world,” Pan’s anger—“the element of Fire having raged so fiercely within her...”—vehemently opposes Mark’s racist perceptions of the Chinese (Sui Sin Far 85-86). Her rage validates the emotional capacity of the Chinese, and Pan simultaneously undermines the authority of the white male journalist by directing her fury at him. However, despite Pan’s subversive existence, the ending of the story witnesses not so much a reconciliation of her plurality, but rather Pan’s retreat into the comfort of her singular affiliation to the Chinese community, as the last sentence of the short story states: “And Pan, being a Chinese woman, was comforted” (Sui Sin Far 86).

Sui Sin Far maintains that the only way to withstand white society’s imperious erasure of Chinese culture is to immerse oneself completely in it. Pan proclaims her Chinese identity through her verbal utterance of singular affiliation. When Mark reunites with Pan after two months of absence, he “felt strangely chilled” by her “Chinese costume” (Sui Sin Far 85). He inquires, “Pan... why do you wear that dress?” to which she responds: “Because I am a Chinese woman” (Sui Sin Far 85). Pan’s traditional Chinese clothing demonstrates her physical embodiment of an Eastern identity, but her explicit declaration of being a Chinese woman, “not... a white woman,” certifies her singular affiliation. Similarly, Pat in “Pat and Pan” employs the verbal utterance of “I am Chinese too! I am Chinese too!” as almost an incantation to preserve his Chinese identity, but of course, he ultimately falls short of what he ventured to accomplish. It is only by resorting to the exclusive identification with the Chinese that the minority culture may escape total annihilation. However, though the Chinese half of Pan may live on, Mark compels her to figuratively murder her white self in desperation, culminating in the death of plurality.

5. Sui Sin Far’s Autobiographical Self

Sui Sin Far’s motives for such desperate measures are illustrated in her memoir “Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of an Eurasian.” Originally published in 1909, Sui Sin Far’s autobiographical piece describes her own turbulent journey to becoming a writer and advocate for Chinese communities in North America. She details her short-lived reluctance as a child to identify with the Chinese out of mortification, yet her indignation towards unfounded prejudice and bigotry allows her to overcome that shame, eventually building a career on the grounds of

counter-hegemonic storytelling. As Sean McCann constructively points out, Sui Sin Far's heroine Pan in "Its Wavering Image" greatly resembles herself (76). Like Pan's biracial identity, Edith Maude Eaton/Sui Sin Far was born to an English father, the scion of a wealthy family, and a Chinese mother, who left China for the West as a young woman. Yet, her mixed-race background alienated her from both parents: "I do not confide in my father and mother. They would not understand. How could they? He is English, she is Chinese. I am different to both of them—a stranger, tho their own child" (Sui Sin Far 224). As Sui Sin Far laments that single-raced people could not be privy to the adversities of biracial citizens, this situated her at a threshold between the frequently hostile white society and the struggling Chinese-American community, neither of which she fully belonged to. In fact, her own plural identity fomented an on-going existential crisis, in which she constantly pondered, "Why are we what we are? I and my brothers and sisters. 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? Why?" (Sui Sin Far 225). In this catalogue of questions, Sui Sin Far desperately imagines an alternate existence devoted to singular affiliation—a reality that might release her from her identity disorientation. She spent her childhood consumed by the dream of being welcomed into the arms of "[her] mother's people" and of dying as a "great and glorious and noble" martyr in defense of the Chinese (Sui Sin Far 225, 227). Sui Sin Far's fictional construction of Pan as a figure of singularity then permits the writer to live out an identity she could not accomplish in reality. Her fiction creates a space in which her childhood hopes for a less perplexing identity is materialized through text.

Despite her liminality, Sui Sin Far, in her youth, often took part in physical battles with other children to assert her Chinese identity. When confronted with a crowd of other children aiming derogatory terms at her and her brother—"Chinky, Chinaman, yellow-face, pig-tail, rat-eater"—Sui Sin Far screams back, "I'd rather be Chinese than anything else in the world" ("Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of an Eurasian" 222). Pan seems as if a shadow of her writer, as the former echoes Sui Sin Far's declaration: "I would not be a white woman for all the world" (*Mrs. Spring Fragrance* 85). However, unlike the fictional heroine, Sui Sin Far acknowledges her white self, not as the antagonistic opposite, but rather as an ally of her Chinese self: "but the white blood in our veins fights valiantly for the Chinese half of us" (222).

Far from reflecting the "formulaic narrowness" of singular affiliation, Sui Sin Far's short story "Its Wavering Image" offers a vision of courage for the Chinese American community—one that foregrounds the humanity of a people whose authentic voices have been drowned out by the violent sea of slander. In the Land where "Free" signifies white, where the theology that claims the "yellow man" as sub-human has been beaten into the Chinese body until it is "black, blue, and green," Sui Sin Far assures them that there is power yet in simply uttering "... I am—I am a Chinese" (Edholm 2; Sui Sin Far 227). In the nightmare of racial hatred, when the oppressor relentlessly effaces the oppressed from cultural

existence, to accept our historical identity, wholeheartedly and truly, remains the only remedy.

WORKS CITED

- Chan, Sucheng, editor. "The Exclusion of Chinese Women, 1870-1943." *Entry Denied: Exclusion and the Chinese Community in America, 1882-1943*, Temple University Press, 1991, pp. 94–146.
- Chapman, Mary. "A 'Revolution in Ink': Sui Sin Far and Chinese Reform Discourse." *American Quarterly*, vol. 60, no. 4, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008, pp. 975–1001.
- Edholm, M.G.C. "A STAIN ON THE FLAG." *Californian Illustrated Magazine (1891-1894)*, vol. 1, no. 3, 02, 1892, pp. 159. *ProQuest*, <http://ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/magazines/stain-on-flag/docview/89931806/se-2?accountid=10226>.
- Sui Sin Far. "Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of an Eurasian." *The Independent Devoted to the Consideration of Politics, Social and Economic Tendencies, History, Literature, and the Arts (1848-1921)*, vol. 66, no. 3138, American Periodicals Series II, Jan. 1909, p. 125.
- Grasso, Linda M. "Inventive Desperation: Anger, Violence, and Belonging in Mary Wilkins Freeman's and Sui Sin Far's Murderous Mother Stories." *American Literary Realism*, vol. 38, no. 1, University of Illinois Press, 2005, pp. 18–31.
- Gyory, Andrew. *Closing the Gate: Race, Politics, and the Chinese Exclusion Act*. University of North Carolina Press, 1998.
- Hill, Herbert. "Anti-Oriental Agitation and the Rise of Working-Class Racism." *Society*, vol. 10, no. 2, Jan. 1973, pp. 43–54. *DOI.org (Crossref)*, <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02695325>.
- Hykes, John R. *The Importance of Winning China for Christ*. Self-Supporting Missionary Literature Department, Mission Rooms, 1892.
- Kearney, Dennis, and Knight, H.L. "Appeal from California. The Chinese Invasion. Workingmen's Address". *Indianapolis Times*, 28 Feb. 1878, <http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/5046>.
- Lee, Joseph Tse-Hei. "Boxer Protocol | Encyclopedia of Chinese-American Relations." *Credo Reference*, 2009, https://search-credoreference-com.ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/content/entry/mcfcham/boxer_protocol/0.
- McCann, Sean. "Connecting Links: The Anti-Progressivism of Sui Sin Far." *The Yale Journal of Criticism*, vol. 12, no. 1, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999, pp. 73–88. *Project MUSE*, <https://doi.org/10.1353/yale.1999.0009>.
- McClellan, Robert F. "Missionary Influence on American Attitudes toward China at the Turn of This Century." *Church History*, vol. 38, no. 4, [American Society of Church History, Cambridge University Press], 1969, pp. 475–85. *JSTOR*, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3163521>.

- Miller, Stuart Creighton. *The Unwelcome Immigrant: The American Image of the Chinese, 1785-1882*. University of California Press, 1969.
- Mink, Gwendolyn. *Old Labor and New Immigrants in American Political Development: Union, Party, and State, 1875-1920*. Cornell University Press, 1986.
- Ngai, Mae M. "Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America." *ACLS Humanities E-Book*, Princeton University Press, 2004. *Library Catalog (Blacklight)*, <http://www.columbia.edu/cgi-bin/cul/resolve?clio8863408>.
- Our Documents - Transcript of Chinese Exclusion Act (1882)*. <https://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=false&doc=47&page=transcript>. Accessed 13 Dec. 2021.
- Register of Inmates of Chinese Woman's Home, 933 Sacramento St., San Francisco, Cal.* Case reports, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, 1903 1892.
- Sen, Amartya. *Identity and Violence: The Illusion of Destiny*. 1st ed, W.W. Norton & Co, 2006.
- Sibara, Jennifer Barager. "Disease, Disability, and the Alien Body in the Literature of Sui Sin Far." *MELUS*, vol. 39, no. 1, [Oxford University Press, Society for the Study of the Multi-Ethnic Literature of the United States (MELUS)], 2014, pp. 56–81.
- Sui Sin Far. *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*. Edited by Hsuan L. Hsu, Broadview Press, 2011.
- Taylor, Bayard. *A Visit to India, China, and Japan: In the Year 1853*. 16th ed, Putnam, 1860.
- Yung, Judy. *Unbound Feet: A Social History of Chinese Women in San Francisco*. University of California Press, 1995.

JOANNA (JO) GAO BC '22 is majoring in Neuroscience and English. As a proud third-culture kid, she was born in Vancouver, Canada, but will always call Shanghai her home. At Barnard, she has worked as a Writing Fellow for 3 years, dedicated to helping students strengthen their writing across all disciplines. For her post-graduation plans, she will be returning to China to begin working for the NYU Shanghai Global Writing and Speaking Fellowship, which allows her to continue pursuing her passion for teaching and academic enrichment. She hopes to ultimately attend graduate studies in English literature, possibly in creative writing or specializing in the Victorian era. Beyond her academic interests, Jo loves all things of the Marvel Universe or anything written by the masterful Agatha Christie.