Rice Asian Studies Review

Volume 7
2023-2024 Issue

Rice Asian Studies Review

Volume 7
2023-2024 Issue

ABOUT RICE ASIAN STUDIES REVIEW

Rice Asian Studies Review (RASR) is an undergraduate peer-reviewed journal promoting Asian, Asian American, and Asian Diasporic Studies research and creative work by students at Rice University. RASR aspires to offer a lively venue for intellectual exchange and production of knowledge against the backdrop of the intensifying twenty-first century globalization. In particular, reflecting the changing subject matters and methodologies of Asian Studies, RASR critically updates and expands on parameters of Asian Studies as a scholarly discipline through the publication of rigorously selected high-quality work by Rice undergraduate students. An interdisciplinary journal, RASR invites students of all specializations to participate in our endeavors of critical engagement with transnational Asia.

From left to right: Muriel Taylor-Adair, Kelly Guo, Sophia Govea, Gina Matos, Matthew Ahn, Matt Banschbach, Rijuta Vallishayee, Maya Habraken, Bryson Jun, Hoang Nguyen, Lily Remington
Photo taken by Kirstie Qian

VOLUME 7
PUBLISHED APRIL 2024
Website: rasr.rice.edu
Email: rasr@rice.edu
Cover design by Lily Remington

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The seventh volume of RASR would not have been possible without the generous support of Rice's Department of Transnational Asian Studies (DoTAS). We are profoundly indebted to Hae Hun Matos, Department Administrator of DoTAS, and Dr. Sonia Ryang, our faculty advisor. As this volume's editorial board endeavored to make bold changes to the journal, Ms. Matos and Dr. Ryang have continuously supported RASR and helped us maintain its standards for high-quality academic publishing. Without their tireless advice and encouragement throughout this entire process, from recruiting our team of editors to delivering the final copy to authors, RASR would not have been possible.

We would also like to express our deepest gratitude to Dr. Kelsey Norman, Dr. Nathan Citino, Dr. Kevin Schoenberger, Dr. Jing Li, Dr. Robert Englebretson, Dr. Jaymin Kim, and Dr. Shih-Shan Susan Huang for serving as reviewers for RASR. They generously took the time to provide valuable insights and suggestions for the editorial board and the authors, and in doing so, helped ensure the journal's academic caliber. We are extremely grateful to have had the opportunity to learn from the immense body of expertise on Rice's campus.

Finally, the RASR editors would like to thank our contributing authors and artists. We are lucky to be able to publish articles and creative pieces concerning a wide range of academic disciplines, geographic areas, and experiences. This would not have been possible without the diverse talents and interests of Rice undergraduate students. As we hope the research and artistry contained in these pages will inspire both new ideas and new scholars, we also thank you, the reader, for reading our journal.

LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

In putting together the seventh volume of the Rice Asian Studies Review (RASR), we made many exciting changes. For this issue, we sought to expand the journal offerings from strictly academic works to include creative submissions such as poetry, art, and photography. This addition is crucial in showing how knowledge of Asia and Asian communities can be spread in many ways beyond the traditional research article. Additionally, we took a radical step in changing the journal's cover to reflect how "Asia" transcends concepts of borders or countries. To showcase this idea of transnationality, the cover uses the symbol of rivers, which can not only define borders but also cut across them. In the same vein, people may be defined by their circumstances, but they can also move and defy these labels. We believe this change parallels the spirit of transnationality that sets the Department of Transnational Asian Studies (DoTAS) at Rice University apart.

In this issue, we bring forth a diverse selection of academic articles and creative works that speak to our reinforced commitment to representing Asia and Asian communities through myriad lenses. In "Preserving the Past, Navigating the Present," Mehek Jain provides a comprehensive account of Palestinian communities in the US, highlighting the immense cultural tapestry and enduring political will of Palestinian Americans. Next, in "The Aesthetic Behind Asian Avant-Garde Music," Richard Li makes the case for the existence of "East Asian Vanguardism" as a hybrid musical aesthetic created by contemporary East Asian composers. Meanwhile, Emilia Cichocki explores how cultural norms and employment policies jointly impact Chinese American mothers in "The Mandates of Motherhood." The themes of transnationality present in these three articles are also echoed in the poignant poetry of Ashley Wang and Lana Nguyen. Interspersed among these written works are artworks by Eric Chen, Sachi Kishinchandani, and Advika Rajeev, which further demonstrate the mosaic that makes up Asian cultures and communities across the globe.

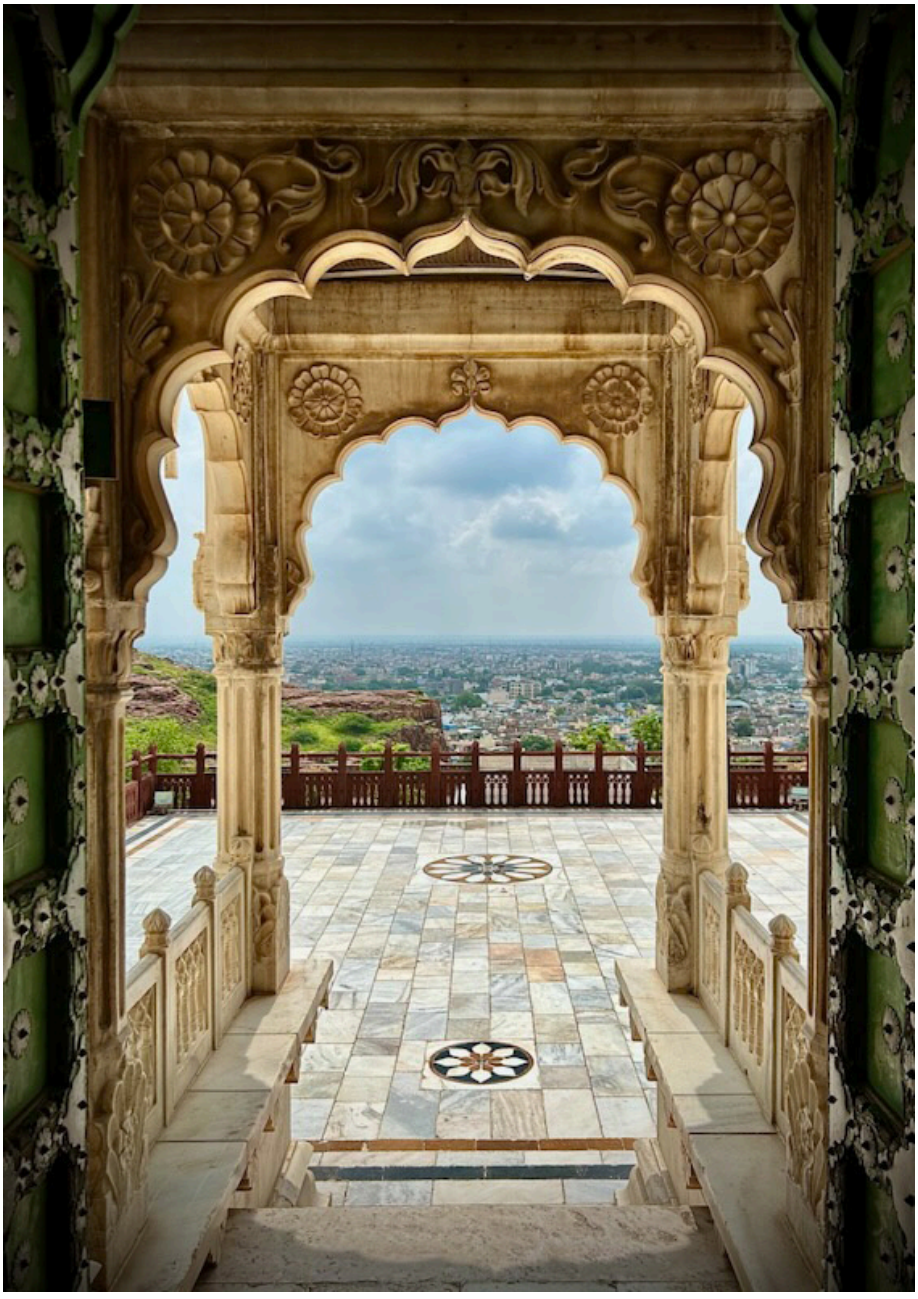
This path-breaking issue of RASR is published alongside thrilling developments in our community. As DoTAS moved from Lovett Hall to Herring Hall, the sense of community among our students has also grown, evidenced by the revitalization of the Rice Asian Studies Organization (RASO). Altogether, we hope RASR will contribute to this growth by inspiring students and scholars to study Asia with fresh perspectives. Our editorial board feels enthusiasm and responsibility as we look back at our legacy to forge new ground, and it is with this sentiment that we present the seventh volume of our journal.

Hoang Nguyen & Lily Remington, Editors-in-Chief

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Gateway

Sachi Kishinchandani



Preserving the Past, Navigating the Present: Unveiling the Evolution of the Palestinian American Identity Over the Last Century

Mehek Jain

ABSTRACT

From the early waves of immigrants navigating cultural assimilation to the emergence of a vocal youth advocating for rights and statehood, Palestinian Americans have continued to demonstrate tenacity and unity in the face of adversity. This paper explores the multifaceted evolution of this resilient Palestinian American identity over the past century, from its origins in the early Arab immigration prior to World War II to the challenges faced by successive generations. Drawing on historical context and insights from numerous interviews, it examines the impact of key events, such as the 1948 Nakba and the 1967 Six-Day War, on shaping the Palestinian American experience. Through an analysis of immigration trends, US policy towards Palestinians, sociological patterns, and various forms of political activism, the paper explores the complex dynamics of the process by which Palestinians seek to integrate into American society while preserving their heritage. Given the scarcity of relevant immigration statistics and the tendency toward a scholastic focus on the broader Arab American identity, this paper underscores the need for continued research in order to fully comprehend the nuanced tapestry of the Palestinian American identity. Nonetheless, this paper highlights how the Palestinian American identity remains a testament to the enduring quest for political recognition and cultural preservation.

Introduction

During the 1948 Nakba or "catastrophe," Israeli forces illegally expanded from their previously allocated territories and usurped Palestinian land, displacing over 700,000 Palestinians from their homes. In the aftermath of the devastation, expelled Palestinians sought sanctuary across the globe.[1] The 1967 Six-Day War compounded the displacement, forcing another 300,000 Palestinians out of Palestine.[2] While many of those displaced in 1948 and 1967 sought refuge in neighboring Arab nations, a minority ventured much farther, with some migrating to the United States. Although the Palestinian population in the U.S. remains very small today, a significant Palestinian American identity has emerged among Palestinian immigrants to the U.S. and American-born Palestinians over the last century. The lack of legal-political Palestinian recognition and the ongoing struggle for statehood have created a unique and dynamic Palestinian American identity, characterized across the generations by the delicate balance of integrating into American society while preserving Palestinian culture and heritage.

Because scholarly attention has predominantly focused on the overarching Arab American identity, few examples exist of academic attempts to explore the unique experiences and challenges faced by Palestinian Americans. This gap in the existing literature can partly be attributed to epistemological and scholastic barriers, which have hindered

efforts to conduct detailed examinations of the Palestinian American identity. By encompassing Palestinian refugees and asylum seekers, American-born Palestinians, and Palestinian American immigrants, this paper seeks to offer a comprehensive analysis of the collective experience and identity formation of Palestinian Americans. This paper adopts a similar framework to the frequently used "three-wave model" of Arab immigration, which delineates three distinct periods: the early 20th century, the mid-1940s to the 1960s, and the 1960s to the 2000s. However, this paper additionally ventures into relatively uncharted territory, exploring the identity of Palestinian Americans in the 21st century and the experience of Palestinian American youth. Particularly in light of recent geopolitical events, understanding the position of Palestinians in the United States today will be of critical significance when anticipating future trajectories of the Palestinian American experience and identity.

Arab Americans Prior to World War II

Palestinians have been in the United States for over a century. Before World War I, Arab immigrants were primarily Christians from the Greater Syria region.[3] In stark contrast to the hyphenated identity of today, early Arab immigrants saw themselves "as sojourners, as people who were in, but not part of, American society."[4] Palestinians, who might have been classified as "Turkish" or "Syrian," arrived in the second wave of Muslims from all over the Arab world alongside Jordanians, Iraqis, and Egyptians.[5] American isolationism in the wake of World War I vastly transformed immigration, subjecting many immigrants, including Palestinian Arabs, to new national-origin quotas. The Immigration Act of 1917 banned "undesirable" migrants from the "Asiatic Exclusion Zone," which included people from West Asia. A few years later, in 1921, the Emergency Quota Act first established restrictive immigration quotas based on nation of origin. The Immigration Act of 1924 then drastically reduced the annual cap to just 155,000 and allowed border policing based on racial hierarchies. Nonetheless, there were around 130,000 Arabs in the United States by the 1930s.[6] The 1922 census of Palestine by the British Mandate provides the clearest insight into the proportion of Palestinians within the overall Arab population, reporting 3,441 Palestinians living in the United States, most (1,644) of whom were Jewish and only 12% of whom were Muslim.[7] Overall, migrants arriving prior to World War II were predominantly "poor, uneducated, unskilled workers who were illiterate in Arabic and English."[8]

The identity of early Arab immigrants was largely affected by Orientalism and Western conceptualizations of whiteness. Although Orientalism positioned Arabs as culturally inferior, it simultaneously "afforded them an entry into the American scene... [by having them act] as interlocutors between 'East' and 'West.'"[9] Some early Arab immigrants additionally sought the qualification of whiteness for cultural assimilation and immigration status purposes.[10] In fact, American historian Alixa Naff portrays these early migrants as "exceptionally individualistic, sectarian, and concerned with assimilating into white American culture."[11] The position of Arabs in American racial categories continued to be a contentious point of discourse with important policy considerations throughout the 20th century. In 1942, for example, a Muslim man from Yemen was denied US citizenship because, according to the US District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan,

"Arabs as a class are not white and therefore not eligible for citizenship."[12] Even in the modern day, politicians debate the racial classification of Arabs, as evidenced in the hostile 2010 census campaign encouraging Arab Americans to "check it right, you ain't white."[13] Due to such complexities with racial classification and the small overall number of Arab immigrants, Arab American and Palestinian American identities were deeply intertwined in this early period. Nonetheless, the work of Syrian Americans from 1926 to 1940 laid the "foundations for cooperative work" which eventually led Palestine to occupy a central position in the development of the Arab American identity.[14] Simultaneously, as Palestine gained prominence in international geopolitics, Palestinians in the US began to develop their own unique identity, one that was characterized by tenacity forged in the immense struggle for statehood.

The Early Palestinian American Identity (1940s-1960s)

The emergence of international policy in the wake of the 1948 Nakba, particularly the creation of The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), forever transformed the experience and identity of Palestinian Americans. Operating in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the West Bank, and Gaza, UNRWA was established specifically to provide aid to Palestinians who had been expelled from their homes in 1948, defining Palestinian refugees as "persons whose normal place of residence was Palestine during the period 1 June 1946 to 15 May 1948, who lost both their homes and means of livelihood as a result of the 1948 Arab-Israeli conflict."[15] The critical issue with UNRWA is its effect in tandem with the 1951 Refugee Convention, which codified the definition of refugee as someone outside the country of their nationality due to persecution on the grounds of "race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion."[16] Article 1D of the Convention, however, includes the caveat that people receiving "protection or assistance" from non-UNHCR "organs or agencies of the United Nations," including UNRWA, are exempt from the Convention and its benefits.[17] The exemption of recipients of UNRWA aid has resulted in most nations, including the United States, adopting a policy of excluding "Palestinians living in Lebanon, Jordan, Syria, the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Gaza" from eligibility for refugee status under the 1951 Convention.[18] Such bifurcation of refugees may have been an intentional effort by the international community based on a reluctance to characterize the Palestinian experience as persecution due to Israel's role in global relations as well as concerns about offering a blank check to the "Third World." UNWRA's establishment as a temporary measure thus addressed the immediate refugee "crisis" perceived by the West rather than the complex geopolitical issue and related legal uncertainty faced by Palestinians.[19]

The murkiness of international policy on the question of Palestinian refugees has allowed the US to absolve itself from accepting Palestinians as refugees. Therefore, in the aftermath of the 1948 Nakba, the primary focus of US policy towards Palestinian refugees was resettlement in Israel and neighboring Arab countries. The US first unsuccessfully attempted to pressure Israel into accepting Palestinian refugees. In 1948, Israel rejected the premise that allowing Palestinians back was their responsibility, arguing that "the charge that these Arabs were forcibly driven out by Israeli authorities is wholly false."[20] Just a few years

later, in 1952, the US considered paying nearly 400 million dollars for the Syrian government to settle "up to 500,000 Palestinians in the fertile plains of the Jazira that lie between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers."[21] Although the US did not proceed with this plan, it has repeatedly chosen to provide financial assistance for refugee resettlement initiatives instead of accepting Palestinian refugees. The Foreign Aid Bill of 1951, for instance, allocated fifty million dollars to countries in the Middle East, with most of the funds given to Syria, for the purpose of resettling Arab refugees.[22] The United States' capital-focused response to the issue reflected generally unsympathetic sentiment towards Palestinian people within the country. In 1944, Congressman James A. Wright proposed Resolution 418, which reiterated a 1922 resolution by the House of Representatives favoring the Balfour Declaration and "the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people."[23] The 1952 McCarran-Walter Immigration Act and the 1953 US Refugee Relief Act then respectively entrenched racialized immigration quotas and authorized visas only for refugees fleeing communism, further solidifying the US position on Palestinian refugees and migrants.[24] Despite the stringent US policy towards Palestinian refugees, some Palestinians were able to reach the US through various other immigration pathways. While official US immigration records indicate just 4,385 Palestinian immigrants between 1948 and 1966, tens of thousands more Palestinians lived in the US at this time, having arrived from other initial places of refuge. Such immigrants included some who had migrated directly from the newly established Israel, where Arabs often endured marginalized citizenship status, and others who had come from camps across Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq, Syria, and the Jordanian-occupied West Bank.[25] Perhaps the most common avenue for entry was through American universities; hundreds of Arab students came to the US on student visas during the late 1940s and into the 1950s.[26]

The erosion of an officially acknowledged political Palestinian identity in 1948 prompted the Palestinian American community to forge a distinctive new identity, which has undergone a transformation over the last century. In *Coffins on Our Shoulders: The Experience of the Palestinian Citizens of Israel*, Dan Rabinowitz and Khawla Abu-Baker outline three generational identities of Palestinians since the 1948 Nakba. Although their research focuses on the distinct identity of Palestinian citizens in Israel, the overarching themes can nonetheless be applied to and analyzed in the context of Palestinian Americans, for many share the same experience of critical historical events and specific generational pressures. Rabinowitz and Abu-Baker first identify the "Generation of Survivors," members of which were either internal refugees as Arabs in Israel but not in their original hometowns, or external refugees exiled over the "green line," the 1949 armistice borders of Israel.[27] In the U.S, the identity of members of the "Generation of Survivors" was sculpted by their journey of adaptation to American society during a period of devastating destruction in their places of origin. These early immigrants often saw themselves as economic migrants who faced similar difficulties to other immigrants, such as cultural barriers and religious intolerance. Yet, their process of adaptation to American society was presumably less hindered by pressure to preserve Palestinian culture and religious differences than was to be the case for the post-1967 immigrants.[28]

Given limited entry pathways, most Pal-

estinian immigrants to the US after World War II were "relatively well-off, highly educated professionals: lawyers, professors, teachers, engineers, and doctors."[29] Many of them having left a devastated Palestine in the wake of the Nakba, these immigrants were "more Arab nationalist in outlook" than their predecessors.[30] Thus, Palestinian Americans of this generation were simultaneously "drawn by US freedom" and "repelled by US policies," this contradiction creating "extremely torn feelings… not as marked in the earlier immigrants."[31] Nahil Abid, an American-born Palestinian who grew up in the West Bank, reiterated such sentiments, expressing how the older generation of Palestinians may have found it "very hard to get acquainted with American society."[32] Indeed, Palestinians in the US at this time expressed little affinity for American culture due to the incompatibility of American norms with their cultural values.[33] The experience of Aziz Shihab, a Palestinian American born in Sinjil in 1927, reflects the challenges faced by post-Nakba immigrants.[34] After being driven from his home in the Nakba, Shihab lived as a second-class citizen in the Jordanian-occupied West Bank. Understanding that "the best way to get out [of the West Bank] was to go to school," Shihab applied to American universities and was accepted to Washington University in St. Louis. After his studies, Shihab landed a job as a journalist for the St. Louis Globe-Democrat. Though initially enthusiastic about the Palestinian cause, Shihab eventually grew bitter toward the US and even more so toward the Arab community as he witnessed divisions within that community.[35] Despite such integration and identity struggles, Palestinians persisted and remained in the US, continuing to demonstrate a tenacious and selfless spirit. For example, Samira F., a San Francisco librarian, explained that she would not return to Palestine in the event of the establishment of an independent state because her "children are American-born and wholly adapted."[36] Overall, the Generation of Survivors, often by necessity due to their lack of a legal identity, veered away from passionate political activism and sought integration into American society while simultaneously prioritizing their Palestinian cultural identity by building tight-knit communities and upholding cultural values.

The Effects of the 1967 Six-Day War (1960s-2000)

The treatment of childless women in AmericThe Six-Day War in 1967 marked a stark change in geopolitical dynamics and therefore also in the Palestinian American identity. Just a few months after the war, President Lyndon Johnson signed the 1967 Protocol, reiterating the US position of refraining from accepting Palestinians as refugees given the aforementioned contradictions under the 1951 Convention.[37] This qualification requirement, later codified in the Refugee Act of 1980, which defined a refugee as a person with a "well-founded fear of persecution," amounted to a specific kind of persecution, posing an insurmountable obstacle to Palestinian asylum seekers.[38] However, simultaneously, the Hart-Celler Act of 1965 began to dissolve former immigration restrictions on people from West Asia. As such, Palestinians who entered the US continued to do so primarily as immigrants rather than as officially recognized refugees. The 1980 US census listed 21,288 individuals who identified their ancestry as "Palestinian," although most Arab American organizations would estimate that the real figure was closer to 200,000.[39] Many Palestinian Americans in this "third wave" of immigration had been living on remittances

from relatives in the US and began emigrating to the US after the 1967 war.

The compound effect of the Israeli occupation and the formation of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) was a revitalized political consciousness and "awareness of being Palestinian" among Palestinians globally.[40] In the US, specifically, both the "older and newer Arab American communities were shocked" at the Zionist-sympathizing response of the US.[41] As the organization of the Arab American University Graduates (AAUG) wrote in its newsletter in 1971, "American jubilation over the Israeli victory…left most Arab-Americans aghast at the degree of insensitivity and even brutality that the US had displayed."[42] Paradoxically, the complicated emotions of remaining in a country that had perpetrated the destruction of their homeland made Palestinians "more enthusiastic participants in American life."[43] The growing role of Palestinian political consciousness in the Palestinian American identity was further facilitated by the blossoming of Palestinian organizations after 1967, such as the "Palestine Committee in Boston, the Democratic Committee for Palestine in New York City,"[44] and, importantly, the Palestine Congress of North America.[45] Arab American scholars have classified politically active Arab Americans from the 1960s through the 1980s into two types, isolationists and integrationists. Integrationists are described as "so assimilated into American culture that they lobbied for Arab issues without grasping the extent of American anti-Arab bias."[46] For instance, Naim Assed is a Palestinian American born in the West Bank who embraced his hyphenated identity but primarily identifies as an American. As a local politician in Albuquerque, New Mexico, Assed advocates for the Palestinian cause, convinced that "working within the American political system is one of the best ways of advancing the Palestinian cause."[47]

Contrastingly, isolationists are characterized as "entirely focused on Arab world issues… convinced that Americans would never support the Arab position."[48] The economic assimilation of many Palestinian Americans reflected this "isolationist" approach, as most Palestinian Americans at the time were self-employed in the grocery store business, creating an "entrepreneurial ethnic enclave or a middleman minority."[49] Indeed, the cultural effects of the Six-Day War contributed to the "isolationist" identity and experience of such Palestinian Americans. By assuming control of many Palestinian territories, Israel catalyzed "the de-Arabization of all of Palestine" during the war.[50] Palestinian Americans in the US after the war "carried a greater burden of internecine conflict than did previous waves, and hence would tend to be less likely than previous groups to consider going home."[51] As a consequence of both the war and the persistent lack of legal recognition globally, Palestinian Americans in the 1970s through 1990s felt heightened pressure to preserve their culture in the face of ongoing memoricide. The threat of memoricide, the targeted destruction of a culture, its people, and even the memory of them, was heightened after 1967 due to "appropriation and erasure of Palestinian heritage and the superimposition of a Zionist Hebrew colonizing toponymy on Palestinian sites."[52] As "members of the new, semi-westernized Palestinian middle class," many Palestinians protected their Palestinian identity against memoricide by creating local communities in the US.[53]

The city of Dearborn, Michigan represents an important case study of how the establishment of ethnic enclaves allowed Palestinian Americans of this generation to deli-

cately balance integration with cultural preservation. Dearborn, a mini-Arab community in Detroit "separated from the rest of the city by a factory complex," had a predominantly Arab population by the 1960s.[54] Sociologists Lauren Wigle and Sameer Abraham describe how migrants in Dearborn "have not assimilated into the mainstream of American society but have retained their traditional social structural arrangements as well as their language and cultural heritage."[55] A 1985 study by researcher Ronald R. Stockton reiterated this approach to the struggle to integrate faced by Palestinian American residents of Dearborn. The overwhelming majority (87%) of respondents were born outside the US, with most (74%) having immigrated after 1967.[56] The study unsurprisingly revealed that Palestinian Americans felt unwelcome in the US, with 62% of respondents feeling that the police treated Arabs differently.[57] Perception of American foreign policy on the Israel-Palestine issue further complexified the unique Palestinian American experience. In line with the "isolationist" categorization, Stockton's study found that many respondents were politically disengaged from domestic American concerns due to a perception that American parties offered limited choice in addressing the issue of their occupied homeland. When delving into political views, the survey revealed that 60% of respondents believed American politicians to be well-informed about Palestinian perspectives, while a significant 90% attributed US policy decisions to Zionist pressure.[58] Most significantly, the vast majority of Palestinian Americans shared a feeling of being exiled and, relatedly, concerns about preserving their culture. In fact, 20% of respondents planned to leave Dearborn within the following two years.[59] Concerns about young Palestinian Americans becoming Americanized, shared by 61% of respondents in the Dearborn study, explicitly reflect the fear of many at this time that "nonviolent assimilation" threatened the Palestinian national identity, especially given Palestinians' lack of legal recognition by the US.[60]

Palestinian American women in the last quarter of the 20th century experienced more challenging circumstances than their male counterparts as they struggled to integrate into American society. Gender norms and cultural practices created a social responsibility for Palestinian women to keep "Palestine alive by maintaining a strong attachment to their native culture," which in turn created more pressure to resist assimilation.[61] Additionally, Palestinian American women faced increased difficulty in pursuing an education, leading to fewer opportunities for them to integrate into the American economy.[62] Hanan, a Palestinian woman from the West Bank born in 1996, shared that, despite having lived in the US for fifteen years, "In America, I still feel that I am Palestinian, the first thing…we wish to go back and live there."[63] Until the possibility of returning to Palestine exists, Palestinian American women remain deeply concerned about the "stateless political status of the Palestinian people."[64] The wife of a respondent in a 1988 study even expressed the desire to have more children, explaining that "maybe when my children grow up, they will have five kids and we [the Palestinian people] will never disappear."[65] As the revolutionary struggle unfolds, older Palestinian American women continue to grapple with the struggle to navigate their lives in the United States and embrace integration without losing touch with their Palestinian identity, for the sake of themselves as well as the entire Palestinian American community.

Although Rabinowitz and Abu-Baker

identify this generation of Palestinians as the "Worn-Out Generation," the "one that tried to lead a transformation by means of parliamentary and civil action," in reality, this characterization as "worn-out" fails to encapsulate the particularly tenacious spirit of Palestinian Americans at this difficult time.[66] Paradoxically, domestic targeting and international oppression have fueled unity within the Palestinian community and strengthened nationalist identity. For instance, in response to increased FBI surveillance and targeting by the Immigration and Naturalization Services (INS), the AAUG established a Palestine human rights task force in April of 1977.[67] Evidently, as historian Pamela Pennock argues, there is no strict binary between "isolationists" and "integrationists."[68] Rather, the Six-Day War affected each Palestinian's identity and experience in the US differently, creating a spectrum of activism and integration among Palestinian Americans. Consistent across the spectrum was the "duality of…identity as both Americans and Palestinians."[69] The Palestinian American identity just before the turn of the century was thus characterized by a desire to embrace and strengthen a complex identity that involved remaining "Palestinian while in the United States."

Palestinian Americans in the 21st Century

In the 21st century, the number of Palestinian refugees entering the US remains miniscule. Over the last twenty years, less than 0.2% of the refugees entering the US were Palestinian.[70] Over the last decade, fewer than six hundred Palestinian refugees have been admitted, with just sixteen in 2022[71] and only fifty-six out of a total of 600,000 refugees in 2023.[72] The miniscule number of Palestinian refugees is a consequence of stagnant US policy towards such refugees and asylum seekers. The US Department of State maintains that the US does not formally recognize the Palestinian Authority (PA) as a "foreign government."[73] Therefore, migrants from "Israel, Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza" holding passports issued by the PA must follow specific procedures for different visa categories. Certain visa applications made by holders of PA passports, including those involving A-1, A-2, A-3, C-3, G-1, and G-2 categories, must be submitted to the Department of State for an advisory opinion. Despite this restrictive policy, the overall number of Palestinian Americans continues to gradually increase, with the 2000 census estimating that around 250,000 Palestinian individuals resided in the country.[74]

Palestinian Americans of the 21st century are often celebrated as optimistic youth with a revolutionary spirit and hope for a better future. Under Rabinowitz and Abu-Baker's categorization, the "Stand-Tall Generation," members of which were born as "Palestinian citizens of Israel… in Israel in the last quarter of the twentieth century," are highly educated, vocal about demanding their rights, and passionate about revitalizing a Palestinian identity.[75] In Palestine, Israel, and the US, the Stand-Tall Generation's "representatives and leaders, many of them women, display a new assertive voice, an abrasive style, and unequivocal substantive clarity."[76] The tenacious spirit of Palestinian Americans today is inherited from previous generations and has only strengthened in recent years. Mirroring how Palestinians mobilized and united against increased FBI surveillance in the 1970s, Palestinian Americans again found strength in their community during the "war on terror." Following 9/11, "public expression of Palestinian identity and political solidarity with Palestinian people put..

[Palestinians] in close proximity with the 'terrorists.'"[77] Palestinian students in the US were particularly targeted, grossly mischaracterized by university administrations as "inherently violent, full of hate, and threatening to Israeli and US national security."[78]

Most importantly, the struggle for statehood, increasing in urgency since 1967, has become a critical element of the Palestinian American identity in the 21st century. A 2008 study of Palestinian and Israeli émigrés to the United States revealed that Palestinian Americans identified themselves as "still in a struggle for statehood and for the end to the Israeli occupation."[79] Although the political consciousness of Palestinian Americans rose in tandem with activism across the Arab American community, the struggle for statehood has differentiated the Palestinian American identity for two critical reasons. First, many Palestinian Americans increasingly prioritize their Palestinian identity over any form of Arab identity, believing that "America and the Arab world had ignored or betrayed Palestinians" in their dismal response to the "Arab-Israeli Conflict."[80] Second, unlike most other Arab immigrants, Palestinians in the US today still wish to return to Palestine if possible, as vocalized by Hanan. Many Palestinian Americans express the sentiment that, in contrast to other immigrants, "becoming American is not a choice made enthusiastically but a passive act, taken because there is no other or no better alternative."[81] The unique struggle for statehood has led Palestinian Americans, even American-born second-generation Palestinians, to exhibit "a high and growing degree of political consciousness and ethnic pride."[82] Fuad Mogan-nam, a Palestinian American of the "Generation of Survivors," shared that his five children are "more Palestinian than I am" due to the prominence of the Palestinian cause in the news.[83] In the contemporary day, it is "virtually impossible to be a Palestinian in America without also being political about it" largely because Palestinians are not given legal, political recognition.[84] Palestinian immigrants in the 21st century similarly find themselves at a pivotal juncture, where the ongoing struggle for statehood highlights the paramount importance of safeguarding the Palestinian identity. This sentiment is exemplified in individuals such as Najat Arafat Khelil, a nuclear physicist in the Washington, D.C. area originally from Nablus. Khelil has not sought American citizenship, explaining that "I feel I cannot identify with any other part of the world until I get my full identity first as a Palestinian. Then I would say, 'Okay, I'm an American.' Because the other identity would be there, clear, settled within me, and I'm satisfied with it."[85]

Pop culture and the media have brought this generation of activist and resilient Palestinian Americans to the limelight. The recent Netflix original *Mo*, for example, depicts the semi-autobiographical experience of a Palestinian refugee living in Houston.[86] *Mo* highlights the contemporary struggles faced by Palestinian Americans dealing with issues related to their multicultural identity, legal difficulties with asylum applications (Mo's has been pending for over twenty years), and troubling economic situations due to a lack of work-related documentation. Mo voices the frustration felt by many Palestinian American youth, lamenting in the very first episode: "I never been to Palestine [sic]. I don't have citizenship there, I don't have citizenship here. I'm like a refugee free agent. I don't even have a fucking passport. All I have is my asylum claim."[87] *Mo* also highlights the generational differences in identity among Palestinian Americans; whereas Mo's mother prioritizes traditional values

and the Palestinian community, even refusing to fire their incompetent fellow Palestinian immigration lawyer, Mo seems to embody a more hyphenated identity. Mo cares deeply about his Palestinian heritage, carrying around a bottle of olive oil everywhere as a memory of home, yet he simultaneously embraces integration, as evidenced by his American slang, Western fashion sense, and interracial relationship. Palestinian journalist Christina Bouri similarly wrote in the *LA Times* of her experience as a Palestinian American, concluding that "my silence [on my identity] comes from an identity that has been shaped by others who do not account for the true nature of Palestinians…. [but] staying silent is no longer an option."[88] The new focus on the experiences of Palestinians in the US through the media and activism reflects an optimistic resurgence of the Palestinian American identity.

In light of the ongoing war in Gaza since October 7th, 2023, US Republican policymakers are seeking to restrict the already minuscule number of Palestinian refugees coming into the US In October, Florida Governor and Republican presidential candidate Ron DeSantis accused former U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley of "trying to 'import' Palestinians into the US"[89] On SiriusXM's "The Megyn Kelly Show," DeSantis deeply mischaracterized the current situation, claiming that "the destruction of the Jewish state…. is a widespread, deeply embedded belief amongst Palestinian Arabs in the Gaza Strip."[90] Similarly, Donald Trump has vowed to expand his previous Muslim travel ban to Gaza, asserting that the US must not bring "in anyone from Gaza, Syria, Somalia, Yemen or Libya or anywhere else that threatens our security."[91] Republicans have attempted to institutionalize these efforts to block Palestinian refugees from entering the US through the Guaranteeing Aggressors Zero Admission (GAZA) Act, which would "prevent the Biden administration from issuing visas to people with Palestinian Authority passports."[92] Democrats have not responded to such Republican policy initiatives, with the Biden administration failing to publicly talk "about a special carveout for Palestinians."[93] The only action undertaken by the Biden administration has been the issuance of a memorandum deferring the deportation of a select number of Palestinians for a duration of eighteen months due to the determination that "humanitarian conditions in the Palestinian territories, and primarily Gaza, have significantly deteriorated."[94] As the conflict in Gaza tragically persists, the effects of such bipartisan inaction and international oppression will certainly influence how Palestinian American identity continues to be shaped. Rabinowitz and Abu-Baker attribute the clarity and spirit of defiance in the "Stand-Tall Generation" to their experience of being witness to "dramatic – sometimes traumatic – constitutive experience," including the October 2000 events.[95] Drawing from this analysis and reflecting on the series of tragic events in recent months, it is perhaps likely that the Palestinian American identity will evolve further, becoming even more resilient and articulate in the coming decade.

Limitations in Research

Despite the relative growth in research on Palestinian Americans in the last few decades, significant limitations and obstacles remain in relation to attempts to define the Palestinian experience in the United States. A considerable portion of the participants in the studies considered were born outside the US and therefore presumably lack American citizenship, yet these studies fail to elucidate

the circumstances of their entry to the country. Consequently, discerning the distinct experiences of individuals based on their entry methods proves nearly impossible. The task of identifying Palestinian Americans from public data is already immensely challenging due to the various classifications assigned to Palestinians. For instance, Yinon Cohen and Andrea Tyree's sample consisted of 3,513 Israeli-born individuals, a group that encompassed male and female immigrants of Jewish and Arab descent across all age groups.[96] In order to differentiate between Arabs and Jews within this cohort, the researchers employed a combination of inquiries related to language and ancestry. The researchers could not simply rely on a birthplace criterion because individuals reporting the West Bank as their birthplace were categorized as having been born in an "unspecified" country, while those indicating Palestine or Israel were coded as Israeli-born in the dataset.[97] Other researchers have identified similar obstacles, such as that Palestinians who relocated to the United States after fleeing from Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, or other countries are often misclassified as nationals of their transit countries rather than as Palestinians.[98] Thus, immigration statistics are significantly limited primarily "because the US Immigration and Naturalization Service has only rarely recognized 'Palestinian' as a nationality."[99] Finally, the majority of these studies are very outdated, with Stockton's research in Dearborn dating back to 1985 and Christison's interviews conducted between October 1987 and November 1988. Similarly, Cohen and Tyree's examination of Palestinian and Jewish Israeli-born immigrants in the United States relies on data extracted from the Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) in the 1980 US census.[100] Therefore, to facilitate the development and dissemination of Palestinian Americans' unique experiences, scholars must prioritize the collection of up-to-date, accurate immigration and demographic data as well as individualized personal interviews.

Conclusion

Over the past century, the Palestinian American identity has undergone a critical transformation. Before World War II, Arab American and Palestinian American identities were deeply intertwined, sharing prevailing concerns of their position in American racial categories. The intricate challenges posed by US policy concerning the recognition of refugee status and a legal Palestinian identity became acutely pressing after the 1948 Nakba, and were renewed after the 1967 Six-Day War. While early post-1948 Palestinian immigrants, many of them students, focused on integration into American society, Palestinian political consciousness in the US was dramatically reinvigorated after 1967. Political activism and ethnic enclaves arose, creating both tension and opportunity for Palestinian Americans' hyphenated identity. The 21st century has brought politically active and optimistic Palestinian American youth into the limelight, with the struggle for statehood persisting as a central element of their identity. Thus, the Palestinian American identity is marked by the nuanced pursuit of integration into American society while zealously safeguarding the rich tapestry of Palestinian culture. As the Palestinian American community navigates the complexities of the present, it remains poised to shape its identity, embodying resilience, solidarity, and an unwavering pursuit of a brighter future.

Notes

1. "UN marks 75 years since displacement of 700,000 Palestin-

ians," *United Nations News*, May 15, 2023.

2. "UN marks 75 years since displacement of 700,000 Palestinians."

3. Michael W. Suleiman, *Arabs in America: Building a New Future* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1999), 1.

4. Suleiman, *Arabs in America: Building a New Future*, 4.

5. Gregory Orfalea, *The Arab Americans: A History* (Northampton, Mass: Olive Branch Press, 2006), 152-153.

6. Suleiman, *Arabs in America: Building a New Future*, 2.

7. J.B. Barron, "Palestine: Report and General Abstracts of the Census of 1922," Superintendent of the Census, 1922.

8. Amaney A. Jamal and Nadine Naber, *Race and Arab Americans before and after 9/11: From Invisible Citizens to Visible Subjects* (Syracuse, N.Y: Syracuse University Press, 2008), 9.

9. Suraya Khan, "Finding Palestine in America: The Impact of the Arab-Israeli Conflict on Arab-American Identity and Activism," PhD diss. Rice University, 2018, 7.

10. Khan, "Finding Palestine in America," 126.

11. Khan, "Finding Palestine in America," 20.

12. Suleiman, *Arabs in America: Building a New Future*, 7.

13. Sarah M.A. Gualtieri and Pauline Homsi Vinson, "Arab/Americas: Locations and Iterations," *Amerasia Journal* 44, no. 1 (2018): xiii

14. Khan, "Finding Palestine in America," 66.

15. "Palestine Refugees," *United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East*.

16. "The 1951 Refugee Convention," *United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees*.

17. "The 1951 Refugee Convention."

18. Julia Ainsley, "Republicans want to ban Palestinian refugees from entering the U.S., but it's already very hard for them to get in," *NBC News*, October 17, 2023.

19. Daniel Cohen, *In War's Wake: European Refugees in the Postwar Order* (Oxford University Press, 2011), 146.

20. Donald Neff, "U.S. Policy and the Palestinian Refugees," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 18, no. 1 (1988).

21. Joshua Landis, "Early U.S. Policy toward Palestinian Refugees: the Syria Option," in *The Palestinian Refugees: Old Problems - New Solutions*, eds. Joseph Ginat and Edward J. Perkins (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 2001).

22. Landis, "Early U.S. Policy toward Palestinian Refugees: the Syria Option."

23. Khan, "Finding Palestine in America," 69.

24. Khan, "Finding Palestine in America," 140.

25. Orfalea, The Arab Americans: A History, 152.

26. Khan, "Finding Palestine in America," 122.

27. Abu-Baker Khawla and Dan Rabinowitz, *Coffins on Our Shoulders the Experience of the Palestinian Citizens of Israel,* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 13.

28. Louise Cainkar, "Palestinian Women in American Society: The Interaction of Social Class, Culture, and Politics," in *The Development of Arab-American Identity*, ed. Ernest Nasseph McCarus, 91.

29. Suleiman, *Arabs in America: Building a New Future*, 9.

30. Orfalea, *The Arab Americans: A History*, 152-153.

31. Orfalea, *The Arab Americans: A History*, 153.

32. Kathleen Christison, "The American Experience: Palestinians in the U.S," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 18, no. 4 (1989): 21.

33. Christison, "The American Experience: Palestinians in the U.S," 21.

34. Orfalea, *The Arab Americans: A History*, 162.

35. Orfalea, *The Arab Americans: A History*, 163-165.

36. Christison, "The American Experience: Palestinians in the U.S," 26.

37. "Refugee Act of 1980," *National Archives Foundation*.

38. "Refugee Act of 1980."

39. Christison, "The American Experience: Palestinians in the U.S," 18.

40. Christison, "The American Experience: Palestinians in the U.S," 30.

41. Suleiman, *Arabs in America: Building a New Future*, 10.

42. "AAUG – The First Year," AAUG Newsletter 4, no. 1 (March 1971), 1.

43. Orfalea, *The Arab Americans: A History*, 190.

44. Pamela E. Pennock, *The Rise of the Arab American Left : Activists, Allies, and Their Fight against Imperialism and Racism, 1960s-1980s* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2017), 26..

45. Pennock, *The Rise of the Arab American Left Activists*, 210.

46. Pennock, *The Rise of the Arab American Left Activists*, 9.

47. Christison, "The American Experience: Palestinians in the U.S," 22.

48. Pennock, *The Rise of the Arab American Left Activists*, 9.

49. Yinon Cohen and Andrea Tyree, "Palestinian and Jewish Israeli-born immigrants in the United States," *International Migration Review* 28, no. 2 (1994).
50. Cainkar, "Palestinian Women in American Society: The Interaction of Social Class, Culture, and Politics," 91.
51. Orfalea, *The Arab Americans: A History*, 190.
52. Nur Masalha, "Settler-Colonialism, Memoricide and Indigenous Toponymic Memory: The Appropriation of Palestinian Place Names by the Israeli State," *The Journal of Holy Land and Palestine Studies* 14, no. 1 (2015): 14.
53. Cainkar, "Palestinian Women in American Society: The Interaction of Social Class, Culture, and Politics," 92.
54. Ronald R. Stockton, "The Palestinians of Dearborn, Michigan," Psychological Reports 56, no. 1 (1985): 123
55. Pennock, *The Rise of the Arab American Left Activists*, 169
56. Stockton, "The Palestinians of Dearborn, Michigan," 125.
57. Stockton, "The Palestinians of Dearborn, Michigan," 125.
58. Stockton, "The Palestinians of Dearborn, Michigan," 127-128.
59. Stockton, "The Palestinians of Dearborn, Michigan," 125.
60. Stockton, "The Palestinians of Dearborn, Michigan," 125.
61. Cainkar, "Palestinian Women in American Society: The Interaction of Social Class, Culture, and Politics," 86-88.
62. Cainkar, "Palestinian Women in American Society: The Interaction of Social Class, Culture, and Politics," 93.
63. Julia Chaitin et al., "Belonging to the conflict: collective identities among Israeli and Palestinian émigrés to the United States," *Journal for the Study of Race, Nation and Culture* 15, no. 2 (2009): 216-217..
64. Cainkar, "Palestinian Women in American Society: The Interaction of Social Class, Culture, and Politics," 88.
65. Christison, "The American Experience: Palestinians in the U.S," 29.
66. Khawla and Dan Rabinowitz, *Coffins on Our Shoulders the Experience of the Palestinian Citizens of Israel*, 98.
67. Khan, "Finding Palestine in America," 219.
68. Pennock, *The Rise of the Arab American Left Activists*, 9.
69. Christison, "The American Experience: Palestinians in the U.S," 22.
70. Nathan Citino et al., "Generations of Palestinian Refugees Face Protracted Displacement and Dispossession," *Migration Policy Institute*, May 3, 2023.
71. Vaughn Hillyard et al., "Trump vows to expand his travel ban to Gaza," *NBC News*, Oct. 16, 2023.
72. Julia Ainsley, "Republicans want to ban Palestinian refugees from entering the U.S., but it's already very hard for them to get in," *NBC News*, October 17, 2023.
73. "U.S. Visa: Reciprocity and Civil Documents by Country: Israel, Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza," U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Consular Affairs.
74. Orfalea, *The Arab Americans: A History*, 201.
75. Khawla and Dan Rabinowitz, *Coffins on Our Shoulders the Experience of the Palestinian Citizens of Israel*, 3.
76. Khawla and Dan Rabinowitz, *Coffins on Our Shoulders the Experience of the Palestinian Citizens of Israel*, 2.
77. Jamal and Naber, *Race and Arab Americans before and after 9/11 : From Invisible Citizens to Visible Subjects*, 299.
78. Jamal and Naber, *Race and Arab Americans before and after 9/11 : From Invisible Citizens to Visible Subjects*, 301.
79. Chaitin, "Belonging to the conflict: collective identities among Israeli and Palestinian émigrés to the United States," 220.
80. Khan, "Finding Palestine in America, 19.
81. Christison, "The American Experience: Palestinians in the U.S," 19.
82. Christison, "The American Experience: Palestinians in the U.S," 19.
83. Christison, "The American Experience: Palestinians in the U.S," 33.
84. Christison, "The American Experience: Palestinians in the U.S," 29.
85. Christison, "The American Experience: Palestinians in the U.S," 26.
86. Mohammed Amer and Ramy Youssef, dir. *Mo*, Netflix, 2022.
87. Amer, *Mo*, episode 1 (14:11-14:24).
88. Christina Bouri, "Opinion: As a Palestinian, I felt fortunate to grow up in California. That doesn't mean it was easy," *LA Times*, November 24, 2023.
89. Ainsley, "Republicans want to ban Palestinian refugees from entering the US, but it's already very hard for them to get in."
90. Ainsley, "Republicans want to ban Palestinian refugees from entering the US, but it's already very hard for them to get in."

91. Hillyard, "Trump vows to expand his travel ban to Gaza."
92. Ainsley, "Republicans want to ban Palestinian refugees from entering the US, but it's already very hard for them to get in."
93. Hillyard, "Trump vows to expand his travel ban to Gaza."
94. Biden R. Joseph, "Memorandum on the Deferred Enforced Departure for Certain Palestinians," The White House, February 14, 2024.
95. Khawla and Dan Rabinowitz, *Coffins on Our Shoulders the Experience of the Palestinian Citizens of Israel*, 10.
96. Cohen and Tyree, "Palestinian and Jewish Israeli-born immigrants in the United States."
97. Cohen and Tyree, "Palestinian and Jewish Israeli-born immigrants in the United States."
98. Chaitin, "Belonging to the conflict: collective identities among Israeli and Palestinian émigrés to the United States," 213.
99. Christison, "The American Experience: Palestinians in the U.S," 18.
100. Cohen and Tyree, "Palestinian and Jewish Israeli-born immigrants in the United States."

Bibliography

"AAUG – The First Year," AAUG Newsletter 4, no. 1, March 1971.

Ainsley, Julia. "Republicans want to ban Palestinian refugees from entering the U.S., but it's already very hard for them to get in." *NBC News*. October 17, 2023. https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/immigration/republicans-want-ban-palestinian-refugees-already-hard-get-in-us-rcna120892.

Amer, Mohammed and Ramy Youssef, dir. *Mo*. Netflix, 2022. https://www.netflix.com/search?q=mo&jbv=81134264

Barron, J.B. "Palestine: Report and General Abstracts of the Census of 1922." Superintendent of the Census, 1922. https://archive.org/details/PalestineCensus1922/page/n59/mode/2up.

Bouri, Christina. "Opinion: As a Palestinian, I felt fortunate to grow up in California. That doesn't mean it was easy." *LA Times*. November 24, 2023. https://www.latimes.com/opinion/story/2023-11-24/Palestinian American-california-gaza-israel-war-arab-jordan.

Cainkar, Louise. "Palestinian Women in American Society: The Interaction of Social Class, Culture, and Politics." In *The Development of Arab-American Identity*, edited by Ernest Nasseph McCarus, 85-106.

Citino, Nathan, et al. "Generations of Palestinian Refugees Face Protracted Displacement and Dispossession." *Migration Policy Institute*. May 3, 2023. https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/palestinian-refugees-dispossession.

Chaitin, Julia, et al. "Belonging to the conflict: collective identities among Israeli and Palestinian émigrés to the United States." *Journal for the Study of Race, Nation and Culture* 15, no. 2 (2009): 207-225.https://doi.org/10.1080/13504630902778644.

Christison, Kathleen. "The American Experience: Palestinians in the U.S." *Journal of Palestine Studies* 18, no. 4 (1989): 18–36. https://www.jstor.org/stable/2537495.

Cohen, Daniel. *In War's Wake: European Refugees in the Postwar Order*. Oxford University Press, 2011.

Cohen, Yinon, and Andrea Tyree. "Palestinian and Jewish Israeli-born immigrants in the United States." *International Migration Review* 28, no. 2 (1994): 243-265. https://link-gale-com.ezproxy.rice.edu/apps/doc/A15543035/AONE?u=txshracd2542&sid=bookmark-AONE&xid=fb74a081.

Gualtieri, Sarah M.A. and Pauline Homsi Vinson. "Arab/Americas: Locations and Iterations." *Amerasia Journal* 44, no. 1 (2018): vii-xxi. doi.org/10.17953/aj.44.1.vii-xxi

Hillyard, Vaughn, et al. "Trump vows to expand his travel ban to Gaza." *NBC News*. Oct. 16, 2023. https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/donald-trump/trump-vows-expand-travel-ban-gaza-rcna120711

Jamal, Amaney A., and Nadine Naber. *Race and Arab Americans before and after 9/11 : From Invisible Citizens to Visible Subjects*. Syracuse, N.Y: Syracuse University Press, 2008.

Joseph, Biden R. "Memorandum on the Deferred Enforced Departure for Certain Palestinians." The White House. February 14, 2024. https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2024/02/14/memorandum-on-the-deferred-enforced-departure-for-certain-palestinians/.

Khan, Suraya. "Finding Palestine in America: The Impact of the Arab-Israeli Conflict on Arab-American Identity and Activ-

ism," PhD diss. Rice University, 2018.

Khawla, Abu-Baker and Dan Rabinowitz . *Coffins on Our Shoulders the Experience of the Palestinian Citizens of Israel*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005.

Landis, Joshua. "Early U.S. Policy toward Palestinian Refugees: the Syria Option." In *The Palestinian Refugees: Old Problems - New Solutions,* edited by Joseph Ginat and Edward J. Perkins, 77-87. Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 2001. https://joshualandis.oucreate.com//US%20Policy%20toward%20Palestine%20Refugees%20new.htm.

Masalha, Nur. "Settler-Colonialism, Memoricide and Indigenous Toponymic Memory: The Appropriation of Palestinian Place Names by the Israeli State." *The Journal of Holy Land and Palestine Studies* 14, no. 1 (2015): 3–57. DOI: 10.3366/hlps.2015.0103.

Neff, Donald. "U.S. Policy and the Palestinian Refugees." *Journal of Palestine Studies* 18, no. 1. (1988). https://www.palestine-studies.org/en/node/39331.

Orfalea, Gregory. *The Arab Americans : A History*. Northampton, Mass: Olive Branch Press, 2006.

"Palestine Refugees." United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East. https://www.unrwa.org/palestine-refugees.

Pennock, Pamela E. *The Rise of the Arab American Left : Activists, Allies, and Their Fight against Imperialism and Racism, 1960s-1980s.* Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2017.

"Refugee Act of 1980." *National Archives Foundation*. https://www.archivesfoundation.org/documents/refugee-act-1980/#:~:text=It%20raised%20the%20annual%20ceiling,between%20Congress%20and%20the%20President.

Stockton, Ronald R. "The Palestinians of Dearborn, Michigan." *Psychological Reports* 56, no. 1 (1985): 123-129.https://doi.org/10.2466/pr0.1985.56.1.123.

Suleiman, Michael W. A*rabs in America: Building a New Future*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1999.

"The 1951 Refugee Convention." *United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees*. https://www.unhcr.org/us/about-unhcr/who-we-are/1951-refugee-convention.

"U.S. Visa: Reciprocity and Civil Documents by Country: Israel, Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza." U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Consular Affairs. https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/Visa-Reciprocity-and-Civil-Documents-by-Country/Israel.html#.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

MEHEK JAIN

SENIOR, LOVETT COLLEGE
HISTORY & POLITICAL SCIENCE

Mehek wrote this paper in the Fall of 2022 for HIST 372: Immigration and the State in the 19th & 20th Century. As an international student, Mehek is passionate about studying the history and politics of global migration patterns to facilitate the development of equitable immigration practices. Her study on Palestinian immigration and identity is driven by her scholastic focus on contemporary Asian history and, more critically, a keen interest in understanding the resilience of a population navigating profound adversity.

Pune's Flowers

Sachi Kishinchandani

The Aesthetic Behind Asian Avant-Garde Music: Fusion of Native Asian and Contemporary Western Techniques in Works by East Asian Composers

Richard (Yicheng) Li

ABSTRACT

Academic musicology tends to focus on works within the context of Western traditions, while ethnomusicology tends to focus on regional folk traditions. Scholars rarely study works by contemporary East Asian composers due to the high demand for intellectuality in Western music theory as well as the historical and cultural backgrounds of certain Asian artworks. However, by analyzing them through both a theoretical and cultural framework, discoveries with relevance to both fields may be made. Using this method to dissect works by contemporary East Asian composers such as Tōru Takemitsu, Chen Yi, and Qigang Chen, this paper proposes the existence of a unique musical aesthetic, "East Asian Vanguardism," created by a fusion of Western techniques with elements of each composer's Asian heritage.

Musicologists regard the turn of the twentieth century as one of the most revolutionary periods in the history of music. During this period, Second Viennese School composers such as Arnold Schoenberg, Alban Berg, and Anton Webern, among others, directly confronted the concept of tonality, a defining characteristic of Western music since the early 1600s (Donat, 1972). These composers are termed "avant-garde" due to the set of new musical languages they were able to introduce to the world. This set of languages became extremely influential to composers who came after them, yet was socially unacceptable in the context of the artistic standards of their time. Less well-known to the public—but arguably no less revolutionary—is a new school of composition known for its fusion of East Asian music traditions with Western contemporary techniques.

In the context of Western classical music, "contemporary music" often refers to works composed during the period from the early twentieth century up to the present day, most of which are known for their complexity, innovation, and even provocation, when compared with works that came before them (Donat, 1972). The combination of techniques used in works from this school is arguably no less musically revolutionary an endeavor than the innovations of the Second Viennese School. This is a movement that began with Chou Wen-Chung and Tōru Takemitsu and continues today with composers such as Chen Yi and Qigang Chen.

In successfully attempting to represent their Asian heritage through the use of authentic Asian music while following the principles of Western music contemporary to their time, these composers mark themselves out as very artistically innovative under the contexts of both Eastern and Western music. Furthermore,

I would argue that their works can be deemed avant-garde in the same sense as those of the Second Viennese School, in that they also introduced a new musical language by creating cultural fusion in music without the involvement of any cultural stereotypes. A term that I coined based on my research, "pentatonic romanticism" refers to such "conventionally established or commercially exploited forms of cultural representation" in Western music, which are easily identifiable through the use of the pentatonic scale (Utz, 2003). Based on this understanding, I coined the additional term "East Asian Vanguardism" to describe this movement, especially its critical attitude towards the pre-established form of cultural fusion noted above, pentatonic romanticism. It is worth mentioning that within the context of music, the term "Vanguardism" can be used in relation to boundary-pushing artwork that breaks with precedents, and is not to be confused with Vladimir Lenin's political ideology of the same name.

In this paper, I will first explain the aesthetic behind "East Asian Vanguardism," describing its historical background and characteristics, before contrasting it with "pentatonic romanticism." Lastly, I will introduce three examples that highlight different aspects of fusion and analyze them using both theoretical and socio-cultural frameworks.

Authenticity of Cultural Fusion in Music – The Problem with "Pentatonic Romanticism"

As mentioned earlier, the composers of cultural fusion music are considered avant-garde due to their use of authentic Asian music within a contemporary Western context (Utz, 2003). In other words, they intentionally go beyond merely superficial pentatonic romanticism, which defined most earlier attempts at East-West fusion by Westerners. The most famous examples of such attempts are late-19th-century Italian composer Giacomo Puccini's operas *Turandot* and *Madama Butterfly*. While these works have achieved great commercial and critical success, they have contributed to a widely accepted misconception that certain Westernized folksongs from Asia are "authentic" Asian music (Utz, 2003). Despite such works having opened the gate to the exploration of Asian music cultures, their extensive usage of the pentatonic scale has created such a strong association between it and Asian music that many listeners mistake otherwise Western compositions for authentic Asian folk songs, even though "pentatonicism" itself is a phenomenon shared by music cultures around the world.

Thus, although many Asian musical systems are based around pentatonic scales, this does not imply that any piece of music using a pentatonic scale should be considered "Asian." Asian musical traditions are composed of their unique tuning systems, textures, and timbres, and these are the aspects of Asian music that the composers mentioned above have focused on. Furthermore, these composers have employed traditional Asian instruments, orchestration techniques, and extra-musical elements such as calligraphy and literature in their works—a major distinction between their works and music based on the concept of pentatonic romanticism. Professionally trained in Western traditions, they also strive to find structural commonalities between traditional Asian music and Western atonal music.

The Characteristics and History of "East Asian Vanguardism"

In the years following World War II, Ja-

pan's attitude towards American culture and ideologies shifted dramatically as the country came under Allied occupation. The Japanese, traumatized by years of horrendous warfare, started to idolize the wealthy and seemingly self-confident "leader of the free world" by emulating every aspect of its culture, from food to music and Hollywood movies. As a result, Western music came to be viewed as more fashionable and modernistic than the products of Japan's own musical traditions (Metzler, 2007). It was in this environment that Tōru Takemitsu (1930-1996), a Japanese composer credited as the pioneer of cultural fusion music, started his musical training under the heavy influence of American composers:

> Right after the war, I listened constantly to American music over the Armed Forces Radio. I also went very, very frequently to the Library of the Civil Information and Education branch of the U.S. Occupation government. There I also sought out American music. Through hearing the music of Roy Harris, Aaron Copland, Walter Piston, Roger Sessions, and such great American composers, I was introduced to an unknown world, and I gradually began to develop a sense of my own musical taste (Takemitsu, 1989).

But it wasn't until later in his career that Takemitsu would develop a fascination for traditional Japanese music. Upon experiencing a performance of Japanese puppet theater (*bunraku*), he was shocked by the great timbral potential of instruments from his own culture that he had failed to recognize before. From that point on, he became devoted to the study of Japanese musical traditions, with a particular focus on differences between Japanese and Western traditions.

While Takemitsu is regarded as the first to attempt cultural fusion in music, the credit for "translating" authentic East Asian harmony and rhythm into the terms of contemporary Western music goes to Chinese composer Chou Wen-Chung (1923-2019). While Takemitsu remained in his hometown throughout most of his career, Chou moved to the U.S. at an early age to complete his graduate composition studies under renowned composers such as Edgard Varèse. It was only after moving abroad that Chou began to take his Chinese heritage seriously, conducting intensive research on classical Chinese music and literature, which he referenced extensively in his later compositions (Chang, 2001).

Similar to the postwar era in Japan, the decade immediately following the Cultural Revolution in China in the late 1970s also witnessed a series of reforms highly influenced by the United States. Deng Xiaoping, the newly appointed leader of the Chinese Communist Party after the death of Mao in 1976, initiated a series of economic reforms with the goal of reconnecting China with the global economy. During this time, China saw a huge influx of Western products and cultural values (Yu, 2008). As both Western powers and the Chinese Communist Party sought to reconcile their diplomatic relationships, members of a new generation of Chinese composers who had just completed their undergraduate studies at the recently reopened Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing were being selected to further polish their craft in the West. Most of these composers went to the U.S. to study with Chou (who was on the composition faculty at Columbia at the time), while a few others went to Europe. Among them were some of the most renowned composers living today,

such as Tan Dun, Zhou Long, Chen Yi, Bright Shang, and Qigang Chen. Under the guidance of Chou and other composers, these composers also expanded their musical vocabulary by looking back at their traditions, history, and cultural backgrounds (Utz, 2003).

Thus, the two core elements of the "East Asian Vanguardism" school of composition can be summarized as: 1) a reimagining of traditional East Asian music through the employment of contemporary Western composition techniques, or vice versa; and 2) a refutation of the preconceived and misleading notation of "Asian music" represented by pentatonic romanticism. Composers whose works follow this practice generally began their musical training in Western traditions but were heavily influenced by the native music of their own respective cultures, which they rediscovered later in their careers. In the case of all of the composers studied, their prior encounters with Western music helped them to appreciate the music of their own cultures in new ways.

While my research for this paper focused solely on this group of composers, it is important to note that other possible configurations of cultural fusion in music also exist, such as the case of contemporary Western composers heavily influenced by Asian musical traditions, or the case of traditionally-trained Asian composers influenced by contemporary Western music. For instance, works by the French composer Claude Debussy and American experimentalist composer John Cage show heavy influences from Balinese gamelan music, while the traditionally-trained Chinese pipa player Wu Man became an expert in the contemporary pipa repertoire, most of which are composed by classically-trained composers, including the three that I will be discussing in this paper.

Large-scale Pitch Organization in Takemitsu's November Steps

To any classical music enthusiast, Tōru Takemitsu is a name that needs no further introduction. Regarded by many as one of the greatest Asian composers who ever lived, his works played a crucial role in shaping the aesthetics of East Asian Vanguardism. Commissioned by the New York Philharmonic in 1967, *November Steps* was arguably the first attempt at cultural fusion within the context of contemporary classical music. The composer's ambition to achieve cultural fusion is put on full display in the instrumentation alone, as it is scored for the *shakuhachi*, the Japanese vertical bamboo flute, and the *biwa*, the Japanese lute, along with a full Western orchestra (Takemitsu, 1989).

Perhaps the most notable deviation from traditional Western music is that the overall quality of the soundscape holds superiority over the individual pitches instead of the other way around, as seen in most Western classical compositions. But this in no way suggests that the pitches themselves are of no importance. In fact, the pitch material in *November Steps* was carefully crafted by Takemitsu employing traditional Japanese music theory to achieve an East Asian avant-garde soundscape. Most traditional Japanese music—especially works that were played in the imperial court—is built upon a symmetrical hexachord system consisting of two sets of "nuclear tones," each with three different pitches (Smaldone, 1989). These nuclear tones form the pitch center of the music, serving as cornerstones that hold the entire piece together. Takemitsu referenced this system by also creating two sets of nuclear tones to organize the pitches and guide listeners through the dense yet extremely detailed orchestral texture (Figure 1). To highlight those nuclear tones played primarily by the strings, Takemit-

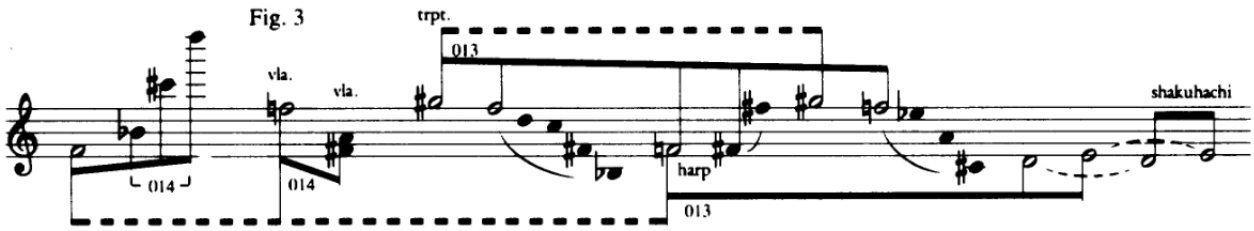


Figure 1: Reduced score of the opening orchestral *tutti* in *November Steps* (Smaldone, 1989)

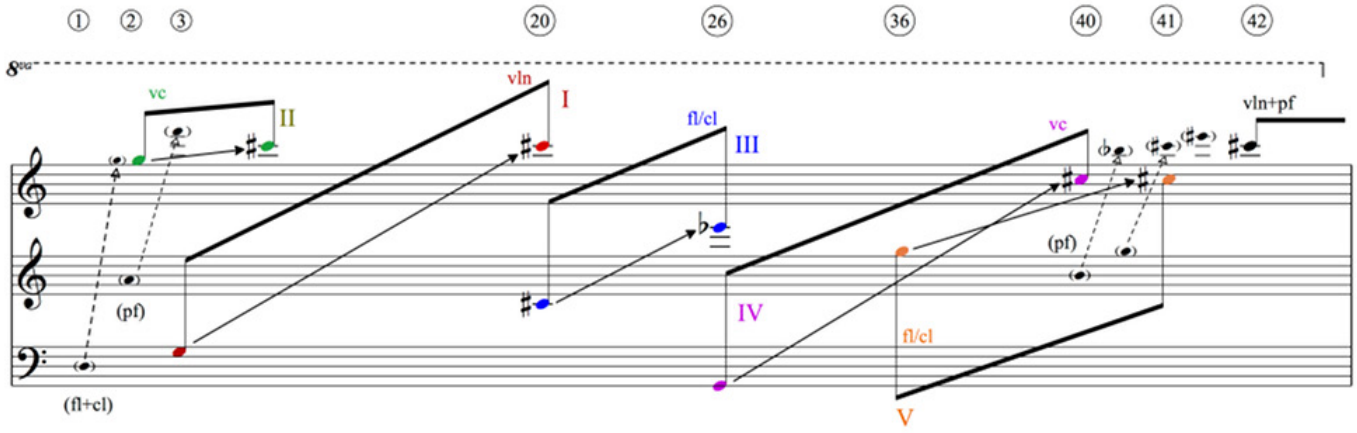


Figure 2: Reduced score of ascending motions in *Happy Rain on a Spring Night* (Rao, 2020)

su doubled them with the harp in a move reminiscent of Japanese chamber music, in which the *shamisen* (a plucked string instrument) is usually doubled with the *shakuhachi*, since the timbre generated by both instruments are a combination of sustained and plucked attacks (Smaldone, 1989). Cultural fusion created in this manner can be considered avant-garde since it is achieved through aspects of music other than just pitch, such as orchestration and timbre.

Extra-musical Elements in Chen Yi's Happy Rain on a Spring Night

While studying composition at the Central Conservatory, Chen Yi (b. 1953) was exposed to traditional Chinese instrumental music as well as Western music theory. She was also introduced to ethnomusicology during that time when collecting folk songs from the countryside. During her doctoral studies at Columbia University, she was inspired by Chou to incorporate extra-musical Chinese elements into her compositions, mainly literature and calligraphy (Rao, 2020).

Happy Rain on a Spring Night is a 2004 composition by Chen scored for a Pierrot ensemble.[1] The piece is inspired by a Tang Dynasty poem of the same name by Du Fu. In this case, Chen used cultural fusion to recreate the vivid imagery described in the poem. Thematic ideas in the piece were created using pitches

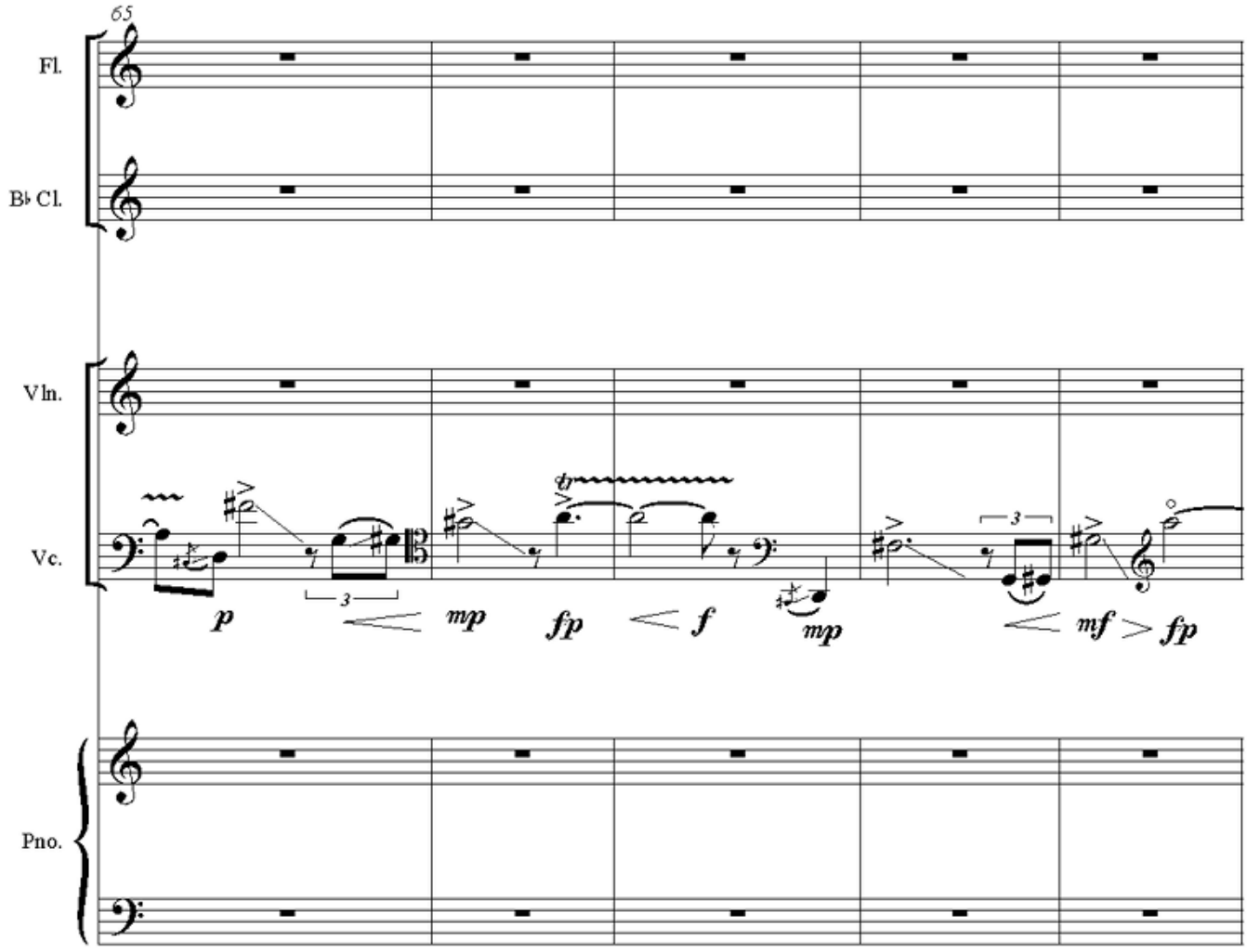


Figure 3: Score excerpt of *Happy Rain on a Spring Night* (Chen, 2020)

selected to match the tones produced when reciting the poem (Figure 2). This was possible since four different tones are available for each character in Mandarin, a feature absent in most European languages. Although the golden ratio, a prominent feature of many contemporary Western works, is used to structure the proportions of the piece, Chen also followed a Chinese tradition known as *ci* (词), a poetic form popular during the Song dynasty. Since Du Fu lived during the earlier Tang Dynasty and couldn't have written poems according to this tradition, I believe that the composer chose to incorporate this element simply to add depth and richness to the cultural fusion that she had cultivated as part of a greater scheme. *Ci* has very distinct patterns of tones and a variable number of characters per line. By applying this form to music and placing it within the broader context of the golden ratio, a complex system is formed that highlights the beauty of nature, the theme of the poem that this piece is based upon (Chen, 2020).

On a larger scale, the whole piece is

structured around a concept frequently used in the construction of Chinese calligraphy known as *shi* (勢), which can be roughly translated as tendency, or momentum. "Musical *shi*" is established through a series of overlapping, ascending motions created by different instruments, generating an inner energy that pushes the music forward throughout the piece (Figure 3) (Rao, 2020). In this case, the composer used Western music and its notation as a tool for contextualizing and then reimagining a traditional Chinese art form, calligraphy. This somewhat abstract idea took the cultural fusion in this piece to a whole new level, mainly due to the fact that extra-musical cultural elements were heavily involved in the process.

Incorporation of Peking Opera Techniques in Qigang Chen's Yi

Unlike his classmates from the Central Conservatory who immigrated to the U.S. to further pursue their careers, such as Chen Yi, Qigang Chen (b. 1951) moved to Paris upon graduating, where he became the last student of famed 20th-century French composer Olivier Messiaen. Chen later served as the musical director of the 2008 Beijing Olympics and is among the most frequently performed living

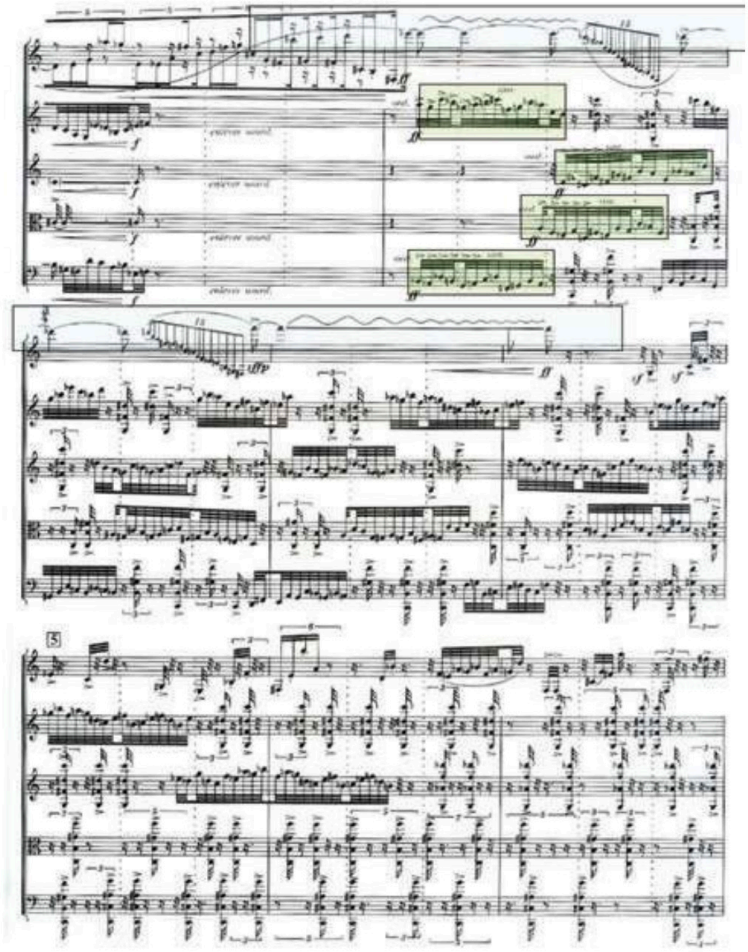


Figure 4: Score excerpt of *Yi* (Rao, 2017)

composers today (Chen, 2019).

Yi is a clarinet quintet written early in Chen's career in 1987 while he was still studying under Messiaen. This piece is a great example of the presence of references to Asian musical traditions without the use of pitch, a technique also employed by Takemitsu in *November Steps* through orchestral doubling. The rhythms in this piece closely follow the gestures of *jinla manchang* (紧拉慢唱), a Peking Opera technique that calls for two different tempi to be present simultaneously (Rao, 2017). In *Yi*, fast-paced fragments (highlighted in green in the score) are played interactively by the strings, while the clarinet "flows" a melody in the highest register of the instrument on top, creating music that exists in different time continuums simultaneously (Figure 4). In common with the work of Takemitsu, Chen's writing here can be considered avant-garde, as both composers create fusion by manipulating the overall texture and rhythm of the piece in addition to using certain pitches. Although Chen's intentions might be too subtle for many to notice, especially those unfamiliar with both musical traditions, *Yi* did achieve cultural fusion in a way that is idiomatic to both cultures.

Conclusion and Reflections

Just like those "musical revolutionaries" from the Second Viennese School in the early 1900s, the composers mentioned above also undeniably launched a revolution in music, one which I have termed "East Asian Vanguardism." This revolution, pioneered by Takemitsu and Chou in the 1950s and further developed by next-generation composers such as Chen Yi and Qigang Chen in the late 1970s, not only brought in fresh perspectives on cultural fusion in music but also contributed to the preservation and celebration of the rich traditions of East Asian civilizations. The growing popularity of this aesthetic also elicited interest among many Western composers and musicians in multidisciplinary cross-cultural collaborations, thus broadening their perspective on traditional Asian music beyond the superficial pentatonic romanticism. Over the past few decades, contemporary classical music communities have witnessed the gradual acceptance of cultural fusion in music, and the cultivation of a globalized music community no longer restricted by ethnic or cultural barriers appears achievable in the foreseeable future.

Notes

1. A chamber music group that includes flute, clarinet, violin, cello, and piano, and a very common type of ensemble for composers to write for in the 21st century.

Bibliography

Chang, P. (2001). Chou Wen-Chung's Cross-Cultural Experience and His Musical Synthesis: The Concept of Syncretism Revisited. *Asian Music 32*(2), 93–118.

Chen, Q. (2019) *Qigang Chen*. France. [Web Archive] Retrieved from the Library of Congress.

Chen, Y. (2020). "Compositional Process and Technique in Happy Rain on a Spring Night." *Music Theory Online 26*(3).

Donat, M. (1972). Second Viennese School? *Tempo*, 99, 8–13.

Metzler, M. (2007). "The Japanese People under Occupation." In *A Companion to Japanese History*, edited by William M. Tsutsui, 270-72. Newark: John Wiley & Sons.

Rao, N. (2017). "Chinese Opera Percussion from Model Opera to Tan Dun." In *China and the West: Music, Representation, and Reception*, edited by Hon-Lun Yang and Michael Saffle, 163–85. University of Michigan Press.

Rao, N. (2020). "The Concept of Shi: Chinese Aesthetics and Happy Rain on a Spring Night." *Music Theory Online 26*(3).

Smaldone, E. (1989). "Japanese and Western Confluences in Large-Scale Pitch Organization of Tōru Takemitsu's November Steps and Autumn." *Perspectives of New Music*

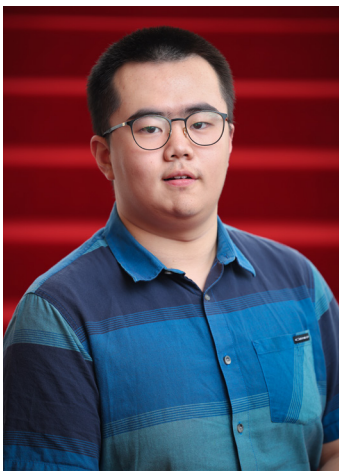
27(2), 216–31.

Takemitsu, T. (1989). "Contemporary Music in Japan." *Perspectives of New Music 27* (2), 198–204.

Utz, C. (2003). "Listening Attentively to Cultural Fragmentation: Tradition and Composition in Works by East Asian Composers." *The World of Music 45*(2), 7–38.

Yu, K. (2008). *Globalization and Changes in China's Governance*. Brill.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



RICHARD (YICHENG) LI

FRESHMAN, JONES COLLEGE

MUSIC COMPOSITION

As a Chinese-American composer, Richard has always been intrigued by other Asian composers and the ways their heritage is represented in their works. Through this paper he wrote in Fall 2023 for FWIS 176: Introduction to East Asian Performance Studies, he hopes to promote contemporary classical music written by Asian composers through a detailed analysis of their works. Richard would like to express his deepest gratitude to Dr. Casey Schoenberger and the editorial board of RASR, without whose support this publication would not have been possible.

in my dreams i'm the perfect karaoke partner

Ashley Wang

& i know all the lyrics to all the mando & somehow even the canto
pop songs but only from the 90s & maybe the 80s &
maybe let's throw in a couple hits from the 2000s, some late-career
a-mei for good measure after the wong fei, yes that looks great—
do you wanna choose the next song go ahead i say but instead of singing
the ayis start testing me, those ever-overlapping voices asking me do you know
this song i used to listen to when i was young & still pretty like you
i belt out ballads like i'm liu ruoying's long-lost daughter, i've got fans
filming me fervently like they're at my vegas concert, i maintain flawless
breath support; at some point everyone strongly considers bursting
into applause but they're too busy standing rooted in their awe, open-mouthed
at the sheer breadth of my cultural knowledge, so deep you could crack it open
and find a one-way plane ticket & dusty photo album inside
what did you expect? one of my jie jies whispers to an ayi
who's gaping a bit, alight with joy, she may be american but she was born to two
shanghainese of course she's cultured & as i nod & smile at them & my mouth
warps itself around the words *xiang wo zhe yang wei ai chi kuang* i start to forget
i'm whisper singing to myself
in this empty american car,
with my one-and-a-half-lingual tongue,
no audience in sight.

Notes

A-Mei: Indigenous Taiwanese singer who's been called the "Queen of Mandopop"

Wong Fei: Faye Wong, Hong Kong Cantopop singer and actress

Ayi: Āyí / 阿姨; in this case, "auntie" (not familial)

Liu Ruoying: Rene Liu, prolific Taiwanese singer, actress, and director

Jie Jie: Jiějiě / 姐姐; "older sister" (not necessarily familial)

Xiang wo zhe yang wei ai chi kuang: Xiàng wǒ zhè yàng wèi ài chī kuáng / 像我这样为爱痴狂; lyric from Rene Liu's 1995 song "Crazy For Love"

dishes to immortalize

Ashley Wang

scallion pancake. watch it brown as your fingertips slowly warm
above the stovetop, face flushing. what a beautiful thing it is to make yourself breakfast
after months away from home, away from food you almost forgot you loved.
if timed properly, the pancake hardens in the pan, delivers its signature crunch.
you lick the salt off your lips, smile a little too wide.

//

eggs & tomatoes. there's rivers of tomato juice on the cutting board; pour them in
with the brightly colored yolk before cooking. maybe the egg tastes just slightly better
this way, maybe it makes no difference—but you've been raised to be clean & consistent,
if nothing else.

you heard a story once about a boy whose family fed him so much egg & tomato stir-fry
that he became severely allergic to both. you laughed at the time, but now you wonder if
you're approaching that point. is three eggs too many for one person?

//

instant noodles. ironically, eaten only at home & rarely at college, where you can't let
yourself be a midnight mess (unless it's friday). relish in the relief of zero nutritional
content, then glance down & see you've slurped it all up in 10 minutes.

the first time you learned how to use chopsticks, you were eating chicken-flavored
instant noodles on a plane to shanghai. you almost miss that 15-hour flight, your neon
childhood wonder, that time when you were still able to daydream. you would make up
stories for strangers whose dialects you didn't understand, eavesdrop too often. now,
you fly to texas & the lack of mandarin dizzies you.

//

bok choy with garlic. two of your favorite vegetables. the center of a piece of bok choy, that miniature duplicate, is like a tender little flower peeking out.

your mom says her father always gave her the center, the heartiest part, of the bok choy to eat (she believes children should always eat well, consume love in the form of food). she wants to do the same for you, except you think the leaf is the best part. you tell her so whenever you see her, sliding one between your front teeth.

//

fried rice. stereotypical, delicious, devastatingly easy to prepare. you must be emotionally distraught, & it must be two a.m. be gentle, cautious with yourself, as if painting over an old windowpane. more importantly, don't oversalt the eggs.

//

spring rolls. your mom's favorite to make with you every time you're home, which these days she says feels like never. you remind her you call every week at college, & she reminds you she's seen you every day for 18 years.

go to the supermarket together, say little as you perform your usual rituals. buy far too many *wangwang* crackers (with her approval). watch her peruse the vegetables, try to stop counting her gray hairs.

in the kitchen, slice the mushroom, carrot, & lettuce diligently. use two knives for efficiency—careful with your fingers. then, relish in the folding process, the all-consuming calm of it. after you've made about 50 spring rolls each, almost singe your tongue with eagerness to eat what you've been toiling at for hours. finally: heated oil, a crunch, & layers of warm, warm textures. it's that feeling again—you've been displaced; the flavors are like family, flying you home.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

ASHLEY WANG

Ashley Wang (she/her) is a junior at Duncan majoring in English with a Creative Writing Concentration and minoring in Asian Studies. She is a poetry section editor for *R2: The Rice Review*. In her free time, she can be found listening to Victoria Monét and playing through the (unofficial) NYT Connections archive.

Philadelphia Chinatown

Eric Chen

The Mandates of Motherhood: Interactions between the Social Pressure of Parenthood and Professional Advancement Among Chinese American Women

Emilia Cichocki

ABSTRACT

The arrival of women in the professional workforce, especially since the late 1970s, seemingly opened up opportunities for independence from the gender norms that had historically restricted them to marriage and motherhood. However, in the United States, women continue to simultaneously encounter social pressure to have children and employment policies that hinder the careers of new mothers. This analysis seeks to explore how Chinese American women exist at the forefront of this interaction, facing expectations of parenthood from Chinese and American sources while experiencing limited access to paid maternity leave and workplace support. It examines the elements that contribute to pressure around reproduction in Chinese American communities, drawing on individual accounts of Chinese social conventions and American prejudice against childless women. Additionally, it argues that Chinese American women who become mothers are subject to systematic discrepancies in areas such as paid maternity leave and company assistance, resulting in either a rapid and damagingly strenuous return to work or the loss of career opportunities. This combination of factors evidences a major, yet often overlooked, barrier to the professional stability of Chinese American women. Addressing and exploring this issue is critical if changes that provide a means to advance gender and economic equality are to be implemented.

Introduction

Over the past several decades, the cultural and social position of women within American society has undergone significant shifts. The maintenance of normative gender constructs, which historically confined women to the role of housewives or caregivers, has increasingly given way to an emphasis on private agency and liberation. The growing presence of women in diverse workforces is both an indicator of and contributor to this phenomenon, with participation in the employment market seemingly providing them with an outlet for the pursuit of individual goals and autonomy. However, the reality for many working women in America is considerably less promising, with Chinese American women facing a unique combination of difficulties.

Among working-age women, the median age of marriage in the United States continues to rise as priorities change and women pursue opportunities for further education or career development.[1] Despite such trends, women continue to encounter significant social pressure to start families, both from popular media and from within established belief systems.[2] Balancing traditional expectations of motherhood with professional aspirations poses a challenge to modern women—stigmatization of voluntary childlessness amplifies pressure to have children, while gender discrimination in the workplace harms new

mothers. Specifically, the combination of childbearing expectations with insufficiently paid maternity leave targets career women who become parents, often forcing them to choose between starting families or working, the latter option often leading them to face considerable health and occupational challenges.[3]

This issue disproportionately affects Chinese American women, who are subject to influences from both Chinese and American societal values.[4] Perceived pressure to begin a family is prevalent among Chinese Americans, shaping attitudes that result in childbirth. Simultaneously, deficiencies in maternity leave among minorities lead to decreased assistance in work environments, placing Chinese American mothers at risk of lost personal or employment opportunities.

Although much discourse exists around the social emphasis on childbearing and poor working policies as separate phenomena, the relationship between them and cultural-specific disparities warrant further analysis. This paper seeks to explore how pressure to have children is compounded by inadequate maternity leave policies to impair the professional prospects of women, with a particular focus on the Chinese American experience within the past fifty years. In particular, it argues that such pressure arises and is disseminated through enduring Chinese social norms, attitudes towards women propagated in the American media, and unequal employment practices throughout the U.S. job market. In particular, inequalities in paid maternity leave represent a lack of support for Chinese American working mothers, leading them to suffer systematic disadvantages in their pursuit of careers and livelihoods.

It is worth noting that the term "Chinese American" refers to an extensive and heterogeneous demographic with a diverse range of experiences.[5] A variety of socioeconomic, cultural, and geographical factors is intrinsically linked to the addressed issues. However, most existing sources do not fully confront the complexity of such distinctions. Consequently, while relying on research that admittedly often involves a degree of generalization, this paper aims to present an appropriate synthesis of current arguments regarding the intersection between motherhood and career.

Chinese Cultural Influences on Pressure to Have Children

The existence of social pressure to have children comprises a substantial factor in the lives of Chinese American women and emerges from an interplay between aspects of American and Chinese culture. Following transitions to the United States in the last half-century, Chinese immigrants have often retained many of their hereditary traditions, resulting in the flourishing of ethnic enclaves that preserve and impart these customs to later generations.[6] In both recent immigrant enclaves and established Chinese American circles, therefore, attitudes concerning childbirth remain highly affected by Chinese cultural precedents around parenthood and associated government policies.[7] As such, a thorough examination of these values is necessary to contextualize Chinese American standpoints.

The interaction between feminine identity and motherhood in China has been shaped by the modern political and social landscape, governed largely by Confucian philosophy.[8] The principles of "piety, harmony and benevolence" hold central positions of importance in Confucianism, with particular weight placed upon the fulfillment of filial duty.[9] Embedded within Confucian thought is an inherent and

oppressive genderization that regards women as an extension of familial desires rather than as independent entities. The prioritization of marriage as a key component of the ethical system promotes a patriarchal perspective of family in which womanhood is dependent upon the "ability to fully integrate into her husband's patrilineage."[10] Additionally, Confucianism places heavy emphasis on reproduction, both as a vehicle for the extension of life and as a manifestation of filial piety; the failure of a wife to bear children may constitute "grounds for her expulsion."[11] Marriage and motherhood thus become codified as intrinsic duties of a woman. With a lack of offspring considered "the biggest vice violating…filial piety," women become vessels for the continuation of the ancestral line, and their primary worth arises from success in marital or parental positions.[12]

The Cultural Revolution, which labeled Confucianism as antiquated and reactionary, eliminated much of the associated thought in the 1960s to 1970s in favor of Maoist propositions.[13] However, the late 20th century saw a revitalization of Confucianism, likely as a way to "fill in the 'ideology vacuum' of the country" through "a [nostalgic] religious movement."[14] The resurgence of Confucian principles within Chinese society reestablished its influence on childbearing attitudes, and continues to generate notable social pressure around marriage and childbearing. Scholar Yi-Chen Su argues that although young Chinese women increasingly choose to delay motherhood, the influence of Confucianism and the resultant pressure to have children have not lessened in recent years.[15] Reminiscent of this belief is the emergence of the derogatory term 剩女 (*shèngnǚ*). Translated as "leftover woman," this phrase refers to women who remain single beyond the age of 27, the perceived upper limit for marriage.[16] So-called leftover women have reported significant pressure to begin families, materializing in parental demands and media stigmatization. Chinese news outlets often place blame on these women for being single, highlighting the potential negative consequences of their circumstances, including isolation and their assumed failure to fulfill their familial duties. Simultaneously, stereotypical television portrayals craft a derogatory image of leftover women as relationship-oriented and "eager to sell themselves off".[17]

The work of sociologist Yingchun Ji sheds light on the societal and parental assumptions placed upon leftover women. Her interviews with thirty unmarried Chinese women reveal common themes of marriage-associated strain and the governance of private life by customary gender relations, which Ji traces to the contemporary persistence "of [the] patriarchal Confucian tradition."[18] Almost all interviewees recounted tension arising from "[intensified] normative marriage expectations" of social circles and familial expectations of "marriage as an ultimate goal," admitting feelings of shame and guilt amidst parental disappointment.[19] During these interviews, several women confessed that being single brought public ridicule, and one participant had even moved to a smaller town "where it would be easier to meet men and stop rumors" as a result of community pressure.[20] Similar results have been detailed by gender studies researcher Shaofen Tang, whose analysis of cultural violence—widely accepted practices that support structural inequity—against leftover women found that verbal techniques of devaluation, sympathy, and shame were often employed as coercion tactics to force marriage.[21]

Finally, the current Chinese political climate has generated further pressure to have

children. Between 1980 and 2015, the Chinese government instituted a one-child policy in order to curb birth rates in the face of overpopulation.[22] Although the measure succeeded in temporarily restricting population growth, it resulted in an inverted population pyramid or 4-2-1 system. This model leaves fewer young adults to care for members of older generations, amplifying the stress felt by children to provide for themselves as well as their elder relatives.[23]

As a means of rectifying this state of affairs, the Chinese government passed a two-child policy in 2015 and a three-child policy in 2021.[24] These policies permitted multiple births per couple and created greater reproductive freedom, but their implementation has increasingly been accompanied by financial subsidies, including housing credit for larger families and childcare allowances.[25] In providing such benefits, the authorities have incentivized a rise in the birth rate, accentuating the importance of offspring and the accompanying role of women.[26] Consequently, pressure to have children has transcended its original status as a strictly social phenomenon and has become a feature of an analogous governmental directive.

As evidenced in the lived experiences of leftover women, single Chinese women continue to encounter systematic and standardized social pressure to begin families. The prominence of filial piety and patriarchal attitudes within Chinese society stem from early Confucian values and contribute to "extreme negative perceptions and social stigma" towards single women, with procreation perceived as a broader cultural duty.[27] Similarly, recent shifts in government approaches have placed an additional priority on childbirth. This combination of elements results in the placing of heavy expectations upon Chinese women to marry and reproduce, the effects of which endure cross-culturally into the Chinese American domain.

American Sources of Social Pressure to Have Children

Following their arrival in the United States as immigrants, working-age Chinese American women inevitably need to adjust to American perceptions towards marriage and childbirth. The idea of a woman as a maternal figure is pervasive throughout American culture—exemplified by the enduring caricature of the housewife—and the position of women in both private and social spheres has generally been that of a central caretaker.[28] Historically, the secondary nature of education and employment opportunities for women has redistributed importance to a woman's willingness to act as a wife and mother.[29] Hence, reproduction has become conventionalized within American culture as a moral imperative for women; although women are no longer confined to such roles, traditional attitudes persist in current thought and continue to strengthen pressure to have children.

Despite modern movements towards an egalitarian gender ideology, American stigmatization of childless women remains prominent. Scholars have noted that having children is associated with the beliefs that parenthood is a social responsibility and that women "gain purpose in their life as they enter motherhood."[30] Correspondingly, voluntarily childless women are subject to normalized accusations of selfishness as a result of their supposed prioritization of personal desires;[31] the stereotypical notion that women without children "are desperate and unfulfilled" emerges from these views.[32]

The combination of factors that shapes such sentiments is naturally complex, and cannot be considered here in its entirety. Nonetheless, due to its relevance in constructing collective attitudes, several studies have proposed media portrayal to be an essential component.[33] Ostracism or erasure of childless women has been mirrored and reflected in popular films and the print media, which present having children as a "tacitly assumed [requirement] of a fulfilled life."[34] Balanced representation of women without children is rare—instead, childlessness is overwhelmingly depicted as leading to discontent, immorality, or desperation, exacerbating the unfavorable judgment surrounding childless individuals.

Four archetypes of childless women in the print media were established by researchers Melissa Graham and Stephanie Rich,[35] including sympathy-worthy women, career women, artifacts of feminism, and reprimanded women.[36] Similar results were found in an analysis of terms present in coverage of childless women by the Associated Press.[37] Clusters of themes were overwhelmingly derogatory and characterized by pitying or threatening undertones, a tendency that researchers attributed to both religious values and an increase in pro-natalist frames.[38] Regardless of the classification into which each example of news portrayal falls, accounts and opinions towards childless women in each remain highly negative. Researchers have emphasized the use of emotive language when reporting on each group, arguing that the purpose of doing so is to alarm and threaten women—especially in the career and reprimanded categories—into "paying attention to their…fertility."[39] Media tropes generally suggest that childlessness is a missed opportunity and a moral failing, thus contributing to the stigmatization of childless women as a core and damaging part of their public identity.

Similar phenomena are seen in the fictionalizations of childless women, particularly in the domain of film. Professor and researcher of political communication Cristina Archetti has examined representations of childlessness in popular movies, noting several common and underlying findings. Childless women in film are often "weird, cold, neurotic and hysterical," living "disordered lives," the implication being that they are unable to take care of themselves as adults. Heightened rates of depression and suicide are troubling themes amongst these characters, as "ordinary women without children… have no reason to live."[40] In addition, positive portrayals occur almost exclusively for women superheroes or astronauts (in films such as *Wonder Woman* and *Gravity*). Archetti argues that this is indicative of a social double standard in which childlessness is acceptable for a man, but for a woman only when "she is devoting herself to a higher cause for the sake of the entire humanity."[41]

In suggesting that having children is an obligation that can only be overridden by greater humanitarian goals and that childless women are unfulfilled or irresponsible, childbearing and motherhood become acts of morality as well as necessary steps toward maturity. Such narratives, coupled with those found in the print media, serve to reinforce the social stigmatization of childlessness; whether their childlessness is voluntary or involuntary, women without children continue to face exclusionary attacks on their femininity and moral character.

It is noteworthy that these sentiments are often directed towards childless but married women, while single mothers face an equivalent but independent stigma.[42] This

may suggest that pressure to have children is felt predominantly by married women, while single women are not similarly influenced. However, anecdotal evidence and interviews from members of the latter group indicate that the converse is true; as a result of narratives surrounding childlessness, single women feel not only pressure to become mothers, but also to enter long-term relationships and marry as perceived prerequisites.[43] Single women interviewed in a 2023 study expressed regret and guilt over being unmarried and childless, with one participant believing that "it's so looked down upon" and claiming that "this shame had a lot to do with the media."[44] A similar investigation conducted in 2011 revealed that single women "experience more pronounced pressure" to conform to the standard family model than single men, with interviewees feeling that there was "a distinct significance attached to grandchildren."[45] The status of being unmarried does not appear to modulate social demand to have children, and the ramifications of poor media portrayals extend beyond married and childless women.

Negative framing of childless women is not restricted to the media, appearing in wider societal sentiments that result in quantifiable consequences. A 2016 study conducted by psychologist Leslie Ashburn-Nardo examined the affective reaction of young adults toward married women with and without children. Participants demonstrated higher levels of moral outrage toward the latter group, who were rated significantly less psychologically and personally fulfilled. Women without children were perceived less positively than those with children, with such attitudes likely attributed to a belief that they were "violating the prescribed social role of parenthood."[46] Comparable results were discovered in an analogous 2018 study, which tested ratings of childless subjects along several dimensions. Involuntarily childless women were perceived as more immature and as having lower levels of life satisfaction, while voluntarily childless women were considered significantly more selfish.[47] Taken together, the findings indicate prominent stigmatization of childlessness and reveal the unfavorable attributes associated with this status.

A desire to avoid these ascriptions, alongside internalized and social opinion, places pressure on women in the United States to marry and become mothers. As Ashburn-Nardo proposes, the invective around childlessness means that "many young people view children as a necessary ingredient for fulfilling lives," culminating in "tremendous pressure to have children, not only from others…but also internally."[48] Statistics from the Pew Research Center support this conclusion, demonstrating that marriage and parenthood are consistently ranked top priorities by Chinese Americans.[49] Similarly, a recent poll found that over 40% of American women reported feeling pressure to have children, with only 20% of men feeling the same.[50]

Intersection of American and Chinese Cultural Norms in Chinese American Communities

The treatment of childless women in American culture perpetuates myths of formulaic behavior that enhance social expectations around marriage and childbirth. Chinese American women are likewise affected by their consumption of the aforementioned modalities of media. Little direct research has examined the internalization of marriage and motherhood bias by Chinese Americans. However, their contact with American media has been shown

to alter their value structures and personal perceptions. In a study published in 1998, Chinese American women expressed having internalized stereotypes and prejudices seen in popular Western media,[51] while a 2023 study attributed the fact that second-generation Chinese Americans demonstrated a greater alignment with American value systems at least in part to media distribution and use.[52]

The introduction of Western principles adds a further element of social coercion for Chinese American women to have children, suggesting that such pressure may be mediated through an interaction of Chinese and American beliefs. American culture typically casts childless women in a negative light, depicting them as immoral and selfish. Concurrently, elements of modern Chinese culture represent parenthood as a necessity. Chinese American women, both married and unmarried, are thus vulnerable to heightened pressure to have children. Semi-structured interviews with unmarried and childless Chinese American women reveal such sentiment. Regardless of their respective individual preferences, participants in a 2000 study detailed the parental and social pressure that they faced to become mothers, stating that they "often felt increasing pressure from [their] family and community to marry" and were "raised…to see children as the goal of marriage."[53] Their attitudes are reminiscent of both Chinese and American cultural standards, suggesting that both are major determinants of childbearing expectations.

In essence, the reductionist treatment of women found in Chinese social norms and the types of widespread American bias detailed above lead to assumptions concerning relationships, marriage, and eventual motherhood. Despite a recent trend toward delaying these events, Chinese Americans continue to follow traditional patterns of behavior, placing greater emphasis on parenthood as "one of the most important things" than their non-Chinese American counterparts.[54] Statements by Chinese American women attest to this, documenting enduring social and private influence in relation to natalism. The accumulation of Chinese and American customs, therefore, forces Chinese American women into a compromised space in which pressure to marry and have children is propagated to a disproportionate extent.

Workplace Policies and Resultant Career Harm to Mothers

As a result of personal choice and social pressure, many American (including Chinese American) women choose to have children while continuing to maintain careers, requiring them to balance the demands of parenthood with professional ambition.[55] Despite the overall decline in birth rates, the number of working mothers has continued to hit record highs. Nevertheless, a significant proportion of companies in the United States do not provide adequate support for female employees, most clearly demonstrated in a lack of paid maternity leave and discriminatory hiring practices. This absence of assistance engenders what is known colloquially as the "motherhood penalty," referencing the drop in salary and disappearance of opportunities for promotion that women commonly face once they become mothers.[56] This inequality often compels women to prioritize either family or career; those who choose both encounter considerable mental and physical health challenges.

Standardized maternity leave conditions in the United States continue to lag behind those in other developed countries.[57]

The United States has no federal law guaranteeing paid parental leave and is classified by the World Bank as the only high-income nation without such a requirement.[58] Instead, companies can set workplace-specific policies, leading to marked inconsistencies in access to paid maternity leave. Statistics from the Bureau of Labor show that only approximately 24% of private sector employees have paid family leave, with uneven distribution across income brackets.[59] Additionally, the average length of paid maternity leave ranges from four to eight weeks, well below the 29-week worldwide average.[60]

Moreover, having children can place female employees at a disadvantage in relation to hiring and salary benefits. A Harvard study discovered that mothers were six times less likely to be hired than childless women, and that they were offered a nearly 8% lower average starting wage.[61] Working mothers have also been found to be less likely to secure promotions than working fathers and childless women.[62] Despite little quantifiable differences in performance, they are consistently rated lower in potential and commitment by employers, revealing the biases held in professional settings.

Chinese American women are not only confronted by limited occupational support for mothers and the related career and health consequences, but also face significant social pressure to start families. Much research has been conducted on systemic inequalities in paid parental leave, with repeated observations being made that access among marginalized or minority groups is substantially lower than that enjoyed by white employees.[63] Due to the relative socioeconomic success of Chinese immigrants and the immanent "model minority" myth, which labels them as "affluent, well educated, [and] professional," they are frequently excluded from discussions of racial and ethnic discrimination in the United States.[64]

Nevertheless, Chinese Americans—who account for 24% of Asian Americans in the United States and only 1% of the overall population—remain a minority, consequently encountering associated disparities.[65] A 2021 study on racial inequalities in family leave found that Asian women received fewer weeks of full-pay maternity leave than white employees.[66] Likewise, according to a 2022 overview of family and medical leave trends over the past decade, Asian women had significantly lower access to paid time off than white workers.[67]

Hence, despite extensive social pressure to have children, companies rarely support—and often penalize—Chinese American employees who choose to begin families. The lack of paid maternity leave creates corresponding drawbacks in advancement and career opportunities for these mothers, who must return to work quickly after having children or risk losing their positions and financial security. Chinese American women are already among the least likely to be promoted to upper management, a phenomenon that is only enhanced by taking time off.[68] Similarly, leaving one's job to focus on parenting harms future earning power, with Asian American mothers earning a nationwide average of 90 cents to every dollar paid to white fathers.[69] Therefore, many Chinese American women elect to begin work soon after childbirth but confront health consequences as a result. New mothers face postpartum changes in physical and emotional well-being that are exacerbated by swift returns to work, including higher rates of depression, fatigue, and the develop-

ment of health issues.[70]

Discourse around working Chinese American mothers explicates the tension between parenthood and career responsibilities. A Chinese American immigrant interviewed in a 2014 study regarding transitions into working motherhood mentioned that her choice to return to work quickly was dependent on "unending departmental work demands" and "tons of work…I just want to take it little by little so that, you know, I will not get strung up when I come back."[71] Her experience echoes feelings of loyalty towards "her roles and duties" as well as concurrent company pressure arising from "nobody [being] officially assigned to take care of…work." Simultaneously, she mentioned the difficulty of returning to work soon after giving birth, stating that "physically it's pretty hard… you did not have the routine for you to follow so, so it was kind of hard and exhausting."[72] Such opinions are not the exception—the twofold impact of workplace requirements and an absence of company support results in a struggle for balance amongst new Chinese American mothers, who have seen large increases in postpartum depression and who, in recent years, are increasingly less likely to return to work after giving birth.[73]

Thus, Chinese American women are faced with a modern social and professional landscape simultaneously marked by social expectations that they will start families and policies that penalize them within their careers. With an outlook rooted in Chinese perspectives but magnified by American attitudes, Chinese Americans are met with extreme social pressure to get married and have children. And yet, systematic inequalities within American workplaces—specifically, lack of paid maternity leave or disparities in access—harm working women who become mothers. They are often faced with the choice of whether to take time off or leave their jobs, potentially hindering future opportunities, or return to work quickly to the detriment of their mental and physical health. Such phenomena hinder the ability of Chinese American women to pursue their personal and occupational aspirations, and pose a considerable barrier to their success.

Conclusion

In recent decades, women within the United States have seen a rapid divergence between their historically subservient position in society and modern aspirations involving individual autonomy, independence, and careers. However, their emergence into the professional domain has necessitated reconciliation between personal inclinations toward marriage, family, and career development. Regardless of the disruption to traditional gender norms, women remain substantially confined by preexisting social expectations that relegate them to prescribed roles involving homemaking and motherhood. In addition to the ostracism experienced by those who do not conform to such roles, pressure is also implicated in neglectful company policies and prejudice that obstruct women from advancements in the workforce.

Within the past fifty years, working-age Chinese American women—who make up a minority in the United States—have experienced these effects to an excessive degree. This demographic derives its perspectives towards childbearing from Chinese social values, which are heavily influenced by Confucian beliefs that paint reproduction as the filial duty of women. The consequences of concurrent attitudes within many American companies, specifically the provision of insufficient and unequal paid

maternity leave, impede the careers of Chinese American women who become mothers. Close examination of the treatment of working mothers reveals limited access to paid maternity leave among Asian American employees, as well as implicit damage to career opportunities and financial harm. Consequently, Chinese American women who begin families often have to return to work quickly after giving birth—giving rise to a variety of mental and physical health concerns—or face losing their jobs and earning potential.

As explored in this paper, there is a fundamental discrepancy between the demands placed upon Chinese American women and those on members of other demographic groups in the United States. They are pressured socially to have children but penalized professionally for being mothers. As such, they encounter formalized difficulties in balancing family needs with employment opportunities, commonly resulting in the loss of the latter. The contradictory impacts of these influences therefore represent a notable, systemic, and yet oft-neglected barrier to their progress.

Moving forward, greater investigation of this issue will be crucial if effective remedies are to be developed and implemented. Federal policies rectifying inconsistencies in paid maternity leave represent a promising step towards a formal solution. Nonetheless, intolerance around childless women and damaging stereotypes of Chinese Americans remain socially embedded, a problem that requires the dismantling of inherent biases within the media and in popular thought. Moreover, given the relative significance of the multiple socioeconomic factors faced by Chinese American women and the complex nature of their identity, research uncovering such intersectionality may provide an increasingly nuanced account of their experiences of motherhood. Further acknowledgment and exploration of continued barriers to the achievement of equality will be crucial in addressing the gaps which persist at the intersection between gender, ethnicity, and policy.

Notes

1. "Why Are Women Opting Out of Marriage Around the World?," University of Houston, September 2, 2023, https://uh.edu/news-events/stories/2023/january-2023/011123.php.

2. Taylor Orth, "Does Society Pressure Men and Women to Have Children?," YouGov, February 8, 2022, https://today.yougov.com/politics/articles/40911-does-society-pressure-men-and-women-have-children.

3. Darios Getahun et al., "Trends in Postpartum Depression by Race/Ethnicity and Pre-Pregnancy Body Mass Index," *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology* 228, no. 1 (January 1, 2023): S122–23, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ajog.2022.11.248.; Wen-Jui Han et al., "The Timing of Mothers' Employment after Childbirth," *Monthly Labor Review* 131, no. 6 (2008): 15–27.

4. Shaofen Tang, "Cultural Violence against Chinese Single Women in Contemporary China: An in-Depth Analysis of Three Key Societal Pressures Used to Compel Unmarried Chinese Women to Marry- Devaluation, Sympathy, and Shame," *SN Social Sciences* 2, no. 2 (January 31, 2022), https://doi.org/10.1007/s43545-022-00317-8.

5. The same consideration is applicable in the case of the term "American."

6. Donghui Zhang and Diana T. Slaughter‐Defoe, "Language Attitudes and Heritage Language Maintenance among Chinese Immigrant Families in the USA," *Language, Culture and Curriculum* 22, no. 2 (July 1, 2009): 77–93, https://doi.org/10.1080/07908310902935940.

7. "Chapter 5: Family and Personal Values | Pew Research Center," Pew Research Center's Social & Demographic Trends Project, May 31, 2023, https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2012/06/19/chapter-5-family-and-personal-values/.

8. Aurelia Dochna, "The Cultural Evolution: Tracing Confucius in Modern China," *China Hands*, November 13, 2020, https://

chinahandsmagazine.org/2020/11/13/the-cultural-evolution-tracing-confucius-in-modern-china/.

9. Bárbara Badanta et al., "How Does Confucianism Influence Health Behaviors, Health Outcomes and Medical Decisions? A Scoping Review," *Journal of Religion & Health* 61, no. 4 (February 10, 2022): 2679–2725, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10943-022-01506-8.

10. "Gender in Confucian Philosophy," Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, February 27, 2023, https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/confucian-gender/.

11. "Gender in Confucian Philosophy."

12. Yi-Chen Su, "Advanced Maternal Age in the Shadow of Confucianism," *American Journal of Bioethics* 15, no. 11 (November 17, 2015): 54–56, https://doi.org/10.1080/15265161.2015.1088987.

13. The Economist, "How Did Confucianism Win Back the Chinese Communist Party?," *The Economist*, June 23, 2021, https://www.economist.com/the-economist-explains/2021/06/23/how-did-confucianism-win-back-the-chinese-communist-party.

14. Joy Lam, "China's Revival of Confucianism | US-China Institute," September 18, 2008, https://china.usc.edu/chinas-revival-confucianism

15. Su, "Advanced Maternal Age in the Shadow of Confucianism."

16. Huimin Zhang, "The Pressures on Leftover Women and Men under the Chinese Patriarchal System," *International Journal of Social Science and Humanity* 12, no. 2 (May 2022): 85–91, https://doi.org/10.18178/ijssh.2022.12.2.1071.

17. Wanqi Gong, Caixie Tu, and Li Jiang, "Stigmatized Portrayals of Single Women: A Content Analysis of News Coverage on Single Women and Single Men in China," *Journal of Gender Studies* 26, no. 2 (October 19, 2015): 197–211, https://doi.org/10.1080/09589236.2015.1095082.; Tianhan Gui, "Coping with Parental Pressure to Get Married: Perspectives from Chinese 'Leftover Women.'," *Journal of Family Issues* 44, no. 8 (January 28, 2022): 2118–37. https://doi.org/10.1177/0192513x211071053.

18. Yingchun Ji, "Between Tradition and Modernity: 'Leftover' Women in Shanghai," *Journal of Marriage and Family* 77, no. 5 (July 29, 2015): 1057–73, https://doi.org/10.1111/jomf.12220.

19. Ji, "Between Tradition and Modernity: 'Leftover' Women in Shanghai."

20. Ji, "Between Tradition and Modernity: 'Leftover' Women in Shanghai."

21. Tang, "Cultural Violence against Chinese Single Women in Contemporary China: An in-Depth Analysis of Three Key Societal Pressures Used to Compel Unmarried Chinese Women to Marry- Devaluation, Sympathy, and Shame."

22. Yaqiu Wang, "It's Time to Abolish China's Three-Child Policy," *Human Rights Watch*, February 22, 2023, https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/02/22/its-time-abolish-chinas-three-child-policy.

23. Bryan Walsh, "How China Came to Regret Its One-Child Policy," *Vox*, January 18, 2023, https://www.vox.com/future-perfect/23558772/china-population-overpopulation-one-child-policy-demographics-aging-beijing-xi-jinping.

24. Hanyi Chen et al., "Association of China's Two-Child Policy with Changes in Number of Births and Birth Defects Rate, 2008–2017," *BMC Public Health* 22, no. 1 (March 4, 2022), https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-022-12839-0.

25. Ji Siqi, "China Population: Cities Unveil New Childbirth Incentives as First Decline in More Than 6 Decades Looms," *South China Morning Post*, January 12, 2023, https://www.scmp.com/economy/china-economy/article/3206420/china-unveils-new-childbirth-incentives-population-growth-set-turn-negative.

26. Aolin Leng and Fuli Kang, "Impact of Two-Child Policy on Female Employment and Corporate Performance: Empirical Evidence from Chinese Listed Companies from 2010 to 2020," *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications* 9, no. 1 (December 14, 2022), https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-022-01472-2.

27. Tang, "Cultural Violence against Chinese Single Women in Contemporary China: An in-Depth Analysis of Three Key Societal Pressures Used to Compel Unmarried Chinese Women to Marry- Devaluation, Sympathy, and Shame."

28. "WIC - Women's History in America," Women's International Center, n.d., http://www.wic.org/misc/history.

29. "WIC - Women's History in America."

30. Kayla Tamas, "'Your Biological Clock Is Ticking': Examining Stigma of Childless Men and Women," Scholar Commons,

n.d., https://scholarcommons.sc.edu/aiken_psychology_theses/39.

31. Christian Agrillo and Cristian Nelini, "Childfree by Choice: A Review," *Journal of Cultural Geography* 25, no. 3 (October 1, 2008): 347–63, https://doi.org/10.1080/08873630802476292.

32. Gayle Letherby, "Childless and Bereft?: Stereotypes and Realities in Relation to 'Voluntary' and 'Involuntary' Childlessness and Womanhood," *Sociological Inquiry* 72, no. 1 (n.d.): 7–20, https://doi.org/10.1111/1475-682x.00003.

33. Melissa Graham and Stephanie Rich, *What's "Childless" Got to Do with It?* (Deakin University, Alfred Deakin Research Institute, n.d.).

34. Cristina Archetti, "The Dark Side of Family: Film Representations of Involuntary Childlessness, Silence and Exclusion," *International Communication Association (ICA) Annual Convention*, May 26, 2019, 1–20.

35. Melissa Graham and Stephanie Rich, "Representations of Childless Women in the Australian Print Media," *Feminist Media Studies* 14, no. 3 (November 2, 2012): 500–518, https://doi.org/10.1080/14680777.2012.737346.

36. Involuntarily childless women, who constitute a significant portion of sympathy-worthy women, are described through themes of regret and desperation as well as by the use of selectively sympathetic language. Career women are handled in a manner implying selfishness and irresponsibility, while those categorized as artifacts of feminism are framed as being misled by philosophy. The trope of reprimanded women centers upon the idea that childlessness is equivalent to carelessness and hedonism that must be appropriately punished.

37. Kimberly Anne Cowart, "News Media Framing of Women's Issues : Images of Voluntarily Childless Women" (Master's Thesis, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 2003), https://trace.tennessee.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=6614&context=utk_gradthes.

38. Cowart, "News Media Framing of Women's Issues : Images of Voluntarily Childless Women."

39. Graham and Rich, "Representations of Childless Women in the Australian Print Media."

40. Archetti, "The Dark Side of Family: Film Representations of Involuntary Childlessness, Silence and Exclusion."

41. Archetti, "The Dark Side of Family: Film Representations of Involuntary Childlessness, Silence and Exclusion."

42. H. M. Rusyda et al., "Coping With Difficulties: Social Inequality and Stigmatization on Single Mothers With Low Income Household," *Pertanika Journal of Social Science and Humanities* 19 (October 1, 2011): 157–62, https://www.mendeley.com/catalogue/0824e4ed-4a85-3fbe-aec4-97ca2e3880e8/.

43. Karen Gail Lewis and Sidney M. Moon, "Always Single and Single Again Women: A Qualitative Study," *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy* 23, no. 2 (April 1, 1997): 115–34, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1752-0606.1997.tb00238.x.

44. Rebecca Chan, Larissa Rossen, and Janelle L. Kwee, "Voices of (M)Otherhood: Listening to the Experiences of Single and Childless Women," *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships* 40, no. 12 (July 19, 2023): 4293–4313, https://doi.org/10.1177/02654075231190847.

45. Elizabeth A. Sharp and Lawrence H. Ganong, "'I'm a Loser, I'm Not Married, Let's Just All Look At Me': Ever-Single Women's Perceptions Of Their Social Environment," *Journal of Family Issues* 32, no. 7 (January 20, 2011): 956–80, https://doi.org/10.1177/0192513x10392537.

46. Leslie Ashburn-Nardo, "Parenthood as a Moral Imperative? Moral Outrage and the Stigmatization of Voluntarily Childfree Women and Men," *Sex Roles* 76, no. 5–6 (March 11, 2016): 393–401, https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-016-0606-1.

47. Tamas, "'Your Biological Clock Is Ticking': Examining Stigma of Childless Men and Women."

48. Ashburn-Nardo, "Parenthood as a Moral Imperative? Moral Outrage and the Stigmatization of Voluntarily Childfree Women and Men."

49. "Chapter 5: Family and Personal Values | Pew Research Center."

50. Orth, "Does Society Pressure Men and Women to Have Children?"

51. Teresa A. Mok, "Getting the Message: Media Images and Stereotypes and Their Effect on Asian Americans.," *Cultural Diversity and Mental Health* 4, no. 3 (January 1, 1998): 185–202, https://doi.org/10.1037/1099-9809.4.3.185.

52. "Acculturation: Four Chinese American Groups in the Continuum," *Geriatrics*, January 2, 2023, https://geriatrics.stanford.edu/ethnomed/chinese/fund/acculturation.html.

53. Susan Ferguson, "Challenging Traditional Marriage," *Gender & Society* 14, no. 1 (February 1, 2000): 136–59, https://doi.org/10.1177/089124300014001008.

54. "Chapter 5: Family and Personal Values | Pew Research Center."

55. Emily Peck, "'Shocking': More Mothers Are Working than Ever Before," *Axios*, September 3, 2023, https://www.axios.com/2023/09/01/working-mothers-labor-market-women-equality.

56. "The Motherhood Penalty – AAUW : Empowering Women since 1881," AAUW : Empowering Women Since 1881, September 1, 2022, https://www.aauw.org/issues/equity/motherhood/.

57. "The State of Paid Family and Medical Leave in the U.S. in 2023," CAP20, January 5, 2023, https://americanprogress.org/article/the-state-of-paid-family-and-medical-leave-in-the-u-s-in-2023/.

58. Dominic Hernandez, "Fast Facts: Maternity Leave Policies across the Globe," *Vital Record*, January 23, 2018, https://vitalrecord.tamhsc.edu/fast-facts-maternity-leave-policies-across-globe/.

59. "The State of Paid Family and Medical Leave in the U.S. in 2023."

60. Claire Cain Miller, "How 4 Weeks of U.S. Paid Leave Would Compare With the Rest of the World," *The New York Times*, October 25, 2021, https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/25/upshot/paid-leave-democrats.html.

61. Shelley Correll, Stephan Benard, and In Paik, "Getting a Job: Is There a Motherhood Penalty?," *American Journal of Sociology* 112, no. 5 (2007): 1297–1339.

62. Ivana Pino, "Understanding the Motherhood Penalty and What It Means for Women's Finances," Fortune Recommends, May 26, 2023, https://fortune.com/recommends/banking/the-motherhood-penalty/.

63. "Paid Family and Medical Leave: A Racial Justice Issue – and Opportunity," National Partnership for Women and Families, August 2018, https://nationalpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/paid-family-and-medical-leave-racial-justice-issue-and-opportunity.pdf.

64. Yue Wu, "Model Minority Stereotypes of Asian American Women in American Media: Perceptions and Influences among Women of Diverse Racial-Ethnic Backgrounds" (MS thesis, Kansas State University, 2007).

65. "Ameredia: Chinese American Demographics," n.d., https://www.ameredia.com/resources/demographics/chinese.html.

66. Julia M. Goodman, Connor Williams, and William H. Dow, "Racial/Ethnic Inequities in Paid Parental Leave Access," *Health Equity* 5, no. 1 (October 1, 2021): 738–49, https://doi.org/10.1089/heq.2021.0001.

67. Goodman, Richardson, and Dow, "Racial and Ethnic Inequities in Paid Family and Medical Leave: United States, 2011 and 2017–2018."

68. Jessica Guynn and Jayme Fraser, "EXCLUSIVE: Asian Women Are Shut out of Leadership at America's Top Companies. Our Data Shows Why," *USA TODAY*, April 25, 2022, https://www.usatoday.com/story/money/2022/04/25/asian-women-executives-discrimination-us-companies/7308310001/?gnt-cfr=1.

69. National Women's Law Center, "Motherhood Wage Gap for Asian American and Pacific Islander Mothers - National Women's Law Center," August 7, 2023, https://nwlc.org/resource/motherhood-wage-gap-for-asian-american-pacific-islander-mothers.

70. Pinka Chatterji and Sara Markowitz, "Family Leave after Childbirth and the Health of New Mothers," July 1, 2008, https://doi.org/10.3386/w14156.

71. Patrice M. Buzzanell et al., "Different Transitions into Working Motherhood: Discourses of Asian, Hispanic, and African American Women," *Journal of Family Communication* 7, no. 3 (June 15, 2007): 195–220, https://doi.org/10.1080/15267430701221644.

72. Buzzanell et al., "Different Transitions into Working Motherhood: Discourses of Asian, Hispanic, and African American Women."

73. Darios Getahun et al., "Trends in Postpartum Depression by Race/Ethnicity and Pre-Pregnancy Body Mass Index."

Bibliography

AAUW : Empowering Women Since 1881. "The Motherhood Penalty – AAUW : Empowering Women since 1881," September 1, 2022. https://www.aauw.org/issues/equity/motherhood/.

Agrillo, Christian, and Cristian Nelini. "Childfree by Choice: A Review." *Journal of Cultural Geography* 25, no. 3 (October 1, 2008): 347–63. https://doi.org/10.1080/08873630802476292.

"Ameredia: Chinese American Demographics," n.d. https://

www.ameredia.com/resources/demographics/chinese.html.

Archetti, Cristina. "The Dark Side of Family: Film Representations of Involuntary Childlessness, Silence and Exclusion." *International Communication Association (ICA) Annual Convention*, May 26, 2019, 1–20.

Ashburn-Nardo, Leslie. "Parenthood as a Moral Imperative? Moral Outrage and the Stigmatization of Voluntarily Childfree Women and Men." *Sex Roles* 76, no. 5–6 (March 11, 2016): 393–401. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-016-0606-1.

Badanta, Bárbara, María González-Cano-Caballero, Paola Suárez-Reina, Giancarlo Lucchetti, and Rocío De Diego-Cordero. "How Does Confucianism Influence Health Behaviors, Health Outcomes and Medical Decisions? A Scoping Review." *Journal of Religion & Health* 61, no. 4 (February 10, 2022): 2679–2725. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10943-022-01506-8.

Buzzanell, Patrice M., Damion Waymer, Maria Paz Tagle, and Meina Liu. "Different Transitions into Working Motherhood: Discourses of Asian, Hispanic, and African American Women." *Journal of Family Communication* 7, no. 3 (June 15, 2007): 195–220. https://doi.org/10.1080/15267430701221644.

CAP20. "The State of Paid Family and Medical Leave in the U.S. in 2023," January 5, 2023. https://americanprogress.org/article/the-state-of-paid-family-and-medical-leave-in-the-u-s-in-2023/.

Chan, Rebecca, Larissa Rossen, and Janelle L. Kwee. "Voices of (M)Otherhood: Listening to the Experiences of Single and Childless Women." *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships* 40, no. 12 (July 19, 2023): 4293–4313. https://doi.org/10.1177/02654075231190847.

Chatterji, Pinka, and Sara Markowitz. "Family Leave after Childbirth and the Health of New Mothers," July 1, 2008. https://doi.org/10.3386/w14156.

Chen, Hanyi, Ting Wei, Haiyin Wang, Yi Zhou, Hua Chen, Lichang Sun, Shaotan Xiao, et al. "Association of China's Two-Child Policy with Changes in Number of Births and Birth Defects Rate, 2008–2017." *BMC Public Health* 22, no. 1 (March 4, 2022). https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-022-12839-0.

Correll, Shelley, Stephan Benard, and In Paik. "Getting a Job: Is There a Motherhood Penalty?" *American Journal of Sociology* 112, no. 5 (2007): 1297–1339.

Cowart, Kimberly Anne. "News Media Framing of Women's Issues : Images of Voluntarily Childless Women." Master's Thesis, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 2003. https://trace.tennessee.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=6614&context=utk_gradthes.

Dochna, Aurelia. "The Cultural Evolution: Tracing Confucius in Modern China." *China Hands*, November 13, 2020. https://chinahandsmagazine.org/2020/11/13/the-cultural-evolution-tracing-confucius-in-modern-china/.

Ferguson, Susan. "Challenging Traditional Marriage," *Gender & Society* 14, no. 1 (February 1, 2000): 136–59. https://doi.org/10.1177/089124300014001008.

Geriatrics. "Acculturation: Four Chinese American Groups in the Continuum," January 2, 2023. https://geriatrics.stanford.edu/ethnomed/chinese/fund/acculturation.html.

Getahun, Darios, Yinka Oyelese, Morgan R. Peltier, Meiyu Yeh, Vicki Chiu, Harpreet Takhar, Nehaa Khadka, Nana Akofua Mensah, Chantal Avila, and Michael J. Fassett. "Trends in Postpartum Depression by Race/Ethnicity and Pre-Pregnancy Body Mass Index." *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology* 228, no. 1 (January 1, 2023): S122–23. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ajog.2022.11.248.

Gong, Wanqi, Caixie Tu, and Li Jiang. "Stigmatized Portrayals of Single Women: A Content Analysis of News Coverage on Single Women and Single Men in China." *Journal of Gender Studies* 26, no. 2 (October 19, 2015): 197–211. https://doi.org/10.1080/09589236.2015.1095082.

Goodman, Julia M., Connor Williams, and William H. Dow. "Racial/Ethnic Inequities in Paid Parental Leave Access." *Health Equity* 5, no. 1 (October 1, 2021): 738–49. https://doi.org/10.1089/heq.2021.0001.

Graham, Melissa, and Stephanie Rich. "Representations of Childless Women in the Australian Print Media." *Feminist Media Studies* 14, no. 3 (November 2, 2012): 500–518. https://doi.org/10.1080/14680777.2012.737346.

Graham, Melissa, and Stephanie Rich. *What's "Childless" Got to Do with It?* Deakin University, Alfred Deakin Research Institute, n.d.

Gui, Tianhan. "Coping with Parental Pressure to Get Married:

Perspectives from Chinese 'Leftover Women.'" *Journal of Family Issues* 44, no. 8 (January 28, 2022): 2118–37. https://doi.org/10.1177/0192513x211071053.

Guynn, Jessica, and Jayme Fraser. "EXCLUSIVE: Asian Women Are Shut out of Leadership at America's Top Companies. Our Data Shows Why." *USA TODAY*, April 25, 2022. https://www.usatoday.com/story/money/2022/04/25/asian-women-executives-discrimination-us-companies/7308310001/?gnt-cfr=1.

Han, Wen-Jui, Christopher Ruhm, Jane Waldfogel, and Elizabeth Washbrook. "The Timing of Mothers' Employment after Childbirth." *Monthly Labor Review* 131, no. 6 (2008): 15–27.

Hernandez, Dominic. "Fast Facts: Maternity Leave Policies across the Globe." Vital Record, January 23, 2018. https://vitalrecord.tamhsc.edu/fast-facts-maternity-leave-policies-across-globe/.

Ji, Yingchun. "Between Tradition and Modernity: 'Leftover' Women in Shanghai." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 77, no. 5 (July 29, 2015): 1057–73. https://doi.org/10.1111/jomf.12220.

Lam, Joy. "China's Revival of Confucianism | US-China Institute," September 18, 2008. https://china.usc.edu/chinas-revival-confucianism.

Leng, Aolin, and Fuli Kang. "Impact of Two-Child Policy on Female Employment and Corporate Performance: Empirical Evidence from Chinese Listed Companies from 2010 to 2020." *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications* 9, no. 1 (December 14, 2022). https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-022-01472-2.

Letherby, Gayle. "Childless and Bereft?: Stereotypes and Realities in Relation to 'Voluntary' and 'Involuntary' Childlessness and Womanhood." *Sociological Inquiry* 72, no. 1 (n.d.): 7–20. https://doi.org/10.1111/1475-682x.00003.

Lewis, Karen Gail, and Sidney M. Moon. "Always Single and Single Again Women: A Qualitative Study." *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy* 23, no. 2 (April 1, 1997): 115–34. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1752-0606.1997.tb00238.x.

Miller, Claire Cain. "How 4 Weeks of U.S. Paid Leave Would Compare With the Rest of the World." *The New York Times*, October 25, 2021. https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/25/upshot/paid-leave-democrats.html.

Mok, Teresa A. "Getting the Message: Media Images and Stereotypes and Their Effect on Asian Americans." *Cultural Diversity and Mental Health* 4, no. 3 (January 1, 1998): 185–202. https://doi.org/10.1037/1099-9809.4.3.185.

National Partnership for Women and Families. "Paid Family and Medical Leave: A Racial Justice Issue – and Opportunity," August 2018. https://nationalpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/paid-family-and-medical-leave-racial-justice-issue-and-opportunity.pdf.

National Women's Law Center. "Motherhood Wage Gap for Asian American and Pacific Islander Mothers - National Women's Law Center," August 7, 2023. https://nwlc.org/resource/motherhood-wage-gap-for-asian-american-pacific-islander-mothers.

Orth, Taylor. "Does Society Pressure Men and Women to Have Children?" YouGov, February 8, 2022. https://today.yougov.com/politics/articles/40911-does-society-pressure-men-and-women-have-children.

Peck, Emily. "'Shocking': More Mothers Are Working than Ever Before." *Axios*, September 3, 2023. https://www.axios.com/2023/09/01/working-mothers-labor-market-women-equality.

Pew Research Center's Social & Demographic Trends Project. "Chapter 5: Family and Personal Values | Pew Research Center," May 31, 2023. https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2012/06/19/chapter-5-family-and-personal-values/.

Pino, Ivana. "Understanding the Motherhood Penalty and What It Means for Women's Finances." Fortune Recommends, May 26, 2023. https://fortune.com/recommends/banking/the-motherhood-penalty/.

Rusyda, H. M., Z. M. Lukman, Nasrudin Subhi, Sheau Tsuey Chong, Anas Abdul Latiff, H. Hasrul, and Wan Amizah. "Coping With Difficulties: Social Inequality and Stigmatization on Single Mothers With Low Income Household." *Pertanika Journal of Social Science and Humanities* 19 (October 1, 2011): 157–62. https://www.mendeley.com/catalogue/0824e4ed-4a85-3fbe-aec4-97ca2e3880e8/.

Sharp, Elizabeth A., and Lawrence H. Ganong. "'I'm a Loser, I'm Not Married, Let's Just All Look At Me': Ever-Single Women's Perceptions Of Their Social Environment." *Journal of Family Issues* 32, no. 7 (January 20, 2011): 956–80. https://

doi.org/10.1177/0192513x10392537.

Siqi, Ji. "China Population: Cities Unveil New Childbirth Incentives as First Decline in More Than 6 Decades Looms." *South China Morning Post*, January 12, 2023. https://www.scmp.com/economy/china-economy/article/3206420/china-unveils-new-childbirth-incentives-population-growth-set-turn-negative.

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. "Gender in Confucian Philosophy," February 27, 2023. https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/confucian-gender/.

Su, Yi-Chen. "Advanced Maternal Age in the Shadow of Confucianism." *American Journal of Bioethics* 15, no. 11 (November 17, 2015): 54–56. https://doi.org/10.1080/15265161.2015.1088987.

Tamas, Kayla. "'Your Biological Clock Is Ticking': Examining Stigma of Childless Men and Women." Scholar Commons, n.d. https://scholarcommons.sc.edu/aiken_psychology_theses/39.

Tang, Shaofen. "Cultural Violence against Chinese Single Women in Contemporary China: An in-Depth Analysis of Three Key Societal Pressures Used to Compel Unmarried Chinese Women to Marry- Devaluation, Sympathy, and Shame." *SN Social Sciences* 2, no. 2 (January 31, 2022). https://doi.org/10.1007/s43545-022-00317-8.

The Economist. "How Did Confucianism Win Back the Chinese Communist Party?" *The Economist*, June 23, 2021. https://www.economist.com/the-economist-explains/2021/06/23/how-did-confucianism-win-back-the-chinese-communist-party.

University of Houston. "Why Are Women Opting Out of Marriage Around the World?," September 2, 2023. https://uh.edu/news-events/stories/2023/january-2023/011123.php.

Walsh, Bryan. "How China Came to Regret Its One-Child Policy." *Vox*, January 18, 2023. https://www.vox.com/future-perfect/23558772/china-population-overpopulation-one-child-policy-demographics-aging-beijing-xi-jinping.

Wang, Yaqiu. "It's Time to Abolish China's Three-Child Policy." *Human Rights Watch*, February 22, 2023. https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/02/22/its-time-abolish-chinas-three-child-policy.

Women's International Center. "WIC - Women's History in America," n.d. http://www.wic.org/misc/history.

Wu, Yue. "Model Minority Stereotypes of Asian American Women in American Media: Perceptions and Influences among Women of Diverse Racial-Ethnic Backgrounds." MS thesis, Kansas State University, 2007.

Zhang, Donghui, and Diana T. Slaughter-Defoe. "Language Attitudes and Heritage Language Maintenance among Chinese Immigrant Families in the USA." *Language, Culture and Curriculum* 22, no. 2 (July 1, 2009): 77–93. https://doi.org/10.1080/07908310902935940.

Zhang, Huimin. "The Pressures on Leftover Women and Men under the Chinese Patriarchal System." *International Journal of Social Science and Humanity* 12, no. 2 (May 2022): 85–91. https://doi.org/10.18178/ijssh.2022.12.2.1071.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

EMILIA CICHOCKI

FRESHMAN, BROWN COLLEGE
NEUROSCIENCE & LINGUISTICS

Emilia wrote this manuscript in Fall 2023 as the English translation of a project for CHIN 401: Fourth Year Chinese I. She is interested in the various factors that influence attitudes towards working women, especially culturally-specific expectations surrounding motherhood and childbearing. She views this as an understudied topic with significant ramifications, and hopes to help promote critical discourse on the sociocultural pressures faced by women in the professional realm.

conversations with má

Lana Nguyen

built without substance
nothing much to look at
send a breeze my way
so it'll topple me over

send me back home
into the arms of my má
where i'll stand in the kitchen
and talk to the floor

má,
i'm just a poet
i'll never be the poem
never the stanza
nor the space in between

i can't be anyone's muse
can't even be my own

how could i?

i get bored and sad when i think of myself

so what do i do?
do i wish on a star?
do i put my palms together
like you do every night?
watch buddha with wistful eyes
let my lips tremble
my head fall
as i take my last breath

wish oh wish, oh wish i might
make a wish on a star tonight

give me breasts
give me hips
give me flesh
to grab and to hold
to call my own

but i know it all
i know it well

wishes can't whittle
soaps can't scrub
and powder's can't prune
the sourness of my skin- yellow
but not like
honeycombs, daffodils
or ripe mangoes

yellow like
sickness, jaundice
bruises healing
stains on white cloth
unwashed teeth
vehicle vomit
the stench of home

má,
the woman i want to be
when will she break free?
when will she burst through the seams
and come greet me?

má,
when will i meet her?
when can i see her?
when can i ask her

does she like it?
the slant of her eye
the shortness of her limbs
the flatness of her nose

doe she ever
stare in the mirror
and never wish for more?

i hope she says yes
for me and for her
i want her to be
my muse, my muse
me, my muse

my muse, my muse
yes, me, my muse

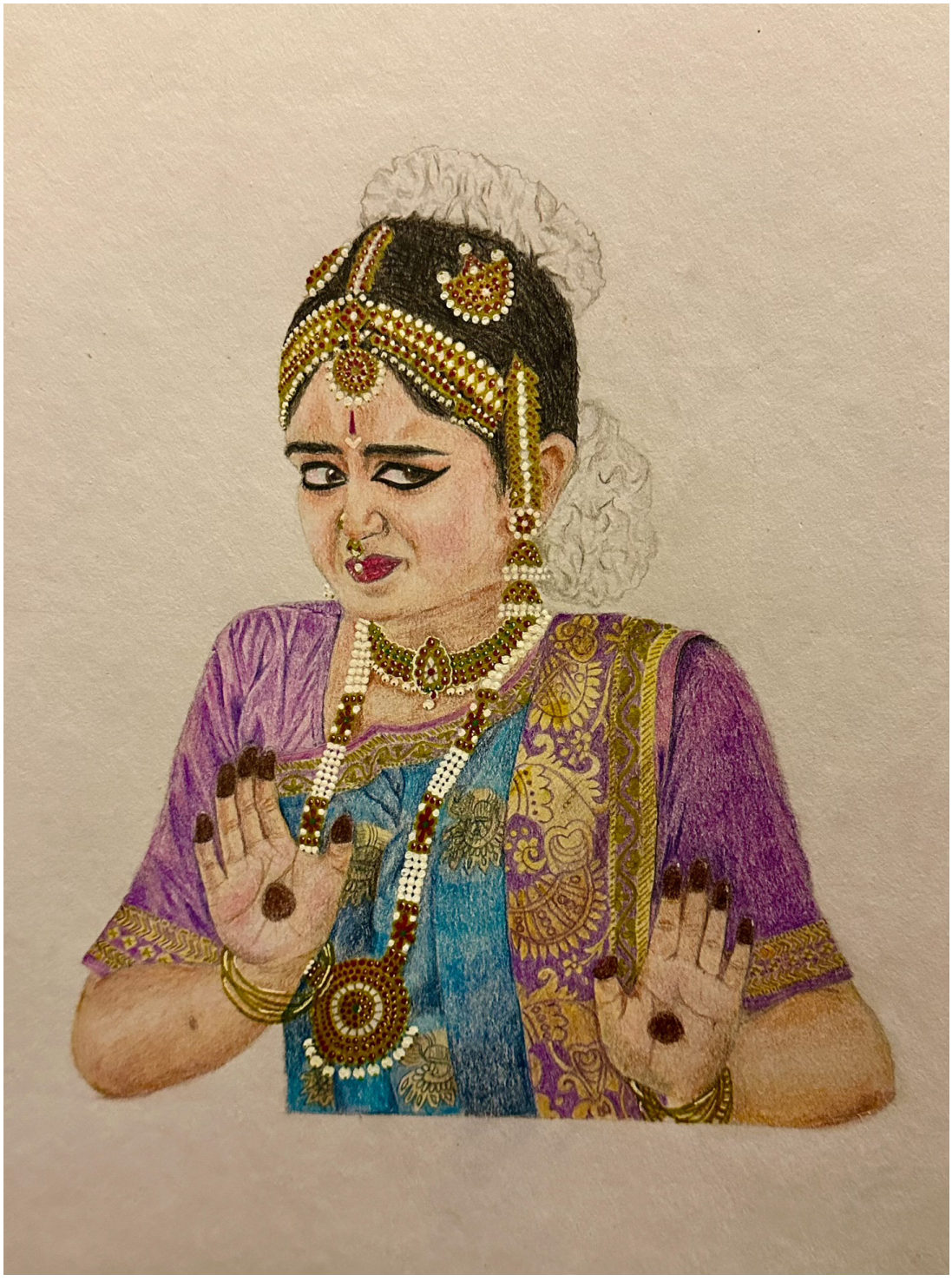
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

LANA NGUYEN

Lana Nguyen is a freshman at Rice University double majoring in English and History. She likes collecting seashells, and if the opportunity presents itself, will tell you all about her lifelong beach adventures. You may find her reading in her free time. She recommends “Almond” by Sohn Won-Pyeong and “East of Eden” by John Steinbeck.

Bībhatsā

Advika Rajeev



Mountains of Udaipur

Sachi Kishinchandani

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

SACHI KISHINCHANDANI

Sachi Kishinchandani is a Senior at Baker College. In her free time, she likes to mindlessly watch YouTube videos and drink boba so she doesn't have to confront the drab reality of her STEM major.

ADVIKA RAJEEV

Advika is classically trained in the Indian dance form bharatanatyam, and she enjoys tying together her artistic interests in drawing and dance. Her piece, Bībhatsā (which means Disgust), is of one of the Navarasas (9 fundamental emotions).

ERIC CHEN

Eric Chen is a pencil artist and enthusiastic nature photographer originally from NYC. He is a QuestBridge Scholar and a double-major in Art and English. Many of his artworks blend surrealist elements with those of grotesque, dream-like, and philosophical and moral themes. His art has been published nationally and internationally across publications like the Vermont Digger, Young Writers Project, Collision Literary Magazine, and has been displayed and recognized by MOMA, the NYCDOE, and many others. When not drawing with his dangerously sharp 4B general's charcoal pencils, he likes conversing with peers in deep philosophical conversations.

EDITORIAL BOARD

EDITORS-IN-CHIEF

HOANG NGUYEN
SENIOR, LOVETT COLLEGE
ASIAN STUDIES, HISTORY, POLITICAL SCIENCE

LILY REMINGTON
JUNIOR, HANSZEN COLLEGE
ASIAN STUDIES, BIOSCIENCES

MANAGING EDITOR

MATT BANSCHBACH
JUNIOR, SID RICHARDSON COLLEGE
ASIAN STUDIES, OPERATIONS RESEARCH

DIRECTOR OF PUBLISHING

MAYA HABRAKEN
JUNIOR, HANSZEN COLLEGE
ASIAN STUDIES

EDITORS

MATTHEW AHN
SOPHOMORE, HANSZEN COLLEGE
BIOSCIENCES

SOPHIA CHO
FRESHMAN, MARTEL COLLEGE
POLITICAL SCIENCE

SOPHIA GOVEA
JUNIOR, BROWN COLLEGE
ASIAN STUDIES, LINGUISTICS

KELLY GUO
FRESHMAN, LOVETT COLLEGE
ASIAN STUDIES, POLITICAL SCIENCE

BRYSON JUN
JUNIOR, BROWN COLLEGE
ASIAN STUDIES, HISTORY

V LUNDQUIST
GRADUATE STUDENT
ENGLISH

GINA MATOS
SENIOR, LOVETT COLLEGE
ASIAN STUDIES, ENGLISH

KARINA PAN
SOPHOMORE, SID RICHARDSON COLLEGE
ASIAN STUDIES, POLITICAL SCIENCE

ELLEN SUN
FRESHMAN, LOVETT COLLEGE
ENGLISH

MURIEL TAYLOR-ADAIR
SENIOR, BAKER COLLEGE
ASIAN STUDIES

RIJUTA VALLISHAYEE
SENIOR, MARTEL COLLEGE
ASIAN STUDIES, HISTORY

RASR

RICE HUMANITIES

Department of Transnational Asian Studies