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Narrative Cold War: Public Identities in the Confession Era

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A decade of strategic Chinese American public writing was provoked by massive investigations and prosecutions, which commenced with the "fall" of China to Communism in 1950, highlighted by several judicial actions and the creation of the Chinese Confession Program in 1956. The decade cemented an oppositional relationship in which the government sought for evidence of fraudulence that investigators were sure was hidden in community sources. Chinese Americans living through investigations and media reports in the 1950s found themselves stigmatized at a time when the culture as a whole was tending toward containment and cohesion. These political and social pressures led to a culture of strategic silence and a proto-model minority narrative, largely self-constructed, as the public face of an active segment of Chinese America. The war of words was carried out among government edicts, print media, and the new wave of memoirs and novels from Chinese American authors. The reflections of younger authors such as Kingston, who grew up during the Confession era, offer us a look back at the legacy and trauma left by the polemics heard and absorbed in their childhood.

Government narratives largely cast Chinese immigration as fraught with fraud to a degree that was inseparable from their culture and history. Importantly, documents and public discussion implicitly framed Chinese and Chinese Americans, alike in their probable fraudulence, in opposition to a US government system seeking to find the truth and root out the fraudulent means by which Communists might enter. The government's authority to narrate and characterize a community thus intertwines with their lack of Americanness and legitimacy. Finding themselves so often on the defensive, community leaders in this period sought instead to brandish their American credentials by seizing the narrative and casting their struggles in early civil rights language, appealing to their rights and protections as citizens and legal residents with a place in American history—a struggle with limited success. Chinese American authors

such as Jade Snow Wong, who were working within the mainstream, had to make far more circumspect and limited appeals, which only in the framework of 1970s ethnic nationalism could take the form of outright protest. Like other prominent minority figures during this pre-civil rights era, some Chinese Americans during the Confession era sought to gain acceptance by presenting a façade of social and personal perfection, though they were also able to deploy certain exoticisms that also made them noteworthy and interesting to mainstream society.

In the 1950s, a growing Chinese America faced new challenges and discrimination, partly as a backlash to their increased wartime visibility and partly as a response to the fears of Communism and illegal immigration. The population numbered 117,629 in the 1950 census (undoubtedly undercounting undocumented migrants), less than 0.1% of the US population, and numbered nearly twice as many males as females, reflecting past immigration restrictions. Chinese America as a whole was coming out of a wartime boom that had greatly improved their mainstream economic opportunities, although different Chinatowns had different trajectories during this period, some faltering economically and some just commencing. 30% of young Chinese American men had worked in defense industries, particularly after the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People's fight for equity had led to President Franklin D. Roosevelt's executive order against discrimination in the defense industry. Nearly another third of Chinese American men between the ages of 15 and 60 had served in the armed forces, opening up new connections and opportunities to some extent; these veterans, in particular, moved out of Chinatowns after the war and established families in other friendly enclaves, some in new suburban Chinatowns. More Chinese Americans were buying property, as well, due to their increased eligibility from newly permitted naturalization and a wave of US-born citizens coming of age. However, as mentioned in the introduction, such individuals also faced restrictive housing covenants and community resistance; similarly, postwar work opportunities were foreclosed in many places by renewed discrimination.[1]

At the same time as this growth and change, Chinese Americans suffered through the confusion of the Confession Program, established in 1956 by the INS as a means of choking off possible Communist infiltration by closing paper slots. The motivations behind the program were multiple and complex. Everett F. Drumright, whose 1955 consular report characterized Chinese paper sons as a dangerous security gap through which Communists would entrench themselves in the United States, triggered a series of actions by the INS to ally itself with the Federal Bureau of Investigation and State Department and shore up its own power within the federal government. Drumright refused the State Department's offer of more investigators, preferring to use his authority to deny passports and visas in which the proof was adjudged insufficient, suspending hundreds of cases, even those which had already been approved by the INS. In 1956, grand juries were impaneled in San Francisco and New York to investigate Chinese illegal entry, resulting in thirty-eight indictments. That same year, the San Francisco office of the INS announced the beginning of the

Confession Program, suggesting but not promising that law-abiding residents who confessed would gain citizenship "if at all possible." To embrace the stigma might, then, lead to a life of new security and status.[2]

Pitched by the government as a program of compassion (by relieving anxiety) but also as a way to weed out Communists, the Confession Program offered contradictory narratives of its own from the beginning and ruptured the divide between illegality and exemplarity by suggesting that one could lead to the other. However, this widespread campaign to obtain confessions and the possibility of deportation only further publicized the fraudulent narratives that the government used to describe the Chinese American community for a decade. The INS sought to cast the Confession Program as a way to free Chinese Americans from the shackles of fraud that obligated them to the providers of documents or slots, once again implicating the entire community. Even as it was hailed as a success, the Program continued to label the problem a general one, "Great strides were made in overcoming *the Chinese fraud problem* during the year." (my italics) However, the description of the program itself was elliptical in the extreme, holding out the hope but not the promise of naturalization even through such methods as military service: "… Chinese persons illegally in the United States who have long feared deportation or prosecution now make full disclosures knowing the Service will assist them to adjust their status *if at all possible* under the law."' (my italics)[3] Ngai's tabulation of the INS reports shows that although many confessors were granted an adjusted status, not all were. (222) Thus, the transformation out of fraudulence was not guaranteed, and there would have been grave doubt before the fact.

The small, tight-knit communities of different Chinatowns, linked by internal structures ranging from family associations to tongs to informal business networks, inevitably made it difficult for an individual to speak publicly without turning informant. Estelle Lau's study of the "paper son" practice of eluding immigration exclusion and restrictions through false documents attesting to kinship suggests that in some ways, Chinese diasporic society became more strongly united by the structures and trust required, but that also means that the thought of betrayal was even more painful. Speaking outside the community, regardless of immigration status, required one to elude the interrogations, invitations to confess, and other nets that lay in wait for Chinese America during the Cold War. That caution can be traced in Jade Snow Wong's slow revelations over time, as her first memoir in 1950 so cautiously circles her parents' immigration. Only in her last unpublished manuscript does she finally reveal some of the secrets that have puzzled scholars.

The public personae of Confession-era authors—and non-authors—must be interpreted in the context of the caution in which they lived for most of their adult lives, and was not fully over even in the 1970s, so that even younger authors, most prominently Kingston, struggled to break the silence but also to preserve secrecy. Prosecutions of illegal immigrant smuggling rings frequently made it into mainstream newspaper coverage in the 1950s through the 1970s. Many of these cases featured

exemplary leaders of Chinatown, making them all the more dangerous for the image of Chinese Americans as a whole; if even these upstanding community leaders were conducting illicit immigration operations, the whole community was implicated. Public figures could not avoid the topic altogether, so prevalent was the coverage and consequent stigma. Likewise, Charlotte Brooks and Peter Kwong have discussed how political turmoil within different Chinatowns differently affected the communities, with a more diverse, tolerant atmosphere in San Francisco and a conservative one in New York.

Though many of the most famous works of Asian American literature avoid addressing immigration explicitly, focusing instead on a protagonist-centered contrast of the US vs. the Asian country of origin and a cultural clash set in the US, careful reading shows the enduring anxiety of the movement between the two as framed by the public discussion of immigration and fraudulent documentation. I begin by examining the multilayered life narratives of Jade Snow Wong, whose exemplarity and carefully self-constructed proto-model minority status elides the presence of illegal immigration within her own family. However, in her much less studied later memoir and her unpublished final work, as well as her heretofore unpublished personal archive, she reveals the anxieties, fears, and complexities of her family's history, slowly empowered by a shifting political and personal landscape. I then turn to the clashes of the 1950s, after the publication of Wong's first memoir, when government officials and Chinese American public figures struggled to control the image of Chinese America, and examine the competing narratives of immigration as a whole and of tragic individual stories as framed by the judiciary, the INS, Chinese American newspaper editors and community leaders, and the mass media. Finally, Kingston's reflections on the traumatic and lasting impact of this era, as remembered from childhood, give us a clearer understanding of how the battle for narrative authority shapes not only the metanarrative but the enduring concerns of authors about narrative and confession.

The Many Faces of Jade Snow Wong

Chinese American literature in the 1950s was kicked off by the bestselling coming-of-age memoir *Fifth Chinese Daughter* by Jade Snow Wong. "Many feel it is a book of permanent importance in interracial understanding," wrote one gushing columnist about Wong, "a beautiful girl with a beautiful name."[4] The great delight with which her most famous piece of writing was generally received in 1950 shows that at the very least, it struck a sympathetic chord with its mainstream readers. Wong, whose fame had already been on the rise as a ceramic artist, was thus launched upon a long career, the epicenter of which would be her Bay Area home, but which would take her around Asia on behalf of the State Department and see her pottery reach the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Wong's memoir appeared years before the most fear-inducing investigations of the mid-1950s, but it coincided with the "fall" of China and waves of postwar

immigrants and refugees which would soon result in the McCarran-Walter Act, as the immigration act of 1952 was popularly known. The INS detailed in 1950 the false documentation, theft or forgery, "schools" coaching applicants for false slots, lack of records, stressing the extreme difficulty of but necessity for investigation. Indeed, it promises an era of intense scrutiny, noting, "it will be apparent that these cases are such as to require very exhaustive examination and thorough investigation because of the possibility that the claim of relationship may be fraudulent."[5] *Fifth Chinese Daughter* thus entered into a landscape of increasing doubt about the legitimacy and legality of Chinese Americans, offering a sentimental and domestic tale that papered over any doubts or skepticism of this particular Chinese American with its appealing descriptive writing, cultural conflict between parent and child, and solidly Californian yet exotically Chinatown setting. Avoiding mention of fraudulent immigration, not to mention Communism or any other politics, Wong implicitly proffers a tale of American suitability in much the same manner as Chinese American public officials would later in the decade with a more explicit political goal.

Fifth Chinese Daughter, famously narrated in what was received as a charmingly modest (and typically Chinese) third person, opens in Wong's early childhood and narrates the love, labor, economic makeshifts, and celebrations of her large and tightly bonded family, supported by her father's garment manufacturing business in San Francisco Chinatown. The strength of their family and their work ethic are counterpointed by traditional Chinese values as well as strong Christian beliefs. As Jade Snow grows up, she increasingly embraces what she characterizes as American independence as well, respecting her parents and her upbringing but venturing out to earn her own money, go to dances, and attend Mills College. The memoir ends with the launch of Jade Snow's pottery business and a reconciliation in which her independence is met with her parents' love and acceptance. The memoir explicitly positions Jade Snow as a bridge between cultures and normalizes cultural and racial differences through her femininity and domestic accomplishments, as well as her experiences outside Chinatown.

The dualities and difficulties of Wong's offering have created a mixed reception and legacy. Because Maxine Hong Kingston dubbed Wong the "Mother of Chinese American literature," Wong has maintained an unquestioned historical status even as her mainstream remembrance or instructional use has dwindled in the last couple of decades.[6] *Fifth Chinese Daughter* received glowing reviews for its timely portrayal of a young woman who combines the discipline of her strict Chinese father and the liberation of American society to become first a worthy contributor to the war industries and then an independent craftswoman and entrepreneur during the postwar economic boom. Critics have explored or deplored the politics of Wong's memoir: its politics of personal responsibility and denial of institutional racism, its food pornography, its wielding of a prefeminist guise for its narrator in order to bolster the relationship between American individualism and Chinese discipline. Leslie Bow has neatly described the ambivalences and complexities of Wong's politics, which conceal

the creation of an economically driven common cause between two disparate cultures.[7] More recent critique has focused on the establishment and subtleties of her double voice or narration, and a corresponding divided subjectivity, working most often along the American/Chinese divide also complicated by her family. This, however, runs the risk of reifying a binary American and Chinese identity, as does the strong historical body of work focusing on her political position as a proto-model minority held up globally as evidence of American equality, which both Ellen Wu and Cindy Cheng have argued served to construct an interstitial Asian identity as a proto-model minority.

My investigation into Wong's papers, now held by the Library of Congress, exposes her highly self-censored construction of her family's immigration history in *Fifth Chinese Daughter* (1950), comparing it with her private accounts as well as new information given in her last and unpublished book manuscript, *Chinese America: Burden and Prize* (henceforth referred to as *Chinese America*), a blend of history, Asian travelogue, and memoir written in the 1990s and 2000s. Through her revelations over the course of her life, rather than only one of her works, we can trace her establishment of a Chinese American subjectivity that encompasses the historically violent conflict of her nationality with her ethnicity. (The slow development of a more ethnic-nationalist point of view expresses itself most powerfully in her engagements with history, both her personal history, which I discuss here, and the larger history of Chinese America that I look at in detail in Chapter Four, as she moves from silence to speaking.) Most crucially, these personal revelations take the shape of information about her parents' immigration, a topic which casts a new light on the careful politics of *Fifth Chinese Daughter* and Wong's publicity materials and interviews.

Let me state clearly that the point of this investigation is not to chide Wong for her concealments or constructions, nor simply to correct the historical record, though it may incidentally do that for those interested in the biographical details of this important cultural figure. Rather, I probe the politicized backdrop for the development of Wong's presentation and narration of her family's immigration history, which vary greatly not only over time but with different audiences, from close friends to the mostly white middle-class audience of her first memoir. Looking specifically at her strategies for dealing with the charged topic of immigration, Wong's repressed relationship to the effects of discriminatory policy or institutionalized racism creates a politically savvy and savory post-World War II narrative, but one which she later revises and elaborates in ways that have not been attended to in critical work.

The greatest silence in Wong's public writing and speaking surrounds the fact that her mother was her father's second wife, a fact which had dropped out of public knowledge but that her papers allow me to elucidate. The discord in Wong's presentation of this information clouds a remarriage after her father's first wife's death, which seems in no way unethical, or even, by her family's Presbyterian beliefs, irreligious. Leslie Bow, in her discussion of Wong's memoir in terms of its historical repression and its inability to resolve the contradictions of a plot that attempts to

contain its feminist conflict and social critique in a classic tale of immigrant self-reliance and rise, presciently pointed out a discrepancy in dates in Wong's two books that led Bow to believe that Wong's father had two wives and perhaps had committed bigamy overseas. Perhaps the most telling discrepancy that Bow points out is the mention of "Daddy's wife" having two-and-a-half-inch bound feet, yet "Mama" loves to walk all over San Francisco. The sudden shift in terminology to "Daddy's wife," since she is usually referred to as "Mama," also seems very telling.[8] (While, with the exception of Bow's deductions, little is usually mentioned about Wong's biography outside her memoirs, I should note that her blended family was evidently known in some circles, perhaps primarily local ones; San Francisco ethnographer and historian Judy Yung wrote to Wong inquiring specifically for information about her half-sister in 1997; Wong wrote back calling her a stepsister instead, perhaps to preserve her family narrative.[9])

Bow's hypothesis, bolstered by how little contact Jade Snow has with her older sisters, and the logical oddity that her collegiate career is presented as a singular success although we also learn in the course of *Fifth Chinese Daughter* that her older sister also went to Mills College, is proven essentially correct in the course of exploring Wong's unpublished and lesser-known writing, both personal and that which was meant to be public. However, the explosive secret was not a shameful bigamy that would explode conceptions of the 1950s nuclear family, but even more dangerous immigration secrets. Exploring these ruptures within the historical archive show the lengths to which Wong went in order to conceal her family's illegal stratagems. Mention of her father's first marriage surfaces only fleetingly once, early in Wong's public life, in a *Saturday Evening Post* feature. Thereafter she conceals it carefully, a combination of the extreme pressure to continue to present a united family front and, as I have discovered in Wong's public and private papers, the cascade of immigration secrets and illegalities that accompanied her mother, a picture bride.

The classic tale of immigrant self-reliance or American pioneer families that was popular in the 1950s demands, first and foremost, an unsullied family. Wong's transformation of her life into art slowly disengages from this model over five decades, breaking her last silence only after both parents' deaths. Perhaps stimulated by the successful presentation of the Wongs as a unified family in *Fifth Chinese Daughter*, Wong habitually elided her father's first wife and 'mama,' mentioning her mother's immigration story in interviews and repeating as late as 1994, early in a draft manuscript of *Chinese America*, that her father "sent for his wife and two little daughters, one of whom had been born just before he left China. More children were born here; neither he nor my mother ever returned to China."[10] Admittedly, these two sentences do not explicitly state that her father's "wife" and "my mother" are identical, but the syntax plainly pushes the reader to conflate them. Her suppression of this history even in a late work that is focused on exposing the unsavory details of Chinese exclusion and anti-Chinese racism is particularly noteworthy. She still answered questions very similarly in an interview in 1995; when asked how her parents

got married, she deceptively replied that her father, as a merchant, was able to send for his wife, without mentioning the complications.[11]

Only after her mother's death at the age of 102 did Wong, in the very last drafts of the same unpublished book, finally reveal another reason for her silence and tell her mother's story at length. Rather than bigamy or abandonment, she reveals more immigration secrets and silence in a separate and evidently newly written chapter on her mother. I give this opening of this story in her own words:

> My mother was my biological mother, but she was my father's second wife. My father's first wife died after giving birth to four children, of whom three survived. My maternal grandmother emigrated here as wife of my maternal grandfather, who was a merchant in a fish and poultry store in Chinatown. Grandmother was a seamstress in my father's factory. When Daddy's first wife passed away, leaving four children with two under ten years of age, she introduced my mother as a picture bride. My mother was twenty-two, and my father was forty-three.

To comply with immigration laws, Mother sailed with my Fifth Uncle, also a merchant in the shirt business, and entered the United States as his wife. I do not know if my mother knew that she would be a second wife to a much older man, nor if she knew that she would care for stepchildren.[12]

Wong finally reveals the reason for her many elisions and silences: Her mother had entered the United States fraudulently, in a fairly common manner, accompanying Jade Snow's Fifth Uncle as his legal wife but then "marrying" Wong Hong once she arrived. The awkward rifts in the family and Wong's strange narrative contrivances result from her desire to avoid this topic entirely. It is important to note that it would seem unnecessary that Wong, understandably eager to conceal her mother's immigration details, should then also conceal the fact of her father's first wife's existence. We can only speculate about why this might have been so; she might have felt that allowing any questions at all about her mother would point eventually to her immigration, or she may have wished to preserve the appearance of a large, unbroken nuclear family. It may have been rooted in her personal dislike of some of her half-siblings. Regardless of motivation, her careful concealment of the exact family configuration, which ends in this post-2000 draft, most centrally buries her mother's immigration in a way that she could not have done if mentioning a second marriage. Only her mother's death frees her to speak.

What it frees her from was a decades-long self-construction as an extraordinarily hardworking, virtuous young American with an unimpeachable family background and few, if any, complaints about inequity. It is clear from one early piece of young writing that she did care deeply about the racial and ethnic inequities of immigration. In a heretofore unnoted 1943 letter to the editor of the *San Francisco*

Chronicle, she protests the views of H. J. McClatchy, executive secretary of the California Joint Immigration Committee that notoriously opposed Asian immigration and advocated heavily for Japanese American incarceration during World War II. McClatchy had evidently been quoted in the *Chronicle* opposing the repeal of Chinese exclusion, in which he said that "60 years' work has kept the Pacific Coast white." In response, Wong offers her most strongly worded critique, calling his views "obviously ridiculous" and calling the exclusion laws "laws originally passed in hysteria." However, the grounds on which she argues this are standard proto-model-minority arguments about the "law-abiding, hard-working and loyal people, who have a much lower crime rate and have caused less civic trouble than an average group of white people." What is more, Wong, perhaps unintentionally, falls into the pit of gaining acceptance by distancing herself from troublesome minorities by repurposing McClatchy's language: "[Why would] allowing Chinese citizenship and to enter on quota add half a dozen Oriental problems to the present Negro one?" Acknowledging racial strife but distancing herself and her race from it, Wong lands far from an ideology of racial equality, relying instead on assimilation and exemplarity already at this young age to make her political points, which in any case she would not continue to press as she grew older.[13]

The very first public profile of the Wongs as a family, a splashy, celebratory 1948 *Saturday Evening Post* feature which has been little studied, shows how the public pattern of Wong's exemplary family and immigration concealments commenced at her still young age. The Wongs's feature appeared in a series about diverse white and non-white families in the US: Chinese, Mexican, Norwegian, Italian, German, African American (then termed Negro), Jewish, Acadian, and "the pure blood of those salty old dogs who settled this nation in the first place," that is to say, English. In the feature, the emphasis on the Americanized family subsumes the only published acknowledgment of Wong Hong's second marriage, establishing the model for public exemplarity to which Wong largely adhered for the rest of her life.

Perry's detailed information about the family overlaps with Wong's already-published essays and what she would write in *Fifth Chinese Daughter.* For example, he mentions that Jon (the youngest Wong, called Prosperity from Heaven in the memoir) calls Jade Snow his "outside mamma" and their mother his "inside mamma"). In what would become a typical dual narrative for Wong, author George Sessions Perry, who became a good friend, alternates between exoticizing and Americanizing the Wongs, all while extolling their virtues to impossible heights. After he first introduces the "Wong family, in the Chinese sense of family … a river 3000 years long," he then focuses himself on "Wong Hong's immediate family, which includes children ranging in age from the forties down to a five-year-old lollapaloosa(sic) named Prosperity from Heaven" (24). Promptly Americanizing this happy nuclear family for the middle-class white reader, he notes, "And, as may be true of your own family, any of these children can usually be found, three minutes after getting home, protruding stern-to, from the refrigerator."[14]

He narrates the family as a happy, inseparable unit culturally spread across a spectrum from Chinese to American, but with a solidly American exterior. On the interior, Perry describes the virtual cloistering of Jang Shee in orientalist tones. Perry says that Jang Shee "speaks no English and almost never goes out," thereby connecting the two, although she lives in Chinatown, and further notes that Chinese ladies are often so cloistered as to only allow a doctor to see their wrist and hand, though this is clearly not the case with Jang Shee, as she sees Perry. Thus, when Perry notes that Jang Shee "sits at the [sewing] machine where, except when sleeping, cooking, or dressing babies, she's sat for twenty-seven years," the reader is primed to accept this as quaint Chinese "dells of privacy" rather than evidence of a rather crushing working-class poverty. Despite these orientalist tendencies, he takes a strong tone in discussing the children's Chinese American identities, referring to them by both translated Chinese and their Western names rather than fully orientalizing them as well. On the other end of the cultural spectrum, Jon becomes the American capstone, an irrepressible little jitterbugger. The color photos of all the Wongs in Western dress and mostly plastered with smiles finalize their image.[15]

Though the profile only presents the Wongs in the most positive and charming (if also quaint and orientalist) light, Wong struggled mightily with the revelation of too much information about the family for reasons that she publicly obscures. She wrote at length but vaguely about this in her first drafts of *No Chinese Stranger*: "When her parents had learned that Jade Snow was working on an autobiography, they had expressed disapproval, for publicity was loathsome. In 1948, when the late George Sessions Perry had been assigned by the *Saturday Evening Post* to write about a Chinese family as part of the *Families of America* series, he had spent three weeks trying to find a family who would consent to be featured. He complained, 'The Chinese seemed to disappear into holes in the wall.'" Wong glosses over any reason or analysis of this fear of publicity, continuing, "Eventually, he was introduced to Jade Snow and she had talked her family into being interviewed and allowing pictures to be taken." This hatred of publicity was drastically compressed in the final publication of *No Chinese Stranger,* and the compressed version specifies the nature of the Wongs's disapproval, attributing their dislike of the Perry article to the drawings by Miné Okubo, which showed the Wongs "in peasant clothes, with unkempt hair, without shoes or stockings. It mattered little about the words Jade Snow had written; the illustrations antagonized her family members."[16] Thus, their disapprobation seems based on their desire to adhere to a proper middle-class appearance, a laudable and mainstream goal, not on a hatred of publicity due to fears of immigration investigation. Even in the draft, no explanation at all is given for a desire for privacy, and the invocation of Perry's complaints about *all* Chinese makes this yet another piece of charming cultural modesty—or inscrutability.

The historical record tells us with great clarity why so many Chinese American families shrank from publicity. Even before the advent of the heightened scrutiny after China's turn to Communism, the questionable entry methods of many wives and paper

sons were not such as most Chinese Americans would submit to mass media scrutiny, and a look at Wong's private papers shows that such was the case for her family as well. Even in 1975, Wong purposely avoids the topic for her family's greater concealment, instead allowing the reader to make some generalizations based on their own level of knowledge—or orientalism.

What is evident from her personal papers is that Wong did not conceal this information privately and that Perry became her coconspirator in its public concealment. Wong became very close with the Perrys, up to and including George Sessions Perry's tragic disappearance and death in 1956. Claire Perry, his wife, wrote affectionately to Wong in 1948, a chatty, personal letter, which breaks off her discussion of clothes and pottery and Wong's book project to note that the *Post* had moved up the schedule of publication of the family profiles and that "we had no time to send the galleys on to you as we had planned. However we corrected yours with extreme care. I believe we added all the things your father wanted, and were very careful in the re-defining of your mother's new status. That is, we just spoke of her as your father's second wife, with no details that could conceivably cause any repercussions."[17] What details Wong had confided to the Perrys, and what they had unwisely put into their first draft, are not clear from their exchange, but it seems clear that she had told them enough that the information could have revealed a questionable immigration status, the only thing about her mother's marriage that could cause "repercussions." Given the generally flippant tone of the piece, it is entirely possible that Perry would have framed it with the best of intentions as quaintly Chinese, not thinking of its possible effects on the family. Wong's first public appearance thus deliberately conceals issues of immigration and familial blending, and possibly extends even further than the suppression of her father's first wife and her half-siblings.

The article constantly oscillates between moments of possible betrayal and moments of cultural obfuscation, whether orientalist or all-American. Looking merely at the staggering range of ages, from fortysomething down to five, of the carefully cataloged Wong children, one might already wonder about this large family. However, "The Wongs" they are and remain throughout the entire article, united by the focus on the patriarch. Wong Hong's first marriage falls under the narrative devices of orientalism. Halfway through the article, the existence of a prior marriage is subtly buried in a list of items that Wong Hong keeps in his safe, including "a tooth that belonged to his first wife" (106). Perry eventually explains briefly, "Mr. Wong's first wife, who had bound feet, has returned to her ancestors. His second wife, still in her forties, is named Jang Shee" (109). The gratuitous note about bound feet, a familiar feature of Chinese culture to the general public, is of more interest than anything else about a previous marriage. He does not belabor the point, referring to Jang Shee's influence on "the children" as if she had borne and raised all the children. Indeed, as this line only appears quite late in the article, he has already presented the Wongs as a united front, not specifying which are Jang Shee's biological children.

It is possible for a *Post* reader to do some speculative mathematics and further reading between the lines here to unravel the family history; Jang Shee is in her forties, the same age (approximately) as the eldest daughter, and the article leads us to believe that she is the biological mother of twenty-six-year-old Jade Snow/Connie and the rest of the children; Fourth Sister, thirty-one-year-old Jade Ornament/Virginia, could also feasibly be her biological child but since the article says she went to China for her education with the oldest daughter, who went as a teacher, a reader might speculate that she is the first wife's biological child (as indeed she is) (107). In the *Post*, the images and writing tend to sweep the Wong children into a happy tangle. The younger siblings are even pictured all riding together on a San Francisco trolley, though the older daughters and their spouses are not pictured at all.

The use of Jon as an Americanizing icon is either ironic or symptomatic of an unease that is particular to his birth and his name. Little Jon (or Prosperity from Heaven)'s last name created a considerable legal problem because of his parents' questionable marriage status. Jade Snow Wong cautiously referred to the reasons behind this in a 1948 letter to Esther Dayman Strong, the beloved dean for whom she keeps house in *Fifth Chinese Daughter*, and her husband Stuart Strong, pertaining to an insurance application with which Stuart was helping her. Wong wrote, "[t]he reason Jon and Mother's names and relationships are so given have to do with legal and passport difficulties. Esther knows all about the difficulties and can explain them to you." Later that year, perhaps driven by continued confusion, Wong threw caution to the wind and set the story down in writing for Strong: "Jon Wong Ng should be Jon's full name. He is supposed to be Cousin Ng's son. His mother is Jang Shee because Chinese women keep their maiden name when they marry (Jang). The 'Shee' is added upon marriage as the equivalent of 'Mrs.' O.K.? However, Jon's last name is Ng."[18]

The reasons for Wong's great care are evident, since Jon's name certainly could have raised all kinds of questions that would ultimately reveal her mother's deceptive immigration paperwork. I speculate that Wong and her younger sister were able to take the name Wong because of less regimented paperwork in the earlier decades, or because they may have been born at home instead of in a hospital, with their births registered later by their father, as was common practice. In addition to the later public writings, the 1930 and 1940 federal censuses show the Wongs living together as a family, and all listed as Wongs, including Jang Shee (spelled with several variants).[19] The care over Jon's last name may also reflect the political situation in 1943, the year in which he was born, and some uncertainty over whether revocation of exclusion might have had some meaning for improperly documented immigrants or their children. No echo of Jon's different last name ever surfaces in any of Wong's own public writings or, for that matter, in "The Wongs," but it does provide yet one more reason the Wongs might initially have flinched from national publicity, as well as Wong's great care in *Fifth Chinese Daughter*. Without this information, Jon completes the picture: the cute-as-a-button, thoroughly Americanized keystone of a perfect nuclear family. As a matter of fact, Jon's jitterbugging entertains the reader and leads

them away from the consideration of immigration details. Following Perry's positioning of Jon as cute distraction, Wong used him in the same way in an early essay, "Jon," and *Fifth Chinese Daughter*.[20]

In her public life, Wong's devotion to an exemplary and blended Chinese and American (rather than Jon's all-American) image continued to snowball, as she gained in confidence and savoir-faire. Some of this care safeguarded not only her family's continued residence but Wong's increasing fame on a local and national scale. Perry's profile singled out Jade Snow among her siblings for special praise as "shining with a bright-blue flame" (107), detailing some of her achievements. The deliberate nature of her public persona as an exemplary Chinese American who bridged the two worlds was exemplified by her use of the moniker Jade Snow rather than the name she used privately with friends, Connie, or, more formally, Constance, in her artistic endeavors as well as her famous use of the third person in *Fifth Chinese Daughter*. Indeed, when launching her early pottery business, she wrote quite coolly to a friend of her intention to "play up the Chinese angle" in order to distinguish herself from the competition.[21]

She had likely also learned a great deal about public relations from the way she was being portrayed elsewhere in mainstream media; this became a reciprocal relationship as she gained control of her public image. For Wong, the expectation of exemplarity and cultural bridging was everywhere manifest as her profile rose *before* the publication of her memoir. In 1947, her pottery and enamelwork was acquired by the Museum of Modern Art and the Metropolitan Museum of Art. *Mademoiselle* magazine awarded her one of its ten Merit Awards for women at the very end of 1948; the *Saturday Evening Post* feature appeared earlier that year. Early praise of Wong set up the image that she perpetuates in her memoir. *Mademoiselle* mentions her achievements in ceramics but heavily emphasizes her cultural "struggles and adjustment" as she "weighs the values in the formal patterns of her Chinese heritage with the enterprise of her American homeland." Notably, none of the other winners' achievements were framed in such terms, with perhaps the exception of Phoebe Bailey, who exemplifies "Quaker humanity"; African American winner Hortense Williams's race is not even mentioned, simply left to be assumed from the photograph. A *House & Garden* feature on California craftsmen more subtly alluded to the popular Chinese vs. American dichotomy, contrasting Wong's "war work in a shipyard" with her "potter's wheel in the China Bazaar."[22]

In addition to the influence of Wong's already public persona, editorial constraints on a young, uncertain author produced a slightly redacted memoir and shaped its cultural politics. Editor Elizabeth Lawrence's greatest influence on the politics of the memoir was in shaping a properly reconciliatory ending. She clearly states her view in a particularly important directive to her inexperienced writer in February 1947: "Even though you cannot say everything in this one book, it should come to an end at the right point artistically. This point should lie near the conscious moment of your acceptance of both the Chinese and American cultures. It might be when you chose a career. It might be Jon's birth. Only you can decide certainly."[23]

Framing the cultural bridge as an "artistic" necessity, Lawrence dictates that Wong must describe a moment of conscious acceptance, thereby imposing both a binary and reconciling framework on the narrative.

Such an attitude was entirely typical of editors at the time in approaching Asian American work. Richard J. Walsh, Lin Yutang's editor, suggested similarly that *Chinatown Family* end with another overt comparison between life in the USA and life in China, resolving cultural duality through a tableau such as a Chinese wedding or through the aged mother's thoughts rather than merely ending with a love match, normally a classic ending to a novel. Wong's memoir was thus unexceptional in being shaped into the required sentimental reconciliation plot early in her process, a plot that fostered the hope of an individualized East–West bridge typical of Cold War orientalism. Lawrence was a highly influential editor at Harper & Brothers, particularly active in mid-century, when the most famous work she edited was probably Betty Smith's *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*. Lawrence also tried to mold another Asian writer into a "marketable mold," writing to Santha Rama Rau to emphasize the "woman angle" when Rau wrote to her for guidance on how to shape a book.[24]

Wong's papers, now in the Library of Congress, reveal much about the shaping of her memoir, which critics have wondered at over the years since her casual mention in an interview that editor Elizabeth Lawrence cut "two-thirds" of her memoir.[25] Lawrence's influence, as well as that of one of Wong's English teachers, was strong because of Wong's uncertainty about professional writing. Correspondence shows that Lawrence first contacted Wong in 1946 to see if perhaps she was in the midst of writing a book; her attention had probably been drawn by Wong's articles in *Common Ground* about her family, which overlap heavily in subject matter (though not in writing style) with *Fifth Chinese Daughter.* Lawrence's heavy persuasion got Wong started on a book, which she had not thought to try for many years. However, while Lawrence did urge many cuts over the next three years, they were not always in contradiction with Wong's own impulses. For example, Lawrence suggested that Wong cut lengthy description about the various families she worked for as a domestic; much of this description of the families' social aspirations and pretensions was quite sarcastic and pointed compared to the published version. However, Wong herself worried constantly about her tone and being too critical, asking Lawrence to help her edit the tone, and had already made many cuts to this section herself. (One key aspect of the writing for which Wong has been critiqued was entirely her own; correspondence reveals that the use of third person was her idea. Lawrence and other readers queried its use, but Wong insisted on it.[26]) Lawrence's edits gently guided Wong to a more positive, triumphant memoir of cultural harmony, with humorously softened lows that might have critiqued either white mainstream or Chinese culture too much—the two poles that stabilized her public identity as the exceptional success of a happy American family.

An American War of Words

During the 1950s, governmental reports and crackdowns on Chinese illegal immigration created a nearly constant furor in the media. Countering a stigmatized identity of a fraudulent and illegal or illegitimate community, Chinese American leaders turned to several different narratives that appealed to American ideals, emphasizing their service, their citizenship, and their uprightness. These started to create a new proto-model minority identity for Chinese America, one of exemplarity not only in their own behavior and achievements but as exemplars of America's goodness. Like Jade Snow Wong's memoir, which proved her family's virtue but also the possibilities and inclusiveness of life in America, Chinese American community leaders' narratives offered powerful counters to government investigations that appealed not only to positive images of Chinese America but positive images of America.

The Chinese American community as a whole, rather than countering these charges one at a time or disputing the existence of illegal or falsely documented immigration, found different rhetorical threads to emphasize during this fraught time in the mid-1950s. A few of these presage the rhetoric of the 1970s, focusing on interracial coalition-building, but most naturally hew to the more assimilationist ethos of the 1950s. Centrally, different speakers appealed to American rights to protect them from Drumright and his ilk. They thus wielded the language of culture, as had Drumright, but insisting upon their essential Americanness that maintained an upright and honorable identity rather than an essential Chineseness which, in naming convention, lack of documentation, and historical precedent, pointed them toward fraud. These forthright public political appeals, while obviously very different in form and content from the literature of the era, nonetheless contain some of the same claims to American values and ideals. Likewise, Chinese American public figures steadfastly maintained a relative silence on the issue of fraud, only referring to it in passing, substituting a history of their patriotic and civic-minded actions.

Community leaders spoke out vehemently against what they perceived as the stigmatization and persecution of the entire community. Family Association leaders and newspaper editors, in particular, took public stances and appealed for help to political allies in the mainstream. Nor did community newspapers shy away from coverage of the various immigration-related laws and cases, from large to small—an individual family's deportation case was as likely to be covered as mass arrivals of refugees or the federal subpoenas of San Francisco. What is more, the coverage I examined was in English-language newspapers (due to my own limitations), and while they certainly would have circulated mainly within the Chinese American community, the extensive English coverage suggests that fear of word getting out or reinforcing community stigma was not stronger than the desire to protest. Amid this haze of immigration cases and investigations, the alternative narratives that these speakers sought to create were narratives of American identity and constitutional rights, offering protest on these grounds such as would not be seen openly in the literature

for many years. The vehement public stand that Dai-Ming Lee of the San Francisco *Chinese World*, in particular, takes demonstrates a historical understanding of these issues that presages the ethnic nationalism of the 1970s by several years. In a way, part of this discourse actually overleaped the proto-model minority discourse, claiming Americanness as a matter of fairness and equality rather than desert.

The trigger for these wars of words, the Drumright Report, as it is now often called, described Chinese immigration as impossibly riddled with fraud and the danger of infiltration, influencing federal policy for the next decade—indeed, perhaps lingering up to the present day. The McCarran-Walter Act, by putting an age limit on applications for derivative citizenship (citizenship via a parent's US citizenship), had engendered a flood of applications in 1952; a 1956 *New York Times* article cited 750 cases still in process. Drumright, then the consul at Hong Kong, sent a long "Report on the Problem of Fraud at Hong Kong" to the State Department in December 1955, describing a crisis in the consulate's ability to check identity and therefore to "exclude Chinese Communist agents or criminal elements." He thus indelibly cast the problem of illegal immigration and the problem of communist infiltration into a single mold, characterizing the need to root out fraudulence as a strong Cold War imperative. The report would give force to a series of investigations and subpoenas that would occupy the community for the greater part of an entire year and continue to plague them over the next decade. It is important, however, to note that the Drumright Report was not the start of such policies or theories in the government, but rather a powerful statement of them at a key moment; the ideas themselves were circulating years before, as other documents show. [27]

While Drumright employs such statistics as he is able, the body of the report consists largely of proof by anecdote, piling example upon example to impress the reader. Naturally, all of these anecdotes are stacked on the side of fraud in order to persuade; he does not dwell upon legal or truthful immigration or citizenship, nor does he mention the danger of excluding citizens. While he details some of the cultural practices that create difficulties, such as adoption, polygamous marriage/concubinage, and different names, he does so to further narrate the difficulty of determining identity accurately, not to exonerate. Cultural difference is thus grounds for suspicion, rather than leniency, and further clouds the truth. The stringent warnings of the Drumright Report would quickly shape the policies of the INS and the State Department as a whole. The Report was confidentially submitted to the State Department in December 1955, but a summary of it was made available to the Appropriations Committees of Congress at the end of February or beginning of March in 1956.[28]

Dai-Ming Lee, a US citizen born in Hawaii, was a leader in the community and a staunch anti-communist, unintimidated by controversy or even possible physical danger. "[E]ven those who didn't agree with him wanted to read him … 'take a look at what Dai-ming Lee is saying about things,'" said his friend Gilbert Woo. His death in 1961 would end a highly active journalistic career after a particularly fraught decade in

which he ceaselessly advocated for a third-party solution to government in China and Chinese American equality both in print and in political meetings.[29]

While the Drumright Report did not itself make the mainstream national news—immigration investigations and cases did—it provoked a barrage of responses from Lee. In the spring of 1956, *Chinese World* ran nearly daily coverage and editorials on the Drumright report, the Grand Jury investigations into Chinese immigration, and the subpoenas of San Francisco Chinatown associations that followed. Lee focused heavily on the unethical and harsh interrogation and other investigative measures of the consulate, performing some impressive close readings, but in addition, he used his months of daily editorials to create alternative narratives around the principles that he saw Drumright's report violating: racial equality, Sino-American friendship and cooperation in the fight against Communism, and the lack of Constitutional protections, since Drumright's actions were legally shielded from judicial review. He heaped months of scorn on the report on all these fronts, suggesting that "it should provide Hollywood with scores of melodramatic plots." These editorials were eventually issued in a pamphlet or short book form by *Chinese World*, sold in both Chinese and English.[30] Addressing a Chinese American audience and acting as his own publisher, Lee was able to stake out clear political positions beyond those of the memoirists and novelists of this era, who were addressing a mostly white publishing industry and audience.

In his extensive editorial responses, Lee does not respond to the details of Drumright's accusations of fraud nor his detailing of Chinese culture, focusing instead on the ethics and legality of this immigration scrutiny, which he generalizes as an attack on all Chinese Americans. He makes a strategic plea for leniency by framing any fraud as in the past and using a bewildering array of arguments, rather than entering into the current cases or fraud then underway in situations of family reunification. Lee only touches lightly on historical or current undocumented or falsely documented immigration by pleading that the "sins of fathers and grandfathers should not be visited on innocent children." He frames Chinese emigration in sympathetic terms, calling them "refugees" in order to appeal to the contemporaneous laws permitting political refugees (including Chinese, but chiefly from Eastern Europe). Describing them as both economically and politically subject to "Manchu oppression," Lee very simply describes them as refugees in search of "an honest living," but who were subject by the exclusion laws to separation from their wives and families on the basis of their race. This sets out a different paradigm for current immigration, emphasizing a refugee situation which was omitted from the prevailing narrative of fraudulence.[31]

Lee most often editorialized immigration laws, policies, or public officials whose pronouncements he found contrary to the whole community's good. Only rarely did he invoke the examples of other prominent Chinese American figures, though their names appeared elsewhere in the newspaper. On one occasion, he instead used a small individual tragedy as an example of the community's persecution and Americanness. In early 1957, he wrote of the tragic immigration case of a man

named Ly Shew who had been convicted of immigration fraud and committed suicide in his jail cell while awaiting sentencing. Lee only acknowledges the finding of Ly Shew's fraud, continually noting that he "pleaded guilty" and that "government investigations discovered his claims to be false." While these might seem to be unequivocal statements, in the context of Lee's skepticism of government investigations and prosecutions, it represents a possible sideswipe at the reliability of these findings at the same time that he acknowledges Ly Shew's guilt elsewhere.

Ly Shew was an undisputed US citizen by derivation (via his father) and had arrived in the United States in 1912. He later visited China multiple times, marrying a woman in his natal village and fathering multiple children. He brought three children, two boys and a girl, to the United States in 1947. In the early 1950s, Ly Shew, living in San Francisco Chinatown and working as a cook, attempted to bring two younger children to the US. However, their immigration cases went through prolonged and unusual legal reversals and wrangles, which ended in their deportation. (Although none of the court cases specifies, it is historically likely that they had to remain in INS custody in northern California throughout their three-year judicial process.)[32] The aftermath of this case can only be traced in local newspaper news stories before Lee's editorial. Perhaps in consequence of the failure of these cases, Ly Shew was caught up in the ongoing Grand Jury investigations and charged with fraud. He fled to Mexico but was either persuaded to return to California and then arrested or else was illegally "arrested" by two State Department security officials without proper extradition. He and his wife then pleaded guilty in federal court; she had in fact been brought to the US in 1947 as his paper daughter.[33] This common dodge came to what the judge called, with considerable understatement, "a rather tragic ending." On or before January 28, 1957, Ly Shew hanged himself in the San Francisco County Jail at San Bruno, where he was being held awaiting sentencing after pleading guilty to perjury and conspiracy. He was survived by his wife, who was spared deportation by the judge, and four small children of that marriage in addition to his elder children.[34]

Mainstream newspaper coverage referred to Ly Shew only as a Chinatown or Chinese cook. This simple phrase cloaks him in a firmly ethnic identity, associating him with then-exotic Chinese restaurants in an ethnic ghetto and ignoring his US citizenship. Ly Shew's supposed children's Americanness and their intent to assume their Americanness had also been deeply questioned during their trials by skeptical judges, and Lee turns this rhetoric around to argue Ly Shew's Americanness as a last eulogistic proof of his worth. Supposedly, Ly Shew had feared being deported to "Red China," and Lee uses his suicide to plead against deportation to a Communist country as a general policy, as well as implicitly noting Ly's anti-Communist politics. He prominently noted that Ly Shew had seen service in World War I—certainly possible, though I was unable to definitively verify it—thereby instead asserting his contributions to his country of citizenship as part of his life story. Lee proffers this fatal tragedy, the suicide of a veteran, as the symbolic culmination of a terrible year of attacks for the Chinese

American community, a year which saw the dissemination of the Drumright report, as well as federal subpoenas and innumerable grand jury indictments. [35]

Following close upon the heels of the Drumright report, the Grand Jury investigation of Chinese immigration sent out a mass subpoena of the family associations of San Francisco Chinatown, when many Chinese American individuals were also being investigated and indicted. The Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association (better known as the Six Companies), the Chinese American Citizens Alliance, and twenty-two other benevolent and family associations were subpoenaed for, in the case of the Six Companies, all books and records showing their officers, and for the other twenty-three associations, "[a]ll lists, rolls, or other records of membership of the Association during the entire period of the Association's existence; all records of dues, assessments, contributions and other income of the Association; and all photographs of the membership or any portion thereof." The hope was to find family records which would disprove assertions made during immigration proceedings. As a group, the associations applied for relief to the courts. Judge Oliver Carter noted in his ruling that the subpoena was indeed unduly onerous, though the volume of the papers was not at issue so much as the sheer extensiveness of the subpoena, which covered all time periods and all of these associations without showing their precise relevance. His ruling quashed it in decided terms, stating that the Grand Jury's investigation "must necessarily be related to individuals, or groups of individuals," but that the subpoena's "broad demand smacks more of the fishing expedition which was condemned" previously, targeting the community in hope of finding proof of fraud rather than fraudulent individuals. The effects of this subpoena went much further than the two months of legal wrangling, as the community was galvanized into public action by what was indeed felt as a broad attack rather than something targeted at particular individuals.[36]

As soon as the subpoena was issued on February 29, 1956, the community as a whole leapt into political action, backed by several supportive California and Chinese Nationalist politicians. The legal course was ultimately the one which garnered relief, but Chinese American leaders also fought the battle in the court of public opinion as well, on a scale that they had never before been forced to undertake. The Six Companies took the lead on all public statements, beginning with a back-to-back press release and statement on their history and mission in mid-March. They took a clear position that this was a racially based or at least racially grouped attack on the entire community, stating that "whether intentional or otherwise, [government officials] are having the effect of stigmatizing the social and family status of a respected community with criminal coloration." The community, not defined in this particular line, was elsewhere defined very clearly as "an entire community and a whole people of a specific racial ancestry." Though they also briefly invoked Chinese American history in the United States, their statements relied on the racially defined identity of the group as a way of invoking the protection of civil rights.[37]

In this discourse, community spokespeople's public statements generally skirted the question of immigration fraud or guilt, relying instead on the language of equal rights and government overreach. In 1957, 124 delegates from Chinese American organizations across the country gathered in Washington, DC to discuss matters related specifically to US domestic issues, oddly avoiding the recent furor over (illegal) immigration. In a statement and series of resolutions issued publicly, the conference delegates focused heavily on the tiny immigration quota and limited slots in the Refugee Relief program, rather than the equally obvious immigration investigations. However, they did, in resolutions related to hardship cases, ask for judicial and administrative review of "unreasonable, capricious, and arbitrary [consular] power" in an apparent swipe at Drumright. As had Lee, the conference focused on the legalities and rights of the Chinese American community while quietly putting the actual issue of illegal immigration to one side.[38]

Notably, although these public statements heavily emphasized the racial inequities of Chinese immigration scrutiny and noted that a blanket wrongdoing was being laid on an entire US racial group, the legal case did not, as a matter of fact, invoke equal protection of the laws, which had newly proved its efficacy when used only two years previously in *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954). It relied instead on the patent overreach of the government, invoking the better-established case law on the Fourth Amendment protection against unreasonable search and seizure. (Invoking equal protection of the laws would not only have trod on relatively new legal ground but might have raised the question of whether it applied to noncitizens or those suspected of not being citizens.) The verdict was hailed both by those who saw it as a repeat of the outrages of King George III and those who saw it as racial profiling, such as the San Francisco African American newspaper the *Sun-Reporter*.[39] Nonetheless, Chinese American spokespeople may have understood that there were limits to the power of racial equality as a narrative to defend themselves.

As a replacement, they relied upon asserting their law-abiding American status, both in cooperating with investigation and resisting unjust investigation, relegating any fraud to a minor and hypothetical percentage: "If any citizens or aliens of Chinese ancestry in the United States are legitimate objects of inquiry with respect to violation of immigration or other laws, we would be the last to deny the government's right to take every appropriate action against them and to receive every pertinent record required in the prosecution of its case. But where, in an effort to adduce evidence in support of intangible suspicion of wrong-doing, an entire community is subject to calumny and the inference of wholesale wrongdoing, we believe that it is our right and our duty to protest, as Americans, against such injustice. This we do." From beginning to end, the press release reaffirms their identity as "patriotic loyal and (law) abiding American citizens (*all sic*)" and, consequently, devotion to and a deserving of civil rights. This would remain their line throughout, finding an alternative narrative to the presumption of guilt.[40]

Meanwhile, the New York Six Companies showed support with symbolic telegrams to President Dwight Eisenhower, Vice President Richard Nixon and a number of other prominent US government officials. This patriotic solidarity, clearly invoking American identity by appealing to the highest US officials rather than Chinese Nationalist figures, would continue amid the investigation and stigma that continued even after the subpoena's quashing. Jade Snow Wong, aware of the same need of authentication although uninvolved in the public discussion of immigration, made some of the same moves in her 1956 *Holiday* article "How To Get the Best Chinese Food." While describing various Chinatown restaurant specializations, Wong recounts the story of a private luncheon that she had organized in 1951 for the wives of important delegates to the Japanese Peace Treaty Conference in San Francisco in 1951. "Mrs. Dean Rusk, wife of the then Assistant Secretary of State," asked Wong to arrange the outing for "Mrs. John Foster Dulles, Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, III, Mrs. Myron Cowen, Mrs. John Sparkman, Mrs. Alexander Smith, and Lady Carl Berendsen," among others (67, 133). She lists the menu for the luncheon, which includes some of the dishes and recipes that appear later in the article. Thus, at the same time that she invites the white middle-class reader into San Francisco's Chinatown, she assures them of its safety and suitability by invoking the wives of white US dignitaries. Far from simple, vain name-dropping, Wong's invocation of these names serves, like the Six Companies' telegrams, to place her as an American in direct communication with powerful mainstream figures. Such ploys for connections to the body politic could serve to establish Chinese Americans citizenship rhetorically, if not legally.

Notes

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[1] Peter Kwong and Dusanka Miscevic, *Chinese America: The Untold Story of America's Oldest New Community* (New Press, 2005) 206–07. Xiaojian Zhao, *The New Chinese America: Class, Economy, and Social Hierarchy* (Rutgers UP, 2010), 74, 81.

[2] Xiaojian Zhao, *Remaking Chinese America: Immigration, Family, and Community, 1940–1965* (Rutgers University Press, 2002), 160–61, 62. Mae M. Ngai, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (Princeton UP, 2004), 210, 12, 17. *Annual Report of the Attorney General of the United States*. (G.P.O., 1957), 442.

[3] In a report in the same year, the INS wrote, "The purpose of the program was twofold. The humanitarian aspect was to free these otherwise law-abiding persons from the constant pressure of living with a lie. At the time, the Service wanted to

terminate permanently the machinery which facilitated a steady influx of illegal aliens." In other words, the program ostensibly fulfilled two purposes, one humanitarian and one practical, particularly in its language about those of "tender years." Annual Report of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, US Dept. of Labor, Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1956/57, p. 13. These reports cover the fiscal year.

4 Fanny Butcher, "The Literary Spotlight," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, July 29, 1951.

5 *Annual Report of the Immigration and Naturalization Service*, US Dept. of Labor, Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1950/51, pp 46–47. https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/000546059

6 Amy Ling, *Between Worlds: Women Writers of Chinese Ancestry* (Pergamon Press, 1990), 120.

7 See Chapter Three of Leslie Bow, *Betrayal and Other Acts of Subversion: Feminism, Sexual Politics, Asian American Women's Literature* (Princeton UP, 2001).

8 Leslie Bow, *Betrayal and Other Acts of Subversion: Feminism, Sexual Politics, Asian American Women's Literature* (Princeton University Press, 2001), 84.

9 Letter from Judy Yung to Wong and letter from Wong to Yung, Folder COR_073, COR series, JSW.

10 Typescript of *Chinese American* marked original mss., undated, p. 103; Folder CBP_004, CBP series, JSW.

11 Transcript of interview by Shan Te-hsing, San Francisco, August 11, 1995; Folder SPT 004, SPT [Scripts and Transcripts] series, JSW.

12 Typescript of *Chinese American*, p. 258; Folder CBP_014 2003 Manuscript; CBP series, JSW.

13 Jade Snow Wong, "Exclusion [Letter to the Editor]," *San Francisco Chronicle* June 21, 1943, p. 10 (Editorial Page). In Box 6, SBK [Scrapbook] series, JSW.

14 George Sessions Perry, "The Wongs," *Saturday Evening Post*, October 16, 1948; George Sessions Perry, *Families of America; Where They Come from and How They Live* (Whittlesey House [division of] McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1949), 137. Ellen Wu more heavily stresses the Americanizing narrative in her interpretation of this piece (Ellen Wu, *Color of Success: Asian Americans and the Origins of the Model Minority* [Princeton University Press, 2017], 126).

15 George Sessions Perry, "The Wongs," *Saturday Evening Post*, October 16, 1948, 109, 05, 10.

[16] Typescript bound draft of *No Chinese Stranger*, p. 36; Folder NCS_006, NCS series, JSW. Jade Snow Wong, *No Chinese Stranger* (Harper & Row, 1975) 4.

[17] Letter from Claire Perry to Connie [Wong], August 9, 1948, p. 2; Folder COR_036 Personal Correspondence, 1947-50, COR series, JSW.

[18] Letter from Wong to Stuart and Esther Strong, Marc 18, 1948 and April 9, 1948; Folder COR_036, COR series, JSW.

[19] The censuses from 1950 onwards are not yet publicly available, due to privacy restrictions, though obviously it would be informative to know how Jon was listed after his birth. A search of Ancestry.com's birth records for 1943 under the last names Wong or Ng do not reveal anyone who can be clearly identified as Jon.

[20] Jade Snow Wong, "Jon," *Common Ground*, Autumn 1945, 39–44.

[21] Letter from Wong to Harriet [Tegart] (typescript copy), September 26, 1944; Folder 39, FCD Correspondence, COR series, JSW.

[22] "Mlle Merit Awards," *Mademoiselle*, December 30, 1948, 97.

[23] Letter from Lawrence to Connie [Wong], February 25, 1947, p. 1 of 2; Folder 29, FCD Correspondence, COR series, JSW.

[24] Letter from Richard J. Walsh to Y.T. [Lin Yutang], June 29, 1948, p. 1; Box 258, Folder 10, JDP. Al Silverman, *The Time of Their Lives: The Golden Age of Great American Book Publishers, Their Editors, and Authors* (Truman Talley Books, 2008). Antoinette M. Burton, *The Postcolonial Careers of Santha Rama Rau* (Duke University Press, 2007) 8. I refer to Cold War orientalism as outlined by Christina Klein in her book, *Cold War Orientalism* (University of California Press, 2003).

[25] Elaine H. Kim, *Asian American Literature: An Introduction to the Writings and Their Social Context* (Temple University Press, 1982). This ought not to be construed as a disparaging comment from Wong. Wong's relationship with Lawrence was extremely strong and personally friendly, and she relied strongly on Lawrence's suggestions.

[26] Letters from Elizabeth Lawrence to Jade Snow or Connie [Wong], including January 9, 1946, November 21, 1949, Letter from Wong to Lawrence, November 27, 1949; Folder 29, FCD Correspondence; COR series, JSW. Undated typescript draft of *Fifth Chinese Daughter*, Folder 007, FCD series, JSW. Cuts are marked on various pages, notably in chapters 14 and 15.

[27] "U.S.Inquiry Hurts Chinatown Trade; $100,000 Weekly Loss Laid to Fear in Passport Check," *New York Times* March 17 1956; Everett F. Drumright, "Report on the Problem of Passport Fraud at Hong Kong" *Foreign Service Dispatch* 931, December 9, 1955, 1-89, file 122.4732/12-955 and "Proposals to Better Cope with Problem of Fraud

at Hong Kong," *Foreign Service Dispatch 942,*December 13, 1955, 1–6; Wolfgang Saxon, "Everett F. Drumright, 86, Is Dead; Envoy to Taiwan in Tense Period," *New York Times*, April 27, 1993, http://www.nytimes.com/1993/04/27/obituaries/everett-f-drumright-86-is-dead-envoy-to-taiwan-in-tense-period.html

[28] "Hk Consul General Charges Passport Fraud Racket," *Chinese World,* March 5, 1956. Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs testimony, January 13, 1956, *Departments of State and Justice, Judiciary, and Related Agencies, Appropriations for 1957: Hearings before the Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations, House of Representatives*. 84th Congress Second Session. GPO, 1956, 219, 226. See also "Bureau of Security and Consular Affairs, February 12, 1957" Departments of State and Justice, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriations for 1958. Hearings before the Subcommittee of the Committee on appropriations, House of Representatives. Eighty-fifth Congress, First Session. GPO, 1957, starts p. 275. The previous year's testimony, when funding was given for eight more employees to deal with fraud in Hong Kong, is quoted on 276, 287, and 304. Most testimony for 1957 is given by Scott McLeod, and then by Frances G. Knight.

[29] Quoted in Brooks, *Between Mao and McCarthy*, 76, also 113–14, 149, 151. "Dai-ming Lee is Dead," March 20, 1961, *New York Times*, 29.

[30] Dai-Ming Lee, "The Mountain Labored and Brought Forth a Mouse," *Chinese World,* May 9, 1956; "Commentary on Drumright Report Published by Chinese World," *Chinese World,* May 28, 1956.

[31] Dai-Ming Lee, "The Sins of Fathers and Grandfathers," *Chinese World,* April 19, 1956; and Dai-Ming Lee, "Drumright's Exclusion Laws," *Chinese World,* April 28, 1956.

[32] Biographical information from a number of sources. *Ly Shew v. Acheson* 110 F. Supp. 50. (1953); and *Ly Shew v. Dulles* 219 F.2d. 413 (1954).

The National Archives at Washington, D.C.; Washington, D.C.; Customs Passenger Lists of Vessels Arriving at San Francisco; NAI Number: 4478116; Record Group Title: Records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, 1787–2004; Record Group Number: 85 (accessed on *Ancestry.com*).

"Chow Faces Quiz by U.S. Grand Jury" *Oakland Tribune,* September 27, 1956, 12.

Entries show the children in 1952: The National Archives at Washington, DC; *Passenger Lists of Vessels Arriving at San Francisco, California*; NAI Number: *4498993*; Record Group Title: *Records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, 1787-2004*; Record Group Number: *85*. *California, Passenger and Crew Lists, 1882–1959* [database on-line], Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2008.

[33] "Albert Chow to Appear Before Grand Jury," *Chinese World,* September 28, 1956; "Chow Faces Quiz by U.S. Grand Jury," *Oakland Tribune,* September 27, 1956, 12. In

both articles, Ly Shew's son Ly Gway Sang appears as an addendum to the interrogation of Chow, a former president of the Six Companies, who had also been subpoenaed by the grand jury. "Immigration Case Cook Talks; Freed," *Chinese World,* September 29, 1956.

"Immigration Law Violations Admitted," *Oakland Tribune*, January 20, 1957, 6. Ly Shue Ngor is clearly named in one of the court cases as entering in 1947. *Ly Shew v. Dulles* 219 F.2d 413 (1954). "Illegal Arrest Charged in Passport Case," *Chinese World,* November 23, 1956.

[34] "Mercy for Mother in Alien Case," *Oakland Tribune,* February 8, 1957; "U.S. Passport Fraud Figure Hangs Himself," *Oakland Tribune,* January 29, 1957; and Dai-Ming Lee, "Deportations to Red China," *Chinese World,* January 30, 1957, 1.

[35] Lee, "Deportations to Red China"; "How Thousands of Chinese Get into U.S. Told: Hong Kong Racketeers Paid $3,000 a Head," *Chicago Daily Tribune,* March 24, 1956. The Supreme Court ruled against petitioners Leng May Ma in *Leng May Ma v. Barber* (1958) and the Quan family in companion case *Rogers v. Quan* in 5–4 decisions from which Chief Justice Earl Warren and Justices Douglas, Black, and Brennan dissented. Clark's opinions for the court rested on statutory grounds, specifying that Ma had not technically gained entry and therefore was not eligible for the benefactions of law due to those who had entered the United States. Douglas' dissent on behalf of all four preferred to read the "spirit of the law" less "narrowly" and focused heavily on the question of "Communist China—a country which the Immigration and Naturalization Service itself has told us is inhospitable to refugees." The opinion footnotes an INS report on "Red China" and the unknown nature of its "persecution" of individuals in China. Douglas concludes that "this case is one of those where the Attorney General is authorized to save a human being from persecution in a Communist land." *Leng May Ma v. Barber*. 357 U.S. 185 (1958), *Rogers v. Quan*. 357 U.S. 193 (1958); and Ngai, *Impossible Subjects,* 221, 23.

[36] Application of the Presidents, Secretaries, Treasurers, and Custodians of Records of CERTAIN CHINESE FAMILY BENEVOLENT AND DISTRICT ASSOCIATIONS to quash Grand Jury subpoenas duces tecum. 19 F.R.D. 97 (1956), 101–02.

[37] "Six Companies Protests Calumny Heaped on Entire Chinese Community: Inference of Wholesale Wrongdong(Sic) Resented by Chinese Organizations," *Chinese World,* March 16, 1956.

[38] "60 New York Chinese Groups Protest 'Blanket' Probe of Sf Organizations," *Chinese World,* March 13, 1956; "Complete Text of Statement Issued by Chinese Confab in Washington," *Chinese World,* March 12, 1957; "Text of Resolutions Adopted by Chinese Conference in Washington," *Chinese World*, March 13, 1957; "More on D.C.

Conference Resolutions," *Chinese World*, March 15, 1957; and "More on D.C. Conference," *Chinese World*, March 14, 1957.

[39] Dai-Ming Lee, "Press Acclaims Judicial Decision on Subpoenas," *Chinese World*, March 27, 1956. I am indebted to Jared Brown-Rabinowitz for his advice on the historical case law.

[40] "Six Companies Protests Calumny Heaped on Entire Chinese Community: Inference of Wholesale Wrongdong [Sic] Resented by Chinese Organizations," *Chinese World*, March 16, 1956.