國立交通大學

語言與文化研究所

碩　士　論　文

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Nieh Hualing and Yan Geling's Writings

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關鍵字：移動、華裔移民、聶華苓、嚴歌苓、《桑青與桃紅》、《無出路咖啡館》、<少女小漁>、<處女阿曼達>、黃秀玲

中文摘要

本文借用亞美研究學者黃秀玲（Sau-ling C. Wong）的雙向移動理論來探討華裔移民女性之移動、抵拒男性宰制並建立起主體性的過程。此移動理論包含平行的地理式移動與垂直的社經式移動。在聶華苓的《桑青與桃紅》中，女主角藉著移動力量產生不同的空間意識，以抵抗宰制並建立新主體性。另一方面，嚴歌苓故事中的華裔移民女性則較關切異國生存問題。在《無出路咖啡館》、<少女小漁>、<處女阿曼達>裡，她們表現出對垂直式移動的矛盾感受，同時也抗拒著主流文化的再現。此論文盼能藉華裔移民女性的異質經驗來豐富、活化華裔美國移動論述。

全文共四章。第一章針對移動女性主體之構成做理論分述。其中，除回顧華裔美國移動論述中女性的邊緣化地位之外，亦論述黃秀玲的雙向移動概念作爲理論基礎。此章中並借用鄭明河（Trin T. Minh-ha）的女性主義觀點來探究華裔移民女性在原生結構與社會關係（filiation/affiliation）之間的主體性構成與抵拒。

第二章借用黃秀玲雙向移動論述中將移動視作可消融宰制論述之「競爭的文化論述」（rival cultural discourse）來分析聶華苓《桑青與桃紅》中的平行移動。由此，桑青與桃紅的平行移動可策略性突破宰制力量的限制。在移動中，桑青與桃紅創造了不同於宰制力量的空間論述，也在過程裡產生強力的主體性。

第三章分析嚴歌苓故事中女主角的社經移動、在原生關係與社會關係中的掙扎。她們的經驗揭露了模範弱勢論述（the model minority thesis）的虛假與種族主義本質，也顯示嚴歌苓本身對依附白人主流者的質疑。同時，本章亦討論了華裔移民女性的垂直向上移動將會帶來華裔美國社群中性別階級的翻轉。

第四章總結本文，除提出更多異質經驗的可能性，並藉此將華裔美國移動論述視作持續開放的文化論述。

Key Words: mobility, Chinese immigrant, Nieh Hualing, Yan Geling, *Mulberry and Peach*, *No Exit Café*, "Siao Yu," "The Virgin Amanda," Sau-ling C. Wong

Abstract

This thesis tries to explore the themes of women's mobility in dislocation in the context of Chinese American immigrant literature and to discuss the ways in which they set up subjectivities from their mobility experiences. Adapting from Sau-ling C. Wong's theory of mobility discourse, which considers the issue of mobility both horizontally (geographically) and vertically (socio-economically), I argue that to women mobility is a way of resisting male domination and of constructing subjectivity. On one hand, in Nieh Hualing's *Mulberry and Peach*, the female protagonist creates alternative consciousness of space as a means to empower herself to fight against androcentric domination and constructs a new subjectivity in the new world. On the other hand, the heroines in Yan Geling's *No Exit Café*, "The Virgin Amanda" and "Siao Yu" are more concerned about the problem of survival. They show ambivalent feelings toward vertical mobility and resist the representations of the mainstream by a strong subjectivity. This thesis may help to revitalize Chinese American mobility discourse by disclosing the specific experiences of Chinese immigrant women.

Chapter 1 firstly discusses women's marginalized status in Chinese American mobility discourses. I introduce my theorization of the construction of female subject in a mobile condition, which is mainly based on Wong's two-directional mobility. Also, I borrow Trin T. Minh-ha's feminist perspective to view Chinese immigrant women's subjectivity and resistance in a non-filiation/affiliation status.

Chapter 2 demonstrates my appropriation of Sau-ling C. Wong's viewpoints about mobility as "rival cultural discourse" against dominant values. By this I argue that Mulberry/Peach's horizontal mobility can be regarded as tactics intending to transgress limitations of domination. The results show that mobility empowers Mulberry/Peach by creating new spatial discourses against Chinese patriarchism or American nationalism and further generates strong subjectivity.

Chapter 3 focuses on the heroines' socioeconomic mobility and their struggles between the filiative or the affiliative relations. I argue that their experiences unmask the hypocrisy of the white's model minority thesis and its racism and reveal Yan's suspicion to those who attach to the white dominant. Lastly, I discuss how Chinese immigrant women's vertical movement may result in the reversal of gender hierarchy in Chinese American community.

Chapter 4 concludes the thesis with a view of regarding the Chinese American mobility discourses as an open one which may include more and more heterogeneous experiences.

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With love, to my families. They always believe me and back me up.

Contents

Chapter 1

Introduction

As an old Chinese proverb "men dominate the outside world and women, the domestic field" shows, the mobility practices of Chinese people have been determined by a gender hierarchy. In other words, to traditional Chinese women mobility is almost out of reach. Those who first came to the United States were at the dictate of the proverb. Out of poverty, the male Cantonese left their wives behind with a promise of coming back and crossed the ocean to America for better opportunities. Ever since then, the discourse of Chinese American mobility has long been circumscribed by the mainstream white. While exploring a new frontier implies heroism and masculinity for the white, the "promised" land to Chinese people has been overshadowed by the Chinese Exclusion Law (1882-1943) which banned the Chinese immigrating into America. Only a small number of women, including prostitutes and a few paper daughters, entered but contributed very little to forming Chinese American families since the U.S. government was trying to uproot the Chinese American population. This resulted in a bachelor society in Chinese American community for a long period of time.[1]

The Second World War had a profound impact on Chinese immigrants and their

[1] My research of the history of Chinese immigration into the United States is based on Sucheng Chan's *Asian Americans: An Interpretive History*.

descendants. In Sucheng Chan's study, the war brought four positive changes, including the improvement of the Chinese images, the removal of some racial barriers of the labor market, sizable Chinese members' enlistment in the armed forces, and the gradual lift of the immigration exclusion.[2] To Chinese women, particularly, the amended War Brides Act in 1947 admitted them to be the main group entering America under the amendment. Most of them married Chinese American men and turned the bachelor world into that of normalcy. And some of them threw themselves into the labor force and initiated different living experiences from that of their predecessors. The door of the States then opened to the political refugees after the Communist China was established in 1949. The members of this group were mostly well-educated intellectuals who would eventually constitute the base of Chinese American middle class. Yet, during the Cold War, each Chinese immigrant was under the country's anticommunist surveillance, which moved the Chinese American groups into silence and the nightmare of investigation, such as the case of Yan Geling.[3]

In general, however, after the period of the legal prohibition of Chinese immigration comes the inclusion age. According to Chan's research, throughout the 60's, 70's and 80's, changes in U.S. immigration legislation had greatly increased the

[2] Chan, "Changing Fortunes, 1941 to 1965." *Asian Americans: An Interpretive History*. 121-42.
[3] Yan's marriage with her husband, a white diplomat, was under investigation because she is from a communist country. Her husband then decided to resign from the job. He did not go back to his diplomatic career until 2004.

immigration quotas for Chinese. The abolishment of the Immigration Law especially brings in a great number of Chinese immigrants, although they have to gain the permission from the immigration bureau before moving in.[4] This is also an age in which Asian Americans are called "legal aliens" by David Leiwei Li, because, not like the exclusion period, "the regulatory function of the law in defining citizens and aliens is increasingly subsumed by mass media and public education" (Li 6). Sharing this racist mind, the model minority thesis has emerged in the mid-1960. According to Chan, the thesis tended to paint rosy pictures of Chinese/Japanese Americans as "models" while in fact it served a critical political purpose at the height of the Civil Rights movement:

> Proponents of the thesis were in fact telling Black and Chicano activists that they should follow the example set by Asian Americans who work hard to pull themselves up by the bootstraps instead of using militant protests to obtain their rights. (167)

Such homogenized discourse for the Chinese American community not only ignores the individual differences within Asian/Chinese Americans, but also covers up its racist core by a stereotypical representation of the Chinese people.[5] Li voices his

[4] According to Chan, the liberalization comes when in 1965 Immigration Law "abolishes 'national origins' as the basis for allocating immigration quotas to various countries" and "Asian countries are finally placed on an equal footing" (198).

[5] The "model" imagination can soon be broke down if we take Asian American women for instance. Some of them take jobs to support their families owing to male members' low wages. Yet, these women are not "receiving earnings that are commensurate with their years of schooling," according to

protest against this dominant strategy because: “It detaches Asians from their association with other racial ‘minorities’ by hailing them as a white-appointed ‘model,’ while it distinguishes them from the unmarked ‘true’ nationals by calling Asians their ‘minor’” (10).

It is under such racism that some Chinese American writers, such as Frank Chin, attempt to invoke a masculinist and active Chinese tradition to counter the practice of discrimination against Chinese immigrants. Yet, their formulation of Chinese American masculinist discourse leads to a marginalization of women’s specificities and reproduces the stereotypes that allocate Chinese women to the position of passive objects. Chinese American women, suffering from restrictions on immigration mobility imposed by the white mainstream, are voiceless and invisible again in Chin’s portrayal of a male-centered Chinese American community. As Patricia P. Chu suggests, when writing Asian/Chinese American experiences, writers, particularly female writers, should combat with both masculinist narratives inside their groups and the stereotypical representation of the white.[6] Positioning Chinese American women thus is a dialogue between “patriarchal values in Chinese tradition and American political and ideological colonization since the early days of East-West contact” (Wong, “Chinese” 51).

Chan’s survey (169).

[6] See her introduction to *Assimilating Asians: Gendered Strategies of Authorship in Asian America.*

Except for the U.S. government's political control over Chinese American mobility, writers who are Chinese-born and immigrate to the United States after the Second World War have been instilling diasporic experiences into Chinese America and have also significantly transformed Chinese American mobility discourse. Being mostly well-educated intellectuals, some of these new immigrants help formulate overseas student literature (liuxuesheng wenxue) and immigrant literature (yimin wenxue).[7] Their texts often depict multiple roles of Chinese American women, such as wives who are bound to family obligations, immigrant students or successful professionals. The theme of Chinese American women's mobility thus is expanded from the difficulties of boundary-crossing to the more imminent issue of survival in dislocation, and both themes connect closely to the tribulations of being a minority woman in the white-dominant society. As Sylvia Yanagisako indicates, when border-crossing occurs, women can "disrupt these seemingly exclusive, natural boundaries of class, nation, and ethnic identity…" (289). While physical mobility for Chinese women is no longer severely suppressed, their marginalized position still keeps pushing them to find better days by struggling against "the Haves" in either

[7] The overseas student literature (liuxuesheng wenxue) specifically refers to the popular genre arose in the 60s and the 70s due to the flourishing phenomenon of studying abroad. The writers who are categorized into overseas student literature include Bai Xianyong, Yu Lihua, Zhang Xiguo and Nieh Hualing. In addition to Nieh, whose *Mulberry and Peach* is chosen as part of my research, Yan Geling— also the writer I am researching on—can be seen as a writer contributing to immigrant literature. In my viewpoint, in terms of a broadly-definite immigrant literature, the writings of those liuxuesheng wenxue writers might be collected in the immigrant literature after they resided in America.

their ethnic community or the (white) dominant society. Hence, social mobility can be a crucial point in understanding women's lives in Chinese America and their transnational experiences. When Chinese women immigrate to America, the so-called "New World," will they be able to overturn gender hierarchy because of their mobility? Can they release themselves from the role of the oppressed in terms of the mobility discourse of Chinese Americans and establish their own subjectivities? What is the trajectory of their social mobility in America—downward or upward? What does Chinese women's social mobility suggest to the Chinese community or the (white) mainstream society?

To answer these questions, this project tries to explore the themes of women's mobility in dislocation in the context of Chinese American immigrant literature and to discuss the ways in which they set up subjectivities from their mobility experiences. I would like to draw upon Sau-ling C. Wong's theory of mobility discourse, which considers the issue of mobility both horizontally and vertically, as a stating point. Horizontal mobility refers to physical and geographical displacements; vertical mobility is about socio-economically upward/downward movements. To women, mobility is a way of resisting male domination and of constructing subjectivity. In Nieh Hualing's *Mulberry and Peach*, through horizontal movements, the female protagonist creates alternative consciousness of space as a means to empower herself

to fight against androcentric nationalist discourse and constructs a new subjectivity out of her own alterity in the new world. On the other hand, after geographical displacement resulting from immigration, the female protagonists in Yan Geling's *No Exit Café*, "The Virgin Amanda" and "Siao Yu" are more concerned about the problem of survival because of the crisis of having downward mobility in the alien country. At the same time, they reflect Chinese American women's ambivalent feelings toward vertical mobility and social affiliations, including interracial relationships (the white vs. the colored or the colored vs. the colored). "Siao Yu" suggests Chinese women's longing for an official "recognition" as a drive for mobility. In the story she undergoes a semi-traumatic experience of a green card marriage, during which time Siao Yu's subjectivity nevertheless gradually becomes stronger. This process of transformation symbolizes a maternal power which transcends either the demand of her patriarchal boyfriend or the regulation of the legal authority. This female agency is further emphasized by Yan in *No Exit Café* in which the heroine's refusal to marry a white man from the mainstream society bespeaks an effort to resist being othered and orientalized. It also expresses Yan's positive perspective on the subjectivities of immigrant women in America, which is not necessarily recognized by the mainstream ideology but is nevertheless constituted along with a strong agency. At the same time, female subject formation in "The Virgin Amanda" is shown as an

ambivalent impact on Chinese American mobility discourse since the story suggests that a Chinese woman's vertical mobility along with man's downward movement may lead to a reversal of gender hierarchy in Chinese American community.

Although originally written in Chinese, Nieh's *Mulberry and Peach* and Yan's *No Exit Café* and other stories can be regarded as Chinese American literary texts because they represent immigrant life of Chinese America in different ways, especially the female experiences of mobility. Both authors have relocated from Mainland China or Taiwan to America and their sentiments of displacement permeate their stories. Their writings are also recognized by mainstream readers in America.[8] In addition to their English achievement, the emergence of these Chinese-language writers in America may result from the multilingual reconfiguration of Asian or Chinese American literature which has been raised in recent critical discourse. When discussing the LOWINUS project, which strives to reveal possibilities of multilingual selection of American literary texts, Te-hsing Shan in his "Re-defining Chinese American Literature from a Multilingual Perspective: Two Recent Examples" suggests that Chinese-language works actually are "relatively strong and powerful," for they "must have already produced distinct literary and cultural traditions." He

[8] The English version of *Mulberry and Peach* won American Book Award in 1990, whereas Yan has successfully entered into Hollywood Screenwriter Association. Yet, about English writing, Yan herself acknowledges that "the most difficult thing for Chinese writers who write in English to be accepted by American readers is culture. You cannot write well by merely know the language." Liu, Yi. "Xinggan Ye Mei le Shi Chedi Shibai" [Without Desire, It Totally Fails]. Star Online 05 November 2003. 05 November 2003 <<http://www.csonline.com.cn/changsha/rwx/t20031105_47111.htm.>>

adds that the subject should deal with "the immigrants of that linguistic community in the United States." Otherwise, "they are read as 'foreign' rather than American literature, because both the content and the language are not commonly understood and accepted as 'American'" (118). Shan's argument not only points to a multilingual project which basically questions the concept of "English as a national language," it also brings out an issue that the inclusion of texts written in Chinese may expand the field of formerly English-based Chinese American literature.[9] Aside from the different choice of language, drawing from Wong's viewpoints, Nieh and Yan's "experience of global dispersal" critically differentiates them from those writers of English-writing bestsellers, such as Maxine Hong Kingston and Amy Tan (Wong, "Chinese" 49). Being contemporary Chinese American female writers, they not only appeal to different readerships, the major themes of their works are also different. Kingston and Tan emphasize on cultural predicaments of American-born Chinese, while Nieh's and Yan's writings stress immigrant's everyday life and their struggle in mobility. Besides, Kingston and Tan's popularity leads to accusations of mis-representation. For Nieh and Yan, the misogynist or exoticized China as represented in Kingston and Tan's stories is an inseparable part of their relocating life.

[9] Like Shan, Pin-chia Feng also suggests that the canon formation of Asian American literature should be interrogated, for it is limited to certain "official" language or geographical location as the *Aiieeeee!* editors mentioned. She shares concepts with Wong that "establishing the Asian American presence" and "claiming America" in the context of Asian America are the deciding factors to view Asian American cultural politics (69-70).

Nieh Hualing was born in Hubei province of China. She spent her early days during the turmoil of the Sino-Japanese War and the Chinese Civil War. After moving to Taiwan in 1948, she began to dedicate herself to writing and became a literary editor of *The Free China Fortnightly*. The journal highlighted the importance of freedom and democracy, "welcoming writers that absolutely abandon 'anti-communism' and writings of propaganda" (Nieh, *Black* 37). Soon it incurred the wrath of the Nationalist government and the general editor Lei Zhen was arrested under the charge of treason. Nieh had to live under the Nationalist "White Terror" until she left for America to participate in the Writer's Workshop at the University of Iowa in 1962. Her Chinese novel *Mulberry and Peach* recreates her experiences of being oppressed and an exile. This book has been translated into many languages.[10] Its English version won American Book Award in 1990. In the story, a Chinese woman named Mulberry is forced to move around owing to the wars in Mainland China, the White Terror in Taiwan, and the oppression of U.S. immigration agency. Mulberry suffers from schizophrenia and her split self Peach emerges. In America, Peach finally overcomes Mulberry and continues to wander around.

As to Yan Geling, she was born in Shanghai. At twelve she participated in the People's Liberation Army's dancing troupe. Yan shifted her career from dancing to

[10] In addition to Chinese and English, the novel has been translated in Croatian, Dutch, Korean and Hungarian. Some sections of the novel have also been translated into Polish (Wong, "Afterword" 227).

writing and went to Columbia College in Chicago for a MFA degree in 1989. Her works are written in Chinese and won numerous literary awards in Taiwan. Both "Siao Yu" and "Celestial Bath" have been adapted into films. Her works often depict people leaving their mother land and struggling through the experiences of relocation. For instance, "Siao Yu" is a so called "Green-Card" story in which Siao Yu leaves for America to be with her Chinese boyfriend but has to marry an old Italian man to gain legal residency. And, Yan's latest novel *No Exit Café* semi-autobiographically retells her experiences of migration. In the novel the female protagonist strives to make a living out of impoverishment. Furthermore, her love relationship with her fiancé (a prospective Caucasian) is also unstable because of the FBI interrogations about her past in the People's Liberation Army. To readers, the story could be a vivid portrayal of Yan's student days in America. The other story, "The Virgin Amanda," presents the story of a successful Chinese immigrant woman whose husband accidentally gets involved in a sexual harassment case with a Eurasian girl.

Both Yan's and Nieh's writings place emphasis on the motif of horizontal movement across national boundaries as well as the ways in which minority women need in order to acquire socioeconomic mobility. This two-dimensional framework of mobility is what Sau-ling C. Wong has highlighted in her article "The Politics of

Mobility." Wong recognizes the significance of Asian Americans' economic problems and their changing social status while pointing out that the class issue is a crucial factor.[11] Therefore, she divides her discussion of Asian American mobility into two directions—horizontal and vertical—to refer to geographical and socioeconomic movements respectively. Wong structures a master paradigm of Necessity and Extravagance to make a contrast between horizontal mobility and vertical mobility. She first argues that American ideological myth of unfettered mobility is Extravagance for Asian Americans, because it connotes independence, freedom, or opportunity that can hardly be applied to Asian American lives. Historically, Asian Americans are mostly under forced movements associated with "subjugation, coercion, impossibility of fulfillment for self or community—in short, Necessity" (121). Wong therefore regards Asian Americans' projection of vertical mobility—ascent of social class—as Extravagance. The connection between vertical mobility and Extravagance somehow reveals Wong's ambivalence of immigrant's upward mobility. The protagonist of *No Exit Café* also maintains a similar kind of ambivalence as she keeps questioning herself about whether it is right to earn upward mobility by marrying a white man.

[11] The class consciousness of Asian American politics is also pointed by Edna Bonacich who believes that class is constituted by relations of dominance and resistance. And in immigrant America this is especially important because "class system of the U.S. is highly racialized" (69). She considers race-class problem is much more determinative than that of gender. On the other hand, to Xiao-huang Yin class consciousness may be more direct because "there persists either a conspicuous or a nearly hidden class struggle in virtually every major Chinese-language work, serving as background for the dynamic process of intra-ethnic confrontation" (203).

Although Wong attempts to raise the issue of class, in my view, Wong's framework fails to address important issues such as gender differences, the possibility of downward mobility, and she also overevaluates the importance of the community. First of all, women's experiences in Wong's discussion give way to the broadly-viewed immigrant America. Wong puts more emphasis on group mobility of Filipino Americans, Japanese Americans and Japanese Canadians than on Chinese Americans and does not delve into specific cases of female mobility. Besides, while expanding on the upward mobility in vertical direction, Wong seems to neglect that downward mobility often takes place in an immigrant condition so that not every person can move upward. Moreover, one's changing status at home and at the host country might cause various reactions among different immigrants. For instance, to well-educated Chinese immigrants especially, under dislocation, they are more likely to have the feeling of "losing face" because they are forced to do non-intellectual work or suffer from impoverishment. Another point that should be re-examined is Wong's community narrative. To Wong, upward movements could remove immigrants from necessitous concerns and brings distance between Necessity and Extravagance, which stands for the competing claims of the horizontal axis and the vertical one. Wong implies that the tension can be reconciled by accepting a "basis of stable lateral network of human relationships that constitute at-homeness" (156).

To Wong, this means returning to community. Put it another way, Wong considers that ascending individuals should still root their spirits in group work simultaneously. Yet, this way of attaching to "at-homeness" can be dangerous. It may marginalize women's experiences and under such narrative female subjects are placed in a minor position for the sake of community's integration, having limited subjectivities for not being able to move freely. Such problematic is reflected in Nieh's or Yan's stories since most of their heroines, after leaving the mother country, choose to keep a distance away from any group, be it the Chinese community or that of the white people.

To understand such an ambivalence toward community shared by both Nieh and Yan, an analysis of immigrant women's relation to home and community should be taken into account. When crossing geographical borders, or, in other words, having horizontal mobility, the authors and their heroines will inevitably come across the loosening of familial relations, realizing that their identity is trapped in a state of what Amy Ling calls "between worlds." And, in the novels there are two basic presentations of mobility which, including exile and immigration, destabilize the idea of natural "home." That is to say, the foundation of natal structure—home and families—is in danger of destruction because of mobility. While this is not merely personal experiences within a single location but a collective phenomenon, especially

in a transnational context, I would like to propose a different way to consider individuals who are in danger of losing natural bonds. In her "Immigration and Diaspora," Shirley Geok-Lin Lim deals with the phenomenon by drawing out metropolitan writers "who are situated outside their natal borders" and whose works she believes "can be taken to illustrate Western notions of Asian corruption or Western practices of postmodernism" (298). The term "metropolitan" means how these writers enjoy "absorption into Western publishing markets" (290). The writers who undergo displacements, Lim argues, have to cope with between-world tensions as their ancestors did throughout American history. Getting far away from natal foundation (filiation), the aliens turn to search for institutional support and unification (social affiliation) as the path to naturalization, which compensates for the loss of "home." [12] To metropolitan writers, thus, writing becomes a way of getting affiliated to other social groups, although in America they are often "falling outside U.S. canonical work" (290).

In her essay Lim also suggests the homogenizing power of the filiation/affiliation pattern and seeks to position diasporic paradigms in-between the filiative and the affiliative to "overlap, destabilize, or supersede paradigms of

[12] Lim borrows the idea of filiation/affiliation from Edward W. Said, who considers it a three-part pattern and says that "what I am describing is the transition from a filed idea or possibility of filiation to a kind of compensatory order that, whether it is a party, an institution, a culture, a set of beliefs, or even a world-vision, provides men and women with a new form of relationship, which I have been calling affiliation but which is also a new system" ("Secular Criticism"19). Thus according to Said, systems of filiation or affiliation should both be exclusive and dominant.

immigration" (291) which dominate minority discourses in Asian American writings. In short, Lim takes metropolitan writers as the representatives of educated intellectuals in Asian America to look into their dilemma between filiative relations and affiliative orders and shows alternative ways out by responding to diasporic problematics.[13] I will argue that the experiences of the educated heroines in Nieh's and Yan's stories—more or less representing each author's life—have deviated from that pattern, too. When the symbolic home becomes void in movement and when there are chances of getting upward/downward mobility, women are endowed with possibilities of reexamining the concept of rootedness or belongingness—be it filiation or affiliation. Peach after all chooses nomadic wandering around the land, and the anonymous woman in *No Exit Café* also rejects the attachment to the white dominant values. It seems to me that through horizontal/vertical mobility a Chinese American woman can find space to escape from being appropriated by either the filiative or the affiliative and is enabled to constitute her self while maintaining a status in resistance.

In the between-world situation, the heroines' migratory experiences closely reflect what Lim calls "individually negotiating" works that reveal "contestations and the cooperations of the filiative and the affiliative in the historicized context of the

[13] Lim believes that after the relation between filiation/affiliation gets reified, conditions of exiles and diaspora can be produced and, to diaspora specifically, "the discourse of diaspora is that of disarticulation of identity from natal and national resources and includes the exilic imagination but is not restricted to it" (297).

subjects' particular diasporic/ethnic cultures" (307). This negotiating work inevitably relates to the critical issue of survival in America. Therefore Siao Yu in Yan's story sacrifices herself by marrying an old Italian man for a legal identification. She may at last return to her Chinese boyfriend but during the fake marriage builds a strong agency. The female protagonist in "The Virgin Amanda," Han Miao, successfully enters into the mainstream world as a lawyer while at the same time she is alienated by the Chinese American community for her husband's sexual scandal. Though Yan's portrayal of the two protagonists is on the tragic side, the stories vividly demonstrate how Chinese American women ambivalently oscillate between different social affiliations and how they long for not only a survival and but also a new self in the new world.

Hence, Lim's conception of individual negotiation can be regarded as a process of subject formation which, I believe, is also Saidian. Lim's binary pattern of the filiative/affiliative could be too simplified because according to Said it is a transformative process from filiation to affiliation and during it the subject may lose his position.[14] Most importantly, to Said, how to situate the subject away from being appropriated by the filiative/affiliative system leads to the strong resort to hold critical consciousness against the dominants. In my viewpoint, among the possibilities that

[14] Said argues that "the loss of the subject, as it has commonly been referred to, is in various ways the loss as well of the procreative, generational urge authorizing filiative relationships" ("Secular Criticism"20).

mobility brings to Chinese American women, claiming her subjectivity somehow becomes more important than claiming Chinese/America because that is a way to counter the exclusive filiation/affiliation system. Furthermore, by claiming the subject position, it is critical that the between-world dilemmas under dislocation cannot be viewed as homogenous because they are made up of a series of personal negotiations, as Lim mentions. Inevitably it is necessary to implode the homogenizing cover of Chinese American studies or movements to make each subject visible. Heterogeneous factors that affect Chinese American individual experiences, such as race, gender, sex, class, or education, should all be considered.

In particular, Chinese American women have been marginalized by gendered, racist ideology which generates narratives that "generalize Asian American identity as male" and in which "women are rendered invisible" (Lowe 431). Their mobility has been superseded by Western, male, and white mobility discourse. Therefore, in this thesis I intend to rid Chinese American women of the label as an immobile object and attempt to trace their different trajectories in daily lives where they fight against multiple forces such as racism, patriarchism, sexism, and class struggle. When mobility becomes possible, Chinese American women's heterogeneous experiences will provide enormous subversive energy in a between-world space and establish their unique subjectivities.

To respond to the heterogeneity of Chinese American women's experiences and to avoid a monopolized presentation of Chinese American mobility narratives, an alternative but open way of viewing women's subject formation in dislocation should be proposed. In her *Women, Native, Other*, Trinh T. Minh-ha queries Third World women's "authenticity" and challenges a unitary concept of identity by regarding the subject (that is, "I") as of infinite layers. Owing to this typographic idea, there is no absolute limit on the constitution of subject because "the natures of I, *I, you, s/he, We, we, they,* and *wo/man* constantly overlap" (94). Therefore the process of subject formation is always endless and subjectivity should be multiple. I believe the indeterminate condition of subjectivity is reflected in horizontal mobility in particular. No certain domination can wholly rule it when a subject rejects both filiation and affiliation order and maintains her in-betweenness. In the Chinese American context, as far as Trinh's infinite subject is concerned, it is a protest against the white/male ideology that implies "Not-I" as a fixed Other. Therefore, under such circumstances, the "Not-I," namely, woman, may meet pressures not only from her community, but also from the outside world, such as racial discrimination, orientalist stereotypes, male oppression, and socioeconomic struggle. Not until a woman recognizes her predicament can she find chances to fight against this process of othering and build up her own subjectivity.

My theorization of the construction of female subject in a mobile condition will therefore basically build on Wong's two-directional mobility and borrow Trinh T. Minh-ha's feminist perspective to view Chinese immigrant women's subjectivity and resistance in a non-filiation/affiliation status. In this chapter, after reviewing the history of Chinese American immigration and women's marginalized status, I briefly introduce Nieh Hualing's and Yan Geling's backgrounds, including their writings and their roles in Chinese American literature. First of all, I discuss Wong's theory of mobility discourse and see how Chinese American women's specificities can be revealed under her two-directional formulation. Because Nieh, Yan, and their heroines are educated intellectuals, next I want to investigate well-educated women's transnational dilemma by viewing the transformative route from filiation to affiliation—a theoretical pattern derived from Said and Lim. In addition, I draw out Trinh T. Minh-ha's concept of infinite subjectivity to show the way in which women constitute themselves so as to resist fixedness or appropriation.

In the second chapter, I will focus on woman's horizontal mobility in *Mulberry and Peach*. By adapting Wong's viewpoint about mobility as a "rival cultural discourse" against dominant values, I argue that women's mobility can be viewed as tactics intending to blur limitations of domination. My discussion of the female protagonist's schizophrenic personality will be divided into two parts. First,

Mulberry represents how a mobile woman is under the power of patriarchal nationalist discourse in forced movements, yet the mobility empowers her by creating new spatial discourses. However, her oscillation between filiative and affiliative orders makes her subjectivity limited owing to the controlling power of the two systems. This also results in Mulberry's schizophrenia after she immigrates to the United States. Mobility gives birth to Peach—a new-born subject that transcends either the filiative or the affiliative—in nomadic mobility after the symbolic death of Mulberry. Furthermore, due to Peach's pregnancy and the indeterminate situation of being "on the road" (Nieh 157), I consider mobility not only a resistance to domination but a power that keeps on regenerating itself, which can correspond to Trinh's perspective on female subject who produces and re-produces narratives endlessly.

In the third chapter, my reading of *No Exit Café*, "Siao Yu" and "The Virgin Amanda" places the emphasis on the narrator's socioeconomic/vertical mobility. The first part will briefly illustrate four kinds of role of Chinese immigrant women in Yan's stories.[15] By unmasking the hypocrisy of the white's model minority thesis and its racist essentialist view, she projects a suspicion to those who show "the sense of specialness" to gain affiliative support in the white society, a process that Trinh T.

[15] Generally speaking, the roles of the Chinese immigrant women in her stories can be divided into four types: immigrant students, coolie labors, professionals, and uneducated women who go directly to the U.S. by marrying Chinese men or becoming prostitutes.

Minh-ha rejects, In the second part, as a representative of the educated intellectuals in Chinese America, the female protagonist in *No Exit Café* shares Trinh's rejection of "sense of specialness" and resists to be a poor, "oriental" Other—by not marrying her fiancé, not conforming to vertical mobility but questioning white people's imposition of salvation on her.[16] Though in a downward status and being attracted by affiliative power, the alternative consciousness comes from the recognition of and refusal to the politics of difference which Trinh defies. In "Siao Yu," however, Yang endows Siao Yu with an alternative transcendence over physical or economical pressure. During the process of gaining official recognition, although Siao Yu's mobility is controlled by both her boyfriend, who symbolizes Chinese patriarchy, and the Italian man, who suggests the cruelty of American legal system, she finally transcends the differences of ethnicity or affiliative relations with a universal maternal love to comfort them, which also goes further to show the birth of a strong subjectivity. Unlike the Siao Yu's positive growth, Han Miao in "The Virgin Amanda" discloses the issue of Chinese men's downward mobility in contrast to women's upward movement. The reversal of gender hierarchy again challenges the male-centered values of Chinese community. Moreover, the story questions politics of difference by drawing out

[16] Yan in an interview indicates this "white saverism," saying that "westerners like to regard themselves as Christians who love all people around the world. They try to save those who do not belong to the Christian world and minority groups. There is definitely noble virtue within the spirit, but superiority of industrialized civilization exists. People who are saved, like Orientals, may feel plenty of ironies and rejections" (Yan, *No Exit Café* 406). Translation mine.

interracial relationships with other racial groups—one theme that keeps repeating in *No Exit Café* and "Siao Yu."

Finally in the last chapter, I consider that Nieh's and Yan's stories demonstrate the interconnection of gender and race in Chinese American context. The open endings of their stories open up more possibilities of immigrant's everyday practices, which will bring a new life to Chinese American mobility discourse. Just like Peach's "always on the road," the discourse will be enriched with newness due to the inclusion of more heterogeneous experiences in mobility. Also, like the concluding scene in *No Exit Café* in which the heroine visits L.A. to nurse her mother's ex-lover, I argue that mobility not only empowers women with its dynamic energy but also makes room for them to recall historical events and further to produce narratives of their own to counter dominant discourse and release the past. The subject keeps negotiating herself between systems of fixedness—dominant historical discourse, native home, or any affiliative relations—and making her subjectivity multiple and indeterminate, defying rules that seek to suppress its agency. It also responds to Trinh's concept of infinite subject that is always in a process of indeterminacy-between departure and "re-departure" (104). Subjects thus keep producing new distances and new relationships to spaces around them. I believe this empowers mobile women to further cultivate consciousness and critique dominant

systems, including filiative/affiliative orders.

With this thesis, I hope to reveal Chinese immigrant women's pleasures and struggles in mobility, which are connected to the trend of global movement but have been overlooked by masculinist narratives. I would like to stress that even within these women's mobility, differences still exist. For example, those who are incapable of moving may not fit into the context I have made. What we should not fail to acknowledge is that *Mulberry and Peach*, *No Exit Café*, "Siao Yu" and "The Virgin Amanda" are narrated by well-educated intellectuals. Their experiences are not representative of all women and we should always be aware of the fact that there are women being left out. Except for the diversified factors in Chinese immigrant women's mobility narratives, my selection of the two authors from different periods shows that women of different ages still have similar problems to solve in the immigrant context. In fact, as Wong mentions in "Chinese American Literature," "the female writer's relationship to American culture is much more vexed than the male's, for, given her subjected position in Chinese patriarchy, the woman's first contacts with Western ways typically had some liberating effects, however the imperialistic or racist aspects of Westernization might play out in the long run" (46-47). Transnational mobility does offer them more possibilities, although both of the authors (and the heroines, too) are haunted by the past and stuck with difficulties

in the host country, such as the FBI's interrogations. However, the past is not completely ugly. Instead, the women stand their ground by establishing a process of negotiation so that memory or history can be transformed into energies to support them to face the days in Chinese America. Therefore, the dynamic power demonstrated by Chinese immigrant women's subjectivities keeps re-vitalizing Chinese American mobility discourse as a non-exclusive one and, like Peach in *Mulberry and Peach*, they are always "on the road" to search for a better future.

Chapter 2

Mulberry and Peach

Nieh Hauling emigrated from Taiwan to America in 1964 and completed a novel about migration—*Mulberry and Peach (Sangqing yu Taohong)*—in early 1970s. Written in Chinese, the publication history of the book reflects the political upheavals in the history of Mainland China and Taiwan. At first, the novel was banned in mid-serialization when it appeared in Taiwan, which was obviously caused by some political intervention. During the next two decades, this book became a "traveling text" that went through different versions and translations until a republication was made in America and later in Taiwan.[17] The novel not only reflects the diasporic fate of the author, its traveling experience also corresponds to the exilic theme. Therefore, Pai Hsien-yung places *Mulberry and Peach* within the field of exilic literature, comparing it to a diasporic lament of Chinese people in the twentieth century as "the wanderer of the century:"

> "Mulberry" and "Peach" in fact are both the protagonist's names, which stand for her two identities. The whole story is the process of the split and transformation of her personality. In the beginning she is Mulberry, a girl coming from Mainland China, who is naïve. At the end she becomes

[17] The English version of *Mulberry and Peach* won American Book Award in 1990. Its Chinese version was also republished in Taiwan in 1997. Sau-ling Wong notes in her afterword of the novel that "in additional to English, *Mulberry and Peach* has been translated in full into Croatian, Dutch, Hungarian, and Korean, while sections of the novel have been translated into Polish" ("Afterword" 227).

> Peach—a totally erotic madwoman who wanders from Mid-West to New York in America. Nieh Hualing does not simply depict an erotic madwomen's life experience. The novel is not merely a case study for clinical observation of psychology. By the book, the author actually allegorizes the miserable history of modern China.[18]

However, as Nieh mentions, this book is about "the fate of 'human beings'" and "not just about the fate of 'Chinese people.'"[19] In my opinion, Nieh in the novel attempts to express the so-called fate by the female protagonist's exilic life to refer to human mobility through time. In her construction of the mobility theory, Sau-ling C. Wong considers that in America mobility is ironically represented as collectively forced historical experiences to Asian Americans. She argues that the politics of mobility can be regarded as a tactic that tries to transform the hegemony. By viewing mobility as a "rival cultural discourse" to disclose the possibilities and proscriptions of movement in Asian American context, Wong believes that Asian Americans can thus loosen the fixedness of places and the prohibitions of the dominant society. In this chapter, therefore, I will borrow her conception of "rival cultural discourse" to explore Chinese women's horizontal mobility within the frame of nationalist/patriarchal system. The central questions that I am working with are

[18] This is my translation from "Shiji de piaobozhe: chongdu *Sangqing yu Taohong*" ([The Wanderer of the Century: Rereading *Mulberry and Peach*] 276).
[19] This quote is translated from "*Sangqing yu Taohong* lihfang xiaoji" ([Note on the exile of *Mulberry and Peach*] 271).

the following: in the process of mobility, with a renewed spatial construction, can women successfully contend with the controlling structure and its encoded system? Besides, in their mobility, where does the power of resistance come from? How does this kind of resistance affect their subjectivity in the immigrant America?

Women in Mobility and Spatial Consciousness

As Pai Hsien-yung suggests, *Mulberry and Peach* is based on the turbulence of modern China. It portrays Mulberry, a Chinese woman, who experiences Japanese invasion, the civil war between the Communist party and the Nationalist party, the "White Terror" in Taiwan, and finally exile in America. Under the investigation and interrogation of the Immigration Service agents, Mulberry suffers from multiple personality disorder and finally becomes Peach. So far, it seems that the temporal and spatial frame of the story covers three places and offers an epic-like presentation of the modern Chinese diaspora. However, Nieh chooses to write in an expressionalist way with the insertion of Peach's four letters to the Immigration Service agents as prefaces to the four narrative segments—the stranded boat in Chu-Tang Gorge, the besieged Peking, the attic in Taiwan, and the exile in America. By doing so, Nieh breaks the simple linearity of History and turns the focus on four spatial narratives. In other words, *Mulberry and Peach* is in fact a novel about a Chinese woman's mobility and how the spatial consciousness emerges from the

process.

In the story, Mulberry/Peach constantly puts herself into exile or moves with free will. Her mobility is presented not as directly resulted from national calamity or family disaster but rather out of her own choice. In part Ⅰ, Mulberry appears in the scene of the stranded boat as a girl who wants to escape from her family. She does not go to Chungking in response to the government's call for young patriots' volunteer for war. Instead, she is there to run away from the disaffection between her families.[20] Next to this, when people flee from the North to the South, Mulberry takes an opposite route and flies to Peking to live and marry her fiancé. After the Communist party takes over Mainland China, her husband and she escape to Taiwan. Yet, the husband embezzles the government's money, which causes them to hide in the attic together with their daughter to avoid being arrested. At last in Part Ⅳ, Mulberry exiles to America and applies for permanent residency. Peach then takes the place of Mulberry under the disorder of two identities. She presents visual evidence of her travel in America with fragmentary maps and proudly announces her power of mobility with the statement: "I'm on the road again" (Nieh 157).

Moving as a woman in the patriarchcal world, the mobility of Mulberry/Peach indeed keeps on loosening the long-established codes of gender system. The

[20] She runs away from home because she feels dissatisfied with her father who wants to give the family heritage—"jade griffin" —to her brother. And also she does not get along with her stepmother.

movements challenge the active and positive characteristics that are considered masculine.[21] Therefore, Mulberry/Peach's high mobility—"leaving" and "movement"— questions the old myth imposed by the patriarchical system, such as "silent women" and "the fixed 'mother' land which awaits conquerors." Moreover, different spatial consciousness can emerge from the process of mobility, which constantly suggests the possibility of resistance and transgression against the hegemonic discourse of nationalism. If, as Sau-ling C. Wong claims, "the coerced movement [of Asian Americans] …can quite arguably be read as a kind of immobility as well, not as blatant as imprisonment but no less damaging" (123), the Chinese woman's geographical mobility in the novel therefore not only blurs or transgresses the limitations of the gender system in America, it also symbolically reverses the historical experiences of Asian American's immobility by Peach's free wanderings. Thus the mobility brings resistances against both the chauvinistic formation of an otherized woman and the domination of the White racism.

About the concept of mobility, Wang Zhi-hong has expanded on it in his *The Politics and Poetics of Gendered Flows*: "…when flow and **mobility** become the intermediary and the manifestation of power and constitute a key factor in the running

[21] Wang Zhi-hong thinks that women's "going out" under the patriarchical system on one hand transgresses the established borders and, on the other hand, it also delimits new lines. He considers it a dynamic process and "since flow combines with public affairs, it sets to be masculine. When women go out and join this flow of history, there are ambiguous transgressions within the encoding of gender system." This is translated from *Xing bie hua liudong dei zhen zhi yu shixue* ([*The Politics and Poetics of Gendered Flows*] 114).

of modern society, they are not only a social phenomenon or tendency but also issues of political actions" (12 original emphases).[22] Therefore, in *Mulberry and Peach*, the episodes of movements in different spaces show us how Chinese women's politics of mobility works. And, in light of Wong's idea of "rival cultural discourse," the narratives which represent these "political actions" should be tactical due to various time/space contexts.[23] Wong believes that the tactical response coming along with mobility narratives will be saturated with consciousness of resistance and transformation, because those who choose mobility will have to face the dominant cultures or ideologies that favor fixity. Hence, in horizontal mobility, people may transform their roles or transgress the boundary of geography. Besides, they can bring about alternative narratives which differ from hegemonic discourses in the process of dislocation. Wong thus deems that mobility narratives function as a way of "retelling/remapping" histories. Based on Wong's argument, a Chinese woman in mobility with free will may, on one hand, demonstrate masculine characteristics and transform her role under gender hierarchy. On the other hand, her resistance to

[22] Wong's discussion of flow or mobility might originate from Arjun Appadurai who provides a framework of new mobile world of mutating cultural flows/scapes: ethnoscapes, mediascapes, technoscapes, finanscapes, and ideoscapes. Appadurai believes these flows lead disjunctive relations to each other. And, they will gradually separate the nation from the state. Among the five flows, "ethnoscape" is closest to Wang's conception of mobility because it stands for "moving groups and persons" who constitute a shifting world and "appeal to affect the politics of and between nations…" (Appadurai 222).

[23] Wong argues: "we are accustomed to thinking of narrative structure as temporally organized, but in a mobility narrative, place names and the way they are sequenced could also be indices of narrative structure, for mobility by definition involves changes in both temporal and spatial dimensions" ("Politics of Mobility" 128).

re-establish the spatial discourse set by patriarchical power also makes her reconfigure female experiences of mobility. Consequently, the woman in mobility can break the signifying system of the old, patriarchical power and re-arrange peculiar, dynamic codes of spaces by the power of exile and movement. In *Mulberry and Peach*, we can see how Mulberry/Peach challenges the gendered codes of "passive women/active men" and how she contends with nationalist hegemony by constant dislocation/de-position.

However, paradoxically, this does not mean that the power and spatial reconfiguration bringing by mobility can make Mulberry disregard the call for Chinese nationalism. After immigration, American nationalist domination also casts a shadow on Mulberry/Peach's life with immigration agent's investigations. In geographical displacements, however, the way she responds to this unceasing call is through initiating alternative spatial experiences or imaginations to dispel and transgress the hegemonic control over gender, family, class, nation, and history. As a result, both Mulberry's exile and Peach's wandering are enriched with a sense of resistance against nationalism. To Peach, in particular, the nationalist hegemony becomes more complex because of its racist element. Therefore, Peach's movement indeed brings more resistant power in a Chinese American context.

In the first part of the story, Mulberry and others are trapped in the stranded boat.

While they are waiting for the boat to move again, it seems that the boat becomes what Foucault calls a "heterotopia." It refers to heterogeneous spaces of sites and social relations and can be constituted in varied forms.[24] People get rid of classes, gender, and morality and are addicted to carnival-like laughter and play, as though they are put there by Nieh to contrast to the outside world of war. Even so, the celebratory atmosphere in the boat actually intermixes with the story of the Three Kingdoms that they sing about, which to some degree instills the grand narratives of History into this heterotopia. The interpellation of nationalist sentiment is thus made clear.[25]

Part Ⅱ is about how Mulberry flies to Peking and marry Chia-Kang, her fiancé. The ancient capital under the Communist siege becomes disordered. Chia-Kang's dream simply implies that the civil war is going to ruin this thousand-year old capital:

> "The Temple of Heaven I dreamed about wasn't like that at all. The Hall of Prayer, the Imperial Circular Hall, the Altar of Heaven were crowded with refugees' straw mats, quilts, and sheets. Ragged pants were hanging out to dry in the sun on the white marble balustrades. The memorial tablets of the emperors had been thrown down to the ground, and the Hall of Prayer was full

[24] Feng Pin-chia draws upon Foucault's concept of "heterotopia" to explain how the boat has alternative and imaginary mobility. Because of "its physical mobility and the rich imagination it offers," the heterotopia makes people wander between History and Reality (Feng, *En-Gendering* 56).
[25] In this part, the story connects history to nationalist patriotism by resorting to loyally devoted historical heroes. One of the six passengers on board—the old man—believes their fate is not unlike those heroes': "all of us here on the boat are going to Chungking; we are going there because we are concerned about the country….[yet] we are stranded in the midst of history!" (39-40)

of excrement." (72)[26]

The Temple of Heaven is originally a holy place symbolizing political and patriarchical hegemony. It becomes dirty and messy in the dream. This discloses that the illusion of a perfect nation/family is in danger of breaking into pieces. Mulberry at first chooses to get married and establish a typical bond of filiative relation to mend this broken imagination of nationalism. Yet, when the Communist party occupies Peking, the couple flees to the South and leaves the burden of family/nation in Peking. In the "no man's land" (104), places in between the Nationalist army and the Communist troops, the refugees in the no-name temple re-set the space of heterotopia where they sing and play as though all are free as people of no-name, no-family, and no-nation. However, their happiness is intermittently mixed with anxiety about the war. These refugees after all could not absolutely achieve the temporary amnesia of no-family and no-nation.

In the third part, the couple flees to Taiwan and Chia-Kang commits a crime. To avoid being arrested by the Nationalist government, they take their daughter, Sang-wa, to hide in an attic. The isolation and confinement of the attic make the triad similar to prisoners on a lonely island. At the same time, the historical fact of "White Terror" still permeates into the attic, as represented by their collection of the

[26] The quotations of the story in this chapter are all quoted from the English version—*Mulberry and Peach: Two Women of China*.

news clips. To the three, the words on the newspaper become the medium for imagining a nation. They cannot go out, but they can imagine their way out. In Sang-wa's diary, this eagerness gradually transforms into disordered narratives and fantastic plots:

> The typhoon is coming. It is raining so hard. They want to hurt the attic with the wind and rain. They'll turn me into a wet chicken. They want to drink soup with people's meat in it. I draw a dragon on my flour sack. I wear dragon clothes then turn into a dragon girl. The typhoon breaks the attic window. Rain comes in. when the rain hits me I become a dragon and swim out the window. The more it rains, the happier I am. I give out silver rays as I swim in the sky. They lose again. (148)

From Sang-wa's narrative, the attic seems to be a kind of mythical space. The world outside the attic is unfamiliar to Sang-wa and life in the attic is out of normality. Therefore, she produces the sense of myth out of the reality around her; myth and reality can not be easily told apart in this case. As Tuan Yi-Fu remarks, "though inaccurate and dyed in phantasms, [the fantastic field] is necessary to the sense of reality of one's empirical world. Facts require contexts in order to have meaning, and contexts invariably grow fuzzy and mythical around the edges" (88). So far, it seems that the attic has become a fantastic world and mythical space. Besides, the

"reality of one's empirical world" mostly comes from the function of the patriarchical structure. The two women in the attic finally get up from this "mythical purlieus" and go out of it to draw the next route of movement. With their mobility, they throw themselves into "reality," the hegemonic world of nationalism. At the same time, however, Mulberry's leaving the attic and abandoning her husband symbolize her resistance of familial burden, an action which has loosened the base of patriarchical nationalism.

The space at last dislocates into America where Peach wrote four letters to the Immigration Service agents. In three of them, she even adds local maps to indicate her route of wandering. About the map, Benedict Anderson has informed us how a map may carry important historical discourse behind it:

> They were on the march to put space under the same surveillance which the census-makers were trying to impose on persons. Triangulation by triangulation, war by war, treaty by treaty, the alignment of map and power proceeded. (173)

> Through chronologically arranged sequences of such maps, a sort of political-biographical narrative of the realm came into being, sometimes with vast historical depth. (175)

The map can be regarded as a demonstration of ideology. It clearly marks the

way the hegemonic discourse dominates the space. The struggle for power leads to the production of the map. What lies behind it might be specific historical and political meaning or, under modernity, a symbol of colonialism.[27] In other words, the map is the tool with which Ideological State Apparatus naturalizes things. In the novel, the three maps that Peach offers to the agents are all incomplete ones with which she in the first letter claims "I'm wandering around these places shown on the map. If you want to chase me, come on" (Nieh 11). According to this, Liang Iping in her "Women/Maps/Empires" considers that Peach "tears up the map and nomadizes in the empire:" "Furthermore, the three fragmented maps therefore break the unity of the map/nation. This illustrates that Peach has already discarded identity of nation or consciousness of nation" (351). To Liang, what Peach asserts—she is "always on the road"—just shows that both the end and the beginning of this travel lose their meaning. Hence Liang points out that Peach "not only runs away from China and Taiwan, but also disdains America" (364). However, since Peach appropriates the Jews' diasporic history into her identity and regards herself as "an Asian Jew" (Nieh 114), I believe there is more to think about this device of inserting maps. In the story, when Peach is pregnant, in the fourth letter she says: "I want to find a place to give birth to my child" (159). It seems that, on the one hand, Peach wants to break the

[27] Anderson suggests that censuses, maps, and museums are three flexible power systems. They have affected how the colonizers imagine about the colonized. The map, as a kind of logo, its "instantly recognizable, everywhere visible" characteristic makes it penetrate deep "into the popular imagination" (Anderson 175).

fixity of lands and borderlines by her horizontal mobility and the fragmented maps just reflect the instability of the nationalist discourse. On the other hand, however, when she connects to the Jewish people's exilic fate, she at the same time shows a desire of searching for a "promised land." Here, the "promised land" suggests to Peach a new life. She has to break up both the completeness of the map and the hegemonic control behind it to generate her spatial narratives of the land. The "promise" then can be fulfilled. Therefore, she may dare to penetrate the "invisible wall" of man-set space and make a free way of wandering. In the meantime she also carries out a mission of searching a place for the next generation—a land whose soil is enriched with Peach's moving experiences and expectations for the coming life.

In China and Taiwan, Mulberry in mobility creates heterotopias where History keeps on intruding, and in the process we could see dynamic re-constitution of spatial discourse and re-encoding of gender system. From horizontal mobility, she can either rely on familial natural bonds or, borrowing Edward W. Said's idea, create social affiliation to compensate for the lack of filiative relations. According to Said, both filiative and affiliative orders are the demonstrations of hegemony. Thus, when Mulberry enjoys the pleasure and power brought about by mobility, she is also anxious for the hunt of either the filiative or the affiliative, which sometimes leads to her alienation to both modes. Worse, being a non-white woman in immigrant

America, Mulberry has to not only negotiate with traditional Chinese values but also face the “positions” imposed by white male racist society. In consequence, Peach’s emergence and wanderings reflect Mulberry’s failure of hovering between the filiative and the affiliative. Peach continues the horizontal mobility and makes herself a strong individual who attaches to no certain system, so that she can survive in the new world.

Subject Formation in Mobility and Rootedness

In the mobility narratives of this novel, Mulberry/Peach’s wandering in North America ultimately becomes a travel of split identities. In what follows I will discuss the motivating force that pushes Peach to take the place of Mulberry in her mobility. This is not like what Pai Hsien-yung has argued as a creation of an erotic madwoman but a process about how a Chinese immigrant woman resists being an object and how a new subject emerges from her mobility in the new world.

As a Chinese woman, her mobility is often restricted, and therefore she gets less and less opportunities to move around. This situation results in her inability of establishing complete subjectivity. Since a woman is always considered a passive other and an object, any act of “leaving,” “movement,” or “transgression” can make her mobility filled with a sense of resistance.

In the North American travel, the gradual split between Mulberry and Peach is

reflected through the entirely different behaviors and ways of self expression of the two personae. The two keeps conversing and contending with each other. Whereas Mulberry is helpless, Peach is bold. The internal split of the character is clearly shown in the narratives of the novel and also leads to a textual "schizophrenia": for example, there are two types of printed characters that reveal how Mulberry suffers from this split. Yet, it is Mulberry's weakness and Peach's rudeness that finally decide "who" wins and "who" loses—the repressed green is overwhelmed by the unrestrained red.

In the novel, Mulberry's name implies a unique connotation: "Mulberry is a holy tree, Chinese people consider it the chief of the tree family, it can feed silkworms, silkworms can produce silk, silk can be woven into silk and satin material" (178). The "tree" implication in fact refers to the old Chinese fable of Lei Zu—the wife of Huang Emperor. She is regarded as the first person that trained her people to obtain silk from rearing silkworms. Both Huang Emperor and Lei Zu are considered the great ancestors of Chinese people and, moreover, silk in the fable has a significant meaning of ongoing propagation. Hence, there is no denying that Mulberry's name indeed carries traditional Chinese values of family and nation. As a result, it is not difficult to realize the reason why her free-willed mobility often results in home-like rootedness when she moves around in China and Taiwan. According to Feng, in

Mulberry and Peach there is "a constant oscillation between filiation and affiliation."[28] Take Mulberry for instance. She moves between "space of home," and "space of no-home." In the first instance, she runs away from her family and forms a new family in Peking. When she hides in the attic with her husband and Sang-wa, she at last goes out and throws herself into social affiliation. Traditionally, we consider family/home as the prototype of nation, and its characteristic rootedness always represses women's development of subjectivity. Therefore, though Mulberry tries to move with free will, she seldom has the chance to deviate from the route prepared for her. Her roles switch from daughter, wife to mother and are always set to be an object under the patriarchical nationalism. She tries to unload the burden of nationalism. However, unlike Peach's provocative actions, she can only passively escape from it. Hence, although mobility gives Mulberry some possibilities to avoid the grand narratives of History, it can not wholly dispel it. The conflicts between the fate of "always being the object" and the active characteristic of mobility somehow cause Mulberry's split afterwards.

As for the relationship between subject and rootedness in the society of mobility, Wang thinks that rootedness might repress and constrain the subject so that people would rather run away from it. Yet, during the process of constructing the subject,

[28] Feng borrows Shirley Lim's idea of these two to show us the tension in the protagonist's mobility: one is "affiliative identity (socialized self)"; the other is "filiative place (homeland)" (*En-gendering* 50).

rootedness to a certain degree can bring us a sense of familiarity and safety. Therefore rootedness sometimes is necessary. Due to this, to women in mobility:

> They will confront with both the repression of the original rootedness and the general shake of the base of the subject's rootedness in a new environment of flow. This is a double dilemma. According to this, women have to confirm and develop their subjectivities by the power of the new environment of flow. They can get rid of the old rootedness and fight against the power of flow that is still dominated by men. At last, they can find a new base of rootedness in the environment of flow. (Wang 179)

In the story, Mulberry has already been in America where she loses connection with her daughter, Sang-wa. It seems that she can thus get out of "the old rootedness." However, when she is pregnant again, this nightmare of repression and fixity, coming from the sense of rootedness, shadows her life. Mulberry's hesitance of keeping the baby or aborting it reveals her osicilliation between affiliation and filiation. Child-bearing somehow symbolizes the return of the filiative order and the patriarchal oppressions. Her being investigated by the agents of the immigration bureau also staggers the construction of a new life in America. Peach, on the contrary, proudly announces in the fourth letter: "I'm going to give birth to a little life that's my own flesh and blood" (Nieh 159). Her active way of resistance subverts

the gendered and stereotypical passivity of women. She then strives for moving and insists on being a woman in mobility to end Mulberry's struggle. As Wang Zhi-hong suggests, people might have both senses of exclusion and requirement when they face home-like rootedness. Peach wanders in spaces to exclude this rootedness and, at the same time, she also wants to find a birthplace for the baby. On her way, she develops temporary affiliations with other Americans or groups by hitchhiking but soon disrupts these interactions in the name of looking for a birthplace. "I am a stranger where I go," Peach gladly remarks, "but I'm happy" (6). Comparing to Mulberry's passivity, Peach seems to "occupy" both the filiative and the affiliative as a free and active subject in mobility. She refuses to be an object and keeps on challenging "the power of flow that is still dominated by men."

During Peach's wandering, what "home" means to her is also worth examining. Interestingly, in accordance with Saidian filiative/affiliative system new affiliative bond is produced owing to natal home's "failure of the capacity to produce or generate children" (Said 16). People thus outwardly rely on building new human relationships to make up for the lack of home hierarchy. In this sense, both filiative and affiliative orders carry the significance of the way people look for home-like rootedness. Unlike Mulberry, who regards her pregnancy the re-appearance of filiative fixity and social activities in the immigrant society a difficulty, Peach

instead is strengthened by the pregnancy and interacts with people from various races or classes in her horizontal mobility. By transforming exclusiveness and rootedness of natal home into boundless place, to Peach, home is closer to Wang's argument: it is "a collection of every strategic positions and not a single location. It is a network (including different nodes and connected relationships) in dynamics, not a pronoun of stop" (180). For this reason, Peach's search for a birthplace can be viewed as a strategic resistance against the domination of either the filiative or the affiliative. Therefore, to her, the new rootedness does not necessarily repress her subjectivity. On the contrary, it might establish her subject position. When Peach says that she is "always on the road," she shows us how the power of mobility works so that everywhere can be home. To Chinese immigrant women, this dynamic condition in mobility makes them aware of their potential in initiating changes and positive attitudes, which helps to construct their subjectivity out of the shadow of repression.

Mobility as the Power of Regeneration

As I have mentioned above, mobility to Chinese women is a tactic of resistance against the controlling system. In mobility, they can thus get empowerment and release their repressed subjectivity. Peach's aggressive attitude shows exactly how this empowerment works:

You're dead, Mulberry. I have come to life. I've been alive all along. But now I have broken free. You don't know me, but I know you. I'm completely different from you. We are temporarily inhabiting the same body. How unfortunate. We often do the opposite things. And if we do the same thing, our reasons are different. For instance. You want to keep the child because you want to redeem yourself. I want to keep the child because I want to preserve a new life. (183)

Obviously the empowerment of mobility functions not only as a way for Peach to set up a new subjectivity but also as a sweet burden of searching a new possibility for the next generation. From Mulberry's death to Peach's emergence, it is a process of generating a new subject. And, Peach's preservation of the new life, on the other hand, is again a generation. It seems that by mobility women can endlessly create the possibilities of re-generation.

Besides, in the beginning of the novel, the Immigration Service agents find crooked columns of words on the wall of Mulberry/Peach's house. Some in Chinese and some in English:

The head is connected to the thighs

Genitals grow out of the neck

normal people (4)

These words can inform us of the reason why Peach embraces sensual and sexual feelings. She puts the genital in the upper, superior position and the head, the lower place. This kind of “normal people” seems to ignore the elements of reason and civilization in the “brain.” They just follow the natural power of sexuality. Moreover, these words can be regarded as Peach’s desire for a new life. She lifts up the genital that symbolizes the power of reproduction. Her pregnancy goes against the traditional value system that demands female chastity. On the contrary, she wants the baby out of her free will. Compared with Mulberry’s passive attitude, Peach is not responsible for anyone. She just searches for natural feelings, such as sex. Her mobility, combined with the power of nature, thus makes the construction of the subject a stronger one.

In terms of the politics of mobility, Wong uses Frederick Jackson Turner’s “frontier thesis” to express how people control lands under movement:

> “Frontier thesis” regards the availability of free land—presupposing unconstrained mobility to take advantage of it—coupled with equality of opportunity, to be crucial determinants of American character and the source of American democracy, through a process of “perennial rebirth.” (“The Politics of Mobility” 118)

Here, we find that Peach moves freely in North America. According to Turner, she

can somehow get free land and space. And, what induces the "perennial rebirth" actually is the power of pregnancy. In her mobility, this power of rebirth/regeneration also continually constitutes a "new" subject that can resist the appropriation of the controlling system. Therefore, Mulberry's "death" is not a real death. It is also a "rebirth" which results in a new woman called Peach. To Peach, what she worships on the road is "life," because it brings women a symbol of hope, and a lively power of mobility. The hope symbolizes women's expectation for new living experiences induced by mobility's generative power. At the same time, this again reflects Peach's joyful attitude in wanderings: "I am a stranger wherever I go, but I am happy" (6).

Thus, the pleasure for "rebirth" is strongly demonstrated in the fourth part of the novel, in which readers can perceive the emergence of a new woman during Mulberry's symbolic dying process:[29]

> Now, I'm still dazed; I grope my way into the bathtub. As I sink down into the water, I become a new woman—my headache, all my pains vanish. All feelings of suspicion, dear, and guilt disappear. The water warms my whole body. I am translucent as the water.
>
> It is wonderful to be alive. (166)

[29] The novel discloses Mulberry's contention with Peach by italic types. In the forth part, Mulberry moans: "*…I still can't make any sound. I must already be dead. Only the dead can't make any sound. I'm already dead—dead—dead…*" (166).

Water seems to cleanse the depressed portions loaded on this woman and refresh the body to become a vigorous subject. The connection between water's fluidity and woman's body is also significant. In *Woman, Native, Other* Trinh T. Minh-ha talks about some writings/storytellings with heroines as their protagonists. She compares the dynamics of women's stories with the fixity of the grand narratives of History constructed by men. To her, writing about women somehow can have the power of fluidity that regenerates. Women's stories therefore functions as the womb and maintains the transmission: "The words passed down from mouth to ear (one sexual part to another sexual part), womb to womb, body to body are the remembered ones" (Trinh 136).

Except for the diasporic fate of the novel itself, which transmits it from one place to another and be "remembered," the mobility of Mulberry/Peach finally empowers a new life. As Trinh suggests, "what is transmitted from generation to generation is not only the stories, but the very power of transmission" (134). This power extends to individuals and communities just as the protagonist's exile initiates the process of empowerment. Therefore, with their geographical mobility, exilic Chinese women keep on regenerating alternative memory/narrative to resist the discourse of hegemony. There is not always a fixed object. By the regenerating power of mobility they can loosen the external force of domination and create

something new from it.

At the end of the story, Nieh uses “Princess Bird and the Sea” as her epilogue. The Princess bird symbolizes the life after death. Taking pebbles, she swears to fill up the sea that drowns her. Hence, to this day, she is “flying back and forth between the Sea and the Mountain” (207). This is just like Peach’s way of generating a strong subject and her constant mobility, which reflects women’s continuous consciousness of resistance.[30] Leo Ou-fan Lee suggests that “we are all descendants of Mulberry and Peach.”[31] It seems that women’s mobility narratives can be expanded and become part of people’s destiny nowadays. Because of this generality, the tragic sense of the story fades away and all kinds of new possibilities rapidly surface. However, Trinh also suggests that the transmission of power is never finished. By the power of mobility, women create/write the memory of resistance to subvert the grand narrative. At the same time, it is also a lifelong struggle that is never finished.

[30] I would like to thank Professor Ying-Hsiung Chou and Professor Te-hsing Shan, who remind me of the possible problematic of viewing a “mad woman” too positively. In my reading, I tend to reveal Peach’s freedom and happiness in mobility as a resolution of unraveling Mulberry’s struggle in in-between, which, of course, is constituted due to Peach’s incapability of conforming to the normality. Somehow, this madness also endows Peach possibilities of deviating from the domination, which is the most significant effect generated by the power of mobility. Yet, according to Chou and Shan, along with her madness, mobility may not absolutely guarantee her a prospective future. And it is necessary to consider Peach’s psychological condition when exploring this thesis.

[31] This is translated from “Chong hua Sangqing yu Taohong de ditu” ([Re-mapping Mulberry and Peach] 281).

Chapter 3

No Exit Café, "Siao Yu" and "The Virgin Amanda"

When Sucheng Chan analyzes the history of Asian American immigration after the mid 1960's in *Asian Americans: An Interpretive History*, she stresses that there are two forces bringing immigrants into the States: the pull and the push. According to Chan, "…changes in U.S. immigration legislation created the pull that brought millions of Asians…, [whereas] conditions in the major Asian sending countries have provided the necessary push" (148). As it is mentioned in chapter two, Nieh Hualing was oppressed by the Nationalist's White Terror in Taiwan. The pressure pushed her to become one of the initial members of the second wave of Asian immigration into the United States.[32] It is not long before the Civil Rights movement. Yan Geling, on the other hand, left China for the United States, "following the massacre at Tiananmen Square" (*The Lost Daughter* 276). Although the two authors emigrate during different periods of time, both of them carry the burden of historical and national trauma. Interestingly, their works demonstrate different facets and themes of Chinese American immigration life. Yan seems to be more concerned about immigrants' dealing with socioeconomic problems. In particular, by depicting more of the various classes of Chinese American immigrants, Yang's portrayal of Chinese

[32] Chan suggests that Asian women and refugees had arrived in America as the major part of the second wave since the mid-20th century. This combination differed from that of the first wave, which was composed of Asian men without families during the late 19th and early 20th century.

immigrant women has significantly broadened Nieh's scope. While Nieh manifests Chinese women's strong and independent subjectivity by writing a single, nomadic woman on the road, Yan further discloses the marginalized status of Chinese American immigrants. To Yan, the downward mobility of some Chinese intellectuals in America especially needs to be explored. Besides, she concentrates on Chinese American women's struggle over socioeconomic mobility, which closely relates to their survival in the new world.

In an acknowledgement Yan states: "immigration—the most fragile and sensitive life style—can provoke the most realistic reactions to the cruel environment" (*Fu Sang* v). Combining with her relocation experiences, Yan elaborates these "realist actions" into dramatic stories. About her Chinese American writings, though the narrative themes sometimes do repeat, she can instill newness into each story, representing multiple experiences of her female characters. In general, the Chinese immigrant women in Yan's stories are represented into four types. They can be coolie labors (e.g. factory workers) or uneducated women who move to America through marriage or becoming prostitutes. Some professionals, such as lawyers, tour guides or hostesses of Chinese TV programs, are also mentioned. And, lastly, the most typical context in Yan's works is framed by lives of immigrant students. Her short stories provide good examples of the last type. "The Insomniac's Beautiful

Encounter," "The Chestnut Hair," "Robber Charlie and I" and "Story in School" ("Hsiehhsiao de gushih") all relate to the hardships of Chinese immigrant students.[33] Her latest Chinese long novel—*No Exit Café*—vividly represents such life according to her personal experiences.

Through these four types of Chinese women, Yan reveals suspicion toward those who affiliate to the (white) mainstream society in terms of social mobility. In her stories, it turns out that Chinese immigrant women who successfully attach to the mainstream will pay for it after all. The Chinese American lawyer's life in "The Virgin Amanda" almost collapses due to her husband's lawsuit, whereas in "The Foe" the TV hostess, Nancy, breaks up with her daughter. Yan, moreover, negatively criticizes Alice for her being supported by rich men in "The Riddle of Las Vegas."

To a certain degree, Yan's depiction of those who gain affiliation to the mainstream is a resistance to the model minority thesis imposed on Asian Americans under the assimilationist policy. Such a thesis emerges at the height of the Civil Rights movement. According to the model minority discourse, Asian Americans are considered to own "high educational attainment levels, high median family incomes, low crime rates, and absence of juvenile delinquency and mental health problems" (Chan 167). This, in fact, is to chastise Black and Chicano activists that their

[33] The titles of the stories, including "The Virgin Amanda" in the beginning, are my translations.

protests can be a deviation. In his *Asian/ American: Historical Crossings of a Racial Frontier*, David Palumbo-Liu indicates that the model minority discourse has left Asian America in a liminal state—between Asia and America:

> …the contents of "Asian American" vary as the ratio of "Asianness" to "Americanness" is manifested in social practice. Despite such practices, which have relegated Asian Americans to particularly constrained roles in the American imaginary, this repertory includes, significantly, the role of a "people" who, albeit marginalized, serve as *models* for Americans. (Liu 171 original italics)

The ambivalence of being both the marginalized and the model implies a predicament: under the appropriation of such White discourse Asian or Chinese immigrants' subjectivities can hardly be established due to the liminal condition. As a result, in Yan's immigrant stories we will see the heroines' hesitation of attaining social affiliation to earn upward mobility, which leads to their state of alienation for certain communities. Yet, their awareness of the minority status makes it possible to rid the liminal state and further create a strong subjectivity.

Besides, Yan's consciousness of the minority condition with regard to the interracial relationships also differentiates her writing from Nieh's. The female protagonists often have romantic encounter with men from the white society but end

up tragically, such as the case in *No Exit Café*. Or, like the Chinese women in "Siao Yu" and "The Virgin Amanda," they can come into interaction or even friction with Hispanic or Italian groups. Yan, moreover, turns over the model minority thesis, in which Chinese and Japanese Americans are defined as "models," to regard Jewish Americans as role models. It is suggested in *No Exit Café* within which Jewish Americans are of an "economically and politically successful group," and "they represent a commitment to affirming ethnic identity within assimilation" (Yin 193). Paradoxically, when Yan questions the blindness of the model minority thesis by viewing the Jewish as new models, somehow she reproduces the racist core of the thesis and homogenizes the heterogeneity inside the Jewish group. Yan purposes to make a contrast to some Chinese immigrants' needy situation by the Jewish's success. Meanwhile, her strategy exposes the danger of representing any groups with simplification. As far as Yan's heroines are concerned, some are aware of this danger, and it brings forth their ambivalent feeling about achieving vertical mobility.

Based on last chapter's argument of Chinese immigrant women's re-creation of spatial discourses in geographical mobility, in this chapter I will engage in these women's construction of Chinese American experiences after immigration. My focus will be on Yan's female protagonists' ambivalent feelings toward social mobility, their resistance to the mainstream representation, their survivals out of the domination,

their relations to other minorities, and their constitution of subjectivities under the condition of in-betweenness.

***No Exit Café*: Downward Mobility**

The plot of *No Exit Café* surrounds an important motif to which Yan pays much attention—namely, the downward mobility of Chinese female intellectuals after relocation and the socioeconomic struggle in America. The novel semi-autobiographically reflects Yan's emigrant experiences as an immigrant student and is narrated in first person. In the story, the female protagonist is a student from Communist China, where she had been a correspondent in the People's Liberation Army. However, this experience has brought her lots of trouble since she fell in love with Andrei—a white, would-be diplomat. The FBI agents impose ceaseless surveillances and interrogations on her; they even force her to take the polygraph test. During the process she cannot but have to quit her job as a waitress in a Chinese restaurant. The female protagonist's economic condition is therefore pushed to the edge.

Through penetrating observations, Yan' portrayal of the heroine's destitution again subverts the model minority thesis. The story points out that some Chinese immigrants are still living under the poverty line of America and can hardly be a candidate for a model role. To Yan, "the extremely poor in America are not called

the extremely poor, they are now immigrant students" (*No Exit Café* 113).[34] For the heroine, being an immigrant student, how to earn socioeconomic survival somehow becomes a critical task during her daily life.

In the story, the economic diversity and exploitation of labor within the Chinese community also fosters the downward mobility of the female intellectual. She is engaged as a waitress, wearing uniforms with cheap and bright-colored "Chinese characteristics" to "buy off huge amount of diners from other races" (Yan 44). Her interactions with her caustic Chinese boss bespeak "unequal relations due to different geographical origins and financial backgrounds inside the Chinese American community" (Feng, "Chinese Immigrant Experiences" 49). This results in her alienated attitude toward the Chinese community by dropping her job—a way to preserve the dignity of an intellectual in her downward mobility:

> The Chinese restaurants in downtown were few. I might have a stable period of unemployment after my resignation. He felt despaired about me. He wondered how a person could be as ungrateful as I am, who would rather suffer from other aspects except for injuring her dignity. In his perspective, everything is comfortable compared to unemployment.
>
> He gave me several pieces of money gloomily.

[34] All the quotations from *No Exit Café* in this chapter are my translations.

I roughly counted it. "You own me thirty bucks," I said.

He pushed the cashier's drawer abruptly and closed it. He thought that I misplaced the benefit and the priority so that I deserved to suffer outside. He had to be convinced by me and totally gave my up. (Yan 166)

Outside the Chinese American community, despite the fact that the heroine's destitution tears apart the imagination or representation of the model minority discourse, her poverty further endows the white with chances to transform the discourse by adding in saverism. By the biblical story of the basket baby who floats to the shore of happiness, Yan indicates the saverist mission of the white mainstream toward the female protagonist: "in my own view, she is a child being put in the basket, and the big current flushes her to our shore" (333). Yet, such a statement is built on racist Orientalism: the Chinese girl is the symbol of the fragile East; she can be owned, transformed, and even assimilated by saving her out of poverty. Therefore, the white saverism plays an important role of elevating the East—toward an upward mobility in America. Thus, the heroine is placed between Asia and America, as Palumbo-Liu suggests, and in this liminal state her constitution of subjectivity is hardly possible. In the novel, the saverism is shared by her fiancé and with whom she can rapidly gain vertical mobility. By this, she can "model" after the life of Andrei's rich Jewish friend, Laura, to enjoy socioeconomic superiority. Yet, throughout the novel she

reveals her ambivalent feelings toward such mobility:

> Andrei Davis' wife will sit on the sofa to read newspapers or the bill in such morning. Or, she will be absorbed in her idleness and just sit on where I am now. That is a woman who feels lucky, cherished and thankful for being inside the window, not outside of it. Who will be the peaceful woman in thick, soft and white bathrobe?
>
> Will it be me? (100)

In her *Woman, Native, Other*, Trinh T. Minh-ha argues against "the sense of sepcialness" to reflect the danger of colored women who enjoy a vertical mobility in the first world:

> I shall, therefore, play a double game: on the one hand, I shall loudly assert my right, as a woman, and an exemplary one, to have access to equal opportunity; on the other hand, I shall quietly maintain my privileges by helping the master perpetuate his cycle of oppression. (Trinh 86-87)

Trinh considers that in this double game uprooted women approaching the mainstreamed "make up" their difference or "specialness" to satisfy master domination and form "a third world in the first world" (98). The heroine in *No Exit Café* shares Trinh's dissatisfaction with this kind of trading on politics of differences to gain affiliative support. She refuses to express "the sense of sepcialness" that is

based on orientalist stereotypes and terminates the interracial love affair with Andrei at last. She then finds a new job to make her living and keeps an independent subjectivity out of the appropriation of the white saverism.

Against this “sense of sepcialness,” the narrator then states that she has no English name. Somehow, Yan tends to draw forth the collective experiences of Chinese immigrant women by the anonymous character’s story. The nameless woman suggests that Chinese women are in strait of being alienated and marginalized by English linguistic system. They are waiting to be named or positioned by the dominant ideology at any time. This passivity reflects how they are in a liminal predicament owing to the nameless condition and feel immobile, which leads their subject formation to a difficult path. When the story goes on, the heroine moves to the west coast to look after her mother’s ex-lover and earns a new income. One of her tasks is to teach the old man how to give a name: “we bring out Mandarin, English, and the languages we have created all together” (Yan 402). Here, Yan challenges the white ideology behind the dominant English system with the hybridity of languages. The hybridity symbolizes the heterogeneity of immigrant experiences and of subject formations. All of these cannot be simplified by certain model minority thesis or white saverism.

So far, Yan severely interrogates the model minority discourse and the white

saverism by the heroine's rejection of "the sense of specialness." Yan's doubt is also suggested by the title of the novel—"no exit café." Interestingly, before *No Exit Café* is brought into public, Yan actually publishes two short stories with the same title.[35] It seems that there is a basic concern which never fades away ever since Yan moves to America and writes the first no-exit-café story. Twice, in the novel the female protagonist mentions that "there will always be an exit" in America. However, the statement full of the imagination of "American dream" and "land of opportunities" is ironically forfeited under the FBI agents' constant interference. The FBI agents' interrogations and the polygraph test imposed on the heroine not only presuppose a stereotype of a vicious "East" but also tear at the hypocrisy of saverism. Yan's title implies that Chinese immigrant women who attach to the representations of the white will step into an impasse without an exit. On the other hand, Yan indicates that in Chicago there indeed are few restaurants whose name is adopted from *No Exit* by Jean Paul Satre. They are named "No Exit Café" where we can see some "social marginalizers" who "distrust or disdain the mainstream" ("A Dark Horse" 408). Inheriting from this anti-mainstream spirit, I believe, Yan uses the title of the novel to resist to the politics of difference. It connotes how a female immigrant intellectual gets her self-consciousness and dignity out of being appropriated by the white

[35] The first story is collected in *On the Other Shore*, and the other, *Song of a Kite.*

saverism and being exploited.

"Siao Yu:" A Maternal Figure

Chinese immigrant women's rejection of orientalist saverism turns out to be a story of seeking for permanent residence in "Siao Yu." Both women are under the economic pressure, and they have to deal with socioeconomic mobility. To Siao Yu, mobility means obtaining a legal status in America. In this short story, Siao Yu leaves Mainland China for Australia to be united with her Chinese boyfriend Jiang Wei, an immigrant student. She ought to "work all day during the week and go to classes on weekends" (161). For the sake of permanent residency, Siao Yu marries an old Italian man under Jiang Wei's arrangement. Siao Yu then moves to live with the old man owing to the Immigration Bureau's investigation. However, Siao Yu's concern for the old man leads her relationship with Jiang Wei to a downhill.

When the story is adapted for film, the director transplants the set from Sydney to Chinatown in New York, contextualizing it within the frame of immigrant America. The change of location is not naturally made for adaptation. Instead, according to Feng, "the author mainly describes widespreading Chinese immigrants and appeals to the reader's collective imagination of the lives of immigrants/overseas students." Therefore, she further suggests that Jiang Wei and Siao Yu can be certain "representatives of new immigrants," whose "deliberately vague location" can "achieve the purpose of generality and commonality" (Feng "Chinese Immigrant

Experiences" 56). While Jiang Wei is eager to acquire permanent residency for Siao Yu, to a certain degree, their story is a microscopic view of all Chinese people's immigration dream in the new world.

In particular, as a factory worker, Siao Yu represents how the third world laboring women are exploited in America. Yet, different from the case in *No Exit Café*, Siao Yu's search for social mobility by a fake marriage is not a way of losing her true self. On the contrary, Siao Yu holds a pure goodness to negotiate herself between the relationships with Jiang Wei and the challenge of the American legal system. In the story, Jiang Wei can be seen as a symbol of Chinese patriarchy that dominantly pushes women into a trade through which they can benefit the patriarchal family. Siao Yu can be regarded as a "gift" which Jiang sends to the American legal system in exchange for a permanent residency. The process somehow reflects Gayle Rubin's discussion of "exchange of women." Rubin borrows Levi-Strauss' theory of the social interactions in the primitive society in which people exchange gifts to achieve peace. The primitive reciprocity shows that "marriages are a most basic form of gift exchange, in which it is women who are the most precious of gifts" (173). Considering that men are the exchange partners, she extends Levi-Strauss's ideas to examine how women become gifts under such an exchange so that they may consolidate patriarchal kinships and social linkage:

> The relations of such a system are such that women are in no position to realize the benefits of their women circulation. As long as the relations specify that men exchange women, it is men who are the beneficiaries of the product of such exchanges—social organization. (174)

Rubin also points out that a woman is being deprived of her free will in an arranged marriage, which further increases her powerlessness within gender hierarchy:

> "Exchange of women" is a shorthand for expressing that the social relations of a kinship system specify that men have certain rights in their female kin, and that women do not have the same rights either to themselves or to their male kin. In this sense, the exchange of women is a profound perception of a system in which women do not have full rights to themselves. (177)

In the case of Siao Yu, her marriage with the Italian man suggests that she is actually being trafficked for permanent residency and, most important of all, as a gift that can only enhance Chinese patriarchal control and the filiative hierarchy. Yet it cannot be denied that the marriage also refers to Siao Yu's affiliative process of overcoming American legal system. Somehow, under these pressures and a needy condition, Siao Yu should have been "the minor among the minors." However, Yan lets Siao Yu go on to strive for maintaining an independent subject between the filiative/affiliative, as what has happened in *No Exit Café*. Yan portrays her as a

desireless, “pure and innocent” woman who hopes that “anything that passed through her hands would become better” (178). Siao Yu’s kind attitude then pulls her out of the danger of losing dignity or being oppressed and becomes a unique model of Yan’s female roles.

A similar case in *The Lost Daughter of Happiness* also brings out such type of unique women. When Fusang, a Chinese prostitute of the late 19th century sells her body in San Francisco, she wears simple and good smiles toward the Chinese members and the white group, even if one of the white rapes her:

> Fusang’s eyes filled with tears, but she didn’t let them fall. She was simply keeping him company in his crying. When a mother sees a child sobbing with such pain, she is bound to be affected.
>
> …he saw her kneeling form through his tears. It was beautiful.
>
> She knelt there, forgiving the whole world once more. (Yan 250)

In “Siao Yu,” the scene of a woman holding a weeping man re-appears when Jiang Wei is frustrated by Siao Yu’s fake marriage:

> She wanted to cry, but seeing him with his head buried in her shoulder, sobbing with abandon, she felt his hurt was even deeper and more terrible than hers. Give him the chance to cry, she thought. Otherwise, if both cry, who will be left to give comfort? (165)

From the two passages, Yan discloses a unique model of Chinese women who possess selfless maternity to comfort men—white or non-white. In Siao Yu's case, somehow, when she attempts to take over Jiang Wei's depression when preserving the fake marriage, when she willingly cares for the old man, she demonstrates a universal mother love to soothe or heal men's pain.

To some degree, this is also an upside-down of the orientalist saverism. Siao Yu is no longer a passive Other, waiting for white people's salvation. Instead, by her goodness, she is able to transform saverism by elevating others. For instance, after co-living with Siao Yu, the old man "had changed," because he "had found a part of himself that had been long lost" (178). Yan further describes that the lost part is "tranquil and refined." Though the old man takes Siao Yu's money as an accomplice, Siao Yu indeed needs his cooperation and help to get over the investigation. Yet, it turns out that Siao Yu is a maternal saver to him.

Therefore, with this universally maternal image, Siao Yu is empowered to earn her survival in a transcendental way. Although being oppressed by Jiang Wei's Chinese patriarchal way, she bears unselfish love and tries to release Jiang Wei's guilty conscience. At the same time, her kindness to the old man suggests how she wins back the trust between people, which is destroyed during immigrants' illegal search for a residence. Here Siao Yu can be regarded as a typical presentation of

goodness. It makes her transcend the limitations of the filiative order or the affiliative and constitute a forceful, alternative subjectivity. Her subject formation is thus facilitated by the energy of maternal love.

In general, people believe that women are born with maternal love. It seems that for Siao Yu or Fusang, a strong subjectivity will naturally take place with maternal power. They need neither the intervention of white saverism nor the domination of the patriarchal orders to define their subject formation. Despite the fact that Yan tries to re-write women's helpless stories in the patriarchal society, it cannot be denied that her presentation of maternal instinct more or less inherits the patriarchcal stereotypes imposed on women: the position of being a "good" mother. However, her descriptions of Chinese professional women demonstrate her attempt to dispel such confinement to women. In this sense, Chinese immigrant women can be economic superiors to support their men and win success outside their families. Siao Yu's story exactly reveals the condition of Chinese men's weakness in America. Yan's depiction of Siao Yu's universal motherhood simultaneously reflects Jiang Wei's incompetence. As a Chinese immigrant man, Jiang Wei cannot provide a better life for Siao Yu. Worse, he just sells her out. Though he feels deeply suffered in the story, Jiang Wei's powerlessness is presented as a collective experience of many Chinese immigrant men's downward mobility in America. The state of

being symbolically castrated is specifically revealed in Yan's "The Virgin Amanda."

"The Virgin Amanda:" Reversal of Gender Hierarchy

Yan presents positive stories of Siao Yu and the anonymous woman in *No Exit Café*. In "The Virgin Amanda," however, Yan casts a tragic view on the Chinese immigrant woman who successfully enters into the mainstream. The woman, Han Miao, moves from the mainland China to America. After she finishes her study she becomes an employee of a law firm. Unlike the case of Siao Yu and Jiang Wei, Han Miao urges her husband, Yang Zhi-bing, to come to the States for her. Yet, Yang's lack of expertise and language ability results in his alienation. The story then is narrated by a third person who retells how Yang is framed and accused of seducing a juvenile Hispanic girl—Amanda.

From "Siao Yu," Yan has displayed instability and the interactions between different ethnic minorities in the U.S. Siao Yu demonstrates her goodness and maternal instinct to smooth over the instable relations between different groups. In ""The Virgin Amanda," the couple lives in a building where people are of "various colors" (118).[36] With her background of advanced education and professional job, Han Miao is clearly different from those residents who merely speak broken English. In Han Miao's viewpoint, her neighbors—Amanda's families—can "barely be labeled

[36] All the quotations from "The Virgin Amada" are my translations from *Bai Sh*e.

in the lowest class of culture and education" (121). Moreover, she considers that Yang Zhi-bing's encounter with Amanda "will have nothing good" (118). Although living with the minority groups, Han's successful immigrant experiences link her closely to the dominant mainstream. Her distrust toward other neighbors somehow represents the gap between the mainstream and the non-mainstream. The gap caused by misunderstandings and stereotypes makes her unable to realize or stop the relationship between Yang and Amanda. It seems that Han's story reflects Yan's suspicion of Chinese women's affiliation to the mainstream—they would need to sacrifice something to pay for it. On the other hand, Yan seems to imply that Han Miao can be seen as a figure that re-produces the model minority thesis. In order to accomplish such a discourse that is based on Chinese American stereotypes, Yan highlights the atypical dimension of Han's life—namely, Yang Zhi-bing's alienation in America. In the story, therefore, her social mobility is set as a contrast to her husband's downward mobility.

Like Jiang Wei's inability in "Siao Yu," Yang Zhi-bing's situation also points out a problematic issue of Chinese men's alienation in immigrant America. In his *Chinese American Literature Since the 1850s*, Yin Xiao-huang discusses Chinese men's American experiences when they find out their patriarchal authority disappears:

> …the post-immigration experience of many Chinese men consists of a daily

> attrition of confidence, on-going difficulties in adjustment, and the shock of losing their once treasured male status. By contrast, women, who were not pampered in Chinese society, are less affected by change. Consequently, they often become stronger than men, are better adapted to their new environment, and play more significant roles in family life. (208)

Accordingly, this kind of reversal of gender hierarchy leads to Chinese men's alienation and downward mobility. In "The Virgin Amanda," Han Miao takes over traditional Chinese men's obligation to earn a living for their family. Yang, who once could "find any positions in society, in business and in women," now, each morning "huddles up as an outsider when the society overwhelmingly enters into its initiating program" (95). In addition to that, Yang's alienation from the society symbolizes a castrating process. Thus in the story Yang tries to deal with the housework to "prove that he is not useless" (97). This spiritual castration is strengthened and finally becomes a physical impotence at nights:

> Yang Zhi-bing immediately understands. His monthly salary in three numbers cannot escape from the wife's realization. It cannot run away from her sentiment or sympathy in mind. His arms under Han Miao's neck gradually become stiff and cold. Actually it is Han Miao who covers him under her wings. Therefore the imagination of Han Miao stretching her

> wings caring for the six-feet tall Yang cannot fade away. It becomes a big trouble when he gets close to or touches his wife. At least it troubles him a lot tonight. Cannot go on again…. (120)

To Chinese men in America, "especially those who were well established in their native country," materially and socially, the emigration "can mean a leap into peril and a step down" that keeps eroding their confidence (Yin 207).[37] As a result, "Chinese immigrant men come to value their relationships with their spouses and seek an emotional heaven in them" (Yin 208). However, Yang Zhi-bing's impotence suggests that this heavenly relationship with his wife is also impossible. Han Miao's successful social mobility radically reverses their positions within the gender hierarchy.

Yang finds his emotional heaven turns out to be an extramarital affair with a Hispanic young girl—Amanda. Obviously, to Yang, it can be a salvation of the Chinese patriarchal system because in their relationship he is established as "a nice figure of father and brother" (111). Yet this salvation is built on Amanda's betrayal and will necessarily become a disappointment. Moreover, it is also the betrayal of the Chinese man by the mainstream ideology. When he shows up as an unassimilable Other who cannot conform to his model minority image, he has to be

[37] Yin borrows Elaine H. Kim's idea to indicate how Asian patriarchy is superseded by American patriarchy whose racist essence does promise Asian American men a better future. And this somehow "results in comparative benefits for Chinese women" (Yin 208).

saved or wiped out. In the story Yang after all cannot be saved through Han Miao's upward mobility. Therefore, Yang is destined to be exxcluded—in the end, he chooses to return to China.

It should be noted that the author does not totally discredit Han Miao or her mobility. Han's mobility brings about economic improvement and more or less demonstrates a sense of motherly love for her husband. In particular, the author shows her sympathy for Han at the moment when Han throws away her dignity and mobility privilege, returning to the Chinese American community for financial assistance in the lawsuit. Regardless of her husband's deception, it seems that her support for Yang turns back to human love. And, in Yan's writings, this kind of women with goodness stands a better chance of surviving in the end.

So far, the author not only exposes the immigration myth but also clearly describes the pain and the gain of Chinese immigrant women during the process of earning socioeconomic mobility. Through various roles, Yan exposes Chinese immigrant women's heterogeneous experiences. She challenges their affiliative relations to the dominant mainstream; she represents their alienation to the Chinese group. To the Chinese immigrant women, these struggles are all related to a basic issue of survival. This survival requires an independent and strong subject to carry out the negotiations or resistances within their daily lives, because during the process

they must constantly be aware of their positions as people being objectified or orientalized. In terms of the reversal of gender hierarchy in America, Yin Xiao-huang once acknowledges that it is more "a complex product of dehumanizing pressures on the immigrants in American life" than a comparison of Chinese women's rise/fall in America to that in China (218). I believe the dehumanization mostly results from the disillusionment of the American Dream because of the racist operation of the dominant society who models Chinese immigrants in accordance with their imagination, which inevitably undermines individual specificity. In Yan's stories, it is clear that only when Chinese immigrant women maintain self-consciousness to avoid a sense of specialness can they establish a subjectivity out of being otherized. This not only challenges the mainstream's manipulation of homogenizing Chinese American women's experiences, it also pushes us to re-consider their relations to other immigrant minorities.

Chapter 4

Chinese American Mobility Discourse—Always on the Road

Almost two decades after the republication of *Mulberry and Peach* in Taiwan, Nieh recently publishes her autobiography—*Three Lives, Three Ages* (2004). The title of the book refers to Nieh's days in three places, namely, mainland China, Taiwan and America. From her autobiography, we can easily tell that Nieh's personal experiences provide the background for the major scenarios of the novel.[38] In other words, *Mulberry and Peach* semi-autobiographically represents Nieh's life. Leo Ou-fan Lee comments on *Three Lives* in his review entitled "The Rebirth of the Wandering Ghosts" ("Yo Hun Zai Sheng"). He asserts that there are "polyphonic forms" in the book, including prose, poetry, letters, records, and dialogue. They can be "voices of human beings" that inform the readers on how Nieh "ceaselessly converses with people whom she is familiar with and concerned about," and "through concise and vivid language she invokes 'wandering ghosts' of the past to the present."[39] Is it possible that Nieh's wandering heroine, Mulberry/Peach, is also in the list of invocation? Like Mulberry's struggle in dislocation, Nieh in *Three Lives* reveals her anxiety of unstable relationships to the filiative units due to

[38] For example, the memory of Chu-Tang Gorge is behind her breathtaking scenes of the stranded boat. Mulberry's life with her fiancé in the besieged Peking is indeed Nieh's personal experience. Moreover, the experience of how her father is hiding in an attic is also rewritten as a nightmare episode brought by the White Terror. These scenarios, including Nieh's American life, supply the basic temporal/spatial frames for *Mulberry and Peach*.

[39] "Yo Hun Zai Sheng" [The Rebirth of the Wandering Ghosts]. Udnnews 26 May 2004. 26 May 2004 <http://udn.com/NASApp/rightprt/prtnews?newsid=2041741>

her geographical mobility. Also, just as Peach experiences the joy of "rebirth" in America, Nieh depicts her pleasure of gaining a new life with a happy marriage in Iowa after fleeing the White Terror. Though this new life is acutely cut back by her husband's death in 1991, in her autobiography Nieh obviously stands up to it.[40] Therefore, in my opinion, the "rebirth" that Lee mentions not only suggests the reconfiguration of the past but also points to Nieh's rebirth out of the shadow of death through the act of writing. *Mulberry and Peach*, I believe, is also a rebirth/representation of Peach's strong subjectivity, which is initiated by the empowerment of mobility.

Most important of all, in Nieh's and Yan's stories, Chinese American mobility discourse also gets a new life, which expands of Wong's two-directional mobility theory. The two authors expose gender differences within Chinese American immigration experiences and the possibility of downward mobility. Corresponding to Wong's "rival cultural discourse" in which mobility is regarded as a tactic of loosening domination, in the process of migration these Chinese immigrant women can somehow circumvent the institution of Chinese patriarchy to re-produce various narratives of life, while surviving challenges in a new world. The authors' characters—Siao Yu, the anonymous woman in *No Exit Café*, and

[40] In the epilogue of *Three Lives, Three Ages*, Nieh talked about her husband's death: "He suddenly fell down during the travel in 1991. It seemed that heaven and earth turned upside down. I fell down, too. After twelve years, unexpectedly I come out with *Three Lives, Three Ages*, and it is also how I struggle from death to life" (349). Translation mine.

Mulberry/Peach—also support Wong's critique of American nationalist violence in regard to the immigration codes. In particular, Yan's Chinese immigrant protagonists have some encounters with American capitalism and with the economically privileged inside their communities, demonstrating socioeconomic/vertical mobility experiences to open up Chinese American mobility discourse. To their heroines, therefore, mobility empowers them to resist hegemonic domination and generate strong subjectivities. In the Chinese American context, their struggles for socioeconomic mobility reveal these women's flexibility in adapting to new lives and, simultaneously, a danger of affiliating to mainstream stereotypical representations, such as the model minority thesis.

In *Mulberry and Peach* and *No Exit Café*, moreover, Chinese women's mobility provides energy of purging the trauma of the past. In *Mulberry and Peach*, the emergence of Peach and her free wanderings symbolize that she can get rid of Mulberry's filiative burden, such as the call of the Chinese nationalism and the breakdown of families. And, in *No Exit Café* the female protagonist's westward travel to nurse her mother's ex-lover suggests a way to compensate for her mother's long lost love. It seems that mobility does not merely endow them with the power of creating alternative narratives to blur the limitations of dominance. In addition, mobility provide opportunities of healing or releasing the trauma of the past.

Also, it is noteworthy to point out that the open endings of *Mulberry and Peach, No Exit Café* and "Siao Yu" indicate more possibilities of the female protagonists' immigrant lives. Peach and the anonymous woman in *No Exit Café* will be on their way to a freer future; it is uncertain whether Siao Yu will return to the Chinese American community. The indeterminacy of their destinations makes it difficult for them to be subjected to the filiative or affiliative orders. While Peach states in the novel that she is "always on the road," being a migratory subject, she is in fact going through an ongoing process of departure and re-departure, as Trinh T. Minh-ha suggests. During the process they will constantly initiate new experiences and, at the same time, they have to contend with different dominant factors to maintain independence. In a discourse of mobility, the establishments of subjectivities will be both flexible and indeterminate, a process which can never be permanently fixed. Refusing to be marginally positioned, therefore, as Trinh argues, these Chinese women can do away with the politics of difference, which imposes restrictions on their subject formations. The subject formation will be ceaselessly "in process" and generates "multiple presence [s]" (94).

Due to the "multiple presence [s]" of the subject formation and the self-consciousness resulting from mobility, the heroines in these three stories seem to be able to better survive in the new world than Chinese men do. This meets the

suggestion in chapter three which refers to the misrepresentation of Chinese Americans under the model minority discourse. And it should be noted that Chinese American women's vertical mobility and the reversal of gender hierarchy in Yan's stories should not be imagined as always felicitous. Instead, they have to get through pain and gain when they struggle to deal with hegemonic domination. The challenges of living in an alien country are shown by their different social status: a nomad, a poverty-stricken student, a maternal-like figure, or a competent professional. Sometimes they even have to take the responsibility of supporting Chinese men.

When it comes to immigrant experiences in the new world, Lisa Lowe stresses the interconnection between "gender" and "race" because "we cannot isolate 'race' from 'gender' without reproducing the logic of domination" (433). Through their writings, Nieh and Yan point out the heterogeneity and multiplicity of Chinese American mobility discourse by representing Chinese women's lives to indicate this "interconnection between 'gender' and 'race'." The heroines' stories represent Chinese immigrant woman's experiences that are filled with individual negotiations with various dominant elements: white racism, class struggle, gender formation, nationalism, and patriarchalism, to name just a few. In terms of race, in particular, the two authors portray the de-humanization of immigrants through the episodes of persecution by the immigration bureau agents. In Yan's stories she further questions

white saverism. These two sides undermine white arrogance and the production of model minority thesis. By bringing out heterogeneous experiences, the two authors liberate the racially bound "model" Chinese Americans and lead them to more interactions with other minorities.

The heterogeneity of Chinese immigrants' lives and their resistant practices should be studied to enrich the Chinese American mobility discourse, one that resists closure or monologism. Again, as Lisa Lowe remarks, in studying Chinese American experiences, we can "include a more heterogeneous group and to enable crucial alliances—with other groups of color, class-based struggles, feminist coalitions, and sexuality-based efforts—in the ongoing work of transforming hegemony" (439). In the case of Chinese American mobility discourse, any monologist interpretation should be put into question and, at the same time, it is necessary to open it up by allowing "alliances" and individual specificities. To Chinese immigrant women, to interrogate their defined mobility under patriarchal power or, to survive under racist violence, they need to hold resistant consciousness against hegemony—an "ongoing work" urged by Lowe. And, in Nieh's and Yan's stories, retelling how they come through dislocation, also point to this ongoing work and the possibility of re-generating or transmitting different Chinese American mobility experiences. The open endings of their writings, especially, have pushed

Chinese American mobility discourse to an open road. This also implies that the work of transforming hegemony through creating alternative experiences in mobility can never be finished. In the words of Peach, Chinese American mobility discourse is thus “always on the road” and always full of novelty and opportunities.

Appendix

	English	Chinese
Nieh Hualing	*Black, Black, the Most Beautiful Color*	《黑色，黑色，最美麗的顏色》
	Mulberry and Peach: Two Women of China (1981)	《桑青與桃紅》
	"Note on the exile of *Mulberry and Peach*"	<桑青與桃紅流放小記>
	Sangqing yu Taohong (1970)	《桑青與桃紅》
	Three Lives, Three Ages	《三生三世》
Yan Geling	"A Dark Horse in Women's Community: Yan Geling on *No Exit Café*"	<女人社群裡的一匹黑馬>
	Bai She	《白蛇》
	Fu Sang (1996)	《扶桑》
	No Exit Café	《無出路咖啡館》
	On the Other Shore	《海那邊》
	"Robber Charlie and I"	<搶劫犯查裡與我>

Yan Geling	English	Chinese
	Siao Yu	《少女小漁》
	Song of a Kite	《風箏歌》
	“Story in School”	<學校的故事>
	“The Chestnut Hair”	<褐色頭髮>
	“The Insomniac’s Beautiful Encounter”	<失眠人的豔遇>
	The Lost Daughter of Happiness (2001)	《扶桑》
	“The Virgin Amanda”	<處女阿曼達>

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