

EXPERIENCES AS A EURASIAN IN SUI SIN FAR'S "LEAVES FROM THE MENTAL
PORTFOLIO OF AN EURASIAN" AND "ITS WAVERING IMAGE"

A MASTER'S PROJECT

BY

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presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

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ประสบการณ์ในฐานะลูกครึ่งในงานเขียนของซูย ชิน ฟาร์ เรื่อง "Leaves from the Mental
Portfolio of an Eurasian" และเรื่อง "Its Wavering Image"

บทคัดย่อ

ของ

นางสาว วิวิรรณ จันทร์

เสนอต่อบัณฑิตวิทยาลัย มหาวิทยาลัยศรีนครินทรวิโรฒ เพื่อเป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษา

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งานวิจัยนี้ได้ศึกษาประสบการณ์ในฐานะลูกครึ่งของตัวละครเอก ในงานเขียนของ ซุย ซิน ฟาร์ เรื่อง "Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of an Eurasian" และเรื่อง "Its Wavering Image" โดยวิเคราะห์ปัญหาที่ตัวละครต้องเผชิญอันเนื่องมาจากการเป็นลูกครึ่ง ได้แก่ การถูกแบ่งแยกจากชาวอเมริกันว่าเป็น "คนอื่น" การแบ่งแยกเชื้อชาติในสังคมอเมริกันที่ตัวละครต้องเผชิญ และความสับสนเกี่ยวกับเชื้อชาติ และวิเคราะห์ว่าตัวละครเหล่านั้นพัฒนาเอกลักษณ์ทางเชื้อชาติจีนอย่างไร เพื่อให้เกิดความเข้าใจที่ชัดเจนเกี่ยวกับการแบ่งแยกเชื้อชาติที่มีต่อชาวจีนและลูกครึ่งในช่วงปลายศตวรรษที่ 19 ผู้วิจัยได้ประยุกต์ทฤษฎีทางเชื้อชาติของ Michael Omi และ Howard Winant และ ทฤษฎีดาวินตามความคิดของชาวอเมริกันของ Richard Hofstadter มาใช้เป็นเครื่องมือในการวิเคราะห์ทัศนคติและแนวคิดของชาวอเมริกันที่มีต่อเชื้อชาติ

ผลการศึกษาพบว่า ประสบการณ์ที่ตัวละครเผชิญในฐานะลูกครึ่งทำให้พวกเขาเกิดความเข้มแข็งและมีทัศนคติที่ดีต่อเชื้อชาติ ซึ่งเป็นสิ่งสำคัญที่ทำให้ตัวละครเอกทั้งสองประสบผลสำเร็จในการพัฒนาเอกลักษณ์ทางเชื้อชาติของตนเอง

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EXPERIENCES AS A EURASIAN IN SUI SIN FAR'S "LEAVES FROM THE MENTAL
PORTFOLIO OF AN EURASIAN" AND "ITS WAVERING IMAGE"

AN ABSTRACT

BY

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Advisor: Dr. Supaporn Yimwilai.

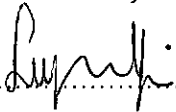
This research is a study of experiences as a Eurasian of the two protagonists in Sui Sin Far's writings, "Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of an Eurasian" and "Its Wavering Image." The researcher examines the problems that the two protagonists, Sui Sin Far and Pan, encounter due to their biracial identity: being perceived as the "others" by white Americans, the prejudice and ignorance towards their Eurasian identity, and their identity confusion. In addition, this study examines how the two protagonists develop their Chinese identity.

To clearly understand racial prejudice towards Chinese and Eurasians in the late nineteenth-century, the researcher employs Michael Omi and Howard Winant's theory of race and Richard Hofstadter's *Social Darwinism in American Thought* to analyze the Americans' attitudes towards Chinese and Eurasians.

The outcome of this study shows that the experiences that the two protagonists encounter make them stronger and help them to have positive attitudes towards their Chinese identity and to develop their Chinese identity successfully.

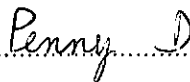
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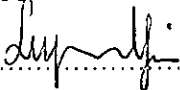
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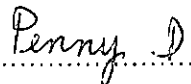
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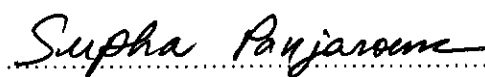
(Assist. Prof. Penny Diskaparakai)



Reader

(Mr. Peter John Cadman)

This Master's Project has been approved as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background

After the Civil War, slavery and immigration in the United States increased considerably. As a consequence, the number of intermarriages also increased. Many states passed anti-miscegenation laws in order to prohibit marriages between whites and other races. The word "miscegenation" referred to intermarriage or sexual relations between people of different races. Some people believed that whites and blacks belonged to different species, and therefore intermarriage should be prohibited.

The first anti-miscegenation law was passed in Maryland in 1661 against marriage between whites and blacks. In 1691, the Virginia Marriage Law prescribed banishment of any white woman who married an African-American man. Then in 1705, the Massachusetts Anti-Miscegenation Law criminalized interracial marriage. In 1721, the State of Delaware passed a law that forbade African-American men to marry white women. A year later, the Pennsylvania Morality Law penalized African-American men for sexual relations with white women, and the Pennsylvania Anti-Miscegenation Law was passed in the same year. In 1922, the Cable Act declared that any American-born woman who married any other race would automatically lose her American citizenship. The last anti-miscegenation law in the United States was passed in 1967 (Kich 10).

By the end of the nineteenth century, the debate about racial classification became central to the issue of American immigration. Since intermarriage was not accepted in the United States, the offspring of these marriages were discriminated against by society. As a result, they had to struggle in a prejudiced world. The hardships experienced by people of mixed race have been illustrated in many writings such as Nella Larsen's Passing (1929) and Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin (1851).

There are many researchers who have studied mixed race marriage of blacks and whites. For example, Kristin Costello Kosmik, in "The Alien in Our Nation: Complicating Issues of Passing and Miscegenation in the American Narrative," examines the complexity of racial "passing" beyond the presumed arithmetic of black-white dualism of Modern America. According to Elaine Ginsberg, the term "passing" is defined as "a transgression not only of legal boundaries but of cultural boundaries" (1). In addition, Mark Andrew Huddle traces the history of American race relations since the Civil War by moving mixed race Americans to the center of his analysis in "The Paradox of Color: Mixed Race American and the Burden of History." However, a few researchers pay attention to mixed race of Asians and whites. Therefore, researcher would like to study the experiences of Eurasians, mixed race of Asians and Europeans in the two writings of Sui Sin Far: an autobiographical , "Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of an

copy

Eurasian" (1909), and a short story, "Its Wavering Images" (1912). In this sense, the word "European" refers to a white person.

The period between 1830 and 1912 was the most significant in the history of the American women's short stories (Ling 287). The popularity of this type of literature during this period gave female writers who wrote short fictional stories an opportune venue to explore such issues. There were a few female authors who were very popular during this period—Kate Chopin and Sara Orne Jewett. Sui Sin Far was one of these writers. However, both Chopin and Jewett wrote fiction about the role of women in the nineteenth century. Sui Sin Far is the first writer who wrote fiction and non-fiction about the Chinese and Eurasians. In the essay, "Edith Eaton: Pioneer Chinamerican Writer and Feminist," Amy Ling indicates that "no one before her had written so sympathetically and so extensively about the Chinese in America" (288).

Sui Sin Far (1865-1914), born Edith Maud Eaton of a Chinese mother and a British father, was the first Chinese-British writer in the United States. She wrote fiction and non-fiction about Eurasians, her ethnic identity. She renamed herself as Sui Sin Far when she began publishing stories about Chinese people in 1896. At the turn of the century, Sui Sin Far was noted mostly for her realistic depictions of Asian Europeans. Sui Sin Far was a representative of mixed race writers who used writing as a vehicle to reveal their identity as biracial people. She wrote "Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of an

Eurasian" and "Its Wavering Image" based on her own experiences in order to promote greater understanding of the "other," which in this sense was a person of mixed race.

Sui Sin Far's writings reveal the unfavorable attitudes of white Americans towards mixed race people and Chinese immigrants. The readers are also given an understanding of how people of mixed race of Chinese origin may have felt and how they develop their Chinese identity. In the two writings, experiences as Eurasians play an important role in the development of the protagonists' identity.

Understanding the experiences of mixed race people in Sui Sin Far's writings is crucial for the readers to discover their power to transcend beyond the discrimination of the society they live in (Ling 289). In doing so, the researcher will apply the theory of race that discusses how the concept of race is constructed based on Michael Omi and Howard Winant's Racial Formation in the United States From the 1960s to the 1990s and Richard Hofstadter's Social Darwinism in American Thought to analyze these two writings.

Purposes of the Study

The purposes of this study are:

1. To explore the experiences of people of mixed race in Sui Sin Far's "Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of an Eurasian" and "Its Wavering Image" in the following aspects:

1.1 The problems of being Eurasian

1.1.1 The sense of being perceived as the "other" by white Americans

1.1.2 The prejudice and ignorance towards their Eurasian identity

1.1.3 The characters' confusion of their identity

1.2 The development of their Chinese identity

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study is:

1. To promote a better understanding of Chinese European people through an analysis of the Chinese European identity as appears in "Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of an Eurasian" and "Its Wavering Image."
- ✓ 2. To be able to used as a tool for further studies or as a guideline for review of the related literature.

Scope of the Study

This study focuses on the two writings of Sui Sin Far:

1. "Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of an Eurasian"
2. "Its Wavering Image"

Procedures of the Study

This research will be conducted in accordance with the following

procedures:

1. Survey related literature:

- 1.1 Study the theory of race

- 1.2 Study the research on mixed race of blacks and whites and
Asians and whites

- 1.3 Study Sui Sin Far's biography

2. Analyze experiences of mixed race people in "Leaves from the Mental

Portfolio of an Eurasian" and "Its Wavering Image" by using the theory of race
in the following aspects:

- 2.1 The problems of being Eurasian

- 2.1.1 The sense of being perceived as the "other" by white
Americans

- 2.1.2 The prejudice and ignorance towards their Eurasian
identity

- 2.1.3 The characters' confusion of their identity

- 2.2 The development of their Chinese identity

3. Give conclusions of the study

4. Suggest topics for further studies

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter is an overview of the related literature including the research on mixed race people, the theory of race and biography of Sui Sin Far.

Research on mixed race people

There are a number of researchers studying mixed race people of blacks and whites. One example is Mark Andrew Huddle's "The Paradox of Color: Mixed Race American and the Burden of History." In this study, he traces the history of American race relations since the Civil War by moving mixed race Americans who struggled to carve out a sense of identity to the center of his analysis in order to better understand the conceptions of race. This study draws from intellectual, cultural, and legal history and applies gender, critical race, and post-colonial theories to explain the concept of race.

Kristin Costello Kosmik, in "The Alien in Our Nation: Complicating Issues of Passing and Miscegenation in the American Narrative," examines the complexity of racial "passing" beyond the presumed arithmetic of black-white dualism of Modern America. This study encompasses works from the mid-nineteenth century through contemporary American literature such as Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel, Uncle Tom's

Cabin, William Faulkner's novel, Light in August, Toni Morrison's novel, Tar Baby and Paradise, and Ralph Ellison's novel Juneteenth.

Also, there is research on mixed race of Asians and whites. In "Multiple Choice: Literary Racial Formations of Mixed Race Americans of Asian Descent," Shannon T. Leonard looks at many Asian American writers both well-known and virtually unknown: Edith Eaton, Winnifred Eaton, Sadakichi Hartmann, Aimee Lui, Chang-rae Lee, Amy Tan, Shawn Wong, Jessica Hagedorn, Peter Bacho, Thaddeus Rutkowski, and Paisley Rekdal.

Theory of race

According to Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary, race is one of the major groups into which human beings can be divided according to certain important physical features, such as the color of their skin or the kind of hair they have (1881).

However, Michael Omi and Howard Winant identify that race is a concept which signifies and symbolizes social conflicts and interest by referring to different types of human bodies (55). In this sense, the concept of race continues to play a fundamental role in structuring and representing the social world, thus we should think of race as an element of social structure rather than as a physical appearance.

✦
A thousand years ago, people of European descent or origin regarded themselves as a superior race. As an exclusive force, they deemed other races as

inferior to them. According to Omi and Winant, the identification of distinctive human groups and their association with differences in physical appearance goes back to prehistory and can be found in the earliest document— the Bible (61). [“] The greatest ^{bible} influence of the Bible on the Europeans' view was a belief that they were sons of God as Omi and Winant wrote: “all presupposed a worldview which distinguished Europeans, as children of God, fully-fledged human beings, etc., from 'other' ” (62).

★ Besides, the Europeans also found themselves different from “others” who could be exploited and enslaved. They discovered people who looked and acted differently and judged them as different species. They defined any one of European origin or descent as “whites” and classified people from different countries as “others.” These ideas were rooted in the theory of Social Darwinism which influenced many people, especially Europeans during the early 20th century and helped to sustain belief in Anglo-Saxon or Aryan cultural and biological superiority. Darwinism was the belief that evolution proceeded by the differential survival of the fittest or superior individuals. It was believed that those individuals that possessed advantageous features — the fittest— were more apt to survive (Hofstadter 89). According to Richard Hofstadter, the greatest influence in the development of racism in Europe in the nineteenth century was the replacement of the Christian belief that “God created all people equal” by Darwinism. On the belief that man had evolved from more primitive creatures, and that some races had evolved further than others, it provided racism with a scientific mask

(91). Hofstadter also concluded that human races differed not only because of survival factors, but also because that they evolved from different primates. The blacks came from gorillas, the whites from chimpanzees, and the Orientals from orangutans, and it was for this reason that some races were superior (85). The racism which developed from the theory of evolution was at first confined to blacks and then applied to other races. As the one race above all others, Europeans believed that interracial marriages should be prohibited.

* In the United States, the concept of determining race by blood was applied to identify people. As a result, many laws of the United States tried to define a Negro, a colored person, as anyone with one-thirty-second of black blood. Although biologically there was no such thing as 'black blood,' these laws upheld the idea that any traceable amount of colored blood in one's genealogical record or ancestry was determined as a black person (Gossett 56). As a result, a number of anti-miscegenation laws were passed in order to prohibit interracial marriages. Since Americans believed that other races belonged to different species from them, interracial marriages between whites and blacks were not accepted. The offspring of those intermarriages were not considered as whites or blacks due to the impurity in their blood from intermixed genes, and these offspring faced racism and prejudice.

The researcher will apply the theory of race discussed above to analyze experiences of mixed race characters in Sui Sin Far's writings in order to answer the following questions:

- How do Eurasians feel?
- What kinds of problems do they face?
- Are they confused with their own identity?
- And how do they develop their Chinese identity?

Biography of Sui Sin Far

Sui Sin Far writes "Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of an Eurasian" and "Its Wavering Image" based on her own experiences as a person of mixed race (Asian and European). To understand experiences as a Eurasian in the two writings clearly, readers need to know Sui Sin Far's biography.

Sui Sin Far (1865-1914), born Edith Eaton, was the first writer of mixed Asian and European ancestry in the United States to publish fiction and non-fiction about her ethnic identity. She was born in Macclesfield, England as the oldest daughter of fourteen children. Her father was an Englishman who tried to support his large family by painting landscapes. Her mother was Chinese and was adopted by an English missionary couple who gave her an English education.

At the age of six, Sui Sin Far and her family left England and immigrated to Hudson City, New York, and in the early 1870s settled in the Montreal suburb of Hochelaga. She went to school until she was eleven years old and then continued her education at home. When Sui Sin Far was eighteen years old, she started her career at Hugh Graham's Montreal Daily Star newspaper as a journalist. In 1888, she published the first of many articles in a Montreal magazine. It was in her journalistic writing that Sui Sin Far openly identified herself as a Chinese British and explained her biracial heritage to her readers. She wrote under the pseudonym Sui Sin Far, a childhood nickname that means "water lily" in Chinese.

In the mid 1890s, Sui Sin Far moved briefly to Jamaica, where she contracted malaria, from which she never quite recovered. She moved to the United States in 1898, and although she traveled a great deal, she spent the majority of the rest of her life in the western United States, most notably in San Francisco and Seattle. Sui Sin Far dedicated herself to battling the racism oppressing the Chinese people in the United States, using a pen as a tool to fight against white American's prejudice. She wrote both articles and short stories; Chinese American women were at the center of many of her writings. Sui Sin Far's full-length selection of short stories, Mrs. Spring Fragrance, was published in Chicago in 1912.

Sui Sin Far died in Montreal on April 7, 1914 due to rheumatic fever. At the time of her death, Sui Sin Far was honored in Chinese communities across North America and a monument to her memory was erected at her grave.

CHAPTER 3

AN ANALYSIS OF SUI SIN FAR'S EXPERIENCES AS A EURASIAN IN "LEAVES FROM THE MENTAL PORTFOLIO OF AN EURASIAN"

This chapter is an analysis of Sui Sin Far's experiences as a Eurasian in her autobiographical essay, "Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of an Eurasian." In this chapter, the researcher examines the problems that Sui Sin Far encountered due to her biracial identity: being perceived as the "other" by white Americans, the prejudice and ignorance towards her Eurasian identity and her confusion. In addition, the researcher examines how Sui Sin Far develops her Chinese identity. The researcher applies Michael Omi and Howard Winant's theory of race which discusses how the concept of race is constructed to analyze white Americans' perception of race.

Marriage * The problems of being Eurasian

The word "miscegenation" refers to intermarriages or sexual relations between people of different races. In the nineteenth century, some white Americans believed that people from different races belonged to different species. They thought that human races evolved from different primates; for this reason, as Michael Omi and Howard Winant suggest, racial intermixture was seen as a sin against nature, which led to the creation of biological throwbacks (15). As a result, many anti-miscegenation laws were

passed. White Americans wanted to protect the purity of white blood (Kich 12). Since intermarriages were unacceptable, children from those marriages were subject to discrimination/

Sui Sin Far was biracial: her mother was Chinese and her father was British. As a person of mixed blood, she learns that whites perceived her as the "other" by the fact that she was a Eurasian. In Racial Formation in the United States From the 1960s to the 1990s, Michael Omi and Howard Winant say "the Europeans believe that they are the most superior of all human races because they are "children of God"" (62). They define any one of European origin or descent as "white" and classify people from different countries as "others." In this way, White Americans, believing that they are of European descent, perceive Chinese as "others".

The Chinese are viewed as "other" as demonstrated by Sui Sin Far's employer's statement, "I cannot reconcile myself to the thought that the Chinese are humans like ourselves" (224). Since Sui Sin Far is a Eurasian woman whose racial identity is unknown to her colleagues, she often hears and reports racist comments from them. Moreover, the white Americans in Sui Sin Far's world always harbor fantasies and stereotypes about how Chinese act and think as a clerk echoes: "their bodies are enough for me. A Chinaman is, in my eyes, more repulsive than a nigger" (224). This sentence indicates that the speaker puts the Chinese on a lower scale than blacks. Americans define the Chinese as inhuman "others" in order to prevent interracial

marriages. Since believing that Chinese are a different species from whites, interracial marriages should not occur.

Sui Sin Far has to deal with prejudice and ignorance in her everyday life due to her Eurasian identity. She is perceived as "other." From the beginning of her autobiographical essay, it is apparent that the young Sui Sin Far does not realize that she is biracial. She thinks that she has no differences from other children in society until her nurse reveals the truth about her mother's background. The nurse's friend scans her from head to foot: Sui Sin Far is perceived as "other". Sui Sin Far's first encounter with the concept of biraciality occurs when she is four years old, walking down a green English lane with her nurse and overhearing the woman telling her friend that her mother is Chinese (218). Later, when Sui Sin Far is at school, she observes that other students treat her and her siblings in an unusual , and they are not well accepted by society as she hears one child telling another child, "I wouldn't speak to Sui if I were you. Her mama is Chinese" (218). From this sentence, the readers can infer that even the children are taught to dislike people who are different from them. Sui Sin Far's racial status affects her social life and also her personal life as she mentions: "now and then we are stopped and plied with questions as to what we eat and drink, how we go to sleep, if my mother understands what my father says to her, if we sit on chairs or squat on floors" (220). This is the type of ignorance that biracial subjects confront daily. Readers can infer from such episodes how much difficulty Sui Sin Far has to encounter.

As a six year old girl in Hudson City, New York, she and her brother are drawn into a fight with hostile children who mock their Chineseness: "they pull my hair, they tear my clothes, they scratch my face, and all but lame my brother" (218). Being a mixed race person, Sui Sin Far has to confront a discriminatory attitude towards her race daily.

Because she is constantly addressed by others in terms of her racial status — every interaction she has with other human beings, white or Chinese, is colored by her "race"—it is inevitable that she will come to identify herself in these terms as well.

Moreover, she becomes the object of curiosity. An old man points to her and says: "Ah, Indeed! Who would have thought it at first glance? Yet now I see the difference between her and other children. What a particular coloring! Her mother's eyes and hair and her father's features, I presume. Very interesting little creature" (218).

These sentences show that the old man judges Sui Sin Far from her appearance. As

Omi and Winant write : "[t]he identification of distinctive human groups, and their

association with differences in physical appearance, goes back to prehistory, and can

be found in the earliest documents—in the Bible" (61). Readers of Sui Sin Far learn from

the evidence that whites judge people from other races as strangers because of their

physical features such as the color of their skin or the kind of hair they have. Repeated

encounters with people's ignorance make Sui Sin Far constantly aware of her

differences. As a Eurasian, she is the victim of curiosity of people in the two worlds, the

white world and the Chinese world, that bring difficulty to her life.

Judge an appearance
 or a name in 1/10

As the product of miscegenation between a white man and a Chinese woman, Sui Sin Far is viewed as the "other," not only by white Americans but also by the Chinese. As a young adult, she becomes more sympathetic to the Chinese; however, she discovers that her appearance prevents her from being membership of the Chinese community. She describes, "the Americanized Chinamen actually laugh in my face when I tell them that I am of their race" (227). However, her inability to speak Chinese is also the cause of non-acceptance from the Chinese as she says, "I am unacquainted with my mother tongue" (227). When Sui Sin Far has a chance to interact with Chinese people, she discovers that her mother's people are just as narrow-minded as her father's and realize that many Chinese people have a prejudice against biracial people as she mentions, "Fundamentally, I muse, all people are the same. My mother's race is as prejudiced as my father's (222).

Because she is alienated from both worlds, Sui Sin Far is confused about her racial identity. She is perceived as "other" by both whites and Chinese; in other words, the two societies discriminated against her, so she cannot identify herself with either. Then the problem of national identity occurs within her mind. Sui Sin Far is caught between the world of her father and the world of her mother as she claims: "I do not confide in my father and mother. They would not understand. How could they? He is English, she is Chinese. I am different to both of them—a stranger, though their own

child" (222). This sentence reveals that Sui Sin Far feels that she is lonely; she does not fit either in the British or the Chinese community.

From "Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of an Eurasian," readers learn that Sui Sin Far needs patience to deal with hostile circumstances not only in her everyday life but also at school and in society. Because of her physical differences, people in both communities look at her as a stranger; therefore, she suffers greatly from that situation.

The development of Sui Sin Far's Chinese identity

Living in a prejudiced society, Sui Sin Far encounters discriminating attitudes and alienation as discussed above. In her autobiographical essay, Sui Sin Far says, "it is not difficult, in a land like California, for a half Chinese, half white girl to pass as one of Spanish or Mexican origin" (227). Sui Sin Far is a biracial person who can follow that role; on the other hand, she tries to assume a Chinese identity. She does not surrender to those hostile circumstances. She fortifies herself by positive action and begins to develop her "Chineseness" by reading about Chinese culture, traveling and writing from the perspectives of Chinese Americans.

Curious to know more about Chinese ancestry, Sui Sin Far begins to fulfill her need by interacting with Chinese people. However, she never contacts any Chinese people; she is fascinated when she sees them for the first time. Working and cooperating with them enables her to move to the threshold of Chinese life, where she

develops her Chinese instincts and a positive attitude toward her Chinese heritage.

First, Sui Sin Far goes to the library and reads every book about China and the Chinese that she can find. There, she learns that "China is the oldest civilized nation on the face of the earth" (222). Later, she travels around the world and often works with and meets a lot of Chinese people. During this trip, she meets and interacts with children of Eurasians. It inspires her to realize her own identity. After realizing the superiority of China, she narrates, "At eighteen years of age what troubles me is not that I am what I am, but that others are ignorant of my superiority" (222). In this sense, an ignorant mind of other people is a big obstacle for the harmonious life of a Eurasian. Even though violence and discrimination against Chinese people are at their height, she is proud of her Chinese identity and considers herself Chinese.

Then Sui Sin Far not only accepts her Chinese identity but also boldly identifies herself as Chinese. When asked by her employer why she is so silent, she finds the courage to confront the prejudice around her and to reveal her identity by saying: "Mr. K., the Chinese people may have no souls, no expression on their faces, be altogether beyond the pale of civilization, but whatever they are, I want you understand that I am-I am a Chinese" (225). The other dinner guests are astonished with her answer and become silent, and her employer apologizes for his ignorance and prejudice.

This episode demonstrates Sui Sin Far's courage: she announces her identity as a Chinese British among the white racists. According to Amy Ling, throughout the

1870s, feelings against Chinese ran so high that both political parties had anti-Chinese planks in their platforms. In such an atmosphere, many Chinese and half Chinese were passing for Mexicans or even Japanese-Eurasians in an attempt to make their lives more comfortable (287). Sui Sin Far is the first Eurasian and the only child in the family who assumes her Chinese identity while other siblings identify themselves differently. For instance, Winnifred Eaton, her sister, creates a Japanese identity for herself, assuming the Japanese pseudonym of Onoto Watanna and composing Japanese romance novels. Her other siblings such as her older brother, Edward Charles, along with her sisters, Christiana Mary and May Darling choose to identify themselves with their British heritage (Ling 284). At that time, the distinction between the Chinese and the Japanese on perspective of white Americans is pronounced, the latter were viewed with more favor than the former. If Sui Sin Far had kept quiet about her identity, she could have enjoyed an easier life as her siblings did, but she did not. On the other hand, she embraced her mother's heritage and also published writings on Chinese American life under the Chinese pseudonym-- Sui Sin Far.

Sui Sin Far uses her works and herself to bridge the gap between Oriental and Occidental worlds; she describes this in her conclusion: "I give my right hand to the occidentals and my left to the Orientals, hoping that between them they will not utterly destroy the significant "connecting link." And that's all" (230). Her pseudonym, therefore, is intended to reveal her Chinese identity and to draw attention to her Chinese

ancestry. She wants to be fully accepted by Chinese people. Then, Sui Sin Far fights against prejudice and ignorance of both the Chinese and the white society toward her biracial identity. She hopes that one day justice will overcome injustice, knowledge will overcome ignorance, friendship will overcome hatred, and brotherhood and sisterhood will overcome discrimination and bias. She imagines a happier future ruled by love rather than blindness and dreams that one day the majority of the population will be Eurasians as she narrates: "only when the whole world becomes as one family will human beings be able to see clearly and hear distinctly. I believe that some day a great part of the world will be Eurasian" (222). This is Sui Sin Far's vision of Utopia; she hopes that a world so thoroughly "miscegenated" that race becomes indistinguishable, and social status, political, and cultural power are not determined by race. People from different races can live happily in the same world.

In order to achieve her dream, she admits that education and knowledge can help her to fulfill this goal. It is for this reason that she decides to learn at a very early age about her Chinese heritage; she recalls, "whenever I have the opportunity I steal away to the library and read every book I can find on China and the Chinese" (222). Due to her personality as a curious, brave, and strong person, she finally develops her Chinese identity successfully.

CHAPTER 4

AN ANALYSIS OF PAN'S EXPERIENCES AS A EURASIAN

IN "ITS WAVERING IMAGE"

This chapter is an analysis of Pan's experiences as a Eurasian in "Its Wavering Image." The researcher examines both the problems that Pan encounters due to her biracial identity— being perceived as "other" by white Americans, the prejudice and ignorance towards Pan's Eurasian identity, and her confusion-- and the way she develops her Chinese identity. In order to understand white attitudes towards Eurasians clearly, the researcher applies Michael Omi and Howard Winant's theory of race, and Richard Hofstadter's Social Darwinism in American Thought to analyze this writing.

The problems of being Eurasian

In Sui Sin Far's fiction "Its Wavering Image," Pan is a Eurasian who is confused by her biracial identity. At first, she lives happily with her Chinese father in Chinatown of San Francisco. In fact, it can be said that Pan is "Chinese in all": within the Chinese community, Pan's biracial identity is viewed as a broadening of cultural membership and she feels "natural and at home" (61). In Chinatown, Pan feels safe and peaceful. She has power, and Chinese people accept her. The Chinese not only accept her as one of their people but also grant her the freedom to be different without alienating her. In

Pan's understanding of race, being Chinese means membership of the Chinese community, which reveals all that she has been raised with happiness and acceptance in the Chinese community. Although her appearance reminds Pan that she is different from other Chinese, Pan does not pay much attention to it until Mark Carson's arrival sets her into conflict with her identity and her Chinese community.

Mark Carson is a white reporter who is known by his colleagues as "a man who would sell his soul for a story" (62). This sentence reveals what kind of man he is: a man who will do anything that benefits himself. He comes to Chinatown in order to find information to write his article. According to Annette White-Park in an essay "A Reversal of American Concepts of 'otherness' in Fiction by Sui Sin Far," Chinatown is a place which has its own environment characteristics, language, and community lifestyle (31). It is a mysterious place in the eyes of Americans, so they try to find the secret of it. Carson is one of the Americans who come to Chinatown for this purpose.

Mark Carson is interested in Pan because of her appearance. According to Carson, it is not clear whether Pan is Chinese or white because she is a biracial; in other words, it is difficult for Carson to determine her real identity. In this way, her appearance puzzles him, and she becomes the object of his gaze in much the same way that Sui Sin Far becomes the object of the old man's gaze. After the first meeting, Carson returns to the office and asks his editor about that girl. The city editor replies, "she [Pan] is an unusually bright girl, and can tell more stories about the Chinese than any other person

in the city" (61). Carson is very pleased to know that Pan has more information about the Chinese, and she can help him to achieve his goal. Therefore, he plans to befriend her. It is clear that the real purpose of Carson's overtures of friendship is to exploit Pan's knowledge about the mysteries of Chinatown.

Because of Carson's attractive appearance and her inexperience with men, Pan easily falls in love with him. According to Carson, he is a man who has "a determined chin, clever eyes, and a tone to his voice which easily won for him the confidence of the unwary" (61). His attractive character impresses Pan, who has never had a white friend before, without realizing the danger that will come to her life and her community.

Pan loves Carson and realizes that he is curious to know about Chinatown, so she tries to satisfy him in order to gain his love. Flattered by his interest in her community, she does not hesitate to invite him to see it. Pan willingly invites him to participate in Chinese culture, and the Chinese people welcome him into private ceremonies. It enables him not only to see but also to take part in ceremonies that no American people have participated in before. Pan has a good intention in trying to help him to enjoy Chinese culture; however, the plan backfires because Carson does not appreciate it. Unfortunately, Carson perceives Chinese people and Chinatown's culture as "unbeautiful" (63) and finds little of value to him in the cultural traditions of the Chinese community. No matter what he does or says about the Chinese, Pan tries to ignore it because she has a positive attitude toward her community. Once Carson says

that Chinatown is unbeautiful, Pan replies "perhaps it [Chinatown] isn't very beautiful, but it is here I live. It is my home" (63).

After coming into Pan's life, Carson introduces Pan to discrimination. He attempts to convince Pan that she is white, not Chinese. He says, "your real self is alien to them [Chinese people]" (63). This sentence, as White- Parks suggests, is "the stereotype that the turn of the century media often hurled at Chinese-Americans" (32). It shows that whites tried to use the media as a tool to promote discrimination toward Eurasians. Moreover, in "Its Wavering Image," Mark Carson is a representative of white Americans who view Chinese as inferior to them as he tells Pan "how beautiful above! [white Americans] how unbeautiful below [Chinese]!"(63). Readers learn what Carson has been taught by white society. Omi and Winant suggest white Americans view others as strangers. On the belief that man has evolved from more primitive creatures, and some races have evolved further than others, it provided racism with a scientific mask (Hofstadter 91). According to the origin of race, Michael Omi and Howard Winant suggest that white Americans regard themselves as a superior race and define other races as inferior to them. Asians are originally from different races, so they are inferior to whites (55). Because of this, Carson refuses to see value in Chinese culture. From the perspective of Carson, readers can conclude that the white community has taught him the boundaries of American identity, which exclude the Chinese and their customs, culture and humanity.

Armed with his faith in the superiority of white culture, Carson believes that he has power to remove Pan from the Chinatown setting in order to resettle her within the white Americans community. This episode reveals that Carson is worried about interracial marriage and wants to remain the majority of white population. His interactions with Pan negotiate an uncomfortable tension between desire and fear of losing the white population. Chinatown and Pan's father's store cause Carson to perceive Pan as an alien, he fulfills his desire by forcing Pan to assimilate into white culture to escape the fear of differences. In Carson's eyes, the relationship between Pan and her Chinese people is meaningless. Therefore, he determines to move Pan from the Chinese environment which she does not belong to and convince her to choose one racial self-identification— white. He also convinces Pan that she “had lived her life alone”(62) before meeting him, which implies that he does not wish to see her as a Chinese woman at all but rather as a white woman abandoned among foreigners.

On the contrary to Carson's idea, within white American society, Pan feels that people perceive her as the “other” and that white Americans do not recognize her as one of their own. This feeling emerges when Pan begins interacting with others outside the Chinese community; white Americans often draw attention to her appearance. Her difference as a person of mixed race is recognized by whites. As the word “species” is a reason for discrimination--the Chinese race being a species of people different from

whites--the Chinese are considered as strangers and inferior to them (White-Park 17).

This idea best explains what Eurasians encounter while living in American society.

Readers see the prejudice and ignorance of whites toward Pan's Eurasian identity in "Its Wavering Image." Pan is a mixed-race person who lives in a society which does not accept interracial marriages. Those marriages are thought to produce degenerate offspring threatening to destroy American civilization (Altschuler 42).

Therefore, white Americans believe that people from different races should not marry each other. As a result, they pass many anti-miscegenation laws in order to prohibit interracial marriages. Since interracial marriages are not accepted socially or legally, the children of those marriages, including Pan, are discriminated against. Because she lives in San Francisco's Chinatown, Pan occasionally faces discrimination by white Americans. The difference between the life in Chinatown and what she encounters while going out in American society brings difficulty to her as the narrator tells "in the presence of her mother's [white] identity she felt strange and constrained, shrinking from their curious scrutiny" (61). What Pan encounters is similar to what Sui Sin Far faces after white people know that she is of mixed race. Sui Sin Far feels as if people perceive her as an object, not a human. Although Pan's mother is white, she is unacquainted with her mother's people because during her early years, she did not have contact with white people. She experiences a feeling of "otherness" when she goes outside the Chinese community.

Both being perceived as the "other" by white Americans and the introduction of discrimination to her by her lover, Pan is set into conflict with her identity. According to Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary, the term "confusion" is defined as a state of mind where people do not know what to believe or what they should do (295). This definition best explains Pan's mind. While Pan thinks of the possibility of dual membership of both American and Chinese cultures, Carson thinks of the possibility of moving Pan into American culture. Pan loves Carson and wants to gain his love but she is also proud of her Chinese identity. Now, Pan stands between her father's and her mother's identities.

Pan is confused with her own identity: she cannot decide which identity she should choose. It is the first time that her biraciality has begun to trouble her.

The development of Pan's Chinese identity

Then Mark Carson succeeds in his goal and begins writing his article. After Carson gathers all his information about the Chinese and Chinatown and believes that Pan will claim white identity as she promises, he leaves Pan in order to write his article. It is a new story revealing the secrets of Chinatown that Pan and her Chinese people have entrusted to him. Pan reads it and realizes his real purpose of being acquainted with her and the Chinese community.

Mark Carson's betrayal turns Pan against him and strengthens her feeling of solidarity with the Chinese community. When Carson's real goal is revealed to Pan, at first, she is extremely disappointed. She is very upset to be betrayed by her lover and feels extremely guilty for assisting him. However, it leads her to realize that her identity crisis is caused by her desire for Carson. By both introducing conflict into Pan's mind and betraying her and her community, Carson assumes the role of an intruder. He comes to Chinatown to expose the secrets of the mysterious "other" to white readers. Carson does not think he has done anything wrong and believes that Pan will forgive him as he says, "Why should a white woman care about such things? Her true self was above it all" (65). In Carson's view, he assumes Pan as a white woman.

From Carson's betrayal, Pan learns that claiming her white identity will identify her as a betrayer of her Chinese community. Carson makes Pan feel guilty for helping him exploit her people; she feels that she is a traitor to her father's people. Pan defines that action as "the sword which pierced her through other" (65). In addition, Carson's betrayal makes Pan realize the importance of her Chinese identity as she claims, "the race that remembers" (65). Pan now realizes the difference between what she is taught by her experiences with Carson and what she directly experiences living with the Chinese. Carson, a representative of white Americans, has taught Pan that the promise of the white man like him is valueless, and she refuses to be associated with the

untrustworthy any more as she says, "you are a white man. And what is a promise of a white man!"(66).

As a result, Pan develops her Chinese identity and becomes confident in expressing herself as a Chinese woman. When Carson meets Pan, he is surprised because Pan does not change her identity as he expects. Readers can see this clearly when Carson meets Pan after a two-month separation period; he cannot believe his eyes seeing Pan in traditional Chinese clothing as the narrator explains, "Carson felt strangely chilled. Pan was not herself tonight. She did not even look herself" (66). Then, Pan declares to him, "I am a Chinese woman" (66). She delights in being of service to her Chinese people. Pan can pass into the white culture in order to live with her lover, but her experiences of the injustice of racism and her loyalty to the Chinese is too strong to allow her to find identity for comfort. Pan is accepted and respected by Chinese people; therefore, she chooses to be other in the eyes of Americans and even in the eyes of the man she loves by asserting her Chinese identity. Pan is a strong woman who chooses her Chinese identity despite feeling bitter about losing her lover.

Pan's experiences show that facing adversity in life leads her to be stronger and cope with problems. Because of her involvement with Carson, Pan has found a new awareness and strength within herself that is her Chinese identity.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

In "Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of an Eurasian" and "Its Wavering Image," Sui Sin Far communicates a sense of shared suffering with other Eurasians. Both works show the problems of growing up with a biracial identity in a divided society--white and Chinese societies in the nineteenth century. They depict a biracial protagonist struggling to define her identity in a world split into two. Since Pan and Sui Sin Far herself are the products of interracial marriages, which white Americans do not accept, they cannot live comfortably in the white world.

Repeated incidents of being hooted or stared at intensify Sui Sin Far's sensitivity, but she fortifies herself by positive action. She goes to the library and reads everything she can find about China and the Chinese. She then develops pride in herself and her Chinese identity. In "Its Wavering Image," Sui Sin Far portrays Pan experiencing similar feelings to her when Pan moves into the white community: white people pay much attention to her physical differences, such as her skin color or hair. Her differences as a person of mixed race are recognized and judged as "other" by white Americans. Also, she experiences hostility towards her biracial identity from white Americans and is introduced to discrimination by Mark Carson which causes her to question her biracial identity. On the other hand, Pan is fully accepted by the Chinese, they recognize her as

a part of their race. Although Pan suffers from racial prejudice and discrimination in every day life, she becomes stronger as she grows older, learning from experiences. Sui Sin Far portrays her thoughts and personality through Pan's character, in "Its Wavering Image," Pan is strong in her belief and has a positive attitude towards the Chinese, inspiring her to develop her Chinese identity. Finally, she is self confident in asserting herself as Chinese. It is clear that Sui Sin Far and Pan face hurdles in their lives in order to learn how to solve the problems and to be stronger.

From both writings, readers understand the lives, thoughts and emotions of the Eurasian protagonists who suffer from unfavorable attitudes toward their biracial identity. Sui Sin Far portrays mixed-race people as victims of white people's false belief in the concept of race. As a representative of Eurasian people, Sui Sin Far wishes to see the Chinese and white Americans co-exist in peace. This ideal is presented by Sui Sin Far in "Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of an Eurasian" when she writes, "only when the whole world becomes as one family will human beings be able to see clearly and hear distinctly" (222). In the conclusion of the autobiographical essay "Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of an Eurasian," Sui Sin Far shows her hope for an end to racism and for the possibility of dual or multiple community membership. However, she thinks that it is difficult to achieve this goal, so in "Its Wavering Image," Sui Sin Far leaves Pan identifying one racial identity, Chinese, and Pan can live happily within the Chinese society without any wavering image in her mind. In these two writings, Sui Sin Far calls

for understanding for biracial people and explains their experiences to white Americans, using a pen as a tool to fight against racial prejudice. As such, the researcher would like to call her a "Woman Warrior."

Readers experience the struggles of Eurasian and Chinese immigrants when they read Sui Sin Far's writings. They can follow the good model of the two protagonists such as their being strong, curious and loyal to their Chinese identity, and learn to appreciate our own identity. In addition, these writings enable readers to realize their own rights and to learn to fight prejudice in their society.

Reading novels is not only for entertainment but also for understanding the way people act, think, make and confront the struggle of life in a fictional world. In addition, readers can go beyond the text and evaluate it in terms of their own experiences based on reason. As Sylvan Barnet writes in A Short Guide to Writing about Literature, the "meaning" of a work is not merely something put into the work by the writer; rather, the "meaning" is an interpretation created or constructed or produced by the reader as well as the writer (125).

Suggestion for further studies

There are still many interesting topics for further studies. It would be an advantage to compare experiences of people of mixed race nowadays and in the period of these two writings.

However, experiences of the offspring of Americans and other races might be studied to see whether they are different or similar to those who are mixed race of Chinese American.

In addition, as Thai society has many ethnic groups and intermarriages among Thai and people of other ethnic groups, there should be a study on experiences as mixed race of those children who live in Thailand to see how they feel and what kinds of problems they face.

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