研究ノート

How did they become invisible?
Chinese American Activism in the Cold War—Civil Rights Movement Era

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Ⅰ. Introduction

My project aims to reexamine the history of Chinese Americans in the Cold War-Civil Rights Movement era from the perspective of Chinese American activism. The purpose of this paper is to identify the causes impacting Chinese American activism from early 1950s to late 1960s.

The African American Civil Rights Movement coincided with the Cold War. It greatly influenced racial relations in American history. In this particular period, the United States had to propagate the superiority of U.S democracy over communism in order to counter the Soviet Union and also to extend its allies in the world. However, due to the racial problems in the domestic sphere, the US was condemned by communist propaganda which stressed that American racism was undermining the benefits of the American way of life.[1] In order to counter this, the President's Committee on Civil Rights made an investigation into racial problems resulting in the report *To Secure These Rights*, which suggested to change unjust laws and to end the residential segregation in order to silence the critics from the outside world.[2] Afterwards, the Committee on Race and Housing[3] produced a report to advocate that minorities should learn about American values and behavior so that they could move out of the slums and into the white suburban neighborhood[4]. Moreover, suburbanization became the facilitating process for assimilation and a strategy to advocate the superiority of American democracy.[5]

By examining the previous studies of Chinese American history in the Cold War period, most of them follow this ideology and their narratives reflect the point of view of assimilation[6]. They usually focused on the outward migration of Chinese Americans from the ghetto, so-called Chinatowns, to the suburbs where they lived among whites. Therefore, the idea was formed that Chinese

Americans gradually entered into mainstream American society and became middle class, and such an idea was reinforced by the repealing of Chinese Exclusion Act in 1943.

In fact, the number of Chinese Americans who assimilated into mainstream society and joined the middle class was limited, and most of them had to continue to live in Chinatowns during that period.[7]

Unlike historians focusing on "suburbanization" and "assimilation", I try to deal with the history of common people who lived in Chinatown from the perspective of Chinese American activism. This paper explores how Chinese American activism became invisible by examining three specific factors which impacted them profoundly: the international and domestic sociopolitical context; the informal sociopolitical structure of the Chinese American community; and the transition of sociological theories stereotyping Chinese Americans.

Ⅱ. To be Contained or to be Integrated: Chinese Americans at the Center of the Triangular Relations among the U.S, PRC and KMT.

As cultural historian Christina Klein stated in her work *Cold War Orientalism*, "containment and integration constituted the two ideological foundations of U.S. postwar foreign policy."[8] The policy of containment aimed to prevent communism from threatening the "free world.", while the ideology of integration reflected the expansion of US economic and political hegemony in the world. In fact, after World War Ⅱ the strategy of the US towards China typically reflected such ideologies. In the meantime it also greatly influenced the fates of Chinese Americans in the Cold War years.

1. Containing the Communist Mainland while Integrating "Free" Taiwan

In reaction to the U.S. policy of non-recognition of the PRC, Mao Zedong published a sarcastic article "Farewell, Leighton Stuart", calling Stuart "a symbol of the complete defeat of U.S. policy of aggression."[9] In 1950, the Korean War broke out. This war thoroughly changed the attitude of the US government towards the PRC.[10]

On December, 1950, President Harry S. Truman declared an order to establish The Division of Foreign Assets Control in the United States Treasury

Department. The new organization was used to ban any flow of capital from the Chinese American community to relatives in the PRC. The US government also used the Trading with the Enemy Act to silence newspapers' pro-China views. For example, in New York's Chinatown, *China Daily News*, which was founded by laundrymen, was exceptional in its independence from the control of allies of Chiang Kai-shek's KMT government in Chinatown and in covering the positive changes occurring in China under Mao. But in 1952, the U.S. government charged several staff members of *China Daily News* with violation of the Trading with the Enemy Act and the Treasury Department's Foreign Assets Control Regulation because *China Daily News* published advertisements for the PRC-owned Nanyang Bank of Hong Kong, informing Chinese Americans that they could use the bank to send money to their relatives in the PRC.[11]

Collapse of the Nationalist regime in mainland China shocked Washington. The pro-KMT China lobby pushed the State Department to consider who "lost" China, and demanded that the Truman government continued to support Chiang Kai-shek's Taiwan government. The U.S. government supplied enormous economic aid to Taiwan, moreover, after the outbreak of the Korean War, president Truman ordered to send the U.S. Seventh Fleet to the Taiwan Strait to prevent the Chinese communist army from attacking Taiwan. Thus Taiwan was integrated into US's economic and military allies as the "unsinkable carrier" in East Asia.[12] Besides providing huge economic and military aid for the Taiwan government, US also spent lot of money to support Taiwan's cultural and educational programs through the United States Information Agency (USIA). The aim was not only to enhance American cultural influence on Taiwan but also to build Taiwan as a model of the "free world" against the "dictatorial" communist mainland.[13]

2. Repressing Chinese Dissents while Utilizing Assimilated Chinese for Cultural Diplomacy.

Due to the establishment of PRC and the subsequent Sino-Soviet alliance, the Chinese Americans faced suspicions of disloyalty. On December 9, 1955, an official report entitled the "Report on the Problem of Fraud in Hong Kong" was submitted to the State Department by the U.S. consul in Hong Kong, Everett F. Drumright, pointed out that the PRC was planning "a criminal conspiracy to evade the laws of the United States" through a well-organized system in Hong

Kong, dispatching immigrants to New York and San Francisco. It had become the major channel for immigrants who had ties with communists in the PRC.[14] This report reawakened the American fear of "Red China." The FBI and the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) began to investigate Communist subversive activities in Chinatowns throughout the country. The progressive organizations and newspapers that were suspected of being pro-PRC became the first scapegoats of this investigation.

In 1956, the U.S. government initiated a "confession program" to encourage the Chinese Americans who had illegally immigrated by means of "paper sons"[15] to voluntarily confess their true status. At that time, Chinese community leaders (Kiu Lings 僑領) began to reassert their declining leadership in the community by attacking leftist organizations and cooperating actively with the FBI and the INS. The INS heralded "the Confession Program as one of its greatest accomplishments" because it rooted out "paper families" one after another and silenced pro-PRC activists.[16]

Nevertheless, at the same time U.S. policymakers were perplexed by internal racial conflict of the "black/white paradigm" and external pressures from communist ideological antagonism. Thus, assimilated Chinese Americans were presented as a "model" of integration into the American way of life. On the one hand, the successful stories of Chinese Americans were used to inspire other minorities and helped to paint desegregation as a necessary and possible goal, on the other hand, to further the containment of Communist China the federal government utilized assimilated Chinese Americans to attest to the credibility of U.S. democracy, and to bolster U.S. efforts to rally the newly decolonized countries in Asia.[17] One example is the experience of Jade Snow Wong who was commissioned by the US State Department to travel abroad in order to promote the "benefits of American way of life" after the outbreak of the Korean War. Jade Snow Wong travelled throughout East, Southeast, and South Asia to espouse the "superiority of US democracy over communism", able to do so because of her racial identity as a Chinese American and her autobiography, *Fifth Chinese Daughter* became "the first nationally acclaimed commercially successful book written by a Chinese American." But she did not achieve the desired results, as she remarked that there was no "shared Asian sensibility".[18] In *Fifth Chinese Daughter*, she expressed her discomfort being a Chinese and how she longed for the American way of life.[19]

However, sometimes the international and domestic sociopolitical climate changed in the blink of an eye. After the New Immigration Act of 1965 went into effect, many new overseas Chinese surged into America from Southeast Asia, Taiwan and Hong Kong. The demographics in the Chinese community changed rapidly. In addition to the influence of the civil rights movement that spread around the whole nation, Chinese Americans were inspired and many younger activists emerged, signaling that the forces of change were stirring in Chinese American communities.

Ⅲ. Transition of the Sociopolitical Structure in the Chinese American Community

1. Internal Power Structure of Chinese American Community

During the Chinese Exclusion period, Chinese immigrants were denied naturalization. In order to protect themselves from discrimination and to have support within their own ethnic enclaves, they created many Chinese-like associations for mutual aid based on kinship, native places, and common interests.

According to Him Mark Lai, Huiguan (會館) and Fong(Cantonese 坊)were two kinds of the most important Chinese immigrant organizations in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The members of Huiguan always consisted of “sojourning merchants” or “artisans” who were from the same locality in China. Huiguan supplied services to protect group economic interests and performed certain charitable and social functions for fellow members while they were away from home. In contrast to Huiguan, Fong was at a low level within the “well-defined hierarchical organization structure” and “evolved under the umbrella of the Huiguan.” Its members mainly shared knowledge of trade, manufacturing and types of labor. The aims of Fong associations were especially important in establishing immigration networks and assisting members in finding jobs, and also crucial to the development of both ethnic businesses and Chinatowns. [20]The most powerful association hierarchically above Huiguan and Fong was the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association (CCBA). It was commonly known as the Chinese Six Companies which was recognized by the larger society as the voice of the Chinese community in the United States. As Lai claimed in his works: “The CCBA/Huiguan system evolved in response to the need of the Chinese to organize for social, economic, and political reasons".[21] (see Appendix 1)

The association leaders always came from among the merchant elites. They were called Kiu Lings (Cantonese 僑領) in Chinese American communities, who were the owners of restaurants, laundry shops, and garment factories, and always controlled the community power structure. They were wealthy and became famous through activities in the family, clan, and regional associations. During the Chinese Exclusion period, Chinese immigrants were isolated from the wider society. In their mind they would forever be considered as foreigners by the white-dominated society, and their roots were in China not in America. They stayed in the U.S. in order to make money and save for their poor family and relatives in China. They would return to China to reunite with their families one day in the future. And many Chinese Americans believed that making China strong would be the key to improving their status in the United States. Therefore, Chinese American had great interest in Chinese political developments.[22]

Moreover, the community power structure was strengthened with the support of the Chinese government, as Zhao pointed out, after the KMT gained control of a large part of China in 1927, it began to regulate overseas Chinese communities and to expand their membership to include overseas Chinese. It also established headquarters in Chinatown in the United States and appointed several heads of Huiguans and the CCBA as the officials of its branches abroad. In order to receive and maintain their loyalties to the Nationalist government, the KMT gave them honorary posts in the central committee of the KMT or central government, meanwhile the Party also helped these Kiu lings maintain their control in Chinatowns. This condition continued after the KMT government retreated to Taiwan.[23] However, the elites did not always control Chinese communities smoothly. Apart from the internal disputes between huiguans and Fongs, many intellectuals, workers and young people also began to challenge the power of the elites in the communities. They began to see that the merchant-dominated power structure had little interest in providing protections for common Chinese Americans. Some of them were inspired by Marxist theories and became sympathetic to Chinese Communists and founded their new organizations, such as Chinese Handy Laundry Alliance (CHLA., founded in New York Chinatown in 1933) on the East Coast of the United States and the Chinese Workers Mutual Aid Association (CWMAA, established in San Francisco in 1937) and the Chinese American Democratic Youth League

(CADYL, the predecessor of Min Qing, established in San Francisco Chinatown in 1940) on the West Coast of the United States. In Him Mark Lai's work, he called this "new power" as the old activists and their organizations were old activist organizations in contrast to some activist organizations founded by "new left" Chinese American activists [24]

2. Internal Political Struggles of the Post World War Ⅱ

Naturally, the Civil War in China garnered great attention in the Chinese communities of America. The "war" in Chinatowns between the main community institution leaders (Kiu Lings) who shared the same interests with the KMT party and the old political leftists who were inspired by the ideology of Mao's communist party became heated. For example, a mass rally for celebrating the founding of PRC (held by members of CWMAA and CADYL in San Francisco on the evening of October 9) was full of hostility. According to a Chinese American community newspaper's report, half an hour after the ceremony began, a "KMT-hired goon squad" busted into the auditorium and tore down the red PRC flags, destroyed the flowers, and sprayed blue dye all over the crowd. Posters titled "Mop up Chinatown's Bandits", which were pasted on buildings and walls, announced that fifteen Chinese American leftists were wanted and five thousand dollars rewarded for each one's death. People in San Francisco's Chinatown were terrified the following days.[25]

Because the U.S. government declined to recognize the PRC and continued to support the KMT, the Chinese American communities were largely dominated by the KMT and its supporters. Moreover, after the Korean War, they formed Anti-Communist League and helped the informants of the FBI and the INS to investigate and repress leftist activists.[26] At that time, some activists and journalists, who supported neither CCP nor KMT but strove for their equal rights, also suffered repression. For example, Gilbert Woo, a liberal Chinese American journalist, who had established the *Chinese Pacific Weekly* which was nonpartisan. However, because some reports criticized KMT roughly dominating and interfering Chinatown affairs, the KMT supporters accused the paper of being pro-Communist and threatened to close the paper [27]

After the crisis atmosphere of investigating Chinese immigration fraud permeated the whole Chinese American communities in the mid-1950s, it compelled Chinese Americans become acutely aware that neither the PRC nor the KMT government in Taiwan could protect them. They called Chinese community organizations to get together and fight for their community interests. In 1957 a National Conference of Chinese Communities, which was convened by New York's CCBA, held in Washington D.C. from March 3 to 7. The 124 delegates from 34 cities throughout the U.S. gathered to discuss how to face the investigations. However, a few participants proposed that the stance of the conference should be anti-communist and pro-KMT. Their agenda was resisted by most representatives. Furthermore, Chinese American journalists also pressured the conference organizers to place the focus on the problems which the Chinese American community faced. As Gilbert Woo wrote in his paper *China Pacific Weekly*:

> If some people enjoy a conference on [China] politics, let them go. I strongly advise all citizens of the United States not to be involved… For decades, involvement in China's political struggle has caused endless conflict in the Chinese American community and brought about zero benefit… If the primary purpose of this conference is a political power struggle rather than an attempt to benefit the entire community, our delegation should withdraw and hold a conference of its own. If they were too myopic to see the harm, why should we follow them down the path? [28]

It meant that a new consciousness emerged in the minds of Chinese Americans. They were weary of China's political conflicts within Chinese American communities, and advocated the struggle for their communities as Chinese Americans instead of being Chinese sojourning in the United States. This was a growing trend leading to the establishment of Chinese American identity in the activist movement of the late of 1960s.

Ⅳ. From Oriental Alien to "Model Minority": Transition of the Image of Chinese in America

1. The Oriental as A Racial Problem

The Chinese of America were socially isolated and lacked communications with the larger American society, sociological scholars of the dominant society had great interest in their life styles and their communities. They called those

Chinese as "the Orientals" and Chinatown as embodiment of the exotic Orient.[29] In academia, Chicago sociologists (Robert Park and his colleagues) put forth a number of approaches and theories in order to understand the Oriental in America, Park thought the main point of the "Oriental problem" was that Orientals could not achieve the last step of the "assimilation cycle" due to "race consciousness" among whites.[30] In order to examine the detailed situation of Chinese society in U.S., Park and his peers recruited several Chinese Americans as graduate students and utilized them as informants to conduct many fieldworks. Paul C.P. Siu was a brilliant student among them. As an insider sociologist, by conducting much fieldwork in New York Chinatown, Siu argued that "sojourner" was more appropriate than "marginality" to describe the mentality of Chinese in America because "a sojourner clings to the culture of his own ethnic group as in contrast to the bicultural complex of the marginal man."[31] Therefore, in the Chinese Exclusion era most of Chinese immigrants were "sojourners" because their lives were characterized by living outside of their homeland and enduring racial discrimination from the white dominated society. Similarly, the "old left" Chinese American activists who shared the "same mentality oriented to towards Chinese culture and revolutionary politics in China" could also be categorized as "sojourners."[32]

2. Assimilation as a Slogan for Becoming "Model Minority"

Compared to the situation of Chinatown in the 1920s when the history of Chinese Americans was being shaped by the Chinese exclusion period, the situation of Chinese Americans had changed greatly in the 1950s, especially after the Chinese Exclusion Act was repealed in 1943, and Chinese Americans had the chance to get white-collar professions. Thus, a few well-educated Chinese Americans gradually became middle class and began to escape from ghetto-Chinatown to live in suburban neighborhoods with whites. At that time, Rose Him Lee, as a Chinese American sociologist who grew up and lived in a white suburb, reexamined Park's theories in her works in the 1950s. Lee suggested that only assimilation could erase the "Oriental problems." In order to reach the absolute "cultural assimilation", it is inevitable to "eradicate all physical evidence of foreignness."[33] Since World War Ⅱ the idea of assimilation became "a set of political dogma" to extend cultural hegemony or to reformulate social policies towards minorities in order to exploit Chinese Americans and to prevent more people from becoming communist activists.[34] For instance, before outbreak of the Civil War in China many American-born Chinese believed that if they failed to establish themselves professionally in the U.S they could always find careers in China. That was no longer an option because of the war. Therefore, assimilation became a much more attractive possibility, especially for those who were born in U.S. and scared in the shadow of the repressive anti-Communist climate of the 1950s. For example, in 1949, the participants of the Chinese Young People's Summer Conference in Lake Tahoe urged youth not only to leave Chinatowns, but to also discard Chinese tradition altogether. They thought it was the best way to advance "understanding" between the races.[35] When assimilationist theory spread around whole communities, the "sojourner" old activists were marginalized and their voices also disappeared. On the contrary, tales of the well-assimilated Chinese Americans were common in mainstream media and eulogized by politicians in the process of policy-making. Gradually, Chinese Americans were labeled as a "Model Minority."[36] However, the showy "Model Minority" image in suburbs could not cover the bleak reality of the extreme unemployment, delinquency, and severe gang violence in Chinatowns.[37]

Nonetheless, the civil rights movement inspired many young professionals and young college students who began to re-identify themselves with and willingly participate in struggles for the interests of the ghetto-Chinatown deserted by their parents. This did not only directly challenge the repressive political and economic order maintained by the association leaders and merchant elites (Kiu Lings) but also contradicted the dominant ideology of assimilation.[38] Moreover, the Third World Student Strikes, which happened at San Francisco State University and U.C. Berkeley in 1968-1969 paved the way for Ethnic Studies and Asian American Studies founding at San Francisco State College and U.C. Berkeley, and then at UCLA. The founding of Ethnic Studies and Asian American Studies in colleges and universities catered to the need to establish a separated institutional existence where Asian Americans as a self-identified group could research their history and culture. The people who had been identified as Orientals came to define themselves as Asian Americans and Asian American activists also created institutions that rejected the goal of assimilation into white-dominated society and absolutely rejected the notion of having to become white.

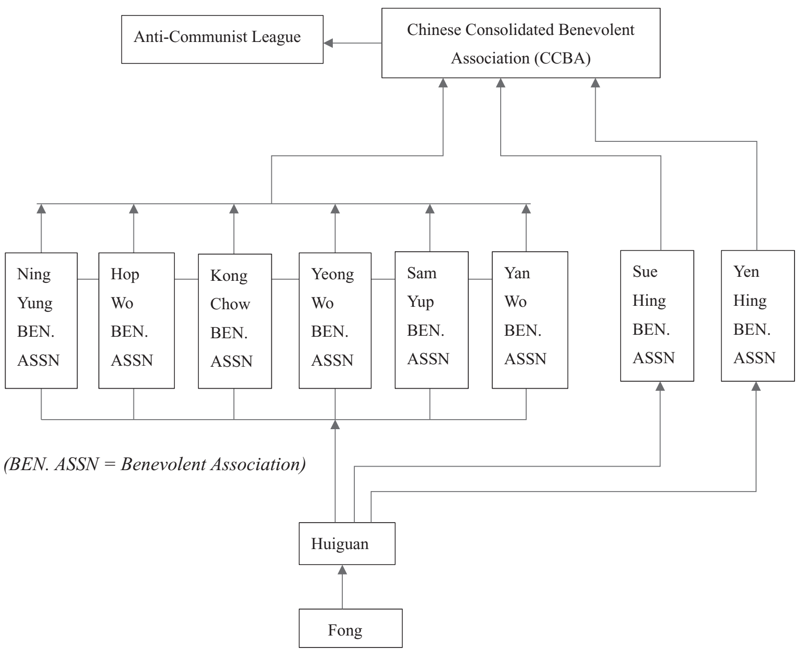
V. Conclusion

Throughout the whole Cold War- Civil Rights Movement era, Chinese American activists struggled to claim rights denied to them by those outside of Chinatown, as well as to change the social and political power within Chinatown itself. The process of claiming their rights and searching for their identity was not a smooth one, but full of setbacks. First, international relations in the context of the Cold War led to utilizing integrated Chinese immigrants to propagating the superiority of US democracy while suppressing the pro-PRC activism. Second, internal political struggles made pro-KMT elites cooperate with the FBI and the INS to root out old leftists and their organizations, meanwhile the non-partisan activism also suffered repression. Third, spreading assimilationist theory around the community made "sojourner" old leftists lose their voices and their activism to become invisible.

However, the Civil Rights Movement inspired new leftists who rejected the goal of assimilation into white-dominated society and began to learn tactics of African Americans' struggling so that they could serve for Chinese communities.

APPENDIX 1

Organizational Relationships in the CCBA-SF/Huiguan System in San Francisco Chinatown



Notes:

This relation chart is drawn by the author on the basis of descriptions of the CCBA-SF/Huiguan system in Lai, Him Mark. “Historical Development of the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association/Huiguan System.” *Chinese America: History and Perspectives* (San Francisco, CA: Historical Society of America, 1987):13-51.

CCBA-SF was established on November 19, 1882. Because it was founded by six companies (six Huiguans, which including Ning Yung, Hop Wo, Kong Chow, Yeong Wo, Sam Yup, and Yan Wo), it was also known as the Chinese Six Companies in the white society. Later, the Sue Hing Association and Yen Hoy Company successively joined in the CCBA-San Francisco.

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1 Mary Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University, 2000), 12.

2 The Report of the President's Committee on Civil Rights, *To Secure These Rights* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1947), 147-148.

3 The Committee on Race and Housing is a citizens' group founded in 1955 for the purpose of inquiring into problems of residence and housing involving racial and ethnic minority groups in the United States.

4 *Where Shall We Live? Report of the Commission on Race and Housing* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1958), 6.

5 At the 1959 American National Exhibition in Moscow, Vice president Richard Nixon specially explained the superiority of American democracy and capitalism by displaying the advantage of the suburban home. See Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (United States: BasicBooks, 1988), 20.

6 There are a lot of works written from this perspective, such as Cindy I-Fen Cheng, "Out of Chinatown and into the Suburbs: Chinese Americans and the Politics of Cultural Citizenship in Early Cold America," *American Quarterly*, Vol. 58, No.4 (Dec., 2006), 1067-1090; Cheng, *Citizens of Asian America: Democracy and Race during the Cold War* (NY: New York University, 2013). Ellen D. Wu, "'America's Chinese': Anti-Communism, Citizenship and Cultural Diplomacy during the Cold War," *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol.77, No.3 (2008), 391-422; Wu, *The Color of Success: Asian Americans and the Origins of the Model Minority* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University, 2013).

7 According to Mely Giok-lan Tan's work, Chinese Americans who could assimilate into the majority society and become middle class were mainly limited to the well-educated professional category, and the proportion of those in manual occupations remained usually high. Those mostly continued to live in Chinatown of San Francisco. See Mely Giok-lan Tan, *The Chinese in the United States: Social Mobility & Assimilation* (Taipei: The Oriental Service, 1971) 231-285.

8 Christina Klein, *Cold War Orientalism: Asia in the Middlebrow Imagination, 1945-1961* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2003), 24.

9 John Leighton Stuart (Chinese: 司徒雷登) was born in Hangzhou, China on June 24, 1876. He was born in a Presbyterian missionary family from the US. Stuart started missionary work in China from 1905. On July 11, 1946, Stuart was appointed U.S. ambassador to China. After Chinese Communist forces controlled Nanjing, Stuart was recalled to the U.S. on August 2, 1949. After he departed to Washington, Mao published the sarcastic article *Farewell, Leighton Stuart*. In the article, called Stuart "a loyal agent of U.S. cultural aggression in China," and his departure from China as "a symbol of the complete defeat of the U.S. policy of aggression." See Mao Tse-Tung, "Farewell, Leighton Stuart," in *Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung*, Vol.Ⅳ (Beijing: Foreign Language Press, 1961), 433-440.

10 Iris Chang, *The Chinese in America: A Narrative Histor*y (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 2003), 239, 242, 248; Meredith Oyen, *The Diplomacy of Migration: Transnational Lives and the Making of U.S.-Chinese Relations in the Cold War*(Ithaca, Cornell University, 2015), 69-70, 99-100.

11 Wang Shigu, "Meizhou huaqiao ribao." [China Daily News] in *Huaqiao Huaren Bauke Quanshu: Meiti &Chuban juan* [The Encyclopedia of Chinese Overseas: Volume of Media &Publication], Zhou Nanjing, ed. (Beijing: Zhongguo Huaqiao Chubanshe, 1999),

250; Lai, *Chinese American Transnational Politics*, 144-146; Renqiu Yu, *To Save China, To Save Ourselves*(Philadelphia, PA: Temple University, 1992),187-189; Amy Chen, *The Chinatown Files* (documentary), (NY: Third World Newsreel, 2001).

12 Meredith Oyen, *The Diplomacy of Migration: Transnational Lives and the Making of U.S.-Chinese Relations in the Cold War* (Ithaca, NY: Cornel University Press, 2015) , 99-100; Wanli Hu, "Mao's America Strategy and the Korean War," in *China and the United States: A New Cold War History*, Xiaobing Li and Hongshan Li, eds. (Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 1998), 310-313; William C. Kirby, "The Changing International Scene and Chinese Policy toward the United States, 1954-1970," in *Re-examining the Cold War U.S.-China Diplomacy, 1954-1973*, Robert S. Ross and Changbin Jiang, eds. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 39-45; Chang, *The Chinese in America*, 247; Shin-shan Henry Tsai, *The Chinese Experience in America* (Bloomington and Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press, 1986), 123.

13 Hongshan Li, "The Visible Hand: Washington's Role in the U.S.-Taiwan Cultural Relations in the Cold War," in *China and The United States: A New Cold War*, Xiaobing Li and Hongshan Li, eds. (Lanham, Maryland: University of Press of America, 1998), 154-155.

14 Everett F. Drumright, "Report on the Problem of Passport Fraud at Hong Kong," Foreign Services Dispatch 931, December 9, 1955, 4-26, file 122.4732/12-955, Central Files, Dept. of State.

15 Thomas Chin, ed., "*The History of the Chinese in California*." Virtual Museum of the City of San Francisco, accessed September 17, 2016, http://www.sfmuseum.net/hist11/papersons.html. In 1906, the San Francisco earthquake and fire destroyed local public records. Dating from the fire, many Chinese claimed that they were born in San Francisco. With this citizenship the father then claimed citizenship for his offspring born in China. Sometimes, the father would report the birth of a son when in reality there was no such event. This was what was termed a "slot" and would then be available for sale to boys who had no family relationships in the United States in order to enable them to enter the country. Merchant brokers often acted as middlemen to handle the sale of slots. Sons who entered the country in this fashion were known as "paper sons."

16 Mae M. Ngai, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004), 218-224; Lai, *Becoming Chinese America*, 30-32; Zhao, *Remaking Chinese America*, 173-183.

17 Cheng, *Citizens of Asian America*, 85-89; Wu, "'America's Chinese': Anti-Communism, Citizenship, and Cultural Diplomacy during the Cold War," 391-395.

18 Cheng, *Citizens of Asian America*, 18, 95-105; Wu, "'America's Chinese': Anti-Communism, Citizenship, and Cultural Diplomacy during the Cold War," 402-420.

19 As an acquaintance of Jade Snow Wong, the Chinese American activist L. Ling-chi Wang mentioned his opinion to Wong's life experience in an interview. He said, "… It is very sad when you read the chapter about how she eventually had to return to Chinatown to start her tourist oriented pottery-making business and had to get 'reacquainted with Chinatown' because she had completely forgotten about how to be a Chinese living in Chinatown… Living in her time, quite different with mine, was difficult if not impossible for her and her generation to speak out about racism. Even in the 1970s, when the younger generation was openly denouncing racism, her generation remained quiet if not uneasy and resentful of the boat-rocking going on…" See more in Kui-lan Liu, *Bian huan de bian jie: ya yi zuo jia he pi ping jia fang tan lu.* 《变换的边界：

亚裔美国作家和批评家访谈录》) (The Shifting Boundaries: Interviews with Asian American Writers and Critics) (Tianjin: Nankai University Press, 2012), 253.

20 Him Mark Lai, *Becoming Chinese American: A History of Communities and Institutions* (Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press, 2004), 39-69; Stanford M. Lyman, "Conflict and the Web of Group Affiliation in San Francisco's Chinatown, 1859-1910," *Pacific Historical Review* 43, No.4 (1974), 473-499.

21 Lai, *Becoming Chinese American*, 39, 49-54

22 Xiaoqian Zhao, *Remaking Chinese America: Immigration, Family and Community* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2002), 94-107; Him Mark Lai, "China Politics and the U.S. Chinese Communities," in Emma Gee, ed., *Counterpoint: Perspectives on Asian America* (LA: UCLA Asian American Studies Center, 1976), 152-159.

23 Zhao, *Remaking Chinese America*, 98; Him Mark Lai, "Historical Development of the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association/Huiguan System," in *Chinese America: History and Perspectives* (San Francisco, CA: Chinese Historical Society of America, 1987), 39-42. As for the relations between KMT and Kiu lings in the Chinese American community, Woo Chin-fu gave detailed description in an editorial article of *Chinese American Weekly* (which was a famous Chinese newspaper circulated in Chinese American community). See Woo Chin-fu, "Qiaotuan, qiaoling yu qiaozhong," [Kiu Lings, overseas Chinese and their organizations], *Chinese American Weekly,* Vol. 1056 (May 2, 1952).

24 Zhao, *Remaking Chinese America,* 101-3; Victor G. and Brett de Bary Nee, *Longtime Californ': A Documentary Study of An American Chinatown* (Stanford University, CA: Stanford University Press, 1972), 200-213; Lai, "A Historical Survey of the Left in America," 73.

25 *China Weekly*, October 22, 1949; Zhao, *Remaking Chinese America*, 117-119.

26 Zhao, Remaking Chinese America, 186; Lai, Chinese American Transnational Politics, 146-148; Sun Xun, "Meiguo huaqiao huaren yu Taiwan dangju dui qi zhengce yanjiu, 1949-2002." [Study on Chinese Americans and Overseas Chinese Affairs Policy of Taiwan Government, from 1949 to 2002] (Ph.D. diss., PLA University of Foreign Language, 2007), 50-55.

27 Interview with Gilbert Woo, in Victor G. and Brett de Bary Nee, *Longtime Californ': A Documentary Study of An American Chinatown* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University), 222-227.

28 Gilbert Woo, "Quanqiao dahui," [On the Chinese American National Conference], *Chinese Pacific Weekly*, March 1, 1957. Quoted the translation of the article from Zhao, *Remaking Chinese America*, 182.

29 Henry Yu, *Thinking Orientals: Migration, Contact, and Exoticism in Modern America* (New York and London: Oxford University, 2001),6-12.

30 Robert E. Park and Ernest W. Burgess, *Introduction to the Science of Sociology* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1921), 760-761; Park, "Racial Assimilation in Secondary Groups," *Publication of American Sociological Society* 8 (1914), 66-72.

31 In his work, Siu mentioned the essential characteristic of sojourner is that the sojourner connects with the culture and customs of his own ethnic group or ancestral land. From the psychological view, a sojourner is unwilling to recognize himself as a permanent resident in his host country. See Paul C. P. Siu, "The Sojourner," *The American Journal of Sociology*, 58(July, 1952), 34; Siu, *The Chinese Laundryman: A Study of Social Isolation*, John Kuo Wei Tchen, ed. (NY: New York University, 1987), Xxiii-Xxxv.

32 Zhenxing Zhu, "From Sojourner to Chinese American: Changing Identities of Chinese

American Activists during the Civil Rights Era," An Occasional Supplement to *Doshisha American Studies*, 21 (Kyoto: International Institute of American Studies at Doshisha University), 109.

33 Rose Hum Lee, "The Marginal Man: Re-evaluation and Indices of Measurement," *Journal]of Human Relations* 5 (Spring 1956), 27-28; Yu, *Thinking Orientals*, 128.

34 Wang, *Post-War Development in the Chinese American community*, 273.

35 Chang, The Chinese in America, 246

36 The concept "model minority" was first put forward by social scientist William Peterson to extol Japanese Americans. Soon after the focus shifted from Japanese to Chinese and attributed their success to "a tight network of family and clan loyalties." Chinese were exalted for their "strict discipline" leading Children to "attend school faithfully, work hard at their studies—and stay out of trouble." See Henry Yu, *Thinking Orientals*, 188-189; Stephen Steinberg, "The Myth of Ethnic Success: Old Wine in New Bottles," *The Oxford Handbook of American Immigration and Ethnicity*, Ronald H. Bayor ed. (Oxford Handbooks Online, 2014).

37 Chiou-Ling Yeh, "Contesting Identities: Youth Rebellion in San Francisco's Chinese New Year Festivals, 1953-1969," in *The Chinese in America: A History from Gold Mountain to the New Millennia* (Alta Mira Press, 2002); Gloria Heyung Chun, "Shifting Ethnic Identity and Consciousness: U.S.-Born Chinese American Youth in the 1930s and 1950s," in *Asian American Youth: Culture, Identity and Ethnicity*, Jennifer Lee and Min Zhou, eds. (NY: Routledge, 2004), 125.

38 Liu, *Bian huan de bian jie,* 271

Abstract

How did they become invisible?

Chinese American Activism in the Cold War-Civil Rights Movement Era

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My project aims to reexamine the history of Chinese Americans in the Cold War-Civil Rights Movement era from the perspective of Chinese American activism. The purpose of this paper is to identify the causes impacting Chinese American activism from early 1950s to late 1960s.

The African American Civil Rights Movement coincided with the Cold War. It greatly influenced racial relations in American history. In this particular period, the United States had to propagate the superiority of U.S democracy over communism in order to counter the Soviet Union and also to extend its allies in the world. However, due to the racial problems in the domestic sphere, the US was condemned by communist propaganda which stressed that American racism was undermining the benefits of the American way of life. In order to counter this, the President's Committee on Civil Rights made an investigation into racial problems resulting in the report *To Secure These Rights,* which suggested to change unjust laws and to end the residential segregation in order to silence the critics from the outside world. Afterwards, the Committee on Race and Housing produced a report to advocate that minorities should learn about American values and behavior so that they could move out of the slums and into the white suburban neighborhood. Moreover, suburbanization became the facilitating process for assimilation and a strategy to advocate the superiority of American democracy.

By examining the previous studies of Chinese American history in the Cold War period, most of them follow this ideology and their narratives reflect the point of view of assimilation . They usually focused on the outward migration of Chinese Americans from the ghetto, so-called Chinatowns, to the suburbs where they lived among whites. Therefore, the idea was formed that Chinese Americans gradually entered into mainstream American society and became

middle class, and such an idea was reinforced by the repealing of Chinese Exclusion Act in 1943. In fact, the number of Chinese Americans who assimilated into mainstream society and joined the middle class was limited, and most of them had to continue to live in Chinatowns during that period.

Unlike historians focusing on “suburbanization” and “assimilation”, I try to deal with the history of common people who lived in Chinatown from the perspective of Chinese American activism. This paper explores how Chinese American activism became invisible by examining three specific factors which impacted them profoundly: the international and domestic sociopolitical context; the informal sociopolitical structure of the Chinese American community; and the transition of sociological theories stereotyping Chinese Americans.