Anna May Wong

From Laundryman's Daughter to Hollywood Legend

Graham Russell Gao Hodges

香港大學出版社
Hong Kong University Press

Hong Kong University Press
14/F Hing Wai Centre
7 Tin Wan Praya Road
Aberdeen
Hong Kong
www.hkupress.org

First published by Palgrave Macmillan

ISBN 978-988-8139-63-7

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Printed and bound by Liang Yu Printing Factory Ltd. in Hong Kong, China

Contents

Introduction

Anna May Wong (1905–1961) remains the premier Asian American actress. In part this distinction stems from the historical rarity of Asian actors in American cinema and theater, yet her singularity derives primarily from her laudable acting in more than fifty movies, during a career that ranged from 1919 to 1961, a record of achievement that is unmatched and likely to remain so in the foreseeable future. During her time, Anna May Wong had significant roles in *The Thief of Bagdad* (1924), *Peter Pan* (1924), *Piccadilly* (1929), and *Shanghai Express* (1932), films that are acknowledged classics. Her feature debut in *The Toll of the Sea* (1922) at the age of seventeen, in the first Technicolor film, made her famous throughout the world. Throughout her career, Anna May Wong established a reputation for a high level of professionalism, personal grace and charm, and an unmatched film presence. No viewer could ignore Anna May when she appeared on screen. Her popularity was so widespread that she frequently graced the pages of movie magazines in America, Europe, Australia, South America, China, and Japan.

Anna May Wong meant many things to different people. During her career, her fame, abetted by the paucity of other Chinese in Euro-American capitals, gave her symbolic power as a Chinese woman. To her fans and film critics in the United States, Europe, and much of the rest of the world she personified Chinese womanhood. This supranational image angered Nationalist Chinese leaders, who regarded her as a puppet of Hollywood. Her family considered her at varying points a devoted daughter, a breadwinner, or a disgrace. Her American audience felt sympathy when she explained why she could never marry, even as they accepted loneliness and death as her cinematic fate. During her life and in memory, an underground audience of gay people regarded her as one of their

own, even if her public image was that of the disappointed woman doomed never to marry. She was considered reliable and friendly by her co-stars and by journalists, and she was accepted in the top ranks of society in all the world capitals. Her strength in dealing with harsh criticism alone merits admiration.

Her durability and professionalism meant that Anna May outlasted numerous other actresses from her era, including Betty Bronson, Colleen Moore, Renée Adorée, Fay Wray, Louise Brooks, and Luise Rainer. Despite her achievements, Anna May Wong has become what Maxine Hong Kingston refers to as a "No Name Woman." Like her fictional counterpart, Anna May has become an unmentionable. Although Anna May is included in the walk of fame on Hollywood Boulevard and is one of four actresses commemorated in a cluster of statues located at Hollywood Boulevard and La Brea in Los Angeles, there is little other coverage of her career. She is left out of standard books on women of silent film and omitted in memoirs and biographies of better-known actors. When she is recalled, Anna May is burdened by a reputation as someone willing to undertake roles in movies degrading to her people. Such was her status with the Nationalist and Communist parties in China, a perception then inherited by the political and artistic Left in the United States and among Chinese Americans generally. Li Lili, a Chinese movie star from the 1930s, when asked early in the twenty-first century about Anna May, retorted: "Fame and achievement are not the same thing." In the United States, Chinese American writers seldom insert Anna May into their novels, poems, and plays. She is controversial among scholars. When I first mentioned this book to a senior Asian American scholar, he angrily responded: "Why do you want to work on her? She was a Dragon Lady. A China Doll! She always died or committed suicide." The pain of her memory has poisoned her American family, who refuse access to her papers because they are ashamed of her.[1]

Anna May's descent into oblivion may seem necessary to a people anxious to forget how American cinema denigrated their culture. Anna May's life intersected with the period of the Chinese Exclusion Act, when Chinese Americans were few and badly oppressed by racism. Films with an Orientalist theme were common in early American features and invariably included an undercurrent of fear of interracial sex. For that reason, Anna May Wong and Sessue Hayakawa, the Japanese male actor, appear as sexually inviting to their white cinematic

counterparts, a quality that always condemned such Asian characters to death by the end of the movie. Film codes forbade kissing between the races, severely limiting Anna May's career, since it meant she could not secure lead roles.

The temptation is to dismiss Anna May Wong as a product of American Orientalism. After all, she commonly signed her publicity photos, "Orientally yours." Her career intersected with the intellectual creation of the "Oriental" at the research institutes of the University of Chicago. Studies of the concepts of "Oriental" and "Orientalism" have been of immense interest to scholars in the past thirty years. In his powerfully influential treatise on Orientalism, Edward Said has described it as a combination of academic, political, and institutional power created first in Europe, and appearing more recently in the United States. Though Said has little to say about theater or film, his argument can certainly be extended to those arts. In his words, Orientalism justified the hegemony Western powers imposed upon the people of the East—"dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, teaching it, settling it, ruling over it, in short ... dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient." Said has had specific influence on Jonathan D. Spence, a preeminent scholar of China, who has demonstrated how the West has long revealed singular attitudes about the Middle Kingdom in its literature. The recent remodeling and expansion of Said's "Orientalism" into the concept of globalism by Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri fit well into the history of the worldwide twentieth-century hegemony of Hollywood, Anna May Wong's chosen world. American films have dominated the world market since the early 1920s and, accordingly, Anna May Wong's personification of the Asian American woman had global reach, a fact angrily resented by Chinese nationalists, who disliked how Hollywood used Anna May Wong to represent the Chinese woman. Such controversies affected conceptions of gender in the movies. In Hollywood, males working as producers, directors, casting agents, and cinematographers created Anna May Wong as the embodiment of the cinematic Chinese woman. As Laura Mulvey has argued, filmmakers constructed a "male gaze" that presented their own vision of the female body. Considered together, these methods of analysis reduce Anna May's life and career to that of a caricature of the Chinese woman who was the willing pawn of powerful men and nations. In so doing, such critics emulate the harsh denunciations made against Anna May during her lifetime. Just one example may

suffice here: when Anna May traveled to Hong Kong in 1936, an angry demonstrator shouted that she was "the puppet that disgraces China."[2]

When she heard such condemnations, Anna May's face reddened and tears welled in her eyes. She was caught between caustic denunciations of her career and the hegemonic power of Orientalism. As a system, Orientalism had significant impact upon Anna May. American and Californian state laws curtailed her ability to marry a man of her choosing and regulated her movements in and out of the United States. As noted, motion pictures codes forbade her to kiss a westerner on screen and limited her to supporting roles. Local discrimination in housing and work restricted her opportunities and those of her family and friends. In childhood and as an adult, she felt personally the pangs of racial hostility. Though Anna May Wong suffered these insults and legal prejudices bravely, she occasionally spoke out defiantly and otherwise seethed inside. Several times her internalizing of discrimination made her physically ill. Although racism victimized Anna May, that mistreatment was not the whole story. Her courage, grace, and intelligence propelled her out in the world in search of love, career satisfaction, and happiness. She became a unique actor whose transnational life and career crossed political, racial, and sexual borders.[3]

The first task of this book, of course, is to rediscover her film career. Copies of about half of the films in which she appeared no longer exist, but fortunately most films with her in major roles are still available. As a star of the first rank, she was ubiquitous in film magazines around the world. Film magazines of the era were often the sole means by which fans could learn about their favorite stars. Through this glossy medium, Anna May and her story became standard fare for eager readers from the United States to Russia, from Sweden to Brazil and throughout the East. I rely on movie magazines to supply the reviews and articles from many countries around the globe to give a nuanced understanding of her transnational career. In the pages that follow, I show how critics from many nations regarded her films differently. Their reaction to her films simultaneously elevated comprehension of her art while consigning the meaning of her career to Orientalism. Anna May added a personal quality to her celluloid and print reputation by visiting her fans throughout the world. Invariably her jaunts were of her own design rather than the efforts of the studio publicity machines. Star tours around the world were common, as were global reputations. Charlie Chaplin,

Douglas Fairbanks Sr., Mary Pickford, and Greta Garbo were popular everywhere. Anna May was of their stature, but unlike the others, racial and nationalist politics colored her reputation wherever she went. Because of her unique fame as an "exotic" Chinese actress, Anna May caused controversy. She frequently introduced Chinese culture and identity to world societies whose contact with actual Chinese people was minimal.

Anna May also had much to say about her films and spoke freely about the casting dilemmas she faced. She wrote frequently about her unique position and expanded her comments regarding politics, fashion, career counseling, and her ceaseless anger at the racial codes that limited her success. Famous for her beauty and grace more than for the discouraging roles she endured, Anna May was the global representative of modern, articulate Chinese womanhood. As a star during the glory years of Hollywood's impact on American and world audiences, she reached out to her audiences in numerous ways. Independent of the studio wishes, she expanded her career to the stage and, later, to political action during World War II.

In books and articles published since the initial appearance of this biography, students of Anna May's life and career have accentuated her modernity, strived to complicate her symbol as Orientalist movie star, and associated her with the phenomenon of the modern girl. Early in her career, Anna May clearly identified herself as a flapper through her dress, speech, love of cars, cigarettes, and personal independence. She became, as I note in this book, a model for young Chinese women. At the same time, Anna May struggled and then came to value her family and its traditions. China, as this book shows, became the lodestar for her values and aspirations. While Anna May came from an ordinary background, her multiple successes demonstrate her extraordinary drive and self-awareness as public vision of the Chinese woman. As I argue extensively in this book, Anna May was much more than a "yellow yellow face," as one recent scholar has described her.[4]

Anna May Wong was able to improve upon her film career by introducing Chinese culture in ways that often the director or screenwriter would not understand. She expressed Chinese traditions through her hairstyles, clothing, body movements, and language. Her contemporaries considered Anna May Wong to be among the world's best-dressed women, and she assembled a huge collection

of Chinese gowns, which she often used in her films. By the late 1930s, when American attitudes about China had improved, Anna May was able to present positive roles of Chinese women on screen. During World War II, she made patriotic movies and visited Allied troops around the United States and Canada.

Much of her career is maligned or poorly understood as cinematic Orientalism. In this book, I contend that this view limits Anna May Wong to a superficial caricature. As a scholar of African American history, I am suspicious of theories that impose conceptions of power upon creative people. A Chinese expression acknowledges that every person has a thousand faces. Anna May's cinematic and personal reputations translated differently among the world's myriad nationalities.

A second task of this book is to uncover the breadth and depth of Anna May Wong's life. Her childhood was troubled, as she was caught between the traditional world of her home and the nasty racism of white Los Angeles. She found respite from her dilemma in motion pictures, a new cultural form created in the streets where she walked every day. After her debut in the movies, she became the "Chinese flapper," an ultra-modern girl who had rejected the ways of her parents. As Sucheng Chan has pointed out, second-generation Chinese American children were prone to such rebellion.[5] Anna May Wong was actually third-generation, but her parents' deep sense of tradition limited the acculturation she gained at home. Later, she tired of being a flapper and began a lifetime investigation of her roots. At first she merely longed to travel to China, then, after a sojourn in Europe, she adapted the styles of the famed Peking Opera. Her nine-month visit to China in 1936 was one of the highlights of her life. She returned fully identified with China and exerted herself constantly in film and philanthropic actions to improve the image of China in the United States and to raise contributions for China Relief efforts and the struggle against Japanese imperialism in World War II. The Cold War cut her off from China and, of necessity, she had to create the Chinese American personality that she used until her death in 1961.

Anna May Wong was expert in self-promotion and wrote articles in fan magazines and newspapers on significant topics including interracial love, Hollywood careers, and Japanese aggression. She never married, and so she took it upon herself to explain to the people of the world the dilemmas of a Chinese American artist during a time when her chances for love were limited by prejudice and

demography. Anna May Wong was always courteous to newspaper writers, but she also gave time to such distinguished intellectuals as Walter Benjamin, who interviewed her in 1928. Anna May could converse as an equal with Benjamin and a host of other powerful intellects, regardless of setting. To use a term popular in Asian American studies these days, she was a transnational, who went from continent to continent in search of fulfillment.[6]

Significant to Anna May Wong's life were her relations with her family and with the close friends she accumulated over the decades. She actually had two families. One, the issue of her father's first marriage in China, was less known to her. Their story, however, provides a useful counterpart to her American kin. In the United States her father, Wong Sam Sing, and his second wife, Lee Gon Toy, had eight children, seven of whom survived into adulthood. Living in a country of hostile political and social institutions, family was critically important to Chinese Americans. As in any family, Anna May's relations with her parents and siblings were not always smooth. In fact, her older sister Lulu told one researcher in the 1990s that the family was ashamed of her. But as Lisa See has shown about her own family, which was friendly with the Wongs, such clan histories, told over many decades, can reveal much about the unfolding of Chinese American history.[7]

Anna May Wong's social world was not limited to her family. Her friends are also a substantial and informative part of this book. For example, she sustained a four-decade friendship with Carl Van Vechten and his wife, Fania Marinoff, which is preserved in a rich cache of personal letters. Their correspondence reveals Anna May's charm, humor, and appreciation for life. She befriended people everywhere and tried to maintain those contacts over her life. Because of racial and class restrictions, Anna May never married. She did conduct a series of long-term affairs by which she took what happiness the world would allow. She carried the pleasures and memories of her loves always in her heart and used these experiences in her films and writings.

These are the large themes of this book. I have divided Anna May Wong's story into seven chapters, with her film career as an organizing device. The first chapter covers her childhood and the early life of her parents in late nineteenth-century California until her debut as an extra in Nazimova's movie, *The Red Lantern*, in 1919. The second chapter recounts her early years struggling for

stardom in 1920s Hollywood. Frustrated by the lack of promotion and angered by her roles, Anna May moved to Europe for three years, as I detail in chapter three. She came back to the States a star, lauded by critics and loved by fans all over Europe. As chapter four narrates, Anna May Wong spent the first years of the 1930s seeking to maintain her stardom in Hollywood but searching for independence by annual trips to Europe, where she made films and created her own stage show. In between appearances, she enjoyed the best of Paris, London, Berlin, and the rest of Europe until political unrest and war forced her to stop. In 1936, driven by personal desire and pushed by the ugly rejection by MGM of her pursuit of the lead role in *The Good Earth*, Anna May Wong made the hegira of her life to China. This remarkable return to her roots is the story of chapter five. In the years after her return in late 1936, Anna May made a series of remarkable films and, motivated by her China trip, devoted huge chunks of time and energy to China Relief and support of the Sino-American alliance in World War II. Sadly, what worked for Marlene Dietrich on the European front did not pay off in Anna May's career. The last, seventh chapter tells of her years battling obscurity, illness, and prejudice to buttress a dignified semi-retirement using her sage investments, diligence, and charm. An epilogue records how Anna May Wong's influence extends into the present.

Upon finishing this book, I hope the reader will discover Anna May Wong's saga to be as fascinating and courageous as I have found it to be in my years of research. Anna May Wong's life is testament to the uplifting example of the individual's will and strength against hegemonic powers, whether political, intellectual, or personal, that seek to oppress a misunderstood or forgotten creativity.

List of Illustrations

One
Childhood

By birth, Anna May Wong was a third-generation Californian, with family roots that traced back to the first years of Chinese arrivals in the Gold Rush years. Both sets of her grandparents arrived in California by 1855. Between that date and Anna May's birth in 1905, the Chinese in California went from initial acceptance to attempted exclusion in the 1880s to violent racial hostility at the close of the century. These historical circumstances shaped her life. Although she was a native Californian with roots as deep as any white person's, Anna May Wong faced harsh social prejudice and discriminatory laws. Her strong sense of family, nationality, and purpose helped her surpass racial oppression.

Anna May Wong's life began on January 3, 1905 at 351 Flower Street, a few blocks away from Los Angeles' Chinatown. Her father, Wong Sam Sing (his nickname was Liangren), had married her mother, Lee Gon Toy, in a Chinese ceremony in San Francisco on September 9, 1901. Wong Sam Sing and Lee Gon Toy had their first home and workplace at the Wong Laundry on 117 Marchessault Street in Chinatown. There, Lee Gon Toy gave birth to their first child, a daughter, Lew Ying (Lulu Huang) on December 21, 1902. The birth of a girl upset Wong Sam Sing so much that he did not come home for days. Domestic aspirations forced him eventually to move his small family to 351 Flower Street, where he founded the Sam Kee Laundry. Flower Street was an integrated block slightly outside of Chinatown. The family moved there right before the birth of their second daughter, Huang Liu Tsong, whom they called Anna May. The family name meant yellow; Tsong meant frost while Liu translated into willow. After Anna May arrived, the mother and two girls promptly caught the measles, adding to Wong Sam Sing's misery over the lack of a son.[1]

* * *

Wong Sam Sing belonged to a generation of Chinese men who had undergone much hardship in America. As work dried up in the gold mines and after the transcontinental railroad project was completed, Chinese men faced rising tides of violent reaction from white laborers. In the early years, Chinese could be found in small towns all over the West as workers in laundries and restaurants and on truck farms. As anti-Chinese violence erupted after the American Civil War, Wong Sam Sing and his generation fled into the larger cities, creating Chinatowns. These Chinatowns were unique to the United States in that residents were forced into cramped, decaying housing within narrow geographic borders. There they attempted to fend off the racism of the ruling race through reliance on traditional lifestyles and domination of property and local industries.

National political developments further diminished the status of the Chinese in America. After the Civil War, the marginal status of the Chinese paralleled the social and political decline of prestige of African Americans. In a process that one scholar calls the "negroization" of the Chinese, these once-valued laborers faced worsening legal, occupational, and social prejudice. Drawing on the U.S. Supreme Court's controversial Dred Scott Decision in 1857, American nativists worked hard to ensure that the Chinese did not gain citizenship and called for their exclusion. Among the newer fears was "amalgamation," a loaded nineteenth-century term for mixed marriages. Such unions between whites and blacks were considered unthinkable since the 1830s; after the Civil War, racists extended these anxieties to the Chinese. As Wong Sam Sing matured, he faced a larger society that increasingly ostracized him. He could scarcely be blamed if he regarded contacts with whites warily.[2]

Wong Sam Sing's travels back and forth across the Pacific identify him as a member of a new style of Chinese: the sojourner. As Wang Gungwu relates, Chinese people had migrated out of the Middle Kingdom before, but not in such large numbers. Until the large-scale migration to the Americas, never before had Chinese labor moved into host societies that regarded themselves as economically and technologically superior. Transit to the United States meant that Chinese sojourners now entered a working class, equally disadvantaged and untutored, that considered itself racially and culturally superior to the Asian

arrivals. As a result, Chinese sojourners in the United States traveled from place to place in a vain search for a receptive community. Wong Sam Sing found his in Los Angeles. On the Pacific Ocean or around the United States, sojourners of his generation learned to accept a transient way of life. While his new American society, especially the laboring class, grew more hostile to sojourners such as Wong Sam Sing, his Chinese culture grew closer, despite the separation of the Pacific Ocean. Contact with "home" through diplomatic channels, newspapers, banks, and frequent visitors kept China foremost in his mind.[3]

Wong Sam Sing's Chinese ideals were his bulwark in a hostile world. Chinese sojourners in the United States had faced sharp discrimination since the 1870s. A series of laws starting with the Burlingame Treaty in 1868, through the Page Law of 1875, and culminating in the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 sharply curtailed the migration of Chinese men to the United States. Legislation also blocked the arrival of most Chinese men identified by the catchall identification of laborer, and barred most Chinese females on a presumptive belief that they were prostitutes. Families were disrupted because, unless the husband was American born, laws banned the immigration of wives. The U.S. Congress amplified these laws over the next twenty years in a series of measures that specifically curtailed the rights of Chinese Americans. Such discriminatory laws made the Chinese the only ethnic group in the history of the United States to suffer restrictions aimed directly at them.[4]

Labor competition and legal restraints were not the only reasons for the racist violence that drove Chinese Americans into refuge in large cities. The last decades of the nineteenth century saw the rise of an American literary Orientalism. While such noted authors as Mark Twain and Bret Harte denied that their stories and poems were malevolent attacks on Chinese Americans, others construed their message as anti-Chinese. From their works emerged such stereotypical Chinese as Ah Sing, the expert card cheat, or Ah Song Hi, an entrepreneurial immigrant who is attacked by the police. Both writers attempted to re-create a pidgin or commercial English language that they heard from Chinese Americans. By the early 1890s, Harte and Twain had, however inadvertently, helped create a genre known as "Chinatown fiction," which portrayed Chinese Americans as insular, poorly acculturated, and often doltish. Whereas the two writers seemed to admire Chinese American talents, Jonathan Spence notes, their curious blending

of stereotypes, myths, and self-fulfillment was matched with language filled with pure racial hostility. In one of Harte's plays, for example, Ah Sing is described as "slant eyed son of the yellow jaunders," a "sinful old sluice robber," a "jabbering idiot," and a "moral cancer." By the hands of other writers and during worsening political times came even nastier racial literature that relentlessly portrayed Chinese men as schemers—dangerous, unreliable, and vicious. In the aftermath of the Boxer Rebellion came a series of books that informed white American readers that the Chinese were a genuine threat to civilization. The novels of Sax Rohmer in the early twentieth century told his audience that even a brilliant Chinese such as his character Fu Manchu was evil, genetically incapable of any good. These stereotypes quickly translated into the new medium of film.[5]

The bulk of those films were made within a few blocks of Anna May's birthplace. Chinatown, Los Angeles, was a relatively recent development. The few Chinese who lived there before the 1880s had faced significant hazards. A major riot and massacre against them occurred in 1871; there were severe incidents of arson in 1886 and 1887. Despite these aggravated assaults, Chinese immigrants held a virtual monopoly on vegetable selling in Los Angeles. When the city of Los Angles tried to tax them out of existence in 1878, the peddlers went on strike and forced the government to back down. Their early heroism helped such other businesses as laundries, restaurants, and herbalist shops to survive and prosper.[6]

In 1900, Los Angeles' Chinatown was a dense settlement of 2,111 souls, 90 percent of them male. Street peddlers crowded the sidewalks. Lo Sang, as locals called it, was architecturally composed of American brick and Mexican adobe buildings and Chinese mercantile and joss houses, and it appeared to outsiders as dirty and overrun with vermin. The nearby gas plant and railroad yards polluted the air, and on occasion the Los Angeles River overflowed through its streets. Because the neighborhood was constructed on private property, there were few such amenities as sewers, indoor toilets, paved streets, or gaslights.[7]

* * *

The Wong family's move to the periphery of Chinatown was not unusual. Lo Sang's squalid ambience had pushed out other ambitious Chinese families. The Asian population of Los Angeles, while segregated, was not as isolated as the

African American or Mexican. The neighborhood was mixed, with Germans, Irish, and Japanese families sprinkled throughout. Other families preceded the Wong clan's removal to the neighborhood's outskirts. Among their friends were the See family, who founded their dynasty of shops just outside Lo Sang on First Street, between Spring and Broadway. Despite the separation of a few blocks, Chinatown remained important for the Wongs. Within two years of Anna May's birth, her family moved briefly back to Chinatown and resided at 21 Private Alley. The Wongs lived there until 1910, when they moved back to the margins of Chinatown at 241 North Figueroa, where they would stay until 1934. This new district was multicultural; the Wongs were the only Chinese on a block composed primarily of Mexican and Eastern European families. Unlike the "bachelor" society found living in Chinatown, the Wong children, though they lived in a traditional home, came into contact daily with other peoples. Her childhood instilled in Anna May an awareness of, if not always a comfort with, a diverse population. In addition, North Figueroa was close to but separated geographically from Chinatown. To get to Chinatown, Anna May and Lulu had to walk several blocks down Temple Street, across North Main Street and Los Angeles Street to the crowded Chinese neighborhood. Prostitutes of all nationalities strolled the streets. Walking home involved going up at least two steep hills, which accentuated the distance between themselves and other Chinese. This geographic separation from other Chinese eventually created a psychological distance for Anna May. While her own neighborhood was diverse, the Los Angeles Chinatown was more ethnically homogeneous than others around the world, which tended to be populated by a polyglot mixture of Chinese sailors and laborers from all over China and the world. In Los Angeles, migrants from Taishan in Guangdong Province and Fujian Province predominated. Although she always identified herself as Chinese, her personality was open to and partly shaped by other Americans. Eventually her search for identity pushed Anna May into travel and the transient reality of film.[8]

Her parents' background added to that social complexity. Though their personal lives retained strong elements of Chinese traditions, Anna May's parents were American-born citizens. Wong Sam Sing was born in the gold region of Michigan Bluffs, California, on July 23, 1860. He was the son of A Wong Wong (Wong Leung Chew or Qiuxian), a merchant who owned two stores, the Fong

Lee and the Wing Chung Chung, in Michigan Bluffs, Placer County, with his wife, Pon Shee. According to the genealogy of the Huang family of Chang On, Guangdong Province, China, A Wong Wong (Qiuxian) was the son of Changhu, the patriarch of this branch. The date and location of Wong Sam Sing's birth suggests that A Wong Wong operated stores for gold miners, work that required some capital and indicated that A Wong Wong had arrived in California after 1853, as Chinese immigrants replaced Anglo-American miners. Burdened by discriminatory taxes and the targets of worsening racial attacks, Chinese miners survived an initial attempt to expel them.

Wong Sam Sing lost both his parents at an early age. Pon Shee died in 1865, and soon after the father took his little boy to his ancestral home of Wing On, a village outside Taishan, Guangdong Province, China. Wong Leung Chew, according to his son, died trying to save a woman who had fallen down a well. When he was five, the orphaned boy returned to the United States, then went back to Wing On from his ninth to his eleventh years. Wong Sam Sing also lived for a time in a joss (a Chinese medicinal) house in Fiddletown, another Chinese settlement, about twenty miles south of his birthplace. The Chinese mining camps in which Wong Sam Sing lived were segregated from the white towns. Although the Chinese borrowed older Euro-American forms of architecture, they quickly adapted them to their own customs. Joss houses in particular represented the strongest examples of the homeland, which these Chinese miners tried to re-create in California and other western states. Such cultural retentions mixed with the evolving aggressive hostility whites expressed toward Chinese immigrants surely made Wong Sam Sing feel far more Chinese than American. His experiences kept him from assimilating and prepared him for his life in Los Angeles' Chinatown.[9]

By the age of nineteen, Wong Sam Sing had saved sufficient capital to return to Taishan to search for a wife. According to statements he made to immigration inspectors forty years later, Wong Sam Sing voyaged in 1886, though this date does not tally with his age at that time. By now the Wong clan had founded a new village, Chang On, about one hundred yards from their old home. Wong Sam Sing used a marriage broker to arrange matters. Now twenty-six years old, Wong Sam Sing married Lee Shee, who was eight years his junior. Marital happiness enticed Wong Sam Sing to remain in China. Lee Shee gave birth to a son, Huang

Dounan (his local name was Jingshu), on February 29, 1893. Sometime after that, Wong Sam Sing moved back to the United States. Such partings were common in Taishan. The original home of a majority of Chinese Americans, Taishan was filled with filial wives who waited for decades for their overseas husbands to return.[10]

Wong Sam Sing told the immigration authorities that Lee Shee had died before his return. In fact, she lived to the age of seventy-eight in Chang On, supported by funds sent by her husband. There were many women like her in the village; Taishan's economy was dependent on funds sent back by husbands abroad. His memory of dates was equally shaky. He claimed to have returned to the States in 1889, something apparently he did not do until the late 1890s. When he returned, Wong Sam Sing opened a laundry, an occupation so common in his family that there was a Wong Laundry Association. Bolstered economically by his work, Wong Sam Sing wrote Lee Shee asking her to bring their son to Los Angeles. Lee Shee replied that she wished to stay in Chang On and maintain the clan there. If he did not like her answer, she wrote, he should find himself another wife. While Lee Shee may have been unwilling to come to America, U.S. immigration policies virtually forbade any Chinese female, including wives, from entering the nation. Those who did come had to undergo extensive and often degrading personal scrutiny before they might be admitted. Even the famous Soong sisters, who were from the most elite family in China, were kept in a pen for two weeks. Ailing Soong (the sister of the future Madame Chiang Kai-shek) later complained directly to President Theodore Roosevelt about her mistreatment. Her account of this abuse became legendary and instilled terror in ordinary people. Not wanting to risk everything for an uncertain future, Lee Shee and Wong Sam Sing agreed that he would stay in the United States and, as was the custom, send cash back home. Wong Sam Sing was more fortunate than most Chinese males and could afford a second wife. Within a year, Wong Sam Sing agreed through a Chinese broker to marry the sixteen-year-old Lee Gon Toy.[11]

His lengthy absence from Chang On did not mean that Wong Sam Sing neglected his Chinese family.[12] According to his daughter, Wong Sam Sing owned quite a bit of property in Chang On. This property was given to Huang Dounan. In addition, Wong Sam Sing regularly sent over cash to subsidize his son's education. Huang Dounan proved to be a scholar and continued his education into

his thirties. Wong Sam Sing later asked Anna May to give some of her earnings to Huang Dounan, although she refused. Eventually Huang Dounan graduated from the prestigious Waseda University in Tokyo and became a schoolteacher and a prominent figure in Chang On. His intellectual pursuits are an indication of Wong Sam Sing's early ambitions for his children, nearly all of whom eventually graduated from college, with the important exception of Anna May.

Wong Sam Sing's travels were common for a Taishanese American of his generation. As Madeline Hsu has demonstrated, Taishanese sojourners combined traditional practices and expectations of family life, along with loyalty to native place and to their kinship organization, while they traveled the world in search of their share of prosperity. Wong Sam Sing went to China at least three times in his life, and he lived in three places in California before settling in Los Angeles. His children doubtless heard many tales of life back in Taishan. The frequent letters and demands from Lee Shee made the old country all the more real to the Wong children. Anna May grew up in a family with a fundamental loyalty to China but with a daily attachment to Los Angeles. She would live with this cultural split her entire life. The psychological ramifications of this partition were manifested in her film career.[13]

Less is known about Anna May's mother. Lee Gon Toy was born on Clay Street in San Francisco on June 6, 1886, the only child of Lee Leng, the proprietor of the Fook Lee Cigar Factory, and his wife, Lee Shee (no relation to the other). Cigar making was a common if unstable industry for late-nineteenth-century Chinese in San Francisco. There was frequent turnover among the shops and small factories, often caused by competition from white firms. Anti-Chinese behavior was at its height during the 1880s, and cigar makers such as Lee Leng faced boycotts, riots, and problems raising capital. Like her future husband, Lee Gon Toy no doubt lived in a household that regarded whites with caution. Nonetheless, Lee Leng was a businessman, and the match must have seemed worthwhile to Wong Sam Sing. While Lee Gon Toy's new husband was the same age as her father, it was not unusual for a Chinese American woman to marry someone far older than she. Lee Gon Toy lost contact with her parents after they left for their home in Lung Jew Village, Yunnan Province, around 1913. Anti-Chinese repression began before her birth and continued throughout her life. Lee Gon Toy, like other Chinese American women at the time, did not dare

to interact with European American society. She could speak and understand English, but she preferred to use the Taishan dialect. Doubtless, that is what she spoke at home with her children and husband. Her American birth lessened the likelihood that she had bound feet.[14]

Wong Sam Sing was fortunate to find a suitable wife in California. The bigoted perception that most Chinese females who arrived during the Gold Rush years were prostitutes propelled California legislators to pass the notorious Page Law in 1875. Under this legislation, Chinese female immigrants, even the most wealthy, entered California burdened by the presumption that they planned to work as prostitutes, a racist conception that was later dramatized in the cinema. Stemming in part from white workingmen's anxieties about the growth of Chinese families in the late 1860s and supported by white capitalists who feared that larger families meant higher wage demands, the Page Law targeted all Chinese women. Immigration officers routinely refused entry to Chinese women, and local police harassed respectable women with potential deportation. That Wong Sam Sing could afford to support wives in California and China attests to his prosperity.[15]

Wong Sam Sing and his large family were different in another aspect from other Chinese residents. The Chinese laundryman's life in the United States was a study of social isolation. The job was stigmatized. Among whites, the work of the Chinese laundryman was associated with dirty water and vile odors. As Iris Chang has described it, laundry work was harsh, unceasing, and physically exhausting. Wielding an eight-pound iron, the laundryman and his family labored on a wet, slippery floor, washing and pressing clothing. Finishing work, including starching detachable collars, cuffs, and shirtfronts, required meticulous attention and delicate treatment. Laundry workers commonly worked twenty-hour days and prided themselves on possessing "flexible" stomachs, ones that could go one or two days without food. Varicose veins and swollen legs were common ailments.

In Los Angeles, however, laundry work was so common among Chinese Americans that it approached the level of a social norm. One out of every five male householders operated a laundry, and Wongs accounted for almost one-third of all laundrymen. Wong Sam Sing employed a classic immigrant method of improving his lot; he had many children who could help in the business as they grew. In all, Wong Sam Sing employed a dozen people in the laundry, a

number that included all the children. A laundry was a sure business prospect, provided a man worked long hours toiling with dirty clothing and boiling water. The exhausting work also tied a man down to the home, so that he rarely had the energy to gamble with the dice, faro, and fan games ubiquitous in Chinatown. The job could provide prosperity. One laundryman earned enough to buy a fifty-thousand-dollar hotel. If lucky, you could get a choice spot near a hotel and apartment buildings frequented by young Western businessmen who required clean shirts. But there were family benefits. The family lived behind the store. Clothing eight children cost little for Wong Sam Sing. And his job gave the father an exalted status. In his shop, Wong Sam Sing was, as his second daughter later recalled, "lord of his household." While Anna May would eventually escape the humid prison of the laundry, her work there fostered lifetime habits of exacting dress.[16]

There was no question of who was in charge of the Wong family. His Taishanese origins and membership in the Wong Association placed Wong Sam Sing higher up in the local hierarchy than his work would indicate. Old World ties reemerged in the family associations. Wong Sam Sing became an active member of the local Wong Kong Hor Tong, the family association, and the Chinese Laundry Alliance. Such ties also mandated that he continue to send support for Lee Shee and Huang Dounan back in Chang On.[17]

Wong Sam Sing now had two daughters but pined for a son. To please him, Lee Gon Toy placed a Chinese boy's cap on Wong Liu Tsong's head and arrayed her in the robes of a prince. Later, Anna May attributed her public confidence to this masculinizing influence.[18] The need for such deceptions ended when Lee Gon Toy produced the first son, Wong Yah Wing (James), on July 15, 1907. As Lulu and Anna May grew older, they helped their mother care for the infants who arrived like clockwork over the next few years. After the birth of Wong Lew Huang (Mary) on March 11, 1910, a second son, Wong Way Ying (Frank), arrived on March 12, 1912, and a third, Wong Suey Ying (Roger), was born on May 16, 1915. Another girl, Wong Lew Choon (Marietta), was born on April 27, 1919, but died in March of 1920. A fourth boy, Wong Kim Ying (Richard), rounded out the family on August 4, 1922.[19]

By the end of the second decade of the century, Wong Sam Sing had sufficient family labor. The girls worked the counter and delivered the clothing while the

boys learned to iron shirts. Lulu and Anna May probably ironed as well, given that they later reported small burn scars on their hands. Laundry work had liberating effects on Anna May. In her tasks, she learned business principles and money management, and how to work with people, especially the westerners she encountered when delivering fresh laundry. She became far more acclimatized to westerners than many of her female classmates.[20]

Although his family status separated Wong Sam Sing from the over-whelmingly bachelor society around Chinatown, many of the common household patterns were universal. Dinners, predominately pork, beef, and rice, were cooked in woks over a clay stove. Fish delicacies from the Los Angeles market included cuttlefish, crab, clams, and oysters. Turtles came from local ponds. The young Wongs grew up eating rice from ceramic bowls decorated with bamboo designs. Main dishes were served from plates of more expensive designs of the Four Seasons or from celadon Double Happiness bowls. Tea was drunk from Chinese cups without handles. Anna May doubtless helped her mother prepare these dishes as she gained a lifelong love of cooking for herself and for larger groups.[21]

Chinese parents were famously conservative with money, but they never hesitated to lavish presents on their children. A family photo taken when Anna May was eighteen months old shows her posed with Lulu between her father and mother, each dressed in traditional Chinese garb. The clothing of the children speaks to the family's deep adherence to Chinese customs. It also shows a degree of prosperity, as such ceremonial garb was most commonly owned by wealthier families.[22]

Lulu and Anna May owned dolls, probably made in Germany, and later shared marbles with their brothers. Years later, Anna May told a Chinese journalist in Hong Kong that Lulu first had dolls and that Anna May asked her father for more. She remembered, "I did this on purpose. Taking my bed as a stage, and my dolls as actors, we performed our own play. Later one of my younger brothers joined us." The wealthier See children owned cast-iron trains and fire engines pulled by iron horses, toys that were enjoyed by middle-class children across the United States.[23]

Anna May's earliest memories involved a frustrated desire for luxury and a new awareness of racial boundaries. Her parents taught her to be decorous and to carry herself with dignity. An English family lived next door to the Wongs and invited young Wong Liu Tsong to their home, where they had a large upright

piano. At first Anna May and the neighboring children "played games together and romped around with no thought of color or creed to disturb us." Then, the children's mother invited Anna May to touch the gleaming black and white keys of the piano. Enchanted, Anna May climbed onto the bench but lost her balance and fell clumsily to the floor. She recalled, "I was covered with humiliation. I felt that I was disgraced forever in the home of my friends and that I would not be permitted to play with them any more because of my unbecoming conduct." Had she been a western child, Anna May believed, she would not have worried, but because of her upbringing as a Chinese child she felt that she had disgraced her parents. She told an interviewer decades later that the impression of difference was so great that "I have never forgotten it." Discouraged, Anna May never learned to play a musical instrument.[24]

Initially, Lulu and Anna May attended the California Street School, accounting for half the Chinese children enrolled. While they learned English and could write their names in the national tongue, the girls received a sobering lesson in American racism. To fit in, Anna May waved her hair and strained to hold her eyes open to round them. She was shocked when her "American" classmates chose her to "represent China because I was the most typically Chinese girl in the school. My attempts at disguise had merely made me stand out more." There were other, less friendly lessons. Western children did not hesitate to use slurs against the young girls, pulling their hair and shoving them off the sidewalk. In the schoolyard, "the great game was to gather around my sister and myself and torment us." When the sisters ran home in tears to tell Wong Sam Sing, he told them to be proud of their people and race. Their position in society was very difficult and perhaps it was best that they "find this out now." A boy sitting behind Anna May took matters further. He stuck pins into Anna May to determine if Chinese children felt pain differently from the way he did. The next day she wore an overcoat for protection, so the youthful sadist used a longer pin. Before long Anna May was wearing six coats as a barricade against him. The teacher insisted that she unbundle when spring arrived, instructions that made Anna May sneeze, then catch a severe cold that developed into a near-fatal bout of pneumonia. She never forgot these incidents, which made the pain of racism very real. It is hardly too much to speculate that the boy's racial torture, which Anna May made into a standard part of her autobiographical interview, instilled a general unease in

her that contact with whites could have painful consequences. Fortunately they found that not every white person treated the girls with contempt. Rob Wagner, later a famous editor and writer, befriended Anna May when she was about eight or ten. He later recalled seeing Anna May and her sisters hauling bundles of clothing up and down the hill that separated their neighborhood from downtown Los Angeles. Wong Sam Sing would wait and watch at the bottom of the hill. Wagner's acquaintance, which later blossomed into a professional relationship, originated from Anna May's work for her father.[25]

Alarmed by the racism their daughters suffered, the Wong parents quickly transferred Lulu and Anna May to the Presbyterian Chinese Mission School at 766 Juan Street off Apablasa in Chinatown. There the girls studied geography, history, arithmetic, and English. The Presbyterians had been active in Chinatown since 1876 and used the schools, which the Chinese prized, as enticements to conversion. Children learned English and Cantonese. Such schools were the advance guard of what would later become a positive national policy toward the Chinese; during the first decade of the twentieth century, they were a bulwark for Chinese Americans against the dominant American racism. As acculturating forces, the Presbyterian schools created a wedge between their Chinese students and the rest of the community, which considered the English-speaking children outsiders. More positively, the Presbyterian schools were places of recreation where hard-working children such as Lulu and Anna May could relax away from the laundry. Anna May remembered the school with great fondness. She described herself as a "tomboyish creature" who played baseball and marbles and refused to learn sewing. Sometimes Wong Sam Sing would come across his second daughter playing marbles, "tousled, grimy, with hair flying, having a glorious time with my 'gang.' My actions troubled him," she remembered.

Such schools also gave the girls a heavy dose of Anglo-Christian values. Although the teachers were white, the students were all Chinese, thus alleviating the harsh racism of the public school. Displeased that his daughters were getting insufficient instruction in Chinese, Wong Sam Sing sent them to an afternoon and Saturday Chinese-language school, which was located above a Pentecostal church filled with wild-eyed worshipers. Anna May recalled how the schools were open all the time, except Sunday. Classes were conducted in a long narrow room in an old building down in Chinatown. She remembered how "The

teacher sat at his desk, a bamboo stick beside him. If one of the pupils showed signs of restlessness or disobedience, whack went the stick across the hands of the offender. Serious disobedience was punished in a severe manner—and not across the hands either." Anna May had mixed feelings about the school. She enjoyed being with other Chinese students and felt comfortable in Chinatown with its "narrow streets lined with grimy buildings, the shops where Chinese herbs and rugs were sold, the gambling houses where white men and Chinese mixed, the overcrowded tenements where the Chinese lived, sometimes entire families living in a room, the gaily painted chop-suey restaurants with their lanterns a soft-many-colored blur in the dusk." She felt sorry for the schoolteacher, who lived in a small room behind the schoolhouse and who never seemed to leave the building and cooked his own meals. His efforts with her were unsuccessful, for after five years she was barely able to read and write Chinese. Still, her days in Chinatown instilled a powerful visual vocabulary in Anna May, which she later used in her acting.

Anna May and Lulu noticed how the schools were changing them. Anna May recalled how "outside of our own home, we were thoroughly American in dress, action, speech, and thought. Right and left we were smashing the traditions of our forebears." Americanization was causing her "to forget all my parents' teachings." As they grew older this process accelerated. Later, Lulu and Anna May returned to their old school, which welcomed them. They then matriculated into the Custer Street School (now Central Junior High Intermediate) and finally to Lincoln High. Lulu left after six months, but Anna stayed for two years in a vocational program.[26]

Future journalists' accounts of Anna May's childhood would portray Wong Sam Sing as a controlling, traditional father. Such parents required their daughters to obey without question and remain close to home. At the same time, Chinese girls had more value in America than in China because of their scarcity and the greater opportunities available to them. While Wong Sam Sing doubtless considered himself a traditional Chinese man, concepts of what that meant were changing rapidly. The fall of the Qing dynasty and the construction of Republican China excited Chinese American men, who considered the triumphs of Sun Yat-sen and other Republicans as proof of China's resurgent power. Chinese Americans were appalled at attempts to restore the monarchy in China.

At the same time, they staunchly resisted modernist reforms intended to eliminate Confucianism and argued against equality and freedom for women. Chinese American men desired to keep women subordinate to men and to keep children obedient, according to Confucian principles. Talk of freedom for women in the United States had, according to prevailing views, already made many Chinese American women unfit for marriage.[27]

While it was possible for their father to maintain charge over his growing family at the laundry, Lulu and Anna May experienced more of life by walking to school or riding the bus through middle-class neighborhoods. Delivering laundry for their father also brought them into contact with non-Chinese adults. Someone noticed Anna May's blossoming beauty, because by the age of ten she was modeling coats for a furrier. Her father was so impressed by a newspaper photo of her dressed in a mink coat and ankle-length pantaloons that he sent the picture to Huang Dounan. Her half-brother responded: "Tsong is very beautiful, but please send me the dollar watch on the other side of the page." Anna May retorted, "a fur coat doesn't tick." Her work for the furrier taught Anna May about fashion and instilled in her a lifelong love of fur coats. By the age of twelve, she had a steady job as a counter girl and model for a department store, Ville de Paris. Her father found her a secretarial job, which required a substantial commute. She hardly lamented when her poor shorthand skills prompted her dismissal.[28]

Family outings included going to Chinese theater. Chinese theatrical performances had been a staple of Los Angeles Chinatown since 1890 and were beginning to incorporate women into their companies, which was a major change from traditions in the old country. Chinese theater in America was largely based in San Francisco, but touring companies regularly visited Los Angeles. A traditional father such as Wong Sam Sing would take his family to see companies of actors performing traditional Chinese plays, often in serials lasting several weeks and accompanied by acrobatics and variety plays. Unlike the more famous Peking Theater, most of the Chinese American actors, plays, and performances came from Cantonese precedents and used Taishanese dialect. Costumes, stage props, and plays often came directly from China. Later, Anna May recalled these evenings fondly. She remembered that performances lasted four hours and that the audiences ate dried melon seeds and chatted constantly. She learned that a good actor had to know hundreds of parts, and be able to perform them at a

minute's notice. However entertaining such evenings were for the Wong family, acting was not regarded as a potential career. No respectable Chinese father wanted a daughter to become an actress. Initially Wong Sam Sing did not have to worry, as female roles were rare in traditional Chinese theater.[29]

Wong Sam Sing was less pleased about a new form of entertainment. The motion-picture industry, which was less than fifteen years old, was laboring hard to appeal to a female audience with ornate theaters, white-gloved ushers, and melodramatic plots. On one occasion at the age of nine, Anna May received a handsome tip for laundry delivery and used the cash to go to the movies. Immediately, Anna May became a big fan of the flicks, often sneaking away from school to the cheap movie houses. She forged excuse notes for her teachers. Later she recalled using her lunch money to buy a ticket and sat in the front row, "where everyone looks funny and wrong-angled." Eventually, her poor eating habits resulted in illness, and her father had to intervene. Still she loved films. Dreams of stardom filled the young girl's mind. She dreamt "not like children dreaming of paradise with angels and toys and fruit—but I saw in my dream a wonder … wonderful, amazing sun city shining with golden light, where white palaces were erected and odorless gardens and [I] wander on white paths and dance and am overjoyed and throw blissful looks in the blue air." The dream addressed her: "… and opposite the palace and gardens—there is a man with short sleeves and a big horn in front of his mouth, shouting, 'Anna May Wong, now you come down the stairs and look like the prince was already approaching—we do a close up of that!' And then the other man comes near with a three-legged peep show box and winds and winds … and I have an overjoyed face because I feel the great happiness—and the important man says 'You did a great job, Anna May Wong—You are a film star!'" Then the dream ended and her father was looking for her with a bamboo stick in his hand.

Anna May recalled these beatings many years later. She remembered that the bamboo stick was talking to her and was long and that it itched when a strong hand used it on a certain part of her behind. "My father has such a muscular hand, and this burnt so much. Ouch, much! You have to go to school, father shouted at me! And not always play hooky."[30] Although Wong Sam Sing spanked her with a bamboo stick for these adventures, Anna May could not resist the thrill of the cinema. Her first sighting of a movie star occurred when she encountered

Alma Rubens in an elevator. She became first a fan of the films of Ruth Roland, and then, like so many American girls, became absorbed in the serial film, *The Perils of Pauline*, starring Pearl White and Crane Wilbur. Each week, parallel versions of the series appeared in film and in the Hearst newspapers. Such combinations were common ploys by newspapers hoping for increased sales. The films, in which White performed amazing stunts while she and Wilbur fended off marauding Indians, thrilled Americans in 1914. Joining the two lead characters in the film was a sinister Chinese criminal, Wu Fang. This character became the prototype of Chinese villains of the 1920s, culminating in the many stories of Fu Manchu, as written by Sax Rohmer. Anna May was hardly the only child to miss the explicit racism of these weekly serials. She learned to accept racism as part of the enchanting narrative up on the screen. She concentrated on White's virtuosity, which convinced her that actresses could perform multiple roles. Already literate, she doubtless could also make the connection between print and film stardom, which she later exploited thoroughly. Less inspiring were the theaters she attended, which were poorly ventilated and shabbily furnished and did not resemble the cinematic palaces found in upscale neighborhoods. An electric piano provided the music for the largely Mexican customers. Still, the films thrilled Anna May. Afterward she would retreat to her room and practice acting in front of the mirror for hours on end. Later, she recalled how she would rehearse the "scenes that appealed to me most." Characteristically, they were screen moments that required that she "cry in anguish, with tears streaming down my face; I would clutch the lingerie to my bosom, and then I would tear it in a paroxysm of sorrow." No one would disturb her, although "my mother saw me once in one of these scenes, but she said nothing." Later, she contended that her father was the principal opponent of her budding film career and that her mother was tacitly accepting. In those years of watching and practicing, Anna May combined a spectator's voyeurism with the imagination of an apprentice actor. As Miriam Hansen has argued, the Hollywood method of narration was creating a new kind of American hieroglyphic that marked a new universal language. For most people, spectatorship was sufficient; for Anna May it was necessary to incorporate the new language into her heart and mind. Sadly, Hollywood was creating an identity for her, and she would have to suffer its malevolent messages for years.[31]

Anna May's interest in films coincided with major transformations of the motion-picture business. One innovation was the emergence of the star system. As film productions gradually began to favor fiction over documentary films, and human performances outstripped mechanical fascination of the flicks, fans across the nation begged studios for information on favored actors. Such genres as vaudeville, opera, and minstrelsy had long depended on stars to boost box office receipts, so it was not surprising that the movies followed suit. Moreover, as stars became more famous and demanded higher salaries, which had soared into thousands of dollars per week by 1915, they represented to their largely female audience the height of success and consumer fashion. Building their fame were the movie fan magazines that were specifically tailored to females and their consumer dreams. Soon, American women were following the leads of their favorite actresses in purchasing clothing, changing their hairstyles, and demanding automobiles.[32]

Accompanying these modern themes were baser appeals to human emotion. In early cinema, anti-Asian themes were among the most profitable narratives. Beginning with a Thomas Edison short made in 1898 and entitled "Dancing Chinamen-Marionettes," the foreign, exotic quality of the Chinese became a staple of American filmmaking. One method that catered to that fascination was "rubbernecking," in which American tourists visited Chinatowns on buses equipped with a "megaphone man" who commented on the passing urban scene to his audience, who were seated in ascending rows similar to those in a theater. Chinatown residents angrily tried to halt the tours, but lacked the political power to do so. Bus tours were for the middle class who could afford the costly tickets; movies appealed to the working class and families eager for inexpensive entertainment. The first films about the Chinese and Chinatown were made in New York; the genre accompanied the industry's migration to Los Angeles in the 1910s. Soon, film writers, directors, and producers expanded their visions, incorporating misinformation and racial myths about China and focusing on urban slums such as the Limehouse district in London. By the time Anna May was a teenager, derogatory movies about the Chinese and their locales were standard Hollywood fare.[33]

There were some positive elements to the American fascination with China. The collapse of the Qing dynasty following the 1911 revolution encouraged

Americans to renew a moral commitment to democracy in China and to disavow the anti-Chinese discrimination in the United States. At the same time, American businesses pushed into China and offered such modern consumer goods and styles as cars, movie theaters, electric lights, bobbed hair, department stores, and photography. As Jonathan Spence has indicated, the rush to modernity in China created an emotional backlash in the States for traditional Chinese culture.[34] That focus on the future, however, manifested in the films more as costume design and set arrangement. Major films dealing with Asian issues pushed older anxieties about interracial love into the foreground.

Wong Sam Sing may have been aware of such currents only insofar as he, like other Chinese American adults, resented the insulting stereotypes offered by the cinema. Yet the danger to his parental authority was immediate. The motion-picture business was much closer than the cinema screens. The fledgling business transferred many of its operations to Los Angeles in the years before World War I. In addition to the constant sunshine, Los Angeles offered protection from a violent patents dispute over a key mechanism in the camera in New York. This battle was the latest installment in a long-term war over rights exclusively owned by the Edison Company. As the studios relocated to Los Angeles, a favorite locale for shooting was Chinatown. When the film actors actually appeared making movies on Chinatown streets, Anna May was hopelessly entranced. The first real actress she encountered in the streets was Mae Murray. Anna May was confused because Murray was "ragged and dirty" in her costume. In the child's mind, Murray should have been "dressed in ermine and blazing with diamonds." Nonetheless, Anna May hung around the film shoots as early as the age of nine, begging for a part. Soon, the actors noticed the pretty little girl and called her the "C.C.C," or curious Chinese child. She in turn became determined: She *would* become a movie star.[35]

Anna's big chance came in a major production in 1919. Sensing that films with Chinese themes appealed to the Americans, Metro Pictures filmed *The Red Lantern*, produced by and starring the veteran actress Alla Nazimova. This extraordinary actress may be credited with introducing the now dominant Stanislavsky or "Method" acting to America. She was known as the First Lady of the Silent Screen and cultivated an image as a "foreign" sexual sophisticate, a role later borrowed by Pola Negri, Greta Garbo, and Marlene Dietrich. Nazimova

was keenly aware of the importance of "racial portrayal" on screen. She wrote in an article for *Moving Pictures Stories* of the need to be sensitive to how racial types would respond to emotional demands—for example, how a Chinese girl or a French girl would experience rejection by her lovers. *The Red Lantern* featured a sympathetic reading of tragic interracial love. Nazimova plays an illegitimate Eurasian woman who falls in love with an American missionary. When he does not return her affection, her character condemns hypocritical westerners who teach the Chinese but allow racial prejudice to interfere with genuine love. Angry, she joins the Boxer Rebellion. Watching this great artist perform, the fourteen-year-old Anna May learned that her own "racial portrayal" had equal value to others and so she could emphasize her own experiences.[36]

In the film, Nazimova plays a dual role as half-sisters, the high-yellow Eurasian Mahlee, born to an English father and his Chinese mistress, and the pure white and blonde Blanche Sackville, the child of the same father and his English wife. Soon the sisters fall for the same man, an American diplomat who chooses the English girl; the father soon disowns Mahlee. Her love for the American unrequited, she swallows poison after he is killed in the Boxer Rebellion. As Mahlee dies on a peacock chair, the titles reveal her final words: "East is east and West is west," a message that proclaimed the mournful fate of mixed-race lovers.[37]

The film inspired a popular theme song and gained generally favorable reviews. One less positive notice, which foreshadowed future criticisms, came from a Chinese student who wrote in *The Baltimore Sun* that no Chinese woman would bare her legs as Nazimova did in key scenes. Such commentary about Hollywood's misrepresentation of Chinese women would dog Anna May through much of her career. Though Anna May received no credit for her work as an extra, *The Red Lantern* was more than a minor debut. It exposed her to the talents of a major star and to the practice of Euro-American women as "yellow faces" who played Asian roles. Mahlee's suicide introduced Anna May to the type of cinematic death she would endure. At the same time, it brought young Wong Liu Tsong to the attention of Hollywood directors, paving the way for her next major role. Anna May placed her account of getting the part in the Nazimova film into her personal mythology and retold the story many times. Nazimova seems to have liked the young actress, and the two became friends.[38]

Nazimova Productions used Euro-American actors in the main roles. Joining Nazimova were Virginia Ross, Frank Currier, Winter Hall, and a youthful Noah Beery. The sole credited Asian actor was the Japanese Yukio Ao Yamo. *The Red Lantern* was set in Peking (Beiping), thereby mandating large numbers of Chinese extras and locale. One sequence required three hundred Asian extras. There had been appeals to Hollywood producers to use Anna May before. Harry Carr and Rob Wagner, who had known her since childhood, urged the producers to give her a chance, only to be frustrated by "that old squawk about racial prejudice," which they believed existed primarily in the producers' minds. It took the Reverend James Wang of the Baptist Church, who often acted as a go-between for Hollywood producers and Chinese extras, to secure a job for Anna. An influenza epidemic put many Chinese actors out of work, so Anna's dreams seemed more real. She approached Wang and poured out her heart to him, telling him of her adoration of Crane Wilbur, Pearl White, Mary Pickford, and others. She told him of cadging nickels to sneak into "bad-smelling North Main Street movie theaters." Although he acceded to her pleas to get her a role as an extra, he warned her that she would be lost among the hundreds of Chinese faces. Still, he mused, "I am sure that you will not go unnoticed, for your face is like a tangerine, your ears and your nose are large, and your eyes are big." His clairvoyant talents then failed him, for he worried that "you will not be photogenic enough." Wang knew Marshall "Mickey" Neilan, a prominent director, through his own roles as a Chinese man in westerns. Through this contact, Anna May got her start. Excited at the chance, she rushed home, stole into her mother's room, and rubbed her cake of white Chinese rice powder all over her face. Her face was then too pale, and so she colored it with the red paper found in any Chinese home for wrapping "lucky money." Anna May noticed one of her eyebrows was now obscured, so she quickly crayoned in a black line. Highly pleased with herself, she presented herself to the studio. The makeup man was aghast, grabbed her by the hand, and flung her into a chair. In two minutes the mask was removed and a more suitable one affixed in place. At first hurt and annoyed, Anna May soon became accustomed to and enjoyed the skills of a makeup artist. Later, she remembered her first day on the set. She did not feel any fear, "because I had acted in front of myself every day … so when I acted, it was a wonderful feeling, as though I was just playing myself."[39]

Her enthusiasm was not shared at home. Wong Sam Sing was upset that his second daughter was in the films. Initially, she did not listen to him at all, preferring to bask in the happiness of filmmaking and convinced that the "camera didn't look at anyone but me." Wong Sam Sing warned his daughter that Hollywood made other films besides those about China and that she would not be needed in those productions. Within a few days, she realized that he was right: "No film … No dream … They didn't need a Chinese girl in that film." Anna May now understood that even with her beauty, she could only get parts in films with Asian themes. Hollywood's rigid racial casting, which exists to the present, had boxed her into a limited number of roles. For the time being, she lost face only within the family. Fortunately for Anna, parts for Chinese actors became fashionable again and she was able once more to find herself immersed in "the place where film enchants people." For the next eight months, she was the "one-hundredth or two-hundredth among Chinese women." Anna May's recollections indicate that she was probably in many more films than she is credited with today. Working as an extra gave her valuable experience and, little by little, more exposure.[40]

Her future in film was still not settled at home. What Chinese films were made were vexing enough to Wong Sam Sing. In addition to Nazimova's production, D. W. Griffith's film, *Broken Blossoms* (1919), established a cinematic vision of the Chinese as spiritually peaceful and unable to compete with the stronger, more masculine western cultures. Similarly alarming for the father was the reputation of actresses. In China, popular perceptions ranked actresses with courtesans. Nor could the American screen world offer much comfort. Sexual scandals plagued the industry throughout the early years. Not until Douglas Fairbanks and Mary Pickford glamorized the profession in the 1920s did Americans regard actors as more than low-class rabble. The glory of their marriage still had to compete with an underworld that helped drugs circulate freely on sets. Hollywood divorce and sex scandals played well in the newspapers; more prosaic and tragic were the fates of thousands of girls who flooded into town, anxious for the chance of a lifetime. The studios were far apart geographically and often isolated from the overburdened trolley lines. Hitchhiking made women vulnerable to wolfish males. Successes were few, and suicide and starvation were common. Anna May was not frightened by the hazards of her new profession. Showing how Americanized she had become, Anna May confronted her father about the career she wanted. In

interviews conducted a few years later, she remembered how he said that she was disgracing the family. She retorted that she wanted to be independent and not like the submissive girls in China.

Many years later, just before meeting her father in Taishan and going to the ancestral village, Anna May recalled that her parents held traditional Chinese thoughts that "a good man will not be a soldier, and a good girl will not be an actress." Such proverbs, overheard by the teenage actress, revealed the tensions between her ancestry and her Chinese American identity. She also remembered that her father was reassured in 1919 by the sudden arrival at his doorstep of about one hundred and fifty Chinese coming to Los Angeles to perform in the movie. He knew some of them, "so he did not stop me any longer." Her mother, she claimed, was even more difficult, because Lee Gon Toy believed that cameras captured the soul. Home life was saddened further when a daughter, Marietta, born on April 27, 1919, died the following March. The baby's death and her parent's disapproval of her career made Anna May ripe for melancholia. That despair coalesced with her own confusion over her identity. While Anna May lived in a Chinese home, she worked in a western industry, one whose product further alienated her from her birth culture. Parental tensions, domestic grief, youthful rebellion, and celluloid fantasies pushed Anna May far into hidden racial and personal grief. It is no wonder that she emerged from childhood unable to speak the language of her parents.[41]

Her father's disapproval did not keep Anna May from the lure of Hollywood. She was among many American ethnics who found that films provided a passageway, intellectually and monetarily, into American society. Cinema helped non-white Americans such as Anna May find a forum for her fantasies for a different future than the one envisioned by her father. She later acknowledged that her first years working as an actress were tough, but the cinema, with its abilities to absorb older hopes and modern dreams, gave her the promise of abundance and self-transformation. She could appropriate movie stardom for herself and thereby insulate her feelings from the eventual betrayals by men and the studios.[42]

But before Anna May was able to focus on her chosen career there was the matter of her education. She recalled the two years at high school as among the happiest of her life. She took up tennis enthusiastically and in her second year

won both singles and doubles tournaments. She overdid her exercise, however, and collapsed while attending Camp Estelle for girls on Mount Baldy. She was brought back into town suffering from St. Vitus Dance. Wong Sam Sing took her to a Chinese physician who tried a number of unsuccessful remedies. Anna May lamented that Marshall Neilan and the other directors who had taken an interest would now forget about her. Finally, the doctor tried an unusual method: he scraped her arms with a gold coin until she bled. He repeated this treatment every few days until she recovered. According to Anna May, her return to health had more to do with her aversion to the treatment than the treatment itself. She had missed months of school. There was some talk of college, but Anna May decided to end her formal education in favor of the full-time pursuit of a career in acting.[43]

Anna May's illness and her response to its cure reflect the extraordinary pressures she faced in life. Wong Sam Sing had made it plain that he disliked her new career. Her response to him and to Chinese culture indicates the psychological gulfs within the family. Unable to withstand paternal insistence, Anna May came close to an emotional collapse. Her mysterious illness resembles those suffered by characters in Maxine Hong Kingston's memoir, *The Woman Warrior*. Therein young Asian American women suffer inexplicable ailments that derive from conflicts at home over identity. As with Kingston's characters, Anna May's illness struck her during a period when her imagination was filled with conflicts over ethnic identity and the racial roles she played or observed in Hollywood cinema. Those conflicts would recur.[44]

The battle over her soul affected her physical beauty. At seventeen, Anna May was on the verge of stardom yet deeply resented in her home. Her father anxiously tried to marry her off, nearly pushing her into a nervous breakdown. An extraordinary photograph made by W. F. Seeley for *Photoplay Magazine* at that time reveals the tensions right under the surface of the beautiful young woman.[45] She is wearing a flower-embroidered dress, a tightly bound collar, and a Chinese country girl's "Child Flower" hairstyle, signifying her unmarried, virginal status. Underneath these reassuring customs are blunt, rebellious eyes, western eyebrows, and pouting lips. The caption for the image tells the audience that she "is a true daughter of the lotus land," a dismissive reference to China. The writer's overt racism toward this third-generation American girl

missed the troubled truth of a Chinese country girl openly defying her traditionalist father. This tension is most apparent in her hands, which are posed palm up below her belly, opening the flowers on her dress, and presenting her purity to a tawdry world.

Wong Sam Sing's aversion to the film world was rooted in Chinese culture. The idea of a female film actress was new in China, and the job had low prestige and poor wages. Before the intrusion of Hollywood films in Chinese cities forced the use of actual women in female roles, men performed such parts. Their meager wages made actresses in China shuttle back and forth from work as "dancing girls," a euphemism for prostitutes. Print images of actresses were generally based upon older portrayals of "calendar girls" and demimondaines, using languorous, sexually alluring poses. The model's eyes looked directly at the viewer, with no modesty. Other aspects of the introduction of women to Chinese cinema were subtler. Regional origins were important. Cantonese (the general area from which Anna May's family came) women were considered by other Chinese to be more lively and liberated. Wearing their hair drawn up into tufts in the fashion of slave girls, they were more useful to Shanghai producers than the northern girls, who were regarded as chaste, living by ritual propriety, and subservient. In short, Anna May's adolescent rebellion against her father shaped her for undesirable stereotypes in Chinese eyes and rendered her fair game for wolfish American cinema executives.[46]

Just how much Chinese Americans disliked the screen world can be discerned in the story of Fong Fat, a peanut seller in San Francisco. Allen Holobar, producer of *Hurricane Gal!* for First National Pictures in 1922, recruited Fong Fat for a part in the film. Fong Fat refused, advising the director that Chinese were averse to the film world because of its depictions of them as villains. When Holobar promised Fong Fat that his role would not be negative, the young peanut seller demanded that the Chinese consul in San Francisco, who gave him permission to take the part, settle the issue. After that, Fong Fat refused to come by boat to Los Angeles, fearing that he would be kidnapped. Only when a train fare was arranged was he willing to take the role.[47]

Anna May Wong did not need travel expenses. She grew up amid moviemakers and was enchanted by them by an early age. Despite her family's traditional ways, young Huang Liu Tsong was ready in her early teens to convert her fantasy

world into stardom. She was hardly alone in that aspiration. Hollywood was filled with young, eager, and unformed children who often had no experience with the theater before their careers started. Few of them had much in the way of "reality" behind their stardom. Many came from poor backgrounds and broken homes, and they lived in the public eye at an early age. "Stars" were often tabula rasae, malleable to authoritarian directors. Their roles shaped their personalities. A necessary quality was a plasticity of character and a willingness to shape oneself according to the demands of the public.[48] Anna May's home life was more substantial than many of her contemporaries in film. Her father's fierce traditionalism was a bulwark upon which she could lean in times of distress. Her Chinese culture provided the self-esteem needed to navigate the shark-filled waters of Hollywood. In the years to come, she would learn to rely on her family and her culture to buffer her from the hardships of her career.

Notes

Introduction

1. Kingston, *The Woman Warrior*, 3–16. I am using this controversial term precisely. For a good collection of the disputes raised by Kingston's work and her myths, see the many arguments in Skandera-Trombley, *Critical Essays on Maxine Hong Kingston*. For discussion of the difference between fame and status, see Chang, "The Good, the Bad and the Beautiful," in Zhang, *Cinema and Urban Culture*, 133. For recent history, see Chang, *The Chinese in America*, 208–10. The one article surveying the effects of Wong's career on contemporary literature has notably few examples to discuss. See Cynthia W. Liu, "When Dragon Ladies Die, Do They Come Back as Butterflies? Re-Imagining Anna May Wong," in Hamamoto and Liu, eds., *Countervisions*, 23–40. For quote on difference of fame and achievement, see Yunxiang Gao, "Sex, Sports, and National Crisis," 96–161. The other statues are of Mae West, Dolores Del Rio, and Dorothy Dandridge.
2. Said, *Orientalism*, 2–9; Spence, *Chan's Great Continent*; Hardt and Negri, *Empire*; Mulvey, *Visual and Other Pleasures*, 14–29. I admit to redacting these complex works, but contend that I am using them as their authors intended. For creation of the Oriental, see Yu, *Thinking Orientals*.
3. On such people, see Hodes, "The Mercurial and Abiding Power of Race," 84.
4. For recent evaluations of Anna May's status as a Modern Girl, see Leong, *The China Mystique*, 77–83, and Lim, *A Feeling of Belonging*, 75–80. For Anna May as a "yellow yellow face," see Wang, Yiman, "The Art of Screen Passing: Anna May Wong's Yellow Yellowface Performance in the Art Deco Era," *Camera Obscura,* 20: 3 (2005), 159–61. Two other books on Anna May appeared at the same time as the original edition of my biography. Philip Liebfriend and Chei Mi Lane's *Anna May Wong* is a useful, non-analytical compilation, packed with useful tidbits about her work with many rare images. A good, searchable compliment to it is the International Movie Data base. For her entry, see http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0938923/. A second biography is Anthony B. Chan's *Perpetually Cool: The Many Lives of Anna*

May Wong (1905–1961). I have used two pieces of evidence from this book for this new edition.

5. Chan, "Race, Ethnic Culture, and Gender in the Construction of Identities among Second-Generation Chinese Americans," in Wong and Chan, *Claiming America*, 127–64.
6. For an excellent discussion of transnationality with particular reference to Anna May's regional background, see Wang, *Chinese Overseas*, 31–32, 38–40, 57.
7. See *On Gold Mountain*.

Chapter One Childhood

1. "The True Life Story of a Chinese Girl, by Anna May Wong," *Pictures Magazine*, August, September 1926; Statements of Wong Sam Sing and Lee Gon Toy, U.S. Department of Labor, Immigration Service, February 13, 1925, in National Archives, Pacific Region, Laguna Niguel, California; Leong, *The China Mystique*, 3; Shevsky and Williams, *The Social Areas of Los Angeles*, 54; Chow, "Sixty Years."
2. Aarim-Heriot, *Chinese Immigrants, African Americans*, 10–11, 25–44, 52, 68–69, 82–83.
3. Wang, *Chinese Overseas*, 62–65; Hing, *Making and Remaking*, 19–22; Chang, *Chinese in America*, 110–12. Chang points out that many interracial marriages were successful.
4. Hing, *Making and Remaking*, 21–28; Aarim-Heriot, *Chinese Immigrants, African Americans*, 172–214; Chang, *Chinese in America*, 130–56; Lee, *At America's Gates*.
5. Spence, *The Chan's Great Continent*, 118–43.
6. Smith, *The Lonely Queue*, 21; Lou, "The Chinese-American Community," 23–27; Chang, *Chinese in America*, 121.
7. Greenwood, *Down by the Station*, 20–29, 140–42; Wild, *Street Meeting*, 23–24.
8. *Sanborn Insurance Maps of Los Angeles*, 3: 268; Wild, *Street Meeting*, 124–26; on Chinatowns, see Benton and Gomez, *Chinatown*, 5–7.
9. Zorbas, *Fiddletown*, 30–36. Huang Family Genealogy, Chang On. For the mining camps, see Randall Rohe, "Chinese Camps and Chinatowns: Chinese Mining Settlements in the North American West," in Lee, et al., *Re-Collecting Early Asian America*, 31–54.
10. Wong, "The True Life Story of a Chinese Girl"; Statements of Wong Sam Sing and Lee Gon Toy, U.S. Department of Labor, Immigration Service, February 13, 1925, in National Archives, Pacific Region, Laguna Niguel, California; Huang Family Genealogy, Chang On; Hsu, *Dreaming of Gold*, 40–42; Johnson, *Roaring Camp*, 243–46.
11. Statements of Wong Sam Sing and Lee Gon Toy; Lou, "The Chinese-American Community," 43–49, 64; Interview with Huang Cui-Xiang, 2001, Guangzhou; Lee, *At America's Gates*, 92–95.
12. "The True Life Story of a Chinese Girl"; Interview with Huang Cui-Xiang, 2001.

13. Hsu, *Dreaming of Gold*, 11–13.
14. Statement of Lee Gon Toy, February 20, 1925; Yung, *Unbound Feet*, 166–67; Chen, *Chinese San Francisco*, 67; Aarim-Heriot, *Chinese Immigrants, African Americans*, 68–69.
15. Gyory, *Closing the Gate*, 242–61; Peffer, *If They Don't Bring Their Women Here*, 7–15; Hing, *Making and Remaking*, 203–7.
16. Liu, *Inside Los Angeles Chinatown*, 185–92; Siu, *The Chinese Laundryman*; Lou, "The Chinese-American Community of Los Angeles," 64; Barbagallo, "Changing with the Rhythm," 9; Chang, *Chinese in America*, 168–69. For number of people working at the laundry, see *Los Angeles Times*, July 24, 1921.
17. Liu, *Inside Los Angeles Chinatown*, 33.
18. For her conviction, see How, "Between Two Worlds," 26. For the account of another Chinese family practicing the same deception, see Larson, *Sweet Bamboo*, 62.
19. "Statement of Lee Gon Toy to J. C. Nardini," April 26, 1925, National Archives, Pacific Region, Laguna Niguel Office (Lulu and Jimmy); County of Los Angeles, Health Department, Birth Certificates 18768 (Anna May); 9927 (Mary); 1843 (Frank); 3133 (Roger); 3044 (Marietta); 8573 (Richard).
20. Sucheta Maxumdar, "In the Family," in *Linking Our Lives*, 36–40, and Barbagallo, "Changing with the Rhythm," 10.
21. Greenwood, *Down by the Station*, 92, 119–32; *Hua Tzu Jih Pao* (Hong Kong), February 22, 1936.
22. Smith, *The Lonely Queue*, 39–40.
23. See, *On Gold Mountain*; for photo, see statement of J. C. Nardini, February 24, 1925, U.S. Department of Labor, Immigration Service, 25200/105, National Archives, Pacific Region, Laguna Niguel Office. See also Smith, *Lonely Queue*, 39–40.
24. Wong, "The True Life Story of a Chinese Girl."
25. Leong, *The China Mystique,* 60; *The New Movie Magazine* (London), July 1932, 26; Wong, "The True Life Story of a Chinese Girl," "Anna May Wong," New York Public Library (NYPL). For similar incidents, see Larson, *Sweet Bamboo*, 69–71; and Lou, "Chinese-American Community," 112.
26. Greenwood, *Down by the Station*, 20–21; Lou, "Chinese-American Community," 259–66; Wong, "Childhood of a Chinese Screen Star," 34; Wong, "The True Life Story of a Chinese Girl"; Leong, *The China Mystique*, 60; Liu, *Inside Los Angeles Chinatown*, 64; Jesperson, *American Images*, 2.
27. Chen, *Being Chinese*, 112–26.
28. See, *On Gold Mountain*, 228; Yung, *Unbound Feet*, 108–9; Gebhart, "Jazz Notes on Old China"; "Anna May Wong," NYPL.
29. Chu, *Chinese Theater in America*, 9–41, 56–65, 75, 91, 96–108. For recollections, see *London Era*, February 27, 1929.
30. Wong, "Bamboo, or China's Conversion to Film"; for using lunch money, see *Mein Film*, June 4, 1930.

31. Spears, *Hollywood: The Golden Era*, 373; Sklar, *Film*, 70; Koszarski, An *Evening's Entertainment*, 271; Wong, "My Film Thrills"; Wong, "The True Life Story of a Chinese Girl"; and *Screen Play Secrets*, October 1931. For Alma Rubens, see *Time*, October 1, 1934. For Peking Theater, see Lou, "Chinese-American Community," 58. For another Chinese girl going to the movies at the same time, see Larson, *Sweet Bamboo*, 123. For spectatorship, see Hansen, *Babel and Babylon*, 16; and Barbas, *Movie Crazy*, 9–15, 61. For crying scenes, see de Silva, *These Piquant People*, 51–52. On Wu Fang, see Eugene Wong, "The Early Years: Asians in the American Films Prior to World War II," in Feng, *Screening Asian Americans*, 53–71.
32. De Cordova, *Picture Personalities*, 55–90; Fuller, *At the Picture Show*, 133–68.
33. Sabine Haenni, "Filming 'Chinatown' Fake Visions, Bodily Transformations," in Feng, *Screening Asian Americans*, 21–53. On such slumming in other Chinatowns, see Heap, *Slumming*, 144–46.
34. Spence, *The Chan's Great Continent*, 165–67.
35. Brownlow, *The Parade's Gone By*, 31.
36. *Moving Pictures Stories*, February 4, 1921. For comment, see Marchetti, *Romance and the "Yellow Peril,"* 4.
37. Lambert, Nazimova, 211–13; *AFI Catalog F1* (Feature Films, 1911–1920), 760–61.
38. For an unintentionally revealing story about this practice, see *Picture Show*, January 20, 1923. For the Chinese government's criticism of Hollywood at this time, see Leyda, *Dianying*, 32–33.
39. Wong, "My Film Thrills"; Wong, "My Story"; Wong, "Bamboo, or China's Conversion to Film"; *London Era*, February 27, 1929; and *Screenplay*, October 1931. For Reverend Wang comments, see *Ciné Miroir*, November 27, 1931, and *Films in Review*, 12 (1960), 129–30. For actions by Carr and Ye, see *Rob Wagner's Script Magazine*, September 1935, 13. For the influenza epidemic in Los Angeles, see Crosby, *America's Forgotten Pandemic*, 92.
40. Wong, "Bamboo, or China's Conversion to Film."
41. Andrew W. Field, "Selling Souls in Sin City: Shanghai Singing and Dancing Hostesses in Print, Film, and Politics, 1920–49," and Michael G. Chang, "The Good, the Bad and the Beautiful: Actresses and Public Discourse in Shanghai, 1920s–1930s," in Zhang, *Cinema and Urban Culture*, 100–59; Brownlow, *The Parade's Gone By*, 31, 39; Wong, "The Childhood of a Chinese Screen Star," Wong, "Bamboo, or the Conversion of China to Film"; Leong, *The China Mystique*, 57. On racial grief, see Cheng, *Melancholy of Race*, 8–16. On the hazards of breaking into Hollywood, see Barbas, *Movie Crazy*, 68–77.
42. See the brilliant commentary on immigrants and the movies in Hansen, *Babel and Babylon*, 111–13.
43. Wong, "The True Life Story of a Chinese Girl."
44. See the discussion of Kingston's novel in Cheng, *The Melancholy of Race*, 64–67.
45. Stills Collection, the Wisconsin Center for Film and Theater Research.

46. Harris, "Silent Speech," 132–37, 140–42; Field, "Selling Souls in Sin City: Shanghai Singing and Dancing Hostesses in Print, Film, and Politics, 1920–49," in Zhang, *Cinema and Urban Culture*, 99–127.
47. *Motion Picture Stories*, July 28, 1922.
48. See the brilliant commentary on this process in Cohen, *Silent Film*, 139–41.

Chapter Two Seeking Stardom

1. Klepper, *Silent Films*, 215–17; *AFI Catalog*, 1921–1930 (Feature *Films*), 580.
2. *AFI Catalog*, 1921–1930 (Feature *Films*), 784–85.
3. Carlisle, "A Chinese Puzzle," *Movie Classics*, May 1925, and *Pictures and Picturegoer*, February 1925; *Pantomine*, December 10, 1921; *AFI Feature Films Catalog, 1911–1930,* 689 for *Outside the Law*. For her comments on the Beery film, see *Picture Show*, September 7, 1929; for *Lilies of the Field*, see *Picture Show*, January 12, 1935.
4. *AFI Feature Films Catalog, 1911–1930,* 215; *Moving Pictures Stories*, January 21, 1921. For *Dinty* in Austria, see *Der Filmbote*, July 23, 1921; *Das Kino-Journal*, August 6, 1921 and September 15, 1923; Wong, "Bamboo, or China's Conversion to Film."
5. *AFI Feature Films Catalog, 1921–1930,* 248; *Moving Pictures Stories*, February 11, 1921; *Der Filmbote*, August 6, 1921. For teacup scene, see *Time*, October 1, 1934.
6. For articles on Hayakawa and his wife, see *Picture Show*, May 7, June 4, November 5, December 2, 1921. For summary of his career, see Sklar, *Film*, 80–81. For his home and entertaining, see Hayakawa, *Zen Showed Me the Way*, 147–50.
7. *AFI Catalog, F1 R* (Feature Films, 1921–1930), 62; *Variety*, October 21, 1921; *Motion Picture Classic*, March 1922, 46; *Picture Show*, January 27, 1923; *Bits of Life*, Pressbook; Koszarski, *An Evening's Entertainment*, 230–32; Rainsberger, *James Wong Howe*, 15–16.
8. Winship, 'The China Doll"; Spear, "Marshall Neilan," in his *Hollywood: The Golden Era; Kinema Junpo* (Tokyo), November 5, 1924. For cross, see Louella Parsons column in the *Los Angeles Examiner*, August 12, 1934. Sex with Anglo-Americans was frowned upon in the Chinese community as well. See Lou, "Chinese-American Community, 333–34. For laws, see Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally,* 90–92; For mixed marriages, see Wild, *Street Meeting*, 136–44.
9. *AFI Catalog F1 R* (*Feature Films, 1921–1930*), 702–3; *Variety*, August 5, 1921; *Moving Picture World*, October 29, 1921; *Das Kino-Journal*, June 9, 1923.
10. For a lengthy discussion of the story, see Nick Browne, "The Undoing of the Other Woman: *Madame Butterfly* in the Discourse of American Orientalism," in Daniel Bernardi, ed., *The Birth of Whiteness*, 227–51; and Marina Hueng, "The Family Practice of Orientalism: From Madame Butterfly to Indochine," in Bernstein and Studlar, eds., *Visions of the East*, 158–83; and Yoshihara, *Embracing the East*, 77–101; on acting, see Naremore, *Acting in the Cinema*, 48–49.
11. McCaffery and Jacobs, *Guide to the Silent Years*, 269–70; Sklar, *Film*, 105, 109; Basaten, *Glorious Technicolor*, 31. For crying, see *Picture Show*, May 6, 1922 and the

commentary in Cohen, *Silent Film*, 155. For Harlan's career, see *Picture Show*, May 26, 1923. For Anna May's recollections, see *Los Angeles Examiner*, August 29, 1960.

12. *AFI Catalog F1 R (Feature Films, 1921–1930)*, 818; *Variety*, December 8, 1922; *New York Times*, December 2, 1922; Beauchamp, *Without Lying Down*, 143; Barbas, *Movie Crazy*, 72.
13. *Kinetetographic Weekly*, April 26, 1923; *Picture Show*, September 22, 1923; *Kinema Junpo* (Tokyo), February 1, 1924; *Screen and Stage* (Tokyo), March, 1924; *Teano Film Gesellschaft Berlin*, July 5, 1924.
14. Pan, *Encyclopedia of the Chinese Overseas*, 334.
15. *Chinese Students Monthly*, December 1922, 74–77.
16. "Anna May Wong," NYPL; Smith, *Lonely Queue*, 36, 49; Chen, "Exclusion of Chinese Women," 128; Lee, *At America's Gates*, 100, 238; Zhao, *Remaking Chinese America*, 15, 17, 37–39; Hing, *Making and Remaking*, 44–48, 206–8. On mixed-race marriages in Los Angeles, see Chang, *Chinese in America*, 196. On preferences of American-born Chinese men, see Sucheng Chan, "Race, Ethnic Culture and Gender," in Wong and Chan, *Claiming America*, 127–64. For differences between Chinese students and Chinese Americans, see Yu, *Thinking Orientals*, 115–16.
17. Anna May remembered this story so well that she related it ten years later in *Mein Film*, August 5, 1932.
18. *Wilmington* (Florida) *Journal*, December 4, 1923, Clipping File, AMPAS; Kingsley, "I Shall Marry a Man of My Own Race." On kiss in O'Neil's play, see Mumford, *Interzones*, 121–32.
19. Gebhart, "Jazz Notes on Old China." See also *Screenland*, January 25, 1922.
20. On the American flappers, see Chang, *Chinese in America*, 195–96. For China, see Koo, *No Feast Lasts Forever*, 98, 180–84; Sergeant, *Shanghai*, 271; Hansen, *Babel and Babylon*, 120; "East is West," *Screen Snapshots*, ca. 1924. On Li Hongzhang, see Spence, *The Search for Modern China*, 213–35.
21. *Wilmington* (Florida) *Journal*, December 4, 1923, Clipping File, AMPAS; *Motion Picture Classic Magazine*, August 1923.
22. Hirschorn, *The Universal Story*, 42; *Kinema Junpo* (Tokyo), February 1, 1924.
23. *AFI Catalog F1 R* (*Feature Films, 1921–1930*), 203; *Variety*, August 23, 1923; Skal and Savada, *Dark Carnival*, 72–74.
24. Winship, "The China Doll." For picture of Anna May and her car, see *Theatre*, September 26, 1925, 48. See also *Motion Picture Magazine*, July 1923; *Movie Weekly Magazine*, November 1, 1924; *Photoplay*, June 1923, March 1924, April 1925, August 1927. See also *Das Kino-Journal*, July 7, 1923. For Cliffords, see Program Notes for *Tschun-Tschi*, Neuen Wiener Schauspielhaus, Vienna, 1930.
25. *AFI Catalog F1 R* (*Feature Films, 1921–1930*), 811; *Variety*, December 8, 1923.
26. Sklar, *Film*, 108–10.
27. *AFI Catalog FI R* (*Feature Films, 1921–1930*); *Variety*, March 26, 1924; Fonoroff, *Silver Light*, 1–2; Youngblood, *Movies for the Masses*, 20, 51–52, 183n27; McCaffery and Jacobs, *Guide to the Silent Years*, 265–66; Pratt, *Spellbound in Darkness*, 298–99;

"Anna May Wong," NYPL; *Kinetographic Weekly*, October 2, 1924; *Pictures and Picturegoer*, November, December 1924; *Picture Show*, November 29, 1924; Mannock's recollections are printed in *Picturegoer*, February 23, 1950, 23. In France, see *Ciné-Miroir*, April 15, May, June, September 1924. For cover, see *Cinémonde*, July 30, 1924. For German, see also *Das Kino-Journal*, August 14, 1926; *Mein Film,* 35, 36, 42 (1926). For South America, *see Cinelandia*, May 1928. Portuguese critics also believed that Anna May was Japanese. See the cover of *Cinéfilo*, October 1, 1928.

28. For *Across the Pacific,* see *Herald* (Australia), January 2, 3, 9, 10, 17, 19, 24 and February 2, 6, 1925; *The Movie Times* (Tokyo), February 1, 1925; *Play and Movie* (Tokyo), February 1924; In Austria, see *Der Filmbote*, March 20, April 24, August 14, 15 (*The Toll of the Sea*) 1924 and *Paimann's Filmlisten*, March 9 and August 27, 1926. For upstaging, see Carey, *Doug and Mary*, 146.
29. *Diangying Zazhi* (Movie Magazine), November 1925; *Diangying Huabao* (Screen Pictorial), May 1925. For affair, Mrs. Douglas Fairbanks, Jr. interview with author, 2004.
30. For date with Romney, see Nolan, *Lorenz Hart*, 62.
31. *Variety*, September 24, 1924; *Motion Picture Magazine*, November 1924; *Motion Picture Classic Magazine*, December 1924; for British reviews, see *Pictures and Picturegoer*, June 1925, October 1925; *Picture Show*, June 14, 1925; for Japanese reviews, see *The Movie Times* (Tokyo), October 1, November 5, 1925.
32. *AFI Catalog F1 R* (*Feature Films, 1921–1930*), 600; Koszarski, *An Evening's Entertainment*, 222; Rainsberger, *James Wong Howe,* 151–54; *Variety*, December 17, 24, 31, 1924; Seagrave, *American Films Abroad*, 25; *Kinetographic Weekly*, January 22, 1925; *Picture Show*, March 7, 1925; *Der Filmbote*, January 1924.
33. For forms, see Wong Lew Song File 14036/236A, Immigration and Naturalization Service, National Archives, Pacific Region, Laguna Niguel, California. For the convoluted rights of American-born Chinese women, see Chan, "Exclusion of Chinese Women," 118–20, 125. For suits, see How, "Between Two Worlds," 26. For inspectors, see Lee, *At America's Gates*, 47–75.
34. "Anna May Wong File," NYPL. For Wong Sam Sing's lease, see Los Angeles Recorder's Office, Norwalk, California, Book 5129, 1–3. On the 1924 law, see Hing, *Making and Remaking*, 32–34; 213–14; on Mexico and ease of entrance, see Lee, *At America's Gates*, 158–59, 179–87.
35. *Xinyingxing* (Silverland), September 1, 1928.
36. "The True Life Story of a Chinese Girl, by Anna May Wong," *Pictures Magazine*, August, September 1926.
37. Leong, *The China Mystique*, 68–70.
38. Sklar, *Film*, 183; Fowles, *Starstruck*, 66, 78–9, 86.
39. For contract and San Francisco shows, see *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 18, 1924 and January 22, 1925. For St. Dennis, nautch girls and trials, see *Los Angeles Times*, January 21, 1915; for trial, see among others *Los Angeles Times*, January 14, 1925.

40. Slide, *Encyclopedia of Vaudeville*, 181; *Der Filmbote*, July 25, 1925. Her playbills are gathered in the Anna May Wong Gift Collection at New York Public Library. For this period, see Book 8408.
41. *AFI Catalog F1 R* (*Feature Films, 1921–1930*), 269; *Variety*, February 4, 1925; *Films in Review*, 16 (1965), 569; *Kinema Junpo* (Tokyo), September 21, 1925; *Movie Times* (Tokyo), October 11, 1925; *Der Filmbote*, March 3, 1924; *Paimann's Filmlisten*, March 12, 1926; *Mein Film* 2, 4 (1926).
42. *AFI Catalog F1 R* (*Feature Films, 1921–1930*), 181, 235, 719.
43. *Motion Picture World*, December 5, 1925. Fairmont Productions completed *Silk Bouquet*, later renamed *The Dragon Horse*, on February 26, 1926. It was licensed to play in New York State on June 26, 1926 and renewed on January 4, 1927. See License Applications for Silk Bouquet, Film Script Collection, Manuscript Division, New York State Archives. For comment on rich Chinese people and their intentions, see *Mein Film* 10 (1926).
44. For *The Desert's Toll*, see *Bioscope*, January 27, 1927, and *Picturegoer*, November 1927. For pay, see Anna May Wong File, "Contract for *The Desert's Toll*," September 4, 11, 1926, USC Film Archives. For Swanson, see Parish, *Paramount Pretties*, 22–26.
45. *Variety*, May 25, 1927; *Screen Secrets*, May 1928; *China Doll*, 3; *Screen and Stage* (Tokyo), April 1927, and *Mein Film*, 45 (1927). For salary for *Mr. Buggs*, see Anna May Wong File, *Honorable Mr. Buggs*, University of Southern California Film Archives. There is some debate whether Anna May appeared in *The Dove* (United Artists, 1927), with Wallace Beery and Norma Talmadge. See *Films in Review*, 38:10 (1987), 510.
46. *Los Angeles Times*, June 30, 2002; Young, *Rustic Canyon*, 83; Pendergast and Pendergast, *Writers and Production Artists*, 738–40.
47. *Mein Film*, 100 (1927).
48. *Mr. Wu*, MGM Production Notes, USC Archives.
49. *Variety*, April 20, 1927; For Jannings and for *Photoplay* article, see AMPAS Clipping File; in London, see *Bioscope*, February 9, 1928; *Kinetographic Weekly*, February 9, 1928; *Picturegoer*, September 1927; *Picture Show*, March 12 and 26, 1927. For South America, see *Cinelandia*, April, May 1927. In Austria, see *Paimann's Filmlisten*, June 24, 1927. For Japanese reviews, see *Movie Times* (Tokyo), September 21, October 21, 1928, and *Kinema Junpo* (Tokyo), November 2, 1928. Chaney's encouragement is reported in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch Daily*, July 25, 1931, and reprinted in *Shanghai Express*, 1:1 (1999). For discussion of "yellow faces," see Fuller, "Hollywood Goes Oriental."
50. *AFI Catalog F1 R* (*Feature Films, 1921–1930*), 562; *Variety*, June 29, 1927; Moy, *Marginal Sights*, 90–92; *Kinema Junpo* (Tokyo), January 10, 1930; *Das Kino Journal*, August 29, 1928, January 5, 1929 and *Picturegoer*, August 1928. For emphasis on the face, see Cohen, *Silent Film*, 107–31. On use of voice, see Crafton, *The Talkies*, 74, 172, 218.

51. For examples of magazine coverage, see *Picture Play*, September 1, 1924, November 1927; *Photoplay*, March 1924, August 1926; *Picture Show Supplement* (London), July 27, 1925; *Movie Weekly*, November 1, 1924; *Theater*, August 1924, August 26, 1927. See *Picturegoer* (September 1927) for direct comment on the limitations of her roles.
52. Chu, *Chinese Theater*, 173. For quote, see Xiao, "Film Censorship," 246.
53. For Jannings, see Carlisle, "Velly Muchee Lonely," 94. Sojin, *The Unpainted Face of Hollywood*, 60–61.
54. Endres and Cushman, *Hollywood at Your Feet*, 23, 27–34; Film Clip, Sekani Moving Ideas, Film Archive.
55. Anna May Wong Gift Collection Book 8409, NYPL; Pepper and Kobal, *The Man Who Shot Garbo*, 32; *Theatre Magazine*, 1927; *Vanity Fair*, 93 (May 1928), 91; Pepper, *Camera Portraits*, 26; Beaton, *Photobiography*, 46–7.
56. See for example, in England, *Picture Show*, January 2, 1926. In Japan see *Kinema Junpo* (Tokyo), January 21, 1924; March 1, 11; October 21, 1925; October 21, 1927; February 11, 1929. Swimsuit photo appears in *Stage and Screen (Tokyo)*, August 1927; the other in the March 1927 issue.
57. *Liang You Huabao*, July 30, 1927; Lee, *Shanghai Modern*, 64–65. On Li Lillli, see Gao, "Sports, Gender, and the Nation-State," chapter 4.
58. *Pei-Yang Pictorial Weekly* (Tianjin), November 30, 1927; May 8, August 29, 1928. For an English review, see *Picturegoer*, March 1928; for France see *Ciné-Miroir*, December 2, 1927; for Austria see *Paimann's Filmlisten*, August 10, 1927 and *Das Kino-Journal*, October 8, 1927. For Germany see *Mein Film*, March 25, 1927. On Gray see *Screen Secrets Magazine*, December 1927, January 1928. For censorship see *Chinatown Charlie* and *Devil Dancer* Files, Censorship Board Scripts, New York State Library.
59. *Variety*, February 5, March 28, 1928; Ellenberger, *Ramon Novarro*, 83–4; *Bioscope*, May 17, 1928; *Movie Times (Tokyo)*, November 5, 1929. For Bull photos, see Pepper and Kobal, *The Man Who Shot Garbo*, 32, and Anna May Wong file at the Wisconsin Center for Film and Theater Research. For South American advertisements, see *Cinelandia*, June, July, August 1928.
60. *Across to Singapore*, MGM Files, USC Film Archives.
61. Carlisle, "Velly Muchee Lonely," 94; *Hollywood Magazine*, February 1932; *Ciné Miroir*, November 27, 1931; *Mein Film*, May 5, 1928; Anna May Wong File, June 7, 1927, National Archives, Pacific Region, Laguna Niguel, California; "Anna May Wong File," NYPL; AMPAS Clippings and *Screen Secrets Magazine*, July 1928.
62. Segrave, *American Films Abroad*, 19–23, 34–35, 41–44, 69–70.

Chapter Three Europe

1. Rotha, *The Film Till Now*, 230; Palmer and Neubauer, *The Weimar Republic*, 263; Ritchie, *Faust's Metropolis*, 350–54, and Elsaesser, *Weimar Cinema and After*, 33–37; AMPAS Clippings.

2. Willet, *The Weimar Years*, 89; Jelavitch, *Berlin Caberet*, 167–74; Gordon, *Voluptuous Panic*; Rose, *Jazz Cleopatra*, 83–88; Schrader and Schebera, *The "Golden" Twenties*, 142, and Ritchie, *Faust's Metropolis*, 343–45.
3. Flemming Christiansen, "Chinese Identity in Europe," and Erich Guttinger, "A Sketch of the Chinese Community in Germany Past and Present," in Benton and Peike, *The Chinese in Europe*, 42–67, 197–211.
4. Bergfelder, "Negotiating Exoticism," in Higson and Maltby, *Film Europe*, 305–8; Kreimeier, *The UFA Story*, 134; Vincendeau, *Encyclopedia of European Cinema*, 125; *Mein Film*, May 5, July 6, September 14, November 23, 1928.
5. Bergfelder, "Negotiating Exoticism," in Higson and Maltby, *Film Europe*, 302–5. Bruno, *Atlas of Emotion*, 294–95.
6. *Film Photos Wie Noch Nie*, 131–32, 159, 170, 237; Pepper, *Camera Portraits*, 26; *Tänzerinnen Der Gegenwart*, 47; Weiss, "Heads and Tales." For Menasse, see Faber, ed., *Divas and Lovers*, 49. For later use of Jacobi's images, see *Tolnai Vilaglapja*, June 21, 1939, 42. For availability of magazines in China, see Lee, *Shanghai Modern*, 18–20, 34.
7. Benjamin, "Gesprächt mit Anna May Wong," in Witte, *Walter Benjamin*, 105–16; Broderson, *Walter Benjamin*, 164–66. For similar reactions, see Guttinger, *Köpfen Sie Mal ein Ei in Zeitlupe*, 23, and Hubert, *Hollywood: Legends and Reality*, 106–9. For café society, see Ritchie, *Faust's Metropolis*, 345–46; and for theater and opera, see the many programs in Anna May Wong Gift Collection, Books 8401, 8402.
8. Spence, *The Chan's Great Continent*, 144–46.
9. Anna May Wong Gift Collection, Book 8414, NYPL; *Pour Vous*, July 18, 1929; *BN L'Arsenale*, February 1929. For population figures, see Pan, *Encyclopedia of the Chinese Overseas*, 311–12.
10. Live Yu-Sion, "The Chinese Community in France: Immigration, Economic Activity; Cultural Organization, and Representation," in Benton and Pieke, *The Chinese in Europe*, 96–125.
11. Anna May Wong Clipping File, AMPAS; *Screenplay Secrets*, June 1929, May 1930.
12. *Ciné Miroir*, June 14, 1929; *Cinémonde*, January 24, 1929. For her life in London, see *Picturegoer*, September 1928 and Anna May Wong Gift Collection, Book 8405. For Lulu's departure, see *Los Angeles Examiner*, May 30, 1929; *Picture Show*, July 27, 1929. For discussion of the impact of Anna May on English fashion, see Rivers, "Anna May Sorry She Cannot Be Kissed."
13. de Silva, *These Piquant People*, 49–54. See also *Picture Show*, September 7, 1930 and *Cinémonde*, January 16, 1930.
14. David Parker, "Chinese People in Britain: Histories, Futures, and Talents," in Benton and Pieke, *The Chinese in Europe*, 67–96.
15. *Ciné Miroir*, November 15, 22, 1929.
16. Jager, "Song," *FilmKritik*. The fullest French review was in *Ciné Miroir*, November 22, 1929. *Song* is dramatized in *Picture Show*, August 17, 1929.

17. Bergfelder, "Negotiating Exoticism," 308–30; Jager, "Song," *FilmKritik*; *Paimann's Filmlisten*, August 31; *Film-Kurier*, August 18, 29, 25; September 1, 8, 10, 1928; *NYT*, August 22, 1928.
18. *Cinémonde*, May 23, 1929; *Close Up*, 3:6 (December 1928), 9–14; *Variety*, November 14, 1928; *New York Times*, August 22, 1928 and December 30, 1929.
19. Wong, "The Chinese Are Misunderstood."
20. McLellan, *The Girls*, 62; Spoto, *Blue Angel*, 38–39; Ritchie, *Faust's Metropolis*, 355; Eisenstadt, *People*, 22; Palmer and Neubauer, *The Weimar Republic*, 12, 151, 272. For Baker's appearances in Berlin, see *Film-Kurier*, September 12, 1928.
21. *Pour Vous*, February 14, 21, 1929.
22. *BN de L'Arsenale*, February 1929.
23. For her statement that she was twenty-three years old in 1930, see *Paris-Midi*, May 1930. For wrong birthday, see *Die Filmwoche*, 35 (1932).
24. *Pour Vous*, March 7, 1929.
25. *Pour Vous*, July 27, 1933 and November 14, 1930.
26. *Pour Vous*, May 26, 1932.
27. *Pour Vous*, March 23, 1933.
28. *Ciné-Miroir*, March 8, 1929; *Pour Vous*, March 16, 1933; *Cinémonde*, October 10, November 2, 1928.
29. *Screen and Stage*, August, October, 1928; *Xinyingxing* (Silverland), September 1, 1928; *Pei-Yang Pictorial News*, August 31, December 26, 1929, March 18, 20, April 1, November 22, 1930.
30. *Film Weekly*, December 17, 1928; February 11, 1929; *Das Magazin*, 63:6 (November 1929); *Filmjournalen*, 5 (1930); See also *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News*, November 20, 1929; *Picture Show*, August 28, 1928; *Ciné-Miroir*, November 15, 1929. For German and Austrian reviews of *Piccadilly* and reruns, see *Paimann's Filmlisten*, February 15, 1929, April 11, 1930, January 11, 1929, and *Mein Film*, January 30, 1930. For Portugal see *Cinéfilo*, November 17, 1928.
31. Brodi, *Der verbotene Blick*, 297.
32. *Kinetographic Weekly*, February 7, 1929; *Close Up* 5 (July 1929), 45–47; *Picture Show*, August 17, 1929; January 12, 18, 1930; February 8, 1930; March 1, 29, 1930; July 12, 1930. For France, see *Hebdo-Cinema*, January 25, 1929. For Austria, see *Das Kino-Journal*, February 16, 1929. For the United States, see *New York Times*, July 14, 1929.
33. This description and the following paragraphs are taken from the review in *Ciné Miroir*, June 20, 1930, from *Picture Show*, March 12, August 18, 25, 1928; October 20, December 29, 1929, and from my own reading of the film. For Thomas's sketch, see *Piccadilly* Pressbook, LOC LP559.
34. Rivers, "Anna May Sorry She Cannot Be Kissed"; Bennett, *Piccadilly*; Doerr, "Reminiscences of Anna May Wong," *Social Magazine*, February 1932.
35. Rivers, "Anna May Sorry She Cannot Be Kissed."
36. There are more than fifty clippings and reviews in the Rose Quong Collection, Pennsylvania Historical Society. None favors Anna May and all commonly argue

that Rose Quong trumped the movie star. For transition to talkies and effect on stars, see Sklar, *Film*, 172–75.

37. Dean, *Mind's Eye*, 67–71. For American coverage, see *Los Angeles Examiner*, February 12, 1929, March 10, 1929. For anecdote about the luncheon, see *Los Angeles Examiner*, August 12, 1934. For 100 pound fee, see *Time*, October 1, 1934.
38. *Filma*, March 13, 1930; *Ciné Miroir*, June 27, 1930; *Hebdo-Film*, March 15, 29, 1930; *Mein Film*, March 15, 1929; *Das Kino-Journal*, March 16, May 4, 1929; *Variety*, May 8, 1929.
39. AMW to VV, September 26, 1929.
40. Klaus, *Deutsche Tonfilme* 2 (1931); Guy, "Calling All Stars: Musical Films in a Musical Decade," in Richards, ed., *The Unknown 1930s*, 102, 104; *Cinémonde*, January 16, February 13, 1930; *Mein Film*, October 7, 1930.
41. *Ciné Miroir*, May 2, September 19, 1930; *Illustrieter Film-Kurier* (Berlin), 59 (n.d.); *Mein Film*, October 16, November 27, 1929.
42. Rivers, "Anna May Sorry She Cannot Be Kissed"; *Los Angeles Examiner*, November 23, 1929; for appearances see *Film Weekly*, April 5, 1930.
43. *Variety*, November 5, 1930; AMPAS Clipping File; *New York Times*, November 4, 1930, April 2, 1931; *Cinémonde*, September 18, 1930; *Hebdo-Cinéma*, October 4, 1930. For German films, see *Die Filmwoche*, January and February 1930. For German indifference to Dietrich, see Ritchie, *Faust's Metropolis*, 358.
44. *Mein Film*, July 22, 1930.
45. On *Sabotage,* see *Hebdo-Film*, June 7, July 5, 1930. *Sabotage* is not listed among Metzner's credits that are detailed in *Film Dope* 42 (1989), 40–43. He left Europe for Hollywood in the mid-1930s to escape Hitler. See also Kracauer, *From Caligari to Hitler*, 194–95.
46. *Ciné Miroir*, June 13, 1930; *Cinémonde*, July 24, 1930.
47. Rivers, "Anna May Sorry She Cannot Be Kissed."
48. *New York Times*, April 20, 1930.
49. Martin Duberman, "Robeson and Othello," in Stewart, ed., *Paul Robeson*, 123–35. For program of this night, see Anna May Wong Gift Collection, Book 8405.
50. *Ciné Miroir*, November 11, 1929; *Mon Ciné*, March 11, 1930; *Carnet*, September 28, 1930; *Cinémonde*, May 18, 1933. The German journalists agreed; see *Mein Film*, February 27, 1929. For French resentment, see Blower, *Becoming Americans,* 55–93, esp. 78–79.
51. *Ciné Miroir*, June 13, 14, 1930; *Paris-Midi*, May 1930.
52. *Ciné Miroir*, June 13, 14, 1930. For many theatrical evenings, see Anna May Wong Gift Collection, Book 8401.
53. *BN de L'Arsenale*, February 1929.
54. *Mein Film*, June 4, 1930.
55. Kracauer, *From Caligari to Hitler*, 6–10, 135; Eisner, *The Haunted Screen*; Berfelder, "Negotiating Exoticism."

56. *Wiener Handelsblatt*, July 5, 15, 19, 24, August 4, 5, 12, 30, 1930; Der Tag, June 22, July 2, 6, 15, 20, 28, 30, 1930; *Neue Freie Presse*, July 10, 1930; *New York Times*, October 18, 1930; *Los Angeles Examiner*, August 22, 1930; *Mein Film*, August 19, 1930. On Feldkammer and Preminger, see Prikopa, *Der Wiener Volksoper*, 83–87.
57. *Der Tag*, August 14, 1930.
58. *Wiener Zeitung*, August 17, September 10, 1930; *Wiener Handelsblatt*, September 16, 17, 1930; *Der Tag*, August 16, 1930. For German remarks, see *Mein Film*, August 17, 1930.
59. For homesickness, see *Los Angeles Examiner*, October 19, 1930.
60. *Screenplay Secrets*, October 1931. I could not find much on Grace Wilcox. She wrote a one-act play involving a flapper and her lover which was published in *Poet Lore: World Literature and the Drama* (Boston: Richard G. Badger, 1930), 251–60.
61. *New York Times*, October 18, November 16, 1930.
62. Smith, *Life in a Putty Knife Factory*, 25.
63. Anna May Wong, AMPAS Clipping File; *Motion Picture Magazine*, October 1931; Lim, *A Feeling of Belonging*, 55–56.

Chapter Four Atlantic Crossings

l. *New York Times*, April 20, 1930; October 30, 1930; Wong, "My Film Thrills," *Cinegraf*, July 1932. Botto, *At this Theater*, 205.
2. On the death of Lee Gon Toy, see Clippings File, AMPAS; *Los Angeles Examiner*, November 12, 1930, February 3, 1931.
3. *American Photography* (Boston), November 1931, 573.
4. For arrival, see *Los Angeles Examiner*, June 2, 1931, and Anna May Wong Clipping File, AMPAS. For Oland quote, see Bob Thomas article, December 22, 1959, reprinted in *Shanghai Express* 1:1 (1999). For salaries, see *Daughter of the Dragon*, Production Notes, Box 32, Paramount Pictures File, AMPAS.
5. *AFI Feature Films, 1931–1940*, 467. Paramount also included a photo of Anna May in a twenty-year anniversary film, which was not released to the public. Ibid., 970.
6. Berenstein, *Attack of the Leading Ladies*, 39–40, 221n10.
7. *New York Times*, August 25, 1931; *Variety*, August 25, 1931; *Los Angeles Examiner*, August 28, 1931; *Screenplay Secrets*, October 1931; *Film Fun*, October, November 1931.
8. *Cinéfilo*, March 1932.
9. "Daughter of the Dragon Pressbook," LP2444, LOC; *Cinelandia*, December 1931.
10. Berry, *Screen Style*, 95–119.
11. Willis, "Famous Oriental Stars Return to the Screen"; see also *Los Angeles Examiner*, May 13, June 2, 3, 1931. For Mary see *Picture Show*, December 19, 1931. Anna May's "return" even received play in Europe. See *Picturegoer Weekly*, October 17, 1931.
12. Winokur, *American Laughter*, 212; Berry, *Screen Style*, 136–40.

13. Parish and Leonard, *Hollywood Players*, 535; Anna May Wong Gift Collection, Book 8408, Book 8409. Van Vechten Scrapbook, 24; *Los Angeles Examiner*, August 25, 1931; *Los Angeles Times*, October 30, 1931.
14. Wong, "Manchuria," 7.
15. Wong, "Manchuria," 6–7. For passive resistance, see Fu, *Passivity, Resistance and Collaboration*, 21–68.
16. *AFI Feature Films, 1931–1940*, 1904; Rainsberger, *James Wong Howe*, 19; *Cinelandia*, March 1932.
17. For a similar reading, see Marchetti, *Romances*, 65. For dialogue, see "Shanghai Express Censorship Dialogue Script," New York State Archives.
18. Program for Anna May Wong, La Scala, Rome, 1934, Anna May Wong Gift Collection, Book 8402.
19. *Shanghai Express*, Production Notes, Box 116, Paramount Pictures File, AMPAS; on clothing, see Rosten, *Hollywood*, 193–95. For comments on von Sternberg's use of Dietrich, see Naremore, *Acting in the Cinema*, 132–36.
20. *Picturegoer Weekly*, October 1, 1932, and *New York Times*, February 18, 1932.
21. *Pei-Yang Pictorial Weekly*, December 5, 1931; *Radio Movie Daily News* (Shanghai), June 17, 1932; Jones, *Portrayal of China*, 37–41. See translation of the Pei-Yang article and several letters between Paramount executives in the Anna May Wong Clipping File, AMPAS. For Hong Shen, see Leyda, *Dianying*, 82; Zhao, "Film Censorship in China," 194–96; Xiao, "Anti-Imperialism and Film Censorship during the Nanjing Decade, 1927–1937," in Lu, *Transnational Chinese Cinemas*, 38–40; Zhang, *Encyclopedia of Chinese Film*, 188; Pickowicz, "The Theme of Spiritual Pollution," and Sergeant, *Shanghai*, 248–50. On students, see Spence, *Search for Modern China*, 283. On Hong Shen, see Ye, *Seeking Modernity*.
22. See the complete discussion of censorship around this time and Hong Shen's reputation building in Xiao, "Film Censorship in China," 178–200. For suspension, see Vasey, *The World According to Hollywood*, 155.
23. "*Shanghai Express* Censorship Dialogue Script," New York State Archives.
24. *Mein Film*, 330 (1932).
25. Riva, *Marlene Dietrich*, 127; Dietrich, *Marlene;* Wollstein, *Vixens, Floozies and Molls*, 25–31; Parish, *Paramount Pretties*, 186–93.
26. *The New Movie Magazine* (London), March 1932, 42. For French magazines, see *Cinémonde*, April 21, 28, 1932; for Portuguese see *Imagem*, January 21, 1932.
27. Marchetti, *Romance and the "Yellow Peril,"* 61–68.
28. For the chill in the air, see Lim, *A Feeling of Belonging*, 60.
29. For comments on studios, gossip columnists, travel, and gays, see Ehrenstein, *Open Secret*, 46–52. For conservative attitudes toward lesbians, see Faderman, *Odd Girls and Twilight Lovers*, 93–118.
30. AMW to VV, September 21, 1932.
31. *Picture Show*, September 10, 1932; May 20, 1933.
32. *AFI Feature Films, 1931–1940*, 171, 1996; Wollstein, *Vixens, Floozies and Molls*, 25–31; Rosten, *Hollywood*, 252.

33. *Screenplay Magazine*, November 1931, January 1932; *Film Fun*, March 1932; *Imagem*, January 1932; *Mein Film*, 286, 317, 320 (1931–1932). For Baker show, see Anna May Wong Gift Collection, Book 8402.
34. *Los Angeles Examiner*, March 30, 1932; *Los Angeles Times*, March 29, 1932.
35. AMW to VV, May 5, July 31, 1932; Kellner, *Carl Van Vechten*, 260; Huston, *Dust Tracks*, 243; on meetings and parties, see Kellner, ed., *The Splendid Drunken Twenties*. On the bicycle races, see Ritchie, *Faust's Metropolis*, 357. For Maschwitz, see Miall, *Inside the BBC*, 31–40, and Maschwitz, *No Chip on My Shoulder*, 59–60, 62. For tolerance, see Mumford, *Interzone*.
36. Paramount Press Clippings, January 13, 1938, Anna May Wong File, AMPAS. On actors and their pretensions, see Rosten, *Hollywood*, 163–68. On her reading habits, see *Screenland Magazine*, October 1931.
37. Woolf, *Hindsight*, 140–46; Woolf, *On the Way to Myself*, 123–25.
38. Woolf, *Studies in Hand-Reading*, 130–33.
39. Application for Form 430, Local File #14036/120, dated December 16, 1935, Los Angeles.
40. Case, *Do Not Disturb*, 267; Case, *Tales of a Wayward Inn*, 209; Van Vechten Scrapbooks, 25, 26, NYPL; Kellner to Author, November 11, 2002; *Diansheng* (Movietone News), October 23, 1936.
41. Parker, "Anna May Wong's Chinese Love Code."
42. *Revue Mondiale* (Paris), June 1, 1932; AMW to VV, September 21, 1932; Zhao, *Remaking Chinese America*, 39. On Chinese students, see Ye, *Seeking Modernity*, 81–113. For another article affirming Wong's unwillingness to give up career for marriage, see *Times of India* (New Delhi), May 30, June 10, 1933.
43. *Der Wiener Tag*, September 12, 13, 14, 15, 1932; *Neues Wiener Journal*, September 12, 13, 1932; *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*, September 12, 13, 1932; *Mein Film*, June 23, 1932; *New York Times*, September 11–17, 1932; AMW to VV, September 21, 1932. Anna May Wong, AMPAS Clipping File; Gielgud, *Years of the Locust*.
44. For family photo, see *Cinema Illustrazione* (Rome), September 5, 1934. For trips, see Newnham, "Chinese Puzzle"; Anna May Wong Clipping File, AMPAS; Immigration File 14036/120 and 84021/345 (Roger), NARA, Laguna Niguel, California; *Royal Pictorial*, February 1935.
45. *Los Angeles Examiner*, May 11, 1933; *Mein Film*, June 5, 1933; Anna May Wong Gift Collection, Box 8407, 8414, Immigration File 14036/120, NARA, Laguna Niguel, California. On Berlin, see Ritchie, *Faust's Metropolis*, 426–30, 452–57.
46. AMW to VV, July 5, 1933.
47. Anna May Wong Gift Collection, Box 8401, 8407; Anna May Wong AMPAS Clipping File; *Shanghai Express* 1:2 (1999), 6. For Dublin, see *Dublin Evening Mail*, October 3, 1933, *Irish Press*, October 3, 1933, *Irish Times*, October 3, 1933. For Ellington Show, see Nicholson, *Duke Ellington*.
48. Balio, *Grand Design*, 321.
49. *AFI Feature Films Catalog, 1931–1940*, 2085; *Variety*, June 6, 1933; *New York Times*, June 1, 1933; *Kinetographic Weekly*, August 10, 1933; *Picturegoer Weekly*, January 27,

1934. For studio change, see Pitts, *Poverty Row Studios*, 353–56; for strange quality of film, see Balio, *Grand Design*, 340.

50. Richard, *The Age of the Dream Palace*, 112.
51. Print viewed at BFI.
52. U.S. Department of Labor Statement of Wong Lew Song, Local File 8402/117, Los Angeles, April 4, 1933 at NARA, Laguna Niguel, California; Parish and Leonard, *Hollywood Players*, 535; Edwards, *The DeMilles*, 131.
53. *Film Star Weekly* (London), October 13, 1934; *Picturegoer Weekly*, October 6, 13, 1934; *Picture Show*, October 13, 1934; *Film Weekly* (London), October 3, 1934; *Variety*, September 25, 1934; *Los Angeles Examiner*, November 28, 1934; Souvenir Program in author's possession; Anna May Wong, AMPAS Clipping File; Low, *Film Making in 1930s Britain*, 138. For Austria, see *Das Kino-Journal*, October 6, 1934. For an example of American reviews, see *Time*, October 1, 1934.
54. *Variety*, August 7, 1935; *Los Angeles Examiner*, January 9, 1934; *Picturergoer*, October 13, 1934; *Film Weekly*, August 24, 1934; *Kinematograph Weekly*, June 8, July 26, 1934; *Today's Cinema*, June 2, 1934;
55. *Variety*, May 29, 1934; *New York Times*, July 31, 1935.
56. *Limehouse Blues*, Production Notes, Box 76, Paramount File, AMPAS.
57. For lyrics, see "*Limehouse Blues* Censorship Dialogue Script," New York State Archives. Anna also had a rough time on the set. Perhaps the broken middle fingernail, reported in the *Los Angeles Examiner* as a tragedy, was minor, but by September, Anna May was suffering from an impacted tooth. *Los Angeles Examiner,* August 17, 1934.
58. *AFI Feature Films Catalog, 1931–1940*, 1200. For reviews, see *Cinema Illustrazione* (Rome), July 31, 1935; *Piccolo* (Belgium), November 16, 1934. For Wagner, see *Rob Wagner's Script Magazine*, September 1, 1934, 13.
59. *Variety*, December 18, 1934; *Modem Screen Magazine*, February 1934; *New York Times*, December 12, 1934; *Los Angeles Examiner*, November 9, 1934; *Kinetographic Weekly*, January 3, 1935; *Picturegoer Weekly*, April 6, 1935; *Picture Show*, August 13, 1935; *Cinema*, January 3, 1935. For Spanish language reviews, see *Cinegraf*, January 1935.
60. *Diansheng*, January 1, 11, February 29, July 19, December 6, 1935.
61. *Los Angeles Examiner*, August 5, 12, 1934; *Xinning Magazine*, October 1934.
62. *Diansheng*, July 20, 1935; *Revista Del Hagar*, November 17, 1935; Anna May Wong Gift Collection, Box 8402, 8403, 8408; *Pour Vous* (Paris), June 2, 1932; Newnham, "A Chinese Puzzle"; *Shanghai Express* (1999), 6. On the rarity of Chinese in Scandinavia, Spain, Italy; and Switzerland, see the relevant essays in Benton and Pieke, *The Chinese in Europe*.
63. Day, ed., *Noel Coward*, 141–43.
64. "Recollections of Hu Die," 14; *Diansheng*, July 19, 1935; *Dianying Huabao*, July 15, 1935; Fania Marinoff to Carl Van Vechten, May 21, June 3, 8, 13, 16, Van Vechten Papers; *Los Angeles Examiner*, January 9, 1936. For photos, see Box 162, Van Vechten Papers; Duberman, *Robeson*, 192–93, 198.
65. Paul Robeson, *Here I Stand* (Boston: Beacon Press Reprint of 1958 edition), 30.

66. *Rob Wagner's Beverly Hills Script Weekly*, 13:326 (July 13, 1935), 21; *Los Angeles Examiner*, August 9, 1934. For prestige of studios, see Rosten, *Hollywood*, 177. For studios' relationship with Chinese officials, see Vasey, *The World According to Hollywood*, 175–79. On Buck, see Spence, *The Chan's Great Continent*, 180–82.
67. See Leong, *The China Mystique*, 75, and Wollstein, *Vixens, Floozies, and Molls*, 254. For comments on miscegenation, see *AFI Feature Films Catalog, 1931–1940*, 808.
68. "*The Good Earth* Production Notes," Folders 2, 10, MGM Collection, USC Film Archives. Wong, "My Story"; Jew, "Metro Goldwyn Mayer."
69. On Buck's homogenization of Chinese people, see Yoshihara, *Embracing the East*, 152–64. For the European reaction, see *Das Kino-Journal*, October 2, 1937. The other comments are my own.
70. *Los Angeles Examiner*, March 8, 1936.
71. *Gua Hua Bao*, February 23, 1936; *Dianying Huabao* (Shanghai Screen Pictorial), March 1, 1936; Pizzitola, *Hearst over Hollywood*, 315; AMW to VV, December 16, 1935. For Chinese American migration to China, see Gloria H. Chun, "Go West … to China," in Wong and Chan, *Claiming America*, 165–90; Immigration File 14036/120, NARA, Laguna Niguel, California. For Mary, see MGM Legal Department Records, Folder 73, AMPAS. Mary received sixty dollars, which was the minimum for the Chinese actors used in the production. MGM fired all of the Chinese actors right after the picture was finished. For Mei-Mei Sze, see *Los Angeles Examiner*, January 28, 1936.

Chapter Five China

1. AMW to CVV, January 7, 1936; *New York Times*, January 26, 1936; *Rob Wagner's Script Magazine*, January 25, 1936, 27; *Los Angeles Examiner*, January 9, 17, 24, 26, March 8, 1936. For theater, see Anna May Wong Gift Collection, Book 8408.
2. *Los Angeles Examiner*, March 8, 1936; Chu, *Chinese Theaters*, 209.
3. Lin, *My Country and My People*, 140–53
4. *New York Herald Tribune*, May 14, 1936; AMW to VV, February 22, 1936.
5. AMW to VV, February 22, 1936; *Ashahi Shimbun*, February 4, 1936; *Tokyo Nichi Nichi*, February 9, 1936; *Osaka Mainichi*, February 9, 1936; *New York Herald Tribune*, May 24, 1936; Spence, *Search for Modern China*, 420–21, on the pamphlets.
6. For brother's defense, see *Diansheng* (Shanghai Movietone News), November 27, 1935; January 24, February 14, 1936. For questions about accepting her, see *Diansheng*, January 1, 1936; *Dianying Huabao* (Screen Pictorial), March 1, 1936; *Shidai Dianying* (Film Age), February, March 1936; *Lian Huabao* (United Chinese Pictorial), February 1936; *Yisheng Dianying* (Voice of Art Film), February 1936.
7. Spence, *Search for Modem China*, 415–16.
8. See Harris, "Silent Speech," chapter 10, for full analysis of this fascinating controversy. See also Zhang and Xiao, *Encyclopedia of Chinese Film*, 284–86, and for Ruan Lingyu, 292–93.
9. Harris, "Silent Speech," 354–58.

10. On the Leftist perspective, see Lee, *Shanghai Modern*, 99–101.
11. Lee, *Shanghai Modern*, 83–110; *All About Shanghai*, 75–77; Jones, *Yellow Music*, 3–8; Clayton, *Buck Clayton's World*, 66–79.
12. For interview, see *Hua Tzu Jih Pao* (Hong Kong), February 22, 1936. For other accounts of her arrival, see *Diansheng* (Shanghai Movietone News), February 14, 1936; *Dianying Huabao* (Screen Pictorial), March 1, 1936; *Gua Hua Bao* (Guangzhou), February 23, 1936; *Pei-Yang Pictorial Notices* (Tianjin), February 12, 1936; *Peking and Tientsin Sunday Times*, February 16, 1936. *North-China Daily News*, February 10–15, 1936; *North-China Herald* (Shanghai), February 19, 1936; *Shun Pao* (Peking), February 10–12, 1936. For her home movie, see Scene List of Wong, "Where the Wind Rocks the Bamboo," AMPAS.
13. *North-China Daily News*, February 12, 14, 15, 16, 1936; Koo, *No Feast Lasts Forever*; *New York Herald Tribune*, May 31, June 7, 1936; Wong, "Where the Wind Rocks the Bamboo." AMW to VV, February 22, 1936; *ANB*, 13: 659–61.
14. *Rob Wagner's Script Magazine*, December 12, 1936, 11.
15. *Liang You Huabao*, February 1936; *New York Herald Tribune*, June 7, 14, 1936.
16. Emily Hahn, *China to Me: A Partial Autobiography* (New York: Doubleday, Doran, 1944), 38.
17. *Hua Tzu Jih Pao* (Hong Kong), February 18, 1936; *Diansheng* (Shanghai Movietone News), February 21, 1936; *Ming Xin*, February 1936; *Yisheng Dianying*, February 1936. On flaneurs and tourists, see Gleber, *The Art of Taking a Walk*, 132–35. On Shanghai, see Bruno, *Atlas of Emotion*, 290–3. For satire, see *Manhua Jie* (Modern Puck), April 1936.
18. *Diansheng* (Shanghai Movietone News), March 27, 1936; Spence, *Search for Modern China*, 426.
19. *Manila Bulletin*, March 4–8, 1936; *Manila Tribune*, March 4, 1936; AMW to VV, March 14, 1936.
20. *Diansheng* (Shanghai Movietone News), April 3, 1936.
21. *Shun Pao* (Shanghai), March 10, 1936; *North-China Herald* (Shanghai), April 1, 1936; interviews of villagers by author, June 2001; Austin Yu to author, March 12, 2002, in author's possession. For myth of villagers, see *Birmingham (Al) News*, August 22, 1937, Clipping File, Wisconsin Center for Film.
22. AMW to CVV, March 23, 1936.
23. *Shun Pao*, March 27, April 1, 1936; *Diansheng* (Shanghai Movietone News), May 15, 1936.
24. *Los Angeles Examiner*, August 20, 1936; Sergeant, *Shanghai*, 258–59.
25. *Shen Pao* (Peking), May 1, 5, 1936; *Diansheng* (Shanghai Movietone News), May 8, 1936.
26. AMW to CVV, May 8, 1936.
27. *Diansheng* (Shanghai Movietone News), August 28, September 18, 1936.
28. *Da Gong Bao* (Peking), May 17–21, 1936; *Pei-Yang Pictorial* (Tianjin), May 16, 1936; *Shun Pao* (Shanghai), May 10, 1936. On Stuart, see West, *Yenching University*, 23–27, 177–83.

29. *Pei-Yng Pictorial* (Tianjin), May 23, 1936; Spence, *The Chinese Century*, 102.
30. *Da Gong Bao* (Peking), May 17–21, 1936; *Diansheng* (Shanghai Movietone News), June 5, 1936
31. *Pei-Yang Pictorial* (Tianjin), June 9, 1936; *Diansheng* (Shanghai Movietone News), June 19, 1936; *Mei Shu Sheng Huo* (Arts and Life), June 1936.
32. *Diansheng* (Shanghai Movietone News), July 10, 1936.
33. *Diansheng* (Shanghai Movietone News), August 7, 14, October 2, 9, 23, 30, 1936; Anna May Wong File 14036/97. Immigration and Naturalization Service, NARA, Laguna Niguel, California.

Chapter Six In the Service of the Motherland

1. There are numerous forms dealing with the imposter in 1935 and 1936 in the Anna May Wong File 14036/297, November 30, 1936, Immigration and Naturalization Service. For incident with father, see Leong, *The China Mystique*, 96.
2. *Rob Wagner's Script Magazine*, December 12, 1936, 11.
3. File 14036/1459-A. November 17, 1938, National Archives, Pacific Region, Laguna Niguel Office; Huang Family Genealogy. For Huang Dounan family, see Family Genealogy supplied to Author by Huang Cui-Xian.
4. *Los Angeles Examiner*, November 23, 30, 1936; *Los Angeles Herald Express*, November 30, 1936; Spence, *Search for Modern China*, 437–50; Paramount Press Clippings, AMPAS.
5. *AFI Film Catalog, Feature Films, 1931–1940*, 12–13; Wollstein, *Vixens, Floozies and Molls*, 256. For *Hollywood Party*, see "*Hollywood Party* Dialogue Censorship Script," New York State Archives.
6. Anna May Wong Gift Collection, Book 8401; Maschwitz, *No Chip on My Shoulder,* 87–88. Maschwitz told both Anna May and his wife Hermione Gingold that he had written the song with each in mind. See Gingold, *How to Grow Old Disgracefully*, 54.
7. *Los Angeles Examiner*, March 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, April 3, 4, 1937; Anna May Wong File 390596/190-H.Q. Federal Bureau of Investigation. On deranged fans, see Barbas, *Movie Crazy*, 165–72.
8. For stage show, see *New York Herald Tribune*, May 21, 1937, and *New York Times*, May 23, 1937. For *Turandot*, see Price, *Renaissance Man*, 77; see also programs for the productions in the Anna May Wong Gift Collection, Books 8408, 8410, and Clipping File, NYPL. For her trip preparation, see the numerous forms in U.S. Department of Labor, Immigration and Nationalization Service File 14036/120, NARA, Laguna Niguel, California.
9. Anna May Wong Gift Collection, Book 8403; U.S. Department of Labor, Immigration and Nationalization Service File 14036/120, April 23, 1937, NARA, Laguna Niguel, California.
10. Maschwitz, *No Chip on My Shoulder*, 104–7.
11. Gielgud, *Years of the Locust,* 156–60.

12. Leong, *The China Mystique*, 88.
13. Jesperson, *American Images*, 45–58.
14. Gielgud, *Years of the Locust*, 158; Chierichetti, *Edith Head*, 54.
15. Engstead, *Star Shoots*, 114, 97–229.
16. *Daughter of Shanghai*, Production Notes, Box 32, Paramount Pictures, AMPAS. On Florey, see Balio, *Grand Design*, 320, and Spear, *Hollywood: The Golden Era*, 333–61. On pay, see Parish, *Paramount Pretties*, 154, 197, 302.
17. *AFI Film Catalog, Feature Films, 1931–1940*, 466; Marrill, *Films of Anthony Quinn*, 49; Edwards, *The DeMilles*, 143–47.
18. *New York Times*, December 25, 1937; *Paramount Service Magazine*, November 13, 1937.
19. *Picturegoer*, July 16, 1938; *Kinetographic Weekly*, July 3, 1938; *Film Weekly*, March 20, 1938; *Das Kino-Journal*, October 30, 1937.
20. *Guoguang Yinxun* (Cathay-Grand News), June 22, 1938. For Chen Yunshang, see Fu, "Selling Fantasies at War: Production and Promotion Practices of the Shanghai Cinema, 1937–41," in Cochran, ed., *Inventing Nanjing Road*, 199. For registration at USC, I rely on the recollections of Joseph B. Comstock, Jr., father of Ned Comstock, curator of the film collection at USC.
21. *Des Moines Register* Stills Collection, LOC.
22. AMW to VV, December 4, 1937; January 3, 1938.
23. *AFI Feature Films Catalog, 1931–1940*, 456; Marrill, *Films of Anthony Quinn*, 52; Production Notes, *Dangerous to Know*, Paramount Pictures, AMPAS.
24. *Picturegoer*, August 21, 1938.
25. *New York Times*, March 12, 1938; *Variety*, March 16, 1938; *Daily Variety*, February 24, 1938; *Hollywood Reporter*, February 24, 1938; *Movie Story*, April 1938.
26. *Kinetographic Weekly*, March 17, 1938; *Paimann's Filmlisten*, October 7, 1938; *Cine Mundial*, April 1938; *Mein Film*, 666 (1938); Ritchie, *Berlin*, 455. For Vienna, see *Das Kino-Journal*, August 6, 1938.
27. Maschwitz, *No Chip on My Shoulder*, 112–17, Doerr, "My Years with Anna May Wong."
28. *AFI Institute Catalog, Feature Films, 1931–1940*, 2400; *New York Times*, June 9, 1938; *Kinetographic Weekly*, July 7, 1938.
29. *King of Chinatown*, Production Notes, Box 69, Paramount Picture Files, AMPAS; *AFI Institute Catalog, Feature Films, 1931–1940*, 1106–7; Marrill, *Films of Anthony Quinn*, 61.
30. *Click Magazine*, December 1938, 8–10; Smith, *Lonely Queue*, 47, 91–93.
31. *Variety*, March 22, 1939; *Daily Variety*, March 15, 1939; *Hollywood Reporter*, March 15, 1939; *New York Times*, March 16, 1939.
32. *Boy's Cinema* (London), May 20, 1939; *Kinetographic Weekly*, March 30, 1939; *Paimann's Filmlisten*, September 25, 1939.
33. *Campbell (Soup) Playhouse*, "The Patriot," episode 19, April 14, 1939.
34. *Island of Lost Men File*, AMPAS Library.

35. *AFI Feature Films Catalog, 1931–1940*, 1041. Fine Arts Pictures also sought to use Anna May's talents that spring for their production of *Panama Patrol*, but she could not fit the film into her schedule. *AFI Feature Films Catalog, 1931–1940*, 1615–16.
36. *Variety*, August 25, 1939; *Daily Variety*, August 2, 1939; *New York Times*, August 18, 1939; *Los Angeles Examiner*, August 16, 1939; *Hollywood Reporter*, August 2, 1939; *Kinetographic Weekly*, October 5, 1939.
37. *Island of Lost Men*, Production Notes, Box 65, Paramount Pictures, AMPAS.
38. I used the data in Rosten, *Hollywood*, 342, 382, to bolster my argument in this paragraph.
39. *Pei-Yang Pictorial Weekly*, February 23, 1937; Anna May Wong Clipping File, WCFTA; Young, *Rustic Canyon*, 131–42; for her party, see *Los Angeles Examiner*, November 23, 1939.
40. Los Angeles Recorder's Office, Document 446, 447, Books 16095, 26 and 16005, 268. For sale to her sisters, see Document 1467, Book 17003, 21.
41. *Paramount News*, Film Clip, August 7, 1941. *Chinatown, Los Angeles*. Souvenir Program of the Chinese Moon Festival, 1941. For interviews with Chinese actors, see Lim, *A Feeling of Belonging*, 73. For troupes of entertainers, see the videotape by Dong, *Forbidden City*. On Chinatown restaurants and tourists, see Gabaccia, *We Are What We Eat*, 102–5.
42. See, *On Gold Mountain*, 215.
43. Paramount Press Release, 1938, AMPAS Clipping File; *Shanghai Movie Star*, January 1, 1939 and *Diansheng Weekly*, November 20, 1928.
44. *Better Homes & Gardens*, 20 (September 1941), 28; *Look*, March 1, April 1, 1938. On furniture and glamor, see Thorp, *America Goes to the Movies*, 91.
45. Stine, *The Hurrell Style*, 113; *Photoplay*, June 1938.
46. *New York Times*, June 22, 1938; Paramount Publicity Sheets, December 28, 1937; January 13, 1938, Anna May Wong Clippings File, AMPAS; AMW to VV, May 9, 1940. For earlier auction, see *Los Angeles Examiner*, January 7, March 9, 1937. See also *Das Kino-Journal*, March 5, 1938.
47. Van Vechten Scrapbook, 27, NYPL.
48. Derham Groves, *Anna May Wong's Lucky Shoes*, 16–19.
49. File 14036/236-A. April 13, September 3, 1939 National Archives, Pacific Region, Laguna Niguel Office; AMW to VV, September 11, 1939, *Los Angeles Examiner*, May 3, 5, September 5, 1939. For Australian coverage, see the *Melbourne Age*, June 3, 10, 13, 1939 and the *Sydney Morning Herald*, June 3, 5, 10, 1939.
50. *AFI Feature Films Catalog, 1931–1940*, 681; Marrill, *Films of Anthony Quinn*, 64.
51. *Variety*, March 21, 1941; *New York Times*, March 7, 1941; *Daily Variety*, February 21, 1941, *Hollywood Reporter*, February 21, 1941.
52. AMW to VV, February 20, April 2, 4, May 10, 1940. Anna May Wong Gift Collection, Book 8411.
53. *Seattle Daily Times*, April 9, 1939 as quoted in Chan, *Perpetually Cool*, 147–56. For Chan's description of Anna May as a Daoist Butterfly, see *idem*, 145–59.
54. *New York Herald Tribune*, July 25, 1940; AMW to VV, August 12, 1940.

55. Richard Wong to VV, October 10, 1940.
56. *New York Times*, September 17, 1940; Anna May Wong Clipping File, WCTA; AMW to VV, October 12, December 12, 1940.
57. AMW to VV, December 30, 1940.
58. *Theatre World* (London), December 1941.
59. *AFI Institute Catalog, Feature Films, 1941–1950*, 275; Mundy, "Joseph H. Lewis."
60. Jesperson, *American Images*, 66, 78; *Variety*, August 19, 1942; *New York Times*, August 10, 1942; *Kinetographic Weekly*, November 19, 1942. *Bombs Over Burma* Censorship Script, New York State Archives.
61. *Los Angeles Times*, December 8, 1942; *Shanghai Express*, 1:1 (1999); AMW to VV, January 20, February 10, 1942; Office of Talent Committee Reporting Activities of Hollywood Victory Committee, USC Film Archives.
62. Wong, "Preface" to Wing, *New Chinese Recipes*. A second, expanded edition came out the following year. On importance of recipes for stars, see Thorp, *America at the Movies*, 91–94. On Chinese food, local influences, and cookbooks, see Gabaccia, *We Are What We Eat*, 102–5, 140–50, 176. For Anna May's previous cookbook participation, see *Milady's Style Parade and Recipe Book for 1935*. For recipe books, see Roberts, *China to Chinatown*, 152, 188.
63. Volker, *Brecht Chronicle*, 114; Hayman, *Brecht*, 263.
64. *AFI Institute Catalog, Feature Films, 1941–1950*, 1311; *Variety*, January 20, 1942; *Los Angeles Examiner*, December 24, 1942; *Hollywood Reporter*, November 4, 1942; *Daily Variety*, November 4, 1942; *Screen Romances*, March 1943; AMW to VV, August 31, 1942. On Hollywood, women, and the war, see Koppes and Black, *Hollywood Goes to War*, 93–101. See also "*Lady from Chungking* Censorship Script," New York State Archives.
65. AMW to VV, August 31, September 10, 1941, October 5, 1943, March 17, 1944.
66. Jesperson, *American Images*, 98–102.
67. Quotes are from Leong, *The China Mystique*, 113; Pan, *Encyclopedia of Chinese Overseas*, 98–99; Wang, *Chinese Overseas*, 42–47.
68. Jesperson, *American Images*, 105–6; for comment on laundrymen, see Lin, *Biography of Mayling Soong*, 225; for cultural workers, see Chiang, *China Shall Rise Again*, 326–27.
69. Anna May Wong Clipping File, AMPAS; AMW to VV, August 9, 1943.
70. AMW to VV, March 17, 1944.
71. AMW to VV, May 10, 22, 1944, January 6, 1945; *Los Angeles Times*, July 25, 1944 in Anna May Wong Clipping File, AMPAS; *Los Angeles Examiner*, March 30, 1944.
72. *Theater World* (London), July 1944, 24–25.
73. Blumenthal, *Stork Club*, 27.
74. AMW to VV, January 6, April 9, September 28, October 31, 1945.
75. See Zhao, *Remaking Chinese Americans*, 48–78, for Chinese American women in wartime.

Chapter Seven Becoming Chinese American

1. AMW to VV, September 11, November 14, 1946; *Shanghai Express* (1999). For another opportunity at this time, which Anna May apparently rejected, see H. A. Spanuth to AMW, January 31, 1946, Herrick Library. The Ripley film can be found at the UCLA film archives.
2. AMW to VV, August 18, 1947; February 25, 1948; October 17, 1950.
3. AMW to VV, February 25, 1948; Robert Payne Papers; Doerr, "Reminiscences of Anna May Wong," 660. Chow, "Sixty Years."
4. See for example, AMW to VV, September 11, 1946; February 25, 1948; See, *On Gold Mountain*, 284. For Howe screening, see Richard See interview with Yunah Hong, May 2003.
5. Doerr, "Anna May Wong," 661. See, *On Gold Mountain*, 293–95; *Los Angeles Examiner*, December 23, 1948.
6. *AFI Feature Films Catalog, 1941–1950*, 1148–49; *Variety*, March 16, September 21, 1949; *Daily Variety*, March 15, 1949; *Hollywood Reporter*, March 15, 1949; *Los Angeles Examiner*, April 18, 1949. For her attitude, see Conrad Doerr to author, March 24, 31, 2003.
7. Los Angeles City Department of Health Internment Order 52015; AMPAS Clipping File; for cremation rituals, see Brook, "Funerary Ritual," Huang Family Genealogy, and *Los Angeles Examiner*, October 15, 1949. For AMW's hospital stay, see *Los Angeles Examiner*, October 26, 1949.
8. *Los Angeles Times*, September 10, 1952; AMW to VV, December 31, 1951; February 17, 1952.
9. Parish, *Actor's Television Credits*, 852; Gianarcis, *Television Drama*, 211; Terrance, *The Complete Encyclopedia of Television Programs*, 295; AMW to VV, February 17, 1952. For the saga of Dumont's files, see Zimmerman, "Archiving Television."
10. AMW to VV, May 29, 1952; October 3, 1952; July 28, 1953. Conrad Doerr to Author, March 24, 2003.
11. Richard Wong to VV, December 19, 1953; AMW to VV, December 28, 1953; January 31, March 6, 1954.
12. AMW to VV, October 29, 1954; January 3, 1955; August 22, 1955.
13. AMW to VV, February 28, August 26, September 8, October 6, 1955; January 7, 14, 1956; *London Star*, September 9, 1955; *London Morning Chronicle*, September 28, 1955 in BFI Clipping Files. For hospital stay, see *Los Angeles Examiner*, October 20, 1955. For Rogers, see Bushnell, *Directors and Their Films*, 287. For *The Voodoo Factor*, see www.us.imdb.com/Title?0191746.
14. AMW to VV, July 15, 31, 1956. Van Vechten cards are almost too numerous to list, but a good example is described in AMW to VV, August 11, 1958.
15. Masden, *William Wyler*, 203; AMW to VV, November 5, 1956.
16. Parish, *Actor's Television Credits*, 852; AMW to VV, January 2, 1957.
17. AMW to VV, January 2, February 27, 1957; Giarnarcis, *Television Drama*, 409.

18. AMW to VV, November 5, 1956; August 15, 1957; August 1, 6, 11, October 27, 1958; January 12, 1959; RW to VV, October 25, 1958.
19. AMPAS Clippings, May 1, 1958; Parish, *Actor's Television Credits*, 852; Giarnarcis, *Television Drama*, 409; AMW to VV, April 15, August 11, 1958; January 15, June 6, 1959; *Holiday Magazine*, 1957.
20. Print viewed at the UCLA and Television Center.
21. Giarnarcis, *Television Drama*, 409.
22. AMW to VV, June 6, October 26, 1959; April 4, August 14, 1960; *Los Angeles Examiner*, July 29, 1960.
23. For comeback, see *Time*, June 20, 1960. For reviews, see *Variety*, June 15, 1960; Marrill, *Films of Anthony Quinn*, 186–87; AMW to VV, February 1, June 1, July 17, 1960; *Time*, June 20, 1960 and *Hollywood Reporter*, June 6, 1960 in AMPAS Clippings; AMW to Ward Morehouse, July 16, 1960; *Los Angeles Examiner*, December 4, 1959; June 30, 1960.
24. *Variety*, June 29, 1960; *New York Times*, May 25, 1961; Wollstein, *Vixens, Floozies and Molls*, 258. There is some dispute over whether Anna May's part made it past the final cuts. She is listed among the players in the *Variety* review, however.
25. AMW to VV, January 4, 1961; Parish, *Actor's Television Credits*, 852; Giarnacis, *Television Drama*, 45.
26. Doerr, "Reminiscences of Anna May Wong," 662.
27. County of Los Angeles, Certificate of Death, 7080/2660; *Los Angeles Examiner*, February 4, 1961.
28. Her will is #439787 in the Hall of Records, City of Los Angeles. For a useful evaluation of the post-fame status of a number of stars, see McCann, *Silent Screen*, 97–114. For amount of estate, see *Los Angeles Herald*, March 1, 1961, and *Los Angeles Examiner*, March 1, 1961.
29. Ellenberger, *Celebrities in Los Angeles Cemeteries*, 192–94. For obituaries, see the many notices in the AMPAS Clipping file.

Epilogue

1. RW to VV, April 14, October 17, 1961; February 12, May 7, 26, 1962; April 26, 1964; Yu Jinyan to Author, March 12, 2002.
2. County of Los Angeles, Certificate of Death 7097–015690 (James); County of Los Angeles, Certificate of Death 39519046194 (Lulu); County of Los Angeles, Certificate of Death 39319056008 (Roger). Roger's remains were placed in Interment Space 1, Lot 9778, Murmuring Trees, Forest Lawn Memorial Parks and Mortuaries. I have been unable to locate Frank's death certificate.
3. For reviews of the plight of Asians or Asian Americans in American cinema, see *The Village Voice*, December 5, 1989; Zia, *Asian American Dreams*, 109–39; Nga, "The Long March from Wong to Woo." On "yellow faces," see *USA Today*, September 10, 1985; *New York Post*, August 10, 1990. For views of Nancy Kwan and other actors,

see Lee, *Asian American Actors*. Recently, an Asian American activist group forced Fox Network Television to abandon screenings of Warner Oland's Charlie Chan movies on the grounds that they were unpleasant reminders of the yellow face era. See *Los Angeles Times*, July 1, 2003.

4. See the discussion of these in Liu, "When Dragon Ladies Die, Do They Come Back as Butterflies? Re-Imaging Anna May Wong," in Hammamoto and Liu, *Countervisions*, 23–40.
5. *Life Magazine*, December 10, 1971; Chu, "Anna May Wong," 288.
6. For Warhol, see Meyer, *Outlaw Representation*, 114; for Johnson, see De Salvo, *Ray Johnson*.
7. Sontag, *Against Interpretation*, 275–93; Meyer, *Outlaw Representation*, 108–9.
8. Bennett, *A Chorus Line*, 103.
9. Scholder, ed., *Sweet Oblivion*.
10. Liu, "When Dragon Ladies Die," 35.
11. Liu, "When Dragon Ladies Die," 31, 37.

Index