

RESEARCH ARTICLE

How Ethnic Origin Shapes Political Preferences: Toward a Deeper Understanding of Asian American Identity

Yat To Yeung 

Department of Political Science, The George Washington University, Washington, DC 20052, USA
Email: ytyeung@gwu.edu

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Abstract

How do Asian Americans think about their ethnic origin? How do ethnic identities affect political preferences? Drawing on interviews with a diverse group of Asian Americans, I provide a nuanced understanding of how they think about their ethnic origin and pan-ethnic identities. The findings reveal that ethnicity plays a significant role in shaping electoral preferences, as Asian Americans exhibit coethnicity preferences, conditional on partisanship. Moreover, I uncover several factors that have been underexplored in the existing literature, including transnational ties, news consumption, and political preferences on foreign policies related to their home country. This article provides a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of Asian American identities by showing that the ethnic origin roots of Asian Americans can have significant influence on their political interests and candidate preferences.

Keywords: Asian American; transnational ties; qualitative; ethnic news; national origin

“Most Americans know nothing about Asian Americans. They think *Chinese* is synecdoche for *Asians* the way *Kleenex* is for *tissues*. They don’t understand that we’re this tenuous alliance of many nationalities.”

Cathy Park Hong in *Minor Feelings: An Asian American Reckoning*, *New York Times Bestseller* and *Pulitzer Prize Finalist*

In her popular work, Cathy Park Hong emphasizes how Asian Americans are often perceived as a monolithic pan-ethnic group in the United States. Despite differences between ethnic groups, Americans tend to view them as a homogenous group, with East Asians being the prototype (Goh and McCue 2021; Lee and Ramakrishnan

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2019). However, research has shown that Asian Americans from different subgroups differ in terms of their socioeconomic status and civic engagement (Lien, Conway, and Wong 2003; Wong et al. 2011). Additionally, ethnicity plays a significant role in shaping electoral preferences, as Asian Americans often exhibit coethnic preferences and are more likely to turn out for coethnic candidates (Leung 2022; Lublin and Wright 2023; Sathwani 2021, 2022). In other words, not all Asian American candidates are viewed equally by Asian American voters. Yet, it remains unclear what motivates these preferences, what ethnic origin really means to Asian Americans, and to whom it matters more. Before examining the effect of ethnic identity, we must first address what ethnic identity is. How do Asian Americans think about their ethnic origin? How do Asian Americans reconcile the differences between their pan-ethnic and ethnic identity? Identities and identity choices are fluid and malleable (Junn and Masuoka 2008; Lien, Conway, and Wong 2003). Therefore, it would be crucial to examine to what extent identity choices are influenced by the context in which Asian Americans find themselves. Before exploring the impact of ethnic identity, it is important to define what this identity means to Asian Americans and investigate their perceptions and attitudes toward it.

Several factors can influence the political participation of Asian Americans. Research in political science has established the concept of “identity-to-politics,” which suggests that an individual’s identity can shape their political preferences (Hajnal and Lee 2011; Junn 2006). As a result, those who identify strongly as Asian Americans are likely to have different political preferences than those who identify more strongly with their ethnic group. Moreover, only 57% of foreign-born Asians are proficient in English, making them more reliant on non-English sources and ethnic media (Asian American Voter Survey 2022; Pew Research Center 2021). These sources may reinforce group identification and expose individuals to news and information from their home country, thus maintaining transnational ties (Viswanath and Arora 2000; Zhang 2021). Studies have shown that exposure to ethnic news is associated with greater political involvement in homeland politics, while exposure to English-language media is associated with greater involvement in American politics (Sui and Paul 2017). Identity, news sources, and transnational ties can have significant implications for Asian American politics. After answering what ethnic origin means to Asian Americans, in the second section of the article, I explore the question of how ethnic identities affect political preferences. Specifically, I aim to describe how Asian Americans perceive coethnic representation, their views on foreign policies related to their home country, and their media consumption habits. Ultimately, I seek to identify the impact of ethnic origin on political preferences among Asian Americans.

This article makes several important contributions to the existing literature on Asian American politics. First, rather than answering *whether* Asian Americans have particular preferences, I provide a nuanced understanding of *how* they think about their ethnic origin and pan-ethnic identities. Drawing on interviews with a diverse group of Asian Americans, I explore the contexts in which ethnic and pan-ethnic identities may be more salient than others. Second, through these interviews, I uncover several factors that have been underexplored in the existing literature but are important to understanding Asian American political behavior. Consistent with prior work on transnationalism (Collet and Lien 2009; Harvie and Lien 2017; Lien 2010), my findings

have shown that a sizable population of Asian Americans pay attention to news of their home country and that they incorporate predispositions toward U.S.–home country relations into their evaluation of the candidates in the United States. Lastly, I have offered further insights into the research on Asian American political representation by demonstrating that Asian Americans prefer coethnic candidates, and it is highly conditional on partisanship. In other words, while the ethnicity of the candidates matters significantly, the desire for descriptive representation only takes effect when both candidates are from the same party as the voter. Overall, my research provides a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of Asian American political preferences and expands the scope of the existing literature.

I begin by discussing the role of ethnic origin in Asian American studies and politics. Second, I discuss how ethnic media and the transnational ties to Asian Americans' ethnic origin could influence their political preferences and participation. Then, I describe how Asian Americans think about their pan-ethnicity and ethnicity, as well as how these identities and the associated group members interact with each other. Finally, I describe how ethnic origin and the associated identity could lead to different candidate and policy preferences.

Ethnic Origin in Race and Ethnicity Politics

While there is a wealth of qualitative research in Asian American studies, scholars of Asian American politics tend to employ quantitative or experimental approaches. Through their work with large datasets, Leung (2022), Lublin and Wright (2023), and Sadhwani (2021, 2022) have established a relationship between ethnic origin and the voting preferences and turnout of Asian Americans. Leung (2022) found that while the preference for a political party usually supersedes the preference for a conational-origin candidate, occasionally, some voters even cross-party lines to support their conational. However, the reasons behind these preferences are not entirely clear. Sadhwani (2022) found that coethnic candidates can stimulate an increase in turnout, conditional on the proportion of Asian Americans residing in the jurisdiction, suggesting that the effect of coethnic appearances is complex and is tied to context. The voter turnout of Asian Americans is also dependent on the individuals' group identity and the group size in the county (Fraga 2016; Kim 2015), suggesting some limitations of the role of ethnicity. Some studies have suggested that differences among ethnic groups may impede the formation of a pan-ethnic Asian American front (Lien 2001; Lien, Conway, and Wong 2003; Tam Cho 2001). Nonetheless, pan-ethnic consciousness among Asian Americans can be activated by group pride, which may unite them to act as a pan-ethnic group (Junn and Masuoka 2008). Moreover, Asian Americans from different ethnic groups exhibit variation in political participation, socioeconomic status, civic engagement, and immigration backgrounds (Wong et al. 2011). While we know that ethnicity plays a significant role in differential outcomes, it remains unclear how ethnic identity affects political attitudes and how Asian Americans relate their ethnic identity to politics.

In the past, scholars of political science have not given enough attention to the differences among ethnic groups. However, there is a large body of literature in Asian American studies and social psychology that highlights the nuanced distinctions among these groups and the conditions under which these differences

matter. By conducting interviews, Ocampo (2016) found that since the perceived default for Asian Americans is East Asians, Filipino Americans are more attached to Latinos than Asian Americans and they share more cultural values and historical background with Latinos than Asian Americans. South and West Asian Americans do not fit into the typical stereotype of what an “Asian” is in the United States, which leads to feelings of exclusion and potentially negative emotions (Flores and Huo 2013; Goh and McCue 2021). These experiences could influence how these groups view themselves in relation to broader Asian American identity and how they perceive political representation by other Asian subgroups. There is a dire need to disaggregate the Asian American population by ethnic origin to unveil their diverse experiences (Lee, Ramakrishnan, and Wong 2018) to continue the growing discussion on intragroup diversity (Jiménez, Fields, and Schachter 2015).

Media Consumption and Transnational Ties

Among the 22.4 million Asian Americans, 71% of Asian American adults are born overseas, and of those, only 57% are proficient in English (Pew Research Center 2021). Rather than consuming content from the mainstream media, a significant proportion of Asian Americans rely on non-English-language sources to obtain news.¹ In California alone, there are 276 ethnic media outlets, with 108 of them serving Asian American and Pacific Islander communities (Zhang 2021). According to the Asian American Voter Survey of 2022, nearly half of Asian Americans consume news from nonmainstream sources. However, the impact of these non-English sources on the public opinion of Asian Americans remains largely unknown.

There are compelling reasons to believe that non-English news sources have a significant impact on the political behavior of Asian Americans. Ethnic media outlets such as television, radio, and online platforms provide an important channel through which immigrants and their descendants can stay informed about current events in their home countries. The ethnic media plays an assimilation function by helping individuals understand American politics, providing news about the interactions between their home country and the host country, serving as an information call center, event organizer, and community advocate, and reinforcing the group identification of ethnic groups (Viswanath and Arora 2000; Zhang 2021). Studies have found that Asian Americans exposed to more ethnic news are more politically active in homeland politics, while those exposed to more English-language media are more politically involved in American politics (Sui and Paul 2017). During the pandemic and the 2022 U.S. presidential election, disinformation targeting Latinos and Asian Americans has been documented (Li 2022; Velez, Porter, and Wood 2023). Differing from the disinformation targeting Latinos, disinformation targeting Chinese immigrants has often been done on WeChat, a popular social media app widely used by Chinese immigrants (Li 2022). This disinformation, which has been disseminated through platforms such as WeChat, can reinforce cultural tensions and appeal to voters on issues such as affirmative action and the treatment of Muslims (Zhang 2018). As such, the information and disinformation conveyed by ethnic media outlets can have far-reaching implications for American politics.

The transnational tie aspect is equally politically consequential. I refer to transnational ties as “multiple ties and interactions linking people or institutions across the borders of nation-states” (Vertovec 1999) and it could be broken down into two parts: political engagement and political attitudes (Lien 2010). Immigrants retain their home country loyalty without diminishing the immigrants’ willingness to participate in American politics (Sui and Paul 2017). Asian Americans’ news consumption reflects their transnational ties: new Chinese and Korean immigrants in the Great Los Angeles area see home country news as more important than neighborhood news, and they are more connected to ethnic media than mainstream media. The preference of the consumers is reflected by the high proportion of transnational news covered by their ethnic media (Lin, Song, and Ball-Rokeach 2010).

The transnational ties to the ethnic origin of Asian Americans matter significantly in daily American politics, especially for new immigrants. Collet and Lien (2009) documented instances where Asian Americans seek to exert influence on domestic and foreign policies based on the ethnic groups’ distinct interests. Asian American immigrants’ political preferences are also shaped by their political socialization prior to arriving in the United States and by the view of how the American leaders were being perceived in their homeland (Harvie and Lien 2017; Lien 2010). For example, those who come from a democratic country or place of origin might be more likely to participate in transnational politics (Lien 2010). There is no evidence that the attachment to the homeland would lower political engagement in America (Mishra 2016), suggesting that Asians can be politically active for causes in both their homeland and host country. The gunman of the 2022 Irvine Taiwanese Presbyterian Church shooting, David Wenwei Chou, was alleged to be motivated by hatred of Taiwan and his discontent with cross-trait tensions in recent years (Qin et al. 2022), suggesting that transnational ties can motivate violent acts and influence political views among Asian Americans. In fact, other literature has suggested long ago that diaspora groups frequently engage in social movements in their host countries to bring their cause to the public and the policymakers (Baser and Swain 2010) and attempt to influence their home country’s politics (Shum and Hui 2021). Transnational ties do not reduce the civic engagement of the immigrants in their host country. In contrast, immigrants who were more involved in homeland politics were more likely to be involved in American politics (Sui and Paul 2017).

This study aims to investigate the significance of ethnic origin in Asian American politics by exploring the beliefs and behaviors of individuals from different backgrounds in both their daily lives and political engagement. The research not only considers the meaning of ethnicity to Asian Americans and their perspectives on coethnic representation but also emphasizes the importance of non-English news sources and ethnic media to this population, as well as the role of transnational ties created by their ethnic origin. Relevant work on race and ethnicity studies has relied on qualitative interviews to conduct exploratory and descriptive research, as well as setting up testable hypotheses (e.g., Ocampo 2016; Pérez 2021). By listening to their personal accounts and exploring how they articulate their identities and experiences, this study aims to provide valuable insights into the relationship between ethnic origin and Asian American politics.

Research Design

The following account draws on a set of 23 original interviews with individuals who are Asian Americans.² All individuals are U.S. residents or citizens, except one who is in the progress of obtaining her residency.³ Interviews were conducted between October 2022 and January 2023, lasting an average of 37 minutes, and totaling over 14.3 hours of transcribed interview notes. Participants were identified and recruited using a combination of direct contacts, referrals, and snowball sampling methods. Interviewees ranged in age, national origin, location, and immigration status. In total, the participants aged from 19 to 80, with a median age of 27, represented 13 national origins from 12 states, including the District of Columbia. To maintain confidentiality and per the research protocol established by the institutional review board, I have refrained from identifying interviewees by name. Pseudonyms have been assigned to all participants in the quotations below.

The interviews were semistructured, with questions drawn from the relevant work on race and ethnicity politics, leaning heavily on Pérez's (2021) and Junn and Masuoka's (2008) studies. They typically began with questions surrounding the respondents' identities and the conditions under which they associate themselves with the identities. The interview then moved to discuss politics, such as their thoughts on descriptive representation by coethnic candidates. The discussion moved to discussing the cultural aspects of their ethnic origin, followed by questions on news consumption and foreign policy. All interviews have been transcribed following the interview and the original recordings were deleted.⁴

As a caveat, I do not intend to claim generalizability or causality in this study. Instead, I take descriptive and interpretive approaches to qualitative research (Elliott and Timulak 2005). Therefore, instead of having closed-ended hypotheses, I provide exploratory research questions and describe how Asian Americans think about the issues, experiences, and identities related to being an Asian American in the United States. I looked for similarities and differences between the respondents' experiences. Then, I developed multiple themes for their accounts and connected them to relevant literature on political behavior and Asian American politics. Hence, this study takes the thematic analysis approach rather than a comparative analysis approach. This study not only validates the existing literature but also raises new questions and perspectives.

The chosen behavior dimensions for this study are political representation and foreign policy preferences, as they highlight the significance of ethnicity in politics. Previous research has demonstrated that ethnicity influences voter preferences (Leung 2022, Lublin and Wright 2023). However, there is a lack of qualitative accounts explaining the reasons behind these preferences. This study aims to complement existing survey research by providing deeper insights into the factors driving such preferences.

Moreover, the foreign policy aspect remains relatively unexplored, despite Asian Americans having strong transnational ties that may make them particularly concerned about a candidate's foreign policy stance. This suggests an additional crucial factor that Asian Americans consider when evaluating candidates. Additionally, the media consumption dimension requires attention, as there is limited political science research on ethnic news and its impact. The recent mass

shooting in Irvine has reminded us of the potential influence of such media on Asian Americans' behavior. By examining these behavior dimensions, this study seeks to enhance our understanding of the complex interplay between ethnicity and political preferences among Asian Americans.

Findings

Asian American, while seemingly intuitive, is fundamentally a complex term with widely varying views. Nearly all Asian Americans possess multiple layers of identities, such as Asian American, ethnic American (e.g., Indian American and Vietnamese American), and plainly American. How do Asian Americans reconcile the differences and what does national origin mean to them? I begin by discussing how Asian Americans conceptualize the term Asian American and the conditions under which they identify themselves with their pan-ethnicity and their ethnicity. I then discuss the political differences between and within the Asian American populations, followed by their view on coethnic representation. Finally, I discuss the transnational ties of Asian Americans and how that affect their candidate and policy preferences.

Conceptualization of Asian American

For most Americans, the term Asian American likely means people of Asian descent who are residing in the United States; they are either naturalized or born in the United States. This is, in fact, the definition that many of my participants agreed with. They also recognized that Asian Americans largely share the same experience living in the United States. Identifying as Asian American also serves as a bridge between the ethnic identity and the American identity. As my participants pointed out, they felt slightly disconnected from their home country, among the seven respondents who have brought up this point, five of them were second generation and the remaining two came here when they were a teenager. The disconnection often stemmed from the inability to speak the native tongue and the cultural difference between where they grew up and their home country. Therefore, they were reluctant to identify themselves fully with their ethnic identity.

Asian American indicates the Americanness side of their identity and their sense of outsidership being in the host country. Joshua, a U.S.-born Filipino American, told me that the outsidership “[is] like I’m the same because I share a lot of culture of what’s here in America through entertainment, through politics and everything, and yet there is still that otherness and why I’d more so be Asian American than straight-up American.” Maya, a Korean American who was born and raised in the United States, similarly, did not think identifying herself as American would fully capture her experience. She put her Korean and Asian American identities before her American identity because when people saw her, they would see her as a Korean first; American was just a nationality that signified where she was born.

Some of my participants intentionally downplayed their American identity because they were disappointed by or even felt hopeless about the domestic politics in the United States, using the quote by Jasmine, a U.S.-born Hong Konger American, “with just how divisive and antagonistic this country has become, I don’t feel attached to this identity,” suggesting that the multiple layers of identities

enabled Asian Americans to resort to their Asian American and ethnic identities under certain circumstances.

Despite generally Asian Americans having no issues with the term, Asian American, it is noteworthy that a small portion of Asian Americans do not associate themselves with it, either because they do not feel any attachment to being Asian American or because they have a critical view about the term. In particular, the racialization of Asian Americans in the United States is problematic and not understandable to some respondents. One participant, who identified himself as Indian, Italian, and American, is critical of the racialized, elitist, and politically manipulated nature of the term:

I check that [Asian American] box when I have to . . . And you see that with the Stop Asian Hate group funded by the C[hinese]C[ommunist]P[arty] united front . . . This is not discrimination in the same that the illegally immigrated Bengali busboy or Chinese prostitute who was trafficked into the country. They are being discriminated against and I don't see them benefiting from any of this kind of discourse . . . These elite terms . . . you heard it from Ivy League Schools, and you learn how to correctly identify yourself to white-adjacent model minority and if you are the lower socioeconomic status or lower educated status, or you're educated abroad and you came here, you're not going to know these terms that were invented by white people. (Sam)

Sam disagreed with the creation of Asian American as a symbolic base for mobilization and an externally imposed racial category (Nagel 1994). Sam's view is echoed by Duncan, who came to the United States when he was 17 from Burma, and Yosef, who came from Taiwan for graduate school. Duncan did not feel an attachment as an American. He noted that America is only a place for work, live, and make an income to raise his kid, "[t]he deep connection that I have with Myanmar is totally different from what I feel for the US." Although the views of Duncan, Sam, and Yosef are the minority of the Asian American population, they have provided new insights as to understanding why more Asian Americans ranked their ethnic origin identity as the most important than Asian (Frasure et al. 2016) and why foreign-born Asian Americans had much weaker pan-ethnic linked fate than their U.S.-born counterparts (Wong et al. 2011). One contributing factor is the racialization of the term "Asian American," wherein it is applied to individuals of Asian ancestry in the United States who previously did not have a socially unifying racial identity or group classification (Omi and Winant 2014). Notably, this term does not find similar usage or definition outside the United States.

The term Asian American or the way how people define Asian Americans could be marginalizing certain national origin groups, this largely has to do with the Asian American default set forth by Americans, including even the Asian Americans themselves (Lee and Ramakrishnan 2019; see also Goh and McCue 2021). Similar to the Americans' prototype of Asian Americans as East Asians, even among some of my participants, certain Asian subgroups were not considered Asian Americans, at least not right on top of their minds. When asked to define Asian American, many participants named Asians from East Asia and sometimes omitted South Asians. Mora, a half-Indian American who grew up in the South told me about her experience:

I typically don't tell people so much that I'm Asian American, because my friends, whenever I've said that thought I was joking because they think of Asian American maybe more like a Chinese American or Vietnamese American, and they just see me as Indian... so, I just feel like a lot of people... thought of me more as Indian than true Asian American. (Mora)

Some of my participants are sympathetic to Mora's experience. Maya stated that, "I do think a lot of people tend to forget that India, and like South Asia exist, and that they are a part of our Asian community, or like Southeast Asia, they kind of just forget about them like almost all the time... I definitely had people told me that India is not part of Asia..." While Mora's experience has more to do with the stereotype of Asian Americans defined by White or other non-Asians, Angie, from East Turkistan, not only was very aware of the fact that Central Asians are often not considered Asians but also pointed out an interesting phenomenon that appears to have to do with the intragroup dynamics of Asian Americans themselves:

I haven't really seen a very diverse, inclusive Asian American sort of community that included Uyghurs and I think that might be one of the causes of this discrepancy, the reason why we don't necessarily immediately identify as Asian American, because there just really isn't a lot of platforms for us to come together as Asian Americans... It's like representation... if you don't feel like you belong there, then you find a group where you belong. (Angie)

The discussion in this section highlighted the underexplored dimension of the term Asian American and Asian Americans. The conversation has shown that while most Asian Americans take no issue with the term, some Asian Americans do not identify themselves as Asian Americans, and those who are not East Asians have felt marginalized by the American default of Asian American. This is consistent with the literature which shows that non-East Asian groups felt unseen or were treated differently due to the Americans' view of East Asians being the prototype of Asian Americans (Flores and Huo 2013; Ocampo 2016). Illustrated by Sam's comment, some Asian Americans also have issues with the racialization of Asian-ancestry Americans. The accounts provide implications on some of the limitations when it comes to the term Asian American or when using the term Asian American as a way to foster political gains, such as the Stop Asian Hate movement.

What Constitutes National Origin Identities?

Although not all Asian Americans agreed on the appropriateness and the applicability of the term, Asian American, the consensus from my participants was that ethnic origin was important to them. While some participants placed their Asian American or American identities above their ethnic identity, all of them recognized the attachment to their ethnic identity. In other words, none of the participants would say that they were not part of their national origin group. I identified that culture, food, and language were critical to the linkage between the participants and their ethnic origin. Specifically, I asked how the participants think about their ethnic identity and what part of the identity were they proud of.

Ethnicity is constructed by culture, history, and external forces, such as category created by government agencies (Nagel 1994). Culture is broadly defined here, which includes but not limited to the language, food, the way of thinking, and family values. The participants told me that Asians share similar family values, where the values are strong and inclusive, and they were proud of that. For example, Joshua told me that his group identity was built upon the big immigrant family that he had, “I think I would connect with that (the big family) with the group identity that we carry, a sense of family, not just through our immediate nuclear family, but through relatives, uncles and aunts, and then maybe even adopted fellow kin group, our culture.”

Language is an essential channel through which Asian Americans connect with their ancestors and national origin; 77% of Asian Americans speak a language other than English at home (Lee, Ramakrishnan, and Wong 2018). In fact, the importance of language to culture and identity has been recognized by all but two of my 23 respondents. Language provides them with a sense of connection and because a lot of first-generation Asian Americans are not proficient in English, their daily conversations are mainly conducted in their native tongue. For the second-generation Asian Americans, they often regretted not being able to speak their native tongue. Taylor, a second-generation Chinese American, told me that her grandparents do not speak English and so she would not be able to communicate with them if she did not know the language. She also emphasized that speaking the language gave her “another level of appreciation and understanding.” Therefore, language not only has practicality but also has special meanings for Asian Americans.

My participants acknowledged the importance of their language and told me that while they would like their children to learn the language, it should not be compulsory because children should have a choice. For some groups, learning the language serves as a means to preserve their culture. Timothy, who came to the United States from Hong Kong when he was 12, said:

If you don't use it, you'll lose it . . . just because something is less useful doesn't mean that it's bad, or doesn't mean that it's not worthy of being learned because that would be saying these disappearing languages in indigenous lands are not worth saving, like these cultures are not worth saving. Cantonese . . . still needs usage and people passing down in order to continue to be preserved. (Timothy)

Likewise, Tammy, a foreign-born Tibetan American, emphasized the importance of preserving her culture and felt that this was not a problem that most Asian Americans would share because of the unique situation in Tibet. She said, “I think being a Tibetan has definitely been the integral of who I am, and I think that is also unique because of the political situation . . . and my responsibility that's embedded within me . . . I think that really is a different sort of feeling compared to other Asians in the United States because you don't necessarily have the sense of like you have to carry your culture, you are dying as a population, that kind of mindset.”

Pan-Ethnic versus Ethnic Origin Identities in Different Contexts

Asian Americans often possess multiple layers of identities (e.g., Wong et al. 2011; Wu 2022). Here, I am interested in the factors that influence their identification with the groups and when they identify with them. I am particularly interested in the scenario where the Asian Americans are with other Asian Americans, just as one could imagine an Asian candidate running against another Asian candidate. From the interviews and the existing literature, when Asians are in a community of their own national origin group, they would identify themselves as a member of that group (Espiritu 1992). Meanwhile, when the dominant group in the setting is non-Asian, they would identify themselves just plainly as Asian Americans. I identified contexts through which the identities are emphasized. The findings are consistent with the literature in identity politics that identities and identity choices are fluid and malleable (Junn and Masuoka 2008; Lien, Conway, and Wong 2003).

Emphasis of Pan-Ethnicity

The concept of pan-ethnicity can be defined as individuals choosing to identify themselves primarily as part of a pan-ethnic group, downplaying the significance of their specific ethnic backgrounds. Among the respondents in my study, a recurring theme emerged wherein they were more inclined to embrace the identity of Asian Americans, particularly in the face of anti-Asian discrimination and within social circles predominantly composed of fellow Asian Americans. These findings resonate with the research conducted by Le, Arora, and Stout in 2020, which highlights the association between the process of racialization and the strengthening of pan-ethnic linked fate. In contrast to the perspectives of Sam and Duncan, it becomes evident that the racialization of Asian Americans often motivates these individuals to align themselves more closely with the broader pan-ethnic category. Furthermore, some respondents mentioned that their tendency to identify as Asian Americans was influenced by the prevailing perception among Americans, who tend to view all individuals of Asian descent through a relatively uniform lens. My participants also viewed that most Asian Americans share similar experiences growing up in the United States, as Timothy described, “to identify with fellow Asian Americans, in addition, it’s not just about being from America or growing up, there’s an additional layer of shared values or shared experiences that are required to feel identified as an Asian American.” The findings are consistent with how the pan-ethnicity of Asian Americans is intricately tied with shared cultures, values, and experiences (Kibria 2002).

Using the term Asian Americans could be a way to create inclusiveness in the social environment. Taylor explained the reason why she identified herself more as an Asian American than a Chinese American when she interacted with her Asian friends, “there’s already common ground, I think, in being able to state that we’re all Asian Americans, so almost just to make sure everyone’s included in the group, I would call us all Asian Americans because that’s what we all kind of fit into, and calling myself specifically Chinese American is almost unnecessary,” suggesting the embracement of Asian American as a pan-ethnic identity. Likewise, Yosef told me that he tried to “assimilate” when there was a group of people of diverse background because he was trying to understand and talk issues from the perspective of the rest

of the group. Identifying as an Asian American instead of the ethnic identity could be boiled down to (1) the indistinguishability of Asian Americans in the United States, (2) inclusivity, (3) the unnecessary of national origin, and (4) actively fitting in.

Emphasis of Ethnicity

By emphasis on ethnicity, I mean that Asian Americans are choosing to downplay their Asian American identity in a specific context. In their mind, they emphasize their ethnic identity so that they are distinct from other Asian Americans. I found that Asian Americans were also more likely to identify with their ethnic identity when they were attending ethnic origin-specific events, such as food festivals, cultural festivals, restaurants with their ethnic cuisines, churches, and with their families. All these contexts involved the culture or language that was specific to their own ethnic group and were not shared by other Asian Americans. Kenneth, a Taiwanese American who came to the United States when he was 11 said, “The only situation I would consider myself Taiwanese American is when there’s a cultural event or when there is a club that requires some specific functions. For example, there is a Taiwanese American club in DC. That’s the only time I would consider myself Taiwanese American because that’s how the club functions and it’s more appropriate. Other than that, I really don’t.” The ethnic identity, thus, could function as a ticket for entering certain social environment. This is when ethnicity becomes salient.

More importantly, although Asian Americans generally believe that they shared the same living experiences and were perceived roughly the same by non-Asians, they felt that there were unique experiences, cultures, and beliefs that were not shared by other ethnic groups. The interviews challenged “ethnic lumping,” the idea that Asian Americans are viewed as a homogenous monolith (Espiritu 1992), as in fact, Asian Americans were highly attentive to the differences between the ethnic groups. I felt this identity choice was particularly pronounced among people with politically oppressed background, such as East Turkistan, Hong Kong, Myanmar, and Tibet, and those who were highly attentive to the authoritarian regimes in their home countries. The struggle that they experienced was not shared by any of the other groups.

Angie described how she reconciled the difference between her Asian American and East Turkistani identities, “in broader issues we are dealing with, like discrimination against minorities in the United States, when we’re filling a college form, those kinds of things, we check mark for Asians, and we stand as Asians. When it comes to matters of specific human rights issues, it’s East Turkistani. When it comes to more cultural issues and language, we’re Uyghur.” Likewise, for Alessandra, she would say that she is an Asian American when there were attacks within the Asian community during the pandemic. However, being a second-generation Hong Konger American, the uprising that happened in Hong Kong strengthened her Hong Konger identity and it was used to separate herself from Chinese when she was with a group of Asians. Hence, some Asian Americans would disengage from their Asian American identity and engage with their national origin identity instead because the Asian American identity does not necessarily capture all

of their experiences, culture, and language. Members with politically oppressed background also retained their ethnic origin identity strongly because they were concerned about the politics and the people of their home countries under the suppression of the authoritarian regime. This finding is consistent with the literature on the role home country conflicts play in the diaspora's lobbying effort and candidate preferences in various host countries (Chang 2004; Shum and Hui 2021).

Ethnic Origin Representation in American Politics

In previous sections, I have described how Asian Americans conceptualize ethnic origin and Asian American, as well as their identities associated with these groups. I have found consistent evidence that ethnic origin is meaningful to most Asian Americans. A large body of work in political science has established “identity-to-politics,” suggesting that the identity of the individual affects his or her political preferences (Hajnal and Lee 2011; Junn 2006). In the following, I discuss how Asian Americans think about coethnic representation, and how ethnicity has an impact on news consumption and foreign policy preferences.

The existing literature argues that Asian voters have a preference for conational-origin candidates (Lublin and Wright 2023). Their ethnic identity is more salient in the face of identity threats (Wu 2022). In most cases, party is prioritized over ethnicity (Leung 2022). Similarly, I found that Asian voters' coethnic preference is relatively weak, compared to party. My participants indicated that the partisan affiliation of the candidate and the platform that they ran with were significantly more important than the ethnicity of the person; almost under no circumstances would the participants be willing to vote for coethnic candidates from the other party.⁵

The coethnic preference is particularly strong among the Hong Konger, East Turkistani, and Tibetan Americans, as all but one respondent stated that the politics of their home countries were influential in their voting decisions in the host country. Alessandra's quote illustrates the reasonings:

I view their political affiliation very highly, so if they lead towards the political party that I'm registered in, then I would likely vote for them, no matter whether they identify themselves as a Hong Konger American or Asian American. If they are both Democrats and they are both running, then I would likely choose the Hong Kong one. I think it's a good representation for the US . . . because I feel like [the voice of Hong Konger Americans] needs to be more out there just to get the voices heard . . . not just because I feel like that person may do good for me, I feel like it would do good for Hong Kong as a country. (Alessandra)

However, some participants also told me that going down to the ethnicity level might be unnecessary and just the candidate being Asian American would be sufficient. For example, Bryson, a Thai American who came to the when he was a teenager, said:

Let's say you have three candidates, and they all represent more or less the values that I'd like, and would I look at race in that case? Maybe, but I wouldn't look down to the Thai level, I would just look down to the Asian American

level. I think it's too niche to go on a Thai level, and I think Asian American for me is enough, because in America, for better or worse, the average white person thinks of all Asians as the same. (Bryson)

I found a new dimension through which the ethnicity of the candidate would be politically consequential—Asian voters are significantly more likely to pay attention and seek out information about a coethnic candidate. The increased attention could be a double-edged sword. On one hand, the candidate could be able to convey more of their platform to the voters and attempt to persuade the voters. As Yosef described, “it will be a wow factor. It will definitely raise my curiosity, no doubt.” On the other hand, that leads to increased scrutiny that could backfire. Beau, a U.S.-born Vietnamese told me that, “I might scrutinize that candidate even more if I am conscious of that fact, and then attempt to be as impartial as possible. I do want to see minorities achieve more but I am not going to vote for someone just because of that.”

Therefore, while the ethnicity of the candidate could be consequential, we should note that for most Asian voters, the effect is small and is conditional on the partisan affiliation of the candidate. In fact, for some voters, the Asian American identity of the candidate is sufficient in terms of having a shared experience with the voters and a sense of representation. Building on how the transnational ties could affect the strength of the coethnic preference, I move to the next section by describing how the ties to the home country could affect other aspects of Asian American politics.

Home Country Ties

Asian Americans are predominantly first-generation or second-generation immigrants.⁶ For them, and implied by some of my participants, America is their home, where they work, go to school, and raise a family; America is their host country. On the other hand, they trace their ancestries back to Asia, where their native tongues were spoken and where their cultures are still being practiced; those countries are their home countries. Most Asian Americans were mindful of the existence of their home and host countries. As my interviews revealed, many of the participants still felt a special connection with their home countries, where their ancestors were from. While there are wide-ranging differences, they still paid attention to the news and events happening in their host countries. At times, the stance of the candidates on foreign policy, particularly the relationship between the United States and their home country, could shape their evaluations of the candidates.

News Consumption

Although not all Asian Americans paid close attention to the news in their host countries, they still were aware of what was happening in their host countries. Even though obtaining news from the host country's news sources would be the most up-to-date, most respondents I know did not utilize such news sources due to language barriers or simply not having the habit of doing so. One participant also stated that since there was a cultural disconnect, he could not tell which news sources were trustworthy. Many of my participants obtained news of their host countries from

the mainstream media in the United States, such as the New York Times, CNN, and the Washington Post.

The reliance on American news media comes with a disadvantage: News coverage depends highly on the geopolitical importance of the home country. China, for example, is covered on a daily basis in American news outlets. In contrast, smaller countries tend to get far less coverage. Beau only paid attention to Vietnamese news through the western lens, but he noticed the limitation, “you’re mostly just paying attention to Vietnam’s interaction with the U.S. and China. Vietnam does not have as much of a geopolitical importance as other countries in that area so that there isn’t as much media coverage about the internal [politics and events].”

I also found that parents or the older generation were important news sources for second-generation Asians because the first generations tended to rely on the news media back in their home countries more and they tended to have a stronger connection with the people who were still living there. The relatives, like Kendrick’s, served as first-hand sources for news that was not necessarily covered by the mainstream media in the United States. For example, Kendrick told me that, “I only pay attention to the news when it’s something really big. I wouldn’t look into local politics . . . We have this Whatsapp group chat, with family members in Indonesia, and they’re always talking about something there, like sending news articles.” My participants also told me that even though they relied on the mainstream media in America, they would get the news of their home countries through interacting with their parents or relatives who were much more in tune with the news. Hence, indirectly they were still receiving coverage from their homelands. Nearly all participants were somewhat connected, regardless of the ways in which they obtained the news, to current events in their home countries.

Foreign Policy

How does ethnic origin affect politics? The literature on identity politics mostly focuses on the domestic context or the individuals themselves. Studies have found that Asians with stronger linked fate are more likely to prefer coethnic representatives (Schildkraut 2013). Social exclusion and experiences of marginalization lead to pan-ethnic political participation and pan-ethnic identification (Masuoka 2006; Okamoto and Ebert 2010). I argue that the attachments to the homelands also influence how Asian Americans evaluate candidates in elections.⁷ My argument echoes the documentation of how Asian Americans attempted to influence foreign policy (Collet and Lien 2009; Mishra 2016). Hong Konger Americans who felt strongly about their Hong Kong identity were also more likely to have been involved in collective actions in the United States and preferred candidates who offered a safe harbor for at-risk Hong Kongers (Shum and Hui 2021). For participants of politically oppressed background, the effect was particularly strong as they saw America as an unparalleled power that could influence how the people from their homelands were being treated and would support the prodemocracy movements there. The effect was so strong that they would consider voting for candidates from the opposite party.

Occasionally, my participants’ preference on domestic policy might be in conflict with their preference on foreign policy. As Yosef said, “The truth is I live in America

and my immediate family lives in America, I always have to take into consideration of that. Let's say if you are supporting Taiwan and you are going to risk everybody's life to engage in that, I don't think it's necessarily a wise choice. It's a combination of [domestic policy and foreign policy]." Likewise, Michael, a U.S.-born Hong Konger American, described his dilemma:

I think this is one of those things where American and Hong Konger may be in conflict, which is that there are a large number of politicians who are publicly very anti-CCP, that this is helpful I think to Hong Kong in some manner, . . . but the way they talk about this actually endanger not just me, but also other Asian Americans in general. . . . That's a tough decision a lot of times. (Michael)

The motives of the candidate could also play a role. The appeals of the candidates could have negative effects if they are deemed ingenuine or pandering (Zárate, Quezada-Llanes, and Armenta [forthcoming](#)) and the commitment of the politicians is important in voters' evaluation (Wamble 2018). I found similar patterns: I asked my participants what they think of the hypothetical candidate if they support strengthening the relationship between the United States and their homelands. My participants were mindful that the candidates might be interested in deriving political gains for position taking, as a "lip service" (Yosef), or other political reasons, rather than genuinely advocating for their homelands.

Taylor told me that she would support the candidate advocating for a stronger relationship between the United States and China because of her emotional connection with the homeland, but she was cautious, "I personally would want to dive in a little deeper as to why they want to strengthen that relationship . . . if it's pure export exploitation or if it's genuine partnership, and whatever it is that they're wanting."

Some other respondents were indifferent because they expected the United States to engage in friendly diplomatic relations with all countries. They had no particularism for ties with their home countries. Kendrick also followed a pragmatic approach. He said that he would support the candidate who advocates for a stronger United States–Indonesia relationship, more because of the economic gains that both countries would benefit from, than his emotional connection with Indonesia. Similarly, Jayden, a U.S.-born Chinese/Japanese American, said, "I don't know if I would say I feel it's more important because I'm Chinese. I feel like it's important because of the country that China is, the impact that they have on the world."

All in all, the majority of Asian Americans I have talked to maintained emotional and social ties to their homelands. Asian Americans regularly consume news of their home countries via foreign and domestic news outlets. They also rely on their relatives and the older generations for more local news. Due to their emotional ties, in their voter calculus, they would also consider the candidates' position on foreign policy with their home countries and the reasonings behind their positions. This part of the article has discovered a new aspect through which national origin affects Asian American politics in the United States.

Discussion and Conclusion

In light of the growing discussion on intragroup diversity (Jiménez, Fields, and Schachter 2015) and the need to disaggregate Asian American in data collection (Lee, Ramakrishnan, and Wong 2018), I have discussed multiple aspects of how Asian Americans think about their ethnic origin identity by drawing upon 23 semistructured interviews that I had conducted. I have shown that ethnic origin and the identity associated with it have important and deep meanings to most Asian Americans. Although most Asian Americans had no issue with the umbrella term, “Asian American,” and agreed that the term appropriately described their experience being both an American but also an outsider in America, a small proportion of them were not susceptible to it because they thought it was inappropriate or served no purpose to them. This likely occurred more often for Asians who were born outside the United States and were not exposed to the category that Americans had created for them. This highlights a limitation in terms of how Asian Americans could be mobilized together as a pan-ethnic group rather than focusing on their ethnic group (Tam Cho 2001). Campaigns and political movements might need to further highlight the commonality between those groups in constructing the pan-ethnic identity for them (Nagel 1994).

I also identified the factors that are important for ethnic identities, and how Asian Americans reconcile with their identities. I found that Asian Americans put different emphasis on the identity depending on the context. When emphasizing their pan-ethnicity, Asian Americans would actively try to think from the Asian American point of view or simply neglect their ethnic identity as they did not deem it as important in the social settings. This identity choice likely occurred during the anti-Asian hate movement and when Asians viewed that they shared the common experience and discrimination from the out-group. They saw the formation of an alliance as a way to achieve political gains in America. In contrast, some Asian Americans, especially those with politically oppressed background, were more likely to not engage with their pan-ethnicity because they had unique experiences and cultures that were not shared by the others; just identifying as Asian American would not fully capture their experience. The results here suggest that Asian Americans cannot be viewed as a monolith and that ethnic origin matters socially and psychologically. Further research could provide a more systematic explanation as to the identity choice that Asian Americans make and its implication in terms of political communication and intragroup politics and policy preferences.

The existing literature shows that Asian Americans prefer conational-origin candidates (Leung 2022; Sadhwani 2021, 2022). This article is consistent with their findings and shows that while Asian Americans have a slight preference for conational-origin candidates, they would be unlikely to vote for candidates who are from the opposite party. Lublin and Wright (2023) claimed that the preference of coethnic candidates is statistically indistinguishable from the pan-ethnic preference, even though the former appears to be slightly stronger than the latter. My interviews, as a qualitative complement, suggest that some Asian Americans are satisfied with pan-ethnic representation, rather than diving deep into coethnic representation. The coethnic preference is not particularly strong. The article leaves

the questions of under what circumstances would ethnic origin be salient in campaigns and elections and what factors determine the desire for coethnic representation instead of pan-ethnic representation.

Lastly, this article echoes the call for further investigation of the linkage between the country of origin and the host country (Shum and Hui 2021). The consideration of the transnational linkage is even more important when we consider the fact that four in five Asian American adults were foreign-born, according to the 2020 U.S. Census, and as my interviews suggest, they were regular consumers of news in or about their homelands. In addition, some Asian Americans place strong emphasis on candidates' stance on the relationship between the United States and their homelands, resulting from their emotional attachment to their home countries. Some of my participants indicated that they would punish the candidates if they advocated for favorable relations with the authoritarian regime at home. They also were attentive to the motives of their political stances. The findings and recent events have shown an increasing need to further examine how foreign media and news, and transnational ties could affect the political behavior of Asians in the United States. For instance, misinformation was dispersed across ethnic-specific social media platforms in Asian American community during the pandemic (Chong et al. 2022) and the **Chinese American gunman in the Laguna Woods shooting was motivated by political hatred against Taiwan** (Qin et al. 2022). Such underexplored aspects of Asian Americans should receive more attention from scholars across disciplines, such as political misinformation, race and ethnicity politics, and public opinion.

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Notes

- 1 The Asian American Voter Survey uses the term non-English sources while most literature has been on ethnic news or ethnic media. Although both terms are similar, they differ in that ethnic media often refers to media in the United States that provides content targeting a certain segment of the population. Non-English sources, on the other hand, include both ethnic media and media from overseas.
- 2 I identify Asian Americans as individuals of Asian-descent living in the United States. These individuals are descents or born from countries in Central Asia, East Asia, Southeast Asia, and South Asia.
- 3 I chose this criterion during participant recruitment as a significant portion of the study was to study the impact of the identity on vote choice and policy preferences. If the respondents are not eligible to vote, their voices are less valuable for drawing conclusions about voting preference in an American election.
- 4 Additional information about the participants and the interview questions are presented in the appendix.
- 5 I did not obtain information about the jurisdiction where the respondents reside. Hence, the study is unable to speak to the effect of the group size on candidate preferences.
- 6 I define first-generation immigrant as a person who is a born outside of the United States. Second-generation immigrant is a person who is a born in the United States with parents who are born abroad.
- 7 I do not claim that preference on foreign policy would be the most important factor, as the majority of the voters view domestic issues as more important issues than foreign policy. In fact, a small proportion of participants told me that U.S.–homeland relations were even less important than the U.S.'s relationship with some other countries. Here, I am simply making the case that the transnational ties do play a role in voter calculus.

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Appendix 1

Additional Participant Information

Participant	Gender	Age	Ethnic origin	Nativity	Generation	Location	Length (minutes)
1	Male	37	Hong Kong	Foreign-born	First	VA	50
2	Female	23	Tibet	Foreign-born	First	MA	27
3	Male	45	Taiwan	Foreign-born	First	VA	35
4	Male	27	China	U.S.-born	Second	IL	44
5	Male	27	Vietnam	U.S.-born	Second	VA	31
6	Female	22	Hong Kong	U.S.-born	Second	TX	39
7	Male	25	Hong Kong	U.S.-born	Second	VA	50
8	Male	53	Taiwan	Foreign-born	First	CA	35
9	Female	51	India/White	U.S.-born	Second	GA	34
10	Male	32	Thailand	Foreign-born	First	NY	29
11	Female	27	China	Foreign-born	First	OR	73
12	Female	25	Vietnam	Foreign-born	First	SC	31
13	Female	30	Hong Kong	U.S.-born	Second	NY	29
14	Male	28	Philippines/ Mexico	U.S.-born	Second	CA	44
15	Female	31	East Turkistan	Foreign-born	First	VA	37
16	Female	80	Japan	U.S.-born	Second	OR	38
17	Male	27	China/Japan	U.S.-born	Second	CA	35
18	Female	27	China	U.S.-born	Second	CA	35
19	Male	20	Indonesia	U.S.-born	Second	TX/DC	29
20	Male	28	India/White	U.S.-born	Second	DC	40
21	Female	21	Korea	U.S.-born	Second	NY/DC	31
22	Female	19	Korea	U.S.-born	Second	OK/DC	29
23	Male	38	Burma	Foreign-born	First	VA	23

Note: Participants in chronological order by which the interviews were conducted.

Appendix 2

Interview Prompts

Identity

What does it mean to be an Asian American? What is most important to your identity as an Asian American?

What does it mean to be [ethnic group]? What is most important to your identity as a member of this ethnic group? Do you consider this to be different from your identity as an Asian American?

Are you proud of being [ethnic group]? What are some of the things you are proud of?

How would you rank your identities? [ethnic] American, Asian American, American (if American). If immigrant: [ethnicity], Asian.

In what situations do you consider yourself as an Asian American? In what situations do you consider yourself as [ethnic group]? Which identity do you feel closer to?

How would you describe any historical differences among Asian/Asian Americans? That is to say, differences in how various communities of color first arrived in the United States, how they were treated here, how they are currently treated here, and their future well-being, or stereotype?

Politics

How would you describe any political differences among Asian/Asian Americans? That is, differences in terms of the politicians they support and the policy proposals they endorse. This could be at the local level, state level, or national level.

How would you describe the political differences among people in different generations in your group?

What does it mean for you to see a coethnic candidate? How does a coethnic candidate differ from another Asian candidate? That is, differences in terms of your willingness to vote, donate, or campaign, your sense of pride, and your trust in them in advocating for you. This could be at the local level, state level, or national level.

Culture

How important do you think your [ethnic group]'s language for your own identity and your ethnic group? How important is that children from your ethnic group should study it?

How important do you think your [ethnic group]'s culture for your own identity and your ethnic group? How important is that children from your ethnic group should learn about it?

Do you read or pay attention to news in your home country? How does that influence your identity?

How does U.S.'s foreign policy with your home country affect you? If a candidate is in favor of strengthening U.S.-[home country] relations, how would that influence your support for him/her?

Appendix 3

Methodology

This study draws on a set of 23 original interviews with Asian American individuals. Interviews were conducted between October 2022 and January 2023, lasting an average of 37 minutes, and totaling over 14.3 hours of transcribed interview notes. Participants were identified and recruited using a combination of direct contacts, referrals, and snowball sampling methods. Interviews were conducted in English only and were recruited via email. Hence, the sample likely excluded Asian Americans who were not proficient in English. The excluded population is more likely to be first-generation immigrants and older. I would expect this population to be the most likely to maintain strong transnational ties, consume foreign media, and possess the strongest national-origin identity. The limitation is a typical limitation of research on Asian Americans as their languages vary and it was not practical to employ translators for every language.

I begin the recruitment by using direct contacts where I have identified participants of different national origins, ages, and immigration statuses as I believe these factors are important to the sample quality. I recruited participants who had no prior knowledge about this research project. I used direct contacts most heavily to recruit participants of different national origins. For example, the Tibetan and Uyghur participants were directly recruited as I believed that they have important voices in this study but would be extremely hard to reach by other recruitment methods.

I also recruited participants by asking connections of mine to refer me to Asian Americans who would be potentially interested in the study, this is what I referred to as referrals. I also used referrals to reach a certain population that was hard to reach. For example, knowing another graduate student who is Burmese, I asked that she referred me to any Burmese she knew in the United States. Eventually, via third-degree connection, I was able to interview Duncan who was a Burmese and was born in Burma. While the direct contact and referral approach has limited me to respondents who were more likely to be highly educated or belong to the middle class, I believe that the wide coverage of different national origins is the most important in this study.

I offset the biasedness by using the snowballing approach which allows me to reach beyond the respondents recruited by the two aforementioned approaches. At the end of every interview, I asked that the respondents refer me to a couple of people who might be interested in speaking with me. For example, Kendrick was able to connect me with his two Korean friends and Timothy was able to connect me with Jasmine by creating a post on my behalf on his social media.

Interviewees ranged in age, national origin, location, and immigration status. In total, the participants aged from 19 to 80, with a median age of 27, represented 13 national origins from 12 states, including the District of Columbia. 19 of the 23 respondents were under 40 years old and the average age is 32. Hence, the sample population skews toward the younger end. Although I did not ask the respondents about their income or education status, the sample population is likely biased. We would expect that this sample population would be more likely to associate

themselves with the Asian American or the American identity than with their national origin identity; this population should be less likely to maintain strong transnational ties or their culture, as they have been immersed or were born into the American way of life. In other words, this is a conservative test. Quite the contrary, I have found strong evidence of transnational ties, consumption of foreign media, and meaningful attachment to their national-origin identity, from this sample, suggesting that where national-origin identity is expected to be the weakest, it is still important and politically consequential. Therefore, I should find even stronger effects of national origin in the broader Asian population.

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