

THE LOTUS

BLOCK 8 NEWSLETTER

MAY 2024

AAPI SPECIAL ISSUE

SPOTLIGHT ON OUR STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS ON CAMPUS

In honor of Asian American & Pacific Islander (AAPI) Heritage Month, *The Lotus* presents Part One of our spotlight on CC's Asian and AAPI groups



Hello! We are Colorado College's Asian Student Union. We are a large club consisting of members who self-identify as Asian. We acknowledge the breadth of this category and hope to celebrate the individuality within the unifying category of Asian as a political identity. In embracing all representations of the Asian diaspora, including international students, we are a club dedicated to promoting the political, cultural, social, and academic interests of Asian-identifying Colorado College students. During the school year, we host blocky general body meetings, as well as individual events in collaboration with other affinity groups on campus that involve food, music,

performances, games, and dance. We host an annual Spring Formal in conjunction with UCCS and USAFA Asian affinity groups to encourage Asian community relations throughout the Springs. As an organization, we also are committed to encourage networking and community building with Asian-identifying faculty. We are a club where commitment is flexible and attendance is non-mandatory, you can go to any event that serves your interests! Follow us on Instagram @coloradocollegeasu for all updates pertaining to events, leadership elections, collaborations, and more. Our GroupMe is also linked in the bio for all members.

Hi! We are CC Adoptees, a club of students who are either adopted or formerly involved in the foster care system. Our club was created to build a community between people who have been adopted and/or fostered, have experience with adoption, and/or have strong connections to the adoption community. We aim to create a safe and inclusive space for those of diverse cultural and familial backgrounds. Because adoption and foster care histories are often concealed or hidden, we encourage open communication between our members in a space where they can feel heard and seen by members of their community. We are a low commitment club that meets blocky to eat food, enjoy each others' company, and educate ourselves on the social and political implications of systems like adoption and foster care. Our club reaches across the racial and socioeconomic diaspora to foster high ideals of friendship, unity, and alliance. You can find us on Instagram @ccadopteers and our GroupMe is in our bio!



Welcome to the Japanese Culture Club, also affectionately known as Henohenomoheji, a vibrant community for enthusiasts of all things Japanese! Here, students can dive into an immersive experience, exploring the rich heritage of Japan through various engaging activities. Whether it's enjoying anime and films, cooking up delicious Japanese dishes, or delving into traditional customs and celebrations, there's something for everyone. For those studying Japanese, Henohenomoheji offers a fantastic opportunity to practice and enhance your language skills in a fun, supportive environment. Join us and connect with fellow students who share your passion for Japanese culture. Let's explore and celebrate the wonders of Japan together!



Hello, we are Colorado College KDance (CCKD)! We are a club open to anyone who is interested in k-pop and/or dance! AT CCKD, we hold dance practices to learn various dances as well as short workshops to learn a small segment of a trending choreography. We also perform live for many CC events including ASU events, admitted student events, and festivals. Be sure to follow our instagram @coloradocollegekdance where we post dance covers and recordings of our live performances! To recruit dancers, we send out announcements in our GroupMe about which dances are being covered so people who are interested in dancing it can join on a first come, first serve basis. If you are interested in joining CCKD, you can join our GroupMe with the link in our instagram bio or ask a current CCKD member. We are looking for more dancers and videographers to film our covers and we would love for you to be a part of our future projects!



Pasifika Student Collective (PSC) is an affinity group that began in the Spring of 2023. PSC seeks to champion the awareness of the Pacific Island region in the Colorado College Community. Throughout the year we hold blocky programs and AAPI month celebrations that promote community, invite people to learn about our culture and create a critical lens that acknowledges the inequities experienced by Islanders and promotes activism. PSC welcomes any and all students who are interested in learning about our region and we cannot wait to see you at one of our events soon!

Stay tuned for Part Two of our spotlight on CC's Asian and AAPI groups in the next issue!

BY VICENTE BLAS TAIJERON '24

REIMAGINING CHAMORU DANCE THROUGH CONCEPTS OF QUEERNESS AND MEMORY

My queerness is something I am continuously learning about and growing into. Growing up on the small island of Guam, I was raised around a stark Catholic culture that fused with Indigenous CHamoru values to create a sense of fluidity that tiptoed around queerness but never actually accepted it. As a result, I found myself lost, with no queer memory and no queer elders to guide me. As I learn more about myself, my desires, the way I love and the way I remember, I situate myself as a student whose identity is continuously evolving and remembering from the work of those before me. One such work I look to, to build and refine my queerness and queer memory is the introduction of *If Memory Serves: Gay Men, AIDS, and the Promise of the Queer Past* by Christopher Castiglia and Christopher Reed.

The introduction of *If Memory Serves: Gay Men, AIDS, and the Promise of the Queer Past* serves as a foundation for the book to allow readers to think about the importance of memory when it comes to imagining a queer future. Castiglia and Reed start by stating that their intent is to critique amnesia or memory loss in the Gay community, arguing that amnesia has weakened “our connections to one another and our ability to imagine, collectively and creatively, alternative social presents and futures for ourselves” (1). By bearing witness to the past, the hardship of the AIDS epidemic and the legacy of queerness before that, Castiglia and Reed seek to reimagine queerness as an expanding space that is intentional with reflecting on hardships and joy, suffering and celebration.

There is an importance to acknowledging the fullness of our memory. Both the good and the bad are crucial to learning and growing as a queer community. While we can always celebrate the good times, Castiglia and Reed also want us to bear witness to the past whilst mitigating the potential harms of thinking about such agonizing periods of queer truth. To remedy this issue they propose the technique of strategic remembering. I found this excerpt from the text to be particularly important as it rebuts a lot of arguments as to why the queer community should embrace amnesia and forget the past. Castiglia and Reed write:

“...we want to advocate for strategic remembering...This book is an effort to exploit the inventive and idealistic operations of memory in order to use recollections of exercises of freedom pioneered by previous gay generations to create a collective connection with the past that enables us as we transform the present.” (10)

Moreover, they promote this strategic remembering tactic to lean away from the notion that queer pasts are to be forgotten. Instead, our triumphs and struggles throughout history are to be remembered, honored and

utilized as lessons to learn from and inspiration by which we can forge a stronger collective connection amongst queer folk today in order to radically reimagine and create a fruitful future for ourselves. By doing so, we work against what they regard as idealistic memories or a process of remembering that devalues queer struggle and erases it. We lean into our pasts and recognize that while there has been queer struggle there has always been queer joy, queer love, queer art, queer activism, which have often been reactions to the many ways in which queer folk experience marginality navigating the world.

Sitting in the fullness of the past and remembering our truth is the best way we create a more innovative queer reality. Castiglia and Reed argue that when we distance ourselves from the temptation to unremember we push ourselves to look at the memories and react to those memories in ways that further the development of our community. They contextualize this point more stating:

“Far from heeding the call to unremember the past and to distance themselves from previous generations, queer artists, filmmakers, novel-ists, sitcom writers, architects, and memorialists have taken up memory with a vengeance, turning pastness into a potent tool for inventive sex-uality, expansive sociality, and creative activism in and for the present. Within these memories, if we remember (the causes and consequences of) amnesia, we might be able to dance again at ground zero.” (37)

Furthermore, Castiglia and Reed write this to show that, oftentimes, the most innovative and creative re-envisioning of our community comes as reactions to the past. Therefore, demonstrating that the legacies of artists, filmmakers, writers and others were forged by the struggles of yesterday and an embrace of both the hardships and joys of queer truth. Reflecting further, I also think the occupations in which Castiglia and Reed choose to center in this quote queer the idea of whose knowledge and memories are valuable. They don't look to queer academics or scholars (although, such queer agents do crucial work too), they choose to value those whose work involves a pronounced form of creativity and artistry and, importantly, those who have been on the margins of academia and society.

This piece has allowed me to reflect more deeply on my queerness as a whole and to think more intentionally about the way I remember. Being that this reading was one of the first queer literature I engaged with during my first semester in college, I view it as a reading that played an immense part in forming my queer identity. From this reading, I began to think about



queer folk before me, queer folk within the context of my homeland whose histories had been erased and how the work of such people inspires me and allows me to cultivate both my present self and future reality.

I feel that this work strongly relates to my capstone as I focused on queerness and reincarnation which inevitably means remembering queerness in both my past life, reflecting on queerness in the present and imagining queerness in the next lifetime. I sought out to ask how did queer love look in the past life? What draws us together in this life? What do we hope for in future lifetimes? By engaging with these questions through a marginalized medium like dance and building off of marginalized epistemologies from Pasifika and, specifically, CHamoru mythology bodily knowledge and oral tradition, I reinforced Castiglia and Reeds points about the importance of memory work in queer reality and future and demonstrate how queerness legitimizes and centers marginalized forms of scholarship and creativity like art and movement. Throughout the process, I learned more about myself, my queerness and how I navigate oceans of love and heartbreak in this life and the next.

Vicente Blas-Taijeron (he/him) is a CHamoru son from the West Pacific island of Guam. He is passionate about the preservation of his culture through various art forms and is a frequent practitioner of CHamoru dance. Recently, his art endeavors have expanded to visual and multimedia art forms which he hopes to continue to explore. He has an ardent desire to share his culture on his own terms and invites you all to read about and join in to the mission of Pasifika and to learn more about the politics and political histories of the Pacific region.

ASIAN STUDIES PROGRAM COURSE OFFERINGS 2024-2025

Faculty		Block 1	Block 2	Block 3
Dr. Yogesh Chandrani		CC100	PA250/RE200/AN208 <i>Topics in Religion: Anthropology of Religion</i>	
Dr. David Gardner				
Visitors	Zoe Wang	PA250/CN250 <i>Topics in Asian Studies: Calligraphy and Painting (Wang) (Class Meets 3-4:30 pm)</i>	PA250/CN250 <i>Topics in Asian Studies: Calligraphy and Painting (Wang) (Class Meets 3-4:30 pm)</i>	PA250/CN250 <i>Topics in Asian Studies: Calligraphy and Painting (Wang) (Class Meets 3-4:30 pm)</i>
	CHINESE		PA302/CN301 <i>Advanced Chinese Language I (Zhang)</i>	PA201/CN201 <i>Intermediate Chinese I (Zhang)</i>
PA404.1/CN401.1 <i>Chinese Language and Culture (Zhang)</i>		PA404.1/CN401.1 <i>Chinese Language and Culture (Zhang)</i>	PA404.1/CN401.1 <i>Chinese Language and Culture (Zhang)</i>	
PA113/CN103 <i>Chinese Skill Maintenance Beginning (Department)</i>		PA113/CN103 <i>Chinese Skill Maintenance Beginning (Department)</i>	PA113/CN103 <i>Chinese Skill Maintenance Beginning (Department)</i>	
PA205/CN205 <i>Chinese Skill Maintenance (Department)</i>		PA205/CN205 <i>Chinese Skill Maintenance (Department)</i>	PA205/CN205 <i>Chinese Skill Maintenance (Department)</i>	
JAPANESE			PA250/JA250 <i>Topics in Japanese: Tale of the Gengi Re The Shining Prince in Literature, Theater, and (Pizarro)</i>	
		PA301/JA301 <i>Advanced Japanese (Onishi)</i>	PA102/JA101 <i>Elementary Japanese (Onishi)</i>	
	PA105/JA103 <i>Japanese Skill Maintenance (Beginning) (Hashimoto)</i>	PA105/JA103 <i>Japanese Skill Maintenance (Beginning) (Hashimoto)</i>	PA105/JA103 <i>Japanese Skill Maintenance (Beginning) (Hashimoto)</i>	
	PA215/JA205 <i>Japanese Skill Maintenance (Hashimoto)</i>	PA215/JA205 <i>Japanese Skill Maintenance (Hashimoto)</i>	PA215/JA205 <i>Japanese Skill Maintenance (Hashimoto)</i>	
HISTORY	PA250/HY254/FG206 <i>Topics in Asian Studies: History of Gender and Sexuality (Mehta)</i>			
MUSIC		PA250/MU221 <i>Topics in Ethnomusicology: Performing the Hindu Epics (Lasmawan)</i>		
DANCE				
RELIGION	PA261/RE261/FG206 <i>Women, Demons, Deities & (Coleman)</i>			
			PA160/RE160 <i>Expressions of Hinduism (Coleman)</i>	
OTHER		PA350/RM300 <i>Advanced Topics in Asian Literature & Culture: The Model Minority (Tabares)</i>	PA250/EN280 <i>Literature of Japanese American Incarceration (Shimoda)</i>	
			PA255/AH255 <i>The Art of Japan (Department)</i>	

CROSSLISTED COURSES

Colorado College Asian Studies 2024-225 course schedule

	Block 4	Block 5	Block 6	Block 7	Block 8
	PA111 Introduction to Asian Studies	PA290 Studying Asia		PA250/RE207/PS203 Topics in Asian Studies: Politics, Religion and the Secular	
	PA406 Senior Seminar				
	PA250/CN250 Topics in Asian Studies: Calligraphy and Painting (Wang) (Class Meets 3-4:30 pm)				
	PA202/CN202 Intermediate Chinese II (Zhang)	PA101/CN101 Elementary Chinese (Department)	PA101/CN101 Elementary Chinese (Department)	PA101/CN101 Elementary Chinese (In Asia) (Zhang)	PA101/CN101 Elementary Chinese (In Asia) (Zhang)
	PA404.1/CN401.1 Chinese Language and Culture (Zhang)	PA404.2/CN401.2 Chinese Language and Culture (Zhang)	PA404.2/CN401.2 Chinese Language and Culture (Zhang)	PA404.2/CN401.2 Chinese Language and Culture (Zhang)	PA404.2/CN401.2 Chinese Language and Culture (Zhang)
				PA201/CN201 Intermediate Chinese I (In Asia) (Zhang)	PA202/CN202 Intermediate Chinese II (In Asia) (Jiang)
				PA304/CN302 Advanced Chinese II (Jiang) (In Asia)	PA350/CN350 Advanced topics in Asian Literature and Culture: Topics in Translation: Tell Stories (Jiang)(In Asia)
	PA113/CN103 Chinese Skill Maintenance Beginning (Department)	PA114/CN104 Chinese Skill Maintenance Beginning (Department)	PA114/CN104 Chinese Skill Maintenance Beginning (Department)	PA114/CN104 Chinese Skill Maintenance Beginning (Department)	PA114/CN104 Chinese Skill Maintenance Beginning (Department)
	PA205/CN205 Chinese Skill Maintenance (Department)	PA206/CN206 Chinese Skill Maintenance (Department)	PA206/CN206 Chinese Skill Maintenance (Department)	PA206/CN206 Chinese Skill Maintenance (Department)	PA206/CN206 Chinese Skill Maintenance (Department)
		PA250/JA250 Topics in Japanese: 1980s Bubble Beats to Chill to: Fiction, Film, and Urban Japan (Pizarro)		PA102/JA101 Elementary Japanese (Pizarro)	PA102/JA101 Elementary Japanese (Pizarro)
	PA102/JA101 Elementary Japanese (Onishi)	PA221/JA201 Intermediate Japanese I (Onishi)	PA250/JA250 Topics In Japanese Studies: Languages and Cultures of Japan (Onishi)		
	PA105/JA103 Japanese Skill Maintenance (Beginning) (Hashimoto)	PA106/JA104 Japanese Skill Maintenance (Beginning) (Hashimoto)	PA106/JA104 Japanese Skill Maintenance Beginning (Hashimoto)	PA106/JA104 Japanese Skill Maintenance Beginning (Hashimoto)	PA106/JA104 Japanese Skill Maintenance Beginning (Hashimoto)
	PA215/JA205 Japanese Skill Maintenance (Hashimoto)	PA216/JA206 Japanese Skill Maintenance (Hashimoto)	PA216/JA206 Japanese Skill Maintenance (Hashimoto)	PA216/JA206 Japanese Skill Maintenance (Hashimoto)	PA216/JA206 Japanese Skill Maintenance (Hashimoto)
			PA250/HY253/RM200 Topics in Asian Studies: History of Modern South Asia (Mehta)	PA384/HY384 Social and Cultural History of China (Williamsn)	PA250/HY200 Topics in Asian Studies: The Korean War (Williams)
	PA295/MU295/AN221 Music in Culture: Indonesia (Lasmawan)				PA250/MU222 Topics in Ethnomusicology: Music and Dance in Bali (Lasmawan)
	PA250/DA233/TH233/FG206 Topics in Asian Studies: The Nakedness of Being (Otake)				
	PA250/DA232/TH232 Topics in Asian Studies: Performance Away (Sriram)				
	PA199/RE140 Islam (Wright)				
					PA261/RE261/FG206 Women, Demons, and Dieties (Coleman)
	PA250/RE252/FG206 Topics in Asian Studies: Gods, Buddhas, Gurus & Other Masculine Superheroes (Coleman)		PA261/RE261/FG206 Women, Demons, Deities, & Other Dangerous Fantasies (Coleman)		PA160/RE160 Expressions of Hinduism: Text image Ritual (Coleman)
			AH254/PA254 Art of China (Bentley)		PA250/RM200 Eating Asian America: Race and Food (Tabares)

FILM REVIEWS & ANALYSIS

BY ESA CHEN '25

PORCO ROSSO (1992)

“Porco Rosso” is an animated film directed by Hayao Miyazaki in 1992, known for its blend of adventure, war, and themes of peace, and friendship. The film revolves around a pilot named Porco, who, due to unknown reasons, has been cursed and transformed into a pig. Despite his new appearance, Porco continues to live on a small island in the Adriatic Sea, making a living as a bounty hunter, using his iconic red seaplane to fend off air pirates. When the pilot, Curtis, is recruited by the air pirate gang Mamma Aiuto, he ambushes Porco on his way to Milan and takes advantage of the opportunity to shoot down Porco’s already malfunctioning plane. To repair his plane, Porco heads to the seaplane manufacturing factory owned by his mechanic, Mr. Piccolo, in Milan, where he encounters a crucial character in the film, Fio, the granddaughter of Mr. Piccolo who has just returned from America and is a young and talented mechanic. Their journey together forms the heart of the narrative, exploring themes of identity, courage, and resistance against fascism. Through Porco’s adventures, the film critiques the ravages of war while emphasizing the pursuit of peace and the importance of friendship. Through well-crafted characters like Gina and Fio, the director Miyazaki challenges societal biases and showcases the strength and capability of women. “Porco Rosso” captivates with its engaging story, memorable characters, and stunning animation, leaving a lasting impression on viewers.

This work is unique because of its realistic background as compared to Hayao Miyazaki’s other works, which are mostly set in fictional backgrounds. The story of “Porco Rosso” takes place in early 20th-century Italy, after the end of World War I but before the onset of World War II. The protagonist, Porco Rosso, was once a member of the Italian Air Force, but he lost his comrades in a dogfight. With the rise of fascism, since then, he has refused to return to the military and lives as a lone bounty hunter, earning his living by fighting air pirates. However, he was constantly labeled as a “lazy pig” and a traitor by the Italian government in the film, and he was secretly monitored and pursued by the secret police due to his opposition to fascism.

But why does Porco turn into a pig? Perhaps it is related to the political beliefs of Porco. In the middle of the movie, Porco says, “I’d rather be a pig than a fascist.” I believe this statement expresses Porco’s conviction: during Porco’s race against Curtis, his reluctance to take lethal action reveals his aversion to killing. He even said, “I won’t go along with the world. Even if it’s a curse I’ve placed upon myself.” Joining the fascists would likely entail more warfare, so he becomes a pig who flies for freedom and bounty and always maintains the spirit of not harming his opponents. In addition, this film also expresses the idea of staying true to oneself. As a child, when I heard Porco tell his former comrade, “A pig that doesn’t fly is just a pig,” I didn’t immediately grasp the significance of this message. It wasn’t until I grew older that I understood that the essence of growing up isn’t about becoming better, but about becoming more complex. Though others don’t understand why he becomes a pig, at least he cherishes the last piece of pure land in his heart, exchanging it in ways that others cannot understand to avoid losing himself. After all, knowing who you are is more important

than playing the perfect role in the eyes of others.

The protagonists of Hayao Miyazaki’s works are often women. Although the protagonist of “Porco Rosso” deviates from the norm by being male, the female characters in the film still possess distinct personalities, much like in other works by Hayao Miyazaki. One of the main female characters is Gina, an acquaintance of Porco Rosso. Gina is a renowned beauty in the Adriatic Sea, running a restaurant on an island alone and being familiar with pilots, including Porco’s former comrades who lost their lives in the war. Her three former pilot husbands have all died in combat. Gina, even without her husband by her side for years, manages her music bar alone. She is not only talented in many areas and with a melodious voice, but also understands military telegrams. Her excellent management skills are evident from her lifestyle and villa in the summer of the film, showing her strong ability.

The second female character is Fio who is clever, capable, and assertive. When Porco’s plane is shot down by Curtis and needs repairs, he visits his mechanic Piccolo’s factory, where Fio, the 17-year-old granddaughter of Piccolo, fearlessly tackles Porco’s skepticism towards women. She draws up designs and improves the plane’s performance, earning his appreciation and trust. The Fio family, besides Fio herself possess superb industrial design and manufacturing skills and remarkable courage. The workers who repair Porco’s seaplane in the play are all women from the Fio family. Porco plays the role of someone who likely held a common viewpoint of the time, from initially distrusting women’s capabilities to later letting go of prejudices and entrusting his seaplane

entirely to these women. It can be seen that Miyazaki still tries to overturn societal biases, actively affirming the functional roles of female characters in the film, being capable and empowered figures.

Overall, “Porco Rosso” is not only an entertaining animated film but also a thought-provoking work that delves into deep themes. Its engaging story, memorable characters, and breathtaking animation leave a lasting impact, prompting viewers to reflect on the values of life and peace long after the credits roll.

References:

Ghibli Wiki. (n.d.). Porco Rosso/Transcript. Retrieved April 20, 2024, from https://ghibli.fandom.com/wiki/Porco_Rosso/Transcript

Wikipedia contributors. (n.d.). Porco Rosso. In Wikipedia. Retrieved April 20, 2024, from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Porco_Rosso

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BY DANIEL WU '25

THE PIG, THE SNAKE AND THE PIGEON (2023)

There is a story in an ancient Chinese novel called *周处除三害* (Zhou Chu Chu San Hai). The story is about a person named Zhou Chu who is considered one of the three main evils around his town along with the man-eating tiger and a Chinese dragon or long in the river. The tiger and the long caused many deaths around the area while Zhou Chu was simply a very skilled fighter who abused his skills to do all sorts of evil to the people in the town. One day he overheard townspeople talking about the three evils in the area. They mentioned the tiger and the long being dangerous and hard to kill so he volunteered to get rid of them. After three days and three nights of fighting, the townspeople thought Zhou Chu had died during the battle and started celebrating for riddance of one of the evils, but Zhou Chu returned after accomplishing the mission. Seeing the townspeople celebrating his "death", Zhou Chu realized that he was the third evil and felt ashamed for how he behaved, so he changed and started to use his strength and skills for good causes.

This story was based on a historical event and person from the Jin Dynasty and has recently become very popular in China due to a film that is based on it. *The Pig, the Snake and the Pigeon* can be considered a modern adaptation of *Zhou Chu Chu San Hai* where the plot remains, but the setting is modernized. The film is about an assassin's journey of killing the top two most wanted criminals who ranked above him on the list and having himself arrested and executed to get rid of three evils in the world. It is the highest-rated movie in China in 2024 so far and has been phenomenal since its release date on March 1st until now.

There are a lot of Chinese cultural references in *The Pig, the Snake and the Pigeon* and to help us better understand this movie when watching it, I would like to provide some explanations for some of the details.

There is an ongoing theme throughout the movie, also highlighted in the movie title. The three animals mentioned don't seem to have any connection, and it is confusing to see for the first time. However, there is a link among them. The Pig, the Snake, and the Pigeon refer to the three sources/poisons of evil in Buddhism: greed, anger, and ignorance. In the movie, each of the three most wanted criminals, including the assassin himself, is the embodiment of one of them. The assassin is the pig (ignorance), the cult leader is the pigeon (greed), and the gangster is the snake (anger). In the movie, each character has a symbol of the source of evil they represent. You can identify them rather easily.

There is a need to further explain the three poisons of evil due to the loss of their true meaning in literal translation. The ignorance (痴) is not simply just being dumb or having no knowledge. In fact, in Buddhist beliefs people with ignorance are not stupid, but lack wisdom. They can't tell good and bad, right

or wrong. They are often oblivious to the causality and consequences in the world to the extent they even seem innocent and naïve. In the movie, the actions of the assassin murdering people for the gang to get money for his grandmother are perfect examples of ignorance.

The anger (嗔) is not merely just the emotion, but where the emotion stems from as well. It is the rage that comes from jealousy, resentment, and not getting what one wants that counts towards hate and anger. In the movie, the gangster is very possessive of a girl that he abducted. His acts of anger and rage all come from his obsession with possessing her. He is paranoid and easily irritable and would keep control over her.

The greed (贪) is the sheer unsatisfiable desire to have more than one needs. The animal that represents greed are pigeons which differ from Western symbolism. It is because in the Buddhist's view, when there's enough supply, it is in the pigeon's nature to keep on eating indefinitely.

One of the brilliances of this movie is the bold yet careful mix of the ancient story and Buddhist beliefs. The assassin got rid of the three evils by killing the first two and turning himself in, which shows the sacrificial core of the Buddhist beliefs as well.

There are other symbols in the movie as well. The gun the assassin has is one of them. During the movie, there was never a shootout scene. There are bare-hand combats and someone getting shot to death. The symbolism of his gun is an instrument of cleansing. When he was fighting the gangster, he had his gun the whole fight, but he never used it. It was only at the end when it was clear that he won the fight that he used the gun to execute the gangster. It is because the direct display of rage is violence so to cleanse rage from the world he needs to defeat rage through violence. The act of him pointing to the scar on his eyebrow when he was about to shoot the gangster implies that rage is infectious and those who treat others with violence will have the taste of it themselves. The display of greed is

control which the cult leader showed. He had control over people's minds and wealth. He made the assassin give up the gun which is a sign of him giving up on his mission and purpose. But the moment when he comes back to the chapel and shoots the cult leader for the first time, all the cult members turn to him because the leader lost control. Then at the end, when the assassin is executed with a gun suggests that he is cleansed as well.

There are more cultural references in the movie worth mentioning for the plot. One of them being the fortune-telling.

The scene where the assassin kneels in front of an idol throwing two objects on the floor in front of it nine times is the process of fortune telling in his region. The idol is of a deity called 关圣帝君 (Guan Sheng Di Jun), a deity that is widely worshiped by mob members because he represents loyalty. The ritual he performed is called 掷杯茭 (Zhi Bei Jiao). With what he wants to ask the deity in mind, he tosses the pieces on the floor and there are three combinations, each with a different meaning. The first means agreed, the second means neutral, the third means disagreed. The assassin wanted to know if he should turn himself in and he asked nine times, getting the same exact results that says he should. The reason he stopped at nine is because people believe that if one asks the deity for more than nine times it will make the deity mad.

There are a lot more references, especially Buddhist references in the movie such as every time the assassin is close to cleansing the poisons his hair is damaged and he gets stabbed which suggests that suffering is a necessary path to a form of rebirth. In sum, this is an entertaining movie because of its plot and cinematography but also there is depth in terms of both the film's message and cultural connotations deeply embedded in it that are worth learning more about.



BY MICHELLE EMIL SOLOMON '24

MICRONESIAN CULTURAL RESILIENCE IN THE DIASPORA: COMMUNITY GRIEVING AND HEALING (AN ABSTRACT)

In Micronesia there is a long history of colonization and U.S. imperialism that have created the conditions for the recent wave of Micronesian migration from islands like Pohnpei to U.S. territories like Hawai'i. The material impact of this U.S. involvement in the region has led to weakened infrastructures on the islands that result in the uncertainty of Micronesian futures. This uncertainty, which I theorize thoroughly as precarity, follows Micronesians to their newly settled homes in the U.S.. In Hawai'i, for example, there have been efforts to target citizens of Micronesia/legal non-citizens of the U.S. due to their perceived over reliance on health resources. For a small population, we often experience or know of others who experience chronic health complications, mental and physical, and are often unhoused and/or impoverished once we reach the states. Due to this precarity, we are used to losing our beloved community members. Despite heightened exposure to loss within our recent history, we continue to honor our losses in a way that refutes desensitization and reaffirms a sense of community.

Overall, this capstone project builds on decolonial, diasporic, and Pacific Studies scholarship to analyze how Pohnpeian traditional funerary rituals practiced in the diaspora have become a site of Micronesian resistance and resilience in the context

of precariousness. Grounded in first-person accounts of my mother and I's experiences with grief in the U.S.. I theorize Micronesian diaspora not as a space of loss (of connection to the land, the ocean, ancestral knowledge) but rather one that highlights the strength and endurance of our community-centered grieving practices. Despite the land we settle upon, we are a community-driven people and must be in order for our culture to live on in these new environments. is an entertaining movie because of its plot and cinematography but also there is depth in terms of both the film's message and cultural connotations deeply embedded in it that are worth learning more about.

Michelle Solomon (she/her) is a Micronesian-American, born and raised in Tucson, Arizona. Her mother is from Pohnpei and her father is from the outer island of Pingelap. Together they had six children together, including Michelle, but overall Michelle has eight other siblings. She has many other diasporic family and community members who claim Guam and Hawai'i as their home. She graduated from Amphitheater High School in Tucson and is now going to graduate as a Feminist and Gender Studies Major here at CC.

JAPANESE PROGRAM CELEBRATES ANNUAL SAKURA FESTIVAL



On April 27, the Japanese Program, with the generous support of the Asian Studies Program, hosted their annual Sakura Festival. This year, students taking Japanese language courses and members of the newly established Japanese Culture Club celebrated the event with a traditional "fishing dance" or *soranbushi* performance and karaoke singing competitions!

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