

如何代表亞裔美國人？楊安澤競選紐約市長面臨考驗

紐約時報 KATIE GLUECK 2021年3月23日 楊安澤已多次以參選人身份出現在亞裔美國人社區，包括在最近反對仇恨犯罪的抗議活動中。 GABRIELA BHASKAR FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

去年春天，在針對亞裔美國人的襲擊事件激增期間，剛退出2020年總統候選人初選的楊安澤在一篇觀點文章中提出，“我們亞裔美國人需要以前所未有的方式擁抱和展示我們作為美國人的品質。”

對許多亞裔美國人來說，這個信息讓他們不安，因為這似乎是將又一個負擔加在了受害者身上。

一年後，在楊安澤希望創造歷史，成為紐約市第一位亞裔市長時，有些紐約人還沒有忘記那篇觀點文章，或者還沒有忘記楊安澤參加總統初選時的言論可能助長了刻板印象的感覺，比如他說自己是“一個喜歡數學的亞裔”。

但許多亞裔美國人也把楊安澤的參選看作是市政府最高層代表他們的機會。在紐約以及整個美國針對亞裔美國人的暴力襲擊增長的時候——包括上週亞特蘭大地區發生的造成八人死亡（其中六人是亞裔女性）的致命槍擊事件，這種代表機會越來越有意義。

亞特蘭大槍擊事件的第二天，楊安澤在時報廣場的記者會上情緒激動地說，“我是在紐約長大的亞裔美國人。我一直習慣於某些形式的欺凌和種族主義，但那是嘲笑、被忽視和被蔑視的形式。現在，這已轉變為一種更兇險的東西。在紐約街頭就能感受到。”

隨著紐約市的多元化亞裔選民們盡力應對公開的暴力（該市周日又發生了三起襲擊亞裔事件）和更微妙形式的偏見，楊安澤和許多其他主要的市長候選人正在競相展示他們將如何領導一個處於危機狀態的社區。他們舉行記者會，與社區的重要領導人建立聯繫，參加聲援亞裔美國人的集會。亞裔美國人在展示日益增長的政治力量的同時，也在經歷着巨大的痛苦。

但與其他候選人相比，楊安澤受到了更多的媒體和公眾注意，此刻正成為對他在壓力下展示領導力和同理心能力的一次重大考驗。他也在尋找以一種既能增強他所依賴的亞裔美國人對他的支持，同時又能建立一個更廣泛聯盟的方式做出回應。

但楊安澤並不是第一名譴責佐治亞州槍擊事件的市長候選人。他反而在事件當天的深夜，在Twitter上發了一條有關聖帕特里克節(St. Patrick's Day)圍巾的帖子，讓一些觀察人士覺得他缺乏敏銳。(他後來說，他當時沒有看到上週二的新聞。上週三上午，他接連發了幾條有關亞特蘭大事件的推文，之後還發表了公開評論。)

上週四，在民權領袖阿爾·沙普頓牧師(Rev. Al Sharpton)召集的一個活動上，楊安澤情緒激動到聲音有點發抖。他毫不掩飾地從個人角度談了“把亞裔美國人也當人看，亞裔美國人和任何其他族群一樣都是美國人”的重要性。

“我很高興看到他在直接談論這個問題，”紐約州在美國國會的代表團中唯一的亞裔美國人、眾議員孟昭文(Grace Meng)說。“我覺得他有點激動。我認為亞裔美國人社區希望看到更多的這種表現。”

本月早些時候，楊安澤來到西安名吃，這個受歡迎的紐約連鎖餐館最近受到針對亞裔的襲擊。SPENCER PLATT/GETTY IMAGES 對十幾名社區領袖、當選官員和選民的採訪顯示，紐約亞裔美國人最熟悉的市長候選人包括台灣移民的兒子楊安澤，以及兩名經驗豐富的紐約市官員：布魯克林區區長埃里克·亞當斯(Eric Adams)和紐約市審計長斯科特·M·斯特林格(Scott M. Stringer)。

“這次選舉其實是一次檢驗：人們是傾向於支持像埃里克和斯科特這樣與選民建立了長期關係的人，還是會更多地——尤其是在新選民當中——把他們的決定建立在與自己與比如楊安澤的身份認同上？”孟昭文說道。她尚未公開表示支持哪位候選人。

一些選民在採訪中還提到了對其他候選人的興趣，包括市長比爾·白恩索(Bill de Blasio)的前法律顧問瑪雅·D·威利(Maya D. Wiley)；在擔任非營利組織負責人期間已與社區領袖建立了關係的黛安·莫拉萊斯(Dianne Morales)；以及代表布魯克林一個重要的亞裔美國人社區區的市議員卡洛斯·門查卡(Carlos Menchaca)，門查卡在民調中的支持率較低。孟昭文還提到了前城市衛生專員凱瑟琳·加西亞(Kathryn Garcia)，稱其在與社區接觸方面特別積極主動。

劉文建的父母周日公開表示支持亞當斯。劉文建是2014年在布魯克林的一輛巡邏車里被槍殺的警官。

“當我們失去兒子時，埃里克·亞當斯給了我們很大的幫助。他一直在幫助亞裔社區，而不只是在他決定競選市長後，”劉偉棠和李秀燕在亞當斯競選團隊提供的一份聲明中說。

有些人可能在這份聲明中看到了對楊安澤的批評。楊安澤已在紐約市生活了多年，他的職業生涯建立在非營利和初創企業領域，但在參加市長競選前一直沒有積極參與過當地政治。

在上月底的一個反對仇恨亞裔美國人的集會上，36歲的杰西卡·趙(Jessica Zhao)說，她對楊安澤的參選感到有點糾結。她對楊安澤作為市長候選人爭取亞裔選民的努力表示贊可，但是她對楊安澤去年春天的那篇觀點文章仍感到擔憂，楊安澤在那篇文章中給了各種各樣的建議，包括建議亞裔美國人穿紅白藍色的衣服。

其實，趙女士已讓曾在海軍服役的丈夫戴上了印有軍隊徽章的口罩，這麼做是出於對丈夫安全的“極大”擔心。但她對於通過自證愛國來抵禦仇恨罪行的念頭深惡痛絕，而且在她看來，楊安澤似乎把安全的責任推給了受襲擊的亞裔美國人，這讓她深感不安。

“給我們增加更多的負擔，叫我們做更多的事，這真的觸到了痛處，”活躍於皇后區森林山亞裔協會(Forest Hills Asian Association)的趙女士說。“好像他為自己是亞裔感到羞恥，這似乎與我們在那個時刻所需要的正相反。我們曾非常希望他能代表我們發出積極的聲音。”

在上週的一次採訪中，楊安澤拒絕說他是否後悔寫了那篇文章，但他多次表示，人們對那篇文章的理解讓他感到“痛苦”。

“人們覺得我在某種程度上讓我們作為美國人的品質受到懷疑，這讓我非常痛苦，其實我的看法恰恰相反，”楊安澤說。他還承諾要更積極地參與到紐約的亞裔美國人社區中來。“我的看法是，我們和其他族群一樣都是美國人，在這個有更多需求和更多喪失的時候，我們應該怎樣幫助我們的人呢？”

當被問及自從參加總統競選以來，他在處理種族問題和身份認同上是否有所改變時，他停頓了一下。

布魯克林區區長埃里克·亞當斯一直在大聲疾呼，要求政府為減少針對亞裔的襲擊提供更多資源。HIROKO MASUIKE/THE NEW YORK TIMES

“這是個非常困難的時候，”楊安澤最終說。“在過去幾個月里，我們對我們在這個國家的身份認識發生了很大的變化。”

趙女士對楊安澤的認識也在過去幾周里發生了變化，她說。

“看到他的變化，看到他能夠對這個國家的反亞裔情緒做出適當的表示，我認為這令人鼓舞，”趙女士說。“我能看出，他為亞裔正在經歷的

痛苦帶來一個獨特的視角。這才是代表形式真正表現出來的時候。這才是產生重大影響的時候。”

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翻譯：Cindy Hao

Anti-Asian Attacks Place Andrew Yang in the Spotlight. How Will He Use It?

Mr. Yang is seeking to become New York City's first Asian-American mayor, but critics say that some of his past comments have fed racial stereotypes.

Andrew Yang has made many campaign appearances in Asian-American communities, and more recently, at protests against hate crimes. Credit...JutharatPinyodoonyachet for The New York Times

By Katie Glueck March 22, 2021

During a surge in attacks on Asian-Americans last spring, Andrew Yang — then recently off the 2020 presidential campaign trail — wrote an op-ed suggesting that “we Asian-Americans need to embrace and show our Americanness in ways we never have before.”

To many Asian-Americans, the message seemed to place yet another burden on victims, and it stung.

One year later, as Mr. Yang hopes to make history as New York City's first Asian-American mayor, some New Yorkers have not forgotten that op-ed, or their sense that Mr. Yang's remarks during the presidential campaign — describing himself as “an Asian man who likes math,” for instance — could feed stereotypical tropes.

But many Asian-Americans also see in his candidacy an opportunity for representation at the highest level of city government, an increasingly meaningful metric amid violent attacks on Asian-Americans in New York and across the nation, including the fatal shootings in the Atlanta area last week that left eight people dead, six of them women of Asian descent.

“I grew up Asian-American in New York, and I was always accustomed to a certain level of bullying, of racism, but it took a form of mockery, of invisibility, of disdain,” an emotional Mr. Yang said at a news conference in Times Square the next day. “That has metastasized into something far darker. You can feel it on the streets of New York.”

As New York's diverse Asian-American constituencies grapple with both overt violence — the city saw three more anti-Asian attacks on Sunday — and more subtle forms of bigotry, Mr. Yang and many of the other leading mayoral candidates are racing to show how they would lead a community in crisis. They are holding news conferences, contacting key leaders and attending rallies in solidarity with Asian-Americans who have at once demonstrated growing political power and are experiencing great pain now.

But more than any other candidate, it is Mr.

Yang who is in the spotlight, with the moment emerging as the most significant test yet of his ability to demonstrate leadership and empathy under pressure. He is also looking to respond in a way that will strengthen his support among Asian-Americans, a group whose backing he is counting on, while simultaneously building a broader coalition.

In recent weeks, Mr. Yang has visited a branch of Xi'an Famous Foods, a popular New York restaurant chain that has been hit hard by anti-Asian harassment. Along with other contenders he joined a rally against Asian-American hate in Manhattan late last month and participated in a vigil on Friday and other outreach efforts over the weekend.

“We have to start building bonds of connection with the Asian-American community to let them know that this city is theirs, this city is ours,” Mr. Yang said at a rally on Sunday. “One great way to do that is by electing the first Asian-American mayor in the history of New York City. Because you know I'll take it seriously.”

Throughout the race he has made frequent visits to heavily Asian-American neighborhoods across the city, expanding his coalition of “Yang Gang” supporters, a cohort that in his 2020 campaign included many young, white men. He has also taken multiple turns on national television to discuss attacks on Asian-Americans, including an appearance with his wife, Evelyn, on ABC's “20/20” on Friday.

Earlier this month, Mr. Yang visited Xi'an

health care. But community leaders say that the matters of security and confronting bias have plainly become among the most urgent, though there are differences of opinion around the role policing should play in combating the uptick in attacks.

“Especially during these times, it's really important to be that candidate to show that you can empathize with the Asian-American community, that you're reaching out actively to the community and you're thinking of ways to bring different coalitions together,” Ms. Meng said.

In Queens, the borough with the largest population of people of Asian descent, Mr. Yang's greatest competition for those voters appears to be Mr. Adams, a former police officer who has been vocal in calling for more resources to combat anti-Asian attacks, and who is widely seen as a strong mayoral contender despite trailing Mr. Yang in the little public polling that is available.

Eric Adams, the Brooklyn borough president, has been vocal in requesting more resources to combat anti-Asian attacks. Credit...Hiroko Masuike/The New York Times

“Eric seems to have engaged in the broadest level of outreach in communities across the city, in particular, in Asian-American communities,” said State Senator John C. Liu of Queens, an influential voice in New York Asian-American politics.

Asked about Mr. Yang's outreach, he replied, “I'm going to limit my comments to things I will positively say about specific candidates.”

“You can use that as my response to your specific question,” he added.

The parents of Wenjian Liu, a police officer who was fatally shot in a patrol car in Brooklyn in 2014, endorsed Mr. Adams on Sunday.

“Eric Adams was there for us when we lost our son — and he's always been there for the Asian community, not just when he decided to run for mayor,” Wei Tang Liu and Xiu Yan Li said in a statement provided by the Adams campaign.

It's a message that some may see as a swipe at Mr. Yang, who has lived in New York City for years — building a career in the nonprofit and start-up worlds — but has not been active in local politics until now.

At the rally against Asian-American hate late last month, Jessica Zhao, 36, said she felt torn about his candidacy. She approved of his outreach to Asian-American voters as a mayoral candidate, but she remained concerned by last spring's op-ed, in which Mr. Yang offered a wide range of recommendations — including advising that Asian-Americans should wear red, white and blue.

Indeed, Ms. Zhao had outfitted her husband — a Navy veteran — with masks bearing the military logo out of a “desperate” concern for his safety. But she detested the notion that proof of patriotism might ward off hate crimes, and was deeply bothered that, in her view, Mr. Yang seemed to put the onus for safety on Asian-Americans under attack.

“To put even more of a burden on us — we could do even more to supposedly pacify racists enough that they won't attack us — really hit a nerve,” said Ms. Zhao, who is active with the Forest Hills Asian Association in Queens. “To say that he felt ashamed to be Asian, it was like the opposite of what we needed in that moment. We were so desperately hoping he could be a galvanizing voice for us.”

In an interview last week, Mr. Yang declined to say whether he regretted writing the op-ed, but said repeatedly that he was “pained” by how it was perceived.

“It pained me greatly that people felt I was somehow calling our Americanness into question when really my feeling was the opposite,” said Mr. Yang, who also pledged to be more active in New York's Asian-American communities. “Which was, we are just as American as everyone else, and then, how can we help our people in this time when there is so much need and deprivation?”

Asked whether he had changed how he approached matters of race and identity since running for president, he paused.

“This is a very difficult time,” Mr. Yang finally said. “Our sense of who we are in this country has changed appreciably in the last number of months.”

And in the last few weeks, Ms. Zhao's sense of Mr. Yang has changed, too, she said.

“Seeing his, I guess, evolution, in being able to properly address anti-Asian sentiment in this country, that has been encouraging,” she said. “I can tell that he brings a unique perspective of what Asians are suffering through. And that's when representation really does come through. That's when it does matter.”

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