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## Conclusion

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### Conclusion

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In 1795, Andreas Everadus van Braam Houckgeest made his memorable appearance before the Chinese emperor Qianlong. In 1874, Samuel Wells Williams found himself in the same position. The American minister to China, B. P. Avery, had official business to transact with the emperor, and he required Williams's services as an interpreter. Houckgeest had followed Chinese protocol by engaging in the prescribed *kowtow*, but that was a formality Williams could dispense with. The previous year, the foreign community in Peking had settled this issue with the Qing government. For the aging American missionary, this singular experience before the monarch was symbolic of the changes that had taken place in China over the course of the century. When he had first arrived in Canton in 1833, he was considered a "foreign devil" by the Chinese and was granted few rights or privileges by Qing officials. Now, in 1874, he and Avery were received "on a footing of perfect equality with the 'Son of Heaven.'" To what did he attribute this dramatic shift? Over the previous half century, China had sustained several massive collisions with foreign powers and the people's national pride was consequently deflated in a manner that Williams regarded as beneficial. The continual humbling of the Chinese, he hoped, would ultimately render them more receptive to the Word of God. After four decades in China, Williams continued to believe that God's will was moving China inexorably (if slowly) in the direction of Christianity. <sup>1</sup>

Williams was less optimistic about the news coming out of the United States, where Chinese immigrants and the white population were clearly not "on a footing of perfect equality." Williams had often criticized the morals of the Chinese, but he nevertheless always understood their worth and firmly believed in their potential. And so he was horrified by the acts of violence committed against Chinese living and working in the American West. The clarion call for the exclusion of Chinese immigrants then echoing through the halls of the U.S. government reached his ears in Peking and left him feeling ashamed of his own country. Williams decided he must return home to teach deluded Americans about the true worth of Chinese civilization, as he had done in the 1840s. History, it seems, was beginning to repeat itself. <sup>2</sup>

The poor treatment of Chinese immigrants heavily influenced Williams's decision to leave China, but declining health and weakening eyesight were also contributed to it. The stalwart missionary who had always enjoyed good health and physical vigor was simply growing old. In fact, members of the foreign community playfully called him Nestor, in reference to the elderly Greek sage in Homer's *Iliad*. On October 25, 1876, Williams departed China for good, forty-three years to the day after his initial arrival in Canton. "Whatever good or evil I've performed in my time in China must now remain," He wrote. "God can make their effects a part of His blessed plan." <sup>3</sup>

Shortly after arriving home, Williams received gratifying news from the institution he had longed to attend as a youth. Yale College had decided not only to confer on him the degree of master of arts but also to create a faculty position for him. He would be the first to occupy the Chair of Chinese Language and Literature. Although the position was largely honorary, given Williams's age and health, it nevertheless held the distinction of being the first of its kind in the United States. <sup>4</sup> And since James Dwight Dana was already a member of the Yale faculty, the childhood friends from Utica were at last reunited. Since the college library's holdings were devoid of Chinese texts, Williams worked with Yung Wing to effect the transfer from China of a sizeable library of Chinese books, totaling 1,280 volumes. The Yale Library now had an East Asian collection. <sup>5</sup> In 1878, Williams delivered his first lecture and remarked later that the "audience was good," despite a heavy snowstorm and a presentation that he described as less than "exhilarating." <sup>6</sup>

Since his teaching responsibilities hardly taxed him at all, Williams devoted substantial time and energy to the plight of the Chinese living in the United States. By the late 1870s, the so-called "Chinese question" had become the topic of a national debate. The anti-Chinese movement began in California, where most of the Chinese population in America lived and worked. After the market crash of 1873 threw many Americans out of work, demagogues like Dennis Kearney, who claimed to speak for the interests of white labor, castigated industries for letting white workers go and hiring in their stead less-expensive Chinese immigrants. Kearney simultaneously used incendiary language to incite unemployed white workers, prodding them to channel their rage toward the Chinese. At political rallies and in the newspapers, the Chinese were painted as human

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vermin who took industrial jobs from deserving white Americans, added nothing to society, and sent all their earnings back to China.

One might expect capitalists to put forward an alternative narrative, but men like Leland Stanford, the California railroad magnate, were too often cowed by this populist uprising; they usually relented against the intense pressure of agitators by releasing Chinese workers from their jobs. In 1877, Kearney started the Working Man's Party, whose members rallied under the slogan "The Chinese must go!" In 1878, Kearney took his anti-Chinese campaign onto the national stage. Although pro-business politicians in the Republican Party might have been expected to defend the Chinese, their pragmatism instead dictated that they too adopt an anti-Chinese platform. Many joined in the ruthless scapegoating of the Chinese so as to secure some of the anti-Chinese vote and keep pro-labor candidates from reaching office. In 1882, this tragic drama culminated in the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act. A nation that had once criticized China for its hostility toward foreigners proceeded to build its own Great Wall out of legislation. <sup>7</sup>

Interestingly, as this story was unfolding, Williams drew a parallel between the current mistreatment of Chinese in the United States and the predicament of foreigners in Canton a half century earlier. Both minority groups were unwanted, condescended to by officials, and dispossessed of their rights. He believed that the behavior of both countries was xenophobic and wrongheaded but that the present American hostility toward the Chinese was far more egregious: "And how much greater is our offense against them than theirs was against us." Filled with indignation, Williams stepped forward as an advocate for Chinese immigrants in the late 1870s and early 1880s. He gave talks on the subject, published several articles that refuted the arguments of the anti-Chinese demagogues, took a trip to Washington to address Congress, and even sent a letter to President Rutherford B. Hayes to argue against the exclusion of Chinese immigrants. This letter, written by Williams, was signed by dozens of members of the Yale faculty. <sup>8</sup>

As with the furlough in the 1840s, Williams's largest project was of a literary nature. Throughout his career, Williams had witnessed the passing of many missionaries, most of whom had died in obscurity. Each death had provoked in him troubled speculation as to the meaning of a missionary's life. Exactly what lasting influence did missionaries have? Would decades of sacrifice be utterly forgotten by future generations? Did the relatively small number of Chinese converts negate a lifetime of dedicated service? Williams tried to dismiss these questions by constantly reminding himself that God, not his fellow human beings, would ultimately determine the value and meaning of his long career as a missionary. <sup>9</sup> However, he still possessed that overweening pride. In an effort both to explain Chinese culture to a new generation of Americans and also to ensure the survival of his name for posterity, Williams revisited that great work that had established his reputation three decades earlier. He decided to revise *The Middle Kingdom*.

The revision proved to be no easy task, given that Williams needed to update his statistics, include an account of events (such as the Taiping Rebellion) that had taken place since 1847, and incorporate new knowledge that had become available since the first edition. As Williams proceeded to add more content to a two-volume work previously criticized for its excessive size, he admitted to having "difficulty in digesting my material in my mind." What was worse, he even began to question the viability of his project. "China," he confided to his diary, "is too big a subject to put into two octavo vols." Williams, it appears, was starting to realize that the grand dream of describing all of China in a single work was perhaps, in the end, pure folly. <sup>10</sup> Despite these doubts, however, the indomitable Williams persevered. After all, China had always attracted individuals of great ambition who coveted large challenges—and Williams was no different.

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By 1881, though, health problems that the author summed up as "age, weakness, and decay" signaled that he was running out of time. For the first time, he confronted the "disturbing" possibility that he would die before completing the revision. *The Middle Kingdom*, he wrote, "looms up larger than ever, a mountain too high for me to climb." As his motor skills began to deteriorate, Williams found he could not hold his hand steady enough to write legibly. And that wonderful stamina and energy that had sustained him for four decades in China now seemed utterly "used up." In his diary, he called on God to lend him additional strength: "May God graciously preserve me to finish this revision, if it will be helpful to his cause in China." Yet quietly, he began to prepare himself for what he called "the final disappointment." On January 26, 1881, fate dealt him a devastating yet expected blow—Sarah Walworth Williams died. In his diary, a shaken Williams bid her farewell: "Dear wife of my life, mine for one third of a century,

adieu till we meet on the Sea of Glass.” <sup>11</sup> In January 1882, his already slow progress on his book came to a crashing halt when a fall on a slippery sidewalk resulted in a broken arm. Williams’s dream was now in jeopardy. <sup>12</sup>

As Williams confronted the likelihood that his final act would end in failure, a good friend of his found himself also in the unfortunate position of watching his grand dream unravel. In 1876, Yung Wing had issued a bold statement. By bringing the Chinese boys of the C.E.M. to the Centennial, he had challenged the tired stereotype associated with his country of birth, that it was old-fashioned, backward, hidebound, inflexible, and averse to technology. In Philadelphia, Yung had showcased a fresh Chinese character before American eyes—young, quick-witted, brave, athletic, adaptable, and oriented toward the future. One year after the Centennial, the experiment continued to thrive. A pleased Yung Wing proudly reported to his friend Samuel Wells Williams that “our Chinese students are making commendable progress.” <sup>13</sup>

Later that decade, however, the wheels started to come off. Yung Wing had pinned his hopes and dreams on the C.E.M., but now he was increasingly drawn away from it. The Chinese government, recognizing that Yung’s unique abilities and experiences made him useful as a diplomat, began to hand him assignments in international affairs unrelated to the C.E.M. Since these duties often called him away from Hartford, the government reduced his position there to that of associate minister and dispatched a man named Wu Zideng to serve as his successor. When Minister Wu arrived in Hartford, he found to his great consternation not only that the students refused to *kowtow* in his presence but also that several had converted to Christianity and cut off their queues. Soon Peking received from Wu alarming reports in which he accused Yung Wing of elevating the goal American education to status of top priority while permissively allowing the boys to grow lackadaisical in their Chinese studies.

Yung Shang Him, one of the students, later wrote his account of the controversy. Minister Wu, whom he called “a bigoted and fanatical conservative,” made the charge that the boys were being “Americanized and denationalized, and that they would do no good, but positive harm, to China, if they were allowed to finish their studies.” When Yung Wing heard of the calumnies spread by Wu, he defended his role with the C.E.M. and argued vociferously for its continuance—but to no avail. Even a petition signed by many notable Americans, including Samuel Wells Williams, and a letter from former President Ulysses S. Grant to Li Hongzhang, the powerful protégé of the late Zeng Guofan, could not forestall the breakup of the Mission. The students were recalled to China in 1881. <sup>14</sup>

According to Mark Twain, a friend of Yung Wing’s and a signer of the petition, the “order came upon him with the suddenness of a thunderclap. He did not know which way to turn.” After the Mission’s recall, Yung for the most part remained in the United States with his American wife, living out his years in despair. <sup>15</sup> Back in China, the students faced a serious reentry crisis owing to the negative publicity surrounding a bold experiment now labeled a failure. Once regarded as China’s best and brightest, the boys were now viewed by most as damaged goods. Consequently, they were treated with contempt, eyed with suspicion, and placed in poor living conditions. For employment, officials assigned them low-paying government jobs with scant responsibility, making them little more than “office coolies,” in the words of Yung Shang Him. According to Yung, it was only through “spunk and determination” that in subsequent years he and many of his peers were able to rise to prominence as doctors, diplomats, professors, and the heads of telegraph, railroad, and mining companies. <sup>16</sup>

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Back in Hartford, citizens collectively mourned the loss of the C.E.M. as one would a death in the family. The *Connecticut Courant* printed an epitaph for the Mission that carried a portentous message: “The Educational Mission, though now in ruins, has not utterly perished from the earth. Its influence survives; no imperial decree can abolish that. The bright lads who are unwillingly going back to China carry ideas among their own luggage. And an idea is more dangerous . . . than a cargo of dynamite.” Years after the recall, an unidentified Chinese man apparently wandered into a junk shop in Connecticut and found the sign board for the C.E.M. He promptly bought it “so that it might not get into an American Museum to become a permanent reminder of China’s disgrace in the abandonment of a magnificent enterprise.” <sup>17</sup>

In nearby New Haven, Samuel Wells Williams continued his race against the clock. Since he no longer possessed the physical energy and mental acuity of his youth, his efforts to write and revise were progressing at a frustratingly slow pace. But unlike the sad saga of Yung Wing's C.E.M., this story would have a happy ending. Late in 1881, Williams's son, Frederick, looked over the work his father had completed thus far and discovered the extent to which the author was struggling. The added chapters were, in Frederick's words, "a confused and prolix narrative." Fortunately, Frederick agreed to assist his father with the editing, and, with his much needed help, the retired missionary was able to see the massive project through to completion. [18](#)

And it was massive. When the publisher released the revised edition of *The Middle Kingdom* in October 1883, it had grown by a full third since its previous incarnation and now totaled more than 1,600 pages. Although blindness prevented Williams from reading his own completed work, he enjoyed holding the two volumes in his hands and feeling their substantial weight. As with the first edition, Williams still cared deeply about the verdict rendered by readers and critics. "He made no pretence of concealing his interest in the press notices of his work," Frederick observed, "which were read to him as they appeared." One review in particular that Frederick clipped out of *The Critic* must have cheered his father's spirits:

Those whose conception of China is that of a land of rat-eaters need . . . conversion. No one can now inform himself about the Chinese without seeing in them a civilized nation. Not to know China as civilized argues ourselves barbarians. It would also be well if the average American, and especially the average Congressman, could learn one thing—viz: that we are not in any danger of a Mongolian deluge. . . . In spite of advanced years and feeble health, our author may yet live to see the absurd and un-American bill repealed. [19](#)

With the publication of the revised *Middle Kingdom*, Williams's final act of loyal service to God was complete. And since he would now be remembered as perhaps the nineteenth century's greatest expert on China, his intellectual legacy was also secured. And so Williams had succeeded in satisfying that great pride that had always existed in a state of tension with his religious mission. Having nothing left to accomplish, the aged missionary promptly entered into rapid decline. That he had survived so long led Frederick to suspect that the hand of Providence had intervened: "It seemed as though his life had been spared to see the consummation of this important endeavor, after which he faded gradually away." On February 16, 1884, Williams died in his bed without suffering. After the funeral was held on the Yale campus, his body was removed to Utica, where he was buried next to his wife. [20](#)

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At the time of Williams's death, the Exclusion Act had been in effect for two years and was already reducing the number of immigrants from China. The hopeful prediction in *The Critic*, that Williams might "live to see the absurd and un-American bill repealed," proved to be naively optimistic: The law was renewed in 1892 for ten additional years and then made permanent in 1902. Its unfortunate influence endured all the way until 1943, when it was repealed during the Second World War. A question worth considering centers on the role played by the cultural productions covered in this study. What was the relationship between the mainstream attitudes that enabled the passage of the Exclusion Act and the museums, panoramas, lectures, books, and travelogues that were designed to teach Americans about China?

More often than not, that relationship was adversarial. Those involved in the project of educating the public about China confronted audiences that, for the most part, did not present them with a *tabula rasa* on which they could inscribe their own views. Most Americans had a preexisting attitude toward China and Chinese people, an attitude formed during their interactions with an almost infinite number of vernacular references to China that appeared in sermons, newspapers, books, political speeches, everyday expressions and idioms, and jokes exchanged in casual conversation. Because most people were comfortable with their prejudices, the challenge facing most of the individuals discussed in this book was to construct China in a way that could subvert the status quo so that something more enlightened, at least in their opinion, might assume its place.

After the Catholic missionaries' rosy portrayal of Chinese civilization had won wide acceptance, Houckgeest sought to puncture it in his account. Similarly, Nathan Dunn attempted to administer a dose of realism to an American public that for decades had been enthralled by the myth of Cathay. And after the Opium War, Samuel Wells Williams, John Peters, and George West each tried to change the popular view that the Chinese were a laughably absurd people. Even Bayard Taylor refused to conform to the mainstream view; to him, the Chinese were not a harmless and comically unprogressive people but rather a vile race that needed to be kept away from American shores. Taylor offered this construction two decades before Dennis Kearney began to provoke anti-Chinese sentiment in California. Finally, Yung Wing, the organizers of the Chinese exhibit at the Centennial, and Samuel Wells Williams all made valiant efforts to combat the mainstream's paranoid call for Chinese Exclusion in the 1870s and 1880s. The pattern that emerges is one in which popular stereotypes were contested rather than reinforced. Although Captain Kellett clearly intended to reap a profit by feeding the public's appetite for mockery, his Chinese junk stands out as an exception, not the rule.

Given this pattern of contestation, I do not believe that constructions of China either caused or contributed much to the popular mindset that favored Exclusion. In fact, it is more likely that the diverse nature of these constructions provided a countervailing influence against anti-Chinese sentiment in America in a way that strengthened resistance to that sentiment. Although the resistance to it ultimately failed, a large number of Americans did decry the acts of bigotry against Chinese immigrants, did defend the right of those immigrants to live and work in the United States, and did register their disapproval of the anti-Chinese movement as it approached its crescendo in 1882. <sup>21</sup> In other words, while the writers, painters, collectors, diplomats, and missionaries discussed in this book did not possess either the power or the uniformity of voice necessary to quell the anti-Chinese movement, they did, when taken as a group, succeed in keeping competing views of China alive in the public discourse. In sum, their books, exhibits, lectures, and paintings probably did not provide the intellectual foundation for the anti-Chinese monolith erected in 1882. These cultural productions might, however, have worked to destabilize the same.

In fact, their intellectual contributions often left lasting impressions when approached by open-minded Americans. They were even able to inspire some people to devote their entire careers to the study of China. In hindsight, although Samuel Wells Williams did very little actual teaching at Yale, the university's decision to create the Chair of Chinese Language and Literature for him appears to mark an important shift. The chair signaled that the day of the amateur ethnologist was drawing to a close. Houckgeest (merchant and diplomat), Nathan Dunn (merchant), John Peters (engineer and diplomat), George West (painter and diplomat), Bayard Taylor (poet and travel writer), and Samuel Wells Williams (naturalist, printer, and missionary) had all traveled to China for reasons unrelated to ethnography. Brought to China by their careers, usually they studied China simply because their interest in it had compelled them to do so. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, however, the study of China was becoming increasingly a specialized field reserved for trained experts bearing the appropriate credentials—professional anthropologists and sinologists possessing academic or curatorial positions in universities and museums. The generational succession in the Williams family perfectly encapsulates this transition. Exposed to Asia by his father, Frederick Wells Williams went on to become professor of modern oriental history at Yale.

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This new generation of experts were often inspired and shaped by their amateur forebears. In the case of Frederick Wells Williams, the chain of influence is of course obvious. However, other experts who lacked bloodlines also acknowledged the continued relevance of the previous generation. For example, the German-born anthropologist Berthold Laufer probably knew more about Asia than any other Westerner at the turn of the century. He had a doctoral degree, could read ten Asian languages, and held a curatorial position at the American Museum of Natural History as well as a teaching post at Columbia University. In 1901, the American Museum, looking to increase its Chinese holdings, sent Laufer on an extensive collecting expedition to China. Seeing the obvious relevance of past exhibits, Laufer studied the catalog from the Chinese exhibit at the Centennial. Once in China, he specifically requested that Samuel Wells Williams's *The Middle Kingdom* be mailed to him. Laufer knew precisely what he was asking for: the revised edition of a book written more than half a century earlier by a missionary with no formal ethnographic training. He deemed it worthy of consultation nevertheless. <sup>22</sup>

In some cases, the older generation of amateurs had an even more profound impact on the new specialists. For the Far Eastern expert William Elliot Griffis (1843–1928), it provided the spark that ignited a lasting interest in Asia. Like many of the figures discussed in this work, Griffis believed that the American public grossly misunderstood Chinese culture. In 1881 he wrote a textbook on China, Korea, and Japan for use in the Chautauqua Society in western New York. At a time when much of the popular press was busy reviling China, while many Americans were clamoring for the exclusion of its immigrants, Griffis insisted on calling China “one great nation, worthy of our respect, and even our emulation.” [23](#)

By 1911, neither his views on China nor his views on the American public had undergone much change. For this “great country and civilization,” he wrote, referring to China, most ordinary people exhibited only “dense ignorance” by erroneously insisting on seeing only “monotonous inflexibility” in the Chinese character. Like many of his predecessors, Griffis hoped to rectify the situation by writing a book—in his case, *China’s Story in Myth, Legend, Art, and Annals* (1911). The task of writing a preface to it prompted Griffis both to contemplate everything he knew about China and to try to understand how he had come by all this information. Toward this end, he decided to compile a comprehensive inventory of knowledge, a personal epistemology that would explore any and all interactions with China that had taken place over a lifetime of nearly seventy years. [24](#)

Griffis proceeded to perform what amounted to an archeological excavation of his mind, an endeavor that involved digging down through the various strata of images, ideas, impressions, and memories of all kinds. Passing through the most recent levels, he noted his association with Chinese people who had provided him with key insights into their culture. In particular, he recalled Yung Wing, the Yale-educated Chinese American who had organized the C.E.M. Continuing his dig, Griffis arrived at the layer composed of the various China experts he had known personally and the influential books these learned individuals had written. Here was Samuel Wells Williams, the American missionary and author of the comprehensive and authoritative *Middle Kingdom*. Penetrating all the way to his childhood years, Griffis encountered the grand Chinese Museum of John Peters, its wonderful array of objects, its statues placed instructively in dioramas, and the two Chinese men, T’sow Chaong and Le Kawhing, who had patiently answered the questions of a curious boy. On reaching bottom, he found his very earliest impressions of China—vague mental images formed by the old China trade. His grandfather, a merchant navigator who journeyed to Canton in the late eighteenth century, brought back numerous “pretty curiosities” that captivated the young Griffis. And his father, a mariner who also plied the waters of the Pacific, regaled him with accounts of his voyages to the Far East. These stories and objects, firing the imagination of the young boy, had “provoked a desire to know more about the mighty hermit nation.” [25](#)

Griffis also asked himself whether, from these myriad influences, a single source was able to rise above the others to assume the privileged position of defining his attitude toward China. The answer was no. One’s acquaintance with “a single person, or book,” he observed, was “worth but little” when attempting to comprehend “so vast and varied a land as China.” In Griffis’s view, these sources worked collectively to shape his overall understanding of China. Even the older images, including those that dated back to his early childhood years, had never entered into a dormant state even as information that was more recent and more reliable became available. And so, quite remarkably, an object that a Cantonese artisan had crafted during the reign of Qianlong continued to exert its influence over a man who was then witnessing the collapse of the Qing dynasty and the formation of a republic.

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Also following the tumultuous events in China was Berthold Laufer, who by 1911 had taken a curatorial position in anthropology at the Field Museum in Chicago. China had once been so mysterious as to cast a spell over dreamy Westerners from afar. As one who had been entranced, Laufer could look back with nostalgia on the days when the ethnographer in China confronted a rich and unique civilization that had developed without much discernible influence from the West. Those days were now gone. The once remote country that had captivated the wide-eyed Houckgeest as he sketched it from his palanquin was now teeming with foreigners from Europe, Japan, and the United States. Vast railroad and mining projects were altering the Chinese landscape; overzealous missionaries sought the eradication of Chinese customs that impeded the advance of Christianity; and a parasitical international community in the port cities treated the local residents as subhuman as it relentlessly pressed China for more and more trading privileges. Given these profound changes, Laufer could only mourn at the passing of a magical era in which

China had inspired true wonder in those who beheld it with an open mind. "The romance of China has died away," he wrote, "with the end of the Chivalrous Manchu dynasty." [26](#)

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**Notes:**

**Note 1:** Samuel Wells Williams, *The Middle Kingdom: A Survey of the Geography, Government, Education, Social Life, Arts, Religion, &, of the Chinese Empire and Its Inhabitants* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1883), 1:xiii-xiv. [Back.](#)

**Note 2:** Frederick Wells Williams, *The Life and Letters of Samuel Wells Williams, LL.D.* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1889), 414-15. [Back.](#)

**Note 3:** Frederick Wells Williams, 416-20. [Back.](#)

**Note 4:** In 1879, three years after Yale had established its professorship in Chinese Studies, Harvard followed suit by hiring Ko Kun-hua from China. Professor Ko and Samuel Wells Williams enjoyed a strong, but short, friendship. Professor Ko died the following year. Frederick Wells Williams, 450-53. [Back.](#)

**Note 5:** See list of Chinese titles: Box 17, series 2, Samuel Wells Williams Family Papers, Manuscript Collections, Yale University Library. Hereafter, this collection will be cited as SWWFP. This was not the first time Williams had brought about the transfer of Chinese books to American institutions. In 1869, he orchestrated an exchange of texts between the United States government and the Chinese government. See Tsuen-hsui Tsien, "The First Chinese-American Exchange of Publications," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* (1965): 19-30. [Back.](#)

**Note 6:** Samuel Wells Williams to Robert Stanton Williams, letter, 1 February 1878, box 14, series 2, SWWFP. [Back.](#)

**Note 7:** See Andrew Gyory, *Closing the Gate: Race, Politics, and the Chinese Exclusion Act* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998). [Back.](#)

**Note 8:** Frederick Wells Williams, 414; Samuel Wells Williams to Robert Stanton Williams, letters, 1 and 6 February 1878, box 13, series 2, SWWFP; and Samuel Wells Williams to Henry Blodgett (Peking), 7 February 1878, box 13, series 2, SWWFP. See Faculty of Yale College to President Rutherford B. Hayes, 21 February 1879, letter, box 13, series 2, SWWFP. [Back.](#)

**Note 9:** Frederick Wells Williams, 420. [Back.](#)

**Note 10:** See entries for 9 and 10 March 1881, "The National Diary 1881," box 14, series 2, SWWFP. [Back.](#)

**Note 11:** Entry for 26 January 1881, "The National Diary 1881," box 14, series 2, SWWFP. [Back.](#)

**Note 12:** Samuel Wells Williams to Sophia Gardner Williams Grosvenor Gray, letter, 17 January 1882, box 13, series 2, SWWFP. [Back.](#)

**Note 13:** Yung Wing to Samuel Wells Williams, letter, 19 February 1877, Yung Wing Papers. Manuscript Collections, Yale University Library. [Back.](#)

**Note 14:** Bill Lann Lee, "Yung Wing and the Americanization of China," *Amerasia* (March 1971): 31; Yung Shang Him, *The Chinese Educational Mission and Its Influence* (Shanghai: Kelly and Walsh, 1939), 10-11; *Mark Twain's Letters*, ed. Albert Bigelow Paine (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1917), 1:391-392; and Thomas E. La Fargue, *China's First Hundred* (Pullman: State College of Washington, 1942), 43-49. Samuel Wells Williams discusses his role in writing the letter in a diary entry dated 22 October 1881, "The National Diary 1881," box 14, series 2, group 547. Williams also describes the C.E.M. in *The Middle Kingdom* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1883), 2:739-741. [Back.](#)

**Note 15:** Edwin Pak-Wah Leung, "The First Chinese College Graduates in America: Yung Wing and His Educational Experiences," *Asian Profile* 16, no.5 (October 1988): 458. [Back.](#)

**Note 16:** In addition, all the subtle transformations that had taken place in the students' general comportment rendered them out of place in China. Yung Shang Him recalled that, while walking

through a country village and dressed in appropriate Chinese attire, a pack of boys followed him and called out "fan kwai" (foreign devil). Puzzled by the taunt, he related the incident to a friend, who explained that "your manly bearing and the style of your walk . . . made you appear so different to others." Yung Shang Him, 14–16. [Back.](#)

**Note 17:** William Hung, "Huang Tsun-Hsien's Poem 'The Closure of the Educational Mission in America,'" *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 18 (June 1955): 61, 73. [Back.](#)

**Note 18:** Frederick Wells Williams, 449. [Back.](#)

**Note 19:** *Critic* (November 1883). See "Reviews of the Middle Kingdom," box 16, series 2, SWWFP. [Back.](#)

**Note 20:** Frederick Wells Williams, 460–61. [Back.](#)

**Note 21:** Philip S. Foner and Daniel Rosenberg, *Racism, Dissent, and Asian Americans from 1850 to the Present: A Documentary History* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1993), 1–7. [Back.](#)

**Note 22:** Berthold Laufer to Franz Boas, letter, 10 April and 1 March 1902, Anthropology Archives, American Museum of American History. See also the chapter devoted to Berthold Laufer in John Haddad, "The Romance of China: Excursions to China in U.S. Culture: 1776-1876" (Ph.D.diss., University of Texas, 2002). [Back.](#)

**Note 23:** William Elliot Griffis, *Asiatic History: China, Corea, Japan, Chautauqua Textbooks* 34 (New York: Phillips and Hunt, 1881), 3–4. [Back.](#)

**Note 24:** William Elliot Griffis, *China's Story in Myth, Legend, Art, and Annals* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1911), vii. [Back.](#)

**Note 25:** We have no way to know whether the majority of Americans understood China in as eclectic a fashion as did Griffis. However, in the 1950s, Harold Isaacs interviewed nearly two hundred panelists to test their understanding of China. He found that, on the subject of China, the minds of his interviewees were littered with an odd assortment of images that, when taken together, did not add up to a single cohesive vision. Harold R. Isaacs, *Images of Asia: American Views of China and India* (New York: Capricorn Books, 1962), 47. Isaacs's book illuminated the American mind in the 1950s, and, unfortunately, no earlier scholar conducted a systematic survey of the nineteenth century to provide us with a comparable snapshot. In the only earlier study, one hundred Princeton students were asked to describe the Chinese, along with other racial groups, by choosing from a pool of eighty-four adjectives. The wide range of responses prompted the researchers to conclude the following: "Apparently the general stereotype for the Chinese among eastern college students is fairly indefinite, for the agreement on typical Chinese characteristics is not great." Daniel Katz and Kenneth Braly, "Racial Stereotypes of One Hundred College Students," *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* 28 (October–December 1933): 282–87. [Back.](#)

**Note 26:** The Manchu dynasty and the Qing dynasty are the same. Berthold Laufer, "Modern Chinese Collections in Historical Light: With Especial Reference to the American Museum's Collection Representative of Chinese Culture a Decade Ago," *American Museum Journal* 12 (April 1912), 137. [Back.](#)

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