

## **Mark Twain's Racial Ideologies and His Portrayal of the Chinese**

Hsin-yun Ou

Department of Western Languages and Literature  
National University of Kaohsiung, Taiwan

### **Abstract**

Although Mark Twain's depictions of the Chinese are not always free from contemporary racial stereotypes, they are more sympathetic than what was typically portrayed in the popular media. In "Disgraceful Persecution of a Boy," Twain unfolds his antipathy towards the discriminatory treatment the Chinese suffered. In "John Chinaman in New York," the narrator pities the "friendless Mongol," but finally finds himself only able to understand the Chinese as superficial stereotypes. In "Goldsmith's Friend Abroad Again," through the narrator's initial ironical statements and later sufferings and disillusionment, Twain satirizes American racist attitudes against the Chinese. In *Roughing It*, Twain characterizes the Chinese with depth and humanity; despite ill treatment from lower-class whites, the Chinese in the portrait Twain paints are hard-working, patient, and benevolent to American society. *Ah Sin* vindicates the Chinese by presenting a Chinese laundryman who outsmarts most of the white characters. Twain's anti-racism fueled his powerful anti-imperial writings later in his life, in which his humanitarian sentiments and sense of moral righteousness became more prominent in expressing sympathy for oppressed groups, including the Chinese, and insisting on racial tolerance. As such, when Twain observed the Chinese, he was in fact examining the American character in comparison with his ideal vision of the U.S. as a nation that represented the forces of social justice and liberalism.

### **Keywords**

Mark Twain, the Chinese, racial stereotypes, American character,  
anti-imperialism, humanitarianism

Although the actual presence of the Chinese was rare on the American East Coast in the nineteenth century, frontier writings and dramas with Chinese characters were popular, because the readers and audiences were curious about the American West. Frontier mythology flourished with the allure of gold and better communication and transportation with the completion of the first transcontinental telegraph line in 1861, the popularity of newspapers, and the completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869. Beginning in the mid-nineteenth century, discussions about the global migrations of Asians to the West Coast, and the alleged threat they posed, circulated throughout the U.S. (Lee 537). Local and state governments in western states proposed anti-Chinese legislation, and influenced Congress to pass similar federal laws. When Mark Twain addressed his audience at the first performance of *Ah Sin* (written by Mark Twain and Bret Harte) in New York in 1877, he stated:

The Chinaman is going to become a very frequent spectacle all over America, by and by, and a difficult political problem, too. Therefore it seems well enough to let the public study him a little on the stage beforehand. (*The World: New York*, 1 August 1877, 5)

This essay attempts to examine Mark Twain's racial perspectives concerning the situation of Chinese immigrants in the U.S. Twain's social engagement, especially his attack on the principles of his time, and his ability to identify irony through humor, make him one of the U.S.'s best-loved national authors. My research investigates Twain's fascination with and sympathy for the Chinese by exploring his ardently debated dynamics of the racist practices against the Chinese in his shorter pieces "Disgraceful Persecution of a Boy" (1870), "John Chinaman in New York" (1870), "Goldsmith's Friend Abroad Again" (1870-1871), his novel *Roughing It* (1872), and the play *Ah Sin* (1877). Furthermore, to analyze Twain's views of the Chinese immigration in connection with nineteenth-century American Orientalism and colonization of Asia, this article will also examine Twain's journals, letters, other literary works, records of the life of Mark Twain, and other relevant documents. Through a study of Twain's vision of American cross-cultural encounters, imperial expansion and racial conflicts, I attempt to explore the influences of nineteenth-century social and ideological changes in mainstream American concepts of the Chinese. According to Karen J. Leong, American Orientalism reflected American ideologies of gender, race, class, and nation (8). In

*New York before Chinatown*, John Kuo Wei Tchen also asserts that Orientalism has played a significant role in the development of American racist ideas and national identity (xx-xxi). Discussing the permeation of U.S. culture with imperialist logic between 1840 and 1940, Amy Kaplan observes that international struggles for domination abroad shape representations of American national identity, and that national cultural phenomena are forged through foreign relations (1). Built on these theories, this essay seeks to argue that Twain's writings demonstrate American Orientalism as influenced not only by the Americans' relations with the Orient and its people, but also by their different social ideologies and self-identification of nationality. Most importantly, this article demonstrates that, since Twain endeavored to understand the Chinese and protest against Western imperialism, his writings offer different perspectives on Asian people from those regarded by Edward Said as "Orientalist," Said's term for a Western mechanism of othering for "dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient" (2-3).

### **"Disgraceful Persecution of a Boy"**

Twain's best-known writings about the Chinese are his three satires published in the *Galaxy* magazine. The first, entitled "Disgraceful Persecution of a Boy," was published in May, 1870 (reprinted in Butcher 188-91). It is a sarcastic exposition of the arrest of a well-dressed boy in San Francisco, who "on his way to Sunday-school was arrested and thrown into the city prison for stoning a Chinaman" (188). Twain condemns the injustice of the arrest, because the boy has been taught by his elders that it was "a high and holy thing" to abuse the Chinese, and yet the boy "no sooner attempts to do his duty than he is punished for it" (190). The boy did not realize that it was wrong to stone a Chinaman, since he had read newspapers written by racist adults, Twain reasons. As heaving rocks at Chinamen was a common pastime, the boy's parents would undoubtedly have commended his action. As such, this article is an ironic defense of the youth, and in fact an attack on the boy's elders, for Twain implicitly expresses his indignation at the mistreatment of the Chinese in California.

In this article, Twain's sympathy for the Chinese receives its angry expression, particularly because the San Francisco community collected unlawful mining taxes and various charges from the Chinese while police stood idly by when the Chinese were attacked by white gangs. The boy found out, Twain suggests, through his parents and the daily newspapers, that "the great commonwealth of California imposes an unlawful mining-tax upon John [the Chinese] the foreigner, and allows

Patrick [the Irish] the foreigner to dig gold for nothing—probably because the degraded Mongol is at no expense for whiskey, and the refined Celt cannot exist without it” (188). Twain’s own aversion to the Irish, along with his earlier support of the Know-Nothing movement (a nativist movement of the 1840s and 1850s, initiated by fears that the U.S. was being overwhelmed by Irish Catholic immigrants), also helps to instigate his abhorrence of anti-Chinese racism advocated mainly by Irish immigrants. “When a white man robs a sluice-box,” Twain notes the racial discrimination in this article, “they make him leave the camp; and when a Chinaman does that thing, they hang him” (188). Even worse, “whenever any secret and mysterious crime is committed, they go straightway and swing a Chinaman” (189).

Twain’s article reflects the historical situation of the early Chinese immigrants to America, who were forced to pay taxes but lived without any legal protection. As early as 1850, a California law provided that “no black, or Mulatto person, or Indian shall be allowed to give evidence in favor of, or against a White man” (Sandmeyer 45). In 1852, the California state legislature catered to white miners’ concerns about Chinese competition and instituted a foreign miners’ license tax, but only Chinese miners were made to pay the tax. In 1853, California’s Supreme Court declared that the Chinese could not be trusted as witnesses in a court of law. It was not until the revised California Code of Civil Procedure took effect on January first, 1873, that witnesses were admitted to the courts of California regardless of color and nationality (Coolidge 76). Thus, in California, acts of cheating and assault on the Chinese, from pulling his hair to murdering him, were committed with impunity. As Samuel Bowles recounts in *Our New West* (1869), the Chinese

are even denied protection in persons and property by the law. Their testimony is inadmissible against the white man. . . . To abuse and cheat a Chinaman; to rob him; kick and cuff him; even to kill him, have been things not only done with impunity by mean and wicked men, but even with vain glory. (403-4)

By 1855, California nationalists elaborated the arguments: the Asiatics were competing unfairly with Yankees, and draining wealth out of the country. With the demise of the railroad and mining industries after the Civil War, the economy fell into a slump, and competition for jobs intensified anti-Chinese sentiment. In 1871, prompted by the high unemployment in California, a mob of over 500 Caucasians

entered Los Angeles' Chinatown to ransack Chinese-occupied buildings, and killed more than 20 Chinese residents. Also, labor union leader Denis Kearney, head of the Workingmen's Party of California, urged lawmakers to stop the flow of Asians into the U.S. All these climaxed in the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, the first statute to ban a group from immigrating to the U.S. based solely on ethnicity. The Act prohibited any Chinese laborer from entering the U.S., and barred any state or federal court from naturalizing any Chinese (Sandmeyer 93-95).

Twain, however, manifests his conscience over ill treatment of the Chinese in many of his recollections. In the memoranda about "Disgraceful Persecution of a Boy," Twain recalls having written a similar report in 1864:

I have many such memories in my mind, but am thinking just at present of one particular one, where the Brannan street butchers set their dogs on a Chinaman who was quietly passing with a basket of clothes on his head; and while the dogs mutilated his flesh, a butcher increased the hilarity of the occasion by knocking some of the Chinaman's teeth down his throat with half a brick. This incident sticks in my memory with a more malevolent tenacity, perhaps, on account of the fact that I was in the employ of a San Francisco journal at the time, and was not allowed to publish it because it might offend some of the peculiar element that subscribed for the paper. (190)

Years later, Twain reiterated in his autobiographical dictation on 13 June 1906 that, as a young reporter for the San Francisco *Morning Call*, he was outraged by an incident he witnessed: several policemen stood idly by when white youngsters assaulted a Chinese man. Twain prepared a fierce report on this racial incident: "One Sunday afternoon I saw some hoodlums chasing and stoning a Chinaman who was heavily laden with the weekly wash of his Christian customers, and I noticed that a policeman was observing this performance with an amused interest—nothing more" (*The Autobiography* 131). Twain's employer, however, refused to run this report, caring about not offending the paper's subscribers with anti-Chinese bias. Twain rewrote the story with a satirical strategy of irony, and published it in a paper in the next state and in a national magazine. In "What Have the Police Been Doing?" (*Territorial Enterprise* [Virginia City], Jan. 16-18, 1866), the narrator, posing as the policemen's loyal friend, satirizes corrupt police officers who constantly victimized the local Chinese population.

Since Twain criticized the San Francisco police for corruption, ineptitude, and abuse of Chinese immigrants, he was unpopular with their chief (Emerson 29). Yet, his contemporaries made similar complaints. Florence Baillie-Grohman, for instance, wrote in her memoir that she asked the police to protect her Chinese servant from being attacked by white youths, but in vain (333-403). Twain's racial tolerance and attention to people on the margins enabled him to characterize the Chinese with depth and humanity. By illustrating the Chinese as individuals who participate in the everyday life of the West, he endorses his depictions of the Chinese with heart-felt humanism. More solemn than his usual tone, Twain's portrayal of Chinese immigrants as victims of hostility is intended to condemn anti-Chinese prejudice and violence.

### **“John Chinaman in New York”**

“John Chinaman in New York,” Twain's second *Galaxy* satire about the Chinese, appeared in September 1870 (reprinted in Twain, *Mark Twain's Sketches* 231-32). It describes a man dressed like a Chinese man standing in front of a New York tea store, “acting in the capacity of a sign,” scolded by passersby, and paid only four dollars a week. The narrator initially objects to the use of a living man as an advertisement for “one of those monster American tea stores” (231), and expresses compassion toward the unfortunate Chinese man who suffered from ill treatment at the hands of white Americans. Astonished by the insult to the Chinese man's humanity, the narrator envisions himself in the role of a benevolent citizen, and delivers a self-righteous critique of white civilization: “Is it not a shame that we, who prate so much about civilization and humanity, are content to degrade a fellow-being to such an office as this?” (231).

With empathy for the Chinese man, the narrator wonders “what was passing behind this sad face,” and he speculates that the Chinese man's thoughts might be with “his natural home beyond the seas,” beyond the confinements of time and space:

Were his thoughts with his heart, ten thousand miles away, beyond the billowy wastes of the Pacific? . . . And now and then, rippling among his visions and his dreams, did he hear familiar laughter and half-forgotten voices, and did he catch fitful glimpses of the friendly faces of a bygone time? (232)

In effect, Twain uses a similar sentimental touch while depicting exotic scenes for his first full-length book, *Innocents Abroad* (1869). In this travel writing, he describes the moment when he saw the Sphinx in Egypt:

After years of waiting, it was before me at last. The great face was so sad, so earnest, so longing, so patient. . . . It was looking over and beyond every thing of the present, and far into the past. . . . It was thinking of the wars of departed ages. . . ; of the joy and sorrow, the life and death, the grandeur and decay, of five thousand slow revolving years. (Chapter 58)

In Twain's imagination, an ancient stone can be full of memory and retrospection. Similarly, in "John Chinaman in New York," the narrator sees the Chinese as humans with a history and culture. The narrator's genteel humanism, however, becomes a satirical target because of his inability to visualize the Chinese except through a set of ethnic stereotypes, including a "quaint Chinese hat, with peaked roof and ball on top," a "long queue dangling down his back," "blue cotton, tight-legged pants, tied close around the ankles," and "clumsy blunted shoes with thick cork soles" (232). Behind the narrator's sentimental sympathy emerge nationalist values: "It is not America that treats you in this way. . . . America has a broader hospitality for the exiled and oppressed" (232). The narrator "pitied the friendless Mongol," and believed that the Chinese, as soon as they made enough money, would love to go back to China: "Money should be raised—you shall go back to China—you shall see your friends again" (232).

Later in this sketch, sympathy for Chinese is further satirized when the "poor Chinaman" turns out to be an Irishman in disguise. When the narrator asks the Chinese about the wages he is paid for this humiliating job, the "Chinaman" responds in a thick Irish accent: "Divil a cint but four dollars a week and find meself; but it's aisy, barrin the troublesome furrin clothes that's so expensive" (232). Behind the crude ethnic mask is a person who breaks down the narrator's contrived image of "the friendless Mongol." As the Irishman complains about the expensive "furrin clothes" that constitute his disguise, the vernacular tone discloses the fact that the genteel narrator has been deceived by superficial ethnic identifiers. The critique of ethnic prejudice in turn becomes a kind of ethnic prejudice, a repetition of the degrading imagery that the narrator disapproves of. Through this, Twain mocks the false assumptions underlying the narrator's self-serving humanism

(Wonham 117-52). The narrator is embarrassed by his own misconceptions of ethnic identity and cultural stereotypes. Through the characterization of both the narrator and the faked Chinese man, this ethnic caricature is a vivid representation of American hypocrisy and superficial understanding of ethnic characteristics.

### **“Goldsmith’s Friend Abroad Again”**

Twain followed up “John Chinaman in New York” with a series of letters under the general title “Goldsmith’s Friend Abroad Again.” Published in three installments appearing in October and November of 1870, and in January of 1871 in the *Galaxy* (X: 569,727; XI: 156), this satire is a vigorous attack on discriminatory practices against the Chinese in California. In this series of letters, a candid Chinese immigrant named Ah Song-Hi writes to his friend Ching-Foo back in China about his excitement while leaving for America, about his ill reception in this country, and his confusion about American values. Twain’s tale of black humor employs an ironic approach to unveil the dark side of America as a land of corruption and oppression, rather than a heaven with equal rights. In the first letter, the narrator talks about his vision of the U.S. as “the Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave” (X: 569). When he landed in America, however, he was beaten by the police, his every penny was taken by the bureaucrats, dogs were set on him, and he was convicted when he was falsely accused of causing a disturbance. While in court, the narrator noticed how a criminal’s nationality influences the judge’s decisions. Even worse, he was not allowed to testify against the Irish Americans who physically assailed him. The narrator condemns the California Supreme Court’s decision that banned Chinese individuals from testifying against whites in court cases: “In this country white men can testify against Chinamen all they want to, but Chinamen ain’t allowed to testify against white men!” (Letter VII). As such, these letters display Twain’s indignation at the injustices against the Chinese.

These letters depict the Chinese as individuals with human rights by relating them to their history. Twain’s tale alludes to the historical fact that the California gold rush fueled impoverished Chinese immigrants to America. During the second half of the nineteenth century, wars and famines ravaged China. China’s defeat in the two Opium Wars, against the British (1839-1842) and the British and French (1856-1860), forced China to legalize the import of opium and sanction Christian missionary activity, and led to the European and American control of major Chinese ports. Several internal rebellions to overthrow the Qing dynasty further



impoverished the country. Millions of the Chinese suffered through numerous famines, and twenty million people died during the Taiping Rebellion (1851-1864) alone. To escape extreme poverty, a growing number of Chinese were attracted by the 1848 discovery of gold in California, from 325 in 1849 to 20,026 in 1852 (Takaki 79). *The Times* reported on their long and brutal sea voyages to the U.S.:

Several Chinese vessels have lately been seized for carrying an excess of passengers . . . the Chinese were packed in the fashion of a hencoop. . . . One hundred of the passengers died on the voyage, and nearly all the rest are sick with the scurvy and are dying off very fast. (26 Sept. 1854. 8, col. d)

These Chinese immigrants risked their life in migrating to America in search of better opportunities, hoping to find sympathy and relief from oppression. Although “all men being created free and equal” had been written in American Declaration of Independence when Americans established their country, racial discrimination did not disappear. Forfeited was the traditional policy of “open doors and equal rights for all,” a view that used to understand the value of the commerce of Asia to the U.S. (Gibson, “Chinaman or White Man” 28). The Chinese were not allowed to enjoy liberty as men of other nationalities enjoyed it, and they suffered endless exploitation.

In “Goldsmith’s Friend Abroad Again,” Twain modeled on the epistolary device and self-criticism in *Citizen of the World* (1760), written by the eighteenth-century British writer Oliver Goldsmith. *Citizen of the World* undeniably influenced Twain’s work, because he characterized it as one of his two “beaux ideals” of fine writing in a letter to his brother Orion on March 18, 1860 (*Mark Twain’s Letters* 45). In the seventeenth century and the early eighteenth century, western views of China was primarily favorable, most of them based on reports from the Jesuits who celebrated Chinese civilization. As philosophers of the Enlightenment were critical of European institutions and turned to the Chinese civilization for solutions, Europe’s admiration of China resulted in utopian idealizations of China as a nation well organized on the basis of reason. To satirize social foibles in England, Goldsmith presents his narrator as a highly cultivated philosopher from China, reflecting the contemporary image of China as one of the world’s great civilizations. Whereas the Chinese narrator in Goldsmith’s story is a philosopher from highly civilized China, the narrator in Twain’s story is an oppressed worker from poverty-stricken China in the late nineteenth century.

Since most of the Chinese immigrants the Americans encountered in the nineteenth century were railroad workers, miners, laundrymen and domestic servants, attitudes toward the Chinese in Twain's America are distinctively different from those in Goldsmith's observations. Many American playwrights of the time gave their Chinese characters pidgin English (with mispronunciations and erroneous usages), which often conjures up assumptions of racial inferiority (Kersten 75).

Nonetheless, as Goldsmith criticizes English society through the lens of a Chinese man, Twain also employs a Chinese persona to satirize American racism and violence. Since Twain was a journalist for American publications which focused on political issues, his writing tended to address general political issues. In the fiction of "Goldsmith's Friend Abroad Again," similarly, he emphasizes that his narrative of the mistreatment of the Chinese was based on his observations of real American life, and he begins each of the three serializations with the following: "NOTE.—No experience is set down in the following letters which had to be invented. Fancy is not needed to give variety to the history of a Chinaman's sojourn in America. Plain fact is amply sufficient" (*The Galaxy*, X: 569). Indeed, this story realistically represents white Americans' attitude toward the Chinese during the late nineteenth century. Thinking of the U.S. as the land of freedom and opportunity, many Chinese willingly left their families and made the long trip, hardly knowing that they would be facing a life filled with discrimination and injustice. Instead of achieving their American dream, many Chinese immigrants, like Ah Song Hi, were severely abused and deeply disillusioned. Twain's "Goldsmith's Friend Abroad Again" discloses situations in which the Chinese were unfairly treated: the handling of disturbances on board ship; police kicking and swearing at the Chinese when off board once they arrive; police putting the Chinese into jail for no reason; and unequal treatment in court toward the Chinese. Through the portrayal of the Chinese narrator who suffers from unfair treatments on the street, in the prison, and even in the court, Twain indicates his sympathy for the victims of racism.

Twain's "Goldsmith's Friend Abroad Again" echoes less prevalent themes put forward in several contemporary publications. Raphael Pumpelly (1837-1923) advocates in his *Across America and Asia* (1870) fair play for the Chinaman, both in China and in the U.S. As a geologist and mineralogist, Pumpelly made the first extensive survey of the Gobi Desert in 1864-1865 in China. In the chapters on "The Chinese as Emigrants and Colonizers" and on "Western Policy in China," he observes that the legislation to exclude the Chinese from the rest of the community produces among American citizens "those moral evils which were the worst results

of slavery with us.”<sup>1</sup> Also, an 1878 article published in *New York Times* states that the Chinese exclusion would be a “violent departure from the theory and practice of the Government of the Republic” as “a land of the free, an asylum for the distressed of all nations,” and that Americans should not have “bullied China into admitting us into their country,” so as not to “rebuild on our Pacific shore the wall which the Chinese have thrown down” (“Senator Morton and the Chinese” 4).

### *Roughing It*

Twain's *Roughing It* (1872) is a non-fictional account based on his western travels through Nevada and northern California in the 1860s. In Chapter LIV, the section entitled “The Gentle, Inoffensive Chinese” focuses on the Chinese in Virginia City, Nevada, where the promising West was ironically also a land of racial prejudices, with white Christians acting against racial minorities. The accompanying illustrations exhibit nineteenth-century representations of Chinese physiognomy such as the queue and slit eyes, seemingly offering caricatures of negative personality. Some scholars suggest that Twain's writing still perpetuates racism, as it relies on the stereotypes in conventional yellowface minstrelsy. Margaret Duckett, for instance, observes that Twain's account of the idiosyncrasies of the Chinese man (a “soggy creature,” among other “yellow, long tailed vagabonds” smoking opium) is stereotypical, and that Twain only shows respect when he mentions the skill of a Chinese bookkeeper in calculating by abacus (53). Robert McClellan also asserts that Twain regards the Chinese as a pathetic example of a people unable to defend themselves (56). Nonetheless, I would argue that, in expressing outrage at the abuse of Chinese laborers in California, Twain also attempts to criticize the injustices of his fellow countrymen, and to condemn American prejudice against the Chinese in spite of their peculiar appearance.

Twain's early journalism in San Francisco expresses his admiration of the self-sufficiency of the Chinese and their serenity under discrimination. In a similar vein, Twain in *Roughing It* describes Chinese laborers who helped build the transcontinental railroad, and expresses indignation at anti-Chinese discrimination. Twain praises the diligence of the Chinese, and respects them for their virtues:

---

<sup>1</sup> qtd. in *New Englander and Yale Review* 29.110 (Jan. 1870): 176-78.

They are quiet, peaceable, tractable, free from drunkenness, and they are as industrious as the day is long. . . . So long as a Chinaman has strength to use his hands he needs no support from anybody; white men often complain of want of work, but a Chinaman offers no such complaint; he always finds something to do. (“The Gentle, Inoffensive Chinese” 177)

In terms of these observations, Twain agrees with some of his contemporaries who appreciated the Chinese for their patience and peacefulness. In her diary of 6 August 1866, Caroline C. Leighton depicts the Chinese she met in Oregon:

Farther up the river, we passed some abandoned diggings, where little colonies of patient, toilsome Chinamen had established themselves, and were washing and sifting the earth discarded by previous miners; making, we were told, on the average, two or three cents to the pan. The Chinaman regularly pays, as a foreigner (and is almost the only foreigner who does so) his mining-license tax to the State. He never seeks to interfere with the rich claims, and patiently submits to being driven away from any neglected spot he may have chosen if a white man takes a fancy to it. (Leighton 33)

Twain also mentions that, in April 1850, California enacted a tax on all foreigners working mining claims, but in fact the “foreign” mining tax was usually inflicted on no foreigners but Chinese (178). Furthermore, Twain describes the Chinese as harmless sufferers of violence, and attacks the San Francisco police for their indifference, while stressing that he is merely describing what has really happened in his days.

As I write, news comes that in broad daylight in San Francisco, some boys have stoned an inoffensive Chinaman to death, and that although a large crowd witnessed the shameful deed, no one interfered. (177)

Murder scenes like this were not uncommon in San Francisco during this period, as a similar report appears in the *New York Tribune* in 1871:

San Francisco, June 2.—The police are endeavoring to arrest a gang of boys who stoned to death an inoffensive Chinaman on Fourth St. yesterday afternoon. Dozens of people witnessed the assault, but did not interfere until the murder was complete. No attempt was then made to arrest the murderers. (*New York Tribune* 3 June 1871)

Twain speculates that the Chinese have been victimized because they have no civil rights. Although the U.S. is the “land of the free,” no Chinaman can testify against a white man, and yet “any white man can swear a Chinaman’s life away in the courts” (177).

Although *Roughing It* frames the figure of the Chinese man as an object of pity, Twain states that no “Californian *gentleman or lady* [Twain’s emphasis] ever abuses or oppresses a Chinaman” (182). Racial discrimination against Chinese, as Twain declares, was limited to “the scum of the population,” their children, and “the policemen and politicians, likewise, for these are the dust-licking pimps and slaves of the scum, there as well as elsewhere in America” (182). This sarcastic statement recalls Twain’s 1870 article, “Disgraceful Persecution of a Boy,” about a well-dressed boy who, on his way to Sunday school, threw stones at a Chinese man. In both writings, Twain mocks the pretense of gentility, and endorses the idea that true gentility is humanitarian in spirit: “They [the Chinese] are a kindly disposed, well-meaning race, and are respected and well treated by the upper classes, all over the Pacific coast” (182). Anxious about the Victorian concepts of social class distinctions, Twain attributes people to different classes according to their moral values and sense of justice, rather than their birth rights.

### *Ah Sin*

The most important factor that contributed to Twain’s writings about Chinese was the current popularity of Bret Harte. Twain was aware that the theme of the Chinese problem was a strong feature in Bret Harte’s mounting fame and fortune after the publication of Harte’s verse, “Plain Language from Truthful James,” also known as “The Heathen Chinese” (1870), whose immense popularity was attributed to public excitement about the Chinese Question. In order to challenge Harte’s triumph, Twain probably regarded his depictions of the Chinese as a literary gold mine. The play *Ah Sin* (1877), a collaboration between Twain and Bret Harte, was intended to exploit the success of the Chinese role in Harte’s celebrated poem and

his play *Two Men of Sandy Bar* (1876), though it was also based on Twain's *Roughing It*.

Harte's verse, "Plain Language from Truthful James," was first printed in the *Overland Monthly* in 1870, and, having enormously increased the circulation of the magazine, the poem was reprinted in almost every newspaper in the country (The *New York Globe*, January 7, 1871; Fenn 45). It recounts the tale of two white men playing cards with a Chinese man. Although the white men cheat, the Chinese keeps winning by hiding cards in his sleeves, and eventually the white men exclaim: "We are ruined by Chinese cheap labor" (Harte 216). The poem was intended to be ambiguously ironic: while it negatively stereotypes the Chinese as cunning, it also portrays white men as deceptive and violent. Harte ridicules anti-Chinese intolerance by accentuating the hypocritical moral attitude of the outwitted white gamblers. According to Gary Scharnhorst, Harte intended "to satirize anti-Chinese prejudices pervasive in northern California among Irish day-labourers, with whom Chinese immigrants competed for jobs" (378). Yet, Harte's exposure of the white men's hypocrisy and the irony of the white men being out-cheated was lost on many readers. Instead, the stereotype of the devious Chinese was perpetuated owing to this poem, and white workers and politicians used the poem to argue for the Chinese exclusion (Mason 150).

Harte may have intended to correct the misreading of his poem when he wrote the play *Ah Sin*. The name of the title role draws attention to the implication of the Chinese character's name in Harte's poem, but the dénouement subverts its implication. Like Harte's "heathen Chinese" who outwits a couple of white card cheaters, Ah Sin in this play outsmarts and exposes the villain murderer, facilitating a key twist in the plot by supplying evidence to convict the guilty in time to rescue the innocent. The Chinese role's conniving manipulation triumphs, not only achieving justice for others but also making his own profits, and the play ends with general shouts of "Hurrah" for Ah Sin.

Twain's curtain speech for the New York production predicted the fate of the Chinese as the scapegoat for social problems, and emphasized: "I wish to say also that this play is didactic rather than anything else. It is intended rather for instruction than amusement" (Daly 235). Indeed, the play intervened in the national imaginary by revising the Chinese stereotypes on the American stage, and by challenging the contemporary ideology of racial minorities' inferiority. *Ah Sin* offers a favorable view of the Chinese on the Western frontier, in which Ah Sin's seemingly clumsy and idiotic imitative manners are presented in contrast to his final

scheming victory. In this respect, *Ah Sin* influenced two successful productions: Joaquin Miller's *The Danites; or, The Heart of the Sierras* (1877) and Bartley Campbell's *My Partner* (1879), both containing a Chinese character who plays a significant role in resolving the dramatic conflict.

*Ah Sin*, however, was short-lived, neither a success in the New York season nor on the road. *New York Times* reports after the first evening of the performance at the Fifth Avenue Theatre that "the audience left the house without making the slightest demonstration of pleasure" (1 August 1877, 5). Although Twain and Harte considered the Chinaman entitled to justice, the failure of *Ah Sin* might suggest, apart from its weak stagecraft, that the theatre audience on the East Coast, who was assured of white superiority, was not comfortable with the Chinese character's ability to manipulate the destiny of so many white characters (Williams, *The Chinese Other* 39). The play's presentation of a smart Chinese man during the peak of the anti-Chinese movement in the 1870s very likely contributed to its failure, because the audience could only enjoy a miserably clownish Chinaman, instead of a triumphantly dominant one (Duckett 146-51; Moy 187-94; Williams, *Misreading the Chinese Character* 211).

Meanwhile, although *Ah Sin* satirized American racists during the anti-Chinese movement, the countertype of the Chinese was "vulnerable to being misunderstood" (Fishkin, "Race and the Politics" 286). A journalist of the *New York Tribune* observed in his opening-night review that the play exhibited the peculiarities of the Chinaman, "the eccentricities of that childlike and bland rogue," who "lies, cheats, steals and makes merry, protects the innocent on strictly commercial principles, and confounds the guilty at last" (Winter 5:1). Duckett remarks that almost every character in the play speaks scornfully of him, "much of the humor is at his expense," and "his frequent beatings and cuffs" are but "clumsy antecedents of the jokes" on Jim in *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (151). Scharnhorst suggests that Twain's "public instruction" through the play takes the form of slander and his version of "the heathen Chinese" is mere caricature (377-99). Even though the play eventually offers a countertype to replace a conventionally negative Chinese stereotype, countertypes are often merely surface correctives, for lurking underneath a countertype is often an old stereotype (Nachbar 239). The image of the Chinese, scorned in the first scene of the play as a "moral cancer" and an "unsolvable political problem" (*Ah Sin* 11), is probably more impressive for the contemporary audience than the final "Hurrah" for him. Thus, although Twain argued against the injustices the Chinese suffered, anti-immigrationists adopted his seemingly negative portrayals of the Chinese to

support their cause. Exactly like Harte's poem, the play's critique of a social problem paradoxically helps to perpetuate it (Moy 20).

This unexpected outcome probably resulted from Twain's revisions of the play, intended to improve the play's commercial viability by amusing the audience with the stereotypes of Chinese immigrants. The later productions of *Ah Sin* registered more Twain than Harte. According to Daly's playbill, *Ah Sin* has been produced under Twain's "immediate supervision."<sup>2</sup> Twain made a crucial decision by placing a comic Chinese character at the center of the action. In his letter to William Dean Howells on Aug 3, 1877, Twain states: "'Ah Sin' went a-booming at the Fifth Avenue. . . . The Chinaman is killingly funny" (*Mark Twain's Letters* 300). Twain's biographer Albert Bigelow Paine asserts that some of the characters in the play "if not faithful to life, were faithful enough to the public conception of it to be amusing and exciting" ("Mark Twain" 258). On October 11, 1876, Twain wrote to Howells that Harte would "put in a Chinaman (a wonderfully funny creature, as Bret presents him—for five minutes—in his *Sandy Bar* play)" (qtd. in Duckett 116). When the play showed signs of weakness, Twain devised new comic business for the Chinaman, employing the cunning stereotypes of Chinese laundryman blowing water onto clothes for ironing (Daly 236). In Twain's handwriting, a stage direction was revised to the effect that Ah Sin steals the judge's handkerchief while the judge is speaking. All these emendations represent Twain's main objectives to elaborate the "comic business" of the Chinese character, and to turn the play into a farce crammed with derisive references to the Chinese (Duckett 147). Twain fitted Ah Sin into the outlines of the yellowface minstrel tradition, and Ah Sin's dignity and human capacity disappeared behind this stereotype mask. As the Chinese character became more comic, he became less morally agreeable. Perceived as a stupid petty criminal by the miners, Ah Sin hides several stolen items under his robes, echoing one of the contemporary assertions that Chinese servants were "the most filthy, mendacious, thieving, unreliable class of house-servants in all the world" (Gibson, *The Chinese in America* 103).

Twain's writings about the Chinese, then, articulate the racial ambiguities of the U.S., much as he does in his *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. In 1876, around the time when Twain was writing *Ah Sin*, he began writing this novel concerning the limitations that American "civilization" imposes on individual freedom. In this

---

<sup>2</sup> The playbill of *Ah Sin* on Tuesday Night, July 31<sup>st</sup>, 1877 in Daly's 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue Theatre (Collected by University of Wisconsin Libraries.)



novel, with penance for the wrongs done by white Americans to black Americans, Twain attacks racial intolerance during both pre- and post-Civil War periods, and condemns the institution of slavery. The end of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, when Huck declares his intention to escape from Aunt Sally's plan to "adopt me and sivilize me" (568-69), designates Twain as embracing the getaway from civilization, of which racism is a disease.

### Twain's Anti-Imperialist Writings

Twain's ambivalence toward slavery and race relations within the U.S. relates to his views of U.S. imperialist actions abroad. His first overseas encounter was with Hawaii in 1866 for six-month, where Twain's interest in China had been aroused by Anson Burlingame, then U.S. Minister to China. Burlingame invited Twain to visit his house in Peking, and Twain wrote on June 27, 1866 that he planned to "go to the States first—and from China to the Paris World's Fair" (*Mark Twain's Letters* 109). However, he failed to do so, as he wrote in a letter to his family from San Francisco on Dec. 4, 1866: "The China Mail Steamer is getting ready and everybody says I am throwing away a fortune in not going in her. I firmly believe it myself" (*Mark Twain's Letters* 122). Twain's attitude toward the Chinese was partially influenced by Burlingame. In a letter Twain wrote to his family from Honolulu on June 27, 1866, he claims that Burlingame was "acknowledged to have no superior in the diplomatic circles of the world, and obtained from China concessions in favor of America which were refused to Sir Frederick Bruce and Envoys of France and Russia until procured for them by Burlingame himself—which service was duly acknowledged by those dignitaries" (*Mark Twain's Letters* 108). In 1867, Burlingame resigned his ministry and soon accepted an appointment from the Chinese government as a special envoy to the West. In February 1868, he helped to draft the Burlingame Treaty with the U.S., the first by a Western power to recognize China's sovereignty and allow unrestricted immigration. With Burlingame's assistance, Twain wrote a laudatory analysis of "The Treaty with China" on the front page of the *New York Tribune* of August 4, 1868.

Like Burlingame, Twain respected the Chinese and resented their mistreatment by imperialists. In "A Tribute to Anson Burlingame" (1870), Twain praised Burlingame for punishing Americans in China who took advantage of the Chinese. In "My Debut as a Literary Person," Twain mentions that "his Excellency Anson Burlingame was there at the time, on his way to take up his post in China, where he did such good work for the U.S." (187). Burlingame helped Twain to

understand that the ancestral worship in China might be the partial reason for China's failure to be industrialized as early as European countries.

Since the departed are held in such worshipful reverence, a Chinaman cannot bear that any indignity be offered the places where they sleep. Mr. Burlingame said that herein lay China's bitter opposition to railroads; a road could not be built anywhere in the empire without disturbing the graves of their ancestors or friends. (Twain, "The Gentle, Inoffensive Chinese" 179)

Honolulu was again Twain's first stop on his 1895-1896 around-the-world lecture tour, from the Pacific Northwest to Australia, New Zealand, Ceylon, India, and South Africa. Twain's travel narrative, *Following the Equator* (1897), links the U.S. racial views to global colonial relations, and condemns the racial practices that connected the institutions of global empire and U.S. antebellum race slavery. This travelogue satirizes imperial territorial robbery for appealing to the "law of custom" as the justification for the expansion of European civilization around the world:

Dear me, robbery by European nations of each other's territories has never been a sin. . . . A crime persevered in a thousand centuries ceases to be a crime, and becomes a virtue. This is the law of custom, and custom supersedes all other forms of law. (623-24)

Twain underlines the violent relationship of colonial encounters when he notes that the native population in Hawaii was reduced by half between his two visits. In view of the import of indentured labor from China that was becoming the economic mainstay of the sugar industry in Hawaii, Twain endorses the import of Chinese labor in the California businesses of mining, mills, and railroads. For Twain, Chinese labor would not be a threat to American workers, but instead a means to liberate white workers from the "drudgery which all white men abhor and are glad to escape from" (*Mark Twain's Letters from Hawaii* 272). Chinese labor would create an elite white working class: "all the best class of the working population who might be emancipated from the pick and shovel would find easier and more profitable employment in superintending and overseeing the coolies" (272). Consequently, Twain envisions that white workers in San Francisco would also be

liberated by the import of Chinese workers, and this might be a partial reason for his argument against racism toward Chinese immigrants.

Twain's late writings are known particularly for their explicit anti-imperialism. Most of them allude to the imperial ventures of the late 1890s and early 1900s, such as those of Great Britain in India, the U.S. in Cuba and the Philippines, and the world's powers in China. These writings were provoked by several international crises, including the Spanish-American War (1898), the Boxer Rebellion in China (1900), and the Boer War in South Africa (1899-1902). Twain wrote a picaresque adventure on Faustian themes entitled *The Mysterious Stranger* (1900), which was an unfinished series of manuscripts on the youthful Satan's travels among the human race. In this story, Twain interrogates the U.S. annexation of the Philippines in 1899, which, as Satan observes in the book, was not dissimilar to the way England has "swallowed" India and Europe is "swallowing" China. As Christian missionaries in China were used for Western imperial exploitation, Twain regards European missionary work as human enslavement and ethnic persecution (Messent 62). Moreover, in *Letters from the Earth*, a compilation of Mark Twain's writings edited by Bernard De Voto in 1939 but withheld from publication until 1962, Twain satirizes man's concept of heaven because of its acceptance of belief in the brotherhood of man. According to Twain's Satan:

The inventor of their heaven empties into it all the nations of the earth, and in one common jumble. All are on an equality absolute, no one of them ranking another; they have to be "brothers"; they have to mix together, pray together, harp together, hosannah together—whites, niggers, Jews, everybody—there's no distinction. Here in the earth all nations hate each other, and every one of them hates the Jew. Yet every pious person adores that heaven and wants to get into it. (qtd. in Duckett 114-15)

Twain opposed imperialism by joining the Anti-Imperialist League, of which he was vice-president from 1901 until his death in 1910 (Scott 61-65). Earlier, in a speech addressed at a meeting of the Berkeley Lyceum, New York, November 23, 1900, Twain argued that the Chinese Boxers were justified in reacting against foreign occupation: "I am with the Boxers every time. The boxer is a patriot. He loves his country better than he does the countries of other people" (*Mark Twain's Speeches* 69). To foster sympathy for the Boxers' actions, Twain demonstrates the mutual sentiment of "patriotism" shared by both the Boxers and the Americans, and

he takes the opportunity to satirize American animosity toward the Chinese in America, as he states: “the Boxer believe in driving us out of his country. . . , I am a Boxer, too, for I believe in driving him out of our country.” In a letter to his friend Rev. J. H. Twichell on Aug. 12, 1900, Twain wrote: “. . . my sympathies are with the Chinese. They have been villainously dealt with by the sceptred thieves of Europe, and I hope they will drive all the foreigners out and keep them out for good” (Emerson 255).

In a similar effort, Twain’s “To the Person Sitting in Darkness” (1901) opposes European and American imperialism, and defends the Chinese Boxer rebellion. At the turn of the twentieth century, the American war against the Filipinos was in full swing, and the allied nations of Europe had just captured Peking and extorted indemnities from China. The beginning of the essay connects the account of sexual trade and the ensuing revelations of imperialist barbarism, because both disregard humanity. Twain attempts to denounce several imperial powers for their moral deficiencies: the English fighting the Boers in South Africa, the Germans and the Russians fighting the Chinese, and the U.S. taking the Philippines. Seemingly defending the actions of the Western nations, Twain writes mockingly: “Extending the Blessings of Civilization to our Brother who sits in Darkness has been a good trade and has paid well, on the whole; and there is money in it yet, if carefully worked” (205). In this Swifitean “Modest Proposal,” Twain advocates “perpetuating the misuse of power” (205). Pretending to be a promoter of imperialism, Twain exposes the deceitfulness of the imperialist actions of England, Germany, Russia, and the U.S. In particular, Twain attacks US imperialism in the Philippines, and condemns Americans who professed benevolence while only intending to conquer other people’s territories. As Twain professes, “There must be two Americas: one that sets the captive free, and one that takes a once-captive’s new freedom away from him, and picks a quarrel with him with nothing to found it on; then kills him to get his land” (211).

Furthermore, Twain attacks the Rev. William Ament (of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions) for collecting undue indemnities for damages suffered by Chinese Christians during the Boxer uprising in 1900. He suggests that Ament was actually “squeezing blood money out of pauper peasants to be ‘used for the propagation of the Gospel,’” and therefore “the act and the words, taken altogether, concrete a blasphemy so hideous and so colossal that, without doubt, its mate is not findable in the history of this or of any other age” (204). Twain mocks the missionaries’ hypocrisy as well as their assistance of imperialism,

because imperialist powers have tried to justify themselves, as the missionaries did, by claiming they were spreading the “blessings of civilization” to inferior countries. Through this sarcastic essay, Twain points out the absurdity of imperial invasion and the importance of following one's conscience. Twain recalls that, after he read his “To the Person Sitting in Darkness” to Howells, “Howells said I ought to have that published. . . . Howells also said that I must go hang myself first, and when I asked him what I should do that for, he said to save the public the trouble, because when that story appeared in print they would surely hang me” (W. M. Gibson 456). Hence, Howells admires Twain's campaign against imperialism by claiming: “one cannot but respect the profound sincerity of Twain's berserker-like rage over the attitude of Europe in China, the barbarities of Russian autocracy, and the horrors of America's methods in the Philippines, copied after Weyler's *reconcentrado* policy in Cuba” (Howells 92-94). Indeed, Twain demonstrates courage in censuring U.S. aggression in extending its empire westward to China, as it did with Hawaii and the Philippines by the end of the nineteenth century.

In the “United State of Lyncherdom” (1901), again with Jonathan Swift's tactics of irony, Twain attacks corruption in domestic politics as well as the missionaries in China. First, Twain reports that, in Missouri, when a white woman was found murdered, the people lynched three negroes, burned out five negro households, and drove thirty negro families into the woods. Appalled by the racially motivated lynching, Twain advocates: “Let us import American missionaries from China, and send them into the lynching field.” Since the Chinese are “universally concede to be excellent people, honest, honorable, industrious, trustworthy, kind-hearted,” almost “every convert runs a risk of catching our civilization” (198-99). Twain believes that the U.S. is “worse off than China,” and appeals to American missionaries to “come home and convert these Christians!” (200). Twain's irony is that the missionaries want to make Chinese Christians, when they should be making their own fellow Americans more “Christian” to prevent lynchings. Twain's point, as usual, is to criticize his fellow Americans. As such, the “decenteredness” of imperialism in Twain's writings demonstrate that the notion of manifest destiny and the discourse of domestic protection often mask a discourse of foreign domination (Kaplan 15, 585).

Moreover, in Twain's unfinished allegory of civilization, “The Stupendous Procession” (1901), he reviews the errors of American imperialism and racism, derisively rewriting the “Declaration of Independence” as “All *white men are created free and equal*” (56). Irritated by American military intervention in the Philippines, Twain wrote a pacifist short story “The War Prayer,” which accuses

blind patriotic and religious fervor as motivations for war.<sup>3</sup> In fact, as early as in Twain's story "Personal Habits of the Siamese Twins" (1869), Twain's allegory of the collapse of boundaries between the domestic space and areas outside the national boundaries interrogates late-nineteenth-century discourses of economic-imperialist nation building (Wu 29-55). All these articles explicitly manifest Twain's humanitarianism, but Twain's study of the human conscience attracts little attention. It is probably because, as Howells comments in his article "Twain," it is "hardly practicable to establish him in people's mind as a moralist; he has made them laugh too long; they will not believe him serious" (qtd. in Fulton 142).

## Conclusion

As Twain's works were often esteemed for his strong belief in liberty, equality and racial justice, and for his sympathy for the exploited or marginalized others (Fishkin, *Lighting Out for the Territory* 145), his objection to the oppression of Chinese immigrant workers in the U.S. might be regarded as his humanistic, egalitarian, and perhaps also patriotic, response to the fault of his country. Some of his pro-Chinese contemporaries in effect more opposed working-class whites' uncivilized ways than supported Chinese immigrants. They invoked the constitutional notion of equal rights for all men, and resisted prejudice against the Chinese and other non-whites, even if these minorities were deemed racially inferior (Murphy 468). Their concern was over the constitutionality of exclusion and adherence to the treaty with China. Twain also portrayed the Chinese subjects as a suitable vehicle for attacking the ignorance and violence of the bigoted of his own race. His defense of the Chinese was intended to stress republican ideas of equality, and to protest the hypocrisy and double standards of ostensibly egalitarian ideals. Due to his sensitivity to the plight of racial minorities, Twain's writing continued to be informed by a critical stance towards man's inhumanity to man. When Twain argued against working men's assailing the rights of the Chinese, it was instigated by his general appeal for religious, political and racial tolerance for minorities, rather than for the Chinese specifically.

---

<sup>3</sup> Twain submitted this article to *Harper's Bazaar*, a women's magazine, which rejected it on March 22, 1905 for being too radical. The story was published after Twain's death, in *Harper's Monthly*, November 1916.

Yet still, Twain endeavored to write outside the Orientalist discourses of his age. Although his Chinese characters were not always free from contemporary racial stereotypes, and although he often wavered between his ethnic convictions and his desire for commercial success, Twain's depictions of the Chinese were more complex and sympathetic than what was typically portrayed in the contemporary popular media. In "Disgraceful Persecution of a Boy," Twain recognizes the discriminatory treatment the Chinese suffered. In "John Chinaman in New York," the American narrator pities the "friendless Mongol," but finally finds himself only able to understand the Chinese as superficial stereotypes. In "Goldsmith's Friend Abroad Again," through the Chinese narrator's initial ironical statements and later sufferings and disillusionment, Twain satirizes American racism against the Chinese. In *Roughing It*, Twain characterizes the Chinese with depth and humanity; despite ill treatment from lower-class whites, the Chinese in the portrait Twain paints are hard-working, patient, and benevolent to American society. *Ah Sin* vindicates the Chinese by presenting a Chinese laundryman who outsmarts most of the white characters. As a matter of fact, Twain's sympathy for the Chinese has been well known to the general public in the early 1870s. In an issue of *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* for July 26, 1873, a cartoon depicts "the new Heathen Chinese: Twain teaches the Shah the American game of draw poker."<sup>4</sup> It indicates that Twain was associated overtly with the cunningly card-sharpping "heathen Chinese" in Harte's "Plain Language from Truthful James."

Twain's anti-racism fueled his powerful anti-imperial writings later in his life, in which his humanitarian sentimentality and moral righteousness became more prominent in expressing sympathy with the oppressed Chinese and an insistence on racial tolerance. He accentuated his sense of fair play in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* in 1899: "I am quite sure that I have no race prejudices, and I think I have no color prejudices nor caste prejudices nor creed prejudices. . . . All that I care to know is that a man is a human being—that is enough for me; he can't be any worse" ("Concerning the Jews" 528). In his anti-imperial writings, again Twain challenges anti-Chinese racism and the American conception of national identity. As in *The Innocents Abroad* (1869), in which Twain's pilgrimages to other countries gain insight into his own life, when Twain observed the Chinese, he was in fact examining his fellow Americans, and gained insight about the character of the

---

<sup>4</sup> The cartoon was reprinted in "The Editor: Mark Twain as 'Heathen Chinese.'" *Mark Twain Journal* 38.1 (Spring 2000).

American nation, of which Twain's ideal vision was one that represented the forces of social justice and liberalism.

### Works Cited

- Baillie-Grohman, Florence. "The Yellow and White Agony." *Fifteen Years' Sport and Life in the Hunting Grounds of Western America and British Columbia*. Ed. W. A. Baillie-Grohman. London: Horace Cox, 1900. 333-403.
- Bowles, Samuel. *Our New West*. New York: Hartford, 1869.
- Butcher, Philip, ed. *The Minority Presence in American Literature, 1600-1900: A Reader and Course Guide*. Washington, DC: Howard UP, 1997.
- Coolidge, Mary. *Chinese Immigration*. New York: Holt, 1909.
- Daly, Joseph F. *Life of Augustin Daly*. New York: Macmillan, 1917.
- Duckett, Margaret. *Mark Twain and Bret Harte*. Norman: U of Oklahoma P, 1964.
- Emerson, Everett H. *Mark Twain: A Literary Life*. Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 1999.
- Fenn, William Purviance. *Ah Sin and His Brethren in American Literature*. Peking: College of Chinese Studies cooperating with California College in China, 1933.
- Fishkin, Shelley Fisher. *Lighting Out for the Territory: Reflections on Mark Twain and American Culture*. New York: Oxford UP, 1996.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Race and the Politics of Memory: Mark Twain and Paul Laurence Dunbar." *Journal of American Studies* 40.2 (2006): 283-309.
- Fulton, Joe B. *Mark Twain's Ethical Realism: The Aesthetics of Race, Class, and Gender*. Columbia: U of Missouri P, 1997.
- Gibson, Otis. Address. "'Chinaman or White Man, Which': Reply to Father Buchard." San Francisco: Alta California, 1873.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Chinese in America*. Cincinnati: Hitchcock & Walden, 1877.
- Gibson, William M. "Mark Twain and Howells: Anti-Imperialists." *The New England Quarterly* 20.4 (1947): 435-70.
- Harte, Bret. "Plain Language from Truthful James." *The Luck of Roaring Camp and Other Writings*. Ed. Gary Scharnhorst. New York: Penguin, 2001. 215-16.
- Howells, William Dean. *My Mark Twain: Reminiscences and Criticisms*. Ed. Roy J. Friedman. Toronto: Courier Dover Publications, 1910.
- Kaplan, Amy. *The Anarchy of Empire in the Making of U.S. Culture*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2003.



- Kersten, Holger. "America's Multilingualism and the Problem of the Literary Representation of 'Pidgin English.'" *Amerikastudien/American Studies* 51.1 (2006): 75-91.
- Lee, Erika. "The 'Yellow Peril' and Asian Exclusion in the Americas." *Pacific Historical Review* 76.4 (2007): 537-62.
- Leighton, Caroline C. *Life at Puget Sound, with Sketches of Travel in Washington Territory, British Columbia, Oregon, and California, 1865-1881*. New York: Charles T. Dillingham, 1884.
- Leong, Karen J. *The China Mystique: Pearl S. Buck, Anna May Wong, Mayling Soong, and the Transformation of American Orientalism*. Berkeley: U of California P, 2005.
- Mason, Jeffrey D. *Melodrama and the Myth of America*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1993.
- McClellan, Robert. *The Heathen Chinese: A Study of American Attitudes toward China, 1890-1905*. Ohio: Ohio State UP, 1971.
- Messent, Peter. "'The Chronicle of Young Satan' and No. 44, The Mysterious Stranger: A Transnationalist Reading." *Centenary Reflections on Mark Twain's No. 44, the Mysterious Stranger*. Ed. Joseph Csicsila and Chad Rohman. Columbia: U of Missouri P, 2009. 51-70.
- Moy, James. "Bret Harte and Mark Twain's *Ah Sin*: Locating China in the Geography of the American West." *Frontiers of Asian American Studies*. Ed. Gail Nomura, Russell Eudo, Stephen H. Sumida, and Russell C. Leong. Pullman: Washington State UP, 1989. 187-194.
- Murphy, Erin L. "'Prelude to Imperialism': Whiteness and Chinese Exclusion in the Reimagining of the United States." *Journal of Historical Sociology* 18.4 (2005): 457-90.
- Nachbar, Jack and Kevin Lause. "Breaking the Mold: The Meaning and Significance of Stereotype in Popular Culture." *Popular Culture: An Introductory Text*. Ed. Jack Nachbar and Kevin Lause. Bowling Green: Bowling Green State U Popular P, 1992. 236-44.
- Paine, Albert Bigelow. "Mark Twain." *Harper's Monthly Magazine* July 1921: 258.
- Pumpelly, Raphael. *Across America and Asia: Notes of a Five Years' Journey around the World, and of Residence in Arizona, Japan, and China*. New York: Leypoldt & Holt, 1870.
- Said, Edward. *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage, 1978.
- Sandmeyer, Elmer Clarence. *The Anti-Chinese Movement in California*. Urbana: U of Illinois P, 1991.

- Scharnhorst, Gary. "'Ways that are dark': Appropriations of Bret Harte's 'Plain Language from Truthful James.'" *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 51.3 (1996): 377-99.
- Scott, Helen. "The Mark Twain They Didn't Teach Us about in School." *International Socialist Review* 10 (2000): 61-65.
- "Senator Morton and the Chinese." *New York Times* 18 Jan. 1878: 4.
- Takaki, Ronald. *Strangers from a Different Shore: A History of Asian Americans*. Boston: Back Bay Books, 1998.
- Tchen, John Kuo Wei. *New York before Chinatown: Orientalism and the Shaping of American Culture, 1776-1882*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1999.
- Twain, Mark. *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. Gloucestershire: Echo Library, 2007.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Autobiography of Mark Twain*. Ed. Charles Neider. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1959.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Concerning the Jews." *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* Sept. 1899: 528.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Disgraceful Persecution of a Boy." *Butcher* 188-91.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Following the Equator and Anti-Imperialist Essays*. New York: Oxford UP, 1996.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Goldsmith's Friend Abroad Again." *Galaxy* X (October and November 1870): 569,727; XI (January 1871): 156.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Gentle, Inoffensive Chinese." 1872. *Butcher* 177-82.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Innocents Abroad, or, The New Pilgrims' Progress*. New York: Oxford UP, 1996.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Mark Twain's Letters*. Ed. Albert Bigelow Paine. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1917.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Mark Twain's Letters from Hawaii*. Ed. A. Grove Day. Honolulu: UP of Hawaii, 1975.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Mark Twain's Sketches, New and Old*. Hartford: American Publishing, 1875.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Mark Twain's Speeches*. Gloucestershire: Echo Library, 2006.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "My Debut as a Literary Person." *The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg*. Fairfield: 1st World Publishing, 2004. 186-223.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Mysterious Stranger: A Romance*. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1916.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Stupendous Procession." *Mark Twain's Weapons of Satire: Anti-Imperialist Writings on the Philippine-American War*. Ed. Jim Zwick. Syracuse: Syracuse UP, 1992. 56.

- \_\_\_\_\_. "To the Person Sitting in Darkness." *Great Short Works of Mark Twain*. Ed. Justin Kaplan. New York: Harper & Row, 1967. 202-17.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The United State of Lyncherdom." *Great Short Works of Mark Twain*. Ed. Justin Kaplan. New York: Harper & Row, 1967. 193-200.
- Twain, Mark and Bret Harte. "*Ah Sin*": *A Dramatic Work by Mark Twain and Bret Harte*. Ed. Frederick Anderson. San Francisco: Book Club of California, 1961.
- Williams, Dave, ed. *The Chinese Other, 1850-1925: An Anthology of Plays*. Lanham: UP of America, 1997.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Misreading the Chinese Character: Images of the Chinese in Euroamerican Drama to 1925*. New York: Lang, 2000.
- Winter, William. "The Heathen Chinese." *New York Tribune* 1 Aug. 1877: 5:1.
- Wonham, Henry B. "'I Want a Real Coon': Mark Twain and Late-Nineteenth-Century Ethnic Caricature." *American Literature* 72.1 (2000): 117-52.
- Wu, Cynthia. "The Siamese Twins in Late-Nineteenth-Century Narratives of Conflict and Reconciliation." *American Literature* 80.1 (2008): 29-55.

### **About the Author**

Hsin-yun Ou is the Assistant Professor of the Department of Western Languages and Literature at the National University of Kaohsiung, Taiwan. She received her Ph.D in Drama and Theatre from Royal Holloway College, University of London, and her M. Phil in English (Shakespeare and Drama to 1640) from the University of Oxford. Currently she is researching 18<sup>th</sup>- and 19<sup>th</sup>-century British and American theatres in relation to Orientalism and gender studies. Her essays have appeared in several AHCI journals such as *Theatre Journal*, *Comparative Drama* and *Notes and Queries*, and several THCI journals.  
Email: ousharon@hotmail.com

[Received 16 Oct. 2009; accepted 28 Jan. 2010; revised 22 Feb. 2010]