The Nation, the Group, the Individual:

Towards an Embodied Rhetorical History of Early 20th Century

Chinese University Students in America

By

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my son Westley (鄧行臻).
May you run and not grow weary.

Abstract

The Chinese living in America under the Exclusion Act of 1882 endured discriminatory practices that emerged from a deeply-embedded racial prejudice. While studies have examined the ways Chinese communities protested their unfair treatment, the rhetorical activities of Chinese students studying in America have received far less investigation. Although their individual sojourn in America lasted a handful of years, their collective presence spanned three decades, a time in which they organized an alliance, held conferences, and maintained a monthly magazine. I argue that the Alliance tried to reshape popular images of the Chinese—as pollutants and deviants—through embodied practices that pivoted on a transcalar understanding of the self: self as nation, and nation as self. Chapter 1 positions the student writings in *Chinese Students' Monthly* as embodied Asian American Rhetoric and an archive from which an understanding of the transcalar and transnational nature of their rhetoric can be built. Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 set the exigence of their activistic practices: Sandwiched between the directive to reform China and the impulse to rehabilitate American images of the Chinese, the students further cemented their transcalar *ethos* through withstanding social, economic, and legal discrimination alongside their U.S.-based peers in America. Chapter 4 recounts a history of concerted embodied activism from the 1910s that involved public speaking and writing, performances, and social events, while Chapter 5 expounds on transcalar rhetoric through examining two practices that purpose to demonstrate a strong and unified Chinese body. Specifically, these students challenged the trope of a weak and fragmented China through their active participation in club activities and officer elections. Through athletic meets and articles calling for curricular/extracurricular balance, the students also strove to efface the image of the "sick man of Asia." Chapter 6 provides a further, longitudinal example of transcalar rhetoric as it developed through the decades in the form of the annual Alliance conferences. Recognizing these Chinese students' activistic practices is necessary for a more multifaceted understanding of early Asian-American rhetorical history and of the transcalar nature of embodied rhetorics among other temporary immigrants.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The publicly visible accomplishments of the Chinese-American baseball team from Hawaii did not escape the attention of Zau Tsung Nyi, the editor-in-chief of the *Chinese Students' Monthly* and the English secretary of the Chinese club at Columbia University. In his editorial, Nyi praised the 1913 team, composed of boys from preparatory schools in Honolulu, for winning 37 of 38 collegiate games, an accomplishment that easily eclipsed the 50 of 87 record of the previous year's team. The Chinese-American boys also tested their abilities against "semi-professional" teams, coming up on top in 12 of 20 contests (Nyi, "Chinese Baseball" 506). But even the 1912 showing has proven to the American spectatorship "that young China is not so much behind in athletics as they generally expect," and it is their "gentlemanly" and rule-following conduct that make them "worthy of the great nation which they represent" (Tong, "Chinese Baseball" 472). The editor-in-chief entreated his readers to draw inspiration from the baseball team and to mold their bodies in a manner that likewise brings glory to their homeland: "[T]his record of the victories of Chinese athletes should encourage Chinese students to take new interests in sports. Not only will the person doing so build up a strong body and constitution necessary for a long useful life but he will add to the prestige and fair name of the Chinese people" (Nyi 507). This "prestige" would translate into material benefits for the new republic as the witnessing of strong Chinese bodies on the field might sway those who hold the economic future of China in their hands. Explained Nyi:

> [I]f the big American bankers could each see a classy game of baseball between a crack American nine and a Chinese team … it would be an immediate solution of all loan difficulties. If the American bankers did not ease up greatly on the interest rates charged by the European robbers at least their good American baseball

> sporting instincts would not let them ask for the whole Chinese Empire as a security for a temporary little accommodation. (506)

Being referenced is the Six-Power Loan, named after the number of countries represented by banking groups that agreed to lend China millions of pounds for railway development in exchange for foreign control of loan expenditure and foreign administration of taxes pledged as collateral (Trani). While American banking groups became members of this consortium during the Taft administration, President Woodrow Wilson announced the country's withdrawal in March 1913, denouncing the "forcible interference in the financial, and even the political, affairs" of China and expressing his desire to form an economic relationship with the nation on a friendlier footing (Robinson and West 181-82). Editor Nyi's quip targeted not Wilson's decision but "American bankers" who were perceived to be in cahoots with their European counterparts to exploit China and who chafed against the President's declaration even as they withdrew from the syndicate. If those Wall Street moguls could only see the strength of the Chinese, they would have treated their government with a little more respect and offered better terms. As the Chinese-American baseball team wound up their third tour to the U.S. in the summer of 1914, a letter to the *CSM* editor reiterated the need for every student to attend a game, to "watch [the team's] movement," and to "see them perform their skill of the *American* pastime," a performance that drew the press and sports commentators to exclaim, "Some record"! (Chiu 567, emphasis added). Positioning the preparatory school boys as bodies that impinge on international relations, the writer held them up also as models worthy of emulation for those on the mainland, urging the magazine's readers to refrain from "be[ing] a bookworm all the time" (567). Both authors' conflation of race/ethnicity

and citizenship—the Americanness of these Chinese-American boys was not mentioned—serves this rhetorical purpose.

These passages raise a number of questions on the rhetoricality of the body that this dissertation seeks to address: 1) How do the comportment and modification of physical individual bodies shape perception of those bodies and contribute to the image of a national body? 2) Conversely, how do already existing images of the individual and national Chinese bodies affect the limitations or potency of bodily performance? 3) Finally, how do these embodied rhetorical acts shift over time in response to changes in the rhetorical situation, e.g., increased familiarity with the physical body, anti-Chinese events in America and back home? If the rhetoric deployed by these student writers can be considered as fundamentally Chinese American, answering these questions then would involve investigating the transnationalism and transcalarity of embodied Chinese American rhetoric.

Chinese Students in Early 20th Century America

Tens of thousands of Chinese came to California in the 1850s during the gold rush. After finishing the First Transcontinental Railroad in 1869, they began to migrate into the Midwest and East coast and took up jobs as launderers and cigar- and shoemakers, often within the confines of Chinatowns. The Chinese-American experience is often presented as part of Asian-American history (Chan; Takaki) though specific histories exist (I. Chang; Yung et al.). These sweeping narratives understandably sacrifice minutiae for scope, giving less attention to how Americanization acted differently along class and geographical divides. Present research is also limited to the experiences of Chinese who lived in the western states, with little published about their lives in the Midwest. *Images of America: Chinese Milwaukee*, a photo book published in

2008, acknowledged Maurine Huang's 1988 Ph.D. dissertation as "one important source of information and inspiration for [their] project" (Holmes and Yuan 6). Victor Jew, a lecturer for the Asian American Studies Program at UW-Madison, published articles on the 1889 anti-Chinese riots in Milwaukee in 2002 and 2003. Neither essays mentioned article- or book-length works concerning the Chinese-American experience in the Midwest; instead, the author used Milwaukee newspapers, broader regional histories, and interviews as his primary sources. The "east of California" terrain has only recently begun to be explored (Jew 77). The dearth of material on the history of Chinese Americans east of the Mississippi in the Progressive Era suggests promising directions for research.

Situated around the Great Lakes as well as along both coasts, early Chinese students in America represent a population that has fallen through these cracks. Not considered potential "Americans" (for citizenship by naturalization was impossible before 1943) but as members of a relatively small exempt class, their experiences receive less treatment in Asian American histories that dwell on the plight of laborers, merchants, and their wives. Not considered fully Chinese, the students' patriotism was questioned in a Communist China, and their contributions as a contingent have only recently been acknowledged (Bieler xiii; Ye 3). These transitory students were mostly Chinese-born and can be distinguished from the American-born, second-generation Chinese living in Chinatowns. While the first group—particularly those who came during the "second wave"—was "relatively affluent by Chinese standards" (Ye 10), many in the second group were working class (Bieler 126). A more accurate Chinese-American history, however, must consider the experiences of both groups. The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and subsequent immigration legislation did not revoke the permission granted to non-laboring students "to go and come of their

own free will and accord" by the Angell Treaty of 1880. (The Angell Treaty was the first to temporarily suspend skilled and unskilled laborers from immigrating to the U.S., but this arrangement had Peking consent and was only made permanent unilaterally by the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and the passing and extension of the Geary Act in 1892 and 1902, respectively.) The first delegation of 120 students entered the States in 1872; this experiment lasted less than a decade and was abruptly halted by the Qing court. Several studies, mostly in the form of biographies, have been written on this Chinese Educational Mission (LaFargue; Leibovitz and Miller; Rhoads; W. Yung). The "second wave" of students would arrive in the early 1900s, growing from 300 in 1906 to an estimated 1,600 between 1925 and 1926, with most of them settling in Eastern and Midwestern colleges (Ye 10). In total of 17,000 students came and went during this wave, which would last until the Chinese Communist Party takeover in 1949 (Bieler 313). Rather than studying and subsisting independently, many of these students organized themselves into groups. The Chinese Students' Alliance of the United States of America was formed when various Chinese student groups came together in the fall of 1911. These local groups included the 23 students that met in San Francisco in October 1902, as well as those in Chicago, IL (1903); Ithaca, NY (1904); Berkeley, CA (1905); and Amherst, MA (1905) (Bieler 171; Ye 20-22). The last group was called the Chinese Students' Alliance of the Eastern States, and the *Chinese Students' Monthly* (known before 1908 as the *Chinese Students' Bulletin*) was their official organ before becoming that of the national alliance.

It is not surprising for an organization like the Alliance to have existed at the turn of the century. Anne Ruggles Gere has noted that this was a time of flourishing for white and women of color clubs, with over two million in membership (5). Just as women created college clubs to

compensate for the lack of intimacy in their colleges classes (48), so did these Chinese students. Just as some women clubs were formed to oppose the form of Americanization that took "a racist, exclusionary, and elitist perspective on citizenship, putting white Protestant Anglo-Saxon males at the top of the national hierarchy, and insisting that immigrants attempt to emulate that model" (58), so was the Alliance created to address this felt marginalization. The publication of the *Chinese Students' Monthly* helped unify the Alliance, whose members were spread across the nation. This mirrors the effect of print circulation for these clubwomen, which gave them an "all together feeling" and allowing them "to see themselves as part of a larger whole, strengthening their perception of their own power to effect changes" (Gere 9-10). It also gave them "a means by which [they] could represent themselves in their own terms to a wider audience" (31), a benefit that can likewise be attributed to the *Monthly*.

Two book-length studies have been composed on these second-wave students: Weili Ye's *Seeking Modernity in China's Name: Chinese Students in the United States, 1900-1927* (2001) and Stacey Bieler's *'Patriots' or 'Traitors'?: A History of American-Educated Chinese Students* (2004). Ye attempts to lift these students out of historical marginalization by revealing their daily lives, as previous histories have focused more on the "ideas and concepts" they brought back to China: "[A]lthough this contingent of American-educated Chinese were not the first generation of modern Chinese to begin to *think* differently, they were among the first for whom 'modernity' became a *lived* experience. In terms of both lifestyle and livelihood, they made decisive strides toward a modern mode" (Ye 5, emphasis in original). Multiple aspects of student life are covered, from the students' involvement in associations and recreational activities to racial confrontations and their brush with interracial romance. Bieler's tome takes a broader and chronological approach,

examining how these students' were sometimes lauded and sometimes pilloried at home "for being tainted by the West" (xi). Her study moves back and forth between politics in the U.S. and in China, all in an effort to create "part of a balance sheet for evaluating this generation of Chinese intellectuals" (xiii). Both Ye and Bieler serve as a crucial preamble to more rhetorically-oriented recovery work. In her 2009 dissertation, Mira Shimabukuro has noted that scholars have yet to truly study the literacy practices of U.S.-based Asians prior to 1965 (6). In taking another look at the writings of these Chinese students, I recast them as kairotically-aware actors who tried to rewrite their place in the United States.

CSM as Asian American Rhetorical Practice

The inclusion of the Chinese students' writing to the rhetorical tradition perpetuates a disciplinary direction. In the second Octalog, Thomas Miller declares that we are moving "beyond histories of *ideas* about rhetoric" and "have become more broadly engaged with the rhetorical *practices* of groups who have been excluded by the dominant intellectual tradition" (qtd. in Atwill et al. 42, emphasis added). Recuperating the rhetorical practices of Chinese student writers adds them to the ranks of other non-white and women rhetors who were only recently deemed rhetorically "fit" (Dolmage and Lewiecki-Wilson 27) to be included in our collective consciousness. From their writings can be inferred a rhetorical history that tells of the resourcefulness of a people within an embattled context. David Zarefsky's fourth sense of rhetorical history—"history as a series of rhetorical problems, situations that call for public persuasion to advance a cause or overcome an impasse" (30)—calls scholars to pay attention to "how, and how well, people invented and deployed messages in response to the situation" (Zarefsky 30). Part of the "how" is shaped by rhetorical education and tradition, but part of it is

also the rhetorical situation itself. In *Chinese Rhetoric and Writing*, Andy Kirkpatrick and Zhichang Xu demonstrates that it is socio-political context "rather than underlying thought patterns determined or influenced by language" that "provides the major impetus for the arrangement of texts and argument" (5). The Chinese Exclusion Act (1882-1943) hung over the heads of the students who wrote in *CSM*, and the existence of *CSM* covered a particularly tumultuous period in Chinese history: the dissolution of a thousands-years-old monarchy in 1912, the gifting of the province of Shandong to Japan at the 1919 Treaty of Versailles, and the outbreak of the Communist-Nationalist civil war in 1927. The perceived weakness and backwardness of political China intermixed with everyday images of the Chinese shaped by visible squalor in Chinatowns and dubious characterizations on the silver screen.

The sometimes blunt and agonistic responses to their cultural marginalization opens a pathway for Chinese student writings to be considered as Asian American Rhetoric. LuMing Mao and Morris Young define Asian American Rhetoric as "the systematic, effective use and development by Asian Americans of symbolic resources … in social, cultural, and political contexts" (3). Though much cultural work of Asian Americans has been examined and celebrated, there is less of a focus on how they "disrupt and transform the dominant European American discourse and its representations of Asians and Asian Americans, thus re-presenting and reclaiming their identity and agency" (Mao and Young 2). Indeed, because the majority of writing in *CSM* critique racism and imperialism in and of the U.S., it ought to be read as "an expression of power, a means of resistance, and … a project of enlightenment" (C. Wang, "Writing" 138). The disruptive, transformative, and agency affirming work of these Chinese students position it firmly as Asian American Rhetoric.

An examination of the rhetorical practices of these students also necessitates adopting an embodied framework. In their 1997 annotated bibliography, Randi Patterson and Gail Corning argue that the body has received implicit attention in the field of rhetoric since Plato's *Gorgias* even though an explicit focus on the body in relation to power had arisen only "recently" (5). This particular strand began with feminist theory, which offered a multifarious definition of "body" vis-à-vis patriarchal structures, and Foucault's notion of power as "a cultural network of influences on bodies" (Patterson and Corning 6; Selzer 7). If power can no longer be seen as centralized and unidirectional, then the body must be interpreted a "the site of cultural inscription, self-regulation, and resistance" (Patterson and Corning 7). Karma R. Chávez's 2018 overview of the field's engagement with bodily concerns highlights more recent interventions by materialist rhetoricians, women of color feminist scholars, and disability scholars (244-45; Selzer 9). Particularly pertinent to this dissertation is Debra Hawhee's *Bodily Arts*, an intersectional and multidisciplinary study of the rhetorical role of athletics in classical Greece. Like sophist-athletes of that time, turn-of-the-century Chinese students in American universities saw themselves as producers of scholarly and athletic knowledge, developed a kind of virtuosity (*aretē*)—one involving the conditioning of teamwork and cooperation—through an incessant struggle against a hostile culture (*agōn*) (17), and crafted cunning and timely responses (*mētis*) to changes in an ever-changing *kairos* (Hawhee 46). Their attention to healthfulness corresponds to Aristotle's wider conception of the ideal body exhibiting "health, beauty, strength, physical stature, athletic prowess" (qtd. in Hawhee 20). The clubhouse, athletic field, and conference podium were places for rhetorical practice (*Regimen*) and performance that sutured the spoken and the visible (163). One difference, however, was the *telos* of such training and exhibition. While sophist-athletes used festivals to

proclaim and circulate honor among a friendly crowd (168), the Chinese students engaged in rhetorical athletics as colonized bodies to resist and reinvent the dominant discourse.

The Chinese students in the U.S. in the first quarter of the 20th century found themselves in a landscape in which their bodies were already inscribed with pejorative meanings and formulated strategies to reinscribe more positive meanings. The individual physical "body" refers to the actual corporeal entity these students inhabited—for the most part, able-bodied and male. This literal body acts as the interface between the student self and his peers or the American public, who interprets the Chinese through this interface, bringing to bear a set of mental representations and joining them with the perceived object (the body). The conflict between what is seen and what is known produces space for rhetorical action: The object is inevitably understood via the set of mental representations just as the representations themselves are modified according to the object. Thus, intentionally modifying the body so that it stands in stark contrast to the bodies known to the American viewer increases the potentiality for a new understanding despite the risk of any incongruence being downplayed or explained away. Zau Tsung Nyi's 1913 conjecture on the international implications of a strong physical body marked the beginning of a sustained attention given by those students to physical development and an increased participation in sporting events. The building of a strong and healthy (literal) Chinese body can therefore be read as a rhetorical ploy that challenged the predominant view of the Chinese body as dirty, diseased, and deviant (R. Lee 8).

CSM and Transnationalism

The nature and circumstances of these students' writing speak to the transnational turn of Asian/American rhetorical studies in the past decade, prompted by Wendy Hesford's urge for

rhetoricians to go beyond taking "the nation-state and citizen-subject as units of analysis" (qtd. in Monberg and Young). In terms of the material, the writings of these and other Chinese students have been studied by itself as, and as part of, a literary genre. Writings like the essays in *CSM* have been considered as examples of *liuxuesheng wenxue* (literature of study-abroad students), a genre that emerged in the late 1800s when Chinese students first sojourned to the West and that blossomed in the 1970s with prolific Taiwanese American writers (Hillenbrand 51). Alternatively, Chih-ming Wang names "the literary and cultural discourses produced by 'Chinese' diasporic intellectuals" as "Chinese student writing" (C. Wang, "Writing" 138). Henry Yuhuai He's *Dictionary of the Political Thought of the People's Republic of China* classifies this genre under *yimin wenxue* or diaspora literature, designating as belonging in this category "any literary works produced by overseas Chinese … regardless of what language they use or what subject matter they write about—whether about their receiving country or the land of their ancestors" (He 598). The dictionary mentions *liufang wenxue* (exile literature) and *xin haiwai wenxue* (new overseas literature) as synonyms for *liuxuesheng wenxue*, the first referring to the work of students who were able to settle abroad, and the second stressing the "artistic achievements of this genre" and "thus excluding memoirs, family histories, or anything like personal experience reports" (He 598). Sau-ling Cynthia Wong complicates matters further by listing still more labels: *huaqiao wenxue* (literature of the Chinese sojourner); *tangrenjie wenxue* (by those living in Chinatowns); Chinese American literature, *huamei wenxue*, *meihua wenxue* (with "Chinese" and "American" switching the first qualifier); *haiwai huawen wenxue* or *haiwai huaren wenxue* (literature of overseas Chinese or overseas Chinese literature); Diasporic Chinese literature; and *shijie huawen wenxue* or *shijie*

huaren wenxue (world literature written in or by Chinese) (S. Wong 66-67). Wong notes that some of the more genocentric labels are preferred by those in the Sinophone world (64).

Chih-ming Wang has argued for the importance of considering *liuxuesheng* (study-abroad students) as more than temporary visitors to the States but as "part of the social fabric of Chinese America" and "knowledge producers working across the Pacific" engaged in communicating to readers at home about America and rectifying foreign misrepresentations of China and the Chinese (C. Wang, "Writing" 138). By declaring its bilingual, transnational, and diasporic nature, *liuxuesheng wenxue* expanded the Chinese American literary tradition and in the process "reconfigured Chinese America as a transpacific community" (C. Wang 139). As Margaret Hillenbrand points out, even Sinophone *liuxuesheng* texts primarily meant for home consumption can be considered Chinese *American* literature because of this transnational aspect: "[I]f liuxuesheng texts have always demonstrated that American literature is both multi-ethnic and multilingual, perhaps it is time to explore more extensively the full, rich life that such literature lives beyond the territorial boundaries of the US, as it travels away from the continental landmass back along the multiple highways opened up by migration" (Hillenbrand 45). Multiethnic, multilingual, and multisituated, *liuxuesheng* writings "might be better read as traveling, deterritorialized narratives of America" (46).

Although *liuxuesheng* writing has been finally accepted as Chinese-American by literary scholars, it is fair to ask at this point if non-Americans could deploy "Asian *American* Rhetoric." David Palumbo-Liu's formation of "Asian/American," which captures the "dynamic, unsettled, and inclusive movement" between the two distinctions (1), can resolve this question by more adequately portraying the transnational identities of these turn-of-century students. Though not

legally Americans, these students were aware of their Americanization, and these rhetorics spring from their engagement within American segments of society. Hong Ye, for instance, noted the "normal and desirable" Americanization of his classmates but faulted them for transforming into the "average American sophomore, good-natured, but often careless and shallow" (qtd. in Bieler 112). English classes and Sunday schools were also making the Chinese "quite susceptible to the process of Americanization" (qtd. in Bieler 115). Although these transitory students were not bound to American soil, they were often grouped together with their brethren who were. When a Chinese man was murdered in Cleveland in 1925, all 600 Chinese in the city including the students were arrested and fingerprinted by authorities fearing a gang war (Bieler 122). Thus, it can be said that these Chinese students were employing Asian American Rhetoric as *cultural* Americans or Asian/Americans.

The global circulation of Chinese body imagery, a movement that the students exploit and are exploited by, underpins the transnational nature of their rhetorical practices. Their activism must be read against the backdrop of a shore-to-shore Asia/n and China/Chinese discursive economy. Thus, Rob Shields's model of "place-myth" is pertinent to our analysis:

> [Place-images] are the various discrete meanings associated with real places or regions regardless of their character in reality. Images, being partial and often either exaggerated or understated, may be accurate or inaccurate. … A set of core images forms a widely disseminated and commonly held set of images of a place or space. These form a relatively stable group of ideas in currency, reinforced by their communication value as conventions circulating in a discursive economy. … Collectively a set of place-images forms a place-myth. (Shields 60-61)

Getting to the root of Chineseness (in a white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant context) would necessitate deconstructing its place-myth by going back to the first mention of Asia in oral and textual traditions and then working forward. Although such deconstruction is beyond the scope of this dissertation, it is not a stretch to say that images of Chineseness existed long before the formation of racial attitudes toward Asian Americans in the early 1900s. Homer's good/evil, civilized/barbaric contrast of Greeks and Phoenicians and Isocrates's of Greeks and Persians prefigures Orientalizing (Winter 79; Isaac 84), and the use of mass metaphors to describe the incursion of Genghis Khan's troops into Europe predates German Kaiser Wilhelm II's coinage of "Yellow Peril" in the 1890s (Paris 91; Tchen and Yeats 12). Stuart Creighton Miller's book, *The Unwelcome Immigrant: The American Image of the Chinese, 1785-1882,* traces the construction of Chineseness through an examination of diaries, books, and letters of traders, diplomats, and missionaries in the 18th and early 19th centuries. (The generally negative *CSM* articles on the falsehoods that missionaries would propagate to validate their work—work that is sometimes defended by Chinese Christian students, albeit reservedly—confirm Miller's hypothesis at least through the beginning of the 20th century.) Further, Martin W. Lewis and Kären E. Wigen argue in "Where is the West? Where is the East?" the conception of "Asia" as holding an intrinsic and stable meaning disregards the ways the West has used labels to set itself apart from the characteristics of surrounding nations. In this sense, "Asia" is less about a geographical entity and its peoples and more about the values, attitudes, and fears of the West (Lewis and Wigen 54-60). The flow of imagery from early travelers to the East to audiences in the U.S., and the effort of Chinese students in America to project through their bodily selves alternative conceptualizations of

their people back home, are circuitous activities that are unbounded by citizenship to any one nation-state.

CSM and Transcalarity

In addition to negotiating shifts of meaning between conceived and perceived bodies through writing and performance, the students also attended to vertical shifts of meaning between the individual and the nation, between the specimen and the species. The era under focus encompasses a particularly fraught period of Chinese politics: An anemic and backward-looking Qing court, widely seen by the students as responsible for China's loss of sovereignty, quickly gave way to a civil war between Western-backed warlords after mere years of revolutionary optimism. While this is a gross simplification of a complex history, Zau Tsung Nyi's concern about this debilitated national image and his suggestion of remedy, i.e., the strengthening of the students' physical bodies, indicates that a new national level of understanding can be attainable on an individual level. When Nyi suggests that a strong body might impress Wall Street interests enough to treat the Chinese government differently, he posits the transferability of any new understandings of the Chinese individual to the nation as a whole. Inversely, articles in the *Chinese Students' Monthly* also lament the treatment of Chinese students on the basis of negative, *a priori* national understandings. These shifts of understanding applies also to the metaphorical dimension of the "body," i.e., as collective group. This explains their equal concern with the physical condition of literal bodies (with its individual and national implications) as with the unity and cohesiveness of the metaphorical body (ditto).

In characterizing the movement between the individual to the community to the national body, I am borrowing the human-geographical concept of "scales," a socially constructed term that

denotes the geographical plane on which an actor is deemed to have political jurisdiction over policy issues (Cidell 197). For example, an issue might be described as a local, regional, or global concern, with implications for each designation (197). To be certain, there is little agreement on the scalar framework itself. While some scholars see individuals as sites of multiple scales, e.g., policymakers who must negotiate between personal and professional identities (Cidell 200), Neil Smith's positioning of the individual body as part of and on one end of the scale, as the "primary physical site of personal identity" (N. Smith 102), is useful in describing our student writers' rhetorical shifts between an individual self and a national self. Smith's typology, which perceives the body as a locus of difference that "marks the boundary between self and other in a social as much as physical sense" (102), enables us to track and make sense of these deliberate perspectival drifts. This tool exemplifies Philip F. Kelly's definition of geographic scale as "a level of resolution at which phenomena are deemed understandable" (Kelly 10); even though the personal-national distinction might be tenuous, I argue that this conflation and its power can only be understood by examining the *transcalar* movement present in our student subjects' discourse.

In emphasizing the transcalarity of rhetoric, I am drawing attention to the dynamic between the literal body and the personification of the nation as the body politic, "a human form rich with rhetorical resources" (Councilor 141). This interaction is primarily synecdochal, which Kenneth Burke defines as related to "part for the whole, whole for the parter, container for the contained … genus for species, species for genus" (426). The promise of this paradigm, as seen in Burke's examples of microcosm and macrocosm, is that one can learn the truth of the other by looking at the one (427). Seeing the movement between the national body and the individual body as synecdochic is to "stres[s] a *relationship* or *connectedness* between two sides of an equation, a

connectedness that, like a road, extends in either direction" (Burke 428). The tendency to extrapolate is human but become insidious and reductive in race relations. In her famous essay spelling out the effects of white privilege, Peggy McIntosh attests that she "can swear, or dress in second hand clothes, or not answer letters, without having people attribute these choices to the bad morals, the poverty, or the illiteracy of my race" (11). While the tendency to substitute the part for the whole or the whole for the part can and does cause harm, the two-way movement also carries positive connotations. Though being called "a credit to my race" would be considered an insult to McIntosh and to any person of color today, the Chinese students in the studied era relished such praise and counted on its transfer up to the group and national level to counter the negative images moving along the same channel. Even when articles like "'Don'ts' for Foreigners When Discussing China" warn against applying a positive from one instance to the whole group ("Don't expect all Chinese to be honest any more than you expect all Americans to be honest"), most of the other "Don'ts" dissuade readers from thinking *less* (from the perspective of the American) of the Chinese, e.g., all are engaged in the laundry business, all live in thatched-roof huts ("'Don't'" 395). Articles that argue against essentialism are few and far between, which speaks to the volume of harmful stereotypes coming down the pike and the consequent need to broadcast a unified if totalizing message than to introduce complexity, exception, and nuance. The concept of transcalarity also accounts for the abundance of articles on the rapid industrial development of China over the decades. Ostensibly, these facts and figures might be useful for American tourists or businesses hoping to invest in China, but their presence builds evidence not only for the kind of civilization burgeoning across the Pacific but the quality of people that hail from it.

Material and Methodology

The *Chinese Students' Monthly*, which this dissertation reads as historical record and as rhetorical argument,[1] was published from November 1905 to April 1931. There were usually eight issues in each volume, November to June, covering the school year. The *Monthly* began as the *Chinese Students' Bulletin*, "a sporadic mimeographed publication of 500 words" (Bieler 159), and received its present name with the third volume in 1908. The publication contained editorials on current events, essays, speeches, reprinted articles, and Alliance news and business. Other sections included local club reports (with their attendant photographs), poetry and fiction, cartoons, book reviews, and reader responses. Advertisement would bring up the end of each issue (Bieler 188-189). Readership included Chinese students in the U.S. and abroad, American students, professors, business people, and missionaries (190). White readers would also use *CSM* for their purposes, from encouraging fellow citizens to act more hospitably toward Chinese students—"Are we, though continued indifference, going to frustrate what bears the seed of the most hopeful

[1] A preliminary reading of several volumes of *CSM*, available in physical form at the Memorial Library at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and in digital form on HathiTrust and Brill, revealed three broad categories of articles: Those that related personal experiences in the U.S., including their participation in rhetorical efforts; those that reported and analyzed Chinese political and economic development; and those that critiqued and interpreted political and religious concepts, e.g., extraterritoriality, Confucianism, and Christian missionary work. These roughly correspond to the rhetorical modes narration, exposition, and argumentation, although there is some overlap. For example, an editorial that begins with a personal anecdote might veer into current happenings back home for larger context before concluding with a call for justice and political change. Writings in the first category were further divided into topics concerning explicit activism (e.g., publication of pamphlets, production of China Nights), athletics, racial uplift (e.g., teaching in Chinatown), and Alliance-sponsored activities (e.g., annual conferences, *CSM* matters). After reading through 194 issues of *CSM* and coding for these categories and subtopics, summaries of articles belonging to the first category (experiences and rhetorical work) were charted in several Microsoft Excel sheets with volume and issue on the y-axis, allowing for a third rereading with a longitudinal emphasis. In the process of composing a history of rhetorical practices, reference was made to articles in the second and third categories (political, religious, and sociological commentary) when they provided relevant context in terms of intentions, motivations, and priorities. Other contextual material include contemporary U.S. local and national newspapers.

growth of our age?" (Bieler 212)—to advising the students themselves to garner respect by dressing more American, just like the better-received Japanese do (Bieler 234).

Recuperating and narrativizing the rhetorical practices of these understudied Chinese student writers demands archival attentiveness and and critical imagination. Carl Becker states that "the form and substance of historical facts, having a negotiable existence only in literary discourse, vary with the words employed to convey them. … It is thus […] the perceiving mind of the historian that speaks" (qtd. in Turner 11). When I read *CSM* articles a certain way, I create meaning from something removed in time and space. Three-quarters of a century has elapsed since the last volume of *CSM* was published, and one cannot fully grasp the *kairos* in which these students speak. At almost every turn, beyond what writers in *CSM* have chosen to reflect on and what contemporary newspapers have deemed interesting to cover, I have come against a paucity in corroborating material. For example, at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where a sizeable local club existed, little exists besides a box of programs. Such a vacuum, of course, can be attributed to a discursive economy that dismisses Chineseness and correspondingly devalues the work of Chinese student clubs. My narratival reconstruction of their rhetorical practices implicates the tension between the "rightness" and usefulness of historical reconstruction in the field of rhetoric and composition.

LuMing Mao reminds us that reconstructions are always descriptions, so we must be culturally sensitive to the thing being described (66). Getting it "right" is an ethical issue because any history is a history of a people. In her explanation of differences between poststructuralist and feminist methodologies, Hui Wu asserts that "I must read women's rhetorical history … as facts and record it as facts, because any contingency in my methods would result in historical

distortions" (87). On the other hand, Cheryl Glenn denies the false dichotomy of "traditional objective historiography" vs. "subjective feminist fictionalization" (Glenn 387) and states that all historians play language games and all histories are stories (388). Scott Stroud applies Deweyan Pragmatism to historiography, arguing that the usefulness of a text (as opposed to its conveyance of true meanings) should determine its validity (Stroud 357-8). Judging a text by its utility is neither appropriative nor harmful to the described culture; no one owns culture, and historians can be transparent and open to being corrected (Stroud 363). Susan Jarratt offers several rhetorical criteria on which postmodern historians can be judged: "Does this history instruct, delight, and move the reader? Is the historical data probable? Does it fit with other accounts or provide a convincing alternative? Is it taken up by the community and used? Or is it refuted, dismissed, and forgotten?" (391).

Where the field seems to have reached consensus is the idea that we must be as rigorous as we are open-minded. Cheryl Glenn and Jessica Enoch agree that historians can't help but make truth claims: "We do care whether a given account is genuinely credible, probable, even true, because what is ultimately at stake is not only constructing a 'usable past' that speaks to present concerns, but also treating that past ethically while getting it right (as far as doing so is possible)" (337). For them, the needs of the community using the knowledge must be balanced with the interests of the community from which the knowledge is gathered. The archival turn springs from the desire to be "doing our homework" (Glenn and Enoch 337). This kind of thinking—that more localized research would bring forth a more complete, truer picture—animates many researchers. In his project on three Midwestern colleges, Thomas Masters found that "the more [he] researched, the more sure [he] was that [he] had found something true about the discipline" (164). To avoid an

"anachronistic reading," Jessica Enoch decided to present her archival materials first, exploring their significance within their historical context, before theorizing about it (23); the aim of David Gold's *Rhetoric at the Margins* is to produce "a more nuanced and representative picture of the past" (ix). He claims toward the end that 1960s should *not* be considered the real turning point for critical pedagogy (153). Just as the field of rhetoric and composition has moved from grand, sweeping narratives (Kennedy; Corbett; Berlin) to the construction of microhistories (Royster; Gold; Logan; Gere; Kates; Enoch), this dissertation produces a microhistory that tries to balance the nuances of text and context, an approach that is reflected in the division of my chapters.

Part of the indeterminacy of writing history comes from the nature of archival work. "The Archive is not potentially made up of everything, as is human memory," reminds Carol Steedman. "[It] is made from selected and consciously chosen documentation from the past and also from the mad fragments that no one intended to preserve and just ended up there" (68). If the building of an archive is haphazard, so is writing from one. "Search is play," Robert Connors muses. "Archival reading is … a kind of directed ramble, something like an August mushroom hunt" (23). Archival work is systematic "play," and fortune favors those who are prepared, diligent, and aware as "accidental discoveries in the archives must be accompanied by the wisdom to recognize the significance of those discoveries" (Ostergaard 41). The "holy grail" (Gaillet 29) is often elusive, demanding tenuous connections to be forged, and even when one has written something that reasonably accounts for what is contained in the archive, "[o]ne is never really finished," reflects David Gold. "Unanswered questions are the fuel of the scholarly process," a process that can be as "scary" and as "messy as hell" (18-19). That the *Chinese Students' Monthly* remains the primary

testimony to the students' rhetorical efforts, of which my narrative is but one subjective and interested retelling, is an intimidating realization.

However, the pursuit of a responsible kind of historiographical "rightness" opens up a space for critical imagination, a concept upon which rests Jacqueline Jones Royster's study of the literacy practices of elite 19th century African American women. For the researcher running up against an archival emptiness, "[t]he task … is to keep the eyes and the mind open for the imaginable, that is, for opportunities to make connections and draw out likely possibilities" (Royster 83). What is producible through the use of critical imagination are broad "institutional, collective patterns" that generate the context for "a meaningful and perhaps even representative story" (83). Critical imagination is an indispensable tool in the rectification of public memory. For Royster's women subjects, whose individual stories have long disappeared, critical imagination "is perhaps the only place to begin an exploration of who we are, where we come from, how we have found and negotiated life's pathways" (Royster 84). What mollifies my disquietude toward writing an imperfect narrative is the absence of an alternative scholarly approach, and the hope that future researchers might uncover materials that give rise to hypotheses that challenge my own. And, frankly, as long as one founds interpretation on a solid base and does not "overreach the bounds of either reason or possibility" (Royster 84), as I try to do here, utilizing an imaginative approach has helped me maintain, more than anything else, an emotional connection to my subject.

Dissertation Chapter Outline

I have adopted Jacqueline Jones Royster's multi-lensed model of context, *ethos* formation, and rhetorical action to structure these chapters. Royster's "kaleidoscopic" framework enables a more robust interpretation of rhetorical performance as it positions literate acts as "a site of

continuous struggle in response to an ongoing hermeneutic problem" (Royster 72). As it also renders these acts with "their own integrity and fidelity" and thereby assists in bringing her subjects out from the shadows (Royster 73), it would seem appropriate to use the same model to understand how these mostly forgotten Chinese student writers recognized, responded to, and replaced deleterious images using limited available resources. **Chapter 2** explores the students' formation of *ethos* using a utilitarian sense of identity. Like Royster's essayists who portrayed themselves as "agents of change" (70), Chinese students interpreted their identities through their sense of collectivity and their perceived mission, which transformed from learning and absorbing the best of America to teaching and intervening. The process of Americanization was taken as a risk for denationalization, as evidence of fulfilling their learning objective, and as an avenue for persuasion. Their unusual rhetorical situation speaks for their inclusion in rhetorical histories. **Chapter 3** pulls together a mega-narrative from smaller narratives in the *Monthly* to illustrate the student-centered legal, economic, and social discrimination that formed the impetus for rhetorical action. Their experiences of deportation, poverty, and overall isolation from American peers held bodily and other material consequences. The circuitous journey itself (from China back to China) is consonant with Foucault's concept of biopolitic: The "making do" of the students while in America highlights their subjective helplessness as their bodies were carried to and fro by abstract and diplomatic pressures and motives. This storytelling forms the basis for **Chapter 4** as the "material conditions, forces, and circumstances that affect a writer's ability to perform" are connected to "the shape and direction of the choices made in carrying out the performance" (Royster 63). This section unpacks an embodied rhetorical "toolkit" that saw students speak before congregations, contribute to newspapers, protest at theaters, perform skits, and mingle with American professors and

classmates. Rhetorical action operates within "the space between the perceived world and the desired worlds" (Royster 70-71), and the students' activities were no less directed and purposeful toward rectifying public understanding and imagining of the Chinese. **Chapter 5** traces the formation of an alternative Chinese body, one that is physically strong and organizationally united, to transcalar and transnational impulses. Concerned with national "weakness," the students strove to rehabilitate this image through attending to personal, organizational, and domestic (China-based) deficiencies. **Chapter 6** represents a case study of the most publicized tool: the annual sectional conference. The history of this gathering shows that its purposes of increasing solidarity and showcasing organization were not designated from the beginning but discovered in the course of balancing resources, student interest, and representational needs. Embodied themes of athletics and self-government bring readers full circle to this introduction. Written as an epilogue, **Chapter 7** ends with a personal reflection on the representational burden of being an international student and the implications of this study on the doing of embodied rhetorical history.

Why This? Why Me?

Recovering the rhetorical practices of early 20th-century Chinese students in the United States finally probes and broadens our public memory that evolves according to ever-changing political conditions. Toward the end of *Intimate Practices*, Anne Ruggles Gere summarizes the cultural work engaged by women clubs and recounts the optimism these women felt about the future recognition of their work. They saw themselves participating in "the congresses of the world," amassing as "a mighty factor in the civilization of the century," building a movement that would be remembered as "the most significant … the most far-reaching" in history (qtd. in Gere 253). However, for various economic and political reasons, club membership declined in the

1920s, and the contributions of women's clubs have been largely forgotten up through the late 1990s, which Gere partially attributes to proliferating "reductive and distorted images of clubwomen" (255-6). Citing Michael Kammen, Gere lays out the workings of public memory and the negative role of myth:

> Public memory, like all memory, is always selective, and its selections shift with the politics of the present. Within memory, myths and legends flourish despite the accessible bodies of information that contradict them. Accordingly, to the extent that the public memory includes women's clubs, it is shaped by myths that bear little relation to the available information from clubwomen's own texts. Rather, public memory draws on the spectacle or images that evolved from (largely hostile) representations of clubwomen at the turn of the century. These images, constructed from popular anxieties, misconceptions, and distortions circulating at the time, contended with and eventually crowded out the accounts of cultural work available in the clubwomen's own records. With these negative images firmly established in the public consciousness, the memory encoded in the club texts became unnecessary and undesirable (256-7).

According to Gere, impeding an accurate accounting of clubwomen are negative images and representations that suppress what can actually be known about them through thoughtful archival work. The deep-seated discursiveness economy of Chineseness works against a public memory that could have remembered and revered the names of otherwise prolific and articulate Chinese Students' Alliance club members. Reversing the status quo demands the persistence of archivists and archival writers and pivots on the use of critical imagination when available materials are

found wanting. This dissertation aims to facilitate the reconstitution and reinsertion of a lesser known microhistory into a larger rhetorical tradition of sociopolitical action. The thousands of articles written in the 20-plus-year life span of the *Chinese Students' Monthly* provide ample material for the tracing of key themes and the composition of a historical narrative of embodied rhetorical practices. Conclusions drawn from the investigation of these three questions thus align with and extend current scholarship in the fields of embodied rhetorics as well as Chinese American and rhetorical historiography.

Cheryl Glenn and Jessica Enoch describe "interestedness" as the "how and why we might read and write as we do" and "one's position inside of and approach to the final text" (21). Being explicit about one's interestedness gives readers a way to interpret one's findings and inferences. My interestedness in my project emerges from my desire to learn more about my people's past and to better understand my own subjectivity as a Chinese living in America. The link between the researched group and the researcher can be simply recurrent themes and patterns—studying the past to see what it can inform us about our present circumstances—but I see a stronger link, one ably voiced by Robert Connors, who writes that history is "the telling of stories about the tribe that make the tribe real." He continues, "[W]e are telling the stories of our fathers and mothers, and we are legitimating ourselves through legitimating them" (34-35). Although Connors is speaking specifically of the historiography of the field of rhetoric and composition, he is stating something unmistakable about archival work for the researcher who has a personal stake in the project. For that researcher, it's more than simply a scholarly project: It's a way to be validated and become "whole." From assumptions made about my mathematical prowess to questions of origin, from outright name-calling to my social invisibility, "being Chinese" is a conflicted status. To be colored

in the United States is to be hyper-aware of one's body. This heightened consciousness stems from the disparity in the treatment of our kind vis-à-vis other kinds; experiencing this disparity causes disgust, raises questions of legitimacy, and reinforces our fragmented identity. Thus, I feel that my research on Chinese students' experiences is an extension of a growing "critical consciousness." Their stories are mine also.

Chapter 2: A Transnational *Ethos*

In response to Wendy Hesford's observation of a transnational turn in rhetorical studies, Morris Young urged scholars "to consider the (trans) socio-historical contexts and global forces that have shaped Asian American lives and literate practices" (131). Understanding the multiple ways that "global forces" act on rhetorical practice involves a critiquing of power, not as something embedded within a site but as exchanges between actors on multiple levels and sites. In their 2013 call for rhetoricians to more seriously adopt "a complex, networked understanding of power" (518), Rebecca Dingo, Rachel Riedner, and Jennifer Wingard assure that merging rhetorical studies with transnational methodologies "broadens the charge of rhetoric by developing a more cogent analysis of globalized systems and neoliberal power *and* by taking into account responses to these systems and power" (521, emphasis original). It is from this in-between space, between accounting for global forces and the responses to those forces, in which a more complex picture of rhetorical context and activity might emerge. From the inception of their academic lives, the bodies of our Chinese students have been the sites of enactment for national agendas as well as resistance and reinvention of those agendas. This chapter argues that their negotiation of these agendas form a basis of their *ethos*, insofar as their identities were enmeshed in their purposes of being. First, a general overview of the students' entry and distribution will be given, with special attention on push-pull factors on which they had little say. Then, I will trace the development of their objectives of being in the United States, highlighting the ways they take on, resist, and usurp those objectives. In sum, this chapter provides an approach to comprehending the transnationality of Asian American rhetoric through attending to a body of students' struggle with and against multi-scalar motives and intentions.

"Like Kindred Drops … Mingled into One"

When C. C. Wang, the editor of the 1908-1909 volume of the *Monthly*, praised President Roosevelt and Congress for the remission of $11 million of the Boxer Indemnity and called it a "square deal" ("Remission" 5), he omitted the driving force behind the President's decision: pressure from Chinese boycotts that erupted in response to the 1902 permanentization of the Exclusion Act. Rather framing it as a retreat out of embarrassment, however, editor Wang called Roosevelt's act a "noble" gesture that represents American character and "sets a new standard of international morality" (5). While it is true that part of the remission of the Boxer Indemnity went to the construction of Tsinghua College, a preparatory school that prepared Chinese students to transfer into U.S. institutions, the scholarship program was not the primary driver of the inflow of Chinese students to America. When *CSM* announced the entrance of the first 47-strong group of indemnity students into U.S. institutions in its December 1909 issue (L. N. Chang, "Hail" 81), the magazine itself was entering its fifth year of publication, the Chinese Students' Alliance had just completed the reorganization and unification of the western, midwestern, and eastern sections, and non-indemnity students in the eastern states alone, funded by provincial and central governments, private, or missionary means, outnumbered indemnity students nine to one (C. Young, "Statistical" 268). In fact, when President Roosevelt petitioned Congress for the remission in 1908, the American education of Chinese youths had already been underway for decades. Since the mid-1850s, American missionaries have been sponsoring and physically accompanying selected students to the U.S. The most notable was Yung Wing, the first known Chinese to graduate from an American university (Yale in 1854). In China from 1841 to 1846, Yung Wing studied at the Morrison Education Society School, the first English school in China (W. Yung 13). In the fall of

1846, school founder Samuel Robbins Brown, on account of ill health, decided to return home and take with him several pupils so that they could finish their education in the States (18). Yung Wing and two others volunteered, and the three of them enrolled into Monson Academy in Massachusetts (27). After graduating from Yale, Yung Wing flitted from job to job back in China, working as a secretary to a commissioner, attorney's apprentice, interpreter, and tea merchant. A friendship with a viceroy enabled Yung Wing to share and put into action his idea of a Chinese Educational Mission, a program that would send youths to the U.S. to procure engineering and science knowledge in order to reform the empire (180). Although the program ended after 10 years in 1881, a "second wave" of college and university students would arrive in the early 1900s, growing from 300 in 1906 to an estimated 1,600 between 1925 and 1926, with most of them settling in Eastern and Midwestern colleges (Ye 10). A total number of 17,000 students came and went until the Communist Party takeover in 1949 (Bieler 313).

Push factors have been explored by Shelley Sang-Hee Lee and other historians. Southern China was hit hard by economic decline after the first Opium War opened treaty ports to the north, and many peasants lost their land in ongoing civil conflicts (S. S. Lee 31). The Boxer Indemnity probably exerted even more pressure via taxation. Their longtime contact with Westerners allowed prospective migrants in the south to imagine a better life elsewhere (31). While conditions were less dire in the north, for parents of selected adolescents, giving consent for their children to be educated at Tsinghua and/or sent abroad was an investment in their futures; on their return, the hope is that they'll be quickly hired as government officials, having a leg up on their Chinese-educated peers. While Chinese peasants were drawn by economic opportunities in California, Chinese students were attracted to the patriotic role they were asked to play: the

intellectual and spiritual revival of a once-proud nation-state through knowledge gathering. One pull factor that deserves further investigation is the amount of publicity U.S. institutions engaged in to draw Chinese students. Prior to the remission, the consuls general of Hong Kong and Shanghai wrote letters urging the State Department to encourage more Chinese to study in U.S., keenly aware of its impact on the demand for American goods, public opinion toward China, and the removal of misconceptions toward the West ("American" 173). Several universities already had in place scholarships for Chinese students, and competition for them was so great that the *Monthly* reported a failure to enforce rigorous standards, something that did no service to the students' education and the reputation of the institution. For example, some students who haven't mastered English grammar were permitted to write B.A. theses (175).

An examination of the students' numbers sheds light on the rhetorical constraints facing the students and helps us understand the rhetorical responses that emerged from that context. The *Monthly* reported 144 students studying in American universities in the 1907-1908 school year (Lok, "Distribution" 202). While the majority of students were male, the December 1907 issue of *CSM* listed 30 female students dispersed over two dozen boarding schools and colleges in the Northeast and Southeast including Wellesley, Wesleyan, and Randolph-Macon ("Abroad" 65). From the institutions mentioned, these women were entering higher education to become missionaries, doctors, and musicians. Miss F. Y. Tsao of Columbia, one of the four women chosen for a Wellesley College scholarship and sent over in the summer of 1907, remarked that the abolition of the imperial examination in 1905 and the establishment of modern schooling created the need for teachers (620). Women students have enrolled in U.S. institutions in the 1890s but mostly under the auspices of missionaries. The 10 that were sent in this "pre-reformation" period

studied medicine and education and became heads of hospitals and medical departments back in China (F. Y. Tsao 618-20). By May 1922, the number of female students in colleges and universities grew to more than 200. The continued orientation toward medicine can be seen in one writer's complaint that there were not enough women taking arts (e.g., painting, drama, dance, writing). While acknowledging the need for women in social services, the author contended that a strict focus on "usefulness" precluded room for play. Even students taking literature focused too much on moral learning (R. M. Li 674). As practicability and transferability to a Chinese setting determined the value of a U.S. education, the Chinese student body was in effect an extension of state power. Among the men, many through the decades pursued courses that they saw as constructive to their home country, from engineering (in all its types) and mining to political science and economics.

Survey cards returned to the Alliance's Membership Committee in January 1910 showed a total of 465 students studying in the eastern states, of which 36 were female and 292 were Alliance members (C. Young, "Statistical" 267). The 465 students were spread unevenly throughout the east, with Massachusetts and New York enrolling 27% and 19% respectively (268). While Cornell University boasted the largest cohort with 35 students, Harvard, Columbia, the University of Wisconsin, Yale, the University of Illinois, and the University of Pennsylvania were not far behind with numbers ranging from 19-26 students. The 465 figure also included students in technical schools, seminaries, academies, and grammar schools. In terms of province of birth, the 292 Alliance members were concentrated in Kwangtung/Guangdong (111), Kiangsu/Jiangsu (68), Chekiang/Zhejiang (34), and Chili/Zhili (24) (271), showing a distinct south/northeast divide that was reflected in dialects and, later on, political sympathies. The May 1911 issue of CSM gave a

total of 704 across the country: 54 women and 650 men (F. Y. Tsao 621). The concentration of students in urban centers in the East and Midwest likely reflected the international prestige and publicity work of institutions in those centers and determined at least partly the loci of Chinese student activity. The geographical divides in Chinese origin and U.S. destination facilitated the formation of unifying strategies explored in later chapters.

A follow-up survey in 1914 offered a wider look at the student body and revealed a similar distribution ("Chinese Students in U. S. A." 344): Of the 845 total, most students were studying in New York, California, Illinois, Massachusetts, and Michigan, and taking course in engineering (civil, mechanical, electrical), agriculture, and mining. Other disciplines that exceeded a dozen enrollees were economics, chemistry, medicine, education, commerce, and politics, while, on the other end of the scale, music and theology had only one and two enrollees respectively. Provincially, the students hailed from the same cluster of provinces as the 1910 survey although the 1914 number was more heavily skewed toward Kwangtung/Guangdong (392 of 845). Significant numbers also came from Kiangsu/Jiangsu (115), Chekiang/Zhejiang (69), and Hunan (66). Given that the 1910 numbers only looked at students in the east, it's possible that the 1914 survey reflected the southern provenance of the now-included western students rather than a shift in the origin of the student body as a whole.

On one hand, the rapidly increasing numbers boosted the Alliance's membership and coffers and allowed for more sustained rhetorical activity across multiple sites. On the other hand, it became quickly apparent that there were not enough resources to sustain all the students studying abroad. Half of the 845 students in the 1914 survey came through scholarship, with 252 on the Boxer Indemnity fund and the rest by provincial and central governments. Scholarship students

from Kiangsu and Hunan were recalled a couple months later (W. Wei 510), something *CSM* condemned as a "blunder" most likely due to the contentious political climate. By May 1914, China's first formal president Yuan Shikai had dissolved the national and provincial assemblies and replaced the House of Representatives and Senate with a personal council. After crushing a KMT uprising, Yuan appointed a military governor (with his own army) as well as a civil authority to each province. This move not only laid the seeds of civil war but also greatly impacted the funding sent to the students abroad as governors often appropriated revenue for military ventures. Though ostensibly created in response to "loafing" students, the establishment of a six-year limit was probably impelled by financial concerns. In a plea against this new policy, F. Chang argued that the Chinese Educational Mission's goal of national regeneration requires experts who have reached the highest level of American education, which can take more than six years ("Effects" 510). The Chinese government had warned that students who failed to return before the limit would have their passage fees forfeited (511).

The economic situation of students supported by provincial and central governments did not improve as the total number of Chinese students studying in the U.S. breached the 1,000 mark between 1914 and 1915. At Evanston, the site of the sixth conference of the midwestern section in September 1915, V. K. Wellington Koo, Columbia graduate and then minister to Mexico, spoke optimistically of the future of the 1,400 government and private students studying in the country, as there were 300-400 returned students serving in various governmental capacities, including President Yuan's personal staff ("Brief" 91). The number stayed steady through January 1920 when *CSM* reported that only half or 800 of the 1,500 number were Alliance members (M. Chou 55). Editors frequently fretted about the proportion of Alliance members to the total student

population, believing that every student ought to join the de facto representative organization of the Chinese student body (Z. Li 90). Indeed, proposals have been tabled that admitted every new student as a member as soon as she or he arrived ashore (C. F. Chang 78). By February 1922, the financial straits prefigured in the 1914 recall of provincial students had come to a head with *CSM* decrying the continued "wholesale emigration" of students despite the lack of resources to support them. Many provincial governments stopped making payments, which caused the Chinese Educational Bureau to effectively become a loan office (T. Koo, "Our" 279). The Bureau was affiliated with the Ministry of Education in Peking that was put in charge of general student affairs in the U.S. in 1907. The Chinese Educational Bureau bore no relation to the Chinese Educational Mission that supported Indemnity students from Tsinghua. The number ballooned to 2,000 by February 1924, a figure compared to the 4,000 U.S.-born Chinese in high schools (C. Kwei, "Chinese" 15), and, over a year later, there were 2,500 students studying in the U.S. with 500 graduating yearly ("China Society and the Chinese" 50).

The students' financial situation maintained during the pre-Nationalist years, but the deepening crisis was taken as an opportunity for positive representation. In the May 1925 issue of *CSM*, a provincial student gave a stark account. Of the 2,500 students, 2,000 were supported by means other than scholarship. Of the remaining 500, only the Tsinghua students, being under the auspices of the Chinese Educational Mission in Washington, have been regularly receiving their allowance. Students that were supported by the Chinese Ministry of Education and the provincial governments were less fortunate. The Ministry of Education had been failing to send their share and had only recently remitted one-and-a-half month of the previous year's arrears, while students from 13 of the 16 provinces that were sending students abroad were "driven to secure work and

support themselves" ("Chinese Students and Government" 39). Hindering these efforts were the persistent pressure of coursework as well as discrimination (40). Earlier in the year, the sudden departure of Dr. U. Y. Yen, the director of Chinese Educational Bureau, left students in his charge in a bind, and the Chinese legation was forced to step in (40). The following *CSM* issue in June 1925 disclosed steps the Chinese legation took, including identifying the most needy students and offering them an option to sail home that summer at a discounted rate (C. K. Young, "Our" 7). An article later in the issue elaborated that Chinese Minister S. K. Alfred Sze had formed an advisory committee whose function was to advise the legation, review applications for help sent to the legation, and offer recommendations to the legation as it deliberates the best course of action (Mason, "Student" 75). The *CSM* editor suggested the Chinese central government or public organizations take over the whole affair of administering competitive examinations (for the purpose of awarding scholarships) and providing financial support, noting that chambers of commerce and educational associations as more reliable bodies than provincial governments (C. K. Young, "Our" 7). One silver lining in the crisis was that it afforded opportunities to influence representation, contingencies that will be explored in a later chapter. While the anonymous "provincial student" of the May 1925 article expressed concern for the public reputation of Chinese students if they were seen as charity cases ("Chinese Students and Government" 39), the willingness of more fortunate students to aid their peers through the raising of funds and the establishment of boarding houses demonstrated a capability to organize and self-govern.

From the mid-1920s into the 1930s, Chinese student bodies began circulating out of the U.S. and into competing Chinese and European institutions. The maturing education system of China and Tsinghua's offering of undergraduate courses in 1925 was a development that raised

questions about the necessity of sending students abroad. In an address before the Chinese Social and Political Science Association on January 22, 1925, Professor Wilson Leon Godshall compared the advantages and disadvantages of continuing the educational enterprise and offered some recommendations. A change in policy would likely halve the total number of students, at that point exceeding 2,000 (32). The seven advantages Godshall enumerated (proficiency in English; familiarity with American customs; contact with democratic government, commercial and industrial enterprises, and a modern educational system; a more objective view of China; opportunities to educate the American public; observation of social reform agencies and methods; and attendance of first-rank colleges) were counterbalanced by a similarly lengthy list of drawbacks. Some of them revealed a penetrating knowledge of student life. For example, Godshall spoke of the tendency of Chinese students to congregate in isolation from American students. Some of them acquired a "cabaret or dance hall habit," dropping out of classes and wasting money on gifts for American girls (Godshall 36). The lack of practical experience might be due to harsh U.S. policies on foreign labor, but nevertheless, an education based solely on the theoretical was an incomplete education. Another factor that gravely limited the usefulness of the students' training was their prolonged absence, which estranged them from the conditions at home. Godshall's complaint that the students formed too hasty opinions of America based on their impressions probably said more about his defensive toward the students' negative experiences. In all, while Godshall agreed that Chinese youths should continue to study abroad, he recommended that future students be prepped to enter U.S. institutions in their junior or senior year so that they are given a chance to mature, and then sent only to smaller liberal arts colleges to ease assimilation and avoid the clustering effect seen in

larger universities (38). Summer courses prior to their first year might also help their English proficiency, so necessary for the accomplishment of coursework (Godshall 32).

The June 1928 issue of *CSM* reprinted Theodore Encheng Hsiao's article from the *China Weekly Review* (1923-50), a historical overview that placed the American education experiment within the context and tradition of traveling scholars and portended a pivot to European institutions. Chinese students had gone to India between the third and eighth centuries to procure religious texts to enable the spread of Buddhism, and after the Sino-Japanese War of 1894, tens of thousands flocked to Japan. The decrease in their numbers in Japan corresponded with the rising popularity of American institutions, especially after the Boxer Indemnity remission (T. Hsiao 45). Between 1884 and 1900, students arrived to the States as part of an exempt class that had to first obtain a certificate from the Chinese government. Their entry was suspended temporarily from 1900 to 1906 over a legal disagreement over the term "student" (45). Europe saw the most Chinese students between 1870s through the 1900s when China's defeat in wars against Western powers was thought to stem from lack of modern armament. The Qing court decided to send pupils to technical schools and factories in France, Germany, England, and Belgium to study military subjects. A demand for labor during the First World War injected more Chinese into France, and a comparatively lenient policy that allowed Chinese youths to work for pay as they study boosted the number of students to 1,500. Like Godshall, Hsiao likewise questioned the advisability of sending students abroad given the recent growth of Chinese colleges and universities (T. Hsiao 46). The pivot to Europe was apparent by 1929. While the Friendly Relations Committee of YMCA's foreign student census showed that China still had the largest contingent in the U.S. (over 2,000 including high school students) as of June that year, the total represented a decrease from 1925, a

trend that the committee attributed to the progress made in Chinese undergraduate education and the lower cost of living in European countries, which were actively vying for Asian students using financial incentives (May 394).

In this decades-long educational project, the Chinese student body acted as a site of cooptation and resistance toward state power. Economics conditions and nationalist ambition, both Chinese and American, beckoned the Chinese student to make the initial oceanic journey. Upon landing, the students endured financial hardships and ostracization from the American body politic In response, they organized, self-strengthened, and reinterpreted their knowledge-gathering mission to one of knowledge-influencing and creating. Returning to C. C. Wang's praise of Roosevelt that began this chapter, the 1908 remission of the U.S. portion of the Boxer Indemnity was symbolic and pragmatic: It signaled a continuation and genuineness of U.S. friendship, despite its overly harsh immigration policies, and it strengthened the ability of the Alliance to fulfill its rhetorical goals: The increase of students would assist in "removing the unfortunate prejudices of our American friends" as the "intermingling of representative types" is the cure to those prejudices ("Remission" 6). Repurposing a pro-abolitionist poem by William Cowper, Wang quotes: "Mountains interposed, / Made enemies of nations who had else. / Like kindred drops, been mingled into one." The "mountains of ignorance" that have long divided two peoples across the Pacific and subjected a country to political and economic exploitation will soon be heaved aside (6); decades of misunderstanding and mistrust will soon be ground down by the waves of student ambassadors. The optimism characterizing Wang's editorial seems quaint when one reflects on the complications that arose upon disembarkation. Situated as a minority of a minority population, the student "saviors" needed succor themselves as they faced immediate problems in their legal,

economic, and social lives (Chapter 3). What helped them navigate these waters was the transformation of their invented *ethos* from one of polite learning and receiving to unabashed activism.

Primary Objective: Learning for China

Laboring for the welfare of China was a trope that was entangled in all sorts of meanings even as it was inscribed in the constitution of the national alliance (Ching et al. 721) and restated in the masthead/imprint as a purpose of the *Chinese Students' Monthly*. Certainly, the students' primary objective to learn and carry their learning back home, but how that learning ought to be achieved, and whether there were other objectives that could be considered laboring, was an open question. Here, it's crucial to conceive of "objective" as more than simply a target or reason for an effort or action but as part of an argument for a certain way of being, thinking, and doing (*ethos* formation). That is, while one of the often stated goals of these Chinese students were to learn scientific means and methods, adopting that objective assumes a posture of beneficiary/benefactor and casts doubts on actions and stances that weren't perceived to be helpful to accomplishing that objective, e.g., the value of racial uplift. Tracing the evolution of student objectives reveals an ongoing conflict between what these students deemed to be important and other stakeholders deemed as important. Political events in China and the U.S. also shaped the parameters of this conflict. Rhetorically, behind every instance of objectivizing lie a host of compelling questions: What ways of being/thinking/doing are being valorized or devalued? What ideas are naturalized or taken for granted? Thus, a rhetorical analysis of these events uncovers the intentions and biases of the rhetor toward sanctioned identities or ways of being/thinking/doing. Further, assuming this dynamic definition of "objective" constructs a natural connection between students' objectives that

seems incompatible at first glance. Taking into account what these students said and what is said to them reveal a multifaceted mission beyond knowledge-gathering. Chinese government representatives, American university professors, other sponsors of the students' education, and the students themselves had a hand in the formation and evolution of their objectives.

In many respects, in terms of their primary objective of learning, the "second wave" of Chinese students differed little from the first wave sent by the Chinese Educational Mission to the United States (1872–1881). W. P. Wang of the University of Pennsylvania puts the second-wave students in the broader historical context of "self-strengthening" resulting from forced contact with the West beginning with the 19th century. Increasing diplomatic contact exposed the need for interpreters and translators (408), and failures in military clashes underscored the importance of scientific subjects such as communications and medicine in the 1860s through 1880s (409), a time frame the CEM students were part of. The failed Boxer Rebellion in 1900 indirectly created the modern public and university school system and led to other transformations in the educational landscape, such as the creation of the Ministry of Education in 1905 and the inflow of Chinese students into American institutions. Supervising the second wave of students in America was the Chinese Educational Mission, a body that shared the name of (but had no relation to) the 1872–1881 pioneering attempt. Prior to the establishment of the Mission in 1907, however, the responsibility of caring for the students fell on the Chinese Minister and his entourage (W. Wang 413). As government representatives, the minister and legation secretary, and later the CEM director, periodically met with their charges and attended the annual Alliance conferences.

W. W. Yen, the Second Secretary of the Chinese Legation, had been anticipating a particular 1908 event for the previous two years (111). Appointed to his position to assist Minister

Wu Ting-fang and sent over earlier in the year, Yen finally had the chance. Yen was at the 4th Annual Conference of the Chinese Students' Alliance of the Eastern States that took place from August 20 to 27, 1908 at Cushing Academy, Ashburnham, Massachusetts. A Shanghai native and University of Virginia alum himself (1900), Yen was not dissimilar to his charges before him. He studied liberal arts and law while at Virginia, participating in literary societies and winning awards in English composition and debate, and was appointed an English language and literature professor at St. John's University back home ("W. W. Yen" 21). Yen begins by telling the story of Yung Wing, one of the three young men who left for New England in 1844, the forerunner of student ambassadorship and the "doyen of American educated Chinese" (112). He draws a parallel between the students who went through the Chinese Educational Mission of 1872, Yung's "pet scheme," and the Japanese students who returned from Europe to modernize their country and became "Heroes of the Orient" (113). The current sorry state of the Chinese Empire, he claims, is the fault of reactionary elements at home. A conservative commissioner complained to the Qing court that the "Americaniz[ed]" New England students had "cut off their queues, others played baseball, some even made love to American girls," and, upon their recall, the students were mistreated, put under heavy guard, and separated from their families (114). But this "inexplicable and ridiculous" attitude of the government and populace no longer holds, and returned students now receive a good salary and are placed in influential posts (115). With this move, Yen simultaneously reassures his listeners by promising goodwill and support from the government, positions them in a storied effort to regenerate their homeland, and implicitly dissuades them from certain behaviors that hurt this regenerative effort. Yen continues by shifting to describing the kind of student that deserves the glory that awaits at home. Perhaps seeing himself among his charges,

he pressed the importance of "prepar[ing] ourselves thoroughly for the grand work" ahead (115). Although many U.S. schools have reported on the students' academic excellence, "as a college man, speaking to college men," Yen asks them to embrace the dictum of Oxford's Benjamin Jowett that "college is a place of learning, a place of society, and a place of religion" (116), a proposition that gives structure to the rest of his speech.

Here, Yen enlarges the students' primary objective by subsuming several activities under the umbrella of assisting in the regeneration of China. The first aspect of college learning comes easy to the Chinese as the pursuit of knowledge is their inheritance: "[I]f any complaint can be made of a Chinese student, it is that he studies too hard, to the neglect of his health and the exclusion of beneficial and innocent enjoyments" (116). But the students can increase the learning of their kin through publication of articles and essays and the translation of science texts. Less appreciated by the students was the idea of college as a place of society. While learning can happen through textbooks and examinations,

> [W]e are learning out of as well as in the recitation room, during vacation time as well as in the college year. The hours, days, even months that we spend in travelling, in meeting American friends, in seeing new places and going through new experiences, in reading the newspapers, magazines and other literature are strictly in the line of our studies, in going to church or attending the theater … add much to our knowledge of the way the people in the west live, move and have their being. (116-17)

This expanded idea of learning makes good sense. It is impossible to learning about a subject without dwelling in it; the cultural turn of humanities and social sciences in the 1970s is predicated

on this notion. Yet, while Yen stresses the need to enter American life so to observe "the principles that underlie American society, … the orderly and systematic manner in which business is done and duties are discharged," and the relations between Americans in the home, government, and workplace (117), what is left unresolved is the spectre of Americanization or the assimilation into and adoption of American life. That is to say, when Yen wishes students would be *more* scattered among universities and devour American media as steadfastly as they do textbooks (117), it isn't clear how students can enter a culture without imbibing aspects of it and making them their own. This, of course, was the commissioner's complaint against the CEM students of the 1800s, that they were too Americanized. Surely enough, on a visit to Europe in the 1920s, Y. Y. Tsu observed that the habits and mannerisms of Chinese students reflected those found in their locales: The British students enjoy tennis, the German students "drink beer, use walking-sticks and greet each other in stiff military fashion," those in France "speak volubly and gesticulate expressively," while American students "yell and sing college songs and swap slang and jokes" (Tsu 32).

Secretary Yen's last point of college as a center of religion places the importance of moral development on par with intellectual growth and social stimulation in the context of learning. Earlier statesmen were wrong to consider only the material aspects of western civilization, such as battleships and guns, and ignore their driving force (Yen 117). Yen asserts that material wealth and power comes from ideals and attributed the unimpeded development of the West to religious educators led by "ideals of liberty, of concord, of peace, of charity, and of justice" (117). A resurgent China must adopt a different set of ideals if it wants to see durable development. While creeds and convictions form the basis of Western ideals, Yen takes a different tack and draws attention to the visible habits that create moral character. In doing so, the Shanghai native collapses

personal and national identities: “Let us first of all set up a new standard in public and private morality. … If we only prove ourselves as their [reactionaries’] superiors in ethics and morals, then our reputation as a class of men and as patriots will be placed on a foundation of rock” (118). In teasing apart religion from morality, Yen argues for moral conduct to be the true measure of one’s moral beliefs, offering a way for Chinese students to decades later argue against the injustice of discrimination, extraterritorial privileges, and even American silence in the wake of armed aggression. Yen’s speech ties studying, socializing, and cultivating a moral character into the students’ primary objective of learning.

Learning Through Acculturation

As the numbers in the previous section show, the Chinese students weren’t spread evenly throughout the country but were distributed into a handful of cities and states. Cities with larger Chinese student populations enabled collaboration and reduced the likelihood of loneliness but did little to discourage group seclusion and promote Chinese-American interactions. Conversely, universities that saw only one or two Chinese students foisted much attention upon them, but such attention was sometimes smothering and was a poor remedy for homesickness (Chapter 3). It became apparent to the student, no matter her or his locale, that the richest source of American knowledge sat in classrooms, ran businesses, and worked in Christian missions. Joseph Bailie, missionary to China and professor of agriculture at Nanking University, observed on a visit back home to the eastern states that the students “segregate themselves too much from the life of the place in which they live. In some places they tend to form a little China among themselves” (“Chinese” 17). Such isolation meant that students learn little from American institutions. That some of the segregation arose from a hasty dismissal of their peers can be seen in Bailie’s defense

of American students. They might seem to care only about baseball, but they "live in the atmosphere of democratic government from childhood and absorb the spirit of Americanism" and therefore make great subjects of study (Bailie, "Chinese" 18). Fletcher S. Brockman, YMCA General Secretary for China, urged the students to go beyond the curriculum and seek relationships with peers and professors, imploring them to use the services of the YMCA or YWCA to set up visitations to American homes. Further, while it might be easier to repudiate American institutions for their faults, they ought to be studied "sympathetically and appreciatively" (Brockman 26). Concurring with this stance was Arthur A. Young, a Chinese student from the West Indies studying at Evansville College. While absorbing everything is unwise, neither is absorbing nothing ("Foreign" 49). Unlike Brockman, however, Young didn't perceive the coddling influence of the YMCA and the church as particularly helpful in getting students to experience American life. Instead, it ought to be experienced through traveling, going to theaters, and partaking in athletics (49). One reason foreign students might not be mingling with their hosts as much, Young explains, was the fear of being seen ignorant of American customs and jokes. Realizing this anxiety, local clubs attempted initiatives to enhance the success of interactions. For example, at the University of Wisconsin, Charles Shao and Franklin Shore created a club that helped Chinese students improve their conversational English, learn customs, and make acquaintances (Sun, "Personal" 19.8 p. 74).

Another suggestion given by Milton Dreyfus, a participant in Stanford's Chinese club, was to adopt local dress and customs as Americans "judge a man much by his externals" (47). To ensure they are going with the trends, students ought to save their shopping till they actually get to America, and only shop at big clothing stores on the main street (47). While the YMCA may not be representative of America as there are millions who are not Christians, unsavory elements exist

in every culture, and if only the Chinese would give American students the chance, they would find them on the whole to be “honest, fair, and well-meaning” (Dreyfus 48). For students who may be taken aback by prejudice encountered, Dreyfus reassures that the color divide in American merely reflects a difference in customs and does not demarcate inferiority or superiority (48). Chinese student would find America to be very much “indifferent to you and quite oblivious to your presence” (48). A further tip given by the Stanford student: Be less sensitive as Americans do not engage in “premeditated incivilities,” and refrain from speaking a foreign language among Americans, who might think that the Chinese are withholding secrets (Dreyfus 49).

Successful acculturation relies on the faculty of seeing. One of the primary habit that D. Y. Lin expected his comrades to develop was that of “observing things … the object for which we are sent here” (161). Observing, mingling, and socializing expanded the students’ learning objective in a way that textbooks and laboratories couldn’t. Observant students were the better laborers for China’s welfare as they brought back a more genuine American article, the real McCoy. But D. Y. Lin, like Secretary Yen in his 1908 conference speech, tiptoes around the line between being involved but not being too involved. In adopting a habit of observation, “to observe their [Americans’] manners and customs, to observe their institutions, and above all, to observe the forces that are at the back of the American civilization” (D. Lin 161), one has to be in close proximity with those things. To observe a phenomenon with the most authenticity is to partake in that phenomenon. A learning that incorporates socialization requires Chinese students, who have crossed the Pacific in search of knowledge, to shed a part of their pre-crossing identity and embrace a new “American” identity. But was this something to fear? As Chinese students are girded by an education in their own history and traditions prior to their voyage, explains Rutien J.

Li, these leaders can march into foreign universities and colleges to "secure a knowledge and intimacy with western civilization" (379). His foundation firm, the student "critical[ly] survey[s]," "scrutinizes," "studies," and then "harvests" (R. J. Li 379). He posits that the student cannot forget his carefully arranged upbringing; his home education acts as a talisman that wards him from harm no matter what territory he enters. Not every Chinese student felt the need to safeguard a Chinese "center." For Tseng Ku Chuan, the second-place winner of the English oratorical contest at the 22nd annual conference of the western section at Stanford (1924), the problem is that the Chinese weren't foreignized enough, taking up the superficialities of Western civilization "in such things as Ford cars, victrolas, radio sets and Hart-Schaffner-Marx suits" and passing by the "high-brow" philosophies, literature, music, and arts ("Appeal" 19). Denouncing jazz music, vaudeville acts, and and baseball stories as unrepresentative of Western civilization, Chuan calls his peers to learn and "assimilate" the fundamentals (20).

In *One Thousand Plateaus*, Gilles Deleuze and Pierre-Félix Guattari define the act of deterritorialization as "two simultaneous movements, one by which a term (the subject) is withdrawn from the majority and another by which a term (the medium or agent) rises up from the minority" (291). In their interactions in the U.S., Chinese students were becoming-American as they took on the language, customs, and thought patterns of their hosts, a process that dissolved the boundary between the "Chineseness" they were bringing and the "Americanness" they were imbibing and ingesting. By Chineseness and Americanness, I mean the cultural elements (speech, dress, practice, foodways) that these students considered to be distinct to the Chinese and to the American. Rather than adopting essentializing and monolithic definitions, I take them as tentative and ephemeral forms that metamorphose with the rhetorical situation. The line between the two has

blurred since the 1880s with American traders and their wares, and Protestant missionaries and their religious schools. However, the distinctiveness of the two was not wholly dismissed but was kept in play by the students whose objectives depended on such distinctiveness. There would have been no need for a physical movement into American space, and the carrying back of American knowledge, had they not believed in a distinction between Chineseness and Americanness.

One of the more interesting aspects of this concept, the process of becoming American—not legally, of course, but culturally—is that its biggest detractors were the American professors and university presidents who spoke at the students' annual conferences. In a speech at the Princeton conference in late August 1911, Professor John G. Hibben, incoming president of Princeton, characterizes the nature of western learning for which the students were striving to procure as a productive system of investigation and research, the application of knowledge to the optimization of economic and political systems, and the inheritance of a composite people that took the best from the Greeks and Romans and imbued it with "a destiny of progress from the Anglo-Saxon blood and spirit" (52-53). One of the dangers he warns the students against was the wholesale adoption of this learning and the forgetting of the moral inheritance of the Chinese: "your commercial truthfulness and honor, your filial piety, your reverence for the sacredness of family ties, the spirit of contentment, of courtesy and of gratitude, the simplicity of your needs and desires, and those homely virtues of industry, frugality and thrift" (56). Such moral remembrance would avert the evils and excesses of American technocracy that is merely reproduced (Hibben 58). In another platform address in the same week, Professor Frederick Wells Williams of Yale, born in Macao and son of a missionary, enjoined his audience to befriend Americans so that the students can practice their English and broaden their perspectives (164). In doing so, however, they

should refrain from picking up the Americans' comportment of rough informality, not because it's unacceptable in the U.S., but because it would not translate well in China, causing the students' and Westerners' prestige to suffer (164). In their scientific education, they should not simply take without regard for what is applicable to Chinese conditions; instead of discarding the old, they should aim to reinterpret the Confucian classics (165). Echoing Hibben, what ought to serve as a framework for their learning is the Chinese "instinct for morality" (Williams 167). Concurrently, at the Madison Conference of the midwestern section of the Alliance, Dean of the Graduate School George Cary Comstock encouraged the conversion to American ideals but called the students to remain "Chinese to the core" (qtd. in S. D. Lee, "Second" 69).

The audience in these three venues probably reacted with pride to these admonishments. In a sort of Althusserian hailing, they probably projected gratefulness for informed American speakers—they were honored guests after all—and cherished the positive characterization of their legacy. However, in drawing a line between American technology (i.e., the application of knowledge for practical ends) and a Chinese moral core, the American dignitaries unwittingly employ an us/them rhetoric that recapitulates the unassimilability argument that bolstered the Exclusion Act. The distinction locates Chineseness in the antiquated past and Americanness in a breakneck modernity. In encouraging the students to retain their past, the platform speakers foreclose the possibility of constructing new identities in a third space. It must be clarified that the binary is not American materialism versus Chinese spiritualism. Hibben tells the students to look beneath the surface of American knowledge and locate "its precious seed" (54), the theories that underpin those facts and formulas. Williams warns against insubstantial learning and invites the students to consider the "unseen" ideals such as those expressed through Christianity: "The ideal

for which [missionaries'] stand … an unselfish desire to help those from whom they can derive no possibly worldly benefit … is the grandest gift the West has to present to the East" (168). Neither is the binary between valued and devalued terms; in fact, the emphasis on Chinese morality likely reflects popular anxieties in a burgeoning capitalist society with Christian influence on the wane. Rather, my argument is that the delineation itself, and the shooing of Chinese students from total Americanization, redeploys the "Chinese as sage" trope and represents one hindrance of the students' learning through socialization objective.

It wasn't until the late 1920s when *CSM* articles appeared that cast Confucianism as a liability. President Yuan's brief reinstitution of the monarchy was preceded by the 1914 restoration of the public worship of Confucius, a move that Ti-Tsun Li of Wisconsin rationalizes as politically expedient, given the philosopher's conviction of the ruler as the rightful parent of the people, and given Yuan's desire to identify with "the most Chinese of all Chinese products" (54). H. S. Chen, in his reflection on 17 years of republican non-accomplishments, acknowledges the role of western exploitation but surmises that the fruit had to be rotten for worms to grow on it (49). Confucianism taught no sense of bond beyond the family, which Chen sees as the reason for republican dysfunction. The old tradition prized "good man politics" (i.e., the only thing needed in maintaining the welfare of a state is a good person on the throne), while the modern state required loyalty to an abstract principle, not a person (52). Chinese morality, largely ceremonial and imposed, has to be replaced by a public morality if corruption and graft in the government were to be stemmed (H. S. Chen 53). These weren't simply anti-Confucianist arguments; they were symptomatic of a population of students caught between becoming American and remaining Chinese. Yung Chi Hoe of Harvard University, praises John Earl Baker's book, *Explaining China*

(1927) for its criticism of the blind familism that Confucianism fosters, claiming it offers nothing enlightening for the understanding of citizen-state relations: “Out of our excessive devotion to the family have flowed all the evil consequences,” such as disregard for the law, inept administration, and the preoccupation of saving face (Hoe 164). Hoe queries: “What are we to do when we go back? The truth is that we can’t do much, unless we either immediately adopt the Chinese ways, or completely disregard them. Being half and half in the American and the native habits of life, a returned Chinese student is caught in all sorts of antinomies” (165). This reinterpretation of a canon was prompted by the prolonged civil war and reflected the helplessness the students must have felt. Repeated disappointments with reneged promises and stalling tactics of western diplomacy might have also caused the students to wonder if the paradigm of Confucian politeness and civility, deployed as a Western trope, had conspired to suppress their people and sustain their suffering under unfair treaties. The Chineseness offered by Confucianism governed the students’ conduct and tethered their possibilities for rhetorical incivility, and a new Chineseness, a nationalism forged through resisting western treachery, emerged as a more viable base from which to engage the world.

Secondary Objective: Intervening for China

Students who were brave enough to befriend American classmates and professors quickly realized that, as much as they were learning from them, there was just as much to chafe against. In the same breath as warm platitudes were questions that betrayed an ignorance of or a mild resentment toward their country or its people. Michigan student Y. F. Wu, in her conversations with American girls, was asked: “Do you have snow in China?” “How do you eat soup with chopsticks?” while Americans who had more familiarity with and a genuine interest in China

would inquire: “Tell us about the education of Chinese women, about your family, or about Chinese art” (qtd. in D. Wong, “Among” 48). Even for those students who weren’t as sociable, the experience of disembarking in Seattle, finding a room to rent, and opening a newspaper convinced them that they weren’t being regarded as mere visiting guests or objects of curiosity but as bodies on which American ideas of Chineseness were inscribed. The students’ primary directive to acquire knowledge through coursework and fraternization offered no guidance on how to manage micro and macroaggressions. What was obvious, though, was that something had to be done, as American attitudes toward the Chinese could determine foreign policy, and propagating a more favorable impression of the Chinese could improve China’s chances of reclaiming its sovereignty and achieving respect on the world stage. Adopting a second objective of correcting misrepresentations became imperative; while it might not have much to do with the objective of learning, it fell under the category of laboring for China. To be clear, what the students realized facing negative experiences wasn’t that they suddenly had to represent China, but that their sense of duty as representatives of China and Chineseness obligated them to intervene through rhetorical activity.

That these students saw themselves as the vanguard of a revolution was undeniable. The language used in *CSM* to describe themselves was bombastic and laudatory. Comparing students to missionaries and soldiers, Rutien J. Li called himself and others the leaders of China’s transition from a “conservative spirit” (378). One *CSM* writer in 1914 divided the population into three. While China fell into ruin because of the “old” generation, whose “sluggishness of senility” enabled the national humiliations, and while a “mature” generation tore down the ancient edifice through revolution, it remains the task of the “young” generation, the students studying abroad, to

rebuild from the ground up (H. Kwong, “Three” 129). In the February 1922 issue, when it became clear that the Washington Conference did nothing to annul extraterritorial rights and restore tariff autonomy but instead resolved to set up commissions to look into these matters, F. Chang announced it was time for the diplomats to step down as representatives of China: “It is futile to expect justice from others by talking and it is a shame to rely on protection from others. China must raise her position by deeds and concrete accomplishments. On the Chinese students at home and abroad this grave responsibility rests” (“Futility” 337).

As representatives sent by China, they imagined themselves as representatives of China and Chineseness, and their interactions with Americans was believed to be emblematic of the state of Sino-American relations. “Who Shall Make China Known, and How?” was the title of a call to action in the “magazine section” of the April 1909 issue of the *Monthly*. The provocative piece recounted the innumerable times students have been asked questions that betrayed an ignorance of their country, such as “whether we ever saw railroads” (“Who” 386). Interlocutors expressed surprise when told about the size and rapid progress of China. What fostered these misrepresentations and kept China as a “mystery” were Chinese officials and merchants as well as Americans who sought to provoke a favorable reaction to their travel stories and Americans who only come into contact with their “next door laundry proprietors” (387). What was needed to remove this “stumbling block to friendship” between the two nations was a new kind of representative, one who is able and eager to utilize various avenues for the dissemination of correct information through the written and spoken word (“Who” 387). Simply being a good scholar and “keep[ing] away from temptations” (moral conduct) weren’t enough, it seems; what was needed were skilled rhetors who would take advantage of welcoming public meeting places, such as

churches. Delivering lectures that tell of the grand traditions and current reforms of China to a public that "very seldom [has] seen any article written by Chinese or heard a Chinese lecturer" would be "rendering a noble service" (388). Internationally minded Americans also helped reinforce the ambassadorial and corrective role of the students. For Amy S. Jennings, editor of *The New Student*, poet, and Barnard College graduate, simply having international students in proximity is not good enough as formal education tends to entrench rather than dispel the mythicality of other cultures (13). Americans gawk at the foreigner "as though they were a species of strange animal which for some inexplicable reason is governing a country instead of being exhibited in a zoo" (14). Because of the deceptiveness of politicians and media, a true understanding of other nations requires friendships with foreign students, and the 2,000 Chinese students in the U.S. provides the most "un-mythical" basis for understanding (Jennings 15). Interestingly enough, they were argued to be also representatives of America in China. Arthur A. Young calls the 2,500 Chinese youths in the U.S. as "an advertising medium of golden value," a walking billboard for a market of 400 million people making decisions on what to eat, drink, and wear ("China's" 42). Young persuades industrialists to consider carefully their treatment of these students: "Consider what it mean to you company to win their friendship—these students who are preparing to become executives in various branches of commerce and industry and will undoubtedly wield a tremendous influence when they return home" (43). Furthermore, enlightened businesses might ease the Chinese government's hesitation of continuing to send students abroad by supplying the very thing that the students were accused of lacking:

> Invite him to your factory and let him see the wheels of industry in motion. Provide him with work for a limited period so that he may grasp the technique of practical

> methods. Give him occasions to observe the working facilities of your chambers of commerce, your noonday luncheons, your bankers' institutes, and your trade conventions. Give him every opportunity to witness how Americans are translating education into action. (A. Young, "China's" 44)

Young wasn't alone in his opinion; he cites that it enjoys the backing of the American Manufacturers' Export Association and American chambers of commerce (45). The students' bidirectional representativeness indirectly aided them in achieving their primary learning objective by motivating Americans to accept their presence in the workplace.

Wang's call encapsulates that second objective of interventionism, one that these students probably didn't leave home with but that quickly emerged from their interactions with townspeople, journalists, and classmates. In laboring for China, while the objective of knowledge gathering through coursework and training compelled the students' voyages in the first place, and certainly remained paramount, their calculus did not account for another purpose to emerge and thus another identity to assume. The students that were initially called to be apprentices and trainees began to see themselves as cultural experts. Responding to Wang's article in a letter to the editor, Miss S. T. Lok of Randolph-Macon College in Virginia concurred and offered further recommendations: "I have always thought that it is our duty … to try to clear the existing misunderstanding as much as possible" ("Randolph-Macon" 537). Not only should students be encouraged to write in the *Monthly*, essays should be submitted to prominent U.S.-based periodicals such as the *Outlook* (1870–1935) and *The Literary Digest* (1890-1938). Copies of *CSM* should also be made available in the libraries of educational and religious institutions in America and abroad (537). Likely referring to their primary objective and tasks as students, Lok

avers: “Since our work is progressing, I think the time has come for us to consider these points” (Lok, “Randolph-Macon” 537).

By 1915, the Chinese students’ corrective objective had been fully accepted despite a persistent dissatisfaction toward the paucity of student writing. In “The Chinese Student and the American Public,” Y. L. Tong reminds his readers that their mission is two-fold: “In the first place, of course, he is here to learn and acquire; in the second place, he is to represent his country unofficially … [I]t is the duty of the Chinese student not only to try to remove as many misconceptions and misunderstandings as possible about our country … but also to disseminate a correct and true understanding” (“Chinese Student” 348). A consistent source of reliable information lays the groundwork for a sympathy towards China’s welfare. Comparing his peers to the Japanese students, whose writings have led to an improved public perception of Japan, the former remain very much inactive in writing articles for newspapers and magazines despite their larger numbers (349). For the eager writer, Tong advises that he must himself be informed: “Hazy and hot-headed utterances and unbalanced statements should be guarded against. They will do more harm than good and tend to destroy the strength and weight of the ideas and informations in your writing” (351). That the opinion surrounding the Chinese students was that they weren’t doing enough can also be gleaned from the title of a 1916 *CSM* article by Patrick Gallagher: “Speak for Yourself.” Among polite company at a New York club, the editor of The Far Eastern Bureau overheard Bret Harte’s notorious quip on the “dark” ways of the “Heathen Chinese” (“Speak” 417), which Gallagher takes as evidence of the “tenacious roots” of an unfavorable public opinion toward the Chinese (418). While The Far Eastern Bureau is doing what it could to disseminate the truth of Chinese affairs, the burden remains on the students and not their friends to

"tal[k] directly to the American people" and correct misrepresentations (419). Gallagher noted that the lack of rhetorical activity cannot be due to a want of skill, as they exhibit plenty in debates, lectures, and after-dinner conversation (419). American editors are hungry for truthful information, and the more active the Chinese students can be in furnishing their point of view, the more the former could utilize their platform and bring before the public a more accurate picture of China:

> How many among you possessing literary ability utilize that ability to write those things about your country and your people which would give the American editor a chance to put the Chinese viewpoint more thoroughly and satisfactorily before his readers? How many among you, with or without conspicuous literary ability, take the trouble to cultivate the acquaintance of editors who would eagerly utilize the things you can tell them, helpful to China and to America[?] (Gallagher, "Speak" 420)

The editor's positive response to Gallagher's plea demonstrates that, on the importance of corrective rhetorical acts, there was much agreement between *CSM* leadership and American allies. While students have performed their first duty of acquiring Western learning rather well, they have so far done little to dismantle caricatures of their country, such as one New York editor's opinion of China as "a vast laundry with chop suey houses all around it" (qtd. in Soong, "Our" 382). Part of the reason for this reticence, reasons the editor, may be that the Chinese students do not want to imitate the loquaciousness of their Japanese peers, who write much but with little sincerity. They may clamor for equal treatment for a honorable people, but what of their treachery in speaking of friendship with China and then springing on it the Twenty-One Demands, which aimed to extend Japanese control of Manchuria and Shantung Province and take charge of China's economy and

military? No, the Japanese believe that "sufficient reiteration will change a downright falsehood to a pleasing truth" (383). The editor's response reveals an ambiguous relationship toward rhetoric, believing that it is only necessary if there's something to hide. It is laudable for the Chinese to patiently take the moral high ground and let the truth win out—Gallagher calls them "modest" ("Speak" 419)—but the surplus of indignities suffered by their compatriots are forcing the students to engage in practices otherwise deemed unsavory. It is admittedly jarring to read Tong and Gallagher's remonstrations when the Chinese students did not, in fact, remain silent in the face of prejudice, as the following chapters will show. Not an issue of *CSM* goes by without a scathing book review, an editorial responding to acts of discrimination, or a narrative documenting a students' negative experience. So whence come these complaints? Perhaps they show that more can always be done in a surrounding marked by overwhelming prejudice. They could also be suggesting the limitations of what the student body can do in influencing public opinion. Or maybe these ought to be interpreted as reminders that impress the need for maintaining eternal vigilance.

In the November and December of 1927, Stanley Kuhl Hornbeck gave a series of eight lectures on China as part of the Lowell Institute Lectures at Harvard. Hornbeck was a Harvard lecturer on Far East matters, having earned his Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin and taught political science there for four years. The lectures were praised by William L. Shen, a Harvard MBA graduate and assistant director of Boston's Chinese Trade Bureau, for their impartiality, their comprehensiveness (covering Chinese pre-revolution and post-revolution history, politics, geography, culture, and foreign and domestic concerns), and a "friendly and sympathetic attitude" ("Reflections" 58). It was probably inevitable that Shen found Hornbeck's lectures sympathetic: The Hoover Institution Archives contain notes from Hornbeck's Saturday Lunch Club speech

before Chinese UW students in 1915 and materials from the annual Chinese Students' Alliance conference in 1916, suggesting some intimacy with the Chinese population. In his reflection on Hornbeck's lectures, which inextricably meshes Hornbeck's material with his own thoughts, Shen acknowledged that China had not consistently made headlines prior to the nationalist movement, and that many Americans still consider China backward and "a land of mystery" ("Reflections" 58). The country is still being represented as the charming Shangri-La of steamship advertisements and the Chinese as the "wicked, cruel, and immoral people" of motion pictures (59). The ongoing Nationalist Movement, which Shen traces to the New Thought Movement of 1919, has come at an opportune time, being the "best medium of broadcasting China's determination" (60). Here (again, it isn't clear whether this is from Shen or Hornbeck), the Chinese students are positioned as a bona fide rhetorical participant in the larger Chinese community's effort in counteracting media influence:

> The Chinese students' clubs of American colleges and universities have been trying to explain the Chinese events clearly and truly to our American friends through their publicity committee, or information bureau. The Chinese merchants have also issued their manifesto for the real appreciation of the Nationalist Movement in China. … [A] group of Chinese scholars and experts, coming directly from China, … [are] addressing American audiences in all parts of country. … Worthy books written by both Americans and Chinese, leading articles in papers and magazines, lectures and addresses, college courses—all contribute immensely toward the happy meeting of the East and the West. (W. Shen, "Reflections" 60)

But even then, there remains a need for interpreting events "against the Chinese background and from the Chinese viewpoint," and Hornbeck's lectures and pamphlets present a good starting point (60). Shen's reflection on Hornbeck's presentations recognizes a bourgeoning rhetorical campaign by the students even as it demonstrates the power of historical exigencies in creating the right occasion for collaboration and in composing an attuned audience. As the rising Nationalist movement captured more front pages of newspapers, students and their American allies were well-positioned to fill in the details and missing context for curious readers and listeners.

Hornbeck's lectures took place in a university in Massachusetts, and that state had always been a harbor for Chinese students. The first four annual Alliance conferences took place in Amherst, Andover, and Ashburnham, and the *Monthly* contains regular club reports from students in Harvard, MIT, and Boston University. The first welfare school to be reported in *CSM* was created in 1910 for Chinese merchants and laborers by Harvard and MIT students (H. Wu, "General" 600), and Boston students were part of a Chinese soccer team recognized by the U.S. Football Association (Mok, "Chinese Soccer" 130). Outside of California and the Northeast, because of their fewer and/or more dispersed numbers, the pressure on Chinese students to "speak for themselves" was correspondingly greater. Vernon Schopp's reflection on what China means to him deserves some treatment. Published in *CSM* in May 1928, the essay offers detailed insight into the sources of information that would feed into an American Midwestern student's conception of China in the Roaring Twenties. An examination of those sources furthers our understanding of what a Chinese student has to do to intervene effectively.

Schopp begins by narrating an incident three years ago when a Chinese student visited an American college friend in a midwestern city. The friend had over an editor, lawyer, banker, and

other professionals who were all eager to meet “a representative of the Chinese race upon an intimate footing” (42). After they all had their turns asking the student questions related to their occupations, the conversation quickly devolved into the mundane topic of tea production. The American also had a visiting Russian friend, and he was asked an unending stream of incisive questions, such as on the progress of the revolution and the competence of certain leaders. In the case of the Chinese student, the querier seemed “handicapped by the fact that they did not know enough to ask particular questions” (42). Schopp attributes this lack of knowledge to the lack of firsthand sources. Few Midwesterners have traveled to China, and travelers aren’t known to stay at a city long enough to know it in depth (43). There’s also a scarcity of Chinese in the region. Midwesterners aren’t likely to meet one beyond their launderer, and even if they meet one, how representative of the nation would that person be? “We see Chinese acrobats and jugglers in our theatres … are, therefore, all Chinese agile and adroit?” (43). While some Midwesterners have met with Chinese students and have noted their “gentlemanly bearing,” their numbers are much too few to produce a widely-dispersed impression (Schopp 43). What Midwesterners are left with are secondhand sources like history textbooks, which talks superficially of dynasties and revolutions, and geography texts, which create an almost idyllic picture, “leav[ing] us with the impressions that the Chinese spend their lives in wading barefooted in marshes, cultivating rice, in making silk cloth from the cocoons of innumerable worms, in raising tea and tediously rolling by hand tea, or in lolling lazily in a river junk” (44). Newspapers are no better as they offer a tiring lineup of “wars and battles, floods, banditry, earthquakes, murders, and famines,” while periodical analysts are too biased to explain these events equitably (Schopp 44).

Here, Schopp returns to find fault with other firsthand sources that corresponds to the categories in Stuart Creighton Miller's *The Unwelcome Immigrant* (1969), which examines the producers and propagators of the Chinese image from 1785-1882. To missionaries, diplomats, and importers, Schopp adds the category of newspaper correspondents, an inclusion that reflects the rise of high-circulation newspapers in the 19th century. While Schopp knew no diplomat nor reporters, the knowledge of China presented by business persons and missionaries leaves a lot to be desired. Merchandisers might gush about the quality of Chinese art, but there's no frame of reference for the Midwesterner to understand it: "Chinese calligraphy is meaningless to us, and besides, we have no corresponding art with which to compare it" (45). Missionaries either are blinded by beliefs that label Chinese and their customs as "heathen" or so humanistic that their own congregations distrust them (45). Again, the lack of a frame of reference is also troubling: "Our definitions of the words, 'religion' and 'worship' and our application of those terms to China, together with our inability to understand a people who claim no Savior, stand as formidable obstacles in the way of our spiritual understanding" (Schopp 45).

What middle America needs isn't more information, Schopp argues, but a means to interpret that information, and he trusts that the Chinese students are up to the task. They must collaboratively "formulate a body of literature … which can be made accessible to all Americans and which will represent China, present and past, in her history, her ideals, her poetry, her fiction, her philosophy, her religions, and her accomplishments and aspirations" (45). While Schopp's proposal might come across as idealistic, it does strengthen the argument that the students must take on a teaching role in addition to a learning role, and it does reflect the unevenness of their impact in the U.S. through the 1920s. Even though the midwestern Alliance conference has been held

annually for 17 years prior to the publication of this narrative, and even though there were always significant pockets of Chinese at the University of Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin—the UW club reached a high of 50 members in 1922 ("Wisconsin Club" 56)—Schopp's experiences hint at the immensity of the students' task at reaching a wider population. It also fleshes out their secondary objective: The student cannot simply provide more or more accurate information, they have to provide a framework that helps their audience interpret this information. In addition, while face-to-face representation while carrying a "gentlemanly bearing" is essential, their repertoire must include modes that cross time and distance. Chapters 4 and 5 examine rhetorical practices that involve the physical body (e.g., putting on plays, participating in sports, even dropping out from school) as well as the written and spoken word (e.g., book reviews, letters to theater managers and editors, church talks).

The secondary objective of correcting misunderstanding and combating prejudice had a transformative effect on those activities subsumed under the primary learning objective as laid out by Chinese legation secretary W. W. Yen in 1908. Students were to absorb knowledge from textbooks and classrooms, but they began to send corrections to periodicals and challenge professors. Students were to socialize to observe the American life, but they began to socialize to alter conceptions of China and the Chinese and recruit sympathetic allies. Students were to drink from the fount of Christianity, but they began to confront missionaries for their inaccuracies and criticize American foreign and domestic policy on the basis of common morality.

Chapter 3: Forging a Voice Amidst Legal, Economic, and Social Discrimination

The Chinese students' transnational and transcalar understanding of themselves and their mission was partially born out of a discriminatory context that reinforced such understanding. The legal. economic, and social discrimination of the Chinese *en masse* was proof to the students that what was being rejected and regulated was not merely Chinese bodies but the very concept of China and Chinese. To make this argument, I posit that the Chinese students by and large were not exempt from maltreatment even though they were exempt as a class from the Chinese Exclusion Act. Thus, one intention of this chapter is to plot the experiences of these Chinese students studying in America and compare them to those of other Chinese emigrants in this era. In addition to helping them forge a transcalar and transnational identity, the similarity in their treatment is also an argument for their inclusion in Chinese American histories that tend to prioritize laborers, merchants, and merchants' wives. Although the students certainly did not consider themselves as Americans (notwithstanding their critics' allegations of Americanization), an expanded history of Asian Americans that includes the stories of transitory residents reveals a consistency in attitude toward Asians regardless of social class and of any intention to stay and make a life. While it is not always appropriate to treat Asian Americans and Asian residents in America as a single category, this difference becomes moot in an era that excludes the whole race from naturalization.

Further, chronicling and comparing the students' experiences also help us understand the circumstances that furnished the exigence and topics for the students' rhetorical responses (Chapter 4). The student writers were not unaware that their stories held a rhetorical purpose; the narratives that furnish the material for this chapter were not simply a recounting of experiences and communication of facts but an advocacy for change as they testify to their persistent struggles and

dashed expectations while in the United States[2]. Similarly, the purpose of this chapter isn't to construct an exhaustive catalog of their experiences but to attribute these encounters to the students' emplacement in a racial hierarchy and the American imaginary of Chineseness. How did their encounters forge their transcalar and transnational self-concept and force the students to speak out and talk back as transcalar and transnational agents?

Shelley Lee has argued that American xenophobia against Asians stemmed not from their threatening numbers—from 1861-1924, one million arrived from Asia while 30 million arrived from Europe—but from the need for a scapegoat during social and economic crises (122). This corresponds with research by Sucheng Chan, who found that violence against Asians in California spiked during periods of economic strife in 1873, 1886, and 1893 (Chan 53). Ronald Takaki called the Exclusion Act "symptomatic of a larger conflict between white labor and white capital" (111). These economic impulses disguised a more encompassing racial structuring, and Shelley Lee proposes that anti-Asianism helped delineate whiteness and define the boundaries of U.S.

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[2] Central to this chapter are nine Chinese student narratives found across six volumes of the *Chinese Students' Monthly*. Most of them are no longer than a few pages; a couple are published in installments across multiple issues. The nine pieces are the only ones I was able to find from the *Monthly*'s publication history (1905-1931) that fit the definition of narrative as a retelling or representation of a series of events. On the whole, the personal narrative isn't a prevalent genre in the magazine. A reader is more likely to encounter editorials, transcribed speeches, expository pieces, and informative reports, which may make use of narrative, but aren't narratives *in toto*. However, contra their sparsity is a surprising consistency in theme and trajectory: Hero leaves home in high spirits, hero faces unexpected challenges in the community, and hero settles into a routine possessing a more ambivalent attitude toward America and Americans. Emphasizing the roles of the rhetor and audience, Lucaites and Condit define narrative "a story that serves as an interpretative lens through which the audience is asked to view and understand the verisimilitude of the propositions and proof before it" (94). While these narratives bear witness to the students' experiences, they also represent counter-narratives to the master narrative that drew these students to the Land of Opportunity. Rhetorically, these narratives serve didactic functions: as warnings to fellow students to temper their expectations and guard against denationalization, as indictments against American readers for hypocrisy, and as emotion-laden additions to an accumulating body of evidence toward the need for a stronger student union and national self-reliance.

citizenship (122). Lee uses the categories of legal, social, and economic discrimination to explore various tools of racism used to enforce the color line. This grouping is a further distillation of Sucheng Chan's seven categories of prejudice, economic discrimination, political disenfranchisement, physical violence, immigration exclusion, social segregation, and incarceration (45). Lee's categories are a useful framework to scrutinize the post-landing experiences of this "exempt" class as filtered through the rhetorical purposes of student narratives, supplemented by relevant material from the *Monthly*. For many students, their first brush of America was on a Dollar Line steamship, and that is where this chapter begins. What follows is a composite of their narratives supplemented with relevant experiences gleaned from the *Monthly* over the decades.

The Journey Over: A Calm Before

In terms of hardships on the way from Shanghai, the second wave of Chinese students, who traveled in second-class accommodations on turn-of-the-century ships, escaped the worst. In the first half of the 19th century, Chinese laborers heading to North America were taken in sailing vessels. Ronald Takaki's history collected oral testimonies to the cramped, gender segregated living quarters, odors, and bland, stale food (68). The inadequacy of cleaning stations together with the constant turbulence in the two- to three-month journey were to blame for the constant stench of vomit (69). Still, the passengers tried to occupy the time by producing dramas, reciting poetry, and playing musical instruments (Takaki 70). Shelley Sang-Hee Lee surmised that the use of steamships in Pacific crossings beginning in the 1860s alleviated these conditions somewhat (36).

For the second-wave students, life on board was considerably easier. Firstly, they had the chance to travel on much larger ships that were able to make the crossing in as quickly as 10 days though most liners took between two to three weeks with stops (Tate 36; Mason, "Shipping" 86).

Secondly, sanitation on board had begun to see improvement in the 1900s, even for steerage passengers. On the SS Amerika of a German line, launched in 1905, first-class passengers enjoyed hot and cold running water in their tubs and basin stands, while cheaper staterooms had access to common baths (B. Smith 43-44). The marine superintendent of the Great Northern Steamship Company, which operated routes from Seattle to Shanghai and Hong Kong via Japan, boasted of the ventilated baths and lavatories on the SS Minnesota, which saw only "two cases of malignant diseases" among the Chinese passengers and crew (qtd. in Blair 587). The ship, with room for 318 cabin passengers and 1,500 "Asiatic steerage," featured

> [A]ll the usual safety appliances, suites de luxe … and finished in mahogany, and with elaborate fittings, elaborate staterooms with running water, telephone, electric heating and lighting, mechanical ventilation, and every luxury; the dining saloon, music room, library, smoking room, nursery, and other public quarters are finished with little regard to expense; food inspection, laundering, and the sanitary quarters under expert care. (Blair 587)

Even the "Asiatic steerage" was replete with an opium den for the Chinese and Japanese cooks (587). By the second decade of the 20th century, ocean liners had been transformed into "great floating hotels" (Willey 342). It was on these "great floating hotels" that the Chinese students found themselves. For some, the opulence was something to which they had difficulty adapting. Mason, the protagonist in F. L. Chang's "Innocents Abroad," struggled with metal utensils and a new diet on board the boat: "from small bits of seasoned pork to a large piece of raw steak was a dynamic change, which often resulted in indigestion; from a cup of hot tea to a dish of ice cream required a strong constitution to withstand" (300). But rather than dampening his spirit, Mason tried

everything on the menu; that is, until he got to Welsh rarebit (F. L. Chang 301). The dining room was only one of the many facilities that awed the students. Reminiscing about his 1924 voyage, Ken Shen Weigh praised the creature comforts on the SS President Jefferson of the Admiral Oriental Line, which connected Shanghai and Yokohama with the Puget Sound:

> Every convenience is provided. The Social Hall in particular is well decorated, and the electric lights shining in the colored glasses in the fire place represent very homely and artistically the glowing of the hearth. The dining hall is big and serves good meals. The smoking room is cozy for smokers and 'gamblers.' As to service, the management showed every way to accommodate the students. (Weigh 29)

Before he and his fellow sojourners disembarked, a picture was taken of the group on the upper deck. The Admiral Oriental Line sent each student a complimentary copy (Weigh 29). The students took in these welcoming spaces and treatment and probably considered them as only fitting for foreign ambassadors. This special care stood in contrast to the unsettling weight of this role and the legal hassles ashore that many were unprepared for.

On October 12, 1909, when the first batch of indemnity students' departed on the Pacific Mail steamship China II from the Imperial Maritime Customs Wharf, their parents, grandparents, siblings, and betrothed were present to see them off. Even though the students would only be gone for four maybe five years, the thought of an extended separation "became so intense that it almost broke [their] hearts" (L. Kao 185). The mood was faithfully captured in Woon Yung Chun's third-person account "East is East and West is West," which contrasted a bustling liner, "her thousand lights blinking and glowing, her decks alive with people, and black smoke pouring out of her funnel" (491), with the quiet scene on the docks. In the poem, "Longing for Home," Joe Yuen

Jeong asks: “How long must I be kept from thee? … Nothing allays my sad heart’s weariness” (57). For Chi Chang, a later University of Minnesota graduate and a mining engineer with U.S. Steel, the stakes were high: In preparation for the trip, he had telegraphed home several times for money, his brothers having liquidated “almost the last of [their family] property” so that Chang could study abroad (“Up” 37). The pressure to not let down one’s family was indeed great; a poem titled “To the Son Going Abroad” by Kwei Chen contains a line from the father: “But remember, the sole way to love thy parents / Is to let them not receive blame” (“To” 65). At stake also was national pride. In his 1924 account, Johns Hopkins University student Ken Shen Weigh noted that the 130 students aboard the SS President Jefferson were sober at the thought of leaving home, but also rejuvenated by “the call of Duty” of contributing to their homeland, and jubilant for having overcome the last obstacles to studying in America (26), which no doubt involved acquiring immigration papers.

The students’ social activities on board the ships show that, even in this incipient stage, the students possessed a strongly transcalar and transnational understanding of themselves and their objectives. As its namesake suggests, Ken Shen Weigh’s “Our Trip to America” documents the author’s day-to-day activities on the SS President Jefferson. Weigh’s retelling of his three-week journey to Baltimore emphasizes a “spirit of cooperation” (26), centering on what the traveling students did as a group, touring earthquake-torn Kobe and Tokyo in motorcars, enduring bad weather, and overcoming alarming but temporary immigration lapses. The unity and self-government of the students seem to be Weigh’s foci. Particularly illustrative is Weigh’s recording of an election that took place on board. The 130-plus body of Chinese students that boarded on August 22, 1924, was equally divided between Tsing Hua alumni and privately-funded

or independent students. The privately-funded students had desired their own association, but as they were strangers to each other, it was impossible to vote for officers based on capability:

> Finally it was agreed upon that a nomination committee be elected which should consist of representatives from the various institutions, in proportion to the number of students they had. Any institution which had three students on board was entitled to one place on the committee. Those who belonged to institutions which had less than three members could combine with the others to make a group of five to elect one member to the committee. (Weigh 27)

That same evening, a 12-member nomination committee elected the president, vice-president, English secretary, Chinese secretary, treasurer, business manager, and social committee chair of the association, and the results were approved at another mass meeting the following day, in which the name and functions of the association were also discussed (Weigh 27). Weigh's narrative demonstrates that the students persistently tried to put on an organized front to counteract the general belief that the Chinese cannot self-govern, a stereotype a fragmented, post-revolution China did not efface (Chapter 5).

The students' interaction with non-Chinese passengers also provided an opportunity to embody the best the Chinese had to offer. The fellow passengers provided Mason in 1909 his "first opportunity" to observe Western civilization. Three American missionaries filled him with unsolicited advice, an American Jew scolded him for speaking out of turn, and another "typical American" annoyed him with a "Ha! Ha! voice" that rang through the ship (F. L. Chang 301). In 1923, Thomas Lee plopped onto a sofa in the Social Hall and observed a girl at the piano with a man lying at her feet. Thomas watched quietly as "[h]er slender fingers glided over the ivory keys"

and followed her periodic glances at her devotee "whose up-turned face never moved from the graceful bending figure" (T. Chao, "Shadow" 22.1 p. 61). The love scene led to a conversation that evening between Lee and his cabin-mate over the merits of the traditional Chinese marriage system. Reflecting on his 1918 voyage, Chi Chang felt these interactions produced a denationalization to be guarded against. Hearing that a familiarity with parlor games could win over American men and ladies, " a group of enthusiastic boys gathered around a table learning the game of bridge from some philanthropical [sic] American passengers" ("Up" 38). The female students, "[t]he few bella donnas of ours," practiced casting glances over their shoulders at their male counterparts. The amalgamations of "sun-proof coats and white serge trousers" would "swivel as though they were mounted on vertical axes." Even "before touching American soil," Chang noted disappointedly, "nearly all of us had acquired some western superficialities" (38). This self-policing of the Chinese body reveals a preoccupation with meaning-making that transcended the individual body.

Arriving Ashore: Legal Discrimination

The students' feted embarkation and onboard interactions set in place an ambassadorial identity that was further cemented by their reception at port. Fu Chi Hao's "My Reception in America" documents the author's 1901 trip on the SS Doric[3]. Fu's troubles began when he and his

[3] I chose to include Fu's "My Reception in America" in the corpus even though it was published in *The Outlook*, a New York City weekly magazine, as his story was abstracted in the third volume of *CSM* (1907-8). In an editorial titled "The Alliance and the Students Coming to America," F. C. Yen seems to assume some reader familiarity with Fu's essay: "[T]he difficulties of gaining admission in this country are always in dread of more or less by every new comer. Those who have read an article by Mr. C. H. Fei [sic] in the August number of 'The Outlook' will sympathize with him for the difficulties he experienced … He was detained for no less than 18 months, on the ground that his pass port was issued by Li Hung-Chang and not by the customs [tao]tai, the only official then recognized by the American government to issue such certificates" (F. Yen 77). Yen uses Fu's case to argue for a larger role for the Alliance in welcoming arrivals and ensuring their

college mate arrived to San Francisco on September 13, 1901 and was denied landing by the inspector, who rejected their passports for being signed by Li Hung Chang, the governor-general of Zhili, and not a customs taotai. To compound the problem, the U.S. consul in Tientsin also made omissions and translation mistakes in their passports (Fu 771). Originally ordered to leave with the Doric a week later, Fu stayed on the ship till its departure, after which he was transferred to the Pacific Mail Steamship Company shed at Pier 40. In this "Chinese jail," which spanned 100 square feet and held as many as 200 people—Erika Lee suggests twice as many (E. Lee 124)—Fu and his detainees ate from the floor "like a group of animals" and endured physical abuse by the American warden (772). His bestial metaphor wasn't the first. In his 1900 book, Presbyterian pastor Ira Condit observed that the inspectors would "pe[n] up" laborers and merchants "like a flock of sheep" while the former took their time with their investigation (qtd. in E. Lee 56). Unsanitary conditions and inept administration led to the death of one merchant and the disappearance of a child (E. Lee 56). Haunted by another story of a man who hanged himself after four months, Fu was finally freed after the Chinese consul in San Francisco posted a $2,000 bond. Unfortunately, his corrected passport hadn't yet arrived, and for a year, the prospective student dallied in San Francisco and Tacoma, Washington, spending time with his American missionary and educator sponsor (Fu 772).

In August 1902, almost a year after arrival, the bail bond agent permitted Fu to leave for Oberlin to begin his schooling. However, the choice of traveling with Canadian Pacific Railway, a

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smooth transition. "My Reception in America" readily fits in this set of narratives as it follows the themes and dramatic structure I laid out in an above footnote, suggesting that this genre, or typified rhetorical response, transcends *CSM*, and as such, it would be presumptuous to dismiss it for its place of publication if one of our aims is to understand Chinese student experiences through their writings.

line that took him into Canada, created another six-week detention in North Dakota as the U.S. forbade the Chinese to re-enter the country without proper certification (772). Meanwhile, the bond agent pressed the Chinese consul in San Francisco for Fu's return, but his compliance was stymied by yet another law that prohibited the selling of tickets to any Chinese without proper certification (772). The proper papers arrived from Minister Wu Ting Fang in January 1903 just as Fu had made up this mind to stay in Canada. Again, he made for the border, and again he encountered an obstacle. Because Fu had planned to work way his through college, he lacked proof that he had enough funds for the entirety of his schooling. Reminded that involvement in manual labor would result in immediate deportation, Fu was nevertheless admitted and reached Oberlin on January 10, 1903. In sum, 16 months had elapsed from his docking in San Francisco to his arrival in Oberlin: "I am sure that I can make much better time in China if I travel on a donkey's back" (Fu 773). The experience soured Fu's original attitude toward American idealism and opened his eyes to the plight of thousands of other Chinese who receive the same treatment and are caught between a rock and a hard place:

> You blame the Chinese for going back to China with the money which they earn by their honest labor, yet hotels and restaurants on the Pacific Coast refuse to entertain Chinese, and the law of this country refuses them the right to become citizens. The Chinese are not allowed to bring their wives to this country to live, yet the State law of California forbids intermarriage between the Chinese and the Americans. How can you blame them under such circumstances? (Fu 773)

With this statement, the Oberlin graduate implies that what is most aggravating for him wasn't the inconvenience caused by one or two laws but their viselike deployment against the Chinese in the effort to squeeze them out. "How can I keep quiet?" Fu asks (773).

Chinese students entering as late as 1924 were met with similar immigration difficulties. Ken Shen Weigh and his cohort avoided San Francisco on their way over. On Sunday, September 7, the SS President Jefferson arrived at Victoria, British Columbia, where a bevy of health inspectors, railway representatives, and media personnel boarded the ship. The Chinese vice-consul had also come all the way from Seattle to meet them (Weigh 29). Each contingent held a different puzzle piece to the completion of the students' onward journey, from landing instructions in Seattle to accommodation information for their cross-continent train ride. Even the health inspection was unusually cursory: "The long dreaded medical examination was passed without our knowing it, when the American doctor counted our number as we walked past him from one deck to the other" (29). The initial celerity came to a halt when it became the immigration officers' turn to process the group. To give some context, one of the stipulations of the Immigration Act of 1924 was that all incoming students had to choose an institution approved by the State Department and produce evidence of admittance before being issued a certificate. However, owing to the late promulgation of the act, the list of accredited institutions wasn't yet ready, so no more than a dozen students were given certificates a few days before departure. At this point, "[a] few impatient ones changed their minds to go to other countries, and quite a number either postponed their American trip or gave up going at all" (Weigh 30). At the eleventh hour, a telegram came from Washington instructing the consulate to furnish tourist visas to all the students. Even then, 50 or so students had to wait for the next ship (30).

The immigration officers who boarded in Victoria were not impressed. Not only were the visas inappropriate for the students' desired length of stay (tourist visas were only valid for six months), the signature of the consul-general was missing in many passports. While the students were allowed to proceed to Seattle, they were placed on parole, their "half student and half visitor visas" raising a conundrum while Washington dragged its feet (qtd. in Weigh 30). In contrast to the private students, the Tsing Hua group had all their papers in order and were cleared to board the Chicago-bound train scheduled for Wednesday. Like Fu in 1901, Weigh and his companions were left in limbo, but unlike Fu, they were treated to a grand time in the city:[4] a Monday evening

[4] Several factors might explain the difference in Fu's and Weigh's treatment: the difference in ports, the centralization and improvement of the immigration system after 1910 as noted by Erika Lee, the number of travelers in Weigh's case making an *en masse* rejection less likely, the increased familiarity with the student-class on the part of the border officials, especially after the entrance of the first group of Indemnity scholars in 1909, and the rise of China's international reputation as an albeit troubled democracy after 1911 and its acceptance into the family of nations. (China sent representatives to the Treaty of Versailles in 1919 and the Washington Naval Conference in 1921.) The nature of the transgression might have also influenced the outcome. While in Fu's case, a Chinese official made an error that led to Fu's detainment, it was an American consul-general's fault for omitting signatures and issuing tourist visas (though with Washington approval).

Erika Lee suggests 1910 as the dividing line between arbitrary and explicitly racist treatment of immigrants by inspectors and a more fair-minded approach by administrators who prized efficiency over ideology. In the first decades after the passage of the Exclusion Act, inspectors with the U.S. Customs Service (under the Department of the Treasury) and, later, the renamed Bureau of Immigration (under the Department of Commerce and Labor) determined right of entry. The lack of centralization left the bureau looking to politicians and labor leaders for direction (E. Lee 50). This conflation of interest put into power collectors of customs like John H. Wise, who from 1892 to 1898, required an excessive amount of evidence from exempt classes (52), and James R. Dunn, who as chief inspector from 1899 to 1901 would seize papers without returning them and falsify testimonies (55). Terence V. Powderly, commission-general of immigration from 1898 to 1902, advocated Chinatown raids and the expansion of the exclusion policy into American territories (66), and under Frank P. Sargent (1902-1908), a celebrated labor stalwart, the percentage of denied or arrested exempt-class immigrants increased from 13% in 1898 to 49% in 1904, with the number of exempt-class Chinese arrested and deported more than doubling (E. Lee 67). After the opening of the Angel Island station in 1910, a new kind of inspectors filled the ranks: "career civil servants" who "adhered to standards of expertise and efficiency," selected on the basis of exam scores and training in jurisprudence (E. Lee 69). While

banquet by the China Club of Seattle, ironically dedicated to the "promotion of friendship, peace and commercial intercourse" between the two nations, an automobile tour of Seattle Tuesday morning followed by a church reception, and a movie at Liberty Theatre that evening (Weigh 30). After another Washington telegram "released [them] from [their] honorable confinement" the last hour, the railway operator worked into the night to secure the students' tickets, and the "Chinese Students' Special" chugged out from Union station on the morning of Wednesday, September 10, with everyone holding Section 6 certificates, which were sent directly to the station (30). When the train pulled into Chicago on September 13, almost a week had passed since their port call in Victoria.

Even when students were permitted entry, their belongings were thoroughly scrutinized. Erika Lee noted that, since its 1910 opening, the Chinese at Angel Island station had their bags turned inside out and their interview responses cross-checked against those of their compatriots, with any resultant discrepancy being seen as indicative of deception (E. Lee 86). Although Mason in F. L. Chang's "Innocents Abroad" went through San Francisco in August 1909, the "revelation" of a person he encountered represents the kind of official the others met in the Angel Island period. Mason noted the zeal of his customs inspector, who "was not only more than efficient, but also did more than his duty, so much so that he even suspected that a student might smuggle a few hundred thousand dollars' worth of diamonds, or a few hundred cans of opium" (F. L. Chang 302). Animated by the determination to find something, the inspector used his magnifying glass and flashlight to go over "[e]very little corner of the trunk." When the officer was finally satisfied, Mason's luggage was left in "in sixes and sevens" (302).

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staffers aimed for fair standards, intense interrogations and humiliating medical examinations remained common practice.

While students had access to immigration allies, it is important to frame their existence and use as responses to a drawn-out process strewn with obstacles. The profusion of diplomatic and legal allies and support organizations corresponds to the amount of stress an entering student was bound to experience. In fact, those organizations seem to understand their role in counterbalancing and paving over a difficult ingress, as Weigh's reception in Seattle suggests. Seen in that light, the emphasis of the *Chinese Student's Monthly* on the feted arrival of each batch of students can be interpreted as much a celebration as a reiteration of the importance of solidarity and as continued proof that the Alliance is fulfilling its role as a frontline asset in a student's "most trying time" (F. Yen 77). Arriving students began to be greeted as early as 1906, five years after Fu Chi Hao's fateful journey, by members of the Chinese Students' Christian Association of North America (CSCA). In a 1926 essay reflecting on CSCA's history, Paul C. Meng noted that theirs was the first student organization to meet arrivals at seaports, asserting that neither the China Club, YMCA, nor YWCA were doing the same ("C. S. C. A." 49). These other groups, who were established allies of Chinese immigrants, began to pay attention to this smaller exempt class. The indemnity students who came over in 1909 reported being "most cordially welcomed and entertained" at every stopover by representatives of YMCA and The World's Chinese Students' Federation (1909-1926) (L. Kao 185). In November 1912, fourteen students from five provinces arriving on Pacific Mail's SS Mongolia were given a reception in Hang Far Low by CSCA and the Chinese YMCA in San Francisco. The program began with national "yells" and an address of welcome and ended at 11:30 p.m. ("Echoes" 126). Students affiliated with the western section of the Chinese Students' Alliance took on an increasing role in welcoming the newly arrived. In the evening of September 30, 1916, Alliance members and the CSCA in San Francisco jointly arranged a program for 200 guests at the

Presbyterian Home that included vocal, trombone, piano, and violin solos, games, and refreshments (N. Soo-Hoo, "Reception" 58). By this decade, the YMCA and Presbyterian Mission Home had established their reputation in the Chinese community and accrued respect from immigration officers. The YMCA intervened in multiple landing cases, and the Presbyterian Home were known to assist merchants and "rescue" Chinese prostitutes (E. Lee 137-38; S. S. Lee 162-63). In some cases, student representatives were allowed to board the ship before the passengers disembarked. In September 1917, Miss Margaret K. Mah, the English Secretary of the western section of the Alliance, delighted in the "many radiant faces on deck." Like many of their predecessors, they wined and dined that same evening at the YMCA building (Mah 68). The greeting functions of these organizations extended beyond throwing banquets and speech-making: Incoming students in 1920 on the SS Nanking and SS Nile were given a sightseeing tour around San Francisco Bay and helped with procuring train tickets for their eastward journey (S. D. Lee, "California" 232). Travelers to the Atlantic coast would be received by more reception committees. Settled university students in larger cities like New York were well-positioned to help newcomers navigate complex transportation systems, find proper housing, and register for courses ("Columbia" 612).

These acts of welcome represented more than a "good time"; they were a demonstration of the organizational ability of the Chinese Students' Alliance and other student organizations. They were also a tactic that softened the blow of the newcomers' first American encounter, which involved interrogation by officers who "have made it their special business to find errors in the papers of every Chinese" (Fu 771). They also served as a counterweight to the other legal, social, and economic discrimination that was yet to come. One unanticipated effect of this celebratory start

to the students' educational careers was that it highlighted the discrepancy between the rhetoric of pro-Chinese organizations and the lived, off-campus reality in a largely hostile America. After getting off the boat, Thomas Lee, the protagonist in Thomas Ming-Heng Chao's "Shadow Shapes," tried to get a haircut at one of the many barbershops in Seattle. He was rejected at each location and told there was a shop for "colored people just around the corner" (qtd. in T. Chao, "Shadow" 22.1 p. 62). Later at that evening's reception, a speaker rose and addressed the guests: "My friends, every home in Seattle is open to you. Make this city your home. We are proud to have you with us tonight, and may we hope that you will always stay with us" (qtd. in 63). Trying hard to reconcile what he heard with what he witnessed, Lee wondered: "The same city insulted him on the streets, and extended him later a hand of welcome at the banquet. Which represented the true public opinion? He had no idea" (63). So while the students were not pelted with bricks, rocks, or manure coming off the boat like other Asian migrants were in the early 1900s (Takaki 73), for many of them, the hearty welcome and other occasions where interactions with non-Chinese were limited, e.g., club meetings and annual Alliance conferences, proved to be the least demoralizing moments of their stay. The initial hurdles encountered by Chinese students generated a keen interest in the unfettered movement of their compatriots and inspired intermittent calls in the *Chinese Students' Monthly* for the repeal of the Exclusion Act and for resolution to other injustices.

Being a Student: Economic Discrimination

Tactics that kept Asian migrants in economic depression ranged from the mid-1800s foreign miners' tax and boycotts of Chinese-produced cigars, to turn-of-the-century laundry ordinances and regulations restricting the selling and storage of Asian-handled fruit (S. S. Lee

131-33). While 1860s railroad workers earned 10 times as much as they could have in China ($30 per month vs. $3 to $5), their income was constantly less than that of white workers, whose $35 per month pay came with board (S. S. Lee 38). Railroad and plantation workers in the South earned even less, about $13 to $18 a month (Chan 82). The laundry business offered the Chinese an independent source of income, up to $50 a week, but much of this money went to supporting families at home, and proprietors were frequent targets of harassment, vandalism, and discriminatory city codes (E. Lee 114; S. S. Lee 132). Compared to other immigrant classes, it may seem that Chinese students were better off as they went abroad on scholarships and were given a monthly stipend. A former American consul-general to Hong Kong and Shanghai reported that "[v]ery few" Chinese students studying in the U.S. come from wealthy families: "The Indemnity men have $60 a month, and some at least of the Provincial-supported men $80, with their tuition and a few incidentals otherwise provided" (Wilder 82). However, a protracted civil war at home made this source of funding unreliable, and when appeals to their representatives failed, students had to find ways to eke out an existence. Studying full-time student precluded working long hours, and they were permitted to engage in work only if doing so maintained their student status (Daugherty 643). But the kind of work allowable under this definition was open to interpretation, and participating in anything resembling "labor" risked deportation. For example, students found working in Chinese laundries and restaurants were arrested in 1905 (E. Lee 226). This did not prevent some students from engaging in such questionable labor during the summer months. Some students saw their poverty as an opportunity to band together, fully aware of the repercussions of being seen as charity cases.

The first half of Chi Chang's narrative "Up Grade—Or Down?" is illustrative of the economic hardships of many Chinese students. Chang's finances seemed secure for his first academic year, his home a "suite of housekeeping rooms" with six other students ("Up" 39). Occupied more often by poor families in the 1920s and 30s, housekeeping rooms were former apartments divided into one or two-room sections. A gas plate connected to the gaslight fixture frequently stood in for a stove, and a bucket of water was used as a sink (Groth 124). But this arrangement was more importantly workable, and Chang wondered why anyone would need assistance from YMCA or the World's Federation of Chinese Students, believing that he could work his way through college (39). At the end of his second semester at the University of California—Berkeley in 1919, he found himself "nearly at the end of [his] tether" (40). That summer, he took on short-term positions as a fish cutter, woodchopper, and fruit picker but was fired without explanation from several places. At the fish cannery, for example, after being verbally assaulted by coworkers, "Where do you think you are, you damned _____!" (omission original), and being paid ten cents for a half bucket of sardines, Chang was inexplicably released (40). Sometimes, the job was simply done, like his task picking apricots for three weeks for 13 hours a day. After returning home and combining his earnings with a banker's draft waiting for him, probably his stipend, Chang was able to go into his second academic year with some security ("Up" 41).

By the spring semester of 1920, however, the UC-Berkeley student found himself broke. A stint doing housework for a professor didn't pan out, and Chang "barely skimmed through" tutoring American students Chinese and teaching Mandarin at a weekend Chinese school (42). The summer of 1920 saw Chang traveling with four others students performing Chinese skits and

musical numbers before American audiences for an educational circuit. Chang questioned the effectiveness of such "education" especially when the troupe was asked to speak in Mandarin:

> It seemed preposterous to say things which not a soul in the audience could understand, but we were hired to do so. Luckily it saved us time and again when we forgot our lines. All went well except that, to me, the whole thing looked like a group of awe-inspired children watching the tricks of a few 'sport model monkeys.' And we were highly eulogized from town to town as to the educational value of our work. Educational value! The only thing that was valuable at all was the weekly pay cheque. (C. Chang, "Up" 42)

What these small town audiences wanted was less an "education," in the sense of increasing their knowledge about and changing their attitude toward a culture they did not share, than being voyeuristically entertained with an "authentic" show. (Student performances as a rhetorical tool are analyzed in Chapter 4.) Tired after traveling for four months across eight states, Chang called it quits and moved to the University of Minnesota to begin his junior year in the fall with only $28 to show for his "monkey" tricks (43).

When Chang finally found a stable source of income, it worked against his main objective of gaining an education. In the summer of 1921, Chang found work gardening, washing dishes, and buttling for a Mrs. W. at her home, which allowed him to pay off some debts. He went into his second year at the University of Minnesota as a butler for a Mrs. L., but his preoccupation with housework meant his "energy for studies was greatly reduced" (43). Chang's hire as a household servant was far from unusual: After their retreat from manufacturing and agricultural positions, Chinese immigrants from 1900 found work as domestic servants, a need driven by population

growth and middle-class expansion (S. S. Lee 74). Even in the American West, thousands of Chinese had worked as cooks in private homes and farms (Chan 34). As if retracing the steps of his predecessors, in the summer of 1922, Chang was able to secure a position as a laborer in a mine. His performance impressed, and Chang would later enter the employ of U.S. Steel Corporation on the mine owner's recommendation. But his third and final year at Minnesota was as tumultuous as the previous; although Chang obtained on-campus work, he graduated with two more loans and more IOUs. The balance between school and work did not improve: "There were thesis writing, laboratory work, and at least four hours spent each day for money earning. Then my daily problems would keep me up till some ungodly hours. Therefore strong black coffee became my close companion of the night" (44). Chang used his free time reading books, which fostered a love of literature, but the burden of work negatively impacted his ambition: "[M]y desire to do engineering work [was] reduced to almost nothing, and what was worse, with a large number of debts which crippled my spirit to such a degree that I felt no hope for my future, experiencing no *joie de vivre*" ("Up" 45, emphasis original).

Reflecting on his five years in the U.S., the author felt unsure whether his education abroad was worthwhile. Certainly, "Gain practical experience!" remained the mantra of the Chinese Students' Alliance, employment organizations, and government and commercial representatives, but such glibness does not take into account the difficulties of a working full-time student, as massive debt crushes any desire for "further self-development," nor does it consider the fruitlessness of an extended stay: "[O]ne knows all there is to know about the kind of work I am doing after six months, and it is impossible for any Oriental to be promoted to any higher position" (46). By January 1925, the time the second half of his narrative was published, Chang had been

working at the mining firm for nearly two years. In “Vanities of the Half-Fledged,” the author muses on the prouder moments of his American education: graduating with honors, seeing his face in a newspaper, being awarded a post-graduate fellowship, but wonders if he could’ve done more and whether his “whole college career, with its diplomas, honors, and keys put together in one bundle, is after all worth a single moonlight walk” (“Vanities” 64). In sum, the fact that Chi Chang didn’t have enough to live on (he mentioned receiving a draft *once*), that he was forced by labor regulations to seek itinerant jobs, that he couldn’t simultaneously study and earn a living, and that he couldn’t be promoted in his present position—all demonstrate that the American-Chinese project of sending Chinese scholars abroad wasn’t very well thought out. Similar to Fu Chi Chao’s narrative, “Up Grade—Or Down?” with its sequel is an argument that Chinese students are at the mercy of American foreign and domestic policies that are at odds, a kind of “we-want-you-here, but we-don’t-want-you-here” deal, that wreaked havoc on those students’ financial and consequently psychological well-being.

Other articles in *CSM* show that Chang’s experiences were not anomalous. A 1910 issue contains a letter dated May 25 from the Alliance to the Director of Chinese Students in the country, pleading with him to petition the Chinese Minister in Washington to redefine a number of college juniors and seniors as “government scholars” so that the government could provide them scholarships or allowances. The letter appealed to the character of these students, who were “courageous enough” to try to make ends meet themselves. Waiting at tables “day and night,” these students become so fatigued that some have already given up (C. C. Wang et al. 522). They cannot find suitable work as prejudice and the law of the land “discriminate so severely” (522). After the

1911 revolution, the intensification of the civil war through the 1920s redirected funds meant for these students and only increased the numbers in dire need.

Negative American perception of poverty-stricken Chinese students became a paramount concern. In a 1924 article, Chungshu Kwei deplored the unreliable amount of financial support given to students sponsored by Peking ministries and provincial government departments. Language difficulties and racial prejudice make it hard for these students to support themselves. When it comes to rent, for example, the Chinese always pay more compared to the American, a sad truth that applies to other commodities (C. Kwei, "Chinese" 16). The University of Wisconsin graduate pressed that adequate financial support affects one's dress, which in turn has a bearing on racial treatment. While torn pants on an American might not attract attention, "an Oriental even with a coat button misplaced cannot escape notice, if not criticism" (16). The unfavorable reputation of China compounded this rhetorical aspect of poverty: "To be a needy student is unfortunate enough … to be a foreign needy student is worse; but to be a needy student from a country much misunderstood affords the greatest test of the individual character" (16). However, for a contributor to the May 1925 issue, even publicizing and circulating the statement, "the Chinese students have gone 'broke'," is itself dangerous as it exacerbates the fallout of a situation that is affecting only a minority of students.

> True it has aroused sympathy of the American public, but is it our wish that we should be treated as subjects of charity? It is learned that the Red Cross has donated one thousand dollars to save the 'starving.' It is rumored that authorities of a certain university even suggested virtual deportation of the 'undesirable.' ("Chinese Students and Government" 41)

Rather than asking others for help, students who are better shape ought to help those in need. While continued poverty does "impair the regard that we have won from the American public towards the Chinese 'student class'," the writer called on the Alliance to form an investigative committee to identify and assist the neediest cases (40).

The most publicized internal effort to combat poverty came in the form of the student-organized Society of Learning and Labor in Oberlin College. Formed in the spring of 1914 in response to the withdrawal of provincial scholarships and the recall of 60 government students, the society operated from a rented house that took on Chinese student boarders. Ming Tsow explained that about a dozen students had contributed $300 worth of furniture and that, as of spring 1915, there were 11 students living there. Extremely poor students were not charged for their room and food as they were "paying" their share through cooking and washing. Students who needed some assistance pay 80% of what was actually charged. Those who needed an extra bit of money could do additional housework like cleaning and firemaking and make 25 cents an hour. The Society also loaned emergency money to members and looked into other employment opportunities, such as teaching American-born Chinese children and merchants Chinese language and "modern business world and management" ("Personal Notes" 10.3 p. 189; Tsow 317-19). A report two years later showed the society had expended to 40 members throughout the U.S. and China and had taken on the additional functions of procuring college scholarships, maintaining reading rooms, and helping with athletic attire, the last two exemplifying the society's belief in a "well-rounded" education for poor students. The report didn't shirk from calling for more support, specifically an endowment fund of $10,000 to finance goals and handle emergencies ("Society" 201). Americans who support missionaries in China ought to lend a hand as there's "no mission

more Christian" ("Society" 203). Other efforts included the Chinese Student Christian Association, which created a Student Aid Fund for "financially embarrassed" students. The fund began with $200 but reached $3,500 and helped 49 students in 1925 (Meng, "C. S. C. A" 49). That same year, students at the University of Michigan reported an available loan fund of $1,150 with $300 loan outstanding. Its officers expressed hope that other clubs would follow suit for the sake of "mutual cooperation" (Mason, "Student" 75).

External sources of help were welcomed but cautiously construed. When John D. Rockefeller, Jr. made a loan to assist Chinese students whose finances were affected by the Chinese civil war, the editor expressed thankfulness that "scores" of students would now be able to study without having the shadow of "dodging university bills and possibly starvation" over their shoulders. The editor warned borrowers to promptly repay the money and for other students to "abstai[n] from sending applications" unless they had no other choice. Motivating this admonition was a concern for the image of the students: "We must avoid making ourselves the parasites of charity." It's one thing to accept needed help to pursue one's educational purpose in the country; it's quite another to live off of that help (T. Chao, "Rockefeller" 5). The *Monthly* took its responsibility of policing image seriously. When creditors knocked on the doors of the Chinese Legation claiming that certain students had left the country before repaying borrowed money, Chao Ying Shill, the *CSM* editor-in-chief from 1925-26, was furious. While this may simply be a case of amnesia, "the consequence of their forgetfulness leads to an uncomplimentary impression of the Chinese students as a whole" (1). Shill listed the initials of each offender along with a description of their situation in hopes that they would recognize their obligation. One Yale University student

left without settling a $56.77 bill from the co-op, while another failed to pay for $40 worth of lab materials at Lehigh University (Shill, "New" 2).

Students who chose to work for pay to fund their college education risked arrest and deportation. In 1901, Fu Chi Hao fully believed that "[i]f at any time during our course of study they find us waiting on the table, washing dishes, or mowing the lawn in summer, immediate deportation will follow" (772). True enough, students found working in Chinese laundries and restaurants were arrested in 1905 (E. Lee 226). However, a clarifying letter from Harry Micajah Daugherty, then Attorney General of the United States, to the Department of Labor dated February 27, 1922 seems to show that these students were mistakenly penalized (Daugherty 641).[5] C. C.

[5] On August 30, 1921, the Department of Labor requested the Department of Justice's input on whether students "who, in connection with his education, performs manual labor either for profit or otherwise," can be legally admitted into the country. The Justice Department responded in the affirmative, saying that the law doesn't allow for the barring or deportation of Chinese who perform labor "only in connection with or in furtherance of the maintenance of the status of student" (qtd. in Daugherty 643), citing treaties and several court rulings in support. Although the Exclusion Act prohibits laborers from entry, it does not repudiate the Angell Treaty of 1880 that allow for educators and students and merchants to come and go as they please (642). More to the point, the court in Moy Kong Chiu v. United States (1917) confirmed that "it is well settled that a Chinese person, who lawfully enters this country as a student, may not be deported because he temporarily engages in manual labor while attending school," notwithstanding fraudulent representations (qtd. in 642). In *in re* Tam Chung (1915), a related case, the court determined that "[s]tudents of all other nations coming hither can of right follow any legitimate vocation contemporaneous *with or after* their studies are completed, thereto need the consent of no immigration officer, can remain here so long as they please, and can not be deported because thereof" (qtd. in 642, emphasis added). Since Congress has not equated student work with deportable labor such as prostitution, the Tam court continued, the Department of Labor cannot unilaterally scrap the rights provided by the 1880 Angell Treaty (643). Therefore, the Attorney General concludes: "labor is not necessarily incompatible with the pursuit of an exempt status," and if the primary purpose of an entering student is indeed to secure an education, the Labor Department has no grounds on which to arrest that student for participating in labor in the maintenance of that exempt status (Daugherty 643).

This interdepartmental exchange shows how shaky the ground is for self-supporting students. Despite a number of court rulings in their favor, it was up to the Department of Labor, under which the Bureau of Immigration operated, to interpret whether a particular instance of labor was done in the furtherance of a primary educational goal. The fact that, in 1924, a Chinese student

Woo surmised that the barred door could be a product of racial prejudice as American students have had no problem getting their foot in. Only some businesses had recently realized that "the purpose of our Chinese students is pure, simple and noble" (C. Woo 169). Woo's defense of the "pure" and "simple" motivation of his peers gives pause; worries about the Chinese biting into the forbidden apple of Western learning are embodied by Sax Rohmer's creation Fu Manchu. In her analysis arguing for the cinematic depictions of Asians as a product of western fears, Karla Rae Fuller describes this personified yellow peril:

> Depicted as twisted combination of high intellect (three doctorates in philosophy, law, and medicine from three Western universities) and evil intentions, the Fu Manchu character is a cultural hybrid in a sense, a product of Western higher learning and Asian cultural elitism. It is as if the combination of his Asian heritage and extensive foreign education in itself produces an evil and alien creation. (Fuller 38)

Although the Paramount Studios' films depicting the character wouldn't take off in popularity until the 1930s (E. Wong 58), the hybridity of Fu Manchu points to a rooted fear that Chinese intellect, usually positively portrayed, can transform into something truly frightening if fed Western knowledge. After all, high intelligence is a step away from the historical image of deviousness popular from the 1870s, a trait that port inspectors have long assumed (E. Lee 84). Fuller argues that the more contemporaneously acceptable character of the smart but docile detective Charlie Chan is but the flipside of the more notorious character (Fuller 119). C. C. Woo was not the only

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in New York who worked his way over was categorized as a laborer and summarily disbarred, a fate shared by "many in number" (Sun, "Eastern" 70), reveals a stark divide between what is arguably permissible and what is more realistically prudent.

one indignant about the unequal state of affairs in regards to employment opportunities. In a 1920 speech in New York, Consul-General of China Iuming C. Suez implored the U.S. government to ease its restrictive exclusion laws, which have been hindering the entry of Chinese students, and permit them to work their way through college and accrue practical experience in businesses (196). Like Woo, Suez appealed to the character of the students, who have "maintained their high sense of honor and moral rectitude" and made favorable impressions on their professors (Suez 196). Employment opportunities for educated Chinese remained restricted by racial prejudice through the 1930s. Even American-born Chinese with technical degrees faced multiple rejections by companies and found themselves working in Chinese restaurants (Takaki 266).

Internships provided little to no immediate remuneration for their trainees, but they provided a way to receive practical training without incurring legal liability.[6] To maintain a

[6] But a further complication presented itself in the form of the 1924 Immigration Act. Section 15 of the act, titled "Maintenance of Exempt Status," stipulated that non-quota or exempt immigrations, which included the Chinese students, must depart from the country at the termination of their status. Chao Ying Shill interpreted this passage as an abrogation of the right of students to receive technical training, mentioning that an unnamed State Department official was working to mitigate its effects ("Effect" 18). Shill denounced the government for placing Chinese students in a precarious bind, encouraging the pursuit of practical experience but essentially withholding it (18). Although, on the surface, the Act doesn't overturn earlier court rulings that specifically allowed for labor that maintains one's student status (Daugherty 643), it seemed like it was up to the Department of Labor to decide whether a student's status terminated after several years of coursework or whether further practical training counted as activities appropriate for a person under student status.

Fortunately, an examination of *CSM* articles from 1924 suggests that the Labor Department opted not to take the stricter interpretation as many of those articles proudly display names of students along with their places of internship. The December 1924 issue alone mentions Louisiana State University students working as assistant chemists; students from other universities found positions on bee and poultry farms, at an electrical company, paper manufacturing company, bank, and railway shops ("Louisiana" 63; "Personal News" 21.2 p. 68-72). Also announced in the issue was a 40-week road building course that invited Chinese students into industrial plants to learn machinery usage. The program was jointly organized by the Ohio Chamber of Commerce, Cleveland Chamber of Commerce, Western Reserve University, and Case School of Applied Science ("Cleveland Plants" 37). Several months after Chao Ying Shill's foreboding analysis, the

favorable impression and to help keep the door open for fellow students, Fisher Y. C. Yu reminded fellow students with jobs to be hard-working, punctual, and good-natured with associates. More importantly, they should never criticize management ("Working" 34). Joseph Bailie, founder of the Bureau of Industrial Service in China in Nanking, warned against participating in worker strikes that were on the rise in the late 1920s, noting that at least one place had rejected placing Chinese students on account of their "being … bolshevick." The former Imperial University in Peking and University of Nanking professor admitted that "racial prejudice" bars entry to other places. To quash such fears, students ought "to conduct himself as if the future good relations between the United States and China depended on the impression he gave." Patience and understanding are the key to remaining composed in the face of prejudice: "Remember that a great many people are uneducated in America. Indeed a great many of the workmen in the plants you go to have had very little school" (Bailie, "To" 72). In a 1928 article, Mingyi P. Chen suggested that personal conduct can determine personal treatment: "[H]e should be patient, tolerate late hours in order [to] help them and be reasonable. In this way, no matter where he goes, he always faces a cordial and congenial group and will feel much more at ease" (29). Chen's advice together with Bailie and Yu's reveal a clear priority in managing public perception of Chinese students.

Joining the Community: Social Discrimination

Chinese immigrants coming into the U.S. faced segregation in the form of physical seclusion and miscegenation laws. Prostitutes were the first to be relocated outside the city limits of

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China Society of America announced plans to "launch an unprecedented campaign to open the doors of firms and factories," stating that they had the support of various chambers of commerce, the Institute of International Education, and the American Manufacturers Export Association ("China Society and the Chinese" 51). Despite the changing attitude of businesses, the *Chinese Students' Monthly* remained cognizant of the danger of a more stringent interpretation of the 1924 Immigration Act as intimated by Chao Ying Shill.

San Francisco in the 1850s, a measure that expanded to include all Chinese from 1879 (Chan 56). Though found unconstitutional, bubonic plague fears at the turn of the century further isolated Chinese residents through quarantines (Chan 56; S. S. Lee 126), realtors and landlords prevented Chinese migration into more attractive neighborhoods (Chan 57), and service establishments like hotels, restaurants, and recreational facilities also turned away Asian customers (S. S. Lee 130). Considered "colored," Chinese children attended segregated schools from the 1880s through the 1930s in California and the 1950s in Mississippi (Chan 58; S. S. Lee 129). The color line was also enforced through marriage laws. Most western states forbade interracial marriage, and after the passage of the 1922 Cable Act, American women risked losing their citizenship if they married an Asian (S. S. Lee 128). (But the repercussion of the law should not be overstated; the Expatriation Act of 1907 had stipulated the loss of citizenship for American women who took *any* foreign husband.) It was within this social climate that Chinese students found themselves. However, unlike other classes of immigrants, these scholars were expressly welcomed by certain sectors of American society, e.g., universities, churches, and trade associations. This contradiction made their isolation even more pronounced and difficult to swallow.

Linguistic Abuse

As Chinese students were more formally dressed than their Chinatown counterparts and on par with the Japanese who also dressed strategically (S. S. Lee 164), the two nationalities were often confused. On the streets of San Francisco, Mason in F. L. Chang's "Innocents Abroad" was frequently greeted with surprise and a "Hello, Jap!" (302). In Chao's "Shadow Shapes," the Seattle taxi driver taking Thomas Lee from the wharf to the YMCA apologized for the 1923 earthquake near Tokyo and then apologized again after learning his mistake (T. Chao, "Shadow Shapes" 22.1

p. 62). In another incident, outside of the narratives, two students on the subway were accosted by an inebriated passenger who ranted against prohibition and tried to get the two thrown off the train: "Do you know [President-elect] Harding? By next January, I mean March—you—out you go! JAPS!" (S. Hung 251). Contributing to this mixup was the motion pictures' portrayal of the typical Chinese as "celestial villains … with mandarin buttons and yellow jackets, wearing their funny looking pig-tails" (T. Chuan, "Essay" 24). Another term patiently bore by the students was "Chinaman," a label used even by well-meaning Americans, such as Chi Chang's college "friend" who came to his defense: "I jus' met a guy up the line, he said you was a Jap. I stuck up for you and told him you was the chinkest Chinaman I ever saw!" (qtd. in "Up" 45). A 1909 editor warned its more sympathetic readers to refrain from using it given its "measure of contempt implied" (C. Wang, "'Chinaman'" 9), and T. K. Chuan's 1924 essay advised students to politely correct users and maintain composure as a "gentleman" and "good spor[t]," though not without remarking that such "little courtesies [e.g., the use of 'Chinese'] … impress us more than the sumptuous and expensive affairs given to us by the Chambers of Commerce, churches and Y. M. C. A." ("Essay" 24). This tempered response is modeled by Siegen K. Chou whose Portland taxi driver was "very thankful" to be told of the preferred descriptor (83). When one writer used it self-referentially, it was deployed emphasize the biases of his American neighbors: "Now I happened to be the only Chinaman in town. I succeeded in overcoming some of the prejudices by trying to be one of them and by so direct their opinion as to make them think I am a good engineer" (C. Chang, "Vanities" 64). Eugene Ming Shu Shen ventured that "chinks," another common term, was also motivated by "the notion of Chinese culture as consisting of nothing but 'laundry,' 'chop suey' and coolie labor in *ensemble*" (50, emphasis original). While the Chinese Students' Alliance as a whole showed

more sympathy to the Chinese laborers and took steps to alleviate their conditions, it did so out of a foremost concern for national image.[7] Although linguistic aggression was less dramatic than physical harassment, it was reported more frequently in the narratives and the rest of *CSM*. Commonly deployed on other immigrant classes to make them feel like outsiders (Takaki 256), the pervasive and glib use of a term like "Chinaman" was more effective at inculcating a sense of inferiority and dissociation enforcing the color line.

Outright assertions of racial inferiority/superiority were less widely reported. In 1925, *CSM* editor Kwei Chen had a particularly perturbing exchange at a pastor's house in the vicinity of a

[7] Part of the strategy for improving the image of the Chinese was raising the estimation of Chinese labor and laborers, persistently seen as a source of humiliation for the nation. The November 1909 editor of *CSM*, C. T. Wang, broached the specific topic of Chinese laborers in America in his call, "A Problem," in the November 1909 issue. Wang posed the question, "What could we do for our working class in this country?" and acknowledged the differing views on the matter. Some students see the plight of the working class as irrelevant to their mission of preparing themselves for leadership positions in China, while others see a disconnect between belonging to an organization whose objective is "to labor for the general welfare of China, both at home and abroad" and casting a blind eye on their those "who need help badly" (C. Wang, "Problem" 5). The editor offered a series of questions that might help those undecided see the significance of this issue: "Is the condition existing in the Chinatowns of this country good for the integrity of China? Is it not a disgrace to our nation to have sociological classes visit the Chinatown together with slums? Do we not feel humiliated to meet with countrymen of ours who live in little dens and who have no higher ambitions than mere existence?" Other nations have attempted to improve the lot of their laboring citizens; in contrast, Chinese students have "remained indifferent," although the receipt of "numerous letters" on this topic indicates a substantial interest in a solution ("Problem" 5). Responding to the call were letters from a University of Wisconsin-Madison student, Kung Chao Chu, and Mrs. H. E. Mitchell of Worcester, an American ally of the students and repeat conference attendee (K. Chu 131-32; Mitchell 222-23). Perhaps partly driven by the discomforting appearance of the ubiquitous Chinatown, student clubs began reporting on welfare activities. A campaign of uplift involving volunteer teaching at Sunday schools and community outreach can be gleaned from club reports published from 1910 through 1926, with the heaviest involvement from student-based associations in Boston and Pittsburgh and local clubs in several midwestern cities (e.g., see Kuo, "Welfare" 416; T. Chu, "Report" 419-429; "Constitution" 429-431; Tong, "Instruction" 223; Hsin 566; H. Wu, "General" 600 for trajectory of Boston's school). This work, done often conjunction with religious and philanthropic organizations, is deserving of a separate detailed study.

midwestern university, probably the University of Nebraska. In the course of the reception, the hostess posed a question that Chen tried at first to deflect: “Of what race would you wish to have been born had you had your choice?” (“‘Pride’” 62). Not taking “healthy, wealthy, and wise” as an answer, the pastor’s wife pressed: “Haven’t you ever wished to have been born white? … One of my lady friends said she was convinced that people of any race other than white wish resolutely that they were born white.” To her credit, the interrogator apologized for her rudeness even as she hounded Chen for “the truth.” The student’s response was tactful though not unproblematic: “I certainly wish to be born a Booker T. Washington rather than the white boy in my English history class who wrote that Christianity entered England 500 B.C.” (In saying that he’d rather be a well-regarded African American author than an ill-informed white student, Chen reproduces the same worldview that associates blackness with inferiority—what follows “I’d rather” is usually something undesirable—although it isn’t clear if Chen is simply echoing his hostess’s beliefs.) In another exchange, walking together out of a classroom, a female student complimented him for his appearance of whiteness: “[W]hen I saw you standing under the lamp, reading your report tonight, you looked *almost* half English to me. Don’t you regard it as a compliment?” (62, emphasis original). Though Chen immediately asked “Why?” he realized the depths that question would plumb and tried a different tack, thanking the classmate for noticing the amount of work he put in “acquiring some of the good English manners” in China (“‘Pride’” 62). These moments of racial insinuation were few and far between in the *Monthly*, though if one considers backhanded compliments to be racist (“Chinese students look and sound so smart!”) the magazine would be full of it, literally and figuratively. One effect of spending years in a racist culture is the inculcation of inferiority. In his psychological analysis of the “failure” of returned students—failure meaning a

lackluster performance disproportionate to their training and opportunities granted—P. C. C. Lu argues that racial discrimination "denationalizes" or strips away the national pride of the student. This discrimination is effected through sensational journalism, movies, stage plays, and "narrow-minded missionaries." The steady drip of racism may be "hardly perceivable," but it produces effects on students of varying sensitivity. While thick-skinned students might be spurred on to greater achievements by these setbacks, they send lesser students "to hell alive in great numbers" (P. Lu 601).

Physical Segregation

It was probably because of their proximity to Americans, in-person and in writing, that the Chinese students were more aware of and vocal toward linguistic abuse. Another ubiquitous form of social discrimination, physical segregation, also affected this group. Not all students lived in the dorms, and many found it difficult to find a welcoming place around campus. Thomas Lee's transfer to the University of Missouri at Columbia in the fall of 1924 forced him to find new lodging. He ended up with Mrs. Roberts, who expressed an initial reservation that other boarders "might not like it." A consultation with her son, who had taught music in Hawaii and sampled Chinese food there, helped make up her mind. The two boasted over what ought to have been a simple decision and compared themselves to their less open-minded neighbor:

> "The woman next door," they told Lee, "spoke last night in church on foreign missions. She urged the congregation to contribute freely to a fund supporting their missionary work in China. And this morning when a Chinese student went to her house looking for rooms, she banged the door in his face. She said she had to do it for her daughter's sake!" (T. Chao, "Shadow" 22.4 p. 57)

Apparently, the lasciviousness of this Chinese male knew no bounds, as per the stereotype (S. S. Lee 129). When a prospective landlady needs reassurance from a son who had visited the Pacific island to open her doors to a student, it's easy to imagine how other students fared. In his letter to a friend, Siegen K. Chou relayed that they had to search for accommodations in "private houses for quite a long time" as "usually there were a few who refuse us very gently simply for the simple reason that we are Orientals" (83). For students who are fortunate enough to find a willing proprietor, they had to be willing to fork over a comparatively large amount of money. As explained by Chungshu Kwei in his 1924 article, Chinese students pay more than Americans for the same thing, be it rent or some other service or commodity ("Chinese" 16). The rejection and extortion in these narratives correspond with the experiences of other students, such as C. T. Tsai, the fourth Chinese student to enroll into the University of Wisconsin (after Y. L. Sun, J. T. Chen, and J. Roy Sun in the fall of 1907). Referring to Tsai in his history of and rationale for the Cosmopolitan Club on the UW campus, Cosmopolitan Association president Louis P. Lochner noted that "[a] Chinaman, coming directly from Shanghai … was 'fleeced' most unmercifully by a local tailor, and had to pay exhorbitant [*sic*] rates for a dingy room until the members of the club discovered him" ("International" 220).

Physical Isolation

Limiting the students' living quarters was but one tactic in the grand majoritarian strategy of physical segregation. Broadly speaking, the social life of Chinese students can be characterized by isolation and loneliness. While it might be reasonable to assume that Chinese students at larger universities have a stronger social life, those students often find themselves segregated from the larger student population and shut out of activities and fraternities (T. Chuan, "Essay" 24), the

well-being of individuals dependent on their cohesion as a bloc. One professor advised a Chinese student to avoid transferring to The Empire State:

> New York is a great and heartless city, and I can see in imagination the lonely and desolate hours that would come to you, and there would also be almost certainly, for you, a sense of its own pompous emptiness. You might not become more bitter about America, but you would not love us more. ("Problem" 8)

Conversely, while Chinese students who end up in smaller towns find themselves alone, they were at least initially more welcomed into academic, religious, and sports functions by the white population (Green 12; Chung Wang 42). In April 1926, nineteen Chinese students in Madison were invited to a weekend of banquet, music, and house and farm visits by a church reverend at Fort Atkinson ("Wisconsin University" 76). Remarking on the difference between urban and rural, Chinson Young contrasts the former's "cold formalities, the negative civilities, the habits of shy reserve" with "the frankness, the gross but sincere joyfulness" of the latter ("Is" 169). But the tendency for the public to either isolate or lionize the Chinese students was another stressor that, in either case, removed them from the body politic (Jennings 13). For some, the move into a small town was sometimes a voluntary choice. Guoktsai Chao, one of the first Chinese students to study at the University of Wisconsin, chose Madison precisely because there weren't many of his peers and he wanted to show the townspeople a different face of the Chinese (58).

Loneliness was a recurring problem in both large and small cities. In the former, Chinese students who desired bonding had no recourse apart from joining the conglomeration of Chinese students, itself a counteraction to racial segregation (Q. Pan 28). It was because of the isolation and "bad environments" endemic to large city life that motivated the Chinese Students Christian

Association to create hospitality committees that connected Chinese students with American homes and businesses (Meng, “C.S.C.A.” 49). Students who opted to go it alone had it worst. Even in cities with more than a hundred Chinese students, one was unlikely to bump into any while wandering the city, and underneath narratives that showcase the wonders of American buildings and streets lies a current of tragic solitude. This can be perceived in Art Yun’s “A Chinese Boy Takes a Walk,” in which he describes an evening stroll through Philadelphia and encounters with a man watching the stars through a telescope, a shop full of pigeons, and the pockmarks on a marble shooting ground, all the while noting the smells of spring and the sounds of the street (46). Two poems by Kwei Chen capture a similar kind of deprivation. In “As I Walk Reflecting,” the writer tells the departing breeze that it is free to come and go as he is “poor” and “seek[s] to keep nothing.” In “Even the Birds Seek Friends,” the poet names a dozen authors he keeps as “friends”: “Oh, with so many good men to befriend me / How can I be solitary!” (“As” 65; “Even” 66). Walks are free, at least; the lack of money prevented students from taking advantage of other attractions and facilities a large city offers (Q. Pan 29).

Students in smaller towns were left to their own devices after the initial warm welcome. One evening in Colorado Springs at the Pitkins, despite the lavish hospitality, Thomas Lee’s thoughts turned to home and his mother: “Two streams of tears flowed from Lee’s eyes and fell slowly upon the pillow. He pressed his mouth hungrily to the spot wet with tears, and rubbed his cheeks gently against it” (T. Chao, “Shadow” 22.2 p. 66). When Lee slipped out of a house party to which he was invited, he explained to Edna: “I don’t belong there. I feel out of place—what’s the use? You don’t understand” (22.3 p. 61). To cope with the loneliness, students went to playhouses or movie theaters. This was true for Chi Chang, whose “social intercourse of any

intimate nature was among the Chinese students" and whose first two years in Berkeley was expended in three movie theaters ("Up" 39). (Rah-rah, pro-student meetings at the YMCA and other organizations seemed like "empty gestures.") It was not wasted time as the stream of releases explained much of the misinformation that harassed the students: "What we really are is quite another thing from what we exist in the mental picture of Americans" (C. Chang, "Up" 45). This abundant "research time" figured into *CSM* articles that criticized the amount of misinformation in the media and into letters sent to theater managers and MPAA president Will H. Hays (Chapter 4).

Other *CSM* articles attest to the widespread isolation felt by the students. In a 1923 article, E. K. Moy recalls a student he met at a conference five or six years ago, a character who frequently hung out at his room to unload philosophical and religious problems that perplexed him. The student seemed "very unhappy" without friends to converse with, leaving Moy to wonder if the unhappiness he senses in the larger student body can be attributed the "lack of proper companionship" (E. Moy 9). Quentin Pan submits that the isolation is caused by a number of external agents, from the "inexorcisable phantom of race prejudice" and religious "friends" with ulterior motives to the unreasonable expectations foisted upon the student. The student's representative role forces him to be at his best and to "appear in some way a finish product of an Oriental culture." This kind of pressure can be very nerve-wracking (Q. Pan 29). Perhaps the isolation is a voluntary escape from these pressures as much as an externally imposed condition. Elizabeth Green's informal interviews with returned students in "Moulding a New-Age Diplomacy" reveals the long-term consequences of seclusion. A graduate student from California doubts that Americans truly believe in the brotherhood of humanity. While the author was aware of his "spiritual, mental and social isolation" and the "indignities he had suffered in his work, in his

search for living quarters," Green was still surprised at how much damage "the slow acid of these things" had caused (11). A Harvard Ph.D. admitted that accepting the segregation and "bury[ing]" himself in studying was the "only one thing to do." Green qualifies her results by stating that bitterness would not describe the experience of most returnees, but admits that many feel "vastly cheated of what chiefly lured them to America" and brought home an overwhelming sense of "weariness and disillusion." These outcomes should force readers, Green asserts, to change the way they act toward these student ambassadors (9).

Interracial Relationships

A rare number of Chinese sought solace in the company of sympathetic American partners. Interrational relationships probably represented the most threatening transgression of the color line. I was able to find one photo depicting a white female, a Chinese student, and their baby in a 1918 photo of the Chinese club at the University of Wisconsin ("Wisconsin Chinese" 200-201), but there were other relationships: Miss Alice Huie married Mr. Y. C. James Yen, a fellow YMCA worker, Yale graduate, and former president of CSCA, in Shanghai (T. Chen, "Personal" 16.4 p. 305); and a Franklin C. H. married Olga Ruesch in 1924 (Sun, "Personal" 19.6 p. 68). For its part, *CSM* reprinted a letter from the China Society of America letter to the Ohio governor against a house bill that prohibited Chinese and white couples from living together (Seaman and Mei 398). While they weren't a common phenomenon (S. S. Lee 183), the patriarchal protectiveness over white women combined with the image of Chinese bodies as filthy, degenerate, and over-fertile (S. S. Lee 129), the last an assumption on which the "Yellow Peril" operated, meant that it's one thing to open one's doors to a Chinese student, and quite another to have him mingle with one's sons or daughters.

Thomas Lee, a character that most likely represented his creator Thomas Chao, found out the hard way[8]. Lee met Edna Griffith while staying at the Pitkins in fall 1923, a temporary place of residence for the Colorado College freshman. After hanging out with her at house parties and wrestling with the American idea of dating and "stepping out," Lee found himself smitten with the tall, brown-haired "Madonna" from New York. He struggled with the thought of letting her know: "There was the racial prejudice. Wherever they would go, they would be the victims of a social persecution. … It practically meant that they would be social outcasts from both races" (T. Chao, "Shadow" 22.3 p. 64). Lee also considered that Edna would lose her citizenship if they marry and that their children would have similar social problems (65). An ecstatic Edna accepted Lee's eventual confession and asserted that "love will always find a way" (70). A chat at a birthday picnic revealed her take on the cause of racial prejudice: "All what they see in this country are

[8] Thomas Ming-Heng Chao's "Shadow Shapes" was a serialized third-person story published from November 1926 to June 1927. It recounts an ill-fated relationship with an Irish Catholic girl he met in Colorado Springs in the fall of 1923. His story is told using letters, song lyrics, and dialogue, and reveals the protagonist Thomas Lee's angst, indecision, and moments of resolve toward their predicament. The climax sees Lee convulsing on the floor after reading the last letter from his beloved, who could not withstand being shunned by her parents and also cope with her ailing health. The retelling is dramatic, with echoes of *The Dream of the Red Chamber*, which is one of Thomas Lee's (and presumably Thomas Ming-Heng Chao's) favorite childhood books ("Shadow" 22.7 p. 63). Although "Shadow Shapes" is written in the third-person as a fictional piece, it seems to be an autobiography, thinly disguised, as places and events in the narrative correspond too well to actual places and events. The central character attends his first football game in which the Colorado College Tigers beat the Utah Utes by a touchdown; the Tigers indeed played and beat the Utes 7-6 in a conference game on November 10, 1923. A "Helen" character, who took part in a play that Thomas wrote at the University of Missouri, "Puppets of Fate," is revealed to be Helen Hatcher, daughter of C. O. Hatcher, by the March 21, 1925 issue of the Chillicothe Constitution, which mentioned the same play ("Featured" 1). Thomas Lee's experiences also correspond largely with Chao's own life: Lee's entrance into Colorado College in 1923, transfer to the University of Missouri in 1924, and 1925 enrollment into Columbia University toward an M.S. in Journalism match the trajectory of Chao's educational career.

laundrymen and chop-suey cooks. You read nothing about them in the newspapers except tong wars and opium dens. We never met any better-class and educated Chinese" (51).

The middle section of the narrative reproduced the letters Edna sent to Lee while he studied in Missouri and received from her mother in New York. They spoke of Edna's inability to understand Mrs. Griffith's obstinacy, at one point wishing that she would read Katherine Anne Porter's 1921 novel, "My Chinese Marriage," a recommendation by Lee. Incidentally, Porter's novel was reviewed in the March 1924 issue of *CSM* (Shill, "My" 72). Edna saw a conflict between her mother's hardheadedness and their family's Christian beliefs:

> I can't understand why people are so prejudiced. God teaches us to love our neighbor as ourselves, but how many do? Well, dear[es]t, maybe our children will see the day when there won't be any race prejudice. I hope so anyway, because it will make life easier for them. But if not, I hope the future generation will stand up for their love against the world, just as we are doing now. (T. Chao, "Shadow" 22.6 p. 68)

Another letter confirmed that Edna's prior association of Chinese with laundries and gang violence also had the same hold on her mother:

> The Chinese are sure cutting up and getting themselves disliked in this country. I see in today's paper that 163 were sent back to their own country and a whole lot more are rounded up to be sent back. If they can't decent and behave themselves, they ought not come over here. No other race gives our government so much trouble? (qtd. in 68)

Edna read her mother's comments as a taunt at her and Lee's relationship. Mrs. Griffith had made her stance clear when Lee lived in Colorado Springs: "Think what will this mean to your mother. It will break her heart. And you will both be outcasts. You will have nobody but yourselves" (50). Correspondence from Lee's dad was likewise negative, pleading with him to remember the typical result of mixed marriages, warning him of the resultant prejudice, and scolding him for retreating from an ambitious future: "You and all of us will be the joke of our friends and the town" (70).

While Lee and Edna reunited in Denver the summer of 1924, and Lee found an internship at a news association, things rapidly fell apart for the couple after his move to New York. Like the midsection, the final, eighth chapter is mostly told in letters. Mrs. Griffith continued to show her disdain for Lee, rejecting his gift that Edna sent to her. Upon learning the name of the green tea, "Lungtsing" [Dragon Well], she exclaimed: "Say, I never could drink any tea with a name like that!" ("Shadow" 22.8 p. 57). A telephone call between her and Lee was a "nasty" exchange that ended with the mother telling the couple "to go to hell" (57). Edna's last hope flamed out when a "stiff, insolent, and even threatening" Mr. Griffith met Lee at Pennsylvania Station. His words matched his countenance: "I'd rather see her dead than to see her marry you." The father threatened the Chinese student should they choose to elope: "Then God help you! … if she marries you, my home will be broken, and I don't care what will happen to me." Insisting that his family "ha[s] nothing against [Lee] as a man," his status as a "Chinaman" made him an unfit suitor for his "American" daughter. Being accused of prejudice only deepened his anger: "What if it is? I don't want no argument. I only want to tell you this. Stop it. And stop it right now!" (58). Follow up letters from Edna grew somber and exuded resignation. On March 16, she wrote: "Even though I suspected things would turn out this way, I didn't think I would take it so hard or that it would

upset me so completely." Edna thought of returning to her family in New York, at least for a year, to give Lee a chance to start a career and gain some financial stability (59). The last letter came swiftly, begging him to not borrow money: "Tom, forgive me, but I can't stand the strain. I can't stand the pressure of the awful letters I am receiving from home. … I fear all this brooding and all the brooding in the future will prove too much for me" (60). While the couple had their happy moments in their 18-month relationship, it was a relationship consumed by fears of racial prejudice, an anxiety that overshadowed their disagreements over religion.

"Shadow Shapes" is more than a sob story; the narrative challenges its readers to consider attitudes against interracial relationships as part of the wider social discrimination of the Chinese. Before Lee had met Edna, he was turned away from several white-only barbershops (T. Chao, "Shadow" 22.1 p. 62). As Fu Chi Hao said in his 1907 essay in *The Outlook*: "The Chinese are not allowed to bring their wives to this country to live, yet the State law of California forbids intermarriage between the Chinese and the Americans" (773). It's also a narrative that conceives of the Asian-white relationship not simply as the inevitable result of mutual attraction but as a performance and response to that social prejudice. In the beginning of their relationship, when Lee offered to ask Edna for her mother's permission to go on a picnic alone in the mountains, Edna showed excitement but also restraint: "She could have hugged him for the suggestion, had there been no children playing on the lawn" ("Shadow" 22.4 p. 50). When Lee returned from Missouri a year later, they became bolder in public: "Even the presence of others could not embarrass them. They saw hardly anybody. Their indifference was so open that it hurt people" ("Shadow" 22.7 p. 62). From self-aware indifference, they began toying with public perception on their daily walks back to Edna's house in Denver: "Every few steps they turned and kissed. Some mischievous ones

in automobiles parked along the road honked every time their lips met. They laughed and skipped across the lawn" (56). Though empowering, this act of transgression was limited by larger forces that determined where it can be performed. For instance, what brought Edna from Colorado Springs to Denver during Lee's year in Missouri was that the family she was staying with had desired to move: "[I]f she should stay in Colorado Springs, she would have to find a room somewhere else, and people, who knew nothing about her, would most likely be hostile toward her love for Lee, and might criticise their being together during the summer months" (71). Given that being Chinese was a strike against a prospective renter, Edna arguably made a rational choice. Another way their relationship was rhetorical was the 18 months was an effort in self-persuasion: They wanted to believe that their obstacles could be overcome with persistence: "The world thundered 'no,' but there was a big 'yes' in their hearts. Their home, his job, a long future—these were dismissed from their minds as easily as if the problems could be solved by a kiss" (70). In sum, while Chao's narrative tells the (probably real) story of a couple who weren't able to persuade their parents and employers to accept them, the narrative doesn't portray them as passive subjects of social discrimination. It might not have encouraged readers to seek the same experience, but it attests to the courage and strength of a people who stood up to racial prejudice. Most Chinese students, however, were not given this opportunity to "perform" in this particular way as pressure from home and peers kept them in line. Quentin Pan observes that the possible "racial and biological consequences" of keeping the company of American girls makes it less than desirable (30).

Physical Violence

Given their comparatively smaller numbers and lesser visibility, it would seem unlikely that the students would be the direct target of any physical violence, which Shelley Lee calls “the first and last resort” for anti-Asian groups. While Asian miners, mill workers, launderers, and farmers were assailed by armed mobs from the 1860s through the 1930s (S. S. Lee 134-36), the students’ transience meant there were no homes to break in and laundries to burn down, their seclusion on campus shielded them from riots, and their sanction by the U.S. government gave pause to any potential antagonists who aimed to their impinge on their liberties granted by the Burlingame-Seward Treaty. True enough, most kinds of social discrimination toward the students were of the implicit kind, enacted through racist language, refusal to rent, and non-inclusion in secular clubs and organizations.

It caused quite a stir, then, when *CSM* readers opened the January 1926 issue to find a 16-page report by Dr. James Kofei Shen, a surgeon at Cleveland’s Lakeside Hospital and medical school graduate of Western Reserve University (“Arrest” 39-54; *Arrest*). The report, written by Shen in October 1925, documents the Chinatown raid in Cleveland on the evening of Wednesday, September 23, which rounded up and fingerprinted 612 of the 700 Chinese residents, including a number of students from the Case School of Applied Science and Western Reserve. The detainees were loaded into wagons and brought into central station. While they waited to be questioned, they were not given food nor provided alternative accommodations, so some opted to sleep in the jail (*Arrest* 2). Taking advantage of broken doors, “souvenir hunters” ransacked altars and took musical instruments and other heirlooms (*Arrest* 9). Ordered by Public Safety Director Edwin D. Barry in response to a murder of a tong member, the draconian measure was roundly criticized by journalists, civil leaders, justices, and residents alike. The doctor’s report contains article sections

from the city's four newspapers, statements of victims, letters from the public, including one from Dr. William Hiram Foulkes, pastor of Old Stone Church. The selected clippings unanimously called the "blanket indictment" a disgrace, a violation of the Constitution, and an imposition of a double-standard as other nationalities involved in much more crime weren't being treated the same, nevermind the patriotic, "peaceable, lawabiding" Chinese (qtd. in J. Shen, *Arrest* 6).

Of particular relevance is the experiences of two brothers, students at Baldwin-Wallace College, who were quoted at length. The two were returning from Washington D.C. and, upon arriving at Pennsylvania train depot on Euclid and 55th, were immediately arrested by an officer. At the holding station, they were searched and jailed for further investigation. The brothers' identification papers would have proven their student status, but the officers refused to examine them: "We remained behind the steel bars for more than eight hours, suffering from cold, hunger and exhaustion. No blankets provided for the night, no food available anytime." Sandwiches brought to them were later "charged to [their] account" (qtd. in *Arrest* 4). Finally, at 3 in the morning on Thursday, the students were informed they were to be transferred to central station, arriving five hours later. The proceedings probably called to mind the treatment the students received entering the country: "[T]hey took our measurements, weights, photographs and finger-prints, proceedings becoming to a first class criminal. We were further questioned and grilled and finally asked to produce our passports" (qtd. in *Arrest* 4). As the students had left their passports at Berea, they suggested that one of them be accompanied to Berea to retrieve them, an arrangement the officers rejected. Their offer to call the college to have the registrar confirm their identity was similarly unheeded: "They would not listen to reason. We were again locked up in the bull pen whi[c]h was filled up to the standing capacity, and with no food for that whole day"

(*Arrest* 4). Students from Baldwin-Wallace, Case, and Western Reserve weren't the only ones arrested; a *Plain Dealer* article from September 24 stated that "[e]ven boys from junior high schools, who had no connection with tong feuds were brought in with the rest" (qtd. in *Arrest* 2). Letters defending the students honed in on their respectability and courtesy. One by "a Cleveland gentlewoman" in the *Cleveland Times* averred:

> Speaking with the knowledge of the Chinese student class who attend our colleges, I want to say that it is a well known fact that women in college vicinities prefer to house the Chinese students because they tell me 'they are so scrupulous, and are better mannered than our own American Boys'. They bring philosophic minds to their country and are honored guests at many professors' dinner table and it is only the American girls of very little or very recent cultivation and education who offer them an affront. That, bringing with them the courteous traditions of their country which was civilized thousands of years before we emerged from barbarism, they should be ha[u]led before the justice en masse for the crime of one, is something for us to blush for. Anyone who has been associated with them in college work will agree with me. (qtd. in J. Shen, *Arrest* 6)

The letter from the Old Stone Church pastor raised concern about the reputation of the city, pointing to their role as "messengers to the rising generations in China when they return" (qtd. in *Arrest* 7). Director Barry expressed regret, stating that those "unfortunat[e]" temporary residents should not have been included in the dragnet and cast blame on policeman who executed his order: "I never imagined they would include students" (qtd. in *Arrest* 3). Dr. Shen's 16-page report ended with a reassurance that the victims were not excessively angry but "remained calm and cool [and]

awaiting patiently" for the righting of wrongs (*Arrest* 12). Such a preoccupation with politeness and civility shows a continuing concern for the image of Chinese, even though such a strategy did little to prevent the raid in the first place.

Chinese students would become victims of physical violence again when detectives raided a San Francisco club meeting on the evening of Wednesday, January 9, 1929. In a letter to the *Monthly*, the club chair recounted how the intruders damaged furniture, confiscated literature mentioning "labor" and Russia, and accused the group of carrying out Communist activities. Members who tried to intervene were hit and arrested. The letter insisted on the students' Constitutional right of assembly and free speech and reported that follow-up meetings with the detectives were fruitless. While the club will approach the mayor and Chinese consulate for assistance, it called the affair a "humiliation [not] to our organization alone, but also to Chinese students in America as a whole" (Mu 190). Few *CSM* issues returned to the Cleveland and San Francisco raids as if they were expected behavior on the part of a racist majoritarian culture. V. P. Ting's article in the December 1926 issue uses the raid as a counterexample to American friendship (8). A bibliography by Paul C. Meng, titled "Recent Events Affecting China's Attitude Toward Western Nations," listed the Cleveland raid along with the 1924 Immigration Act, gunboat diplomacy, Christian missions, militarism in the West, and several massacres that took thousands of lives in China (36). Its inclusion demonstrates the reverberation of the raid over a year later. These incidents in Cleveland and San Francisco also demonstrate the precariousness of being part of an "exempt"-class; neither their attire nor their demeanor lessened their maltreatment.

Going Home: A Conclusion

Kwei Chen's poetry is tinged with sadness and regret. When asked why he expresses himself in meter and rhyme, Chen responds by saying that they best capture his "sweet" and "bitter" years in America: "Here and there cheated and despised apart from any faults of my own, I grieve and become angry; but when I occasionally find an understanding friend, I rejoice, rejoice until I weep" ("Thoughts" 65). His poem, "Little Friends," reflects on his encounters with elementary school children in California and Illinois and wonders how the innocent minds of American children become poisoned, how the pure "spring-water" becomes "foul in a river." The children involve the poet in music and snowball fights, pose honest questions, and lift him in his low spirits, "[e]ven without uttering a word":

> Then Charles rode a-horseback on my knee,
>
> Grace entwined me with her arms.
>
> Your tender eyes, your merry eyes …
>
> Your little golden hair …
>
> Your jocund smiles …
>
> Your soft, sweet, voices …
>
> O you children!" "Your teacher taught you to recite
>
> "Jesus loves Children."
>
> She knew not
>
> That you are this same Jesus!

Chen meditates on the causes of their transformation and grows weary: Why do they change? "What else may happen to you and me hereafter— / Who knows?" (K. Chen, "Little" 54). The later issues of *CSM* are replete with poetry that look back and sigh. Because of their mixed feelings

toward America, going home was as much a cause for excitement as a dreaded eventuality. Chen-Shih Yuan's poem "The Lonely Man" represents this quandary brilliantly:

None

Is happier than a stranger

Departing from a strange land:

Merrily the train spirits him away—

He alone sheds no parting tears.

None

Is happier than the lonely man

Lying in a stranger's bed:

Freely as the sea-born air

He goes winging to the skies—

No heavy wall of kindred drags his spirit down. (T. Yu 69)

At home, many students did not find the reception nor the opportunities they expected. With the rise of nationalism, American-educated students were looked on with suspicion. It did not help that many were not provided the practical training that would've made them better leaders.

The narratives that compose this chapter can be read as a parable of sorts. A hero leaves home with great expectations, endures great hardships, and returns with no fanfare. It's a story that reflects on the legal, economic, and social discrimination that awaited the Chinese students who had the courage to cross the sea. Such discrimination converged on the site of the Chinese body: They were prodded, debarred, jailed, impoverished, overworked, sequestered, threatened, and

beaten. But it's also a story that offers a fertile ground for rhetorical and embodied response: The students banded together, self-policed, and acted out. The narratives are a representative sample of the journeys undertaken by the rest of the students. For the student body as a whole, encountering a culture of legal, economic, and social discrimination shaped the tools and topics for speaking back to that culture through a reinvention of the Chinese body, the focus of the following chapters.

Chapter 4: Appropriating Channels of Imagery

Employing Stewart Hall's terms, Kent Ono and Vincent Pham explain the weak correspondence between Asian imagery and lived reality to "a lack of systemic power" (5): "Because so few Asian Americans were historically involved in externalizing images of themselves and other Asians and Asian Americans, the primary externalizations—public images, discourse, language, and signs—were created by non-Asian Americans" and thus reflect "an externalization of the dominant society's values of and attitudes and beliefs about them" (Ono and Pham 42). The work of Asian American independent media is supplanting these images with those that better reflect Asian American experiences, and Ono and Pham trace the beginning of institutional and collective activism to the 1970s with the creation of Asian American film festivals. I argue that organized action began with the earliest Chinese students in America through bodily interventions that aimed to educate audiences and correct harmful stereotypes. The students' legal, economic, and social engagement with the community, explored in Chapter 3, provoked a battery of responses that aimed to correct misconceptions and construct alternative Asian bodies and identities. This chapter will explore the exigence for rhetorical response and then the tools employed by the students in meeting that exigence.

The available avenues for Chinese imagery were alluded to in an October 15, 1920 speech by a Chinese consul before the Fifth Avenue Association at New York's Waldorf-Astoria. There, Iuming C. Suez stressed the inseparable bond of trade and friendship and encouraged his audience to support the education of Americans in China. Such an initiative would familiarize them with its history and customs and curb the tendency of seeing Chinese as an abstraction. When Americans encounter the expression, "the Chinese," "[a] certain set of virtues and faults are brought together

and the result is that abstract personage … But when they once land on Chinese soil they would not meet abstractions—they would meet folks just like themselves" (Suez 195). At the same time, Suez urged his listeners to heed the "unanimous opinion" of Chinese communities in America on the "gross" misrepresentation of the country in the papers, Chinatown exhibitions, and entertainment venues (197). While the press positions China as an embattered but potentially dangerous power, Chinatown displays fail to portray the real conditions found in either country and only work to "ridicule the harmless Chinese." On the stage and screen, the Chinese are characterized as "cutthroats, rogues and rascals … with the abominable pigtails" and often played by Japanese actors (Suez 198). In an editorial deploring the lack of scholarships for Americans to study in China, the negative imagery and the lack of respect for the country were likewise pinned on the media. Because of motion pictures, the average American's knowledge of China is "grotesquely incorrect" and is bound to consider the Chinese in terms of "a hideous queue, long finger nails, curious costume, stooped back, withered limbs, treacherous plots, mysterious powers" ("Chinese Scholarships" 9). Chinatowns are depicted as dirty "dungeons of murderous vengeance" on the stage and screen, in novels, and traveling exhibits, and neither the outdated textbooks nor uplift-minded missionaries try to correct this image (9). Suez and Kwei's categories of theaters, newspapers, textbooks, missionaries, and Chinatown displays (or the real thing) correspond to the main sources of Chinese knowledge for white Americans in the 1910s and 1920s. To this list of informants, Vernon Schopp, a Midwestern American and contributor to a 1928 issue of *CSM*, added the laundrymen or handful of Chinese students that Americans run into (43). In his review of Paul Hutchinson's *China's Real Revolution*, University of Chicago student Y. P. Mei casually mentions that a Chicago church included "Washie Washie All The Day" among a musical

performance that ostensibly showcased numbers from all nations (60). Chinese students organized a multipronged response to each of these avenues of knowledge, putting on their own performances, employing oratory and writing skills before American congregations and the readership of U.S. dailies and periodicals, and utilizing every opportunity to reach out in friendship through social events.

The Transnational Rise of the Publicity Committee

Although the Chinese student club in New York discussed establishing an agency to connect Chinese writers and speakers with newspapers and lecturing opportunities in the May of 1911 ("To Make" 660), it took the leadership and modeling of the Chinese Students' Alliance to spur the proliferation of publicity committees on a local level. The correlation between patriotic fervor and literacy activities was first seen in an organized effort in 1912 to spur international recognition of the new republic. In a report by Alliance president P. W. Kuo (1911-1912), the Alliance's Patriotic Committee had encouraged local clubs to nominate speakers to communicate "a correct interpretation of the Revolutionary and Republican movement in China," explained those movements to several New York papers, and sent President William H. Taft a petition on the matter ("Report" 52). The next provocation came with Japan's imposition of 21 territorial and administrative demands on the fledgling Chinese government in January 1915, which affirmed once more the Alliance's need of a counteracting force. In his report for February and March of 1915, Alliance president Y. L. Tong of Princeton announced his appointment of two publicity committees, English and Chinese, whose duty would be to "promote friendly relations" between the two nations and to translate English-language articles into Chinese so that people at home could learn the American perspective on East Asian issues. ("Alliance President's Report" 457). What

galvanized the creation of these U.S.-based bureaus in response to a Sino-Japanese affair was probably the belief that Japan was behind much of the anti-Chinese propaganda in the U.S. Not much else was written about these two national-level committees, but three years after Tong's initiative, the *Chinese Students' Monthly* began to feature regular news of the formation and various activities of club-level committees dedicated to the dissemination of the Chinese perspective. A pattern was also set by the Alliance in 1912 and 1915: Political events at home or in the U.S. would trigger a flurry of rhetorical labor, which would die down and recommence when the next event hit. On October 18, 1918, the club at Columbia University approved the establishment of a five-member committee "whose function shall be to correct or defend any statement that may appear anytime in periodicals or books about our country" (Y. C. Chang, "Columbia" 137). It made sense that the felt need to "defend" China in an organized manner arose in New York City; the metropolitan had 130 Chinese students, 95 of whom were studying in Columbia (137). The city also rivaled San Francisco in the number of Chinese from other social classes. Being also the heart of U.S. communications and trade also meant that the students probably came across more instances of anti-Chinese rhetoric; in smaller towns outside of New York and California, the students were generally better received and integrated more successfully into communities even if they were aided by their status as curiosities (Chapter 3).

The Washington Naval Conference of 1921-1922 provided another opportunity for publicity committees to play their role. Convened by President Warren G. Harding, the meeting proposed to defuse tensions and forestall an arms race in the Far East among eight other nations, including Japan and China. While the Japanese entered negotiations with the intent to hold onto Shantung, the Chinese delegation was able to secure an agreement, with the help of allied pressure,

that reverted the province back to Chinese control. While the meetings took place, the students saw it their mission to put the squeeze on their country's delegates as well as make clear to the American public the justice due China. In Massachusetts, the student clubs at New Bedford, Cambridge (Harvard), and Worcester disseminated their points of view through local newspapers and pamphlets and sent telegrams of support to the conference chair and their own delegates (H. Yuan 564; Foo 698; "Worcester" 65). Likewise, at the Michigan College of Mines, students contributed articles to Houghton and Hancock papers and instructed their representatives, "Get Japs out of Manchuria and Shantung, or quit Conference." The reply, which came swiftly the next day, promised their "utmost" (C. Pan, "Michigan" 17.3 p. 229). Speaking bureaus were organized, among many other places, at Iowa State University and Cornell (L. Hsu 53; T. Shen 227). The Cornell club aligned all three committees (financial, publicity, and social) toward the purpose of securing "justice" from the Washington conference: While the financial committee raised funds and the publicity committee spoke at churches and wrote to newspapers, and the social committee had invited 400 to attend a Chinese Night (T. Shen 227). But, in terms of publicity work, the significance of the Versailles and Washington conferences was that they greatly increased American sympathy for the Chinese predicament and established the foundation for interventions that were less obviously political. For example, a 1927 report by the Oberlin Chinese Students' Club informed *CSM* readers that nearly 1,000 students and faculty members had signed a petition to Congress that demanded a more reciprocal relationship with China and the withdrawal of military forces. Encouraged by the impact of their work, the publicity committee at Oberlin asked for more materials from the Alliance and cited plans of sending speakers to nearby towns (T. Huang 72). After the conclusion of the Washington conference, instead of dissolving, the publicity

infrastructure was soon turned to media concerns. Tsao Chien Li, the Alliance president in the fall of 1922, felt the need to remind his readers of their accomplishments during the Shantung affair and the Washington conference and asked his readers to build on them and "fight the motion pictures that have long misrepresented our nation to the American public" ("President's" 63). In the June 1927 issue of *CSM*, the Chinese Students' Club of Washington (the state) prided on its active battle against the anti-Chinese propaganda of the "Anglo-American press" ("Chinese Students' Club" 70).

The Writing and Speaking Chinese

From the 1910s came an increased attention to the development and accomplishments of a germinating number of rhetors. These reports served to inspire more students to take on the role of cultural interpreter and to showcase to the American readership a dimension of the Chinese seldom entertained by the press: adroitness in the Americans' own language. (Indeed, whenever newspapers cover a speech done by a Chinese student, mention is often given to the impeccable English exhibited.) Thomas Chao, the 1926-1927 *CSM* editor, graduated with degrees in journalism from the University of Missouri and Columbia University. His role model might have been Hollington K. Tong, who was also a University of Missouri ('12) and Columbia journalism student ('13) and had worked for the *Kansas City Star* and the *New York Evening Post* after graduating with the first class of the newly established School of Journalism at Columbia (Nyi, "Chinese Associated" 508). Eva Chang, reported to be the "only girl journalist among the Chinese students" by the conference daily in 1924, contributed to the *New York Herald-Tribune* as a feature writer covering the Democratic National Convention (*The Conference Daily* qtd. in Sun, "Eastern" 71). Chang was hardly the sole female Chinese student involved in the profession. Miss Mamie

Leung edited the *Daily Trojan* and *Wampus* (a humor magazine) at the University of Southern California as well as the journal of Chinese Students' Christian Association ("Personal News" 21.3 p. 74). The Chinese students' interest in writing was not restricted to news media either; Columbia student Henry H. C. Chou wrote his dissertation on the evaluation of composition ability (Sun, "Personal News" 19.2 p. 77), a work that captured the emerging concern with mode-specific writing measurement and made comparisons to methods used in Chinese composition, and Kwei Chen had poetry published in college papers, *The Century Magazine*, *The English Journal*, and the *Wisconsin Literary Magazine*. The *Monthly* did not hold back its praise for the Hunan native, who demonstrated once again the literary abilities of the Chinese across languages and genres: "[T]he crown of achievement comes … when a Chinese student can wield this literary weapon so dexterously as to express his sentiments and emotions in verse" (C. Young, "Poems" 5). College newspapers remain a favorite outlet for communication: In 1916, the Michigan club assigned three students, "all able literary men," to contribute to the Michigan Daily (W. Young, "Michigan" 12.2 p. 111), and over at Vassar, Miss Sophia H. Chen's paper on Chinese poetry in *The Miscellany Monthly* (1872-1924), understood to be the first female student publication in the U.S., raised considerable interest on China among her classmates. Chen and a Chinese peer also gave frequent informal talks and had "a good time" teaching them Chinese (S. Chen 114). Other students contributed or were requested to contribute to *The Annals* of the American Academy of Political and Social Science (on Chinese immigration), *The Monist* (on Lao-Tze), the *International Journal of Ethics* (on Mozi philosophy), and various biology and medical journals (T. Chen, "Personal News" 16.2 p. 157; "Personal News" 21.3 p. 74; "Personal News" 21.6 p. 80). The involvement of Thomas Chao, Eva Chang, and Kwei Chen on the editorial board of *CSM* is evidence that

Chinese students utilized their writing talent not solely to pursue personal career goals or to shore up a national need but also further the welfare of their peers in America.

Fostering writers and writing ability were contests sponsored by Chinese politicians, professional societies, cultural associations, and the *Monthly* itself. The *Monthly* contest commenced with the 1914-1915 volume of *CSM*, with the first set of winners announced in the March 1915 issue. Essays that captured the top prizes were written on China's economic development and its alignment in the world war. The subjects for the April contest asked about "motion pictures as a means of educational and social uplift in China" and "the best means for the improvement of the Chinese in America socially and intellectually" (H. Kwong, "Winners" 262), both of which concerned Chinese students over the entirety of their sojourn. By the 1917-1918 academic year, a Girls' Essay Competition joined the offering, as well as a contest sponsored by the American-Asiatic Association, a commercial lobbyist group on East Asian policy issues. Prizes ranged from $10 to $15 monthly (*Monthly*) to lump sums of $25, $50, and $75 (Association). That year, the subjects remained more or less the same, focusing on issues related to industrialism, banking, and social welfare, while the women's contest asked for entries on education, hospital work, and "American Home Life" (Yui, "Essay" 13.1 p. 7). The women's contest drew 21 entrants, and the second- and third-place winners had their essays on American homes published in the June 1918 issue (Yui, "Essay" 13.4 p. 190; Lewis 453; S. Chiu 461). The number of contests expanded dramatically in 1920 with readers being able to choose between seven options. Essay competitions were sponsored by the Chinese Ministry of Education ($50 for best essay on "the responsibility of the Chinese returned students," "the evils of militarism," etc.); Chinese Patriotic Committee of New York City ($50 on "the significance of the recent boycott," etc.); Chinese

consul at New York ($30 on China's criminal law, sanitation, or future impact on world trade); Chinese minister to England; Chinese Political Science Association; Chinese Legation at Washington; and the World's Students' Federation of Shanghai (Wood, "Essay" 16.1 p. 25-28). The January 1921 issue added to these two more contests by the Chinese Students' Banking Club of New York and the Chinese Engineering Society (Wood, "Essay" 16.3 p. 192). In each case, the assigned subject aligned with the sponsors' foremost concerns. After a lull, the *Monthly*'s contest returned in 1927 to boost interest in *CSM* and "encourage a larger output of writing among the Chinese students." Much more open than those in the past, the contest asked for writing in any subject and style, with selected judges coming from academia and journalism ("Announcement" 79).

In addition to in-house contests, local Chinese clubs organized external essay competitions that involved high school students in the vicinity. In 1922, the club at the Michigan College of Mines ran a month-long contest for schools throughout Houghton County, offering 20 embroideries as prizes for the best essays on "China at the Washington Conference." The initiative was intended to raise interest among American youths in Chinese affairs and designed to work in conjunction with pamphlets published by the Alliance and the club (C. Pan, "Michigan" 17.4 p. 344). The club report in the June 1922 issue of *CSM* announced that the contest, which ultimately involved six high schools, was a "great success" (C. Pan, "Houghton" 698). Among names announced in Houghton and Hancock newspapers, names that were evenly distributed between genders, 16-year-old Edgar Wiedenhoefer took first place. The Michigan club noted that the winning entries were "highly praised by the judges" and exhibited a "grasp of subject and the rightful voice for China" (699). A similar competition was organized by students at Cornell in

1924 for high schools in Ithaca "to impress upon the young generation of America, the better side of China and the Chinese" ("Cornell" 73). Together, these writing competitions not only honed the pen but promoted a conception of China and the Chinese that went beyond what was commonly conveyed through textbooks and the media. For the high schoolers, composing a persuasive, detailed essay about a nation forces writers to dig deeper into its history and politics to adequately support their claims. For both Chinese and Americans, these competitions also reinforced the importance of writing to understand a complex topic and effect political change.

In addition to writing for the press, students began speaking back at venues that drew large crowds, such as churches and on-campus gatherings. The *Monthly*'s attention to the caliber of student speakers intimates a conception of oratorical ability as a force in itself. Chinese students joined their universities' debating teams and societies, such as P. C. Chang, the literary editor for *CSM* in 1912-1913, who helped Clark University win a debate contest against Boston (Kwong and Lee 287). Perhaps the most celebrated orator in the annals of the *Chinese Students' Monthly* was Ching-Yie Tang of Beloit College. A junior at the college in the fall of 1916, Tang came second in the Home Oratorical Contest that December and placed first in the state contest on February 6, 1917, beating entrants from Lawrence College, Ripon College, and Carroll College. Beloit students were ecstatic following the triumphant announcement, and Tang was "seized [and] hoisted on shoulders" (qtd. in Burwell) and "carried up and down the halls" (*Beloit Daily News* qtd. in "Personal Notes" 12.6 p. 325). Tang was but one of several dozens of other Chinese students who were celebrated for their victories on debating teams. Chinese and English debates at the annual sectional conferences further honed the students' skills (Chapter 6). At Ohio State University, a debating committee was formed to "develop debating faculties" among club members

(P. Huang 622). The success of Chinese students on the platform shows that the Chinese Students' Alliance had no shortage of talent to deploy toward specific paradigm-shifting goals. The *Monthly* mentioned participation in an interracial forum, the disruption of a "misinformed" conference presentation, a refuted classroom lecture, and a 1919 Varsity Welcome speech at the University of Wisconsin, courtesy of Keats S. Chu, who spoke on the topic of "The Foreigner Within Our Gates" before a crowd of 8,000 ("Personal News" 15.1 p. 56).

Off campus, this eloquent but disruptive Chinese body often appeared in churches. Their frequency probably reflected the need to combat exaggerations like Dr. William Hervie Dobson's on China's rate of female infanticide.[9] In a June 1926 *CSM* editorial, an editor blasted Dobson's presentation before a women audience at Grace Episcopal Church in Madison, Wisconsin, which peddled the claim that 8,000 baby girls are killed by Chinese parents per day (T. K. K. 5). News of presentations at Eastern and Midwestern churches appeared in the *Monthly* from 1917 through 1926, although, from the beginning, religious institutions have played a large role in acclimatizing students to their new environment (Chapter 3). Students were frequently invited to speak probably because they were seen as cultural informants and an additional, dependable source of information to newspapers and their own missionaries. The 18-member club at Ames, Iowa, for example, reported that local churches and campus organizations were "anxious to know the real situation in

[9] Occasionally, these speeches were for the purpose of soliciting funds for disaster relief. During the 1920-1921 North China famine, brought on by a drought and resulting in 500 thousand deaths, the Detroit club planned to send members to churches to round off the $700 raised among the city's Chinese (K. Moy 233). The campaign at Worcester, Massachusetts, was comparatively expansive. The 11-member club sent 100 letters to churches in January 1921; over 20 responded and requested the club to speak at a regular Sunday service or at a separate gathering. The students were "welcomed in the most cordial manner every time" and succeeded abundantly in their mission. Because of the campaign, "[p]eople in this part of the country have changed their attitude toward the Chinese" (L. Chen, "Worcester" 536).

China directly … instead of from the unreliable sources" (S. Cheng, "Ames" 62). Understanding the value of this platform, student clubs planned their talks carefully. In Cleveland, a three-person committee consisting of Paul Young, Y. C. Chen, and James K. F. Shen (the same student who would cover the city's purge of Chinatown residents in 1925) convened to "map out a series of talks" ("Cleveland" 62). The publicity committee in Pittsburgh planned to have more members "well prepared and informed" to deliver lectures on "different subject-matters" in area churches (G. Chow, "Pittsburgh" 15.7 p. 70). The students sometimes organized to address a network of churches, like those in Kansas State Agricultural College (now Kansas State University) who were engaged to speak to rural congregations around Manhattan (Lau 66). The amount of traveling and speaking interfered with the academic work of students like C. F. Chou, who "worr[ied] that he ha[d] not enough time to study" while speaking in churches around Urbana and in Bondville and White Heath, the last a village of no more than two hundred residents 20 miles away from campus. Chou's participation in the university's varsity wrestling and tennis teams certainly did not help the matter (W. Chao, "Illinois" 15.8 p. 66), but such a laden schedule is not unusual for students who seek to effectively represent a nation. In regards to content, the speakers devoted their allotted time to interpreting Chinese affairs or explaining the purposes of the Chinese students.[10]

[10] This admittedly brief analysis was gained through reading club reports voluntarily sent to *CSM* over two decades. A deeper understanding of Chinese student involvement in Christian activities would probably begin with the Chinese Students' Christian Association (est. 1909), their yearbooks, and their journal *The Chinese Students' Christian Journal*/*Christian China*. In addition to publishing, the Chinese Students' Christian Association, a YMCA-affiliated organization, arranged multiple yearly conferences and appointed secretaries who would travel to local clubs to encourage them in Christian living and service. Although the *Chinese Students' Monthly* would periodically promote CSCA activities, the attitudes of CSA members (some were members of both) toward Christian workers became increasingly strained due to the rise of Chinese nationalism, perceived gap between Christian ideals and foreign policy toward China, and inadequate missionary attention or care toward Chinese cultural practices and desire for autonomy.

Other off-campus venues that saw student lecturers included the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Science ("Personal News" 21.3 p. 76) and advertising and philanthropic societies around Baltimore. Requests to speak at the latter prompted the local club to consider sending out more female members (S. Lin 411). Also receiving media coverage were engagements at literacy-based sites. A clipping dated February 28, 1916, from the *Mining Gazette* of Houghton, Michigan, mentioned the "capacity audience" that attended W. K. Woo's talk the previous day at the public library. The Michigan College of Mines student employed "[n]umerous slides" and "told many things of his own experiences" in East Asia as well as Hawaii: "In every respect, the lecture was a delight" (qtd. in "Personal Notes" 11.7 p. 529). Valparaiso University student Henry T. Y. Kiang's address at a literary club, which met at the home of a local optometrist/jeweler, was lauded by a paper for the speaker's "mastery of English as well as a broad grasp of Chinese history and the political situation" (qtd. in C. L. Wong 374). The invitation of Chinese students to teach at these venues suggest that cultural learning was seen as part of literacy education. What this section tries to give is a sense of the students' rhetorical work as well as the portrayal of that work through the "official organ" of the Alliance, a portrayal that inspires further counteracting activities from insiders and demonstrates unity of purpose to outsiders. The sight of a Chinese student speaking better than his or her peers was a force to behold, but it was by no means the only embodied strategy enacted by the Alliance. While the rhetorical prowess of a few certainly point to the capacity of the Chinese to master the English language, outside of the delivered content, the Chinese body speaking well did little to append new meanings to an entire nation. What was also needed were indexical strategies that pointed outward from the speaker and gestured toward a larger group and culture, e.g., performances and social programs.

The Performing Chinese

The transcalar movement between the individual and the national are primarily shifts in identification and can therefore be interpreted as dynamic appeals to *ethos*. In one moment, the student writer can speak of the "I" and the "reader," indexing literal and conceptually bounded figures, while in the next, employ the "we" of the Chinese national body, an "imagined community" that constitutes a "nation" (Anderson 6). This signifies the trans-modal aspect of transcalar rhetoric whereby the rhetor weaves between the literal and the figurative as she creates new meanings through multiple identifications. Her audience, too, oscillates between encountering and perceiving the student's literal and physical body and understanding it through the lenses of the imagined or conceived Chinese body. This interplay between the imaginary and the encountered has been studied by tourism scholars who argue that what is actually seen when one encounters a site/sight involves myths and fantasies. Chris Rojek speaks of the double journeys that a tourist takes: "[t]he physical movement to new places and situations" and the "internal, psychological ... journeying to an inner world in which the travel sight is imaginatively explored through cultural metaphors, allegories and fabrications" (53). In our context, when a white American meets a Chinese student, there is the movement toward the perceived body (the encounter itself), but there is also movement that returns to the imaginary that is prompted by the encounter. Rojek's indexing and dragging model speculates that whenever tourists gaze at and try to make sense of an object, they consciously and unconsciously drag elements (images, associations) from different representational files (compiled from tourist brochures, television commercials, news articles) and combine them to form their perspective (Rojek 53). The success of the Chinese student in changing minds, however, highlights the real power the student has in performing the perceived body. Not

only can the student modify and "stage" her or his body, the modified body itself forms a new element or representational "file" for subsequent access of the perceiver's imagination.[11]

There was much grist for this imagination-engineering mill as the loneliness of Chinese students drove them to seek entertainment in theaters, which further educated them on the pervasiveness of racial misrepresentation. In a June 1924 *CSM* article, Yuan-Lun Ta seemed to assume that the resentment towards the depiction of Chinese on the stage and screen was widely shared, stating that it's a "common experience that our evenings in theatres are often spoiled by the

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[11] That Chinese student writers were aware of their influence on the imaginary can be seen in the magazine's book reviews, which distinguished good *possible* fiction centered on China from the bad. One reviewer marveled at how the protagonist's travels in Violet Mary Irwin's novel *The Short Sword* (1928) generally corresponded with his own, calling the book "a tale of continuous adventure … within the limits of possible fact." Despite the lack of "dramatic structure" and the presence of inaccuracies, such as the description of a piece of land that can grow rice and wheat, Irwin's effort is "accurate as a whole in its portrayal of modern Chinese life and the series of incidents making up the story are well within the range of real life" (C. K. Wang 165). On the other hand, Josef Washington Hall's "unquestionable" knowledge of China exhibited in *Moonlady* (1927) is counterbalanced by the unlikely composite of qualities within a single character:

> A woman, who by her high ideals can unusual talents qualifies herself to lead an extraordinary public movement is not lacking. A woman who expresses her emotions and affections in the most frank manner, however rare in China, may probably be found. A woman who would suffer herself to degrade to a shameful station because of the want of necessities, is perhaps not uncommon. … But they cannot be the one and same woman. It is impossible that the girl who has such filial piety as to withhold for a long time response to the call of her patriotism can be the same girl who would give up her body and soul inherited from her ancestors to the pleasure seekers. It is equally impossible that the girl who has the talent of transacting affairs of the state with composure and of managing thousands of people with tact can be the same girl who would lose her self-control in face of a single helpless enemy. (R. Zu-Ku 192)

While Hall's taking of creative license may not stem from malice, nevertheless, "he makes her one as can never be found in reality" (192). To return to the influence of the perceived body on the conceived, the task of the student rhetor become easier when one considers that persuasion is rarely the result of a clean substitution of one idea for another. If one takes into account Chaim Perelman's definition of argumentation as "the discursive techniques allowing us to induce or to increase the mind's adherence to the theses presented for its assent" (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 4), the students are simply increasing adherence to positive images whilst loosening the hold of those seen as pejorative.

appearance of a Chinese mandarin or coolie on the stage, to say nothing of the frequent exploitations of opium smoking, cruelty, treachery, and a hundred and one other fictitious crimes." What else could be expected from a "scandal-loving American public"? (Ta 4). When they didn't go alone, they were invited by Americans who didn't see the murderous and lustful depictions as an issue. As Mi Wu explains, "I have been invited by respectable business men of Boston to see plays of similar character performed, and I knew it was all for hospitable entertainment and harmless mirth" (389).

Resisting Caricature

Early criticism of media portrayals centered on stage plays, such as the "The Trunk Mystery" (1910), which was based on the Elsie Siegel murder in New York. Students in Seattle and New York tried unsuccessfully to stop its production, fearful of the "disorder" and anti-Chinese sentiment that may result ("Trouble" 419). Four years later, the relocation of London play "Mr. Wu" (1914) to New York again attracted the attention of *CSM*. Peng Chun Chang, who attended a show and later composed his own plays, acknowledged profit as the main driver of themes but drew a line between "innocent and harmless" inaccuracies and ones that foster misconceptions that "ma[k]e racial differences appear ever wider and irreconcilable" (222). Citing characters that do not behave and dress like their real-life counterparts, Chang dismissed the artistic value of false representations: "No prejudice, however cleverly dramatized, can ever form the substance of a work of art, for it is neither beautiful, nor agreeable, nor desirable … and certainly not morally worthy" (222). The American audience must have felt the same way as *CSM* reported the play "dead" soon after it landed. While the play was showing in London, students there unsuccessfully petitioned the Lord Chamberlain, who historically held the role of theatrical

licensure and censorship, but were able to strike two lines from the script: “Never teach the Chinaman” and “Add Western knowledge to his native Oriental cunning and you make him a devil incarnate” (T. Z. Tyau qtd. in “English” 507). It’s notable that the omitted text would have undermined the educational purposes of Chinese students abroad. Despite the play’s failure in New York, silent film versions appeared in 1919 and 1927 with the latter starring Anna May Wong.

The January 1920 issue reprinted a *New York World* essay by Julius Su Tow, Secretary of the Chinese Consulate General at New York. Tow would later write *The Real Chinese in America: Being an Attempt to Give the General American Public a Fuller Knowledge and a Better Understanding of the Chinese People in the United States* (1923). In the article, “Chinese Plays Seen Through Chinese Eyes,” Tow attributes the inaccuracies in a slew of plays—“East is West” (Chinese girls being auctioned), “The Rose of China” (a “peculiar caricature” of a Chinese priest), and “The Geisha” (Chinese geisha keeper)—to their playwrights’ lack of knowledge (43). These ignorant representations result in “mockery and humiliation” suffered by the Chinese but also drive a wedge between the two nations. This appeal to international relations, the idea that these caricatures “create ill-feeling and contempt in the American public toward our people as a nation” (Tow 43) can be read as the rhetoric of a diplomat, but the appeal also connects artistic choices made on a local level to supranational effects, a move repeatedly made by the students themselves. The silent film adaptation of the play “East is West” also received opprobrium when it came out two years later (C. Kwei, “‘Toll’” 74). *CSM* editor Chung-Shu Kwei equated the selling of daughters, something that rarely happens in China, to a phenomenon actually present in the West: the forcing of daughters to marry into wealthy families (75). The portrayal of Chinese as polygamists, which “no Chinese endors[e],” is comparable to Americans who keep multiple

girlfriends (76). Also undesirable was the other extreme of taking a good aspect of Chinese life and exaggerating it to the point of ridiculousness. Written by an ex-missionary, the play "Flower Candle Wife" depicts a character giving up on a relationship for the sake of tradition. In truth, a reviewer writes, "filial piety with us knows definite bounds," and the playwright ignores the reality of modern Chinese who do not "submit blindly to unreasoned and unreasonable paternal dictate" (C. Kwei, "Three" 3). The play's sponsorship by the China Society of America led the reviewer to urge readers to do more than simply "detect faults" and become more involved in the creative process ("China Society of America" 4).

The danger of non-involvement is illustrated in Yuan Lun Ta's experience with the Chinese Students' Club of Philadelphia. When the Women's Hospitality Committee invited the club put on a pantomime for a university function and supplied the script, the club's president gave his consent without consulting the club. The players were apparently too happy to appear on stage at a posh hotel (Ta 5). When the club finally formed a Censorship Committee to explore the objectionable content, prompted by Ta's own protest, their suggestions were rejected by the women's group on the pretext of copyright (5). What finally provoked several club members to call a special meeting was the presentation of the pantomime itself. The story of "The Willow Pattern Plate" involved an elopement of a mandarin's daughter, the murder of her suitor, and the daughter's suicide. The barbarity of the plot was matched by the incongruous attire and offensive gestures, which included "frequent bows and other exaggerations of formality." Judging by the mayor's expression of surprise toward the gulf between Chinese and American values and customs, irreparable damage had been done. The students' undertaking of these roles had led the audience to assume the play's authenticity. However, at the special meeting, the motion that a complaint be lodged against the

play's author was defeated by a "most irrational" assembly, and the issue was summarily dismissed. The one bright point, Ta notes, was the passing of a resolution making "all future dramatic activities subject to the approval of the members of the Club" (6). Although Ta's efforts in enjoining his countrymen to refuse complicity in their own degradation was unsuccessful in this instance, they did effect one structural change: the increase of control by the Chinese students over their depictions through the creation of an oversight mechanism. Another university-sponsored play, a comic opera put forth by the Michigan Union Opera in 1924 called "Tickled to Death," received reproval on the first page of the January 1925 issue of *CSM* for its gross misrepresentation of Chinese institutions. The sanctioning of this play by an intellectual authority led C. S. Kwei to question if misrepresentations were merely the outcome of simple ignorance, and dismissal by school officials of a student's concerns resulted in his voluntary withdrawal from the university (C. Kwei, "It is in a Spirit" 3; H. Ch'ang 31).[12] If the presence of a Chinese body in an American play

[12] Hsiao-Chuan Ch'ang's open letter to Dr. Marion LeRoy Burton, the fifth president of the University of Michigan, begins: "It is in a spirit of deep sorrow rather than resentment that I have made the decision to withdraw from the University as a positive protest against the gross misrepresentation of China as set forth in the Union Opera 'Tickled to Death'" (H. Ch'ang 31). After listing the play's inaccuracies and taking the university to task for its lack of action, Ch'ang reveals the extent and result of student remonstrations at Ann Arbor: "Many a painstaking protest has been made by the Chinese students at Ann Arbor and other places to the University Senate Committee on Students' Affairs, which had been coldly ignored." On top of this, school officials dismissed the significance of the issue by telling the Chinese students that "they took the matter too seriously and lacked a sense of humor." For Ch'ang, his "moral duty" was clear: The refusal of university faculty to remedy the situation and their reassigning of blame on the Chinese students themselves force his withdrawal. He admits that he is "quite aware this will bring nothing to bear" but concludes with the Chinese saying: "A scholar might be killed; but can never be humiliated" (qtd. in 31). The original reads, "士可殺，不可辱," a quote from one of the Five Classics, the *Book of Rites*, which were composed before 200 B.C. and part of the state-sponsored curriculum up till the dismantling of the imperial examination system in 1905. By employing this quote, Ch'ang brings to bear the legacy of Chinese intellectualism, reminding the audience of the value of their "old" education as well as chastising Western so-called education that would permit this travesty. The parallel of a scholar's death and Ch'ang's departure is also notable; regardless of the actual outcome of his critical decision, it is the principle or spirit of the protest that matters for him.

can inadvertently authenticate its distortions (“The Willow Pattern Plate”), then surely its absence can make a similarly strong statement.

Halfway through the “second wave” of Chinese students, motion pictures began to receive attention. The rise of the silent film turned the students’ critical eye to movies like “The Tong Man” (1919), whose interrupted screening represented the first success of coast-to-coast Chinese student activism. Lehigh University students, through the university YMCA, brought the matter to the attention of the manager who, “being a good Christian man,” canceled the showing (C. S. Yu 68). In Seattle, the Washington club sent letters to the mayor and theater manager and received favorable replies (M. Woo 71). A report by students in Rochester, New York, spoke of similar outcomes with Mayor Hiram Edgerton and revealed the factor that galvanized the widespread movement: a telegram from the Chinese National Welfare Society. The Society had urged the students to stop the motion picture on account of it being a Japanese scheme to destroy Sino-American relations (Hsia 70). The Chinese National Welfare Society in America was a KMT-supported organization founded to recruit the support of overseas Chinese to fight Japanese claims over Shantung, showing that the students’ coordinated activism was at least partially motivated by political events as well as external organizations.

Protests against other films also achieved similar outcomes. In California, the showing of “East of Suez” (1925) at Stanford Theater in Palo Alto “outraged” students who took up the matter with the theater manager. According to the 1928-1929 editor Ju-Ao Mei, “[t]he manager regretted, apologized, and pledged that he would never allow thereafter to be shown in his theater any picture that would cast bad reflections on a nation ‘whose people and civilization I have the highest esteem and admiration’” (qtd. in “‘Telling’” 8). Another incident involved a Californian theater cutting out

offending parts of a film after a Chinese consul general was invited for his input (J. Mei, "'Telling'" 8). The Chinese tried other strategies over the decades. The Oberlin club spoke directly to audiences at the Apollo Theatre (Y. Lee 46), a Colorado Spring High School senior wrote prize-winning contest essays against "Shadows" (1922) and "East is West" ("Personal Items" 60), and the Cleveland club itself "almost filled the dramatic column with a criticism of 'Chinatown Nights'" (A. Young, "Making" 388).

The value of speaking up was reiterated by editor Ju-Ao Mei: "[A]s such, [a protest] differs from silence or non-protest in at least one material respect, and that is: A protest can never be misinterpreted as implied admission or tacit acquiescence" ("'Telling'" 8). Rejecting the commonly held notion of *Chinese Students' Monthly* as "an agent for the promotion of friendship" between the nations, Mei reminds readers that it takes two to tango: "As to whether our American readers do care to befriend themselves with China or not, it is a question strictly theirs, in which the *Monthly* is not least interested. What the *Monthly* attempts to do is simply to make the American people *understand* China better" ("Chinese Students'" 1, emphasis original). This redefinition of the magazine's purpose sets the tone for Mei's critique of "Telling the World" (1928), a Sam Wood film starring Anita Page. In the essay, the editor recounts his experience of viewing a motion picture that amounted to "just another insult to China" and "once more a misrepresentation of the Chinese conditions and the Chinese character" ("'Telling'" 6). Putting on an identity that conflates the personal with the national, students like Mei continually interpreted slander against the Chinese race as an affront on a geopolitical scale. The plot of "Telling the World" does not deviate much from those of previous stage plays. To summarize, a white girl traipses into a war-torn region of China and was caught by "bandit-like native soldiers." Her American "sweetheart" sets off to

rescue her but becomes captured himself. His serendipitous access to a "wireless sender" initiates a well-rehearsed finale of "[t]he yellow press—the headlines—the American gunboats—the bombardment of Chinese cities—the slaughter of Chinese people—the rescue of the 'hero' and 'heroine'—the Chinese apology" (Mei, "'Telling'" 7).

Protests against the 1929 film "Chinatown Nights" were met with mixed success. The Cleveland club president sent a letter to major Cleveland newspapers, the manager of the State Theatre, and to Mr. William Harrison Hays himself, castigating the picture for its violent depiction of the Chinese (Y. Hsiao 395). While the papers received the letter favorably, the manager Sanford Farkas justified the picture by pointing to the dozens more that put the Americans in "a very bad light." Farkas admitted that the producers might have "exaggerated, as was necessary in creating a fast moving melo-drama," but assured the writer that "the majority of my race know that the Chinese people are a very cultured, educated and law-abiding group" (qtd. in 395). How could they, really, the club president asked, if they lack the background knowledge to contextualize even one biased film? (Y. Hsiao 395). The letter to Hays was most likely ignored or rejected, if the one sent seven years prior was any indication. A November 1922 letter from the Alliance president T. C. Li to William Harrison Hays, the first chair of Motion Picture Association of America, represented the students' most high-profile attempt at reforming the silver screen (T. C. Li "Challenge" 32; "Reform" 6; C. Kwei, "Mr." 4). Hays's ultimate rebuff of the Alliance's request for stronger oversight showed that American film producers cannot be trusted to do what was just on their own volition.[13]

[13] Published in the December issue, Li's letter reminded Hays of the "far larger and nobler function" of film, that of education, and accused the director of shirking that purpose (T. C. Li, "Challenge" 31). Instead of promoting Chinese virtues of filial piety and "feminine faithfulness" and conveying China's social progress, current motion pictures poison the mind of Americans with

From “Mr. Wu” (1914) to “Chinatown Nights” (1929), the course of the Chinese students’ rhetorical resistance against stage productions and film was marked by disappointment and disillusion.[14] Media histories like to point to the introduction of Charlie Chan, popularized by Warner Oland’s portrayal in 1931, as a complex turning point in Asian American depictions. The devious, lecherous, and murderous Chinese mandarin had been replaced by an affable and

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sordidity and anachronisms such as the queue. Since the photoplay will become popular in China, Li reasoned, shouldn’t Hays try to “suppress” misrepresentation and present the best aspects of each country? (32). Introducing Li’s letter, a *CSM* editor asserted that the ball is now in Hays’s court and rejected the usual defense given by producers that Americans also exploit their own. Americans know better than to take in what they watch wholesale because they know the real America, not so with the real China. Furthermore, the editor ventured, the contempt raised by these films is the cause of racial discrimination experienced by the students. Given the uplifting role of film, that the people desire something is no excuse to uncritically give it: “If the public show a morbid taste, reform it. If the public have no good taste, create it. If the public possess a wholesome taste, foster it” (“Reform” 6).

William Hays’s response was quoted in Kwei’s editorial in the January 1923 issue. The MPAA chair deferred to the producers’ “duty to themselves, their duty to the industry, their duty to those particularly concerned and their duty to their public” and assured the Chinese of “the most careful and charitable consideration” in this matter. Such equivocation was not taken well by the editor, who latched onto the fourth item mentioned by Hays. If the film industry indeed considers its audiences’ interest, shouldn’t it attempt to reduce misinformation, which could “dra[w] the average American into the web of ignorance from which he may become too helpless to extricate himself”? Life might be more difficult for Chinese who bear the consequences dealt by misinformed Americans, but such experiences “only serve to stimulate rather than humiliate them” (C. Kwei, “Mr.” 4). The editor’s veiled threat aligns with the more aggressive student rhetoric in the post-Shantung and post-Washington Conference era. (The Lilly Library at Indiana University Bloomington, which holds a collection of Hays’s papers, could not locate a copy of Li’s letter nor Hays’s full response, according to personal correspondence in April 2015.)

[14] In response to the defeatist attitude of some students, Arthur A. Young of the Cleveland club urged the Alliance to attempt new tactics in a December 24, 1928, letter. To stem the proliferation of anti-Chinese pictures, it’s not enough to wait until they come out. If protests happen before or during filming, not after, perhaps by way of an appointed scout who may also attend previews, then much damage can be nipped in the bud. In addition to raising the issue with sympathetic theater managers, the Alliance could also try to contact the Federation of Women Clubs (which is “always for clean, moral pictures”) and religious and educational authorities. The point of gathering support against these “evil” movies, Young suggests, is to “hit at the one vital spot in the movie industry, i.e., box office receipts” (A. Young, “10525” 166).

intelligent solver of crime, an archetype that was devised to placate Asian communities, but was no less one-dimensional (Fuller 72; Ono and Pham 82; E. Wong 60). This perspective tends to ignore the more "proactive" efforts of the Chinese students, who put on their own plays in the attempt to offer alternative conceptions to their viewership. Years of disillusionment convinced the students that it was not enough to critically attend screenings, refuse participation in racist plays, and engage in other bodily protests like dropping out of college. For the sake of the nation, it was necessary to put their own bodies on the stage and make their audiences see anew.

Flipping the Script

Many of the students' own productions centered on Chinese mythologies though some gave insight into a slice of Chinese life. The 1920s brought plays that illustrated the same virtues as those conveyed through traditional stories but applied them to nationalist themes and settings; these new performances reinforced the good character of the Chinese while bringing audiences up to date on current affairs in China. One of the first shows for a public audience was a dramatization of the classic novel Journey to the West under the Copley Society. More known for its art exhibitions, the Copley Society of Boston grew out of a student association affiliated with the School of the Museum of Fine Arts. A Chinese performance under the auspices of the Society in 1914 was so well-received that the February 1915 issue of *CSM* announced plans to reproduce it. Readers were urged to give their support as the Boston student-produced show was "a corrective to the caricatures of Chinese life" seen in the recent "Mr. Wu" (1914) ("Personal Notes" 10.4 p. 254). When the dramatic piece hit several months later, *CSM* editor Tse Vung Soong commended "the real Chinese play given in Chinese by an entire Chinese cast" for breaking new ground in racial representation and genre. With parallels to The Pilgrim's Progress ("'Adventures'" 455), the

performance was similar to the morality plays of the Middle Ages, something that contemporary American audiences probably had difficulty making heads or tails of and simply accepted the "archaic quaintness, gorgeous scenery, [and] fantastic costumes" (456). Soong was critical about the newspapers' "barren attempts" at description and the play's weak last scene, but those were expected miscues:

> The experience has shown us that student performances should neither attempt too much, nor claim too readily. Within the somewhat limited field of conveying to foreign audiences some conception of our traditions, customs a[n]d ideals, as well as in serving as illustrations, not representatives of Chinese art, our efforts can accomplish something. But wisdom for ourselves as well as justice to our culture demands that we refrain from claiming to perform the impossible feat of presenting real Chinese art. (Soong, "'Adventures'" 455)

It was probably because of shows like "Mr. Wu" that made Soong extra conscious of the limitations and almost impossible representational burden of the dramatic performance. For Soong, it remains important to convey something authentic from Chinese culture even if it is imprudent to claim any kind of authenticity. That same year, Philadelphia students entranced an audience of 600 with a drama called "When the Old Meets the New" that typified the "modern Chinese family" ("City" 323), and Peng Chun Chang of Columbia, who wrote against "Mr. Wu," had the honor of penning two plays that achieved success: "The New Order Cometh," shown at Northford and New Haven, Connecticut, was performed by Yale and Columbia and used scenes in America and China to feature "the struggle between Oriental conservatism and Occidental modernism" (Mok, "Chinese Play" 399). Chang's second, "The Intruder," was reviewed by Elmer Reizenstein,

famous for the Pulitzer Prize-winning drama “Street Scenes” (1929). The New York playwright began his critique by explaining the image of China in the mind of the uninitiated American. For him:

> China is as distant as Mars—and as vague. He imagines it as a land of romance and mystery—picturesque kaleidoscopic and fascinatingly ancient. To be sure, he reads of railroads and loans and republics, but these are cold abstractions devoid of poetry and humanness, that are not calculated to fire even the liveliest imagination. When he thinks of China, therefore, he thinks of it in terms of walled cities and graceful flower-boats, of haughty mandarins and fiery dragons. He sees in “The Yellow Jacket”—let us say—an authentic representation of Chinese life. (Reizenstein 489)

P. C. Chang’s dramatic effort remedies this fanciful imagination. Produced in New York at the Brinckerhof Theatre, “The Intruder” follows the misfortunes of a once-prosperous family and its two wasteful older sons, who put the family’s property in jeopardy before the intervention of the youngest son and daughter. The American applauded the allegorical play for both its artistic and “ethnological” merit: “The Intruder” might have been “the first attempt upon the American stage, to portray modern Chinese life,” but besides that, it expertly refashioned elements of American drama—“[t]he unhappy old couple, the wayward son, the virtuous daughter, the unscrupulous villain … the mortgage on the farm and the courageous and triumphant young hero”—into something educational and intriguing (490). Chang himself, who appeared with the rise and fall of the curtain to give context to the proceedings, exhibited a good “sensitiveness to the nuances of American slang” (490), and the majority of the cast of Columbia Chinese students exceeded expectations (491). Reizenstein ended his review by looking forward to Chang’s “long and brilliant

career" (491), a premonition that would come true as Chang would go on to become a gifted diploma, philosopher, professor, and playwright dedicated to cross-cultural education.

The next student playwright to receive critical acclaim emerged in 1919 in the genius of Shen Hung, who would also, like P. C. Chang, become a renowned dramatist. At Ohio State University, the ceramic engineer student wrote "The Wedded Husband," a production that was enthusiastically embraced by academic, media, and industry pundits. The *Monthly* noted that the play was "is Chinese in everything except language" and anticipated the performance by Columbus Chinese students ("Personal News" 14.5 p. 354; C. Lin, "Columbus" 14.6 p. 395). (The script, accessible online, is subtitled "A Realistic Chinese Play.") To summarize, the play tells the story of a Miss Wang who was engaged to a rather simple man out of filial piety. She falls ill and, unbeknownst to her, is cared for by her fiance. Upon recovering and learning about his devotion and subsequent succumbence to the same illness, Miss Wang changes her mind and opts to become a widow (Drobik). The April 11 and April 12, 1919, showings were delivered before a capacity audience of 1,300 at University Chapel Hall. The June club report quoted extensively from the press, citing the play's "extraordinary beauty of the lines and delightful bits of comedy" and "stately" and "convincing" acting that was "consistent with all American ideas of the dignity of the high-class Chinese" (qtd. in C. Lin, "Columbus" 14.8 p. 503). The report mentioned one surprising twist, the inclusion of two American girls in starring roles, and spoke of the effect of the play on the club's involvement in other campus activities (503). The influence of Hung's play also extended beyond his era. An Ohio State University archive article by Michelle Drobik mentioned Hung's Chinese-language works while studying at Tsing Hua and the OSU's revival of the play in November 2013 (Drobik). An article from *The Lantern* that winter touched on the play's

contemporary and current significance through an interview with East Asian literatures Ph.D. student Man He. The student shared with the reporter a conversation she had with Hung's daughter and biographer, Hong Qian, who gave permission to reproduce the play. In employing a mixed-gender and mixed-raced cast and portraying the "new woman" in nuanced light, Shen Hung was truly doing something out of the ordinary. Most plays that emphasized modern Chinese femininity, revealed He, tended to have the character break with tradition by leaving the home, perhaps to escape an arranged marriage, but Shen Hung's Miss Wang freely chooses widowhood. Man He commented on the timeliness of the play's revival, asserting that it still holds cross-cultural appeal for today's audiences (Soo). "The Wedded Husband" was not Shen Hung's only work. At Harvard, Hung wrote a second play in three acts, "The Rainbow," which aimed to raise audience sympathy for the Shantung decision. The play was performed by students in Ames, Iowa, on October 10 before a "smiling" audience of 800. As expected, three American women were involved in the cast, and Mrs. E. G. Nourse was cited as the acting coach (Yao 41). A condensed version of "The Rainbow" at the University of Illinois made headlines and reaped "piles of letters of appreciation from the audience in spite of the sore legs they suffered on account of the lack of seats." Proceeds went to the American Red Cross and the club's publicity bureau. Professor Thomas Edward Oliver, Miss Florence Curtis, and Mrs. A. R. Seymour helped with coaching and Mrs. F. C. Baker with music (Liang 63). A third play, the farce "For Romeo and Juliet," was performed at Harvard on April 30, 1920, for 300 guests including an ex-governor of Massachusetts. Hung's play was only part of the evening's program; another farce, a classic delivered exclusively in Chinese, furnished a "fertile field for imagination and thought, with the

action and gestures as clues." Interestingly, the audience seemed to have understood the plot and were seen discussing it after the program (Hsi 67).

The social program that April at Harvard notwithstanding, there's a developing sense that the authenticity that T. V. Soong in 1915 so strongly coveted to compensate for productions like "Mr. Wu" (1914) has to be married with audience intelligibility. Shen Hung's works from 1919 and 1920 employed English, utilized a partially American cast, and relied less on traditional mythologies like The Journey to the West or Hua Mulan and more on realistic settings that featured characters reconciling with modernity. In regards to language spoken, although there remained some in-house criticism of the "more or less Chinese fashioned English" employed in some performances (F. Yu, "Golden" 67), the very sight of Chinese actors and actresses trading lines in the native language was probably enough to raise their esteem. This accounts somewhat for the continued resonance of Shen Hung's first play, "The Wedded Husband," even as it is repurposed to fit in with a multicultural ethic of a state university. Examining the list of sponsors of that November 2013 rerun also gives a sense of the long-term impact of productions like Hung's. Jointly given by The College of Arts and Sciences at OSU, Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures, Institute for Chinese Studies, East Asian Studies Center, Department of Theatre, Graduate Association of Chinese Linguistics, and Graduate Students for East Asian Languages and Literatures, it's arguable that without the efforts of student playwrights in the 1910s and 20s, public and academic interest in things "authentically" Chinese might have remained untapped, an interest that has, in our time, developed into the existence of various departments and organizations. Finally, Shen Hung's modern plays signaled a shift from the overreliance on more traditional pageantry whose significance might be lost on an American audience. As one of the

functions of Chinese theatre was to retell historical tales in very similar ways to reinforce a set of values or ethical perspective (P. Cheng), such a function was less effectual on an audience who did not share that cultural context. The Chinese club at New York constructed a Chinese Night for March 17, 1923, on such an assumption:

> Chinese music and ceremonial dances are either unpopular or unappreciated because of their wide difference from the Western ones … In order to make it a success, a new and original path was sought and opened. It was to present the every day life of China, as well as her festivities. It was made typically Chinese from the start to finish, so that the audience can see China right before their eyes. ("Chinese National" 67)

Although the resulting program did include dragon and lion dances and a Mid-Autumn Festival play featuring fairies, there were also depictions of present-day school life and a dramatic overview of famous characters throughout Chinese history: "[L]eading great men and women appear[ed] one after the other speaking of the contributions and achievements they have made towards the world's civilization, such a silk, the compass, the printing press, the philosophy, poetry" ("Chinese National" 67). To be clear, folk tales never completely vanished from the stage. Traditional performances could familiarize their audiences with artistic elements native to Chinese theatre. During the International Students' Spring Festival in Philadelphia in 1922, a thousand guests were treated to a production of "The Yellow Jacket": "The rare Chinese tapestries, the gorgeous costumes, the fantastic weapons, the symbolic paints on the characters' faces, the property man with his whimsical manners, gong, the banner … created a truly Oriental atmosphere and gave our American friends some idea of the charm and quaintness of the Chinese stage" (Ling 701). At its

Chinese Night on April 28, 1923, the Wisconsin club juxtaposed "The Empty City Stratagem," a play based on a romanticized bit of history involving the brilliant scheme of a 200 A.D. general, and "An Unknown Private," "a modern Chinese play of love and romance" set in 1911 revolutionary China ("Madison" 67). But the students' mission to modernize the Western image of the Chinese (even as they tried to maintain cultural distinctiveness) and to elicit sympathy for their country's cause in the international arena demanded a shift in emphasis.

Performances that were not based in mythology were crafted to teach Americans about Chinese institutions or its socio-political status. Some depicted old customs as a way to distance them from a modern China that now "knows better." In "The Chinese Old-time Marriage," put on by the Pennsylvania club in 1916, the absurdities of traditional marriage were presented "in such a humorous way that the audience was kept in a continuous fit of laughter" (T. H. Chen 224). Chinese family life was presented in "Shao Jeh Yee," put on by students at Pittsburgh at Schenley Theater in April 30, 1919. Commenting on the play, a paper commended the actors' "excellent English" and remarked on the difference between the play's setting and that found in "Chinese laundries and Oriental Restaurants" (qtd. in Chin 509). "The Rising Giant," another Pittsburgh play produced a year later, alluded to the awakening of China (G. Chow, "Pittsburgh" 16.2 p. 154), although references to national rebirth was often put in benevolent terms, as seen in the New York club's one-act play "Monuments Five," which impressed on the enduring friendship between China and the U.S. ("New" 69). In other occasions, actual assistance for the nation was obtained through donations to student performances. To raise funds for famine relief, the Yale club staged the Chinese play "Mu Lan" on May 9, 1921, with help from Columbia University students (Fugh 619). For the same purpose, the New York club planned to repeat the previously-successful "The

Never-ending Sorrow," which depicted the life of Emperor Ming Huang and consort Yang Kwei Fei, for January 2 and 3 in 1925 (D. Wong, "Impressive" 63). But performances also offered the audience a better understanding of the students themselves and invited Americans to reflect on the motivational differences between them. In its June 1928 issue, the *Monthly* reproduced the entire script of "The Spirit of Chinese Youth," a two-scene play written by Tim Min Tieh and performed on International Night at the Oregon State College. Inspired by a story in the *Daily Worker*, the play tells the personal sacrifice of two college-aged sisters, Chun Yun and Chu Yueh, who rebel against their protective father and use disguise to further the nationalist cause. Queries Chun Yun: "I have heard that all what most American students care for is a good time. They live in a country with a stable government, and need not concern themselves with grave matters. They do [not] have the responsibility that we have" ("Spirit" 25). While the Americans are having fun, Chinese students have to concern themselves with social reforms, worker and peasant organization, and international relations (25). The girls affirm their willingness to shed blood for China, against "medievalism within" and "imperialism without" (26).

Other performances that educated Americans on the circumstances of their Chinese counterparts took a more direct approach than Tieh's. As part of a "quasi-formal" entertainment in January 1920, the Cornell club put on a show for 300 guests that acquainted them with the language difficulties of Chinese students. The one-act farce written by Y. R. Chao depicted the attempt of a Chinese to register a letter using a dictionary and some notes from a tutor while mispronouncing the "reg" of the word "register." The skit provoked the audience to much laughter (H. Kao 62), most likely in sympathy, not derision. Another Michigan presentation on March 2, 1922 centered on an encounter between Chinese youths educated at home and Chinese who

studied at the University of Michigan. The meeting contrasted values between the civilizations and proceeded to an intentionally searching conclusion: "[W]hether 'the East and West shall ever meet' remains to be seen" (L. Hu, "Michigan" 17.6 p. 562). Performances like this was specifically requested by the students and townspeople at Ann Arbor in the spring of that year; through these spectacles, the students hoped to "bring about the popularity of the Chinese students here and better understanding of China" as well as remove public indifference toward this group (L. Hu, "Michigan" 17.8 p. 699).

The Mingling Chinese

Incoming students soon realized they were walking into world where "Chineseness" already had meaning. Instead of being greeted as ambassadors of a venerable though struggling nation, assumptions about their characters and abilities were instantly imputed onto them as they appeared on campuses, in churches, and on the streets. In 1928, William Ellery Leonard, poet, playwright, and assistant professor of English at the University of Wisconsin, told *CSM* readers that, with every wave of Chinese immigration, those assumptions have shifted. Whereas 40 years ago, when the race was viewed "as alien as Mars" who produced "tea and silk and fire crackers" and gorged themselves "on rat-tails and bird-nest soup," the entrance of laundry operators, laborers, and diplomatic representatives have given rise of "very precise, though very ridiculous" notions of Chineseness (Leonard 5). In laundries, the Chinese can be found "wearing pig-tails and flopping sandals … squirt[ing] water out of their mouths onto shirt-bosoms before polishing them with their irons." In front of consulates, "Chinamen" were "stately princes stepping out of carriages in their gorgeous Mandarin silks." In Chinatowns, they were "keepers of opium dens … who sometimes went to the white man's Sunday school and sometimes eloped with the pretty Sunday

school teacher" (Leonard 5). These contrasting definitions offered a "sense of the individuality of China as a whole" but "no sense of individual Chinese—the four hundred millions, each his own self,—and each, after all, like each of us" (5). Certain influences in recent years have somewhat alleviated these "tragic absurdities," including efforts by Chinese writers in periodicals, American academics who have traveled to China, and literary translators who have made Chinese figures beyond Confucius more accessible to English speakers (5). The American education of Chinese youths have also created "a fine lot of fellows, earnest, studious, keen-witted, internationalists yet patriots" (6). Although the Wisconsin poet warned that a more thorough understanding isn't a panacea, alluding to the first World War, he urged the students to continue pursuing friendship and "creating public sentiment of our common humanity" (Leonard 6).

Patrolling Conduct

The students were keenly aware of their influence in this paradigm shift. In some cases, they pointed to the general goodwill reserved for their class as evidence of the advancement of a nation, or at least of the American impression of the Chinese. In other instances, they redirected that positivity to elevate the public opinion of their lower-class brethren. After a joint student-merchant entertainment thrown by Pittsburgh students in the spring of 1921, N. H. Leung observed that the participation of this latter class allowed Americans to see the goodness of the Chinese as a whole. Heretofore, Americans who have personally encountered the students maintained the belief that they were a "selected group" and that "their decencies" were a consequence of their Western training (N. Leung 616). Not so, argues Leung. One's character has all to do with upbringing, and Americans ought to see through the laborers' initial appearances: "Humble though their occupation may be, they have always a lofty ideal. Ignorant, perhaps, for

want of education, they are ever-ready to learn what they can. They may lack in personality, but not in integrity." With this entertainment, Leung avers, the Americans will begin to see that "Chinese in general are respectable people, no matter in whatever walk of life they may be," as the fortune of all Chinese improves when one learns "to judge a person by what he is and not by what he appears to be" (616). A belief in the power of friendly relationships to change minds, and in the trickle-down potential of any favor obtained, is what motivated to the students to regularly pursue opportunities for socialization.

Earning a good impression involves putting one's best foot forward, and many *CSM* articles relayed kind words from American educators who attested to the students' academic prowess and studiousness (Chapter 6). The magazine also announced honors and accomplishments in the "Personal News" section, especially if they put the Chinese in comparatively good light. In addition to acceptances into greek letter organizations like Phi Beta Kappa and exceptional results of debate contests, mentioned previously, the *Monthly* also highlighted general academic performance. In the spring of 1921, when the Chinese at the University of Illinois attained a 3.61 GPA between 82 students, the club reporter added that the average "topp[ed] the list of the averages … among all foreign students representing 28 nationalities" and that the club became "the recipients of many congratulations from our friends and admirers on the campus" (H. Li 614). Likewise, in 1925, students at Indiana were congratulated for achieving the highest average semester grade among students from other nations and earning a mention in Purdue's paper *The Exponent.* As Y. J. Hsia was the best-performing Chinese with an average of 94%, he was awarded the alumni-donated Scholarship Cup (J. Wei 73). Hsia must have balanced his student life well as his name appears on the university's men's tennis All-Time Roster for the same year.

Intellectual achievements weren't the sole focus of the *Monthly*; the intelligence of the Chinese, which was often construed as cunning by immigration officials and the media, was never a question. Articles in *CSM* also reminded readers of their duty when it came to personal conduct, aiming to rein in excess and thereby control the parameters of racial representation. In the December 1910 issue, D. Y. Lin, forestry student at Massachusetts Agricultural College, blasted students who were failing to take advantage of institutional facilities that inculcate good habits, such as the Y. M. C. A. and instead indulging in sensuous freedom: "They smoke, they try 'to get by,' they 'crib,' they swear, and do many other things of a like nature" (160). Because they sow immoral habits, they reap a future of immoral character. Lin urged his readers to pursue "praiseworthy" habits that come from a "pure and clean motive" and put themselves into environments that encourage such habits (160). Another reminder came in 1915 from Amos P. Wilder, former American consul-general to Hong Kong and Shanghai, who argued that the uniqueness of the Chinese student has worn off and that the student must try even harder to stand out. Unlike 20 years ago, "[a] Chinese in an American city now attracts no more attention than a Canadian or a Norwegian. You students must stand or fall, like the rest of us, by what you are" (Wilder 82). The increased scrutiny means that there is no room for mediocrity, not to mention behaviors that are "pert and coarse and lax" (83). Though Wilder's claims about the students might have been overblown, editor Hsu Kun Kwong of Columbia concurred that no one student should give Americans any reason to criticize the body ("Uphold" 62). For students who do "squander away their time, drink intemperately, cut chapel service," Wilder's "sound thrashing" is deserved, but Kwong rejects the idea that many Chinese "go wrong" as the pressure to equip oneself adequately for service to the country is too great (62-3). Finally, the idea that being on one's best

behavior is sufficient to raise the esteem of one's race is complicated when such behavior is part of the American imagination of the Chinese. When Patrick Gallagher, editor of The Far Eastern Bureau, reminded Chinese students that the honor of their country rests on their conduct ("the young Chinese … *is* China") and that this "tour of duty" never ends, he was essentially telling the students to comply with American expectations: The students should "be true to their own Chinese character in moderation, modesty, wisdom, and capacity" ("On Guard" 216). In a sense, when replacing one's conception of a race with another, the fixating act itself is left uninterrogated.

Greasing the Wheels

The Chinese positioned themselves in others ways to minimize chances for ostracization. Wooster College student Chung Wang recommended "acting as the Romans do" and learning the host language and customs (37). Chung Wang's assimilation strategy bears out in Chi Chang's trajectory at Berkeley. While Chang initially felt like a peg in a round hole in the American classroom, tormented by the anxiety of being seen doing the wrong thing, he asserts that he came a "full fledged American college student" in half a year: "I could even see the jokes that the profs used to pull in class rooms so that I could laugh as heartily as the natives, whereas, in the beginning, when there were roars of laughter, I only sat in my seat, looking like a jackass" (C. Chang, "Up" 39). Chang came to know a group of Americans more deeply. Within this group, governed by a "'flapdoodle' sort of democracy," Chang felt like he could let down his guard and be his honest self. His inclusion prevented him from "getting tarred and feathered" by others (45).

Becoming conversant in English was another strategy in seeking integration. As soon as Chi Chang discovered that his Shanghai days had not prepared him adequately for his stay in America, he began to practice daily on his own:

> In order to ameliorate my pronunciation, for instance, I formed the habit of reading aloud some good old-fashioned English literature for at least fifteen minutes early in every morning; and this habit I have been keeping throughout almost four years till now with as little interruption as possible and apparently with no intention at all of ever getting it into a hitch. (C. Chang, "Vanities" 64)

For Kwei Chen, however, fluency in English represented a betrayal of one's mother tongue. In a poem titled "Response to a Fellow Chinese Student" that appeared in the January 1926 issue of *CSM*, Chen maintains:

> I do not wish wholly to correct my ac-
> cent in English;
> "I do not wish people to suspect
> "That perchance my country has long
> been colonized by England,
> "And that English is replacing Chinese
> "On the tongues of school-children" ("Response" 11)

The poet seems aware of the racism inherent in performing a colonizer's language; while assimilation and acceptance *might* be the fruit of linguistic adoption, keeping a "broken" accent is akin to standing firm in a losing battle, a demonstration of one's true loyalty. Chen's position on the English language seems justified by the long history it shares with proselytizing. In an 1837 address, Reverend William J. Boone of the Protestant Episcopal Church Mission to China informed missions that they were allowed to remove Chinese youths from their families, "before their minds have become corrupted with the idolatry of their parents," so that they could be taught

Christian principles and the English tongue: “A knowledge of the English language would render the work of preparation for the ministry comparatively easy to any whose hearts the Lord might incline to preach his gospel to their countrymen” (Boone 14). Chen’s view of English is myopic, Chi Chang might respond: Taking on the host language and customs cannot be read as simply yielding to a superior force. When the images of the Chinese are so strongly entrenched in American minds, being contrary to that image is truly a radical thing that beggared belief. Chang describes the reactions he would get from Americans and the way those reactions further fueled his performance of a different kind of Chineseness:

> They are at a loss to understand, when a few of us happened to be presented to them, the ‘real thing.’ … It is preposterous that we can do college work at all—let alone doing it well! Therefore I, beside making a living in my profession, commit the crime of being different from what I aught to be. Now I happened to be the only Chinaman in town. I succeeded in overcoming some of the prejudices by trying to be one of them and by so direct their opinion as to make them think I am a good engineer. I play bridge, I go to church, and I say ‘hello’ to the same fellow a dozen times a day. (C. Chang, “Up” 45)

With phrases like “being different from what I aught to be” and “direct[ing] their opinion,” Chang insists on a difference between playing to the crowd and accepting colonization. Chung Wang would agree, submitting that there’s a vast gap between changing one’s way of thinking and living wholesale and accepting total segregation, neither of which is helpful to China’s regeneration (Chung Wang 41). This calls for a discerning spirit: “We must give a great deal of reflection to what we are learning in the country and get the good out of it” (41). While, given the existence of

racial prejudice, pretending to be American might not work all the time, Chung Wang contends that many in the country sincerely "desire to know us." If this is the case, it is up to the student to "avail [himself] of all the opportunities in order to study the real spirit of American civilization" (42). Examining a 1929 listing of Cleveland club members and their interests offers a rare look at the balance students struck between assimilation and resistance: Y. E. Hsiao sports a Chinese flag on his lapel; S. L. Dong drives a Chevy coupe and takes dancing classes; Jack Yep resembles an "Arizona cowboy"; Jessie Wong Ming manicures her nails, wears a bob, and "knows all the Cleveland reporters"; Kailuen Eng restricts himself to brushes, foregoing pens; Yee M. Poy's guilty pleasure is Lucky Strikes; Poy is also known as "the only Chinese who ever harangued a passing mob on Euclid Avenue"; T. W. Leung loves visiting the art gallery and carries a black briefcase; and A. A. Young truly dislikes landladies (A. Young, "Snapshots" 163). This balance between partial and total Americanization is embodied in a 1922 *Racine Journal News* photo of Madison student Miss Anna Chang wearing a costume that combines Eastern and Western elements. The photo is titled: "When East's West / We Have Flappers" and captioned: "Miss Anna Chang / Miss Anna Chang, a Chinese co-ed at the University of Wisconsin, combines the typical costumes of the flappers of the land of her birth and the land of her education" ("When East's" 12).

Beyond those in the narratives, other strategies for integration reveal themselves through the rest of *CSM*. One early obstacle to integration that Chinese students found was the translation of Chinese names into English. A February 13, 1909 letter from the Imperial Chinese Legation to C. T. Wang, the President of the Chinese Students' Alliance, reported that checks were being sent to the wrong person as students were abbreviating their first names like the Americans do. As the legation representative pointed out, while this might be fine with English names as a C. can only

point to a handful of first names (Charlie, Carl, etc.), a C. in Chinese can refer to a multitude of characters. Another issue came from the transposition of first and last names. Again, while the first name-last name order is natural in English, the fact that some Chinese students adopted the convention while others didn't caused much confusion. Using surnames before personal names shows deference to ancestors. Finally, dialectal difference means that the same name can be abbreviated and spelled out in at least two different ways. In short, there is no need for the students to abridge their names as English names are much longer. To make it easier for Americans to address them, students should write out their names in full and consistently place their surname before the given name (T. Wu 340). This request was never taken up as the publication five years later of another article on the same topic suggests. In "Name in Full," the writer argues that students ought to adopt the "examination-paper rule" and spell out their names, placing the blame of this extra work on both Chinese and English: "the former for having more characters and intonations than the latter can adequately express" ("'Name'" 484). Furthermore, adding to the original 1909 request, the author recommends the use of a hyphen between the two characters of the given name to prevent Americans from confusing one of those characters for the surname, e.g., Yuan Shih-k'ai wrongly addressed as "Mr. Kai" by journalists. The suggestion of adopting the Mandarin spelling as universal reflects the spirit of Peking-led unification in post-revolution China (485). That difficulty remains for researchers digging into the lives of those affiliated with the Alliance in this era is ample proof that name translation is a persistent intercultural issue. (It is almost 2019, and I still do not know how I ought to refer to myself in America. Am I: Tang Hin Heng? Tang Hin-Heng? Tang Hinheng? Hin Heng Tang? Hin Heng Antonio Tang? Antonio Tang Hin Heng? What about the Mandarin Deng Qian-heng or Deng Qianheng? The receptionist at a

medical clinic called me “Hin” the other day, the last in a parade of very nice, well-intentioned people. I am too tired to create a fuss.)

Another method of easing integration was simply taking advantage of holidays and extraordinary occasions to show a different side of Chineseness and ingratiating themselves to the larger community. The December 1909 issue of *CSM* wished students a Merry Christmas and encouraged them to travel the country and perform their duty of correcting misunderstanding: “Give your American friends a chance to know more about the true conditions at home” (L. Chang, “Merry” 81). When the “Spanish” flu hit in 1918, the *Monthly* reported the extensive effort of students in helping their communities. Several members of the Pennsylvania Chinese student club, for example, risked their lives by volunteering in Stetson Hospital, Germantown Hospital, and Emergency Hospital No. 1. The student who volunteered in the last location contracted the flu and was bedridden for three weeks, while another medical student was involved in an ambulance collision returning from a visit to a flu-stricken family (How 139-140). The student in Pennsylvania was fortunate; several Chinese student deaths were reported in Johns Hopkins and Michigan (J. Chu 64; Fong 254). Chinese students in Indiana also bought gifts for orphans through a Salvation Army subscription fund “as a part of our program to concern ourselves to the welfare of the community” (J. Wei 72), while students in Michigan donated $50 to victims of the Great Flood of 1913 in Ohio (“Michigan Club” 486).

Entertaining Guests

Policing of personal conduct and engaging in limited assimilation were two strategies of mitigating negative impressions of the Chinese. In hosting a plethora of social events and seeking opportunities to socialize with Americans at every turn, the students hoped to advance a wider

conception of Chineseness than the one that laborers in America offered. Social programs usually took the form of Cosmopolitan Club-sponsored "Chinese Nights," open houses, fundraisers, or celebrations of the October 10 establishment of the Chinese republic. ("Chinese Nights" or "International Nights," a regular fixture of the Cosmopolitan Club, was an evening in which student representatives of a country, or regional group of countries, gave a program to a university audience to highlight the distinctiveness of that country.[15]) Financial drives were for disaster relief in China or for political efforts such as the 1921-1922 Washington Conference. For the 1920-1921

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[15] Louis P. Lochner, Wisconsin student and the first president of the Association of Cosmopolitan Clubs, explained that International Night was an outgrowth of the international students' desire to learn about each other. The lineup of acts on International Night was not unlike the social programs presented by the Chinese club described, replete with song, dance, and theatrical numbers:

> On such an evening, the members from one nation describe the history and institutions of their country, play music by their national composers, throw on the canvas pictures of their mother country, decorate the hall with their national colors, yes, even serve refreshments peculiar to their native land. Thus the members have an opportunity to gain an insight into the mode of living, the characteristics, and the points of view of different peoples. (Lochner, "History" 10)

A front-page article announcing an event in *The Daily Cardinal* at the University of Wisconsin suggests that the students utilized the media apparatus surrounding these Nights to do similar representative work. In "Chop Suey Not a Chinese Dish," club president Tsai explained the American origin of the food and assured readers that it won't be on the menu: "We never have any of that over in our country" (qtd. in "Chop" 1). In previewing a talk at a Chinese Night in 1920, *The Daily Cardinal* cited Ming-Heng Chou attesting the enduring idea of democracy in Chinese politics. Compared to the U.S., "[t]he methods are different, but the idea of the sovereignty of the people is the main principle" (qtd. in "Chinese Program" 3).

Although the Cosmopolitan Club was a convenient vehicle for Chinese club activities, providing a ready audience and resources, its multiculturalist perspective was also fraught with representational dangers. In an ad encouraging readers to support the advertisers of *The Cosmopolitan Annual*, a Frankenstein-esque figure stands prominently in the foreground. Apparently a composite of various cultures, the figure sported a sombrero, a kilt, a Union Jack waistcoat, a stars-and-stripes jacket, and wooden clogs. It held a mug of beer in its left hand and a set of skis in the right. "Chineseness" was represented in its queue that weaved through the letters C-L-U-B (Ad 137). After the revolution of 1911, the *Chinese Students' Monthly* became adamant that this depiction had to go (H. Kwong, "Chinaman's" 410). The Chinese students readily accepted the gift of their own space and audience through International Night, or Chinese Night as it was called the evening of, but realized that their participation in Cosmopolitan Club cannot replace the representational autonomy that came from doing one's own thing.

famine in North China, the Chinese club at Kansas State Agricultural College raised $840 from a Chinese Night audience of 2,500, a number that was exceeded successively by Chinese Nights at the University of Kansas ($1,200 from 3,000) and at Washburn College ($1,000 from over 2,000) (Kiang 395; Chiang 532). Not all fundraisers were for disasters; one 1921 event in Bethlehem raised funds for the Eastern Pennsylvania Chinese Soccer Team, which comprised students from Lehigh University and the University of Pennsylvania. The team's performance surprised Americans and proved that Chinese students were "not only mentally efficient but also athletically" (C. F. Wong 298).

Programs that celebrated the Chinese national holiday took place on or close to October 10. Other programs occurred in December or April, probably to give enough time for club members, who were otherwise preoccupied with schoolwork, to organize personnel and rehearse performances. The club at Northwestern decided to host a dinner party on November 28, 1924, the day after Thanksgiving, and treated their guests with some Chinese cooking ("Northwestern" 20.3 p. 65). The various purposes of these functions determined their location. On campus, gymnasiums, club houses, and music halls were regularly booked, while off campus options included churches, high schools, and hotel rooms. First Christian Church in Centralia was the site of a Chinese Night hosted by students 30 minutes away at the University of Missouri. The group spoke on "The New Woman of China" and entertained guests with fife music and literary explication ("University of Missouri" 21.8 p. 74). The Canton Tea Garden in Chicago was the location of a banquet hosted by the Northwestern club to evaluate the Chinese performance at the Washington Conference and involved an open forum that included Americans ("Northwestern" 17.4 p. 345). The grounds and purpose also constrained the number of guests, which ranged from

several dozen to a couple thousand. Students (particularly heads of organizations), faculty, and their spouses were expected guests. Programs opened to the public involved professionals (lawyers, doctors), journalists, business representatives, and allied organizations like Friends of China. Prominent politicians were an ex-governor at a Harvard event (Hsi 67) and a Houghton circuit judge at a Michigan College of Mines October 10th celebration (C. Pan, "Michigan" 17.1 p. 51). The celebration of the establishment of the Chinese republic on March 22, 1912, was attended by state governor Francis E. McGovern and Professor Charles R. Van Hise, both of whom orated optimistically about the new democracy ("Wisconsin" 579; "Chinese Students Greet" 8). Chinese merchants, who were less frequently invited to these elaborate functions but more likely to mingle with students at separate gatherings, were nevertheless important financial supporters of student functions. For example, the production expenses of an entertainment given in MIT's Symphony Hall to benefit famine sufferers were partially borne by local merchants (Tu 533).

Guests entering into the hall were immediately surrounded by Chinese decor like lanterns, paintings, and flags. Inside Michigan's Lane Hall, the "perfect Oriental atmosphere" was credited to an architectural student and an art student ("Michigan University" 64). In a separate area, an assortment of cultural and visual artifacts, e.g., postcards, might be displayed (Toy 70). *The Daily Cardinal* reported that the Chinese club at the University of Wisconsin stood by and elucidated the "silks, furs, books and ink-tables, pipes, idols, household gods, embroidered silks and dresses, drugs, and miscellaneous articles of all kinds" ("Oriental" 5). At Kansas State Agricultural College, students were on hand to explain the Chinese republic's five-colored flag (Lau 66). The evening's program can be expected to consist of songs and music, speeches, literary presentations (poetry), stunts, and slideshows. The Chinese national hymn was sung at October 10 celebrations. Audience

were treated to sounds from the flute, dulcimer (yangqin), and Chinese violin (erhu). On occasions, American music was mixed in; an opera was even sung by an American at an Illinois event (W. Chao, “Illinois” 16.4 p. 299). Sporting demonstrations might involve shuttlecocks (jianzi), Chinese “boxing,” fencing, and sword dances. Less frequent was magic shows and puzzle solving. In terms of dramatic performances, which were explored in a previous section, Chinese mythologies and scenes from current China were recurring themes. On Chinese Night on April 23, 1926, the Philadelphia club enacted a Cantonese dragon boat race. In the distance along the river, vessels of red and blue first became distinguishable. As the maidens and boatmen, played by costumed students, came into view, the background transitioned from night to a dawn of blues and pinks, exuding a sense of “romantic China” (“Philadelphia” 76). Providing another visual delight was lanterns slides of old China. Stereopticons also depicted contemporary social movements; in Pittsburgh, guests were shown students and merchants agitating in the streets of Shanghai after the Shantung verdict (G. Chow, “Pittsburgh” 16.2 p. 154).

Chinese students also took advantage of a captive audience to speak on a variety of topics from their hardships in the U.S., as Cleveland members did in 1916 (M. Ho, “Cleveland” 603), to current events in China and academic subjects like etymology. In Milwaukee, Kai Yen Ma spoke on the topic of “Misunderstanding Between America and China” (Ma 620). Under the vaulted high ceilings of Bates Hall in Boston, where Chinese students and 200 Americans were joined in the celebration of the 14th anniversary of the Chinese republic, a series of talks followed the opening address and traditional tunes: T. K. Chuan delivered a speech titled “Yellow Peril or Red Menace,” showcasing a “wonderful talent in mastering American sense of humor”; Dison Poe spoke on tariff autonomy (“audience was completely absorbed in the graveness of the problem and

that they were no longer aware of the fact that some one was giving a speech"); Chao-Ying Shill remarked on extraterritoriality; and Eugene Shen's talk on Chinese religions was received with "hearty laughter and applause," his listeners unaware of "how much they have been already informed of the true teachings of Confucius in common with or in contrast to that of Christ" ("Double" 57). These descriptions in the club report demonstrated an awareness of the inherent dryness of such topics at a fête but emphasized the tactics that the speakers adopted to effectively convey their messages. To augment their speeches, written materials were sometimes distributed, especially during the Shantung debacle. Food, of course, was available as part of the program. Refreshments such as tea, cakes, nuts, and candies were staples, while multicourse banquets offered guests a taste of China. At the University of Missouri, this education was extended to the utensils used: "chopsticks … instead of knives and forks" ("University of Missouri" 20.6 p. 74). But Chinese dishes weren't merely for the guests: A Chinese New Year celebration at Seattle's University Methodist Church allowed the hosts themselves "to enjoy the typical home product from town" (Tuck, "Seattle" 17.5 p. 415). Home cooking also led to even more opportunities for socializing as the Cleveland club found when members were "kept busy, even long after the meeting, in answering inquiries as to the exact recipes and formulas" ("Cleveland" 430).

These events were given some coverage by university and local papers, but these papers were not often quoted in club reports. An entertainment at a high school in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, was described by *The Globe* to have "removed prejudice as to what natives of other lands can achieve." The presenters displayed "excellent handling of the English language … better than many Americans" (qtd. in C. F. Wong 298). In addition to monetary donations, tangible political support provided a further measure of the impact of these social occasions. Following a

dinner hosted by the Cleveland club in 1927, American guests adopted a resolution by the club that appealed to the U.S. government to support China's democratic aspirations. Guests were called to give speeches, and four of them were appointed to pass on the resolution to President Coolidge, Secretary of State Frank B. Kellogg, William Borah (chair of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations), Stephen G. Porter (chair of the House Committee on Foreign Relations), and other civic organizations (H. Hsieh 68).

While it is tempting to view these social events as an automatic good in which the American public developed familiarity with and sympathy for this demographic, they were undoubtedly contested terrain over representation. Observing the Cleveland club's third annual open house given on April 29, 1916, the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* noted that, of the 300 guests, "President Charles F. Thwing and the faculty of the university and others were garbed in Chinese mandarin robes, while several members of the students' club wore American clothes" (qtd. in M. Ho, "Cleveland" 603). The students' decision to adhere to Western attire might have been motivated by their desire to demonstrate adaptability to Western customs or to project modernity. They might even have perceived their guests' "mandarin robes" as a gesture of respect. A line is crossed, however, when student hosts are suggested to dress "more Chinese-like." An editorial by C. S. Kwei explained that the students' refusal to wear "long gowns" at these events isn't due to the rejection of their culture: "[T]here is nothing disgraceful about our costumes, nor is it inappropriate for the Chinese to wear them if they so choose voluntarily" ("China" 3). What Kwei and others were opposed to was the motive behind the request, the satisfaction of American curiosity. Unless the occasion was a fashion show or costume contest, "the Chinese could not possibly cater to the whims and wiles of certain individuals." One might as well ask American

women attend dinner parties “in their great-grandmothers’ attire” (3). The *CSM* editor might also be concerned that such a request not only pigeonholes the Chinese but diminishes their capabilities. The same editorial praised a Chinese delegation for refusing to wear their “native costume” despite requests by their host, the China Society of America, to do otherwise. The event was the 11th Annual Dinner at New York’s Plaza Hotel, and the delegation belonged to the Chinese Industrial Commission. When the silk commission attended the previous year’s dinner, the Society compelled them to appear in traditional garb. Kwei was grateful for this year’s pushback: “If they were not distinguished enough by virtue of their office, we venture to reason, they would not attempt to distinguish themselves by dint of costume” (3). This tension over attire shows that effective representation requires eternal vigilance, even on one’s own turf.

American-Chinese interaction also occurred at activities that were not explicitly social. In 1917, the Michigan club offered interested Americans weekly lessons in Chinese. One section had 20 students. Phrases like “How do you do?” were written out on the blackboard (W. Young, “Michigan” 12.7 p. 370). Weekly discussion groups were another stimulus for fraternization. The home of China missionary Alice Williams, the headquarters for the Chinese club at Oberlin College, was also the site of a voluntary Sunday group that met to exchange opinions and to listen to American speakers (“Oberlin” 75). The “lively” Sunday group at Yale was more academically focused: In the fall semester of 1919, members of the club presented and discussed papers with American students sometimes in attendance (P. Shen 67). The *Monthly* also mentioned events that brought together students of different nationalities for the explicit purpose of increasing mutual understanding. The International Student Conference on World Problems that took place at the University of Michigan from March 26 to 27 brought students of 15 nationalities through four

sessions devoted to immigration and imperialism topics: “Most of the foreign students were surprised to learn how China has been so treated by the imperialistic powers, and confessed that they had never realized the injustices the powers have been doing to us” (“International Student” 73). The faith in interstudent diplomacy was driven by disillusionment in “old-man war-diplomacy,” which was blamed for the First World War.

Social programs remained the primary opportunity for the students to appear before and to speak directly to American audiences.[16] Those who accept an invitation to one of these functions already express an interest in learning from the hosts, and any appeals to *logos* are couched in the larger purpose of entertainment. Other opportunities came with special forums dedicated to the topic or with student lectures, often illustrated with visual aids, at churches and other public venues.

A Conclusion

[16] Americans played the role of hosts as often as the role of guests. In 1921, students in Seattle found themselves “mingling considerably” at informal parties and dinners at private homes, churches, and fraternity houses like Sigma Chi (Tuck, “Seattle” 16.8 p. 618). Milwaukee students were entertained on March 21, 1922, at the “Chinese-decorated” home of Mr. and Mrs. Gibbs, who gave away game prizes, arranged for songs and storytime, and served food that resulted in “well-cleaned plates” (Ma 621). On February 22, 1929, at a reception celebrating George Washington’s birthday, 60 Chinese students from the University of Chicago and Northwestern University took in a private collection of jade and porcelain and an address by Dr. Berthold Laufer, who stressed the importance of Chinese studies in America and lauded the emergence of a “Pacific humanism” in which classical study extended beyond the Mediterranean (Laufer 331). Sometimes, guest and host roles were switched in the course of a prolonged itinerary, such as the one arranged by Reverend George W. Verity of Fort Atkinson who invited the Wisconsin club over for a weekend in April 1926. A church feast was followed by visits to personal homes; the next afternoon, the 19 members were taken around town and nearby farms. That evening, five club members performed music and gave short lectures before a church audience of 700. The “mutually beneficial” occasion proved that socializing is the “best and the only way to get first hand information of the real representative American home and country life” (“Wisconsin University” 76).

Living in America in the first quarter of the 20th century, the estimated 2,000 Chinese students in America each year occupied a highly circumscribed yet constructive position: circumscribed in the sense that they were read through the orientalist tropes of "the pollutant, the coolie, the deviant, the yellow peril" (R. Lee 8), and constructive in the sense their rhetorical presence, through bodies and texts, offered another kind of reading that challenged these images. The *Chinese Students' Monthly*, along with being an instrument for community reaffirmation as seen in its club news and home affairs sections, offered a reactive and proactive space for media activism. As explained by Kent A. Ono and Vincent N. Pham, reactive spaces "draw attention to Asian and Asian American marginalization in society and media overall," while proactive spaces "influence media representation, putting forth resistant, but also sometimes self-defining, images of Asians and Asian Americans" (Ono and Pham 112). While many studies have critiqued the racist portrayals of Asians through examining media artifacts themselves, often beginning with the film appearances of Fu Manchu (1923) and Charlie Chan (1926) and quickly moving into modern-day television (Feng; Fuller; Ono and Pham), fewer studies focused on the earlier historical resistance toward them. How did the Chinese students react and respond to disparaging representations especially between the rise of mass media in the late-19th century (as demarcated by Stuart Creighton Miller) and through the silent film era of 1894-1929. Published from November 1905 to April 1931, the *Monthly* offers an archive of the reactions and responses of those who see themselves on stage and screen, in newspapers and in exhibition halls. The rhetoric of these contributors pushes against the idea of a silent marginalization and extends the legacy of Asian/Asian-American media activism.

The above exploration is by no means an exhaustive catalog of Chinese student rhetorical activity in the early 20th century, but it does the idea that they did not remain passive to what they identified as the spectre of "capitalism-militarism-Hearstism" (S. Cheng, "Plea" 36), a force that combines anti-Chinese physical violence (military bombardment, exclusion) with sensational anti-Chinese discourse. Historical exigencies forced the students' intervention and provided the topics to expound on. Examining the rhetorical production of these students reinserts their bodily presence into a country's history that continuously sought to remove the social and political existence of their kind. Further, a focus on their rhetorical practices not only fills out our understanding of the forces that shape Asian American representations, but as such strategies often collapsed individual and national identities, they highlight a multilayered Chineseness peculiar to international students in a majority culture. The larger argument of this dissertation is that, in offering an alternative body to the weak, abject, and deviant Chinese body prevalent in the white American imagination, the students' went beyond refuting misrepresentations by substituting in their place a more desirable if exceptional representation.

Chapter 5: Constructing Alternative Bodies: Strong and Unified

At every turn, the Chinese students were weighed by the representative burden of portraying their people and their homeland in the best light possible, a role that even sympathetic audiences admitted they had given the paucity of reliable sources of information. Their role as cultural ambassadors complicated these tasks as the stakes of changing existing stereotypes were not only deemed personal but national. In addition to putting on theatrical performances and hosting social events, the students also attempted to rehabilitate images of the Chinese by attending to their physical and organizational health. There are several differences between the strategies discussed in the previous chapter and this chapter that justify their separate treatment: Firstly, performances and social functions can be considered other-directed strategies that aimed to engage their audiences in a more explicit argument about what the Chinese are like. Student-written and -starred plays taught viewers something different about China and the Chinese and obviously contended with the ones that put them in a negative light. Social events like national celebrations drew and brought together the students, townspeople, and college peers and through a carefully constructed program imparted new knowledge while enlisting their audience's imagination and emotions. Conversely, the two strategies discussed in this chapter had more to do with self-regulation. While there is certainly a publicly visible aspect to training one's body and managing a well-run organization, the transformation had to begin with and be sustained by the students. As such, these strategies are more longitudinal and less episodic in nature.

Secondly, the students' preoccupation with physical vitality and organizational unity was more clearly transnational and transcalar in character. That is to say, concerns over American perception of events back home (or images carried from home) strongly influenced their decision to

attend to student health/cohesion in the U.S., and the students hoped that the good impression they leave on their hosts might improve the latter's perception of the Chinese nation as a whole. What follows is an application of this trans-modal understanding of transcalar rhetoric to two embodied concerns: the Chinese as physically weak, and the Chinese as socially fractured. The reader will note that the first image assumes a literal definition of the body, while the second a more figurative definition. In each case, both the audience and rhetors negotiate meaning by moving back and forth between imagined and encountered Chineseness while plying between national and individual inferences, implications, and applications.

A Strong *Ethos*: National Pressure

A Cornell study comparing the physical measurements of entering Chinese students and American students was deemed "fairly representative" by K. S. Lee, who stated the results "sho[w] plainly our physical inferiorities" and announced that every student ought "to reflect for a moment about our health before we blindly keep turning that ever grinding wheel" (qtd. in Munford 523). This 1908-1912 study followed on the heels of another study at the University of Washington by its physical director, who found that the average American student in attendance weighed almost 20 pounds heavier than his Chinese counterpart ("Of Interest" 590). A third study reported in the 1915 issue of *CSM* comparing Yale students and Ya-Li College students in China revealed "the need of physical training in China," with the latter group scoring "poor" or "fair" across categories of muscular development, strength, nutrition, ailments, and vision ("Physical" 246). While these studies were inspired by the logical positivism of the era, they confirm a historical image of the Chinese scholar. In his defense of missionary work, Chen Lang Tung said that the introduction of physical education was necessary to remedy the image of "hunch-backedness, weak physique, pale

countenance and inability to perform any physical work that requires a man's strength" ("Christian" 22). The performance of physical labor was not seen as only arduous, it was socially discouraged: "It would greatly have lowered the dignity of the scholar if he were to take off his long gown, twirl round a horizontal bar, or chase a piece of inflated leather frantically across the field" (Chau 23). This national image was readily adopted by students who were sent to the States. "To the average Oriental mind," Chinson Young averred, "the best student is necessarily a 'grind,' a 'stude,' or a lean, sickly looking wight, who buries himself for the most of his time in the reading room of some library, devouring with famished voracity the contents of some ponderous tomes" ("Is it Worth" 169). Instead of leaving for academic break, which cost travel and lodging money, Chinese students tended to take summer school, study a new discipline, or helping out in factories, businesses, and healthcare institutions (E. Chang 51). That Chinese athletic prowess was a point of scrutiny for American onlookers can be inferred from the praise given to the "first-wave" of students with the 1870s Chinese Educational Mission. In his 1911 essay, William Lyons Phelps, Yale Professor of English Literature, remembered the Chinese students at his Hartford high school for their dress, scholarship, and English mastery but most singularly their unexpected abilities on the field and pitch:

> I have never been able to explain why they played baseball and football so much better than we Americans, who had thrown and kicked these two spheres since we could walk. I can well remember, when we used to 'choose up sides' at football, how the first choice invariably went to Se Chung, a short thick-set boy, built close to the ground, who ran like a hound, and dodged like a cat. What Se Chung had in grace and speed, Kong had in bull strength. Built broad and strong, eternally good

> natured and smiling, he would cross the goal line, carrying four or five Americans on his shoulders. In baseball, Tsang was a great pitcher, impossible to hit; King was a tower of strength to any nine, and even little Chunk, much younger than the others, took to baseball as an infant takes to the bottle. (Phelps 706)

The use of hyperbole and metaphors suggests a disjunction between the conceived and perceived body for the American professor, a case of an exception proving the rule.

But this image of weakness and sickness was not confined to the gentry alone. It is true that the endurance of the Chinese civilization has been linked to the hardiness of its people. In "Distinguishing Characteristics of Chinese Civilization," S. C. Lu of Illinois attributed the country's vast population and title of "oldest continuous civilization" to a physical vitality (382). However, this national image has become troubled with the opium affliction, without which, Lu surmises, its physical vitality might not have been sapped (382). As it stood, the political "dismemberment" of China was only possible because of a "chronic" weakness that "became suddenly acute towards the end of the nineteenth century, when the European Powers, after witnessing her absolute weakness and helplessness … planned for her final vivisection" ("Territorial" 483). Other writers called the body politic "deformed" (T. Koo, "Confucius" 541) and deserving of the title "The Sickman of Asia" because of rampant corruption within the governmental ranks (W. Hsu, "Wanted" 20). Although Yang Jui-sung has argued that the term "sickman" bore no relation to bodily status and was an invention of Chinese and not Western intellectuals pressing for reform (42-43), the fact that Chinatowns in America were seen as diseased slums (Shah) and that Chinese themselves were constructed as sufferers of "excess and degeneration," which "carried … connotations of disease, contagion, and pollution" (R. Lee 36)

meant that physical inferiority was not solely a self-label. Indeed, Sir Henry Ellis of the Amherst mission to Peking in 1816 criticized the general cleanliness of the Chinese, their "horrid effluvia proceeding from their persons" and their "stench … *sui generis*" (qtd. in Miller 52). The earlier Macartney mission in 1792 found mandarins who "spit about the rooms without mercy, blow their noses in their fingers and wipe them with their sleeves or upon anything near them" (qtd. in Miller 42).

Individual Response

The call to activeness was primarily correlated with the physical ability to finish one's studies and take up the reins of a humbled monarchy and later republic. At a 1908 Christmas meeting in Washington with students, Ambassador Tang Shaoyi encouraged his listeners "to join the field and gymnasium sports, advocating strongly that [they] must have vigorous and healthy bodies to carry on [their] works" (C. Wang, "One" 249). On account of reports of students falling ill, *CSM* editor C. C. Wang (Wang Ching-ch'un) enjoined his readers to take up physical training as their "loyal duty to our country" as a healthy body can be put to many more tasks ("Common" 281). Miss Nettie Soo-Hoo of California asserted that maintaining good health and teaching others to do the same will lead the "culture to efficiency" ("Value" 204). A rhetorical question was asked by S. M. Wo of Johns Hopkins Medical School: "How many lives of great moral beauty and intellectual brilliancy have been disabled because of shattered health? How many noble souls, at the prime of their moral and intellectual prowess, have been prevented from great achievements on account of physical failure?" (292). Miss P. Y. Tseo drew on facts from hygiene science to demonstrate the dangers of overworking and related the story of a female student, one of the "brightest and most ambitious as well as patriotic Chinese girls," who died from tuberculosis after

ignoring her health in favor of her studies (137). Concluding her call for balanced intellectual and physical development, Tseo allegorized: “Let us bear in mind that a good musician cannot make good music with a poor instrument, neither can a learning man reach the highest success through the medium of poor health” (138). The strong connection between a healthy body and the potential to work and lead was put the most bluntly by Stewart E. S. Yui of Columbia: “China does not need theorists, but men who can carry their theories into practice; not idealists, but men who can bring their ideals into realization” (“All” 246).

It took the 1913-1914 successes of a Chinese-American baseball team from Hawaii (Tong, “Chinese Baseball” 472; Nyi, “Chinese Baseball” 506; C. Chiu, “Honolulu” 567) for reports of athletic participation and success to trickle into the pages of *CSM*. Many solutions to physical inactivity were proposed and tried, from a prescription of “sunshine and fresh air” along with taking in moderate amounts of food and “cultivat[ing] deep breathing” (Wo 293) to a recommendation to join in games/sports in the gym or field (Yui “All” 247). (Stewart E. S. Yui of Columbia vetoed “in-door games … in dormitory rooms and apartment houses” as they do not work the muscles enough. I can’t help but think of foosball, which apparently wasn’t invented too long after in 1921.) In her argument to include physical education in the curriculum for women in China, penned by Miss Bertha Hosang of the University of British Columbia, the value placed in play, dance, and outdoor excursions can be inferred: Dancing “promot[es] a graceful carriage with free easy movements” (378), while being in nature allows the breathing in of ample oxygen and the calming of the body and mind: “We must therefore compensate our long weary months of sedentary life by mountain excursions, camping trips and rambles in the woods where we may partake freely of God’s bounty—sunlight and fresh air” (Hosang 380). E-Tsung Chang chose to do

just that, writing up her reflection ("Impressions of My Camp Life") on her counsellorship at Camp Cavell on Lake Huron, which included, in addition to "liv[ing] with Wordsworth, the birch trees, the rattling falls, and the silent woods" (51), an opportunity to share with American campers a bit about Chinese customs, something often misportrayed by the media (E. Chang 52). When World War I broke out, military camp was suggested for its benefits to physical development, character formation, and the nipping of "evil habits" (H. Kwong, "Students'" 260).

The most popular method of remedying perceived physical inferiority was involvement in sports. In 1913 at Columbia University, Z. T. Nyi found that only one student was in athletics among the cohort of 60 ("Way" 368); five years later, K. L. Kwong announced in *CSM* the formation of the first Chinese crew rowing team in the country made up of himself and 16 other Columbia Chinese students, a development that the local press thought to be "more or less of a joke" (qtd. in 332). Considering that only 15 out of 400 American freshmen signed up for crew, perhaps the Chinese aren't "as thoroughly 'book-wormed' as the Americans would think" (332). What Chinese students across the nation need to prove that they are physically on par with the Americans is more assistance in training (K. Kwong 332). While the contingent in Columbia has made a good start, more Chinese students ought to show an interest in sports to allay public suspicion on the physical capabilities of the Chinese, argued K. F. Mok of MIT: "We have track stars who can make the century in ten flat, others who can broad jump over 22 feet and make a vault of over 12 feet. We are not lacking in material indeed as much as lacking in interest" ("Chinese Soccer" 130). Mok reported on the "fairly good success" of two Chinese soccer teams formed in New York and Boston in the fall of 1917. The Boston team had defeated Andover, Worcester, Andover, and Harvard, and a game with the Bridgeport all-star team, arranged by the

United States Football Association, was played to a 2-2 draw. Echoing Kwong, Mok saw expenses as the sticking point for the teams. The money needed for travel, uniforms, and shoes have only been partially met through canvassing (130). From the late 1910s onward, the number of calls to action in the *Chinese Students' Monthly* decreased as more reports of athletic accomplishments came in. In universities and cities across the States, Chinese students joined intramural leagues and varsity teams in basketball (H. H. Wu 69; Y. M. Chang 189); wrestling (W. Chao, "Illinois" 15.8 p. 66; "Personal News" 21.6 p. 80); tennis ("Baltimore" 279); football (C. Hsu 236; Hsiung 67); soccer (T. Chen, "Personal" 16.5 p. 401; "M. I. T." 65; Sun, "Personal" 19.3 p. 64-65; Y. C. Chang, "Cornell" 72; Y. M. Chang 189); and track ("Personal Notes" 17.7 p. 627; "Personal Notes" 17.8 p. 705; Sun, "Personal" 19.3 p. 63). The Eastern Pennsylvania All Chinese Soccer team from Bethlehem, Pennsylvania "surprise[d] many Americans with both its energy and effort," its success "prov[ing] to the public that we Chinese students are not only mentally efficient but also athletically" (M. Lee 153; C. F. Wong 298). In many instances, Chinese students won championships and regional and national recognition. In 1923, C. W. Chen, a "pole-vaulter of national fame," won the pole-vault event at MIT's home meet (Sun, "Personal" 19.3 p. 63). The following year, Cornell University's C. K. Huang won championships in tennis for singles and doubles, while the club captured first place in volleyball and soccer ("Cornell" 72). Another tennis star was Peter Sah of Wisconsin, who won singles and doubles in a summer tournament and was predicted by the press to win the Big Ten title for the state in 1924 (Sun, "Personal" 19.3 p. 66). But even when they were beat, the players were lauded for performing admirably and for representing the nation well, and there was always the side effect of generating public interest in the club, as the Rensselaer club discovered from their basketball and soccer matches against other

foreign student teams (D. Hung 231). By 1925, an Ohio State University Chinese student found it appropriate to declare that the Chinese there have been "traditionally interested" in sports, relating his team's achievements in tennis and soccer ("Ohio" 62). The successful two-month nationwide tour of a Chinese basketball team, which won eight out of 12 games against college and city opponents, serves as a natural bookend to a pattern inspired by the team from Hawaii. The basketball team's manager reportedly spent $80,000 during the campaign to improve American-Chinese relations through sports ("Chinese Basketball" 279).

From the Individual to the National

The benefits of physical development did not stop at the individual level. In participating in sports, Chinese students believed that the esteem they accrued would travel upward into the level of the group and the nation. Some students stressed the potent symbolism of the individual, like C. C. Wang, who noted the correspondence between the comportment of a nation's leader and the state of its progress:

> There is the vigorous Mikado at the head of thriving Japan; there is the anxious Czar leading the tottering Russia. We have the ambitious William holding the helm of the German Empire; we have the energetic Roosevelt steering the American Republic. The old gentleman, Edward, represents the steadiness of England; the leisure-loving Fallières portrays the easy-going France. Aside from all these, we have our young Emperor Hsuan Tung, who typifies the youthful and rapidly growing China. (C. C. Wang, "Common" 279)

This interrelatedness was reiterated by the Nanking government in 1928. In his inaugural address, Chiang Kai-shek named the "[d]evelopment of a strong physique in order to overcome the

degenerating influence of a weak people" as one of the four things that the country needed to strive toward (N. Lin, "Inauguration" 106). Other students, like Z. T. Nyi of Columbia, suggested that a motivation for increasing physical activity for the Chinese student was a return to a better national image: "If we look back to the Golden Age of Chinese Literature, we will find that it was then that sports such as polo games, archery, football, boxing and wrestling flourished in great profusion" ("Way" 369). The yardstick Nyi seems to use for an appropriate national image was not the late-Qing era, which was marked by humiliation, but the flourishing Tang Dynasty from 618 to 907. Still others joined the individual and the national by alluding the concept of social degeneration prevalent in social science commentaries in the 19th and early 20th centuries (Pick). Miss P. Y. Tseo claimed that healthy physiques make nations "greater and richer" while overworking has been linked to "race degeneration" (135). A concerted attention to physical development, mused Tseo, would make China the "best and strongest nation physically as well as intellectually in the Far East. Nay, among all the civilized countries of the entire world" (138). In a similar vein, Miss Bertha Hosang attributed the fall of the Greek and Roman empires to the inactivity and luxurious life of the women (373). For China to escape the same fate, it must put "her women, the mothers and guardians of the Chinese race, in good physical trim," and all its citizens should pay heed to the real risks of "national decay through the physical deterioration of the people" (Hosang 381).

Writings on National Vitality

This linkage explains the profusion of *CSM* articles on the cleanliness and healthfulness of the Chinese back home. Such depth of attention might be generally informative, but the students believed what was at stake was the connotations of the national body as conceived, and therefore,

the individual body as conceived. While it was relatively easy to take on healthier habits, the task of directly influencing a national image was much harder. Thus, apart from taking a personal interest in sports, the students also reported on and interpreted the latest body-centric developments across the Pacific. Articles on China discussed growth in hygiene education, athletic performance at the Far Eastern Olympic Games, need for medical programs and systemization, and eradication of opium. On the cleanliness front, Miss Nettie Soo-Hoo of California remarked that one piece of evidence that China has "recently awakened from a deep and prolonged slumber … saw the numerous successes of others and appreciated the possibilities for putting on new vigor" was the increased focus on improving the general health of its population ("Value" 204). Returned students in Peking administered a program that involved recreation grounds, lecture slides, and loans for parents and youths: "[B]oys and girls gathered from the streets are learning lessons of team work, order, and cleanliness together with the sheer joy of play," and "[o]ver a hundred children became relentless enemies of the fly in a 'Swat the Fly' campaign" ("Community" 51). At the newly-opened Peking Community Service Health Center, mothers learned to be attuned to the physical condition of their children through plays and films shot in America, and provided food and clothing for children from impoverished homes ("Health" 54). Miss Ying Mei Chun of Wellesley noted the emancipatory effects of the new emphasis on physical education for Chinese women. Because they have been largely confined to the home, there's a need to amend their "constitutional weaknesses" and shore up their mental, moral, and social development (329). Revitalized bodies allows them to perform their domestic duties and "efficient[ly] bring [their] children up systematically by proper feeding, necessary ventilation and sanitation" (Y. Chun 331). The contributions of missionary schools to public hygiene was acknowledged by friends and

critics. In his list of merits and demerits of missionary education, Chen Lang Tung, a graduate of a Christian college in China, granted that the movement for sanitation in the country truly began with religious schools, which taught courses in hygiene, offered physical examinations, and promoted physical activity and sports ("Christian" 22). But because proselytizing was their primary objective, the uncleanliness of the Chinese was often exaggerated by missionaries to raise funds for their missions in the first place. For the audience of Methodist missionaries who circulate this falsity, "whenever the word 'Chinese' by chance comes for a visit to their ears they just visualize in their mind a Chinaman must be half made of dirt and his attitude at the table is similar to a team of football players yelling their victory" (H. Chi 39). As public health was very much a work in progress in those decades, another tactic employed by the students was to decouple the connection between hygiene and cultural progress, inviting foreign writers like Harold Scott Quigley, Minnesota political science professor, who wrote about his increased regard for Chinese art, thriftiness, and industry despite the conditions he found. Many a traveller leave for China "fortified against odors and dirt rather than prepared to appreciate art and philosophy. He returns with no lessened regard for western sanitation, but somewhat less certain of the relationship between sanitation and civilization" (Quigley 5)—his clincher perhaps a sly dig at American exceptionalism.

A point of pride for Chinese students was the country's performance at the Far Eastern Olympic Games, which they saw as emblematic of how far the nation as a whole has come in physical education. A spring 1913 issue touted the many points the "boys" achieved in track and field in the Manila event, a delegation drawn from the institution that "pioneer[ed] in introducing athletics in China," St. John's University, and looked forward to the 1915 Games to be held in

China (“Chinese Students at the Far” 387). As YMCA national physical director J. H. Crocker explained in *China’s Young Men*, the notion of a Far Eastern olympiad was “to arouse the Oriental millions to a realization of their athletic possibilities,—both from the standpoint of individual competition and of general athletic development,—and to place them on a footing of athletic equality with the rest of the world” (214). Judging by the enthusiastic support given by government officials and the attendance at a two-day national competition in 1914 in Peking, which involved six Chinese schools and 100 competitors (Crocker 216), China well deserved their accolades in the Shanghai Games the following year. “Nothing is more significant of the progress which China has made in the lines of physical education than the championship she carried away,” exclaimed the “Home News” section in *CSM* (C. T. Kwei 7). While the Chinese team captured second place in its debut in Manila, they bested a “strong Filipino team” in the 1915 edition and left the Japanese in third (7). The relentless civil war, unfortunately, did much to interfere with preparations and dampen hopes, leading Ping-Tsang Chen to exude pessimism for China’s teams at the 7th Games, excepting the brilliant football squad—the “champion pigskin chasers of China” (71). Another notable sports accomplishment by national representatives was the 1924 fielding of China’s first Davis Cup team (tennis), the captain of which had played for MIT and Cambridge (Sun, “Chinese” 74). The development of modern athletics continued apace (Sung 133), boosting Chinese prestige.

Going hand-in-hand with an awakening in personal hygiene and physical education was the development of preventative and curative medicine. The 1915 issue presented the opinion of Professor Victor C. Vaughan, Dean of Medical Department of Michigan University and President of American Medical Association, who linked health and national prestige: “No nation which

neglects the health of its citizens can be great, or, having won greatness, can long retain it" (204). Unsurprisingly adopting embodied language, the doctor lavished praise on China for taking strides in the right direction ("It has been, as it were, asleep for centuries. Now it has awakened. Full of vigor and strength, its sons and daughters are flocking to this country in order to become initiated in western science") even as he urged for more Chinese students to take up the study of medicine and, upon their return, build labs and conduct health surveys, and fulfilling a "moral obligation" (Vaughan 207). Whereas C. Y. Pang of Ohio argued for more pharmacists, specifically, to increase oversight and save on the cost of imported drugs (273), Miss Gien Tsiu Liu, a medical student at the University of Michigan, insisted on the priority of increasing the number of women physicians, explaining that they are well positioned to better the livelihood of millions of women now afflicted with diseases (38). More women physicians can lower the infant mortality rate. China's high death rate in general is the reason the country is "classified with the backward races in spite of our history of a long continued highly developed civilization" (Liu 39). A hyperawareness of national image was probably why the *Monthly* celebrated medical pioneers like Tseo Pang-Yuen, Ida Kahn, and Mary Stone and the work of the Chinese Ladies' Red Cross Society during the First World War (Meng, "From" 169), and proudly announced other medical developments, such as the formation of the Chinese Medical Club of Boston in November 1920, a group made up of Chinese medical graduates, students, and nurses exchanging ideas and discussing China-related problems (C. Hu 610) as well as a 1925 medical conference in Hong Kong ("Medical" 70). Several writers tried blurring the line between civilization and medical advancement, like Quigley did with hygiene, by emphasizing the lineage of traditional Chinese medicine. Clearly writing to an American audience, W. E. Mao in "Foreign Missions: Are They Justified?" interrogated, point-blank:

> I suppose you must have been full of such impression about the Chinese people that they are very unsanitary and that the whole nation lived in sickness, and also perhaps you had the impression that medical science was never known to the Chinese before the time when the missionaries brought it over. I must make a strong and utter denial at this opportunity. The science of medicine has been known to the Chinese more than 5000 years ago. (W. Mao 28)

Furthermore, he defended, the squalor missionaries like to report on is a natural result of urbanization, something has only begun recently (28). Other students were more tempered in their approach. Wu Lien-Teh, who received his MD from Cambridge, stated that Chinese medical practice was "far ahead of their times" and involved inoculation for smallpox 600 years before Hippocrates, mandatory state exams for practitioners, and a National Pharmacopeia that was handed down over two millennia (581). Wu did not ignore the influence of Western medical theory, however, and acknowledged the cruciality of isolation hospitals and medical schools, the November 1913 presidential mandate allowing dissections on cadavers, and visits of medical commissions (583). Similarly, H. Y. Wong clarified that he was not calling for a ban on Chinese traditional medicine as much as its reorganization and systematization (328).

Our trans-modal model of transcalar rhetoric, which collapses literal and figurative meanings of cleanliness and healthfulness, also accounts for the students' reporting on the latest in their country's war against opium, from the initial successes at closing dens and uprooting of poppy fields that led a 1917 editorial to declare "The Passing of the Opium Evil" (Mok, "Passing" 288) to the relapses that came with military governors who desired to finance their troops in the civil war (C. Kwei, "As a Result" 4) and Japanese and British nationals who trafficked while their

governments turned a blind eye (C. Kwei, “Question” 1; Sze, “What” 13; McKibben 8; Das, “Suppression” 12). The *Monthly* dedicated a whole volume to the Geneva opium conferences organized by the League of Nations in the winter of 1924. In the December 1924 issue, resolutions by Chinese Students’ Alliance and Chinese Students’ Christian Association condemned opium as a “universally recognized” menace to “all civilized people” and called for readers to support the country’s delegates (“Resolutions” 44). When the talks failed and the Chinese representatives withdrew in December, the Chinese students interpreted the result as stemming from the greed of Western nations and transferred their faith to budding local movements like the National Anti-Opium Association and the later National Opium Suppression Conference in the Nanking decade (C. K. Young, “Many” 4; Sze, “Why” 12; “Opium” 69; T. Chao, “Customs” 4; N. Lin, “Opium” 108). By the November 1928 issue, the *Monthly* reported the Chinese ambassador to the U.S., Dr. Sao-Ke Alfred Sze, confidently declaring before the China Society of America that “as other conditions improve, the production and consumption of opium in China will be progressively reduced until the evil is entirely wiped out” (“Present” 89). *CSM* writers weren’t just concerned with opium and morphine. When American brewers threatened to move to China because of the Prohibition, Frances Willard Wang of Northwestern University likened alcohol to the drugs and urged readers to warn everyone of its dangers: “[W]hat we can do is to write to our parents, our relatives and our friends immediately and ask them to spread this information throughout the Republic” (263). Likewise, the growth of imported cigarettes, largely from the U.S., was another revisited concern (F. Yu, “American” 45; C. Kwei, “While” 2).

A Unified *Ethos*: National Pressure on Individual Response

Another avenue in rhetorical studies for theorizing about bodies is as metaphor. Adopting the construction of the body politic, KC Councilor argued that metaphors on eating and excreting worked with anti-immigrant rhetoric to shut out "those who did not agree with the national stomach" (141). From this perspective, Chinese immigrants were unassimilable because they were indigestible (Councilor 142). Jennifer Keohane's study of the rhetoric of the Knights of Labor revealed how the labor organization included itself into the body politic and claimed citizenship by advancing "a particular type of physicality" that excluded other kinds (68). In our study, moving from a more literal definition of the body to a more figurative definition necessitates another investigation of the "good" or ideal body. While a "good" literal body as performed by the Chinese students is one that is active, healthy, and free from ill habits, a "good" metaphorical body entails ideas of unity or togetherness. The fragmentation that readily characterized the Chinese body politic was a consequence of repeated embarrassment before foreign troops through the 1800s. The First Opium War (1839-42) resulted in the cession of Canton, Amoy, Foochowfoo, Ningpo, and Shanghai to Britain. Eleven more treaty ports were opened by the Treaty of Tientsin following the Second Opium War. Further treaties surrendered political control of Outer Manchuria to the Russians, Guangzhouwan to the French, and the Kiautschou Bay to the German empire, the last of which changed into Japanese hands after the First World War. Immune from Chinese law, persons residing in these territories accused of crime were tried at the Mixed Court in the International Settlement, the British Supreme Court for China, or the United States Court for China and received leniency in many cases. The *Monthly* reported that the manager of an Italian trading company was fined merely $44 and imprisoned for two months for smuggling 649 pounds of opium worth 300,000 in gold (C. Kwei, "Question" 1; Sze, "What" 13). Foreign ruthlessness was certainly

blamed by student writers as the primary cause of China's sad state of affairs. However, another cause, and one that easily invited the first, was a weakness born from a lack of cohesion among its people. One student writer remarked: "It has been repeatedly observed by writers of renown that individually the Chinese rank among the strongest of all peoples, while considered as a whole they are possibly the weakest of all. … Remember what happened to the Hebrews and the American Indians. God cannot help those who do not help themselves" (C. Wang, "Union" 249).

The political and economic reforms after the 1911 revolution gave hope for an alternative discourse that held despite monarchic restoration attempts in late 1915 and 1917. A summer 1915 excerpt from the The North-China Daily News in *CSM*, titled "China's Growing Solidarity," ventured that railways, telegraph wires, and a cooperative government run by progressives and conservatives were forces that were uniting the country: "From Canton to Manchuria, from the coast to Szechwan, there are signs that China the Dispersed and Disembodied, has become China the United … a stepping-stone to China the Strong" (qtd. in "China's" 589). Concerted nationwide boycotts against Japanese goods in light of the harsh Twenty-One Demands placed on the Chinese government was praised for its show of unity ("Boycott" 588). After Yuan Shikai proclaimed himself emperor in December that year, many student writers grew more anxious save for a couple who saw an opportunity for further centralization. Editor T. V. Soong of Columbia wondered about the "partisanship and clannish obstructiveness" that might come with Yuan's radical move ("Retrospect" 148), he prompted his readers to not outright reject monarchy but consider that "mere changes of [political] form will not give us national efficiency and unity" (149). This position was taken up by F. Chang, who weighed "the unity and efficiency of the nation" against the right to choose a chief executive ("Monarchy" 160). What's apparent, Chang argues, is that a

weaker nation is more susceptible to foreign control (163). Any optimism soon collapsed with the beginning of the civil war from 1916, and the image of a divided China reemerged. In the throes of disunity, *CSM* quoted Admiral Tsai Ting-Kan, then Chairman of the China Tariff Revision Commission and a student of the original Chinese Educational Mission, yearning for a Lincoln figure: "We revere him in China. In our present political impasse between the North and the South, China yearns for a strong and central figure" (T. Tsai, "Tribute" 553). When a unification conference called by nominally Chief Executive Tuan Chi-jui fell apart in 1925, editor C. K. Young adopted a defeatist tone. The tuchuns were too dependent on their armies and would not easily give them up: Convening a "mob" is pointless when "the problem is tangled up like the telephone wires after a tornado" and when "the mob is composed of elements similar to oil and water" ("'Busted!'" 2).

Aware of the dangers of a fragmented image to national welfare, student writers proposed solutions and tried tactics to ameliorate the impression. In his first-place oration in the 1919 Midwest conference in Columbus, Ohio, H. C. Tung railed against continued disunion by invoking the risk of foreign exploitation: "[I]n the case of our existence as a nation union means life" (38). For Tung, the solution is to root out corruption, seek cohesion among the people, and prove wrong a quote from the *The World's Work* (1900-1932), a magazine that described China as "no nation" but "a collection of four hundred million individuals" each with their own political and social agendas (qtd. in Tung 40). One way of creating cohesion would be to strive for the unification of a "national mind," something that Y. C. Ho asserted can only be done under student leadership (57). Ho might have listened to or read Charles Keyser Edmunds's address at the 20th Annual Alliance Conference (Eastern Section) at Haverford, Pennsylvania, who challenged the Chinese students to

accept their place as sensitive guides to an adrift China. The physicist and Johns Hopkins graduate explained that, as the "head" and upper "backbone" of China, they were to ensure that the rest of the body is coordinated and ambulating smoothly:

> China needs leadership. But this must be related to the backbone just as the head is the development of the upper end of the spinal column. The head distinguishes between various burdens as to their relative importance and which should be carried first; and the head guides the walking. … [T]he scholars of China must lead the advance, but the advance must not be so rapid that the common people cannot follow—otherwise there is a rending of the body. Keep your heads up, to be sure, but also keep your feet upon the ground. (Edmunds 7)

For J. L. Li of Iowa University, who else but China's "choicest sons and daughters" are fit enough to take the rein and put an end to China's condition of being "wounded, crippled, maimed, and mutilated"? "Our corrupt and selfish officers and officials? Our out-of-date literari? Our younger and less fortunate students at home? Our shrewd but ignorant merchants? Or our experienced but short-sighted farmers?" (J. Li 129). Because the duty falls upon the students, they must prove themselves to be "mentally, physically and religiously fit, but also socially fit" and learn the patience and tolerance needed to lead the other classes, qualities that can be practiced through engaging in Alliance work (130). Emphasizing the importance of embodied action to national salvation, Li insists that the Chinese "are not in any way inferior to the Occidentals in mentality" but simply "lack the wonderful power of putting our thoughts into operation, or of making good our own statements" (131).

In conjunction with encouraging each other to take seriously this leadership role, *CSM* writers also continuously stressed the essential unity of the body politic. A 1918 editorial maintained that "the contending parties … are fighting for the same object and toward the same end—a strong, constitutional, republican government for united China" (Yui, "United" 245). A retrospect by C. C. Yu three years later interpreted the public outcry against the two attempts to reestablish the monarchy as evidence of oneness against despotism (275). Other writers held that this unity ran deeper than a shared political commitment. At an address before the China Society of America in February 12, 1924, Chinese ambassador Alfred Sze Sao-Ke assured the American audience that the lack of political consolidation does not negate the fact of cultural homogeneity: "[C]ommercially, socially, religiously, educationally and in every other respect there is no cleavage between the North and the South or the East and the West" ("What" 12). In the winter of 1927, several months after a Nationalist purge of Communists that took over 300 thousand lives, Chang-Wei Chiu of Columbia drew parallels between the perceived fragmentation of the Chinese national body and the superficial divisions that impinge on but did not dissever the American body politic:

> The Chinese body politic is temporarily dislocated as might be the bones of a human being. But the Chinese people are inherently linked together as are the veins of the body. Be he from Mukden or Canton, a Chinese unequavocably [*sic*] regards himself as a Chinese—that alone. No Chinese ever thinks of his people as a divided people, any more than a Western farmer and a Wall Street banker would think of the Americans as a divided people. (C. Chiu, "Mr." 35)

If the American nation hasn't already been torn apart by differing breakfast preferences and political philosophy, then why shouldn't the same confidence prevail when judging the Chinese condition with its competing revolutionary and conservative elements? (34). Why is China held to a different standard when "the Catholics and the Ku Klux Klan … [can] flouris[h] under the same Constitution and the same Stars and Stripes"? (C. Chiu, "Mr." 35). Even so, the growing intensity of the Nationalist-Communist conflict compelled T. T. Yu to ask for more cohesion among the students abroad. In"A Plea for a United Front," Yu reminded his compatriots that the true enemy is out there in the form of imperialist Japan, which had invaded Shantung with 30,000 troops and killed over five thousand Nationalist soldiers and civilians in Tsinan on the pretext of protecting its citizens and business interests: "Obviously, if our house still remains divided, we shall be all wiped out before any of us can realize our respective ideals. Every party … can survive only when all are united before a common enemy" (T. Yu 47). What is necessary to remain steadfast and to survive this and other incursions is a generous dose of tolerance (47).

The watershed moment for practical activity toward unity came with the signing of the Treaty of Versailles, which transferred control of Shantung from the Germans to the Japanese after the First World War. The decision, widely condemned in China, revealed the risk of the continued internal bickering and inefficiencies of the Chinese Students' Alliance. Ming Heng Chou, the 1919-20 president of the Alliance and Wisconsin student, blamed factionalism for the non-return of Shantung and used the decision to justify structural changes to the Alliance and chasten members toward cooperation: "The past administrations have clearly shown lack of co-ordination between the central board and the local clubs. Consequently the former remained to be a nominal head, while the latter were left to work out their own salvation" (M. Chou 53). To more tightly bind the

local clubs to the Alliance, Chou proposed administrative reports to be read at local club meetings, sectional announcements and passed ordinances to be included in the *Monthly*, and "gold merit keys" to be awarded for exemplary service on the Alliance, sectional, or club level (53). The practice of unity, Chou claimed, would have a great effect on the image of China: "Let us demonstrate to the world that as college students and as citizens of the Chinese Republic, we are able to govern ourselves and govern ourselves well and also capable of running the administration of an organization and running it smoothly and efficiently" (54). This idea of student reform was heartily endorsed by Dr. Julean Arnold, U.S. commercial attaché in China and frequent contributor to *CSM*. Dire circumstances have forced the transformation of China from the "old China … of essay" to a new "China of action" and "of group activity, of organization, of cooperative enterprise" (Arnold 23). Arnold pressed home: "[T]he Chinese student in America should learn to work together in organization and in group activity" (23).

Just as the perceived cause of the Shantung crisis motivated students toward introspection and reorganization, the well-orchestrated domestic agitation against the terms of the Paris-signed accord made it easier for student writers to point to a unifying force. The May Fourth Movement, which brought together students, merchants, and workers in anti-imperialist demonstrations across China, galvanized the students studying abroad and allowed *CSM* writers to speak of the birth of a "national spirit." They saw the promise of Young China as an alternative pathway to centralization compared to bumbling top-down efforts from corrupt politicians. Student strikes inspired M. Joshua Bau in an editorial to announce "the rise of a new element in the Chinese politics, which fights neither for the North nor for the South, but for the welfare of the people" (10). The same hopefulness marked H. C. Tung's first place oration in the 1919 Midwest conference in Columbus,

Ohio. The banding together of students, merchants, and laborers against "corrupt and traitorous officials and the unjust treatment from the Powers" has proved inspirational to Chinese everywhere but represents only a start. With Shantung still in Japanese possession and extraterritoriality not yet abolished, the Chinese must "prosper as one and united nation, or fall together" (Tung 40). For C. C. Yu, nevertheless, their initial successes have shown the world the potential of Chinese power. Yu encouraged his readers to support the paradigm-shifting movement by continuing to emulate its character, as, by doing so, not only would "our brothers and sisters working on the other side of the water may keep their courage to strive for that distant goal" but future generations of Chinese may in turn consider the scholars abroad a beacon of "inspiration and hope" (C. C. Yu 277).

Before switching over to an examination of unity from the level of the individual students, another embodied concept, one more forward-looking, remains to be discussed: the idea of Pan-Asianism. Student writers have entertained the idea of a supranational body as a counterweight to the Western body politic from at least 1916, but the concept wasn't truly pondered until repeated disappointments in international relations (e.g., Treaty of Versailles; 1924-25 opium conferences in Geneva; May 30, 1925 Shanghai massacre; 1927 bombing of Nanking) eroded the perceived helpfulness and authenticity of an American friendship. A 1916 editorial by Tse Vung Soong of Columbia reported on the gathering of students from India, China, Japan, the Philippines, Persia, and Turkey in Chicago on December 31, 1915 to discuss the creation of a Pan-Asiatic League. Soong was unconvinced about the viability of such a league, doubting that there was much cultural or philosophical similarities between these nations (not to mention the animosity between China and Japan) and anxious about raising the ire of a western world still obsessed with a Yellow Peril (Soong, "Pan-Asiatic" 456). Eight years later in a 1924

article, Hawking Chen ventured that the "fashionable" notion of internationalism can only be considered after achieving a "rational nationalism" (not anti-foreignism). Such an idea posits that "a strong unified China is not only a blessing to the Chinese themselves" but a conduit to international stability (H. Chen, "Rational" 12). Similarly, Chun Wang argued that internationalism is only patriotism writ large, the next step in the movement from loyalty to tribe and state: "Every individual is a part of mankind. To consider him as a separate being from the rest of the world is quite an artificial thing" (Chun Wang 12). The enthusiasm for internationalism seemed to wane with the conviction that anti-Chinese policies imposed by the West were racially motivated (as opposed to based in a lack of correct knowledge). In the winter of 1925, Chinese students in Pittsburgh met with Indian students to form an Asiatic Club, "realiz[ing] that liberation of our country will be strengthened by cooperating with the Hindu people" ("Greater" 67). An 1927 article titled "Anti-Asianism in Panama" urged Asian nations to act in concert for racial equality, and another essay in the same volume asserted that Dr. Sun Yat-Sen supported Pan-Asianism and believed in Asian independence as a prerequisite for world peace (T. Chao, "Anti-Asianism" 5; Das, "Asian" 58). The 1928 *CSM* review of Josef Washington Hall/Upton Close's book, *The Revolt of Asia*, summarized Hall's sentiment that a Pan-Asiatic Union is growing threat. The Western bloc is no longer dominant and must seek the friendship of Asian nations (W. Shen, "'Revolt'" 52). It isn't clear from the *Monthly* that Pan-Asianism exerted any significant influence on student activity. Still, its mention is important if only to account thoroughly for the students' grasping of powerful and whole conceptual bodies.

Maintaining a Unified Ethos

If left alone, the history retold above might convey the impression that the image of the national body acted unilaterally upon the individual and literal body and that it was specific circumstances on the state-level that dictated student rhetorical activity. However, student organization was a natural response to their dispersion across America, much like the Chinese in Sun Yat-Sen's tea on a tea plate metaphor. Sun was quoted by Judge Paul Linebarger's in his memorial address to have likened the present condition of the Chinese to tea poured out onto a plate. Such tea loses its heat quickly and requires a vessel that holds the liquid together. The revered statesman diagnosed: "The Chinese people spread themselves out over too great a surface to hold the warmth of their association. … [S]ome day they will make for themselves a political vessel which will bring them together in the warmth of a new understanding" (qtd. in Linebarger 5). In the context of China's drive toward modernization, a student noted: "She is heedlessly sending students to England, Germany, France, Japan, and the United States … Here she sends us to Harvard, Yale, Columbia, Pennsylvania, Cornell, Amherst, Chicago, Illinois, Wisconsin, Boston Technology, and a host of other places" (X 453). The Chinese Students' Alliance was formed to be a vessel that can retain "the warmth of … association" between members scattered across states. In contrast, organization came much harder for students in America's northern neighbor. Because of the poll tax, Philip K. Lem explained, only generously supported students could afford an education in Canada (316). Remarking that June 1917 was the first congregation of Chinese students in Canada (compared to American gatherings have been taking place since 1903), Lem continued: "We have no athletics, no parties to go to; we lack that delicate pleasure of associating with others. Ah, we are human beings, and all men have a great longing for friendly associations" (318). While Chapters 2 and 3 examine the circumstances of student dispersion, the remainder of

this section will show that the conceit of organization was a central preoccupation of *CSM* writers from the get-go "to form a more perfect Union," so to speak, with its attendant effects on the image of the national body. The troubles outlined above, though influential, are better interpreted as the larger context for rhetorical action. In fact, since individual action was more readily perceivable by the American public, many students believed that any rehabilitation of the Chinese national image had to begin with them.

The formation of the Chinese Students' Alliance of North America and the years of subsequent tinkering it underwent grew out of the need for stronger fellowship and a national backdrop explored above. With the growth of students studying in the Midwest, it became imprudent to request clubs in Wisconsin and Illinois to maintain affiliation with an organization headquartered in the east. Z. T. Ing reported that attendees of the first Midwest conference in Evanston in 1910 overwhelmingly supported the proposal of a national organization with three sections that held independent annual conferences (132). Rejecting the alternative of having three separate alliances—"Would it not be ridiculous to outsiders as well to our own people at home that we students are divided into many parties, while in a foreign country?"—Ing contended that this proposal would tie students more closely to their representatives (134) and prevent conflicts between the Eastern and Western (California-based) alliances from recurring (135). While a Joint Council currently held together the administration of the Eastern and Western alliances, there is still much division as the Council exists as "a union of the alliances and therefore not a direct union of the students" (Ing 136). The potency of a national outfit is described by C. C. Wang, a previous editor of the *Monthly* and President of Cosmopolitan Clubs in USA, whom Ing quotes: "If we have one general organization with sufficient power to act, we shall be able to do much more in

promoting the welfare of our students and in looking after the interests of our country. We shall be able to increase our prestige and conduct our general affairs" (qtd. in 136). A truly national organization with "one Board of Executives, one constitution, one central government" would represent a great stride toward student unity (137). Separate bills were passed by students in each region, which led to the rise of the Chinese Students' Alliance *of North America*, a process detailed in Chapter 2 and 6. However, this did not immediately solve the estrangement some local clubs felt toward their sectional leadership. (But see the effect of the Treaty of Versailles on reorganization as mentioned above.) A 1920 letter to the editor complained that local clubs were not yet considered part of the Alliance and that some students who attended club meetings do not pay membership dues, casting doubt on the representativeness of sectional officers (Z. Li 89). To strive toward democracy, Li suggested that every student should automatically be considered an Alliance member and that all local clubs should automatically be considered units of the national organization (90). One example of good local-sectional-national linkage is the 1920-21 edition of the Pittsburgh club. Its active publicity committee distributed 3,000 pamphlets, stocked local libraries with materials on China, and received coverage in the daily press, proving that the club has "successfully transferred [their] loyalty from the individual to the organization itself" (M. Ho, "Chinese" 398).

Although the semblance of efficient self-government spoke well for the national image, as a training ground for future political leadership, the Alliance needed the substance of actual student cooperation. Toying with the organization chart is not a replacement for building a "virtuosity," to take Hawhee's term, of teamwork and self-sacrifice. The 1914-15 president of the Alliance Yueh-liang Tong observed that, while the Alliance had become "a very good machine," it required

"more steam and power to drive it and set it in good working order." In other words, the "need is not so much *more* organization as *more* spirit of co-operation" ("Alliance President's Message" 171, emphasis original). What Tong alluded to was the tension between sectional and national governments and between members. In the first instance, Alliance measures "meant for the good of all" have frequently been shot down by sectional representatives "on the pretext that such a measure is against the interests of their particular section" (172). Among members was missing a spirit of cooperation. The Alliance, reminded Tong, isn't merely "a means for unit[ing] our activities and promoting our welfare in this country" but "instil[ling] in us the spirit of co-operation and teach[ing] us how to unite and work harmoniously, first in our student body here, and then in our larger field of service at home" (172). A student body united in action can "form an army, invincible for China's advancement" (Tong, "Alliance President's Message" 173).

From the *Monthly*'s earliest volumes to its last can be found articles responding to the topic of dissension in the ranks. This can be interpreted as evidence for a historical lack of cohesiveness on the part of the students, but taking into consideration the actual accomplishments of the Alliance (Chapter 4) and the state of the Chinese nation, these writings can instead be construed as a long-term rhetorical strategy to maintain a national image by keeping students in line. In fact, it's possible that concerns over this national image magnified any local friction that existed. An anonymous student named "X" in the May 1909 issue referred to a factionalism among the students that arose from their dispersion, a situation that reflected badly on the body politic. While "[t]he student body is cut up," the homeland is "torn with party dessensions [*sic*]" and suffers from few real friends (X 453). Warning readers that "China is watched" (453), the writer asks: "Unless there is a unity of purpose, how can we solidify China, and face our foes at home and abroad?"

(454). What students needed was a shift in thinking: Replace the term "I" with the "You" as "the first estranges, the second draws together; the first leads to egotism, the second to otherism; the first to destruction, the second to preservation" (X 452). One dissenting voice can be found in S. J. Chuan's argument for "strong individualities," which he saw as the force that advances civilizations. Using Martin Luther and Abraham Lincoln as jumping-off points, Chuan asserts that the China of "cohesion, solidarity, and the complete subordination of the individual to the society" has passed away with the establishment of the Republic (122). Although the monarchy of the past had suppressed the individual voice, what is now needed more than ever are individuals who can discern between the "evils" of the old world, which included opium addiction and political graft, and the new world with its "temptations of smoking, drinking, [and] materialism" (S. Chuan 123). Rather than an argument for selfishness or self-centeredness, however, what's being debated here is the relation of the individual to the group. An organization cannot run at all without some degree of submission of the personal will, and no organization can run ethically without being responsible to its constituents' beliefs and values. A 1918 prize-winning essay by Miss Nettie Soo-Hoo of California articulated this symbiosis using the nation as the frame: The larger entity has to consider the citizens more than "mere tools for the glory of the country" and reflect "the common soul of its people" ("Value" 207), while the individual must "consider himself a part of a larger whole, and avoid all acts harmful to the general welfare" (207). According to Soo-Hoo, success comes when the truth is realized that "the one exists merely for the other" (207).

Much of the bickering that these writers criticized took the form of sitting back and allowing others to do the heavy lifting and yet speaking vocally when the results prove disagreeable. A 1918 editorial blasted members for "complaining or 'kicking'" and for placing

blame squarely on the officers: “We must regard the glory of our organization as our own glory and bear its shame as our own shame” (Yui, “United” 246). Instead of wasting our energy “for the destruction of each other,” we should instead be channeling that energy to advance the national cause (245). Two years later, Miss Lily Soo-Hoo of Oberlin found it appropriate to admonish: “We should not stand on the side-lines and criticize, but we must get into the fight and be in the game ourselves.” It’s bad form to “knock” the product of others without being able to do better (28). The most apathetic Chinese students would usually not partake at all in Alliance activities, leading to an open letter by the 1927-1928 officers that rebuked indifference and “individualistic gentlemanhood” in an effort to gain membership (Tang, Wu, and Liang 70). Another recurring issue was an excessive competitiveness among officers and would-be officers. Quentin Pan noted a deficient *esprit de corps* that stemmed from a refusal “to play second fiddle.” Unwilling to accept a loss, the competition between candidates can become so intense that an election for a chairmanship “was almost dropped” (Q. Pan 33).

Starting from the mid-1920s, the increasing number of American-born Chinese involved in Alliance activities also led to some tension, a development that compounded the provincialism that had existed between members. Miss Mamie-Louis Leung scolded fellow readers for trying to solve a national crisis, and even blaming the U.S. for racism, while ignoring the palpable friction between the different Chinese groups on campus (43). At the University of Southern California, Leung observed: “When a Pekinese meets a Cantonese on the campus he mutters some unintelligible greeting, forces a hypocritical smirk, and rushes by in a great hurry. Ditto the Cantonese” (M. Leung 43). Because they don’t participate as much due to their smaller numbers, the students from the north are called “deadheads” and “dum[bb]ells” by the Cantonese, who have

the numbers to accomplish more (43). Meanwhile, a Chinese-born thinks that his birthplace "has given him a certain lofty advantage," while the American-born perceive the former as "slow, lacking in pep, dowdy in dress" (44). This mentality has not only harm elections in which members vote according to clan and not suitability for office, it represents "a festering wound which can endanger the life of the nation with its subtle poisons" (45). Forgoing "dogmatic cliq[ui]shness" and remembering our commonalities can help "weld the different sections of the country into one glorious and unified whole" (M. Leung 45). Reflecting on the need for "a spiritual awakening" among his peers, Paul C. Meng pointed to the "antagonism among graduates from different schools in China, the gulf between the native Chinese student and the American born Chinese student and lack of a positive spirit of cooperation and brotherhood, which exist more or less in different localities" ("C. S. C. A." 50). This cliquishness would sometimes emerge from otherwise healthy activities, such as an athletic event at an annual conference, a variant that Alliance leadership still reproved. An editorial by H. A. Pan of Pennsylvania praised the enthusiasm shown by competitors and spectators but asked that such spirit "be confined within proper bounds" and not conflict with the unifying purpose of the conference (11). Practically, this means avoiding name-calling, keeping jealousy and cynicism in check, and avoiding dirty politics (H. Pan 12). There were other tactics that reinforced the unity of the student body, beyond the printing of words on a page. One pantomime put on by the club at Columbia University was a farce that "embodied the idea of evils of internal strife" ("Columbia Chinese" 58). Other performances and their rhetoricity are explored in Chapter 4. For Wan L. Hsu, the organization and administration of a student loan fund at the University of Michigan was "a lesson in co-operation." While Americans are taught "lesson of co-operation through class work, games and student organizations," the Chinese receive no such

education (W. Hsu, “Lesson” 37). A circular to solicit support asked: “Do we need more and a better spirit of cooperation in our club life, which is but a miniature of our national life?” (38). This fund and other responses to economic discrimination are investigated in Chapter 3.

The purpose of this chapter was to elucidate the formation of Chinese student selves through two examples of embodiment, and through such analysis, gain a better understanding of the transcalar rhetoric of Chinese student writers. Their shifting identities, along with their experiences juxtaposed with those of other immigration classes (Chapter 3), form the rhetorical context for a number of practices (Chapter 4 and 6) that further entangle the literal and the metaphorical, the individual and the national, in a concerted activistic strategy.

Chapter 6: Manufacturing Visibility: A History of Alliance Conferences

This chapter aims to give one further illustration of the transcalar and transnational *ethos* of the students (Chapters 2 and 5), which was sustained by the discriminatory context (Chapter 3) and undergirded their image-shifting strategies (Chapter 4), through the extended example of the Chinese Students' Alliance conference. Forwarding a new Chinese body for public consideration required increasing the visibility of the students. But their small numbers (Chapter 2) and social marginalization (Chapter 3) meant that any visible act must reach a maximal number of people and that such acts must be intentionally manufactured. Carefully planned and advertised, stage plays, social functions, and object exhibitions, along with lectures and public writing, can be considered force multipliers in that they allow a single Chinese student in each case to influence a disproportionate number of Americans. No other embodied rhetorical practice made a more tangible impact as the annual conferences organized by the Chinese Students' Alliance. Conferences were the one setting in which strategies discussed in previous chapters oftentimes appeared together.

Held in the late summer in cities all over the Pacific Coast, Midwest, and Atlantic Seaboard, these gatherings of 100-200 student delegates with their American guests presented a different depiction of Chineseness likely unfamiliar to the surrounding communities. Venues would be advertised in the *Monthly* in the final issue of the previous school year. In early years, a detailed itinerary with photographs would be provided; heading into the 1920s, readers would find more succinct announcements mentioning the conference theme and offering travel information. Conference programs stuck to a standardized format: business meetings in the morning followed by platform addresses, athletic competitions in the afternoon, and literary and social functions in the

evening. Historians, conference chairs and subcommittee chairs, and attendees themselves would often summarize the proceedings in the first magazine issue of the following school year. Through these activities, among other goals, committee organizers hoped to raise the estimation of their race among onlookers.

In this chapter, I narrate a history of these conferences in order to show how the ever-present transcalar and transnational mindedness of the students led to an evolution of conference goals. Through this investigation, I argue that correcting a comprehensive racial image that made claims about the bodily characteristics of robustness and wholeness, themes that were explored in Chapter 5, required a concerted strategy that directly engaged those characteristics and embodied alternative ones. Early conference descriptions would be supplemented with newspaper accounts, while *Monthly* articles provide the bulk of material for later conferences. For convenience's sake, conferences will be referenced by city, year, number-section (east, midwest, west), e.g., Amherst 1905 1E.

A Better Chinese

In the early years beginning 1905, the conference was portrayed as a foreign novelty by Massachusetts newspapers. The tightening of the Exclusion laws, which dropped the number of Chinese in America from 89,863 in 1900 to 71,531 in 1910 according to the 13th census (C. K. Chen 378), along with the concentration of Chinese in Chinatowns, meant that most white Americans had little interaction with the Chinese beyond getting a garment cleaned or visiting the occasional chop suey restaurant. Although the proceedings of that inaugural conference is lost with the untraceable first volume of *CSM* (1905-1906), its activities can be pieced together with reports by *The Boston Globe*. As would be expected with 38 students (36 according to *CSM*), one room

was reserved for the August 28-29 convention at the Massachusetts Agricultural College ("Met at Amherst" 11). The first day of the conference, a Monday, opened with addresses by the local club president as well as representatives from the Chinese legation. Talks touched on the latest developments in China and lauded the role of education in international relations. Unable to make it to the opening ceremonies, Sir Liang Chentung, the Chinese minister to the U.S., would have been thrilled to be part of that momentous occasion as, a quarter century earlier, he himself was sent to the U.S. as one of 120 children during the Chinese Educational Mission (1872–1881), a short-lived Qing experiment. The minister was also instrumental in negotiating the return of the Boxer Indemnity for the American education of Chinese students. Later that evening, Liang returned to open up his residence for a reception for the cadre of students from Columbia, Yale, Cornell, and other universities. Even this early in history, outsider enthusiasm for Chinese student affairs can be seen in the high number of Amherst residents that attended the function ("Met at Amherst" 11).

While pomp and circumstance might have been the bywords of the first day of the conference, it was the second day that made an indelible impact on the fate of the Alliance. *The Globe* reported on the election of officers, the adoption of a constitution, and the decisions to make the organization permanent and to return to Amherst in the summer of 1906 ("For Annual Conference" 14), but newspapers could only capture a modicum of the stirrings behind the curtain. By August 1905, there were already four separate Chinese student organizations: the "Chinese Students' Alliance of America" (1902) and the Pacific Coast Chinese Students' Association (1905), both formed by Berkeley students; "The Chinese Students' Alliance of the Middle West" (1903), which drew from the immediate vicinity of Chicago; and the "Ithaca Chinese Students'

Alliance" (1904), composed of students from Cornell and nearby schools (V. Koo, "Short" 420-22). The organization established at Amherst 1905 1E that became the fifth, the "Chinese Students' Alliance of the Eastern States," hoped to bring yet-to-be-affiliated students on the east coast into the fold. It was this eastern alliance that initiated the nationalization of the whole apparatus, absorbing the Ithaca group in 1906 and persuading the west coast organizations to sign on through a Joint Council in 1909. By supporting the creation of a separate midwestern conference, which met in Evanston in August 1910, the Eastern Alliance enabled the creation of an entity that was ready-made for subsequent amalgamation. The national association was born when the proposal to "wel[d] … all elements into a consolidated whole and thereby avoid any sectional jealousy that may exist now between the different divisions of students" (V. Koo, "Short" 429) was adopted by each conference in the summer of 1911. The Executive Council, the central organ of the unified Chinese Students' Alliance, was composed of members from all three Sections. Membership is transferable from section to section, and the publication of the *Chinese Students' Monthly* and the student directory became the purview of the Alliance (431).

Of course, none of this was foreseeable by the roomful of students that met at Amherst 1905 1E. For the moment, the idea of a national alliance was still a fledgling's dream, as intangible as the flames that leapt at the closing bonfire on the grounds of Henry D. Fearing Tuesday evening. There, in the welcoming home of a sinophile and retired hatmaker, the students sang in Chinese amidst the swaying Japanese lanterns, joined by Minister Liang. The students were to leave the next day for their schools and colleges, and Liang himself had a busy day ahead: the settlement of a dispute between the On Leong Tong and the Hip Sing Tong in Boston's Chinatown ("Asks for Peace" 7). But those students made good on their promise and met on the same campus grounds

the following year, their numbers having swelled to 116 including guest speakers. The December issue of the *Chinese Students' Bulletin*, as the magazine was then known, reported attendees from seven Chinese provinces, with three native-born from New York and California, and one from Constantinople ("Newspaper" 6). The conference committee received 87 letters, postcards, and telegrams from well-wishers and sent out a total of 267 invitations and circulars (6). On site were reporters representing *The Springfield Union*, *The New York Herald*, *The Springfield Republican*, *The Boston Transcript*, *The Springfield Homestead*, and one Amherst local paper.

What set the 1906 conference apart from the inaugural conference was the higher level of media coverage before, during, and after the event. Five days before the conference, *The North Adams Evening Transcript* assuaged public fears of the student "invasion" and assured, possibly tongue-in-cheek, that the students will incite "no disturbance of the labor market" ("The Chinese" 4). *The Transcript* and *Boston Post* would closely follow the development of the four-day gathering. The Monday was again opened by the conference chairman, who declared the object of the conference "to bring into closer contact students from China who are in Eastern institutions of learning" ("Chinese Students Meet" 7). But emerging alongside the social intention of the conference was the representational purpose. The next day, MIT student Lingoh Wang, gave an "interesting" address that seemed directed at the few Americans in the audience. Entitled "Method of Promoting Better Relations Between China and the United States," it drew geographical and material parallels between the two nations and confessed the speaker's discouragement with the hostile anti-Chinese attitude, placing the blame on the misunderstanding of the Chinese. To rectify this attitude, Wang proposed to repeal the Chinese Exclusion Act, carry out educational exchanges so that American educators can carry more positive messages into U.S. public schools, and

encourage the emigration of “better” Chinese (“Dr. Tenney” 8). Occupying the better part of Wednesday were athletic contests (“Chinese Students in Baseball” 2), a category of activity that seems absent from the record in 1905. The tennis tournament was originally slated for Tuesday but held off due to rain (“Dr. Tenney” 8).

Chinese envoy Liang reappeared at Amherst 1906 2E at the end of the week to encourage the departing students. Echoing Wang, Liang remarked that they shoulder a great responsibility as the hope of the nation depends on the educated classes. Other speakers included Dr. Charles Tenney of Cambridge, who was appointed in charge of the interests of Chinese students in the country; the president of the Massachusetts Agricultural College, and a biology professor from Amherst College (“Liang Cheng” 12). As per tradition, a great bonfire was lit on Friday evening. *The North Adams Evening Transcript* described the “blaze of glory” thusly:

> A Chinese bonfire is a remarkable creation. The American college boys would do well to take lessons of their yellow brethren. A pine tree 18-inches in diameter at the base and 20 feet in height was cut down and borne on the shoulders of the enthusiastic youth to the chosen location. A posthole was excavated and the tree replanted. — was massed around the trunk and brush and various combustibles were intertwined among the branches from the ground to the topmost twig. When the torch was applied a most wonderful and brilliant spectacle followed. This kindled the fires of enthusiasm in the breasts of the excited Chinese youth, who with college yells and striking gymnastics danced on the lawn about the tree (“A Chinese Bonfire” 5).

Remarkably, Wang's desire to correct misrepresentations achieved at least partial fulfillment. The front page of Saturday issue of *The Gazette and Courier*, a Greenfield paper, entertained the idea that the American public might have been wrong about the Chinese colony. The article remarked on the extraordinariness of the gathering and praised the students for their serious-mindedness in pursuing the regeneration of their country, a steadfastness that "impressed itself" on all onlookers: "The dignified and studious appearance of these fellows … suggests how far the Chinese nation has been misjudged by the American people [who] … have taken it for granted that the element that comes here to do mental work correctly represented Chinese life" ("The Conference Chinese" 1). Unlike those laborers seen in restaurants and laundries, these students were visibly different, an irrefutable "addition to the life of any nation" (1). Like Wang and Liang, the Greenfield paper tried to raise the estimation of the Chinese by distancing these students from those engaged in occupations more visible to the public eye. The students would see just how tenuous that line was, both in their interactions with white townspeople, the immigration system, and law enforcement (Chapter 3), even as they remained defensive in discussions that mentioned the two in the same breath, and even as they ran language schools for them and celebrated holidays in Chinatown restaurants, staffed by laborers though owned by merchants. This tactic was in line with the shift noted by Erika Lee. Instead of pursuing justice through solidarity, by 1910, merchants made their case before the legal system by separating themselves from their poorer brethren through flaunting their attire and their number of wives (E. Lee 112).

Looking forward to Hamilton 1909 5E, the fifth conference and the first outside Massachusetts, a *CSM* editor exclaimed: "It is the one event, in which all our life and interests focus; from which is drawn our inspiration, our enthusiasm, our dignity, our solidarity, nay, even

our life, as a student body; and on which, the validity and dignity of our assertion as the representatives of China's head, heart, and body depend" (Tsur, "Fifth" 473). Asserting that the student body represented "China's head, heart, and body" suggests that spectators surveying this group would grasp the height of Chinese intellect, the depth of their passion, and the strength of their athleticism. These aspects perfectly matched the conference foci on intellectual, social, and physical activities. Thus, the annual conference is a bodily symbol that call a historical image into question as much as it denies other kinds of Chineseness. But strength in unity goes beyond symbolism; after a conference, C. S. Liu found the "strength and encouragement" to return to his studies (qtd. in "Testimonies" 507). The Massachusetts Agricultural College has the distinction of being the location for the first and second annual conference of the Eastern Alliance, soon to be the Chinese Students' Alliance of the United States. The two- and five-day conferences of 1905 and 1906 established the pattern of activities that succeeding conferences would follow.

The *Chinese Students' Bulletin* printed the program for Andover 1907 3E hosted by Phillips Academy. A close look at the weeklong event reveals a compartmentalization of the business, social, and athletic functions. After a late Wednesday inception at 7:30 p.m., a time chosen to allow ample time for students to travel to the site, the following days saw platform addresses and conference meetings before noon, track meets, tennis, baseball, and association football tournaments at 2 p.m., and plays, oratorical contests, and debates in the evening, along with social functions. The final day began with the election of new officers, picture taking, awarding of prizes, refreshments, and the now-traditional bonfire ("Outlines" 158). Minister Liang was absent that year, recalled to China to take on a leadership role on foreign affairs ("Chinese Conference" 1). The final sporting event was a baseball game between the students and Phillips

Academy faculty on Brothers' Field, which ended without a single hit for the students (Titus 726). Undeterred, cries of "Tson Hua! Hoola! Hoola! Vivela! Vivela!" and "Chung Kuo Hao!" rang throughout the farewell reception, as if the students' strength emerged from simple fraternity ("Outlines" 159-160). A *CSM* writer notes:

> In that evening, that memorable evening, when we gathered under the same roof, we actually forgot that we were in a foreign land. We sang songs and gave yells and cheers. At one time the hall was filled up with noise of yells and at another moment with melody of sweet songs, and occasionally noise and melody mixed up altogether. … We wish that this social, a new character of this year's Conference, be continued in succeeding years. ("Conference Notes" 30)

The foreignness of U.S. cities drew these students together and inspired their song and cheer. For a while, they "forgot" their isolation. Ironically, in later conference reports, this social atmosphere was taken as a sign of forgetting one's homeland and one's primary vocation of being a hardworking student.

Representation Through Collectivity

In the May 1908 issue of *CSM*, C. C. W. reflected on the successes of the first three summer conferences as a way to pique readers' interest in the upcoming one at Cushing Academy in Ashburnham, Massachusetts (Ashburnham 1908 4E). He noted the threefold increase of participants from 30 in 1905 to just over 100 in 1906 and the attendees' warm enthusiasm of Andover 1907 3E when the locale switched to a town of 7,000 an hour and a half from Amherst. Such obvious success can only come from a steadfast dedication to the conference's mission: the formation of friendships across interests and geographical distance to pave way for a "harmonious"

reconstruction of China (C. C. Wang, “Review” 283). That Ashburnham conference was likewise successful in this mission can be seen in the series of testimonies by participants reflecting on the broad accessibility of the event. The conference’s now weeklong schedule allowed students to pick and choose their activities without fear of missing out on a large proportion of the events. Boasted a Harvard student: “Those who are socially inclined will enjoy especially the receptions and musicales; those who are interested in intellectual activities will find a field for their inclination in the oratorical contest and debates; those who are fond of athletics will find keen and worthy competition on the cinder path, tennis court and ball field” (qtd. in “Testimonies” 506). University of Michigan student Chengting T. Wang remarked that the comprehensiveness of the program allowed for personal refinement of skills and talents, “be he an orator or a musician, an athlete or a debator, one of literary taste or of scientific bent, endowed with organizing abilities or bestowed with social grace” (“Retrospection” 533). Taking advantage of this diversification, the students came in droves. W. W. Yen, secretary to the Chinese legation and University of Virginia graduate, commented on the “bond of sympathy … or affinity of souls” that pervaded the atmosphere: “One touch of American college life seems to make us kin” (111).

Beyond associational benefits, conferences offered a site for the practice of democracy and self-government. Though free association by itself is rhetorical as it displays strength and unity of purpose (Chapter 5), in a practical sense, the students had been given the reins of a republic-in-the-making and had to cultivate governmental and policy-making skills. Since the students were scattered around the country, the annual conference remained the best place to deliberate problems. The Chinese Students’ Alliance was a “miniature republic … in its structure and organization,” and, as a member of the Alliance, “[e]ach delegate is entitled to enjoy the full

privileges of the Conference" ("To the Hundreds" 270). Business meetings and discussions over resolutions were to be guided by "reason and conviction, not personal preference or prejudice" (271). Just as maximizing participation in a direct or representative democracy helps boost its legitimacy, the increasing number of conference-goers added to a growing set of voices and offered student leaders chances to organize and amplify their concerns. A high attendance also prevents rash decisions from being made by a few and acute problems from being deferred (273).

For Chengting T. Wang, while the friendships and acquaintances he made at Ashburnham 1908 4E made the foremost impression, relationships made more critical given the students' "sojourning in a foreign land, separated from sweet homes and scattered in various institutions" ("Retrospection" 532), the second impression he took away was the opportunity for collective action. Although he doesn't frame it explicitly as such, it's reasonable to assume he considered concerted action as predicated on the solidarity he found. That the Chinese have been too concerned with their individual welfare can be seen in the acts of aggression suffered by the nation: "Were we COLLECTIVELY as strong as we are individually, would we have allowed the European nations to grab our territories, exact our indemnities, humiliate our nation, or maltreat our people? Or would we suffer Canada even now to impose a poll tax of $500—what a shame!—upon a countryman of ours who may desire to set his feet upon that soil for peaceful vocations?" (C. Wang, "Retrospection" 532, emphasis original). Although the immorality of the actions of western nations are beyond dispute, Wang argues that part of the responsibility is on the Chinese themselves. A strong, unified, and potent body isn't subject to the devastating repercussions of another's capricious sense of morality.

A recurrent observation of my study is the students' effortless transcalar shift between seeing oneself as an individual, a community, and a nation-state (Chapters 1 and 5). This variable subject position, a 20th-century version of Louis XIV's "l'état, c'est moi," is made possible by the students' positions as cultural ambassadors and the reconstructive tasks ahead of them, but also by the widely accepted practice of ethnic essentialism, the imputation of national characteristics to individuals. The notion of volksgeist, popularized by Johann Gottfried Herder, claims that nations are separate entities with a distinct and absolute spirit (Van Benthem van den Bergh). In this schema, individuals of a race necessarily have more in common with each other than those outside of it as they share the same language, traditions, and cultural script. Orientalist theory posits that the images Western scholars impose onto a people have a life of their own and are taken as reality no matter what the reality is (Said 13). But, in a sense, it is this cultural essentialism that allows these students to recreate the discourse surrounding the Chinese. *Because we act in a civilized manner, China (and other Chinese) must also be civilized.* Cultural interpretation and representation have always exploited the use of metonymy for better or worse ends. What's missing from both the students and the townsfolk, of course, is the acceptance of diversity of lived experiences, a breakaway from a monolithic and totalizing view of a culture. Toward the later conferences, however, extensions of invitation to U.S.-born Chinese and an expression of desire to hear their concerns suggests a changing position on the part of conference organizers.

The shifting subject position allows the students to perceive their own experiences as analogous to the experiences of the country as a whole (e.g., racial microaggressions as an extension of China's defeat in both Opium Wars, the imposition of extraterritoriality, and the removal of tariff autonomy), and such national humiliations to be taken as a personal affront. The

annual conference becomes a nexus in which collective remembrance and "conference" becomes converted to collective action. Chengting T. Wang mentioned that the annual conference enabled attendees to debate and shape foreign policy and essentially "exchange … notes" ("Retrospection" 533). In addition to in-house concerns, such as debating constitutional changes and the joining of the World Chinese Student's Federation, a Shanghai-based outfit that assisted returning students with job placement, the Andover 1907 3E itinerary also allowed time for more outward-facing collaborations, e.g., resolution discussions that molded the official stances of the Alliance on mutual concerns ("Conference Notes" 28-29). Later on, in a piece looking forward to Ann Arbor 1920 11M, sectional chair Sidney K. Wei observed the "repulsive" effect of being separated at different institutions. For Wei, this makes all the more important the conception of the annual conference as "a laboratory for expressing th[e] group spirit of service, co-operation, and fellowship" (S. Wei 12). The 1908 conference at Ashburnham also saw success at offering a different side of the Chinese. Henry S. Cowell, Principal of Cushing Academy called the conference a "revelation" to Ashburnham residents: "The students 'came, saw, and conquered' our hearts. The gentlemanly conduct of the students, the high character of their public exercises, their intense patriotism, their spirit of appreciation, made them our most welcome guests" (qtd. in "Testimonies" 504). J. G. Miller, the pastor of a congregational church, enthused that "scales of prejudice fell from the eyes of our people" at the sight of the students at their activities. The townspeople's "tongues were let loose and they cease not to speak of the Conference with pride" (qtd. in 504).

Representation Through Organization

The 5th conference at Colgate University in Hamilton, New York, was the best-documented one in the *Chinese Students' Monthly* up to that point, a development that reflected a bureaucracy that was not only more efficient in running the event but publicizing about it. The first issue of *CSM* published after the conference contained editorials, statistics, reports by various chairmen, a lost-and-found notice, group photo, poem, transcripts of speeches by W. W. Yen, the secretary of the Chinese legation and representative of the Chinese minister, and by W. H. Crawshaw, the dean of Colgate University, and a 12-page synopsis by a "historian of the conference." In the classified was an ad for S. Arakelyan, a photographer out of Boston who took shots at both Hamilton (1909) and Ashburnham (1908).

The location of the conference in Hamilton, the first outside Massachusetts, represented the shift of student population across the eastern seaboard. It was the most-attended conference yet with 135 delegates, with many from Midwestern institutions. (These students would separately organize the first Midwestern conference the following year in Evanston, Illinois.) The total number of attendees was one-third of the 465 Chinese students in the U.S., a tally reported half a year later (C. Young, "Statistical" 268). Representing 28 universities and colleges (55 from Cornell, Harvard, Yale), six professional schools, eleven academies and high schools (Tsur, "General" 19), the student body included 14 female students, the most ever thus far, who helped with bazaar, the musical recital, and other social aspects of the program (20). Still, the editor averred, their numbers made the boys "the backbone, head, heart and limbs of the Conference" (20). Receipts and bazaar sales generated a tidy profit of $44.83 (about $1,200 in today's dollars) (20), but not without donations from the Chinese legation for the prizes (T. Chu, "Athletics" 37). If

the conference ran any larger or longer than a week, the chair noted, the good balance achieved between expenditure and receipts might have been in jeopardy (Tsur, “General” 23).

Behind the scenes, the machinery that ensured the smooth running of the gathering has shifted from a one-man show to a well-functioning central committee and subcommittees. Even in spring 1909, there had already been seven subcommittees operating in resolutions, accomodations, receptions, athletics, decoration, music, and the bazaar (V. Koo, “Brief” 41). Looking forward, conference chair Y. T. Tsur recommended that each subcommittee ought to be replete with a secretary, responsible for correspondence and news interviews, a treasurer, responsible for receipts and expenditures, as well as other members. Although the conference chair is still the overseer, responsibilities are delegated to the heads of these subcommittees (Tsur, “General” 23). Since the subcommittee heads are also members of the central conference committee, there would be no conflict: the “[a]bsence of conflict brings harmony; harmony, co-operation; co-operation, efficiency” (22). Tsur’s advice was taken to heart; by Champaign-Urbana 1918 9M, there were chairs of 15 subcommittees: Accommodation, Athletics, Auditor, Business, Cheer Leader, Chinese Literary, Decoration, Dramatic and Stunt, English Literary, Meals, Publicity, Reception, Resolutions, Social, Vocational (P. Chung 406). Efficient cooperation, which facilitated solidarity, was only one benefit of running a multi-tiered bureaucracy. By performing self-government, the students undercut racial arguments that the Chinese were unable to govern themselves, that they were predisposed to autocracy. It must be clarified that this was self-government in a limited sense, that is, freedom from external and foreign control. Democracy, per se, as in rule by constituents, would not be explicit parlance until after the 1911 overthrow of the Manchu state. For example, when Ambassador Tang Shao Yi told students at a 1908 meeting at Washington to “prepare” for

the impending 1917 parliament by perfecting their speechmaking (C. Wang, “One” 249), he was probably envisioning the context of a constitutional monarchy. In fact, at a debate at Hartford 1910 6E, it was resolved that China, still then a monarchy, wasn’t ready for a constitutional government despite recent reforms (Y. Tsao 37). However, a mere three years later at Ithaca 1913 9E, historian Woon Yung Chun reported the creation of a mock parliament that reproduced the Chinese National House of Representatives. Speaking in Mandarin, students debated the impeachment of a premier and a woman suffrage bill (W. Y. Chun 62). From the 1912 and 1913 conferences onward, in the pages of *CSM* and in conference debates and discussions, democracy was celebrated, then qualified, then questioned, at least in its West-centric form.

The practice of self-government was a focus of the synopsis by V. K. W. Koo of Columbia, the prenominated “Historian of the Conference” (V. Koo, “Brief” 41). He quoted *The Outlook*, which called the gathering “[a]n interesting scene in the drama of China’s awakening” and a congress of “future leaders of the Chinese Empire” (qtd. in 42). In the four-part layout of the program—business meetings, platform addresses, athletics, and literary/social functions—it was the few hours before the noon addresses that offered the most evidence of Chinese intellectualism and pursuit of modernity. In the daily business meetings, “problems [were] solved, officers elected, and resolutions adopted” (43), and although rarely over two dozen members were present, the enthusiasm of those attendees made up for the missing numbers. Matters included the formation of a joint council through which the Chinese Students’ Alliance on the Pacific Coast could be united with its eastern counterpart, and the petitioning of the Board of Education for more scholarship funds to distribute among the needy members (43-44). What stirred the body of students, though, was the elections of new officers of the Alliance:

> [T]here were seen students hurrying around the town, stopping some fellow-members on their way, perhaps, to ask them to nominate themselves, for one position or another. … [T]he campus of Colgate University was dotted with groups of two and three, some of them with their soft hats tipped over on one side and lighted cigarettes between their fingers, engrossed in talking in a low voice, occasionally with a furtive look around, apparently to see if there was anybody overhearing their conversation. (V. Koo, "Brief" 44)

Weili Ye, author of *Seeking Modernity in China's Name*, has argued that the similarity of this election with subsequent referendums in China suggests that these students were a driving force toward China's reform (25), but, for our purposes, the Colgate election visibly forwards a new kind of Chinese body: strong, autonomous, civil, egalitarian.

Koo also expressed admiration for the oratorical contests and debate. Two of the five candidates in the English contest were women speaking on the "intricacies and usefulness of domestic science" and the meaning of education to Chinese women. The latter won an honorable mention in front of a panel of judges consisting of Chinese secretary Yen, Principal of Colgate Academy F. L. Shepardson, and a Mr. H. H. Hawkins (V. Koo, "Brief" 47-48). Women debaters did not have to wait too long to receive top honors; the very next year, at Hartford 1910 6E, Miss Y. J. Chang won first place in the Chinese oratorical contest, speaking on the improvement of Chinese women's lives (Y. Tsao 37). The Cornell-Pennsylvania debate at Colgate was attended by townspeople and weighed the relative importance of industrial transformation and military reorganization to China's regeneration. The students "hurled arguments and refutations at each other" in 10-minute direct speeches that moved onto five-minute rebuttals. Although the oratorical

contests were successful, conference chair Tsur expounded the continued importance of examining manuscripts beforehand to ensure high standards and to preclude "objectionable sentiment" ("General" 24). There was, in addition, a language problem. Up until Syracuse 1925 21E, English was the de facto language of the conference to smooth over dialectical differences, but that policy could not be extended to cover the Chinese oratorical contest, the first time one was conducted at a conference. Tsur recommended that future participants should be restricted to "kwanhua" or Mandarin Chinese speakers only, a policy that would help judge selection and probably aid listener comprehension. If participants know this ahead of time, they could receive the proper training before the contests (24).

What's relevant here is the taut connection between rhetorical practice and viable self-government. For the students, argument is not an ornamental art akin to the eight-legged essay expected in the now-defunct (since 1905) imperial examinations but a necessity for efficacious national administration. For the townspeople of Hamilton, the student debate must have been a sight to behold. The English fluency of these Chinese students have often been remarked on by news correspondents. On one hand, mastery of English can be seen as a sign of or capacity for civilization. One's grasp of English has historically been used as a demarcation for in-group status. On the other hand, applauding the rhetorical savviness of these students means legitimizing another pathway to the shaping of reality, one based on the power of argumentation and not on that of physical might. Watching the debate probably caused consternation or discomfort for some viewers as it suggested that other accepted truths, such as cultural superiority, the missionary enterprise, or American gunboat diplomacy, might become the next topics of debate. Indeed, conference forums in the mid-1920s on imperialism and nationalism questioned the authenticity of U.S. friendship.

Similarly, the *Monthly* would take a more critical turn in its columns and address those same issues, and more than a handful of students would win oratory honors, join debating societies, and argue about the veracity of particular Chinese "facts" to audiences in churches and community organizations. In response, Chinese students have been shut down in public forums and criticized in editorials for being too aggressive. Rhetorical practice at conferences wasn't limited to the oral either. In Lafayette 1925 16M, a literary contest was held for participants to write on professional problems or the conference theme using either Chinese (preferred) or English (T. M. Tsai 77).

The Colgate conference was taken as another opportunity to educate the community. The music recital at the Baptist Church involved hundreds of interested people, many of which were from the "outskirts of town" (V. Koo, "Brief" 50) Thirteen Chinese and Western selections were played, some using Chinese imported instruments, and the performances were received with ovations and much curiosity. Chairman Tsur called the recital "a sort of education" for Americans ("General" 24). Athletically, the report from the chair of the athletic committee mentioned a track meet, tennis tournament, baseball game, and association football game (T. Chu, "Athletics" 35). At the meet, winners scored points for dashes, high and long jumps, shot put, tug of war, and the relay race, with Amherst carrying the day followed by Harvard in a distant second (36). Conferences continued to serve as an outlet for physical activity through the decades. In urging more students to attend, C. C. Chi explained that it isn't so much about the prizes one can win from athletic competitions: "We do not have much chance to exercise, much less to compete while in school. In the conference all sorts of competitions are available, either individual or group." In addition to health benefits, competitors also practice the qualities of "fair play and sportsmanship" (C. Chi 42).

About 50 of the conference participants stayed in town for what would become the inaugural meeting of the Chinese Students' Christian Association at the Baptist Church, where the music recital took place just days before, a quick five-minute jaunt from campus. There, the students heard speakers explain the need for an expansion of missionary activities in China (Hodges). What was remarkable was the turn of events after Hamilton 1909 5E and the CSCA meeting when the congregation of the Baptist church met to take stock of the preceding gatherings. "The Echoes and Impressions from the Chinese Students" was the topic of the evening. Following the gush of praise was the broaching of a sensitive topic by a former missionary to China (C. Wang, "'Chinaman'" 8). The use of "Chinaman," Dr. Patridge argued, was not in keeping with civil taste and "want of reverence" for the people. The oddity of term is made even more apparently when considering that "Englandman" and "Franceman" are not used (9). The *CSM* writer noted that names are simply signs that point interlocutors to the same object and that the distaste toward this particular term comes from its connotation of contempt. In the course of an otherwise pleasant conversation, the appearance of the nomenclature immediately disrupts all goodwill, the Chinese "listeners at once look annoyed and irritated [and] the conversation begins to be wearisome" (9). Although the writer conceded that this admonishment might "sharpen the malignity of certain people" (C. Wang, "'Chinaman'" 9), that this problem was identified as such and brought up among missionaries and churchgoers themselves represents a tangible result of student gatherings.

The Middle Years

In the 10 years between Hamilton 1909 5E and Princeton 1920 16E, the annual conference built upon its successful model of representation: Draw students to the gathering, organize social,

athletic, and intellectual activities that enhanced solidarity and demonstrated good self-government, and work toward removing prejudice through visibility and direct contact. Togetherness was fostered through the use of space and doses of healthy competition. At Hartford 1910 6E at Trinity College, local clubs were asked to bring photos and member statistics so an exhibition room can be filled paraphernalia ("Sixth" 496). Students moving through the room might recognize old faces from their prep school days or inquire more about an intriguing major at another institution. A new feature introduced at Hartford 1910 6E was vocational meetings. Students with the Chinese Academy of Arts and Sciences would read papers from different disciplines and involve the audience in discussion (Y. Tsao 36). In Madison 1911 2M, in addition to meetings of the Chinese Academy of Arts and Sciences, conference historian S. D. Lee noted reunions of Ai-Kwoh-Hwei, the Engineers' Club, the Agriculturists' Club, the Chinese Educational Mission Club, Nanyang Club, Soochow Club, and Saint John's Club ("Second" 75). Like the separation of social, athletic, and literary activities, rather than suggesting fragmentation, the presence of these smaller gatherings suggests that the annual conference was a place for everybody. There is also some evidence that the division of these clubs actually enhanced the general sense of fellowship. Recounting the athletic and literary competitions at Troy 1919 15E, a *CSM* writer noticed that the "ancient rivalries of St. John's, Nanyang, and Tsinghua, transported across the Pacific" were "thriving vigorously on American soil; with the newly acquired antagonisms of Yale and Harvard" ("Eastern" 95). The continuation of old relationships and rivalries served as a reminder of home but also lessened the alienation that came from being on foreign soil. While they might be considered "just" kinship bonds in China, their transplantation accreted to them a timeless and geographically unbound

nature. Competition itself was seen as a tool for solidarity just as the Olympic Games help further friendships and the community of nations (C. C. Wang, “Review” 286).

The only entertainment to which guests weren’t invited were interclub nights, functions organized by the presidents of local Chinese clubs that usually consisted of a series of performances such as stunts and skits. Marked with much laughter and frivolity, interclub nights “remind us exiles of our sweet home” (Y. Tsai, “Seventh” 688). But even functions that were held for foreign guests had a self-empowering purpose. One new feature introduced in Madison 1911 2M was the International Night. (No relation to the event by the same name organized during the academic year, often under the auspices of the Cosmopolitan Club.) Conference historian S. D. Lee explained that this event’s purpose was to recognize non-American friendships. Though many American did attend, students and guests of numerous nationalities met to mingle and “make merry.” Common circumstances make friends of the most dissimilar people, and that evening was no different, functioning to “dissipate that inquietude which haunted our friends whose homes were far, far away … [but also] intensify the national spirit among our own people, and to create better feelings, to some extent at least, between China and other nations” (S. D. Lee, “Second” 73). Shifting the level of magnification affects the level of scrutiny in one’s perception of difference. Among peers, the students saw differences in dialect, upbringing, and schooling. Among representatives of other countries, the students probably put on a united front, understanding that a consolidated notion of Chineseness, even in its diversity, made it easier to “package” and convey to strangers.

Volatile news from China meant that the serious character of business and forum meetings did not lessen, even when their number of attendees later did. Before the Chinese Revolution, the

students debated the best pathways to regeneration, focusing on scientific, mechanical, and agricultural advances that might be transferable home. After the revolution, conference goers discussed priorities of the new government as much as they celebrated the ascension of the world's youngest republic. In the wartorn years when much of China was split between factions, the Chinese students denounced the meddling of western powers, which they argued prolonged the civil war. It was not all just talk. Many of these students who drew inspiration at these sites would go on to lead accomplished political, scientific, and literary lives, such as conference historian of Hamilton 1909 5E Wellington Koo, who negotiated China's position at the 1919 Paris Peace Conference and became a League of Nations founder, a judge at The Hague, and for a brief period the Premier and President of the Republic of China. At Andover 1916 12E, after papers on national defense and reconstruction were read, the resulting discussion showcased "well ripened thoughts which must have long occupied the minds of the participants." Students weren't "building castles in the air" but proposing steps that led toward solutions (L. T. Chen, "Twelfth" 47). Although some conference observers deplored the increasing attention placed on play and social functions in the early 1920s—Princeton 1920 16E was criticized for being conceived of as "a means of rest and entertainment" (Z. Li 89) and Haverford 1924 20E a "yacht of pleasure" (C. Kwei, "Purpose" 4)[17]—in 1925, news of a British-led but American-complicit massacre in

[17] According to the editor-in-chief C. S. Kwei, delegates to Haverford 1924 20E and its midwestern and western counterparts had nothing to show for their time, except for "a few half-hearted declarations and resolutions" and maybe sore appendages from "social gatherings, dances and other thirdgrade attributes of western civilization" (C. Kwei, "Purpose" 3). Recalling the words of the conference chairman, who deemed the conference "a mirror that reflects both our country and ourselves to the American public," Kwei warned about the effects of this mischaracterization: "Had an American called upon some of our delegates to explain the causes of the present conflict and to describe the extent of its military operations, we may be pardoned for thinking that many a delegate would have turned a sorry figure" (4). Acting editor-in-chief C. K. Young evinces: "One does not *confer* with his opponent on the tennis court, still less does he with his partner on the

Shanghai refocused participants and even turned their rhetoric against their hosts. resulting in signed manifestoes at Syracuse 1925 21E and Lafayette 1925 16M and a debate over the installment of Mandarin Chinese as the official conference language at the former (S. Chang 74). Conference organizers continued to see these gatherings as a source of accurate news and took every chance to influence public opinion. Months after the abdication of the last Qing emperor, audiences were treated to scenes from the revolution on a lantern slide projector at Williamstown 1912 8E (Chimin 255). At Madison 1911 2M, church pulpits in Methodist, Baptist, Congregational churches were given over to conference students. A meeting of the Young People's Christian Union, a Universalist counterpart to the Y. M. C. A., was also addressed (S. D. Lee, "Second" 74).

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dancing floor. Recreation is *essential* but not *fundamental*. The primary purpose is *business* and not *pleasure*. The Conference site is no Summer resort!" (C. K. Young, "Preparations" 3, emphasis original).

Taking into consideration the lonely lives of many of these delegates (as not all hailed from large universities or cities) might have helped C. S. Kwei understand the students' tendency to socialize or at least become more empathetic toward it. In a piece explaining the merits of attending the conferences in 1925, C. C. Chi contends that they provide much needed fraternization. He goes on to describe the life of a typical student, but it isn't clear that he isn't discussing himself:

> I get up about seven o'clock, have breakfast, and rush to the classroom, hoping—probably against hope—not to be called upon by professors. I take lunch about twelve o'clock, then go to library, and may have other classes in the afternoon. I have my dinner about six o'clock, and then go to library again, and go back about ten o'clock—all alone. I may write some letters, may prepare lessons for tomorrow before retiring. Day after day the same thing happens—monthly exams, term papers, etc. On Saturday evenings and Sundays, if time permits, I go to movies—all alone." (C. Chi 42-43)

Such a lifestyle, Chi assures, has led to many breakdowns and insanities (43).

It can also be argued that "play" is a stronger rhetorical tool than Kwei and Young give credit for. Being culturally adept, e.g. through learning American dances, opens up more pathways for communication and relationship-building. Although the Americanization of these students has been criticized and led to their political exile at home, breaking the us vs. them dichotomy involves creating a fair bit of common ground. Given this, the value of these annual conferences lie both in how they prepare students for effective representation tomorrow, in the skills they learn and knowledge they pick up, as well as for today, in the cultural give-and-take they engage in.

Athletically, conference attendees showed an eagerness to strive even in their many losses: In a game against the high school team at Princeton 1911 7E, the Chinese students showed an uncanny grasp of baseball rules ("Chinese Play" 35). In the wake of another thrashing by another high school, Chimin Chu Fuh noted that the "enthusiasm and spirit manifested" at Williamstown 1912 8E "revealed a change in the attitude of Chinese students toward physical education and their awakening to the truth of the saying, 'Sound mind in sound body'" (Chimin 255). In the same conference, the tennis tournaments were so popular that matches were played throughout the conference and the doubles tournament was left unresolved (255). The Chinese would finally taste their first conference victory at Andover 1916 12E: 3-1 against a local baseball team (L. T. Chen, "Twelfth" 49). The rhetorical nature of these events cannot be overstated; the sight of Chinese students hitting home runs, running the bases, and keeping up with more professional teams surely jarred with popular conceptions of Chinese as emaciated, queue-wearing opium-smokers.

The presence of these students in town is another rhetorical ploy. As constraining as it is to be guests, being treated as a foreign dignitary affords greater public visibility. The front page of the Friday, September 1, issue of the *Wisconsin State Journal* announced a tour for the 200 students of Madison 1911 2M led by Superintendent of Public Property William L. Essmann, who will show the "splendors of the magnificent new capitol" and escort them to a roof garden and through the mile-long tunnel that connected the state house to the heat and power plant ("Chinese Guests" 1). The visits to the state capitol, the roof garden, and the one-mile tunnel left enough of an impression to be recorded by S. D. Lee, the conference historian of Madison 1911 2M ("Twelfth" 74). When 150 students reconvened in Madison six years later for Madison 1917 8M, the *Wisconsin State Journal* ran through the program, including President C. R. Van Hise's welcome address, the

baseball game with the Brittingham Park team, the Sunday attendance of various churches, and the evening banquet at Association Hall to which many "well known" Madisonites were invited ("200 Chinese" 4). The Madison Chamber of Commerce also arranged a two-hour tour of the city in 40-50 automobiles (T. Lee 55; Ho 8; "Chinese Students Welcomed" 8). In these tours, the larger community was given the chance to encounter a different kind of Chineseness. Many probably became curious enough to attend a function or two and learn more about the identities and ambitions of these students, turning them from objects to gawk at to acquaintances with a relatable backstory. Of particular interest were the street celebrations of the new Republic. At Williamstown 1912 8E, a number of students wore "fancy costumes" that made the brass band parade "exceedingly spectacular." Lines of spectators offered well wishes, and the parade was followed by jubilant speeches that predicted great things for the young nation (Chimin 256-7). Of course, these occasions weren't the only times when a resident might run into a Chinese student. Students would often hold club celebrations at Chinese restaurants, take in the infrequent movie, and even show up at a dance hall, but the sight of a conglomeration of students probably left a bigger impression as it attested to their well-mannered and -manicured presence. The importance of a visible, critical mass can be read in a letter by J. Zohn Zee, who hoped for a general conference in 1915 to coincide with the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco: "The Pacific Coast badly needs the acquaintance of the better class of Chinese. A successful conference will do much to correct certain prejudices of the anti-Chinese" (237). As a general conference would pull students from all three sections and require a large travel subsidy, the plan was turned down (H. Kwong, "General" 261).

The intervening years saw some positive effects of these annual conferences, at least those which can be gleaned from the *Monthly* and local papers. Bazaars have proved to be overwhelmingly popular from year to year, with a commentator for Hartford 1910 6E expressing the need for larger stock of goods ("Sixth" 496). In addition to purchasable embroideries, pictures, and antiquities, another keepsake beginning with Ithaca 1913 9E was the *Conference Daily*, a paper that was issued every morning of the length of the conference that acted as a bulletin, history, and souvenir (W. Y. Chun, "Ithaca" 59). At Madison 1923 14M, in addition to the conference picture, a motion picture reel of the delegates was taken to be distributed as a news item to theaters in the U.S. and China ("Mid-West" 62). Residents not only brought home their memories with these students but objects that would remind them of those times and could be passed on generationally. Many papers expressed surprise and instructed their readers to consider a different frame of mind. A reporter at Hartford 1910 6E chastened:

> The man who said that the Chinese always looked as if he was occupied in solving a mathematical problem, or lost in philosophical contemplation, was way off. He should go out to Trinity some time next week and take a stroll about the campus. There is any thing but lack of animation. Trinity in her palmiest days of students' celebration or insurrection could not hold a candle to the activity and excitement which these Chinese College men have brought here. (qtd. in Y. Tsai, "Conference" 643)

The laundryman or the laborer is often used as the basis of comparison. Reflecting on Madison 1911 2M, the *Wisconsin State Journal* admitted the unfounded sense of superiority that the "average occidental person" might possess and pointed to the brilliance of the 200 students at the

conference. It clarifies the intention of these students, the absorption of western learning for the regeneration of their native land, and their goals of going into politics or education back home. Their brilliance is made even starker considering their lack of knowledge of American customs and their complete Americanization after their schooling. The handful of Chinese girls that have come are “talented musicians and artists” who will soon surpass American girls in achievements (“Chinese Studes” 12). Turning directly to their readers in an issue after the second Madison conference in 1917, the *Journal* stressed the importance and influence of being a good host:

> Their friendship for us and our country is determined not so much by the beautiful scenery of our city as by impressions received from our people … Let not Madison people be second to any in showing their real hospitality. It is not enough to open the doors of the University. Our citizens should meet and mingle with our guests. Let us not turn aside as of little importance invitations to attend the sessions of the conference. (“The Chinese Student Conference” 12)

Many towns seemed to have grasp the significance of these student gatherings. While the early conferences at Amherst might have been received with nary a newspaper article, communities began to anticipate the influx of delegates. At Troy 1919 15E held at the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute,

> stores hoisted Chinese flags … the local newspapers published column after column about the Conference; various civic and religious organizations, like the University Club, the Y. M. C. A., the Y. W. C. A., the Presbyterian Church, the Watervliet Arsenal, invited the delegates to visits and receptions; many families gave dinners

> and afternoon teas. It seemed as if both the Institute and the city experienced the Confucian happiness of receiving friends from a distant country. ("Eastern" 46)

Nevertheless, the students remained dissatisfied with warm feelings and mere friendship. The hope was that clearing away prejudices might lead to a better policies toward and standing for China. For them, the correction of misunderstandings is the fulcrum on which larger societal and foreign policies ought to pivot. Said Y. T. Tsai: "Without affectation, we are bringing home to the minds of the American people that the Chinese as a race is after all not much worse than the best people on this earth. When this idea is infused into the minds of every American, China will be in a position to assert her rights as a nation" ("Conference" 644).

A Limit to Bodily Representation

Not every conference reflection showed a change in heart and mind. To return to an earlier point, there is a risk for the students in setting themselves apart from their laboring brethren, namely that they would "merely" be considered an exception to the rule. It might be fine and dandy to have a more enlightened view of these select group of Chinese, the truth is still out there, taking away our jobs, holing themselves up in ramshackle opium dens, and menacing our children. Reflecting on Princeton 1911 7E, the *Eau Claire Leader* first assured that readers who visited any of the conference sessions would be left in awe. While the American impression of the Chinese comes from laundry operators, "[t]he type of Chinese students that one sees at any of our large universities is as different from this as the ordinary Harvard university boy from the average Polish farm hand just over from Russia's plains" ("Chinese Students in Conference" 4). After explaining the meager upbringing of most Chinese laborers, the reviewer contrasted them from the type that assembled at Princeton, who are "sons of wealthy merchants and are backed by plenty of money":

> Consequently the Chinese student is very much of a dandy. He spends money lavishly on our choicest tailors. He has Epicurean supper parties at elite restaurants where he touches elbows with the dress-coated Smart Set. He is physically as clean a type of manhood as you could find outside a manicurists parlor. Every hair is brushed into its proper setting, the sharp creases of his trousers are direct from the tailor's iron. ("Chinese Students in Conference" 4)

Following this comparison, the writer heaped praise on the students as he launched an oblique critique on American youths. Unlike Americans who prefer their sports, the "not an athlete" Chinese student is hard at work, returning "rich cargoes of American scientific learning" to regenerate his homeland. And while Americans college students are "knock[ing] little balls in the air," their Chinese peers are imbibing knowledge from papers and books. Even though they come from rich families, their diligence measured to that of "ditch diggers." Though the article sets these students apart from the laboring class who "shuffles along the streets in his wide trousers with the silence and furtiveness of the Oriental" ("Chinese Students in Conference" 4), their continued mistreatment and economic conditions often caused consternation in students who worried about a sullied reputation.

It's difficult to ascertain when the Chinese students realized how surfacey a response like the *Eau Claire Leader*'s was and invested in programs toward racial uplift. At Andover 1916 12E, a system of student waiters was deployed in the hope of "abrogating the false pride of deprecating the work of menial labor." Even though the scheme didn't start out popular, more students volunteered each day to a point where the director of the educational mission "expressed great satisfaction in the changed spirit and attitude" (L. T. Chen, "Twelfth" 46). As a conference topic, it

wasn't until Ann Arbor 1920 11M, 15 years after the first conference at Amherst, when the *Monthly* mentioned that the Pittsburgh club will be donating a medal to the Chinese essay contest on the theme: "How Should Chinese Students in America Counsel Overseas Chinese?" (C. Chow 10). The students' relationship with merchants was less ambiguous. A look at the financial report for Evanston 1928 19M reveals their generous contribution to the conference. Only half of the $1,503 in income came from delegate receipts. A sizeable amount came from donations: the Chinese Merchants' Association at Chicago gave $100, the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association donated $25, and $248 was raised from other Chinese merchants in Chicago (P. Yang 58). Through the 1920s, the centralization of China's peasants and workers in its nationalist revolution forced the educated class, which included American-educated students, to choose a side. They could align themselves with Chiang's government, which purged the Communists in 1927, or they could ally themselves with the proletariat in the burgeoning populist movement. Though commended as leaders in the May Fourth Movement of 1919 and as martyrs in the Shanghai massacre of 1925, the lack of a clear student stance increased the perceived gap between themselves, who were seen as part of the bourgeoisie, and the worker and peasant classes.

The diversification of the Chinese student body may have addressed the problem of the public perceiving students as the exception to the rule. An emerging phenomenon in the mid-1920s was the involvement of high school and undergraduate Chinese-Americans, a generation, Sucheng Chan noted, that appeared in this decade. While second-generation Asian Americans were born as early as the 1850s, because of the persistent lack of women from home, their populations remained small until the 1920s (Chan 103). The presence of this new cohort in the annual conferences brought new concerns to conference discussions, something that was not always appreciated.

Breaking from the anti-imperialist conference themes of the midwestern and eastern sections, the Stanford conference of 1925 focused on the "education" of overseas Chinese and "service to the Chinese community in America" (Snark 79). Conference secretary W. P. Hsieh noted that the western delegates focused on social service issues, appointing committees improve ties between students and merchants along the coast. Discussed strategies included public lectures by California and Stanford students, the establishment of libraries and language schools, and the establishment of social contact (W. Hsieh 54). The driving force behind these domestic topics was "a dozen high school girls, mostly native born Cantonese" (54), who were probably not in a position to tackle China-based concerns as they were "not legally Chinese" (55). In the English essay contest, race prejudice was the subject of seven of the eight entries, with Flora Belle Jan, a Chinese-American born in Fresco in 1906, winning the literary prize. Hsieh wrote critically of such a focus, calling it a waste of time compared to "weighty questions concerning restricted tariff, unequal treaties, and educational and industrial problems at home" (55). The youths were also the instigators of the conference's decidedly more social ambiance; everyone rushed onto the dance floor as soon as the ballroom opened, while discussion sessions had to wait a quarter-hour for a decent number to show up (W. Hsieh 56).

What's clear is that women like Flora Belle Jan and other native-born Cantonese were remaking the conference in their own image. Growing up in the U.S., this generation of Chinese had a vastly different set of priorities and concerns. Racial prejudice is a more familiar topic to Jan and others as they had seen and wrestled with so much. As more Chinese Americans entered the Alliance, racial discrimination became a topic that advanced beyond the western conferences. In the English oratorical contest at New Haven 1928 23E, Miss Mary Moy spoke on the difficulties

confronting the second generation of Chinese in America: “Being a second generation Chinese herself, Miss Moy pointed out in a very enlightening manner the handicaps and problems confronting the Chinese students that will have to be solved sooner or later” (T. Hu 63). Boldly bringing one’s own intentions into the gathering represents one further way the new generation remade the annual conference. In a poem reflecting on Evanston 1928 19M, Jan wrote that she didn’t attend to gain “oratorical honors” nor “athletic fame” but to “quest for love” (“Why” 56).

Historical circumstances once again impinged on the character of conference. While U.S.-born Chinese might have been considered an oddity in 1925, their presence and ideas became actively encouraged in the waning years. As the nationalist government in China stabilized their foothold, a centralized leadership meant that the country was finally able to deal with other nations in an officially recognized capacity. (One repeated excuse western powers had for not acquiescing to demands to return territorial and administrative control was that it wasn’t always clear whom these should be returned to.) It became prudent then for China to evaluate and clarify its relationship with other nations, unilaterally abrogating treaties that were deemed unfair and granting trade favors to proven friends. “China’s Foreign Relations” was the declared theme of Baltimore 1929 24E, and, in a circular letter, native-born Chinese students and other international students were explicitly encouraged to join with the “view of possibly aiding our Government to formulate foreign policies” (“Summer” 391). Ostensibly, the purpose of their invitation was to encourage “fraternal association” with China-born peers (391), but it’s less obvious what connection the letter’s authors made between fraternal association and foreign relation policy-making. Perhaps organizers saw that the twin identities of native-born Chinese offered them a unique perspective on foreign policy; after all, the treatment of Chinese in the U.S. was perceived

as part of American policy toward China as a whole (Chapter 3). For example, *Monthly* writers pointed to the incongruence between the Exclusion Act and the Open Door policy as grounds for the nonsensicality of the former. Or perhaps the letter writers saw the need for people of the same race to "stick together" and present a unified front, especially now that a consolidated Nationalist China might be finally strong enough to protect its overseas nationals. As a sweetener, the authors mentioned a number of activities these newcomers could participate in. For athletics, competitions in tennis, basketball, football, track and field, indoor baseball, swimming, and handball were planned. Recreational parlor games included bridge, ping-pong, billiards, and chess. Photography was added to contests in oratory and debate. Finally, if students so wished, they could join excursions to Washington and Annapolis ("Summer" 391). The addition of men and women like Flora Belle Jan recreated the visible Chinese student body. American observers at these later conferences would likely have noted that some Chinese bodies, hailing from Chinatowns, were indistinguishable from American ones in attire, language, and mannerisms.

A Conclusion

Very little information exists on what happened after Baltimore 1929 24E. The final issue of the Chinese Students' Monthly came April 1931, though the 1929-1930 volume had shown a steadily disappearing editorial presence (i.e., issues were essentially a collection of guest articles). The last conferences of the western and midwestern sections appears to have taken place in 1928, their 26th and 19th, respectively, while the Baltimore conference was the 24th and last-recorded one in the east. The fragmentation of the Alliance sometime between the late-1920s and 1931 (Ye 48; Bieler 197) probably led to the cessation of the Monthly. Losing the official organ for the

general body of Chinese students meant losing a publishing venue for the records of those later conferences, even if they were held.

The mission of the annual conferences were the same as the *Monthly*, which was to carry out the threefold objectives of the Alliance: unifying the Chinese students in America, advancing their interests, and striving for the welfare of the country regardless of where the students found themselves. Socially, the longevity and consistent attendance of the conference speaks well to its ability to hold together a student body separated by hundreds of miles. This was undoubtedly helped by its separation into western, midwestern, and eastern sections. Although later iterations emphasized the social dimension, the enthusiasm shown by delegates in response to the Shanghai incident is proof of its capacity to organize when it mattered, and the incorporation of U.S.-born Chinese in social activities points to an evolving inclusivity. The rhetorical significance of the annual conference was refracted through the students' transcalar and transnational self-perception. They hoped that, by being visibly different from the Chinese in the American imagination—through presenting a strong and unified body—they could reshape public perception of China and the Chinese as well as remold U.S.-China relations.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

Posing the question "*How does one create respect under conditions of little or no respect?*" Ralph Cintron's 1997 ethnography, *Angels' Town: Chero Ways, Gang Life, and Rhetorics of the Everyday*, "explores how a variety of people made or displayed themselves and how these makings were influenced by systemic power differences" (Cintron x, emphasis original). In his fieldwork, Cintron encountered a young Latino whose bedroom walls were hung posters of soldiers and cars, an aggregate of "hyperbolic" imagery that Cintron argued countervailed that missing respect (Cintron 112). The studied community's idealizations of "tough and dynamic" professions such as the police point to the same need to feel strong amidst an "outerscape of social conditions that were loosely structured around ethnic, socioeconomic, and power differences" (Cintron 112). Although Cintron's ethnography connects systemic inequalities to everyday rhetoric, a similar rhetorical context holds for the thousands of Chinese university students scattered across Progressive Era America. The students' knowledge-gathering mission grew to include a knowledge-creating component when they encountered, oftentimes firsthand, the negative imagery of the Chinese as propagated and sustained by legal, economic, and social institutions. This dissertation argues that a particular kind of rhetorical framing enabled the students' work: a transcalar *ethos* driven by transnational concerns. Seeing themselves as individual and corporate embodiments of the Chinese state, the students worked to correct that negative imagery and produce a different kind of body through written and spoken discourse, performance, and intentional socialization. Further, through participating in sports, maintaining healthy and active bodies, and running a shipshape organization, they hoped to impute respect to the Chinese nation. There is some evidence that their efforts succeeded, as seen in media responses to their annual

Alliance conferences, but this dissertation is more interested in the act of "making" and "displaying" of bodies itself, to employ Cintron's terms, and, in particular, the transcalar and transnational aspects of that act.

Historicizing these acts of making and displaying reveals several realities of embodied rhetoric at large. Firstly, preexisting depictions of the subaltern's body seem to define and motivate alternative depictions of that body. The representation of the Chinese student body as moral, exemplary, and healthful is not just appropriate for visiting scholars but diametrically opposite of the images they encountered in America. Defining such embodied acts as attempts to portray a more modern China, I think, overlooks the local provenance of these acts and the very specific frustrations experienced by these students. Beyond the Chinese student context, this study reinforces the need to examine the historical context for embodied rhetorics in general. Secondly, the transnational and transcalar nature of these acts demands we continue to move between the literal and the figural and between the individual and the national as we try to make sense of the significance of embodied rhetorics. In recreating the Chinese body, the students took into account not only images circulating in the United States but considered events from home and the latest news reports concerning Sino-American relations. Their wider conception of strength, for example, which included physical and organizational dimensions, presented a wider front to engage negative imagery that also shifted between the literal and the figurative. (For example, the Chinese were seen as deviant in their foodways as well as in the larger sense of general incompatibility and unassimilability.) Thus, it may be fruitful for scholars to examine the motives and inspiration underpinning the creation and generation of alternative bodies. The concept of transcalarity, in particular, may offer a way to understand the various selves deployed by rhetorical agents and the

way they work toward the making of new bodies: self as individual, self as group, self as nation (and vice versa). Much has been written on the reductiveness of considering the individual as representative of a people group (e.g., on tokenism, on model minority), but less perhaps on the intentionality and effectiveness of such a move on the part of the subaltern. Further, exploring the figurative Chinese body opens a door for more research on organization as rhetoric. While many articles have been written on the rhetoric used in organizations (e.g., Tompkins, Barker et al.), organization itself has yet to be seen as a meaning-wielding force. This may allow scholars to examine, for example, the activities of international students as something that is embedded in and responsive to history and not simply activities in themselves.

Limiting the force of these assertions is the relatively homogenous subject studied: the able-bodied, heterosexual Chinese male. The dearth of female subjects has much to do with the status of Chinese males in the era as Chinese females were afforded less social and physical mobility. This context, however, does not efface the presence and contribution of women students actively participating in Chinese student clubs. Even at the height of Chinese student presence in the 1920s, a couple hundred of the 2,000 or so students were female. Women contributors to the *Chinese Students' Monthly* compared themselves to their American counterparts, encouraged other female students toward non-traditional courses of study, argued for political and social equality with the Chinese men, and penned plays that idealized the modern Chinese woman even as they maintained the value of certain traditions. Rosalind Mei-Tsung Li, for example, reveals psychological aspects of being a Chinese woman in America, decrying the "God" of "correctness" that interferes with her everyday life, the prison-like home, and the compulsion to choose majors that prized utility over play and the arts (673). Lest readers believe she desired wholesale change,

Li offers the modern Chinese woman as a better alternative to the prayer-meeting attending American girl or the flapper (675). In her 1924 essay, Dorothy Tsienyi Wong compiles answers to the question, "What do you girls talk about when you are by yourselves?" (“Among” 48). Responses ranged from a discussion of Christian virtue (as they pertain to conversation) to the revelation of the party, men-chasing type of girls vs. the type interested in solving national and international problems. Kuo Sieu Wong’s response hinted at a *de facto* segregation between the sexes: “When the Chinese boys know more of the Chinese girls through the cultivation of sincere friendship and through frank intercourse, the girls’ conversation will not appear such a mystery” (qtd. in “Among” 50). Dorothy Wong’s follow-up questionnaire to 1,200 Chinese students suggests what hindered understanding was not so much a lack of intercourse but a battery of delimiting preconceptions. Asking for opinions on 16 women-centered issues, the 1927 questionnaire indicated that many of the students (mostly men) accepted the economic and intellectual independence of women as well as their social and legal equality even as they doubted women’s ability to exploit those opportunities. (A popular refrain is great “in theory but not in practice.”) (“Women” 21). Wong’s short story and play, published in two later issues that year, reveals a similar ambivalence: In “Happy Day of Yuelin,” a young bride persuades her groom (a “modern” gentleman who had studied abroad) to accept their arranged marriage through her humility and charm. The tell-tale last line following the protagonist’s “victoriou[s]” smile: “For antipathy toward old fashionedness, an enema of old-fashioned ways is a sure cure” (“Happy” 43). In the play “The Great Event in Life,” Wong’s protagonist develops doubts toward an impending marriage and turns her thoughts toward her friend’s employment as a research bacteriologist with the Rockefeller Foundation (“Great” 16).

How might the relative lack of women subjects affect the validity of this study? For one, the Chinese Students' Alliance, with its regional branches and constituent local clubs, was by and large a male-centric entity. With very few women in leadership and editorial positions, it is difficult to say through examining the *Chinese Students' Monthly*, the "official organ" of the Alliance, how women students envisioned and tactically created alternative Chinese bodies. Much could be read between the lines, and this approach could serve as the focus of a deeper study. In the exchange above, however, it's clear that *CSM* functioned as much a tool for interstudent communication and discipline ("What kind of Chinese should we be?") as a didactic text for outsiders. The ambivalence of the male students toward Chinese women's suffrage, to take one example, tugs at the seams of an outward-facing front that purposed to be strong and united. Might "strong" and "united" mean differently for those women students?

On the whole, I hope this dissertation shows that the international student remains a viable research subject in rhetorical studies. The Institute of International Education reported 481,280 were enrolled at American colleges and universities in the 1997-1998 academic year, a number that jumped to 1,094,792 in 2017-2018 ("International Students"). In some doctorate-granting universities, such as New York University and the University of Southern California, internationals make up nearly 30% of their student population ("International Students"). China and India continue to provide the most international students (51% combined in 2017-2018) although there have been rapid increases from Nepal, Brazil, Vietnam, and Nigeria ("International Students"). The Brookings Institution, looking at student visa approvals, found the metro area of Los Angeles-Long Beach-Santa Ana as a top destination for students from Hong Kong, with many attending the University of California at Berkeley, UCLA, and the University of Southern

California. Students from China favored the New York-Northern New Jersey-Long Island area, as well as other metro areas in the northeast, Midwest, and California (Ruiz). Through their analysis, Brookings found that international students "contributed approximately $21.8 billion in tuition and $12.8 billion in other spending—representing a major services export—to these metropolitan economies," and almost half of foreign graduates end up working in the same metropolitan area. In terms of majors, international students disproportionately study science, technology, engineering, mathematics (STEM) fields. Business, management, and marketing are also popular (Ruiz).

Even with over a million students from across the globe studying in the United States, the international student experience is not a unique one. The needs of developing economies and the encouragement of home communities continually "push" students to study abroad, while the draw of academic prestige, expanded career options, and comparative intellectual freedom "pull" students through the borders. As the Brookings study has shown, in their circulation from home to the U.S. and back, international students have become an indispensable part of globalization, meeting needs wherever they go. Research on this ongoing phenomenon began in the late 1990s with the publication of the *Journal of Studies in International Education* (JSI). Hans de Wit, director of the Centre for Higher Education Internationalisation at Universita Cattolica Sacro Cuore in Milan, Italy, stated that the study of international education had not been taken up in an exclusive manner prior to *JSI*, but many journals since then have done so, including *Frontiers* by the Forum on Education Abroad and the *Journal of International Students* ("A Call"). As noted by de Wit, themes in *JSI* range from study abroad and exchange, disciplinary internationalization, and national and institutional policies, to student experiences and their interactions with home. Recently, articles on transnational and global citizenship education have surged (de Wit). Although

the reasons that compel students to come to America to study might have changed over the years, I wonder if the international student body, neither immigrants nor tourists, still influences domestic attitudes toward and knowledge of global regions ("Asia," "Africa," "Middle East") and attitudes toward foreignness more broadly.

I am also interested in the ways being an international affects the psyche and compels participation in social organizations, perhaps to assuage the feeling of displacement, "homesickness," or, to take Homi Bhabha's term, unhomeliness—the inability of the majoritarian culture to "place" the alien, preventing the alien's easy assimilation or accommodation. While the casual observer might perceive being an international student as simply adopting a status, I increasingly find being an international to be a livelihood, a liminal space in which I shimmer in and out of camouflage, network and un-network, and meander toward my vanishing point of a future. We cannot "go home" because there is no home. We cannot stay because there we receive no welcome here. Even in our numbers, we are a shadow people, as thin as a razor blade, poised and precarious.

But in that precariousness, we are still speaking back to the majoritarian culture. In October 2013, the Wisconsin State Journal reported the creation of a YouTube channel by a group of UW Chinese students aiming to explain cultural differences to an American audience (Simmons). With 33,000 subscribers and 55 videos published to date, Channel C seems to function as a modern day *CSM*, with two episodes provocatively titled "Why don't Chinese students speak English?" and "Why Chinese Students Don't Party." Using the framework of embodied rhetoric, we can begin to see efforts like Channel C as counteracting disparaging embodied imagery and substituting alternative conceptions.

On a personal level, this dissertation has been a way for me to understand and work through my bodily anxieties. I remember coming to the States as a mere 115-pound Western Washington University freshman. I remember beginning to lift weights and being proud of my results. Another place I feel aware of my body is at borders or airports when I am waiting in line and fearing for my future. At airports, I get pulled aside by immigration officers. They do not interrogate me *per se*, but I do have to wait for an hour on a wooden bench as they take my passport into the inner rooms and figure out if I have a good reason to be here. "*How does one create respect under conditions of little or no respect?*" I still wonder if passivity might get me further ahead in life in the States, half believing that the tallest blades of grass get cut by the lawnmower. My predecessors have shown an uncommon strength.

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