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Abstract:

For today's reader of Twain, the chronological appearance of "The Treaty with China" in August of 1868 may seem an anomalous entry in his bibliography, published at a time when his growing reputation is still primarily dependent on his ability to elicit a laugh or, for the more sophisticated reader, a knowing snicker. However, issues of race, class, and politics are not absent from his journalistic work prior to August 1868. Nothing in Twain's writing prior to 1868, however, which had limited circulation, would have prepared the contemporary reader for the strong, unequivocal sympathies expressed toward the Chinese immigrants in "The Treaty with China." For this reason alone, a closer analysis of "The Treaty" is warranted, providing prescient evidence regarding the political basis of Twain's oeuvre at this embryonic stage of his career as a public figure. Many Twain scholars, largely through the brilliant analysis in Philip Foner's 1958 work, *Mark Twain: Social Critic*, are already aware of the existence of "The Treaty with China," even if they have never seen the text, but it has otherwise suffered from undeserved neglect, primarily because it has not been widely available to scholars since its 1868 publication, except for those with access to adequate microfilm resource libraries. This lacuna in Twain studies, at least, is now remedied with this reappearance of the entire text of "The Treaty with China."

Mark Twain, “The Treaty with China,” and the Chinese Connection

MARTIN ZEHR

The very first “encounter” Sam Clemens has with Chinese immigrants occurs in unknown circumstances during his first trip to New York, in 1853. While eagerly absorbing the sights, sounds, and exotic experiences of the metropolis, seventeen-year-old Sam writes to his mother in Missouri the following complaint: “Niggers, mulattoes, quadroons, Chinese . . . , to wade through this mass of human vermin, would raise the ire of the most patient person that ever lived.”¹

Aside from the crude racism inherent in this comment made by Clemens upon his first exposure to the world outside his Missouri boyhood, there is also evident a budding talent for exaggeration. Despite the size of New York at the time, there were few inhabitants of Chinese ancestry, certainly an insufficient number to constitute a “mass” by any stretch of the imagination. Available evidence indicates there were so few Chinese in New York at the time that they were considered a novelty, not too different from the prevailing attitudes in 1834 when the first Chinese woman visitor to the United States, Afong Moy, was put on display as part of a cultural exhibit in a New York museum. In 1853, a scant four years after the first wave of Chinese immigrants disembarked in San Francisco following the beginning of the California Gold Rush, it is quite likely the young Sam Clemens would almost have to have made an intentional search in New York to locate a “Chinaman,” or else be the beneficiary of unlikely circumstance.

At this early date in the history of the migration of Chinese across the Pacific to the American continent, the only locales that record a noticeable influx of Chinese were California and, to a lesser extent, the Nevada (Washoe) Territory. There were virtually no Chinese living on the east coast or in any of the other states or US territories. In 1869, in his revised edition of *Beyond the Mississippi*, Albert Richardson, in a discussion of Chinese immigrants, states that “only three hundred of them live in New York, and they make execrable cigars and retail them in the streets.”² It is safe to conclude, therefore, that the adolescent Clemens, unless he had already developed a taste for execrable cigars, had no personal or spectator experience of

the Chinese in his Hannibal childhood, and it is probably reasonable to assume that any representations of Chinese at the time would have been gleaned from tidbits transmitted via California and Nevada newspapers.

In July of 1861, when Sam Clemens, then an unemployed riverboat pilot, heads west with his brother Orion, there is little evidence that his homegrown racism and anti-foreign attitudes had undergone anything approaching a significant transformation. There are no contemporary writings that shed light on any such change, and the later writings of Mark Twain, including his *Autobiography*, dictated in the last decade of his life, make no references in this regard. Indeed, Twain's later writings are generally absent of any blatant attempts to "whitewash" the personal racism of his youth and early adulthood. He makes no attempt to defend the racial attitudes endemic in the Hannibal of his childhood, except insofar as he describes these as normal, unquestioned aspects of the local environment. The world of the young Sam Clemens is one in which, as he later observes, "I had no aversion to slavery. I was not aware that there was anything wrong about it."³ These general attitudes regarding race and slavery are likely replicated in his unquestioned—and unchallenged—attitudes toward "foreigners," which, for the provincial, isolated citizen of the first half of the nineteenth century, would certainly include not only the Chinese but also the recent Irish immigrants.

For today's reader of Twain, the chronological appearance of "The Treaty with China" in August of 1868 may seem an anomalous entry in his bibliography, published at a time when his growing reputation is still primarily dependent on his ability to elicit a laugh or, for the more sophisticated reader, a knowing snicker. However, issues of race, class, and politics are not absent from his journalistic work prior to August 1868. In one notable instance, a piece he wrote for the *Virginia City Territorial Enterprise* in 1866, titled "What Have the Police Been Doing?" Twain satirically praises the ability of the police to "take good care of the city" while as "many offenders of importance go unpunished, . . . [the police] infallibly snaffle every Chinese chicken-thief that attempts to drive his trade."⁴ Here, Twain also castigates the police, in the same sardonic manner, for their brutal treatment of a "wretch" whose crime is stealing a bag of flour. The added description of the "wretch" as someone who cannot vote suggests a likely reference to the Chinese, who at this time could not vote or serve on juries in California or Nevada. These references are evidence of a growing empathy for the Chinese immigrant, an empathy not apparent in earlier pieces written during his short tenure as a police beat reporter for the *San Francisco Morning Call*, in whose pages he generalizes about the Chinese when he states that "they appreciate 'good' and 'bad,' but it is only in reference to business, to finance, to trade, etc. Whatever is successful is good; whatever fails is bad. So they are not conscience-bound."⁵ Nothing in Twain's writing prior to 1868, however, which had limited circulation, would have prepared the contemporary reader for the strong, unequivocal sympathies expressed toward the Chinese immigrants in "The Treaty with China." For this reason alone, a closer analysis of "The Treaty" is warranted,

providing prescient evidence regarding the political basis of Twain's oeuvre at this embryonic stage of his career as a public figure. Many Twain scholars, largely through the brilliant analysis in Philip Foner's 1958 work, *Mark Twain: Social Critic*, are already aware of the existence of "The Treaty with China," even if they have never seen the text, but it has otherwise suffered from undeserved neglect, primarily because it has not been widely available to scholars since its 1868 publication, except for those with access to adequate microfilm resource libraries. This lacuna in Twain studies, at least, is now remedied with this reappearance of the entire text of "The Treaty with China," complete with every word, diacritical mark, and misspelling of the original, which doubtless—let us now imagine—garnered the attention of the average New York businessman on that hot August afternoon:

New York. Tuesday, August 4, 1868. The tired businessman, leather valise in hand and folded newspaper tucked under his arm, grabs the iron rail with his free hand and pulls himself up on to the moving wood platform, his attention focused on the immediate mission of locating a free square foot of space in which to stand or sit for the duration of his uptown trip. After the long day spent in his fourth-floor Wall Street office he is thankful, grateful, for the convenience of the horse-drawn streetcar, a relatively new conveyance in the city, albeit a futile attempt to relieve the congestion that will not be considerably diminished by the advent of the city's subway system three decades in the future. Nevertheless, he can relax momentarily and take some solace in the observation that the heat is bearable, now in the tolerable nineties—hot enough to cause him some discomfort in his standard business attire, but diminished as a threat to his health from its peak a few short weeks ago. Then, in a period of three days, nearly 250 deaths were attributed to the effects of a heat wave in the city that "exceeded anything known for the last quarter of a century." A succession of days with the mercury at one hundred degrees or more had kept the city's Board of Coroners busy "attending the multitude of inquests thrown hourly upon their hands." The New York Times, in its reporting of the epidemic of sun-stroke, had compared the heat unfavorably to that experienced by residents of Panama and Calcutta, opining that "The mercury may rise as high or perhaps a little higher in those places than here, but for still, dead caloric—for oppressive, stifling, overpowering heat, New York, we honestly believe, can beat the world." The Times had further provided the insight to its readers that the effects of the heat had "caused great suffering among the poorer and laboring classes."

Reflecting briefly on the relative balminess of the current weather, the businessman, by now comfortably situated on a rearward-facing bench, unfolds his own newspaper to scan the front page for news of interest, his own stop still many blocks distant in the Harlem section of Manhattan. His paper, the rival New York Tribune, is more to his liking, with its pronounced progressive slant, a champion, under the many years' editorship of Horace Greeley, of such causes as abolitionism and woman's suffrage. During this campaign season, only a few months following the impeachment

and acquittal of the Tennessean Andrew Johnson, General Ulysses Grant, the soldier-savior of the Union, has been nominated by the now-dominant Republican Party to run for the Presidency against New York's ex-governor, Horatio Seymour. The expected accounts of their still-new campaigns are included, of course, along with the usual telegraphed bit synopses of events across the country: gamblers lynched in Sioux City for cheating; a cotton crop in Alabama "cut short one half" by rains and worms; the employment of one thousand men by the Colorado Central Railway; a "drunken frolic and murder" in Georgia; the appointment of Mr. J. Ross Browne as Anson Burlingame's successor as Minister to China, ironically, heading out on the steamship Japan; and the apprehension of two Hartford, Connecticut physicians for "producing an abortion upon Mrs. George E. Botsford, a respectable married woman, . . . which resulted in death." There is a squib announcing the arrival of the Chinese Embassy, with its thirty-one member entourage, headed by former Minister Burlingame, upstate in Albany. The diplomatic party is en route to Auburn, the hometown of Secretary of State William Seward who, in addition to having concluded the purchase of Alaska from the Russian Czar within the last year, was a primary negotiator of the recent treaty between the United States and China. For New Yorkers, the exotic nature of the Embassy's appearance is underscored by a story, appearing three days later in both the Times and Tribune in which, in describing the visit to Secretary Seward, it is reported that

In the course of the evening, music and dancing were introduced for the entertainment of the Chinese members of the Embassy, to whom the mingling of the sexes in society is a novel and heretofore unheard-of-thing. Their amusement at the strange sight of ladies and gentlemen joining in the dance was a marked feature of the evening. Cards were exchanged between the Chinese and their visitors, the former giving their address in the national hieroglyphics, which were of course in great demand.

In our businessman's copy of the Tribune, the far-right column is filled with the first section of an article titled, in large typeface, "The Treaty with China," with the subtitle, "Its Provisions Explained." The article begins with the confident assertion that "Everyone has read the treaty which has just been concluded between the United States and China." A bit presumptuous, perhaps, but the reader is warned of expressions, seemingly vague clauses and legal "surplusage" of the treaty, all which have meaning to be divulged by the amiable correspondent, who assures us, regarding the treaty, that "Apart from its grave importance, the subject is really as entertaining as any I know of."

With that introduction, each of the eight separate treaty articles is printed with an accompanying discussion of its merits and necessity, in readily accessible language and a sardonic turn of phrase at once amusing and critical. Explaining the need for the Chinese government to maintain discretion within its "dominions" for the granting of privileges not covered by the treaty, the writer asserts the presence in China of a

"tyrannical class" of foreigners who "know what is best for them, better than they do themselves, and therefore it would be but a Christian kindness to take them by the throat and compel them to see their real interests as the enlightened foreigners see them." This is not, despite its frontpage placement, a news story in the tradition of Sgt. Friday's "Just the facts, ma'am" reportage. Our businessman, now intrigued by the unexpected tone, continues to read on, absorbing the combination of delicious wit and didactic exercise in this thinly disguised advocacy piece. The writer explicates as he exults, providing a truncated, roughly factual history of the travails inflicted on the Chinese by foreigners in China and Americans in California. He has witnessed the latter persecutions firsthand and confidently assures the reader that the treaty will set matters right as it afflicts the persecutors:

think of the howl that will go up from the cooks, the railroad graders, and the cobble-stone artists of California, when they read it. They can never beat and bang and set the dogs on Chinamen any more. These pastimes are lost to them forever.

The writer catalogs the insults and humiliations he has seen inflicted on the Chinese in an unrelenting air of satisfaction and vindication derived from his own anger, honest and tempered by a disarming sarcasm that invites a full reading. For our businessman, however, this will have to wait, the ride homeward is, alas, too short for this accomplishment. The article stretches over five pages and, in excess of seven thousand words, cannot be completed before his disembarkment in the late afternoon. He flips the pages to the end, where he notes the nom-de-plume of the writer who has garnered his attention for countless city blocks: Mark Twain.

Our fictional 1868 reader, like his twenty-first-century counterpart, may well have experienced a sense of surprise at the unmasking, as it were, of the identity of the author of "The Treaty with China." For both, Twain's wit and sardonic perspective come as no surprise, the creative product of this distinctly American voice. The contemporary Twain scholar, of course, recognizes Twain's efforts, fictional and otherwise, in service of serious national concerns, as an important, integral aspect of his larger-than-life iconic status. For the New York businessman, however, to the extent he knows of Mark Twain, not necessarily a foregone conclusion in 1868, it is as a humorist, perhaps in a very broad sense of the term, but a humorist nonetheless, appearing in print and on the lecture platform in the practice of his craft, perhaps considered the equal of contemporaries Artemus Ward, Petroleum V. Nasby, Josh Billings, and Orpheus C. Kerr. If the businessman is a well-rounded, "littery" person, he may have some recollection of Twain's Cooper Union lecture on the subject of the Sandwich Islands, delivered over a year and a half prior to publication of "The Treaty." Perhaps he has even read the popular story of the "Jumping Frog," which appeared in the *New York Saturday Press* nearly three years

earlier. It is probably a good bet that he has never seen a copy of Twain's first book, *The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County and Other Sketches*, published in New York only one year previous, but selling so few copies that it will, when the plates are finally destroyed three years after its initial publication, lose money for its author. Twain's first appearance in a "serious" vein in the East, the "Forty Three Days in an Open Boat," chronicling the accounts of survivors of the *Hornet* ship disaster, in the December 1866 issue of *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, is unlikely to have entered the reader's consciousness, especially with its erroneous attribution of authorship to "Mark Swain." But, for the loyal *Tribune* reader, Twain's presence in our businessman's midst has not gone unnoticed. Six letters on the voyage of the steamship *Quaker City* to the Old World were published in the *Tribune* in 1867, just as they were on the west coast for the source of their subsidy, the *Alta California* of San Francisco. Their entertaining and jaundiced views of Old World pretensions and New World sightseers were a more-than-welcome nostrum to a populace with a continuing need to look outward in an attempt to salve the physical and psychological devastation of four years of Civil War and its aftermath. Twain also had served a short stint as the *Tribune's* Washington correspondent from November of 1867 to March 1868, during which time he contributed a number of short, humorous pieces satirizing the capitol's political culture. All of the reader's exposure to Twain through the *Tribune*, to this point, however, would have consisted of material with a decided emphasis on entertainment. Twain's introductory description of the subject matter as "entertaining" to the contrary, "The Treaty with China" is unmistakably intended for more serious consideration. In the next few days, the *Tribune* prints shorter, follow-up news stories documenting the progress of the Chinese delegation from Auburn to Buffalo and on to Niagara Falls. The manner of these pieces underscores the diplomatic importance of the Embassy's work, the efforts of local public officials to provide a respectful reception, and the curiosity aroused in the local public by the appearance of these exotic foreigners.

From the 1860s onward, Twain exhibits an interest in the plight of the Chinese, both as immigrants to the United States following the California Gold Rush, and as victims of the imperialist western democracies flexing their military muscle in the coastal provinces of China during the latter half of the nineteenth century. This interest, conveyed in a print medium primarily through a few short stories and sketches and in newspaper and journal articles scattered over a period of four decades dating from his apprenticeship in Nevada and California, may have escaped the attention of Twain scholars, as has "The Treaty with China." When Twain readers are aware of the Chinese connection, the most frequently cited examples are the short piece "Disgraceful Persecution of a Boy" or *Ah Sin*, the failed theatrical collaboration with Bret Harte, his erstwhile mentor and colleague. *Ah Sin* also demonstrates that Twain's literary and journalistic trajectories, with respect to racial and ethnic topics, are not straight lines, although, with the advantage of more than a century of hindsight, it is certainly not difficult to describe him as enlightened in this

regard.⁶

The conclusion that Twain's observations of the Chinese, direct and otherwise, influenced his writings, especially in terms of his acute awareness of the roles of race, class, and ethnicity in his characters, is inescapable. One of the less controversial statements one can make regarding his personal and literary evolution is that a change did in fact take place in his personal attitudes with respect to each of these factors, even acknowledging, at this late date, that Twain is still the subject of occasional charges of racism. A review of his writings on the Chinese reveals the importance of his observations in this regard, even though they rarely constitute a prominent role in his work. Nevertheless, from the time of his first focused writings on the Chinese, during his journalistic apprenticeships in the West, it is apparent that Twain is closely noting and, unlike many of his contemporaries, choosing not to ignore the fate of these immigrants.

The Sam Clemens who freely uses the epithet "nigger" with demeaning intent in his youth and classifies the Chinese as "vermin," unlike many of his countrymen, undergoes transformation sufficient to render a convincing portrait of Jim as most deserving of our admiration in *Huckleberry Finn*, while expressing solidarity with the Boxers for their attempts to secure Chinese self-determination in their own country. In both instances, Twain's transformation is a product of a developing empathy that is, in turn, a product of his often-demonstrated ability to successfully adopt the perspective of the other in his writings.⁷ This ability is augmented by an often-seen rooting for the downtrodden or underdog, a feature of his writings since the publication of his very first literary effort outside Hannibal, "The Dandy Frightening the Squatter," in an 1853 edition of the eastern humor magazine, *The Carpet-Bag*. It is not much of a stretch to replace, in our imagination, the lower-class squatter who upends the arrogant and insipid intruder, shoving him into the Mississippi's waters, with the oppressed Boxer who wants nothing more than to cast the invading imperialists into the Pacific. Indeed, the popularity of Twain's writings in China during the last century is at least partially attributable to an appreciation of his pro-Chinese sympathies, an appreciation largely neglected by American readers.⁸

As noted previously, the study of Twain's writing regarding the Chinese also yields evidence of a stubborn independence of thought, which did not wither in response to his firing by the editors of the *San Francisco Call* in the 1860s or the criticism of American missionaries four decades later. During Twain's lifetime, it is doubtful that his attitudes toward the Chinese ever represented anything more than a distinctly minority opinion in the United States, where the fears of "Yellow Peril" or the protectionist proclivities of organized labor were continually leveraged by clever politicians into support for the official exclusionary policies against Chinese immigration beginning in 1882. Thus, while Twain's adoption of liberal attitudes toward the efforts of black citizenry to climb the economic and political ladders in the United States and his adult stance regarding women's suffrage were shared by a large, if not majority, constituency, his defense of the Chinese, whether as

immigrants or nationalists, is conspicuous by its lack of popular support during his lifetime. Twain's willingness to take the risks inherent in expressing his support for these unpopular causes, indeed, becoming a public critic of his country's imperialist policies during the McKinley and Roosevelt presidencies, is evidence of both the strength of his core popularity and his tenacious striving to lash out at accepted institutional thinking in a manner that mirrors his adoption of the white cotton suits he flaunted. The travels of the Vandal, from a personal as well as geographic standpoint, had, in the end, provided an open-minded thinker like Sam Clemens with a sufficient variety of perspectives with which to view his world, such that he was finally forced to jettison the provincial world-view implanted in his Hannibal childhood. Thus, while his connections, in many important respects, with his Missouri roots were loosened, even broken, his ties to humanity in a broad sense became strengthened in the course of time and his life experience.

It is also apparent that Twain's writing is influenced in a stylistic sense in conjunction with his experience of the Chinese. Almost from the beginning, Twain's writing about the Chinese is permeated with an intentional editorial flavor, not unlike any of his early western journalism, i.e., never strictly journalistic. During this same period, his predilection to sarcasm, present from his Hannibal youth, is reinforced by its reception from an entertained readership, of course, but, in the case of his writings regarding the Chinese, there is another factor in play: the desire to convey a message that would undoubtedly never see print if presented in a straightforward manner. If Twain was not adept in the ability to mix humor, irony, and sarcasm with a pointed observation prior to his western apprenticeship, he certainly is a master by the time he crosses the isthmus and reaches New York, where he employs this balanced repertoire to his, and our, advantage in *The Innocents Abroad*, his breakthrough work. Not long after this overwhelming success, he uses a Chinese subject as the vehicle for another form of experimentation, creating a character named "Ah Song Hi" as the first-person narrator of a series of letters, a device freely adapted from the work a century earlier of Oliver Goldsmith. This perspective, it should be noted, predates its use in the person of Huck Finn by fifteen years. Even his early attempts to perpetrate a bit of what he might have believed were harmless hoaxes, in two separate instances in his Nevada writings, are mirrored in an early "Chinese" sketch titled "John Chinaman in New York." Finally, during the last two decades of his life, Twain's bolder, more strident anti-imperialist writings, now unfettered by the burden of building a reputation, are affected, in terms of both content and style, by his indignation at the predations of the "civilized" powers on the sovereignty of China.

Twain's experience with and writings about the Chinese certainly deserve more scholarly attention as the thread of Twain's interest in the Chinese runs through the entire length of his writing career. Indeed, the available evidence indicates that Twain at one time had formed the intention to visit China, his plan thwarted by the career-making opportunity to travel with the innocents across another ocean on the

steamer *Quaker City*.⁹

The quality of empathy Twain frequently demonstrates in his writings is amply exhibited in his fiction and nonfiction references to the Chinese, just as it is for members of other groups, even those with whom he has little in the way of close contact or opportunity for observation. It is my hope and intention that the reader will conclude, through the evidence and discussion presented herein, that Twain's particularly acute sense of the perspective of the "other," a pervasive element in his literary and journalistic efforts, is the impetus, with a few conspicuous exceptions, for his Chinese writings. The close reader should also encounter ample evidence, throughout Twain's adult life, of his own particular "Celestial" connection.

Finally, a discussion of Twain's "Chinese" connection would be incomplete without mention of Anson Burlingame, at whose urging and with whose undoubted collaboration "The Treaty with China" was written. Burlingame, in 1868 head of the Chinese Embassy mission to the United States advocating the passage and acceptance of the treaty, is an important figure in Twain's history and development in at least two important respects. First, during their initial meeting, in 1866, while Twain was a correspondent in the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii) for the *Sacramento Union*, Burlingame, then the American minister to China, gave Twain the opportunity to write an account of the clipper ship *Hornet* disaster, which was the basis for Twain's *Harper's* article on the subject. Burlingame and Twain became friends during these contacts and, according to Twain's recollection, meeting Anson Burlingame was one of the important "turning points" of his life. Burlingame served as a mentor of sorts for the then-peripatetic writer, encouraging him to seek the "refinement of association" with individuals of intellect and character. Burlingame's association, by virtue of his position and ambassadorial activities, also undoubtedly reinforced and magnified Twain's observation-based interests in the Chinese. A measure of Burlingame's fervent advocacy of improved relations between the US and China can be seen in a speech he gave in New York, on June 23, 1868, prior to adoption of the treaty, a speech which was certainly read by Twain. In an impassioned, heartfelt plea to Americans for fair treatment of China, Burlingame asserted that "I desire that the autonomy of China may be preserved; that her independence may be maintained; that she may have equality, and that she may dispense equal privileges to all the nations."¹⁰ Every one of these sentiments is restated in Twain's "The Treaty with China," printed six weeks subsequent to Burlingame's New York speech and written within days of Twain's return to New York from San Francisco on July 29. Certainly, Twain's subsequent writings on the Chinese are the product of his own convictions, but these are, without doubt, reinforced by his admiration for and friendship with Burlingame. Twain may have even "borrowed" Burlingame's words, as seen in an excerpt from the same speech, during which Burlingame condemns critics of the Chinese who would "undertake to say that these people have no rights which we are bound to respect" (675). The phrase, of course, is a clear reference to the text of Chief Justice Taney's infamous *Dred Scott* decision of 1856, in which the Supreme

Court determined that African Americans had no rights that “the white man was bound to respect.”¹¹ Twain’s later parroting of this language, with a sardonic twist, is contained in his condemnation of the treatment of Chinese immigrants at the hands of the San Francisco police, “Disgraceful Persecution of a Boy.” Burlingame died in St. Petersburg, Russia, during a diplomatic mission, in 1870, at the age of forty-nine. Mark Twain, then serving his brief stint as an editor-owner of the *Buffalo Express*, in his eulogy of his friend, stated that “he had outgrown the narrow citizenship of a state, and become a citizen of the world; and his charity was large enough and his great heart warm enough to feel for all its races and to labor for them.”¹² The sentiment may have been an expression of Twain’s own aspirations, an acknowledgment of the abandonment of his own adolescent “vermin” attitudes.

The New York businessman, had he at last finished reading “The Treaty with China” on that hot August day, likely would not have been surprised with the attention and concern expressed by Twain toward the Chinese during the next forty years. With the conspicuous exception of *Ah Sin*, the nature, strength, and direction of Twain’s sympathies for the plight of the Chinese are entirely predictable from a reading of his 1868 editorial *qua* news story. Working backward from our twenty-first-century vantage point, perhaps we can also become convinced of the strength and importance of Twain’s Chinese connection.

Notes

¹ Mark Twain, letter to Jane Lampton Clemens, August 31, 1853, in *Mark Twain’s Letters, Volume 1: 1853–1866*, ed. Edgar Marquess Branch, Michael B. Frank, and Kenneth M. Sanderson (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 10.

² Albert D. Richardson, *Beyond the Mississippi: From the Great River to the Great Ocean* (Hartford, CT: American Publishing Co., 1869), 593.

³ Mark Twain, *Mark Twain’s Autobiography, Vol. 1* (New York: Harper, 1924), 101.

⁴ Mark Twain, “What Have the Police Been Doing?” *Virginia City (NV) Territorial Enterprise*, n.d., reprinted in *Golden Era*, January 21, 1866. The original text has been reprinted in Franklin Walker, ed., *The Washoe Giant in San Francisco: Being Heretofore Uncollected Sketches by Mark Twain* (San Francisco: George Fields, 1938), 97. It should be noted that, although the Chinese are specifically mentioned in the cited quotation from this piece, this is the only specific mention of the Chinese in this writing, which is a general satirical description of the activities of “our virtuous police force.” “What Have the Police Been Doing?” does, however, presage Twain’s later sketch, “Disgraceful Persecution of a Boy,” in which police collaboration in the stoning of a Chinese boy is the subject of a satire in which treatment of the Chinese is implicitly compared with treatment of African Americans. See, for example, Shelley Fisher Fishkin, “Mark Twain and Race,” in *A Historical Guide to Mark Twain*, ed. Shelley Fisher Fishkin (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 136; and Bernard Taper, introduction to *Mark Twain’s San Francisco*, ed. Bernard Taper (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1963), xx.

⁵ Edgar Marquess Branch, ed., *Clemens of the "Call": Mark Twain in San Francisco* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), 70. This volume contains a number of short pieces written by Mark Twain during his brief tenure as a police beat reporter for the *San Francisco Morning Call* in 1864. Included are twelve short pieces regarding the Chinese, none of them particularly sympathetic to Chinese immigrants and, as Branch states in his prefatory remarks, "Their comedy draws upon racial stereotypes and crudities, understandable in the context of that day if not entirely excusable" (69).

⁶ In a brief interview I was fortunate to have with the late Iris Chang (April 8, 2004), author of *The Chinese in America: A Narrative History* (New York: Viking, 2003), she indicated her awareness of the Bret Harte–Mark Twain collaboration, *Ah Sin*, and Twain's generally favorable description of the Chinese immigrants from *Roughing It*, both mentioned in her book, and also cited her reading of "Disgraceful Persecution of a Boy." She was generally unaware, however, of Twain's other Chinese writings or his involvement in the Yung Wing matter, which, in all fairness, were beyond the scope and intention of her comprehensive and well-researched history. In another recent work with an exclusive focus on the personal and literary relationship between Samuel Clemens and Ulysses Grant, there is not a single mention or reference to the Yung Wing matter, despite the fact that Clemens and Grant were two of the key players in this incident (along with Twain's close friend, the Reverend Joe Twichell), which resulted in the rescission of the Viceroy of China's decision to close the Chinese Educational Mission in Hartford, Connecticut. The Yung Wing matter provides incontrovertible evidence of Twain's empathy toward the Chinese in America and the ex-President's unhesitating willingness to exert his influence at the behest of his friend and future publisher, Samuel Clemens. It is also notable that Twain's action in the Yung Wing matter is contemporaneous with the enactment of the Chinese Exclusion Act, by which Chinese immigration to the United States was virtually ended, not to be permitted again until the Second World War. These examples illustrate the present difficulty of obtaining an adequate account of Twain's strongly held feelings toward the Chinese in his adult years.

⁷ See Martin Zehr, "The Vision of the Other in Mark Twain's 'War Prayer,'" in "New Perspectives on 'The War Prayer': An International Forum," ed. Shelley Fisher Fishkin and Takayuki Tatsumi, special issue, *Mark Twain Studies* 2 (2006): 87–91.

⁸ See, for example, Xilao Li, "The Adventures of Mark Twain in China: Translation and Appreciation of More than a Century," *Mark Twain Annual* 6, no. 1 (2008): 65–76; and Lao She, "Mark Twain: Exposer of the Dollar Empire" (1960), trans. Zhao Yuming and Sui Gang, first published in English by J. R. LeMaster in the *U.S.-China Review* 19, no. 3 (1995), and reprinted in *The Mark Twain Anthology: Great Writers on His Life and Work*, ed. Shelley Fisher Fishkin (New York: Library of America, 2010), 283–88.

⁹ It can also be confidently asserted that, over a century before contemporary interest in the interior designer's deference to the concept of Feng Shui, Twain had at least a passing familiarity with what was then referred to as the "Chinese superstition."

¹⁰ The entire text of Anson Burlingame's speech is reprinted in William Speer, *The Oldest and the Newest Empire: China and the United States* (Hartford: S. S. Scranton, 1870), 673–78. This work also contains the full text of the treaty's provisions.

¹¹ *Dred Scott v. Sandford*, 60 U.S. (19 How.) 393 (1856), 407. Note that, while the appellee's name in this famous case is "Sanford," a clerk's misspelling at the time has been subsequently retained in the official legal citation. Also, the opinion was published in December 1856, a date retained in the official citation, despite the commonly published reference to 1857, the year in which the Court's decision became widely known.

¹² Mark Twain, "Anson Burlingame," *Buffalo Express*, February 25, 1870, reprinted in Joseph B. McCullough and Janice McIntire-Strasburg, eds., *Mark Twain at the Buffalo Express: Articles and Sketches by America's Favorite Humorist* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1999), 153.