ABSTRACT

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Borderspaces in Text and Image:
Representing Canada in Chinese Textual Culture (1868-1938)

This dissertation examines the concept of “borderspaces” as productive sites of investigation. Borders are understood as lived spaces—hence, “borderspaces”—inhabited by people and languages. These borderspaces point to intimate connections between the nations of Canada and China that multiply the ways the relationship between the two nations can be imagined beyond the figure of the diasporic immigrant. Most investigations in Sino-Canadian studies emphasize the immigrant community but overlook the lived and mediated experiences of other Chinese individuals who also visited and/or wrote about Canada for Chinese-reading audiences in China at this time. Using Chinese-language travel writings and fiction about Canada, this dissertation considers the discursive linkages between Canada and China produced by Chinese diplomats, officials, overseas students, and translators who represented Canada for audiences in China during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries when travel to Canada was becoming increasingly restrictive for ethnic Chinese.

Examining these travel writings and fiction through the lens of minor transnationalism (Lionnet and Shih), which emphasizes the experiences of individuals who grappled with colonial, imperial, and global dominance and control, this dissertation draws attention to minor writings that critique hegemonic and homogenizing narratives of global history. As such, the notion of borderspaces highlights the uneven experiences of ethnic Chinese in North America while simultaneously showcasing the agency of Chinese writers and
translators in dealing with issues of representation they confronted as Chinese individuals in the context of North American discrimination.

This dissertation explores four different concepts of borderspaces that produce dissonance against major singular narratives of Chinese oppression in North America. It examines how discriminatory laws, imperial desires, mass migrations, and power imbalances affected Chinese travellers and writers as well as how their writings offer a complicated critique and commentary of China’s historical position in the world.

This research thus provides a more nuanced picture of the relationship between Canada and China in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries by demonstrating that first, multiple vectors (both physical and intangible) connect two nations and that second, these spaces are significant to the project of critical global history.
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1 Introduction

Borderspaces in Text and Image: Representing Canada in Chinese Textual Culture (1868-1938)

1.1 Introduction

Recently, there has been a growing interest in bringing historically and conceptually related fields of Asian North American Studies and Asian Studies together. Scholars have sought to illuminate how trans-regional subjects and those who stayed “at home” in Asia were and still are affected by the multi-directional movement of people, ideas, and goods. These studies have uncovered the intricate and interconnected relationships between imperial desires, colonial projects, and mass migration. My dissertation aims to add to this body of knowledge through a study of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Chinese travel writings and fiction on Canada. My goal is to multiply the sites in which we can understand Sino-North American relations beyond the coolie figure.¹ I join Henry Yu, Lisa Rose Mar, Guoqi Xu, Steven G. Yao, and others in the attempt to share new narratives that speak to the misunderstandings of oppression and coercion of ethnic Chinese subjects in North America. These scholars all work to provide agency to ethnic Chinese subjects – whether they are intellectuals, community leaders, brokers, teachers, or poets – and point to the nuances of privilege and knowledge amongst those recognized as ethnically “Chinese.” Through my study, I will introduce the concept of “borderspaces” as a productive site of investigation. Borderspaces, I argue, point to intimate connections

¹ The figure of the coolie is a common representation of the Chinese migrant labourer of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.
between the nations of Canada and China that complicate and multiply our understanding of Sino-Canadian relations. In tracing how Chinese diplomats, officials, students, and translators of the nineteenth and twentieth century navigated various borderspaces, I aim to reveal other connections between China and Canada and to explore how Chinese subjects were active agents in constructing Canada for their peers in China through textual culture.

In *Minor Transnationalism* (2005), Françoise Lionnet and Shu-mei Shih critique universalizing and homogenizing understandings of literature, contrasting works in a ‘major’ key (grand narratives of history and nationalism) to ‘minor’ transnational works in which “traumas of colonial, imperial, and global hegemonies as well as the affective dimensions of transcolonial solidarities continue to work themselves out” (21). Drawing attention to the problem of the uneven migration of ideas across local and global spaces, they argue that these ‘minor’ writings produce a dissonance with ‘major’ grand celebratory narratives. In my work, I aim to show how the concept of borderspaces is useful in understanding that dissonance because borderspaces exist in an introspective ‘minor’ tone that is critical of hegemonic global history. I explore the relations between China and Canada in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as a case of minor transnationalism. First, through the various manifestations of borderspaces where the Chinese minor experience contrasts those of other races and ethnicities in a North American context, the disadvantageous position of the Qing empire and later the Republican state of China are discussed. The discriminatory treatment received by ethnic Chinese abroad found in their own Chinese-language writings speak back to the North American authorities who placed exclusionary laws upon them in the same century. The
distinct kinds of grappling that Chinese writers faced while representing Canada, including the foreign conquest of their native land, the change in governing systems, and the shift from a traditional to vernacular form of written expression at the turn of the century, make their writings important to investigate within the framework of minor transnationalism.

Second, I extend this notion of minor transnationalism to understand the unevenness within one homogenized racial group. While Lionnet and Shih speak of productivity in understanding minor cultures vis-à-vis one another, I believe the idea of the minor can be a productive lens to study a group of individuals with distinct outlooks, belonging to different classes, and even speaking different dialects, whom are often singularly categorized by a race. In my work, I will show the distinctions amongst racially Chinese bodies in Canada: for example, the Southern Chinese labourers were different from the Northern Qing diplomats – their purposes for travel, their class, their dialects are all different. However, both groups were and are perceived as belonging to the same empire and race because they share a written language and an imagined cultural history. I highlight the different minor tones found in Chinese-language writings about Canada in order to further this idea of minor transnationalism and consequently bring out nuanced experiences within a group of individuals seen as racially and ethnically homogeneous. In other words, their writings carry minor tones that cause dissonance with the homogenizing major historical narrative of Chinese oppression under Canadian laws.

My primary sources are Chinese-language travel writings and fiction about Canada published in China. Using these accounts, I will reveal the different tones of Chinese experiences of Canada. Some of these Chinese language accounts tell of the early contact between Chinese observers and Canada. These sources grant us a fresh perspective on
Sino-North American relations, since many Chinese immigrants and labourers in North America were given limited narrative agency. Many Chinese immigrants and labourers composed on the walls of the prison on Angel Island,\(^2\) wrote in *qiaokan* magazines,\(^3\) or sent personal letters home. However, their reading audiences were limited at the time to those who were imprisoned, those who read the region-specific publications, and their own families. As such, turning to Chinese visitors who were literate and able to publish their observations in their own language for a wider reading population in China offers new insights on cross-ethnic encounters and other minor experiences. These writers had the opportunity to objectify the North American people, their land, and their society, which is a suitable counterpart to Euro-American visitors in China who left a plethora of observations on Chinese people and Chinese society during the same era. Moreover, the texts tell of the imagined Canada found in published Chinese translations works that help us to contemplate how textual culture linked the two nations and shaped the understanding of Canada for Chinese-reading audiences who never travelled abroad. It is not only the ways in which Chinese travellers made observations about North America that are worthy of examination, but also the ways in which Chinese translators (who may never have seen North America for themselves) produced Canada for their audiences that make evident the

\(^2\) See Steven G. Yao’s work on Angel Island poetry and for a translated version of the poems etched onto the prison walls in *Foreign Accents: Chinese American Verse from Exclusion to Postethnicity* (2010), pp 63-94.

\(^3\) Please see Madeline Hsu’s research on the publications circulated in Southern China that created transnational ties between America and China of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in *Dreaming of Gold, Dreaming of Home: Transnationalism and Migration between the United States and South China, 1882-1943* (2000).
diverse ways through which Canada was connected to China in this era beyond the immigrant experience and historical narratives of exclusion.

Using the concept of borderspace highlights the minor tones of Chinese experiences in Canada and takes into account the “intimacies” of colonial and imperial empires, as Lisa Lowe argues. Using the concept of borderspace highlights the minor tones of Chinese experiences in Canada and takes into account the “intimacies” of colonial and imperial empires, as Lisa Lowe argues. Lowe evaluates the flaws in the ways we see the colonial archive and its problematic divorce from other archives of knowledge that are closely related and affected by narratives of liberalism, colonialism, slavery, and imperialism. Reading these particular records of travel experiences, rather than turning to colonial historical records, to understand Chinese minor experiences in Canada is significant to the process of decolonizing knowledge. Colonial archives, often filled with charts and data, do not leave room to understand what the lived experience was for the individuals. By studying an archive less visited but nonetheless significant, I read these historical documents as literary production. I bolster how active Chinese agents authored texts that would inform a generation of Chinese readers who could not physically make the journey abroad themselves. Certainly Chinese writers (travellers and translators) wrestled with imperial violence and conflict, but it is the way in which they creatively expressed their ideas about the world that demonstrate their empowerment. I believe the concept of borderspace emphasizes the creativity of Chinese diplomats, officials, students, and translators in their critical and didactic construction of the archive of knowledge on Canada during their time.

4 In her book she argues for the intimacies between liberalism, colonialism, slavery, and imperialism. Please see Lisa Lowe’s The Intimacies of Four Continents (Durham: Duke UP, 2015).
1.2 Defining Borderspace and Contact Zone

The concept of borderspaces is different from Mary Louise Pratt’s idea of the contact zone, which describes the coercion, inequality, and conflict when two normally geographically and historically separate groups of peoples meet (8). Pratt’s seminal work investigates how European travel writing created an imperial vision of the world for its domestic European reading subject. Importantly through the contact zone, she highlights the ongoing relations and asymmetrical relations of power that still exist in today’s world (34). While borderspaces and contact zones discuss the meeting of geographically and historically separate groups of people, borderspaces are not the same as contact zones because it deals with encounters that are brief – not ongoing like in the contact zone, but nonetheless significant. Once a border is crossed, whether it is a physical border or an epistemological one, it cannot be uncrossed or reversed even if one attempts to go back the way one came.

For nineteenth-century and twentieth-century Chinese visitors and writers, a physical border-crossing from one empire to another occurred in travelling and a transition from seeing one’s “home” from being an empire to being one of many nations occurred in history. Once this shift from one place to another or from one governing system to another was registered and traversed, knowledge of the world could not naturally be reversed. There were also other epistemological border-crossings in their era. They include the contradictions between using traditional literary practices of composition (integral to their education) and technological methods of representation (which was relatively new and unfamiliar) to portray the world. As soon as a writer is made aware of a new knowledge paradigm or method of representation, they must make a decision as to how to respond to
the new paradigms and methods; they cannot simply ignore the competing paradigms and methods. Moreover, epistemological borders can also describe the divide between writing regimes where traditional ways of writing were challenged by the “modern” vernacular conception of a national language. In China, although the Sinitic characters of the language may not have changed, new definitions and grammatical patterns were introduced in modern vernacular form – distinct from former ways of learned expression. In a similar vein, epistemological borders are also crossed in the process of linguistic translation where words are borrowed and created from other languages to form new meanings in the host language. In these ways, epistemological borders are often crossed and writers cannot so effortlessly return to former modes of representation. Thus they must forge new methods to grapple with knowledge and representation. To put it another way, writing that crosses the borders of one’s knowledge can be caused by travel, politics, religion, acts of writing or translation and once one learns of something beyond one’s own horizon, this awareness cannot be so easily erased and can be reflected in one’s writings. Ultimately, writing seen through the lens of borderspace crosses multiple kinds of borders that make these transitions and movements in knowledge more evident and visible. Borderspace highlights those moments when bridges and chasms become apparent in knowledge. Chinese travel writing especially shows that these Chinese travellers did not necessarily have the colonizing power that European travellers held in the world, but they had their own unique set of problems to handle and continued to produce knowledge amongst these multiple paradigm shifts of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.  

5 One illustration of such knowledge production is the Chinese understanding of Canada according to cartographic representations. These maps were based on second-hand knowledge and often copied from
One way to imagine the concept of borderspaces is against cartographic practices. While cartographic representations would place China and Canada as separate landmasses, the idea of borderspaces magnifies their connection. While cartography imagines borders as immaterial lines dividing geographical areas, I understand borders as lived spaces—hence, former sources; at the time, they did not hold the same imperial uses as others who used maps to exert cultural dominance and thus reflect a unique wrestling with foreign knowledge. Perhaps based on a sixteenth-century map where Canada was situated in the middle of North America, when composing his Kunyu wanguo quantu (坤輿萬國全圖) [Map of the Myriad Countries of the World] in 1602, Jesuit missionary Matteo Ricci (1552-1610) pinned Canada in the same central location as Country of Canada (jianada guo 加拿大國 amongst other “countries.” In a 1849 map produced by Qing geographer Xu Jiyu’s 徐繼畬 (1795-1873) entitled Yinhuan zhilve (瀛寰志略) [Short Survey of the Maritime Circuits] (1849), Canada was simply labeled an British territory; its physical area was more recognizable as a land of its own, connected to present-day America. But even Xu’s map was based on another famous work: Wei Yuan’s 魏源 (1794-1857) Haiguo tuzhi (海國圖志) [Illustrated Treatise on the Maritime Kingdoms] (1844).\(^5\) Having read Xu’s work based on Wei’s writings, Chinese envoy Fu Yunlong 傅雲龍 (1840-1901) then produced a “new” Mercator’s map of Canada and published it within his accounts of Canada in the nineteenth century. On this map, Canada was depicted with much more detail; lakes properly labeled such as Hudson’s Bay (hadesong wan 哈德送灣); provinces such as Ontario and Quebec being visible; major waterways are labeled, along with Columbia River (possibly by its tributary river Kelowna, kelunna he 可倫拿河) and Jasper, which he marks with Sullivan Peak (shaliwang feng 沙里王峰). Notably, this “new” map was based on another American map of Canada printed by Rand and McNally just a few years before Fu published his rendition with Chinese transliterations (Rand McNally & Co’s British America [1893]). Based on the locations and waters labeled, as well as the overall longitude and latitude ratio of the maps, it is evident that Fu did not produce the map from first hand knowledge as he did not travel across Canada and thus never saw these sites he labels. His itinerary map in writing diverges greatly from the map as presented. Thus while these “Chinese” maps are accurate to some degree, they highlight only several facts about Canada by attempting to transliterate names of foreign places and often incorporating the Western measurement system of recording distances. As such, these maps do not tell much about the imagination of Canada beyond reproducing existing knowledge. Evidently, Chinese maps were not used for the purposes of cultural dominance but for general knowledge of the world.
borderspaces—inhabited by people and languages. While maps are presented as neutral renderings of physical geography, studies have shown that cartographic representations are not unbiased: they are engaged strategically for economic expansion, imperialist agendas, and cultural dominance: Joseph R. Allen has discussed the various types of maps used in imagining Taipei’s economic future in the 1930s (17-40); Andre Schmid has analyzed the changes in the strategic representation of Korea vis-à-vis the rest of the Japanese empire for imperial imaginations (199-223), and Emma Teng has depicted the evolution of the Chinese empire’s cartographic representations of Taiwan to claim its power over the island during the Qing dynasty. In addition, maps fail to chart the lived experiences of physical travellers and the imagined experiences of readers such as: the time spent in transit, the conversations on board vessels, and the treatment abroad. The concept of borderspaces focuses on these events and acknowledges the lived experience of people in motion, challenging the seeming neutrality of cartographic representation by “mapping” lived experiences conventionally uncharted on maps. Analyzing these lived experiences gives us a deeper understanding of the inter-relationship between various sites.

Borderspace, then, allows for the analysis of short interactions that are important to understand in their own historical moment. Borderspace attempts to reimagine the relationship between two or more cultures from the perspective of the disadvantaged. The Chinese diplomats, translators, and students who wrote about Canada indeed were

geographically and historically separated because of the distance between the two lands and because of the relative youth of Canada’s nationhood there were extremely few historical ties between the two nations as well. Significantly, whether they were travellers or immigrants, there was inequality for ethnic Chinese bodies in Canada. However, the conditions that allowed this group of writers to pen their experiences point to a different kind of contact that are distinct from the experiences of other diasporic Chinese individuals. Using the concept of borderspace, I explore the dilemmas that minor writers faced because of particular physical and epistemological borders that shifted or were fortified in their historical present. Ultimately, while the contact zone speaks about coercion, conflict, and inequality in ongoing relations between two cultures, borderspace focuses on writing that crosses physical and epistemological borders between cultures.

Borderspace as a concept can be understood as a dissonant space reflecting the subjective and phenomenological experience of travel in physical terms. With regards to these brief physical encounters, borderspaces can be experienced in two different ways. First, they can be interpreted as the space of legal borders. People populate these borders when waiting for immigration officers to grant clearance into the country of destination or when visiting tourist sites located at shared national borders. This lived experience of borders reveals the discriminatory nature of the border-crossings. Second, the concept could point to a space people enter into that is not conventionally considered a border but nevertheless

7 Examples include Niagara Falls, which sits on the border between the United States and Canada, and the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ), between North and South Korea. Political borders are often seen as touristic sites as well. Please see Dallen J. Timothy’s “Political boundaries and tourism: borders as tourist attractions” Tourism Management 16.7 (November 1995): 525–32.
physically connects or separates two nations. For example, the space covered from the “origin” to the “destination” upon ships and planes can be imagined as a borderspace – a border connecting the two sites where lived experience further highlights its spatial nature. These physical conceptions of borderspace become useful in understanding the lived experience of border-crossing in a minor tone because certain groups of people are treated as lesser because of their ethnicity and race, countering the major tone of dominant narratives.

Borderspaces can also be understood as intangible spaces of dissonance. Studying writings about foreign lands reveals two possibilities of immaterial borderspaces. First, texts themselves that describe foreign lands can be imagined as borderspaces discursively connecting two nations through the act of reading. For readers, the texts bridge one place to another place whether the texts are perceived as being based on “real” or imagined journeys. The dissonance found between the textual representation of a place found in the texts and the corresponding material history in which the texts are produced demonstrate a particular intangible borderspace for minor cultures that veil the unevenness of experience based on one’s ethnicity. Second, texts that portray foreign lands can be imagined as borderspaces through the act of writing. Minor writers have to negotiate and navigate across competing worldviews – ones formed before departing abroad and ones formed during the travelling itself as well as ones formed from traditional knowledge and ones created during the process of translating foreign cultures – in order to represent the foreign for their domestic audiences “at home.” Being in a minor position, there are different struggles of representation due to treatment received by travellers and the primary source material used by translators, for example. Thus because of the particular position of the
writers, borderspaces are sites of epistemological dissonance and provide particular perspectives on transnational history that contrast major historical narratives, which often conceal minor tones and experiences.

Drawing on Meng Yue’s idea of contrapuntal spaces whereby one studies a culture by “expanding the meaning and multiplying the number of ‘territories’ so that the term serves to refer to regions, cultures, subcultures, sociopolitical units, and different sovereignties” (2006: xii), the idea of borderspaces refrains from applying simple binaries to the study of space in order to uncover minor tones and experiences in a transnational context. Multiplying the number of ‘territories,’ so that it includes distinct regions and different cultures, subcultures, and epistemological paradigms, allows for a useful triangulation of relationships that reflect the possibilities of borderspace beyond binaries. In my dissertation I discuss the relationship between Cantonese-speaking steerage passengers, Mandarin-speaking passengers who were more privileged, and the North American laws that affected them. By acknowledging the distinctions between the dialects and experiences of these transpacific travellers, I complicate the singular narrative of Southern Chinese migration of the nineteenth century, exposing the co-existence of two groups of travellers who could be identified as “Chinese” but who were nonetheless unable to communicate with one another and had very different experiences of travel. I also discuss epistemological cultural paradigms at work in the construction of Canada for Chinese-reading audiences by Qing diplomats. By understanding the shifting paradigms and modes of representation as competing different ways of seeing one object, we may avoid interpretations that too easily construct a monolithic “Chinese view” on a particular object such as “Canada.” Moreover through borderspaces, the significance of the Japanese
mediation of Chinese-language travelogues and fiction about Canada is explored. By examining how the image of Canada is mediated between these multiple linguistic and cultural sites of contact and transmission, I complicate binary approaches to cross-cultural contact. In this project, I also consider the window of opportunity provided by the Boxer Indemnity Fund for overseas Chinese students to be educated at American institutes and to be granted entry into Canada because of their student status. As such, this textual archive challenges binary structures and presents a more nuanced understanding of the complicated and contradictory nature of Sino-Canadian border-crossings across multiple spaces and sites.

The idea of borderspaces is one that is always in the process of becoming and allows for continuous (re)imaginings of different vectors that connect two places. My project is not a geographic interpretation of Canada as told by Chinese visitors but a study of how Chinese travellers, translators, and writers wrote about Canada in their time. The idea of borderspace is thus open to new possibilities of reading and is always in becoming in different contexts. In introducing the concept of borderspaces, my dissertation also seeks to contribute to the fields of Chinese Travel Writing and Fiction, Transpacific Studies, as well as Chinese North American Studies including Overseas Chinese Students and Chinese Canadian Studies.

1.3 Chinese Travel Writing and Fiction

Numerous studies have investigated traditional Chinese travel writing, but their scope is usually travel within the Chinese empire or East Asia and focuses on poetic composition. Scholars such as Richard E. Strassberg, Stephen McDowall, and Cong Ellen Zhang have
uncovered the importance of travel within the empire and writing about the experience for Chinese literati from the third century to the nineteenth century. Tian Xiaofei’s comparative work on early medieval poetry and nineteenth century travel accounts also stresses the role of poetry. Although Tian touches upon Chinese diplomats in America and Europe, the emphasis is nevertheless on the traditional poetic practices. Chinese travel writing on Canada, which has received little attention, challenges the conventional scope of and poetic emphasis in Chinese travel writing. Because Canada was a *tabula rasa* – a new, uninscribed site – travellers writing about Canada could not rely on the conventions of traditional Chinese travel writing in their representation of place after physically crossing into Canada. Writing about Canada required new ways of representing beyond topoi established by the existing literary canon. Moreover, former studies have not considered the impact of the changing visual regime, which perhaps only post-nineteenth century travel literature can effectively address. For Chinese writers at the turn of the century, the introduction of photography as a technology-informed registration of space differed from traditional literary forms of representing landscape and they were required to grapple with this new visual regime. My dissertation hopes to provide new knowledge about how Chinese subjectivities were challenged by the unfamiliar Canada and by photographic encounters in North America.

Moreover, Lydia Liu has studied the impact of Japanese and European translated lexicon on the creation of modern Chinese literature as a political cultural project. Her project slightly differs from my contribution to the field of Chinese literature. She complicates the understanding of literature and translation by pointing to what she terms as “translingual practice” or “the possibility that a non-European host language may violate, displace, and
usurp the authority of the guest language in the process of translation as well as be transformed by it or be in complicity with it” (Liu 27). Some of the writers I deal with in my dissertation are using Japanese words and translated works as their source texts and I do agree that the writers and translators can be considered as being part of a larger political cultural project to build a “modern” China. However, I use this active agency of translators and writers to complicate the understanding of foreign space in minor translated literature instead of focusing on solely their impact on the construction of a modern Chinese subjectivity. I want to bolster the way these literary spaces found in minor translated literature are created with their own local literary practices and within the global material context of its production. In doing so, I demonstrate the dissonant grappling and struggle for these translators in a larger transnational moment. Chinese diplomats, officials, and translators were forging their way to best represent and produce the foreign world for their audiences – a minor struggle unique to their position in the world.

In this active attempt to write about the foreign via Japanese sources and lexicon, I examine the material context of cultural production by Chinese translators to reveal the inassimilable elements that are meaningful to uncover. Emily Apter describes the productivity of seeking out the inassimilable parts in world literature and translation, putting forth the notion of “untranslatability.” That there are words and ideas that cannot be easily translated matter to our understanding of the world, subsequent assumptions and biases about the Other, and the formation of World Literature. Certain experiences require contextualization within their historical moment; this contextualization reveals the dissonance between text and reality and the incommensurable aspects between particular literary paradigms and cultural histories. Reading the Chinese-language historical archive
of Canada as literature and highlighting the inassimilable elements further develops Apter’s idea, reinforcing the significance of these untranslatable parts because they can speak back to a larger transnational history between Canada, China, Japan, and France and comment on the assumption of commensurability between cultures.

On late Qing fiction and translation, Milena Dolezelova-Velingerova has successfully demonstrated that Chinese literary production at the turn of the century was not simply imitating Western fiction. Pointing out the revolutionary Liang Qichao’s 梁啟超 (1873-1929) influence on fiction and studying the plot structures of late Qing works, she illustrates how Chinese works were in themselves evolutionary and have been misunderstood by the iconoclasm of the May Fourth movement. While her research marked a watershed moment in Chinese literary history by showing the continuity between late Qing fiction and new literature, there is still much to be said about the depiction of the foreign in Chinese literary works at the turn of the century. Rebecca Karl has discussed late Qing narratives and plays using the notion of “staging the world.” Her engagement portrays how Chinese intellectuals saw themselves and placed themselves as part of a world in evolutionary and progressive stages. Karl delineates the ways in which particular countries were imagined by Chinese intellectuals vis-à-vis China’s idea of nationalism at the turn of the century: “a staging that makes visible a world of synchronic temporality emphasizing historical identification and spatial proximity” (4-5). I agree that there was a “structured totality” in these plays that adhered to a nationalist agenda at the time and the Chinese diasporas in these countries (such as Hawai‘i) were used to constitute the idea of national belonging, as Karl argues. However, the relationship
between the Chinese diasporas vis-à-vis the Chinese readers “at home” is not necessarily considered in all texts.

The works I deal with do not inherently comment on the relationship between the racially Chinese abroad and those at home, and I approach this disconnect as an issue that speaks to the significance of literary representation and the untranslatable. These works are important because Chinese readers in China were reliant upon them to “see” the world. Adopting Apter’s idea of untranslatability, I revisit translated fiction via Japan in an attempt to show the problems translators encountered when writing about foreign sites within a transnational context that was not discussed in Lydia Liu’s, Dolezelova-Velingerova’s nor Karl’s work. Canada was not simply a trope for modernity as other sites such as Japan, Britain, and Russia were. Canada with its recent confederation in 1867, its historical divide between the French and British, and its exclusionary treatment of Chinese in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries made it more than a signifier of modernity and a simple model to follow for Chinese intellectuals. And so, Chinese works about this land are worthy of further examination as they served as way for readers to “enter” Canada via their imagination during an era when their opportunities to travel to Canada was limited and Canada was a young nation also seeking its identity.

All in all, my thesis aims to demonstrate how travel narratives worked to establish multiple connections between China and Canada in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries to contribute to the field of Chinese travel writing and literature. The concept of borderspaces helps to bring out the problems of representing the unfamiliar Canada to Chinese-reading audiences, including the challenge of describing a place firstly without being able to rely on existing poetic traditions, secondly with new knowledge of
photographic technology in sharp contrast to traditional worldviews, and thirdly within the
Sino-Canadian context that was discriminatory towards ethnic Chinese. For these reasons,
studying the construction of Canada in Chinese travel writing and literature of the
nineteenth and twentieth centuries is a worthwhile project to the field.

1.4 Transpacific Studies

In the last two decades, Chinese North American scholars have traced transpacific
networks between China and the Americas. My dissertation hopes to contribute to this
field of transpacific relations by further conceptualizing the Pacific and the journey on the
ship from East Asia to North America as objects of study. Kornel Chang (2012), Yunte
Huang (2008), Madeline Hsu (2000), and Elizabeth Sinn (2013) have described the
movement of people, ideas, and goods across the Pacific Ocean from the nineteenth
century onwards. Chang traces the messiness of empire-building by studying the
transpacific movement of labourers and merchants. Chang argues that these migrants were
significant in the making of American-Canadian borders and it was because of the mass
migration that borders were fortified. Huang shows the intimacies of American and Asian
American literature through the influence of the Pacific on both canons. He argues that
poetics about and absence details about the Pacific shaped and formed American literature.
Hsu speaks of the community built through writing disseminated across the Pacific when
physical reunions between families in America and China were not always possible. She
studies the transpacific flow of money, letters, and aspirations about Gold Mountain that
maintained the imagined connection between physically separated families. Sinn shows
how Hong Kong became an important site due to transpacific trade related to Chinese
mass migration to North America. She argues that the transpacific economy, including the
shipment of deceased Chinese labourers back to China, gave Hong Kong its significance as a cultural center.

Each of these studies of transpacific networks provides their own insight into the intimate relationship between the continents and the construction of space and place. In understanding the Pacific Ocean and the transpacific journey as a borderspace, I wish to contribute another approach to reading these waters and the lived experience on the ships. I specifically mark the Pacific Ocean as a space that is lived and that the travellers’ experiences in this borderspace give definition to their idea of the foreign world. I emphasize a distinct nineteenth-century minor Chinese subjectivity that is not only aware of the forced migration and labour trade of Southern Chinese men, but is also able to provide critique on Sino-North American relations at the time. Reading their travel writing as literature, I study the allegorical meanings of their recorded transpacific journeys and reveal the larger vision of the world embedded within their travelogues. In relation to other transpacific studies, I offer new materials from other racially Chinese individuals who were privileged to inform their domestic audiences in China about the unfamiliar lands and their fellow Qing subjects who left the empire for livelihood in North America. These materials reveal the distinct minor tones found in a diverse group of individuals whom could all be considered racially Chinese but express their minor voice differently.

1.5  Chinese North American Studies

1.5.1  Overseas Chinese Students

Huping Ling (1997), Stacey Bieler (2004), Weili Ye (2001), and Madeline Hsu (2015) have conducted interesting research on overseas Chinese student populations. Providing a
macro-analysis of the female student population, Ling defines three distinct generations of women: pioneer (1881-1930s), wartime and postwar (1940s-1950s), and contemporary (1960s-1990s). Bieler attends to the experiences of students after returning to China and gives an overview of their paths after graduating from the United States. Ye approaches the student diaspora by highlighting opinions on race, contributions to their guest and home societies, and other undertakings while abroad in the early twentieth century. Instead of their academic studies, Ye discusses their daily lives and extracurricular activities. Hsu explores the reasoning for the myth of the “model minority” through studying the laws and systems that permitted selective migration of overseas students and professionals in the twentieth century. These diverse studies, however, have overlooked their experiences at borders and their leisure travel outside of school campuses.

My dissertation explores issues of race and representation for students as they cross legal borders between Canada and the United States. I argue that these borders are sites where they, as bilingual students, cannot conceal their racialized bodies. I build on former research by analyzing the leisure travel of students and take a closer look at student writings, which are often critically overlooked. As one of the first groups of Chinese individuals with the ability to speak fluent English and communicate with the Canadian and American authorities, their writing provides insights into their lived experiences as Chinese minor subjects at Canadian-U.S. borders. These borderspaces are where they often grappled with the Chinese exclusionist acts in both countries and their own narrative subjectivities. I believe my dissertation will contribute to the larger field of Chinese-North American Studies by studying these descriptions of lived and marked experience of leisure travel by Chinese overseas students.
1.5.2 Chinese Canadian Studies

In addition, borderspaces offer new interpretations of Chinese Canadian history. Historians and literary scholars have written extensively concerning the physical mass border crossing of Chinese labourers into Canada in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. These include authors such as Peter S. Li, Lisa Rose Mar, and Lily Chow who have all discussed the migration of Chinese settlers to Canada, those who assisted these individuals, and their collective fate as labourers on the Canadian Pacific Railway. While it is important to recognize the contribution of racially Chinese labourers on the railway and their settlement in Canada, it has become a singular narrative that hides other minor Chinese experiences during the same era.

My project incorporates those who were physically affected by the Sino-North American discrimination as well as the Chinese reading audiences who learned about Canada through imagined journeys. I consider the discursive space where Chinese diplomats, officials, overseas students, and translators penned Canada for their audiences in China in the same era because I believe by examining the representation of Canada in Chinese textual culture, the field of Chinese Canadian Studies can be expanded beyond the immigrant community and begin to imagine other connections between Canada and China.

In a related vein, existing research concerning Chinese migration into Canada and the United States privileges the West Coast as a site of border crossing but the larger archive of Chinese-language travel writing on Canada that I discuss in this dissertation allows us to reconceptualize the cross-cultural encounters beyond the physical West Coast. Indeed, there are several reasons why the West Coast is important to the imagination of Chinese-North American relations. Vancouver, Victoria, Seattle, and Californian coastal cities
were popular ports of arrival for those travelling from China in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Consequently many notable events concerning the history of Chinese migration to North America, such as the Vancouver Riots of 1907 and the Survey on Race Relations of 1924, occurred on the West Coast because of the large number of East Asian immigrants who lived and worked in the mountainous regions at the time. Lisa Rose Mar tells of the processes used to allow Chinese individuals to enter Canada including paid translators and the memorization of family details for interrogation. Julie Gilmour studies the issues of race and the role of Mackenzie King in the 1907 Vancouver Riots that damaged the storefronts of Japanese and Chinese entrepreneurs. Their archives reflect the large number of Chinese immigrants on the West Coast and their histories.

Importantly, the archive I use brings to light the encounters between China and Canada by including spaces east of Vancouver and Victoria. This move is not simply a shift in focus from one locale to another, but a productive expansion of Chinese experiences and representations of Canada that assists in reimagining the relationship between Canada and China and the agency of Chinese travellers and translators writing for a wide readership in

China. Scholarship on West Coast Chinese migration is tied to histories of discrimination, which unfolded in places such as Angel Island and other quarantine centers at arrival ports in Canada and the United States. Though this history should not be forgotten, it often overshadows other readings of Chinese “real” and imagined experiences in North America and obscures the agency of Chinese writers and other discursive connections between Canada and China.

1.6 The Itinerary

My dissertation is divided into four chapters and begins on the Pacific Ocean and then moves eastward to explore four different concepts of borderspaces that call attention to the dissonance of ‘major’ singular narratives of Chinese oppression in North America during the nineteenth and twentieth century. In Chapter 1, I examine the accounts of two late Qing diplomats Zhang Deyi 張德彝 (1847-1918), Fu Yunlong 傅雲龍 (1840-1901), and overseas student Xie Fuya 謝扶雅 (also known as Zia Nai Zing; 1892-1991) to imagine the sea as borderspace. I read the writings at sea as allegorical of the global context of their travels and reveal the invisibility of privilege and personal experience and cartographic vision in writing. This chapter explores global history from the perspective of Chinese travellers on the Pacific Ocean, revealing how they were affected by discriminatory laws, imperial desires, mass migrations, power imbalances, and economic interests. The experience of travel via the Pacific Ocean for Chinese subjects was distinct from colonial itinerants travelling on the same ship or during the same era. In contrast to a British man travelling from Hong Kong to Canada in the same era, Chinese diplomats arriving from Yokohama or Shanghai to North America grappled with distinct issues related to the space of the Pacific Ocean. Linguistic barriers became evident through their
personal experience on American and British vessels, which predominantly employed English-speaking captains and Cantonese-speaking seamen. Many of these Chinese diplomats travelled on vessels with Chinese who would become labourers (also known as coolies) in the Americas, a fact that gestures towards the multiple different “Chinese” experiences of migration. Therefore, this chapter shows how personal experiences of travellers crossing the Pacific Ocean were unique in comparison to other colonial itinerants, affecting not only the way they would pen the experience but also their understanding of the world based on their treatment during their voyage.

Zhang Deyi’s articulation of his voyage as part of the Burlingame Mission\(^9\) in 1868 reveals that the treatment of Chinese on board and in America was a point of contention. His rewriting of the ship experience as a victorious Sino-centric narrative of privilege is interesting in and of itself. However, when we recall that the purpose of his travel was to negotiate the exclusionist laws against Chinese in the United States, his writing demonstrates an active agency in critiquing these unfair regulations. Twenty years later, when Fu Yunlong travelled across the Pacific Ocean in 1888, his narration of the other ethnic Chinese on board suggests the fraught nature of the travel. The Southern Chinese people who shared the same space as he did for weeks only lightly pepper his accounts. The relative disassociation with the Chinese on board in Fu’s official accounts is juxtaposed against his poetic rendering of Chinese suffering in Cuba and Brazil. This comparison exposes a disjunction between apathy and sympathy for his “compatriots”

\(^9\) The Qing-appointed mission was led by Anson Burlingame (1820-1870) for the purpose of negotiating treaties on behalf of the Chinese. It began in 1868 and soon ended after his death in 1870. Further details about this diplomatic voyage is discussed in the first chapter of my dissertation (31-88).
within the global coerced displacement of Chinese coolies. Xie Fuya’s voyage in the 1920s reveals an organization of space that takes after the modern map only to overcome the imposed boundaries between racialized bodies on the ship. His experience in the SS *President Jefferson*’s dining hall is read as an allegory of China’s brighter future. Through these three examples I aim to show how the sea can be imagined as a borderspace – not neutral and not resistant to the larger historical framework, but creative in its critique of global affairs. The sentiments of Zhang, Fu, and Xie reveal a complicated critique and commentary on the position of China in the world through writing about the Pacific and the transpacific journey on the ship.

In my second chapter, I examine Niagara Falls to show the concept of borderspace as chasm where writers grappled between cultural paradigms. The idea of borderspace can be imagined as a chasm between two or more distinct and competing worldviews. In traditional Chinese travel writing, it was common practice to compose poems that did not necessarily need to correspond to physical reality. Modern technology, such as photography, complicated this poetic portrayal of space and self in the nineteenth century because it was understood to be a scientific and empirical representation of physical reality. Compared to rendering a scene with poetic inspiration, a photograph provided a different method to register what was seen. Even though nineteenth century diplomats did not incorporate photographic prints in their travelogues, they were certainly exposed to the technology. For late Qing individuals travelling outside the Chinese empire in the same era as the advent of modern technology (including microscopes, maps, trains, bridges, photography), they were required to negotiate between traditional aesthetic modes of representation and new technologically-informed ones. The notion of borderspace as
chasm, then, can be conceptualized as a site where individuals are required to negotiate between knowledge regimes, where both systems compete to form an understanding of an uneven world.

As such, this chapter highlights moments that reveal the epistemological rupture in Chinese travel writing using Niagara Falls as an illustration to bring forth issues and new interpretations of minor representation in the nineteenth century. Niagara Falls during the nineteenth century was still a tourist site in-the-making and would become a major source of hydroelectric power for both Canada and the United States in 1893. By the twentieth century, trains and bridges would have carved the infrastructure for the iconic site. Niagara Falls represents a distinctly different and dynamic narrative. I study how Zhi Gang 志剛 (n.d.) and Fu Yunlong, the two Chinese diplomats, grappled with writing about this site-in-progress, its value as a source of hydroelectric power, and its reputation as a site of scientific advancement in the nineteenth century. I trace their photographic encounters at Niagara Falls to consider the tension between traditional methods of recording space and technology-informed registration. Zhi Gang’s 1868 visit whereupon he was suspended in midair with a Canadian engineer over the Niagara Gorge is recorded in two ways: first as a diary entry in Zhi’s records, and second as a photograph published in English-language newspapers (not included in the diary). In Fu’s official accounts there are no photographs, but at Niagara Falls he mentions the invitation to be photographed by a foreign (North American) photographer through a translator in 1888. Given his particular interest in technology – including cannons and water routes – Fu’s written justifications for declining are worthy of inspection. I argue that both Zhi Gang and Fu Yunlong were caught between the traditional paradigm of inscribing the landscape and the technology-inspired paradigm
as they sought to depict themselves. I read their photographic encounters as allegories for the restrictions of ethnic Chinese in the world and as opportunities for self-depictions of courageous loyalty towards the Qing empire. I illuminate the unevenness of an epistemological shift on local knowledge in these nineteenth century accounts of Niagara Falls to reveal the intangible idea of borderspace as a chasm between distinct paradigms.

Next, I examine translations of imagined journeys to Quebec and British Columbia. In Chapter 3, I study the ways in which Canada was symbolically described, relayed, and portrayed for audiences in China via Japan. I view these sites of intra-Asian translation as borderspaces that connect Canada and China through texts beyond the immigrant community. I focus on the histories and contexts of China, Japan, and Canada in studying the intra-Asian translations from the ‘minor’ perspectives to construct a dissonant understanding of global history. I argue that these texts are alternative discursive realities: complimentary narratives that share the same moments in material time as Chinese restriction and exclusion in Canada. I uncover their book histories to note their circulation and production across multiple nations and histories (Canada, France, Japan, and China) – research that will contribute to studies of trans-regional movements of the texts and people. Subsequently, I study the local Chinese literary writing practices as evidence of the Chinese translators’ agency – revealing the complexities of the minority subject, imagined as both within China and outside of China. I contemplate the ways in which translation formed a bridge and created a veil over foreign lands for early twentieth century Chinese-language readers in China as it connected readers to a praiseworthy “Canada” while concealing the discriminatory regulations Canada placed on ethnic Chinese.
I examine two works produced via Japanese mediation. The first is Jules Verne’s (1828-1905) *Famille sans nom* (Family without a Name) (1893), which was later translated by Morita Shiken 森田思軒 (1861-1897) into Japanese and Bao Tianxiao 包天笑 (1876-1973) into Chinese. I place the work within its historical moment when anti-Chinese sentiment was at its peak in British Columbia to reveal its dissonance with the material reality of Sino-Canadian relations. Canada was represented by the Chinese translator as a model to be followed, rendered to encourage China’s walk towards nationalism. The 1906 Chinese commentary to the text praises French patriotism in Canada while disregarding the poor treatment of ethnic Chinese in Canada at the time. By commenting on the incommensurable and untranslatable elements of this alignment between French rebellion and the Chinese spirit of revolution, I show how the idea of borderspace as veil is productive in understanding the dissonance between text and reality. The second work is Jing Que’s 景慄 (n.d.)’s *Huanqiu zhouyouji* (環球周遊記), or *An Account of Global Travels* (1917; 1919; 1926). Appearing to be a successful work by a wealthy Chinese man travelling around the world, the text was in fact plagiarized from several Japanese texts. The text was an amalgamation of works by Anesaki Masaharu 姉崎正治 (1873-1949) and Tsuboya Suisai 坪谷水齋 (1864-1949), both Meiji intellectuals who visited North America in the early twentieth century. The significance of the Japanese mediation on the rosy portrayal of Jing’s adventures in Victoria, British Columbia is exposed when the writing is situated within the context of contemporary anti-Chinese sentiment. The notion of borderspace as both a bridge and veil becomes apparent in this chapter as we understand how these texts were able to bring readers to foreign lands via local Chinese literary traditions such as ‘vicarious travel’ and ‘commentary’ while also hindering the
reader’s ability to understand the material reality of foreign lands. I argue that these writings have untranslatable elements that craft distinctly utopian views of Canada for Chinese audiences that counter narratives of Chinese discrimination and thus trace other vectors that connect Canada and China.

We return to Central Canada in our final chapter, imagining the concept of borderspace as a legal border with bodies in motion. In Chapter 4, I focus on borders in Central Canada, including Niagara Falls, as sites of border-control to study the concept of borderspace as stage. I examine the recorded interactions at the border by Chen Hengzhe 陳衡哲 (also known as Sophia Chen Zen; 1893-1976), Xie Fuya, and Gong Xuesui 龔學遂 (1895-1968), including their conversations with border officials before and after the Chinese Exclusion Act. Studying these borders as physical borderspaces populated by active Chinese agents permits fresh and meaningful readings of Canadian spaces beyond the narrative of West Coast oppression. I analyze the moments of tension between being the subject of their own writing and being objectified as ethnic Chinese individuals at the borders of the United States and Canada to reveal how the borderspace served as a stage for challenging authorities and for didactic purposes. Together, they construct a futuristic portrayal of Canada that can be overcome, deferring from their present and distinct from former accounts about Canada.

In Chen’s accounts, she narrates a successful border-crossing while reversing the expected power dynamics at Canadian customs, which sought to objectify her. Her narrator undermines objectification as an ethnic minority travelling in Canada and instead objectifies the Canadian officer. In contrast, Xie is not successful in legally entering the Canadian side of Niagara Falls because he cannot obtain a visa. Xie then uses poetry to
overcome the physical restraints placed on him as an ethnic Chinese in 1926, three years after the Chinese Exclusion Act was established. In a similar vein, Gong’s travelogue highlights the discriminatory treatment he faced as a Chinese at Niagara Falls, but uses photography instead of poetry to portray a successful border-crossing. For all three educated Chinese, the North American laws imposed on Chinese formed the foundation on which they represented Canada as an accessible place despite legal restrictions and barriers. I believe that understanding the ways in which Chinese travellers negotiated these borderspaces is crucial to understanding Sino-North American relations in the twentieth century.

Through visiting these places – from the Pacific Ocean, to Niagara Falls, to Quebec and British Columbia, and then back to Central Canada – I hope to conceptualize borderspaces as sites where minor transnationalism can emerge. I take into account the discursive spaces of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to demonstrate the multi-vectored intersections between Chinese literary production and Chinese Canadian history. I take writing steeped in Chinese localized knowledge formation and literary practices and place it within a Sino-Canadian historical context to demonstrate how both physical and intangible borderspaces connect these cultures. Let us embark on the journey to reconsider the links between China and Canada.
Chapter 1
Pacific Ocean as Borderspace:
Reading the Waters between China and North America (1868-1925)

2.1 Introduction

The late-nineteenth century was the first time in the history of Chinese travel writing that the Pacific Ocean became a site of writing. This phenomenon involved various kinds of travellers including diplomats, officials, overseas students, and coolie labourers from different parts of China. As a result of these multiple trans-regional movements, the experiences of transpacific travelling and docking at ports in the Americas were recorded in official accounts, published travelogues, and newspapers. In this chapter, I interpret these writings produced at sea by Chinese writers within the context of their contemporary Sino-North American relations to illuminate the notion of the Pacific Ocean as borderspace. I argue that the Pacific Ocean as borderspace serves as a site of border crossing even before physically arriving at a destination in North America, and that it is a site where people dwell, contemplate, and grapple with their first-hand knowledge of an unfamiliar world.

Through the concept of borderspace, my chapter investigates the lived experiences of the Pacific Ocean in Chinese travel writing. I aim to paint a complex picture of Chinese travellers to the Americas during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries that cause dissonance with other narratives at sea. I read their writing as allegorical critiques of the historical circumstances of their era in hopes of uncovering new histories and relations between North America and China. In examining Chinese travel writings on the Pacific Ocean as borderspace, I ask: How does the concept of borderspace expose the limitations of cartographic representations of the sea? How are inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic
individuals on the ship seen vis-à-vis the Chinese travellers, and what does their interaction say about their perspectives of the foreign world yet to be seen? What new understandings of the world can be found in these Chinese oceanic writings?

The study of the Pacific Ocean as borderspace can be thought of in comparison to cartographic representations of ocean space. While maps show water as a neutral space, the experiences on board vessels travelling across water demonstrate its contested nature. This chapter contributes to former studies that challenge the neutrality of cartographic representation by highlighting the experiences neutralized on maps but made apparent in writing. I join scholars such as Martin Wigen and Karen Wigen, Edward Said, W.J.T. Mitchell, Emma Teng, and Marcia Yonemoto in reexamining the feigned neutrality of cartographic practices throughout history. For example, the ‘West’ was a historically dynamic construct that changed shape depending on political circumstances and imagined relationships. Studies of mapping practices in Qing Taiwan (1644-1911) and Tokugawa Japan (1603-1867) reveal that maps were not neutral representations of space and have taken many different forms before the standardization of the Mercator projection of the world. The concept of borderspace indicates how lived experience of space surpasses cartographic knowledge – the sights, scents, and sentiments on board are not found in cartography. Through drawing attention to these experiences that contend with the limitations of cartographic representation, I interpret Chinese oceanic writing as representative of each author’s understanding of the world and as allegories for Chinese-North American relations of their historical moment. As such, this chapter strives to uncover several limitations of cartographic practices through these transpacific examples.
Reading beyond the material reality of physical travel, I am interested in comprehending the Chinese literary practices of recording to demonstrate how the borderspace was filled with multilingual people (captains, seamen, fellow passengers) in fraught motion from three distinct generations. Borrowing Michel de Certeau’s idea of “practiced place” as space, this chapter highlights several moments where the space of the Pacific Ocean, as lived and experienced by Chinese travellers, presented specific problems of representation at the turn of the century. Space is multi-directional and polyvalent: “Space occurs as the effect produced by the operations that orient it, situate it, temporalize it, and make it function in a polyvalent unity of conflictual programs or contractual proximities” (de Certeau 117). Likewise, the Pacific Ocean was a space influenced by various valences including imperialist desires of the British and Qing empires for economic trade and cultural knowledge and colonial desires of the Americas for cheap labourers causing power imbalances at sea and on land. Through my research and analysis, I will show how the oceanic space served as a borderspace between North America and China and reflected particular issues for Chinese travellers in constructing Canada in their writing. The same space of the Pacific Ocean is crossed through many generations, but their critiques, narratives, and comments tell of the distinct experience on board and in narration, which can be productively read through the lens of minor transnationalism.

The investigation of the Pacific Ocean as borderspace speaks to the call for minor transnationalism. My chapter is a retelling of oceanic travel and writing from the perspective not of the colonizers or conquerors of trade but from the angle of those who shared the same ethnicity as those who were in a weaker position because they either needed to leave China for livelihood by choice or they were coerced into labour jobs.
Travelling via the Pacific Ocean for Chinese travellers who planned to return to China points to issues of envisioning the world, even before reaching a “destination,” that differs from and causes dissonance with colonial itinerants and migrants travelling on the same ship or in the same era. In contrast to a British man travelling from Hong Kong to Canada, Chinese diplomats arriving from Yokohama and/or Shanghai to North America grappled with distinct issues related to the transpacific journey. Their personal experiences as Mandarin-speaking Chinese officials on American and British vessels that predominantly employed English-speaking captains and Cantonese-speaking seamen created translingual experiences not had elsewhere. The concept of borderspace illuminates these human exchanges and records of exchange situated within discriminatory laws, imperial desires, mass migrations, power imbalances, and economic interests. The shared diurnal and translingual experiences with Cantonese-speaking and English-speaking individuals on board are telling of the ocean as a borderspace where interactions occur and people dwell. And so, this chapter will show how the lived experience on board while crossing the Pacific Ocean was unique in comparison to other colonial itinerants through the formation of the world via transpacific oceanic writing.

In a related vein, secondary research on oceanic writings have not yet addressed the Chinese experience that causes dissonance with rhetorical practices found in British, American, and French literature. There were many stories about voyaging across oceans, such as Daniel Defoe (1660 – 1731) in British literature, James Fenimore Cooper (1789 – 1851) in American literature, and Jules Verne (1828 – 1905) in French literature. Scholars such as Margaret Cohen and Elizabeth DeLoughrey speak of a Western imperialist colonial logic within the writings. Cohen shows in her study of well-known British and
French works that there was a common rhetoric of the “craft of the mariner” (58). This man employed modern reasoning to survive and to conquer the land and challenges ahead of them. DeLoughrey reveals the valorization of international travel by the unmarked (read white) male elite, where the ocean space was charted and claimed. DeLoughrey proves that the trope of the “self-made male” in British works corresponded perfectly with the mentality of empire building at the time in Britain (13). Penned from the position of those who may have been identified with colonizing powers of the period, the perspectives found in this group of oceanic writings face different problems of representing imperial conquest. Chinese travellers, however, did not speak of this “mariner’s craft” nor “self-made male” because they were not navigators as the others were but passengers. The Chinese voyager travelled towards Canada and the United States with other agendas such as: representing their nation as a diplomat; surveying the rest of the world as an envoy; studying at American institutions as an overseas student; or making a living as a labourer. This distinction from British, American, and French protagonists is meaningful because the rhetoric of the Chinese voyager often embodies objective observation and physical experience such as reoccurring seasickness. These differences signify dissonance with other narratives that is important to explore in the transpacific space as it reveals a productivity of theorizing ocean travel. My chapter contributes to research on oceanic writing by contextualizing the Pacific Ocean of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, highlighting the creativity of the Chinese individuals writing with unique historical agendas and new understandings of China’s position in the world.

While studies on coolie labour have uncovered important histories of Chinese labourers sent out around the world, my study of the Pacific Ocean as borderspace hopes to add
another layer in theorizing the space of transpacific movement between China and North America. Liu Yuzun (1979), Walton Look Lai (1993), David Northrup (1995), Linqian Wang and Kunyang Wu (2002), and Moon-ho Jung (2006) expose darker sides of imperialism in the research on the transport of coolies. In the earliest of these studies of on Chinese coolies, Liu conducts ethnographic research on those who successfully returned to China from Southeast Asia. Their reported experiences show the horrific situations they were placed in. In Lai, Northrup, and Jung, mortality rates of those Chinese on ships are found through careful studies of colonial documents, suggesting the unbearable conditions on ships. Wang and Wu compiled data on the lists of ships holding Chinese coolies and collections of tricks employed by recruiters to coerce individuals into labour contracts in the nineteenth century. I use these bodies of knowledge to foreground how the other Chinese travellers on the ship (directly and indirectly) wrote about the experience of seeing and interacting with the mass migrations of Chinese labourers on board. I examine how these other Chinese travellers were forced to grapple with first-hand experience on the Pacific Ocean that contrasts those of English-speaking passengers and navigators on American and British steamships. These Chinese-language accounts are important in that they tell of the circumstances of their own travel and those in the Cantonese-speaking laboring class. I emphasize this multilingual and translingual space of ocean travel, shared by Cantonese Chinese, Mandarin Chinese, and English travellers, as a physical and psychological borderspace because the concept points to the intra-ethnic intimacies of lived experience on the waters.¹⁰

¹⁰ I am borrowing here from Lisa Lowe’s idea of the intimacies of the four continents, although I speak of the intimacies within the ethnic category of Chinese. I choose intra-ethnic and not national because at the
In other studies on transpacific travel, the Pacific Ocean is often not theorized as a space. In histories of these waters, the unevenness of the lived experiences on board is often not taken into account. Yukari Takai discusses steamships as a multinational enterprise and how they were controlled during the nineteenth century, obliterating the fact that they were populated with people (whether it be the crew or the cabin passengers) journeying together for weeks and that they were travelling on fraught waters. Lisa Rose Mar examines the Chinese middlemen assisting Asian immigrants between Canada and China from 1885 to 1945, disregarding the politics of ocean travel in the era through which they moved. Elizabeth Sinn also focuses on transpacific networks, though she frames those networks as physical transactions across stable binaries such as “homeland” and “destination,” for example the shipment on the Pacific Ocean of human remains of those who died abroad from North America to China. My concern, however, is with the embodied writing practices and imperialist desires that shape the experience of oceanic space. I aim to illustrate how, even though a body of water can be commonly referenced with unchanging coordinates on a map, the same waters posed different challenges for the Chinese travellers and writers of different generations. Their techniques of writing expose a diverse set of challenges. As a consequence, abstracting the ocean as a borderspace and exploring the various experiences of navigating that space reveals individual and uneven understandings of the world.

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time of travel before 1911, the idea of nation was still in formation and I do not believe the writers were speaking of a nation-state but an overarching cultural identity because of their customs and manners and shared written language.
The Pacific Ocean as a site of multiple trans-regional crossings needs to be understood within the context of nineteenth- and twentieth-century histories of imperialism and nation-building agendas. Because the British empire wanted to conduct trade with the Qing empire but was ultimately refused, it launched the First Opium War (1839-1842), which increased the trans-regional movement of traded goods and people for centuries to come. The war ended with the Treaty of Nanking (1842), a peace treaty established between the United Kingdom and the Qing empire that ceded Hong Kong to the British and opened five ports in China for foreign trade: Amoy, Canton, Fuchow, Ningpo, and Shanghai. Merchandise and people flowed through these port cities thereafter. These port cities, then, served the colonial desires of the North and South Americas as their demand for labourers to construct their national railways grew. Tens of thousands of Chinese labourers – many of whom were from Southern China\(^\text{11}\) – were recruited or coerced into work in the United States, Cuba, Peru, Brazil and other territories during the late nineteenth century. The cultural imperialist desire of the Qing empire created missions for diplomats and officials to be sent abroad to learn about the West. The crumbling conditions within the Chinese empire against foreign invasion created trans-pacific opportunities for officials. Exiled and active revolutionaries chose to come to Canada and the United States for their own nationalist agendas in this turbulent time as well. The overlapping transoceanic experiences carved a distinct Chinese-language archive where Chinese writers did not always explicitly address these imperial motivations but understood the unevenness of the world via the sea.

\(^{11}\) This is an important detail I will return to later as these Chinese labourers spoke Cantonese and not the Mandarin dialect of other travellers at the time.
Their writings did not solely speak of the ocean itself, but also described the ship’s design and its passengers, the crossing of the meridian, and most interestingly, the place of China (empire and republic) in the world. Zhang Deyi (張德彝; 1847-1918) notes the different rooms and cabins upon SS China during his 1868 travels. Fu Yunlong (傅雲龍; 1840-1901) describes the SS City of Rio de Janeiro and its make during his 1888 mission.

Southern Chinese passengers are outlined in Li Gui’s (李圭; 1842-1903) official narrative of his 1876 visit for the Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia, and the same is documented in Fu’s records.

Many Chinese travellers observed the crossing of the meridian and the “double day” it produced, including: Zhi Gang 志剛 and Zhang Deyi, who came as part of the 1868 Burlingame mission; Huang Zunxian (黃遵憲; 1848-1905), who embarked on a diplomatic career in San Francisco in 1882; and Xie Fuya (謝扶雅; 1892-1991), who was travelling towards North America at the time for graduate studies in the 1920s. The place of China is often referenced in these works – whether Chinese travellers elevated its position or commented on its loss of status in the world. Liang Qichao (梁啟超; 1873-1929), a famous revolutionary politician in the 1890s who composed poems about the transpacific journey much like his contemporary and friend, Huang Zunxian, recorded his

12 Huang composes about this change in time in “Thoughts about an Ocean Voyage”: “To cope with my depression I start recording my diary / Only to discover I can celebrate the Flower Festival two days in a row” (25). As noted in his footnotes, Huang follows the movement of the sun and realizes that there was a ‘double day’ on his travels, which happened to be the Flower Festival (Schmidt 313).
renewed faith in China as he sailed on its waters.¹³ Less studied though nonetheless important, Zhang Deyi, Fu Yunlong, and Xie Fuya speak of China’s changing position in the world in their accounts. In this chapter, I explore these last three examples of Chinese oceanic writings to understand the physical dimension of borderspace as a site of contemplation and movement.

My chapter is divided into three sections. In the first, I discuss the class and privilege manifested on the vessels, which are invisible on maps, to demonstrate the creative agency of a Chinese diplomat, Zhang Deyi in 1868. I argue that his writing offers a critique of the unfair treatment of the Chinese on the SS China and by extension in the Americas. Zhang was the author of several travelogues, including *Hanghai shuqi* (航海述奇) [Travel Stories of Foreign Countries] (1867), *Oumei huanyouji* (歐美環遊記) [Travel Records of Europe and America] (1868),¹⁴ *Shi Ying zaji* (使英雜記) [Miscellanies of an Envoy in United Kingdom] (1891), and five others. In these writings, Zhang takes meticulous notes in diary form with details on weather, distance travelled, modes of transport, places of interest, and observations of how he and his entourage are seen by others.¹⁵ I focus on a passage concerning his oceanic journey from *Travel Records of Europe and America*, which constitutes 7 pages of the 200-page travelogue covering his month-long journey on

¹³ This has been explored in Yunte Huang’s *Transpacific Imaginations: History, Literature, Counterpoetics* (2008).

¹⁴ Also known as Zaishuqi (再述奇) [More Narratives of the Foreign].

¹⁵ Tian Xiaofei comments on his interaction with Americans in Boston in her manuscript. I will return to this topic later in this chapter.
the *SS China*. This account demonstrates how we can imagine the Pacific Ocean as borderspace and how this expresses an alternative history of transpacific space.

In the second, I analyze the reported seasickness of the Chinese envoy, Fu Yunlong. The description of the physicality of the journey – uncharted on maps – is juxtaposed against his description of other Chinese passengers (possibly coolies and possibly seamen) he interacts with on board *SS City of Rio de Janeiro*. I argue that his seasickness is a metaphor for his vision of China’s weakness in the world in 1888. Fu wrote a collection of works based on his travels to Japan, America, Canada, Cuba, Brazil, and Peru. Fu divides each country into three works. One focuses on official geographic records of each country (*tujing* 圖經),\(^\text{16}\) mainly translated from other English-language materials such as guidebooks and colonial reports but organized in the traditional framework of Chinese historical records.\(^\text{17}\) Recognized as the being extremely diligent in writing, Fu’s official reports were “aided by illustration and tables in his treatment of such topics as past history,

\(^{16}\) Information about each country he visited was collected and was categorized by location, entitled: *You li Riben tujing* (遊歷日本圖經) [*Illustrated Travel Records of Japan*] (1889); *Youli Meiliija he zhong guo tujing* (遊歷美利加合眾國圖經) [*Illustrated Travel Records of the United States of America*] (1889); *Youli Milu tujing* (遊歷秘魯圖經) [*Illustrated Travel Records of Peru*] (1901); *Youli Baxi tujing* (遊歷巴西圖經) [*Illustrated Travel Records of Brazil*] (1901); *Youli Guba tujing* (遊歷加巴圖經) [*Illustrated Travel Records of Cuba*] (1901); and *Youli Jianada Tujing* (遊歷加納大圖經) [*Illustrated Travel Records of Canada*] (1902). His Japan travelogue is still often cited, but his other writings have not been the subject of major examination. There is a Japanese translation of Fu’s *Travel Envoy Records of Japan* entitled *Yäreki Nihon zukei: honbun to sakuin* (遊歷日本図経: 本文と索引) (1975).

\(^{17}\) I have found that many of his notes on Canada were directly copied from yearbooks and government sources on the 1880s and 1890s. The information presented in the official reports are often given from a statistical point of view and evidently not based on personal observation of the sites. Because this shared content is significant, it is dissected in the second chapter of my dissertation (89-142).
administrative systems, foreign relations, political affairs, culture and literature, military systems, industry, and rivers and canals” (Dong and Wang 21). The second work is a collection of poetry separated into country-specific books. The final work for each country provides extra notes and miscellaneous remarks (yují 餘記). The excerpts were much shorter in Youli Tujing Yuji (遊歷圖經餘記) [Extra Notes on Travelling] (1889). However, they shed light onto his own experience since his official records were evidently not based on personal observation but on statistics and information gleaned from other sources. Fu compartmentalizes his thoughts in these ways, with objective methods of recording through translation, traditional literati practices of poetic composition, and extra fragmentary and more subjective notes. In this chapter, I focus on ten pages from a section of extra notes (yují) in which Fu describes people and interactions during his voyage on the sea towards North America. I juxtapose this to his poetic compositions of Cuba to understand the portrayal of events on board. I use his writings to show the grappling with first-hand experience in translingual oceanic experiences that illustrate how the Pacific Ocean can be understood as a borderspace.

In the third, I study the usage of modern maps to analyze the experience of the Pacific Ocean of the overseas graduate student, Xie Fuya. Interpreting Xie’s experience of the dining hall on the SS President Jefferson and his relationship with foreigners on the ship in

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18 The collection is entitled Youli Shiji (遊歷詩集) [Travelling Poetry Collection] (1889).
19 I speak of the implications of these divisions in Chapter 2 (89-142) of my dissertation.
20 A collection of poetry is listed about Canada, but is still missing from available archives today. I have personally tried to locate the full collection of poems in Beijing, Hangzhou, and institutes in North America. Unfortunately, it seems that the poems on Canada no longer exist. But the material in the other collections infers that Fu was extremely adamant about poetic composition.
1925, I argue that his writing resists the stability of geographic borders\textsuperscript{21} as presented on maps in order to propose a futuristic gaze of the world for his Chinese Republican readers. Xie Fuya, published a travelogue in 1929 about his experience travelling from China to America as an international graduate student. This travelogue, \textit{Youmei xinhen} (遊美心痕) [Travelling to America, Traces of the Heart] is 174 pages long, and focuses largely on his experience at the University of Chicago and Harvard University, as well as his travels in North America as a student.\textsuperscript{22} However, he also dedicates one chapter (22 pages to be exact) to his transpacific voyage. Therein, he describes the passengers onboard (including students and missionaries), comments on human relationships (5), and expresses his boredom and disinterest after being at sea for several days (15). In this chapter, his interactions in the dining hall and observations on board showcase the movement of people and goods upon the Pacific Ocean as borderspace. I aim to demonstrate that this was a site for his critical formation of his worldview in the Sino-North American context, which legally excluded Chinese individuals from immigration after 1923. Reading the waters from the Chinese perspective allows for an allegorical understanding of the writing and thus bolstering the ocean as a borderspace connecting the two continents as worthy of exploration and critical assessment.

2.2 \textit{Class and Privilege: A Critique of Sino-North American Relations}

The Pacific Ocean was not a neutral space, as demonstrated by the division of classes of transpacific passengers. The structure of steamships and ticketing systems would indicate

\textsuperscript{21} To clarify, the geographic borders referred to in his writing are continental and not the lines drawn on maps that divide the ocean and seas into national holdings.

\textsuperscript{22} I discuss his poetry at Niagara Falls in Chapter 4 of my dissertation (185-245).
the privilege of passengers and dictate the type of spaces they would occupy on the vessels. While a map can show the routes and detours taken from the point of departure to the point of arrival, the embodied and class-specific way in which a passenger travelled cannot be made visible on maps. In this section, I will first consider the divisions in treatment and the impossibility of this treatment to be rendered cartographically.

The difference in cabin space affected the experience of travellers. Whether a passenger was in steerage or in a first-class cabin would prescribe the conditions in which they slept and interacted with others. Although it is not evident what exactly the sleeping cabins for the steerage looked like on a ship belonging to the Pacific Mail Steamship Company (PMSC), which had at least six fleets carrying many Asiatic passengers back and forth between America and China in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the very absence of documentation for lower class passengers is perhaps revealing. While the staterooms and other rooms were advertised in colourful detail in brochures such as the one describing SS Korea and SS Siberia, the steerage conditions were not listed:

The accommodations for passengers are confined entirely to the boat, promenade and upper decks, the bulk of them being on the two last named. The upper deck is so arranged that all the Staterooms are on the starboard side, and the galleys, pantries and quarters for servants and crew are all on the port side, along which there runs a working passage, thus enabling all the service of the ship to be performed without intruding upon the passengers’ quarters. The Staterooms are all paneled in white, with dark cherry trimmings. Each is provided with a white enameled iron bedstead, brass trimmed, fitted with upper and lower berths. There is in each room also a convertible sofa and folding lavatory stand with porcelain and cut-glass fittings. Each berth in every Stateroom is fitted with an independent electric light, nicely shaded for reading purposes. Each Stateroom has an

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23 The Pacific Mail Steamship Company was also the owner of SS China and SS City of Rio de Janeiro, the two ships on which the two diplomats investigated in this chapter travelled to America.
electric fan. The Dining Saloon is reached by a double stairway of solid bronze with ornamental railings and newel posts. [...] The Music-Room and Library are just abaft the Social Hall and divided along the sides into numerous booths, with a comfortable seat running around the inside of each, so that a number of parties may each obtain considerable privacy. The whole is carpeted in red and upholstered in dark red plush. The woodwork is mahogany, richly paneled. A well passes through the center of the Music-Room. (Across the Pacific 18)

Although it is logical to advertise the details of the privileged parts of the ship, the conditions of the steerage cabins being unrepresented suggests its unremarkable nature. The fact that the steerage conditions were not included tells of suppressed details for public audiences and potential customers. Steerage cabin conditions of the PMSC vessels, however, can be abstracted from other facts about the ship’s structure. As Mary Greenfield mentions, the PMSC’s SS City of Peking was “built to accommodate not only up to 150 first-class passengers but also 1,800 steerage passengers, the latter almost entirely Chinese. Steerage was usually filled to capacity, and at times some captains filled it well over the legal limit” (425-6). These numbers suggest that the conditions would have been rather cramped and space would have been tight on PMSC vessels. As such, the accommodations while traversing the Pacific Ocean reflected unequal treatment of travellers at sea specifically in terms of density of living space. The experience on the waters for these individuals who slept in tight spaces or in first class cabins on board is not visible on maps. Even more importantly, is that official histories and archives do not speak of the conditions of steerage class cabins; information about these class-specific differences is only found in personalized and individual accounts written by Chinese travellers.
Moreover, the hierarchy of the ship cannot be concealed especially when studying the different fares. Steamships offered first class tickets; tickets for servants of the first class; and steerage often corresponded to second class tickets and sometimes third class tickets depending on the ship. According to *An Official Guide to Eastern Asia, Trans-Continental Connections between Europe and Asia* (1913), travelling on a mail steamer such as the *SS Manchuria* and *SS Korea* would cost 45 pounds for a first class ticket, 30 pounds for a ticket for a servant of the first class passenger, and 17 pounds for a second class ticket from Hong Kong, Manila, or Shanghai to the Pacific Coast (54). On intermediate service ships such as *SS China*, which is the ship Zhang Deyi sailed on, first class tickets cost 25 pounds (54). While the exact amount of a steerage ticket is unknown for each ship documented in this chapter, it would have ranged from being a fourth of the price to a third of the price of a first-class ticket.\(^4\) Nevertheless, while a fare table could be easily printed alongside a map, the experience of belonging to a particular ticket class is not representable in cartographic form. These lived experiences are not conventionally characterized on maps and bolster how lived experience of space exceeds what can be learned from cartographic representations. Ultimately, it is because of these limitations in cartographic representation of the Pacific Ocean journeys that points to the significance of

\(^4\) According to Brandon Dupont, Drew Keeling, and Thomas Weiss on passenger fares, their chart comparing first, second, and steerage/third class advertised fares from 1850-1916 show that at its greatest discrepancy between first and third class; a first class ticket would have been approximately five times the price of a steerage ticket in the 1850s while the smallest disparity would have been in the 1900s when a first class ticket would have been approximately three times the price of a steerage ticket. Please see “Passenger Fares for Overseas Travel in the 19th and 20th Centuries,” Annual Meeting of the Economic History Association, September 21-23, 2012. Vancouver, Canada.
reading and interpreting lived and recorded experiences over other official records that contrast the minor-major tones of writing.

Zhang Deyi’s arrival to the United States as the translator in the Burlingame Mission via the SS China of PSMC bolsters the significance of writing. Zhang was a Bordered Yellow Bannermen and as such was eligible to enter the School of Combined Learning (Tongwenguan 同文館) established in 1862; a part of the Bureau of Foreign Affairs (Zongli Yamen 總理衙門) founded only a year earlier. Zhang became part of the first class of the Institute[25] studying English (Reynolds 71), equipping him to become a translator for the Burlingame entourage six years later. Travelling with the first diplomatic mission from China to America in 1868 at the age of nineteen, he carefully recorded his observations at sea and on land. Keeping detailed entries for all his journeys including this inaugural mission, he would become very well travelled, navigating more than “a hundred thousand li through thirteen countries” (11) in the years to come. Before going into detail about his

[25] The Tongwenguan was restricted to children of bannermen and that Zhang won a place out of ten boys aged thirteen to fifteen to be enrolled in the first class. According to Douglas Reynolds, Deyi “saw it [enrolling in the Tongwenguan] as a possible avenue for career advancement” since many bannermen were living in poverty at the time (71).

[26] In terms of early Sino-American relations, the 1868 Burlingame Mission is perceived as diplomatically important. The mutual and relatively equal understanding established between the two countries when the diplomats were in America did not reach full maturity. The treaties were drafted but never implemented. Many attribute this failure to the early death of Anson Burlingame, the leader of the mission, who died in Europe soon after their visit to America. Nevertheless, even though the impact of the mission was not long lasting, the context in which it was made possible is worthy of mention because of the interaction and the attempt to reach an understanding between the two nations, and later the challenge it posed to the U.S legislative decisions to overturn its agreements. For more on this legal barter, please see Beth Lew-Williams’s “Before Restriction Became Exclusion: America’s Experiment in Diplomatic Immigration Control.” Pacific Historical Review 83.1 (February 2014): 24-56.
artful rhetoric in writing about the oceanic voyage, some background information on the
goal of the Burlingame Mission is needed in order to understand the knowledge Zhang
possessed while travelling to America on the *SS China*, which would be the foundation
from which he wrote.

On Thursday, November 29, 1867 or the “second day of the 11th month of the year
dingmao,”
27 several Chinese representatives were sent out on the Burlingame Mission
with Anson Burlingame (1820–1870) as their leader. The former American Minister to
China was entrusted by Empress Cixi (1835–1908) to serve as the envoy leader of the
Mission after his assignment as Minister to China ended. Burlingame was to represent
China in negotiations with foreign nations. Little did they know at the time that the treaty
they would successfully negotiate with the President of the United States in 1868 would be
nullified in 1882. But on the 25th of February of 1868, Zhang and the other eight Qing
diplomats of Manchurian, Mongolian, and Han descent and three westerners, set out from
Shanghai for Yokohama to begin their mission *(Zhang and Xu 441)*. Zhang was the
translator for Zhi Gang,
28 perhaps the most prominent Chinese figure on the trip as he was
commonly photographed and named in iconic images of the Mission.
29 The entourage

27 In the original, Zhang uses the traditional calendar to record the date however in translation, Johnston has
converted the dating system to the Western calendar. The original, though, indicates that Zhang was thinking
of time not in sync with the Western calendar, which should be noted.

28 Zhi Gang was a customs official of Manchurian descent; served in Guizhou; and in the nine rank system of
the court, Zhi was of the second-rank *(Diary 13)*. He will be further discussed in Chapter 2 (89-142).

29 He is photographed and recognized as the Chinese ambassador during this journey to North America,
which is later discussed in Chapter 2. Another example was seen at the exhibition “Images Through Time:
Photos of Old Hong Kong” held between December 18, 2013 to April 21, 2014 at the Hong Kong Museum
of History, where Zhi is named along with Sun in the “Photograph of the Chinese Delegation.” Moreover, on
journeyed to the United States, Cuba, Peru, Canada, England, France, Russia, Italy, before returning to China in 1870 after the unexpected death of Anson Burlingame.

At the beginning of the journey, the whole entourage would have known of the reality of the large number of Chinese labourers being recruited for work around the world in the mid-nineteenth century. The 1860 *House Commerce Committee’s Report on the ‘Coolie Trade’*\(^{30}\) aligned the severity of the situation of Chinese coolies with the African slave trade (19). The report accused the shipmasters of the horrific transportation of Chinese labourers, declaring: “It is a mortifying fact that up to the present time American shipmasters and northern owners are found willing to connect themselves with a trade in many of its features as barbarous as the African slave trade”(19). By 1869, one recruiter claimed at a town meeting that his firm had “already imported and delivered thirty thousand Chinese labo[u]rers to California” (Jung 103). Whether the Chinese labourers were forced to work abroad is difficult to be certain of for several reasons. Some other systems such as credit-tickets tied individuals to work overseas (Northrup 11). Wealthy merchant contractors in British Columbia, for example, paid for the travel expenses of the immigrant in which the immigrant would repay as a worker (Wolf 13). Nonetheless, what is undeniable is that at the time of the Burlingame Mission’s becoming, the Qing court and

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the entourage were cognizant of the (possibly coerced) mass migration of Chinese individuals transported overseas on foreign steamships before the 1860s. The mission came into being because the court recognized that Chinese subjects were being mistreated overseas.

The Burlingame Treaty of 1868 was established to protect the Chinese from discrimination abroad. As a translator on this mission, Zhang was aware of the proposals and of the treatment of Chinese when they set out. The articles in the Treaty advocated for the equal rights of Chinese people working and living in America. Zhang, however, would have been mindful that more articles in the treaty were to help Chinese immigrants in the United States because they were being treated unfairly; unable to legally vote and become naturalized citizens. If the Chinese in America held the same privileges and received the same respect as other races, then Article Six of the Treaty would cease to have ever existed. Article Six, seen as an indication of Burlingame’s “profound commitment to racial justice” (Schrecker 30), is as follows:

Citizens of the United States visiting or residing in China shall enjoy the same privileges, immunities or exemptions in respect to travel or residence as may there be enjoyed by the citizens or subjects of the most favored nation, and, reciprocally, Chinese subjects visiting or residing in the United States shall enjoy the same privileges, immunities and exemptions in respect to travel or residence as may there be enjoyed by the citizens or subjects of the most favored nation. But nothing herein contained shall be held to confer naturalization upon citizens of the United States in China, nor upon the subjects of China in the United States (emphasis mine).

The explicit note of similar privileges, immunities, and exemptions corresponds to a material reality where these privileges, immunities, and exemptions were not available to the Chinese in America. On the equality of Americans in China, John Schrecker notes that
articles that “banned a reverse coolie trade from America to China and granted Americans
the right to emigrate there, neither very common or [sic] even likely events” were
superfluous and unnecessary (29). Nevertheless, in the historical context of Zhang’s time,
he knew about the poor circumstances of the Chinese in America.

2.2.1 Recasting of the Chinese Experience on Board as Critique

Zhang’s writings are the product of Qing’s changing view on the significance of
diplomatic missions and of their place in the world. Paul Cohen suggests studying China’s
own social structures and internal changes as sites of departure for understanding Chinese
history (5). As such, I understand the creation of the mission was not simply a response to
“Western impact.” In fact, Zhang Deyi’s text challenges the simplistic model of “Western
impact” on China. While there is a Sinocentric quality in his work, as noted by Tian
Xiaofei, I shall show that this perspective was established much earlier than the moment
Tian analyzes. Specifically, the Sinocentric quality begins on the journey on the ship
indicating that he was never a passive recipient of the foreign. The text’s artfulness in
presenting the lowly global status of fellow Chinese passengers on the ship emphasizes
Zhang’s position as an active agent and not as a passive recipient of unequal
circumstances. I argue that Zhang was not resisting an objectifying gaze or simply
fabricating a reality – the experience at sea as a critique of the borderspace shared by
China and North America was a creative articulation. Thus, the text further bolsters the
Pacific Ocean as a borderspace where people are in motion and where accounts can be
allegorically interpreted.

Zhang recasts Chinese as privileged on the ship in an attempt to reorganize the reality of
unfairness for Chinese peoples using the metaphor of caged animals. The reality of poor
treatment of Chinese on the vessels of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company was noted in
the late 1860s by the company itself: “Beginning in 1867, company directives firmly and
repeatedly admonished captains to ensure that the Chinese be treated with cordiality. They
reissued these orders frequently, which suggests that they were not always followed”
(Greenfield 454). And the same reality was arguably seen on SS China, the second
American vessel the representatives boarded for their trip to the United States on Saturday,
8 March 1868.³¹ Zhang describes the boat as large, the second-class rooms as unpleasant,
and the Chinese as privileged:

…a superior vessel some 450 by 100 feet called the China, [which is how
the Middle Kingdom is referred to in the English language³²] is broad and
clean. The second-class passengers’ iron bunks, about 1,500 of them in
tiers, take up the forward half, intolerably fetid folds and coops with a ceil-
like [sic] aspect. Amidships lie the kitchens, washrooms and special
dressing and smoking rooms for Chinese. The aft section, containing the
first-class cabins and dining room, is fashioned like any other ship. (Diary
37-8)

The denigrating depiction of the second-class cabins is noted for its unpleasant smell, and
the confined nature of the cabin rooms are described twice. Using the imagery of stables
and holes, Zhang equates the steerage cabins to the cage of animals and livestock.
Literally translating his depiction, he aligns the cabins with the stables for sheep (yangjiu
羊厩) and the makeshift coops dug out by chickens (jishi 雞埘) (Oumei 38). The second-

³¹ They first took another Pacific Mail ship named Costa Rica from Shanghai to Yokohama, then China from
Yokohama to America.

³² My translation of Zhang Deyi’s wording in the original (Oumei 38). That the ship is called “China” is not
quite given attention but it was a part of a fleet of new steamships belonging to the Pacific Mail Steamship
Company. According to Elizabeth Sinn, China was part of “four new side-wheelers that the PMSSC [Pacific
Mail Steamship Company] built specifically for the China route” (121). They were named Great Republic,
China, Japan, and America and “entered service between 1867 and 1869” (121).
class cabins are thus painted as ill-equipped, undesirable, and unsuitable for humans as it is where sheep and chickens would dwell.

In contrast to these dilapidated second-class cabins, Zhang portrays privileged treatment for the Chinese passengers on the ship. According to him, the Chinese (huaren 華人) on board have designated kitchens, washrooms, dressing rooms, and smoking areas (Oumei 38). He explains this arrangement without a hint of humility. There is no racial disadvantage in being Chinese on the SS China. He claims the Chinese are set apart, receiving superior treatment distinct from the rest of the passengers. Taking his account at face value, it appears as if the ethnic Chinese are entitled to restricted areas on the American vessel.

However, Zhang’s careful depiction of the ship’s cabin and the subsequent implication of an elevated status of the Chinese are overturned with his nota bene. He makes a special annotation of the racial composition on board: “For fellow-passengers, we have 24 Westerners, both men and women, plus 1,237 Chinese of all ages and both sexes, mostly Cantonese” (Diary 38; Oumei 38, emphasis mine). Zhang’s explicit survey of the ship’s demographics is crucial to understanding the Pacific Ocean as a space of contestation and contemplation. According to the passenger list of SS China on 1 April 1868 in the Daily Alta California, there were at least 738 Chinese landing in California with the delegation. Assuming the ten Oriental delegates are included in Zhang’s sum, there are around 489 Chinese unaccounted for and not mentioned in the newspaper. As Mary

33 Large numbers of Chinese were transported on the specific steamship SS China – in April of the following year, there were 1,250 Chinese on board (Sinn Pacific 127).
Greenfield put forth, steerage was “filled to capacity” and sometimes filled “well over the legal limit” (426). So perhaps Zhang’s number is closer than reported in newspapers. Nevertheless, taking both sets of numbers into account and assuming figures are objective, between ninety-six to ninety-eight percent of the boat’s population was ethnically Chinese. This calculation illuminates that the two observations Zhang records about the second-class cabins and Chinese privilege can be read as artfully masked comments of the sea experience and as a critique on the international circumstances of ethnic Chinese.

On the one hand, Zhang’s portrayal of Chinese superiority is challenged firstly because up to ninety-eight percent of the whole ship was Chinese. The ship at one point only had 268 first class cabins and 771 second class cabins (“SS China”). The maximum legal capacity would then be 1,039 passengers. Zhang claims that there were around 1,500 beds which demonstrates either a change in the ship’s build, an inflated number given to Zhang in which he dutifully reports, or a ballpark estimation Zhang made himself. Nevertheless, these numbers indicate that the majority of the ethnic Chinese passengers must have been in steerage cabins because of the limited number of first class cabins.35

Evidently then, it would have been mostly Chinese who experienced the unpleasant air and dwelled in the confined space of the second-class cabins. The parallel drawn between the second-class cabins and the stables and coops (which keep sheep contained and chicken sheltered) overturns his portrayal of Chinese superiority on board. According to his numbers, only two percent of the passengers were not ethnically Chinese. His claim

34 738 of the newspaper’s total of 762 is 96.8%; 1237 of Zhang’s reported total of 1261 is 98%.
35 Other passengers also noted how SS China had mainly Chinese in steerage in 1896 (qtd. William Adams, in Greenfield 454).
that rooms were ‘designated’ for Chinese then seems highly unlikely. Perhaps he was solely highlighting special rooms for the delegation, as Anson Burlingame was a noteworthy ticketholder – so much so that his name appears first in the passenger list while the “738 Chinese” on board are the last to be anonymously addressed by their ethnic group. Or perhaps it was seen as entitled for the Chinese simply because there were so many Chinese on board that it was impossible not to see Chinese people in every room on the ship. Ultimately, his *nota bene* disqualifies his previous description of the vessel as having designated areas solely for Chinese passengers.

What is noteworthy is that he does not explicitly frame the situation as pitiful or shameful for the Chinese. This is one moment where the creative agency of Zhang Deyi is seen in shaping and revising the experience of travel for Chinese passengers. Tian Xiaofei refers to this rhetoric of self-revision as being part of the coloniality of travelogues:

[T]he mid-nineteenth-century Chinese travel accounts of Europe and America [is] metaphorically ‘colonialist’ discourse that commits acts of violence to the encountered world by imposing on it their own conceptual categories and systems of classification. Language and representation have their share, indeed a powerful one, in the colonial enterprise. (158)

In a pointed example, Tian shows how Zhang Deyi had taken his experience in Boston being mistaken for a woman and self-revised it into a reason to boast about his Chinese identity and create “a much more flattering portrait of onlookers ‘marveling’ at the Chinese travellers and even ‘expressing envy’” (188). Tian shows how the act of writing about these incidents revealed Zhang’s sense of insecurity and urgency to affirm himself (203). On the boat, Zhang’s rhetoric also exposes this ‘colonialist’ sentiment in concealing the situation of the Chinese aboard. He never directly mentions that the Chinese were
occupying the stable-like steerage cabins. Zhang’s overzealous writing about the privileged state of the Chinese on the ship may show insecurity, however I argue that it is rather a deliberate act to critique the global situation of Chinese mass migration for livelihood. The experience on the ship at sea not only demonstrates his careful concealment of the place of Chinese and the Qing, but also prompts him to inform his Chinese audience at home of an opposite reality, making his oceanic writing worthy of evaluation and consideration in his historical moment.

On the long journey at sea, Zhang had time for mental contemplation – to reorganize the reality he saw with his naked eye on the ship and the knowledge he had in mind about the treatment of Chinese in the world before boarding. Zhang Deyi’s livestock, pens, stables, coops, and cages are allegories for the unfair treatment of the ethnic Chinese on the ship and abroad. Zhang’s writing can be read as critiques of the global historical moment where humans were being treated like animals instead of equal persons. While indirect in pointing to the treatment of Chinese, Zhang rewrites their underprivileged reality.

Read in light of the large Chinese demographic of the ship, his reportage of Japanese forced labourers whom he saw the day after departing from Yokohama further discloses the fraught nature of the space within the vessel and the place of Chinese in the world. Zhang documents the large group of Japanese people disembarking beside them on an adjacent ship, which reminds him of home:

This morning saw over a hundred Japanese leave the ship [across from us]. [D]isheveled and grimy-faced as unquiet ghosts [they were] looking straight at our ship in horrible manner. Learnt on inquiry they were forced labours for Western ships, clothed like slaves, fed like dogs or swine and kept in such misery that hanging itself would be preferable. I was reminded of late nights, hearing cock crow[ing], [dog] bark[ing], caws and birds [chirping] in the jabber
of voices, *as if I had been back at home* until I was presently shaken from my rever[ie] by a cable clattering to the ground as the deckhands cleaned the ship, and there I was back on board with the same scene before my eyes. (*Diary 38*, emphasis mine)

In Zhang’s account, this disheveled crowd having been sold for labour is better off not living – “hanging itself would be preferable” (38). Critically this scene reminds him of China, “as if [he] had been back at home” with animals and livestock. Twice in the span of two days, then, Zhang makes reference to livestock and caged conditions in his diary—first when describing second-class cabins, and again when aligning the Japanese in front of him with a distant memory of China. Although he divorces the Japanese situation from the Chinese people on his boat, who may or may not have also been coolies (not uncommon in the 1860s), what is noteworthy is how, once again, humans are aligned to animals in their misery, suggesting a critique of global racial inequalities. Zhang ends off the haunting entry for the day with a serene comment: “We sailed at half past one, southwards, among lands, and entered the Pacific, or Great Eastern Ocean, at night” (38) with little interaction occurring with the other 1,237 Chinese on board.36 Zhang is not overtly political about his depiction of the treatment of Chinese travellers and obscures his critique within a calm image of the evening waters.

The references to the cabin conditions equitable to livestock cages, the animal-like situation of the forced labourers on the other ship, and the livestock “at home” cannot be so peacefully dismissed, however, especially considering the era in which Zhang writes.

36 Unlike his fellow contemporary Li Gui (李圭) (1842-1903), representative to the Philadelphia Centennial Expedition of 1876, Zhang does not explicitly illuminate the hardships and discrimination of the Chinese. On Li’s journey upon the Pacific Mail’s *City of Peking*, he speaks to the Chinese on their way to America and asks them why they go (261). Li ends his entry plainly: “I felt enormous pity for them” (261).
The references to livestock made in his descriptions of the steerage cabins inhabited by ethnic Chinese, of situation of the Japanese forced labour, and of his “home” in China indicate that Zhang could not have been unaware of the lowly position of the Chinese. His time on the water provides him with an opportunity to witness first-hand what he has only heard of in reports. At this point, the link between the Chinese labourers and their Japanese counterparts is made clear by two connections. First, as we saw earlier, he associates the Japanese labourers to the livestock at his own residence in China. The scene of the ghastly faces reminds him of the desolate situation of Chinese people back home. Second, the image of the livestock at home in China echoes the treatment of (ethnic Chinese) passengers in steerage as chickens and sheep as well. The livestock serves as a symbol of unfair treatment – in this case, of both the Japanese forced labourers and the ethnic Chinese on the ship sailing towards North America. Thus, Zhang Deyi’s oceanic writings create an intricate metaphor for Sino-North American relations. Not explicitly writing about the standing of the Chinese on a global stage, he nonetheless distinguishes the unfair treatment of those of Asian descent in the Americas. Writing as such shows his contemplation of racial hierarchy as well as his consciousness in assessing the wretched position of the Chinese via the Pacific Ocean.

Zhang demonstrates that the Pacific Ocean is indeed a borderspace, filled with transnational intersections that produced racial anxieties. Upon the steamship, his seemingly proud and privileged commentary about the Chinese belies a rhetorical attempt to overcompensate for what he perceives as the Chinese standing in the Americas. Demographic information about the ship contradicts Zhang’s proud claim of Chinese supremacy. And with his nota bene, Zhang illustrates that Chinese subjects were treated
unfairly on the ship and, by extension, in the transnational space of the world. Zhang’s oceanic writing thus functions indirectly as a critique of racial inequality in the nineteenth century. A reorganization of the world materialized in writing about this space of the Pacific Ocean for Zhang Deyi—as it would for Fu Yunlong, who I turn to in the next section.

2.3 Seasickness?: A Metaphor for Qing Weakness

While coolie transportation in the nineteenth century is well researched, the personal experiences of Chinese travellers who shared the same ethnicity as these Chinese labourers has not been critically examined. Nevertheless, interactions across class borders such as these are significant to the narrative of minor transnationalism, in that they tell a shared global history from a distinctly minor perspective. Intraethnic encounters between Chinese seamen and labourers and envoy travellers expose not only the diversity of a space that may appear neutral on maps but also the need for interpretation of the waters as a borderspace. By rendering the Pacific Ocean as a borderspace, the physicality of the shared journeys and the psychological grappling of those who did write about the experience are made evident.

The rivalries in California over the transportation of coolies across the Pacific Ocean show how profitable the trade was and how economic interests were intertwined with the flow of human migration in the era of gradual emancipation in the United States. In 1869, Cornelius Koopmanchap, then president of the Central Pacific Railroad Company, endeavoured to bring more Chinese labourers via transpacific routes to California (Jung 103), perhaps in response to the changing laws against slavery. George W. Gift, a U.S. Navy officer and later businessman, also attempted to transport Chinese coolies by ship to
America the following year. Gift wrestled with then-British colonial Hong Kong authorities and laws (Jung 121). While both failed to reach their aspirations, their struggle to acquire foreign labour dominates the history of trans-oceanic migration, and the perspective of the Chinese travellers remains largely unaccounted for.

In this section, I discuss Fu Yunlong’s writings and his journey on the *SS City of Rio de Janeiro* in order to better situate the intraethnic encounter he portrayed in 1888. In 1887, Fu Yunlong was sent as one of a dozen Chinese travel envoys (*youliren 遊歷人*) to observe technology and people around the world. Fu’s journey to Japan, the United States, Canada, Peru, Chile, Brazil, and Cuba was made possible by a new initiative established by the Qing court. In 1885, the court issued a call for travel envoys after finding significance in having more officials observe the world in addition to representatives already serving in foreign countries (Zhuan 96; Reynolds 283). Aware of the changing times, when the Qing desired new knowledge about the world, Fu applied for

37 In contrast to Jung’s writing, historian Elizabeth Sinn paints Koopmanschap as being successful. By 1861, Koopmanschap & Co was the agent of 16 of 32 ships sailing from Hong Kong to America (*Pacific Crossing* 115). Later, she depicts his change in career as a recruiter of Chinese labour as follows: “his experience in transpacific business no doubt helping to establish him as the leading contractor and importer of Chinese labor by the end of the decade” (117).

38 The other envoys included Li Bingrui 李秉瑞 (1856-1917); Miao Yousun 繆佑孫 (1851-1894); Xu Zonggao 徐宗培 (1855-n.d.); Jin Peng 金鵬 (1855-n.d.); Liu Qitong 劉啟彤 (1854-n.d.); Cheng Shaozu 程紹祖 (1849-n.d.); Hong Yu 洪勲 (1855-n.d.); Chen Tang 陳唐 (1856-n.d.); Gu Houkun 顧厚焜 (1838-n.d.); Hong Zhaoqian 孔昭乾 (1856-n.d) and Li Yingrui 李瀛瑞 (1846-n.d). The details of when some of these envoys died are unknown today.

39 This is printed in Fu Zuxi et al’s *Fu Yunlong Zhuan* (96) and translated in Reynolds’s *East* (282-3). I have borrowed the English rendition in Reynolds’s text. Reynolds correctly translates the *Yi fu Xie Zuyuan zou qing lianxi Yangwu rencai shu* as “Forwarding with Recommendations Xie Zuyuan’s Memorial to Train Western Experts.”
the position. Seventy-five eligible candidates wrote the exam for the position of travel envoy, which was not based on Confucian learning but on issues of national defense and foreign affairs (Wang Xiaqiu 201). This shift in subject matter may have been challenging for many, but not for Fu since he was serving as the Senior Secretary on the Ministry of Defense (Zhuan 103). In the end, Fu’s examination essay “Ji Zhongguo zi Mingdai yilai yu Xiyang jiaoshe dalüe (記中國自明代以來與西洋交涉大略) [Overview on Sino-Western Relations since the Ming Dynasty]” won first prize and was reprinted in a Shanghai newspaper, Shenbao 申報 (1872-1949), on 28 October 1887. Subsequently, he was sent out for two years as a travel envoy. At the age of 46, he sailed to Japan for several months before arriving in North and South America.\textsuperscript{40}

Specific rules were laid out in the regulations for this new role of travel envoy, which affected Fu Yunlong’s experience abroad.\textsuperscript{41} The protocols were very clear, and were even published for the public on 2 June 1887 in Shenbao, under the title “Zongshu niding Chuyang Youli Zhangcheng Tiaokuan (總署擬定出洋遊歷章程條欵) [Regulations Governing Travel Abroad Appointees].”\textsuperscript{42} Translators were assigned to the travelling officials, since most had little training in foreign languages. In terms of pay, the rank of

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\textsuperscript{40} His journey into Canada is discussed in detail in Chapter 2 (89-142).


\textsuperscript{42} This is how Reynolds translates this title. However, more precisely the article’s title can be translated as “Rules and Regulations Set for Travel Envoys Going Overseas.” [總署擬定出洋遊歷章程條欵] Fu Zuxi also quotes the rules (see pages 96-7).
the travel envoy determined the wages of the envoy and his translator: the higher the ranking, the larger the stipend granted by the court. Whether travelling by ship or by train, these representatives could only purchase second-class tickets. Perhaps because Fu did not hold a high rank in the Ministry of Defense, his compensation was not great, as he noted his stress over the stipend throughout his journey. Selected envoys could reject the call of duty if their parents were aged or ill, following Confucian ethical standards. Travel notebooks were to be submitted upon their return and a prize would be granted for the best one. In the end, Fu’s notes were recognized as the most stellar of the reports submitted. Based on his two-year voyage, Fu compiled three collections of texts per country visited. His existing poems express concern for the Chinese abroad and their desolate conditions, often focusing on Chinese coolies and labourers. Fu attempted to place his sentiments and personal experiences into the poetic and miscellaneous collections rather than the official records. I read these as creative products of his experience of oceanic travel as borderspace: marking the beginning of a border-crossing that began even before arriving in North America.

Before arriving in North America, Fu’s knowledge of the world was already being formed by several factors: the texts he read in preparation for his travels, the financial and bureaucratic restrictions of the envoy mission, contemporary changes in Sino-American

43 In Canada he mentions how he was in a rush to leave partially because of the frigid weather and partially because of the shortage of monetary resources.

44 His hardworking habits were arguably cultivated by self-motivation for career enhancement. Fu never passed the imperial examinations and was born in an era where degrees could be purchased (Reynolds 324). I argue he tried much harder because he perceived this opportunity as travel envoy as a turning point in his career.
relations, and even the conditions of the ship he travelled on. Firstly, in preparing for his
travels, Fu did not appear to have read Chinese travelogues, such as those of the Chinese
diplomats on the Burlingame Mission,\(^{45}\) and may not have been aware of the specific
experiences of Chinese diplomats travelling in the Americas. Instead, he researched
Chinese texts about the ‘West’ that were based on translated knowledge, such as Xu Jiyu’s
*Yinghuan zhilüe* (瀛寰志略) [*A Short Account of the Maritime Circuit*] (1849) and Wei
Yuan’s *Haiguo tuzhi* (海國圖志) [*Illustrated Treatise on the Maritime Kingdoms*] (1843).
These sources would have given Fu a less Sinocentric perspective of spatial geography,
one in which China’s global position was decentered. In this way, Fu’s writings do not
echo the Sinocentric methods of reorganizing knowledge like Zhang Deyi but adopts a
darker outlook on the lowly position of Chinese.

In addition to knowledge transmitted through books, Fu’s worldview was also influenced
by the terms in which he left China, in particular the regulations he was given in terms of
his travel budget. The low travel budget of the envoy mission was publicly mocked in an
article published anonymously in *Shenbao* on 10 November 1887, which ridiculed the fact
that envoys had to purchase second-class tickets and claimed that the stipulation made
them “a laughing stalk” (*xiaobing* 笑柄).\(^ {46}\) Whether Fu was aware of the jeers and jokes is

\(^{45}\) He does not make reference to them and moreover believed that he was the first Chinese to have visited
Niagara. This is discussed further in the second chapter of my dissertation (89-142).

\(^{46}\) Reference to this article is also made in *Fu Yunlong Riji*, a Chinese compilation and annotated summary of
Fu’s life. The compiler of Fu’s diaries (who is also a descendant of Fu Yunlong), Fu Xuncheng also
mentions this article published in *Shenbao* entitled “Lun Youli renyuan zhi zezhong (Discussion of the
Importance of Travel Envoys)”. While some of the secondary commentary provided by Fu Xuncheng is
biased in this author’s opinion, the *Shenbao* has been consulted again for accuracy. Doubt in the secondary
unknown, but I argue that this regulation directly affected his undertaking as he left his motherland. Knowing that the Qing court would only be able to afford frugal transportation for their journeys, that is the reason that Fu was keen on maintaining his budget and his financial restrictions.

Another factor influencing Fu’s understanding of the world before physically crossing into foreign lands was that travel permits were required for envoys. Travel documents were to be handled by the Bureau of Foreign Affairs as stipulated in Article Twelve of the regulations: “The Zongli Yamen will issue letters of introduction and passports to facilitate the full assistance and cooperation of ministers and consuls abroad” (Reynolds 287, also Zhuan 97). This paperwork would impact Fu’s understanding that despite his status as an official envoy, the world and the oceans were not freely navigable spaces.

An additional element that shaped Fu’s worldview was the contemporary change in Sino-American relations. The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 was established five years before Fu Yunlong departed. On his way to San Francisco, he already knew that Chinese citizens in America did not have the right to vote (Zhuan 133). Thus his observations about the

commentary arises from sections in the book which include baihua dialogue between Fu Yunlong and others which do not have citations and is extremely exaggerated (See pages 127-28).

47 Separate papers were necessary for him and his fellow travel envoy and partner, Gu Houkun (顧厚焜) (1838 – n.d.) to land in Japan. Fortunately, the change in Sino-Japanese relations in 1886 allowed for a speedy processing of their visas in Japan. According to Reynolds, the Japanese were very receptive to the travel envoys and made sure to expedite their visas: “Most fortuitous for them [Fu and Gu] is that Japan had approved permits for Chinese to travel into the interior […] only one year earlier, for the two specified purposes of research (gakujitsu kenkyū) and medical treatment” (304).
Chinese he saw on SS City of Rio de Janeiro can be read as allegorical of the historical moment in which he wrote. As such, Fu Yunlong’s writing should be interpreted beyond a physical reality of shared intraethnic space, as a strategic reorganization of the position of Chinese in the world.

Lastly, the tattered condition of the ship Fu boarded was another factor that would form the foundation of his oceanic writing. He boarded the ten-year-old iron-hulled steamship SS City of Rio de Janeiro. The steamship travelled on a route from Hong Kong, Yokohama, Hawaii, Honolulu, to San Francisco after becoming part of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company’s fleet. Built in 1878 and originally fitted for 100 first class passengers and 400 steerage cabins, SS City of Rio de Janeiro was sold to PMSC in 1881 (Braynard 6). Fu correctly records the change in ownership in his travelogue – “initially a Brazilian boat, it later changed hands to an American company” (Zhuan 129). More important to understanding the complex Sino-North American context were the seamen on board with him at the time. When the boat sank in San Francisco in February of 1901, it was reportedly hard to save its passengers because the seamen were Chinese and did not speak English, as stated by the lawyer in the liability case, William Denman:

The members of the crew of the deck department (sailors) of the engineer’s department and of the fireroom [sic], constituting all the crew, save the cabin boys, were Chinese who could not understand English. The officers could not speak Chinese nor any language that these Chinamen could understand. All the commands were either by gesture or through two interpreters. (33)

The fact that Chinese men were made to stand at court as witnesses exposes that the ethnicity of crewmen as Chinese and the fact that they did not understand English. Most of
the passengers who died in the shipwreck were also Chinese, but the lawyer only cared for the economic interests of transportation companies to reconsider hiring Chinese as seamen and not the ethnicity of the dead (55-6). That Chinese were employed as seamen is not surprising on a Pacific Mail Steamship Company’s vessels. The *SS City of Peking* had also advocated for the cheap and diligent labour of Chinese men on board. It is safe to assume that some (if not most) of the Chinese on the *SS City of Rio de Janeiro* when Fu travelled just three years earlier were actually seamen and not just those sailing overseas for livelihood in North America. With this background information of the conditions of his journey and the knowledge he possessed prior to stepping foot onto soil, I allegorically read the intraethnic encounter on board as a portrayal of the weakness of the Qing empire in his mind in 1888.

### 2.3.1 Re-Interpreting the Affect and Physicality of the Journey

Statistics outlining the number of Chinese passengers on the ship tells us nothing of the lived experiences and interactions between these passengers. The language barriers affected the embodied experience and accounts of the other Chinese passengers on the ship. The inability to communicate with them but inclusion of their presence on the ship reflects Fu’s anxieties towards China’s international standing. Fu Yunlong’s description of travel across the Pacific Ocean as a borderspace of lived experiences and affects can be interpreted as a microcosm representing the international standing of ethnic Chinese during this era, where the Qing empire was grappling with its place on a global scale.

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Fu’s comments on the body’s adaptability to material conditions of the ship suggest the standing of ethnic Chinese during his era. Fu describes the difficulty of lying down and in breathing, and subsequently the high possibility of growing sick on board which can be read as a microcosm of the place of China in the world. Fu Yunlong presents details about the ship’s general measurements as well as the cabin’s wretched condition:

Its length 350 feet, width 32 feet, can hold 2,275 tonnes and more with 75 pounds of steam pressure per square inch. It can take a total of 775 passengers. Thirty-four upper cabins and twice as many beds. No middle cabin. The apparent middle cabins are the same as the lower cabins with sleeping mats; [a place to sleep that is partitioned] made with bamboo and cloth. Lying down is minimal. Containers made of cloth attract a windy draft but prevent air circulation. Breathing is made difficult. [Those who were] not sick would get sick. (129)

His attempt to provide an objective description by presenting the materials in the cabin such as “bamboo and cloth” is met with his disappointment in and concern with the living standards in the steerage spaces. As such, Fu’s bodily experience indicates his awareness of the poor conditions of travel upon this American steamship.

Fu’s seasickness and claustrophobic feelings within the cabins can be read as a microcosm for the Chinese subjects in general, given the historical context of his era. It is a borderspace in which anxieties surrounding larger global issues are condensed into personal, embodied, and lived experiences. His reported claustrophobic experience suggests how the Chinese were placed in unbearable circumstances in the world. His own inability to rest and eat represents the issues faced by ethnic Chinese counterparts in the world who were facing unequal treatment for livelihood. This observation on the ship across the Pacific Ocean marks Qing’s weakness through first-hand experience. Fu comes to the conclusion that the Cantonese on the ship were heading to the West “for livelihood”
(Zhuan 129), but does not disclose any interaction that he confirmed this with the Cantonese. He also does not present himself as knowledgeable of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act. He makes no association of the “700 Guangdong people” boarding the boat at Yokohama for America with the Act that only allowed Chinese merchants, students, and diplomats to enter the United States. However, his familiarity with American treatment of Chinese is displayed in his one and only empathetic phrase on board where he felt deeply for their position, claiming that they were perceived as foes and as slaves after their toil without “the rights of citizenship and the right to vote” (129). Fu may have read the Burlingame Treaty, which mentioned that “the Chinese were not allowed to act as witnesses in American courts and were singled out to pay a special tax, but also pointed out that the Qing government needed to send officials there to prevent the Chinese from becoming a lower social stratum in America” (Qin 52). However, this cannot be proven. 49 Setting aside the debate on Fu’s sources of information, his words nevertheless reveal a growing concern and consciousness for the Chinese abroad. The poor ventilation that he reports, I argue, was a way of expressing anxieties concerning the place of ethnic Chinese in the world. There was an increasing humility in being Chinese in the world. No longer a record of reserved spaces and rooms on ships for Chinese as Zhang Deyi kept, Fu’s depictions were darker. 50

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49 It is unclear whether he was specifically aware of the Burlingame Treaty but he certainly did not read the travel writings of the Chinese diplomats on the Burlingame Mission since he thought he was the first Chinese person to visit Niagara Falls in his own writing.

50 His impressions on New World soil would be rendered gloomier as well. He devotes an entry to the tombstone of a Chinese girl from Nanhai, sold to Gold Mountain or California as a concubine. She was abused without help but mentally strong and so people enshrined her (Riji 123). He would also go on to
After complaining that the cabins would make people sick, Fu says that his own seasickness is quite severe. From Japan to the United States, he says that he could finally eat after five days at sea since departing from Japan and sit upright on the ship. However, despite this (reported) seasickness, Fu manages to write a single line about the Cantonese on the *SS City of Rio de Janeiro* almost every day. While they seem short, the Chinese must have been significant to him because these are his only observations of people on the ship besides the captain, who is only mentioned at the beginning.

Between his own descriptions of bodily discomfort Fu records short excerpts about the Chinese and careful notes on his location on the Pacific Ocean. Evidently Fu was serious about following regulations as an official travel envoy, producing calculations and charts with information such as distance travelled on water, the climate, and the geographical coordinates throughout the journey. Vacillating between neutral cartographic knowledge, his own physical body, and his personal observations and impressions of other Chinese travellers, I argue a reshaping of his worldview was being crafted with regards to the inability of the Qing empire to protect their own subjects. The back and forth rhetorical movement is like waves tossed about. His narrative wavers between his knowledge of the world, attempts to rest, sights of Chinese on board, and dutiful reporting of coordinates for his audiences. This rhetoric can be read on the textual seasickness, on the level of representational structure. The Chinese traveller was grappling with various forms of

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interview railway workers in Cuba, recording not only the number of migrants but also the death toll (*Riji* 129).
knowledge that would make representing travel on the Pacific Ocean in a familiar and stable Sinocentric mode an impossibility.

This rhetorical movement suggests a struggle with the issue of representation, a textual seasickness that suggests Fu was not able to express or completely understand what he saw. His comments, when analyzed, show that he was wrestling with how to represent intraethnic encounters and comprehend the unequal power relations on the ship. I show how and why the portrayals were structured the way they were and how we can read them as part of his larger metaphorical seasickness towards the Qing empire.

Firstly, the interactions between Fu Yunlong and the Cantonese travellers on board are presented in tableau-like fragments devoid of communication, likely due to linguistic differences. Fu omits any dialogue he may have had with Chinese passengers – coolies or seamen – presenting each scene with little to no commentary. His descriptions of these

51 One point of speculation is whether or not there were ethnic Chinese crewmembers on board with Fu at this time. He makes no comment about their presence, but there is a large possibility that there were. As former research by scholars such as John K. W. Tchen (1999) and Robert Schwendinger (1978) illustrates, there were definitely Chinese sailors and cooks on these American vessels of the nineteenth century even if accurate numbers cannot be retrieved. There is a strong case for Chinese crewmembers on specifically Rio de Janeiro amongst other Pacific Mail Steamships because in 1901, three years after Fu Yunlong boarded the Rio it sank at the Golden Gate. In the reports of the aftermath in the San Francisco Call on February 23, 1901, there were 77 Asiatic crewmembers, 68 Chinese and Japanese in steerage in total. 15 Asiatic in steerage were saved, 41 Chinese crewmembers also survived. Of the deaths, 36 crewmembers identified as Chinese perished along with 48 Asiatic in steerage. Out of a total of 201 people, 145 were of Asian descent and at least 77 Chinese crewmembers. The event and its death toll were also reported in newspapers in North Carolina such as The Semi-Weekly Messenger on February 26. Without a passenger list though, it is a speculation that Fu purposefully chose to exclude them in his travelogue. It is highly unlikely though that 77 Chinese crewmembers were inexperienced and suddenly signed to the shipping companies between 1889 (after Fu boarded) and 1901 (when the accident occurred).
interactions are objective and depersonalized. He notes that a “Guangdong person helped [Yunlong] shave [his] hair (tifa 蕃發).” The terseness in his speech suggests that while endeavouring to take note of cultural encounters on the ship, he distanced himself from the scene and tried to be objective. Fu does not provide details as to how the scene came about or give further clues about its players. Did the Guangdong native volunteer to do his hair? Was it Fu who requested the Guangdong native to do so? Was there money involved? Due to his detached and non-descriptive way of reporting, we are left with many questions unanswered about the relationships he established on board. However, surely in order for his hair to be done there needed to be some communication and instruction, if not verbally then through their bodies using corporeal gestures. Nevertheless, the lack of dialogue and inability to communicate with the man produces a fragmented exchange that is isolated and suspended in time.

Secondly, in this fragmented form, the narrative objectifies and disposes of other Chinese. This could also be a consequence of having only physical interactions without any verbal exchange. Fu makes note of sickness and death in the lower cabins, but neither pursues the matter further nor attempts to help the Chinese there. He mentions that in the lower cabin there was a Chinese labourer (huagong 華工) thought to be sick. The following day, he observes again that someone in the lower cabin may have measles, however their whereabouts are no longer known (Zhuan 129). This piece of news about the disappearance of a human body, which implies the individual had died or been thrown into the sea, is not accompanied by further investigation and simply ends with the uncertain location of the body. There is a lack of expression of compassion and mourning. Perhaps Fu was too sick to make further inquiries, but it is more likely that the fate of the person
deemed sick was obvious, who was likely thrown into the ocean to prevent the spread of infectious disease. This disposal would not be the first case of death and removal off a ship. While wrestling with how to describe the situation, Fu ambiguously leaves no explanation for the disappearance and his accounts seem to be lacking in continuity and in emotion.

The elliptic rhetoric, however, is extremely important when considering seasickness as metaphor because it follows the logic of rupture and trauma. The tableau-like and fragmented representations of the Cantonese correspond to the mental reorganization Fu undergoes while on the Pacific Ocean. The isolated moments suspended in time are not neatly arranged because Fu’s reality was shaken by what he witnessed and understood of the historical vulnerability of Chinese subjects in the world. Whether the Chinese in question were seamen or passengers looking for livelihood abroad, or, like himself, were sent out as envoys, the diminishing position of the Qing empire is undeniably in question. In the past, tributes were always received on their own territory with other states, such as Annam (931-1887; Vietnam), travelling to the capital of China to pay their respects to the Chinese emperor. As such, the borderspace of the Pacific Ocean illuminates what is unrecorded in cartographic form and the problems of including a space outside of China proper, which placed the Chinese traveller-writer in a difficult position. The representation of the physicality of the journey read from the perspective of the Chinese traveller-writer offers new interpretations of the writing. Fu’s rhetoric in portraying the journey on the Pacific Ocean allegorically presented the lowly place of Chinese in the late nineteenth century.

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Zhang Deyi notes that on May 22, 1868 a passenger “reported to have succumbed in the aft cabins and to have been ordered by the captain to be thrown overboard wrapped in white felt by four blacks” (*Diary 71*).
century, forming a consciousness that was no longer Sinocentric and an awareness of the bleak position of overseas Chinese in the Americas. In the twentieth century, which will be examined next, this consciousness of China’s position globally became more hopeful although still critical.

2.4 Modern Maps and the Allegorical Gaze towards China’s Future

Modern maps often render divisions between territories as neat lines. However, the making of these lines and their dynamic nature are often not considered because of the seeming neutrality of their function as separating nation-states and other territories. The significance of thinking through the process of mapmaking and the standardization of particular projections in it demonstrates that in conforming to one model, other systems were obliterated and eliminated. Much like the notion of minor transnationalism that tells of the aftermath of the trauma of colonial and imperial pursuits, cartography can be considered from a minor perspective as well.

In traditional Chinese mapping practices, China was placed at the center. Because the empire dominated much of the surrounding areas, many states sent envoys to pay tribute to the emperor, as aforementioned. Moreover, the Chinese classics and learning were central in East Asian culture; with scholars coming from Japan, Korea, Russia and Vietnam to study at the Imperial College (guozijian 國子監) beginning in the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). This Sinocentric understanding of the Chinese empire was not only present in nomenclature – China in Chinese literally means “Middle Kingdom.” It was also present in the way the world was imagined for centuries, until the seventeenth century when Matteo Ricci and other Jesuit missionaries collaborated with Chinese officials to produce a map of the world that positioned the Chinese empire as only one part of the globe. But it
took two more centuries before the Mercator projection of the world was reproduced in China. As such, local cartographic practices underwent immense change before evolving into the modern projection we see today.

The notion of borderspace, which allows for new interpretations of events normally not rendered visible on maps, responds to this change and standardization by exploring how Chinese students with modern education grappled with the voyage on the Pacific Ocean differently from their predecessors. I argue that modern educated individuals did not experience the immense reorganization of the world and knowledge systems as late Qing diplomats did. While men like Zhang Deyi critiqued the unfair circumstances for the Chinese and Fu Yunlong’s representation of seasickness marks the weakening of the Chinese empire in the global context of their era, students who straddled both dynastic imperial education and modern knowledge would comprehend the world-at-large with a new outlook. For the latter group of students, imaginations of the world via the Pacific Ocean held a hopeful gaze towards the future.

Xie Fuya was part of a large population of overseas Chinese students who travelled from China to America to study during the Exclusion Era (1882-1943). He belonged to the intellectual group, a less significant yet distinct set of Chinese sojourners with the goal of obtaining a degree abroad (Hum Lee 88). Born in the province of Zhejiang, he would eventually become a respected philosopher, literary writer, and Christian theologian. Xie had studied in Japan before enrolling in the University of Chicago in 1925 and then

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53 I believe Fu Yunlong’s projection of the world found in his accounts is a distinct Mercator map copied from the Rand and McNally publishers in America. Please see note 8 of the Introduction for more discussion of the said map.
Harvard University in 1926. His itinerary indicates he left China for Seattle via Victoria, Canada, and then arrived in Chicago. He then visited Philadelphia and Niagara Falls, ending his trip in New York. Commonly situated in Christian theological studies, Xie’s experience as a perceptive and thoughtful exchange student in America has been overlooked. Nevertheless, his is an important example in theorizing the Pacific Ocean as a space of border crossing in the twentieth century.

Closely examining his experience on the Pacific Ocean, Xie’s educated rhetoric with its insightful observations, dialogue, and references attest to the distinct perspective of a new era traveller more knowledgeable of global racial hierarchies and economic trade. Xie’s linguistic skills naturally ignited interactions with foreigners on the ship. His dialogue with one American and an ethnic Indian on board makes his journal meaningful to

54 In a short study on Xie, Hing-cheong Ho and Pan-chiu Lai explain Xie’s background in the United States before returning to teach in China. Enrolled in the Divinity School at the University of Chicago, Xie transferred to Harvard a year later to audit courses. He attended “a wide range of lectures on philosophy and history of religion, his religious ideas owed much to the teaching of Alfred Whitehead (1861-1947), and Edward C. Moore (1857-1943) and George F. Moore (1851-1931)” (439).

55 For example, Christian Meyer writes about Xie’s influence in China’s Religious Studies. Meyer briefly mentions Xie’s American education only to mark its influence in shaping his way of thinking: “with fresh insights and inputs from the West, especially from the years at the universities of Chicago and Harvard, [Xie] draw[s] on an arsenal of recent publications on philosophy of religion, life philosophy, and other topics” (31).

56 Xie was fluent in Mandarin, Japanese, and English. His wife was from the Guangdong province and presumably spoke Cantonese, which would suggest Xie understood the Southern dialect. On the ship, he engaged in conversation with an American missionary; their relationship is further discussed in Chapter 4 (185-245).
investigate (as other interactions were often Sino-Japanese\(^{57}\)). In addition, his concern for the well-being of his ethnic counterparts abroad is clear. Xie dedicates two chapters to Chinese abroad and exchange students,\(^{58}\) proving his concern for ethnic Chinese overseas. However, Xie did not interact with Chinese on board in 1925, except on one occasion with another man, Li Haisheng (黎海生) (n.d.). I argue that the ocean was a space in which the traveller could explore the unequal power relations at hand, revealing his understanding of international affairs. Moreover, through this investigation I demonstrate the importance of interpreting these writings in the context of Sino-North American relations. The Pacific Ocean as borderspace is a space in which he could critically narrate his deep-seated concerns about the China of his time, even without reference to many conversations with Chinese on board \textit{SS President Jefferson}.

The scarcity of dialogue between Chinese immigrants on the \textit{SS President Jefferson} can be explained by the era in which Xie travelled. In 1882, the United States declared a ban against Chinese migrants to its shores. However, the Chinese were not completely excluded between the years of 1882 and 1888: “the vast majority of congressmen agreed that some form of restriction was needed” (Lew-Williams 31). Thereafter only particular groups could land and numbers had dwindled. By the 1920s when Xie arrived, the

\(^{57}\) Zhang Deyi is one example. On board he discusses hiragana and katakana with another Japanese passenger via writing (\textit{Oumei} 38-9).

\(^{58}\) Xie had a pronounced concern for his fellow Chinese abroad even though he does not mention coolies directly in his oceanic writing. He dedicates a chapter of his diary to the Chinese in America (the overseas students and the life of \textit{huaqiao}) and closes his book with a didactic answer for “How should Overseas Students be? (\textit{Liuxuesheng yingdang zenyang? 留學生應當怎樣?})”, describing the attitude changes and issues of nationalism and westernization.
Exclusion Act for the Chinese had already been in place for several decades. The ship’s demographic make-up indicates the apparent success of the Exclusion Acts. On 9 November 1925, Xie Fuya sailed with “students going [to America] and missionaries coming [to China]” (5) on the SS President Jefferson. 59 There were 75 first class cabins and 209 sleeping cabins in total. However, only 40 passengers were on board: “5 Japanese, 1 Indian, 9 Chinese, all others Westerners [25]” (5). Xie notes that the “8 or 9 Chinese were hardly on deck” (8). Although they lack interaction, Xie’s care for and knowledge of modern China’s position are unmistakable in his oceanic writings. Xie Fuya’s writing at sea confirms that the ocean is a space for understanding the world, a site populated with inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic individuals in motion.

Xie’s modern perspective utilizes physical objects as symbols to situate China’s global position. The prolonged sea journey is the catalyst for his critical opinion of China’s lack of its own fleet of steamships. He notes that there were no Japanese on board because “if they wanted to go to America they have their own ships, why take American vessels?” (17). He laments to fellow passenger Li Haisheng that China is the only nation without their own transpacific route – the British, the Japanese, and the Americans all have ships with routes to the Americas. In fact, the China Merchants Steamship Navigation Company (MSNC) was established in 1873, but it was sold in 1884. In Xie’s opinion, the lack of a Chinese vessel is heavily attributed to the unequal treaties and he makes no mention of the MSNC. Xie states that it was the treaties that firstly carved foreign concessions in Shanghai, secondly handed Hong Kong over to the British, and thirdly gave the

59 The vessel weighed 14,174 tonnes with sleeping cabins, cafes, smoking room, common room, post office, reading room, writing room, snack room (7-8).
Philippines to the Americans (17). He reveals his anxiety for China’s position after the unequal treaties were signed, exclaiming: “With these types of restrictive constraints, where can China rebound!” (17). Through his pointed and well-informed analysis of the non-existence of Chinese steamships in relation to the history of Chinese concessions, Xie himself illustrates that the sea has always been a politically contested space. Consequently, Xie’s writing frames the Pacific Ocean as a site for psychological struggle – a place to reconsider the place of China, using the vessel as a symbol of China’s present state – but in a different sense than that expressed by late Qing diplomats’ allegorical critique and metaphorical seasickness.

As we will see below, whether it is through questioning the discrepancy between his cabin and that of his American friend; mapping out the layout of the dining room by race and cartographic vocabulary; or exposing his superior attitude and knowledge through dialogue, Xie’s persuasive rhetoric is telling of the newer era in which he travelled and the modern education he received. Translating the experience and “ordering newly acquired experiential knowledge of the world for transmission to readers back home” (Teasley 122), Xie positions himself as an educated individual equipped to comment on international relations and global affairs for his literate audience in China. Though accompanied by very few accounts of interactions with ethnic Chinese individuals, his oceanic writing suggests the formation of an informed “cognitive map” of the world that grants hope for China’s ability to better position itself in response to changing global
conditions. Xie makes sense of his first-hand experiences on his transpacific journey through critical frameworks and historical evidence.

His interactions on the ship reveal it as a borderspace in which the experience of transpacific travel is reframed through the lens of Sino-North American relations. It is a space in which border-crossing occurs in the traveller-writer’s mind. In the section below I explain how Xie’s exchange with an American man on the ship and specifically in the dining hall in 1926 attempts to allegorically reposition the geographic borders as represented on a modern map in order to impart a hopeful gaze of the future for his Chinese Republican readers at “home.”

2.4.1 In SS President Jefferson’s Dining Hall: Overcoming Boundaries as Allegory

Xie meets an American on the ship and notes the inequality between races early in their interactions. The American on the SS President Jefferson is named John Hawk (1878 – 1946), likely a medical missionary in China from 1905 to 1945. Before Xie partakes in the meal with the American, he takes note of the differences in their cabin spaces as a sign of inequality. Through a comparison of Xie’s headquarters and Hawk’s bedroom, the young exchange student exemplifies what he believes is an unspoken hierarchy between races. Distinct from former authors who did not inquire about the discrepancy in cabin rooms and only observed their differences, Xie is quick to observe, questions the

60 The notion of “cognitive mapping” is found in Fredric Jameson’s work and critically discussed by Robert Tally Jr. As powerful as cartographic practices are, they are “reversible” and complex in the Deleuzean and Foucauldian sense (400). Beyond hegemonic effects, it is productive in considering a new kind of consciousness when dealing with cartographic frameworks.

61 Possibly Dr. John Crisman Hawk was the father of Mary Ellen Hawk (284). See John Craig William Keating’s A Protestant Church in Communist China: Moore Memorial Church Shanghai 1949-1989.
circumstances, and forms opinions. Looking at the layout of both rooms, he first
denigrates his own. His own bedroom, he describes, has two beds with an upper and lower
level, only one window, and poor air circulation (6), while Hawk’s rooms has two round
windows and his bed is placed at the center of the room. Zhang Deyi and Fu Yunlong
likewise described the cabin spaces on the *SS China* and *SS City of Rio de Janeiro*
respectively. However, Xie Fuya’s displeasure is evident, and he inquires into the
inconsistency between rooms. Xie reports that he questioned Hawk, who claimed that a
friend booked the fare ticket. Xie then shares that he went through a travel representative
at the Shanghai Bank for his ticket. This observation demonstrates critical insight, but his
account is not without bias. He comes to his own conclusion, rhetorically asking whether
the site of purchase was really the only reason for the inconsistency of cabin space: “Is
that why there is a difference? Or was it the timing of when the tickets were booked? *Or is
it because of the difference between the people of the East and the people of the West? I’ll
leave that to the reader’s discretion!*” (6, emphasis mine). He is insightful by not only
considering the place of purchase, but also the time of purchase and the purchaser’s
background, and he also alludes to a commonly imagined binary logic of East-West,
nudging the reader to reconsider racial dimension of unequal power relations.
Xie’s analysis of the ship’s dining hall also characterizes his perception of the unspoken positionality between ethnicities and discloses his critical way of thinking about space aboard the steamer based on the modern map. A pamphlet for one way travel from Seattle to Japan, China, and the Philippines (Fig. 2.1) created by the Admiral Line (of the Pacific Steamship Company) was published in 1922 for commercial purposes. In the pamphlet, the dining hall of the President Steamships of the American Mail Line is described as “magnificent” (Fig. 2.2):

Four to ten persons can be seated at the mahogany tables of varying sizes, and although no pains have been spared in beautifying the surroundings, all this effort has not impaired in the least that eagerness to maintain the unrivaled superiority of cuisine which has enhanced the reputation of this organization in its twenty years of experience on the Pacific. (Seattle 7)

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62 Its design suggests the binary between the East and the West where the former is less technologically advanced with an image of a sampan and the latter more advanced with an image of a steamer.
The dining hall was perhaps not too large and although the number of tables is not explicitly given, if there were four large tables, the room could fit all forty passengers at the time. It seems that in Xie’s experience, the dining hall was also quite small. What is noteworthy is that in the pamphlet’s characterization of the dining hall, the rhetoric of spatial description focuses on the aesthetics and food selection (the mahogany tables, the surroundings, and the cuisine).

However, Xie Fuya uses a different rhetoric to describe the dining room. He imagines the space as being organized “by international nature” (6):

The seating in the dining hall, is according to the dining hall’s manager’s discretion and is mainly separated by international nature [國際性質 guoji xingzhi]. Chinese people sit in one place, Japanese people sit in another place, and the Indian man sits by himself at one table. The abovementioned Easterners take up several tables. Together they sit to the Northeast corner of the room. Westerners sit on the West side of the room; very few sit in the

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63 Tickets were required for meals on board. It is unclear as to what would happen to passengers who did not hold tickets or if the room had met capacity.
Southeast corner. This is really as they call it, the order of things or the categorization of things [方以類聚 物以群分 fangyi leiju wuyi qunfen].

Xie figures race and space in the dining hall as his premise. The passengers are depicted by their ethnic appearances, not by their gender, their age, nor their name besides Hawk. He uses the order of things found in a Confucian and Daoist classical text to justify the separation of individuals in the dining hall. Even so, I argue that this is the foundation from which we can understand the interactions in the Pacific Ocean as borderspace.

The cultured way he describes the layout of the room is significant as he uses the cardinal directions to describe the seating divisions, like one would when speaking about a map. Choosing not to employ relative terms such as “to the left of” or “to the right of” particular objects such as tables or doors, he borrows the cartographic vocabulary of cardinal orientations (north, south, east, west) and imagines the dining hall from a bird’s eye view as in modern mapping practices. As such, his awareness of race and space, as well as his way of describing the room, demonstrates a higher level of critical consciousness that defies the vertical hierarchal organization of upper and lower cabin space as seen in Zhang Deyi’s and Fu Yunlong’s accounts. The spatial understanding of race and geography parallels the modern cartographic organization of space, which situates countries such as China, Japan, and India in the “East” and others in the “West.”

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64 This concept comes from the Book of Changes.
65 There were few female passengers in number. He notes “there were not many passengers, and female passengers even fewer” (7).
After establishing this spatial understanding of race and geography, inspired by the modern projection of the world map, Xie defies the distinct positions of separate nations that he initially curates. He breaks down the framework of the modern projection of race and geography found in maps – overcoming its putatively neutral presentation of geographic spaces. He also overcomes the framework of the classical Chinese understanding of the order of things and categorizations, showing that these frameworks are not unchangeable. Through requesting a new alliance with Hawk, Xie challenges the cardinal separation and implied racial hierarchies of a modern projection of the world. At dinner, Xie claims: “Hawk and I had to request to sit together” (7). The fact that Xie had to request to be seated with Hawk suggests the anomaly of trans-ethnic interaction in the dining hall. At afternoon tea, Xie and Hawk sit together again without mention of a request – perhaps illustrating the successful collapse of the standardized framework of the modern projection of maps and traditional paradigms of order in Chinese culture. In other words, by physically dining with his new American friend during meals on the ship, Xie was breaking down the delineations of distinct nations projected in cartographic representation and offering hope for the next generation of Chinese to follow his example of trans-regional friendship.

With more factual evidence, Xie Fuya views tea as symbolic of China’s position while showing that he and Hawk have a friendship and are in dialogue with one another. He paints below the setting in the café on the ship with Hawk while critiquing the situation of Chinese tea trade:

While Hawk and I were having desserts after dinner one day in the café, what hurt [me] the most is the [place of import] of the tea [we were served]. The brand of [red] tea [I had] indicated that it was from Sri Lanka. Hawk
had green tea. My heart was already deep in thought – [I] guessed it was Japanese [tea] and was unfortunately right. (19-20)

His disappointment is found after learning of the country of origin of Hawk’s green tea. Can we trust his observation? Not only an observant passenger, he also supports his observations through facts and data concerning the shipping trade. Xie lists the numbers and calculations of the tea trade from 1914 to 1923: $1,495,799 worth of tea was traded in 1914 (20); $305,916 worth of tea was traded in 1920 (21); and by 1923, the worth of tea traded climbed back to $901,417 (21). Charting a decade of data on the Chinese tea export trade, Xie’s clearly researched and rational tone resurfaces to temper with his personal feelings of anxiety for China’s position. His ability to discuss with Hawk resists the raced space of the dining hall, and thus in turn resists racializing the space of the globe for which the dining hall serves as allegory.

Ultimately, I argue that a reshaping of Xie Fuya’s worldview and influence on his readers was being crafted with these facts and his friendship with John Hawk; a distinctively modern allegorical rendering of the position of Chinese in the world as malleable and hopeful. By presenting the friendship and articulating relations on board the SS President Jefferson as being trans-ethnic and trans-regional, Xie pointed to the possibilities of China’s future in the world. Even though there may have been rules governing the dining hall related to lines delineating positionality on maps, Xie borrowed the particular framework of horizontal organization of cartography to demonstrate their vulnerability. His overcoming of racial barriers and his awareness of the tea trade situation both teach a hopeful lesson to readers via the ocean travel writing.
2.5 *Chinese Oceanic Writings: Some Conclusive Remarks*

In this chapter, I have explored the oceanic writings of three authors Zhang Deyi, Fu Yunlong, and Xie Fuya that demonstrate how the Pacific Ocean is a unique border and a contested space for contemplation between China and North America. Their individual inscriptions of sights, interactions, and exchanges on board *SS China, SS City of Rio de Janeiro*, and *SS President Jefferson* respectively prove that the sea was not simply physically navigated nor simply a neutral space as represented on maps. The time spent on these ships testifies to the fact that the sea was part of a larger border-crossing from the moment of departure. Border-crossing does not begin by setting foot onto new territory, but through embarkation and departure from an ‘origin.’ This marks the entrance into the border at sea. As such, the written impressions by the travellers testify to the ocean as a borderspace connecting the two continents.

I have used the notion of borderspace to interpret the experience of travel on the Pacific Ocean through an alternative angle that is not conventionally recorded on maps and that takes into consideration the experience of Sino-North American relations. I have made visible privilege and class, the physicality of the journey, and questions regarding the standardization of modern maps to demonstrate the limitations of cartographic representation and ways that oceanic writing confronts these limitations. Zhang Deyi’s 1868 experience critiques the issue of class and privilege in the nineteenth century for Chinese coolies. I articulated how his writing about livestock and cages can be read as allegories for the unfair treatment of Chinese overseas. Fu Yunlong’s 1888 impression is written in a fragmented manner to demonstrate his grappling with the Cantonese on the ship, the reality of Chinese in the Americas, and his own physical experience. I argued that
his seasickness was a metaphor for fraught Sino-North American relations and the weakening Chinese empire. His vulnerability as a Qing subject may have affected his writing – its contents and its forms. Xie Fuya’s 1925 writing takes on an authoritative voice to persuade readers to reconsider China’s current situation. Describing the material conditions of the boat with the framework of a modern map, which delineates separation of nations, Xie allegorically breaks down the barriers between races to impart hope for his generation.

Noticeably, their distinct approaches to writing about their journeys at sea are telling of the times in which they write. For Zhang, who was part of the first diplomatic expedition to America from the Qing government, his artful concealment of his poor treatment stems from his own grappling with the unfair circumstances of Chinese overseas (including coolie labourers and those kidnapped) and also his class consciousness that prohibited him from acknowledging that he and the Chinese overseas belonged to the same category. For Fu who was sent to observe the world, his brief notes on board demonstrate his sense of responsibility for the task of his era – a time when knowledge about the West was growing ever more important because of Qing’s relative weakness. Finally, for Xie, who was already acquainted with modern knowledge of the world, his authoritative way of sharing facts and questioning his circumstances challenged his readers to overcome barriers and be critical amidst the economic and legal changes against China as a nation-state and ethnic Chinese people. These travellers creatively constructed their worldviews on the Pacific Ocean in relation to the distinct historical presents in which they travelled.

They not only learned about issues of privilege and contestation of the waters, but also penned what they knew and saw with new imaginations of the world. These ethnic
Chinese faced new sights on board and interacted with other Chinese counterparts as well as passengers belonging to other nationalities that reinforced and challenged their existing understandings of the world and the place of the Chinese. As they navigated the Pacific Ocean as borderspace, both physically and psychologically, their oceanic writings opened up an understanding of this space as shaped through various minor perspectives. In my next chapter, I continue to explore the journey of Zhi Gang and Fu Yunlong at Niagara Falls through another manifestation of borderspace as a chasm separating different epistemological paradigms.
Chapter 2
Borderspace as Chasm: The Accounts of Niagara Falls by Nineteenth-Century Chinese Diplomats (1868-1888)

3.1 On Borderspace as Site of Negotiation between Aesthetics and Science

Chinese travellers began visiting Niagara Falls as early as the nineteenth century: Zhi Gang and Zhang Deyi of the Burlingame Mission went in 1868; first minister to Washington Chen Lanbin (陳蘭彬; 1816-1895) in 1878; travel envoy Fu Yunlong in 1888; Qing politician Li Hongzhang (李鴻章; 1823-1901) in 1896; and Manchu noble Zaize (載澤; 1876-1929) in 1906. There were more visitors after the establishment of republican China in 1911, including diplomats, officials, overseas students, and writers. Many of them left diaries and published travelogues that included the visit to the large waterfall at the U.S.-Canadian border.

Niagara Falls would have been a *tabula rasa* for many of these nineteenth-century Chinese travellers who had a tradition of inscribing poetry about famous landscapes within China. Niagara Falls’ relative anonymity to Chinese audiences provided a blank slate for Chinese writers to work from. Former sites within the Qing empire were already “inscribed landscapes,” meaning that travellers had a plethora of poetic forefathers to engage with in representing the landscape through writing: “For many travel writers, excursions to places that had accumulated a literary tradition were encounters in which Nature was inextricably

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66 Visitors included the scholar Hu Shi (胡適) (1891-1962) in 1915, literary writer Liang Shiqiu 梁實秋 (1903-1987) in 1924; scholar and philosopher Xie Fuya (謝扶雅) (1892-1991) in 1927; female exchange students Qian Yonghe (錢用和) (1896-?); reporter Zou Taofen (鄭和) (1895-1944) and transportation minister Gong Xuesui (龚學遂) in the 1930s. Xie and Gong are discussed in Chapter 4 of my dissertation, which explores other writings of Niagara Falls and Central Canada (185-245).
linked with language and history” (Strassberg 6). Particular places within the Qing empire already had preconceived connotations surrounding them and a long literary history attached to them. In comparison, Niagara Falls was foreign; for Chinese travellers at Niagara Falls, there was no former writing specific to this site from which they could draw from. Without a literary history, new possibilities of representing the space were presented to these travellers.

Moreover, for some nineteenth-century Chinese travellers, the unfamiliar site forced them to negotiate between different knowledge regimes in writing about the rushing rapids. Because of its sublime reputation of natural beauty and its technological reputation of producing hydropower, the depictions of Niagara Falls could be conceived of both aesthetically and scientifically in writing. A chasm between such frameworks can be imagined as a borderspace where writers grappled with their former literary practices and first-hand knowledge in representing the foreign world for themselves and for their potential audiences. In other words, they were working with subjects unfamiliar to the travellers themselves and unfamiliar to their prospective audiences who had never seen Canada nor the United States and so these travellers would have to discern how to negotiate between traditional aesthetic practices and narratives of modern scientific knowledge in their writing.

67 Although the lack of former poetic tradition did not stop Japanese visitors from composing poetry at Niagara Falls. For example, Narushima Ryuhoku (1837-1884) composed when he travelled to Niagara Falls. For a translation of his poem, please see Donald Keene’s “The Survival of Chinese Literary Tradition in the Meiji Era” 83.
To complicate this situation further, modern technology on scene at the tourist site introduced yet another way of ‘seeing’ and representing the world. Photography challenged the transcendental portrayal of space and self in the nineteenth century because of its mimetic and empirical possibilities in representing a physical reality. Thus, late Qing individuals travelling outside the Chinese empire in the same era as the advent of modern technology (including microscopes, photography, newspapers, maps, telescopes, trains, and steamships) were required to work between traditional aesthetic practices of seeing and representing the world as well as technology-informed methods of seeing and representing the world. The way Qing individuals narrated the events at Niagara Falls, then, reveals their agency in choosing how to record what was ‘seen.’ Since the large cataract could be represented in two or more ways, Chinese travel discourse was situated within inherently distinct and conflicting views of the space itself. Their writings illuminate the notion of borderspace through the negotiations required in characterizing the world through traditional literary practices, scientific knowledge, and photographic apparatuses of Niagara Falls.

Borderspace as chasm points to the agency involved in the border zone between knowledge regimes. Niagara Falls is one illustration of this phenomenon where an epistemological chasm can appear. Between two knowledge regimes when a chasm occurs, there requires reconciliation and negotiation by the traveller-writer. Since the nineteenth-century Chinese travellers arrived at a time when photographic technology was being introduced to the world, their writings expose conflicts and subsequent negotiations made to inscribe the experience. I am interested in highlighting various problems posed by competing paradigms of representing space through traditional aesthetic practices, modern
scientific knowledge, and photographic technology at the borders of Canada and the United States for these Chinese travellers. In addition to studying the methods in which writers reconciled these knowledge regimes for their own professional agendas, I extend their writings to the Sino-North American context in which they wrote, reading their experiences as metaphors of what they imagined the pan-ethnic Chinese experience to be in North America at the time. In doing so, I show how they were physically in North America but mentally adhered to traditional worldviews of the world as representative of their psychological interiority.

3.1.1 Minor Transnationalism and Chinese Travel Writing in North America

Borderspaces, as we have discussed, are different from borderlines represented in maps since it is an affective space and significantly, opens up a transnational critique of a Chinese experience of space. Borderspace emphasizes the nuances in travel writing that go beyond what is legible on maps. Since maps are flattened representations of the world, movements between locations are presented as linear trajectories that disclose neither the way a traveller arrived at their final destination nor the thoughts a traveller had at the site. These writings stand at the chiasmic edges of representation, reflecting the struggles Chinese travellers faced in describing North America. The methods of representation through which the Chinese traveller brings Canada and the United States to Chinese readers in China and takes “China” via Chinese traditions and cultural history with him into Canada and the United States as he writes, is a movement untraceable on maps. Subsequently, an investigation into the negotiation between knowledge regimes in Chinese travel writing provides new opportunities for understanding the relationship between Canada, China, and the United States in the late nineteenth century.
Studying Chinese travel writing makes the human experience observable, which adds to the narrative of transnational relations while challenging the neutral authority of cartography. For example, Niagara Falls is visible as a city and site between Canada and the United States on many maps, but the experience of visiting the site as an ethnic minority is impossible to represent on a map. Awareness of the discrimination against ethnic Chinese, which would eventually escalate to exclusionary laws in both Canada and the United States by 1923, is only found in writing. Examining literary texts brings to light the Chinese subject’s fraught experience and writer’s agency in working through regimes of knowledge. Extending this idea further, the concept of borderspace highlights how sites that intersect Canada, the United States, and Qing China, can be read as larger critiques of the global moment from which they were written. This triangulation is not cartographically representable; though one site would be symbolized by a singular point on a map, by evaluating the literary representations as transnational moments, a site experienced from the ground level by an embodied subject has the potential to reflect a mélange of visions and ideas that speak to or speak back to transnational relations.

By studying the Chinese subject’s experiences, I contribute to the project of minor transnationalism, which takes into account the perspective of those that challenge “major” common celebratory narratives. Chinese visitors who came in the nineteenth century wrote from a distinct angle that differed from non-Chinese travellers. For European and American audiences, nineteenth-century Niagara Falls was still a tourist site-in-the-making (Nye 76). It was also only just becoming a major source of hydroelectric power for both Canada and the United States and had developed a large reputation in a short period of time. Kevin Hutchings writes that the waterfall was the “epitome of [the]
David Nye agrees that since the 1830s the Falls had satisfied the “taste for the sublime” for Western audiences (76). There was a change from aesthetic celebration of the sublime to the purpose of entertainment, leisure, and tourist exploitation of Niagara Falls. The site developed quickly with international tourists. Hutchings discusses the transformation of Niagara by tourism:

As Niagara’s reputation for international tourism became more and more established, enterprising tour guides began increasingly to obtrude themselves upon travellers who had come to view the scenery, disrupting their Romantic reveries and lightening their pockets in the process; at the same time, an increasing assortment of ‘carnival acts and sensational entertainments were added to lure the tourist’, drawing attention away from the Falls itself, and inciting the wrath of indignant Romantic tourists who had come to escape the anti-Wordsworthian world of getting and spending. (163)

These audiences would later critique the development of the cataract as tourist site; debates about tourism harming the eco-habitat and tourism overtaking the experience were common topics. Little has been said about other international (non-European and non-American) experiences of Niagara Falls, but they tell of another side of the site’s history and representation. Chinese visitors who came after 1868 were not involved in the debates about tourism. When the first Chinese representative visited the site, the Suspension Bridge was being built, and environmental issues and indignant sentiments of Western visitors were neither felt nor considered. As such, Qing travellers wrote about Niagara

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68 A British writer wrote in 1851: “the imposing Table Rock became for some symbol of ‘the ROCK of everlasting ages’” (qtd. in Hutchings 155). Not only Christianized but also to be feared, Niagara as depicted by European writers was to be revered because personal safety at the Falls was not guaranteed (155).
Falls in ways that differ from English-language travelogues and compositions. In the numerous studies about Niagara Falls (Ginger Strand 2008; Alice Mah 2012; Karen Dubinsky 1999; Pierre Berton 1997), there is a missing chapter about how Chinese tourists experienced and recorded the site. I hope to add to the subset of tourism on the site not only to describe what Chinese writers said they saw but also to suggest what their writings metaphorically represent.

Importantly, this investigation responds to the call of minor transnationalism to draw attention towards perspectives of traumas caused by “colonial, imperial, and global hegemonies” (Lionnet and Shih 21). I interpret the Chinese experiences at Niagara Falls as moments that cause dissonance with major narratives of the space from other cultures. In doing so, I contribute to a critical global history that reassesses experiences of those who were in a weaker position in comparison to those writing from a position of power. The Chinese writers in the nineteenth century were located within a matrix of discriminatory laws against ethnic Chinese outside China, desires of the Qing empire for ‘modern’ knowledge through first-hand experience abroad, and power imbalances caused by foreign imperial conquests within the Chinese empire. They were not travelling to North America for purely touristic purposes or religious pilgrimages as other visitors were. As such, Chinese travellers penned Niagara Falls from a perspective that contrasts those who did not have to consider discrimination against their empire’s subjects abroad and conquests of their empire’s territories at home. They structured their travels under the itineraries of diplomatic negotiation with “Western” countries and for knowledge production of the “West” for Qing audiences. In a world where ethnic Chinese abroad were being discriminated against and where the Qing government was diminishing in power, Chinese
travellers went to North America to fight for the rights of the Chinese being treated unfairly by appealing to the American government, working at Chinese embassies abroad, participating in World Expositions, and compiling knowledge through surveying foreign lands for their domestic audiences in China. Studying the travel writings as new material to critically comprehend global history exposes how minor subjects grappled with representing the world because of the introduction of distinct systems of knowledge and because of the global context in which they composed.

Moreover, Niagara Falls presents an important site through which to consider Qing travel writing. A close examination of writings produced about the unfamiliar cataract may be surprising to scholars of traditional Chinese studies. Richard E. Strassberg’s seminal work *Inscribed Landscapes* demonstrates how it was common practice in traditional Chinese travel writing to compose poetry at a physical site about the transcendental. In writing about a place, poems did not necessarily correspond to a physical reality. The ‘world’ was seen as a reflection of the writer and particular sites were perceived as revealing a full view of the world: “[r]elated to the discovery in Nature of a mirror of the moral self is the idea that certain scenic views can provide a total perspective on the world” (Strassberg 20). In composing poetry, travellers were contributing to a larger literary dialogue with former poets transcending time. Following this tradition into the nineteenth and twentieth

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69 The secondary literature about Chinese travel in North America of the nineteenth century is growing. But while the first translated compilation of Chinese travel accounts about America, entitled *Land Without Ghosts* (1989), includes writings by Qing individuals who visited Niagara Falls and other sites, little critical attention is given to their experiences. Common sites they visited, such as Niagara Falls, however, are not explored in detail. As such, only brief comments are given; close interpretive analysis of Qing travel is not found in the compilation.
centuries, Qing travellers are known to have composed poetry about their journeys. Notable research includes Tian Xiaofei’s *Visionary Journeys: Travel Writings from Early Medieval and Nineteenth-Century China* (2011) and Wu Shengqing’s *Modern Archaics: Continuity and Innovation in the Chinese Lyric Tradition, 1900-1937* (2014). Both projects highlight the poetic composition of Qing writers, some of whom travelled to North America and Europe. Both reach the conclusion that poetry allowed Chinese writers to grapple with their realities and circumstances abroad. Tian investigates the role of poetry in travel writing and argues: “in some ways, nothing helped the Chinese elite grapple with the complexities, the trauma, and the conflicted feelings induced by such a shocking experience better than writing poetry” (157). Wu agrees that poetry helped literati to “find solace” (96). Wu also discusses the power of poetic composition of Lu Bicheng’s travels to Switzerland in carving out a distinct female voice (308-311). Within traditional Chinese travel writing, then, poetic composition has a proven place within the genre. Both agree that literati struggling to reclaim authority over knowledge when it is contested turn to poetry.

At Niagara Falls, Qing travellers did not write a single poem, or if they did, they no longer exist today. When we consider how poetry was perceived as such a significant part of travel writing and note its absence in these travel writings about such a grand landscape known for its sublime nature, more analysis of what was written about the site becomes necessary. Using the prose that still exists about Niagara Falls, I argue that prose-only travel writing reveals struggles travellers faced in penning the experience as ethnic Chinese minorities abroad beyond poetic form. This chapter hopes to contribute to literary Chinese travel writings in two ways. First on the level of the local within Chinese literary
composition, it studies the encounters that deal with photography to assess the interactions between traditional and modern scientific practices of registering space in Chinese travel writing. I expand on the research of Zhengzheng Huangfu\(^70\) where she interprets the conceptual frameworks through which nineteenth-century Chinese travellers were arguably bounded by to question the limits of the border-crossing into Canada by other Qing travellers. I wish to use the site of Niagara Falls to indicate that the Chinese literati did not fully move beyond the borders of the traditional paradigms of representation even though their physical bodies had stepped on Canadian soil. I agree that they were still working within a particular framework of ordering the world as Huangfu describes using Buddhist and classical perspectives, but they were also incorporating other practices to reconcile the chasm between distinct paradigms of representation. Second on the level of the trans-regional within the context of Sino-North American relations, I read the texts as representative critiques of their period by taking into account the larger trans-regional movements of their time. I show how an examination of the prose within Sino-North American relations grants allegorical meaning and significance to the writing.

3.2 Subject Choice and Research Questions

While there are many late Qing visitors to Niagara Falls, this chapter focuses on two whose writings deal with photographic encounters – unique from other Chinese travellers who went to and observed the waterfalls in the same era. Zhi Gang and Fu Yunlong wrestled with this mimetic type of representation in dialogue with the traditional ways of

\(^{70}\) Her name is cited as Zhengzheng Huangfu in her dissertation. However, currently Professor Huangfu goes by Jenny Huangfu Day. I refer to her work in this chapter with her maiden name “Huangfu.”
the Chinese literary canon. Their rendering and strategic use of photography present an opportunity to re-visit the break or rupture they experienced in Chinese travel writing and are excellent examples to illustrate the concept of borderspace as a chasm between paradigms.

Zhi Gang and Fu Yunlong engage with the medium of photography differently in their accounts. In 1868, when Zhi Gang boarded a steel-boxed gondola across the Niagara gorge, he was aware of the reporters taking pictures of him. Remarkably, this incident is recorded in English-language reports (Keefer, “Report”) as well as in Chinese in Zhi Gang’s travelogue, and the photograph still exists today (Fig. 3.1). In 1888, when Fu visited Niagara Falls, a local photographer requested a picture of him but he rejected the invitation through his translator. Without a picture, Fu’s written defense of his rejection warrants investigation. I argue that photography changed the way they could imagine representing space and self for themselves and their audiences, complicating the competing paradigms of knowledge in their particular era. Borderspace as chasm points to the space in which they attempted to reconcile these distinct systems – an experiment that shows that their worldview was at the edges of traditionally-acquired knowledge and technology-informed knowledge. Aware of other modes of representation, I argue that their writing attempted to reconstruct the classical worldview even while critiquing the trans-regional circumstances of their travel.
Zhi Gang, who went to Niagara Falls in 1868, was a Manchurian bureaucrat of the Guwalgiya clan (瓜爾佳氏 gua er jia shi) and appointed secretary in the Bureau of Rites. He held a juren degree (Rao 303 and Jiang 341), which meant he had passed the provincial exam of the imperial civil examination system and had an excellent understanding of Confucian classics and traditional literary practices. Before being invited to the Burlingame mission, Zhi Gang served in the Foreign Affairs Office in the capital of Beijing. Of his part in the Burlingame mission, whose objective was to negotiate treaties with Western countries from 1868 to 1870, little is examined about his perspective on North America even though he left behind a comprehensive travel record. Zhi Gang’s Chushi taixi ji (初使泰西記 [Record of the Inaugural Mission to the West]) was published in Beijing in 1877. Originally, as suggested in the preface written by a friend who expressed interest in publishing it because his son Yi Hou (宜垕; n.d.) had found value in it, Zhi had kept his
journal to himself only sharing it with friends when requested (Zhi 1877 [2008]: 245).

Another version, *Chuxi taixi jiyao* (初使泰西紀要) [Summary of the Inaugural Mission to the West] was printed in 1890. It included a preface by a gentleman named Songling (松齡; n.d.).\(^{71}\) Both texts were edited; the former being more detailed but the latter being more complete in its records. The former was included in the encyclopedic collection *Xiaofanghu zhai yudi congchao* (小方壺齋輿地叢鈔) [Geographical Collection of the Xiaofanghu Studio] (1891). A few Qing diplomats and scholars such as Zhang Yinhuan (張蔭桓; 1837-1900) and Zhen Jun (震鈞; 1857-1920) took note of the text but provided little analysis.\(^{72}\) In the late twentieth century, both editions were amalgamated and incorporated into Zhong Shuhe’s *Zouxiang shijie congshu: Jindai Zhongguo zhishi fenzi kaocha Xifang de lishi* (走向世界叢書: 近代中國知識份子考察西方的歷史) [Towards the World: History of Modern Chinese Intellectuals in the West] (1985; 1993) with an added table of contents, new footnotes, and appendixes.\(^{73}\) I put forth that Zhi Gang’s writing was not a simple merging or absorption of worldviews between modern technology and traditional aesthetics.

Fu Yunlong arrived in 1888 as a travel envoy sent out to explore and survey lands beyond the Chinese empire. He wrote profusely about his time abroad: each country he visited has

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\(^{71}\) This may be a playful gesture towards the Qing Dynasty writer Pu Songling (蒲松齡; 1640–1715).

\(^{72}\) Zhen, who authored *Tian zhi ou wen* (天咫偶聞) [Coincidental Knowledge from the Capital] (publication date unknown), mentions Zhi’s inability to apply his knowledge upon returning to China. After 1911, Zhi’s text was included as part of a collection *Yangwu yundong* (洋務運動) [Foreign Affairs Activity] although he was not the credited author and Yi Hou was mistakenly attributed as author.

\(^{73}\) For the section on Niagara Falls, there was no change between the first and second editions.
a corresponding set of textual accounts as well as short essays on national defense and scientific knowledge such as projections of the world and canons. His writing on Japan and two other excerpts about the earth were included in Geographical Collection of the Xiaofanghu Studio as well. His knowledge of Chinese literary tradition was impressive despite not having passed the official civil examinations, as demonstrated by the structure and style of his three travel accounts on Canada – an official history, supplementary notes, and a (now missing) collection of poetry. The first account, Youli Yingshu Jianada Tujing (遊歷英屬加納大圖經) [Illustrated Travel Records of the Expedition to British Canada], consists of a total of eight scrolls and one map, which is the only illustration in his accounts on Canada. The second work is entitled Youli Jianada Tujing Yuji (遊歷加納大圖經餘記) [Supplementary Notes to the Illustrated Travel Records of the Expedition to British Canada], and is only one scroll in length and made up of fragmentary writings about the trip. The poems on Canada are recorded to be in Bu yi jie ji (不易介集) [Collection of Unchangeable Purpose], but the entire volume is now missing. These

74 For more bibliographic information about Fu, please see Chapter 1 (31-88).
75 The author believes Fu was quoting from Mencius; when he said “Hui of Liu Xia would not for the three highest offices of State have changed his firm purpose of life. 柳下惠不以三公易其介” and so was thinking of the firm and unchangeable purpose in naming this collection. http://ctext.org/mengzi/jin-xin-i/ens
76 The compilers (also his descendants) of Fu’s travel writing make reference to the poems especially at Niagara Falls. For example, the index of Fu Yunlong zhuan indicates their existence alongside poems about America, Cuba, Peru, and Brazil (368). Even though the poems at Niagara Falls are referenced in secondary literature, they are not presented (Wang and Yang 162; Wang 203). But in my research in Beijing and Hangzhou in 2016, there is no physical copy of these poems was found. While the National Renmin University (Beijing) has the book on record, it was irretrievable. I also confirmed at the National Library of China with their ancient archives that this copy does not exist in their library. In Hangzhou, I checked for different poetry collections of Fu Yunlong at the Hangzhou Library, Zhejiang Library Shuguang Location,
texts are discussed in detail in the next section. Suffice it to say here that Fu’s corpus, like his photographer encounter at Niagara Falls, illuminates the dilemma between aesthetics and science. Secondary literature has taken a historical as opposed to literary approach to Fu’s writing. A cultural studies approach significantly considers both the overall structure of his corpus and its contents as telling of the Sino-North American relations in his time, exceeding the interpretations of his works to date as solely historical documents.

With regards to their accounts, questions I raise in this chapter include: How did Qing travellers negotiate the competing paradigms of traditional aesthetics and technology-informed knowledge while abroad? How did photography challenge the limits of their classical worldview and learned paradigms of Chinese travel writing? And what new understandings of the world are formed in reading of these writings through the notion of borderspace? With reference to these inquiries, this chapter is separated into three parts. In the first, I establish the dilemma caused by paradigms of classical knowledge and modern technology in Qing writings of foreign landscape and self-representation. I show how the writing points to changes in Chinese travel writing through allusions and empirical

and the Zhejiang Library Gushan Location (浙江圖書館孤山館舍), to no avail. Fu’s poetry in North American institutes also only have holdings of the poetry in Cuba, Brazil, and Peru in Bu yi jie ji shi gao (不易介集詩稿) [Manuscript of Poetry from a Collection of Unchangeable Purpose] (1889).

77 For more detailed review of secondary literature, please refer to Chapter 1 (31-88). In 2005, Fu’s corpus on Japan, the United States, Canada, Peru, Brazil, Cuba, and Hawaii were compiled by Fu’s descendant Fu Xuncheng (傅訓成), forming a new (though not scholastically critical) narrative of Fu’s travels with excerpts from his notes and rough references to his poetry. In secondary research, Wang Xiaoqiu (王曉秋), Yang Jiguo (楊紀國), and Douglas and Carol Reynolds provide an overview of Fu’s work within their studies of the group of travel envoys of 1888, with a focus on Fu’s journeys to Japan.
evidence as well as fragmented writing, suggesting a changing relationship of the writing subject with the ‘world.’ In the second part, I demonstrate how photographic events at Niagara Falls complicated traditional paradigms of representation of space and self. While both Zhi Gang and Fu Yunlong write about a photographic encounter, material prints of the event are excluded from their travelogues. I argue that this absence was largely because of credibility issues that photography engendered, and not because they were unfamiliar with photographic apparatuses. In the third part, I analyse Zhi and Fu’s literary appropriations of these photographic encounters and the missing photographs to show how they can provide insight into Qing travellers’ understanding of their empire’s position in the world-at-large.

3.3 The Dilemma between Aesthetics and Technology-Informed Scientific Knowledge

The notion of borderspace as chasm emphasizes the dilemma between knowledge paradigms – namely the dilemma between traditional aesthetics and scientific knowledge in rendering foreign sites. The Chinese tradition of travel writing in prose and poetry was already long established by the time Qing travellers went to North America, which meant that the Chinese subject was accustomed to particular practices of representing space. As outlined in Karatani Kōjin’s pivotal work on modern subjectivity, landscape became external, making the space an object, and the writer a subject in Japanese literature.78 In other words, the idea that the world was an object, separate from the writer, was learned and not natural to Japanese travellers. For the Chinese subject, the relationship between

78 Please see Karatani’s chapter on the change of landscape to an external object and phenomenon “The Discovery of Landscape” in Origins of Modern Japanese Literature, Brett de Bary, et. al. trans. (Durham: Duke UP, 1993), 11-44.
the writer and the ‘world’ was unified, and in writing about the ‘world’ one was writing essentially about something they saw themselves a part of as well. By the Ming and Qing, the ‘world’ had been perceived as external to oneself in travel writing such as Xu Xiake (徐霞客; 1587–1641) whereby the physical world was described as an observable object. But technology of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries would present very different methods of registering and ‘seeing’ the ‘world.’ Thus, it is not only that Niagara Falls was a new object in the sense that the Chinese travellers had never seen it before but also that the relationship to this grand waterfall as an external object was being shaped by modern technologies was new. Modern technologies would affect the way travellers conceived the ‘world’ and ask of them to create new scientific vocabulary and present numbers with which to understand and relay the physical reality to their peers at home. With these challenges in mind, Qing travellers represented foreign spaces for their audiences in a manner that diverged from preexisting travel writings. Subsequently, the new relationship with landscape suggests a way to imagine the rupture between paradigms and the consequent reconciliations made by the traveller-writer.

Both Zhi Gang and Fu Yunlong were very much interested in new technologies and modern science during their time abroad. Both were made aware of the empirical method of reporting and understanding the world beyond what was discernible with human observation and what was found in the Chinese literary lineage. For example, Zhi spoke of microscopes that allowed one to “see” the smallest germs in water normally undetected by the naked eye:

There was an electric light revealing-micro lens [a microscope], allowing one to see what was unseen. Its method: use about two chi of batter, place on the glass with thinner peripheries and thicker core [convex lens], with
the light shining behind the mirror. Standing in front of the mirror looking at it, in the batter were bugs the size of an inch to a chi, squirming about like snakes and moving at the speed of worms.79

有作電氣光視顯微鏡，能見人所不見之物者。其法，將麪糊涂于徑二尺許，邊薄中厚之顯微鏡。鏡後發電氣光。人在鏡前觀之，則陳麪糊中，有寸許至尺許大至蟲，或蜿蜒而行，或蠕蠕而動。 (276)

The microscope produced technology-enabled knowledge about microcosms that would only be visible through the apparatus. The word for microscope itself was a neologism derived from missionary-Chinese texts (Liu 275). As such, the scientific technological extension of the human eye created insight of a world that could be observed and was perceived as objective. And scientific knowledge via this apparatus was to be learned and presented in a new descriptive way to readers.

In his work, Zhi Gang would attempt to bridge the gap between foreign technological machines and Confucian ideology. Huangfu suggests that technology was likened to the human body in his work, asserting that “even machines were modeled after nature” in Zhi Gang’s writing and defied the common opposition in Qing China of modernization as being against nature (75). Huangfu’s reading of Zhi’s fusion of the body and technology is worthy of citing in full to understand the chasm he filled:

No matter how intricate the machines were, they were all dictated by nature. After giving one of the best descriptions of a steamship found in Chinese literature, he declares that the principle of all steam-powered machines mimics the dynamics in the human body: “when heated, the energy machine (qiji) moves and produces energy (qi); the energy rises from behind and subsides in the front, circulates in the ren and du arteries, and spreads throughout the four limbs and hundreds of bones ... Those who recognize this principle find numerous utilities based on it; this is the origin

79 All translations are my own unless otherwise indicated.
of affairs of machines.” (73)

I will return to this point about Zhi’s absorption of foreign technology into a Confucian worldview in the last section of this chapter. Importantly here, this chasm affected the way Zhi reported and understood the world in the nineteenth century because of technologies unavailable before this time.

Taking into account this technology-informed knowledge, Zhi Gang’s rendering of Niagara Falls highlights the limits of traditional practices to represent the grandiosity of the scene. It was common practice to refer to sites physically unseen but found in the cultural memory of Chinese readers. Zhi Gang describes the rainbow and the fog around Niagara Falls, equating the rushing rapids to the gorge of Dragon’s Gate (龍門 Longmen), the east city gate of Chu during the Warring States period (473-221 BCE). The ancient structure is compared to the present Niagara Falls:

[In] one of the [falls] all day lies a long rainbow, spitting from above thick fog; [it is like a] reminder of the past gorge of Longmen [Dragon’s Gate] which are as high as twenty ren[^80] [or 160 feet], its rushing bubbles thirty li [or 15 kilometers].

The classical Dragon’s Gate Gorge was described in the well-known Shui Jing zhu (水經註) [Commentary of the Water Classic], and was thus a perfect compromise allowing domestic Chinese readers to visualize the foreign site of Niagara Falls through a familiar scene. By the time of Zhi Gang’s writing, the Dragon’s Gate would have ceased to exist,

[^80]: Equal to 8 feet, an ancient unit of measure.
as it was an ancient structure. However, it was not necessary for the reader to have seen the gorge itself; what was most crucial was knowledge of the imagined place by literary predecessors. Using it to imagine Niagara Falls was fitting for audiences who never saw Niagara Falls and Dragon’s Gate but did not need to have physically seen it in order to ‘see.’ Here Zhi Gang’s worldview was classical; he tried to use the transcendental to allow readers to ‘see’ Niagara Falls.

Significantly, Zhi’s classical allusion to Dragon’s Gate was not seen as sufficient as numbers that never accompanied the description before appeared in the account, demonstrating the influential presence of modern scientific knowledge. While describing sites did not have to correlate to a physical reality, Zhi Gang was no longer alluding to form a single transcendental image as in former travel writing. There was a new relationship to the world as something measurable. The allusion to Dragon’s Gate was only used as a foundation to convey the visible qualities of Niagara Falls. New numerical information not found elsewhere in relation to Dragon’s Gate include: “twenty ren” and “thirty li.” In the *Commentary of the Water Classic*, which is a gloss for other books that describe small and large bodies of water, there are no concrete numbers given but only a vague reference to the immensity of the waters at Dragon’s Gate: “Its waters rose to innumerable \(^{81}\) heights [literally ten-thousand *xun*\(^{82}\)] and its fall reached extreme depths [literally a thousand *zhang*\(^{83}\)] 其水尚崩浪萬尋，懸流千丈” (Roll 4). If taken literally,

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\(^{81}\) The character “wan” can mean ten-thousand or symbolically innumerable quantities.

\(^{82}\) One *xun* is 8 *chi* or Chinese foot, and one *chi* is approximately 10 inches. So one *xun* is 80 inches in length.

\(^{83}\) This is the equivalent of 10 *chi* or 100 inches.
the writing could mean the waters reached 20,000 metres in height and 8,000 feet in depth. However, while the numbers “ten-thousand” and “thousand” appear in this description, they would be understood as figurative (and not literal measurements) meant to convey the vastness of the view. In comparison to ten-thousand xun (wanxun; 萬尋) and a thousand zhang (qianzhang; 千丈), the numbers provided by Zhi Gang are much more concrete.

Zhi Gang’s active agency in creating hard numbers to represent the actual waterfall in North America shows a shift in quantifiable knowledge, for he could have simply borrowed wanxun and qianzhang to convey the vastness if he only wanted to describe the transcendental. In 1893, Horseshoe Falls was reported as being 160 feet tall and 2000 feet wide, with a volume of 50,000 gallons of water per minute (“Niagara” 128). Zhi Gang may have been translating 160 feet to 20 ren. But thirty li is equal to fifteen kilometres and close to 50,000 feet, which is twenty-five times the empirical measurement of 2,000 feet. This exaggeration can be read as an attempt to represent the vastness of Niagara Falls – though for this purpose he could have kept the vague and illusive wanxun and qianzhang metaphors. Instead, I argue that the numerical specificity indicates a change in the relationship with landscape. A separation of the landscape as an observable and quantifiable object required seemingly objective numbers to portray the landscape. The combination of classical allusion with quantifiable measurements demonstrates new ways of describing the idea of the immeasurable nature of landscape, revealing the chasm between the two regimes of knowledge that required reconciliation in writing.

Fu also represented the world in empirical ways because of technology-informed knowledge that was unlike traditional methods of ‘seeing.’ Fu hired someone to hand-copy Mercator maps of the countries he visited, such as Canada and the United States (Fig 3.2).
Fu was reproducing mediated scientific knowledge about the world that was not based on former methods of ‘mapping’ the world. Previously, Chinese empires saw themselves at the centre of the universe and so placed China at the centre of their maps and all other nations were depicted in relation to the empire, perceived as the Middle Kingdom. With the inclusion of the Mercator map without reference to China, Fu was presenting another version of the world to his audiences. This version was one that not only differed in its projection but also offered a view beyond the empire’s practices and what the human eye would be able to observe at the time. Knowledge mediated by technology would continue to appear in his corpus that revealed a change from former methods of representation.

In a similar vein, Fu also marked down the mileage travelled between cities by train in his *Supplementary Notes* that was impossible to know solely through the body. He records the distance travelled between cities and the total distance travelled once he reached Niagara Falls. Notably, the naked eye and the human body would be unable to “measure” the distance covered by the speed of the train with such precision. Although in former travel

*Figure 3.2 Map of British America in Fu Yunlong's Records. Copy Courtesy of Professor Graham Sanders.*
writings, distance travelled by foot, on horse, or via boat is described in Chinese travelogues, often in by units of ten of li (a Chinese mile, around 500 meters), the distance covered by the speed of technological advances would challenge the traditional ways of measuring and knowing space and subsequently affect the registrations of space in Chinese travel writing. In premodern times, measurements were based on the human body and were relativistic, which became ‘unreliable’ and so a universal measurement system was adopted. The relationship with space is externalized as the Chinese subject moves through space – no longer a reflection of a unity with the world but a separate entity. The knowledge produced for his audiences was not first-hand but made through other channels. This is important to note because it shows how technology affected the way Fu ‘saw’ the landscape and then translated it as external to oneself for his audiences in China. It was no longer according to traditional ways of counting using the human body. Because of the long distances that were being traversed by train, another empirical scale was required to explain the distance outside of human experience.

Not only would technology change the way of ‘seeing’ for Fu, but it would also reveal his embodied experience that was distinct from representing the transcendental image of the immense cataract. At the Cave of Winds at Niagara Falls, there was an elevator that led tourists behind the waterfall. Fu Yunlong would borrow the missionary-Chinese loan word

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84 Such as in Yu Yonghe’s (郁永河; c.1650 – unknown) The Small Sea Travel Records (裨海紀遊), which described the island of Taiwan in the seventeenth century (1697). A translation of some excerpts can be found in Emma Jinhua Teng’s Taiwan’s Imagined Geography: Chinese Colonial Travel Writing and Pictures, 1683-1895 (2005): 261-280.
for elevator “自行屋 zixingwu,” which literally means a self-moving room. This word was specific to his time and was later replaced by “電梯 dianti,” which literally means electric stairs. This later adoption of “electric stairs” shows that the process of making sense of the unfamiliar would become one that describes the function of the thing (the elevator that transports items up and down like stairs) rather than embodied experience of the thing (being inside an elevator that moves on its own). This distancing of the physical experience for the metaphysical adheres to the scientific rhetoric of the microscope in the way that it disembodies and neutralizes the scientific observer. Fu Yunlong’s text reveals that the temporary lexicon, used to fuse new technologies into native knowledge for his readers, was still in becoming and retained its embodied experience in his struggle to describe new technology in writing.

Significantly for Fu Yunlong, the dilemma between aesthetics and science is further reflected and reconciled in his division of his whole corpus. The three separate texts about each country mark the dilemma between traditional divisions of Chinese travel writing and subsequently, the work of reconciliation in the borderspace as a chasm between knowledge paradigms. Traditionally it was common to have two complimentary works in travel writings:

The traditional division of Chinese travel writing into history and belles lettres reflects a distinction between public, impersonal forms and more private modes that included the representation of the subjective self. This

85 For an appendix of missionary-Chinese loan words, please consult Lydia Liu’s Translingual Practice (1995). The term for elevator is found on page 269 of Liu’s text.

86 The difficulty in translation of terminology, measurements, scale, materials, and methods was noted by Reynolds (329) but Fu’s self-explanation of this struggle is not further investigated.
duality was further reinforced by the presence of two principle discourses in classical Chinese, which were combined in varying proportions within most texts. At one pole was the objective, moralizing perspective of historiography; at the other, a mode of expressive and aesthetic responses to the landscape derived from poetic genres that could be termed “lyrical.” (Strassberg 9-10)

Fu’s writings demonstrate both poles of this duality: the moralizing perspective of historiography is found in Illustrated Travel Records of the Expedition to British Canada (hereafter Illustrated Records) and the private expression through lyrical writing is found in his reported poetry collection.

Notably, Illustrated Records was created through research with objective details; Fu compiled this body of knowledge from former English works to fulfill the moralizing function of a traditional Chinese historian. Fu copied from Elisée Reclus’s 1890 encyclopedic work The Earth and its Inhabitants: British North America. Names and surface areas of the Great Lakes and other significant lakes are noted in the exact order and with the exact same information as in Reclus’s text (464) but with Fu’s own transliteration for each site: “Superior (xibire hu 西比热湖), Michigan (mixigen hu 密西根湖), Huron (feilun hu 費倫湖), Erie (yeli hu 野裏湖), Ontario (yongdaliyue hu 翁打里约湖), Winnipeg (weinibieku hu 雍尼别苦湖), Manitoba (mayituoba hu 瑪宜脱拔湖), Cedar Lake (xida hu 西打湖), Dauphin (tufen hu 土分湖) and Lake Winnepessis (weinibiekexi hu 雍尼别可西宁湖)” (juan 2). Fu also borrowed from the Canadian

87 Although these lakes are also described in an earlier (1883) publication, the Stanford’s Compendium of Geography and Travel: North America (350) edited by Ferdinand Vanderveer Hayden (1829-1887) and Alfred Richard Cecil Selwyn (1824-1902),87 the order of the lakes are different, being Superior, Michigan, Huron, Erie, Ontario, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Winnipegosis, Cedar Lake, Dauphin Lake.
Department of Agriculture’s *Canada: Its History, Productions, and Natural Resources* (1886), a handbook created for the Colonial and Indian Exhibition in London. Fu’s data is the same as those presented in this handbook in several places.\(^8\) This translated body of knowledge was detailed and objective, winning him acclaim at court upon publication.

More important is Fu Yunlong’s act of reorganizing the body of knowledge into a particular order that corresponds to the traditional Chinese historian’s moral mission. *

Illustrated Records* follows the traditional form of objective historical writing and covers a wide range of topics:

- Canada’s longitudinal and latitudinal position and climate; its geography [...] ; its customs; its population; its produce; its agriculture; its livestock [...] ; its exports and imports; its maritime customs; [...] its fisheries; [...] its banks; its national debt; its railway repair progress and revenue; [...] ; its education and schools; its annals [...] miscellany; its postal system[and others].

Information on postage is found in the fourth scroll of *Illustrated Records* and in the *Canadian Handbook* (1886), indicating that Canada gained $1,178,751 in stamps in 1875 and $2,325,490 in 1885; $1,750,000 in letters in 1875 and $3,060,000 in 1885; etc (103). The only difference is that Fu adds in the Chinese calendar, so besides the Gregorian years of 1875 and 1885; he also translates the dates for his audiences as Guangxu 1 (光緒一年) and Guangxu 11 (光緒十一年). Otherwise, the information is the same. Fu’s chart on the progress of the Canadian Pacific Railway likewise comes from the *Canadian Handbook* (juan 5; and page 91 of the handbook).
Admittedly, the table of contents for the abovementioned handbook, *Canada: Its History, Productions, and Natural Resources*, reveals similar topics:

Climate [Effects on Animal and Vegetable Life]; Extent Area; Historical Sketch; Confederation; Constitution; Population; Land; Geological Survey; Public Debt; Revenue and Expenditure; Trade and Commerce [Banking]; Transport Service [Railway]; Auxiliaries to Transport Service – Telegraph and Telephone Lines; Savings Banks; Cities of Canada; Insurance; Newspapers; Various Statistics; Manufactures; Forests; Education; Agriculture; Minerals; Fisheries; Shipping; Prices in Canada; Animal Life and Hunting Grounds. (xiii-xiv)

The resemblances are noticeable – the inclusion of climate, laws; population; land; public debt; revenue and expenditure; railway; shipping and postal costs and other industries are all overlapping (xiii-xiv). However, the order is more telling of his agency in addressing a moralizing purpose: Fu compiles his writing like the traditional historian’s way of separating histories into subcategories. In the *Hanshu* ([Book of Han](#)), the partitions included newer labels for old categories found in Sima Qian’s ([司馬遷; c.145 – 86 BC]) *Shiji* ([Records of the Grand Historian](#)) in the Han dynasty. The order is modelled in Fu’s table of contents, such as book on heavenly patterns ([天文志 tianwen zhi]), book on geography ([地理志 dili zhi]), book on rivers and waters ([溝洫志 gouxu zhi]), and books on economy (including food and agriculture) ([食貨志 shihuo zhi]). Moreover, there is also a self-written preface ([敘序 xuxu]) in the style of the *Taishigong zixu* ([太史公]).

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89 The author would like to thank Graham Sanders for his insight on the content division of Fu Yunlong’s text. The late professor Milena Dolezelova-Velingerova (1932-2012) had passed on a copy of Fu Yunlong’s *Travel Records of the Expedition to British Canada* to him and had the opportunity to share this knowledge with the author in Toronto in November 2016.
In rearranging the topics that he gleaned from English-language works, Fu successfully presented himself as a historian, in the footsteps of other writers of official histories. Consequently, Fu attempted to bring the knowledge about the foreign under a classic rubric:

Thus, when a travel writer adopted the narrative persona of the historian, he was appropriating a potent form of literary authority. At the same time, because the conventions of historiography governed content, they tended to direct the writer’s concerns toward the public values and issues of official, court-centered culture. (Strassberg 11)

This use of the traditional framework to categorize foreign knowledge is meaningful to consider as this combination reconciles foreign histories into a classical system of knowledge.

The collection of poetry about life abroad encapsulates another form of writing that Fu partitioned, following the traditional duality of official history and personal letters. The text’s title suggests the space he made for its existence: You Jianada Shiyu (游加納大詩隅) [Some Poems about Travels to Canada] in Collection of Unchangeable Purpose.

Trusting that these poems did exist (as it is listed in the contents of the Collection), they would have presumably served the lyrical pole of the duality of literary travel writing. Strassberg notes how Chinese travel writing embodied many literary forms “out of a matrix where narrative was dominated by the impersonal style of official, historical

90 His contemporary, Li Shuchang (黎庶昌; 1837 – 1897) also made a similar comparison of Fu to Sima Qian. This can be found in his postscript of Travel Records of the Expedition to Japan as noted in Reynolds (330).

91 The character “隅 yu” in its title literally means a corner, or a separate place off to the side. Here it is a quantifier for the number of poems in the collection.
biography, and subjective, autobiographical impulses were largely subsumed within lyric poetry” (4). Perhaps it is not surprising then that Illustrated Records was an impersonal official history and that Collection of Unchangeable Purpose existed as a personal poetic archive. But what is intriguing is the content of Supplementary Notes, which is neither an official history nor a compilation of lyric poetry.

I argue that the classical dual framework of writing an official history with a poetry collection was insufficient for Fu because of this dilemma between aesthetics and technology-informed knowledge. The third text is more subjective and personal than the first encyclopedic work in its opinions and thoughts. It is also an appendage to an assumed expressive form of the second collection of poetry. But it is not an organized diary as in his Supplementary Notes on the Illustrated Travel Records of the Expedition to Japan. Supplementary Notes about British Canada is presented in a disorganized form. The disorganization not only suggests its rough nature; the rhetoric of fragmentation also reflects the internal chasm in knowledge regimes later in his trip. The chasm of knowledge regimes is exemplified firstly on the level of the corpus where there is a distinct partitioning of his official work, poetic composition, and personal opinion. That each text represented a form of ‘seeing’ – whether it was fully mediated through translation, expressed through a poetic aesthetic (now lost) voice, or partially learned through first-hand empirical knowledge suggests a rupture in understanding the world. At the same time, by introducing the third text of fragmentary writing Fu is able to reconcile the knowledge regimes by carving a space for experiences that could not be subsumed into the official history nor poetic letters. This reconciliation did not mean that the tensions between the paradigms ceased to exist, but that the third text provided a resolution by its existence.
As a result, since both Zhi Gang and Fu Yunlong were sent out by the Qing during a time when modern technology changed the ways the world was experienced and thus recorded, the ‘world’ was an empirical object that was measurable but not solely through the same means of observation as in the past. To put it another way, the world became something that could be objectively understood with (arguably) indisputable knowledge tied to the advent of technology such as microscopes, maps, trains, and elevators that would create other methods of understanding the world. This technological influence on local knowledge, which marks the chasm between aesthetics and technology, slowly shaped the relationship Qing travellers had with the ‘world’ and the way they would write about the foreign. In the end, a conflict between classical methods and technology-informed ways of registering their experiences abroad emerged. For Zhi Gang and Fu Yunlong, their use of mixed paradigms (whether in content or form) in speaking about Niagara Falls characterizes the negotiation between knowledge regimes in dealing with the foreign. Their writings can be understood as contested sites where regimes fought for their attention to be chosen modes to see the world for themselves and their audiences. In writing about the foreign space, Zhi Gang and Fu Yunlong were dealing with their classical worldview and the new one provided by modern technology and scientific methods. Borderspace as chasm is exposed and negotiated in the mixture of literary allusions, quantifiable numbers, and the partitioning of the travel corpus. Their photographic encounters further complicated this rupture and changed their relationship with the world. This makes the absence of the photographs in their travelogues even more fascinating. I explore reasons for their exclusion in the next section below. I argue that it was not because they were unfamiliar with photographic technology but because the
photographic apparatus challenged their subjectivity that the photographic encounters never materialized into photographs in their publications.

3.4 Photographs Not Included: Reinterpreting Encounters at Niagara Falls within the Sino-North American Context

3.4.1 Photography and the Issue of Credibility

Though both Zhigang and Fu Yunlong were familiar with photography and had their photographs taken, neither included actual photographs in their works. This absence can be critically assessed. At Niagara Falls, neither traveller was surprised at the presence of photographers on scene. Zhi Gang noted being photographed by reporters: “At the time there was a dabbler, using [a] camera to capture [the scene], to transfer the view to [those] near and far. 當時有好事者，以鏡照之，傳觀于遠近” (284). Moreover, the young
interpreter Zhang Deyi mentioned the presence of photographers nonchalantly, suggesting that they were quite aware of the technology:

His Excellency Zhi went across and back in a basket with Assistant Brown and the site foreman, followed in another by myself, Assistant Deschamps and Mr. Dolliver. We were stopped briefly halfway over for pictures to be taken.

For Fu Yunlong, even though he rejected the photograph, the request from the foreign photographer was reported:

As such, they make customary references to photographers taking pictures and reveal familiarity with the results of a mimetic material print. Their reactions to photography do not reflect astonishment at the apparatus and

Figure 3.4 The Burlingame Mission. Courtesy of the Harvard Fine Arts Library Collection.

92 This translation is from Diary of a Chinese Diplomat; all others are my own.
procedure. Although their writing was edited after the trips were made, as demonstrated by details described that could only be known after the time of the event, they were evidently aware of the power of photography in representing physical spaces and people.

Zhi Gang had gained much exposure to the technology because of his part in the Burlingame mission. The diplomat was photographed alone with Sun Jiagu and Anson Burlingame at a New York portrait studio by Mathew Brady (1823–96) in 1868 perhaps before seeing Niagara Falls (Fig. 3.3).93 Because they were the inaugural diplomatic entourage sent out by the Qing empire, the group was constantly photographed in deliberate, posed studio photographs such as this iconic picture94 of the whole Burlingame mission with its Chinese, French, British, and American delegates was taken on June 1868 before the visit to Niagara Falls (Fig. 3.4). Perhaps because they were part of the visible minority as well,

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93 Zhi does not explicitly mention when this photograph was taken, but he did arrive in the 5th month of Tongzhi year 7 (June 1868) in New York for 8 days (271).

94 Often reproduced today, this image was also showcased in the Hong Kong Museum of History in 2015 during their Historical Photos Exhibition entitled “Images through Time: Photos of Old Hong Kong” 岁月留影 (suiyue liuying) which the author saw while on research in Hong Kong. The exhibition ran from April 1 to June 1. For more information, please visit their official website: http://www.hkpsd.org/
they were also photographed on scene, in unplanned and incidental moments such as the picture of the entourage captured at Niagara Falls, where the Qing representatives seem to be waiting upon the Terrapin bridge (Fig. 3.5). Zhi may never have seen that picture of the delegates at the bridge, but he certainly saw the picture of himself crossing the Niagara gorge in the steel buggy in the newspaper (Fig. 3.1) as he claims: “Western newspapers of various countries published this affair, expressing the bravery of the diplomat 各國西人新聞紙亦載此事，謂使者為有膽也” (284). As such, in his writing about the photographic encounter at Niagara Falls, Zhi Gang sounds at ease with the presence of the camera and familiar with the distribution of photographic images in the mass media. 95

Although Fu Yunlong had fewer photographs of himself than Zhi Gang due to his status as a travel envoy, he was still knowledgeable about photography. As his journey was on a tighter budget and within strict rules the Qing court had imposed on the travel envoys in 1888, they only travelled in pairs with one or two servants. His chances of being photographed in America were much lower than that of Zhi Gang on the Burlingame mission, whom travelled with a larger entourage and was deemed as in the inaugural diplomatic mission from the Qing court. Evidently, his movements through the United States, Canada, Peru, Chile, Brazil, and Cuba were not noted in foreign newspapers even

95 Zhi’s interest in photography does not dwindle, given his detailed account of the technological aspect of the art in his diary in Britain. He describes the dark room and the experience that he may have read in the newspaper (321-22). It is unclear whether he personally participated in this experience as this excerpt is placed within an entry about him skimming the news in Britain. For certain though, he shows his interest and knowledge of the process involved, which required a variety of chemicals and apparatuses as well as technique.
upon arrival. However, according to Xiaqiu Wang and Jiguo Yang (124), who examined the archives of the Fu family, Fu was photographed in San Francisco. Even though he had fewer photographs taken, Fu Yunlong would have become familiar with the technology because he travelled twenty years later than Zhi Gang. Photography spread quickly through the Qing dynasty after its introduction to the world in 1842. In the 1840s, the First Opium War was “captured on camera by both foreign and Chinese photographers” (Bennett 2009 xii). In the 1860s, Zou Boqi (鄒伯奇; 1819-1869) invented his own version of a camera in China, and in 1869 he published Sheying zhi qi ji (攝影之器記) [Notes on a Mechanism for Capturing Images] (Bennett 2010 50). By the 1870s, photographs appeared in Chinese newspapers and periodicals in Hong Kong and Shanghai such as The China Magazine and The Far East.

Hence, both Zhi Gang and Fu Yunlong were well acquainted with photography even though photographic images were excluded from their travelogues. Indeed, it could have just been a technological constraint not to include images. There were nonetheless other ways in which images could have been included in their works, such as printmaking.

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96 There is no special mention of the envoy’s arrival in 1888 in contrast to the newspaper reports of the Burlingame mission, where they were named as passengers of China in 1868 local newspapers in California.  
97 His simple headpiece (that did not yet reflect a high rank, which he would obtain later in life) suggests it was taken near the beginning or even before the journey abroad began. This portrait was included in his later collection of writings compiled by his descendants. It is contested whether this was taken in San Francisco since Fu should have adorned a different headpiece based on his rank by the time of his arrival.  
98 Fu’s close associate and superior, the General Li Hongzhang would be commonly photographed. Please see John Thomson’s portrait of ‘Li-Hung-Chang [Li Hongzhang]’ 1872. Collotype from Thomson, Illustrations of China and its People Vol 4. (1874) in Bennett (2010), 232.
technologies at the time allowed for woodblock rubbings of images.\textsuperscript{99} However, it is also important to consider how the photograph would have undermined their credibility. While there was a material print taken of Zhi Gang and no portrait taken of Fu Yunlong, the absence of photographs at Niagara Falls can be interpreted as a problem of credibility created by the mimetic apparatus. Since photographic technology was believed to be able to capture a physical reality and transform it into print form, this technology-informed registration of the world was unlike the traditional method of recording experience, which did not always correspond to something visible or physical. When foreign photographers captured their pictures with or without permission, the Chinese traveller-writer’s credibility was being challenged through a new seemingly indisputable perspective granted through photography. Ultimately, I argue that the presence of photographic prints in their publications would cause them to lose credibility, that employing the art of photography was sufficient for them to authenticate their writings for their audiences, and that including a photograph would flatten their narrative about their lived experiences.

Zhi Gang’s self-aggrandizing representation of himself was only possible with the exclusion of the photograph itself. Zhi Gang claims that the crowds were waving their handkerchiefs at him and the Canadian engineer on board for their bravery:

\begin{quote}
Dozens of men and women from the same hotel came down to watch, waving their handkerchiefs and sending off, like a ceremony for the long journey to the West.
有同寓旅客男女數十人自下觀劇者，皆手揮巾帕而送之，
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{99} The photographs were not etched into woodblocks that could be rubbed and set next to the movable text as in other works at the time – such as the popular \textit{Dianshizhai huabao} (點石齋畫報) \textit{[Dianshizhai Pictorial]} (1884-1898).
As they crossed the gorge, he says that the men and women were waving at him but this claim of excited crowds is most likely fabricated. Beginning in May 1848, a metal basket attached to a wire cable carried interested riders across the Falls for a dollar. The wire cable was 359.6 meters long and carried one hundred and twenty-five people across the gorge each day. Thus, it would not be surprising to those who had been at Niagara before to see two men in a buggy, because decades earlier individuals could travel across in a similar contraption. For those who had not been there before, they would become aware of the funambulism which occurred beginning in 1840 with various tightrope walkers crossing the gorge since these funambulists were idolized in museums and within the pages of other tourist material. Charles Blondin (Jean Francois Gravelet; 1824-1897) tightroped across in 1859, once in a sack, another time with someone on his back, and yet another time crossing while pushing a wheelbarrow (Jeffrey 14). Moreover, at the time, the Suspension Bridge was being built and was to be completed a year after the Burlingame mission visited. The steel-cased buggy was used to “carry workmen as they gave the cable wires a second coat of paint before they were clamped in cable form” (Seibel 123) and would have been a common sight. Even Zhi Gang noted the buggy’s function (282) for the 1268-foot bridge in the making. Thus, sitting in an iron basket and riding along the gorge would not constitute much of a sight by 1868 whether it was because tourists could pay to do the same, because funambulists had done more dangerous acts across the gorge, or because workmen were regularly transported across the gorge to complete the construction of the Suspension Bridge.
The photograph (Fig. 3.1) challenges the brave image of Zhi Gang constructed in his own writing. From the photograph, there is no proof of the crowds. Moreover, including it in his writing would reduce the two men in the picture to passive individuals in a steel-box. Zhi would have been simply a man in traditional clothing sitting next to another man in Western clothing. Both would have had their two legs dangling from the steel-box buggy. Their posture would not suggest the sense of danger and awe reported in Zhi’s account. As such, after examining the photograph, there appears to be nothing exceptional about the experience that would suggest a sense of danger or necessary caution.

The photograph’s inclusion would also have left him no room to align himself with the famous assassin, Jing Ke (荊軻; n.d. – 227 BCE). The writing allowed for exaggerations and counterfactual sentiments. Assuming the role of a hero, Zhi Gang says that he was like Jing who would not return after he departed for attempted regicide of the soon-to-be emperor of the Qin:

\[
\text{It was like rising into the clouds, being able to see but not come close; Jing Qing [another name of Jing Ke] at the waters, once gone never to return.} \\
\text{一似此去將入雲霄，可望而不可即者；有如荊卿易水，一去不復還者。 (284)}
\]

The account above echoes a famous song attributed to Jing Ke as he was crossing the river:

\[
\text{Winds cry xiao xiao, Yi waters are cold.} \\
\text{Brave men, once gone, never come back again.} \\
\text{風蕭蕭兮易水寒，壯士一去兮不復還。 (“Jing Ke” 348)}
\]

Associating himself with Jing Ke renders Zhi Gang just as courageous if not more so. Jing Ke was never suspended on high; he reportedly sang this song of no return when crossing
waters of the Yi River towards the palace. Claiming to enter the clouds would have been clearly counterfactual with the photograph, which shows quite some distance between Zhi Gang and the sky. In fact, the highest point he would have reached would be just as high as the gorge. The cables indicate the substantial distance from the sky. As such, the allusions about his courage would be more convincing than the photograph itself, which surely would not convey the sense of bravery of ascending into the clouds that Zhi desired. Zhi Gang’s ascension on the buggy, which required writing to connect him with the famous assassin, was only possible without the photographic evidence.

While the photograph itself is not included and thus does not deny the traveller’s creative license, the Qing traveller intriguingly uses the rhetoric of photography to establish his authority. By merely mentioning that a photographer was on scene to take his photograph, even though the picture was never reproduced for his audiences, Zhi signalled that the event was worthy of photographic recording. The fact that a reporter was interested in capturing the moment when Zhi Gang was in the buggy gave meaning to the event. As such, claiming that western newspapers celebrated Zhi’s bravery was premised on the importance of photography. In other words, the gesture towards the photograph was enough. Thus, in the chasm between traditional ways of writing and technological methods of reproducing the scene, the borderspace was filled with writing that was seen as a sufficient medium to conveying his thoughts to his audience while rhetorically incorporating technology instead of including a material print to support the written narrative.

Similarly for Fu Yunlong, the reference to photography affords him the opportunity to claim loyalty to the empire for his labour overseas. Rejecting the offer for a portrait fulfills...
his desire to position himself as a loyal subject to the Qing and establish his authority. He explains how grey his face has become and how tired he has grown since his arrival in North America:

Yunlong’s face has grown dark and haggard, ten times more than it was at the time when sojourning at San Francisco. Why? Endless nights of thousand li travels, the five senses simultaneously being used, fearful and toilsome!

Indeed, it is possible that his face was in a haggard state; perhaps the waterfalls had startled him and so he was uncomfortable with having his picture taken. But his explanation presents Fu as a hardworking subject on his envoy mission through explaining his weary demeanour could easily be captured in a photograph. Understanding the technology of photography and its ability to reproduce each of his facial features and subsequently reproduce his exhaustion into a material print, Fu denies the photographer’s request to more convincingly create an image of himself as a loyal subject through gesturing towards what the photographic lens would have apparently revealed. Writing gave him space to explain beyond what a photograph could. In the end, Fu decided to use writing about the photographic encounter and incorporate the mimetic capabilities of photography rhetorically to expose his loyalty.

In both cases, for the Qing travellers to establish credibility, the photographic material print was not only unnecessary but also undesirable for constructing their authoritative voice. Including a photograph would flatten their experience; much like how simply marking their visit at particular sites on a map diminishes the lived experience. However, these accounts of photographic encounters granted them credibility. The rhetorical use of
mimetic technology strengthened their accounts while the printed photograph would have challenged their version of events. Zhi Gang’s suspension in mid-air was given significance by photographers on scene. Fu Yunlong’s tired demeanour was imaginable because of an understanding of the replicative technology of photography. The material photographs would dispute or undermine Zhi Gang and Fu Yunlong’s literary self-representation. As such, it is understandable why photography was not included. It is fascinating that its mimetic technology was used to build up an image of a courageous diplomat for Zhi Gang and an image of a loyal subject for Fu Yunlong. Photographic technology thus complicated the understanding and writing of self at this borderspace, where traditional paradigms of the transcendental competed with the photographic perspectives of the world and self. In the final section of this chapter, I interpret the photographic encounters of Zhi Gang and Fu Yunlong as allegories, telling of the Sino-North American context in which they wrote and revealing the chiasmic edges at which they were working as borderspaces.

3.5 **Telling of their Times**

Borderspace as chasm becomes a useful concept when we extend it into a global history. Based on what we understand about the Qing traveller’s dilemma between traditional paradigms (whether that be allusions, quantifiable numbers, or the partitioned genres of travel writings) and technological methods of recording space and self (whether that be influenced by microscopes, maps, trains, or cameras), the tabula rasa of Niagara Falls allows for allegorical interpretations of the representations. I read their encounters as symbolic of their historical moment to render a minor narrative of nineteenth-century experiences at Niagara Falls.
3.5.1 Bird Cage as Metaphor for Chinese Restrictions in the World

Zhi Gang refers to the steel-boxed gondola as a birdcage, which I read as a metaphor for the overseas Chinese situation at the time. When we understand Zhi Gang’s attempts at absorbing new technology into his own outlook, it is evident that he did not make it past the borders of his classical worldview even while stepping onto foreign land. Borderspace illuminates this chasm between the two paradigms that exposes how his description of the exterior landscape of Niagara Falls was a continued reflection of the interiority of the subject. I will show how this metaphorical reading is possible through the absence of the photograph, the multiple names the buggy could have been referred to, the timing of his visit, and his knowledge of the grim conditions of Chinese people overseas.

The photograph of the two men in the gondola exposes that the fact that the buggy did not look like a birdcage. The steel-box gondola in the photograph would challenge his authoritative experience of the space. From the first glance at the gondola, he stated that it looked like a birdcage hanging high (仰見巨鍊橫空，有掛如雀籠者) (282) and then when he entered the gondola, he also noted that he was entering the aforementioned birdcage (車懸木兜如方盤，容三，四人，即前所遙望如雀籠者) (283). However, when he was up close to it, it would be evident that it was unlike a birdcage in shape and size. The buggy was rectangular and open at the top, while birdcages in the Qing were more box-like and would not have an open roof from which birds might escape. The buggy was also quite large, being used to transport building materials for the Suspension Bridge. Zhi Gang’s physical experience of entering the gondola would not have matched the relative size of a birdcage to a human body. Yet despite the difference in physical
shape and size he describes it as a birdcage, which suggests that it can be read as a metaphor and not representative of a material reality.

Zhang Deyi, his translator on the Burlingame Mission, describes it as a basket (126). Zhang also perhaps lacked the vocabulary to describe the gondola, but did not name it a birdcage. Referring to it as a basket is arguably more neutral than a birdcage, even if Zhi was attempting to emphasize the height from which it was suspended (and subsequently his courage). There were multiple ways to describe this steel contraption but the choice of calling it a birdcage is very particular. Other times, Zhi Gang describes foreign machinery vis-à-vis the human body such as the example of the mechanic movements to human arteries mentioned above. Indeed, it was partially because the chasm between aesthetics and technology existed that allowed him to refer to the steel-boxed gondola as a birdcage because he had never seen anything like it before. The written record of riding the steel buggy juxtaposed with his other descriptions of machines using the human body, then, is important. Instead of using metaphors of the body, the buggy over the Niagara Gorge is described as an inanimate object. This means that there was some sort of difficulty in rendering the steel buggy in relation to the human anatomy and suggests a purpose behind naming it a birdcage. And so, calling the buggy a birdcage was intentional and not simply a description of a physical structure.

Understanding his familiarity with the photographic medium and decision to exclude printed images, I believe his writing ultimately exhibits an inability to adopt a new worldview between paradigms. Consequently, his representation of the landscape was still an active portrayal of his inner thoughts and the interiority of the subject. As such, recognizing that Zhi was working within the idea of borderspace as chasm helps illuminate
why and how the birdcage serves as a metaphor for the Chinese standing in the world in his historical moment.

If the photograph shows that the buggy did not look like a birdcage and the choice of naming it as a birdcage was particular, then the birdcage can be read as a symbol within the context of Sino-North American relations at the time. A birdcage is a universal symbol of confinement or a lack of freedom. Cages confine animals; and those within the cage do not have freedom of movement. Zhi Gang’s claim of entering a vehicle that resembles a birdcage can be read as an alignment of himself as a trapped animal. He recalls an image of confinement at a moment when he should have been elated at Niagara Falls. The Burlingame Treaty was signed just a month before, which was to secure the equal rights of Chinese in America and Americans in China (although the latter laws to protect Americans were redundant), at least until 1880 when the Angell Treaty retracted the former agreement. Zhi Gang could not have known when writing the first edition of his work that the treaties he and the Burlingame mission fought for would be overridden by a new agreement three years later. However, Zhi Gang would have learned of the poor position as a Qing representative by the time his work was published since he would have returned from Europe, where he had experienced difficult obtaining equality for Chinese people, as shown by his 50-day-wait to receive an audience with Queen Victoria (1819-1901) (300). Since Burlingame had passed away, the mission was more difficult to complete. As such, Zhi Gang could not have been unaware of the lowly place of the Chinese in the world.

Further extending this metaphor, Zhi can be understood as a representative of the Chinese populations abroad – gesturing to the poor circumstances of overseas Chinese. His
confinement within the steel buggy metaphorically points to the larger Chinese situation of overseas discrimination – the circumstances which led to his coming to North America and the reason he was travelling around the world. He was aware of the large number of deaths of overworked Chinese labourers in Panama and the current situation of Chinese labourers working on plantations in Cuba from his travels:

Heard that when the railway was being built, because the land was unkind and the weather was extremely hot, Spanish people hired “piggies” – more than twenty thousand Cantonese people respectfully came to work. Also heard they lived in caves and in the wilderness; food raw and water cold, forced to hard and toilsome work and so most of them died of disease and sickness.

[...] Going to the island of Cuba. At the centre of the island were Spanish people purchasing “piggies” from the Southern Canton province, send here to plant tea and opium [at plantations].

He would still have been able to recognize the grim future of overseas Chinese in the world even though the American government had been persuaded to protect equal rights of Chinese and Americans through the Burlingame Treaty. Although he did not witness the situation in Panama himself, Zhi Gang still showed attention to the Chinese labourers by noting their suffering and death. The understanding of the plantation workers in Cuba also proved the lowly position as he referred to the Chinese as “piggies” or contract labourers. Thus, the naming of the birdcage suggests a darker reality for Chinese overseas in the larger global context despite the successful signing of the Burlingame Treaty on 28 July 1868 in Washington.
Overall, this metaphor shows how the new worldview of technological influence could not immediately divorce the writer from his former writing practices of representation.

Specifically, the description at Niagara Falls still portrays the interiority of the subject corresponded to the Chinese literati consciousness – another reason the photograph could not be materially included but referenced. Zhi was perhaps still producing in the lyrical mode – a mode that Stassberg defines as follows:

In contrast to historiography’s paradigms of totality, Chinese lyricism sought to represent an alternate vision. The lyric poet, operating from a more interior ground of being than the historian, often captured his momentary experiences of self-realization in descriptions of landscapes. In an autobiographical act, he signified an identification of his inner feelings (ch’ing) [qing] with the sensual qualities of scenes (ching) [jing], using highly imagistic language that often obscured the distinction between observer and object. (12)

Zhi Gang could use this birdcage metaphor precisely because there was a chasm between his worldviews – the photograph, which would reduce the buggy to a steel-box, and the lack of vocabulary to describe the steel contraption in the Chinese lexicon. This photographic encounter within the Sino-North American relations as of 1868 and the dire circumstances for Chinese overseas that he learned about from sources and witnessed first-hand suggests that he incorporated parts of the technology-informed knowledge into a traditional framework of expression. Through this chasm he could articulate other sentiments and speak from another side of a global history.

3.5.2 Avoiding Photography, Avoiding Objectification

Fu Yunlong speaks from a minor perspective on global history, where his avoidance of the photograph can be read as allegorical of his overall avoidance of objectification. I argue that as a recognizable Chinese minority aware of the discriminatory laws of Canada and
the United States and the treatment of Chinese in South America, his polite rejection has a hidden meaning in the global context from which he composed *Supplementary Notes*. His avoidance of the photographic encounter and the way he retreats in other parts of his text allow him to take back his agency as a minor subject, challenging the authority of those who tried to objectify him and ethnic Chinese people in general.

In rejecting the photograph at Niagara Falls, he retains his agency through his successful aversion of the camera in the moment of invitation. Borrowing the mimetic technology of photography to construct himself as a loyal subject, I argue that Fu was standing his ground in declining the photographer’s request because he was also avoiding the possibility of becoming a spectacle. A photograph could capture the traveller with its lens, making the Chinese traveller aware of their position as an object on scene. On site, the physical apparatus of the camera lens would alert Fu to his vulnerable subjectivity as spectacle. After the photographs are taken, the physical print would also tell of the photographer’s control over the outcome of the picture. By not being persuaded by the photographer who was selling his craft, Fu could avoid the gaze and protect himself from becoming a spectacle.

Interestingly, the form of fragmentary writing of *Supplementary Notes* at Niagara Falls parallels Fu’s avoidance of the camera. The photographic encounter where the foreign photographer is denied permission to capture Fu’s presence at Niagara Falls is directly followed by empirical knowledge and observation. I quote the passage in full (repeating a portion from above) to demonstrate their close succession in writing:

> Yunlong’s face has grown dark and haggard, ten times more than at San Francisco. Why? Each night of thousand *li* travels, the five senses
simultaneously being used, fearful and toilsome! Across the shore were discontinuous paths, high and dangerous. [There was] a mechanic stairwell like a small boat, using the current of the waters to operate, but its height is not comparable to here [where Fu stood].

雲龍面黧形悴十倍于游三法蘭昔斯哥時。何也？一晝夜行數千里，五官并用，遑計勞耶！對岸危棧斷續，機梯形如小艇，亦藉水輪轉之，而高遜此。(Fu Diary 158).

The explanation as to why Fu rejects the photographer’s invitation is immediately covered by other observations to regain his neutral authority of the situation. Even in the very close reading of this moment of his travelogue, the reader’s attention is shifted away from Fu and onto quantifiable and empirical data.

Similarly, the photographic encounter at Niagara Falls is flanked by his experience with custom officials over his lost luggage and his reporting of empirical measurements of train travel from city to city within Canada that avoids attention on his subjectivity. After losing his baggage, Fu and his translator are asked to wait until the following day to meet with the official head of customs.¹⁰⁰ However, Fu never discusses the actual interaction with this official head of customs, obliterating the foreigner’s gaze here as well. After claiming the meeting occurred, Fu then brings a short history of the frontiers of Canada – a brief lesson on Canada’s territory is presented against the Chinese calendar – into his narrative:

Met [the customs officers] and met with the visiting deputy officer since the official border officer who controls the whole land had not returned. In the 28th year of the Wanli reign of the Ming Dynasty (1600), French arrived. In the 28th year of the Qianlong reign (1763) the land became British possession. In the 39th year, Quebec became a part [of the country]. In the 56th year (1791) Quebec was separated as Eastern Canada, making Ontario Western Canada.

¹⁰⁰ Perhaps head official Bulieshidengshiju (布列士登氏居) (156) referred to Sir Mackenzie Bowell (1823-1917), who was the customs minister at the time.
見之，有訪副疆吏之約，蓋領加納大全境疆吏它往未歸也。先是明萬
歷二十八年（千六百），法郎西人至此，我乾隆二十八年（千七百六十
十三）屬於英，三十九年貴壁為一部落。五十六年（千七百九十一）
分貴壁為東加納大，而以翁打里約為西加納大。*（Fu Diary 156-7）*

The dialogue between the two is replaced by a historical review, obfuscating the
experience. Fu simply claims success in retrieving the luggage and excludes the official
gaze and interrogation, which mirrors the photographic encounter: the camera would
expose more than he would have been comfortable telling, and, similarly, the interaction
with the official head of customs would reveal interrogation. The interrogation would
compromise his agency, as he would be questioned and placed in a relatively powerless
situation. By excluding the description of the interrogation process, Fu was concealing the
problem of subjectivity much like his resistance to the photograph, where his control of
the situations and self-representation were limited.

Photographs were a way to control bodies imposed by the government, and so camera
technology had been used to monitor Chinese bodies since much earlier than Fu’s text:

> Written physical descriptions and photographs had been made part of the
> admission procedures during the very early years of exclusion enforcement.
> […] Inspectors were instructed to photograph all newly arriving and
> departing Chinese labo[u]rers and to conduct exhaustive physical
> examinations in accordance with [criminal detective Alphonse] Bertillon’s
> methods. (Lee 84-5)

As a travel envoy, Fu had witnessed unfair treatment of Chinese and objectification of
Chinese bodies on the boat, as argued in Chapter 1. Having the desire to go to Canada, Fu
learned that he would require another document (such as a passport) from the British
officials and that without it he would not be able to travel (欲游英屬地加納大，訪之英
領事，言非紆道至美利加國都向英使索護照，不可游也。游之不克徑行如是) (132).
From his poetry in Cuba, Peru, and Brazil, it is more than evident that he was concerned about the treatment of Chinese populations overseas. His experience travelling overseas revealed an objectification of the ethnic Chinese body. Therefore, his resistance to photography and interrogation can be interpreted as a symbol of defiance against the objectification of his compatriots who were helpless, suffering, and interrogated because of American laws.

In a related vein, knowledge rendered possible by technology was inserted into his account after Fu visits Niagara Falls, concealing the experience of being watched. The careful recording of the distance covered on the train is important. The measurements of the distances between cities in *li* and then in British miles are repeatedly and mechanically presented until the end of his *Supplementary Notes* on Canada:

Going 12 *li* (4 British miles) stopped at *Yishiduobafeilu* [Buffalo?\(^{101}\)].
Another 24 *li* (8 British miles, 12 in total) stopping at *Kelinsiweili*. Another 12 *li* (4 British miles, 16 in total) stopping at *Luyiweili*.
行十二里（英里四）停倚士多拔費路。又二十四里（英里八，合前十十二）停可林司為里。又十二里（英里四，合前十六）停路宜為里。
(*Fu Diary* 159–62)

During these long intervals on the train, being a minority in North America, it is likely that he was subjected to the gaze of foreigners. In bringing this impersonal information into his diary, the experience of being an ethnic minority abroad was obscured. No lyrical subjectivity is found – landscapes and fellow passengers are not described. The text can thus be seen as “scientific.” Ultimately, the obliteration of the objectifying gaze was produced through the writer’s agency in presenting the rejection of the photograph.

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\(^{101}\) The place names are not identified.
obscuring the exchange with the Canadian official, and inputting numerical data about the distance travelled without subjectivity. The order in which these three episodes are arranged together overcome objectification of another Chinese individual, namely the author.

I argue that this avoidance stems from a self-concealment in grappling with new knowledge and the discriminatory foreign space. Fu Yunlong retreats to writing to fill the chasm between the photographic technology-informed representation and the aesthetic practices in Chinese tradition. Because Chinese travel writing was a matrix of forms (Strassberg 4), it allowed for a divided psyche reflecting a battle between former knowledge of travel writing and first-hand travel experience within an unfair global context. The official history in compiling and translating knowledge could also be a site of refuge, in not needing to explain other circumstances of the travel where the travel envoy would be subjected to an objectifying gaze and interrogation because he was Chinese.

Poetry could be a place of retreat, where sentiments of discrimination and suffering of the Chinese could be stored and hidden. The existence of supplementary notes is interesting because it exposes the additional need for writing and expression besides the two poles of poetic expression and official historiography about Canada. In composing the historian’s craft and lyrical writing, the autobiographical self within Supplementary Notes where we find the photographic encounter expresses other experiences of being a Qing travel envoy in the nineteenth century. As such, Supplementary Notes was needed for Fu to bring harmony to the situation. He could disclose some experiences of being an envoy by not having to translate new knowledge into the classical framework and not having to withhold his subjective thoughts within poetic form.
Consequently, on the level of content of Supplementary Notes, the chasm between former knowledge and physical travel in the global context is evident. The avoidance of the camera can be understood as a way to challenge the objectification of his minor body. The fragmentary pastiche style of his writing demonstrates the avoidance of moments of being watched (such as on long journeys on the train) and of interrogation (such as his interview and interaction with customs officers). This is telling of the times in which Fu travelled as a minor subject in a global historical moment where a Chinese man at Niagara Falls experienced the sights and the border-crossing very differently from other non-Chinese men and had other means to represent the minor perspective of it all through photographic encounters and conceptual frameworks of local tradition.

3.6 Conclusions

Through a close reading of the Qing travel writings on Niagara Falls, the notion of borderspace as chasm opened the space for further inquiry, going beyond understanding a site as a mere location between Canada and the United States on a map. The waterfall was not only a tourist site for American and European travellers but can also be productively understood from the minor perspective of Chinese travellers at the time. As such, the idea of borderspace as chasm revealed divisions between traditional methods of portrayal and those influenced and informed by modern technology, which presented a unique problem for Chinese travellers of the nineteenth century.

As I have shown in this chapter, the records of Zhi Gang and Fu Yunlong illustrate how Chinese travel writing grappled with long-established and newly encountered paradigms in representing unfamiliar spaces outside the Chinese empire. Through a combination of
classical allusions found in Chinese literary practice and technology-informed knowledge, Qing travellers often brought foreign knowledge under a classical rubric. Zhi Gang employed common allusions in Chinese cultural memory as well as empirical data to bring the unknown to his domestic reader. Fu Yunlong subsumed translated knowledge about western countries into patterns of native official historiography for his assignment to the Qing court.

Their encounters with modern technologies, such as microscopes, maps, trains, and photography, revealed a changing relationship with seeing, understanding, and reporting the world in the late nineteenth century. Subsequently, photography would challenge their authority and credibility. While Zhi Gang, Fu Yunlong, and their contemporaries were acquainted with visual technology, material photographs were never reproduced for their audiences. The presence of material photographs would invalidate their experiences and gesturing to the photographic power of representing a physical reality was often seen as enough to establish their authorial credibility. As such, photographic encounters gave Zhi Gang and Fu Yunlong significance as visual recording assigned value and worth to their activities abroad. Thus, while photographic prints were capable of nullifying their self-representations, the photographic apparatus and its mimetic function were effortlessly borrowed to construct their authority and importance as travel officials abroad. This incorporation demonstrates the work of the Qing travellers between aesthetic and technological paradigms of representation.

Interpreting their literary rendering of Zhi Gang being in an iron buggy crossing the gorge or of Fu Yunlong’s rejection of the camera’s gaze at Niagara Falls within a transnational context gives new meaning to their written experiences. Understanding their writing
through the notion of borderspace as chasm allows us to see the grappling of distinct worldviews between the multiple gazes that intersected at these waterfalls. Their writing reveals a deep awareness of the dark reality of the overseas Chinese population of the nineteenth century, rendered invisible on maps. Producing an alternative minor perspective of Niagara Falls of the same era, this chapter has sought to uncover other interpretations of their encounters that represent their times and present other ways to imagine celebrated sites. In my next chapter I explore another way writings about foreign lands formed through translation can be conceived of as a borderspace.
4 Chapter 3
Borderspace as Bridge and Veil: An Exploration of Intra-Asian Translation in the Sino-Canadian Context (1906-1917)

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I aim to show how the concept of borderspace is useful in understanding untranslatable and incommensurable ideas via translation. In doing so, I highlight the introspective ‘minor’ tone of translated literature that simultaneously bridged Chinese readers to foreign worlds and veiled the negative material experiences of Chinese minority subjects in Canada within a global historical framework. As a case study of minor transnationalism, I focus on the choices made within this borderspace – the space of translation – where Chinese translators of Japanese texts were working to bring Canada to their readers. This space forms a mediated layer that can both connect and conceal information about the unfamiliar Canada for reading audiences in China. In this space, the translators’ active decision-making and engagement with twentieth-century Japanese and Chinese languages are highlighted to study how translingual practice – “the possibility that a non-European host language may violate, displace, and usurp the authority of the guest language in the process of translation as well as be transformed by it or be in complicity with it” (Liu 27) – complicates the understanding of foreign space in minor translated literature.

Foreign settings in Chinese literature and travel writing are often read as evidence of a “modernity” that is “elsewhere.” Not enough attention is given to the way these spaces are created in terms of local literary practices and the way they can be read within global contexts. It has been acknowledged that travelogues and geographic works “gained considerable influence as a source of ‘new knowledge’ [having] a great impact on people’s
imagination regarding the concept of the world and China’s position in it” by the turn of the century (Hu 22). Although foreign settings of Chinese stories in the late Qing have been studied, scholarship on translated foreign fiction in China and its problems are rare. More specifically in secondary literature, the Chinese imagination of the foreign has not been considered within the Sino-Canadian context. Nevertheless, a particular case study of Chinese-language works about Canada exposes the agency of translators and complexities of translation that have not been previously discussed.

In this chapter, I examine issues of translation and rhetoric, representation of space via translation, and the relationship between text and reality using the portrayal of Canada in two works produced in twentieth-century China. I ask: How does the translator’s decision to follow local literary practices impact the imagination of foreign lands where the reader belongs to a minority group? How does translated intra-Asian literature point to incommensurable elements and why does this matter in the age of world literature? How

102 Perhaps because of the distance to Canada that is much larger and therefore less accessible than common sites such as Japan, Russia, and Britain, it has never been examined. Japan, Britain, and Russia are outlined in Milena Dolezelova-Velingerova’s collection of essays on late Qing fiction. For example: “So for instance, Li Baojia’s Modern Times describes the lives and activities of the first Chinese overseas students in Japan, several scenes in his The Bureaucrats take place in England, and the hero of Zeng Pu’s Flower, a prominent scholar and diplomat, travels to Germany and Russia” (9). In Brian Bernard’s research on South China Seas, he investigates the way the South Seas (or nanyang) were understood as “integral to modern Chinese literary enlightenment” for fiction writers such as Xu Zhimo and Xu Dishan (30). Canada in Chinese literature differs from the way South Seas “blends the genres of travelogue and fiction [together] to reflect upon and critique the travel[ler]’s own subjectivity and values” (38). I aim to show how foreign settings such as Canada are productive sites to consider the discrimination of Chinese abroad. Moreover, Joshua Fogel has discussed Sino-Japanese travel writing within East Asia by educators, scholars, students, professional travel writers, journalists, politicians, and more in his book, The Literature of Travel in the Japanese Rediscovery of China, 1862-1945 (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1996).
can the relationship between text and reality be problematized through the historical
contextualization of an ethnic Chinese reader and his/her material ethnic counterpart
overseas?

To respond to these questions, I study texts that would constitute much of what readers in
China could conceive of Canada if they never left “home.” Writings published in Chinese
via Japan were the mediums through which Chinese readers could imagine Canada, during
the era when the Canadian government restricted and then excluded ethnic Chinese from
entering its dominion. I demonstrate how the imagination of the foreign requires both local
and global contextualization. In conducting a local and a global reading, a deeper
understanding of the problems of translating foreign space in writing are brought forward.

In the first half of the chapter, I study one of the historical novels by Jules Verne (1828-
1905) in Chinese translation based on a Japanese version of the French work. In the
second half, I explore the Chinese translation of two Japanese travelogues by Anesaki
Masaharu 姉崎正治 (1873-1949) also known by his studio name, Anezaki Chôfû 姉崎嘲
風, and Tsuboya Zenshirô 坪谷善四郎 (1864-1949) also known by his pseudonym
Tsuboya Suisai 坪谷水哉. Both the novel and travelogue are important as they are
mediated through several layers of translation – specifically through Japan. The
production and content of these texts express how the borderspace of translation
functioned as a bridge and a veil: the work of Chinese translators served as a bridge for
readers in China to “see” a Canada they may not have personally been able to visit, yet
also casted a veil over the racist historical context of the Americas of the twentieth
century. Ultimately, I am interested in how translators grappled with the textual
imagination of Canada mediated through Japan for their reading audiences. Using the site
of translation as an example of the transnational as defined by Lionnet and Shih as “not bound by the binary of the local and the global and can occur in national, local, or global spaces across different and multiple spatialities and temporalities” (6), I revisit the ‘minor’ perspective of global history by giving context to the overlapping spaces and histories between China, Japan, and Canada.

4.2  *Jules Verne’s Famille-sans-nom (1889) in Chinese Translation*

The Chinese version of Jules Verne’s *Famille-sans-nom* is one site of translation that provides insight into the ‘minor’ perspective of global history. Verne’s novel explores the 1837 Rebellions in Canada and follows a fictional character, Jean Sans-nom, whose father was a traitor to the French rebellion in early nineteenth-century Canada. The protagonist and his brother attempt to redeem the sin of their father by raising another revolution against the British. In the end, they both fail and sacrifice their lives in the patriotic effort. Authored with French nationalistic sentiment, the text was quickly translated into English in 1890 as *A Family Without a Name*; then into Japanese in 1898 as *Mumei-shi* (無名氏) [The Man Without a Name]; and finally into Chinese from the Japanese version in 1906 as *Wuming zhi yingxiong* (無名之英雄) [Nameless Hero]. Verne’s writing, then, was mediated multiple times for Chinese audiences: first through the English; second through the Japanese translation from the English by Morita Shiken 森田思軒 (1861-1897); and third through the modifications of the Chinese translator, Bao Tianxiao 包天笑 (1876-1973).
Disseminated as a bounded three-volume publication in China, Bao’s reason for selecting to translate *Famille-sans-nom* may have been twofold. First, because of Verne’s growing popularity in East Asia. Verne’s popularity began in Meiji Japan, and since his works were often translated into Chinese via Japan, he became widely read and accepted in twentieth-century China as well. Chinese translators used Japanese renditions as source texts and some translated from Japanese texts while living in Japan. From 1903 to 1907, Verne was one of the most frequently translated writers in China, along with Arthur Conan Doyle (1859-1930) and Alexandre Dumas (1824-1895) (Jiang 117). Vernean science fiction, political novels, and detective fiction gained recognition at the turn of the century (Jiang 117), and important figures such as Liang Qichao (1873-1929) and Lu Xun (1881-1936) were also interested in producing Verne for Chinese audiences. In 1904 another rendition of *De la terre à la lune* and *Autour de la lune* (Around the Moon) (1870) appeared as 環遊月球 *Huanyou yueqiu* (Voyage around the Moon) by the Commercial Press Translation Bureau (Pollard 189).

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103 The dimensions of each volume are: Vol. 1 18.9 cm x 12.8 cm; Vol. 2 18.7 cm x 12.6 cm [open 23.1 cm]; and Vol. 3 18.6 cm x 12.7 cm. Shu-ying Tsau notes that *The Grove of Fiction* printed several original novels including the most popular novel (Zeng Pu’s *Niehai hua*) and 17 short stories and translations including “Shaw’s *Caesar and Cleopatra* (translated by Zeng Pu) and many short stories” (26).

104 In 1900, *Le Tour du Monde en Quatre-Vingts Jours* (Around the World in Eighty Days) was translated by Chen Shoupeng 陳壽彭 (1857-1928) and Xue Shaohui 薛紹徽 (1866-1911) as 八十日環遊記 *Bashi Ri Huanyou Ji* or Records of Travelling for Eighty Days). In 1902, Liang Qichao’s rendition of *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* (*Vingt mille lieues sous les mers*) was published while he was in exile in Japan as *海地旅行* (Haidi Lüxing or Travels under the Sea). In 1903, *The Begum’s Fortune* (*Les Cinq cent millions de la Bégum*) was translated as 鐵世界 *Tie Shijie* or An Iron World) (Jiang 61). Most famous perhaps are Lu Xun’s translations of Verne’s novels while he was studying in Japan: *From the Earth to the Moon* (*De la terre à la lune*) 月界旅行 *Yuejie Lüxing* or Travels on the Moon) (1903) and *Journey to the Center of the Earth* (*Voyage au centre de la terre*) 地底旅行 *Didi Lüxing* or Travels below the Earth) (1906) (Jiang 61). Others were also interested in producing Verne for Chinese audiences. In 1904 another rendition of *De la terre à la lune* and *Autour de la lune* (Around the Moon) (1870) appeared as 環遊月球 *Huanyou yueqiu* (Voyage around the Moon) by the Commercial Press Translation Bureau (Pollard 189).
鲁迅 (1881-1936) aided Verne’s reputation in China. Thus when Bao chose to translate *Famille-sans-nom*, he was choosing from a wide selection of Vernean works already made popular by the Japanese translator in Japan and by a group of Chinese intellectuals who had access to the Japanese editions working in Japan and China.

Second, the political atmosphere in China at the turn of the century also made the depiction of Canada significant to Chinese audiences. In the novel, Canada was the backdrop of political upheaval and rebellion against the existing government, which is perhaps why it was translated at a time when constitutional change was perceived as necessary in both Japan and China. Consequently, the revolutionary spirit embedded within the text itself corresponded to the political agenda of fiction. The literary revolution advocated by Liang Qichao probably affected the decision to translate *Famille-sans-nom*. Since Liang’s vision of literature saw fiction as being a harbinger of social change in China “for the sake of advancing political reform” (Wong 123), Verne’s historical novel about Canada would lend itself well to the political agenda of the literary revolution with its notions of revolution and sacrifice. While Liang probably did not have a direct say about the choice to translate of *Famille-sans-nom*, his influence was immense in the Chinese literary world. Many were avid followers of Liang and Kang Youwei 康有為 (1858-1927), including Di Chuqinq 羅楚青 (1873–1921), who was the editor of *Shibao 時報* (Luan 91). The Chinese translator of *Famille-sans-nom* would begin working at this newspaper press under the direction of Di in 1906, while simultaneously completing

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105 Liang and Lu believed that science fiction especially would “help the spread of modern knowledge in China, emancipate people’s minds and bring positive developments to a declining civilization that was being surpassed by the industrialized Western nations” (Han 15).
translations for another press named Xiaoshuolin 小說林 (Forest of Fiction). In Bao’s early career, the political climate, the turn to fiction, and his role at a pro-revolutionary newspaper suggest Verne’s text was a perfect candidate for Chinese intellectuals and audiences seeking social change.

Notions of progress, individualism, and national character constructed the political significance of fiction at the time, and so Bao Tianxiao was able to connect Verne’s “Canada” to Chinese readers. As Kirk Denton puts it, Western translations helped to form:

[…] a Chinese discourse of modernity centered around such terms as evolution and progress, individualism, liberty, law, nation, and national character. [Translated fiction] seemed to give narrative form to aspects of this discourse of modernity, presenting tales of individualist heroes, for example, and to offer a new, more politically engaged role for fiction in nation-building. (289)

The suitability of Famille-sans-nom in addressing those political needs is lucid when the text is read as one that “attacks British imperialism in Canada and pleads the ‘lost cause of the French-speaking provinces’” (Hillegas 42). Andrew Martin echoes this anti-colonialist sentiment in the novel, claiming that it has underlying “seeds of subversion” for revolution in the face of imperialism:

The later novel The Family with No Name similarly ends in the suppression of a rebellion (of French Canadians against the British), but spells out a message of proliferating revolt: ‘If these insurrections had been abortive, they had sown seeds on fertile ground. With the advance of time, these seeds would bear fruit’ […] the protagonist, having only been temporarily removed to heaven is always liable to return to lead his people to victory. (103)

The message within the novel is that the revolt never ends, acting as an encouragement for reformers and their supporters to fight ceaselessly for revolution. At a time, the dynastic empire was being challenged by the conception of a nation in China due to the Opium and
Sino-Japanese wars that threatened Qing power to govern its land and its subjects. This concept of a nation called for the formation of a republican government, where power is held by the people and elected by the people, as opposed to a monarch state. *Famille-sans-nom* was thus a fitting choice for early twentieth-century China.

Further evidence of the political reform’s influence on literary selection and production appears in the title change of the Chinese rendition. Out of the three translations—*Family Without a Name* in English, *A Man without a Name* in Japanese, and *Nameless Hero* in Chinese—the centrality of a protagonist as a hero is solely emphasized in the Chinese title. The change is much like what Patrick Hanan has described in the translation of Verne’s *Deux ans de vacances* (1888). The English translation was entitled *Two Years’ Vacation* (1889), then the Japanese version was named *Jugō shōnen* [Fifteen Boys] (1896) by Morita Shiken, and then the Chinese rendition was renamed *Shiwu xiao haojie* [Fifteen Young Heroes] (1902-3) by Liang Qichao (146). Hanan illustrates that Liang’s frequent referral to the boys as heroes in the novel was due to a perceived lack of Chinese heroes in the world (146-7). Joan Judge also points out how in September 1904 “a *Shibao* editorialist questioned whether China would ever be able to produce its own heroes” (94). In a similar vein, it seems Bao’s new title for *Famille-sans-nom* shared the same sentiments and concerns as other title changes, namely by responding to the search for ‘missing’ Chinese heroes. Through studying the transnational evolution of the novel’s retitling, Bao’s rendition is telling of its time. In choosing to emphasize the existence of a hero in *Famille-sans-nom*, Bao’s title was born in a literary sphere that was largely impacted by Liang Qichao’s views of fiction and his search of China’s own heroes. As a
result, Bao’s revision of the title also testifies to the political climate and literary scene in early twentieth-century China.

Moreover, the plot development of Verne’s work also corresponded well with the novels of the late Qing era, which may have influenced its selection. Milena Dolezelova-Velingerova points out the trope of the hero’s inevitable fall in late Qing fiction:

The hero’s failure or the tragic end of his life is the final point of the story, contrasting with the reconciliatory and ‘morale lifting’ denouement of the traditional Chinese novel and ‘the return of new generations of warriors, rakes, or scholars to carry the ball through further revolutions of endless flux.” Unlike traditional full-length narratives which ‘tend to reach a climax – or a logical end-point – long before the literal terminus of the book,’ the late Qing novels frequently culminate by a tragic ending in the very last chapters. (53)

The hero in late Qing fiction is thus “always doomed to failure” (53). Similarly, the protagonist of *Famille-sans-nom*, Jean-sans-nom, also meets his demise at the end, dying for the patriotic cause of the French upon a flaming ship over Niagara Falls. The novel hints at a resurrection of the rebellion in the future. The novel’s subversive plot (including the hero’s fall, despite which hope for a resurrection of the rebellion remains) would have been fitting for the development of a revolutionary spirit that sought to overturn the dynastic rule and establish a new republican state. Perhaps because *Famille-sans-nom* is perceived as being a sensible choice of translation at the time for commercial value due to the author’s popularity and political value due to its revolutionary spirit and fictional structure, the Chinese translation of *Famille-sans-nom* has been overlooked in Chinese literary studies.

Within French literary studies, Verne’s *Famille-sans-nom* has received critical attention, although not as extensively as his science fiction. Many have attempted to reign in the
historical novel within the French novelist’s oeuvre. In the preface of the 1970 version of *Famille-sans-nom*, Jean Chesneaux ties the novel together with several common themes in Verne’s corpus, such as the prestige of America’s democracy, the positive image of the Indians, and the connection between the Celtic race of French Canadians and the French. In his manuscript, Andrew Martin highlights the “similar aversion to imperial domination” found in many novels and points out the “radically anticolonial note” in *The Family With No Name* and *Foundling Mick (P’tit bonhomme)* (1893) (23). Perhaps because Verne’s historical fiction is often set apart from his well-known *Voyages Extraordinaries*, most secondary research has sought to find their similarities. Nevertheless, these scholars are reading the text in its original language, and thus are not concerned with a set of questions that can only be posed through a study of the work’s afterlife in translation.

While little has been said in secondary research specifically about Verne’s Canada, the setting of the trilogy to which *Famille-sans-nom* belongs, the significance of space in

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106 One study that differs is Karin Beeler’s work on Canada as imagined by French writers. Beeler notes that the main concern for French authors writing European readers was in producing a “landscape that reflected romance, intrigue and the ideologies of the Old World” (40). Calling *Famille-sans-nom* as a novel “which deals with the white man's imaginative conception or idealization of the Canadian Indian,” Beeler shows how the Indian character serves as a trope of the Good Savage (41).

107 In contrast, the image of America in the works of Jules Verne has garnered more scrutiny. Arthur B. Evans points out that Verne’s America is both idiosyncratic and progressive and simultaneously, has expansionist political ambitions, a lack of culture, and is a place obsessed with money (42). Jean Chesneaux comments that the United States “came closest to the ‘model of progress’ that Jules Verne envisioned for humanity” (“Jules” 112). The railroad established in the Americas was impressed on Verne’s mind (114). And within *A Family without a Name*, America represented the land of liberty — the leaders of the rebellion are Americans who “wish to drive England from its last strongholds in the New World” (118). Peter Schulman traces the turning point in Verne’s writing when America loses its “sunny optimism” and saw America as a threat to Canada in the novel *L’Ile a helices* (1895) and as a threat to the world in *Sans dessus*
Vernean writing has been explored by several scholars. Many have mentioned Verne’s obsession with data and maps. Terry Harpold has commented on its significance to Jules Verne as he drafted real and imagined maps for his fictional writings (19-20). In the Chinese and Japanese translations, however, these maps were never included, which suggests that there are other ways of understanding Verne via the lens of translation. Translation therefore tests the limits of these arguments made about Verne’s corpus. A Chinese translation of Verne provides a new lens through which to investigate the idea of the cartographic gaze and the notion of writing as colonization found in secondary readings of Vernean works.

Baryon Posadas has argued for a cartographic gaze or cartographic imagination of the world that “functions in response to the very sense of crisis it itself provokes by offering the fantasy of a stable frame of reference for navigation and representation” (329) in adventure narratives. Using Mary Louise Pratt’s “planetary consciousness” where the world is seen as a “singular spatial totality against the backdrop of colonial expansion” (15), and Anne McClintock’s notions of representation and control, Posadas argues for the significance of such ordering and stability to make “legible a spatial imaginary made possible by technologies of cartography that were products […] of colonial fields of knowledge production” (330). However, the cartographic gaze cannot be construed in the same way via translation because the host’s local context changes the guest’s gaze and focus. Such a cartographic imagination towards colonial expansion is not shared with the

dessous: “Verne fiercely attacks an America that can simply purchase any country or territory that it wants, for the sole purpose of exploiting it, impervious to the incredible environmental or human costs” (64).
host context in China since China was not in the position to conquer other territories. The idea of creating such a gaze in order to conquer or manage the world is not translated into Chinese because of the local needs at the time. The political and literary modernity sought after by Chinese writers and translators overtakes the colonial reading of a cartographic imagination. The appearance of the Chinese translation thus challenges the cartographic gaze that was embedded within such narratives and that is established in secondary readings of Verne as well.

In contrast, Timothy Unwin’s theory on Verne’s writing becomes meaningfully expanded by way of studying the Chinese translation of *Famille-sans-nom*:

Verne creates the sense not so much that his own imaginary world is in some sense ‘real’ or ‘believable’, but that the world beyond the text is itself a vast narrative mediated through many different discourses, and that it remains to be explored, retold, rewritten, re-read, remapped. Text, fiction and narrative are everywhere. Writing is itself a process of colonization, partly because there are so many texts out there, so much written ‘territory’ that must be appropriated and reigned in. (10-11)

Indeed there are multiple kinds of mapping and exploration that occur within and outside of Vernean texts, which speak to diverse discourses and point to writing as a “process of colonization.” While Unwin reads the complex textual world of Verne through his original French works, studying translations provides a new temporal and spatial context (here, the twentieth-century China) through which to reconsider the “imaginary world” and writing as a “process of colonization” in Verne’s corpus. As such, the Chinese translation of Verne’s historical novel is even more important to explore. I illuminate how the translated work can be conceptualized as a bridge and veil between the two cultures of Canada and China in hopes of uncovering the nuanced influences of local literary practices and the
‘minor’ tones of global history of the text that challenge and expand current understandings of Verne’s oeuvre. Even though the image of Canada has not received due attention, by filtering it through the Chinese literary and historical lens, the Vernean textual universe is further understood and tested.

4.2.1 The Tradition of Woyou in Nameless Hero

In these cross-cultural encounters through translation, there was a borrowing from local Chinese traditions to bring the foreign land of Canada to Chinese readers. The Chinese literary practice of armchair-travelling (woyou 臥遊) helped bring the Chinese readers to Canada by allowing them to feel like they were “there.” This practice was indebted to the Japanese translator’s rhetoric. Not only was there an ease of translating Jules Verne’s work from Japanese instead of from the original French, but the Japanese version helped readers feel like they were “there” in a foreign land. I illustrate the importance of Japanese mediation to Chinese readers’ imagination of Canada since Bao Tianxiao relied heavily on Morita Shiken. As such, the work of both the Chinese translator and Japanese translator first served as a bridge between the two nations of China and Canada.

In Chinese literary practice, woyou originated in the legacy of painting. In the Southern Song Dynasty (1127-1279), paintings were perceived as having the ability to transport a person “lying down” to the place they were looking at. Landscape paintings were used to bring the viewer to the depicted site. In other words, woyou was an alternative way for a person to “see” the “world.” Generally, the person was someone who could not physically travel and so utilized the medium of painting to vicariously journey to the depicted place. By the seventeenth century, literati were using woyou to paint scenes that countered the reality of social chaos. Cheng Zhengkui 程正揆 (1604-1676) used this tradition as “artistic
resistance against late Ming chaos” (Wang Reverie 5). By the Qing dynasty (1644-1911), woyou developed into “a vehicle for expressing political statements, literati’s cultural identity, and friendship” (Wang 6). In the late Qing, Yanning Wang argues that this tradition was a “prelude” to females’ physical departure towards the world from domestic spaces and inner quarters (xiii). Women benefited from this tradition of woyou at a time when they were unable to personally travel due to gender and social norms, so they read about the travels of others and composed poetry in response to those who made the journeys. 108 By the nineteenth century, woyou could be defined as “vicarious journeys through landscape paintings or written texts on travel” (Wang 6). Thus in the Chinese literary realm, written texts on journeys elsewhere were considered a common medium for imagining places and sites. The political aspects of woyou in recasting and resisting reality will become important to understanding the usefulness of the literary tradition in the Sino-Canadian context, which is further explained below after a brief explanation of Morita’s influence on the practice of woyou found in Nameless Hero.

Canada was brought to readers through the tradition of woyou with the assistance of the Japanese rendition of Jules Verne. The fact that Bao Tianxiao was working with Morita Shiken’s translation helped readers imagine journeys elsewhere. Because Morita was a journalist, his career had “serious repercussions when considering how the modern novelistic style was created in Japan” (Komori 123). Since the primary role of a journalist was to report the event and “clearly express the central issue while providing the reader with the feeling of actually being at the scene” (123), there was an intrinsic sense of

108 Over time, some noteworthy women were able to visit countries in Europe and Africa and their writings on their travels became a part of the journey of woyou for others.
“being there” in Morita’s translations. Since Bao’s mastery of foreign languages was limited to Japanese, he heavily relied on Japanese translations to create Chinese versions of Western works\(^\text{109}\) and subsequently reproduced Morita’s vividly descriptive translation for Chinese-reading audiences. He himself claims:

> But my English was not good enough to translate, my Japanese could pass, but those with too many Japanese words and native words I also could not understand. So I did not like the works of Japanese writers and exclusively chose Japanese translated works from Western books. They have a famous writer, Morita Shiken, with exceptionally good *kanbun*, making it easy to translate. I love his books the most; they are translated from the French.  

但是我的英文程度是不能譯書的，我的日文程度還可以勉強，可是那種和文及土語太多的，我也不能了解。所以不喜歡日本人自著的小說，而專選取他們譯自西洋的書。他們有一位老作家森田思軒，漢文極好，譯筆通暢，我最愛讀他的書，都是從法文中譯出來的。(Bao 174)

Thus, because of Bao’s linguistic limitations and the journalistic career of Morita, the “sense of being there” also became part of the Chinese reader’s experience of Canada in *Nameless Hero*.

The Chinese translators working with these Japanese texts were in essence borrowing the tradition of *woyou* to bring the foreign “home” to their audiences. This armchair-travelling was an option for the Chinese readers who did not and perhaps could not go to Canada themselves because of their individual circumstances. Although in the earliest conception of the literary tradition, *woyou* was associated with someone elderly who could not physically travel but had the desire to do so, the Chinese reader may have been physically

\(^{109}\text{For example, Bao translated Verne’s *Les Cinq Cents Millions de la Bégum* (The Begum’s Fortune) from Morita Shiken’s *Tetsu sekai* 鐵世界 (Iron World) (1887) as *Tie Shijie* 鐵世界 (Iron World) in 1903. This close affinity to the Japanese title which Morita chose suggests the reliance on the Japanese editions.}\)
able to make the journey (despite financial or legal restrictions), but not have had a desire to visit Canada at all perhaps because of the distance. Nevertheless, the translators’ production of these texts opened up the possibility for Chinese readers who desired to “travel” to “see” Canada.

One illustration is the description of Montreal in Bao’s translation of Verne’s text, which allowed readers to imagine the city. Not only highlighting the history of Montreal, the text explicitly points to the current physical buildings and architecture of the city:

Today, there are cathedrals of the old and new religions, bank, the exchange house (where one exchanges gold, silver, paper money), the public hospital, the theatre, the church of Na-de-er-da-mo [Notre Dame], Mo-shi-ke-ji-er [McGill] University, and the Saint Sebishiyi [Sulpice] school [seminary].

The ways in which the views of the Canadian city are translated, along with Bao’s added explanation of what a stock exchange is, “where one exchanges gold, silver, paper money,” allowed readers to imagine the cityscape. In this way, borrowing from the Japanese lexicon for the bank (ginkō), exchange office (ryōgaeya), theater (gekijō), Bao Tianxiao was adopting Japanese terms for these modern institutions. He thus used Sino-Japanese-European neologisms to bridge the gap between readers’ knowledge and the foreign context of Montreal. As such, Bao relied heavily on the Japanese vocabulary to present the main attractions in Verne’s Montreal to his own domestic readers.

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110 The superscript is copied in the original style where the translator has made his own commentary.
Another illustration of armchair-travelling via the text is found in the scene where Fengling (the Chinese name Bao gives Verne’s female protagonist, Clary) is almost hurt while trying to escape drunken soldiers. It is especially vivid because of its detailed and dramatic unfolding in the Chinese text, bringing the reader into the scene. The dramatic insertion of “suddenness” of having three soldiers emerge from the village and the quick succession of events allows the reader to become an intrigued onlooker. The scene unfolds as follows:

Suddenly, from [the direction of] the village, appeared three British soldiers. They were drunk: their eyes were shining like foxes; their mouths were skewed; and their feet were crippled. The clothes on their body were all covered with traces of blood. They were making exaggerated drunken noises, asking “Who is it?” Wu-bei-si [Bridget] and Fengling [Clary] saw this. [They] feared and wanted to escape, however they were already seen. There was already one blonde and ugly British soldier, holding onto Fengling [Clary]’s hand.

This is one example of Bao’s narration that places the reader in suspense, which creates the “sense of being there.” The narration, which moves rapidly, portrays the events as if the reader is watching as the men appear and taking account of their details. The narrator provides not only the visual sight of the soldiers through careful description of their physical attributes such as their eyes, their mouths, their feet, and then their clothing; but also the sound of the soldiers’ drunken voices. The eventual escape of the two French females from these dangerous British men is evidently useful for readers to “see” Canada through its forestry and the division between the English and French. And so, it is in this practice of woyou that the Chinese translator bridged the gap between Chinese readers and
Canada. Placing this “sense of being there” into the Sino-Canadian context reveals how at once the text can be seen as both a bridge and as a veil.

On the one hand, the particular moment in Chinese history when *Nameless Hero* was produced is crucial to understanding Bao’s translation as a bridge that allows readers to envision themselves in Canada. He was translating when the Qing dynasty (1644-1911) was coming to an end and a Republican spirit was on the rise. This places the work within decades of changing world order for those in Qing China. Even before the fall of the Qing, its subjects were learning about the force of foreign powers through the ceding of Hong Kong to the British in 1841; the two Opium Wars beginning in 1839 and ending in 1860; the Sino-Japanese War of 1894; and the Eight-Nation Alliance attack in Beijing in 1900.

In the same historical moment, foreign fictional works were starting to be imported into Qing China, such as Jonathan Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels* (1726; trans. 1872), as well as Verne’s *Deux ans vacances* and *Famille-sans-nom*. These literary translations were a response to the times when learning about the foreign was prioritized for self-strengthening and republican reform.

Canada’s history of Chinese discrimination in the early 1900s also adds to understanding Bao’s translation of *Nameless Hero* as a bridge. This was a time of high tension for Chinese immigrants in Canada as the Head Tax had increased to five hundred dollars per person wishing to enter the dominion. Discrimination was growing in Canada’s West Coast and eventually culminated with the 1907 Vancouver Riots, which damaged the stores and businesses of Chinese-Canadians and Japanese-Canadians. Under these restrictive financial, legal, and social circumstances against Chinese persons, the text created by Bao via the tradition of *woyou* countered the physical restrictions on the
Chinese body in the global context. The text allowed audiences to imagine a place they could not physically reach themselves, much like the depiction of places that combatted the social realities via woyou in the past.

On the other hand, however, in building a bridge through the narrative, the borderspace of translation also casts a veil over Canada. The relatively utopian portrayal of Canada was in sharp contrast to the material treatment of Chinese readers, if they were to make the journey. The paperwork required of ethnic Chinese to make the journey into Canada would already be the first difference from the relative fluidity of Verne’s characters, who seem to retreat within Canadian and American forested lands with ease. Moreover, the average ethnic Chinese would have had to face interrogation at the borders, which never occurs in the novel for the French-speaking characters. Thus even while Bao was an active agent in constructing the text as a bridge between China and Canada via Japan, the text can be read as a veil to the discrimination faced by ethnic Chinese if they were to travel or if their ethnic counterparts were taken into consideration. The discursive connection through the tradition of woyou can be read as a creative counter-narrative to the official restrictions placed on Qing subjects at the time, serving as both a bridge and veil to the material historical circumstances and relations between China and Canada.

4.2.2 The Practice of Commentary in Nameless Hero

Commentary was a traditional literary device that Bao Tianxiao used to help readers grapple with the foreign text. His commentaries are interspersed within the novel: providing explanations for particular modern institutions foreign to his audiences and inserting zealous exclamations about French patriotism in Nameless Hero. Through these paratexts, the Chinese translation manipulates Verne’s work for the historical political
agenda of reform at the turn of the century. Taking the historical context of Canada’s relative anonymity and its discriminatory treatment of Chinese into account, Bao’s practice of commentary clearly illuminates how borderspace can be imagined as both a bridge and veil when foreign spaces are translated. Although Verne’s *Famille-sans-nom* focuses on the French minority in Canada and their patriotism, their patriotism was explicitly used to encourage those Chinese readers (within the geographic borders of the crumbling Qing empire) to sympathize with the reformers and revolutionaries. This minor-to-minor alignment – that is, how Bao’s Chinese readers were considered a minority to the empire while the French were also considered a minority to the Canadian (British) regime – was one way to bridge the two nations via translation and make the work relevant to Chinese audiences. However, Bao’s alignment of the revolutionary situation in China to the French position in Canada engenders issues of untranslatability. The call for the end of a dynastic cycle was not the same as the French rebellion since the latter was reclaiming and vindicating land for which they formerly had ownership. Moreover, the praise for Canada’s rebellions excludes the group of ethnic Chinese suffering under Canada’s then-current laws. Using the image of Canada to encourage the Chinese readers in China to unite in the name of social change, Bao’s paratexts points to incommensurable ideas of compatriotism. Highlighting the incommensurable ideas and the gap between text and reality, I demonstrate how the text connected and concealed Sino-Canadian material history as a borderspace that creates an important and significant dissonance when reading the work in a global context and world literature.

Within the genre of Chinese fiction, the practice of including commentary was not innovative. In his study on the stages of vernacular Chinese fiction and its relationship
with translated fiction, Hanan illustrates that translators wrestled with “unfamiliar forms of western fiction” by including commentaries, which followed a traditional Chinese fictional model (159). Prior to Bao, there were commentaries by translators that explained the original author’s situation and analyzed thoughts and contents to make the work relatable to Chinese readers. The translator’s comments were much like the narrator’s voice in Chinese fiction:

The narrator’s discourse is frequently interspersed with evaluative adjectives, expressive figures of speech, long explanations and commentaries, and direct addresses and questions to the reader. The most conspicuous of these devices are the narrator’s comments. The narrator interrupts the flow of the narrative to remark on events or social phenomena depicted in the novel. (Hanan 64)

And so this voice from the translator is not unprecedented – questioning and reflecting on the text itself was part of a literary practice common in Chinese literature.

However, in later decades the nature of the commentaries became more political. There was a shift in the way journalists and publicists “promoted a course of edification intended to convert their moral and intellectual inferiors into politically active citizens” (Judge 80). When describing how the British and French fought, Bao inserted patriotic tropes and charged emotions that shared similar ‘edification’ purposes. He emphasized the sacrifice of the French and claimed:

Scholar Tianxiao said: When I was translating up to this point, I closed the book and pondered, in towering anger, my sweat dripping endlessly, my back drenched as if with cold water, I really did not have the time to mourn for Canada’s patriotic persons. I wish to tell [my] brothers with the words that filled my heart [but] I cannot tell [my] brothers. I am [only] hoping to read my books to reflect on myself.

天笑生曰 吾譯至此掩卷想 吾髮指吾皆裂 吾汗涔涔下 吾背如澆冷水 吾實不暇為加拿大愛國志士悲。吾慾舉吾臆中之語告同胞 吾實不能告吾
By siding with the French and the underdog in the situation, Bao was in essence soliciting patriotic sentiments from his readers in his commentary. As with early translators who grappled with Western texts followed the traditional Chinese fictional model of “insertions and end-of-chapter summaries” (Hanan 159), Bao was also following this model. He increased the dramatic effect of such paratexts with his exaggerated reactions of “towering anger” and endless perspiration, demonstrating his engagement with the construction of the text as a bridge between China and Canada. However much he relied on Morita, Bao was an active agent in connecting Canada with Chinese readers through lively commentary as he specifically called for his ethnic “brothers” or tongbao 同胞 to reflect. These comments were new additions and not found in Morita Shiken’s version. Moreover, like other Chinese translators and writers, he “treat[ed] fictional characters as real people” (Pollard 196). Although he claims he did not have “time to mourn” for the patriots of Canada, this small detail illustrates how he perceived the French characters as representatives of sacrifice. His added commentary in addressing the foreign politics and simultaneously Chinese readers reveal Bao’s political motives and desire to align the two contexts as young nations. In other words, borrowing the patriotism of French Canadians to establish the bond of his Chinese readers was an important move in bridging Canada to his readers. Thus, while using the practice of commentary in Chinese fiction was not new per se, Bao’s insertions to the text bolsters his perception of the historical need for a republic; a state requiring support by specific Chinese readers.

The borderspace as veil between the two cultures becomes more evident as Bao’s rhetoric exposes which populations are included and excluded in his commentary. This patriotism
within the commentator’s plea corresponded to the notion of the republican state, or, the need for a republican government instead of the dynastic rule. The minor-to-minor alignment, that is French against British Empire and Chinese against the Qing Empire, was one vision Bao Tianxiao employed to imagine “the world,” much like what Rebecca Karl has identified in other narratives and plays staged for the nationalistic agenda of China at the turn of the century. Bao’s paratexts not only transpose French patriotic sentiment in Canada onto his Chinese readers, but also indicate that his audience was focused on the Chinese within the Qing empire’s physical borders.

His writing shows the geographically limited boundaries of the trope of tongbao, which can be understood as “brothers” and especially “compatriots.” The translator supports the revolution in Montreal in response to the unhappiness of “the French; minorities; slaves; and those tongbao in similar circumstances” (3). While employing the term tongbao in praising the French compatriots’ rebellion against the British, Bao forgets about the reality of Canadian laws against his contemporary ethnic compatriots abroad. In his own historical moment, he is translating a text that takes Canada as a model to follow in terms of rebelling and fighting against existing governments for his Chinese readers in China. Anxious for the French characters, he sides with the French to conjure emotions of patriotism in Chinese readers. Later in the novel, he again explicitly names China’s situation: “Tianxiao says […] In this chapter you can briefly see the trajectory of the

\[\text{112} \] Rebecca Karl argues that Hawaii at the heart of the Pacific helped to constitute overseas Chinese as potential ‘national people’, helping to form the dynamic conceptions of nation in the twentieth century. Please see the third chapter in her *Staging the World: Chinese Nationalism at the Turn of the Twentieth Century* (2002).
revolutionists. [This] makes me think of my nation’s patriots’ revolutionists 天笑生曰。

此一章略見運動家之跡。抑我嘗我國志士之所謂運動者矣” (85-6). The republican spirit allows his commentary to be politically effective and engaging. Drawing upon his Chinese compatriots in China, however, he neglects the Chinese compatriots in Canada.

The transnational Chinese overseas are forgotten while Bao encourages those Chinese within the empire through this French novel. Ultimately, the circumstances of those Chinese in the country Bao praises are completely disregarded. The term tongbao, which he interchangeably uses to refer to the French and to the Chinese, is complicated by the global situation, making evident that there are untranslatable and unbridgeable elements in translating foreign spaces.

In studying the work through the lens of translation, we can reevaluate the notion of writing as colonization as proposed by Unwin and the idea of world literature. The process of remapping of Verne onto the Chinese afterlife exposes incommensurable issues because of the host culture’s ‘minor’ perspective. Because the Chinese translation uncritically took the French rebellion in Canada as a model for its Chinese readers within the borders of the empire, there was a neglect of the Canadian treatment of Chinese individuals abroad. Only from a ‘minor’ perspective can the dissonance and incommensurability between cultures be heard and comprehended.

This process of rereading and remapping Verne in translation is important in the age of world literature, which assumes a kind of translatability between cultures. The careful remapping of the translated Famille-sans-nom within the Sino-Canadian context shows that writing and the space of translation serves as a veil that needs to be lifted in order to question the premise of world literature’s existence. While the novel enabled Chinese
audiences to imagine Canada by bridging it with the historical circumstances, it also problematically ignored the existence of Chinese diasporas abroad. It is only through afterlives, such as these, that we can investigate the minor tones and nuances of intra-Asian translation. In the next work of intra-Asian translation, the difference between the ethnic Japanese and Chinese historical experience in Canada is explored to reveal another ‘minor’ register of global history that challenges the assumed translatability between cultures.

4.3 Jing Que and his creators

Huanqiu zhouyouji (環球週遊記) [An Account of Global Travels] was first published in 1917 and republished in 1919 and 1926. Ostensibly, it appears to be an original Chinese work published by Zhonghua shuju, with authorship attributed to Jing Que 景慤 (n.d.). The book has 338 pages, has no photographs, and contains a handful of illustrations. The travelogue describes a wealthy Chinese man’s extensive travels in 1909, from Shanghai to Japan, Canada, the United States, Britain, France, Spain, Italy, Switzerland, Holland, Russia, among other places, and finally returning to China. This is the only work attributed to the author, Jing Que. Based on its publication run, the book’s reception was more than fair. Today the text (both the original and its twenty-first century reprint) is available at various institutions across China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan.

This work, however, is actually a translation and pastiche of three travelogues by two different Meiji era (1868-1915) Japanese intellectuals. The main content of the book comes from the writings of aforementioned Anesaki and Tsuboya who are not credited in the Chinese translation. A graduate from the Department of Philosophy from the Imperial University of Tokyo in 1896, Anesaki travelled on the prestigious Kahn Scholarship from
Japan to America in 1907 and was invited to be a visiting professor at Harvard University in 1914 and 1915. He also visited France, India, Switzerland, Italy, Germany, and Britain in 1908. Anesaki published travelogues of his journeys to Europe and America in Japanese, entitled Hanatsumi nikki (花つみ日記) [Diary of Flower Picking] (1909; trans. Flowers of Italy, 2009) and Teiunshu (停雲集) [Long Distance Friendships] (1911; trans. Wandering Clouds, 2014). Less popular in comparison, Tsuboya was the first editor of the Japanese periodical Taiyō (Fessler 255) and then later became a local politician (Tayama 175). He published his travel diaries of his journeys in China, Korea, the Americas, and Europe in Kaigai angya (海外行脚) [Overseas Pilgrimage] in 1911. He also penned other travelogues and translated foreign works in his later years.

As an intra-Asian work, this Chinese text is worthy of being explored because of its hidden translated history, which I will show is problematic and crucial to the interpretation of the travelogue at its global historical moment. The three travelogues share similar itineraries and have corresponding passages. Indeed, by 1911 both Anesaki’s and Tsuboya’s works were published. Jing Que’s text was printed in 1917. But the publication

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113 Anesaki wrote about religion and life in Japan in publications in English such as Nichiren: The Buddhist Prophet (1916); the Archaeological Institute of America’s The Mythology of All Races (1928); History of Japanese Religion: With Special Reference to the Social and Moral Life of the Nation (1930); and Art, Life, and Nature in Japan (1933).
114 Fessler translates this first title as Flowers of Italy which does not correspond directly to Anesaki’s title. Fessler translates the second title as Wandering Clouds while the original title alludes to the friendship formed across distances according to a poem by Tao Qian.
115 Tsuboya’s works were also advertised in Anesaki’s works and vice versa. Tsuboya also wrote: 日本漫遊安内 (1905); 世界漫遊案内 (1910); 山水行腳 (1912); and 水哉紀行選集 (1932). He translated Henry Dyer’s work on agriculture.
order only suggests that the Chinese author copied the Japanese version: their matching itineraries prove that the original was certainly Japanese. In the Chinese text, the narrator-protagonist claims that he took his journey ten years before but could not publish his thoughts until most recently. Jing reports that his Pacific travels began in the “first year of Xuantong’s reign [1909], in the afternoon of September 4 時在宣統元年九月四日之午後” (14) and that he was on board the same ship with Anesaki Masaharu (15). In Anesaki’s work, he claims boarded the Shinanomaru on 4 September 1907 (155-6 in the original; 69 in the trans.) and alighted on the nineteenth of the same month in Victoria, Canada (159; 72).116 Interestingly, both Anesaki (72) and Jing (18) state that the ship crossed the meridian on Wednesday 11 September. However, according to the date in which Jing crossed the meridian on the Pacific Ocean in 1909, the day would have been a Saturday and not a Wednesday since the eleventh of September in 1909 was a Saturday. While both authors note the double day (since the same day is experienced twice on the Pacific because of the time zones), the dates do not match with the reported year of travel for the Chinese protagonist. In contrast, the Gregorian calendar indicates that the date correlates to a Wednesday in 1907 – the year Anesaki claimed he sailed for North America. In both texts, the date September 11 is recorded, but only in the Japanese text does the explicit weekday correspond to the year of Anesaki’s departure. Therefore, we may conclude either that the Chinese author made a mistake in remembering the year he extensively travelled the world and the date he crossed the meridian, or that his writing was extracted from an account by another individual who wrote about the same experience in 1907 as Anesaki. The similar experiences in the three accounts suggest more conclusively that the

116 Tsuboya notes arriving in Canada on the 18th (231).
Chinese text is linked to specifically to the writings of Anesaki and Tsuboya, which are further discussed below. Nonetheless, judging solely by the itinerary, Jing Que was likely a penname\textsuperscript{117} for a group of editors who took the Japanese writings and imported them into China without giving credit to the original authors.

I suspect that the creators of Jing Que’s text were part of the group of Zhonghua shuju editors listed in the publication material. The press listed Jing Que as author; Ouyang Hancun (歐陽瀚存) and Lu Shoujian (盧壽錢) as revisers (校訂者 \textit{jiaodingzhe}); and Zhuang Qichuan (莊啟傳) as copy editor (潤辭者 \textit{runcizhe}). Ouyang authored books in Chinese about mining and farming and translated religious texts from Japanese into Chinese.\textsuperscript{118} Lu published books through Zonghua shuju on mental health, marriage, and America’s wealthiest.\textsuperscript{119} Zhuang was likewise associated with Zhonghua shuju, editing other volumes with them in the 1920s and 1930s.\textsuperscript{120} Since Ouyang’s repertoire suggests Japanese literacy, perhaps he was the one who translated from Anesaki’s and Tsuboya’s works while the other editors revised his translation; and together they crafted \textit{An Account of Global Travels}. With the book’s distribution in Beijing, Tianjin, and other Chinese cities as well as Singapore, the intended audience of the book is presumably Chinese. I put

\textsuperscript{117} It is not a common surname to begin with. It ranks 253 in the \textit{Bai jia xing} (百家姓) out of some 400 possible Chinese surnames. Moreover, there is no other record of a Jing Que.

\textsuperscript{118} Publications include: \textit{Kuang ye tiao li tongshi} 鑛業條例通釋 (1916); \textit{Ying Mei Ri chanye wenti} (英美日產業問題) (1930); \textit{Nong cang jingying lun} (農倉經營論) (1935); and \textit{Mi zong yao zhi} 密宗要旨 (1939).

\textsuperscript{119} Works include: \textit{Shenjing suirou liaoyangfa} 神經衰弱療養法 (1917); \textit{Hun yin xun} (婚姻訓) (1917; 1919; 1926); \textit{Zhongguo fu nv mei tan} (中國婦女美談) (1917); and \textit{Meiguo shida fu hao} (美國十大富豪) (1914; 1927).

\textsuperscript{120} For example, he edited \textit{Yuan wen lei jian bian} (元文類簡編) in 1918 and \textit{Yao shi Qing chao wen lu jian bian} (姚氏清朝文錄簡編) in 1933.
forth that this translation was written in response to a deepening interest in the world among Chinese readers, and also to a growing concern during this period over China’s global standing. I would argue that the editor(s) and translator(s) of the text fabricated this work in order to address the practical needs of its Chinese-reading audiences who desired to “see” the world through the eyes of an ethnic Chinese traveller.

As an example of an intra-Asian translation, the text’s creation reflects the needs of the Chinese society at the time and reveals how mediated texts served as both a bridge and veil for Chinese contemporary audiences when placed in the Sino-Canadian context. I focus specifically on the chapter on Canada in the book to further expand the idea of translation as a borderspace that serves as both a bridge and a veil to the reader’s perception of foreign space. This aspect of the text has not been explored because existing research is unaware of its Japanese origins. In Satō Saburō’s research, the Chinese text is categorized under works about Chinese travellers in Meiji Japan during the twentieth century (257). In Li Lan’s book, Zhang Zhi’s research, Xue Liqing’s dissertation, and Liu Zhan’s thesis, Jing Que’s text is used to reference the global coverage of a Chinese man in the twentieth century. With my discovery of the book’s history as plagiarized from Anesaki Masaharu and Tsuboya Suisai, I analyze how the Japanese mediated journey brings out issues of (un)translatability, to clarify the concepts of borderspace as connecting and concealing “Canada” to Chinese readers. I aim to show that while the work of the creators via the Japanese text initially served as a bridge between Canada and China, like Bao Tianxiao’s rendition of Nameless Hero, it also cast a veil over the imagination of a foreign country. Placing the work within the global context indicates how intra-Asian translation is complex and warrants exploration.
4.3.1 *The Tradition of Woyou in An Account of Global Travels*

I am returning to the concept of *woyou* that I applied earlier to Verne’s text, which I argued had assisted in bridging the two nations of Canada and China for the domestic Chinese readership. The creators of Jing Que were also using the practice of armchair travel to bring domestic Chinese readers to Canada, which initially connects the two contexts. Situating the text within Chinese-Canadian relations between 1917 and 1926, the Chinese readers of a text on Canada were just as unable to travel as the elderly man at home and late Qing females in their inner quarters in recumbent travel. Beginning in 1885, the Canadian government issued a “head tax” for every Chinese immigrant entering its borders under the Chinese Immigrant Act. By 1904, the head tax increased to five hundred Canadian dollars, the equivalent of over $10,000 today.\(^\text{121}\) This was a hefty sum, often requiring Chinese men to borrow from several households in order to afford their passage. By 1923, the Canadian government attempted to restrict all Chinese immigrants with the Chinese Exclusion Act. Whether or not translators realized or were aware of the discrimination and legal restrictions placed on Chinese in Canada, the plagiarized Japanese texts served as a bridge between the two cultures when physical travel of a Chinese man to Canada became precarious. Because of the tense and increasingly strict policies against ethnic Chinese immigration, the possibility of Chinese individuals visiting Canada in the time of *An Account of Global Travels*’ publication were small even for the privileged, and nonexistent for the average Chinese man and woman. This gives further

\(^{121}\) According to the Bank of Canada, which only tracks from 1914 to 2016. However, judging by inflation, if $500 Canadian in 1914 is worth $10,733 in 2016, then it would have been significantly more in 1904. <http://www.bankofcanada.ca/rates/related/inflation-calculator> Retrieved 5 Nov 2016.
value to texts like Jing Que’s, in their continuation of the tradition of *woyou*, especially considering the restricted physical movement and travel of ethnic Chinese.

Here, I expand the tradition of *woyou* to include the men and women who were financially and legally restricted from travelling to Canada in particular. While in the earliest conception of *woyou* the intended audience was older men who preferred to “lie down and travel” or for late Qing females bound to their quarters to travel vicariously through reading, *An Account of Global Travels* shows the impact of these changes in the meaning of *woyou* by extending its audience to both men and women who were unable to personally voyage to Canada despite gender and age. Literary texts not only united the two cultures in discourse, but also carved an alternative reality to their material present. As such, the creators’ depiction of the activities on board the ship to North America painted a picture of living on board in comparison to being on land that would allow readers to “see.” The narrator explains:

> Life on the ship is rather leisurely, unlike the busyness of life on land, [people] play cards, chess [the game of go], tell stories, or share about their own experiences. At night, they sleep well [lit. high pillows] and do not sense whether or not there were winds or waves, which were all a blur.

By portraying day-to-day life on the ship, the readers are bridged to a new context. Early in the narrative, Jing Que reports the news of September 12th and the ensuing discussion on board that follows (20). In doing so, he allows the readers to find themselves cartographically between Yokohama (Japan) and Victoria (Canada):

> Weather was overcast. Latitude 49° 58’N, longitude 166° 15’W – the distance from yesterday to today is 263 *li* – distance from Yokohama is
2,513 li – distance to Victoria is 1,747 li – Temperature 52 °[F],
temperature at sea 50 °[F].

These details fit with the distance travelled: since Anesaki notes in his travelogue that they
passed the 180° on the 11th, reaching 166°W is relatively correct. The source of this
information is not from Anesaki or Tsuboya’s writing, but was incorporated to allow
readers to imagine the foreign point at sea. These details show how the reader was taught
to see the journey through the protagonist’s descriptions and by coordinates on a map
where they could imagine themselves between two spaces. In this way, the creators of Jing
Que’s text were bridging readers in the tradition of woyou, where the armchair-traveller
could also “see” the world despite legal restrictions.

Furthermore, in order to introduce readers to a Chinese globetrotter, the creators crafted a
new preface, which would make Chinese readers likely unable to separate the author,
narrator, and protagonist and likely unable to notice a translator at work. By using the
paratextual space of the preface, which was common in Chinese literary tradition, the
editor(s) and translator(s) reproduced the framework of woyou to help Chinese readers
imagine the world through a first-person Chinese narrator. The protagonist-narrator uses
classical knowledge, for example. Jing Que expresses himself using words from Zhuangzi:
identifying himself as someone with limited knowledge using the parable of “the summer
insects who cannot speak of knowledge of ice [winter] 夏蟲不可以語冰” (1). The
protagonist-narrator marks time in relation to the establishment of the republican state in
China as well. He says that the journey was made “three autumns before the establishment
of the Republic 民國紀元前三年秋” (2). The construction of references to a Chinese audience is so well done that even contemporary scholars today still believe it is of a Chinese authorship as mentioned above. Subsequently for Chinese readers, the central traveller was considered an ethnic Chinese individual through a perfectly packaged preface, which likely assisted their understanding through woyou.

The editors and translators were not only interested in writing a new preface, but also in adding travel information for Chinese readers for practical knowledge and omitting other writings perhaps seen as impractical. The eighteen-page chapter that discusses tips for travellers is entitled: “Haiwai lvxing xuzhi (海外旅行須知) [The Must-Knows of Overseas Travel].” Yet, illustrations and poetry in the Japanese works were not reproduced for Chinese audiences – a tradition from travel diaries popular in medieval and early modern Japan (Fogel 33). While they were borrowing the woyou tradition, the former practices of painting and writing poetry while travelling were not presented. Both Anesaki and Tsuboya did not paint landscapes, but made some light black-and-white sketches of landscapes with thin brushes along with some photographs (in Anesaki, 153) and other people’s brush drawings in black and white (in Tsuboya, 212; 238; 313). These images were not made privy to Chinese readers. This was a result of discounting pictures as essential elements in the tradition of premodern East Asian travel writing by the editors. Furthermore, while Tsuboya did not write poems, Anesaki did compose some kanshi, none of which were reproduced in the Chinese rendition. Particulariy in Canada, Anesaki did

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122 Anesaki wrote poems especially in Italy. For example, when he was near the Roman Forum or Foro Romano in Italian, Anesaki wrote about the flowers around the area: “It has lost its charm - thousands of
not mediate on the landscape through poetic means – perhaps because there was little for Anesaki and Chinese editors to draw from since few East Asian literati travellers had come by this time. But there was no poetic attempt made by Chinese editors in the whole travelogue despite Anesaki’s many poetic compositions, which suggests that poetry held little value in helping audiences imagine the world, was seen as unpractical for their audiences, or too difficult to translate. The deliberate choice to eliminate sketches, photographs, and poetry from the Chinese translation suggests that the editors were thinking agents in producing a particular traveller and a particular way of “seeing” for their domestic audiences. Unlike nineteenth century travellers whom arguably grappled with “shocking experiences” by “writing poetry” (Tian 157), there was no perceived need for editors to include drawings and poems.

The concept of borderspace as bridge is made evident when the texts and the work of the creators are seen as connecting two or more cultures. Masaharu Anesaki and Tsuboya Suisai’s travelogues bridged the cultures they physically experienced to their Japanese audiences. How they experienced the Pacific Ocean, the port city of Victoria, and the rest of the world was brought home to Japanese readers through their writings. Unknown to these authors, the same texts would serve to connect their experiences abroad to Chinese audiences in the decades to come. How Anesaki and Tsuboya experienced their journey around the globe became part of the foreign imagination for Chinese readers through translation. The translators were fully operating within the tradition of woyou in

flowers bloom / as if to ridicule / the acts of man / amongst the palace ruins” (Hanatsumi 155). At Hadrian’s Villa in Tivoli, he wrote about the flowers as well (Hanatsumi 177).
repackaging the Japanese intellectual experience of global travel into one of a Chinese man, to grant Chinese readers the opportunity to envision the foreign land of Canada.

At the same time, the Japanese originals that helped readers “see” Canada also hindered the Sino-Canadian reality that Chinese readers would have experienced abroad. Adopting the Sino-Canadian context, the notion of borderspace as veil also appears as a mediated layer between text and reality. Since readers were unaware that the text was translated from Japanese sources, it gave the false impression that Canada was welcoming to Chinese visitors. Through a first-person perspective, Chinese readers envisioned the foreign seemingly through the lens of one of their own, which hid the actual material history of a Chinese man in Canada at the turn of the century. While the work of the translator(s) assisted in overcoming the racist barriers for Chinese travellers, it also omitted the treatment a Chinese visitor would have faced in that era.

Indeed, the narrative subject was changed into a Chinese traveller, but there remains an untranslatability and incommensurability between the Japanese traveller’s experience and the Chinese traveller’s experience in the material history of the 1900s. Because Anesaki was a Japanese man on a Japanese ship waiting to board again towards Seattle, he was granted permission to roam freely in Canada:

> After our ship was tied up at the wharf in Victoria, we were able to go ashore and see the city. I found the flavor of this frontier town intriguing: the forests and fields along the cliffs of the offing, the houses scattered across them, the boards laid down to form roads and pedestrian pathways. (Fessler 72)
Chinese individuals would have had to produce papers to gain access since Chinese discrimination was at its peak during this era, right before the Chinese Exclusion Act.\textsuperscript{123} Japanese travellers were all welcome in the nineteenth century and then a quota was placed on their immigration in 1908, but exclusion was never imposed on the Japanese. Japanese-Canadians were detained and dispossessed of their homes and businesses in 1942 when Japan became a significant power in the Second World War and seen as an enemy to the Allies.\textsuperscript{124}

A Chinese traveller, no matter how privileged, would have been interrogated in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In one of the earliest articles on Chinese in Canada in \textit{Shenbao}, a reported returnee spills forth sympathy for Chinese diaspora on the West Coast because of his experience in Victoria. Entitled “\textit{Kelian wugao zhi huaqiao} 可憐無告之華僑 [Pitiful Chinese Diaspora with No Voice],” the article opens with a tragic...

\textsuperscript{123} In certain cases, particular Chinese were allowed to stay in Canada for ninety days, which arguably played a role in “the failure of Chinese exclusion laws” in the United States (Ryo 127). Ryo looks at the social factors (like smuggling networks and loose policies) that “enabled and facilitated illegal Chinese border crossings” (127) much like Erika Lee. If Chinese passengers showed that their final destination was America; they could roam Canada for three months: “Chinese immigrants destined for the United States were \textit{permitted to remain in the dominion for ninety days} without paying the head tax and could presumably later cross the border at will” (Lee 153, emphasis mine). The risk labourers faced trying to cross into the United States was small; even if apprehended they could “simply try again” but they would gain job stability and livelihood if they succeeded (Ryo 127). If rejected by U.S. Customs, individuals could return again to Canada and then try repeatedly to cross into the United States.

\textsuperscript{124} It is beyond this chapter to speak of the treatment of Japanese-Canadians during the war. However, more research is being conducted on the unfair discrimination of Japanese-Canadians who lost their land and confined to particular areas due to the War Measures Act of 1942, which ordered Japanese Canadians living within 160 km of the Pacific Coast to relocate to camps and farms in British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, and Ontario.
tone and immense empathy for the overseas Chinese through the eyes of the writer, Yan Guoxi 顏國熙 (n.d.): “China’s national power has been weak in the recent years, and the subsequent maltreatment of Chinese diaspora by others abroad cannot be fully recorded. 中国国力不振近年以来華僑之受凌虐於外人者不可勝記.” Yan reports that those quarantined with him in British Columbia “were forced to stand naked for two hours a day for the duration of three days. 拘於入口人查檢室中者凡三日每日約以二小時之久赤裸.” He was then examined by a British doctor and subsequently released because of the protection offered by his status. His testimony stands to show how Chinese were mistreated as he was physically confined and examined before being permitted to pass because of his apparent official status. The mistreatment serves as the foundation for solidarity among the Chinese across social classes. Yan questions how other compatriots would be treated, if a privileged individual like himself were treated as such. Yet this discrimination is absent from the Chinese translation of the Japanese text. A free and legal Chinese experience in Victoria is presented because the text translates the Japanese traveller’s experience. Thus, a veil is created over the material circumstances of a Chinese man arriving in Canada in the early twentieth century.

At Victoria specifically, the Chinese narrator-protagonist is walking through a pedestrian-friendly area with beautiful buildings that does not reflect the reality of a Chinese person’s experience of travel in Canada because he would not have alighted from the boat at the port city. This gap between text and reality forms a veil between the Chinese reader and historical Canada. Tsuboya gave careful descriptions in diary-style form describing the sights he saw in Victoria. In turn, the minute details of the journey were presented to Chinese readers. In the company of five Japanese passengers from the boat, Tsuboya/Jing
took a bus from the dock to the market place. The trams or densha/dianche (電車) came every fifteen minutes and the fare was five cents per person. However, the group paid twenty-five cents in total because of an apparent discount for six or more travellers (Jing 23; Tsuboya 232). 

I reiterate the entire translated passage of the experience in Chinese at the city centre to show the freedom represented in Jing’s mediated tour of Victoria (the italicized text is not found in Tsuboya’s original):

[When] I first arrived [in] North America, everything I saw was very different. The streets were wide and the architecture grand. Shops are decorated beautifully – rarely seen in my life. Roads are paved with wood and the majestic parliament building is made of beautiful stone. [I] went to the post office, where there was a female secretary selling fine art postcards. The fine details in the paintings made one draw a sigh of admiration. Walking towards Dugulasi (獨古拉斯) [Douglas] Street, were two Japanese shops selling earthenware and other sundry items; their space was quite small. Right after, [I] saw a Chinese town, and so I thought of finding a Chinese restaurant and everyone agreed. But the time was still early, and [one] could not dine until after 2 in the afternoon. So [I or we] bought some of the famous local fruits to bring back to the ship. After carrying [the fruit] back to the ship, I wanted to take pictures at the parliament so fell behind and did not return to the ship with the others. [I] wanted lunch but the time was already after mealtime on the ship, so [I] went ashore again to tour Beigen Gongyuan (倍根公園) [Beacon Hill Park] The slope and valley are all naturally fantastic, the well-known flowers in bloom, their exotic fragrance reached my nose. [I] was so amused that I did not grow tired, so continued onwards to view the zoo.

\[\text{125 The trams began operating on February 22, 1890 in Victoria (Ewert 12). And fares were five cents from the start (Ewert 13). Interestingly, in November of 1899, there were distinct fares for Victorians: “The fare was five cents cash, 6 for 25 cents, 8 for 25 cents in rush hours during weekdays, and 8 for 25 cents for students riding between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., excluding weekends; a trip to Esquimalt cost 10 cents.” (Ewert 38).}\]

\[\text{126 In Tsuboya’s version, it was “an old woman.”}\]

\[\text{127 This sentence is not found in Tsuboya’s travelogue.}\]

\[\text{128 In Tsuboya’s text, “there are two Japanese-owned stores in Victoria; one is by Mr. Kawai from Osaka, on Douglas Street; the other is somewhere else. Both stores sell pottery and miscellaneous things.”}\]

\[\text{129 In Tsuboya, “Japanese flowers of spring and grasses of autumn at once.”}\]
there were strange animals and rare birds, [it was] not lacking in anything. Hearing that next to the Parliament Building was a zoological museum, I went forward to search for it and found its entrance which had a post “Umbrella placed here” (傘置此處, in the Chinese original: Please leave Umbrella here [sic]). I saw this and felt the care of the reception. I went into the garden to tour for a short while and rushed back to the ship for fear that the boat would not wait for me. Contrary to my expectation, after returning to the boat it did not leave.

初至北美大陸所見皆異。事街衢之寬廣、建築之宏大、肆廛裝飾之美麗、尤生平所罕見、路皆鋪木巍峨之政廳則全以美石砌成。至郵務局見有女書記一人。售美術信片其繪畫之精妙令人歎服。行至獨古拉斯街。由日本商店二家。均賣陶器與雑貨。規模甚小。旋見有中國人一部落。予因發起覓中國飯店。眾賛成。然因時尚早。非午後二時。不可得食。也遂購是地有名果物。持之歸船後。余因至政廳攝影相失在後。竟不及與同行。諸人偕歸船。欲覓午餐。已飯後鐘矣。更登岸。遊倍根公園。一丘半壑皆饒天然風韻。且名花盛開異香。觸鼻大有樂此不疲之況。復往觀動物園。園在林間。奇獸珍禽。無不畢備。聞政廳旁有動物博物館。予往尋之。果得其入口處有揭示曰「傘置此處」(Please leave Umbrella here.)予觀於此。感服其接待至殷勤焉。予人園遊覽未久。卽匆促返船恐船之不我待也。不意返船後,船遲遲未開。(23-4)

In the Chinese representation, there was plenty of leisure time. The protagonist could study the details of the postcards at the post office; take stock of the small Japanese shops along Douglas Street (although in the original, there is only one Japanese shop on Douglas Street); comment on the animals and birds are the zoo; and march into the garden. The protagonist (re)presents Tsuboya’s freedom to leave the group of Japanese men and to do as he pleases. There is no indication as to who had advised Jing about the proximity of the parliament building to the zoological museum. There is no parallel drawn between the

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130 In Tsuboya, “the courtesy.”
131 The English was never presented in Tsuboya.
132 It is possible that they learned the routes through guidebooks as they were growing in popularity:
“Japanese travellers overseas also increased in number as they gradually gained the wealth necessary to join
animals and birds in the zoo to discrimination, as dissected in Zhang Deyi’s accounts. His pacing forward to photograph the buildings and then walking to find the museum reflect a free body with a choice to go wherever he wished – the only restriction being imposed by time. Jing’s meandering journey through Tsuboya’s reporting style crafted an unrestricted movement in Canada.

The Sino-Canadian context makes evident the untranslatable elements – elements that remain unbridged and suspended for reflection about the historical circumstances of discrimination in Canada. The Chinese translators could have altered the text to reflect a more accurate depiction of travel for Chinese visitors, but they did not. Instead in revisiting this text, which adhered to the Japanese travellers’ experience while attempting to present itself as a Chinese character, the dissonance between the experiences of intra-Asian travellers becomes apparent. The resounding differences also remind us of the rich meaning that literature provides in contemplating translation from the perspective of minor cultures. These perspectives form other critical angles from which to understand the world and the untranslatability between cultures.

The free nature of Jing’s exploration made possible through translation was productive in helping Chinese audiences envision the foreign. The text was problematic in concealing the reality of the impossibility of a Chinese man experiencing Canada in this spontaneous way in their era, where one could go wherever one pleased. The Chinese man’s reception

the crowds of tourists; like their Western counterparts, they traveled with Baedeker guides in hand, eager to see the famous sights” (Fessler Musashino 180).
in Canada would have been very different. They would have faced quarantine checks, perhaps asked to pay a head tax, produce paperwork and be interrogated before alighting the boat itself. Later, the Chinese traveller would have encountered further interrogation to differentiate himself from a Chinese immigrant due to the Exclusion Acts. As such, even though the editors and translators attempted to bring the world to their readers, there was a curtain placed over the Canadian discrimination of Chinese.

4.4 **Conclusions: A Distorted Portrayal of Canada**

Canada was introduced to Chinese reading audiences through Japanese texts. Chinese editors and translators produced novels such as Jules Verne’s *Famille-sans-nom* and travelogues such as Jing Que’s *An Account of Global Travels* from Japanese versions to discursively bring the “world” “home” to China. These texts worked within the Chinese literary tradition of *woyou* or “recumbent travel.” Because of the Head Tax, Immigration Acts, and Exclusion Acts, ethnic Chinese travel to North America would become very difficult and challenging. So in various ways, whether through writing, compiling, translating, excluding painting and poetry, adding appendixes, providing commentary, these Chinese agents were active in transmitting new knowledge to their audiences. Even though the texts were copied from Japanese sources, it is undeniable that the Chinese editors and translators were actively engaged in bridging the cultures together through writing. I have argued that the translator’s decisions responded to the physical restrictions placed on Chinese individuals in the historical era and their work and text allowed for two cultures to be bridged together.

In addition, I have articulated the importance of studying intra-Asian translations in showcasing how Japanese mediation affected a minority subject’s imagination of the
foreign lands through woyou. By “bringing” readers “there,” I have demonstrated how the untranslatable elements such as the French-Chinese alignment as revolutionaries and the Japanese-Chinese difference in treatment in twentieth-century Canada create dissonance with universalizing notions of literature and perceived commensurability between cultures. This dissonance can be understood within the borderspace as veil, which illuminates how knowledge that crosses borders requires contextualization. The Sino-Canadian material history provides the important context for the ‘minor’ voice in this global historical moment. Borderspace as veil demonstrates the problems with translating between cultures. I triangulated the relationship between restricted Canada, educated Japanese writers and their texts, and Chinese editors and their circumstances to argue that the final products or these texts are often veils. While readers are transported through discourse to the foreign land, the land itself in the context of Sino-Canadian relations would have never been as imagined through the text.

Ultimately, borderspace in translation begins with a bridge and becomes a veil. Literature can embrace the distinctions and differences that indicate the untranslatability of cultures through epistemological shifts, dynamic transnational contexts, and ethnic-specific treatments. Tracing the different manifestations of borderspace through this case study illuminates issues of representation of foreign spaces that require understanding the literary production within local literary practices, as well as global historical relationships.
Chapter 4
Borderspace as Stage:
Chinese Narrative Subjects at Canadian Borders (1919-1938)

5.1 Introduction

For many Chinese travellers of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, arrival at Canadian borders coincided with the establishment of the Chinese Immigration Act of 1885\(^{133}\) and the Chinese Immigration Act of 1923. The latter is commonly referred to as the Chinese Exclusion Act, but both acts limited the entry of Chinese people into Canada. Exceptions were made for particular Chinese individuals in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, if they belonged to groups such as: diplomats and consuls, Canadian-born children or parents of those born in Canada, merchants, and students. In article 5 of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1923, the “entry to or landing in Canada of persons of Chinese origin or descent irrespective of allegiance or citizenship is confined to the following classes”:

\[ (a) \] The members of the diplomatic corps, or other government representatives, their suites and their servants, and consuls and consular agents;
\[ (b) \] The children born in Canada or parents of Chinese race or descent, who have left Canada for educational or other purposes, on substantiating their identity to the satisfaction of the controller at the port or place where they seek to enter on their return;
\[ (c) \] (1) Merchants as defined by such regulations as the Minister may prescribe. (2) Students coming to Canada for the purpose of attendance, and while in actual attendance, at any Canadian university or college authorized by statute or charter to confer degrees; who shall substantiate their status to the satisfaction of the Controller at the port of entry subject to the approval of the Minister, whose decision shall be final and conclusive; provided that

\(^{133}\) The Head Tax for every Chinese immigrant was the result of this Act. Later, the Chinese became the first ethnicity ever to be banned from Canada (Holland 152). In America, the Chinese were the “only ‘race’ openly discriminated against in American immigration laws” (Ye 82). For a summary of the redress please see: Peter Li’s “Reconciling with History: The Chinese-Canadian Head Tax Redress,” Journal of Chinese Overseas 4.1 (2008): 127-40.
no Chinese person belonging to any of the two classes referred to in this paragraph shall be allowed to enter or land in Canada who is not in possession of a valid passport issued in and by the Government of China and endorsed (*visé*) [sic] by a Canadian Immigration Officer at the place where he was granted such passport or at the port of place of departure.  

With the exception of Chinese diplomats and consuls, every Chinese individual needed to convince the border agents of their right to enter through Canadian borders. These travellers would be recognized and objectified as ethnically Chinese and subsequently interrogated for papers. Canadian-born children or parents would only be granted entry “on substantiating their identity to the *satisfaction of the controller* at the port or place where they seek to enter” (5.b; my emphasis). Merchants were under similar regulations by the Minister (5.c). Students also had to “substantiate their status to *the satisfaction of the Controller* at the port of entry” with a valid passport (Government of China) (5.c; my emphasis). These laws governing the movement of Chinese immigrants to Canada are crucial in the study of the Chinese travellers and their literary representations of their experiences. Chinese visitors to Canada were to a certain degree at the mercy of immigration authorities.  

However, travellers’ accounts also reveal that there was room for negotiation and exchange between travellers and authorities, and that borders also

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134 Extracted from the Chinese Immigration Act, 1923 which is accessible in the Library and Archives Canada (LAC) collections under the *Statutes of Canada*.

135 For example, a Chinese man educated in America named Wong Chin Foo was charged a head tax even though he was coming to Canada to give a lecture in October 1887. Scott D. Seligman provides the details of the interaction as Wong tried to cross at Niagara Falls as he had done before: “This time, however, was different because he was Chinese, Canadian border authorities collared him and assessed him a $50 ‘head tax.’ He was given the choice of paying or being turned back” (153). For more information on Wong’s life as an advocate for Chinese in America, please see *The First Chinese American: The Remarkable Life of Wong Chin Foo* (2013).
served as places of agency and performance. Whether or not the authors were able to physically enter Canada or not, their narratives all presented a successful border-crossing despite the discriminatory laws and interrogation. In this chapter, I show how their writings created borders as sites of agency and performance as they all suggested the ability to overcome the border control between Canada and the United States.

Many Chinese individuals who arrived at Eastern Canadian-U.S. borders in the twentieth century recorded their experiences in short articles in publications or autobiographical travelogues. Visitors included Lin Yutang’s daughter Lin Taiyi, University of Michigan students Chen Xuan, Guo Dehua, and Cheng Shunyuan, University of Chicago students Chen Hengzhe, and Xie Fuya, Oberlin College student Qian Yonghe, writers such as Liang Shiqiu, and officials such as Gong Xuesui. Against the backdrop of unfair Chinese discrimination and exclusion, certain students and government officials from China were able to travel, interact, study, and publish—an opportunity enabled by government sponsorship and funding programs such as the U.S. Boxer Indemnity Scholarship Program (Gengzi peikuan jiangxuejin), the Young Men’s

136 The Boxer Indemnity Scholarship Program was funded by an indemnity from China given to the United States after the Boxer Rebellion, which the American President at the time, Theodore Roosevelt (1858-1919), then gave back to China in the form of a scholarship program. There was an agreement between the two governments when the United States granted part of the Boxer Indemnity for educational uses in 1908, which stated that 100 students a year would be sent for five years and 50 a year after that for the duration of 29 years. From there, students would stay in the States for five to nine years. Qinghua College was thus formed in 1911 with American missionaries managing the exchanges (Bu 224). It was now known as Tsinghua University in Beijing.
Christian Association (YMCA),\textsuperscript{137} and various government stipends. Given exemption from the Chinese Exclusion Act, these Chinese travellers gained a status that afforded them mobility in North America. Nevertheless, as privileged as these travellers were, they would have known based on the paperwork required to land in North America that there was Chinese discrimination abroad.\textsuperscript{138} Discrimination formed the foundation from which these Chinese travellers created narrative subjects with a consciousness of the Chinese position in the world.

I differentiate narrative subjects from the author because I consider the author as an external agent who writes the work and the protagonists within the work as created subjects. While there is an intimate relationship between the two in that these texts can be considered autobiographical, the physical author and their embodied experience is not to be equated with the subject within the writing. As Janet Ng explains in her study of Chinese autobiographical texts that the subject and author are distinct entities:

\textsuperscript{137} The YMCA history is less fraught as it was always perceived as a Christian education organ. It sponsored education programs that sent Chinese students abroad during the early twentieth century. For further reading on the YMCA activities, please see: Ming K. Chan and Arif Dirlik’s \textit{Schools into Fields and Factories} (1991).

\textsuperscript{138} For Chinese students training to go abroad, they had preparatory schools formed in the 1910s and Christian missionaries also helped in the education and transition periods of these students’ lives (Bu 224). It was nearly impossible to have been completely oblivious to anti-Chinese discrimination in their era. Furthermore, students and officials alike would have read newspapers in China, which reported tightening restrictions on Chinese overseas in both the United States and Canada. For example, \textit{Shenbao} published various articles on Chinese in Canada before Chen left for America with specific articles such as “Canada’s Restriction of Chinese” (June 5, 1907) and “Pitiful Chinese Diaspora” (June 24, 1911) (my translations). Both tell of anti-Chinese sentiments and discrimination. That is not to say that I am claiming all three students must have read these specific accounts, but that the reading public was aware of the challenges abroad for Chinese peoples.
The equation between the textual subject and its external referent, the author, has been fully critiqued and the subject destabilized. […] The subject of autobiography is not the center of meaning but is discursively created in a speech act. (10-11)

The text itself is a product of its own and the author forms the subject of the text through writing. By separating the textual subject from the author, we can see the creative agency, innovation, and embellishment of the Chinese travellers. Underlining their role as authors affects our reading of borderspace – a space conceivable as a material border delineating Canada and the United States and as a conceptual stage for narrative subjectivities to challenge material realities. Beyond oppression and resistance, these Chinese textual subjects achieved an alternative reality where exclusion and discrimination could be defeated and (re)presented for Chinese-reading audiences.

Crucially, these Chinese travellers had the ability to interact with customs officials – a privilege not every Chinese sojourner would have had. Students could converse with them in English, as they received special training in preparatory schools in China as students projected to study in America and education as students in their respective American universities. They were also exempt from the legal exclusion with proper paperwork. Officials often had translators accompanying them. They spoke with customs and immigration officers at the borders and understood protocols to follow in order to pass border inspections. In contrast, other Chinese sojourners would not be able to speak English and required interpreters from the local community commissioned by the authorities.¹³⁹ The ability to engage in dialogue changed the dynamics of interrogation –

¹³⁹ This interrogation process is outlined in Lisa Rose Mar’s research on the brokers and interpreters that used their position to assist Chinese immigrants.
the scrutiny at the borders in Eastern Canada often explicitly discussed the anti-Chinese laws and sometimes specifically commented on the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1923 after it was established. The conversations at the border published within their accounts reveal that ethnic discrimination did not stop ethnic Chinese subjects from negotiating their entry. For the first time in history, a substantial group of Chinese individuals were equipped with language skills that would help them engage with English-speaking officials and were able to present these circumstances for Chinese-reading audiences. More importantly, they could directly address the discriminatory laws put in place by the Canadian government through their publications.

Consequently, these borders separating Canada and the United States were experienced as sites of interaction and interrogation in two ways. In a physical sense, the border involved a lived experience of movement through policed space. Due to the legal restrictions placed on Chinese entry to Canada during the first half of the twentieth century, the physical border was not a line but a space of movement and dialogue. In a discursive sense, Chinese visitors wrestled with ethnic objectification of their bodies by creating textual subjects who could overcome ethnic discrimination in writing. Because of the legal interrogation and paperwork required, Chinese travellers were compelled to create discursive subjects who could challenge the law. By writing and creating the textual subjects, they granted hope to the next generation of Chinese and reimagined the futuristic possibilities of ethnic Chinese in the world. And so the idea of borderspace is twofold in this chapter.

I use the concept of borderspace as *stage* to understand how the legal practices (meant to control Chinese bodies) formed the foundation for empowered discursive subjects. A *stage*
suggests the spatial quality of legal preparations and border interrogations. A stage also suggests a place for performance, where actors take on roles and can improvise outside of the expected script. My use of stage here differs from the staging found in Rebecca Karl’s work, which delineates the ways in which particular countries were imagined by Chinese intellectuals vis-à-vis China’s idea of nationalism at the turn of the century: “a staging that makes visible a world of synchronic temporality emphasizing historical identification and spatial proximity” (4-5). My idea of borderspace as stage does not reflect the construction of conceptions of race and nationalism predicated on other sites that make up a “structured totality” of the world (4) found in examples Karl provides, such as: the African diasporic enslavement (Chapter 5; 117-148); the construction of Poland in opera (Chapter 2; 27-49; and the position of self against Hawai’i (Chapter 3; 53-82). In my reading of twentieth-century travel writing in Canada, other diasporas and nations do not resonate with Chinese authors even though they are aware of the low status of the Chinese among nations, which is distinct. I see these Chinese authors as active agents responding to a particular historical moment of ethnic exclusion and discrimination, where they attempted to overturn physical restrictions through discursive practices unlike the imagined conceptions of race and nation for other Chinese intellectuals as outlined in Karl’s work. In writing based on the embodied experience, the informed writers held a new understanding of the foreign and unfamiliar world as well as China’s relationship to it. Borderspace as stage for speech act can thus be imagined as a site where writers grappled with discriminatory laws through crafting textual victories that demonstrate this new outlook.
Moreover, comparing my concept of borderspace as “stage” to Mary Louise Pratt’s notion of the “contact zone” can be enlightening. Borderspaces reflects the sense of “coercion and radical inequality” as outlined in the contact zone. Pratt defines the contact zone as:

…the space of imperial encounters, the space in which people geographically and historically separated come into contact with each other and establish ongoing relations, usually involving conditions of coercion, radical inequality, and intractable conflict. […] in terms of co-presence, interaction, interlocking understandings and practices, and often within radically asymmetrical relations of power. (8)

The co-existence of the ethnic Chinese travellers with other Chinese diasporas in North America and Canadian (presumably non-Chinese) inspectors did not always result in an “asymmetrical” power relation, however. Although Chinese writers did not adopt the anti-conquest rhetoric commonly found in the notion of contact zones, a distinct rhetoric of overcoming authority was mobilized in these borderspaces. As such, borderspace functions as an extension of the contact zone by pointing to another kind of performance through textual writing from the subjectivity of a minority.

The authors examined in this chapter embody issues of representation as a minority in North America and use mediums of writing and photography to create subjects who challenge ethnic objectification. Analyzing the physical and discursive spaces through which they negotiate their ethnicity can assist in a renewed interpretation of the movement of people and ideas between “here” (that is, China) and “there” (that is, Canada) beyond exclusion and oppression. One way of interpreting this movement is that it connects the two nations, Canada and China, through the physical arrival of Chinese individuals at Canadian borders. Another interpretation is that it connects the two nations through the narrative subject of Chinese travel writings, who creates a bridge to the Canadian
experience for their Chinese audiences in China (as well as America in some cases). This chapter addresses both connections (physical and discursive) by investigating three accounts at borders in Eastern Canada and the United States. I discuss how three twentieth-century travellers used prose, poetry, and photography to perform a discursive overcoming of the material discriminatory laws in Canada for Chinese-reading audiences.

First, this chapter will examine the writings of Chen Hengzhe (1893-1976). Immediately following her graduation from Vassar College (BA 1919) and the University of Chicago (MA 1920)\(^{140}\) in History in the United States, Chen taught English literature and Western history at Yenching University.\(^{141}\) Obtaining support from the Boxer Indemnity Fund to study in America, she was an active writer during her stay in North America. Chen travelled to various places, keeping record of cities that she visited in China, the United States, as well as Canada.\(^{142}\) She wrote in both English and Chinese and disseminated her ideas in literary magazines, in books, and at public talks for students. Chen penned many short stories and an autobiography in English.

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\(^{140}\) Her dissertation is entitled *The Intercourse between China and the West in Ancient and Mediaeval Times* (221 B.C. – 1367 A.D.). She attended the Graduate School of Arts and Literature at the University of Chicago but notably did not enjoy her time there because of the emphasis on lectures. For more on her experience in Chicago, please see Chen’s essay, “Meiguo nuzi de daxue jiaoyu (American Female University Education),” *Jiaoyu zazhi* 15.1 (1923): 1-9, and Clara Haesussler Bohan’s *Go to the Sources: Lucy Maynard Salmon and the Teaching of History* (2004).

\(^{141}\) Yenching University was later named Peking University in 1952. She was asked by the then-President Cai Yuanpei to be part of the faculty in 1920.

\(^{142}\) For other accounts on American impressions in Chinese beginning from Xu Jiyu’s writings in 1848 and from Taiwan as well, please see R. David Arkush and Leo O. Lee, trans. and eds., *Land Without Ghosts: Chinese Impressions of America From the Mid-Nineteenth Century to the Present* (1989).
Although Chen’s writings have been discussed by other scholars, her travelogues have not garnered much attention. Literary scholars Janet Ng and Katrina Gulliver have touched upon her writing style and issues of modernity in her short stories, respectively. Ng highlights the aurality of her short story “Yīrì [One Day],” also arguably the first Chinese vernacular story and discusses the way sound dictates the movement of the fiction (32). While she reads Chen’s writing through language reforms and the aurality, I read Chen’s experiences as an ethnic minority and focus specifically on her travel narratives in Chinese. Her travel narratives are also not as phonocentrically driven as “One Day.” Gulliver’s research explores only the English-writings of Chen and misses a crucial part of Chen’s corpus.143 Denise Gimpel critiques Chen’s fictional and autobiographical works, claiming that Chen made very little use of her privileges even though she strived to be a cultural bridge between China and America:

> Her education in the United States, her membership of societies and networks, her contacts both with intellectuals at the center of reform and debates and with influential figures should have enabled her to develop her ideas for Chinese society and culture. They certainly offered her an exceptionally privileged position with more than enough space and opportunity to act. Yet [...] she very rarely made positive use of privileges, spaces, or opportunities. (40)

Nevertheless, I will argue that Chen did make constructive use of her place and standing. Elsewhere, Gimpel has written that Chen “consistently (re)constructed her own biography as that of the exemplary modern women (what China needed): self-determined, mistress of her own fate, educated, successful” (“Taking” 402), which I agree aligns with Chen’s use

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143 Joan Judge has also made a similar observation in her review of Gulliver’s text in “Modern Women in China and Japan: Gender, Feminism and Global Modernity Between the Wars” Pacific Affairs, 86.4 (2013): 883-5.
of discursive space and the way she fashioned her travel accounts. As is evident in her 1919 travel account, Chen creates a confident and didactic narrative subject – distinct from the ones found in her fictional works – who is forced to navigate issues of race at the material border between Canada and the United States, not seen elsewhere in her works. Chen’s account about visiting Canada reveals how borderspaces are filled with complex power shifts for a female subject of her standing and privilege and creates an alternative reality where exclusion and discrimination is defeated.

Examining “Jianada Luyingji (加拿大露營記) [Notes on Camping in Canada]” (1919) in Chen’s compilation Hengzhe Sanwenji (衡哲散文集) [Hengzhe Essay Collection] (1938), this chapter focuses on her experience of crossing into Canada for a vacation in 1919. Her travel experience to Canada while a student at Vassar College was published in English in the school’s newspaper and in Chinese in an overseas student journal, which was later included in her personal collection of essays. While not yet critically studied, the text reveals a specific narrative subjectivity that aspires to influence a generation of Chinese students instead of being passively objectified as Chinese in North America.

Second, this chapter will study the travelogue of Xie Fuya (1892-1991). Before becoming a professor in China, Xie was a graduate student of philosophy and theological studies at the University of Chicago and later Harvard University. Apart from being a Christian philosopher, he was part of a generation of Japanese-trained and classically educated

144 According to his own rendition of events, his wife had feigned illness in order to persuade Xie to return home sooner than expected. He never got to travel to Europe as intended. After forfeiting his education at Harvard to go back home, he was still hired as a professor at Lingnan University (48). Please see Xie Fuya’s Zi bianzi zhi dianzi (From Pigtails to the Digital Age) (1992).
Chinese who went to America as Y.M.C.A.-sponsored graduate students. Though Xie Fuya is widely read in theology and philosophy and many scholars in China and abroad have studied his transnational contribution to the fields,¹⁴⁵ his poetry and prose have never been discussed, and will be closely examined in this chapter.

In 1926, Xie wrote seven poems in Chinese at the Niagara border: “First Time at Niagara;” “Luna Island,” “Horseshoe Falls,” “Three Sisters Island,” “Cannot Alight at Canadian Border,” “Niagara,” and “The Night at the Falls.” These poems are fascinating for their symbolic representation of border crossing. In his travelogue, a chapter of ten pages is dedicated to Niagara Falls. His poems offer a different perspective on Canadian borders and exclusion. Instead of being objectified, Xie creates a narrative subject who performs a successful experience of reaching Niagara Falls.

Lastly, this chapter studies the travelogue of Gong Xuesui (1895-1968). Gong was a former Chinese Nationalist transportation minister, mayor of Dalian and then mayor of Qingdao. A graduate in mining at the Tokyo Imperial University, Gong headed the Department of Construction, leading the development of public roads and highways in 1930.¹⁴⁶ In 1936, he left for Europe and America to learn about the West. Upon his return,

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¹⁴⁵ Christian Meyer and Lauren Pfister have written about Xie’s philosophies in English. For a productive study in Chinese, please see Qingchang He’s *Identity Development of Christian Diaspora: Thought Process of N.Z. Zia* (2013): 30-64.

¹⁴⁶ Gong’s friends included Mei Yiqi 梅贻琦 (1889-1962), the former dean of Tsinghua University, and Song Ziliang 宋子良 (1899-1983), the brother of the famous Soong sisters. Mei brought students and faculty to safety during the later years of World War II. In *Mei Yiqi Riji* (梅贻琦日记) (1941-1946), Mei speaks of meeting with Gong Xuesui (162). Beginning in the late thirties, Mei was already planning how to evacuate students. Mei received his education in the United States on a Boxer Indemnity Fund and was involved in
he promoted the building of Nanchang urban landscape (Li 18), oversaw the rebuilding of Nanxun (南潯) Railway, and was appointed the committee chairperson of the KMT Special Unit and executive on the Jiangxi Provincial Party. Recognized for his efforts during the Anti-Japanese War and for his service on the Nationalist’s First Election for Assembly in 1948, Gong retired in 1949 and passed away from a stroke in 1968.

Most secondary literature focuses on Gong’s role in transportation and he is known for works such as Zhongguo minzu haiwai fazhan zhuangkuang (中國民族海外發展狀況) [The Circumstances of Development for Ethnic Chinese Abroad] (1929), Jianshe zhaiyao (建設摘要) [A Summary of Building Construction] (1935); and Zhongguo zhanshi jiaotong shi (中國戰時交通史) [History of Transportation in Wartime China]

the Young Men’s Christian Association. Song was the superior to Gong at the Southwest Transportation Office (西南運輸總處) (Yunnan 170). They worked closely together as Song left his position, Gong took over as head.

147 Guannan Li discusses Gong’s role in Nanchang in his article which emphasizes Gong’s adoption of Chiang Kaishek’s New Life Movement in the 1930s and the urban planning of the city. For more please see Li’s “Reviving China” (2012).

148 For Gong’s remarks on the anniversary of the railway, please see: Zhijian weiyuan Gong Xuesui daibiao daci (執監委員龔學遂代表答詞) [Remarks by Supervisory Committee Representative Gong Xuesui] in Qingzhu tiedaobu anguan Nanxun tielu zhounian jinian tekan (慶祝鐵道部按管南潯鐵路週年紀念特刊) [Special Anniversary Publication for the Nanxun Railway] (1930).

149 During the Anti-Japanese War, Gong headed the transportation development and was called by Chang Kai-shek to assist in the war effort (Zhang 492).

150 This was later included in the 2011 Beijing National Library publication for a collection of the history of Chinese overseas Minguo huaqiao lishiliao huibian (民國華僑史料彙編) [Republican Chinese Overseas History Collection].
However, Gong also published a 277-page travelogue of his 1936 trip abroad, *Oumei shiliuguo fangwenji* (歐美十六國訪問記) [Reports from Sixteen Countries of Europe and America] (1938). This travelogue is of utmost importance in this chapter because of his visit to Niagara Falls.

*Reports from Sixteen Countries of Europe and America* (hereafter *Reports*) discursively grapples with the Chinese Exclusion Act at the Canadian-U.S. border of Niagara Falls. I argue that it does so by juxtaposing photographic and written accounts in a way that challenges the restrictions placed on the author’s ethnic body because of the legal discrimination. The inclusion of photographs in the twentieth century diplomat’s account is a manipulative attempt to support his narrative of visiting the Canadian side of Niagara Falls, but with closer inspection cannot prove his story. The sophisticated use of photography meaningfully illustrates how another medium of representation attempted to overcome twentieth-century Chinese discrimination in the physical and discursive sense of borderspace.

### 5.1.1 Critical Global History, Twentieth-Century Chinese Travel Writing, Overseas Chinese Students

Unquestionably, the Chinese Exclusion Acts impacted how Chinese travellers rendered their experience as Chinese individuals preparing to cross borders and at borders.

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151 His last text was heavily critiqued by a contemporary in 1948; please see He’s “Gong Xuesui zhe” (1948). It was also examined in Xiao Xiong’s (肖雄) *Kangri zhanzheng shiqi Sichuansheng yiyun yanjiu* (抗日戰爭時期四川省驛運研究) [Anti-Japanese Period Sichuan History] (2012); Li Cheng’s work on Yunnan and Burmese highways (2010); Zhang Houquan’s (張後銓) *Zhaoshangju shi: jindai bufen* (招商局史: 近代部分) [Commercial History: The Modern Chapter] (2007); and Wu Zhenyi’s (吳圳義) *Qiujier yu zhanshi Yingguo* (邱吉爾與戰時英國, 1939-1945) [Churchill and Wartime England, 1939-1945] (1993).
themselves. Their portrayals always included the process of preparing paperwork required due to the exclusionist laws, revealing the effect of the law on the author’s subjectivity and subsequently, their narrative subjects. The adjudication of the border crossings of the authors cannot be reduced to whether or not they were physically successful entering restricted lands – information obtainable from data sheets and government surveys. More than “objective” and material statistics of border control, the discursive construction of borders produced by these writers tells of the experience of border-crossing. A hermeneutic evaluation of how the experience was represented through writing and photography uncovers nuances of being an ethnic minority in that era. Situating the writings within their contemporary moment of Chinese exclusion posits the creative reestablishment of the place of Chinese in the world in the discursive and visual realm and provides another perspective on critical global history, twentieth-century travel writing in Chinese, and overseas Chinese students.

The literary portrayals by these twentieth-century travellers have not been studied in relation to the Canadian discriminatory laws at the time. Lines of oppression have been traced in Chinese North American Studies, with research on Chinese immigrants turning to fake papers to gain entry into Canada,152 and Chinese sojourners seeking alternative

152 Please see Estelle T. Lau’s *Paper Families: Identity, Immigration Administration, and Chinese Exclusion* (2006). In addition, oppression surfaces in Chinese Canadian literature as well: the Chinese are often portrayed as holding secrets for decades in order to protect their status, such as characters in Wayson Choy’s *The Jade Peony*. 
routes with various detours in order to step foot into the United States. However, what has yet to be examined is the distinct position of Chinese travellers who had opportunity to publish their thoughts to audiences back home in the era of Chinese Exclusion. While the common understanding of student writing holds that many Chinese overseas students kept silent or downplayed the significance of racial discrimination in America (Ye 93), discrimination became very palpable at borders, which makes their literary output about North American travel experiences worthy of inspection. Even though the laws were unkind and unfair, I put forth that the Sino-North American context is the foundation from which Chinese narrative subjects emerge and perform discursive victories over discrimination. All three travellers explored in this chapter create a narrative voice that resists the oppressive treatment of being Chinese especially at borders for their own specific audiences.

153 Please see Erika Lee’s *At America’s Gates: Chinese Immigration During the Exclusion Era, 1882-1943* (2003) for a sustained discussion on the alternative routes through Mexico and Canada into the United States.

154 While their writing reflects discriminatory laws aimed at the Chinese labour class, their ethnic Chinese counterparts in North America are not often mentioned. It is necessary to note that students did not address Chinese labourers in their accounts. Intra-ethnic identification may have impeded their inclusion of other ethnic Chinese in North America. Students probably made minimal contact with the working class due to differences in spoken language (Ye 94-5). While most of the elite students came from schools in Shanghai and Beijing with standard education in Mandarin, the labourers from Southern Chinese provinces who came to build the Canadian Pacific Railroad spoke Cantonese. The speakers of the two dialects would be mutually incomprehensible, even though the dialects share the same written language (Ye 95; Holland 151). The dialectal differences would have made the students and the working class unable to communicate orally with one another. And as a result, students may have found working class Chinese too irrelevant and insignificant to record for their fellow students in America and prospective overseas students in China, for whom they wrote.
As part of critical global history of the twentieth century, an exploration of the Chinese consciousness abroad is necessary, as these borders posed tangible problems for the Chinese travellers and their Chinese narrative subjects. In a study of narrative subjectivity in twentieth-century European travel writing, Stacey Burton notes that European authors faced ethical issues as they attempted to reconcile their subjective experience with a growing awareness of the problems of ethnographic knowledge about other cultures. They also learned to recognize that “their observations abroad continue to be of significance in a globalized world, where once predominant cultures have been made conscious of being one among many” (40). Indeed, self-consciousness and subjectivity from the perspective of the West is one side of the phenomenon of global travel in the twentieth-century. However, twentieth-century travel writing in Chinese presents a different set of problems and solutions for travellers who created their own strategies of representation. Ethnic Chinese travellers recognized that their position was not esteemed when crossing borders. Thus, in this chapter I present three cases of twentieth-century Chinese travellers contending with the tension between being objectified as a discriminated minority. I argue that through the creation of narrative subjects, the authors are able to resolve this tension for Chinese-reading audiences. In this way, I aim to show how the creation of narrative Chinese subjects emerged on the borderspace as stage in ways that differ from types of self-construction found Western travel writings.

Moreover, little has been said on the overall Chinese experience at the borders in Eastern Canada. Much attention has been given to the unglamourous experiences of the large populations of Southern Chinese who remained after the California Gold Rush on the
West Coast or attempted to enter the United States thereafter. However, the West Coast emphasis overshadows other borders that shaped the Chinese imagination of Canada and the United States. In fact, dominant narratives of oppression associated with the coolie class entering Canada is challenged in two ways. First, many Chinese labourers did not want to stay in Canada regardless of the restrictions placed on Chinese immigration. After the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway, Chinese workers in Canada desired to seek work in the United States because of the slowing Canadian economy (Ryo 121) and not for political reasons. Their agency counters the simple narrative of oppression and suggests an aspiration to leave Canada. Second, Chinese travellers (such as those discussed in this chapter) were coming from south of the border for leisure purposes. These borders, then, were traversed by choice without notions of imagined desire to immigrate to Canada. Due to their ethnicity, they understood that a different kind of paperwork was to be prepared in order to travel. This awareness defies the linearity of racial subjugation, as Chinese writers carved out a discursive space to overcome legal obstacles through mediums of writing and photography. This aspect of the crisscrossing of Chinese individuals at borders in Eastern Canada should not be overlooked.

Importantly, these writings illuminate the authors’ creative renegotiations with former traditions of Chinese travel writing, in keeping with a dialectical reading of global and local contexts. This chapter offers insight into twentieth-century Chinese travel writing as distinct from traditional travel writing. The texts examined here were written as guidebooks that could teach future visitors how to navigate Canadian-U.S. border control

and inspire Chinese-reading audiences with ? . Former travel writing was often penned both to represent a consciousness and to create a relationship with the past or religion (Wang 223). While the consciousness remains latent, these twentieth-century writings are prompted by travels with didactic purposes, building not so much a connection with the past and particular religion as a bridge between the present needs and future aspirations of Chinese people as part of a larger world. Moreover, poetry is less common in the twentieth-century travelogues, and when it does appear it is not written as part of the former tradition. In traditional travelogues, a well-known site was embodied; each place was “regulated for centuries and enveloped by literary texts” (Karatani 41). Little to no literary traditions corresponded to these unfamiliar sights in the “New World”: Niagara Falls is a site without “a literary tradition [where] Nature was inextricably linked with language and history” (Strassberg 6). Additionally, the focus and purpose of the description of travel has evidently shifted in the twentieth century. Modern travel writing emphasizes the route to the destination, whereas traditionally no emphasis is given to this itinerary:

   Literati travel essays usually begin with a history of the place of interest and an explanation for taking the trip. Boats, horses, sedan chairs were often used, but […] there is little description about transportation and the actual journey to the place of interest is often not even mentioned. Emphasis is on sceneries at the destination rather than the journey to it. (Wang 225)

156 For example, Yung Wing, Chen Xuan, and Sophia Chen Hengzhe do not compose poetry in their travelogues, while Qian Yonghe at some points (though not in Canada) and Lu Bicheng (呂碧城) (1883-1943) composed poems about Europe, which is less relevant to our discussion. Wu Shengqing delves into Lu’s poetic muse in Modern Archaics: Continuity and Innovation in the Chinese Lyric Tradition 1900-1937 (2014) to explain how modern technology was introduced into Lu’s poetry without former literary referents.
As such, methods and vehicles of transportation are often omitted in traditional narratives. In these twentieth-century travel accounts, a frequent theme is necessary paperwork, offices to visit, inspections to pass, and possible vehicles to take. As a result, routes are rendered more significant in these twentieth-century travelogues, which points to the desire to create knowledge relevant to the needs of the current moment and provide best practices for future Chinese visitors.

Ultimately, their works were written as ‘how-to’ books for their audiences. The travelogues explored in this chapter are not in diary form but organized by sights, cities, or specific trips. Written in the first-person, they all embody a strong sense of narrative authority. The overall tone is instructive and educational. With their didactic rhetoric, these travelogues were disseminated as instructive texts for those who were in America, or were planning to come and sought to understand the place of Chinese individuals abroad in China. While the dominant narrative that any Chinese attempting to enter Canada or the United States was subjected to harsh examination remains (Tong 30), the travelogues highlight the literary triumphs in crossing the border, indicating the needs these authors felt they were meeting by publishing such works. Their writing concerns possibilities for Chinese to successfully enter Canada, instead of focusing on resistance against restrictions and discrimination. All three examples illuminate how the borderspace is both a border and space where authority can be challenged and where power is dynamic. As a result, the borderspace as stage is a productive idea to visualize critical global perspectives and interpret them within local traditions of writing.

Critical interest in the overseas student population in America is growing, which makes studying Chen and Xie an important contribution to the field. Many scholars such as Xu
Guoqi and Andy Chih-Ming Wang have touched upon the earliest group of students from China of the nineteenth century. The leader of the Chinese Educational Mission (CEM), Yung Wing 容閎 (Rong Hong)\(^{157}\) (1828-1912) is often cited for his own experiences at Yale as well as for his influence on the next generation of Chinese students who went from 1872 to 1881. Xu studies their contribution to China’s social progress and its role “in national development and improving Sino-American relations in developments such as the American return of Boxer Indemnity funds for education [1900s]” (17). Wang explores the CEM and Yung Wing as a call for a reconsideration of the Asian American field of study: “Viewing Yung as a transcultural pioneer forces us to recognize that Asian America as an ethnic community is inseparable from Asia as a transnational presence” (38). Wang’s survey of the field aligns with my own work, in terms of seeing students as important transnational entities. As a result, an extensive exploration of twentieth-century students with a distinct worldview dealing with more exclusionist laws is still needed.

Moreover, the worldview emerging from leisure travel of later students has yet to be explored. One of the most detailed scholarly works about this later generation is Weili Ye’s *Seeking Modernity in China’s Name: Chinese Students in the United States 1900-1927* (2001). In approaching the student diaspora, Ye makes observations of their opinions on race, contributions to their guest and home societies, and other undertakings while abroad. However, in her final chapter, which discusses the leisure activities of the students, Ye attends to sports and recreation and not student travel, although she acknowledges that travelling was a common pastime. Their travels are significant,

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\(^{157}\) This discrepancy in names comes from the transliteration of Yung Wing’s name at the time, based on Cantonese, whereas Rong Hong is the standard pinyin today.
however, as students purposely recorded and published their writings about short trips away from campus. Their writings reveal their extracurricular experiences, testify to relationships within their circles, and express their agency in creating empowered narrative subjects for their peers.

Comprehensive studies about overseas Chinese graduates such as those by Huping Ling and Stacey Bieler are valuable for their scope. Ling and Bieler research the preparation of Chinese students overseas and their return migration to China in the twentieth century. Ling dissects the female student population into three generations: pioneer (1881-1930s), wartime and postwar (1940s-1950s), and contemporary (1960s-1990s). Bieler attends to questions about the aftermath of these overseas students after returning to China. However, neither study is concerned with critically reading personal writings and sentiments of students. Historian Madeline Hsu has begun research on international education programs and its entanglements with Chinese projects for modernization between 1872 and 1955. Yet again, the scholarship does not interpret thoughts of the students themselves and their dealings with Chinese exclusion and borders.

Therefore, an interpretative reading is necessary to give meaning to these discursive border crossings. The writings about border crossings are not simply historical documents, but part of a literary imagination. Their writings rework and re-present the power relations put in place by the Canadian government at the time. Significantly, their re-interpretations of Sino-Canadian power relations directly affect their contemporary audiences’ imagination of a Chinese person abroad and of foreign lands as well. This chapter investigates and interprets their writings to answer the following questions: How does the idea of borderspace contribute to the emergence of narrative subjects in twentieth-century
travel writing? How do the narratives of these travellers at U.S-Canadian borders challenge the material realities of Chinese Exclusion in Canada? What does the appearance of an ethnic narrative subjectivity reveal in critical global history?

5.2 Chen Hengzhe’s Disheartenment and Joy at the Borders

Chen Hengzhe’s descriptions of border customs are tactful performances to reclaim power. My analysis is divided into two parts. First, I outline Chen’s route and itinerary. Then, I examine her written experience crossing into Canada. Her textual account reveals a resistance to the perception of victimhood and to the fear of interrogation at the border for ethnic Chinese. In her inscriptions of the borderspace, two Foucauldian concepts surface: the internalization of surveillance and the incorporation of the individual in webs of power. In the face of discrimination, her narrative subject, who is a strong, educated English-speaking Chinese woman, momentarily gains control of power at the border inspection. Playing with power, Chen’s writings depict Chinese in North America as more than oppressed people. As such, her subject’s performance at the Canadian-U.S. border demonstrates how the borderspace is a stage to speak back to ethnic objectification by overturning expected power dynamics.

Chen visited Canada for almost two months during her summer break in 1919. Subsequently, she wrote two pieces about Canada in English and in Chinese based on her privileged route from Vassar College to a semi-private island of Deer Lake in Ontario. In

158 Lisa Rose Mar also claims that Chinese people were not powerless in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Canada. Mar’s research indicates how Chinese interpreters and brokers were not silently being oppressed. She argues that the Chinese middlemen were influential in provincial politics and showed strong resistance against other parties. Please see Mar, Lisa Rose. Brokering Belonging: Chinese in Canada's Exclusion Era, 1885-1945 (2010).
fact, Chen refers specifically to this trip in a letter to Vassar College’s school newspaper in English at the end of 1919. She claims that she “went to a wild region in Canada and camped with an American family on their private island for almost two months,” and that the island’s “only permanent inhabitants are the weather-beaten pines, the thick moss, and the plaintive loons!” (“Thanksgiving” 1-3). In her Chinese account, the route to Canada is emphasized and a distinct ethnic narrative subject emerges.

Chen’s Chinese account, “Notes on Camping in Canada,” is much more detailed and focuses on how special the experience was to visit an island normally out of reach for most people.159 The author describes going to Deer Lake, where she met her friend from Vassar College. Chen’s host was Mrs. Hyde (Haide 海德), who owned a large home on the island in Southern Ontario.160 Her Chinese account covers the long, escorted journey from Toronto through other nearby cities. The narrator leaves from Silver Bay to Albany, and then takes the Canadian Pacific Railway to Toronto by night train (646). In her Chinese writing she explains how she transferred on and off various vehicles (including a

159 It was a rare opportunity for a Chinese female student to be invited to vacation with fellow classmates who owned land in another country, although it was not uncommon for Chinese students to visit the homes of schoolmates within the United States. For example, Chen follows Helen Stark to her hometown over Christmas holiday in the 1920s. Chen was so inspired by this trip that she wrote a short story about Helen’s mother and her deceased admirer Frank. Qian Yonghe also has a friend named Miss Stark who invited her to her Illinois home before Qian embarked on her tour of Winnetka Public School during the 1920s. Perhaps this was due to visa issues but I believe it may be related to the demographics of the student body in the American institutions at the time. According to the Oberlin Register, of the living alumni there were only 758 Canadian individuals of 30,150 graduates.

160 According to the Vassar school newspaper, there was a Ruth Hyde who attended Vassar College at the same time as Chen. She was part of the Phi Beta Kappa, a prestigious society as Chen was as well (“Phi Beta Kappa Elections” 6).
train, car, public boat, and family boat) and chaperoned from place to place until she reached Deer Lake:

After arriving in *Tuolangtuo* [Toronto], a friend of Mrs. Hyde picked me up and we talked and enjoyed a day together before boarding a *night train* on the railway heading north to Deer Lake. When we were about halfway there, Mrs. Hyde and her son came on the car to welcome me. The next morning, we set out for Deer Lake. After being *driven* to the Deer Lake Station, we stepped onto a *boat* and crossed Gooseneck Lake. Once ashore, we walked for twenty minutes and then sat in the Hyde *family boat* across Deer Lake. At one in the afternoon, we arrived on Hyde’s Island.

Requiring a family boat to access the island suggests the isolation and privacy on the islet and shows how this experience was extraordinary for the number of transfers made in order to arrive at the family island. The details of this route are presented in the Chinese account although not in the English, revealing the different audiences Chen had in mind when writing and publishing.

The difference between the English and Chinese versions was perhaps due to the fact that Chen was recognizably Chinese. Her Chinese-reading audiences may have been more interested in her the descriptions of her travel itinerary, since the opportunity for ethnic Chinese to be allowed into Canada was limited during this time of discrimination. For her Chinese audiences, the narrator describes the preparation of documents and process required to cross the border and her experience on the train before arriving in Toronto. The account represents the experience of a minority group under official scrutiny that she
desired to share with Chinese-reading audiences. The border-crossing of her narrative subject will be examined below.

5.2.1 Triumphant Narration on the Canadian Pacific Railway

In her Chinese account, the border is a policed space and not simply a line of entry or restriction. As a single Chinese female on the Canadian Pacific Railway in the early twentieth century, the narrative subject’s experience by train passing through a border in Eastern Canada demonstrates how power is not a one-way channel of oppression. Foucault claims: “individuals are the vehicles of power, not its points of application” (Power/Knowledge 98). As such, people are incorporated into the web of power and not simply static figures. Unlike other narratives of Chinese border crossings, which present the ethnic individual as the victim who fears interrogation, Chen’s narrative shows how the Chinese individual can be an active subject who highly anticipates interrogation from authorities, which I will demonstrate. In other words, Chen creates an ethnic Chinese subject with a desire and the power to challenge the official inspection in place, showing that the borderspace is a stage for dynamic power relations, where subjectivity and objectification are fraught.

To prepare herself as a “vehicle of power”, the narrator must first embody self-policing. This self-policing reflects Foucault’s notion of the internalization of surveillance. Contemplating the Panopticon and its design, Foucault explicates that the unidirectional gaze of the overseer onto the inmates continues to dwell within the individual while applying no force to constrain the individual (Discipline 202). Foucauldian surveillance, which becomes internalized, is explained through the image of the circular prison. Foucault claims:
He who is subjected to a field of visibility, and who knows it, assumes responsibility for the constraints of power; he makes them play spontaneously upon himself; he inscribes in him the power relation in which he simultaneously plays both roles; he becomes the principle of his own subjection. (*Discipline* 202-203)

In other words, because the inmates do not know when they are being watched, they constantly live with the sense of not knowing and subsequently feeling that they are constantly being watched. Similarly, Chen’s accounts demonstrate how surveillance can be psychologically engrained into one’s mind, as seen in the subject’s preparation for inspection and inner registration of the border check yet to come. Her narrator explains to current and potential Chinese international students how to navigate the complicated and time-consuming process of border-crossing:

The first item is to write a letter to the Chinese Consulate in New York and inquire about everything. But they [the Chinese Consulate] are not very knowledgeable, and incorrectly informed me of many things. Now is not the time to talk about that, so I will only write down what things I [you] should do. (1) Bring two four-inch photos and personally go to New York’s (or another location’s) Chinese Consulate, to get your passport. But [note that] this passport is for documenting purposes, not useful practically. From [this practice] it is obvious how unstable the Chinese nation is. (2) Bring three four-inch photographs and former US entry permit to New York’s (or another location’s) Immigration Office. Obtain a US re-entry permit and inquire about various regulations for re-entry. (3) Arrive in New York’s (or another location’s) British Immigration Office (Ellis Island, N.Y.C.), and request the secretary to draft a letter to the Canadian government and request a special entry permit. The effectiveness of this letter is of utmost importance; [you] must obtain this [document] so that you don’t have any issues.

The above three things take about two or three weeks to complete.
The details of this entry written in Chinese suggest the narrator’s desire to help fellow Chinese friends in America and coming to America avoid miscommunication if they aspire to enter Canada and the internalization of surveillance. The second step in the instructions, in which the narrator speaks of the re-entry permit into the United States, is catered to Chinese audiences already in or coming to America.161 Moreover, the narrator displays her capability of independently completing the tasks involved and successfully crossing the border alone as well. Her ability to permeate borders is a skill she takes pride in. She educates her fellow classmates about the process, highlighting the best practices for making the trip while taking on the role of a model Chinese narrative subject that illustrates how individuals are incorporated into the web of power and can retain a certain level of control over social structures.

Nevertheless, Chen’s narrative subject is fully aware of her Otherness. As demonstrated by her comment about the difficulty in crossing the Canadian border, she felt all Chinese were monitored: “But it is not a simple thing for Chinese to enter Canada, because I have

161 Chen is not the only Chinese student in America who wrote to students and classmates. Kuo Ping-wen, who attended the College of Wooster in Ohio also wrote for the school newspaper “The Wooster Voice” and another publication “Annual Reports for Exchange Students in America” (留美學生年報). Guo’s article was published in January 1911 entitled “Chinese Students in America,” and argued that Chinese students were the future “bridges” to changing China (1911): 8. For further reading, see: Xiaodan Peng and Xiaoli Zhou’s “Kuo Ping-wen – Sino-American Exchange Education’s Pioneer” (2010). I would like to thank librarian Denise Monbarren at the College of Wooster in Ohio for her assistance in retrieving this article from the archive.
experience regarding this, I can assist my Chinese students with some of the processes. That is why I am writing it out for classmates to see” (636). She writes as though she is representing a generation of Chinese who would be under surveillance and would need guidance as a visible minority. Although every passing body may have had to undergo a security check at the borders, the narrator’s step-by-step instructions after the event demonstrate how heavily the sense of surveillance weighed on her shoulders as a Chinese minority. The author’s Chinese friend and peer at Vassar College, Lucy Yang, stated early on in *The Chinese Students’ Monthly* that they were “subjected to a good deal of good natured curiosity from both the students and faculty” (70). As such, Chen would be conscious that her ethnicity would call attention towards her Chinese narrative subject travelling in America as well. The internalized surveillance thus prompts the narrator to apply for documents, passports, and permits in the manner in which she did. Although she is resolved to be an exemplar of boundary crossing, she was fully aware of her status as a visible minority. Hence, her gathering of travel papers and then her detailed account of acquiring them are proof that even before arriving at the national borders, the policing of the body was already internalized and that Chen perceived the objectification of her ethnic body while abroad which influenced her creation of the narrative subject of her travel writing.

Yet, after all the paperwork, the narrator falls asleep while crossing the border. Assuming that there would be an inspector coming by and that this official would have at least checked on her even if she were asleep, she reports:

> Usually, when the vehicle leaves the United States, I should give the document to the official at the American Immigration Office and he will exchange it for another. That night when the train left America, I fell asleep
and no one came to inquire. It was only the next morning when I learned that I already entered into Canadian territory. There was *discomfort in my heart*; I couldn’t believe that I used so much time and effort to get those letters and passport, and couldn’t use them.

The narrator awakes surprised that she had already “successfully” crossed into Canada. This disbelief, once again, reflects the internalization of surveillance. She is only alarmed because no immigration officer cleared her. Notably, she is disappointed – there is “discomfort in [her] heart” – for passing through without having an official review of her travel documents. She has become “the principle of [her] own subjection” (Foucault *Discipline* 202-3). She expresses her annoyance at her wasted efforts on those travel documents through imagining the process of surveillance whereby she would effectively enter into Canada with the proper papers. This discomfort in her heart stems from not having been checked at the border. Her time and effort, moreover, were spent because she could not help herself from internalizing the surveillance as a Chinese entering into Canada. In other words, the narrative subject’s surprise, disappointment, and annoyance all reveal the strict policing of her own body without force.

The narrator’s anticipation in meeting with an immigration officer is warranted because she knows she can overturn the power hierarchy for a short amount of time. Ironically then, the internalization of surveillance she embodies serves as the foundation for her empowerment as she anticipates being tested and tried at the border. The internalization
prompted her to prepare her papers. These documents shaped her as a model to be followed as an ethnic other, but can also serve as a kind of power because they allow her to overcome the legal obstacles against ethnic Chinese. When she holds them still in her possession without being checked, however, her papers cannot materialize into power.

She can only claim her own narrative subjectivity when the papers are verified – she is keen on the demonstrative act of showing her papers to authorities rather than the purpose of the papers themselves. And so, the narrator’s joy finally comes when the luggage officer arrives and questions her, revealing both the power hierarchy and its antithesis: the fluidity of power. Her joy stems from her own policing and internalization of surveillance and from the interrogation, which serves as an opportunity for Chen to subvert the powers of surveillance and control. The narrator gains knowledge as power because she knows she has sufficient documentation to pass the test. The dialogue between the narrator and the official demonstrates how power can be challenged:

Afterwards, when we arrived in Toronto, there was an officer checking on luggage. He looked at me and said: “Of which nationality are you?” At that time I knew I had many charms, and was happy that he was anxious so I plainly replied: “Chinese.” He immediately revealed a surprised air and said: “How did you get here?” I said: “I took the train on the Canadian Pacific Railroad to get here!” He grew even more surprised and said: “Do you have a passport?” I said: “I think so. Do you need to see [it]?” He said: “Naturally I need to!” I gave him everything: my two passports, six letters. As usual I went to check my belongings and [at the same time] stole a glance at him. He was already sitting down with a pair of large glasses examining each word without missing one on the eight pieces of paper. After finishing that, his face changed immediately. He politely returned them to me; and socialized with me, and bid me farewell before I left!

不一會, 車到了托朗托, 有一個關吏來查行李了。他把我看了幾看, 說: “你是那國的人?” 我那時知道我的護身符很多, 樂得使他著著急, 所以便淡淡的答道: “中國人。”
In the above passage, the narrator explicitly claims she was “happy” at the officer’s expense. Then she teases him with the possession of the passport – delaying him by pretending as if she had not cared so that she could take extra pleasure in mocking him of the procedures by stating: “‘I think so.’” Controlling the time and investigation with the researched documents, she suspends his authority over her. Moreover, she steals a glance at him, reversing the surveillance system that sought to objectify her. In fact, the narrator could have condensed her response into one of the two phrases but further obstructed him with the obvious question: “‘Do you need to see [it]’”? Throwing off the expected balance of power, this reversal shows empowerment of the narrative subject – a triumph over laws that objectified her only by her ethnicity.

Still, it needs to be clarified that the narrative subject was only empowered when she was under scrutiny that she had expected and prepared herself for performance. Had the officer not asked, her preparations to claim power would have served no purpose. She, then, would have lost her chance to reverse the power relation and grasp her narrative subjectivity. She would not have taken the time to prolong the moment of interrogation if not to enhance the dramatic effect of the reversal of her role from being a suspicious passenger to being a lawful one since there would be no contact between her and this
“overseer.” Thus, the volatility of power requires both players in this situation should form resistance.

The narrator’s self-discipline allows her to be a role model and challenge the power structures in place. Framing her story as a didactic model to be followed by other current and future Chinese students wishing to visit Canada, Chen’s accounts undeniably suggest the internalization of surveillance. The narrative subject overturns the power and takes authority through the internalization, though requiring another overseer to challenge her before reaching her goal of entering Canada. Subsequently, this borderspace functions as a stage for Chen to create an empowered narrative subject on.

In the final analysis, Chen’s writing at the border constructs the borderspace as a stage for an ethnic empowered narrative subject to emerge. Written in vernacular Chinese, her 1919 account glides over any sense of fear in being a cultural Other in transit. Chen’s portrayal of her time in Canada shows how class and education play a large role in the experience of a distinct group of Chinese people in America during the time of anti-Chinese sentiment. As aforementioned, the narrator’s extraordinary journey to the isolated island speaks volumes to this issue of class differentiation. And although she was chaperoned by a male friend of Mrs. Hyde into the train to Deer Lake, the narrator represented herself as a free person: “I always took this opportunity to leave and go afar and observe them 我常常趁這個機會，抽身到遠處去，看他們的情形” (Chen 641). With the notion of surveillance ingrained in her mind, she would feel as vulnerable as prisoners in the Panopticon, “induce[d with] a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power” (Foucault Discipline 201). However, this sense of surveillance also helped her overcome the border check with pride. Her internalization of surveillance
prompted her to obtain required documents, to be disappointed in the initially porous border, to be empowered as she temporarily suspended the power hierarchy as an informed and resourceful passenger, and finally to teach others about the process through her writing. With the knowledge of constant visibility, Chen’s travelogue reflects the implications and fluidity of power as described in Foucault’s Panopticon and the performance required to delay and suspend the execution of power. Ultimately, Chen’s account demonstrates how borderspaces were sites where interactions occurred and where power could be overturned in the face of discrimination.

5.3 Poetic Power: Xie Fuya’s Negotiation and Defiance at the Borders

Xie Fuya’s experience at the borders did not go as smoothly as Chen’s journey in Eastern Canada. The Chinese Exclusion Act had been established for three years upon the narrator’s arrival to the United States, which required him to obtain a visa normally available to students. However, the narrator explains that he could not obtain the visa since he arrived during Labour Day weekend when the documents could not be processed. Thus, even though he understands the necessary protocol, his writing speaks of the reality and timing of the Exclusion. Though the narrator’s trials and tribulations were modern in terms of the systems created around him, Xie’s means as an author to address them were classical. The author chose poetic expression to overcome the physical restraints placed on his identity as an ethnic Chinese individual. As such, Xie’s poetry narrates the border not as a line but as a space in which subjectivity is negotiated.

In Xie’s compositions, the poetic self offers a futuristic possibility of crossing into Canada for all Chinese that responds to Xie’s historical moment where Chinese are often unable to physically step foot onto Canadian soil. Xie’s decision to create poetry, I argue, is a
response to the objectification of the narrator’s body at Niagara Falls. The defiant poetic inscription of the experience redeems the physical limitation. His choice to return to the Chinese tradition of poetry writing is significant, considering the context of Sino-North American relations. When the narrative subject is challenged by the objectification of his ethnic body, the poetic self performs and expresses himself with traditional Chinese tropes and poetic forms at the borderspace, discursively defying material conditions of Chinese Exclusion.

The event takes place in September 1926. The first-person narrator of the travelogue explains that the summer break for the University of Chicago occurs in September (70). He was not alone when he went, as suggested in the use of a plural pronoun to describe his arrival: “The day we arrived at Niagara, was coincidentally September 6th – America’s Labour Day 我們到奈迦拉這一天，拾逢九月六日美國勞動節” (100, emphasis mine). Although it is unclear who exactly was travelling with him at the time, it may have been one or two fellow students of the author. Xie’s writing about his experience at Niagara Falls is flanked by his recollections in Philadelphia and Boston, which are not explicitly connected to one another but suggest that this tourist site was a detour en route to Harvard that he was ultimately headed for.

After arriving in Niagara Falls, the narrator shares observations of the American-Canadian border, showcasing the physical conception of borderspace in multiple ways. The requirement of transactions or “procedures” to cross the border points to the border’s spatial and non-linear nature. The narrator states that if one is on the American side then one cannot enter the “Canadian side (kanjie 坎界)” without a permit (100). Likewise, he
explains that if one is on “Canada’s side (kannada 坎拿大),” without a “substantial number of procedures (xiangdang shouxu 相當手續),” one cannot pass into the American side or “meijie 美界” (100). This process suggests that a border is crossed through many steps and that people move through both space and time. The border is neither a material line nor physical gate, as the narrator explains. Although all must “pass the gate” or “guoguan 過關” to get into Canada (100), he clarifies that this “gate” is not a physical structure at all:

There is no [physical] gate but at the adjoining border office on the bridge, police officers stand erect at both sides, checking carefully, to prevent third-class country citizens from stealthily entering its country for work. 關雖沒有，但毗連處之橋上，巡警林立兩旁，稽查嚴密，防範三等國的人民，偷過入境作工。(100)

The “gate” is in fact the policemen who stand at both sides of the bridge, conducting strict searches. His observations make clear that there is a policing but that the border is not simply a line to be crossed; one must go through interrogation with the authorities before being allowed into the country. The “third-class country citizens” he mentions are later identified as the discriminated Chinese minority. As a result, Xie presents the phenomenon of borderspace as a physical stage, where different actors within a power hierarchy are involved in a material border. Below, borderspace as a conceptual stage for textual subjects (and especially the poetic self) to challenge material realities of exclusion and discrimination are highlighted in Xie’s writing.

The narrator moves onto the next act performed on this conceptual borderspace as stage, one where ethnic subjectivity is explicitly narrated for readers. He and his companions wanted to cross into Canada from the United States but were only able to take the tourist tram around Niagara Falls and were not permitted to get off on the Canadian side. This
experience on the tram shapes a specific understanding of self that provides a distinctly ethnic Chinese perspective of Niagara Falls because of the experience as a minority. The narrator’s consciousness of ethnic difference emerges in a lengthy description of the day’s events at Niagara Falls on Labour Day:

The Immigration Office was closed. It was fate to be unable to meet the Immigration Officer; and so the visa could not be processed. It was easy to find an office worker at another inspection branch, who granted one exemption, which allowed [us] to sit in the tourist car and make a round [on it] without alighting. From the northern point of the two nation’s line of demarcation, [the car] traces the waterfall and makes a circle on the windlass. The car is like a tram, but both sides are open and thus are not in the way of observation. Every time there was a famous spot or memorial site, [the tram would] stop for three to five minutes. The tram conductor would speak and explain for a while. Others desiring to alight could do so freely to observe closely, or rest at the travel center, or walk around in the forested park. But we grew aware that this blessing is not something we of today can enjoy. From the moving car, one could see the flying waves flowing, the mist going in all directions, the steep nature of rocky grottos, the liveliness of rushing waters, the iron bridge like a long rainbow suspended on high, the cliffs stand erect like a ghost. This trip on the windlass took a little more than an hour. The fare was $1.25 and can be considered as a tale of the Canadian side of Niagara Falls to learn from.

移民局封關，局長大人無緣拜見，許可證是辦不到的了。好容易找到一處稽查分所的辦事員，給予一條，只准在觀覽車上坐看一圈，不許下車。自北端之兩國分界線起，沿瀑流之洞，轆轆環繞。車如電車式，但兩壁開通，可以縱覽無阻。每到名勝紀念處，停三五分鐘，由車長說明一番，別人喜欲下車流連者，就可任意下去，仔細玩賞，或盤桓於旅社，或徜徉於園林，但我們覺悟這段福分，非我們今日所能享受的了。車過之處，但見飛瀑之狂瀉，霧沫之四濺，巖石之崚嶒，急湍之奔躍，鐵橋如長虹之高懸，絕壁如巨鬼之駭立。如是轆轆一周，為時一點多鐘，車資一元兩角半，這算是完了坎界瀑布之一重公案！ (100-101, emphasis mine)

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162 The demarcation line runs from north to south following parts along the Niagara River.
The narrator thus describes the experience of being barred from alighting the tourist tram at this borderspace of Niagara Falls. The scene contains concrete details of the tram’s make, of the presence of other tourists on board, of the sights, and of the fare. By comparing the confinement within the tram in contrast to the other travellers who could “freely” alight, “rest […] or walk around in the forested park,” the narrator comes to a distinct understanding of self through an awareness of his limitations as an ethnic Chinese individual: “But we grew aware that this blessing is not something we of today can enjoy” (101). He uses the pronoun “we” in the transition from description to narration to highlight the low standing of Chinese people – establishing his own narrative subjectivity and simultaneously pointing to the larger ethnic population in general as a collective experience. The pronoun plausibly represents either of the two groups of people. Firstly, the vague pronoun can be read as encompassing both the narrator and his unknown companions in his contemporary moment. Since they would be the only ones requiring a visa to enter Canada, the “we” could refer to his companions. Second, the ambiguous “we” can be linked with an ethnic identity, since other tourists and travellers would not need such documentation—the restrictions were solely for the Chinese. The pronoun invites his Chinese readers to grasp and evaluate the circumstances of Chinese globally. The “we of today” supports this subtle invitation. “Today” could mark the specific September day he was at Niagara Falls and signal the current state of affairs (including exclusion and discrimination of Chinese). If the “today” can be understood as the latter, then the “we” points to a larger imagined community of ethnic Chinese not limited to his companions. I argue that Xie was raising consciousness of the ethnic Chinese position via the lived experience of the discursive subject within this borderspace.
Still, the narrative subject may not have realized how privileged he was to be allowed onto the tram. He and his fellow classmates were able to discuss the details of the special border crossing by tram in English. The fact that a conversation occurred and resulted in a partial exemption into Canada is evidence of his language skills and education in the face of biased Sino-American and Sino-Canadian relations. The narrator’s ability to understand the circumstances granted him and his peers the opportunity to “sit in the tourist tram” even though they could not freely roam the Canadian side of the Falls. This obtainment of a ‘pass’ is important to recognize. It demonstrates a privileged experience, one that gestures to the oppressive history of Chinese-American and Chinese-Canadian relations.

The poor timing of the late summer day to visit the waterfall was perhaps not as significant as Canada’s Exclusion Era, which had begun just three years prior to this visit, in prohibiting and controlling his activity. Although the narrator explicitly addresses neither the Exclusion Act nor the labouring Chinese class, discrimination and exclusion together framed the experience even if he was unaware of his own advantageous position. Nonetheless, it is not only this privileged experience of being on the tram that speaks. Xie’s poems about Niagara Falls continue to contend with this tension between ethnic objectification and subjectivity. Poetic power confronts the tension in several ways – challenging the historical event with the discursive rendition through the poetic body.
5.3.1  *Victorious through the Poetic Body: Return to Traditional Travel Traditions of Poetic Composition at Niagara Falls*

In Xie’s travelogue, there are only two instances where he writes poems. The first is at the Independence Hall in Philadelphia and the second is at Niagara Falls. It is unknown whether he composed his Niagara poems on-site, but the fact that he made it a point to write seven poems about the falls (more than the one poem at Independence Hall) suggests that it was important for Xie to record his experience at the border. I argue that these poems are a discursive negotiation of the speaker’s failed physical attempt to enter Canada, allowing his poetic subject to access Canada and to cast a futuristic gaze to Chinese individuals crossing into Canada. The borderspace as stage at Niagara Falls thus features a poetic subject who performs an overcoming of the narrator’s physical limitations.

In two poems about Horseshoe Falls and Luna Island, the poet sets the scene by describing the waterfalls as supernatural, yet also audible and visible to the poetic subject. Unlike early European writers at Niagara Falls, these poems express no fear of the sublime as described by the narrator. In “*Matibu (Wei Naijia zui mingshengchu)* 馬蹄瀑 (為奈迦最名勝處) [Horseshoe Falls (The Most Famous Site of Niagara Falls)],” he claims:

> The sound of thunder where the golden drum beats,  
> Uncountable trees and pear blossoms rush down horseshoes.  
> This waterfall should only exist in the heavens.  
> The flat cliffs play to the setting sun in the west.

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163 Xie Fuya enjoyed writing poetry on his many trips. In a collection of his centennial birthday, Xie’s dedication to poetic composition can be seen. See *Xie Fuya jiao shou bai ling shi wen* (1991).

164 Pear blossoms point to the use of brass castanets shaped like *lihua* (犁鏵) plows, which is homophonous with pear blossoms (also *lihua* 梨花), which matches the emphasis on sound of the rapids.

165 The verb used here can be understood in its musical definition, which does not mean to wipe out or paint, but a kind of performance played on string instruments.
殷殷何處動金鼙。
萬樹梨花殞馬蹄。
此瀑祇應天上有。
平巖一抹夕陽西。 (105)

To the poet, the scenery does not belong to the earthly realm. The poet focuses on the
sounds produced at the site using references to drums, percussion, and stringed
instruments to describe the thunderous rapids aurally, thus producing sound for the poem’s
audience so as to demonstrate the poet’s proximity to the rapids rather than instilling fear.

In “Lunandao (Zai Naijia bu zhi zhongyi) 魯南島 (在奈迦瀑之中翼) [Luna Island (In the
Middle of Niagara Falls)],” the poet says:

The trees above Luna Island thrive,
The waters below Luna Island are like fire,
Leaning against the fence, could not see enough to be satisfied no matter
how much one sees,
Suspecting [I] reached a mythical land isolated from mankind.

The poetic subject is separated from nature by a “fence” and cannot fully admire the
beauty of the scenery. This “fence” relates back to the exception made by the official for
him and his companions, since even if they wanted to stay longer to admire the rapids,
they could not since they were only allowed to ride the tram for a little over an hour. The
poet paints the landscape as magnificent and mythical, both aurally stunning and visually
utopian in its natural sublimity in these poems while leaving his inscription on the site as
former travellers would.
Not only does the poetic subject hear and see the thundering beauty of the touristic site, he is also soaked in the waters, which is significant in demonstrating victory over physical limitations placed on the narrator based on race. The seven-character quatrain poem, “Chuyou Naijiabu 初遊奈迦瀑 [First Time at Niagara Falls],” reads:

The high waterfall falls into a deep aura of darkness,  
bubble-like mist blows and soaks my collar,  
In a dampened area under a steep cliff,  
Are there travellers who can understand me [?]  
千尋飛瀑氣陰森。  
泡沫吹來溼我衿。  
一帶深溼巉壁下。  
遊人幾輩是知音。(105)

As with the other poems, there is a supernatural quality (a “deep aura of darkness.”) And yet, the clothes of the poetic subject are wet because of the mist that comes from the waterfall. The proximity of the water and its ability to “soak [his] collar” present a physical interaction of the body in the poem. This contact of nature with the body of the poetic subject exceeds the legal restrictions of the narrator described earlier. The narrator explains that the official exception made by the Canadian police allowed him and his companions to sit on the tram but not alight. Thus he was allowed to see and able to hear the rapids. The additional contact with the water goes beyond the physical restrictions placed on the narrator’s body – it was deemed permissible and sufficient for him to look and listen but not touch land. In this way, the poem expresses the co-presence and co-existence of the corporeal subject and nature that exceeds the physical and legal realities of 1926.
5.3.2 *The Poetic Subject and Futuristic Time: “Cannot Alight at the Canadian Border”*

Xie Fuya’s “*You Kannadajie buxu xia che* 遊坎拿大界不許下車 [*Cannot Alight at the Canadian Border]*” is the third-last poem about Niagara Falls within the collection. The poem shows again how the border at Niagara Falls can be conceptualized as a stage for Xie to renegotiate physical limitations to the landscape through his poetic subject’s performance. Its title points to the physical inability to cross – unlike the other titles of the collection directly named after the waterfalls of the area, such as “Horseshoe Falls” and “Luna Island” – which may suggest the author’s stake for writing about the experience.¹⁶⁶ Here, I closely examine the futuristic gaze that the poetic subject casts onto the tourist site.

The four-line poem opens with a description of the tram ride across the Niagara Gorge and ends with a hopeful message for Chinese visitors. This poetic self overcomes the ethnic objectification against the narrator. The poem reads in full:

> The light car rolled for one circular trip,  
> down the valleys and up around the mountains.  
> Seen as strange by foreigners,  
> had no fate to appreciate closely the falling of plum flowers.  
> 輕車轆轆一迴環。  
> 下俯澄淵上繞山。  
> 異樣外幫人¹⁶⁷看待。

¹⁶⁶ While it is common in traditional poems to describe a scene as such, it seems there was something particular about this poem and the experience it represented. In a reprint of Xie’s whole poetic collection seventy years later, only this poem is removed from the set of seven composed at Niagara Falls (*Xie Fuya* 14-15). Perhaps at a later age, Xie felt that it was not important to recall this experience on the tram. Its selected omission, however, makes it interesting.

¹⁶⁷ This can also be defined as Gentiles. Considering Xie’s biblical knowledge, perhaps this was a negative outlook as Gentiles were viewed as unclean and seen as not the chosen people (in comparison to the Jews) until the coming of Jesus Christ. By extension, Xie may have inserted this to demonstrate the eventual acceptance of the Gentiles would also be for the Chinese.
The first two lines of the poem are straightforward in their imagery: a cable car makes a loop around valleys and mountains. However, the third line, which is the turn or twist within poetic tradition, is ambiguous in its meaning. It could infer that strange foreigners were looking at the poetic subject or that foreigners viewed him as strange. Both renderings are plausible, but being the well-travelled man that the author was, the foreigners would not have been that peculiar nor would they look peculiar to the author. Xie studied in Chicago for a year by this time and had sailed over from Japan and interacted with various ethnicities. As such, I argue that it is the latter interpretation of foreigners finding the poetic persona strange that connects with the resolution in the fourth line. The foreigners finding the poetic persona odd is more logical because those other people with him on the tram may perceive it strange that the narrator did not leave the tram car to observe Niagara’s natural scenery. They most likely do not understand his special circumstance or the arrangement made with the official since little interaction is recorded between them. Importantly, Xie places the poetic persona as an object to be observed in this turn. This inclusion of a foreigner’s gaze on the poetic subject brings an awareness of the co-existence of races.

This tension in the third line when the poetic self is objectified is resolved in the last line when the poetic subject refers to seeing plum flowers to provide hope for future Chinese visitors. The poet laments being unable to admire the “falling of plum flowers,” a phrase which also alludes to the poor Chinese standing at this particular historical moment and hope. It is not that the poetic subject cannot see the flowers at all, which would be a complete absence of vision, but that he cannot observe them closely in detail. The poetic
body is still at the scene and able to see (though limited) Niagara Falls. The poem also brings attention to the bodies of the Chinese passengers, as strange objects of fascination observed by local passengers. Xie’s poem thus bolsters the point that the body was indeed present at the border, though unable to place his two feet on Canadian soil, demonstrating that the borderspace was a stage for the poetic body’s presence to perform a border-crossing despite being unable to alight.

Moreover, the tension is resolved by reworking a common trope in classical Chinese poetry of the plum. The renegotiation of the poet’s restricted body in his historical moment is refracted through this image of the plum. The image of the plum was well loved by poets throughout the dynasties, and embodies “feelings about the solitude and adversities of life, which are particularly keen during the coldest days of the year” (Huang “Four” 73). The plum tree in late imperial poetry reconfigured the identity of the poet as a loyal patriot. Jiang Jie (蔣捷) (1245-1301) and Qu Yuan (屈原) (340-278) brought this image of the plum or luomei (落梅) into communion with the idea of loyalty to home states in danger of being subjugated to other states (Yang Hoisting 208). Whether or not there were actual plum trees at Niagara Falls is less significant than the poetic reference to them, as the poetic tradition often used nature to reflect the inner thoughts of the poet. The plum can further be read as a symbol of China’s future as imagined by the poet. Plum blossoms typically bloom in the late winter and early spring, and are thus adored as “the harbinger of spring” (Huang “Four” 71). This means that in September, the falling of leaves of the plum tree could not be seen in reality. Moreover, in North America, this type of tree would never have been seen at all because it only grows in Asia. The “lack of fate” in failing to see the plum blossoms fall up close arguably echoes the narrator’s explanation of poor
timing in arriving in September and being unable to speak personally with an immigration officer. This “lack of fate,” the last two words in his poems (緣慳 yuanqian), references an idiom about missed opportunities to meet someone or something: “緣慳一面” (yuan qian yi mian). The same character for fate “緣” (yuan) is found in his description of the missed encounter with the immigration officer. Thus, Xie sets up a parallel between the two incidents. As such, the repetition of the character for “fate” here and in the narrator’s missed opportunity to meet with the immigration officer (who held the power to let him into Canada) together support the argument that both events were “missed” due to poor timing. It was not that the poetic subject could not see Canada or the plum tree’s petals, but that the season in which they bloomed had not arrived. Xie’s poetry implies that one would be able to admire all these sights personally given the right timing. Although the narrator’s physical body is restricted from alighting in the physical conception of the borderspace, his poetic persona is defiant and powerful on its discursive stage. Thus, the poem gestured towards a futuristic moment (with better timing) where it would be possible to enter into Canada. Xie Fuya enacts this experience in the discursive space of the poem and portrays a successful border-crossing through the poetic self. Xie’s writing encourages future generations of Chinese by pointing to the transcendental image of the plum flowers beyond the legal restrictions placed against ethnic Chinese in his historical moment.

Pausing for contemplation at the border, Xie selected traditional poetry as his medium for responding to the Chinese Exclusion Act. The portrayal of supernatural waters was overcome by a poetic subject who could hear its thunderous rapids, see its captivating waters, be drenched in its mist, and watch the leaves fall from plum trees (that most likely did not exist at all) at Niagara Falls. Poetry offered a hopeful message of equality in the
future. As a result, the Chinese poetic subject performed a victorious lyrical monologue, embedded within Chinese literary patterns and tropes to portray an optimistic future for Chinese people in the world.

5.4 *Posing for Success: Gong Xuesui’s Photographic Manipulation at the Borders*

Gong’s travelogue similarly highlights the discriminatory treatment he faced as a Chinese traveller at Niagara Falls, using photography rather than poetry to portray a successful border-crossing. Gong presents three pieces of photographic evidence alongside his textual account, which presents the narrator’s entering into Canada despite being aware of the objectification of the narrator’s body in North America. Carefully studying the place in which these three photographs were taken, however, proves that they were all captured on the American side and so cannot evince the narrator’s account. I will show that the ethnic objectification of the narrator at Niagara Falls forms the foundation for which the creation of an empowered photographic subject. Gong’s agency in creating the photographic subject demonstrates how borderspace as stage can be understood as a material space where people are in motion and as a discursive space for writers to create an alternative reality in direct opposition to discrimination.

The travelogue, with its careful instructions, seems to anticipate more Chinese readers going to Niagara Falls and is didactic, like the other travel writings in Chinese in this century. The text opens with a descriptive tone from the first-person perspective. The narrator leaves Washington, D.C. on 17 June at eight-thirty in the evening for Buffalo en route to Niagara Falls. After describing the farewell bid by a friend named Mr. Huang, he provides the cost for the train from Washington, D.C. to Buffalo, the hotel in Buffalo, and local transportation from Buffalo to Niagara Falls:
The lower bunk is three additional American dollars, while sleeping on the upper bunk, is $2.40 more. I arrived at the Buffalo Hotel at seven thirty-five the next morning. [The hotel] was quite far from the station. For a two-person room, the cost is five American dollars a day. Niagara Falls is twenty-seven British miles away from Buffalo. There are trains and public buses that bring you directly there. For convenience sake, I considered joining a tour for $3 USD per person – it would be about six hours including return time.

臥車下鋪須加美金三元，上鋪須加美金二元四角。華盛頓至布法羅（Buffalo），為四百六十五英里，翌朝七時三十五分到達，住 Buffalo Hotel，距車站甚遠，兩人一室，每日五個美金。

尼加拉瀑布，距布法羅二十七英里，有火車及公共汽車直達。為求便利計，儗參加遊覽團，每人索價三美金，來回約六小時。(241)

Resembling an instructive guidebook, the itinerary is easy to follow from the train to the hotel to the tourist site. His route with supplementary information provides an idea of the expenses for his audiences as well. I argue that Gong Xuesui wrote with a didactic purpose in response to the discrimination against Chinese people by giving instructions and encouragement to his readers.

The narrator explains that the best view of the Falls is from the Canadian side of the border, however crossing the Canadian border poses an issue for Chinese because of the Chinese Exclusion Act. He explicitly shares his opinions about Chinese discrimination in Canada:

This Niagara Falls, at the conjoining point between US and Canada, [one] must stand in the Canadian territory, in order to see clearly. The tour has to enter Canadian national borders […] but since 1921 Canada has rejected Chinese from entering, so the person at the tour reception did not wish to serve us.

This is quite strange as fifty years ago, Britain hired many Chinese labourers to Canada to explore mines and build railways. As to Canada's

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168 Even though he is wrong about the year it was implemented (that is, 1923), by his arrival in 1936 the Act would have been established for over a decade.
prosperity, Chinese people played a huge role that would not go unrecorded. Who would know that after the task was complete, the workers would be abandoned. The past few years, however, Canada only permits the Chinese to leave and does not permit Chinese people to come in. If one is reasonable, we can negotiate with the Canadian government, and I believe it can be like how Canada treats the Japanese so that each year Canada can allow 150 Chinese to come in. Sadly, our country does not actively negotiate, and so we are left controlled as they [the government] please[s].

這個尼加拉瀑布，在美國和加拿大交接地點，要站在加拿大境內，纔可看得清楚。遊覽團是要入加拿大國境的，可是自一九二一年加拿大就拒絕中國人入境，因此，遊覽招待處不願招待我們。

說也奇怪，在五十年前英國招了很多華工到加拿大開礦築路，對於加拿大的繁榮，中國人不無微勞足錄。孰知鳥盡弓藏，近年以來，加拿大卻只准中國人出境，不准中國人入境了。如果據理向加拿大政府交涉，相信也能和加拿大對待日本人一樣，每年可以允許華人一百五十人入境。可惜我國不去交涉，只好任人為所欲為。(242)

During the time he was left behind by others who could enter Canada lawfully, he stops to collect his thoughts on the unfairness of this law, providing a history of the contribution ethnic Chinese labourers made to the construction of the Canadian national railway. From this historical reflection, he proceeds to critique his own government and their delay in negotiating diplomatic relations with Canada. Importantly, the historical review exceeds what could be perceived and physically experienced on site. That is, the history of the Chinese Canadian contribution to the railway was not visible by simply visiting Niagara Falls or Canada. Therefore, Gong’s attempt to historicize the experience of the border is a purposeful recollection and contextualization of Chinese discrimination from which his photographic subject will overcome.

Gong gives another episode to educate his readers about the Chinese discrimination in the world, which I argue, sets the groundwork for his photographic subject to resolve. The
narrator shares an anecdote told to him by an anonymous Chinese Canadian *huaqiao*\(^{169}\) (華僑) that expresses a sense of shame in being Chinese abroad:

> A Canadian homeless man went to travel in China, and received great respect and large banquet by the local officers. This news was published in a Canadian newspaper and almost made the *huaqiao* die of shame.  
> 有一個加拿大流氓，遊歷中國，竟受地方官鄭重招待，款以盛宴。這個消息刊在加拿大報章，差不多把華僑羞死了。 (Gong 242)

There is no name provided for this *huaqiao* – and whether or not this conversation ever happened cannot be confirmed. The specifics are unknown as to how this homeless Canadian man arrived in China. In fact, this conversation may or may not have occurred at Niagara Falls, though it is recollected there. It is significant that this constructed memory is used to give context to treatment to come in his narrative. The episode is crafted to teach readers about the Chinese standing in the world.

Through both examples of the Canadian Pacific Railway and the anecdote of the Chinese diaspora in Canada, Gong constructs a “history” for the narrative experience. Including the historical context helps Gong to situate the experience, although this history would not have been immediately evident through visual observation. Both the inclusion of unfairness and shame of Chinese diasporas are not experienced by being physically in Canada. More importantly, Gong’s narrative will show readers how to overcome this disadvantageous position as ethnic Chinese, which he himself constructed discursively.

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\(^{169}\) *Huaqiao* can be translated as Chinese overseas although there are many different opinions as to whether this could reference sojourners of the first generation and whether in the diaspora of Chinese which groups can be or are recognized as belonging to the *huaqiao*. 

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According to Gong’s text, the ethnic Chinese traveller needs to have determination to successfully cross into Canada. His experience begins with the hotel receptionist rejecting his request to join a tour. At the “Niagara Falls Tour Reception” counter inside the Buffalo Hotel, the staff member asks whether the narrator and his companion are Japanese or Chinese. When he responds that he is “Chinese,” the receptionist shakes their head – a symbolic decline to their request of joining the tour (242). Instead of joining the tour bus or train, then, the narrator makes his own way by renting a car with his passport, which he is confident will allow him to cross:

Because [our] passport had the signature from the Canadian Consulate in Washington, D. C., we confidently went forward and could care less about the rejection of the receptionist and rented our own car to go to Niagara. [...] First, [we] went towards the American Customs. They said: “It is not a Diplomatic Passport, so it might be difficult to pass. If you insist on passing, you can try going to the Canadian Customs side and try.” We set our hearts, garnered courage, and drove across the bridge to the other side and the Canadian Customs Worker after seeing their consul’s signature, could only let us into its borders. / The event of watching the falls is a very small thing; what was not reasonable was the feeling of being rejected for being Chinese – it was terrible. If we lacked any less courage, then we would have early on been scared away by that group of wretched beings. Good thing we held forcefully onto our values and in the end reached our goal.

His phrasing of the inevitable reaction of the Canadian consulate, who “could only let us into its borders,” suggests they managed to cross successfully into Canada. Canada was
reached because of the amount of courage they had. His explicit mentioning of “courage” many times in this passage points to the need for the Chinese subject to have determination. This successful crossing in writing, in spite of laws meant to keep out Chinese, compliments his careful selection of photographs that gesture to the possibility of seeing and visiting Canada, which is examined next.

5.4.1 American Perspectives: Photographs at Niagara Falls

Photographs are inserted throughout Gong Xuesui’s travelogue, but Niagara Falls presents a special case, as a space of Chinese discrimination. Throughout Report, Gong is careful to match corresponding photographs of both himself and buildings he saw with his written accounts. By this era, it was not exceptional to include photographs in travelogues and Gong liberally includes them within his text. Gong includes pictures of him and his companions on the boat at the beginning of his journey. He includes a photograph of him and a friend in front of the White House (136). At Niagara Falls, the juxtaposition of photographic images with the text also provides visual evidence to the narrative. Nevertheless, photography can be “a strategy of appropriation,” that passes as “a miniaturization of the real, without revealing

Figure 5.1 Niagara Falls Falls View Bridge. From Gong Xuesui’s Reports (1938)
either its constructed nature or its ideological content” (Burton 42), which I reframe as a performance of the photographic subject. Here, I argue that Gong uses the photographic subject to perform at the policed border against Chinese exclusion in North America. Much like Gong’s writing, photography is also ideological and not simply mimetic or natural. Gong resists the restrictive laws against Chinese travel by exposing that “reality” is a construct that can be challenged discursively, through writing and photography.

The photographs serve as evidence of the travel, although the actual experience of taking photographs is not recorded in the text itself. Unlike writers who were involved in the set-up of the camera, the apparatus, and the lighting, Gong placed the photographs into the travelogue as illustrations of the text. However, this also creates a disjunction with the textual account that demonstrates how writing does not record the full experience since there is no mention of picture-taking at Niagara Falls. At the same time, writing is not seen as sufficient in representing the experience and photographs serve as a kind of supplement

170 The images are important as it shows both a transformation in the publishing parameters and an authorial familiarity with photography. In my research, images are published within travelogues quite late within the collections. In a revised edition of Liang Qichao’s early twentieth-century record of North America in Xindalu youji (新大陸遊記) [Travel Writings of the New World] (2006), there are some ink sketches of Canadian scenes but not presented in photographic mediums. For example, there are illustrations of the harbour (15), the Bank of Montreal (16; 19), the shores of a fishing village (17), and of Vancouver (21) in Liang’s revised text. However, in the original text, there is none of these images. Ji Hongchang (吉鴻昌) (1897–1934), who was sent out by Chiang Kai-shek to visit North America in the same decade as Gong, does not include images of the trip in his Huangqi shicha ji (環球視察記) [Observations around the World]. The photographs with Gong Xuesui are much more significant and frequently appear in his travelogue, demonstrating the change in printing practices and use of photography in travelogues.
to the writing.\textsuperscript{171} I argue that this photographic persuasion was a performance in the borderspace of Niagara Falls, created out of the ethnic Chinese awareness of the author and of the narrator, that was needed to support the text. As such, with the ethnic objectification of the narrator, the photographic subject appears to counter the discrimination discursively.

Unlike other Chinese photographers at Niagara Falls,\textsuperscript{172} the photographic subject is found in two of the three black and white photographs. The two photographs of the narrator are examined in detail below. The first is entitled “Niijiala Pubu de Falls View Qiao" \textsuperscript{171}尼加拉瀑布的 Falls View 橋 [Niagara Falls’ Falls View Bridge]” (Fig. 5.1), and frames his whole body perched on a rock with a bridge in the background and this posture suggests he is fully aware of the presence of the camera. The photograph is approximately 2 7/8 of an inch by 3 1/8 of an inch. The second is entitled “Niijiala Pubu Qian" \textsuperscript{171}尼加拉瀑布前 [Before Niagara Falls]” (Fig. 5.3). His head occupies one-twentieth of the almost three-inch by three-inch photograph and he is posing for the camera without making eye contact with

\textsuperscript{171} There is no mention of how the apparatus was dealt with and who took the photographs for him. The use of photographs has the ability to “undermine the legitimacy of the objective truthfulness conventionally ascribed to photography” (Sakaki 8), which Gong does not seem to consider. For further discussion of this notion of photography and transparency, please see Atsuko Sakaki’s \textit{The Rhetoric of Photography in Modern Japanese Literature: Materiality in the Visual Register as Narrated by Tanizaki Jun’ichiro, Abe Kōbō, Horie Toshiyuki, and Kanai Mieko}, where the multifaceted relationship between photography, its processes, its production and consumption is read within Japanese literary works.

\textsuperscript{172} Other visitors, such as overseas student at Oberlin College, Qian Yonghe (錢用和) (1897-1990), took photographs at Niagara as well, but not of themselves or the people at the Falls (34-5). It is only in the later journals when particular diplomats chose to document their journey abroad with text and image and specifically photographs of themselves. And even then, many images are collective group pictures at political parties or welcoming events.
the apparatus. The rest of the image is of the rushing rapids. The third image at Niagara Falls is of a funambulist who signed a photograph while explaining his own bravery, and was purchased from a store at Niagara Falls. Using the first two images, I demonstrate how the text was not enough for Gong and required a photographic subject – the person within the frame – to persuade readers to believe that the narrative described had happened.

In the first image, the assertive posing of the photographic subject’s full body perched on a rock responds to the “courage” required in the face of discrimination as described in the narration. This subject is the only person in the frame, with his body at the center of the photograph and his face turned towards a distant point to the right, which probably means he was looking towards the cliffs at Terrapin Point. His left leg is perched upon a rock. He wears a brimmed hat along with a dark-coloured blazer, matched with a pair of white (or very light coloured) trousers. The Upper Suspension Bridge is in the background, while the calm gorge is to the left of the subject. The defiant position of his body upon the rock is a confident stance and not passive. This pose recalls that of patriotic heroes in Romanticist sculptures and paintings, ones Gong perhaps saw in Europe before arriving in the United States. Like the subject in Caspar David Friedrich (1774-1840)’s oil painting Wanderer above the Sea of Fog (c. 1818),

Figure 5.2 Caspar David Friedrich's *Wanderer above the Sea of Fog* (c. 1818)

173 This third image is not examined as it was a purchased print and irrelevant to the current discussion at hand.
Fog (c. 1818) (Figure 5.2), Gong’s photographic subject chooses not to expose his face but stands confident before nature. With the camera’s frame capturing his whole body, the subject seems to be standing in defiance of the rejection that the narrator of Gong’s travelogue faced trying to cross the Niagara Falls due to his race. Through the photographic subject, Gong stands his ground and visually presents the successful visit to Niagara Falls in the narration and points to possibility of being at the cataract, although the narrator does not say which side he is on. In other words, despite the racist encounter, the photograph defies the limitations imposed on Chinese bodies by immigration laws and expresses a utopic vision of successful border-crossing for Chinese individuals. In spite of racist discrimination, the photograph tells of a positive experience at Niagara Falls.

Similarly, the photographic subject of the second image also tells of a successful sight-seeing experience (Figure 5.3). The profile of the subject is visible, specifically his head and upper right shoulder. Still wearing the same brimmed hat, the picture was probably taken during the same tour. There is a clear view of the interaction of the body with the environment even though the rapids look a bit misty in the image. The scenery is located in front of the photographic subject. The subject stares into the distance.

Figure 5.3 Before Niagara Falls. From Gong Xuesui's Reports (1938)
with the cascading waterfall to his left. The camera freezes the moment of his successful witnessing of the Falls. The framing effect of the picture makes Niagara Falls the object captured. Instead of the ethnic Chinese individual being the object of the gaze (in the eyes of authority), the photographic subject is empowered by retaining the gaze. The gaze of the photographic subject subverts the power of surveillance, the systems such as Foucault’s Panopticon that attempt to control and discipline socially. The subject’s gaze (which objectifies the land) counters the objectification of the narrator at the hotel and at immigration control. In choosing this particular format of presenting the waterfall, I argue that Gong not only presents the immensity of the waterfall but also success in the photographic recreation of a more utopian picture of border-crossing. Even though his ethnic Chineseness is not fully visible in the picture, the author is able to use the photograph to overcome the obstacles others have presented to the narrator’s ethnic body. Using these images, Gong shows his readers a visual representation of the textual determination to see Niagara and visit Canada.

From the pictures alone, it is undeterminable as to which side of Niagara Falls the subject is on unless one utilizes a map of the border city. But when one does, it is evident that he is on the American side (Fig. 5.4). In “Niagara Falls’ Falls View Bridge,” the inlet on the left side of the picture and the bridge in full view exposes his position on the American side. If he was standing on Canadian territory, he would have been facing the

- Figure 5.4 Map of Terrapin Point from "Niagara Falls." Map. Google Maps. Accessed 23 Apr. 2017.
American Falls and the waterfall would have appeared in the background. In other words, if he was standing on Canadian territory, the bridge would be in front of the waterfall, which would be the American Falls. But there are no waterfalls behind the bridge, which means he is on the American side. Gong did not see the act of watching the waterfalls as significant as pausing for the camera to be part of the perfect spectacle to match his text. In “Before Niagara Falls,” while it is harder to discern whether the large rushing waters behind the subject are the American Falls or the Horseshoe Falls (Canadian), he is certainly on American soil as well. Judging from how the water cascades and his position to the right of the water with the photographer beside him, the photographic subject would either be at the same place as the first photograph (next to the Bridge) at Prospect Point with the American Falls to his left or at Terrapin Point with Horseshoe Falls to his left (Fig 5.5). In any case, it is evident from where the subject is standing in the first and second pictures that he remains on American territory.

Nevertheless, without this investigate work into the positioning of the subject, there remains an ambiguity of location that presents the possibility of a successful crossing, but not that it certainly happened. Furthermore even the titles are ambiguous, as they do not tell of the side on which the subject is standing. In the textual account, the narrator and his companion drive across the border and enter into Canada. For Chinese readers unfamiliar with the area and without a map of the area,
the photographs could be accepted as evidence of the narrator’s text, which portrays entry
into Canada. My point is that while the narrator may or may not have crossed into Canada,
the photograph was used to substantiate the claim made in the text that he surely crossed
and the photographic subject is empowered.

By publishing these photographs above the text on the same page that the author claims he
had successfully entered Canada, a reader without prior knowledge of Niagara Falls or
without a map of the area could presume that they corresponded with the textual
statement. The photographic subject’s posing as an observer objectifying the rushing
rapids presents a counter-narrative to the exclusionist discourse at the time. Without an
investigative or familiar eye, then, the photographic subject creatively overthrows those
who attempted to keep the narrator out of Canada at the hotel, at the American consulate,
as well as, in material reality, the Canadian government’s decision to exclude ethnic
Chinese. Ultimately, the inclusion of the body in the photographs challenges the systemic
racism of the Canadian government at the time. Hence, Gong responds to the
objectification of ethnic bodies through his photographic subject to show his Chinese-
reading audience that it is possible to cross into Canada.

5.5 Conclusions

The illustrations of Chen Hengzhe’s powerful narrative, Xie Fuya’s poetic persuasion, and
Gong Xuesui’s photographic musings distinctly speak about discursive victories in Eastern
Canada. Already on American soil, many Chinese travellers sought to explore Canada and
turned their experiences of discrimination at the borders into written publications. As a
result, these routes and the writings that accompany them demonstrate a spectrum of
Chinese experiences in North America during the Exclusion Era, ones that go beyond
other ethnic Chinese memories in North America of prisons and retention interrogations, the middlemen coordination of funds and salaries for oppressed Chinese, and succumbing to race riots and discriminatory laws. By turning to borders of Eastern Canada, these Chinese narrators share a similar performance of a Chinese subjectivity through prose, poetry, and photography that contributes to critical global history beyond oppression and resistance. They are a creative overcoming of legal restraints placed on ethnic Chinese in textual representation. The archives present an interesting and important perspective on Chinese racialized bodies in twentieth century Canada. All three accounts expose how the legal system left room for alternative accounts and experiences that contrast those from the bachelor societies on the West Coast of the early twentieth century. These written archives by overseas students and officials allow for a reassessment of the linear borders so heavily emphasized in Chinese North American historiography. By reading the border as a narrative space of performance, it becomes a site for the overturning of power and the reclaiming of agency. At Canadian-U.S. borders, their accounts transform borders into a didactic discursive stage for ethnic relations to be played out.

As a cultural movement, these travel writings suggest that there was a need for these writers to inform and instruct. In this chapter, I have argued that urgency and desire to record these experiences for their Chinese-reading audiences were present because of the objectification of the authors’ ethnic bodies at borders. These writings respond to the reality of the exclusion laws for Chinese in North America. The Chinese Exclusion Act in Canada was the foundation for their subjects’ performances at Niagara Falls – a space

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174 Please see for example the telling of histories in Frances Hern’s *Yip Sang: and the First Chinese Canadians* (2011).
conceivable as a material border delineating Canada and the United States and as a conceptual stage for narrative subjectivities to challenge material realities. The ethnic Chinese narrative subjects that emerged in Chen Hengzhe, Xie Fuya, and Gong Xuesui’s travelogues offer hope to future generations. Beyond oppression and resistance, these Chinese narrative subjects achieved an alternative reality where exclusion and discrimination could be defeated and (re)presented for their Chinese-reading audiences.
In my dissertation, I used the concept of borderspaces – spaces conceivable as a physical border between territories as well as spaces conceivable as immaterial spaces between cultural paradigms and languages – to explore the multiple ways in which connections between Canada and China could be imagined beyond narratives of immigration and settlement from 1868 to 1938. I illustrated how Chinese diplomats, translators of fiction, and overseas students grappled with the shifting place of late Qing and early Republican China in a world understood as uneven. Over this span of seventy years, the mass migration of Chinese individuals to North America began; China’s dynastic governance ended; and the Chinese Exclusion Acts in the United States and Canada were established. Most narratives about this period describe the physical crossing of Chinese sojourners and immigrants to North America. During this time, however, in addition to the narratives of Chinese sojourners and immigrants, Chinese writers who described Canada in their works for Chinese audiences also connected the two nations via the acts of writing and reading.

I attempted to examine textual accounts of Chinese travellers and translators within their local literary practices and within the trans-regional historical moments in which they were produced. I argued that these writings expose a ‘minor’ voice that wrestled with the changing world order in ways that cause dissonance with ‘major’ narratives as outlined by Françoise Lionnet and Shu-mei Shih:

If the minor mood in music is an introspective and mournful tone different from the more triumphant ‘major’ key, then, ‘minor transnationalism’ is perhaps the mode in which the traumas of colonial, imperial, and global hegemonies as well as the affective dimensions of transcolonial solidarities continue to work themselves out and produce new possibilities. (21)
The minor voice causes discord with ‘major’ hegemonic and homogenizing narratives. And so, the Chinese writings subvert, contrast, and speak back to the dominant narrative of Chinese oppression overseas. It also serves to undermine notions of universalism by highlighting the ‘minor’ experience that includes the aftermath of colonial, imperial, and global control and dominance. Focusing on the Chinese literary practices of these writings about Canada allows local particularities to be explored within the ‘minor’ that challenges the ‘major’ universalist understandings. I revealed how Chinese diplomats, translators, and overseas students engaged with Chinese literary practices to bridge the gap between “Canada” and their domestic readers in China. “Canada” is understood as including the physical experiences in Canada as well as the textual representations of Canada. Their literary production responded to the material realities of Chinese discrimination and exclusion in North America, indicating their ‘minor’ position, which embody the Chinese coolie trade, the foreign attacks on China proper, and subsequent movement of Chinese overseas students to North America.

These textual accounts created alternative realities where Chinese exclusion and discrimination abroad were (re)presented to their Chinese-reading audiences. This dissertation explored how the active sites of contemplation for these (re)presentations served as borderspaces. In Chapter 1, I explored how the lived experiences of Chinese diplomats travelling on the Pacific Ocean aboard vessels bound for Canada served as a borderspace: a space of discrimination and maltreatment, but also a space of hope for Chinese in the world. In Chapter 2, I explored the writings of Chinese diplomats at Niagara Falls in the nineteenth century, who, in portraying the Falls for domestic audiences in China, represented this borderspace as a chasm between traditional practices
of representation and technology-informed paradigms of representation. In Chapter 3, I turned to Chinese translators of works based on Canadian settings, where borderspace was conceived as both bridge and veil between Chinese audiences and Canadian lands. At once, the work and methods these translators employed connected and concealed “Canada” – a place with discriminatory and restrictive laws against Chinese individuals—thus demonstrating how two nations could be discursively connected while also complicating that connection. In Chapter 4, I discussed twentieth-century students and officials whose border-crossing narratives mobilized and educated Chinese individuals in the face of Chinese Exclusion Acts in North America, thus presenting the borderspace as a stage that served to exceed restrictions placed on ethnic Chinese. Ultimately, my dissertation was interested in how two nations can be discursively connected and subsequently how knowledge production is shaped through movement across borders and writing is read as allegorical of specific trans-regional historical moments.

I have demonstrated how the concept of borderspace is productive in reevaluating Sino-Canadian relations. Representing spaces of travel as borderspaces draws attention to individual experiences of space that go beyond both dominant historical narratives set by the nation and tropes of resistance. In my work, I have sought to closely examine the idea of migration with more caution to its material and discursive realities. Chinese migration to Canada in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries is often imagined as a singular movement, one caused by a push factor (famine in South China) and a pull factor (the construction of a national railway in Canada). However by focusing on lived experience and culture-specific readings of the narratives that followed such experiences, I approached “migration” between Canada and China as one with multiple vectors.
This dissertation does not take away from the significance and importance of Chinese immigrants, labourers, business owners, and other early settlers in Canada that connected the two lands through their physical journeys. Although the field of Chinese Canadian Studies is generally approached from the perspective of those who immigrated to Canada, my investigation of borderspaces considers those who visited and wrote about Canada but did not settle down in Canada. It incorporates those Chinese who never had any intention to immigrate but were affected by the Sino-American context of discrimination and exclusion abroad. It also includes the Chinese-reading audience that learned about Canada through writing. People and language were forming the ties that would connect China and Canada in the era of mass Chinese migration to Canada. As such, it is possible to forge new interpretations of Sino-Canadian border-crossings, beyond that of Chinese coolie migrants to Canada, by considering how Chinese textual culture linked the two nations.

My project attempted to reimagine the linkages between the two nations through textual culture – whether the writings were based on real or imagined journeys. It is my hope that we appreciate the differences and nuances within these texts to reconsider ideas such as multiculturalism, discrimination, and racism in Canada – notions which must be further problematized to make change for Canada today.

Specific to Canada, my dissertation calls attention to the dissonance of these writings to the Canadian grand narrative of multiculturalism, a term coined in the 1970s to celebrate Canadian inclusion of all cultures and races. As we commemorate Canada’s 150th anniversary, it is truly important to look back at the historical unevenness produced within our physical borders and beyond them to reflect upon the present and future. Using Chinese-language texts that depict lived and imagined experiences of nineteenth- and
twentieth-century Canada for ethnic Chinese allows us to reconsider moments that contrast the celebratory tone of Canada’s 150th birthday. The nuances of ‘minor’ cultures and their individual lived experiences in Canada cause dissonance with contemporary Canadian notions of acceptance of and respect for all cultures. There is still a lot of room for discussion and change for those who are forgotten (such as the Aboriginal peoples and their histories) or those who were granted apologies. Such grand symbolic gestures are often accompanied by few concrete changes for the community. The above studies outline the impact of racist policies in the context of minor transnationalism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It was my goal to re-read these fictional and historical travel writings as creative critiques and constructions of active Chinese agents at a time when Canada was not as welcoming towards particular minorities. Significantly, the borderspaces produced in these various writings speak back to the ‘major’ tone of official narratives of Canadian multiculturalism by emphasizing that the racism directed towards the Chinese was countered by ‘minor’ writings that were not passive in the face of discrimination.

Finally, the idea of borderspaces as non-neutral border-crossings of people and language in motion makes exploring its representation of foreign cultures relatable and relevant to today’s society. There are more opportunities to see the world today through the privilege of accessible travel, a wide selection of readings, and a plethora of media outlets. The idea of borderspaces allows for a re-imagining of the significance of human-to-human experience at borders, the impact of technology on a society’s perception of another culture, and the influence of writing on perceptions of the world. Using the context of Sino-North-American relations to study borderspaces asks us to consider how we articulate spaces and places with an awareness of our privilege and unique histories.
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