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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Face in late imperial China's diplomacy with the United States: Minister Cui Guoyin's approach to Chinese exclusion

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Abstract

As the Chinese minister to the United States between 1889 and 1893, Cui Guoyin faced unprecedented pressures from the Qing government to achieve an alleviation of Chinese exclusion. However, American discrimination against Chinese escalated despite his tireless effort to stem it. The failure made him frustrated and especially sensitive to the issue of *face*. While finding it a useful tool to exonerate himself, Cui believed that *face* could also be helpful to Chinese bargaining with the United States over immigration. He incorporated this belief into his exchanges with the U.S. Department of State. At Cui's suggestion or at least agreeing with him, the Zongli Yamen referred to America's reputation as a pressure for concessions in its communications with the U.S. legation in Beijing as well. Such "weaponization" of *face* represents both an often ignored backward turn in late Qing's diplomatic mentality and the limit of its diplomatic leverage with the United States.

Key words: Chinese exclusion; diplomacy; *face*; Qing; the United States

China had maintained a legation in Washington, D.C. since 1878, charging its ministers with the job of protecting Chinese immigrants in the United States. The ministers, for their part, faithfully did their duty by upholding the sanctity of treaties, Chinese sovereignty, and the principle of equality. They impress academia with courage and assertiveness. Chan Kim Man is one of the earliest scholars thus impressed. In his dissertation of 1981, he observes that from 1878 to 1907, all of the seven Qing envoys adroitly invoked Sino–American treaties and the international principles of sovereignty and reciprocity to protect Chinese laborers. They did this in formal protests, treaty negotiations, and public appeals.[1] Though attributing the ministers' tactics to the Chinese Six Companies, an umbrella organization for Chinese Americans, Yucheng Qin also praises them for their audacity in referring to international law to protect Chinese expatriates. Bilateral treaties and the need to indemnify violence victims in the spirit of state-to-state reciprocity were their most important kit.[2]

Studies not specifically dealing with late Qing's diplomacy give attention, albeit often in passing, to Chinese ministers' efforts at resisting anti-Chinese discrimination as well. For instance, in her inquiry into America's Sinophobic movement, Erika Lee twice mentions Chinese minister Wu Tingfang's complaint to American officials concerning their immigration agency's rough treatment of Chinese merchants.[3] Sue Fawn Chung addresses Chinese miseries in the nineteenth-century American West. To show how difficult it was for Chinese to seek justice, she cites Chinese minister's interference

[1]Chan 1981, pp. 126–360.
[2]Qin 2009, pp. 1, 101–38.
[3]Lee 2003, pp. 124, 129.

in the investigations surrounding the 1887 Snake River massacre of 34 Chinese miners in Oregon.[4] To David M. Pletcher, whose focus is on America's economic expansion across the Pacific before 1900, Chinese ministers' protest over immigration was an issue that the Secretary of State had to deal with seriously.[5]

What this literature tells is Chinese ministers' confidence and fearlessness in pressing America to properly protect Chinese immigrants. Their courage heralded a stride forward in China's diplomatic conduct. Traditionally, China regarded other countries as tribute-bearers, approaching them condescendingly. But the Opium War and other humiliating defeats in the hands of Western powers in the middle and late nineteenth century shattered its complacency. It then hesitatingly but unequivocally required its officials and diplomats to deal with foreigners and their governments in line with internationally recognized principles, especially after the publication of Henry Wheaton's *Elements of International Law* in Chinese in 1864.[6] Recent scholarship in the field of Chinese immigration to America well captures this change.

However, hard as they worked, Chinese ministers did not succeed in making the U.S. government abolish or even modify its harshness toward Chinese immigrants. Simply a few years after the start of large-scale Chinese immigration in 1849, California began to witness anti-Chinese hostilities. The white society accused Chinese of taking away their jobs and dragging down the level of their livelihood and civilization. With Sinophobia spreading nationwide, Congress finally passed and the President signed the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882, banning Chinese labor immigration for 10 years. Subsequent revisions not only barred from reentry those laborers who had left the United States, but required all Chinese laborers to register with the authorities. In 1902 Congress extended Chinese exclusion indefinitely. The policy was not terminated until 1943, when China had become a war-time ally of America.

All this happened while Chinese ministers were working inexhaustibly to stem the tide. They were no doubt tireless and audacious, just as scholars have noted. Yet the courageous employment of international law does not tell the full story of their approach to Chinese exclusion. Traditional Chinese ways of handling foreigners were still influential. One such way was the attention to *face*. According to Peter Loewenberg and other scholars, *face* in Chinese culture means "the self as presented to, or revealed to, others." It signifies "reputation and good name" and governs "Chinese perceptions of each other, of interactions with foreigners, and of foreign policy and international behavior." When China feels it has lost *face* internationally, it often tries to regain it by adding difficulty to foreigners' dealings with itself.[7] The concern with *face* thus pervades traditional Chinese relations with the world, often prompting China to take tough actions against the countries that do not respect its *face*. Regarding foreign visitors as tribute-bearers is one most vivid representation of this concern.

However, the ministers' attention to *face* displays important departures from China's traditional approach. Rather than remain concerned merely about China's *face* as China usually did when it was resourceful and self-centric, these diplomats paid roughly equal attention to the *face* of China and the United States. To them, China lost *face* because of Chinese immigrants' inherent defects while America suffered a damage to its reputation due to its allegedly malfunctioning democracy and bad faith. Since America had received or would receive punishment in the form of *face* loss, the ministers believed that *face* could be a weapon for China to pressure the United States into becoming more tolerant of Chinese immigrants. In the process, *face* changed from a reason for Chinese diplomacy to one of its tools. The transformation speaks much about the steady weakening of the Chinese nation and the shrinking of diplomatic resources at its disposal in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

[4]Chung 2011, pp. 70–71.
[5]Pletcher 2001, p. 149.
[6]Liu 2004, pp. 108–23.
[7]Kitson 2020, p. 151; Loewenberg 2011, pp. 689–706; Stroud 2013, pp. 109, 110, 113, 121.

To illustrate the largely ignored role of *face*, this article will highlight the example of Minister Cui Guoyin (Tsui Kuo-yin), the top Chinese envoy to the United States from 1889 to 1893. Cui's personal background makes him the best choice for such a study. Coming from the eastern Chinese province of Anhui, he was a fellow provincial and protege of Viceroy Li Hongzhang, the *de facto* superintendent of late Qing's foreign affairs. As Minister Zhang Yinhuan, Cui's predecessor, had become extremely unpopular with Chinese in both the United States and Guangdong because of his consent to immigration self-restriction in the treaty of 1888, Li expected Cui to put things right.[8] That is why the viceroy wrote Cui shortly after the latter's arrival in the U.S. capital, urging him to "take the defense of Chinese laborers as the single most important task as soon as you step off the train."[9] The contrast between high expectations and the bleak reality on the spot made the minister particularly sensitive to the *face* involved in the disputes over immigration. The diary that he kept daily faithfully records his pondering on the issue.

To address the "weaponization" of *face* in both Cui's private thinking and China's open communications with the United States, I will use other historical sources in addition to Cui's diary. One is the minister's exchanges with the Chinese Zongli Yamen (Foreign Ministry) and Li Hongzhang. These archives could demonstrate Cui's conveying of his personal understanding of *face* to the Qing government and his desire to weaponize it in diplomacy. Another group of sources consists of the Zongli Yamen's notes with the American minister in Beijing and Cui's correspondence with the U.S. Department of State, both of which could reveal the working of *face* in Sino–American bargaining. Altogether, these documents are meant to prove that when international law nominally guided Qing's conduct toward the United States, *face* was still an important means by which Qing diplomats navigated the rough waters of bilateral relations.

Immigrants' damage to Chinese *face*

As the Chinese envoy responsible for protecting his compatriots in the United States, Cui Guoyin should have tried to safeguard their interest and repute both in public and private. But unexpectedly, he took a dim view of them despite his persistent effort to seek justice for them. He confided to his dairy that they damaged the *face* of the Chinese legation and Chinese as a whole with their supposedly undesirable or even repugnant traits. Allegedly, this not only lowered Americans' assessment of Chinese but made the legation's representations much more difficult than they should be. By holding immigrants themselves at least partially responsible, Cui managed to ensure himself that his failure at stopping exclusion was somewhat excusable.

One source of Chinese immigrants' alleged damage to Chinese *face* was their "rejection" of naturalization. In making the charge, Cui seemed unaware of the whiteness of American citizenship since the first days of the Republic. In 1790, U.S. Congress limited naturalization to "any alien, being a free white person" who had resided in the country for 2 years. The "white person" prerequisite remained in American statute books until 1952, no matter how naturalization clauses evolved. Blacks and American Indians were the only nonwhite groups granted citizenship rights after 1870.[10] Chinese immigrants, definitely nonwhite, were naturally ineligible for that privilege. The United States reiterated this denial in both its accords with China like the Burlingame Treaty of 1868 and such domestic laws as the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882.[11]

Apparently, Chinese immigrants did not refuse naturalization, but were barred from it. Still Cui's criticism of their "shortsightedness" in rejecting it dots his diary pages. For example, on July 19, 1890, Cui wrote that at the start, Americans "very much welcomed" Chinese, but the latter were "reluctant to naturalize." After European immigrants did, they became "jealous of Chinese" because of Chinese diligence. This caused the minister to lament that Chinese immigrants were anything but "far-sighted

[8]Chan 1981.
[9]Gu and Dai 2008a, p. 642.
[10]Lopez 2006, p. 31.
[11]Bevans 1968–1976a, pp. 683, 693; *Congressional Record* 1882, p. 61.

people." They could not see through "the vicissitudes of the world," nor did they "have insight into the future."[12] In the diary of December 25, 1891, Cui reiterated the accusation. Citing European immigrants' consent to naturalize as a foil, he attributed the "ice-charcoal disharmony" between Chinese and Americans to the former's indifference to American citizenship and consequent inability to vote. Cui specifically quoted a line from the Chinese classic *Book of Songs* to highlight Chinese "miscalculation": "Who created the curse that is still wreaking havoc?"[13]

One detrimental consequence was Chinese immigrants' isolation and helplessness in the face of exclusion, according to Cui. On August 28, 1890, after consulting America's census figures, he found that Chinese were merely one-fortieth of European immigrants but were still excluded. It was their refusal to naturalize that had made themselves alone and "helpless" in a hostile world, the minister believed.[14] Cui repeated the assertion on September 5 and 16. When all other immigrants got naturalized, they converged with American workers to form "one powerful bloc," leaving Chinese in "increasing isolation." Cui asked rhetorically, "how could they hope to live in America without harassment?"[15] Such isolation was particularly obvious in presidential elections, when politicians courted the favor of the electorate. But Chinese refusal to naturalize deprived them of valuable discursive power at ballot stations, contended Cui. They thus turned themselves into "mice in an ox horn, with no way out."[16]

Examples beyond national and racial boundaries served to bolster this conviction of Cui. One case cited was the Chinese experience in British Columbia. In contrast to America's total denial of Chinese naturalization, Canada appeared more flexible by leaving the decision-making power with judges, though the latter often "used their discretion to keep Chinese immigrants' naturalization rates low."[17] Possibly not knowing this situation, Cui attributed Canada's relative tolerance to Chinese willingness to naturalize. Chinese Americans appeared ever more myopic in contrast. On July 17, 1893, the minister praised Chinese for seeking Canadian citizenship in order to fish in British Columbia. In this way, no matter how much Canadians dreaded Chinese competition, they could only petition their legislature to keep Chinese away from the fishing industry, not from Canada. Cui could not help exclaiming, "What a miscalculation it is for Chinese to refuse naturalization in America!"[18]

Another reference was African Americans. In the diary of June 1, 1893, Cui claimed that Americans used to "extremely abhor Blacks, often proposing to expel them." Yet the Civil War enfranchised African Americans, who would never face such threats again. In contrast, Chinese "rejected American citizenship" and "incurred harm on themselves."[19] Once more, the minister wrongly scolded Chinese immigrants for lacking foresight. As a matter of fact, African Americans acquired full citizenship rights in the 1870s not only because of their incessant struggle but also because the triumphant Republican Party needed to demonstrate their "devotion to the principle of equality." It therefore ensured the passage of the Naturalization Statute of 1870, whereby American citizenship would be "predicated on both whiteness and blackness."[20] Without doubt, even under this new law, Chinese were still ineligible for citizenship no matter how persistent they were in striving for it.

According to Cui, Chinese immigrants' rejection of naturalization also embarrassed the Chinese legation in front of Americans. He straightforwardly criticized their reluctance to "discard the land of their parents," believing that the stubbornness had caused "repeated setbacks" in the legation's negotiations with the United States over immigration.[21] At other times, Cui held that immigrants'

[12]Cui 2016, p. 157.
[13]Cui 2016, p. 423.
[14]Cui 2016, p. 162.
[15]Cui 2016, pp. 164–65, 168.
[16]Cui 2016, p. 483.
[17]Mar 2010, p. 136.
[18]Cui 2016, pp. 720–21.
[19]Cui 2016, p. 677.
[20]Aarim-Heriot 2003, p. 152.
[21]Cui 2016, p. 343.

damage to Chinese *face* had made the legation's bargaining hopeless. For instance, on June 24, 1891, the minister not only repeated his strong disapproval of their "refusal" to naturalize, but accused them of making it "impossible for China to demand America to terminate its stringent Chinese exclusion."[22] The accusation reappeared on July 9, when Cui censured Chinese immigrants for placing themselves "at the mercy of other groups" with their rejection of citizenship. Even the legation could "not save their situation due to their lack of foresight," argued the minister.[23] One could see this complaint again in his talk with four American merchants on a ferry to Key West, Florida, on February 7, 1892. Responding to the merchants' comment that the anti-Chinese sentiment originated in western states, Cui lamented that Chinese immigrants' rejection of citizenship had divested them of any influence on legislators from the West. It was "a pity" that they had thus become "so isolated that nothing could really be done to help them," Cui believed.[24]

Another source of immigrants' alleged damage to Chinese *face* was their indulgence in revengeful killings. Cui believed that this habit had further thwarted his effort at protecting them. For example, on August 17, 1890, while condemning exclusionists' "incessant jealousy," the minister averred that Chinese had "got what they deserved." Persistent "tong wars and evasions of opium tax" bothered Americans the most, "making it hard [for the legation] to remedy the situation." Chinese had given exclusion advocates the pretext to both prohibit the immigration of those Chinese who had not started their journey and harass those already in the United States, Cui claimed.[25]

Cui found additional support for this assertion in certain Americans' remarks. The entry for November 9, 1891, quoted Senator Joseph Norton Dolph (R-OR) as saying that Chinese liked to "commit revengeful killings and smoke opium" and thus provided an excuse for exclusionists to step up their agitations. Considering Dolph "relatively fair-minded," Cui concurred that Chinese immigrants' "corruption of public morals" with their pernicious traits made it "truly hard" for them to escape discrimination.[26] In the dairy of March 27, 1892, an American teacher at a Chinese school in New York also ensured Cui that Chinese immigrants' obsession with revengeful killing, opium smoking, and gambling had extremely tainted their image. Anti-Chinese Americans could then feel more justified in demanding their ousting. Regarding this observation, Cui wrote, "I agree."[27]

Also bothering Cui were Chinese petty tricks. One typical example was the Chinese detour to Canada en route to America. After the 1882 exclusion act went into effect, many Chinese first headed to Canada and then stealthily crossed the border into America. Canada levied only a head tax of $50 on each immigrant.[28] Rather than view the practice as an imposed inconvenience, Cui cast it as a sign of Chinese tendency to make troubles. On April 27, 1890, learning that two Chinese had been stopped from entering the United States from Canada, Cui ridiculed that they were "indeed clever" to do that. But Americans would simply be more resolved to enforce "stringent measures against Chinese when the latter thought they had succeeded with their trick," warned the minister.[29] Cui confided his discontent with Chinese folly again on February 25, 1891. He called Chinese clandestine entrance a "shameless" action, though attributing the shamelessness to America's loss of faith.[30]

Cui was so annoyed by the disgracing trick that he even refused to offer Chinese stowaways any assistance at the end of his stint. In the entry for July 15, 1893, Cui recorded a development in which sixty five Chinese were detained off the shore of Oregon. Having no passports or money, these people could neither enter America nor return to Canada. When Secretary of State Walter Gresham inquired if the Chinese legation could finance their departure, Cui replied negatively. Not

[22]Cui 2016, p. 339.
[23]Cui 2016, p. 348.
[24]Cui 2016, pp. 444–45.
[25]Cui 2016, p. 158.
[26]Cui 2016, p. 405.
[27]Cui 2016, p. 460.
[28]Chang 2012, p. 39.
[29]Cui 2016, p. 112.
[30]Cui 2016, p. 260.

only did there exist no such budget, he said, he was also fearful that those immigrants would escape on their way back, making Chinese diplomats their "*de facto* accomplices." "China does not approve its subjects' sneaks into America," he told Gresham, so it was up to Congress to decide how to deal with these Chinese.[31]

Thus Cui held Chinese immigrants themselves largely responsible for their exclusion. They supposedly surrendered their due political influence by refusing to naturalize and aggravated Americans' anti-Chinese bias by behaving recklessly. Either way, they were believed to have damaged the good name of not only themselves but Chinese as a whole, making it virtually impossible for the legation to make effective representations. However, the minister obviously failed to realize the centrality of racism to Chinese exclusion. Just because of their drive to keep America white, Americans could find fault with whatever Chinese did. To charge Chinese immigrants with losing *face* therefore reflects more of Cui's desperation than of laborers' deficiencies.

America's tainted name

While criticizing Chinese immigrants, Cui also believed that exclusion had exposed taints on America's good name. America always projected itself as a perfect model of democracy for the entire world. But in Cui's reasoning, it was neither a real democracy nor a model internationally. For one thing, he viewed Chinese exclusion as the result of the disproportionately huge influence of the working class in American politics. This laid bare the malfunctioning status of the American system. For another, the United States showed itself to be a bully by only excluding the weak Chinese race. Therefore, rather than serve its interests, exclusion actually damaged America's *face*.

To Cui, the most convincing evidence of American democracy's abnormality was the *Gongdang*' s influence. If translated literally, *Gongdang* means "Workers' Party." But there was no political organization thus named in nineteenth-century America. The nearest equivalent was the Workingmen's Party, which first appeared in New York in 1829 but collapsed in 1831, well before the coming of Chinese immigrants in significant numbers. It reemerged in 1876 but seemed to have no interest in Chinese immigration. Yet its Californian namesake, established 1 year later, was extremely anti-Chinese. However, by 1881, 1 year before the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act, the influence of the Workingmen's Party of California had dwindled to such a degree that its fiercely Sinophobic leader Denis Kearney was compelled to admit, "There is no Workingmen's Party now."[32] As Cui did not come to the United States until 1889, "*Gongdang*" in his dairy should mean American workers in general rather than a specific political party.

In Cui's account, all American officials seemed to be in a constant fear of the *Gongdang*, whose ubiquitous and suffocating influence turned its hatred of Chinese into a national sentiment. On the evening of August 14, 1891, when learning that at least 3,000–4,000 Chinese were barred from reentering the United States after their visits to China, Cui had a particularly poignant feeling of the *Gongdang*'s detriment. Since "all Americans are united in appeasing the Gongdang by excluding Chinese laborers," he wrote, Chinese "could never satisfy the United States." The *Gongdang* was "only pleased with stopping all Chinese from coming," so "what is the use of passports?"[33] Five days later, Cui returned to American officials' fear of the *Gongdang*. Despite their pretended unawareness of anti-Chinese injustices, "everybody from the President to inferior officials" were busy "pleasing the *Gongdang*," averred the minister.[34]

Cui attributed the *Gongdang*'s abnormal influence to the vote in its hands. Intended to express the will of the entire populace, vote had supposedly morphed into a means for American workers to sway government policy only in their favor. In the entry for October 21, 1890, Cui analyzed why workers had a bigger voice than other social segments, especially the companies which desired Chinese labor.

[31]Cui 2016, pp. 718–19.
[32]Gyory 1998, pp. 89–90; Kauer 1944, p. 289; Lowrie 2010, p. 1112.
[33]Cui 2016, p. 369.
[34]Cui 2016, p. 371.

The crux of the matter was just the "one person one vote" system, he believed. Even if all the companies spoke for Chinese, their influence was "only one thousandth of that of workers." It was therefore "totally impossible for the United States to stop appeasing workers and excluding Chinese," concluded Cui.[35] On January 8, 1892, he reemphasized workers' power at the polls. While stating that "only the *Gongdang* is jealous of Chinese and all others are not," Cui bemoaned that politicians had to "bend to its desires" because of its size and vote.[36]

To Cui, even the President had to placate the *Gongdang* for its vote. This started when somebody decided to run for presidency. In 1891, President Benjamin Harrison was considering a second term. In the diary of June 21, the minister stated affirmatively that Harrison dared not "counter the intention of that party [the *Gongdang*]" by abolishing Chinese exclusion. If he did, "the *Gongdang* is sure to rebel" and thwart his reelection bid, Cui predicted.[37] Harrison failed in the campaign, but the President-elect, Grover Cleveland, feared the *Gongdang* as well. According to Cui's entries for December 2 and 3, 1892, it was just Cleveland's "appeasement to the *Gongdang* on Chinese immigration" that had helped him win the election. "Predictably," Cui continued, exclusion would become "harsh again," making it "so hard [for the legation] to make representations."[38]

Once in office, the President was still not immune to the *Gongdang*'s influence. In 1889, believing that many Chinese were taking advantage of their transit through the United States to stay in the country, Congress considered further tightening the control of Chinese immigration. Harrison only demanded the legislature to remove "the particularly draconian clauses." Cui interpreted this decision as an appeasement to the *Gongdang* in the dairy of December 14.[39] Harrison's appointment of Representative William W. Morrow (R-CA) as the United States district judge for the northern district of California struck Cui likewise. A notorious anti-Chinese agitator, Morrow not only supported the registration of Chinese laborers, but pressed the government to exclude all Chinese except the Chinese minister. Still Harrison announced his appointment on September 22, 1891, to "court the *Gongdang* all along." This was nothing but "an evil collaboration."[40]

Politicians other than the President were the same afraid of the *Gongdang*. One example was Harrison's Secretary of State, James Blaine. Cui observed on November 24, 1891, that Blaine ignored Chinese "calls for the abolition of Chinese exclusion" out of a need to "befriend the *Gongdang*."[41] Both major parties seemed to be doing the same. In his analysis on January 17, 1890, Cui held that in that year's general election, "the Southern and Northern parties [Democrats and Republicans]" deemed it "extremely urgent" to secure victory in California and Oregon, where the *Gongdang* controlled "a large number of votes." They thus had to advocate for Chinese exclusion "against their conscience."[42]

To stress the pathetic nature of *Gongdang*-dominated American democracy, Cui recorded a couple of tolerant voices that had been silenced by the pro-*Gongdang* clamor. When free of the *Gongdang*'s interference, they appeared to display no deep antipathy to Chinese. For example, on November 23, 1889, the minister felt relieved that around 5,000 Chinese lived in New York without the danger of being excluded or killed. This was due to the "the continuing power of the government" in spite of "the *Gongdang*'s hate of Chinese."[43] The American Consul General in Panama Thomas Adamson earned the praise of Cui also because of his indifference to the *Gongdang*'s agitation. On August 11, 1893, the minister wrote that Adamson, at the request of the Chinese government, had helped Chinese expatriates in Panama "extremely sincerely." This led him to believe that it was "not the original intention of Americans, noble or humble, to loathe Chinese." "If not for the *Gongdang*'s

[35]Cui 2016, p. 181.
[36]Cui 2016, pp. 428–29.
[37]Cui 2016, p. 337.
[38]Cui 2016, p. 563.
[39]Cui 2016, p. 43.
[40]Cui 2016, p. 386.
[41]Cui 2016, p. 411.
[42]Cui 2016, p. 58.
[43]Cui 2016, p. 32.

invidiousness and American officials' need of it," Cui remained sure, "how could America discuss exclusion!"[44]

Two groups of ordinary Americans impressed Cui especially deeply with their disregard for the *Gongdang*'s hysteria. One was religious people. In 1890, a Virginian church petitioned Congress to end Chinese exclusion. Greatly excited, the minister inferred from the event that churches were righteous despite the *Gongdang*'s ubiquitous influence. He noted on September 26 that church people had no interest in "presidency or congressional seats," so they "need not curry favor with the *Gongdang*."[45] Legal persons constituted another group. Learning on September 27, 1890, that a San Franciscan court had rejected whites' plan to force Chinese out of the local Chinatown, Cui could not conceal his excitement. Praising all American judges as "consistently upright," he trusted that they "would not humiliate weaklings or fawn on powerful men" like *Gongdang* agitators. Lawyers received the same recognition in the entry for October 26.[46]

Cui had undoubtedly exaggerated the goodwill of both groups to prove the malfunctioning of American democracy. Church people were truly restrained, but were nonetheless contemptuous of Chinese. It was this contempt that repeatedly convinced other Americans of the validity of Chinese exclusion.[47] As to lawyers and judges, they did deliver some justice to Chinese immigrants by either helping them launch lawsuits or handing down rational verdicts. But at the same time, one must realize that many more legal professionals promoted the escalation of Chinese exclusion. One notorious example was the 1889 Supreme Court ruling on the *Chae Chan Ping v. United States* case, which not only denied re-entrance to Chinese laborers who had left America, but upheld the right of the federal government to ignore treaty pledges and prohibit Chinese immigration as needed.[48]

In Minister Cui's private pondering, the United States lost *face* not only in bending to the will of the *Gongdang* but in acting immorally on the diplomatic stage. One of the embarrassments thus incurred was its supposed inability to confront the Chinese legation's queries concerning immigration policy. The United States often chose to dodge the questions by delaying or giving no reply at all, which seemed to Cui a sign of abashment. This happened in 1891, when America began the preparation for the 1893 Chicago exposition to commemorate the 400th anniversary of Columbus's voyage to the New World. A large number of countries, China included, received its invitation. However, Cui worried that the workers accompanying the Chinese delegation might be prevented from landing because of Chinese exclusion. So he reached out to the Department of State for clarification, but the latter referred him to Congress. The evasiveness was obviously meant to avoid making any binding promise, but Cui understood it as evidence of America's self-inflicted awkwardness. As he confided his dairy on August 16, 1891, American government's desire to have Chinese present at the fair conflicted with the *Gongdang*'s intention to keep them away. "Even if China does not care about the contradiction, America has to," wrote Cui. He believed the inconsistency to be the reason that "the Department of State remains silent."[49]

On certain other occasions, the Department of State gave Cui the same impression of feeling embarrassed. In 1892, not only was American Congress considering the extension of Chinese exclusion for another decade, it also planned to require all Chinese laborers to carry certificates or face deportation. The result was the passage of the Geary Act on May 5. Before that fateful date, Cui wrote to Secretary of State James Blaine in an effort to stop the legislating process. But there was no timely reply. On March 8, while knowing that Blaine's "renewed illness" was the cause, Cui still believed that the reticence actually stemmed from his being "stuck for words" in the face of America's violation of treaties and his "inability to challenge" China's "justifiable accusations" on

[44]Cui 2016, pp. 734–35.
[45]Cui 2016, p. 172.
[46]Cui 2016, pp. 172, 183.
[47]Miller 1969, pp. 57–80, 201–02.
[48]Villazor 2015, pp. 137–42; "Recent Cases" 1889, p. 136.
[49]Cui 2016, p. 370.

immigration. "How could he reply to me? He is at his wit's end," the minister reassured himself.[50] It seems that Cui did not receive the expected reply even at the end of the month. He thus commented on March 25 that the Department of State "actually could not reply," being in no position to refute Chinese charges because they were "based on treaty clauses." Neither could it admit that America was in the wrong, reasoned Cui, so it had "nothing to say."[51]

Cui was indeed eager to receive Blaine's reply. As he put it in a letter to the latter on March 22, 1892, he had written Blaine "more than once on the subject" of American violation of bilateral treaties, but had received no response though he had been "promised…a reply." Cui was therefore expecting "a note about this matter very soon."[52] One week later, Blaine did write back, but only to acknowledge his receipt of a circular of the Chinese government asking foreign diplomats in China to help maintain order across the empire. The Secretary of State remained wordless on the new rules for Chinese immigrants.[53] No document could explicitly tell why Blaine chose to be evasive. But as the *Chae Chan Ping v. United States* verdict had unequivocally defended the sovereign right of America to disregard treaties as needed, he should not be feeling embarrassed at the congressional move. More possibly, the evasiveness was a sign of American condescension and arrogance toward China whereas Cui's interpretation, a wishful imagination.

In Cui's depiction, the United States had also become a bully by excluding Chinese. Shortly after his assumption of the ministerial position, he had the feeling that exclusion might extend to other immigrant groups. For example, after a lengthy survey of America's geographical size and material abundance on March 15, 1890, Cui found out that as its cultivated land increased, its cultivable land was on the decline. Aggravating the situation was the influx of foreign immigrants. "Observant Americans" decided to curb the trend, choosing to first exclude Chinese, whose immigration was "the easiest to prohibit." Even with this policy in place, America would still be "full of people," Cui contended, so immigration restriction "started with Chinese, but would not end with them."[54] He forthrightly predicted a universal restriction on December 15, 1892. Since European immigrants were 200 times those from China, even their "identical sartorial styles, cuisines, and living habits" could not long forestall Americans' intolerance, Cui believed. Congress would "certainly discuss universal restriction" quite soon.[55]

However, the anticipated universal restriction did not materialize until the early twentieth century, sometime after Cui's return to China. He attributed the hesitancy to America's lack of courage to treat Europeans as it did Chinese. From a talk with Senator Nelson Wilmarth Aldrich (R-RI) on February 23, 1892, he learned that European countries were actively financing their poor's migration to America, a high proportion of which were criminals. Though Cui thought that some sort of restriction might be justifiable, he did not believe that the United States could be "so impolite to Europeans" as it was to Chinese. In front of well-matched countries, it had to act "in line with international law."[56]

Russia's defiance was especially noteworthy to Cui, not only because of its challenge to America's diplomatic arrogance but also due to its exposition of America as nothing but an intimidator. To alleviate social and economic problems at the end of the nineteenth century, the Russian government permitted, even encouraged, certain ethnic and religious groups – Jews, for example – to immigrate to the United States. Such an action obviously ran counter to America's planned restriction of European immigration. But when a devastating failure of harvest hit the Russian wheat belt in 1891–1892, threatening 20 million people and killing 400,000, both Americans and American government extended their helping hand. They sent five shiploads of flour to start their relief efforts.[57]

[50]Cui 2016, p. 453.
[51]Cui 2016, p. 459.
[52]United States Department of State 1861–1996a.
[53]United States Department of State 1861–1996b.
[54]Cui 2016, pp. 85–86.
[55]Cui 2016, pp. 568–69.
[56]Cui 2016, p. 449.
[57]Tyrrell 2010, pp. 99–100.

Cui juxtaposed Russia's encouragement of outward migration with American relief to show that America kowtowed to Russian power. It was on his way back from Cuba on February 13, 1892, that he learned of the U.S. government's collection of 30,000 buckets of flour and 50,000 dollars for Russia's famine victims. This news led Cui to exclaim that gone was the arrogance that America displayed toward China. Despite Russia's defiance of tightening American immigration control, the United States appeared "so obedient." That was simply because "it fears Russian power," Cui argued.[58]

Not only did Russia encourage America-bound migration, it even obstructed American citizens' visit to Russia. America's humanitarian aid against this backdrop only increased Cui's contempt for its hectoring toward China. In June 1892, Russia denied entrance to Poultney Bigelow, a famous American journalist and author. In his dairy of the thirteenth, Cui called the event "a heavenly punishment" and "backfiring" for the United States, which still "kept only Chinese away" in violation of international law. Rather than take firm counteractions, the United States showed its "obedience" by sending food and funds to Russia's famine victims "thousands of miles away."[59] On May 13, 1893, Cui noted that Russia had "just" expelled another American visitor and seized an American fishing vessel off the Bering Strait. In contrast to its arrogance toward pacifist China and Chinese, the United States not only remained silent on the events but continued its dispatch of reliefs to Russia "just a few days ago." Fundamentally, it was "Russian power" that had stopped America from "holding Russia accountable and seeking compensation," Cui believed.[60]

Particularly affected in the U.S.–Russian row over immigration were Jewish Americans. According to a treaty of commerce and navigation signed in St. Petersburg in 1832, the citizens of both countries enjoyed the "liberty to enter" each other's territories. However, after 1865, due to rising anti-Semitism, Russia refused to recognize American Jews' passports in "persistent and determined violation of the treaty."[61] Learning on April 28, 1891, that Russia had even turned down an English merchant's offer of mediation, Cui ridiculed that America and Britain were "cruel themselves but demanded tolerance from others." While the former prohibited Chinese immigration, the latter levied "a tax of 100 or 50 dollars" on any Chinese entering Canada, which was under British rule. "More powerful than Britain and America," Russia "slighted them" by refusing to both admit Jewish Americans and open the mediator's letter. "Don't they deserve that?" asked Cui rhetorically.[62]

The United States had apparently disgraced itself because of Chinese exclusion in Cui's narration. Internally, its democracy ceased to function properly because of the *Gongdang*'s preponderance. On the international stage, it not only became expressionless when facing Chinese inquiries but suffered a heavy blow to its dignity when trying to impose Chinese exclusion-like restrictions on European immigration or protect its own citizens from prejudices overseas. These losses of *face* demonstrated to Cui that America was not always on the winning side in the process of prohibiting Chinese immigration. Exclusion could also damage American interests.

Face in bilateral encounters

Cui resorted to the *face* perspective not just to vent his frustration and exonerate himself from failing to check Chinese exclusion. He also attempted to incorporate it into the actual encounters between China and the United States over immigration. But immigrants' supposed damage to Chinese reputation disappeared half way in the process. Neither was there any explicit criticism of America's political system that might antagonize Americans. Rather, whenever *face* was involved, open communications focused on praising America's original conduct – either in nation building or in negotiations – and exposing Americans' failure to measure up to it in dealing with Chinese.

[58]Cui 2016, p. 446.
[59]Cui 2016, p. 489.
[60]Cui 2016, pp. 661–62.
[61]Bevans 1968–1976b, pp. 1208–09; *Passport* 1911, pp. 2–4.
[62]Cui 2016, pp. 299–300.

Through the shift of emphasis, Cui and the Zongli Yamen sought to maximize the benefit by protecting the Chinese *face* and using the American one as an inducement for the U.S. government to modify exclusion. In this way, *face* evolved from Cui's private understanding into a diplomatic tool aimed at bettering Chinese situation in America.

Cui conveyed his *face*-colored understanding to his superiors in Beijing in many of their communications. Complaints about Chinese "bad" habits and criticisms of America's substandard performance were both present. A memorial to the Zongli Yamen dated November 28, 1890, did just the former. Despite his relief that a San Franciscan court had allowed Chinese to continue living in the local Chinatown, Cui noted that the lawyer for the white plaintiffs cited Chinese "unclean habitats" as one excuse for demanding their removal. He opined that Chinese themselves had actually supplied "fodder for attack." Were they to live in "perpetual peace," they must mind their conduct, believed the minister.[63] Cui reiterated the assertion in his April 18, 1892, report to the Zongli Yamen on his visit to Cuba. Finding Chinese Cubans "well-behaved and cautious" and thus living "in harmony with local people," he could not help but portray the San Francisco Chinese in less favorable terms. Just because of their "indulgence in revengeful killing among themselves," he told the Zongli Yamen, they suffered "the pains of American expulsion."[64]

The minister felt so displeased with Chinese immigrants that he was still smarting from their "undesirable" characteristics even at the end of his stint. In his report to the Zongli Yamen summing up his career in America on October 13, 1893, Cui insisted on scolding immigrants for refusing to naturalize and losing the leverage against "the naturalized *Gongdang* members." If they were citizens with the vote, he continued, they could have "forced the President and congressmen to think twice" before imposing "flagrant exclusion." Meanwhile, Cui accused many Chinese for being "undisciplined" and adding difficulty to his attempt at curbing American discrimination.[65]

Cui stressed the malfunctioning status of American democracy in his communications with the Qing government as well. For example, in a telegram on May 26, 1893, the minister told the Zongli Yamen that the U.S. Department of State "feared public opinion," which was actually an epithet for the *Gongdang* in his diary. The agency thus remained "silent for the moment" on whether America would enforce the 1892 Geary Act.[66] Li Hongzhang's replies indicate that Cui had conveyed similar information to the viceroy as well, though the minister's original letters are not found. On April 10, 1890, while acknowledging his reception of Cui's two previous letters, Li agreed that Chinese exclusion really damaged the reputation of the United States. "Neither rational nor tolerant," it not only caused protests from Chinese and Europeans but aroused "disputes by many Americans," the viceroy said.[67] Li sent another letter on the twenty-seventh, highlighting America's embarrassment in more explicit terms. He agreed to Cui's analysis that the U.S. government had become "unable to defend itself" on the issue of Chinese immigration: it "naturally had nothing to say" in the face of "frequent inquiries." But he urged Cui to "keep demanding" an explanation, both to make known "Chinese insistence" and "meet the expectation of the people of Guangdong," the home province of most Chinese immigrants in the United States.[68]

Though not a one-to-one match, these communications show that Cui had been reporting his *face* perspective on Chinese exclusion to his superiors back in China. His intention was not merely to explain away his failure of duty but to encourage the government to realize the importance of *face* in diplomatic encounters with the United States. As already explained, to ensure that *face* could be most helpful to China, Cui's policy suggestion to the Zongli Yamen specifically passed over the obstructive role of Chinese immigrants and the abnormality of American democracy. Instead, he urged the government to acknowledge America's consistent good name and pressure American

[63]Wang and Wang 2015, p. 1725.
[64]Wang and Wang 2015, p. 1757.
[65]Wang and Wang 2015, p. 1793.
[66]Huang 1990, p. 1759.
[67]Gu and Dai 2008b, p. 27.
[68]Gu and Dai 2008b. pp. 35, 41.

politicians to preserve it by tolerating Chinese immigration. This was what Cui unequivocally proposed in his memorial to the Zongli Yamen on April 17, 1892. Since the United States had "always been a self-disciplined country with no excessive, malicious habits," he contended, China could cite this reputation and "guide America to China's advantage" in negotiations over immigration.[69]

The suggestion apparently had the approval of the Zongli Yamen, which repeatedly emphasized the precariousness of American *face* in its notes to Charles Denby, the U.S. minister in Beijing. For example, the note of June 13, 1892, not only expressed Chinese indignation at the Geary Act under congressional discussion, but warned that America's good name might be at risk. "Numerous," wrote the Zongli Yamen, "are the harsh measures in the act that could damage your country's reputation."[70] On August 5, 1892, the Zongli Yamen repeated the warning. After enumerating the many treaty pledges that the United Stated had violated in passing exclusion laws, it called Denby's attention to the fact that such lack of faith had "naturally hurt your country's name and the friendship between our two countries."[71]

While sending out blunt warnings, the Zongli Yamen substantiated its charges with concrete evidences, in an effort to arouse America's remorse for imposing exclusion. American inconsistency was one proof. On June 16, 1890, the Zongli Yamen stated to Denby that it was "not China's intention" to encourage its subjects' migration to America. Instead, all the treaty encouragements "originated in the United States." China was therefore "really shocked" at what America did to Chinese. The Zongli Yamen repeated this position in the above-cited note of June 13, 1892, adding that America "should not have really intended" those promises to be violated by itself in the future.[72]

Another supposed damage to America's reputation stemmed from its breaching of its founding principles, though the Zongli Yamen did not clarify what those principles were. On June 17, 1890, it accused America of "threatening Chinese immigrants' lives" with exclusion. This action, the Zongli Yamen continued, not only violated past treaties but "ran counter to your country's founding documents." Chinese had helped make California "well-connected and prosperous," only to be "be hated, envied, burnt, and expelled." Nobody could have predicted that such "meanness and bullying" would come from the United States, which always advertised itself as a "friendly" nation. The charge reappeared in the note of August 5, 1892.[73] On May 25, 1893, the Zongli Yamen again challenged America to assess Chinese exclusion against its founding ideals. It demanded that the U.S. Supreme Court declare exclusion unconstitutional. At least, it told Denby, the United States should make sure that exclusion "tallies with your country's founding principles." Only in this way could China be convinced of America's "devotion to justice."[74]

While the Zongli Yamen was using American *face* as a pressure in Beijing, Cui was doing the same in Washington, D.C. He warned the Secretary of State that exclusion damaged the reputation of the United States. For example, in the letter of December 16, 1889, Cui ensured Blaine that America's "open disregard of treaty obligations" could leave "a most unfavorable impression" on China. He encouraged the latter to exercise his "high sense of justice" and help solve the problem of Chinese immigration.[75] After the passage of the more stringent Geary Act in 1892, Cui again referred to America's reputation when trying to stop it from being enforced. As he told Gresham, the new Secretary of State, on March 13, 1893, the legislation presented "embarrassments" – "great and, I think, unmistakable" – to "a great nation like the United States."[76]

Inconsistency was also a taint that Cui found on America's name. Just like the Zongli Yamen, the minister charged the United States with violating the treaty clauses that it initiated and induced China

[69]Wang and Wang 2015, p. 1755.
[70]Huang 1990, p. 1685.
[71]Huang 1990, p. 1698.
[72]Huang 1990, pp. 1441–42, 1685.
[73]Huang 1990, pp. 1443–44.
[74]Huang 1990, p. 1758.
[75]United States Department of State 1861–1996c.
[76]United States Department of State 1861–1996d.

to accept. Cui stressed this point in the letter of May 23, 1890, which pressed Blaine to interfere in San Francisco's planned removal of Chinese from the local Chinatown. He not only cited the relevant clause from the Treaty of 1880 but reminded the Secretary that the treaty was forced upon China. The United States sent commissioners to Beijing for the "express purpose" of concluding a treaty and offered to protect Chinese immigrants "in order to induce the Chinese government to make the treaty modification which they desired."[77] On June 7, Cui repeated the charge that America had forgotten how it cajoled China at the negotiating table. He told Blaine that American protection of Chinese became a clause of the 1880 treaty "at the express request of the United States." It was just upon this "express condition and assurance" that China agreed to surrender "certain treaty rights as to immigration."[78]

In Cui's description, America betrayed its founding principles as well. As the Department of the Treasury was then in charge of the Customs House, the minister wrote to Secretary Charles Foster on November 7, 1892, to demand justice for Chinese entering the United States. For the purpose of convincing Foster into taking action, Cui reminded him of America's proclamation "throughout the world for over one hundred years" that it was "an asylum for the people of all the nations of the earth." Nevertheless, "obnoxious and unenlightened" Chinese exclusion was nothing but "a step backward from progress, civilization, freedom, and liberty," the minister pointed out.[79]

Cui's one difference from the Zongli Yamen was his contrast of American provincialism to Chinese magnanimity. In his letter to Blaine on March 26, 1890, the minister detailed how the Qing government protected Americans in China in line with treaties. But the United States and its minister in Beijing, not "content with requiring a strict observance of treaty stipulations," demanded "protection and indemnity" beyond treaty terms. To these "extreme and illogical" requirements, the Chinese government had "yielded" in a "spirit of conciliation." If the United States did likewise to Chinese immigrants, Cui believed, "how different would be the international relations of the two countries today."[80] On May 5, 1892, Cui once again referred to Chinese generosity as a foil for America's shabby treatment of Chinese. As he stated in the letter to Blaine, even William M. Evarts, one of Blaine's predecessors, admitted that China had been "most conciliatory" in negotiations, always consenting to "whatever treaty stipulations and changes the American Government ever asked." Against this backdrop, Cui "can not understand" America's violation of treaties.[81]

Though Cui and the Zongli Yamen apparently believed that their U.S. counterparts valued *face* to the same degree as they did, neither Charles Denby in Beijing nor the officials in Washington seemed to be much impressed. Without taking the *face* offensive seriously, they simply ignored Chinese inquiries or at most, made their responses as principled as possible. Their emphasis was on America's sovereign right to devise and enforce whatever policies necessary regarding Chinese immigration.

On the one hand, U.S. officials highlighted America's strict observance of diplomatic accords and internationally recognized principles when contemplating Chinese exclusion. For example, in its response to the Chinese charge that the Geary Act hurt America's good name, the American legation wrote on August 18, 1892, that its country had merely carried out what the Treaty of 1880 promised, that is, the power to regulate and suspend Chinese immigration. Not only was the American practice "not contrary" to the treaty, it was even considerate enough to punish Chinese violators of the law "most leniently," the note claimed.[82] Assistant Secretary of State William F. Wharton replied to Cui's criticism in the same vein on December 10, 1892. Ignoring the Chinese minister's frequent reference to American *face*, he insisted that the United States was merely practicing "the inherent prerogative of sovereignty." The Geary Act devised "an orderly scheme of individual identification and

[77] *Notes* 2010*b*, pp. 218–19.
[78] *Notes* 2010*b*, p. 225.
[79] United States Department of State 1861–1996e.
[80] United States Department of State 1861–1996f.
[81] United States Department of State 1861–1996g.
[82] *Zhongmei* 2006, pp. 336–38.

certification" that provided "the means" whereby Chinese could enjoy their privileges as stipulated in bilateral treaties.[83]

On the other, American officials wished that China understand, respect, and trust America's political and legal procedure. In the note of July 26, 1890, the U.S. legation offered a rare response to the Chinese charge that America damaged its reputation by violating its founding principles. If approved by three-fourths of congressmen, a bill could have the same validity as a founding document, claimed the legation, meaning that the Chinese accusation was unwarranted. Besides, it cautioned China against coming to a hasty conclusion about a legislation still under congressional discussion. As to those policies violating bilateral treaties, the legation asked China to trust the impartiality of American court, which would "invalidate" any deviations.[84]

The Department of State answered Cui's inquiries in a similar way. To pacify the Chinese minister, Secretary Blaine wrote on October 6, 1890, that he did not reply in a timely manner simply because Cui's questions "have been and are now the subject of careful consideration on the part of this government."[85] The implication is that Cui should remain patient while America's political machine was going through necessary procedures. Facing Cui's demand that the U.S. government ask Congress to reconsider the Geary Act, Secretary Gresham followed Blaine's lead in citing the working style of American politics as a pretext for his evasiveness. As he put it in his letter of August 19, 1893, "the President does not regard the moment opportune" since Congress was busy dealing with "the serious financial stress that affects the country."[86]

It is safe to say thus far that Cui's *face* approach to Chinese exclusion was not simply a way to vent personal frustration but also a tool that China used to compel the United States to tolerate Chinese immigrants. But America almost completely ignored the *face* offensive by Cui himself and the Zongli Yamen. The dodge reflected the difference between American and Chinese diplomatic mindsets. As the United States had the resources to safeguard its sovereignty, to emphasize its sovereign power in enforcing exclusion was naturally the best option. But Qing China, semi-colonial and weak, could only count on the reciprocity principle of international law to protect itself and its nationals. Yet this principle was increasingly undermined by American power. That is why Cui encouraged himself and the Zongli Yamen to seek solutions in China's traditional culture, just as Chinese doctors often looked to ancients for effective prescriptions.[87] *Face* thus emerged as a means to counter America's defense of sovereignty and neglect of reciprocity.

Conclusion

On September 13, 1893, Cui Guoyin boarded the ship back to China, ending his term as the Chinese minister to the United States. Before his departure, Cui ensured President Cleveland in his farewell letter that he would "carry away with me the most pleasant memories of my sojourn in this land." Cleveland, besides wishing him "an agreeable journey," expected the minister to take home "not only pleasant memories of your sojourn here, but likewise an abundant conviction of the desire" of America for a "good relationship" with China.[88] Despite such diplomatic politeness, Cui's memories were undoubtedly bitter. He did not succeed in abolishing or even alleviating Chinese exclusion, falling far short of the high expectations that the Qing government had for him.

This frustrating failure made the minister especially sensitive to *face*. While trying to save his own reputation, he came to realize that *face* could be a weapon not only for personal exoneration but for Chinese diplomacy with the United States. That is why, after narrowing the focus down to America's loss of good name, both Cui and the Zongli Yamen adopted *face* as a tool supplementary to

[83]United States Department of State 1861–1996h.
[84]*Zhongmei* 2006, p. 137.
[85]United States Department of State 1861–1996i.
[86]United States Department of State 1861–1996j.
[87]Cui 2016, pp. 5–6, 586.
[88]*Notes* 2010*c*, pp. 65–67.

international law in their striving for Chinese immigrants' rights. But this tactic did not elicit an expected reaction from American officials, who not only seemed unconcerned about *face* but insisted on prioritizing American sovereignty over diplomatic reciprocity. The "weaponization" of *face* therefore provides a unique snapshot of late Qing's helplessness when it stumbled into the modern world.

Given the long-term power imbalance between the two countries and America's consistent overbearing attitude to China, the backward turn to *face* during Cui's tenure might not have been an isolated case. A cursory glance at documents related to other ministers suggests the likelihood. For instance, when demanding indemnity for the Chinese victims of the 1885 Rock Springs massacre in Wyoming, Minister Zheng Zaoru invoked the *face* of America as a pressure. In his long letter to the Secretary of State on November 30, 1885, Zheng asked America to value its name as "the early, constant and steadfast friend of China" and the "great and enlightened" nation which "has done so much to bring the nations of the earth up to this high plane of international justice and fair dealing."[89] Like Cui, Zhang Yinhuan attributed the continuance of exclusion to Chinese immigrants' defects in his dairy whereas in his reports to the Qing government in the early twentieth century, Wu Tingfang occasionally stressed Chinese laborers' "flocking" and the *Gongdang*'s "manipulation" of democracy as the basic reasons for discrimination.[90] But it requires another essay or even a series of essays to analyze whether and how other late Qing ministers to America had integrated their private understandings of *face* into open diplomacy. Still, by concentrating on the example of Cui Guoyin, this study has provided a window into the working of the traditional Chinese conception of *face* in modern Sino–American interactions seemingly governed by international law.

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[89]*Notes* 2010*a*, pp. 392–93.

[90]First Historical Archives of China, Peking University, and La Trobe University of Australia 2004, pp. 36, 70–71; Zhang 2016, passim.

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