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New Perspectives on Imagology

Edited by

Katharina Edtstadler, Sandra Folie and Gianna Zocco



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A Study on *The Travel Journal and Pictures*: Li Danlin's Image of Foreign Lands and Cultures

ZHU Wenjun

Abstract

This article studies the hetero-images in premodern Chinese painter Li Danlin's travelogue *The Travel Journal and Pictures* with regard to Daniel-Henri Pageaux's and Jean-Marc Moura's theories. Li draws pictures of foreign lands and cultures to express his exoticist interest, following the tradition entailed from *The Classic of Mountains and Seas*. He transforms the reality and constructs two forms of hetero-images: those of Western cultures by applying clichés, and stereotyped images of indigenous peoples as "Manyi." These hetero-images give us insights into premodern Chinese ideology and offer an example of Occidentalism as a Sinocentric form of ethnotype.

Keywords

Li Danlin – *The Travel Journal and Pictures* – premodern China – hetero-image – Occidentalism

In 1903,¹ Li Danlin (李丹麟, 1846–1916),² a Cantonese painter in the late Qing dynasty of China, made an overseas trip following the Chinese ambassador Yang Ru (杨儒). He travelled to many countries and continents such as Korea, Japan, the United States, Peru, and Europe, and later visited Vietnam, Cambodia, and the South Pacific islands at his own expense. The journey

1 Li Danlin narrated in *The Travel Journal and Pictures* that he departed in 1903. However, according to *Boluo Xianzhi*, the local chronicle of Li's hometown, and *Huizhou Mingren*, the biography of the celebrities in Li's hometown edited by Zhu Jitang and Huang Songsen, Li started his journey in 1891.

2 The dates of birth and death confirmed by *Huizhou Mingren* are widely accepted. Nonetheless, *Boluo Xianzhi* records other dates: 1840–1910.

lasted for around three years. During the trip he made 205 drawings appended with explanatory texts, and compiled them into the two volumes of *Youli Tuji* 游历图记 (The Travel Journal and Pictures).³

Although Li was the first Chinese artist to travel around the world and draw his impressions, his book has received little attention in academia. It has only been documented in some Cantonese historical and biographical sources, such as *Guangdong Huaren Lu* 广东画人录 (The Biographies of Cantonese Painters) (1985, 76–77), *Huizhou Mingren* 惠州名人 (The Celebrities in Huizhou) (1999, 45), and *Boluo Xianzhi* 博罗县志 (The Chronography of Boluo County) (2001, 760).⁴ This indicates that the circulation of Li's travelogue was probably confined to local intellectual circles in Guangdong (Canton). While most of the premodern⁵ Chinese travelogues were written in the form of a diary in classical Chinese, Li created for the first time a large-scale, systematic depiction of foreign lands, combining the genres of essay, poem, and painting.

My research aims to examine how Li perceives and represents foreign people and cultures from the perspective of imagology, paying particular attention to the specific form of the book, and to further explore the particularities of Sinocentric ethnotyping reflected in *The Travel Journal and Pictures*. My study of hetero-images in Li's travelogue is not limited to the literary text but will also consider his drawing and cartography.

The Travel Journal and Pictures consists of four parts. The first part includes twenty hand-painted maps of various locations around the world. His so-called maps vary in form: some are bird's eye views, some are horizontal views, some are detailed, some are simplified. As we can see from the map "Into Nagasaki, Japan,"⁶ unlike in regular geographic maps, the cartography is a mixture of map and Chinese landscape painting. Different from "Ditu" (地图), the modern maps that we are accustomed to find in atlases, cartography using conventional

3 Since the journal has never been translated into English or other languages, I translate all the titles and notes cited from the volumes myself.

4 There exist various versions of *The Chronography of Boluo County*. The earliest was edited by Han Rizuan (韩日缵) in the late Ming dynasty (1628–1644), and later ones are based on this and other early versions. The edition that I consulted relates the history of Boluo (博罗) county from 214 BCE to 1990 CE.

5 The "premodern" period in the Chinese context refers to 1840–1919, from the Opium War to the May Fourth Movement.

6 There are no page numbers but only the numbers of maps or figures in the 1905 edition of *The Travel Journal and Pictures*. Please note that the number of a map or figure given in parentheses after a quote from Li's travelogue refers to the numbers used in the 1905 edition of *The Travel Journal and Pictures*, whereas the designation "Figure 10.1" (up to "Figure 10.5") in the caption lines of a printed image relates to our own system of numbering. You can compare both numbers in the List of Figures and Tables on p. XIII.

landscape painting style is called “Yutu” (輿圖), and was the dominant form in China before the twentieth century. Obviously, the maps painted by Li are “Yutu” rather than “Ditu.” For instance, the mountains and buildings around the bay in the following image (Figure 10.1) do not conform to a proportional graphical perspective but follow the conventions of Chinese landscape painting, which value artistic representation instead of verisimilitude.

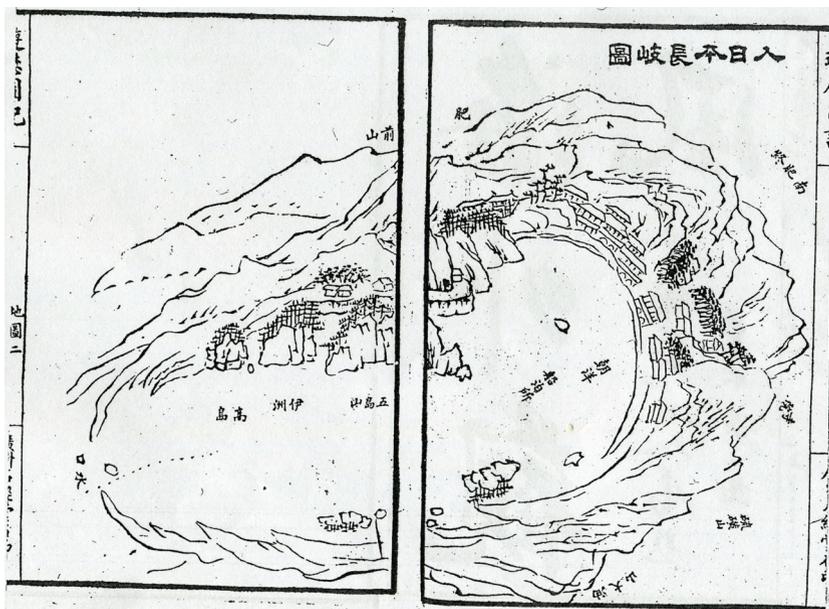


FIGURE 10.1 “Into Nagasaki, Japan” 入日本长崎图.

This is the reason why I translated the title as “Travel Journal and Pictures,” since the term “picture”—unlike possible alternatives such as “map” or “painting”—may refer to multiple genres of painting, drawing, and “Yutu.” Because Li specializes in the depiction of flowers, birds, and figures but not landscapes, his attempt to paint the panorama results in a serious deformation of the landscape. Li’s choice of cartography reveals his outdated technique and traditional mindset.

In the second part, he portrays people in foreign lands with explanatory texts. The painted figures include people from North and South America (Native Americans), Japan, Luzon (the Philippines), Malta, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Java, Kelantan (Malaysia), Siam (Thailand), Tibet, Holland, Hawaii, Malaysia, Bangladesh, Kolkata (India), Vietnam, Phnom Penh (Cambodia), Laos, France, and so forth; and people from indeterminate regions like Nanyang (a Sinocentric Chinese term for the “South Sea” or Southeast Asia) and Taixi (泰西, the Far

West). Because the geographical terms and the toponyms are not unified, the areas that Li refers to are too vague to be pinned down precisely.

Li consciously paints people of different ages, races, social classes, occupations, and genders for comparison. The characters depicted are chiefs, ancient kings, men, women, children, ancient officials, businessmen, and poor people. They are more specifically divided into elegant men, businessmen, wealthy women, female workers, nuns, and old peasants. Among the gestures shown are the following: arrow shooting, dining, selling food, holding a baby, treasure hunting on the sea floor, spitting arrows, saluting, shooting a gun, smoking, etc. The costumes worn include long gowns, formal dresses, etc. The diverse appearances shown include nose piercings, symmetrical beards, beards under the chin, etc. Sometimes Li zooms in to paint the earrings, aprons, shoes, etc. And sometimes he paints both the front view and the back view. Some pictures have titles and notes; while others are marked with either titles or notes.

Li adopts the Chinese style of line drawing in traditional ink and brush to outline the figures. In his day, Western painting techniques had already been circulating for a long time, having been introduced to China by Giuseppe Castiglione (1688–1766), an Italian missionary in China who served as an artist at the imperial court. Castiglione paints in a unique way, fusing European and Chinese traditions and adjusting the Western style to suit Chinese tastes. However, Li sticks to the form of Chinese line drawing without any trace of Western influence, which coincides with the Sinocentric content of his travelogue.

The third part is made up of essays and poems comparing the West with China, including; “Visit to Various Countries and Comment on the Backwardness of Chinese Science and Technology,” “Visit to Philadelphia and the Principle of Making Guns and Artillery,” and “Poem on Visiting the Bronze Column as Boundary Sign in Vietnam.” Li reflects on the reasons why the development of Chinese science and technology fell behind that of the West, and draws the conclusion that the advanced Western knowledge and techniques mostly originated in China and were further developed in the Occident to exceed China. This was a widely accepted strategy in the late Qing dynasty to provide theoretical support for learning from the West while maintaining ethnic identity and superiority. This kind of argument had already been criticized by certain Chinese intellectuals of Li's time for its arrogance, such as Zhang Zhidong (张之洞) in *Quan Xue Pian* 劝学篇 (Exhortation to Study), but Li still adheres to the problematic strategy. Li's attitude corresponds with his Sinocentric representation of foreign cultures. In contrast with other travelogues and geographical treatises of the same period (see Casalin in this volume, chapter 9), the ideas revealed in *The Travel Journal and Pictures* are comparatively conservative.

The fourth part consists of the articles entitled “The Humanized Tiger,” “The Chicken Ghost,” “The Tiger Ghost,” “The Cannibal Tree,” “The Itchy Tree,” “The Animal-Hunting Tree,” “The Insect-Hunting Tree,” “The Feet-Biting Insect,” “The Flytrap Tree,” “The Intoxicant Tree,” “Lujiang Matting Ghost,” “Yugui Mountain God,” and “The Boa Eating the Elephant.” These articles mainly narrate mysterious anecdotes in remote areas, as well as detailing exotic animals and plants.

The Travel Journal and Pictures provides various hetero-images of foreign lands and people. Because I intend to investigate how these hetero-images are formed at both the individual and the collective level, Jean-Marc Moura's theory provides a foundation for my analysis. Moura elaborates on the triple meaning of every image: “image of a foreign referent, image coming from a nation or a culture, image created by the particular sensitivity of an author” (1999, 184). For instance, the image of the saluting “Taixi” general represented by Li's drawing (Li 1905, fig. 59, 60) is based on actual Western soldiers, and shaped by the Chinese traditional conception of “Taixi” and Li's own vision. Correspondingly, three levels of analysis are defined: “the referent, the socio-cultural imaginary, the structures of a work” (Moura 1999, 184).⁷

My approach is to scrutinize the peculiar authorial intention of Li's exoticism in section 1, and to study the form and the structure of *The Travel Journal and Pictures* as a homage to an ancient Chinese classic depicting foreign lands and cultures in section 2. I will proceed to the level of sociocultural imaginary, namely the analysis of Li's divergent hetero-images of developing areas and economically developed civilizations as a form of Sinocentric ethnotyping in section 3. Last but not least, in section 4 I will further explore this ideology in relation to the concept of “Occidentalism.”

1 Exoticism and Alterity

As the second and the fourth part of his travelogue show, Li Danlin's enormous curiosity about exoticism and alterity predetermines his focus. When he paints a boy hunting treasures in the sea in Hawaii, he notes: “It is so bizarre that I have to draw it for memory's sake” (Li 1905, fig. 32).⁸ When describing

7 My translation. Original quote: “[P]our l'imagologie, toute image étudiée est [...] dans un triple sens : image d'un référent étranger, image provenant d'une nation ou d'une culture, image créée par la sensibilité particulière d'un auteur. Trois niveaux d'analyse se voient définis : le référent, l'imaginaire socioculturel, les structures d'une œuvre.”

8 My translation. Original quote: “可谓奇也，故图而记之。”

the sky burial, a ritual of consecrating the human corpse to birds, he calls the carrion birds “bizarre” (ibid., fig. 53).⁹ He also comments on the Western style of beard as “bizarre” (ibid., fig. 67). In South America, he depicts women with moustaches and remarks: “We Chinese think it is grotesque” (ibid., fig. 68).¹⁰ In the article “Saigon Fortress,” in which he uses the phrase “the most curious thing,”¹¹ we find another example of this style. Even when reflecting on the gap between China and the West, Li is still interested in the curious aspects: “European countries invent delicate techniques that become more and more extraordinary.”¹² He questions these techniques, asking: “Why did no one make any strange devices or create any curious techniques at the beginning of Western civilization?”¹³ “In the past few decades, aren’t there more and more incredible things coming up?”¹⁴ It is evident that Li looks for and records strange phenomena with great enthusiasm. According to the preface written by his friend Deng Jiyong (邓骥英), Li’s personality is “quite curious.”

Li’s curiosity implies his exceptional attention to the difference between Self and Other. As Daniel-Henri Pageaux remarks, “every image comes from an awareness [...] of an I in relation to the Other, of Here in contrast with Elsewhere” (2014, 455),¹⁵ and the image thus expresses the significant distinction between two cultural entities. Although lacking any in-depth understanding of sociocultural differences, Li consciously made comparisons between China and foreign cultures in his travelogue.

Li’s enthusiasm about otherness evokes the notion of exoticism discussed by Victor Segalen, which describes exoticism as resulting from the perception of the difference and the recognition of the Other. According to Segalen, when we find something exotic, the singularity of the others is a source of enjoyment, arousing the durable pleasure of feeling the diversity (Segalen 1986, 44).¹⁶ Therefore, exoticism refers to “the acute and immediate perception of an

9 My translation. Original quote: “可谓奇异。”

10 My translation. Original quote: “妇人生须，中国以为奇怪。”

11 My translation. Original quote: “所最奇者。”

12 My translation. Original quote: “欧洲各国艺学精巧，愈出愈奇。”

13 My translation. Original quote: “虽彼国文明渐启，尚不闻有人焉，制一奇器，创一奇技也欤？”

14 My translation. Original quote: “数十年来，不更愈出愈奇，有不可思议者乎？”

15 My translation. Original quote: “Toute image procède d’une prise de conscience, si minima soit-elle, d’un Je par rapport à l’Autre, d’un Ici par rapport à un Ailleurs. L’image est donc l’expression, littéraire ou non, d’un écart significatif entre deux ordres de réalité culturelle.”

16 My translation. Original quote: “la perdurabilité du plaisir de sentir le Divers.”

eternal incomprehensibility” (ibid.),¹⁷ namely the impenetrability of otherness. As Li Danlin takes pleasure from the objects beyond his comprehension and seeks for diversity and alterity, the motivation of *The Travel Journal and Pictures* can be regarded as exoticism.

Nonetheless, as Joep Leerssen points out, exoticism may also be “ethnocentrism’s friendly face.” When “[t]he other culture is appreciated exclusively in terms of its strangeness; it is reduced to the aspects wherein it differs from the domestic standard” (2007a, 325). Li’s depiction lays stress on the weird characteristics of foreign peoples, alienating them from Chinese civilization. By highlighting the opposition of Self and Other, Li distinguishes domestic culture and reaffirms Chinese cultural identity. However, his judgement of strangeness is based on the preconception that Chinese culture stands for the absolute criterion of normality.

2 The Form Drawn from *The Classic of Mountains and Seas* (山海经, Shan Hai Jing)

In the preface, Deng Jiying suggests a connection between *The Travel Journal and Pictures* and *Shan Hai Jing* 山海经 (The Classic of Mountains and Seas), in their way of painting beasts and monsters vividly. *The Classic of Mountains and Seas* is a Chinese classic compilation of fabulous geographical and cultural records in ancient times, and a collection of Chinese mythology. The earliest version that still exists is *Shan Hai Jing Zhu* (山海经注) edited by Guo Pu (郭璞, 276–324 CE). As Yang Yulian (杨玉莲) (2018, 91–94) concludes, there are mainly five opinions about the compilation time of *The Classic*, ranging from the Xia dynasty (c. 2070–c. 1600 BCE) to the Han dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE). Although the compilation date cannot be pinned down exactly, it is certain that *The Classic* had been circulated before Sima Qian (司马迁, c. 145–c. 86 BCE) started to write *The Records of the Grand Historian* (史记, *Shiji*), which mentions *The Classic* (Sima 2012, 3179) for the first time, during the Western Han or Former Han dynasty.

The Classic consists of eighteen chapters, which can be classified into four categories: “Classic of the Mountains,” “Classic of the Seas,” “Classic of the Great Wilderness,” and “Classic of Regions within the Seas.” The chapters of *The Classic* progress like a travel journal, as each section concentrates on a specific region, describing its unique races, deities, plants, and minerals. The

17 My translation. Original quote: “la perception aiguë et immédiate d’une incompréhensibilité éternelle.”

world depicted in *The Classic* focuses on the central lands surrounded by the regions of the south, west, north, and east mountains. The mainland is encircled by the four seas, beyond which there are still outlying continents. *The Classic* contains rich knowledge of geography, mythology, folklore, history of science, religion, ethnology, and medicine.

The affinity between *The Travel Journal and Pictures* and *The Classic of Mountains and Seas* can be interpreted along three aspects. Above all, the poem "Du Shan Hai Jing" 读山海经 (Reading *The Classic of Mountains and Seas*) by Tao Yuanming (陶渊明, 365?-427) (1979) confirms that *The Classic* originally consisted of pictures and texts. The pictures have been lost since the Tang dynasty (618-907), and only the texts remain. It can be deduced from the drawings recreated in the Ming (1368-1644) and the Qing dynasties (1644-1911) that the original pictures mainly showed mysterious landscapes and creatures. Thus, based on the similar form and Deng's mentioning of a connection in the preface of *The Travel Journal and Pictures*, I suggest that Li Danlin chose to combine paintings and texts in order to pay homage to *The Classic of Mountains and Seas*.

Secondly, as the lands, gods, and creatures portrayed in *The Classic* blur the boundary between fiction and reality, *The Travel Journal and Pictures* can also be considered a mixture of mythology and geography. By comparing the second and fourth part of the travelogue with our knowledge about the world acquired from documentaries, scientific research, and travel experiences, we can recognize certain exaggerations in Li's depiction of folklore, flora, and fauna, such as the anecdote of "The Tiger Ghost." It is probable that Li Danlin made exaggerated descriptions of foreign people and creatures to imitate *The Classic*.

Thirdly, both works are characterized by exoticism. *The Classic of Mountains and Seas* also shows a peculiar interest in the impenetrability of otherness. It has been noted that "officials and intellectuals were amazed by *The Classic*; by reading it we can investigate auspicious omens and strange things, and know the exotic customs in distant countries" (Liu and Liu 2008, 77).¹⁸ Li Danlin potentially took inspiration from *The Classic* to create a work that intends to amaze his readers with the diversity and incomprehensibility of exotic scenes.

The Travel Journal and Pictures carries on the tradition entailed from *The Classic of Mountains and Seas*, bearing resemblance to its form and content. Combining drawings and writings, realistic portrayal and exotic imagination,

18 My translation. Original quote: "朝士由是多奇《山海经》者，文学大儒多读学以为奇，可以考禎祥变怪之物，见远国异人之谣俗。" *The Qilüe* (Seven Surveys/Seven Reviews) is the first known bibliography of Chinese works.

Li's choice of form and theme as an allusion to *The Classic* predetermines his way of depicting foreign lands and people.

In the preface to the earliest still existing version of *The Classic of Mountains and Seas*, Guo Pu expresses an idea similar to the basic assumption of imagology that the representation of foreign cultures is shaped by the beholder's ideology: "The objects are not strange in themselves, but only alienated by the subject. The strangeness of the objects lies in the mind of the subject" (Chen 2012, 315).¹⁹ The curious aspects of the hetero-image ("other") can be attributed to the ideology of the curious onlookers ("self"). Therefore, the hetero-images in *The Travel Journal and Pictures*, as well as in *The Classic*, relate more to the "self" (domestic culture) than to the "other" (the foreign scenes).

Guo's statement corresponds to Joep Leerssen's opinion: "The default value of human's contacts with different cultures seems to have been ethnocentric, in that anything that deviated from accustomed domestic patterns is 'Othered' as an oddity, an anomaly, a singularity" (2007b, 17). The foreign objects are not strange by nature, but Li and the author(s) of *The Classic* accentuate their strangeness because of their deviation from Chinese conventions.

3 Two Types of Hetero-Images

As already shown in the previous sections of this chapter, Li's personal interest in exoticism and the analogous structure to *The Classic of Mountains and Seas* significantly shape Li's description of foreign lands and cultures. However, another factor that contributes to these peculiar hetero-images, that is to "the opinion that others have about a group's purported character" (Leerssen 2007a, 343), in *The Travel Journal and Pictures* is the traditional Chinese imagination of foreign lands. As Daniel-Henri Pageaux claims, "the representation of the foreign is dependent on a certain ideological option (made of a complex mixture of ideas, feelings, traditional preconceptions, historical orientation, etc. [...])" (1995, 138).²⁰ Hence, authors do not just give an authentic portrait of reality when representing foreign countries but instead sort out the features that conform to the ideology of their own culture, consciously or subconsciously.

Li Danlin's selection and representation of hetero-images in *The Travel Journal and Pictures* is imbalanced. On the one hand, his description of

19 My translation. Original quote: "物不自异，待我而后异，异果在我，非物异也。"

20 My translation. Original quote: "La représentation de l'étranger est tributaire d'une certaine option idéologique (faites d'un mélange complexe d'idées, de sentiments, d'a priori traditionnels, historiquement repérables etc. [...])."

developing areas such as Southeast Asia and South America is so detailed that various little-known regions and minority ethnic groups are displayed distinctively. On the other hand, he refers to European countries and North America in general as “Taixi” (the Far West) or “Westerners” without distinguishing different cultures. Obviously, there are many more paintings and texts about indigenous people in less industrialized regions than about the citizens in economically developed countries of “Taixi.” I will analyse the two different types of hetero-images respectively.

3.1 “Taixi”: A Misinterpretation of the West

In premodern Chinese, “Taixi” (泰西) is a cliché that refers to the Western countries, including Europe and the United States. Its usage can be dated back to the Ming dynasty, when the Catholic missionary Matteo Ricci visited China. It literally means “Far West,” which is in contrast with the “Far East” for Western people. As Jean-Marc Moura comments, “the cliché [...] is defined as a stylistic effect fixed by the usage, a manifestation of the servile spirit of imitation” (1993, 100).²¹ As a result of the repetitive usage of “Taixi,” some Chinese people with a more conservative attitude generalized the West as a whole and refused to explore the nuances and diversity among Western cultures. The notion of “Taixi” is paralleled with the Western concept of the “Orient,” a historical term for the East evolving from the Near East to the continent of Asia. Western terms such as the “Orient” or the “Far East” are also generalizing and illustrate a lack of affirming the diversity of Asian cultures. Hence, we can find similar patterns of thinking about “others” in East and West.

As most of premodern Chinese travel journals rather focus on developed Western countries, Li's travelogue opens up a new field by introducing neglected parts of the world so as to enrich Chinese people's knowledge of the globe. However, as Xu Junmian (徐君勉) declared, “generally, it is easy to compose travelogues on less cultivated areas, but difficult to write on more civilized places” (Liang 2018, 5).²² Liang Qichao (梁启超) asserts in *Xin Dalu Youji* 新大陆游记 (Observations on a Trip to America) that “previous Chinese travel journals mostly describe trivial things such as extraordinary landscapes or splendid palaces [...] but fail to grasp the key ideas when observing societies with complex civilizations” (2018, 7).²³

21 My translation. Original quote: “[Le cliché] relève de la stylistique et se définit comme un effet de style figé par l'usage, manifestation d'un servile esprit d'imitation.”

22 My translation. Original quote: “凡游野蛮地为游记易，游文明地为游记难。”

23 My translation. Original quote: “中国前此游记，多纪风景之佳奇，或陈宫室之华丽，无关宏旨……但观察文明复杂之社会，最难得其要领。”

Li Danlin fails to understand Western societies and cultures. He paints figures of Western female workers and Western old farmers, without any regard to Western industrial civilization, the social classes in capitalist societies, or the issue of gender relations. He depicts Catholic nuns and priests, yet he appears to know little about Christianity. His ignorance is clearly reflected in the map of Washington (see Figure 10.2).

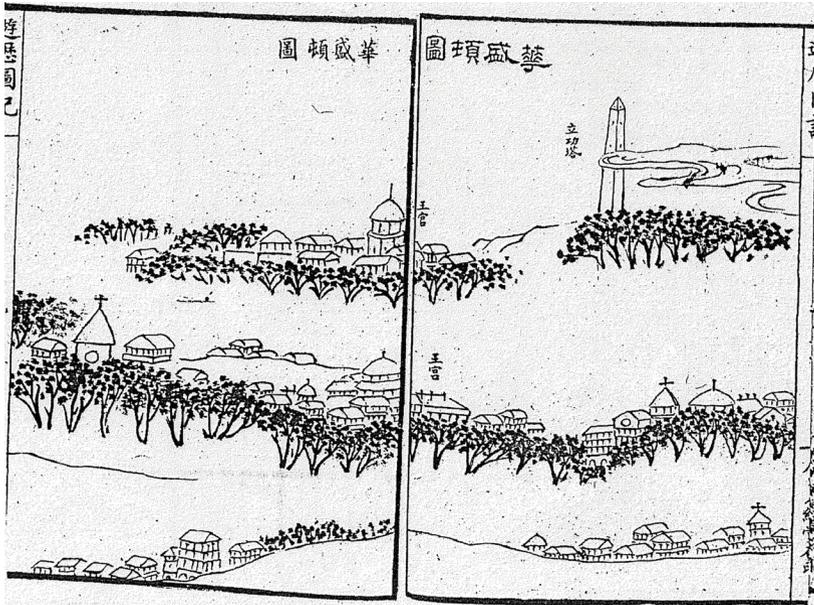


FIGURE 10.2 “Washington, DC” 華盛頓圖.

In this picture, Li labels the Washington Monument as “Honour Tower,” and mistakes Capitol Hill and the White House for “Royal Palaces.” Given that the political institution of the United States had been clarified since 1846 by several Chinese intellectuals, such as Liang Tingnan (梁廷柎) (1993), Xu Jiyu (徐繼畲) (1850), and Wei Yuan (魏源) (2011), Li’s ignorance of the separation of powers and the democratic political system seems ridiculous. Moreover, he not only applies the traditional Chinese political system of imperial monarchy to Washington but also adapts the architecture to Chinese style. For instance, the United States Capitol is assimilated to a traditional Chinese tower. In Li’s paintings, there is not much difference between the architecture in Washington (see Figure 10.2) and in Japan (see Figure 10.1). Recalling Jean-Marc Moura’s reflections on the stereotype as a preconceived idea and an exaggerated belief associated with a category (1993, 100), it can be concluded that the stereotype of feudal monarchy formed by traditional Chinese ideology has distorted Li’s perception of Washington.

3.2 *"Manyi": Hetero-Stereotypes about Indigenous Peoples*

By contrast, another kind of hetero-stereotype exists in Li's description of developing regions, indicating his prejudice and discrimination against other ethnic groups. For example, in the picture of Vietnamese women (Li 1905, fig. 50), Li Danlin criticizes their gestures, their unruliness, and arbitrariness from the perspective of Chinese conventional manners and norms of behaviour requiring women to be calm, elegant, and obedient. While we just see two women walking casually, Li infers their morality from their gestures and makes negative judgements out of the preconception that women not following Chinese feudal ethical code are ill-mannered.

In the picture of a Vietnamese tribal chief (*ibid.*, fig. 52), Li Danlin refers to tribal people as "Manyi" (蛮夷), a Sinocentric cliché which means "primitive" or "uncivilized" people, namely "barbarians." The original European connotation of "barbarian" was "applied to all non-Greek-speakers," in order to guarantee the Greek "linguistic identity" (Beller 2007, 266). However, in the Chinese context, the term "Manyi" reflects the attitudes of Chinese agricultural society on surrounding nomads.

"Manyi" is a pejorative Chinese term for various non-Chinese peoples bordering ancient China, contrary to "Huaxia" (华夏, China) in the centre, which mainly consists of Han (汉), the majority ethnic group in China. According to the Sinocentric worldview, "Huaxia," namely Han culture, is superior to "Manyi" because of its advanced culture, literature, and etiquette. Ancient Chinese intellectuals including Confucius have emphasized the strict distinction between "Huaxia" and "Manyi" by the measure of courtesy, morals, ideology, costumes, and so forth. For example, Mencius (孟子) states: "I heard that we can convert the Manyi into Huaxia, but I never heard people converted from Huaxia to Manyi" (2000, 175).²⁴ This ethnotype is seen as based on nurture rather than nature, as the "barbarians" could become Chinese by learning Chinese culture and manners. Despite the fact that the neat line between "Huaxia" and "Manyi" had been blurred, and the superiority of Chinese culture had been challenged first by the nomads, and then by the West at the end of the nineteenth century, Li still insisted on this distinction by highlighting the barbarian features of other ethnic groups.

When Li Danlin depicts the people at the southwest border of China (see Figure 10.3), he criticizes: "Women have autonomy there, with lapels pointing to the left. Their custom is lustful."²⁵ There are three issues here which illustrate Li's stereotypical manner. Above all, the lapel is the overlapping part of the Chinese gown, which should point to the right according to

24 My translation. Original quote: "吾闻用夏变夷者，未闻变于夷者也。"

25 My translation. Original quote: "女子自权，左衽长发，俗淫。"



FIGURE 10.3 “A man from ‘Wutu’ Nation (British colony)” 英屬烏吐國人.

Chinese convention. It is an ancient Chinese stereotype that those who dress in the opposite way would be regarded as barbarians. For instance, in *The Analects of Confucius* (论语), Confucius claims: “If it were not for Zhong Guan (管仲), we would have untied the hair and worn the gowns with lapels pointing to the left” (Ruan 2009, 5457).²⁶ It means that if there

26 My translation. Original quote: “微管仲，吾其被发左衽矣。”

were nobody to fight against nomadic peoples with primitive civilization, the Huaxia or Han culture would have been assimilated by the barbarians. Based on the stereotype, Li imposes the conventional Chinese dress code on other ethnic groups.

Secondly, due to his conservative ideology entailed from the Confucian ethical code, especially the “Three Obediences and Four Virtues” (三从四德), Li took it for granted that a woman should be obedient to her husband as a chaste wife and should not have too much interaction like flirting with other men. Thirdly, besides the text, the drawing also highlights the tattoo on the man's naked body as a trait of the barbarian.

Other recurrent stereotypes in *The Travel Journal and Pictures* underline the savage characteristics of indigenous people. For instance, Li represents Native Americans as “wearing fur coats, drinking blood, hunting with bows and arrows, being ruthless,” and characterizes their culture by saying that “the one who kills the most can be the chief.”²⁷ As we can see from the drawing (see Figure 10.4), Li emphasizes the feather decoration, the fur robe, and the bow and arrows as savage traits.

In Li's stereotyped depiction, the indigenous people of a Dutch colony are endowed with a “ferocious nature,” “disobeying Confucian moralization, residing in caves and the wilderness.”²⁸ Furthermore, Li describes their cannibalism at length: “when the parents get old, their children divide their corpses and feast on them [...] It is called ‘belly burial.’”²⁹ The savage custom goes against Confucian filial morality. As if to arouse the reader's imagination of the bloody scene, Li draws a knife held by an indigenous man (see Figure 10.5).

Li accuses people in Kelantan and India of “not using chopsticks” (Li 1905, fig. 20), regarding chopsticks as a sign of civilization. He depicts them as sitting on the ground, grabbing the food with their right hands, and cleaning their bottoms with their left hands. They rarely wash their hands but only wipe them on their clothes. “You can imagine how dirty their clothes are.”³⁰ Such descriptions convey a note of contempt.

Besides the clichés of “residing in the wilderness,” “enjoying hunting,” and “being fierce,” Li describes the mountain people in Taiwan as blowing arrows from specific pipes (ibid., fig. 23). They are characterized by “not tying their

27 My translation. Original quote: “衣毛饮血，善箭，好獵，性狼（狼）恶，亦以多杀人为酋长。”

28 My translation. Original quote: “性凶恶，不服王化，野处穴居。”

29 My translation. Original quote: “父母将老，子孙分而食之 [...] 名曰腹葬云云。”

30 My translation. Original quote: “不用箸，不用刀叉，用右手将饭爪挪入口而食之，左手不行礼，专以出公（出恭）之便，抹屎而已 [...] 食毕，且不洗手，仅以衣拭之。其衣服不洁，可想而知也。”



FIGURE 10.4 “The chief of a native American tribe” 堙陣國酋長式.

hair,” having tattoos, painting their bodies with animal blood, and wearing leaves.³¹ Li vividly portrays the untidy hair, the almost naked body, the tattoos, and the large pipe.

31 My translation. Original quote: “台湾生番，野处穴居，喜獵，用噴筒，能伤虎象各兽。披发文身，遇人即伤。以兽血漆身[……]性凶恶，男女多衣树叶。”



FIGURE 10.5 "A man from the mountain in 'Mata' (Dutch colony)" 嗎搵山民.

There are other repetitive clichés that emphasize the barbarous nature and manifest Sinocentric stereotypes, such as "eating raw meat," and "taking pleasure in killing people or fighting," and so on. Such clichés and stereotypes can be associated with the notion of "national character" proposed by Joep Leerssen. National characters originate from "[t]he tendency to attribute specific characteristics or even characters to different societies, 'races' or 'nations'" (2007b, 17).

The figures painted by Li automatically become personified portraits of different nations and races. Despite their distinctive appearances and attributes, Li ascribes the common national character of “Manyi” to all these developing societies and cultures.

Daniel-Henri Pageaux points out that to invent a stereotype, “the descriptive elements (physical features) are mixed with the normative order (inferiority of such people, of their culture)” (2014, 457).³² Li’s descriptions or portraits seem to be objective and neutral, but they actually involve a negative judgement. Pageaux also clarifies “the formation of otherness, through binary oppositions that merge nature with culture: wild vs. civilized, barbaric vs. civilized, human vs. animal [...] being superior vs. being inferior” (1995, 144).³³ This explains how Li Danlin transforms the “reality” to construct otherness and alterity following the Sinocentric standard of ethnotyping. Li’s creation of these barbarian hetero-images also conforms to the mythological convention initiated by *The Classic of Mountains and Seas*.

In *The Travel Journal and Pictures*, detailed and stereotyped descriptions of peoples in developing areas contrast with brief and fallacious depictions of Western societies. According to Pageaux, the transformations of “reality” inherent in hetero-images typically show two different modes. The first approach is the cultural integration or domestication of the “other” by assimilating the unknown to the known—this is how Li Danlin applies clichés and stereotypes like “Manyi” to foreign peoples. The second method is exclusion or marginalization—this explains how Li simplifies the descriptions of Western cultures (Pageaux 1995, 142).³⁴ As Moura reveals, “reducing distant worlds by schematization and generalization, [clichés and stereotypes] allow the creation of a world both exotic and familiar, based on the principle of an artificial distance, which refers to a familiar series of conventions” (1993, 106).³⁵ To

32 My translation. Original quote: “Le descriptif (l’attribut physique) se confond avec l’ordre normative (infériorité de tel peuple, de telle culture).”

33 My translation. Original quote: “On mettra donc en évidence le système de qualification différentielle qui permet la formation de l’altérité, à travers de couples oppositionnels qui vont faire fusionner nature et culture : sauvage vs civilisé, barbare vs cultivé, homme vs animal [...] être supérieur vs être inférieur.”

34 My translation. Original quote: “Des processus d’appropriation de l’étranger (réduction de l’inconnu au connu) ou d’éloignement, d’exotisation, des processus d’intégration culturelle de l’Autre ou d’exclusion, de marginalisation.”

35 My translation. Original quote: “Réduisant les mondes lointains par schématisation et généralisation, ils (clichés et stéréotypes) permettent la création, ou plutôt la fabrication, d’un monde à la fois dépaysant et connu, reposant sur le principe d’une distance mimée, artificielle, qui renvoie à une série familière de conventions.”

cater for the traditional Chinese stereotype, Li Danlin creates hetero-images in a dual way: on the one hand, he ignores the democratic politics and core values of certain developed Western societies; on the other hand, he classifies diverse customs of people in developing regions into the conventional Chinese category of “barbarians” based on the division of “Huaxia” and “Manyi,” Han and other ethnic groups.

4 Occidentalism: Sinocentric Schemata of Ethnotyping

The Sinocentric perception represented by Li's *The Travel Journal and Pictures* may be associated with the notion of Occidentalism, which can be considered the counterpart of Edward Said's concept of Orientalism. Occidentalism refers to a hetero-image of the West formed by non-Western countries. Like Orientalism, Occidentalism is a political vision of reality with a structure that promotes the difference between the familiar (China, the East, “us”) and the strange (“Taixi,” the West, “them”) (cf. Said 1979, 43). As non-Western cultures are remarkably diverse, individual cultures such as the Middle East, India, Japan, and China all have their own particular perceptions and misperceptions of “the West.” My article focuses on Occidentalism in the Chinese context, as *The Travel Journal and Pictures* exemplifies the conventional way that Chinese people perceived and represented the West in the premodern era.

As Alastair Bonnett states, “[t]he oldest heritage of discovering and interpreting the West is from China,” which can be dated back to the fifth century (2004, 40). The image of “the West” or “the Occident” has been evolving over time, shifting from the myths in *The Classic of Mountains and Seas* toward a more realistic portrayal, expanding from ethnic groups in western China, the Indian Subcontinent, and Arabia, to the modern geographical and sociocultural West or Occident typically characterized by a capitalist economy, democratic politics, and Christian religion. Summarizing this process, Bonnett claims: “As contact increased, Westerners were accorded a collective identity” (ibid.). The Western countries were gradually essentialized as “Taixi.” Since the nineteenth century, as the West showed military and economic dominance over the East, the traditional stereotype of Westerners as “barbarians” was replaced by the neutral term of “foreigners” (see Casalin in this volume, p. 202).

In *Occidentalism: A Theory of Counter-Discourse in Post-Mao China*, Chen Xiaomei elaborates on the official Maoist Occidentalism and the antiofficial discourse shaped by diverse domestic contexts of contemporary China. Wang

Ning claims in his article “Orientalism versus Occidentalism?” that as an immature and problematic academic concept, Occidentalism is only “a strategy of discourse opposed to Western cultural hegemonism, or an ideological force challenging the Western power” (1997, 66). While Chen and Wang are mainly concerned with contemporary China, the case study of Li Danlin’s travelogue offers a historical dimension.

According to Said, “Orientalism expresses and represents that part [the Orient] culturally and even ideologically as a mode of discourse with supporting institutions, vocabulary, scholarship, imagery, doctrines, even colonial bureaucracies and colonial styles” (1979, 2). This coincides with the ethnotype of “Huaxia” and “Manyi” that was deeply rooted in Chinese ideology and backed up by numerous Confucian canons³⁶ and ancient Chinese diplomatic policies. From my perspective, Said’s explication can thus be adapted to describe the Chinese form of Occidentalism: continued investment made Occidentalism, as a system of knowledge about the West, an accepted grid for filtering through the West into Chinese consciousness (1979, 6).³⁷

Said comments on the Egyptian courtesan depicted by Flaubert: “she never spoke of herself, she never represented her emotions, presence, or history. He spoke for and represented her” (ibid.). Similar to the courtesan, the Western figures in *The Travel Journal and Pictures* appear to be silent and absent. It is unlikely that Li Danlin, taking the position of an interpreter and accompanying the ambassadors, had never communicated with Westerners. In his travelogue, except for commenting on their appearances, he seems to have no intention to exchange ideas. In contrast to this, he notes his conversations with indigenous people in the fourth part of the travelogue. However, these seemingly talkative natives are also represented by Li, whose mentality is profoundly influenced by the Sinocentric convention. As Daniel-Henri Pageaux demonstrates, “the stereotype is the index of univocal communication, of a culture in the process of (self-)blocking” (2014, 456).³⁸ The readers may never hear the authentic voice from either Westerners or indigenous people.

36 *The Spring and Autumn Annals* (*Chunqiu*, 春秋); *The Three Ritual Classics*, which includes *Rites of Zhou* (*Zhou Li*, 周礼), *Ceremonies and Rites* (*Yi Li*, 仪礼), and *Book of Rites* (*Li Ji*, 礼记); *The Three Commentaries on the Spring and Autumn Annals*, especially *The Commentary of Zuo* (*Zuo Zhuan*, 左传); *The Analects* (*Lun Yu*, 论语); *Mencius* (*Mang Zi*, 孟子), and other canons in *The Thirteen Classics* (*Shi San Jing*, 十三经) of Confucian tradition.

37 Original quote: “Continued investment made Orientalism, as a system of knowledge about the Orient, an accepted grid for filtering through the Orient into Western consciousness [...]”

38 My translation. Original quote: “Le stéréotype est l’indice d’une communication univoque, d’une culture en voie de blocage.”

5 Conclusion

As a homage to *The Classic of Mountains and Seas* and a nostalgic example of the Sinocentric pattern of stereotyping, Li adapts the reality of foreign lands and cultures in a dual way: the detailed and stereotyped description of people in undeveloped areas contrasts with the brief and fallacious depiction of the Western world. While the clichés and stereotypes reflect Li's conventional mindset about the distinction between barbarians and Han culture, he creates hetero-images of silent Westerners, as well as savage images of indigenous peoples, thus depicting these cultures in a manner that fits his ideologies.

Nevertheless, Li's underlying intention of misinterpreting Western cultures must be situated within the context of a semicolonized China. Analogous to Chen's methodology, James G. Carrier affirms that "political contingencies shape the orientalisms and occidentalisms" (1995, 8). For imagological studies, Joep Leerssen also places emphasis on historical contextualization (2007b, 28). Unlike "Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient" (Said 1979, 3), in premodern China the critical context was the impending threat of being invaded and colonized. The failure of the two Opium Wars in 1839 and from 1856 to 1860 had severely challenged conventional Sinocentric views, as Chinese people found themselves defeated and partly dominated by the so-called "barbarians."

As shown in my analysis, rather than to present "realistic" images of "others", Li Danlin's misinterpretation of foreign "reality" aims to restore the auto-image of China as an autonomous and culturally orthodox empire. As Carrier points out, the self-image of Non-Westerners "often develops in contrast to their symbolized image of the West" (1995, 6). On the one hand, Li depicts "barbarian" peoples to regain confidence of China as a highly civilized nation; on the other hand, he portrays silent Westerners drawing all of their inspiration from ancient Chinese inventions, in order to escape from the reality of Western hegemony. Leerssen declares that the patterns of othering are necessary for "the maintenance of selfhood through historical remembrance and cultural memory" (2007b, 29). Hence, it is possible that Li Danlin—striving to recover from the collective trauma of semicolonization—tries to reconstruct national identity by revisiting outdated stereotypes. In this sense, *The Travel Journal and Pictures* can be seen as representing a decolonizing or anticolonialist strategy of discourse.

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