

storytelling, and questions misconceptions about Chinese “cruelty.” In the chapter, “Girls of My Acquaintance,” Lee acknowledges the gender oppression of women in China but challenges the stereotype of Chinese parents killing their baby girls. In discussing his experience in relation to the Chinese Educational Mission, Lee questions Western imperialist practices in China and considers Yung Wing’s project as a remedy for “the wrongs” committed by the so-called “Christian” and “enlightened nations.” In the last chapter, “First Experiences in America,” Lee also describes his own experience in a train robbery and critiques the violence in the industrialized America. Though it is categorized as an autobiography, Lee’s work focuses mostly on his memory of everyday practice of Chinese culture and society and his impression of the technologically oriented United States.

Lee also wrote polemic essays explaining his faith and defending Chinese presence in the United States. His first essay, “Why I Am Not a Heathen,” was published in *North American Review* in September 1887, and served as a response to his fellow Chinese American Wong Chin Foo’s essay, “Why Am I a Heathen?” carried in the April issue of the same journal. Lee answers Wong’s concern by differentiating between religion and ethics and narrating his own spiritual journey from a “heathen” to a Christian. He questions the hypocrisy of the British government in claiming to be a Christian nation but practicing gunboat policy in China. Lee concludes by reiterating his faith in “true Christianity” and embracing the values of cosmopolitanism.

As anti-Chinese sentiment and legal exclusion of the Chinese escalated in the United States, Lee changed his modest tone in the previous essay and wrote a powerful argument in the essay, “The Chinese Must Stay,” carried in the *North American Review* in April 1889. Resorting to the high ideals of the founding fathers of the Republic, Lee questions “this generation of Americans in their treatment of other races” and condemns the laws passed against the Chinese and the anti-Chinese platform adopted by both political parties on the West Coast. With statistics, examples, and logical reasoning, Lee challenges all 11 charges against the Chinese and dismisses them one by one as contradictory, speculative, and malicious.

After Lee worked at odd jobs for decades and served as the editor of the *American Banker* from 1918 to 1927, Lee lost his job with humiliation and finally decided to leave for China. Although China had been under siege of the Japanese Imperial Army during the 1930s, Lee could not find decent work and suffered from poverty. His last correspondence with the United States was in 1938, when he was allegedly killed by the Japanese bombing of Canton.

Yuan Shu

See also Chinese Americans

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Lee, Yuan Tseh (1936–)

Yuan Tseh Lee is a prominent Taiwan-born scientist who spent much of his scientific career in the United States, including conducting the research that won him a share of the 1986 Nobel Prize in Chemistry. He returned to the island in 1994 where he has played an active role in its science and education policy and in its politics.

Yuan Tseh Lee (Li Yuanzhe in *pinyin*) was born on November 19, 1936, in Hsinchu (Xinzhu) in Taiwan. His father Lee Tze-fan (Li Zefan) was an artist and educator, and his mother Ts’ai Pei (Cai Pei) directed a kindergarten. At the time Taiwan was under Japanese occupation, so Lee grew up speaking Japanese and went to a Japanese school until the end of World War II in 1945 when the island returned to Chinese rule. After some initial difficulties, Lee adjusted to going to a Chinese school and learned to speak Chinese. Soon he became an avid reader of

books and magazines (both Chinese and Japanese), which greatly expanded his horizon and turned him into a young idealist and even a socialist. Lee excelled in both academics and sports (baseball and table tennis), but it was a biography of Marie Curie that led him to decide to pursue a career in science.

Lee entered the elite Taiwan University in 1955 to study chemical engineering, but changed to chemistry a year later because he was attracted in part by the devotion of some of its faculty. Upon the recommendations of an upper classman, C. T. Chang (Zhang Zhaoding), he spent much time and energy on physics as a foundation for the understanding of most chemical phenomena, which eventually led him to specialize in physical chemistry. Following his graduation in 1959, he enrolled in the graduate program in chemistry at Tsinghua University in Hsinchu where he obtained his MS with a thesis on the studies of natural radioisotopes present in a mineral called Hukutolite. Afterward he stayed at Tsinghua as a research assistant conducting research on the determination of the structure of a substance called tricyclopentadienyl samarium using x-rays. Throughout this period, Lee learned to make instruments and set up sophisticated experiments under primitive conditions that would serve him well later in his career.

In 1962, Lee entered the University of California, Berkeley, to pursue a PhD in chemistry. There he was interested in the research on chemical reactions by Dudley Hershbach, one of his chemistry professors, but Hershbach soon moved to Harvard. Lee ended up working with Bruce Mahan, whose style of providing little guidance but maximum freedom benefited Lee in the long run as it forced and encouraged him to find solutions to scientific problems on his own. After successfully completing an experiment on reactions between excited and ground-state alkali atoms, Lee received his PhD in 1965 and stayed in Mahan's lab as a postdoc. This gave Lee the opportunity to carry out studies on ion-molecule reactions by shooting crossed beams of molecules (ions) at each other and using detectors to examine their reactions, a field that was pioneered by Hershbach.

In February 1967, this interest in molecular beam reactions led Lee to take up a second postdoc with Hershbach at Harvard. At the time, one of the major

limitations of Hershbach's crossed molecular beam apparatus was that it could work only with alkali molecules. Within a year, however, Lee, with the support of a team of graduate students and technicians, successfully designed and constructed a machine capable of carrying out such experiments with nonalkali molecules, which opened the era of universal crossed molecular beam experimentation that was fundamental to understanding exactly what happened during chemical reactions. Hershbach marveled at Lee's talent and skills, calling him "the Mozart of physical chemistry." He also commented that Lee could make such a complicated machine and make it work because he had "five thousand years of cultural heritage" behind him.

In 1968, Lee was hired as an assistant professor at the University of Chicago where he continued and expanded his earlier successes with new generations of crossed molecular beams apparatus that revolutionized the field. In quick succession he was promoted to associate professor in 1971 and full professor in 1973. But in 1974 he returned to Berkeley as both a professor of chemistry and a principal investigator at the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory that the university ran under contract with the federal government. He also naturalized as a U.S. citizen that same year.

At Berkeley, Lee continued to lead research in his field with the construction of several molecular beams apparatus specially designed to examine reaction dynamics, photochemical processes, and molecular spectroscopy. His lab attracted students and scientists from all over the world and in turn produced many future leaders in the field. Honors also poured in during this period: he was elected a member of the U.S. National Academy of Sciences in 1979, a member of Academia Sinica, the highest scholarly acclaim in Taiwan, several honorary professorships from universities in mainland China, the Ernest O. Lawrence Award from the U.S. Department of Energy in 1981, the National Medal of Science in early 1986, and later that same year, the Nobel Prize in Chemistry, which he shared with Hershbach and Canadian chemist John C. Polanyi "for their contributions concerning the dynamics of chemical elementary processes." As he gained prominence, Lee became increasingly active in public policy both on and off campus, including serving as cochair of the chancellor's

Asian-American Affairs Committee at Berkeley and as a member of the Secretary of Energy Advisory Board.

Finally, in 1994, attracted by the prospect of democratic reforms in Taiwan and propelled by an attachment to his birthplace, Lee decided to take early retirement from Berkeley and return to Taiwan to become the president of Academia Sinica (he gave up his U.S. citizenship to do so). In his new position he devoted himself to strengthening the academy's research efforts by both increasing its budgets and recruiting other scientists who had, like him, gone abroad, especially to the United States, from Taiwan. Believing that scientists and intellectuals should exercise their social responsibilities, Lee also became centrally involved in educational reforms, cross-strait (Taiwan-mainland China) relations, and other social and public affairs in Taiwan.

Most significantly and controversially, Lee lent his considerable prestige in support of the eventually successful candidacy of Chen Shuibian, leader of the opposition Democratic Progressive Party, in Taiwan's 2000 presidential election. He justified his move as a step in encouraging democratic reform in Taiwan, but his critics felt that by doing so he compromised the traditionally nonpolitical status of Academia Sinica (he later expressed his disappointment in Chen, who was indicted for corruption after leaving office in 2008). Lee offered to resign his presidency of the academy but his resignation was not accepted, and he continued in that position until 2006, when he became a research fellow in the academy's Institute of Atomic and Molecular Sciences that he and C. T. Chang had helped found in the early 1990s. In 2008, he was elected president of the International Council for Science and began his term in 2011.

Zuoyue Wang

See also Taiwanese Americans

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Leong, Russell (1950–)

Russell Leong is the editor of *Amerasia Journal*, a leading interdisciplinary journal in the field of Asian American studies, as well as an adjunct professor in the Departments of English and Asian American Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles. He is also a poet and author whose works have won the PEN Josephine Miles Award in Literature and the American Book Award.

Leong was born in San Francisco's Chinatown district in 1950. He was an early participant in San Francisco's Kearny Street Workshop, a nonprofit, politically active artists' collective dedicated to producing Asian American art. In 1972, he received his bachelor's degree from San Francisco State University. Leong went on to spend the next two years studying in the Department of Chinese Languages and Literature at the National Taiwan University. In 1990, Leong completed a master's degree in fine arts from UCLA's School of Theater, Film, and Television.

Leong's work has been critically praised for its discussion of Chinese American identity, migration, and diaspora. It has also addressed topics including gay and bisexual identity, AIDS, and religion and spirituality. In 1993, Leong published *The Country of Dreams and Dust*, a collection of poems, to widespread acclaim. It would eventually win the PEN Josephine Miles Literary Award as an example of excellence in multicultural literature.

In 2001, *Phoenix Eyes and Other Stories*, a book of short stories penned by Leong, was honored as one of 15 American Book Award winners. The book contained 14 stories written over 30 years, several of which had been anthologized in collections including *Aiiieeeee! An Anthology of Asian American Writers*, edited by Frank Chin, and *Charlie Chan is Dead: An Anthology of Contemporary Asian American Fiction*,