

Domestic Diplomacy: Empress Dowager Cixi, Sarah Pike Conger, and the Chinese Butler Who Brought Them Together

Grant Hayter-Menzies

Keynote Address presented at *The Imperial Court in China, Japan, and Korea: Women, Servants, and the Emperor's Household (1600 to early 1900s)*, University of San Francisco, Center for the Pacific Rim, April 18, 2013.

While researching the life of Sarah Pike Conger, wife of the United States minister to China from 1898–1905, as she experienced and recorded it while living in Beijing's diplomatic quarter, I discovered that it was largely through the influence of Wang, the Number One Boy, or butler, at the American Legation, that one of the most unique cross-cultural relationships in East-West diplomacy had its genesis. Thanks to Wang, a friendship blossomed between the Buddhist and xenophobic Empress Dowager Cixi and Mrs. Conger, whose love of America and depth of Christian devotion were her two mainstays until she met China and fell in love with it too.

Sarah came to Beijing in 1898, a middle-aged woman from Iowa knowing absolutely nothing of China or the Chinese people. Yet she left seven years later one of China's most passionate defenders. A survivor of the Boxer Uprising, that mob effort in summer 1900 to rid China of foreign exploitation, Sarah was the first foreigner to stretch a hand to Cixi, the one person who disproportionately bore the most blame for the disaster.



Fig. 1. Sarah Pike Conger

The daughter of a low-ranking Manchu official, Cixi was several years Sarah's senior, born in 1835, and at sixteen was selected as concubine to the Xianfeng Emperor. Bearing the emperor's only son, Cixi rose in rank after Xianfeng's death in 1861, becoming Empress Dowager when their son, the Tongzhi Emperor,



Fig. 2. Cixi

ascended the throne. She served as regent for him and, after his early death, for her nephew, the Guangxu Emperor. This charmed life as young and beautiful imperial consort had gone up in flames in 1860 with the looting and destruction of the Old Summer Palace in Beijing by foreign troops during the Second Opium War; Cixi spent the rest of her life watching helplessly as China was then fought over by foreign powers jostling for precedence like irate customers at an understaffed Chinese-takeout counter. The Dowager had no reason to love any foreigner. However, when Sarah's hand was offered, Cixi accepted it. This was something new and strange in East-West relations. Yet neither woman could have reached out to the other without help. And as unconventional as their own friendship was, especially so were the means by which it was effected.

Throughout her seven years in Beijing, Sarah came to depend on her butler Wang to teach her not just ordinary Chinese customs but how to enjoy and participate in ceremonies and festivals by responding gracefully to the complex demands of Chinese etiquette. Cixi also looked to someone seemingly just as unlikely—a teenaged lady-in-waiting named Der Ling. Though born in China, Der Ling—whose Christian name was Elisabeth Antoinette and whose title of princess is a matter of debate—had rarely lived there. But as a young woman of European education and American upbringing she was able to convey to the Dowager the meaning behind Mrs. Conger's strange foreign gestures and requests. Together, Wang and Der Ling are reminders that behind every performance are stagehands who actually pull the production together. Theirs was domestic diplomacy at its finest.

Sarah's first frustrated impression of Beijing was that it was a place of walls and locked gates. To understand the people with whom she would be living, Sarah wanted to meet them—especially Chinese women, who she knew were restricted to their courtyards by Confucian rules. Thus, though the Chinese language was beyond her, Sarah became an avid student of Chinese symbols. Around basic themes of long life and happiness—the character for which could be found on everything from roof tiles to lanterns, porcelain, and paving stones—circled a constellation of other symbolic prayers to the infinite: prayers for many sons, for wealth and health, for the benevolence of Guanyin (goddess of mercy) or for the special blessings of a pantheon of other deities or ancestors it suited a family or clan to worship. Sarah became interested in the deeper meanings of Chinese art and architecture at a time when English art critic John Ruskin had already primed the sensibilities of the public: “All great art is the work of the whole living creature, body and soul, and chiefly of the soul.”¹

Sarah came to believe that in order to understand the Chinese, she had to understand their art first. Historian James Hevia underscored this when he observed that “Her interest in finding meaning in Oriental splendor foreshadowed later reactions to the Forbidden City, ones that would re-imagine the palace and the city of Beijing as sophisticated works of art.”²

Before his death in 1901, William Pethick, the American-born secretary of statesman Li Hongzhang, was Sarah's advisor in Chinese culture, instructing her in what she called its “language.” Wang took the American's place and became, like Pethick, a teacher. Not only did he advise Sarah on what colors of clothing and which flowers were appropriate for which season, and for which kind of ceremonial and informal occasions across the spectrum, but he drew her attention to Chinese traditional festivals which, in most foreign households

in Beijing, tended to remain in the servants' quarters, set apart by race and class. Sarah's other Chinese servants had also seen that she respected and was interested in their religious customs. On her first Christmas in Beijing, they responded in kind with two little trees decorated with auspicious Chinese symbols. Sarah moved what she called her Chinese Christmas trees into her inner sanctum, the Legation library, where she also kept a statue of the Buddha. There was a reason for this concealment. Sarah's residence in Beijing's diplomatic quarter had exposed her to too many examples of foreign distrust or open disapproval of the Chinese and their culture, criticism which was to extend to herself in time. It was usually a dialog that began with the premise that everything Chinese was strange, bizarre, and above all heathen, and ended with the snickering assessment that Mrs. Conger had "gone native." In fact, Sarah embraced the Chinese with a compassion and deep emotion too precious to her to be exposed to unthinking comment, much as the Chinese Christmas trees and the Buddha in the library needed not display but protection.

It is clear that Wang understood this even as he understood instinctively when the time was right to welcome Sarah more deeply into his culture. By Autumn Moon Festival of his first year as butler, Wang was confident enough to ask Sarah if she was interested in joining him and the other male servants for their celebration of the festival, which was incidentally a favorite holiday of the Empress Dowager. Happy to be asked, Sarah followed Wang to an outer courtyard that only the servants used—an area many foreign memsahibs in Beijing would never have ventured to, from class prejudice or fear or both. There, Sarah joined and photographed all of her houseboys sitting at a round table, its top crowded with bright dishes and teacups, all enjoying themselves under the light of the full moon.

The Buddha said, "He who forgets self, be he the humblest of earthly creatures, will reach the Ocean of Eternal Peace."³ Before coming to China, at a time of deep spiritual crisis, Sarah had made a vow to forget herself in order to learn about the people around her. Her enjoyment of the Moon Feast in the servants' courtyard, the young men smiling as they drank their tea, perhaps offering Sarah a moon cake, was all the proof she or the Buddha might need that she had come very close to her desired goal: to fill her life with China and the Chinese, and to be ready to meet and, she hoped, befriend the Empress Dowager. First, though, she would have to pick her way to her through a thorny hedge of tabloid journalism which had sprung up around the Forbidden City even before the Boxer Uprising cast the Dowager and all Chinese as scoundrels.

Cixi's bad press in the West began in 1898, when during the Guangxu Emperor's Hundred Days of Reform, fomented by advisors like Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao, she discovered that his platform included plans to depose her. She placed the emperor under house arrest and captured some but not all of his advisors. Kang escaped and from exile filled newspaper columns with fulminations against Cixi, charging her with every sin of depravity and misrule, including the murder of her own son, adding her to the list every Chinese had in his mind of imperial female tyrants of dynasties past. And later, Cixi's alleged connivance in the Boxer Uprising, in which she was popularly believed to have urged on the mob like some supernatural heroine from Beijing Opera, put the final nail in her public-relations coffin.

After the Empress Dowager's return from exile in winter 1902, when Sarah and other diplomatic wives came to the Forbidden City at her invitation, the Uprising was still fresh in the minds of their husbands, who saw Cixi and the Chinese as backward xenophobes willing to commit mass murder. These women, encouraged by Sarah, bravely disobeyed their husbands by accepting Cixi's invitation, opening themselves to international criticism. Unlike these women, however, Sarah had lived through the bullets and bombs. It was easy to blame Cixi for the Uprising, but the truth of her involvement is far more complicated, a fact Sarah appreciated to a degree extraordinary for the times. "My sympathy is with China," she wrote defiantly when such sentiment was tantamount to treason.⁴

It was at this juncture that Wang, from the American Legation, and Princess Der Ling, from the imperial palace, played their crucial roles.

We don't know much about Wang. He may have been Han Chinese—as can be seen in this portrait photo, his wife and daughter had the bound feet of Han women. Perhaps in his late twenties or early thirties when he worked for the Congers, though he had a family, he was supremely loyal to his employers. During the Boxer Uprising, when other servants ran away, rather than abandon the Congers to rescue his own family, Wang remained with them, keeping them and other refugees alive with food he caught or stole in the no-man's land outside the Legation's walls, often under deadly crossfire. Like Sarah, Wang helped fill sandbags, he took on all the American refugees' laundry



Fig. 3. Wang & family

and assisted in the makeshift siege hospital, saving the lives of wounded and sick men, women, and children. Yet Wang also broke that cardinal siege rule of share and share alike by sparing from the collective dinner table a pony that was loved by the Congers' daughter, Laura. His tender heart extended to Laura's parents. When Laura returned to America after the siege, and the Congers had to spend Christmas in ruined Beijing without her, Wang set up a photograph of their daughter on a table in the library. He placed around it flowers and Christmas presents, as a Chinese family might offer incense, fruit, or rice on the altar before their ancestral portraits.

Wang had to push through some boundaries that were not easy for him to traverse. Though he was not what we would today term a dog lover, when a Shih Tzu puppy named Sherza, given to Sarah by the Empress Dowager, suddenly sickened and died, Wang stood quietly by and commiserated respectfully while Sarah wept over the lifeless body. He then wrapped Sherza in silk and laid her in a grave he had dug in the Legation garden, and planted flowers on the spot because, as he told Sarah, "I thought Madame would like to see them there." With Wang, Sarah also tested her own cultural limits. Accustomed to American

household servants, often women with strong characters, Sarah at first was puzzled when confronted by her Chinese houseboys' solicitous and selfless care for her home and family. "They are so quiet, attentive, careful, tasteful and exact about their work," she wrote, "that they seem more like well-bred girls than men"⁵—a less harmless form of the racialized regendering of Chinese males in America, where the braided queues and colorful silk robes of visiting dignitaries invariably led to Chinese men being seen as somehow womanly or effeminate to American men. Perhaps this is what moved Sarah to ask one of her servants to unplait his queue, as seen in a photograph she took of the occasion. Was this her way of proving that a man could have hair longer than most women did, could be careful, attentive, and tasteful, yet remain very much a man? For a Chinese male to show his unbraided hair in front of a woman not his wife, especially a foreign one, was not common in the China of that day; just unbraiding one's queue publicly could be interpreted as disobedience to the Qing regime. Clearly this man trusted Sarah or he likely would not have assented to her request. And perhaps he did so in shared amusement with Sarah at the prejudices of "foreign devils."

Before Wang, Sarah had made some serious missteps in her dealings with Chinese people. On one occasion, to help a female servant who had shared with Sarah her worries about her childlessness, Sarah overcame her scruples regarding the selling of children and made inquiries at a mission for orphans in Beijing about buying a child for her servant. The tough, no-nonsense missionary ladies didn't judge, but they did bring Sarah back to reality: suppose they let her buy a child for this woman, and the woman's husband then took the girl as his concubine? Suppose the woman herself wanted to employ the girl as a prostitute? This kind of thing never happened after Wang became butler of the Legation. Far from being the cringing and pliant Chinese male of Western stereotyping, he took the upper hand in helping Sarah inch her way into Chinese society. "[Wang] watches me very closely," Sarah observed, "and I encourage him to do so." Her encouragement brought with it incidents which in the typical master-servant relationship—especially between a foreign woman and a Chinese man—would have been unthinkable. On the occasion of preparing for an audience with Cixi, Sarah had carefully selected a pearl and coral ornament the Dowager had given her, thinking it might please Cixi to see her wearing it. But Wang stopped Sarah before she reached the door. "No proper time wear that summer ornament," he told her. Sarah put the ornament back in its box, in exchange for another that passed Wang's approval. On another evening, just as Sarah was leaving for a dinner with Chinese officials wearing a long, fur-lined, black satin coat, Wang approached her with that look. "More better," he advised, "you wear light, long, foreign coat." "Off it went," Sarah wrote, "and my own 'lady's coat' was donned."⁶

Far from being the sort of pretentious expat one finds in the stories of Pearl S. Buck, Sarah appreciated Wang's advice, not just because she valued every opportunity to learn but also because, like the Chinese, she shared a sense of everything being in its rightful place, as foreordained as the motions of the stars. Through Wang and his faultless sense of propriety and proportion, his choice of flowers and his lessons in the encoding and decoding of auspicious and gracious messages in everything Sarah gave to or did for her friends, even to his help in decorating the Legation in a mix of Chinese and Western styles, Sarah learned

to make her aristocratic Manchu and Chinese women friends comfortable, and from there it was not much of a step to requesting a personal audience with the Empress Dowager Cixi who, as Sarah acknowledged, had every reason to distrust a foreign woman like herself.

This is where Princess Der Ling enters the scene, or rather leaps onto the stage.

Seventeen at the time she was summoned from France in 1903 to serve at the Empress Dowager's court, Der Ling went from the broad boulevards of Paris, where her father served as Chinese ambassador, and from her beloved mentors Isadora Duncan and Sarah Bernhardt, to the narrow *hutong* of Qing Beijing, and to the fearsome presence of Cixi, post-Uprising she-dragon of China. Such a cultural shift would have scared off most young girls, but Der Ling was adept at making adventure work in her favor.

She spoke and wrote Chinese, French, and English, but her preferred language was always American English larded with slang; and her amusement toward Chinese customs was that of the foreigners, not the natives, in China. As she said of herself, "At heart, I was a foreigner."⁷ She was, and she was also a feminist when such was radical even for a Western-bred woman, let alone an Asian one, and in the 1920s she would shock Chinese society and the more prim expats with her flapper antics. She was a snob and a romantic, and she later exploited American gullibility through her lectures and books by claiming to belong to the deposed imperial family of China. Yet if Der Ling had any fixed point within her it was a sense that her life was one of high purpose, one meant to build bridges between East and West, to make China, and Cixi, understandable to the outside world. She was determined to take on the job singlehanded and make it a success.

Der Ling's 1911 memoir of her service at court is the first eyewitness account of life with the Empress Dowager by a woman of Cixi's own race, and it remains the classic tale of a Western-educated Asian woman's experiences in an exotic atmosphere that, as Der Ling wrote, made her feel like Mark Twain's Connecticut Yankee at King Arthur's court. It features Der Ling in one of her many roles, that of roving reporter at the Qing imperial court, always in the right place at the right time to explain to her American readers the 150 dishes offered to Cixi at a single sitting, or candid details of the Dowager being bathed, or her outbursts of joy or rage. At court, Der Ling soon proved a very different young woman from the pliable maidens Cixi was accustomed to. She flouted convention and risked Cixi's rage by refusing to



Fig. 4. Cixi, Der Ling, and head eunuch Tsui

consider a Manchu prince to whom the Dowager wished to marry her off. (She later wedded an American soldier of fortune, who helped her market herself to the exotica-mad U.S. of the Depression era.) Unlike many Chinese women, brought up to be meek, Der Ling had been encouraged by her father to consider herself the equal of any man. Most interestingly, this girl who worshipped her own father came to see Cixi not so much as mother figure as a kind of exalted dad—calling her *qin baba* or, as Der Ling translates this term, “dear father,” an ironic reverse of Sarah Conger’s early impression of her Chinese male servants being like well-bred girls. In certain ways, Der Ling would have made a model servant to the Dowager. She memorized Cixi’s likes and dislikes, was respectful (except when Cixi spoke of marriage), and learned to deftly interpret and anticipate her moods and needs. Yet when faced with having to make Cixi’s bed, or carry food trays, tasks that were considered an honor by others, Der Ling was as aghast as most teenaged American girls would be today. Even after Cixi assured her that she was not to do any real work (thereby incurring the resentment of court ladies who overheard), Der Ling made sure she was always somewhere else when domestic tasks needed doing. In fact, Der Ling didn’t see herself as lady-in-waiting material at all, but as an educator. She ended up being something of a life coach to the tired and jaded Dowager, her aim to introduce Western ways to the imperial court and to China itself.

Shortly after arriving at court, Der Ling arranged to have European and American newspapers and magazines delivered to the palace. She translated on the spot all the foreign news for Cixi, especially features about other rulers around the world, proving that if Queen Victoria could allow all her news as well as her photograph to appear before the people, Cixi could do it too, and her subjects would love her the more for it, as was the case with Victoria and her family. Der Ling and her sister Rong Ling entertained the Dowager, demonstrating dances taught them by Isadora Duncan, and Der Ling gave the Guangxu Emperor piano lessons, noting with pride how well he kept time playing waltzes. She modeled French gowns for the Dowager, helped her try on her high-heeled shoes, showed her how to use French perfumes, hair dye, and makeup, and sympathetically sat with Cixi as she wept passionately over past and present losses. She even decorated a French-style palace for the Dowager—who hated it on sight.

As with Wang’s education of Sarah Conger, Der Ling’s most important achievement was to prepare Cixi for the American woman reaching out to her with what seemed an outlandish request: that Cixi sit for her first Western-style portrait, to be painted by an American woman artist, Katharine Carl. The portrait, thought Sarah, would be a way to combat the ugly caricatures of Cixi appearing in the Western press. It would also be a way to memorialize a woman she had grown to admire. She knew from experience the power of a picture to evoke emotion and inspiration. Until her death in 1932 at age eighty-nine, Sarah kept near her a portrait of her son Lorentus, in which the seven-year-old boy is shown as he was the year of his death, gazing out at a future he would never know. The death of an only son was a tragedy in which both Sarah and Cixi shared.

Cixi had already posed for formal and informal photographic portraits in 1903, when Xunling, a brother of Der Ling who was trained in European techniques, began taking photos of the Dowager at the Summer Palace and

at her Beijing retreat near the Forbidden City (fig. 2 & 4). These images, some in costumed settings with Cixi in the role of Guanyin, are intensely revealing, particularly in that they often show Cixi more or less as her real self—wandering her snowy gardens, or gazing at her aging face in a hand mirror in what David Hogge suggests is less vanity than emulation of a scene from her favorite opera, *The Peony Pavilion*.⁸ But most of these photos were not released to the public view for a century (some of them were first seen in my biography of Princess Der Ling, *Imperial Masquerade: The Legend of Princess Der Ling*, in 2008; the rest in the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery's 2011–2012 exhibition, "Power Play: China's Empress Dowager"). For Der Ling, the first hurdle was convincing Cixi to agree to the portrait at all. For most traditional Chinese, portraits were only painted after death for display at the family altar. When Der Ling offered by example a portrait of herself painted in Paris by Katharine Carl, Cixi was up in arms at the sight of so much décolletage. A gifted amateur painter, she then criticized the shading produced by Western-style perspective. There were to be no shadows, she told Der Ling, and repeated often to Katharine Carl and throughout the period of the project. Der Ling eventually obtained Cixi's consent, but her next challenge was to keep the Dowager to the artist's schedule. Cixi was busy and restless, and soon tired of the sittings, so that Der Ling and her sister had to don her robes and jewels and sit in her place.

In the meantime, for Sarah, the portrait project opened a door. Primed by Wang on the symbolic utterances, gestures, and gifts that would be most appreciated by a woman like Cixi, Sarah was a hit from her first private audience. She and Cixi became simply two women of a certain age and similar experiences, who had been through tragedies and triumphs, who loved what was beautiful, and who shared a keen interest in the rights and education of women. Cixi paid Sarah the rare compliment of acting on her advice, issuing a decree to permit overseas education of promising Chinese and Manchu boys, and supporting schools for women in China. As a result of these meetings, Sarah was demonized by the American press for "taking a hand washed in the blood of Christian martyrs," accused of excusing the trauma of the Boxer Uprising. Sarah forgot nothing of those fifty-five days of misery. But as she told a reporter, "Nothing was said between us of forgiving or forgetting."⁹

The important thing was not to blindly cling to these past events, like hugging thorns to one's bosom, she said, but to sit down face to face with one's perceived enemy and speak as one person to another. Sarah's parents had reminded her in childhood, when faced with unfamiliar people or places, to remember that she was just as far from other people as they seemed to be from her. "If you look deeply enough in anyone," Sarah told her granddaughter, who repeated the words to me, "you will find the good that is there," a concept that is as Buddhist as it is Christian.¹⁰

That it was Cixi's humanity, not her splendor or exoticism, that appealed to Sarah can be seen in the latter's account of a day spent with the Dowager at the Summer Palace. After a luncheon with Cixi, Sarah and ladies of the foreign legations took a launch out to the small island in Lake Kunming where there stood a temple to the Dragon King. On reaching the double staircase below the temple, Sarah climbed to the top, where a broad verandah and wide-angle-view of the Summer Palace unfolded. There Cixi stood waiting for her. "The Empress Dowager stepped to the marble balustrade," Sarah recalled, "and looking out

upon the wonderful scene stretched out before her, spoke my name. I went to her and she took my hand in both of hers. Looking at the scenes about us and beyond us, she said in a tender, thoughtful way, 'Is it not beautiful?'"¹¹ As they stood holding hands, quietly looking across the lake to the golden roofs and crimson pillars among the trees on the opposite shore, both women clearly felt, if they did not speak it, that they were sisters in appreciation.

With the portrait completed and Edwin Conger's term as minister about to expire, the Congers prepared to return to the United States in spring 1905. Shortly before the departure date, the Dowager and Sarah had a final visit. We do not know what they discussed. Sarah by this time had learned to be very discreet about all her dealings with the Dowager. But she does tell us that after she had left the palace and was climbing into her sedan chair, Cixi sent Der Ling running after her. She explained to Sarah that Cixi had wanted her to have an amulet, a "good-luck stone," which dated back to the Tang Dynasty. The amulet was carved from a piece of blood-jade, pale pink veined with darker red, which Sarah describes as being in the shape of a hand. Cixi had removed the amulet from her person, and "wishes to give it to you to wear during your long journey across the great waters," Sarah was told, "that you may safely arrive in your honorable country." The amulet had been worn by Cixi on her own great trek into the unknown when she fled Beijing on August 14, 1900, surviving to return to the capital in triumph two years later—one could call it a lucky charm indeed.¹²

When Sarah reached the American Legation afterward, she first showed the amulet not to Edwin or to any of her friends, but to Wang, who assured her that the stone was "a very great thing" and that with it, the Dowager had blessed her. Cixi gave presents to many foreign guests, including samples of her painting, but only to Sarah Conger did she give such a gift as this. The Dowager and Sarah would keep in contact until the former's death in 1908, through letters, photographs, gifts for Sarah's young granddaughter Sarah Buchan Jewell (gifts I saw when I visited the 105-year-old Sarah), even a small fortune donated to the city of San Francisco after the 1906 earthquake, clearly prompted as much by Sarah's presence in California as by the disaster the quake wreaked on the Chinese community there.

Xunling's photographs convey more of the humanity of the Dowager than either of Katharine Carl's portraits. But when Cixi's portrait was finally unveiled in the United States, Sarah believed it supplied the missing key to the mystery of who the Dowager was. As she wrote in her book, *Letters From China*:

True to the Chinese idea there were characters, symbols, seals and decorations. All spoke a silent, but positive language.... But that which was far more to me was the Imperial woman sitting there in her strength of character. As I gazed at the portrait I could recall a sweet tone of voice, a gentle clasp of hand, a cordial smile.... There is a chord in human nature when played upon by woman, that woman alone can hear and appreciate.¹³

But without Wang's invaluable guidance through these characters, symbols, and seals, or Der Ling's patient coaxing of Cixi, Sarah might never have witnessed the portrait-project's beginning, let alone seen the finished article that was presented to President Theodore Roosevelt in the White House Blue Room. More importantly, nor could she have journeyed into the mystery of herself, which she realized she had come to China to discover. Even as author Isak Dinesen's manservant Farah Aden helped her, a Danish baroness, become a Somali in spirit

if not flesh, so Wang helped Sarah recognize her own Chinese soul, even as Der Ling helped Cixi see herself as a monarch after the motherly mold of Queen Victoria, a far cry from the image created of her in the West as the incarnation of Asian female evil. Sarah was to stay in touch with Der Ling but she would never meet Wang again, and we know nothing of what effect, if any, Sarah had had on his and his family's lives. But we do know she was forever grateful to him. He was, she said, "The *very* best of the best."¹⁴

Thanks to this gallant, heroic, and cultivated Chinese servant, a Midwestern congressman's wife who revered the American flag, Independence Day, and Abraham Lincoln, discovered that in her breast also beat a poetic, patriotic Chinese heart.

Notes

- ¹ Grant Hayter-Menzies 2011, quoting John Ruskin 2007, p. 181.
- ² Hayter-Menzies 2011, quoting James L. Hevia 2003, p. 268.
- ³ Hayter-Menzies 2011, quoting V. R. Burkhardt 1953, p. 51.
- ⁴ Hayter-Menzies 2011, p. 191.
- ⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 46.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 215–17.
- ⁷ Hayter-Menzies 2008, p. 249.
- ⁸ David Hogge 2011.
- ⁹ Hayter-Menzies 2011, pp. 207–8.
- ¹⁰ Hayter-Menzies's interview with Sarah Buchan Jewell, granddaughter of Sarah Pike Conger, October 28, 2008.
- ¹¹ Hayter-Menzies 2011, p. 224.
- ¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 258–59.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 242–43.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 89.

References

- Burkhardt, V. R. 1953. *Chinese Creeds and Customs*, vol. 1. Hong Kong: South China Morning Post.
- Hayter-Menzies, Grant. 2011. *The Empress and Mrs. Conger: The Uncommon Friendship of Two Women and Two Worlds*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.
- . 2008. *Imperial Masquerade: The Legend of Princess Der Ling*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.
- Hevia, James L. 2003. *English Lessons: The Pedagogy of Imperialism in Nineteenth-Century China*. Durham & Hong Kong: Duke University Press; Hong Kong University Press.
- Hogge, David. 2011. "Piety and Power: The Theatrical Images of Empress Dowager Cixi," in *Trans Asia Photography Review*, vol. 2, issue 1 (Fall) (online: <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/t/tap/7977573.0002.108/--piety-and-power-the-theatrical-images-of-empress-dowager?rgn=main;view=fulltext>).
- Ruskin, John. 2007. *The Stones of Venice*, vol. 3. New York: Cosimo Books.

Grant Hayter-Menzies is an author who has specialized in writing biographies of extraordinary but under-appreciated women, particularly women for whom Asia served as a catalyst for personal transformation—women like Sarah Pike Conger, wife of the American minister to China (*The Empress and Mrs. Conger: The Uncommon Friendship of Two Women and Two Worlds*), Princess Der Ling (*Imperial Masquerade: The Legend of Princess Der Ling*), Pauline Benton, the pioneer of Chinese shadow theater in the West (*Shadow Woman: The Extraordinary Career of Pauline Benton*, McGill-Queen's University Press, 2013), or his newest subject, Lillian Carter, mother of President Jimmy Carter, whose Peace Corps service in the slums of 1960s India was the summation of a life devoted to compassionate care for those nobody else cared about.