



WHITMAN

Travels

Expectations

>VS<

Reality



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Throughout this zine we found various ways to address the topic expectations vs. Reality in traveling abroad, while using a variety of the Walter Whitman letters, Postcards, and other various Peer-reviewed scholarly articles. We noticed that Like many people Whitman created this idea of what he expected things to be like or look like when he arrived at a certain place. Also, like many people have noticed, not everything is the way it is imagined when we arrive at the place we had created so many thoughts and images in our heads about. There are also many ways the things around us influence the way we think something is going to look like. In this zine we found many ways to showcase how Whitman had created an expectation and found out that in reality it was much different. We also found a way to connect both the past and present through each representation in our own ways. In this zine we decided to showcase the architecture, what it was expected to look like then, why the architecture was the way it was, how it has changed over the years and how the expectations have changed. We showcased how the dead should be treated based on how America believes it to be vs the reality of what actually happens in other countries. We showcased transportation and technology and what it was expected to look like based on what America thinks how advanced things should be and then compared that to the expectations and how much it differed. We showcased the festivities and compared how they are much different than those in America and how he expected them to be more similar. Lastly, we compared the clothing to the past and present and how Whitman expected things to look like vs. how it really is and why some people use it as opposed to everyone.



Expectations

Treat of De

ment the ad

Reality

Source: Whitman Collection (journal + photos) from Salem State University Archives.

When Whitman visited other countries he seemed to expect them to treat the dead the same way America does-based on his records from his travels.

He expected other cultures to bury their dead, as that's what's common in America. Not even cremation was popular in America at the time so he didn't even expect other cultures to burn the bodies.

What else is important to note is that graves in America have a marker-stating the person's name and D.O.B. - D.O.D.



In reality not every culture buries their dead. In fact, many cultures have different ways of treating the dead. This was something Whitman learned first hand on his travels.

The most shocking to him was his visit to China which he discussed in his journal, "I saw the badly eaten body of a boy about two years of age, I was quite troubled when I saw it, thinking that the dogs had probably dug it out of a grave. What a shock I thought to the parents..." He went on to talk about how he went to find someone to bury the body but someone told him, "...that in all probability it had never been buried." It was shocking to him that the dead weren't even buried. He even commented, "An old custom like this does not stop all at once..." which seems to suggest that this custom should change.

On the other hand, while looking through his photos and postcards-one photo was of an Indian Funeral Fire. While he could have thought this was odd, he still has a photo of it rather than also having a photo of the dead in China too. It's as if he saw India as more of a tourist attraction than China-even going as far to have a picture of the dead.



Expectations?

of
Transportation & Technology

in China

Prior to leaving to China on his travels, writer Whitman was predisposed to the transportation and technology modernness displayed and utilized in America. He expected efficient cars, trains, boats and more, but was met with something else. Today, major cities in China (Shanghai, Beijing, Hong Kong, etc) are bustling with people and modern transportation which is what he had expected many years ago, and was not reality. He had gotten his hopes up and romanticized China to mold it to fit his western bias, and was disappointed when not met with his perfect false reality.

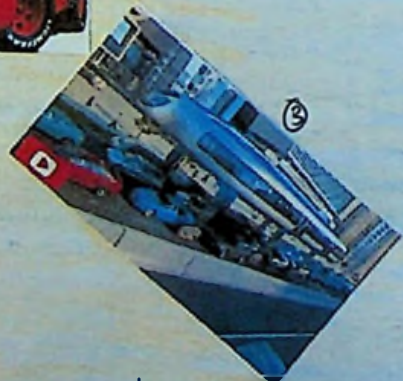
What Whitman Anticipated:



①



②



③

Source:
① Busy street Wunan China

② Lightning McQueen Cars Movie, Film character

③ New Transportation Technology, BuY Drives over cars

What he Got!

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Reality!

of
Transportation & Technology

in China



Shanghai - 1850s/1860s

→ Person-hauled wagons

Boat (on side) and farming tools (technology) ③

After Arriving in China, Whitman soon realized that China was different from his American homeland. People mainly travelled by boat, foot, or person-hauled



Country Scene, Shanghai

wagon. Meanwhile in America, people often used cars, bikes, and trains (railroads). Whitman was not pleased with this difference, and wrote "Had we taken a British boat we would have had better service." He shows to be bias towards western industrialism and technology, believing it to be better than that of China. The reality of this time (1900s) was that the western hemisphere was more modern with transportation and technology.

sources: ① phone interview, postcard, Walter Whitman Collection Salem State University
② Whitman collection, manuscript, Salem State Archives, archives and special collections (both)
③ country scene, postcard, Walter Whitman Collection

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In the late 19th and early 20th centuries post cards were sent to show the areas where a traveler had been. The postcards often depicted the traditional architecture of the area, perpetuating the idea across North America and Europe that other cultures were less advanced. Whitman made note of the Chinese architecture as consisting of mudbricks, and windows tightly closed to keep evil spirits out. The presence of modernity was ignored to keep thoughts in line with what he already knew.



Leong Wah Pagoda near Shanghai



Nanking Road near Shanghai

1. Observations on Life in China 1825-26, Manuscript, Walter Whitman Collection, Salem State University Archives and Special Collections, Salem, Massachusetts.
2. Leong Wah Pagoda, Postcard, Walter Whitman Collection, Salem State University Archives and Special Collections, Salem, Massachusetts.
3. Nanking Road near Shanghai, Postcard, Walter Whitman Collection, Salem State University Archives and Special Collections, Salem, Massachusetts.

Nearly a hundred years later, people still expect to see traditional architecture. A study of American foreign exchange students found that the students studying in China did not expect to see any modernity. One participant was shocked by the lights of the Shanghai skyline, she commented that it reminded her of London. Another participant was surprised that temples were a source of income in the tourist trade. Cross cultural competency among the students in the study increased with the realization that modernity is universal. Students made comparisons relating their host country to the United States.



So that's exactly why I took the picture because it looks completely like nothing I would expect in China.



The photo is like... it's like what you think about when you think of China. Like there's temples [sic] everywhere. But that's not true. There's [sic] only a few temples and they are set up like this, like very touristy. You have to pay to get in, there's [sic] just a lot of people there. Umm when you think about temples you think of something serene and quiet but no it's not.

1. Ara Pachmayer and Kathleen Andereck, "Enlightened Travelers? Cultural Attitudes, Competencies, and Study Abroad," *Tourism, Culture and Communications*, Vol. 19, (2019): 172-173.
2. Pachmayer and Andereck, 177
3. Pachmayer and Andereck, 172
4. Pachmayer and Andereck, 173
5. Pachmayer and Andereck, 173

Expectation

In America when we celebrate it involves food, socializing, and sometimes gifts. We tend not to focus so much on music and dancing as a big important part during a celebration. Whitman thought their celebrations to be



Shanghai, Cricket Club Recreation Grounds on a Holiday

Similar
to ours

Reality

"... what in

America would be a good gymnastic

exercise, in body, leg, and arm movements. We were told that was just a "dance" (8)



In China their celebrations and festivals are different compared to America.

"We foreigners have not been properly or perhaps sufficiently well trained to appreciate and enjoy much of either the ancient or the modern Chinese music" (4)



Clothing from the past and present have definitely changed a bit. But this is some of the things Whitman expected to see on his trip. Vibrant Colors like these. Not all were as vibrant as the more modern ones but they definitely were traditional.

The traditional clothing brings people impulsive feelings with visual communication'

The term "ancient china" is a phrase of



Figure 2

22nd APEC POLITICAL LEADERS' ETHNIC FASHION LINE

3

convenience that masks significant cultural variation². In other words not everyone will wear these garments. People will wear them to distinguish class. Not just anyone will wear them, or for specific rituals that are being done.

1. Guan Jin. Influences of Chinese Traditional clothing Elements on Modern Clothing Design. 2016
2. John S. Mayor. China History of Dress. 2006-2020
3. Le Xing. Understanding Chinese Consumers Purchase Intention of Cultural Fashion Clothing Products: Pragmatism Over Cultural Pride. 2017



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Expectation Vs. Reality in Clothing

There are a variety of postcards in the Whitman Collection. Many Containing traditional wear in the Chinese Culture. These two pictures range from the actresses sitting down in traditional clothing from just walking down the street in traditional wear.



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1. Shanghai, Three celebrated Actresses. Postcard. Salem State University Archives and Special Collections, Salem, Massachusetts.
2. Manchu Women, North of China. Postcard. Salem State University Archives and Special Collections, Salem, Massachusetts.



