“All the aids which a beginner needs”: James Summers’ (1828-1891) research on Chinese grammar

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Part II: Summers' works and their historical background

Chapter 1. Summers' life and times

This chapter provides the historical background of Summers' times and briefly introduces his life, focusing on his professional life as a professor of Chinese.

1.1 A brief introduction to Summers' life and the historical background of his works

Summers' life can be divided into five stages with four pivotal turning points, excluding his birth in 1828 and death in 1891: going to Hong Kong in 1848, being imprisoned in Macau in 1849, returning to Britain and assuming the post of Professor of Chinese literature at King's College London in 1852, and leaving for Japan in 1873.

1.1.1 Humble origins and the trip to Hong Kong

James Summers[19] was born on 5 July 1828 (Koyama 2007, p. 1) in Lichfield, Staffordshire, England and was baptized on 30 July 1828 in St. Mary, Lichfield, as an Anglican Christian (*Register of Baptisms in the Parish of St Mary in the City and in the County of Lichfield*, 1828, p. 97). Summers only received an elementary education in Staffordshire. He then worked as a master in the National School at Penkhall for over three years from 1845.[20] Before Summers

[19] Summers has many Chinese names. Nowadays in China, he is often addressed as *Sàmòsī* 薩默斯 or *Sūmóusī* 蘇謀斯, as a transliteration of his family name. His other names based on transliterations are *Sàmò* 薩默 and *Cénmǎshì* 岑馬士 (Mǎ Jǐnqiǎng 2004, p. 2). However, Summers called himself *Shēnyǎkè* 申雅客, *Xīnmáshì* 心麻士 (cf. Chapter 3) and *Sùmǎmáshì* 宿馬麻士 (No. 1, 1866) and *Xīnmǎshì* 心瑪士 in the *Flying Dragon Reporter* (No. 5, 1866). Wáng Tāo (1828–1897, cf. Chapter 3) also addressed him as *Shēnyǎkè* in his *Mànyóu Suílùtú Jì* (漫遊随录图記 *Roaming Notes with Illustrations*, 2004 [1890], p. 156). Another Chinese name that Summers gave himself was *Zuǒmáxū* 佐麻須 as published in his Japanese newspaper *Tai Sei Shimbun* 大西新聞 (cf. Kwan 2014a, pp. 27–28). I was unable to find a photo of Summers, but we do know something about what he looked like. In the records of the Indian Office, Summers was described as 5 feet and 5.5 inches tall with brown hair, grey eyes, and a fresh complexion (IOR/L/MIL/11/281/1620/007).

[20] The school was run by Rev. Samuel Minton (Stanton, 25 November 1852), a vicar who wrote a letter of recommendation for Summers when he applied for the "professor of Chinese literature" post at King's College London. After Summers got the post, the newspaper *Staffordshire Advertiser* reported this news with a brief introduction to his life in Staffordshire: "[w]e learn with satisfaction that Mr. James Summers, a native of Lichfield, who was for some years a pupil in the Training School established here by the Diocesan Board of Education, is elected professor of Chinese literature in King's College London. He left the school to become master of the National School, Penkhull, where he remained for more than three years, until he went to China, in connection with the British chaplaincy established at Hong Kong. He is returned at the end of three years and a half, and has just received the honourable appointment named above" (*Staffordshire Advertiser*, 1853a). "National Schools" were supported by the church and provided elementary education to the children of the poor (Alexander 2011). Akaishi (2021, pp. 4–5) reports that Summers' study in the Training School lasted for a year (September 1844–October 1845), and then he worked in the National School. Foster (1887–1888) records that Summers was from Titchfield (p. 1317). However, based on what was shown in the local newspapers, Summers was born in Lichfield, which sounds or looks very similar to "Titchfield", which might have been the cause of confusion in the registration.

Akaishi claimed that Summers taught the students in the National School by observing the Monitorial System (2021, pp. 5–6). The gist of this teaching method is that the teachers firstly teach the superior students and then

became a professor at King's College London, he had never followed formal higher education.[21] Although one can deduce from his works that Summers had ample working knowledge of English (as his native language), Greek, Latin, German, French, Chinese, Japanese, and Korean as well as some basic knowledge of Hebrew and Sanskrit, there is no evidence that he received any systematic training in linguistics.

During the nineteenth century, Britain colonized large areas in North America, Africa, Australia, and Asia and became the "Empire on which the sun never sets", with its economic and political powers extending over the whole world (Marshall 2004, p. 1; Levine 2007, p. 105). Especially with the help of the completion of the Industrial Revolution in the nineteenth century, Britain's national productivity and economic strength were significantly enhanced (Matthew 1993, pp. 442–448) and thus became representative of a thriving and flourishing Europe. In contrast, a different picture was shown on the other side of the continent in the Qing empire of China (1644–1912).

Before the eighteenth century, Europeans had a rather positive view of China and the Chinese language, and they admired Confucianism and the Chinese civilization. Summers himself observed that "[t]he colouring of every thing that concerns the Chinese has been heightened by the romantic accounts of this nation given by the early historians of the East, and the imagination has supplied much that was not found in the reality" (Summers 1863a, p. v). From the mid-eighteenth century onwards, this attitude changed, and it plummeted after China's defeat in the Opium Wars (Xavier and Trujillo-González 2019, pp. 7–8). The Qing Empire was swaying in the storm of internal and external strife, finally coming to its end (Jones and Kuhn 2008, pp. 107–162). China lost many wars and signed a number of treaties, which were to its disadvantage. Among them, the *Treaty of Nanking* was signed in 1842 after China was defeated in the First Opium War (1840-1842) by Britain. Britain occupied the island of Hong Kong as its colony according to the treaty. Guangzhou, Fuzhou, Xiamen, Ningbo and Shanghai were opened as treaty ports, where the British were allowed to live and establish

let them teach the inferior ones (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 2020). This method was appropriately considered more suitable for big classes with many students, but later when Summers was teaching Chinese at King's College London, there were not enough students for this kind of method.

[21] However, afterwards, in 1857, Summers took the entry examinations to Oxford University. The examinations were about classical humanities, including ancient Greek tragedies, Cicero's *Catilinam* and Euclid's *Geometry* (Kwan 2014a, p. 40). This shows that he did not study linguistic-related discipline at Oxford. In the nineteenth century, the professorship of linguistic-related subjects was established in many universities, and in Oxford, there were also such chairs established (Davies and Lepschy 1998, pp. 7–10; Ziegler 2000, p. 93). Therefore, Summers' knowledge concerning linguistics, including terms and the notion of metalanguage, is a result of learning other languages and reading linguistic studies by others. Knowledge of more traditional linguistics was inevitable because he studied Ancient Greek and Roman literature.

consulates.[22] In 1844, America and France successively signed treaties with the Chinese government so that they could gain the same benefits as the British (Zhāng Jiànhuá 2001, pp. 83–84; Qū Wénshēng 2017, p. 100). These five ports became essential to the West and were frequently visited by missionaries and merchants (Zhāng Jìng 2001, pp. 42–43). Thus, the varieties of the Chinese language in those five cities became the main focus of study for many British scholars, and manuals and dictionaries about them were published. Branner even claimed that these five ports are the birthplace of modern Western linguistic sinology (1997, p. 235).

In this context, Summers went to Hong Kong in 1848 and stayed for approximately four years in China. In his description of the situation in China, he summarized China as an "isolated position" with "exclusive policy" and "heathen darkness" (1853a, p. 35). At the same time, he tried to depict China objectively and neutrally and avoid both the "romantic […] imagination" (1863a, p. v) and the "ignorant […] prejudice" (1863a, p. xxi–xxii) of China and its people, language, and culture that were current in the West at that time.

1.1.2 Summers in Hong Kong

Summers was invited to Hong Kong[23] as a missionary and a preceptor (i.e., headmaster, cf. Sweeting 1990, p. 146) in 1848 by Rev. Vincent John Stanton (?–1891), a member of the Church Missionary Society.[24] In 1843, Stanton was appointed as a presbyter by the Bishop of Hertfordshire and the first Colonial Chaplain of the Anglican Church in Hong Kong by the British government (Kwong 2013, p. 254; Akaishi 2021, p. 6). He established St. Paul's College there in 1849–1851, where Summers worked (Kwan 2014b, p. 81; Akaishi 2021, p. 6).[25] The college taught Chinese natives English and religion. At the same time, the preceptors at the school could also gain some experience, training both their Chinese language and proselytising skills (Kwan 2014a, p. 31; 2014b, pp. 91–92).[26] This position as a preceptor (Carl

[22] This summary is based on Wakemann Jr. (2008, p. 173, pp. 178–185, pp. 192–195, pp. 211–212).
[23] It is said that Summers always dreamt of becoming a diplomat (Shigehisa 1932, p. 319; Koyama 2007, p. 1; Kwan 2014a, p. 45), and working in Hong Kong might have been a good opportunity to get closer to his dream (Shigehisa 1932, p. 319).
[24] Akaishi speculated that Minton and Stanton knew about each other and that Minton recommended Summers for the post in Hong Kong (2021, p. 6).
[25] The predecessor of this college was established in 1848 and Summers worked there upon his arrival (Akaishi 2021, p. 6).
[26] St. Paul's College was not the only western school for Chinese natives and newly arrived missionaries established in China. The Anglo-Chinese College, for one, was founded by Robert Morrison (1782–1834) in Malacca in 1818 and later moved to Hong Kong (Masini 1997, p. 13; Kwan 2014b, pp. 83–85). It was considered to have been the best Chinese school in the Far East in 1825 (Masini 1997, p. 13). Morrison was a member of the London Missionary Society, whose main goal in sending missionaries to China was not preaching religion but to translate the Bible. Therefore, studying the Chinese language became the primary job of the newly arrived.

Smith collections, CS/1015/00145549) was to become the prelude to Summers' later post in King's College London (cf. Section 1.2).

Summers was a diligent student of Chinese under the guidance of some native speakers (Summers, 24 November 1852), and he was also a capable assistant to Stanton. He lived as a guest with Stanton's family. In 1850, Stanton recalled:

> I found great difficulty in procuring a suitable Assistant. However, in the autumn of 1848, Mr. James Summers arrived from England, and immediately devoted himself to the study of the Chinese language, in which he has ever since been making rapid progress.[27]

1.1.3 Summers in the dispute of power

As mentioned above, Britain was not the only foreign power that kept up diplomatic relations with the Chinese government. There were moreover continuous disputes among the colonial powers. Summers, unfortunately, got involved in a religious and diplomatic incident in Macau, which reflected ongoing conflicts between Britain and Portugal and between different religious denominations (Mǎ Jǐnqiáng 2004, pp. 3–4, p. 59).

After the Portuguese settled in Macau during the sixteenth century, Catholicism became the dominant Christian denomination there (Mǎ Jǐnqiáng 2004, pp. 10–11). During his 1849 trip to Macau, Summers as an Anglican, refused to remove his hat to show his respect in a Catholic Corpus Christi procession. For this reason, he was imprisoned on 7 June 1849 (Mǎ Jǐnqiáng 2004, p. 18; Kwan 2014a, p. 45). The British Captain Henry Keppel (1809–1904) heard about this but failed to set Summers free in negotiations the next morning, so he raided the prison and saved Summers by force later that day. As a result, one Portuguese soldier died and several were injured (Mǎ Jǐnqiáng 2004, pp. 18–20; Koyama 2007, p. 1; Kwan 2014a, pp.

Chinese natives could also learn English and European literature in the missionary schools (Sū Jīng 2005, p. 5, p. 10, p. 56).

Up to 1860, Catholics built 371 schools in the regions of the Southern Yangzi River with a total of 5,510 students (Shǐ Shìwēi 1983, cited in Zhāng Jìng 2001, p. 45). These schools were not very large and often provided free food and accommodation and waived tuition fees in order to attract more students (Zhāng Jìng 2001, p. 45). Chinese people could learn about religious doctrines there as well as receive education in Western languages and scientific knowledge (Kwan 2014b, pp. 85–86). Among all of the church schools in Hong Kong and mainland China, more than ten women's schools were established. This was a shock to the traditional Chinese notion: "ignorance is a woman's virtue" (Zhāng Jìng 2001, pp. 45–46).

In Europe, the first college for educating native Chinese missionaries, Collegio de' Cinesi, was built in Naples in 1724 by the Italian missionary Matteo Ripa (1682–1746) and was approved by the Pope in 1732. It was the only institution for Chinese studies in eighteenth-century Europe (Masini 1997, pp. 7–8; Casacchia and Gianninoto 2011, p. 49; Gianninoto 2018, p. 162).

[27] This was written by Rev. Stanton, cf. *The West of England Conservative, and Plymouth and Devonport Advertiser*, 1850.

45–46). This startled the governments of Britain, Portugal and other countries that had embassies in Macau (Mǎ Jǐnqiáng 2004, p. 34). The Portuguese government tried to negotiate with the British government after the incident. It was not until 1850 that the British Navy finally denounced Keppel's behaviour and promised compensation (Mǎ Jǐnqiáng 2004, p. 21).

This case must be understood within a highly complicated political context. The forceful reactions on the part of Keppel and Summers were seen as Britain trying to challenge the powerful status of Portugal in Macau; meanwhile the Portuguese themselves demonstrated their grip on the region in their punishments (Mǎ Jǐnqiáng 2004, p. 4). Colonists from the West regarded China as a big cake, from which each country wanted as large a slice as possible. The case of Summers is just one example due to these circumstances.

This incident had a life-long impact on Summers. When Summers applied for a post in the Foreign Office of Britain in 1861, there was still some discussion about his imprisonment in Macau even inside the office (Kwan 2014a, p. 44–45). In *The London and China Telegraph* that year, Summers' case was again brought up, with accompanying negative comments (1861a, p. 219). This case nearly put an end to Summers' dream of becoming a diplomat (Kwan 2014a, pp. 45–46) because of his "stubborn and volatile character" (Koyama 2007, p. 1).[28]

In September 1850, Summers left Hong Kong for Shanghai after he resigned from the college due to the new requirement that all tutors had to be official clergymen, unluckily Summers was not. In Shanghai, he continued his teaching and missionary duties, hired by the Bishop of Shanghai of the Protestant Episcopal Church Mission, American missionary Boone, and British missionary Hobson, the colonial chaplain at Shanghai. He also learnt Shanghainese.[29] Two years later, in 1852, he went back to Britain.[30]

1.1.4 Back to Britain

At the end of 1852, Summers was appointed Professor of Chinese Literature at King's College London. He held the position for more than twenty years. On 23 April 1853, after assuming the post in King's College London, Summers married Jane Frankland, née Colling,[31] who

[28] Oddly enough, in 1890, one year before the end of his life, he failed to raise his hat again and was considered disrespectful to the empress dowager of Japan. As a result, he was injured by a soldier by mistake (Koyama 2007, p. 2). Two incidents about the lifting of hats make Summers sound like fortune's fool: one was in his twenties, the starting point of his career; the other was nearing the end of his life. That Summers was often bad-tempered is confirmed by William Jones Boone (1811–1864) and John Hobson (1849–1862, cf. Akaishi 2021, pp. 10–11).
[29] Summers' experience in Shanghai is summarized from Akaishi (2021, pp. 8–10).
[30] Shigehisa (1941, p. 344) argued that Summers also went to Beijing and Tianjin. No direct evidence for this claim has been found yet, as stated by Akaishi (2021, p. 17).
[31] Her birth and death dates are unknown.

originally came from the United States (*Staffordshire Advertiser*, 1853b).[32] His second wife was Ellen Williams (1843–1907). Altogether, he had nine children (Koyama 2007, p. 2).[33]

1.1.5 Leave for Japan

In 1873 (Summers, 27 June 1873), Summers resigned the post at King's College London and left for Japan to teach English and English literature at several universities, such as one of the precursors of University of Tokyo – called Kaisei Academy at the time, and in Niigata English College (Shōwa 1965, pp. 23–24). He was considered a trailblazer in translating Shakespeare's works into Japanese (Shigehisa 1932). In 1891, he passed away in Japan and was buried in the Foreigners' cemetery of Yokohama (Shōwa 1965, p. 27).

1.2 Summers' professional life

In 1814, the first Chinese-related professorship in Europe, called the Chair of Chinese and Tartar-Manchu Languages and Literature (*Chaire de langue et littératures chinoises et tartares-mandchoues*), was established in France, and Jean-Pierre Abel-Rémusat was appointed as chair holder. Research on China and Chinese consequently began to shift into a more professional and academic direction (Lundbæk 1995, p. 49; Casacchia and Gianninoto 2011, p. 50; Wesołowski 2011, p. 20; Zhāng Xīpíng 2017, p. 1).

In order to improve their understanding of China, the British—among other Europeans, such as the Germans and the Dutch—established some domestic institutions of Chinese language and culture. The earliest institution for teaching the Chinese language in Britain was the Language Institution for the Propagation of Christianity, founded by Morrison in 1824 (Kwan 2014b, p. 85). Morrison's student Samuel Kidd (1804–1843) began teaching Chinese at University College London in 1837 and became the first Professor of Chinese Language and Literature in Britain (Sū Jīng 2005, p. 58; Hú Yōujìng 2009, p. 12; Kwan 2011, p. 128). King's College London established a chair in 1847 and appointed Samuel Turner Fearon (1819–1853) as the first professor (Kwan 2011, pp. 139–142). Then in 1875, James Legge (1814–1897) became the Professor of Chinese at the University of Oxford (Hú Yōujìng 2009, pp. 70–71). Wade assumed the post of Professor of Chinese at the University of Cambridge in 1888 (Hú

[32] His marriage was also recorded in Carl Smith Collection (CS/1015/00145539). However, the date of marriage was "30, June" by mistake in this collection.

[33] Brown (1967, p. 9) mentioned that Summers had two wives. But there is no further information on what happened to his first wife. No obituary or death record was found. Needham (2020, pp. 52–54, cited by Akaishi 2021, p. 15, p. 19) pointed out that Summers left his first wife before he went to Japan and then started his second marriage with Ellen, who had two children from a previous marriage.

Yōujìng 2009, p. 81), but this was only the beginning. As a result, research on the Chinese language and culture became firmly established in British scholarship step by step.

Sir George Thomas Staunton (1781–1859) played a crucial role in establishing the chair for Chinese literature at King's College London. Staunton was a scholar of Chinese culture and acted as a diplomat in China. Morrison was a close friend of his. When Morrison passed away, Staunton decided to establish a Chinese professorship at a British university and donate the books left by Morrison. The first chair was therefore established on his initiative at University College London in 1837. Kidd became the first professor of Chinese Language and Literature, and his contract lasted for five years. Later, Staunton decided to move the chair from University College London to King's College London.[34]

In the spring of 1852, Summers sailed back to Britain. He lived with Rev. Samuel Minton in Liverpool[35] until Capt. Peter Cracroft (1816–1865)[36] recommended him to apply for the post at King's College London. Rev. Vincent Stanton supported Summers' application for the post, writing three reference letters for Summers. In his letters, Summers was referred to as being "diligent" regarding the study of the Chinese language (Stanton, 23 November 1852).[37]

Staunton's attitude towards the candidates for the post held a lot of weight (Kwan 2011, pp. 135–149). For his final call to the chair, Summers retained life-long gratitude to Staunton, and dedicated one of his books to Staunton.[38] His appointment as Professor of Chinese Literature came into effect at the end of 1852.

1.2.1 Summers as a professor

At King's College London, the study of Chinese was independent from the regular courses, and could be found on the list of "Extra Instruction" together with Hebrew, Spanish, vocal music and a number of other subjects, and Chinese courses were only "given within the walls

[34] My information on Staunton's role in establishing the discipline in Britain is based on Kwan (2011, pp. 128–129).

[35] The address of Summers' cover letter on 22 November 1852 is "The Rev. Samuel Minton's…Liverpool". The recommendation letter by Rev. Minton was from the same address. Minton also conducted Summers' wedding ceremony (*Staffordshire Advertiser*, 1853b).

[36] In Summers' letter, only Cracroft, his last name was written. His first name and year of birth and death are cited from Kwan (2014a, p. 33).

[37] Summers mentioned that the Bishop of Victoria (Hong Kong), George Smith (1815–1871), also planned to write a recommendation to Staunton for him when Summers left Hong Kong (Summers, 22 November 1852). It is most likely to be true, though in the end, Summers did not submit any recommendation letter from Smith. Smith was also a teacher at St. Paul's College in Hong Kong (Sweeting 1990, p. 146). Summers was its preceptor so they must know about each other.

[38] Summers wrote on the flyleaf of *The Gospel of Saint John in the Chinese Language* that the book is "[d]edicated to that worthy friend of the Chinese, and liberal patron of Anglo-Chinese literature, Sir George T. Staunton" (1853b).

of the College" (*The Calendar of King's College London for 1853–1854*, 1853, p. 67). For students of Chinese, there were no rules regarding regular hours of attendance issued by the University. Not many students took up the challenge of studying Chinese. After Summers' appointment, the number of students gradually increased. His most renowned students were Robert Kennaway Douglas (1838–1938, cf. Kwan 2018, p. 57), who succeeded Summers as Professor of Chinese Literature after Summers resigned in 1873 (*Edinburgh Evening News,* 1873), Edward Harper Parker (1849–1926) who became a historian and a philologist (Branner 1999, pp. 12–13; Kwan 2018, p. 57); William Marsh Cooper (1833–1896), Arthur Davenport (1836–1916) and William Frederick Mayers (1831–1878), who became diplomats (Zhāng Hóngshēng 2000, p. 319; Yǐn Wénjuān 2020, p. 34).[39]

Since 1854, King's College London had a connection to the Foreign Office. The college taught Chinese to prospective interpreters, who would then work in China. Before they were allowed to work for the Foreign Office, they had to prove their level of proficiency in a competitive examination. Being the professor of Chinese, it was Summers' task to instruct these students (Kwan 2014a, pp. 41–42). Twenty-one students of his were appointed in China until the termination of the programme in 1861 (Summers, 13 April 1861).[40] The effect and result of Summers' Chinese courses are summarized by a comment from one of his students:

> I studied Chinese under the outstanding guidance of Professor Summers. I learnt one thousand words within several months and some sentence patterns for daily conversation. When I arrived in China, I found the grammar and characters I learned very helpful. […] But on the other hand, because my pronunciation was not good, I felt sad and disappointed that Chinese people could not understand me when I repeated the sentences I had learnt so diligently. (Davenport 2000 [1879], pp. 307–308, translation mine)[41]

[39] Parker mentioned another two students of Summers in his book (1902), i.e., Sadler and Bryson. The latter ended up in Hankou, China (Parker 1902, p. 207). Another two students of Summers were mentioned in *The London and China Telegraph*, namely a Mr. Forrest and a Mr. Adkins (1861b, p. 141), both of whom became diplomats. However, no further information was found about them, including their full names. It is said that Ernest Mason Satow (1843–1929), who turned to Japanology, was a student of Summers as well (Todd 2007, p. 1; Kwan 2014a, p. 29, etc.). However, Akaishi (2021, p. 17) strongly argued that he was not taught by Summers. Besides, Summers also taught English after he arrived in Japan. Among those students of his, there were many famous figures in history as well (cf. Kwan 2014a, p. 29; Akaishi 2021, p. 2).

[40] For more about the history of the programme, see Kwan (2014a).

[41] Another student of his, Parker, said that Summers' Chinese calligraphy was the best among all the Europeans he had ever seen, but that his "Mandarin" was lousy, and "did not in the least correspond with" Shanghainese, the Ningbo dialect or Cantonese (Parker 1902, p. 207). These three topolects are, of course, different from Mandarin, but one can deduce from his comment together with Davenport's that Summers' pronunciation of Mandarin was probably not very good.

Nowadays, Mandarin is the most commonly taught variety of the Chinese language in the world. However, in Summers' times, there was no consensus on which variety of Chinese should be learnt by students. Among the early missionaries, Jesuits such as Matteo Ricci (1552–1610) paid more attention to Mandarin.[42] Protestant missionaries, by contrast, focused more on local Chinese topolects in their contact with the common locals in and outside China. They focused on the vernaculars, just as suggested by the Lutheran motto "to look on the mouth of the people" (Branner 1997, pp. 235–236; Klöter 2005, p. 91; 2011b, p. 244, p. 246). When the five abovementioned treaty ports were opened in 1842, the importance of studying the different topolects of these ports became apparent. The missionaries had to translate the Bible into different topolects, edit dictionaries and publish corresponding teaching materials.[43]

In his letter to Staunton, Summers emphasised that he could speak three varieties of the Chinese language, i.e., Cantonese, Shanghainese and Mandarin (Summers, 22 November 1852). This was confirmed by Stanton (Stanton, 25 November 1852). Summers himself argued that Shanghainese is the most important topolect for the British government because "[Shanghai] is yearly increasing in its commercial importance to England" (Summers, 22 November 1852). His argument served as advice for King's College London. In fact, Summers was following Stanton's suggestion in this, who had argued that Shanghainese should be the first Chinese topolect to be learnt by British students (Kwan 2014b, p. 95). Another reason why Summers recommended Shanghainese so fervently may have been that he himself felt confident to teach it. In his letter to Staunton, Summers said that he knew Shanghainese best of the varieties of Chinese that he was able to speak. After reading Summers' *Gospel*, Qián Nǎiróng (2014, p. 4) emphasised that Summers' record and analysis of the phonological system of Shanghainese in the mid-nineteenth century is basically correct. Despite this fact, however, Mandarin—more specifically Nanjing Mandarin—played the most important role in Summers' works, including his most thorough Chinese monograph, *Handbook*, which served as a textbook for students at King's College London (Summers, 13 April 1861). Regardless of his emphasis on Shanghainese in his letters, Nanjing Mandarin was indisputably the most important variety of the Chinese language in Summers' point of view. That is also why this dissertation mainly focuses on his research on Mandarin.

[42] This does not mean that the Catholic missionaries ignored the local vernaculars, but barely any extant materials can be found (cf. Klöter 2007, pp. 195–196; 2011b, p. 244).

[43] According to Yóu Rǔjié, there are in total more than 600 extant versions of the translation of the Bible into Chinese topolects and 249 different manuals, dictionaries, grammar books, etc. by Westerners (2003, p. 6). The missionaries also taught the Roman alphabetic orthographies to the local people in order to write their respective topolects. Those orthographic systems were very popular among illiterate believers and were used as a communication tool, especially in the southern Fujian region (Yóu Rǔjié 2003, p. 18).

However, "Mandarin" was not a simple and elementary concept. In his inaugural address (1853a, pp. 28–29), Summers mentioned the "universal spoken language" in China, which was used by officers and in court. This spoken language had two types: "[o]ne, taking its rise from Peking, spoken in the **extreme** north of China; the other, taking its rise from Nanking, is used **throughout** the central and southern districts" (p. 29, emphasis added). From the words "extreme" and "throughout", one can see that Summers observed that Nanjing Mandarin is more widely used and hinted that it is therefore worth learning. In his *Handbook*, Summers also emphasised that Nanjing Mandarin has the "correct sound" and is "the language of universal circulation" (1863a, Part II, p. 4). In the same book, he stated that Wade's *The Hsin ching lu* (1859) records Beijing Mandarin, which is "not employed throughout the provinces as Mandarin, except by the high officials who come direct from the northern capital" (1863a, p. x). Summers changed some words into their counterparts in Nanjing Mandarin from Beijing Mandarin while citing examples from Gonçalves' *Arte China* (cf. Appendix 1). Therefore, his *Handbook* is not based on Beijing Mandarin but on Nanjing Mandarin. There is some other evidence in his *Handbook* showing that Summers gave preference to Nanjing Mandarin, such as the five tones of Mandarin that he specified. Summers stated that sometimes he learned Mandarin with "a native of Peking" who stayed in Shanghai (Summers, 24 November 1852), which means that he showed at least some interest in the dialect from Beijing. However, from what has been mentioned above, the "Mandarin" that he described in his works and that he taught to his students was Nanjing Mandarin.

That being said, some features based on other varieties of the Chinese language can be found in the examples of his *Handbook*. The most important example is the AAB pattern of the reduplication of adjectives (cf. Chapter 5). Other examples are the word "*piĕ-t'eû* 鼻[頭] 'a nose,' met. 'a servant'" (1863a, p. 44),[44] the expression "*yiù-shă* 有殺 'has killed'" (1863a, p. 71)[45] and the demonstrative "*kó* 個" in "*kó-jîn* [個人] 'that man'" (1863a, p. 105).[46] However, the *Handbook* includes examples cited from Chinese literary works with some words or expressions not commonly used in Mandarin nowadays. For example, "*chūng-í* 中意 lit. 'hit the centre-idea,'–'please, suit'" (Summers 1863a, p. 73) is commonly used in Cantonese,

[44] *Bítóu* with the meaning "nose" and "servant" does not exist in present-day Mandarin, but can still be found in topolects like Shanghainese and Southern Mĭn (Xŭ Băohuá and Miyata 1999, pp. 6867–6868).
[45] *Yŏu* acting as an adverb denoting "already" appears in topolects in Fujian and Zhejiang (Xŭ Băohuá and Miyata 1999, p. 1750).
[46] Using *gè* as a demonstrative pronoun is a characteristic of Pekingese, Shanghainese, Xiang, Gan and Cantonese (Xŭ Băohuá and Miyata 1999, p. 373).

Shanghainese and Hakka[47] (Xǔ Bǎohuá and Miyata 1999, p. 711). However, in *Shuǐhǔ zhuàn* (水滸傳 *Water Margin*, fourteenth century), [48] one of the novels cited in the *Handbook*, expressions like *bù zhōngyì* 不中意 'not pleased' were listed (1997, p. 945). The language in *Water Margin* is a mixture of Shandong and Zhejiang topolects, and there are discussions about which topolect the fiction was based on (Lǐ Yǒnghù 2008, p. 82). For Summers, it was not easy to distinguish dialectal features, considering the time span of the Chinese language discussed in his works.

Although Summers considered Nanjing Mandarin to be the most widely used in China, six years after he returned to Britain, the *Treaties of Tianjin* were concluded after China's defeat in the Second Opium War in the year 1858 (Fairbank 2008, pp. 243–250). This series of treaties not only concerned Britain, but also France, Russia, and America (Gě Fūpíng 2014, p. 166). Hankou, Nanjing, and some other cities were opened to the West as treaty ports (Fairbank 2008, p. 251). The most important result of this treaty, however, was that it henceforth allowed foreign diplomats to enter Beijing (Fairbank 2008, p. 250). With this series of treaties, the sphere of influence of Western countries extended from the South to the capital of China. This was seen as the point where it became obvious to the British and other Westerners that they should urgently learn Beijing Mandarin (Kwan 2014a, p. 44). Besides, after the massacre and wars in Nanjing during the Taiping Rebellion (1851–1864), the dramatic decline of the local population reinforced the shift of the Westerners' interest in the Chinese language (Simmons 2020, pp. 22–24). Diplomats and missionaries are not linguists and their interest in a language is a merely practical one. The change in the political situation was followed by the change in the preference for the language in language teaching activities (Kaske 2008).

Most of the early missionaries and Western merchants before the mid-nineteenth century learnt and wrote about Nanjing Mandarin. Some of them, like Morrison, noted the rise of Beijing Mandarin, and still advocated learning the former (Morrison 1815b, p. xviii). After the mid-nineteenth century, some Chinese and European scholars like Summers still preferred Nanjing Mandarin (Simmons 2017, p. 68; 2020, pp. 24–32). The Nanjing pronunciation preserved more characteristics of classical Chinese; for example, the *Rùshēng* 入聲 'entering tone' made the Nanjing pronunciation more "orthodox" and was therefore favoured by

[47] Hakka is mainly spoken in central and Eastern Guangdong, Western Fujian and Southern Jiangxi, with around 44 million speakers (Hóu Jīngyī 2002, p. 155; Eberhard, Simons and Fennig 2022).

[48] Summers' translation of the book is *Stories of Banditti* (1863a, Part II, p. 51). The formation of *Water Margin* was a long and complicated process. Here I follow the general concept and attribute the work to Shī Nàiān (fourteenth century, cf. Mair 2001, pp. 626–628).

conservative Chinese scholars (Kaske 2008, pp. 41–42). As a scholar, Summers considered Nanjing Mandarin to be the "correct sound", which did not reflect the state's urgent need to learn Beijing Mandarin.[49]

1.2.2 Summers' other duties

Summers continued his studies of Chinese with great enthusiasm and was eager to apply his knowledge to the field (Summers, 13 April 1861). This was one of the reasons why he also found employment in the British Museum Library from 1858 to 1859 (Harris 1998, p. 253) and later worked at the India Office Library in 1868 (Kwan 2018, p. 75).[50] These part-time jobs gave him the opportunity to get access to articles and books about the Far East, which helped him to improve his Chinese. It was to the advantage of these institutions that he could compile the catalogues for libraries in conjunction with deepening his previous knowledge about Asia. In the very beginning of his professorship, he did not "reach a proficiency as to be able to read and write [Chinese] like a native", but he was sure that he "[could] attain it with the foundation already laid" (Summers, 22 November 1852). He published some works on Chinese and he even studied Japanese, starting around 1864.[51] In 1868, he was able to deliver a speech on "Japan and the Japanese" (*The Hampshire Advertiser County Newspaper*, 1868). Besides, he registered as a student in Magdalen Hall at Oxford (Foster 1887–1888, p. 1371)[52] —though he never received a degree (Kwan 2014a, p. 40)—and held a position as a curate at Hitchin Church, Hertfordshire in 1863 (Koyama 2007, p. 1; Nakagawa 2008, p. 99). He was also a

[49] This could be one of the reasons why the Foreign Office terminated the interpreter plan with King's College London in 1861.

[50] Summers' professorship at King's College London carried an annual salary of 100 pounds (Staunton, 30 December 1852). Summers always suffered from some financial shortages in order to publish his journals (Shigehisa 1941, p. 350; Nakagawa 2008, p. 118). This could also be one of the reasons why Summers had part-time jobs since he had to make the ends meet.

[51] The essay 'The Japanese language and grammar' was published in *Chinese and Japanese Repository* (November 1864, pp. 151–158) and marks the commencement of Summers' study of Japanese (Nakagawa 2008, p. 107).

[52] Magdalen Hall became part of Hertford College in 1874 (Kwan 2014a, p. 40). Lundbæk wrote that Antonio Montucci (1762–1829) mentioned "a professor in the Hertford College" who was a teacher of the Chinese language, and this teacher was James Summers (Lundbæk 1995, p. 27, p. 52). When Montucci passed away, Summers was only one year old. Montucci, therefore, could not know that Summers would have become a Chinese teacher in 1852 and he registered in the predecessor of "Hertford College". In fact, Montucci only mentioned that there was one professor for Chinese at the Hertford College (Montucci and Morrison 1817, p. 17). "Hertford College" in this context, as correctly pointed out by Lundbæk, was the East India College at Hertford, which is different from the one at Oxford which Summers attended. "James Summers" was not a common name for Chinese teachers in nineteenth century Britain either. Therefore, Lundbæk might confuse the "Hertford College" Summers studied at and the East India College, and therefore considered Summers to be the Chinese teacher in Montucci's work.

corresponding member of the Ethnographical Society of Paris (C*hinese and Japanese Repository*, Vol. 1, 1863–1864, title page).[53]

The British Library is the national library of Britain. Its history can be traced back to the British Museum founded in 1753. Summers wrote to King's College London to request permission (7 June 1858) to work for the Department of Printed Books of the British Museum. The library of the British Museum held various sources for Summers' studies. Summers helped to compile the catalogue of the East Asian collections from August 1858 onwards (Kwan 2018, p. 66). Although he resigned approximately half a year later, he still helped as requested until 1865 (Kwan 2018, p. 66). From 1868, Summers worked in the India Office Library for about five years (Kwan 2014a, pp. 50–52).

The India Office Library was founded as early as 1789 (Datta 1966, p. 99). It held book collections from China, which were simply placed on the shelves and left there to be covered by dust until Dr. Fitzedward Hall (1825–1901)[54] became aware of these treasures (Summers 1872a). While working there, Summers finished his book *Descriptive Catalogue of the Chinese Japanese and Manchu Books in the Library of the India Office* (hereafter: *Catalogue*), which was published in 1872.

Summers kept good connections with these institutions,[55] so that he could still get access to the materials even when he did not work there. Besides his teaching commitment at the university and his work in the libraries, he managed to edit journals and publish books concerning Asian languages and cultures.[56] For instance, in 1873, Summers printed *Taisei Shimbun*, which was one of the first Japanese newspapers published overseas, although there was just one issue (Shōwa 1956, p. 21; Koyama 2007, p. 2, etc).[57] Summers' achievements not only reflect the fact that he had free access to important libraries, but also his diligence and hard work, as mentioned by Rev. Stanton.

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[53] The Ethnographical Society of Paris (Société Ethnologique de Paris) was established in 1839 and "became the example of the ethnological societies in England and America" (Vermeulen 1995, p. 28).

[54] Hall was the librarian of the India Office Library, an Orientalist, as well as professor of Hindustani in King's College London since 1862 (*The Calendar of King's College London for 1863–1864*, 1863).

[55] For example, after he stopped working formally in the British Museum Library, he still offered help to the library (Harris 1998, p. 253; Kwan 2018, p. 66).

[56] Publishers run by Westerners also emerged in the treaty ports and places like Hong Kong and Macau. Before 1899, there were already twelve such publishers (Yóu Rǔjié 2003, p. 5). The most important ones are: The Morrison Education Society, which moved from Malacca to Hong Kong together with Morrison's Anglo-Chinese College in 1843; The London Missionary Society Press, which was established in Shanghai by Walter Henry Medhurst (1796–1857) in 1843; and The American Presbyterian Mission Press, which was established in Macau in 1844 and moved to Shanghai in 1860 (Lǐ Bīn 1997, p. 105; Zhāng Jìng 2001, pp. 43–44; Yóu Rǔjié 2003, p. 5). From 1844 to 1859, 434 works were published by such publishers, including religious preaching materials, textbooks, dictionaries, and introductions to Western science (Zhāng Jìng 2001, pp. 43–44). Many famous scholars like Alexander Wylie (1815–1887) and Joseph Edkins worked for such publishers (Lǐ Bīn 1997, pp. 105–106).

[57] More works published by Summers will be introduced in Chapter 3.

To sum up, in the course of his career, Summers expanded his interest in the history, cultures, literature, and other aspects of China and East Asia. He edited and published journals about them as an academic scholar, with the help of the store of books in libraries collected by missionaries and merchants. At the same time, he was one of the earliest occupants of a professorship for Chinese in Europe who travelled to and worked in China, differing from the early armchair sinologists in this respect. Although he only spent four years in China, Summers had exposed himself to the native environment of the Chinese language, and experienced close contact with the Chinese culture. During his daily communication with local people, he gained active knowledge of the Chinese language through his diligent studies, be it Cantonese, Shanghainese, or Mandarin. This set the cornerstone of his applied approach to the Chinese language in his teaching activities after he returned to Britain and assumed the post at King's College London, which was later on reinforced by the student interpreter programme in collaboration with the Foreign Office.