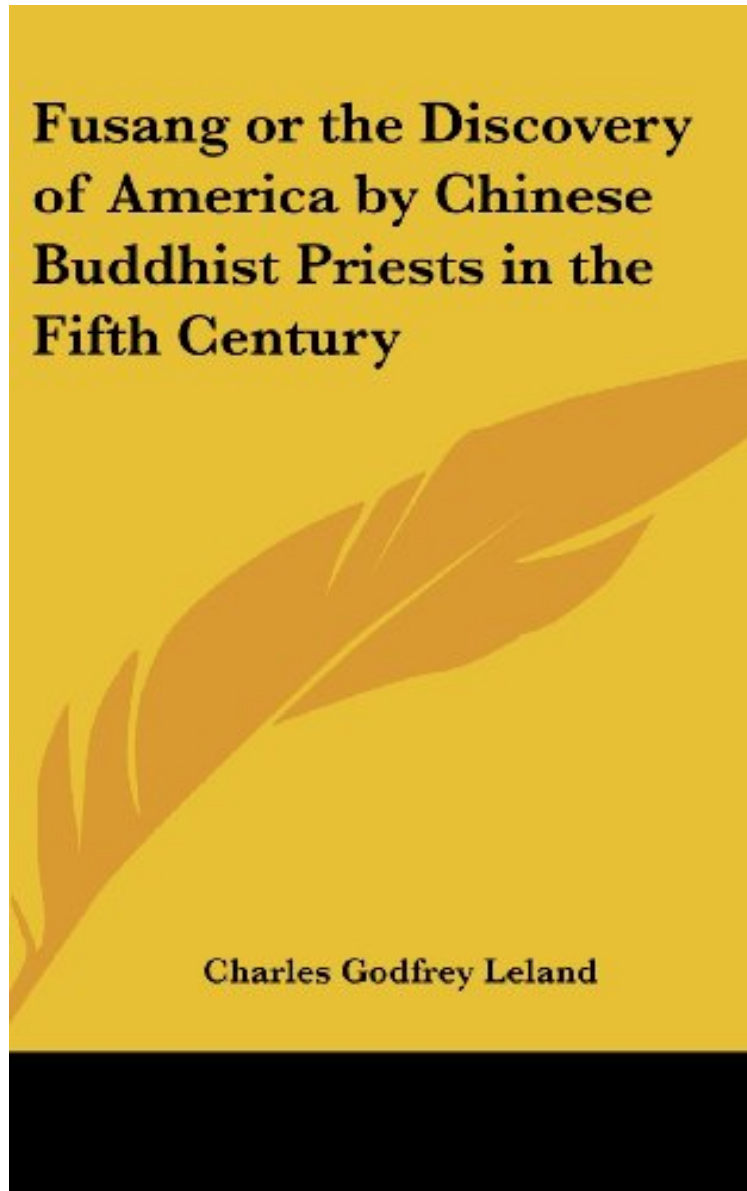


Fusang or the Discovery of America by Chinese Buddhist Priests in the Fifth Century

Charles Godfrey Leland

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About the Author Charles G. Leland (August 15, 1824 March 20, 1903) was an American humorist and folklorist. He became interested in folklore and folk linguistics, publishing books and articles on American and European languages and folk traditions. He studied languages, wrote poetry, and pursued a variety of other interests, including hermeticism, Neo-Platonism, and the writings of Rabelais and Villon. After college, he went to Europe to continue his studies. In his travels, he made a study of the Gypsies, on whom he wrote more than one book. He began to publish a number of books on ethnography, folklore and language. His writings on Algonquian and gypsy culture were part of the contemporary interest in pagan and Aryan traditions. He erroneously claimed to have discovered 'the fifth Celtic tongue': the form of Cant, spoken among Irish Travellers, which he named Shelta. He became president of the English Gypsy-Lore Society in 1888. He wrote *Aradia, or the Gospel of the Witches*, reportedly containing the traditional beliefs of Italian witchcraft as conveyed him in a manuscript provided by a woman named Maddalena, whom he refers to as his "witch informant." This remains his most influential book.