

A Chinese Reformer in Exile

*Kang Youwei and the Chinese Empire Reform
Association in North America, 1899-1911*



Robert L. WORDEN and Jane Leung LARSON
With Zhongping CHEN and Evelyn HU-DeHART
Contributions from CHEN Xuezhong
and Yang ZHENG

A Chinese Reformer in Exile

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*To our cherished spouses, Norma Chue Worden and
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Introduction

1 Setting the Scene

Those who hereafter will write the history of New China cannot do otherwise than take the events of 1898 as the first chapter of that history.¹

Liang Qichao spoke these words at the Beijing memorial service for Kang Youwei shortly after his long-time mentor died in Qingdao on March 31, 1927. Liang's words held a great degree of truth considering the sustained reverberations of the One Hundred Days of Reform, when the Guangxu Emperor—under the guidance of Kang and his followers—proclaimed nearly two hundred edicts to modernize China's government and society during the summer of 1898. The conservative reaction to the Hundred Days was swift and harsh. Some of the reformers were executed, others escaped with their lives, and the Empress Dowager, Cixi, imposed herself as regent for her nephew. This marked a radical setback to the reform of the archaic Qing governmental system and a return to cautious, self-preserving structural embellishments rather than progressive functional changes. Kang, Liang, and other reformers fled into more than a decade of foreign exile. Although the 1898 reform movement ended abruptly, its ideals endured among many Chinese, both within China and overseas, and were praised by foreign observers. While Kang and his followers were forced by circumstances to employ new tactics, their reform goal—a constitutional monarchy—remained the same. The sequence of events between the Hundred Days in 1898 and the Republican Revolution of 1911 are well known. Less known are the political and economic activities of the exiled reform leaders and the contributions they made to the formation of modern China. If “New China” had its birth in 1911, it surely had its conception in 1898.

The circumstances that brought about the failure of the Hundred Days of Reform and secured its place in history as an abortive attempt to change China's political system made way for the inevitability of the Republican Revolution of 1911. But before 1911, the exiled reformers—led by Kang Youwei—made valiant efforts to restore the Guangxu Emperor and themselves to power.

1 Ma Honglin 馬洪林, *Kang Youwei Dazhuan* 康有爲大傳 [Comprehensive Biography of Kang Youwei] (Shenyang: Liaoning Renmin Chubanshe, 1988), 626–27. This translation appears in Owen M. Green, *The Story of China's Revolution* (London: Hutchinson, 1945), 155. The original sentence reads: “Hou you zuo xin Zhongguo shi zhe, zhong budebu yi Wuxu wei di-yi zhang” 後有作新中國史者，終不得以戊戌爲第一章。

After Kang sought without success to obtain support from foreign governments to restore Guangxu, he succeeded in marshalling virtually untapped resources among Chinese overseas. A network of Kang's followers and community leaders organized themselves politically and mobilized the energy and financial support of hundreds of thousands of Chinese at home and abroad to apply pressure on the Qing government.² In 1899, with the help of Chinese Canadian entrepreneurs, Kang oversaw the establishment of the Baohuanghui—the Society to Protect the Emperor—known in English as the Chinese Empire Reform Association.³ It became a transnational organization of political operatives using public and secret communication and newspaper networks. They attempted an uprising, plotted ill-fated assassination schemes, fostered feminist breakthroughs and international boycotts, and launched a putative intercontinental financial empire. The reformers outpaced Sun Yatsen and his revolutionaries almost up to the eve of the 1911 revolution. Kang's reform movement is credited by historians as having inculcated the values and aspirations of citizenship, nation, and constitutionalism and inadvertently helped produce the 1911 revolution.

The Hundred Days' downfall was a turning point in China's history. At the time, Sun Yatsen, Huang Xing, and other exiled revolutionists sought an immediate end of the monarchy and the establishment of a republic. They rejected reform and for them the Qing court's conservative backlash was clear evidence that methodical gradual change was ineffective. Rather, total revolution was the obvious solution. As Kang and his followers moved abroad in search of support from foreign governments and Chinese overseas, they found themselves in competition with these more radical elements. The goals of both exile groups were the same: create a new sense of nationhood among the Chinese people, and enhance China's status in international society and commerce. It was only the means to the goal that were incompatible. Kang and Liang advocated the establishment of a constitutional monarchy. They saw revolution as a violent force that would do more harm than good by its disruption of society. They

2 Numerical estimates of Chinese Empire Reform Association supporters are impossible to verify, but a conservative estimate of the membership is at least 100,000. Beyond the organizational membership, there were many more inside (and outside) China who read the reformers' newspapers, participated in the constitutional movement of 1907–11, followed the writings of Liang Qichao and other popular reform advocates, or otherwise endorsed the goal of constitutional monarchy for China.

3 In this book, the name Baohuanghui is used in general statements about Kang's overseas reform organization as it evolved, but more often it is used for the association as it was officially named until 1907, when the name changed to Diguó Xiánzhēnghuì (Imperial Constitutional Association). Depending on the context, the Western name, Chinese Empire Reform Association, is used in some instances.

believed it was more reasonable to keep the Qing monarchy, bring it under constitutional authority, and proceed to democratic government through an evolutionary process of popular education and institutional change. Although Kang was loyal to the Manchu emperor, in the long run, the throne and Qing dynasty were secondary to his long-range plan to protect China's national sovereignty by the eventual establishment of a republic. In his famous *Datong Shu* (Book of Great Community), Kang envisioned a one-world utopia emerging in the remote future.⁴ But an orderly progression was critical to Kang's concept of China's modernization. He wrote in 1902 that "The three systems—monarchical absolutism, establishment of constitutional rule, and democracy—must come one after the other in proper sequence. To change the sequence would bring about great disorder."⁵

Kang's reformers and Sun's revolutionists were outlawed in China. Political parties were banned, so both groups sought political and financial support from Chinese overseas. Kang and Sun both traveled first to Japan and then expanded their operations into Southeast and South Asia, the Pacific, and eventually to Chinese communities and student groups in the Americas and Europe. Keen rivalries developed between the two exile groups. What ensued, sometimes silently, other times not, throughout the Chinese communities of the world, was a tripartite struggle among Qing loyalists, reformists, and revolutionists. Competing political, charitable, paramilitary, and journalistic organizations flourished, sometimes merged, and periodically died out. The years between 1898 and 1911 saw intense activity in all these sectors among expatriate Chinese. While Qing loyalists supported the status quo, the exiled reformers and revolutionists brought a new awareness of China's institutional weaknesses to the overseas communities and preached more modern and radical solutions to receptive audiences.

Expatriate Chinese, numbering in the hundreds of thousands, were receptive both to the reformers and the revolutionaries. These expatriates hoped for China's improvement and modernization even as they themselves struggled to

4 See Jung-pang Lo, *K'ang Yu-wei: A Biography and Symposium* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1967), 433–62, for a chronological list of Kang's writings from pre-1876 to 1927.

5 Kang Youwei 康有為, "Da Nanbei Meizhou zhu Huashang lun Zhongguo zhi ke xing Lixian buneng xing Geming shu" 答南北美洲諸華商論中國只可行立憲不能行革命書 [A reply to the Overseas Chinese Merchants in North and South America on Why Constitutionalism, not Revolution is the Way for China], May 1902 in *Kang Youwei Quanji* 康有為全集 [Collected Works of Kang Youwei], ed. Jiang Yihua and Zhang Ronghua 姜義華, 張榮華 (Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin Daxue Chubanshe, 2007), vol. 6, 314. Translation from Lo, "Sequel to the Chronological Autobiography," *K'ang Yu-wei*, 192. The Chinese reads: "凡君主專制, 立憲, 民主三法, 必當一一循序行之, 若紊其序, 則必大亂..."

overcome prejudice and hardship in their adopted lands. Most Chinese overseas had not forsaken their homeland; many left because of economic or social necessity, others by force, and still others to seek their fortune as sojourners. Their allegiance to China was inbred, and their plans to return home someday were often taken for granted. As a minority abroad, a Chinese overseas could more easily see China as a nation, whereas his homebound contemporary might identify no further than with his village, district, or province. Hence, roaming political propagandists at the turn of the twentieth century fostered a degree of nationalism in the minds of the Chinese overseas. The work before Kang, Sun, and their disciples was to bring this latent nationalism to maturity.

Political organization, financial capital, and clearly defined programs and goals, animated by astute leadership, were all needed. Because of his role in 1898, Kang Youwei had an advantage over other exiled figures. He enjoyed traditional respectability as a high-ranking, albeit more free-thinking Confucian scholar. He was renowned for briefly having been an advisor (sometimes construed as “prime minister” by westerners) to the Guangxu Emperor. His gradualist program sought to preserve the useful aspects of China’s society through a reinterpretation of Confucian tradition, while developing a cosmopolitan plan of reform that drew from a wide range of foreign sources. While carrying out his reform mission overseas, Kang also found a new “market” in which he promoted equitable legal and social treatment of Chinese in their adopted lands. The histories of the Chinese in China and the Chinese overseas began to merge.

In contrast, Sun Yatsen’s rebellious talk was said to have “frightened his audiences,” particularly those in the United States, and at times he left such gatherings “without securing their support.”⁶ Kang’s reception among the Chinese overseas initially gave the reformers a decided advantage to promote their organization and preach their version of China’s political salvation. The revolutionaries were not idle, of course, and competition was waged in earnest, with the reformers securing greater popularity and support in North America, while Sun’s forces did not come to the fore until relatively late in the pre-revolutionary period. Between 1909 and 1911, thanks largely to the reform organization’s internal troubles, Sun’s Tongmenghui (Revolutionary Alliance) slowly gained a decisive and permanent advantage.

If Kang is to be considered as having made a contribution to China in the twentieth century, it has to be the political awakening he achieved among its people. As a politician, Kang drew support from Chinese communities

6 Shelley Hsien Cheng, “Tung-meng-hui: Its Organization, Leadership and Finances, 1905–1912,” Ph.D. dissertation, Department of History, University of Washington, 1962, 18.

throughout the world which at one time or another believed that the “Modern Sage” held the greatest hope for a new China. Although his movement was superseded by the revolutionists, it built considerable momentum and support. The fact that Kang’s reforms were met with Qing obstruction created a more radicalized atmosphere for those of a revolutionary bent. The Baohuanghui thus served as an important intermediary link between the years when reform was popular until the point when revolution was inescapable. Some might argue that the reformists’ efforts held back the revolution. It can also be argued that to the contrary, the reformists’ miscarried program actually hastened the revolution. Their inability to achieve progress and constitutional governance in China was proof to many of the incompetence and the lack of desire of the Qing administration to facilitate radical reform as a means of keeping China from complete collapse. There remained only one alternative, and Kang, through his failures, unintentionally showed the revolutionists the way.

In the 2010s, Kang was celebrated in docudramas and opera.⁷ His tomb in Qingdao, destroyed during the Cultural Revolution, has been rebuilt, and his dismembered skull reburied. Museums have opened in Kang’s honor in his last home in Qingdao and his hometown in Nanhai, where a kind of Kang theme park (Kang Yuan) has been built.⁸ Examples of his calligraphy are in the permanent collections of art galleries in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City and the British Museum in London, among others. The Baohuanghui headquarters in Victoria, British Columbia, has been lovingly restored inside and out by its current owners who fly a replica Baohuanghui flag on its pinnacle. Long forgotten documentary troves have been brought to light and are well used in this book.

Historians no longer view Kang Youwei as a reactionary old man who had seen his day—only one hundred of them—and of little importance thereafter. He is now placed solidly in the historical framework of the 1898–1911 era.

7 Hong Kong-New York filmmaker Evans Chan has produced three docudramas about Kang Youwei and his movement—*Datong: The Great Society* (2011), *Two or Three Things about Kang Youwei* (2013), and *Chinatopia* (2014). Chan was librettist for *Datong: The Chinese Utopia*, an opera on Kang Youwei commissioned for the 2015 Hong Kong Arts Festival.

8 Kang’s tomb outside of Qingdao below Xiang’er Mountain was rebuilt in 1985 to rebury Kang’s skull, preserved and hidden by a museum director in 1966 after Kang’s bones had been disinterred and burned by the Red Guards. Wan Zhaoyuan, *Science and the Confucian Religion of Kang Youwei (1858–1927): China before the Conflict Thesis* (Leiden: Brill, 2021), 222–25. Kang’s home in Qingdao is the Kang Youwei Residential Museum, 6 Fushan Road, and the museum on the site of Kang’s home in Danzao, Nanhai, houses a number of artifacts, including a large portion of the Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection referred to below.



FIGURE 1 Parapet of restored 1905 Baohuanghui founding headquarters building at 1715 Government Street, Victoria, British Columbia.

Kang was an accomplished scholar of both traditional and “Western learning” before 1898 and a leader of others in synthesizing these ideas to create a new and reformed China. By the time the Hundred Days ended, he was an experienced—if unsuccessful—politician and statesman, an eminent Confucian intellectual and writer, and importantly, a man in the prime of life at age forty with a driving ambition to overcome the great failure of 1898. He wanted to save China from itself and from encroachments of Japan and the West. He realized the importance of improving the quality of life for his fellow Chinese at

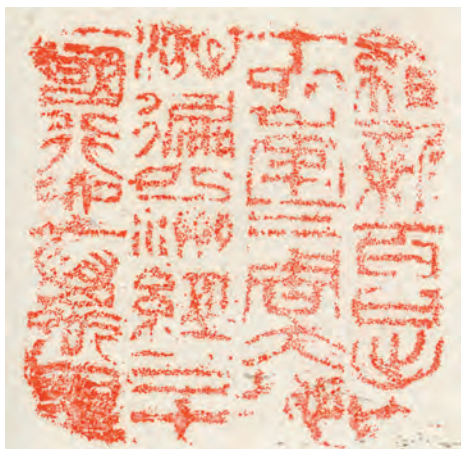


FIGURE 2

Kang Youwei's seal carved by Wu Changshi upon return to China. It reads, "One hundred days of Reform, sixteen years of exile, three world tours, four continents and thirty-one countries visited, six hundred thousand *li* traveled."

home and came to understand the need to do so for those overseas and took action. He sought not to destroy the imperfect, as would happen with revolution, but to work constructively and gradually toward perfection.⁹

Kang's exile from China began with Cixi's coup d'état in September 1898 and lasted until December 1913, when he returned to Guangzhou. Instead of enduring years of bitter frustration, resentment, and inactivity, these fifteen years were the busiest and fullest of his life.¹⁰ During most of his exile years, Kang was considered an outlaw, a fugitive with a price on his head, vulnerable to arrest or assassination by Qing agents and revolutionist enemies. For this reason, he spent many years not only away from China but also away from East Asia. He traveled purposefully throughout North America, Europe, North Africa, the Middle East, and South and Southeast Asia. His self-appointed place in life was as a messenger for constitutionalism as the key to China's political revival. He addressed Chinese communities and the governments and peoples of the countries in which he traveled. Kang journeyed to many Western

9 Kung-ch'üan Hsiao, *A Modern China and a New World: K'ang Yu-wei, Reformer and Utopian, 1858–1927* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1975), 194–95.

10 As the wording on Kang's seal carved after his return to China reveals (see caption), Kang followed the Chinese custom of using "inclusive counting," calculating sixteen years of exile by including both the first and last years in the span, 1898–1913. All traditional Chinese methods of counting years use inclusive counting, according to Endymion Wilkinson, *Chinese History: A New Manual*, 6th ed. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2022), vol. 1, 942. Seal translation from Zhang Qireng [Chi Jeng Chang] 張啓祜 and Kang Xuepei [Connie Kang] 康雪培, *Kang Youwei Haiwai Shiji* (*Kang Youwei's Overseas Poetry Collection*) 康有為海外詩集 (Beijing: Zhongyi Chubanshe, forthcoming).

countries, meeting with heads of state, as well as with scores of lesser dignitaries and officials on national, state, provincial, and municipal levels. He studied the finer points of constitutionalism, industrialization, and social reform, all in an effort to understand how best to reform China's institutions.

Kang logged approximately 180,000 miles during his fifteen-year exile. His travels included all the European countries except Russia (where he was *persona non grata*); Morocco, Egypt, Turkey, and Palestine; India, Sikkim, and Ceylon; Burma, Malaya, Thailand, Straits Settlements, and the Netherlands Indies; Japan and Hong Kong; and, most important to the scope of this book, the North American countries of Canada, the United States, and Mexico.¹¹ Kang spent approximately twenty-nine intermittent months between 1899 and 1907 visiting these latter three countries. His visits were as long as twenty months in 1904–6 and as short as a still-unconfirmed, secretive visit for several weeks in 1909. He first arrived in North America in April 1899, and allegedly departed for the final time in June 1909.

Seeking practical ways on how to modernize China, Kang traveled for self-education. He visited executive agencies of government, prisons, universities, military academies, factories, charitable institutions, asylums, museums, national parks and monuments, and even American country clubs to study the workings of Western society. He looked for Western innovations that he had studied and written about since the 1870s in China and inspected them at their sources. He also periodically spent months at a time in seclusion in India, Canada, Sweden, and elsewhere, contemplating, writing, and planning, as well as recovering from illnesses. He gained much information and many new insights on Western civilization and institutions and life in general from his travels, and many of his writings were inspired by his experiences abroad. He published some ninety books, articles, and essays during his exile. Numerous other writings from this time went unpublished or were published at later dates. He also revised and completed some older works, such as *Datong Shu*. While many of Kang's published writings in his fifteen-year exile reflect knowledge distilled from North America, apart from poems about favorite scenic spots, he did not write detailed travelogues for the North American countries as he did for most of the European countries he visited.

11 Lo, "Sequel to the Chronological Autobiography," *Kang Yu-wei*, 274 n46 (in regard to Russia). However, Kang attempted to convince at least two Chinese envoys in Europe to give him travel papers to enter Russia, but was turned down. Unpublished manuscript, Kang Youwei, "Bu Helan Youji" 補荷蘭游記 [Supplemental Record of Travels in Holland]; <http://cn.51bidlive.com/Item/6596825#pretty>, accessed May 20, 2024.

Unlike his other travels, Kang's North American sojourns were consumed with expanding the Baohuanghui, campaigning for its political agenda, and attempting to micromanage multiple aspects of the organization, from writing association charters, to designing membership badges, to critiquing the financial practices of Baohuanghui business managers. By any standard, the Baohuanghui was an ambitious, worldwide enterprise, with at least 230 chapters in the Americas, Asia, Australia, Africa, and Europe. North America was the organizational hub, hosting at least 160 chapters as well as newspapers, schools, military academies, women's associations, banks, a streetcar line, and even a restaurant.¹² Kang also chose North America to convene three organizational assemblies, from the founding meetings in Victoria in 1899, to two plenary sessions in New York City that adopted new charters in 1905 and 1907. Kang assumed another, lesser-known role as a business manager, financier, and speculator. Members bought shares in the Commercial Corporation (Shangwu Gongsi), whose holdings were widespread in East Asia, Southeast Asia, and North America, and involved businesses from rice brokerages in Malaya, to land speculation and streetcar and steamship concessions in Mexico, publishing houses in China, restaurants and hotels in Hong Kong, Penang, and Chicago, banks in several countries, and (notably unprofitable) newspapers throughout the world.

Kang never traveled or lived alone in exile, in part because he depended on interpreters, who often held dual duties as secretary—writing letters to foreign dignitaries and taking notes or dictation for letters or essays. Kang eventually learned enough English to write letters to English-speaking friends on the rare occasion when he had no secretary, but his semiofficial interactions with journalists and political leaders, among others with whom he wanted to speak, required fluency. Young Chinese men fluent in English accompanied Kang on his journeys, and, in Mexico, his Chinese associates were able to speak Spanish. In Europe, Kang met an Austrian man who served triple-duty as bodyguard, valet, and translator and came with Kang to the United States. As essential as an interpreter was a bodyguard to protect Kang from assassins, and Kang had one and sometimes multiple guards at various times during his exile. Only one of Kang's wives traveled widely with him, and she—Lily Haw, formerly of Fresno, California—acted as his interpreter and secretary from the time of their marriage in 1907. Kang's mother and other wives, except for brief periods when they joined Kang, lived together in Hong Kong

12 See "Mapping the Baohuanghui" in Appendix 2 for a table of chapters identified with their geographical place names. The North America figure does not include the American territory of Hawai'i, which had seven known chapters.

or Macau. Kang's second daughter, Kang Tongbi, was his most important and constant travel companion, and she too learned enough English to be his interpreter. When Kang settled somewhere for an extended period, he often hired servants from the local population, who might or might not be Chinese, and letters and government reports mention German and English maids. Finally, in North America, Kang often traveled with an entourage of local Chinese leaders, sometimes so large that when they disembarked at a train station, they left in a procession of carriages.

Kang's North American allies strongly influenced Baohuanghui issues and activities. Through them, he explored their countries, observing their political and social conditions, especially the treatment of Chinese living within their borders. While his travels in the United States were more wide-ranging and varied than in Canada or Mexico, Kang was able to focus on different concerns in each country, whether it be establishing and expanding the Baohuanghui as he was able to do effectively in Canada, delving into the business opportunities only possible in Mexico, or galvanizing Chinese nationalism (and positive American response) as he did with the 1905 anti-American boycott in the United States. Kang's campaigning style also differed from country to country, from year to year, and from community to community. For example, in Mexico, Kang rarely gave public speeches, except when he first arrived in a community. And, his travels inside Mexico seemed as much for his own edification as for spreading the Baohuanghui message, whereas he had an active schedule of talks and press interviews in the United States and Canada, especially during his first visits to these countries.

Confusion by non-Chinese about Kang's status is clear from the range of titles and attributions applied to him. In North America, the press called Kang Youwei Mr. Kang (sometimes Mr. Wei), Dr. Kang, Honorable Kang, General Kang, Crafty Kang, and even Prince Kang. The titles given by the press ranged from Chinese Premier, Prime Minister, and Secretary to His Imperial Majesty—usually prefixed with “former”—to less formal descriptions as Refugee Chinese Statesman, a Ruler in Exile, Noted Visitor, Oriental Grandee, Chinese Dignitary, the Celebrated Chinese Reformer, the Advance Agent of the New China, to “a reformer—a revolutionary—a thorough socialist.” Significantly, on the Federal government level of the United States, Kang was known as ex-Counselor of State, Chinese agitator, Vice Minister of War, and prominent Chinese exile. But by nearly unanimous usage, Kang was most frequently addressed as “His Excellency.”

Because of his scholarly renown, foreign contemporaries considered Kang Youwei a “modern Confucius.” An American historian of the period effused that he:

is the New China ... His name spreads like the spirit of an informing angel over the whole of China, and every new official, especially those educated in America, who has seen the light, goes sometimes to the Oracle Kang to feed it with oil.¹³

Other observers compared him to Rousseau, Voltaire, Kossuth, Martin Luther, John the Baptist, Moses, and even the Count of Monte Cristo. Like Dumas' fictitious hero, Kang sometimes was an immoderate risk taker in his financial dealings. He could be impulsive and demanding at times and, at others, generous, and youthfully enthusiastic about new discoveries, and always ready for new adventures. He purchased a house in Sweden and a typewriter in the United States. He used the advanced technologies of his day while dressing himself as a Mandarin and depending on personal translators for his conversations with his hosts. Like a traditional Buddhist-inspired scholar, he was drawn at times to primitive living, returning again and again to a simple fisherman's shack on Coal Island in the Strait of Juan de Fuca, British Columbia, and pursuing hard-ship travel on horseback in India and on mountain railroads through the American Rockies. He ignored the counsel of sound advisors and was quick to blame others for his own misjudgments. Kang was willing to consider assassinating Sun Yatsen and the Empress Dowager while investing in a bodyguard, protective armor, and handguns for himself. He hobnobbed with kings, princes, sultans, presidents, prime ministers, nobility, and other luminaries but was most impressed by the likes of the energetic Theodore Roosevelt, to whom he wrote seven letters and telegrams between 1905 and 1909, and the elderly Porfirio Díaz, who had been Mexico's dictator since the 1870s. "Oracle" Kang promoted the cause of women's liberation—including that of his own daughter, Kang Tongbi, and the wives of Chinatown elites—while taking on a teenage Chinese American bride for himself and going off with her to a Scandinavian hideaway. Kang was his own man in a brave and uncertain new world.

2 Authors and Contributors

This book represents more than fifty years of original archival research on Kang and the Baohuanghui in North America. It is based on Robert L. Worden's 1972

13 John Stuart Thomson, *The Chinese* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1909), 193. In his *China Revolutionized* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1913), 13, Thompson altered his glorified opinion when he compared Kang "to a Taft 'stand-patter' medium reformer and Sun [Yatsen] a thoroughgoing advanced reformer of the Roosevelt type."

Georgetown University doctoral dissertation, “A Chinese Reformer in Exile: The North American Phase of the Travels of Kang Youwei, 1899–1909.” Worden carried out his trailblazing study of Kang Youwei in North America in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the first doctoral-level scholar to thoroughly delve into a vast assortment of archival sources then available in North America to document Kang’s activities. He consulted directly with three scholars having an intimate knowledge of Kang and his organization: Jung-pang Lo, Kang’s grandson; Kung-ch’üan Hsiao, an eminent Kang scholar; and Him Mark Lai, the “dean of Chinese American history” and expert on Chinese American political organizations. Worden’s approach to research and analysis was also influenced by personal acquaintances with his Georgetown history professor, Wei-kuo Lee, who was himself a student of Liang Qichao in the 1920s, and Arthur Hummel, the founder of what became the Asian Division of the Library of Congress, who served as Liang’s interpreter in the 1920s. In his methodology and conclusions, Worden trod new ground in 1972 by integrating Chinese and Chinese diaspora history and introducing the idea of Kang and the Baohuanghui as radical reformers, change agents of the twentieth century rather than diehards clinging to the past.

The authors and contributors amplify, update, and reconfigure Worden’s original work, enriched by the many primary sources discovered since 1972 and their complementary areas of expertise. The primary authors are Worden and Jane Leung Larson, whose research on the Chinese Empire Reform Association evolved from studying the papers of her grandfather Tom Leung (Tan Zhangxiao), Kang’s host, travel companion, and confidant during his encounter with North America. The contributing authors are: University of Victoria historian Zhongping Chen, the foremost expert on Chinese reformers and revolutionaries in Canada and author of *Transpacific Reform and Revolution: The Chinese in North America, 1898–1918*, and Evelyn Hu-DeHart, Brown University, a renowned historian of the Chinese in Latin America.¹⁴ Chen wrote much of Chapter 1 and portions of Chapter 11. Hu-DeHart was largely responsible for Chapter 8. Chen Xuezhong of Guangzhou is a protégé of Fang Zhiqin, Institute of History at the Guangdong Academy of Social Sciences, and contributed his deep knowledge of the lives of Kang and his students, particularly to this book’s Prelude and the Hundred Days of Reform. Yang Zheng, a Ph.D. candidate in Chinese history at the University of Connecticut under Peter Zarrow, the leading American historian of Kang and Liang, served as expert translator and research assistant.

14 Zhongping Chen, *Transpacific Reform and Revolution: The Chinese in North America, 1898–1918* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2023).

Worden and Larson are responsible for the final edited manuscript, including its interpretations and conclusions, as well as any mistakes herein. However, they know that their coverage of such a vast topic as Kang and the Baohuanghui in North America has been greatly enhanced by the contributors' participation.

3 Approach and Sources

This book aims to demonstrate that Kang's fifteen years in exile—particularly his extended visits and political organization activities in North America—were the most consequential in his life. Although his reworking of Confucianism in the 1880s and 1890s was more striking and original, Kang's complex public roles as politician, statesman, business speculator, and inveterate traveler, were complemented in private by adding to his already voluminous oeuvre of books, essays, letters, and poems. North America inspired Kang's transformation from a utopian philosopher to a more practical visionary consumed with the material world that he came to believe was the means to China's national salvation. Thus, equal attention is given to the Baohuanghui founded by Kang in North America, in effect China's first mass political party.¹⁵ While the book's attention centers on the North American activities of Kang and the Baohuanghui, Kang's far-flung travels and organization required an occasionally wider geographic angle to bring context and continuity to this regional history during the 1899–1909 decade. However, concurrent with the decline of the reform movement abroad after 1909, the political legacy of Kang and the Baohuanghui flowered inside China during the two years (1910 and 1911) before the successful Republican Revolution. The book concludes with analysis of the significant events in this latter period that illuminate this legacy.

Kang Youwei is an iconic figure in China's modern history. Such influential books as Jonathan Spence, *The Gate of Heavenly Peace* (1981); John Fitzgerald, *Awakening China* (1996); and Peter Zarrow, *China in War and Revolution* (2005) center Kang and his movement at the birth of a modern Chinese nation.¹⁶ Kang's radical Confucianism and design for a One World utopia (*Datong Shu*) have

15 Sun Yatsen formed the Xingzhonghui [Revive China Society] in 1894, but its membership never grew beyond a few chapters in Yokohama, Hong Kong, San Francisco, and Honolulu. See Chen, *Transpacific Reform and Revolution*, 118–24.

16 Jonathan D. Spence, *The Gate of Heavenly Peace: The Chinese and Their Revolution, 1895–1980* (New York: Viking Press, 1981); John Fitzgerald, *Awakening China: Politics, Culture, and Class in the Nationalist Revolution* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996); Peter Zarrow, *China in War and Revolution, 1895–1949* (New York: Routledge, 2005).

been treated in recent studies of late Qing thought.¹⁷ In 2016, art historian Aida Wong described Kang's little-known impact on Chinese modernity as a "calligrapher, art activist, and aesthetic reformer" in *The Other Kang Youwei*.¹⁸ Wong captures the challenge of understanding and presenting an accurate picture of Kang: "the value of studying Kang Youwei is in the way it demands boundary crossing on so many different levels and reveals the complexities of his times. His story is the story of modern China."¹⁹ In another vein, in 2023, Luke Kwong translated a contemporary novel (1909) about Kang by a revolutionary activist, Huang Shizhong, *Da Ma Bian (The Big Cheat)*, as part of Kwong's mission to "debunk the Kang-centered narrative" and stimulate "Kang Youwei's modern-day apologists" to reexamine "the stupefying effects of received wisdom" concerning his role in the Hundred Days' reforms.²⁰ Kang, however, remains relevant today. What does it mean that there is now an ideological faction in the People's Republic among "New Confucian" academics who call themselves "Kangists" (Kang Youwei zhuyi zhe) or members of the "Kang Party" (Kang Dang) and embody the "Kang Fever" (Kang Youwei Re)?²¹ Kang is seen as a prophet, not only predicting the chaos following the 1911 revolution but also espousing strategies that embraced Confucianism as a philosophical guide for China's future, including his approach to unifying a multiethnic nation and to China's proper role in the world, yet quite unlike Kang, these Kangists reject all acceptance of Western values or institutions and apparently all of Kang's reform proposals.²²

The evolution of the Baohuanghui in North America has proven an even more challenging topic than Kang's time in exile, and only three books to date

17 Three notable books are: Wan Zhaoyuan, *Science and the Confucian Religion of Kang Youwei (1858–1927): China before the Conflict Thesis* (Leiden: Brill, 2021); Peter Zarrow, *Abolishing Boundaries: Global Utopias in the Formation of Modern Chinese Political Thought, 1880–1940* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2021); and Federico Brusadelli, *Confucian Concord: Reform, Utopia and Global Teleology in Kang Youwei's Datong Shu* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2020).

18 Aida Yuen Wong, *The Other Kang Youwei: Calligrapher, Art Activist, and Aesthetic Reformer in Modern China* (Leiden: Brill, 2016).

19 Wong, *The Other Kang Youwei*, 191.

20 Luke S.K. Kwong, *The Big Cheat (Da ma bian): A Late Qing Novel by Huang Shizhong on Kang Youwei* (Leiden: Brill, 2023), x, xii.

21 Lee Ting-mien, "A Preliminary Overview of Kang Youwei Studies in China Today," *Oriens Extremus* 58 (2020–21); this issue includes a guest-edited section by Peter Zarrow, "Rethinking Kang Youwei in the Twenty-First Century."

22 Ge Zhaoguang, "If Horses Had Wings," translated by David Ownby, *Reading the China Dream*, <https://www.readingthechinadream.com/ge-zhaoguang-if-horses-had-wings.html>, accessed January 15, 2023.

begin to cover this ground. L. Eve Armentrout Ma's 1990 history of the reform and revolutionary movements as they developed in the Chinatowns of the Americas and Hawai'i between 1899 and 1911 has been the primary English-language publication documenting Baohuanghui activities in the Americas.²³ Ma's portrait of Sun is more complete than her portrayal of Kang, providing few details about Kang's time in North America, noting that "it is regrettable that so little scholarly attention has heretofore been devoted to this party."²⁴ In 2009, Gao Weinong, a historian of the Chinese diaspora at Jinan University in Guangzhou, published a book on the Baohuanghui in the United States.²⁵ Gao worked primarily with Chinese language materials, including archives at the University of California, Berkeley and University of California, Los Angeles, to be described later, but as with most China- and Taiwan-based historians, his analysis lacks the corroborating (or conflicting) evidence and perspectives found in contemporary North American English-language archival materials. Chen's 2023 book, *Transpacific Reform and Revolution* is an analysis of reformers' and revolutionaries' networks in North America and China, with a strong emphasis on British Columbia communities. A few geographically based overseas Chinese histories provide rich details on Baohuanghui leaders and local party activity in places where the organization flourished, for example in Montana (Mark Johnson, *The Middle Kingdom Under the Big Sky*, 2022) and Australia (Mei-fen Kuo, *Making Chinese Australia*, 2013).²⁶

Jung-pang Lo's seminal *K'ang Yu-wei: A Biography and a Symposium* (1967) includes a meticulously annotated translation of Kang's chronological autobiography (*nianpu*, ending in 1898) and a sequel that covers the rest of Kang's life until three weeks before his death in 1927.²⁷ Because Lo was Kang's grandson and his mother was Kang Tongbi, who accompanied Kang during much of his exile and made it her late life mission to preserve his writings, Lo's book is

23 L. Eve Armentrout Ma, *Revolutionaries, Monarchists, and Chinatowns: Chinese Politics in the Americas and the 1911 Revolution* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1990).

24 Ma, *Revolutionaries, Monarchists, and Chinatowns*, 160.

25 Gao Weinong 高偉濃, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui zai Meiguo Huaqiao Shehui zhong de Huodong* 二十世紀初康有為保皇會在美國華僑社會中的活動 [Activities of Kang Youwei and the Baohuanghui among the Chinese in the United States in the First Part of the Twentieth Century] (Beijing: Xueyuan Chubanshe, 2009). The book is introduced by forewords in English by Him Mark Lai and Jane Leung Larson.

26 Montana had twelve Baohuanghui chapters; Mark T. Johnson, *The Middle Kingdom under the Big Sky: A History of the Chinese Experience in Montana* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2022). Australia had twelve chapters; Mei-fen Kuo, *Making Chinese Australia: Urban Elites, Newspapers and the Formation of Chinese-Australian Identity, 1892–1912* (Victoria, Australia: Monash University Publishing, 2013).

27 Lo, *K'ang Yu-wei*.

considered the most faithful account of Kang's life as he experienced it. A companion volume is Kung-ch'üan Hsiao's 1975 magnum opus, *A Modern China and a New World: K'ang Yu-wei, Reformer and Utopian, 1858–1927*, the most expansive analysis and clearest distillation of Kang's radical Confucian philosophy, reform proposals, and utopian vision, derived from Hsiao's readings of Kang's complete writings and intensive discussions with Lo during their time together at the University of Washington.²⁸

As the authors discovered in this project, the scope and impact of Kang's exile years and his political and entrepreneurial activities abroad become clear only when one plumbs a plethora of transnational primary sources. Governmental and institutional archives in North America yielded immigration records and ship manifests documenting Kang's travel and international border crossings, corporation reports, legal cases, congressional hearings, police and intelligence reports, college records, and census reports. Coverage in local and national newspapers of Kang and the Baohuanghui and its affiliated businesses and activities was plentiful and widespread in North America, reflecting popular interest in this organization. In addition, Chinese newspapers (especially those published by the Baohuanghui) give contemporaneous coverage of Kang and his organization.²⁹ Newly discovered personal documentation—correspondence, diaries, and journals, not only of Kang and Baohuanghui members but of the Americans and Canadians who met Kang—is the book's most valuable primary source. Organizational artifacts such as badges, letterhead, picture postcards, posters, stock certificates, photographs, and membership rosters—excavated from the earth by archaeologists, found in the attics of homes of Baohuanghui descendants, or bought in auction—contributed to a concrete picture of the organizational culture. As these diverse primary sources were explored, the authors were better able to confirm the facts of historical events, balance personal accounts against more objective information, and evaluate how the Baohuanghui was seen by the governments and societies in which it operated.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, Worden uncovered a wealth of official government documents relating to Kang's activities and travels held by the U.S. government, several state and city governments; as well as documents from

28 Hsiao, *A Modern China and a New World*, v.

29 Most useful is the complete run of the Australian Baohuanghui newspaper, *Donghua Xin Bao* (*Tung Wah News*; later changed in English to *Tung Wah Times*), Sydney, 1898–1936, and available online through the National Library of Australia Trove searchable newspaper database: <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/>. Chapter news from around the world and articles about the Chinese political scene are covered in this newspaper, sometimes several months after they occurred for events in distant North America.

the governments of China, Canada, and Britain. Of particular importance were documents from the United States departments of state, war, treasury, and commerce and labor. The Bureau of Immigration's "Segregated Chinese Files" yielded approximately 150 letters, memoranda, notes, telegrams, and affidavits. Much later Zhongping Chen's study of Kang and the Baohuanghui in Canada made use of Chinese Immigration and North-West Mounted Police files at the Library and Archives Canada in Ottawa and Chinese materials in the British Columbia Provincial Archives in Victoria, University of British Columbia, and the City of Vancouver Archives. Evelyn Hu-Dehart accessed Spanish-language publications, which when combined with North American archival and published sources, were instrumental in developing the story of the Baohuanghui in Mexico, Brazil, and other parts of Latin America. Jane Leung Larson networked with numerous Kang scholars and Baohuanghui descendants worldwide and coordinated collaborative research on the Tom Leung and Kang Tongbi collections.

In the last several decades, publishers in China have produced multiple collections of the writings and correspondence of Kang Youwei and other Baohuanghui leaders, allowing the authors to study documents in the highly restrictive Chinese archives. Three major collections of Baohuanghui correspondence and printed matter pertaining to North American activities emerged after Worden wrote his dissertation and contributed to the original findings in this book:

- The Ethnic Studies Library, University of California, Berkeley holds the largest collection of Baohuanghui materials in the United States: "Chinese Empire Reform Association Documents, 1899–1948" is composed of seventy-three bound portfolios that include important documents, such as the 1905 and 1907 charters, an almost full run of the first year (1904) of the New York Baohuanghui newspaper (*Zhongguo Weixin Bao* (*Chinese Reform News*), Kang's speeches and writings, and extensive business records. This collection was preserved in Hong Kong by reform editor and activist Wu Xianzi, a Kang follower who took on the role of Baohuanghui archivist and historian and remained active until 1951.³⁰

30 See Yu Huizi 余慧子 [Wei Chi Poon], "Meiguo Bokelai Jiazhou Daxue Tushuguan Suocang Baohuanghui, Zhongguo Minzhu Xianzhengdang, Zhongguo Minzhu Shehuidang Shiliao" 美國柏克萊加州大學圖書館所藏保皇會, 中國民主憲政黨, 中國民主社會黨史料 [Historical materials on the Baohuanghui, China Democratic Constitutionalist Party, and China Democratic Socialist Party at the UC Berkeley library], *Jindai Zhongguo Shi Yanjiu Tongxun* (Taipei) no. 7 (March 1989): 97–110. Wu's collection was bought by the university library at a Hong Kong auction in 1983. Collection guide is at Online Archive of California, AAS ARC 2000/78, Chinese Empire Reform Association documents, 1899–1948,

- The Tom Leung Collection at the East Asian Library, University of California, Los Angeles contains more than three hundred original documents—mostly letters—written by Kang and other Baohuanghui leaders to Tom Leung, a student of Kang and long-time supporter in the United States. Significantly, the Tom Leung Collection is well-known in China because of the 2008 volume *Kang Liang yu Baohuanghui*, edited by Fang Zhiqin and Cai Huiyao.³¹
- The Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection, discovered in 2013, exposes heretofore unknown Baohuanghui activities, both the mundane and the clandestine, and lays bare the emotionally wrought interpersonal relations among the activists. Kang Tongbi saved these materials while living in South Windsor, Connecticut between 1903 and 1907, where she was a student, Baohuanghui manager, feminist advocate, and assistant to her father. The South Windsor home of Mary Starr Tudor, Tongbi's host, remains in the Starr family. Made up of approximately three hundred letters, invoices, posters, photographs, and other personal papers—including what is likely Kang Youwei's earliest extant chronological autobiography (*nianpu*)—the collection is split among items recovered from the South Windsor home of Robert Starr III, unknown locations in China, and the Nanhai Kang Youwei Museum in Kang's village, Danzao, Foshan. Fortunately, this book's research team compiled, transcribed, translated, and analyzed the entire digitized collection, which is maintained in virtual form on a private online storage site.³²

In the process of writing this book, the authors' knowledge has been enhanced by a variety of individuals around the world. These include descendants of Kang and other Baohuanghui members, artists, film makers, archaeologists, specialists on topics as diverse as streetcar lines in Mexico or Chinese currency, and, of course, other historians. Because the authors have freely shared their research, they have come to serve as an informal clearinghouse for questions

<https://oac.cdlib.org/search?style=oac4;Institution=UC%20Berkeley::Ethnic%20Studies%20Library;idT=UCb164610212>, accessed July 1, 2023.

31 Fang Zhiqin and Cai Huiyao 方志欽、蔡惠堯, ed., *Kang Liang yu Baohuanghui: Tan Liang zai Meiguo Suocang Ziliao Huibian* 康梁與保皇會：譚良在美國所藏資料彙編 [Kang, Liang, and the Baohuanghui: A Compilation of Materials Collected by Tom Leung in the United States] (Hong Kong: Yinhe Chubanshe, 2008). See Chapter 5 for details about this collection. The Tom Leung Collection is online: <https://digital.library.ucla.edu/catalog/ark:/21198/zz00231155>.

32 Chi Jeng Chang 張啓祜 of Vancouver, Canada, and his brother Zhang Qizhen 張啓禎 of Beijing, China, were largely responsible for transcribing and compiling these materials. The Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection is described in greater detail in Chapter 3.

and information about Kang and the Baohuanghui in North America, specifically through the public blog *Baohuanghui Scholarship*.³³ Those seeking information on Kang and the Baohuanghui find the blog, which allows the authors to crowd-source research queries. “Mapping the Baohuanghui,” a table of all known Baohuanghui chapters, has expanded as the authors tapped the local knowledge of those who have identified the many locations of Baohuanghui chapters for which only the Chinese names were available.³⁴ It must be noted that China’s ever-higher Great Firewall has seriously inhibited communication with colleagues and researchers in China, and both *Baohuanghui Scholarship* and the cloud document storage website are blocked in China.

Research on *A Chinese Reformer in Exile* was also rewarded by visiting the sites where Kang and the Baohuanghui were active. This led to new primary sources and a depth of understanding not possible from documents alone. Valuable artifacts have been found where Kang or the Baohuanghui were active. A time capsule was uncovered in the cornerstone of the original 1905 North American Chinese Empire Reform Association headquarters building in Victoria, British Columbia. The battered tin box contained items the founding Victoria members found significant, including foreign postage stamps, a Baohuanghui membership badge, a printed letter to members from Liang Qichao on the 1905 anti-American boycott, and the July 22, 1905, issue of the San Francisco Baohuanghui newspaper *Wenxing Bao*. These items, as well as a large stone plaque mounted inside the building inscribed with the names and chapters of hundreds of Baohuanghui donors, provided tangible connection with Baohuanghui history. Other such material evidence the authors have studied—from picture postcards advertising the Baohuanghui-run restaurant in Chicago to membership and stock certificates and elaborate Baohuanghui chapter posters—have richly augmented the authors’ plentiful archival sources.

4 Structure of the Book

The Prelude presents Kang Youwei’s personal development from son of a distinguished Guangdong literati family to impassioned political crusader

33 *Baohuanghui Scholarship*, <https://baohuanghui.blogspot.com/>, established in 2010.

34 In addition to the “Mapping” appendix in this book, the most updated version can be found on the *Baohuanghui Scholarship* blog: <https://baohuanghui.blogspot.com/2012/05/mapping-baohuanghui.html>. Also see “Play the Baohuanghui Guessing Game—Unidentified Chapters”: <https://baohuanghui.blogspot.com/2013/12/play-baohuanghui-guessing-game.html>.

whose radical advice to the Qing emperor sent him fleeing into a fifteen-year exile. Chapter 1 brings Kang to North America and the founding of the Chinese Empire Reform Association, or Baohuanghui, in Canada. Chapter 2 traces Kang's five years of travel before he returned to North America, during which time he directed the Baohuanghui's worldwide expansion and its manifold activities. Chapter 3 investigates how the Baohuanghui network penetrated Chinese communities in North America through the efforts of Kang's followers, who created a strong organizational identity and established Baohuanghui schools, newspapers, businesses, and women's groups. Chapter 4 shows that while Kang sought moderation through political reform rather than revolution, he also used militant tools, such as uprisings, assassination, and military schools, to achieve his goals.

Chapter 5 focuses on two months in spring 1905 when Kang lived in Los Angeles hosted by former student Tom Leung, illuminating Kang's relationships with followers and his growing understanding of American politics. He also had to confront the dangers posed by self-promoting Americans such as Homer Lea, whom he had entrusted with organizing the Western Military Academy. Chapter 6 examines how Kang and the Baohuanghui attempted to influence the American public and politicians to change the U.S. government's Chinese exclusion policy and mobilized the first mass movement in China, the 1905 anti-American boycott. Chapter 7 details Kang Youwei's extensive travels across the United States in 1905. The tour, with his retinue, delved into the workings of American governance and society with an eye to what would be useful to China's modernization. Kang also personally mobilized Baohuanghui members and gained popularity among Chinese Americans.

Chapter 8 examines the Baohuanghui network in Latin America, focusing on Mexico, where Kang made extended visits between 1905 and 1907. Encouraged by local Chinese, he unleashed his entrepreneurial ambitions in several Baohuanghui business ventures, with disastrous results in the city of Torreón. Chapter 9 surveys the vast Baohuanghui Commercial Corporation, envisioned by Kang as a Chinese East Asia Company, which included important business ventures in North America, such as the controversial but long-lived King Joy Lo restaurant in Chicago.

Chapter 10 spans 1906 to 1908, a critical period of tumult and transition when Kang positioned his reform movement to take advantage of Qing constitutional preparations by reconstituting the Baohuanghui (Protect the Emperor Society) as the Xianzhenghui (Constitutional Association) and directing its attention to political activities inside China. The year 1908 ended tragically for Kang, with the suspicious death of Guangxu. Chapter 11, covering the years 1909 to 1911, analyzes the complicated legacy of Kang and his reform movement,

which in North America was fracturing from internal conflicts and the appeal of Sun Yatsen and the revolutionaries, even as China's energized constitutionalists were elected to the first legislative assemblies. Despite these advances for a constitutional monarchy, an uprising in Wuchang, Hubei Province, in October 1911 led to the fall of the Qing in January 1912. The Conclusion suggests that Kang's most significant historical legacy is the unprecedented political movement he inspired and developed in China and abroad, with North America being where Kang's organizational achievements were most fully realized.

Chinese-language personal and organizational names and publication titles in the footnotes generally appear with characters at first mention in the book. Similarly, alternate personal names (usually Cantonese) also are listed at their first mention in the text or footnotes. The Cantonese dialect was central to the identities of many of the overseas Chinese mentioned in the book and the authors have endeavored to use the names they adopted and preferred, and were commonly used in Canada, the United States, and Mexico. All personal and organizational names (and variants) and Chinese-language terms also appear with characters in the Glossary.

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Kang Youwei's post-1898 travels were an unprecedented departure from his lifestyle up to that time, and they affected him in various ways. This book tracks Kang's peripatetic exile and the expansive network he established to shed light both on Kang's and China's political evolution. While the authors cannot measure the man as a whole historical person solely by examining this period, they hope to demonstrate the critical place Kang holds in China's modern history and among the Chinese communities in North America and beyond. Kang promoted the idea of uniting Chinese citizens to save their nation, in spite of regional, class or ethnic differences, a theme that Sun and his revolutionaries had to adopt once they took power. Kang's reform organization was an early expression of Chinese liberalism, a middle way that brought together the interests (and freedoms) of individuals with national interests, while strongly critiquing autocracy. Constitutionalism was both the end, and, via his political organizations, the means, to realize his reform agenda. Kang's ambitions would be muzzled in twenty-first century totalitarian China—where it is dangerous to evoke the “dream of constitutionalism” and illegal to organize a political association.

The Authors

September 21, 2024

Prelude: From Village Organizer to International Politician, 1883–99

Kang Youwei was born in his ancestral village of Sucun, also known as Yintangxiang (Silver Pond Village), Jiangpu Subdistrict, Nanhai District of Guangzhou Prefecture, Guangdong Province, on March 19, 1858.¹ His *nianpu* (chronological autobiography) lays out an illustrious pedigree of thirteen generations of scholar-officials. Each generation produced notable officials at the prefectural and provincial levels and even some of the wives achieved honorary titles. Eighteen of his early nineteenth-century kin, including his father and a grand-uncle who was a general, had military experience; three of them were cited posthumously for valor in battle. Noting this military expertise, Kang declared: “It was as if the fathers were dragons and the brothers tigers.”² He was quite proud of this scholar-official-military lineage, and it inspired him to cultivate such achievements in himself. As he progressed through his early education under the tutelage of his grandfather, Kang Zanxiu, Kang immodestly said he was “rather bright” and an uncle declared he was “no mediocre student” when his knowledge of the Confucian classics and their commentaries was tested at the age of five.³

As eldest son, ten-year-old Kang took charge of the funeral of his father, Kang Dachu, who died in 1868. Continuing his Confucian studies with his grandfather, his “appetite for learning was sharpened” as he read the classics all day and by lamp-light behind his bed curtains throughout the night. His reading also included Qing court documents and the achievements of Taiping Rebellion suppressors Zeng Guofan, Luo Bingzhang, and Zuo Zongtang, “which fired my ambitions.” By age eleven, he had become “more self-confident and was able to undertake more responsible work.” He visited well-known scenic and historical spots and wrote poems and essays about them as he sought to emulate great scholars of the past. By his own admission, he assumed “an air of superiority” over his fellow students. Biographer Kung-ch’üan Hsiao wrote

1 Nanhai Kang Xiansheng Zibian Nianpu 南海康先生自編年譜 [Chronological Autobiography of Kang Youwei], translated by Jung-pang Lo, “Chronological Autobiography of K’ang Yu-wei,” in his *K’ang Yu-wei: A Biography and Symposium* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1967), 21.

2 Kang, “Chronological Autobiography,” *K’ang Yu-wei*, 25.

3 Kang, “Chronological Autobiography,” *K’ang Yu-wei*, 23–24.

many years later that “intense self-confidence bordering on self-conceit was easily [Kang’s] most prominent [personality] trait.”⁴

As his knowledge of the Confucian classics deepened, he came to despise the study of the archaic “eight-legged essay” (*baguwen*) pushed on him by his grandfather and uncles.⁵ Nevertheless, he mastered the style in order to pass examinations. After failing the provincial exam in 1876, he began studying under an eminent local scholar, Zhu Ciqi, who insisted on going back to the original Confucian classics for inspiration. By then Kang believed “it was possible for me to be a sage,” and he set out to read all the important Confucian books before he was thirty. The more he read, however, the more “irreverence” he showed toward certain great Song, Ming, and Qing literary figures, and Teacher Zhu admonished him for his impudence and conceit. Kang stopped his formal studies in 1879 and closed himself off from the world on nearby Xiqiao Mountain so he could sit alone “to cultivate my mind.” This further convinced Kang that he was indeed a sage as he came to believe “that the universe and its myriad things were all part of me.” As he moved into his twenties—by then a married man and father of a daughter—he devoted himself to reading Buddhist and Daoist books “to nourish my inner spirit.” He also began to read about the outer world and visited the British colony of Hong Kong. There, he was impressed by Western administration and organization and came to understand that the foreigners were not barbarians, but worthy of emulation.⁶

Kang concentrated his studies on the “practical affairs of human society.” But he lived in a sort of dreamy atmosphere, enjoying flowers, bamboo, and quiet ponds, intermixed with more study. He again took the provincial examination in 1882, failed once more, and proceeded to Beijing, after which he circuitously returned home where he dove into reading official Qing treatises and began “a thorough study of Western learning in order to broaden my views.” Kang’s newly purchased books in translation from Shanghai enabled him to delve into “Western sciences, such as acoustics, optics, chemistry, electricity, and mechanics, as well as history and travelogues.” He was soon ready to embark on his life’s work.⁷

4 Kang, “Chronological Autobiography,” 26–28; and Kung-ch’üan Hsiao, *A Modern China and a New World: Kang Yu-wei, Reformer and Utopian, 1858–1927* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1975), 18.

5 *Baguwen* 八股文 was the eight-part essay scholars had to master to pass the traditional civil service examinations.

6 Kang, “Chronological Autobiography,” 28–36. Kang visited Hong Kong in 1879.

7 Kang, “Chronological Autobiography,” 38–39. In 1883, Kang wrote that he had decided not to pursue civil service examinations but focus on “the study of new things.” However, in 1893, to please his mother and uncles, Kang again took the provincial examination (*juren*) 舉人 and passed; Kang, “Chronological Autobiography,” 57.

1 The Power of Organization: 1883–95⁸

Kang Youwei instinctively practiced *minquan* (popular power) from the beginning of his political career. Many others of his time also pursued political reform, but few were as intrepid as Kang in going beyond the traditional limitations of his lowly position to communicate with higher authorities. He persistently pressed his views through any channel he could find until he forced open the “path of speech” (*yanlu*) to sit in front of the Guangxu Emperor as an advisor in June 1898. Kang’s unusual success at challenging authority stemmed less from the content of his ideas than from the intensity of his self-generated mission to save China. But Kang’s voice, as brilliant and eloquent as it was, would likely have remained unheard had he not mobilized others supporting his cause through associations and mass actions that caught the attention of the emperor and his progressive court advisors.

Kang began organizing voluntary associations as early as 1883. As a young father, Kang refused to bind the feet of his daughters, even though he met unexpected resistance from his fellow villagers, including his own clan. Kang formed the first Chinese Anti-Footbinding Association (*Buchanzuhui*) with a man from a neighboring village who had lived in the United States and shared Kang’s views about this “unnatural custom [that] was widespread and stubbornly and blindly adhered to.”⁹ Both men and women (including bound-feet women) could join, and if women later unbound their feet, “they were congratulated and honored.” Kang wrote in his autobiography that “when people in the district voiced the fear that the very word ‘association’ (*hui*) might be a violation of the prohibitions [of the government against popular organizations], many of the members gradually drifted away.”¹⁰ It would take more than a decade before the national movement against footbinding took off, but eventually this “moral revolution” succeeded, and fewer and fewer Chinese parents bound their daughters’ feet after the early 1900s.¹¹

8 This section and the following sections covering the Hundred Days and its downfall have been enhanced by the research and analysis of contributor Chen Xuezhong.

9 Kang’s association was the first to be initiated by a Chinese person; foreign missionaries had earlier organized anti-footbinding societies, but with little impact beyond their few Christian followers. Kang, “Chronological Autobiography,” 38. The Taiping movement also abolished footbinding among their followers. It should be noted that Manchus and Hakka people, among others, did not bind their women’s feet.

10 Kang, “Chronological Autobiography,” 39. In 1895, Kang Guangren founded the Guangdong Anti-Footbinding Society using the regulations of his older brother’s original association. Kang Youwei also submitted a memorial to prohibit footbinding in 1898.

11 Kwame Anthony Appiah, *The Honor Code: How Moral Revolutions Happen* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2010), 53–100, describes the rapidity of “moral revolutions” when issues of

Kang traveled to Beijing in 1888, “a man lowly and unknown.” Moved by “a vast concern for China and her people,” he wrote his first petition to the emperor proposing the reform of government through adoption of Western forms.¹² Kang hoped to submit the memorial through a high-ranking official in Beijing, approaching, among others, the emperor’s tutor Weng Tonghe. Although these officials appreciated his courage and even expressed support for his views, none dared submit the memorial under his own name.

Despairing of making change in Beijing, in 1890 Kang returned to Guangzhou to build his own brain trust of reformers. He opened a unique school to teach both Chinese and Western subjects and engage students, almost as equals, in devising a Confucian theory of reform.¹³ This became Guangzhou’s famous academy, Wanmucaotang (Thatched Hut among Ten Thousand Trees), a name evoking the cultivation of talent or ridgepoles. Wanmucaotang spawned a generation of reformers that began with Kang and his illustrious students, among them Liang Qichao, Xu Qin, and Mai Menghua. They spread throughout the country to establish political and social reform organizations, including the Qiangxuehui (Society for the Study of National Strengthening, established in late 1895) and the Baoguoahui (Society to Preserve the Nation, which was established on April 12, 1898 and was the closest predecessor to the Baohuanghui). During this time, Kang and his students published newspapers and books, gave public speeches, and distributed leaflets to propagate their reform theories among Chinese elite, allowing them to gain practical experience in political mobilization that would be deployed during their exile.

2 Rallying Scholars for Political Reform: 1895–98

A milestone in Kang’s political life and a defining event in the reform movement arose from the Qing government’s military defeat by Japan in 1895, culminating in China’s submission to the crippling Treaty of Shimonoseki that April. China lost Taiwan and other offshore islands and was forced to pay an indemnity ten times what it paid in the Opium Wars.¹⁴ That spring, Kang and

honor are effectively deployed to change longstanding behavior, as Kang did by invoking the national dishonor of footbinding in the chapter, “Freeing Chinese Feet.”

12 Kang, “Chronological Autobiography,” 45–46.

13 Ma Honglin 馬洪林, *Kang Youwei Dazhuan* 康有為大傳 [A Comprehensive Biography of Kang Youwei] (Shenyang: Liaoning Renmin Chubanshe, 1988), 103–43, includes a colorful history of Wanmucaotang and its most famous students, “Wan Mu Sensen San Wan Hua” 萬木森森散萬花 [The Forest of 10,000 Trees Scattered 10,000 Flowers].

14 Peter Zarrow, *After Empire: The Conceptual Transformation of the Chinese State, 1885–1924* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012), 28.

Liang were in Beijing along with thousands of other *juren* (provincial graduates) to compete in the triennial metropolitan exams to become *jinshi* (palace graduates), a select group who could directly memorialize the emperor.¹⁵ Apart from taking the grueling examinations, which Kang passed and Liang failed, the two men “aroused the spirit of the scholars” whom they mustered together to memorialize the Qing.¹⁶

China’s first mass petition movement became known as Gongche Shangshu, or the Joint Petition of Imperial Examination Candidates to the Emperor, and foreshadowed Chinese student protests of the twentieth century.¹⁷ Kang and his followers, including Liang and Mai Menghua, began by collecting signatures of eighty *juren* from Guangdong to request the government to carry on the fight against Japan and not sign the Shimonoseki treaty. They also tried to persuade *juren* from Hunan and other provinces to submit similar petitions. But, Kang’s unique tactic was organizing a three-day rally, from April 30 to May 2, at the Songyun shrine in Beijing to take advantage of the intense nationalistic atmosphere in the capital for dissemination of a much broader reform message. Beforehand, Kang and his followers canvassed provincial native-place lodges where the *juren* from all over China were residing during the examination period and alerted them to the upcoming event. Hundreds of scholars and officials heard Kang expound on his far-reaching petition calling for “a complete transformation of China’s economic and educational system.”¹⁸ This 18,000-character petition was characteristic of his later memorials and petitions, which included many of the same reform proposals and also flaunted Kang’s precocious knowledge of world history and modern technology and his bold interpretation of Confucian orthodoxy that gave the government flexibility to respond to changing conditions. Historian Peter Zarrow writes,

Kang’s petition called upon the government to promote industry; modernize the army; build railroads, a postal system, and a merchant marine; employ ‘good men,’ even using the talents of Overseas Chinese (mostly lower-class merchants but technically and commercially skilled); and

15 *Juren* had passed the provincial civil service examination (*xiangshi*) 鄉試, which made them eligible for some government posts and the right to attempt the Metropolitan Examination (*huishi*) 會試 in the capital.

16 Kang, “Chronological Autobiography,” 64.

17 *Gongche* (or *gongju*) 公車 refers to the special government carriages transporting *juren* to the capital for the official national examinations during the Han dynasty; thus the image of the *gongche* evoked the high rank and privileges of the *juren*.

18 Jonathan D. Spence, *The Gate of Heavenly Peace: The Chinese and Their Revolution, 1895–1980* (New York: Viking Press, 1981), 7–13.

improve agriculture through training schools ... Most tellingly, the reformers envisioned an active citizenry; people not just dedicated to their families and local community good but to fueling China's growth and progress.¹⁹

Kang's 1895 petition was never submitted to the court, and, if it had been, would have been too late to stop the Shimonoseki treaty from being signed. With far more impact, the petition was copied by hand for distribution at the Songyun meeting and then widely published. Kang Youwei now had the attention of reform-minded officials and a much broader following. Political scientist David Strand highlighted the significance of Kang's public debut, saying with the "degree of political compression achieved in Beijing in spring 1895 ... Kang's ideas exploded outward from the capital along old and new communications pathways [and] signaled a new style and tempo of politics."²⁰ Strand assessed Kang's "gift for oratory" as greater than his rival Sun Yatsen, and the speech at the Songyun Shrine came closest to China's "equivalent of the Gettysburg Address."

In less than two months, Kang's third memorial, based on the petition but including, for the first time, a proposal for a parliament, at last reached the emperor, who was greatly impressed.²¹ Once he knew he would be heard, Kang submitted one memorial after another, expanding on the idea that the emperor could save China and make the country rich and powerful only by thoroughgoing reform following the models of Japan, Russia, Germany, and Britain.²² At the same time, Kang and Liang continued to rally the lettered elite, from lower-level officials to those in the top leadership, around the reform cause.

Chinese cultural pride, however, continued to make it difficult for some scholars to accept reforms so influenced by Western concepts. Even after the Sino-Japanese War had clearly marked the failure of thirty years of the self-strengthening movement, most scholar-officials inclined toward reform

19 Peter Zarrow, *China in War and Revolution, 1895–1949* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 13–14.

20 David Strand, *An Unfinished Republic: Leading by Word and Deed in Modern China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 73–75, 279.

21 Young-tsu Wong, *Beyond Confucian China: The Rival Discourses of Kang Youwei and Zhang Binglin* (London and New York: Routledge, 2010), 19. Wong notes that never before had the idea of a parliament (*yiyuan*) 議院 been discussed in a memorial to the emperor.

22 Before June 11, 1898, Kang sent seven memorials under his own name and wrote eighteen more that were submitted by others. See Kong Xiangji 孔祥吉, *Kang Youwei Bianfa Zouzhang Ji Kao* 康有為變法奏章輯考 [A Study of Kang Youwei's Reform Memorials] (Beijing: Beijing Library Press, 2008), 91–229.

still clung to the fallacious *ti-yong* formula.²³ In a speech to the Baoguoahui in spring 1898, Kang said that the scholars were responsible for China's weak response to the immediate Western pressures.²⁴ A constant theme of Kang's writings was an attack on the fatalism of those who said the situation was hopeless and who passively awaited "butchering."²⁵ Kang and, even more so, Liang Qichao, also criticized escapism and decadence by painting lurid pictures of scholars who "did not read books or tend to affairs" but instead, preferred to "smell flowers and drink wine."²⁶ Liang summarized the situation by saying that China would "not perish from poverty, weakness, foreign disaster, or internal discord" but that it would "truly perish because ... of the scholars."²⁷ This inherent conservatism would doom the Qing's attempts at reform, repeatedly causing officials to impede the reform program just as it began to gain momentum.

But by early 1898, Kang's appeals to the throne, coupled with mounting foreign encroachments on China's territory, pushed the Guangxu Emperor to make the most important decision of his life—to launch comprehensive reforms. The ambitious Guangxu saw the great Qing emperor Qianlong as his model and had long sought to distance himself from the Empress Dowager (Cixi), whose rule he found repugnant for its corruption and cost-draining luxuries.²⁸

3 One Hundred Days of Reform: June 11–September 21, 1898

The Wuxu (1898) One Hundred Days of Reform (June 11–September 21) are regarded by many scholars as the peak of Kang Youwei's political career. During this extraordinary summer, no person was more active than Kang in promoting

23 *Ti-yong* 體用 or "*Zhongxue wei ti, Xixue wei yong*" 中學爲體，西學爲用 (as stated by Zhang Zhidong 張之洞) can be translated as "Chinese learning as the essence, Western learning for utility." Kang rejected *ti-yong*, believing that China must understand the ideas behind Western institutions before they could be adopted in China.

24 Jian Bozan 翦伯贊, *Wuxu Bianfa* 戊戌變法 [The Reform Movement of 1898] (Shanghai: Renmin Chubanshe, 1957), 4: 409. Portions translated in John Schrecker, "The Pao-kuo hui: A Reform Society of 1898," *Papers on China* 14 (December 1960): 60.

25 Jian, *Wuxu Bianfa*, 413–14.

26 Jian, *Wuxu Bianfa*, 415.

27 Jian, *Wuxu Bianfa*, 413.

28 Pamela Kyle Crossley, *Orphan Warriors: Three Manchu Generations and the End of the Qing World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 167–68.

the reforms and writing or revising more than fifty memorials submitted to the throne, although most were in the names of other officials.²⁹

Kang designed the blueprint for systemic reform and put forward hundreds of detailed measures, many of which the emperor immediately issued as edicts, including the abolition of the eight-legged essay in the civil service examinations and the establishment of a modern educational system. It was Kang who proposed the strategy of appointing young officials to advance the reforms and weaken the authority of the conservative opposition. Ever attentive to the power of public opinion, Kang and his followers were the most effective of the various reform groups in enlisting support for political reform (*bianfa*), even to the point of establishing the short-lived Baoguhui, meant to be the model for a proto-political party.³⁰ Thus, officials and scholars, including Kang's political enemies, considered him to be the leader of the reformers, labeling his faction the Kang Dang (Kang's Party). Kang, however, was merely a second-class secretary (and only a sixth-rank official) at the Ministry of Works (Gongbu), not part of the inner circle that made the ultimate reform decisions. This inner circle was actually presided over by the Guangxu Emperor, but Kang was regarded at the time as the most prominent champion of reforms and the spiritual leader of the 1898 movement.³¹ And, on September 26, when Cixi publicly announced

29 Kong Xiangji, who did extensive archival research on Kang's contributions during the Hundred Days, found forty-nine memorials submitted directly by Kang or drafted by him but submitted in the names of other officials; Kang also presented the emperor copies of books he had edited; and he submitted memorials drafted by others that he had revised with considerable modifications. Thus, the number of memorials that Kang had some role in composing was greater than forty-nine. Kong, *Kang Youwei Bianfa Zouzhang Ji Kao*, preface and 230–476. Mao Haijian 茅海建, documented five more memorials that can be attributed to Kang, in “Kang Youwei yu ‘Zhen Zouyi’: Du Kong Xiangji bianzhe *Kang Youwei Bianfa Zouzhang Ji Kao*” 康有為與“真奏議”: 讀孔祥吉編者康有為變法奏章輯考 [Kang Youwei's “Genuine Memorials”: Reading Kong Xiangji's Study of Kang Youwei's Reform Memorials] Study of Kang Youwei's Reform Memorials], *Jindaishi Yanjiu* no. 3 (2009): 142–58. Wong, *Beyond Confucian China*, 30, says there were at least seventy memorials written by Kang in 1898.

30 Wong, *Beyond Confucian China*, 26, writes that the Baoguhui was initiated April 12, 1898, and held three meetings that month, but was soon disbanded by Kang after it was accused of “a hidden, conspiratorial agenda.”

31 There has been scholarly dispute on Kang's role in the 1898 reforms. Although most scholars agree that Kang was the most prominent individual initially proposing systemic reform, they debate about how much credit he should be given as the movement's leader. Indeed, Kang looked to the emperor as the one who must preside over the reforms and recognized that without the weight of imperial authority such sweeping change could not be implemented. Luke S. K. Kwong's *Mosaic of the Hundred Days: Personalities, Politics, and Ideas of 1898* (Cambridge: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1984) was widely seen by scholars as meeting his stated goal of “combatting the influence of the K'ang-Liang sources in interpreting the Hundred Days Reform.” It is the authors' view that

the arrest of those considered responsible for the reforms, she declared Kang to be “the most guilty one ... and gathered around him a large party for treasonable purposes of his own.”³²

On June 11, 1898, just as Kang had long urged him to do, the emperor issued a decree launching wholesale reform. In blunt terms, he decried the ignorance and conservatism of the officials who had stalled in making significant changes sought by the court since China's defeat by Japan.³³ During the next 103 days, Guangxu announced nearly two hundred imperial orders that directed officials to modernize China's education, military, commerce, finances, agriculture, industry, mining and railways, postal system, press, technology and innovation, social customs, selection of officials, and, most importantly, the political system.³⁴ On June 15, the emperor abruptly dismissed Weng Tonghe—his tutor and closest advisor, the man responsible for bringing Kang to the emperor's attention—after Weng's increasingly strenuous objections to Kang and the radicalism of his proposals.³⁵ A day later, Kang was summoned to his one and only official audience with Guangxu.³⁶ Among Kang's key recommendations

Young-tsu Wong's *Beyond Confucian China*, 15–47, is the most reliable English-language source on the sequence of Wuxu events and Kang's role in them; Wong states that Kang was “the key reformer in 1898” and “his ideas were the basis of the Emperor's reform program.” Also see Wang Rongzu (Young-tsu Wong) 汪榮祖, “Ye Lun Wuxu Zhengbian Qianhou de Kang Youwei” 也論戊戌政變前後的康有為 [A Follow-Up Study of Kang Youwei Before and After the Wuxu Coup d'état], *Lishi Yanjiu* no. 2 (1999): 71–86. Mao Haijian also concluded that Kang's group had the most influence on Guangxu's reform program; Guangxu's esteem for Kang was illustrated by his actions on five occasions when he protected Kang against reprisals by disgruntled senior officials; and many of Guangxu's edicts reflected direct or indirect proposals of Kang and his allies. Mao Haijian, “Wuxu Shiqi Kang Youwei yu Guangxu Di” 戊戌時期康有為與光緒帝 [Kang Youwei and Emperor Guangxu during 1898], *Jindaishi Yanjiu* no. 4 (2021): 34–54.

32 Lane J. Harris, *The Peking Gazette: A Reader in Nineteenth-Century Chinese History* (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 303.

33 For a compilation of the most important edicts and memorials from this period, see chapters 25 and 26 on the One Hundred Days and its immediate aftermath in Harris, *The Peking Gazette*, 280–308.

34 “Introduction” in Liang Qichao, *Thoughts from the Ice-Drinker's Studio: Essays on China and the World*, trans. and annotated by Peter Zarrow (London: Penguin Classics, 2023), XIII.

35 Wong, *Beyond Confucian China*, 27–28.

36 Wong, *Beyond Confucian China*, 29. Wong writes that Kang's meeting with the emperor lasted two and a half hours, based on Kang's account of the audience, but it was likely far shorter, in part because Kang's non-native Mandarin would have hindered smooth conversation with the emperor. Most of Kang's proposals were in writing. Zhang Yuanji, a reformer who met Guangxu immediately after Kang on June 16, observed later that Kang was only with the emperor for about fifteen minutes. Bess Manying Ip, “From Qing

was the establishment of a bureau of institutions or Planning Board (Zhidu ju) to appoint young reformers to plan and implement the emperor's program and provide a mechanism for bypassing obstructive court officials. After the audience, the emperor appointed Kang as a secretary to the Zongli Yamen (Foreign Affairs Office) to give him a platform for submitting memorials, and from then on, the two men were in constant communication.³⁷ The emperor also appointed four younger reformers as secretaries in the Grand Council (Junjichu)—Lin Xu (a descendant of Commissioner Lin Zexu), Liu Guangdi, Tan Sitong, and Yang Rui, providing a crucial link to Kang and Liang, who were too controversial to be in court.³⁸ Their job was to sift through the incoming memorials and draft the new policies, and their appointment allowed Guangxu to bypass the Grand Councilors (*junji dachen*). Liang Qichao was put in charge of a translation bureau and had the honor of one private audience with the emperor, but his strongly accented, poor Mandarin made communication difficult.³⁹

The emperor's decrees threatened to uproot all those opposing the reforms. Replacing the eight-legged essay in the government examinations with "questions and themes" about current events and establishing the Planning Board would have fundamentally altered the prevailing political structure.⁴⁰ In addition, militias were to be formed, and antiquated military elements were to be disbanded. The Manchu banner men, who had long enjoyed their state-subsidized leisure, were ordered to enter some useful employment. The fiscal system was to be thoroughly revised and an annual budget adopted. On September 4—against Kang's advice that such a move would be "unrealistic and even harmful" for the future of reform—the emperor dismissed all the top officials of the Board of Rites (Libu) because they were blocking memorials from lower-level reformers and replaced the conservatives with more

Reformer to Twentieth-Century Publisher: The Life and Times of Zhang Yuanji, 1867–1959," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Auckland, 1983, 43.

37 Wong, *Beyond Confucian China*, 28–31.

38 Chen Xuezhong email to Jane Larson, August 19, 2024, notes that these four were promoted to the fourth rank, higher than held by Kang, and as clerical and administrative assistants in the Grand Council, they had greater access to the emperor. Lin and Tan were close to Kang and Liang. Wong, *Beyond Confucian China*, 29–30.

39 Gloria Davies, *Worrying about China: The Language of Chinese Critical Inquiry* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009), 6.

40 Cixi and her conservative officials were not opposed to reform measures to make China wealthy and strong, and, in fact, Guangxu needed Cixi's permission to begin the Hundred Days of Reform. A furious resistance arose against the magnitude and radicalism of the reforms, the style and methods of Kang and other reformers, and especially the prospect of losing power and position.

sympathetic officials.⁴¹ He did not seek the approval of the Empress Dowager as was the custom, a defiant act that probably incited Cixi to soon take back the throne.⁴² Earlier, Guangxu had also abolished nine sinecure offices, and thousands were potentially put out of their jobs.⁴³ The emperor's "draconian style provoked fear, resentment, and resistance among officials," writes Luke Kwong, "anything but conducive to the joint effort he had hoped for."⁴⁴

Deliberately excluded from the final 1898 reform agenda was the introduction of a parliamentary system first proposed to the emperor in Kang's third memorial in 1895. In an ironic twist, Kang himself wrote an unsigned but identifiable essay in July in *Guowen Bao* arguing that it was premature to initiate a parliament and a constitutional system.⁴⁵ Instead Kang was advocating a politically realistic path that he thought would calm the conservative fears but would set himself against both his reform followers and his now radicalized patron, Guangxu.

Although both Guangxu and Kang initially believed the reforms should advance gradually, the unexpectedly strong resistance from the opposition forced them to speed up the pace of change. The emperor's decrees in September took on a tone of urgency and appealed directly to his subjects to support his efforts.⁴⁶ This followed an earlier suggestion by Kang that the emperor rouse the populace by sending copies of his reform decrees along with his portrait "to every nook and corner of the empire ... so that the common

41 Wong, *Beyond Confucian China*, 36.

42 The usual practice had been for the emperor to get permission from the Empress Dowager before abolishing or appointing high officials above the third class.

43 This occurred on August 30, according to Lo, "Notes to Chronological Autobiography," 166 n61. The nine offices abolished were: Supervisor of the Heir Apparent, Office of Transmission for Imperial Edicts, Court of Banquets, Court of State Ceremonials, Court of the Imperial Seal, Court of Revision, the governorships of Guangdong, Hubei, and Yunnan that already had viceroys, the Directorate General of the Yellow River, which had to be administered by the governor of Henan, and the Grand Canal captaincies.

44 Luke Kwong, "Chinese Politics at the Crossroads: Reflections on the Hundred Days Reform of 1898," *Modern Asian Studies* 34, no. 3 (2000): 670. Kwong also describes Guangxu as "impetuous" and "aggressive," rather than timid as he is generally portrayed, but with his power institutionally although ambiguously frustrated by Cixi, who could at any point reassert her authority.

45 Kong Xiangji 孔祥吉, *Wuxu Weixin Yundong Xin Tan* 戊戌維新運動新探 [New Exploration of the 1898 Reform Movement] (Changsha: Hunan Renmin Chubanshe, 1988), 52–63.

46 Wong, *Beyond Confucian China*, 37: "As late as September 12, [Guangxu] reiterated in an edict his interest in borrowing Western systems and his determination to move the reform forward. He asked his countrymen for a united effort to make reform successful."

people would become acquainted with their sovereign and his program."⁴⁷ On September 13, Guangxu granted "common people and scholars without official rank throughout our empire" the privilege to memorialize him with their proposals on "the question of Reform" to be forwarded by their local officials.⁴⁸ But the reformers were helpless to overcome the much larger and more powerful conservative faction, and the Hundred Days' reforms were doomed. When Cixi, backed by her unified team of senior ministers, clashed with her intrepid but comparatively powerless nephew whose main supporters were a disparate group of reformers with little political experience and no common view of the process or objectives of reform, the contest was over.⁴⁹

4 A Dangerous End Game: September 14–21, 1898

The end game for the Hundred Days began on September 14, when Cixi rejected the emperor's request to open the Diligent Court (Maoqin Dian), a hall used by past Qing emperors to discuss critical matters of state and which Guangxu thought might substitute for the postponed Planning Board and provide his supporters an official venue to implement the reforms. Guangxu had gone to the Summer Palace that day to see Cixi, and over the next four days, they heatedly discussed Kang and the future of reforms. Cixi had seen her influence over Guangxu wane as the emperor adopted Kang's approach to reform, dismissed senior officials close to her, and sought out foreign advisors whom she feared would further threaten her power. She began to take steps to restore her control.

Guangxu realized that he and Kang, as well as the reforms, were imperiled. On September 15, he sent a secret edict to the reformers by way of Yang Rui, one of the four young Grand Council secretaries, conveying deep frustration that he had no power to get around Cixi or to dismiss "fatuous, old officials"

47 Hsiao, *A Modern China and a New World*, 214, says that Kang's proposal was made during the summer of reforms but the emperor never had a chance to carry it out.

48 Harris, *The Peking Gazette*, 296.

49 Among the various reform groups, Kang's "faction" was the most prominent, but he was unable to unite all reformers under his leadership. For example, individuals such as Weng Tonghe and Yan Fu disagreed with much of Kang's theory of reform and radical methods. One of the Grand Council secretaries, Yang Rui, was closer to Zhang Zhidong than to Kang, and, another, Liu Guangdi, disliked Kang and sometimes refused to cooperate with him. Thus, one scholar believes that Yang and Liu were not part of Kang's faction; Huang Zhangjian 黄彰健, *Wuxu Bianfa Shi Yanjiu* 戊戌變法史研究 [Studies on the 1898 Reforms], vol. 2 (Shanghai: Shanghai Shudian Chubanshe, 2007), 543–70.

and install talented people who could make change. Guangxu addressed the edict to the four secretaries and “other comrades” (*zhu tongzhi*), rather than to Kang, Liang, and others too controversial to name. The emperor asked, “If I cannot protect myself, how can I protect others?” and pled for help:

You [Yang Rui], together with Lin Xu, Liu Guangdi, Tan Sitong, and other comrades should quickly meet to discuss suitable measures to take. You’d best send a secret, sealed memorial through the Grand Councilors, then wait until I ponder it deeply and give my response about how to handle this. It is with great urgency and anxiety that I await your plan.⁵⁰

Seeking both to mitigate conservative hostility toward Kang and to protect him, Guangxu took further action on September 17, issuing a decree ordering Kang to leave at once for Shanghai.⁵¹ A day later, Cixi demanded that she approve all official documents prepared by Guangxu’s handpicked junior secretaries, and the emperor understood that he no longer would be able to communicate independently.⁵²

In the meantime, Kang and his inner circle had begun to make their own desperate moves, hoping to enlist others in a military plot to arrest Cixi and seize power for the emperor. Kang, Liang Qichao, Tan Sitong, Kang Guangren (Kang’s younger brother), and Bi Yongnian, a secret society friend of Tan Sitong from Hunan, were at the center of the plot. Seeking military help, they approached several Japanese and a shrewd and seemingly reformist army commander, Yuan Shikai, who had just been tapped by the emperor (on Kang’s recommendation) to lead an expanded imperial army.⁵³ Kang himself called

50 Huang, *Wuxu Bianfa Shi Yanjiu*, 530. Kang and Liang later tampered with the wording of the secret edict for political effect, and this altered wording was widely published by Liang Qichao 梁啟超, including in his account of 1898, *Wuxu Zhengbian Ji* 戊戌政變記 [Records of the 1898 Coup d’état] (Shanghai: Zhonghua Shuju, 1937), 65. The tampered sentence read: “And with your comrades quickly come up with a scheme to rescue me.” Huang Zhongjian, Kong Xiangji, and other scholars have examined the original edict in the archives. For example see, Huang, “Kang Youwei Yidai Zhao Bianwei” 康有為衣帶詔辨偽 [Distinguishing the True Edict for Kang Youwei from the False] in *Wuxu Bianfa Shi Yanjiu*, 528–42.

51 Mao, “Wuxu Shiqi Kang Youwei yu Guangxu Di,” 51–52. That summer Kang was assigned to a post in Shanghai, to manage the newspaper *Shiwu Bao* 時務報 (*The Chinese Progress*), but continued drafting memorials and writing books in the capital; thus, Guangxu’s order to Kang in September could be approved by Cixi with some justification.

52 Lin Keguang 林克光, “Wuxu Zhengbian Shishi Kaoshi” 戊戌政變史事考實 [Examination of the Historical Facts of the Wuxu Coup], *Jindaishi Yanjiu* no. 1 (1987): 122–46.

53 Wong, *Beyond Confucian China*, 38, writes that Kang, through a memorial submitted by Xu Zhijing, had recommended Yuan and his Western-trained army to the emperor as the base for a stronger force to protect the throne, and on September 16, the emperor met Yuan. Kang in his “Chronological Autobiography,” 123, explained that Yuan had been a



FIGURE 3 Cabinet portrait card of Liang Qichao, Guangxu Emperor, Kang Youwei on top row; martyrs Kang Guangren, Tan Sitong, and Lin Xu on bottom row.

sponsor of the Qiangxuehui and was the “only man with military command who could save the emperor.” One of the Japanese was Hirayama Chikashi (Shu), who later helped both Kang and Liang come to Japan. Craig A. Smith, “The Datong Schools and Late Qing Sino-Japanese Cooperation,” *Twentieth-Century China* 42, no. 1 (January 2017): 10.

on former Japanese prime minister Itō Hirobumi, then in Beijing, regarding a plan to make him an imperial advisor.⁵⁴

On September 18, acting on Kang's orders, Tan Sitong approached Yuan about taking a leading role in the plot. Fatefully, Yuan was noncommittal, and several days later Kang's plot was revealed to Cixi, setting off a bloody climax to her slow-rolling coup d'état.⁵⁵

On September 21, the Empress Dowager resumed regency over the government, and the emperor was deprived of the right of administration.⁵⁶ That same day, the hunt for Kang and his followers began. Kang, who had fled the capital the day before, was accused of "forming a faction for personal gain and spreading pernicious words to disrupt the government."⁵⁷ The first to be arrested was Kang Guangren, at the Nanhai Huiguan where he and his brother had been living. Liang Qichao had escaped to the Japanese consulate, and Bi Yongnian left Beijing in the early morning.

On September 23, Tan Sitong, Lin Xu, Yang Rui, and Liu Guangdi were arrested. Tan had proclaimed his willingness to "die out of loyalty," and in self-sacrifice, he refused to flee when warned by his fellows. He thus became the most famous of the martyred "Six Gentlemen" (Liu Junzi) beheaded on

54 In regard to Itō and Kang's approaches to other foreign powers for assistance, see Zhongping Chen, *Transpacific Reform and Revolution: The Chinese in North America, 1898–1918* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2023), 22.

55 There are disputes about whether Yuan Shikai secretly reported Kang's plans to Cixi and Ronglu and if this directly caused the Wuxu coup d'état. We concur with Mao Haijian's conclusion that Cixi suddenly decided to return from the Summer Palace on September 19 to prevent the reforms from spiraling out of control. The immediate reason for Cixi's alarm was an inflammatory report from Censor Yang Chongyi 楊崇伊 fiercely attacking Kang and the reforms, but once back in the Forbidden City, she postponed her return to the Summer Palace three times, as events unfolded, until she assumed total control of the government and came out of retirement. Scholars infer that Cixi probably learned of Kang's plans from Yuan indirectly (he was in Tianjin), possibly through Ronglu, who met Yuan on September 22. Moreover, it is not clear when Cixi heard about the plot, but most likely before the arrest of Tan Sitong on September 23. Cixi's resumption of rule took place earlier, as did the order to arrest Kang and his brother, and would have occurred whether or not Kang's plot came to light. Mao Haijian, *Wuxu Bianfa Shishi Kao* 戊戌變法史事考 [A Consideration of the Historical Events of the 1898 Reforms] (Beijing: Sanlian Chubanshe, 2005), 111–63. Huang, *Wuxu Bianfa Shi Yanjiu*, 605–50. Wong, *Beyond Confucian China*, 41.

56 This was Cixi's second period of regency (*shezheng*) 攝政 over the emperor, since Cixi and Empress Ci'an jointly held this power during Guangxu's childhood reign. However, both times, Cixi called her regencies "political tutelage" (*xunzheng*) 訓政 to disguise the totality of her powers, particularly after her coup in 1898. Mao Haijian has proved through archival research that Guangxu still held nominal rights to sign documents until September 26 and on October 8 was put under house arrest, confined to Yingtai, an island in Zhongnanhai, on the west side of the Forbidden City. Historians once believed that Guangxu lost all powers on September 21 and was put under house arrest on September 23.

57 *Jiedangyingsi, youyan luan zheng* 結黨營私, 莠言亂政.

September 28 at Caishikou execution grounds in Beijing. The other five, like Tan, were reformers closely associated with Kang and Guangxu: Kang Guangren, Yang Shenxiu, Lin Xu, Liu Guangdi, and Yang Rui. Cixi ordered Liang's arrest and beheading and called for Kang's death by slicing for his "treachery," his writings burned, and his property confiscated.⁵⁸

The Hundred Days' Reforms were rescinded beginning on September 26, with the restoration of the offices and departments abolished by Guangxu and the cancellation of the citizens' right to submit memorials to the throne.

5 Escape to Hong Kong and Japan: 1898–99

Kang narrowly escaped with his life. On the portentous day of September 18, Guangxu's warning finally reached Kang by secret edict and oral instructions through Lin Xu.⁵⁹ That day and the next were spent in Kang's frantic discussions with Itō Hirobumi; his Welsh missionary friend Timothy Richard; and Liang Qichao, Tan Sitong, Kang Guangren, Bi Yongnian, and Lin Xu, seeking a way to rescue the emperor from his plight.⁶⁰ Near sunrise on September 20, Kang bade farewell to his brother, and with his servant Li Tang, left for Tianjin. Liang urged Kang to travel in disguise, but Kang felt "that since death and life were predestined [he] would let events take their course."⁶¹

58 Maribeth Cameron, *The Reform Movement in China, 1898–1912* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1931), 51. See Imperial Edicts of September 21, 25, 26, 28, and 29, 1898, translated from the *Peking Gazette* and enclosed in Dispatch no. 54, E. H. Conger, U.S. Minister, Peking, to Secretary of State, Washington, September 30, 1898, Dispatches from U.S. Ministers to China, 1843–1906, vol. 105, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/189072424?objectPage=111>, accessed May 24, 2024, Record Group (hereafter RG) 59, National Archives (hereafter NA-Washington, in Washington, DC, and NA-College Park, in College Park, Maryland). These edicts are also in Harris, *The Peking Gazette*, 300–304. Cixi exposed Kang's plot only after the execution of the Six Martyrs, on September 29, describing it as attempting not only to overthrow the dynasty but to capture Cixi's residence, the Summer Palace, "thereby gaining control of her sacred person."

59 Lin Xu was carrying a copy of Guangxu's September 15 edict to Yang Rui and was asked by Guangxu to transmit his personal instructions to Kang to leave Beijing immediately. Personal communication from Chen Xuezhong to Jane Larson, April 27, 2014; Wong, *Beyond Confucian China*, 39–40.

60 The emperor was to meet Itō Hirobumi on September 20, an appointment that alerted Cixi to possible trouble, as she suspected Guangxu would give Itō a position in his court. She decided to return to the Forbidden City on September 19 and put an end to Guangxu's reforms; at this time she was not planning a violent coup.

61 Kang, "Chronological Autobiography," 127; also Hsiao, *A Modern China and a New World*, 159–60.

The next morning in Tianjin, Kang boarded the British ship *Chungking* at Tanggu Port bound for Shanghai. The Chinese navy cruiser *Feiying* was sent in pursuit but turned back because of lack of fuel. For this, Kang said, *Feiying's* captain, Liu Guanxiong, was imprisoned.⁶² While onboard the ship to Shanghai, there allegedly were several attempts on Kang's life. A Canadian newspaper later reported the rumor that "twice Chinese among the passengers were apprehended in endeavors to gain access to Kang's cabin, the one with a particularly ugly dagger concealed in his spacious sleeve, the other with a bottle of deadly inhalant poison."⁶³

When Liang Qichao heard of Cixi's September 21 coup, he sought help from the acting Japanese ambassador Hayashi Gonsuke and then turned to Timothy Richard to save Kang. Richard sent an urgent telegram to his friend, British Acting Consul General Byron Brenan in Shanghai. As a result, when the *Chungking* reached the Shanghai port of Wusong (Woosung) on September 24, Kang was intercepted while still on the ship by journalist John Otway Percy (J. O. P.) Bland, acting on Brenan's request, before reward-seeking Chinese police could find him.⁶⁴

Bland was one of the "old China hands" continually seeking economic advantage in China for Britain and felt that to aid a progressive such as Kang would be to his benefit. Also, at the time Bland was a correspondent for *The Times* of London. According to Bland's own account in his unpublished "Memoirs," he was approached "very unofficially" by the British vice consul, Frederick S. A. Bourne, to take Kang off the *Chungking* and transfer him to the Peninsular and Oriental steamer *Ballarat*. He was further informed by Bourne that the HMS *Esk* would be lying off Wusong and "I was to see to it (he did not say how) that Kang was not killed on his way across."⁶⁵ Bland explained to Kang that "my consul knows that you are a loyal subject of the emperor and

62 Kang, "Chronological Autobiography," 133. *Feiying*, according to Kang, was twice as fast as the *Chungking* and could have easily caught up with it. Kang hinted that Liu Guanxiong sympathized with him since, by turning back, he did "the right thing."

63 "Kang Yu Wei's Lucky Escape," *Daily Colonist* (Victoria), April 13, 1899, 6.

64 Lord Charles William de la Poer Beresford, *The Memoirs of Admiral Lord Charles Beresford* (London: Methuen, 1914), vol. 2, 433.

65 J. O. P. Bland, "The Memoirs of J. O. P. Bland," unpublished manuscript, J. O. P. Bland Papers, Manuscript Collection 81, Rare Book Division, University of Toronto Library, Box 3, Folio 10, 7–8. In a published account of the event there is only a footnote reference to the *Parliamentary Papers*, Blue Book no. 1, in regard to "one of the writers" helping Kang escape. See J. O. P. Bland and E. Backhouse, *China Under the Empress Dowager* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1910), 204. The diplomatic reference is to the dispatch of Brenan to Claude MacDonald, British minister in Beijing, September 26, 1898, *Parliamentary Papers* (China #1), 308. Also see Sir Wilson Black to Chamberlain, Hong Kong, October 8, 1898,

could not have committed this crime (of murdering the emperor as he was accused). Moreover, he knows that you favor an alliance with Great Britain and that you hate Russia.”⁶⁶ Having been told this, Kang was transferred to the *Ballarat* where an armed guard was posted at his cabin door.⁶⁷ The personnel on the *Chungking* reportedly told Cai Jun, Shanghai’s circuit intendant who was charged with searching for Kang, that Kang boarded the HMS *Esk*. Still suspicious, Cai sent two patrol boats (“warships” according to Kang) to follow the *Ballarat*. On seeing this, the escort ship HMS *Bonaventure* under the command of Captain R. A. J. Montgomerie “cleared for action,” and presumably the Chinese boats stood off.⁶⁸ It was not until more than ten years later that Kang got around to thanking Bland for his critical assistance, but when he did, he showed a great mark of gratitude.⁶⁹

On September 29, the *Ballarat* arrived safely in Hong Kong, where Kang was met by the pro-British commercial agent, Ho Tung (He Dong; later Sir Robert Hotung) and several British police officials. He and his servants were temporarily housed at the police barracks where he rejoined with his family on October 1.⁷⁰

Kang’s family had all been ordered to be arrested but miraculously had escaped. Most of his family had gone by ship from Guangzhou to Macau shortly before troops arrived to arrest them, except his mother who was staying in the Kang ancestral village of Sucun and was later escorted by boat to Hong Kong by two servants. Kang was mortified that his sheltered mother, unused to being apart from her family, had to flee, “homeless and distressed,” and travel on the foul lower deck with “rude and boisterous” passengers to evade the authorities who might spot her on the upper deck with others of her class.⁷¹

Parliamentary Papers (China #1), 280; and Vice Admiral Sir Eric Seymour to Admiralty, on board the HMS *Centurion* at Weihaiwei, October 2, 1898, Black to Chamberlain, 300.

66 Kang, “Chronological Autobiography,” 128.

67 Beresford, *Memoirs*, vol. 2, 433.

68 Beresford, *Memoirs*, vol. 2, 433. Also, Kang, “Chronological Autobiography,” 131; and “Kang Yuwei at Hong Kong,” *New-York Tribune*, October 1, 1898, 1.

69 Letter of Kang Youwei, “The Palace” (Penang) to J. O. P. Bland, Penang, December 23, 1908, Bland Papers, Letters Inward, Series A. 2. For a brief overview of the Kang-Bland relationship and Bland’s varying assessment of Kang’s character and movement, see Robert L. Worden, “The Views of J. O. P. Bland on K’ang Yu-wei and the Chinese Reform Movement,” *Asian Profile* (Hong Kong) 3, no. 6 (December 1975): 563–73.

70 For a biographical sketch of Ho Tung and his activities in Hong Kong, see Howard L. Boorman and Richard C. Howard, ed., *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968), 2:75–76. Ho Tung generously financed Kang’s travel and family expenses and housed Kang and his family in Hong Kong.

71 Kang, “Chronological Autobiography,” 131, 137–38. Also see “Kang Yu-wei’s Ancestral Home,” *North China Herald*, October 17, 1898, 711. Joining him were his wife, Zhang Yunju,

While in Hong Kong, Kang was pulled into the great rivalry between Britain and Russia. The former British commissioner of the admiralty, Lord Charles William de la Poer Beresford, at that time on a fact-finding mission to East Asia on behalf of the Associated Chambers of Commerce, invited Kang to meet with him.⁷² Beresford determined that Kang had “leanings toward Britain” but that the position of the reform party at the moment was that it was “completely crushed but not killed.”⁷³ Perhaps sensing Beresford’s keen interest, and it being a time of great dependency for Kang, he told the statesman that he favored opening China to the trade and commerce of the world.⁷⁴ Beresford held the position, as later publicly proclaimed, that Britain, in conjunction with the United States, Japan, and Germany, should take over China’s army as they had done already with the Chinese customs service in order to insure an “open door” policy that would protect the trade of Britain.⁷⁵ He made similar comments in a speech to the Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong.⁷⁶ Beresford was a rabid Russophobe, and suspecting a liaison between the conservative faction in Beijing and the Russians, hoped to gain influence with Kang by promising “to help save the emperor.”⁷⁷

Kang meanwhile was actively approaching foreign governments for military assistance. American minister Edwin H. Conger in Beijing forwarded Secretary of State John Hay a translated letter attributed to Kang and sent from Hong Kong in which Kang described himself as Assistant Secretary of the Ministry of Works and quoted directly from Guangxu’s altered secret edicts. Kang asked that the American president “show pity” and “move troops” to rescue Guangxu. The same or similar message, he disclosed, had been sent to other

and children; his mother, Lao Lianzhi; a male cousin; the widow of Kang Guangren, Huang Jinyu; and Huang’s daughter, Kang Tonghe.

72 Lord Charles Beresford, *The Breakup of China* (New York and London: Harper, 1899), 191. Beresford said he arrived in Hong Kong on September 30 and interviewed Kang that same evening. This book was Beresford’s published report of his 1898–99 trip to Asia. Also see Kang, “Chronological Autobiography,” 139; Geoffrey M. Bennett, *Charlie B., A Biography of Lord Beresford of Metemneh and Curraghmore* (London: Peter Dawny, 1968), 216; and Beresford, *Memoirs*, vol. 2, 434 for abbreviated versions of the interview.

73 Beresford, *Breakup of China*, 192.

74 Beresford, *Breakup of China*, 193. Kang had long held to the idea of free trade; see Kang, “Chronological Autobiography,” 161–62, n54 and n55.

75 Speech of Lord Beresford, MP York, June 9, 1899, *Parliamentary Debates* (Authorized Edition), vol. 72, May 31–June 19, 1899 (London: Wyman and Sons, 1899), 790.

76 “Needed Reforms in China, Lord Charles Beresford Speaks on the Situation in the Court,” *New-York Tribune*, January 4, 1899, 1.

77 Kang, “Chronological Autobiography,” 139. See Chapter 1 for Kang’s second entanglement with Beresford in London in June 1899.

foreign legations in Beijing. “I can only travel from country to country,” wrote Kang, “and weeping bitterly deliver these secret messages.”⁷⁸

In Hong Kong, Kang received news of the arrests and executions of his associates who had been caught up in the wake of the anti-reform storm. Fearing he too would be arrested or assassinated in Hong Kong, he decided to go to Japan after receiving an invitation from Prime Minister Ōkuma Shigenobu. Kang left Hong Kong on October 19, arriving in Kōbe at midnight on October 25 and proceeding directly to Tokyo to a government-provided house. Ōkuma fell from power in early November but he continued to aid Kang; it was the beginning of a long friendship between the two men.⁷⁹

Japanese supporters of both Kang and Sun Yatsen saw their simultaneous exiles in Japan as a chance to bring together the reformers and revolutionaries in a unified movement that would strengthen Japan's role in a reformed China.⁸⁰ Consequently, they made many attempts to arrange a meeting with Sun during Kang's five-month stay in Japan. This was not the first time that the two men (or their close associates) were in the same place at the same time. No later than 1893, Kang and Sun could have met in Guangzhou. Kang's Wanmucaotang school was near Sun's medical clinic at Shuangmendi, in a building that housed Kang's favorite bookstore. In spring 1894, Sun attempted to visit Kang at his school, but Kang was not in Guangzhou. A year later in Shanghai, Sun's comrade, Chen Shaobai, chanced upon Kang and Liang Qichao in a hotel en route to the metropolitan examinations in Beijing, and, according to Chen, had a long discussion about the impossibility of reform under Manchu rule.⁸¹ In the winter of 1897, Sun sent a representative to discuss cooperation with Kang, but Kang's proposals were finally winning the attention of officials in Beijing, and again Sun was rebuffed.⁸²

78 No. 97, Edwin H. Conger, Peking, to Secretary of State John M. Hay, November 22, 1898, *Dispatches from U.S. Ministers to China, 1843–1906*, vol. 107, RG 59, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/189072424?objectPage=365>, accessed June 1, 2024. According to Conger, the original document, which is undated, was sent from Hong Kong; it is a translation from the Chinese. Kang left Hong Kong for Japan on October 19, 1898.

79 Marius B. Jansen, *The Japanese and Sun Yat-sen* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1954), 77.

80 Jansen, *Japanese and Sun Yat-sen*, 76ff. Also see Harold Schiffrin, *Sun Yat-sen and the Origins of the Chinese Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), 147ff., for an analysis of Japan's role in trying to bring together the forces of Sun Yatsen and Kang Youwei for the advantage of the Japanese government.

81 Schiffrin, *Sun Yat-sen*, 149.

82 Letter from Wang Daxie 汪大燮 to Wang Kangnian 汪康年, June 2, 1898, in *Wang Kangnian Shiyou Shuzha* 汪康年師友書札 [Correspondence between Wang Kangnian and His Teachers and Friends] (Shanghai: Shanghai Guji Chubanshe, 1986), 782–84.

Thus it is no surprise that during Kang's time in Japan, he found excuses for his absence when interviews between reformers and revolutionaries were arranged, even on occasions when Liang Qichao took part. Kang's negative attitude toward Sun and the revolution he promoted was rooted in his conviction that only reform under the leadership of the emperor could save China. At that time, and indeed, until Kang's organization began to falter in 1909, the reformers and their program were much more attractive to both overseas Chinese and foreign governments than were Sun's revolutionaries. Kang had little incentive to cooperate with Sun and plenty of reason to avoid collaboration, as he sought to thwart the growing ties between Liang and his followers and Sun and his followers.

Kang was cordially treated by the Japanese and was visited by numerous notables in the Japanese official and scholarly hierarchy. His patron, Marquis Ōkuma, accompanied Kang on a tour of scenic spots and, after the fall of the Kenseitō cabinet, invited Kang to live at Waseda University, where Ōkuma had become president.⁸³ During his time at Waseda, Kang also met with or received indications of support from former minister of interior Shinagawa Yajirō, former foreign minister Soejima Taneomi, and other notable sympathizers.⁸⁴

During Kang's exile in Japan, Qing authorities pressured the Japanese government to arrest Kang and Liang. When Ōkuma's cabinet fell from power in November 1898, the succeeding Yamagata cabinet was not as cordial to the reformers and Kang was asked to leave the country.⁸⁵ The day he left Japan, Kang visited the U.S. Legation to request letters of introduction to allow him to travel in the United States before he sailed to England, but Kang's status as a refugee wanted in China left the legation secretary unable to help.⁸⁶ Kang now intended to approach Western governments for their assistance in restoring the emperor.

The period from September 1898 to April 1899 found Kang initially welcomed in Hong Kong and Japan by a number of supportive persons, such as Ho Tung, Charles Beresford, Ōkuma, and others. He was not found wanting in

83 Joseph R. Levenson, *Liang Ch'i-ch'ao and the Mind of Modern China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), 2d rev. ed., 64.

84 Lo, "Sequel to the Chronological Autobiography," *K'ang Yu-wei*, 178–79.

85 Jansen, *Japanese and Sun Yat-sen*, 78. The new Japanese government decided to continue to protect Liang Qichao, but sustained its antipathy toward Kang. Thus, when Kang passed through Japan in October 1899 on his way to Hong Kong, he was not allowed to leave his ship in Kōbe.

86 Joseph R. Herod, Secretary, U.S. Legation, Tokyo, to Secretary of State John Hay, March 31, 1899, Despatches From United States Ministers to Japan, 1855–1906, RG 59, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/188396641?objectPage=358> accessed May 24, 2024, copy in Chinese File 14735-89, Entry 132, RG 85, NA-Washington.

his great time of need and was accommodated wherever he traveled, a pattern set for the next decade. His stay in Japan gave little respite from the discord already existing between his forces and those of Sun Yatsen, but set the tone of their ideological and political battles to come.

6 Kang Completes His *Nianpu*

During his first months in exile, Kang finally found time to rest and write about the reform movement of 1898, retracing in his mind how it evolved, anguishing over why it failed, and slowly coming to understand how to revive it outside of China. He began to sign his letters and poems “Gengsheng” (Life Renewed).⁸⁷ And in January 1899, three months after he entered Japan, Kang completed his *nianpu* or chronological autobiography, detailing his life from birth in 1858 until landing in Japan in October 1898. When Kang left Japan for North America, he took this *nianpu* as his personal copy, and it was found in the attic of Mary Starr Tudor’s house in South Windsor, Connecticut, where Kang’s daughter Tongbi lived between 1904 and 1907.⁸⁸ Various characteristics of this *nianpu* compared to other copies point to it as the oldest extant version of this valuable document.⁸⁹

The South Windsor *nianpu* was likely Kang’s second draft, as his handwriting is seen only in corrections and additions written between the lines. Typically, Kang’s first draft was marked up with many cross-outs and insertions, and he would have others recopy sections as he finished them, in this case over several years. Four or more people wrote portions of the South Windsor text. It is speculated that the South Windsor version was copied from Kang’s original handwritten manuscript between 1896 and early 1899. The handwriting in the first eight pages seems to be written by Tongbi as a teenager in 1896 or 1897.⁹⁰ The initial sections were probably copied by Kang’s daughters with later sections copied by his students, both those in China before the Hundred Days’

87 Wong, *Beyond Confucian China*, 112.

88 See Introduction and Chapter 3 for details on the full Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

89 The analysis in this section is credited to brothers Chi Jeng Chang 張啓祜 and Zhang Qizhen 張啓禎. They are the sons of Zhang Cangjiang 張滄江, Kang Tongbi’s last personal secretary from 1955 to 1969. Secretary Zhang helped Tongbi organize and publish Kang Youwei’s papers and later inherited Tongbi’s personal papers, including her memoirs, which are now in Canada. Without the help of Chi Jeng Chang, this section and indeed many details throughout this book, would be missing.

90 Chi Jeng Chang recognizes Kang Tongbi’s handwriting, which is unskilled and includes many incorrect characters.

reforms and in Japan during Kang's five-month sojourn there between October 26, 1898 and March 22, 1899. The first draft of Kang's *nianpu* has not been found and may have been discarded as sections were copied.

Until the South Windsor *nianpu* was discovered in 2013, scholars believed that the earliest complete version of this autobiography was the document titled *Wo Shi* (My history), which was donated in 1961 to the National Museum of China (Zhongguo Guojia Bowuguan) in Beijing by the family of Kang's student, Luo Xiaogao (Luo Pu), who was in Japan when Kang left for Canada. *Wo Shi* is eighty-eight pages long, the first seventy-eight in Kang's handwriting and the last ten pages written by Kang's disciple Han Wenju. The National Museum has permitted only one person to study *Wo Shi*—the preeminent Hundred Days' Reform scholar, Mao Haijian—who examined it closely for four days in 2006.⁹¹

In 1927, Kang celebrated his seventieth birthday in Shanghai, and Luo brought *Wo Shi* to Kang. However, Kang instructed Luo to keep this original document and also transcribe it at once. From this first transcription by Luo, others subsequently made copies—among them, Xu Liang (Xu Shanbo, the son of Xu Qin), Ding Wenjiang, Gu Jiegang, and He Fengru, accumulating various errors as well as corrections and additions of Kang's marginal notes.⁹²

In 1958, Kang Tongbi produced Kang's *nianpu* in a private mimeographed edition based on historian Gu Jiegang's copy.⁹³ In 1967, Kang Tongbi's son, Jung-pang Lo (Luo Rongbang), working closely with his mother, published an English translation of this *nianpu* with copious annotation and a sequel bringing Kang's life up to date until his death.⁹⁴ This collaboration was complicated by the break in U.S.–China relations after 1949, because Lo had gone to the United States in the 1930s to pursue higher education in history. Kang Tongbi, who lived in Beijing, had to travel to Guangzhou and hand over research documents to couriers who delivered them across the border to her sister Kang

91 Mao Haijian 茅海建, “‘Kang Youwei Zixie Nianpu Shougaoben’ Yuedu Baogao” “康有為自寫年譜手稿本” 閱讀報告 [A Report on Reading “Kang Youwei’s Self-Written *Nianpu* in Manuscript], *Jindaishi Yanjiu* no. 4 (2007): 120–42. There is no known image of the National Museum *nianpu*, and as of December 2022, Mao, who has a digitized copy of the South Windsor *nianpu*, has not published an analysis of the two versions.

92 See Mao Haijian’s article for the history of these copies, all deriving from Luo Pu’s 羅普 transcription, which is not extant.

93 Chi Jeng Chang, recalls that his father, Zhang Cangjiang, had a mimeograph machine, stencils, steel plates, and stylus in their home, and his mother engraved stencils for days on end, sending away the rolls of completed stencils (email December 6, 2022).

94 Kang, “Chronological Autobiography,” 17–174, and Lo, “Sequel to the Chronological Autobiography,” 175–278, *Kang Yu-wei*. The original materials Lo received from Kang Tongbi and used in the preparation of Kang’s *nianpu* and its sequel are at the University of California at Davis Library. The sequel incorporates various sources compiled by Kang Tongbi and Lo, including Kang’s poems, letters and other writings; see Lo, *K’ang Yu-wei*, 175–77.

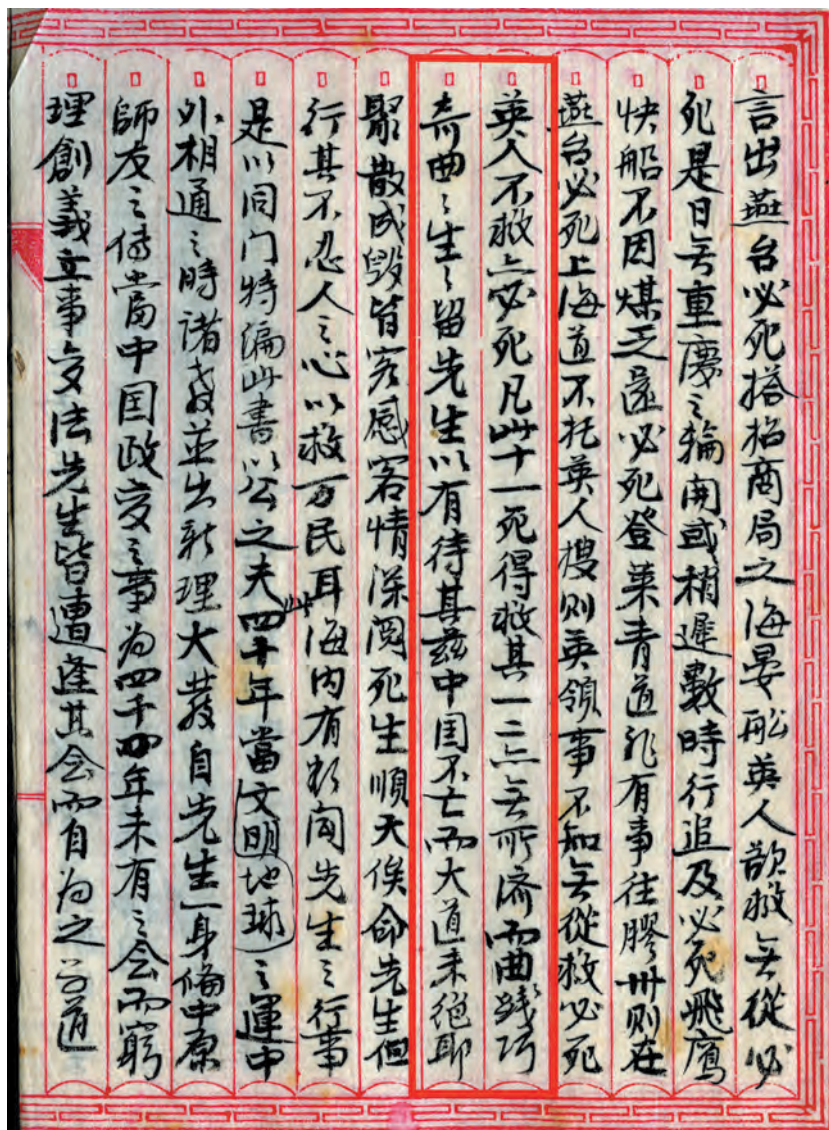


FIGURE 4 Last full page of Kang Youwei's South Windsor *nianpu*; outlined in red is the passage beginning "If the British had made no move to rescue me ..."

Tongwei in Hong Kong, who in turn sent them to Lo.⁹⁵ Fortunately, Kang's *nianpu* in Lo's book represents the most accurate, complete and updated

95 Chi Jeng Chang, email December 30, 2022, writes that in 1962 his father and Kang Tongbi traveled to Guangzhou with materials for Jung-pang Lo. They were not permitted to travel to Hong Kong at that time.

version, including Kang's subsequent interpolations. On the contrary, the most available Chinese version of Kang's *Wo Shi* in his collected writings (*Kang Youwei Quanji*) includes mistakes found in earlier copies.⁹⁶

The South Windsor *nianpu* has unique characteristics, unseen in other versions. Kang frequently refers to himself in the third person as "xiansheng" (which might be translated as teacher, master, gentleman, or simply "he"). No other version has crossed-out characters or circles signifying the deliberately missing characters for many people's names and titles, almost all in the last twelve pages that describe the height of the Hundred Days of Reform and its downfall. The absence of many key names in the South Windsor version points to it preceding *Wo Shi*. The Wuxu events were still fresh in late 1898 when Kang wrote about them in Japan. As the Qing's most wanted man, Kang was worried that his colleagues in China and Hong Kong could be arrested or be in danger—among the unnamed were Xu Qin, Yung Wing (Rong Hong), and Chen Yikan. Kang named only a few disciples and allies whom he considered to be safe, such as Zhuoru (Liang Qichao), or who had died, such as Fusheng (Tan Sitong). *Wo Shi* (and all other versions) is written in the first person, and all the individuals Kang mentions are named. South Windsor is the only edition in which the year given for Kang Tongbi's birth was 1882, corrected to 1881 in other versions.⁹⁷ Perhaps most telling, this is the only version in two volumes, volume one from Kang's birth in 1858 to 1895 and volume two ending on October 26, 1898, when Kang arrived in Japan. The two volumes are bound together and written on seventy-two folded sheets of red-lined Chinese *maobianzhi* (rice) paper. The cover of each volume reads "Nianpu."

Thus, the authors of this book conjecture that Kang wanted to assure his place in history as he set off for the West and decided to leave behind a complete record with his most trusted students in Japan for safe keeping and to show to their Japanese friends to help them understand Kang's life and ambitions. Before he left Japan for Victoria, Kang copied the South Windsor *nianpu*

96 Kang Youwei, "Wo Shi," 我史, *Kang Youwei Quanji* 康有為全集 [Collected Works of Kang Youwei], ed. Jiang Yihua and Zhang Ronghua 姜義華, 張榮華 (Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin Daxue Chubanshe, 2007), vol. 5, 58–106. For example, on page 63, in the paragraph for the sixth year of Guangxu, there is the phrase "不能講書" [not able to explain contents of books] which was wrongly transcribed from the sentence "不能出遊, 不能購書, 乃至無筆墨." Kang, "Chronological Autobiography," 36, translates the sentence: "We could not travel or buy new books, and we could not even afford to buy brushes and paper."

97 The South Windsor version not only has a later birth year (Guangxu 7th year) for Kang Tongbi but also records her birthdate as "21st day of the 12th month"; later versions give her birthdate as the 24th day of the 12th month of Guangxu 6th year.

himself, filling in the blank names and changing “xiansheng” to “wo” or “wu” (I, my). He also inserted post-1895 commentary into pre-1895 sections of the text. The South Windsor *nianpu* has thousands of differences in wording from other versions.⁹⁸

Forgotten or presumed lost by both Kang and his daughter Tongbi after their long years abroad, the South Windsor *nianpu* found refuge in the United States until 2013.⁹⁹

On the last full page of his *nianpu*, written in January 1899, Kang contemplated his tempestuous past few months and dedicated himself to a better future for China:

If the British had made no move to rescue me, I would have been killed. Thus on eleven instances I narrowly escaped death; and even if I had escaped death in one or two instances, it would not have been sufficient to save me. The course of my life has zigzagged strangely, and at each turn I have emerged alive so I am still unscathed. Perhaps my life is preserved for a purpose: perhaps China will not fall, and our great enterprise will go on.¹⁰⁰

In North America, Kang would soon realize that reform could succeed only if demanded by the Chinese people at large and that Chinese living overseas might be the key to raising awareness of constitutional reform to a higher plane. In China, he had learned the political art of organizing, but now his skills and vision would be tested on the international stage. On March 22, 1899, Kang set sail for Canada, his friend Ōkuma Shigenobu allegedly providing him with 7,000 yen for expenses.¹⁰¹

98 Emails from Chi Jeng Chang, December 6, 2022–January 24, 2023. Historian Cheng Zai 承載 has studied the South Windsor *nianpu* thoroughly, comparing it word for word to other versions, but because he has not been able to view the National Museum *nianpu*, he has not published his research. Email to Jane Larson, October 17, 2022.

99 This item was sold for 437,000 RMB in the December 17, 2014, Duo Yun Xuan art auction in Shanghai to an unidentified buyer. However, the authors have a full scan of the South Windsor Collection, including the *nianpu*, thanks to Tong Bingxue, Beijing. It is the authors' intention to donate the scans to an institution that will provide free access to the public.

100 Kang, “Chronological Autobiography,” 143. This quote is outlined in red on Figure 4, last page of South Windsor *nianpu*.

101 “Chronique: Japon,” *Toung Pao*, vol. 10 (1899), 328; Levenson, *Liang Ch'i-ch'ao*, 64, cited this amount as taels.

New World Origins: Mobilizing an Association to Reform China, 1899–1904

If our emperor is not restored to his throne,
China will be subjugated;
If our emperor regains his power,
no country will be as strong as ours.
Our comrades should shed blood and rise up,
and make a vow to help our emperor recover his power!¹

KANG YOUWEI, “Song of the Rescue of the Sacred Emperor” (Jiu Shengzhu Ge),
Victoria, British Columbia, October 1899



In exile as China's most wanted man, Kang Youwei set foot in North America on the evening of April 7, 1899. Sheltered amidst the dramatic fiords of the British Columbia coast, Victoria's deep-water harbor was the destination of the *Idzumi Maru*, a Japanese ship that Kang had boarded in Yokohama on March 22. He was accompanied by Nakanishi Shigetaro, his Japanese interpreter who also spoke Chinese and English, and Li Tang (Lee Tong), his servant and bodyguard. Kang planned to transit Canada en route to the United States and Britain. He was seeking American and British intervention to topple the Empress Dowager Cixi's conservative regime and restore the Guangxu Emperor and the aborted political reforms. Kang had tried previously and failed to obtain assistance from Japan's government, leading him to cross the Pacific and appeal to the Western powers that had endorsed the Hundred Days of Reform.

1 Kang Youwei, “Baojiu Da-Qing Huangdi Gongsì Xuli” 保救大清皇帝公司序例 [Preface and Regulations for the Company to Protect the Great Qing Emperor], October 1899, in *Kang Youwei Quanji* 康有為全集 [Collected Works of Kang Youwei], ed. Jiang Yihua and Zhang Ronghua 姜義華, 張榮華 (Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin Daxue Chubanshe, 2007), vol. 5, 154–55. Translated by Yang Zheng.

North America opened Kang's eyes to a greater source of power than foreign governments to spur the changes he sought.² First in Canada and then throughout the world, Kang found his Chinese compatriots eager to implement his ideas for China's political, educational, economic, even military transformation. Within a few months, Kang and Chinese community leaders in British Columbia organized a reformist association that would become the first truly global Chinese political organization.³ Expanding from Canada into the United States, Central and South America, Asia, Australia, Europe, even Africa, by 1909, Kang's organization had grown to more than 230 chapters. North America—Canada, the United States, and Mexico—was where the association fulfilled its greatest potential, with at least 160 chapters that managed the full gamut of associated endeavors that Kang believed were necessary to save China: newspapers, schools, military academies, women's associations, and businesses.⁴ In this new world, Kang evolved into the first Chinese "retail politician" who literally hit the campaign trail on his first trip to the United States in 1905, speaking to Chinese audiences wherever they lived, in mining towns or big cities, to promote his cause from railway platforms and in Baohuanghui meeting halls.

When Kang arrived in North America in 1899, Chinese immigrants in Canada, the United States and Mexico probably numbered between 100,000 and 110,000. As the decade progressed, the Chinese living in each country increased or decreased, in response to the severity of immigration restrictions they faced. After the first Chinese exclusion laws were adopted by the U.S. Congress in 1882, the Chinese population in the United States dropped from 87,863 in 1900 to 71,531 in 1910.⁵ Even though in 1885 the Canadian government imposed a \$50 head tax on each immigrant laborer from China and raised it to \$100 in 1900 and \$500 in 1903, the Chinese population in Canada, despite racist immigration restrictions, increased from an estimated 13,500 in 1899 to 27,774 by

2 Much of the analysis in this chapter is based on Zhongping Chen, "Kang Youwei's Activities in Canada and the Reformist Movement Among the Global Chinese Diaspora, 1899–1909," *Twentieth-Century China* 39, no. 1 (January 2014), 3–23. Copyright © 2014 Twentieth-Century China. Published with permission by Johns Hopkins University Press. Portions also were published in Zhongping Chen, *Transpacific Reform and Revolution: The Chinese in North America, 1898–1918* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2023), chapters 1 and 2, also with permission.

3 Sun Yatsen's Xingzhonghui 興中會 (Revive China Society) was founded in Honolulu and Hong Kong in 1894, but had few chapters in Japan and other countries and operated covertly.

4 This is an estimate, as many chapters are known only by their Chinese name and are not included in "Mapping the Baohuanghui" <https://baohuanghui.blogspot.com/2012/05/mapping-baohuanghui.html>, accessed April 1, 2024.

5 Morrison G. Wong, "Chinese Americans," in Pyong Gap Min, ed., *Asian Americans: Contemporary Trends and Issues* (Thousand Oaks, California: Pine Forge Press, 2006), 113–14.

1911.⁶ While the Canadian Chinese population doubled during the decade, the Mexican government under the long-time president Porfirio Díaz took the opposite tack of his two northern neighbors and encouraged Chinese immigration and investment in Mexico, boosting the Chinese population between 1900 and 1910 by nearly five times, from 2,833 to 13,203.⁷ Kang would use his political clout in an attempt to influence Chinese immigration policy in all three countries, as he quickly realized how compelling this issue was for his followers.

Still on board ship in Victoria harbor, Kang and Li Tang were separated from their Japanese companion solely because they were Chinese. Before they could be landed, they first had to prove to Canadian authorities that they were exempt from the \$50 head tax imposed on Chinese entering Canada, unless they were diplomats, scholars, students, or merchants. Even more humiliating, Kang and other Chinese on the ship were subjected to a strict medical examination in quarantine.⁸ A reporter for Victoria's *Daily Colonist* captured Kang's anxiety and curiosity as he approached his first Western city:

When the steamer that brought him to America reached quarantine at William Head yesterday, he was on deck and everywhere asking questions—chiefly concerning the quarantine laws and system. Then when the liner moved in from quarantine to the city, his interminable questioning was resumed—what was Victoria's population; its manner of municipal government; its facilities for policing and protecting against fires; its school and hospital arrangements?⁹

Like all other Chinese seeking to enter Canada, Kang was required to register with Canadian immigration authorities. To evade paying Canada's head tax, he claimed to be a member of the Chinese "diplomatic corps." The register of his personal information reads partly as follows:

Name: Kang Yu Wei

Age: 42

Place of Birth: Canton [Guangdong], Nam Hoi [Nanhai county], China

Title, Official Rank, Profession or Occupation: Diplomatic Corps

6 Edgar Wickberg, et al., *From China to Canada: A History of the Chinese Communities in Canada* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1982), 55–57, 82, 296, 300.

7 See Chapter 8.

8 Wickberg, et al., *From China to Canada*, 57.

9 "A Ruler in Exile, Kang Yu Wei, Leader of the Pro-English Reform Party of China, In Victoria," *Daily Colonist* (Victoria), April 8, 1899, 2.

Last place of domicile: Yokohama, Japan

Physical marks or Peculiarities: 5 feet 2 inches, long features, pit on left temple, a few grey hairs, scar above left temple.¹⁰

A Chinese cook at the quarantine spotted Kang's name on his luggage and alerted Victoria Chinese to his arrival. Canadian Immigration Service interpreter Li Mengjiu (Lee Mong Kow, also known as Li Xianchou) led a group of local Chinese leaders to welcome Kang at the wharf and escorted him to the city.¹¹ That evening, Li entertained Kang as an honorary guest at his home and introduced Kang to "the leading men of Chinatown." Among these men was likely Li Fuji (Lee Folk Gay), who would play a dominant role in Baohuanghui development. Li Fuji was a Victoria merchant selling hats, embroidery, silk and opium at his shop called Quong Man Fung (Guangwanfeng).¹²

By the time of this gathering, Kang had already given his first interview to the Canadian press, thanks to the Victoria *Daily Colonist* reporter who must have accompanied immigration officials out to the steamer *Idzumi Maru*, possibly aware of the international celebrity on board. The report, "A Ruler in Exile," set the tone for stories to follow: "He has known what it is to dictate to many, many millions, and control the swaying of a sceptre over the most populous people the world has ever known."¹³ His "interminable questions" to the reporter about the workings of a Western city displayed Kang's direct style and approach to the world: "He himself is an excellent interviewer."

The *Colonist* also noted that "while [Kang] slept last night under a friendly flag, an armed guard of his own countrymen kept constant watch lest emissaries of the Manchu dynasty destroyed his life." Kang's story was said to have "in it all the fascination of a medieval romance. It is the chapter which deals with his escape from Beijing, when he was as near to death as though he stood upon the scaffold with the sword of the executioner poised for fatal descent."¹⁴ To Americans across the border, Kang was glamorously depicted by the *Seattle*

10 General Register of Chinese Immigration, RG 76 D2a, vol. 700, reel C-9512, Register 7, serial no. 29006, Library and Archives Canada.

11 Li Fuji 李福基, "Xianzhenghui Jishi Shilüe" 憲政會紀始事略 [A Sketch of the Origins of the Constitutional Association], printed, 1909, 2, Chinese Empire Reform Association, AR-22, Ethnic Studies Library, University of California at Berkeley, AAS ARC 2000/78, hereafter AAS ARC 2000/78.

12 Chen, *Transpacific Reform and Revolution*, 83–84, 139.

13 "A Ruler in Exile," *Daily Colonist* (Victoria), April 8, 1899.

14 "Kang Yu Wei's Lucky Escape," *Daily Colonist* (Victoria), April 13, 1899, 6.

Post-Intelligencer as “compelled to flee for his life and even after reaching Japan narrowly escaped death at the hands of eight hired assassins.”¹⁵

In Victoria, Kang’s announced plans were to travel to London, where he was to “make a final appeal to the British foreign office ‘to break the age-old bonds of my distressed and unhappy country.’”¹⁶ In order to exploit the Anglo-Russian rivalry over China, Kang depicted himself as the “head of the pro-British reform party” and even claimed that “it was [at] his instigation that Wei-hai-wei was placed in the hands of Britain as a weapon to check the advance of Russia and a first step toward the modernizing of China.”¹⁷ While the Canadian newspapers announced Kang’s intention to go directly to England, those in the United States, in Seattle and in New York, for example, said that it was “probable that his trip will be of semi-diplomatic significance as he bears letters of introduction to President William McKinley and other high officials at Washington and to men of similar importance in London.”¹⁸

Kang found his entry into the United States blocked by the Chinese exclusion acts and American official reluctance to be pressed by Kang to risk a dangerous diplomatic and military confrontation with China. Only when the exclusion policy directly threatened American interests in China with later talk of a boycott against American imports was Kang finally allowed entry to the United States.¹⁹ On the contrary, the British government—bolstered by the efforts of Timothy Richard and J. O. P. Bland—had helped Kang escape China in 1898 and gave him and his family protection in Hong Kong and in other British territories throughout his exile. But whenever Kang’s political activities endangered British relations with the Qing, he would be temporarily banned. British willingness to give Kang refuge never translated into politico-military action backing the reformers in China.

15 “Fleeing From Assassins, Kang Yu Wei, Exiled by Bitter Political Enemies,” *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, April 9, 1899, 10.

16 “Ruler in Exile,” *Daily Colonist* (Victoria), April 8, 1899.

17 “Ruler in Exile,” *Daily Colonist* (Victoria), April 8, 1899. There is no evidence that the Weihaiwei port in Shandong, where the Japanese sank the Chinese navy at the end of the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95, had been leased to the British in July 1898 through any intervention or proposal of Kang Youwei, although it occurred during the Hundred Days of Reform.

18 “Fleeing From Assassins, Kang Yu Wei,” *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, April 9, 1899, 10. Also see “Chinese Reformer Seeking Refuge,” *New-York Tribune*, April 9, 1899, Section 11, 2; “Kang Yu Wei and His Plans,” *New York Times*, April 10, 1899, 7; and “An Interview With Kang Yu Wei,” *The Times* (London), April 29, 1899, 5 (the interview was originally published in the *Victoria Times* as “A Statesman Reformer,” April 10, 1899, 5, and provided to the London *Times*’ Vancouver correspondent).

19 Kang’s successful entry into the United States is recounted in Chapter 2

1 Kang's Reform Program Transformed

Canada became the country where Kang's ambitions as a politician addressing the Chinese common man were awakened in 1899 and snuffed out in 1909. On his first visit, Kang formed close and long-lasting ties with prominent Victoria and Vancouver Chinese and would eventually entrust these leaders with great power and responsibility over his organization. Kang's political program was radicalized by his early experiences in Canada, not only from this first exposure to a Western democracy in action but also from his new-found empathy for the challenges faced by Chinese in North America. Embracing dual personae as articulate, urbane envoy to the West for the "New China" and practical politician who would recruit hundreds of thousands of Chinese living abroad to the cause of constitutional reform in China, Kang entered the New World.

Kang's firsthand encounter with Western democracy began April 8, one day after landing in Canada. He was paid a call by Victoria mayor Charles Redfern, a British-born jeweler and self-made man who had risen to the peak of Victoria politics.²⁰ Another first for Kang was observing a working democracy in a visit to the seat of British Columbia's Parliament on April 10. In the company of F. Carter Cotton, the provincial minister of finance, Kang toured the central chamber of the provincial legislature, the educational department, and other offices. "Kang was very much interested in the [provincial] treasury and asked a great many questions." In the educational department office, he asked about "the number of children attending school, number of teachers, of schools, and amount expended in maintaining them." The visit to the parliamentary buildings of British Columbia impressed Kang so much that he told Minister Cotton: "[When] he is returned to power he will erect a similar structure" in China. After the minister casually assured him of British support, Kang "bowed low and expressed his thanks in profuse terms."²¹

Kang's self-directed education in the mechanics of Western governance continued April 10 with a review of warships at a major naval base in Esquimalt, west of Victoria, and a second visit with mayor Redfern at city hall. He also inspected the city fire brigade and prison.²² British support for restoring the emperor was certainly on Kang's agenda when he met on April 10 with Lieutenant Governor Robert Thomas McInnes, the official representative of Queen Victoria in the province and nominally the highest official in British Columbia.²³

20 "A Statesman Reformer," *Victoria Times*, April 10, 1899, 5. Charles Edward Redfern was Victoria mayor in 1882–83 and 1896–99.

21 "A Statesman Reformer," *Victoria Times*, April 10, 1899, 5.

22 "A Statesman Reformer" and "Kang Yu Wai was kept busy to-day," *Victoria Times*, April 10, 1899, 5.

23 "A Statesman Reformer," *Victoria Times*, April 10, 1899.

Since Kang was planning to enter the United States from western Canada and travel across the country to depart for England from New York, he approached the U.S. consul in Victoria, Abraham E. Smith. As one of several sympathetic American officials in Canada who time and again went out of his way on Kang's behalf, Smith wrote to the collector of customs in Port Townsend, Washington, asking if Kang could be passed through the border without a Section 6 exemption certificate.²⁴ Under the Chinese exclusion law of 1882, "Section 6" certificates were issued only to Chinese entering the United States who could prove they belonged to the "exempt" classes of students, merchants, or other nonimmigrant travelers.²⁵ With a Qing order for his arrest and execution, Kang could not obtain a certificate from China's government nor did he qualify as a subject of some other foreign government, which could also grant such certificates.²⁶

While Canada welcomed Kang as a worthy Chinese leader temporarily removed from power by the forces of backwardness, the U.S. government thwarted Kang's entry at every level. The rigorous requirements of the Chinese exclusion laws seemed immutable. The customs collector at the Port Townsend border would not allow Kang to enter without a Section 6 certificate "in the absence of definite instructions from the Department [of Treasury] to the contrary."²⁷ Consul Smith then wrote to the Department of State citing Kang's case as a political exile who desired to journey to Washington to visit McKinley. "In view of these facts (Kang's prominence)," wrote Consul Smith, "it seems special action of the U.S. government is required to enable Kang Yu Wai, his secretary and interpreter to go through the United States."²⁸ Assuming that he would be admitted to the United States, Kang continued his visit in western Canada

24 Col. F. D. Huestis, Collector of Customs, Port Townsend, Washington, to Abram E. Smith, U.S. Consul, Victoria, BC, April 12, 1899, Miscellaneous Letters Received, U.S. Consulate, Victoria, BC, vol. 20, Entry UD-10; and Smith to Huestis, April 12, 1899; Letters Sent, U.S. Consulate, Victoria, B.C., vol. 35, Entry UD-10, both in Records of the Foreign Service Posts of the Department of State, RG 84, NA-College Park.

25 United States Senate, *Reports of the Immigration Commission*, vol. 39, Immigration Legislation, Document no. 758 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1911), Appendix E: Treaties and Laws Respecting Chinese Immigration. 1881–1904, p. 132–36, Act of July 5, 1884; 23 Stat. L. Sec. 6, 116. Section 13, mentioned in Huestis to Smith, referred to diplomatic credentials.

26 Imperial Edict of September 29, 1898, in Lane J. Harris, *The Peking Gazette: A Reader in Nineteenth-Century Chinese History* (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 303–4.

27 Huestis to Smith, April 12, 1899.

28 No. 111, Abraham E. Smith, Victoria, to Thomas W. Cridler, Assistant Secretary of State, April 14, 1899; Despatches from United States Consuls in Victoria, Canada, 1862–1906, RG 59, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/211556142?objectPage=171>, accessed May 25, 2024. The letter includes a clipping of "Heads Risked for Kang," *Daily Colonist* (Victoria), April 13, 1899, 2.

as his case was passed up the bureaucratic ladder to the Department of State and the Department of the Treasury (under which jurisdiction the Bureau of Immigration made the final decision).

Kang Youwei's personal inspection of Canadian government, educational system, and military facilities during his five-day stay in Victoria resulted in a new, more radical set of systematic reforms than he had previously espoused for China. On April 12, he announced that China needed to implement a program of "representative parliamentary government, a system of national banks, state ownership of mines and railways, free education, both elementary and advanced, and including the establishment of technical schools and government seminaries for military and naval training." *The Province* (Vancouver) commented, "This comprehensive scheme for the organization of the Chinese empire shows that Kang is a thorough socialist in principle and revolutionist in method. He advocates, however, a peaceful introduction of his reforms."²⁹

Equally transformative for Kang were his contacts with Chinese suffering from discrimination and exclusion in Canada. This was reflected in Kang's speech in Victoria's Chinatown on April 8. An innovation in his political reform agenda, the speech responded to the political interests and demands of his audience and appealed to them directly, something he had not done before.³⁰ After describing Guangxu's reforms of 1898, his miserable life following the September coup, and his desire to protect overseas Chinese, Kang cried out, "Do you want China to strengthen itself? If so, please clap your hands! Do you hope for the restoration of Emperor Guangxu? If so, please clap your hands." The audience answered Kang with thunderous applause. After this first successful speech to a mass audience of overseas Chinese, Kang began to hear their sad stories of wandering lives beset by discrimination in Canada and their worries about the fate of China and the future of reforms.³¹

On April 13, Kang went by boat to Vancouver and had another opportunity to assess the sentiment of the Chinese in Canada. According to a local newspaper, the Chinese there were afraid to receive Kang for fear of retribution against their relatives who were still in China. But one local leader, Liao Yipeng (Lew Yick Pen, Dr. Lui), was in favor of a formal reception and convinced his fellow countrymen that Kang was not a rebel but had the "interests of a new China" at heart. Liao also said that Kang "would travel throughout America to form influential lodges of Chinese sworn to struggle by his side, in the interests

29 "Kang Yu Wei Here," *Province* (Vancouver), April 13, 1899.

30 "A Statesman Reformer," *Victoria Times*, April 10, 1899, 5.

31 Kang, "You Yuduoli, Wen'gehua, Erbu ji" 游域多利, 溫哥華, 二埠記 [Recalling travels to Victoria, Vancouver, and New Westminster], in *Kang Youwei Quanji*, vol. 5, 118.

of a new China." Liao's advocacy of Kang "caused an intense sensation among the Chinese" and Kang was cordially received.³²

When Kang met with Vancouver's Mayor James Garden on April 13, he thanked the British for protection of his life after the failure of the 1898 Reform and spoke again about his plans to travel to London for further help.³³ The climax of Kang Youwei's activities in Vancouver, however, was his public speech in the city hall on the evening of April 14. An audience of about 1,000 attended his lecture, including the Chinese from Vancouver and nearby towns as well as Japanese and Canadian guests.³⁴ Seated before his audience, silent and unsmiling throughout his talk, Kang began by saying that this was the first political meeting held in Chinese history and the first at which anyone who had been involved at the highest level of government had addressed the people.³⁵

Kang deplored both the weakness of China under the rule of Cixi's conservative faction and the disunity of millions of Chinese at home and abroad. Thus, he urged the solidarity of the Chinese people in all counties, prefectures, and provinces of China, as well as in cities abroad.³⁶ After Kang "exhorted them to unite as one man to spread the gospel of Chinese reform in America," he declared that a united Chinese people could defend themselves and save their nation.³⁷ Even though their homeland could not be saved from foreign annexation, they would still be able to stand on their own feet as did the Jews in foreign lands. Unlike his previous lecture in Victoria, Kang's speech in Vancouver did not end with the shouting of slogans to restore the Guangxu Emperor. Instead, likening overseas Chinese to the Jews, Kang made his audience "sigh with feeling or weep in silence."³⁸

Immediately after the meeting, a Canadian newspaper reporter gave Kang a telegram from Seattle that read, "On Wong, a highbinder, gone to Vancouver to

32 "Heads Risked For Kang, Vancouver Chinese Will Kowtow Come What May to Relatives," *Daily Colonist* (Victoria), April 13, 1899, 2.

33 "Cantonese Reformer," *Vancouver News-Advertiser*, April 14, 1899.

34 "Celestial Banquet," *Province* (Vancouver), April 14, 1899; "He Would Kill Kang," *Province*, April 15, 1899; "Assassin After Kang," *Daily Colonist* (Victoria), April 15, 1899; "Kang Talks of Home," *Vancouver World*, April 15, 1899.

35 "Kang Talks of Home," *Vancouver World*, April 15, 1899. W. A. Cumyow (Wen Jinyou) provided newspapers with a translation of Kang's talk.

36 Kang, "You Yuduoli, Wen'gehua, Erbu ji," 118.

37 "He Would Kill Kang," *Province* (Vancouver), April 15, 1899.

38 Kang, "You Yuduoli, Wen'gehua, Erbu ji," 118.

kill Kang.”³⁹ Indeed, the British Colonial Secretary in Ottawa, Joseph Chamberlain, had previously transmitted Kang’s request for protection to the Canadian government on April 11. Beginning on April 18, a Canadian police officer was assigned to Kang as his personal escort.⁴⁰ In any case, Kang’s placid response impressed the reporter who was thanked for his consideration in passing on the telegram: “I do not fear death although I know I am menaced by it. When I came to this country, I was prepared to meet enemies, men who are opposed to my movement. I believe that my countrymen in British Columbia are with me in my efforts for reform and I fear no assassin.”⁴¹ However there was no banquet that night as planned, and Kang did not leave the Hotel Vancouver.

Repeated invitations from the Chinese community in nearby New Westminster prompted Kang to go there on April 18 and extend what was to have been a brief stopover in Pacific Canada before proceeding to the United States.⁴² In New Westminster, Kang met the mayor of the city and then toured the provincial jail, a power house, an insane asylum, and a gold storage facility. Two hours were devoted to Kang’s tour of the penitentiary, where Kang probed his hosts with many questions about prisoner housing, kitchens, workshops, and the signal system that allowed the main office to keep contact with the guards.⁴³ Such intense study of every aspect of the workings of North American institutions, public and private, never ceased to appeal to Kang over the years.

Kang’s transformation by his first encounter with the West is apparent from his public speech at the New Westminster Opera House on the evening of April 19, in which he announced yet another new initiative, this one addressed directly to the stature of Chinese in their host countries. The two-hour speech attracted more than six hundred Chinese and about fifty White guests, including several women. While Kang’s two earlier public lectures in Victoria and Vancouver had stressed the restoration of the Guangxu Emperor and the solidarity of Chinese at home and abroad as the key to successful reforms, in New

39 “He Would Kill Kang,” *Province* (Vancouver), April 15, 1899, and “Assassin After Kang,” *Daily Colonist* (Victoria), April 15, 1899. Both newspapers claimed it was their reporter who delivered the telegram to Kang.

40 H. B. Greaves, Report to Major A. B. Perry of the North-West Mounted Police in Victoria, May 9, 1899, RG 18, vol. 170, file no. 339-48, Library and Archives Canada.

41 “He Would Kill Kang,” *Province* (Vancouver), April 15, 1899. No additional information about the potential assassin has been found in the Canadian press.

42 Kang, “You Yuduoli, Wen’gehua, Erbu ji,” 118–19.

43 “Inspected the Penitentiary,” *New Westminster Columbian*, April 20, 1899.

Westminster Kang also called for changes in the behavior of overseas Chinese themselves and their relations with White society.⁴⁴

Kang refuted the foreign stereotype that Chinese were not political and felt no patriotism toward their motherland. "I know you all love your country dearly; you want to see good laws, honest statesmen, and good government." To accomplish this he said, "you must all do your duty and work hard toward the upbuilding of our country and restoration of the rightful sovereign to the throne."⁴⁵ Kang also directed his audience to look to themselves for personal change:

Now, dear friends, do your duty toward China. Be good citizens of whatever country you are in; observe the English laws, keeping them as though you were in China; may the English friends admire your good behavior. Be friendly, and have brotherly love toward each other. Have kindly feelings; learn to do good.⁴⁶

This was a theme Kang would develop as he became increasingly aware that Chinese overseas were considered by Canadians and Americans as unclean, unwilling to integrate into Western society, slovenly, and boorish. He ended with his rousing oratorical call and response:

Now, you have heard all I had to say. Would you like to reform China? Would you be pleased to see your Emperor restored to power? Will you be glad to see China make good progress and become a powerful nation? Now if you do, say 'Hig lo' [系咯, a Cantonese term meaning "yes"].

Here the speaker rose, as he concluded his address, and as he raised his hands above his head, the audience followed suit, shouting as one man, "Hig lo!"⁴⁷

The most notable outcome of Kang Youwei's discussions with Chinatown merchant leaders in Vancouver and New Westminster was his proposal to unite all overseas Chinese through a massive commercial corporation in Canada, the

44 "Huang Yu Wei's Movements, *New Westminster Columbian*, April 20, 1899; Greaves, Report, 1899.

45 "China's Awakening," *New Westminster Columbian*, April 28, 1899; Kang, "Zai Wen'gehua Niaoeweishiwanshipabu yanshuoci," 121.

46 "China's Awakening," *New Westminster Columbian*, April 28, 1899.

47 "China's Awakening," *New Westminster Columbian*, April 28, 1899.

United States, and Australia for investment in Chinese industrial enterprises. That proposal, perhaps only a small part of Kang's reform agenda, was promoted in *The Province* as "A Gigantic Chinese Trust Formed Here." Seven wealthy Vancouver merchants—Ye En (Charley Yip Yen, Ye Huibo), Ye Chuntian (Yip Sang), Huang Yushan (Wong Soon King, owner of Hip Tuck Lung), Chen Cai (Chang Toy, owner of Sam Kee), Liao Yipeng (Lew Yick Pen), Li Ji (Lee Kee, Li Qingchi, owner of Lee Yuen), and Wen Jinyou (Won Alexander Cumyow)—described their purpose as giving overseas Chinese a chance to invest their money in the countries where they were living and eventually carry out Kang's reform plans. Based on their overestimation of five million Chinese living in Canada, the United States, and Australia, the founders planned to issue about \$60 million dollars' worth of stock, including \$5 million dollars in Canada. They also vowed to send out agents to establish chapter companies "in every city of any size in Canada, the United States and Australia." Specifically, the planned commercial corporation would later establish a bank, build steamships, and even construct a railway line in Mexico, with all of these business establishments centrally managed by the headquarters in Vancouver.⁴⁸

Kang apparently knew nothing of the Vancouver merchant initiative because of his quick departure from British Columbia before it was announced. In late April 1899, Consul Smith's communications with Washington made it clear that Kang could not enter the United States from western Canada. Smith learned that the Department of State saw "no occasion for any exceptional treatment of Mr. Kang," and the Acting Secretary of Treasury agreed, saying that Kang, as any Chinese would, had to produce a Section 6 certificate to be exempt from the exclusion laws.⁴⁹ Thus, Kang left Vancouver on May 3 for "Ottawa and New York en route to England."⁵⁰

On his trip to eastern Canada, Kang's retinue added two more Chinese members. Joining his original bodyguard and valet, Li Tang, and Staff Sergeant J. H. Heffernan of the North-West Mounted Police, a new secretary, Claude Ley Kum (Chen Enrong), a Chinese newspaper man born in Melbourne, Australia,

48 "Millions in It!" *Province* (Vancouver), May 18, 1899, 1. For the identification of the seven merchant incorporators, see Zhongping Chen, *Transpacific Reform and Revolution*, 85, 261 n114.

49 Alvey A. Adey to Lyman J. Gage, Secretary of Treasury, April 24, 1899, Chinese File 14735-89, Box 162, RG 85; Adey, Acting Secretary of Treasury to Hay, April 27, 1899, Chinese File 14735-89, NA-Washington. Also no. 70, Cridler to Abraham E. Smith, April 29, 1899, enclosed letter from Treasury; Instructions to U.S. Consuls From Department of State, Entry A1-5, vol. 167, 93, RG 59, NA-College Park.

50 "Kang Yu Wei is Back," *Province* (Vancouver), May 2, 1899, 8.

replaced Nakanishi Jūtārō as interpreter.⁵¹ Kum was summoned from Hong Kong by Kang, no doubt for his strong identification with Britain to the point of advocating that the British naval fleet in Hong Kong should “insist on an ‘open door’ through all the ports on the coasts and rivers of China.”⁵² Lu Zirong (Loo Gee Wing), a Chinese merchant from Victoria, also joined the entourage as a young follower of Kang’s cause.

Kang reached Ottawa late at night on May 8, 1899. The party’s late morning breakfast at the Russell House hotel made news when Kang ordered cake, apple pie, ice cream, and rice pudding after consuming a proper Canadian breakfast—“never had such an order been given at the hotel before,” but the chef “braced himself with a mighty effort and the order was soon filled.”⁵³

On May 10, Kang met Canadian Prime Minister Wilfrid Laurier. Kang had looked forward to meeting Laurier as “Canada’s greatest Liberal” and later wrote to him recalling their mutual feeling of political kinship.⁵⁴

I shall never forget the words you [Laurier] used when you shook my hand. “We are both reformers. I hope you will have every success in your reform movements and also express the hope you will succeed in getting into power again, same as ourselves in Canada.”⁵⁵

51 Li, “Xianzhenghui Jishi Shilüe,” 1909, 2; “A Chinese Reformer,” *Vancouver News-Advertiser*, April 28, 1899, 2; “The City,” *Vancouver News-Advertiser*, May 3, 1899, 8; “Kang-Yu Wei in Ottawa,” *Ottawa Citizen*, May 9, 1899, 1. Jung Chang, *Empress Dowager Cixi: The Concubine Who Launched Modern China* (New York: Knopf, 2013), 349, claims that “[Kang] left Japan to travel the world, accompanied by a Chinese-speaking, Japanese intelligence man, Nakanishi Shigetaro, who had trained in Japan’s intelligence institute, which was specifically targeting China. He now acted as Kang’s interpreter and bodyguard—and contact man with Tokyo.” In fact, Nakanishi returned to Japan shortly after Kang’s party arrived in Canada; he was never again reported to be at Kang’s side in North America. In an April 17, 1899, letter to Kashiwara Buntarō, executive secretary of Datong School in Yokohama, Kang explained that Nakanishi Shigetaro had asked to return home to resume his studies, and Kang felt that he had no choice but to allow him to leave. Kang Youwei, “Yu Boyuan Wentailang shu” 與柏原文太郎書 [To Kashiwara Buntarōin], *Kang Youwei Quanji*, vol. 5, 120. Canadian newspapers often rendered his name J. Nakanise and also as Nakanishi Jūtārō.

52 “A Chinese Reformer,” *Daily News-Advertiser*, April 28, 1899.

53 “Ottawa’s Chinese Visitors,” *Ottawa Citizen*, May 10, 1899.

54 “Kang-Yu-Wei, “Noted Chinese Reformer in Ottawa,” *Ottawa Citizen*, May 9, 1899, 1. As Canada’s prime minister (1896–1911), Laurier advocated rigorous restriction of Asian immigration but was said to be “scrupulously careful to avoid an extreme policy or offensive means.” See Oscar Douglas Skelton, *Life and Letters of Sir Wilfrid Laurier* (London: Oxford University Press, 1922), 2:348. For a review of Canadian Chinese restriction laws, see Cheng Tianfang, *Oriental Immigration in Canada* (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1931).

55 Kang Youwei to Sir Wilfrid Laurier, October 10, 1899, Sir Wilfrid Laurier Papers, Manuscript Group 26, G, vol. 127, no. 37913, Library and Archives Canada.

Kang next visited the Dominion Parliament and met the governor general of Canada, Gilbert Elliot-Murray-Kynynmound, Earl of Minto, who invited Kang “and his secretaries” to a ball with about seven hundred guests at Government House, where they stood out in their “native costumes.”⁵⁶

While in Ottawa, Kang once again approached the United States consulate. Consul General Charles E. Turner was absent from the city so Kang decided to make a direct overture by telegram to the Department of State in Washington.⁵⁷ His answer was quick in coming, and merely reiterated the one received in Victoria—that he could only enter the country upon production of a Section 6 Certificate.⁵⁸ The Department of State also informed Turner that Kang had applied for a special entry permit but that the U.S. government was “without authority to grant him the desired permission.”⁵⁹

Kang even recruited Canadian support for his efforts to gain admission to the United States through William C. Parmelee, the deputy minister of trade and commerce and chief controller of Chinese immigration for Canada. Parmelee put consistent pressure on the U.S. government to admit Kang. On May 10, Parmelee personally approached the United States vice consul general, Horace M. Sanford, on behalf of “His Excellency Kang Yu Wei, ex-Counselor State, [and] Claude Ley Kum, Secretary and Interpreter ... who are now in disgrace.” As Sanford had been instructed by Consul General Turner not to issue any visas, he “was in a quandary as to what action [he] had better take.” Kang now indicated that he had purchased passage on the *Lucania*, leaving the following week from New York City for England, and wished to proceed there via Niagara Falls.⁶⁰

Several days later, with Parmelee continuing to press Kang’s case, Vice Consul Sanford attempted another tack, admission for Kang under Section 3 of

56 “Ottawa’s Chinese Visitors,” *Ottawa Citizen*, May 10, 1899; “State Ball, Brilliant Function at Government House, Nearly 700 Present,” *Ottawa Citizen*, May 11, 1899, 1.

57 Telegram of Kang Yu Wei, Ottawa, to Commissioner of Foreign Affairs of the United States, Washington, May 10, 1899, Miscellaneous Letters of the Department of State, 1789–1906, RG 59, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/153540925?objectPage=549>, accessed May 24, 2024.

58 Telegram of Thos. W. Cridler, Washington, to Kang Yu Wei, Ottawa, May 11, 1899; Domestic Letters of the Department of State, 1784–1906, vol. 237, RG 59, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/29866632?objectPage=76>, accessed May 24, 2024.

59 No. 152, Cridler to Turner, May 11, 1899, seven enclosures, including copies of letters from and to Victoria, Tokyo, Treasury Department, and Kang Youwei; Instructions to U.S. Consuls, vol. 167, 245, Entry A1-5, RG 59, NA-College Park.

60 No. 156, Horace M. Sanford to David J. Hill, Assistant Secretary of State, May 11, 1899; Despatches From U.S. Consuls in Ottawa, 1877–1906, RG 59, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/212417479?objectPage=351>, accessed May 25, 2024.

the Treaty of 1894.⁶¹ Section 3 provided that a residence certificate could be issued to Chinese subjects by their government or the government of the country where they last resided.⁶² The 1894 Treaty appeared to accommodate Kang, since he could claim residence in Canada. The Department of State felt, however, that he could not legitimately claim residence there after such a short period of time.⁶³ Their opinion had been influenced by the Treasury Department, which cited the appropriate laws under its enforcement and suggested that the Canadian government would not, under the circumstances, issue the certificate.⁶⁴

Being thus confronted with U.S. legal (and political) obstacles, Vice Consul Sanford advised Kang to cancel his passage from New York and go to England via Montreal.⁶⁵ Kang had no choice but to abandon his original plan to seek help for his cause from Washington. On May 20, after going on to Montreal, Kang departed for England, accompanied by his three Chinese aides and debarked at Liverpool on May 31.⁶⁶

In London, Kang was met and interviewed by the press, which reported that it “found him anxious to know whether the coup d’état and its consequences [had] been realized in England.”⁶⁷ He emphasized to his interviewer that the emperor intended to befriend England while the Empress Dowager favored the

61 Telegram of Sanford to Hay, May 15, 1899, RG 59, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/212417479?objectPage=352>, accessed May 25, 2024.

62 Department of State, *Regulations Prescribed For the Use of the Consular Service of the United States* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1896), no. 3691, Certificates, 146. Also see William M. Malloy, comp., *Treaties, Conventions, International Acts, Protocols and Agreements Between the United States of America and Other Powers* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1910), vol. 1, 241–43 for the text of the 1894 treaty.

63 The distinction between this later treaty and the Act of July 5, 1884, is that it allowed certification on the basis of residence as well as citizenship. Since Kang was a subject of the Qing government (which obviously would not vouch for him) rather than of Canada, the 1884 law was not applicable. See no. 159, Cridler to Sanford, May 22, 1899, Instructions to U.S. Consuls, vol. 167, 370, Entry A1-5, RG 59, NA-College Park.

64 Cridler to Lyman J. Gage, May 16, 1899, and Gage to Hay, May 19, 1899; Chinese File 14735-89, Box 162, Entry 132, RG 85, NA-Washington.

65 No. 157, Sanford to Hill, May 25, 1899, RG 59, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/212417479?objectPage=355>, accessed May 25, 2024, in which Sanford indicates he had only pursued the matter so intently because of the persistent requests of Parmelee who “has been very kind to us in giving information for our own government.”

66 I. H. Heffernan, Report to the officer commanding the North-West Mounted Police in Regina, May 24, 1899, RG 18, vol. 170, file no. 339-48, Library and Archives Canada.

67 “Kang Yu Wei,” *Times* (London), June 8, 1899, 10.

Russians, and that although the reform party had been “hampered,” it was “not extinguished.”⁶⁸

Kang stayed at the residence of the former Lord Commissioner of the Admiralty, Charles Beresford, who had gained influence with Kang when the two met in Hong Kong after the 1898 coup and sought to enlist him on the side of Britain in its rivalry with Russia over China.⁶⁹ Beresford once again attempted to entangle Kang’s cause with British imperialism before the House of Commons. In a lengthy debate on civil service expenditures affecting British military efforts in China, Beresford spoke of the dangers of not supporting reform in China and proposed internationalizing China’s army with a Briton as commander in chief. His proposal for military intervention was rebuffed in the course of committee discussion.⁷⁰ Kang did not see even “the ghost” of British Prime Minister Salisbury (Robert Gascoyne-Cecil), as his secretary later complained.⁷¹ More humiliating was the theft of Kang’s travel funds in London.⁷² Thus, turned away for a second time by a national government (Japan being the first), Kang returned to the friendlier grounds of Canada after only ten days in England. He departed on June 11 from Liverpool for Montreal.⁷³

2 Establishing the Baohuanghui in Canada

Penniless and disappointed, Kang and his retinue could not even continue their journey from Montreal until financial aid came from two of his closest compatriots in British Columbia, Li Mengjiu in Victoria and Ye En in Vancouver.⁷⁴

68 *The Times* (London), June 8, 1899, 10.

69 See Prelude.

70 Parliamentary Debates, vol. 72, 784–875. For a condensed version see “Parliament,” *The Times* (London), June 10, 1899, 8–9. Jung-pang Lo, “Sequel to the Chronological Autobiography,” *Kang Yu-wei: A Biography and Symposium* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1967), 180, said that the proposal was voted down by fourteen but there is no evidence of this vote in either of the two aforementioned sources. If some unofficial vote was taken it must have been overwhelming in rejecting the proposal as there were only twenty-one members on the Committee of Supply.

71 “The Moving Throng,” *Province* (Vancouver), July 10, 1899, 5.

72 Li, “Xianzhenghui Jishi Shiliüe,” 2, writes that more than \$1,000 (currency unknown) given to Kang for expenses by Marquis Ōkuma before he left Japan was stolen from the room of Kang’s interpreters, Chen Enrong 陳恩榮 and Lu Zirong 盧梓榮.

73 S.S. *Tainui*, Liverpool to Quebec, June 11, 1899, passenger manifest, National Archives, London, England. Traveling with Kang were Loo Gee Wing [Lu Zirong], Claude Ley Kum [Chen Enrong], and Lee Tong [Li Tang] 李棠. The ship arrived in Canada on June 21.

74 Li, “Xianzhenghui Jishi Shiliüe,” 2–3.

How could Kang's earliest supporters not help him financially? In May, thanks to Kang's planting the idea with them during his first visit to British Columbia, they had announced a plan to establish a gigantic company, and "already in Vancouver we have sold our countrymen alone thousands of dollars' worth of shares."⁷⁵

When Kang Youwei returned to Vancouver on July 3, it appears he was unaware of what had been promoted after his departure that spring. He informed the local police that he intended to sail for China on July 10 and requested that the Canadian government restore police protection for him while in British Columbia.⁷⁶ However, on July 9, Kang wrote a letter to Prime Minister Laurier, stating that he would be "spending the hot [summer] weather in some quiet island" in western Canada.⁷⁷ Kang's sudden change of plans came with his decision to follow through with local Chinese initiatives in founding the organization that would soon be named Baohuanghui.

Exactly what kind of enterprise Kang encountered in Vancouver is unclear. The Vancouver leaders may not even have begun to execute their plans for the company beyond their May publicity. In any case, Kang convinced them to alter their original scheme. There began a flurry of organizational activities in which Kang undertook to rename, formalize, and expand the organizational vision of Ye En and the Vancouver Chinese, transforming it from a business to a political association. Kang suggested the name, Baoshanghui (Merchant Protection Society), most likely to cater to the business interests of its founders.⁷⁸ On July 9, Kang went to Victoria and held a series of meetings with Chinatown leaders, who presented counterproposals. A merchant, Huang Xuanlin, proposed that since the Guangxu Emperor "has risked his life to save the people," it would be more meaningful to call their organization the Baohuanghui (Protect the Emperor Society).⁷⁹ Li Mengjiu suggested the English name, Chinese Empire Reform Association.⁸⁰ Li was considered one of

75 "Millions in It!" *Province* (Vancouver), May 18, 1899, 1; "Vancouver Affairs: Chinese Reformer Thinks Up a Graft," *Daily Colonist* (Victoria), May 19, 1899.

76 "Kang Going Back," *Vancouver World*, July 4, 1899, 7; Major A. B. Perry, letter to F. White, Comptroller of the North-West Mounted Police, July 6, 1899, RG 18, vol. 170, file no. 339-48, Library and Archives Canada.

77 Kang Youwei, letter to Sir Wilfrid Laurier, July 9, 1899, Prime Minister Laurier's fond, 35243-44, Library and Archives Canada.

78 Lo, "Sequel to Autobiography," 180, notes that Kang initially proposed Zhongguo Weixinhui 中國維新會 [China Reform Association] as the organizational name.

79 Lo, "Sequel to Autobiography," 180, 256 n6.

80 Li, "Xianzhenghui Jishi Shilüe," 3; M. W. Fyffe, Report to the officer commanding the North-West Mounted Police in Vancouver, August 31, 1899, RG 18, vol. 170, file no. 339-48, Library and Archives Canada; Li Donghai 李東海, *Jia'nada Huaqiaoshi* 加拿大華僑史 [A history of the Chinese in Canada] (Taipei: Zhonghua Dadian Bianyinhui, 1967), 276.

Victoria's most influential Chinese leaders and often played a mediating role when there were disputes in the Chinese community.⁸¹ Thus, paternalistic as Kang would become in his dominance over the Baohuanghui, the organization owed its origin and its Chinese- and English-language names to Chinese leaders in British Columbia rather than to Kang alone. Kang and other leaders sometimes used the name Zhongguo Weixinhui (China Reform Association) among themselves, and Kang's biographer and grandson has suggested that Kang merely tolerated the name Baohuanghui because of its popularity among his followers.⁸²

Without Kang's instigation and influence, the Baohuanghui could not have formed or expanded globally, but its ultimate success or failure depended on local community activists, first in British Columbia and then throughout the world. That Kang was able to enter Canada and freely develop his organization was due not only to Canada's less onerous Chinese immigration laws but also to the predominance of Canadian Chinese in British Columbia, particularly in Victoria and Vancouver. In 1901, British Columbia was home to 86 percent or 14,885 of the 17,312 Chinese in Canada. By 1911, Chinese in this province had reached 19,568 and comprised 70 percent of Canada's Chinese population.⁸³

The Baohuanghui origin story places its founding in Victoria on July 20, 1899. As has been seen, this greatly simplifies a more complicated genesis.⁸⁴ While the initiative to form a global organization was taken by Ye En and other Vancouver leaders, Kang may have trusted Victoria leaders like Li Fuji more than he did Ye En and the Vancouver Chinese, an inclination that would pre-empt his very different relationships with Li and Ye a decade later. In any case, Kang's Canadian police escort recorded a meeting at the Chinese Theatre in Victoria on July 17 and 18, with Kang filling his spare time by "writing letters and receiving visitors."⁸⁵ Probably because they feared persecution by the Qing government, no one volunteered to serve as the first Baohuanghui president.⁸⁶

81 Liu Jing, Zou Chongle, and Wu Yamin 劉靜, 鄒崇樂, 武亞民, "Kang Youwei dui Jia'nada Huaqiaode Yingxiang—yi Situ Yingshi weili" 康有為對加拿大華僑的影響——以司徒英石為例 [Kang Youwei's Influence on Canadian Chinese—Taking Situ Yingshi as an Example] (paper, International Scholarly Conference on Kang Youwei and Modern China, Nanhai, Guangdong, March 17–19, 2018).

82 Letter of Jung-pang Lo to Robert L. Worden, July 27, 1971, author's file.

83 Wickberg, et al., *From China to Canada*, 79.

84 A granular account of the July 1899 organizing meetings in Vancouver and Victoria can be found in Chen, *Transpacific Reform and Revolution*, 35–41.

85 Fyffe, Report, 1899.

86 This was not a national president, but for the Victoria chapter. Before 1900, there was no overall president in Canada.

Kang held daily discussions on national affairs and finally persuaded Li Fuji to accept the position. He exhorted Li: "At present our motherland is in great peril. To found this society for national salvation is the duty of all citizens."

After Kang had completed writing the founding documents, the inauguration of the Baohuanghui was announced on July 20, 1899 in Victoria. However, the Chinese in Vancouver previously selected Ye En as the president of Baohuanghui's Vancouver chapter.⁸⁷ There is no consistent list of Baohuanghui founders, but an October 21, 1906 notice by Kang to change the name of the Baohuanghui to Xianzhenghui (Constitutional Association) listed Li Fuji, Feng Xiushi, Dong Qiantai, Lu Renshan, and Xu Weijing (all from Victoria), Ye En of Vancouver, and Liu Kangheng of New Westminster as the "righteous founders."⁸⁸ A large engraved stone tablet written by Liang Yingliu (Liang Shaoxian) and dated May 21, 1907, names men from the three main chapters in British Columbia—Victoria, Vancouver and New Westminster—as Baohuanghui founders. This tablet is mounted inside the Baohuanghui building in Victoria at 1715 Government Street, which was built in 1905 and self-styled as "The First Chinese Empire Reform Ass'n" in English on its parapet. The tablet lists donors to the building from Canada and the chapters they represent. It clearly credits Kang Youwei together with Ye En, Li Fuji, Dong Qiantai, Xu Weijing, and Liu Kangheng among the founders.⁸⁹

Following the formal inauguration of the Baohuanghui, Kang retired for much of the summer to an idyllic retreat that he named Wen Dao (Literary Island), a small island lying off the Saanich Peninsula, north of Sidney, British Columbia, with easy access to Victoria.⁹⁰ In his many poems about this beloved island, Kang sometimes called it Weijie Dao 未潔島 (Impure Island), an improbable name for a favorite place, but a proper choice for Coal Island, the home of a friend and likely supporter, Wei Dinggao, a wealthy farmer, fisherman, and

87 Li, "Xianzhenghui Jishi Shilüe," 3–4.

88 Kang Youwei, "Bugao Baiqishiyu bu huizong dingwei xinnian yuandan ju daqingdian gaochan Baohuanghui gaiwei Guomin Xianzhenghui wen" 布告百七十余埠會眾丁未新年元旦舉大慶典告藏保皇會改為國民憲政會文 [Text of announcement to members of 170 chapters to hold a big celebration ceremony on New Years Day 1907 for the completion of the change from Protect the Emperor Society to Citizens' Constitutional Association], October 21, 1906, in Tang Zhijun 湯志鈞, *Kang Youwei Zhenglunji* 康有為政論集 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1981), vol. 1, 598.

89 Liang Yingliu 梁應騷, "Chang jian chuangsui Baohuanghuisuo beiji" 倡建創始保皇會所碑記 [A stone inscription regarding the initiation and construction of the office of the Protect the Emperor Society], May 21, 1907; tablet found behind a boarded up window by Ian Sutherland on third floor, 1715 Government Street, Victoria, BC.

90 Lo, "Sequel to Autobiography," 181–82.

wood merchant.⁹¹ The press reported that Kang was living on the island “in a bare upper story of a Canadian frame house, with no furniture beyond a trestle bed and a rough pine table, with a couple of chairs.”⁹² He was accompanied by his secretary (probably Claude Ley Kum) with whom he exchanged English and Chinese lessons. Suiting his isolated and reflective lifestyle, Kang named his home Liaotianshi (Hut under the Vastness of Heaven).⁹³ Nonetheless, Kang’s life was still under assassination threat from the Qing government. A Canadian police officer escorted him during the day, and at night Kang was protected by two Chinese bodyguards.⁹⁴ Once more, Kang tried to obtain entry to the United States through Seattle but had no more success than before. Permission was denied this time on the basis that Kang was no longer a Qing official.⁹⁵

Nevertheless, Kang Youwei fully enjoyed his life on Coal Island. He wrote more than twenty poems there during summer 1899, describing how he sailed

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- 91 Chen Zhongping 陳忠平, “Kang Youwei Wen Dao zhi Mi ji qi Haiwai Gailiang Yundongde Xingshuai” 康有爲文島之謎及其海外改良運動的興衰 [The Puzzle of Kang Youwei’s Wen Island and the Vicissitudes of His Reform Movement Abroad], *Dushu*, March 2018. Chen also notes that *weijie* 未潔 would be pronounced “meiji” in Kang’s Nanhai dialect, evoking the name of the island resident, Wei Dinggao 魏鼎高, and the meaning of coal 煤 [*mei*], pronounced “mui” in Cantonese. John Adams, a local historian of the Chinese in Victoria, has studied the land ownership records and confirms that Wei (also known as Wei Si 魏四, or Wei the 4th, Muk Sau, Ngai Muk Sow, and Ngai Sai) owned the eastern portion of Coal Island. From Kang’s poems, it appears he lived across a small stream from Wei’s household, spanned by a single plank bridge. We use Coal Island when referring to the geographical place, Wen Island when referring to Kang’s poems or self-described experience of the island.
- 92 “Watching the Exile,” *Daily Colonist* (Victoria), October 19, 1899, 6.
- 93 Kang, “Jihai Xia Qiu Wendao Zayong Shijiu Shou” 己亥夏秋文島雜詠十九首 [Nineteen Poems Narrating Summer and Fall 1899 on Wen Island], in *Kang Youwei Quanji* 康有爲全集 [Collected Works of Kang Youwei], ed. Jiang Yihua and Zhang Ronghua 姜義華, 張榮華 (Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin Daxue Chubanshe, 2007), vol. 12, 197.
- 94 According to Fyffe’s 1899 report, there were rumors of threats against Kang’s life that he had his Canadian police escort investigate. These turned out to have been spread by his opponents in Chinatown.
- 95 Wilson R. Gay, U.S. Attorney, Seattle, to Secretary of Treasury, July 31, 1899; and Assistant Secretary of Treasury to Gay, August 1, 1899, Chinese File 141735-89, Box 162, RG 85, NA-Washington. Also, a cipher telegram, Hay to Edwin A. Conger, U.S. Minister, Beijing, December 2, 1899, Diplomatic Instructions of the Department of State, 1801–1906, Vols. 6–7, RG 59. <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/149301198?objectPage=20>, accessed May 24, 2024. This document said “Kang Yu Wei wished to enter the United States but was not permitted.” See also no. 306, Conger to Hay, January 2, 1900, Dispatches from U.S. Ministers to China, 1843–1906, vol. 107, RG 59, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/189073556?objectPage=448>, accessed May 24, 2024, in which Conger reported a visit from Li Hongzhang requesting that the United States prohibit the entry of Kang and Liang Qichao should they seek admission.

a boat among nearby islands every day, admired the distant view of the snowy mountains under summer sunlight, or sadly sang songs of his homeland while striking the water with his oars or wandered drunkenly on the beach.⁹⁶ Every day Kang watched the ocean or took naps on the rocks, and in the evening after dining and drinking wine, he would row around the island. In spite of this restful interlude, Kang suffered from a persistent headache that lingered for months.

Kang's Chinese host and other island residents were fishermen who also raised pigs, sheep, and other livestock. Most of Kang's daily needs were provided by a Victoria Baohuanghui member, Feng Junqing, but local Chinese gave him fish and vegetables. Kang learned how to fish, hunted pheasants on a larger island, and bathed in the ocean that was cold even in summer. In his poems, he lamented China's national crisis and worried about both the emperor imprisoned on Yingtai island and his own mother thousands of miles away, and he was still distraught over his failure to win British support for the emperor's restoration.⁹⁷

On Mid-Autumn Day, September 19, Kang viewed the moon with Su Shiyi, a fellow villager from Yintang, Nanhai. He asked Su to make a copy of his poem and commentary to send to relatives, friends, and colleagues "so that they may know how I feel as an exiled person":

A wandering guest from 20,000 li away,
My gray sideburns show the passage of forty springs;
Turning to look at the Milky Way and enjoying the full moon with friends,
Most rare it is on Wen Island to receive a fellow villager;
Ashamed that my partisan troubles [*danghuo*] have unjustly fallen upon
my fellow villagers,⁹⁸
Ashamed that I can do nothing to bestow them with favor;
Fearful that I could forever be separated from my hometown,
It's futile for my elders to keep talking about an exiled official.⁹⁹

96 Kang, "Jihai Xia Qiu Wendao," *Kang Youwei Quanji*, vol. 12, 197–99.

97 Kang, "Jihai Xia Qiu Wendao," *Kang Youwei Quanji*, vol. 12, 198.

98 Zhongping Chen email to Jane Leung Larson, May 27, 2014, noted that Kang's fellow villagers fled from their homes after the 1898 coup. "Partisan trouble" is a historical term referring to political victims; the term first appeared in the Han dynasty.

99 Kang Youwei, "Wen Dao Sixiang" 文島思鄉 [Thinking of My Old Home on Literary Island] poem, September 19, 1899, no. 135 in Fang Zhiqin and Cai Huiyao 方志欽, 蔡惠堯, ed., *Kang Liang yu Baohuanghui: Tan Liang zai Meiguo Suocang Ziliao Huibian* 康梁與保皇會: 譚良在美國所藏資料彙編 [Kang, Liang, and the Baohuanghui: A Compilation of Materials Collected by Tom Leung in the United States] (Hong Kong: Yinhe Chubanshe, 2008), 86. The number following the date in the Fang book refers to the internal

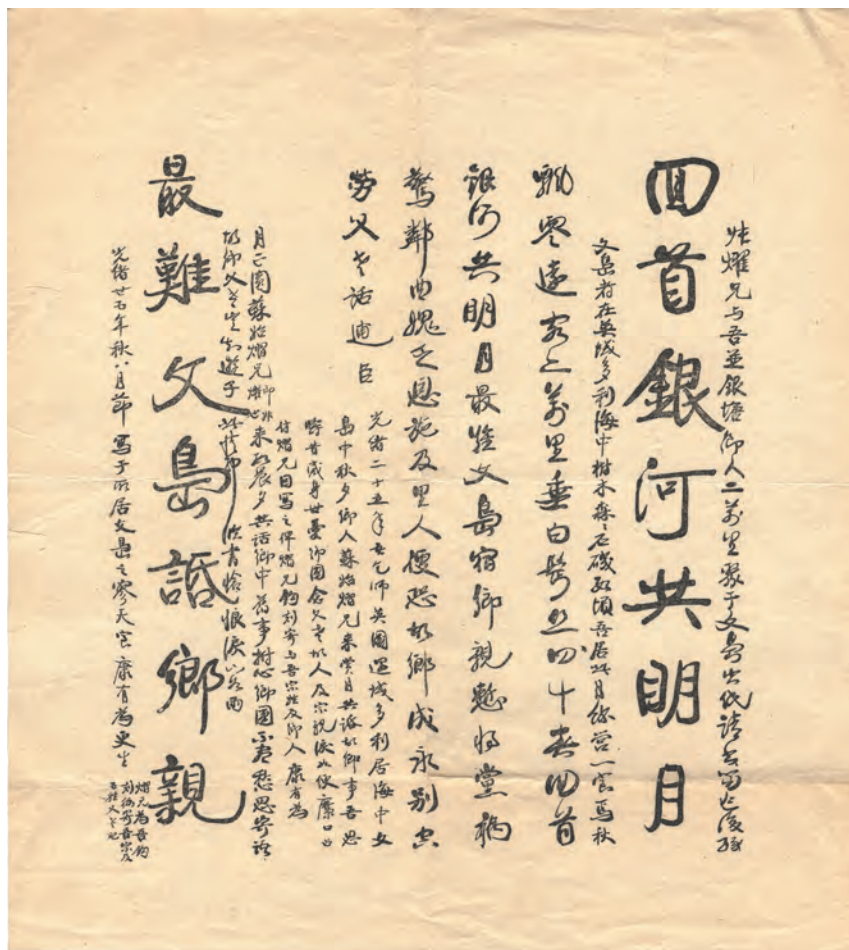


FIGURE 5 “Thinking of Wen Island,” a poem in Kang’s handwriting, reproduced by Su Shiya using *shuanggou* style in which each stroke of a character is traced with a fine brush, then filled in or the interior carved out so that the calligraphy can be duplicated.

A celebration in Victoria of the emperor’s birthday on August 4 may have been the first political event sponsored by the Baohuanghui, but there is no evidence that Kang actually attended. He vividly recounted how he held an

document number for the Tom Leung Collection, Asian Library, University of California, Los Angeles, which is online at the UCLA Digital Collection, <https://digital.library.ucla.edu/catalog/ark:/21198/zz00231185>, accessed January 30, 2023—searches can only be made with the Chinese characters for sender’s name).

informal ceremony for the imperial birthday on Wen Island and presided over a lavish celebration for the emperor in Victoria on August 4, in a poem and short essay. However, Kang's police escort reported that between July 30 and August 9 Kang was sailing among the islands.¹⁰⁰ "The Emperor's Birthday," a report in the Victoria *Daily Colonist*, described celebrations in the three British Columbia cities, but failed to note either Kang's presence or that the Baohuanghui was involved: "Simultaneously with Vancouver and New Westminster, Victoria received a telegram from Peking [*sic*] announcing that yesterday was the thirtieth birthday of His Majesty Kwong Suie [Guangxu], the Emperor of China. The news has set Chinatown in a state of excitement, and was the cause of a general celebration last evening in that part of the city."¹⁰¹

Whether or not Kang participated in Guangxu's birthday celebration, he was busy establishing his burgeoning organization that summer. In fact, Kang used the occasion of Guangxu's birthday to mobilize telegrams to the Qing Foreign Affairs Office (Zongli Yamen) wishing the emperor a long life, asking about his health, and calling for his restoration. Kang's merchant followers in Victoria, Vancouver, and New Westminster joined Seattle, Portland, and Port Townsend in the United States, followed by communities in Southeast Asia and Japan, in a long-running circular telegram campaign. This was a new kind of political movement for China, and it persuaded Cixi to back down from her plans to dethrone Guangxu (described in Chapter 2).¹⁰² From Hong Kong, Liang Yingliu described how the Canadian Chinese initiated the movement:

Only a few [Qing] officials still want to get rid of the emperor. They intended to displace him in the sixth month [late June–July 1899] ... In one day there were as many as fourteen telegrams [from Canada], and altogether more than forty from Nanyang [Southeast Asia], Japan, and the Americas. As a result, the officials stopped their attempt to get rid of the emperor. It really turned the situation around.¹⁰³

100 Kang Youwei, "Meizhou Zhu Shengshou Ji" 美洲祝聖壽記 [Remembering the Celebration of the Emperor's Birthday in the Americas], *Kang Youwei Quanji*, vol. 5, 133; "Mingyi ge shiji" 明夷閣詩集 [Collected Poems of the Mingyi Pavilion], *Kang Youwei Quanji*, vol. 12, 188, 199; Fyffe, Report, 1899. It is possible that the police report greatly simplified Kang's activities during those ten days, given the usual pace of Kang's life.

101 "The Emperor's Birthday," *Daily Colonist* (Victoria), August 5, 1899, 5. Since the Baohuanghui had just been inaugurated, it is not surprising that the reporter would miss the involvement of the new organization.

102 Sang Bing 桑兵, *Gengzi Qinwang yu Wan-Qing Zhengqu, Di-Er Ban* 庚子勤王與晚清政局 (第二版) [The 1900 Movement to "Rush Troops in to Save the Throne" and the Late Qing Political Situation, 2nd ed.] (Beijing: Beijing Daxue Chubanshe, 2015), 63–65.

103 Liang Yingliu to Tan Zhangxiao 譚張孝 [Tom Leung 譚良], December 8, 1899, no. 501 in Fang and Cai, 331.

Police reports reveal that Kang did spend much time away from Coal Island. On July 28, Kang left the island to attend a large meeting with approximately 2,000 Chinese in Victoria and went to a smaller meeting the next day.¹⁰⁴ And, from August 10 to September 16, Kang was in Vancouver, New Westminster, and Victoria attending meetings, visiting friends, and receiving callers. Thereafter, he returned to his island retreat and stayed until early October. Back on Coal Island, Kang frequently received visitors from these three cities.¹⁰⁵

Kang also undertook to expand the Baohuanghui from Canada to the United States. First, he wrote letters to contacts in Portland, Seattle, and San Francisco, most of whom became key leaders of those chapters.¹⁰⁶ While in Vancouver on September 11, "a number of Chinese came to visit him from the United States."¹⁰⁷ In late September, Kang went a step further and sent three emissaries from Victoria and Vancouver to the United States, and one of them, Ma Guntang, visited Port Townsend, Seattle, Portland, and San Francisco from late October to late November 1899 to deliver public lectures and help establish local chapters.¹⁰⁸ Kang's other emissaries, Liao Yipeng (Dr. Lui) of Vancouver and Tom Chue Thom (Tan Chaodong, Chiu Doong Tam, Tom Chhui Pak) of New Westminster, also received funds from Baohuanghui chapters in Canada for their travel to cities in the United States, with Kang providing letters of introduction and copies of the Baohuanghui charter.¹⁰⁹

By late September 1899, likely in consultation with local leaders, Kang had written the "Preface and Regulations" of what he informally called the Baohuanghui (Protect the Emperor Society), rather than the official name, Baojiu Da-Qing Huangdi Gongsi (Company to Protect the Great Qing

104 Fyffe, Report, 1899.

105 Fyffe, Report, 1899. Police records on Kang ended on September 30, 1899.

106 Li, "Xianzhenghui Jishi Shilüe," 4, says that Kang wrote Li Meijin 李美近 and Liang Hongxuan 梁鴻軒 in Portland, Hu Ba'nán 胡拔南, Liu Qiong 劉瓊, and Zhen Xiang 甄想 in Seattle, and Tan Shubin 譚樹彬, Guan Boyao 關伯堯, Cui Zijian 崔子肩, and Lei Weili 雷維利 in San Francisco.

107 Fyffe, Report, 1899.

108 Ma Guntang 馬袞堂 to Kang Youwei, December 1899, Yuk Ow Collection, carton 5, Ethnic Studies Library, University of California at Berkeley. Apparently Ma remained in San Francisco until sometime in 1900, and Kang complained, "We seem to spend association money on him for nothing ... We sent him to the United States only as a matter of expedience, since no one could go there at that time." Kang ordered Tom Leung to send Ma back to Canada. Kang Youwei to Tom Leung, letter, June 27, 1900, no. 505 in Fang and Cai, 27.

109 "Chinese Organizing," *Daily Colonist* (Victoria), October 10, 1899, 5; also see Kang Youwei to Tan Chaodong 譚朝棟, letter, October 2, 1899, in *Kang Youwei Quanjī*, vol. 5, 136.

Emperor).¹¹⁰ This charter was the first of what would be three successive charters regulating the Baohuanghui, the second two resulting from plenary meetings of chapters convened by Kang in New York City in 1905 and 1907, when delegates discussed and altered Kang's draft charters.¹¹¹

In 1899, Kang carefully incorporated both political and business interests of overseas Chinese into this founding document, which was published in October as the preface and regulations for a "corporation" (*gongsi*) to protect the emperor, or Baojiu Da-Qing Huangdi Gongsi.¹¹² Envisioned at its birth as a transnational organization, Kang laid out regulations at the local, national and global level. The Baohuanghui's hybrid structure reflected elements of Kang's earlier plans to form commercial companies and study societies as patriotic political organizations. Earlier, in 1895, Kang proposed establishing joint stock companies to resist foreign economic intrusion, after the model of the British East India Company or the Netherlands East India Company.¹¹³ The same year, Kang initiated the popular Qiangxuehui (Society for the Study of National Strengthening) in Beijing and Shanghai to learn from the West and build a cadre of reformers.¹¹⁴ In April 1898, Kang founded the Baoguohui (Society to Preserve the Nation) in Beijing, which made explicit its political purpose: "to preserve the nation, preserve the race, and preserve [Confucian] teachings" (*baoguo, baozhong, baojiao*).¹¹⁵ The Baoguohui structure, officers and their selection and duties, rules of conduct, and even such elements as how new members were registered and their donations recorded, as outlined in its charter, show remarkable continuity with what Kang would mandate for operating the Baohuanghui.¹¹⁶

However, the 1899 Baohuanghui charter was far longer than the 1898 Baoguohui charter, and was both didactic and programmatic. Kang wanted to

110 Kang's October 2, 1899 letters to Tan Chaodong and Huang Shichu 黃仕初, *Kang Youwei Quanji*, vol. 5, 136, 138, refer to the charter as "Baohuanghui Xuli" 保皇會序例 [Preface and Regulations of the Protect the Emperor Society].

111 See Chapter 7 for description of the 1905 charter and Chapter 10 for the 1907 charter.

112 Kang Youwei, "Baojiu Da-Qing Huangdi Gongsi Xuli" 保救大清皇帝公司序例 [Preface and Regulations for the Company to Protect the Great Qing Emperor], in *Kang Youwei Quanji*, vol. 5, 144–55.

113 Zhongping Chen, *Modern China's Network Revolution: Chambers of Commerce and Sociopolitical Change in the Early Twentieth Century* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011), 43.

114 Kung-ch'üan Hsiao, *A Modern China and a New World: K'ang Yu-wei, Reformer and Utopian, 1858–1927* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1975), 211–13.

115 "Baoguohui Xu" 保國會序 [Preface to the Society to Preserve the Nation], Kang Youwei, *Kang Youwei Quanji* 康有為全集 [The Complete Works of Kang Youwei], ed. Jiang Yihua and Zhang Ronghua 姜義華, 張榮華 (Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin Daxue Chubanshe, 2007), vol. 4, 52.

116 "Baoguohui Zhangcheng" 保國會章程 [Charter of the Preserve the Nation Society], Kang, *Kang Youwei Quanji*, vol. 4, 54–56.

rouse to action those who were passively bemoaning their fate as powerless Chinese overseas. He recited a litany of losses China had suffered under the reign of the Empress Dowager: lives lost in foreign invasions, territory lost to foreign concessions, rights lost to foreign-owned railroads and mines, and the public treasure disappearing in foreign indemnities and tariffs. He listed the territories lost to foreign powers, large and small, and pointed out the result: "China's 20,000 miles of territory has been split into pieces. Our race [*zhongzu*] with four thousand years of history and 400 million brethren have been surreptitiously sold into slavery." Kang then built a case for the emperor as a daring yet desperate man who risked his life to carry out reforms and save China from foreign incursions, knowing that he would incur the wrath of Cixi and her grand councilor, Ronglu. The emperor's fate symbolized both the Chinese nation and the reform movement, inspiring activism by the Chinese people. Cixi and Ronglu were pictured as traitors selling out the nation and the people in order to accumulate personal power. Kang shamed his fellow compatriots for their acquiescence and dared them to take action:

The reason our emperor was almost killed and is now held in prison is because ... none of our 400 million people is willing to rise and rescue him ... The one who saved us we have allowed to be threatened by death and incarceration with no interference. Those who put our rescuer in prison and betrayed us, we have allowed to serve as our emperor and empress and have put up no resistance. Do our 400 million people have hearts? China is the so-called land of propriety and righteousness. We have a tradition of loyalty and benevolence. How unfaithfully and unjustly we have acted! No wonder we are going to lose our country.¹¹⁷

To validate his authority to form the Baohuanghui, Kang cited his altered version of the emperor's secret edict issued September 15, 1898, which he rewrote as if Guangxu had addressed it personally to him.¹¹⁸ The charter's first article reads: "This company was established according to a secret imperial edict delivered by Grand Council (Junjichu) official Yang Rui [a reformer appointed by the emperor as a secretary to the Grand Council] to Kang [appointed by the emperor as a

¹¹⁷ Kang, "Baojiu Da-Qing Huangdi Gongsi Xuli," 145.

¹¹⁸ The actual edict read: "You [Yang Rui], together with Lin Xu, Liu Guangdi, Tan Sitong, and other comrades should quickly meet to discuss suitable measures to take. You'd best send a secret, sealed memorial through the Grand Councilors (*junji dachen*), then wait until I ponder it deeply and give my response about how to handle this. It is with great urgency and anxiety that I await your plan." Kang was not mentioned, and the edict did not address reform, only the current crisis. See Prelude for more about the secret edict and what followed in the days after.

secretary] at the Ministry of Works [Gongbu].”¹¹⁹ Kang’s rewritten secret edict in the 1899 charter included an explicit command to activism absent in the original:

Because now is an extremely difficult time for our country, I believe reform is the only way to save China. I also believe that I have only to remove the conservative and decadent officials from power and appoint open-minded and gallant officials in order to carry out the reforms. However, the Empress Dowager holds a different opinion. I have tried several times to persuade her, but have only agitated her. My throne is in peril.¹²⁰

Reading this document (or hearing it read at Baohuanghui meetings), the merchants, miners, and laundry workers who might never have thought about the future beyond the fate of their families and villages were suddenly shocked into realizing that China’s survival was in their hands. They were connected, for the first time, through the idea of the Chinese nation, not just to each other but to their compatriots spread over the globe. Moreover, Kang condemned not only the atrocities committed by foreign powers in China but also anti-Chinese racism in North America. Foreigners’ mistreatment of Chinese at home and abroad, including the Chinese Exclusion Acts in the United States, Chinese head tax in Canada, and even the impudent beatings and insults of Chinese by American children (*xitong*)—all were blamed on the autocratic policies of Cixi and her conservative clique in the Qing court.¹²¹

There are five million Chinese overseas. They are treated badly. Without the protection of our government, they are like abandoned children. Some may blame the government officials for lack of conscience, but without power, they are the same as the people. There is no point in criticizing them. Some may blame the royal family. Who is the so-called royal family? There is no parliament in China. The political power is in the hands of one person. In the past thirty years, England, France, Russia, and Germany have multiplied their territories. Japan has become stronger because institutional reforms have been introduced. But our country has ceded land continuously and is in great danger of extinction. The blame should be put on none other than the Empress Dowager. Her heavy-handed and conservative regime should take full responsibility.¹²²

119 Kang, “Baojiu Da-Qing Huangdi Gongsi Xuli,” 152.

120 Kang, “Baojiu Da-Qing Huangdi Gongsi Xuli,” 155.

121 Kang, “Baojiu Da-Qing Huangdi Gongsi Xuli,” 144.

122 Kang, “Baojiu Da-Qing Huangdi Gongsi Xuli,” 148.

Although the new organization was called a company (*gongsi*) throughout the document, Kang gave precedence to its political functions over its business goals. He distinguished between “two prescriptions” for saving the country from its near-death condition:

I have two prescriptions: the best way is called Baohuanghui [Protect the Emperor Society]. We should support the sacred emperor who can cure and save our people. If his throne is restored, our four hundred million people will be rescued immediately. The lesser way is called Baogongshanghui [Preserve Industry and Commerce Society]. The five million compatriots overseas should band together to defend themselves, and then it will serve as a comfort to the four hundred million people. The first prescription is very convenient and easy. The second prescription is very prudent and reliable.¹²³

Thus, in Baohuanghui’s first programmatic document, Kang differentiated the Baohuanghui as a political body from the Baogongshanghui as a business advancement arm and strongly favored the political over the commercial aspects of the organization, with only passing mention of the latter. The organizational regulations, as for example, prioritize political goals in allocating funds raised from “comrades” (*tongzhi*):

The contributions to our company will be used to recruit and support loyal and righteous people, who will travel and give speeches to mobilize and communicate with talented and hardworking people and run newspapers to promote our cardinal principle of righteousness and to inspire the people. If we can collect a great sum of money, we will open banks and steamship companies to preserve the emperor and the country, and protect industries and commerce from foreign invasion. We are trying to carry out various activities in accordance with the imperial edict. The most important thing is to rescue our emperor and our country. We will not spend the funds on trivial matters.¹²⁴

However, a profit motive on the part of those joining the company was assumed. But the profits were to come only when the emperor had been restored and would involve industries and commerce inside China. To induce people to make donations, Kang looked to the reinstated emperor who would

123 Kang, “Baojiu Da-Qing Huangdi Gongsi Xuli,” 150.

124 Kang, “Baojiu Da-Qing Huangdi Gongsi Xuli,” 153.

bestow rewards in gratitude for the overseas reformers' efforts in rescuing him. "There is no higher merit than to rescue the emperor," wrote Kang and the "rewards will exceed any other." In addition to the traditional honors that would be requested of the emperor, such as official posts or titles of nobility awarded to large donors and the most devoted, hardworking leaders, "no matter how much the donation to the company, in the future it can be converted to shares in metal and coal mines." Kang specified that when the emperor is restored, "receipts showing donations can be exchanged for share certificates." The more money donated, the greater the future business opportunities. For example, "those who have donated more than 5,000 yuan will have the privilege of undertaking ventures in mining, industry, and commerce, if they wish to do so."¹²⁵ Kang's detail-oriented approach to running an organization was demonstrated in the provision describing the coupon books to record donations, taking into account that these documents would be used in future years to exchange the membership receipts for mining shares, merit medals, and official posts.

The coupon book concept appeared in later charters, but the idea of membership in the organization as an investment that would literally pay off in future years in the form of stock shares disappeared in the 1905 charter, which instead provided less speculative and more practical benefits, such as the right to hospitality for Baohuanghui visitors to other chapters.¹²⁶ However, many other organizational elements that appeared in the 1899 charter were retained through the years, even though the terminology might change, from the basic structure of the organization to membership requirements. As the organization expanded to incorporate more newspapers, schools, military training, banks and other business ventures, the charters likewise embraced these new activities within their purview.

Structurally, the Baohuanghui network functioned under the hierarchy of president, headquarters, and chapters (which even in 1899 were organized in regional divisions led by the largest chapter). "The president (*gongsizhang*) is in charge of all the company matters, and all others should follow his lead." Chapter leaders were expected to inform the president of the most generous donors and dedicated workers in their chapters, and large payments of expenses by the headquarters had to be approved by the president. Kang surely imagined that he would be president and described the qualified candidate as "a loyal supporter of the reform movement, whose talent and reputation have been widely acknowledged, who is trusted and relied on both at home

125 Kang, "Baojiu Da-Qing Huangdi Gongsi Xuli," 153.

126 See Chapter 7 for details.

and abroad.” However, the presidency in 1899 was conceived of as an elective position just like all the other organizational offices denoted in the charter, and Kang suggested that “talented and well-known supporters of the reform movement will [have the chance] to serve as president of the company over successive elections by the general public.” As Gao Weinong notes in his study of the Baohuanghui, Kang never gave up the presidency, and, at the beginning of many Baohuanghui meetings, there was often a call for “Long Life to President Kang!”¹²⁷

Elections were mandated in the 1899 charter for all significant posts in the headquarters and the local chapters, as was a form of legislative process to make decisions. Kang designated two sites for the headquarters of the company (*zonggongsi*), both conveniently near China and both based at prominent newspapers run by Kang followers: *Zhixin Bao* in Macau, established in November 1897 by Kang and He Suitian (He Tingguang), and *Qingyi Bao* in Yokohama, established in December 1898 and edited by Liang Qichao. Both newspapers were funded by “shares raised by merchants in Hong Kong, Macau, and Japan,” an important consideration as Kang clearly hoped these men would make out-sized donations to operate the new headquarters. Of the two headquarters, Macau, “near Hong Kong, a hub of transportation for foreign countries, is the primary location where we will deal with company matters.”¹²⁸

The headquarters was to play a centralizing role, receiving donations from chapters on a monthly basis and paying major expenses, in close conjunction with the president, whose approval was needed for withdrawals of “thousands and tens of thousands of yuan [probably Hong Kong dollars].” Baohuanghui chapters not only had to remit the donations they received each month to the headquarters (with the coupon books providing a handy reminder with one of the three copies of a donation receipt to go to headquarters), but also submit a report of their chapter’s activities at least every quarter. In future charters, headquarters would be charged with exchanging donation receipts from chapters for membership certificates, further solidifying this centralization. In keeping with this theme, chapters were not to retain any more income than was absolutely needed to operate.

The chapters were vital to the life of the organization, and Kang addressed their operation in detail.

127 Gao Weinong 高偉濃, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui zai Meiguo Huaqiao Shehui zhong de Huodong* 二十世紀初康有爲保皇會在美國華僑社會中的活動 [Activities of Kang Youwei and the Baohuanghui among the Chinese in the United States in the First Part of the Twentieth Century] (Beijing: Xueyuan Chubanshe, 2009), 99.

128 Kang, “Baojiu Da-Qing Huangdi Gongsi Xuli,” 152.

- All chapters were to publicly elect their leaders (presumably by the membership). These “board members” (*zhili*) were activists who were “to give speeches according to our manifesto to promote our company” and serve as “legislators” (*yiyuan*) in the local chapter. In a democratizing mode, the charter reads: “The more *zhili*, the better, so that everyone bears a share of the responsibility for avoiding national doom and racial extinction.”¹²⁹
- From the board members were to be elected several directors (*dongshi*) to carry out managerial duties as well take on a leadership role within the chapter and in communications with headquarters: “They handle all the chapter’s company affairs such as receiving and allocating donations, correspondence with other chapters, etc. When problems arise and the directors need to have a public discussion (*gongyi*) with the board members, they take on the role of the chairperson (*yizhang*). When the directors need to assist the general manager (*zongli*) of the headquarters, they take on the role of legislator and assistant manager (*xieli*).”¹³⁰
- Regular correspondence between chapters was mandated in the charter because “China is afflicted by a lack of communication.” “Our comrades should exchange letters and photographs frequently, gather and talk to each other as often as possible, so our blood will circulate [we’ll maintain close connections]...” Each chapter was to have a secretary (*shuji*) to maintain these connections. Kang envisioned more substantive exchanges as well: “Conversations about our national humiliation will arouse people’s indignation. Exchange of ideas about progress in industry and commerce as well as protecting our reform movement will remind people that they are related by blood, and our character will flourish again.”¹³¹
- Because chapters faced different local conditions, their legislators were given the autonomy to decide among themselves matters such as the number of staff members (*banshiren*), how to deal with income and expenses, deposit of funds, and methods of fundraising.
- Each chapter was encouraged to establish a corporation office and to gather members on Sundays to discuss national affairs and read association newspapers to learn what other chapters were doing across the world. Kang even advocated group singing, noting that “every country has songs and poems to laud their monarchs” to be sung at public gatherings. Kang composed a

129 Kang, “Baojiu Da-Qing Huangdi Gongsi Xuli,” 152.

130 Kang, “Baojiu Da-Qing Huangdi Gongsi Xuli,” 152.

131 Kang, “Baojiu Da-Qing Huangdi Gongsi Xuli,” 152, 154.

five-stanza song, “The Rescue of the Sacred Emperor” (Jiu Shengzhu Ge) to be sung from memory “whenever our comrades assemble.”¹³²

- Kang also grouped the chapters into regions: United States, Canada, Southeast Asia, Australia, and Japan. A general manager (*zongli*) who was loyal, righteous and gallant was elected to lead each region and report to headquarters. In 1899, the network already included San Francisco, Cuba, Honolulu, New York, and Singapore, which were allowed to elect their own general managers to be in charge of company affairs for nearby cities.¹³³

Members of the newly formed company were called “comrades” (*tongzhi*). “According to the secret imperial edict, those of our 400 million compatriots who are determined to be loyal to our emperor and our country and want to save our race are considered comrades of our company.”¹³⁴ However, it was also required that each comrade buy a “share” (*fenjin*) in the company for one U.S. dollar (or two Chinese yuan), and “we welcome those who donate up to ten thousand shares for the expenses of the company.”¹³⁵ Wary of spies within the organization, Kang devoted one article in the charter to loyalty: “Every comrade should act as one, and, if anyone harms our comrades, other members of integrity in our company should take revenge. Heaven and earth both attest to this vow.”¹³⁶

The last two articles in Kang’s 1899 charter directed the organization’s members to take political action. The first article presented a four-step mobilization of public opinion to pressure the Empress Dowager to return the throne to the Guangxu Emperor, or at the very least, to persuade her to protect his life. Kang began by praising the one high official who dared to memorialize the throne on behalf of the emperor, Liangjiang (Jiangsu, Jiangxi, and Anhui) Governor General Liu Kunyi, but “because he was not supported by others, he did not succeed.” However, “the whole country praised his loyalty.”¹³⁷

The charter’s final article was suffused with urgency: “Chinese court officials are selling China’s territory [a reference to leasing Weihaiwei in Shandong and the New Territories in Hong Kong to Britain in 1898] and conceding political

132 Kang, “Baojiu Da-Qing Huangdi Gongsi Xuli,” 154–55. See first page of this chapter for a translation of the first stanza.

133 Kang, “Baojiu Da-Qing Huangdi Gongsi Xuli,” 152.

134 Kang, “Baojiu Da-Qing Huangdi Gongsi Xuli,” 152.

135 Kang, “Baojiu Da-Qing Huangdi Gongsi Xuli,” 153.

136 Kang, “Baojiu Da-Qing Huangdi Gongsi Xuli,” 153.

137 Liu’s singular efforts beginning in October 1898 to protest Cixi’s coup are described in Marianne Bastid, “Official Conceptions of Imperial Authority at the End of the Qing Dynasty,” in *Foundations and Limits of State Power in China*, Stuart R. Schram, ed. (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 1987), 177–79.

power to foreigners,” and “the emperor has been imprisoned for over a year.” Kang urged quick action to rescue the emperor and commanded his followers to treat this mission as an emergency: “We look to our comrades in every chapter who have read this preface and regulations to mobilize those who share our aspirations. Please do so immediately. Any delay will do harm to the general situation.” With Liang Qichao and others, Kang had long been planning the most militant action of his reform movement. During Kang’s sojourns on peaceful Coal Island, his plans took shape. On October 2, he wrote Li Tengfang, one of his emissaries in the United States, to issue his first call to raise funds to support the military rescue of Emperor Guangxu or “Qinwang,” citing the wealth of Chinese merchants in the Americas.¹³⁸ Qinwang would move from plan to reality with an actual military uprising in central China and is discussed in detail in Chapter 4.

3 The Baohuanghui Expands to the World

It would be five years before Kang returned to North America and finally crossed the Canadian border into the United States in February 1905. Although Kang departed in October 1899 to oversee Qinwang in Asia, Canada, especially British Columbia, remained a prime Baohuanghui organizational hub with Canadian Baohuanghui leaders entrusted with responsibility for both communications and commercial development. Although Hong Kong, Macau, and Yokohama traded places as official headquarters, public letters (*gongghan*) from Kang or Liang Qichao often went through Canadian Baohuanghui leaders like Li Fuji, Dong Qiantai, or Ye En and were transmitted to other chapters. They were copied by hand, duplicated with some form of stencil and stamped with a seal that said “The Society to Protect the Great Qing Emperor” (Bao Da-Qing Huangdi Hui). In spite of the great distance and unpredictability of sea transportation, Kang depended on Canada for communications in both directions. In July 1901, anxious because he had received no responses from Victoria to his letters from Penang over several months, he ordered his Victoria contacts to write “a few words every month whether or not your city has business with me. That way I will be free from worry.”¹³⁹

138 The literal definition of Qinwang 勤王 is “rush troops to save the throne.” Kang Youwei to [Li] Tengfang 黎騰芳, October 2, 1899, in *Kang Youwei Quanji*, vol. 5, 139.

139 Kang Youwei to Victoria Baohuanghui, transmitted by Li Fuji, Dong Qiantai 董謙泰, and others of the Victoria chapter to all members, stenciled letter, July 6, 1901, no. 510 in Fang and Cai, 34–35.

Kang's most sustained relationship with a North American Baohuanghui leader was with Victoria president Li Fuji. In 1905, Li housed the Baohuanghui international headquarters on two stories of his new building at 1715 Government Street, while operating his opium business in the rear. Most of Kang's communications to Baohuanghui chapters went through Li and his colleague Dong Qiantai, even though they openly acknowledged their lack of literary skills. This is particularly apparent in a 1901 letter from Li and Dong to Tom Leung (Tan Liang, Tan Zhangxiao or Tom Jerng How, Tan Jiqian or Tom Tsai Hin) of Los Angeles, in which Dong's "awkward diction, strange grammar, and bad penmanship" were remarked upon by later translators and editors, who found the letter difficult to follow.¹⁴⁰ "Our association does not even have a secretary, and we have to beg for help when writing is needed. We workers cannot read or write, and when we need to communicate with other cities, we cannot express our thoughts clearly and fluently. We are ashamed. What we have is our determination." Kang may not have known that Li and Dong did not always pass on his letters when they sensed what he said would affect the morale of members. They told Tom Leung: "We have decided not to print President Kang's letter that you have sent to us. Otherwise, people might be bitterly disappointed. Please do not send it to many other places. In the past, when letters from the president, the headquarters, and Yokohama included anything unsuitable for the public to see, we would skip them." Nevertheless, Li's dedication and loyalty to Kang and the Baohuanghui won him Kang's respect and trust, and Kang's letter to members mentioning that he had asked Li to manage the planned Commercial Corporation praised "Fuji's motto of 'forbearance and working hard while enduring criticism.'"¹⁴¹

During his long absence from North America, Kang dispatched surrogates to Canada on their own organizing tours to bolster and no doubt to check on the initiatives of the strong local leaders such as Ye En and Li Fuji—these included his long-standing disciples Liang Qitian (Leong Tai Kinn, Leong Kay Ting, Junli) and Liang Qichao as well as Kang's second daughter, Kang Tongbi. First, Kang ordered Liang Qitian to mobilize the local Chinese to support Qinwang and to promote the Baohuanghui's expansion. Arriving in Victoria on March

140 Dong Qiantai to Tan Zhangxiao, Los Angeles, August 26, 1901, no. 519 in Fang and Cai, 299–300. The quote is from Charles Liu, Portland State University, who first translated the letter, and is echoed in the endnote of editor Fang Zhiqin for this letter.

141 Kang Youwei to Ye En 葉恩 [Ye Huibo] 葉惠伯, Xu Weijing 徐爲經, Li Fuji, Liu Zhangxuan 劉章軒, Dong Qiantai, Li Youshu 李祐樞, and my comrades in all chapters], public letter, February 26, 1903, no. 563 in Fang and Cai, 49.

4, 1900, Liang based himself in Victoria's Chinatown.¹⁴² In his first month in Canada, a large convention of reformers was held in Victoria, and more than \$8,000 was raised to aid the cause of the reform movement.¹⁴³ As early as May 1900, the Baohuanghui chapters in Victoria, Vancouver, and New Westminster had formed a national federation under Ye En's leadership headquartered in Vancouver.¹⁴⁴ In July 1900, on the eve of the Qinqiang uprising, Liang Qitian left Canada for the United States. Victoria's Baohuanghui dispatched Shen Caiman as Liang's escort to assist with his organizing efforts.¹⁴⁵

When Kang decided the time was right to develop Baohuanghui business ventures, he first turned to the Canadian Chinese colleagues who had shown such enthusiasm for the idea that they prematurely publicized it in May 1899 in Canadian newspapers. In late 1902, Kang dispatched Zhu Jinli (Zhu Li) from Hong Kong to Canada to discuss with Li Fuji, Ye En, and other leaders the company that would become the Commercial Corporation (Shangwu Gongsi). In November that year, Kang sent Li his draft of the *Regulations of the Chinese Commercial Corporation* (Zhongguo Shangwu Gongsi Zhangcheng) to be sent to all the chapters and noted in his cover letter that "these have been printed in Hong Kong in excess of 1,000 copies for Chinese communities throughout the world."¹⁴⁶ Kang recalled that "the suggestion to establish the Commercial Corporation arose last year. The letters, which came from various cities, one after another, agreed with such an idea. People eagerly await its establishment." The charter's finalization awaited the arrival of Liang Qichao in British Columbia and was completed in April 1903. The alterations to Kang's draft were announced in a group letter from members in Vancouver, New Westminster, and Victoria, who declared that the three chapters had bought \$50,000 to \$60,000 worth of Commercial Corporation shares and expected to sell several thousand more.¹⁴⁷ Shortly before Liang arrived in Canada, Kang wrote another public letter to the Canadian members divulging he had asked

142 "Fugitive Chinese Reformer, Arrival at Victoria of Leong Kay Ting," *New-York Tribune*, March 5, 1900, 5.

143 "Local News: Chinese Reformers," March 20, 1900, 2; "Vancouver Affairs: Chinese in a Newspaper Venture," March 21, 1900, 1; "The Seditious Placards, Chinese Reformers Say They Were Posted by Enemies," March 24, 1900, 1, all in *Daily Colonist* (Victoria).

144 Chinese Empire Reform Association of Canada Files, Reference no. B04406, Society no. S0000075, British Columbia Archives, Victoria.

145 Li, "Xianzhenghui Jishi Shiliu," 4–5.

146 Kang Youwei to Li Fuji, duplicated letter, November 10, 1902, no. 546 in Fang and Cai, 44: "I have enclosed the charter for the Commercial Corporation [*Shanghui*]."

147 Dong Qiantai, Li Fuji, et al. to Baohuanghui members in your city, duplicated letter, April 28, 1903, no. 562 in Fang and Cai, 311–12. See Chapters 3, 8, and 9 for more about the Commercial Corporation.

Li Fuji to take the position of Commercial Corporation general manager. He told them, "Fuji is so humble that he has repeatedly declined to take the job."¹⁴⁸ Later, Kang assigned Li to oversee the Commercial Corporation's Mexican projects, including a streetcar line and a bank.¹⁴⁹ Initially no decision was made on who should be overall manager of the conglomerate, so the Hong Kong/Macau headquarters staff managed the Commercial Corporation's day-to-day operations.¹⁵⁰ But, in late 1904, during Kang's third trip to Canada, he tapped Ye En to be Commercial Corporation general manager in Hong Kong, and Ye assumed this post in 1905.¹⁵¹

Liang Qichao landed in Canada on March 3, 1903, on the *Empress of India* and stayed in the Vancouver-New Westminster-Victoria area until late April, before traveling across the country. Just four days after his arrival, the Baohuanghui held a general election of officers from a slate of candidates in the three large British Columbia cities. The candidates had appealed to voters with Western-style political campaigns and public speeches. Liang noted that 1,489 members cast votes. He was so impressed by these competitive elections that he called them a phenomenon unprecedented in thousands of years of Chinese history and the historic beginning of Chinese political parties.¹⁵² Kang heard about the elections and in a public letter cited them as an example of the Baohuanghui's growing strength. "Zhangxuan [Liu Zhangxuan] and Jiang Lun [both of New Westminster] were elected. I think that the Canadian chapters are starting afresh. These two gentlemen will be able to make their contributions and meet popular expectations, I believe."¹⁵³

In the same letter, Kang also noted, "I have heard that the morale of the Commercial Corporation was greatly boosted after Zhuoru's [Liang Qichao] arrival." Liang was so heartened by pledges of \$100,000 from the three major Canadian chapters that he believed he could achieve 80 to 90 percent of the

148 Kang to Ye En, et al., no. 563 in Fang and Cai, 50.

149 See Chapter 8.

150 Wu Xianzi 伍憲子, *Zhongguo Minzhu Xianzhengdang Dangshi* 中國民主憲政黨黨史 [Party History of China's Democratic Constitutional Party] (San Francisco: Shijie Ribao, 1952), 89.

151 Chen, *Transpacific Reform and Revolution*, 69.

152 Liang Qichao 梁啟超, *Xin Dalu Youji* 新大陸遊記 in *Liang Qichao Quanji* 梁啟超全集 [The Complete Works of Liang Qichao], ed. Yang Gang and Wang Xiangyi 楊鋼, 王相宜 (Beijing: Beijing Chubanshe, 1999), vol. 2, 1129–30; "Address on Chinese Reform," *Province* (Vancouver), March 9, 1903, 2.

153 Kang Youwei to Li Fuji, duplicated letter, April 29, 1903, no. 566 in Fang and Cai, 53–54.

corporate fund-raising target of approximately \$1 million dollars.¹⁵⁴ Strengthening the Commercial Corporation was just one of Liang's organizational initiatives during his first weeks in Canada. In Vancouver, Liang also proposed the establishment of several new Baohuanghui divisions: mutual defense (*lianweibu*) for protection of Chinese from racial discrimination; public relations (*jiaoshebu*); and promotion of education (*quanxuebu*), which stressed the study of English.¹⁵⁵

Businessmen and officials from British Columbia and neighboring Washington State held a banquet in honor of Liang in Vancouver on April 23, toasting closer relations between a reformist China and North America. On April 17, Liang laid the foundation stone for the new Canadian Baohuanghui headquarters in Vancouver and delivered a public speech to the audience of Chinese and Canadians.¹⁵⁶

Liang Qichao's confidence in the reform cause was greatly boosted by the commitment from the Chinese in British Columbia to Baohuanghui political and business agendas. This confirmed Liang's decision to follow Kang Youwei's leadership rather than the revolutionary path that had long attracted him (see Chapter 2). While in Vancouver on April 15, Liang received a reproachful letter from Kang, to which he not only made an apologetic reply and accepted Kang's censure for his "wide fancy" for revolution, but also wrote to his former classmate, Xu Qin (Xu Junmian, Xue'an, Xu Shiqin or Su Shih Chin, Choy So Kan), asking Xu to remind him in the future of his promise made in Canada to forsake such "improper thoughts."¹⁵⁷

Liang departed Vancouver on April 29 and arrived in Ottawa where he received a warm welcome at the Dominion Parliament from top Canadian leaders. In Ottawa and Montreal, as well as in numerous cities in the United States, Liang used his visit as the occasion to establish new Baohuanghui chapters. When Liang reached California in late October 1903, he reported that there were twelve Baohuanghui chapters in Canada, and seventy-four chapters in the United States.¹⁵⁸ Liang did not reach his fundraising target for

154 Ding Wenjiang and Zhao Fengtian 丁文江, 趙豐田, ed., *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian* 梁啟超年譜長編 [Uncut Version of Liang Qichao Life Chronicle] (Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin Chubanshe, 1983), 310–12, 326 (letter to Xue'an 雪庵, or Xu Qin 徐勤), 1903.

155 Liang Qichao to Xu Qin, April 18, 1903, in Ding and Zhao, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 321.

156 "A Chinese Banquet," *Province* (Vancouver), April 3, 1903, 3; "Chinese Laid Corner-stone," *Province*, April 18, 1903, 1; Wickberg, *From China to Canada*, 75; Chen, *Transpacific Reform and Revolution*, 57.

157 Ding and Zhao, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 312, 318–21.

158 Liang, *Xin Dalu Youji* in *Liang Qichao Quanji*, vol. 2, 1132–33, 1147–86.

the trip, and his generally pessimistic view of the political consciousness of North American Chinese, especially those in San Francisco, turned him against republican revolution. When Liang returned to Vancouver on November 28, he was impressed by the new Baohuanghui building and praised this Canadian chapter as the best among its counterparts in North America.¹⁵⁹

The next Baohuanghui envoy, Kang's second daughter, Kang Tongbi, arrived in Victoria from Japan on the *Tosa Maru* on May 7, 1903. She was imbued with her own sense of political mission and empowered by her father to represent him in North America. She proved a compelling representative for Kang's cause and began her North American sojourn by giving speeches on reform in Victoria and Vancouver, which for a Chinese woman was historic in itself.¹⁶⁰ She also organized what most probably was the first Chinese political association expressly for women, the Chinese Empire Ladies Reform Association (Baohuangnühui or Baojiu Da-Qing Guangxu Huangdi Nühui).¹⁶¹

The first Chinese Empire Ladies Reform Association chapter was founded in Victoria in May during Kang Tongbi's first two weeks in the city.¹⁶² She was welcomed by local Chinese women at a reception in Vancouver on May 22 and established the second women's reform association there on May 28. Fortunately, the first two Chinese Empire Ladies Reform Association chapters published photo collage membership posters—Victoria in mid-summer 1903 and Vancouver and New Westminster in mid-autumn 1904.¹⁶³ These posters illustrate the common symbols, themes, and organizational structure shared by the women's groups and their male counterparts, with a feminist twist.¹⁶⁴

159 Lo, "Sequel to Autobiography," 269 n27; Liang, *Xin Dalu Youji* in *Liang Qichao Quanji*, vol. 2, 1187–88.

160 "Tosa Maru Arrives," *Daily Colonist* (Victoria), May 8, 1903, 3; "A Reformer's Daughter," *Daily Colonist*, May 23, 1903, reported that Kang Tongbi had been in Victoria for "about two weeks."

161 "Chinese Woman Reformer in America," *New York Times*, August 25, 1903, 7, states Kang Tongbi had "established twelve lodges of the Woman's Chinese Reform Association, three of them being in Canada." See Chapter 3 for more details on this organization. Zhongping Chen, "Kang Tongbi's Pioneering Feminism and the First Transnational Organization of Chinese Feminist Politics, 1903–1905," *Twentieth-Century China* 44, no. 1 (January 2019): 4–7, documents how the 1903 origin of Kang Tongbi's organization predates the better-known Chinese revolutionary feminist organizations established in Japan.

162 "Daughter of Kang Yu Wei," *Province* (Vancouver), May 22, 1903, 1.

163 The Victoria poster is at Harvard-Yenching Library, Harvard University and the Vancouver/New Westminster poster at the City of Vancouver Archives.

164 Zhongping Chen, et al., "Chinese Empire Reform Association: The First Worldwide Chinese Political Association," on "Victoria's Chinatown: A Gateway to the Past and Present of



FIGURE 6 Victoria, British Columbia, Chinese Empire Ladies Reform Association poster, 1903.

The Victoria Chinese Empire Ladies Reform Association poster features images of the Qing and Baohuanghui flags, Kang Youwei, Liang Qichao, and

Chinese Canadians,” https://chinatown.library.uvic.ca/index.htmlq%3Dchinese_empire_reform_association.html, accessed June 16, 2023.

the Guangxu Emperor.¹⁶⁵ The photomontage shows three rows of local officers and board members, each identified by name and office, very similar to the array of positions in most Baohuanghui chapters, except for the image of Kang Tongbi as president (*nühuizhang*). The titles held by the eighteen local Chinese women included general director, director, associate director, treasurer, secretary, speaker, supervisor, and translator. Feminist themes distinguished the women's association posters. Victoria's poster altered the traditional saying, "In the rise or fall of the country, every man bears responsibility," to read, "In the rise of the country or its fall, men and women share equal responsibility."¹⁶⁶ Another poetic couplet hails women warriors in Chinese and Western history, including Joan of Arc "who sacrificed her life for the country" and equally audacious and militant Chinese heroines like Qin Liangyu (1574–1648), a female general of the Ming dynasty "who went to rescue the emperor" after taking over her husband's troops following his death. Perhaps most surprising is the poster's praise of the almost contemporaneous Russian woman assassin of Tsar Alexander II, Sophia Perovskaya, whose deeds as "Su Feiya" had just been fictionalized in Chinese form as a serialized novel in Liang Qichao's journal, *Xin Xiaoshuo* (New Fiction), November 1902–June 1903.¹⁶⁷

The Vancouver women's association had at least forty members, according to a local newspaper, and had elected officers and gone through "regular organization business" at its first meeting.¹⁶⁸ The association's poster was produced a year later and, in a surprisingly egalitarian fashion, gives equal precedence to the portraits of Kang Tongbi and the Vancouver chapter president Yip May Young (Ye Meirong), daughter of Canadian Baohuanghui president Ye En, placed directly across from each other.¹⁶⁹ The two became good friends and shared photographs and letters after Tongbi settled in the United States.¹⁷⁰

165 The Baohuanghui flag here has three stars bordered by two stripes with the Chinese and English organizational names; the flag's design and evolution are described in Chapter 3.

166 Thanks to Hongmei Sun and Hu Ying for translating this poster. See "The Chinese Empire Ladies Reform Association in Victoria, B.C.," September 6, 2014, *Baohuanghui Scholarship* blog, <https://baohuanghui.blogspot.com/2014/09/the-chinese-ladies-empire-reform.html>, accessed June 16, 2023.

167 Liang Qichao 梁啟超, *Dong'ou Nühaojie* 東歐女豪傑 [Female Heroes of Eastern Europe], serialized novel in *Xin Xiaoshuo* 新小說, November 1902 to June 1903. Novel originally published with running commentary by Han Wenju 韓文舉 [Kang Youwei's student who copied his *nianpu* in Japan].

168 "Chinese Women Form a Society," *Province* (Vancouver), May 29, 1903, 9.

169 The Vancouver poster can be seen in Chen, *Transpacific Reform and Revolution*, 91.

170 Kang Tongbi 康同壁 and Yip May Young [Ye Meirong 葉美蓉], Vancouver, BC, photo, 1903, no. S-P5; Yip May Young, Kang Tongbi, and Gum Mei Yip [Ye Jinwei 葉金薇] (Ye Chuntian's daughter), photo, 1903, no. 康-4; Yip May Young and Kang Tongbi, photo, 1903, no. 康-6; Yip May Young, Vancouver to Kang Tongbi, November 26, 1904, no. E-35; Yip May Young on board the *Empress of China* to Kang Tongbi, February 25, 1905, no. E-36; Yip



FIGURE 7 Vancouver Chinese Empire Ladies Reform Association President Yip May Young and Kang Tongbi, Vancouver, 1903.

Twenty other women are shown in the poster, seven of them officers, including general director, associate general director, treasurer, secretary, and others.

May Young in Macau to Kang Tongbi, March 22, 1905, no. E-37; and Yip May Young to Kang Tongbi, August 22, 1905, no. E-38, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection; Yip May Young's letters are all in English.



FIGURE 8 Plaque listing donors to the Baohuanghui headquarters, Victoria, inscribed by Liang Yingliu, 1907.

Antithetical couplets call for constitutional government, popular representation, and gender equality: "Our duty is to take full responsibility as we should. Our foundation is righteous thinking. Our nation's fate lies in our own hands."¹⁷¹

¹⁷¹ "職思其所司，義思其所立" is a quote by Xin Xianying 辛憲英, a woman, from the Book of Jin. Chuimei Ho and Ben Bronson, "The Chinese Empire Ladies Reform

Support for the Baohuanghui in Canada was strong, with Liang Qichao reporting twelve chapters in 1903. It is speculated that this included Vancouver, Victoria, New Westminster, Extension Mines, Kamloops, Nanaimo, Union Mines, and Rossland, British Columbia; Ottawa; and Montreal, along with the women's association chapters in Victoria and Vancouver.¹⁷² In 1903 the membership of the larger chapters in Victoria, Vancouver, and New Westminster totaled approximately 2,500.¹⁷³ The small and medium-size towns, such as the small mining town of Rossland, were home to sizeable Chinese populations, almost all male, and already politicized by their membership in the anti-Qing secret society Zhigongtang (Chee Gong Tong, Chinese Freemasons). These chapters probably had about fifty members each. Rossland's membership poster displays photographs of fifty-three men. The town of Sidney, near Victoria, had forty-seven members in 1904, as reported in the New York City Baohuanghui newspaper, *Zhongguo Weixin Bao* (*Chinese Reform News*).¹⁷⁴ Donors from thirty-seven Canadian cities and towns can be identified on the impressive carved plaque inside the Baohuanghui building in Victoria.¹⁷⁵ The list included the major cities of Calgary, Alberta; Winnipeg, Manitoba; and Toronto, Ontario; and many small towns in British Columbia, such as Fraser Sawmill (Fort Fraser). Thus, it is likely there were at least forty Canadian Baohuanghui chapters by 1907 when the plaque was inscribed.¹⁷⁶ However, a total of fifty-five verified Baohuanghui chapters existed at one time or another in Canada, forty in British Columbia alone.¹⁷⁷

Association in 1903–4.” Thank you to Yang Zheng and Connie Kang for translation of the couplets.

- 172 See Chen Zhongping 陳忠平, “Baohuanghui zai Jia'nada de Chuangli, Fazhan ji Kuaguo Huodong, 1899–1905” 保皇會在加拿大的創立, 發展及跨國活動, 1899–1905 (The Establishment of the Chinese Empire Reform Association in Canada, its Organizational Development and Transnational Activities, 1899–1905). *Jindaishi Yanjiu* no. 2 (2015): 144–45. Kang Tongbi's role as a Baohuanghui organizer is further described in Chapter 3.
- 173 Chen, *Transpacific Reform and Revolution*, 82. Chen estimates 1903 membership numbers of 600 in Victoria, 1,000 in Vancouver, and 900 in New Westminster, Ladner, and Chilliwack.
- 174 “Gebu Baohuanghui Jinshi” 個埠保皇會今事 [Recent Activities of Baohuanghui Chapters], *Zhongguo Weixin Bao* no. 8, April 28, 1904, 15; for detailed discussion of Canadian membership, see Chen, *Transpacific Reform and Revolution*, 81–83.
- 175 Liang Yingliu 梁應騷, *Changjian Chuangshi Baohuanghuisuo Beiji* 倡建創始保皇會所碑記 [Plaque of Donors to the Founding Baohuanghui Building], 1907, at 1715 Government Street, Victoria, BC.
- 176 Chen, “Baohuanghui zai Jia'nada de Chuangli,” 145.
- 177 See “Mapping the Baohuanghui” in Appendix 2.

It also appears that Baohuanghui membership reflected the Chinese immigrant population, which was dominated socially and economically by wealthy merchants and “immigrant power brokers” yet largely composed of poor laborers.¹⁷⁸ This membership reflected the composition of Baohuanghui chapters in the United States and Mexico. Unlike the Rossland poster, which displays photographs of all its members, the Vancouver poster shows only its forty-two leading members and their titles as officers or board members. Zhongping Chen has concluded from the high proportion of Baohuanghui members to the Chinese population in Canadian cities or towns and the relatively large number of small donations published in lists of donors for various Baohuanghui fundraising efforts, that even in its early days, Baohuanghui membership went well beyond the elite Chinese in a community. He concludes, the Baohuanghui “was mainly a political association of poor migrants from China.”¹⁷⁹

In Canada, the domination of one family (Ye or Yip) in the Vancouver chapter leadership was unusual, however. Ye En was president (*zongli*), his brother Ye Tingsan (Yip On) was secretary (*shuji*), and his uncle Ye Chuntian (Yip Sang) was auditor (*heshu*). Ye En and Ye Tingsan took turns serving as the Chinese interpreters in the Canadian immigration service in Vancouver, indirectly controlling entry and exit of Chinese immigrants, while Ye Chuntian was the most important merchant in Vancouver with his firm, Yongsheng.¹⁸⁰

The Ye family dominance is also seen in the Vancouver Chinese Empire Ladies Reform Association poster. Almost half of the women’s association leaders are related to Ye En, Ye Tingsan, or Ye Chuntian. Two of the members are Caucasian—Nellie Towers (Nellie Yip Quong), the English-language secretary and daughter-in-law of Ye Chuntian and wife of Ye Guang (Yip Quong)—both Baohuanghui leaders—and Mary Benson, the wife of a Vancouver customs official who was friendly with Baohuanghui leaders.¹⁸¹ Towers was a Boston teacher who had met her merchant husband when both were in New York

178 The term “immigrant power brokers” refers to persons like Ye En and Ye Tingsan whose power derived from their positions as interpreters and agents for the Canadian government in its dealings with Chinese immigrants. Lisa Rose Mar, *Brokering Belonging: Chinese in Canada’s Exclusion Era, 1885–1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 3–4.

179 Chen, *Transpacific Reform and Revolution*, 80–85.

180 Ye En 葉恩 (Charley Yip Yen) has been frequently confused as being the same person as Yip On (Ye Tingsan) 葉庭三 by scholars, including Jung-pang Lo, *K’ang Yu-wei*, 512; Timothy J. Stanley, *Contesting White Supremacy: School Segregation, Anti-Racism, and the Making of Chinese Canadians* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2011), 184–85; Mar, *Brokering Belonging*, throughout.

181 Chen, *Transpacific Reform and Revolution*, 94–95.

City.¹⁸² Thus, this association not only broke through gender barriers, but also the racial barrier between Chinese and Caucasian women.¹⁸³

4 An Urgent Mission

Kang Youwei left Canada on the R.M.S. *Empress of India* on October 10, 1899. He was hastening to Asia for more fundraising and to be close to what he hoped would be a successful Qinsang uprising against Cixi and Ronglu.¹⁸⁴

En route, Kang formed friendships with some of his distinguished shipmates, including British Conservative Party member of Parliament Ernest Frederic George Hatch, who was on a world tour, memorialized in his *Far Eastern Impressions*. He wrote that Kang “was surrounded by a large bodyguard of servants; and so suspicious was he of foul play that his food was always tasted in his presence by one of his suite before he would himself partake of it. To me he displayed a courteous affability, and after a time unburdened himself upon the ... all-absorbing question of China’s future.” Kang, Hatch wrote, believed it was “the proper policy” for the British government to insist on Guangxu’s reinstatement. Hatch then inserted a long statement given him by Kang that described the Russian threats to China and the British Empire. When Hatch met Chinese statesman Li Hongzhang in Beijing, Li peppered him with questions about Kang, including, “He is now in Hong Kong, and if he attempts to stir up rebellion in China, will you then interfere?” Hatch suggested that if Kang went so far, “he might receive a friendly hint.” Indeed, the British government would take an increasingly dim view of Kang’s peaceful intentions, in large part because of the complaints of Qing officials.¹⁸⁵

Canada was the source for the initial funds for Qinsang, primarily from supporters in British Columbia. In early 1900, several dozen Baohuanghui leaders from nearby cities met at the Chinese Theatre in Victoria and raised \$10,000 for

182 Chuimei Ho and Ben Bronson, “The Ladies of the Empire Ladies Reform Association—Who were They?” “Chinese Women in the Northwest,” August 30, 2018, Chinese in Northwest America Research Committee, http://www.cinarc.org/Women.html#anchor_342, accessed February 18, 2024.

183 Ho and Bronson, “The Women’s Empire Reform Association in 1903–4.”

184 “Kang Going Home,” *Province* (Vancouver), October 11, 1899, 2. He was traveling with two secretaries, Lee Fong and Dong Jun. Also “Record Cargo for the Orient,” *Daily Colonist* (Victoria), October 11, 1899, 6: “There were many interesting passengers aboard, chief among them being Kang Yu Wei, the Chinese reformer.”

185 Ernest Frederic George Hatch, *Far Eastern Impressions* (Chicago: A. C. McClurg, 1905), 125–33.



FIGURE 9 Kang Youwei and British Member of Parliament Ernest F. G. Hatch on board R.M.S. *Empress of India* bound from Vancouver to Asia, October 1899. This may be the earliest extant picture of Kang in exile.

Qinwang in one night.¹⁸⁶ More funds were contributed in meetings in Vancouver and New Westminster. Victoria Baohuanghui leader Li Fuji then assumed the task of raising Qinwang funds throughout North America.¹⁸⁷ On July 30, 1900,

186 "Yingguo Jia'nada shu Sanbu Baohuang Tongren Dahui ji" 英國加拿大屬三埠保皇同人大會記 [Record of Rally of Comrades Loyal to the Emperor from Three Cities in British Columbia], *Qingyi Bao* no. 45, 1900, 16.

187 Lo, "Sequel to Autobiography," 184.

American and Canadian news reports told of 110 Chinese reformers—thirty from Vancouver, sixty from New York and Boston, and twenty from Seattle—who departed on the *Empress of India* for Macau to join a “council of war” with Kang.¹⁸⁸ Their goal was the restoration of the emperor, “whose whole ambition is to lift China from her present state of barbarism and inertia to the level of a civilized power.”¹⁸⁹

As will be discussed in detail in Chapter 4, Qinqiang rapidly turned into a fiasco later in 1900. Significantly, its failure caused Kang to pivot the focus of his reform movement from China to the overseas Chinese communities, where he was more easily able to effect change. This began first in Asia with the establishment of Baohuanghui chapters and a network of schools and newspapers, and took a more activist turn when Kang made his third trip to Canada, November 1904 to February 1905, and from there traveled to the United States and Mexico. At this point, most of his energies were directed to making the Baohuanghui a political and economic force in North America to elevate the status of Chinese living there.

• • •

Kang Youwei’s arrival in North America was multidimensional. It was his first time traveling outside of Asia. He naturally gravitated to Chinatowns and interacted with the Chinatown elites. He hoped, after traveling in Canada, to visit the United States but his radical approaches raised suspicions among U.S. diplomats and with officials in Washington and his entrance was blocked. After his unsuccessful visit to England, he returned to Canada and established a retreat at Wen Island and began to write—or rewrite—his version of the Hundred Days’ reforms. But he was keenly observant of society and governance as he traveled in the two Western democratic nations and his political thinking became transformed. He listened closely to the Chinatown leaders in Victoria and Vancouver and from this emerged the Baohuanghui. His disciples—including his own liberated daughter—helped the fledgling organization spread successively and successfully from Canada into the United States and then further afield. While this was going on, Kang would return to Asia for a period of contemplation and plotting before traveling to Europe and back to Canada (see Chapter 2).

188 “Chinese Go to Battle,” *Province* (Vancouver), July 30, 1900, 8.

189 “Chinese Reformers Active,” *New-York Tribune*, August 1, 1900. Story is datelined “Montreal, July 31.”

Touring the World

The United States remained an elusive but promised land for Kang during the next five years. From his Coal Island retreat in British Columbia during summer 1899, Kang made a third, unsuccessful attempt to enter the United States, this time through Seattle.¹ Rebuffed, he set his sights on Hawai‘i, which had been annexed to the United States only the year before, bringing the quasi-independent republic, with its 25,000 Chinese residents, under the Exclusion policy.²

Kang consulted with L. Edwin Dudley, the U.S. consul in Vancouver, on how to legally obtain entry to the islands. Dudley, in turn, procured a letter of introduction for Kang from the Hawaiian consul general stationed in Victoria and wrote to the U.S. consul general in Honolulu to inform him of Kang’s pending arrival and good intentions, stating that he thought Kang was “travelling under a British passport.”³ Although American consular officials in Hawai‘i posed no objections to a visit, Dudley was informed that a U.S. Bureau of Immigration official in Honolulu would only admit Kang if he possessed the unattainable Section 6 certificate.⁴ It is testimony to Dudley’s unusual regard for Kang that he would go to such lengths to aid a man whom the U.S. government had on four occasions in one year successfully kept out of the country.

On October 10, 1899, Kang left Canada for Japan, Hong Kong, and Singapore. However, in January 1900, the Chinese minister in Washington, Wu Tingfang, believing that Kang was aboard the Japanese steamer *America Maru* bound from Hong Kong for Honolulu and San Francisco, personally notified the U.S. Secretary of State. Wu was sure that Kang, “being under some sort of indictment

1 See Chapter 1, and also Robert L. Worden, “K’ang Yu-wei, Sun Yat-sen, et al., and the Bureau of Immigration,” *Ch’ing-shih wen-t’i* 2, no. 6 (June 1971): 1–10.

2 Delber L. McKee, *Chinese Exclusion versus the Open Door Policy, 1900–1906: Clashes over China Policy in the Roosevelt Era* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1977), 35.

3 L. Edwin Dudley, U.S. Consul, Vancouver, BC, to R. P. Rithet, Consul General, Hawaiian Islands, Victoria, BC, September 1, 1899; Letters Sent, U.S. Consulate, Vancouver, vol. 60, Dudley to S. Seabrook pro R. P. Rithet, to Dudley, September 8, 1899 (copy), Miscellaneous Letters Received, U.S. Consulate, Vancouver, vol. 18; Dudley to William Haywood, U.S. Consul General, Honolulu, September 11, 1899. Letters Sent, vol. 60, all from Entry UD-10. RG 84, NA-College Park.

4 M. P. Boyd, Vice and Deputy Consul General, Honolulu, to Dudley, October 10, 1899, Miscellaneous Letters Received, U.S. Consulate, Vancouver, vol. 18, Entry UD-10, RG 84, NA-College Park.

in China, cannot possibly have any regular papers or certificates which would properly admit him to residence in this country,” and asked that the proper authorities “exercise due vigilance that he may not enter the country in violation of United States laws.”⁵ American immigration authorities in Honolulu and San Francisco were alerted, but Kang was not aboard the *America Maru*. Instead, he had arrived in Singapore on February 2, 1900.⁶ The Qing government misinterpreted or was misinformed on Kang’s moves, but the coordination of efforts on the parts of the governments of China and the United States to prevent Kang’s entry was impressive.

Kang did not return to North America until 1904 and finally crossed the U.S. border in February 1905. During this four-year period, the Qing court’s attitude toward Kang and reform had somewhat softened. In 1901 the Empress Dowager introduced the New Policies (Xinzheng), a series of administrative, economic, and political reforms resembling the Hundred Days’ program that was a direct response to the shock of foreign troops invading Beijing and the desperate escape of the imperial family to Xi’an during the Boxer Uprising. Cixi’s 1901 edict announcing the reforms also denounced Kang as a traitor still bent on sedition—“Even though he and others have fled overseas, they continue to lead people astray with their ‘Rich-You Honorable-Wei’ (*fuyouguíwei*, a play on the name Youwei) membership certificates and their incitement to rebellion.”⁷ But, as the years passed, Qing diplomats in the United States put increasingly less pressure on American immigration authorities to bar the entry of Kang or his followers. Although the U.S. Chinese Exclusion policy was tightening during this period, there was great sympathy in the United States for Kang’s reform movement and respect for its leaders, all of whom ultimately were able to enter the country with or without the required papers.

5 Hay to Gage, January 29, 1900, copy in Chinese File 14735.89, Box 162, RG 85, NA-Washington.

6 Eddie Tang, “British Policy Towards the Chinese in the Straits Settlements: Protection and Control, 1877–1900 (With Special Reference to Singapore)” (M.A. thesis, Australian National University, 1970), 279–80. The matter was mentioned again in the summer but only to the degree that the Treasury Department had “no interest at present” in Kang or Liang; Gage to Hay, July 30, 1900, Letters Sent, Records of Correspondence, Chinese Files, Imprint Book C–I, 308, Entry 133, RG 85.

7 Douglas R. Reynolds, *China, 1898–1912: The Xinzheng Revolution and Japan* (Cambridge: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1993), 202. The Chinese reads: “尙以富有貴爲等票誘人謀逆” (*Guangxu Chao Donghualu* 光緒朝東華錄 [Records from within the Eastern Flowery Gate, Guangxu Era] (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1958), ed. Zhu Shoupeng 朱壽朋, 4:4601). The Xinzheng reforms occurred between 1901 and 1910.

1 Kang Tours the World: 1899–1904

By the time Kang returned to North America in November 1904, he had traveled to twenty-five countries and territories in Europe, Asia, and Africa, moving quickly from one place to another, in part to elude Qing assassins but also to satisfy his prodigious curiosity about the world. Throughout his exile, Kang would occasionally withdraw from his fast-paced travels to isolated retreats where he felt safe and could write. He found a nearly year-long haven in the hills of Darjeeling, India, and fell in love with Sweden, where he would ultimately buy an island home. While traveling, Kang spent considerable time and expense keeping contact with his followers and the Baohuanghui hubs in Victoria and Vancouver. He used telegrams and the postal mail to maintain control over his organization's leaders and to issue public letters and official Baohuanghui statements for circulation by printed letter and in Baohuanghui newspapers. Kang's journeys during these years are briefly traced below. A few significant events are introduced that had a great impact on Kang and his Baohuanghui organizational activities.

1.1 Hong Kong

In October 1899, Kang learned that his mother had fallen ill in Hong Kong. He sailed first from Victoria to Japan on the *Empress of India*. Arriving in Yokohama on October 26, Kang came under the close scrutiny of Qing authorities, who were determined to capture Kang dead or alive. Only through the intercession of friendly Japanese officials did Tokyo agree to let Kang transit Japan on his way to Hong Kong and most likely he never went ashore. He wrote to Liang Qichao that his ship was escorted by two police patrol boats to protect him.⁸ Indeed, the day Kang arrived in Yokohama, one of the premier Baohuanghui newspapers, Liang Qichao's *Qingyi Bao* (*China Discussion*) was set on fire, probably by a Qing agent, a double tragedy because all the manuscripts Kang had sent to the paper for publication during his travels were also

8 Kang, writing to Liang Qichao, said he would leave Japan from the port of Moji on October 28, sailing straight to Hong Kong and hoped his presence on the ship would be kept secret because he had heard that Manchu official Gangyi intended to send a naval vessel to intercept him. Because of the dangers for Liang Qichao, he probably did not see Kang on this trip, but sent in his stead another Kang follower, Liang Zigang 梁子剛, for secret talks. Kang Youwei to Liang Qichao 梁啟超, October 27, 1899, in *Kang Youwei Quanji* 康有為全集 [Collected Works of Kang Youwei], ed. Jiang Yihua and Zhang Hualong 姜義華, 張榮華 (Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin Daxue Chubanshe, 2007), vol. 5, 140.

consumed.⁹ On October 30, Kang departed on the *Kawauchi Maru* from Kōbe to return to Hong Kong.

The Qing government alerted authorities in Shanghai and Hong Kong (and in many other countries) to arrest Kang should he attempt to land, an entreaty refused by the British government in Hong Kong, which was especially angered when the Qing advertised a reward of 100,000 taels for Kang's capture.¹⁰ As the *Hawaiian Star* of January 4, 1900, put it, "this is regarded as an incitement to commit murder in a British colony."¹¹ To the dismay of the Qing government, Kang was treated as a dignitary in Hong Kong, and British Governor Henry Blake vowed that he would vigorously protect Kang from danger.

While in Hong Kong, Kang made two important moves on behalf of the Baohuanghui. First, he consciously or unconsciously found a way to forestall the friendly collaboration of Liang Qichao and his group of "sworn brothers" with Sun Yatsen (Sun Yixian, Sun Zhongshan, Sun Wen) in Japan that had developed when Kang left for Canada in March 1899. By the end of 1899, Liang was making a long delayed journey outside of Asia to organize Baohuanghui chapters in Hawai'i.¹² Two other members of Liang's brotherhood in Japan—his cousin and Kang's former student, Liang Qitian, departed on his own multiyear organizing trip to the Americas, and another former student and probably the most radical of the group, Ou Jujia (Ou Yunqiao, On Won Chew, Ou Yungao)—took over Baohuanghui headquarters in Macau.¹³ The organization

9 Jung-pang Lo, "Sequel to the Chronological Autobiography," *K'ang Yu-wei: A Biography and Symposium* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1967), 182. Note: some of the dates on this page have been incorrectly transcribed from the lunar calendar—for example, the fire was on October 26, according to *Qingyi Bao*. However, the paper kept publishing until late 1901, when it was superseded by *Xinmin Congbao*.

10 Lo, "Sequel to Autobiography," 261 n13. The British had banned Sun Yatsen's entry after 1896, but the Qing minister in London, Luo Fenglu 羅豐祿, was told that Sun wished to overthrow the Qing whereas Kang wanted to rightfully restore the Guangxu Emperor.

11 "Reward for Kang Yu Wei," *Hawaiian Star*, January 4, 1900.

12 The revolutionary Feng Ziyou's claim that Liang and his sworn brothers wrote to Kang in Hong Kong suggesting he resign has not been verified; possibly Xu Qin, or some other person close to Kang, informed him that Sun and Liang's group were getting close. Nor is it likely, as Feng claims, that Kang became so angry that he immediately sent Liang to Hawai'i, since the trip had been long planned. See Chen Xuezhong 陳學章 and Wang Jie 王傑, "Xu Qin yu Hengbin Datong Xuexiao" 徐勤與橫濱大同學校 [Xu Qin and the Datong School in Yokohama], in *Kang Youwei yu Jindai Wenhua* 康有為與近代文化 [Kang Youwei and Modern Culture], ed. Fang Zhiqin and Wang Jie 方志欽, 王傑 (Kaifeng: Henan Daxue Chubanshe, 2006), 265.

13 Zhao Chunchen 趙春晨, "Aomen Baohuang Zonghui Shishi Gouchen" 澳門保皇總會史事鉤沉 [Deep Study of the History of the Macau Baohuanghui Headquarters], *Guangzhou Daxue Xuebao* (Shehui Kexue Ban) 3, no. 2 (February 2004).

grew exponentially as a result, and the developing alliance of Liang and his followers with Sun was ended, leaving Sun feeling deeply betrayed. The second display of Baohuanghui influence staged by Kang in Hong Kong was a circular telegram movement that helped halt Cixi's attempt to dethrone Guangxu and replace him with a new emperor. Circular (or public telegrams)—sometimes representing tens of thousands of people from many different places and typically conveying political messages and published in newspapers—fit into the traditional Chinese mold of petitions and memorials. Unlike memorials, however, the circular telegram exposed the imperial court to a much wider public. Kang found the circular telegram an effective way to contact his dispersed organization and encourage Baohuanghui chapters to send their own public telegrams to Qing officials and even to foreign governments. This use of communication technology for political mobilization has been compared to contemporary political protests rapidly organized through online social media.¹⁴

At the Qing court, calls for dethroning the emperor had begun soon after Cixi resumed the regency. When Guangxu did not perform his public New Year rites in 1899, rumors of his ill health made international news.¹⁵ That summer, as Kang and the Canadian Chinese were in the process of inaugurating the Baohuanghui, an article datelined Victoria appeared in the June 29 *New York Times*. It reported confusing hearsay that the emperor would either resume power in July or be replaced with a child emperor.¹⁶ Shortly thereafter, a circular telegram, not yet in the name of the Baohuanghui, originated in British Columbia, inquiring after the health of the emperor and asking that he be returned to power. Including the telegrams from Canada, at least forty were reported coming from Southeast Asia, Japan, and the Americas.¹⁷

14 Zhou Yongming, *Historicizing Online Politics: Telegraphy, the Internet, and Political Participation in China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), 59–79. Zhou, 65, describes telegrams from Chinese in Siam (known as Thailand since 1938) signed by as many as 80,000 people after a rumor in February 1900 spread that the emperor had been poisoned.

15 “China’s Ailing Emperor,” *The Sun* (New York), May 15, 1899.

16 “Imperial Changes in China,” *New York Times*, June 29, 1899, 3. In May, *North China Daily News* (Shanghai) reported that the emperor would be replaced by the grandson of Prince Gong or the grandson of Prince Yicong, which was reprinted by *Zhixin Bao* 知新報 on June 8, 1899; Sang Bing 桑兵, *Gengzi Qinwang yu Wan-Qing Zhengju, Di-Er Ban* 庚子勤王與晚清政局 (第二版) [The 1900 Movement to “Rush Troops in to Save the Throne” and the Late Qing Political Situation, 2nd ed.] (Beijing: Beijing Daxue Chubanshe, 2015), 51–52.

17 Liang Yingliu to Tan Zhangxiao, December 8, 1899, no. 501 in Fang Zhiqin and Cai Huiyao 方志欽、蔡惠堯, ed., *Kang Liang yu Baohuanghui: Tan Liang zai Meiguo Suocang Ziliao Huibian* 康梁與保皇會：譚良在美國所藏資料彙編 [Kang, Liang, and the Baohuanghui: A Compilation of Materials Collected by Tom Leung in the United States] (Hong

Kang's circular telegram to Baohuanghui chapters, sent from Hong Kong on January 20, 1900, carried shocking news: Cixi planned to appoint Pujun, the fourteen-year-old son of her ally Prince Duan, as the rightful successor to the childless Tongzhi Emperor.¹⁸ On January 24, Cixi issued an edict to that effect, the first step in deposing Guangxu. Again, Baohuanghui chapters in places as diverse as Montana mining towns and cities including Sydney, Bangkok, Rangoon, Hanoi, Honolulu, San Francisco, and Vancouver swiftly and massively reacted to Kang's alert. The Macau-based *Zhixin Bao* reported that telegrams to the Foreign Affairs Office from forty-six cities abroad "crowded into the telegraph lines like sardines."¹⁹ Multiplying the impact of the telegram movement were two Baohuanghui newspapers with worldwide distribution, *Qingyi Bao* in Yokohama and *Zhixin Bao* in Macau, which reprinted the telegrams and the extensive list of cities sending them.²⁰ Perhaps even more effective in influencing public opinion were telegrams sent from abroad to British, American, and Japanese envoys in Beijing, the Japanese emperor, and the British foreign minister asking them to come forward to save the Guangxu Emperor and return him to power. At the same time, aware that Boxers were increasing their antforeign activities, these same overseas Chinese sent telegrams warning the Qing government that the foreign powers could find the abrogation of Guangxu an excuse to invade China.²¹

Moderate reformer Jing Yuanshan, head of the Shanghai Telegraph Administration, helped by two more radical reformers, Tang Caichang and Wang

Kong; Yinhe Chubanshe, 2008), 331. A generic telegram can be found here: "Yingshu deng bu Shangmin Qing Cixi Guizheng zhe" 英屬等埠商民請慈禧歸政摺 [Merchants of British Columbia and other places memorializing Cixi to return the government], 1899, in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui* 康有為與保皇會 [Kang Youwei and the Baohuanghui], ed. Shanghai Shi Wenwu Baoguan Weiyuanhui 上海市文物保管委員會 (Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin Chubanshe, 1982), 3.

18 Edward J. M. Rhoads, *Manchus and Han: Ethnic Relations and Political Power in Late Qing and Early Republican China, 1861–1928* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2000), 71, says Pujun's father, Zaiyi or Prince Duan, was sympathetic to Cixi's pro-Boxer stance. Also see Lo, "Sequel to Autobiography," 182.

19 "Feili Yaowen Hui Zhi" 廢立要聞匯志 [Report of Important News on Deposing the Emperor in Favor of a New One], *Zhixin Bao*, March 31, 1900, quoted in Sang, *Gengzi Qinqwang*, 66.

20 Zhou, *Historicizing Online Politics*, 69, says that besides Japan where it was published, *Qingyi Bao* had outlets in Beijing, Shanghai, Sydney, Honolulu, Singapore, San Francisco, Lima, and other cities.

21 Sang, *Gengzi Qinqwang*, 59–71. In this section, Sang also details the escalating claims by Kang of his responsibility for this movement as time went on. Thus, we rely not on his accounts, but on contemporary newspapers and correspondence of others about these events.

Kangnian, organized a circular telegram signed by more than 1,200 influential officials in China. Historian Zhou Yongming asserted that “the global scale of the telegraph campaign had much to do with the strong influence of the Society for Protecting the Emperor on the Chinese in general and overseas Chinese in particular at this time.”²² The pressure worked; Cixi abandoned her plan to depose Guangxu, and a new series of telegrams followed congratulating the emperor on the New Year.

Chen Guoyong, a leader of the Yokohama Baohuanghui, wrote a fellow member in Los Angeles after the telegram movement:

Today the Baohuanghui is our only hope to save China from perishing. The overseas Chinese are indignant. In the last month of the lunar year [January 1900], hundreds of telegrams were dispatched to Beijing to oppose the adoption [of Pujun] as heir apparent. This shows that Heaven will not let China perish by keeping several million Chinese overseas for the purpose of the restoration of the Han mandate!²³

Staying in Hong Kong proved too dangerous for Kang. After surviving two close assassination attempts at the hands of Qing agents, on January 27, 1900, he left for Singapore.²⁴

1.2 *Singapore and Penang*

Kang's main supporters in Singapore were Khoo Seok Wan (Qiu Shuyuan) and Lim Boon Keng (Lin Wenqing). Khoo was a fervent reformer and follower of Kang who had organized his own circular telegram movement with one hundred Singapore merchants on October 12, 1899, to protest the threatened abdication of Guangxu.²⁵ Khoo was one of Kang's wealthiest supporters and became the foremost funder of the Qinwang military uprising, which was being planned while Kang was in Singapore (see Chapter 4). Lim was similarly involved in promoting the restoration of the emperor through an English-language newspaper, *China Times*, which he edited for the Baohuanghui.²⁶

²² Zhou, *Historicizing Online Politics*, 68.

²³ Chen Guoyong 陳國鏞 to Tan Zhangxiao, May 19, 1900, no. 513 in Fang and Cai, 276; English translation in “New Source Materials on Kang Youwei and the Baohuanghui: The Tan Zhangxiao (Tom Leung) Collection of Letters and Documents at UCLA's East Asian Library” by Jane Leung Larson, *Chinese America: History and Perspectives* 7 (1993): 156–61.

²⁴ Lo, “Sequel to Autobiography,” 183.

²⁵ Zhou, *Historicizing Online Politics*, 66–67.

²⁶ Lo, “Sequel to Autobiography,” 184–85.

Kang, however, was in a most precarious situation. A new Qing proclamation had been issued on February 14, 1900, extending the charges against Kang and Liang Qichao to include “the crimes of establishing newspapers, convening meetings, organizing societies, and inciting people against the government; and fresh warrants were issued for their arrest.”²⁷

The February 14 edict, which was publicized in Singaporean newspapers, offered a tempting 145,000 tael reward for the heads of Kang and Liang.²⁸ This new inducement to prospective assassins prompted Kang to announce that he would leave Singapore for Europe on February 23.²⁹ However, a report from Singapore in the next month said that Kang had secretly returned from the ship on the pilot’s boat and had since been living in a country home with a Sikh police guard.³⁰ This elaborate feint was organized by the Singapore chief of police, who disclosed the plan in a letter to Straits Settlements Governor Sir Alexander Swettenham.³¹ It was then that Kang moved to the home of Lim Boon Keng on March 26, and, on April 7, to the home of Zhang Fanglin to further throw off enemy agents trailing him.³² In spite of the precautions, press reports from Singapore several months later erroneously said that agents had gotten past the Sikh guards and had “badly wounded” Kang who was “lying at the point of death.”³³

In the meantime, Kang’s compatriot Yung Wing (Rong Hong) met Kang in Singapore to discuss Qinwang plans.³⁴ Yung had fled Beijing in 1898 because of his close association with Kang and the Hundred Days.³⁵ He had become

27 Lo, “Sequel to Autobiography,” 183.

28 “Price on Reformers’ Heads,” *Straits Times*, March 8, 1900, 3. Li Hongzhang, Liangguang governor, had added 40,000 taels, and, later the Shanghai magistrate another 5,000 taels, to the 100,000 to be paid by the Qing court.

29 Song Ong Siang [Song Wangxiang], *One Hundred Years’ History of the Chinese in Singapore* (Singapore: University of Malaya Press, 1967), 313–14.

30 Arnot Reid, “Kwang Hu Wei,” *Straits Times*, March 23, 1900, 3. This may refer to Khoo Cheng Tiong’s [Khoo Seok Wan’s father] house in Thomson Road. Initially Kang stayed at Khoo Seok Wan’s home on Boat Quay, February 1–25 (Song, *One Hundred Years’ History*, 317, and Lo, “Sequel to Autobiography,” 183).

31 Cuscaden to Swettenham, February 21, 1900, National Archives (UK), FO 17/1718, “Chinese Revolutionaries in British Dominions, Sun-Yat-Sen, Kang-yu-wei, etc., (Kidnapping of Sun-Yat-Sen by the Chinese Legation), 1896–1905,” 304–5.

32 Lo, “Sequel to Autobiography,” 183–84.

33 “Attempts to Kill Kang Yu Wei,” *New-York Tribune*, July 13, 1900, 3; and “Kang Yu Wei May Be Dying,” *New-York Tribune*, July 23, 1900, 3. Lo, “Sequel to Autobiography,” does not mention any such events although he does say that about this time, a Japanese agent, Miyazaki Torazō, arrived in Singapore and was arrested on suspicion of planned assassination of Kang. See Lo, “Sequel to Autobiography,” 264–68 n22.

34 See Chapter 4 for details on Yung Wing’s collaboration on Qinwang with Kang in Singapore.

35 Yung Wing, *My Life in China and America* (New York: Henry Holt, 1909), 238, 241. Yung, who had returned to China from the United States in 1895, states that “My headquarters

a naturalized U.S. citizen in 1852 and was the first Chinese graduate of an American university, Yale College in 1854. He led the Qing-sponsored Chinese Educational Mission, which sent 120 young Chinese students to study in New England between 1872 and 1881, during which time he married an American woman, Mary Kellog. Yung described Kang's precarious situation in Singapore to his friend Reverend Joseph Twitchell in Hartford, Connecticut: "Khang Yu Wei was well guarded and protected by the governor of Singapore. A guard of eighteen Sikhs was placed around his residence day and night."³⁶ Yung noted that while "many a ruffian" had attempted to win the reward for Kang's head, the plots had all failed.

While hiding in Singapore, Kang was deeply involved in the intrigue of staging a sweeping uprising in China timed to take advantage of the chaos of the Boxer Uprising and the foreign troops storming the country to protect their interests. Plans for Qinqiang had been in the works since early in Kang's exile, and fundraising among members began in autumn 1899 when Kang was still in Canada.³⁷ Kang openly sought help from foreign governments to overthrow the Boxers and their patrons, Cixi and her faction, and thereby effect Guangxu's restoration. The whole of the Baohuanghui was mobilized to support the action, which was to start in the Yangzi Valley and spread north, and Kang and his associates raised hundreds of thousands of dollars from members in Japan, Southeast Asia, Hawai'i, Canada, and the United States to support the military action. Khoo Seok Wan in Singapore was the most generous donor. Baohuanghui newspapers argued for the necessity of military action, and foreign newspapers, including the Victoria *Daily Colonist*, covered the plans (and the rumors) as they developed.

During March 1900, the *Daily Colonist* in Victoria published a series of reports emanating from Singapore, and allegedly from the pen of Kang, which said he was ready to place an army of 20,000 troops in the field "at any time on behalf of the deposed monarch."³⁸ About eleven days later, a second report said that troops were being trained in five southern provinces by European officers for the reform army, followed by an amazing story of how the Empress

became the rendezvous of the leading reformers of 1898," and after the coup, "Being implicated by harboring the reformers and in deep sympathy with them, I had to flee for my own life and succeeded in escaping from Peking." He then lived in Shanghai and Hong Kong, moving back to the United States in 1902.

36 "Affairs in China," *Hartford Courant*, July 9, 1900, 4. Thank you to historian Yvonne Yung for identifying Twitchell and Yung in this article which does not name them.

37 Kang Youwei to Tengfang [Li Tengfang 黎騰芳], October 2, 1899, in *Kang Youwei Quanj*, vol. 5, 139.

38 "Affairs of the Orient: Strength of Reformists Shown," *Daily Colonist* (Victoria), March 7, 1900, 8.

Dowager had dispatched two Chinese cruisers, *Hai Tien* and *Hai Shan* to proceed to the Straits Settlements, thus to act in conjunction with the men detailed to “capture or assassinate Kang Yu Wei and other Reformers.”³⁹ On the same day of the report of the ships being dispatched, the *Colonist* blasted Kang for his boasting:

On the whole, we cannot conscientiously say that Kang cuts a dignified figure in these plots and counter-plots, and he is not a man of the right calibre to undertake the regeneration of his unhappy country. If, as he pretends, he has eight million taels and several millions of supporters prepared to take up arms on his behalf, and if he really meditates a coup against the Empress Dowager ... would it have been possible for him to do anything more foolish than to show his hand in this way, and put the enemy on its guard? As it is, this idiotic bombast has merely the effect of compromising the safety of his adherents left behind in China while he tries hard to excite sympathy in Europe.⁴⁰

Qinwang was one element of a tripartite strategy by Kang and the Baohuanghui to use violent means (uprisings, assassinations, and overseas Chinese military training) to obtain their ends and is the subject of Chapter 4. But it would fail badly and led Kang to abandon hope of restoring the emperor through military action.

As it happened, around the same time that Qinwang failed, during the court's long exile in Xi'an, Cixi was moved to issue an edict in the name of the emperor on January 29, 1901, that apologized for “the accumulated and continued abuses and our excessive attention to empty formalities over the past several decades [which] have contributed to the present calamitous situation.”⁴¹ The edict heralded a decade of significant reforms, the so-called New Policies (Xinzheng). Kang, who spent much of 1901 in the Straits Settlements island of Penang, was heartened that many of his ideas shown through in the edict's proposals. He wrote his student Tom Leung in Los Angeles: “The old clique has been almost entirely eliminated. It is clear that Heaven desires a new China ... It is said that ‘His Majesty will return to power in the third month [April 19–May 17], and Lü

39 “War Clouds Over Orient,” *Daily Colonist* (Victoria), March 18, 1900, 8. Also, “Chinese Cloud Grows Darker, Warships Despatched by the Empress Dowager in Pursuit of the Crafty Kang,” *Daily Colonist* (Victoria), March 27, 1900, 2.

40 “Late News of the Orient, The Dowager Empress Makes Trouble for Reformers—Kang Yu Wei,” *Daily Colonist* (Victoria), March 27, 1900, 8. This article also reported Kang's alleged departure for Europe.

41 Reynolds, *China, 1898–1912*, 201.

Wu [Empress Lü Zhi and Empress Wu Zetian—codenames for Cixi] stays in Shaanxi.’ However, this is not confirmed. Because diplomatic circles strongly hold this view, I expect it to be true.”⁴² Kang hoped Cixi might remain in Xi’an while Guangxu returned alone to assume power in Beijing, with the acclamation of the allied powers. In August 1901, Kang wrote a confidential letter from Penang to Tom: “His Majesty will return to power very soon. I have asked some people in Shaanxi and Beijing to take care of things. I’m relying greatly on Japan [*da tuo Riben*]. I cannot tell you the details though.”⁴³ Kang’s machinations, which remain unknown, could not change the fact that the emperor was powerless to act independently of Cixi, and they finally returned together to Beijing in spring 1902. Kang’s lasting loyalty to an emperor who had trusted him meant that until Guangxu’s death Kang would never give up hope that the emperor would retake his throne and revive the Hundred Days’ reforms.

1.3 India

On the advice of a doctor, Kang moved from the unhealthy dampness of Penang to the snowcapped mountains of India.⁴⁴ He arrived in Kolkata on December 12, 1901, accompanied by his second wife Liang Sujue, second daughter Kang Tongbi, and several others, including two servants.⁴⁵ He spent eighteen months in India, mostly in seclusion in the mountains where he finished writing some old books, rewrote others lost during 1898, chronicled his travels in India, and worked on poetry and philosophical treatises.

Initially Kang and his entourage stayed in Kolkata, where they were invited to a “majestic” ceremony with masses of British and Indian soldiers and rajahs (“kings”) from various Indian states. After the ceremony, they met the lieutenant

42 Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, March 11, 1901, no. 515 in Fang and Cai, 29.

43 Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, August 22, 1901, no. 508 in Fang and Cai, 36.

44 Straits Settlements Governor Alexander Swettenham to British Colonial Affairs Minister Joseph Chamberlain, December 15, 1901, National Archives (UK), FO 17/1718, “Chinese Revolutionaries in British Dominions, Sun-Yat-Sen, Kang-yu-wei, etc. (Kidnapping of Sun-Yat-Sen by the Chinese Legation), 1896–1905,” 596, states that Kang left Penang with his family on December 7.

45 Lo, “Sequel to Autobiography,” *K’ang Yu-wei*, 189, mentions only Kang Tongbi was with him in India. But “Yindu Youji” 印度游記 [Records of Travel to India], in *Kang Youwei Quanji*, vol. 5, 509–50, translated in Kamal Sheel and Ranjana Sheel, trans. and ed., *Kang Youwei Engages India: His Travel Narratives (1901–1902) and Predicaments of Civilization and Nation* (New York: Routledge, 2024), DOI 10.4324/9781003453512, 33, lists Tongbi, Wanluo 婉絡 [Liang Sujue], Huang Rongsheng 黄榕生, servant Wu Jiren 吳積仁, and older female servant A Juan 阿娟. While in Darjeeling, Liang Sujue bore a son, Kang Tongji 康同吉, who died after one month, January 1902.



FIGURE 10
Kang in Penang, circa 1900.

governor of Bengal, Sir John Woodburn. They also visited the local Chinatown and met briefly with the Viceroy of India, Lord Curzon (George Nathaniel Curzon). Then, for several weeks, they toured various cities in northern India, including Delhi and Agra, but they spent most of the time in cooler climes of Darjeeling, a resort in the eastern Himalayas.⁴⁶ Kang recuperated there from his travels and lingering malaria contracted in Penang and worked on numerous writing projects. From their base in Darjeeling, Kang, a servant, and Tongbi made a sixty-mile trip—on horseback and on foot—to Gangtok, capital of the Kingdom of Sikkim, a British protectorate. There they were received by Thutob Namgyal, the *chogyal* or king and British officials. As part of their journey to Sikkim, the travelers also apparently visited Nepal and Tibet, but neither Kang nor Tongbi left any detailed written record.⁴⁷

During her stay in India, Tongbi wrote a poem including a line that Chairman Mao Zedong would quote when meeting her decades later: “As a woman who journeyed west, I am the first Chinese.”⁴⁸ She wrote years later that, “Of the Chinese who traveled to India through history, starting with Qin Jing,

46 Kang, “Yindu Youji,” in Sheel and Sheel, 33–117.

47 Kang Tongbi’s unpublished “Yindu youji houxu” 印度游記後序 [Postscript to account of a journey to India], manuscript courtesy of Chi Jeng Chang, 19–20, 23–31, 33–35.

48 As recounted in Zhang Yihe 章詒和, *Wanshi bing buru Yan* 往事並不如煙 [The Past is not like Smoke] (Beijing: Renmin Wenxue Chubanshe, 2004), 163; the full line is: 若論女士西游者, 我是支那第一人. Liang Qichao first described Kang Tongbi’s India journey and published this poem in *Xinmin Congbao* 新民叢報 no. 4 (March 1902), in his column “Yinbinshi Shihua” 飲冰室詩話 [Notes on Poetry from the Ice Drinker’s Studio].

Faxian, Sanzang [Xuanzang], and Huineng, my father was the fifth person after the passage of 1,000 years. If you're talking about females traveling from our nation, then Tongbi was the first person."⁴⁹ And, she added, "Liang Qichao compared me to the tiger cub of a tiger father."

During his India sojourn, Kang produced two works concerning India itself: "Yindu Youji" (Records of Travel to India) and an eighteen-page essay about India in the form of a letter addressed to Liang Qichao entitled "Yu Tongxue Zhuzi Liang Qichao Deng Lun Yindu Wangguo Youyu Gesheng Zili Shu" (Discussing India's Extinction caused by Independence of its Provinces in a Letter to Liang Qichao, Colleagues, and Followers). The two works provide a look at how Kang viewed China's historical interactions with India as well as expressing his general ideas on the problems of civilization and nationhood. He observed, as a warning to China, how the division of India into independent provinces "led to its quick demise." He was critical of the Hindu caste system and saw how British colonial rule had weakened the ruling class. As with his other travel literature, he inaccurately assumed that the customs and practices he observed in places he visited briefly were common throughout India. In the second work, he rejected Liang Qichao's ideas on provincial autonomy and expressed grave concerns about China's potential political fragmentation, especially because of societal elements that were obstacles to nationalism.⁵⁰

Among other works Kang completed during this period was *Datong Shu* (Book of Great Community), unveiling a vision of the future so daring that Kang would not permit it to be published in full during his lifetime. Peter Zarrow writes that it describes "[p]erhaps China's only full-fledged utopia" and is "a complete critique of power in all its forms." He notes that *Datong Shu* outlined a programmatic path to a completely egalitarian world by abolishing all boundaries—gender, race, class, nation, even species—to attain "unity, equality, independence, productivity, peace, and joy."⁵¹ This dream was in stark contrast to Kang's heavily nationalistic, China-oriented political agenda, but one can see clearly Kang's organizational mind at play. In *Datong Shu*, Kang

49 This statement is the first line of Kang Youwei's "Yindu Youji" and is repeated in Kang Tongbi's "Yindu youji houxu." The four men listed are reputed to be the first Chinese Buddhist pilgrims to India: Qin Jing 秦景 of the Eastern Han (27–220), Faxian 法顯 (traveled from 399–414), [Tang] Sanzang (or Xuanzang 玄奘, 602–664), and Huineng 慧能 (638–713).

50 Kang, "Yindu youji," 97–117, and "Yu Tongxue Zhuzi Liang Qichao Deng Lun Yindu Wangguo youyu Gesheng Zili Shu" 與同學諸子梁啟超等論印度亡國由於各省自立書 [Discussing India's Extinction caused by Independence of its Provinces in a Letter to Liang Qichao, Colleagues, and Followers], 141–74 in Sheel and Sheel, *Kang Youwei Engages India*.

51 Peter Zarrow, *After Empire: The Conceptual Transformation of the Chinese State, 1885–1924* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012), 51–53.

described constitutional monarchy as “just the same as a democratic form of government” since the monarch had no effective power under either system. “Someday monarchy will certainly be abolished and discarded, and [all states] will only belong to the One World [government].”⁵² However, while Kang’s utopia was “a borderless and hence entirely decentralized world ... the Great Commonweal was to be composed of democratic federal political units” that reflected his observations of Western parliaments and public education.⁵³

During this time, Baohuanghui members’ loyalty was wavering over the growing concern that the Manchus were not worth “protecting” and should be driven out. Liang Qichao had overseen the publication and distribution of a controversial and popular book, *Xin Guangdong* (New Guangdong), written by Baohuanghui—but anti-Manchu—stalwart Ou Jujia that called for an independent Guangdong. Kang worked hard to close the ranks once again and used India as an example of disunity that led to foreign aggression and takeover. In a group letter sent to “all comrades” through members in Canada, Kang wrote: “I have been in India and have seen that Indians can’t even become generals in their own army. Indian soldiers can’t take part in the Assembly. I am sorry for the Indians, and I grieve when I read their books. My conclusion is that independence for the provinces and revolution is not good for China. Today, if we hope to save China and defend her independence, we should concentrate our attention and pool efforts to deal with the three evil ones [Ronglu, Li Lianying, and Cui Yugui].”⁵⁴ Kang hadn’t forsaken violence in this letter and urged members to unite to restore the emperor, stating, “If we organize an insurrectionist army and launch a general offensive toward North China, financial resources will be an important concern.”

1.4 *Southeast Asia and Hong Kong*

After two years of an exile within an exile, Kang left India in spring 1903 for a tour of Southeast Asia, an early stronghold of Baohuanghui support. There he founded or shored-up chapters and generally aroused a new sense

52 Laurence G. Thompson, *Ta T'ung Shu: The One-World Philosophy of K'ang Yu-wei* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1958), 86.

53 Peter Zarrow, *Abolishing Boundaries: Global Utopias in the Formation of Modern Chinese Political Thought, 1880–1940* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2021), 29.

54 Lo, “Sequel to Autobiography,” 191. Kang Youwei to Li Fuji 李福基 and Ye En 葉恩, September 23, 1902, no. 542 in Fang and Cai, 40–41. Ronglu 榮祿 (1836–1903), head of the Grand Council; Li Lianying 李蓮英, Cixi’s chief eunuch (d. 1911); and Cui Yugui 崔玉貴, a eunuch famous for throwing Guangxu’s favorite concubine into a well on Cixi’s command, were considered reactionaries by Kang.

of nationalism among the Chinese in Burma, Malaya, and the Netherlands Indies.⁵⁵ In Java, where Chinese were second-class citizens with few political, legal, and educational opportunities, Kang concentrated on planning and seeking funding for a network of about twenty modern schools, which opened in 1906 with graduates of Datong School in Yokohama teaching Mandarin and other subjects. Kang also promoted religious Confucianism in Java, appealing to the *kaum muda*, the “enlightened” Java Chinese who adopted Western clothes and sports, yet ardently embraced Confucian traditions to an extent not seen among Chinese in North America.⁵⁶ For this Southeast Asian organizing tour, Kang hired a secretary in Klang, Malaya, twenty-year old Zhou Guoxian (Chew Kok Hean, Chow Kuo Hsien, Chou Kuo-hsien, Chow Kwo Hean, Chew Kai Ho), the man who would serve as Kang’s most frequent spokesman and English interpreter in Europe and the United States from 1904 to 1907.⁵⁷

In fall 1903, Kang made his way north to Hong Kong and in March 1904 met with Liang Qichao, Xu Qin, and others at the first true assembly of Baohuanghui leaders.⁵⁸ Plans were made to establish periodicals and newspapers in Hong Kong, Yokohama, Shanghai, and Guangzhou, and the Guangdong Public School. After the Hong Kong meeting, Kang sent Liang on an undercover trip to Shanghai in April 1904 to establish what would quickly become China’s most innovative and politically influential newspaper, *Shi Bao* (*Eastern Times*), building its reputation as an agitator and information clearinghouse during the anti-American boycott that emerged the next year.⁵⁹ In Hong Kong, Kang may also have overseen the completion of his biography (*Wo Zhuan*) assembled by his students Lu Naixiang and Lu Dunkui, and he would later make many attempts for the manuscript to be translated into English to enhance his reputation.⁶⁰

55 See Lo, “Sequel to Autobiography,” 193; also, 269 n25, which suggests that it was upon the news of Ronglu’s death that Kang felt it safe to travel again. *He Yin Huaqiao Jiaoyu jian* 荷印華僑教育鑑 [Handbook of Education of the Chinese in the Netherlands Indies] (1928), 372 and 405, cited in Lo, “Sequel to Autobiography,” 269 n26.

56 Didi Kwartanada, emails to Jane Larson, December 10, 2008, and February 2, 2009.

57 “Kang Yu Wei,” *Straits Echo* (Penang), August 29, 1903, 3. When Kang hired Zhou, he was secretary of the Klang General Farms, a government agency. After Zhou left Kang in fall 1903, he would go on to study in Scotland and met Kang again in Europe in 1904.

58 Not until Kang convened plenary meetings in New York City in 1905 and 1907 was a representative group of chapter leaders present, although none of Kang’s top deputies, such as Liang Qichao or Xu Qin, attended.

59 In Shanghai Liang Qichao traveled, as he frequently did, under a pseudonym and stayed in the relatively safe Japanese hotel, Tigers’ Den, where he met with his confederates Di Chuqing 狄楚卿 and Luo Xiaogao 羅孝高. Joan Judge, *Print and Politics: Shibao and the Culture of Reform in Late Qing China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 32. More on *Shi Bao* 時報 and the 1905 boycott in Chapter 6.

60 See Chapter 7 for details.

The most ambitious and portentous act of the Hong Kong gathering was the formal initiation of the Commercial Corporation (Shangwu Gongsi or Shanghai).⁶¹ This was a multinational conglomerate made up of business and financial enterprises (including newspapers and publishing companies already in operation) that was based loosely on the model of the British East India Company, except that Kang saw it as a vehicle for Chinese, rather than foreign, financial and political gain. Kang also hoped that Commercial Corporation earnings would rescue the Baohuanghui financially by decreasing reliance on donations to fund general operations and special projects. This strategy would fatefully entangle politics with business and weigh down the organization with financial losses and internal strife.

Kang left Hong Kong for Europe on March 22, 1904. In a dramatic change of policy, the British government was in the process of banishing Kang from Hong Kong because “it cannot be expected that a British colony which is in constant and friendly communication with the constituted Chinese authorities will tolerate the presence of men who use the security and protection afforded them by the British flag to stir up sedition in China and hatred and distrust of the foreigner whose hospitality they enjoy.”⁶² Not only was Kang banned from returning to Hong Kong but banishment orders were given for the editors and printer of the Baohuanghui newspaper *Shang Bao* (*Sheung Po*) because of its pronounced anti-Western views and inflammatory nationalism. This change in British policy toward Kang has been documented by historian Phoebe Li, and it would keep Kang from fulfilling his dream of visiting Australia and caused him to focus his political proselytizing on the Chinese in North America.⁶³

1.5 *Europe*

After a long journey by ship from Hong Kong—with diversionary breaks of a day to more than a month in Saigon, Bangkok, Malacca, Penang, and Ceylon—Kang transited the Suez Canal, with a stop in Port Said, Egypt. He finally arrived in Italy in mid-June 1904 and then proceeded to France, where he was joined

61 Lo, “Sequel to Autobiography,” 195. Liang Qichao’s involvement in the first years of the Commercial Corporation is discussed in Chapter 3 and Chapter 9 describes the conglomerate’s rise and fall.

62 F. H. May, Officer Administering the Government, to Alfred Lyttleton, Secretary of State for the Colonies, March 24, 1904, “Kang Yu Wei,” National Archives of Australia (hereafter NAA): Series A1, 1910/3933, <https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/>, accessed February 6, 2019.

63 Li Hairong 李海蓉, “Yingguo Zhengfu dui Kang Youwei Liuwang Taidu zhi Kaoshi—Jian lun Baohuanghui de Moluo” 英國政府對康有為流亡態度之考釋—兼論保皇會的沒落 [Textual Analysis of the English Government’s Attitude toward Kang Youwei in Exile—and the Rise and Fall of the Baohuanghui], *Shi Lin* no. 1 (2019): 89–100, 204.



FIGURE 11 October 4, 1904 in Aberdeen, Scotland, possibly at St. Margaret's School for Girls: standing, from left: Luo Chang, unknown man, and Zhou Guoxian; seated, from left: Kang Tongbi, Kang Youwei, and nanny for girls; at Kang's feet, Lu You 陸佑 and Lu Qiutai 陸秋泰, Malaysian Chinese girls and Zhou's relatives studying at St. Margaret's.

by daughter Tongbi, on summer vacation from her high school studies in Hartford, Connecticut. Together, they toured Switzerland, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Denmark, Sweden, Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, England, and Scotland.⁶⁴

Sweden aroused Kang's poetic and romantic nature and stimulated his utopian bent. Swedish sinologist Göran Malmqvist wrote that Kang thought Sweden's social and political development surpassed that of other countries and that this small, poor country had previously achieved his dream of Datong. Kang's Swedish journal catalogs the country's advanced social welfare institutions and extols Sweden's frugality, cleanliness, order, and good management, qualities he found lacking in China. Kang's Datong world features publicly run childcare and schools to equalize educational opportunity and old age homes in the most beautiful scenic spots. While in Sweden, Kang visited public housing, public baths, child care centers, and shelters for the poor. He praised a relief home for the poor with its spotless windows and corridors, white carpets, thick cotton-padded mattresses, and plentiful doctors and nurses who saw patients twice a day, "all paid for by funds in the State Treasury! How benevolent! Just like the world of Datong!" Kang remarked that the population of Sweden was about 4 million with 2,000 students attending university. "The population is no greater than our Shunde County (Guangdong), so shouldn't Shunde be worthy of Sweden and have 2,000 university students?"⁶⁵

While sitting on a rock on the Sandhamn island Baltic seashore, Kang wrote, "I received a message that Changshu [Weng Tonghe, the emperor's tutor] was dead. I sobbed and cried while the roaring wind and mournful waves added more grief to my sorrow."⁶⁶ Although Weng had attempted to stop the more radical measures proposed by Kang during the Hundred Days and was dismissed by the emperor into his own bitter exile, Kang did not forget Weng for bravely recommending him to the emperor, an act that abruptly thrust Kang into political power.⁶⁷ Kang recalled in a poem:

For the task of reforming China, who is number one?
Aiding the shrewd king with traditional scholarship,

64 Kang called the Netherlands "Holland" [Helan 荷蘭].

65 Kang Youwei (Ma Yueran 馬悅然 [Göran Malmqvist], ed.), *Kang Youwei Ruidian Youji* 康有為瑞典遊記 [Kang Youwei's Swedish Travel Journal] (Hong Kong: Commercial Press, 2007), 16, 63, 85.

66 Kang Youwei, "Ku Weng Tonghe (wai yi shou)" 哭翁同龢 (外一首) [Tears for Weng Tonghe (another poem)], August–September 1904, no. 110 in Fang and Cai, 87–88.

67 Young-tsu Wong, "Emperor Kuang Hsu and Reform," in *Rejuvenating a Tradition: Reform and Revolution in Modern China* (New York: Peter Lang, 1990), 130.

Here was the prime minister who led the reform;
 Secretly planning in the office, arduously struggling to save the country
 and the people;
 How great the prime minister Changshu
 Who tried to chisel the sky to open the universe!⁶⁸

Kang left Sweden and sailed from Liverpool on November 1, 1904, arriving in Montreal eleven days later.

2 Kang Returns to North America

I once lived surrounded by mountains and the ethereal sea,
 Traveling freely [to nearby islands] even through turbulent storms.⁶⁹
 My native country has experienced tremendous changes [in the five
 years since I left Wen Island];⁷⁰
 Pine and catalpa trees still spread over the hillsides and ravines at my old
 home.⁷¹
 I recognize the scattered islands nearby,
 although tumultuous waves never ceased beating against their shores.⁷²
 How could the trees and stones I once caressed know that I would come
 back?
 I sigh at the hardships suffered while circumnavigating the world these
 past five years.

KANG YOUWEI, *WEN DAO* (Coal Island), British Columbia, December 5, 1904⁷³

68 Kang Youwei, "Ku Weng Tonghe."

69 *Fenglang zongheng yi chuyou* 風浪縱橫亦出游 This line has a double meaning, as the storms imply the political climate in China. Kang traveled despite the danger he encountered as a wanted person by the Qing court.

70 This line comes from the phrase, *canghaisangtian* 滄海桑田 (time brings great changes).

71 Pine and catalpa trees 松楸 are both known for their longevity. The former residence refers to Kang's temporary home on Wen Island, Liaotianshi 寥天室 [Hut under the Vastness of Heaven].

72 This line also has a double meaning, the waves referring to turbulent Chinese politics.

73 Kang Youwei, untitled and unpublished poem, written upon return to Wen Island, near Victoria, Canada, December 5, 1904, among Kang Tongbi's possessions saved by her in 1969 to be given to her last personal secretary, Zhang Cangjiang 張滄江, for his preservation in North America; courtesy of Chi Jeng Chang, Vancouver, BC. Translation by Yang Zheng, with Chi Jeng Chang.

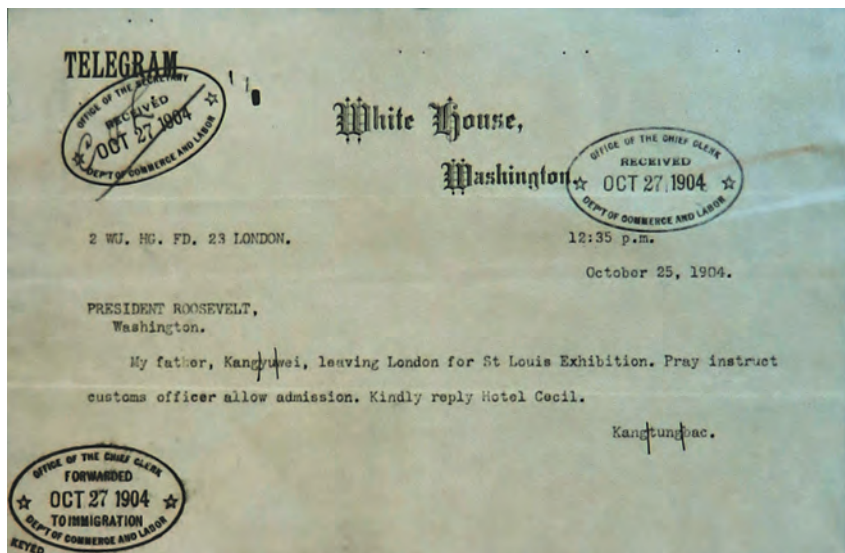


FIGURE 12 Kang Tongbi's telegram from London asking President Roosevelt to allow her father to enter the United States to attend the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair.

During most of 1904, Kang was in perpetual motion. He visited seventeen countries from his starting point in Hong Kong on March 22 before departing from Liverpool on the S.S. *Lake Manitoba*, landing in Montreal, Canada, on November 12.⁷⁴ It had been five years since Kang left North America, and the Baohuanghui was now a thriving network of chapters, newspapers, schools, women's organizations, and business ventures, thanks to Kang's deputies and to the initiative of local Chinese activists, a development described in Chapter 3.

Despite these successes, Kang was uneasy and even fearful as he faced the challenge of Sun Yatsen, who had spent 1904 targeting Baohuanghui members in the United States. Kang also constantly worried about money.⁷⁵ Perhaps

74 "Canadian Passenger Lists, 1865–1935," https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/1263/?name=Yei+Wei_Hang&f-Self-Travel-Ship=Lake+Manitoba&f-Self-Travel-Ship_x=1&gender=m&gender_x=1&name_x=1_1, accessed May 16, 2023. The database was searched with a variant of Kang's Romanized name, Yei Wei Hang (Hang as a surname). The ship departed on November 1, 1904.

75 For example, in the December 5, 1904 letter from Kang Youwei to Kang Tongbi 康同璧, no. S-C39, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection, Kang is depending on wealthy member Ye En and the Hong Kong headquarters to supply Tongbi with funds for personal support and Baohuanghui projects. He states baldly that "I have no money here," and hopes that he can raise stock shares in the United States.

foremost on his mind was his desire, indeed his strongly felt need, to visit the United States after six years of fruitless attempts since his first arrival in North America in 1899. Kang now hoped to go to the United States before the end of the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair. This trip was especially meaningful to him not only because this was the first world's fair at which China was officially represented but also because Chinese at home and abroad had shared the humiliation of the special restrictions imposed on Chinese laborers and merchants working at the fair.⁷⁶ Thus, on October 25, 1904, Kang Tongbi sent a telegram from London to President Theodore Roosevelt: "My father, Kangyuwei, leaving London for St. Louis Exhibition. Pray instruct customs officer allow admission, Kindly reply Hotel Cecil. Kangtungbac."⁷⁷ The telegram was received at the White House on October 27 and forwarded to the Department of Commerce and Labor, so as to establish an awareness of Kang's pending arrival in New York. Customs officials at Boston and on Ellis Island, New York Harbor, were notified. Since no contact had been made with or by the Chinese legation or the Department of State on the matter, only a routine inspection was ordered upon Kang's arrival.⁷⁸ According to the Bureau of Immigration (although the source of information is not apparent), Kang "claim[ed] to be a citizen of the Empire of Japan."⁷⁹ It appears that no effort was made to contact Kang at his return address, the Hotel Cecil in London, as had been requested. Having given up waiting, Kang departed on November 1 for Montreal. The Chinese inspector in New York reported that he had been "indirectly informed that this person would soon arrive in Montreal, Canada, and would doubtless make an effort to enter the United States somewhere along the border."⁸⁰ However, no such attempt was made. The immigration bureau's Acting Commissioner General Frank H. Larned in Washington made it clear to the New York Chinese inspector that Bureau files showed that Kang had previously attempted to enter the United States as a citizen of Japan and would have to meet the requirements

76 See Chapter 6 on the Baohuanghui and Chinese exclusion for details on the much-publicized treatment of China's representatives at the St. Louis exposition and its evocation during the 1905 anti-American boycott.

77 Telegram of Kangtungbac, London, to President Roosevelt, Washington, October 25, 1904, Chinese File 14735-89, Box 162, RG 85, NA-Washington.

78 F. H. Larned, Acting Commissioner General of Immigration to F. W. Berkshire, Chinese Inspector in Charge, New York, October 28, 1904, cc to Boston and Ellis Island, New York Harbor. Chinese File 13298.

79 Larned to Berkshire, October 28, 1904.

80 Berkshire to Larned, November 7, 1904; and Larned to Berkshire, November 8, 1904, acknowledgment, Chinese File 13298.

of the Chinese exclusion laws to be admitted. This Kang could not have done, lacking a Section 6 certificate.⁸¹

In Montreal, Kang was greeted by his followers and a band at the berth on the St. Lawrence River and was escorted to the Windsor Hotel.⁸² Kang's advance man was the Vancouver Baohuanghui president Ye En (Charles Yip Yen), depicted by *La Presse* as "a millionaire from Victoria, British Columbia" comparable to John Pierpont Morgan and Andrew Carnegie.⁸³ In fact, Kang would soon tap Ye En to head the Commercial Corporation in Hong Kong. As he did in 1899, Kang resumed his efforts to reform Chinese behavior and urge adaptation to local norms. On November 13, Kang's appearance at Montreal's Knox Church prompted such a large crowd that the usual churchgoers had to relinquish their pews in the main part of the church, which filled with his Chinese audience. Kang compared Chinese and Western cultures, "much to the disadvantage of the former," and, according to the *Montreal Star*, vowed that China "would become one of the greatest nations of the earth, if western methods and civilization were adopted."⁸⁴ But incessant travel had taken its toll on Kang's health. A persistent case of bronchitis plagued him for months, and he longed to return to the peace and solitude of Coal Island, off Victoria, British Columbia.⁸⁵ Thus, he spent only a few days in eastern Canada before heading west.

From Montreal, Kang proceeded to Toronto, arriving on the evening of November 15. Vancouver Baohuanghui leaders Ye En and Yang Lingshi had gone ahead to promote Kang among the local Chinese to assure that Kang would be greeted in style at the train station and housed in a "grand hotel." Kang viewed Niagara Falls, then returned to give a talk until 11:00 PM in a Toronto church, with several hundred prospective members in the audience. Ye called on those moved by Kang's speech to join the Baohuanghui at once, and a few hundred signed up and He Yanmei was selected as president. Kang and his escorts then traveled to Ottawa, where Kang gave an evening lecture on a topic he would soon develop into one of his most influential tracts, "Wuzhi

81 Larned to Berkshire, October 28, 1904, Chinese File 13298.

82 "A Chinese Reformer," *Toronto Globe*, November 14, 1904.

83 "Un Regenerateur de L'Empire de Chine," *La Presse* (Montreal), Novembre 14, 1904, 1 and 5, with drawings of Kang, Liang, the Guangxu Emperor, Ye En, and local Baohuanghui leaders; also see "Orienteaux A Montreal," *La Presse*, Novembre 17, 1904, 1. Ye En was, of course, a Vancouver man.

84 "Knox Church Crowded with Attentive Chinese Audience," *Montreal Star*, November 14, 1904, 12.

85 Many letters from Kang to Tom Leung, Kang Tongbi, and others between December 1904 and until the end of April 1905 refer to Kang's illness. Also see Lo, "Sequel to Autobiography," 197–98.

Jiuguo Lun" (National Salvation through Material Civilization): "I told them what I learned from foreign countries—that we should start with the industry and business sectors, then move on to the arms industry. China is short of material prosperity, so we should start by developing manufacturing. Then we can achieve self-reliance." In a letter to daughter Tongbi describing his talk in Ottawa, Kang distinguished between Chinese people learning "the foundations of prosperity" from Westerners and those abandoning their traditions entirely. He praised the behavior of Japanese he met in London, who bowed to show respect rather than shake hands in the Western way as Chinese abroad tended to do. Kang even described Chinese who followed the "unspoken customs" of foreigners as having developed "the stain of servitude." It was the Western "foundations of prosperity" they should adopt, wrote Kang, rather than their "national traditions."⁸⁶ Kang failed to mention the other "national traditions," such as the queue that he consistently urged Chinese to discard in favor of Western styles.

In Ottawa, according to press reports, Kang also planned to make return visits to Sir Wilfrid Laurier, the prime minister, and Lord Minto, the governor general, both of whom he had met in 1899. Kang took the opportunity—when informing Laurier of his hoped-for visit—to send the prime minister an "ancient Chinese porcelain and a box of Chinese silk embroidery as a small present."⁸⁷ Both men were out of the city, however, and Kang did not tarry in Canada's capital.⁸⁸ Leaving Ottawa on November 17, he proceeded by Canadian Pacific Express to Winnipeg, Manitoba (where there was a Baohuanghui chapter) for a stop on November 19 and thence to Vancouver, on November 22.⁸⁹ Kang's English-speaking and Scottish-educated interpreter and private secretary Zhou Guoxian and Austrian bodyguard, valet, and linguist Rupert Humer came with him from Europe and would remain at his side throughout much of the next year.⁹⁰ Humer met Kang

86 Kang Youwei to Kang Tongbi, November 16, 1904, no. S-C31, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

87 Kang Youwei, Hotel Russell, Ottawa, to Laurier, November 17, 1904, Laurier Papers, vol. 345, no. 92267; also see "Asst. Private Secretary" to Prince Kang Yu Wei, Vancouver, November 23, 1904 (copy), vol. 345, no. 92269, acknowledging Kang's gift.

88 "Chinese Prince, Kang Yu Wei Was a Guest at Russell House," *Ottawa Citizen*, November 18, 1904, 10.

89 "Kang Yu Wei, The Noted Reformer on His Way to Vancouver," *Vancouver Daily News-Advertiser*, November 16, 1904, 7; "Kang Yu Wei Route," *Vancouver Daily News-Advertiser*, November 20, 1904, 1; "China's Exiled Prince Arrives," *Province* (Vancouver), November 22, 1904.

90 Zhou Guoxian 周國賢 also traveled with Kang in Europe in 1906–7. After he left Kang's service, Zhou studied for two years at Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio (1908–9?), and graduated with a bachelor's degree in philosophy from the University of Chicago (1911). That same year, Zhou traveled with Kang to Japan where he met Liang

Youwei in Belgium in 1904 and accompanied him during his travels in Britain and North America in 1904–5.⁹¹

Ye En's daughter, Yip May Young, wrote in broken English to her friend Tongbi that "Uncle" Kang was welcomed in Vancouver by a crowd, not only of Chinese, but "in all different nations," and more than 3,000 people came to City Hall to listen to him "preach" from 8:00 to 10:00 that night.⁹² Kang called for unity of overseas Chinese with their compatriots and stressed the importance of developing commercial enterprises and promoting industrial education.⁹³ On November 29, Kang was entertained with a lavish banquet by Vancouver's Baohuanghui.⁹⁴ The non-Chinese guests included a dozen Canadian officials, the Japanese and American consuls, and journalists from local English-language newspapers. Kang's old acquaintance, U.S. Consul L. Edwin Dudley, spoke about the friendship of President "Teddy" Roosevelt and Secretary of State John M. Hay for the Baohuanghui, and, "referring to the work of the Reform Association, he said the awakening and development of China would be even more rapid than that of Japan." However, in his talk, Kang graciously "declined the honor" after Dudley compared him" to Bismarck and Garibaldi." Kang also expressed surprise at the success of the Baohuanghui and attributed this in part to its "foreign friends."

Upon his return to Vancouver, Kang had approached Dudley about renewing his quest to enter the United States. Three days before Kang's banquet, Dudley had duly informed the Department of State that he intended to issue Kang a Section 6 certificate. He also requested that Kang and his party be given immunity from luggage inspection.⁹⁵ The latter request was denied on the basis that

Lingxian, Liang Qichao's daughter; they married in 1914. In 1913 Zhou was Liang's secretary when he was appointed minister of justice in the cabinet of Xiong Xiling 熊希齡 (1913–14). Zhou also served as Chinese consul general in Rangoon (1918), Vancouver (1919), Manila (1922), Singapore (1924), and Ottawa (1925).

91 See Rupert Humer (born ca. 1886) reference in "Kang Yu-wei Here For A Week," *Hartford Courant*, July 17, 1905, 11, which identified him as a linguist who had attached himself to Kang's party in Belgium in 1904. Carl C. Glick, *Double Ten, Captain O'Banion's Story of the Chinese Revolution* (London and New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1945), 146, identified Humer as an "Austrian linguist." A Rupert Humer, born ca. 1886 in Austria, then living in Newark, New Jersey, is recorded in the 1920 and 1940 U.S. censuses.

92 Yip May Young 葉美蓉 to Kang Tongbi, November 26, 1904, no. E-35, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

93 "China's Exiled Prince Arrives," *Province* (Vancouver), November 22, 1904, 1; Kang Tongbi, *Nanhai Kang Xiansheng Nianpu Xubian*, 121.

94 "Chinese Reform Leader," *Vancouver News-Advertiser*, November 30, 1904, 2.

95 No. 652, Dudley to Francis B. Loomis, Acting Secretary of State, November 26, 1904, Despatches From United States Consuls in Vancouver, Canada, 1890–1906, RG 59, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/211527778?objectPage=268>, accessed May 24, 2024, repeating the



FIGURE 13 Kang Youwei in Vancouver, 1904.

telegram of November 25, plus additional information on Kang, Liang, and Kang Tongbi in their respective dealings with the United States. Dudley listed others who would accompany Kang: Zhou Guoxian, secretary Yong Lin Shak, Ye En, and an Austrian valet—Kang's traveling party was somewhat different when he finally crossed the border in 1905.

Kang was not an official of a foreign government, but Dudley's more consequential initiative on Kang's behalf was not questioned. Dudley's letter to the Department of State in regard to his issuance of the Section 6 Certificate had been answered immediately by Third Assistant Secretary Herbert H. D. Pierce.⁹⁶

However, Kang did not take advantage of this longed-for opportunity to visit the United States until three months later. The St. Louis World's Fair had closed on December 1, and the urgency of Kang's travel may have been blunted by the onset of winter and his continuing bronchitis. Kang began his recovery at the newly built North Vancouver Hotel, watching "cold gusts pushing the moon across Vancouver harbor" and observing the transformation of the dense wilderness from "dead trees and fallen limbs, a thousand years old, to be burnt and cleared for the development of residential areas."⁹⁷ But, Kang sought greater isolation and retreated to his Hut under the Vastness of Heaven (Liaotianshi) on Coal Island, its geography sheltering Kang from both rain and people, Kang's default in times of stress. He spent most of the winter there, writing and making plans for his visit to the United States.⁹⁸ His first task was compiling the travel notes for his 1904 trip to eleven European countries.⁹⁹ Only six years into his global circumambulation, Kang marveled that after turning forty, thanks to the wonders of modern transportation, as a Chinese, he had become the greatest traveler of all time, outdoing Tang monk Sanzang's journey to the West (India), as well as Columbus and Magellan. He explained that his visits to twenty-six countries in Europe, Asia, and the Americas were but an experimental search for the best methods to save China, just as the

Yong Lin Shak could be Vancouver Baohuanghui member Yang Lingshi, who was in the United States between 1905 and 1907 in Los Angeles and Portland. Dudley also stated Kang Tongbi had visited President Roosevelt in 1903, and Tongbi's memoirs also mention an October 12, 1903, visit to the president and his family, but a search of the Desk Diaries, Series 9, Roll 430, Roosevelt Papers, MSS 38299, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, https://www.loc.gov/resource/mss38299.mss38299-430_0193_1119/?sp=296&st=image&r=0.1,-0.008,1.057,0.398,0, shows no record of this visit.

- 96 Telegram of Herbert H. D. Pierce, Washington, to American Consul, Vancouver, November 26, 1904; Despatches From Department of State to U.S. Consulate, Vancouver, vol. 44, Entry UD-10, RG 84, NA-College Park.
- 97 Thank you to Chi Jeng Chang and Connie Kang for their compilation and translation of "Kang Youwei Vancouver Poems," December 1904.
- 98 Kang probably went to Coal Island on December 4, 1904, with visits to nearby Victoria for Baohuanghui functions and to Harrison Hot Springs for its recuperative qualities.
- 99 Kang Youwei, "Ouzhou Shiyi Guo Youji Xu" 歐洲十一國游記序 [Preface to Travel Notes on Eleven European Countries], in *Kang Youwei Quanji* 康有為全集 [Collected Works of Kang Youwei], ed. Jiang Yihua and Zhang Hualong 姜義華, 張榮華 (Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin Daxue Chubanshe, 2007), vol. 7, 344–45. Kang said he completed this work on December 22, 1904. It was published in 1905 by Guangzhi Shuju in Shanghai.

legendary Shennong had tasted hundreds of herbs to discover those with curative powers. In 1917, Kang wrote that “I have an unquenchable desire to travel,” which he celebrated in his earlier preface for a collection of poems named after the Hut under the Vastness of Heaven:

Since my return to Canada in November 1904, I continued my travels to the United States and Mexico, and returned to Europe. I was like a swan, flying high, rising steeply up thousands of miles, and shooting into the vast heavens.¹⁰⁰

After Kang finished compiling *Ouzhou Shiyi Guo Youji* (Travel Notes on Eleven European Countries) on December 22, he incorporated these experiences in his essay “Wuzhi Jiuguo Lun.” He argued that Western countries became strong primarily because of their development of science, industry, and technology, which gave them the tools to build steamships, modern factories, and gunboats, and, as a result, powerful militaries. Material (or industrial) civilization was thus the key to the salvation of China.¹⁰¹ Two North American cities were singled out in the essay, Vancouver and Los Angeles, for the speed of their transformation to modernity. Vancouver had only recently surpassed Victoria in population and influence.

The two metropolises used to be desolate mountains covered with vegetation and home to foxes and hares. Today they have developed into metropolises covering dozens of [square] miles with populations of more than 100, 000. How magnificent the buildings and parks are! How imposing the schools and mansions are! Tramcars are numerous, and electric lamps are just as bright as the moon. On Sundays, people all go to the parks. There are men and women as well as carriages everywhere. Los Angeles is even more magnificent than Vancouver.¹⁰²

100 Kang Youwei, *Liaotianshi Shiji* 寥天室詩集 [Collection of Poems in the Hut under the Vastness of Heaven], in *Kang Youwei Quanji* 康有為全集 [Collected Works of Kang Youwei], ed. Jiang Yihua and Zhang Hualong 姜義華, 張榮華 (Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin Daxue Chubanshe, 2007), vol. 12, 258. Kung-ch'üan Hsiao, *A Modern China and a New World: Kang Yu-wei, Reformer and Utopian, 1858–1927* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1975), 29.

101 Kang Youwei, “Wuzhi Jiuguo Lun” 物質救國論 [National Salvation through Material Civilization] in *Kang Youwei Quanji* 康有為全集 [Collected Works of Kang Youwei], ed. Jiang Yihua and Zhang Hualong 姜義華, 張榮華 (Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin Daxue Chubanshe, 2007), vol. 8, 61–101, especially 62, 71. See Chapter 5 for further details on this essay.

102 Kang, “Wuzhi Jiuguo Lun,” in *Kang Youwei Quanji*, vol. 8, 84–85.

The essay also laid the theoretical foundation for the Baohuanghui to promote its transnational business, which was a priority for Kang before he went to the United States. And, Kang pointedly wanted his readers to put material considerations before more nebulous political ideas, in particular, revolution, as Kang faced the growing influence of Sun Yatsen in the United States.

While on Coal Island, Kang could easily travel to Victoria, and his letters during that period were mailed from the city on Driard Hotel stationery.¹⁰³ On December 11, Kang gave a public speech to Victoria's Chinese, again lecturing his followers to "follow the customs of the people of this country, particularly their methods of living, to pay heed to the laws of sanitation and cleanliness" so as to overcome "the objections against the presence of Chinese in this country."¹⁰⁴ This resulted in the Victoria chapter promising to set up a bathhouse for Chinese residents; the Vancouver chapter followed suit, announcing it had formed a Society for the Promotion of Cleanliness and provided "free public baths."¹⁰⁵ The renovation of the Vancouver Baohuanghui building in 2017 exposed large characters for Baths (*Xishenfang*) and Barber (*Jianfasuo*) on the first floor, indicating that Kang's suggestions were taken to heart.¹⁰⁶

Meanwhile Consul Dudley was arranging for the documents that would serve as Section 6 certificates for Kang and Zhou Guoxian.¹⁰⁷ These were registered with the U.S. consulate in Vancouver on December 17, for a simple fee of \$1 each.¹⁰⁸ Kang must have kept his copy of the Canadian government-issued

103 For example, see Kang Youwei to Kang Tongbi, December 5, 1904, no. S-C39, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

104 "Practical Methods: How Kang Yu Wei Works along Beneficial Lines--Delivers Address," *Victoria Times*, December 13, 1904, 1.

105 "Big Cleanup for Chinatown," *Province* (Vancouver), January 3, 1905, 1.

106 Thanks to Chi Jeng Chang who made this discovery during the building's renovation in 2017. The building was constructed in 1903 at 5050-509 Carrall Street, Vancouver, and was occupied by the Chinese Empire Reform Association until 1945. It is the property of the Lim Sai Hor (Kow Mock) Benevolent Association. See "Historic Study of the Society Buildings in Chinatown: Report of the Chinese Canadian Historical Society Contractor to the City of Vancouver," Appendix, A43-A63, July 2005.

107 Certificate issued by J. M. Bowell, Vancouver; certified by L. Edwin Dudley, U.S. Consul, Vancouver, December 17, 1904. This certificate and full Section 6 documentation is in Chinese Exclusion Act Case Files, 1895-1943, Sumas File 140 (Kang Yu Wei), Records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, RG 85, NA-Seattle. Dudley, Bowell, Kang, Harry Edsell, and others signed the various documents. Thanks to Joseph Ng for identifying the file location. A duplicate copy of this certificate is in Kang Youwei Residential Museum, Qingdao 青島市康有為故居紀念館.

108 U.S. Treasury Fees, U.S. Consulate, Vancouver, December 17, 1904, recorded \$1.00 fee for "Chinese Certificates," vol. 3, Entry UD-10, RG 84, NA-College Park.



FIGURE 14

Sign for “Barber” and “Baths” [Jianfasuo, Xishenfang], in the Canadian Baohuanghui headquarters known as Da Zhonghua, 529-531 Carrall Street, Vancouver.

certificate certified by Dudley in his possession until he returned to China in 1913.¹⁰⁹ Kang’s certificate was issued on the basis of residency in Canada under Article 3 of the Treaty of 1894 and his status as a “teacher, author and journalist” who intended “to visit the United States as a tourist for curiosity or pleasure.” The Canadian residency tack had failed to persuade U.S. officials to accept Kang’s Section 6 compliance in 1899. But now, in 1904, his latest attempt was successful and bypassed the officials in Washington. The Bureau of Immigration was not cognizant of Kang’s visa until 1907 when he reentered the

109 The copy of the certificate, stamped “Duplicate,” was donated to the Kang Youwei Residential Museum in Qingdao by Pang Lian 龐蓮 (1907–97), wife of Kang Tongning 康同凝 (1909–78), Kang’s fourth son by He Zhanli 何旻理, Kang’s third wife.

United States at New York.¹¹⁰ No correspondence has been found between the Chinese legation in Washington and the Department of State for this period in regard to Kang per se. Either time or ignorance had seemed to mellow these various agencies' interests in Kang, and the whims of the U.S. consul in Vancouver delivered to him a long-sought goal.

Dudley also provided Kang with letters of introduction stating that "this gentleman is entitled to every courtesy at the hands of the people of the United States."¹¹¹ He further wrote:

His Excellency is a tourist within the meaning of the Chinese Exclusion Act, and therefore, entitled to enter the United States, but he is more than this, he is at the head of a great movement for the uplifting of his people, and I shall feel personally obliged for any courtesy you may show His Excellency and the gentlemen who accompany him.

Dudley also was impressed with the work of Kang's Chinese Empire Reform Association, which he intimated in his letter to John Hay. He wrote that he had "been carefully watching the results of [Kang's] efforts, and I believe that his influence has worked great good among the Chinese residents in this Province ... I feel that His Excellency is doing great work not only for the benefit of his own people, but for mankind." Dudley also suggested that it was the "better class" of Canadian Chinese who were members of the reform association.¹¹² Dudley's solicitous arrangements for Kang's entry into the United States went far beyond the call of duty, yet Kang continued to delay the short trip across the border. Personal letters to his daughter and other Baohuanghui leaders in the United States from December 1904 through January 1905 show that Kang felt unprepared on many fronts to advance to what he knew could be his main stage. Holding him back were fear of Sun Yatsen, lack of

110 No. 384, F. W. Berkshire, Chinese Inspector, New York to Commissioner General of Immigration, March 1, 1907, Chinese File 14735-89, Box 162, Entry 132, RG 85, NA-Washington, noted "Not reported by Consul."

111 Dudley to Customs Officers of the United States, December 7, 1904, 312, vol. 75; Dudley to John Hay, Secretary of State, December 7, 1904, 313, vol. 75; Dudley To Whom It May Concern, December 7, 1904, 314, vol. 75, in Letters Sent From U.S. Consulate, Vancouver, BC, August–December, 1904, vol. 124; also see Dudley to Kang Yu Wei, Hotel Vancouver, November 26, 1904, Letters Sent, 289, vol. 75; Chew Kok Hean to Dudley, December 1, 1904, Letters Received, U.S. Consulate, Vancouver, vol. 27, all in Entry UD-10, RG 84, NA-College Park.

112 Dudley to John Hay, Secretary of State, December 7, 1904, 313 in Letters Sent From U.S. Consulate, Vancouver, BC, August–December, 1904, vol. 124, RG 84.

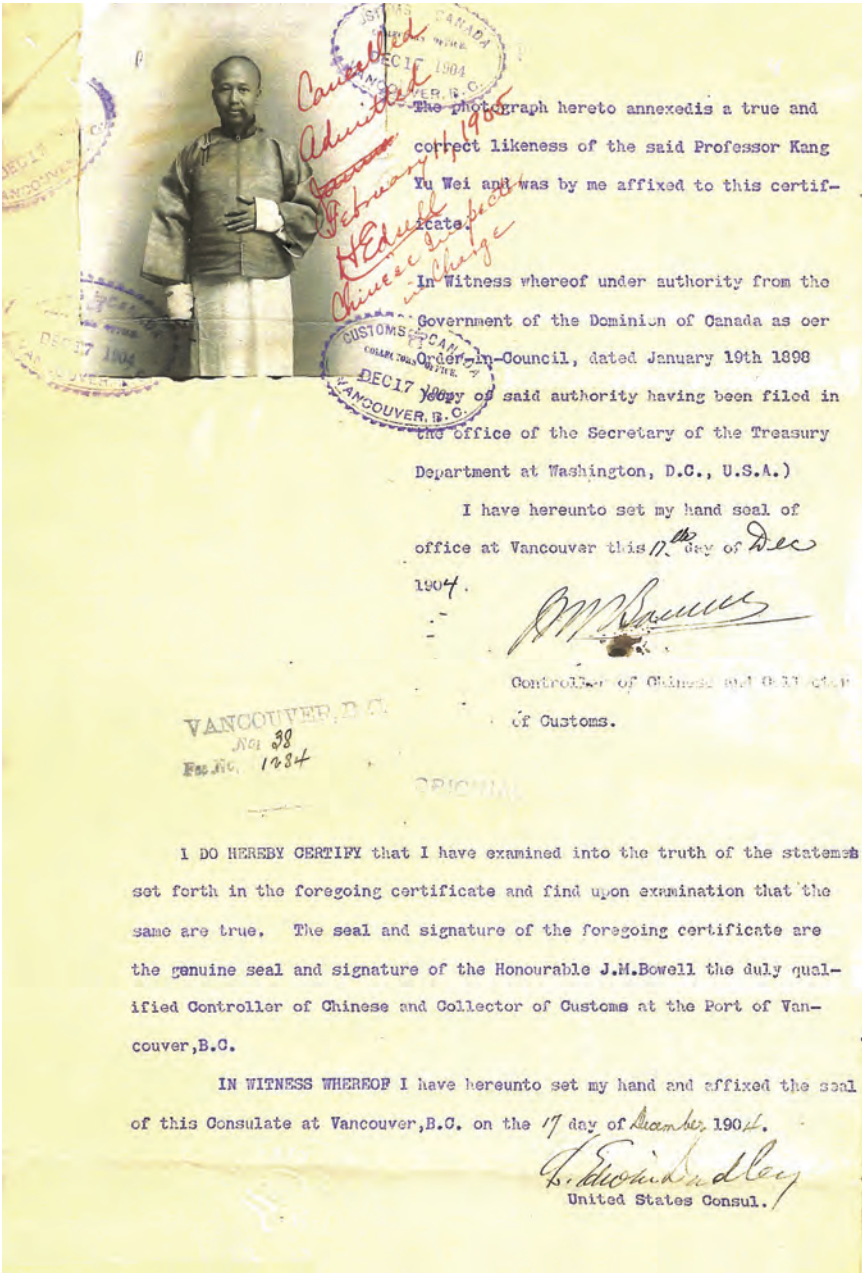


FIGURE 15 Section 6 certificate Issued by the Canadian government “for “Professor Kang Yu Wei,” signed by J. M. Bowen, Controller of Chinese and Collector of Customs, Vancouver, certified by L. Edwin Dudley, U.S. Consul, Vancouver, December 17, 1904, and notations of acceptance by H. Edsell, Sumas, Washington, February 11, 1905.

sufficient travel funds, and the slow completion of materiel that he needed for fundraising in the United States (membership badges and Commercial Corporation share certificates). Kang also had a lingering pain in his throat and lungs that he endured even after two trips to soak in the healing mineral waters of Harrison Hot Springs.¹¹³

Sun Yatsen's presence in the United States during most of 1904 (April 6 to December 24) terrified Kang into preparing both defensive (body armor) and offensive responses (assassination), a topic explored in depth in Chapter 4. Not only Sun but other revolutionary orators were touring the United States at this time, stirring up much mutual suspicion among Baohuanghui members as they wondered who among them was to be trusted. Baohuanghui stalwarts such as Tang Mingsan and Liang Wenqing (Liang Qiushui, Liang Wenxing) in New York and Huang Rongye in Hartford were writing alarming letters to Kang Tongbi and no doubt to Kang himself describing Sun's attacks on Kang and the Baohuanghui and reporting on his conversations with Baohuanghui members and allies.¹¹⁴ Among those suspected of collusion was the elderly Yung Wing, who had met Sun in Hartford and praised him publicly afterward. This caused local Baohuanghui leader Huang Rongye to warn Tongbi, "Thief Sun has met Mr. Yung [Yung Wing]. I don't know the content of their conversation. But what else could it be about other than bad-mouthing Mr. Kang and our party? ... Given Mr. Yung's words, his mind must have been poisoned by Bandit Sun. We should be very careful when we consult Mr. Yung about confidential party matters in the future."¹¹⁵ Yet, Yung cooperated closely with Kang in 1905 and received funding from him.¹¹⁶ During most of December, Sun was in New York City, preparing to depart for London, frustrated because he had failed to raise much money, even though his speeches in Chinese communities across the United States had roused a certain amount of revolutionary zeal and alienated some (although not many) Baohuanghui members from the reform movement. Kang fretted over whether it was safe to go to San Francisco, where Sun had strong supporters among the Zhigongtang (Chee Gong Tong, Chinese Triads, Freemasons), including Wong Sam Duck (Huang Sande), who in his

113 Kang visited Harrison Hot Springs, east of Vancouver, in December and January. Lo, "Sequel to Autobiography," 197–98. Letters sent and received at the U.S. Consulate, Vancouver, indicate that Dudley and his wife also vacationed at Harrison Hot Springs during the latter half of December, possibly coinciding with Kang's stay.

114 See Chapter 4 for details. The letters date from December 1904 to February 1905 and are in the Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

115 Huang Rongye 黃榮業 to Kang Tongbi, December 7, 1904, no. S-C32, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

116 See Chapter 7 for details of Kang's multifaceted involvement with Yung Wing.

later memoir disclosed that Sun had asked him to assassinate Kang.¹¹⁷ Sun's movements were secretive, and even Baohuanghui leaders in New York were not aware he had departed from that city in late December and had arrived in London on January 5. Now that Kang's nemesis was out of range, he could tackle more mundane projects, related in one way or another to money.

Kang planned to sell Commercial Corporation shares as he made the rounds of American chapters (following his speeches, it was customary to solicit funds) and was impatiently waiting for the company's stock certificates that had been sent by Luo Chang from London to New York and were delayed because Luo forgot to include the bill of lading.¹¹⁸ Kang believed that Canadian and U.S.-based investors would be key to the Commercial Corporation's success, and, although he was ultimately disappointed by the stock sales he made, he wanted to begin his U.S. trip with plenty of certificates on hand. Kang also had grown exasperated with Hong Kong's handling of the Commercial Corporation and during this third trip in Canada made the critical decision to appoint Ye En, the first national president of the Canadian Baohuanghui and the originator of the 1899 scheme to create a multinational corporation, as the general manager (*zongli*). Ye won the appointment because he enjoyed a high reputation among the Chinese in North America and received strong recommendations from two other top Baohuanghui leaders, Liang Qichao and Xu Qin.¹¹⁹ Ye En and his family settled in Macau in March 1905, and under his management, the Commercial Corporation rapidly expanded.¹²⁰

While in Canada, Kang became engrossed in another more labor-intensive and member-directed fundraising scheme—the sale of membership badges in each city on his U.S. itinerary. The full story of the badges, which illustrates Kang's detail-oriented and obsessive management style, is told in Chapter 3.

117 Kang Youwei to Kang Tongbi, December 31, 1904, no. S-C48, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection. Huang Sande 黃三德, *Hongmen Geming Shi* 洪門革命史 [Revolutionary History of the Triads] (China: 1936), 12–15. See Chapter 4.

118 Kang Youwei to Kang Tongbi, letters, January 12, 1905, no. S-C49 and January 26, 1905, no. S-C7, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection. Luo Chang was a student at Oxford at the time.

119 Sang, *Gengzi Qinwang*, 537–41; Gao Weinong 高偉濃, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui zai Meiguo Huaqiao Shehui zhong de Huodong* 二十世紀初康有為保皇會在美國華僑社會中的活動 [Activities of Kang Youwei and the Baohuanghui among the Chinese in the United States in the First Part of the twentieth Century] (Beijing: Xueyuan Chubanshe, 2009), 314–15.

120 Yip May Young [Ye Meirong, daughter of Ye En] in Macau to Kang Tongbi, March 22, 1905, no. E-37, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection, verifies the family's arrival in Macau. Chapter 3 covers the early development of the Commercial Corporation, and Chapter 9 is devoted to its flowering and demise.

From a distance, Kang supervised every aspect of the production of the badges, working closely with Tongbi and Yung Wing in Connecticut, Luo Chang in London, and Tang Mingsan, Liang Wenqing, and Li Zesheng of the *Zhongguo Weixin Bao* (*Chinese Reform News*) in New York. Kang's firm ideas on matters aesthetic and promotional were openly objected to by some whose duty it was to "sell" the badges to members. To raise funds, Kang conceived of the idea of requiring members to wear the badge to meet him as he toured the United States and charging members \$1 for the badge. Tens of thousands of badges were manufactured, and the sales brought in needed income.

Kang's preoccupation with this and other fundraising schemes reflected his personal insecurity about money and dependence on others to provide it. He continually wrote Tongbi that he had no money to disperse and was unable to redeem a money order from the Hong Kong headquarters.¹²¹ Frequently, during this period, Kang solicited funds from the wealthy Ye En, to pay for a variety of projects, from production of badges to Tongbi's personal expenses and a loan of \$2,000 to \$3,000 for Yung Wing.¹²² Yet, when Kang needed \$300 or \$400 to go to the United States, he was ashamed to ask Ye En "for such a small amount of money." Since Tongbi was handling some disbursements from Hartford National Bank (with funds from the Hong Kong headquarters), he asked her for \$200. "For even as small an amount as \$200 I still need it to be wired. You know how in need of funds I am."¹²³ He asked Tongbi to send some blank checks (presumably her Hartford bank), "so I can withdraw money anytime." Tongbi was something of a banker for the Baohuanghui in North America, sporadically receiving funds from Hong Kong and dispersing them for Baohuanghui projects and to her father. Kang did not get the \$200 until he arrived in Portland, even after sending Tongbi repeated letters telling her, "I have no money here."¹²⁴

Curiously, while Kang was begging his daughter to send him money, he was also discussing mysterious plans with her involving tens of thousands of dollars (U.S. or Hong Kong), likely concerning early business projects. "I just received a letter from Hong Kong that says they only collected a little more than thirty

121 Kang Youwei to Kang Tongbi, December 5, 1904, no. S-C39, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

122 Kang Youwei to Kang Tongbi, letters, December 5, 1904, no. S-C39; December 1904, no. S-C46, December 31, 1904, no. S-C48, January 9, 1905, no. S-C35, and January 12, 1905, no. S-C49, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

123 Kang Youwei to Kang Tongbi, January 12, 1905, no. S-C49, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

124 Kang Youwei to Kang Tongbi, February 6, 1905, no. S-C23, and W.S. Andrews, Asst. Cashier, Hartford National Bank, to Kang Tongbi, notice, February 21, 1905, no. E-5, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

thousand yuan. The matter in Rangoon is hard to handle, and Penang has already remitted one hundred thousand yuan for it."¹²⁵ Hong Kong was the Baohuanghui financial headquarters, to which membership fees, donations, and proceeds from the sale of Commercial Corporation shares were to be sent. Kang also might have been referring to the funding needed for rice brokerages in Rangoon and Penang, a pet project of Kang's from their initiation in 1904 which would exhaust a large proportion of Commercial Corporation funds.¹²⁶ Kang also asked Tongbi to remit the funds she held to Hong Kong, and likewise Kang told her that he had remitted to Hong Kong the \$1,000 she had sent him.

Yet, two group letters sent from the Hong Kong headquarters that coincided in time with Kang's third trip to Canada give a sense of how stretched Baohuanghui finances had become on all fronts. Guangzhi Shuju (Diffusion of Knowledge Publishing House), a publishing and translation company in Shanghai initiated by Liang Qichao with much financial support from Kang and Baohuanghui members, issued its annual settlement of accounts in December 1904 that showed a loss and lower dividends for members, causing an uproar.¹²⁷ A plea was also made to renew subscriptions to the Hong Kong newspaper, *Shang Bao* (Commercial News) "so we can pay for expenses."¹²⁸ And most demanding was the Guangdong Public School, a project championed by Baohuanghui leader Xu Qin, who wrote all members on January 15, 1905, asking them to fulfill the pledges made a year earlier to support this initiative. Xu made a down payment himself on a \$16,000 building, bought textbooks, and began hiring teachers, far exceeding the donations he had received. He planned a modern boarding school for 150 students and classes in Chinese, English, gymnastics, and music. "My heart shakes like a hanging flag ... I beg for your quick response."¹²⁹

125 Kang Youwei to Kang Tongbi, February 1905, no. S-C25, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection. The same letter to Tongbi mentions that Kang had bought ten thousand [dollars of life insurance?] from the New York Life Insurance Company (whether with his own or Baohuanghui funds is not known).

126 Kang Youwei to Li Fuji, May 26, 1904, in "Wu Xianzi Xiansheng Yigao ji Suocang Wenjian 伍憲子先生遺稿及所藏文件 [Mr. Wu Xianzi's Posthumous Manuscripts and Collection of Documents], Special Collections, University of Washington; thank you to Zhongping Chen for this reference. See Chapter 9 for more on rice brokerage investments.

127 Zhongguo Baohuanghui Zongju 中國保皇總局 [China Baohuanghui Headquarters] to all comrades, printed announcement, Hong Kong, December 14, 1904, no. Z-9, and Kang Youwei to Kang Tongbi, December 5, 1904, no. S-C39, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

128 Zhongguo Baohuanghui Zongju, December 14, 1904, no. Z-9, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

129 Xu Qin to comrades, January 15, 1905, no. Z-7, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection. The school opened in 1905 with ninety students. See Chapter 3.

Kang hoped that his financial plight would be relieved in the United States. He wrote to Tongbi's fiancé Luo Chang in London after he discovered that Luo had only about twenty British pounds and could not lend money to Tongbi: "Nothing can be expected of me until I come to the United States. Yet, I cannot guarantee you anything. I am deeply worried about it."¹³⁰

Originally, Kang planned to stay for a while in Hartford with Yung Wing, but Tang Mingsan told him that Hartford was too near New York, where there was still fear Sun Yatsen would reemerge. Moreover, a doctor told Kang that his bronchitis would not improve until he stopped using his voice so much and moved to a warmer climate. In January, Kang complained to Tongbi that his symptoms were "so severe that if I speak often I feel a lot of pain. I also cannot bend to write ... So this time I visit the United States with fear. I am afraid I am aging and cannot endure the arduousness of dealing with people all the time." Yet, his urge to travel could not be restrained: "I plan to make use of these two months' leisure time to go to Brazil, and I will be excused from social activities and talking. (This way I will recover on my own.)"¹³¹

On February 6, Kang sent a red New Year greeting to Tongbi: "I wish you peace and luck this coming spring. Please send several hundred badges to Portland if they are ready. I will go to Portland on February 11."¹³² Kang was ready to embark on a nine-and-a-half month, fifty-city tour of the United States that would be the pinnacle of his career as an itinerant politician.

3 Kang Enters the United States

"I have just entered Canada and soon will be in the United States," wrote Kang on December 6, 1904, to Tom Leung in Los Angeles. He announced his wish for Tom to accompany him as an aide during his American travels:

We will see each other soon. You can tell me everything about Los Angeles. When I tour places, I will definitely visit their factories, government agencies, and schools because these are very important. I would like to have a disciple or close relative accompany me so that I can entrust a lot

130 Kang Youwei to Luo Chang 羅昌, January 9, 1905, no. S-C35, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

131 Kang Youwei to Kang Tongbi, January 12, 1905, no. S-C49, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

132 Kang Youwei to Kang Tongbi, February 6, 1905, no. S-C23, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

of things to that person in the future. Do you wish to tour with me? Send me a telegram if you do.¹³³

Tom Leung would spend much of 1905 with Kang, usually serving as a physician (Tom was an herbalist by profession) but also as a key functionary in Baohuanghui activities as diverse as its business arm, the Commercial Corporation; its military cadet training program, the Western Military Academy; and its support of Baohuanghui students abroad. Tom also provided Kang with a home base for two months in Los Angeles, from which Kang was able to further explore his theory that China's greatest need was modern technology and industry, as will be discussed in Chapter 5. Apart from Kang's deep interest in absorbing the secrets of American power, he was obsessed with the challenge from Sun Yatsen and his embryonic revolutionary party and queried Tom: "Do you know where that Thief Sun [Sun Zei] is now? Please keep a close watch and investigate his whereabouts."¹³⁴

Americans first learned of Kang's imminent arrival in the United States from an article that appeared in the *Washington Post* and other newspapers on January 8, 1905, describing the Chinese Empire Reform Association as "a powerful reform movement which is quietly spreading over the entire world, and in which nearly 5,000,000 people are interested."¹³⁵ It stated that Kang's mission was to strengthen reform association chapters and "endeavor to establish a Chinese International Banking Institution, with capital of \$15,000,000." A large section in this article was devoted to General Richard A. Falkenberg, "commander-in-chief of the Chinese imperial reform army."¹³⁶ Falkenberg's prominence in this story foreshadows the coming controversy over the Western Military Academy (Gancheng Xuexiao), a network of military training

133 Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, December 6, 1904, no. 131 in Fang and Cai, 54.

134 Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, December 22, 1904, no. 356 in Fang and Cai, 56.

135 "Chinese Reform Plan," *Washington Post*, January 8, 1905. This article also appeared in the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* "Sunday Magazine" on the same date and in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* a week later. All say Kang "is now on his way to this country and will visit President Roosevelt, who is already aware of the coming visit of this titled Chinaman and also of the vast movement now on foot, to Americanize China, being made acquainted a short time ago with the facts by Miss Kang Hong Beck, a bright and charming girl of seventeen years, who, while in Washington recently, accepted an invitation to call on the president of the United States." Kang Tongbi's visit to the White House was in October 1903, according to her unpublished memoirs. Chi Jeng Chang, "Kang Tongbi (Kang Tung Pih) Chronicle," unpublished paper, September 28, 2014, 4, citing Kang Tongbi's unpublished memoir.

136 Falkenberg, an accomplished self-promoter, may have been instrumental in prompting this article, which does not mention his rival, Homer Lea.

programs sponsored by Baohuanghui chapters beginning in 1904, at the initiation of another American, Homer Lea, the Academy's chief instructor. Myth and mystification shroud the Western Military Academy's short but dramatic history (see Chapter 4 for details).

Before departing Canada, Kang wrote in his European travel book that he had "not yet tasted all the herbs of the earth." By this he meant he had not visited all the countries of the world in search of the best "cures" for China, in seeming expectation of his impending United States tour.¹³⁷ Kang, Zhou Guoxian, Rupert Humer, Ye En, and Hip Kwong left for the United States on February 11, 1905.¹³⁸ After a minor delay at the border, they crossed into the United States on the Central Pacific Railway at Sumas, Washington, and proceeded to Port Townsend, Washington, where Kang's visa was certified by immigration officials.¹³⁹

"Of all the countries on earth, none is as prosperous and as contented as the United States of America," Kang had written in one of his memorials to the emperor in 1898.¹⁴⁰ During his tour, Kang aimed to observe that prosperity and contentment. Zhou Guoxian, speaking on Kang's behalf in Seattle, told the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*:

We have come to the United States because it is the country where the greatest effort toward progressive China should be made. A country of freedom and broad-minded ideas, it is only fitting that Chinese in America should do much towards making the movement a success. And, if we hope to teach the Chinese here something, so also do we now hope that we may ourselves learn many things that will help us in our work.¹⁴¹

137 Kang, *Ouzhou Shiyi Guo Youji* in *Kang Youwei Quanji*, vol. 7, 345.

138 Hip Kwong is listed as a Vancouver merchant, Wing Yuan Co., whose destination is the same as Kang's and Zhou's—Seattle, Portland and Washington, DC. Canadian Pacific Railway [Chinese] arrivals at Port Sumas, Washington, February 11, 1905.

139 Telegram of Harry Edsell, Chinese Inspector in Charge, Sumas, BC [*sic*], to F. J. Schofield, U.S. Vice Consul, Vancouver, February 10, 1905, Letters Received, U.S. Consulate, Vancouver, vol. 30, Entry UD-10, RG 84, NA-College Park. As a further and final note on L. Edwin Dudley, a letter addressed to Dudley from Joseph M. Singleton (Zhao Wansheng 趙萬勝), president of the New York City Baohuanghui, February 10, 1905, was received (Letters Received) and noted Dudley's expected arrival in New York and promised to inform him when Kang arrived there, Miscellaneous Letters Received, U.S. Consulate, Vancouver, vol. 30, Entry UD-10, RG 84, NA-College Park.

140 "Seventh Memorial to the Emperor" (submitted February 1898), translated in Hsiao, *A Modern China and a New World*, 209.

141 "Kang Yu Wei in Seattle, Prominent Chinese Has Great Mission," *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, February 12, 1905, 1 and 10.

In his first statement to the press and the public of the United States, Kang succinctly indicated the task he set for himself: to teach and to learn. He sought an “interchange of ideas” with the local Chinese, as his academic upbringing had for so long instilled in him. Kang brought to the United States a rarely seen side of Chinese life—that of the upperclass elite, of the character of a member of a traditional scholar-gentry class family.¹⁴² He appeared in the traditional garb of one of his class, “picturesque” in a deep red robe. This was a cultural shock to the Americans who had heard of the supposed glories of China, but had seen only the thousands of immigrant Chinese laborers living and working in apparent poverty and taking little interest in their new homeland.

Still suffering from bronchitis, Kang left Seattle on February 13 after a farewell banquet that included thirty women (perhaps representing the local Chinese Empire Ladies Reform Association).¹⁴³ Portland reform association leaders escorted Kang to their city, headquarters for the twenty-six Pacific Northwest chapters. He was met at the train depot by one hundred local members.¹⁴⁴ A few days later, several hundred Chinese filled every seat at the First Methodist Church where Kang gave his first talk.¹⁴⁵ In Portland, Kang was asked about the intrigue widely publicized before his arrival in the United States that would mar his visit—Richard Falkenberg and several other American military officers had promised large commissions to American National Guardsmen in Portland and Seattle to enlist in the Chinese Imperial Reform Army and train Chinese cadets, a project having nothing to do with the Western Military Academy according to San Francisco Baohuanghui leader Tom She Bin (Tan Shubin).¹⁴⁶ Through Zhou Guoxian, Kang informed the *Oregonian* that “his work is not to stir up strife and revolution nor to create dissatisfaction among the Chinese in the country but rather to encourage them to become better citizens and in that way carry the work of the reform back to the mother country.”¹⁴⁷

Kang had his first taste of American institutions in Oregon’s capital, Salem, where he first visited with Governor George E. Chamberlain and then inspected

142 Kang at times denied his heritage as a Chinese aristocrat, apparently for reasons of appealing to his general middleclass American and Chinese audiences, people who had struggled to reach their middle position, and Kang wanted to appear as one of them. “Step by step Kang, the Cantonese son of a shopkeeper and grandson of coolie” read an article in the *Daily Colonist* (Victoria), April 13, 1899, 6. An imaginative reporter who had talked with Kang wrote this piece of misinformation.

143 “Kang yu Wer,” *Seattle Republican*, February 17, 1905, 4. See Chapter 3 for a description of the Chinese Empire Ladies Reform Association.

144 “Kang Yu Wei Here, Noted Chinese Reformer Is Visiting Portland,” *Portland Oregonian*, February 14, 1905, 8.

145 “Chinamen Hear Reformer,” *Portland Oregonian*, February 18, 1905, 10.

146 “Recruit an Army,” *Portland Oregonian*, January 31, 1905, 14.

147 “Kang Yu Wei Here,” *Portland Oregonian*, February 14, 1905, 8.

the state penitentiary and mental asylum. At the penitentiary, Wong Gee, an aged Chinese prisoner who had been convicted of murder in 1898, “fell at the feet of the prince [*sic*] and begged forgiveness for his crime.” Moved, Kang asked the governor to pardon the man, and the next day, “the convict was taken to Portland ... by two members of the prince’s staff, who will send him to China.”¹⁴⁸ Keeping a notebook at hand to record his observations, Kang toured every corner of the penitentiary from the scaffold and trapdoor in the execution room to the chapel. At the asylum, besides animated discussion with a doctor on Chinese and American theories of insanity, he took special interest in the laundry room machinery, “lovingly examining” the washing machines and wringers in action.¹⁴⁹ The next day Kang visited Willamette University in Salem and spoke to several hundred students, with Zhou Guoxian interpreting.¹⁵⁰

Kang rested in the rural abode of Portland Baohuanghui leader Li Meijin about twenty-five miles south of the city, returning to Portland around March 1.¹⁵¹ He visited Astoria, where numerous Chinese were employed in the fishing and canning industry, on March 9, and “addressed a large crowd of his countrymen at Fisher’s Opera House” before leaving by train for Los Angeles.¹⁵² Along the way, he made stops to give speeches in Sacramento, Fresno, Bakersfield, and other California towns where the Baohuanghui had chapters.¹⁵³

Kang’s brief stay in Fresno, a thriving agricultural town in the San Joaquin Valley with the third largest Chinatown in California and an active Baohuanghui chapter, yielded a most unexpected consequence. He met an impassioned fifteen-year old American-born Chinese girl who would become the love of his life. Among those greeting Kang’s train in Fresno were Lily Haw (He Zhanli, He Jinlan) and her father, Haw Gum (He Chunfang, Fernando Haw, Jim Fernando), a vineyard foreman and dedicated Baohuanghui member whose admiration of Kang inspired his daughter’s more complicated emotions.¹⁵⁴ That evening, Lily

148 “Chinese Murderer Receives Full Pardon,” *Anaconda Standard*, February 22, 1905, 1.

149 “Salem’s Royal Visitor,” *Salem Capital Journal*, February 21, 1905, 3.

150 Chen Yuesong, “Meiguo Lai Gao: Shi Nanhai Xiansheng You Kelijin Xilin Ji” 美洲來稿: 侍南海先生遊柯利近西林記 [Contribution from the United States: Report on Escorting Mr. Nanhai to Salem, Oregon], *Tung Wah Times*, April 22, 1905, 2.

151 Kang Youwei to Kang Tongbi, February 22, 1905, postmarked Sherwood, Oregon, February 24, no. 康-23, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection. “Personal Mention,” *Portland Oregonian*, March 2, 1905, 4.

152 “Reformer Talks at Astoria,” *Portland Oregonian*, March 10, 1905, 7.

153 Lo, “Sequel to Autobiography,” 198.

154 Kang Youwei, “Wang Ying He Zhanli Nüshi Zhuang” 亡媵何旃理女士狀 [Description of Losing Concubine He Zhanli], February 5, 1915, in *Kang Youwei Quanji*, vol. 10, 220–21. He Zhanli was born on October 11, 1890 according to affidavits by her father Haw Gum, mother Chun See, and doctor Chester Rowell, in statements verifying Lily [Lillie] Haw’s



FIGURE 16 Lily Haw (standing at right) and her family, Fresno, California, circa 1907.

and her father, along with hundreds of Fresno Chinese, packed the China Alley theater to hear Kang's hour-and-half speech.

"Frequent bursts of applause" interrupted Kang's speech as he urged all Chinese men "to cut off their tails and otherwise seek to uplift their race," reported the *Fresno Republican*.¹⁵⁵ Long before the fervor over shedding the Manchu-required queue would begin in 1911, Kang urged his followers to modernize their appearance by removing their queues and cease shaving their heads.¹⁵⁶ Baohuanghui chapters in North America, Fresno included, had

status as American-born, Fresno County, California, notarized August 17 (parents) and August 19, 1908 (doctor); documents donated by Pang Lian, He Zhanli's daughter-in-law, to the Kang Youwei Residential Museum in Qingdao. Kang in poems about He said she was born in 1891.

155 "Chinese Reformer," *Fresno Republican*, March 14, 1905, 6.

156 Kang in 1898 in his report to the emperor on the Meiji reforms suggested abolishing the queue and that the Guangxu Emperor should take on a Western hairstyle; universal queue-cutting was the policy after the Revolution began in Wuchang and until Yuan Shikai took over the Republican presidency from Sun Yatsen. See Rhoads, *Manchus and Han*, 64–65, 252–53. Kang, who often did not practice what he preached, did not cut off his queue until around his sixtieth birth year, 1917, as seen in a portrait by Xu Beihong

begun an open campaign against the queue in 1904.¹⁵⁷ It was seen as a political act, although Kang never spoke of the queue as a symbol of Han bondage to Manchu custom but rather as a hindrance to modernization, specifically its inconvenience for soldiers.

In Fresno, Kang further galvanized the audience by introducing his Datong ideal of gender equality, a subject well-suited to appeal to the few women present. Stories have been told that Lily Haw was so taken by Kang that she offered to play the zither for him after the talk, a meeting that led to a mutual infatuation fired by letters during the next two years, culminating in 1907 when Kang took Lily as his third wife.¹⁵⁸

With such a send-off, Kang embarked for Los Angeles, but his arrival was delayed by storms. Kang was welcomed at the Los Angeles train station on March 15 by a military guard from the Western Military Academy. Escorted by the Academy's chief instructor, "General" Homer Lea, Kang rode in an open car to the Baohuanghui headquarters and from there to a home near Westlake Park, where he would live for nearly two months, hosted by his student Tom Leung.¹⁵⁹ In Los Angeles, as in every other American town and city visited by Kang in 1905, he was following in the footsteps of his followers and local leaders who had built the Baohuanghui, chapter by chapter, since 1899.

• • •

It was five years between when Kang Youwei first set foot in North America in 1899 until he returned again in 1904. This long period was one in which he

painted around that time as well as a photograph of Kang taken in Shanghai and dated 11th month, 1917 (see image in Conclusion). Thank you to Aida Wong, for noting this, email to Jane Larson, May 22, 2016.

157 "Chinese Revolutionary Badge," *San Francisco Chronicle*, August 17, 1904, 6: "The queue-cutting reform recently started among the Chinese residents of the national capital has taken possession of the Chinese colony at Fresno. The Chinese Empire Reform Association stands sponsor for the peculiar movement." The movement in Washington, DC, New York, Boston, and Philadelphia is mentioned in "Abolish the Queue," *Washington Evening Star*, August 11, 1904. In a 1902 public letter, Liang Qichao thanked Ye En for his photo: "We have one more comrade because Huibo [Ye En] has cut off his [Manchu-style pigtail—queue]." Liang Qichao to Ye En, Li Fuji, et al., August 14, 1902, no. 540 in Fang and Cai, 102. "Chinese Reformer Here," *Los Angeles Times*, March 16, 1905, section 2, 8.

158 Mabelle M. Selland, *From China to Fresno: A Love Story* (Fresno: Heritage Fresno Press, 2007), 42–49. Although he firmly believed in women's equality, Kang eventually had six wives. See Chapter 10 for Kang's marriage to Lily Haw.

159 "Chinese Reformer Here," *Los Angeles Times*, March 16, 1905; "Chinese Welcome Kong Wu Wei," *Los Angeles Herald*, March 16, 1905, 12. See Chapter 5 for Kang's Los Angeles stay.

felt continually threatened with capture or assassination by Qing agents or bounty hunters. He lived in seclusion in Hong Kong and the Straits Settlements before taking up residence in the safer Himalayan foothills of northeast India. It was a time of great thoughts of utopia but also plans for an armed uprising to restore Guangxu to a position of authority. When he felt it safe to travel again, he made a far-ranging tour of eleven European countries in search of models of governance for China. Then he returned to North America and during a three-month sojourn in British Columbia he partly recovered his health and held wide-ranging discussions with local Chinese community leaders. Ever busy, he found time to write poetry and about his European travels. Kang was also occupied with how to raise mission-supporting funds, strategies as expansive as the Commercial Corporation and as mundane as selling badges for the now flourishing Baohuanghui. Between 1899 and 1904, Kang and his close followers had expended considerable energy in developing the Baohuanghui as a robust international political party. In early 1905, Kang finally achieved his long-sought goal of visiting the United States, spending his first month in the Pacific Northwest and central California before moving on to a longer visit to Los Angeles.

Building the Baohuanghui in North America, 1900–1905

We look to America for the realization of what otherwise will be impossible to obtain— reform in China.¹



1 A Government in Waiting?

Kang's vaulting ambitions for the Baohuanghui went far beyond the reach of other overseas Chinese voluntary associations, such as secret societies or clan- or district-based protective associations, to the point of declaring that any of the China's four hundred million people who were loyal to the emperor, the country, and the Chinese race could be members.² From the beginning, Kang set no limits on the worldwide expansion of the Baohuanghui, the range of activities it would pursue, or the scale of the national issues it would address. In the 1899 Baohuanghui charter, he confidently promised monetary rewards and official appointments for Baohuanghui donors and leaders to be granted by a grateful Guangxu Emperor when he regained his throne, thus leading one to assume that Kang imagined the Baohuanghui to be laying the organizational foundation for a modern government and a participating citizenry. In North America, the organization came the closest to fulfilling Kang's vision, but its development between 1900 and 1905 was due primarily to the energy and initiative of Kang's deputies, local chapters, and members, rather than to Kang's leadership, which had both constructive and destructive results.

- 1 Kang Youwei in an interview while traveling across Canada in 1899; see Bennett Chapple, "Kang Yu Wei on the 'New China,'" *The National Magazine* (Boston) 10, no. 5 (August 1899): 468.
- 2 Kang Youwei, "Baojiu Da-Qing Huangdi Gongsì Xuli" 保救大清皇帝公司序例 [Preface and Regulations for the Company to Protect the Great Qing Emperor], October 1899, in *Kang Youwei Quanjì* 康有爲全集 [Collected Works of Kang Youwei], ed. Jiang Yihua and Zhang Hualong 姜義華, 張榮華 (Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin Daxue Chubanshe, 2007), vol. 5, 152–53.

2 Propagating the Baohuanghui in North America and Beyond

During his five-year absence from North America, Kang's many deputies traveled widely, leaving new Baohuanghui chapters in their wake. Along with chapters founded on the initiative of local Chinese, Kang's party enjoyed "a period of phenomenal expansion," especially between 1899 and 1901, as the reformists outstripped the revolutionaries in their contest for support.³ This strategy of building a party from the grass roots resembled a Western political campaign in which a candidate's "surrogates" do the legwork with local community leaders. It proved so successful for Kang that Sun later imitated it with his own political organization, the Tongmenghui (Revolutionary Alliance). Kang's precursors were of such importance in developing the Baohuanghui and in personifying the reform movement for North Americans that their organizing tours in the United States are treated in some detail below.⁴

Most of Kang's organizers were his former students, personally and ideologically close to him and trusted to transmit the reform message with both passion and fidelity to Kang's platform. In only a few cases were newer followers from overseas Chinese communities sent into the field, and these were generally men whom Kang had personally come to know well, although they never earned the same trust as he bestowed on his students.

2.1 *Liang Qitian*

The first and one of the most indefatigable of Kang's deputies was Liang Qitian, Liang Qichao's cousin and one of his "sworn brotherhood" in Japan who had tilted toward revolution. He spent four years organizing and reviving Baohuanghui chapters in North, Central, and South America. Liang arrived in Canada in March 1900, was reported to be in Portland in July and San Francisco in August before traveling widely in the United States. He went to Mexico sometime before June 1901 and probably visited countries in Central and South America before returning to the United States. Liang made a second trip to Mexico, Central, and South America in 1903 followed by a second tour of the United States. That year, he was reported by the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* to be the vice president of the Baohuanghui's Mexico City chapter, and "when his work of organizing societies in the republic [of Mexico] is well-advanced, he will go to Europe, where he will

3 Jung-pang Lo, "Sequel to the Chronological Autobiography," *K'ang Yu-wei: A Biography and Symposium* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1967), 258–59 nn8–11.

4 Their organizing tours in Canada and Latin America are treated in Chapters 1 and 8, respectively.

continue the reform movement.”⁵ There is no evidence he went to Europe, or visited any Baohuanghui chapters established on the continent, but Liang was as much in demand at the end of his journey as when it commenced. On January 2, 1904, Liang spoke at the dedication of the Los Angeles Baohuanghui office and took the overnight train to Marysville, an important commercial center in California’s central valley whose population was one-quarter Chinese. He was met by ten carriages and a brass band and wrote his classmate Tom Leung in Los Angeles, “Our comrades wearing the badges of our association were waiting solemnly ... A sea of Westerners from all over were watching. Receiving such warm and honorable treatment, I was moved and ashamed.”⁶ Liang asked Tom to send several copies of the Los Angeles chapter’s charter to Marysville to use as a model. A month later, the *Hawaiian Star* noted Liang’s passage back to Asia via Honolulu, and he became a key figure at the Baohuanghui headquarters and an officer in the Commercial Corporation in Hong Kong.⁷

Liang’s first trip to the United States came during a time of high tension between the Qing government and the Baohuanghui. In Canada Liang had been raising funds from Baohuanghui members for the Qinqiang uprising to restore Guangxu to his throne (see Chapter 4). The *New-York Tribune* reported that Liang’s speech in Portland on July 30, 1900, blamed Cixi for “intriguing with the Boxers instead of putting down the rebels.” A separate news dispatch revealed Baohuanghui plans to take advantage of the invading Allies during the Boxer uprising:

There sailed yesterday from Vancouver on the steamer Empress of India fifty prominent Chinese reformers from New York and Boston, twenty from Seattle and thirty from Vancouver, all bound for Macao and all wearing conspicuously displayed a button photograph of their Emperor,

5 “Chinese Secret Society at Work in this Country,” *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, October 24, 1903. Although the revolutionaries established party chapters in Europe, it appears that apart from a chapter in Liverpool, England, the Baohuanghui primarily sent members there for study, including Luo Chang, who graduated from Oxford and married Kang Tongbi.

6 “To Revivify the Old China,” *Los Angeles Times*, January 3, 1904, 5; “Chinese Reform Movement,” *Marysville Daily Appeal*, January 7, 1904, 1; Liang Qitian 梁啓田 to Tan Zhangxiao and Huang Binghu 黃冰壺, January 9, 1904, no. 180 in Fang Zhiqin and Cai Huiyao 方志欽, 蔡惠堯, ed., *Kang Liang yu Baohuanghui: Tan Liang zai Meiguo Suocang Ziliao Huibian* 康梁與保皇會: 譚良在美國所藏資料彙編 [Kang, Liang, and the Baohuanghui: A Compilation of Materials Collected by Tom Leung in the United States] (Hong Kong: Yinhe Chubanshe, 2008), 168.

7 “A Notable Chinese,” *Hawaiian Star*, February 8, 1904, 1. Mo Yunping 莫雲屏 and Tan Zhangxiao, Los Angeles, to all members, May 1, 1905, no. 579 in Fang and Cai, 226–30. From Torreón, Kang summoned Liang Qitian to North America to supervise the Mexican businesses but he did not return. Kang Youwei to Tom Leung, December 26, 1905, no. 352 in Fang and Cai, 68.

Kwang Su. The Chinese Empire Reform Association of the World had received a cable dispatch in cipher from its leader, Kwang Yu Wie, instructing the association to send the leading members to Macao at once, where a council of war will be held to consider ways of raising an army among the members of the association to support the allied Powers.⁸

Wu Tingfang, the ever-vigilant Chinese minister in Washington, DC, notified the U.S. State Department about Liang's presence and activities in the United States. As a result, when Liang arrived in San Francisco on August 27, 1900, Collector of Customs John P. Jackson investigated and reported to the Treasury Department that, upon having located Liang, he determined that "no action" should be taken against him because "notoriety is just what he wants and I will not aid him in his designs," and, furthermore, he hadn't violated the law. Jackson's report was forwarded to the State Department for consideration.⁹

Liang was a suitable envoy for Kang, as pictured in a full-page story in the Sunday magazine of the *San Francisco Call* a few days after his arrival—a dignified young man in black skullcap and long scholar's robes studded with buttons from various Baohuanghui chapters around the world.¹⁰ Accompanied by a Canadian Chinese who acted as English-language interpreter and political attaché, Liang's style of travel set the pattern for subsequent Baohuanghui itinerants, blending organization and propaganda work with enthusiastic tourism and detailed observation and reports on anything that could be applicable for exploitation or imitation by the reformers. Liang, in a boast that could not be disproved, presented himself to the *Call* reporter as "the only visitor to this shore who has known or even seen the Emperor, Kwang Hsu ... Certainly Leung Kai Tin is THE most remarkable Chinaman who has ever visited San Francisco." Liang told the *Call* that "I was a student of Kang Yu Wei, and one of the scholars whom the Emperor gathered about him during his six months of busy reform." He claimed also that he carried letters between the reformers and the emperor when meetings were no longer possible. In fact, during the Hundred Days, it is unlikely Liang Qitian was in Beijing at all, and only

8 "Chinese Reformers at Work: Propaganda by Leong Ki Hin—Members of Association Sail for Macao," *New-York Tribune*, August 1, 1900, 3.

9 Report of John P. Jackson, Collector of Customs, San Francisco, to Commissioner General of Immigration, September 12, 1900, Chinese File 1991, Box 16, Entry 132, RG 85; Oliver L. Spaulding, Acting Secretary of Treasury, to Secretary of State, September 19, 1900, Miscellaneous Letters of the Department of State, RG 59, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/153568951?objectPage=4>, accessed May 24, 2024, enclosing a copy of Jackson's letter.

10 "He was a Fellow-Student of Emperor Kwang Hsu of China," *San Francisco Call*, September 9, 1900.

Kang and Liang Qichao had personal audiences with Guangxu. But, as Liang Qichao's cousin and comrade in arms in Japan, Liang Qitian was certainly the first Chinese to visit North America with a close second-hand account of the reformers' role in the 1898 events.¹¹

In his first speech to San Francisco Chinese on September 2, covered by the *Call*, Liang fulsomely pled the case for supporting the emperor and shed tears for the plight of "the first honest Emperor with which the Creator has blessed China for thousands of years ... Do you know, men of China, that the father of us all is at this moment a prisoner? Do you realize that this great and good man is suffering for us?" As the audience wept, Liang changed his tone: "Do not weep, my brothers ... Liberty and reform will soon be ours." He then introduced a theme that Kang and many others would echo, the inspiration of the American Revolution and democracy for China:

All will soon be changed and the regeneration of China will follow. The inspiration comes from the land of glorious liberty (America), whose hospitality you now enjoy; the land of the flowery banner whose sons were the first great reformers. The immortal father of their country, Washington, has not only liberated Americans, but the history of his deeds is now reforming China.¹²

Liang Qitian was a prodigious organizer for the Baohuanghai, traveling far beyond cities and larger towns to mining and fishing villages of Montana and the Pacific Northwest (Washington, Oregon, and Idaho), where Liang Qichao later reported thirty-eight chapters by 1903–4.¹³ In towns where enthusiasm for reform was flagging or membership stagnant, Liang apparently revived chapters and expanded membership.¹⁴ Like Kang, Liang apparently reveled in tourism. He and his interpreter Gong Hee were thought to be "the first tourists of their race" in Yellowstone Park and sent a bound, rice-paper Chinese book

11 Liang Qitian taught at the Baohuanghai's Datong School in Yokohama in 1899.

12 "Leong Tai Kinn Sheds Tears over the Woes of Kwang Su," *San Francisco Call*, September 3, 1900, 2.

13 See table below of Liang Qichao's tabulation for Montana (12 chapters) and the Pacific Northwest (26 chapters).

14 L. Eve Armentrout Ma, *Revolutionaries, Monarchists, and Chinatowns: Chinese Politics in the Americas and the 1911 Revolution* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1990), 79. For Liang Qitian and his Portland, Oregon-based interpreter Gong Hee's activities in Montana in 1901, see Mark T. Johnson, *The Middle Kingdom under the Big Sky: A History of the Chinese Experience in Montana* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2022), 75–77.

illustrated with their photographs and hand-drawn maps of the park to the corporate headquarters of the Northern Pacific Railroad.¹⁵

Liang's travels in Latin America will be recounted in Chapter 8, but he appears to have been the first of Kang's disciples to investigate Mexican business opportunities. In June 1901, he wrote Tom Leung to entice Tom to invest in a land-buying pool that would engage in farming before selling the land at a tremendous profit.¹⁶ He also asked Tom to recruit "an agricultural expert" who could look into raising silkworms on the plentiful mulberry trees, because "Mexican people are crazy about Chinese silk goods," and, with Mexico's heavy levies on silk goods, "we will be able to make a great profit." In the same letter, Liang said he had traveled to thirteen cities for the Baohuanghui and that the association had been established in Torreón under the initiative of the wealthy landowner and merchant Wong Foon Chuck (Huang Kuanzhuo), who had offered to hire one of Kang's students as a speaker for the association and pay him \$1,000 and expenses.

2.2 *Xu Qin*

Xu Qin (Xu Junmian, Xue'an, Xu Shiqin or Su Shih Chin, Choy So Kan) left his post as principal of the Datong School in Yokohama to join his classmate Liang Qitian in North America in May 1901. Xu was one of Kang's first students, and his commitment to Kang was shown as early as the 1890s when he used his family fortune to pay rent for Kang's school and subsidize the publication of Kang's books. When Kang fled China, he turned to Xu to look after his family.¹⁷ Described by others as the disciple most trusted by Kang, the reliable and loyal—as well as fearlessly blunt—Xu would be tapped to wrangle with the Baohuanghui's most challenging organizing tasks, traveling almost continuously on Kang's behalf until 1912.¹⁸

Xu Qin arrived in San Francisco on the *City of Peking* on May 31, 1901, to be greeted at the dock by Consul General He You, who believed that Xu was

15 "Unique Railroad Literature," *St. Paul Globe*, March 5, 1903, 6.

16 Liang Qitian to Tan Zhangxiao, June 10, 1901, no. 565 in Fang and Cai, 162.

17 *Nanhai Kang Xiansheng Zibian Nianpu* [Chronological Autobiography of Kang Youwei], translated in Lo, *K'ang Yu-wei*, 57, 128.

18 Chen Xuezhong 陳學章 and Wang Jie 王傑, "Xu Qin yu Hengbin Datong Xuexiao" 徐勤與橫濱大同學校 [Xu Qin and the Datong School in Yokohama], in *Kang Youwei yu Jindai Wenhua* 康有為與近代文化 [Kang Youwei and Modern Culture], ed. Fang Zhiqin and Wang Jie 方志欽, 王傑 (Kaifeng: Henan Daxue Chubanshe, 2006), 255–69. For Xu's later career in the United States, see Chapters 10 and 11.

an official sent by China's government to study in the United States.¹⁹ When a Chinese newspaper exposed Xu as "a revolutionist," the consul general and Chinese Minister Wu Tingfang were outraged at being deceived and protested to U.S. authorities, all the way to the secretary of the treasury, accusing Xu of bearing a fraudulent Section 6 certificate and demanding that he be deported under Chinese exclusion laws.²⁰ Xu was arrested and "assigned quarters in the County Jail as a Federal prisoner."²¹ The Baohuanghui rallied behind Xu, led by Tang Qiongchang (Tong Kai Chong, Tong King Chung) in San Francisco, whose own relatives in China had been jailed by Qing authorities after Consul General He You reported on Tang's political activities in the United States.²² American attorneys were hired to defend Xu in court, and another American whom the members called "Ban Na" was deputized by the Baohuanghui to go to Washington and follow up Xu's case with President William McKinley.²³ McKinley had visited San Francisco earlier in May and had met Tang and two other San Francisco chapter leaders. They presented him with a pair of curtains embroidered with life-size peacocks and expressed the association's gratitude for American forbearance during the Boxer uprising: "We feel that it was you, and you alone, of all the rulers of the great nations, who had the courage to say a kind word for the helpless subjects of our beloved Emperor, Kwang Hsu, and at a time, too, when all Europe stood ready to apportion ancient China as might best satisfy their greed."²⁴ Mr. "Ban Na" described his meetings with McKinley to the San Francisco chapter, saying that McKinley "had long admired the members of the association, and he knew that what they did was

19 "China Sends Her Best Men Here," *San Francisco Call*, June 1, 1901. The delegation that Xu Qin attached himself to include another reform-minded man whom Xu probably knew, Xue Songying [Sieh Sung Ying, Xue Xianzhou], a government-supported student who entered the University of California. Xue's teenaged niece, Xue Jinqin, already famous for being the first female to give a political speech in China, was soon to be recruited by Kang as a potential assassin of Cixi (see Chapter 4).

20 "Minister Wu Scents Treason," *San Francisco Call*, June 8, 1901, 14, does not identify the Chinese newspaper.

21 "Legal Complications are Arising in Case of the Chinese Reformer," *San Francisco Call*, June 15, 1901, 14.

22 "Consul-General and Reformers," *New-York Tribune*, July 30, 1900, 3. Tang used the Baohuanghui newspaper, *Wenxing Bao* (Chinese World) 文興報 to denounce the consul general, who is quoted saying about Tang, "His relatives were cast into prison, apparently because they were in league with him to overthrow the present dynasty."

23 Cui Zijian 崔子肩 in San Francisco to all honorable and righteous Baohuanghui members, printed letter with seal "Meiguo Zhengbu Baojiu Da-Qing Guangxu Huangdi Hui Yin" 美國正埠保救大清光緒皇帝會印 [Seal of the Head United States chapter of the Society to Protect the Great Qing Emperor Guangxu], 1901 [probably August], no. 506 in Fang and Cai, 358–62. "Ban-Na" was written 班拿.

24 "Chinese Reformers' Gift to M'Kinley," *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 24, 1901, 3.

actually what patriotic citizens did—what was righteous and just.” As for Xu, “Ban Na” wrote that McKinley “would like to see him stay in the United States to observe our democracy so that one day it might be adopted by China. He said that if [Xu’s] passport has a problem, he would consider Mr. Xu a political prisoner and allow him to stay in America under special protection.” On July 6, 1901, the *San Francisco Call* reported: “Su Shih Chin, a proscribed enemy of the Dowager Empress of China, was admitted to this country yesterday by order of the Secretary of the Treasury,” who “decided that this Government could not debar Chinese immigrants of the favored classes because of political offenses.”²⁵ Xu thus began his American tour as something of a celebrity with his plight and cause given extensive coverage in the American press and was the beneficiary of both American patronage and American legal justice (he had been released from jail after only a few days thanks to his lawyers’ habeas corpus appeal).

Qing officials would never again embarrass themselves by such public protests against the visiting reformers. Records show in 1903 that China’s new minister, Liang Cheng (Liang Zhendong, Chentung Liang Cheng, Liang Pixu), asked the Department of State to exclude Liang Qichao, but for a reason not evident in these documents, Liang was able to enter unobstructed.²⁶ Furthermore, around this time, reform-minded Qing officials and Manchu princes visiting North America began to engage in regular interchange with Baohuanghui members and openly express their support. In the midst of his American tour, Liang Qichao told the New Orleans *Times-Picayune*: “While we were in Washington the whole of the Chinese Legation used to come see us every evening, including the Chinese Minister, and they were all very interested in our work.”²⁷ Chinese Minister Liang Cheng was certainly sympathetic to, if not on occasion directly allied with, the Baohuanghui, on such issues as opposing the Exclusion policies. This reflected both the easing of Qing hostilities toward the Baohuanghui after the inauguration of Cixi’s New Policies (Xinzheng) as well as Liang Cheng’s personal history as an Americanized, English-speaking alumnus of Yung Wing’s Chinese Educational Mission.²⁸

25 “Su Shih Chin is Allowed to Land,” *San Francisco Call*, July 6, 1901.

26 Hay to Chentung Liang Sheng, April 8, 1903, Notes to Foreign Legation, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/216903560?objectPage=115>; Oliver L. Spaulding, Acting Secretary of Treasury, to Hay, March 1, 1900, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/153557989?objectPage=4>, and Milton E. Ailes, Acting Secretary of Treasury, to Hay, April 3, 1903, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/153621044?objectPage=181>, both in *Miscellaneous Letters of the Department of State RG 59*, all accessed May 24, 2024.

27 “News and Notables at the New Orleans Hotels,” *Times-Picayune*, July 11, 1903.

28 Liang Cheng 梁誠 (Liang Pixu 梁丕旭) arrived in 1875 as part of the fourth detachment of students; Edward J. M. Rhoads, *Stepping Forth into the World: The Chinese Educational*

Another positive change for the Baohuanghui was the new Guangdong Governor General Tao Mo, who ignored San Francisco Consul He You's telegram asking him to arrest the family of Xu Qin.²⁹ Tao also released from prison the families of Luo Botang and Tang Qiongchang, the San Francisco Baohuanghui activists who had been promoting and fundraising for Qinwang. Kang Youwei wrote members in August 1901 that Governor General Tao had said openly that Xu, Luo, and Tang were "trying to protect the emperor; they were not protecting thieves and bandits. If people tried to protect the emperor and their families must be arrested, what about those who protect the thieves? ... As a result, our comrades will be more courageous and enthusiastic because they do not have to worry about their families."

2.3 *Kang Tongbi*

Kang's most unusual precursor was his second daughter, the charismatic and adventurous Kang Tongbi.³⁰ Kang sent her off from India with these verses:

Thousands of miles to America and Europe
 A young girl makes the trip alone.
 Do I not have compassion on you?
 But I cannot help having pity on all living beings ...
 An initial step toward women's rights—

Mission to the United States, 1872–81 (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2011), 17, 145–46, 210–11.

- 29 Kang Youwei to righteous Baohuanghui comrades in all cities, August 3, 1901, no. 532 in Fang and Cai, 37. Chang Yu-fa writes that Baohuanghui chapters throughout the world, including British Columbia, Panama, and Colombia, carried out several public telegram campaigns addressed to Tao Mo, in summer and fall 1901, to explain the Baohuanghui movement and ask him to protect the emperor. Chang Yu-fa 張玉法, *Qingjide Lixian Tuanti* 清季的立憲團體 [Constitutionalists of the Late Ch'ing Period: An Analysis of Groups in the Constitutional Movement, 1895–1911] (Taipei: Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, 1985), 254.
- 30 Kang, "Chronological Autobiography of K'ang Yu-wei," 36, gives Tongbi's birth year as 1881, but Lo, *K'ang Yu-wei*, 145 n8, thought this was an error and suggested she was born in 1887. 1881 seems to be the correct birth year, recorded both by Kang Youwei in *Nanhai Kang Xian-sheng Zibian Nianpu* translated by Lo and by Kang Tongbi in her autobiography (although there is a difference of two days between the father's and daughter's notation of her birth date). It seems unlikely Kang would have misremembered the birth year of his much-loved second daughter, or would have missed the incorrect year when he made multiple checks of the *nianpu* manuscript. Lo notes that Tongbi wrote in the preface to her father's *nianpu* that she was eighteen in 1903 when she went to the United States; indeed, many American newspapers reported that she was seventeen when she arrived (and continued to report she was seventeen as the years passed). However, we conjecture that this was a convenient fiction allowing Tongbi to "pass" as a teenager of American high school age.

A great task you now undertake.
 'People's rights' is a universal principle;
 Constitutional government is truly an excellent plan;
 These are timely panaceas—
 Proposals that can really save the country.
 Clearly will you enunciate my aim,
 And with zeal carry out the mission.³¹

Kang depended on Tongbi as his most constant companion in exile, with his wives and mother ensconced in Macau and Tongbi's older sister Tongwei a married woman by 1899. Tongbi often served as Kang's interpreter as well as his personal and scholarly assistant. When she arrived in North America, she was, by any standard, a precociously modern Chinese woman who must have seemed no less intrepid and sophisticated to the wives of wealthy Chinese merchants, her peers in North America, as to American observers. Unlike her peers, Tongbi walked (and rode horses and test fired a machine gun) unhampered by bound feet; she arrived speaking English reasonably well (and was literate in Japanese and Sanskrit); she had traveled widely and at times on her own; and she easily took on the role as public representative of the Chinese reform movement.³² As with his other daughters, Kang wanted Tongbi to receive a foreign education.³³ However, because he also needed her help as a political organizer and a travel escort, it took Tongbi four years of preparation to be admitted to college and once there she was granted status as a "special student," receiving an honorary college degree.³⁴ Tongbi's public speeches, sense of fashion, and eloquence in newspaper interviews kept her in the American press throughout her stay (1903–9). She studied first in Hartford, Connecticut—Lords Hill School for Girls and Hartford High School, as well as with private tutors—and then in New York City at Barnard College. Tongbi's presence on the East Coast

31 Kung-ch'üan Hsiao, *A Modern China and a New World: K'ang Yu-wei, Reformer and Utopian, 1858–1927* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1975), 11.

32 Lo, "Sequel to Autobiography," 190, for 1902, recounts a nine-day horseback ride with her father "over the foothills of the Himalayas to Gangtok, capital of Sikkim." "Miss Kang Tung Pek Fires Machine Gun," *Hartford Courant*, July 18, 1905, 11, describes Kang Youwei's visit to the Colt Armory in Hartford, where he "spent the greater part of the afternoon yesterday watching his daughter, Miss Kang Tung Pek, firing a Colt automatic machine gun" and other weapons with much relish and astonishingly good aim.

33 Both Kang Tongwei and Kang's adopted daughter, Kang Tonghe, were educated in Japan.

34 Tongbi missed many classes at Barnard in her two years there. She generally joined her father's travels each summer, several times sailing to Europe.

was likely one reason that Kang Youwei would return several times to that part of the United States.³⁵

Stirred by her imminent entry into the realm of politics, Kang Tongbi wrote these words before setting sail from Japan to Canada:

In study, I should not be bound by formalities,
But aspire to improve my people's lives.
The Universal Principles³⁶ inherited through my family must surge forward,
So the blood of our martyrs will not have been shed in vain.³⁷

The gist of Tongbi's reform message was similar to that of her father's. Beyond her father's nebulous goal of "an initial step toward women's rights" was her hope that Chinese women would join the movement, first by modernizing their own families, and then through teaching others to do the same. She could hardly have been uninfluenced by her father's famous work, *Datong Shu* (Book of Great Community), which he had completed when they lived together in India in 1902. Among his basic premises was that to achieve unity, certain "barriers of suffering" must be eradicated to achieve "one world." In Kang's utopia, the barriers between men and women would disappear entirely:

The men and women of One World are entirely equal. Through the abolishment of the family, women are no longer burdened with the age-old duties of caring for children, nor are they merely playthings for men. There being no essential differences between men and women as human

35 Kang Tongbi's educational career seems to have followed this sequence: November 1903 to spring 1904, Lords Hill School for Girls, Hartford; November 1904 to June 1905, private tutoring by Adeline Bartlett Allyn in East Windsor with the goal of helping Tongbi pass college entrance examinations and enter Barnard College in 1906; June 19–24, 1905, college entrance examinations at Trinity College, Hartford; Barnard College report on Tongbi's failure to pass the examinations in English, American history, Latin grammar and composition, elementary French, elementary algebra, and geography; July 1905 to August 1906, private tutoring with Mrs. Goodwood in English and math; September 1906 to January 1907, enrolled as a junior at Hartford Public High School; February 1907 to June 1909, "Special Student" and "Guest of the College," Barnard College; graduated with the 1909 class.

36 *Gongli* 公理, the philosophy of the Great Unity, from *Datong Shu* 大同書, which Kang Youwei had just completed; the original title of *Datong Shu* was "The Universal Principles of Mankind" [Renlei Gongli] 人類公理.

37 Excerpt from Kang Tongbi 康同璧, "Xie Huai" 寫懷 [Reflections], *Yomiuri Shimbun* (Tokyo), March 12, 1903. Translated by Hongmei Sun, Chi Jeng Chang, and Jane Leung Larson. The martyrs referred to probably include both the six men executed in 1898 and the lives lost in the failed Qinwang attempt in 1900.

beings, women are not regarded any differently than men when it comes to work or to holding office.³⁸

Kang's criticisms of "sex boundaries" and "family boundaries"—two major sources of suffering—were very severe. "His views in these connections were, at the time he expressed them, by far the most novel and provocative."³⁹ He wrote impassioned on the status of women in *Datong Shu*:

Now for ten and some thousand years and in all the countries of the globe, incalculable, inconceivable numbers of beings who have all alike had human forms, have all alike had human intelligence, who have all been in intimate relation with and loved by men, have been callously and unscrupulously repressed, restrained, kept in ignorance, shut up, imprisoned, and shackled by [these same men]—prevented by men from attaining independence, from taking part in public affairs, from becoming officials, from being citizens, from participating in public assemblies; still worse, from doing scholarly work, from voicing their opinions, from having their names heard by others, from free social intercourse,... from [even] leaving the house; and still worse, [forced by men] to bind and constrict their waists, to veil their faces, to deform their feet, to tattoo their bodies ...⁴⁰

The influence of such ideas is shown by Kang Tongbi's advocacy of the emancipation of women when she began an independent life in North America.⁴¹ Tongbi arrived in Canada on May, 7 1903.⁴² Her lectures on reform in Victoria and Vancouver were "the first occasion on which any Chinese woman has been known to speak in public."⁴³ She also organized the first chapters of the Chinese Empire Ladies Reform Association (Baohuangnühui or Baojiu Da-Qing Guangxu Huangdi Nühui)—in effect a Baohuanghui women's auxiliary, with

38 Laurence G. Thompson, ed. and trans., *Ta Tung Shu, The One World Philosophy of Kang Yu-wei* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1958), 39. This book is a partial translation and annotation of the first complete edition of the *Datong Shu* in 1935.

39 Hsiao, *A Modern China and a New World*, 446.

40 Kang Youwei, *Datong Shu*, translated in Hsiao, *A Modern China and a New World*, 447. This translation reads much smoother and is more moving than that in Thompson, *Ta Tung Shu*, 149–50, and is thus chosen for use here.

41 See Chapter 1 for a description of Kang Tongbi's arrival in Canada and establishment of the Chinese Empire Ladies Reform Association, as well as an analysis of the Victoria women's association poster.

42 "Tosa Maru Arrives," *Daily Colonist* (Victoria), May 8, 1903, 3.

43 "A Reformer's Daughter," *Daily Colonist* (Victoria), May 23, 1903.



FIGURE 17
Kang Tongbi, Victoria, British Columbia,
1903.

chapters in Canada, Hawai'i, and the United States.⁴⁴ Verified chapters were in three cities in British Columbia: Vancouver, Victoria, New Westminster (chapter shared with Vancouver); and nine in the United States and Hawai'i: Seattle, Portland, Astoria (Oregon), Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago, New York, Boston, and Honolulu, according to Zhongping Chen.⁴⁵ When Liang Qichao and Kang Tongbi visited Astoria in September 1903, accompanied by women's association leaders from Vancouver and Seattle, Tongbi recruited the ten Chinese women in town to form a local chapter and raised \$600 for the

44 "Chinese Woman Reformer in America," *New York Times*, August 25, 1903, 7, states Kang Tongbi had already "established twelve lodges of the Woman's Chinese Reform Association, three of them being in Canada." According to *Province* (Vancouver), May 29, 1903, 9, Kang Tongbi formed a women's association on May 28 with an inaugural membership of about 40; this chapter subsumed Vancouver and New Westminster.

45 Zhongping Chen, "Kang Tongbi's Pioneering Feminism and the First Transnational Organization of Chinese Feminist Politics, 1903–1905," *Twentieth-Century China* 44, no. 1 (January 2019): 3–32.

Guangdong Public School that Liang was promoting and, at the insistence of the women members, had agreed would enroll girls.⁴⁶

There were Chinese feminists in cities that Tongbi did not visit who took on the task of founding women's associations under her remote guidance. The Honolulu chapter was begun by an elementary school teacher, He Huizhen (Fui Jin Ho), who had been immortalized in a twenty-four-poem cycle by Liang Qichao after He served as his interpreter and translator during his six-month stay in Honolulu in 1899–1900. Working face to face “deep into the night” translating Liang's writings, He and Liang may have become romantically involved. Liang was as impressed with He as she no doubt was with him. In his poem cycle published in *Qingyi Bao*, Liang wrote that “two hundred million [women of China] must bow their heads [to Miss He]” and “women's equal rights have arrived in Honolulu.”⁴⁷ He's letters to Tongbi in late 1904 and early 1905 acknowledge not only that there was resistance to a reformist women's association from the largely uneducated and conservative female population in Honolulu but also opposition from the revolutionaries in that city, where Sun Yatsen had many followers. He wrote in English to Tongbi:⁴⁸

I have organized a society for our sisters in Honolulu, and am glad to inform you I am doing very well. At first people have so much to say against us, but now they saw our object of our aims. I know not whether you have seen our by-laws in *Sun Chung Kwock Bow* [*Sun Chung Kwok Bo*, *Xin Zhongguo Bao*] some time ago. Would you like to have me send a copy to you? I thank you very much in sending me your rules for your society. It is very well done, but I have to [start] from little at a time ... We named our society Hua Nü Hequn [Chinese Women Coming Together in a Group].

46 “Chinese Women are for Reform,” *Astorian*, September 22, 1903, 4; and “Anxious to be Educated,” *Astorian*, September 23, 1903, 4. The accompanying women's association leaders were Yip May Young of Vancouver and Liu Yulan 劉玉蘭 [Lon Lew] of Seattle. Chen, “Kang Tongbi's Pioneering Feminism,” 22–23.

47 Hu Ying, *Tales of Translation: Composing the New Woman in China, 1899–1918* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), 198–200.

48 He Huizhen 何惠珍 [Fui Jin Ho] in Honolulu to Kang Tongbi, December 23, 1904, S-C45 and He Huizhen to Kang Tongbi, February 13, 1905, S-C44, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

How often do you meet and where do you hold your meeting? Do you have regular program for the meeting? What topic have you taken up lately? ...

When I first organize [*sic*] this society, both men and women said all kinds of badness against us. They did not want women to be so progressive. I started with a few, and I gave them lecture concerning our object of forming this society and I had the constitution published in the newspaper. Now I'm glad to inform you that I have about forty members. Several American women joined it. My aim is, if we save enough money I would like very much to open a school for women. Knowledge brings happiness.

On August 20, 1903, Tongbi crossed the Canadian border at Port Townsend, Washington, identified as a scholar whose last place of residence was India. She was escorted by Vancouver Baohuanghui leader Charlie Yip Yen (Ye En).⁴⁹ According to an article datelined Tacoma, Washington, August 24, she had earlier "established twelve lodges of the Woman's Chinese Reform Association, three of them being in Canada."⁵⁰ In Seattle, Tongbi joined Liang Qichao's entourage for about three weeks, at the end of Liang's long organizing tour of the eastern and central United States.⁵¹ With his broad experience in Australia, Hawai'i, Southeast Asia, and now North America, Liang must have been a welcome guide for Tongbi to Chinatown politics and Baohuanghui organizational practices, many of which he himself undoubtedly originated or refined (see below).⁵²

49 "Miss Kang Bac Tung" listed no. 3 on lists of Chinese passengers arriving at Seattle and Port Townsend on steamer *Majestic*, August 20, 1903, M1364, RG85, NA-Washington.

50 "Chinese Lady Reformer," *Daily Colonist* (Victoria), August 25, 1903. Clearly most of these chapters were established by local women, not by Kang Tongbi personally.

51 Liang Qichao 梁啟超, *Xin Dalu Youji* 新大陸遊記 in *Zouxiang Shijie Congshu* 走向世界叢書 [Series of Books on World Travels], ed. Zhong Shuhe 鍾叔河 (Changsha: Yuelu Shushe, 1985), 534. Liang mentions that Tongbi was escorted by his younger brother Liang Qixun, a student in Chicago, when they all met in Seattle. "Would Reform China," *Portland Oregonian*, September 7, 1903, 5, reports that Liang was arriving in Portland that day and that "with Leong Chai Chu is traveling a daughter of the great reformer, Yuan, who has a price set upon his head by his home government."

52 Tongbi would experience the bitter divisions tearing apart Chinese communities that so appalled Liang; "Chinatown Women Divided by War," *Washington Times*, December 3, 1903, 2, describes an attempt by a Chinese Christian woman leader in New York City Chinatown to divert membership from the reform movement. "One-half of the Chinese 'five hundred and fifty,' headed by Kang Tung Bac, the girl orator who held all Chinatown spellbound several weeks ago while she expounded the present political situation and its danger to China, is up in arms against the other half, which has for its leader Mrs. Loo Lin, missionary and teacher." This break may be an early signal of the future departure of

Although few details exist about the activities of the Ladies Association chapters, the *New-York Tribune* reported on the New York City chapter a day after its founding on October 20, 1903. It noted that “the presence of so many women [thirty-four] on such an occasion really marked an epoch in the annals of Chinatown, as it is not considered at all ‘seemly for our women to be seen in public,’ as a member of the reform association explained.”⁵³ After an “impassioned, patriotic” speech by Kang Tongbi, officers were elected, and, like the British Columbia chapters, many of the members were wives of local Bao-huanghui leaders. Tongbi told the *Tribune* “in pretty broken English”: “I want them to read papers ... I want them to know things. I want them to help to make things go right and to have grand education.” As she would frequently repeat, “Why should not we women stand together and help each other?” Tongbi’s message was fortified throughout her American stay. Before leaving the United States in 1909, she told a newspaper reporter:

It is the American women’s club that will give the open door to the women of China ... Organization—that is the big lesson I have learned in America. Only American women and girls could teach it to me. It leads the way to more effectual accomplishment than anything else in the world. That is why I choose it to accomplish my purpose, and that is why I know I shall succeed.⁵⁴

Kang Tongbi’s feminist sensibilities were always on alert, and she asserted herself as an independent woman, even after she became a student. Tongbi’s feminism is observed from her own perspective from a three-week-long fragment of her diary (June 17–July 10, 1904), when she made an excursion from Hartford to St. Louis, Missouri.⁵⁵ Tongbi traveled first to New York City, where she was hosted at the West 86th Street home of an American friend, Pansy Mason, and her family. The Masons were China missionaries, whom Tongbi had met in 1903 in Zion City, a religious utopian community in Illinois. In Chinatown, she first gave a lecture to the New York chapter of the Chinese Empire

many Chinese Christians from the reform movement to join the revolutionaries led by fellow Christian Sun Yatsen. Ironically the New York City Ladies’ Association had its first meeting in the Morning Star Mission on Doyers Street, and its president was Mrs. Fung Y. Mow, whose husband was a missionary.

53 “Chinese Women Organize,” *New-York Tribune*, October 21, 1903, 4.

54 “The Week’s Society Events,” *Aberdeen News* [Aberdeen, Washington], August 14, 1909, 6 (this article was probably copied from another newspaper).

55 Kang Tongbi diary, June 17–July 10, 1904, no. 001–010, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

Ladies Reform Association at the home of one of its members “to encourage them,” and then spoke until 11:00 PM to the general membership at the Mott Street Baohuanghui headquarters.

From New York, Tongbi traveled alone on the all-night train to Chicago, arriving at 5:00 PM and was greeted by Baohuanghui members:

After seeing all the members in the Chapter office, I was taken to the home of [Chicago chapter] President Moy Dong Chew (Mei Zongzhou). I was invited to give a speech at 9 [PM] at the association office and finished my speech at 12 [midnight] and then returned to my hotel.

I planned to leave for St. Louis tonight, yet all the comrades made me stay a little longer. The members of the Chicago Ladies Branch invited me to a dinner party. In the evening, I went to their place to give a speech again.

From Chicago Tongbi again traveled by herself to St. Louis. She was met by the local Baohuanghui leaders and hosted at the home of a Pastor Gibson. She had come to see the St. Louis World's Fair, a special occasion since this was the first time China had participated officially in a world's fair. Tongbi visited the fair in the company of new American friends, both men and women, and Baohuanghui members from St. Louis and Los Angeles. The splendor of China's pavilion, a miniaturized replica of an imperial palace, greatly impressed the Americans. However, it was the Chinese Village operated by a Chinese American company in the carnival portion of the fairgrounds that represented China to Tongbi and filled her with shame. When Tongbi encountered two women with bound feet swaying on the streets of the Chinese Village, she felt the women as well as China had been humiliated. She was not the only Chinese disturbed by the American fascination that these women evoked and their unseemly role as entertainers on the midway. The St. Louis Baohuanghui had already raised \$400 to send the women back to San Francisco. “Yet they still covet every opportunity to get in the village. If there is nobody to stop them, they would stay and make more money.”⁵⁶ “I was overwhelmed by indignation when I saw this last night and scolded them harshly [for two hours] until I left at 10 PM.” Tongbi also noted with interest the painting of Empress Dowager Cixi by American Katharine Carl, which hung prominently in the international portrait gallery.⁵⁷ “She was dressed in a yellow robe, draped in a pearl cape. Her

56 Kang Tongbi diary, July 3, 1904, no. 006, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

57 For a photo essay with the portrait and how it was painted see David Hogge, “The Empress Dowager and the Camera: Photographing Cixi, 1903–1904,” 2011, on the MIT Visualizing

finger nails were sheathed in jade. Westerners don't understand this or think it looks like a beast's claws. I overheard them talking about this and said to them, look at my finger nails—our women are not like that, only she is.”⁵⁸

Tongbi's first four years in the United States were closely supervised by Yung Wing (Rong Hong) of Hartford, Connecticut. Yung had been charged by his close friend and associate Kang Youwei with arranging and monitoring his daughter's education and housing. Yung greeted Tongbi in Hartford on October 22, 1903, and hosted her at his home for a time.⁵⁹ She would spend the better part of the next three years studying under Yung Wing and a physician, Mary Starr Tudor of South Windsor, Connecticut, and lived for most of that time with Dr. Tudor.⁶⁰ During those years of tutoring in English and normal academic work, she may have had some ties with Trinity College in Hartford.⁶¹

Local Baohuanghui leaders put Tongbi's celebrity to good use and not simply to advocate women's rights. After her speech to the wives of powerful New York City Baohuanghui members, three wealthy merchants provided funds sufficient to inaugurate the long-awaited *Zhongguo Weixin Bao* (*Chinese Reform News*).⁶² The first issue appeared on March 10, 1904, and covered a talk by Tongbi organized by the Hartford chapter in a nearby town, which drew more than three hundred people. She argued that China could only be saved by Chinese unifying behind their nation—explicitly by joining the reform association—a simple but effective idea that struck home in Chinese communities riven by feuds and mistrust.

Cultures, https://visualizingcultures.mit.edu/empress_dowager/index.html, accessed February 18, 2024.

58 Kang Tongbi diary, July 5, 1904, no. 007, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

59 “Daughter of Pioneer Chinese Reformer Kang, Guest of Yung Wing,” *Hartford Courant*, October 23, 1903, 5. Yung Wing was described in the article as “an old friend of her father's.”

60 In her memoirs, Kang Tongbi called Dr. Tudor Qiude Yisheng 秋得医生. Chi Jeng Chang, email message to author, December 10, 2023.

61 Letter to J. J. McCook, Acting President, Trinity College, to President, Barnard College, New York, June 14, 1905, Central Records Office, Barnard College—a letter of introduction and recommendation for admission to Barnard.

62 “Chinese to Print a New York Newspaper,” *New York Times*, December 20, 1903, 24. “A few weeks ago Hong Yu Wai's daughter, Kang Tung Bek, came here and lectured to Chinese women in the Doyers Street Chinese Theatre ... Upon her arrival the question of establishing a Chinese newspaper in New York was revived, and Jue Chue, Lee Yick Yue [Li Yiyao], and John Chantz, three of the wealthiest and most influential merchants in Chinatown, agreed to finance it.”



FIGURE 18 Detail from a postcard of Luo Chang, Kang Tongbi, and Dr. Mary Starr Tudor at Tudor farm, Main Street, South Windsor, Connecticut, circa 1905.

Miss Kang spoke of the fierce competition in the world, and if we didn't join together and form organizations, we could not save China. Quarrels are frequent among the compatriots in every city. There is truly great power in solidarity. When she spoke like this, we were very touched. We Han are grandchildren of the Yellow Emperor and must take a lesson from history that we are all kin, forget grudges and embrace righteousness. With a firm heart, do what you can for the reform endeavour ...⁶³

63 "Nüshi Yanshuo" 女士演說 ["The Lady's Speech"], *Zhongguo Weixin Bao* 中國維新報 [*Chinese Reform News*], March 10, 1904, 11. This inaugural issue also includes an article on

Hartford newspapers reported continuously on Tongbi during her lengthy stay in that city. Once, there were headlines that her life had been threatened, and that men with connections with the Qing government were on their way to assassinate her.⁶⁴ She, like her father, was considered a dangerous rebel, according to the press. In reality, as noted above, political relations between the reformers—other than Kang Youwei himself—and Qing officials had quietly and dramatically changed since Liang Qitian and Xu Qin visited the United States. In her memoirs, for example, Tongbi recorded her welcome at the Chinese legation in Washington, DC, in October 1903: “One day, [Secretary of the Chinese Legation] Chow Tszchi [Zhou Ziqi] invited us to a tea party, then took us to the White House to see President Roosevelt. The so-called “white palace” is just a white house. I also saw President Roosevelt’s wife and two daughters.”⁶⁵

Tongbi became a central figure for the Baohuanghui and Kang in North America. Just how central is clear from the size and range of her correspondence during just one year of her stay in the United States, from October 1904 to October 1905. This correspondence is part of a remarkable collection that Tongbi left behind in the home of the Starr-Tudor family of South Windsor, Connecticut, where she lived until she went to college in New York City in 1907. The South Windsor Collection includes 220 letters (55 from Kang Youwei); 40 photographs; many miscellaneous items (receipts, Baohuanghui posters, membership rosters, printed reports from Baohuanghui headquarters, newspaper articles, published and unpublished poems and other writings); a portion of Kang Tongbi’s 1904 diary; and what is probably the earliest extant version of Kang’s self-written chronicle (*nianpu*).⁶⁶ Kang’s letters to his daughter are

the Ladies Association, “Jiuguo Nühui Zhangcheng xu” 救國女會章程敘 [Description of the Charter for the Save the Country Women’s Association].

64 “Threaten Life of Khang Tung Pek,” *Hartford Courant*, January 25, 1905, 5.

65 “Kang Tongbi Zizhuan” 康同壁自傳 [Autobiography of Kang Tongbi] in *Kang Tongbi Yigao: Kang Tongbi Koushu Zhang Cangjiang Zhengli* 康同壁遺稿: 康同壁口述張滄江整理 [Posthumous Manuscript of Kang Tongbi: Kang Tongbi’s oral history as told to and organized by Zhang Cangjiang], unpublished manuscript edited by Chi Jeng Chang, Vancouver, Canada, and Zhang Qizhen, Beijing, China. Theodore Roosevelt was the first to call the presidential mansion the “White House.”

66 The cataloging of the collection has been done by Chi Jeng Chang. The original documents are held by various people in China as well as by Robert Worden and Chi Jeng Chang, who purchased Kang Tongbi materials from Robert Starr, III, South Windsor, Connecticut, for a planned donation to an archival institution. A large portion of the materials in China is owned by the Kang Youwei museum in Nanhai, Guangdong. The authors have worked with scans of the full collection, which we have shared online through a Box.com account. Special thanks to Tong Bingxue of Beijing and Virginia Macro, Wood Memorial Library, South Windsor, Connecticut for providing these scans. We cite the documents using item numbers from the scans, date, and Kang Tongbi South

notable for an intimacy lacking in his letters to other disciples, often writing to Tongbi about sensitive topics, both personal and political. Kang also displayed his emotional volatility along with an unusual ability to work with persons with equally strong and sometimes conflicting views. The correspondence features rapid exchanges between letter writers about events as they are unfolding for Kang and his political party. Tongbi received constant orders from her father and communicated with many secondary leaders traveling with Kang or hosting him in their cities. Her circle of correspondents included men and women, both Chinese and American, in the United States, Canada, Mexico, and Asia.

The South Windsor Collection reveals that Kang put Tongbi in charge of managing the design, manufacturing, payment, and distribution of about 20,000 Baohuanghui badges, constantly pestering her with detailed demands and changes in orders. She also was asked to put pressure on the aged Yung Wing to undertake an English translation of Kang's biography (*Wo Zhuan*), covering his life to date and his political, philosophical, religious and pedagogical views that Kang wanted the English-speaking world to read. During 1905, when Kang traveled to about fifty American cities, Tongbi became a clearinghouse for the organization receiving frequent updates and requests from Baohuanghui leaders traveling with Kang or from cities hosting him. Tongbi was also kept informed of much larger issues dominating Baohuanghui discussion at that time, the 1905 anti-American boycott, Western Military Academy troubles, and the challenge of Sun Yatsen and his revolutionary followers. Moreover, Tongbi was privy to or intimately involved in various plots to assassinate Cixi and Sun Yatsen, as described in Chapter 4.

On September 12, 1906, Kang Tongbi entered Hartford Public High School for less than half a year's study, and then feeling that she needed more "personal attention than can be given in a public school," she left for New York.⁶⁷

Windsor Collection. Item numbers preceded by "S-" were in the possession of the Starr family in South Windsor until 2023. All other item numbers were assigned by a private art investor in Beijing or Hong Kong who bought the larger group of materials, including the *nianpu*, on eBay in September 2013 from Harold French, an auctioneer in Warner, New Hampshire. These items were resold to several private parties in China through a December 2014 art auction in Shanghai. This portion also originated in the Starr Tudor home in South Windsor and was sold decades ago by a member of the Starr family to the French family auction house, where it remained until Harold French sold it on eBay.

- 67 Letter of Edward H. Smiley, Principal, Hartford Public High School, to Miss Gill, Barnard College, February 7, 1907, Central Records Office, Barnard College. Extant Hartford Public High School records list her dates of attendance from September 12, 1906, to February 7, 1907. Letter of C. Duncan Yetman, Principal, Hartford Public High School, to Robert L. Worden, March 9, 1971.

She had made previous application to Barnard College and was admitted as a special student in spring 1907.⁶⁸

Kang Tongbi audited courses in English, French, history, and education at Barnard. According to Barnard's dean, "she not only pursued them with success, but also gained the esteem respect of her instructors."⁶⁹ She had at least one article published in a school journal soon after her enrollment. It relived her experience of being lost with her father while riding on horseback from India to Gangtok, the capital of Sikkim, in 1902.⁷⁰ In the following year, she was courteously included in the senior section of the yearbook listed as "Tung Phi Kang, Canton, China, 'Mistress of herself, though China fall.'"⁷¹

Perhaps because she had been a fervent advocate for Chinese women's rights, Kang Tongbi took a different stance than most of her Barnard classmates on whether American women should have the right to vote. "Many people ask my ideas on woman's suffrage. I believe that America is ripe for it; but this will take time in my country," she wrote in an essay in the *Chicago Tribune* published in 1910.⁷² Tongbi's outspoken convictions were demonstrated when "in 1908–1909, Miss Kang was one of only 28 students out of a total registration of 498 bold enough to publicly support the radical cause of women's suffrage by joining the Barnard College Chapter of the Collegiate Equal Suffrage League of New York."⁷³

2.4 *Liang Qichao*

Liang Qichao was certainly Kang's "precursor" of greatest renown. His fame came not only as Kang's closest disciple but from the clarion call of his prolific political commentary, which appeared in reform newspapers and journals. Accordingly, "he became an inspiration and an idol—a patriotic hero, whose command of Chinese classical learning together with a remarkable sensitivity

68 Letter of Dean, Barnard College, to Miss Kang Tung Pih, Windsor, Connecticut, January 14, 1907, a letter of acceptance; and Acting Dean, Barnard College, To Whom It May Concern, November 8, 1909, a certification of attendance and status as a "guest of the College," Central Records Office, Barnard College.

69 Acting Dean to Whom it May Concern, November 8, 1909.

70 Kang Tong Pi [sic], "Lost in An Indian Forest," *Barnard Bear* 2, no. 3 (May 1907): 3–6.

71 Barnard College, *The Mortarboard* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1908), 56.

72 "My Experiences in America in Studying for Reform Work," *Chicago Tribune*, March 20, 1910, F9.

73 Katie Portante and Donald Glassman, "Kang Tung Pih 1909: Noble Daughter, Global Activist," August 13, 2008, Barnard Archives and Special Collections, <https://barnardarchives.wordpress.com/2008/08/13/kang-tung-pih-class-of-1909/>, accessed April 28, 2020.

to ideas and trends in the West, gave him the appearance of an intellectual giant joining Occident and Orient, almost a universal man."⁷⁴

But Liang was also a workhorse for the Baohuanghui, eschewing the pleasures of tourism and scholarly retreat indulged in by his teacher. By the time he arrived in British Columbia on March 3, 1903, Liang had traveled on behalf of the Baohuanghui in Japan, Hawai'i, Hong Kong, Singapore, Ceylon, Australia, and the Philippine Islands. In these travels, he founded new chapters, established or bolstered newspapers and schools, founded publishing and translation businesses, raised funds and promoted Commercial Corporation shares, and built the symbolic and structural bones of the Baohuanghui. Crossing Canada, Liang went to New York, Boston, Washington—where he and his interpreter Bao Chi met with Secretary of State John M. Hay and President Theodore Roosevelt—and then toured the western and northwestern United States, ending his journey in California in October.⁷⁵ Liang not only went to major cities in the United States, but made a point of reaching the Chinese population of such localities as rural Idaho.⁷⁶

After nearly nine months in Canada and the United States—from early March to the end of November 1903—Liang returned to Japan and in 1904 published his trip journal as *Xin Dalu Youji* (Travel Notes from the New World).⁷⁷ Scholars have mined this journal in a number of book chapters and articles, so a detailed account of Liang Qichao's sojourn in North America is redundant.⁷⁸

74 Wm. Theodore de Bary and Richard Lufrano, comp., "Liang Qichao," in *Sources of Chinese Tradition* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), vol. 2, 287.

75 For Liang's appointment, see Series 9, Desk Diaries, Roll 430, June 20, 1903, Roosevelt Papers, MSS 38299, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, https://www.loc.gov/resource/mss38299.mss38299-430_0193_1119/?sp=239&st=image&r=0.061,0.031,1.053,0.397,0; the visited was "commended by Gov. [John L.] Bates of Mass." Also, Joseph R. Levenson, *Liang Ch'i-ch'ao and the Mind of Modern China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), 2d rev. ed., 68–70. Attending the meeting with Roosevelt were Liang Qichao, Ye En, and Bao Chi, interpreter, see "Chinese Reformers," *Daily Colonist* (Victoria), June 21, 1903, 2.

76 Jung-pang Lo, "Footnotes to History, Chinese Reformers in Idaho," *Idaho Yesterdays* 5, no. 3 (Fall 1961): 20–21; "Noted Chinese Reformer Coming," *Idaho Statesman* (Boise), August 23, 1903, 7; and "Noted Author and Scholar, Leong Kai Cheu, A Distinguished Statesman Visiting in Boise," *Idaho Statesman*, August 24, 1903, 2.

77 Liang Qichao, *Xin Dalu Youji* in *Zouxiang Shijie Congshu*, 367–653. Liang left from Victoria, BC, on the R.M.S. *Empress of China* on November 30, 1903; "Leaders of Chinese Reform Society," *Daily Colonist* (Victoria), November 29, 1903.

78 For example, see K. Scott Wong, "Liang Qichao and the Chinese of America: A Reevaluation of his *Selected Memoir of Travels in the New World*," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 11, no. 4 (Summer 1992): 3–24; Philip C. Huang, *Liang Ch'i-ch'ao and Modern Chinese Liberalism* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1972), 77–83; and Levenson, *Liang Ch'i-ch'ao*, 69–76. For his trip to Canada, see Zhongping Chen, *Transpacific Reform and*

Liang's Baohuanghui legacy can better be judged by summarizing his contributions to the organization's institutional structure and culture, allowing us also to observe the Baohuanghui's worldwide development since 1899.

3 Making "New Citizens"

The full extent of Liang Qichao's Baohuanghui work is difficult to measure because many elements of the organizational culture cannot be traced to a single creator. However, Liang's presence in North America in 1903 also coincided with the emergence of a distinct symbolic Baohuanghui identity that directly reflected Liang's conceptualization of the proper goals of the organization and, by extension, the Chinese nation. Compared to Kang, whose concerns were of a more universal nature, Liang probed deeply into how groups, and especially political associations, were essential to cultivating citizenship and a sense of common nationality.

Before his North American trip—but after months in Australia and the U.S. territory of Hawai'i—Liang began to write a series entitled *Xinmin Shuo* (*The New Citizen*) for his Yokohama newspaper, *Xinmin Congbao* (*Sein Min Choong Bou*). According to historian Peter Zarrow, Liang called for the Chinese people "to become more active, assertive, and responsible citizens, capable of contributing to a strong nation." *The New Citizen* "advocated a strong nationalist consciousness and the ideal of devotion to group."⁷⁹

Both Kang and Liang saw groups as the building blocks of ever-larger and more powerful aggregations of people. However, whereas Kang sought a one-world Datong as his ultimate goal, the more practical Liang "turned to the

Revolution: The Chinese in North America, 1898–1918 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2023), 54–57, and L. Eve Armentrout Ma, "A Chinese Statesman in Canada, 1903: Translated from the Travel Journal of Liang Ch'i-ch'ao," *BC Studies* 59 (Autumn 1983): 28–43. Note that the dates in Liang's journal (converted from the lunar calendar) rarely match those in the extensive contemporary Canadian and American newspaper reports of Liang's visits to various cities and instead differ by a few days; most authors writing about Liang's trip used the journal dates (converted to the Western calendar). The journal contains acerbic criticism of the Chinese in San Francisco and their chaotic Chinatown politics, caused, Liang believed, by too much freedom and a deep-rooted inclination to split into factions and divisions based on clan and regional connections. Many have speculated that Liang's seemingly abrupt embrace of "enlightened autocracy" after his North American trip was due to his deep disappointment with the un-citizen-like behavior he observed among Chinese living in a democratic society.

79 Peter Zarrow, *After Empire: The Conceptual Transformation of the Chinese State, 1885–1924* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012), 77.

'nation' as the sole hope for China's survival, survival in a world of endless, brutal struggle."⁸⁰ The key to building a nation was "renewing the people" (*xinmin*). Adopting this Confucian term for Liang's "new citizen," writes Zarrow, "was no coincidence."⁸¹ Liang was referring to the traditional practice of self-cultivation and prefaced *The New Citizen* by extending the concept of renewal from the individual to the nation: "If we are to make a country stable, prosperous and glorious, then we must understand the Way of renewing the people."⁸²

In "Self-Government" ("Zizhi"), Liang contrasted Chinese who had accepted despotic rule for thousands of years with the Anglo-Saxons who "possess the greatest capacity for self-government of any race in the world," thus making Britain globally dominant economically and militarily.⁸³ "Look at how fewer than ten thousand British people live in India today, while they have tamed 200 million Indians to be as obedient as a flock of sheep." Liang argued that this national power stemmed from self-disciplined, orderly individuals able to formulate and obey both rules governing themselves and laws governing their schools, communities, provinces, and nation. From such self-governance, Liang claimed, "a country of complete and perfect liberty, equality, independence and autonomy [will] be created," and perhaps more crucially, with the strength to resist foreign intervention. Chinese citizens needed to look to themselves and take responsibility for their nation, rather than vainly hope for "wise rulers and ministers" to emerge and guide China. Liang condemned this attitude as creating the "most corrupt government and the weakest people" in Asia.⁸⁴

3.1 *The Baohuanghui Network*

Since its initiation in 1899, the Baohuanghui network in North America had grown impressively, with Liang Qichao himself overseeing the founding of about twenty new chapters during his trip, many of them in small towns in the Pacific Northwest as well as in the major cities of Montreal and Toronto. He reported in his journal that there were eighty-six chapters in the Americas and Hawai'i, but party historian Wu Xianzi, whose statistics might be more accurate, added the chapters formed during Liang's visit and came up with a

80 Zarrow, *After Empire*, 87–88.

81 Liang Qichao, *Thoughts from the Ice-Drinker's Studio: Essays on China and the World*, trans. with an introduction and notes, Peter Zarrow (London: Penguin Classics, 2023), 14; more than half the translations in this book are from *The New Citizen*.

82 Liang, "Preface to The New Citizen," *Thoughts from the Ice-Drinker's Studio*, 36.

83 Liang, "Self-Government (The New Citizen, chapter 10)," *Thoughts from the Ice-Drinker's Studio*, 98–104.

84 Liang, "Renewing the People is China's Most Urgent Task Today (*The New Citizen*, chapter 2)," *Thoughts from the Ice-Drinker's Studio*, 40–41.



FIGURE 19 Seated, on left, Liang Qichao, on right, Liang Qixun; standing are two unidentified men, Portland, Oregon, 1903.

grand total of 103 chapters in eleven divisions in 1903.⁸⁵ These chapters were in addition to those in Japan, Hong Kong, Macau, Australia, Southeast Asia, and South Africa.

Only four years after the Baohuanghui was founded, it was well on its way to the approximately two hundred chapters in 1907 cited by Wu in his party history.⁸⁶ Because many chapter locations are known only by their Chinese names, it is difficult to link them to accepted geographical names. Thus, “Mapping the Baohuanghui” in Appendix 2 is undoubtedly incomplete.⁸⁷ However,

85 Liang Qichao, *Xin Dalu Youji in Zouxian Shijie Congshu*, 553–54; and Wu Xianzi 伍憲子, *Zhongguo Minzhu Xianzhengdang Dangshi* 中國民主憲政黨黨史 [A Party History of the Chinese Democratic Constitutional Party] (San Francisco: *Shijie Ribao* [Chinese World], 1952), 26.

86 Wu, *Zhongguo Minzhu Xianzhengdang Dangshi*, 8. The year 1907 was one of transition from the Baohuanghui to the Xianzhenghui. Note, as detailed in Chapter 1, that nearly 40 chapters in Canada alone have been documented as of 1907, so the 12 recorded by both Liang and Wu show that their numbers are not comprehensive.

87 Appendix 2, “Mapping the Baohuanghui,” is a table of all verified chapters along with schools, newspapers, women’s associations, and businesses.

TABLE 1 The Baohuanghui in the Americas and Hawai'i, 1903 (per Liang Qichao and Wu Xianzi)

	Division	Headquarters	No. of chapters
1	Canada	Vancouver	12
2	California	San Francisco	6
3	Northwest U.S.	Portland	26
4	Eastern U.S.	New York City	6
5	Central U.S.	Chicago	13
6	Southern U.S.	New Orleans	4
7	Montana	Helena	12
8	Mexico	Torreón	9
9	Central America	Panama City, Panama	4
10	South America	Lima, Peru	3
11	Hawai'i	Honolulu	8

by 1911, North America still predominated, with 160 chapters: Canada, 55 chapters; United States (including Hawai'i), 93 chapters; and Mexico, 12 chapters.⁸⁸

By 1903, some of the chapters Liang visited already boasted their own association halls (many more opened by the time of Kang's arrival in 1905) to accommodate meetings, lectures, newspaper offices, schools, and Western Military Academy classrooms. These halls had one or more rooms or the entire building. In most cases, the chapter headquarters were located in buildings owned or leased by wealthy merchant members. Liang wrote a pair of scrolls for the new Los Angeles chapter and asked that the Baohuanghui charter be framed and hung.⁸⁹ He also asked the Los Angeles leaders to make copies of their new charter to send to the Fresno chapter and also to "keep in constant communication with other cities, especially those nearby—Fresno, Sacramento and Hanford—so you can encourage them" (implying their backwardness). San Francisco, Liang observed, "has made headlong progress," and described the public election of chapter officers and a state-wide president (*zongli*), since San Francisco was headquarters for Baohuanghui's California division.

88 The United States total is the most likely to be underestimated in this count. The numbers of Canadian and Mexican chapters are more accurate because of the extensive research on Canada by Zhongping Chen and Chi Jeng Chang and the relatively few chapters in Mexico.

89 Liang Qichao to Los Angeles Baohuanghui, November 21, 1903, no. 112 in Fang and Cai, 108–9.



FIGURE 20 The New York chapter occupied several floors above the Port Arthur Restaurant and Soy Kee Company at 7-9 Mott Street in Chinatown. The school (Aiguo Xuetang) and Western Military Academy armory shared space with the Baohuanghui meeting hall.

The scope of the Baohuanghui and its associated newspapers, schools, businesses, and political activities is apparent from Liang's description of the letters he wrote before leaving San Francisco on his return to Japan. He informed his Los Angeles comrades: "I have also written a farewell letter, a public letter regarding the newly formed Commercial Corporation (Shangwu Gongsi), a public letter regarding the Guangdong Public School (Guangdong Gongxue), and a public letter refuting the exclusion regulations." All were delivered to the San Francisco newspaper office, *Wenxing Bao* (*Mon Hing Bo*, *The Chinese World*), to be printed and mailed to members.⁹⁰

In spite of Liang's apparent success at expanding the Baohuanghui network, he was deeply discouraged by his fundraising results and poured out his

90 Liang Qichao to Los Angeles Baohuanghui, November 21, 1903, no. 112 in Fang and Cai, 108.



FIGURE 21 Officers and members in Baohuanghui headquarters, 7-9 Mott Street, New York City: seated to right of table is New York chapter president Joseph M. Singleton; standing far right is Li Yiyao. The Aiguo Xuetang [Patriotic Academy] sign is visible through the window.

frustration to Kang in a long letter from San Francisco on November 18, 1903.⁹¹ He bemoaned that the combined efforts of Xu Qin for six months and himself for nearly a year yielded less than 10,000 Chinese yuan, bringing little gain if transportation costs were deducted for Xu, himself, and his interpreter Bao Chi (Pow Chee). The American chapters had raised three times that amount, 30,000 Chinese yuan, including 10,000 yuan by New York City members alone, but Liang complained that their remittances to Hong Kong were only a small part of this. For instance, New York had sent Hong Kong only HK\$2,000, in addition to giving Xu Qin about 1,000 (currency unclear) for the Guangdong Public School. Liang said when he was in New York City, “they treated me with public funds most of the time [rather than with individual contributions by the leaders]. Their generosity results from using other people’s money.” He calculated that New York still had US\$1,000 in its coffers, and “I cannot force them to remit it.” The same was true of other chapters Liang visited, but he found San Francisco the most recalcitrant. “I spent more than two months in this city arguing about using public funds to solve real problems. My failure truly hurts

91 Liang Qichao to Kang Youwei, November 18, 1903, in Ding Wenjiang and Zhao Fengtian 丁文江, 趙豐田, ed., *Liang Qichao Nianpu changbian* 梁啟超年譜長編 [Uncut version of Liang Qichao Life Chronicle] (Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin Chubanshe, 1983), 330–32.

me.” He admitted that San Francisco could not remit all their public funds, but “they have their own thoughts and do not follow our instructions.” They also “looked down upon our members in Hong Kong” and were reluctant to send the expected remittance. In addition, Liang found, that “if a chapter does not set up an association office, it will soon disband; if it has a clubhouse, its public funds are often used up.” Fundraising was made all the more difficult because Kang used the remitted funds to support secret activities, such as assassination plans, which could not be divulged to members (see Chapter 4). “One has to ask to what extent our efforts contribute to the actual situation in China and benefit the social reformers in our local chapters in America.” Liang wanted the public funds to be used for education, which members could easily support. He had more success selling Commercial Corporation shares, perhaps because members saw them as good investments.

The network’s heart was the Baohuanghui’s official headquarters, which, at various times, was in Macau, Yokohama, or Hong Kong. In actual practice, however, ultimate responsibility lay with Kang, who kept on the move and lacked full trust in his subordinates. The first headquarters was probably shared between Yokohama, where Vice President Liang and the newspaper *Qingyi Bao* were located, and Macau, with its pioneer Baohuanghui newspaper, *Zhixin Bao*. But Macau became too dangerous after the failed 1900 Qinswang uprising, and *Zhixin Bao* was closed under Qing government pressure in early 1901. Hong Kong took over as financial and business headquarters, and although it never had the political power of Macau, a large portion of member dues was sent back to support it and Kang’s activities. After the Huayi Bank (Wah Yick) was set up in New York in 1905, it began to share fiscal responsibility with Hong Kong for dispersing funds to various Baohuanghui projects. The United States became the unofficial “offshore” headquarters of the Baohuanghui by the time Kang Youwei arrived there in February 1905 and was more central to the organization than the official headquarters in Hong Kong and Macau.

Many working-class Chinese men and women in the communities where Baohuanghui chapters were established gave of their hard-earned money to support the Baohuanghui. But Kang and his deputies who visited Canadian, American, and Mexican Chinatowns were an impressive sight. They were well-educated, well-dressed articulate men, and a few women, who were passionate about their cause. They promised not only to restore the emperor but to reform China through the creation of a modern, Western-style constitutional monarchy. These overseas Chinese had memories of their villages and their families who remained and surely hoped for an improvement in China’s place in the world. They were not likely to achieve the reformers’ sophistication and aspirations, but the presence of such distinguished visitors from the



FIGURE 22 Announcement posted in San Francisco Chinatown that Baohuanghui will celebrate the emperor's birthday on February 15, 1904; photographer, Arnold Genthe.

homeland who not only sought China's modernization but eventually took up the cause of opposing anti-Chinese racism in North America was well received. There would have been no little pride among the men who donned sharp-looking military uniforms and hope for women who listened to speeches about gender equality. But the average person could not have missed, and may have basked in the reflected glory of the apparent wealth of Kang and the others as they lodged in expensive hotels, were entertained with sumptuous banquets

given by Chinatown elites, met local dignitaries, and moved about in modes of transportation unaffordable for humble Baohuanghui supporters. When the leaders of the Baohuanghui and its successor organizations failed to achieve meaningful change in the lives of ordinary Chinese, it would have been an easy transition from financially supporting Kang's reformers to donating to Sun's revolutionists.

3.2 *Organizational Style and Identity*

The qualities Liang sought to cultivate in Baohuanghui followers to make them into "new citizens" are open to speculation. One clue comes from the descriptions of the symbolism of the Baohuanghui flag, which appeared first during Liang's visit in 1903 and may have been inspired or even designed by him. The flag was unfurled at parades greeting Liang and in association meeting halls he visited. In the years following Liang's visit, it was carried aloft by marching formations of Western Military Academy cadets, who were part of the Baohuanghui network of paramilitary schools for young Chinese men.

Evoking the American stars and stripes, the Baohuanghui flag was simpler. The earliest versions have a white background and three red stars (the center star sometimes elevated or larger than the other two) between two red stripes. By 1905, the flag sometimes was portrayed in red, white, and blue, with three white stars on blue bordered by two red stripes against a white background. It appears from extant artifacts that each chapter produced its own flags and organizational materials, following a basic design. Kang said later that the flag resembled the *tricolore* flag of the French Revolution, and the meanings of its stars and stripes as ascribed by Liang do echo the French concepts of *liberté, égalité, fraternité*.⁹² As best as can be determined from American newspaper coverage and the ideas behind the flag—lacking description in Baohuanghui primary sources—the stars and stripes symbolized the following ideas, as explicated in writings by Liang Qichao:⁹³

92 Kang Youwei, "Tonggao Gebu Congxin Dingding Guomin Xianzhengdang Dangqi han" 通告各埠從新訂定國民憲政黨黨旗函 [Letter Informing All Chapters of the Change of the Flag of the National Constitutional Party], November 1906, in *Kang Youwei Quanji* 康有為全集 [Collected Works of Kang Youwei], ed. Jiang Yihua and Zhang Ronghua 姜義華, 張榮華 (Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin Daxue Chubanshe, 2007), vol. 8, 233. See Chapter 10 for description of the new flag Kang envisioned to replace the Baohuanghui flag.

93 "Dream of Big Republic Thrills All Chinatown," *Boston Herald*, May 26, 1903, 1; "Reformers at Work," *Boston Evening Transcript*, May 26, 1903; "Chinese Reformer Stirs Race Street," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, June 21, 1903, 2.

THREE STARS:

- Education, self-edification, or self-knowledge: A new nation could only come from individuals imbued with civic responsibility (*gongde*, or public morality) who “regard state affairs as their own affairs,” obey the law, and are devoted to acquiring knowledge of the world beyond China.⁹⁴
- Unity: Chinese must unite to gain the strength needed to save their country from being divided, instead of caring only about the wellbeing of themselves and their family.
- Equality: Within Chinese society, men and women and all social classes should be equal; Chinese as a people should be treated equally with other nationalities (a critique of U.S. exclusion policy); and on its own territory China’s sovereignty must be respected.

TWO STRIPES:

- Independence (*duli*), freedom (*ziyou*), or autonomy: Citizens must seize and protect their political rights, just as nations must assert their independence (sovereignty) in a competitive world.
- Grouping (*hequn*), association, state consciousness (*guojia sixiang*), nationalism: There is strength in groups of citizens gathering together for a common cause; from the group comes the nation.⁹⁵

Often crossed with the Qing dragon flag, the Baohuanghui flag appeared on Baohuanghui letterhead, menus for Baohuanghui banquets, chapter posters, Baohuanghui newspaper banners, membership badges, stock certificates, and the parapet of at least one Baohuanghui building in Victoria. Symbolic and material manifestations of group identity evolved over time, spurred by the visits to North America of Liang Qichao in 1903 and Kang Youwei in 1905. In the 1899 Baohuanghui charter, Kang promoted identification with the organization through correspondence and exchange of photographs among chapters,

94 Liang Qichao, “Public Morality (*The New Citizen*, chapter 5),” *Thoughts from the Ice-Drinker’s Studio*, 58.

95 Here we use translations for the Chinese terms *duli* 獨立 [independence] and *hequn* 合群 [grouping], from Liu Boji 劉伯驥, *Meiguo Huaqiao yishi* 美國華僑逸史 [Unofficial history of Chinese Americans] (Taipei: Liming Wenhua Shiye Gufen Youxian Gongsi, 1984), 525, to describe the general meaning of the flag’s design. “Chinese Reformer Stirrs Race Street” describes the stripes as standing for liberty and purity. For Liang Qichao’s discourse on grouping and state consciousness, see Liang, “Public Morality,” 53, and “State Consciousness (*The New Citizen*, chapter 6),” 60–72, in *Thoughts from the Ice-Drinker’s Studio*.



FIGURE 23 The Baohuanghui flag was reproduced with several designs. Top left: Sketch on envelope of coat of arms for parapet of the Victoria headquarters, 1715 Government St. and found in time capsule. Top right: From dinner menu for Kang Youwei, November 29, 1904, Vancouver. Center: Letterhead of Hartford, Connecticut chapter. Bottom: Letterhead of “Chinese Empire Reform Association Headquarters for the use of the president only.”

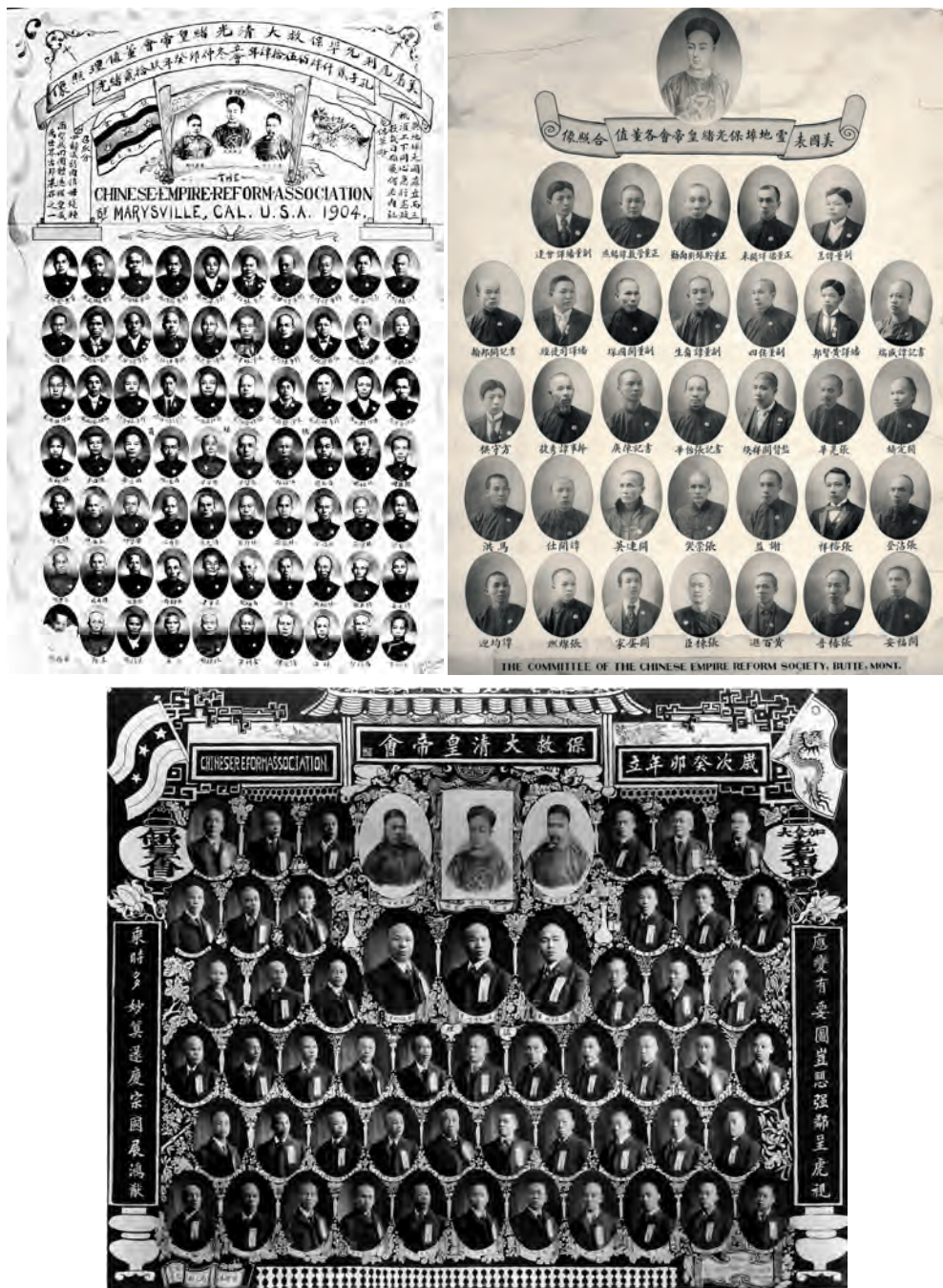


FIGURE 24 Baohuanghui chapter posters, from top left: Marysville, California, 1904. Butte, Montana, 1901. Rossland, British Columbia, 1903.

because “foreign people mock us as a heap of loose sand.”⁹⁶ By 1903, a favored medium of exchange among chapters was the group photo montage or poster, picturing chapter officers and active members, along with Kang, Liang and the Guangxu Emperor. Chapter offices displayed these photo montages on their office walls in a display of solidarity and brotherhood.⁹⁷ Because they are striking and produced with care, several of these posters have been preserved and show the diverse membership of the chapters. For example, Marysville, California, included a woman and baby among its members; Western dress and absence of queues predominate among members of the Rossland, British Columbia, chapter, whereas most members wear Chinese dress and queues in Butte, Montana.⁹⁸

Historian Theresa Man Lee has observed that “Liang [Qichao], and more generally late-Qing reformers, identified the transformation of subjects into citizens as the most daunting task in modernizing the imperial state.”⁹⁹ This is clear from Liang’s *New Citizen* series, which emphasized the deliberate efforts required of individual citizens in each stage of the state-making process. And, Lee astutely notes that this concern with creating citizens and effective political institutions was not shared with Sun Yatsen and the revolutionaries. This was “puzzling precisely because the revolutionaries advocated outright republicanism as opposed to constitutional monarchy,” and “a republic would most certainly require citizens rather than subjects.” Instead of the elaborate organizational strategies of Kang and Liang to develop a politically conscious citizenry, revolutionaries focused on inspiring “national pride ... first and foremost defined by anti-Manchuism.” This lack of concern with institution-building may be one reason for the rapid disintegration of the Republic’s political integrity after its founding in 1912.

96 “Baojiu Da-Qing Huangdi Gongsi Xuli” 保救大清皇帝公司序例 [Preface and Regulations for the Company to Protect the Great Qing Emperor], October 1899, in *Kang Youwei Quanji*, vol. 5, 152.

97 “Hot Debates in Chinatown,” *New York Sun*, November 29, 1908, 9, described the New York City chapter offices had two walls hung with framed group photographs from other chapters.

98 The posters date from as early as 1901, with most produced from 1903 to 1905. Extant are Vancouver, Victoria, and Rossland, BC; Honolulu; Fresno and Marysville, California; Butte and Marysville, Montana; and the Victoria and Vancouver Ladies’ Association posters described above.

99 Theresa Man Lee, “Liang Qichao and the Meaning of Citizenship: Then and Now,” *History of Political Thought* 28, no. 2 (Summer 2007): 309–10.

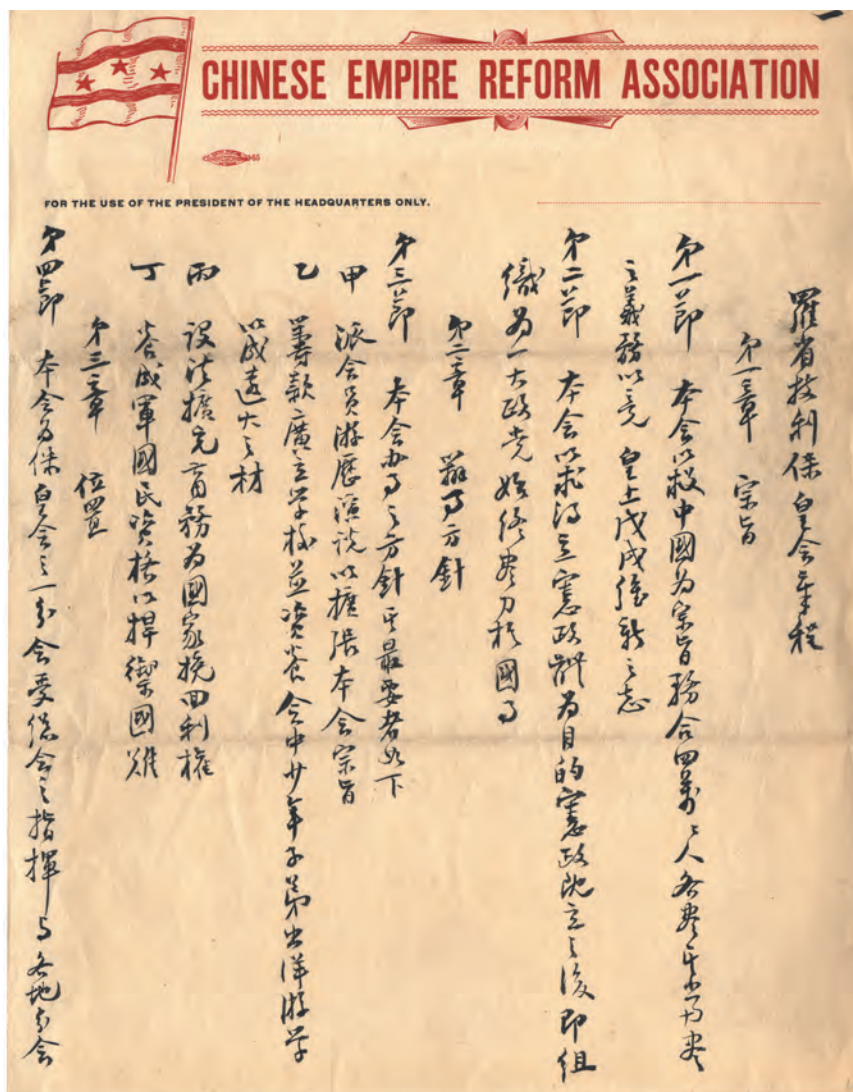


FIGURE 25 First page of Liang Qichao's draft of Los Angeles Baohuanghui charter, November 1903.

Liang's theories of developing the qualities of "new citizens" are apparent in the charter he wrote for the Los Angeles chapter near the end of his visit to the United States in 1903.¹⁰⁰ First, he succinctly described Baohuanghui goals:

100 "Luosheng Jili Baohuanghui Zhangcheng" 羅省技利保皇會章程 [Charter of Los Angeles Baohuanghui], in Liang Qichao's handwriting on Chinese Empire Reform Association

This association aims to save China. The efforts of each of the four hundred million Chinese people must be combined in order to carry out the emperor's 1898 reforms.

The purpose of this association is to establish a constitutional government. After the constitutional government is established, we will form a large political party that will always exert itself in the affairs of the nation.

These goals make clear that Liang saw the Baohuanghui as the vanguard of a Chinese political party that would participate in a future constitutional government and, until that time, be the vehicle for fighting to restore Guangxu's 1898 reform program. A constitutional system was the ultimate aim rather than protecting the emperor.

In the charter, Liang mandates four activities:

- Dispatch our members on speaking tours to promote the principles of our association.
- Raise funds to establish schools and support our association's youth to go abroad to study so that they will become useful talents for the future.
- Devise means to strengthen businesses in order to recover our nation's economic rights.
- Cultivate the military qualifications of citizens (*guomin*) in order to defend the country when it is in trouble.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the content and style of Baohuanghui charters bear little resemblance to the articles of incorporation filed by chapters in various states. Corporation papers were probably drafted by American friends of Baohuanghui leaders to meet state legal requirements for nonprofit organizations and tended to stress education and moral improvement. For example, the Los Angeles chapter's incorporation papers were prepared by attorney and state legislator Frank C. Prescott and notarized by a prominent businessman, G. G. Johnson. The papers were filed December 12, 1903, after Liang's visit and as many as three years after the chapter's formation.¹⁰¹ The Los Angeles "Pow Wong Whui" was formed to:

... unite for educational purposes and in a more united way to advance the interests of the Chinese residents of California in order to be better

letterhead with red and white Association flag, November 1903, no. 111 in Fang and Cai, 384–88.

101 Prescott later told the *Los Angeles Herald* that he had been made an honorary Baohuanghui member during Liang Qichao's visit, see "Speaker of Legislature Po Wong Wuey Member," *Los Angeles Herald*, June 25, 1905, 4.

enabled to more efficiently advance the interests of the Chinese morally and mentally and instruct them along the lines of modern progress, and to place them in a position to assist their countrymen in China to participate in the benefits of enlightenment and learning, and to assist the Emperor and his subjects in such advancement, and to own, buy, sell and mortgage property only sufficient to carry on the work above set out.¹⁰²

The concrete goals and activities Liang outlined in his charter for Los Angeles did not appear in the 1903 articles of incorporation, which emphasized instructing the Chinese in California in the ways of “modern progress” so that they could help the emperor and Chinese in China make similar advances. However, Liang also believed that an important Baohuanghui function was to teach members civic values and behavior useful to China’s modernization. In the journal of his American travels, Liang wrote that the bylaws of the Chinese associations in San Francisco “generally follow those of Western societies, which are civilized and comprehensive, but when I look at how their members actually behave, not one fails to violate their bylaws.”¹⁰³ On the other hand, Liang was mightily impressed after observing the competitive election of Baohuanghui leaders in Canada, complete with vigorous campaigning, and described it as an historic event in the formation of Chinese political parties. Both observations might have led Liang to take great pains in composing the Los Angeles charter. He explained in an accompanying letter to that city’s leaders:

Probably I put in too many details in the section on meeting procedures. This is because Chinese people never had any rules for holding a meeting, and therefore a meeting often ends up with no decision or resolutions. This charter takes the meeting rules of Western meetings of all kinds as a model, and we Chinese should learn from them.¹⁰⁴

The Los Angeles charter specified weekly membership meetings on Sunday evenings, and if there was no official business to discuss, “lectures will be given.” Liang listed twelve regulations governing meetings, which were to be run by a

102 Articles of Incorporation, Pow Wong Whui of Los Angeles, filed in the California Office of the Secretary of State, December 12, 1903, GC 1145, Box 133, File 5091, Seaver Center for Western History Research, Natural History Museum, Los Angeles, California.

103 Liang, “Defects of the Chinese People,” February 1904, in *Thoughts from the Ice-Drinker’s Studio*, 167.

104 Liang Qichao to the comrades and righteous brothers of the Los Angeles Baohuanghui, November 21, 1903, no. 112 in Fang and Cai, 108–9.

chairman, sergeant at arms to deal with members speaking out of turn or other disruptions, and a record keeper. One issue at a time was to be discussed, with members required to stand when speaking, and if two persons spoke at the same time, the sergeant at arms could stop both from speaking. When consensus on an issue could not be reached, a vote was taken, with approval by a simple majority. Liang even described how to vote by raising one's hand to signify approval. Wearing a hat and smoking were prohibited.

Membership was "open to any patriotic Chinese ... regardless of their surname, native place, or religion," and each member was obligated to pay dues (one U.S. silver dollar with "additional donations accepted"). "Foreigners" could also become Baohuanghui members if recommended by two members and approved by the chapter president and vice president.¹⁰⁵ It is notable that Liang asked the Los Angeles leaders to prepare a list of chapter members and the amount of their donations for publication in the Baohuanghui's San Francisco newspaper, *Wenxing Bao*. It became common practice for such lists to be published periodically in Baohuanghui newspapers, giving chapters and individual members public acknowledgment of their donations as well as spurring competitive giving, a tactic Liang himself had described when he was contemplating organizing Yokohama reformers in early 1899.¹⁰⁶ The charter specifies that funds in the chapter's treasury were to "be treated like national bonds" that would be repaid with a share of the profits "in the future when the reforms succeed." To forestall too much independent action, the chapter was "under the direction of the general association," in other words, Kang Youwei.

Among the twelve categories of officers described in the Los Angeles charter were two that consciously projected the organization into the greater community: an English-language clerk to translate documents "that concern relations with Americans" and orators "to make speeches to the public to advocate the principles of the association." Liang also wrote a variety of cross-checking

105 Los Angeles Mayor Meredith Snyder, along with several other distinguished White guests at the farewell dinner for Liang Qichao, were made members of the Los Angeles chapter and given membership buttons with the image of the emperor; "Surprise by Wong Whuy," *Los Angeles Times*, November 1, 1903, C11.

106 Gao Weinong 高偉濃, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui zai Meiguo Huaqiao Shehui zhong de Huodong* 二十世紀初康有為保皇會在美國華僑社會中的活動 [Activities of Kang Youwei and the Baohuanghui among the Chinese in the United States in the First Part of the Twentieth Century] (Beijing: Xueyuan Chubanshe, 2009), 166–70, cites a March 1899 letter from Liang to his wife speculating about how cities might vie with one another to recruit the largest proportion of their communities as members. Gao, 170–71, includes lists of members and their contributions for Boston and other chapters, published in *Zhongguo Weixin Bao* in 1904, and describes the changes in dues through time as instigated by Kang Youwei.

duties into the positions dealing with money, with an auditor to oversee the accountant, two treasurers responsible for common funds and local office funds, and monthly posting of the financial statement at the chapter office.

3.3 *Membership Medals and Badges*

After Liang Qichao's visit, Kang Youwei developed a standard Baohuanghui membership badge. He saw membership badges (*huipai*) as an important public display of Baohuanghui identity, proof of membership, and a source of funds. Badges were discussed numerous times in Kang's and others' correspondence, and regulations regarding their design and cost were detailed in the 1905 charter (see Chapter 7). One justification for requiring badges was the assertion that persons pretending to be Baohuanghui members had illicitly enjoyed the hospitality of the association when visiting other chapters. Henceforth, Baohuanghui members were required to wear their badges at association functions, both at home and when traveling, "to show they are comrades."¹⁰⁷

Surviving examples of Baohuanghui badges show a variety of metals and designs, in part because there was no centralized production of the badges until Kang became directly involved in late 1904.¹⁰⁸ One example has a round shape with a pointed scalloped bottom and a scalloped crest with a loop suspension ring to which a ribbon and pin could be attached. Guangxu's image is inside a beaded oval frame in the center of the badge. Above the oval frame are two crossed flags: on the left, the three-star, three-stripe Baohuanghui flag, and on the right, the dragon flag of China. This is counter to the description in Section 10 of the Baohuanghui constitution. It stipulated the Qing flag on the left and the Baohuanghui flag on the right. Another example has the initials C.E.R.A. (Chinese Empire Reform Association) vertically on the left rim of the badge. To the right, in Chinese characters, is the inscription Baohuanghui Tongzhi (Baohuanghui comrade). Guangxu's portrait is in between the inscriptions. The reverse of the badge is plain and the outlines of the stamped images of the flags and Guangxu can be seen. The color is white or nickel; composition unknown.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ Section 10, 1905 charter, as cited in Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 80.

¹⁰⁸ An early badge example is seen in chapter posters for Butte and Marysville, Montana, dated 1901, round with an image of the emperor and no apparent writing. A few of the more-Americanized members, for example Guan Xianghuan of Butte, also wore an American flag pin below this badge. Johnson, *The Middle Kingdom under the Big Sky*, 81, 83.

¹⁰⁹ "1471 Kuang Hsu 光緒: White-metal Medal, ND, (c.1905)," Baldwin's Auction Archive. A similar badge is at https://www.auctionzip.com/auction-lot/Silver-C.E.R.A.-Chinese-Medallion-Badge_3E540E3A15/, accessed October 8, 2022.



FIGURE 26 Typical Baohuanghui badge found in 1905 time capsule, 1715 Government Street headquarters, Victoria.

A bronze-colored version found in a time capsule at the Victoria Baohuanghui headquarters has the identical design with a horizontal top bar made of the same copper-nickel alloy attached to the loop ring. The top bar is framed with a beaded line and has room for an inscription. No inscription is shown; perhaps the member's name, rank, or the chapter's city or town was meant to be engraved there. The 1905 constitution stipulated special staff badges (*zhilipai*), probably with appropriate rank inscription on a top bar. A June 1905 letter also

mentions special badges for Baohuanghui officers.¹¹⁰ Whether they were produced or not is not clear but the one found in Victoria may be of this category.

Archaeologists found a Baohuanghui badge in Butte's Chinatown in 2007. The partially corroded badge was one of some 60,000 artifacts recovered during the excavations. The badge's design is the same as those discussed above (round shape, scalloped bottom, scalloped crest) and presumably is made of copper-nickel alloy.¹¹¹

Prior to Kang's return to North America in 1904, a number of gold-plated and silver medals for special Baohuanghui members had been made in London. These medals (*baoxing*) were probably the same ones described in the contemporary press.¹¹² One was fabricated as an eight-pointed star with a medallion of the Guangxu Emperor on one side and crossed flags on the reverse (the Qing dragon flag and the Baohuanghui flag). The inscription, in Chinese, said that it had been presented in the Guangxu Emperor's thirtieth year (1904) by Kang Youwei and also included the characters for Baohuanghui beneath the flags. The medal was said to be made of "solid silver" and one of only twelve given to Americans. It was presented to Reverend Frederick Poole of Philadelphia, an ardent American supporter of the Baohuanghui. Kang supposedly made a formal presentation of the award when he was in Philadelphia in June 1905, but Poole only received the actual medal on July 12. A similar silver medal, "in the shape of a star," was presented to the captain of the Chinese militia company in Butte, Montana, on September 29. "One side," it was reported, "bears a raised picture of the young emperor of China and the flag of the reform association, which is similar to the American flag."¹¹³

The London badges include Guangxu's image beneath crossed Qing and Baohuanghui flags set off with sun rays on the obverse. The reverse has the characters "Baohuanghui tongzhi." They were made of "yellow copper." The badges made in the United States eliminated the rays, had the "Baohuanghui tongzhi" inscription in smaller characters on the obverse (the reverse was left blank), and were to be made of "white copper."¹¹⁴

110 Section 10, 1905 Baohuanghui charter, as cited in Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui* 96. Liang Wenqing 梁文卿, New York, to Kang Tongbi, South Windsor, June 17, 1905, no. B-24, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

111 The Chinese Empire Reform Association medal is in the collection of the Mai Wah Society Museum, Butte, Montana, <https://www.maiwah.org/2013/07/26/aotm-cera-medallion/>, accessed July 4, 2021.

112 "Order of Kwang Su for Rev. Mr. Poole," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, July 13, 1905, 6.

113 "Chinese Reform Party is Going to Spokane," *Anaconda Standard*, September 30, 1905, 7.

114 Kang Youwei, North Vancouver, to Kang Tongbi South Windsor, December 21, 1904, no. S-C47, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

A gold medal of unique design was presented to Western Military Academy chief instructor Homer Lea at a banquet on January 2, 1904, celebrating the opening of the Los Angeles Baohuanghui office.¹¹⁵ Signaling Lea's continued rise within the Baohuanghui, the medal has the Chinese characters for loyalty and honesty (*zhong* and *cheng*) in the center of a round beaded frame with "Los Angeles chapter" in Chinese across the top. The two central characters are encircled by two other inscriptions in Chinese that read: "Respectfully presented by Baohuanghui members" (*Baohuanghui tongren jingzeng*) "to Comrade General Lea" (*Li Jiangjun tongzhi huicun*).¹¹⁶ The outer edges are embellished with intricate ornamental curls and twists. The medal is suspended by sewn-together red, white, and blue ribbons which themselves hang from an ornate gold upper portion containing the initials C.E.R.A. This medal was listed in an accounting of badge sales and distribution by Li Zesheng of New York as a "gold badge with carved letters."¹¹⁷

Membership badges were a constant concern in Kang's letters to daughter Tongbi, beginning sometime before December 1904.¹¹⁸ It was time to manufacture quantities of badges for the general membership in a cost-effective manner with less attention to fine materials and fancy design. As with most Baohuanghui matters, even the badges were controversial. Kang told Tongbi to obtain quotes from both England and the United States to manufacture 10,000 badges with "either one or two flags above the Emperor and the five characters for 'Baohuanghui Comrade.'" Kang suggested that the text size be reduced by half, allowing both Chinese and English to be used. To save money and for the sake of egalitarianism, he wanted these badges made of copper and tin "so that everyone will be the same."¹¹⁹ But after new badges were produced with the modified design, Tang Mingsan of the New York City Baohuanghui said of them: "People here think they do not look good and say that they are hard to sell." However, the limited-edition gold and silver badges were meant for special recipients, not for the general membership. Kang had a few in hand

115 "To Revivify the Old China," *Los Angeles Times*, January 3, 1904, 5.

116 On the left, 保皇會同人敬贈 and on the right, 李將軍同志惠存. The medal is in the private collection of Joshua Powers in Vermont.

117 Li Zesheng 李澤生, Record of Baohuanghui badge distribution, [July 1, 1905; may be lunar], no. Z-8, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

118 Kang Youwei, Victoria, to Kang Tongbi, South Windsor, December n.d., 1904, no. S-C46, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection, is the first documented mention of badges.

119 Kang Youwei, Victoria, to Kang Tongbi, South Windsor, December n.d., 1904, no. S-C46, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

when he arrived in Los Angeles and gave the special gold badge to Homer Lea and silver ones to his drill masters.¹²⁰

In late 1904, Kang, while still in British Columbia, wanted Tongbi in Connecticut to oversee the production of the general membership badges. He told her that Tang Mingsan did not know English, and “he could be cheated by others.” So he directed Tongbi to obtain a cost estimate for the production of 10,000 badges and to purchase the copper and tin needed to produce the medals. Everything about the badges was to be kept secret.¹²¹ In a second letter, Kang said the badges should cost fifty cents or less to produce and would be sold for one dollar (about US\$35 in 2024 prices), thus the production of 20,000 badges would raise at least \$10,000 for the association. Kang was very detail-oriented in this matter. To avoid the heavy expense of customs duties, Tongbi was told to have them fabricated in the United States. He specified the use of a copper-nickel alloy rather than brass. The design was to be modified “without rays or make the rays smaller or just use the two flags,” and Baohuanghui *tongzhi* was to be put on the front of the badge next to the emperor’s portrait and at half the size as on the gold and silver medals. He told Tongbi that an order of several thousand would suffice at first. “Do it quickly,” he ordered her, “[and] I will distribute badges in every town I go to.”¹²² Tongbi replied by telegram to her father’s directives in his first and second December 1904 letters. The telegrams are not extant but it is clear from Kang’s replies what issues confronted her. She asked Kang to send one of the London-made silver medals as a model. He replied that he would send several and that the new copper medals were to be made smaller—“even half the size”—to lower costs. On a practical note, Kang said he had asked Ye En in Vancouver to arrange “from several hundred to a thousand dollars to wire to you to make the medals.”¹²³

Kang questioned Tongbi about the badge order status during the ensuing months and told her to send 2,000 to Vancouver. In January, just before he reached Portland, Oregon, and having not received any badges, he asked Tongbi

120 Kang Youwei, Los Angeles, to Tang Mingsan 湯銘三, New York, to be forwarded to Kang Tongbi, April 21, 1905, 康-11; and Tang Mingsan, New York, to Kang Tongbi, South Windsor, May 3, 1905, no. B-5, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

121 Kang Youwei, Victoria, to Kang Tongbi, South Windsor, December n.d., 1904, no. S-C46, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

122 Kang Youwei, North Vancouver, to Kang Tongbi South Windsor, December 21, 1904, no. S-C47, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

123 Kang Youwei, Vancouver, to Kang Tongbi, South Windsor, December 31, 1904, no. S-C48, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.



FIGURE 27
Portrait card of Guangxu
Emperor.

to instead “send a few hundred” to him in that city.¹²⁴ He had not received the badges because they had yet to be produced, but a prototype was available. Tongbi sent him a sample in February, and he replied that “our comrades” were not happy with it. Contrary to Kang’s intent that the emperor’s image represent “an iconography of vigorous imperial leadership,” members told him that the portrait “does not look illustrious and also appears quite sad.”¹²⁵ Yet, the unidentified comrades also did not want to spend a thousand dollars to change the die. A second message complained again about the emperor’s sad and

124 Kang Youwei, Vancouver, to Kang Tongbi, South Windsor, January 12, 1905, no. S-C49, and February 6, 1905, no. S-C23, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

125 Daniel Barish, *Learning to Rule: Court Education and the Remaking of the Qing State, 1861–1912* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2022), 97, describes Kang’s suggestion to Guangxu in 1898 to send his portrait throughout China as “the strongest statement of [Kang’s] belief in the symbolic role of the emperor.” Kang Youwei, Portland, to Kang Tongbi, South Windsor, March 2, 1905, no. S-C9, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

impotent visage, adding that the painted color “looks pale and dull.” Although Kang knew it would cost more, now he asked if the flags also could be done in color. “It would be more beautiful,” he declared.¹²⁶ Part of Tongbi’s problem was finding a better portrait of Guangxu and, in the end, the “sad” version was used.¹²⁷ Kang soon announced that “we will use the antiqued bronze color for our badges” because they would look similar to those produced in London, “thus mitigating some people’s hostility.”¹²⁸ Facing a shortage of funds available from Hong Kong, Kang sought to lower the cost, telling Tongbi the manufacturer “could use less white copper” (a copper-nickel alloy).

In the meantime, the medals made in London were causing problems. Li Fuji in Victoria wrote to Kang Tongbi in late March 1905 saying that the Bao-huanghui would have to pay duty of thirty cents per medal, thus adding to the overall cost. Moreover, it was discovered that they were not solid gold or silver but only gold or silver plated. The customs manifest declared them as solid gold and silver, thus the high duty cost. A batch of one hundred medals had been sent from London (presumably to New York), and then shipped onward to Canada (presumably Victoria) at a cost of \$29 duty. This must have been the batch Li Fuji complained about. Luo Chang had mailed a package from London in November 1904 to Tang Mingsan at the Chinese Reform News Publishing Company office in New York City. When this second batch “of several hundred” medals was held up over the duty issue, Kang feared that they might have been confiscated by U.S. customs officials and told Tongbi in April 1905 to not pick them up. Instead she was told to telegraph Luo Chang to send one or two gold medals to Kang and mail the rest to Hong Kong after they had been retrieved from New York.¹²⁹

126 Kang Youwei, Portland, to Kang Tongbi, South Windsor, March 11, 1905, no. S-C27, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

127 Tang Mingsan, New York, to Kang Tongbi, South Windsor, December 29, 1904, no. S-C50, January 2, 1905, S-C20, and January 4, 1905, no. S-C30, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

128 Kang Youwei, Los Angeles, to Kang Tongbi, South Windsor, March 23, 1905, no. 康-21, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection. Also see Kang Youwei, Los Angeles, to Kang Tongbi, South Windsor, April 10, 1905, no. 康-17; April 16, 1905, no. 康-9-3; April 19, 1905, no. 康-9-4, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

129 Li Fuji 李福基, Victoria, to Kang Tongbi, Hartford, March 25, 1905, no. B-63. An earlier letter from Li to Tongbi, March 10, 1905, projected a 35-cent duty per badge, no. S-C34, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection. For the gold plating, see Tang Mingsan, New York, to Luo Chang 羅昌, London, April 13, 1905, no. B-22; Kang Youwei to Tang Mingsan, to be forwarded to Kang Tongbi, April 21, 1905, no. 康-11, all in Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

In January or February, Luo wrote to the Returned Letter Office in London asking what had happened to his package and was informed on March 16 that it remained unclaimed at the American Express Office in New York City awaiting payment of duty and warehousing charges. A month later, two more letters were written concerning the London-made badges. On April 13, Tang Mingsan in New York wrote to Luo Chang saying he had not picked up the badges because Luo had not sent an invoice for them. Now the “Buddha” (Kang Youwei) wanted the badges, and Tang asked Luo to go to the manufacturer’s shop and obtain an invoice indicating “exactly what the gold badges are made of, so that the duty amount will be properly decided.” Coincidentally, the next day Luo wrote again to the British post office in London, asking them to have the package of badges returned. On May 2, however, Tang Mingsan sent a messenger to the American Express office to pay the duty. Luo was informed a month later by the British post office that the duty had been paid and the badges had been retrieved by Tang.¹³⁰

Surviving receipts, invoices and correspondence show how many badges were made, how much they cost, and who the supplier was. Kang Tongbi gave the job to the Ernst Schall Company, “Jewelers, Silversmiths and Diamond Merchants” and purveyors of “Fine Watches, Bric-a-Brac and Optical Goods” located at 941 Main Street in Hartford.¹³¹ Schall’s was once described as “one of the most enterprising and attractive of the many fine businesses of Hartford” and “one of the oldest businesses in the city,” having been founded in the early 1860s.¹³² By all descriptions, the Schall Company was a jewelry business and offered to design “presentation jewels, badges, emblems [and] class pins.” But evidently the company did not perform foundry work, such as required by the Baohuanghui badges.¹³³ The Schall Company records apparently no longer exist and it may not be possible to determine who actually manufactured the Baohuanghui badges or even if they were made in Hartford. A hint of a possible

130 Tang Mingsan, New York, to Kang Tongbi, South Windsor, May 3, 1905, no. B-5. Also see Returned Letter Office, Mount Pleasant, Clerkenwell, London, to Luo Chong, Oxford, March 16, 1905, no. Z-18-2; Tang Mingsan, New York, to Luo Chang, Oxford, April 13, 1905 [with Luo’s parenthetical comments inserted], no. B-22; and Returned Letter Office, Mount Pleasant, Clerkenwell, London, to Luo Chong, Oxford, May 13, 1905, no. Z-36-1, all in Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

131 *Geer’s Hartford City Directory, July 1897* (Hartford: Hartford Printing Company, 1897), 717 for Schall, incorporated in 1892, and 329 for Stevens, <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=hvd.hn4ggv&seq=3>, accessed July 25, 2015.

132 *Hartford and Its Points of Interest* (New York: Mercantile Illustrating Company, 1895), 96, <https://archive.org/details/hartforditspointoomerc>, accessed October 10, 2022.

133 *Hartford and Its Points of Interest*, 175.

manufacturer appears in a brief postcard message from Yung Wing to Kang Tongbi on May 1, 1905: "... please send back the proposal for manufacturing the gold and copper badges by 'Bolie' so we have the document on file."¹³⁴ At the time, the city had numerous companies performing die making and metal casting. The only foundry seen in the 1904 Hartford business directory whose name comes close to "Bolie" (伯烈 or Ba-liht in Cantonese) is J. Blake and Son, brass founders and copper smiths.¹³⁵

One of Kang Tongbi's interlocutors in the badge business was James R. Stevens, a clerk and later business associate at Schall Company. His business card was found among Kang Tongbi's personal papers. A letter written to her by Yung Wing in February 1905 said he had heard from an individual in New York City whom he did not identify, "through Mr. Stevens," that the badges could not be manufactured for less than nineteen cents apiece for an order of 6,000. Yung assured Tongbi of the following delivery schedule, pending her approval of the first medal: "2,000 on the 22nd of February; 2,000 on the 28th of Feb'y; & the final 2,000 of 6th March."¹³⁶ In fact, it was later revealed in correspondence, that it was Yung who had made the first inquiry with Schall concerning the badges.¹³⁷ But who Yung's proposed provider was is not known, only that James Stevens needed Tongbi's "assent to this arrangement." It also was around this time that Kang Tongbi gave a lavish lunar New Year banquet at the King Far Low restaurant for twenty of her friends, including her teachers—Yung Wing and two unidentified Hartford physicians—"and a number of ladies from this city."¹³⁸

A series of invoices and receipts issued by the Schall Company tell the rest of the story. Kang Tongbi made an initial payment to Schall on March 4, 1905, of \$380 and received an invoice acknowledging this amount and that 2,000

134 Yung Wing [Rong Hong] 容閔, Hartford, to Kang Tongbi, South Windsor, May 1, 1905, no. B-53, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

135 *Geer's Hartford City Directory; Geer's Classified Business Directory*, 1904, no. 67, July 1904–July 1905 (Hartford: Hartford Printing Company, 1904), 658 and 672.

136 Yung Wing, Hartford, to Kang Tongbi, South Windsor, February 14, 1905, no. E-40, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection. The letter was in a hand-carried envelope instructing the bearer to "Wait for answer."

137 Ernst Schall, Hartford, to Kang Tongbi, South Windsor, no. E-20, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

138 "Miss Khang Gives Dinner to Dr. Yung," *Hartford Courant*, February 20, 1905, 5. The dinner was held on February 19.

badges were "Awaiting your instructions to ship."¹³⁹ On April 17, Schall issued an invoice to Tongbi for 3,000 badges that had been "recolored in copper color." The cost was \$90.¹⁴⁰ Tongbi, being a modern woman in America, used the telephone to call in her next order to Schall. Company president Ernst Schall himself wrote to Tongbi, acknowledging her "valued telephone order for 2000 more medals made of bronze" and saying that he had hurried to place the order so that it would be ready by May 1. And, he had done this quickly despite having had to change the die. What change was made was not stated. He also noted that had she originally ordered 4,000 badges, he could have reduced the cost to eighteen cents per badge. Always a gentleman in his correspondence, Schall said "At any rate I placed the order & thank you in advance & for the past for your Extreme Kindness."¹⁴¹ Despite the statement that he "could have" reduced the cost to eighteen cents per badge, he actually did reduce it to that price in a subsequent invoice.¹⁴² On April 22, Schall wrote to Tongbi reporting that he had sent 500 medals that day to the Chinese Reform News Publishing Company in New York and that she could expect 2,000 more on May 1 and an additional 2,000 on May 8.¹⁴³ On April 28, Schall wrote again to Tongbi about the order of 4,000 additional medals, the ones due on May 1 and 8. He asked if she would like to inspect them before he boxed them for shipping. And, would she be so kind as to pay him the \$90 for the bronze plating of 3,000 medals. "This amount I had to pay cash and it is of no profit to me," the German-born Schall gently complained in his less than perfect English, and "all of orders of this kind I had to agree to pay on delivery of the medals."¹⁴⁴

With some badges now in hand, Kang directed they be distributed to Bao-huanghui chapters in St. Louis, Chicago, and Washington, DC, in advance of his visits so members would be wearing them when he arrived. "Only in this way," wrote Kang, "can we distribute the badges fast and get our investment

139 Schall receipt to Kang Tongbi, for \$380, March 4, 1905, no. Z-16-3; and invoice, March 7, 1905, no. Z-16-1, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

140 Schall invoice to Kang Tongbi, for \$90, April 17, 1905, no. Z-16-2, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

141 Schall to Kang Tongbi, April 22, 1905, no. E-18, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

142 Schall invoice to Kang Tongbi, May 1, 1905, no. Z-16 (2), Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

143 Schall to Kang Tongbi, April 25, 1905, no. E-17, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

144 Schall to Kang Tongbi, April 28, 1905, no. E-19, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

(money) back.”¹⁴⁵ Kang insisted on prior distribution because he had already found that the “Members of Baohuanghui in the cities I have been wouldn’t buy the badges, thus making it difficult to collect money. For example, no one in Victoria would buy the badge.”¹⁴⁶ He asked Tongbi to send 1,000 badges to him in Los Angeles so he could forward them to Fresno and other cities in California. The new badges were successful; Zhou Guoxian wrote from Los Angeles to Kang Tongbi on April 19 saying: “The medals are alright and agreeable to our Reform Association” and that he had wired \$400 to her.¹⁴⁷ Success was indeed achieved because, in early May, Kang wrote to Tongbi that “Now various chapters are all asking for badges, and I don’t have enough to answer their needs.” He had 2,000 badges that he had been distributing and Tang Mingsan in New York City had “only several hundred.” So, Kang asked Tongbi to order 10,000 more badges.¹⁴⁸ A partial record made by Li Zesheng in New York City shows that 3,363 badges were mailed to individuals and chapters in Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Honolulu, Norfolk (Virginia), New London (Connecticut), Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, St. Louis, and Central America, but only 153—those sent to individuals—had been purchased.¹⁴⁹

By the time Kang reached Kansas City in May 1905, he asked that additional badges be sent to Chicago, to which he had earlier mailed five hundred.¹⁵⁰ Altogether, 1,000 or 1,200 badges were sent to Chicago, 200 to Baltimore, and 2,100 to New York City, but 220 were missing upon receipt. Still there was dissatisfaction. As Tang Mingsan reported in mid-May:

Many people here dislike the style of the badges, because they are not resplendent. They are difficult to sell. We are sending out enthusiastic people and will publish notices to try our best to sell them. Chinese

145 Kang Youwei, Los Angeles, to Kang Tongbi, South Windsor, April n.d., 1905, no. 康-5, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

146 Kang Youwei, Los Angeles, to Kang Tongbi, South Windsor, April 19, 1905, no. 康-9-4, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

147 Zhou Guoxian 周國賢, Los Angeles, to Kang Tongbi, South Windsor, April 19, 1905, no. E-26, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collections.

148 Kang Youwei, Los Angeles, to Kang Tongbi, South Windsor, May 5, 1905, no. 康-13, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

149 Li, Record of Baohuanghui badge distribution, no. Z-8, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

150 Kang Youwei, Kansas City, to Kang Tongbi, South Windsor, May 14, 1905, no. 康-20, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

people here have too much freedom, so they open their mouths and complain.¹⁵¹

Tang Mingsan also was unhappy about having to be the distribution point for the United States and had been criticized by Kang for failing to get badges in time to Washington and Pittsburgh. So Tang asked Tongbi to mail the badges directly to the local chapters. Around this time, Tongbi evidently was dissatisfied with the quality of the Hartford-produced badges, and Tang suggested that “more elegant” ones could be made at less cost in New York.¹⁵²

Despite the dissatisfaction, an order for 10,000 more badges was placed with Ernst Schall a few days before May 15. Schall wrote politely to Tongbi that he appreciated the “extreme kindness in giving me preference in making 10,000 medals.” He assured he would do his best in regard to “workmanship & quality.” He explained again that the more ordered the cheaper the per-badge cost would be and that an order of 20,000 could have been had for fifteen cents each, what he had been led to expect when the subject of the badges originally was discussed with Yung Wing. “Small lots cost more,” and he asked her to come to his shop the next day so he could explain more clearly that with the smaller-size orders he had “to pay spot cash & can not wait for payment.” Schall preferred a face-to-face meeting rather than a telephone conversation or an exchange of letters. He explained, though, that he no longer would pay for the badges in advance of receiving her checks. “A contract for 20,000 at 15 Cts must be made in writing,” he told Tongbi, and “must be paid on delivery” from the manufacturer to him. He reiterated that he could charge fifteen cents per badge “providing [the] quantity is furnished for cash on delivery.”¹⁵³

Invoices from Schall confirm that Kang Tongbi made the required payments but it seems not in advance of Schall’s receiving the badges from the foundry. Two payments totaling \$900 were made on June 17 and July 19 but Tongbi remained in arrears for \$600 for her orders for a total of 10,000 badges on June 9 and 14 and July 17. And, badges were not the only business she did with Schall; an invoice in early July billed her for a \$30 coral necklace and \$2.50 to repair a crescent broach. Two months later, Tongbi evidently lost a gold locket

151 Tang Mingsan, New York, to Kang Tongbi, South Windsor, May 16, 1905, no. B-6; May 24, 1905, no. B-10; May 27, 1905, no. B-11, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

152 Tang Mingsan, New York, to Kang Tongbi, South Windsor, May 16, 1905, no. B-9, and May 27, 1905, no. B-11; Kang Youwei, Washington, DC, to Kang Tongbi, South Windsor, June 22, 1905, no. 康-4, all in Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

153 Schall to Kang Tongbi, May 15, 1905, no. E-20, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

and chain “of Chinese workmanship” either at the Hartford railroad station or at Brown Thomson, a Hartford department store. It was valuable enough that Yung Wing placed a classified advertisement in the *Hartford Courant* offering “a suitable reward.”¹⁵⁴

But Tongbi was still learning about American-style business deals. On August 11, Schall wrote to her saying he had shipped more medals to “foreign ports” (evidently Mexico) and asked where and to whom to ship another 4,000 badges he had in stock. “I also wish that you will kindly send checks for this balance order \$600,” wrote Schall. He explained that he “had to scratch around & pay for them 3 weeks ago” and that “I need the funds now to pay off taxes and other bills, to pay for the medals when they where [sic] delivered & now I had to pay spot cash & I had to borrow money to do that.” At the end of his missive, he insisted, “I must have the money now ...”¹⁵⁵ Facing her own financial shortfall, Tongbi paid \$140 on August 18, with a balance of \$460 still due. As of September 13, when Schall sent a second bill, this amount was still in arrears. He added a note at the bottom of the second invoice, saying “This account must now be settled without delay. I filled the contract according to your order at a low figure & I must have the \$460 & I give you this notice to attend to it at once.”¹⁵⁶ After five more days, Schall stepped up his demand for payment saying if she did not pay for the 4,000 badges, he would be forced to withdraw the money Tongbi owed from her checking account. It seemed, said Schall, that Tongbi was withholding payment because of the lost or delayed shipment of 1,000 badges sent to Mexico; “this cannot do any longer. The medals you ordered must now be paid for.” This is the last extant piece of correspondence between Ernst Schall and Kang Tongbi but surely was not the end of their dispute as he threatened to “draw on your Bank for the Bill that we sent you” if she

154 Schall invoices to Kang Tongbi, July 1, 1905, no. Z-16 (4), and July 17, 1905, no. Z-19; Yung Wing, Hartford, to Kang Tongbi, South Windsor, August 29, 1905, no. E-39 [written in English], which mentions an ad for \$1.10 for four days in *Hartford Courant* (see “Lost,” *Hartford Courant*, August 25, 1905, 16, and three successive days), all in Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

155 Schall to Kang Tongbi, August 11, 1905, no. E-21, and September 18, 1905, no. E-22, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection, says he had inquired at the local transportation company about a package of 1,000 badges he sent earlier to Mexico. “All the [sic] said they could do was trace said Pkge & likely you will hear from your party ...”

156 Schall invoices to Kang Tongbi, August 18, 1905, and September 13, 1905, no. Z-16 (4), Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

did not pay by return mail.¹⁵⁷ However, her father apparently came to Tongbi's rescue a month later, sending \$250 to her from Portland and \$200 from New York, and informed her that "the funds for the badges are settled."¹⁵⁸

By this time, though, Kang's travels in the United States were nearly ended and it remains uncertain how his scheme of having the badges sold in advance of his arrival in each locale worked out and what the cost was for each badge. It is obvious that the sale of badges was both an important source of income as well as a heavy drain on expenses.

3.4 *Newspapers*

Even before their exile, Kang and Liang were pioneers in publishing newspapers for political purposes. Their first effort was in Beijing in 1895 with a daily newsheet for government officials at a time when Kang said that "no one in the capital dared to establish a newspaper to broaden our general understanding of world affairs."¹⁵⁹ Once abroad they found greater freedom to publish and with an expanded readership, focused on education of the general populace (*kai minzhi*) rather than influencing elite opinion. Altogether, about forty newspapers were published in North America, Asia, and Australia.

Wenxing Bao (*Mon Hing Bo* or *The Chinese World*) in San Francisco was established in 1899 and by 1901 had become a daily.¹⁶⁰ It was the only Baohuanghui newspaper in the United States in 1903, although by December of that

157 Schall to Kang Tongbi, September 18, 1905, no. E-22, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

158 Kang Youwei, Portland, to Kang Tongbi, South Windsor, October 13, 1905, no. 康-28, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

159 This newsheet was called *Zhongwai Jiwen* 中外記聞 according to Liang Qichao, "Chronological Autobiography of K'ang Yu-wei" in Lo, *K'ang Yu-wei*, 69, 152. Kang and Liang's first "party" journal, *Qiangxue Bao* 強學報 [Journal of Self-Strengthening], supported their study society, Qiangxuehui 強學會 [Society for Self-Strengthening] around the same time in 1895; both papers were superseded in 1896 by *Shiwu Bao* 時務報 (*The Chinese Progress*), which for a brief period became an official newspaper to promote Guangxu's reforms. Joan Judge, *Print and Politics: Shibao and the Culture of Reform in Late Qing China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 21–23. In 1895, *Bincheng Xin Bao* (Penang *Sin Poe*) 檳城新報 was begun in Penang; in 1897, *Zhixin Bao* (China *Reformer*) 知新報 was established in Macau; after the Hundred Days, Liang Qichao founded *Qingyi Bao* 清議報 in December 1898 in Yokohama.

160 According to Him Mark Lai, "The Chinese American Press," in *The Ethnic Press in the United States: An Historical Analysis and Handbook*, ed. Sally M. Miller (New York: Greenwood Press, 1987), 32, *Wenxing Bao* 文興報 was founded in 1891 or 1892 and taken over by the reformers in 1899.



FIGURE 28 Banners of three newspapers found in the 1905 time capsule at Baohuanghui founding headquarters, 1715 Government St., Victoria. From top: *Sheung Po* [Shang Bao], Hong Kong; *Sun Chung Kwock Bo* [Xin Zhongguo Bao], Honolulu; and *The Chinese World* or *Mon Hing Yat Bo* [Wenxing Bao], San Francisco.

year a printing press had been ordered from China and an editor from Liang Qichao's Datong School in Yokohama had arrived in New York City in anticipation of the publication of an East Coast newspaper, *Zhongguo Weixin Bao*. The New York paper published its first issue in March 1904, at five cents a copy, with an illustrated story about Christopher Columbus on its cover and an article reporting Kang Tongbi's speech in Hartford.¹⁶¹

A substantial Baohuanghui newspaper network existed in 1903, including *Xin Zhongguo Bao* (*Sun Chung Kwok Bo*, *New China News*) (Honolulu); *Donghua Xin Bao* (Sydney); *Bincheng Xin Bao* (Penang); *Tiannan Xin Bao* (Singapore); *Xinmin Congbao* (Yokohama); *Yadong Bao* (Kōbe); and *Yiyou Xin Bao* (Manila).¹⁶² The *Tung Wah News* (*Donghua Xin Bao*), which had been launched in Sydney in 1898 by reformers, became the official Baohuanghui organ in Australia under the editorship of Tang Caizhi and was renamed *Tung Wah Times* (*Donghua Bao*) in 1902. This Australian newspaper was published until 1936 and included not only news of Baohuanghui chapters in Australia but from around the world and is the only association organ for which there still exists a complete run.¹⁶³ *Wenxing Bao*, like Baohuanghui newspapers in other cities, was the American nerve center for Baohuanghui communications, producing a daily newspaper disseminating the reform message to a wide readership of Chinese in the United States and linking distant chapters with each other and with the central party leaders through the distribution of important documents, such as those written by Liang Qichao. More than any other Baohuanghui leader, Liang—China's most-read journalist and founder of several newspapers—was responsible for quality control and innovation for the Baohuanghui press network. The newspapers, if not having the highest circulation in the cities of their publication, were avidly read by the community

161 "Chinese to Print a New York Newspaper," *New York Times*, December 20, 1903, 24. *Zhongguo Weixing Bao* 中國維新報 has been lost to historians except for isolated issues. Vol. 1, no. 1, with the English subtitle "Chinese Reform News," appeared on March 10, 1904, and ran through 1937. Ethnic Studies Library, University of California at Berkeley, holds most of this newspaper for 1904, its initial year of publication, AR-44A-B. The New York Public Library had a more extensive collection (1904–8) but discarded it in September 1960 because it "had deteriorated to such an extent that it could no longer be used." Letter of John P. Baker, Executive Assistant, Research Libraries, New York Public Library, to Robert L. Worden, Georgetown University, Washington, DC, February 17, 1971.

162 From "Mapping the Baohuanghui" and Jung-pang Lo, "Sequel to Autobiography," 258. Not included in this list is the problematic *Datong Ribao* 大同日報 (*Chinese Free Press*), San Francisco, which was more of a Zhigongtang 致公堂 organ but was established by Tang Qiongchang 唐瓊昌 and Ou Jujia 歐渠甲 (both involved with *Wenxing Bao* and the Baohuanghui) in 1903; it was taken over by revolutionaries in 1904.

163 For *Tung Wah News* and *Tung Wah Times* see <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper#>, accessed May 5, 2023.

elite, posted on Chinatown bulletin boards, and, in the case of newspapers published in Asia, sent into China. Liang's cascade of intellectual and political epiphanies were quickly dispatched to his eager readers as lucid commentaries (*shelun*) that were generally first published in his Yokohama newspapers, *Qingyi Bao* and *Xinmin Congbao*, then reprinted worldwide by other Baohuanghui newspapers. Editors of these newspapers were selected by Kang or Liang and personally monitored by central association leaders close to Kang, such as Xu Qin.

3.5 *Political Movements*

Shortly after they were established, the newspapers became a vehicle for mobilizing political action. In the beginning, the newspapers publicized the Baohuanghui circular telegrams in 1899 and in 1900 to forestall the Guangxu's removal. But beyond publicity, some Baohuanghui newspapers took an activist role in inflaming, if not creating, political movements. *Shi Bao*, the Baohuanghui newspaper Liang started in Shanghai in 1904, was founded to promote the party's reform message inside China. With its graphically interesting and more readable layout, satirical cartoons complete with caricatures, proactive reporting and political editorials, and serialized novels, *Shi Bao* looked and read differently from other Chinese newspapers.¹⁶⁴ In 1905, it became the mouthpiece of the anti-American boycott with daily coverage of the boycott and calls to action. Less known was how *Shi Bao* editors helped to initiate what became China's first mass political movement, a topic explored in detail in Chapter 6.

The seeds of the 1905 boycott were planted during Liang's final days in San Francisco in November 1903, when he helped draft a petition—no doubt in the form of a circular telegram—signed by “more than 100,000 people in more than one hundred American cities” through the Six Companies (Zhonghua Huiguan).¹⁶⁵ The petition described the rigors of U.S. exclusion laws for Chinese and asked Qing foreign affairs officials to refuse to renew the soon to expire U.S.–China exclusion treaty. In his letter to Los Angeles Baohuanghui leaders, Liang referred to a public letter he wrote refuting exclusion; it might have been this petition, or perhaps a much-circulated essay, *Huagong Jinyue Ji* (Notes on the Exclusion of Chinese Laborers) that was published in *Xinmin*

164 Ma Guangren 馬光仁, *Shanghai Xinwen Shi, 1850–1949* 上海新聞史, 1850–1949 [History of Shanghai Newspapers, 1850 to 1949] (Shanghai: Fudan Daxue Chubanshe, 1996), 253. Ma writes that it was said of *Shi Bao* that it was the first newspaper whose graphic style embodied the meaning of its writing (紙面體載).

165 “Zhishi Fuchi Daju” 志士扶持大局 [Man of Integrity Supports the Interests of a Nation], *Chung Sai Yat Po* (*Zhongxi Ribao*), November 11, 1903, 2.

Congbao soon after his return to Japan.¹⁶⁶ This essay was reprinted as a pamphlet during the 1905 anti-American boycott.¹⁶⁷ Liang's extensive experience in Chinese American communities lent credibility to his detailed descriptions of the Exclusion policy.

A succession of transnational political movements, such as the 1908 anti-Japanese boycott and the constitutional petition movement of 1907–10 (detailed in Chapters 10 and 11), were organized by the Baohuanghui in a similar fashion, using newspapers to influence public opinion on the sometimes complex issues behind these movements, disseminate petitions, and support fundraising efforts.

3.6 *Civil and Military Education*

Educating a new generation of reformers loomed large in the strategies of Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao, the Baohuanghui core leadership having largely come from the students of Kang's Wanmucaotang in the 1890s. Thus, Liang's Los Angeles charter specified "raising funds to establish schools and support our association's youth to go abroad to study so that they will become useful talents for the future."¹⁶⁸

Liang's cohort of fellow students followed him into exile in Japan after the Hundred Days' reforms, and some became teachers at Liang's famous Datong (Great Unity) schools, Datong Xuexiao in Yokohama and Tokyo or Tongwen Xuexiao (Common Culture School) in Kōbe.¹⁶⁹ These schools were the most-distinguished successors to Kang's Wanmucaotang, sharing a curriculum and teaching style that combined Confucianism and Western-style education but now focused on motivating and training political activists. Liang dispatched a constant stream of graduates (both men and women) and their teachers to distant posts where they taught in Baohuanghui schools, managed newspapers, or worked in Baohuanghui companies, such as Shanghai's Guangzhi Shuju (Diffusion of Knowledge Publishing House). The demand far exceeded the supply, as Liang explained in 1902 when Canadian members asked for a few experienced Datong or Tongwen teachers to come to Canada.

166 Liang Qichao to Los Angeles Baohuanghui, November 21, 1903, no. 112 in Fang and Cai, 108.

167 Wong, "Liang Qichao and the Chinese of America"; "Huagong Jinyue Ji" 華工禁約記 in A Ying 阿英, *Fanmei Huagong Jinyue Wenxue Ji* 反美華工禁約文學集 [A Collection of Literature in Opposition to the American Treaty Excluding Chinese Laborers] (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1962), 487–522; Six Companies petition reproduced on pages 509–21.

168 Charter of Los Angeles Baohuanghui, November 1903, no. 111 in Fang and Cai, 384.

169 Craig A. Smith, "The Datong Schools and Late Qing Sino-Japanese Cooperation," *Twentieth-Century China* 42, no. 1 (January 2017): 3–25.

The best candidates, Liang told them, were occupied with more critical activities in China, Macau, and Japan, and an assignment to Canada would have to wait. As for the students, they had to graduate before being asked to take on new responsibilities. And when they did finish, Liang contended, they would most likely be needed to carry out “our movement and activities” inside China because “we have many opportunities but have to weigh our options. We have to keep them confidential and cannot discuss them in this letter.”¹⁷⁰ The confidential plans Liang intimated in his letter no doubt included what came to be known as the Guangdong Rising of 1902–3, a conspiracy among reformers including Liang, Yung Wing, and Ou Jujia; revolutionaries; and secret society members to seek Guangdong’s independence and then use it as a base to establish a republican form of government.¹⁷¹

During his time in the United States, Liang openly advocated for the Guangdong Public School in a public letter he wrote in San Francisco. This prospective school in Guangzhou would teach the children of members’ families remaining in China and was first promoted by Baohuanghui leader Xu Qin, who had repeatedly solicited donations for it from overseas Chinese as early as 1901. The school finally opened in 1905 with ninety students, more than doubled its enrollment in 1906, and made plans to purchase seventeen *mu* (2.62 acres) of land.¹⁷²

The Baohuanghui network of schools began in Japan, Guangdong, and Macau and expanded rapidly from 1905 onward, not only in North America (Vancouver, Los Angeles, Fresno, San Francisco, and New York) but also in Southeast Asia (Burma, Java, Penang, and Singapore, including schools

170 The three candidates Liang mentioned were his close friend and disciple, Tang Juedun 湯覺頓, one of the original Datong School teachers in 1898 and “the most competent talent” whom “we absolutely cannot send to a faraway place”; He Qingyi 何擎一 who worked at Tongwen School; and Wang Jingru 王鏡如 (Wang Jueren 王覺任), who was in charge of the Macau headquarters. Liang Qichao to Ye En 葉恩, Li Fuji, and others, August 14, 1902, no. 540 in Fang and Cai, 99–102.

171 Strongly opposed by Kang, this failed uprising is described in Chapter 4. It likely involved students educated at a school in Xiamen (Chucui Sishu 儲才私塾) associated with the Baohuanghui. See L. Eve Armentrout, “The Canton Rising of 1902–1903: Reformers, Revolutionaries, and the Second Taiping,” *Modern Asian Studies* 10, no. 1 (1976): 83–105.

172 Xu Qin to Tan Zhangxiao, October 17, 1906, nos. 168 and 167 in Fang and Cai, 138; translated in “New Source Materials on Kang Youwei and the Baohuanghui,” 180–82. Also see Ruan Fangji, Huang Chunsheng, and Wu Jie 阮芳紀, 黃春生, 吳洁, with materials provided by Tan Jingyi 譚精意 [Jane Leung Larson], “Guanyu Baohuanghui Shi jian Shougao” 關於保皇會十件手稿 [Ten Original Documents concerning the Baohuanghui], *Jindaishi Ziliao* [Modern Historical Materials] 80 (January 1992): 17 n1; and Ding and Zhao, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 360. The school’s name was later changed to Nanqiang Gongxue 南強公學.



FIGURE 29 "A Chinese School in New York," photo in "Oriental Schools in New York," *Van Norden: The World Mirror*, July 1909.

specifically for girls); Honolulu, Hawai'i (Mun Lun School or Minglun Liang-deng Xuetang, founded in 1911 and still thriving); and Hankou, Hubei (a short-lived college of law and politics—Jiangnan Gongxue—established during the flowering of the constitutional movement in 1907). Schools were comparatively expensive to establish and required trained teachers comfortable with a less-formal teaching style and Sino-Western curriculum.¹⁷³ It took several years to assemble funds and personnel before opening school doors. The New York City school, one of the Patriotic Academies (Aiguo Xuetang or Oikwok Hoktong), opened in 1904 and solicited students from the northeast region through advertisements in *Zhongguo Weixin Bao*, offering room and board for \$12 a month.¹⁷⁴ Liang Wenqing was sent from the Datong School to teach the morning Chinese classes, and an American teacher was hired to teach English

173 For example, Belinda Huang, "Teaching Chineseness in the Trans-Pacific Society: Overseas Chinese Education in Canada and the United States, 1900–1919," Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton University, 2009, 117–19, examines Vancouver Aiguo Xuetang 1909 account books, finding tuition fees paid for only 25 percent of the school's budget, with the remainder coming from an active fundraising campaign and local chapter contributions.

174 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 230–31 (from *Zhongguo Weixin Bao*, August 25, 1904). Also see "School for Tiny Chinese," *Kansas City Star*, December 29, 1905 (originally published in the *New York World*).

in the afternoon. Both boys and girls attended, and night classes in Chinese and English were offered to adults for \$1 a month. The school principals were local Baohuanghui leaders, whose duties included continuous fundraising.¹⁷⁵

Baohuanghui school curricula mirrored the organization's values and goals, distinguishing the schools from others in local Chinatowns. Historian Belinda Huang notes that "the Baohuanghui network of paramilitary and elementary schools transformed the educational and political landscape in Chinese North America." They introduced such timely subjects as Qing current affairs and a more flexible style of teaching, all the while attempting to build "new citizens" who were strong physically, morally, and intellectually and dedicated to the reform cause.¹⁷⁶ Huang describes how Baohuanghui schools in North America broke with Chinese tradition: "Although they continued to emphasize literacy in Classical Chinese, knowledge of Confucian texts, and Confucian ethics, they were among the first institutions inside and outside of China to weave physical education, scientific knowledge, and even domestic arts into the curriculum." In her examination of Baohuanghui schools in San Francisco, Vancouver, and Victoria, Huang discovered that instructors used such teaching aids as maps, picture charts, and animal rhymes alongside age-graduated textbooks to teach history and Chinese philology written by Chen Zibao, a Kang disciple and early educational reformer.¹⁷⁷ In keeping with Kang's egalitarian ethos, Chen advocated universal literacy and education for women and designed his textbooks with these goals in mind: "He deliberately chose easily accessible everyday topics that might interest his elementary readers, such as family relations, food, music, and clothing, and he employed easy to understand language, often in the Cantonese vernacular, colloquially spoken, and even in rhymes, to appeal to his audience, an approach very different from the dry and one-book-fits-all-one mentality of previous educators," according to Huang. From North America, these progressive methods of teaching Chinese language and culture disseminated to Baohuanghui schools worldwide.

The Western Military Academy was unique to North America. One of Kang's enduring criticisms of the Qing court was its inadequate military preparations. He insisted that "if the nation doesn't prepare itself [for war], then the people must prepare themselves." Not coincidentally, this was part of Kang's tribute to

175 For example, New York's principal was Tang Zhao (Tong Chew 湯昭 or Tang Mingsan 湯銘三), editor of *Zhongguo Weixin Bao*, and Vancouver's principal was Ye Chuntian 葉春田), the national Baohuanghui president for Canada.

176 Huang, "Teaching Chineseness," 100, 119–23.

177 Zhongping Chen, email to Jane Larson, April 14, 2022, notes that the Victoria school was a project of reformists, especially Li Mengjiu, but was not a Baohuanghui school as the leaders did not want to antagonize the Qing government.

the Los Angeles-based Western Military Academy written in January 1905 after receiving a photo of drilling cadets.¹⁷⁸

In his 1903 Los Angeles charter, Liang Qichao had mandated activities “to cultivate the military qualifications of citizens,” a clear reference to the academy founded early in 1904 in Los Angeles by Homer Lea, a self-proclaimed American military strategist who had won the trust of Baohuanghui leaders to organize a military training program for Chinese cadets taught by American military veterans. In the 1905 Baohuanghui charter, Kang referred directly to “the more than twenty Academies” and states that the local Baohuanghui chapters and academy principals would select the top graduates for further study in American military schools to prepare them to be “future commanders and leaders,” to be paid for by the Baohuanghui headquarters.¹⁷⁹ Full treatment of the Western Military Academy is in Chapter 4.

Both Kang and Liang said that only persons who had studied abroad were capable of shouldering the responsibility for China's future.¹⁸⁰ Thus a top priority for the Baohuanghui was developing a cadre of young reformers competent in naval and military tactics, science, technology, government, law, business, and finance, which could only be accomplished by study in Japan, North America, or Europe. Liang's 1903 Los Angeles charter, as well as Kang's 1905 and 1907 organizational constitutions, reiterated the urgency of this task and the need to raise funds to support it. A handful of people, including Xu Qin, Liang Qichao, Kuang Shoumin (Kuang Shouwen), Tom Leung, and Kang Youwei collected personal and Baohuanghui funds, arranged the transnational logistics for the students—from making travel arrangements to meeting immigration regulations and selecting appropriate schools abroad—and communicated with one another to coordinate this program. Once the students were abroad, overseas members hosted them in their homes, monitored their studies, involved them in Baohuanghui activities, and, in a few cases, elicited

178 Kang Youwei, “Zawen” 雜文 [Essay] January 28, 1905 in “Gancheng Xuexiao Shi” 干城學校史 (History of the Gancheng schools), Chinese Empire Reform Association, AR-3, Ethnic Studies Library, University of California at Berkeley, AAS ARC 2000/78, hereafter AAS ARC 2000/78.

179 Huang, “Teaching Chineseness,” 109–10.

180 Lin Keguang, “Kang Youwei Jiaoyu Gaige Sixiang ji Shijian” 康有為教育改革思想及實踐 [The Ideology and Practice of Kang Youwei's Education Reforms] in Hu Shengwu 胡繩武, *Wuxu Weixin Yundong Shilun ji* 戊戌維新運動史論集 [Collection of Essays on the History of the 1898 Reform Movement] (Changsha: Hunan People's Publishing House, 1983), 192–94; and Dong Shouyi 董守義, *Qingdai Liuxuesheng Yundong Shi* 清代留學運動史 [A History of the Study Abroad Movement during the Qing dynasty] (Shenyang: Liaoning People's Publishing House, 1985), 329.

long-term and dangerous commitments from them, including assassination and participation in uprisings. Funds came from local chapter donations, the Commercial Corporation and its subsidiaries, and Baohuanghui headquarters in Hong Kong.

Tom Leung in Los Angeles had the greatest responsibility for supporting students abroad and conceived of an unusual method of funding their studies. Perhaps noting the popularity of lavish Chinese restaurants patronized by Americans, Tom successfully persuaded Kang that it would be possible to pay for student expenses abroad with profits from such a restaurant. With Kang's approval and initial investment, Tom opened King Joy Lo (Qiongcailou) in the Chicago Loop in 1906, a restaurant that was both larger than its competitors and profitable enough to survive for twenty years. Yet, in its first three years, only \$7,500 appears to have been allocated for payments to fewer than twenty students (see Chapter 9).¹⁸¹ Baohuanghui chapters also donated funds for study abroad. Belinda Huang examined account books for Baohuanghui's San Francisco headquarters from 1907 to 1910, which show income from local chapters subsidizing tuition for thirteen people (all men except for Kang Tongbi), with payments ranging from \$100 to \$1,000.¹⁸²

Other Baohuanghui leaders advocated that the Baohuanghui give the highest priority to funding education abroad. In 1905, journalist Liu Zhenlin argued, "Because the traditional examination system has been abolished and a constitutional government is not far away, the future will belong to the students ... I would like to suggest that our party send more members abroad to study and prepare for the future. If we don't, we will not be able to play any role in the political arena and will be eliminated by natural selection."¹⁸³ Liu's suggestion that a dedicated fund be set up for study abroad was never accepted. That year, Liang Wenqing, who taught at the New York City Patriotic Academy, recommended the diversion of Commercial Corporation profits to support students rather than reinvesting in business projects, because the

181 Tan Jingyi 譚精意 (Jane Leung Larson), "Guanyu Baohuanghui Pai Xuesheng Chu Meiguo Liuxue de Yundong: yi Tan Liang Dang'an wei Zhongxin" 關於保皇會派學生出美國留學的運動: 以譚良檔案的爲中心 [The Chinese Empire Reform Association's Movement to Send Students Abroad: Evidence from the Papers of Tom Leung], in *Wuxu Weixin yu Jindai Zhongguo de Gaige: Wuxu Weixin Yibai Zhouian Guoji Xueshu Taolunhui Wenji* 戊戌維新與近代中國的改革: 戊戌維新一百周年國際學術討論會論文集 [The Hundred Days of Reform and Modern China's Reforms: Proceedings of Symposium on the 100th Anniversary of the Hundred Days of Reform], ed. Wang Xiaoqi 王曉秋 (Beijing: Shehui Kexue Wenxian Chubanshe, 2000), 473–85.

182 Huang, "Teaching Chineseness," 104.

183 Liu Zhenlin 劉楨麟 to Tan Zhangxiao, September 19, 1905, no. 195 in Fang and Cai, 195–96.

goals of the reformers were political and not business-oriented. Liang stressed military and naval studies, so that when the students returned to China and scattered throughout the provinces taking leadership positions they would provide a base of trained military men to support a reform-oriented government when it came to power. According to Baohuanghui party historian Wu Xianzi, Kang wanted to implement this idea but concluded it was not practical, since the investors wanted to make money and did not necessarily share the activists' political motivations.¹⁸⁴ In actuality, as will be shown, Commercial Corporation investments were frequently diverted to nonbusiness projects, when financial demands overcame Kang's intention to separately finance and administer business and general organizational activities.

3.7 *Commercial Activism*

The increasingly elastic boundaries between Baohuanghui business and political or educational arms had not yet emerged in 1903, when Liang Qichao was in North America. But the Commercial Corporation as a formal entity was fashioned in part by Liang during this trip. Its complexity and huge financial burdens were emblematic of Baohuanghui power, appeal and overreach.¹⁸⁵

As recounted in Chapter 1, in 1899 Ye En and other Chinese Canadian merchants publicly announced the formation of a large commercial conglomerate for Chinese investors, attempting to jumpstart an idea that Kang had discussed with them before he departed for Europe in early May that year. Only a few days after Kang left British Columbia, the *Daily Colonist* (Victoria) reported that Kang and the Vancouver Chinese "are figuring on a scheme of gigantic proportions, namely a combine of Oriental trade in Canada, the United States, and Australia."¹⁸⁶ Sixty million dollars in stocks were to be sold by companies to be founded by Kang, who was quoted as overoptimistically estimating that five million Chinese lived in these three countries and Canadian Chinese alone would buy five million dollars in shares. However, upon Kang's return

184 Wu, *Zhongguo Minzhu Xianzhengdang Dangshi*, 66–68. According to a letter from Tang Mingsan and other Baohuanghui leaders published in "Huishi Jiwen" 會事紀聞 [Member News], *Tung Wah Times*, September 15, 1906, 3, Kang did deposit US\$10,000 in the New York bank in 1906 to pay students in the United States and Europe to translate Western books over their summer vacation, both to support these "humble students" 寒士 [*hanshi*] and to provide new materials in Chinese to teach Chinese citizens "new studies" 新學 [*xinxue*].

185 See Chapter 9 for detailed Commercial Corporation analysis, particularly developments after 1903.

186 "Chinese Reformer Thinks Up a Graft," *Daily Colonist* (Victoria), May 19, 1899, 2.

to Canada and the founding of the Baohuanghui in July 1899, the organization lost most of its commercial qualities.

This submersion of commercial goals was only temporary. The first indications of this followed Liang Qichao's trip to Australia from October 1900 to May 1901, giving speeches and observing political, cultural, and economic conditions.¹⁸⁷ After Liang departed, the Chinese merchants in Sydney who had invited him to Australia convened a series of meetings to establish nonpartisan chambers of commerce. The resultant New South Wales Chinese Chamber of Commerce (Huashanghuishe), in turn, supported the *Tung Wah Times* and promoted Baohuanghui programs. Among the goals of the new chamber of commerce was to develop a common approach among the disparate Chinese Australian businesses in New South Wales and a unified response to the anti-Chinese sentiment, as the White Australia policy became law, effectively ending further Chinese immigration and blocking access to naturalized citizenship to all but White immigrants.¹⁸⁸

By 1903 Liang Qichao was already directly operating or overseeing a growing network of Baohuanghui newspapers and publishing companies in Asia. Although most income for these businesses came from book and newspaper sales or large handouts from general organizational coffers, shares had been previously sold for Guangzhi Shuju. Founded in spring 1901 in Shanghai, the company translated and published books for the voracious readers of "new studies" (*xinxue* or Western political, social and economic thought) who bought whatever was published, causing books to sell out the first day they went on sale.¹⁸⁹ Sounding like Kang would years later when talking about his Mexican investments, "no other business is as lucrative as publishing," wrote Liang in August 1902. "Now there are more than ten new publishing firms in Shanghai. The reason why we can outperform them is because of my

187 Gloria Davies, "Liang Qichao in Australia: A Sojourn of No Significance?" *China Heritage Quarterly* no. 27 (September 2011), http://www.chinaheritagequarterly.org/articles.php?searchterm=027_liang.inc&issue=027, accessed October 13, 2022.

188 John Fitzgerald, *Big White Lie: Chinese Australians in White Australia* (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2007), 102–3, 182–85. Also see Chinese Australian Heritage Resources, "TungWahNewspaperIndex," https://resources.chineseaustralia.org/tung_wah_newspaper_index, accessed October 13, 2022.

189 Cai Huiyao 蔡惠堯, "Shilun Baohuanghui Shibai de Neibu Yuanyin" 試論保皇會失敗的內部原因 [On the Internal Reasons for the Failure of the Baohuanghui], *Jindai Shi Yanjiu* no. 2 (1998): 113–15, details the travails of Guangzhi Shuju over the next eight years—its first successful year was followed by an inability to pay dividends, embezzlement by the manager, a continual lack of enough operating funds, pirating of their books, and a publishing market for new textbooks cornered by the Qing Ministry of Education. Liang ultimately took the blame for his poor management of the company.

reputation." Liang feared competition from his better capitalized competitors, rising rents ("we are held hostage because they [the landlords] see our business is so good"), striking printers, and a shortage of paper. Liang suggested that the Baohuanghui buy its own building for the press and, even more optimistically, open a paper mill and invite Japanese experts to help manufacture "foreign-style" paper, which would be in great demand throughout China. "We need more capital so that we can overwhelm [the competitors] financially and stay on top," claimed Liang, who at first proposed either raising more shares or allocating 80,000 to 100,000 yuan from the soon to be established Commercial Corporation.¹⁹⁰ In his next letter to members, Liang promoted the paper mill as "the best business to make big money," and since it required more than 200,000 yuan in start-up capital, "it would be wonderful if the [Commercial Corporation] could be established."¹⁹¹

While Liang plunged the Baohuanghui headlong into the bubbling Shanghai publishing market, Kang was developing the justification and organizational structure for a Chinese "East India Company." The Commercial Corporation's original concept and draft charter envisioned massive overseas Chinese investment in China. Such investment, according to one account, was needed to compete for profits with the foreigners who were "seizing rights to such businesses as banks, railroads, mines, overseas transportation and shipping, and foreign exchange."¹⁹² In fall 1902, Kang issued the draft charter for the Commercial Corporation to Chinese communities throughout the world to solicit their comments, stressing that "the establishment of the Commercial Corporation is the most important thing to which you should give your attention."¹⁹³ Kang wrote Li Fuji and his compatriots in Victoria: "The Commercial Corporation is the base for saving our country. Please do not give up and let foreigners take it."¹⁹⁴

190 Generally referred to in correspondence as Shanghui 商會, the same term used for the chambers of commerce promoted by the Qing government but more appropriately translated as "business association" as it applies to the Baohuanghui, the formal name was Shangwu Gongsi, or Commercial Corporation.

191 Liang Qichao to the comrades and righteous brothers in your esteemed city's Baohuanghui, copied letter, October–November, 1902, no. 544, 103–4, and Liang Qichao to Ye En, Li Fuji, et al., August 14, 1902, no. 540 in Fang and Cai, 100–2.

192 Dong Qiantai 董謙泰, Li Fuji et al. to the comrades and righteous brothers in your esteemed city's Baohuanghui, November 29, 1902, no. 549 in Fang and Cai, 304.

193 Kang Youwei to Li Fuji, November 10, 1902, no. 546 in Fang and Cai, 44.

194 Kang Youwei to all members by way of (Li) Fuji, (Liu) Zhangxuan 劉章軒, (Ye) Huibo 葉惠伯 [Ye En 葉恩], and (Li) Youshu 李祐樞 (all of Canada), December 29, 1902, no. 550 in Fang and Cai, 48.

Kang was impetuous by nature and often urged haste over caution. While he was against the overthrow of the Qing regime through violent revolution, he was revolutionary in his thinking on how best to save China. Thus, in November 1902 he wrote to Li Fuji: "China is facing urgent change and calamity. How can we take our time and wait until it is too late? If we dwell on too many considerations, nothing can be done. Doubts would hinder the establishment of the Commercial Corporation."¹⁹⁵

Doubts were not in evidence when Liang Qichao arrived in Canada the next spring, charged with establishing the Commercial Corporation as a going concern. Li Fuji, Ye En, and other Vancouver and Victoria Baohuanghui leaders worked with Liang to revise the bylaws drafted by Kang and Hong Kong headquarters personnel He Suitian and Wang Jueren (Wang Jingyu, Wang Jingru).¹⁹⁶ A revised charter for the Chinese Commercial Corporation, or Zhongguo Shangwu Gongsi, was issued in late 1903 in the form of a one-page document, "Concise Rules for Soliciting Shares for the Chinese Commercial Corporation" (Zhongguo Shangwu Gongsi Zhaogu Jianming Zhangcheng), in the names of Kang as supervisor (*duban*) and Liang as deputy supervisor (*fuduban*).¹⁹⁷

The "Concise Rules" presented a vision of China as the factory of the world and Hong Kong as entrepôt, with Chinese overseas managing an international supply chain linking New York and other cities through control of banks, shipping, warehousing, and marketing, foreshadowing much later investments in China by Chinese in Hong Kong and Taiwan. There is no mention of newspapers or publishing companies, which were to consume much of the Commercial Corporation capital.

An unusually detailed and widely published news story about a "Chinese Mercantile Company" appeared while Liang was still in the United States, datelined Seattle, October 23, 1903. It quoted a Seattle Baohuanghui leader and businessman Woo Gen (Hu Zhen, Hu Ba'nán) and described Baohuanghui plans to organize a \$25 million company to promote trade between the United

195 Kang Youwei to Li Fuji, November 10, 1902, no. 546 in Fang and Cai, 44.

196 Most likely the version Kang submitted for comments and revision is "Zhongguo Shangwu Gongsi Yuanqi fu Zhangcheng" 中国商务公司缘起附章程 [Introduction to Chinese Commercial Corporation with Charter Attached], 1903, in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui* 康有为与保皇会 [Kang Youwei and the Baohuanghui], ed. Shanghai Shi Wenwu Baoguan Wei yuanhui 上海市文物保管委员会 (Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin Chubanshe, 1982), 266–86.

197 This version may be the copy at Ethnic Studies Library, University of California at Berkeley, Chinese Empire Reform Association, AR-12: Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao, "Zhongguo Shangwu Gongsi Zhaogu Jianming Zhangcheng," 中国商务公司招股简明章程 [Concise Rules for Soliciting Shares for the Chinese Commercial Corporation], ca. November 1903 (Liang Qichao wrote Kang on December 19, 1903 enclosing the printed copy).

States and China with headquarters in Hong Kong and an office in New York. Woo said he would soon leave for Hong Kong to help launch the company, which would engage in banking, import/export, and farming a large plot of land in Guangdong; incorporate the existing Shanghai book publishing firm; and fund an endowment for an American-style college in Guangzhou. The article claimed that at least \$1 million was to come from Chinese in the United States, but even more from India, including \$300,000 from one Chinese merchant. Woo said: "We believe that one of the strongest influences in building up China will be through close trade relations with America, whereby we can draw the lessons we need from this country. That is one of the objects of the Chinese Mercantile Company. Of course its first object is to make money, but while we are doing that we will help the reform work in China."¹⁹⁸ Woo Gen's publicity for the "Chinese Mercantile Company" set the stage for great expectations on all sides and for Kang's trip to North America in one year. Apart from his predictions for how much investment would be raised by the Bao-huanghui, all of the projects he announced came to pass save an operating import/export company—among them, a Guangdong land reclamation project (Xuwen Kenwu Gongsi), the Guangdong Public School, and banks in New York, Torreón, Hong Kong, Penang, and Guangdong.¹⁹⁹ In December, Woo Gen sailed for Asia on the *Iyo Maru* "to participate in the organization of the Chinese Mercantile Company."²⁰⁰ He attended the Hong Kong organizing meeting of the Commercial Corporation in March 1904 along with Kang, Liang, and others, and was made one of the officers.²⁰¹

This grand vision for the Commercial Corporation, as portrayed by Woo Gen, had not materialized by early 1905 when Kang arrived in the United States. The bulk of the corporation's businesses were newspapers, including the newly established *Shi Bao* in Shanghai and *Shang Bao* in Hong Kong, and the existing translation publishing company, Guangzhi Shuju in Shanghai (sometimes called Yishu Ju or Translation Bureau). Rice brokerages in Penang and Singapore began operations in 1904, but banks had not yet been set up.²⁰²

198 "Organize Big Enterprise," *Seattle Times*, October 23, 1903, 4; "Move of Reformers," *San Juan Islander*, October 29, 1903, 4; "Bow Wong's Great Project," *Hawaiian Star*, November 13, 1903, 3.

199 Chapter 9 includes charts with all known business projects, organized by category.

200 "Sails for the Orient," *Seattle Times*, December 15, 1903, 4.

201 Li Fuji, "Xianzhenghui Jishi Shilüe" 宪政会纪始事略 [A Sketch of the Origins of the Constitutional Association], 1909, 4, Chinese Empire Reform Association, AR-22, AAS ARC 2000/78.

202 Wang Jueren to Tan Zhangxiao, October 12, 1904, no. 149 in Fang and Cai, 149. The Singapore rice brokerage is Huafeng, 1904–7. Tan Zhangxiao, et al., respectfully informing comrades of all cities, May 1, 1905, no. 579 in Fang and Cai, 224, says that "a bank cannot

After only a month in the United States, Kang discovered for himself how difficult it was to sell stock shares and admitted that “people in these cities have no certainty of earning money in this business, and as a result, I cannot persuade them with my empty words.”²⁰³

Kang’s draft charter states the intention to raise 120 million yuan in shares (presumably Hong Kong dollars), a target that must have seemed unobtainable a few months later.²⁰⁴ The “Concise Rules” instead declared that “this company has prepared capital of 10 million yuan divided into 500,000 shares, each share 20 yuan, received in Hong Kong banknotes (*yinzhi*).”²⁰⁵ In spring 1903, Li Fuji in Victoria reported to North American Baohuanghui members that Liang Qichao’s persuasive speeches about “the righteousness of our cause” had brought spectacular results—more popular enthusiasm and new members than ever before. Moreover, Li said, the Chinese in Vancouver and Victoria had bought \$50,000 to \$60,000 of Commercial Corporation shares and predicted that “\$2 million in shares will not be difficult to raise.”²⁰⁶ But this proved unrealistic. Wu Xianzi reported that Liang collected less than \$600,000 in the United States and Canada by the time he left in November 1903, and American and Canadian newspaper reports describe contributions Liang received from “two-thirds of the residents of San Francisco Chinatown coming to \$150,000.”²⁰⁷ Although the “Concise Rules” mandated the selling of more Commercial Corporation shares between January 1904 and February 1905, Tom Leung, in a May public letter, written on Kang’s authorization, intimated that this was not done. He said, “Our Commercial Corporation raised only one-tenth of the funds we estimated that we would at the beginning.”²⁰⁸ Although Kang and others were also recruiting shareholders in Southeast Asia, Hong Kong and even in China, it is not known how much they contributed to Commercial Corporation capital

be established and many of our important tasks cannot be pursued” because the funds raised were not enough.

203 Kang Youwei to unknown addressee, February–March 1905 (on stationery of Chinese Empire Reform Association Headquarters, For Use of the President Only.), no. 347 in Fang and Cai, 57.

204 “Zhongguo Shangwu Gongsì Yuanqì fù Zhāngchéng,” 1903, in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui*, 279.

205 Kang and Liang, “Zhongguo Shangwu Gongsì Zhaogu Jianming Zhāngchéng.”

206 Dong Qiantai, Li Fuji, et al. to all comrades and righteous brothers in your city, April 28, 1903, no. 562 in Fang and Cai, 311. It is not clear what currency Li was using, Canadian, U.S., or Hong Kong dollars.

207 Lo, “Sequel to Autobiography,” 269; and “Chinese Give Money for Reform,” *Portland Oregonian*, November 25, 1903, 12, and “Chinese Reformer Coming,” *British Colonist*, November 26, 1903.

208 Tan Zhangxiao, et al., May 1, 1905, no. 579 in Fang and Cai, 224.

compared to the initial investments from North America.²⁰⁹ Kang had anticipated the United States would be his “Gold Mountain” for selling stock shares and even delayed his departure from Canada until he received the specially printed stock share certificates from London via New York where Luo Chang had sent them.²¹⁰

Kang's first trips to the United States and Mexico in 1905 opened doors to new investments in North America—banks, a restaurant, real estate, and a streetcar line—which took funds and energy away from the Commercial Corporation's original focus on business in China. Kang's speculations in Mexico were encouraged both by his Chinese compatriots there and at least one American benefactor, Charles Ranlett Flint, known at the time as the “Father of the Trusts.” The full story and ultimate scope of the Commercial Corporation as well as the troubles it wrought for Kang and the Baohuanghui will be treated in later chapters.

• • •

Motivating Baohuanghui members to play an active role in the organization was foremost in the minds of Kang and his protégés—whether by donating their hard-earned cash, investing in stock shares, buying membership badges, attending speeches or Chinese-language classes, or risking their lives as political assassins or warriors inside China. The greatest sacrifice was also among the most attractive to fervent nationalists, and Kang's many (well-publicized) escapes from death no doubt inspired members, both men and women, to follow in his appeals. As the next chapter will explore in depth, violent and militaristic means were part of the Baohuanghui program.

209 Cai, “Shilun Baohuanghui shibai,” 103.

210 Liang Wenqing in New York to Kang Tongbi, February 5, 1905, no. S-C51, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection: “The Elder has sent several telegrams asking me to forward to Vancouver the stock share certificates and other things sent from England ... Yesterday I sent someone to the customs office to forward them on.”

Flirtation with Violence: Uprisings, Assassination, and Military Schools

Woe is me, if I lose my country and am expelled with no home to
return to? Alas!

If I don't rise up and fight now,

I will never be able to fly again. Alas!¹

KANG YOUWEI, "GANCHENG XUEXIAO GE" (Song for the Western Military Academy), 1905



At several stages during his exile, Kang Youwei determined that militant means were needed to achieve the goal of restoring the Guangxu Emperor to the throne. When the antforeign Boxer movement became violent in 1900, Kang saw an opportunity for his own armed uprising to overthrow the Empress Dowager Cixi and restore the emperor. The Qinwang uprising in the Yangzi Valley he supported failed spectacularly. But when a second opportunity arose in Guangdong in 1902 involving cooperation with revolutionaries—despite support given to it by some of his Baohuanghui associates—Kang was opposed. Nevertheless, he did not abandon violent means. In response to threats on his life by Qing agents, Kang reciprocated with his own plans to have Cixi and her confidant Ronglu assassinated. That effort also failed but not from want of trying. Even more secretive was Kang's plan to assassinate his political foe, Sun Yatsen, a scheme discovered by historians only in 2013. Finally, Kang's idea of establishing military academies overseas to train Chinese men as the backbone of a strong, modern Chinese military came to fruition during the years 1903–5. Fighting back proved as attractive to Baohuanghui followers as it was to Sun's,

1 "Gancheng Xuexiao Ge" 干城學校歌 [Gancheng (Western Military Academy) School Song] in Gao Weinong 高偉濃, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui zai Meiguo Huaqiao Shehui zhong de Huodong* 二十世紀初康有為保皇會在美國華僑社會中的活動 [Activities of Kang Youwei and the Baohuanghui among the Chinese in the United States in the First Part of the twentieth Century] (Beijing: Xueyuan Chubanshe, 2009), 267–68.

and it was not difficult to recruit participants in uprisings, assassination plots, and military training.

1 Uprisings

The Yihetuan (Righteous and Harmonious Fists) movement, or Boxer Uprising, smoldered in the northern provinces following the One Hundred Days of Reform in 1898 and into 1899. In early 1900, Cixi and the conservative court sanctioned the anti-Christian, antiforeign Boxers, and, in April, violence broke out in full force in Beijing against Chinese Christians and foreigners. An allied military force invaded China, aimed at rescuing diplomats besieged in Beijing and elsewhere. Amidst this chaos and the presence of the allied relief expedition, Kang and others quickly developed a plan already in the works to launch an armed effort to rescue the emperor. Feng Zishan wrote from Yokohama: “The [Boxer] matter has made foreign countries realize that the puppet government is barbarous. If our party can rise to power, we will first protect the foreigners and their property. Therefore, foreign interference is actually helpful to us.”² Baohuanghui resources were mobilized for what is known as Qinwang—or the Datong uprising for the city in Anhui Province where the revolt began prematurely in August 1900.³ Qinwang, the term Kang preferred, means “rush troops to save the throne.”⁴

1.1 *Qinwang: The Preparations*

Qinwang was first seriously discussed by Kang soon after arriving in Japan at the beginning of his exile. Along with Liang Qichao, Xu Qin, and Mai Menghua

2 Feng Zishan 馮紫珊, et al., Yokohama, to Tan Zhangxiao, July 16, 1900, no. 518 in Fang Zhiqin and Cai Huiyao 方志欽, 蔡惠堯, ed., *Kang Liang yu Baohuanghui: Tan Liang zai Meiguo Suocang Ziliao Huibian* 康梁與保皇會: 譚良在美國所藏資料彙編 [Kang, Liang, and the Baohuanghui: A Compilation of Materials Collected by Tom Leung in the United States] (Hong Kong: Yinhe Chubanshe, 2008), 279–80.

3 E. Joan Smythe, “The Tzu-li Hui: Some Chinese and Their Rebellions,” *Papers on China* (Harvard University) 12 (1958): 51–68; Chün-tu Hsüeh, *Huang Hsing and the Chinese Revolution* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1961), 5ff; Kung-ch’üan Hsiao, *A Modern China and a New World: Kang Yu-wei, Reformer and Utopian, 1858–1927* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1975), 236–37; and Marius B. Jansen, *The Japanese and Sun Yat-sen* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1954), 87ff.

4 The term *qinwang* 勤王 was first used to mean “rushing in troops to save the emperor” in a famous Tang dynasty essay, “Wei Xu Jingye Tao Wu Zhao Xi” 爲徐敬業討武曌檄 [A Denunciation of Wu Zhao in Support of Xu Jingye’s Military Campaign] by poet Luo Binwang 駱賓王 extolling a rebellion against Empress Wu Zetian 武則天 [Wu Zhao] who had replaced her third son with her fourth son as emperor, effectively extending her rule.

(Mai Rubo), he met with Tang Caichang, a militant Hunan reformer who had come to Japan to offer his help rallying troops inside China.⁵ Tang had been a colleague of Tan Sitong and Liang Qichao at the Academy of Current Affairs (Shiwu Xuetang) in Changsha, Hunan, in 1897.⁶ After the Hundred Days in 1898, Tang wanted to avenge his fellow provincial and close friend Tan's execution. In addition to his reform objectives and strong Confucian background, Tang's ideology had an anti-Manchu element, which made him attractive to secret society members and to revolutionists, such as Sun Yatsen and Xingzhonghui (Revive China Society) members. Although Tang met with Sun in Japan and sought out any individual or group that might further Qinwang, he chose to work with the reformers, who had broader political backing and better funding.

During his second sojourn in Canada, in fall 1899, Kang prepared to put Qinwang into action through the newly organized Baohuanghui. Its charter urged every member to "rescue the emperor ... as if we are putting out a fire or hunting a fugitive criminal."⁷ He detailed preparations for Qinwang in a letter to Montana Baohuanghui organizer Li Tengfang on October 2, 1899, and asked Li to raise funds from his 30,000 comrades in the United States to pay for the rising.⁸ Kang claimed there were more than 700,000 troops in China—based in Hunan and the Yangzi River basin provinces, among other places—ready to launch Qinwang, and all that was needed was funding to carry it out. Before Kang left Canada on October 10 to raise funds among overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia and be closer to the scene of action, American newspapers reported that he had sent notices to San Francisco, Portland, and Seattle "asking for funds and volunteers for a rebellion against the reigning dynasty in China."⁹ Kang could

5 Kang Youwei, "Tang Lieshi Caichang Muzhiming" 唐烈士才常墓志銘 [Epitaph on a Memorial Tablet for Martyr Tang Caichang] in *Tang Caichang ji* 唐才常集 [Collection of Writings of Tang Caichang], ed. Hunan Institute of Philosophy and Political Science (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1981), 266, and Tang Caizhi 唐才質, "Tang Caichang Lieshi Nianpu" 唐才常烈士年譜 [Chronicle of Martyr Tang Caichang], in *Tang Caichang ji*, 273. This meeting may be in addition to the discussion between Kang and Tang on October 31, 1898 recounted by Sang Bing 桑兵, *Gengzi Qinwang yu Wan-Qing Zhengju, Di-Er Ban* 庚子勤王與晚清政局 (第二版) [The 1900 Movement to "Rush Troops in to Save the Throne" and the Late Qing Political Situation, 2nd ed.] (Beijing: Beijing Daxue Chubanshe, 2015), 82.

6 Joseph W. Esherick, *Reform and Revolution in China: The 1911 Revolution in Hunan and Hubei* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), 14–16.

7 See Chapter 1 for details.

8 Kang Youwei to Li Tengfang 黎騰芳, October 2, 1899, in *Kang Youwei Quanji* 康有為全集 [Collected Works of Kang Youwei], ed. Jiang Yihua and Zhang Hualong 姜義華, 張榮華 (Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin Daxue Chubanshe, 2007), vol. 5, 139. Li is referred to by Liang Yingliu as a Baohuanghui organizer in Helena, Montana—Liang Yingliu 梁應騷 to Tan Zhangxiao, December 8, 1899, no. 501 in Fang and Cai, 331.

9 "Kang Going Home," *Province* (Vancouver), October 11, 1899, 2. "Revolutionists are Organizing for Kwang Hsu," *San Francisco Call*, October 3, 1899, and "Seeks to Overthrow the Chinese Dynasty," *San Francisco Chronicle*, October 9, 1899, 3.

not recruit for Qinwang without inadvertently alerting governments in China, Japan, and Britain to his intentions, which had the immediate effect of further restricting his movements in Asia.

Qing government officials protested in alarm when Kang arrived in Hong Kong. China's envoy in London, Luo Fenglu (Lo Fengluh), wrote British Prime Minister Lord Salisbury (Robert Gascoyne-Cecil) on December 6, 1899, arguing that Kang's presence in Hong Kong posed a direct threat to China.¹⁰ He claimed that the Japanese and American governments had not given Kang asylum because his followers in those countries had earlier been incited by Kang's fiery speeches calling for rebellion. However, the British Foreign Office deputy to Lord Salisbury, Francis Bertie, advised the prime minister that in fact Kang, as advisor to the emperor in the 1898 reforms, was worthy of British asylum and informed Luo that as long as Kang did not stage an armed uprising in Hong Kong he would be given safe harbor. Pressure from Qing authorities continued, and Qing assassination attempts on Kang's life caused him to retreat from public appearances.

Despite these threats, Kang continued to prepare for Qinwang, meeting secretly in Hong Kong with his "brilliant general" Tang Caichang in early January 1900.¹¹ They likely discussed fund raising for Qinwang—Tang had previously spent 30,000 yuan given him by Singapore supporter Khoo Seok Wan—and Tang's plea that he be allowed to coordinate his Yangzi River strategy with Sun Yatsen, who was planning a rising in the Pearl River (Zhu Jiang) basin. Kang rejected this suggestion for partisan as well as strategic reasons, favoring the battle plan of Baohuanghui troops launching Qinwang from Guilin and securing the south before moving north into the Yangzi area.¹²

Kang undertook a related, more public initiative later that month, when he telegraphed Baohuanghui activists throughout the world warning them that Cixi planned to depose Guangxu and install fourteen-year-old heir apparent

10 Li Hairong 李海蓉, "Yingguo Zhengfu dui Kang Youwei Liuwang Taidu zhi Kaoshi—Jian lun Baohuanghui de Moluo" 英國政府對康有為流亡態度之考釋—兼論保皇會的沒落 [Examination of the English Government's Attitude toward Kang Youwei in Exile—and the Rise and Fall of the Baohuanghui], *Shilin* no. 1 (2019): 93–94.

11 *Tang Caichang ji*, 274. Tang arrived in Hong Kong around January 8, according to Sang, *Gengzi Qinwang*, 249. Kang Youwei to Kang Tongwei 康同薇, September 3, 1900, in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui* 康有為與保皇會 [Kang Youwei and the Baohuanghui], ed. Shanghai Shi Wenwu Baoguan Weiyuanhui 上海市文物保管委員會 (Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin Chubanshe, 1982), 183. "I've lost my brilliant general and I cannot express my grief. In January 1900 he came to stay a few days and today we are parted by death." Kang was with his family, including Tongwei, in Hong Kong in January 1900.

12 Sang, *Gengzi Qinwang*, 85–86, 207–8.

Pujun on the throne.¹³ Baohuanghui members immediately initiated a circular telegram campaign in protest. Inside China, Tang Caichang signed a notable group telegram opposing Cixi's scheme, penned by Shanghai Telegraph Administration chief Jing Yuanshan.¹⁴ Around the same time in January 1900, a group of reformers approached Pelham Warren, the British acting consul general in Shanghai, threatening that if the emperor were not restored, they were ready to "stir up Secret Societies all over the country with the object of compelling foreign Powers to interfere."¹⁵ Warren counseled them that this course of action would "alienate the sympathies of foreign Powers from their cause." At this point, the Hong Kong government feared it could no longer protect Kang, and his wealthy supporter Khoo Seok Wan paid for Kang's passage to Singapore.¹⁶

Kang landed unhindered in Singapore on February 2, and was met by Lim Boon Keng (Lin Wenqing) and police chief W. A. Cuscaden, who boarded his ship "and conducted our charge safely to the care of his friends."¹⁷ Kang "had given verbal assurances to the Protector of Chinese [the Singapore agency overseeing Chinese immigrants] that he would not plot against the Chinese Government while he was residing in the Colony."¹⁸

Kang soon violated his pledge to the colonial authorities, directing fund-raising for the revolt while battle plans developed. Even more egregiously, he met with Yung Wing, who came from China in March 1900 to plan Qinwang with Kang.¹⁹ Yung was closely allied with Tang Caichang, and his stature as a diplomat and business owner made him an appropriate public face for the movement inside China. Perhaps because they were confident Britain would

13 See Chapter 2 description of Baohuanghui's telegraph movement that began with Kang's January 20, 1900, circular telegram.

14 Zhou Yongming, *Historicizing Online Politics: Telegraphy, the Internet, and Political Participation in China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), 68, 249 fn26.

15 Pelham L. Warren to Marquess of Salisbury (British Prime Minister Robert Gascoyne-Cecil), August 30, 1900, National Archives (UK), FO 17/1718, 372.

16 Kang left Hong Kong on January 27, 1900. Jung-pang Lo, "Sequel to the Chronological Autobiography," *K'ang Yu-wei: A Biography and Symposium* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1967), 183. Kang's family continued to live in Hong Kong during periods when the British government prohibited Kang's presence.

17 Lim Boon Keng to Alexander Swettenham, February 2, 1900, National Archives (UK), FO 17/1718, "Chinese Revolutionaries in British Dominions. Sun-Yat-Sen, Kang-yu-wei, etc., (Kidnapping of Sun-Yat-Sen by the Chinese Legation) 1896-1905," 301-2. See Chapter 2 for more on Kang's stay in Singapore.

18 Eddie Tang, "British Policy Towards the Chinese in the Straits Settlements: Protection and Control, 1877-1900 (With Special Reference to Singapore)" (M.A. thesis, Australian National University, 1970), 280.

19 J. W. Wong, "Three Visionaries in Exile: Yung Wing, K'ang Yu-wei and Sun Yat-sen, 1894-1911," *Journal of Asian History* 20, no. 1 (1986): 19-20.

support their movement, Kang and Yung divulged to the Straits authorities important details of the hoped-for rising. Kang was interviewed periodically by Singapore Police Chief Cuscaden, who was charged both with Kang's safety and with collection of intelligence about the reformers' plans. He forwarded his findings to Singapore Governor Alexander Swettenham, who in turn informed Prime Minister Lord Salisbury. Yung's excellent English allowed him to speak directly to Cuscaden, whom he brazenly asked, "If there was a 'Rising,' would the British Government support it?"²⁰ "Certainly not," replied Cuscaden, as this would harm his government's friendly relations with China. Yung contended that theirs was not a rising against the Qing government but to rescue the emperor—in this situation, would Britain "remain passive?" Cuscaden ducked the question: "I told him I knew nothing of politics." Yung and Kang further told Cuscaden that the "Rising" was to start in about three months and that they had "500 Americans to help them." These statements put the British government on guard in China and led directly to the raid that would halt Qinwang as it was unfolding. Far from an underground movement, Qinwang was projected by the press outside of China to be "one of the biggest revolutions in the history of mankind" joining the forces of a million Westernized Chinese with "the Powers of Europe, America and Japan."²¹

On May 28, Kang claimed to Cuscaden that eleven of eighteen provinces supported the reformers and soon they would assault Guangzhou and move on to other sympathetic provinces.²² Cuscaden quoted Kang directly in his report: "Now what I am going to tell you is in confidence. You may tell the Governor [Swettenham] for the information of Lord Salisbury that we expect a great event to happen in China toward the end of this month." Apparently oblivious to the broad hints from Cuscaden and others that the British government would never back their rising, Kang and his followers continued to act otherwise.

All the while, Kang evaded the Qing assassination attempts and feared that Straits Chinese would be tempted to collect a newly publicized reward of

20 Swettenham to [British Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary] Salisbury, March 29, 1900, FO 17/1718, 310–13. The letter contained excerpts of Cuscaden's report on his visit with Yung Wing.

21 "Plans of Chinese Reformers," *New-York Tribune*, July 28, 1900, 3 and "Reformer Alarms Dowager Empress, An Order of Eight Thousand Uniforms by Kang Yu Wei," *New-York Tribune*, April 2, 1900, 1. The latter story quoted from *Daily Mail* (London), which was later denied in "A Defence of the Reformers," *North China Herald*, May 16, 1900, 879.

22 W. A. Cuscaden to Alexander Swettenham, May 29, 1900, National Archives (UK), FO 17/1718, 322–25.

145,000 *taels* for his head and that of Liang Qichao.²³ The reward announcement outraged the British government, which did not want to see Kang harmed on its territory, and Kang was given Sikh police protection.²⁴ Meanwhile, local Baohuanghui members generously supported Kang and Qinwang preparations, most notably Kang's long-time follower Khoo Seok Wan, the influential publisher of *Tiannan Xin Bao* (*Thien Nam Sin Pao*, *The New Southern Daily*).²⁵

Kang remained in Singapore and dispatched emissaries internationally in search of moral support, and, more importantly, solicited funds from Chinese overseas and military backing from foreign governments.²⁶ Among the itinerant Baohuanghui fund raisers in Canada and the United States was Liang Qitian, whose 1900 tour was partly a quest for support for the revolt, as was Liang Qichao's 1900 trip to Hawai'i (see Chapters 1 and 3). In many cases, funds arrived too late for Qinwang. On September 11, Li Fuji of Victoria, British Columbia, reported that Liang Qitian had succeeded in raising \$5,000 to \$6,000 in memberships and "military subscriptions" in San Francisco. But the success was not repeated in British Columbia where the people were poor, forcing Li to borrow from his business to supplement the local contributions before wiring \$2,000 to Baohuanghui headquarters in Macau.²⁷ Baohuanghui followers in North America were enthused that Kang was raising an army to rescue the emperor and their expectations were high. But tensions and suspicions arose because Kang's projections of Qinwang's timing kept moving into the future. Tom Chue Thom, in New Westminster, British Columbia, wrote Kang on August

23 J. A. Alexander Swettenham to Joseph Chamberlain, M.P., March 10, 1900, National Archives (UK), FO 17/1718, "Chinese Revolutionaries in British Dominions." "Chinese Reformers," *Straits Times*, March 8, 1900, 3, details the reward breakdown: 100,000 *taels* from the Empress Dowager, 40,000 from Liangguang Acting Viceroy (Li Hongzhang) and 5,000 from the Shanghai Magistrate.

24 After protests from the British government, a later decree rewarded the capture of Kang and Liang, rather than their assassination. Tang, "British Policy," 281–83.

25 Kang later wrote, "As for the Hankou Incident, we were completely dependent on [Qiu] Shuyuan [Khoo Seok Wan] going all the way to donate funds." Kang Youwei, Penang, to Tan Zhangxiao, July 5, 1901, no. 509 in Fang and Cai, 32.

26 Lo, "Sequel to the Chronological Autobiography," 184–85.

27 Li Fukki [Li Fuji] 李福基 to the Chief of the Society [Kang Youwei], and Li Fukki to Sam Muk [Kang Youwei; a code name derived from Kang's Japanese name Jiamusen], September 11, 1900, National Archives (UK), FO 17/1718, 418–421, both letters translated into English were enclosures in J. A. Swettenham to Joseph Chamberlain, January 30, 1901, FO 17/1718, 410–411. These letters were found by Hong Kong police "on board a piratical craft" and sent to Swettenham by Hong Kong Governor Henry Blake. It is notable that earlier in 1900, Li and other Baohuanghui leaders had raised \$10,000 in one night for the uprising: "Yingguo Jia'nada shu Sanbu Baohuang Tongren Dahui ji" 英國加拿大屬三埠保皇同人大會記 [Record of Rally of Baohuanghui Comrades from Three Cities in British Columbia], *Qingyi Bao* no. 45 (1900): 16.

18, complaining that “the last telegram from you stated that in the fifth or sixth month [late May to late July 1900] at latest you would march an army for the relief of the Emperor but up til now nothing has been done, and this cools the mind of the people in foreign parts all the more.”²⁸ On Kang’s instruction, Tom had recently visited the United States and found that the lack of action in China made it difficult to get donations in San Francisco, and even more ominously, “we hear defamatory talk.” He accused Kang of idling in Singapore while his followers prepared to risk their lives in battle.

Liang Qichao’s Qinwang fundraising from local Chinese in Hawai‘i totaled 40,000 yuan in June 1900, far short of what he had promised Tang Caichang.²⁹ Liang had heard of a wealthy American who donated tens of millions of dollars for the Spanish-American War in Cuba in 1898 and believed that this gentleman could be persuaded to lend funds for Qinwang in return for large profits in China.³⁰ Liang naively entrusted a well-connected American life insurance agent in Honolulu (probably Clinton J. Hutchins) with 20,000 yuan (US\$10,000) to travel to the United States to approach the gentleman and make the case for a loan. Liang had met Hutchins in 1898 in Beijing, where Hutchins was peddling Equitable Life Assurance policies, and, being a man of political ambitions, had come to China with a letter of introduction to Li Hongzhang.³¹ But Hutchins’

28 Tom Chue Thom (Tham Chhui Pak), New Westminster, to Master Hong of Nam Hoi [Kang Youwei], translated from the Chinese, August 18, 1900, FO 17/1718, 414–415.

29 Gloria Davies, “Liang Qichao in Australia: A Sojourn of No Significance?” *China Heritage Quarterly* no. 27 (September 2011), http://www.chinaheritagequarterly.org/articles.php?searchterm=027_liang.inc&issue=027, accessed December 7, 2020. Also see Sang, *Gengzi Qinwang*, 122–23.

30 Zhang Pengyuan, *Liang Qichao yu Qingji Geming* [Liang Qichao and the Late Qing Revolution] (Taipei: Academia Sinica, 1964), 147–48. This possibly is the same man Kang had heard about in 1899—a “rich gentleman” [named Fu-shen-yi-shi da in Mandarin] in Washington who would like to contribute ten to twenty million to the Elder in order to save China.” Tom Leung was asked by Liang Yingliu to investigate further. Postscript by Liang Yingliu], December 7, 1899, of a letter from Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, no. 502 in Fang and Cai, 25–26 (Liang Yingliu was with Kang in Hong Kong and was in Zilijun, mentioned below.)

31 Although Chinese sources give only “Heqin” as the name of Liang’s American contact in Hawai‘i, Clinton J. Hutchins in Honolulu was approached in 1902 by Yung Wing to support the Guangdong Rising and his name and address can be found in Yung’s diary: <https://cslib.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p15019coll14/id/781>, accessed December 17, 2020; see June 1902, 23rd week, Friday (actual date April 29, 1902) and July 1902, 28th week, Thursday (actual date: June 4, 1902). Also see “Will See Emperors,” *Hawaiian Star*, March 29, 1898, 7, and Clinton J. Hutchins, “Life Insurance in Japan and China,” *The Insurance Monitor* 51 (1903): 56–60. As evidence of his political connections, in 1918 Hutchins was a top candidate for governor of Hawai‘i, a U.S. presidential appointment.

departure for the United States resulted in the disappearance of half the sum Liang had raised, leaving only 20,000 yuan to send to Macau for the uprising.

In addition to funds, North America was seen as a source of military recruits. In mid-May, Yokohama Baohuanghui leader Chen Guoyong informed Tom Leung in Los Angeles that “the arrangements and deployments in China will soon be completed, and many people of exceptional ability from all parts of the country have come to pledge allegiance.”³² Chen also pressed Tom to persuade Los Angeles Chinese who had military training to join the fight and urged Tom to engage Homer Lea and the American military veterans whom Lea had recruited to Kang’s cause (see below).

Western newspapers reported that Kang began to summon volunteer troops to China from abroad, issuing an order at the end of July 1900. Some 110 Chinese reformists from Vancouver, New York, Boston, and Seattle traveled from Canada to Baohuanghui headquarters in Macau for a “council of war.”³³ “Without taking time to finish their washing, the yellow warriors departed to-day [July 30] on the *Empress of India*,” supervised by the head of Canada’s Baohuanghui, Charlie Yip Yen (Ye En), wrote the Vancouver *Province*. The secretary of the Canadian Baohuanghui, Won Alexander Cumyow (W. A. Cumyow, Wen Jinyou), said that Kang had ordered “the leaders of the organization throughout the world ... to hurry to [Macau] for the purpose of forming an army of 100,000 men, to operate in conjunction with the forces of the allied Powers to defeat the Boxers.”³⁴ When the allied forces successfully occupied Beijing and subdued the Boxers and their supporters in court, said Won optimistically, “we should issue a general call to arms in all countries where we have members. The response would be astonishing, particularly in the United States, where there are many thousands who are members of the reform associations.” Furthermore, “this force will be large, armed, and equipped from the society’s own funds.”

On the ground in China, Qinwang commander Tang Caichang managed to marshal a motley group of commanders and troops along the Yangzi River basin by the summer of 1900. Tang had returned to Shanghai from Japan in November 1899 with promises of Baohuanghui funding and mobilized the Zilijun (Independence Army) led by politically motivated recruits from Hunan and Hubei, few of whom had military training.³⁵ Additionally, many members of the Gelaohui (Society of Brothers and Elders)—a Yangzi Valley secret

32 Chen Guoyong 陳國鏞, Yokohama, to Tan Zhangxiao, May 19, 1900, no. 513 in Fang and Cai, 276.

33 “Chinese Go to Battle,” *Province* (Vancouver), July 30, 1900, 8.

34 “Chinese Reformers Active,” *New-York Tribune*, August 1, 1900, 3. Story is datelined “Montreal, July 31.”

35 Wong, “Three Visionaries in Exile,” 71, 78–81—Tang’s top deputies were three men whom he had met when at the Hunan Academy of Current Affairs and again in Japan after

society—were motivated by anti-Qing fervor as well as the promise of payment for their service and cooperated with the Zilijun. Tang simultaneously was planning the institutions to install civil rule if Qinwang was successful. He established the Zhengqihui (Society of the Righteous Spirit) in 1899, later reconstituted as the Zilihui (Independence Society), with the aim of restoring Guangxu, establishing a parliamentary form of constitutional government, and cooperating with foreigners while protecting their assets and churches in China.³⁶ Tang's organization was the moving spirit behind a self-proclaimed *guohui* or national assembly convened at Yuyuan in Shanghai's International Settlement in July 1900.³⁷ Fresh from his meeting with Kang in Singapore, Yung Wing was elected president and Tang became its chief executive, in anticipation of a successful transfer of governmental power to a national assembly should Qinwang succeed. Kang and Tang also sent letters to two progressive Yangzi River region viceroys, Zhang Zhidong (Huguang—Hubei and Hunan) and Liu Kunyi (Liangjiang—Jiangsu, Anhui, and Jiangxi), believing that they would support Guangxu's restoration.³⁸ This was a dangerously naive move; the viceroys were in a position to foil the rising as easily as to assist it, and as shrewd political actors, realpolitik prevailed over idealism.

As Kang and his followers attempted to recruit powerful officials to their cause, Sun Yatsen sought a united front with Kang and Li Hongzhang, after the latter had fallen from Cixi's favor and was "banished" to become the governor general of Liangguang (Guangdong and Guangxi provinces).³⁹ Sun asked

Wuxu: Lin Gui 林圭 who was stationed in Hankou (Hubei), Qin Lishan 秦力山 in Datong (Anhui), and Shen Jin 潘薰 in Xindi (Hubei).

- 36 Lo, "Sequel to Autobiography," 185, 264; Edmund S. K. Fung, "The T'ang Ts'ai-Ch'ang Revolt," *Papers in Far Eastern History* 1 (March 1970): 87–90; Li Chien-nung, *The Political History of China, 1840–1928*, Ssu-yü Teng and Jeremy Ingalls, trans. and eds. (Princeton: Van Nostrand, 1956), 182; Smythe, "The Tzu-li Hui," 55–56, 60–61; and Sang, *Gengzi Qinwang*, 207–8.
- 37 Wong, "Three Visionaries in Exile," 20–21. Also known as Zhongguo Yihui 中國議會 or Zhongguo Guohui 中國國會, this was a mobilization platform composed of prestigious elites rather than a legislative body; see Sang, *Gengzi Qinwang*, 127–29. It met only twice, July 26 and July 29, 1900. Sang, 158, says the Guohui subsumed the Zilihui 自立會 as its civil arm and Zilijun 自立軍 its military.
- 38 Wong, "Three Visionaries in Exile," 17, says that Kang telegraphed Liu Kunyi 劉坤一; "Kang Yu Wei's Open Letters to The Powers," *Fortnightly Review* no. 315, New Series (July 1, 1901): 10, in which Kang describes Tang's approach to both Liu and Zhang Zhidong 張之洞.
- 39 Harold Schiffrin, *Sun Yat-sen and the Origins of the Chinese Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970), 189–200; and Cheng, "T'ung-meng-hui," 30–31. Sun's initiative to involve Li Hongzhang in an alliance with Kang was ill-conceived. Li in his capacity as Liangguang governor general had added 40,000 taels to the Qing reward for Kang.

Japanese mediators led by Miyazaki Torazō to initiate negotiations with Kang.⁴⁰ Kang had had unsatisfactory dealings with Miyazaki in Hong Kong and Japan in 1898, and Kang's Hong Kong informants warned him that Miyazaki and his Japanese associates were coming to Singapore to assassinate him rather than negotiate an alliance.⁴¹ Instead of acceding to Miyazaki's request for an interview, Kang told the Straits police of the alleged plot, and Miyazaki and a companion were arrested on July 6; they were carrying two swords and a dagger, along with HK \$27,000. Sun Yatsen, for whom Miyazaki was working, arrived from Saigon to join his Japanese partners and succeeded only in convincing the Singapore governor to release Miyazaki and his companion, who were both banished for five years from Singapore; Sun was forced to leave with Miyazaki after only three days.⁴² These actions ended any further possibility of cooperation between Kang and Sun. Nevertheless, Sun's men would team up with Homer Lea at the end of July to once again attempt a military coalition of revolutionaries and reformers, possibly at Lea's initiative.

1.2 *Homer Lea's Role*

The participation of American adventurer Homer Lea in Qinwang has been subject to speculation and involved considerable contemporaneous exaggeration and self-promotion.⁴³ Lea was a twenty-three-year-old Stanford University

40 Kang, "Chronological Autobiography of K'ang Yu-wei," in Lo, *K'ang Yu-wei*, 139, 142, 172–74 n73 and n74.

41 Kang was especially suspicious of Miyazaki's intentions because he had learned that Miyazaki had just met with Liu Xuexun, deputy of Li Hongzhang 李鴻章. Liu was much hated by the reformers for his efforts on behalf of Li and the Qing government to capture or kill Kang and Liang. This made Liu a target of assassination, which was attempted in April 1900 in Guangzhou (see section below on assassination); Ho Hon-wai, "A Biographical Sketch of Liu Xuexun: The Controversial and Mysterious Guangdong Gambling Farmer, Mandarin-Capitalist and Secret Agent in Modern China," in *Power and Identity in the Chinese World Order: Festschrift in Honour of Professor Wang Gungwu*, Bill K. L. So, et al., ed. (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2003), 145–56. Ho, 156, states that it was Liu himself who made sure that Kang heard about his meeting with Miyazaki, in an attempt to sabotage Sun's plans for an alliance with Kang. Also see Joseph Swettenham memorandum to Colonial Office, July 12, 1900, National Archives (UK), FO 17/1718, 341–49; Wong, "Three Visionaries in Exile," 15; Schiffrin, *Sun Yat-sen*, 190–96.

42 Tjio Kayloe, *The Unfinished Revolution: Sun Yat-Sen and the Struggle for Modern China* (Singapore: Marshall Cavendish Editions, 2017), 91–93.

43 Roger R. Thompson, "Who was Homer Lea (1876–1912), and Why Should We Care? Myth and History in the 'American Century,'" *China Review International* 19, no. 1 (2012): 9–23. This is a modern China scholar's deeply researched assessment of Lea's role and significance during his lifetime and his posthumous revival as a prophetic military strategist during the U.S. conflict with Japan in World War II. This lengthy review essay of Lawrence

student who, although physically unfit for military duty (he had been crippled since childhood and weighed only one hundred pounds), “satisfied himself with being an amateur authority on warfare.”⁴⁴ He talked and wrote convincingly well but was a hopeless romantic. He was a man not so much in quest of a nebulous dream, but one who yearned to see his theories of military and political science activated. And the Chinese served his purpose well. By March 1900, he had sought out Baohuanghui leaders Tom Leung in Los Angeles and Tom She Bin in San Francisco and impressed them with his military expertise and willingness to travel to China to train Chinese troops and lead them in restoring the emperor. Lea dropped out of Stanford University and became a “foreign advisor” to the cause. The translation of a letter of introduction for Lea to Kang Youwei written by Tom Leung (under an alternate name, Tom Tsai Hin or Tan Jiqian) appeared in a full-page Sunday magazine section about Homer Lea’s ambitions in the *San Francisco Call* in April 1900.⁴⁵ Tom’s letter exposed his inability to judge the truth of Lea’s claims and repeated Lea’s falsehoods that “his grandfather was a general and marshal in the American Civil War” (in other words, Robert E. Lee) and that Lea recently graduated from Stanford. Certainly Kang would be pleased to read that Lea was “indignant about China because it has been preyed upon by the Western powers” and to learn that “when he gets to know us, he will help us in all matters concerning the emperor. China therefore will be very fortunate indeed.” Lea, “a young man of more or less leisure,” reportedly had volunteered to teach military strategy and tactics to 2,000 Chinese men with the expectation he would become their commander in chief.⁴⁶

With such publicity in hand, Lea began soliciting recruits from Stanford and from among hundreds of adventurers, ex-servicemen, and soldiers of fortune who wrote to him after reading press coverage.⁴⁷ Lea departed from San

Kaplan’s 2010 biography of Lea also critiques scholars and others who earlier attempted to discern fact from fiction to recount Lea’s life.

44 Lawrence M. Kaplan, *Homer Lea: American Soldier of Fortune* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2010), 11–12, 20, 32–35.

45 “Translation of Mr. Homer Lea’s Letters of Introduction Written by Tom Tsai Hin of Los Angeles to the Leading Revolutionists,” *San Francisco Call*, April 22, 1900, magazine, 1; “Young Californian is Plotting to Become Commander-in-Chief of Chinese Rebel Forces,” same source.

46 “Young Californian is Plotting,” *San Francisco Call*, April 22, 1900, magazine, 1. The article states Lea expected to have 20,000 men under his command but Tom’s letter in Chinese specifies only 2,000. The letter as quoted above is from the authors’ translation.

47 “Homer Lea, a Stanford Student Sails for China with a Big Sum of Money Collected for the Purpose of Raising an Army to Outwit the Empress Dowager,” *San Francisco Call*, June 23, 1900, 1.



FIGURE 30 "Young Californian," *San Francisco Call Magazine*, April 22, 1900 portion of full-page article, and close-up of Chang Kung Sing (Zhang Hongsheng), Homer Lea, and Tom Tsai Hin (Tom Leung).

Francisco June 22, bound for Asia as a "secret agent" to raise a reform army with none of the reported recruits other than possibly the Los Angeles Baohuang-hui military student Zhang Hongsheng (Chang Kung Sing, Jeong Goong Sing), supposedly with \$60,000 in his possession. Lea—known as Kan Ma Li or Kong

Ma Li in Baohuanghui correspondence—was described as “a talented and rare person” by Chen Guoyong, a Yokohama Baohuanghui member who had not yet met him.⁴⁸ Lea had told the Baohuanghui that he could recruit American soldiers to fight in China, leading Chen to propose that “if our cause succeeds, they will be rewarded with rights in China, such as mines and railroads.” Similar quid quo pro propositions ceding major powers in China to foreign governments, soldiers, or investors would resurface repeatedly, and were not limited to reformers. A decade later, Lea, Yung Wing, and others convinced Sun Yatsen that they could recruit American investors to fund a military overthrow of the Qing, in return for concessions in China, and although this plot failed, Sun took Lea back to China in 1911 as his top military chief.⁴⁹

Kang wrote to Tom Leung in June 1900 in anticipation of Lea's arrival in Asia. But, he was concerned about the “low remuneration” they could offer him.⁵⁰ Kang also decried the news leaks preceding Lea, perhaps unaware that Lea himself bore much responsibility. Lea arrived in Yokohama on July 11, and, after receiving 200 yen and another introductory letter to Kang from Chen Guoyong and the Yokohama chapter, he departed the next day for Hong Kong and Macau, on his way to Singapore to see Kang.⁵¹ Incongruously, although Kang was under the protection and observation of the Straits Settlements governor and police, there is no British government record of a visit by Homer Lea or any correspondence documenting that the two met in Singapore. It may be that Lea arrived in Singapore just as Kang was being spirited off to an island to avoid assassins and then was personally escorted by Governor Swettenham to his official residence.⁵² One Lea biographer uses a vague statement given by Lea to the *San Francisco Call* in April 1901 as proof of his meeting with Kang in Singapore at an unstated date: “Prime Minister Kangyerwa [*sic*] told me himself that the trouble arose in 1898, when the Empress accomplished her great coup.”⁵³ No other evidence has been found that Lea and Kang met in 1900 or what transpired between them.

48 Chen Guoyong 陳國鏞 to Tan Zhangxiao, May 19, 1900, no. 513 in Fang and Cai, 276.

49 Plot known as Red Dragon conspiracy is described in Chapter 11. Sun Yatsen embraced the notion of awarding concessions and other monopolies to Western funders.

50 Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, June 27, 1900, no. 505 in Fang and Cai, 27.

51 Feng Zishan, et al., Yokohama, to Tan Zhangxiao, July 16, 1900, no. 518 in Fang and Cai, 279–80.

52 Kang was moved secretly to an inaccessible Malayan island on July 26 and to Governor Swettenham's residence on August 9, 1900; Li, “Yingguo Zhengfu dui Kang Youwei,” 95.

53 Kaplan, *Homer Lea*, 229–30 n4; “Homer Lee, the Student, Now a Chinese General,” *San Francisco Call*, April 9, 1901, 12.

Hong Kong Governor Blake reported to the Colonial Office on August 3 that he had spoken with Homer Lea, who had left Hong Kong with “some of Sun Yatsen’s party” on July 30. He was headed for Baohuanghui headquarters in Macau, no doubt for the war council Kang had summoned but did not himself attend. Blake said that Lea had been sent to China by reformers in San Francisco, who proposed a united front between the followers of Kang and Sun to take over Guangdong and proclaim a new government before moving to annex the provinces south of the Yangzi. Lea “advocated immediate action and pressed that the Powers are too busily engaged in the North to interfere in the South.”⁵⁴ Blake explained Lea’s views further:

The idea is that Macau would form a convenient base of operations; that 25,000 Coolies should be enlisted under American Officers, and that Canton should be made the objective. It is assumed that all the Macau authorities could be bribed, and an understanding arrived at with the Portuguese Governor on the basis of territorial compensations.

Blake also reported that Lea and his companions did not achieve their mission in Macau, because “Kang Yu Wei’s party would have no coalition with the followers of Sun Yat Sen.” Blake believed that “neither party is prepared, and without an organized party on this side of the water,” he viewed Lea’s plans as “mere vapouring.” Nevertheless, Blake contended that Kang, like Lea, was anxious to take action, even more so than Sun (who would delay his moves with the Huizhou uprising until October 1900). How Lea met up with Sun’s men and traveled to Macau with them instead of Hong Kong Baohuanghui leaders has never been explained. Kang’s grandson, Jung-pang Lo, later opined that “many people suspected” Lea was “a spy for Sun Yat-sen” while in Kang’s camp.⁵⁵

Lea’s actual military participation in Qinwang also is unknown, as there is no corroboration from Chinese sources that he played a role. Lea biographer Eugene Anshel says his involvement in the uprisings was “quite uncertain” and “fanciful.” He also failed to find any concrete evidence that Lea met Kang prior to 1905.⁵⁶ Lea claimed in 1901, however, that he had been “placed in charge in the southern part of China, with the rank of a general in the imperial army.”⁵⁷

54 Henry A. Blake to Joseph Chamberlain, August 3, 1900, National Archives (UK), FO 17/1718, 365–66

55 Lo, “Sequel to Autobiography,” 272.

56 Eugene Anshel, *Homer Lea, Sun Yat-sen, and the Chinese Revolution* (New York: Praeger, 1984), 20–21, 47–48.

57 “Homer Lee, the Student, Now a Chinese General,” *San Francisco Call*, April 9, 1901, 12.

Another Lea biographer, Lawrence Kaplan, admits that Lea “made poor progress at best” with his supposed command and that his effort had “aborted” after only two weeks. Lea may have been involved in subsequent anti-Qing efforts in China, but after about four months in the country and fearing arrest, he fled to Japan in disguise in December.⁵⁸

Lea’s name appears next in Kang’s extant correspondence with Tom Leung in July 1901, and the mention was critical. “Homer Lea does not understand our internal situation, and his idea is not feasible,” Kang complained, adding that, at Lea’s suggestion, “we have spent several thousand dollars, but these efforts have been of no use to us.” Furthermore, he wrote that people like Lea and Yung Wing “do things in the Western style,” ask for “millions of dollars from our association,” and suggest “that such and such arms should be purchased for several million dollars and such and such a steamboat worth several million dollars should be purchased.” Kang concluded that Lea did not know that “our association is about as big as the blood from a mosquito or an ant ... Aren’t Homer Lea’s words like someone talking in his sleep?”⁵⁹ Despite this significant lack of confidence in Lea, Kang would place him in a position of trust again in 1905, only to see that trust quickly erode and suffer a permanent break (see “The Western Military Academy” below).

1.3 *Qinwang: The Culmination*

Kang had set his sights on foreign governments to support Qinwang, seemingly confident that the allied powers whose armies had descended upon China to defend their citizens against the rampaging Boxers would throw their weight behind the reformers’ military rising to restore Guangxu to power. That summer, the foreign legations in Beijing were under siege by the Boxers and Qing soldiers, Cixi having declared war against the allied powers on June 21. All foreigners, especially missionaries and diplomats, feared for their lives. In mid-July, the Eight Powers Expeditionary Army began its advance in Tianjin and marched to Beijing. In mid-August, the foreign troops lifted the legation siege and occupied the Forbidden City as the Qing court fled to Xi’an. The chaos in the north offered the Baohuanghui an opportunity for a rising in the south. As the allied troops neared Beijing, the Baohuanghui undertook a concerted campaign to persuade the foreign armies to restore Guangxu to his throne, remove Cixi, and insure a Qing government friendly to foreigners.

A Baohuanghui petition dated July 18, 1900, from Cui Zijian (Chuy C. Kain), San Francisco chapter president, was sent to the governments of the United

58 Kaplan, *Homer Lea*, 42, 45, 49–51.

59 Kang to Tan Zhangxiao, July 5, 1901, no. 509 in Fang and Cai, 32–33.

States, Britain, Germany, and Japan. The copy received by President William McKinley stated in part:

That your Petitioners, the Chinese Empire Reform Association of America, are an Association for the purpose of advancing the interests of the Chinese Empire and of the Chinese in China and abroad, and specially of securing reforms in the Government of that Empire.

That recent events in China have emphasized the necessity and importance of changes in the administration of your Petitioners' native country.

That recently the Emperor Kwang Hsu has published a message in which he proposed that certain of the Powers should aid in reinstating him on the Throne, and should declare a joint Protectorate and undertake the government of the country through the Emperor ...⁶⁰

Apparently, no action was taken other than McKinley's office forwarding the petition to the Department of State, which politely acknowledged it and filed it away among its "miscellaneous letters." The central theme was similar to that proposed by Charles Beresford after he met Kang in Hong Kong in 1898.⁶¹ Both proposals suggested forming a joint protectorate with the same countries, and both omitted Russian participation.

In conjunction with Baohuanghui appeals to foreign leaders for assistance, Kang sent personal letters to those who had previously supported him or his followers, including Hong Kong Governor Henry Blake in late July.⁶² Blake

60 To the Honorable William McKinley, President of the United States of America: The Humble Petition of the Chinese Empire Reform Association of America, dated San Francisco, July 18, 1900, signed by Chuy C. Kain [Cui Zijian], President, Miscellaneous Letters of the Department of State, RG 59, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/153565242?objectPage=290>, accessed May 24, 2024. Most likely, it was Kang, not Guangxu, who published the proposal that the Allies restore Guangxu to his throne. However, Kang in "Kang Yu Wei's Open Letters to the Powers," wrote that Guangxu did "attempt to put himself under the protection of the foreign ministers," an incident described by the letters' editor, Percival Landon, as "a curious tale current in Peking, that the Emperor, while attempting to escape by the Northern gate of the Imperial City with the intention of throwing himself upon the protection of the British Legation, found himself stopped and sent back by a patrol of Cossacks." See Percival Landon (editor), "Kang Yu Wei's Open Letters to The Powers," *Fortnightly Review* no. 315, New Series, (July 1, 1901): 5.

61 See Prelude.

62 Blake was known for proposing favorable treatment of Kang and Sun, usually facing opposition from the British Foreign Office, which saw no gain in displeasing the Qing government, according to Mary Man-Yue Sun, "British Policy and the Chinese Revolutionary

forwarded Kang's letter to British Colonial Secretary Joseph Chamberlain with the comment that "while I am ... informed that Kang Yu Wei's party is anxious to take immediate [military] action, he is apparently anxious himself to impress upon me his friendliness to foreigners."⁶³ Kang attributed the Boxer "disturbances" to Cixi's backing and described his sadness and anger when he heard that foreigners had been murdered and the legations set on fire. Then he made his case:

We all know your country's desire to give support to China. We are cordially attached to [Great Britain] and hope that she will help us and join with the other nations in saving the Emperor. If we reformers are given authority we can without fail extirpate the Boxers and protect foreigners and mission stations. We will introduce Western laws and methods and select and employ able foreigners ... we hope you will telegraph to your Government and urge it to quickly take advantage of this opportunity to protect the Emperor and restore him to power and assist the reform party.

The reformers' pleas to the allied powers fell on deaf ears, not only because their armies were at that moment marching from Tianjin to Beijing but they foresaw trouble for themselves from domestic uprisings which could further destabilize China or even cause southern China to secede, endangering the foreigners in their way. When Blake heard a rumor in mid-August that Kang was coming to Hong Kong to prepare for "active operations in Canton and neighborhood," he asked the Colonial Office if he could assure Kang that were he to refrain from military action, the British government would reciprocate by pressing the Qing government for "any fair and reasonable reforms that the people may demand."⁶⁴ After consulting with Prime Minister Salisbury, Colonial Secretary Chamberlain replied to Blake that "Her Majesty's government ... could not sanction any such promises" to the reformers.⁶⁵ Moreover, Blake was directed to call a halt to the enlistment of foreigners in a rising and, if

Movement, 1895–1912," Ph.D. dissertation, Department of History, University of London, 1968, 123–31.

63 Henry A. Blake to Joseph Chamberlain, August 3, 1900, enclosing Kang's letter, National Archives (UK), FO 17/1718, 364–70. In his letter Kang notes that he sent Blake "a work called 'Friendly relations with other Countries' for his "perusal and consideration."

64 Governor Henry Blake telegram to Joseph Chamberlain, August 18, 1900, National Archives (UK), FO 17/1718, 354.

65 Joseph Chamberlain telegram to Governor Blake, August 20, 1900, National Archives (UK), FO 17/1718, 354.

Kang persisted, Blake was to deport him from Hong Kong. Kang never left Singapore for Hong Kong nor did he attend the “council of war” in Macau that he had called for at the end of July, having prompted scores of Chinese volunteers from North America to sail across the Pacific.⁶⁶ The volunteers arrived in Hong Kong on August 21, so there would be no possibility of their participation in a war council or Qinwang itself and there is no evidence that they joined Homer Lea or other Baohuanghui military leaders.⁶⁷

In August 1900, Qinwang strategy was plagued by both urgency and vacillation. Troops were assembled by Tang’s commanders in the Yangzi River region thanks to the Independence Army and the regional secret society Gelaohui (Society of Brothers and Elders). However, native-place ties and political sympathies—and the July departure of Governor General Li Hongzhang to aid the Qing in the north—weighed in favor of the Liangguang region (Guangdong and Guangxi) to initiate the uprising. Also disputed was the scope of the Yangzi rising, with Tang Caichang and Liang Qichao promoting an expansive series of attacks along the Yangzi River from Hubei’s border with Sichuan all the way to Jiangsu and Zhejiang, while Kang wanted to limit the action to Hubei and Hunan. Kang also complicated the military strategizing by directing the flow of money and assigning commanders from his post in Singapore, far from the Macau headquarters and the front line in China. This meant slow communications and growing disillusion and confusion among those on the ground. Above all, Kang was torn about which military strategy was best, and his indecision endangered both his commanders and troops.⁶⁸

More money had been directed to the Liangguang troops and the arrival of the overseas volunteers was anticipated, but Tang’s Independence Army based in the Yangzi region, although short of funds, had recruited Gelaohui and Xingzhonghui members and even some Qing soldiers.⁶⁹ Tang no doubt felt empowered by the Guohui assembly, which adjourned on July 29.⁷⁰ Another impetus for immediate action from Tang’s troops was the approach of the allied forces toward Beijing; they entered the capital on August 14. Tang set August 9 for the uprising to begin. Tang was based at Hankou, Hubei, a strategic location in the center of China on the bank of the navigable Yangzi River, “crossroad of nine provinces,” and commanded five regional armies.⁷¹ The armies were to rise at the same time from an area that reached west to Hubei’s border with

66 “Chinese Reformers at Work,” *New-York Tribune*, August 1, 1900, 3.

67 “Marine News,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, August 22, 1900, 12, reports the *Empress of India* arrived in Hong Kong via Yokohama on August 21.

68 Sang, *Gengzi Qinwang*, 80–95.

69 Fung, “The T’ang Ts’ai-Ch’ang Revolt,” *Papers in Far Eastern History* 1 (March 1970): 100.

70 Sang, *Gengzi Qinwang*, 95–96; Fung, “T’ang Ts’ai-Ch’ang Revolt,” 97–101.

71 Fung, “T’ang Ts’ai-Ch’ang Revolt,” 98–100.

Sichuan (at Yichang), south to the Hunan border city of Changde, and east to Anqing and Datong in Anhui, the latter city just north of Nanjing.

Fate, however, intervened. As Tang awaited funds from Kang to pay his troops, he postponed the rising until August 19, and again until August 23. The delays led to some Gelaohui defections, a shortage of arms, and, more critically, to the discovery and quick suppression of Tang's scheme by local Qing authorities.⁷²

The commander of the easternmost army in Datong and trusted reform veteran, Qin Lishan, had not learned that Tang had postponed the August 9 initial rising date and led his men into battle on schedule.⁷³ After six days of fighting with no backup from the four other armies, Qin's Front Army (Qian Jun) was defeated by Liangjiang Viceroy Liu Kunyi's troops.⁷⁴ Many of Qin's soldiers were captured but Qin escaped to Shanghai and then to Japan. Interrogation of the captives yielded intelligence about Tang's five-army rising and his Hankou base, which was shared by Viceroy Liu with Hubei-Hunan Viceroy Zhang Zhidong. Under Zhang's authority, with the ready assent of Hankou's British Acting Consul General E. H. Fraser, whose permission was needed for police action in the city's British concession, arrest warrants were issued on August 21, two days before Tang's postponed August 23 rising.⁷⁵

With British police assistance, two houses in Hankou were raided on August 22 and nearly thirty men seized, half of whom were turned over to Viceroy Zhang. Fraser reported that the police found guns, swords, ammunition, "240 whistles," and, most incriminating, documents in English and Chinese about the aims of the Zilihui (Independence Society), as well as paper money for the "Provisional Government," which made clear the connection to Kang Youwei and Yung Wing.⁷⁶ Fraser easily justified his cooperation with Zhang:

... even supposing that the movement is really a "reform" movement, and that no action was to be taken against foreigners, the overthrow of the

72 Wong, "Three Visionaries in Exile," 16–17.

73 Qin Lishan 秦力山 studied with 1898 martyr Tan Sitong in Changsha, Hunan at the Shiwu Xuetang in 1897 and fled to Japan in 1898, where he studied at Liang Qichao's Datong School and was acting editor of *Qingyi Bao*. Fung, "T'ang Ts'ai-Ch'ang Revolt," 78–80.

74 Fung, "T'ang Ts'ai-Ch'ang Revolt," 98–101.

75 Acting Consul General E. H. Fraser [Hankou] to Acting Consul General Pelham L. Warren [Shanghai], August 23, 1900, enclosure in Warren to Marquis of Salisbury, August 30, 1900, National Archives (UK), FO 17/1718, 372–73.

76 "Reform" Notice found with a Reformer arrested in Hankou [objects and rules of action for the China Independence Association], Inclosure 2, and "Reform" Document found with a Reformer arrested in Hankou [letter from Head of the Hankou Branch of the China Independent Association], Inclosure 3, in Warren to Marquis of Salisbury, August 30, 1900, National Archives (UK), FO 17/1718, 373.

constituted authorities would let loose upon us all the disorderly rabble of the three cities [Hankou, Wuchang, and Hanyang] because the present authorities, who have hitherto striven to maintain order here, are to be preferred to a self-constituted Government of high-sounding aims, but of doubtful experience and ability.⁷⁷

As ordered by Zhang Zhidong, Tang Caichang was among the sixteen men beheaded on August 23, the same date Tang had finally set for the rising to begin. Even with the excellent communications up and down the Yangzi basin, Tang had not known about the fighting in Datong and its disastrous consequences.

Less surprising is evidence that neither the Macau headquarters nor Kang himself were clear about Tang's battle plans in China. Canadian Baohuanghui leader Li Fuji received several telegrams and letters detailing battle plans from both the Macau headquarters and Kang in Singapore during a two-week period at the end of August.⁷⁸ Li coordinated communications between Kang and North American chapters, forwarding Kang's pleas for funds and guns for Qinwang. Li received telegrams on August 15 and 29, both reporting that "expeditions for the relief of the emperor have started for Peking," but with different logistical strategies. The telegram arriving on August 15 from Macau reported one army moving from the Yangzi River and another army from "Huai Lai" (perhaps referring to the Huai River which flowed through northern Anhui, near Datong). On August 29, Li received a telegram directly from Kang that declared that the Qinwang troops had begun to move from various locations in Jiangnan, literally south of the Yangzi River, which in the late Qing usually referred to the prosperous region that incorporated Shanghai, Nanjing, Suzhou, and Hangzhou. On August 24, a day after the executions in Hankou, Kang learned by telegram that there had been a defeat on the battlefield, yet he apparently did not inform Li and wrote that "there were still large bodies of gallant men in

77 Acting Consul General E. H. Fraser [Hankou] to Acting Consul General Pelham L. Warren [Shanghai], August 23, 1900, enclosure in Warren to Marquis of Salisbury, August 30, 1900, National Archives (UK), FO 17/1718, 372–73.

78 Descriptions of these letters and telegrams are found in three letters to Kang Youwei: Li Man Wai [Li Wenhui 李文惠, alternate name for Li Fuji] to Sam Muk [Kang Youwei; this is code name from Kang's Japanese name Jiamusen], August 21, 1900 and two letters from Li Fukki [Li Fuji] to the Chief of the Society [Kang Youwei] and to Sam Muk, both dated September 11, 1900, National Archives (UK), FO 17/1718, 416–21, both letters translated into English were enclosures in J. A. Swettenham to Joseph Chamberlain, January 30, 1901, FO 17/1718, 410–11.

the provinces who were prepared to march north to save the emperor.”⁷⁹ Nor did Li realize what had happened as of September 11, 1900, when he told Kang:

Nothing has yet been heard that the expeditions for the relief of the Emperor have reached Peking. The Western newspapers say nothing of what the New Party [the reformers] is doing. I presume the action we have taken has been published in newspapers and news is on its way to us.⁸⁰

In fact on August 27, the downfall of the Qinwang plot in Hankou was described in detail thanks to “official dispatches from Shanghai” published the next day in the *San Francisco Call*—“the Hankou uprising was not due to the Boxers, but was a plot organized by the partisans of Kang Yu Wei, the reformer, combined with the secret society known as the ‘Ko Lao Hui,’ an anti-foreign organization.”⁸¹

The Qinwang suppression was, according to Kang, “a great calamity” for the reformers.⁸² Two days after Zhang Zhidong had Tang and his men executed, he alerted Liangjiang Viceroy Liu and Qing authorities in Anhui and neighboring provinces about the plot, and they continued the crackdown during the next weeks.⁸³ Kang later claimed that more than 2,000 were killed after Hankou was exposed.⁸⁴ Baohuanghui members and those troops who escaped execution and arrest blamed Kang for the failure of Qinwang and accused him of misusing funds.⁸⁵ He, in turn, faulted the rashness and leaks of subordinates and the failure of men like Zhang Zhidong and Liu Kunyi to come to the reformers’ aid. Kang could not comprehend the depth and breadth of British opposition to the uprising plans and attributed Hankou Consul Fraser’s ignorance, misunderstanding of Chinese language, and “want of communication between

79 Lo, “Sequel to Autobiography,” 187–88.

80 Li Fukki to Sam Muk, September 11, 1900, National Archives (UK), FO 17/1718, 421. This quote is the English translation of the original letter provided to Joseph Chamberlain.

81 “Hankou Uprising Not Due to Boxers, but a plot of Reformers Against the Peking Government,” *San Francisco Call*, August 28, 1900, 1. *Daily Colonist* (Victoria), August 24, 1900, 4, disclosed “a threatened rising is reported from Hankou” but did not associate it with the reformers.

82 “Kang Yu Wei’s Open Letters to The Powers,” *Fortnightly Review*, no. 315, New Series (July 1, 1901): 11.

83 Smyth, “Tzu-li Hui,” 64.

84 Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, November 26, 1900, no. 517 in Fang and Cai, 29; Kang Youwei, Penang, to Tan Zhangxiao, July 5, 1901, no. 509 in Fang and Cai, 32–33.

85 Wong, “Three Visionaries in Exile,” 17, 22.

East and West” to explain why he so willingly cooperated with Zhang Zhidong’s crushing of Qinwang.⁸⁶ The earnest but imprudent appeals by Kang, Tang, and Yung Wing to the viceroys Liu and Zhang served only as early alerts and were compounded by the multiple instances when Kang and his associates openly broadcast their intentions to come to the rescue of the emperor.

The failure of Qinwang and execution of numerous followers had a deep effect on Kang, and he refrained temporarily from urging violent means to achieve his goals.⁸⁷ Not only did the ignominious end to the grand battle plans harm morale and fundraising among members, but it led to constant surveillance by Qing officials in Macau, Hong Kong, and China. Kang told Tom Leung in July 1901 that “ever since fall and winter [of 1900], everything we planned to do has been known in advance by local officials, who in turn immediately took precautions and arrested our people. The situation has been extremely dangerous.”⁸⁸ There was also personal fallout from Qinwang for supporters and their families. San Francisco’s vigilant Chinese consul He You telegraphed Guangdong Governor General Deshou to arrest the families of local Baohuanghui leaders Tang Qiongchang and Luo Botang, both instrumental in raising funds for Qinwang. They were not released until summer 1901 by a sympathetic Guangdong governor, Tao Mo.⁸⁹ Kang bemoaned the tragic aftermath for the orphans and widows of those executed, or the families left behind by fighters who escaped.⁹⁰ He beseeched Baohuanghui members to donate money to support the families of those who were martyred to save the emperor. Tang Caichang’s father, grandmother, wife, and children needed one hundred yuan a month to survive, “yet it has been a whole year and no money is in sight. They piteously entreated and cried for food.” Kang accused members of banqueting while doing nothing “for these righteous comrades who died for us.”

86 “Kang Yu Wei’s Open Letters to The Powers,” *Fortnightly Review* no. 315, New Series (July 1, 1901): 11.

87 Lo, “Sequel to Autobiography,” 188. Wong, “Three Visionaries in Exile,” 22.

88 Kang Youwei, Penang, to Tan Zhangxiao, July 5, 1901, no. 509 in Fang and Cai, 32. See Chapter 3 for the role of Kang’s precursors in North America, such as Liang Qitian 梁啟田 and Xu Qin, to overcome the effects of Qinwang.

89 Kang Youwei to Righteous Members of the Association, August 3, 1901, no. 532 in Fang and Cai, 37 and Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, August 22, 1901, no. 508 in Fang and Cai, 36.

90 Kang Youwei to Righteous Members of the Association, 19th day of unknown month [probably summer of 1901], no. 530, Tom Leung Collection, Asian Library, University of California, Los Angeles, <https://digital.library.ucla.edu/catalog/ark:/21198/zz002539m5>, accessed October 19, 2022.

1.4 *Qinwang Aftermath and the Guangdong Rising*

After the Qinwang debacle, Kang spent several months in Penang where he continued to watch the outcome of the Boxer Uprising and tried to plan his next steps in secrecy.⁹¹ In November 1900, he sent a printed letter to the rescued foreign ministers in Beijing, indicting the Empress Dowager, Prince Duan, Prince Qing, Ronglu, and other Boxer supporters. Another Kang letter, dated November 14, 1900, was addressed to “The Minister for the United States of America at the Court of Peking.”⁹² Kang proposed a three-point program for the allied powers:

- Insure the just punishment of the real culprits,
- Satisfaction to the different countries, whose people and representatives have been unjustly assailed,
- Permanent settlement of the international relations of my country.

He continued, more in line with his personal interests, stating that Cixi and her colleagues:

... [s]hould, on no account be recognized by the Allies as competent to negotiate for peace. They one and all should be marked out for condign punishment by the Emperor with the powerful assistance of the allies.

The emperor—“the great friend of foreigners”—should be restored, which implied Kang’s recall to Beijing. Kang also said that Guangxu had commanded him in September 1898 in a “secret Edict” to “solicit the protection and help of foreign nations.” Whether or not there was such a secret edict, Kang had been doing just that ever since he fled China in September 1898. He approached the Japanese, British, and U.S. governments directly about the edict. Kang’s only success had been to secure protection for himself from the British and Canadian governments while in their territories. But he continued to suggest how the foreign powers might help China by way of the reformers.

91 British government correspondence reveals the struggle to untangle what was true and false in reports to the Foreign Office about Kang’s plans and movements. For example, see J. A. Alexander Swettenham to Mr. Villiers, Foreign Office, November 1, 1900, National Archives (UK), FO 17/1718, “Chinese Revolutionaries in British Dominions,” 378–79, in which Swettenham corrects the rumor that Kang was responsible for Sun Yatsen’s October 1900 Huizhou uprising and states that Kang was not in Shanghai as reported.

92 Kang Youwei, Straits Settlements, to U.S. Minister [E. H. Conger], Beijing, November 14, 1900, Legation Archives Peking, Miscellaneous Letters, 1900. Entry UD-10, RG 84, NA-College Park.

Kang sent a letter to the Victoria chapter in July 1901 reflecting on the Qinwang disaster.⁹³ Kang disclosed that the Baohuanghui headquarters and newspaper in Macau had temporarily closed, because “many provincial governors have sent secret agents there to monitor and investigate our affairs” to prevent another Qinwang-like uprising. “If anything happens in [Macau], information will leak out. Our failure last year was due to information leaks.” He ordered chapters to communicate directly with him: “From now on, any confidential matters will be handled in Penang. If you want to write me, send it directly here.” He also suggested that he was planning what seemed to be another military rising in the Jiangguang area (Yangzi River valley, Guangdong, and Guangxi provinces), but gave no details. “You will learn about this from the newspapers. It’s highly confidential. I cannot tell you more.” Kang optimistically held out hope for some kind of military action during the foreign occupation of Beijing, especially should Guangxu return to Beijing before Cixi, but this time it was essential to keep their plans secret.

He Suitian, who had managed *Zhixin Bao* in Macau until it was closed, reported to chapters in July 1901 that “some military experts have returned inland on their own to regroup their subordinates for future adventures.”⁹⁴ More than a year later, Liang Qichao informed Baohuanghui chapters:

The Guangxi “people’s party” [*mindang*] has occupied Nanning. Our association in Hong Kong sent several people to direct them, but they are lacking in arms and ammunition so we can’t be too hopeful that they will achieve great success.⁹⁵

Liang’s pessimism notwithstanding, the Guangxi rebels, who were probably secret society members, did inspire member enthusiasm. The San Salvador, El Salvador, chapter sent a circular letter in June 1902 declaring, “it is not fair when people inside China risk their lives, and the people abroad do not render financial assistance.”⁹⁶ San Salvador members claimed to have each donated

93 Kang Youwei to comrades and righteous brothers of the Victoria Baohuanghui, transmitted by Li Fuji, Dong Qiantai 董謙泰, and others of the Victoria chapter to all members, stenciled letter, July 6, 1901, no. 510 in Fang and Cai, 34–35.

94 He Tingguang 何廷光 [He Suitian] in Macau to Comrades of the Association, July 31, 1901, no. 533, Tom Leung Collection, Asian Library, University of California, Los Angeles, <https://digital.library.ucla.edu/catalog/ark:/21198/zz002539qq>, accessed October 19, 2022.

95 Liang Qichao 梁啟超, copied and entrusted to Ye En 葉恩 to send to chapters, October–November 1902, no. 544 in Fang and Cai, 104.

96 San Salvador Baohuanghui to members, June 21, 1902, no. 538 in Fang and Cai, 367.

one month's salary to kick off what they hoped would be monthly donations by all Baohuanghui members to pay for a three-year military campaign. By this point Kang and Xu Qin had concluded that military action could not succeed, but they dared not state this bluntly when funds were flowing in to save the emperor.⁹⁷ By then, establishing the Commercial Corporation had taken priority over uprisings, yet a few key Baohuanghui radical activists threw their support behind what has been called the Canton Rising and Second Taiping Uprising of 1902–3 and hereafter will be more accurately called the Guangdong Rising.⁹⁸

The Guangdong Rising was strongly opposed by Kang. Nevertheless, some of his closest collaborators were involved in this plot to overthrow the Qing. Liang Qichao provided propaganda from Tokyo, printing and distributing several thousand copies of Ou Jujia's *Xin Guangdong* (New Guangdong), which proposed making Guangdong an independent nation. Liang also sent Ou's declaration to Australia, Hawai'i, North America, and elsewhere.⁹⁹ Ou was Kang's former student, Liang's close associate, and a Zhigongtang (Chee Kong Tong, Chinese Triads) member, who raised funds among Chinese communities in the United States. In 1902 and 1903, he also edited two San Francisco newspapers: the Baohuanghui organ *Wenxing Bao* (*Mon Hing Bo*, *The Chinese World*) and the Zhigongtang newspaper *Datong Ribao*, and used them to publish *Xin Guangdong* and other revolutionary writings. Kang was so upset with Ou's participation in the Guangdong Rising plot that he exclaimed to Tom Leung in September 1902 that Ou had "preposterously incited revolution and betrayed our cause. I desire to sever relations with him and expel him."¹⁰⁰ Apparently hoping to counteract Ou's influence, Kang asked Tom to write editorials for *Wenxing Bao* to "promote ideas like popular rights (*minquan*) and freedom (*ziyou*). Just don't betray the goal of protecting the emperor or discuss revolution."

Another Guangdong Rising supporter was Yung Wing. He had been promised the presidency of the new government to be formed if the military action

97 Sang, *Gengzi Qinwang*, 125–26.

98 L. Eve Armentrout, "The Canton Rising of 1902–1903: Reformers, Revolutionaries, and the Second Taiping," *Modern Asian Studies* 10, no. 1 (1976): 83–105.

99 Liang Qichao to Ye En, et al., and "all the righteous comrades of the Baohuanghui," August 14, 1902, no. 540 in Fang and Cai, 99.

100 Kang Youwei, Darjeeling, to Tan Zhangxiao, Los Angeles, September 9, 1902, no. 129 in Fang and Cai, 39. In a sign of rapid changes of allegiance on both Kang's and Ou's part, Kang soon would entrust Ou with enlisting assassins of Sun Yatsen. See below.

succeeded.¹⁰¹ Yung left China in 1902 and met with Liang Qichao in Yokohama on his way to the United States.¹⁰² Back in the United States, he made overtures—all unsuccessful—to former military men and politicians—while corresponding periodically with Liang and other Guangdong Rising conspirators, most significantly the Australian-born Hong Kong-based revolutionary Xie Zuantai (James See, Tse Tsan-tai). Xie had founded the Hong Kong Xingzhonghui with Sun Yatsen and had strong ties to the Taiping rebels and the Zhigongtang (which provided most of the military recruits). He also was one of the two Christian revolutionaries who led the Guangdong Rising. Xie recruited Hong Quanfu (Hung Chuan-fook, Hong Chan-Kwei), nephew of the Taiping Rebellion commander Hong Xiuquan.¹⁰³

As with Qinwang, an informant discovered the plans for the uprising, which was to be launched with an explosion during official lunar New Year rites at Guangzhou's Wanshou Gong (Longevity Temple). On January 28, 1903, the Qing authorities arrested and immediately executed many of the ring leaders and seized their arsenal.¹⁰⁴ Kang's reaction was stern: "Due to the Guangdong disorders in the twelfth month [December 30, 1902–January 28, 1903], there are still German, American, British, and French warships docked on the Pearl River. If they had been successful, in this new year of 1903, Guangdong would belong to other countries."¹⁰⁵ As to the earlier rebellion in Guangxi, Kang said

101 Armentrout, "Canton Rising," 89, states that Xie Zuantai 謝纘泰 and Hong Quanfu 洪全福 asked Yung to be "the first President of the new government that their revolution would hopefully lead to. Yung accepted."

102 Armentrout, "Canton Rising," 88, 93, 97, 98–100. The full text of Yung's 1902 diary can be seen at Connecticut State Library, State Archives, RG000, Classified Archives, 974.62 H25 w1, <https://cslib.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p15019coll14/id/781https://cslib.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p15019coll14/id/781>, accessed May 17, 2024. Armentrout's citations of the diary incorrectly use the diary's printed dates rather than converting the lunar dates that Yung wrote in entries. For example, on May 16, 1902, Yung met Liang Qichao in Yokohama; in the diary the entry appears on the printed entry for May 27.

103 Xie Zuantai's background and his later perspective on the rising is found in John Fitzgerald, *Big White Lie: Chinese Australians in White Australia* (Sydney, Australia: University of New South Wales Press, 2007), 85–89. For a description of the uprising from the point of view of its military commander Hong Quanfu, see Roxann Prazniak, *Of Camel Kings and Other Things: Rural Rebels against Modernity in Late Imperial China* (Lanham, Maryland: Roman and Littlefield, 1999), 16–17.

104 Edward J. M. Rhoads, *China's Republican Revolution: The Case of Kwangtung, 1895–1913* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975), 67–68.

105 Kang Youwei to Ye En [Ye Huibo] 惠伯, Xu Weijing 徐爲經, Li Fuji, Liu Zhangxuan 劉章軒, Dong Qiantai, Li Youshu 李祐樞 and my comrades in all chapters], public letter, February 26, 1903, no. 563 in Fang and Cai, 49–50.

that he had predicted long ago it would be difficult to put down because it bordered on Yunnan and Guizhou and was hemmed in by mountains; renewed attempts to rise would “only cause people more misery and suffering, and give the French more excuses.” Kang was now acutely aware of the precariousness of China’s sovereignty, having lived in British-ruled India since late 1901. Too much money had been wasted on uprisings, he said, because “our fellow reformers were enchanted with military rebellion,” and Kang instead endorsed assassination. In the next few years, the Baohuanghui turned to targeted killings and military training.

2 Assassination

Assassinations are an unlikely method for a political organization dedicated to cultivating citizenship and public accountability. Yet, for at least ten years, Kang Youwei committed Baohuanghui funds and personnel to plot assassinations of his most feared Qing and pro-revolution enemies. Confidential letters to close disciples and daughter Kang Tongbi display Kang’s fervor for and commitment to this method. Beguiled by the seeming ease of assassination, he seemed never to question its utility or morality. Yet, time and again he failed in his search for “a warrior who wields a sharpened sword” (*yike jian heng mo*).¹⁰⁶

Kang’s preoccupation with political assassination was not unusual, given how commonplace and accepted this strategy was throughout the early twentieth century world. Late Qing would-be assassins—whether of the anarchist, revolutionary, or reform persuasion—saw themselves in the mold of chivalrous knights-errant (*youxia* or *xiashi*) of traditional Chinese culture. Disregarding convention and risking their lives, they took justice into their own hands. Young women, in the ancient tradition of female knights-errant (*nüxia*), also were drawn into Kang’s schemes.

During his 1902–3 refuge in India, when Kang sought to avoid potential Qing assassins by living in the high mountain town of Darjeeling, he reread the popular biographical stories written by Han dynasty historian Sima Qian. He observed in Sima Qian’s assassins the devotion and unwavering commitment that he failed to find in his own search for modern-day knights-errant who would risk all to do away with Cixi and her “evil clique.” In his 1902 poem,

106 Literally a sword sharpened in the transverse direction, meaning a skilled and well-equipped soldier.

“Reading the Biographies of Assassins in the *Shiji* [*Records of the Grand Historian*],” Kang wrote:

With wolves reigning at court and foxes ruling in the provinces,
A wrathful tide surges over a China betrayed.
Fuming in his heart, historian Sima Qian regarded Nie Zheng with
reverence;
Chanting poetry, Tao Yuanming articulated his admiration for Jing Ke.
We have none with the daring of long-gone Yao Li,
How can we endure without the slaying shaft used in Bolang?
Woe to the four hundred million Chinese people!
Not one warrior can be found who wields a sharpened sword.¹⁰⁷

Even before Kang was personally threatened with assassination, he considered violent measures to carry out his goals. He sought to forestall Cixi's coup in September 1898 by attempting one of his own. He sent Tan Sitong to recruit General Yuan Shikai to storm the Summer Palace (Yiheyuan) and use force to restore power for the emperor from Cixi and her supporters.¹⁰⁸ During the chaotic preparation for this coup, Kang suggested assassinating both Cixi and Ronglu. Yuan refused to take such direct action and probably revealed Kang's plot to the two intended victims.

After 1898 assassination became an essential part of the Baohuanghui program, asserts Baohuanghui historian Cai Huiyao in a study focusing on Kang's most dedicated potential assassin, Liang Tiejun.¹⁰⁹ Other Baohuanghui leaders also participated in assassination plots, but none so openly as Liang Qichao in 1901–2, when he wrote persuasively about the necessity of destruction and assassination. In the words of cultural commentator Yan Fu, Liang's “flow of

107 Kang Youwei, Darjeeling, 1902, in his “Du *Shiji* Cike Zhuan” 讀史記，刺客傳 [Reading the Biographies of Assassins in the *Records of the Grand Historian*] in *Kang Nanhai Xiansheng Shiji* 康南海先生詩集 [Collected Poems of Mr. Kang Nanhai], juan 1 to 7 (Taipei: Wenhai Chubanshe, 1974), vol. 1, juan 6, 28–29. The poem mentions assassins profiled by Sima Qian 司馬遷 in *Shiji*: Nie Zheng 聶政, Jing Ke 荊軻, and Yao Li 要離. Bolang 博浪 is the site of the failed assassination of the Qin Emperor by Zhang Liang 張良. Translated by Connie Kang, Yang Zheng, and Zhang Tianrun.

108 Young-tsu Wong, *Beyond Confucian China: The Rival Discourses of Kang Youwei and Zhang Binglin* (London and New York: Routledge, 2010), 40.

109 Cai Huiyao 蔡惠堯, “Liang Tiejun Shishi Kao Lun” 梁鐵君史事考論 [An Examination of Historical Events Involving Liang Tiejun] (paper, conference on centennial of Wuxu Bianfa, Nanhai, Guangdong, September 15–17, 1998).



FIGURE 31 Postcard portrait of Empress Dowager Cixi, circa 1903; it once belonged to Kang Tongbi.

words indeed has magical power sufficient to move men. When he advocates assassination, people are suddenly open to assassination. When he advocates destruction, then people suddenly flock to destroy.”¹¹⁰

Liang also used fiction to depict the “new citizen” in his journal, *Xin Xiaoshuo* (New Fiction). The journal’s first five issues, beginning in November 1902, featured a serialized novel most likely written by Kang disciple Luo Xiaogao (Luo Pu, Gaoshan), *Dong’Ou Nühaojie* (Female Heroes of Eastern Europe). The heroine is Russian revolutionary Sophia Perovskaya, known to Qing readers for her role in assassinating Tsar Alexander II in 1881.¹¹¹ In the novel, Perovskaya becomes the imagined muse of a Chinese woman studying in Switzerland who learns of the feminist assassin from her radical Russian classmates. Kang Tongbi and her Chinese Empire Ladies Reform Association members, as well as the revolutionary woman martyr Qiu Jin, executed after an assassination attempt in 1907, all idolized Perovskaya, whom they called “Su Feiya.” The female assassin had become a kind of role model for politically inspired Chinese women of the early twentieth century.

Kang distinguished between the bloodshed and chaos of revolution and the focused, self-contained violence of assassination, which he described as the appropriate tactic to restore the emperor and his reforms:

Today, if we want popular rights and freedom and seek to defend China’s independence, we must get rid of the three great malefactors [*sanda du*]. This can be done easily, and China can be saved. How could we lose the chance? The reason we can’t do it now is that we lack financial resources. It is extremely difficult to mobilize troops from other provinces to enter the capital, so it is better to start from Beijing. For many years I have talked about this, but our fellow reformers were enchanted with military rebellion, so our financial resources were otherwise engaged. When the Empress Dowager came to the Summer Palace not long ago [1902 after

110 Yan Fu Ji 嚴復集 [Collected Works of Yan Fu], vol. 3, 632, “Biduan you you moli, zuyi dongren. Zhu ansha, ze ren yinzhì er xian ran ansha yi; zhu pouhuai, ze ren you qun ran zheng wei pouhuai yi” 筆端又有魔力，足以動人。主暗殺，則人因之而儻然暗殺矣；主破壞，則人又群然爭爲破壞矣 quoted in Cai Huiyao, “Liang Tiejun Shishi Kao Lun.” In *Xinmin Congbao* 新民叢報 and other publications at this time, Liang Qichao advocated “destructivism” or *pohuaizhuyi* 破壞主義 to rid China of the old so it could build the new.

111 Perovskaya was a leader of the Russian revolutionary group, Narodnaya Volya [People’s Will], which made many attempts on the Tsar’s life, finally succeeding with a suicide bombing on March 1881. Perovskaya was the first woman to be hung in Russia for a political crime.

returning to Beijing from Xi'an], it was the best chance for us in the last five years.¹¹²

In this letter, written in Darjeeling and sent by the Canadian leaders to all members in October 1902, Kang tried to inspire his followers to focus their deadly aim on Ronglu, Li Lianying (Cixi's chief eunuch), and Cui Yugui (second chief eunuch): "How is it possible that the three men cannot be removed if several tens of thousands of people are determined to do so?" Kang ended his letter unambiguously: "I am determined to work with you to shoot at this target. Now the goal has been set, and the target has been found, and if we just face the sky and shoot, we will hit the target someday."¹¹³

Kang did not rely on using masses of voluntary assassins to hunt down his targets. In fact, he spent generously on hired guns, writes historian Henry Y. S. Chan: "According to Liang Qichao, Kang had paid tens of thousands of dollars to a certain man named Yingtian, a name also close to Sakurada in Japanese, for the assassination of the Empress Dowager. The latter disappeared after spending the money. Then Kang recruited another man. He wrote to Liang for financial support."¹¹⁴

Liang replied to Kang's request for money in November 1903 from San Francisco, as he was ending his American fund-raising trip, clearly frustrated and exasperated with his mission. Liang was compelled to be "wordless when asked about the use of funds." He told Kang this put him in an awkward position because of "the secret activities that cannot be spoken about, especially to new members in new chapters."¹¹⁵ And in his picturesque way, he disparaged Kang's dependence on paid assassins:

I think those who accept money for heroic deeds cannot be trusted with great responsibilities ... I have not met the assassins we hired, so I cannot judge their qualities. But why have they postponed action for several months and spent money like water? ... I often told Mian [Xu Junmian, Xu Qin] and Yun [Ou Yunqiao, Ou Jujia] that supporting assassins is like

112 Kang Youwei to Li Fuji, Ye En, letter forwarded by Li Fuji and Dong Qiantai in Canada to all members; Kang's letter dated September 23, 1902, forwarding date October 27, 1902; no. 542 in Fang and Cai, 40.

113 Kang Youwei to Li Fuji, Ye En, no. 542 in Fang and Cai, 40–41.

114 Henry Y. S. Chan, "The Reformer as Conspirator: Kang Yu-wei versus the Empress Dowager, 1904–1906," *Chinese Studies in History* 25, no. 4 (1992): 42.

115 Liang Qichao to Kang Youwei, November 18, 1903, in Ding Wenjiang and Zhao Fengtian 丁文江, 趙豐田, ed., *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian* 梁啟超年譜長編 [Uncut Version of Liang Qichao Life Chronicle], Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin Chubanshe, 1983, 332.

whoring. After years of lovers' vows, as soon as the frequenter of brothels is impoverished, the prostitute will board another's ship with her Chinese lute. So, buying another's life with money is the most dangerous and stupid scheme.

Liang had come to believe that Baohuanghui "party bosses" (*dangkui*) should be the ones to carry out assassination and no longer agreed with the plan "to rely on people from lower social classes (*xiadeng shehui zhi ren*), hoping to satisfy their appetites with ten thousand dollars." This was another of Liang's abrupt about-faces. He had advocated successfully in 1900 for spending tens of thousands of dollars to hire Japanese assassins to kill Liu Xuexun, a Qing collaborator tasked with assassinating Kang and Liang in Japan in 1899 and in Hong Kong and Singapore in 1900.¹¹⁶ In fact, Liu was shot in Guangzhou on April 25, 1900, an act described by Yokohama Baohuanghui leader Chen Guoyong as "the first sign of the beginning of our movement for protecting the emperor."¹¹⁷ Although Liu was not killed, Chen thought the attempt was enough to "make the traitors afraid and boost the courage and morale of our people."

As Liang had advocated, Kang changed direction by 1904 and actively sought out assassins among "chivalrous" Baohuanghui members. This section concentrates on those assassins and plots that were centered in North America. Of particular interest are Xue Jinqin, a young woman student in Los Angeles who volunteered to assassinate Cixi, and Kang's obsession with assassinating Sun Yatsen when he was in the United States.

2.1 *Cixi and the Evil Clique*

How can our nation endure [its volatile state], first being driven to the east, then to the west?

Drifting rain through the cold window besieges the hero.

Reciting songs with sorrow, the poet holds fast to her strength,

And wields her sword like a knight-errant (*xiashi*) on the central plains (*zhongyuan*) [China].

XUE JINQIN, United States, unknown date, 1902–11¹¹⁸

116 Ho, "A Biographical Sketch of Liu Xuexun," 142–75, says "Liang Qichao argued that Liu's assassination was a first priority and that the reformers should spare nothing in the attempt."

117 Chen Guoyong to Tan Zhangxiao, no. 513 in Fang and Cai, 277.

118 Sun Yuan 孫元, "Xue Jinqin/Xue Junping 薛錦琴, 薛君平, 1883–September 19, 1960," manuscript provided to Jane Leung Larson by Xue Jinhuan 薛錦寰, Xue Jinqin's seventeenth younger brother. Poem translated by Connie Kang and Yang Zheng.



FIGURE 32 Xue Jinqin, 1902 or earlier, *Nüzi Shijie* (Shanghai), February 1904.

Aspiring Cixi assassin Xue Jinqin saw herself in the heroic terms of a knight-errant, forging ahead with sword in hand and a fate that could end her life. It is likely that Xue came to the United States in 1902 with the ambition to obtain a Western education and return to China to “wield her sword” against the Empress Dowager. Xue imagined joining Cixi’s inner court, which had recently

been exoticized by such Westernized Chinese as “Princess” Der Ling and foreign women, such as Sarah Pike Conger, wife of the American minister to China.¹¹⁹ Xue’s bold nature was evident from an early age, and by the time she landed in San Francisco, she was already called “China’s Joan of Arc.”¹²⁰ As appropriate for an assassin, perhaps, she has been identified with several names—Sit Gum Kum, Sit Ting Kum, Sieh King King, Xue Junping—and even a codename: Wushi (Fifty).

Xue began her brief career at age fourteen as a precocious feminist and political figure. In 1897, she and her older sister, Jinxia, became the first girls to study at the first new-style middle school in Shanghai—Yucai Shushu—which later became Nanyang Middle School.¹²¹ The Xue sisters were the firstborn of twenty children in a progressive, entrepreneurial family from Xiangshan (now Zhuhai) in Guangdong Province.¹²² Their father was a Shanghai comprador, Xue Sanyong, and their uncle, Xue Xianzhou (also known as Xue Songying or Sieh Sung Ying and Hsueh Sung Ying), was largely responsible for introducing cooperative banking to China. Xue Xianzhou was a law graduate from Beiyang University in Tianjin who soon would travel abroad as an economics student in the United States and Germany.

On March 24, 1901, Shanghai’s Zhang Yuan Park, safely located in the International Settlement, was the site of one of China’s first nationalist, antiforeign rallies. The rally’s impetus was a pending treaty between the Qing court and Russia that would reinforce Russia’s continued occupation of Manchuria following the Boxer Uprising and limit Chinese rights over railways and mining in the northeastern provinces.¹²³ Imbued with anti-Qing sentiment, the rally was organized by reformers, including Xue Xianzhou, only five years older

119 After returning to Beijing from Xi’an in 1902, Cixi began to cultivate foreign friends: see Grant Hayter-Menzies, *Imperial Masquerade: The Legend of Princess Der Ling* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2008) and *The Empress and Mrs. Conger: The Uncommon Friendship of Two Women and Two Worlds* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2011).

120 “Leads Her Sisters Out of Bondage,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, November 3, 1902, 7.

121 Yao Minghui 姚明輝, “Shanghai Zaoqide Xinshi Xuetang” 上海早期的新式學堂 [New-Style Academies in Early Shanghai] in Shanghai Shi Wenshiguan Wenshi Ziliao Gongzuo Weiyuanhui 上海市文史館文史資料工作委員會, *Shanghai Difang Shi Ziliao* 上海地方史資料 (4) [Materials on the Local History of Shanghai, vol. 4] (Shanghai: Shanghai Shehui Kexueyuan Chubanshe, 1986), 28. Xue Jinqin and her older sister Jinxia were Xue Sanyong’s two eldest children.

122 Their hometown was Nanxi 南溪, Zhuhai, Guangdong. However, Xue Jinqin was born in Shanghai.

123 Immanuel C. Y. Hsu, “Late Ch’ing Foreign Relations, 1866–1905,” in *The Cambridge History of China*, vol. 1, Late Ch’ing, 1800–1911, ed. John K. Fairbank and Kwang-ching Liu (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 127–29.

than his now-seventeen-year-old niece, Jinqin. Xianzhou taught at Jinqin's old middle school and brought other students and teachers to the rally.¹²⁴ He was among the speakers calling for the court to "resist Russia to save China," as the nationalistic frenzy rose in the audience of nearly one thousand.¹²⁵ Xianzhou later described his own "electrification" when Jinqin suddenly mounted the podium and gave an impassioned and politically sophisticated speech.¹²⁶ *The North China Herald* covered the rally and devoted an article solely to Jinqin, "A Patriotic Girl":

At the mass meeting held by the Chinese gentry, literati and people at Chang Su-ho's Garden the day before yesterday, Miss Hsueh, a patriotic young lady 16 [*sic*] years old ... took part and delivered a very appropriate speech.

Miss Hsueh told the audience that it appeared to her that her countrymen of all classes and of all ranks hopelessly lacked union and patriotism. The officials seemed to care only for their posts and remember only their own families, while the people regard themselves as helpless babies and left everything in the hands of the officials. This was the reason why China was so weak.¹²⁷

Jinqin declared that every citizen in countries like the United States, whether an official or a commoner, "considered his country as his own property and treated every matter in connection with the Government as his own business." Thus, none dare insult countries where the people and their officials were united, whereas China could easily be bullied because few took interest in the impending treaty with Russia.¹²⁸

Two months after that electrifying event, Xue Xianzhou sailed to the United States in the company of Baohuanghui leader Xu Qin and entered the

124 It is not clear where Xue Jinqin was studying at the time. According to "Nü Zhong Zhang Fu" 女中丈夫 [A Woman of Great Capability], *Chung Sai Yat Po* [Zhongxi Ribao], August 31, 1901, 2, she graduated from McTyeire School for Girls in Shanghai and then attended Beiyang Xuetang in Tianjin.

125 Xiong Yuezhi 熊月之, "Shanghai Ju E Yundong Shulun" 上海拒俄運動述論 [Account of the Anti-Russian Movement in Shanghai] in *Shanghai Shi Yanjiu* 上海史研究 [Study of Shanghai History], ed. Tang Zhenchang and Shen Hengchun 唐振常, 沈恒春 (Shanghai: Xuelin Chubanshe, 1988), vol. 2, 239–40.

126 "The Oddest College Fraternity," *San Francisco Call*, October 13, 1901, Sunday magazine, 5.

127 "A Patriotic Girl," *North China Herald*, March 27, 1901, 606.

128 A similar account of Xue Jinqin's speech can be found in "Xue Nüshi Jinqin Yanshuo" 薛女士錦琴演說 [Speech of Woman Student Xue Jinqin], *Zhongwai Ribao*, March 27, 1901, as quoted in Xiong, "Shanghai Ju E Yundong," vol. 2, 247.

University of California, Berkeley to study economics.¹²⁹ Xianzhou joined “the oddest fraternity,” a group of Chinese students rooming together in a house owned by professor of Oriental languages John Fryer. In a feature article about the “fraternity” in the *San Francisco Call*, the author’s attention turned from Xianzhou to his niece and the story of her historic speech: “One of the treasures of Hsueh Sung Ying of the fraternity is the likeness of his seventeen-year-old niece, who is still in China ... For a Chinese woman to address a public meeting was astonishing enough, and the extreme youth of the speaker as well as her unexpected eloquence, made a strong impression.” When the author asked Xianzhou if he were not proud of her, “Mr. Hsueh looked a little dubious ... ‘It was a good speech. But I think she has been somewhat spoiled since by flattery.’”¹³⁰

Xue Jinqin’s speech at the anti-Russia rally was the first record of a Chinese woman speaking in public. She repeated the feat again soon after landing in the United States, on October 23, 1902, as the first Chinese woman to give a lecture in San Francisco’s Chinatown. Several thousand men and women, including Caucasians, crowded into the Red Cassia (Dangui) theater on Washington Street to hear the “daintily clad slip of a girl” and “high priestess of a new Chinese reform movement”—the “Chinese Joan of Arc.”¹³¹ This time, Xue did not fault foreign countries for China’s debilitation or her people’s lack of unity. Instead, she said, China was weak because two hundred million women had no way to play a role in China’s future and “have given up and neglected their responsibilities.”¹³² “The crushing oppression suffered by women” was symbolized best by their bound feet, which hampered their movements and broke their spirits. “As such, the body serves no purpose. And since women have absolutely no learning, how can one expect them to help the country prosper and the family thrive?” Education was the way to give women “complementary footing with men,” and then “it would be impossible ... for our country not to be strong.” This was the very argument made by Liang Qichao in his famous 1897

129 See Chapter 3 for Xu Qin’s difficulty upon landing. Xue Xianzhou arrived in San Francisco on May 31, 1901: “China Sends Her Best Men Here,” *San Francisco Call*, June 1, 1901, 14.

130 “The Oddest College Fraternity,” *San Francisco Call*, October 13, 1901, Sunday magazine, 5.

131 *San Francisco Chronicle*, November 3, 1902; “Nüshi Yanshuo” [A Woman’s Speech], *Chung Sai Yat Po*, November 3, 1902. Xue’s arrival in the United States is documented in S.S. *America Maru* passenger manifest, October 22, 1902, M1414, Roll 7, NA-Washington: “Cabin: Miss Sieh Kin King, 16, student, Landed Collector’s order, Oct. 23, 1902, by Insp’r Sharp, Sec. 6 Certificate.”

132 This and subsequent quotes from “Speech by Ms. Sieh King King” [“Nüshi Yanshuo” 女士演說] translated by Ellen Yeung in *Unbound Voices: A Documentary History of Chinese Women in San Francisco* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 184.

essay, "On Women's Education": "When I seek out the root causes of national weakness, I find that they inevitably lie in women's lack of education."¹³³ As proof, he concluded, the "country with the best women's education is also the strongest," the United States.

Notably, Xue Jinqin also made contact with Kang Tongbi after her own arrival in North America in 1903. With other women in San Francisco, she helped establish a chapter of Tongbi's new Chinese Empire Ladies Reform Association (Baohuangnühui) on August 22, 1903, as recorded in a famous Shanghai publication, *Wanguo Gongbao* (*A Review of the Times*), edited by Methodist missionary in China Young J. Allen.¹³⁴

How and when Xue came to be recruited—or volunteered—as an assassin of Cixi is not known. But it was Liang Qichao himself who likely won Xue's dedication to the Baohuanghui during her sojourn in Yokohama from late July 1901 to October 1902. There, she studied under and was hosted by Liang.¹³⁵ Xue's Japan sojourn coincided with the height of Liang's "destructionist" phase, and her immersion in the intellectual ferment created by Liang's publications and schools must have deepened Xue's preternaturally sophisticated political understanding. Furthermore, Wong Bing Woo (Huang Binghu), a credible source because she and her husband Tom Leung hosted Xue in Los Angeles from 1905 to 1908, recalled that Xue proposed herself as a Cixi assassin to Liang Qichao. As Wong recounted to her daughter, Louise Leung Larson, thirty years later:

... a young woman named Sit Gum Kum [Xue Jinqin] came to live with us at Olive Street ... She had met Liang [Qichao] in Shanghai and had stayed at Liang's home in Japan. Sit Gum Kum had made known to Liang her

133 Liang Qichao, "On Women's Education" [Lun Nüxue 論女學] in *The Birth of Chinese Feminism: Essential Texts in Transnational Theory*, ed. Lydia H. Liu, Rebecca E. Karl, and Dorothy Ko (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), 186–203. This essay was first published in *Shiwu Bao* (*The Chinese Progress*), in two parts: no. 23, March 11, 1897, and no. 25, April 11, 1897.

134 Chen Zhongping, "Kang Tongbi's Pioneering Feminism and the First Transnational Organization of Chinese Feminist Politics, 1903–1905," *Twentieth-Century China* 44, no. 1 (January 2019): 16.

135 "Passengers, Outward," *North China Herald*, July 31, 1901: "Per str. [steamer] Gaelic ... For Yokohama ... Miss Hsiuih Jechin." Thanks to Chi Jeng Chang for finding this evidence. When Xue left Shanghai, she may have intended to come to the United States, for among the others on the *Gaelic* were four male students going to San Francisco who would be part of Xianzhou's "oddest fraternity" at the University of California. "Nü Zhong Zhangfu" 女中丈夫 [A Woman of Great Capability], *Chung Sai Yat Po*, August 31, 1901, 2, attributed a problem with Xue's passport as the reason for not traveling on to the United States.

willingness to take part in the plot [to assassinate Cixi]. It involved her coming to this country to study because it was known that Old Buddha [Cixi] had a liking for returned students. Sit Gum Kum was then to obtain a position in Old Buddha's court and kill her when the opportunity arose. Only a very few of Kang's closest friends knew of her part in this exciting intrigue, which was being planned in our home. Although Sit Gum Kum had come to this country in the same year Mama did, she studied in San Francisco before moving to Los Angeles to stay with us. She was a good companion for Mama—they were about the same age—and she took care of Lillie and me as well as attending Los Angeles High School. The Bo Wong [Baohuanghui] gave her some money, and Papa gave her room and board during the three years she lived with us.¹³⁶

Greeted deferentially by Baohuanghui members at the San Francisco dock in October 1902, Xue's initial impression of the United States was marred by being detained on the ship for questioning along with the other Chinese. "Now we know that foreigners treat us like criminals," Xue said bluntly when interviewed by the San Francisco Baohuanghui newspaper *Wenxing Bao*, then edited by Ou Jujia. She added that Chinese had only themselves to blame for this treatment because they had not shouldered responsibility for their country and were passive victims of foreign aggression.¹³⁷ Xue's letter to a Chinese friend was also published in *Nüxue Bao* (Women's Studies News), so that "*you can learn about how White people treat us East Asian people*" (emphasis as in original). The letter recounted in detail Xue's humiliating rejections before finding a landlord in Oakland who would accept a Chinese renter. Twice, landlords agreed that Xue could move in and later told her to leave, once after arriving with her luggage, the second time a few days after moving in, ostensibly because the other roomers in the house objected to her presence when they found out she was Chinese. "How can I not cry over this experience?" Xue wrote her friend. The reporter concluded, "Miss Xue went abroad to study because of the difficulties our country is facing. Now that the United States is praised as the most

136 Louise Leung Larson, *Sweet Bamboo: A Memoir of a Chinese American Family* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 55–56. Larson's notes of the original interview of her mother on June 14, 1934 read: "Leung Kai Chiu met Sit Gum Kum in Shanghai where Sit Gum Kum was studying. Made speeches about patriotism, et al. Leung and other students talked to her and she said she was willing to kill Old Buddha. Leung told Kang about this [and] it was decided to have her come to U.S. to study then return to China and get a position in court then kill Old Buddha."

137 "Ji Xue Nüshi Er Ze" 記薛女士二則 [Record of Two Points by Miss Xue], *Nüxue Bao*, March 1903, 22–23, reprints an undated article from *Wenxing Bao*.

civilized country in the world, how could we not expect that she be respected and well-treated?"¹³⁸

Xue's undercover calling as a Baohuanghui-supported would-be assassin was well-disguised and eventually superseded by her career as a student. As Tongbi attempted a year later, Xue entered the American education system at the university level and then quickly dropped out to study many years in high schools before she advanced to college. "I shall reside with my uncle [Xue Xianzhou] in Berkeley and attend the university there," she told a newspaper reporter after her San Francisco speech, but even with an interpreter at her side, language problems proved insurmountable, and she transferred to Oakland High School.¹³⁹ However, "idolized in Chinatown" and looked up to by her fellow reformers "as their priestess and prophet," Xue remained in the lime-light, hailed in a full-page *San Francisco Chronicle* profile as surpassing Joan of Arc: "How much broader Sieh King King's purpose! How infinitely more difficult of achievement! How much greater the forces opposing her! How much more profound and wondrous the spirit that animates her—because it is natural, far-seeing, yet grim as death, unyielding as the mountains."¹⁴⁰ Li Yaoxi, a Baohuanghui admirer from Hanford, California, wrote four poems for Xue that were published in *Chung Sai Yat Po* (*Zhongxi Ribao*) in San Francisco: "There never is a lack of erudite people, but this girl is the embodiment of a hero!"¹⁴¹

Quite apart from the hyperbole with which Xue was idolized by the media, her friend Wong Bing Woo agreed that she exuded self-confidence, zeal, and even daring:

Mama described Sit Gum Kum as *di daum* (*dadan*—courageous to the point of boldness). She was not afraid to drive a horse and buggy and took us on many drives to faraway places like Long Beach and Pasadena. Once, Mama said, we toured all of Los Angeles in a horse-drawn bus. I dimly remember her as a short, dark woman, quite thin, who unlike Mama, always wore American clothes, long dresses with high collars and

138 Xue Jinqin to Chen Muyi 陳慕義, "Aihong Jingyan" 哀鴻警雁 [A Mournful and Vigilant Wild Goose], *Nüxue Bao*, February 1903, 43.

139 "A Chinese Reformer," *Daily Colonist* (Victoria), November 7, 1902, 5; "Aihong Jingyan" reports that Xue moved to Oakland to be near her school; "Praise is Given to Fong Sec," *San Francisco Call*, May 19, 1905, 6 (a magazine published by the Chinese Student Alliance of America "contains an article by Miss S. Hsueh of the Oakland High School").

140 Charles K. Moser, "China's Joan of Arc," *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 1, 1903, 2.

141 "Zeng Xue Jinqin Nüshi Youxue: Sishou" 贈薛錦琴女史遊學: 四首 [Ode to Miss Xue Jinqin Studying Abroad: Four Poems], Li Yaoxi 黎耀西, *Chung Sai Yat Po*, November 12, 1902, Supplement, 2.

mutton-leg sleeves. She was determined to learn English and hired a private tutor as well as attending school.¹⁴²

Probably the first person to take serious measure of Xue's potential as an assassin was the militant and sometimes revolutionary Ou Jujia. Ou and Xue were both in San Francisco from 1902 to 1903 when Ou was editor of *Wenxing Bao* and probably again in 1904 until January 1905, when Ou was organizing Western Military Academy (Gancheng Xuexiao) branches. Kang entrusted Ou with evaluating Baohuanghui members who stepped forward as assassins of Sun Yatsen. With Ou's endorsement, Kang staunchly backed Xue: "When Yunqiao [Ou Jujia] first recommended her to us, most people voiced objections, as this was an important matter. I didn't believe them. Although there was opposition to her, I desired to keep this person and thought it was a good thing."¹⁴³ Few Baohuanghui members knew of Xue's secret mission, and Kang was furious in August 1905 when daughter Tongbi apparently mentioned it to her fiancé Luo Chang: "As to the matter of Xue [Jinqin] and Yunqiao [Ou Jujia], [*Zhongguo Weixin Bao* editor Tang] Mingsan did not say anything, so you must have been the one to reveal it ... It makes me fear you, and I dare not tell you things ..."¹⁴⁴

Kang, like so many others, was entranced by Xue. They personally met in October 1905 in Portland, Oregon, and must have discussed Xue's assassination mission to Beijing.¹⁴⁵ Upon parting, Kang gave Xue an unusually generous \$100 gift. Kang described Xue as having "a solitary and aloof nature, similar to plum blossoms under the cold moon leaving behind a delicate aroma in reply to the icy snow. I loved her very much and regretted that I could not have her around."¹⁴⁶ Kang's poetic allusion to Xue's fortitude and hidden qualities was matched by

142 Larson, *Sweet Bamboo*, 56.

143 Tan Zhangxiao to Tang Mingsan 湯銘三, letter in reply to President [Kang Youwei]'s June 5, 1908, letter of refutation, Tan Zhangxiao, *Zhengxinlu* 徵信錄 [Report on Financial Management] (San Francisco: Guohun Ribao, January 7, 1909) in Fang and Cai, 252. Tom Leung quoted his teacher in this letter to Tang.

144 Kang Youwei to Kang Tongbi 康同壁, August 18, 1905, no. 康-27, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection. From another letter in this collection from Tang Mingsan to Kang Tongbi, November 16, 1904, no. B-20, we know that Xue and Tongbi corresponded.

145 *Zhengxinlu* in Fang and Cai, 240–41, records transactions by Tom Leung to support Wushi 五十 [Xue Jinqin] from October 1905 to January 1907. Kang must have assessed Xue as willing to carry out her mission in October 1905, because of his anger in February 1906 when he learned that Xue had backed out; *Zhengxinlu* in Fang and Cai, 246–47.

146 *Zhengxinlu* in Fang and Cai, 252.

the alias chosen for her, Wushi.¹⁴⁷ The word for “fifty,” Wushi probably evokes the Tang poem, “The Gorgeous Zither,” whose title 錦瑟 (*jinse* or zither) is a homographic pun for Jinqin, 錦琴. The poem contains this stanza: “For no reason, the gorgeous zither has fifty strings. Each string, each fret, recalls a youthful year.”¹⁴⁸

After meeting Kang, Xue moved from San Francisco to Tom Leung’s home in Los Angeles. She stayed with the Toms for three years, studying at Los Angeles High School and caring for Tom’s two young daughters. In September 1905, Xue’s imminent arrival in Los Angeles was announced in the *Los Angeles Times*: “Within the next month one of the most talented of Chinese women in America will visit Los Angeles at the invitation of the Chinese Empire Reform Association, and will lecture to Chinese women exclusively in the new hall on Appalblasa Street.”¹⁴⁹ In the same hall where the Western Military Academy cadets were to drill and the Baohuanghui was to sponsor lectures and entertainment, “the Hon. Miss Sit Ting Kum, lecturer and reformer of note, will address the Los Angeles Chinese women and endeavor to stir them up to emulate their white-skinned sisters of clubdom.”

Rousing speeches aside, Kang was anxious for Xue to return to China and launch what he knew would be a long process of infiltrating the Empress Dowager’s court, a process already begun by the much more experienced Liang Tiejun. Kang and Liang studied together under Confucian master Zhu Ciqi in 1878, and Liang later became a skilled martial artist and successful businessman. Throughout Kang’s career, Liang worked closely with him, not as a disciple but as an equal. One of Liang’s early exploits on behalf of his old friend was a secret trip to Beijing in April 1900 to retrieve the bones of Kang’s martyred brother Guangren for burial in Macau, the home in exile of Guangren’s mother and widow. In 1904 Liang, under the alias Wu Daoming, was planning to set up a photography studio in Beijing, knowing the fascination of both the emperor and Cixi for photography. Liang intended to befriend palace eunuchs and ingratiate himself with the imperial concubines to gain intelligence, and,

147 “Wushi” 五十 appears in the publication, *Zhengxinlu*, used by Kang Youwei and Tan Zhangxiao (Tom Leung) in communications that took place between themselves as well as Tang Mingsan.

148 Chen Xuezhong, “Presentation on Xue Jinqin and Lin Duo.” Chen notes that Baohuanghui nicknames were chosen carefully, often in reference to a story. The author of “The Gorgeous Zither” [“Jinse” 錦瑟] is Li Shangyin 李商隱; see A Cheng, ed., Yang Xianyi and Dai Naidie [Gladys Yang], trans., *Tang Shi* 唐詩 (*Tang Poems*) (Beijing: Waiwen Chubanshe, 2001), 278–79.

149 “Almond Eyes Read Future,” *Los Angeles Times*, September 29, 1905, part 2, 1.

ultimately, entrée to the Forbidden City and Summer Palace, where he could assassinate Cixi. At great expense to the Baohuanghui, his plot had taken more than two years, and still Liang procrastinated, making it ever more likely his plans would be exposed.¹⁵⁰ Perhaps Kang saw Xue as being able to assist Liang in his plot, but he also was unhappy that the Baohuanghui had given funds to her since 1902 and felt that she should make good on her promise to go to Beijing.¹⁵¹ As Tom Leung explained to Tang Mingsan in 1908:

The reason we supported Wushi financially was that we wanted her to get into Beijing as an assassin. The Teacher urged her to go to Beijing, and she said, "My studies are not finished, and I have an old mother to attend to. Therefore I'm not able to go now." I told the Teacher the truth. The Teacher instructed me to stop financial support.¹⁵²

Larson heard the same story from her mother:

When she first came to live with us, Mama said Sit Gum Kum often declared, "Old Buddha must be killed," and that she was willing to do it. Then gradually she began to change and started to voice fears for her family if she killed Old Buddha. "I don't care if I get killed," she said, "I expect that. But I don't want to endanger my family."¹⁵³

Perhaps Wong Bing Woo was right in her judgment that "Sit Gum Kum had never intended to kill Old Buddha, but had merely offered to do it in order to be sent to this country to study, which was her primary goal."¹⁵⁴ Surely, Xue's muted ambitions played out in the course she set for herself when she left Los Angeles in 1908. Her path was decidedly nonheroic and unexpectedly traditional, even if modestly pioneering in her career choices. From the yearbooks of DePauw

150 Cai, "Liang Tiejun Shishi Kao Lun."

151 An earlier sign of recrimination from and against Xue comes from Tang Mingsan in a letter to Kang Tongbi: "Jinqin and her brother [Jinbiao 薛錦標, who came to San Francisco to study in 1904] do not have tuition, and they blame our association. How could they be supported by spacious mansions with ten thousand rooms and not be willing to work for us? It is laughable and hateful." Tang Mingsan to Kang Tongbi, November 16, 1904, no. B-20, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection. From other letters in this collection, it is apparent that Baohuanghui payment for students' educational expenses ebbed and flowed with Baohuanghui income.

152 Tan Zhangxiao to Tang Mingsan, letter in reply to President [Kang Youwei]'s June 5, 1908, letter of refutation.

153 Larson, *Sweet Bamboo*, 56.

154 Larson, *Sweet Bamboo*, 56.

University in Greencastle, Indiana, it is learned that Jean Ching Hsueh, “the little Chinese girl” from Shanghai, now twenty-six, became the university’s first Chinese woman student in 1909 and graduated with a chemistry degree in 1913.¹⁵⁵ She then studied early childhood education at the University of Chicago and returned to Shanghai in 1914, twelve years after her much-heralded arrival in the United States. In 1915, at age thirty-two, she married another Baohuanghui member, Lin Duo (Lin Tianmu), who had studied metallurgy at the University of Wisconsin and economics at the University of Chicago with Baohuanghui financial assistance.¹⁵⁶ Xue opened a school for young children in her home in Shanghai and taught English. After Lin Duo died in 1946, Xue moved to Hong Kong to direct the savings department at Guohua Bank.¹⁵⁷

After Kang learned from Tom Leung that Xue was unwilling to carry out her assassination mission because of filial responsibilities, he ordered no more payments be made to her as of February 1906, only a few short months after she arrived in Los Angeles. Both Kang and Tom were conflicted about this mandate, and Tom wrote that:

... later I requested to continue the support because I felt that Wushi had extraordinary character and conduct. I still remember I said Heaven would take care of this old woman [Xue’s mother], and our party did not have to worry about her. In his reply, the Teacher said, “This old woman was old and seriously ill; it seemed that Heaven was going to take care of her and we need not worry. Our party is in a difficult position financially but since I loved her, let’s forget previous discussions and continue supporting that person. You [Zhangxiao] provided clear water daily and an antique vase to sustain this plum blossom. I would like to support the flower without asking anything from it.”¹⁵⁸

155 Thanks to Chi Jeng Chang for uncovering Xue Jinqin’s educational career. Xue’s photo is in *Mirage Yearbook*, DePauw University, 1913, 35.

156 Records exist only for 1908 and show direct transfers of more than \$400 to Lin Duo from the Chicago restaurant King Joy Lo in 1908; *Zhengxinlu* in Fang and Cai, 269–74. Xue Jinqin in a tribute to her husband after his death states that Lin was a few months short of graduation from the University of Chicago, when he returned to China, inspired by the new republic. Sun Yuan, “Xue Jinqin/Xue Junping, 1883–September 19, 1960,” manuscript. In Shanghai, Lin Duo became a Fudan University economics professor and businessman.

157 With a career in banking, Xue followed in the footsteps of her uncle Xue Xianzhou, founder of China’s credit cooperative movement. According to her seventeenth younger brother, Xue Jinhuan, her bank salary supported five Xue households. She died at age seventy-seven in 1960. Sun Yuan, “Xue Jinqin/Xue Junping, 1883–September 19, 1960,” manuscript.

158 Tan Zhangxiao, *Zhengxinlu* in Fang and Cai, 252.

With what appeared to be Kang's assent, Tom went on paying Xue's educational expenses from Baohuanghui funds for another year and, beginning in September 1907, supported her himself. During the venomous conflict that emerged between Kang and Tom over the Chicago restaurant King Joy Lo in 1908–9, Kang first accused Tom of “robbery” for using association funds to pay Xue to “teach his family English” but later relented and accepted the expense as legitimate.¹⁵⁹ Xue may have felt some residue of guilt for defying Kang's order, because she did not go to Indiana for college until after Cixi died in November 1908.¹⁶⁰

Although bitterly disappointed in Xue Jinqin, Kang suffered greater personal loss in August 1906 when his favored “knight-errant,” Liang Tiejun, was fatally poisoned in prison after being arrested by the Qing authorities. Liang's plot was exposed by an informer, either someone involved in the various business fronts Liang had established to allow him access into the imperial circles and raise funds for his plans, or a disaffected Baohuanghui member turned revolutionary.¹⁶¹ It was certain that Liang's assassination plans were maturing when Kang met Xue Jinqin in Portland in October 1905. At that time, Liang was asking for more funds and qualified helpers. Liang and his plot had suffered a grievous loss before when his compatriot, Luo Pushi, was arrested and executed in July 1905. Luo had gone to Tokyo and acquired two valuable skills for assassination—manufacturing explosives and practicing hypnotism (*cuimianshu*). His arrest meant that Luo had not yet tested his explosives or transported them to China.¹⁶² Kang undoubtedly wanted to hasten Xue's move to Beijing to supplement Liang's slowly progressing assassination plans.

Liang finally moved the Guangming Photography Studio from Tianjin to Beijing in February 1906 and began to make friends with the palace eunuchs who gossiped with him about the daily life and comings and goings of Guangxu and Cixi. While waiting for his chance, Liang developed other businesses in China, perhaps in conjunction with the Baohuanghui Commercial Corporation,

159 Tan Zhangxiao, *Zhengxinlu* in Fang and Cai, 246–47, 252.

160 Wong Bing Woo [Huang Binghu], oral history recorded by Louise Leung Larson, June 16, 1934. “She stayed at 903 [S. Olive, Tom Leung's address in Los Angeles] for 3 years—went to Chicago after Old Buddha died.”

161 Cai Huiyao, “Liang Tiejun Shishi Kao Lun,” believes it was Zhu Qi 朱淇, an early member of the revolutionary Xingzhonghui 興中會 who later turned to Kang Youwei but after 1904 became dissatisfied with the Baohuanghui; Liang Tiejun had contacted Zhu in Beijing and may have attempted to involve Zhu in his plot.

162 Ding and Zhao, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 343. Luo Pushi's 羅璞士 execution was covered up by Qing authorities as well as by the Baohuanghui; this is seen in letters from Liang Qichao to Jiang Guanyun 蔣觀雲.

which Kang had once hoped Liang would head.¹⁶³ Liang found entrée into the Summer Palace when a foreign circus performed there—possibly Spampanni's Circus, which was touring China in spring 1906. Photographs taken by the emperor and princes of this event were developed by Liang's studio, allowing Liang's team to inspect the site where they knew that the Empress Dowager would be watching a play on her birthday, November 25, 1906.¹⁶⁴ On that day, they hoped to detonate bombs previously stashed under the stage.¹⁶⁵ Before such a dangerous move could be made, the plot was exposed and on August 8, Liang Tiejun was arrested and sent to a jail in Tianjin under the control of Yuan Shikai.¹⁶⁶ Ever the knight-errant, it was said that Liang took poison voluntarily when he was given the choice of that or being beheaded.

However, like Xue Jinqin, Liang Tiejun may have been backing away from assassination. On August 1, 1906, he wrote Kang: "I don't have to be Luo Binwang. I'd rather be Di Renjie. So, don't mention the previous business again. I only hope to succeed, and why do you care which method we use?"¹⁶⁷ Both Luo and Di were Tang dynasty notables, Luo, a rebel who led an uprising against Empress Wu Zetian, and Di, an honored prime minister under Empress Wu. Cai Huiyao concludes that Liang was tactfully retreating from his assassination plot around the same time that Yuan Shikai was sending troops into Beijing to search for partisans like Liang. As further evidence of Liang's change to a more accommodative strategy with the Cixi regime, the day before he was arrested, Liang wrote Baohuanghui leader Xu Qin: "From now on, don't make any unplanned moves." Xu described Liang's words to Tom Leung: "He [Liang] also said that if we did so [carry out assassination plots], none of the influential men in Beijing would fear the Elder anymore. If we act peacefully, the prospect of reestablishing our party [in the capital city] will be at hand." Xu concluded, "Today we can do nothing but comply with the last words of Mr. Liang, that is,

163 Chan, "The Reformer as Conspirator," 44, states that Liang Tiejun established a trading company in Wuhan in 1905 and also wanted to form rickshaw and steamship companies with Baohuanghui funds. In describing plans for the Commercial Corporation, Kang wrote: "I would like to recommend Liang Tiejun as the general manager to decide all business matters ... If we have him, I'm sure all the Hong Kong business affairs will prosper." Kang to Ye En, et al., no. 563 in Fang and Cai, 50–51.

164 Cixi 慈禧 was born on the tenth day of the tenth lunar month in 1835.

165 Chan, "The Reformer as Conspirator," 45. The bombs may never have been manufactured, after the arrest and execution of Luo Pushi in July 1905.

166 Xu Qin to Tan Zhangxiao, October 17, 1906, nos. 168 and 167 in Fang and Cai, 138.

167 Cai Huiyao, "Liang Tiejun Shishi Kao Lun."

to concentrate on establishing businesses and industries on one hand and on sending people to study abroad on the other.”¹⁶⁸

Kang heard the devastating news while on his beloved Swedish Hideaway Island (Korsholmen). “So sad he was close to death,” Kang wrote an elegy of one hundred verses for Liang Tiejun to express “a hundred years of sorrow for a friend in death” and “a thousand years of pain for a national martyr.”¹⁶⁹

Liang Tiejun’s death marked the end of Kang’s efforts to assassinate Cixi and coincided with the declaration on September 1, 1906, of Cixi’s imperial edict to establish a constitutional government. Xue Jinqin faded into obscurity, no longer giving news-making speeches and rarely being referred to in Baohuanghui correspondence, as she pursued personal rather than political goals. And, in North America, Kang was fixated on another threat to his life and his cause, Sun Yatsen, and he directed his most trusted disciples in the United States to target Sun for assassination.

2.2 *A More Immediate Threat*

If we don’t put this man out of action, he will surely make a nuisance ... I am willing to spend all my assets in order to get rid of him.

KANG YOUWEI TO KANG TONGBI, October 20, 1905¹⁷⁰

The South Windsor letters of Kang Tongbi lay bare for the first time Baohuanghui plans to assassinate Sun Yatsen on American soil. Only an intimate like Kang Tongbi could have been party to such open exchanges with Kang, Ou Jujia, Tang Mingsan, and others about the threat Sun posed to Kang and the Baohuanghui and the necessity of removing him through assassination. Before this correspondence was discovered in 2013, scholars had no knowledge of these serious assassination discussions. In the letters, the writers almost always refer to Sun as “Bandit Sun” (Sun Zei) or “Xingzhe” (Abbot’s Servant), a nickname for Sun denoting him as the audacious monkey Sun Wukong in *Xiyou Ji* (Journey to the West).¹⁷¹ Only rarely do writers use the respectful “Sun Wen” when writing about Sun Yatsen in letters to Tongbi.

168 Xu Qin to Tan Zhangxiao, October 17, 1906, nos. 168 and 167 in Fang and Cai, 138.

169 Cai Huiyao, “Liang Tiejun Shishi Kao Lun.”

170 Kang Youwei to Kang Tongbi, October 20, 1905, no. 康-30, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

171 Xingzhe 行者 is the name given Sun Wukong by the monk Tang Sanzang (Xuanzang); it also is a Buddhist term meaning disciple or pilgrim. Anthony C. Yu, trans. and ed., *The Journey to the West*, rev. ed., vol. 1 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), x.

Much of the impetus for assassination came from Kang. He deeply feared being in the United States at the same time as Sun and yet longed to visit in 1904 so he could attend the St. Louis World's Fair. Kang was well aware that Sun Yatsen was touring the country that year, attempting to win the hearts, minds, and funds of politicized Chinese Americans. Sun was openly reaching out to Baohuanghui members to boost his small group of Chinese American revolutionary sympathizers, who by themselves were too few to form an effective organization. In San Francisco, Sun formed strategic alliances with the influential Reverend Ng Poon Chew (Wu Panzhao), leader of Chinese Christians and editor of *Chung Sai Yat Po*, which until 1904 was more partial to the reformers than the revolutionaries, and the powerful Zhigongtang that previously had ties to the Baohuanghui and was now run by Zhigongtang leader Wong Sam Duck (Huang Sande).¹⁷²

From April 6 to December 24, 1904, Sun visited cities and towns with Baohuanghui chapters and met a number of Baohuanghui leaders.¹⁷³ Huang Rongye described Sun's December visit to Hartford, when "he talked about nothing but attacking Mr. Kang and dissolving our party ... It is a great comfort to see how our comrades were infuriated by his speech."¹⁷⁴ However, some members found Sun engaging and direct, among them Yung Wing, who in later years would join Sun and Homer Lea in the revolutionary cause. Huang reported to Tongbi: "[Yung Wing] praised Bandit Sun for his intelligence and bravery and how he defies difficulties and devotes himself to the cause." Tang Mingsan in New York noted that several New York Baohuanghui members had become

172 Other names for the Zhigongtang [Chee Kong Tong] 致公堂 are Hongmen 洪門, Chinese Freemasons, and Triads. L. Eve Armentrout Ma, *Revolutionaries, Monarchists, and Chinatowns: Chinese Politics in the Americas and the 1911 Revolution* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1990), 95–98. Zhigongtang-Baohuanghui interconnections are explored in Chen, *Transpacific Reform and Revolution*, 39, 126–130. See Chapter 11 for the revolutionary party's successful diversion of the Zhigongtang membership and fundraising resources, which were used to compete with the Baohuanghui, 1909 to 1911.

173 Sun arrived at San Francisco onboard the S.S. *Korea* from Honolulu on April 6, 1904. Lists of Chinese Passenger Arrivals at San Francisco, California, M1414, and Lists of Chinese Applying for Admission to the United States through the Port of San Francisco, California, M1476, both RG 85, NA-Washington; also see <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/6336563>, accessed May 30, 2024. Huang Sande 黃三德, *Hongmen Geming Shi* 洪門革命史 [Revolutionary History of the Triads], China, 1936: 11. Coincidentally World's Fair Commissioner Wong Yap was on the same ship as Sun. See more in chapters 2 and 11 about Sun's courting of Baohuanghui members.

174 Huang Rongye 黃榮業 to Kang Tongbi, December 7, 1904, no. S-C32, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

friendly with Sun: “Sun is very eloquent and persuasive, and I worry about it a lot ... Xiansheng (Kang) must be careful when he travels to the United States.”¹⁷⁵

Sun left New York for London on December 24, 1904.¹⁷⁶ Notwithstanding good attendance at his speeches and Baohuanghui alarm about his stealth and appeal, Sun departed from the United States almost destitute from his feeble fundraising and disheartened by “the ‘closed minds’ of the *huaqiao*,” who preferred the reformers.¹⁷⁷ Wong Sam Duck accompanied Sun on his 1904 travels and reported later that Sun was thwarted not only by the reformers but his own lack of “learning or substance,” causing audiences to leave in the middle of his speeches. When Wong bade farewell to the discouraged Sun in New York, he suggested that Sun recruit learned and eloquent revolutionary speakers in Japan or Hong Kong who could communicate more convincingly to overseas Chinese. He also cautioned Sun to temper himself for the long battle ahead with the Baohuanghui, but, “Sun Wen, seeking speedy success ... and jealous of Kang and Liang, wanted to put a quick end to Baohuanghui obstruction.”¹⁷⁸

As it happened, Kang and Sun never were in the United States at the same time. Sun’s plans were unpredictable and secretive compared to Kang’s travels, and in 1905, Baohuanghui leaders believed rumors of his imminent return. Tang Mingsan (Tang Zhao, Tong Chew) and Liang Wenqing in New York were unable to track Sun’s presence accurately and even thought that he was in their city in January 1905: “Bandit Sun’s whereabouts are hard to trace. Word has spread that he went to London or Australia, but he is actually in New York.”¹⁷⁹ In fact, Sun and his Tongmenghui (Revolutionary Alliance) were recruiting Chinese students in Europe and Japan in 1905, and it was not until late 1909 that he returned to the United States.¹⁸⁰

Sun’s 1904 tour had a more powerful effect than Wong Sam Duck thought—at least on the Baohuanghui leadership’s sense of safety and morale. By late December, Kang had concluded that “our party lacks both good strategy and

175 Tang Mingsan to Kang Tongbi, December 5, 1904, no. B-21, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

176 British immigration records show that Sun arrived in London January 5, 1905 on the S.S. *Menominee* from New York City (Ancestry.com, UK, Incoming Passenger Lists, 1878–1960, search for Sun Yat Sew and Menominee) and “Ocean Steamers,” *San Francisco Call*, January 6, 1905, 11; S.S. *Menominee* was scheduled to leave New York on December 24, “Shipping and Foreign Mails,” *New York Times*, December 22, 1904, 11.

177 Schiffrin, *Sun Yat-sen*, 333.

178 Huang, *Hongmen Geming Shi*, 12–13.

179 Liang Wenqing to Kang Tongbi, January 4, 1905, no. S-C54, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

180 Chen, *Transpacific Reform and Revolution*, 118.

power, and that's why [Sun's] party has expanded and flourished, and he can ride roughshod over us."¹⁸¹ A news story from Chicago on December 29, 1904, spread the rumor that the Qing government had sent assassins to the United States to kill Kang Tongbi; Baohuanghui members immediately suspected it was fabricated by the "opposition party" and warned Tongbi not to meet with any Chinese person who came to see her unless she knew them.¹⁸² A real-life revolutionary challenger to Tongbi, Wu Fengming (Wu Foong Ming), was following the East Coast Chinatown lecture circuit in January and February 1905. She was the daughter of an English mother and Chinese father who had been executed by the Qing as a revolutionary leader.¹⁸³ Avenging her father and promoting revolution, "Bandit Wu" attacked the Baohuanghui from Baltimore to Boston, spreading "rumors and slander." Tang Mingsan told Kang Tongbi, "This woman is as wicked as a wolf. She will travel to all cities in the future. If she goes to Hartford she may ask to see you."¹⁸⁴ Baohuanghui leaders such as Liang Wenchang of Washington, DC, were accused by the sponsor of Wu's talks, the Zhigongtang, of harassing Wu during her lecture and dissuading people from attending.¹⁸⁵ The Baltimore Baohuanghui even hired an attorney to file a lawsuit against Wu for slander. Strong-arm tactics by the Baohuanghui were likely an over-reaction, and, when she was in New York City, Tang Mingsan wrote, "We shouldn't have feared Bandit Wu. This low-class person isn't worth our fighting and getting hurt."¹⁸⁶ Of a more lasting impact on Baohuanghui prestige, Kang's son-in-law Mai Zhonghua (Mai Manxuan) reported from Macau that revolutionary and reform newspapers around the world were "hurling abuse at each other, and all matters, big and small, within the party are being displayed," fanning the flames of contention between the two groups and seeding doubt in the

181 Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, December 22, 1904, no. 356 in Fang and Cai, 56.

182 Tong Chinn 童頃 to Kang Tongbi, in care of the Hartford Baohuanghui chapter, telegram, December 29, 1904, no. E-45; Huang Rongye to Kang Tongbi, December 29, 1904, no. 雜-7-2; Chen Yuesong 陳岳崧 to Kang Tongbi, December 29, 1904, no. B-31; Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection. Also see "Threaten Life of Khang Tung Pek," *Hartford Courant*, January 25, 1905, 5.

183 Huang Rongye to Kang Tongbi, January 23, 1905, no. S-C14, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

184 Tang Mingsan to Kang Tongbi, January 22, 1905, no. S-C57, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

185 Huang Rongye to Kang Tongbi, January 23, 1905, no. S-C14, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

186 Tang Mingsan to Kang Tongbi, February 10, 1905, no. S-C19, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

minds of Baohuanghui members.¹⁸⁷ In San Francisco, said Liang Wenqing, “not a day goes by that there aren’t words of denunciation” against the Baohuanghui in the two revolutionary newspapers, *Datong Bao* and *Chung Sai Yat Po*.¹⁸⁸

The first hint found of Baohuanghui assassination plans for Sun is in a letter from Ou Jujia to Kang Tongbi in July 1904.¹⁸⁹ While Ou had clashed with Kang Youwei in the past, Kang had forgiven him and dispatched Ou on a nationwide tour in the summer and fall of 1904 to establish branches of the Western Military Academy.¹⁹⁰ To assist Ou in communicating with the American military instructors recruited by the academy’s chief instructor Homer Lea, he traveled with a translator and secretary, Chen Yuesong (Chan Yok Soon). Chen was a college student in Chicago, and Kang appreciated his language abilities enough to bring him to the West Coast in spring 1905 to serve as a Chinese language secretary and later sent him to Hartford to assist Yung Wing in translating Kang’s biography (*Wo Zhuan*) into English.

It is clear from Ou’s letter that Kang had asked him to investigate the individuals who had come forward as prospective assassins of Sun Yatsen. Earlier, as noted above, Ou had recommended Xue Jinqin to Kang as worthy of cultivating as an assassin of Cixi. Ou wrote to Tongbi: “The decision to remove the Bandit [Sun] is certain, but it is hard to find the right person. Chen Yuesong has volunteered to do it, but when we traveled together, I found that he is just an inexperienced scholar.” Ou reported that “someone in New York also wishes to serve” and that he would soon meet this person to find out “whether he can do it.” It could be that the New York person is the unnamed assassin referred to below in a letter from Tang Mingsan. In any case, the desire to assassinate Sun animated Kang and his followers, as the competition between the reformers and revolutionaries heated up in 1904 and 1905.

Even though Ou Jujia told Kang that Chen Yuesong was unsuitable for the task of assassinating Sun, Chen relished the prospect. Confiding in Kang Tongbi in January 1905, Chen wrote that if “Bandit Sun had come to this city [Chicago],

187 Mai Zhonghua 麥仲華 to Kang Youwei, May 16, 1905, no. 康-2, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

188 Liang Wenqing to Kang Tongbi, January 22, 1905, no. S-C15, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

189 Ou Jujia [Ou Yunqiao 歐雲樵] to Kang Tongbi, July 29, 1904, no. S-C33, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

190 See Western Military Academy, this chapter. The American Homer Lea structured the academy’s nationwide instructional program and organized branches in California, but Kang deputized Ou Jujia rather than Lea to visit cities where the Baohuanghui had chapters to set up academy branches.

I would have bought a gun and found an opportunity to eliminate him.”¹⁹¹ Chen told Tongbi he had made up his mind. “I will first try to kill him secretly. If that won’t work, I will follow him to other places and kill him openly. If I am arrested by the American police, I will change my name and claim that the Qing government ordered me to do it, and I could still get the reward. I want to do this for my beloved country, for the great cause, and for my 400 million fellow countrymen.” Chen claimed to have written Kang an express letter with his proposal, telling Tongbi, “I would immediately take action if I could get a reply from him.” He concluded dramatically: “My days are numbered. I only hope that you, my respected lady, will take good care of yourself for our country’s future. Either my life or my death will be shared with you for our country.” Later in 1905, Kang would disregard Ou’s poor assessment of Chen and suggest he be made a member of a team assassination effort.

Kang’s fear of assassination by Sun or his allies was shared (and perhaps aggravated) by Baohuanghui leaders in the United States, such as Tang Mingsan, who believed Kang was in danger and should be prepared for any contingency because “America is a free nation, and preventive methods may not suffice.”¹⁹² Preventive measures were on Kang’s mind as he prepared to cross the border in 1905. Writing from Canada in December 1904, Kang made an unusual request of Tom Leung in Los Angeles:

In the United States, there is the opposition party [*fanduidang*—the revolutionaries]. We can take President McKinley as an example [assassinated in public at the Pan-American Exposition in 1901]. Many of our comrades are worried. I heard that in San Francisco there are catapults or slingshots and bronze armor, as well as other protective wear made of hair and paper. Please purchase them on my behalf. Be sure to try them out with a gun before you buy. Keep them at your place and keep this a secret. Wait

191 Chen Yuesong to Kang Tongbi, January 7, 1905, no. B-32, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection. In this letter and an earlier one (December 29, 1904, no. B-31), Chen also followed up on the threat to Tongbi that had been reported in a Chicago newspaper and caused Chen’s colleague Tong Chinn to send Tongbi this telegram: “News had widespread in Here that secret service men have discovered [*sic*] for assassinate you” (Tong Chinn to Kang Tongbi, December 29, 1904, Chicago, no. E-45, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection). Chen described the article as “fabricated news” about Tongbi meant to “blacken the mission of our party,” and said he wrote a letter to the newspaper editor to correct the record about Tongbi (including the mention of a reward by the Qing government for Tongbi’s capture), the Baohuanghui, and the Western Military Academy.

192 Tang Mingsan to Kang Tongbi, January [25 or later], 1905, no. S-C58, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

until I notify you that I've arrived in America and then mail them to me. And please use the hair and paper [from the armor] to make a red wool winter cowl-like hat [or hood] of red wool. This message is confidential. Please do this immediately and keep it a secret.¹⁹³

Lightweight armor made of paper and hair was used in ancient China, so Kang must be suggesting Tom procure it in San Francisco's well-supplied Chinatown. Tom apparently was unable or unwilling to carry out this mission for Kang, but Kang had given the same task to Li Meijin (Lee Maginn, Lee Mee Ginn) in Portland and to Kang Tongbi.¹⁹⁴ Writing Tongbi, Kang declared his offensive as well as defensive aims:

It is most important to do away with Sun; I am waiting for this, and then I can enter the United States.

Another thing—if the United States has catapults, slingshots, steel armor, and protective clothing made of hair and paper, please purchase them for me secretly. Test them first before purchasing. Make a hood [or cowl-like winter hat] (*fengmao*) according to this model, and cut a pattern [to use] when you purchase the armor. [Li] Fuji has entrusted the purchasing of the protective clothing to [Li] Meijin, and I have asked [Tan] Zhangxiao to do it. If you know someone trustworthy, you can ask him to do it also—do it quickly so I can enter the United States.¹⁹⁵

Kang Tongbi apparently took on the not-so-simple task of arranging for the manufacture of traditional Chinese bullet-proof clothing, perhaps in New York City's Chinatown. On December 31, 1904, Kang wrote Tongbi to “send a letter to monitor the progress in making the armor and cowl.”¹⁹⁶ And, Kang admitted, “Whether or not to go to San Francisco is giving me a lot of trouble.” No photographs of Kang in 1905 show evidence of body armor or protective head gear, nor do is it known if he or any of his escorts were armed with slingshots or catapults in case of attack. Kang never dared venture to San Francisco, where Sun's supporters were most numerous, in spite of its importance as the lead

193 Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, December 6, 1904, no. 131 in Fang and Cai, 54.

194 Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, December 22, 1904, no. 356 in Fang and Cai, 56.

195 Kang Youwei to Kang Tongbi, December 1904, no. S-C46, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

196 Kang Youwei to Kang Tongbi, December 1904, no. S-C48, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

Baohuanghui chapter in the United States. In February 1905, he told Tongbi that he had bought \$10,000 worth of life insurance.¹⁹⁷

Kang's anxiety about Sun was justified, if a claim made long after the fact can be believed. Zhigongtang leader Wong Sam Duck made the revelation in his 1936 memoirs of the Hongmen (an earlier name for Zhigongtang). Sun wrote Wong in 1905, when Kang was nearby in Los Angeles, asking him to plot Kang's murder, a letter that Wong said was consumed in the fire following the 1906 San Francisco earthquake. Wong justified his defiance of Sun by saying that he could not carry out such a dishonorable act as assassinating Kang, whom he still respected and believed had the same patriotic goal as Sun, the well-being of China. Although Wong said that he agreed with the revolutionaries' method of overthrowing the Qing, he felt that as a Hongmen leader, it was unjust to use an underhanded tactic to defeat able and virtuous men like Kang and Liang rather than take the honorable stance of fighting them face to face. Wong implies that he never responded to Sun's letter or revealed it to anyone, instead "dismissing it with a laugh."¹⁹⁸

If Wong Sam Duck had known of Kang's dishonorable intentions toward Sun Yatsen, he might have followed through with Sun's suggestion. While there is no evidence that such intentions evolved into an actionable plot, from December 1904 to February 1905, the assassination chatter within Baohuanghui ranks would have alarmed Sun and his allies. New York leaders Tang Mingsan and Liang Wenqing, along with Kang Tongbi, appear to be the key figures communicating with Kang about assassination. Worried about how well they would perform, Kang wrote Tongbi in early December asking her to consult with Tang about the "secret plot (*mitu*) against Xingzhe (Sun)."¹⁹⁹ On January 4, before Kang entered the United States, Liang wrote to Tongbi, indicating that an assassin had been found but was requiring payment. And, although Kang and others had grave doubts about the loyalty of Yung Wing to the reform cause, Liang suggests that his opinion on Sun's assassination be solicited:

Bandit Sun's whereabouts are hard to trace ... The Elder sent us a letter instructing us to assassinate him. I have discussed it secretly with Liang

197 Kang Youwei to Kang Tongbi, February 1905, no. S-C25, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

198 Huang, *Hongmen Geming Shi*, 13–15. Thanks to Connie Kang for translation of Chapter 9, "Thoughts of Assassination Driven by Jealousy and Envy," about this episode. Huang dates Sun's letter to June 1905 but also says it was when Kang was recuperating in Los Angeles, which was from March 15 to May 8, 1905.

199 Kang Youwei to Kang Tongbi, December 5, 1904, no. S-C39, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

Qiming.²⁰⁰ Liang said that the assassin asked some wealthy people to guarantee a cash reward so the secret plot can proceed. What does Yung think of this aim? Sun has approached him and persuaded him to cooperate. Please tell me what to do.²⁰¹

Thoughts of assassinating Sun seemed to fade temporarily after Kang arrived in the United States in February 1905 and had to juggle far more pressing demands such as the Western Military Academy and the anti-American boycott. When the pace of Kang's American tour slowed eight months later and he began to plan his next travels, his frantic worries came to the fore again. Kang wrote Tongbi on October 20, 1905, from Boise, Idaho, after hearing from Tang Mingsan that Sun was returning to the United States soon: "Considering that American laws are very lenient, it is a good opportunity to assassinate him when he comes to the United States ... This man is extremely dangerous and cruel. His visit to New York again must be targeted toward me."²⁰² Kang had planned to return to New York to set up the Huayi (Wah Yick) Bank after his trip west, but concluded that it would be too risky if Sun was also there and decided to go directly to Mexico.²⁰³ Although he was fearful for his own safety, Kang showed no qualms in inciting assassination not only with willing volunteers such as Chen Yuesong, but incredibly enough, with Yung Wing (whom Kang had admitted was "addicted to revolution") and even Tongbi herself.²⁰⁴ Improvising strategy as he writes from Boise, Kang freely expresses frustration with his motley crew of potential assassins and finally places Tongbi in control:

If we don't put this man out of action, he will surely make a nuisance. I have already given the idea to Ming [Tang Mingsan] and Yu [probably Kang Jiyu or Kang Youpei, Kang's cousin], and also asked [Chen] Yuesong to assist. The two, Ming and Yu, are both cowardly and skeptical.

200 Email from Chi Jeng Chang, June 28, 2023: Liang Qiming 梁啓明 is a cousin of Liang Qichao and in the United States.

201 Liang Wenqing to Kang Tongbi, January 4, 1905, no. S-C54, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

202 Kang Youwei to Kang Tongbi, October 20, 1905, no. 康-30, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

203 The decision to skip New York was a sudden one; the day before, Kang had informed Tongbi that he would return to New York in the next few days. Kang Youwei to Kang Tongbi, October 19, 1905, no. 康-24, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

204 Kang Youwei to Kang Tongbi, February 1905 from Portland, Oregon [no date], no. S-C24, "[Yung] has an addiction to revolution. As soon as he met them, he was affected."

Besides they cannot fulfill the task by themselves. I am afraid they may spoil the plan.

... Luckily Wenchang [possibly Liang Wenchang of Washington, DC] has financial power and can be relied on. (The forty members of the Baltimore Gansibu [Dare-to-Die Corps] are all his close friends.)²⁰⁵

You [Tongbi] and [Chen] Yuesong are close. Or you can tell Chunfu [Yung Wing] to secretly invite the Bandit to some place where you all wait in ambush, and then you can kill him. You can encourage Yue [Yuesong] and Wen [Wenchang] and plot with them.

Whether or not Kang dared imagine the outcome of this plot, especially where Yung Wing and Tongbi were involved, his letter shows a striking personal antipathy to Sun that overcomes not only any sense of moral scruples but his responsibility for the lives of long-time disciples, a respected elder, and his dearest child. There was no mistaking Kang's intentions. He further told Tongbi, "If he is not in New York, I want you to follow him and bear in mind that your goal is to murder him." Of even greater consequence, Kang had heard from Liang Qichao that Sun had mobilized Chinese students in Japan to assassinate the emperor. "This [assassinating Sun] is the only way our emperor and I will feel safe. If Ming [Tang Mingsan] and Yu [Kang Jiyu, that is, Kang Youpei] have doubts, you can make decisions without letting them know. Wait for my further instructions." Kang said he would summon Tang Mingsan and Kang Youpei and possibly Tongbi to St. Louis to tell them how to proceed.

Kang makes clear in his October 20, 1905, letter that he was prepared to forsake his reform mission to bring about Sun's demise. He baldly stated, "I would even stop him at the cost of my own scheme," and "I am willing to spend all my assets in order to get rid of him." This is the last letter from Kang to Tongbi in the South Windsor Collection, so it can only be surmised that Kang must have lost nerve or awakened from his assassination fantasy. As Kang told Tongbi he would do, he went to St. Louis on November 6, but later letters from Kang to

205 This is the first mention of a Baohuanghui dare-to-die corps 敢死部 in a letter, but Kang's 1905 Baohuanghui charter includes a Ganbu 敢部 [Bravery Division], "for those who are willing to join the rolls and wear the Ganbu medal [*pai*] 牌 in order that the multitudes will all respect them. Those who die for the association and the nation will be generously compensated." "Ganbu" [Bravery Division], section 17, "Baohuanghui Gongyi Gaiding Xinzhang" 保皇會公議改定新章 [New Baohuanghui Charter Finalized after Public Discussion], July 30, 1905, Ethnic Studies Library, University of California at Berkeley, Chinese Empire Reform Association, AR-2, AAS ARC 2000/78, hereafter AAS ARC 2000/78.

other correspondents do not mention meeting to plot Sun's assassination with Tongbi or other members. Of course, by then, it may have finally been confirmed that Sun was not coming to the United States anytime soon.

Kang reached Torreón, Mexico, on December 2, 1905, and launched into the most active entrepreneurial phase of his life. Ironically, Baohuanghui businesses and the resulting disputes, distractions, and corruption would weaken the association far more than challenges from revolutionary rivals. And, if Kang had succeeded in eliminating Sun Yatsen, that could have hastened the loss of support among his overseas Chinese followers and made Sun a martyr to the revolutionary cause. Such self-inflicted character assassination would likely have condemned Kang to unforgivable ignominy in Chinese history. As it was, in 1909, Kang's reputation would be greatly damaged by the suspicion he was behind the assassination of Guangxi official Liu Shiji (Low Sz Ki), whom Kang had accused of deceitfully promoting stock shares for the Zhenhua Shiye Gongsi (Zhenhua Company, see Chapters 9 and 11) under the aegis of the Xianzhenghui while asserting the company's independence from Kang's control.²⁰⁶

3 The Western Military Academy

When the nation doesn't prepare itself [for war], then the people must prepare themselves. On hearing that the Western Military Academy (Gancheng Xuexiao) had opened, I jumped to my feet with the greatest of joy ... Although the school is small now, it will grow little by little, and some day China will be able to depend on it to avoid the danger of fighting the enemy with bare hands. (Kang Youwei, January 28, 1905)²⁰⁷

Kang Youwei wrote this tribute upon receiving a photograph of Western Military Academy (the name used as registered in California) cadets drilling in Los Angeles. He heralded the school as a first step in the long process of China's military modernization: "We'll gradually achieve results through blood and iron [a reference to Bismarck's 1862 speech on military preparedness], assert

²⁰⁶ See Chapter 11 for details on the May 1909 Liu Shiji assassination.

²⁰⁷ Kang Youwei, "Zawen: Luosheng bu Gancheng Xuexiao Bingcao tu ti ci" 雜文：羅生埠干城學校兵操圖題辭 [Essay: Encouraging Remarks on the Picture of Soldiers Drilling at the Gancheng School in Los Angeles], January 28, 1905 [February 16, 1905 handwritten next to article, perhaps indicating publication date] in "Gancheng Xuexiao Shi" 干城學校史 [History of the Gancheng Schools], Chinese Empire Reform Association, AR-3, AAS ARC 2000/78.

authority over our territory, and stand up in the world for the people of our divine emperor. Will all the above start from the school today?"

3.1 *The Academy from Kang's Perspective*

Much of our previous understanding of the Western Military Academy has been based on American sources, which inflate the role of American advisors in both the academy's initiation and its sustenance. Even more confusingly, these sources often used the term Chinese Imperial Reform Army or Chinese Imperial Army to indicate the academy. Key Americans associated with the academy were given to self-promotion and deliberate distortion. Even more fundamentally, their conceptions of the purpose of the academy differed substantially from those of Kang and the Baohuanghui. American journalists in search of dramatic news could not penetrate the fabulation of Homer Lea, who took all credit for the schools, and, along with his nemesis Richard Falkenberg, often portrayed the academy as an army and themselves as commander(s) in chief. These stories and embroidered descriptions of Western Military Academy practices were also perpetuated by other American associates with faded memories and partial knowledge.²⁰⁸ The Chinese perspective has been largely missing, so this account focuses on Chinese-language Baohuanghui sources to provide a clearer and less sensational view of the Western Military Academy.²⁰⁹

"The military! China lacks it," declared Kang in January 1905. "That is why she was invaded and insulted day after day ... The military! The military! Having it would be like having shields (*gandun*) and city ramparts (*chengbi*) when we're at war."²¹⁰ Kang's tribute breaks down the meaning of *gancheng*, the Chinese name for the Western Military Academy, into its component images, which together mean "defending army." The classical term comes from a poem in the

208 The earliest American source on the Western Military Academy was written by playwright Carl C. Glick, *Double Ten, Captain O'Banion's Story of the Chinese Revolution* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1945), but it is plagued with historical inaccuracies and lacks documentation and often even plausibility. It is based on Ansel O'Banion's forty-year-old recollections and suppositions concerning his collaboration with Homer Lea and, as embellished by Glick, is a broad mixture of fact and fancy.

209 Two major books on Homer Lea are Lawrence M. Kaplan, *Homer Lea: American Soldier of Fortune* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 2010) and Eugene Anschel, *Homer Lea, Sun Yat-sen, and the Chinese Revolution* (New York: Praeger, 1984). While valuable for their skeptical stance on Lea and extensive accounting of historical details found in American source materials, both lack many Chinese sources and contain important historical and analytical errors. Lea's "army" was known as the Chinese Imperial Army (a confusing name since it implies association with the prevailing Qing leadership), and Falkenberg's "army" had the similar and more logical name: Chinese Imperial Reform Army.

210 Kang, "Zawen: Luosheng bu Gancheng Xuexiao."

Shijing Zhounan (Odes of Zhou and the South from the Book of Songs) and is used in an idiom, *guozhigancheng* or “heroic defenders of the nation.”²¹¹

The Western Military Academy was a natural outgrowth of Kang’s oft-expressed view that above all else China should strengthen its military to survive in a brutally competitive world. Kang’s travels in Europe, Southeast Asia, and India, where he observed German military and technological might and the vast extent of the British Empire thanks to its navy, reinforced this belief. It was no abstract goal, because he was one of the first modern Chinese to promote universal conscription and in 1908 said that “the responsibility to be soldiers has to be shared by all citizens.”²¹² Kang saw the academy’s network as a meaningful if preliminary effort at citizen military preparedness. The academy also fit into Kang’s current preoccupation with China’s need to master science and industry, the know-how he termed “material civilization,” to ensure survival in the modern world. Kang’s prescription for gaining this mastery began with the long process of training young Chinese in the Western knowledge and skills that would enable China to adopt and even improve on the tools of Western progress. In his seminal 1905 essay on this topic, Kang proudly mentioned that his countrymen recently had opened the Western Military Academy.²¹³ In this essay, Kang extolled the discipline he observed in certain European nations, especially Germany. The Western Military Academy served this broader character-building function by instilling self-discipline and teamwork in its students, which Kang saw as a modernizing influence. Finally, Kang had long promoted vigorous physical exercise and in the 1890s required students at his Guangzhou academy to take physical

211 The poem, “Rabbit Nets” [兔置, Tuju], can be found in *The Book of Songs: The Ancient Chinese Classic of Poetry*, Arthur Waley and Joseph R. Allen, trans. (New York: Grove Press, 1996), 9.

212 “Jiu qingyuan yue: ju guomin wei bing ye” 九請願曰舉國民爲兵也 [ninth point: mobilize citizens as soldiers] in “Er bai bu Qiaomin Qingyuan shu” 二百埠僑民請願書 [Petition from Two Hundred Overseas Chinese Cities] (*Zhongguo Weixin Bao*: July 28, 1908), 40, Chinese Empire Reform Association, AR-6, AAS ARC 2000/78. Kang cites a historical precedent for universal military service in China: “In recent history, although [conscription] has been abandoned, in the Han, Tang and Song it was a commonplace that could not be avoided.”

213 Kang Youwei, “Wuzhi Jiuguo Lun,” 物質救國論 [Essay on National Salvation through Material Civilization] in *Kang Youwei Quanji* 康有爲全集 [Collected Works of Kang Youwei], ed. Jiang Yihua and Zhang Hualong 姜義華, 張榮華 (Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin Daxue Chubanshe, 2007), vol. 8, 67; also see Young-Tsu Wong, “The Search for Material Civilization: Kang Youwei’s Journey to the West,” *Taiwan Journal of East Asian Studies* (Taipei) 5, no. 1 (June 2008): 33–59. See Chapter 5 for additional analysis of this essay.

education—including military drilling.²¹⁴ Even Kang's pleasure at seeing Western Military Academy cadets in military uniforms and cutting or hiding their queues was linked to his hopes for China joining the modern world of nations.²¹⁵

Kang did not delude himself that the Western Military Academy could alone fill the need for a strong Chinese military force to defend the country from foreign imperialism. And, neither privately nor publicly, whether in Chinese or in English translations of his words, did Kang ever state that the academy was in reality a reform army training to overthrow Cixi. After the great debacle at Datong and Hankou in 1900, Kang had rejected military means to force his doctrines on China, although as explored above, he generously supported daring volunteers for the secretive mission of assassination of the Empress Dowager and other key figures who supported her.

We can better grasp how Kang and the Baohuanghui conceptualized the link between the Western Military Academy and the larger goal of imbuing martial values in the Chinese national consciousness by examining the two military sections in the July 1905 Baohuanghui Gongyi Gaiding Xinzhang (New Baohuanghui Constitution Finalized after Public Discussion), adopted at a plenary meeting of chapters in New York City. Kang wrote this highly detailed governing document, which superseded all earlier charters.

Discussion of the Military Affairs Division (Shangwubu) in the new constitution was devoted entirely to the Western Military Academy and has an unusual specificity compared to most other divisions described in the charter. It began:

The weakness of China is caused by the lack of soldiers. Germany and Japan use the military to be strong, and all their citizens consider it their responsibility to be soldiers. Our country must learn from them. Today with a population of several tens of millions in the province of Guangdong, we have only one military academy with only one hundred students—how can we direct our military affairs (*zhibing*)? Now in the

214 Lo, *K'ang Yu-wei*, 3, says Wanmucaotang “differed from other schools of the time by its stress on inculcating courage, self-confidence, and manliness of character and—what was remarkable for the time—by its attention to physical culture, which included calisthenics and military drill.”

215 Kang was a pioneer in promoting Western-style uniforms and cutting queues for military men as an avenue to modernity for China, styles popularized after the Qing New Policies began to be implemented in 1901. Antonia Finnane, *Changing Clothes in China: Fashion, History, Nation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 70–73.

United States we have set up the Western Military Academy (Gancheng Xuexiao) in various cities.²¹⁶

Although the 1905 Baohuanghui charter was adopted at a challenging time for the military academy, when it was under investigation at the order of New York Governor Frank Wayland Higgins and other American officials, Kang, undaunted, boasted about the twenty schools opened thus far: “We have engaged (*yanqing*) American instructors (*Meiguo jiaoxi*) to train us how to wear a sword (*peijian*) and carry a gun.” He confidently suggested that chapters that had not set up schools should do so with funding from local Baohuanghui businessmen and asserted that “all the ambitious young men should attend the schools ... We hope that in the future they will be able to resist foreign aggression (*yuwu*) on behalf of their country.” The charter was explicit about the expectations and possible rewards for the students:

Those who join must complete the course and not quit halfway through. Those who have demerits will have them recorded or reported as light punishment. Among those who have rendered great service or made great progress after three years, the headquarters and the principals of the branch schools will select the promising ones for enrollment in American military schools (*Meiguo bingxue*) to prepare them to be officers (*jiangshi*). The headquarters will fund their admission, and every business member should also do his utmost to help this. The details of the procedure should be decided upon by each city itself.

The three-year program and promise to fund the most promising graduates to matriculate at American military schools, along with other requirements mentioned in the Shangwubu section of the 1905 charter, were reiterated in other Chinese-language Western Military Academy documents. Kang also proposed that the Baohuanghui someday open a professional military academy of its own in the United States. “Now we have more than twenty [Gancheng] schools, and the number is increasing daily. However, unless there is systematic army training (*lujunxue*) for men of high ambition (*zhishi*), the great goals cannot be achieved ... Here in the United States, if we open such a school and fill it with Gancheng students, it would be the easiest way to achieve success and grow large. Everyone should pay attention to this.” It is also notable that the charter

216 “Shangwubu” 尙武部 [Military Affairs Division], section 20, “Baohuanghui Gongyi Gaiding Xinzhang,” July 30, 1905, UCB, AASC, AR-2.

designates that special managers (*ganshiyuan*) be appointed to take charge of all matters relating to military study and the Gancheng schools.²¹⁷

In contrast, the 1905 charter describes in emotionally charged tones the Bravery Division (Ganbu) and the importance of militarizing Chinese cultural values:

China has been weak for a long time, and we must strengthen ourselves (*zhiqiang*) ... Today the reason that all countries respect Japan is because of its military brilliance (*wuming*) rather than its cultural achievements (*wenming*). Recently, those who mistakenly place their trust in culture are actually hindering self-strengthening. It is of no use in saving the nation and is actually extremely harmful ... Giving in helplessly when someone spits in your face is no different from being tied up awaiting death. That was the old custom, which gave rise to the biggest malady of being weak.

Today we should glorify and esteem valor, strengthen ourselves and deem militarism as our creed. Thus, we have specially set up the Bravery Division for those who are willing to join the rolls and wear the Ganbu medal (*pai*) in order that the multitudes will all respect them. Those who die for the association and the nation will be generously compensated.²¹⁸

How many members joined the elite Bravery Division cadre, whether Ganbu medals were ever awarded, and how the Bravery Division related to the Shangwubu of the Western Military Academy is not known. The only evidence that the Bravery Division went beyond an aspirational statement was Kang's dramatic letter to daughter Tongbi in October 1905 (details above) that mentioned "the forty members of Baltimore Gansibu (Dare-to-die Corps)" as an asset for carrying out Sun's assassination.²¹⁹ Baltimore had an especially active Baohuanghui chapter and a Western Military Academy branch. The ideal Ganbu member could have been modeled on the daring and multitalented Liang Tiejun, who was then being supported by the Baohuanghui to ingratiate himself with Cixi's court so that he could find an opportunity to assassinate the

217 "Zhiyuan" 職員 [Functionaries], section 14, "Baohuanghui Gongyi Gaiding Xinzhang," July 1905, UCB, AASC, AR-2.

218 "Ganbu" [Bravery Division], "Baohuanghui Gongyi Gaiding Xinzhang," July 1905, UCB, AASC, AR-2. Ganbu is Section 17 and Shangwubu Section 20 in the charter. Ganbu might also be translated as Division of Daring and is written with a different *gan* 敢 than the *gan* 干 of Gancheng.

219 Kang Youwei to Kang Tongbi, October 20, 1905, no. 康-30, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

Empress Dowager.²²⁰ There also was precedent for compensation to families of Baohuanghui members who sacrificed their lives on behalf of the organization. Perhaps Kang formalized such compensation in this document because of his earlier frustration when raising voluntary donations for the families of those executed after the Qinwang failure and the few survivors who escaped abroad.

There is no doubt that Kang considered the Western Military Academy a great accomplishment for the Baohuanghui and a hopeful sign that China might someday have a true citizen army that could overwhelm any enemy. And, Baohuanghui members agreed, leading to the rapid growth of the academy in the United States.

3.2 *Development of the Western Military Academy*

The Los Angeles cadets marched in the January 2, 1905, Tournament of Roses in Pasadena, the academy's dramatic public debut orchestrated by its chief instructor, Homer Lea. "Yon the flash of bayonets and rhythmic tread of disciplined heels, whence march Capt. Obanion's natty company of fifty-eight Americanized Chinese, legged and musketed and grim."²²¹ This good publicity in the *Los Angeles Times* set straight what Lea had complained was "a policy on the part of some of the newspapers in this city to ridicule the whole thing down here, simply because these men are Chinamen and are being drilled in Chinatown."²²² When the cadets saw the admiration and outright astonishment at their skill on the faces of a usually indifferent or even hostile American audience, their pride and self-confidence were shared throughout the Chinese community.

The Western Military Academy network spread to all regions of the United States and possibly Canada. Young Chinese men were eager to enter the academy, even though they had to buy their own uniforms and weapons, pay tuition (albeit a token fifty cents or one dollar a month), and devote many hours a week to drills and classes. Physical training for a patriotic cause, learning how to handle modern weapons, being part of a close-knit team, and working with the American military instructors—all had great appeal to the mostly illiterate men whose days were spent toiling in laundries, restaurants, sweat shops, farms, or doing other physical labor. Most important for the reform cause, "the

220 Cai, "Liang Tiejun Shishi Kao Lun." See above for Liang's involvement in assassination attempts.

221 "The Tournament of Roses, Flags and Flowers, Throngs and Glory," *Los Angeles Times*, January 3, 1905, Section 2, 1.

222 "Not a Queue in the Line," *Los Angeles Times*, December 31, 1904. Lea also is quoted as saying that "it is a fact that Americans generally look either with disfavor or amusement on Chinamen."

academies ... introduced and integrated Chinese nationalism and youth activism among young migrants,” who “self-identified as ‘Chinese’ before most of their compatriots in China,” according to Belinda Huang.²²³ Member donations to support the schools also flowed freely, as evidenced by lists of each donor’s name and contribution in New York’s *Zhongguo Weixin Bao*. For example, both St. Louis and Chicago Baohuanghui chapters opened their schools with donations of nearly \$300 each in August and September, 1904, and New York City claimed to have raised \$1,000 before it opened in new quarters in early 1905.²²⁴

The origins of the Western Military Academy can be traced to Liang Qichao’s visit to Los Angeles in October 1903, when Homer Lea enhanced his martial aura with the reformers by meeting Liang at the train station surrounded by several high-ranking American military officers. He then joined Liang in the first of sixteen carriages escorted by a National Guard Signal Corps mounted detail and military band.²²⁵ Liang was greatly impressed with “Major General” Lea, whom he described in his trip journal as “enthusiastic about China” and the nephew of General Robert E. Lee (a frequently repeated falsehood that Lea never corrected).²²⁶ Lea presided over Liang’s welcoming banquet and was the only Caucasian present when Liang was hosted at the home of his former classmate Tom Leung.²²⁷ The plan for the Western Military Academy must have been discussed because Liang wrote the 1903 Los Angeles Baohuanghui charter and included the goal: “Cultivate the military qualifications of citizens in order to defend the country when it is in trouble.”²²⁸

223 Belinda Huang, “Teaching Chineseness in the Trans-Pacific Society: Overseas Chinese Education in Canada and the United States, 1900–1919,” Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton University, 2009, 115.

224 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 244–45; New York donations noted in “Gancheng Xuexiao Kaixue” 干城學校開學 [Gancheng School Begins Term], handwritten heading “Xuesheng caoyan xx” 學生操演 [Students drill—two illegible characters], handwritten date, February 26, 1905, in “Gancheng Xuexiao Shi.”

225 “Leong Kai Cheu Formally Welcomed by Municipal Officials and Citizens,” *Los Angeles Herald*, October 23, 1903.

226 Liang Qichao 梁啟超, *Xin Dalu Youji* 新大陸遊記 in *Zouxiang Shijie Congshu* 走向世界叢書 [Series of Books on World Travels], ed. Zhong Shuhe 鍾叔河 (Changsha: Yuelu Shushe, 1985), 567.

227 “Occident and Orient Feast,” *Los Angeles Times*, October 23, 1903, 7; “Real Chinese Feast, All Native Viands,” *Los Angeles Times*, October 25, 1903, 8.

228 Liang Qichao, “Luosheng Jili Baohuanghui zhangcheng” 羅生技利保皇會章程 [Charter of Los Angeles Baohuanghui], November 1903, no. 111 in Fang and Cai, 384–88.



FIGURE 33 Homer Lea in uniform with gold badge, circa 1904.

Prior to the formal opening of the academy in spring 1904, Lea was presented with a gold medal saluting his loyalty and honesty (*zhongcheng*) on January 2 at the well-publicized dedication ceremony for the new Los Angeles Baohuanghui headquarters.²²⁹ It was incorporated in the State of California on November 28

²²⁹ "Pong Wong Wuey has 1200 Members," *Los Angeles Herald*, January 4, 1904; "To Revivify the Old China," *Los Angeles Times*, January 3, 1904, 5.

as the Western Military Academy, with a Board of Directors entirely made up of Americans, but not Homer Lea.²³⁰ Later, in a poem Kang wrote for Tom Leung, he privately credited Tom as responsible for founding the academy—"Tom, my disciple ... you are the originator (*chuang zu*) of the Gancheng Schools."²³¹ As the American Baohuanghui leader closest to Kang, Tom would have had the authority to organize the academy and then cede control over most of its operations, including curriculum and recruiting instructors, to Homer Lea. In any case, few Chinese had the appropriate knowledge or experience to establish a military school. The idea for the school probably came from Lea. His biographer, Lawrence M. Kaplan, states that Lea first conceived of a plan in 1902 to train "a cadre of reform army soldiers in America that could be utilized to help lead the imperial Chinese army after the emperor was restored to power" and, over time, convinced the Los Angeles chapter to put it into effect.²³² Whether local Baohuanghui leaders understood or even agreed with Lea's true intentions is unknown, but the Western Military Academy was inseparable from the Baohuanghui. Lea could not have trained the Chinese cadets, much less communicated with them or overseen the academy's expansion across North America, without Baohuanghui organizational structure or support. Homer Lea's leadership and charisma were critical to making the academy a success while it lasted, but his overweening ambition to command a reform army in China led to the academy's premature downfall. Kang welcomed the idea of a military academy in North America and overlooked Lea's transparent desire to use the academy for his own purposes.

The diary of U.S. Military Academy (West Point) dropout George West records that on April 30, 1904, Lea installed him as captain and drill instructor and National Guard Captain George C. Prescott Jr., as first lieutenant and assistant instructor at a ceremony in the new Baohuanghui hall in Los Angeles.

230 Western Military Academy Articles of Incorporation, Office of the Secretary of State, State of California, November 28, 1904, California State Archives, Sacramento. The incorporators were Roger Sherman Page, A. C. Way (Tom Leung's banker), G. G. Johnson (notary public for the 1903 Los Angeles chapter incorporation), John Alton, and Newman Essick, most of whom attended the welcoming banquet for Kang Youwei: "Kowtow to Kang Yu Wei, Chinatown's Biggest Banquet to Noted Visitor," *Los Angeles Times*, March 19, 1905, 16.

231 Kang Youwei, "Zhuisi Luosheng Xihu Guzhai" 追思羅生西湖故宅 [Recalling my Former Home in Westlake [Park], Los Angeles], circa September 18–24, 1905, poem, no. 350 in Fang and Cai, 89. Tom Leung recommended Lea to Kang and other Baohuanghui leaders in early 1900, so perhaps Kang is referring to Tom's role in initially involving Lea in the Baohuanghui. See Chen Guoyong to Tan Zhangxiao, May 19, 1900, no. 513 in Fang and Cai, 276, and Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, June 27, 1900, no. 505 in Fang and Cai, 27.

232 Kaplan, *Homer Lea*, 88–89.

The following week, West noted that the academy opened to students.²³³ West and Prescott were among the first American instructors Lea recruited, many of them members of National Guard units or veterans of the Spanish-American War in the Philippines. Lea found his most enthusiastic captain and drill instructor in retired U.S. Army first sergeant Ansel O'Banion, whose stories told thirty years later created much of the myth of Homer Lea and the Chinese Imperial Army.²³⁴

With the founding of the academy's Los Angeles headquarters, Baohuanghui chapters rapidly opened academy branches through the summer and fall of 1904. Kang entrusted not Lea but Ou Jujia, a disciple and former *Wenxing Bao* newspaper editor in San Francisco, to travel across the United States and organize the academy network. Ou's credibility as a promoter of military preparedness and calisthenics came from his fame as the author of the militant essay, *Xin Guangdong* (New Guangdong), and because he founded a



FIGURE 34 Company A, First Infantry (California), Western Military Academy, Los Angeles, led by Captain Ansel O'Banion, standing at left of cadets.

233 Excerpts from George W. West's diary in Eline West to Lee Shippey, April 4, 1945, A. E. O'Banion, 1945–1950 Correspondence, Box 1, Carl Glick Papers, University of Iowa Libraries, Iowa City, IA, as quoted in Kaplan, *Homer Lea*, 77.

234 Glick, *Double Ten*.

Western-style school in Kowloon that taught calisthenics.²³⁵ Kang's choice of Ou and not Lea for peripatetic organizer is one of many examples of Kang's top-down executive-style of leadership, appointing, transferring, and dismissing Baohuanghui leaders at will. Lea probably recruited the American instructors for these branches, a duty made explicit in the 1905 Baohuanghui charter, but he, like the instructors, was seen by Kang as subordinate to his direction. Ou performed his duties well. *Zhongguo Weixin Bao* carried a report from the Chicago branch, including a list of donors to the school:

Our association has responsibility that we cannot shirk for a new people and a new country (*xinmin xinguo*), so following in the footsteps of Los Angeles and St. Louis, we have set up a Gancheng Xuexiao to stir up young people's spirits and cultivate people's military skills. Instructors have arrived, and students already number several thousand. We hope that comrades in other chapters who are angry about the plight of the country will start a school and join with us in saving the situation.²³⁶

Ou might have met Homer Lea in San Francisco in 1902, but it is confirmed that in 1903 both men were members of the greeting party for Liang Qichao in Los Angeles.²³⁷ Ou had returned to Asia in November 1903 to take over editorship of *Nanyang Zonghui Bao* (*The Union Times*) in Singapore, but Kang ordered his return to San Francisco in 1904, charging him with a new mission to oversee

235 Ou gave more than US\$2,000 to a Kowloon charitable organization to establish the Yuying Xuexiao 育英學校, which taught calisthenics, math, English, and Chinese, using profits from his essay, "Xin Guangdong" 新廣東 [New Guangdong]—see Liu Xueqin 劉雪琴, "Ou Jujia Sixiang Yanbian Yanjiu—Jian yu Kang Youwei ji Kangmen Dizi Deng Ren Xiang Bijiao" 歐榘甲思想演變研究—兼與康有為及康門弟子等人相比較 [A Study on the Development of Ou Jujia's Reform Ideology—A Comparison with Kang Youwei and His Students] (M.A. thesis, South China Normal University, 2009), 22. In 1906, Ou founded and became principal of the now over one-hundred-year-old school Guangzu Zhongxue 光祖中學 in Shenzhen—Luo Gengxiao, Liu Zhongguo, and Yu Jujie, "*Jiaguo zhi Guang*": *Ou Jujia yu Guangzu Zhongxue* "家國之光"—歐榘甲與光祖中學 ["Light of the Country": Ou Jujia and Guangzu Middle School] (Guangzhou: Huacheng Chubanshe, 2015).

236 "Shijiagao laiham" 市加高來函 [Letter from Chicago], *Zhongguo Weixin Bao* no. 27, September 15, 1904, Chinese Empire Reform Association, AR-44, AAS ARC 2000/78. The number of students presumably refers to all the Gancheng branches.

237 "Chinese Held Spellbound," *Los Angeles Times*, October 23, 1903, 1. "Ow Ku Gap" in this article is Ou Jujia. He sat on the speakers' platform with other dignitaries welcoming Liang Qichao; Lea was in the audience.



FIGURE 35 Western Military Academy: Top: Company A, Fourth Infantry (Pacific Northwest), Portland, Oregon, circa 1905. Center: Two Western Military Academy officers, St. Louis, Missouri: left: Captain Fred C. Husman, Company A, Second Infantry (Midwest), and right: unidentified officer, circa 1905. Bottom: Two unidentified Western Military Academy cadets, circa 1905.

the expansion of the Western Military Academy in the United States.²³⁸ As of July 1904, Ou in Chicago wrote Kang Tongbi that “Our association already has seven or eight schools for military drills (*bingcao*). Based on the progress we’ve made, it won’t be very difficult to carry this out in other chapters.”²³⁹ In 1905, after Ou had returned to Asia, his secretary told the *Los Angeles Times* that he had traveled with Ou, “who came from China to organize these military schools under orders from His Excellency Kang Yu Wei. I traveled all over the United States with him. We organized companies in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Chicago, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, New York, Baltimore and elsewhere.”²⁴⁰

As many as thirty-five cities in North America established branches of the Western Military Academy, enrolling several thousand students. Lea indeed organized the academy like an army with regiments and companies, mandating uniforms that, apart from gilt “dragon” side buttons on the dress uniform caps, were standard U.S. Army apparel to be ordered from the Pettibone Manufacturing Company in Cincinnati or San Francisco.²⁴¹ According to Kaplan, there were four Infantry Regiments: the First in California, the Second in the Midwest, the Third on the East Coast, and the Fourth in the Pacific Northwest.²⁴² No Chinese sources mention regiments or companies. Following is a regional grouping of cities with Western Military Academy branches, whose existence is verified by at least one source:

- California: Bakersfield, Fresno, Hanford, Los Angeles, Oakland, Oxnard, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Francisco, Santa Barbara, Ventura, and (Visalia?)²⁴³

²³⁸ Ou left San Francisco in November 1903 for Hong Kong, according to Liu Xueqin, “Ou Jujia,” 88. When Ou returned to the United States in 1904 has not been verified.

²³⁹ Ou Jujia to Kang Tongbi, July 29, 1904, no. S-C33, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

²⁴⁰ “Whose Army Falkenberg’s?” *Los Angeles Times*, March 30, 1905, sec. 3, 1. “On Won Chew” is Ou Jujia; the unnamed secretary is probably Chicago student Chen Yuesong, who was interpreting for Ou on his Western Military Academy organizing tour and in March 1905 served as Kang’s secretary in Los Angeles. In December 1904, Chen wrote Kang Tongbi that Ou had returned to Asia; Chen Yuesong to Kang Tongbi, December 29, 1904, no. B-31, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

²⁴¹ “Headquarters First Brigade C.I.A. General Orders no. 8,” Los Angeles California, November 1, 1904, Powers Papers, Hoover Institution Archives. This is the only surviving example found of an official order issued by Lea.

²⁴² Kaplan, *Homer Lea*, 82–83; Kaplan’s sources are Frederic L. Chapin, “Appendix II: The Chinese Imperial Army” in “Homer Lea and the Chinese Revolution” (B.A. thesis, Harvard University, 1950), 115–16 (a chart showing the four regiments in 27 locations; Los Angeles and New York had more than one company); Glick, *Double Ten*, 66–77; and various contemporaneous articles from American newspapers.

²⁴³ Chapin’s list includes San Diego, perhaps on the basis of Lea’s proposed Carlsbad, California, academy in late 1905, but it never opened; Chapin does not include Oakland, which has been documented as separate from San Francisco.

- Pacific Northwest: Bellingham, Portland, Seattle, Spokane, Tacoma, Walla Walla (and perhaps Vancouver and Victoria in Canada)²⁴⁴
- Montana: Butte
- Midwest: Chicago, Denver, Phoenix, St. Louis, Ogden, Utah (and Omaha, Nebraska?)²⁴⁵
- East Coast: Baltimore, Boston, Hartford, New York, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and Washington, DC²⁴⁶
- South: (New Orleans?)²⁴⁷
- Hawai'i: Honolulu²⁴⁸

3.3 *Independent Origins: New York and San Francisco*

Lea would discover that he was not alone in the Western Military Academy endeavor. Two other Chinese military schools associated with local Baohuanghui chapters had begun independently before April 1904, one in New York City and another in San Francisco.²⁴⁹ Given the close communication among Baohuanghui chapter leaders and the personal friendship between Tom Leung of Los Angeles with Tom She Bin in San Francisco and Joseph M. Singleton (Chu Mon Sing, Zhao Wansheng) in New York City, as well as Ou Jujia's interactions with both Lea and Falkenberg (discussed below), apparently Lea's Chinese

244 Although listed by Chapin under the Pacific Northwest Fourth Regiment, we do not have corroboration of the two Canadian branches and are not certain they existed.

245 Omaha was among cities with academy branches listed in "Chinese Drilling in all Countries," *Washington Times*, June 19, 1905, 3, but there is no corroborating evidence of a branch in the city.

246 Hartford was said to be part of the "First Battalion of the Third Infantry" according to George McVicker, "Drill Nucleus Here," *New York Times*, January 22, 1905, 16. "Chinese Soldiers Now Being Drilled in the United States." *Brooklyn Eagle*, April 30, 1905, 1, lists Washington, DC, as among the six cities (including Philadelphia) in the "Department of the East" (Chapin lists Pittsburgh and Philadelphia as in the Midwest Second Regiment).

247 New Orleans is mentioned as having an academy branch in "Chinese Drilling in all Countries," *Washington Times*; New Orleans had a Baohuanghui chapter.

248 Honolulu had a Julebu 俱樂部 (social club) whose activities were military drills and language lessons and may have preceded a Gancheng school, according to Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 241.

249 At least one other early Chinese American military brigade was organized prior to the Western Military Academy by American-born Chinese Seid Back Jr. in Portland, Oregon, in 1898, but there is no evidence that it developed into or became affiliated with the Portland branch of the academy. "Chinese Troops in Portland," *Boston Globe*, October 20, 1898, 6. Unlike the academy, Back's group was organized to allow American-born Chinese to support Spanish-American War efforts.

colleagues did not share their knowledge with him.²⁵⁰ As Kaplan argues, had Lea been aware of any challenges to his authority, he would have taken immediate action.²⁵¹

New York City was first to train Chinese cadets. Yee Guy Maine (Guy Maine, Yu Jiaming), founder of the Chinese Guild of St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church, recruited Major George McVicker to form a Chinese cadet class for the Guild in 1902.²⁵² Maine and the Chinese Guild were instrumental in the establishment of New York's Baohuanghui chapter the same year, and, in 1904, McVicker and the cadets enthusiastically joined the formal Western Military Academy network under Lea's leadership. The Baohuanghui newspaper in New York, *Zhongguo Weixin Bao*, published detailed recruitment advertisements outlining the regulations and program of the New York branch of the Western Military Academy, promising instructors to be sent by Homer Lea.²⁵³ McVicker seemed baffled by just whom he was dealing with, describing Lea to the *New York Times* as "China's military representative in this country."²⁵⁴ He said he was "visited by a Chinaman, who said he had come from the West, from California [Ou Jujia came to New York in September 1904 as part of his Western Military Academy organizing tour], and that he had been authorized to make a proposition to me to go to China to act as a drillmaster for the Chinese government." When McVicker said that this would be impossible for him to consider, the man then asked him to "instruct a military company of Chinamen that was about to be organized by the Chinese Reform Association of this city." McVicker said that later he received a commission from Lea as "Major, commanding the First Battalion of the Third Infantry of the Chinese Imperial Army," which McVicker understood to be "directly from the Empress Dowager of China."²⁵⁵

The origins of the San Francisco cadet school are less clear. In 1900, Lea became well-acquainted with the San Francisco chapter, including its leader Tom She Bin. It was around this time that Lea won Baohuanghui financial

250 Tom Leung had a longstanding friendship with Tom She Bin 譚樹彬 and had received a letter in 1902 from Joseph Singleton reporting on the official formation of the New York Baohuanghui chapter after the visit of Xu Qin (see Zhao Wansheng to Tan Zhangxiao, November 13, 1902, no. 552 in Fang and Cai, 337).

251 Lawrence M. Kaplan, personal communication with Jane Larson, July 20, 2012.

252 *Year Book of St. Bartholomew's Parish, New York City, 1902* (New York: Winthrop Press, 1903), 85–86. Yee Guy Maine (Yu Jiaming) 余佳明, or, more commonly, Guy Maine, took the surname Maine rather than Yee [Yu] when referring to himself in English.

253 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 255–65. The recruitment announcement is analyzed below.

254 "Drill Nucleus Here for Chinese Army," *New York Times*, January 22, 1905, 16.

255 There are no extant copies of Lea's commissions, according to Lawrence Kaplan, email message to Jane Larson, August 25, 2013.

support to travel to Singapore, Hong Kong, and China to meet Kang and join the planned Qinwang uprising.²⁵⁶ However, before Lea opened the Los Angeles headquarters, American-born postal clerk Wong Kin (Wong Kim, Wong Kam, Huang Jin), a colleague of Baohuanghui and Zhigongtang leader Tang Qiongchang, had taken the initiative to begin drilling cadets in San Francisco.²⁵⁷ Announced in a Chinese New Year's proclamation in 1904 and financially backed by three local merchants, Wong's "suddenly developed new plan" was praised by John Endicott Gardner, the Chinese immigration inspector in San Francisco who was fluent in spoken and written Chinese. Gardner gave an interview in March to the *San Francisco Chronicle*, describing Wong's cadets as "nearly all American born; but some day they will go back to China, where they will be teachers."²⁵⁸ The *Chronicle* also stated: "Most of the progressive men of Chinatown have encouraged [Wong], and Pow Chee [Bao Chi], the leader of the reform movement, upon whose head the Empress Dowager has placed a price, not only gave him encouragement when he visited this city, but he aided him financially as well." The reporter mistook the interpreter and secretary Bao Chi, for Liang Qichao, whom Bao escorted in 1903, but Liang's support for Wong's cadets is conceivable, since he visited San Francisco for extended periods between September and late November 1903. In any case, Liang had endorsed Lea's plans for military training in Los Angeles in October.

When Prince Pulun arrived in San Francisco in April 1904 on his way to St. Louis to represent China at the World's Fair, he was greeted at the Chinese consulate by "thirty local Chinese, all without the queue and wearing up-to-date American clothes and a yellow ribbon badge which proclaimed them members of the Chinese military company."²⁵⁹ Even more brazen than Homer Lea, Richard Falkenberg, "an opportunistic San Francisco businessman, adventurer,

256 "Young Californian is Plotting to Become Commander-in-Chief of Chinese Rebel Forces," *San Francisco Call*, April 22, 1900, Sunday Magazine.

257 "New Chinese Daily," *San Francisco Call*, June 21, 1903; Wong Kin [Huang Jin, Wong Kam, Wong Kim,] 黃金 is given as business manager and Tong King Chung [Tang Qiongchang] 唐瓊昌 as editor of the new daily *Tie Tong Yat Po* 大同日報 [Datong Ribao], with the "Gee Kong Tong" 致公堂 [Zhigongtang] functioning as treasurer. Wong compiled and published the 1913 *International Chinese Business Directory of the World* and was a Baohuanghui supporter. See Conclusion, this book.

258 "Will the Great Chinese Revolution Begin in San Francisco?" *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 6, 1904, 4. Pow Chee was identified as the Australian Chinese reformer Bao Chi 鮑熾 by Mei-fen Kuo, La Trobe University. Bao interpreted for Liang in Australia in 1900 and became a Baohuanghui leader there; his English fluency meant that he was occasionally interviewed instead of Liang Qichao, creating confusion as to whom was the real leader.

259 "Welcome to a Member of the Royal Family of China," *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 18, 1904, 14.

and soldier of fortune,” had learned of Wong’s activities and in February tried unsuccessfully to persuade California Governor George C. Pardee to issue him a commission to organize Wong’s cadets into a California National Guard company.²⁶⁰ Instead, Falkenberg had to be satisfied with leading these cadets in field exercises in the San Rafael Hills that summer, at the same time pursuing a far more entrepreneurial scheme of selling commissions to American military men to be officers in his own nonexistent “Chinese Imperial Reform Army.”²⁶¹ In any case, later in 1904 the Falkenberg/Wong Kin cadets allied with the San Francisco Baohuanghui chapter (but not with the Western Military Academy headquarters).

Another key Baohuanghui figure, Ou Jujia, could not have been blind to the potential conflict between Lea and Falkenberg, after he returned to the United States to organize branches of the Western Military Academy in 1904. Ou was a former colleague of Wong Kin, as both were members of the Zhigongtang secret society and in 1903 were editor and manager respectively of the Zhigongtang newspaper *Datong Bao*.²⁶² Thus, it is assumed that Ou allowed Wong (and Falkenberg) to run the San Francisco military training program independently of the Los Angeles headquarters. The secretary who accompanied Ou on his organizing trip in 1904 later told the *Los Angeles Times*, “Falkenberg was made commander of the San Francisco military school; that is all the authority he has. Homer Lea was made commander of all the military schools in the United States. Mr. On Won Chew [Ou Jujia] ordered all to report to Gen. Lea.”²⁶³

Homer Lea and the American press discovered the competing “commanderships” of Falkenberg and Lea only after Kang arrived in Los Angeles in March 1905. The *Los Angeles Times* reported on Kang’s meeting with “General R. A. Falkenberg, the Commander-in-chief of the reorganized Chinese Imperial

260 Kaplan, *Homer Lea*, 65, 76.

261 “Pig-tailed Warriors Go through Maneuvers,” *San Francisco Call*, July 25, 1904, 5, describes the “Chinese Cadet Corps” of “Captain Wong Kam [Wong Kin]” and “Major Falkenberg, formerly of the Filipino Scouts” (Falkenberg was neither a Major nor of the Filipino Scouts). Wong Kin, Falkenberg, and Gardner all gave speeches at a Dragon Boat Festival feast in June 1904 for the Sheung Mo Hok Tong Military Association and Chinese Military Corps; see “All Chinatown Holds Feasts,” *San Francisco Call*, June 18, 1904 (Gardner is referred to as “Dr. Gardiner”). “Americans for Chinese Army,” *New York Times*, May 15, 1904, 2, datelined St. Paul, Minnesota, is one of many articles about the recruiting efforts of Falkenberg and his cronies, in this case Edmond F. English, “Chinese Imperial Reform Army, General Staff, Yankton, SD.” Falkenberg’s recruitment scheme is described more fully in Chapter 5.

262 “New Chinese Daily,” *San Francisco Call*, June 21, 1903; Ma, *Revolutionaries, Monarchists, and Chinatowns*, 87, regarding Ou’s involvement in *Datong Bao*.

263 “Whose Army Falkenberg’s,” *Los Angeles Times*, March 30, 1905, sec. 3, 1.

Army, who has expressly come down from San Francisco to meet his eminent chief.”²⁶⁴ Suddenly, the dreams of grandeur of the American “commanders” and drillmasters risked Kang’s reputation as well as the Baohuanghui’s much-vaunted military education program. State governors and the U.S. departments of state and of war began to question the legality of what looked like foreign troops drilling on American soil to overthrow the Qing government. When Kang saw how Lea and Falkenberg had subverted the real meaning of his reform program, he denied and rejected them in varying degrees.²⁶⁵ The conflict’s troublesome consequences are played out in later chapters, but should not diminish the significant contributions of the Western Military Academy and Homer Lea for both the Baohuanghui and the students themselves, not to speak of the positive images of Chinese masculinity that so impressed Americans. The fact that Lea had won over not only Liang Qichao, but in the future would become Sun Yatsen’s military advisor, points to the supposition that it was not just a naive facet in Kang’s character that made him abide in Homer Lea’s plans and fancies. When not one, but three of modern China’s greatest figures trusted a man of Lea’s sort, it is a credit to Lea, not a deficit to Kang, Liang, or Sun.

3.4 General Operations

Lea and the Baohuanghui systematized the operations of the academy branches by dissemination of an elaborate set of twenty-five guidelines that mandated the behavior, attitudes, and performance required of students (described as “youth” or *shaonian*) and instructors.²⁶⁶ These were presented as Homer Lea’s oral instructions, translated into Chinese and published in early 1905 by a Baohuanghui publishing house. The “Special Report Transcribing and Translating the Draft Military Regulations and Announcements of Head Instructor

264 “Events in Local Society, Distinguished Guests Dines,” *Los Angeles Times*, March 29, 1905, 10. The article included side-by-side photographs of Kang Youwei and R. A. Falkenberg.

265 See Chapters 5 and 7 for the academy’s premature demise, thanks to feuding of American commanders that invited U.S. government investigation and resulted in Kang’s orders that the academy be disbanded to avoid further trouble.

266 “Zhuan jian: ci Jiang Li Zongjiao suo Ni Junli bing Xiao Qi Yi Lu” 專件: 茲將李總教習所擬軍例並小啓譯錄 [Special Report Transcribing and Translating the Draft Military Regulations and Announcements of Head Instructor General Lea] in “Gancheng Xuexiao Shi,” handwritten date February 12, 1905, 1, Chinese Empire Reform Association, AR-3, AAS ARC 2000/78. This nineteen-page document appears to be assembled after the fact, with text pasted on sheets and the title page, page numbers, and occasional dates written by hand (possibly by Baohuanghui historian and archivist Wu Xianzi). The article about the Butte, Montana, and Fresno, California, Gancheng schools is from *Zhongguo Weixin Bao*, April 19, 1905. This article points to the New York Baohuanghui newspaper as the publishing house (along with the fact that there is a set of 1904 issues of *Zhongguo Weixin Bao* in this collection at Berkeley).

(*zongjiaoxi*) General Lea” compiled in one document what had earlier been published in segments, probably in a Baohuanghui newspaper. The extant copy is pasted page by page in an assembled booklet that includes other contemporaneous news articles about academy branches in Chicago, St. Louis, Fresno, and Butte, Montana, among other American cities, and the congratulatory statement that Kang wrote upon seeing the photograph of the drilling Los Angeles cadets. This document should be read not as Lea’s verbatim instructions (although they could be) but his words filtered and literally and metaphorically translated through a Baohuanghui cultural and political lens.

In Lea’s introduction to the rules, he seems to echo Kang by arguing that China was weak not because it lacked men, wealth, or natural resources but because it was not “militarily minded.” Recognizing this, Lea noted that the Baohuanghui comrades set up the academy (in Los Angeles) and invited him to be the lead instructor.²⁶⁷ After only a few months of training, Lea remarked, the students had been completely transformed and made great progress, “which shows their ambition, determination and enthusiasm for study ... I can’t help but congratulate you on the future of your country.”

Lea’s regulations emphasized the school’s total immersion in military discipline and a nationalistic ethos. He began by describing the students as soldiers who should be motivated not by the desire for self-development or recreation but to share their expertise back in China:

This school is established to train (*zaojiu*) talented people. Instructors must follow this [mission] in the education of soldiers (*bingshi*), and the soldiers must seek to make their country strong and prosperous (*yi tu qiangsheng qi guojia*). Instructors and students who do not obey the following specified regulations, that is, those who break the rules knowingly and willfully, will be expelled immediately. Those who complete their schooling (*zuye*) will return to China to serve as instructors, not merely [be trained] to build their physiques (*zhuang tipo*) or learn how to march in formation (*buwu*).

No doubt because Lea lived in the city, the Los Angeles school was designated as the academy’s headquarters and Lea as responsible for recruiting “excellent military officers who will not receive a salary (*bushou xinjin*)” to serve as head instructors at branch schools. Lea also stated that the art of war (*bingfa*) or military tactics differs from other subjects of study, and students should consider it

267 “Zhuan jian,” 1.

as a life mission. “Those who complete the academic program and win honors will have the foundation of a very promising career and official rank.”

Lea expected the students to adhere to military-like behavior and deportment, maintaining “dignity in appearance, a stern bearing, head held high and body straight,” even when at leisure. His regulations required students to salute their instructors (often called “officers” in the document) when they entered the classroom or were encountered elsewhere, including on the street. The drilling field is described as a solemn space where students must quietly line up in military order, under absolute enforcement of the rules with no toleration of any violation. And, perhaps in response to local authorities showing suspicion about the school’s purpose, Lea cautioned students to refrain from wearing their uniforms or carrying their weapons except when drilling or on parade.

Many regulations applied to the use of weaponry—including guns, bullets and knives—which were to be handled when in the proper emotional state (not when angry or fearful) and with great care, and returned to the school principal after use in a parade or other activity for storage in a safe place. Instructors were warned that if a student did not know how to fire a gun, he should not use real bullets. When supervising student practice at shooting ranges, they were to follow the “U.S. Firing Regulations for Small Arms (1904).” Those who had attained excellent skills could practice shooting outdoors and take part in mock battles if there were enough skilled students.

Lea told instructors how to recognize qualities worthy of cultivation in students, including good vision for rifle practice; the wisdom, bravery, and intelligence to engage in multiple battle situations; and how to be cautious and protect themselves. In a nod to the American style of teaching, “instructors should use encouraging words when training students and continue until the students achieve a thorough grasp of the skills and can drill as a group ... each student should feel worthy and wish to attain a higher level of instruction and competence.” Lea emphasized that instructors were to be attentive to their students’ needs, use plain language, be patient, teach skills in sequence of difficulty, and avoid overstraining soldiers by providing rest breaks. It must be remembered that the vast majority of the instructors were trained American military men, since only a few Chinese were qualified for this position, and Lea seems to be reminding the instructors to be sensitive to the cultural differences they would encounter with their Chinese cadets.

Homer Lea set out a demanding curriculum based on seven standard American military texts and expected the instructors to “be able to recite details from memory (*beisong*) and explain them clearly” to the students. “These books should be translated promptly into Chinese (*Huawen*) so that everyone can

read them, which will allow each soldier and officer to follow the commands of the chief instructor (*zongjiaozhang*) and be tested on these military books.” Compared to the course of study and texts offered by the U.S. Military Academy in 1904, Lea’s reading list was slim and selective. Lea focused heavily on technical skills such as map-reading, sketching roads and battlefields, handling and firing small arms, drilling in formation, marching in parades and mustering for inspections, but also included two books read by fourth-year West Point cadets, *Organization and Tactics* and *The Service of Security and Information* (techniques of defense and reconnaissance to keep an army from being taken by surprise), both by General Arthur L. Wagner, as well as a tome by a military engineer on “the elements of the art and science of war” incorporating lessons from Alexander the Great, General William T. Sherman, and Napoleon but not Sunzi.²⁶⁸

Even with Lea’s highly detailed regulations, the branch schools operated quite independently, raising their own operating funds and choosing uniforms and weapons.²⁶⁹ Some of the schools seemed to offer nonmilitary courses but not traditional military school academic courses, such as mathematics. This contradicts the Los Angeles incorporation papers which describe the academy as “a seminary of learning for instruction in elementary and academic studies, in languages and in military science and tactics.”²⁷⁰

One of the best-documented branch schools was in New York City. In 1904, *Zhongguo Weixin Bao* published the school’s seventeen-point “founding regulations” for the purposes of recruitment. This showed how a branch school implemented Lea’s directives.²⁷¹ New York began to recruit students actively sometime in 1904, most likely after Ou Jujia’s visit, incorporating the program

268 Wagner’s books, as well as “Firing Regulations for Small Arms for the United States Army and Infantry Drill Regulations, United States Army” appear in the “Course of Study and Books Used at the Military Academy,” *Register of the Officers and Cadets* (West Point, New York: USMA Press, 1904), 31–32, and on Lea’s reading list. Lea’s other selections are: “Regulations for the Army of the United States” (1901), “Military Map-Reading, Field, Outpost and Road Sketching” by William D. Beach, and “A Course of Instruction in the Elements of the Art and Science of War” by J. B. Wheeler. Thank you to Lawrence Kaplan for sharing tables of contents for each of these books.

269 Lawrence Kaplan, email message, June 1, 2013, shared useful observations about the differences between the New York and Los Angeles branches.

270 Western Military Academy Articles of Incorporation, Office of the Secretary of State, State of California, November 28, 1904, California State Archives, Sacramento.

271 Gao Weinong transcribed this document, “Niuyue Ganchengxiao Caochuang Zhangcheng” 駁約干城校草創章程 [New York Gancheng School Founding/draft Regulations], *Zhongguo Weixin Bao*, September 29, 1904, 13, Chinese Empire Reform Association, AR-44, AAS ARC 2000/78.

begun in 1902 by George McVicker and the St. Bartholomew's Chinese Guild. It is learned from the New York regulations that:

- Each student paid a one-dollar entrance fee.
- Students were expected to supply their own uniforms and weapons.
- Drills were held for an hour two or three times a week.
- Once a week, drills ended at sunset, so that all students could study one hour of spoken and written Chinese (*guoyu guowen*—national language, usually indicating Mandarin, but might be Cantonese). [Some students were American-born and needed Chinese lessons for this reason, but even those born in China might not be literate. Mandarin may have been taught to prepare for return to China at a leadership level. The Baohuanghui in New York also ran an Aiguo Xuetang (Patriotic Academy), which taught Chinese to both children and adults.]
- Large exercises were held quarterly; stars designating first-, second-, and third-class performance awarded to the best students.
- At the end of each year, New York students joined with students from nearby Western Military Academy branches for joint exercises, with three classes of awards to the superior students.
- The program was to last three years, with a diploma awarded upon graduation.
- “Intelligent, quick-learning students or those with natural talents can go to Western military academies, with tuition paid by members.”
- When these students graduated from the American academies, they must return to the Gancheng to teach “and are not allowed to bite the hand that fed them.”

The New York announcement ended with a statement giving the strongest argument that the academy was not organized to mount a military campaign against the Empress Dowager. At the very least, it showed that the academy leaders in New York saw the school as a patriotic, nationalistic contribution to China with nothing to hide from the Qing government: “This school plans to report to the imperial envoy (*qinchai*) to seek advice about registering with the governor general of Liangguang [Guangdong-Guangxi]. All who come out of this school are permitted to return to China to serve as military drill coaches.”²⁷²

It was known that the Liangguang governor general, Cen Chunxuan, was friendly with Kang and recently had begun to modernize and expand military instruction in Guangdong.²⁷³ For advice on “registering” the academy with Cen, the New York Baohuanghui may have been planning to approach the sympathetic Liang Cheng, the Chinese minister to the United States who met with

²⁷² “Niuyue Ganchengxiao Caochuang Zhangcheng.”

²⁷³ Rhoads, *China's Republican Revolution*, 51–58, 77–78.

Baohuanghui leaders in New York City in June 1904 when they came to greet Prince Pulun, whom Liang was escorting on his U.S. tour.²⁷⁴ Liang Cheng also met with two Los Angeles Baohuanghui members who had close ties to Homer Lea, when they came to St. Louis to convey messages to Prince Pulun about the patriotism and loyalty of the Baohuanghui.²⁷⁵ Zhang Hongsheng had studied military affairs in Los Angeles at the turn of the century and was to have accompanied Homer Lea to China in 1900.²⁷⁶ The other Los Angeles visitor was the branch's English-language secretary, probably Allen Chung, who was said to have been Lea's classmate at Stanford and active in the academy. The two undoubtedly spoke to Liang Cheng about the Western Military Academy in Los Angeles.²⁷⁷ During the later furor over the true purpose of the Western Military Academy, Liang Cheng told an American reporter, "The idea that an army for a hostile movement against China could be recruited in a friendly nation like the United States is absurd."²⁷⁸

A sketchy but suggestive picture of the actual operations of the New York branch confirms that at least some important guidelines in the 1904 prescriptive document were carried out. New York's school received continuous coverage from several New York City newspapers through the years it operated, supplementing the scarce archival evidence from Chinese newspapers of that era.

The *New-York Tribune* published a translation of a formal letter from the Los Angeles headquarters of the Western Military Academy welcoming McVicker and his cadets into the Baohuanghui network:

To the Chinese Cadets of New-York City. From headquarters of General Lee [*sic*] to Major McVicker, Instructor: Receive him kindly, and strictly

274 "Huiyuan Jie Jian Beizi" 會員揭見貝子 [Prince Meets Association Members], *Zhongguo Weixin Bao*, June 9, 1904. Also see "Prince Pu Walks up Three Harlem Flights," *New York Times*, June 2, 1904, 9. As noted in Chapter 3, Liang Qichao also had a friendly relationship with Liang Cheng and other Qing representatives in Washington.

275 "Xin Lei lai han" 新蕾來函 [Letter from St. Louis], *Zhongguo Weixin Bao*, June 23, 1904.

276 Zhang Hongsheng 張洪勝 [Chang Kung Sing, Jeong Goong Sing] is mentioned in the letter of introduction for Lea to Kang from Tom Tsai Hin (Tan Jiqian—alternate name of Tom Leung or Tan Zhangxiao); the Chinese letter and a somewhat inaccurate English translation are in "Young Californian is Plotting to Become Commander-in-Chief of Chinese Rebel Forces," *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 22, 1900, Sunday Magazine, 1. In Chen Guoyong to Tan Zhangxiao, May 19, 1900, no. 513 in Fang and Cai, 276, Chen asked Tom Leung to persuade a Mr. Zhang to return to China to help with Qinwang because Chen had learned from Tom that Zhang was pursuing military and naval studies. The next year, Kang Youwei wrote Tom Leung asking him to give his regards to Mr. Zhang; Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, April 7, 1901, no. 520 in Fang and Cai, 31.

277 Allen Chung was the Los Angeles "English-speaking secretary" according to the *Los Angeles Times*, January 3, 1905, 5, "To Revivify the Old China"; Chung is mentioned as one of two Chinese students Lea met at Stanford in Glick, *Double Ten*, 36.

278 "Sir Liang Cheng Ridicules Stories of Chinese Army," *Washington Times*, June 27, 1905, 12.

obey the orders from beginning to end to redeem China. Be diligent to practice. Instruction and orders will be forwarded accordingly. With best wishes to the members of the Chinese Empire Reform Association.

From the fellow Chinese cadets of Los Angeles, California²⁷⁹

The conceptual divide between the Americans and Chinese involved in the military academies is illustrated by the contrasting terminology in English and Chinese. In the translated letter above, McVicker is introduced as “instructor,” not “officer,” the term Lea typically used for the instructors. Even more tellingly, no Baohuanghui documents have been found that use the term “Chinese Imperial Army” or variants such as “Chinese Reform Army,” in spite of their frequent use by Lea and his instructors as well as by the American press. Lea claimed to have received a commission in 1900 as Lieutenant General, then the highest rank in the U.S. Army, and used this title to refer to himself. The only surviving artifact that might refer to this commission is a wood and steel baton, which reads in English, “Lt. General Homer Lea, Kwangtung China, August 1900,” and in Chinese, “To General Lea, China, Guangdong Province, Guangxu 26th year, August 13, 1900.”²⁸⁰ The term lieutenant general never appears in Chinese in references to Lea. In all Baohuanghui documents and artifacts, Lea was called General (*jiang*), probably more of an honorific than an official title, and he was designated as “head instructor” (*zongjiaoxi*) rather than commander.

With the transfer of authority from St. Bartholomew’s to the Baohuanghui, the New York school, like other academy branches, was housed and funded through the local Baohuanghui chapter. New York’s armory was located at various addresses on Mott Street in the heart of Chinatown, its first home in a newly remodeled space at 6 Mott Street, “in the rooms of the Oriental Club, which is composed of Chinatown’s leading merchants,” according to the *New York Times* in January 1905.²⁸¹ With initial donations of \$1,000 from Baohuanghui members, the drills took place in the late afternoon and evening, taught by both

279 “Chinese Reformers are Drilling,” *New-York Tribune*, January 24, 1905, 7. The letter was translated from the Chinese by Baohuanghui members and shown by McVicker to the *Tribune* reporter.

280 Kaplan, *Homer Lea*, 45, 230 n12. Kaplan, email message, August 30, 2013: “The highest grade in the U.S. Army at the time was a Lieutenant General (three- star), but the grade of General (four-star) had been used in the Civil War and was again used in World War I and after ... Richard Falkenberg designated himself a General (four-star) and his subordinate Fernand Parmentier was a Lieutenant General. In the U.S. Army, it is customary to address an active duty general or a retired general of any grade simply as “General,” which is why everyone, including the press, referred to Homer Lea as General Lea.”

281 “Drill Nucleus Here for Chinese Army,” *New York Times*, January 22, 1905, 16.

American and Chinese instructors.²⁸² Within a few months, the school had moved again to the new Baohuanghui headquarters at 7-9 Mott Street, above the famous Port Arthur Restaurant, itself owned by a Baohuanghui board member, Chu Gow (Cao Jiu). In addition to the armory, the building housed the association meeting hall and Aiguo Xuetang (Patriotic Academy): "The Chinese cadets drill at 7 and 9 Mott Street every Thursday evening in the hall of the Chinese Reform Association ... The cadets drill with discarded National Guard muskets and wear a uniform like that of our militia."²⁸³ Finally, in 1906 the armory moved to 12 Mott Street to share space with the Baohuanghui's Wah Yick Company (Huayi Gongsi).²⁸⁴

McVicker, who understood himself to be "a Major in the Chinese Imperial Army," told the *New York Times* that two companies of 150 men were drilling in New York and that he was in charge of the "First Battalion of the Third Infantry," which included New York, Philadelphia, Hartford, Boston, Washington, and Baltimore.²⁸⁵ And, this blunt quote in the *Times* reveals what Lea had led McVicker to believe about the official nature of the school:

The object of it all is to prepare Chinamen in the United States for work in the Chinese Army. These Chinamen will return to China as soon as they qualify in the school of the squad, but they are considered members of the Chinese Army when they enlist.

McVicker showed the *Times* reporter "General Orders No. 7" signed by "Lieut. General Homer Lea" and dated September 29, 1904, which was sent to him from "Headquarters, First Brigade, [C.] I.A. [Chinese Imperial Army], Los Angeles, Cal., USA." The printed sheet listed guidelines for the "officers," including: "All commands should be given in a clear, vibrant voice. The Chinese by nature move leisurely; hence it is doubly important that all commands be given with great sharpness and decision. Cadence should always be brisk." McVicker said that he communicated with the cadets through a Chinese interpreter and that the students had been taught "movements in close and extended order" as well as "all about loading and firing, but as yet they have had no rifle practice." In June 1905, McVicker was planning an "exhibition drill and sham battle" at Cedar Grove, Long Island, in preparation for inspection by Kang, who was

282 "Gancheng Xuexiao Kaixue" in "Gancheng Xuexiao Shi."

283 "The Chinese are Drilling," *New York Times*, June 21, 1905, 4.

284 "Chinamen in Parade," *New-York Tribune*, September 13, 1906, 5. The name "Eastern Military Academy" is the taken to mean Western Military Academy in this story.

285 "Drill Nucleus Here for Chinese Army," *New York Times*, January 22, 1905, 16.

soon to arrive in New York.²⁸⁶ “The Chinese Guard, consisting of eighty-eight uniformed cadets, with real rifles, all members of the Chinese Empire Reform Association” took a steamer to Long Island for “an exhibition drill” only one day before New York Governor Higgins put a halt to McVicker’s outdoor armed drills.²⁸⁷ A number of photographs document large-scale battle exercises by other academy branches. Palm trees, yucca, mesquite, and encroaching houses are the backdrop of a panoramic photograph taken August 12, 1904, at Sunset Boulevard and Vermont Avenue in Hollywood showing Captain Ansel O’Banion commanding one of the two Los Angeles companies, lined up and kneeling in dress uniforms with their rifles aimed.²⁸⁸

While various American officials became increasingly suspicious of the aims and tactics of the Western Military Academy, Qing diplomats in the United States publicly approved the academy activities as patriotic. Although no evidence has been found that Qing officials recommended academy graduates



FIGURE 36 Drilling cadets at Sunset Boulevard and Vermont Avenue, Los Angeles, August 12, 1904, commanded by Capt. Ansel O’Banion (in white shirt).

²⁸⁶ “To Meet Kang Yu Wei,” *New-York Tribune*, June 17, 1905, 6.

²⁸⁷ “Outing for Good Chinese,” *New York Sun*, June 20, 1905; “Oppose Chinese Troops,” *New-York Tribune*, June 21, 1905, 12.

²⁸⁸ “Gen. Homer Lea’s Chinese troops, Sunset Blvd. and Vermont Ave., Los Angeles, August 12, 1904, commanded by Capt. A.E. O’Banion”—Ansel O’Banion note to Charles O. Kates, postmarked February 23, 1949. Joshua B. Powers Collection, Joshua B. Powers photograph album, Photo 5, Hoover Institution Library and Archives.

to Governor General Cen as drillmasters, Chinese Minister Liang Cheng's defense of the academy and his full-throated discounting of its revolutionary aims was not exceptional. New York's Chinese Consul Xia Xiefu (Sha Kai-fu) openly praised the military academy at Baohuanghui events, according to English- and Chinese-language newspapers. In September 1904, an audience of one thousand in New York Chinatown's Doyers Street Chinese Theatre heard a speech by the academy's roving organizer Ou Jujia and watched a vigorous military display by McVicker's cadets. Consul Xia "gave a speech to endorse the Gancheng schools, pointing out the lively appearance [of the students] in contrast to the much-loathed image of Chinese as dead people and China as a dead country."²⁸⁹ In April 1905, despite persistent rumors that the cadets were a covert force being trained to depose the Empress Dowager, the *Brooklyn Eagle* reported that Consul Xia had visited the Baohuanghui armory at 7-9 Mott Street to view another drill and again "expressed much delight in the manner in which they executed the maneuvers."²⁹⁰

The paths of individual Western Military Academy cadets back to China to serve as drillmasters or officers cannot be traced. However, articles in New York City newspapers suggest that this did in fact occur and was expected of the graduates. One group appears to have ended up training the Chinese Volunteers in the Shanghai International Settlement, a group that eventually joined with the Settlement's foreign volunteers who had banded together to protect the area.²⁹¹ In September 1906, the *New-York Tribune* reported that "members of the Chinese Empire Reform Association in Chinatown were jubilant yesterday over the news they had received of the first public parade in Shanghai of the 1st Chinese Volunteers. These Chinamen were reported to have received their military training from Chinese drillmasters educated at the Eastern Military Academy [*sic*], No. 12 Mott street." The article claimed that "one drillmaster trained in New York in modern tactics, on returning to China ... can educate a hundred Chinamen to become drillmasters, and these in turn, can educate thousands of their fellow-countrymen in American methods of warfare."²⁹²

289 "Zhishi Yanshuo" 志士演說 [Man of Ideals Gives Speech], *Zhongguo Weixin Bao*, no. 29, September 29, 1904.

290 "Chinese Soldiers Now Being Drilled," *Brooklyn Eagle*, April 30, 1905, 1.

291 "The Chinese Volunteers," *North China Herald*, January 25, 1907, 153-54, describes the acceptance of the Chinese Volunteers, originally named Chinese Physical Culture Society, into the Shanghai Volunteer Corps.

292 "Chinamen in Parade," *New-York Tribune*, September 13, 1906, 5.

The first graduating class of the Western Military Academy in New York completed its studies in May 1907. According to the *New York Times*, May 28, 1907, Baohuanghui chapter president Joseph Singleton presided over a dinner at the Chinese Tuxedo Restaurant, where the “First Chinese Regiment of New York” was discharged “as full-fledged drillmasters, equipped to return to China and teach their countrymen American tactics.” Graduates received service medals, and “the discharge warrants mean 100 percent duty in service and scholarship during the three years at the academy,” corroborating the three-year program mandated in New York’s 1904 “draft regulations.” There was no mention of Homer Lea, whose open association with the Western Military Academy was effectively broken in November 1905, when Kang Youwei released a public letter to the American press abolishing Lea’s post as chief of the military schools.²⁹³

Singleton told the new graduates: “Your work is by no means done. It is your duty to stir up in China that same spirit which you yourselves have already displayed in your work here in this regiment. Love of country is the spirit which should be constantly more and more stirred up in the Chinese Empire.”²⁹⁴ Two years earlier Singleton had told a *Brooklyn Eagle* reporter that not only would graduates of the academy return to China to teach American military skills, but “I am thoroughly convinced that this military movement on the part of Chinese residents of America will do much toward bringing about those reforms in China that are so earnestly advocated by our society” and “will have a tendency to create a feeling of friendliness between the authorities in China and the Reform Association.”²⁹⁵

It is unclear if academy graduates attended American military academies at Baohuanghui expense, since documentation on the students supported by the organization does not include their academic institution or major.²⁹⁶ However, one of the strongest arguments for Baohuanghui funding to students of

293 “Homer Lea Loses His Peacock Feather,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, December 30, 1905, 14.

294 “Chinese Regiment Disbands,” *New York Times*, May 28, 1907, 4.

295 “Chinese Soldiers Now Being Drilled in the United States,” *Brooklyn Eagle*, April 30, 1905, 1.

296 譚精意 (Tan Jingyi/Jane Leung Larson), “Guanyu Baohuanghui Pai Xuesheng chu Meiguo Liuxue de Yundong: yi Tan Liang Dang’an wei Zhongxin” 關於保皇會派學生出美國留學的運動:以譚良檔案的為中心 [The Chinese Empire Reform Association’s Movement to Send Students Abroad: Evidence from the Papers of Tom Leung], in *Wuxu Weixin yu Jindai Zhongguo de Gaige: Wuxu Weixin Yibaizhounian Guoji Xueshu Taolunhui Wenji* 戊戌維新與近代中國的改革: 戊戌維新一百周年國際學術討論會論文集 [The Hundred Days of Reform and Modern China’s Reforms: Proceedings of Symposium on the 100th Anniversary of the Hundred Days of Reform], ed. Wang Xiaoqi 王曉秋 (Beijing: Shehui Kexue Wenxian Chubanshe, 2000), 473–85.

military and naval science came in 1905 from a teacher at the New York Aiguo Xuetaang, Liang Wenqing. Liang proposed to Kang that Baohuanghui business profits go to support students who might return home and form the core of a modern military.²⁹⁷ Kang felt this idea was impractical, but the Baohuanghui bank in New York, Huayi Gongsi, later worked with Tom Leung's Chicago restaurant, King Joy Lo, to fund Baohuanghui members studying abroad.²⁹⁸

How long the New York military academy survived under Baohuanghui auspices is unknown, but "a company of Chinese cadets, very well drilled, uniformed Chinese on horseback" marched in the Fourth of July parade in New York City in 1911.²⁹⁹ It would not take long before Baohuanghui influence was eclipsed by the revolutionaries.³⁰⁰

A stirring martial song purportedly written by Kang for the Western Military Academy students appears in a special section on association songs in the 1905 Baohuanghui charter.³⁰¹ In the opening stanza, Kang painted a savage Social Darwinist picture to inspire the resolve of the Chinese patriot abroad looking back on his homeland beset with enemies and facing expulsion himself because of the Chinese exclusion policy:

Across the Pacific Ocean, I set my eyes on China,
Knitting my brow, I worry about the frailty of our country's military.
Grinding their teeth, strong foes are fighting each other to tear apart the
prey.
Pursued like fish and meat, my people are driven out in humiliation.
Deep in the dark night I watch, anguished with woes.

297 Wu Xianzi 伍憲子, *Zhongguo Minzhu Xianzhengdang Dangshi* 中國民主憲政黨黨史 [A Party History of the Chinese Democratic Constitutional Party] (San Francisco: Shijie Ribao [Chinese World], 1952), 66–68.

298 Tan Zhangxiao, *Zhengxinlu* in Fang and Cai, 267–75.

299 "Safe and Sane' Fourth," *New York Evening Telegram*, July 5, 1911.

300 For the sudden turn of New York Baohuanghui members to Sun Yatsen in spring 1911, see Ma, *Revolutionaries, Monarchists, and Chinatowns*, 140–43.

301 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 136–142, 267–68, analyzes Kang's promotion of group singing to instill unity and morale and transcribes "Gancheng Xuexiao Ge" and other Baohuanghui songs. Huang, "Teaching Chineseness," 110–12, has a detailed description and analysis of the Gancheng school song, and many of her translations are used here. The Baohuanghui songs "Gancheng Xuexiao Ge" 干城學校歌, "Aiguo Duange" 愛國短歌, and "Aiguo Ge" 愛國歌 are reprinted in *Kang Nanhai Xiansheng shiji* 康南海先生詩集 [Collected Poems of Mr. Kang Nanhai] in Shen Yunlong 潘雲龍, ed., *Jindai Zhongguo Shiliao Congkan Xubian* 近代中國史料叢刊續編 [Collected materials on modern Chinese history], vol. 35 (Taipei: Wenhai Chubanshe, 1974).

Like Jews cast out like homeless dogs. Alas!
 Like Poles and Indians enslaved forever. Alas!
 Woe is me, if I lose my country and am expelled with no home to return to? Alas!
 If I don't rise up and fight now,
 I will never be able to fly again. Alas!³⁰²

Rising up and fighting back against foreign oppression was a theme that Kang would return to throughout his 1905 journey in North America. The Gancheng song echoes a protest song Kang wrote around the same time to spur on the anti-American boycott, depicting powerless Chinese immigrants on the verge of landing in the United States, fearful of exclusion laws and despairing because their country was too weak to protect them. In that case, Kang called for donations to support the boycott in China.³⁰³

The Gancheng song, on the other hand, asks the Chinese in America to “forget all poverty and hardship” and use their own flesh and blood to “defend the nation (*weiquo*) without wavering.” Kang invoked the instructive example of the not-yet-concluded Russo-Japanese War of 1904–5: “[Japan], whose territory is no larger than our Sichuan and whose people are short in stature ... triumphed over strong Russia, and all nations respect their heroes.” Kang’s conclusion: “One must have an army to be civilized; without an army, one is a barbarian and slave.” With China’s four hundred million people, Kang claims, “we could have 10 million soldiers in one great army.” Kang hailed early military heroes such as Han dynasty Liu Bang’s general Han Xin, “who conquered eight states in less than half a year ... We, the talents of a later generation, must catch up to them.” Belinda Huang notes that Kang chose historical models renowned for their bitter lives that echoed the experiences (or the self-images) of the immigrant students at the Western Military Academy, “for example, Ban Chao, who was apart from his family for decades, and Han Xin, humiliated then beheaded by his commanders after faithful service.”³⁰⁴ Huang claims the academy “was one of the earliest instances when young overseas Chinese in North

302 The first and last stanzas of the Gancheng song were translated by Kang’s great-granddaughter Connie Kang [Kang Xuepei] of Houston, Texas.

303 “Ju Jinyue Chuandan—Lü Mei Huaren Laigao” 拒禁約傳單—旅美華人來稿 [Leaflet Opposing the Exclusion Treaty—Manuscript from Chinese Living in America], printed document, June 10, 1905, no. 577 in Fang and Cai, 381. See Chapter 6 for the song’s full lyrics.

304 Huang, “Teaching Chineseness,” 111.

America were given a special role and perspective in ‘revitalizing our Middle Flowering Realm (*wo Zhongghua*).’³⁰⁵

Kang ended his Gancheng song with this stanza in the voice of students seeking understanding and respect from their countrymen:

Having only mastered the drill steps, how can I be complacent?
 I’ve just begun my military studies, and I will persevere to the end.
 Soldiers are like water, the art of war is like the mountains.
 My experience keeps changing, but there is only one archenemy to me.
 Set off from the west and launch to the east, and the world will shake.
 Don’t belittle us foot soldiers, motivated by our pledge of allegiance.
 Empower our China.
 Exalt our Chinese people.³⁰⁶

“It is a great pity to see this work in which you have taken so much interest die an unnatural death,” wrote Kang to Homer Lea in November 1905 from Torreón, a letter in English that was published in American newspapers.³⁰⁷ Kang explained to Lea that because “at present those military schools are no longer in existence, hence no further income can be derived,” and he was abolishing Lea’s position. Kang graciously put the onus on the faintheartedness of the Chinese merchant supporters and students who were afraid to continue the military schools, given the state and federal investigations into their legality. Lea’s culpability goes unmentioned, and Kang writes, “I have repeatedly persuaded them to resume their work, but they dare not to.” One can surmise from the New York graduation ceremony in 1907, when Kang was in the United States, that it was only Lea who was set loose by Kang, and individual branches of the academy were free to continue operations. Nevertheless, Kang surely

305 Huang, “Teaching Chineseness,” 110.

306 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 268.

307 “Homer Lea Loses His Peacock Feather,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, December 30, 1905, 14; this letter dated November 30, Torreón, Coahuila, Mexico, was reprinted in other American newspapers across the nation. When the Butte chapter was asked about the letter by the *Anaconda Standard* (“Reform Army a Dream, The Chinese Wake Up,” January 8, 1906), “they claimed to know nothing of the abandonment of the movement.” Homer Lea’s picture was still hanging in the New York Baohuanghui headquarters three years later, according to “Hot Debates in Chinatown,” *New York Sun*, November 29, 1908. Chapters 5 and 7 describe a series of publicity-grabbing controversies that roiled the Western Military Academy during Kang’s 1905 trip in the United States and led to Kang writing a public dismissal letter to Lea.

was deeply disappointed that the Western Military Academy could not expand, so that “our objects sought would have been successfully accomplished.”

• • •

Previous scholarship has focused on Kang and the Baohuanghui’s fostering of military training for cadets of the Western Military Academy. Little has been written about their involvement in armed uprisings and planned assassinations. These two methods were seen as ways to achieve the Baohuanghui’s political goal of establishing a constitutional monarchy. The killing of archconservative leaders, such as Cixi and Ronglu, was considered but never carried out. Similarly, Kang felt personally threatened by Sun Yatsen and his followers and protected himself with body guards, bullet proof garb, handguns, and the counterthreat of assassinating Sun. Anti-Qing assassins—including a woman — were recruited and trained but the violent action was never taken. The Qinqwang armed uprising in 1900 did take place and spectacularly failed. But Kang and close followers developed plans, raised funds, and had fighters in the field. However, Qinqwang was ill conceived and uncharacteristic of the reformers’ usually peaceful route to political success. It seems totally anachronistic that Kang and reformers would consider the same militant method as Sun Yatsen and his revolutionaries. But Kang was impetuous and impatient at times and knew from his long study of China’s history that radical methods sometimes worked. The era of the Boxer Uprising of 1900 was a desperate time for China and Kang had followers willing to risk their lives to realize the goal of restoring Guangxu to power. The Western Military Academy seems to have grown out of the Qinqwang schema and was seen as a new way to instill national pride. But competing American soldiers of fortune had their own grandiose ideas—much to Kang’s embarrassment—and Chinatown cadets proved best suited for local parades and celebrations.

Kang and His Disciple in Los Angeles, March–May 1905

Flat are the great plains of America, where there is little good scenery to see.

Of the whole land, which I have traveled, Los Angeles is the most excellent:

Close to the ocean and the mountains, it is neither too cold nor too hot; Many are the flowers and various the fruits, and all the houses and buildings are new;

Big as one's fist are the fragrant oranges, which are sold throughout America.

A house is rented, facing West Lake, its blue green waters so beautiful. Day after day I walked around, leaning on my cane and roamed the islands across the wooden bridge.

All over the slopes, flowers flourished, and the meadows served as a carpet for me and my books.

For two months in spring, I had a short sojourn here, recuperating and forgetting the worries of one in exile.

On the East Coast there is only Hartford where the groves and houses can be compared to [those in Los Angeles],

Yet there are no hills and I am afraid of the cold; it is not a good haven for me.

Tom, my disciple, you who did so well choosing the present place for me, you are the originator of the Gancheng Schools [Western Military Academy].

Don't forget me when you travel in your dreams; in our old mansion, the blossoms are fine.¹



1 Kang Youwei, “Zhuisi Luosheng Xihu Guzhai” 追思羅生西湖故宅 [Recalling my Former Home in Westlake, Los Angeles], circa September 18–24, 1905, on Yellowstone Park Association letterhead, no. 350 in Fang Zhiqin and Cai Huiyao 方志欽, 蔡惠堯, ed., *Kang Liang yu Baohuanghui: Tan Liang zai Meiguo Suocang Ziliao Huibian* 康梁與保皇會: 譚良在美國所藏資料彙編 [Kang, Liang, and the Baohuanghui: A Compilation of Materials Collected by Tom Leung in the United States] (Hong Kong: Yinhe Chubanshe, 2008), 89.

During a too long excursion in Yellowstone Park, where he wrote this poem in September 1905, Kang Youwei remembered Los Angeles as an idyllic haven, with his old student Tom Leung as host and confidant. Kang's two months in Los Angeles, however, exposed him to the prying eyes of American newspaper reporters, the conflicting demands of Homer Lea and Richard Falkenberg for his approval, loss of control over the fate of the Western Military Academy, and an intensification of the differences between the United States and China over the Chinese Exclusion policy. Each of these events required a response from Kang. In Los Angeles, Kang also witnessed the dynamism of a rapidly modernizing metropolis that clarified his developing view that China's priority should be the acquisition of "material civilization." Technology and industry now dominated Kang's prescription for China, over and above political reform. The result was his essay, "Wuzhi Jiuguo Lun" (On National Salvation through Material Civilization), completed in Los Angeles.²

In spite of his lingering bronchitis, Kang dictated a lengthy statement to the press through his interpreter, Zhou Guoxian, on March 15, 1905, the day he arrived in Los Angeles. It set the tone for his American trip:

It is now material things which must have the close attention of the Chinese. We have passed the theoretical stage. We know the theories of civilization as it is understood in the Western world, and now we must bend ourselves to study and work combined.

Theory is good, but practice, study, the material arts, machinery, science—and guns—are what China's hopes are now based upon.

We now have a national spirit, patriotism, the rest must be accomplished on a substantial basis of material advancement ...

In short, my purpose is to know what is best in Western knowledge and apply it to our institutions.³

Kang retreated to rest and write in the house rented for him by Tom Leung across from Westlake Park. An urban oasis, the *Los Angeles Herald* described it as "a magnificent home in the Westlake district, overlooking the lake," lavishly furnished with carved ebony furniture draped with heavy red and gold

2 Young-tsu Wong, "The Search for Material Civilization: Kang Youwei's Journey to the West," *Taiwan Journal of East Asian Studies* (Taipei) 5, no. 1 (June 2008): 37.

3 "Chinese Welcome Kong Wu Wei," *Los Angeles Herald*, March 16, 1905.

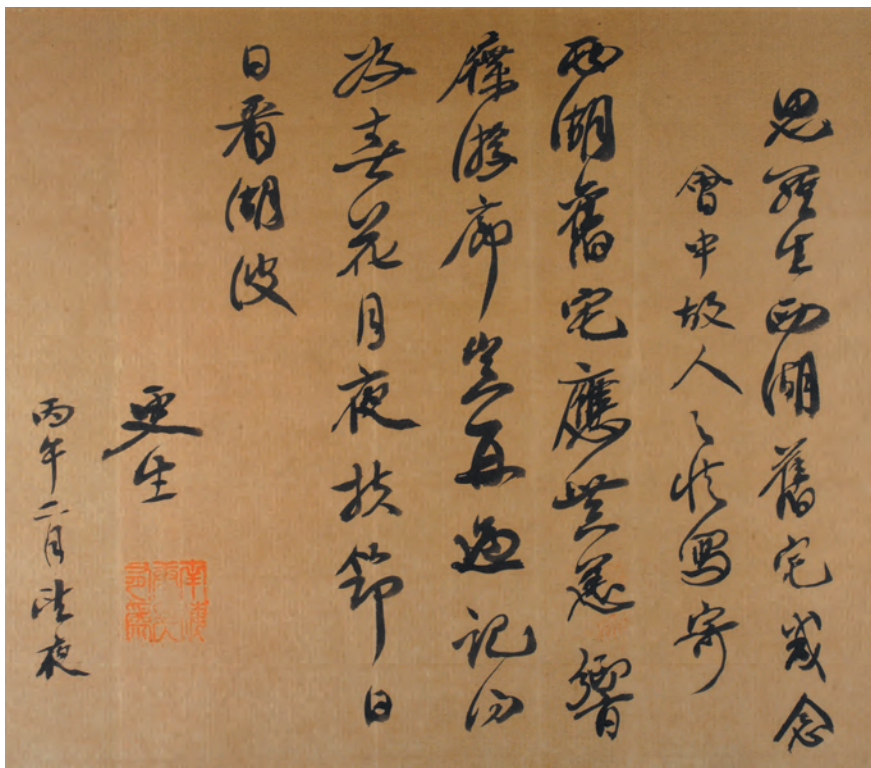


FIGURE 37 Kang Youwei from Mexico, March 9, 1906: "Missing my old house near Westlake Park in Los Angeles, I wrote a poem to send to Zhangxiao."

embroidered tapestries.⁴ Kang probably shared the house with members of his traveling party, including Zhou Guoxian and his Austrian bodyguard, Rupert Humer.⁵ Kang's poems recount his reveries: "I would lie down on the

4 "Chinese Welcome Kong Wu Wei," *Los Angeles Herald*, March 16, 1905. Westlake Park was renamed MacArthur Park in 1942. Kang called the lake "West Lake," like the famous Xi Hu 西湖 [West Lake] of Hangzhou.

5 The Chinese secretary may be Chen Yuesong [Chan Yok Soon] 陳岳崧 from Chicago; he was with Kang at that time, as mentioned in "Reformer Wei Comes to Study," *Los Angeles Examiner*, March 16, 1905. Others who arrived in Los Angeles with Kang were Western Military Academy Lieutenant Ben O. Young of Fresno, Lieutenant Fook Sang of Portland, and Tong Chinn [Tong Qing] 童頃 of Chicago (who might have also served as an English-language secretary—see his letter in English to Kang Tongbi from 2316 [*sic*—the address was 2613] W. Seventh Street, Los Angeles, April 21, 1905, no. E-51, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection).

grass whenever I got tired, take a little rest and open a book to read. Crossing a bridge, I took a stroll in the woods and watched waves rolling on the waters. I returned home after boating on West Lake, then asked for cooked fish.”⁶ Tom Leung’s cook prepared Kang’s meals and his favorite “heart tea” to give him energy, and on occasion Tom’s wife, Wong Bing Woo, brought Kang home-cooked food and herbal medicines. Thirty years later, she recalled a banquet for Kang hosted in their home. When Kang was asked to name their month-old daughter, he declared, “Let her be called Law Lan [Luolan] (Pink Flower).”⁷ Luolan was the Chinese name for Madame Roland, “the mother of the French Revolution” as immortalized in China by Liang Qichao’s 1902 biography in *Xinmin Congbao* (*Sein Min Choong Bou*).⁸ Kang’s feminist (and surprisingly revolutionary) christening complemented Liang Qichao’s chosen name for Tom Leung’s first daughter, Mulan, after woman warrior Hua Mulan.⁹

On March 18, Kang was heartily welcomed in Los Angeles by the Chinese community and “representatives of the bench, the Chamber of Commerce, and military men” at the first public event to honor Kang:

The greatest banquet ever given in Chinatown took place last night in a little banquet hall on Marchessault Street in honor of Kang Yu Wei, who is without doubt the most illustrious living Chinese, the Premier of China for a hundred days and a fugitive from the wrath of the Empress with a quarter of a million blood money on his head ...

As he entered the banquet hall the Chinese fell back in awe-struck lines, leaving a path through to the table, which was set back against the flaming embroidery of the Chinese imperial banners.¹⁰

Sitting with the guest of honor were local notables Judge John M. York, Colonel Cassius M. Moses, Colonel William J. Fife, John Alton, G. G. Johnson, A. C. Way,

6 Kang Youwei, “Zhounian Zhuishi Luosheng Xihu Guzhai” [Cherishing the Memory of My Former Home in Westlake, Los Angeles one year later], poem, nos. 106 and 116 in Fang and Cai, 91.

7 Louise Leung Larson, *Sweet Bamboo: A Memoir of a Chinese American Family* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 53.

8 Ying Hu, *Tales of Translation: Composing the New Woman in China, 1899–1918* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), 172.

9 Larson, *Sweet Bamboo*, 51–55. This book relies heavily on Larson’s 1934 oral history of her mother, which focused on the family’s early history, and the individual childhood recollections written by Larson and her siblings in 1940.

10 “Kowtow to Kang Yu Wei, Chinatown’s Biggest Banquet to Noted Visitor,” *Los Angeles Times*, March 19, 1905, 16.

Newman Essick of the Chamber of Commerce and the local president of the Baohuanghui, Mo Yunping (Moc Won Ping, Wong Ping).¹¹ On Kang's left was Governor Oscar H. La Grange "of the Soldiers' Home" and, on his right, was Homer Lea.

Toasts were made in honor of Kang, and he, in turn, proposed toasts to President Theodore Roosevelt whom he compared to George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, and William Gladstone. Wong Yap (Huang Xi, Wong Tui That, Huang Chuda, Huang Qiaokai), an official who had represented China at the 1904 World's Fair, praised Kang as the "greatest light in the Chinese world today. He has the courage and resolution that would not be daunted by the presence of death." Kang then spoke on the political evolution that he had written about in his *Datong Shu* and about the economic construction of China.¹²

A Chinese newspaper noted other details, marveling that Kang was greeted at the restaurant entrance by a contingent of several dozen soldiers "carrying rifles and holding swords." Striking the reporter as even more notable, "Kang went upstairs, everyone bowed with their hands folded in front to show respect. Homer Lea who was studying Chinese etiquette did the same, and all the Westerners followed suit. Westerners generally shake hands as a greeting but they saw the Chinese bow with hands clasped in front and did this—it was really strange to see Americans do this!"¹³ Not only did local Baohuanghui leaders toast Kang, but La Grange, York, and Lea made speeches, Lea praising Kang as a "son of God." Four hours later, the two hundred guests dispersed after wishing Kang long life three times.

The Chinese report of the banquet merely mentioned the attendance of "a Guangxi alternate county magistrate Huang Shida." This must refer to the Qing official Wong Yap, who was quoted by the *Los Angeles Examiner* as "voic[ing] in sturdy terms the devotion of the Chinese people to the Emperor and to His

11 The authors conclude that Wong Ping is Mo Yunping 莫雲屏, referred to by Kang in various letters to Tom Leung concerning the Los Angeles chapter, and author with Tom Leung of a group letter in support of the Hong Kong headquarters, seemingly written at the behest of Kang; Mo Yunping, Tan Zhangxiao, and others in Los Angeles to all comrades everywhere, printed letter, May 1, 1905, no. 579 in in Fang and Cai, 223–31.

12 "Kowtow to Kang Yu Wei," *Los Angeles Times*, March 19, 1905, 16.

13 [Chen] Yuesong, "Luosheng Baohuanghui Da Juhui ji" 羅省保皇會大聚會記 [Record of Los Angeles Baohuanghui's Great Gathering], March 1905 [handwritten date] in "Gancheng Xuexiao Shi" 干城學校史 [History of the Gancheng Schools], Chinese Empire Reform Association, AR-3, UC Berkeley Ethnic Studies Library, AAS ARC 2000/78, hereafter AAS ARC 2000/78. This is a newspaper clipping, probably from *Zhongguo Weixin Bao* or *Wenxing Bao*. The Guangxi official referred to in this article as Huang Shida 黃使達 is certainly Huang Chuda 黃處達.

Excellency Kang Yu Wei, whom he hoped soon to see again in power.”¹⁴ The *Examiner* observed that such a full-throated toast to Kang, “coming from a member of the present government was startling and portentous of the force of the hold Mr. Wei has on his people.” In fact, Wong was Tom Leung’s relative and had been his house guest since December 1904, after representing the Guangdong and Guangxi provincial governments at the St. Louis World’s Fair. As shown below, Wong’s near arrest by American immigration officials a few days later at Tom Leung’s home aroused more American press interest and no doubt pushed Kang to begin planning action against the Exclusion policy.

1 Tom Leung

Kang preferred traveling with family or intimate friends who served as his companions, intellectual sounding boards, interpreters, and personal assistants. His former students filled these functions well, and because of the strong teacher/student relationship, Kang, as Baohuanghui president, dispatched them at will to carry out his orders while simultaneously treating them as confidants and soul mates. Tom Leung (Tan Liang, Tan Zhangxiao or Tom Jerng How, Tan Jiqian or Tom Tsai Hin) thus spent most of 1905 with Kang, visiting him several times a week in Los Angeles and joining his traveling party on much of his American trip. Tom, an herbalist by profession, was described by the *Boston Journal* as “the official doctor for his excellency’s suite” and he fascinated American observers with his simple methods—herb tea and a fan—to treat Kang’s heat stroke in Boston, giving Kang speedy respite while eschewing American-style ice baths and wet blankets.¹⁵

Tom Leung came from the town of Ganzhu (Gum Jook) in one of China’s wealthiest counties, Shunde (Sun Duck), only about thirty miles from Guangzhou in the Pearl River (Zhu Jiang) Delta.¹⁶ Tom spoke Sam Yup (Sanyi or Three Counties) dialect as did Kang from neighboring Nanhai, and, like Kang, came

14 “Declares in Favor of Restoration of Kwank Hsu,” *Los Angeles Examiner*, March 19, 1905, 23.

15 “Herb Tea and Fan Saves Kang Yu Wei,” *Boston Journal*, July 13, 1905, 12.

16 In this book, Tom Leung 譚良 is referred to using his Chinese surname Tom 譚, but in English, Tom used the surname “Leung,” which appears in his official immigration papers, advertisements for the “T. Leung Herb Co.,” and as the surname finally adopted by his children in 1914, after Tom Leung gave up explaining to school officials why their surname was Tom (Larson, *Sweet Bamboo*, 99).



FIGURE 38 Kang Youwei and Tom Leung, Los Angeles, spring 1905.

from a literati family, his father passing the metropolitan examinations in 1863 to become a *jinshi*.¹⁷ Tom's parents died within six months of each other in 1894–95, postponing for three years of mourning Tom's arranged marriage to Wong Bing Woo (Huang Binghu), the well-educated but bound-foot daughter of a shark fin merchant.¹⁸ Temporarily free from marital obligations and with

17 Tan Zizhong 譚子中 of Ganzhu in Shunde earned the *jinshi* degree in 1863 and became a magistrate of Jianghua County in Hunan. He died in 1894 or 1895, around the same time it is believed that his son Tom Leung went to Guangzhou to study with Kang (most likely between 1895 and 1898).

18 Most of the biographical information on Tom Leung is from Larson, *Sweet Bamboo*.

no more paternal pressure to undertake a classical education, Tom chose to study instead with Kang at Wanmucaotang in Guangzhou. Tom learned Western political theory, science, geography, world history, and Confucian ethics from Kang and reveled in the informal atmosphere of exchange and vigorous debate encouraged by his teacher. Deep bonds formed when students joined Kang in spirited discussions with renowned scholars in Guangzhou or on excursions to scenic spots where students and teacher alike could relax, talk about reform theory, and speak freely.¹⁹ Thus, Tom fell easily into the role of loyal reform disciple during the heady years leading to the 1898 reforms.

Tom Leung became the first of Kang's disciples to settle permanently in North America. Although Tom had no education in Chinese medicine, his cousin Tom Foo Yuen (Tan Fuyuan) offered him a valuable immigration slot as partner in one of the most successful medical practices in Los Angeles, the Foo and Wing Herb Company.²⁰ Tom moved to the United States in summer 1899 and learned how to prescribe and dispense herbs well enough to allow his cousin to make a long visit to China. Tom began to learn English and settled into the busy and lucrative life of a Chinese herbalist who treated American patients seeking alternatives to Western medicine.²¹ After two years in Los Angeles, Tom returned to China in 1901 but remained only long enough to persuade his wife to come back with him to the United States. To ensure that he could bring Wong Bing Woo back to Los Angeles as the wife of a merchant, Tom arranged for a Christian wedding at the Preston Memorial Chapel in Guangzhou presided over by Oscar F. Wisner, president of Canton Christian College (Lingnan University).²² Tom was also corresponding with Wisner about sending students to the college at his or Baohuanghui expense,

19 Chen Xuezhong 陳學章, "Wuxu Bianfa de yaolan—Wanmucaotang" 戊戌變法的搖籃—萬木草堂 [Cradle of 1898 Reforms—Wanmucaotang] (unpublished paper, Guangdong Academy of Social Sciences, 2004).

20 William M. Tisdale, "Chinese Physicians in California," *Lippincott's Magazine* (Philadelphia) 63 (March 1899): 412, <http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?num=411&u=1&seq=7&view=image&size=100&id=mdp.39015078623611>, describes a firm identified as Foo and Wing by Haiming Liu, *Transnational History of a Chinese Family: Immigrant Letters, Family Business, and Reverse Migration* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2005), 58. Tisdale claimed that "with the possible exception of one or two firms of 'advertising doctors,' this firm of Chinese physicians had more patrons than any other physician or combination of physicians [of the 350] in the city."

21 Haiming Liu, *Transnational History*, 45–69, describes Chinese herbalists in southern California, including Tom Leung and his cousin Tom Foo Yuen [Tan Fuyuan 譚富園], and states that Chinese herbalism was the one profession Chinese were able to engage in successfully and that most of the patients were White.

22 Larson, *Sweet Bamboo*, 31–32.

with Wisner responding, "We will be happy to receive the students you wish to aid. The number is not our concern. Without the earnest assistance of the comrades of your country, the students may not be able to make it."²³ In May 1902, Tom Leung and Wong Bing Woo, now five months pregnant, set sail from Hong Kong on the S.S. *Gaelic*. Tom found onboard a political compatriot in the only other Chinese occupying first-class cabins on the ship, the aging reformer Yung Wing (Rong Hong), who was returning to Hartford after many years in China. When they landed in San Francisco, Tom and his wife were detained for five days before being allowed on American soil. Yung Wing was not so lucky. The *Gaelic* passenger manifest reads: "Yung Wing, 74, Chinese Minister at Washington, 1876–82, naturalized at Hartford, Conn. Oct. 30, 1852 ... escaped." Yung's American citizenship had been revoked after the Exclusion Act of 1882, but he managed to return to Hartford after this absence. His amah, Ah Hee, was sent back to China.²⁴ Kang later used Yung Wing's troubled return to the United States to illustrate the injustice of the Exclusion policy in a letter to President Theodore Roosevelt following Kang's two June 1905 meetings with the President.²⁵

Upon returning to Los Angeles, Tom began to dress in Western clothes and hid his queue under a wig while resuming his career as herbalist and activist. His wife soon bore the first of eight American-born children, and then unbound her feet. Now a prominent member of the community, Tom's daughter's birth announcement appeared in the *Los Angeles Herald*.²⁶

23 Oscar F. Wisner [Yin Shijia 尹士嘉] to Tan Zhangxiao 譚張孝, April 26, 1902 [or March 19, 1902], no. 200 in Fang and Cai, 357. A later letter on Canton Christian College letterhead from Chen Jiwu to Tan Zhangxiao, no date but 1903 or after, indicates that Tom had a plan for sending Chinese from the United States to the college and suggests he speak with Mr. Zhong [Zhong Rongguang, according to Fang] when he came to the United States to raise funds, no. 233 in Fang and Cai, 340.

24 S.S. *Gaelic* passenger manifest, June 13, 1902, M1414, RG 85, NA-Washington. Upon landing in San Francisco, Tom and Wong were detained until June 18. Yung Wing was an associate minister at the Chinese Embassy and knew before leaving Hong Kong that his U.S. citizenship had been revoked, as he had been informed by American minister in Beijing, Charles Denby, in 1898; see Edmund H. Worthy Jr., "Yung Wing in America," *Pacific Historical Review* 34 (January 1965): 283–84. One reason for Yung's return may have been to raise funds for the Second Taiping uprising of which he was a prime organizer; see L. Eve Armentrout, "The Canton Rising of 1902–1903: Reformers, Revolutionaries, and the Second Taiping," *Modern Asian Studies* 10, no. 1 (1976): 94.

25 Kang Youwei, Mexico City, to Theodore Roosevelt, January 30, 1906, 17–18, Chinese File 12264–78, Box 86, Entry 132, RG 85. See Chapter 6 for Kang's comment on this incident.

26 "Births," *Los Angeles Herald*, September 12, 1902: "September 7, at 903 South Olive street, to Mr. and Mrs. Dr. Tom Leung, a daughter."

Tom's "career" in the Baohuanghui began shortly after his arrival in the United States. Kang wrote Tom Leung from Hong Kong in December 1899: "People there [in the United States] have been longing for one of us to be there, like yearning for rain [during a drought]. Now that you are in the United States, you can follow my orders to dispatch letters to all cities to reassure them [that they are not alone] and encourage them to organize an association if they do not have one."²⁷ Kang's letter was forwarded with a postscript by Baohuanghui activist Liang Yingliu, whom Kang had instructed to brief Tom on the current extent of the organization in North America and what was expected of him.²⁸ Kang and Liang were together in Hong Kong at the time.

Liang Yingliu, whose communications to Tom were read and marked with emphasis dots by Kang (shown in italics below), told Tom, "By instruction of the Elder (*zhangzhe*—Kang Youwei), I ask you to promote the Baohuanghui. If the association is successful, then it is hopeful that his Majesty can regain his power, China will not perish, and the yellow race will not be wiped out."²⁹ Liang introduced by name the key Baohuanghui leaders in Canada, San Francisco, the Pacific Northwest, and Montana. He exhorted Tom to reach out to businessmen such as Tom She Bin (Tan Shubin), an herbalist in San Francisco and founder of the local chapter who was already Tom's friend. He even suggested that Tom look into enlisting secret society members to the cause: "*It's a time of crisis, and we need all kinds of good people, as in the Water Margin (Shui Hu)*. You cannot only associate with friends with whom you write highbrow songs and compose stories." Significantly, Liang also suggested that Tom investigate the establishment of Baohuanghui military training: "America allows people to train militias. When the Baohuanghui has ample funds, it will start to train a militia. (We don't even need money. American law permits training

27 Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao [postscript by Liang Yingliu 梁應騷], December 7, 1899, no. 502 in Fang and Cai, 25–26. Since Kang states that he added "circles for emphasis and commentary," he must have examined the postscript from Liang and thus it was sent from Hong Kong.

28 Liang Yingliu had been a student of Kang's, according to Chen Hancui, *Kang Men Dizi Shuliue* [Brief Sketches of Kang [Youwei]'s Disciples] (Guangzhou: Guangdong Gaodeng Jiaoyu Chubanshe, 1991), 164, who states that Liang helped Kang compile *Chunqiu Dong shi xue* [Dong Zhongshu's Study of *Spring and Autumn Annals*] and participated in the Zilijun [Independence Army] uprising. He also was active in Huayi Bank and Zhenhua Gongsi and wrote the inscription on the 1907 plaque of donors to the Baohuanghui building, 1715 Government Street, Victoria, BC.

29 Liang Yingliu to Tan Zhangxiao, December 8, 1899, no. 501 in Fang and Cai, 330–32. A translation of this letter, which wrongly states that Liang wrote it in Canada and misdated it as 1901, appears in Larson, "New Source Materials on Kang Youwei," 169–73.

on Sundays).” Liang knew that “*new ordnance and firearms* are often invented [in the United States]” and “*we need all these weapons.*” “We should know their names, what they are good for, and how to ship them to China. Please study them at all times, and write letters to tell us about them.”

Liang Yingliu appealed to Tom Leung’s ambitions: “You have always cherished a sense of loyalty and righteousness and have thought of saving the world. Now here is the opportunity for you, and I think you should take it right away.”³⁰ Over the next ten years, Tom would found the Los Angeles Baohuanghui chapter and at one time or another be involved in a broad range of activities, all either initiated or sanctioned by Kang. Between 1899 and 1909, Kang kept in close touch with his student, writing him lengthy and often confidential letters, which he sometimes urged Tom to destroy after reading.³¹ Tom recruited Homer Lea and helped establish the Western Military Academy. He wrote for and possibly edited *Wenxing Bao* (*Mon Hing Bo, The Chinese World*) in San Francisco and, after the 1906 earthquake, in Los Angeles. In 1899, Liang Yingliu charged Tom Leung with the task that came to define his Baohuanghui career: Tom should recruit members “who are versed in Western languages, public law, machinery, or physics, so that they will be useful to us. Most important are political science, finance, and naval and military sciences, *and if there are no such people, then seek out the talented and intelligent and have them study*

30 Liang Yingliu to Tan Zhangxiao, December 8, 1899.

31 Fang Zhiqin and Cai Huiyao, “Kang Youwei de Yipi Mihan Jiedu” [Deciphering a Cache of Kang Youwei’s Confidential Letters], in *Kang Youwei yu Gaige Chuangxin Xueshu Yantaohui Lunwenji* (2008 *Zhongguo Guangdong Nanhai Danzao*) [Compilation of Papers from Scholarly Symposium on Kang Youwei and Reform Innovations (2008, Danzao, Nanhai, Guangdong, China), ed. Wang Jie and Zhang Jielong (Guangzhou: Lingnan Meishu Chubanshe, 2011), 176. Kang was most concerned by others reading his letters to Tom that dealt with leaks of the Qinqiang uprising or musings about other Baohuanghui leaders, financial problems, and low morale, which would be dangerous or fodder for gossip if in wrong hands. The Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection also includes examples of Kang urging his correspondents to burn or otherwise dispose of his written words so that they would not be read by others. For example, Kang wanted Tongbi (and Tang Mingsan of New York City) to distribute the newly manufactured Baohuanghui badges before he arrived in a city. Members were to buy the badges for \$1 each and wear them to greet Kang. In this case, it seems that Kang was embarrassed about the pecuniary intentions behind distributing membership badges (he saw it as a good way to raise money for his travels), and thus instructed his daughter: “You could inform Ming[san] of this situation, and let him take care of it; or you could show him this letter and ask him to burn it (destroy it) after reading.” Kang Youwei to Kang Tongbi 康同璧, April, 1905, no. 康-5, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.



FIGURE 39 Kang Youwei seated; standing from left, George Lem and Tom Leung, both of Los Angeles, Ben O. Young of Fresno, translator Zhou Guoxian, 1905, Los Angeles.

*these subjects in school.*³² In response to this challenge, Tom Leung would propose supporting Baohuanghui students with the profits from an opulent Chicago restaurant run by the Baohuanghui, King Joy Lo (Qiongcaillou).

Tom most likely organized the Los Angeles Baohuanghui chapter soon after he came to the city and informed Liang Yingliu, who acknowledged its existence in his December 1899 letter.³³ However, its formal establishment was

32 Liang Yingliu to Tan Zhangxiao, December 8, 1899 (emphasis in original).

33 Liang to Tan, December 8, 1899: "Los Angeles, where you live, also has a chapter."

reported in the San Francisco newspaper *Chung Sai Yat Po* (*Zhongxi Ribao*) in June 1900, with Tom Leung introducing several hundred audience members to the purpose of the Baohuanghui: “coalescing the popular will to implement a new governmental system” and transform China’s weakness into strength.³⁴ Notably, another speaker stressed the need to strengthen China by taking advantage of American education: “All Chinese children born in the United States should attend American schools to study various subjects like chemistry, astronomy, geography, technology, the arts, military affairs, agriculture, and political affairs.” By the time the chapter opened its first headquarters at 417 North Los Angeles Street in January 1904, local newspapers reported that membership was a healthy 1,200.³⁵ Surely the chapter must have served all of Los Angeles County or even the broader Southern California region, because a 1905 census of Chinese showed only 2,800 Chinese in Los Angeles County (and only 800 in the city proper).³⁶ As with Chinatowns throughout the United States, tightening Exclusion Act enforcement had put pressure on Chinese to the point that their numbers in Los Angeles County had fallen drastically from 8,000 in 1898. Following Liang Qichao’s visit to Los Angeles in 1903, Tom Leung was replaced as chapter president by Mo Yunping (Wong Ping). However, as a dignitary by virtue of his ties to Kang and Liang and his literary abilities, Tom was called upon to read a poem composed specially for the occasion of the dedication of the new offices.³⁷ An undated New Year public letter sent by the Los Angeles chapter composed in highly stylized *pianti* or parallel prose was probably written by Tom Leung:

We sing for love of our country, our hearts ardently pursuing the waves of pepper flowers [a poetic reference to pepper flowers as a symbol of beauty and auspiciousness].

34 “Hui Li Baohuang” 會立保皇 [Society Established to Protect the Emperor], *Chung Sai Yat Po* [Zhongxi Ribao], June 13, 1900. The meeting was held June 10, 1900.

35 “Pong Wong Wuey has 1200 Members,” *Los Angeles Herald*, January 4, 1904; “To Revivify the Old China,” *Los Angeles Times*, January 3, 1904, 5.

36 “Big Slump in Chinese Noses,” *Los Angeles Times*, July 5, 1905, section 2, 5, reported that the census was conducted by four local Chinese under the auspices of a Chinese business association, with results given to both the U.S. and Qing governments. San Bernardino and Oxnard, both southern California towns, would host their own Baohuanghui chapters and Western Military Academy branches (see “Mapping the Baohuanghui,” Appendix 2).

37 The first headquarters was in the Garnier Building, now the home of the Chinese American Museum.

Everything is in peace and as auspicious as the duckweed plant [refers to Confucius who told the King of Chu of the appearance of duckweed in the water—which is edible and sweet as honey—and a positive sign from Heaven].³⁸

Tom was not present for the inauguration of a much more elaborate Los Angeles headquarters in July 1905 because he was traveling with Kang.³⁹ Perhaps in keeping with “the impulse of the Los Angeles spirit of progress,” as the *Los Angeles Times* described it in September 1905, “the Chinese Empire Reform Association has just completed a \$40,000 block for its headquarters in the heart of Chinatown.”⁴⁰ This two-story building was built on land leased for forty years from the Sepulveda family by the Wai Sun Building Company, “composed of leading merchants and professional men who are members of the reform association.” The first floor was devoted to profit-making retail stores and a bathhouse, and the second floor to offices, a “model schoolroom” for the association’s Chinese-language school, and a capacious (3,750 square foot) meeting and lecture hall that doubled as a drill hall for the Western Military Academy.

“And last and greatest of these wonders,” continued the *Times*, “the Los Angeles Chinese propose to lift their women folk to a higher educational plane, and will actually encourage the club idea among Chinese maids and dames!” A Baohuanghui women’s association was founded earlier, likely in 1903, as in January 1904, Baohuanghui organizer Liang Qitian wrote Wong Bing Woo a letter recalling his stay with her family in Los Angeles a few weeks earlier and enclosed a “letter of congratulations” for the “ladies reform association” (nü weixinhui).⁴¹

38 The lines read: 愛國興歌，心逐椒花之浪。太平呈象，祥開萍實之江。 Los Angeles Baohuanghui to comrades and righteous men in your city, printed letter, no date, no. 574 in Fang and Cai, 375. Translation by Kun Yue and Chen Xuezhong.

39 “Banquet and Dedication,” *Los Angeles Herald*, July 29, 1905: “The Bow Wong Wui society will celebrate the birthday of the Chinese emperor with a banquet at the Bow Wong Wui hall, 409 Apablaza street, this evening and will dedicate the new hall during the evening.”

40 “Almond Eyes Read Future,” *Los Angeles Times*, September 29, 1905, pt. 11, 1. The building was on the current site of Union Station. Thank you to Gilbert Hom, Chinese Historical Society of Southern California, for this detail.

41 Liang Qitian 梁啓田 to Huang Binghu 黃冰壺, January 31, 1904, no. 178 in Fang and Cai, 165 [Fang wrongly dates letter as 1901; Liang Qitian’s speech at the dedication of the first Los Angeles office is noted in “To Revivify the Old China,” *Los Angeles Times*, January 3, 1904, 5].

The *Times* also mentioned an upcoming talk in the new hall by the feminist orator Xue Jinqin (Sit Gum Kum), whose secret role as a prospective assassin is highlighted in Chapter 4. Wong Bing Woo invited Xue to live at her home, and they became close friends during the three years Xue was in Los Angeles. Early on Wong herself displayed feminist leanings. She was the first Chinese woman in Los Angeles to take the podium, and a Shanghai magazine covered her speech in fall 1904 linking the Baohuanghui goal of saving the nation to the education of women, moving the audience of four hundred Baohuanghui supporters, both men and women, who had come to welcome her cousin, Wong Yap, the Qing official who had just represented Guangdong and Guangxi merchants at the St. Louis World's Fair.⁴² When she was heavily pregnant with her second child, she lectured for thirty minutes in Chinatown, arguing that Chinese women should be taught to read and write and their husbands not allowed to take concubines. "Asked if she had prepared her speech in advance, she said, 'Why should I? It was all in my stomach. I talked till I was red in the face.'" ⁴³ While her husband was on the road with Kang Youwei in 1905, Wong corresponded with Kang Tongbi, who was then studying in Hartford. Wong was six years older than Tongbi, but she respectfully addressed Tongbi as "Elder Sister" and bemoaned the fact that her children "stop my progress."⁴⁴ Wong invoked the Confucian Datong world where "people did not love their parents only, nor treat as children only their own sons," and asked "when will the words of Confucius be put into practice?"⁴⁵ Wong's second letter to Tongbi a month later took heart from Tongbi's response: "You said that if we two hundred million women were allowed to cherish lofty and wonderful aspirations like you, this would turn our poor, weak country into a strong powerful one." Wong pointed to the hopeful sign of Chinese uniting to reject the Exclusion treaty (perhaps she had also heard of the women's groups forming in China

42 "Nüshi Yanshuo" 女士演說 [A Lady Makes a Speech], *Nüzi Shijie* no. 11 (November 7, 1904): 74.

43 Larson, *Sweet Bamboo*, 47–48. Also see "United States Seen by Eyes of Oriental," *Los Angeles Examiner*, January 29, 1905, 67: "Mrs. Leung is very much interested in the reform movement, and active in the work of amelioration for the women of her country. One month ago, she spoke to a crowded house in Chinatown, being the first Chinese woman to speak in her own language to her own people on a public platform in Los Angeles."

44 Huang Binghu to Kang Tongbi, July 15 and August 15, 1905, nos. B-38 and B-39, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

45 From "Liyun" 禮運 [Movement of the Rites] in *Liji* 禮記 [Book of Rites], as adopted from a translation by James Legge. This comes from the description of Datong that inspired Kang Youwei's *Datong Shu*. 大同書.

to support the boycott) and invoked “gathering together into large groups” (*he daqun*), a common Baohuanghui phrase indicating associations and mass actions, such as the anti-American goods boycott.⁴⁶

If only our compatriots could show a little courage and uprightness, we could gather together large groups (*he daqun*) and combine forces in order to wipe out this humiliation (*xuechi*) ... There are barbarian villains raising a storm in the nation, plotting to plunge our compatriots back into the ocean of misery. These kinds of people are truly less than beasts. I would like to sharpen my sword and exterminate these monsters, open up our path to reform and rescue our fellow sisters from their profound misery.⁴⁷

Wong’s background was far more traditional than Tongbi’s. She grew up in a wealthy family who lived in a park-like compound of ten large buildings, served by her own maid from childhood, her feet bound at age six. But Wong’s father, while in no way as forward-thinking as Kang, believed in some education for girls, and Wong received four years of tutoring in reading, writing, geography, and history. Her calligraphy and literary style display a passionate and sharp intelligence that could resonate with Tongbi’s inspiring words. Although Tongbi and Wong never met, Tongbi’s elder sister, Tongwei, visited Los Angeles in late 1908 and was Wong’s house guest for a week.⁴⁸ Tongwei was transiting the United States on her return to Asia after a European rendezvous with her father and sister. Before her marriage in 1898, Tongwei was a pioneering journalist and feminist, one of the first women to work for a newspaper as

46 Wong Sin Kiong, *China’s Anti-American Boycott Movement in 1905: A Study in Urban Protest* (New York: Peter Lang, 2002), 54–56, describes a number of women’s rallies, organizations, even vocational courses to teach women how to sew products to replace American imports. “It was the first time in Chinese history that a large number of women participated in a social and political movement.”

47 Huang Binghu to Kang Tongbi, August 15, 1905, no. B-39, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

48 Kang Tongwei 康同薇 to Huang Binghu, January 29, 1909, no. 103, Tom Leung Collection, Asian Library, University of California, Los Angeles, <https://digital.library.ucla.edu/catalog/ark:/21198/zz002313df>, accessed January 21, 2023. Kang Tongwei mentions that they have not seen each other for several months and asked, “Have you given birth to a son?” Larson, *Sweet Bamboo*, 54–55.

translator for the early reform paper, *Zhixin Bao*, and founder of a magazine for women, *Nüxue Bao*.⁴⁹

When Kang Youwei and Tom Leung reunited in Los Angeles, seven or eight years after they were together in Guangzhou, Kang must have been pleased to see his former student transformed into an American gentleman. Sporting a mustache and elegantly dressed in frock coat and top hat, necktie pinned with a cluster of three large pearls, and a Chinese-carved, gold-headed walking stick at his side, Tom's opulent image exuded self-confidence, if not pride.⁵⁰ His affluence as an herbalist eased his transition into American society, but Tom resembled many other Baohuanghui leaders who also comfortably acculturated to a Western lifestyle and customs. In a sense, these men (and a few women, especially Kang Tongbi), personified Kang's ideal amalgamation of Chinese and Western cultural traits: preserving Chinese literary arts and family values, while Westernizing their appearance, physical activities, engagement with society, and political style.

Tom engaged in American society with gusto. From his earliest days in the United States, he had American friends, even though his English was limited. One friend, Art Howard, was a nurseryman who in his youth mowed Tom's lawn and whom Tom paid twice the usual price. Tom talked about science and technology with Art and his brother, Paul, who was also Tom's first English teacher, and they showed him simple experiments with electricity and taught him how to make perfume from flowers. Tom asked another American friend to teach him to play tennis, but he was too clumsy to move fast enough. He also took lessons in the cornet and ballroom dancing, with equally poor results. Every Fourth of July, Tom invited his neighbors to a fireworks display that included six-foot-tall skyrockets and Roman candles. Thanksgiving and Christmas were celebrated in full fashion, with Tom presiding over a traditional turkey dinner and the family opening gifts around a decorated tree. He encouraged his wife to wear American clothes and accompany him on excursions to the Rose Parade and rodeos. He named his sons after American presidents, the first three Taft, William and Howard; his fourth son, Monroe; and fifth, Bismarck (later changed to Lincoln).⁵¹ However, not until 1909 and the birth of his first son did Tom finally cut his queue, long defying Kang's open

49 Lily Xiao Hong Lee and A. D. Stefanowska, ed., *Biographical Dictionary of Chinese Women* (Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 1998), 275–76.

50 See Figure 37; Larson, *Sweet Bamboo*, 44–45; and “In Frock Coat and High Hat,” *Los Angeles Times*, March 10, 1908.

51 His sons' Chinese names all began with “wei” 爲, as in Kang Youwei.

advocacy for modern Western haircuts.⁵² Alongside his headlong enthusiasm for the American lifestyle, Tom Leung's literary talents as a poet and calligrapher meant that his Baohuanghui colleagues described him as a poet rather than an herbalist.⁵³ He continued to practice calligraphy during his thirty-year sojourn in the United States. His large Chinese scholar's collection of books must have cost thousands of dollars to buy and ship from China. Chinese medicine texts, John Fryer's series of introductory guides to Western science and thought, books by Kang, Liang Qichao, and Weng Tonghe, and multivolume sets of Chinese classical poetry, history, calligraphy, and philosophy filled the glass-fronted bookcases in Tom's library.⁵⁴

In Los Angeles, Tom Leung came to be known as a "millionaire and one of the so-called Chinese princes of America" (1907) and eventually "the wealthiest Chinese citizen" (1920).⁵⁵ To practice as an herbalist in California was to suffer the continual indignity of arrest for practicing medicine without a license or for using "quack" methods. Those most targeted were herb doctors with many American patients, such as Tom Leung. According to his mortified daughter, Tom was arrested more than one hundred times, but thanks to Chinatown bail bondsmen and a pair of American attorneys, he never spent an hour in jail although he paid about \$5,000 in fines. These arrests provided excellent fodder for reporters: "In Frock Coat and High Hat—Millionaire Chinese Doctor in Police Court" in the *Los Angeles Times*, describes Tom Leung as one of two herbalists refusing to comply with the law, in the city's "second crusade against Celestial Physicians."⁵⁶

Tom Leung died in 1931, four years after Kang's death. Pasted into scrapbooks or stored in boxes, Tom Leung's papers emerged in the historical record fifty years later, when their significance was recognized by University of California,

52 See Chapter 2.

53 Larson, *Sweet Bamboo*, 70. In describing Kang's 1905 visit to the United States, Jung-pang Lo, "Sequel to the Chronological Autobiography," *Kang Yu-wei: A Biography and Symposium* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1967), 198, wrote, Kang was "accompanied by the poet T'an Chang-hsiao."

54 Tom Leung's books were donated to the University of Southern California, UCLA (360 titles in 2,248 volumes) and the Chinese American Museum of Los Angeles (approximately 100 titles).

55 "Net Drags in Rich Chinese," *Los Angeles Times*, January 9, 1907; "Our Chinatown in a Nutshell," *Los Angeles Times*, February 22, 1920; Tisdale, "Chinese Physicians in California," 412.

56 "In Frock Coat and High Hat," *Los Angeles Times*, March 10, 1908. This article, like "Net Drags in Rich Chinese," includes much apparently fabricated biographical information about Tom Leung, possibly combining the fabulous careers and real estate of more than one herbalist. There is no evidence that Tom owned property in Chicago or San Francisco, as claimed in these stories.

Los Angeles professor Perry Link. Nearly two hundred letters, poems, official documents, and business records from Tom's days as a Baohuanghui activist, 1899 to 1912, along with many personal letters from relatives in China, were preserved. The collection was donated to UCLA's East Asian Library in 1985.⁵⁷ Such a rich cache of Baohuanghui documents is rarely found, and in the 1980s Chinese historians were stepping carefully back into the study of Kang Youwei and the Baohuanghui and reevaluating the late Qing reformers in the reflected light of Deng Xiaoping's reforms. Consequently, there was much interest when a few of the letters were shown to Kang scholars in Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangzhou in 1990. In 1997, Fang Zhiqin of the Guangdong Academy of Social Sciences published a large selection of the Tom Leung documents in time for the centennial of the Hundred Days of Reform and in 2008 issued a second edition.⁵⁸

Tom filled a scrapbook with eighty documents written between 1898 and 1926 that he considered to be official Baohuanghui business, including printed or mimeographed group letters from other chapters and leaders such as Kang or Liang Qichao, letters written to the Los Angeles chapter, and transmissions of Kang's letters through Canadian Baohuanghui leaders.⁵⁹ The last item in the scrapbook is a lengthy 1926 essay published by Tianjin Yong Baoshe that Kang wrote to lambaste the failures of the Republic of China to live up to its constitutional promise. A file box of more personal correspondence includes letters

57 The documents were among many items left behind in the Los Angeles family home after Wong Bing Woo suffered a stroke and she and her adult children moved to new homes in the 1950s. Luckily, Arnold Larson, ex-husband of Tom Leung's second daughter, Louise Leung Larson, salvaged the letters and many other historical artifacts from the vacant house and gave them to the Southwest Museum, Los Angeles. When Arnold Larson died in 1981, Louise Larson reclaimed the items from the Southwest Museum and ultimately gave the letters to the University of California, Los Angeles. The collection is viewable online at <https://digital.library.ucla.edu/catalog/ark:/21198/zz00231155>.

58 The Tom Leung documents were first described in Ruan Fangji, Huang Chunsheng, and Wu Jie, with materials provided by Tan Jingyi [Jane Leung Larson], "Guanyu Baohuanghui Shi jian Shougao" 關於保皇會十件手稿 [Ten Original Documents concerning the Baohuanghui], *Jindaishi Ziliao* [Modern Historical Materials] 80 (January 1992): 1–18. A more detailed description and analysis of ten letters is in Larson, "New Source Materials on Kang Youwei and the Baohuanghui." Fang Zhiqin and Cai Huiyao 方志欽, 蔡惠堯, ed., *Kang Liang yu Baohuanghui: Tan Liang zai Meiguo Suocang Ziliao Huibian* 康梁與保皇會: 譚良在美國所藏資料彙編 [Kang, Liang, and the Baohuanghui: A Compilation of Materials Collected by Tom Leung in the United States] (Hong Kong: Yinhe Chubanshe, 2008).

59 Documents pasted in the scrapbook are numbered 501 to 580 in Tom Leung Collection, University of California, Los Angeles; loose documents in boxes are numbered 101 to 364 and include many Tom family letters.

from Kang, Liang Qichao, and about fifty Baohuanghui members, including Xu Qin, Kuang Shoumin, Li Fuji, and Ye En, who were writing from throughout the world. Tom Leung's relatives also were among the letter writers, some of whom were involved in the reform movement or had investments in Baohuanghui businesses. Nearly forty letters and poems from Kang, as well as correspondence he received when traveling with Tom Leung in 1905, illuminate not only the complex relationship of Kang to his disciple but the evolution of the Baohuanghui and Kang's changing perspective and strategies. Factionalism and corruption were to quickly erode Baohuanghui influence in the United States after 1908, and the letters illuminate the conflicts already rife in the association shortly after its founding. Tom Leung's assiduity at saving Baohuanghui correspondence allowed him to compile what became a damning public exposé of Kang's autocratic management style and Baohuanghui financial mismanagement in 1909 (see Chapter 9).

2 Material Civilization

On his first day in the city, Kang told the *Los Angeles Herald*, "I have found Los Angeles one of the most progressive cities I have met during my travels."⁶⁰ In fact, Kang came to see Los Angeles as a prime example of Western "material civilization" and gave it prominence in "Wuzhi Jiuguo Lun" (On National Salvation through Material Civilization), whose preface was written in April 1905 while in the city.⁶¹ "Wuzhi Jiuguo Lun" starkly diverged from Kang's utopian masterpiece, *Datong Shu*, and marked his personal development into a more pragmatic thinker after leaving the isolation of India for extensive travels in Europe and North America. Kang's focus on the distant future receded as he concentrated on the urgency of China's economic construction if it were ever to match the West, much less avoid being devoured by it. He stressed that:

The root of China's weakness lies solely in not knowing well enough to develop science and technology [*wuzhi xue*]. The Chinese civilization, which is thousands of years old, is actually the foremost on earth. But it

60 "Chinese Welcome Kong Wu Wei."

61 Kang Youwei, "Wuzhi Jiuguo Lun," 物質救國論 [Essay on National Salvation through Material Civilization] in *Kang Youwei Quanji* 康有為全集 [Collected Works of Kang Youwei], ed. Jiang Yihua and Zhang Hualong 姜義華, 張榮華 (Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin Daxue Chubanshe, 2007), vol. 8, 61–101. *Wuzhi* literally means "material, substance, matter," but we follow Young-Tsu Wong's usage in "Kang Youwei's Journey to the West," 33–59.

has placed undue emphasis upon ethics and philosophy, and is extremely deficient in science and technology.⁶²

Kang conceived of a social evolutionary progression measured by the level of a country's material advancement, more pertinent to a nation's power in the world than the greatness of its philosophy or religion. Kang suggested that Germany, with its superior philosophers such as Kant and Hegel only became strong when it focused on industrial development, and although the young United States "had not produced a single philosopher," Kang praised it above other countries as a model of rapid modernization and national strength.⁶³ The technological strength of the "new world" (*xin shijie*) (by which he meant the developed countries) was like a great wind sweeping away the "old world" (*jiu shijie*), like leaves off a tree.⁶⁴ In his essay, Kang extolled Vancouver, British Columbia, and, even more so, Los Angeles, which represented for Kang the expansive, enlightened West.

While in Los Angeles, Kang wrote a long letter describing the ideas in his essay to an (unnamed) Qing envoy in Europe in hopes that they would be passed on to the Qing authorities. "Only you understand me. That's why I dare to present my ideas to you."

I entered America via Canada after touring eleven countries in Europe. The more I observed, the more I found China is deficient. That which is most wanted is none other than technological knowledge (*wuzhi zhi xue*). Other countries become strong only because they have automobiles, streetcars, technology, warships, guns and cannons, not because of freedom, constitutions, and other empty words ... Great Britain got the steam engine and became the most powerful country in the world. Germany, engaged in industry and business for thirty years, has surpassed Great Britain. Hard-working for forty years, the United States has become the richest country in the world. This proves that the technology of the steam engine (*wuzhi qiji*) is most important. A country's survival depends on it!⁶⁵

62 Kung-ch'üan Hsiao, *A Modern China and a New World: Kang Yu-wei, Reformer and Utopian, 1858-1927* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1975), 520.

63 Hsiao, *A Modern China and a New World*, 524.

64 Kang, "Wuzhi Jiuguo Lun," in *Kang Youwei Quanji*, vol. 8, 80. Also see Wong, "The Search for Material Civilization," 47-48.

65 Kang Youwei to unknown addressee, April 12, 1905, no. 351 in Fang and Cai, 58-59. For translation, see Larson, "New Source Materials," 173-76. Fang and Cai, "Kang Youwei de Yipi Mihan Jiedu," 180, identifies the addressee as "a certain Qing diplomatic envoy." The

Not only national survival but human happiness could be generated by “material civilization.” The steam engine not only powered gunboats but steamships, locomotives, factories, and electricity-generating stations—and along with other manifestations of technological industrialization, such as the automobile—were the keys to creating a Datong-like environment where people could enjoy urban affluence close to nature. In his essay, Kang described a thriving new town he toured in Southern California with amenities more desirable than the grand cities of Suzhou, Hangzhou, Tokyo, and Yokohama. “Not that we in the East with several thousand years of civilization and millions of people could not attain this, but material learning (*wuzhi zhi xue*) has made it possible. Their remarkable material gains can be traced back to many sources long ago and eventually led to an unprecedented economic harvest.”⁶⁶ This town could have been any one of several rapidly growing and well-planned communities in the area, quite possibly Redlands. Redlands prospered from orange groves and railway connections to become known at the turn of the century as “The City of Millionaires” and “The City of Beautiful Homes.” Redlands’ Smiley Heights neighborhood was a tourist stop on a popular rail excursion from Los Angeles known for its scenic route along the San Gabriel Mountains; the town would also have been familiar to Kang’s host, Tom Leung, since his cousin Tom Foo Yuen began his herb business there.⁶⁷

letter states Kang last saw the addressee nine months earlier, which would indicate both were in Western Europe.

66 Kang, “Wuzhi Jiuguo Lun,” in *Kang Youwei Quanji*, vol. 8, 85; thank you to Connie Kang [Kang Xuepei] for a smooth translation.

67 Identification is complicated because both the 1919 edition of “Wuzhi Jiuguo Lun,” 55 and the version in *Kang Youwei Quanji*, vol. 8, 85, use two transcriptions of the town name, 叻論 or Daolun [Dou/tou-leuhn in Cantonese] and 叻倫 or Lelun [Lahk-leuhn]. The latter could be Redlands, which is about sixty miles from Los Angeles [Redlands appears as 列倫 or Lielun in *Chinese and English Phrase Book and Dictionary* (Vancouver: Thomson Stationery Company, 1903 and 1910)]. See Carey McWilliams, *Southern California: An Island on the Land* (Santa Barbara: Peregrine Smith, 1973), 127, 152–54, in which he describes how the area was promoted to Eastern settlers by the railroad companies; the wealthy Smiley twins from Lake Mohonk, New York, who developed a garden estate on 200 acres overlooking the San Bernardino Valley, and how “in Redlands social rating is clearly marked by altitude.” In other respects, Kang’s description does not match Redlands, its age of well over six years (incorporated in 1888) and that most of its wealthy migrants came from Chicago (McWilliams, 153). Also see City of Redlands website, <https://www.cityofredlands.org/history-landmarks>, accessed February 2, 2023. Thank you to Paul Chace, Suellen Cheng, Gilbert Hom, and Kirby Leung for sharing their expertise in Southern California history and Chinese names. For Tom Foo Yuen’s office in Redlands, see Tamara Venit Shelton, *Herbs and Roots: A History of Chinese Doctors in the American Medical Marketplace* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019), 86–87.

Kang wrote enthusiastically about this almost utopian Southern California town:

Buildings rise into the sky; parks are magnificent and beautiful. They fill the hills and gullies. Weeping willows line both sides of the road. Men and women stroll and gather on the roads between beautiful and neatly pruned fields and gardens ... With a warm climate, the small place favors the growth of oranges, which bring ready profits. Rich people from New York immigrated to this place from the east. It developed so rapidly. There are already forty-six millionaires among several thousand people. There are countless rich people among the rest. Each one has his own gardens and palatial buildings occupying an entire hill. Their gates look strangely wonderful, overlooking each other from a distance. Each one has electric vehicles and good horses chasing each other day in and day out. Thus, the hotels, theaters, schools and parks are bustling with activity. Wide roads were built in the high mountains so that cars and horses can twist up to the top, allowing homes to be reached by tramcars and residents to drive their cars in and out. At night, electric lamps shine like daylight. During the day, women travel here to shop. All of this has been made possible by tramcars and automobiles.⁶⁸

In a seemingly abrupt change of mind, Kang's letter to his diplomatic friend in Europe disparaged those who put "freedom, constitutions, and other empty words" above knowledge of science and technology.⁶⁹ Kang, according to Kung-ch'üan Hsiao, criticized Chinese students abroad who were dazzled by the "social and political ideas of Europe and America," but did not recognize that "the tide of revolutionary thought has been threatening to engulf all. 'Liberty' and 'revolution' have become clichés on young people's lips." Hsiao also pointed out that Kang had ulterior motives in championing technology over politics at this time and hoped his essay would divert "attention to what he believed to be a more constructive and less hazardous approach to the problem of China's modernization."⁷⁰ The distinction between reform and revolution had sharpened, and, with the founding of Sun Yatsen's Tongmenghui (Revolutionary Alliance) that summer, the Baohuanghui predominance in overseas Chinese communities was receiving its first serious organizational challenge. However, throughout Kang's American journeys, he was caught

68 Kang, "Wuzhi Jiuguo Lun," in *Kang Youwei Quanji*, vol. 8, 85.

69 Kang Youwei to unknown addressee, no. 351 in Fang and Cai, 58.

70 Hsiao, *A Modern China and a New World*, 516–17.

in the contradictions of his own polemics and showed no diminution in his promotion of constitutionalism and political reform when speaking to both Chinese and American audiences. When Kang reprinted the essay in 1919, he admitted that in 1905 Liang Qichao had “strongly opposed [the publication of this essay], thinking that liberty, revolution, and constitutional government would be sufficient to effect our country’s reconstruction.”⁷¹

There is no doubt that Kang was gravely concerned about China’s laggard performance in technology and industrialization, struck as he was by the simple contrast of lifestyle in Los Angeles and Suzhou or Yokohama. Showing his naive faith in the ability of Chinese to quickly absorb this new knowledge with minimal investment, Kang suggested to his diplomat friend that China could rapidly gain several thousand skilled people if each county in China sent two students abroad to acquire technological knowledge. Top foreign engineers could also be invited to China to set up factories to train local people in modern skills. European science and industry museums greatly impressed Kang, who believed that even the common people should understand technology. Inspired by the Royal Scottish Museum in Edinburgh that boasted a display of steam engines, Kang suggested that each Chinese province be directed to build a museum to exhibit this “wonderful machine” and invite an engineer from abroad to demonstrate it. “After people acquire the rudiments of the steam engine, they will continue to learn how to use these machines without being urged. This is the simplest way to pass on technological knowledge.” But, said Kang, this knowledge “cannot be achieved overnight. It will take several years, six or seven, before success can be 70 percent achieved.”⁷² He recognized that someone like himself (and virtually all of his students), trained in the literary arts but devoid of scientific or technological expertise, were of little use in saving China through “material civilization.”⁷³ Thus it was of the greatest urgency to send students abroad to acquire this knowledge.

As was his style, Kang took what he had learned in his travels and suggested specific destinations for Chinese students, chosen less for academic prestige and more for their excellence in technical education and economical value for the Qing government. Instead of Harvard, Yale, Oxford, or Cambridge (all of which he had visited), Kang proposed Birmingham, England, and Edinburgh, Scotland, for the study of machinery; Cornell University in Ithaca, New York, as ideal for the study of electricity, or for a less expensive alternative,

71 Hsiao, *A Modern China and a New World*, 521. Liang did not publish the essay through Guangzhi Shuju in Shanghai until 1908.

72 Kang Youwei to unknown addressee, no. 351 in Fang and Cai, 58–59.

73 Wong, “The Search for Material Civilization,” 51.

the University of California, Berkeley; Germany for technical and scientific training of all kinds; and Rome or Florence, Italy, for mechanical drawing; and finally Japan, for technical training rather than the “useless learning” that Chinese students favored.⁷⁴ Paradoxically, Kang’s priorities of science or engineering were pursued by few students supported by the Baohuanghui, although several ventured into banking as directed by Baohuanghui leaders. One of those who did pursue applied science was Lin Duo, who studied metallurgy at the University of Wisconsin from 1907 to 1908.⁷⁵ He was urged by Kang to switch his major to the liberal arts (*wenke*) because he was an excellent literature student and, in the future, could run a newspaper or fill a diplomatic post.⁷⁶

3 Tom Leung’s Entrepreneurial Approach

While Kang was pondering the most practical way to build a corps of Chinese engineers and scientists, his Los Angeles host and American travel companion Tom Leung was developing his own plan to fund the studies abroad for promising Baohuanghui men and women.⁷⁷ With Baohuanghui businesses gearing up in 1905, Tom conceived of an entrepreneurial notion to support students. He proposed his scheme to Kang during their travels across the United States and began to implement it after they bade farewell in Portland, Oregon, in October 1905. Tom’s pitch to start an upscale restaurant whose profits would support Baohuanghui students abroad was not as far-fetched as it sounds. The Commercial Corporation, the profits of which were to fund Baohuanghui nonbusiness activities, included hotels in Hong Kong.⁷⁸ Tom had no experience running restaurants, but he did know how to cater to Americans willing to pay well to enjoy elegantly presented Chinese cultural offerings, whether these be herbal treatments or “a house of thousand gastronomic delights” amidst “the mystical

74 Wong, “The Search for Material Civilization,” 52–54.

75 Tom Leung’s accounts show that King Joy Lo paid Lin Duo \$405 between January and December 1908. Tan Zhangxiao, *Zhengxinlu* 徵信錄 [Report on Financial Management] (San Francisco: Guohun Ribao, January 7, 1909) in Fang and Cai, 269–74.

76 “Kang Youwei to Liang Qixun 梁啟勳, October 22, 1907, in Zhang Ronghua 張榮華, ed., *Kang Youwei Juan* 康有為卷 [Kang Youwei Documents] (Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin Daxue Chubanshe, 2015), 12–13.

77 See Chapter 3.

78 Zhongguo Kezhan [China Hotel] and Zhonghua Jiudian.

enchantment of its exotic settings.”⁷⁹ Kang assured Tom that he would get the capital needed for the restaurant from funds Kang would raise in Mexico and the Huayi Bank in New York, and he emphasized the primacy of educated leaders for Baohuanghui success. He admonished Tom: “You are too prudent ... Hurry, hurry. Do not hesitate. Hesitating will delay other businesses.”⁸⁰ Opening in December 1906, the King Joy Lo Restaurant in the Chicago Loop was managed by Chin F. Foin (Chin Fan Foin, Chan Foon, Chen Hongxun), an experienced restaurateur and president of the Chicago Baohuanghui chapter. But Tom was in charge of the finances—with Kang’s intermittent supervision and neglect.⁸¹ As the most notable Commercial Corporation business in the United States (and one of the longest-lived and culturally significant of Baohuanghui enterprises), its operations will be described in Chapter 9.⁸²

Since Liang Qichao’s visit to Los Angeles in 1903, Tom had provided room and board in his home to Baohuanghui students. From San Francisco, Liang wrote Tom, “When I was in your city, we talked about sending Cheng Kang’en to live at your house with you providing room and board, so that he could attend school near your place. You agreed to do that ... If you accept him, it will not cost you much and Cheng Kang’en will be extremely grateful.”⁸³ Tom, his wife, and their growing family lived with his cousin and medical partner, Tom Foo Yuen, in a large, two-story house that also served as a medical office. One or two students from China always lived in a small house in the rear yard.⁸⁴ In 1905, three students lived with the Tom family: two male students sent by Wang Jueren, a former student of Kang’s who worked out of the Baohuanghui Hong Kong/Macau headquarters, and the female student Xue Jinqin.⁸⁵ At some point, Tom’s personal support of students was supplemented by Baohuanghui

79 “King Joy Lo Restaurant Company,” *Official Reference Book, Press Club of Chicago* (Chicago: Press Club of Chicago, 1922), 269.

80 Tan Zhangxiao, “Cui ban jiulou yuan xin” [letter urging me to set up a restaurant], November 7, 1905, in *Zhengxinlu* in Fang and Cai, 256.

81 “King Joy Lo: The Finest Chinese-American Restaurant in the World,” advertisement in *Chicago Tribune*, December 22, 1906, magazine section, 20.

82 As one of many references to King Joy Lo’s innovative place in Chinese American restaurant history, in 2021, the Chinese American Museum of Chicago featured King Joy Lo in its exhibition, “Era of Opulence: Chinese Fine Dining.”

83 Liang Qichao to Tan Zhangxiao, November 24, 1903, on stationery of Lexington Hotel, San Francisco, no. 177 in Fang and Cai, 110.

84 Larson, *Sweet Bamboo*, 49. Tom continued to host students in his home until sometime in the 1920s.

85 Wang Jueren to Tan Zhangxiao, March 29, 1905, no. 151 in Fang and Cai, 151. Wang sent his son Wang Jiaju and another man, Wu Xiliu.

funds, and he began to coordinate the logistics and funding for students outside of Los Angeles. Tom received letters from Liang Qichao, Xu Qin, and other leaders suggesting specific individuals to consider for support, often younger male relatives of Baohuanghui leaders, including Liang, Xu, Ou Jujia, Mai Menghua, and Kang Youwei himself (as well as his daughters and niece). Their destinations were primarily the United States, but some went to Japan or Europe, while others finished studies in Japan and then continued their education in the United States. There was talk of the economic advantages of supporting Baohuanghui youth already in the United States but there is no record that this was done.

Baohuanghui business developments were peaking when the world financial panic hit in 1907, and it was probably no coincidence that in early 1908, Kang's personal distress touched Tom Leung. Kang accused Tom of owing the Baohuanghui \$160,000 in loans for the restaurant and letting down the students who depended on its profits. Finding himself attacked on all sides, the loyal disciple turned bitter and performed a "document dump," publishing his voluminous correspondence with Kang and others about King Joy Lo in an attempt to clear himself and show Kang to be arbitrary and vengeful. Tom's *Zhengxinlu* (Report on Financial Management) was printed by a San Francisco Baohuanghui newspaper, *Guohun Bao* (*The New Era*) in January 1909.⁸⁶ Combined with other business scandals that erupted around this time, Tom's booklet badly damaged the morale of Baohuanghui members, contributing to the organization's rapid decline. Rather than "clear himself and fend off rumors," *Zhengxinlu* had the opposite effect on Tom's reputation. He was widely condemned within the organization as an embezzler and swindler and the individual who precipitated a series of business scandals that shattered the Baohuanghui in their wake.

Before Tom Leung's document collection was discovered in 1982, historians knew him only as one of the main culprits provoking Kang's lament to Liang Qichao in March 1908: "Our great enterprise is now almost ruined by a few men."⁸⁷ The attacks on Tom were continued by others, including Xu Qin. Xu wrote public and private letters in 1909 that accused Tom of greedily taking Baohuanghui funds and destroying his teacher's health and the Baohuanghui.⁸⁸ Tom was shocked by the vehemence of his once trusted

86 Tan Zhangxiao, *Zhengxinlu* in Fang and Cai, 237–75.

87 Lo, "Sequel to the Chronological Autobiography," 211, 274 n47.

88 Cai Huiyao 蔡惠堯, "Kang Youwei, Tan Zhangxiao and Qiong Cai Lou" 康有為, 譚張孝與瓊彩樓 [Kang Youwei, Tan Zhangxiao and King Joy Lo], *Zhongguo Jindai Shi*, 2002,

classmate. Three years earlier, Xu had written Tom expressing his admiration and gratefulness for Tom's work sending students abroad and described Tom as "a dragon or elephant [that is, a key leader] of our party" in whom Xu was entrusting the task of raising funds in the United States for the newly established Guangzhou newspaper, *Guoshi Bao*.⁸⁹ Tom replied to Xu's 1909 accusations with another open letter.⁹⁰ However, few Baohuanghui members were convinced by Tom's defense, even with his revelations of Kang's rash attacks on him after strongly encouraging Tom to pursue King Joy Lo as a vehicle to support students.⁹¹

As a consequence of this scandal, Tom's involvement in the Baohuanghui ended in 1909 and there were no further letters from Kang. However, in 1921, Tom returned to China for a long visit and reportedly paid a call on Kang in Shanghai.⁹² According to Wong Bing Woo's recollections, he found Kang quite poor, and, as in the old days, gave his teacher money. In 1927, Tom wrote Wu Yutang of *Shijie Ribao* (*Chinese World*) in San Francisco suggesting they organize a joint celebration of Kang's seventieth birthday in Los Angeles and San Francisco because "to do it alone is not as good as group action," and "I don't have anyone to talk about this with locally."⁹³ Tom wrote Wu again in February asking for Kang's address in Shanghai "because I wish to send over a birthday present."⁹⁴ Kang's last birthday was celebrated on March 9, 1927; he died in Qingdao on March 31.

99–106. Xu Qin's public letter was published in June 1909 (duplicated in open letter from Tan Zhangxiao to Xu Qin, June 1909, in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui* 康有為與保皇會 [Kang Youwei and the Baohuanghui], ed. Shanghai Shi Wenwu Baoguan Weiyuanhui 上海市文物保管委員會 (Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin Chubanshe, 1982), 424–25.

89 Xu Qin to Tan Zhangxiao, October 17, 1906, no. 168 in Fang and Cai, 137–39. One of the accusations Kang made against Tom Leung in April 1909 was that he stole several hundred *Guoshi Bao* shares, presumably bought by other members; see Kang Youwei to Liang Qixun, April 13, 1909, in Zhang, *Kang Youwei Juan*, 21–23.

90 Tan Zhangxiao to Xu Qin, public letter, June 1909, in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui*, 424–25.

91 See Chapter 9 for more on the King Joy Lo controversy.

92 Larson, *Sweet Bamboo*, 155. These are the memories of Tom's wife Wong Bing Woo, from an oral history taken sixteen years later; there is no independent corroboration of their meeting.

93 Tan Zhangxiao, T. Leung Herb. Co., Los Angeles, to Wu Yutang, *Chinese World*, San Francisco, January 10, 1927, Ethnic Studies Library, University of California at Berkeley.

94 Tan Zhangxiao, T. Leung Herb. Co., Los Angeles, to Wu Yutang, *Chinese World*, San Francisco, February 4, 1927, Ethnic Studies Library, University of California at Berkeley.

4 Lea, Falkenberg, and the Western Military Academy

When Kang arrived in Los Angeles in March 1905, he was delighted to be greeted at the train station by Western Military Academy (Gancheng Xuexiao) cadets led by Homer Lea. He was quickly appalled by how the local press described the scene: “Mr. Wei was met at the Arcade depot by large deputations from Chinatown, General Homer Lee of the Imperial army, and a company of the local Chinese military forces.”⁹⁵ At some point, Kang learned that Lea called the Western Military Academy the “Chinese Imperial Army” and had taken the title of commander in chief. Kang appeared with Lea at a welcoming banquet on March 18 and visited Los Angeles Mayor Owen McAleer in Lea’s company.⁹⁶ On March 27, Kang met Lea’s rival, Richard A. Falkenberg, for the first time. Falkenberg came to Los Angeles from San Francisco with that city’s Bao-huanghui leader, Tom She Bin, to dine at the home of Falkenberg’s friend and prominent attorney, Colonel Albert Beecher Hotchkiss. The repast, according to a newspaper report, was not only “in honor of His Excellency Kang Yu Wei, the Prime Minister of Emperor Kuang Hsu of China,” but also of “his military chief, General R. A. Falkenberg, the Commander-in-chief of the reorganized Chinese Imperial Army, who has expressly come down from San Francisco to meet his eminent chief.”⁹⁷

The press was quick to pick up the contradiction—both Lea and Falkenberg claimed to be the “commander in chief” of the supposed “Chinese Imperial Reform Army,” a militia being trained to wage war, if necessary, for the cause of reform in China. Reporters sought out Kang at his residence to confirm a quote attributed to him by Hotchkiss, who had provided Kang’s apparent endorsement of Falkenberg to society reporters: “I feel assured that China with General Falkenberg’s help will be one of the foremost nations within a much shorter time than Japan succeeded in forging to the first rank.”⁹⁸ When Kang was informed of his alleged statement, he angrily denied making comments recognizing Falkenberg, and, through Zhou Guoxian, declared that “General Lea is supreme.”⁹⁹ Also denied was the existence of any such unit as the Chinese Imperial Reform Army. The truth was divulged by another “cultured Chinaman”—probably Kang’s secretary, Chen Yuesong, who had interpreted

95 “Reformer Wei Comes to Study,” *Los Angeles Examiner*, March 16, 1905.

96 “Kong Wu Wei Visits Mayor,” *Los Angeles Herald*, March 22, 1905, 5.

97 “Events in Local Society, Distinguished Guests Dines,” *Los Angeles Times*, March 29, 1905, 10. The article included side-by-side photographs Kang Youwei and Falkenberg.

98 “Events in Local Society”; “Whose Army Falkenberg’s?” *Los Angeles Times*, March 30, 1905, section 3, 1.

99 “Whose Army Falkenberg’s?”

for Ou Jujia in 1904. He stepped forward to explain to the *Times* reporter how Falkenberg was related to the Baohuanghui:

I am the secretary of On Won Chew (Ou Jujia) who came from China to organize these military schools under orders from His Excellency Kang Yu Wei. I traveled all over the United States with him. We organized companies in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Chicago, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, New York, Baltimore, and elsewhere. Falkenberg was made commander of the San Francisco military school; that is all the authority he has. Gen. Homer Lea was made commander of all the military schools in the United States. Mr. On Won Chew ordered all to report to Gen. Lea.¹⁰⁰

When Falkenberg was told by the *Times* reporter that Kang knew nothing of his appointment as commander, he asserted, "I am supreme in my authority over all the troops of the Chinese Imperial Reform Army," and said that On Won Chew (Ou Jujia) had given him this commission. He then issued a public statement using the title of "General Commanding, C.I.R.A. [Chinese Imperial Reform Army]" to make it clear that the Chinese cadet companies "have nothing whatever to do with the Chinese Imperial Reform Army in China." He gave credit to Homer Lea as founder and commander of the cadet companies, and "we may possibly in the future, in case of an emergency, accept them individually or as a body for our Chinese Imperial Army depending upon circumstances."¹⁰¹

Meanwhile, a much-aggrieved Homer Lea and the cadets of the Western Military Academy's Los Angeles branch pressured Kang for answers. Captain Chung (probably Allen Chung, English secretary of the Los Angeles Baohuanghui and a former Stanford University classmate of Homer Lea) spoke to reporters following the cadets' meeting with Kang.¹⁰² At the Hotchkiss dinner, Chung said, Falkenberg had made an offer to Kang's secretary, Chen Yuesong, to lend the reform movement \$10 million. According to Chung, Falkenberg told Chen that he was "president of Standard Oil Company and his dividends would come due about September."¹⁰³ Chung also related that Falkenberg had recently been fired from his command of the San Francisco company. This

100 "Whose Army Falkenberg's?" See Chapter 4 on the Western Military Academy for the history of Falkenberg's contacts with the San Francisco Baohuanghui chapter and Chinese cadets.

101 "Whose Army Falkenberg's?"

102 "Kang Cables to Find Out," *Los Angeles Times*, March 31, 1905, 7. Lawrence M. Kaplan, *Homer Lea: American Soldier of Fortune* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 2010), 98.

103 "Kang Cables to Find Out."

was affirmed by another report that after the San Francisco cadets learned of Kang's denunciation of Falkenberg, they disgustedly turned Falkenberg's picture to the armory wall and then tore it down and threw it into the street.¹⁰⁴

The press also unearthed attempts by Falkenberg's associates to commission retired American military officers for the well-publicized but highly secretive and not yet organized Chinese Imperial Reform Army. Ansel E. O'Banion, Homer Lea's assistant, said that he had "seen an order issued by Gen. Falkenberg, in which he incloses some sort of coupon to all the generals, and colonels and things he has appointed, asking them to return not less than \$5, and as much more as they choose to send, the money to be used to buy a medal for His Excellency, Kang Yu Wei."¹⁰⁵ Falkenberg's efforts to solicit officers for a nonexistent army had come to the attention in Washington of the postmaster general, the Department of State, and the Chinese minister, and would spill over into the unraveling of the Western Military Academy.

As the furor grew, Kang left Los Angeles "to avoid being made an actor in the farce comedy of 'Gen.' Falkenberg ... He left yesterday morning with his entire suite for one of the suburban towns in Southern California, the name of which is held back in order that Mr. Kang may spend the period of his retirement in peace."¹⁰⁶ When Kang later returned to Los Angeles, he issued a statement under the auspices of his office as president of the Chinese Empire Reform Association:

Los Angeles, April 7, 1905.

To the American People: I desire to announce that Gen. Homer Lea of Los Angeles is the only one recognized and appointed by me as the general of all Chinese military schools in America, and furthermore, I have appointed no one such as "General Commanding", or any office of the so-called Chinese Imperial Reform Army, which is not in existence, and any person claiming such rank or position in the "Imperial Reform Army" is considered an imposter.

104 "Falkenberg's Crown Badly Tilted," *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 3, 1905, 4.

105 "Kang Cables to Find Out."

106 "'Excellency' Shakes Dust," *Los Angeles Times*, April 3, 1905, 4. On April 1, Col. Albert B. Hotchkiss died "quite unexpectedly, following closely upon a reception Tuesday evening at his home to Kang Yu Wei of the Chinese reform party." See "Col. Hotchkiss Dead," *Los Angeles Times*, April 2, 1905, 6, which reported that Hotchkiss had been promoted by Falkenberg to "Brigadier General" of his army and had suffered a fatal stroke "as a result of the unkind aspersions" made against Falkenberg.

KANG YU WEI

Grand President, Chinese Empire Reform Association¹⁰⁷

When presented with Kang's statement by a *Los Angeles Times* reporter, Falkenberg at first insisted it was forged by Kang's secretary, Zhou Guoxian, but Zhou said "it was genuine and expressed the sentiments of His Excellency."¹⁰⁸ Then Falkenberg "produced an imposing-looking document done in green dragons and red seals and dated at San Francisco, which proved to be a commission as 'general' from Leong Kai Chew [Liang Qichao]." According to Falkenberg, Liang's signature was judged to be genuine by Tom Leung. Falkenberg claimed the commission was given to him at a banquet for Liang in San Francisco in October 1903, although newspaper reports of this event did not mention Falkenberg among the American guests.¹⁰⁹ It purportedly carried the seal and signet of the emperor himself, according to another newspaper.¹¹⁰ However, Liang's journals record no contact with Falkenberg, nor is there correspondence to document that he informed Kang of any commission other than that given to Homer Lea. Very likely, Liang and his interpreter Bao Chi (Pow Chee) met cadets commanded by Wong Kin in San Francisco in 1903 and could well have written a congratulatory scroll or provided some funds, as is suggested in a lengthy article about the cadets in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, "Will the Great Chinese Revolution Begin in San Francisco?"¹¹¹ But the article does not mention Falkenberg. Since this analysis is dependent on American press reports of this rapidly unfolding debacle, it cannot be verified if Kang, or indeed, Tom Leung, ever saw this document. Nevertheless, Kang felt called upon to send a cablegram to Liang Qichao in regard to Falkenberg's "commission."¹¹²

Perhaps because Falkenberg was not named in Kang's April 7 statement, before he left Los Angeles on April 10, the inveterate fabricator of stories paid a call on Kang to make one last attempt to win him over. Falkenberg succeeded only in convincing Kang that he was as farcical as the whole episode itself. "He revealed the hitherto unsuspected fact that it was he and the architect,

107 "Statement of Kang Yu-wei to the American People, Los Angeles, April 7, 1905, Powers Papers, Hoover Institution Archives. Also, "Tries to Sort out Generals," *Los Angeles Times*, April 8, 1905, 6.

108 "Tries to Sort out Generals," *Los Angeles Times*, April 8, 1905, 6.

109 "Banquet Given to Leong Chew," *San Francisco Call*, October 6, 1903, 9.

110 "Falkenberg's Crown Badly Tilted."

111 "Will the Great Chinese Revolution Begin in San Francisco?" *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 6, 1904, 4. See Chapter 4.

112 "Kang Cables to Find Out." Whether the cable was actually sent is not known, nor was there ever a report that Kang received a response.

Lieut.-Gen. [Fernand] Parmentier, who saved the life of the Chinese Emperor, when the Empress lately proposed clipping His Majesty's head off" in 1900, by soliciting diplomatic support from such personages as King Edward VII, Kaiser Wilhelm II, and Tsar Nicholas II, all of whom supposedly then brought international pressure to bear upon the Empress Dowager. "And that," said Gen. Falkenberg reproachfully, "that cost me \$35,000. For once the decorous Kang Yu Wei lost his temper."¹¹³ Falkenberg returned to San Francisco, and, aggrieved by scorching press coverage and Kang's dismissal, his schemes turned to undermining Kang, Lea, and the Western Military Academy.

To say the least, Falkenberg was a soldier of fortune and a man of some evident psychological difficulties, which may explain the nature of his contacts with Kang Youwei. Kang likely had no knowledge of Falkenberg's long record of deception and self-promotion. For example, when Kang met Falkenberg at the Hotchkiss dinner, Falkenberg declared that when the dividends came in from his oil company (which he had named Standard Rock Oil Company, but Kang and others misread as Standard Oil Company), he wanted to lend ten million dollars to the reform movement.¹¹⁴ According to Homer Lea's biographer, Lawrence Kaplan, Falkenberg "first came to the attention of the U.S. government in 1891, when he created a minor diplomatic incident by offering to raise a small group of American scouts for service with the Honduran army, in possible violation of the U.S. neutrality laws."¹¹⁵ In December 1893, the War Department received a letter from "Captain" R. A. Falkenberg of the Arizona Territory,

113 "Gen.' Falkenberg Packs His Traps," *Los Angeles Times*, April 11, 1905, section 2, 1. In fact, Falkenberg's statement includes a grain of truth: see R. A. Falkenberg, General C.E.R. Army and Representative Extraordinary of Emperor Kwong-Hsui and Chinese Empire Reform Association, San Francisco, to Secretary of State John Hay, Department of State, October 6, 1900, Miscellaneous Letters of the Department of State, RG 59, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/153569410?objectPage=328>, accessed May 24, 2024. The letter claims he was "representative of the Association in the United States and 'other countries,'" and that he had sent similar petitions to support the emperor's reinstatement to Britain, Germany, and Japan.

114 "Kong Cables to Find Out." Falkenberg's Standard Rock Oil Company did indeed exist, incorporated in Arizona in 1901, and by 1903 it owned or leased, but may never have developed, several thousand acres of "asphaltum property" in southern California. Kaplan, *Homer Lea*, 236 n48. An advertisement for Standard Rock Oil Company in *Pacific Oil Reporter* 4, no. 1 (November 7, 1902): 11, lists capital of \$500,000 and treasury stock of \$300,000; ownership of 92 acres of "proven oil land" leased in McKittrick, 80 acres in Coalinga, 160 acres "adjoining oil well" in Napa Valley, with a lease of 6,000 acres of asphaltum land, and a refinery in Santa Clara County. Asphaltum could be converted to asphalt or refined as oil and is found in seeps, such as the La Brea Tar Pits. The annual meeting report for May 21, 1903, states that until the price of oil increased from 25 cents to 50 cents a barrel, "the time has not yet arrived to bore for oil."

115 Kaplan, *Homer Lea*, 66–67.

who claimed to be the sole survivor of the 1876 Battle of Little Big Horn, more popularly known as “Custer’s Last Stand.” At that time, he said, he was known as “Nick Dick” because of the notches on his rifle and had served as an Indian scout, having joined Custer “independently with my own men outfitted at my own expense.”¹¹⁶ For obvious reasons, government authorities did not accept this claim. Falkenberg’s supposed mining business came to light in 1892 in the *Los Angeles Herald*, which described “Captain Dick” Falkenberg as “a picturesque looking man of powerful physique and long curling hair,” who had come to Los Angeles “backed by a New York capitalist” to develop the Gold Prince Mine in Riverside County, California.¹¹⁷ A month later, the *Herald* featured an exposé of Falkenberg given by his abandoned wife, who had come to Los Angeles only to discover her husband had decamped to Aberdeen, Washington. Whether she or he had begun divorce proceedings is unclear; press reports have it both ways. The unnamed Mrs. Falkenberg not only disputed Falkenberg’s claims to have been a government scout and Indian fighter—“he has no title to consideration from those who love the truth”—but displayed their marriage certificate with his name as Baron Richard Alexander Von Falkenberg Wersick and said that he was born Arthur Krache in Breelau, Germany. Falkenberg’s mining business partner, H. A. Thomsen, “who was so taken in by the adventurer,” came from New York to take over the Southern California mine, “shaking his skirts clear of the long-haired individual who cut such a wide swath in Los Angeles.”¹¹⁸

But whatever the threat Falkenberg posed to him, Homer Lea had given Kang an ultimatum. “You must disavow Falkenberg or I will stop my work.”¹¹⁹ Kang’s statement above was crafted after many rounds of drafts written by Kang and Lea, with Zhou Guoxian as translator and intermediary. It would emerge that Lea was displeased at Kang’s weak endorsement of him and failure to denounce Falkenberg by name. The slight would fester and break open in the press much later. Zhou, in particular, won Lea’s wrath, perhaps because

116 Capt. R. A. Falkenberg, Mammoth, Arizona Territory, to War Department, December 6, 1893; and Capt. R. A. Falkenberg to William J. Volkmar, Assistant Adjutant General, January 14, 1894, File no. 2394, Entry 25, Records of the Adjutant General’s Office, Department of War, RG 94, NA-Washington.

117 “Captain Dick Missing,” *Los Angeles Herald*, November 25, 1892, 5. Falkenberg’s disappearance was attributed to “Mrs. Captain Dick” arriving in Southern California to undertake divorce proceedings.

118 “Mrs. Captain Dick’s Story,” *Los Angeles Herald*, December 22, 1892, 3, says Dick had begun divorce proceedings.

119 “Wei Stops the War between Chinese Generals,” *Los Angeles Examiner*, April 8, 1905. Lea’s quote is a paraphrase by the reporter.

Lea knew how dependent Kang was on Zhou to mediate Kang's relations with Americans and the press. "Hot Row over Chew Kok Hean," appeared in the *Los Angeles Times* on June 23, 1905, when Kang, Zhou, and Lea were in Washington, DC. Unashamedly based on rumors by way of Lea's Los Angeles cadets, the story tells of Lea's "rip-snorting ruction with the smooth little Chinese personal secretary, Chew Kok Hean [Zhou Guoxian]."¹²⁰ Lea had turned on Zhou, said the cadets, because Lea suspected him of treachery and "secretly opposed to Lea and in favor of 'Gen.' Falkenberg."

Kang's refusal to mention Falkenberg by name in the statement and his disavowal of the existence of an army or an officer in charge of an army exposes the reality of his relationship with Homer Lea: Kang saw Lea not as an equal but his subordinate. He handled Lea with great forbearance until Lea's declarations to the press finally went too far in challenging Kang's preeminence. In early July 1905, Lea would tell the *New-York Tribune* that "in forming these regiments he had acted upon his own initiative and was responsible to no person or party."¹²¹ Even then, Kang did not publicly dismiss Lea, but let him slip away without losing face.¹²² Not until November 30, 1905, the day that Kang arrived in Mexico, did he issue a public statement formally dismissing Lea. Before that point, Kang did not want Lea's close ties with sympathetic American reporters to create even more controversy for the Western Military Academy. After all, Lea was more deeply embedded in the Baohuanghui leadership than any other American.

For two months in Los Angeles, Lea lived only two blocks from Kang's rented house across from Westlake Park. They had many opportunities to engage in the wide-ranging theorizing about world affairs that both men enjoyed. There is evidence that Kang saw Lea as an informant on American society. A passage from Kang's "Wuzhi Jiuguo Lun" demonstrating the moral superiority of Chinese society to American society with its appalling crime rate contains this nugget of information: "American Homer Lea told me that 10,000 Americans were murdered there every year."¹²³ In Los Angeles, Kang also consulted Lea and local bankers about his idea of establishing a four-million-dollar

120 "Hot Row over Chew Kok Hean," *Los Angeles Times*, June 23, 1905. The story implies Zhou soon would "lose his feathers," but he remained with Kang in the United States and rejoined him in Europe in 1906.

121 "China's Greatest Need," *New-York Tribune*, July 5, 1905, 4.

122 Kaplan, *Homer Lea*, 122–23.

123 Kang, "Wuzhi Jiuguo Lun," in *Kang Youwei Quanji*, vol. 8, 66. Hsiao, *A Modern China and a New World*, 527–28 notes that this view contradicted Kang's argument further on in the same essay that good morals were a product of material civilization, rather than unrelated to it.

Guangdong bank with Chinese and American partners.¹²⁴ Kang's outreach to Americans was not limited to Lea—he also asked daughter Tongbi to speak with Yung Wing to see if Yung had any political connections in New York City to help with the bank project.¹²⁵ It was Lea himself who proposed to Kang that he join Kang's tour of the East to recruit bank investors.¹²⁶ From these few documented exchanges, it is apparent that Kang and Lea had some rapport that went beyond the Western Military Academy.

The problem of the Chinese Imperial Reform Army in California did not end with Falkenberg's departure. It was now Homer Lea's turn to inflame the issue when he undertook to consolidate his leadership of the Chinese military cadets and left Los Angeles on a several-weeks' inspection tour of California branches of the academy. In Fresno on April 8, Lea told the *Fresno Republican*, "You should not get the idea from the fact that we are organizing an army and drilling the men in modern war tactics that we have civil war in view to revolutionize China."¹²⁷ Rather, Lea said, after the Empress Dowager dies and the emperor takes power, "the prime minister, who passed through here a short time ago [referring to Kang's stop in Fresno in March], will take his place as prime minister and will be the real emperor. I will take my place as commander in chief of the army ..." New York's *Zhongguo Weixin Bao* (*Chinese Reform News*) also covered Lea's visit and competitive drill of the Fresno cadets, but Company D was called "Gancheng Xuexiao" [Western Military Academy], the officers were termed instructors, and the soldiers, students or trainees.¹²⁸

Fresno's "Company D, First Regiment, Imperial Army" had formed in September 1904, under the guidance of Homer Lea or Ou Jujia.¹²⁹ Perhaps unique among Western Military Academy units, Company D was regarded as almost an equal to the two local National Guard units, Companies C and F.¹³⁰

124 Kang Youwei to Kang Tongbi, May 5, 1905, no. 康-13, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection. See Chapter 9 for more on this bank scheme.

125 Kang Youwei to Kang Tongbi, May 5, 1905.

126 Kang Youwei to Kang Tongbi, April 25, 1905, no. 康-16, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

127 "American Commander of Chinese Army," *Fresno Republican*, April 9, 1905.

128 "Kaoyan Gancheng Xuesheng" [Testing the Gancheng Students], April 19, 1905, *Zhongguo Weixin Bao*, in "Gancheng Xuexiao Shi" [History of the Gancheng Schools], Chinese Empire Reform Association, AR-3, AAS ARC 2000/78.

129 Franklin Ng, "The Western Military Academy in Fresno," in *Origins and Destinations: 41 Essays on Chinese America* (Los Angeles: Chinese Historical Society of Southern California and UCLA Asian American Studies Center, 1994), 159. Ng's paper is the only detailed study of a Western Military Academy branch and makes use of both Chinese and English-language sources.

130 Ng, "The Western Military Academy in Fresno," 158.

The twenty-six cadets were led by two officers, "Major" W. S. Scott (a retired first lieutenant in Company C) and "First Lieutenant" Curtis Neal (concurrently second lieutenant, Company C). Lea had given both Fresno men ranks higher than they held within the California National Guard. Company D's "Second Lieutenant" was Fresno Baohuanghui member Ben O. Young (Ouyang Xianzhou), who escorted Kang on his American tour. For its 1905 Chinese New Year celebration, Company D gave a two-hour public exhibition drill culminating in a fireworks show watched by "a thousand people, white, black and yellow," followed by "Major" Scott proclaiming "from the balcony to the wondering populace below ... 'Here's to the success of Company D and the Imperial Army.'"¹³¹

The adulatory attention given in Fresno newspapers to Company D and the lofty new positions of Scott and Neal undoubtedly provoked jealousy among their National Guard colleagues. Lieutenant Jacob A. Alexander of the State Adjutant General's Office was in Fresno inspecting Company F and was asked about the legal status of Company D and in particular whether Neal was neglecting his Company C duties by training the Chinese cadets, or even worse, had committed "the offense of being connected with a foreign military company."¹³² Alexander pointed out to the local newspapers that no body of men other than the National Guard or regular troops of the United States was permitted to parade with arms without a permit from the governor and suggested that Neal might be court martialed. "Captain" W. S. Scott was offended by Alexander's statements challenging his and Neal's patriotism and said that he had understood from Homer Lea that the cadets had a license from the California governor to drill with arms.¹³³ Moreover, he explained his title: "I am captain of the company, which means nothing more or less than that I am an instructor in the school."

California Governor George C. Pardee, to whom Lieutenant Alexander reported, took the case to the next level. His suspicions had been aroused by Homer Lea, then in San Francisco to assert his command over the academy branches formerly associated with Falkenberg. On April 25, Pardee received a telegram from Lea, inviting him to meet the Chinese consul general at the Palace Hotel for dinner the following evening, perhaps with the intention

¹³¹ "Reform Banquet," *Fresno Republican*, February 13, 1905.

¹³² "Imperial Army Gets Setback," *San Francisco Call*, April 22, 1905; "Was Drilling A Chinese Squad," *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 22, 1905. "Unlawful Militia," *Fresno Republican*, April 21, 1905, in which Scott, Neal, and "the Chinese Imperial Army of Fresno being investigated by state military officers" are pictured.

¹³³ "Chinese Company Incorporated," *Fresno Republican*, April 22, 1905. "Incorporated By State, Chinese Military School Not an Illegal Institution," *Fresno Democrat*, April 21, 1905.

of convincing the governor that Western Military Academy activities were benign.¹³⁴ Whether Pardee accepted Lea's invitation is not known, but Lea next organized a banquet in San Francisco clearly meant to associate the Western Military Academy with influential military figures. Lea arranged for Wong Kin and Ralph Faneuf, a member of the California National Guard who was in charge of the academy's Oakland branch, to personally deliver an invitation to General Frederick Funston, the U.S. Army commander of the Department of California, the man at the top of Lea's list of prospective guests. Funston's outraged response so damaged Lea's image that Lea had to cancel the banquet and leave town. The *San Francisco Chronicle* described the scene this way:

Wong Kim [Wong Kin] was dressed in the uniform of a Captain of United States Cavalry with the exception of the insignia, which was the Chinese dragon instead of the American coat of arms. To General Funston he presented an invitation to dine at one of the swell restaurants in the city. This invitation was signed "General Lea."

"Who is General Lea; who made him a General, the President or the Governor of some State?" asked General Funston. The reply was not satisfactory and caused General Funston to look more closely at the man in uniform, and when he saw he was a Chinese, he was indignant.

"Who on earth gave you the right to wear that uniform," he demanded. "Who made you a Captain?" Again the answer was not satisfactory. The terse and emphatic verbal reply declining the invitation was then delivered and the two made their escape.¹³⁵

As the *Chronicle* helpfully noted, instead of Lea receiving the endorsement of the U.S. Army for his activities, "he has caused the Government of the United States to sit up and take notice of the fact that illegally armed bodies of foreigners are organizing and drilling in the United States for the purpose of engaging in a rebellion against the lawfully constituted authority of a power with which the United States is on terms of peace and amity." Lea's pretense of commanding an army (which would occasionally alternate with his describing the program as a school) made suspect the genuine educational mission of the

134 Kaplan, *Homer Lea*, 106. The Chinese consul general referred to was Jing Poo Hai; the acting consul general at the time was Chung Pao-Hsi. A copy of the telegram is in folder 14, box 41, Governor George Cooper Pardee Papers, Bancroft Library Archives, University of California at Berkeley.

135 "Provost Guard May Seize Arms," *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 4, 1905, 9. Kaplan, *Homer Lea*, 124.

Western Military Academy, as documented in Chinese-language Baohuanghui sources described in Chapter 4. The contradiction between an army and an academy as well as Lea's knack for garnering publicity, good and bad, exacerbated by Falkenberg using Lea's troubles to sow even more doubt about the academy, all combined to keep the issue alive as Kang and his party left Los Angeles and crisscrossed the United States throughout the rest of 1905.

The first issue to be resolved was whether or not the Fresno branch had a legal license from the governor to bear arms. Lea, who certainly knew better, had led the legal representative of the Baohuanghui in Fresno, William D. Crichton, to believe that a license granted to Los Angeles for bearing arms also applied to Fresno. The governor's permission had been granted for bearing arms, but only from December 30, 1904, to January 3, 1905, to the Los Angeles branch for its appearance in the Tournament of Roses parade.¹³⁶ Lea had stretched the permission granted him for this singular event into a violation of the state law. Pardee responded on May 10 that the Fresno Chinese cadet company was in violation of the law and drilling with arms "should immediately be desisted from."¹³⁷ Pardee also asked Fresno County district attorney George W. Jones to investigate further the legality of the Fresno academy.¹³⁸ In spite of Jones affirming the academy's incorporation as educational institutions in both Fresno and Los Angeles, he informed the governor that neither branch offered academic courses and both were devoted to drilling. Furthermore, he said he believed that the cadets "were in violation of neutrality and international laws and that the federal government should take action to disband them."¹³⁹ Jones also was aware that the Fresno and Los Angeles branches were two among many such cadet companies, and "I understand that the local lieutenant of the company [referring to Ben O. Young of Fresno] recently went on an extended trip throughout the East on a tour of inspection with General Lea."¹⁴⁰ Jones told Pardee that he had ordered the association to cease drilling "until such time as permission is received from you as Governor of this State."¹⁴¹ That permission never came, and from all reports, the Fresno academy disbanded.¹⁴²

136 "Hard Lines for Lea," *Fresno Republican*, June 17, 1905. Also see Ng, "The Western Military Academy in Fresno," 164.

137 Pardee to Crichton, May 10, 1905, Pardee Papers.

138 "Outlawed By Governor," *Fresno Democrat*, May 16, 1905; "Governor After Chinese Army," *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 18, 1905, 9.

139 Kaplan, *Homer Lea*, 110.

140 "Guards Suppressed," *Fresno Republican*, May 16, 1905, 5.

141 Jones to Pardee, May 17, 1905, Pardee Papers.

142 Pardee gave Jones his wholehearted support in forbidding the "Imperial Reform Army" to drill, finding the latter's "action in this matter entirely satisfactory." Pardee to Jones,

The Fresno episode would have drifted into the background of Kang's life, as eventually did Lea's connections with him, had it not been for the continuing legacy of Richard Falkenberg. Falkenberg launched a letter-writing campaign to further sully the reputation of Lea and the Western Military Academy, by providing an insider's knowledge to Governor Pardee. According to Lea biographer Lawrence Kaplan, Falkenberg advised the governor that Lea's cadets were "entirely illegally organized." However, Falkenberg, "being a military man," assured Pardee that he told "the San Francisco boys [the cadets led by Wong Kin] ... to 'ask permission and license from our Governor, who himself is a soldier.'" Falkenberg "went on record as a law-abiding citizen appealing for a favor from Pardee; he wanted the governor to help protect his good name and stop the press from mentioning his involvement with Lea and the reformers. He also wanted Pardee to know that his own 'organization of 3,000 American Officers is entirely legal and has nothing to do with these Chinese Military Companies in America.'" ¹⁴³

At times, the press and government officials confused Falkenberg's "organization of 3,000 American Officers" with Lea and the Western Military Academy instructors. In reporting on Pardee's order to Fresno's academy to desist all drilling, the *San Francisco Chronicle* concluded its May 18, 1905 article with what appeared to be a related piece of news—the mobilization of Falkenberg's "Chinese Imperial Reform Army" in Washington state:

Bellingham Bay, Spokane, and Walla Walla have taken up arms and the army is on the move. Inquiries were received in this city [San Francisco] yesterday relative to the kit and clothes necessary for the warriors who are to leave the meads of the Northwest for the battle fields where the Chinese Imperial Reform army is to begin its campaign.

May 25, 1905, Pardee Papers. On February 15, 1906, the *Fresno Republican* attempted to discover what became of Company D and was told that most of the men had left town for military service in China. Ben O. Young had also disappeared, and although a friend told the *Republican* that he was out of town on business, others thought that he had gone to China (Ng, "The Western Military Academy in Fresno," 166–67). Young, however, had gone to San Francisco to become the news editor for *Wenxing Bao* and later moved to Los Angeles where the newspaper decamped after the 1906 earthquake. "Chinese Daily Comes Here," *Los Angeles Times*, May 7, 1906, in which Young's name appears as Ben O. Yang and is pictured in a military uniform. Chen Yikan (Chun Yi Om) was *Wenxing Bao's* managing editor.

143 Kaplan, *Homer Lea*, 110–11; Kaplan quotes from R. A. Falkenberg to Governor Pardee, May 18, 1905, folder 8, box 25, Pardee Papers.

... They report that they have received marching orders, that by July 1st 50,000 good men will be mobilized in Peking ...

These announcements are coupled with the schedule of prices which they are to get for their devotion to the new flag: Majors shall drag down \$3,000 (with a liberal allowance), captains, \$2,300, and first lieutenants, \$1,800.¹⁴⁴

These soldiers of fortune were some of the hundreds or perhaps thousands of American men with military experience who had eagerly agreed to take a commission in Falkenberg's paper army. They had been recruited over the past year by Edmond F. English of Yankton, South Dakota, Falkenberg's compatriot in an earlier scheme to raise a volunteer force to fight in the Philippines in 1899. In spring 1904, Secretary of War William Howard Taft received a number of inquiries concerning the activities of "Brigadier General" English. Letters came from such writers as Edwin Y. Webb, a North Carolina Democrat in the U.S. House of Representatives; the office of the secretary of state of Minnesota; and several National Guard officers from various parts of the country. All had had correspondence from English, either asking for recommendations or offering commissions in the Chinese Imperial Reform Army. The War Department took no action other than to answer the inquiries. Others contacted the Department of State, as they interpreted these overtures as a violation of neutrality. This led to an exchange of notes between the Department of State and the Chinese legation in Washington.¹⁴⁵ Chinese minister Liang Cheng replied that he too had received many requests for further information on English and his "army," but denied that English had any authority "to tender commissions in any Chinese army to American citizens" and that no such army as the Chinese Imperial Reform Army existed.¹⁴⁶ Baohuanghui chapters were also contacted by the press in cities such as Portland where a number of soldiers had been recruited, but the Baohuanghui also claimed no connection to this army and

144 "Governor After Chinese Army," *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 18, 1905, 9

145 No. 44, John M. Hay to Chentung Liang Sheng, May 23, 1904, 271, RG 59, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/216903560/objectPage=140>, accessed May 24, 2024, which cited the letter of Hon. Ernest W. Roberts, U.S. House of Representatives, concerning English; also see Hay to Leslie M. Shaw, Secretary of Treasury, June 2, 1904, Domestic Letters of the Department of State, vol. 275, RG 59, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/29892172/objectPage=91>, accessed May 24, 2024, which referred to a telephone conversation on the same matter.

146 Chentung Liang Sheng to Hay, May 25, 1904, Notes from the Chinese Legation, 1868–1906, vol. 6, RG 59, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/188240677/objectPage=75>, accessed May 24, 2024.

denied it existed.¹⁴⁷ This ambiguous situation continued in May 1905, when the *Chronicle* reported:

At the supposed headquarters [presumably the Baohuanghui headquarters in San Francisco] the proposed coming of the new recruits is viewed with some doubt. General Falkenberg has doffed for the time his three stars, and General Homer Lea has departed with his battalions to other scenes. Governor Pardee has taken a hand and told the soldiers drilling with arms that Uncle Sam will spank them if they don't quit, and so far as present information goes there will be no drums beating nor flags flying when the Washington braves come marching by on their way to Peking.¹⁴⁸

The mix-ups created by a gullible or forgetful press would continue as Falkenberg and English trumpeted their stories. "Ten Thousand Americans to Officer Chinese Army," datelined Yankton, South Dakota, August 26, 1905, countered the "bitter attacks and ridicule [that] have been directed at General English in the papers." English claimed to have recruited half of the needed 10,000 men to train the armed forces of a reformed China and replace Japanese and German drillmasters. Illustrating how good tales never die and even take on exaggerated new "facts" of their own:

R. A. Falkenberg of San Francisco, is the commander in chief of the army and holds a commission signed by Leong Kai Chen, a member of the Chinese privy council and the head of the Chinese Reform society, which has some 40,000,000 members in China and many in this country. Until recently Kang Yu Wei was the Chinese representative in this country, but he was deposed by the Chinese emperor. However, he is now in New York collecting money for the movement, and as a result the Chinese in this country are divided and a bitter war between the two elements is the result.

So active have the reformers been in this country that cadet corps composed of Chinese were formed at San Francisco, Fresno, Los Angeles, Sacramento, St. Louis, New York and Philadelphia, but within a short time the governors of the states where these companies are located, have directed that they be discontinued because of the constitutional prohibition for aliens to bear arms and because of a hint from the state

147 "Recruit an Army," *Portland Oregonian*, January 31, 1905, 14. A Captain Clifford Mumby did most of the recruiting in person in Portland, but there was still confusion as to whether English or Falkenberg was the organizer.

148 "Governor After Chinese Army," *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 18, 1905, 9.

department at Washington that this movement was inopportune and might be misconstrued by China, a friendly power.¹⁴⁹

This story, coming three months after Kang and Lea left Los Angeles on May 8, was part of Falkenberg's ongoing efforts to resuscitate his reputation and retaliate against Kang, Lea, and the Baohuanghui. The mention of the concerns of governors and the Department of State points to a particularly effective move taken by another of Falkenberg's cohorts, Dr. William H. Eckley, English's representative in St. Paul, Minnesota. After Falkenberg's public embarrassment at Kang Youwei's rejection and the departure of Kang and Lea from Los Angeles, Eckley began to write state governors, including California Governor Pardee and New York Governor Frank Higgins. Higgins was informed that there were a number of Chinese belonging to an organization of "which Kang Yu-wei, one time Minister of War under the present Chinese Emperor, Kwang Hsu, claims to be the Grand President, who are armed and drilling in different cities in this country."¹⁵⁰ The letter cited the evident illegality and the complicity of Homer Lea in the matter. Eckley's letters, discussed in Chapter 7, led to serious consequences for the Western Military Academy and grave embarrassment to Kang and Lea during what was supposed to be a victory lap for the Baohuanghui and its impressively trained young cadets.

5 Kang's Telegram Sets off a Boycott

On March 21, 1905, Kang was surely shocked to learn that the Qing official who three days earlier had paid tribute to him as "the greatest light in the Chinese world today" was almost arrested by immigration officials in Tom Leung's home.¹⁵¹ Wong Yap was Tom's wife's cousin who had represented the Guang-

149 "Ten Thousand Americans to Officer Chinese Army," *Albuquerque Evening Citizen*, August 26, 1905, 1. "Leong Kai Chen" could be Kang's first precursor, Liang Qitian, whose Baohuanghui organizing efforts in the United States took place between 1900 and 1904, including in San Francisco. However, he was often confused with his cousin Liang Qichao, and this supposed "commission" of Falkenberg might be what he said earlier to have been made by Liang Qichao in 1903 (see above). Note that Falkenberg claimed commissions from Ou Jujia, Liang Qichao, and Liang Qitian in three different news articles.

150 William H. Eckley, St. Paul, to Honorable Frank W. Higgins, Albany, May 25, 1905, File no. 1019722, Entry 25, RG 94. Higgins was the interim governor of New York in 1905. This letter was found in the National Archives (NA-Washington) as it was forwarded to the White House.

151 "Kowtow to Kang Yu Wei," *Los Angeles Times*, March 19, 1905, 16.

dong and Guangxi provincial governments at the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair before coming to Los Angeles in fall 1904.¹⁵² Wong's appearance in Los Angeles had elicited much interest from the press. They first spotted him at the Tournament of Roses parade in Pasadena, but mistook his cousin Wong Bing Woo for "his dainty little wife" and speculated that his visit to Los Angeles was for the purpose of "casting the Imperial eye over" the Western Military Academy.¹⁵³ A more accurate portrayal showed photographs of Tom Leung, "Mrs. Leung and her baby," and "Wong Yap, the Author," who was writing a book on "What a Traveler Sees in America."¹⁵⁴ Seen in Kang's company on other occasions by American reporters, Wong's near arrest caused a stir in the local newspapers, with the *Los Angeles Examiner* trumpeting, "Big Wig of Flowery Kingdom Narrowly Escapes Arrest."¹⁵⁵

China's World's Fair delegates had been subjected to sixty-one special rules restricting their entry and movements in the United States. American immigration inspectors aggressively enforced rules, being especially vigilant when the Chinese fair participants landed on American soil and again when the fair was over.¹⁵⁶ Thus it was no surprise that Chinese Inspector J. H. Jenkins of Los Angeles suspected Wong Yap of being "one of the Chinese workmen who had made his escape from the St. Louis fair." Jenkins together with another inspector

152 Huang Qijun 黃啓騫 to Tom Leung, December 11, 1903, no. 267, Tom Leung Collection, East Asian Library, University of California, Los Angeles, <https://digital.library.ucla.edu/catalog/ark:/21198/zz00252z76>, accessed November 7, 2022. Huang Qijun, Wong Yap's father, told Tom that he "spent several thousand taels for my son to purchase an official title." He described his son as a friend of Vice Commissioner of the St. Louis Exposition Board Huang Kaijia [Wong Kai Kah], who recommended him to Prince Pulun, leader of the Chinese delegation. "Nüshi Yanshuo" 女士演說 [A Lady makes a Speech], *Nüzi Shijie* no. 11 (November 7, 1904): 74, describes the reception in Los Angeles welcoming Wong Yap and featuring a speech by Wong Bing Woo.

153 "Envoy Wong Comes to See," *Los Angeles Times*, January 4, 1905, section 2, 1. The documentary account of this incident can be found in Wong Yap, Folder 2061, Box 42, Segregated Chinese Case Files, 1893–1935, Los Angeles District Office, RG 85, Records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, National Archives-Pacific Southwest Region. Thanks to Paul Chace for locating these files. Wong Yap and Wong Bing Woo were first cousins on their father's side.

154 "United States Seen by Eyes of Oriental," *Los Angeles Examiner*, January 29, 1905, 67.

155 Huang Qijun to Tom Leung, December 11, 1903, no. 267, Tom Leung Collection, East Asian Library, University of California, Los Angeles, <https://digital.library.ucla.edu/catalog/ark:/21198/zz00252z76>, accessed October 19, 2022. Also see "Excellency Shakes Dust," *Los Angeles Times*, April 3, 1905, 4; "Declares in Favor of Restoration of Kwank Hsu," *Los Angeles Examiner*, March 19, 1905; and "Big Wig of Flowery Kingdom Narrowly Escapes Arrest," *Los Angeles Examiner*, April 2, 1905, 23.

156 The St. Louis World's Fair ran from April 30 to December 1, 1904.

and an interpreter encountered Tom Leung and his American secretary at the Foo and Wing Herb Company when they arrived at 903 South Olive Street at ten in the morning on March 21. Wong was still in bed and refused to be interviewed until he had dressed, brushed his teeth, and washed his face. He then answered only the most cursory of questions about his identity, declining to show his papers to an official of such insufficient rank as Jenkins, "stating that if we wished any information about him to telegraph to the Chinese minister in Washington, and to the Department [of Commerce and Labor] for some person of high authority or rank to come here and interview him."¹⁵⁷

Jenkins returned to South Olive Street at noon and found Tom Leung, "the alleged Wong Yap," and George Lem (Lin Guoxiang, a close friend and Baohuanghui colleague of Tom's) in the sitting room. Once again Wong refused to show his papers and told Jenkins that he had "only a letter from the Chinese government to the President of the United States, and that letter he could show to nobody but the President of the United States." Lem then told Jenkins that he had "no right to interfere with anybody except laundrymen and laborers on gardens." Jenkins countered that Wong "just better go down here to the U.S. Attorney's office with me, and he [U.S. Attorney Louis H. Valentine] is a big enough man in the government service." Tom intervened, telling the inspector "This is my house, and you have no right to come up here."

Lem and Tom asked Jenkins to telegraph the Department of Commerce and Labor, where Wong insisted that his name was on file. Jenkins telegraphed his superior, Commissioner of Immigration Hart H. North in San Francisco, to report that Wong had given him "no evidence of his right to remain in this country" and asked North to "wire answer if he is what he claims to be," that is, a commercial representative of Chinese empire to the St. Louis exposition." That afternoon, said Jenkins, "[Wong Yap] got in a city hack and went to the District Attorney's office, and showed his papers." In the meantime, North wired Jenkins: "Wong Yap landed at this port April 6, 1904 as official of Chinese government. He should not be molested."

However, Jenkins continued to be suspicious of Wong, especially after he learned that "the Chinaman had consulted a young lawyer here by the name of York [John M. York, an advisor to the Los Angeles Baohuanghui chapter], making very exaggerated statements to him in reference to this matter."¹⁵⁸ Wong's affront at his treatment may have caused him to prepare an affidavit to present

157 Statements in reference to Wong Yap made by J. H. Jenkins and William L. Waller, Los Angeles, March 23, 1905, in Wong Yap Folder 2061.

158 J. H. Jenkins, Chinese Inspector in Charge, Los Angeles, to Commissioner of Immigration, San Francisco, June 24, 1905 in Wong Yap Folder 2061.

to the State Department in a demand for damages, as newspaper reports stated that he left Los Angeles for San Francisco and then for Washington, to seek advice from Chinese Minister Liang Cheng.¹⁵⁹ Jenkins also found dubious Wong's use of multiple names and further noted that "this Chinaman who represents himself as being Wong Yap and governor of the Kwang Si province in China has been lecturing to the society here known as Bow Wong Woy ... it is equal to treason for a government official of China to advocate the principles enunciated by this Bow Wong Woy society."¹⁶⁰

Kang must have been disquieted by witnessing Wong Yap's experience as a Qing official, humiliated by the American exclusion system, yet daring to resist his inquisitors. In short order, Kang would become a highly effective campaigner against the Chinese Exclusion policy, arousing his compatriots to take mass action and convincing empathetic Americans that exclusion was not only unfair but potentially harmful to U.S.–China trade. Kang's power came from the weight of his organization and its role in the 1905 anti-American boycott. As will be seen in Chapter 6, it became clear to various American officials how much influence the Baohuanghui wielded in China, giving Kang's two meetings with President Theodore Roosevelt in June 1905 a compelling urgency. There is evidence that Roosevelt sought to influence Chinese public opinion toward the United States by issuing an executive order directly after his second meeting with Kang that significantly improved the experience Chinese immigrants faced upon arrival in the United States.

Kang planned his travels in the United States with the goal of meeting Roosevelt and swaying the debate over the Exclusion policy. When he crossed the United States border for the first time on February 11, 1905, at Sumas, Washington, he gave his destinations as Seattle, Portland, and Washington, DC.¹⁶¹ His departure for the East Coast from Los Angeles seemed predicated as much by the availability of the president and whether Congress was in session as on

159 "Big Wig of Flowery Kingdom Narrowly Escapes Arrest"; "Los Angeles Bull and Chinese Club," *Los Angeles Times*, June 7, 1905, section 2, 1. The *Times* article claimed that "the arrest of a Chinaman in Los Angeles was the direct means of bringing about the threat of a boycott of all American goods in China—the problem that the President is laboring with," because Wong Yap "straightway sent over an edict and put the grand kibosh on American goods therein." This sensationalistic commentary also remarked that "Homer Lea, Kang Yu Wei and half a dozen Los Angeles Chinese, including Dr. Tom Lung, have been quietly called to Washington on the case."

160 Office of Chinese Inspector, Los Angeles, to Commissioner of Immigration, San Francisco, March 29, 1905 in Wong Yap Folder 2061.

161 Canadian Pacific Railway [Chinese] arrivals at Port Sumas, Washington; Kang Yu Wei is no. 140, arriving as a traveler with a Section 6 Certificate on February 11, 1905.

anything else.¹⁶² Kang would have preferred to linger in Los Angeles as long as possible because, as he wrote his daughter Tongbi, he was still ill and feared his illness would worsen during his travels to the East Coast. But, he also told her, "I must meet the President and other top officials before Congress ends its session. I already lost a chance last year, and if we lose the opportunity this time, then we will have to wait until September or October." Indeed, on April 29, 1904, Congress had passed what would be its last piece of Chinese exclusionary legislation, an obscure law which delinked Chinese exclusion laws from any future treaty with China and allowed existing legislation to continue in effect indefinitely.¹⁶³ Kang had hoped to speak with Roosevelt concerning the renewal of the Gresham-Yang Treaty of 1894 before its expiration on December 7, 1904. As recounted in Chapter 2, Kang wished to travel to New York after his European tour, but there was no reply to an October 25, 1904 telegram from Tongbi in London to President Roosevelt requesting her father be admitted to the United States, and Kang sailed for Montreal on November 1 to begin a four-month sojourn in Canada.

By mid-March 1905, Kang was in Los Angeles, and Gresham-Yang treaty negotiations had stalled. The differences kept widening between the Chinese and American proposals for a revised treaty. The more pro-Chinese voices in the U.S. government, including Secretary of State John M. Hay, had receded. Roosevelt, in pursuit of his landslide 1904 election victory, had promised to continue the Exclusion policy. To the fore in the negotiations came newly appointed California Republican Victor Metcalf as Roosevelt's new secretary of commerce and labor. He sought to maintain the department's aggressive enforcement of exclusion provisions and introduce new procedures to register and deport Chinese who had illegally entered the United States. Meanwhile the Chinese side was becoming emboldened. Chinese Minister Liang Cheng presented successive drafts of a new treaty that carefully defined a laborer and explicitly allowed nonlaboring Chinese to enter the United States, while calling for reciprocal treatment of American laborers in China and equalizing the treatment of Chinese in the United States with other Asians, who at that time did not fall under such harsh exclusionary regulations. The Chinese drafts

162 Kang Youwei to Kang Tongbi, April 21, 1905, no. 康-11, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection. This was one of several letters in this collection that Kang wrote from Los Angeles to Tongbi and New York Baohuanghui leader Tang Mingsan asking their help in planning his travels East to coincide with the presence of the President and Congress in Washington, DC.

163 Delber McKee, *Chinese Exclusion versus the Open Door Policy, 1900-1906: Clashes over China Policy in the Roosevelt Era* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1977), 91, 84-102. The act also affirmed the 1902 extension of exclusion laws to Chinese living in the U.S. possessions of Hawai'i and Philippines.

were rejected out of hand by the United States side. According to historian Delber McKee, “The anti-Chinese appeared victorious, whether there was a new treaty or not, since domestic legislation had been separated from treaty terms in 1904. Furthermore, the Department of Commerce and Labor seemed strong enough to dictate the terms of any new treaty. China could only accept defeat gracefully.”¹⁶⁴

U.S. government negotiations shifted from dealing with the assertive envoy Liang Cheng to direct talks between the newly appointed minister to China, William Woodville (W. W.) Rockhill and the Qing Foreign Ministry (Waiwubu) in Beijing. A circular entitled “Hoping Our comrades will Join Together to Abolish the Exclusion Act” published by the Baohuanghui newspaper *Zhongguo Weixin Bao* in New York illustrates the alarmed reaction of the Chinese in the United States:

It is rumored that an American envoy will take the S.S. *Manchuria* and sail for Beijing in a week or two. To prevent him from being successful in his movements upon his arrival at Beijing, all we can do and must do now is to cable the Foreign Ministry [Waiwubu] that it should not consent to a new treaty. Let all merchants in every city in the United States do the same, so that our government will realize how anxious we all are. All the Baohuanghui chapters in the Western United States ought to call special meetings and cable all our provincial governors and all comrades to join together to protest the act.¹⁶⁵

On April 30, Minister Liang wrote a public notice to Chinese in the United States, expressing his despair at the turn of events: “The Chinese exclusion act is increasingly severe over and above what it was originally. The oppression, indignity, and general disquietude resulting therefrom are being daily aggravated ... As your Minister, I can no longer bear to see our people unjustly suffering inequities and indignities visited continually upon them, as people who cry but cry in vain.”¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁴ McKee, *Chinese Exclusion*, 102.

¹⁶⁵ Translation [with corrections from copy of attached Chinese version, “Wang Wo Tongbao Gongmou Zuzhi Jinyue” 望我同胞共謀組織禁約 [Hoping Our Comrades will Join Together to Abolish the Exclusion Act] by Interpreters J. Scott Hall and Chin Willie of a circular sent out by the “Daily World,” (Chinese), New York, NY, undated, Segregated Chinese Records, Immigration and Naturalization Service, RG 85, NA-Washington. Minister Rockhill left on April 18 on S.S. *Manchuria* for China, according to *Los Angeles Times*, April 19, 1905.

¹⁶⁶ “Proclamation of Sir Liang Chen Tung, Chinese Minister to the United States, Spain, Peru, Cuba, and Mexico, Issued through Consul General Chung at San Francisco, Cal.,”

Liang Cheng's proclamation was posted on Chinatown walls and published in Chinese American newspapers, further inflaming anxiety and the sense of impending doom among the Chinese in America. Kang was preparing to leave for the East Coast, but he was moved to send an urgent group telegram to Liang Qichao in Yokohama, the editors of *Shi Bao* in Shanghai, and other groups of activists in Hong Kong and elsewhere.

Kang's telegram read:

The United States has extended the Exclusion Treaty but Minister Liang refused to sign it. Now the U.S. government has sent an envoy to Beijing to ask the foreign ministry to sign the agreement. He left ten days ago. This concerns the livelihood of the Chinese people, especially the Cantonese, because they earn tens of millions of dollars here every year. If we are able to get rid of the treaty, it could greatly increase our annual income. Chinese people's lives are impoverished. If the laborers are completely cut off from working in the United States, then the situation inside China will certainly turn into great disorder.

Now, all the cities have sent telegrams to the foreign ministry to urge them to fight against the treaty. But the foreign ministry is cowardly, and, if frightened by the American envoy, will sign it. This is a matter of life or death. I hope you can organize a rally and urge everyone to send telegrams to our government and to provincial governors, appealing for help. At the same time, we should use newspapers to arouse popular sentiment. We may succeed in remedying this situation. All your expenses will be reimbursed later; please do not be stingy with small expenses. The Chinese in America will continue to give financial support.¹⁶⁷

Kang left Los Angeles on May 8.¹⁶⁸ With his telegram, action on exclusion turned to China.

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translated by J. Endicott Gardner, Inspector and Interpreter, San Francisco, April 30, 1905, Segregated Chinese Records, File Box 85, Entry 132, RG 85, NA-Washington. Liang Cheng also called for Chinese such as Wong Yap who felt they had been wronged by immigration officials to fill out detailed forms describing the incidents and forward them to the Chinese consul, which would attempt to make a claim to the U.S. government for indemnity.

167 Liang Qichao to all comrades and righteous brothers in all cities, printed letter, June 7, 1905, no. 578 in Fang and Cai, 113. The telegram was probably sent May 1 or 2, as Liang Qichao received it May 4 in Yokohama.

168 [Tang] Mingsan 湯銘三 [in New York] to Kang Tongbi, May 8, 1905, no. B-7, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection: "This morning received telegram saying Kang left for Washington at 3 o'clock this afternoon."

Kang's eight weeks of respite in Los Angeles with the hospitable and industrious Tom Leung were anything but restful. Although he found the setting idyllic and the American and Chinese communities welcoming, he had bronchitis to overcome, correspondence to maintain, Baohuanghui business to supervise, and a fractious Western Military Academy leadership with which to contend. Kang not only had to deal with the academy's purported American leaders but also needed to fend off government investigations into the legality of the operation. The elements of failure of the academy were falling into place. Kang's time in Los Angeles also further raised his consciousness about the ill-treatment of Chinese travelers and Chinese Americans through the racist Exclusion Acts. Yet again, Kang turned to a radical approach, although this time not involving violence. He initiated an anti-American goods boycott through his followers back in his homeland. Modern technology—the telegraph—was put to good use, with moderate success in the offing.

A Galvanizing Issue: American Exclusion Policy and Chinese Nationalism

We vow to resist the great oppression.
We vow to work together and cooperate with one another.
We vow to wipe out our shame and disgrace.
We would risk our lives to fight against exclusion and to accomplish
our goal.
My fellow 100,000 compatriots, do you hear me?

Verse from protest song by Chinese in the United States, 1905¹



On May 10, 1905, the Shanghai General Chamber of Commerce (Shanghai Shangwu Zonghui) proposed a nationwide boycott of American goods to protest the U.S. government's harshly applied policies prohibiting Chinese immigration.² Millions of Chinese at home and abroad were stirred by the boycott, which they learned about in newspapers or novels, if they could read, and in speeches, plays, and songs if they could not. Boycott rallies across China attracted thousands. Merchants stopped buying and selling American products, and if they refused, boycott committees stepped in to persuade them to comply. Chinese overseas sent thousands of dollars in donations to support the

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- 1 The Chinese Empire Reform Association in Rangoon, protest song, "Ju Jinyue Chuandan—Lü Mei Huaren Laigao" 拒禁約傳單—旅美華人來稿 [Leaflet Opposing the Exclusion Treaty—Manuscript from Chinese Living in America], printed by *Yangjiang Xin Bao*, June 10, 1905, no. 577 in Fang Zhiqin and Cai Huiyao 方志欽, 蔡惠堯, ed., *Kang Liang yu Baohuanghui: Tan Liang zai Meiguo Suocang Ziliao Huibian* 康梁與保皇會: 譚良在美國所藏資料彙編 [Kang, Liang, and the Baohuanghui: A Compilation of Materials Collected by Tom Leung in the United States] (Hong Kong: Yinhe Chubanshe, 2008), 379–83.
 - 2 This chapter is partially based on Jane Leung Larson, "Articulating China's First Mass Movement: Kang Youwei, Liang Qichao, the Baohuanghui, and the 1905 Anti-American Boycott." *Twentieth Century China* 33, no. 1 (November 2007): 4–26. Copyright 2007 Twentieth-Century China, published with permission by Johns Hopkins University Press.

cause.³ Kang Youwei himself learned about the Shanghai Chamber of Commerce boycott meeting on May 14 in Kansas City, the first stop on his trip from Los Angeles to Washington, DC. He wrote his daughter: "In Shanghai, there was a rally to oppose exclusion. They want to boycott American goods, and it is expected to be successful."⁴

Few knew that a telegram sent by Kang Youwei from Los Angeles had set in motion a chain reaction connecting Kang, Liang Qichao, Baohuanghui activists around the world, and the Shanghai General Chamber of Commerce.⁵ Nevertheless, American officials monitoring the boycott movement as it unfolded in the United States and China soon suspected the hand of the Baohuanghui in galvanizing China's first mass movement.

Much of the boycott's earliest ideology, strategy, financial backing, propaganda and information channels, and a few of its key personnel, came from Baohuanghui sources.⁶ True, the movement was largely mobilized through a network of newly formed local and provincial chambers of commerce inside China, as described by Zhongping Chen in *Modern China's Network Revolution*.⁷ However, the zeal of these nationalistic businessmen was inspired by the Baohuanghui reform philosophy and publications. Their domestic network and organizational capacity expanded through the Baohuanghui transnational network of members. Their boycott message was given depth by the Baohuanghui's

3 Two books in English are devoted to the anti-American boycott: Guanhua Wang, *In Search of Justice: The 1905–1906 Chinese Anti-American Boycott* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2001) and Sin Kiong Wong, *China's Anti-American Boycott Movement in 1905: A Study in Urban Protest* (New York: Peter Lang, 2002).

4 Kang Youwei to Kang Tongbi 康同壁, letterhead of The New Coates, Kansas City, Missouri, May 14, 1905, no. 康-6, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

5 See Chapter 5 for telegram full text.

6 Historians Delber L. McKee and Guanhua Wang have stressed the Baohuanghui role in the boycott. See McKee, *Chinese Exclusion versus the Open Door Policy* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1977), 110–11, 131, 148, 218, and "The Chinese Boycott of 1905–1906 Reconsidered: The Role of Chinese Americans," *Pacific Historical Review* 55 (May 1986): 165–91; Wang, *In Search of Justice*, 84–87. McKee, *Chinese Exclusion*, 110, for example, refers to "a thinly disguised partnership between the merchant guilds [in Shanghai] and the Chinese Empire Reform Association," and, citing the long history of Baohuanghui actions against exclusion, claims that there were "some indications that the Reform Association was the senior partner." Wang describes the Baohuanghui as a "bridge linking those in China and abroad who opposed American racial discrimination ... It functioned as a liaison in the initiation of the boycott movement, probably also defined the time and place of the movement's initiation, and, moreover, expounded theoretically on the boycott's necessity and feasibility."

7 The oldest chamber of commerce in Shanghai was founded as a nongovernmental organization in 1902. Zhongping Chen, *Modern China's Network Revolution: Chambers of Commerce and Sociopolitical Change in the Early Twentieth Century* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011), 1, 110–19.

history of opposing Chinese exclusion. The peculiar form of nationalism that found its voice in boycott pamphlets, newspaper articles, songs, and speeches has been called “boycott nationalism” by historian Guanhua Wang.⁸ Boycott nationalism shared much in common with the values that the Bao-huanghui reformers were promoting—populism, the identification of the nation with the family, citizen rights and responsibilities, solidarity and unified action, nonviolence, promotion of public over private interests, and progressivism. The boycott provided an unexpected opportunity for the reformers to persuade Chinese to practice citizenship and overcome their traditional passivity, factionalism, and selfishness by uniting in protest.

1 A Matter of Life or Death

This is a matter of life or death. I hope you can organize a rally and urge everyone to send telegrams to our government and to provincial governors, appealing for help. At the same time, we should use newspapers to arouse popular sentiment. We may succeed in remedying this situation. All your expenses will be reimbursed later; please do not be stingy with small expenses. The Chinese in America will continue to give financial support.⁹

Kang's urgent telegram from Los Angeles pled with his followers to use all means to forestall the Qing government from renewing the 1894 Gresham-Yang exclusion treaty. The treaty required China's government to accept the prohibition of Chinese laborers in the United States and agree to far-ranging restrictions on other classes of Chinese immigrants.¹⁰ During the ten years it was in effect, Congress and U.S. immigration officials continued to tighten the exclusion of Chinese, a violation of the treaty according to Qing envoys in the United States. China refused to renew Gresham-Yang when it expired in 1904, in hopes of negotiating a more favorable treaty. As detailed in Chapter 5, Chinese envoy Liang Cheng's suggestions were repeatedly rejected by President Theodore Roosevelt's hardline Department of Commerce and Labor. Now, in May 1905, American envoy William W. Rockhill was on his way to Beijing

8 Wang, *In Search of Justice*, 158.

9 Liang Qichao to all comrades and righteous brothers in all cities, printed letter, June 7, 1905, no. 578 in Fang and Cai, 113.

10 George E. Paulsen, “The Abrogation of the Gresham-Yang Treaty,” *Pacific Historical Review* 40 (November 1971): 457–77.

to lobby China directly, and Kang feared the Qing would capitulate and the survival of Chinese in America would be at stake.¹¹

The rapid reaction by Baohuanghui activists to Kang's telegram was coordinated by Liang Qichao in Yokohama. On June 7, Liang wrote a public report to Baohuanghui chapters describing how the boycott came about:

After I got this telegram [on May 4], I immediately sent telegrams to Shanghai, Hong Kong, Beijing, and other cities [where the Baohuanghui had activists]. The same afternoon that I received President Kang's telegram, I got telegrams from Shanghai and Hong Kong. The details in these telegrams were nearly the same as the one from President Kang because they also had received a telegram from him. Since then, I have had constant and urgent communications with Shanghai and Hong Kong by letter and telegram to discuss how to handle this problem.

I recall the lengthy article written by Mr. Chen Yi'an [Chen Yikan, Chen Jiyan], in Honolulu's *Xin Zhongguo Bao* [*Sun Chung Kwok Bo, New China News*]. It discussed the idea of a resolution by a federation of industrial and commercial organizations to not buy American merchandise as a method of resistance.¹²

Liang called Chen's proposal for a boycott against American goods "the best foreign affairs strategy ... Some of us may say that Chinese are just like loose sand who cannot easily be gathered together. I and others think that we should try." He also described a precedent for China that had just occurred in Japan during the Russo-Japanese War. Neutral France had permitted the Russian Baltic Fleet to anchor in Cam Ranh Bay in French Indochina before sailing to Japan, angering the Japanese. After Japan's diplomatic protests failed to move France, Liang reported that Japanese merchants met and resolved to boycott French goods.

11 Rockhill left for Asia on April 18, 1905, on the *Manchuria* ("The Manchuria Sails," *Los Angeles Times*, April 19, 1905, 1). Rockhill arrived May 20 in Shanghai to find the boycott plans well under way. See McKee, *Chinese Exclusion*, 108.

12 Liang Qichao, June 7, 1905, no. 578 in Fang and Cai, 112. The lunar date of Liang's letter is the fifth day of the fifth month; the date he says he received Kang's telegram was the first day of last month, in lunar terms the first day of the fourth month or May 4, 1905. Zhou Yongming, author of *Historicizing Online Politics: Telegraphy, the Internet, and Political Participation in China*, email to Jane Larson, January 14, 2014, estimated that it would take one day for a telegram traveling from Los Angeles to Japan in 1905, via the trans-Pacific submarine cable.

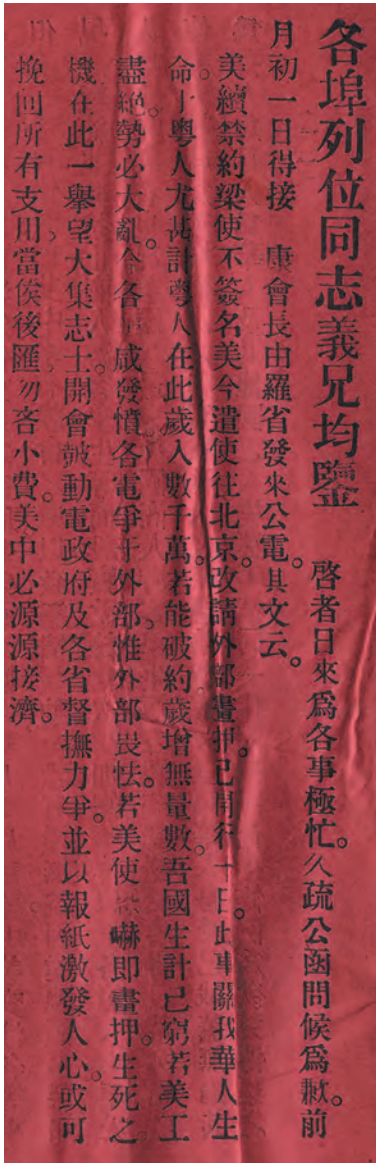


FIGURE 40

Portion of Liang Qichao's public letter, June 7, 1905, quoting Kang's telegram urging mobilization against Chinese exclusion.

"Why doesn't China think about applying the same methods to encourage our comrades in the commercial world to protest against the United States?"

Shanghai was chosen rather than Hong Kong as the place to start the boycott, said Liang, because it was "the number one commercial city in China." Moreover, in Shanghai, "*Shi Bao* [*Eastern Times*], a newspaper published by our

party, now sells 10,000 copies a day. Government officials all over the country read this paper every day. Thus I [Liang] had the paper publish the telegram from President Kang and write daily essays and criticism that go into detail about the severity of this matter." *Shi Bao* was founded in 1904, when Kang sent Liang undercover to Shanghai along with two other reformers, Di Chuqing (Di Baoxian, Gaode) and Luo Xiaogao (Luo Pu, Gaoshan), who also had been living in Japan. Beginning on May 5, *Shi Bao* became the preeminent source for boycott information and coordination, before the Shanghai General Chamber of Commerce boycott meeting but after receipt of Kang's telegram in that city. Boycott announcements, reports of meetings with American and Chinese officials, open letters, pledges of support, resolutions, and lists of participating merchants were all published in *Shi Bao* and disseminated to other newspapers in China.¹³ *Shi Bao* readers could not miss the significance of the boycott for China's future. "An Open Letter to Prepare to Resist the Chinese Exclusion Treaty of the United States" was published in *Shi Bao* on May 10:

In the short term we need to fix exclusion laws. And in the long run, we need to also think of the aftermath, as this issue is related to the honor or the shame of the whole country. Every person can feel the pain. Everybody should join together to plan the boycott (*mou dizhi*).¹⁴

Shi Bao staff members went far beyond publicizing resistance to the Exclusion Treaty. In June Liang Qichao described how the staff first met with "the most powerful directors of the Shanghai General Chamber of Commerce," a body that could "be used to our advantage in organizing this project." *Shi Bao* staff also visited Shanghai *daotai* (circuit intendant) Yuan Shuxun, the highest Qing official in the city at the time. The success of these meetings, said Liang, was "really unexpected."

Confirmation of Liang's account of these meetings comes directly from *Shi Bao* publisher Di Chuqing and editor Luo Xiaogao, who wrote Kang on June 22 using their nicknames, Gaode and Gaoshan.¹⁵

13 Wang, *In Search of Justice*, 2, 114–15, 182; Gaode and Gaoshan to Kang Youwei, June 22, 1905, no. 183 in Fang and Cai, 321. Wong, *China's Anti-American Boycott*, 121.

14 Xu Dingxin and Qian Xiaoming 徐鼎新, 錢小明, *Shanghai Zongshanghui shi, 1902–1929* 上海總商會史, 1902–1929 [History of the Shanghai General Chamber of Commerce] (Shanghai: Shanghai Shehui Kexueyuan Chubanshe, 1991), 70.

15 Gaode and Gaoshan to Kang Youwei, June 22, 1905, no. 183 in Fang and Cai, 321–22. A detailed argument for Gaode 高德 as Di Chuqing 狄楚卿 and Gaoshan 高山 as Luo

Last month we received your telegram and learned that the American Minister [Rockhill] tried to force us to renew the immigration treaty. We immediately began to use every ounce of our strength to deal with this. First, we talked secretly with two of the most respected and influential people in Shanghai and decided to boycott American products. Then we sent people to seek help. We recruited more than twenty powerful people. The most important helpers are two high-ranking officials, metropolitan official Yang Xingcheng [Yang Shiqi] and Zeng Shaoqing [Zeng Zhu]. The rest are members of the Chamber of Commerce.

Shi Bao staff members Di and Luo also sought sympathetic Qing government contacts. China's Foreign Ministry was headed by Prince Qing (Yikuang), on whom American Minister Rockhill focused intense attention. The prince was much influenced by his vice minister, Wu Tingfang, former minister to the United States, who was experienced in negotiating with the U.S. government over Exclusion policy. Wu probably was the first Chinese to allude to the possibility of a boycott, when he spoke before the sympathetic American Asiatic Association about Chinese grievances in January 1900.¹⁶ Kang learned from Luo and Di that *Shi Bao* had sent three men to Beijing from Shanghai to seek assistance for the boycott:

Attendant Gentleman Wu [Wu Tingfang] very much liked our idea of a "boycott," and he said that he would voice strong opposition to the treaty in the Foreign Affairs Ministry. The Grand Councilor Qu Hongji has promised to refuse to agree to the treaty. Prince Qing also thought our suggestion was good and instructed us that if we can stick to it all the way, the Americans will compromise.¹⁷

These efforts to enlist government support for the boycott were apparently clandestine. Di and Luo told Kang that "many officials now privately express

Xiaogao 羅孝高 is in Chen Xuezhong 陳學章, "Gaode Gaoshan kao" 高山高德考 [On Gao De and Gao Shan] (unpublished paper, Guangdong Academy of Social Sciences, ca 2004); "Gaoshan' kao" [On "Gaoshan"], *Guangdong Shehui Kexue* no. 2 (2004): 10.

16 "I should not be surprised if some of my countrymen, in view of the exclusion, should boycott some American goods, but I hope this may not occur." Quoted in Linda Pomerantz-Zhang, *Wu Tingfang (1842–1922): Reform and Modernization in Modern Chinese History* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1992), 116.

17 Gaode and Gaoshan to Kang Youwei, June 22, 1905, no. 183 in Fang and Cai, 321–22.

their sympathy for our party but neither they nor we can make this public." Others whom Kang suggested as possible sympathizers were Prince Pulun, who had met with Baohuanghui leaders during his 1904 trip to the United States as leader of China's official delegation to the St. Louis World's Fair, and Prince Zaizhen, whom Kang considered a supporter of the Baohuanghui.¹⁸

While the Shanghai General Chamber of Commerce held meetings to plan the boycott, said Luo and Di, *Shi Bao* engaged in advocacy and recruited supporters for the cause. Their letter to Kang asked for funds from Chinese in the United States to carry out their plans for a national campaign—fliers, a survey of American goods in China, and activists who would be sent into China's interior to lobby for the boycott "in hopes of sweeping the whole country." This, they advised, "requires a considerable amount of money."¹⁹ Moreover, *Shi Bao* was rejecting advertisements from American firms, and "in doing so, we may lose several hundred dollars a month, but we have to do it for our country."

Money was the most tangible contribution made to the boycott by Chinese living abroad. Donations from overseas Chinese flowed to newspapers such as *Shi Bao* as well as to organizations involved in the boycott, including the Shanghai General Chamber of Commerce. Kang wrote about allocating \$10,000 from Baohuanghui funds to *Shi Bao* to support its public discussion of the boycott.²⁰ Los Angeles Baohuanghui leader Tom Leung's correspondence shows that he made at least one boycott donation to the Baohuanghui office in Hong Kong, which was acknowledged by Ye Huibo (Ye En) and Kuang Shoumin, who were in charge of Baohuanghui headquarters: "The \$200 you sent us previously for the Reject the Treaty Society general headquarters (Juyue zonghui) has been safely sent to the movement in Guangzhou."²¹ Kang was consumed with building the Reject the Treaty Society (Juyuehui) as early as May 1905 while in St. Louis. As he told his daughter Tongbi, "popular sentiment is coming around to

18 "Ju Jinyue Chuandan," June 10, 1905, no. 577 in Fang and Cai, 381; Edward J. M. Rhoads, *Manchus and Han: Ethnic Relations and Political Power in Late Qing and Early Republican China, 1861–1928* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2000), 96, includes Zaizhen among the top four Qing court supporters of constitutionalism in 1905. "Prince Pu Walks Up Three Harlem Flights," *New York Times*, June 2, 1904, 9, reports that Pulun received "a delegation from the Chinese Reform Association" at his hotel in New York City.

19 Gaode and Gaoshan, June 22, 1905, no. 183 in Fang and Cai, 322.

20 Kang Youwei to Liang Qixun 梁啟勳, July 22, 1905, in Zhang Ronghua 張榮華, ed., *Kang Youwei Juan* 康有為卷 [Kang Youwei Documents] (Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin Daxue Chubanshe, 2015), 4–5.

21 Kuang Shoumin 鄺壽民 to Tan Zhangxiao, August 10, 1905, no. 189 in Fang and Cai, 156.

us, and we are in a good position.”²² After Kang’s lengthy meetings with followers at his next stop in Chicago, fundraising began in earnest, according to later claims to the press by Chicago activist Chen Baixin (Chin Pak Sun, Chan Pak Sun, Chan Pack Sun, Chan Pok Sun), and “the humblest Chinese willingly paid \$5 each into the agitation fund.”²³ A letter to Roosevelt from a Chinese American notably unsympathetic to the boycott illustrates Kang’s success in raising funds and arousing fervor against the Exclusion Treaty.²⁴ New York City police informant Quan Yick Nam and a personal friend of the president wrote him in August 1905 concerning “the trouble maked [*sic*] by the members of the Chinese Reform Association within the United States” whose speeches in different cities “force every Chinese to put there [*sic*] moneys to there [*sic*] Association and send it to China for the boycott expense.” Quan thought that the U.S. government should not tolerate Kang’s speeches against its own interests: “If this Government take some action against them, so they can’t collect the money so easy in here, then the boycott could not grow so quick over in China.”

American officials following boycott activities at home and in China also observed Baohuanghui influence on Chinese public opinion—especially the key role of *Shi Bao*. Di and Luo in Shanghai admitted to Kang: “This time, we have the government officials’ assistance, and we have students to travel places to lobby for us. Thus, we can rouse a big movement. As a result, the American envoy [probably referring to Rockhill] has often found fault with *Shi Bao*.”²⁵ Another member of *Shi Bao*’s editorial team, Mai Menghua, told Kang in June: “The American consul [probably acting Consul General James W. Davidson] knows that to some extent the whole thing was started by us. In recent days, he has made frequent visits to *Shi Bao*, striving to speak persuasively and coming at the issue from every possible angle to try to save the situation.”²⁶ A few months later, Shanghai Consul General James L. Rodgers, informed the State Department: “It is generally admitted that the movement, which is the natural outcome of such an organization as that perfected for the boycott work, is really the expression of allegiance to the reform cause of Kang Yu-wei ...” Rodgers speculated that “the boycott is but the medium of supporting a popular

22 Kang Youwei, St. Louis, to Kang Tongbi, May 21, 1905, no. 康-7, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection. “I have been handling the Juyuehui 拒約會 for several days.”

23 “Boycott Urged Here,” *Chicago News*, August 9, 1905, 10.

24 Quan Yick Nam, New York, to Theodore Roosevelt, August 3, 1905; Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Series 1, Reel 57, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.

25 Gaode and Gaoshan to Kang Youwei, June 22, 1905, no. 183 in Fang and Cai, 322.

26 Mai Menghua 麥孟華 to Kang Youwei, June 1, 1905, no. 184 in Fang and Cai, 318–20.

sentiment and that at the proper time it will be allowed to drop behind, while the cause of reform in China goes to the fore ...”²⁷

Shi Bao staff members took heart from Rockhill’s willingness to meet with eight directors of the Shanghai General Chamber of Commerce on May 21, a day after he arrived in Shanghai. Mai Menghua described to Kang what happened at the meeting:

It happened that the new American minister Rockhill had just arrived in Shanghai and was greatly shocked upon learning of the situation. He immediately requested a meeting with the board of directors. He was cordial in his attempts to persuade us, but used the same argument as the consul did. The board of directors was firm in attitude. The American minister could not do anything about it, only saying that the treaty was misunderstood, it had really not been changed much, and was even more lenient.

Because we had not read the text of the treaty, we sent telegrams to the foreign ministry and [Chinese] Minister [to the United States] Liang [Cheng]. In their replies, both gave the main points of the treaty. We showed them to the American minister but he had nothing to say and only requested that we not be in such a rush. His inner feelings of fear could be seen in his words and attitude. Our foreign ministry promised us a vigorous fight. The American minister has been intimidated. I think our minister’s negotiations will turn out successfully in favor of our demands.²⁸

Rockhill’s report to Secretary of State John M. Hay on his May 22 meeting with the chamber directors confirmed much of the substance of Mai’s letter to Kang about the meeting.²⁹ He described Shanghai Consul General Davidson’s anxiety about the “anti-American agitation,” which persuaded him to meet with the “heads of the native guilds.” Rockhill also reported that when he met the chamber directors he told them “they had been misled and were evidently not aware of the true state of the negotiations now pending between the two governments.” He gave them a memorandum blandly summarizing the exchange

27 Rodgers to the Department of State, August 24, 1905, and September 15, 1905, Despatches from U.S. Consuls in Shanghai, China, 1847–1906, M112, RG 59, NA-College Park.

28 Mai Menghua to Kang Youwei, June 1, 1905, no. 184 in Fang and Cai, 319.

29 Rockhill, American Legation, Peking, to the Secretary of State, July 6, 1905, no. 23, in *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1906), 205–6.

of treaty drafts. "I asked them to make it known to their guilds. This they promised to do, and they left assuring me that they were perfectly satisfied with my explanations." Thus, Rockhill was surprised that the "local press" never ceased publishing "inflammatory articles against our country and encouraging the proposed boycott." He asked Davidson to visit the *daotai* (Yuan Shuxun?) and "ask him to put a stop to such foolish and lawless agitation," but apparently the *daotai* was unwilling to act.³⁰

When Rockhill arrived at the American Legation in Beijing, he found many telegrams and diplomatic dispatches stating that the movement had spread to Fuzhou, Xiamen, Guangzhou, Hankou, Tianjin, and to interior towns in Fujian Province, and that "fears were expressed that the ignorant people of the interior might commit acts of violence against foreigners."³¹ Rockhill convinced Prince Qing to issue an order on June 29 that in the mildest terms asked his viceroys and governors to tell the merchants to call off the boycott, which was to start in July.³² In fact, except for Zhili Viceroy Yuan Shikai's strong efforts to ban boycott activities in Tianjin, the Qing government acted as innocuously as possible, and the boycott continued to develop.

Meanwhile, in San Francisco, the enterprising Immigration Service Chinese Inspector John Endicott Gardner began negotiations with the San Francisco Baohuanghui chapter president (presumably Tom She Bin). Gardner believed that the chapter president and Kang had the power to "break the back-bone of the boycott; not by interdicting the boycott arbitrarily, but by counsel based upon the conveying of news welcome to the Chinese, which is, that the U.S. government is placing a correct construction upon the treaties."³³ By this, Gardner understood the Baohuanghui to support the U.S. government limiting but not completely prohibiting the immigration of Chinese laborers as long as "high class Chinese will no longer be excluded." Furthermore, Gardner told the commissioner of immigration that Kang was in the position to suspend

30 At least four of the prominent men connected with the Shanghai Chamber of Commerce and the boycott held the title *daotai* 道臺 or circuit intendant: According to Zhongping Chen, email to Larson, March 14, 2014, appointed were Yuan Shuxun, the highest-ranked Shanghai *daotai*, and Yan Xinhou 嚴信厚, in charge of the Salt Administration. Fujian merchant Zeng Shaoqing 曾少卿 bought his title and did not fill a position; wealthy comprador Xu Run 徐潤 also bought his title but had once been a manager of the China Merchant Steamship Navigation Company, so he was considered a true official.

31 Rockhill to Secretary of State, July 6, 1905, 205. Rockhill officially took charge of the American Legation on June 1, 1905. McKee, *Chinese Exclusion*, 115.

32 Wang, *In Search of Justice*, 130.

33 John Endicott Gardner to Commissioner of Immigration, San Francisco, August 7, 1905, Segregated Chinese Records, File Box 85, Entry 132, RG 85, NA-Washington.

“the spread of literature here and in China detrimental to the interests of the United States.” Apart from inflammatory pamphlets and fans picturing Americans abusing Chinese, Gardner wrote, “Kang Yu Wei has a pupil who is at the head of one of the Shanghai dailies, from which position he is directing the thought of the Chinese in and around Shanghai on the matter of the boycott.” Gardner must have been referring to *Shi Bao* editor and Wanmucaotang student Luo Xiaogao, who “in keeping with Chinese customs and usages” would have been loyal to his teacher “all of his life ... from which you will appreciate the influence that may be exerted for or against us by Kang Yu Wei.” Gardner’s August 7, 1905, letter to the commissioner of immigration in San Francisco was the last of his attempts to mediate a solution with the Baohuanghui, which were quashed in Washington. In any case, it was already too late as the boycott had begun, and Kang’s own position on exclusion had hardened.

Kang began his public campaign against exclusion in St. Louis in May, just as Rockhill was meeting with the Shanghai Chamber of Commerce. Propitiously, the American Baptist Missionary Union was holding its convention in St. Louis, and one of its pro-Chinese members, Rev. Henry Clay Mabie, invited Kang to address the assembly. In his introduction to the conventioners, Mabie intimated that Kang was familiar with Baptist missionary work in China and that it would be appropriate to have him speak.³⁴ When Kang entered the hall, Mabie was reading a paper on higher education in China and cut short his speech. “The audience arose en masse and welcomed the oriental visitor with cheers and waving of handkerchiefs,” according to the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*.³⁵

Kang expressed his “great pleasure to travel through this new and wonderful country, young and progressive, where people believe in the Christian religion as they believe in themselves.”³⁶ He also mentioned that he personally knew a number of missionaries who had worked in China, including Timothy Richard and W. A. P. Martin.³⁷ Kang encouraged foreign missionary work in

34 “Mission Spirit Increases With Baptists,” *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, May 20, 1905, 3.

35 “Chinese Reformer Asks Concession to Countrymen,” *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, May 20, 1905, 3. The official record of the convention told the story less dramatically, noting that Kang, Zhou Guoxian, and Homer Lea entered, took seats on the platform, and, after Mabie’s paper was finished (or perhaps “cut short”), he welcomed the visitors on behalf of the union. *Ninety-First Annual Report of the American Baptist Missionary Union, 1904–1905* (Boston: Missionary Rooms, 1905); Minutes of Meetings, 359, <https://findit-uat.library.yale.edu/catalog/digcoll:459163>, accessed November 11, 2022.

36 *Ninety-First Annual Report*, 359–61.

37 *Ninety-First Annual Report*. Also see Cyrus H. Peale, *Nationalism and Education in Modern China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1932), 15, which quoted Kang as having said on another occasion: “I owe my concern to reform chiefly to the writings of two missionaries, the Rev. Timothy Richard and the Rev. Dr. Young J. Allen.” For other references in

China, particularly in the field of education. This led him to the main topic of his speech:

In China there are thousands of schools in which youth are receiving education along modern lines. They desire to complete their studies under American influence, and they would do so were it not for your rigid exclusion laws. I have no objection to these laws in so far as they relate to undesirable classes. But our students and scholars have been subjected to indignities on coming to this country. If you will modify these laws, you will do a service not for China only but for humanity. In the event of my return to Peking, I will do my best to encourage missionary work in China. You have my warmest wishes for your success in all your undertakings, and I thank you for the honor you have shown me.³⁸

The press was enthusiastic in its description of Kang: "His Excellency became quite animated in his speech, making gestures quite contrary to the conception of Oriental placidity. He was frequently cheered in referring to the Chinese Exclusion Acts."³⁹ Homer Lea ("an attaché") followed Kang with further remarks on the exclusion laws. The American Baptist Missionary Union then unanimously adopted a resolution (drafted on the spot) to seek modification of the "so-called Chinese Exclusion Act so as to prevent the great personal indignities often inflicted upon students coming to this land for the purposes of higher education, and that representative citizens of China should also be admitted on the same terms and conditions of equality with those of the most favored nations of the world."⁴⁰ This action, while not in itself unusual as American missionaries had long been leaders in the American pro-Chinese, anti-exclusion campaign, had a dramatic impact following Kang's thirty-minute speech.⁴¹ Kang incorporated themes of Chinese nationalism, equal treatment,

this regard see William E. Southill, *Timothy Richard of China* (London: Seely, Service, and Company, 1924); and Timothy Richard, *Forty-five Years in China* (New York: F. A. Stokes, 1916).

38 *Ninety-First Annual Report*, 359–60.

39 "Chinese Reformer Asks Concession," *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, May 20, 1905, 3.

40 *Ninety-First Annual Report*, 361. See also *Executive Committee Record of the American Baptist Missionary Union*, September 12, 1904–December 6, 1905, 269–70, concerning further action of the St. Louis resolution; and *Ninety-Second Annual Report*, 47.

41 "Baptists Favor Modified Exclusion Laws at Chinese Reformer's Request," *St. Louis Republic*, May 20, 1905, 3. McKee, *Chinese Exclusion*, 48–50, 165. McKee notes that American church groups wrote petitions and organized resolutions against exclusion from 1901 on, but unlike American business and agricultural interests, "showed almost no desire to admit laborers," focusing their efforts on "the privileged classes, especially students."

racial discrimination, and mutual economic benefit that would be brought up repeatedly as he traveled through North America. The Baptists' resolution was one wave in a building tide against exclusion during summer 1905. American public opinion, an alarmed business community, and a more positive press all caused Roosevelt to back away from his commitment to exclusion and join Secretary of War William Howard Taft and other advisors to make significant changes in Exclusion policy and implementation.⁴²

2 Opposing Chinese Exclusion

Until the boycott, Kang relied on personal diplomacy with foreign leaders to press for more equitable treatment of Chinese immigrants. In April 1903, Kang sent a public letter to his followers expressing deep concern when he heard that the Canadian government planned to raise the head tax on Chinese immigrants from \$100 to \$500 (Canadian dollars). "I am shocked and worried beyond description," he said, "I talked with President (*zongtong*) [Canadian Prime Minister] Laurier four times about this ... I felt honored that my suggestions were accepted last year. As a result, the tax was not increased ... Now I am afraid I cannot do anything about it. It would be too disrespectful if I sent another letter to him."⁴³ The new Chinese head tax went into effect on January 1, 1904.

As onerous as Canada's head tax was, it lacked the sweeping nature of Chinese exclusion in the United States and the bitter imagery that powerfully evoked nationalistic fervor among overseas Chinese. Kang foreshadowed the organization of a boycott in a December 29, 1902, letter to members, which proposed a two-pronged strategy for dealing with the expiration of the Gresham-Yang treaty in 1904, the nub of which was the "strength of the group" (*tuanli*) and uniting in large groups (*he daqun*), expressed in personal behavior and united action.⁴⁴

42 McKee, *Chinese Exclusion*, 126–27.

43 Kang Youwei to Li Fuji 李福基, duplicated letter, April 29, 1903, no. 566 in Fang and Cai, 53–54. On May 13, 1902, Kang wrote Canadian Prime Minister Sir Wilfrid Laurier, asking that fares to Canada from China be lowered to earlier prices so as to not prevent immigration and citing Canada's need for population and laborers; Kang Youwei, "The Yews," Darjeeling, to Laurier, May 13, 1902, Laurier Papers, vol. 233, no. 65103, Library and Archives of Canada.

44 Kang Youwei to all members by way of (Li) Fuji, (Liu) Zhangxuan 劉章軒, (Ye) Huibo 葉惠伯 [Ye En 葉恩], and (Li) Youshu 李祐樞 (all of Canada), December 29, 1902, no. 550 in Fang and Cai, 46–8.

The year after next will be the time when the Sino-American commercial treaty expires. Our fellow countrymen should promptly unite and without delay strive to improve as soon as possible in all the areas where we fall behind Americans. As a result, Americans will not find fault with us. Consequently, our united strength will be enough to save our country and resist foreign influence, and perhaps we can avoid being expelled and other humiliations. You first have to help yourself, and then you can seek help from others.

Kang then instructed members to improve themselves and their communities in visible ways to alter the harsh American judgments about the Chinese living among them, which led to unequal treatment and exclusion.

- Filthiness: “This is the most frequent American criticism of us, and a lot of our people are indeed not clean.” Five areas needed attention: First, Chinatown should be “frequently swept clean,” because “anyone who passes through” can see its condition. “Last year doctors in San Francisco used this to criticize us and were concerned about their health” [referring to the quarantining of Chinatown because of bubonic plague fears in 1900]. Second, because Americans looked down on people who dressed in a slovenly manner, “clothing and shoes should be kept clean.” Third, “you must wash your face and hands, clean your beard and comb your hair,” because Americans “are very particular about these things.” Fourth, “you should take frequent baths.” Finally, “keep your rooms and houses clean,” as “even poor Westerners’ houses are very clean.” Kang felt that these changes were all easily implemented, and, “To be despised by Westerners because of these things is not worth it.”
- Beatings and killings of each other: Here, Kang was referring to fighting among those from different dialect groups, counties, and even surnames. “They quarrel with each other every day. When someone is angered by what another person has said, he seeks revenge with a knife. They only pay attention to the internal struggles with people of their own race but ignore the insults of foreigners. Their business is ‘brothers killing brothers.’” Such self-destructive behavior had consequences: “Previously, we thought China was the whole world, nobody on the outside could compete with us, so our struggles were only among brothers. Now we know there are many countries, and China is just one of them. We must be united to resist foreign powers. We should not act like before and struggle internally over trivial matters. This is most important if we wish Americans not to exclude Chinese workers.”
- Have more civilized meetings: Kang felt that changing these cultural and personal practices would be enhanced by group “activities such as reading

books and newspapers, discussing current events, and studying new laws” and would arouse a sense of righteousness and cooperation so that “shallow ideas will be exposed as shallow and deep insights as deep.”

Personal and community reforms would then facilitate the Baohuanghui to lead a unified front in the looming political battle over exclusion: “Next year we should bring together a large group to recover from our national humiliation ... This is really the main responsibility of our Association ... Such activities as organizing large groups and drumming up enthusiasm are the foundation for saving our race in the future.”

In 1903, two Baohuanghui leaders—Chen Yikan and Liang Qichao—cultivated fertile ground for an anti-American boycott with their trenchant newspaper articles. In 1897, Liang Qichao had first written about the conditions of Chinese laborers in the United States in *Zhixin Bao* (*China Reformer*), and, in 1902, he gave his readers a broad economic and foreign affairs perspective on Chinese emigration and the U.S. exclusion acts in *Xinmin Congbao* (*Sein Min Choong Bou*).⁴⁵ Liang had gained direct experience fighting for Chinese immigrants in 1899, when he led a successful movement to petition the Japanese government to grant the same residence rights to Chinese merchants and industrialists as to Europeans and Americans, amidst much Japanese agitation for excluding Chinese.⁴⁶ But it was Chen Yikan, a Baohuanghui editor in Hawai‘i, who first used the term *dizhi* (boycott) to persuade Chinese that they had the power to organize against the United States.⁴⁷

2.1 *Chen Yikan’s 1903 Blueprint for a Boycott*

In 1903, one of Kang’s students, Chen Yikan, edited the leading Chinese newspaper in Hawai‘i, *Xin Zhongguo Bao* (*Sun Chung Kwok Bo, New China News*). Hawai‘i, among other U.S. territories, had been brought firmly under American exclusion rules in 1902, much to the disgruntlement of the islands’ large Chinese population.⁴⁸ This affront must have precipitated Chen’s “Suggestions for the Boycott of the Exclusion Law,” a detailed justification and blueprint for a

45 Liang Qichao 梁啟超, “Zhi Wu Xingshi shu: Lun Meiguo Huagong Liu Shi” 致伍星使書: 論美國華工六事 [A letter to Ambassador Wu: Six Matters regarding the Chinese Laborers in America], *Zhixin Bao* 14 (1897): 3–4, and *Zhixin Bao* 15 (1897): 1–2 cited in Jing Tsu, *Failure, Nationalism, and Literature: The Making of Modern Chinese Identity, 1895–1937* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005), 58; Wang, *In Search of Justice*, 55.

46 Eric C. Han, *Rise of a Japanese Chinatown: Yokohama, 1894–1972* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014), 76–78.

47 Wong, *China’s Anti-American Boycott*, 97.

48 McKee, *Chinese Exclusion*, 60–65, remarks that the 1902 legislation “represented a significant step forward for the exclusion forces,” and the Chinese minister in the United

boycott of American goods that was reprinted by Liang Qichao in his widely distributed *Xinmin Congbao* and dispersed through other reform newspapers around the world.⁴⁹ Chen argued that a strong country protects its people overseas and that if Chinese did not protest their treatment in the United States, other countries would also exclude them. A boycott would not involve the Qing government—yet it could effectively back up the government in its negotiations with U.S. officials. Most importantly, a boycott could succeed because American business owners did not want to lose the China trade. When American business and industry calculated the cost of the boycott, Chen believed, they would surrender and seek a relaxation of exclusion laws. Furthermore, a boycott could set off a Chinese production boom of goods to replace American imports, so that even if the boycott failed and Chinese immigrants were expelled from the United States, they could return home to good jobs.

Chen outlined a number of tactics requiring unity of purpose and coordination among different groups:

... merchants should stop buying American goods, Chinese should stop using American products and workers should refuse to unload American goods from foreign ships. To enforce these measures, [Chen] suggested that Chinese merchants organize themselves into a body which would elect executives to supervise the sanctions. Those merchants who failed to comply with the sanctions would be punished. To help the vast masses to identify American goods, American brands would be listed in both Chinese and English and would be widely circulated. At the same time, public speeches were to be made to publicize the boycott.⁵⁰

Organizationally, Chinese in 1903 were not ready to implement such a boycott, as the interlinked network of chambers of commerce did not exist until 1904. Inspirationally, however, Chen's proposal was effective, providing a practical, easy to grasp strategy that could be executed when the time was right. After the boycott was announced in Shanghai in May 1905, Liang Qichao wrote, "At first, even I did not believe that a boycott could be carried out, but now it has come this far. If we succeed, all of our hundred thousand compatriots who live in

States, Wu Tingfang, objected most to the provisions relating to Chinese in Hawai'i and the Philippines.

49 Chen's editorial appeared in *Xin Zhongguo Bao* 新中國報 in February 1903 and was reprinted in *Xinmin Congbao* 新民叢報 on October 4, 1903. Wong, *China's Anti-American Boycott*, 120, 138 n7.

50 Yen Ching-hwang, *Coolies and Mandarins: China's Protection of Overseas Chinese during the Late Ch'ing Period (1851–1911)* (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1985), 323.

America should lift a cup of wine to toast Mr. Yi'an! [Chen Yikan] ... From this, we can see the importance of the press, and if the will of the people is united, then there will be no country that does not fear us."⁵¹

In the unequal struggle over Exclusion policies between the United States and China, Chen argued that if Chinese people cooperated, they could overpower the U.S. government—and succeed where their diplomats had fallen short. This idea was riveting and fit the Social Darwinist themes of the time. Liang Qichao's Yokohama newspaper, *Xinmin Congbao*, contrasted the weakness of China's government with the "magical power" (*moli*) of the people in 1905.⁵² "If this fight lets our people appreciate their great strength, if we use such strength in campaigns to back up our government, we will win the respect of the world." The article by Liang also predicted that within one or two months the power of the Chinese people would send a shock wave to the world, thrusting Chinese public opinion into the U.S.–China relationship with the message that "China cannot be bullied." But, Liang warned, if the actions of the Chinese people failed, China's international status would be weakened even more.

2.2 Liang Qichao's "Notes on the Exclusion of Chinese Laborers"

Around the time Chen Yikan wrote his seminal article, Liang Qichao was in the United States learning firsthand about discrimination against his fellow countrymen. His experiences were distilled in two works published by *Xinmin Congbao* in 1904. *Xin Dalu Youji* (Travel Notes from the New World) is still much-quoted, but Liang's now largely forgotten *Huagong Jinyue Ji* (Notes on the Exclusion of Chinese Laborers) was probably the earliest and most influential introduction to the Exclusion policy for a Chinese audience.⁵³ Liang's *Notes* thoroughly documented the history of the Exclusion policy and graphically described the horrors to which only Chinese immigrants to the United States

51 Liang Qichao printed letter, June 7, 1905, no. 578 in Fang and Cai, 126.

52 Yin Bing 飲冰 [Liang Qichao], "Dizhi Jinyue yu Zhong-Mei Guojiao zhi Guanxi," 抵制禁約與中美國交之關係 [The Relationship between the Anti-Treaty Boycott and China-U.S. Diplomatic Relations], *Xinmin Congbao* no. 68, ca. midyear 1905. Zhang Cunwu 張存武, *Guangxu Sanyinian Zhongmei Gongyue Fengchao* 光緒三十一年中美工約風潮 [Agitation against the Sino-American Exclusion Treaty] (Taipei: Zhongyang Yanjiu Yuan Jindaishi Yanjiusuo, 1965), 78–79.

53 K. Scott Wong, "Liang Qichao and the Chinese of America: A Re-evaluation of his *Selected Memoir of Travels in the New World*," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 11, no. 4 (Summer 1992): 3–24; A Ying 阿英, *Fanmei Huagong Jinyue Wenxue Ji* 反美華工禁約文學集 [A Collection of Literature in Opposition to the American Treaty Excluding Chinese Laborers] (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1962), 25.

were subjected. Perhaps the most humiliating procedure was the recently introduced Bertillon system for identifying Chinese through meticulous measurements and photographic images taken of their body parts, from head to toes, in different positions. Liang described each step in the procedure ending with: "All of these measurements are taken while the person is nude. The length of the fingers and toes between each joint is also recorded. There is nothing that is not recorded in great detail."⁵⁴ The final section of Liang's essay described the early movement to oppose exclusion. He excerpted Chen's 1903 blueprint and also reprinted a petition that he had helped draft in San Francisco representing Chinese in one hundred American cities and towns that implored the Qing government to resist American entreaties to renew the Exclusion treaty. During the boycott, Liang's *Notes* would become an important propaganda tool when it was read aloud at meetings and distributed as a pamphlet throughout China. Chinese Inspector Gardner in San Francisco translated the contents of Liang's pamphlet for his superiors and may also have borrowed some of Liang's arguments in the series of reports he sent to Washington in July and August.⁵⁵ Liang claimed in his June 1905 public letter on the boycott that his essay had a central role in the decisive May 10 Shanghai meeting:

On the day of the meeting, the two *daotais*, Zeng Shaoqing and Xu Yuzhi [Xu Run], made the first speeches and read to the audience my article, "Notes on the Exclusion of Chinese Laborers." Then they emphasized that this issue was a matter of life and death for Guangdong people and even an issue of life and death for all of China. There were a few thousand people attending the meeting. Everyone became angry.

Seven items were decided that day:

- Don't buy any American merchandise.
- Chinese merchandise must not be exported to the United States.
- Workers must not unload American merchandise arriving in port.
- All Chinese employees of American firms, including compradors, secretaries, interpreters, and waiters, must quit their jobs.

54 Wong, "Liang Qichao and the Chinese of America," 15–16.

55 John Endicott Gardner to Commissioner of Corporations James R. Garfield, Washington, DC, letter and attachment, "Translation of Treatise on 'The Chinese Exclusion Act,' written over the non de plume of Liang Kai Chew," July 1, 1905, Segregated Chinese Records, File Box 85, Entry 132, RG 85, NA-Washington. Gardner wrote Garfield that "it was but a short time ago that I saw how the Chinese texts of our treaties read and how they really bear out what has always seemed to me to be the sensible view."

- Send these resolutions by telegram to the Foreign Ministry in Beijing, the Board of Trade [Shangbu], the governors and governors general of all provinces, and the Imperial Envoy of China in Washington, DC, urging them to be persistent in the fight to abolish the Exclusion Acts.
- Inform the American Chamber of Commerce in Shanghai of our resolutions; ask the Chamber to transmit them to the U.S. consulate in Shanghai to send to the U.S. government.
- Send these resolutions by telegram to all cities in China, asking them to gather people together to discuss and carry out the resolutions and enhance our momentum and strength ...

In the last month, everyone in Shanghai has been thinking about and talking about the Exclusion Treaty. From millionaires to poor workers, millions of people are of one mind, and we must not stop until we win back our rights. Oh! We have been working on these matters for many years, but have never seen more success than this time.⁵⁶

2.3 *The St. Louis World's Fair and a Growing Drumbeat against Exclusion*

It is significant that Kang first addressed Americans on the topic of exclusion in St. Louis, because it had been in conjunction with the 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition—usually referred to as the St. Louis World's Fair—that a number of Qing officials and merchants were embarrassed by rude treatment from U.S. customs and immigration officials. Kang, of course, had two months earlier witnessed the distress of Guangdong-Guangxi fair representative Wong Yap, after Wong underwent interrogation by immigration officials in Los Angeles at the home of Kang's student, Tom Leung.⁵⁷

Perhaps it was the sharp contrast of Chinese pride and shame that made the St. Louis fair such an evocative event during the boycott. The exposition was China's first official participation in a world's fair, and the likeable and adventurous Prince Pulun was sent to preside over the opening of China's pavilion. The American public was delighted with the Chinese exhibit, and the American press showered adulation on Prince Pulun. Preceding Pulun's arrival and presenting a distinguished yet modern image, was Vice Imperial Commissioner Wong Kai Kah (Huang Kaijia), an eloquent English speaker from Guangzhou who was intimately acquainted with American life from his nine years as a student in Yung Wing's Chinese Educational Mission. St. Louis officials gave

⁵⁶ Liang Qichao, June 7, 1905, no. 578 in Fang and Cai, 113–14.

⁵⁷ See Chapter 5 for an account of this incident.

a warm welcome to Wong Kai Kah, who came not only with his wife but all his children. Other members of China's delegation to the fair, however, met with a considerably different reception during their stays in the United States.

Wong Kai Kah arrived in St. Louis in July 1903 with a team of laborers to undertake construction of China's exhibit, an elaborate pavilion recreating Pulun's palace. The U.S. Congress, determined to avoid "the flagrant abuse of hospitality and violation of law by Chinese persons who had been admitted to take part in former expositions," singled out the Chinese among all the other international delegations. An onerous set of sixty-one rules set highly restrictive and discriminatory conditions on the entry of Chinese fair participants to the United States.⁵⁸ Not only laborers but merchants and some officials had to undergo such affronts as measurement by the Bertillon system upon arrival in San Francisco and again in St. Louis. Surprised and enraged by these regulations, the Qing government protested, and articles about the dispute appeared in both the American and Chinese press. Such harsh treatment was not taken lightly by the merchants and officials on whom it was imposed, and their stories would be told in person or by others at the 1905 boycott rallies.

Wong Kai Kah's own vehement response to the discriminatory treatment accorded his countrymen—"A Menace to America's Oriental Trade"—was published in the March 1904 edition of the respected *North American Review*. His article described how Chinese merchants' excitement about the fair upon being invited to participate had turned to hostility when months later, the sixty-one rules were announced by the U.S. Treasury Department.⁵⁹ "The publication of these rulings in the Chinese press led to indignation meetings of the merchants, and the determination of many to give up their contemplated exhibitions; and I fear the participation of Chinese merchants in the Fair will not be as generous as it would otherwise have been." And, he suggested how they might retaliate—with a boycott. According to a U.S. House of Representatives report in 1906, Wong's article was the most widely read criticism of exclusion by Americans, prompting many angry letters to the Bureau of Immigration.⁶⁰

58 Bureau of Immigration file no. 11047 C, memorandum by Commissioner General to Secretary of Commerce and Labor, April 29, 1904 in U.S. House of Representatives, 59th Congress, 1st session, Doc. no. 847, "Facts Concerning the Enforcement of the Chinese Exclusion Act," 1906: 40. China had participated in American world's fairs since 1876.

59 Wong Kai Kah, "A Menace to America's Oriental Trade," *North American Review* 178, no. 568 (March 1904): 414–24.

60 "Facts Concerning the Enforcement of the Chinese Exclusion Act," 1906: 44.

Prince Pulun was escorted through the United States by Commissioner Wong and Chinese Minister Liang Cheng and officially represented his uncle, the emperor, rather than the Empress Dowager. Baohuanghui members saw the prince as a supporter of reform, and local chapters located along his itinerary forthrightly approached him to explain the patriotic purposes of the association and appeal for his help in convincing Cixi to relinquish the throne to Guangxu.⁶¹ In New York City, the exclusion laws were the topic of the prince's meeting with a Baohuanghui delegation. *Zhongguo Weixin Bao* (*Chinese Reform News*) described Pulun as "a sympathetic, intelligent, and generous man," whom, it hoped, "would not forget the humiliation and sufferings of his citizens [abroad] and would strive to make the country strong."⁶²

Kang had attempted to enter the United States in 1904 in time to attend the St. Louis World's Fair and join the already raging debate over exclusion.⁶³ Had Kang arrived as he had hoped, the political conditions in both China and the United States may not have been ripe for him to wield the significant influence he would hold in 1905, not least of which came from the "magical power" of a popular boycott.

3 From Humiliation to Resistance

With members across the world and a strong orientation toward China, why did Kang and the Baohuanghui focus so much attention on the plight of Chinese immigrants in America? The simple reason was the resonance of this issue with Chinese nationalism. At the turn of the century, as historian Peter Zarrow notes, "laws preventing the immigration of Chinese to America and Australia were even more widely resented" than the manifestations of foreign imperialism inside China.⁶⁴ In his June 1905 letter, Liang Qichao tapped

61 *Zhongguo Weixin Bao* 中國維新報, reported on Prince Pulun's encounters with Baohuanghui members in St. Louis (June 23, 1904), and New York (June 9, 1904) and reprinted telegrams from Seattle and Helena (April 28, 1904) asking for the resumption of reforms by Guangxu and a letter from Victoria describing the Baohuanghui (September 1, 1904). Chinese Empire Reform Association, AR-44, UC Berkeley Ethnic Studies Library, AAS ARC 2000/78, hereafter AAS ARC 2000/78.

62 "Huiyuan Jie Jian Beizi" 會員揭見貝子 [Members Describe Meeting with Prince], *Zhongguo Weixin Bao*, June 9, 1904; "Prince Pu Walks Up Three Harlem Flights," *New York Times*, June 2, 1904, 9.

63 See Chapter 2.

64 Peter G. Zarrow, *China in War and Revolution, 1895–1949* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 7.

into this deep resentment. After describing how at least one hundred thousand Chinese had suffered under Exclusion policies, he wrote: "This really has filled the whole country with bitter hatred and [led us to] plot a way to resist. This has been in the minds of the people for a long time. Now, taking advantage of the opportunity to change the [Exclusion] Treaty, the Chinese are compelled by their shared hatred of this act to plan a way to deal with it. This is a development in the patriotic feelings (*aiguoxin*) of the Chinese people."⁶⁵

Patriotism in China, then as now, was expressed with strong doses of anti-foreign sentiment. Compared to the antiforeign Boxer violence, a boycott was seen as a "civilized" form of protest. The reformers described the boycott as an experiment in political participation, an opportunity for Chinese to practice citizenship and overcome their traditional passivity, factionalism, and selfishness by uniting in protest. Kuang Shoumin in Hong Kong, who received the Baohuanghui boycott donations collected in the United States, observed that although they could not meet openly in the British-controlled colony, merchants from Xinning County (today's Taishan) living in Hong Kong were the first to hold boycott meetings and raise money, under the guise of their commercial guild. They were followed by merchants from other parts of China. "Thus, the people in Hong Kong gradually dare to talk about the boycott movement. This is the beginning of the development of popular rights (*minquan*) in China!"⁶⁶ The boycott was a chance to cultivate Liang Qichao's "new citizen" (*xinmin*), a unifying theme of the reformers and the major thrust behind the promotion of local self-government soon after the boycott ended.⁶⁷ A lengthy *Shi Bao* essay published on May 23 and 24 exulted over the boycott's success in transforming people's political thought from "empty talk" to action, "unlike the irrational action of the past which was unorganized and had no impact." Action was possible because "in recent years, the thinking of our citizens has developed, and we are no longer able to keep silent under the persecution of foreigners." The "idea of the nation" (*guojia sixiang*) that took root with

65 Liang Qichao printed letter, June 7, 1905, no. 578 in Fang and Cai, 122.

66 Kuang Shoumin to Tan Zhangxiao, August 20, 1905, no. 194 in Fang and Cai, 158.

67 Theresa Man Lee has explored these issues in "Local Self-Government in Late Qing: Political Discourse and Moral Reform," *Review of Politics* 60, no. 1 (Winter 1998): 31–53, and in "Liang Qichao and the Meaning of Citizenship: Then and Now," *History of Political Thought* 28, no. 2 (Summer 2007): 305–27.

the boycott made “people begin to speak up when something is wrong with domestic or foreign policy decisions.”⁶⁸

In 1905 Kang wrote several patriotic songs to be sung at Baohuanghui meetings to cultivate the personal qualities of a good citizen.⁶⁹ Gao Weinong conjectures that Kang observed the power of group singing in Western churches and patriotic ceremonies and adapted this to a Chinese audience. He promoted singing to instill group solidarity and a visceral connection to the nationalistic sentiments and potent images depicted in his songs. The practice of group singing was embodied in the 1905 Baohuanghui charter, along with other activities to cultivate loyal and competent citizens. In addition to including group songs at their meetings, local chapters were expected to promote the reading of Baohuanghui newspapers to spread knowledge about China and the world, recruit itinerant public speakers to educate and motivate members, and help their members improve personal hygiene and social behavior to win respect from the larger community.⁷⁰ Here and elsewhere in the 1905 charter, Kang seemed to be deftly introducing “modern” modes of action to Baohuanghui members, prescribing group activity to modify behavior. This mode of organized behavior modification was also a dominant element in Kang’s Datong utopia.

A long ballad, probably composed by Kang Youwei given its esoteric poetic style, ties the sufferings of Chinese immigrants to China’s national predicament and gives powerful descriptions of the hated Pacific Mail Steamship Company detention shed in San Francisco and the endless and costly “document-checking.”⁷¹ Written from the vantage point of Chinese onboard a ship watching in

68 “Lun Dizhi Meiguo Huagong Jinyue” 論抵制美國華工禁約 (Essay on Boycotting the American Exclusion Treaty), *Shi Bao*, May 23 and 24, 1905 in A Ying, *Fanmei Huagong Jinyue*, 601–2.

69 These are included in the 1905 “Baohuanghui Gongyi Gaiding Xinzhang” 保皇會公議改定新章 [New Baohuanghui Constitution Finalized after Public Discussion], July 1905, UCB, AR-2. Gao Weinong 高偉濃, *Ershi Shiji chu Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui zai Meiguo Huaqiao Shehui zhong de Huodong* 二十世紀初康有為保皇會在美國華僑社會中的活動 [Activities of Kang Youwei and the Baohuanghui among the Chinese in the United States in the First Part of the Twentieth Century] (Beijing: Xueyuan Chubanshe, 2009), 136–42, describes this “system for singing songs” and quotes long passages from the songs. See Chapter 7 for more on the 1905 constitution.

70 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 130–35.

71 Chuimei Ho has identified the song as of the Han dynasty *Fu* 賦 style, which, by the late Qing, would have seemed highly recondite to all but the most educated of listeners. Zhongping Chen, *Transpacific Reform and Revolution: The Chinese in North America, 1898–1918* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2023), 256 n49, also notes that the first verse appears with a different last line (having the same meaning) in a collection of Kang’s poems, in *Kang Youwei Quanji* 康有為全集 [Collected Works of Kang Youwei],

shame and anger as their fellow passengers from other countries freely disembark on American soil, this protest song is a fine example of how the national humiliation of exclusion could be transformed into the resolve of resistance. The song was included in a remarkable open letter and handbill sent to Baohuanghui chapters in early June 1905 from Rangoon, Burma.⁷² Demonstrating the powerful reach of the Baohuanghui network, the document reprints several letters and telegrams that must have arrived in Burma within a month of being written in May 1905. They include a letter from Kang in Los Angeles; telegrams from Kang and activists in Shanghai and Hong Kong; and the song, which the Rangoon chapter had received with Kang's letter. The Rangoon chapter sent the open letter to encourage the recipients to "do their duty to show that 'we are all in the same boat together':

Verse 1:

Vast is the Pacific Ocean,
 Prosperous is America.
 Turn the ship sideways,
 Waves running high.
 Look back at the motherland,
 It's now far, far away.
 Being barred from entering [the United States]
 We are very grieved.⁷³

Verse 2:

See Europeans disembark,
 Husband's hand on the shoulder of his wife.
 See Japanese disembark,
 Beaming with pride.

ed. Jiang Yihua and Zhang Hualong 姜義華, 張榮華 (Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin Daxue Chubanshe, 2007), vol. 12, 263.

72 "Ju Jinyue Chuandan," June 10, 1905, no. 577 in Fang and Cai, 382–83. Thank you to Renqiu Yu, SUNY Purchase for checking this translation. Chen, *Transpacific Reform and Revolution*, 72–73, believes that Kang wrote the full public letter and asked the Rangoon chapter to issue it.

73 Before Angel Island Immigration Station was built in 1906, all incoming Chinese to San Francisco, whether exempt or not, U.S. citizens or not, remained on board ships until all other passengers disembarked. They were then sent to the Pacific Mail detention shed for "processing" by immigration officers called Chinese Inspectors who determined whether the immigrants would be allowed to land or be deported. Capitalizing on the Gold Rush, the Pacific Mail Steamship Company had long brought immigrants from Shanghai, Hong Kong, and Yokohama to San Francisco.

Alas, innocent are we Chinese,
 Not allowed to return to the boat,
 Imprisoned, but why?
 Tears shed into the Pacific Ocean.

Verse 3:

See Koreans and Siamese whose countries
 used to be China's vassal states.
 See Indians whose country is ruled by the British.
 See Jews who do not even have a country.
 They all pass easily and quickly
 Carrying their baggage, they walk with ease.
 Oh, our large country, as vast as 10,000 miles,
 Unable to measure up to them—why?
 We stare at the tall buildings in San Francisco, in despair.

Verse 4:

Watch a European with a dog wagging its tail, both landed,
 Walking away slowly.
 Chinese should be grieving, lower than a dog.
 Why so despicable, so disgraceful?
 Our own country is too weak and without virtue,
 Tears come down like rain
 When looking at our homeland.

Verse 5:

Even one as honorable as a royal prince was hit by a flying stone, and a
 minister can be demanded to show his passport.⁷⁴
 See the embassy guard trampled to death,⁷⁵
 How much more do we workers and merchants [suffer]?
 Alas, we have no country
 And can only blame our Empress Dowager for her lack of virtue.

74 Kang described a similar incident in his January 30, 1906, letter to President Roosevelt, 12, Chinese File 12264–78, Box 86, Entry 132, RG 85: “When former Chang Yen Hoon [Zhang Yin huan, Chinese minister to the United States, 1885–89] arrived in San Francisco en route to his assignment at Washington, customs officials even dared to make a demand for his credentials. International discourtesy could no further go.”

75 Again, Kang's January 30, 1906, letter, 11, described a violent encounter on a train between Chinese inspectors and “their myrmidons” with a secretary and attaché of the Chinese Legation in Washington. The attaché, “presuming on his official character resisted arrest and was assaulted,” dying shortly thereafter from his injuries.

Verse 6:

We lament that with such difficult lives and so poverty-stricken,
 We cross the ocean.
 How distressed we are! Looking at the vast land, we hesitate.
 There are restrictions on the other four continents, and it's also hard to
 go back home.
 We are so sorrowful that our navy was destroyed and cannot be rebuilt;⁷⁶
 Our military strength is weak and no one comes to protect us.
 We just wait for the boat to sail.

Verse 7:

Our compatriots imprisoned in a wooden shed,⁷⁷
 The Americans have forgotten their promise,⁷⁸
 And now suffering from the hardship of "document checking"⁷⁹
 Our compatriots have to endure the pain of confinement, alas!

Verse 8:

Confined in the wooden shed for several months,
 The hardship of "document checking" results in the expulsion of tens of
 thousands of people.
 Those confined in the wooden shed lose hundreds of dollars,

76 This probably referred to Japan's destruction of China's navy at the Weihaiwei naval base at the end of the Sino-Japanese War of 1895.

77 The detention shed in the Pacific Mail steamship warehouse in San Francisco is described by Mae Ngai, *The Lucky Ones: One Family and the Extraordinary Invention of Chinese America* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2010), 79: "several hundred people were crammed into the second-floor loft, which measured 150 feet by 100 feet, the size of a 'four-room cottage'" and "a symbol for all that was rotten about Chinese exclusion." Confinement was not limited to laborers, but to virtually all Chinese arrivals save high officials. Kang never landed in San Francisco but entered the United States at Port Townsend, Washington, and New York City.

78 Probably refers to the 1868 Burlingame treaty allowing free immigration of Chinese to the United States, which was replaced by another treaty in 1880 and opened the way for the 1882 Exclusion Act. McKee, *Chinese Exclusion*, 23.

79 "Document-checking," according to Him Mark Lai, is a Cantonese term, *lice* 櫟冊, which refers to the excessive documentation required for Chinese immigrants upon entry, exit, and return to the United States. Adam M. McKeown, *Melancholy Order: Asian Migration and the Globalization of Borders* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 240, cogently analyzes the effect of bureaucratizing the Chinese exclusion process on the individual: "A new identity was created for the migrant and fixed in a matrix of cross-referenced files, forcing the migrant to constantly reproduce himself in the terms of those files. In the case of any discrepancy, the files were right and the migrant wrong."

The hardship of “document checking” squanders hundreds or thousands of dollars.

How miserable!

Verse 9:

Those who are sent back by the same boat
 Pawn their house or sell their land to pay for the return trip.
 How can they pay their debts?
 They just lament to heaven and utter cries of anguish.

Verse 10:

To sneak into the United States through an unguarded path in the night
 costs several hundred to a thousand dollars.
 When you are caught by the inspector, everything is gone.
 You are just heartbroken.

Verse 11:

There are 100,000 Chinese in this country.
 We can pool together as much as 100,000,000 dollars.
 Since we have such rich resources and powerful strength, why are we
 afraid of the small nation [United States]?

Verse 12:

We vow to resist the great oppression.
 We vow to work together and cooperate with one another.
 We vow to wipe out our shame and disgrace.
 We would risk our lives to fight against exclusion and to accomplish our
 goal.
 My fellow 100,000 compatriots, do you hear me?⁸⁰

4 Tackling Exclusion

4.1 *Kang Advocates for Chinese in America*

Kang was a forceful and astute interviewee with American reporters, and his interpreter Zhou Guoxian, a man who later became a diplomat himself, ably

80 “Ju Jinyue Chuandan,” June 10, 1905, no. 577 in Fang and Cai, 382–83.

represented Kang's views.⁸¹ Although the press made Kang uneasy with many awkward questions about the Western Military Academy (Gancheng Xuexiao) during his 1905 American tour, concerns about the impending boycott meant that he had ample opportunity to develop succinct arguments to persuade Americans of the justice of the Chinese cause. Through Zhou, Kang told the *St. Louis Republic*:

America stands for fair play, and the Chinese, as almost all people of the world, have looked to the Stars and Stripes as the emblem of honesty and democracy ... The Chinese do not regard it as fair play to be excluded from a country which discriminates between social and commercial equality ... they regard the barriers that are raised against them as a direct insult. The Chinese have only one retaliation. America closes the door to them. China can close the door to American trade ...⁸²

On his next stop, Kang spoke with a *Chicago Tribune* reporter: "America is making a great mistake in adopting such stringent laws to exclude the Chinese. Of course, these laws are passed to keep out our lower class of cheap labor. However, their rigid enforcement is excluding a desirable class of Chinese."⁸³ As a result, he went on, "wealthy and educated Chinese" chose to go to Europe instead. At this point in the rapid evolution of Kang's "class consciousness," he stressed the rights of Chinese students, diplomats, and merchants to enter the United States in a more dignified fashion instead of being treated as if they were laborers.

As time went on, Kang took a much harder line on exclusion, perhaps because he learned how strongly Chinese Americans felt about the issue. After all, most Baohuanghui members were not part of the "desirable," exempt class. When he met with reporters in New York City in late June, he explained that "this boycott on American goods is to prevent the exclusion of any Chinamen [*sic*] from the United States."⁸⁴ Kang emphasized that Chinese students would someday "have a tremendous influence on the future of China" and Americans were excluding them now at the expense of closer U.S.–China ties. But he made it clear that the Exclusion Act, being inherently unfair and unequal, "in principle is radically wrong. All Chinamen [*sic*] should be freely admitted

81 Zhou served as a senior diplomat for the Republic of China between 1918 and 1930; see Chapter 2.

82 "Strong Feeling Against Exclusion," *St. Louis Republic*, May 20, 1905, 2.

83 "Says Empress Took Bribe," *Chicago Tribune*, May 24, 1905, 7.

84 "Kang on Chinese Reform," *New-York Tribune*, June 29, 1905, 8.

to this country. By that I mean that conditions should not vary from those which are applied in passing upon the qualifications of immigrants of other nationalities.”⁸⁵

4.2 *Stepping into American Politics*

Instead of going first to New York or Hartford, where he could have been with his daughter, Tongbi, Kang went from the West Coast to Washington to await a meeting with President Theodore Roosevelt. Kang complained that Chinese minister Liang Cheng had blocked his visit for three days, so he had to wait a week in Washington before he, Yung Wing, Zhou Guoxian, and Tom Leung met with the president and Acting Secretary of State Francis B. Loomis at the White House on June 16.⁸⁶ According to a newspaper report written by Tom Leung, the meeting was devoted exclusively to Kang’s proposal that Chinese Exclusion laws should be abolished. In response, “the U.S. president said, ‘I cannot bear to see the U.S. laws so harshly limiting the Chinese,’ and that he would try his best to remedy the situation.” In fact, Roosevelt only promised to treat the exempt categories of Chinese immigrants with greater leniency, that is, students and merchants. Even in this partial modification of exclusion’s enforcement, Roosevelt’s stance was politically risky. Roosevelt told Kang that his surrogate, Secretary of War William Howard Taft, had only the day before “denounced the Exclusion policy as wrong in principle.”⁸⁷ Indeed, in a controversial June 15 commencement address at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, Taft aroused the ire of West Coast politicians by his forceful words: “Ought we to throw away the advantage which we have by reason of Chinese natural friendship for us and continue to enforce an unjustly severe law, and thus create in the Chinese mind a disposition to boycott American trade and to drive our merchants from Chinese shores, simply because we are afraid that we may, for the time, lose the

85 “The Man of the Week: Prince Kang Yu Wei,” *Los Angeles Herald*, July 23, 1905, magazine.

86 See Chapter 7 for details of this meeting. Tom Leung 譚良, “Ji Kang Huizhang Jinye Lao Zongtong” 記康會長進謁勞總統 [Record of President Kang’s Meeting with President Roosevelt], unidentified newspaper (probably *Zhongguo Weixin Bao*, undated [between June 17 and June 27, 1905]). Enclosed with a letter from Tom Leung to Huang Chuda [Wong Yap, Huang Xi], by way of Wing Wang and Co., Vancouver, June 27, 1905, Yip family and Yip Sang Ltd. Fonds, City of Vancouver Archives. Available online from Yip Sang Collection, University of British Columbia Open Collections, <https://open.library.ubc.ca/collections/yipsang/items/1.0114246#p020r0f>. Also see Kang Youwei, Washington, DC, to Liang Qixun, Chicago, June 16, 1905, in Zhang, *Kang Youwei Juan*, 2, concerning the Liang Cheng obstruction.

87 Tom, “Ji Kang Huizhang Jinye Lao Zongtong.”

approval of certain unreasonable and extreme popular leaders of California and other coastal states?"⁸⁸

Earlier in Chicago, Kang had also urged U.S. Vice President Charles W. Fairbanks to lift Chinese Exclusion laws, and, now, Roosevelt's warm reception heartened him.⁸⁹ New York Baohuanghui editor Tang Mingsan, who was in Washington with Kang, told Tongbi that the president was "eagerly attentive, even solicitous."⁹⁰ That evening, Kang wrote to Liang Qixun, Liang Qichao's brother who was studying in Chicago: "The president said he could not bear the meanness and cruelty of the exclusion law and needs to do his utmost to ameliorate it. Upperclass people, businessmen, travelers, and students ought to be treated with leniency. I'm planning to meet him again ..."⁹¹ Now that Kang had parlayed his way into the exclusion dialogue, he began to speak more openly to the press. On June 17, during an excursion to Pittsburgh, Kang gave a speech in which he referred to Roosevelt's pledge "that the present Chinese exclusion laws would be modified as to give equal rights with the Japanese."⁹²

Exclusion had risen to the top of Roosevelt's agenda by the time he met Kang on June 16. Having given up on Congress, Roosevelt had made his first executive move on June 14, directing intransigent Commerce and Labor Secretary Victor Metcalf to instruct immigration officials to treat the exempt classes of Chinese courteously.⁹³ With the boycott as impetus, pressure on Roosevelt was coming not only from China's government but from American business owners. The American Asiatic Association, a powerful, New York-based lobby that "represented virtually all firms and individuals active in Far Eastern trade," also sought better treatment for Chinese people in the United States, and its delegation met Roosevelt a few days before Kang.⁹⁴ With the anti-Chinese

88 "Taft at Oxford, Ohio," *Evening Star* (Washington, DC), June 15, 1905, 22, and "Taft's Attack on the West," *Los Angeles Herald*, June 17, 1905, 6.

89 Tom, "Ji Kang Huizhang Jinye Lao Zongtong." No corroboration has been found about this meeting between Kang and Fairbanks, but the vice president was in Chicago May 25–27, 1905, coincident with Kang's presence.

90 Tang Mingsan 湯銘三 to Liang Wenqing and Li Zesheng 李澤生, letterhead of The Arlington, Washington, DC, June 16, 1905, no. Z-43, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

91 Kang Youwei to Liang Qixun, June 16, 1905, in Zhang, *Kang Youwei Juan*, 2.

92 "Kang Yu Wei Says President Aids Chinese Reforms," *Pittsburgh Dispatch*, June 19, 1905, 3. Japanese immigration to the United States was not limited until 1924, in part as a result of efforts by Japan's government to stop its citizens from migrating.

93 "President Aids Chinese," *New York Times*, June 15, 1905, 1.

94 "Appeal For the Chinese, Asiatic Association Protest to President Against Exclusion Laws," *New York Times*, June 13, 1905, 8. The American Asiatic Association went to great lengths to mobilize business groups against the exclusion laws because of their adverse effect on the Chinese trade. See James J. Lorence, "Business and Reform: The American

Congress adjourned for the summer and a clear swing in public opinion as demonstrated by more pro-Chinese editorials in the American press, Roosevelt was prepared to shift his stance.⁹⁵

On June 19, Secretary of State John M. Hay wrote in his diary that “the President is determined to put a stop to the barbarous methods of the Immigration Bureau.”⁹⁶ Indeed, Roosevelt’s Cabinet debated Chinese Exclusion twice between Kang’s two June visits, resulting in Secretary of War Taft and the other Cabinet members trouncing Secretary Metcalf’s defensive pro-exclusion position.⁹⁷ Thus, Roosevelt was prepared to meet Kang again with news of his forthcoming announcement of a directive to relax Exclusion Act enforcement. No doubt Roosevelt hoped that Kang would react to this positive news by backing away from support of the boycott. Other influential Chinese community members, including *Chung Sai Yat Po* (*Zhongxi Ribao*) editor Ng Poon Chew and Chinese Minister Liang Cheng himself, met with the president during this period, but only Kang commanded an organization and transnational press with influence on public opinion in China.

Accompanied by Yung Wing, Kang had a second interview with Roosevelt on June 24. This time Secretary of State John M. Hay was present.⁹⁸ It is not known if Kang encountered the disgruntled Secretary Metcalf, whose own appointment with Roosevelt was scheduled directly before Kang’s. Later, in a letter to Roosevelt, Kang recounted this visit, saying:

When I called your attention to the sad conditions of my countrymen, who for various reasons came to this country, or made their residence therein, you were pleased to express your compassion, regretting the

Asiatic Association and the Exclusion Laws, 1905–1907,” *Pacific Historical Review* 39, no. 4 (November 1970): 421–22.

95 McKee, *Chinese Exclusion*, 126–45, “Roosevelt’s Change in Position,” is a well-documented account of this shift in the context of national politics and within Roosevelt’s Cabinet, both before and after the boycott began.

96 Diary of John M. Hay, June 19, 1905, John Hay Papers, Container 1, MSS 25379, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress. Hay, who was present at the second meeting with Kang, made no mention of it in his diary. As indicated by other entries in his diary he was much preoccupied with the idea of dying. He died at his home in New Hampshire on July 1, 1905.

97 The cabinet met June 20 and June 23. McKee, *Chinese Exclusion*, 128. For the June 23 meeting, see “Fair Play for Chinese: President Instructs Secretary Hay to Take Action,” *Washington Post*, June 24, 1905, A1.

98 The appointment was for June 24, 1905, 12:30 PM, Series 9, Desk Diaries, Roll 430, Roosevelt Papers, MSS 38299, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, https://www.loc.gov/resource/mss38299.mss38299-430_0193_1119/?sp=638&st=image&r=-0.033,-0.005,1.336,0.564,0.

harshness with which the exclusion laws were enforced. You even promised to do your utmost to bring about a change in the interest of justice and square dealing.⁹⁹

That same day, Roosevelt issued executive orders to the Department of State and the Department of Commerce and Labor, doing everything Kang said had been promised. The Department of State was instructed to order its consuls to "show the wisest and heartiest courtesy to all merchants, teachers, students and travelers who alone or with their wives and minor children may come to the United States, as well as all [Qing] officials or representatives in any capacity of the Chinese Government."¹⁰⁰ The Department of Commerce and Labor was informed that dismissal was threatened for any Bureau of Immigration official who showed "any discourtesy to Chinese persons." Roosevelt further ordered that "if any Chinaman comes here with a certificate in wrong shape because of the action of a United States official, the Chinaman is *not* to be put back ... instead we will punish the United States official."¹⁰¹

Perhaps Kang had provided the final incentive that Roosevelt needed to take action on June 24. In any case, these executive orders soon brought a halt to such despised and feared practices as the Bertillon measurements and implementation of a special census and registration of Chinese residents, which was seen as the first step in expelling all Chinese from the United States.¹⁰² Clearer and broader definitions of the exempt categories of Chinese were instituted. In

99 Kang Youwei, Mexico City, to Theodore Roosevelt, January 30, 1906, 26 pages. The letter was forwarded to the Department of Commerce and Labor, and was eventually placed in Chinese File 12264-78, Box 86, Entry 132, RG 85. Secretary of Commerce and Labor Victor H. Metcalf, an avowed anti-Chinese proponent, was delegated to answer the letter. He did so on February 15, saying that the contents had been carefully considered and enclosed a copy of the revised Chinese regulations of the Department; see Metcalf to Kang, February 15, 1906, Chinese File 12264-78. Also see, Robert L. Worden, "Letter from K'ang Yu-wei to Theodore Roosevelt," *Bridge: An Asian American Perspective* 5, no. 3 (Fall 1977): 18-21.

100 Roosevelt to Loomis, Acting Secretary of State, June 24, 1905; Roosevelt Papers, Series 2, Letter Books, 156: 194.

101 Roosevelt to Metcalf, June 24, 1905; Roosevelt Papers, Letter Books, 156: 230. Also see "Department Circular no. 81: Enforcement of the Chinese Exclusion Laws—General Instruction," Department of Commerce and Labor, Washington, June 24, 1905, which was enclosed in Metcalf to Roosevelt, June 24, 1905; Roosevelt Papers, Series 1, Letters Received, June 21-July 7, 1905. The sameness of date indicates the rapidity with which action was taken on the issuance of the president's orders.

102 The special census of Chinese began in spring 1905 in two regions, Montana and Idaho and New Jersey and Pennsylvania and was conducted by Chinese Inspectors, who, in addition to recording residence and occupation, checked an individual's documents for compliance with immigration restrictions, resulting in deportation for those without the

December 1906, Metcalf was replaced as secretary of commerce and labor by Oscar Solomon Straus, who criticized the overreaching application of exclusion policy to any Chinese, not only to those of “a particular and well-defined class,” with the effect that “exclusion was the rule and admission the exception.”¹⁰³

As early as July 5, 1905, the *Los Angeles Times* reported that “leading Chinese merchants” in that city had previously noticed “a relaxation of the activities of these [immigration] officers” as a result of the executive order to enforce exclusion laws “with a little less rigor.”¹⁰⁴ Immigration historian Adam McKeown affirms this perception by noting that “a change in enforcement style is apparent in the day-to-day records of Chinese investigations. The machinery of the reforms was maintained, but now largely used in the service of predictability. The interviews became much more formulaic, field investigations declined, and fewer applicants were denied.”¹⁰⁵

Greater courtesy and leniency on the part of immigration officers were not dramatic enough changes in exclusion enforcement to stop the progress of the boycott. And, the most noticeable reforms, such as cessation of Bertillon measurements, were not announced until February 1906. Thus, contrary to what Roosevelt surely hoped, after their meetings Kang did not back off from promoting the boycott or criticizing U.S. policy. Historian Delber McKee notes that although Kang initially seemed impressed by the president’s orders, “Roosevelt’s failure to influence the Reform Association became increasingly evident during summer 1905 as the association’s leaders made speeches in support of the boycott and continued to collect money.”¹⁰⁶

Indeed, on June 16, the day of Kang’s first meeting with Roosevelt, *Zhongguo Weixin Bao* editor Tang Mingsan, part of Kang’s contingent in Washington, told his New York colleagues that the Reject the Treaty Society had begun in Washington. And, in New York City, Tang said that he was asking two prominent donors, Zhao (possibly Zhao Wansheng or Joseph Singleton) and Li (possibly Tom Lee), to visit local stores to solicit contributions.¹⁰⁷ In mid-July, Tang was back in New York City and wrote Kang Tongbi that “yesterday we gathered

proper documentation. Mark T. Johnson, *The Middle Kingdom under the Big Sky: A History of the Chinese Experience in Montana* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2022), 97–99.

103 McKeown, *Melancholy Order*, 242–43. Oscar Straus wrote this in 1907; he replaced Metcalf on December 17, 1906, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/10457180>, accessed November 16, 2022.

104 “Big Slump in Chinese Noses,” *Los Angeles Times*, July 5, 1905, section 2, 5.

105 McKeown, *Melancholy Order*, 244.

106 McKee, *Chinese Exclusion*, 131–32.

107 Tang Mingsan to Liang Wenqing and Li Zesheng, June 16, 1905, no. Z-43, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

together at the Zhonghua Huiguan (Six Companies) and discussed the boycott issue. Most of them supported us.”¹⁰⁸ There was immediate action north of the border as well—in Vancouver, although Canadian Chinese suffered far fewer immigration restrictions than their American compatriots, “due to the propaganda carried on by the Chinese Empire Reform Association,” 800 vowed to boycott American goods at a meeting on June 19, under the auspices of the Chinese Merchants Guild and Chinese Board of Trade of Vancouver, donating \$1,000 Canadian dollars to support the boycotting laborers in China.¹⁰⁹

Kang proceeded to Philadelphia directly after his meeting with Roosevelt on June 24 and was interviewed by the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. He explained that:

America is the pattern China must follow, but before this country can greatly influence China, there must be some changes in the exclusion law ... The anger against Americans that may result in a general trade boycott is not the work of the Chinese Government. The government prefers the friendship of this country. The movement is a genuine uprising of the people ...¹¹⁰

In Boston in early July, Kang addressed the limited effect of Roosevelt’s directives:

President Roosevelt’s recent action relaxing in some measure the rigid enforcement of the Chinese exclusion act is by no means satisfactory to the Chinese people. They are rapidly becoming more and more enlightened and will insist upon being treated exactly in the same manner as the most favored nations, or the boycott which has been declared against American goods will spread and be rigidly enforced over the entire Chinese empire.¹¹¹

The May 10 meeting of the Shanghai Chamber of Commerce gave the U.S. government a two-month ultimatum to adopt a new treaty more favorable to Chinese immigration or the boycott would begin. Although there were calls

108 Tang Mingsan to Kang Tongbi, July 16, 1905, no. B-12, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

109 “Local Chinese Give Aid to Boycott,” *Province* (Vancouver), June 19, 1905, 1; “Chinese Boycott,” *Vancouver News Advertiser*, June 20, 1905, 3; “Financial Aid for the Boycott,” *Province*, June 20, 1905, 2.

110 “Man who Wants to Reform China Given a Warm Welcome,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, June 25, 1905, 2.

111 “Chinese Reformer Here,” *Boston Herald*, July 6, 1905, 7.

for further postponement of the boycott and pressure from both U.S. and Qing officials, it was no surprise that on July 20, Shanghai chamber leader Zeng Shaoqing declared the boycott in effect.¹¹² The *Philadelphia Inquirer* had a special correspondent on the scene in Shanghai on July 20, who emphasized the irony of Kang's reception in the United States at the very time that his newspaper, *Shi Bao* (*Eastern Times*)—"about the most sensational paper published in China"—was promoting dangerous anti-American sentiments and allowing "our usual commercial enemies," Europe and Japan, to eye the boycott with glee:

The paper is run by Chinese with Chinese capital, but it is registered in a Japanese name. It is both an organ of Japan and Kang Yu Wei's reform party. While Kang Yu Wei is receiving the hospitality of America, not daring to come to China lest he should lose his head, on which the Empress has placed \$100,000 reward, his compatriots in Shanghai slander Americans and help to boycott their goods.¹¹³

In Hartford, Kang made his final position on the boycott and exclusion absolutely clear. No longer was he equivocating about whether the American government could rightly exclude certain classes of Chinese. He now advocated equal treatment with other nationalities.

We want to be treated as we treat others, especially by Americans. We do not only wish the free entrance into the United States of students and merchants, but all classes of Chinese.

We look on America as the greatest country in the world, and, but for the exclusion act, our best friend. Is it any wonder we want to come here, and is it any wonder that we will use all the means in our power to gain admittance? The boycott on American goods will last while the exclusion act is in force.¹¹⁴

On August 31, "official fear of popular radicalization and American reaction" finally led the Chinese court to issue an edict calling for an end to the protest.¹¹⁵

¹¹² Chen, *Modern China's Network Revolution*, 116–17.

¹¹³ "Americans in Danger through China's Boycott," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, August 21, 1905, 1 and 4. *Shi Bao* was founded by Liang Qichao, Di Chuqing, and Luo Xiaogao, all of whom were living in Japan in 1904. There is no evidence it was supported by Japanese funds, but plenty of evidence that its expenses were a severe drain on Baohuanghui resources.

¹¹⁴ "Kang Yu Wei Here for a Week," *Hartford Courant*, July 17, 1905, 11.

¹¹⁵ Chen, *Modern China's Network Revolution*, 119.

The Qing government had not acted sooner both because officials largely shared the boycotters' opposition to exclusion, and because they were wary of antagonizing the boycotters by banning their activities and thus inciting rebellion against the government itself.

Although the boycott had largely died down by early 1906, Kang was still deeply concerned with exclusion. He knew that no matter what Roosevelt could affect through his executive orders, only the U.S. Congress had the power to fundamentally change the Exclusion Act. He also knew that Congress was in session, and he may have heard about the legislation drafted by the pro-Chinese, pro-business American Asiatic Association and introduced by Representative David J. Foster of Vermont.¹¹⁶ The Foster bill was in accord with the president's proposal in his December 5, 1905, address to Congress to apply exclusion laws only to Chinese laborers.¹¹⁷

Even though he was in Mexico at the time, Kang wanted to take part in the American political process. "Fearing lest the Congress may not have presented to it all the facts bearing on the question at issue," he wrote, "I beg to submit herewith the Chinese side of the question."¹¹⁸ Kang sent a twenty-six-page typed letter to Roosevelt from Mexico City on January 30, 1906. He signed it with his English name—Kang Yu Wei—but almost certainly his secretary Linn Chew Sang (C. S. Linn, Lin Zhaosheng) composed it; in any case it is a vivid, forceful statement of Kang's position on exclusion, as close as one can get to Kang's own words. The letter was forwarded by the White House to the Department of Commerce and Labor for a reply. Secretary Victor Metcalf informed Kang that his letter's contents had "been carefully considered." This was a mere formality, but Metcalf did forward the letter to the U.S. House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee, with the sole result that two summary sentences were quoted in the *Records of the Bureau of Immigration of Facts Concerning the Enforcement of the Chinese Exclusion Laws*, 1906:

Two decades' rigid enforcement of the Exclusion Laws has brought about the ill-will of four hundred million people. The exclusion of Chinese labor on the one side is now met by the boycott of American products on the other.¹¹⁹

116 The Foster bill, HR 12973, was introduced January 26, 1906. McKee, *Chinese Exclusion*, 172. Also see "Foster Bill Faces Defeat," *San Francisco Call*, March 24, 1906.

117 McKee, "The Chinese Boycott of 1905–1906 Reconsidered," 186.

118 Kang to Roosevelt, January 30, 1906 4, Chinese File 12264–78, Box 86, Entry 132, RG 85.

119 These two sentences are quoted in U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Foreign Affairs, *Compilation From Records of the Bureau of Immigration of Facts Concerning the Enforcement of the Chinese Exclusion Laws* (Washington: Government Printing Office,

Kang explored in his letter the constructive role of Chinese immigrants in the building of America and favorably compared their behavior in American society with that of immigrants of certain other nationalities. Chinese were originally welcomed to build the transcontinental railroad, a treacherous task in a “region overrun by wild beasts and savages so that thousands of them perished,” but their labor “increased enormously the wealth of this Republic.” With the 1882 Exclusion Act, “my countrymen, having rendered a good service in former years, have now the doors of the country slammed in their faces.” Kang then confronted the objections against Chinese immigrants: “The future historian will marvel why enlightened Americans, who permit the free dumping of the riff-raff and the off-scouring of Europe, who welcome the assisted emigration of European paupers and criminals—should single out the Chinese for exclusion.” The Chinese, Kang averred, were peaceable and law-abiding compared to Italians in “their alleged disregard and defiance of law,” an observation Kang made from noting the many Italians and absence of Chinese among the prisoners in a New York State prison he had visited (in Ossining). And, he claimed, Chinese were no worse than the Jews in “their disposition to live economically.”

Kang could only account for the setting apart of Chinese immigrants from all other nationalities, specifically the Japanese, by citing American disrespect for China’s powerlessness:

Are Japanese welcome because their country is strong and Chinese excluded because their country has been hitherto weak? Surely, such considerations cannot possibly have any influence with enlightened Americans! Were we Chinese dealt with on an equal footing with the Japanese, the friendship between China and America would be further cemented: Our students, travelers, professional and business men would come in large numbers; and the consumption of American products would be vastly increased. With our huge empire as a market, a large profitable trade would result in great benefit to both countries.

Making jabs at the failure of Americans to live up to their much-vaunted democratic values and their self-righteous “enlightenment” was a favorite ploy

1906), 155. While in Mexico in summer 1907, Kang released his letter to an English-language newspaper, *The Daily Record*; the story was picked up by American papers, including the *Savannah Tribune*, July 13, 1907, 1, “China to Vent Wrath,” which described the letter as the “most aggressive ... to come from the pen of a Chinese” against the Exclusion policy.

of Kang's to explain Chinese outrage at the inequity of their situation. For example:

As an enlightened nation Americans lay great store on the rights of the people to life, liberty and property. Is it then just, according to American law and equity, that these Chinese who have been proved innocent of the crime of illegal residence in American territory should be deprived of the right to bring suit for damages against Chinese inspectors for false arrest and imprisonment?

Kang also intimated that more than trade was being threatened by exclusion:

When the sentiment of nationality shall have attained full development, a united Chinese nation will seek to assert its rights and avenge its wrongs. Its anger will be vented in way that I dread to think of, but which I forsee [*sic*] and deplore in advance.

If the present friction be not removed, the time will come when a small spark may start an uncontrollable conflagration and the friendly ties between our people be severed beyond remedy.

What most rankled Chinese in "all classes of society" was seeing immigration officers routinely subject Qing officials to indignities at the U.S. border, personifying China's weakness and inability to retaliate. Kang frankly acknowledged that a boycott was a measure taken only by the weak and, were China strong, its retaliation would certainly be more effective:

Even Mr. Young [Yung] Wing, who accompanied me to see you last July [*sic*], although he was a naturalized citizen of the United States, a graduate of Yale, honored by that university with the degree doctor of laws, and in 1876 was an associate envoy with Minister Chin Lan Pin (Chen Lanbin), on his return to America after a visit in China, was detained and closely questioned; and it was only after a long interval that he was officially "landed." So it seems that no matter who they are, so long as they are Chinese persons, they must suffer these indignities. The result is that the whole Chinese population whether of high or low degree, whether educated or ignorant, is disaffected towards Americans. This disaffection is now manifested in the boycott. It is but retaliation in a mild form. Were China strong instead of weak, retaliation would not stop with this measure of doubtful expediency.

Kang told Roosevelt, “Could you bring about a repeal of the Exclusion Laws, you would confer incalculable benefits on the Far East and your memory would forever be cherished by a grateful people.” But he recognized the “determined opposition” of the labor unions to “the far-sighted policy of an open door for Chinese immigration,” making it impossible to pass Congress. Thus, Kang presented a five-point program of a more moderate nature that Congress could adopt to ameliorate the impact of exclusion and lessen the distress, shame, and anger suffered by Chinese in the United States. Kang’s proposals resembled some of the measures to be announced by the Department of Commerce and Labor in February 1906 as well as provisions in the Foster bill and similar suggestions made by Chinese minister Liang Cheng and Guangdong viceroy Cen Chunxuan, a Kang ally.¹²⁰

1. That no identification by photographs and body measurements should be required;
2. That Chinese exempts hailing from countries other than China should be permitted to obtain passports from American diplomatic and consular officers stationed therein and that they should not be restricted to any port of entry;
3. That the same law should hold good in Hawai’i and the Philippines;
4. That certificates issued by Qing officials and Chinese Chambers of Commerce and viséd [*sic*] by American consuls should entitle the holders to free and immediate admission;
5. That medical examinations held in China should be participated in by Chinese physicians assigned for such service by the Chinese Government, while those held in America should be the same as those prescribed for European immigrants.¹²¹

Several months after his outspoken letter to Roosevelt, Kang addressed the American people with an article in a widely circulated New York City news and opinion monthly, *The World’s Work*. “The Hostility of China,” published in May 1906, told of the growing antiforeign sentiment in China but ascribed the boycott primarily to the poor treatment of Chinese in the United States.¹²² Kang acknowledged that the new regulations would likely remedy the “abuses

120 McKeown, *Melancholy Order*, 301–2.

121 Kang to Roosevelt, January 30, 1906, 24–25, Chinese File 12264–78, Box 86, Entry 132, RG 85.

122 Kang Yu Wei, “The Hostility of China,” *The World’s Work* 12 (May 1906): 7487–89. In spite of its title, the essay occasionally wanders into charming if unrelated topics on Kang’s mind, closing with this observation: “Your women seem to be—how shall I express it delicately?—‘on top’ shall we say? Why is it, for example, in clothes, that in the United States your women only have the silks, and your men seem to have only the stiffer, harsher materials?”

committed in American ports against Chinese who have had a right to enter," that is, students, merchants, officials, and travelers, but he questioned whether they would be enough to end the boycott, which might be "a demand that Chinese laborers shall be admitted." He reasoned that "no more absolute line of class discrimination can be drawn among Chinese than among other peoples. An American may be a laborer today and a merchant tomorrow; so may a Chinese ... A Chinese may come to the United States to labor, and may acquire capital to set himself up as a merchant; or, a Chinese student in the United States may wish to help himself along by laboring, as so many of your own college students do ..." Written while in Mexico, Kang could also respond to common American criticisms of Chinese as temporary sojourners and cheap labor by citing the counter examples of Chinese living in Mexico: "In Mexico, for instance the Chinese obtain considerably higher wages than the Mexicans. They settle down, too, and commonly cut off their queues [which Kang explains are retained in the United States to allow Chinese to return to China] ..." Kang also tried to dispel fear of a China arming itself: "No part of the world need fear a 'Yellow Peril,' if it is willing to deal fairly with the yellow man."

Unfortunately, Kang's arguments against exclusion—and those of the more influential coalition of American entrepreneurs and missionaries who broadly supported the Chinese cause—failed to convince a U.S. Congress that had neither the will nor the necessity to alter existing exclusion laws. Perhaps legislators would have felt more urgency if the boycotters in China had continued to agitate publicly throughout 1906. But the Qing government began to clamp down on the boycott, fearing backlash against itself, and merchants quickly realized that they would suffer greater financial losses than the American companies they were targeting. Students and business owners, among other groups in China, had serious differences in opinion about boycott strategy. These differences helped disperse group cohesion and led to the result Liang Qichao had cautioned against in his June 1905 public letter: "If we are like a tiger's head and a snake's tail [a fine start but a poor finish], then we will be looked down upon by the foreigners. So, in my mind, I am still quite hesitant about what our comrades are facing."¹²³ Indeed, even in the United States, where the Chinese showed great enthusiasm for the boycott and offered considerable financial support, the boycott created a battlefield for competing political factions, including the Baohuanghui. After the California earthquake and fire on April 18, 1906, destroyed San Francisco's Chinatown, overseas Chinese attention turned to giving relief to their fellow countrymen in that city. Rather than

123 Printed letter from Liang Qichao to all comrades in all cities, June 7, 1905, no. 578 in Fang and Cai, 127.

garner sympathy for pro-Chinese forces in Congress, the earthquake allowed the Foster bill and other legislation to be pushed aside and forgotten. In any case, the result might have been the same, because the strong early showing of pro-Chinese groups had mobilized the more powerful anti-Chinese labor and West Coast interests who easily fought back after being caught off guard. There were even serious discussions of extending exclusion to Japanese and Korean immigrants.¹²⁴

The 1906 Congressional hearings were held after open demonstrations of boycott support in China had largely disappeared, and the economic impact on American exports was just beginning to be felt. In fact, American cotton, oil, tobacco, flour, and life insurance would all be hit hard by the boycott. In 1908, Commerce and Labor Secretary Straus wrote that in 1905, China was the largest importer of American goods in Asia, more than doubling the value of American imports since 1902.¹²⁵ "It was reasonable to believe that American trade would continue to progress in something like the same ratio, and a larger and larger share of the foreign trade of China accrue to the United States. Instead of that, the exports of the United States to China fell [from \$57,000 in 1905] to \$44,000 in 1906, and to \$26,000 in 1907."

It was significant that Oscar Straus, the first Jewish appointment to a presidential cabinet and a man with clear sympathy with the Chinese cause, was Roosevelt's replacement for "the notoriously racist" Victor Metcalf.¹²⁶ Metcalf had not hesitated to express positions contradicting Roosevelt's new policy of forbearance, whereas Straus agreed with Roosevelt that it was time to liberalize the Chinese Exclusion policy, even if Congress could not enact legislation or China would not agree to a new treaty. Apart from personnel and regulatory changes, Roosevelt also allocated some of China's Boxer Indemnity funds to finance scholarships for Chinese students. This was intended to win back the favor of the most vehement and unrelenting of China's boycotters, who had begun to withdraw from American schools in China or to study in Japan or Europe instead of the United States.¹²⁷ Roosevelt's actions were incremental and introduced without fanfare. While these measures did improve the immigration experience of Chinese Americans, their central grievance was not

124 McKee, *Chinese Exclusion*, 171–98, describes the rise and fall of the Foster bill and other legislation to lessen the effects of exclusion during 1906.

125 Oscar S. Straus, "The Spirit and the Letter of Exclusion," *The North American Review* 187, no. 629 (April 1908): 484–85.

126 Madeline Y. Hsu, *The Good Immigrants: How the Yellow Peril Became the Model Minority* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2015), 43.

127 McKee, *Chinese Exclusion*, 194–97.

removed until 1943 when the United States needed China as an ally in World War II and Chinese Exclusion laws were finally repealed.

Amplified by Baohuanghui articulation of boycott strategy and ideology, the 1905 boycott proved to be a turning point in Chinese political history. Scholars now view the boycott as the first mass protest in China, a training ground for much larger movements such as the massive May Fourth demonstrations in 1919.¹²⁸ The boycott also gave birth to transnational Chinese politics, with Chinese overseas providing the impetus, inspiration, and sustenance for the movement. Fueled by emerging nationalism and a rising awareness that people had power apart from the government, the boycott became a medium for public expression of political opinions, which the Qing court briefly accepted and even encouraged.

Kang Youwei recognized that the boycott's inherent populism gave the Baohuanghui a platform inside China to publicize the reform agenda beyond an elite audience, while appealing directly to the interests of its overseas membership. During the 1905 movement, *Shi Bao* in particular consciously attempted "to mold" public opinion and defined the boycott as "the basis for attaining self-government and standing on our own feet." Boycott nationalism was revived in 1908 with the first Chinese boycott against Japan. More openly than in 1905, the Baohuanghui again played a major role, and again overseas chapters were heavily involved. As before, antiforeshism and a powerful sense of China's weakness inspired nationalistic fervor, but this time, the Baohuanghui unambiguously advanced what had always been the reformers' core political agenda—constitutionalism. A new petition written by Kang to the Qing court demanded that the emperor immediately convene a national assembly and adopt a constitution and was signed by members of two hundred overseas Baohuanghui chapters (see Chapter 10).

In spite of Roosevelt's June 1905 orders, abuse of Chinese entering the United States continued, and, as late as July 1907, Kang predicted to the *New York Times* that the "present disfavor with which my countrymen regard American products imported into their country is bad enough, but I am apprehensive, I may say I am certain, that the trouble will increase and spread to I do not know what limits if your country does not adopt methods more seemly and humane toward Chinamen in this country ... It is unreasonable to look to us for friendship when you treat us like enemies and criminals."¹²⁹ Kang also stressed that "the present temper of the Chinese toward you" also hindered the

128 Zarrow, *China in War and Revolution*, 161.

129 "Kang Yu Wei Predicts Increasing Chinese Boycott if His Countrymen Are Not Treated Better Here," *New York Times*, July 28, 1907, Magazine Section, 11.

very advantageous investment of American capital in China—advantageous to both the Chinese, who needed money and knowhow and the United States, which could benefit from the “cheap labor” and the “boundless field” of China. “It seems, said Kang, “like sheer blindness and stupidity not to avail yourselves of these vast opportunities.”

Perhaps since he had personally felt the inconveniences caused by the Bureau of Immigration merely because he was Chinese, Kang had a grudge against the U.S. Exclusion policy. He often cited the cases of European immigrants being treated far more fairly than the Chinese, with mere travelers and students from Europe much less likely to be subjected than their Chinese counterparts to abusive treatment and such inconveniences as detention and lengthy physical and documentary examinations. Kang had faced this himself and had reason to feel somewhat bitter. Nonetheless, he did not complain because of personal affront, but rather out of concern for the well-being of the Chinese people, both in the empire and overseas, as exemplified in his writings and actions during his travels. Furthermore, when he finally was able to enter the United States in February 1905, Kang functioned as a kind of emissary for the Chinese people. He spoke directly to the American public sometimes in person but mostly through the American press. He did this throughout his travels to more than fifty towns and cities in every region of the country.

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The details and successes of the anti-American boycott as a protest against exclusion of Chinese in the United States continued to develop as Kang Youwei began his tour of the United States. His declaration that the boycott was “a matter of life or death” and the promise that Chinese in America would provide financial support was both grandiose and practical, and showed a sharpening of Kang’s political skills. Protecting the emperor was not quite the resonating issue as was equitable treatment for overseas Chinese. Kang was moving beyond the political goal of constitutional monarchy that would benefit him personally, to social activism that was supportive of masses of Chinese abroad. The boycott had the avid support of Liang Qichao in Japan and the liberal press in Shanghai and spread throughout coastal China. Most important, it garnered the attention of U.S. officials at home and abroad. Perhaps none of Kang’s efforts in the past resonated so well and so widely as his call to overcome the shame of exclusion with the resolve of resistance. He now had an issue he could bring to the doorstep of the United States’ president and the American people.

On the Road: Kang as Reform Missionary and Advocate for Chinese Americans, May–December 1905

I traveled a distance of about 50,000 li, crossed the Rockies four times, saw both oceans, and touched my feet on both coasts. I was on sailing boats on the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers. In the East, I climbed the White Mountains, and in the West, I visited Yellowstone.¹

...

As I traveled through more than fifty cities and towns in United States—from Hartford, Pittsburgh, Baltimore and Kansas City in the East, to Anaconda (Montana), Ogden (Utah), Salt Lake City, Portland, Seattle, Fresno, and Sacramento in the West, and New Orleans, San Antonio and Beaumont (Texas) in the South—any place that has more than ten thousand people and claims to be a city, all have self-government.²

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From all appearances, Kang Youwei's 1905 tour of the United States was a victory lap. The enthusiastic response in Chinese communities, both large and small, energized Kang. His precursors in the United States—Liang Qichao, Xu

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- 1 Kang Youwei, *Kang Youwei Quanji* 康有為全集 (The Complete Works of Kang Youwei), ed. Jiang Yihua and Zhang Hualong 姜義華, 張榮華 (Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin Daxue Chubanshe, 2007), vol. 12, 268. This is an excerpt from a seventy-verse poem Kang composed at the peak of the Rocky Mountains on October 30, 1905.
 - 2 Kang Youwei, *Lun Zizhi* 論自治 (On Self-Government), ca. 1908, in *Wanmucaotang Yigao* 萬木草堂遺稿 (Unpublished Works from the Thatched Hut Among Ten Thousand Trees) (Taipei: Chengwen Chubanshe, 1978), vol. 1, 61. Kang's choice of cities seems meant to display his wide travels to places most Chinese would never have heard of; they all hosted Baohuanghui chapters in 1905.

Qin, Liang Qitian, Kang Tongbi, and Ye En—as well as local Chinese, had developed the largest national Baohuanghui network in the world, which would reach at least eighty-six chapters (ninety-three, including Hawai'i) and tens of thousands of members.³ Kang's reception by Chinese in the United States—from the pomp of marching Western Military Academy (Gancheng Xuexiao) cadets who greeted his arrival in many cities to the impressive Baohuanghui meeting halls where he delivered speeches—evinces an already strong organizational identity and social network. Americans invariably treated Kang as a dignitary who was welcomed by mayors and governors in virtually all the towns and cities he visited and who was called to the White House twice for discussions with President Theodore Roosevelt. He received breathless coverage in the American press, allowing his travels to be traced almost day to day.

But, Kang's focus during this U.S. tour was neither promotion nor study. His concerns included, but were hardly limited to:

- Promoting an anti-American boycott in China to protest Chinese Exclusion laws while attempting to influence the American political debate in both the court of public opinion and at the White House;
- Confronting a growing controversy over whether the large and visible network of Baohuanghui military schools was actually a Chinese reform army training on American soil;
- Expanding the Baohuanghui's Commercial Corporation by raising shares and making plans to form banks and other lucrative businesses;
- Inspiring Baohuanghui membership morale through speeches and the sales of “Baohuanghui comrade” badges designed by Kang.

Shadowing Kang's public activities were two persistent worries. Kang was concerned both by dissension and interpersonal jealousies within the Baohuanghui as well as the growing challenge of revolutionary opponents, namely

3 These numbers represent chapters existing by 1907 that are documented and identified with their geographical names, at the time of publication; there are more chapters for which we have Chinese names but have not yet verified their geographical locations. See *Mapping the Baohuanghui* in appendix with updates at <https://baohuanghui.blogspot.com/2012/05/mapping-baohuanghui.html>. For unidentified chapters with Chinese names only, see *Play the Baohuanghui Guessing Game* <https://baohuanghui.blogspot.com/2013/12/play-baohuanghui-guessing-game.html>. L. Eve Armentrout Ma, *Revolutionaries, Monarchists, and Chinatowns: Chinese Politics in the Americas and the 1911 Revolution* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1990), 51, estimates that in summer 1900 about 1/8 of the Chinese in the mainland United States were Baohuanghui members. There were about 100,000 Chinese in the United States in 1905.

Sun Yatsen, who had preceded Kang in the United States between April and December 1904.

1 Kansas City and St. Louis

Kang's seven months of continuous American travel and politicking began on May 8. He left by train from Los Angeles bound for Washington, DC, and his hoped-for meeting with President Theodore Roosevelt concerning Chinese Exclusion policies. He was accompanied by his secretary and English interpreter Zhou Guoxian, who confidently served as Kang's political attaché and spokesperson and spent more time at Kang's side in North America than any other escort. Other members of the party were bodyguard Rupert Humer; Western Military Academy chief instructor Homer Lea; Fresno's Western Military Academy "Lieutenant" Ben O. Young (Ouyang Xianzhou, Ouyang Hu); and assistant secretaries Tong Chinn (Tong Qing) and Chen Yuesong, both of Chicago. Their first notable stop was Kansas City, Missouri, arriving there on



FIGURE 41

Kang Youwei's visiting card or *baitie* 拜帖, found in Tom Leung's wallet.

the morning of May 13. Local Baohuanghui members greeted Kang and his retinue at the railroad station and took them by carriage to the New Coates Hotel where they were welcomed by a larger contingent of association members. While Kang rested in his room, Zhou “entertained visitors during the forenoon and did the talking for the semi-royal Oriental.”⁴ Through Zhou, Kang said he had come to the United States for “learning the customs of the American people, learning their thrift and energy.” The same press report said that on the afternoon of May 13, Kang wanted to be taken to “the busy sections of the city” and “to see the packing house districts and downtown streets where crowds were moving.” Before departing for St. Louis on the evening of May 14, Kang gave a speech, the content of which went unreported in the local press. From Kang’s correspondence, however, it is learned that three things were on his mind at this point, only one of which he might have spoken about publicly. One was the emerging Shanghai boycott of American goods, an event he had just received news about upon arriving in Kansas City. The other two concerns were the English translation of his biography (*zhuan*) by Yung Wing (Rong Hong) and Baohuanghui membership badges.⁵

By the time Kang arrived in St. Louis on May 15, an additional and bothersome issue resurfaced. That was the news that California Governor Pardee had acted to disband the “Chinese Imperial Reform Army” company in Fresno. This action was first brought to Kang’s attention in the St. Louis press, which also reported his arrival in the city for the purpose of inspecting the local Western Military Academy branch.⁶ And it was to St. Louis that the correspondence from Fresno County District Attorney George W. Jones was forwarded to Homer Lea and from where Lea sent his rebuttal to the actions taken against

4 “Kang Yu Wie in Town,” *Kansas City Star*, May 14, 1905, 8. Advance news of Kang’s arrival in the United States had been reported in Kansas City earlier. See “Kang Yu, Chinese Reformer,” *Kansas City Star*, February 18, 1905, 2. The only other reference found in the *Kansas City Star* at this time was on May 15, 1905, 6, when a brief item said that since the \$100,000 reward for Kang’s head had been withdrawn, he now “must be glad to have such an excellent commercial rating.” Also see Kang Youwei, Kansas City, to Tang Mingsan 湯銘三 and Liang Wenqing 梁文卿 in New York to be forwarded to Kang Tongbi 康同璧, South Windsor, May 14, 1905, no. 康-6, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection, about his arrival and activities in Kansas City.

5 Kang Youwei, Kansas City, to Kang Tongbi, South Windsor, May 14, 1905, 康-20, and Kang to Tang Mingsan and Liang Wenqing to be forwarded to Kang Tongbi, May 14, 1905, no. 康-6, both in Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

6 “Will Disband the Chinese Reformers, California Governor Acts,” *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, May 19, 1905, 1.

his military school.⁷ Lea's pompous appearance in St. Louis, "resplendent in gold braid and insignias," only added to the press interest in the controversy.⁸ Lea contended that the furor in California would not stop him from continuing his journey to the East Coast and predicted that upon his return to Los Angeles, the academies would be "flourishing." Lea claimed that the rumor being spread by his archrival Richard Falkenberg that he "intends to mobilize 50,000 Chinamen on the coast and take them to China to overthrow the Government of the Empress Dowager is without any foundation," it being physically impossible to send even one hundred men without alerting the government.⁹

Kang's presence in St. Louis was front-page news, including a full-length drawing of him "from life."¹⁰ As would be the case throughout his American tour, Kang, Lea, and the others were feted at a banquet. In St. Louis, the event was held on May 18 at the Mikado restaurant. It was attended by former Missouri Governor Charles P. Johnson, local court judges Benjamin F. Clark and Hiram N. Moore, and other dignitaries, as well as the Baohuanghui members and officers of the local Western Military Academy. Kang's speech compared China's need for emancipation with Abraham Lincoln's freeing the slaves during the American Civil War. The Chinese, coming from the oldest civilization, needed American help as badly did "the negro homeless race, which, a few years ago, was considered ignorant." He also contrasted the Empress Dowager—"the great drawback to the Chinese people"—with progressive and enlightened "good Queen Victoria."¹¹ On May 19, Kang addressed the American Baptist Missionary Union Convention and made the speech that initiated his public campaign against Chinese exclusion.¹² That evening, Kang spoke at a

7 "Lea will Continue His Trip to the East," *St. Louis Republic*, May 20, 1905, 2. See Chapter 5 for Fresno episode details.

8 "Former Chinese Premier," *The Bee* (Earlington, Kentucky), May 18, 1905, 3.

9 "Lea will Continue His Trip to the East," *St. Louis Republic*, May 20, 1905, 2.

10 "By Education Kang Yu Wei Hopes to Reform China," *St. Louis Republic*, May 17, 1905, 1. The drawing looks like it was signed by W. C. Coleman and has the "from life" inscription under his signature.

11 "Asks Americans' Aid for Chinese," *St. Louis Republic*, May 19, 1905, 3; and *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, May 19, 1905, 1. The St. Louis company was commanded by Captain Fred C. Husman (pictured in Chapter 4), and had its headquarters at 20 South Eighth Street.

12 See Chapter 6 for more on this speech and St. Louis as the site of Chinese nationalist anger for the discrimination against Qing officials, merchants and workers at the 1904 World's Fair.

banquet at the local Baohuanghui headquarters of the unfairness of the U.S. exclusion laws and the impending new treaty.¹³

Dressed in “gorgeous silk raiment of dainty colors,” Kang also indulged his fascination with technological innovation at the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* newspaper plant, where he astounded his hosts by climbing onto a bench to poke his head into a linotype machine to understand how it replicated in lead type the keystrokes of the operator.¹⁴ He had less interest in the editorial function of an American newspaper than its manufacture, but perked up in the pressroom, moving “as close as possible to the whirling machinery and when one of the big presses stopped again put his high-priced head inside of one of them in an effort to hastily master the intricacy of its construction.” Kang subsequently attempted to recruit a Baohuanghui member to study advanced printing technology “so that he can help our newspapers.”¹⁵

As the entourage was preparing to leave St. Louis on May 22, Homer Lea told the press that Kang and his party had received “a most gracious reception” in the city, and claimed that 98 percent of the Chinese in St. Louis belonged to the Baohuanghui. Seven carriages decorated with U.S. flags and Baohuanghui insignia took Kang, his traveling companions, and local Chinese to the railroad station. They were escorted by a police sergeant and six patrol officers and followed by “a crowd of curious persons,” according to one account.¹⁶

13 “Strong Feeling Against Exclusion,” *St. Louis Republic*, May 20, 1905, 2. “‘Modern Sage of the Flowery Kingdom’ Gathering Mighty Force to Hurl against Walls of Stagnation and Retrogression in China,” *St. Louis Republic*, May 21, 1905, part 4, 1, gives the St. Louis headquarters address as 20 South Eighth St., but other sources say 23 South Eighth St. The building also housed the Western Military Academy branch.

14 “Chinese Reformer Peers into the Heart of a Great Newspaper Home and Shows Much Interest in Its Features,” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, May 20, 1905, 3.

15 “I’m looking for someone to study electrotyping [or electroplating] [*dianban* 電版].” Kang Youwei to Liang Qixun 梁啟勳, October 22, 1907, in Zhang Ronghua 張榮華, ed., *Kang Youwei Juan* 康有為卷 [Kang Youwei Documents] (Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin Daxue Chubanshe, 2015), 12. Zhang gives a date of November 2, 1906, but the authors have revised the year because Lin Duo, mentioned in this letter, was studying metallurgy at the University of Wisconsin 1907–8.

16 “Chinese Reformer Leaves St. Louis,” *St. Louis Republic*, May 23, 1905, 3.

2 Chicago and Zion City

Kang arrived in Chicago on May 23 for a planned one-week visit. He was greeted at the railroad station by a four-hundred-cadet contingent of the Chinese Empire Reform Association—"all in uniforms"—and, riding in a carriage drawn by four white horses, was led by the local Baohuanghui band to a reception held at their Chicago headquarters on Clark Street in Chinatown. After a brief speech, he was taken to his lodging, an apartment in the luxurious Congress Hotel, which had been built as the Auditorium Annex for visitors to the World's Columbian Exposition held in Chicago in 1893.¹⁷ The travelers were joined in Chicago by Tom Leung (Tan Zhangxiao), Kang's former student and Los Angeles host who, as an experienced herbalist, served as Kang's doctor on this trip. In the late afternoon, after a drive through Chicago, Kang attended a banquet in his honor at the "highly respectable" Joy Yet Lo, perhaps the earliest Chinese restaurant in the city to attract an American clientele and owned by



FIGURE 42 Kang Youwei and Homer Lea arriving in Chicago, May 23, 1905.

17 "Kowtow to Kangyu Wei," *Chicago News*, May 23, 1905, 8; "Says Empress Took Bribe," *Chicago Tribune*, May 24, 1905, 7.

Baohuanghui member Chen Baixin.¹⁸ Chicago's *Inter-Ocean* described Kang as "the smartest Chinaman since the time of Confucius," who believed that "the only future for China depends on her willingness to accept Western improvements in commerce, manufacturing and government."¹⁹

On May 24, Kang and a fourteen-person retinue made an overnight trip to Zion, Illinois, a Christian utopian community of several thousand people located fifty miles north of Chicago on the shore of Lake Michigan. There they met John Alexander Dowie, a "minister of divine healing" and "First Apostle" of the Christian Catholic Apostolic Church he had founded in 1900 with the inception of Zion City. Kang wrote in December 1904 that "I already know [Reverend] Dowie and will go to the United States to meet him soon."²⁰ Kang had corresponded with Dowie for several years, the mutual attraction no doubt stemming from their shared utopian ambitions. Surprisingly, Zion City had attracted numerous Chinese Americans and Chinese visitors (including Liang Qichao and Kang Tongbi in 1903), and its leaders had plans for missionary work in China. Liang's brother Liang Qixun, a frequent correspondent of Kang's, was then a student at Zion City College. In Zion City, Kang felt free to expound fully on his one-world Datong vision, which Dowie endorsed: "His many plans for helping humanity coincide with my own."²¹ Kang said that twenty years earlier he wrote several books proposing to unite the people of "all Nations, Flags, and Countries of earth," speaking one language with equal rights and liberties for all, public institutions designed "not for the benefit of a few, but for the good of all," and common cultural customs, such as clothing and food.²² Kang, or rather his interpreter Zhou Guoxian, used Christian language familiar to Zion City citizens: "If we could carry out this program, we should step towards every heavenly bliss." But, said Kang, his focus now was on saving his country, not the world.

18 "Chinese Reformer Visiting Chicago," *Chicago Tribune*, May 24, 1905, 7; "Kang Yu, Reformer Talks to Countrymen," *Chicago Record-Herald*, May 24, 1905, 3; "Says Empress Took Bribe," *Chicago Tribune*, May 24, 1905, 7. Joy Yet Lo postcard, 1905, "Chicago Nostalgia and Memorabilia," <https://chuckmanchicagonostalgia.wordpress.com/2015/01/16/postcard-chicago-joy-yet-lo-co-291-s-clark-chop-sooy-as-served-in-china-highlyrespectable-1905/>, accessed November 17, 2022.

19 "Chinese Reform Comes to Chicago," *Inter-Ocean* (Chicago), May 24, 1905.

20 Kang Youwei, North Vancouver, to Liang Qixun, Chicago, December 17, 1904, in Zhang, *Kang Youwei Juan*, 1; note that Zhang thinks Kang is referring to John Dewey and probably didn't know that Liang Qixun was a student of Dowie.

21 "Zion's Onward Movement for China," *Leaves of Healing* 17, no. 8 (June 10, 1905): 256.

22 "Zion's Onward Movement for China," 255.

Kang's visit was big news in *Leaves of Healing*, Zion City's weekly newspaper, in June.²³ The issue featured a large black-and-white front-page photograph of Kang and Dowie, the same photo inside rendered as a color lithograph. The effusive accompanying article reported that at the "regular Mid-Week Rally" in Shiloh Tabernacle, the "Philosopher and Guide of Four Hundred Millions of people, and the Prophet of Restoration, whose Message is to all the inhabitants of the earth, met, clasped hands and spoke to a present audience of over five thousand" followers and visitors. If true, this was the largest audience Kang had ever addressed and probably represented nearly all of the population of Zion City.²⁴ Toward the end of his lengthy introduction, Dowie issued a warning to the Empress Dowager: "as the Prophet of God in these latter days, that if she harms the Emperor she will hear the tramp of tens and hundreds of thousands and of millions of Chinese Reformers marching upon Peking."²⁵

In his talk, Kang praised Zion City and claimed that he himself had "engaged in Religious and Social work, such as Dr. Dowie is doing here." He clarified that these were references to the Confucian religion and his reform efforts to bring about social equality for men and women. He also spoke of his political reform efforts during the Hundred Days and his stand against the U.S. Chinese Exclusion laws. Other Chinese followed Kang, including Chan Yoke (possibly Chen Yuesong), speaking for the Chicago chapter of the Baohuanghui, to reinforce Kang's message about "the evils of the Exclusion law." Dowie concluded the assembly by calling for a vote to authorize him to write President Roosevelt "urging His Excellency to take action so that the Congress shall speedily repeal the Chinese Exclusion Act." All stood in acclamation.

"[Kang] will be glad if I can sit up half the night with him," said Dowie during the assembly, looking forward to a long conversation that evening. Dowie had just returned from Mexico where he planned to establish seven cities for his followers, supported by truck gardens producing vegetables for sale in the United States, irrigated and powered by the plentiful water under extinct volcanos.²⁶ He was considering buying a hacienda in Tamaulipas and was seeking a concession from the Mexican government to build a railroad. Perhaps it was no coincidence that upon Kang's return to Chicago, he wrote to Mexican President José de la Cruz Porfirio Díaz Mori and sent him some antique Chinese

23 "Zion's Onward Movement for China," 248–59; "Grand Reception in Zion City to Former Prime Minister of China," 249. Chi Jeng Chang visited Zion City in 2014 and shared his photographs of these rare documents.

24 The permanent population was estimated to be about 7,500, although Dowie claimed it was 10,000 in 1905, according to Grant Wacker, "Marching to Zion: Religion in a Modern Utopian Community," *Church History* 54, no. 4 (December 1985): 501.

25 "Zion's Onward Movement for China," 253.

26 "Dowie to Establish Eden," *Brownsville (Texas) Herald*, May 22, 1905, 1.



FIGURE 43 Cover, *Leaves of Healing*, June 10, 1905, with John Alexander Dowie and Kang Yuwei in Zion City, Illinois.

porcelain. In June Díaz responded with gratitude for the gift and for Kang's kind comments about him, and thus helped pave the way for a future meeting between the two men (see Chapter 8).²⁷

27 Porfirio Díaz, Mexico City, to Señor Kan YuWei, Chicago, Junio 20 de 1905 (in Spanish), see Jung-pang Lo, "Sequel to the Chronological Autobiography," *K'ang Yu-wei: A Biography*

Kang and his party returned to Chicago on May 25 and remained until early June. The Chicago chapter was a significant one for the Baohuanghui, important enough that before Kang's visit one thousand Baohuanghui badges had been distributed to local members.²⁸ Kang had close ties to several key Chicago members: Liang Qichao's brother Liang Qixun and two men who served as Kang's secretaries or interpreters, Chen Yuesong and Tong Chinn. Later in the year, Los Angeles leader Tom Leung would choose Chicago to open a Baohuanghui-funded restaurant that would play a large role in the Commercial Corporation. Chicago was dominated by the two major Chinese families, surnamed Mei (Moy) and Chen (Chin), who traded the local Baohuanghui presidency back and forth. Both Chin F. Foin (Chen Hongxun) and Moy Dong Chew (Mei Zongzhou, Mei Qishan, Hip Lung, Xie Long) were highly successful entrepreneurs.²⁹

Kang's longer-than-planned stay in Chicago may have been related to mobilizing promotion and fundraising to support the anti-American boycott. In August, the *Chicago Daily News* published "Boycott Urged Here: Big Chinese Fight on American Manufactures Started in Chicago, Secrets of Clark Street," as revealed by restaurateur and interpreter Chen Baixin (Chin Pak Sun), one of the founding members of the Chicago chapter.³⁰ Chen confirmed that "a series of secret meetings were held by [Kang Youwei] in Chicago during the latter part of May and early June" and that the first donations toward the boycott came from Chicago. "Chicago men have done their part and done it well," said Chen, and since they had no political power to change exclusion laws, they were using commercial power and predicted, "The business nation probably will now treat us with fair consideration."

3 Washington

Possibly after visiting Baohuanghui chapters in Ohio, Kang arrived in Washington on June 7 and registered at the Arlington Hotel on 15th and I Streets Northwest.³¹ There Kang and his party received a stream of Chinese visitors,

and *Symposium* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1967), 202, for a reproduction of the letter.

28 Li Zesheng 李澤生, Record of Baohuanghui badge distribution, [July 1, 1905; may be lunar], no. Z-8, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

29 Huping Ling, *Chinese Chicago: Race, Transnational Migration, and Community since 1870* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012), 30–31, 71–72.

30 "Boycott Urged Here," *Chicago News*, August 9, 1905, 10; "Chinese for Reform," *Chicago News*, July 23, 1903, 4, lists Chin Pak Sun as an officer in the newly incorporated chapter.

31 Ohio had at least three Baohuanghui chapters in Cleveland, Cincinnati, and Columbus. The Columbus chapter was formally incorporated chapter in 1907, but it probably had

including “a Chinese reform editor from New York,” who must have been Tang Mingsan of *Zhongguo Weixin Bao* as he had come to Washington to join Kang and communicate with the New York chapter.³² Among Kang’s first activities in Washington were meetings with Chinese merchants and the local Baohuanghui leadership at their headquarters in Chinatown, then located on Pennsylvania Avenue near 3rd Street Northwest, at the foot of Capitol Hill. The morning after his arrival, Kang hosted a delegation of newspaper reporters in his hotel to explain his goals and plans.³³ He also visited the Bureau of Engraving and Printing “to study the methods of that Institution.”³⁴ Kang began the process of scheduling an interview with Roosevelt and wrote to Yung Wing, asking him to come to Washington for the visit to the White House and to bring a gift of Chinese porcelain for the president. But, if Yung could not make it in time, he would proceed to the meeting without him.³⁵

On June 9, Kang received a delegation of some forty Chinese from Baltimore at his hotel. Since Kang “has no alternative” to their insistence that he visit their city, plans were made to go to Baltimore. No expense was spared by his Maryland hosts who engaged a special Pennsylvania Railroad car for the trip.³⁶

4 Baltimore

Kang made the short trip to Baltimore on June 10, arriving in the late afternoon at Union Station, where he was met by prominent Chinese American residents. He was accompanied by his usual traveling companions and a “large

been founded at an earlier date; Cleveland and Cincinnati chapters existed in 1903 and 1904. See Articles of Incorporation, Chinese Empire Reform Association, vol. 122, 95, Office of the Secretary of State, Columbus, Ohio. For Kang’s arrival in Washington, see “People Met in Lobbies,” *Washington Post*, June 8, 1905, 6, which describes Kang’s arrival the previous afternoon with Zhou Guoxian, two other Chinese, and “a bodyguard from Austria ... who speaks every continental tongue.”

32 “Seeks to Reform China, Kang Yu Wei Says Empress is the Obstacle,” *The Sun* (Baltimore), June 10, 1905, 2.

33 “Kang Yu Wei Is A Visitor Here, Greatest of All Chinese Reformers,” *Washington Times*, June 9, 1905, 1. See also “Progress in China, A Man Who Works For Reform,” *Evening Star*, June 9, 1905, 7.

34 “Seeks to Reform China, Kang Yu Wei Says Empress is the Obstacle.”

35 Kang Youwei, Washington, to Kang Tongbi, South Windsor, June 11, 1905, no. 康-18, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection; written on Arlington Hotel letterhead.

36 “Seeks to Reform China, Kang Yu Wei Says Empress is the Obstacle”; “Noted Chinese Leader Coming,” *Baltimore American*, June 10, 1905, 15; “To Reach Baltimore Today, Kang to Lecture at Y.M.C.A.,” *The Sun*, June 10, 1905, 2. Liang Wenqing, Washington, DC, to Kang Tongbi, Hartford, June 9, 1905, no. B-30, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection, wrote that he, Tang Mingsan, and Zhao Wansheng had come from New York to meet Kang in Washington.

number" of Washington Chinese.³⁷ At the heart of the Baltimore group was Chin Ywo Jong, the local Baohuanghui president, and the secretary, Der Doo (Xie Du). Dickinson's Band, a local marching unit of twenty-one pieces, led the parade of some twenty carriages as it made its way from the station through then-fashionable sections of the city, first to the local association hall in Chinatown to greet some of the city's eight hundred members and then to the Hotel Rennett.³⁸ The Baltimore City police, evidently in fear that this visit might be marred by someone trying to collect the rumored \$100,000 Qing reward for Kang, assigned two detectives and fourteen police officers to accompany the procession.³⁹ Kang gave speeches at the Young Men's Christian Association and at a restaurant in the Park Avenue Chinatown. He then "did a social tour of the Baltimore Country Club."⁴⁰ On June 12, the group returned to Washington after having seen other local landmarks and institutions.

5 Washington: Meeting with Theodore Roosevelt

Besides having to work through the government bureaucracy to get an appointment to meet Roosevelt, there was another difficulty. Kang blamed China's minister to the United States Chentung Liang Cheng (Liang Cheng) for delaying his meeting with the president for three days, presumably because of Kang's persona non grata status with the Qing government.⁴¹ Ironically, Liang Cheng, like Kang, strongly opposed exclusion and favored the boycott. In any case, it was reported that Kang had been called back from Baltimore by Roosevelt himself "to consult him concerning the Chinese treaty and Chinese exclusion."⁴²

37 "Noted Chinese Leader Coming," *Baltimore American*, June 10, 1905, 2.

38 "Kang Yu Wei in Baltimore," *Baltimore American*, June 11, 1905, 6.

39 "Kang Yu Wei Arrives," *The Sun*, June 11, 1905, 16. The two detectives accompanied Kang throughout his visit to the city. See also "\$100,000 For His Head, China's Empress Offered That For His Head, Kang Yu Wei in Washington," *The Sun*, June 9, 1905, 2.

40 *The Sun* (Baltimore), June 11, 1905; also "Mr. Kang Has a Busy Day," *The Sun*, June 12, 1905, 12.

41 A Rangoon Baohuanghui handbill, dated June 10, 1905, said that Liang Cheng 梁誠 "has been fighting hard against the treaty." See "Ju Jinyue Chuandan—Lü Mei Huaren Laigao" 拒禁約傳單—旅美華人來稿 [Leaflet Opposing the Exclusion Treaty—Manuscript from Chinese Living in America], printed by *Yangjiang Xin Bao*, June 10, 1905, no. 577 in Fang Zhiqin and Cai Huiyao 方志欽, 蔡惠堯, ed., *Kang Liang yu Baohuanghui: Tan Liang zai Meiguo Suocang Ziliao Huibian* 康梁與保皇會: 譚良在美國所藏資料彙編 [Kang, Liang, and the Baohuanghui: A Compilation of Materials Collected by Tom Leung in the United States] (Hong Kong: Yinhe Chubanshe, 2008), 379–83. Also see Kang Youwei, Washington, to Liang Qixun, Chicago, June 16, 1905, in Zhang, *Kang Youwei Juan*, 2.

42 "To Meet Kang Yu Wei," *New-York Tribune*, June 17, 1905, 6.

A first-hand report published in two American Baohuanghui organs, *Zhongguo Weixin Bao* and *Wenxing Bao* (*Mon Hing Bo*, *The Chinese World*), by Tom Leung, whom Kang had deputized to record this important occasion, described exactly how the meeting with Roosevelt came about.⁴³ On June 13, Kang sent a message to Acting Secretary of State Francis B. Loomis requesting an appointment to meet the president. The response came from the Department of State on June 16 at 8:00 AM, asking Kang to be prepared to meet Roosevelt before 1:00 PM. Kang arrived at the State Department at 11:00 AM, where he was greeted by Loomis. With Kang was Yung Wing, who had arrived in Washington at Kang's request to translate during the meeting with Roosevelt; this was their first reunion since the fateful summer of 1898 in Beijing.⁴⁴ They were accompanied by Tom Leung and Zhou Guoxian. The group toured the Departments of State and Navy, which were housed in the same building, and were summoned to the White House next door at 12:30.⁴⁵ From Tom Leung's report:

The president was standing there waiting for us. We greeted each other, each shaking hands with him. The president and President Kang talked

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- 43 Tom Leung 譚良, "Ji Kang Huizhang Jinye Lao Zongtong" 記康會長進謁勞總統 [Record of President Kang's Meeting with President Roosevelt], unknown newspaper, probably *Zhongguo Weixin Bao*, undated [between June 17 and June 27, 1905]. Enclosed with a letter from Tom Leung to Huang Chuda [Wong Yap, Huang Xi], by way of Wing Wang and Co., Vancouver, June 27, 1905, Yip family and Yip Sang Ltd. Fonds, City of Vancouver Archives. Available online from Yip Sang Collection, University of British Columbia Open Collections <https://open.library.ubc.ca/collections/yipsang/items/1.0114246#pozorof>.
- 44 Kang anxiously awaited Yung Wing's arrival in Washington, as he understood Yung to be well-versed in American officialdom and able to communicate his ideas to Roosevelt directly. He was reassured when Kang Tongbi wrote him that Yung had departed for Washington from Hartford, Kang Tongbi to Kang Youwei, June 12, 1905, no. Z-47, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.
- 45 The date of Kang's first meeting with Roosevelt is not recorded on June 16, 1905, Desk Diaries, Roosevelt Papers, MSS 38299, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, https://www.loc.gov/resource/mss38299.mss38299-430_0193_1119/?sp=634&st=image&r=0.173,0.028,0.936,0.395,0. However, the June 15 entry shows a noon appointment with Homer Lea (introduced by General Harrison Gray Otis), with four other appointments scheduled at the same time. Lea's appointment with Roosevelt may have focused solely on the Western Military Academy controversy, and he seems not to have been with Kang the next day. The Roosevelt Papers contain no other mention of this and a subsequent visit by Kang. No personal diaries exist for this period of Roosevelt's career. The correspondence of Kang and others after the meeting confirms the June 16 date; see Kang Youwei, Washington, to Liang Wenqing, New York, June 16, 1905, written on Arlington Hotel letterhead, no. 康-34, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection. Kang wrote he had seen Roosevelt that day. Also see "Kang Yu Wei Says President Aids Chinese Reform," *Pittsburgh Dispatch*, June 19, 1905, 3; "Kang told his hearers of meeting President Roosevelt and Acting Secretary of State Loomis in Washington last Friday [June 16] and of the pledges made by the President."

about how they had heard about each other for some time and had always wanted to meet. President Kang made the proposal that the Chinese exclusion laws should be abolished. The president said, "I cannot bear to see the cruelty of the laws excluding the Chinese" and would try his best to remedy the situation. He said that he would treat with leniency upper-class Chinese (*shangdeng Huaren*) such as students and merchants. He also said that just a day ago Secretary of War [William Howard] Taft was lecturing on lifting the ban on Chinese people's entry into the United States.⁴⁶ President Kang thanked the president. The president said that the Secretary of War and Mr. Yung used to attend the same school (Yale). Then we shook hands and ended the meeting. After touring around the White House, we left.

Kang was gratified with Roosevelt's willingness to soften the exclusion policy.⁴⁷ He wrote New York leader Liang Wenqing, "The President promised to make efforts to ameliorate Exclusion policy by more lenient treatment of tourists, students, and businessmen."⁴⁸ Fellow New Yorker Tang Mingsan, a member of Kang's Washington escort party, told Liang that as a result of the successful meeting Kang "has to stay little bit longer and negotiate other matters. It is certainly a great event."⁴⁹

Another issue may have come up in the June 16 meeting, but certainly was the subject of Homer Lea's meeting with Roosevelt the day before.⁵⁰ Kang later intimated to an audience in Jersey City that he told Roosevelt that Chinese were receiving military training and English-language instruction in Chinatowns around the United States. To this Roosevelt reportedly said "Good!"⁵¹

For his second meeting with Roosevelt, Kang told his Chicago confidant Liang Qixun on June 16 that he would bring up the subject of the "matter of the

46 On June 15 at Miami University in Ohio, Taft's commencement address denounced the Exclusion policy as wrong in principle, unjust in operation; see Delber McKee, *Chinese Exclusion versus the Open Door Policy, 1900–1906: Clashes over China Policy in the Roosevelt Era* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1977), 127.

47 See Chapter 6 for details.

48 Kang Youwei in Washington to Liang Wenqing in New York, June 16, 1905, no. 康-34, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

49 Tang Mingsan to Liang Wenqing and Li Zesheng, letterhead of The Arlington, Washington, DC, June 16, 1905, no. Z-43, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

50 Desk Diaries, June 15, 1905, Roosevelt Papers, https://www.loc.gov/resource/mss38299.mss38299-430_0193_1119/?sp=634&st=image&r=0.031,0.085,0.78,0.329,0, indicates the appointment was one of five made for noon: "Homer Lea, introduced by [*Los Angeles Times* publisher] Genl. H. G. [Harrison Gray] Otis."

51 "A Brilliant Oriental Exile and Reformer," *Christian Advocate* 80, no. 30 (July 27, 1905): 1167. *Christian Advocate* was a Methodist newspaper published in New York City.

price of the pound” (*bangjia shi*) and hoped that “our party will take the lead on this.”⁵² Although Kang’s reference is vague, we do know that Kang had strong and well-developed views on an intertwined set of issues then confounding U.S.–China relations, all of which Kang may have wanted to address with Roosevelt. After years of attempts, China had failed to convince the allied powers that it should be able to pay its 450 million tael (67.5 million British pounds) Boxer Indemnity using its silver currency (tael or *liang*) rather than the currencies of the powers, all denominated in gold.⁵³ In fact, the Boxer Protocol had set the terms of payment using the 1901 market rate of the tael in relation to the various foreign currencies, and with the fluctuating price of silver, China had had to absorb generally unfavorable exchange rates in the intervening years. While Secretary of State John Hay was negotiating with Chinese Minister Liang Cheng to renew the contentious Exclusion treaty, the issue of the Boxer payments to the U.S. was also on the table. On November 25, 1904, Hay wrote Liang Cheng that the U.S. would only accept China’s Boxer Indemnity payments in gold dollars.⁵⁴ Kang could well have learned this while in Vancouver in late 1904 and composed the poems entitled “Bang Fen” (Anger over the Pound) that equate gold with the pound:

At that time we agreed upon the payment in taels, not gold.
Silver and gold are two different kinds of standards.
The former uses the tael (*liang*) as its unit, while the latter is the pound
(*bang*) ...
We never agreed to pay the indemnity in gold.
How could they not treat the treaty seriously!⁵⁵

Or, Kang may have wanted to speak to Roosevelt about another aspect of the Boxer Indemnity debate in the United States. Secretary Hay’s November 1904 letter to Liang Cheng also said that he favored returning some of the 25 million dollar indemnity owed to the United States by China, because the full sum more than covered the damage done to American property during the Boxer Uprising. In 1905, Hay suggested that this remission be applied toward funding

52 Kang Youwei, Washington, to Liang Qixun, Chicago, June 16, 1905, Kang Youwei, Washington, to Liang Qixun, Chicago, June 16, 1905, in Zhang, *Kang Youwei Juan*, 2.

53 Frank H. H. King, “The Boxer Indemnity—‘Nothing but Bad,’” *Modern Asian Studies* 40, no. 3 (July 2006): 663–89.

54 Hongshan Li, *U.S.–China Educational Exchange: State, Society and Intercultural Relations, 1905–1950* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2008), 51.

55 Kang Youwei, “Bang Fen” 鏹憤 [Anger over the Pound] in *Liaotianshi Shiji* 寥天室詩集 [Poems of the Hut under the Vastness of Heaven], *Kang Youwei Quanjì*, vol. 12, 260.

Chinese students in the United States, a gesture that Kang approved of and would eventually come to pass.⁵⁶ Before Kang's second meeting with Roosevelt, he spoke in Pittsburgh about the importance of bringing Chinese students to study in the United States and explicitly said he hoped to enlist Roosevelt's support in this mission.⁵⁷

Finally, it is conceivable that Kang hoped to discuss yet another related topic with Roosevelt: an American plan devised by Cornell University professor Jeremiah Jenks to help China deal with its Boxer debt and modernize its financial system by converting to the gold standard.⁵⁸ Jenks was a member of a Congressional commission formed on the request of Roosevelt after the president was approached by the governments of Mexico and China to help stabilize the ratio between the values of silver and gold. Mexico, a silver producer, and China, having a massive need for silver to pay its Boxer debts, were both suffering in 1903 as the value of silver kept falling. Jenks visited China in 1904 and proposed a method to convert the country to a gold exchange standard using token coins that could be used to pay foreign gold debts backed by a foreign-based gold-exchange fund in dollars or pounds. Liang Qichao openly supported a gold standard for China, and in 1905 before entering the United States, Kang had in hand a draft of what would become an influential 1910 book on the same topic, in which he stated that China should have accepted the Jenks proposal.⁵⁹

Kang's June 16 letter to Liang Qixun admits multiple problems dealing with his Chinese American colleagues.⁶⁰ It was not enough that the Western Military Academy affair and the Falkenberg debacle continued to be an issue. He told Liang how the Chicago Chinatown leaders "all kept quiet" when he asked

56 Li, *U.S.-China Educational Exchange*, 51-52.

57 "Kang Yu Wei Says President Aids Chinese Reform," *Pittsburgh Dispatch*, June 19, 1905, 3, quoted below.

58 Austin Dean, "A Coin for China: The Monetary Standards Debate at the end of the Qing's Dynasty, 1900-1912," unpublished paper, 2016. Thank you to Professor Dean, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, for the references and background he provided on the Boxer Indemnity controversies and related discussions of the gold standard for China.

59 Kang Youwei, *Jin Zhubi Jiuguo Lun* 金主幣救國論 [Discussion on the Gold Standard to Save China] (Shanghai: Guangzhi Shuju, 1910); Ye Shichang 葉世昌, *Zhongguo Huobi Lilun Shi* 中國貨幣理論史 [A History of Chinese Monetary Theory] (Xiamen: Xiamen University Press, 2003), 281. Kung-ch'üan Hsiao, *A Modern China and a New World: Kang Yu-wei, Reformer and Utopian, 1858-1927* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1975), 316, writes that Kang's 1910 book on the gold standard was actually a collection of essays written between 1904 and 1908. Lo, *K'ang Yu-wei*, 455, writes that the first draft of *Jin Zhubi Jiuguo Lun* was finished in 1905.

60 Kang to Liang Qixun, June 16, 1905.

questions about certain expenses by the chapter and how they had attacked one another, including the Chicago leader Moy Dong Chew. These issues, he said, were symptomatic of what was happening in other chapters. "I do not have the time and energy to deal with all the complaints," he wrote, "[but] I regard it as a major problem." Kang probably was not looking forward to at least one aspect of his forthcoming visit to New York City: "The New York chapter is especially disorganized and difficult to maintain. I truly have no power to cope with this! What should I do?" Before Kang arrived in the United States, Liang Wenqing even confessed to Tongbi that his New York chapter was "not enthusiastic" about Kang coming, but at least Zhao (likely the highly Americanized New York Baohuanghui president Zhao Wansheng or Joseph Singleton) was no longer "in an uproar because the Master did not adopt the Western style of dress."⁶¹ Kang needed Liang, one of his more dependable lieutenants, to draft a new Baohuanghui charter, which would be discussed at a plenary meeting in New York City. New York City was thus an important venue for Kang. Liang said that Boston also was a problem. The Baohuanghui chapter there was reported as "very unstable" and was "falling apart" because its leaders had failed to distribute the annual bonus from the Shanghai book company Guangzhi Shuju (Diffusion of Knowledge Publishing House) and the Commercial Corporation had not gotten underway.⁶² Additionally, "no one is in charge in San Francisco," and the headquarters might have to be transferred to New York. Apart from Chicago, and San Francisco (where he never went), Kang was well-received, and New York City became the place he returned to most frequently.

While in Washington, Kang also visited the U.S. Capitol and George Washington's home at Mount Vernon, Virginia.⁶³ In her supplemental biography of Kang Youwei, Kang Tongbi said her father also saw the Washington Monument and visited "a cannon factory, steel factory, a museum, waxworks museum, and the zoo."⁶⁴ Washington had no steel factory per se but if he went to the

61 Liang Wenqing, New York, to Kang Tongbi, South Windsor, January 2, 1905, no. S-C21, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

62 Liang Wenqing, New York, to Kang Tongbi, South Windsor, January 2, 1905, no. S-C21, and February 3, 1905, no. S-C54, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

63 Lo, "Sequel to the Chronological Autobiography," 198, says Kang attended a session of Congress, but according to the *Congressional Record*, vol. LI (1905), Congress was not in session at the time. Also, a search of registers of visiting dignitaries to Mount Vernon did not produce Kang's name, although it is possible he visited without signing the register.

64 Kang Tongbi 康同璧, *Nanhai Kang Xiansheng Nianpu Xubian* 南海康先生年譜續編 [Continuation of Kang Youwei's Chronological Life], ed. Lou Yulie 樓宇烈, *Kang Nanhai Zibian Nianpu (Wai er Zhong)* 康南海自編年譜: 外二種 [Chronological Autobiography of Kang Youwei with Two Additional Sections] (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1992), 61.

Washington Navy Yard he may have seen naval ship guns being manufactured from steel. And on his next stop, Pittsburgh, he visited a steel mill.

6 Pittsburgh

Kang and company left Washington and went directly to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, on June 17. He was less than unanimously welcomed in the Steel City. The reception at Union Station was composed of local Baohuanghui members and a parade to Chinatown was led by the 14th Regiment Band, a well-known local marching band. A banquet was held that same night, but the reporter writing the story about the event seemed preoccupied with assassination rumors. He wrote: "It is being talked of in the Chinese quarter that something may happen to mar the visit of Kang to this city."⁶⁵ Much like reporters in other cities had written, this one described how Kang had been forced to flee from China in 1898, and that the Qing government had a high price on his head. "So fearful is he of his life," one article said, "that he maintained a fellow-countryman who tastes all food before it is served to his excellency."⁶⁶ And perhaps more alarming, many Chinese in Pittsburgh deplored his visit. The *Pittsburgh Dispatch* quoted Ben Lee as saying:

Kang Yu Wei makes trouble wherever he goes. The heavy price on his head will sooner or later cause him to be murdered, and we do not desire that any crime be committed among our peaceful brothers in Pittsburgh. In advocating enmity of the Government of China he makes enemies and few friends.⁶⁷

Tom Leung later received a letter from Kuang Shoumin, who managed the Hong Kong Baohuanghui headquarters, saying that "people in Pittsburgh ... are extremely opposed," presumably in regard to requests for funds to support the boycott of American goods.⁶⁸

65 "Former Chinese Premier is Here as a Reformer," *Pittsburgh Dispatch*, June 18, 1905, 2.

66 *Pittsburgh Dispatch*, June 18, 1905, 2. This story is typical of many supposed habits of Kang Youwei.

67 *Pittsburgh Dispatch*, June 18, 1905, 2. Whereas newspapers in other cities reported that the \$100,000 reward for Kang had been lifted by Cixi, it was reported that in Pittsburgh there was talk among ostensible opponents of Kang of a \$140,000 reward. See "A Price on His Head," a special report from Pittsburgh published in the *Plain Dealer* (Cleveland), June 19, 1905, 2. The actual reward was 145,000 taels, as described in Chapter 4.

68 Kuang Shoumin 鄺壽民, Hong Kong, to Tan Zhangxiao 譚張孝 [Tom Leung], Los Angeles, October 24, 1905, no. 192 in Fang and Cai, 160. Kuang heard about Pittsburgh's

No harm, however, came to Kang during his visit. On the afternoon of June 18, he addressed about eight hundred local Chinese at the Fourth Avenue Baptist Church. Kang told the audience of his meeting with Roosevelt, indicating that the president was in favor of modifying the exclusion laws so that Chinese would have equal rights with the Japanese. Portions of his speech were translated and recorded for the public:

It is to America that the Chinese must look for deliverance from the oppression of an ancient and unprogressive government. To effect this deliverance from the oppression no violence is necessary. The reform association must inculcate in its members the desire to study and to utilize American methods so that when they return to their homes they can spread the propaganda among their less enlightened friends.

To carry out this plan the reform party in China will, just as soon as possible, send students to this country to attain technical information and prepare themselves to assist their party in modernizing China. To do this I am making every effort to secure the friendly assistance of the President. He is a fair-minded and fearless man and I believe he will aid us greatly. The Japanese long ago realized the need of injecting new method into their government and they send thousands of students to America. The result is that they are able to carry on a successful war against one of the most powerful nations in the world.⁶⁹

In the first paragraph quoted above, Kang mentioned one of the important facets of his reform program directed toward the Chinese overseas—that they should study Western methods and then return to China where they, in turn, would teach their “less enlightened friends” in the modern ways of life and government. Another facet of the program outlined in the Pittsburgh speech was sending students to America to study. This had been one of the features in the reform decrees of 1898. At his own expense, Kang had sent his own daughters and former Wanmucaotang student Liang Junke, abroad to study.⁷⁰ Liang Qichao’s brother, Liang Qixun, among others, also had been sent to the

intransigence from Chen Yikan, editor of *Wenxing Bao* 文興報 and collector of Baohuanghui boycott donations in San Francisco.

69 “Kang Yu Wei Says President Aids Chinese Reform,” *Pittsburgh Dispatch*, June 19, 1905, 3. Also see Kang Youwei, Washington, to Kang Tongbi, South Windsor, June 16, 1905, no. 康-34, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

70 Lo, “Sequel to Autobiography,” 274 n44.

United States to study at the expense of the Baohuanghui or its Commercial Corporation.⁷¹ Kang would have difficulty recruiting appropriate students to study technology and engineering subjects, including the manufacture of steel, an area in which Pittsburgh excelled.⁷²

On June 19, Kang and his party, which included Zhou Guoxian and Ben O. Young, toured the vast Homestead mills of the Carnegie Steel Company “from one end to the other” and took especial interest in the production of armor plate from which weapons of war were made, asking “thousands of questions.”⁷³ Whether Kang had time to visit the Westinghouse Electric Company as he had hoped is unknown, but he left Pittsburgh the following day to return to Washington to await further discussion with Roosevelt.⁷⁴

7 Washington: A Second Meeting with Roosevelt

After returning to Washington, Kang experienced little of the activity that ordinarily surrounded his visit to other cities. He had already gone on sight-seeing expeditions and had had a meeting with the president. Although there was a local chapter of the Baohuanghui, no public reports appeared about further activities involving Kang.⁷⁵ However, organizational correspondence discloses that a chapter of the Reject the Treaty Society (Juyuehui) had been established in Washington around this time and that donations were being solicited by and from Baohuanghui members to support the anti-American boycott.⁷⁶ Presumably, chapters of the Society were being formed throughout

71 Lo, “Sequel to Autobiography,” 210. Also see Chapter 9 for more about funding student costs through King Joy Lo restaurant in Chicago.

72 Kang Youwei to Liang Qixun, October 22, 1907, in Zhang, *Kang Youwei Juan*, 12: “If Chen Yu wants to enter the Pittsburgh Iron School, I can write him a recommendation. I have to find someone to go to that school.”

73 “Chinese Dignitaries Visit Homestead Mill,” *Pittsburgh Post*, June 20, 1905, 2.

74 “Chinese are Pleased,” *Pittsburgh Post*, January 19, 1905, 2.

75 Kang’s initial stay in Washington, including reception by the local chapter, did make the local press. However, neither of Kang’s visits with Roosevelt were reported in the Washington newspapers although they were mentioned in nearly every press of cities in which Kang traveled during the rest of his tour.

76 Tang Mingsan, Washington, DC, to Liang Wenqing and Li Zesheng, New York City, June 16, 1905, no. Z-43, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection. Also see Kang to Liang Qixun, June 16, 1905, in which Kang says he had sent \$1,000 to Yokohama, in Zhang, *Kang Youwei Juan*, 3. Kang to Liang Qixun, July 22, 1905, in Zhang, *Kang Youwei Juan*, 5, indicates Kang had allocated 10,000 yuan to *Shi Bao* 時報 (Shanghai) in support of the boycott. *Shi Bao*

the country to collect funds to be sent to boycotters in Hong Kong and China, with participation from the Baohuanghui in the United States and those sympathetic to revolution as well. The boycott was just one of the causes requiring donations and energy from members. Liang Wenqing expressed his concerns to Kang Tongbi that the “various fundraising programs in recent years will inevitably irritate people, while to be engaged in fights on several fronts at once is overwhelming and intimidating.”⁷⁷ Among the demands were funds to support Kang in New York during the plenary meeting later that summer, membership badges for Baohuanghui leaders, and the boycott. Liang asked Tongbi to solicit donations from the Ladies’ Associations (*nühui*).

On June 24, this time accompanied only by Yung Wing, Kang paid a second visit to the White House. Roosevelt was joined by Secretary of State John M. Hay, who had just returned from Europe.⁷⁸ As expanded upon in Chapter 6, Roosevelt told Kang that he would issue executive orders that over time would significantly ease restrictions on entry of the exempt classes of Chinese, including students and officials, and improve the experience of ordinary Chinese immigrants by encouraging immigration officers to treat them with courtesy and leniency while ending the humiliating Bertillon measure system. It is clear that Roosevelt saw Kang as having the influence to halt the anti-American boycott, scheduled to begin in July, and it is likely that Roosevelt hoped that his actions would convince Kang to change course and oppose rather than promote the boycott among his followers.

Kang was impressed with Roosevelt, and said that he was “one of the most stern, as well as one of the most broad minded rulers in the world.”⁷⁹ This, and similarly positive comments, were made during the rest of the itinerary to audiences and interviewers throughout the United States and Mexico. Zhou

reportedly had a circulation of nearly 10,000 in just one year’s time. See Gaode 高德 [Di Chuqing 狄楚卿] and Gaoshan 高山 [Luo Xiaogao 羅孝高], Shanghai, to Kang Youwei, June 22, 1905, no. 183 in Fang and Cai, 321. “Juyue Zonghui zhi Huikuan” 拒約總會之匯款 [Remissions to the Reject the Treaty Society headquarters], *Chung Sai Yat Po* (San Francisco), July 25, 1905, says the Reject the Treaty Society was established June 20, 1905.

77 Liang Wenqing, New York City, to Kang Tongbi, South Windsor, June 17, 1905, no. B-24, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

78 The appointment was made for 12:30 PM. Roosevelt Papers, Desk Diaries, June 24, 1905, https://www.loc.gov/resource/mss38299.mss38299-430_0193_1119/?sp=638&st=image&r=-0.033,-0.005,1.336,0.564,0. Hay had returned from Europe where he had gone for a “cure.”

79 “To Go Back to China,” *Mexican Herald*, January 24, 1906, 2.

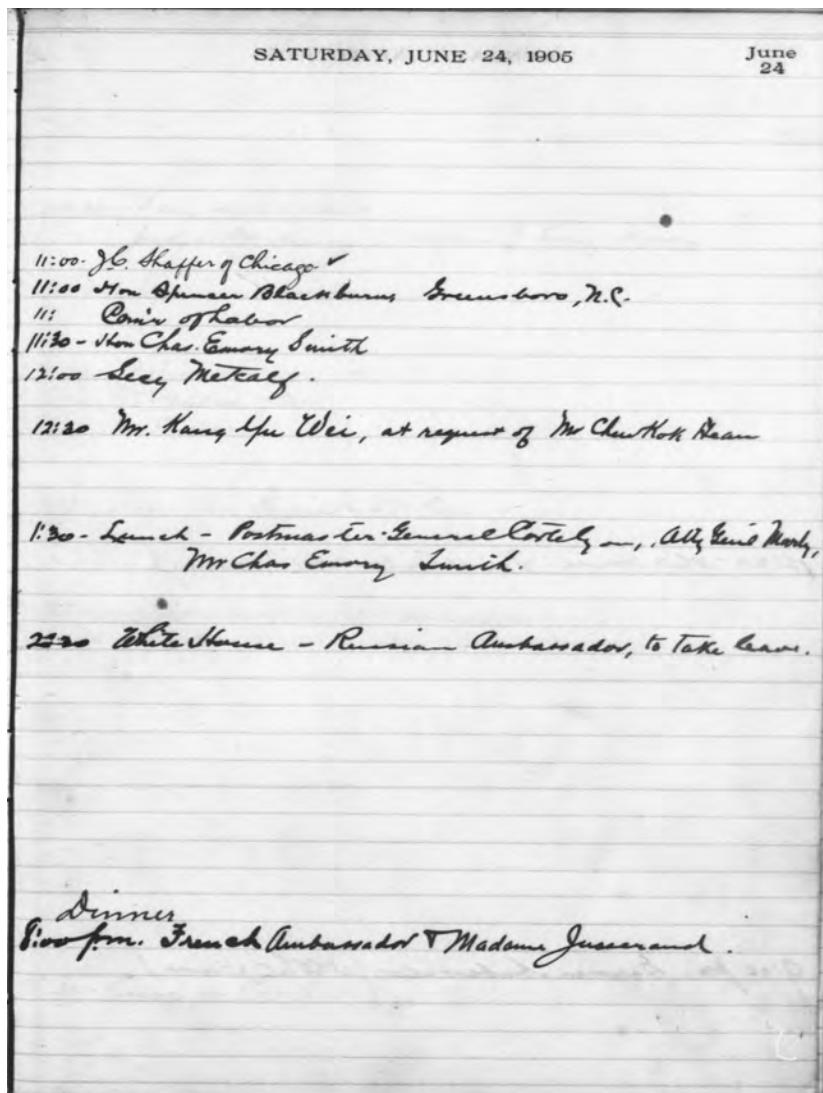


FIGURE 44 June 24, 1905 desk diary for Theodore Roosevelt; "12:30: Mr. Kang Yu Wei, at request of Chew Kok Hean."

Guoxian also took a liking to Roosevelt and later was seen in Butte, Montana, proudly wearing a Roosevelt-Fairbanks 1904 election campaign pin on his lapel. The local media said Zhou "prizes it highly."⁸⁰

80 "Chinese Reform Party is Going to Spokane," *Anaconda Standard*, September 30, 1905, 7. Senator Charles W. Fairbanks was Roosevelt's vice presidential running mate in the 1904 election.

8 Philadelphia

Hours after his second visit with Roosevelt, Kang arrived at the Broad Street railroad station in Philadelphia. There he received the grandest welcome and the most extensive newspaper coverage to date. His visit provided a holiday for local Chinese and they prepared for it elaborately, albeit, not without some friction between Qing loyalists and reformists. The Pennsylvania Railroad train arrived about 6:00 PM, and Kang reportedly emerged dressed in dark red silk robes. His appearance created such a stir at the station that a squad of police had to make a pathway to the carriage awaiting him on Broad Street.

Here [awaited] a platoon of mounted police, the band of the First Regiment [of the Pennsylvania National Guard], merchants from the Chinese colony in carriages and two companies of Chinese soldiers on line ... The standard bearers carried the imperial flag of China as well as the Stars and Stripes and borne in line also were yellow guidons with a black dragon, the adopted flag of the Chinese reform party.⁸¹

One of the two Chinese cadet companies in the parade was from the New York City Baohuanghui chapter. Kang's arrival there reportedly was anxiously awaited.⁸²

Kang rode in the lead carriage, which was drawn by four gray horses and headed a line of carriages that bore prominent members of the Philadelphia Baohuanghui. The cavalcade went first to Independence Hall, but "much to the disappointment of the visitor the Hall had been closed for the day so the march

81 "Chinese Reformer Given Glad Welcome," *Philadelphia Ledger*, June 25, 1905, 1. To the contrary, the design of the Baohuanghui flag was, as described in other newspapers, a "red, white, and blue ensign, with three white stars upon the wide blue central stripe" in "Here To Preach Reform of China," *Boston Globe*, July 7, 1905, 14; and *New York Herald*, June 28, 1905, 5, with similar description and picture of flag-bearing Chinese cadets. A preliminary report on Kang's U.S. travels, his visit to Washington, and his impending visit to Philadelphia is "Reform of China This Man's Aim," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, June 10, 1905, 5. Another such report was "Chinese Reformer To Be Here To-Day," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, June 24, 1905, 7.

82 As early as June 8, Kang's imminent arrival was expected in New York City, but necessarily delayed by his appointments in Washington; "Reception for Kang-Yu-wei. Regiment of Chinese Soldiers Will Turn out to Escort the Prince," *New York Times*, June 8, 1905, 9; and "Kang-Yu-Wei Didn't Come," *New York Times*, June 13, 1905, 9. Kang's visit had been anticipated at least since February as indicated in the letter of Joseph M. Singleton, New York, to L. Edwin Dudley, U.S. Consul, Vancouver, February 10, 1905, Miscellaneous Letters Received, U.S. Consulate, Vancouver, vol. 30, Entry UD-10, RG 84, NA-College Park.

was taken up for Chinatown without the intended stop. Kang was welcomed in the Race Street Chinatown amid the din of exploding firecrackers—"with the biggest string of firecrackers ever seen in Chinatown"—and, after an hour's rest at the Hotel Walton, where he had engaged a seven-room suite, Kang returned to Chinatown for a large banquet and speeches.⁸³

The issue of Kang's lodging costs came up at this time. Chen Yuesong wrote to Kang Tongbi, noting that the hotel bill in Philadelphia for Kang and his entourage would cost upward of \$8,000 (some \$285,000 in 2024 dollars).⁸⁴ But this was deemed acceptable since "Mr. Kang is a VIP who cannot lower himself to stay anywhere cheaper." Besides, added Chen, "his U.S. trip is not for pleasure but for important business."⁸⁵

Homer Lea also received a rousing welcome in the City of Brotherly Love, meriting front-page coverage in the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. The article said in part:

... the General himself disclaimed even the remotest thought of [being head of the armies of China], but his constant companionship with Kang Ye We and the enthusiasm which he is rousing among the Chinese here and in Europe has deep significance to all observers.⁸⁶

In their speeches, Kang and Lea encouraged the audiences to help restore China's vast prestige by ridding itself of the conservative elements that opposed change and modernization. In a speech made at the Odd Fellows Hall, Kang was said to have "aroused a gathering of 500 of his fellow countrymen to an unusual demonstration of patriotic fervor."⁸⁷ At one point in his oration he said:

"We are organizing ourselves for self-preservation. Let everyone who desires to join this movement stand up!" The entire assemblage of Chinamen arose.⁸⁸

83 "Man Who Wants to Reform China Given a Warm Welcome," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, June 25, 1905, 2.

84 This value was determined using consumer price index on www.measuringworth.com, accessed April 22, 2024.

85 Chen Yuesong 陳岳崧, New York, to Kang Tongbi, South Windsor, June 25, 1905, no. B-33, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

86 "American May Lead Chinese, General Homer Lee [sic] Given Enthusiastic Reception by Local Celestials, In Company with Kang Ye We," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, June 26, 1905, 1. Also see "Declares China's Dowager Empress Caused the Russo-Japanese War," same edition, 2.

87 "American May Lead Chinese," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, June 26, 1905, 1.

88 "Exile From China Arouses Chinamen," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, June 26, 1905, 2.

Kang spoke for four hours on “the conditions in China, brought through the despotism of the Dowager Empress and called upon his auditors to aid in the movement to free their Emperor from his bondage and emancipate the people of China.”

During the Philadelphia visit, Kang toured the United States Mint, Independence Hall, and some large industrial establishments of interest, such as the Baldwin Locomotive Works. On June 27, he called on John Weaver, the city’s Republican Party reform-minded mayor, to learn more about the nature of American municipal reforms.⁸⁹ One report noted that Kang was accompanied in his visit with Weaver by Captain Lung of the local Chinese military company; Reverend Frederic Poole, superintendent of the Chinese Mission; and Zhou Guoxian as his official interpreter. The article asserted that all but Kang were dressed in uniforms. After the city hall visit, the travelers left for New York City.

Following Kang’s departure, a dispute came into the open between Reverend Poole and Thomas W. Barlow, a lawyer who served as Chinese consul in Philadelphia. Trouble between the two men had long been brewing over political matters in Chinatown. In a statement by Poole about what was developing into internecine strife, he said, “possibly the thing that has stirred the Chinese most and may have led Mr. Barlow to become angry with me, was the trouble regarding the parade in honor of Kang Ye We ... The Chinese in every city are wildly enthusiastic regarding [Kang] and the merchants here wished to show him every honor.”⁹⁰ On June 23, Poole had personally petitioned the municipal government for permission to hold the parade but Barlow had tried to block the effort.⁹¹ Poole also implied that Kang’s association with President Roosevelt should have been enough to have won him the right to be publicly honored in Philadelphia.⁹² Poole’s “adherents” charged that Barlow had received money from the Qing government and had rendered services to influential Chinatown residents in return. Barlow denied receiving any Qing government money and countercharged that he was anxious to tell the Christian League, which employed the clergyman, “what I know about Mr. Poole.” Poole responded with criticism of Barlow for having tried to block the parade for Kang, noting

89 “Exile From China Arouses Chinamen,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, June 26, 1905, 2; “Chinese Reformer at Picnic,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, June 27, 1905, 9; and “Mayor Receives Kang Yu Wei,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, June 28, 1905, 7.

90 “Crisis Imminent in Internecine Chinatown War,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, June 29, 1905, 1, 6. Poole was the “Missionary in Charge” of the Chinese Mission, at 929 Race Street, an adjunct of the Christian League of Philadelphia.

91 “Chinese Reformer Here,” *Philadelphia Ledger*, June 24, 1905, 2.

92 “Crisis Imminent in Internecine Chinatown War.”

that the Chinese consul in New York had participated in celebrations honoring Kang.⁹³ The trouble eventually subsided and there were no further reports of the “imminent crisis” in the weeks after Kang’s visit.

Coinciding with Kang’s first full day in Philadelphia—June 25—the *Los Angeles Herald* published a page-one banner headline “15,000 Armed Chinese in the United States Preparing on American Soil for War of Conquest,” followed by more coverage inside. The story line was that “an organization of Chinese in the United States, Mexico and Canada, armed with modern implements of war and drilled by Americans who have seen service in the regular army of this country ... is thriving here” and was aimed to overthrow the present government of China.⁹⁴ The article described the “unseemly controversy” over the competing leaders of the reform army during Kang Youwei’s visit to Los Angeles, although no mention was made of Lea’s rival, Richard Falkenberg. While the article offered numerous quotes about the benign nature of the militia training, it also mentioned New York Governor Frank Higgins’s call for an investigation, a halt to drilling by the Fresno cadets, and a quote from the U.S. district attorney in Los Angeles on his expectations there would be “a complete explanation ere long.” This major exposé served to bolster the efforts by Falkenberg to embarrass Lea and spur a clampdown by the U.S. government on the Western Military Academy (see Chapters 4 and 5).⁹⁵ A follow-up article in the *Herald* linked the “mobilization of a large Chinese army on American soil” with predictions by an unnamed expert that China and Japan would team up and fight against the United States within a decade. “There naturally will be much speculation as to the significance of the existence of the great armed aggregation of Mongolians in this country and this persistent influx of yellow men.” It further cited the “bitter feeling of Chinese against the enforcement of the United States’ exclusion laws” and the anti-American feeling being promoted in China by the announced boycott of American goods. “Orientalism is Spreading Danger” managed to link two of the Baohuanghui’s most successful projects, the Western Military Academy and the anti-American boycott, as ominous threats to American security and commerce.⁹⁶

93 “Barlow Denies Poole’s Charges,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, July 1, 1905, 9. Kang had not yet been to New York City.

94 “15,000 Armed Chinese in the United States Preparing on American Soil for War of Conquest,” *Los Angeles Herald*, June 25, 1905, 1, 4.

95 Lawrence M. Kaplan, *Homer Lea: American Soldier of Fortune* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 2010), 117–20.

96 “Orientalism is Spreading Danger,” *Los Angeles Herald*, June 26, 1905, 1.

9 New York City

Kang's arrival in New York City had long been anticipated, and preparations for the public reception had been underway since the early part of June. Kang arrived at the Pennsylvania Railroad station in Jersey City, New Jersey, on June 27. It was during that time that Governor Frank Higgins' investigation of New York's Western Military Academy took place and, as a result, the reception plans were toned down. In a show of defiance, Kang was accompanied by a battalion of fifty Philadelphia military cadets.⁹⁷ The Philadelphia battalion was joined by some seventy New York City cadets, and, "headed by a platoon of police" led by the Epworth Band playing "Marching Through Georgia," Kang's entourage proceeded to the Cortland Street Ferry to cross the Hudson River. Once in Manhattan, Kang's group loaded into twenty-two carriages and went directly to Baohuanghui headquarters at 7-9 Mott Street in Chinatown. Because of pressure from the police, instead of rifles the cadets carried flags. The flags included those of the United States, China, and the Baohuanghui.⁹⁸ The traveling party at this juncture included Zhou Guoxian, Rupert Humer, Homer Lea, Ben O. Young, Tom Leung, Rev. Frederick Poole (listed as the "Chaplain of the Third Chinese Regiment"), and a number of unidentified servants. Kang Tongbi came from South Windsor, Connecticut, to join her father.⁹⁹ They all were accommodated at the luxurious Waldorf-Astoria Hotel.¹⁰⁰

The New York City Baohuanghui was well-established by Liang Qichao's visit in 1903, and was given a further boost when Kang Tongbi visited in the fall of the same year.¹⁰¹ She founded a New York chapter of the Chinese Empire Ladies Reform Association (Baohuangnühui) and helped solicit funding for

97 "Head Chinese Reformer Here," *New York Sun*, June 28, 1905, 7.

98 "Chinese Reformer Here," *New-York Tribune*, June 28, 1905, 3; "Kang Yu Wei Arrives; Reviews Chinese Troops," *New York Times*, June 28, 1905, 2; "He's Urging Chinese Reform," *Anaconda Standard*, July 9, 1905, 3.

99 "China Prefers One Dog," *New York Times*, June 29, 1905, 8.

100 "Kang Yu Wei Arrives; Reviews Chinese Troops"; an inspection under arms was held at Baohuanghui headquarters.

101 New York City may have been one of the early chapters formed, in 1899 or 1900, although formal organization probably came later. "Alarm Felt in Chinatown," *New-York Tribune*, July 17, 1900, provides evidence that the local Baohuanghui had formed as early as 1899 (most likely after the San Francisco chapter on October 26): "There is a strong party in Chinatown which was organized a year ago, when the Empress Dowager was trifling with the young Emperor. The party is known to favor reform in China ..." Incorporation papers were not filed until 1906. See Chapter 3 for details on Kang Tongbi's activities in New York City.

Zhongguo Weixin Bao (*Chinese Reform News*), which published her articles. The president of the New York City chapter was a naturalized American citizen named Chu Mon Sing (Zhao Wansheng), or, as he favored it, Joseph M. Singleton. He was married, successively, to three Caucasian women who bore him five children, and made his home in Brooklyn and in later years in Rockville Centre on Long Island. In the 1880s, Singleton was in charge of the Chinese mission of the Central Congregational Church in Brooklyn and was involved in a Chinatown anti-gambling crusade. In both the 1880s and 1890s he worked as a court interpreter. He later owned a cigar factory and several stores in New York City and was one of the more well-known and wealthy men in the local Chinese community. With such a record of community involvement, he was chosen as head of New York City's Baohuanghui and subsequently became the president of the Baohuanghui's eastern division in the United States.¹⁰² Singleton may have been the person who had complained about Kang's failure to adopt Western clothing, according to Liang Wenqing (see above), but the two made their peace to the extent that Kang and others in his traveling party stayed in Singleton's Brooklyn home later in 1905.¹⁰³ New York City came to be Kang's most frequented city in the United States, spending a total of about eight months there in 1905, 1906, and 1907.

The New York City chapter supported two reform newspapers, *Zhongguo Weixin Bao* (1904–37) and *Niuyue Ribao* (*New York Daily News*, English and Chinese, established 1902). It also collaborated with at least one church-connected group, the Chinese Guild (Baoliangju) of St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church. The guild was founded in 1889 by Yee Guy Maine, an associate of Singleton's, to provide legal aid to abused Chinese immigrants.¹⁰⁴ Among the guild's activities was the formation of the "Chinese Battalion" in 1902 under the command of

102 Information on Singleton has been gleaned from a number of newspaper articles cited above and below, as well as a short paragraph in Warner M. Van Norden, *Who's Who of the Chinese in New York* (New York: no publisher, 1918), 33; *Lain's Brooklyn Directory for the Year Ending May 1st 1889*, 1109 (home listed at 911 Fulton Street); Huie Kin, *Reminiscences* (Peiping: San Yu Press, 1932), 51–52; and personal inquiries by Robert Worden in New York City Chinatown in January and April 1971.

103 For example, see post office registry receipt from Mrs. A. B. Allyn, South Windsor, CT (Kang Tongbi's private teacher), August 16, 1905, and envelope addressed to Kang Yu Wei Esq, 173 Putnam Ave, Brooklyn, NY, no. Z-26, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection. Singleton was one of the Baohuanghui-connected owners and corporate officers of the Chicago King Joy Lo restaurant from 1912 to 1926.

104 E. Clowes Chorley, *The Centennial History of Saint Bartholomew's Church in the City of New York, 1835–1935* (New York: no publisher, 1935), 220ff; Huie, *Reminiscences*, 52; Arthur Bonner, *Alas! What Brought Thee Hither?: The Chinese in New York, 1800–1950* (Madison, New Jersey: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1997) 123.

Major George McVicker, a figure in the 1905 Chinese Imperial Reform Army controversy.¹⁰⁵ Also in 1902, “one of the most eminent Chinese reformers” (possibly Xu Qin or Liang Qitian) addressed the guild members, and in the following year, a report of Chinese Guild activities noted:

The Guild has rendered some services in the formation of the Chinese Empire Reform Association in this city. The Association has now in this city about 5,000 members.¹⁰⁶

In the run up to Kang’s 1905 visit, several reports noted the active role of guild members in the Baohuanghui. Many praise-worthy comments were made on the role of “Freedom, Knowledge and Equality” that the Chinese Empire Reform Association championed for the Chinese.¹⁰⁷

But Kang’s first visit to New York City signaled the impending demise of the Western Military Academy and the severing of its association with Homer Lea. On June 28, the *New York Sun* published “White Leader of Chinese.” The article said, “When Kang Yu Wei landed in town yesterday, there was a figure in his retinue which attracted more attention than the reformer and ex-Prime Minister of the Chinese Empire himself. It was a hunchback in the full fatigue uniform of a General ... Homer Lea is his name.”¹⁰⁸ Lea’s bid for top billing greatly offended Kang, whose patience with Lea’s continual self-promotion had long been tested.¹⁰⁹ Combined with Lea’s acceptance of American press coverage presenting the Western Military Academy as the Chinese Reform Army, repercussions of the machinations of the other “General,” R. A. Falkenberg, served to dampen Kang’s reception in New York and foreshadowed the official end of Baohuanghui military schools.

Falkenberg, as noted in Chapter 4, was humiliated when Kang publicly declared on April 7 that “Gen. Homer Lea of Los Angeles is the only one recognized and appointed by me as the general of all Chinese military schools

105 *Year Book of St. Bartholomew’s Parish, New York City, 1902* (New York: Winthrop Press, 1903), 89. See Chapter 4 for the absorption of the New York battalion under the Western Military Academy auspices.

106 *Year Book of St. Bartholomew’s Parish, New York City, 1903*, 97.

107 *Year Book of St. Bartholomew’s Parish, New York City, 1904*, 99–100; *Year Book of St. Bartholomew’s Parish, New York City, 1905*, 61–62, 70.

108 “White Leader of Chinese,” *New York Sun*, June 28, 1905, 2.

109 Liang Wenqing, New York, to Kang Youwei, Boston, July 11, 1905, no. K-0, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

in America.”¹¹⁰ In addition to his publicity campaign raising the specter of a “yellow peril” in the guise of Chinese soldiers drilling in American cities, he conducted a letter-writing campaign through Dr. William H. Eckley of St. Paul, Minnesota, to alert state governors of the likely illegality of Kang’s and Lea’s military drills of foreigners on American soil.¹¹¹ In his letter to New York Governor Higgins on May 25, Eckley reported that “there are a number of Chinamen belonging to an organization, of which Kang-Yu-Wei, one time Minister of War under the present Chinese Emperor, Kwang Hsu, claims to be the Grand President, who are armed and drilling in different cities in this country.”¹¹²

Governor Higgins took two courses of action. First, he forwarded the Eckley letter to William Loeb Jr., Theodore Roosevelt’s private secretary, who in turn, forwarded it to the War Department.¹¹³ The War Department followed up on Homer Lea and his activities in Los Angeles and wrote to the chief of police of that city, William A. Hammel. Hammel launched an investigation and reported back to Washington that there were, indeed, thirty-six Chinese in a company “under the personal supervision of Homer Lea, and drilled by ... Capt. Ansel O’Banion ... operating under a Charter, issued by the Secretary of State, under the name of the Western Military Academy.” However, Hammel reported, they did not drill in public “except with permission from the U.S. government, and their object is the betterment of their condition, as they expect to occupy responsible positions in the Chinese Army at some future time.”¹¹⁴ Higgins and the Department of State were duly informed of the events in Los Angeles but, in the meantime, Higgins had launched a second course of action, an investigation of his own in New York.¹¹⁵

110 “Statement of Kang Yu-wei to the American People, Los Angeles, April 7, 1905, Powers Papers, Hoover Institution Archives.

111 Whether Eckley wrote governors only of those states known to have Western Military Academy branches is unclear, because the governor of Georgia got such a letter and no known Baohuanghui chapter existed there (“Chinese are Being Drilled,” *Atlanta Constitution*, May 28, 1905, 4).

112 William H. Eckley, St. Paul, to Frank W. Higgins, Albany, May 25, 1905, File no. 1019722, Entry 25, RG 94. Higgins was the interim governor of New York in 1905. Inquiries to the New York State Library for further leads proved nil, as did a search of the Higgins Papers at the George Arents Research Library, Syracuse University.

113 Frank E. Pesley, Secretary to the Governor, Albany, to William Loeb Jr., Secretary to the President, May 27, 1905, File no. 1019722, Entry 25, RG 94.

114 W. A. Hammel, Chief of Police, Los Angeles, to Military Secretary’s Office, June 20, 1905, File no. 1019722, Entry 25, RG 94. Also see Kaplan, *Homer Lea*, 119.

115 Military Secretary to Higgins, July 3, 1905; Robert Shawoliver, Acting Secretary of War, to Alvey A. Adee, Acting Secretary of State, July 3, 1905, File no. 1019722, Entry 25, RG 94. There is a possibility that the U.S. Secret Service also investigated these activities, as mentioned in “Chinese Drilling in All Countries,” *Washington Times*, June 19, 1905, 3.

Higgins requested the Commissioner of Police in New York City, William A. McAdoo, to report to him on the matter.¹¹⁶ McAdoo was initially incredulous that this was a serious problem, saying to the *New York Evening Post*: “If the Chinamen can’t shoot any better than Mock Duck (Mai De, a notorious Chinatown gambler) and the others we have arrested in Chinatown, they couldn’t do any harm if they did go back to China, and it would be good way of getting rid of them.”¹¹⁷ After further consideration, however, McAdoo put his forces to work under the direction of Acting Captain William J. Eggers. The substance of Eggers’ report, and McAdoo’s subsequent report to Higgins, was that every Thursday evening at the Chinese Empire Reform Association’s Mott Street headquarters, “the cadets drill with discarded National Guard muskets and wear a uniform like that of our militia.” Furthermore, the *New York Times* reported, the “cadets have been drilling there for the last ten years.”¹¹⁸ Kang was implicated because of his coming visit to New York to review the troops as “President of China’s ‘new military board.’”¹¹⁹

Police pressure in New York City kept the Chinese from openly drilling in preparation for Kang’s expected arrival, but after a visit by local Baohuanghui president Joseph M. Singleton to the corporation counsel’s office, tentative permission was granted to drill indoors only.¹²⁰ Thus, on June 27, the flag-carrying cadets who escorted Kang from his train took up their arms to drill for Kang’s inspection when they arrived at Baohuanghui headquarters.¹²¹

Throughout the investigations, allegations that the cadets were being trained for eventual return to China to fight against the Empress Dowager

Subsequent research into Records of the Secret Service, RG 87, at the National Archives proved nil.

116 Commissioner of Police (1903–5).

117 “A Chop Suey Waterloo, Disbandment to End Glory of Chinese Cadets,” *New York Evening Post*, June 20, 1905, 1.

118 “The Chinese Are Drilling, And in Chinatown, Awful Revelation of A Story Ten Years Old,” *New York Times*, June 21, 1905, 4. Also see “Police Rout Chinese Soldiers,” *Pittsburgh Despatch*, June 21, 1905, 6; “Oppose Chinese Troops,” *New-York Tribune*, June 21, 1905, 12. The “ten years old” assertion is probably a misconception derived from Major George McVicker’s connection with a drill team of Chinese boys at St. Bartholomew’s Community Center on East 190th Street. This group formed in 1902 and became part of the Western Military Academy network in 1904 (see Chapter 4).

119 “The Chinese Are Drilling.”

120 “Chinese Indoor Drill,” *New-York Tribune*, June 23, 1905, 7; “Cut Out Chinese Drill, Hot Weather Given As Reason—Other Causes Alleged,” *New-York Tribune*, June 26, 1905, 2; “Chinatown Drill Omitted, Hint of Police Visitation Was Feared By Recruiting,” *New York Times*, June 26, 1905, 7.

121 “Chinese Reformer Here,” *New-York Tribune*, June 28, 1905, 3; “Head Chinese Reformer Here,” *New York Sun*, June 28, 1905, 7.

were vigorously denied by Singleton. In a statement to the press, he demonstrated his ability to place the blame for the charges on the forces of "Dr. Sin Yat Mun, ... the head of the Gat Ming [Geming?] Society ... [who] are the friends of the gamblers, the Highbinders, the secret society members and the revolutionists. ... It is an infamous lie from beginning to end."¹²² McVicker also defended the drills and blamed the "Highbinders—an organization of Chinese who are of the most disreputable character, and who make a practice of levying blackmail on their fellow countrymen." McVicker claimed that the Chinese he was training were American citizens, many of them wealthy, and "none of the men are going back to China, as reported."¹²³ No one seemed to connect the investigation with Falkenberg, the actual instigator.

There is little documentation extant on the closing of the New York investigation, leaving the Higgins document and the press reports as the leading sources of information.¹²⁴ As Chapter 4 describes in detail, the New York academy graduated a class in May 1907, and some of the graduates apparently returned to China.¹²⁵

During Kang's first visit to New York City, he made contacts with leading Chinese Americans and their organizations and left a lasting impression on the local Chinese population.¹²⁶ He granted his usual interviews to the press, made comments in regard to the boycott and exclusion issues, and warned that China was "ready to befriend in the future the countries that have befriended our people in the past."¹²⁷ Kang went through his routine of reviewing cadets, attending banquets, making speeches, and visiting landmarks. On June 29, Kang, Tongbi, and his "official suite" met with the Democratic New York City

122 "Chinese Dragon Not Menace in U.S., Reformers Deny They Plan Revolt on Emperor," *New York American*, June 25, 1905, 37.

123 "Oppose Chinese Troops," *New-York Tribune*, June 21, 1905, 12.

124 Inquiries were made to various agencies within the City of New York Municipal Government and the Municipal Archives and Records Center by Robert Worden in 1970 regarding the availability of police department records relating to this investigation. Published reports made no reference to it and no other records were found. Worden was advised by the Practice and Claims Division, Law Department, Corporation Counsel's Office, that records of the sort sought are routinely destroyed after a twenty-year period.

125 "Chinese Regiment Disbands," *New York Times*, May 28, 1907, 4.

126 Numerous inquiries were made among the older residents of Chinatown by Robert Worden in 1970 in regard to Kang's visits and, while there was a note of reluctance to admit either personal or parental ties to the reform movement, there was a definite sense of pride connected with the memory of Kang's stay in the city.

127 "China Prefers One Dog ... Kang Yu wei Says," *New York Times*, June 29, 1905, 8. Also see "Kang on Chinese Reform," *New-York Tribune*, June 29, 1905, 8; "China's Empress Started War, Says Kang," *New York American*, June 30, 1905, page 2, for various versions of the interview.

Mayor George B. McClellan Jr. The mayor congratulated his visitors on the opportunity to reform China, saying he had great respect for all reformers.¹²⁸ On July 1, Kang gave a ninety-minute speech to “hundreds” at the Chinese Theatre, 5-7 Doyers Street in Chinatown. He spoke on the long history and traditions of China, citing its inventiveness, boundless resources, and love of peace. China’s too peaceful disposition, said Kang, had brought it ruin because of the aggressiveness of the Western powers. He also said that except for the obstacle of Cixi there could be a “great future” under the Guangxu Emperor. He told his audience that the purpose of the reform movement was to cultivate patriotism among the overseas Chinese and to encourage the adoption of Western ideas of progress, modern education, industry, and commerce, all of which would benefit the nation.¹²⁹

As his visit to New York City drew to a close, Kang was given a farewell reception at the Baohuanghui Mott Street headquarters on July 3. He departed the following day for his next stop, Boston.¹³⁰

10 Boston

Kang Youwei, Kang Tongbi, and the rest of the retinue arrived in Boston on July 5 and remained ten days. On July 6 they met Democratic Mayor Patrick Andrew Collins, who gave Kang a pass that would “bring especial courtesies” in case Kang visited any of the city institutions.¹³¹ Speaking to a reporter the same day as the visit with Collins, and despite his favorable statements about Roosevelt’s personality, Kang said that the president’s recent order “relaxing in some manner the enforcement of the Chinese exclusion act is by no means satisfactory to the Chinese people.” He added that the Chinese were becoming more enlightened and wanted nothing less than most-favored-nation

128 “Kang Yu Wei Goes to City Hall,” *New-York Tribune*, June 30, 1905, 4.

129 “Peace Love China’s Ruin,” *New-York Tribune*, July 2, 1905, 12.

130 “Reception to Kang Yu Wei,” *New-York Tribune*, July 4, 1905, 6.

131 “Here To Preach Reform of China,” *Boston Globe*, July 7, 1905, 14. Also see “Kang Yu Wei Arrives on Recruiting Errand, Ex Minister Brings Pretty Daughter,” *Boston Journal*, July 6, 1905, 6. A letter from Kang Tongbi to her fiancé Luo Chang, July 8, 1905, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection, no. Z-31, refers to a newspaper photograph (Z-30) from the article, “Chinamen Await Kang’s Address,” *Boston Herald*, July 8, 1905, 14, showing Tongbi with her father and several other men: “I just saw that the American newspaper here printed an article with a photo with my father, me and other people. If you’d just seen the photo you might be suspicious, but it does not matter, since my father was there. If my father had not been there, I would not have allowed a photo of me taken with the other people.”



FIGURE 45 Kang Tongbi's clipping of *Boston Herald*, July 8, 1905; pictured in addition to Kang Youwei and Tongbi are from left, unknown man, Chin K. Shue of Boston, Ben O. Young of Fresno, secretary/translator Zhou Guoxian, and Tom Leung, Los Angeles.

treatment. Or else, he noted, the boycott of American-made goods "will spread and be rigidly enforced over the entire Chinese empire."¹³²

Kang Tongbi gave an interview in Boston on July 8.¹³³ The message she had delivered to earlier audiences was similar to that of her father. But she went

¹³² "Chinese Want Equality with Other Nations," *Wilkes-Barre Times*, July 6, 1905, 1; "Chinese Reformer Here," *Boston Herald*, July 6, 1905, 7.

¹³³ "Emancipation Ideals for Chinese Women," *Boston Globe*, July 9, 1905, 26. After this interview, Kang Tongbi drafted a letter to Luo Chang at Oxford expressing heartsickness and jealousy: "You are now on summer vacation. Are you going other places to travel, or staying at Oxford, I beg to know. I assume you travel only to socialize with others, making me feel confused, or does this make it easier to forget me?" She also complained about the intensity of touring with her father, leaving her feeling "disorganized with my mind

further by expressing the hope that Chinese women also would join the reform movement, first by modernizing their own families, and then through teaching other women. She described her efforts in 1903 organizing chapters of the Chinese Empire Ladies' Reform Association in "very many of the large cities" on the Pacific Coast and in New York City, and said that she was doing the same in Boston.¹³⁴ Unlike her father, who had frequently suggested that Chinese men should cut their queues and change to Western-style clothing as a step to modernity, Tongbi argued that "the American woman had far better adopt the Chinese costume," praising it as "loose, comfortable, and sensible," presumably thinking of the tunic and pants that she herself wore upon first arriving in Canada. She said she wanted to pursue studies in the United States and England in political economy and history, and eventually return to China to establish schools for girls. In the Boston interview, she very lucidly hit upon a facet of her father's philosophy that supported her own efforts: the support of reform by the women of China. In answer to a reporter's question (which she insisted was the standard American question), she said:

O yes; introduce telephones and telegraphs. But already we have telephones and telegraphs in China. What we need now is men with such brains as your inventor of the telegraph and women who may be their sympathetic wives.

On July 9, Kang gave a lengthy oration at the Park Street Congregational Church.¹³⁵ The audience was almost exclusively Chinese, "from the laundryman with his queue to the student at Tech or Harvard with short hair and the most fashionable American garb."¹³⁶ Kang encouraged his audience to learn to speak English and to study foreign civilizations to "be better able to profit from that knowledge." He spoke at length on the "great industrial and intellectual

disconnected from my body"; July 8, 1905 (misdated June 8, 1905), no. Z-31, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

134 "The Old Woman as the New Woman," *Wichita Eagle*, November 1, 1903, 20: "The native Chinese women of New York and Boston have organized the 'Chinese Empire Reform Society.'"

135 "President Kang of the Chinese Reform Association, His Daughter and Leading Members of the Local Branch," *Boston Herald*, July 8, 1905.

136 "Chinese Applaud Reformers, Kang Yu-Wei and Daughter Spoke at Park Street Church," *Boston Globe*, July 10, 1905, 3, morning edition; also, "Oriental Grandee Talks to Boston Celestials at Park Street Church," *Boston Journal*, July 10, 1905, 3; "Mass Meeting of Chinese," *New York Times*, July 10, 1905, 7.

awakening in China,” the expansion of Chinese factories and trade, and the exploitation of the country’s natural resources, both agricultural and mineral, “with which he said China is teeming.” However, Kang insisted “these riches ... should be developed not by the foreigner, but by the Chinese themselves,” something American entrepreneurs would not want to hear. Then, after having spoken for three hours, Kang invited Tongbi to the podium. The newspapers opined that it was an “extraordinary thing” that, after his own long speech, Kang asked his daughter to speak. “Such a thing would have created a terrible scandal in China, where women are taught to be seen and not heard.”¹³⁷ In her speech, Tongbi urged her listeners to have an appreciation for “the duty of women in patriotic work that presages a very different status for women in China.” The *Boston Globe* called Tongbi a “Chinese Joan of Arc” while she “playfully” called herself “‘father’s boy’ ... alluding to the Chinese feeling that not to have a son is a family calamity” to describe her work preaching the reform message on behalf of Kang during the previous two years.¹³⁸

The day after the Park Street speeches, Kang and his retinue were received by Massachusetts Governor William Lewis Douglas. Douglas, a Democrat, invited the group to visit his shoe factory in Brockton. Kang also asked where he could visit industries which made machinery, as well as local cotton mills. Douglas told him where these could be found and suggested the group also visit Fall River, Massachusetts, and Providence, Rhode Island. The final request was for permission to visit the state prison at Charlestown and this was granted. Unfortunately, Kang suffered heat prostration and was confined to his room in the United States Hotel on Beach Street that afternoon. Tom Leung used his skills as an herbalist and prepared herb tea for Kang, while Tongbi wielded a fan, leading to Kang’s “speedy recovery.”¹³⁹ Tom told a *Boston Globe* reporter that Kang had in fact toured the Brockton factory but would likely not visit the prison.¹⁴⁰

Meanwhile, conflict had erupted in San Francisco, where Chen Yikan edited *Wenxing Bao* and wielded much influence over Baohuanghui fundraising for the anti-American boycott. Problems arose between the reformers and the

137 “Mass Meeting of Chinese.”

138 “Emancipation Ideals for Chinese Women,” *Boston Globe*, July 9, 1905, 26.

139 “Kang Yu Wei Better, Went Out Earlier than is Customary,” *Boston Globe*, July 11, 1905, 4, evening edition; “Herb Tea and Fan Saves Kang Yu Wei,” *Boston Journal*, July 13, 1905, 12. Temperatures had been as high as 96°F for that and the previous day. During the first half of July a record heat wave had struck the East Coast and a “score” of people had reportedly died from heat exhaustion.

140 “Kang Yu Wei Better.”

revolutionaries over control of the donated boycott funds. During Kang's Boston visit, he learned of an incident on July 6 in San Francisco in which a Baohuanghui messenger delivered a letter to the Reject the Treaty Society headquarters saying the Baohuanghui and *Wenxing Bao* were withdrawing from the society and wanted their donations refunded. There was an altercation, and the messenger reportedly struck the society's general manager.¹⁴¹ The fight was reported in *Datong Ribao*, a newspaper controlled by the revolutionaries.¹⁴² Kang was told that someone had leaked secret correspondence between Chen and Baohuanghui leaders to the "cursed newspaper." There were repercussions for morale in New York City, but Joseph M. Singleton stepped in and "now, things are all settled ... [through] private negotiation."¹⁴³ The Baohuanghui continued to solicit funds for the boycott, which were subsequently sent directly to Baohuanghui headquarters in Hong Kong for distribution in China rather than through San Francisco.¹⁴⁴ This controversy opened the newspaper wars between the reformers and revolutionaries in the United States, which would continue beyond 1911.¹⁴⁵

Around this time, there began to be consternation within the Baohuanghui over Homer Lea's evident transgressions. Liang Wenqing wrote to Kang Youwei from New York on July 11, saying "Homer Lea is such an outrage." He accused Lea of telling the English-language press in New York City that it was he who was responsible for the establishment and financing of the Baohuanghui's Western Military Academy branch. Liang described Lea as believing the schools belonged to him personally and criticized him for having not mentioned Kang's name in this regard. Liang also suggested to Kang, "Could you try to drive him back to Los Angeles from Boston?"¹⁴⁶ On July 4 in New York, Lea

141 "Ou Juyue Zhili Shi Zheng" 歐拒約治理事證 [Beating the Anti-Treaty (Boycott) Manager Ou Confirmed], *Datong Ribao*, July 15, 1905 (in Chinese), copy in John Endicott Gardner files, Segregated Chinese Records, File Box 85, Entry 132, RG 85, NA-Washington. *Datong Ribao* 大同日報 was a pro-Sun Yatsen organ.

142 Ironically, *Datong Ribao* was established in 1903 by the Zhigongtang with Ou Jujia and Tang Qionghang (both Baohuanghui leaders) as editor and manager; in 1904, when Sun Yatsen came to the United States and affiliated with the Zhigongtang, it became a revolutionary organ (see Chapter 4).

143 Liang Wenqing, New York, to Kang Youwei, Boston, July 11, 1905, no. 康-0 (2) and July 18, 1905, no. 康+0, both in Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

144 Kuang Shoumin to Tan Zhangxiao, August 10, 1905, no. 189 in Fang and Cai, 156.

145 "*Wenxing Bao* has declared war with the cursed newspaper [*Datong Ribao*]." Liang Wenqing, New York, to Kang Youwei, Boston, July 18, 1905, no. 康+0. See Chapter 11 for the newspaper wars.

146 Liang Wenqing, New York, to Kang Youwei, Boston, July 11, 1905, no. 康-0 (2). For examples of the media, see, "White Leader of Chinese," *New York Sun*, June 28, 1905, 2; and

had given a *New-York Tribune* reporter an “authoritative statement” saying he was prepared to serve China’s government, whether it be Cixi or Guangxu, and that reform not revolution was the key to success. But he also claimed there were between eight and ten million Chinese drilling under the auspices on the Chinese Empire Reform Association—with him as commander in chief—in some thirty cities in the United States. Lea declared he had personally formed the regiments “on his own initiative and was responsible to no person or party.”¹⁴⁷ Liang was clearly justified in his criticism of Lea. Coincident with this episode, Lea began wearing civilian clothes.¹⁴⁸ Lea left the group soon thereafter, and, in time, became a follower of Sun Yatsen. Leaving Boston on July 15, Kang’s party departed for the cooler climes of Connecticut.

11 Hartford

Kang visited Hartford, his daughter’s adoptive hometown, from July 15 to 19. The group arrived at Union Station where they were received by Yung Wing, followed by an official welcome at Hibernian Hall, which housed the local Baohuanghui headquarters. After the reception, their carriages took them to the Allyn House, where they engaged a six-room suite. In the evening, a private dinner was held at the State Street home of Wong Yuen, vice president of Hartford’s Baohuanghui chapter. Kang, however, wearied from the trip from Boston, did not attend. Otherwise, the visit was quiet and restful for Kang, and he praised Hartford as the “cleanest city he had ever been in.” Cleanliness notwithstanding, during the visit to Hartford, Kang was under the protection of several detectives and uniformed police officers because of rumored threats on his life.¹⁴⁹ It could be that Kang feared the revolutionaries active in Hartford, who had been inspired by Sun Yatsen’s visit in December 1904—likely, these were the Zhigongtang (Chee Kong Tong) members of the Chinese Club

“China’s Greatest Need: General Homer Lea Says Country Must be Nationalized,” *New-York Tribune*, July 5, 1905, 4.

147 “China’s Greatest Need: General Homer Lea Says Country Must be Nationalized.”

148 Kaplan, *Homer Lea*, 123.

149 “Chinese Reformer Coming This Week,” *Hartford Courant*, July 11, 1905, 4; “Kang Yu Wei Here For A Week,” *Hartford Courant*, July 17, 1905, Part 11, 11; “Chinese Reformer Comes Tomorrow,” *Hartford Courant*, July 14, 1905, 8; “When Kang Yu Wei Fled From China,” *Hartford Courant*, July 15, 1905, 3, for local interest in the reformer. Also see Robert L. Worden, “Chinese Reformers in Connecticut,” *Bulletin of the Connecticut Historical Society* 39, no. 3 (July 1974): 78–86.



FIGURE 46
Kang Tongbi, Hartford, Connecticut,
Johnstone Studio, circa 1905.

who “want to have the Chinese Emperor deposed at once” and were deemed by the *Hartford Courant* as “similar to the Boxer organization in China.”¹⁵⁰

On July 16 Kang Youwei and Kang Tongbi addressed the local Chinese community at the City Mission Hall. Kang was quoted in the local press as saying “President Roosevelt appeals to me above all the heads of nations I have met on my journey through five continents.”¹⁵¹ He went on to say the current boycott of American-made goods in China would continue as long as the Exclusion Act was in force. He said the Baohuanghui would not “bring about a revolution by bloodshed, as many of our enemies would make the world believe, but by introducing a desire for freedom and knowledge into China.” On the evening of the 16th, a banquet for seventy guests—including Tongbi’s host in South Windsor, Connecticut, Mary Starr Tudor—was held at the King Far Low restaurant

¹⁵⁰ “Chinese Reformer Comes Tomorrow.” Huang Rongye 黃榮業, a leader of the Hartford chapter, wrote Kang Tongbi about Sun’s visits to the city, as well as a lecture tour by a revolutionary woman, Wu Fengming 伍鳳鳴, sponsored by the Zhigongtang, and Yung Wing’s meetings with and praise of Sun: December 7, 1904, no. S-C32, no date 1905, no. S-C22; January 23, 1905, no. S-C14; February 7, 1905, no. S-C16; and March 20, 1905, no. S-C56, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

¹⁵¹ “Kang Yu Wei Here for a Week.”

on Center Row. The restaurant was adorned with “the green dragon flag of China, the United States flag, and the red, white and blue flag of the Chinese Empire Reform Association.” Two Hartford Police Department “secret service men” reportedly were present to “keep out uninvited guests.”¹⁵²

The visitors were received by the Democratic Hartford Mayor William F. Hennessey on the morning of July 17. He recommended they visit the state capitol and wrote letters of introduction to the Colt Patent Fire-Arms Manufacturing Company, Underwood Typewriter Company, Columbia and Electric Vehicle Company, Pratt and Whitney Company (which made precision machinery), and other local factories.¹⁵³ The group—comprising Kang Youwei, Kang Tongbi, Zhou Guoxian, Tom Leung, Homer Lea, and Rupert Humer—spent the better part of the afternoon at the Colt factory. Company president Lewis C. Grover himself took the group through the plant. Kang Tongbi’s questions were reported to be “the rapid-fire kind” and, when they reached the test range, she surprised everyone by requesting to fire some of the weapons on display. First, she fired a 38-caliber military automatic revolver “without flinching” and then a 41-caliber “deadly Derringer,” both with remarkable accuracy. A worker then brought out a tripod-mounted machine gun and attached a bicycle-style seat while Grover personally fed in a belt full of cartridges. Tongbi obliged the group by firing it. “The sand house shook from the shower of bullets, 450 a minute going into it,” the *Hartford Courant* reported. Tom Leung took a shine “to the little Derringer and he was peppering away with it until he had to be dragged away.” Tongbi asked the selling price of the machine gun but when informed it was \$700, she declined to have her father purchase it for her. However, before leaving the factory, Kang bought two 32-caliber “new pocket” revolvers, two pairs of 41-caliber Derringers, four 32-caliber “pocket model” automatic pistols, and ten 38-caliber “military model” automatic pistols. These weapons were “of the latest patent” and came with a large supply of cartridges, all for a total cost of \$312.05. Most of these weapons were said to be destined for friends in China. The newspaper article reported that Kang made a practice of buying the products of the factories he visited and speculation was made on what would happen should he visit the local automobile factory.¹⁵⁴ The

152 Mary Starr Tudor (1840–1917). “Chinese Reformer Comes Tomorrow,” which reported the decorations for the forthcoming banquet. Also see “Banquet at Last: Kang Yu Wei is Entertained at King Far Low Restaurant,” *Hartford Courant*, July 17, 1905. 11.

153 “Miss Kang Tung Pek Fires Machine Gun,” *Hartford Courant*, July 18, 1905, Part II, 11.

154 Receipt, “His Excellency Kang Yi Wei, Allyn House,” Colts’ Patent Fire Arms Manufacturing Co., Hartford, Connecticut, July 17, 1905, no. Z-21, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

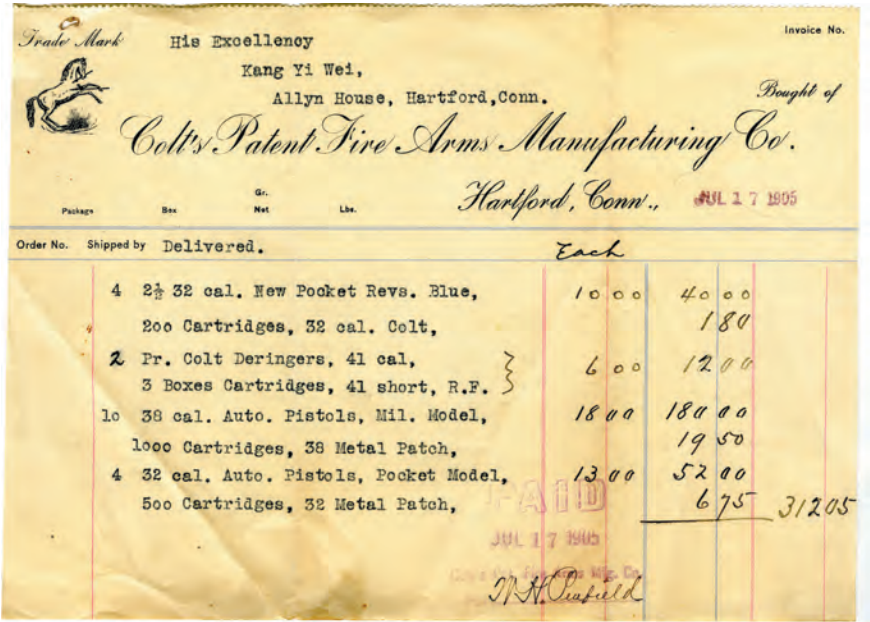


FIGURE 47 Colt Firearms Co. receipt for \$312.05 for firearms and cartridges bought by Kang Youwei, Hartford, Connecticut, July 17, 1905.

machine gun demonstration and the firearms purchases were perhaps motivated by the warning reported in January 1905 in the local press that Tongbi had received a telegram from a Chicago Baohuanghui member that “men from China were now on their way here to kill her.”¹⁵⁵

12 Translating Kang's Biography

I think my biography 我傳 should be translated by [Yung Wing]. I cannot think of anyone else as qualified for the job as he is. While you [Tongbi] are in the United States and in particular because of his advanced age,

155 “Threaten Life of Khang Tung Pek,” *Hartford Courant*, January 25, 1905, 5; and telegram from Tong Chinn 童頃, Chicago, to Mrs. Kang Tung Bac, Hartford, December 29, 1904, no. E-46, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection. Also see letters of Chen Yuesong, Chicago, to Kang Tongbi, South Windsor, December 29, 1904, no. B-31, and January 7, 1905, no. B-32, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

you should take advantage of this opportunity and try to urge him to accomplish this.¹⁵⁶

KANG YOUWEI, Los Angeles to Kang Tongbi, South Windsor, Connecticut, March 23, 1905

[Kang Youwei] loved the wilderness and went hiking every month. He was in blissful happiness visiting beautiful places and would go where no one else went—mountains and waters, forests, in the snow, or under moonlight, and secluded paths in the hills or on islands. Deep in the night, he leaned on his stick and went boating. Carefree and at leisure, he chanted as he walked so as to contemplate nature, and it seemed as if he forgot all about the world. In 1898, he frequently thought about traveling in the mountains. And yet he gave lectures every day and repeatedly memorialized the emperor, stressing politics and Confucianism. He took many risks and didn't care if he died from overwork.

KANG YOUWEI, handwritten excerpt from *Wo Zhuan*, ca 1904, found in South Windsor, Connecticut, 2014¹⁵⁷

During his travels in North America, Kang was preoccupied by a personal goal, to see his biography (*Wo Zhuan*) translated into English, preferably by the man whose fluency in the language and respect from Americans exceeded other candidates for the job, Yung Wing in Hartford. Many letters in the Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection, written between December 1904 and September 1905, mention the biography and Kang's persistence in having it translated, presumably because he wanted the English-speaking world, particularly Americans, to read an assessment of his life to date from the perspective of his students and himself.¹⁵⁸

Yung Wing, then aged seventy-seven, came to Kang's aid in a variety of ways in 1905. Most significantly, Yung was Kang Tongbi's sponsor in Hartford and Kang's principal host in that city, and he twice accompanied Kang Youwei to the White House as his interpreter and advisor on American politics. Kang also wanted to involve the business-savvy Yung in a Baohuanghui scheme along

156 Kang Youwei, Los Angeles, to Kang Tongbi, South Windsor, March 23, 1905, no. 康-21, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

157 Kang Youwei, [1904?], excerpt from conclusion of *Wo Zhuan*, no. S-C40, n.d., Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection. Thank you to Chi Jeng Chang, Yang Zheng, and Zhaoyuan Wan for this translation.

158 The first letter mentioning the biography is in Kang Youwei, Victoria, to Kang Tongbi, December 5, 1904, no. S-C39, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

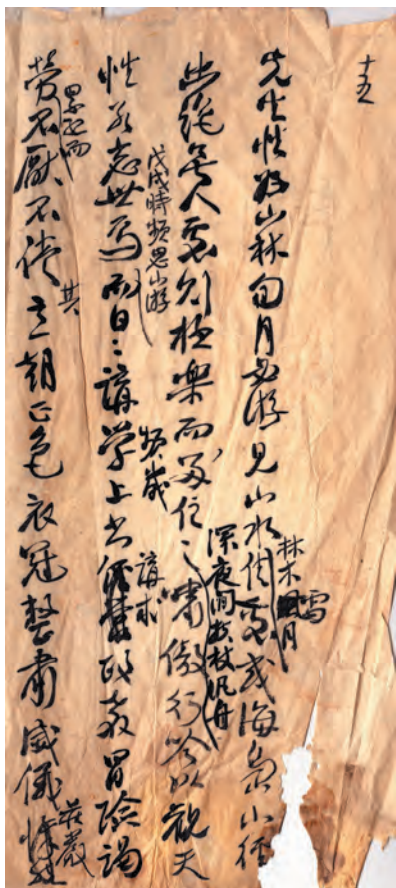


FIGURE 48

Kang Youwei, handwritten excerpt from *Wò Zhuan*, circa 1904: “[Kang Youwei] loved the wilderness and went hiking every month ...”

with Homer Lea and asked Tongbi if she had gotten Yung to join the Bao-huanghui.¹⁵⁹ The elderly scholar, however, was also held in suspicion by Kang for his admiration of Sun Yatsen. In February 1905, Kang had warned Tongbi

159 Kang Youwei, Los Angeles, to Kang Tongbi, South Windsor, April 25, 1905, no. 康-16, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection. “Homer Lea wants to come with me to the East to get things going. What do you think? But for it to be a success, I want our association to invite Yung Wing—did we get him to join? It is not easy to get a million dollars; I would not dare to say so.” Kang had been discussing business plans with Lea, probably to recruit American businessmen to invest in the Commercial Corporation. An experienced businessman, Yung Wing returned to China as a Yale graduate and engaged in businesses, from tea to translation; he later assisted Zeng Guofan in purchasing machinery in the United States for the Jiangnan Arsenal. Yung Wing, *My Life in China and America* (New York: Henry Holt, 1909).

that Yung had “an addiction to revolution,” but in the same letter asked her, not for the first time, whether or not Yung would do the translation of his biography.¹⁶⁰ After arriving in Los Angeles in March, Kang asked Tongbi to suggest to Yung that he come west to work together with him on the translation. When that did not materialize, Kang decided to send his Chinese language secretary Chen Yuesong to Hartford to assist Yung.¹⁶¹ Finally, in May 1905 from Chicago, Kang wrote his daughter that he had heard from Chen in Hartford, and Yung Wing “does not want to translate the book. He said it’s necessary to rent an office for a year to do the translation, so it seems there is no hope at all.” Kang went on to write that “my only regret is that I did not have [Oxford-educated] Luo Chang do it last year, since I hoped Yung Wing would agree.” He seemed to blame Tongbi for having not asked Yung Wing earlier: “Then we would not have wasted so much money and half a year’s time.” At that point, Chen Yuesong was ordered to make a copy of the biography and bring it to Kang in Washington or New York.¹⁶² By the middle of September, Kang was reconciled to the idea of Luo Chang performing the translation. He wrote to Tongbi: “You can ask Luo Chang to start to translate my biography, as he might be able to catch up. Urge him to complete it quickly.”¹⁶³ However, no English translation of the biography was ever published or discovered in unpublished form.

Two crumpled sheets of paper written by Kang but referring to himself in the third person were discovered by the book’s research team in Robert Starr’s South Windsor attic in 2014.¹⁶⁴ One sheet vividly describes the virtues and

160 Kang Youwei, Portland, to Kang Tongbi, South Windsor, after February 22, 1905, no. S-C24, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

161 Kang Youwei, Los Angeles, to Kang Tongbi, South Windsor, April 16, 1905, no. 康-9-3 (“I have received your telegram today and know that Chun Lao 純老 [Yung Wing 容闕] is not coming here”) and April 23, 1905, no. 康-12 (“I want to send Yuesong [to you in Hartford] immediately”), Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

162 Kang Youwei, Chicago, to Kang Tongbi, South Windsor, May 27, 1905, on Congress Hotel stationery, no. 康-22, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection. It is perhaps this copy that was sent to Luo Chang.

163 Kang Youwei, Montana, to Kang Tongbi, South Windsor, September 20, 1905, no. 康-35, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

164 Kang Youwei, [1904?], excerpts from *Wo Zhuan*, no. S-C40 and S-C60, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection. When and where Kang wrote these sheets is unclear, but there are various word differences from the published version, and this must have been a first draft. For example, in the first sentence of the top paragraph, the phrase 久遠事皆不忘 (“he never forgot anything that happened long time ago”) reads 每讀一書過目成誦 (“he had a photographic memory of every book he read.”) in Lu Naixiang and Lu Dunkui 陸乃翔, 陸敦騷, *Nanhai Xiansheng Zhuan (shangbian)* 南海先生傳(上編) [Biography of

blemishes of Kang's singular personality, and the other presents his concepts of the duality of nature and historical evolution through the lens of the Three Ages. In this excerpt, Kang bats aside his critics by claiming that his accomplishments justified his domineering style and bull-headed behavior:

With his intelligence, good memory and broad knowledge, he [Kang Youwei] never forgot anything that happened a long time ago. He would make quick decisions at the critical moment upon encountering something, even those [situations] that were hard to tackle, and could settle things with a few resolute words. So, he is the most decisive and self-confident. And some say this is his stubbornness, autocratic decision-making. Every person has a different perspective and may view his words and deeds as not short of deficiencies. However, the very reason that he could violently shake up the world and risk disastrous prospects without changing his mind is because of his firm and resolute character and great self-confidence. The most important achievements made on earth are invariably carried out by strong-willed and powerful men, because they exemplify unyielding character ... It might be that self-decision and rigidity are in his nature, but he grew to pool wisdom from others for his theories.

He daily commended desistance from killing [animals for meat] and yet he ate meat; daily he acclaimed monogamy as just and yet he took a concubine because he had no son [referring to his second marriage at age forty to Liang Sujue]; daily he talked about equality of the sexes and yet the [female] members of his family [*jiaren*] did not enjoy independence; daily he discoursed on equality of all persons and yet he liked to employ male and female servants. He advocated cutting the queue and yet kept his own. He was expert in Western learning and tools but held fast to Chinese tradition in etiquette, customs, and implements. He praised democratic government, but concentrated on protecting the emperor. He paid attention to a one-world utopia but served only his own country of China. All of these seem to be contradictions in deeds and words. This is because he deeply understands the theories of duality [*eryuan*] and the

Mr. [Kang] Nanhai (part one)] (Shanghai: Wanmucaotang, June 1929) in *Kang Youwei Quanji*, vol. 12, Appendix 2, 470.

three ages [*sanshi*] and therefore has prepared appropriately for the long journey ahead before his ideals can be realized.¹⁶⁵

The South Windsor documents reveal that Kang himself wrote at least part of this biography, which had been thought to be solely the work of his students, Lu Naixiang and Lu Dunkui, two Hong Kong followers who completed their manuscript in spring 1904.¹⁶⁶ They had begun gathering contributions from their Wanmucaotang classmates in fall 1903 with the aim of updating and expanding a brief 1901 biography written in just forty-eight hours by Liang Qichao and published in his Yokohama magazine, *Qingyi Bao*.¹⁶⁷ Kang was in Hong Kong when the two Lus were working on the biography, from fall 1903 until the end of March 1904, suggesting that he participated in the project and could have obtained the full manuscript at that time. However, the Lus did not publish the biography until 1929, after Kang's death. They explained in the postscript that they feared it was not a full portrait of Kang that met the standard that Liang had set for himself in depicting Kang in 1901, Oliver Cromwell's fabled admonition to a portraitist, "Paint me as I am" (warts and all).¹⁶⁸ Perhaps this was due to Kang's interference in their portrayal, but in any case, Kang's persistence in seeking a translator displays his own satisfaction with the biography. While he also carried a copy of his *nianpu* when he came to North America, it was *Wo Zhuan*, which gave a more updated (to 1904 rather

165 Excerpt from *Wo Zhuan*, no. S-C40, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection. The second paragraph begins with a slightly revised translation done by Hsiao, *A Modern China and a New World*, 32.

166 Zhongping Chen recognized these two documents as portions of the book by Lu Naixiang and Lu Dunkui, *Nanhai Xiansheng zhuan (shangbian)* in *Kang Youwei Quanji*, vol. 12, Appendix 2, 440–71. S-C60 is found in the twelfth section on Kang as a prominent religious scholar, 469–70, and S-C40 is in the thirteenth section, the conclusion, 470–71. There are minor differences between the two documents and the published book. Thanks to Chi Jeng Chang 張啓祜 for sharing his analysis in an unpublished paper, July 4, 2018, "Guanyu Kang Youwei—Wo Zhuan—Fanyi shi" 關於康有為—我傳—翻譯事 [Regarding the matter of Translating Kang Youwei's "My Biography"] and for subsequent analysis of the documents.

167 Liang Qichao 梁啟超, *Nanhai Kang Xiansheng Zhuan* 南海康先生傳 [Biography of Mr. Kang Nanhai], *Qingyi Bao* 清議報, no. 100, December 21, 1901 in *Kang Youwei Quanji*, vol. 12, Appendix 1, 422–39.

168 Lu and Lu, *Nanhai Xiansheng Zhuan* in *Kang Youwei Quanji*, vol. 12, Appendix 2, 471; Liang Qichao, *Nanhai Kang Xiansheng Zhuan*, 439. As noted by Chi Jeng Chang, email to Jane Larson, December 6, 2022, Kang revised Liang's 1901 wording, with various sentences in South Windsor document no. S-C 40, paraphrasing Liang's portrayal of Kang.

than October 1898) and comprehensive picture of Kang as a man, politician, philosopher, religious thinker, educator, and visionary that he must have felt would build his reputation in the West.

Translating *Wo Zhuan* for a Western audience, who would have found much of its content difficult to understand without detailed explanatory notes, would have been a daunting and time-consuming job. The biography as it was finally published was 56 double leaves and approximately 35,000 characters in length. The content presented the details of Kang's life history and elucidated his views on political reform, Confucian philosophy, world view, religion, and the books he wrote, including *Datong Shu* expounding on his One World utopia. It is no wonder that Yung would not take this on.

Yung Wing's age and his strongly conflicted feelings about Kang and the Baohuanghui may also have played a role in his unwillingness to publicize Kang's life through an English translation, but he eventually drafted a lengthy document in English requested by Kang, a letter to President Roosevelt to follow up on their June meetings. Kang wrote a curt note to Yung, complaining that the letter was already two months late, then asked Tongbi on August 20 to urge Yung to "immediately ... complete the letter for the president."¹⁶⁹ Nine days later, Yung wrote to Kang Tongbi, telling her that six days earlier he had sent "the Memorandum" to Kang in care of his secretary, Zhou Guoxian, and was concerned whether or not it had been received.¹⁷⁰ Presumably this was the long letter that Kang sent to Roosevelt in September 1905 indicting the Empress Dowager.¹⁷¹ So the man whom Kang saw had "an addiction to revolution," who seems to have not joined the Baohuanghui, and had derailed Kang's plans to have him translate his biography, apparently had substantive input to the letter Kang would send to Roosevelt in a matter of weeks.

169 Kang Youwei, New York, to Kang Tongbi, South Windsor, August 20, 1905, no. Z-42; and Kang Youwei to Yung Wing, no. Z-45(5), August [15–27?], 1905, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

170 Yung Wing, Hartford, to Kang Tongbi, South Windsor, August 29, 1905, no. E-39, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

171 Kang Youwei, New York, to Roosevelt, September 14, 1905, with nineteen-page enclosure; Miscellaneous Records of the Department of State, RG 59, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/153673938?objectPage=378>, accessed May 24, 2024. See below for more on this letter.

1. Farmington Ave.
Hartford Conn.
29th August, 1905

Dear Miss Kang:

I sent your father the Memorandum on the 23rd instant, six days ago. It was addressed to Chew Koh Hien. I asked Chew to let me know if he had received it. He has not written to me.

I feel somewhat anxious about your health. How are you now: are you better? You must take good care of yourself. Don't study too hard.

I intend to come out to see you sometime this week. Do you expect your father to come to Hartford soon?

Kind regards to Dr. Todor & Mrs.

all
Yun

Yun's Sincerely,
The advertisement in
The Conant cost \$1⁰⁰. for four days
Did you see it, & did you receive
any answer?
Yung Wing

FIGURE 49 Yung Wing to Kang Tongbi, August 29, 1905: "I sent your father the memorandum on the 23rd instant, six days ago ... I intend to come out to see you sometime this week. Do you expect your father to come to Hartford soon?"

13 Leaving Hartford, on to New Haven

Kang left Hartford earlier than planned when an “urgent call” from New York City required him to preside over the long-planned Baohuanghui plenary session, which would take place later in July.¹⁷² Kang expected to return to Hartford—because he found it “a good city to rest in”—before traveling west and then to “South America.”¹⁷³ His visit to New England ended with a farewell banquet given by Yung Wing. Before leaving Hartford on July 19, Kang hosted a luncheon for Yung and Yung’s close friend and pastor, Reverend Joseph Hopkins Twichell, who had attended Kang’s City Mission Hall speech and noted in his journal that the lunch was “an interesting occasion—though very little English was spoken by any except Mr. Wing, Miss Khang and myself.”¹⁷⁴ Twichell and Mark Twain, both of Hartford, had formed deep friendships with Yung Wing and helped him advance the case of Chinese rights in the United States, and it is possible that Kang also met Twain in 1905. On the way to New York City on July 19–20, an overnight stop was made in New Haven, giving Kang the opportunity to visit the Yale University campus.¹⁷⁵

On July 18, the day before Kang left Hartford, he had “a long conversation” with Homer Lea, before Lea reportedly left for New York City to join Captain Ben O. Young and “see about what can be done towards keeping up the interest in the New York companies of Chinese” after Governor Higgins had banned the cadets from bearing arms in public.¹⁷⁶ However, no reports of Lea in New York have been found, and he probably did not attend the Baohuanghui plenary session.¹⁷⁷ Lea made an extended visit to Canada that summer, so the parting

172 Kang and others mentioned the New York meeting as early as June. For example, see Kang Youwei, Washington, DC, to Kang Tongbi, South Windsor, June 11, 1905, no. 康-18, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

173 “Kang Yu Wei Departs,” *Hartford Courant*, July 20, 1905, 18. Kang Tongbi’s host, Mary Starr Tudor, offered to house Kang Youwei, his daughter and entourage upon Kang’s return visit either at her home or that of her sister, “to give my dear little girl the happiness of being with her father during the last weeks of his stay in this country.” Mary Starr Tudor, South Windsor, to Kang Tongbi, New York, July 21, 1905, E-42, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

174 Joseph H. Twichell, Personal Journal, vol. 8 (1905), entries of July 15–19, July 19. Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Thank you to Yvonne Yung to pointing us to this reference.

175 “Kang in New York,” *Hartford Times*, July 20, 1905, 3; and “Kang Yu Wei Departs,” July 20, 1905, 18; “Kang Yu Wei, The Chinese Reformer Expected Here This Afternoon,” *New Haven Evening Register*, July 19, 1905, 11; also *Hartford Times*, July 20, 1905, 3.

176 “Kang Yu Wei is Pleased with Edict,” *Hartford Courant*, July 19, 1905, 8.

177 Ben O. Young [here as Ouyang Hu 歐陽胡] is on the attendance list of the 1905 plenary meeting. “Baohuanghui Gongyi Kaiding Xinzhang,” 1905, Ethnic Studies Library,

conversation in Hartford may have been Lea's last meeting with Kang.¹⁷⁸ The two men are not reported in the American press as ever meeting again.

Despite the generous media coverage of Kang's visit to Hartford, a week after he left, the *Hartford Courant* published an editorial saying that reform in China had to begin not "at the top of things ... but away down among the people." The editorial writers criticized Kang's "luxurious grandeur" and the size of his staff, saying this was "certainly not the American way to go about reforming things with gentlemen in waiting ..." Kang was "pretty much the old thing that needs to be reformed out of China before the people of that country can make a wholesome use of the faculties with which they are certainly endowed ..." Furthermore, they said Kang "is diplomatically inept or mischievous" and the people traveling with him were "earning their salaries ... by a display of the same qualities." Homer Lea was branded "only an ass in all this" and his training of Chinese cadets was "a violation of the hospitality of this country and a cruel wrong to the Chinamen who are persuaded to take part in this drilling business." The editorial ended with a final condemnation. It said Kang's speech criticizing the exclusion laws was "easily ... as impertinent a speech as was ever made in Hartford, assuming Mr. Kang knew anything of what he was talking about." Right or wrong, asserted the editors, those laws were "our laws" and this foreigner's attack on them was highly resented.¹⁷⁹

14 The New York City Plenum

Kang and his party returned to New York City on July 21, in preparation for the Baohuanghui plenary meeting held July 24–28. To the great fortune of historians, Kang's preliminary summons to the meeting, rules of order, attendees, and the final charter resulting from deliberations in eight sessions over five days were published as a detailed booklet, mainly written by Kang, dated July 30, 1905, and titled "Baohuanghui Gongyi Gaiding Xinzhang" (New Baohuanghui Charter Finalized after Public Discussion).¹⁸⁰ The primary purpose of the meeting was to enact an organizational charter or constitution (*zhangcheng*)

University of California at Berkeley, Chinese Empire Reform Association, AR-2, AAS ARC 2000/78, hereafter AAS ARC 2000/78.

178 Kaplan, *Homer Lea*, 123.

179 "Mr. Kang, The Reformer," *Hartford Courant*, July 26, 1905, 8.

180 "Baohuanghui Gongyi Gaiding Xinzhang" 保皇會公議改定新章 [New Baohuanghui Charter Finalized after Public Discussion], July 30, 1905, AR-2; "Xinzhang" hereafter.

that would imbue the Baohuanghui's structure and procedures with the features of constitutionalism.

According to historian Gao Weinong, Kang had long wanted to convene an international congress that would display his organization's democratic character, but kept missing opportunities.¹⁸¹ He presided over a small meeting of leaders in Hong Kong in March 1904 attended by Liang Qichao, Xu Qin, and a few others that launched the Commercial Corporation and several newspapers, among other initiatives.¹⁸² However, Baohuanghui members were too widely dispersed to give the Hong Kong gathering a representative attendance. Kang drafted a partial Baohuanghui constitution at that time but had no easy way to obtain the reactions about it from the membership. Kang also wanted to use the opportunity of the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair and the hoped-for presence of numerous overseas Chinese, including Baohuanghui members, but he was too late in recommending the plenary and he himself could not gain entry to the United States.

Once in the United States, Kang revived his plans to convene a congress but his constant travel and lingering ill health caused further postponements. On June 26, when Kang was in Philadelphia, he issued a call to Baohuanghui chapters to come to New York to discuss and revise the organizational charter. Kang had long worked on this document, absorbing ideas from his travels and meetings with Chinatown leaders.¹⁸³ Now, he wanted to meld his ideas with those of the plenary participants, a process that is apparent in the "Xinzhang" document. Kang's public letter summoning all chapters to send delegates to the meeting, "Baohuanghui Gongyi Gaiding Zhangcheng" (Baohuanghui Group Discussion to Finalize Editing the Charter), begins: "Our Baohuanghui has only been established five or six years, and it has more than 160 chapters over 5 continents." Yet, Kang decried, the old charter needed revision with uniform rules for all chapters.¹⁸⁴ Just as for a village or a country, the Baohuanghui

181 Gao Weinong 高偉濃, *Ershi Shiji chu Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui zai Meiguo Huaqiao Shehui zhong de Huodong* 二十世紀初康有為保皇會在美國華僑社會中的活動 [Activities of Kang Youwei and the Baohuanghui among the Chinese in the United States in the First Part of the Twentieth Century] (Beijing: Xueyuan Chubanshe, 2009), 75.

182 See Chapter 2.

183 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 76.

184 "Baohuanghui Gongyi Gaiding Zhangcheng" 保皇會公議改定章程 [Baohuanghui Group Discussion to Finalize Editing the Charter] appears on the first few pages of "Baohuanghui Gongyi Gaiding Xinzhang" 保皇會公議改定新章, July 30, 1905, UCB, AASC, AR-2; Gao Weinong mistranscribes *gongyi* 公議 [public discussion] as *huiyi* 會議 [meeting] for both documents.

“should set up a constitutional system and a charter and hold an assembly to bring together legislators to jointly make decisions after deliberation. To arrive at clear and reasonable decisions, one needs to pool wisdom and come to an agreement.”¹⁸⁵

The de facto headquarters of the international Baohuanghui was a mobile one—it was situated wherever Kang Youwei happened to be at the time. There were offices in Macau, Hong Kong, Yokohama, and elsewhere and chapters throughout the world but it was the Canadian and United States chapters that Kang had recently visited and their leaders with whom he was personally acquainted. Despite Kang’s idea that delegates should be democratically elected from among chapter memberships in Canada, the United States, and Mexico—“the North American core”—the New York plenum was an all-American affair. Those unable to attend were allowed to submit draft resolutions in writing and they were considered in democratic fashion by the delegates who were present.¹⁸⁶

Kang acknowledged that transportation costs meant that a truly representative congress could not occur, even within the United States. Each chapter would have to fund the travel, lodging, and food for its delegates, who would be elected by their membership if the chapter had at least one hundred members. Kang asked chapters to spend the necessary funds for travel to the meeting so that the number attending would be high enough to ensure the results would be fair and equitable. Perhaps because they were already traveling with Kang or because they had contacted him to express their intention to attend, Kang named a few individuals in his June letter as delegates to represent their regions, Tom Leung (Los Angeles), Ben O. Young (Fresno), and Li Meijin (Portland).

Kang’s summons to the July plenary meeting included a detailed list of resolutions that would create several new Baohuanghui divisions (*bu*) to resolve certain internal problems Kang felt hindered the organization. Notably, his proposals were not adopted without substantial changes, as seen in the differences between the proposed resolutions in the June 26 “Zhangcheng” and the final twenty-seven articles in the “Xinzhang.”¹⁸⁷ Gao Weinong notes that although Kang clearly dominated the Baohuanghui and no proposal would have been accepted that did not meet his approval, most of the content of the

185 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 76.

186 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 76–77.

187 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 102–7, provides details on differences between Kang’s initial proposals and the final charter approved at the July meeting.

final resolutions came from the meeting participants. Kang's top concerns are summarized as follows:

- Stable and increased funding for the Baohuanghui, especially the overburdened headquarters in Hong Kong. Kang attempted to blend the financial needs of the organization with the self-interest of the members through the Lianweibu (Mutual Defense Division) to provide mutual aid and social insurance while collecting fees that would mostly go to the headquarters, and the Shangwubu (Business Affairs Division) to raise stock shares to establish a bank and potentially bring profits to shareholders.
- Cultivation of talent for a future time when the reformers would rule China. Kang proposed a Xuexiaobu (School Division) to supervise the Western Military Academy, establish schools, and send students abroad. Kang also suggested a Quangongbu (Exhortation to Industry Division) that would raise funds to educate the children of members in technology and other fields that would make their homeland strong and wealthy.
- Emigration to remote, undeveloped lands where Chinese were welcome and could become rich by developing profitable businesses. To facilitate this, Kang suggested a Zhiminbu (Immigration Division) to organize settlements in Mexico, throughout South America, Borneo, and Johor Bahru, just north of Singapore.
- Molding the ethics and behavior of members. Kang proposed a Jiejingbu (Cleanliness Division) because “our compatriots are the subject of gossip by foreigners” due to their “lack of cleanliness.” While admitting this was a minor issue, Kang said that it “leaves behind an endless legacy of trouble.” In addition to bodily hygiene, Kang wanted to impose behavioral norms on Baohuanghui members, and among the rules he proposed was a system of clear punishments and rewards, rewarding members who are “enthusiastic, loyal, and have sacrificed their life or spent all their property for their country” and punishing those who “are members in name only, or are actually betraying or attacking [the organization], leak secret matters, or are stealthily trying to break up the organization.” Finally, Kang wanted to formalize how Baohuanghui headquarters should dispense hospitality to visiting members, because too many visitors demanded to be treated in costly and time-wasting style.

The plenum was held at the Mott Street Baohuanghui headquarters.¹⁸⁸ Besides Kang as presiding officer, the attendees included twenty-five leading Baohuanghui members representing the following sixteen cities, regions and countries: New York (Joseph Singleton, Yee Guy Maine, Li Yiyao, Cao Jiu, Tan Wenji, and

¹⁸⁸ “Roosevelt His Model,” *Ogdensburg [New York] Journal*, July 26, 1905, 1, reporting from New York on July 25.

Wu Jixun); Hartford (Huang Rongye, Huang Chunshan, and Zhang Liqing); Boston (Chen Guorui, Mei An, and Hu Meifang); Philadelphia (Feng Cikun and Li Zesen); Baltimore: (Li Duchu); Washington, DC (Liang Wenchang); Pittsburgh (Li Kuncheng); St. Louis (Feng Chunlin); Portland (Liang Qun); Oakland, Los Angeles, and Mexico (Tom Leung); Fresno (Ben O. Young); Honolulu (Huang Shaojing and Zhuo Hai); Montreal (Tang Mingsan); and western Canada (Lin Boxiong).¹⁸⁹ In addition, the “Xinzhang” epilogue claims that the plenum received “more than one hundred [pieces of correspondence] from chapters in the United States, Mexico, and Canada exchanging suggestions.”¹⁹⁰ One of the few American newspapers reporting on the meeting said that one hundred delegates attended.¹⁹¹

Kang addressed the July 24 plenary opening. He said that China was in danger because of the Empress Dowager’s unauthorized control of the imperial throne. As he had noted in many speeches before, he said the Guangxu Emperor was “benevolent and valiant and willing to sacrifice his life to save his people through the reforms.” The Hundred Days had gained world attention and given China “a new lease on life,” but this effort had been wasted and the reform government had been overturned. He went on to describe the founding of the Baohuanghui in Victoria in 1899 and the machinations of Cixi during the 1900 Boxer Uprising that brought on a flood of Baohuanghui telegrams in protest, after which the conservative government “became afraid.” He congratulated the Baohuanghui and “all righteous people” for having saved the emperor. He also noted that that “our society’s flag and that of England’s are pursuing each other like the sun and moon. This is an association such as China has never seen before.” He said that had happened because those “who loved their country were of one heart” and “responded on their own,” and thereafter the association developed quickly. He compared the substantial Baohuanghui membership to the size of a small country but one that could not succeed in its current “disorganized and lawless” state. He noted that not everyone who should have participated in the New York meeting was able to attend. But he acknowledged that a critical mass of members was in the United States and the Americas and that it was appropriate that the session was being held in the eastern United States (Dong Mei). He attracted attention in the English-language press for his statement that the delegates should “Adopt for yourselves the principles set forth by Mr. Roosevelt,” because “You American

189 “Xinzhang,” July 30, 1905, AAS ARC 2000/78, AR-2.

190 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 80.

191 “Roosevelt His Model.”

Chinese are too docile. You are not sufficiently self asserting, self confident, and strenuous.”¹⁹²

He concluded his speech saying:

The grand plan for this congress [*yiyuan honggui*] is both exacting and thorough, and like nothing ever held in China before. I am deeply [grateful] that our organization has grown so large and has joined together the talents and righteousness of the meeting delegates. Whether or not we develop vigorously depends on this gathering. At this meeting we will discuss how to remedy old abuses, implement the new system [*xinzhi*], strictly enforce the rules and regulations, and increase the funds we raise. When we undertake a new activity, we need to manage it well to lessen any harm and increase the benefits ... The duties of the members of this assembly are very solemn. It is not just our organization that depends on it, but all of China entrusts their fate in us. Your humble servant cannot bear the great expectations.¹⁹³

The plenum held eight sessions over five days. The secretary read out each proposal concerning the Baohuanghui constitution three times and delegates spoke about them in turn. Gao summarized the proceedings as follows:

The [constitution] synthesized both the organization's guiding principles, goals, organization, internal structure, activities, procedures, regulations, and other basic features and also included a plan for strengthening the organization's cohesion. It not only gave a summary review of the stages that the organization had gone through, but embodied the organizational transformation, conceptual renovation, and operational norms of the Baohuanghui.¹⁹⁴

The new constitution had twenty-seven sections, as follows:¹⁹⁵

Section 1: Aims of the Organization: “To preserve our organization, we members must abide by our aims, and not take the organization's name lightly. The Western name at this time is Reform Society [Weixinhui], and after the

192 “Roosevelt His Model.”

193 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 78–79.

194 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 81.

195 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 102–35, reviews the divisions in detail and also compares the 1905 charter to the 1907 charter that succeeded it. For the 1905 original document, see “Xinzhang,” July 30, 1905, AAS ARC 2000/78, AR-2. See Chapter 10 for a description of the 1907 charter.

emperor is restored to power, our association will become a large political party.”¹⁹⁶

Section 2: Organizational Name: Kang evoked the emperor’s secret edict (reworded after the fact) to justify the name of Baohuanghui: “You may with your comrades speedily plot a way to save me from danger.”¹⁹⁷

Section 3: Duties of Members: “Everyone who joins the society will be loyal and righteous to each other and join together as a group [*hequn*] to rescue the country.”¹⁹⁸

Section 4: To maintain contact among chapters, new chapters were to announce their initiation by sending letters to all chapters; thereafter, chapters were to send reports every three months. Each chapter was required to send monthly reports to the headquarters.¹⁹⁹

Section 5: Letter Seal: “Headquarters will engrave seals to send to new and existing chapters.” Letters between chapters, including public letters, were to be stamped with this seal to authenticate the identity of the sender.²⁰⁰

Section 6: Reception of Guests: “For the Hong Kong headquarters to treat members with courtesy is especially difficult. With more than one hundred thousand members, more than one thousand return every [month].” Six regulations standardize and subsidize Hong Kong’s costly reception of visiting chapter members, specifying who is to receive what kind of reception, from the types of refreshments served to sightseeing options, and requires chapters to contribute to these costs.²⁰¹

Section 7: Preferential Treatment for the Ill and for Death and Burial: A set of regulations specifying what kind of care is due to ill chapter leaders according to their position, as well the proper etiquette to follow for funerals of members and leaders, including visits to the bereaved and escorting the funeral procession.²⁰²

Section 8: Reporting Achievements (*baogong*): “Those who perform arduous tasks, are felt by the members to be loyal and righteous, sacrifice their lives, or donate their wealth are to be respected and esteemed by all.” Merit rewards include gold and silver medals, tuition-free education for sons and brothers at

196 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 83.

197 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 90. See Prelude for Guangxu’s wording of the secret edict.

198 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 90.

199 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 129.

200 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 130.

201 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 142–46.

202 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 149–52.

Guangdong Public School, and portraits and memorial plaques in the headquarters or chapter buildings.

Section 9: Commemorations: Four events were to be commemorated annually: the emperor's birthday, the founding of the Baohuanghui (July 20, 1899), the execution date of the Six Martyrs in 1898, and a memorial for the martyrs of the failed Qinwang uprising in August 1900.²⁰³

Section 10: Proof of Membership: "A membership certificate (*huipiao*) has been issued to all who have joined the Baohuanghui ... For the sake of convenience, a membership badge (*huipai*) can be used instead of a membership certificate. On the upper left side of the badge is the national flag and on right the Baohuanghui flag, and a portrait of the emperor. All the members must wear the badge at Baohuanghui meetings or gatherings to show they are comrades. And, any member traveling to other Baohuanghui locations should wear the badge as a proof of membership without which comradely reception will be denied."²⁰⁴

Section 11: Membership Fees: "The Baohuanghui has now expanded to five continents with multitudes of members, so the requirement of a membership fee has been made a policy now." The fee was \$5 in the United States and the same value in the local currency of other countries.²⁰⁵

Section 12: Certificates to Prove Membership: After a member joins with a five-dollar membership fee, the chapter issues a receipt (*shoupiao*); every quarter, the chapter remits public funds from membership fees to the headquarters; upon receipt, the headquarters issues a certificate of proof (*pingpiao*), which is sent to the chapter and given to the member. The chapter's three-part receipt register would provide proof of membership to be given to the member, sent to headquarters, and kept by the chapter.²⁰⁶

Section 13: Settling Up Public Funds: Membership fees must be collected by chapters and are considered public funds, which must be remitted in full to headquarters to handle national affairs. In this section, Kang scolds chapters for withholding funds from headquarters and attempting to use them locally.²⁰⁷

Section 14: Functionaries (*zhiyuan*): These are important personnel chosen and dispatched by Kang as president (*zongzhang*) for both the headquarters and chapters. Functionaries were needed for all of the divisions listed below and for important duties such as managing and accounting for funds,

203 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 148–49.

204 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 95–96.

205 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 167–68.

206 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 178–80.

207 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 174.

translation, mail communications, negotiating with foreigners, and formulating policy. Also, “each chapter’s personnel should include a president and vice presidents, directors, supervisor, treasurer, auditor, Chinese and Western secretaries, orators, outreach activists [*zhili*], assistant manager.”²⁰⁸

Section 15: Mutual Defense Division (Lianweibu): The most elaborately described division in the “Xinzhang.” Its stated purpose was: “saving the country and providing mutual aid to our comrades through their trials and tribulations, helping one other whether in good or bad luck and giving mutual aid during illness.” This optional social insurance system for members offered support for medical care and funeral costs; funding for their family and legal support if the member was murdered, in a legal dispute, or the victim of a disaster; and subsidy of travel costs for the elderly and ill to return to China. To join, a member paid an additional monthly contribution of fifty cents, or six dollars per year, collected by the chapter, with 70 percent sent to the Hong Kong headquarters. Chapters in the Northwest, led by Portland, had formed Lianweihui [Mutual Defense Association] branches earlier, and this extended the system to all other Baohuanghui chapters.²⁰⁹ Kang would order some of the collected funds be diverted to pay expenses of activists in China during the 1905 boycott.²¹⁰

Section 16: Mutual Defense Core Group (Lianwei Neibu): The primary distinction of members of this most dedicated inner circle of the Lianweibu was their annual contribution of one hundred dollars (the type of currency was not included), or in special cases for those without such wealth, those with great passion and loyalty would give what they could afford. Contributions went to the headquarters, and if a Neibu member got in trouble, he would be supported by his fellow core group members.²¹¹

Section 17: Bravery Division (Ganbu): This was the “dare-to-die corps,” to carry out dangerous missions on Baohuanghui’s behalf, with compensation promised to their families should they lose their lives.²¹²

208 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 106–7.

209 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 103, 109–17. It is unknown how many chapters adopted this program but Kang reported that several Lianweihui (Mutual Defense Association) had been established in British Columbia. Kang Youwei, Sherwood, Oregon, to Kang Tongbi, February 22, 1905, no. 康-23, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection. Lianweihui also were formed in Los Angeles, Fresno and Marysville, California and Helena, Montana.

210 “Ju Jinyue Chuandan,” June 10, 1905, no. 577 in Fang and Cai, 381.

211 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 117–21.

212 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 105. See Chapter 4 for details on Ganbu 敢部 [Bravery Division].

Section 18: Financial Management Division (Licaibu): This division seeks to strengthen China by fostering skills in technology, management, and finance through support of the Commercial Corporation (Shanghui) and the education of young members.²¹³

Section 19: Education Division (Xuebu): Devoted to opening civil schools and sending students abroad. “[We must] think up a way to raise funds to help pay the costs of sending students to England, Germany, the United States, France, and Japan.”²¹⁴

Section 20: Military Affairs Division (Shangwubu): This division administered the Western Military Academy headquarters and the more than twenty branches. The most promising students, after completing a three-year course, will be selected to study at American military schools, to be paid for by headquarters.²¹⁵

Section 21: Cleanliness Division (Jiejingbu): “Many of our countrymen have dirty bodies, are sloppily dressed, have poor manners, and when foreigners [outsiders] see them, they call out insults.” Each chapter was to set up a “cleanliness bureau” (*jiejingju*) and open a bath house to allow members to bathe daily and have their hair cut every ten days.” Kang also specified that “our members wear Western clothes, the clothes ought to be uniform, easy to clean and tidy up. When we go out and talk and laugh, our activities should be legal. Don’t cause a hubbub and stomp your feet. When you finish your work, wash your hands, and before going out, wash your face. Then foreigners will see our organization as civilized and won’t despise us.”²¹⁶

Section 22: Exhortation to Industry Division (Quangongbu): Kang called on members to invest a certain percent of their income in a safe, Chinese-run financial institution, specifically Huayi Gongsi (Wah Yick Company). Their investments would subsidize technological education for members, who would either pay this money back after finishing their education or serve their companies with newly learned skills. Kang said this would be much wiser (and more profitable) for both the members and for China than saving money only for buying land in their villages back in China, the traditional practice of sojourners.²¹⁷

Section 23: Land Reclamation Division (Pidibu): Here, the Baohuanghui was turning from countries like the United States where Chinese had immigrated and faced exclusion to those where Chinese could invest in and develop land,

213 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 103, 105.

214 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 105.

215 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 105. See Chapter 4 for details.

216 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 133–35.

217 “Xinzhang,” July 30, 1905, AAS ARC 2000/78, AR-2.

namely Mexico, South America, and Southeast Asia. Kang baldly states his ultimate imperialistic ambitions, by suggesting emulation of the British East India Company.²¹⁸

Section 24: Legal Division (Falübu): This division was proposed by delegates to render justice through an internal legal system when troublesome members spread rumors, spied on the organization, leaked secrets, embezzled funds, or carried out other traitorous acts against the Baohuanghui.²¹⁹

Section 25: Speech-making: "All associations, whether new or old, must use speeches to arouse popular support and enhance group morale." All members were encouraged to make speeches on "national affairs," and speechmaking sessions were to be regularly scheduled each week. Touring orators were also encouraged, and the charter asked chapters to receive visiting speakers warmly.²²⁰

Section 26: Reading Newspapers: "The more newspapers, the larger the association will grow. Each chapter ought to support them, and each newspaper should increase its [stock] shares in order to expand or to add new papers ... For our association to save China, our members must be informed about China and the world and agriculture, industry and commerce." Kang then listed seven Baohuanghui newspapers in Shanghai, Hong Kong, Yokohama, Australia, the United States, and Hawai'i. Newspaper offices also served as local political headquarters for the Baohuanghui.²²¹

Section 27: Discarding Old Rules: "Wherever there is a difference between the old rules and the new, the old must be deleted and the new inserted. Although each chapter has autonomy it may not go outside of the rules set by the headquarters."²²²

Another feature of the constitution, appended to Section 25, was lyrics for songs, probably written by Kang. "Every country has songs to praise its leaders. Songs at dinner parties create group spirit, and all the people sing lustily. Here are words for songs, so that when our association's comrades gather they can sing together."²²³ The lyrics were in high literati style that would have been unfamiliar to the average Baohuanghui member, and were frequently didactic

218 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 103–4, 105. See Chapter 8 for Baohuanghui attempts to carry out this ambition in Mexico.

219 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 105–6.

220 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 130–32, 385–90 for examples of speeches.

221 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 132–33. The newspapers were: Shanghai *Shi Bao* 時報, Hong Kong's *Shang Bao* 商報, Yokohama's *Xinmin Congbao* 新民叢報, New York's *Zhongguo Weixin Bao* 中國維新報, San Francisco's *Wenxing Bao* 文興報, Honolulu's *Xin Zhongguo Bao* 新中國報, and Sydney's *Donghua Bao* 東華報.

222 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 102.

223 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 136–37.

in content. “Aiguo Ge” (Patriotic Anthem) in both long and short versions, “Gancheng Xuexiao Ge” (Song for the Western Military Academy), and “Baohuanghui Ge (Protect the Emperor Society Song) were published in the constitution. These lofty words come from the long version of the “Patriotic Anthem”:

We are the offspring of our ancestor, the Yellow Emperor, going back
thousands of years,
Generations descending from senior officials and noble lords,
adorning the central plains like golden branches and jade leaves,
We 400 million people are brothers from the same roots.
With the largest extended family in the world, whose power compares
to ours?
Of all the world's peoples, whose prosperity can surmount ours?

KANG YOUWEI, “Aiguo Ge” (Patriotic Anthem), long version, Baohuanghui
Gongyi Kaiding Xinzhang, 1905²²⁴

The constitution's epilogue praised the orderly plenary meetings: “They held eight sessions, the assembly hall was solemn and congenial, the meeting participants were seated in rows, and the secretary recorded all the discussion.”²²⁵ Dissent and resistance from within did not cease after the plenary. Kang complained at length later in 1905 to Tom Leung that a prominent Baohuanghui member—presumably Chen Yikan who wrote the Lianweihui (Mutual Defense Association) charter when he was in Portland, Oregon, but had not attended the New York plenum—had done nothing to promote the new Baohuanghui constitution and “thinks that this charter solely aims to extort money from people.” Chen may have been partially correct in his assessment. In the same letter complaining about Chen, Kang lamented the dearth of funds vis-à-vis the ongoing needs of the association, especially now that it had a new charter with membership in the Lianweihui requiring monthly dues. The same letter contained complaints about other Baohuanghui members, upon whom he depended but did not always trust. He ended this part of his lengthy letter by telling Tom Leung “You need to burn this, don't leave this lying around where someone might see it.”²²⁶

224 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 138.

225 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 80–81.

226 Kang, Torreón, to Tom Leung, Los Angeles, December 26, 1905, no. 352 in Fang and Cai, 63–68.

15 A Side Trip and Second Visit to Philadelphia

After the plenary session, Kang remained in New York City. On August 3, he made a forty-mile side trip north to the New York State penitentiary in Ossining (formerly Sing Sing).²²⁷ On August 22, Kang, Zhou Guoxian, and Howard Moy (Moy Ying Fook, Mei Yingfu) made a return visit to Philadelphia.²²⁸

The entourage had shrunk considerably. Homer Lea had departed under a cloud, Ben O. Young had returned to the West Coast, and Rupert Humer had returned to Austria to visit his sick father. Kang Tongbi had suddenly left her father's side to return to Connecticut on August 13.²²⁹ A deep misunderstanding had developed between them during the summer. Kang accused Tongbi of confiding Baohuanghui secrets to her fiancé Luo Chang, who was then in the United States. The secrets included the Cixi assassination plot involving the female student Xue Jinjin (see Chapter 4), and in almost a jealous pique, Kang lashed out at his daughter on August 15: "I dare not to tell you things nor ask for your opinion nor show you any written accounts ... Since you have a loved one, you are truly careless and open, and tell him everything, leaking everything out just like a funnel ... This letter is a harsh warning. Never show it to him [Luo Chang]. You can mail it back to me and I will burn it. Don't be enslaved by your love affair and ignore your father."²³⁰ As was the case with many of Kang's flare-ups, Luo Chang and Tang Mingsan, to whom the secrets about Xue Jinjin had been told, met with Kang and cleared his suspicions of them and Tongbi. Luo wrote Tongbi, "It was all through [your] father's misunderstanding that caused the trouble."²³¹ Kang, who had also received a letter of explanation from Tongbi, added a hurried postscript to his scathing letter before he sent it: "You should not be sad or angry because [the leak was not from you]."²³²

227 Kang Tongbi, *Nanhai Kang Xiansheng Nianpu Xubian*, 61.

228 Tang Mingsan to Kang Tongbi, August 23, 1905, no. B-13, and Tan Liang in New York to Kang Tongbi, August 27, 1905, no. B-34, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection. Howard Moy and his father, Boston Baohuanghui leader Moy Wah June, would later manage King Joy Lo restaurant in Chicago.

229 Luo Chang 羅昌, New York, to Kang Tongbi, South Windsor, August (n.d.) 1905, no. L-4, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection, made it clear that Tongbi left without bidding farewell to Luo or her father.

230 Kang Youwei, New York, to Kang Tongbi, South Windsor, August 15, 1905. 康-27, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

231 Luo Chang, New York, to Kang Tongbi, South Windsor, August 15, 1905, no. L-5-1, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

232 Kang Youwei, New York, to Kang Tongbi, South Windsor, August 15, 1905, no. 康-27. Kang's postscript attributes his suspicions to worrying about how close Tongbi had become with Luo Chang and also suspected she was involved romantically with Tang Mingsan.

Just before Kang's arrival in Philadelphia, the *Philadelphia Inquirer* reported that he was returning because, on his first visit, "he had no time to make addresses to his countrymen in this city." He was to be the guest of Reverend Poole and would formally establish a Baohuanghui chapter in Philadelphia.²³³ Kang's name also was mentioned in regard to the Chinese boycott of American goods. On August 21, the *Inquirer* noted that the Shanghai daily newspaper *Eastern Times* (that is, *Shi Bao*) was "very slanderous to America" and had been "publishing long anti-American articles, which greatly exaggerate the situation and lead the Chinese, who are always ready to jump to conclusions, to think the matter much worse than it really is."²³⁴ The "situation" referred to was the growing boycott of American-made goods and "very alarming" threats against the welfare of Americans in Chinese cities and Singapore. The "matter" was Chinese displeasure with the United States' insistence that China sign a new exclusion treaty.

On August 24, the *Inquirer* ran a short notice saying Kang had returned after a two-month absence. It indicated he would remain "for a short time, in order to inspect a number of points of interest which he failed to see on his first visit."²³⁵ The boycott issue came up again when Kang linked ending the boycott to the U.S. government taking action "to protect [Chinese] merchants from indignities at the customs houses." The *Inquirer* believed that "it is possible that [Kang's] voice will be the decisive one in negotiations now pending regarding the Chinese boycott of American goods and the Chinese reign of terror in New York's Chinatown." Several delegations of Chinese merchants met with Kang at his Hotel Walton lodging, some to discuss the boycott. Others, from New York, came to talk about the increase in killings of rival secret society members in New York City. Kang's English-speaking secretaries declined "to impart any information regarding the outcome of his various conferences."²³⁶ As to why New York Chinese would go to Philadelphia to see Kang when he had just left their city, a clue may be the escalating tong violence in New York City between August 6 and August 20. It began with targeted killings of On Leong gang members by Hip Sing gunmen, all the more shocking because the victims sat in the audience at the previously neutral and safe territory of the Chinese Theatre on Doyers Street, where Kang and his daughter had given speeches.²³⁷

233 "Chinese Reformer Coming Again," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, August 20, 1905, 6.

234 "Americans in Danger Through China's Boycott," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, August 21, 1905, 1, 4.

235 "Chinese Reformer Here Again," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, August 24, 1905, 9.

236 "Reformer May Put Stop to Boycott," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, August 25, 1905, 4.

237 Scott Seligman, *Tong Wars: The Untold Story of Vice, Money and Murder in New York's Chinatown* (New York: Viking, 2016), 113–19. Thanks to Seligman for suggesting the

The New York delegation to Philadelphia could well have been leaders from the local chapter, because Joseph Singleton and others would later lead mediation resulting in a “pause in Chinatown killings” in March 1906, an occasion celebrated at the Port Arthur Restaurant, below Baohuanghui headquarters on Mott Street.²³⁸

16 New Haven, New York, and New Hampshire

After leaving Philadelphia, Kang is next documented on August 29 at the Hotel Pequot in New Haven, Connecticut, where he rested for several days and prepared for an excursion to the White Mountains in New Hampshire.²³⁹ Since such a trip apparently required more appropriate attire, Kang wrote to Tongbi in South Windsor, inviting her to accompany him north and to bring one or two sets of Western clothes (*yi'er xizhuang*), because the ones sent earlier did not fit.²⁴⁰ From New Haven, Kang traveled west for a boat trip up the Hudson River to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York. There he met the superintendent and reviewed the cadets on September 2 before returning to New York City. It is possible that at the academy, Kang met two Chinese cadets who had been appointed in June and would graduate in 1909. They were the first cadets from China at the academy, specially appointed by President Roosevelt, and certainly notable among the corps.²⁴¹

Chinese Theatre Massacre as the reason New York members preferred to meet Kang in Philadelphia.

238 “Tong Killings Pause and Chinatown Feasts,” *New York Times*, March 29, 1906, 9. The toastmaster was Baohuanghui chapter president Joseph Singleton and others present involved in the Baohuanghui were Fung Mow and Jue Chue.

239 Kang Youwei in New Haven, Connecticut, to Kang Tongbi, August 29, 1905, no. 康-8(1), Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

240 Kang Youwei in New Haven, Connecticut, to Kang Tongbi, August 31, 1905, no. 康-8(2), Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

241 Lo, “Sequel to Autobiography,” 199. Kang’s visit was not officially documented in Military Academy records, but most likely he made the visit unannounced (letter of Assistant Archivist, U.S. Military Academy Archives, to Robert Worden, February 14, 1972). Ying H. Wen (graduate 4831, class rank 25) 837, and Ting C. Chen (graduate 4852, class rank 103) 840 were at USMA from June 15, 1905, to June 11, 1909, when they graduated but were not commissioned. See Charles Braden, ed., *Biographical Register of the Officers and Graduates of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York, Since its Establishment in 1802*, Supplement V, 1900–1910 (West Point: Association of Graduates, U.S. Military Academy, 1910), 837, 840. Also see “Chinese at West Point,” *Kansas City Star*, July 23, 1905, 15, quoting from the *New York World* and identifying the cadets as Ting Chia Chen and Ying Hsing Wen.

Kang and Zhou Guoxian returned to New England in early September for a scenic respite in the White Mountains in northern New Hampshire. They took the train to Bethlehem, New Hampshire, and stayed about a week at the luxurious Maplewood Hotel. At some point, perhaps while he was in the White Mountains, Kang inscribed four pages of memories about his teacher, Zhu Ciqi, on Maplewood Hotel letterhead.²⁴² Later in the year, before leaving the United States, Kang wrote a long poem in which he said that he had been to “the White Mountains in the east and Yellowstone in the west.”²⁴³

Before Kang left the East Coast, he wrote, evidently with Yung Wing’s assistance, the first of three lengthy essays he sent to Roosevelt over the years. In a cover letter, he mentioned his June visit to the White House, and asked for the president’s consideration in the matter discussed in two enclosed “memorandums,” both of which were entitled: “Reasons Why the Dowager Empress of China Should Be Requested to Abdicate.”²⁴⁴ The memoranda were detailed indictments of Cixi on political, moral, and philosophical grounds. The memoranda also summarized the efforts of various reform-minded individuals opposed to the Empress Dowager’s conservatism since the 1880s, including, of course, himself and Liang Qichao. Kang implied in the cover letter that he had discussed all this with Roosevelt during their first June meeting. No mention was made in the letter or memoranda of Chinese immigration problems in the United States, a subject on which Kang would discuss at great length in his second letter to Roosevelt in January 1906.

17 Chicago

The much-diminished traveling party—Kang, Zhou Guoxian, and Tom Leung—headed for Chicago, through New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Indiana. The *Chicago Tribune* records his arrival on September 13 “to inspect the

²⁴² The letterhead noted is in the Tom Leung Collection (no. 346), UCLA Library Digital Collections, <https://digital.library.ucla.edu/catalog/ark:/21198/zz0025326k>, accessed July 7, 2021. Also see Kang Youwei, “Zhu Zhifu Zhuan” 朱之絨傳 [Biography of Zhu Zhifu], early September 1905, no. 346 in Fang and Cai, 95.

²⁴³ Poem, *Kang Youwei Quanyi*, vol. 12, 268: “Dongfang deng Baishan, xi you Huangshiyuan” 東方登白山, 西游黃石園; thank you to Chi Jeng Chang for this source.

²⁴⁴ Kang to Roosevelt, September 14, 1905, with nineteen-page enclosure; Miscellaneous Records of the Department of State, RG 59, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/153673938?objectPage=378>, accessed May 24, 2024.

work of the Chicago chapter of the association," leaving for Portland, Oregon that night.²⁴⁵

As happened during his visit to Chicago in May, Kang still found cantankerous would-be followers there. After his departure, he wrote to Liang Qixun that he "strongly blamed the ten people in Chicago" and asked "Why were they so angry?"²⁴⁶ He told Liang that in all other cities people signed on with the Baohuanghui "immediately after my speeches" and that "at the least more than one hundred members signed up in each chapter." He observed that the "Chicago people wanted to join Lianwei[hui] (Mutual Defense Association)," implying that they were motivated more by self-interest provided by the protection of this "social insurance plan" than by the political aims of the Baohuanghui. In the end, he complained, the Chicago chapter did not establish a Lianweihui and failed to issue Baohuanghui badges or submit funds to support the anti-American boycott.²⁴⁷ "None of the other chapters act as strange. Why?" Kang wrote to Liang again just before he left the United States in late November. He confirmed that "As to the association affairs in Chicago, nothing has been achieved" and that all other Baohuanghui chapters "are doing okay."²⁴⁸ It would not be the end of his frustrations with Chicago.

18 Westward Bound

Kang's party arrived in St. Paul, Minnesota, on September 14 and may have been received by the local Baohuanghui chapter, which was founded in 1904.²⁴⁹

²⁴⁵ "Chinese Reformer in Chicago," *Chicago Tribune*, September 14, 1905, 5, which reports the Chicago Baohuanghui headquarters at 333 Clark, but the *Chicago News* coverage of the chapter, often sourcing Chen Baixin, consistently gives the address as 311 Clark; the incorporation and dissolution papers use 313 as the street number: Chinese Empire Reform Association, 313 South Clark Street, Chicago, incorporated July 25, 1903, dissolved May 24, 1937; Illinois Secretary of State Papers, Box 900, no. 49527.

²⁴⁶ Kang Youwei to Liang Qixun, Chicago, September 25, 1905, in Zhang, *Kang Youwei Juan*, 5–6.

²⁴⁷ However, see "Boycott Urged Here," *Chicago Daily News*, August 9, 1905, 10, which boasts of the local Baohuanghui chapter's fundraising for the boycott with "the first assessments to meet the expenses ... levied in Chicago."

²⁴⁸ Kang Youwei, San Antonio, Texas, to Liang Qixun, Chicago, November 25, 1905, in Zhang, *Kang Youwei Juan*, 6.

²⁴⁹ Lo, "Sequel to Autobiography," 199. "Yihui you Kai" 義會又開 [Another Righteous Association Begins], *Zhongguo Weixin Bao*, August, 4, 1904. The announcement in this newspaper states that "St. Paul is full of patriotism and ready to do battle for a just cause." More than one hundred membership certificates were issued, and an office would be set up in the building of the restaurant Kwong Tung Low.

His letter to Roosevelt, however, was dated September 14, with New York as its place of origin and a return address for further correspondence at the Chinese Reform News Publishing Company, 7-8 Chatham Square in New York City.²⁵⁰ The cover letter was handwritten in English (most likely by Zhou Guoxian), with Kang's signature, and apparently was predated to September 14, by which time they were in St. Paul.

After St. Paul, the group traveled to Billings, Montana, arriving there on September 15 with a welcome by "a large delegation of local reformers led by a brass band."²⁵¹ After a brief reception, Kang gave a speech interpreted by Zhou Guoxian at the Billings City Hall, to a large crowd, "principally Americans." He was introduced by Judge Oscar Fletcher Goddard and spoke about Cixi's resistance to reform and modernization, pointedly referring to her opposition to exploiting China's "vast wealth of minerals" and "underdeveloped agricultural resources." From Billings the travelers moved on to Livingston, the northern gateway to Yellowstone National Park, which they entered on September 18.²⁵² Kang "complained of the mountains that were treeless, the rocks that were 'wizened yellow in color', the heat that made the place feel like a boiler."²⁵³ He concluded his unhappy comments with "my visit lasted for a total of six days: my interest sagged and petered out." During his time at Yellowstone, Kang reportedly wore "the regulation American costume" but after he left the park, he reverted to his traditional Chinese clothes "because they are more comfortable."²⁵⁴ Kang seems to have preferred Western clothes for these outdoor excursions, as he had urged Tongbi to have his "grey Western clothes" altered

250 Kang to Roosevelt, September 14, 1905, RG 59, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/153673938?objectPage=378>, accessed May 24, 2024. Handwritten cover letter dated "New York, Sept. 14, 1905," signed by Kang in a different hand; asks for reply sent care of Chinese Reform News, 7-8 Chatham Square, New York City; stamped received by Department of State Sept. 21, 1905; sent first to White House, forwarded to State. When Kang left the East Coast in September, he fully intended to return to New York City, which, through the newspaper *Zhongguo Weixin Bao* [Chinese Reform News] was as close to a U.S. base for him as anywhere.

251 "Tells His Hearers of Chinese Reform Party," *Anaconda Standard*, September 16, 1905, 4; "Americans Interested," *Billings Gazette*, September 19, 1905, 7.

252 Lo, "Sequel to Autobiography," 199, which says Kang arrived in Yellowstone September 18 and "spent six days there," leaving on September 24. *Helena Independent*, September 24, 1905, 8, announced Kang's arrival in Helena on September 23. Kang used inclusive counting, and thus his stay was five days in common Western usage.

253 Kang Tongbi, "Supplement to the Chronological Autobiography of Mr. Kang Youwei," mimeographed edition, 1958, 73a, cited in Hsiao, *A Modern China and a New World*, 29–30.

254 "Chinese Reform Party is Going to Spokane," *Anaconda Standard*, September 30, 1905, 7.

and quickly sent to Philadelphia so that he would have them for his White Mountains trip.²⁵⁵

19 Helena and Butte, Montana

Kang Youwei's arrival in Helena, Montana, on September 23 was styled as the enactment of "a cross section of the great reform movement which Chinese enthusiasts believe will result in the regeneration and reformation of China."²⁵⁶ The local press described the movement as having the purpose of "revolution in China, a peaceful revolution ... but a revolution, they have in mind, notwithstanding." Kang gave a series of lectures, to both Chinese and non-Chinese audiences, attended by such notable public officials as Helena's Democratic Mayor Richard R. Purcell, who introduced Kang at one of his speeches, and Montana Governor Joseph K. Toole, also a Democrat, who was described as an "interested listener."²⁵⁷ Helena was the lead city for Montana's twelve Baohuanghui chapters and the first to be incorporated, in June 1901, through the efforts of Liang Qitian and his Portland aide Gong Hee.²⁵⁸ Indeed, Montana Chinese were in the core leadership when the Baohuanghui was founded in 1899, and Tom Leung was advised to make contact with the "loyal and righteous" Li Tengfang (Ting Fong) of Helena and Guan Lai (Quon Louie, Quon Loy) of Butte after he arrived in the United States that year.²⁵⁹

Kang, Zhou, and Tom were escorted from Helena to Butte, Montana, by three officers of the Butte Baohuanghui on September 26.²⁶⁰ The six were

255 Kang Youwei, New York to Kang Tongbi, August 20, 1905, no. Z-42, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection. This is one of several letters to Tongbi asking for his suits of Western clothes.

256 "Kang Yu Wei in Helena," *Helena Independent*, September 24, 1905, 8.

257 "Wei's Plea to His People His Mission in America," *Helena Independent*, September 26, 1905, 8. Also "Will Speak at Auditorium, Kang Yu Wei Will Recite History of the Reform Movement in China," *Helena Independent*, September 25, 1905, 8. Attendance at the public meeting was estimated at 600–700; the text of Kang's speech was given in the former article.

258 Mark Johnson, "Becoming Chinese in Montana: The Chinese Empire Reform Association and National Identity among Montana's Chinese Communities," *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 64, no. 4 (Winter 2014): 64. The Chinese Empire Reform Society of Montana, based in Helena, was incorporated June 25, 1901. See Chapter 3 for more on Liang and Gong's organizing efforts.

259 Liang Yingliu 梁應騷 to Tan Zhangxiao, December 8, 1899, no. 501 in Fang and Cai, 331.

260 "His Excellency Kang Yu Wei Visits Butte," *Anaconda Standard*, September 27, 1905, 7.

met at the railroad depot by local Chinese and a band. The first stop was the Baohuanghui headquarters on Colorado Street, which was festooned with flags and flowers. The local press, perhaps not knowing just how to report the proceedings, said that after lunch “a general jollification took place.” The same article reported that Kang, through his interpreter, said of the Chinese boycott of American goods that “it is more of a misunderstanding than an attempt to shut out American goods, although it can be said that it is in line with the reform now in progress.” In an interesting twist of interpretation, Kang also reportedly said of the treatment of Chinese in the United States that it was not the government that was to blame but “the people and the politicians.” The government, said Kang, “wants to do what is right and fair ... but they realize that this is a country of politicians whose wishes must be catered to by those seeking office.” That spring, however, Montana was among four states where the U.S. government had begun a “special census” of the Chinese population, with Chinese inspectors attempting to document each Chinese person in Montana and check whether they were properly registered, allowing immediate arrests and deportation for any that lacked documentation. While Roosevelt’s June executive order would stop the special census from further implementation, Montana newspapers were full of news of “rounding up chinks,” as the order did not take effect until 1906.²⁶¹

At this juncture, Kang said there were “several million” Baohuanghui members through the world, with 10,000 in Japan and others scattered throughout European and other countries.²⁶² But, he explained, “There are fewer members in the United States than any other country for the reason that the statutes of the United States contain a Chinese exclusion act, which prohibits our countrymen from coming here.” The distribution of Baohuanghui members was quite different in reality, with only one known chapter in Europe and far more chapters in the United States than in any other country. Given that there are records of 22,000 membership badges produced in 1905, most of them destined for American chapters, the number of members likely was greater as well.²⁶³

261 See Chapter 6 and Mark T. Johnson, *The Middle Kingdom under the Big Sky: A History of the Chinese Experience in Montana* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2022), 97–99, 118. Johnson notes Montana’s Chinese population decreased 23 percent between Liang Qichao’s visit in 1903 and Kang’s in 1905.

262 “His Excellency Kang Yu Wei Visits Butte,” *Anaconda Standard*, September 27, 1905, 7.

263 The number 22,000 comes from the invoices for badge production sent by Hartford jeweler Ernst Schall to Kang Tongbi between March and September of 1905. Invoices, Ernst Schall Co., 941 Main Street, Hartford, Conn. to Miss Tung Pih Kang, dated March 7 to September 13, 1905, no. Z-16, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.



FIGURE 50 At the Original Copper Mine, Butte, Montana, September 29, 1905. Kang Youwei and Tom Leung are midway up the stairs, Zhou Guoxian on the stair below, all holding candles that lit their way into the mine. Tom Leung's handwritten comments on right.

While in Butte, Kang and his party descended 2,000 feet into the Original Copper Mine. Notably, according to historian Mark Johnson, "as Chinese workers were prohibited from laboring in [underground] mines, Kang and his group were likely the first Chinese individuals to descend into the shafts."²⁶⁴ Making their visit even more unusual, they were joined in this tour by the cast of the stage adaptation of Lew Wallace's 1880 historical novel *Ben Hur: A Tale of the Christ*, which was being performed locally at that time. The occasion was memorialized in a striking group photo.²⁶⁵ The same day, September 29, Kang

²⁶⁴ Johnson, *The Middle Kingdom under the Big Sky*, 90, 192, indicates that Montana law and custom excluded Chinese from underground mining and not until World War II were Chinese employed at Anaconda Copper Mining Company.

²⁶⁵ Lo, "Sequel to Autobiography," 199, mentions the copper mine visit. The photograph, with the caption "The Ben Hur Co. at The Original Mine Butte Mont September 29, 1905" is photo no. 康-5, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection. Tom Leung wrote on the cardboard mat of his copy of the same photo: "Mr. Nanhai personally descended 2,000 feet deep into the mine" (collection of Jane Leung Larson).

witnessed a Western Military Academy militia drill in Chinatown “and paid them a high compliment for efficiency.” The drill was followed by a farewell banquet at the home of Baohuanghui leader Guan Lai. On September 30, Kang, Zhou, and Tom departed for Spokane, Washington.²⁶⁶

20 Washington and Oregon

On October 1, 1905, Kang, “his bodyguard, Arthur Jones,” Zhou Guoxian, and Tom Leung arrived in Spokane via the Northern Pacific Railroad.²⁶⁷ Kang was interested in Spokane because it had been founded only some thirty-two years earlier yet had a rapid and tremendous growth. The usual round of speeches and banquets took place and much was written on Kang’s Hundred Days of Reform. Both Kang and Zhou were interviewed. As he had done in several cities before, Zhou demonstrated his Western education by commenting on various facets of American society. This time, after a lengthy interview with Kang, Zhou accompanied the reporter to the hotel bar and asked the bartender if he could make a mint julep.

“We can make anything,” said [the bartender].

“That is the spirit of America,” said the young Chinaman. “When you go into a bar in England and ask the man if he can make a drink he will tell you that he will try. When you go into a bar in this country and ask if he can make a drink he will say ‘sure.’ Nothing is impossible in America. That spirit is what makes it so great.”

Among events during the Spokane visit was a tea party held in Kang’s honor at the home of Dr. William L. Hall, a former missionary to China.²⁶⁸ On October 4, Kang, Tom, Zhou, and “one attendant” traveled to Walla Walla, where they

²⁶⁶ “China’s Great Leader Coming to Spokane,” *Spokane Chronicle*, September 30, 1905, 1.

²⁶⁷ “Kang Yu Wei to Educate the Chinese,” *Spokane Spokesman-Review*, October 2, 1905, 10; “Kwong Yu Wei is Coming, President of Reform Association Arrives Today,” *Spokane Spokesman-Review*, October 1, 1905, 9. Arthur Jones may be pictured alongside Kang, Zhou, and Tom in the Original Copper Mine photo. Kang’s regular bodyguard, Rupert Humer, may have rejoined Kang later in October. Humer returned to New York from Europe on October 12 after visiting his ailing father: New York Passenger and Arrival List, Rupert Humer, single, 20 years old, left Liverpool, October 5, 1905, arrived New York, October 12, 1905, from Liverpool on the S.S. *Baltic*.

²⁶⁸ “Kong Yu Wai is Chinese Guest,” *Spokane Spokesman-Review*, October 4, 1905, 7, which features a drawing of “Chew Kok Hean.”

visited the Baohuanghui headquarters and Kang spoke to the local Chinese at the Odd Fellows' Temple.²⁶⁹ He also toured the classrooms and laboratories of Whitman College, a private coeducational institution that aspired to be the "Harvard of the Northwest," and addressed the students in the college chapel.²⁷⁰ He praised the practicality of American education and spoke of his belief in the equality of men and women. Smiling at the women in the audience, "I believe in women's suffrage," he said, "because women have suffered so much," bringing applause and laughter from the students. He described his campaign to abolish footbinding, and again "convulsed the audience" when he said, "Now they have as big feet as your women." The next day, the same Walla Walla newspaper featured Kang Tongbi in its "Notable Women" column.²⁷¹ The sole Chinese in Whitman's student body, Li Yiyu (Yade Yee Lee), so impressed Kang by his solemn demeanor and direct questions about how to uplift China that Kang offered to support Li's studies but was "politely refused." Kang wrote to Tongbi: "I have never met anyone like him in America."²⁷²

Proceeding southwest, Kang passed through Pendleton, Oregon, on October 5, where he spoke briefly to reporters and Chinese residents before taking the next train to Portland.²⁷³ This was Kang's second trip in 1905 to Portland, the lead chapter in the Northwest division of the Baohuanghui, incorporating Oregon, Washington, and Idaho, and, according to Liang Qichao in 1903, had twenty-six chapters. The party resided at the Portland Hotel and intended to visit the Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition.²⁷⁴ Whether they did so is unknown, but in Kang's only press interview, he gave the fair as the reason for his visit and would not discuss "questions now disturbing the relations between China and the United States," in other words, the boycott. Kang had come to realize that he and his organization were embroiled in another

269 "Noted Chinaman in City," *Walla Walla Evening Statesman*, October 4, 1905, 9.

270 "Talked at Whitman To-Day," *Walla Walla Evening Statesman*, October 6, 1905, 9.

271 "Notable Women: Kang Tung Pih, Chinese Girl Reformer," *Walla Walla Evening Statesman*, October 7, 1905, 5.

272 Kang Youwei, Portland, to Kang Tongbi, October 13, 1905, no. 康-28, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection; "Talked at Whitman To-Day," says Kang "spoke of how proud he was that one of his countrymen, Lee, was studying here in this well-known college." However, Li was in Whitman's secondary school program, Pearson's Academy; *Chinese Students' Alliance Annual Bulletin, Pacific Coast*, August 1908, 25 [Li Yiyu 李奕榆 is rendered Yade Yee Lee].

273 "Famous Chinaman Hong You Wai Passed through Pendleton," *East Oregonian* (Pendleton), October 5, 1905, 8.

274 Kang Youwei, Hotel Dacres, Walla Walla, to Kang Tongbi, South Windsor, October 5, 1905, no. 康-29, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection. "Won't Discuss Boycott," *Portland Oregonian*, October 9, 1905, 7.

controversy with the U.S. government that had fallen out of his control. He rarely spoke again to reporters until he arrived in the southwestern states more than a month later.

Around this time, Kang received a letter from Homer Lea. He soon relayed to Tongbi that Lea had warned him that “some people in Washington” had accused the Western Military Academy “of teaching soldiers to rise up and create chaos,” the military schools in California were forced to shut down, and Kang was implicated.²⁷⁵ “The victims of this trouble” (presumably the organizers of the military schools) were “afraid of a big disturbance” and had advised Kang to leave the United States and go to Canada or Mexico. Kang told Tongbi that if she were summoned to a meeting with President Roosevelt, it would concern this investigation of the Western Military Academy. Kang was rattled by news of an August earthquake in Macau that had sent his terrified mother and wife to Hong Kong. He also heard of rumors about disillusioned Baohuanghui leaders in New York and that it was being said “that Americans know that I am behind the anti-American boycott.” After some consideration, Kang wrote, “there is such a stream of rumors, I feel uneasy and want to go to Mexico.” He had not decided whether to first return to New York, where he had left his belongings and planned to oversee the establishment of a bank (the future Huayi Bank).

In Portland, Kang also met the “Chinese Joan of Arc,” Xue Jinqin, whose education he had been supporting since she arrived in San Francisco in 1902. Xue, the first woman to give a public speech in China, had given her word to Liang Qichao and Kang that she would return to China upon graduation and as a rare female “returned student,” join Cixi’s court with the intention of assassinating her.²⁷⁶ Kang had Tom Leung give Xue a \$100 farewell gift, travel funds, and continued educational support.²⁷⁷ When Tom returned home to Los Angeles from Portland, Xue probably accompanied him, as she lived with Tom and his family for the next three years while she attended high school and cared for Tom’s children.

275 Kang Youwei to Kang Tongbi, October 5, 1905; and Kang Youwei, Portland, Oregon to Kang Tongbi, October 13, 1905, no. 康-28, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

276 See Chapter 4.

277 Tan Zhangxiao, *Zhengxinlu* 徵信錄 [Report on Financial Management] (San Francisco: Guohun Ribao, January 7, 1909) in Fang and Cai, 240. In this report, Xue Jinqin 薛錦琴 is referred to by her alias, Wushi 五十: “October 16: paid 52.05 for Wushi’s travel expense to Portland; \$75.50 for Wushi to spend; gave \$100 to Wushi as a farewell present; paid \$16 to the hotel where Wushi stayed; gave Wushi \$50 to pay for her and her brother’s tuition; also paid \$128.50 for Wushi and her brother’s tuition from [end of September to end of December].”

Another significant Baohuanghui project was initiated in Portland. Tom Leung had convinced Kang that he could raise funds to support Baohuanghui students abroad with the profits from a successful restaurant. Kang made his first investment in Portland, presenting \$7,296.07 in Commercial Corporation shares to Tom upon their parting on October 15.²⁷⁸ Thus began the fateful saga of the King Joy Lo restaurant in Chicago, which ultimately would estrange Kang from Tom and contribute to the rapid decline of the Baohuanghui in 1909.²⁷⁹

21 Idaho, Utah, Colorado, and New Mexico

Leaving Portland, Kang, Zhou, another unidentified interpreter, and a White man (perhaps bodyguard Arthur Jones) traveled by train to Baker City, Oregon, arriving there on October 19 to be met by a procession and the White Swan band, as well as two officers of the Boise, Idaho, Baohuanghui.²⁸⁰ They were feted at a banquet at Baker City chapter headquarters and entertained by the concert band. With his Boise escorts, Kang traveled to Nampa, Idaho, and were met there by a larger delegation from Boise, and were hosted at the local Chinese temple. They then proceeded east twenty more miles to Boise.²⁸¹ On October 20, they visited the state capitol and met with Republican Governor Frank R. Gooding.²⁸² Gooding responded to Kang's "rapid fire" questions concerning the state's elective system of government, saying "that all officers are merely servants of the people." In particular, Kang asked about the sources and amount of state revenues, who collected them, and how surplus funds were handled. "He was much impressed with the fact that the people keep a close watch of their public servants, and that rigid economy is insisted upon," perhaps reinforcing Kang's view that government could more easily collect taxes if citizens could elect their representatives. After his interview with the governor,

278 "October 15: received [Commercial Corporation] shares [Shang gu] of \$7,296.07 (given to me by the master when we parted in Portland)." Tan Zhangxiao, *Zhengxinlu* in Fang and Cai, 240.

279 See Chapters 5 and 9.

280 "Prince Kong Yu Wei Visits at Baker City," *Oregon Journal* (Portland), October 20, 1905, 2; "Exiled Oriental Due in Boise This Morning," *Idaho Statesman*, October 19, 1905, 5. It is possible the assistant interpreter is Quong Sin Wah, as later in the journey, he is identified as accompanying Kang as interpreter in Boise, Idaho and New Orleans. "Chinese Colony Will Greet Dr. Kang Yu Wei at Train," *Times-Picayune*, November 11, 1905, 5. Li Meijin, head of the Northwest Baohuanghui division, who spoke English, may also have come with Kang from Portland, since Idaho was a part of that division.

281 "Exiled Oriental Due in Boise This Morning," *Idaho Statesman*, October 19, 1905, 5.

282 "Kang Yu Wei and Mr. Chew Kok Hean," *Idaho Statesman*, October 21, 1905, 3.

Kang was taken to the Baohuanghui headquarters. When he visited the capitol, Kang had been “gorgeously attired in ultramarine blue silk” but he later emerged onto the street dressed “like any other Americanized Oriental.”

Once again wearing his blue silk ensemble, on October 24 Kang visited the Idaho State Penitentiary. There he and Zhou met Yee Wee, who had been convicted on circumstantial evidence of murdering a fellow Chinese eight years earlier. He had been sentenced to be hanged, but the sentence was commuted to life imprisonment. Kang agreed to seek a conditional pardon for Yee. The *Idaho Daily Statesman* explained that the governor of Oregon had acceded to a similar request by Kang in April and had pardoned Wong Yik. Immediately after leaving the penitentiary, Kang and Zhou went to see Governor Gooding to plead Yee’s case. Gooding said he would “do the best I can for you” while noting that America’s laws are just and “are made to be obeyed.”²⁸³ Yee was pardoned in October 1906.²⁸⁴

Kang made an abrupt change in travel plans while in Boise. As of October 19, Kang still planned to return to New York City to handle the challenges to the Western Military Academy in New York and California. He wrote to Tongbi: “The Gancheng [Western Military Academy] matters have all been caused by that traitor Lea. I have sent Zhangxiao [Tom Leung] there [Los Angeles] to settle the problem, and now all is well, but the chapters are all shocked by this incident. I’m going back to New York tomorrow or the day after tomorrow and will make decisions once I’m back.”²⁸⁵ On October 20, in a dramatic turnaround, Kang wrote Tongbi that he had learned from Tang Mingsan that Sun Yatsen was expected back in New York.²⁸⁶ For Kang, this posed a great danger for himself, yet he realized that it was an opportunity for his allies to carry out Sun’s assassination. “The only reason I would return to New York is to open the bank. But I am afraid it is not proper to be in such a dangerous place (and besides the anti-American boycott has been exposed), so I will definitely

283 “Doors of Pen May Swing Wide for Yee Wee, Sentenced for Life,” *Idaho Statesman*, October 25, 1905, 5.

284 In December 1905, a group of local Chinese met with Idaho Secretary of State Will H. Gibson to inquire about the status of Kang’s request that Yee be pardoned. They were informed that the State Pardon Board would take up the case in January. The case, after “a full and complete investigation” by the board, was finalized in October 1906. “State House News: The Pardon Board,” *Idaho Statesman*, December 2, 1905, 10; and “Chink Yee Wee is Given Liberty,” *Idaho Statesman*, October 4, 1906, 5.

285 Kang Youwei in Boise to Kang Tongbi, October 19, 1905, no. 康-24, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

286 Kang Youwei in Boise to Kang Tongbi, October 20, 1905, no. 康-30, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection. See Chapter 4 for more on this letter and the plot to assassinate Sun.

not go back to the East. I will go to Mexico soon.” This letter ends by pleading with Tongbi to work with Tang Mingsan and others (including Yung Wing) “to pursue [Sun] and wipe him out and make sure that you eliminate him.” Zhou Guoxian wrote Tongbi on October 23: “Father says probably he will not return to New York, but go to Mexico from St. Louis.”²⁸⁷

Not only did Kang shun New York, he retreated into the wilderness, as was his impulse when public life became overwhelming. From Boise, Kang and his one remaining travel companion, Zhou Guoxian, traveled by train southeast to Ogden and Salt Lake City, Utah, and then further southeast to Grand Junction and Montrose, Colorado.²⁸⁸ By October 29, they had reached Ouray, Colorado, where they began a rigorous overland journey crossing the Rocky Mountains from Ouray to Aztec, New Mexico, the site of an old irrigation system that Kang had been told resembled China’s and might indicate that Chinese had been there long ago. Kang traveled by train, and, when the mountains were too rugged, transferred to a large carriage pulled by six horses, following the Silverton Trail that twisted up to the 11,000-foot summit of Red Mountain Pass.²⁸⁹ He observed indigenous people in their plank homes and miners camping in tents and panning gold. At the summit, Kang loudly sang a seventy-verse poem extolling the rich resources and rapid growth of the United States, of which excerpts follow:

... Even though it was late to be founded, no other country in the world was established so quickly as the United States.

Carrying a sword, it opened up territory, confronting no obstacles to become an immense country.

The reason is machinery, which has built up a civilization—railways have shrunk the land and the mountains ...

I was astonished by the speed of [America’s] opening up and evolution and by the timely birth of Washington and Lincoln.

It’s unparalleled in history in terms of “little effort, big effect”...

Every day, I look at the map, and every evening I study the mountains and the rivers.

287 Zhou Guoxian 周國賢 in Boise to Kang Tongbi, October 23, 1905, no. E-25, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

288 Lo, “Sequel to Autobiography,” 199. No American press coverage of Kang has been found in Utah newspapers although both Salt Lake City and Ogden had Baohuanghui chapters.

289 Kang Youwei (Lou Yulie 樓宇烈, ed.), *Kang Nanhai Zibian Nianpu (Wai er Zhong) 康南海自編年譜: 外二種* [Chronological Autobiography of Kang Youwei with Two Additional Sections] (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1992), 126–28. This poem is in *Liaotianshi Shiji* in *Kang Youwei Quanjī*, vol. 12, 267–69.

I am very envious of Washington and have been thinking about opening up a new heaven (*kai xin tian*) ...

Suddenly, I am standing alone on the snowy peaks of the Rocky Mountains.²⁹⁰

When Kang spoke of “opening up a new heaven,” he was referring as much to America’s territorial expansion as to his political and utopian visions for China. “Great Britain and Spain won’t perish after 10,000 years because their seeds and roots are everywhere. We Chinese can learn lessons about national power from history—in the struggle for wealth and power, don’t give up the wilderness.” In line with his thought that Chinese needed to colonize unpopulated areas of the world, he imagined, “Tens of millions of people can immigrate quickly and establish a new China. This method will save the old country and found a new country, and my people will be safe and strong. Although that will not reach the happiness of Datong, I hope it will at least save those many poor people.” During his Rocky Mountain journey, Kang made plans for further travel to Brazil and Mexico, where he would explore these resource-rich and population-poor countries as more hospitable lands for Chinese immigration than Canada or the United States.²⁹¹

From Silverton, Kang and Zhou took the narrow-gauge mountain railroad built to haul gold and silver from the productive Rockies to the town of Durango, Colorado, and crossed the border for the short trip to Aztec, New Mexico. Kang visited the ancient stone ruins of an eleventh- and twelfth-century walled city built by ancestors of the Pueblo Indians in Aztec and wrote that the two- and three-story buildings were like those in China; presumably he also saw the irrigation ditches from the Animas River and the rice paddies that had brought him over the Rockies to this small town in search of historical connections of the Americas to China.

Kang left New Mexico by train on November 1, traveling westward via Mancos and then east to Denver. He compared the lush mountain scenery to Guilin’s, considered the most beautiful in China.²⁹² On November 2, he arrived in Denver and then traveled on to Kansas City and St. Louis, arriving on November 6 where he was able to receive mail and spent considerable time

290 *Liaotianshi Shiji, Kang Youwei Quanji*, vol. 12, 267–68. Kang’s quotes in the following paragraph also come from this poem.

291 Lo, “Sequel to Autobiography,” 200. See Chapter 8.

292 Kang, *Kang Nanhai Zibian Nianpu*, 128, and *Liaotianshi Shiji, Kang Youwei Quanji*, vol. 12, 267.

corresponding with his followers.²⁹³ Zhou Guoxian, identified in the press as Chew Kai Ho, gave a wide-ranging interview to the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, while Kang slept, and pointedly stated, “We don’t want to embarrass the United States by preaching open revolution, and so we have dispensed with our military corps.”²⁹⁴ In an October 20 letter from Boise, Kang told Tongbi about his much-desired assassination of Sun Yatsen and suggested how he would finalize these plans: “After I get to St. Louis, I will ask for [Tang] Mingsan or [Kang] Jiyu [Kang Youpei] to come see me. After telling them what to do, I will leave. I might also telegraph you to come.”²⁹⁵ However, subsequent letters from Kang do not mention meeting with Tongbi or other members to plot Sun’s assassination. Rumors persisted that Sun had arrived under cover in New York, and Kang decided firmly that he would not return there as planned.²⁹⁶ Instead, Kang and Zhou left St. Louis, with what the *Post-Dispatch* described as “several tons of baggage” for points south on the afternoon of November 10.²⁹⁷

22 New Orleans

Kang and Zhou, along with another secretary, Linn Chew Sang (C. S. Linn, Lin Zhaosheng), took the Louisville and Nashville Railroad to New Orleans, arriving there on November 11.²⁹⁸ Kang’s publicists in New Orleans did a good job of advance news on his arrival. Two articles appeared in the *Times-Picayune*, one on November 8 and another on November 11, and Kang contributed in his usual voluble way, now signaling greater confidence that he could speak freely in the South, distant from those who could cause him trouble.²⁹⁹

293 Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, November 7, 1905, *Zhengxinlu* in Fang and Cai, 256: “Several letters have been received. I arrived in St. Louis yesterday and plan to enter Mexico directly via New Orleans. I will not return to New York.”

294 “Price on His Head, He Loses No Sleep,” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, November 7, 1905, 10.

295 Kang Youwei to Kang Tongbi, October 20, 1905, no. 康-30, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

296 Tang Mingsan in New York to Kang Tongbi, November 3, 1905, no. B-18, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection: “I heard that Xingzhe [Sun] has arrived under cover. Have you heard anything there?”

297 “Chinese Colony Will Greet Dr. Kang Yu Wei at Train,” *Times-Picayune*, November 11, 1905, 5, quotes a telegram sent from St. Louis on November 10, 1905, by Quomg Sin Wah [sic] saying Kang was departing at 3:50 for New Orleans on the Louisville and Nashville line.

298 “Kang Yu Wei is in Town, Chinese Reformer Welcomed to New Orleans,” *New Orleans Times-Democrat*, November 12, 1905, 15.

299 “Chinese Reform: President of the Movement to Speak Here,” *Times-Picayune*, November 8, 1905, 5; and “Chinese Colony Will Greet Dr. Kang Yu Wei at Train.”

The welcoming committee for Kang in New Orleans anticipated that five hundred members of the Chinese community—nearly 100 percent—would go to the railroad depot to greet him. The committee members wore traditional Chinese clothing and rode in eleven carriages, with two other decorated carriages reserved for Kang and his “suite.” They lodged at the St. Charles Hotel. After a brief rest there for the travelers, a reception was held in Chinatown at the Baohuanghui headquarters and included a lecture by Kang, followed by a “sumptuous feast.”³⁰⁰

As in most of the cities, a holiday was declared in Chinatown, and the press emphasized that “all those who turned out to receive [Kang] affected American dress in deference to his well-known wishes, for Kang dislikes to see those of his countrymen who have cast their fortunes with America clinging to the tight-fitting shoes and loose duds of their native land.”³⁰¹ Significantly, it was in New Orleans, near the end of the United States tour, that the strongest disclaimers were made against the press conjectures on the true nature of the reform movement and his trip. Zhou Guoxian told reporters in New Orleans:

The press of the country has made many ridiculous statements concerning the significance of the tour of his excellency ... One cannot help admiring you American newspaper reporters in your persistence in striving for information for your journals, but I have noted in some of the cities where we have visited that the reporters have drawn too much on their own imagination ...

It is not true that his excellency is arousing the Chinese in this country to a warlike spirit. Such an assertion is absurd. Neither is he organizing military companies. He is here to aid his fellow-countrymen to become better citizens of their adopted country.³⁰²

Zhou also emphasized that reformation in China would come without “a general revolution, and probably, without bloodshed.”³⁰³

On November 13, Kang and his companions met Democratic Mayor Martin Behrman, City Attorney Samuel Louis Gilmore, Assistant District Attorney St. Clair Adams, Judge Lawrence O'Donnell, and School Board President Andrew Wilson. The judge gave them a “quite replete” history of New Orleans and

300 “Chinese Colony Will Greet Dr. Kang Yu Wei at Train.”

301 “Kang Yu Wei is in Town.”

302 “Kang Yu Wei is in Town.”

303 “Kang Yu Wei, President of China Reforms, Guests of the Local Community,” *Times-Picayune*, November 12, 1905, 14.

Behrman assured them that they would be “afforded every opportunity” to see all they wanted to see in the city. This included Tulane University’s medical school, local prisons and asylums, courts, and other public institutions.³⁰⁴ The next day they visited the New Orleans Progressive Union that had been organized a few years earlier to entertain distinguished visitors to New Orleans, inspected “a few of the factories,” and held discussions in Chinatown with Baohuanghui and Zhigongtang members. Kang warned them all against pursuing revolution, because it could not succeed in overthrowing China’s government, which, ironically, he described as “too strong and too well organized,” but “would largely depend upon a people for the most part uneducated and ignorant.”³⁰⁵

In an informal discussion with local Chinese leaders at the Baohuanghui office on November 15, Kang stressed to his listeners the importance of paying close attention to propaganda work. “We want no revolutionary talk,” he said, “a revolution against a well-organized government such as China is, must fail unless there is help from some outside power and revolutionists can hope for no such help.” He continued, “Learn yourselves, and then teach others; educate, and from education will slowly evolve the reforms so ardently sought after.” As examples, Kang’s arguments against revolution and violent upheaval recalled how the French Revolution turned into anarchy and how the Confederacy’s lack of foreign assistance during the American Civil War brought about its failure. Only through reform could China be regenerated. The theme of Kang’s reform program was for gradualism and evolution in government, beginning with constitutional monarchy. The goal of revolution was to destroy the basis on which that constitutional monarchy could rise and lead to a peaceful evolution and full democracy in the future. For Kang there was no room for compromise with the radical solutions offered by revolutionaries.³⁰⁶ It seems clear that Kang’s rhetoric was animated by the growing challenge posed by Sun and his Tongmenghui, founded that August in Tokyo. Kang’s worries were reinforced by Liang Qichao who had just written to him that the Baohuanghui was losing ground in Japan to the Tongmenghui, which was recruiting Chinese students to assassinate the emperor.³⁰⁷

304 “Chinese Reformers Call on Mayor,” *Times-Picayune*, November 14, 1905, 5.

305 “Chinese Reformer Wei Warns His Countrymen Against Armed Revolution,” *Times-Picayune*, November 15, 1905, 10.

306 “Chinese Reform Chief Gains Many Converts,” *Times-Picayune*, November 16, 1905, 5.

307 Kang Youwei in Boise to Kang Tongbi, October 20, 1905, no. 康-30, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

At another Chinatown banquet, on November 16, Kang warned his fellow diners about the dangers of smoking and drinking, although his autobiographical poems often describe the pleasures of drinking wine. There was no speech that night. Instead a grand farewell banquet was planned for three days later. The article also noted that two “young men, sons of wealthy Portland, Oregon, Chinese,” were traveling with Kang “to improve their education and broaden their knowledge.”³⁰⁸ One of these men was probably Linn Chew Sang from Astoria, Oregon, who would be Kang’s secretary in Mexico, the United States, and Europe.³⁰⁹ On the evening of November 19, Kang spoke at length on the reform movement but also gave advice on the election of “grand master” of the New Orleans Baohuanghui and what the members should be doing to support the cause. Hom Kim, an English-speaking Americanized Chinese who had accompanied Kang during his New Orleans visit, was elected to head the local chapter. On November 20, Kang and the others visited several cotton mills.³¹⁰

According to the local press, Kang became familiar with two modern conveniences while in New Orleans. As his principal means of transportation he used an automobile while touring New Orleans. The other was a typewriter. He purchased one and had it delivered to his suite in the St. Charles Hotel where he studied the possibility of converting such a machine for use in typing Chinese characters.³¹¹ Prior to this time, Zhou Guoxian had typed at least one of Kang’s letters, the one to Theodore Roosevelt, dated September 14, 1905. So the technology was not new to Kang.

After a ten-day visit, one of his longer stays in an American city, Kang departed from New Orleans on the morning of November 22. Accompanying him was his new secretary and interpreter Linn Chew Sang, assistant secretary G. Low, and Louis Ott, whom Kang Tongbi had sent from Hartford to “accompany her father”; Zhou Guoxian had returned to New York but would rejoin

308 “Chinese Reform Chief,” *Times-Picayune*, November 17, 1905, 11.

309 Lin Zhaosheng 林兆生 is identified as the Astoria, Oregon representative at the New York 1907 plenary meeting. AR-5 “Diguo Xianzhenghui Daji Yiyuan Huiyi Xuli” 帝國憲政會大集議員會議序例 [Procedures for participants in Imperial Constitutional Association plenary meeting], also in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui* 康有為與保皇會 [Kang Youwei and the Baohuanghui], ed. Shanghai Shi Wenwu Baoguan Weiyuanhui 上海市文物保管委員會 (Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin Chubanshe, 1982), 488.

310 “Chinese Choose Chief: The Election of Bow Wung Wei’s Grand Master,” *Times-Picayune*, November 21, 1905, 16.

311 “Chinese Reformer Thinks He Can Adopt the American Typewriter to His Country’s Use,” *Times-Picayune*, November 19, 1905, Part 1, 4. Lo lists among the nonextant works of Kang, *Zhongguo Huozì Yīnjī* 中國活字印機 [A Movable-Type Press for Chinese], which suggests earlier thoughts on this subject; Lo, *Kang Yu-wei*, 440.

Kang in Europe in 1906.³¹² Upon his departure, Kang again warned that the Chinese boycott of American goods would not end until the American Chinese immigration laws were modified.³¹³ He emphasized that Chinese in general are well inclined toward the United States, while noting that they faced considerably more discrimination in the west than in the east and south and are treated “outrageously” by Federal immigration officials “who take advantage of the law to go beyond their actual powers.” He again expressed his expectation that President Roosevelt, the square dealer, would give a square deal to Chinese.

23 **Beaumont and San Antonio, Texas**

When the Southern Pacific Railroad “Sunset Limited” train from New Orleans stopped at Beaumont, Texas, on November 23, Kang came out on the back platform of the train to greet a crowd of Chinese who heard he would be passing through.³¹⁴ They invited him off the train for a meal and he ended up spending the night. Kang spoke at Yee Woo and Company to “practically all the Chinamen in Beaumont,” reciting his favored theme that Chinese must adapt to American society and master English so that “you will be drawn toward [Americans] and they toward you,” while educating themselves in science and other useful knowledge for China. Texas hosted at least six Baohuanghui chapters—Beaumont, Dallas, Galveston, Houston, San Antonio, and Waco.

The last major stop on the United States tour was San Antonio, where Kang again was hailed as a “Chinese Prince.” Grand preparations were made for his planned arrival on the morning of November 23. The local Chinese community, carrying banners, was on hand and accompanied by a brass band playing Western music as the Southern Pacific 8:30 AM train pulled in. Four mounted police officers stood by to lead the procession. But Kang did not arrive as planned because of the unscheduled stop in Beaumont.³¹⁵ After he did arrive, presumably on November 24, Kang spent six days inspecting oil wells and even

312 “Chinese Leader Leaves,” *Times-Picayune*, November 23, 1905, 5; “Kang Yu Wei Here,” *Beaumont [Texas] Enterprise*, November 23, 1905, 2.

313 “Kang Yu Wei Discusses Chinese Boycott,” *Times-Picayune*, November 22, 1905, 13.

314 Lo, “Sequel to Autobiography,” 201; “Kang Yu Wei Here.”

315 “To Be Here Today, Chinese Prince Is Coming To Spend Three Days With Local Celestials,” *Daily Express* (San Antonio), November 23, 1905, 16; “Prince Coming Today, Chinese Residents Are Not Disappointed Over Non-Arrival,” *Daily Express*, November 24, 1905, 14. Also see “Chinese Reformer in Texas,” *Dallas Morning News*, November 23, 1905, 5.

attended a rodeo.³¹⁶ From San Antonio, Kang traveled south to Eagle Pass, Texas, where on November 29 he crossed the Rio Grande into the Mexican state of Coahuila. He was met at Piedras Negras by the Torreón leader Wong Foon Chuck (Huang Kuanzhuo).³¹⁷ On November 30, using the return address of Torreón, Mexico, Kang wrote a letter to resolve the Western Military Academy problem by dismissing Homer Lea, stopping his monthly allowance, and abolishing his office as commander in chief.³¹⁸ Having severed his relationship with Lea and leaving behind whatever fallout there might be for the military school network, Kang arrived in the city of Torreón on December 2, 1905, to begin a new chapter of his exile tour.

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The United States phase of Kang's North American travels was at an end after nine and a half months of extensive and intensive travel and study of the complexities of American society and government. The importance of the United States tour is observed in Kang's and the Baohuanghui's involvement with the Western Military Academy controversy, his two-month stay in Los Angeles, public speeches to Chinese and, through interpreters, to non-Chinese audiences, and meetings with local dignitaries (governors, mayors, leading clergymen, and returned missionaries) almost everywhere he went. He took the lead in urging China to boycott American-made goods until the harsh treatment of Chinese by the immigration inspectors was halted. He would point out the correlation between the United States' anti-Chinese exclusion laws and the Chinese boycott of American goods. His highest level meetings, at the White House with President Roosevelt, resulted in a significant change of U.S. government policy, if not practice, in what Secretary of State Hay called the "barbarous methods." Kang urged Roosevelt to ask Empress Dowager Cixi to abdicate her position as regent, thus restoring the Guangxu Emperor to power and a clear path to a constitutional monarchy. Kang missed no opportunity to expound his views to diverse audiences on numerous topics of personal interest to himself, the Baohuanghui, and Chinese Americans.

316 Lo, "Sequel to Autobiography," 201.

317 "Huishi Jiwen: Kang Huizhang you Mei Ru Mo" 會事紀聞:康會長由美入墨 [Association News: President Kang leaves America and Arrives in Mexico], *Tung Wah Times*, February 3, 1906, 5. Kang left the United States on November 29.

318 "Homer Lea Loses His Peacock Feather," *San Francisco Chronicle*, December 30, 1905, 14. The dismissal letter to Lea from Kang in Torreón, dated November 30, 1905, was reprinted with this article. It also appeared in "Reform Army a Dream, The Chinese Wake Up," *Anaconda Standard*, January 8, 1906, 6.

Kang Youwei and the Baohuanghui in Mexico (and Latin America)

If we stick to the old lands, we will not make a living easily. If we claim new land, it will be easy to get rich. It is suitable for our Association to claim new land in Mexico, South America, and Southeast Asia, where our companies could be transplanted.

KANG YOUWEI, “Land Reclamation Division,” Baohuanghui Charter, July 1905¹



1 The Baohuanghui in Latin America

At the beginning of the twentieth century, many overseas Chinese merchants and community leaders in Latin America were actively corresponding with Baohuanghui leaders. Chief among them was Huang Zhuoxing—known by his Spanish name Alonso Quant—who was based in San Salvador, in the Central American country of El Salvador. He was also known in nearby Panama, and made his living in medicine, probably as an herbalist. Along with another Chinese immigrant in Central America—Chen Wencun—they sent several long missives in mid-1901 to mid-1902 to San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Victoria, British Columbia, the North American headquarters of the Baohuanghui.²

- 1 Kang Youwei, “Pidibu” 闢地部 [Land Reclamation Division], section 23, in “Baohuanghui Gongyi Gaiding Xinzhang” 保皇會公議改定新章 [New Baohuanghui Charter Finalized after Public Discussion], July 30, 1905, Ethnic Studies Library, University of California Berkeley, Chinese Empire Reform Association, AR-2, AAS ARC 2000/78, hereafter “Xinzhang.” Thanks to Yang Zheng for translation of this and other Latin America-related materials. Evelyn Hu-DeHart largely wrote Chapter 8.
- 2 Huang Zhuoxing (Alonso Quant) 黃卓興 and Chen Wencun 陳文邨, San Salvador, to Tan Shubin, San Francisco, June 15, 1901, no. 523/524), 284–89; Huang and Chen, San Salvador, to the Association, Victoria, July 14, 1901, no. 522, 290–92; Cen Zi'an 岑子安, Huang Zhuoxing, and Chen Wencun, San Salvador, to righteous comrades of the Los Angeles chapter, August 25, 1901, no. 526, 295–96; and Huang, no. 527 (postscript to no. 526, August

They touted their enthusiasm for the Baohuanghui, submitted unsolicited advice about how to expand the movement, and pleaded for more attention from the North American leadership. They had no qualms about writing directly to Kang's first two envoys to the Americas, Liang Qitian and Xu Qin, suggesting that they travel south to "push the work forward in Cuba, Mexico, Panama, and Peru."³ Huang, who arrived in Central America in 1895, and Chen two years later, would have made knowledgeable and trusted guides to their region had Liang and Xu visited them during their tours of Latin America in 1901. It is not known whether or not they visited Central America, but neither prospective hosts nor visitors mentioned an encounter.

Describing themselves as "second- and third-class associations" with small memberships of fifty to seventy people, their "financial resources ... limited," Huang and Chen nevertheless had raised substantial funds for the reform movement and forwarded the money to the San Francisco Baohuanghui office, the "transmitting station" for funds raised in Central and South America.⁴ Furthermore, they compared themselves favorably to the San Francisco chapter. Only 4,000, or 10 percent of the 40,000 total Chinese population in San Francisco, were Baohuanghui members, and they had bought fewer "shares" (donations) than their less well-off Central American compatriots. In June 1902, the San Salvador chapter sent a public letter to "members in your city" calling for "tremendous funds" to support military actions inside China.⁵ They suggested that members donate one month of their wages to the cause, and issued a challenge:

Members here would like to take the lead, and each has donated one month's wages (*juan yiyue gongjin*). We wish that your members there will follow suit and contribute more. We have to support the interests of the nation. We can expect to accomplish something in several months and predict that the whole situation will be under control in three years.

25, 1901), 293–94; all in Fang Zhiqin and Cai Huiyao 方志欽, 蔡惠堯, ed., *Kang Liang yu Baohuanghui: Tan Liang zai Meiguo Suocang Ziliao Huibian* 康梁與保皇會: 譚良在美國所藏資料彙編 [Kang, Liang, and the Baohuanghui: A Compilation of Materials Collected by Tom Leung in the U.S.A.] (Hong Kong: Yinhe Chubanshe, 2008).

3 Huang Zhuoxing and Chen Wencun, San Salvador, to the Association, Victoria, postscript to no. 526, August 25, 1901, no. 527 in Fang and Cai, 293–94.

4 Huang Zhuoxing and Chen Wencun, San Salvador, to the Association, Victoria, July 14, 1901, no. 522 in Fang and Cai, 290.

5 San Salvador Baohuanghui to members and comrades in your city, June 21, 1902, no. 538 in Fang and Cai, 367–68. See Chapter 4 for more on the Guangdong Rising of 1902–3.

Such large donations could solve the problem “once and for all,” presumably by restoring the emperor to his throne. Apparently, an annual donation of a month’s wages was too much for the San Salvador members, so, a few months later, they instead proposed “a monthly contribution (*yuejuan*) by all members regardless of our limited ability. We were willing to be the first chapter to do so. After we started, we wrote all the chapters telling them of our proposal and asked them to follow suit. But we never heard back from them.”⁶

According to Kang, San Francisco was in fact embarrassed into emulating the Central American fund-raising challenge, and San Salvador’s achievements eventually earned his praise. In October 1902, Kang wrote a letter from India to Canadian headquarters president Li Fuji that was duplicated for all Baohuanghui chapters:

Now San Salvador carried out a monthly contribution. In his letter, Minsheng [Chen Minsheng, head of California division in San Francisco] told me that San Francisco also did the same. If every place follows suit, we will gain financial strength, and there will be nothing that we cannot achieve.

... People in other places are all inspired by the persistence and enthusiasm of our people in Portland, Montana, and San Salvador.⁷

Nor was Kang the only one to appreciate the prodigious efforts of the San Salvador leaders in their impassioned bid for recognition. Victoria leader Li Fuji remarked that Huang and Chen “offered in-depth and farsighted views, rather than talking in clichés and truisms. I have high regard for them.”⁸ The Central American Chinese soon receded from the scene, but did not totally fade away and continued to send contributions through the rest of the decade.⁹

6 Cen Shouchang 岑壽昌 and Chen Yiqi 陳宜齊, San Salvador, to Tan Zhangxiao 譚張孝, [Los Angeles], January 3, 1903, no. 553 in Fang and Cai, 297.

7 Kang Youwei to Li Fuji 李福基, October 20, 1902, mimeographed copy of Kang’s original letter to Li, no. 548 in Fang and Cai, 42.

8 Li Fuji and Dong Qiantai 董謙泰, Victoria, to Tan Zhangxiao, [Los Angeles], September 26, 1901, no. 537 in Fang and Cai, 302–3.

9 San Salvador was among ninety-four Baohuanghui chapters making contributions to build new headquarters in Liwan 荔灣 District, Guangzhou, dated August to September 1908; twenty individuals, including Chen Wencun gave fifty-nine yuan (actual currency unknown). “Juan Jian Diguo Xianzheng Zonghuisuo Maidi Zhengxinlu” 捐建帝國憲政總會所買地徵信錄 [Financial Accounting of Donations for Buying Land for Xianzhenghui Headquarters Building], 35, original in Shanghai Museum; thanks to Connie Kang for procuring a copy of the full document listing both chapters and individual donors. An abbreviated version of the document with chapters and total donations from each city is in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui*

Elsewhere in Latin America and the Caribbean, significant Chinese communities had been established, especially in Cuba and Peru. Their overseas history began with the mass recruitment of Chinese contract laborers, colloquially called “coolies,” in the mid-nineteenth century to labor on offshore guano mines and sugar and cotton plantations.¹⁰ Following the importation of almost 135,000 such laborers to Latin America and the Caribbean, thousands more arrived as free immigrants at the turn of the century; others flowed into Mexico. Almost all of them hailed from the same counties of Guangdong’s Zhu Jiang (Pearl River) Delta as Kang Youwei and his disciples.

Kang and others showed early interest in establishing Baohuanghui chapters throughout Latin America. For many of these chapters, the only documentation of their existence is a 1908 booklet of ninety-four chapters, naming individual donors and donation amounts, toward the purchase of land and construction of new organizational headquarters in Guangzhou.¹¹ Others have been identified in a 1904 list of 132 chapters that supported the anti-Russian movement, the 1913 *International Chinese Business Directory of the World*, and in articles about local chapters published in Baohuanghui newspapers.¹² Altogether, twenty-five Latin American chapters have been positively identified.¹³

康有為與保皇會 [Kang Youwei and the Baohuanghui], ed. Shanghai Shi Wenwu Baoguan Wei yuanhui 上海市文物保管委員會 (Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin Chubanshe, 1982), 529–37; the list of cities with translations of some city names is in Gao Weinong 高偉農, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui zai Meiguo Huaqiao Shehui zhong de Huodong* 二十世紀初康有為保皇會在美國華僑社會中的活動 [Activities of Kang Youwei and the Baohuanghui among the Chinese in the United States in the First Part of the Twentieth Century] (Beijing: Xueyuan Chubanshe, 2009), 52–56. San Salvador was listed as a chapter in Wong Kin’s 1913 directory described in Appendix 2.

10 Evelyn Hu-DeHart, “*La trata amarilla*: the ‘Yellow Trade’ and the Middle Passage,” in *Many Middle Passages: Forced Migration and the Making of the Modern World*, ed., Emma Christopher, Cassandra Pybus, and Marcus Rediker (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 166–83.

11 As identified in “Juan Jian Diguo Xianzheng Zonghuisuo,” in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui*. See footnote above for details. Several of the chapters have not been identified by their non-Chinese names.

12 Thank you to Chi Jeng Chang for locating the 1904 list of 132 chapters: “Haiwai Baohuanghui Chengqing Dai Zou Qingzhan Wen” 海外保皇會呈請代奏請戰文 (An Overseas Baohuanghui Petition Memorializing to Ask for a Battle Assignment), reprinted from *Shang Bao in Bincheng Xin Bao* [Penang Sin Poe], March 7, 1904, 1. Wong Kin [Huang Jin], *International Chinese Business Directory of the World* [Wanguo Jixin Bianlan 萬國寄信便覽] (San Francisco: International Chinese Business Directory Co., 1913), in which chapters are designated by the name Guomindang 國民黨, adopted by Kang Youwei in February 1912 for the Xianzhenghui.

13 See Appendix 2, “Mapping the Baohuanghui,” for the known Latin American chapters as of publication date.

Some of the first Latin American chapters were in Central America, largely because of the presence of activists such as Huang Zhuoxing and Chen Wencun. Five Central American countries hosted the seven verified Baohuanghui chapters: Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Panama. In addition to a chapter in Bocas del Toro, Panama, a brief article in a rare 1901 edition of *Wenxing Bao* (*Mon Hing Bo, The Chinese World*) describes chapters in Panama City and Colón sending a telegram of birthday greetings and hopes for his restoration to the emperor in Xi'an, where he and the Qing court had fled during the Allied occupation of Beijing in 1900.¹⁴ Guatemala City, Guatemala, and Limón, Costa Rica, donated to the Guangzhou building in 1908. There was a chapter on the Caribbean coast, the town of Bluefields, Nicaragua, that signed the 1904 anti-Russian letter.

The Caribbean hosted at least three chapters in Cuba, in Havana and a suburb, Marianao; and in Jamaica. The first mention of Cuba is in the 1899 charter written by Kang shortly after the Baohuanghui was inaugurated in Victoria, British Columbia. This suggests that Cuba was first among other Latin American nations with considerable reform supporters and that other Caribbean or Latin American chapters also existed: "San Francisco, Cuba, Honolulu, and New York can also elect their general managers, as can Singapore. The general managers are in charge of company affairs for nearby cities."¹⁵ Kang wrote in April 1903 that a "Mr. Zhou" was in Cuba to set up a chapter, and asked Xu Qin to proceed there as soon as possible to assist Zhou.¹⁶ Jamaica's chapter, presumably in Kingston, is verified by a letter announcing its inception in New York's *Zhongguo Weixin Bao* from August 18, 1904.¹⁷

Kang expressed great enthusiasm for Brazil, but never visited there, nor, it appears, did his advance men to Latin America, Liang Qitian or Xu Qin. In 1903, Liang Qichao listed Lima, Peru, as the lead chapter in the three-chapter South

14 Bocas del Toro, Panama appears in Wong Kin, *International Chinese Business Directory*. "Banazi, Gelang Erbu Liuyue Ershiliuri Dianda Xi'an Gongzhu Wansui Diangao" 巴拿孖, 個郎埠二埠六月二十六日電達西安恭祝萬歲電告 [Text of Telegram sent to Xi'an by the Panama City and Colón, Panama, Chapters to wish the Emperor Long Life on August 10, 1901], *Wenxing Bao*, 1901, Him Mark Lai Research Files, Box 32 Folder 11, Ethnic Studies Library, University of California at Berkeley.

15 "Baojiu Da-Qing Huangdi Gongsu Xuli" 保救大清皇帝公司序例 [Preface and Regulations for the Company to Protect the Great Qing Emperor], October 1899, in *Kang Youwei Quanji* 康有為全集 [Collected Works of Kang Youwei], ed. Jiang Yihua and Zhang Hualong 姜義華, 張榮華 (Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin Daxue Chubanshe, 2007), vol. 5, 152.

16 Kang Youwei to Li Fuji, duplicated letter, April 29, 1903, no. 566 in Fang and Cai, 53–54.

17 "Gebu Baohuanghui Jinshi" 各埠保皇會近事 (Current Activities of Baohuanghui chapters), *Zhongguo Weixin Bao*, August 18, 1904, 15.

America division of the Baohuanghui.¹⁸ Two other Peruvian cities—Trujillo and Paita—formed chapters in 1904 and listed their initial members with their donations in the New York City newspaper *Zhongguo Weixin Bao*.¹⁹ The Lima and Trujillo chapters were listed in Wong Kin's 1913 directory.²⁰

The main Baohuanghui focus was on Mexico with at least twelve chapters, most prominently Torreón, Coahuila, and Mexico City. In Sonora, apart from chapters in Alamos, Guaymas, and Hermosillo, one of the largest Chinese communities in 1903 was the copper mining town of Cananea, a company town owned by American investors where a chapter was formed and still existed in 1919.²¹ In the southern the state of Sinaloa, Culiacán appeared on the 1908 list of chapters. In Coahuila state, besides the Torreón chapter, Monclova hosted a Baohuanghui school. In Baja California, the Santa Rosalia chapter flew the Baohuanghui flag downtown to celebrate Chinese New Year in 1908.²² And in the northeastern border state of Tamaulipas, Ciudad Madero on the Gulf of Mexico set up a chapter in 1907.²³ Next to Sonora, Yucatán was home to more Chinese than any other Mexican state, and the capital, Merida, hosted a Baohuanghui chapter.²⁴

Evidently Kang Tongbi's feminist influence had reached Mexico, perhaps even in the form of a Torreón chapter of the women's reform association, given

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- 18 Liang Qichao 梁啟超, *Xin Dalu Youji* 新大陸遊記 in *Zouxiang Shijie Congshu* 走向世界叢書 [Series of Books on World Travels], ed. Zhong Shuhe 鍾叔河 (Changsha: Yuelu Shushe, 1985), 554. Adam McKeown, *Chinese Migrant Networks and Cultural Change: Peru, Chicago, Hawaii, 1900–1936* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 138, says it was only in 1905 that the official Lima chapter was founded but gives no source; he suggests that earlier formation was obstructed by the Qing government-supported Sociedad de Beneficencia China.
 - 19 “Gebu Baohuanghui Jinshi” 各埠保皇會近事 [Recent Activities of Baohuanghui Chapters] *Zhongguo Weixin Bao*, July 21, 1904, 14–15.
 - 20 Wong, *International Chinese Business Directory*, 1312, 1322.
 - 21 “Moguo Lian-na-ni-bu Xianzhengdang zhi Kang Xu Zongzhang Shu” 墨國諫拿尼埠憲政黨致康徐總長書 [Letter from Cananea, Mexico Constitutional Party to Presidents Kang and Xu], September 9, 1919 in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui*, 484–86.
 - 22 Veronica Castillo Munoz, *The Other California: Land, Identity and Politics on the Mexican Borderlands* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2016), 71, describes Santa Rosalia members led by Leon Yuen getting permission to raise the organizational flag for Chinese New Year, 1908. Thanks to Fredy González for pointing this out.
 - 23 “Huishi jiwen Moguo Moshiyaobu Benhui Kaimu Ji cheng” 會事紀聞墨國磨詩耀埠本會開幕紀盛 [News and Open Letter from Madero, Mexico chapter], *Tung Wah Times*, February 2, 1907, 6.
 - 24 Wong, *International Chinese Business Directory*, 1913, 1588; “Kong Yu Wei Coming,” *Mexican Herald*, November 19, 1905, 3: “Should he get this far into Mexico an invitation will be extended to the great organizer to extend his visit to Merida, where the association is strong.”



FIGURE 51
Sixteen-year-old Chinese Mexican
Huang Qiongfeng, Torreón, Mexico, 1903.

the publicity given in Baohuanghui newspapers to a young feminist, Huang Qiongfeng. A photograph sent to Tongbi in 1903 shows her as a serious sixteen-year old dressed in a matching plaid Mexican jacket and skirt. It appeared again in a photo collage of young women studying in the Americas, all with Baohuanghui connections (including Kang Tongbi and Xue Jinqin) in Liang Qichao's *Travel Notes from the New World* (*Xin Dalu Youji*) published in *Xinmin Congbao* in 1904.²⁵ *Wenxing Bao* in San Francisco and *Donghua Bao* in Sydney

25 Photo of Huang Qiongfeng 黃瓊鳳, 康-10, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection. "Liuxue Meigo Gaodeng Xuexiao ji Zhong Xuexiao zhi Zhongguo Nü Xuesheng" 留學生美國高等學校之中國女學生 [Chinese Women Students Studying in American Middle and Advanced Schools], fig. 33, Liang Qichao, *Xin Dalu Youji* in *Zouxiang Shijie Congshu*,

both published articles about Huang's passionate speeches at two Baohuanghui gatherings in Torreón in August 1903 to celebrate the emperor's birthday, demonstrating that she was "one of the pioneers of the emerging women's movement."²⁶ Huang later studied oil painting with an American teacher and one of her paintings was sent to Nanjing for the Nanyang Exhibition in 1910; her father Huang Zanjian was described as a long-time merchant in Mexico.²⁷

2 Kang's Vision

It was in Mexico that Kang Youwei and the Baohuanghui staked their fortune in Latin America, and for a few years in the first decade of the twentieth century, it looked like they would be wildly successful. Kang's many-faceted strategy for the Baohuanghui mirrored his vision for China as a whole. Mass emigration, purchase and cultivation of land abroad, and international business development were not only necessary to save China, but would give livelihood to Chinese barely able to eke out a living in their overcrowded homeland. Rather than flood into countries such as the United States that forbade most Chinese from entry, Kang said that Chinese should emigrate to countries like Mexico and Brazil "with vast areas of undeveloped fertile land available to foreigners."²⁸ This mode of gaining economic power also beckoned to Kang and the Baohuanghui as a quick way to build up the organization's business conglomerate, the Commercial Corporation (Shangwu Gongsi, see Chapter 9), with the British East India Company as their model. Toward this end, Kang proposed a "Colonization Division" (Zhiminbu) in his discussion draft for the 1905 Baohuanghui charter.²⁹ "The comrades of our Association need to enlarge their ambitions and prepare to run [a business]. Don't limit yourself to America and

367–653. The women pictured in the collage, including Huang Qiongfeng, were praised in a women's journal for their overseas studies; "Nüzi Liuxue" 女子留學 [Women Studying Abroad], *Furu Bao*, 1904.

26 "Nüquan Fada zhi Mengya" 女權發達之萌芽 [The Beginning of a Women's Movement], *Tung Wah Times*, September 26, 1903, 3.

27 "Meizhou Tongxin" 美洲通信 [Correspondence from the Americas], *Tung Wah Times*, August 13, 1910, 2.

28 Kang Youwei, "Pidibu" [Land Reclamation Division], section 23, in "Xinzhang," July 30, 1905, AR-2, AAS ARC 2000/78.

29 Kang Youwei, "Zhiminbu" 殖民部 [Colonization Division], "Yishi Zongzhi" 議事宗旨 [Goals for Discussing Official Business], "Baohuanghui Gongyi Gaiding Zhangcheng" 保皇會公議改定章程 [Baohuanghui Group Discussion to Finalize Editing the Charter], in "Xinzhang," July 30, 1905, AR-2, AAS ARC 2000/78.

Australia (Mei Ao)! That means meeting with disaster and bitter humiliation!" Instead, the Baohuanghui should survey the world for desolate and remote lands to develop. Baohuanghui delegates to the 1905 New York plenary meeting amended Kang's proposal and instead created a "Land Reclamation Division" (Pidibu), which explicitly named Britain and the Netherlands as colonial and entrepreneurial models for the Baohuanghui:

England took India with a company of 70,000 employees. The Netherlands developed Java with a company of 120,000 employees ... we hope our association abandons old ideas to embrace new ones and makes judgments about land in keeping with the times, so that it can seize this opportunity before it expires.³⁰

Kang's rugged trip over the Rocky Mountains in October 1905 allowed him to contemplate the next steps in this bold plan, as recounted in the sequel to his autobiography:

He thought of going to Brazil and of the plan to bring over Chinese workers to establish a Chinese colony in that South American country. He wrote that China's poverty was due, in part, to overpopulation, that malnutrition was weakening the Chinese race, and that there were two directions for the expansion of the Chinese people. Within the empire, the people in South China could migrate to sparsely populated areas in Manchuria, Mongolia, and Turkestan as soon as there were railways. Abroad, the people of China could migrate to the newly opened, fertile, and thinly populated lands in Mexico, Peru, Chile, Brazil, and Argentina. The two countries best suited for Chinese colonization, he thought, were Brazil and Mexico, where the climate is like that of China; and he planned to visit Brazil and Mexico.³¹

30 Kang Youwei, "Pidibu." The reference to the role of the East India Company, "a private company," in the British colonization of India echoes an analysis made by San Salvador Baohuanghui members in their June 21, 1902, no. 538 in Fang and Cai, 367–68.

31 Jung-pang Lo, "Sequel to the Chronological Autobiography," *K'ang Yu-wei: A Biography and Symposium* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1967), 200. For an exploration of Kang's concepts of race and nation as related to his vision of a "New China" located in Latin America, see Pablo Ariel Blitstein, "A New China in Mexico: Kang Youwei and His Languages of Cohesion-Making on the Two Sides of the Pacific (1895–1911)," *Oriens Extremus* 55 (2016): 209–60.



FIGURE 52
Charles Ranlett Flint, *The World's Work*, vol. 3
(1901).

As they played out in Latin America over the next few years, Kang's ambitions were certainly influenced by his illustrious entrepreneurial friend, Charles Ranlett Flint. Flint carried out considerable business in Latin America as a shipping magnate, arms dealer, international trader, and consul for Chile, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica. Flint was a man of remarkable stature in the early twentieth century. Known during his time as the "father of the trusts," Flint belonged to the select circle of American capitalists that included Andrew Carnegie and John D. Rockefeller. Yet, Flint is remembered today, if at all, for his "industrial consolidations," mergers of related businesses into a more efficient and profitable company. His most famous merger was the Computing Tabulating Recording Company, forerunner to IBM.³² United States Rubber Company evolved out of Flint's Brazilian rubber exporting business. China was another of Flint's interests and, before he met Kang, Flint had entertained China's ministers to Washington Wu Tingfang and Liang Cheng, as well as Prince Pulun during his 1904 trip to the United States. Probably unknown to Kang, Flint had

32 "The Origins of IBM," <https://www.ibm.com/history/ctr-and-ibm> accessed August 12, 2024. Flint's merged company was formed in 1911.



FIGURE 53 Fishing with Charles Flint on Long Island, circa 1907, from left: Flint, Kang Tongbi, and Kang Youwei. From Charles R. Flint, *Memories of an Active Life: Men, and Ships, and Sealing Wax*, 1923.

also sold a Chilean battleship to Japan in 1895 for its war against China and munitions to Russia during the Russo-Japanese War (1904–5).³³

Kang met Flint either in summer 1905 in New York City or on one of his subsequent visits there in April 1906 or March 1907.³⁴ Different as they were, both men thought and acted on a global stage, and neither feared taking financial risks. Flint liked Kang and said that they “got on famously.” Flint’s autobiography describes Kang as being even more impressive than the Chinese ministers and royalty he had met: “Probably the ablest of all the Chinese who ever visited this country came as a political refugee.” Kang, said Flint, “exerts a powerful influence with the Chinese abroad” and “was almost the unofficial Emperor of

33 “Biographical Note, Charles Ranlett Flint Papers, 1872–1930,” MssCol 1032, Manuscript and Archives Division, New York Public Library.

34 Kang was in New York twice in 1905 (June 27–July 4 and July 21–August 22). Flint invited Kang and his daughter (and likely Luo Chang) to his Long Island home, as shown in a photograph of them on a fishing excursion in Flint’s autobiography, Charles R. Flint, *Memories of an Active Life: Men, and Ships, and Sealing Wax* (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1923), 166–67.

China," "the idol of the people."³⁵ Chinese emigration to Mexico was one topic they discussed:

During our many discussions I must have asked very many questions of Kang Yu Wei, some of them quite personal, and his daughter repeated all but one of them to him. While we were discussing Mexico, I asked: "Can your father wield sufficient influence to bring about the emigration of so many coolies?"

"The question is not *can*," she flashed, "it is *will* he?"

And that was the end of that question.³⁶

Kang never organized a mass campaign to attract Chinese immigration to Mexico, although a number of relatives of Baohuanghui leaders, including at least two of Kang's own kin, did respond to Mexico's welcome to Chinese immigrants and investors.³⁷ As Kang saw for himself, the Chinese had built a thriving and prosperous community along the U.S.-Mexico border by the dawn of the twentieth century.

3 The Chinese in Mexico

Just when anti-Chinese sentiment in the United States was rising, Porfirio Díaz ascended to Mexico's presidency in 1876 on the promise of modernization and

35 Flint, *Memories*, 276–78.

36 Flint, *Memories*, 278.

37 The two known Kang relatives who worked in Mexico were Kang's cousin, Kang Youpei 康有霈 (also known as Kang Jiyu 康季雨, 繼寓), second son of Kang's uncle, Kang Dashou 康達守, and his cousin Kang Youlin's 康有霖 son, Kang Tonghui 康同惠. Kang Youpei went to Mexico in November 1906. See "Chinatown Feast," *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, November 5, 1906, describing a banquet in his honor at the Baohuanghui headquarters in New Orleans Chinatown on November 4 (he is called Kang Que Kee). After the banquet he left by train for San Antonio, where he remained for several days before going to Mexico. Kang Youpei had been in New York City working with Tang Mingsan on the newspaper *Zhongguo Weixin Bao* and was involved with Tang in plotting the assassination of Sun Yatsen in 1905. In Mexico he became a business partner of Baohuanghui supporter Huang Kuanzhuo (Wong Foon Chuck) 黃寬焯 in Torreón, while apparently commuting back and forth to New York to work with Tang to manage Huayi Bank.

development.³⁸ By opening the borders of Mexico to American and other foreign investment to extract and market Mexico's prodigious natural resources and cash crops, the general-turned-dictator committed to provide a tightly controlled political environment and ready supply of cheap, docile labor. His plan succeeded spectacularly, as the country's growth increased manifold by the end of the century. Among those who capitalized on Díaz's modernization project were the Chinese, who initially went to Mexico with the intention of surreptitiously crossing the border into the United States to escape Chinese Exclusion laws. Indeed, they were the original "illegal aliens" who crossed the U.S.-Mexico border without permission. But they soon found opportunities opening up all along this fast developing, nearly 2,000-mile-long Mexican frontier region. Mexican peasants were becoming wage earners and consumers, and mining camps, company towns, port cities, and railroad towns escalated the process toward urbanization. Everywhere in these newly formed population centers, Chinese could be found delivering services to feed and house the workers, wash their clothes, and sew, cobble, and repair what the workers wore on their bodies and feet. The Chinese operated the majority of retail outlets in every town and village, at every street corner and terminal. As they gained confidence and accumulated more capital, they ventured into wholesale and larger-scale commercial operations and into more complex manufacturing and service businesses.³⁹

Thriving Chinese communities sprang up in northwestern Mexico, along the border with Arizona and California and the Pacific coast of Mexico, along the Gulf of California, comprising the states of Sonora and Sinaloa with their booming economies of mining and commercial agriculture, railroads, and ports. The border regions of Baja California to the northwest and Yucatán to the southeast were also becoming attractive destinations for the Chinese. Sonora's Chinese population soared from 850 in 1900 to 2,414 in 1904, and 4,486 in 1910, according to official census figures. The mining town of Cananea in Sonora alone had some eight hundred Chinese in 1903; most of them were shopkeepers (groceries, work clothes, and footwear) and service providers (food and

38 Both the Democratic and Republican conventions in 1876 sought tighter restrictions on Chinese immigration, and the U.S. Congress produced a scathing report on the "Social, Moral, and Political Effect" of such immigration. See Jean Pfaelzer, *Driven Out: The Forgotten War against Chinese Americans* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 76.

39 Evelyn Hu-DeHart, "Immigrants to a Developing Society: The Chinese in Northern Mexico, 1875–1932," *Journal of Arizona History* 21 (1980): 49–86, and "Huagong and Huashang: The Chinese as Laborers and Merchants in Latin America and the Caribbean," *Amerasia Journal* 28, no. 2 (2002): 64–90.

lodging), while local Mexicans provided the bulk of the labor force. The total population of Chinese in Mexico multiplied almost five times between 1900 and 1910, from a relative handful of 2,833 to an impressive 13,203 individuals (predominately male), according to the Mexican census.⁴⁰

But it was Torreón, in the border state of Coahuila that proved to be most attractive to Baohuanghui members. Located on the other side of Mexico from Sonora and oriented toward the Gulf of Mexico, Torreón was an emerging urban powerhouse in Mexico. It was the meeting point of two new railroad lines that linked Coahuila's mining and agricultural products to the United States—the Ferrocarril Central Mexicano (Central Mexican Railway) to Ciudad Juárez in Chihuahua state and El Paso, Texas (next to New Mexico), and the Ferrocarril Internacional (International Railway) to Ciudad Porfirio Díaz in Coahuila, across the border from Eagle Pass, Texas. Torreón lies where Coahuila and Durango states meet on the Nazas River, which irrigated the fertile Laguna Valley and its cotton crop.

Chinese and many other foreign entrepreneurs—American, British, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Arab, and Turkish—flocked to Torreón from the United States and Europe, joining local entrepreneurs. Benefiting from the generous tax abatements of the state and federal governments, these forward-looking entrepreneurs built a diverse group of modern industries as well as department stores and banks. With eight big furnaces, the Fundición Metalúrgica de Torreón (Metal Foundry of Torreón) was the most modern in Mexico when it was built in 1901, fed by the mines of Coahuila and two neighboring states. Americans built the Compañía Guayulera Continental Mexicana (Continental Rubber Company of Mexico) to refine the native rubber plant (*guayule*) for industrial use. Germans built a new municipal market, “El Parián,” on land they acquired in Torreón.⁴¹ The city had potable water, electricity, a modern drainage system, and a modern hospital.

40 Evelyn Hu-DeHart, “Los Chinos de Sonora, 1875–1930. La formación de una pequeña burguesía regional” [The Chinese of Sonora, 1875–1930. Formation of a regional petite bourgeoisie] in Rosa María Meyer and Delia Salazar, coord. [eds.], *Los inmigrantes en el mundo de los negocios, siglo XIX y XX*. [Immigrants in the business world, nineteenth and twentieth centuries] (Mexico: Plaza y Valdes, 2003), 115–36. An estimated 35,000 Chinese actually entered Mexico during this period, with more than half surreptitiously crossing the border into the United States during the period of Chinese exclusion.

41 Torreón's municipal market, as in many other Mexican cities, was named *El Parián*, after the silk market in Manila's Chinatown where the silver ships from Mexico went to trade for Chinese silk, ceramics, and other fine goods, 1565–1815. It is unlikely that Wong Foon

Unlike the Chinese immigrants who were building other overseas communities in Mexico, leading Baohuanghui members in Torreón were highly educated individuals, of intellectual, not mercantile backgrounds, who readily identified themselves as Kang's followers. Their plan was to bring their own and other Baohuanghui members' kin to colonize the land in Torreón. For example, Los Angeles leader Tom Leung (Tan Zhangxiao) found positions in Torreón for a nephew and the son of a friend and arranged for their care and supervision by Torreón Baohuanghui leader and entrepreneur Wong Foon Chuck (Huang Kuanzhuo).⁴² Wong reported that he would take Tom's nephew Tan Liting to the Tanshan Food Store (Tanshan Liangshi Dian) to work as an all-around helper, a better job, he assured his uncle, than "restaurant or farm work," the alternatives.⁴³

When Kang arrived in Torreón in 1905, 500, or 3.5 percent, of its population of 14,000 were Chinese. They formed the largest foreign colony and the most conspicuous given their occupations and businesses scattered around the city. They operated groceries and food stalls, laundries, restaurants, and retail shops dealing in daily consumer items. But they did not stop there; they joined other foreign investors to establish banks and hotels. The Chinese acquired large tracts of urban real estate which they turned into enormous market gardens to grow fruit and vegetables for local consumption and even for export to the United States. These "Chinese Gardens," as locals called them, employed upward of a hundred Chinese horticultural workers, and by their sheer size, numbers, and location, could not be missed by anyone entering the city. They were vertically integrated with Chinese grocery wholesalers and retailers, and during the first decade of the twentieth century, they were in control of production, distribution, and sale of daily foodstuff to the local population, rich

Chuck and others living in Torreón knew of the historical significance of this name; nevertheless, the Manila connection remained strong, because in Chinese then as now, Lü 呂 signifies Luzón 呂宋 [Luzon], the big island where Manila is located, and has come to represent all things Spanish and Spanish-speaking, including Mexico. Wong Foon Chuck typically used 呂 to refer to the Mexican people and their language.

42 Hu Dianzhang 胡典章 to Tan Zhangxiao, May 26, 1907, no. 247 in Fang and Cai, 336; Huang Kuanzhuo to Tan Zhangxiao, after July 7, 1907, no. 249 in Fang and Cai, 189. Because Huang Kuanzhuo was best known in Mexico as Wong Foon Chuck, this is the name used in this book.

43 Huang Kuanzhuo to Tan Zhangxiao, after July 7, 1907, no. 249 in Fang and Cai, 189.

and poor.⁴⁴ This explains the unusual Chinese name for Torreón—Caiyuan—which can be translated as “vegetable garden,” or more elegantly, as “garden estate.”⁴⁵

4 Wong Foon Chuck in Torreón and Mexico

Driving the decision of Kang Youwei and the Baohuanghui to target Torreón as the main site for their plans in Latin America was a hard-charging, visionary, modern industrialist, and an ardent early Baohuanghui promoter named Wong Foon Chuck. He was both typical and atypical of the thousands of Chinese immigrants who found their way to Mexico in the waning years of the nineteenth century, after the United States enacted the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882. Like many of his compatriots, he was attracted to the Mexico-United States borderlands, the better to pursue a transnational, transborder family and business life. As well, he was interested in politics at home and how those Chinese overseas, especially merchants with resources, could advance political transformation in China. His immigration history also followed a familiar pattern: when only twelve or thirteen years old in 1874, he left his village in Kaiping County in Guangdong’s Pearl River Delta with a maternal uncle, bound for San Francisco.⁴⁶ Wong Foon Chuck proved to be a practical-minded, forward-looking, politically savvy modern businessman eager to tackle large

44 Leo M. Dambourges Jacques, “The Chinese Massacre in Torreón (Coahuila) in 1911.” *Arizona and the West* 16 (Autumn 1974): 237.

45 Torreón’s Chinese name, Caiyuan, was usually rendered in Chinese as 菜苑; interestingly, this descriptive Chinese name uses the more classical *yuan* 苑 rather than the more prosaic *yuan* 園, the first meaning a “residential estate,” the latter a “garden.” Given the Cantonese origins of the Chinese in Torreón, this is not surprising because many elegant places in Guangdong Province were/are named *yuan* 苑. Either way, it was a clever play on words in Chinese because the name evoked both the high-functioning large truck farms that Chinese entrepreneurs owned and operated along with large numbers of coethnic workers, as well as the Baohuanghui vision of building a dream home for their members in Mexico.

46 Wong Foon Chuck’s biographical information is taken from a commemorative essay cum memoir published at the end of a long and productive life: *Huang Gong Kuanzhuo Lü Wai Qishisan Jinian* 黃公寬焯旅外七十三紀念冊 [Seventy-third year Commemoration of the Emigration of Huang Kuanzhuo] (San Francisco: Chung Sai Yat Po, 1947), hereafter cited as “Huang Commemoration.” Evelyn Hu-DeHart is indebted to Leroy Emery for pointing her to this publication. Correspondence from Mr. Emery, April 25, 2003. She is indebted to Prof. Wang Bing of the Department of Chinese, National Institute of Education, Singapore, for help reading this text written in semiclassical Chinese.



FIGURE 54
Wong Foon Chuck, circa 1915.

industrial projects with Mexican partners on a scale not typical of most of his countrymen.

Wong received a missionary education in China. For two years, from ages thirteen to fifteen, he was taken under the wing of an American missionary family in San Francisco and he began to learn English. When he was around twenty, he returned to China for a visit and to get married, but rushed back just before the enactment of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act. In 1883, after dabbling in various businesses with the Wong (Huang) clan (*huiguan*) in San Francisco, a restless Wong Foon Chuck made his way to the U.S.-Mexico border at Eagle Pass, Texas, population around 5,000. He crossed the border to Piedras Negras in Coahuila state—which was renamed Ciudad Porfirio Díaz after the ascending strongman president—attracted by the new railroad line, Ferrocarril Internacional, being built in Eagle Pass with American capital. From there he heard about the thriving city of Torreón which lay at the boundary between the mine- and land-rich states of Coahuila and Durango, and through which the new railroad line would pass on its way to Mexico City. Torreón was already a stop on the other new railroad line that ran from El Paso to the Mexican capital. During the final years of the nineteenth century and into the new one, he built a business, managing hotels for the railroad company, including the Hotel Internacional, in Ciudad Porfirio Díaz.⁴⁷ When his Chinese village

47 Wong Fong Chuck's unpublished autobiography, probably written in 1945, states, "By 1901, I was managing six hotels [under contract] for the Mexican International System of

wife declined to join him in Mexico, Wong married and started a family with a local Mexican woman in 1895. He was buying up large amounts of land and investing in diverse businesses in Torreón, while sizing up other investment opportunities in the neighboring state of Tamaulipas, with its Atlantic (Gulf of Mexico) coastline. He learned the benefit of cultivating relationships with powerful local politicians, such as Miguel Cárdenas, who later became governor of Coahuila. He also took time to know and harshly judge his Mexican neighbors. He wrote:

At present, Mexico is a new world. The territory is vast and the land is fertile. The educational level of the natives is very low, close to ignorance. All you need is a little thinking and some money to make them your working cattle and horses. We can create a solid foundation of businesses so that other Chinese people can come here to live.⁴⁸

Early in the twentieth century, Wong Foon Chuck was eager to entice the Baohuanghui to invest in Mexico. With people like Flint goading him on, Kang Youwei and others probably needed little prodding, especially when Wong had already laid the foundation by setting up Torreón's Baohuanghui chapter, under the Spanish name Asociación Reformista China, in 1900 or 1901. He probably registered it as a Mexican voluntary association, as required by Mexican law, like other Chinese voluntary associations already operating in Mexico.⁴⁹ At about this time, a younger brother, whom Wong affectionately called "A Chao" (Wong Joe Chuck or Huang Kuanri), joined him in Mexico, as did others from the Baohuanghui and from California, including the English-speaking medical professional Dr. Walter Lim (J. W. Lim), whose wife and sister comprised two members of the very small female Chinese population in Torreón at the time.⁵⁰

Railroads." Wong also says he was given the contract for the Piedras Negras hotel in 1906. Thank you to Hugo Wong for this source.

48 Huang Kuanzhuo to Tan Zhangxiao, July 7, 1907, no. 250 in Fang and Cai, 187–88. Although Wong Foon Chuck expressed these opinions in a letter to Tom Leung in 1907, they were probably already well formed at the beginning of the decade.

49 Evelyn Hu-DeHart, "Voluntary Associations in a Predominately Male Immigrant Community: The Chinese on the Northern Mexican Frontier, 1880–1930," in *Voluntary Organizations in the Chinese Diaspora*, ed. Khun Eng Kuah-Pearce and Evelyn Hu-DeHart (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2006), 141–68.

50 Lo, "Sequel to Autobiography," 201. Lim's name comes up in the Mexican documents. See Juan Puig, *Entre el Río Perla y el Nazas: la China Decimonónica y sus braceros emigrantes. La colonia china de Torreón y la matanza de 1911* [Between the Perla and Nazas Rivers: Twentieth Century China and Her Labor Migrants. The Chinese Colony of Torreón and the 1911 Massacre] (Mexico: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, 1992), 156, 194.



FIGURE 55 1907 certificate of appreciation for Wong Foon Chuck (Huang Kuanzhao) from Torreón municipal government on the city's twenty-fifth anniversary.

In May or June 1901, Wong welcomed Kang's envoy, Liang Qitian, on his first visit to Mexico. He was one of two Baohuanghui leaders, the other being Xu Qin, who undertook fact-finding and fundraising tours of Latin America in the first years of the new century. Brimming with ideas both practical and wildly speculative about Torreón's potential for Chinese immigrants, their reports paved the way for Kang's enthusiastic visit in late 1905 to early 1906.

Liang visited thirteen cities in seven Mexican states. "The association has been established, and its office is in Torreón, which is the most populated place," he reported.⁵¹ Liang expressed great admiration—"envy" was his

Here the name is rendered as "Dr. Walter Sam Lim" described as a Protestant medical doctor trained in the United States.

51 Liang Qitian to Tan Zhangxiao, June 10, 1901, no. 565 in Fang and Cai, 162–65. It is not clear what he meant by Torreón being "the most populated place," because it was not so in terms of Mexican population, nor true in terms of Chinese population, which was more numerous in the northwestern state of Sonora and its Pacific port city of Guaymas. He could have been referring to the relative proportion of the Baohuanghui members in the city's Chinese population, or simply misunderstood information he received. See Chapter 3 for Liang Qitian's extensive work as a Baohuanghui organizer. For a description of the extended, powerful and prestigious Liang family and lineage in the Zhu Jiang Delta (Chakeng, Shenhuan Township, Xinhui County), see Helen F. Siu, *Agents and Victims in South China: Accomplices in Rural Revolution* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 45–48.

precise word—for Wong Foon Chuck's Xin Guangdong Yuan (New Guangdong Garden), his urban estate comprised of 5,000 *dijia*, 600 of which were already under cultivation.⁵² According to Liang, Wong bought the land at the low price of half a (Mexican) dollar (or peso) per hectare and expected to reap more than \$500,000 in profits within ten years. "[Wong's] achievements are a credit to the overseas Chinese," Liang marveled. With equal admiration, Liang remarked on Wong's warm relationship with his Mexican neighbors: "Local Mexicans within several hundred meters all showed him great respect and were very friendly and welcoming. Local officials invited us over and danced until the wee hours."

One curious omission in Liang Qitian's letters, as well as those that Wong wrote, to other Baohuanghui leaders, was any mention of specific Mexican chapters other than Torreón and Mexico City, although he mentioned visiting thirteen Mexican cities. Liang Qichao enumerated but did not name nine Mexican chapters in his 1903 list of 103 chapters in the Americas and Hawai'i, and the numbers may have increased with Baohuanghui business ventures.⁵³ Liang Qitian remarked only in passing in his 1901 report: "There are a grand total of 6,000 Chinese in Mexico," which was a bit high for those first years of the decade, but the Chinese population was indeed growing rapidly. He went on to note that there were 3,000 in Mérida (Yucatán) on the Atlantic coast, a greatly exaggerated number, and 300 in Mexico City, an underestimation.⁵⁴ But he made no mention at all of the large and prosperous Chinese communities of Sonora or Baja California, which accounted for some 80 percent of the total Chinese population in Mexico, approximately 3,000 to 5,000.

In view of Wong Foon Chuck's success with his vegetable garden business, Liang Qitian promoted Baohuanghui investment in the urban agricultural enterprise as a means to provide good employment for Chinese immigrants, whom the association planned to attract in large numbers to Torreón. He noted that without agricultural employment, most Chinese worked as cooks and laundrymen for American and European factory owners and railroads. He also suggested that buying and selling land to take advantage of rapidly

52 Liang used a strange word, *dijia* 的架, to represent the amount of land in Wong's hands. Is this the same as *diduan* 地段 (areal sector or section), which is used as a land measurement word by Wong Foon Chuck in "Huang Commemoration," 39)? Both could be informal surrogates for the Mexican measure unit for land, *hectare* (2.471 acres), in the absence of an exact Chinese equivalent and term.

53 See Chapter 3 for Liang Qichao's table of chapters.

54 Liang Qitian to Tan Zhangxiao, June 10, 1901, no. 565 in Fang and Cai, 162–65.

fluctuating prices—land speculation, in short—would constitute good business, yielding “a big profit.” Liang strongly hinted to his correspondent, Tom Leung, that it would be highly profitable to pool 10,000 to 20,000 Mexican dollars from several friends to buy “fields” in Torreón while prices were still low and entrust the enterprise to be managed by “Wong Foon Chuck and his associates.” In the meantime, Liang noted that he was raising 7,000 dollars to open a “Chinese Mexican grocery store” in Torreón and had recruited a manager to run it. Clearly, Liang had gotten the investment fever and was pursuing private interests alongside his Baohuanghui mission. This dangerous mixing of private and organizational interests came to harm Baohuanghui investment in Mexico and elsewhere, but it seemed to have been a common practice involving a number of Baohuanghui leaders, including Kang Youwei himself.

Liang also ruminated on the possibility of raising silkworms, which could feed on mulberry trees growing throughout Mexico and thus create a Mexican silk industry. But he dismissed it as impractical because of the large capital outlay required—\$60,000 to \$100,000—and “the need to find someone competent, which is difficult.”

Not long afterward, in 1902, another itinerant Baohuanghui organizer, Xu Qin, visited Latin America as part of his trans-Americas tour to reinvigorate the Baohuanghui, signing up many new members along the way.⁵⁵ He was especially keen on sending immigrants to colonize Mexico on inexpensive land and pressed members throughout the world to purchase shares in the incipient Commercial Corporation to further this project.⁵⁶

Liang Qitian toured Latin America again in 1903 and stopped over in Mexico for many months of travel and recruiting, accompanied at times by Wong Foon Chuck. Wong noted that Liang’s visit spurred donations from compatriots who came out to hear his speeches.⁵⁷ Wong had begun planning an ambitious Baohuanghui business venture based in a land-locked city like Torreón. The Sino-Mexican Steamship Company (Zhong-Mo Lunchuan Gongsi) was being formed to operate steamships between Mexico’s western coast and China. It

55 L. Eve Armentrout Ma, *Revolutionaries, Monarchists, and Chinatowns: Chinese Politics in the Americas and the 1911 Revolution* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 1990), 81; “Zhishi Youzong” 志士游踪 [Man of High Ambition Continues Travel], *Chung Sai Yat Po*, December 3, 1901, 2, says Xu Qin would be traveling to the South American chapters.

56 Xu Qin, Japan, to Tan Zhangxiao, December 23, 1903, no. 170 in Fang and Cai, 133.

57 Huang Kuanzhuo to Tan Zhangxiao, March 31, 1903, no. 561 in Fang and Cai, 185–86. Presumably the speech was in Torreón.

would sail into Manzanillo, Colima, on the Pacific coast, about 430 miles from Torreón and 30 miles from the nearest railroad. The idea, of course, was to facilitate and accelerate the arrival of Chinese immigrants on the land that the Baohuanghui would acquire for colonization. Not surprisingly, this steamship project was never realized, although a concession for the line was obtained from the Mexican government in 1907, and the Baohuanghui continued to pour money into it at least until sometime in 1908.⁵⁸

Wong Foon Chuck had greater success, and obviously took immense pleasure in, the elementary school he built in 1904 following Kang's educational philosophy. The Youmei School (Escuela Yue Mae) was located in Monclova, a city in Coahuila between Ciudad Porfirio Díaz and Torreón, and classes were held in the Hotel Internacional, which was run by Wong.⁵⁹ In the first year, twenty-eight boys and four girls were taught English, Chinese, and Spanish, as well as music and martial arts (physical education).⁶⁰ The principal was Wong's younger brother, José Chuck Wong (Huang Yuanhuo). Kang wrote an



FIGURE 56 Principal José Chuck Wong (Huang Yuanhuo) and students of Youmei School, attending the centenary of Mexican independence in Chapultepec Park, Mexico City, 1910.

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- 58 Huang Kuanzhuo to Tan Zhangxiao, March 31, 1903, no. 561 in Fang and Cai, 185. See below regarding 1908 investments.
- 59 Thank you to Hugo Wong, great-grandson of José Chuck Wong and great-grand-nephew of Wong Foon Chuck, for details about Youmei School. For more on the Wong family in Mexico, see Hugo Wong, *America's Lost Chinese: The Rise and Fall of a Migrant Family Dream* (London: Hurst, 2023).
- 60 "Huang Commemoration," 25–27.

inscription for the school in 1905, exhorting the students not only to study hard and keep the teachings of Confucius in mind, but also to

Forget not where your roots are,
Worship not all things foreign.
Open up new land and establish a colony,
Let developing a new China be your responsibility!⁶¹

In 1910, the school's band was invited to perform for President Díaz in the capital to celebrate the centenary of Mexican independence from Spain. Six teachers went along with thirty-two boys and four girls, chaperoned by Wong Foon Chuck himself, who also covered the expenses. Because Monclova had relatively few Chinese families, the students were boarders from Ciudad Porfirio Díaz and elsewhere, including Wong Foon Chuck's four children born to his Mexican wife. Among the teachers contracted from China was Cao Yi, who had studied in Kang Youwei's Wanmucaotang in Guangzhou and taught in the Youmei school from 1906 to 1909.⁶²

5 Kang Youwei in Mexico: 1905–7

Kang's nine and a half month travels through the United States ended Texas-style with a visit to a rodeo and oil wells during his five days in San Antonio in late November 1905.⁶³ While in San Antonio, Kang wrote to his disciple Liang Qixun that while in Mexico he planned to buy land for development.⁶⁴ This was the same plan Kang had introduced in the 1905 Baohuanghui charter to promote Chinese immigration to "places like Mexico and Borneo with vast areas of undeveloped fertile land that can be purchased by foreigners."⁶⁵ Kang had begun to do this himself, perhaps to support his own family, and claimed

61 The poetic inscription by Kang comes from the "Huang Commemoration," and was translated by Connie Kang and Chen Xuezhong.

62 Cao Yi 曹毅 to Tan Zhangxiao, November 30, 1909, no. 188 in Fang and Cai, 199. Cao also conceived of starting a Youmei School in Kaiping, Guangdong, Wong Foon Chuck's native place.

63 See Chapter 7.

64 Kang Youwei to Liang Qixun 梁啟勳, November 25, 1905, in Zhang Ronghua 張榮華, ed., *Kang Youwei Juan* 康有為卷 [Kang Youwei Documents] (Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin Daxue Chubanshe, 2015), 6.

65 "Pidibu" [Land Reclamation Division], section 23 in "Xinzhang," July 30, 1905, AR-2, AAS ARC 2000/78.

to Liang that he recently bought thirty “miles” of land in “Nanyang,” perhaps referring to Borneo.

Kang and his party were met at the border town of Eagle Pass, Texas, by Wong Foon Chuck, and on November 29 they took the new railroad across the Rio Grande to Ciudad Porfirio Díaz, Mexico. They were greeted at the train station by several hundred men and women, who came from all over Mexico, some traveling hundreds of miles, including some from Central America.⁶⁶ Among those Kang met were Dr. Huang Richu from Mexico City, who became a key partner with Wong Foon Chuck in Baohuanghui enterprises. Kang spent a few days acclimating himself to Mexico, no doubt staying in Wong's Hotel Internacional. He “lectur[ed] to a large assembly of his countrymen,” and a banquet was held on December 2, before leaving for Torreón.⁶⁷ With Torreón as his base, Kang stayed almost six months in Mexico. He took an immediate interest in silver mines, for which the wider region was famous since Spanish colonial times, producing much of the silver that was exchanged in China for silk, porcelain, and spices during the Manila galleon trade of 1565–1815. Although the Mexican Baohuanghui chapters on the Pacific coast invited Kang to visit, he was too preoccupied with the business opportunities offered by his Torreón compatriots.⁶⁸

Kang's primary goal in Mexico was making money for Baohuanghui causes and for support of himself and his family. His ambitious plan to buy land to provide livelihood to Chinese immigrants receded with the temptation to engage in land speculation for quick and easy money. Only a few days after arriving in Torreón, Kang fully entered into deal-making mode. He was especially captivated by the idea of a profitable banking operation in Torreón. Not only would he make money buying and selling land but could multiply the proceeds by operating a bank under the highly attractive terms the Mexican government had set to stimulate investment. He wrote Tom Leung on December 5, 1905: “A decision has been made to purchase land here and to set up a bank so that we can take advantage of the bank turnover activity to rapidly accelerate our land purchases. If we have \$100,000 to show to the Mexican government for

66 “Huishi Jiwen: Kang Huizhang you Mei Ru Mo” 會事紀聞: 康會長由美入墨 [Association News: President Kang Leaves America and Arrives in Mexico], *Tung Wah Times*, February 3, 1906, 5. The distant places Kang's greeters came from do not include any with known Baohuanghui chapters: 忙古撈 [Managua, Nicaragua?], 漢都 [Honduras?], 沙灣拿 [San Juan, Honduras or Santa Ana, El Salvador?], 烈打, 夏朗.

67 “Chinese Reformer in Mexico,” *Dallas Morning News*, December 1, 1905, 9; “Chinese Prince Kang Yu Wei Left Yesterday,” *San Antonio Light*, December 1, 1905, 10.

68 “Huishi Jiwen: Moxige lai han” 會事紀聞: 墨西哥來函 [News from the Association: Letter from Mexico], *Tung Wah Times*, March 17, 1906, 5.

verification, later on for every \$36,000 we get, \$100,000 in banknotes will be turned back to us. It's like we gain \$65,000 without doing anything.”⁶⁹ No doubt the banking opportunities were introduced to Kang by Wong Foon Chuck, who took a lead in promoting and managing the bank. Wong had no prior banking experience, but as a veteran entrepreneur he certainly anticipated how Baohuanghui capital might be deployed to join the banking boom that followed Mexico's banking reforms in 1897.⁷⁰

By the end of December 1905, Kang was waxing euphoric about the possibilities for land deals and a bank in Mexico, and went further to dream of shipping silver bullion to China and opening a bank there as well.⁷¹ Kang explained to Tom Leung how setting up a Mexican bank worked:

Mexico is the best place to operate a bank. Before you begin business, you deposit 20 percent [of the desired bank assets] as cash in the official Treasury [probably Coahuila State Bank]. After the grand opening, deposit one-third in the safe, and the 20 percent [deposit] is returned. The returned banknotes [*yinzhi*] will be three times the capital. This is because a young nation wants to increase revenues. No other countries have this kind of advantage.

Kang said he was ready to incorporate a bank with capital of 400,000 to 500,000 pesos. By his calculation, this would bring in 1.2 million to 1.5 million pesos in banknotes. Initially, Kang explained, a 400,000 peso bank would require a 20 percent deposit into the state treasury of 80,000 pesos (US\$40,000), and a 500,000 peso bank would need 100,000 pesos (US\$50,000).⁷² When the bank opens, “we need to raise or borrow somewhat more than 100,000 pesos to put into the safe for one day in preparation for the inspection (for example, we

69 Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, December 5, 1905, in “Letters and Telegrams Concerning Stock Shares of King Joy Lo and Relevant Matters,” Tan Zhangxiao, *Zhengxinlu* 徵信錄 [Report on Financial Management] (San Francisco: Guohun Ribao, January 7, 1909) in Fang and Cai, 257.

70 Charles A. Conant, *The Banking System of Mexico* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1910), 14–15, details the impact of the 1897 banking reforms on the growth of banking assets in Mexico; the rules for establishing a “bank of issue” seem to match the requirements Wong and Kang describe below.

71 Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, December 26, 1905, no. 352 in Fang and Cai, 63–68. Kang uses the term yuan 元, and by context it would be logical he is speaking of Mexican pesos. However, the currency could be Chinese yuan, which had about the same value—2:1—to the U.S. dollar.

72 Kang's letter specifies the 2:1 ratio of whatever currency to which he was referring (Mexican or Chinese) with the U.S. dollar.

can borrow the money from the Chicago restaurant for just one day). At that time, we could receive more than a million pesos in banknotes. When we get that million-plus, we can open banks in China one after another. At the same time, silver bullion can be exported [to China], and land can be purchased." Silver imported from Mexico, both in the form of ingots and coins, was long used in Chinese domestic and international commerce, and the weight of the Chinese tael, or *liang*, was standardized to that of a Mexican silver peso coin.⁷³ The demand in China for silver bullion had skyrocketed with the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–5, and the silver Mexican one peso coin had been pegged to US\$.49, while its market value rose abroad. Kang told Tom Leung that sale of Mexican bullion to China would bring a profit of 18 cents on one (Mexican) dollar. "If we have capital of a million [dollars], we can make \$180,000. If we make nine shipments annually, we can earn millions."⁷⁴

Then, setting his goal even higher, Kang suggested that the Baohuanghui could certainly raise US\$200,000 to \$300,000 to set up a one-million-peso bank that could draw at least \$3 million in banknotes. "If we're resourceful, the profits will be inexhaustible. We have such an enormous association, we must be able to raise \$300,000."

Kang also disclosed that Wong Foon Chuck would soon go to the United States to sell Mexican bank shares, and anticipated that Wong could raise his high target of US\$300,000 with no trouble. In a second letter to Tom Leung, written a day later, Kang described Wong as another Chen Yixi, a highly successful entrepreneur who had raised several hundred thousand dollars of shares from Chinese in North America in 1904 and 1905 for his Xinning (Taishan) railroad project.⁷⁵ But, Wong's departure had been delayed by unnamed problems, and Kang was already bemoaning the fact that while "[our] bank in Mexico is a wonderful idea, we have to wait four months to open for business. Our capital is frozen for several months. It's terrible."⁷⁶ And he was also damping down his

73 Thanks to Austin Dean, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, for providing the authors a draft of his paper on the gold standards debate in the late Qing, December 2016.

74 Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, December 26, 1905, no. 352. Wong later estimated only a 7-percent profit from silver bullion sales to China. Huang Kuanzhuo, "Laigao: Xu Kaiban Moguo Yinhang chuyi" 來稿: 續開辦墨國銀行芻議 [Humble Contribution: Opening the Mexican Bank (continued)], *Tung Wah Times*, October 20, 1906, 5.

75 Chen Yixi 陳宜禧 also raised funds in Southeast Asia and Hong Kong. See Madeline Y. Hsu, "California Dreaming: Migration and Dependency," *The Free Library*, <https://www.thefreelibrary.com/California+Dreaming%3A+Migration+and+Dependency.-a0105160296>, accessed July 16, 2017; originally published in *Chinese America: History and Perspectives* 16 (2002).

76 Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, December 27, 1905, in "Letters and Telegrams Concerning Stock Shares of King Joy Lo and Relevant Matters," Tan Zhangxiao, *Zhengxinlu* in Fang

more wild expectations by suggesting that a \$200,000 initial investment would still bring in huge profits.

Meanwhile, Kang was attracted by more money-making temptations. On January 11, 1906, Kang told Tom Leung that he had asked Wong Foon Chuck to buy land in Torreón that required \$10,000 to \$20,000 in remittances, probably from Baohuanghui Hong Kong headquarters.⁷⁷ And now he was exploring raising sheep. “Both are lucrative, but require money, and both could be put off.” At the same time, Kang was also promising to invest more in Tom’s business project, the King Joy Lo (Qiongcailou) restaurant in Chicago, which demanded an equal amount of funds. Kang said he had only \$10,000 in savings deposited in Mexico and was not sure where it should be invested.

The Mexican bank project, however, was proceeding—Kang told Tom that he had entrusted Wong Foon Chuck with the important task of setting it up, adding, “It looks risky, but I do not have another choice.”⁷⁸ Whether to open a bank with capital of one million pesos, or much less, which would eliminate the burden of a 6-percent tax, remained open, but by mid-January Kang had begun the incorporation process. He named Wong Foon Chuck, Situ Guoyin (another “dependable millionaire” according to Kang), and Mexico City physician Huang Richu as bank directors. Dr. Huang (who may have been Wong’s brother or cousin) was, like Wong, another strong personality who would travel frequently to Torreón to help Wong manage the growing Baohuanghui investments and businesses, especially the mounting land purchases.⁷⁹ Kang also asked his trusted disciples Tom Leung and Liang Qitian to participate officially in the bank.⁸⁰ Tom visited Torreón in spring 1906, but unlike Wong and the others encouraging Kang’s Mexican endeavors, he apparently predicted that the enterprise in Mexico would collapse.⁸¹

and Cai, 258. Kang was in frequent communication with Tom at this time about another business deal that became the King Joy Lo restaurant in Chicago.

77 Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, January 11, 1906, in “Letters and Telegrams Concerning Stock Shares of King Joy Lo and Relevant Matters,” *Zhengxinlu* in Fang and Cai, 258.

78 Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, January 11, 1906, “Letter as Proof that I was Instructed to Collect Business Funds, Public Funds, Railroad Funds and Invest them in the King Joy Lo Restaurant,” *Zhengxinlu* in Fang and Cai, 259.

79 Lo, “Sequel to Autobiography,” 201. Huang Kuanzhuo to Tan Zhangxiao, after July 7, 1907, no. 249 in Fang and Cai, 189, refers to his two younger brothers [*shedi*] 舍弟 Ah Chao 亞潮 [Huang Kuanri 黃寬日] and [Huang] Richu 日初.

80 Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, January 17, 1906, no. 125 in Fang and Cai, 69.

81 Cao Yi to Tan Zhangxiao, June 17, 1907, no. 154 in Fang and Cai, 198. Cao Yi was stationed in Mexico by the Baohuanghui: “When I saw you in March–April 1906 in Mexico at the general association headquarters in Torreón, it occurred to me that we had met before.” Cao recalled meeting Tan at Wanmucaotang (in Guangzhou) in 1897. For Tom Leung’s

On January 23, 1906, Kang, accompanied by Dr. J. W. Lim, translators C. S. Linn, Luo Changgen, and Huang Jinyuan, along with his bodyguard Louis Ott, visited Mexico City, where they were received by Huang Richu.⁸² Kang had received three letters of invitation from Mexican President Porfirio Díaz, but Díaz had to defer their audience until Kang's 1907 visit to the capital. Kang was welcomed by local members on January 24, on the eve of Chinese New Year, with a banquet at the Hotel Palacio, and over his stay continued to speak to the local Chinese until the night before he left the city.⁸³ The *Mexican Herald* followed Kang's travels with almost daily reports, with Linn expounding on and exaggerating Kang's life and achievements. Indeed the Chinese chargé d'affaires in Mexico City, Liang Hsun (Liang Xun), often got equal press deriding Linn's earlier statements to the press on behalf of Kang for "indulging in vain talk" about the Baohuanghui having 1 million members in 170 cities.⁸⁴ Liang claimed that Kang had no intention of working for reform but duped his members into donating toward his luxurious travel and retinue of servants. When Kang was asked by the *Mexican Herald* about Liang's allegations, Linn replied that Kang was "more amused than anything else," and would pursue his reform work "just as though there were no such persons on earth."⁸⁵ Dr. Lim and several members from Torreón both wrote long letters to the *Herald* defending Kang's character and style of travel, criticizing Liang's contempt for the Chinese masses, and disputing Liang's doubts about the number of chapters by suggesting he look to the association's spread in the United States and Australia.⁸⁶

Along with some sightseeing, Kang inspected manufacturing plants, such as tanneries and dye-making. He was particularly interested in the ancient

skepticism about the Mexican banking schemes, see Kang Youwei and Tang Mingsan 湯銘三, New York, to Tan Zhangxiao, June 3, 1906, on notepaper with name of *Zhongguo Weixin Bao*, no. 108–1 in Fang and Cai, 71 (described below).

82 "Huishi Jiwen: Moxige lai han" 會事紀聞:墨西哥來函 [News from Chapters: a Letter from Mexico] *Tung Wah Times*, March 17, 1906, 5; "Kong Yu Wei En Route," *Mexican Herald*, January 23, 1906, 3; "To Go Back to China," *Mexican Herald*, January 24, 1906, 2.

83 "Chinamen Banquet Visiting Reformer," *Mexican Herald*, January 25, 1906, 1; "Kong Yu Wei May Have to Leave Without Being Able to See the President," *Mexican Herald*, January 30, 1906, 1.

84 "Mr. Liang Hsun Talks," *Mexican Herald*, January 25, 1906, 1.

85 "Is Not Surprised," *Mexican Herald*, January 26, 1906, 3.

86 "Dr. Lim and Others," *Mexican Herald*, January 29, 1906. Kang Youwei, Mexico City, to Kang Jiuyu [Kang Youpei], New York, January 25, 1906, accused Liang Xun of deceiving Chinese laborers in both the United States and Mexico, and wanted the complaints to reach the Qing constitutional delegation during their current U.S. visit; Xiling Yinshe Auction Company, http://www.xlysauc.com/auction/detail/id/223710/order/lot_no/sort/asc.html, accessed August 13, 2024.

civilizations of Mesoamerica, touring the south where he saw the famous Mitla cultural site in Oaxaca state.⁸⁷ Kang would later tour Mayan sites of the Yucatán, and, outside Mexico City, he inspected the remnants of the sacred pyramids of Teotihuacan revered by the Aztecs. Meanwhile, he engaged a teacher to help him study Mexican history and was intrigued by his speculation that the ancient Mexicans had descended from the Han Chinese; possibly, he mused, an ancient Han tribe crossed over Alaska to Mexico, becoming the ancestor of the Aztecs.⁸⁸

The Sierra Madres roll along, with the ocean on both sides.
 People coming from Xianbei⁸⁹ found another world.
 Red soil and bleak landscape render the country barren as stone,
 The people wear no sandals and wrap themselves in rugs when it's cold.
 A melting pot of yellow, red, and white races,
 The consequence of years of strife among Americans, French, and Spanish.
 Remnants of altars and temples can be traced to the old civilizations,
 Laying my hands on the ruins, I imagine they came from China.

KANG YOUWEI, poem written February or March 1906 from Mexico, to Tom Leung⁹⁰

While in this old capital, the first one Spaniards established in the New World, seat of the grand old viceroyalty of New Spain and major market for the Manila galleon trade with China, Kang bought a chest of Mexican and American

87 "Kong Yu Wei to Mitla," *Mexican Herald*, January 31, 1906; "Kong Yu Wei Much Gratified with the Success of Reform Society in Mexico," *Mexican Herald*, February 11, 1906. This article indicates that Kang was unaware that the ruins of Mitla were those of the Zapotec civilization, which preceded the Aztecs: "He has studied the ruins at Mitla with the idea of tracing the ancestry of the Aztecs back to the Asiatics."

88 Lo, "Sequel to Autobiography," 201; Lo wrote that [Kang] "visited the altars and the temples" of Tenochtitlan, the old Aztec capital, but this city lay beneath the Spanish-built Mexico City, and excavation of its ruins began only in 1978. However, Kang would have heard the stories and founding myth of Tenochtitlan.

89 Xianbei is the name of a powerful nomadic tribe that came originally from eastern Inner Mongolia. The Tuoba Xianbei founded the Northern Wei dynasty (386–534). Kang thought that some of them migrated to Mexico.

90 This is one of three poems Kang wrote about Mexico and sent to Tan Zhangxiao; private collection, Jane Leung Larson. Translated by John T. Ma, Connie Kang, Chi Jeng Chang, with Jane Leung Larson and Cai Huiyao.

antiques that was sent to Los Angeles for shipment to his family in Hong Kong.⁹¹ While Kang wrote frequently to his Baohuanghui followers pleading for capital for the many Baohuanghui ventures in the United States and Mexico, he personally indulged in collecting art and antiques during his extensive world travels. However, when the association's finances took a downturn in 1908, at least some of the antiques Kang had bought were considered organizational assets to be sold to cover the debts.⁹²

When Kang returned to Torreón that spring, he became engrossed in the "satisfying business" of buying land.⁹³ Probably using funds sent by Wu Hongyou of San Antonio who had earlier pledged \$10,000, Kang bought land for 2,900 pesos, and within one day was able to sell it for 3,700 pesos.⁹⁴ He bought another piece of land for 2,100 pesos, and "now someone has asked to buy it for 3,000." Land sales were to provide assets to establish the Mexican bank, and Kang dangerously began mixing Baohuanghui and Shanghui (Commercial Corporation) funds and expenses: "Now I have combined the Bao[huang] hui with the Shanghui and invested in this bank (I have already bought 40,000 pesos worth of land). I may be able to use what the U.S. Bao[huang] hui has earned to pay back the debts, and to support students." Jung-pang Lo also described this large land purchase, which was for eighty blocks (*boluo*) of land.⁹⁵ Kang sold three blocks of this property for 20,000 pesos, reaping another enormous profit.

Having been successful in land speculation in Mexico and establishing the foundation for continued financial operations in Torreón, Kang had hoped to travel on to Brazil, perhaps for more land speculation, but discovered that there were no ships for convenient transportation.⁹⁶ Kang decided to return to the United States. Wanting to save time and effort, Kang sought to return to New

91 Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, [unknown date; probably December 1907 as it was written on stationery of Grand Hotel, Saltsjöbaden, Sweden], no. 114 in Fang and Cai, 80: "Last year I bought a chest of antiques in Mexico City."

92 See Liang Qichao to Kang Youwei, January 26, 1908, in Ding Wenjiang and Zhao Fengtian 丁文江, 趙豐田, ed., *Liang Qichao Nianpu changbian* 梁啟超年譜長編 [Uncut Version of Liang Qichao Life Chronicle] (Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin Chubanshe, 1983), 431.

93 Kang Youwei to Liang Qixun, April 3, 1906, in Zhang, *Kang Youwei Juan*, 10.

94 Kang Youwei to Liang Qixun, April 3, 1906, in Zhang, *Kang Youwei Juan*, and Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, after January 9, 1906, *Zhengxinlu* in Fang and Cai, 259.

95 Lo, "Sequel to Autobiography," 202–3. Lo also mentions that Kang used his own funds to buy up a block of land for 1,700 pesos and sold it several days later for 3,400 pesos, nearly doubling his initial outlay. Then he bought a house for 2,400 pesos, doubling that amount as well when he sold it a month later.

96 Kang Youwei to Liang Qixun, April 3, 1906, in Zhang, *Kang Youwei Juan*. "Here no ships go to Brazil, so I'll return in a few days to the United States."

York by the route he came, crossing the border at Eagle Pass, Texas. On April 5, 1906, a telegram was received at the White House from Wong Foon Chuck, requesting President Roosevelt give his “kind instructions to immigration officers” to allow Kang to return to the United States at Eagle Pass.⁹⁷ Wong tactfully noted that “Mr. Kong Yu Way was received by his excellency last summer and may be remembered.”

The U.S. Exclusion Acts, however, provided that Chinese could enter only at designated ports, which did not include Eagle Pass.⁹⁸ With Wong’s request in hand, and evidently ignoring previous files on Kang, the commissioner general of immigration called the Chinese legation in Washington, DC, and “was advised that Kong Yu Way had no connection whatever with the Chinese Government and was not entitled to any special consideration by [the United States] Government; that the Legation did not desire to have anything to do with the said Kong, and furthermore, that the Chinese Government had placed a price on the head of the said Kong Yu Way—he being a political offender.”⁹⁹ Thus, when the New Orleans district office also inquired if Kang—whose representative had approached the local bureau office with letters of introduction from New Orleans Mayor Martin Behrman—was entitled to enter as a representative of the Qing government, a curt and negative reply was made by Washington.¹⁰⁰

Absorbing this additional rebuff from the Bureau of Immigration, Kang followed a more favored route. He approached Sam E. Magill, the United States consul in Tampico, State of Tamaulipas, who wrote a very adulatory letter to immigration officials in New York “in order to prevent any delay in their landing in New York.”¹⁰¹ The letter noted that Kang and his two secretaries (“C. S. Linn and T. Chin” [Tong Chinn] would arrive in New York City on board the S.S. *Niagara*. The New York City immigration bureaucracy, cautious as ever in

97 Telegram of Wong Foon Chuck, Eagle Pass, Texas, to Roosevelt, April 5, 1906, Chinese File 12689, Entry 132, Box 162, RG 85, received at the White House and forwarded to the Department of Commerce and Labor.

98 San Francisco, Portland, Boston, New Orleans, and Port Townsend, Washington were the originally designated ports; *Reports of the Immigration Commission*, vol. 39, 137, Chinese Immigration Law of September 13, 1888. Later, New York City and Malone, New York, were added as entry points to facilitate the growing number of Chinese in the eastern United States.

99 Memorandum for the Secretary from F. P. Sargent, April 6, 1906, Chinese File 12689.

100 No. 438–C, P. H. Stretton, Inspector in Charge, New Orleans, to Sargent, April 12, 1906; and telegram of Sargent to Stretton, April 14, 1906; Chinese File 12689.

101 Sam E. Magill, U.S. Consul, Tampico, to Commissioner of Immigration, Ellis Island, New York Harbor, April 19, 1906, quoted in H. R. Sisson, Acting Chinese Inspector, New York, to Sargent, April 25, 1906, Chinese File 12689.

the enforcement of the Chinese exclusion laws, politely replied to Magill and then referred the letter to Washington.¹⁰² Still seemingly unaware of how Kang originally gained entry to the United States in 1905, the central office advised careful inspection of “this Chinese reformer” upon his arrival.¹⁰³

After being “entertained in royal style by his compatriots in Tampico,” Kang sailed north on April 19, 1906.¹⁰⁴ He arrived in New York City on April 28 and was duly scrutinized by the Chinese immigration inspector, who “did not feel in view of the prominence of this man that [he] would be justified in holding him on board the steamer.”¹⁰⁵ Although the original document was retained at Port Townsend, Washington, Kang had a certified duplicate copy of the certificate issued by the Canadian government certified by U.S. Consul L. Edwin Dudley. The bureau in Washington was not fully aware until 1907 that Kang’s entry had been authorized by the U.S. consul in Vancouver in 1904.¹⁰⁶

Meanwhile, Wong Foon Chuck was occupied in promoting the soon-to-be launched Hua-Mo Bank (Hua-Mo Yinhang, Compañía Bancaria Chino y México or Chinese-Mexican Bank) as a subsidiary of the Commercial Corporation. He wrote a lengthy article promoting the “special rules for raising shares” for the Mexican bank, which was published in the July 7, 1906 edition of Sydney, Australia’s *Tung Wah Times*, a Baohuanghui newspaper, with other party newspapers disseminating the same article earlier than this most distant outpost of the media network.¹⁰⁷ Not only was the Mexican bank to be established on May 25, but also a provincial bank in China (presumably funded by silver bullion shipped from Mexico bought with the banknotes issued to Hua-Mo). Wong hoped to raise 200,000 Chinese yuan (equal to US\$100,000) from the

102 Robert Watchorn, Commissioner, New York, to Magill, April 24, 1906, Miscellaneous Letters Received, U.S. Consulate Tampico, 1905–1906, vol. 122, Entry UD-10, RG 84, NA-College Park; Sisson to Sargent, April 25, 1906.

103 Sargent to F. W. Berkshire, Chinese Inspector, New York, April 26, 1906, Chinese File 12689.

104 “Kang You Wei,” *El Paso Times*, April 30, 1906, 4. The Chinese community in Tampico was large enough to host a Baohuanghui chapter, but there is not enough evidence to verify that they did.

105 New York Passenger and Arrival List, Kang Yu Wei, married, 49 years old, professor, left Tampico April 19, 1906, arrived New York, April 28, 1906 on the S.S. *Niagara*; with Kang were Chin Tong, 23, St. Louis, Missouri, and Linn Sang, 21, Astoria, Oregon. Kang retained a duplicate of the equivalent of a Section 6 certificate issued December 17, 1904, by U.S. Consul in Vancouver, Edwin Dudley; he kept this copy for the rest of his life, and it is now in the collection of the Kang Youwei Residential Museum in Qingdao.

106 Berkshire to Sargent, April 30, 1906, Chinese File 12689.

107 Huang Kuanzhuo, “Chuangban Moxige Yihang Tebie Zhangcheng” 創辦墨西哥銀行特別章程 [Special Rules for the Establishment of the Mexican Bank], *Tung Wah Times*, July 7, 1906, 5.

sale of 10,000 shares at twenty yuan each. Wong tempted bank investors by promising that the Commercial Corporation would award bonus shares in the Canton-Hankow (Yue-Han) Railway for each bank share bought, with the first group of investors receiving proportionally more bonus railway shares than those who invested later. The Commercial Corporation had already bought 300,000 (Chinese yuan?) worth of railroad shares and would distribute a portion of its holdings to encourage bank investment.

Because of the lucrative bank business which can use the banknotes for circulation instead of cash, we dare set up these special rules and show you the magic of investment. As long as we can print banknotes, it is the same as turning stone into gold. My goal is for China to retrieve its commercial power and for our comrades to receive great profits. I am deeply worried that if we delay, we will lose the opportunity.

It is likely that Wong personally pitched fellow Baohuanghui members in the United States to buy Mexican bank shares, according to another article in the same issue of *Tung Wah Times*, and he may have been in the United States during the same time as Kang. The newspaper reprinted a May 12, 1906, article from the *Pittsburgh Chronicle-Telegraph* reporting that Wong was planning to visit that city to study the iron and steel industries.¹⁰⁸ Kang was probably referring to Wong when he wrote Tom Leung about sending someone to the United States (Kang specifically mentioned Philadelphia) who had pledged \$50,000 for the bank and subsidizing the trip with Baohuanghui funds to keep on good terms with this unnamed person. However, Kang wrote sarcastically, "When I asked how much of this investment he could come up with now, he said \$5,000. So you can see his strength."¹⁰⁹

However, by June 1906, Kang was reporting great success in raising enough money to establish a large bank, although he did not credit Wong's efforts. Kang told Tom Leung that he was concentrating on getting investors for the bank, and when he had completed the job, he would go to Europe.¹¹⁰ He exclaimed

108 "Huishi Jiwen" 會事紀聞 [Association News], *Tung Wah Times*, July 7, 1906, cites this *Chronicle-Telegraph* article that was sent to the Sydney newspaper and described Wong Foon Chuck's great wealth, business acumen, and charitable accomplishments (setting up the Youmei School and promoting Chinese opera).

109 Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, undated, probably May or June or later, 1906 [refers to relief funds for what is probably the April 18, 1906, earthquake], *Zhengxinlu* in Fang and Cai, 260.

110 Kang Youwei and Tang Mingsan, New York, to Tan Zhangxiao, June 3, 1906, no. 108-1 in Fang and Cai, 71, and Kang Youwei, Hartford, to Tan Zhangxiao, June 8, 1906, no. 126 in

that the bank had received more than 400,000 (currency unspecified), added to 600,000 previously procured—"it must be enough to do the job." The letter from Kang included comments by Tang Mingsan of New York City's *Zhongguo Weixin Bao* inserted alongside Kang's bold characters, chiding Tom Leung: "The Buddha [Kang] said you had predicted the rapid collapse of our procedure for making special profits (*teli*). Luckily we didn't pay attention to your words." Tom's skepticism about the bank's profitability arose from his observations in Torreón earlier that year, yet Kang asked him to serve as the general manager in Mexico and promised an annual salary that would equal Tom's lucrative medical practice. Tang noted: "Having observed your work and conduct, the Buddha sang praises to your talent and regards you very highly. We have already sent several thousand dollars. Have you received it?" Tom did not take up the offer and may have used the funds for King Joy Lo, the Chicago restaurant he was in the process of setting up (see Chapter 9).¹¹¹

Tom Leung also was asked to recruit Hua-Mo Bank investors in Stockton and Fresno, two important Baohuanghui chapters in California, selling what was termed "special dividend shares" (*teligu*).¹¹² An example exists of a Hua-Mo stock certificate issued to Feng Jingquan of Helena, Montana, a Baohuanghui leader whose business expertise was such that he was brought to New York to help manage the New York Huayi Bank. Feng paid 25 yuan (Chinese) on June 11, 1907, for stocks, which were issued from New York—named are two supervisors, Chen Huannian and Tang Zhao (Tang Mingsan), and one secretary, Kang Tongzhao (son of Kang's cousin Kang Yougong). The certificate for the Hua-Mo Bank was printed on blanks of the American Banknote Company in New York. Kang's braggadocio about the bank's investors may have been justified, as Baohuanghui historian Wu Xianzi confirmed that stock sales for the Hua-Mo Bank reached 937,268 (no currency given but it appears to be U.S. dollars) between 1906 and 1909, although he gives no sources.¹¹³

Fang and Cai, 70. Kang left for Europe from New York on August 16, 1906. "Pleased with American Women," *Salt Lake Telegram*, August 17, 1906, 5.

111 You Shiyin 游師尹 to Kang Youwei, March 25, 1909, in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui*, 395: "Zhangxiao told Americans that Hua-Mo Bank was a fraud, and the capital for the bank had been spent on the restaurant business."

112 Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, June 21, 1906, "The Letter about the Loan of \$4,000," *Zhengxinlu* in Fang and Cai, 263–64.

113 Wu Xianzi 伍憲子, *Zhongguo Minzhu Xianzhengdang Dangshi* 中國民主憲政黨黨史 [A Party History of the Chinese Democratic Constitutional Party] (San Francisco: Shijie Ribao [Chinese World], 1952, 86. Although no currency is given, it is deduced that U.S. dollars were meant since Wu specified in a list of expenditures of Hua-Mo Bank that two of the expenditures were in U.S. dollars, and the total figure for expenditures and remaining



FIGURE 57 Hua-Mo Bank share certificate for Feng Jingquan, Helena, Montana, June 11, 1907, bought for 25 yuan.

Another promotional article by Wong Foon Chuck, written in June or July 1906 and reprinted in *Tung Wah Times* in October, touted the “two profitable businesses in Mexico,” banking and transporting silver bullion “in order to retrieve [Chinese] control of our money.”¹¹⁴ Wong explained the interconnection among the three Commercial Corporation banks in Hong Kong, New York City, and Torreón as well as Baohuanghui’s ultimate ambition to “claim” a provincial bank in China, or failing that, a state bank in Mexico. While the vision of gaining economic power by controlling government banks was never realized, Wong’s description of the Commercial Corporation banks clarifies their interrelationship. Wong argued that while investors might wonder why the Commercial Corporation didn’t put all its capital into the Mexican bank if it was indeed such a profitable investment, it was wise to diversify their holdings. Hoping to arouse nationalist sentiments, he cited the dangers of “commercial warfare with the white thieves [*baizei*]. They will bankrupt us if we put all our money in one place.” Since all three banks were interconnected, with a carefully planned circulation of funds, “our business will run like a wheel.” The established Hong Kong bank could absorb large sums of funds and take

funds in Hua-Mo’s account equaled 937,268 yuan. If there were different currencies meant, the figures would not add up.

114 Huang, “Laigao: Xu Kaiban Moguo Yinhang,” *Tung Wah Times*, October 20, 1906, 5.

advantage of the demand in China for silver bullion. The New York bank (Huayi Yinhang) could take in investments from chapters and transfer them to Hong Kong. It also could receive banknotes from the Mexican bank at a slight discount, making a profit from the sale, and then buy Mexican silver dollars—or bullion—for transfer to Hong Kong. When the Hong Kong bank received Mexican silver dollars from the Mexican bank, it could sell the silver bullion and receive Hong Kong currency, making a 7-percent profit. This was what Kang and others described with the unique term *teli*, meaning special dividends or profits, and would become an important source of income for the Commercial Corporation.¹¹⁵

In fact, the idea of international currency trading and circulation of funds to make profits for the Baohuanghui was not new. When Liang Qichao was in the United States raising funds for the Commercial Corporation in 1903, he believed he could raise \$1 million worth of shares from small shareholders.¹¹⁶ Instead of remitting the shares directly to Hong Kong, Liang wanted the accumulated funds sent to Mexico to buy Mexican silver with U.S. currency, which would then be remitted to Baohuanghui headquarters in Hong Kong. “We may earn several tens of thousands from this.”

By August 1906, the *Mexican Herald* reported that the “Chinese-Mexican Bank of Torreón” was preparing to build a two-story stone building to house not only the bank but offices to be rented on the second floor. “The institution is destined to play an important part in the banking activity of that city, and the promoters have asked for a concession from the Mexican government.”¹¹⁷ With a prime location fronting on the city’s main plaza, Wong Foon Chuck claimed that office rent alone would bring in 8,400 pesos a month.¹¹⁸ Wong must have

115 You Shiyin to Kang Youwei, March 25, 1909, in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui*, 395. In his accounting, You shows income received at Huayi Bank in New York City from “special dividends or profits” to be 285,000 out of total income of 455,000 [currency unclear, You noted it is “based on gold and silver,” presumably to convert income of Commercial Corporation ventures in different countries to a common standard].

116 Liang Qichao to Xu Qin, [July] 1903, in Ding and Zhao, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 326.

117 “The Chinese-Mexican Bank of Torreón,” *Mexican Herald*, August 1, 1906. “Chinese–Mexican Bank at Torreón,” *Modern Mexico* 21, no. 5 (August 1906): 15, states that banks could be established in Mexico without a concession, “but the recognition carried by a government concession is a valuable asset.” A concession required the 20-percent deposit into the state treasury described above. Conant, *Banking System of Mexico*, 15.

118 Huang, “Laigao: Xu Kaiban Moguo Yinhang,” *Tung Wah Times*, October 20, 1906, 5. Wong’s contribution is dated 30th day, 5th month, 1906, but there was no 30th day of that month; Huang may have meant the 4th or leap month, June 21, or perhaps the 29th day of the 5th month, July 20. The bank building is on the northeast corner of Av. Juárez y Calle Valdés

felt two stories were not enough, and when the new building—called Banco Chino by Mexicans—finally opened in November 1908, it “contain[ed] more than fifty rooms on the second and third floors for offices for professional men.”¹¹⁹ The building was another financial drain, costing 140,000 (no currency given) to build, according to Kang, and used funds from New York that were meant to buy land and build the streetcar line described below.¹²⁰ After occupying the building for less than two years, and holding a mortgage loan of 60,000 pesos with the brothers Antonio and José Lavín, the bank moved to rented quarters and sold the building in 1910.¹²¹

To top off their impressive investment plan in 1906, Kang and Wong began to raise funds for an electric streetcar line for central Torreón to supplement and extend the Ferrocarril Eléctrico de Lerdo a Torreón (Lerdo-Torreón Streetcar Company) that operated three circuits in the city. They hired an American contractor, Henry Pethan, and applied for a franchise for an east-west route through the center of Torreón. Pethan said that the “Chinese line” would run from “the Chinese gardens and the handsome country residence of Dr. [J. W.] Lim east of the city, traversing the principal streets to the cemetery west of the city proper” for a total of eight miles of track.¹²² Torreón was already considered to have one of the best streetcar services in Mexico, and “when this new line is completed there will be perhaps none that will equal it.”

Wong Foon Chuck and Huang Richu were put in charge of this new project and promised investors big profits.¹²³ To keep the franchise, the Commercial Corporation had to raise 300,000 (unspecified currency), or it would revert to the existing tramway company. The plan was both to raise shares from members

Carrillo (see Silvia Castro, “Sobre la ubicación del Banco Chino [On the location of the Chinese Bank], *El Siglo de Torreón*, December 6, 2015, <https://www.elsiglodetorreon.com.mx/noticia/2015/sobre-la-ubicacion-del-banco-chino.html?from=old>, accessed January 5, 2023).

119 “Much in Little,” *Norwich (Connecticut) Bulletin*, January 15, 1909, 8, which was reprinted from *Mexican Herald* and dated the opening to November 15 [1908].

120 Kang Youwei to Liang Qichao, March 23, 1910, in Ding and Zhao, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 531–32.

121 “Chinese Bank Building in Torreón is Sold,” *El Paso Herald*, June 13, 1910, 9. Silvia Castro, “Sobre la ubicación del Banco Chino,” states that the mortgage was arranged by Wah Yick in November 1910.

122 “Laying Rails for New Tramways,” *Modern Mexico*, July 21, 1908, 14. This is probably Torreón’s municipal cemetery. The streetcar line ran on Av. Morelos. These valuable articles from *Modern Mexico*, an English-language newspaper serving the American and international communities in Mexico, first came to Evelyn Hu-Dehart’s attention thanks to Leroy Emery in 2001.

123 Wu, *Zhongguo Minzhu Xianzhengdang Dangshi*, 79.

and to buy and sell land that would rise in value due to the coming streetcar line. Thus, in a little more than a year, Kang had risked all in Mexico, in turn buying land, establishing a bank, announcing impressive construction plans, and developing a streetcar line. Each project carried more weight within the Commercial Corporation (and the entire organization) than the one before.

Kang would not return to Mexico until summer 1907, but a 1906 blueprint of central Torreón blocks shows the extent of Kang's and Baohuanghui domination over the developing city.¹²⁴ The Commercial Corporation owned fourteen blocks, Kang six (on which he had a house), and Huang Richu eight, many of the blocks adjacent to and including the terminus block of the planned streetcar line. By February 1907, Wong Foon Chuck and Walter Lim had obtained the concession for the streetcar line through Torreón, but were required to give the Lerdo-Torreón streetcar company four months to decide whether or not it would pursue the new line.¹²⁵ Although "it is understood that the company now operating has decided not to build the Chinese extension, as it will mean an expenditure of \$200,000," that company insisted that its concession "forbids anyone else from building a street railway within five blocks of any of its tracks." This set up an imminent conflict between the two companies since the Chinese line would require crossings that intersected with the Lerdo-Torreón track "and is being watched with great interest."

Following the first plenary meeting of the newly christened Xianzhenghui (Constitutional Association) in New York City in March–April 1907, Kang traveled to Chicago to check on the King Joy Lo restaurant. While in Chicago, he received an invitation from President Porfirio Díaz to visit him in Mexico. It was sent through the Mexican ambassador in Washington to Kang's well-placed friend, Charles R. Flint.¹²⁶ Before Kang departed for Mexico that June, Flint tried to use his influence in Washington to accomplish what Wong Foon Chuck had failed to do on Kang's behalf a year before. In a series of letters to various cabinet members, Flint informed them of the Díaz invitation, Kang's importance in present and future Chinese politics, and his desire to return to the United States through Eagle Pass, Texas.¹²⁷ This time, the Department of State asked the Department of Commerce and Labor to handle Flint's inquiry.

124 Blueprint section of "Plano Ciudad Torreón, Coahuila," in Lo, "Sequel to Autobiography," 203.

125 "Chinese in Traction War," *San Antonio Express*, February 25, 1907.

126 Flint, *Memories*, 278.

127 Charles R. Flint, New York, to Robert Bacon, Acting Secretary of State, May 21, 1907; State Department Numerical Files, 6750/1, RG 59, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/19748403?objectPage=284>, accessed May 25, 2024; Flint to Oscar S. Straus, Secretary of Commerce and Labor, May 23, 1907; and Hopkins and Hopkins, Washington (Flint's attorneys in the

Feeling, perhaps for the first time, that there was some importance to the matter, the Bureau of Immigration was instructed to cull their files for information on Kang.¹²⁸ The result was a three-page report forwarded to the Department of State on his various encounters with the Bureau since 1899. The report concluded by shifting the decision as to waiving the port of entry requirements back to Secretary of State Elihu Root.¹²⁹ Declining to make the decision, Root remanded the letter back to Commerce and Labor, saying “this Department has no wish in the matter.”¹³⁰ As it turned out, the exclusion laws were strictly adhered to, and Kang’s request to return via Eagle Pass, as before, was turned down.¹³¹

That spring while still in the United States, Kang was fielding demands for funds from all directions. On April 8, 1907, he wrote to Liang Qichao about the financial exigencies he was facing and clearly gave precedence to the Mexican projects. He indicated that he had allocated the needed 300,000 (unspecified currency) for the streetcar line.¹³² Kang seemed undaunted by his deep dive into Mexican investment and further told Liang, “The [streetcar] route is eight miles, and it will yield lots of profits.” Moreover, Kang justified continued land speculation in Mexico by estimating profits that matched the streetcar needs. “Last year, I bought one block of land for 500 [pesos] and sold it recently for 8,000 [pesos]. The profit is much more than twenty times our investment cost. I estimate we’ll earn more than 300,000 [pesos] in profits if we hold on to the land until it reaches 10,000 [pesos] in value. If the streetcar project goes

District of Columbia), to Straus, May 27, 1907, both in Chinese File 14735-89, Entry 132, Box 162, RG 85, NA-Washington.

128 Bacon to Straus, May 27, 1907, enclosing Flint to Bacon, Chinese File 14735-89, copy in State Department Numerical Files, 6750/1, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/19748403?objectPage=288>; and Huntington Wilson, Third Assistant Secretary of State, to Flint, May 25, 1907, informing him of action taken, copy in State Department Numerical Files, 6750/1, RG 59 <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/19748403?objectPage=286>, both accessed May 25, 2024.

129 Laurence O. Murray, Acting Secretary of Commerce and Labor, to Elihu Root, Secretary of State, June 1, 1907; State Department Numerical File, Case 6750 (original), Chinese File 14735-89 (copy).

130 Root to Straus, June 7, 1907, Chinese File 14735-89; copy in State Department Numerical Files, 6750/1, RG 59 <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/19748403?objectPage=296>, accessed May 25, 2024.

131 Straus to Hopkins and Hopkins, June 10, 1907, and Straus to Flint, June 10, 1907, Chinese File 14735-89, Entry 132, Box 162, RG 85.

132 Kang Youwei to Liang Qichao, April 8, 1907, letter in Ding and Zhao, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 378–79. It is not clear how the 300,000 in currency Kang refers to in his April 8, 1907, letter to Liang Qichao relates to the estimated \$200,000 cost reported in the *San Antonio Express*, February 25, 1907.

in, there will be more profits. If we can make all these profits, then we could manage the whole situation." By the whole situation, Kang was referring to the difficulties suffered by other portions of the Commercial Corporation, to the point that it was not able to distribute dividends to its shareholders (see Chapter 9). If Kang truly gained such an unimaginable profit margin, his optimism about land value increases would be reasonable. For a few short months, at least, Kang, Wong Foon Chuck, and Dr. J. W. Lim continued to make bold plans and promoted them loudly.

Kang returned to Mexico in June 1907. He stayed for nearly a month in Torreón to check on his investments, which were then progressing well. During this time, Dr. Lim announced that a concession had been granted by the state government to build and operate a connecting streetcar line between Torreón and Matamoros, a city about ten miles away and in the heart of Mexico's cotton-producing country.¹³³ A survey was underway by Lineberg and Rone of Torreón, machinery had been ordered, and completion of this line was hoped for "in the course of two years or before." Furthermore, "it is planned to extend the road to other towns in the Laguna district later on." The new concession was for eighteen kilometers (about eleven miles) and would nearly double the distance proposed for the first line.

At the same time, Dr. Lim was embarking on an even grander dream floated previously by Wong Foon Chuck—a steamship line that would sail between all the ports in western Mexico to China.¹³⁴ In the second of two interviews with the *Mexican Herald* in less than a week, timed, no doubt to coincide with Kang's visit, Lim, whose title was given as president and manager of the Ban-carria Chino y Mexico, said that the steamship line concession had been applied for and if granted, as he fully expected, would be "one of the largest items that has ever been undertaken by any corporation in Torreón." It should be noted that steamships had been crossing the Pacific between China and Japan and Mexican west coast ports since the late 1860s, so Lim and Wong's plan was not

133 "Concession to Chinese Banker," *Modern Mexico* 21, no. 11 (February 1907): 40 (the article does not state which line received the concession but its length suggests this is the Matamoros line); "Chinamen to Build Road," *Mexican Herald*, June 9, 1907, 10; "Interurban Electric Railways and Waterways Development in Mexico," *Railway and Engineering Review*, August 3, 1907, 690.

134 "China Steamer Line," *Mexican Herald*, June 17, 1907, 3. "China is Mexico's Future Customer," *Mexican Herald*, June 28, 1907, 1, 3. The second article is an interview with Kang Youwei and mentions that a "concession has recently been obtained whereby a steamship line from Hong Kong to Mazatlán will at the earliest practical moment be in operation."

novel.¹³⁵ After a \$3,000 bond was deposited, the Mexican government granted a five-year concession in 1907, with the contract promising that “at intervals not to exceed forty-two days steamers [carrying passengers, freight, and mail] will leave Hongkong and Shanghai, China, via Yokohama and Tokyo, Japan, touching at the Sandwich Islands and Honolulu, for Mazatlán, Mexico.”¹³⁶

And, in another leap of faith, Kang had reregistered the Mexican bank as a “large one million [yuan] company” (*baiwan da gongsi*), indicating that he had succeeded in raising the \$300,000 in shares needed for the bank reserves.¹³⁷ When the process was complete, Kang could proceed to Mexico City and his appointment with President Díaz.

Wearing the dual mantle of statesman and international capitalist, Kang, accompanied by Linn Chew Sang, arrived in the capital on June 27 and stayed at the Hotel Palacio where Kang granted a lengthy interview to reporters.¹³⁸ Kang expressed his pleasure with how well the Chinese were accepted in Mexico, as contrasted with the United States, which he felt was going to lead inevitably to a more thorough boycott of American goods. The boycott, in his estimation, would hurt, to some degree, the United States economy. He demonstrated the wisdom of Mexico’s policy by pointing to the flourishing Commercial Corporation enterprises in Torreón. He scorned the “yellow peril” concept and went to some length to explain his *datong* theory of the equality of all races. Furthermore, “China is too busy today with the great work of development ... to reflect long upon things so far in the future as the Yellow Peril, the Asiatic invasion or any other chimerical scheme.” Unaware of the irony of what was already perceived by some Mexicans as a Chinese commercial invasion, Kang touted the streetcar and steamship concessions and the flourishing bank and projected a large flow of Chinese immigrants eager to engage in business in Mexico.¹³⁹ In

135 Ruth Mandujano-López, “Transpacific Mexico: Encounters with China and Japan in the Age of Steam (1867–1914),” Ph.D. dissertation, University of British Columbia, 2012, <https://open.library.ubc.ca/cIRcle/collections/ubctheses/24/items/1.0103455>, accessed August 14, 2017).

136 “Concession for Steamship Service Between Mexican, Chinese, and Japanese Ports,” *Monthly Bulletin of the International Bureau of the American Republics* 25, no. 6 (December 1907) in *Congressional Serial Set* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1907), 1400.

137 Kang Youwei to Liang Qixun, June 18, 1907, in Zhang, *Kang Youwei Juan*, 15. Huang Kuan-zhuo also refers to “our newly established million dollar company” in a letter to Tom Leung on July 7, 1907, no. 250 in Fang and Cai, 187.

138 “China is Mexico’s Future Customer, Kong Yu Wei Talks of Conditions,” *Mexican Herald*, June 28, 1907, 1, 3.

139 “China is Mexico’s Future Customer,” *Mexican Herald*, June 28, 1907, 3. The reporter wrongly contended that all three enterprises were backed by the Bank of China, portending “enormous investments that will follow in the near future.” He also reported that Kang

keeping with this image, Kang was introduced to President Díaz by the Mexican ambassador to the United States as a “foreign investor” rather than in his political capacity.¹⁴⁰

On June 29, Kang met with the seventy-seven-year-old Díaz, then in his seventh term as Mexican president. Díaz impressed Kang with his health and sprightliness. For nearly two hours, the men discussed matters of economics and politics and exchanged views on the ethnological and etymological similarities of the Chinese and Aztecs—a thesis Kang had studied on his first visit to Mexico in 1906. The meeting was described as very cordial and full of mutual admiration.¹⁴¹ Kang’s detailed record of their conversation reveals that he compared Díaz to German Kaiser Wilhelm II, whom Kang believed had made Germany number one in governance in Europe. Indeed, Kang saw Wilhelm’s style of governance as appropriate for China, which he described elsewhere as “taking people’s rights as the base of a constitutional system with the power of a talented and mighty ruler for their realization.”¹⁴² Although democracy worked well in the United States, Kang told Díaz, it could not be adopted by Mexico and praised Díaz’ strong-arm rule as the only effective way to bring order to Mexico after four hundred years of turmoil. Kang understood Díaz’ regime was more a dictatorship than a modern Western-style republic, but may have been unaware that rebels were threatening Díaz’s rule even then.¹⁴³ When Kang told Díaz of his hopes that many Chinese would immigrate to Mexico and asked the president to guarantee their safety, Díaz assured him that the Chinese would be treated equally with people from all other nations. Díaz was delighted that

owned 75 percent of the bank’s stock and much of the stock in the two concessions, which is equally unlikely. On the same page, also see “Likes the Chinese,” about Torreón contractor Frank H. Dillon praising the Torreón investments, particularly the bank, “a monument to their genius and enterprise.”

140 “Kong You Wei Met President Yesterday,” *Mexican Herald*, June 30, 1907, 12.

141 “Kong You Wei Met President Yesterday”; Huang Kuanzhuo to Tan Zhangxiao, July 7, 1907, no. 250 in Fang and Cai, 187. Huang learned of the unusual hospitality shown to Kang by the Mexican president from Huang Kuanri and Huang Richu, who were with Kang; Huang Kuanzhuo to Tan Zhangxiao, after July 7, 1907, no. 249 in Fang and Cai, 189.

142 Roland Felber, “The Use of Analogy by Kang Youwei on his Writings on European History,” *Oriens Extremus* 40 (1997): 69; the authors slightly altered Felber’s translation of Kang’s *Bu Deguo Youji* 補德國游記 [Supplementary Report of Travels to Germany], 1906, for greater precision.

143 “Ye Moxige Zongtong Duiwen Ji” 謁墨西哥總統對問記 [Record of a Visit to the Mexican President], essay, June 29, 1907, in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui*, 302–4; Kang’s report with the above title was published in a Beijing daily literary paper, *Fengya Bao* no. 242 (1907): 244; thank you to Liu Haiyun for this source.

the Chinese were coming to work the vast swathes of unpopulated fertile land and particularly welcomed capitalists and their investments.

Back in Torreón, Wong Foon Chuck reported that Li Fuji had arrived from Canada to assume management of the Mexican ventures.¹⁴⁴ Li later admitted that he arrived in Torreón in July 1907 to find that Kang, Wong Foon Chuck, and Huang Richu had committed to four major projects in Mexico—real estate, banking, the streetcar line, and the shipping franchise—and he was powerless to make any changes in their plans.¹⁴⁵ It was probably around this time that the streetcar line and the bank were incorporated under one company—Compañía Bancaria y de Tranvías Wah Yick—the Wah Yick Banking and Tramway Company, which appears to be the one-million-dollar (or peso) company referred to above.¹⁴⁶ The company was known simply as Wah Yick (Huayi) by Mexicans, a name shared by the New York and Hong Kong banks.¹⁴⁷ In addition to its new stone building downtown (Banco Chino), the company constructed two apartment buildings to house and feed railroad workers, Mexicans, and others. Sometime during this period, one Woo Lam Po arrived to serve as secretary of the Torreón Xianzhenghui chapter and manager of the bank.¹⁴⁸ Other new arrivals included Kang's relatives, Kang Tonghui and Kang Youpei.¹⁴⁹

144 Huang Kuanzhuo to Tan Zhangxiao, July 7, 1907, no. 250 in Fang and Cai, 187.

145 Li Fuji, "Xianzhenghui Jishi Shilüe" 憲政會紀始事略 [A Sketch of the Origins of the Constitutional Association], 1909, 7, Chinese Empire Reform Association, AR-22, AAS ARC 2000/78.

146 Kang Youwei to Liang Qixun, June 18, 1907, in Zhang, *Kang Youwei Juan*, 15. "Enterprising Chinamen," *Mexican Herald*, July 12, 1907, refers to the newly formed "banking and real estate association," "capitalized at \$1,000,000 and ... headed by Kong Yu Wei as president."

147 Unfortunately, there was no consistency in how Kang, Wong, or others referred to the Mexican company. For example, there seems to be no Chinese version of the full Spanish company name; in letters and articles written by Kang, Wong Foon Chuck, and others, there is a distinction made between the bank, usually called "the Mexican bank" [*Moguo yinhang* 墨國銀行 or *Mohang* 墨行] or Hua-Mo Bank and the streetcar line. Wu Xianzi's Baohuanghui history, *Zhongguo Minzhu Xianzhengdang Dangshi*, uses Hua-Mo Yinhang 華墨銀行 to refer to the bank and never mentions a combined company. Because the combined company became known locally as Wah Yick, this name is used in this book.

148 Little is known about Woo Lam Po, whose name does not appear in Chinese in any of the Kang/Liang correspondence, but it does appear in Mexican documents, suggesting that he dealt with local and federal authorities. He probably came from the United States or Hong Kong, as he knew English. See Puig, *Entre el Río Perla y el Nazas*, 204–5. He may be Hu Lanfu 胡蘭甫, mentioned in a letter from Xu Qin to Liang Qichao, probably in 1909, that Hu had written Xu from Mexico with a potential buyer for the streetcar line willing to pay 35,000 yuan; in *Liang Rengong Xiansheng Nianpu Changbian Gaoben*, vol. 10, 4712.

149 Huang Kuanzhuo to Tan Zhangxiao, July 7, 1907, no. 250 in Fang and Cai, 187, mentions Kang Youpei (Kang Jiyu) buying land with Huang to build a "luxurious recreation park." For Kang Tonghui's presence, see Lo, "Sequel to Autobiography," 215.

6 Torreón: The Capitalist Experiment Fails

Kang probably did not return to Torreón from Mexico City, because he and Linn Chew Sang were escorted by President Díaz's private secretary to the pre-Columbian town of Xochimilco. Famous for its hanging gardens, Kang was more interested in the modern waterworks then being constructed to bring potable water to the capital of one million people from the Xochimilco springs.¹⁵⁰ He also toured Mexico City's museum with the director and a German archaeologist and declared that Aztec (and Mayan) hieroglyphics resembled the ancient writing of the first peoples of Mongolia, Siberia, and China. Departing from Xochimilco for Mexico's east coast on July 3, Kang and Linn boarded the S.S. *Merida* at Vera Cruz on July 4. They stopped at Havana, Cuba, on the ninth and arrived in New York City on July 12, 1907.¹⁵¹

Kang spent the rest of July to early November in New York City and Long Island. He also married his third wife, Fresno teenager Lily Haw, who became his translator and secretary.¹⁵² Kang was in New York that fall when, first the United States, and, then the world, were hit by the great 1907 bank panic. From October 15 to November 4, the world saw Wall Street lose half its value, banks overrun by fearful depositors, and the collapse of huge financial and industrial firms. For Kang, so heavily invested in the capitalist system both financially and intellectually, it must have been unnerving. Yet, letters written by Kang at that time betray no awareness of the bank panic, and he certainly could not have anticipated the depression that would cross the border and pummel the Mexican economy during the next two years. Given Kang's close friendship with industrial consolidator Charles Flint, Kang could have observed in a personal way the distress caused by a failing financial system on the most powerful industrial nation.¹⁵³

Coincidentally—or perhaps not—it was around this time that the financial burden of raising funds for the Mexican streetcar line began to weigh heavily

150 "Visita de un estadistá chino á las obras de Xochimilco y al Museo" [Visit of a Chinese statesman to the Xochimilco works and the Museum], *La Voz de Mexico*, July 5, 1907, 2.

151 H. R. Sisson, Chinese Inspector, New York, to Commissioner General of Immigration, July 12, 1907, Chinese File 14735-89. Also see Passenger and Crew Lists, S.S. *Merida*, July 12, 1907, Nos. 25 and 26, final destination was noted as Stockholm, Sweden, T715, RG 85, NA-Washington. Kang and his secretary left Mexico City on July 3 for Vera Cruz and were to sail on Friday, July 5, according to "Notes of the Passing Day," *Mexican Herald*, July 4, 1907, 12.

152 See Chapter 10.

153 Flint, *Memories*, photograph facing 167, for example, pictures Kang and daughter Tongbi standing on a shoreline at the South Side Sportsmen's Club, Long Island, where Flint, Andrew Carnegie, and other wealthy business owners hunted and fished.

on Kang. He began to seek funds from other parts of the Commercial Corporation. On October 9, 1907, Kang wrote Tom Leung in an urgent tone: "The streetcar company in Mexico needs several hundred thousand."¹⁵⁴ The franchise could be lost if the funds were not raised by the contracted date, when it would revert back to the Mexican government.¹⁵⁵ Although Kang had told Liang in April that he had already allocated 300,000 for the streetcar franchise, he now asked Tom Leung why the Chicago restaurant King Joy Lo was not coming up with the capital for the Commercial Corporation ventures in Mexico: "The Chicago business was entirely handled by you ... you must manage to repay several tens of thousands of dollars to meet the need." The restaurant was established to support Baohuanghui students, not to provide funds for risky ventures in Mexico, and, in any case, King Joy Lo only brought in profits of \$50 a day at that time.¹⁵⁶ Kang suggested that Tom should have no trouble paying "one or two hundred dollars every day," but no such sum, whether from profits, or the return of a loan, could realistically be remitted to the Commercial Corporation.¹⁵⁷ Kang's urgency was underscored by the failure of a Torreón delegation led by Wong Foon Chuck and Huang Richu, co-managers of the bank, who returned empty handed from a fund-raising trip to New York City. Struck for the first time by doubt about the probability of success in his Mexican ventures, he admitted despondently, "I feel very uneasy."¹⁵⁸ Nevertheless, Kang's trepidation was tempered by his unwavering confidence in the astuteness of his real estate purchases, which he expected to grow in value. In

154 Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, October 9, 1907, no. 120 in Fang and Cai, 77. Thanks to Yang Zheng for discovering that this letter and a followup letter from Kang to Tan, December 9, 1907, no. 121 in Fang and Cai, 78, were mistakenly dated 1906 by Fang and Cai, but correctly dated by Mo Shixiang, "Kangmen zai Shang Hai Polie: dui youguan Zhijiage Qiongcaillou Zhaiwu Jiufende Ruogan Xinhande Shuping" 康門在商海中破壞：對有關芝加哥瓊彩樓債務糾紛的若干信函的述評 [The Kang School on the Verge of Splitting after Plunging into the Sea of Commerce: A Commentary on Some Letters concerning the Dispute over Debts of Chicago's Qiongcaillou], *Jindaishi Yanjiu*, no. 2 (1995): 67.

155 Kang Youwei to Liang Qichao, March 9, 1908, *Liang Qichao Nianpu*, 444: "The 4th month of this year [April 30–May 29, 1908] is the deadline for the contract, and the Mexican officials will get the [franchise for the] streetcar line back." It is possible that Kang meant that the contract would expire in four months. Presumably this deadline is for the central Torreón line from the cemetery to the Chinese gardens on Av. Morelos.

156 For King Joy Lo daily profits, see Feng Jingquan 馮鏡泉 to Tan Zhangxiao, September 28, 1907, no. 138B in Fang and Cai, 169.

157 Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, October 9, 1907, no. 120 in Fang and Cai, 77. There would soon erupt a rabid dispute between Kang and Tom over tens of thousands of dollars that Kang felt were loans and Tom believed to be stock shares for the Chicago restaurant. See Chapter 9 for details.

158 Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, October 9, 1907, no. 120 in Fang and Cai, 77.

November, he believed that the more than ten blocks of land he had bought in Torreón could fetch 100,000 (no currency given) and would “provide a sound financial foundation for the Bao[huang]hui.”¹⁵⁹ Apparently hoping to keep that land, Kang also wanted to borrow funds from the Commercial Corporation to buy another ten-plus block property to resell for a profit, repay the loan and also invest in the streetcar and shipping lines. But, he concluded, “I worry about borrowing too much money ... I fear that obtaining funds for the party activities and investment will become a problem in the future.” By December 1907, Kang’s anxiety increased: “Because I cannot raise the sums needed for the streetcar business, I am extremely worried and distressed.”¹⁶⁰ Yet according to his “Ruishi Youji” (Record of Journeys to Switzerland) in late 1907, Kang traveled to Germany, France, and Austria “in order to purchase tram equipment for Mexico.”¹⁶¹

In early 1908, Liang Qichao began to pressure Kang to sell the Mexican land to support his own political and publishing ventures in China, which were in critical need of funding.¹⁶² These endeavors included the newly founded Zhengwenshe (Political Information Society), a protopolitical party that was greatly extending the reach of Xianzhenghui inside China.¹⁶³ It alone needed 100,000 (unspecified currency), the very amount Kang had said the land was worth in November 1907. But, when Kang replied to Liang in March 1908, the financial crisis had hit Mexico, and he admitted that the land he thought worth 10,000 per block in November had lost half its value.¹⁶⁴ Yet, he tenaciously insisted that if the streetcar line was completed, the land value might rise again to its 1907 level, “so we cannot afford to sell the land now.” Kang was now desperate. “There is a huge gap between our expectations and the reality for the Mexican business.” Not only was several hundred thousand needed to secure the streetcar line contract but payment of “interest for the two business endeavors in Mexico requires another 100,000. It’s a critical situation—if we can’t manage this, then our members throughout the Americas will burst into an uproar, and the Baohuanghui [*sic*] will collapse.”

159 Kang Youwei to Liang Qichao, Xu Junmian 徐君勉 [Xu Qin] and Mai Rubo 麥孺博 [Mai Menghua 麥孟華], November 4, 1907, *Liang Qichao Nianpu*, 421–22.

160 Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, December 9, 1907, no. 121 in Fang and Cai, 78.

161 Kang Youwei 康有為, “Ruishi Youji” 瑞士游記 [Record of Journeys to Switzerland] in *Kang Youwei Quanji* 康有為全集 [Collected Works of Kang Youwei], ed. Jiang Yihua and Zhang Hualong 姜義華, 張榮華 (Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin Daxue Chubanshe, 2007), vol. 8, 328.

162 Liang Qichao to Kang Youwei, January 26, 1908, *Liang Qichao Nianpu*, 434.

163 See Chapter 10.

164 Kang Youwei to Liang Qichao, March 9, 1908, *Liang Qichao Nianpu*, 443–47.

Kang, as always, was inclined to blame others for organizational problems, and he poured out bitter accusations to Liang in this letter. First, Tom Leung's failure to rapidly repay purported loans to King Joy Lo meant that the New York Huayi bank could not satisfy the "scores of letters and telegrams" from Li Fuji in Mexico pleading for funds to help the businesses he was trying to rehabilitate. Furthermore, Kang wrote that squabbling between the two Huangs in Mexico had delayed progress with the businesses they were jointly managing:

Huang Kuanzhuo [Wong Foon Chuck] and Huang Richu compete with each other. Both want to take charge in order to receive the middleman's fee of up to tens of thousands. Therefore, there has been no income for more than a year.

Wong Foon Chuck's multifaceted competence in business was greater than other members, said Kang, but Wong selfishly pursued his own interests over the greater good. Kang claimed that Wong had taken for himself fourteen blocks of "public" land in Torreón, perhaps referring to the fourteen blocks shown as Commercial Corporation property on the 1906 map. "If we entrust him with full power, it will enable him to pursue his personal interest in the name of you and me. In the future, this will give people something to blame us for."¹⁶⁵

Meanwhile, belying Kang's fears, the streetcar line was being built. In March 1908, J. W. Lim and Wong Foon Chuck were granted Section 6 certificates by the U.S. consul at Ciudad Juárez to go to the United States to purchase "machinery and other materials for streetcar construction in [Torreón]."¹⁶⁶ They may not have made this purchase, but several articles in *Modern Mexico* between June and December 1908 report substantial headway on the streetcar project that made it appear the tramway might be soon be operational.

Modern Mexico reported on June 30, 1908, that track laying had begun that week for the streetcar line led by "Chinese capitalists" [Wong] Foon Chuck and J. W. Lim and would traverse previously inaccessible areas of Torreón through both residential and business districts.¹⁶⁷ The new system would boast the most up-to-date safety equipment—air brakes and double tracks—and the

¹⁶⁵ Kang Youwei to Liang Qichao, March 9, 1908, *Liang Qichao Nianpu*, 447, in which Kang also praised the superior business talent of Liu Zhangxuan 劉章軒 of New Westminster, B.C. and, equally with Huang Kuanzhuo, criticized Liu's pursuit of self-interest

¹⁶⁶ D. Edwards, American Consulate, Ciudad Juárez, to Assistant Secretary of State, March 25, 1908, State Department Numerical Files, 12795/1-2, RG 59, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/20251668?objectPage=466> accessed May 25, 2024.

¹⁶⁷ "Laying Tracks for the New System," *Modern Mexico*, June 30, 1908, 11.

most advanced machinery in its power plant. Such a project required “an outlay of several hundreds of thousands of dollars to the promoters and builders.” American contractor Henry Pethan said on July 20, 1908, that he had “graded three kilometers [1.8 miles] and that the ties and rails have been distributed and are being laid” for the new Chinese streetcar line being built by the Compañía Bancaria y de Tranvías Wah Yick, “represented by Foon Chuck and Dr. J. W. Lim.”¹⁶⁸ Furthermore, the Chinese would build a power plant for the electric cars or “tramways,” as well as new office buildings) on property they already owned near the grand avenue named after President Díaz (Calzada Porfirio Díaz). Lim assured the residents of Torreón that the line and power plant would be finished and operating within the year. This new system would provide a “service of less than four minutes through the principal streets and every ten minutes to the suburbs.”

In a stealth action, the streetcar company chose Christmas 1908 to install the five crossings along Avenida Morelos that intersected with the existing lines run by the Lerdo-Torreón streetcar company (Ferrocaril Eléctrico de Lerdo a Torreón). Five groups of about twenty Chinese men each “could have been seen loitering around at each point where a crossing was to be put in, but being Christmas and the streets unusually crowded, no one suspicioned for an instant what their object was.”¹⁶⁹ Between 11:00 PM on Christmas night until 5:00 AM on December 26, the teams of men laid the five crossings. “The Chinese company has a large portion of its line completed and it has been a question as to whether it would be allowed to lay the crossings. The line extends from Torreón Nuevo, which is located about four miles southwest of this city, to the cemetery in the northwestern outskirts ... This will cause an advance in the price of property bordering along the line. Torreón Nuevo is a newly laid out addition and is owned principally by the wealthy Chinese of this city.”¹⁷⁰ It was reported that it would be a matter of weeks before the system would be ready to carry passengers. Thus, “the news of the laying of the crossings was hailed with delight by all of the property holders and business men of the city, as it will give them two first class systems and the competition will demand good service and reasonable fares.”¹⁷¹

168 “Laying Rails for New Tramways,” *Modern Mexico*, July 21, 1908, 14.

169 “Tramway Puts in Crossings,” *Modern Mexico*, January 5, 1909, 15. Also see Allen Morrison, “The Tramways of Lerdo, Gomez Palacio and Torreón,” *Electric Transport in Latin America, Past and Present*, <http://www.tramz.com/mx/lt/lt.html>, accessed July 3, 2023.

170 “Steal March on Old Company,” *San Antonio Express*, December 29, 1908, 3.

171 “Tramway Puts in Crossings,” *Modern Mexico*, January 5, 1909, 15.

The 1909 edition of the authoritative *Terry's Guide to Mexico* depicted Torreón as “a new and thriving town, very rich commercially,” and “one of the wealthiest of the local institutions” was the Compañía Bancaria China y México.¹⁷² T. Philip Terry praised the recent and rapid growth of Torreón, which had been elevated to the rank of a city in 1907. “The Chinese have aided materially to develop the resources of the place.” Terry noted Torreón’s good “tramlines,” although tellingly does not include the Chinese line through the center of town in his description of transportation options for travelers.

Despite the progress achieved in 1908, the streetcar line was never completed. Indeed, it now appeared that the entire Mexican enterprise was threatened. In March 1909, Kang’s nephew You Shiyin (Y. S. Wan, Yan S. Wan), who was working at Huayi Bank in New York, sent his uncle a financial report. The Mexican bank had \$200,000 in assets and had contributed income to Huayi of more than \$210,000 in special profits (*teli*) as well as \$11,000 in Torreón land sale proceeds. However, Hua-Mo’s bottom line showed losses of \$20,000, You explained, because attempts to sell more land had failed and too much money was spent on wages. “We should have profited from the bank, but, on the contrary, we suffered a loss.”¹⁷³ Tom Leung, who had just published a damning defense against Kang’s accusations of Tom’s theft and mismanagement of King Joy Lo, had made matters worse by “telling Americans that Hua-Mo Bank was a fraud.”

Meanwhile, Li Fuji, Kang’s trusted deputy in Victoria, remained in Mexico to represent Kang and the broader organization against what was perceived to be the extremely selfish pair, Wong Foon Chuck and Huang Richu.¹⁷⁴ Li’s compatriot in Victoria, Luo Yuehu, wrote to Kang in June 1909 with news from Li that there were plans afoot to transfer managerial power of the Mexican company to Hong Kong via Victoria.¹⁷⁵ Mexican law required a public announcement one month in advance for this kind of official corporate action. Luo updated Kang about the sorry state of the Mexican businesses:

Although the [Mexican] bank has several hundred thousand in capital, they purchased too much land in [missing characters in the transcript]. They also built the road [streetcar line] and established their own building

172 T. Philip Terry, *Terry's Guide to Mexico* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1927, originally published in 1909), 35–36.

173 You Shiyin to Kang Youwei, March 25, 1909, in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui*, 395–96.

174 Li, “Xianzhenghui Jishi Shilüe,” 7–8, states that Li arrived in Torreón on July 1, 1907, and left Torreón on September 17, 1909.

175 Luo Yuehu 駱月湖 to Kang Youwei, June 19, 1909, in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui*, 418–21.

[Banco Chino building]. In recent years, there has been drought in Torreón. Because of the poor harvests, even if we want to sell the land at its original price, there is no buyer ... We do not know when we can finish the truck road (*kachelu*, referring to the streetcar line). Kuanzhuo [Wong Foon Chuck] is wealthy, but he cannot help us, not to mention [Huang] Richu. They not only cannot provide funds for the bank, but even owe the bank several tens of thousands of [Mexican] dollars. Because we took too many bold actions, the capital of the bank is now spent but cannot yield profits.

In short order, the Mexican enterprise had devolved. There was not enough money to complete, much less maintain, the projects publicized with much fanfare not long before. Li Fuji left Torreón in September 1909 and published a pamphlet in November explaining to members in North America the status of the Mexican investments:

If we had managed the Mexican bank well, we could have earned a lot of profits. However, it did not yield much income because of a lack of [currency] exchanges (*huidui*). One hundred thousand [pesos?] was spent on purchasing land. We expected the land price to rise, creating unimaginable profits. The construction of the bank building cost 150,000. We are selling it and waiting for a favorable bid. The construction of the streetcar track has cost us 150,000 and is not finished yet. We have to raise some more funds to complete it. Otherwise the money we have invested in it will not be retrievable. When the streetcar line is completed, if someone offers a good price, we can sell it, too.¹⁷⁶

Li admitted that dividends from the Hua-Mo Bank had not been paid because the construction of the streetcar line was too costly. And, he proposed that when all the Mexican investments were sold, the profits should be invested in China. He did not even mention the fate of the steamship line concession, which in March 1908, along with the streetcar line, “needed huge amounts of money,” according to Feng Jingquan of New York’s Huayi Bank, who was juggling Li’s requests for financial support with demands from others.¹⁷⁷ When that project was abandoned or whether it was sold off is not known.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁶ Li, “Xianzhenghui Jishi Shilüe,” 6–7.

¹⁷⁷ Feng Jingquan to Tan Zhangxiao, March 10, 1908, no. 138-D in Fang and Cai, 175. This is the last reference to the steamship line in a primary source document.

¹⁷⁸ Ruth Mandujano, email message, April 25, 2022, stated that she had not heard of the Baohuanghui steamship company in her extensive study of Sino-Mexican steamship ventures but noted that many steamship concessions were unsuccessful.

The next Kang confidant to be dispatched to Mexico was Xu Qin, who was in the United States to calm the troubles arising from multiple business scandals and sagging morale. Xu told Kang in October 1909, "There are rumors that Hua-Mo Bank is a fraud and really doesn't exist. So, I have to go there and investigate first, and then make a public announcement to soothe people. But if I go alone, my report might not be trusted. So, I will go with Zhao Wansheng (Joseph Singleton of New York) and Mei Shengjie (St. Paul, Minnesota), who have been elected by the Eastern [chapters]."¹⁷⁹ At first, Xu believed that even though the rest of the Commercial Corporation businesses had failed, "we still have some small-scale operations in Mexico. If we expand these, we will probably be able to regain people's support, and our association might recover." However, by November 1909, even before going to Mexico, Xu had concluded that instead he would have to close the bank and sell the streetcar line.¹⁸⁰ "The Mexican bank really can't work. The only way to deal with it is to close the business as soon as possible. You said that someone wants to purchase the streetcar [line]. This is not the case." Xu said that the bank had lost more than \$10,000 every year and there was no choice but to sell it. Moreover, from Mexico, Xu reported to Kang in March 1910 that the streetcar line was costing \$300 (pesos?) a month to maintain in its unfinished state.¹⁸¹

In the end, Hua-Mo Bank was not shuttered, but in 1910 both the Banco Chino building and the streetcar line were no longer in Wah Yick's hands. A bank even newer than Hua-Mo but far more prosperous, Bank of La Laguna, bought the Banco Chino building in June 1910 for \$128,000 (pesos?), forcing Hua-Mo Bank to move from its elegant ground floor headquarters to shared space with the department store, El Puerto de Shanghai (Port of Shanghai) on 1110 Hidalgo.¹⁸² "One of the emblematic buildings of the city," the three-story Banco Chino stone building with classical arches and columns and decorative parapet on the corner of Valdes Carrillo and Juarez was restored in 2012 by the Museo Arocena.¹⁸³

179 Xu Qin to Kang Youwei, October 13, 1909, in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui*, 438. Zhao and Mei attended the 1907 New York Xianzhenghui plenary session and were influential leaders.

180 Xu Qin to Kang Youwei, November 7, 1909, in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui*, 455.

181 Kang Youwei to Liang Qichao, March 23, 1910, in *Liang Qichao Nianpu*, 531.

182 "Chinese Bank Building in Torreón is Sold," *El Paso Herald*, June 13, 1910, 9. For the location of the Port of Shanghai, see Silvia Castro, "Sobre la ubicación del Banco Chino [On the location of the Chinese Bank], *El Siglo de Torreón*, December 6, 2015, <https://www.elsiglodetorreon.com.mx/noticia/2015/sobre-la-ubicacion-del-banco-chino.html?from=old>, accessed January 25, 2023.

183 "El Museo Arocena," <https://museoarocena.com/el-museo-arocena/>, accessed January 6, 2023.

Then, in October 1910, it was announced that a group of Mexican investors had formed a new streetcar company with a capitalization of \$200,000 (pesos?) to “take over the concession and lines of the Chinese Street Car company.”¹⁸⁴ The article stated that the line “had been constructed two years ago” and was “much more extensive than that of the old company, which is operating within the city limits.” Whether Wah Yick was paid for the concession and lines or had lost their investment to the Mexican government is unknown, but the most ambitious project of the Baohuanghui had failed.

Characteristically, Kang now turned on Wong Foon Chuck and took no blame for his own gullibility or adventurism:

Now when I reflect on matters, everything was Wong’s fault. He is talented, manipulative, and secretive. He is omnipotent. Our party members have all been betrayed by him. I asked Jiyu [Kang Youpei] to bring \$160,000 to Mexico [in 1906] to purchase land and build roads [probably meaning the streetcar line]. Huang suddenly spent \$140,000 to construct the stone building [for the bank]. Building this line also cost several hundreds of thousands of dollars. In the past he always talked about how profitable these businesses would be. I was enticed into this.¹⁸⁵

Soon, monumental events locally, regionally, and nationally dealt both the Chinese in Torreón and Hua-Mo Bank a definitive final blow.

7 The Tragic Denouement: 1911

Looking back from the 1911 Mexican Revolution as it played out in Torreón, the city’s reaction and response to its highly visible Chinese commercial enterprises were varied and apparently contradictory. On the one hand, in 1907 on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of Torreón and its elevation that year from town to city, the municipal government issued a proclamation to honor “citizen Wong Foon Chuck.” Wong, or Foon Chuck, as he was known in Mexico, was lauded as one of the city’s “founding fathers” and “most favored sons,” in view of his “civic virtues and for his efforts in contributing to the development and prosperity of the town which led to its elevation to the high status of city in 1907.” The proclamation was signed by the governor of Coahuila, the

184 “Street Car Company Organized,” *El Paso Herald*, October 5, 1910, 14.

185 Kang Youwei to Liang Qichao, March 23, 1910, in *Liang Qichao Nianpu*, 531–32.

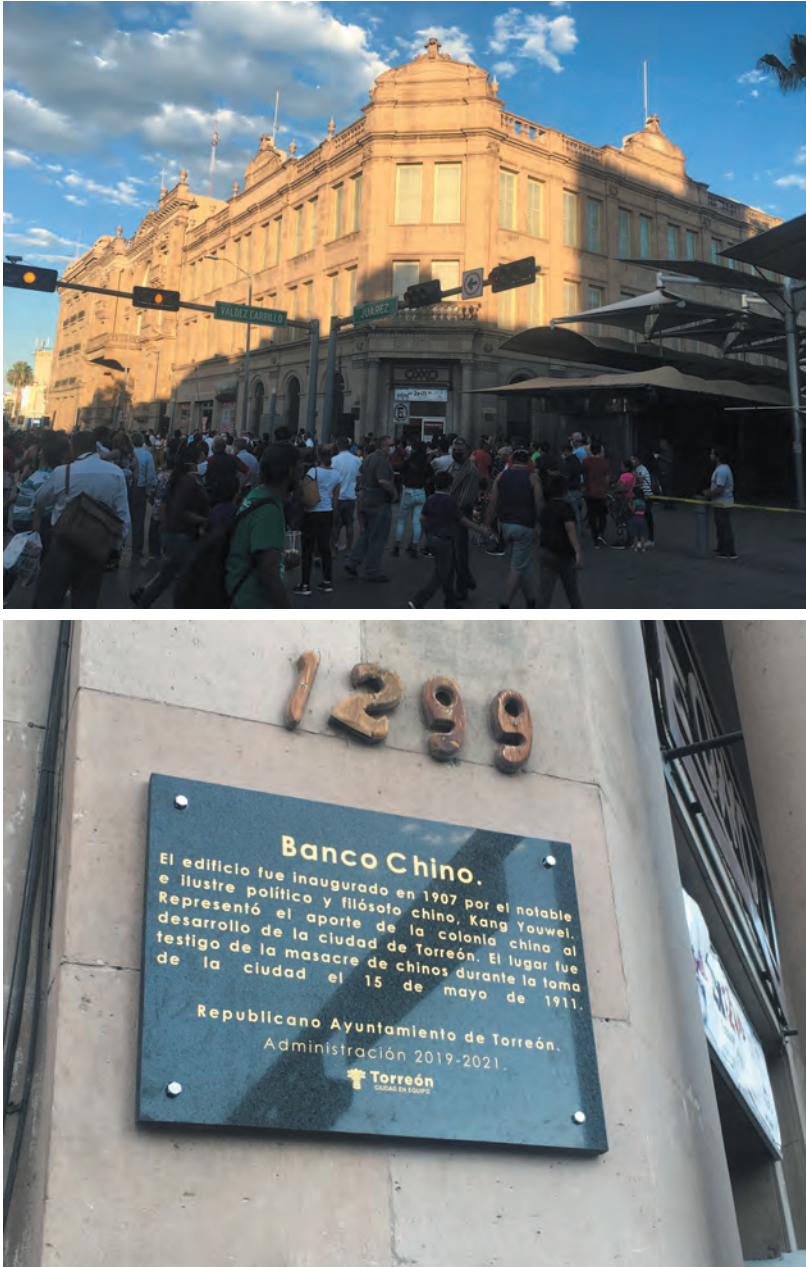


FIGURE 58 Banco Chino building, Torreón, today (now Museo Arocena), and 2019 plaque commemorating the inauguration of the bank by Kang Youwei in 1907 and noting the massacre there on May 15, 1911.

mayor of Torreón, and the chair of the anniversary celebration.¹⁸⁶ There could be no greater recognition of a person's standing in his community, especially in the business community, and testament to his active networking with local Mexican and international political and business circles.

At the same time, local Mexican businessmen appeared unnerved by the influx of foreigners and their rapid succession of commercial and industrial enterprises. In 1907, they formed a chamber of commerce to consolidate their interests vis-à-vis foreigners. As they lamented in the Torreón newspaper, *El Nuevo Mundo* (The New World): "We cannot compete against the foreigners in commercial ventures. The sad and lamentable fact is that the prostration of our national commerce has created a situation in which Mexicans are replaced by foreign individuals and companies, which monopolize our commerce and behave in the manner of conquerors in a conquered land."¹⁸⁷ To be sure, this diatribe was directed at *all* foreigners in Torreón, but it was also clear by then that the Chinese were more visible than others given the type of businesses they operated, their numbers, and ubiquity. Wong Foon Chuck alone owned large tracts of urban farmland, the Xin Guangdong and Do Sing gardens; his businesses included the Railroad Hotel and other boarding houses for workers, grocery stores, and fruit and vegetable stands in the El Parián municipal market, where produce from his farms was sold daily. Other Chinese merchants owned department stores, El Puerto de Shanghai (Port of Shanghai), El Pabellón Mexicano (The Mexican Pavilion), El Puerto de Ho Nam (The Port of Ho Nam), and La Plaza de Armas (Armament Square), and many restaurants and grocery stores. Among the laundries was the state-of-the-art steam laundry, Lavandería de Vapor Oriental.¹⁸⁸

Meanwhile, Mexico itself was in the throes of a growing anti-regime movement, led by Coahuila native Francisco Madero, an American-educated mining engineer and scion of the leading local industrial and commercial family. Throughout Mexico, but especially in the northern border region, local elites such as the Maderos felt increasingly disaffected by dictator Porfirio Díaz's modernization policies, which they perceived favored foreign investors over Mexico's own rising bourgeoisie. Furthermore, Díaz had surrounded himself with a closed clique of political advisors and loyalists appointed to

186 There is an image of this Proclamation in "Huang Commemoration," 38, reproduced in this chapter.

187 Raymond Craib III, "Chinese Immigrants in Porfirian Mexico: A Preliminary Study of Settlement, Economic Activity and Anti-Chinese Sentiment," *Latin American Studies Center* (Albuquerque, New Mexico) *Research Paper Series* no. 28 (1996): 15.

188 Puig, *Perla y Nazas*, 164–65.

governorships and military command posts, further alienating local elites who felt politically marginalized in addition to being disadvantaged economically.

Starting out as a reformer, much like Kang Youwei in a very different context far away, Madero asked for fair elections to take place in 1910, after the octogenarian Díaz would have completed his seventh presidential term. But when the old dictator refused to yield and cynically manipulated the elections for an eighth term, Madero radicalized his position from reformer to revolutionary, issuing the clarion call in 1910 and 1911 to overthrow the regime by armed struggle, a position similar to that advocated by Sun Yatsen in China in 1911. Like Kang and Sun in China, Madero and his followers were motivated by a new-found sense of nationalism, similarly tinged with a strong dose of xenophobia and desire for democratic government. If anything, given Mexico's proximity to the mighty, overpowering, and avaricious United States, and given its much larger contingents of foreigners, including the Chinese, Mexico's revolutionary nationalism was even more fundamentally antiforeign. "Mexico for the Mexicans" became the Madero revolution's rallying cry.¹⁸⁹

Were the Chinese in Torreón, led by Wong Foon Chuck, Huang Richu, Dr. and Mrs. J. W. Lim, and Woo Lam Po—passionate followers of reformer Kang Youwei—equally attuned to the unrest stirring up among Mexicans in their midst? Did they bear witness to revolutionary forces in their inexorable march in mid-1911 across Mexico, starting with Madero's home state of Coahuila, taking villages, towns, and cities from federal defense forces, most of which turned out to be quite feckless?

On May 5, 1911, after the town of Gómez Palacios, not far from Torreón, had fallen to revolutionary forces, an exuberant bricklayer made a speech that took aim specifically at the Chinese. Jesús Flores railed against the Chinese for taking jobs away from Mexicans, especially Mexican women, not a surprising charge given the type of gendered commercial activities that Chinese men rendered in food and laundry services. He called for restricting further Chinese immigration. A few months earlier, on September 15, 1910, at the Torreón festivities on the occasion of the centenary of Mexican independence from Spain, someone in the crowd shouted "Death to the Chinese."¹⁹⁰ This was, in fact, not a new idea, for it had already been broached some years ago by the anarcho-syndicalist Partido Liberal Mexicano, the most radical opposition movement to the Díaz dictatorship. In its 1906 platform, a brief plank under

189 A good analysis and summary of the Madero Revolution is Enrique Krauze, *Mexico. Biography of Power: A History of Modern Mexico, 1810–1996* (New York: HarperCollins, 1997).

190 Puig, *Perla y Nazas*, 169, 173–79.

the section on “Foreigners” stated simply: “Prohibit Chinese immigration.”¹⁹¹ The pro-labor party had been active in organizing the most serious mining strike in Mexico, in the northwestern border town of Cananea, where Chinese small businesses had proliferated, often acting in concert with the American owners of the company town to provide needed services and daily consumer items to a largely male Mexican work force, but in so doing stifled the development of a Mexican-owned and operated domestic local market.¹⁹²

It appeared that Woo Lam Po, Xianzhenghui member and manager of Wah Yick Bank in Torreón, learned about Flores's anti-Chinese harangue. He wrote, printed, and circulated a notice in Chinese to his unsuspecting countrymen about the imminent danger of rebels entering the city:

Brothers, attention! Attention! This is serious. Many unjust acts have happened during the revolution. Notice has been received that before 10 o'clock today the revolutionists will unite their forces and attack the city. It is very probable that during the battle a mob will spring up and sack the stores. For this reason, we advise all our people, when the crowds assemble, to close your door and hide yourself and under no circumstances open your places for business or go outside to see the fighting. And if any of your stores are broken into, offer no resistance but allow them to take what they please, since otherwise you might endanger your life.¹⁹³

Rather than signing the notice in the name of the Asociación Reformista, Woo issued it in the name of the Torreón Merchants and Laborers Society, an organization hastily thrown together in the face of this anticipated crisis, which happened to share quarters with the reform association. While Woo was certainly prescient about the looming danger threatening his community, he could not have possibly foreseen the actual devastation that was about to occur. The die had been cast, and his warning was too little and too late.

On May 13, 1911, the first contingent of armed rebels entered Torreón, trampling on the Chinese vegetable farms located at the entrance to the city and killing at least one hundred workers. On May 14, the commander of the far-outnumbered Federal forces withdrew from the city during the night,

191 James D. Cockcroft, *Intellectual Precursors of the Mexican Revolution, 1900–1913* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1968), 240.

192 Hu-DeHart, “Immigrants to a Developing Society.” Cananea hosted a Xianzhenghui chapter.

193 Puig, *Perla y Nazas*, 176–77. Later, Woo provided this English translation as part of the documentation submitted to investigating commissions, including one led by American lawyers hired by the Qing government.

effectively surrendering it. But the worst came on May 15. When Commander Emilio Madero (brother of revolutionary leader Francisco Madero) arrived in Torreón in the name of the victorious revolutionary army, he was confronted by vast numbers of bodies of Chinese men wantonly and brutally massacred in a mad rampage by his own unruly troops, aided and abetted by a furious local mob. The Maderistas had entered Torreón in the middle of the night, and, for the next ten hours, massacred about two hundred defenseless Chinese found wandering the streets or pulled out from their hiding places in their boarding houses or shops. Augmented by about 4,000 poor people and freed prisoners from Torreón and nearby towns, the huge faceless mob (*una masa anónima*) attacked foreign properties indiscriminately, but focused physical attacks almost exclusively on Chinese men, who were stripped, robbed, and mutilated while their homes and stores were ransacked and burned.

Eyewitness accounts, many given by American and European residents, record gruesome scenes of bodies hacked with machetes and knives, severed heads and limbs thrown into the streets. A few Japanese were also killed “owing to similarity of features,” but none of the eyewitnesses could identify or articulate a clear cause for the mob’s anti-Chinese fury.¹⁹⁴ Americans and Europeans who bore witness to the massacre provided testimony to numerous investigating committees; U.S. consular agent in Torreón, George C. Carothers, also provided the U.S. Department of State with vivid details. These non-Asian foreigners, who owned and managed railroads, factories, and many businesses, also feared for their lives and perhaps wondered why they were spared.¹⁹⁵

That May, two Chinese who survived the massacre wrote letters to Xianzhenghui newspapers with firsthand accounts and pungent analysis.¹⁹⁶ Madero’s incitement of xenophobia and the prevalent view of Mexicans that Chinese had much “hidden wealth” resulted in “an act that targeted the people of the weakest nation—the Chinese people.”

They took down our national flag, tore it to shreds, and trampled on it. They looted all the businesses and properties—cleaned out everything. The wretched scenes of brutal killing included: brains pouring out of

194 Jacques, “The Chinese Massacre,” 238–39; Puig, *Perla y Nazas*, 173–228.

195 G. C. Carothers, Consular Agent, Torreón, to Secretary of State, May 19, 1911, no. 812.00/1895, State Department Records Relating to Internal Affairs in Mexico, 1910–1929, Microcopy M274B, Roll 13, NA-College Park.

196 Lü Mo Caiyuan Tongbao zhi Xuelei shu” 旅墨菜苑同胞之血淚書 [Letters in Blood and Tears by Compatriots in Torreón, Mexico], *Tung Wah Times*, July 8, 1911, 2. Translated by Mi Ling Tsui. Stories about the aftermath of the massacre and compensation for victims appeared for several more months in *Tung Wah Times*.

severed heads, intestines spilling out of slashed abdomens, bodies cut into pieces or torn apart by horses, and flesh stomped into paste ...

Why were our compatriots so wantonly murdered? Our country is weak, our navy is not strong, our government is muddleheaded, and the people are not patriotic.

Having little faith that the Qing government would seek justice for the Torreón Chinese, one letter sought to mobilize public pressure on both China and the United States:

I beg of you to telegraph the U.S. capital to request military protection, and telegraph our motherland to urge serious negotiations, spur public discussion, and request the speedy dispatch of warships as a show of force, with the aim of seeking satisfactory compensation.

The letter-writers credited the survival of three hundred or so Chinese in Torreón to “the white folks and charitable people” who hid them during the massacre and protected them afterward. As they fled, the survivors were “robbed of their money and clothing by the revolutionary forces—not one was spared. And now hundreds of our compatriots have no clothing or food, suffering cold and hunger, and are at the mercy of others.” A third letter came from the San Francisco Xianzhenghui headquarters pleading with members for relief funds.

In the Qing government’s own investigation later that year, the final casualty tally came to 303 Chinese men, with a long list of property losses totaling some 850,000 pesos, later revised upward, as indemnification for the victims and their families. The Chinese community of Torreón was reduced by more than half. Most of the wealthiest Chinese, including Wong Foon Chuck and Woo Lam Po, had departed before the massacre.¹⁹⁷ Tending to the wounded patients streaming into the Torreón hospital for forty-eight hours straight was J. W. Lim.¹⁹⁸ He emerged from the hospital the morning of May 15 to take his automobile back home in the Chinese garden section of the city:

197 “Chinese Killed at Torreón,” *Houston Post*, May 28, 1911, 1: “The more wealthy resident Chinese of Torreón were not in the city on that day, but their properties, the most important of which was the Chinese bank, suffered.” Wong may have been in Eagle Pass with his family, as when revolutionary violence led to the closing of the Youmei School in 1910, he sent his four children and wife to safety in Eagle Pass. Woo was reported to be in Aguascalientes some 300 miles to the south; see “Plan Reception for Madero,” *San Antonio Express*, May 24, 1911, 3.

198 “Slaughter of Chinese was Terrible,” *El Paso Herald*, May 25, 1911, 1, 3.

About 9 o'clock that same morning [May 15] he rode down to the central plaza in his carriage. There he was suddenly confronted by a howling mob of 500 of the populace, none of whom he knew. They had just finished the devilish task of looting the Chinese bank and stores and killing as many defenseless Chinese as they were able to corral. This work had been dispatched within three hours. Doctor Lim himself being up to that moment ignorant of what had happened. Although he wore the Red Cross badge, several in the mob began to cry, "Kill him, he's a Chinaman." Several carbines were leveled at him, and all he could do was sit in his carriage, smile at his assailants and point to the badge he wore.

Fortunately, one of the crowd stepped forward, thrust the carbines to one side, and called to the *cabecilla*, or leader to come to the rescue. He did so, and told the doctor to get away to the neighboring town of Gomez Palacio as fast as he could.¹⁹⁹

In June the Qing government submitted its report in Mexico City and demanded an indemnity of 12 million pesos (US\$6 million).²⁰⁰ The losses included "besides a bank and clubhouse, eighty-nine places of business." Among these eighty-nine businesses were four laundries, five restaurants, ten vegetable stands, twenty-three food stalls, forty grocery stores and several large vegetable gardens. The report gave a blood-curdling description of the damage done to the Wah Yick Bank and Asociación Reformista headquarters. After sacking the Shanghai department store and the collocated Yee Hop Nan's general store and killing all the occupants, the rebels attacked Wah Yick:

The Shanghai company and the Wah Yick Bank occupied the same building. The employees of the two establishments lived in the upper floors as well as other countrymen of theirs, and the whole of them, numbering twenty-five, were killed by the mob. Two of them were cut to pieces, one the treasurer of the bank, and another man's head was cut off and thrown out of the window into the street. The flow of blood was so great that it actually ran through the flooring and dripped to the ground floor.

199 "Chinese Worth Now Question," *El Paso Morning Times*, August 18, 1911, 2. Earlier stories reported Lim had been dragged around the plaza on a rope, then shot dead; "Chinese Banker Lynched," *Panama Star and Herald*, May 23, 1911; Telegram of "TA," Mexico, to Secretary of State, May 23, 1911, 812.00/1920, Microcopy M274, Roll 13, NA-College Park, reported "300 Chinese subjects have been brutally murdered."

200 "Chinese Cruiser will Back Demand for an Indemnity," *San Antonio Express*, June 10, 1911, 1, 11 quotes the report of the Chinese legation lead by Shung Hai Sun, chargé d'affaires.

The reform club was attacked and fifteen or sixteen men killed, among them being the secretary of the club.²⁰¹

On June 20, 1911, Wah Yick manager Woo Lam Po wrote a letter to the board of inquiry detailing his inspection of damage to the company, claiming a loss of 150,000 pesos, of which 98,000 were deposits stolen from the bank's safe—a far cry from the one-million-peso company that Kang and Wong had registered in 1907.²⁰² Woo stated that this did not include “the value of broken doors, windows, and stained glass of the building owned by Kang Youwei.”²⁰³ Woo also inspected “the building known as Banco Chino, located at the corner of Juarez and Valdes Carrillo, and described damage to the building, floor by floor.” The Bank of La Laguna presumably owned this building, and another news story says it “was a complete wreck on May 15, but was doing business a few days after the capture of Torreón” and only claimed \$12,000 [probably pesos] in damage.²⁰⁴ The reform association claimed 20,000 (pesos) in damages to its office, and Woo reported losses of 5,500 pesos for his newly formed Torreón Merchants and Laborers Society on the second floor of the building where the reform association was located.²⁰⁵

The loss of life hit Wong Foon Chuck and the reformers hard, with their personnel almost totally slaughtered. Wong lost many workers in his truck farms and other businesses, and even Kang Youwei was personally touched by the

201 “Chinese Cruiser will Back Demand for an Indemnity.”

202 Letter from Woo Lampo to Board of Inquiry, Archivo Histórico Genaro Estrada de la Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, files 13-2-34, cited in Silvia Castro, “Sobre la ubicación del Banco Chino [On the location of the Chinese Bank], *El Siglo de Torreón*, December 6, 2015, <https://www.elsiglodetorreon.com.mx/noticia/2015/sobre-la-ubicacion-del-banco-chino.html?from=old>, accessed January 25, 2023. A year later, Xu Qin, representing the larger association and continuing Kang's vendetta against Wong Foon Chuck, appealed to the Chinese minister for reparations of 200,000 pesos, because beyond the loss of 150,000 pesos to the bank in May 1911, the association had been unable to rent its residential rooms in the bank building nor could the bank reopen for business; Xu accused Wong and others of downgrading the association's losses “to satisfy their own interests.” Xu Qin to virtuous brothers and comrades, public letter (printed), June 25, 1912, Him Mark Lai Papers, Research Files, Box 31, Folder 39 (Wu Xianzi), Asian American Studies Collection, Ethnic Studies Library, University of California at Berkeley, AAS ARC 2000/80.

203 This might be the house Kang owned in Torreón.

204 “Banks Resume Payments in Torreón,” *El Paso Herald*, June 7, 1911, 1.

205 Several U.S. newspapers reported the Chinese Reform Society claimed \$20,000 “for club rooms and contents” and \$150,000 for Wah Yick's losses, but the currency referred to must be pesos from Woo's testimony. See, for example, “Torreón Damage Claims are Being Considered,” *El Paso Morning Times*, June 29, 1911, 9.

massacre. Among the dead was Kang's cousin's son, Kang Tonghui.²⁰⁶ As many as seventeen of those killed had been sent by King Joy Lo to work at firms operated by the reformers in Torreón and other Mexican cities, according to Willie Poyke of King Joy Lo, who requested that the U.S. Department of State file a \$100,000 claim with the Mexican government.²⁰⁷ While Dr. Lim was the only Xianzhenghui leader on hand during the massacre, Wong Foon Chuck, his brother Wong Joe Chuck, and Woo Lam Po assisted with the investigation.²⁰⁸ The survivors, mostly people of no means, found themselves in dire straits after the destruction of their homes and businesses. The *Houston Post* reported on May 28 that "members of the Chinese Reform association in the capital opened a subscription list to secure funds for the aid of their countrymen."²⁰⁹

The Torreón massacre marked the single most violent and brutal aggression against the Chinese in the Americas. The ensuing series of investigations undertaken by Mexican and Chinese authorities, military and civilian, determined that the Chinese were not armed and offered no resistance or provocations to the revolutionary forces. Why then did this bloodbath take place? The answer was clearly hinted at by the many signs of serious resentment and misgivings about foreign intrusion into the Mexican local and regional economy, so notable in a place like Torreón. The Chinese were specifically targeted because they were ubiquitous, hence highly visible, stood out physically and culturally, and, unlike other foreigners, were overwhelmingly male and tended to work and live together. In addition, they were identified with significant urban real estate holdings and several high-profile enterprises, notably the bank, urban gardens, department stores, and the downtown streetcar project. But Mexico's revolutionary nationalism, built on the rallying cry of "Mexico for the Mexicans," trumped any success the Xianzhenghui and Chinese immigrants might have achieved in a place like Torreón. Their visible success—as

206 Lo, "Sequel to Autobiography," 215. Kang Tonghui was the grandson of Kang's father's cousin Kang Dajie 康達節, who had taught Kang how to compose essays, and his father was Kang's cousin Kang Youlin.

207 "Chinese Seek Damages," *Topeka State Journal*, June 10, 1911, 18.

208 "Chinese did not Fire on Rebels," *El Paso Herald*, June 8, 1911, 1. Also see "Protection for Chinese," *El Paso Herald*, August 11, 1911, 1: "The feeling of panic in the Chinese colony, which resulted in a number of its members leaving Torreón after the battle in which more than three hundred were killed, has given way to one of greater confidence since the visit of Foon Chuck, a Chinese capitalist, delegated by the Chinese legation to make a summary of all the losses sustained by the Chinese in Torreón and in other cities in northern Mexico."

209 "Chinese Killed at Torreón," *Houston Post*, May 28, 1911, 1.

with all foreign successes—represented an intolerable obstacle to social and economic progress for Mexicans in their own land.

In a flash, literally, a promising Chinese community in a small corner of Mexico was bloodily wiped out, in the name of Mexico's own aspirations for a modern nation free of foreign domination. Kang Youwei, Liang Qitian, Xu Qin, Li Fuji, Wong Foon Chuck, and the Xianzhenghui had great hopes for Torreón as the site of a prosperous Chinese community organized according to their reformist ideals. Chinese immigrants would colonize the land that would in turn bear rich fruits to finance the reform movement throughout the Americas and the world. But it was not to be. After the 1911 massacre, Chinese communities elsewhere in Mexico continued to grow and thrive amidst Mexico's emerging revolution. They provisioned various factional armies and supplied food and daily necessities to cities and towns. The Xianzhenghui and the Chinese community of Torreón, however, met an untimely and spectacular demise.

With the massacre of 303 Chinese in May 1911, the Chinese reformers' experiment in Torreón came to an abrupt halt. Even without the massacre and the instability caused by the gathering storm of the Mexican Revolution at their doorstep, the Xianzhenghui enterprises had fallen one by one, crushed by a chronic lack of capital, overconfident and risky speculation, weak and confusing leadership, sniping and in-fighting among themselves—compounded by the damage done to the value of their investments by the 1907 worldwide financial crisis. Finally, in the face of the massacre's devastation, perhaps there was also an implicit recognition that the small piece of Kang Youwei's Chinese nationalist vision in Mexico could not stand up to the powerful wave of Mexico's own revolutionary nationalism.²¹⁰

Kang never acknowledged the nationalistic, antforeign impulse behind the Torreón massacre of Chinese, instead impugning the "internal chaos" and intra-party conflict of Mexico's republican presidential system. After the October 10, 1911 Wuchang Uprising, when Sun Yatsen and the revolutionaries were preparing to establish a government, Kang pointed to Mexico and other Latin American countries as "modeling themselves after the United States by setting up a president, and consequently there has been disorder." He wrote in November 1911 to three leaders of the provisional military government in Hubei, hoping to persuade them to establish a "titular monarchical republic"

210 Evelyn Hu-DeHart, "Indispensable Enemy or Convenient Scapegoat? A Critical Examination of Sinophobia in Latin America and the Caribbean, 1870s to 1930s." *Journal of Chinese Overseas* 5 (2009): 55–90.

rather than a presidential republic.²¹¹ No doubt referring to the May massacre in Torreón, Kang cautioned: “Mexico is especially close to the United States, and the chaos of fighting for the presidency is still not over. Madero has taken it, and now there are various parties attacking him and several thousand of our compatriots have died.”

Fifteen years later in 1926 with the divided Chinese republic riven by warlords, Kang wrote a lengthy condemnation of presidential republics, with Mexico as a case in point:

[Mexico] had a revolution just as we did in 1911. Madero kicked out Porfirio [Díaz]. Victoriano Huerta overthrew Madero and killed him. Venustiano Carranza drove Huerta away and stepped into his place. Finally, Álvaro Obregón overthrew Carranza. Five generals fought against one another for power and were reduced to three. The fight goes on.²¹²

• • •

Latin America was a new frontier for Kang Youwei and, as with Canada and the United States, his followers paved the way for him. Although Mexico is considered geographically part of North America, it is a predominately Spanish-speaking nation with a culture distinct from its northern neighbors. Well before his arrival, Kang’s traveling advance scouting parties and local overseas Chinese had been busy setting up Baohuanghui chapters, raising political consciousness, and, as always important to Kang, raising funds, not only in Mexico, but also in Central America, South America, and the Caribbean. Mexico, however, was the focal point for Kang and he placed great hopes and launched ambitious business projects for what he assumed would lead to financial success for the burgeoning Commercial Corporation. Chinese Mexicans had made significant achievements, but within three years of Kang’s departure, financial and political problems emerged and, in 1910 and thereafter, revolution and racism decimated their communities and investments and destroyed Kang’s grand dreams.

211 Kang Youwei to Li Yuanhong, Huang Xing, and Tang Hualong 黎元洪,黃興,湯化龍, November 9, 1911, in *Kang Youwei Quanji* 康有為全集 [Collected Works of Kang Youwei], ed. Jiang Yihua and Zhang Hualong 姜義華,張榮華 (Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin Daxue Chubanshe, 2007), vol. 9, 210. See Chapter 11 for more on this letter and Kang’s proposal of a titular monarchical republic.

212 Kang Youwei, *Kang Nanhai Moji* [Kang Nanhai’s Handwritten Work] (Tianjin: Yong Baoshe, 8th month [September 7 to October 6], 1926).

Diving into the Sea of Business

The fate of our business is tied up with the fate of China.¹



In early 1904, Kang Youwei met in Hong Kong with Liang Qichao, Xu Qin, and others to formally establish the China Commercial Corporation (Zhongguo Shangwu Gongsi or, for short, Shanghui). The corporation's purpose was to consolidate the emerging Baohuanghui business activities in China and abroad as a means of obtaining funds to support its political activities. Kang had contemplated such an enterprise at least since the mid-1890s. After his exile began following the Hundred Days of Reform and as he gained practical experiences and observations in his extensive travels, his thinking evolved further.

Kang knew from the onset that he should not mix public and private funds nor conflate business enterprises with political activities. Such overlaps were inevitable, however, and, on many occasions, he and his followers commingled funds that should have been kept separate. Kang's temperament also affected his business dealings and ongoing relationships with his lieutenants. He had a life-long sense of urgency and audacity as witnessed by the Hundred Days in 1898, followed by his world travels seeking political support from foreign leaders to assist in restoring the Guangxu Emperor to power and garnering financial support for himself and his overseas reform movement.

Kang was always moved by the impulse to “get going fast; hesitate and it will be too late.” This propensity also applied to his approach to business. Examples of Kang's do-it-now approach are seen in his open letter of November 10, 1902, sent to Li Fuji “and comrades of all chapters.”² It enclosed the Commercial

1 Kang Youwei to Liang Qichao 梁啟超, Tang Juedun 湯覺頓, Mai Rubo [Mai Menghua], Mai Manxuan 麥曼宣 [Mai Zhonghua 麥仲華], and He Qingyi 何擎一, April 16, 1910, in Ding Wenjiang and Zhao Fengtian 丁文江, 趙豐田, ed., *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian* 梁啟超年譜長編 [Draft Version of Liang Qichao Life Chronicle] (Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin Chubanshe, 1983), 533.

2 Mimeographed letter of Kang Youwei to [Li] Fuji 李福基 and comrades of all chapters, November 10, 1902, copied by Li Fuji and Dong Qiantai 董謙泰, Canada, December 25, 1902, no. 546 in Fang Zhiqin and Cai Huiyao 方志欽, 蔡惠堯, ed., *Kang Liang yu Baohuanghui*:

Corporation charter, of which more than 1,000 copies had been printed in Hong Kong for worldwide distribution. He informed Baohuanghui members that establishing the Commercial Corporation was a “most important step ... we must do it quickly and thoroughly.” In case the recipients were not clear about Kang’s urge for haste, he went on to say that “[p]eople eagerly await the establishment of the Commercial Corporation,” and “we should begin to set it up as soon as possible.” He counseled against “far-sighted arguments” and invoked a famous classic: “as the *Yijing* [Book of Changes] says, ‘Shillyshallying harms work.’”³ He continued with his own exhortation: “We must make decisions promptly and act quickly. Hesitation will bungle matters.” He claimed that dissenting opinions on establishing the Commercial Corporation were “just petty” and “[w]e definitely will not wait. Why should we?”

Kang’s relationships with those who managed Commercial Corporation businesses resembled his interactions with Baohuanghui and military school officials. At times he micromanaged the corporation, while at others he allowed his subordinates considerable latitude in running their enterprises. Moreover, Kang seemed to have a sense of personal ownership of both association and corporation funds. This attitude, in conjunction with personal relationships he had with various managers, often impeded rational business decisions. Business problems evolved into internal dissension.

When Commercial Corporation ventures prospered, new sources of wealth encouraged new ventures and greater risk taking. When there was corruption, greed, and quarreling among Commercial Corporation officials, not only was the corporation weakened but more ominously the reform association itself.

1 The Power of Commerce

Kang Youwei petitioned the Qing government concerning his economic ideas as early as 1888. He suggested currency reform and supported the construction of railroads. After China’s disastrous defeat in the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95, Kang submitted a memorial to the government opposing the signing of the Treaty of Shimonoseki, which included terms highly disadvantageous to China. His tone had become more insistent and his thinking expanded well beyond currency and railroads to a comprehensive modernization of

Tan Liang zai Meiguo Suocang Ziliao Huibian 康梁與保皇會：譚良在美國所藏資料彙編 [Kang, Liang, and the Baohuanghui: A Compilation of Materials Collected by Tom Leung in the United States] (Hong Kong: Yinhe Chubanshe, 2008), 44–45.

3 This phrase is actually from the “14th year of the Duke Ai of Lu” entry in *Zuo Zhuan*, not the *Book of Changes*. The original text is 需, 事之賊.

agriculture, industry, science and technology, commerce, and social services. The purpose of Kang's economic reforms, as historian Kung-ch'üan Hsiao put it, was "not only to enrich the state but to give an affluent life to the people."⁴ Wealth in Kang's view was not only a source of national power but a goal for the benefit of the Chinese people. Private enterprise expedited and protected by the government was the driver. Kang's recommendations included the concept of investing private funds in Chinese-owned banks regulated by the central government. He wanted government to foster innovative business ventures by teaching modern managerial and technical skills. In Kang's view, the role of government was to stimulate private business but not be a substitute for it. Government should establish business schools, publish business journals, and promote trade fairs as the means to spread modern commercial knowledge and stimulate innovation and competition. This included establishing chambers of commerce (*shanghui*) throughout China as a way to resist foreign economic aggression.⁵

In late 1895, Kang founded the Qiangxuehui (Society for the Study of National Strengthening) in Beijing and Shanghai to promote further discussion about chambers of commerce. His ideas began to come to fruition during the Hundred Days of Reform. Kang again advocated merchant-managed bureaus of commerce (*shangwuju*) throughout China, and an imperial edict was issued to do so in Guangzhou and Shanghai.⁶ After the reforms failed and Kang and key followers fled abroad, even bigger ideas began to form. Kang wrote a lengthy essay in 1899 advocating the establishment of banks, opening mines, building ships, and forming guilds among and by the Chinese overseas. Chinese-owned banks and overseas enterprises were especially important to Kang's scheme because he saw that foreign ownership of such enterprises in China inhibited national economic development. Thus, Kang added economic salvation to the political equation that he expected from his reform movement.⁷

Kang further developed his thinking on the business empire in "Wuzhi Jiu-guo Lun" (On National Salvation through Material Civilization), the essay he

4 Kung-ch'üan Hsiao, *A Modern China and a New World: K'ang Yu-wei, Reformer and Utopian, 1858-1927* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1975), 301-4, 311.

5 Zhongping Chen, *Modern China's Network Revolution: Chambers of Commerce and Sociopolitical Change in the Early Twentieth Century* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011), 43.

6 Jung-pang Lo, "Sequel to the Chronological Autobiography," *K'ang Yu-wei: A Biography and Symposium* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1967), 195; Zhongping Chen, *Modern China's Network Revolution*, 42-43, 53-55.

7 Kang Youwei, "Kang Yu-wei's Latest Work," *North China Herald*, April 18, 696-98; April 25, 742-45; and May 2, 1900, 789-90. English translation of a Chinese-language article published in Japan in 1898-99, according to Lo, *K'ang Yu-wei*, 450.

completed in 1905 in Los Angeles.⁸ By material civilization, Kang meant science and technology, which made the West strong and wealthy. Kang linked capitalism with industrial development, citing the tremendous wealth created by Andrew Carnegie and John D. Rockefeller in the technology-dependent businesses of steel and petroleum. Kang's essay updated the traditional phrase "locating wealth in the people" (*cangfu yu min*) to mean that individuals could bring wealth to their nation "through proficiency in agriculture, industry, commerce, mining, or transportation."⁹

Kang now called for the Chinese overseas to take personal responsibility by leading in the development and expansion of Chinese-owned commercial enterprises around the world. After its initial conception in Victoria in 1902 and with the official founding of the Commercial Corporation in 1904, Kang embarked on a personal program of economic reform leadership and suggested that there was a potential new means of financial prosperity for the reform movement. Through his advocacy, the Baohuanghui became committed to far-flung business ventures. Various factors led to the rapid rise and subsequent decline of the Commercial Corporation, some avoidable, and others, the consequences of history.

Kang had promoted the intrinsic value of Chinese ethics while adopting selected Western-style economic practices in modernizing China since 1886. Liang Qichao wrote in 1902 about the practicality of the German economic model. But it was only after observing financial crises in China in 1910 and their own personal experiences around the same time with the failure of the Commercial Corporation that Kang and Liang promoted the idea of Chinese-run stock exchanges.¹⁰

Kang's financial ideas were also influenced by real world encounters during his travels. He became friends with many prosperous Chinese merchants and

8 Kang Youwei, "Wuzhi Jiuguo Lun" [National Salvation through Material Civilization] in *Kang Youwei Quanji* 康有爲全集 [Collected Works of Kang Youwei], ed. Jiang Yihua and Zhang Hualong 姜義華, 張榮華 (Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin Daxue Chubanshe, 2007), vol. 8, 61–101. See Chapter 5 for a description of this essay as it related to his observations in the United States.

9 Young-tsu Wong, "The Search for Material Civilization: Kang Youwei's Journey to the West," *Taiwan Journal of East Asian Studies* (Taipei) 5, no. 1 (June 2008): 47. Kang began writing this essay on Coal Island in 1904, see Zhongping Chen, "Kang Youwei's Activities in Canada and the Reformist Movement Among the Global Chinese Diaspora, 1899–1909," *Twentieth-Century China* 39, no. 1 (January 2014): 18.

10 Bryna Goodman, "Dubious Figures: Speculation, Calculation, and Credibility in Early Twentieth-Century Chinese Stock Exchanges," in Chia Yin Hsu, Thomas M. Luckett, Erika Vause, ed., *The Cultural History of Money and Credit: A Global Perspective* (Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2016), 114–17.

entrepreneurs in Southeast Asia and the Americas and attempted to understand what made for a successful business. He weighed this against what he observed of Western business practices and what he learned from discussions with American capitalists like Charles Ranlett Flint (see Chapter 8). He openly admired business magnates like Flint and Carnegie and sought to emulate them. As will be shown, Kang emphasized that Western business practices should be followed in Baohuanghui commercial endeavors rather than the casual and easily corrupted Chinese methods of commerce and investments, which placed personal relationships over impersonal accounting and book-keeping procedures. Yet, both those whom he entrusted with business deals and he himself easily lapsed into the bad practices of Chinese commerce, and only Kang had the power to oversee and curb transgressions. He seemed unaware of this fatal flaw in Commercial Corporation governance.

2 Development of the Commercial Corporation

In spring 1899, before Baohuanghui's founding, Kang electrified Vancouver's Chinese with his proposal that Chinese in Canada, the United States, and Australia establish a massive trust to invest in Chinese-owned industries in North America.¹¹ Kang had already left for England when a group of Vancouver merchants announced that they had begun to form such a company and to sell shares for one dollar each, with a goal of sixty million dollars. These funds would be deposited in a bank of their own founding, with company chapters in overseas Chinese communities and Vancouver as the headquarters. Ye En, prominent merchant and interpreter for the Canadian immigration service, was among the group promoting this idea. He asserted to the Vancouver *Province*: "With the large amount of money we will have at our command we will be able to control many of the leading Chinese industries in Canada and the United States. Our operations will not be confined to these, for we will build steamers, and may possibly construct a railway line in Mexico." This vision faded from reality even with Kang's return to Canada that summer and the founding of the Baohuanghui in July 1899. However, the idea soon resurfaced as the funds necessary for Baohuanghui political and military activities could not be raised from donations alone.

The failure of Qinwang, the expensive Baohuanghui-supported military adventure in August 1900 (see Chapter 4), turned the organization to less

11 See Chapter 1 for details. "Millions in It!" *Province* (Vancouver), May 18, 1899, 1.

radical and more profit-oriented activities. The association's moderate wing, as historian Eve Armentrout Ma puts it, "favored policies designed to encourage commerce, manufacturing, and free-market capitalism in China" and the San Francisco chapter organized a Baoshangju (Preserve Commerce Bureau) under its auspices.¹² In October 1900, these San Francisco champions of business were behind a Chinese Six Companies memorial to the Qing court. It had sixteen suggestions to promote more open domestic and foreign trade, including establishing chambers of commerce to serve both Chinese and foreign merchants and protecting the property belonging to overseas Chinese both in China and abroad.

Kang's own plan to establish the Commercial Corporation emerged further in 1902–3, anticipating by about two years the Qing government's establishment of a commerce ministry in late 1903 and promotion of chambers of commerce in early 1904.¹³ In August 1902, he wrote to Li Fuji and others in Victoria expressing his optimism about new governmental appointments in Guangdong that augured well for Baohuanghui business ventures there.¹⁴ The time was opportune, Kang wrote, to establish a *shanghui*, and he was writing regulations for it. He completed a draft business charter within a month, and Baohuanghui officials in the Macau headquarters—He Suitian and Wang Jueren—printed copies for distribution by the British Columbia chapters.¹⁵ "Now, the Commercial Corporation is the foundation for rescuing the emperor and protecting the country," wrote the Macau officials, and they hoped "that our comrades will support this charter."

As the first step in the deliberative process, Kang's Commercial Corporation draft charter was dispatched to local chapters by British Columbia leaders with a circular letter dated November 29, 1902: "We present this charter to you with great respect. Please accept and read it. This is just a draft, so feel free to

12 L. Eve Armentrout Ma, *Revolutionaries, Monarchists, and Chinatowns: Chinese Politics in the Americas and the 1911 Revolution* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1990), 75.

13 Chen, *Modern China's Network Revolution*, 59.

14 Kang Youwei, [Darjeeling], India, to Li Fuji, Dong Qiantai, and All Comrades, August 2, 1902, Victoria, BC, copied by Li Fuji and Dong Qiantai [Victoria] and sent to Comrades of All Association Chapters, September 13, 1902, no. 541 in Fang and Cai, 38. Kang referred to the newly appointed governor, Cen Chunxuan, whom Kang said he "formerly recommended to administer Guangdong."

15 He Tingguang 何廷光 [He Suitian 何穗田] and Wang Jueren 王覺任, [Macau], to Li Fuji and Dong Qiantai of the Canadian chapter to be forwarded to comrades in all chapters of the Baohuanghui, September 23, 1902, no. 543 in Fang and Cai, 146.

improve its defects and make corrections as you see fit.”¹⁶ The Canadian comrades hailed the success of the Baohuanghui since its founding in 1899, noted that there were now ninety chapters worldwide and “such an enormous number of members that we have even lost count of them.” They noted the establishment of the translation bureau and newspaper offices as further examples of success. However, the formation of the Commercial Corporation was now “the most urgent thing to do.” They cited the foreigners’ seizure of Chinese banks, railroads, mines, overseas transportation and shipping, and foreign exchange after the Boxer Uprising as reason for the Baohuanghui to “not sit idly by and watch foreigners make great profits from China.” As a cautionary tale, and as a model, they pointed to India: “In the past, the British spent 70,000 pounds to set up a company in India [the British East India Company], and now they control India’s financial resources.” Now Chinese at home and overseas had the opportunity to compete with foreigners in business and share in the profits by using “every ounce of strength and [raising] huge investments to set up a large corporation.” All this was to proceed after Baohuanghui members reviewed and commented on the proposed charter.

Baohuanghui members received Kang’s frequent reports on Commercial Corporation progress via circular letters duplicated and disseminated by Li Fuji and Dong Qiantai in Victoria. Communications were complicated by Kang’s isolation in India and the need to coordinate with Baohuanghui headquarters in Macau, which managed the Commercial Corporation in Hong Kong, and the Victoria chapter, which distributed most group letters at this time. For example, forty-five days had passed since November 10, 1902, when Kang wrote his exhortatory letter introducing the Commercial Corporation charter to members and December 25, the date of the mimeographed copy of this letter sent by Li and Dong.¹⁷ In this key letter, Kang confidently asserted that establishing the Commercial Corporation was “the most important step to regain China’s economic rights, create wealth for our comrades, protect China and the emperor, and rescue ourselves.” But now action was needed to achieve the goals of the corporation. He pressed Baohuanghui members to “pay close attention to it, concentrate our efforts on it, and loudly appeal to the public.” In this way, he said, “the Commercial Corporation will achieve great success.” He

16 Lin Lihuang 林立滉, Huang Yushan 黃玉珊, Li Fuji, Xu Weijing 徐爲經, Ye Huibo 葉惠伯, Dong Qiantai, Li Youshu 李祐樞, Liu Zhangxuan 劉章軒, Jiang Anlu 蔣安祿, and Zhao Yuanxiang 趙元祥 of Victoria, Vancouver, and New Westminster, to All Comrades of our Association, November 29, 1902; no. 549 in Fang and Cai, 304–5.

17 Kang to Li Fuji and Comrades of all Chapters, November 10, 1902, mimeographed letter copied by Li Fuji and Dong Qiantai, Canada, December 25, 1902; no. 546 in Fang and Cai, 44–45.

noted too that although many chapters were enthusiastic about the corporation idea, “there will be different opinions among us over the charter based on their knowledge and experience.” He knew that some might oppose the charter and that others might want a smaller-scale enterprise. Still others would wait until a higher-up Baohuanghui official came to their city to urge them to take part. Now was the time, Kang urged members, to “examine and approve the charter” as their top priority.

A circular letter written by He Suitian, Wang Jueren, and Kuang Shoumin of the Macau headquarters discussed revisions to the *shanghui* charter.¹⁸ While Kang’s original draft charter is no longer extant, letters detailing this and subsequent revisions to the charter are an example of the Baohuanghui process of consultation and decision-making and foreshadowed the conflicts between the Hong Kong/Macau headquarters and the British Columbia activists who still felt ownership of the Commercial Corporation idea. The new Article 10 read: “The selling of capital stock will not exceed fourteen months, beginning October 31, 1902, and ending February 15, 1904.” And, during this period, once a stockholder began to purchase shares there would be penalties if he stopped paying for them halfway through the fourteen months: “All the shares bought before that month will be confiscated and belong to the company. From then on, we will do no more business with that shareholder.” Article 12 provided details on how *shanghui* agents were to engage in a businesslike manner to sell and record stock certificates. In this way the company would be able to properly apportion stock dividends. Article 18 required that funds from stock purchases were to be deposited immediately in a local bank and then remitted monthly to the company’s general headquarters in Hong Kong. The responsibility for dealing with collection of capital should lie with “a wealthy company or person to be elected as the agent for each town.” Finally, Article 20 required that local Baohuanghui chapters elect a secretary (*ganshiyuan*) to go to Hong Kong and discuss procuring an office there for the Commercial Corporation, after which overseas chapters could begin to remit stock funds.

With the momentum gained through the activism of Kang and other Baohuanghui leaders, the goal of formally establishing the Commercial Corporation seemed near at hand. Around New Year 1903, the Victoria, Vancouver, and

18 He Suitian, Wang Jueren, and Kuang Shoumin 鄺壽民, Macau, to Baohuanghui chapters, copied and sent to each chapter by Li Fuji, Victoria, November 15, 1902, stenciled letter with seal of Bao Da-Qing Huangdi Hui 保大清皇帝會, no. 545 in Fang and Cai, 147–48. It seems likely that this letter reached members in North America after the November 29, 1902, circular letter from Canada.

New Westminster leaderships proposed revisions to the draft Commercial Corporation charter with the hope of improving managerial responsibilities and gaining the public trust. They reported that their three chapters had “raised more than 1,000 shares, and we expect to raise several thousand more,” encouraging their readers to do the same.¹⁹

While still in India, Kang wrote again to Baohuanghui members in late February 1903. Although the letter is mostly about internal Chinese and Baohuanghui politics and personalities, he touched on the Commercial Corporation.²⁰ “No effort should be spared to handle the business of the Commercial Corporation,” he wrote. He praised key people in Hong Kong, Macau, Yokohama, and the Americas, suggesting that the corporation should be managed jointly by an internationally recruited team. He compared the teams to Western-style cabinets with ministers who have different skills. He strongly endorsed Li Fuji’s role as manager in the future corporation but saved most of his praise for Liang Tiejun, who had made a fortune from the salt business, which he gave up to join Qinwang. Both wealthy and intensely loyal to Kang, Liang should serve as general manager (*zongli*). An enclosure also praised He Suitian of Macau, whom Kang wanted as a manager or treasurer. He said that He, since the early days of the Baohuanghui, had generously bankrolled the association and “always wholeheartedly tried to tackle the toughest parts of the job” and that his “loyalty and righteousness have met no match.”

Enthusiasm for the Baohuanghui and a resultant increase in membership followed Liang Qichao’s March 1903 visit to British Columbia. Time was set aside during Liang’s visit to “slightly revise” the corporation charter. A month later, printed copies of the revised charter were enclosed with a letter written by the British Columbia leadership. They boasted that “[e]ven though our places and people are poor, the comrades of our chapters have purchased shares worth \$50,000 to \$60,000. More is coming.” They said they had heard

19 Letter from 24 people in three chapters—Vancouver: Wen Jinyou 溫金友, Huang Yushan, Ye Huibo, Zhao Yuanxiang 趙元祥, Liang Rushan 梁如山, Ye Chuntian 葉春田, Chen Cai 陳才, Chen Hechou 陳鶴儔; Victoria: Dong Qiantai, Liu Jintang 劉錦堂, Li Fuji, Luo Yuehu 駱月湖, Xu Weijing, Lin Lihuang, Chen Dongru 陳東儒, Liu Zikui 劉子逵, Huang Jinfeng 黃錦峰, Chen Chunchu 陳春初; New Westminster: Li Youshu, Li Yongrao 李永饒, Liu Zhangxuan, Ye Cheng 葉成, Jiang Anlu, Jiang Lun 蔣倫 to all comrades, December 1902–January 1903, no. 554 in Fang and Cai, 308–10.

20 Kang Youwei to Ye En 葉恩 [Ye Huibo], Xu Weijing, Li Fuji, Liu Zhangxuan, Dong Qiantai, Li Youshu and my comrades in all chapters], public letter, February 26, 1903, no. 563 in Fang and Cai, 49–52.

about “very enthusiastic” responses in other places and, therefore, “\$2 million in shares will not be difficult to raise.”²¹

Just as the first shares were being sold in spring 1903, there were already signs of difficulties for the Commercial Corporation, including concern about its leadership and control of wealth. Chinese in the Americas wanted Canadian Baohuanghui president Ye En as the Commercial Corporation’s manager. Liang Qichao favored Kang disciple Luo Xiaogao, while Xu Qin prudently advised that Kang himself should control the corporation or delegate that authority to subordinates he personally trusted. Kang wanted Li Fuji or wealthy businessman Liang Tiejun to hold the top job. According to historian Cai Huiyao, they could not agree, “resulting in the fact that they could not find a suitable person to be manager.”²² Liang Qichao and Xu Qin in Yokohama continued to issue stock certificates for the Baohuanghui’s existing business, based in Shanghai: Guangzhi Shuju (Diffusion of Knowledge Publishing House, also known as Yishu Ju, or Translation Bureau). The Hong Kong/Macau headquarters criticized the Yokohama leadership for having “entered into rivalry” with the incipient corporation. Such internal disagreement bode ill before the Commercial Corporation had even begun operation.

Around the same time, Liang Qichao wrote about Guangzhi Shuju’s successes. Its profits—it had collected more than 100,000 yuan in capital—were such that others were inspired to establish their own competing publishing enterprises. Liang warned that although the Guangzhi Shuju was about to disburse dividends to Baohuanghui chapters, more capitalization was needed. To take advantage of the flourishing publishing business, Liang proposed establishing a paper mill, but it required 200,000 yuan, and he expressed the opinion that private investment made through Kang’s proposed Commercial Corporation “would be wonderful.”²³

21 Public letter from Baohuanghui officials in Victoria, Vancouver, and New Westminster, BC: Dong Qiantai, Li Fuji, Xu Weijing, Zhao Yuanxiang, Ye Huiibo, Jiang Anlu, Jiang Lun, Li Youshu, and Liu Zhangxuan, April 28, 1903, no. 562 in Fang and Cai, 311–12.

22 Cai Huiyao 蔡惠堯, “Shilun Baohuanghui Shibai de Neibu Yuanyin” 試論保皇會失敗的內部原因 [On the Internal Reasons for the Failure of the Baohuanghui], *Jindai Shi Yanjiu* no. 2 (1998): 103–4.

23 Public letter from Liang Qichao “entrusted to Ye En to send to chapters,” October–November 1902, no. 544 in Fang and Cai, 103–4. Fang says there is no date or signature on the letter “but we know from tone that it is Liang Qichao.” When “yuan” 元 is used in the text, it refers to Chinese money, most probably in the form of Mexican silver dollars, the most popular currency in China at the time because of its weight and purity, according to historian Elizabeth Sinn, although other currencies such as Chinese silver taels were in use

Amidst this scramble for power and funding, Kang was confidently emerging from his long retreat in India. Coinciding with Liang's visit to Canada and the death of the despised Ronglu (in Beijing, on April 11, 1903), Kang decided that furthering the cause of restoring Guangxu to the throne and organizing the Commercial Corporation required his personal presence in Hong Kong.²⁴ So he left Darjeeling expecting that "this year will bring extremely good news." By November or December 1903, he had produced "Zhongguo Shangwu Gongsi Zhaogu Jianming Zhangcheng" (Concise Rules for Soliciting Shares for the Chinese Commercial Corporation), which corrected and clarified the earlier 1903 draft charter. Specifically, he stipulated that shares were to be sold in two tranches, between January 16, 1904 and August 11, 1904 and between July 12, 1904 and February 4, 1905. An ambitious goal was set: 500,000 shares worth 20 yuan each, or 10 million yuan.²⁵ As a point of comparison, Liang's 1903 in-person North American fundraising had brought in 605,000 Hong Kong yuan, far from reaching his initial goal of US\$1 million.²⁶

Kang was to be the company's supervisor (*duban*), Liang Qichao the deputy supervisor. The "Concise Rules" opened with a statement of intent: "We join together (*hequn*) with the strength of our numbers in this company to vigorously promote Chinese commerce and retrieve the financial power that has flowed away."²⁷ Thus, most of the proposed investments were in China, rather than overseas. Of the initial projects listed for specific allocations of funds,

as well; email to author, July 31, 2016. The exchange rate was approximately two Chinese yuan to one U.S. dollar.

24 Kang Youwei in Darjeeling to Li Fuji, duplicated letter, April 29, 1903, no. 566 in Fang and Cai, 53–54.

25 "Zhongguo Shangwu Gongsi Zhaogu Jianming Zhangcheng" 中國商務公司招股簡明章程 [Concise Rules for Soliciting Shares for the Chinese Commercial Corporation], signed by supervisor Kang Youwei, deputy supervisor Liang Qichao, undated [1903], Ethnic Studies Library, University of California Berkeley, Chinese Empire Reform Association, AR-12, and AR-22, hereafter AAS ARC 2000/78. According to Gao Weinong 高偉濃, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui zai Meiguo Huaqiao Shehui zhong de Huodong* 二十世紀初康有為保皇會在美國華僑社會中的活動 [Activities of Kang Youwei and the Baohuanghui among the Chinese in the United States in the First Part of the Twentieth Century] (Beijing: Xueyuan Chubanshe, 2009), 288–89, this is an updated and abbreviated version of "Zhongguo Shangwu Gongsi Yuanqi fu Zhangcheng" [Introduction to Chinese Commercial Corporation with Charter Attached], in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui* 康有為與保皇會 [Kang Youwei and the Baohuanghui], ed. Shanghai Shi Wenwu Baoguan Weiyuanhui 上海市文物保管委員會 (Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin Chubanshe, 1982), 266–86.

26 Zhongping Chen, *Transpacific Reform and Revolution: The Chinese in North America, 1898–1918* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2023), 58–59.

27 Kang and Liang, "Zhongguo Shangwu Gongsi Zhaogu Jianming Zhangcheng," AR-22, AAS ARC 2000/78.

only one—"running banks, beginning with Hong Kong and expanding to other cities"—was realized. A wholesale warehouse in Hong Kong, a porcelain company in Wuhu, Anhui (which seems to have been Kang's pet proposal), a street-car line in Guangzhou, and an import-export shipping company with branches in Hong Kong, Shanghai, Yokohama, and New York were never established. The remainder of the initial capital was to be used for projects "with the greatest profit and most stable business," which might include buying land in the new treaty ports or opening factories. Some of these projects would reemerge in different forms and places over the span of the Commercial Corporation, underlying the Baohuanghui's enduring aspirations to promote nationalistic capitalism.

The formal establishment of the Commercial Corporation occurred in an inaugural meeting held in Hong Kong on March 7, 1904, with Kang Youwei, Liang Qichao, Xu Qin, and numerous Baohuanghui chapter leaders in attendance.²⁸ Xu Qin and Liang Qitian were elected as treasurers (*shouyinyuan*) of the corporation; Kuang Shoumin and Ye En as bookkeepers (*guanyinyuan*); and Kang Youpei (Jiyu) and Wang Gongyou as auditors (*heshuyuan*). Commercial Corporation councilors (*yi yuan*) also were elected: Luo Botang of San Francisco, Hu Ba'nán (Woo Gen) of Seattle, and Bao Chi (Pow Chee) and Ouyang Du'er of Sydney, Australia. Each Baohuanghui chapter could now sell shares according to the schedule Kang had set up.²⁹ In September 1904, *Zhongguo Weixin Bao* reported the sale of shares in New Orleans where Zhang Shenglong topped the list of nearly forty investors with \$10,000, and more than one hundred shares were sold in St. Louis.³⁰ When Kang was in Vancouver in late 1904, he turned to Ye En for managing the day-to-day operations of the Commercial

28 Wu Xianzi 伍憲子, *Zhongguo Minzhu Xianzhengdang Dangshi* 中國民主憲政黨黨史 [Party History of the Chinese Democratic Constitutional Party], originally published serially in *Shijie Ribao* (Chinese World), March 10–May 24, 1951] (San Francisco: Chinese World, 1952), 158; hereafter Wu, *Dangshi*.

29 "Gongju Shanghui huiyuan" 公舉商會會員 [Publicly elected members of the Commercial Corporation], *Zhongguo Weixin Bao* 1, no. 8 (April 28, 1904): 14, Chinese Empire Reform Association, AR-44 A-B, AAS ARC 2000/78. Thanks to Gao Weinong for transcription.

30 "Zi jiang Meiguo Wukelian bu huihui shangwu gongsi shou gufen yin fang ming lie," 茲將美國烏柯連埠匯回商務公司收股份銀芳名列 [Following is a list of names and value of their shares in Commercial Corporation from New Orleans, United States, beginning with Zhang Shenglong], *Zhongguo Weixin Bao* 1, no. 26 (September 8, 1904): 16, and "Xinlei lai han" 新蕾來函 [Letter from St. Louis], no. 27 (September 15, 1904): 16, AR-44 A-B, AAS ARC 2000/78.

Corporation headquarters in Hong Kong. This was a decision he would come to have many reasons to regret.³¹

This strong beginning seemed to have eased off by mid-March 1905, at which point Kang could directly monitor the Commercial Corporation's progress. He had been in the United States for a month and had visited West Coast cities as he worked his way south to Los Angeles. He complained that the number of investors was "not great (less than two or three thousand)" and that despite the "solicitous hospitality" the members gave him, "the shares they raised were very few."³² Many of those he hoped would become shareholders were uncertain about investing in the new corporation. Some of the skepticism was because of the poor performance of the one Commercial Corporation business in which members had already invested—the Guangzhi Shuju, which had lowered its dividends because of losses and paid them only irregularly.³³ But Kang blamed himself for the slow start: "Handling the matters of the *shanghui* is like a fan in autumn. I have traveled all the way to America but have ended up empty-handed. I really feel ashamed."³⁴ As a counterexample, Kang reported that Seattle entrepreneur Chen Yixi was trying to establish a railway company in Xinning (present-day Taishan), in southwestern Guangdong Province and had raised more than \$100,000 in Los Angeles and more than \$200,000 in Vancouver. The reason for these successes, Kang opined, was that this was a project that people could identify with, backed by substantial evidence. This led Kang to say that he had to change his approach, and quickly. He concluded, "It is not wise to talk about something after the opportunity to achieve it has slipped by."

Simultaneously, Kang was developing a proposal for a bank based in the United States with American investment to bolster its capital and expertise. From Los Angeles, Kang wrote to his daughter Tongbi about this plan, citing the example of a joint French-Chinese bank in Tianjin, and describing his

31 See Chen, *Transpacific Reform and Revolution*, 69, 85–87, 99–103, for a focus on Ye En's political and business involvement in the Baohuanghui, with an emphasis on how Ye En and his large Ye clan dominated the Baohuanghui in Canada and benefitted from Ye's presence in Hong Kong, including immigrant smuggling operations that took advantage of their key roles in the Canadian immigration system.

32 Kang Youwei to unknown addressee, ca. March 1905, incomplete letter on stationery of "Chinese Empire Reform Association Headquarters. For use of the president Only," no. 347 in Fang and Cai, 57.

33 Kang Youwei to Kang Tongbi 康同璧, December 31, 1904, no. S-C48, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection. "The annual report from Guangzhi 廣智 indicates that they've suffered from losses and lowered the dividend by 7 percent. So, there's a great uproar. How can I deal with this?"

34 Kang Youwei to unknown addressee, ca. March 1905, no. 347 in Fang and Cai, 57.

consultations with Homer Lea about its implementation.³⁵ With American partners, he felt it was possible to establish a \$4 million bank in Guangdong, with only \$1 million in initial funds to meet corporate requirements. Lea had apparently introduced Kang to local bankers. Now Kang wanted Tongbi to talk with Yung Wing (Rong Hong), who had considerable business experience and American political connections. "There are hardly any Chinese who are capable of such foresight and vision," but Kang suggested that "Americans in New York City are perhaps quite competent in this." Responsive but practical, Yung asked how much money had been raised already and how much was expected from American contributors.³⁶ A much less ambitious Commercial Corporation bank was opened later in 1905 in New York City; Kang's meetings there with American industrialists and financiers, however, produced no investors in his bank.

Just before Kang left Los Angeles to continue his extensive tour of the United States, local Baohuanghui leaders Mo Yunping and Tom Leung (Tan Zhangxiao) sent a lengthy printed letter authorized by Kang to chapters throughout the world, directing that it be read at membership assemblies and posted at the chapter headquarters. The letter addressed a variety of organizational successes, such as establishing Baohuanghui chapters in 160 cities on all the five continents. Of immediate concern was that in the past year, "[o]ther parties attacked us on every side like storms," and "many people are sowing discord, spreading slander and rumors, and waiting for an opportunity to attack us." But "fortunately our comrades have stood firmly and were not swayed" and "have worked very hard and traveled many places to make speeches in order to strengthen people's confidence in us." However, the letter went on, "a lie if repeated often is accepted as truth," and it "becomes very hard to remove" rumors from peoples' minds. The target of the rumors was the Hong Kong headquarters, and the main reason it became the target was the establishment of the Commercial Corporation. Some problems had come from within, from Baohuanghui members who "coveted a huge amount of loans [from the Commercial Corporation] and ganged up to demand them," and when they did not get the money, "they turned disputatious and tried to break up the association." They even "forcibly occupied the Baohuanghui office for a time" and made frightening speeches directed to members visiting Hong Kong from abroad,

35 Kang Youwei to Kang Tongbi, May 5, 1905, no. 康-13 (1), Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection. See Chapters 4 and 5 for more about Homer Lea.

36 Yung Wing [Rong Hong] 容閔 to Kang Tongbi, May 20, 1905, no. B-49, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

finding it easy to “arouse suspicions because money was involved.” The letter further charged that “numbers were not seen; businesses were not started; share certificates were not issued to shareholders.” These failures were fodder for “the enemy [revolutionary] newspapers to attack us daily.” Baohuanghui headquarters had “submitted to insult without retaliation,” and rumors “then spread from place to place and persisted as time went on, and people got used to what was wrong, regarding it as right.” Although there were doubts about the Commercial Corporation within the organization, if it had “never been established, there would be no funds to borrow, and there would be no reason for internal attacks ... but now internal doubts arise from everywhere.”³⁷

Externally, Mo and Tom’s letter went on, Sun Yatsen and his supporters had “become very jealous and gradually began to attack us.” When the Commercial Corporation was established, “China’s wealth and power [were] all in the hands of our association” while the revolutionaries had “met a dead end.” The situation became more serious when disaffected Baohuanghui members—“traitors of our association”—joined Sun’s cause and collaborated with it to set up another company as they “tried to tear down our Commercial Corporation, attacking us in both Hong Kong and the United States.” While Kang was in Canada in early 1905 before coming to the United States, he was confronted by a campaign to raise shares for a competing company, Hongye Company (Hongye Gongsi).³⁸ Hongye had borrowed the given name of the respected Yung Wing (Rong Hong), implying he was a founder, and its share certificates bore the names of Yung, Xu Weijing of Victoria, and He Suitian, one of the initiators of the Commercial Corporation in Macau. Kang saw this as deceitful and harmful to Yung Wing’s reputation and a direct threat to the Baohuanghui itself. To emphasize this point, Tom and Mo wrote that this rival company had the goal of “toppling the Baohuanghui and ending up with the Commercial Corporation themselves,” thus grabbing “all the wealth and power of China.”³⁹

37 Mo Yunping 莫雲屏, Tan Zhangxiao [Tom Leung], and others in Los Angeles to all comrades of all places, May 1, 1905, printed letter to be read at Baohuanghui chapter meetings “by authorization of the president,” no. 579 in Fang and Cai, 223–31, 224; hereafter Mo and Tan, May 1, 1905.

38 Kang Youwei to Kang Tongbi, January 21, 1905, no. S-C2; January 24, 1905, S-C1; and January 25, S-C7, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection. Kang wanted his daughter in South Windsor to alert Yung Wing about the Hongye Company 宏業公司 and to send letters to Victoria and Vancouver Chinese leaders declaring that he had not entrusted business to Zhu Li 朱禮 [Zhu Jinli 朱錦禮, who had come to Canada to form the Commercial Corporation in 1902 but broke with Kang]. Kang describes Hongye as a lumber company [*bandian* 板店].

39 Mo and Tan, May 1, 1905, 224.

To confront these internal and external problems, Mo and Tom reported, Hong Kong shareholders met on April 8, 1905, to examine the Commercial Corporation's capital and finances. They claimed that "everything has been cleared up." Although the year-long rumor that the Commercial Corporation had failed to issue share certificates was refuted, the fact remained that the corporation had in hand only one-tenth of the expected funds. This dearth of funds, the Los Angeles leaders informed their readers, was holding up the establishment of a bank and meant that "[m]any of our important tasks cannot be pursued." This "collapse" of the Commercial Corporation was blamed on "internal betrayal and external assaults" which, in turn, had "almost torn apart" the Baohuanghui. "A single spark can start a prairie fire," they wrote: "[I]sn't this frightening?"⁴⁰

Mo and Tom acknowledged that some of the discontent and lack of support for the Commercial Corporation arose from complaints from Baohuanghui visitors to the Hong Kong headquarters, who left disappointed with the less than gracious hospitality. In defense, they pointed out that the headquarters had about 1,000 visitors each month, which taxed the cramped and unostentatious facility and its overworked staff. Yet, the overseas chapters sent few funds to the headquarters, and this was why the visiting comrades "are only treated with roast duck or barbecued pork and a cup of wine and dim sum." Some visitors stayed for months without paying and ignored association regulations while others "pretended to be our members and came to eat and stay and inquired about our business. As a result, there is a joke popular in Hong Kong: if you cannot afford lunch or dinner, why not go to the headquarters of the Baohuanghui for dim sum and meals?" Moreover, some of the culprits were Baohuanghui members from North America. Kang later added annual membership fees to the 1905 Baohuanghui charter to replace the one-time fees upon joining, with remission of the larger portion to headquarters.⁴¹

Mo and Tom disputed the charges of corruption among the headquarters staff, saying that they had "risked their lives for ten years and abandoned their homes for the sake of our country." But, "Spreading slander infiltrates people's minds." As a result, the 100,000 yuan pledged for a public school (probably Guangdong Gongxue) and 1 million yuan pledged for purchasing shares had not been received. Because the Hong Kong headquarters had to purchase land for the school, "this almost caused the disintegration of the Baohuanghui." And, they warned: "If we ourselves fail, our country in turn will fail."⁴²

40 Mo and Tan, May 1, 1905, 224.

41 Mo and Tan, May 1, 1905, 228–9.

42 Mo and Tan, May 1, 1905, 230.

Confidence returned to Kang by summer 1905, as he planned the first Baohuanghui plenary session to be held in North America. He wrote members on June 26, inviting them to meet in New York City and submitting a proposed charter for their consideration.⁴³ Among the new Baohuanghui divisions, Kang suggested was a Shangwubu (Business Affairs Division). Kang's primary aim in setting up the Shangwubu was "to raise stock shares to invest." He believed the quickest way to make returns on investments was to start a bank that would in turn support Commercial Corporation businesses. Kang set an initial target of US\$300,000 and suggested a scheme requiring all Baohuanghui chapters to take on the burden of raising capital by floating shares. Instead of relying on individuals buying shares as in the past, which would take too long, Kang wanted to require chapters to buy shares based on the size of their membership, a 100-member chapter investing \$1,000, a 1,000 member-chapter \$10,000. It turned out this was a step too far, and the plenary delegates did not adopt the Shangwubu proposal. However, the new Baohuanghui charter incorporated two business-related articles.

Article 18 of the charter approved by the plenary delegates on July 30, 1905, provided for the Licaibu (Financial Management Division).⁴⁴ Kang saw developing banking and industrial enterprises as the top goals for strengthening China's financial security. The Commercial Corporation was poised, according to the charter, "to continue the gradual increase of investment to expand the businesses we can operate. Banking is key to commerce, and technological development should prioritize the manufacturing of iron and steel machinery." Kang argued that "China's weak banking system has been the cause of its poverty, and the lack of factories to manufacture machinery, especially iron and steel machinery, has been the cause of its weakness and defeats." The charter continued: "Without acknowledging and solving these problems, China will never be powerful and wealthy ... To save China, our members should go all out to work together to handle our business projects."⁴⁵

43 See Chapter 7 for details on the 1905 plenary session and charter. The June 26, 1905, document, entitled "Baohuanghui Gongyi Gaiding Zhangcheng" 保皇會公議改定章程 [Baohuanghui Group Discussion to Finalize Editing the Charter] was included in a longer text published after the plenary, "Baohuanghui Gongyi Gaiding Xinzhang" 保皇會公議改定新章 [New Baohuanghui Charter Finalized after Public Discussion], July 30, 1905, UCB, AASC, AR-2; "Xinzhang" hereafter.

44 "Article 18, "Licaibu" 理財部 [Financial Management Division], "Xinzhang," July 30, 1905, Chinese Empire Reform Association, AAS ARC 2000/78, AR-2.

45 Article 18 refers to the Commercial Corporation charter for further reference. It is not clear if a new charter was adopted at the plenary meeting; only the 1903 charters and a charter adopted in 1906 are extant and are discussed below. Kang's June 1906 revision to the 1905 Commercial Corporation charter discussed below states that it amends what was adopted at the New York plenum.

Article 18 also addressed how to choose enterprise managerial personnel. Kang knew that there would be many applicants for the positions from different Baohuanghui chapters. The charter decreed that employment in an enterprise was to be based strictly on the recommendation and sponsorship of the applicant's home chapter, and the final employment decision had to be approved by the supervisor (*duban*), in other words, by Kang, who wanted absolute control over his business managers.

Article 22 established the Quangongbu (Exhortation to Industry Division). In this section, Kang addressed the importance of technological knowledge to make a nation powerful and suggested how a Baohuanghui member could support this effort by personal investments in Baohuanghui banks. The charter states that of the more than 100,000 Baohuanghui members, most were manual laborers who worked hard to save money (for very limited interest) to buy land in their home towns. But they had few or no technical skills useful in industry. In Western countries, it was observed, workers could use their savings to purchase industrial-company stock. The invested money could then be used by the company to train employees in new technologies which, in turn, helped the company to boost productivity and profits. The logical conclusion for Kang was that Baohuanghui members could invest 11 to 13 percent of their income in the recently established Hong Kong bank, the Huayi Company (Huayi Gongsi). He presented the bank as a safe place to invest because it was backed by several large companies, and the members' contributions would not be lost. The investments "could be used for the education of our people who would either pay back their educational loans after graduation or serve the company with their newly learned skills." Kang was thus exhorting Baohuanghui members not to be selfish or shortsighted, but to invest their savings wisely for the purpose of making China (and the Baohuanghui) strong and powerful.⁴⁶ Although Kang used the term "savings bank" (*jizhu yinhang*), these deposits were investments rather than savings accounts, since Huayi Gongsi was not a consumer bank and thus a much riskier proposition.

Although the 1905 New York plenum may have adopted a revised Commercial Corporation charter which would have given more details about the new structure, regulations, and proposed enterprises, the text has not been found and may not be extant. Correspondence from Kang and others points to a retreat from China and Asia-based businesses to pursue an ambitious expansion in North America. Kang's focus now was to establish a branch of the Hong Kong Huayi bank in New York City and to raise capital to fund this and also a

46 Article 22, Quangongbu 勸工部 [Exhort to Industry Division], "Xinzhang," July 30, 1905, AAS ARC 2000/78, AR-2.

bank and other enterprises in Mexico. The Commercial Corporation's potential was a constant preoccupation during the remainder of Kang's 1905 stay in the United States, even after he left the East Coast and traveled west to Portland, Oregon, roughed it in Yellowstone Park, went deep into the Rocky Mountains, and visited New Orleans and Texas before entering Mexico. Tom Leung was among those gathering Commercial Corporation shares from American chapters after the 1905 plenum. Ye En and Kuang Shoumin in Hong Kong sent Tom three acknowledgments for money orders totaling \$19,450 that he collected from members in Chicago and Seattle between mid-June and September 1, 1905.⁴⁷ Kuang cautioned Tom to specify the cities the share funds came from, "so we can register them in the account books." However, in October, Kang fretted that only \$100,000 had been raised for establishing the New York bank, yet it began operations that year. It was also during this time that Kang handed Tom Leung initial funds to open a restaurant, the profits from which were to fund the expenditures of Baohuanghui students, another of Kang's priorities at the time.⁴⁸

Following his first lengthy stay in Mexico, Kang returned to New York in late April 1906. Buoyed by bold and deceptively successful forays into Mexican banking and real estate—the Mexican arm of Huayi Bank had a reputed worth of one million (pesos)—Kang issued a revision of the 1905 Commercial Corporation charter on June 6, 1906.⁴⁹ Its closing statement stressed that the additions and revisions to the original 1905 charter were based on American and European commercial law in order to clarify lines of authority and standardize the accounting and auditing practices. The revisions were "decided after intense deliberation" and were to supersede the 1905 charter, except for those articles that had not been revised. By the time the new charter revision was written, a number of Baohuanghui businesses had been merged with or

47 Three letters to Tom Leung cover these transactions: Ye Huibo and Kuang Shoumin to Tan Zhangxiao 譚張孝, August 10, 1905, no. 189; Kuang Shoumin to Tan Zhangxiao, August 20, 1905, no. 194; and Kuang Shoumin to Tan Zhangxiao, October 24, 1905, no. 192 in Fang and Cai, 156, 158, 160.

48 Tan Zhangxiao, "Revenue and Expenses over the Years," in Tan Zhangxiao, *Zhengxinlu* 徵信錄 [Report on Financial Management] (San Francisco: Guohun Ribao, January 7, 1909) in Fang and Cai, 240; hereafter *Zhengxinlu*. "October 15: received [Commercial Corporation] shares [*shanggu* 商股] of \$7,296.07 (given to me by the master when we parted in Portland)."

49 See Chapter 8 for details on business activities in Mexico. Kang Youwei and Tang Mingsan 湯銘三, New York, to Tan Zhangxiao, June 3, 1906, no. 108–1 in Fang and Cai, 71. Shanghai Gailiang Zhangcheng 商會改良章程 [Commercial Corporation Revised Charter], June 6, 1906, in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui*, 287–93.

newly established by the Commercial Corporation in Hong Kong, Shanghai, Southeast Asia, Mexico, and the United States; they are discussed in the next section. In Kang's closing statement, he made several observations, summarized here:

- The association's business affairs were increasing daily, growing in importance and magnitude.
- China's existing commercial practices and regulations were too antiquated to handle Commercial Corporation business and so for the charter to be effective, the old practices could not be followed.
- As an agricultural country China had only small businesses, no commercial laws, and the people lacked proficient business skills. The Commercial Corporation was at the beginning stages of doing international business with only draft business regulations, which had not been tested and finalized. Kang said, "If we stick to our old commercial ways to navigate the new world of business, it would be like crossing the ocean in a sailing boat, not a steamship—utterly impossible!"
- The corporation had tried to adopt Western regulations, methods of calculation, and other tools used by banks, but since none were in common use, corporation businesses faced obstacles and still used the old commercial system. Thus, inefficient management and mistakes in transactions made the old system unable to function well.
- Because the scope of the Commercial Corporation's businesses was global, the company had been hampered by slow communications.
- Kang's travel experience gave him the "opportunity to become familiar with the pros and cons and the mysteries of the European and American commercial system and regulations. Few Chinese know anything about this."
- Kang had made a broad study of Western business practices and resolved to base decisions on law and regulations rather than on people. To do otherwise left the corporation open to fraud and possible sabotage. China's high-level officials and intellectuals needed to master Western commercial skills so they could manage the country's commerce and make it expand worldwide. "I have come to the realization that a man with these commercial skills can do business without stepping out of his room."

Kang was referring to the power of an individual investor. He said that a rich American could increase his wealth from stock investments and influence his country. The stock market has created hundreds of such wealthy men with tens of millions of dollars. European stock exchanges "are more magnificent than king's palaces," and the New York stock market "can control the finances of the whole world," said Kang. "Today my fellow Chinese can learn from Western

commercial skills and set up our own commercial system and rules. When there are rules, problems can be avoided.”

Following these general comments, Kang made some specific observations. He insisted on “simple and clear” monthly balance sheets and that the new charter would go into effect only when approved by a majority of those participating in a deliberative meeting. Furthermore, Kang characteristically urged quick adoption and publication of the charter so that “we start anew and the day when our business prospers will soon arrive.”

In the revised 1906 charter, Kang reiterated his extensive powers as supervisor of the Commercial Corporation, a position very much like the chief executive officer of an American corporation, with control over appointments of personnel as well as major administrative and investment decisions.⁵⁰ While clearly wanting others to have a check on their powers, he set no limits for himself. He also instructed the Hong Kong headquarters and each subsidiary business to report to him frequently with an accounting of funds and specified that investments in both established and potential enterprises be approved by him and not be mingled. If temporary loans were made from the funds of an existing business to a new project, the debt should be cleared as soon as possible. This cautious approach to mixing funds of different Commercial Corporation businesses would soon be succeeded by far riskier behavior initiated both by Kang and those running the various enterprises. However, the revised charter represented Kang’s attempts to formalize business practices and clarify the lines of authority for business decisions.

Letters written at the same time as the publication of the 1906 revised charter show that Kang’s apprehensions about Commercial Corporation progress had not been assuaged. In letters to Tom Leung between June 5 and 10, Kang concluded in disappointment, “I am ashamed that we have achieved nothing in business year after year.”⁵¹ He complained about the “terrible loss” from Commercial Corporation manager Ye En’s failed Guangdong fishery venture, which “had gone down the drain” after investments of 64,000 yuan.⁵² Rather than bowing to the power-balancing regulations and business structure in the Commercial Corporation revised charter, Kang commandeered the authority given to him as corporation supervisor: “I plan to take back all the power I gave to [those running the Hong Kong headquarters], break up the headquarters and not install the Commercial Corporation president (*zongli*). I’ll dismiss

50 “Quanxian” 權限 [Division of Powers], Shanghai Gailiang Zhangcheng, articles 13 to 19, in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui*, 290–92.

51 Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, June 10, 1906, no. 124 in Fang and Cai, 73.

52 Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, June 5, 1906, no. 130 in Fang and Cai, 72; Wu, *Dangshi*, 90.

Huibo [Ye En] and cut off our relationship. The headquarters will be relocated wherever I am, and I will put things back in good order. I have no other choice!" Kang saw the recently chartered Mexican bank as a source of new funds, but he decried the lack of enthusiasm for buying shares in the bank from both Tom (who had been skeptical about the Mexican investments) and Baohuanghui chapters in the American West.⁵³

These were not the only problems the Commercial Corporation faced. At the Hong Kong Commercial Corporation headquarters, Kuang Shoumin remained in charge in October 1906, and admitted that "we do not have a great many deposits [in the bank] and the demands for funds come from all directions." Those demands were coming from Commercial Corporation entities in Shanghai, Hong Kong, and Penang, as well as from individuals seeking allowances for studying and traveling abroad. Kuang said he also had to deal with the currency exchanges with the Mexican and New York banks. "In other words," he complained, "we are constantly in need of cash to cope with such situations." Because of these burdens, the corporation did "not dare [to] make a long-term loan even to a most prudent firm because it is unpredictable when we will need a certain amount of money."⁵⁴ Kang, who had claimed that Commercial Corporation headquarters would follow his lead, was in the midst of seven months of extensive travels in Europe and could assert his control only sporadically.

Kang returned to New York City in March 1907 and oversaw another plenary meeting, inaugurating the Xianzhenghui (Constitutional Association) and introducing the concept of rights and duties to the membership. The 1907 charter mandated a unique right to be a shareholder: "All members can enjoy the right of taking part in business. This organization's Commercial Corporation only permits members to buy shares. Those who are not members cannot be shareholders."⁵⁵ Kang also obsessively submerged himself in supervising an increasingly complex and overextended business empire. Just as Kuang Shoumin in Hong Kong had experienced in 1906, Kang complained to Liang Qichao in April about the demand for funds from all sides.⁵⁶ "Ten telegrams

53 Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, June 5, 1906, no. 130 in Fang and Cai, 72, and June 8, 1906, no. 126, 70.

54 Kuang Shoumin to Tan Zhangxiao, October 9, 1906, no. 190 in Fang and Cai, 159.

55 Article 27, "The right to take part in association businesses," *Diguo Xianzhenghui Daji Yiyuan Huiyi Xuli*, 帝國憲政會大集議員會議序例 [Account of Imperial Constitutional Association plenary meeting], March 23, 1907, in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui*, 493.

56 Kang Youwei to Liang Qichao, April 8, 1907, letter in Ding and Zhao, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 378–79.

arrived from the United States, Mexico, and Europe asking for \$120,000, which we have to allocate.” Instead of putting more money into one of the earliest Commercial Corporation ventures—rice brokerages in Southeast Asia—which had overspent their initial investments, Kang thought it better to sell those companies. “If we don’t sell them, we’ll fail; if we do sell them, we’ll control the overall situation,” he told Liang. Money in hand that had been received from outside loans to the Commercial Corporation had run out by then and several tens of thousands of dollars were lacking for distribution as dividends to shareholders. Although the purchase and resale of property in Mexico had been very profitable, the same was not the case in Japan, which had been considered for real estate investment. Only the Mexican ventures seemed to have a bright future, but great sums were needed to proceed with some of the more ambitious projects, and this occupied Kang upon his return to Mexico in June 1907. By October, with Kang back in New York City, the tide began to turn against Commercial Corporation profitability, creating a crisis of confidence in Kang and the Xianzhenghui to be exploited by Sun and his revolutionary followers.

3 The Commercial Corporation Conglomerate

Kang wrote to Liang Qichao in March 1908 about the pressure of business dealings. He explained, in typical dramatic fashion, that “[f]rom the end of last year, I have been busy with business matters to the point that I’ve almost spit blood ... I don’t have even one spare moment.”⁵⁷ Kang felt besieged less by the multitude of enterprises subsumed by the Commercial Corporation over which he held ultimate authority and more by his belated concerns about the loyalty and competence of the men in charge of them. He lamented, “In our party, we especially lack those who are talented in business and are also loyal.” The few whom he deemed capable of managing an enterprise could not be entrusted with full powers because they too often put their own interests ahead of the organization.⁵⁸ While the targets of his greatest wrath shifted over time, his current focus was on Tom Leung, who was charged with being treacherous and untrustworthy because, Kang believed, Tom had embezzled great

57 Kang Youwei to Liang Qichao, March 9, 1908, in Ding and Zhao, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 443.

58 Kang was referring to Wong Foon Chuck (Huang Kuanzhuo) 黃寬焯 of Torreón and Liu Zhangxuan of New Westminster, BC.

sums of money lent by Huayi Bank in New York for the King Joy Lo restaurant. Toward the end of the letter to Liang, Kang made a telling observation:

... people are devoting their lives to me and placing their hopes on me. I head everything, so if someone doesn't get along with someone else, it's not a big worry, but if the person is rejected by me, then he will oppose our party forever.⁵⁹

When Kang spoke or acted, he now realized, it could have serious consequences. It was, perhaps, a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Spanning China, Southeast Asia, Hong Kong, Macau, Canada, the United States, and Mexico, the Commercial Corporation came to encompass banks and currency trading; newspapers and book publishing companies; restaurants and hotels; rice brokerages and fishing monopolies; streetcar lines, a steamship line, and railroad investments; mining; real estate and land development; and antiques. There is no definitive list of Commercial Corporation enterprises and their precise years of operation. Account books, annual financial reports, and official records of the shares raised have not been found for the Commercial Corporation or the businesses that issued stock certificates in their own names, such as Hua-Mo Bank in Mexico. Official corporate records are available only for the King Joy Lo restaurant in Chicago and, along with copious correspondence, news articles, advertisements, and ephemeral remnants of its long life, tell a more complete story of a Commercial Corporation business. Fortunately, Baohuanghui historian Wu Xianzi (a former student of Kang's) was in Hong Kong as *Shang Bao* editor (1905–11) and preserved a large archive of official Baohuanghui documents as well as correspondence with Kang and others. Wu's collections and his 1951 history of the reform organization, including the Commercial Corporation, supplemented by contemporary correspondence from those intimately involved in the Commercial Corporation, provide only a blurry picture of its convulsive life and ultimate demise. A methodical examination of this complex conglomerate deserves a book of its own and is beyond the scope of this work.

Below are tables of the identified Commercial Corporation businesses, some without a name, others with a name but no clarity as to their function or even their location. Businesses are grouped by general category and the dates of their founding, followed by a brief description of the category.

59 Kang Youwei to Liang Qichao, March 9, 1908, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 446.

TABLE 2 Banks

Business	City	Years in Operation
Huayi Gongsì 華益公局, also known as Wah (or War) Yick and Company	Hong Kong	1904?–
Huayi Yinhao 華益銀號 (a private or remittance bank)		Ye En opened in 1907
Huayi Yinhang 華益銀行, sometimes called Huayi Gongsì 華益公局, Wah Yick Company	New York City	1905–
Hua-Mo Yinhang 華墨銀行, also known as Hua-Mo Bank, Compañía Bancaria Chino y México or Chinese-Mexican Bank; invested in real estate in Torreón and traded currency with New York and Hong Kong. In 1907, Hua-Mo Yinhang, along with a streetcar line, combined as Compañía Bancaria y de Tranvías Wah Yick (Wah Yick Banking and Tramway Company).	Torreón, Mexico	1906–11
Huafeng Yinhao 華豐銀號 (private bank)—connected to rice brokerage (see below)	Penang	Ended by 1909?
Hua-Mei Yinhang 華美銀行	New York City	1909?
Qiongzhou Qianhao 瓊州銀號 (private bank) ^a	Guangzhou (or Hainan?), China	Ended by 1909?

- a You Shiyin to Kang Youwei, March 25, 1909, in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui*, 396; Li Fuji, “Xianzhenghui Jishi Shilüe” 憲政會紀始事略 [A Sketch of the Origins of the Constitutional Association], 1909, Chinese Empire Reform Association, AR-22, Ethnic Studies Library, University of California at Berkeley, AAS ARC 2000/78, hereafter AAS ARC 2000/78.

3.1 Banks

As described in Chapter 8, the Huayi Bank branches in Hong Kong, New York, and Torreón were interconnected. They received investments, public monies (membership fees and donations from the chapters), and business profits and allocated these funds for both business and other (educational, political, etc.) purposes. The Huayi Bank in Hong Kong and likely in New York deposited these funds in registered conventional banks to earn interest and, in Hong Kong, to take out loans. In contrast, the Huayi branch in Torreón—Hua-Mo Bank (Hua-Mo Yinhang, as Compañía Bancaria Chino y México)—was registered officially with the State of Coahuila. The banks made investments in Commercial Corporation companies and loaned them money. Inevitably, they became an irresistible piggybank for Kang and the Baohuanghui, not only for allocation to businesses, but also for buying real estate and antiques, and for

supporting Liang Qichao's political activities, the development of schools, and other causes. It is unknown whether Kang funded his travels or the daily living costs of himself or his family from these funds. The copious correspondence from Kang to the New York Huayi staff ordering payments to various recipients does not reveal any such transfer, but Kang may have paid for these expenses from the Hong Kong and Torreón branches. After Xu Qin took charge of all the businesses in 1909, he admonished Kang for withdrawing money at will.⁶⁰ As supervisor of the Commercial Corporation, Kang ostensibly had the authority to direct funds in any direction he thought fit and exercised this power erratically. Moreover, the three banks' managers often funneled monies into local businesses they deemed worthy of investments or loans and made major decisions without Kang's authorization.

Huayi headquarters was in Hong Kong, and ideally funds from the other branches were remitted there for political activities and centralized distribution to Commercial Corporation businesses. A major source of profit for the banking consortium was the circulation of funds from country to country to make profits from the different exchange rates and take advantage of the need for silver bullion in China and its availability in Mexico. When this circulation was stopped by Hong Kong headquarters in 1908 because of heavy losses suffered by manager Ye En's business projects, the revolving wheel of profits came to a halt. Li Fuji managed Hua-Mo Bank from July 1907 to September 1909 and blamed the bank's failure on the lack of currency exchanges, along with the purchase of real estate that lost its value and the construction of a 150,000-peso stone bank building, along with other overly ambitious investments by earlier managers, including Kang and his local agent, Wong Foon Chuck (Huang Kuanzhuo).⁶¹ In November 1909, after returning to Canada, Li apologized to Hua-Mo shareholders for not distributing dividends because Hua-Mo funds were being used to complete the streetcar line in Torreón. He was uncertain whether or not Hua-Mo could pay back the investors' principal when the line was completed and the real estate and bank building was sold.

In practice, the Huayi banks were administrative arms of the Commercial Corporation, handling the selling of stock shares to members and distributing stock certificates. Kang oversaw the establishment of the New York Huayi branch in late 1905. He chided the staff and attempted to guide them in following his rules for carrying out their daily business. The key managers of the

60 Xu Qin to Kang Youwei, October 13, 1909, in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui*, 440.

61 Li Fuji, "Xianzhenghui Jishi Shilüe" 憲政會紀始事略 [A Sketch of the Origins of the Constitutional Association], printed, 1909, 6–7, Chinese Empire Reform Association, AR-22, AAS ARC 2000/78.

New York Huayi Bank were Kang Youpei (Kang's cousin), Feng Jingquan, Tang Mingsan, Liang Wenchang, and You Shiyin (Kang's nephew). Initially, Kang chose his former student Tang to keep track of funds passing through the bank and to sign off on all documents. He did this even though "managing business is not Mingsan's strong point" and stated that he did not promote the "extremely talented" Kang Youpei, because "I rarely use people related to me."⁶² "If Ming [Tang Mingsan] was not in New York I still would not use Yu [Jiyu, Kang Youpei]. We should rely on laws instead of people. This is why Europeans rarely fail in business," wrote Kang. Tang shrank from having so much power and yet took other liberties that earned Kang's rebukes. Tang allowed Liang Wenchang to travel outside of New York to sell shares to members, or even worse, to handle these exchanges by mail, a practice Kang found improper as Commercial Corporation regulations stipulated that Baohuanghui members had to personally go to New York City to exchange stock certificates. Each bank staff member appeared to act somewhat independently of the others. Liang for instance sent funds directly to Hong Kong that he raised from selling shares to members in other chapters, without informing his New York associates how much he had sold. Liang also was charged with producing financial reports for Kang and the Hong Kong headquarters every other day, but Kang complained that this was not done.

In December 1905, Kang in Torreón asked Tom Leung in Los Angeles to tell "the officials in charge of Hong Kong, Shanghai, Penang, and Yokohama to pay attention to the banking business and prepare for it." He also demanded that Tom "describe to them in great detail the banking laws *because they don't understand them*. (When you write them about this, you can use my name.)" Apparently, Tom along with Homer Lea, had been consulting Los Angeles bankers about the banking business, and Kang felt that Tom was in a position to instruct Commercial Corporation leaders even though he had no banking expertise.⁶³ Kang told Tom that Luo Xiaogao (a *Shi Bao* editor in Shanghai) and Fan Jingsheng (Fan Yuanlian, an instructor at Peking University) had studied banking and that he had sent the son of Canadian leader Xu Weijing to study banking in London.⁶⁴ However, none of these individuals, as far as is known,

62 Kang Youwei, [Torreón], to Tan Zhangxiao, [Los Angeles], December 26, 1905, no. 352 in Fang and Cai, 63–68. Kang Youpei 康有需 is identified in this letter as Jiyu 季雨. While the other administrators were in New York City, Liang Wenchang lived in Washington, DC.

63 Also, Kang Youwei, with notes from Tang Mingsan, to Tan Zhangxiao, June 3, 1906, no. 108-1 in Fang and Cai, 71, states that Kang wanted to employ American bankers and asks Tom Leung to thoroughly investigate American bankers in Los Angeles.

64 Kang Youwei, [Torreón], to Tan Zhangxiao, [Los Angeles], December 26, 1905, no. 352 in Fang and Cai, 68. Tom Leung also asked Xu Qin, in Guangdong at the time, to recruit five

worked in the Commercial Corporation banks. You Shiyin was studying at Columbia University, possibly in business or law, while working with Huayi Bank in New York. He took charge of establishing the Hua-Mei Bank (Hua-Mei Yinhang) in New York in 1909 (which seems to have been intended as more of a consumer bank than the by-then defunct Huayi branch in New York) and produced a detailed financial report of the Commercial Corporation's assets and debts for Kang.⁶⁵ You also had a long-standing business relationship with financial-industrial magnate Charles R. Flint, which continued even after You left the United States.⁶⁶

The New York bank and its officers became key players in the dispute between Tom Leung and Kang Youwei over the King Joy Lo restaurant in Chicago, as described below. In particular, Tang's leniency in lending bank funds to Tom Leung earned Kang's severe denunciation. In *Zhongguo Minzhu Xianzhengdang Dangshi* (Party History of the Chinese Democratic Constitutional Party), Wu Xianzi wrote that between shares and loans to King Joy Lo from the New York bank coffers, "the bank was exhausted of its capital stock and its expenses exceeded its revenues."⁶⁷

While the New York Huayi branch never had much capital on hand (probably less than US\$100,000), the Torreón branch at one point had nearly one million pesos (approximately US\$500,000). Kang bragged in 1908 that the Hong Kong headquarters also was worth more than one million yuan and was the "number one private [remittance] bank (*yinhao*) in Hong Kong, crediting

people to study business in American colleges. Xu Qin 徐勤 to Tan Zhangxiao, November 25, 1906, no. 162 in Fang and Cai, 142, reported he had four volunteers.

65 You Shiyin 游師尹 [Yan S. Wan] to Kang Youwei, March 25, 1909, in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui*, 394–97. Xu Qin, then in the United States raising funds to clear outstanding debts, wrote Kang in October and November: Xu Qin to Kang Youwei, October 13, 1909, in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui*, 438–40, reports that the Huayi Bank in New York owed \$10,000 to individual customers and it could neither be closed nor developed further; Xu Qin to Kang Youwei, November 7, 1909, in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui*, 439, reported Huayi Bank was closed.

66 Charles R. Flint Papers, Box 2: Business Correspondence, 1907–1916, MssCol 1032, Manuscript and Archives Division, New York Public Library. For example, one letter from You Shiyin (Y. S. Wan), Beijing, to Flint, July 14, 1915, states: "Sorry to inform you that I have not been successful in my effort to get you the business. I spent three weeks in Peking trying hard to get it but the business has such a nature that it is impossible to push it through at the present."

67 Wu, *Dangshi*, 88. Wu's figures may be based on incomplete information, if the case of King Joy Lo is illustrative. The authors' estimates of New York Huayi contributions to King Joy Lo, not including \$4,500 in personal loans to Tom Leung and Tom Chong [Tan Chang] 譚昌, described below, are more than \$70,000. Wu writes that Huayi Bank in New York bought \$20,000 in King Joy Lo stock, as well as making a loan of \$36,500 and \$4,500 in personal loans, totaling \$61,000 to King Joy Lo.

Liang Shaoxian (Liang Yingliu) and praising the bank for being “very good at preserving what we have.”⁶⁸

Kang defended the hard work and long hours of the bank managers in New York and Hong Kong when they were attacked by skeptical Canadian members in 1908.⁶⁹ Kuang Shoumin in Hong Kong “served without any personal gain,” earning only 2,000 yuan in the six years he’d worked for Huayi. “The New York head office also shares the same burden. Feng Jingquan and Zhang Bingya can only go to bed at three in the morning.”

Muddled accounting practices and mixing of funds inevitably caused problems. For example, Wu Xianzi said that the people in charge of Huayi headquarters in Hong Kong also managed the Commercial Corporation and took care of the public funds for political and educational activities. These funds were all kept in the same bank account—in a Western bank—and “it was not easy to retrace and match the records of income and expenses for different purposes.”⁷⁰ The same was true in New York, where the people in charge of the local Baohuanghui chapter also managed the Huayi bank. Moreover, as Wu noted and correspondence confirms, the transfer of funds among the three banks caused disputes about who owed whom and even where the funds came from. “So later,” wrote Wu, “there were big troubles ... Not only were outsiders puzzled. Even insiders couldn’t figure it out.”⁷¹

3.2 *Newspapers and Publishing Companies*

If all forty or so of these newspapers and publishing companies were solely financed through the Commercial Corporation, no money would have remained for other business projects. They must have survived through subscriptions, advertising, and book sales. Local Baohuanghui members and chapters also subsidized some of these papers directly without Commercial Corporation support. Because the newspapers and the books published by Guangzhi Shuju carried the reform message as broadly as any other Baohuanghui activity, giving them both commercial and political value, newspapers and publishing houses were among the final enterprises still funded when support for other types of businesses had fallen off.

Guangzhi Shuju received subsidies and investments from the time it opened in 1901, including 70,000 yuan in loans from Hua-Mo Bank in 1906; in 1910 Kang

68 Kang Youwei to all Xianzhengdang chapters, February 16, 1908, Chinese Empire Reform Association, AR-24, AAS ARC 2000/78. He also said this in a letter to Liang Qichao, December 9, 1907, in Ding and Zhao, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 424.

69 Kang Youwei to all Xianzhengdang chapters, February 16, 1908, AR-24, AAS ARC 2000/78.

70 Wu, *Dangshi*, 89.

71 Wu, *Dangshi*, 88–89.

TABLE 3 Newspapers and Publishing Companies

Business	City	Years in Operation
Bincheng Xin Bao 檳城新報 Penang Sin Poe	Penang, Straits Settlements	1895–still in operation in 1941
Zhixin Bao 知新報 China Reformer	Macau	1897–1901
Haojing Bao 濠鏡報 Macau News		1898?–
Qingyi Bao 清議報 China Discussion	Yokohama, Japan	1898–1901
Xinmin Congbao 新民叢報 Sein Min Choong Bou (New Citizen Journal)		1902–7
Xin Xiaoshuo 新小說 The New Fiction		1902–5
Tiannan Xin Bao 天南新報 Thien Nam Sin Pao	Singapore	1898–1905
China Times (?), English-language paper		1900–?
Nanyang Zonghui Bao 南洋總匯報, Union Times, previously known as Nanyang Haiyun Bao 南洋海運		1905 or 1906–46?
Donghua Xin Bao 東華新報 Tung Wah News (1898–1902) and Donghua Bao 東華報 Tung Wah Times (1902–36)	Sydney, Australia	1898–1936
Yiyou Xin Bao 益友新報; name later changed to Minyi Bao 岷益報	Manila, Philippines	1899–?
Xin Zhongguo Bao 新中國報 Sun Chung Kwok Bo or New China News; name changed to Xin Zhongguo Ribao (New China Press) 新中國日報 in 1941	Honolulu	1899 or 1900–1978
Longji Bao 隆記報 ^a		1900–3
Wenxing Bao 文興報 Mon Hing Bo; Xianzheng Bao 憲政報 Chinese World; moved to Los Angeles after San Francisco earthquake and renamed Xianzheng Bao; in 1908, returned to San Francisco as Shijie Ribao	San Francisco	1899–1906
Shijie Ribao 世界日報 Sai Gai Yat Po, The Chinese World; formerly Wenxing Bao		1908–69?
Guohun Bao 國魂報 The New Era		1907–10
Jingang Ribao 金港日報		

a Ma, *Revolutionaries, Monarchists, and Chinatowns*, 60, 103. Before 1900 and after 1903, *Longji Bao* 隆記報, Honolulu, was a pro-revolution newspaper.

TABLE 3 Newspapers and Publishing Companies (*cont.*)

Business	City	Years in Operation
Guangzhi Shuju 廣智書局 Diffusion of Knowledge Bookstore; originally referred to as Yishu Ju 譯書局 Translation Bureau	Shanghai	1901–30s? ^b
Shi Bao 時報 Eastern Times		1904–39
Zheng Lun 政論 Political Commentary		1907–8
Guofeng Bao 國風報		1910–12
Niuyue Ribao 紐約日報 New York Daily News; English and Chinese	New York City	1902–9
Zhongguo Weixin Bao 中國維新報 Chinese Reform News		1904–37
Guangdong Bao 廣東報	Guangzhou	1902?
Lingnan Bao 嶺南報 South China News		before 1904–? ^c
Yangcheng Ribao 羊城日報		before 1905–? ^d
Guoshi Bao 國事報		1906–11?
Wudao Ribao 烏島日報	Java, Netherlands Indies	1904–9? ^e
Shang Bao 商報 Commercial News	Hong Kong	1904–11 ^f
Yangjiang Xin Bao 仰江新報	Rangoon, Burma	1904 or 1905–8?
Shangwu Bao 商務報		1910?
Xianzheng Bao 憲政報 Hin Jing Bo	Los Angeles	1906–8 (see Wenxing Bao and Shijie Ribao in San Francisco)

b Wu, *Dangshi*, 92 says Guangzhi Shuju ceased operations in 1915. However, Christopher A. Reed, *Gutenberg in Shanghai: Chinese Print Capitalism, 1876–1937* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2004), 52, says Guangzhi had a branch in Liulichang, Beijing, for more than thirty years, and in 1925 Guangzhi Shuju and Shijie Shuju 世界書局 [World Books] bought another company, Guangyi Shuju 光益書局, 287 n76.

c Lo, “Sequel to Autobiography,” 196, says *Lingnan Bao* was reorganized in 1904, perhaps under the Commercial Corporation.

d Guanhua Wang, *In Search of Justice: The 1905–1906 Chinese Anti-American Boycott* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2001), 115–16, 183, describes role of *Yangcheng Ribao* in boycott.

e Lo, “Sequel to Autobiography,” 270 n30.

f Jung-fang Tsai, *Hong Kong in Chinese History: Community and Social Unrest in the British Colony, 1842–1913* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 245.

TABLE 3 Newspapers and Publishing Companies (*cont.*)

Business	City	Years in Operation
Zhonghua Weixin Bao 中華維新報 Tiong Hoa Wie Sin Po; published in romanized Malay	Buitenzorg (Bogor), Java, Netherlands Indies (later Indonesia)	1906
Riri Xinwen Bao 日日新聞報	Tianjin, China	1906–?
Jiangnan Gongbao 江漢公報; also known as Dajiang Ribao 大江日報	Hankou, China	1907–8
Xin Bao 新報 Sun Bo, Chinese Reform Gazette; changed name to Rixin Bao 日新報 in 1911	Vancouver, British Columbia	1908–11
Qinan Xin Bao 啓南新報 Kinam Sinpo, The “Kee Nam” Chinese Daily News ^g	Bangkok, Siam (Thailand)	1909 or earlier–1910
Huaxin Ribao 華新日報 ^h		
Guomin Gongbao 國民公報	Beijing, China	1910–19
Beijing Shibao 北京時報 (Jingdu Shibao? 京都時報) ⁱ		?–1908
Yadong Bao 亞東報	Kōbe, Japan	
Moxige Chaobao 墨西哥朝報 Mexico Morning News; in English	Mexico City	

g Eiji Murashima, “The Origins of Chinese Nationalism in Thailand,” *Journal of Asia-Pacific Studies* no. 21 (August 2013): 162.

h Chang P'eng-yuan 張朋園, “Shi Bao: Weixinpai Xuanchuan Jiguan zhi yi” 時報: 維新派宣傳機關之一 [*Shi Bao: a Propaganda Organ of the Reform Faction*], *Jindaishi Yanjiusuo Jikan* [Bulletin of Institute of Modern Chinese History, Academia Sinica, Taiwan] 4 (May 1973): 152.

i Lo, “Sequel to Autobiography,” 270 n30.

still was directing funds to the consistently needy publishing house “to save it from peril.”⁷² Guangzhi Shuju was established with as much as \$140,000 worth of shares before the Commercial Corporation began, and its shareholders often complained when they did not receive dividends.⁷³ Under the purview of Liang Qichao, Guangzhi Shuju suffered a loss of 10,000 yuan for overstocking

72 Kang Youwei to Liang Qichao, December 9, 1907, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 423; Kang Youwei to Liang Qichao, August 24, 1910, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 533.

73 Lo, “Sequel to Autobiography,” 275. Guangzhi Shuju dividends were paid four times, according to Wu, *Dangshi*, 92.



FIGURE 59 Chinese Reform Gazette, Sun Bo Company (Vancouver *Xin Bao*) stock certificate for Lee Shay Chun (Li Shizhang), 1909–1910.

textbooks to be used in studying for the traditional civil service examinations, which were abolished in 1905. However, the book company remained relevant with its translations of important literary, scientific, and political works, as well as publication of original fiction, and may have survived into the 1930s.

The largest Commercial Corporation cash infusions went to two newspapers in China. Hong Kong's business-oriented *Shang Bao* was awarded 55,751 yuan in shares between 1904 and 1906, while the investigative and crusading Shanghai newspaper *Shi Bao* (*Eastern Times*) may have received nearly US\$60,000 directly from the Commercial Corporation or through the Torreón and New York banks.⁷⁴ Even with this subsidy, *Shi Bao* issued constant pleas

74 Wu, *Dangshi*, 86–88. Wu does not specify the currency of the allocations from the Commercial Corporation, so *Shi Bao*'s total may be considerably less than US\$60,000 (Hong Kong dollars were worth about half of U.S. dollars). Kang Youwei in March 1908 complained to Liang Qichao that *Shi Bao* had cost 200,000 yuan to the Commercial

for additional funds. On May 23, 1906, *Shi Bao* editor Luo Xiaogao wrote Tom Leung reporting that the paper's circulation had reached 14,000, making it China's largest-circulation newspaper.⁷⁵ "However," Luo disclosed, "the capital is exhausted, and we cannot expand." He said the newspaper did not need a subsidy in 1906 but had debts to pay and, if the circulation increased, they would have to buy new printing presses. Added to this, Kang admitted to Tom Leung that "we are having financial difficulties supporting *Zhongguo Weixin Bao* (New York City), *Shi Bao* is already in big trouble, and I must also take care of the Beijing newspaper."⁷⁶ Furthermore, *Wenxing Bao* (*Mon Hing Bo*, *The Chinese World*) of San Francisco was in the process of being relocated to Los Angeles after the April 1906 earthquake and required considerable funds. All were dependent on contributions from the Mexican investments. Wu Xianzi's summary of Commercial Corporation 1906 transactions shows only small allocations of \$1,500 (*Xianzheng Bao*, the name for *Wenxing Bao* when it moved to Los Angeles in 1906) and \$5,038 (*Zhongguo Weixin Bao*) funneled from Hua-Mo Bank via the New York bank, with nothing for the Beijing paper.⁷⁷

A new Guangzhou daily newspaper—*Guoshi Bao*, begun by Xu Qin—was also draining funds in 1906.⁷⁸ Xu emphasized the importance of a Guangdong-based newspaper since most Baohuanghui members were Cantonese. "If we don't have a daily newspaper here," wrote Xu, "we cannot strengthen and augment our party." Tom Leung raised shares for *Guoshi Bao* in Los Angeles and other American cities, at Xu's request, and Wu Xianzi shows the new paper receiving 5,350 yuan in shares from the Commercial Corporation.⁷⁹

Corporation or the Baohuanghui since its founding—"There was not one year in which *Shi Bao* didn't ask for money. If it's like this, it really won't work ... There is no reason they need more money." Kang Youwei to Liang Qichao, March 9, 1908, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 446. At this time, Kang was also concerned about the opposition to the newly formed political arm in China, Zhengwenshe, by *Shi Bao* editor Di Chuqing 狄楚卿, who feared government retribution. There was dispute within the Xianzhenghui about whether to give up the paper since it had lost editorial control.

75 Pu [Luo Pu 羅普 [Luo Xiaogao] 羅孝高] to Tan Zhangxiao, May 23, 1906, no. 186 in Fang and Cai, 202.

76 Kang Youwei, Hartford, to Tan Zhangxiao, Los Angeles, June 8, 1906, no. 126 in Fang and Cai, 70.

77 Wu, *Dangshi*, 87–88. The currency for these allocations is probably U.S., based on the fact that the funds were distributed by the Huayi Bank in New York. The Beijing newspaper closed by February 1908; Kang Youwei to all Xianzhengdang chapters, February 16, 1908, AR-24, AAS ARC 2000/78; Kang wrote that it lost more than 10,000 yuan.

78 Xu Xue'an 雪菴 (Xu Qin) to Tan Zhangxiao, June 4, 1906, no. 169 in Fang and Cai, 136.

79 Wu, *Dangshi*, 86.

Newspapers in San Francisco and Honolulu, both founded in 1899, were the longest-lived business ventures. The San Francisco paper *Shijie Ribao* (*Sai Gai Yat Po*, *Chinese World*), which was founded in 1899 as *Wenxing Bao* and renamed *Xianzheng Bao* during its Los Angeles sojourn from 1906 to 1908, survived until 1969. It was edited by stalwarts like Wu Xianzi (1928–36) and Dai Ming Lee (Li Daming) (1945–61) and became the mouthpiece of the anti-Communist, anti-Nationalist “Third Force” or China Democratic Constitutionalist Party during the Cold War period. It was largely funded by Chun Quon (Chen Gun or C. Q. Yee Hop) and political activist and wealthy businessman Jun Ke Choy (Cai Zengji).⁸⁰ Chun Quon had come to San Francisco from Honolulu, where he and his family supported the reform paper *Xin Zhongguo Bao* (*Sun Chung Kwok Bo*, *New China News*, renamed in 1941 *Xin Zhongguo Ribao*, *New China Press*) until its demise in 1978.⁸¹



FIGURE 60 The Baohuanghui newspaper *Shijie Ribao* (*Chinese World*) was still in operation in 1938 when these San Francisco Chinatown residents read “news of the surrender of Canton to the Japanese”; photographer, Dorothea Lange.

80 Him Mark Lai, *Chinese American Transnational Politics* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2010), 17–18, 25–26, 33.

81 Him Mark Lai, “The Chinese Community Press in Hawai‘i,” *Chinese America: History and Perspectives* 24 (2010): 97–100.

TABLE 4 Restaurants and Hotels

Business	City	Dates of operation
Zhongguo Kezhan 中國客棧, also known as China Hotel ^a	Hong Kong	1905–?
Zhonghua Jiudian 中華酒店		1906?–8?
King Joy Lo (Qiongcailou) 瓊彩樓 (restaurant)	Chicago	1906–26

a Lo, “Sequel to Autobiography,” 200.

3.3 *Restaurants and Hotels*

Baohuanghui entrepreneurs also engaged in the tourism and hospitality business—challenging endeavors for making an easy profit. The story of King Joy Lo restaurant is well-documented and is presented below as a case history of a Commercial Corporation business. A short-lived Hong Kong hotel—Zhonghua Jiudian—was one of Ye En’s projects that had received at least 20,000 yuan in loans from Huayi Bank and also raised stock shares from members.⁸² It sought outside shares, and Ye believed it was well-located, attractively decorated, and useful for housing members visiting Hong Kong. For a time, Ye contended, business was good, but it was forced to close because of management problems. According to a December 1909 public letter sent by the San Antonio chapter denouncing Ye En, the hotel was beset by corruption, and “all the comrades who returned to Hong Kong from abroad and stayed in this hotel spoke about it with resentment.”⁸³

3.4 *Agricultural Commodities and Natural Resources*

Agricultural commodity and natural resource companies were the most problematic of all Commercial Corporation businesses, rarely yielding a profit even in the best of times. Kang and the Baohuanghui committed generous funding and much energy to exploiting the Southeast Asian and Chinese markets for rice, fish, silver, and land development. According to Wu Xianzi, of the original allocation of Commercial Corporation shares totaling 598,760 yuan, more than one-third went to rice brokerages in Singapore and Penang.⁸⁴ By comparison,

82 Wu, *Dangshi*, 90; Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 318–19.
83 Wu Hongjin 伍鴻進 and others in the San Antonio, Texas, chapter to all comrades of the Xiangzhengdang [Constitutional Party], December 16, 1909, no. 309 in Fang and Cai, 315.
84 Wu, *Dangshi*, 86–87. Wu says that Xin Kai Mei 新開美 [note this is misprinted as Xinwen Mei] received 110,120 yuan between 1904 and 1906 and Huafeng 107,583 yuan in 1904 (a total of 217,703 yuan), and that Xin Kai Mei also received 56,292 [pesos] from Hua-Mo Bank. According to Wu, King Joy Lo received 20,000 yuan and the Hong Kong Huayi Bank

TABLE 5 Agricultural Commodity and Natural Resource Companies

Business	City	Dates of operation
Huafeng Yinhao 華豐銀號, a rice brokerage and bank ^a	Singapore and Penang	1904–7
Xin Kai Mei 新開美, rice brokerage	Penang, Straits	1904–10
Rubber tree plantation ^b	Settlements	
Rice brokerage ^c	Rangoon, Burma	1904–?
Yupiao Gongsi 漁票公司, a fishing franchise for which a “certificate” was issued by an official allowing exclusive fishing in a certain area	Guangdong	ca. 1905–6
(Xuwen) Kenwu Gongsi 徐聞墾務公司, also known as Xuwen Wuben Gongsi 徐聞務本公司, a land reclamation enterprise	Guangdong	
Zhibuju (Textile Bureau) 織布局 ^d	Hong Kong	1906–?
Zhenhua Shiye Gongsi (Jun Wah Sut Yip, Jun Wah Mining Company) 振華實業公司 silver mines, land reclamation, steamship transportation, railway construction, and a provincial bank	Guangxi	1907–9 ^e
Tianping Shan Yinkuang silver mining 天平銀礦—part of Zhenhua ^f		1907?

- a Li, “Xianzhenghui Jishi Shilüe,” 6: “I heard that the Huafeng Bank in Penang owed over 20,000 yuan. The capital of the Huafeng Bank has been allocated to the rice brokerage [*mijiao*], and the business picked up.”
- b Kang Youwei to Liang Qichao, March 23, 1910, in Zhang Ronghua, ed., *Kang Youwei Wanglai Shuxin Ji* 康有為往來書信集 [Collected Correspondence of Kang Youwei] (Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin Daxue Chubanshe, 2012), 627–28.
- c This rice brokerage is mentioned in Kang Youwei to Li Fuji, May 26, 1904, Wu Xianzi Archives, University of Washington.
- d Kang Youwei to Liang Qixun 梁啟勳, April 12, 1909, in Zhang Ronghua 張榮華, ed., *Kang Youwei Juan* 康有為卷 [Kang Youwei Documents] (Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin Daxue Chubanshe, 2015), 19–20. Zhang notes that the company was founded by Ye En who raised \$200,000 in the Americas; Chen Yikan was in charge of the bureau, which may have been part of Zhenhua.
- e Ou Yungao 歐雲高 [Ou Jujia 歐渠甲] to Tan Zhangxiao, August 7, 1908, no. 172 in Fang and Cai, 192. “Last year, I established Zhenhua Gongsi in accordance with instructions of the Governor of Guangxi Province.”
- f Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 348–49.

this was a greater sum than received by the Hong Kong Huayi Bank and ten times more than the allocation to King Joy Lo restaurant. Perhaps this is why Kang used their funds to bail out the businesses in Mexico.⁸⁵ With so much ready cash, the rice brokerages provided lucrative opportunities for the managers to spend tens of thousands on personal loans, starting restaurants, hiring prostitutes, and speculation. When Kang arrived in Penang in 1908, he became personally involved in overseeing the rice brokerages, but by March 1910, their shaky situation had been exposed in public letters by combative members, and banks were calling for repayment of past loans.⁸⁶

Ye En, the ambitious Vancouver merchant and Chinese-language interpreter who in May 1899 had first imagined (and publicized) a future multinational Chinese corporation run by reformers, arrived in Macau in March 1905 to take charge of the Commercial Corporation. He stepped into a commercial world in which he had no experience. Funded primarily through the Hong Kong Huayi Bank, Ye's first project was a fishing franchise business or *yupiao gongsi*, a government-conferred monopoly with a certificate (*piao*) issued by a provincial official allowing the harvest and sale of fish from a certain area. Fishermen paid the company for the privilege of fishing in this area, and the company carried out armed patrols to prevent poaching by fishermen who did not want to pay the tax. Kang was enraged when the company failed within a year due to Ye's unfamiliarity with official practices and because of the high monopoly fees.⁸⁷ The losses included more than 60,000 yuan in investments and loans as well as several thousand yuan worth of foreign rifles. Ye En had also formed the Xuwen Kenwu Gongsi, a land reclamation company in the southern Guangdong county of Xuwen, once a maritime Silk Road port that had been

200,000 yuan. Wu does not specify where these figures come from, and they are not corroborated.

85 Kang Youwei to Liang Qichao, March 9, 1908, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 443–44 and Lo, "Sequel to Autobiography," 210.

86 Kang Youwei in Penang to Liang Qichao, October 18, 1908, in *Kang Youwei Quanji* [Collected Works of Kang Youwei], ed. Jiang Yihua and Zhang Hualong 姜義華, 張榮華 (Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin Daxue Chubanshe, 2007), vol. 9, 5–6. To cover Mexican business costs, Kang ordered the sale of stored millet worth 90,000 yuan but was stymied because the millet could not be sun-dried during the rainy season. Also see Kang Youwei to Liang Qichao, March 23, 1910, in Ding and Zhao, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 531.

87 Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, June 5, 1906, no. 130 in Fang and Cai, 72; Wu Hongjin and others in the San Antonio, Texas, chapter to all comrades of the Xiangzhengdang [Constitutional Party], December 16, 1909, no. 309 in Fang and Cai, 314–15; Kang Youwei to Liang Qichao, February 4, 1912, in in *Kang Youwei Wanglai Shuxin Ji*, 642.

supplanted by Guangzhou eight hundred years before. Although only about 5,000 yuan was invested in Xuwen, it too was a total loss.⁸⁸

Most controversial, and, with King Joy Lo, the most consequential for the decline of Baohuanghui morale, was Zhenhua Shiye Gongsi (Jun Wah Sut Yip, Jun Wah Mining Company), a major business commitment in Guangxi Province with ambiguous ties to the Commercial Corporation, and also spear-headed by Ye En. As a development project, Zhenhua ambitiously spanned mining, reclamation of land, railroad and steamship lines, and a provincial bank, all in keeping with long-term Xianzhenghui goals of overseas Chinese investment to modernize China. Zhenhua's open attacks on the corruption and questionable management of the Commercial Corporation and Xianzhenghui in 1908 and 1909 garnered the eventual support of many if not most Xianzhenghui members and would prompt dramatic disillusionment in Kang and the Xianzhenghui. Since Zhenhua's history is deeply tied to the demise of the Commercial Corporation, it will be discussed further in the last section of this chapter.

3.5 *Railroads, Streetcars, and Steamships*

Transportation projects were among the costliest of all Commercial Corporation businesses, with the streetcar lines and proposed steamship line in Mexico draining Hua-Mo Bank of much of its funds. Hua-Mo also attempted to

TABLE 6 Railroad, Streetcar, and Steamship Companies

Business	City	Dates of operation
Zhong-Mo Lunchuan Gongsi 中墨車輪船公司, Sino-Mexican Steamship Company	Mexico (unknown city)	1903–8? (period of investment; it never started)
Yue-Han Tielu 粵漢鐵路, investments in Canton-Hankow Railway	Guangzhou, China	1906
Compañía Bancaria y de Tranvias Wah Yick (Wah Yick Banking and Tramway Company); subsumed Hua-Mo Bank (Hua-Mo Yinhang) and streetcar company with concessions for two connecting lines. In Chinese, simply known as Wah Yick 華益	Torreón, Mexico	1907–11 (streetcar line sold for 200,000 [pesos?] in 1910) ^a

a "Street Car Company Organized," *El Paso Herald*, October 5, 1910, 14.

88 Kang Youwei to Liang Qichao, February 4, 1912, in *Kang Youwei Wanglai Shuxin Ji*, 642.

extract money from the New York Huayi Bank and the King Joy Lo restaurant to meet official funding deadlines set by construction contracts with the Mexican government.⁸⁹ In the end, none of the Mexican projects were completed, in spite of the tremendous investments.

In early 1906, the Canton-Hankow Railway Corporation (Yue-Han Tielu) was formed in Guangzhou to finance with private Chinese capital the southern section of the railway previously owned by the American China Development Company.⁹⁰ Baohuanghui members in Canada and the United States purchased as much as 500,000 yuan in Yue-Han shares, much of it raised by Ye En who was sent to North America in spring 1906 by the Hong Kong Huayi Bank, and others, including Tom Leung and the New York Huayi Bank office.⁹¹ Ye must have arrived in North America shortly before the June 21 deadline for purchase of Yue-Han shares, but the demand for shares was so great that he exceeded the Baohuanghui goal of 300,000 yuan.⁹² Meanwhile, accusations of corruption and dishonesty against the railroad project managers in Guangdong mounted, while investments poured in so quickly that the company had received the needed capital by summer.⁹³ As a result, Kang, apparently with the agreement of shareholders who met in New York, possibly in conjunction with the June 1906 revision of the Commercial Corporation charter, jointly signed a public telegram to Ye En to return the railroad stock funds to Huayi Bank (for investment in the Mexican branch).⁹⁴ Ye declined, contending that Kang only wanted to snatch the funds after seeing how much he had raised and that he could not return funds meant for Yue-Han shares without getting the consent of the investors.⁹⁵ In March 1909, You Shiying at the New York Huayi

89 See Chapter 8 for details.

90 Edward J. M. Rhoads, *China's Republican Revolution: The Case of Kwangtung, 1895–1913* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975), 91–94.

91 Lo, "Sequel to Autobiography," 203–4, says the Commercial Corporation purchased \$300,000 in shares (20 percent of the stocks sold), under Ye En's leadership. Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, January 11, 1906, "Letter as Proof that I was Instructed to Collect Business Funds, Public Funds, Railroad Funds and Invest them in the King Joy Lo Restaurant," and Kang Youpei, New York, to Tan Zhangxiao, March 20, 1906 in *Zhengxinlu*, 259, 261.

92 Xu Xue'an [Xu Qin] to Tan Zhangxiao, June 4, 1906, no. 169 in Fang and Cai, 136. Xu Qin also planned to accompany Ye En to raise Yue-Han shares and stated that funds had to be sent as soon as possible so he could purchase the shares before the deadline.

93 Mai Zhonghua to Tan Zhangxiao, May 16, 1906, no. 147 in Fang and Cai, 193. Rhoads, *China's Republican Revolution*, 92–93.

94 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 316, quotes Xu Qin's public letter in 1909, as excerpted in Ye En, "Bo Xu Qin Bugaoshu Zai Qi" 駁徐勤布告書再啓 [Another Public Denunciation of Xu Qin], 1909, AR-19, AAS ARC 2000/78.

95 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 321, quoting Ye En, AR-19.

Bank reported to Kang that 42,000 yuan in railroad shares was transferred to the bank, but there is no other evidence about the disposition of the rest of the 500,000 yuan collected by Ye En and others.⁹⁶

3.6 *Other Investments*

Real estate acquisitions were among the other investments made by the Commercial Corporation. Its agents bought and sold real estate in Torreón, Mexico, and Johor Bahru, Malaya, and Penang, often with disastrous results because of market and economic changes.⁹⁷

Kang himself speculated in European antiques and art, spending tens of thousands of dollars of Commercial Corporation funds, and shipped them to Hong Kong for sale. Wu Xianzi writes that Kang withdrew 69,313 yuan from Hua-Mo Bank for “Italian curios” (*Yiguo gudong*), which might have included reproductions of Raphael paintings or even Roman sculpture, as above all Kang admired European art for its realism.⁹⁸ While their value was more than 100,000 yuan in 1908, according to Liang Qichao, “there’s a problem selling them in Hong Kong.”⁹⁹ Liang wanted to try offering the antiques and paintings at a reduced price as “otherwise, it would be like throwing our investment into the sea.” As Ye En noted in 1909, this “rash” purchase had already incurred 18,000 yuan in transportation and warehouse fees, and Ye thought Kang should compensate the Commercial Corporation, just as Kang had asked Ye to do with his money-losing propositions.¹⁰⁰ However, even though the market for his collectibles was poor in Hong Kong, Kang decided to display his collection to cultivate Chinese tastes, and in May 1907, he opened the Ou-Mei Meishu Pinwu Chenliesuo (Euro-American Fine Arts Exhibition Hall) at 37 Queens Road Central, under the ownership of Shengli Gongsi (Profitable Company). Several Xianzhenghui newspaper articles described the vast scope of a collection procured during more than ten years in Europe and the Americas.¹⁰¹ Among

96 You Shiyin to Kang Youwei, March 25, 1909, in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui*, 396.

97 See Chapter 8 for details on the Mexican real estate purchases and sales.

98 Wu, *Dangshi*, 87; Aida Yuen Wong, *The Other Kang Youwei: Calligrapher, Art Activist, and Aesthetic Reformer in Modern China* (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 100–101.

99 Liang Qichao to Kang Youwei, January 26, 1908, in Ding and Zhao, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 431.

100 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 322.

101 “Shengli Gongsi Chuangban Ou-Mei Meishu Chenliesuo” 勝利公司創辦歐美美術陳列所 (Shengli Company Establishes the [Euro-American Fine Arts Exhibition Hall]), *Tung Wah Times*, June 15, 1907, and “Xianggang Tongxin: Ji Ou-Mei Meishu Pinwu Chenliesuo zhi Sheng guan” 香港通信: 紀歐美美術品物陳列所之盛觀 (Hong Kong

the curiosities on display were a chair belonging to a Pope; a portrait of French King Louis XVI; paintings on leather from the fourteenth to seventeenth centuries; a tapestry more than four hundred years old; a gold cabinet containing coins from a hundred countries; stone statues of Napoleon, Washington, and Columbus; glass tables; and wooden electric lamps. While Kang clearly saw educational value in this private museum that opened in May 1907 with a five-cent admission charge (the profits going to the Guangdong Gongxue), he later decided that the valuables he had collected would sell better in the United States and planned to ship them to Chicago to store and perhaps sell from the King Joy Lo building.¹⁰² However, these items may have ended up furnishing Kang's homes in Shanghai and Qingdao when he returned to China, or were sold to support his large family.

3.7 *Unanswered Questions*

Although the tables above outline the prodigious breadth of the businesses under the Commercial Corporation's purview, there is scant official corporate documentation about the conglomerate and its component businesses. Historians have only the correspondence and internal histories written by Kang and his followers. These records, as detailed and colorful as they are, give more of an impressionistic picture of the Commercial Corporation as seen by individuals, whose lack of business experience is apparent from their reports on financial details. They frequently mixed currencies (pesos, U.S. dollars, Chinese yuan) or lacked specificity about when a transaction occurred.¹⁰³ In addition, the correspondents often used idiosyncratic terms when describing business and financial transactions. They even frequently used terms, such as the highly touted

correspondent: Remembering the Magnificent Wonders of the Exhibition of European and American Art Objects), *Tung Wah Times*, June 22, 1907, 6. Both announcements are followed by a long essay written by Kang (anonymously) recalling his visits to museums in Europe and the Americas. Wu, *Dangshi*, 91, states that Shengli Company drew more than 16,000 yuan from Huayi Bank in Hong Kong.

102 Kang Youwei to Liang Qixun, December 20, 1908, in Zhang, *Kang Youwei Juan*, 19.

103 This lack of specificity describing currency and time in financial summaries occurs even in Wu Xianzi's Xianzhenghui history, one of the most important sources on the Commercial Corporation written by a highly credible and direct observer of events. As an example of Wu's inattentiveness to detail, he specifies Hua-Mo Bank had acquired 937,268 pesos over three years from various sources on one page but a few pages later, when listing allocations from Hua-Mo Bank to other Commercial Corporation businesses, he mixes currencies, specifying U.S. currency in two cases and none in the other disbursements, overlooking the fact that Chinese yuan and Mexican pesos were half the value of U.S. dollars. Wu, *Dangshi*, 80, 86–87.

“special profits” (*teli*) from the Hua-Mo Bank, whose meaning that can only be guessed at.¹⁰⁴ A few key questions that have yet to be answered definitively:

- How much share capital did the Commercial Corporation hold? How was it allocated to different businesses?¹⁰⁵
- What was the monetary relationship of the Commercial Corporation and the three Huayi banks (Hong Kong, New York, and Torreón)?
- How much did the component businesses, such as Hua-Mo Bank, raise in investments apart from allocations by the Commercial Corporation?¹⁰⁶
- How much in outside loans, from banks or individuals, was taken by the Commercial Corporation and its component businesses? Were any of the loans repaid?¹⁰⁷
- What specifically caused the closure of the Commercial Corporation and the failed businesses during the period, 1909–12?
- Which businesses survived beyond 1909–10? How did they manage to do so?
- Were Wong Foon Chuck, Tom Leung, Ye En, and other managers accused by Kang of embezzlement in fact seeking to profit themselves at the expense of the Baohuanghui?
- How much property, from real estate to antiques, did Kang buy for his personal use? Was any of this paid for with Baohuanghui and Commercial Corporation funds, as some have contended? During his exile, what were the sources of Kang’s personal income?

¹⁰⁴ See Chapter 8.

¹⁰⁵ Comparing accounts by Wu Xianzi and You Shiyin, the share capital held by the Commercial Corporation ranged from 250,000 yuan to nearly 600,000 yuan. Wu Xianzi’s history gives the figure 598,760 yuan as the initial Commercial Corporation share capital and a list of eight businesses and the amount each received, probably during the 1904–6 period (Wu, *Dangshi*, 85–87). In March 1909, You Shiyin attempted to summarize the current financial status of the Commercial Corporation, banks and other businesses for Kang, estimating that the Commercial Corporation had received approximately 250,000 yuan in shares, of which 50,000 had been allocated to the bank[s]; the banks had received an additional 400,000 yuan from other sources, for a total of 455,000 yuan—but it is unclear over what period these funds were acquired or how to compare You’s figures to Wu’s (You Shiyin to Kang Youwei, March 25, 1909, in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui*, 395–96).

¹⁰⁶ If King Joy Lo and Hua-Mo Bank are considered alone, for which there is considerable documentation, it is likely that at least several hundred thousand U.S. dollars in investment, apart from Commercial Corporation allocations, were raised from stock offerings directly by businesses.

¹⁰⁷ It is probable that hundreds of thousands of Chinese yuan were borrowed from local banks to prop up Commercial Corporation enterprises. This seemed to be the case with Hong Kong’s Huayi Bank, which was forced to repay its bank loans after news broke that the currency circulation with Mexico and New York had come to a halt, causing a two million yuan loss, according to Kang: Kang Youwei to Liang Qichao, January 17, 1911, in Ding and Zhao, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 534.

Other historians must undertake the task of assessing the Commercial Corporation by business metrics as they would be applied to other multinational conglomerates of its time. In the absence of Commercial Corporation archives, which might provide more accurate financial data and clarity about the management structure, this may never be possible. Nevertheless, the Commercial Corporation was a several hundred thousand dollar company, and some of its component businesses raised stock shares totaling at least this amount. It had branches in Asia, North America, and Australia. Its longest lasting businesses were often bought by wealthy individuals or groups of individuals who maintained an organizational connection with the remnants of the Baohuanghui. Newspapers were the longest survivors, kept alive by politically committed owners. In the early twentieth century, probably no other Chinese conglomerate was as diversified in business type or region.

Among all Commercial Corporation enterprises, one left behind an incomparable historical trail—King Joy Lo. It is worth examining in detail the full King Joy Lo business history using evidence unknown to earlier scholars, who viewed its management failures as epitomizing the Baohuanghui's decline and fall.¹⁰⁸

4 Case Study of King Joy Lo of Chicago

4.1 *The Paper Trail*

Establishing a Commercial Corporation restaurant was Tom Leung's idea. He proposed using dividends from a profitable restaurant to fund Baohuanghui members pursuing advanced studies abroad, a special concern of his.¹⁰⁹ Kang liked the idea, saying "To promote learning and cultivate the talented is an important task."¹¹⁰ Kang may have been persuaded by Tom's general business sense for generating quick and easy money, having benefited from Tom's personal wealth as an herbalist in Los Angeles. Both men had dined in the showy Chinese restaurants run by wealthy Baohuanghui members, such as Chicago's Joy Yet Lo owned by Chen Baixin and King Yen Lo begun by Chin F. Foin ("the wealthiest Oriental of his age in America," according to *The Inter Ocean*,

108 Cai Huiyao, "Kang Youwei, Tan Zhangxiao yu Qiongcaillou 康有為, 譚張孝與瓊彩樓 [Kang Youwei, Tan Zhangxiao and King Joy Lo], *Lishi Dang'an* 2 (2000): 105.

109 See Chapter 5 for details on Tom Leung's activities to support study abroad and Kang's incorporation of higher education into his organizational goals.

110 "The Letter Urging Me to Set Up a Restaurant," [Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao], November 7, 1905, *Zhengxinlu*, 256.

May 19, 1904) and Port Arthur Restaurant owned by Chu Gow in New York.¹¹¹ Tom must have concluded that these establishments, which served liquor and catered to upperclass American patrons, were the most profitable business for a Chinese to operate in the United States. Apparently no such Chinese restaurants existed in Los Angeles or San Francisco, and it is known that Tom first sought to locate King Joy Lo on the West Coast.

The old bonds of trust between master and disciple predisposed Kang and Tom to overlook the formalities of a business contract. Kang handed Tom nearly \$7,300 in Baohuanghui funds as they parted in Portland, Oregon, on October 15, 1905. This was the first transaction in a long and costly project.¹¹² Little did they realize that in a few years both their friendship and the Baohuanghui would be gravely damaged because of the misunderstandings that began this day. Three weeks later, Kang wrote Tom: "I think the amount of money you currently hold is enough to do the job. Additional funds needed will amount to no more than \$3,000. That's not much and easy to raise."¹¹³ Kang seemed to believe that as little as \$10,000 (about \$350,000 in 2024 dollars) would suffice for Tom to get the restaurant up and running.

Instead it took at least \$100,000 and a year of preparations to open King Joy Lo in Chicago. Examination of King Joy Lo internal correspondence and publications has led scholars to conclude that the restaurant was a total failure, unable to pay its debts or provide dividends, much less fulfill its purpose as a benefactor for Baohuanghui-supported students. A wholly different perspective arises from official State of Illinois corporate records and contemporary newspaper articles and advertisements. Looking back more than one hundred years, Chinese American historian Huping Ling characterized King Joy Lo as having been "probably the most extravagant Chinese American restaurant in Chicago established at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries."¹¹⁴

111 "Chinese Reformer Comes to Chicago," *Inter Ocean*, May 24, 1905, 5; "... at 5 o'clock [Kang] was banqueted at the restaurant Joy Yet Lo on Clark street"; both Chin F. Foin 陳宏勳 [Chen Hongxun] and Chen Baixin 陳百信 were part of Kang's party when he visited Zion City in 1905, see Chapter 7. Port Arthur Restaurant was founded by Chu Gow 曹九 [Cao Jiu] in 1897, <https://baohuanghui.blogspot.com/2012/12/the-baohuanghui-on-mott-street-new-york.html> accessed March 5, 2019; Chu hosted the Baohuanghui headquarters above his restaurant at 7-9 Mott Street beginning in 1905.

112 Tan Zhangxiao, "Revenue and Expenses over the Years," *Zhengxinlu*, 240. "October 15: received [Commercial Corporation] shares [*shanggu*] of \$7,296.07 (given to me by the master when we parted in Portland)."

113 "The Letter Urging Me to Set up a Restaurant," [Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao], November 7, 1905, *Zhengxinlu*, 256.

114 Huping Ling, "The Transnational World of Chinese Entrepreneurs in Chicago, 1870s to 1940s: New Sources and Perspectives on Southern Chinese Emigration," *Frontiers of History in China* 6, no. 3 (2011): 396.

The restaurant survived until 1926 and remained under the management of men once associated with the Baohuanghui. Yet, it was equally true that King Joy Lo did not provide much profit to its investors, nor did it support many students, and the value of its stocks fell between 1906 and 1912, when documentation exists of investors cashing in their shares for 77 percent of their original value.¹¹⁵ These seeming contradictions in the story of King Joy Lo are explored below.

This book is not the first to examine the many letters and reports emanating from Kang, Tom, and other Baohuanghui members on what has widely been seen as the King Joy Lo debacle, but it goes further, using a wider range of documents.¹¹⁶ The letters indisputably chronicle the stark changes in Kang's disposition toward Tom Leung and King Joy Lo, beginning with his exuberance and confidence in 1905–6, turning to apprehension and suspicion in 1907, and finally escalating to accusations of theft and treasonous behavior in 1908, 1909, and beyond.

Assessing King Joy Lo's financial condition during its first turbulent years is difficult because the only sources are transactions recorded in Baohuanghui documents. Neither Kang nor Tom were careful accountants, and Kang only intermittently approved specific items of income and expense. Only after the funds had been spent did he ask Tom for an accounting, and Tom had to reconstruct the transactions and attempt to document and justify them. Blurring this none too clear picture were Kang's deliberate or accidental changes in how he described a specific fund transfer, first as an investment, later as a loan, or vice versa. Tom for his part struggled to keep pace with Kang's demands to know why so little profit flowed to the Baohuanghui, where the money had gone, and why he failed to pay interest on sums that he held temporarily. This new analysis collates the transactions documented in the multiple letters and reports from 1905 to 1909 and includes only those sums that are corroborated by more than one person's account, while deferring judgment on transactions for which there is only a single mention by one person.¹¹⁷

Luckily, Tom Leung saved his correspondence documenting the King Joy Lo dispute and published replicas for others to read and assess: "A mass of words

115 Huang Qijun 黃啓騫 to Tan Zhangxiao, February 10, 1912, no. 261, Tom Leung Collection, Asian Library, University of California, Los Angeles, <https://digital.library.ucla.edu/catalog/ark:/21198/zz00252z13>, accessed February 22, 2022.

116 For example, see Cai, "Kang Youwei, Tan Zhangxiao," *Lishi Dang'an 2* (2000): 99–106; Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 210–21; Lo, "Sequel to Autobiography," 210–11; Chen, *Transpacific Reform and Revolution*, 106–8.

117 Yang Zheng's painstaking analysis of the confusing accounts of King Joy Lo-related income and expenditures was critical to presenting King Joy Lo's financial history.

have confused people, and it is like being in a fog. Idle talk does not help. Only evidence is believable.”¹¹⁸ To expose what he thought was Kang’s duplicity, Tom assembled and distributed a booklet entitled *Zhengxinlu* (Report on Financial Management) in January 1909. It memorialized the back-and-forth correspondence between Kang and Tom dating from King Joy Lo’s inception in 1905 until Tom was forced out in 1908.¹¹⁹ Nevertheless, *Zhengxinlu* and other correspondence documenting King Joy Lo’s tribulations provide copious if confusing records for the historian. Yet, they tell only part of the King Joy Lo saga.

In addition, there is a cache of less emotionally charged documents from 1905 to 1927—official corporation records, newspaper articles, reports of property leases and capitalization, postcards, advertisements, and even menus. In surprising ways, these records corroborate as well as challenge the internal correspondence and allow comparisons of King Joy Lo with its competitors in Chicago.

Entirely lacking, however, are the corporate records for King Joy Lo operations. Thus, there is no accurate picture, other than what is inferred from the existing documents, of the initial costs of establishing the restaurant and after it opened, the revenue and expenses of operating it. Although annual financial reports and a charter drafted by Tom Leung in 1905 are alluded to in correspondence, they are not extant.

4.2 *The Preparations: 1905–6*

The first friendly transfer in Commercial Corporation funds for King Joy Lo (\$7,296.07 handed by Kang to Tom Leung in October 1905) was always described by Tom Leung as “business shares” (*shanggu*), an investment not to be paid back or to collect interest, but with an eventual obligation to pay dividends to shareholders.¹²⁰ Kang’s description of this initial transaction, however, varied, even within the same letter. For example, in a long letter written in 1908 contesting Tom’s handling of King Joy Lo accounts, Kang initially described the transaction as capital stock (*guben*) representing the initial portion of the Commercial Corporation’s total investment in the restaurant (syncing with Tom’s use of “business shares”), but later in the letter said the transaction was “making a loan” (*fangkuan*).¹²¹ Kang also insisted that funds passing through Tom’s hands, both for investments and loans, should bear interest until Tom

118 Tan Zhangxiao, “Preface,” *Zhengxinlu*, 238.

119 *Zhengxinlu*, 237–75.

120 Tan Zhangxiao, “Revenue and Expenses over the Years,” *Zhengxinlu*, 240.

121 Kang Youwei, “Refutation letter from the President in response to original correspondence,” written before June 5, 1908, *Zhengxinlu*, 243, 248.

purchased the shares or the loan was repaid.¹²² In response, Tom asserted, "I am like the manager of a firm or the butler for a rich family. I handle money and transactions for the owner [Kang] and am asked to pay interest. Does that make any sense?"¹²³ Historian Cai Huiyao described the consequences: "The results of not discussing in advance the nature of all the allocated funds (such as whether or not they were loans) were confused accounts, mutual arrears, too tangled up to unravel, which led to an explosive dispute between Kang and Tom about King Joy Lo debts."¹²⁴

Initially, Tom Leung was solely responsible for establishing a profitable restaurant for the Baohuanghui, recruiting investors, and distributing the profits to students. Tom first searched for a location in Los Angeles, where he lived and worked as an herbalist. However, he soon discovered that storefront rental was too expensive for the amount of capital he held.¹²⁵ Less than a month after turning over the funds to Tom, Kang chided him for having "too much fear and worry [that] will delay things, and you will miss good opportunities."¹²⁶ Luckily, Chin F. Foin, one of the founders of the Chicago Baohuanghui chapter and an experienced restaurateur, telegraphed Tom in November 1905 about a suitable storefront in Chicago.¹²⁷ This was a corner property at 100-104 East Randolph Street, not in Chinatown but a mile north, in the theater district of Chicago's prestigious Loop neighborhood. Chicago's *Inter Ocean* on December 24, 1905, publicized the fifteen-year lease deal (\$172,500, from May 1906 to December 1921 at \$12,000 a year). The signatories were Tom Leung, Chin Foin, and Don Joy (both of King Yen Lo restaurant), and another Baohuanghui colleague, Chen Baixin of Joy Yet Lo restaurant.¹²⁸ The building was four stories with a

122 Kang Youwei, "Refutation letter," *Zhengxinlu*, 242: "160,000 [Chinese yuan] is a huge amount, but he has paid no interest whatsoever in three years."

123 Tan Zhangxiao to Tang Mingsan in reply to Kang's refutation letter, written between June 5 and August 18, 1908, *Zhengxinlu*, 249-50.

124 Cai, "Kang Youwei, Tan Zhangxiao yu Qiongcaitou," *Lishi Dang'an* 2 (2000): 100.

125 Cai, "Kang Youwei, Tan Zhangxiao yu Qiongcaitou," 99.

126 Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, November 7, 1905, *Zhengxinlu*, 256.

127 Tan Zhangxiao, responding to Kang Youwei's letter of November 20, 1905, *Zhengxinlu*, 257: "When the Teacher's letter came to urge me to speed up, and I was pondering what to do, I received a telegram from Mr. Chen in Chicago, saying he had found a storefront for a restaurant there. So, we finally settled on Chicago." For Chin Foin's background, see Huping Ling, "Chinese Chicago: Transnational Migration and Businesses, 1870s-1930s," *Journal of Chinese Overseas* no. 6 (2010): 265.

128 "Randolph Street Lease," *Inter Ocean* (Chicago), December 24, 1905, 21. C. N. Souther Jr., of Hipple and Clarke negotiated the lease of 100-102 Randolph Street. The lease for 104 Randolph Street is reported in "Leases," *Inter Ocean*, April 22, 1906, 36. In 1910, meat market owner Oscar F. Mayer bought the building and leasehold at 100-102 Randolph (40.2 × 100 feet) for \$50,000 from Koelling and Klappenbach, taking ownership of the existing King

basement and would be Chicago's first Chinese restaurant with dining on the ground story, private and club dining rooms on the second story, and kitchens and storerooms on the third and fourth stories. Decorations from China and building alterations were estimated at \$50,000 to \$60,000. In April 1906, Chen Baixin and Don Joy leased the second and third stories of 104 Randolph Street for a total rental of \$22,500 over an undisclosed number of years. Both leases began on May 1, 1906. Tom's vacillation had dissolved when he partnered with the ambitious restaurateurs in Chicago, goaded on by Kang's insistence. But he alone carried the heavy burden of the restaurant's funding and obligation to support students.

Tom's trust in Chin Foin was not misplaced. King Joy Lo (Qiongcailou—瓊彩樓—Luster of Beautiful Jade Restaurant) opened for business in December 1906.¹²⁹ As was often the case with Kang's excessive attention to detail, the restaurant's name was not to his liking. He thought the name Qiongcailou was "too low class" and more acceptable names would be Huayanlou (華嚴樓, Supreme China Restaurant), Yi Feng (移風, Flowing Breezes), Hua Cui (華粹, Essence of China), or Zhuan Yu (饌玉, Jade Cuisine). But the sign for Qiongcailou had already been made, and its name—King Joy Lo in Cantonese dialect and the name by which it was always known to the public—was never changed.¹³⁰

King Joy Lo was legally incorporated by the State of Illinois on September 8, 1906, "to buy and sell Chinese merchandise and to conduct and carry on a restaurant and eating house."¹³¹ At least on paper at incorporation, King Joy Lo was fully subscribed for its target of \$100,000 in capital stock, each share worth \$100. The list of fifteen individuals holding the 1,000 shares was headed by Tom Leung (335 shares) and Chin Foin (305 shares). Many familiar names appear on the list, and it is likely all were Baohuanghui members. From Chicago, there were Don Joy, Chan Pak Sun (Chen Baixin), Chin Yong Quai (Chen

Joy Lo Company \$12,000-a-year lease until its expiration in 1921; "Should Combine These Properties," *The Economist* (Chicago), January 1, 1910, 186. Thanks to New York artist Chee Wang Ng for discovery of these and many other documents and artifacts relating to King Joy Lo.

129 The term *qiongcai* 瓊彩 dates to Tang dynasty poems, as a metaphor for beauty and rich, lustrous colors.

130 Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, December 27, 1905, *Zhengxinlu*, 257–58.

131 Articles of Incorporation, King Joy Lo Company, filed with James A. Rose, Secretary of State of Illinois, September 5, 1906, no. 57783, Box 1006, Illinois State Archives, Springfield. The incorporators were Frank T. Milchrist, Ninian H. Welch, and C. F. Foin. The initial shareholders not listed above were: Joe Lai Tong, Joe Ying Lund, Tom On Yuen, Jung Young Pool, and Chan Pak Chong.

Xiankui), and Wong Dock (probably Huang Duo); Los Angeles shareholders include Moc Won Ping (Mo Yunping) and George C. Lem (Lin Guoxiang). Dr. Mon Fong Young (Yang Mingfeng, Xiangchi) was a Baohuanghui leader from St. Joseph, Missouri. The \$33,500 in shares subscribed to by Tom Leung probably includes investments through Kang and the Commercial Corporation, as well as personal shares and those held by his family members. Tom's relatives in China claimed to have bought more than \$12,500 in shares, and Tom himself may have purchased \$6,000 worth.¹³² There is evidence that two \$10,000 shareholders may have taken \$10,000 loans from Huayi Bank to purchase their shares—Chin Yong Quai, a relative of Chin Foin, and Tom Leung's nephew, Tom Chong (Tan Chang, Tan Beixuan, Tom Jai Chong, Tam Kai Chung). After Tom Leung was sidelined in 1909, Tom Chong became King Joy Lo president. Kang later accused Chin Yong Quai and Tom Chong of borrowing the funds as a “tricky way to invest without upfront money”; in his case, Chin promised to pay back the \$10,000 with interest in three months, which did not happen.¹³³

¹³² When Tom Leung's relatives in China wanted to sell their shares in 1912, they sent him a list of shareholders (individuals and family associations) and their holdings, which totaled \$12,500 but was not all-inclusive. Letter from Huang Qijun to nephew-in-law Tan Zhangxiao, February 10, 1912, no. 261, Tom Leung Collection, <https://digital.library.ucla.edu/catalog/ark:/21198/zz00252z13>, accessed February 22, 2022. The total amount of investments from Tom's relatives may be found in “Appendix: List of King Joy Lo shareholders,” *Zhengxinlu*, 275: “China, \$13,500.” For Tom Leung's personal investment in the restaurant, see Jane Leung Larson, “The Beginnings of King Joy Lo Restaurant in Chicago,” unpublished paper, November 2004, revised December 2008, quoting a 1934 oral history by Louise Leung Larson with her mother, Tom Leung's wife, Wong Bing Woo: “Ging Choy Lo is the Chicago restaurant ... Papa had about \$6,000 worth of shares in it.”

¹³³ Kang Youwei to Liang Qixun, Tang Mingsan, and Kang Tongbi, April 13, 1909, in Zhang, *Kang Youwei Juan*, 23. These two loans made July 12 and 28, 1906. Kang's 1909 letter is the only one accusing Tom Chong of receiving Huayi money to buy King Joy Lo shares, whereas the Chen Xiankui 陳賢達 loan is well-documented: Kang Youwei, “Refutation letter from the President in response to original correspondence,” written before June 5, 1908, “Loans to Qiongcailou,” *Zhengxinlu*, 247: “July 28, 1906: \$10,000. This was handled by [Chen] Xiankui. The 100 [jiedan] says the loan period is three months, and the interest is 10 percent. Both must be paid at the end of three months. However, not a penny of interest was received. I demand that the interest, with interest on the interest, be fully paid.” In the same letter, under “Money Passing through the Hands of Gengsheng,” *Zhengxinlu*, 248: “In the 5th month [June–July 1906], Zhangxiao and Chen Xiankui requested a loan of \$10,000 on behalf of the Chicago restaurant and promised to pay 10 percent interest and pay back the capital as well as the interest in three months.” Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, October 9, 1907, no. 120 in Fang and Cai, 77: “Last year in the early summer, you borrowed \$10,000. You said that the capital plus 10 percent interest would be paid back in three months. After a year, I have seen nothing out of it, and you haven't mentioned anything about paying it back.”

Perhaps this was Tom Leung's ploy to meet the \$100,000 capitalization goal for King Joy Lo.

The capital stock Tom marshalled may or may not have been \$100,000, but this ambitious sum was almost five times the \$21,000 capital stock reported to the Illinois Secretary of State by King Joy Lo's nearest competitor among Chicago Chinese restaurants, Chin Foin's King Yen Lo.¹³⁴ Tom also had at his disposal Commercial Corporation loans of at least \$32,000.¹³⁵ This was enough to stage a stunning formal opening on December 20, 1906.¹³⁶

King Joy Lo was lavish. Employing a faux Chinese-English type font in its headline, a full-page 1906 *Chicago Daily Tribune* Saturday magazine advertisement proclaimed King Joy Lo "the finest Chinese-American restaurant in the world." One of the accompanying drawings shows a huge dining room with second-story galleries supported by massive columns capped with a lotus flower motif. The galleries on either side ran the length of the main dining room, providing more intimate but equally ornate settings for enjoying meals. From above diners could see a flowing fountain below and well-heeled men and women customers walking arm-in-arm under a mammoth crystal chandelier suspended from a rotunda. A second dining room drawing, seen from the opposite view, shows the fountain in more detail. Behind two admirers of the swan-mounted fountain is a wide staircase that divides at a mezzanine, where a quintet entertains with music, and then leads to the upper dining level. The "Main Kitchen" is featured in another drawing. It shows neatly dressed cooks with toques working at what appears to be a long gas-fired range with ten side-by-side woks and, beyond, an equally long range with perhaps the same number of burners. White-coated waiters haul the viands to the dining room. "Everyone should dine at the King Joy Lo," proclaims a subtitle. The accompanying text informed its readers that the Chinese are "the greatest epicures since the famous feasters of ancient Rome." The description continued in a style as florid as the drawings. Diners were required to make advanced reservations for the first public opening in December 1906, and "thousands of people" who failed to make reservations were turned away. "To see the magnificence of

134 Secretary of State, Illinois, Biennial Report of the Secretary of State of the State of Illinois for the Fiscal Years beginning October 1, 1904, and Ending September 30, 1906 (Springfield: Phillips Brothers, State Printers, 1906), 102.

135 Four loans made by Huayi Bank for King Joy Lo before December 20, 1906 can be verified in *Zhengxinlu*: \$10,000, April–May 1906, 248; \$10,000, July 12, 1906, 262; \$2,000, September 5, 1906, 262; and \$10,000, October 26, 1906, 262.

136 "King Joy Lo," *Chicago Tribune*, December 22, 1906, advertisement, magazine section, 20: "King Joy Lo was opened to the public for the first time on the evening of Thursday, December 20th."

[illegible]

FIGURE 61 Inaugural advertisement for King Joy Lo, *Chicago Tribune*, December 22, 1906.

the King Joy Lo decorations is to understand how \$150,000 had been spent to produce and assemble them.” The restaurant had its own electric lighting plant and a separate kitchen just for cooking rice. A bar on the main floor served “everything from beer to champagne.” The restaurant was staffed by “hundreds of employes [*sic*] and careful management ... skillfully handled by Mr. Chin F. Foin, general manager.” No mention was made of the owners or their plans to

use profits from King Joy Lo to bring Chinese students to America for higher education and the betterment of China.¹³⁷

Other sources confirm that King Joy Lo management spent freely on both luxuries and advanced technology. *American Florist Weekly* reported that the Atlas Floral Company, an upscale Chicago florist, was “busy on a large decorative order for the opening of a Chinese restaurant for King Joy Lo.”¹³⁸ Another trade publication, *The Gas Engine*, pictures two 55-horsepower gas engines in the basement of King Joy Lo and a letter from manager D. W. Thoms (Duck W. Thoms) dated September 17, 1908, which reads: “This plant has been in continuous operation for two years, twenty-four hours per day. We are generating sufficient current to furnish 1,500 lights of various candle-power and 50 H.P. in motors for ourselves.”¹³⁹ Every month, wrote Thoms, the plant produced a monthly average of 16,000 kilowatts at a cost of one cent per kilowatt-hour, allowing the restaurant to sell power and light to some of its neighbors, bringing in about \$225 a month, meaning that they made a profit running the engines. Gas engines were state-of-the-art in 1906, replacing steam engines; few were used for generating power. While there no King Joy Lo menus survive from its early days, the 1908 *Gas Engine* article reads:

King Joy Lo Mandarin restaurant at 102 Randolph Street is the most complete of its kind in this country. There are magnificent furnishings and equipment. Banquets are served identical to those served to the royalty in China. The dishes range in price from 35 cents to \$1 for chop suey up to \$18 to \$30 a plate for some extra fancy dishes dear to the Oriental fancy.¹⁴⁰

From its beginnings, King Joy Lo far outshone other Chinese restaurants in Chicago in glamour and attractiveness to non-Chinese residents and tourists alike. It was later emulated by (or directly spawned) dozens of similar restaurants in other cities extending from Portland, Oregon, to Boston, Massachusetts.

While King Joy Lo's style and Chinese-American menu must have been largely Chin Foin's creation, he returned to China during the first half of 1906 to bring back a daughter from his first marriage during a critical time as the restaurant was being set up.¹⁴¹ Although other King Joy Lo founders, such as restaurateurs Chen Baixin and Don Joy, were in Chicago to carry on in Chin's

¹³⁷ “King Joy Lo,” *Chicago Tribune*, December 22, 1906, magazine section, 20.

¹³⁸ “Retail Holiday Trade in Chicago,” *American Florist Weekly*, December 29, 1906, 1095.

¹³⁹ “The Most Revenue,” *The Gas Engine*, January 1908, 525–26.

¹⁴⁰ “The Most Revenue,” *The Gas Engine*, January 1908, 525.

¹⁴¹ Chin F. Foin, his wife, and daughter (Miss Mee Chin) returned to San Francisco July 3, 1906: “Spends Night in Fog Bank,” *San Francisco Call*, July 4, 1906, 12. Thank you to Nancy Wang for sharing her research about her grandfather Chin Foin's life.

absence, Tom Leung's correspondence and records tell a sober story of the difficulty of funding this costly undertaking. The bulk of the initial financing came from the New York Huayi bank, either as loans or investments. The following table, representing a total of \$62,550 in investments (\$29,500) and loans (\$33,050), includes only those transactions flowing into King Joy Lo via New York's Huayi Bank between April 1906 and May 1907.

Other investments and loans were also secured from individuals during this time. The initial \$100,000 capitalization of King Joy Lo theoretically incorporated only \$29,500 in Huayi investments (from two named entities, Yongfu Gongsi and Xiaoda Caotang), with the remaining \$70,500 from the individuals listed in the incorporation papers. Other loans and investments may have been procured from Americans.¹⁴² Thus, it is possible that by spring 1907, when King Joy Lo was less than six months old, it was funded by at least \$133,050 (excluding uncorroborated loans or investments). The 1907 annual report filed with the State of Illinois by Tom Chong states, "the cost and expenses of refitting and improving the premises where said restaurant is located was about \$125,000.00"¹⁴³ Later, Kang accused Tom Leung of having siphoned off monies for personal use, but it is indisputable that the King Joy Lo start-up costs could match or exceed \$150,000, given the restaurant's \$12,000 annual lease, building renovations, state-of-the-art power plant, decorations, staff, advertising, entertainment, and elaborate menu.

Complicating Tom Leung's early management of King Joy Lo finances was Kang's order on November 11, 1905, to lend as much as \$7,000 to a Portland leader, Li Meijin, out of the initial restaurant investment of \$7,296.¹⁴⁴ Li had sent Kang a request for a loan of \$7,000 because of a business loss, and Kang wanted to comply, because "he is a righteous person. How can we not help him?" After Kang failed to intercept public funds from other Baohuanghui sources in the United States before they were sent to Hong Kong, he tapped

142 The two transactions cited below have no corroboration in other documents. Printed letter from Tan Zhangxiao to the public, June 1909, no. 308 in Fang and Cai, 235, quotes from a public letter from Xu Qin stating: "In the first month [February 13–March 13, 1907], [Zhangxiao] accepted the investment of \$27,500 from an American [xiren] for stock shares. But the president did not approve and refused to accept the share certificates." Tan Zhangxiao to Kang Youwei, July/August 1908; no. 139 in Fang and Cai, 233: "Qiong[cai] lou also owes over \$10,000 to an American [beer] person [pǐjiǔ xiren 啤酒西人]. The debt is already one year overdue without a single penny paid. The creditor deeply understands the difficulties of Qionglou and hasn't even charged us any interest and has also extended the deadline for us to pay back the loan."

143 Affidavit of Tom Chong, Secretary and Treasurer, Annual Report of King Joy Lo Company, filed March 23, 1907, File 783, Box 1006, Illinois State Archives, Springfield.

144 Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, "The Letter which Authorizes Me to Grant a Loan of Business Funds [shāngkuān] 商款 to [Li] Meijin," November 11, 1905, *Zhengxinlu*, 265.

TABLE 7 Funds from Loans and Investments by the Commercial Corporation to King Joy Lo, 1906 and 1907 (with source documents)¹⁴⁵

	Investment	Loan	Date	Source
1	\$12,500 ^a		April 1906	<i>Zhengxinlu</i> , 241, 258, 262
2		\$10,000 ^b	July 12, 1906	<i>Zhengxinlu</i> , 260, 262, 267
3	\$2,000 ^c		August 30, 1906	<i>Zhengxinlu</i> , 240, 244, 246

- a Kang Youwei to Tom Leung, January 4, 1906, *Zhengxinlu*, 258: "My earlier letter also said to invest \$12,500. So it's a deal." Also see Tom Leung, "Revenue and Expenses over the Years," *Zhengxinlu*, 241: "April [third lunar month], 1906: paid \$12,500 to purchase King Joy Lo shares." The \$12,500 sum incorporates \$6,296 (Kang's original \$7,296 minus \$1,000 not paid back from a loan to Li Meijin 李美近—see below), \$50 (Laotong 勞桐 Commercial Corporation shares), \$300 (Los Angeles Commercial Corporation shares), \$5,000 (New York, that is, Huayi Gongsi), \$250 (Los Angeles public funds), all in *Zhengxinlu*, 240; plus \$500 from Kang, *Zhengxinlu*, 243. The total of these investments is \$12,396; Tom Leung must have made up the missing \$104 to equal \$12,500. Kang saw it somewhat differently, not taking into account an unpaid loan from Li Meijin, in "Refutation letter," *Zhengxinlu*, 243: "The planned investment in the Chicago restaurant was \$12,500, and Zhangxiao received from me \$12,296.07; together with the \$350 of Commercial Corporation stock [Laotong and Los Angeles investments above], Zhangxiao received \$196 more than the planned investment sum." The \$5,000 from Huayi Gongsi is noted in Kang Youpei to Tan Zhangxiao, January 2, 1907, *Zhengxinlu*, 262: "April 3, 1906, I sent \$5,000 to you in Los Angeles."
- b Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, no date [1906], *Zhengxinlu*, 260: "About the loan, I have told Guiyu [Kang Jiyu, that is, Kang Youpei] to allocate \$10,000." Kang Youpei to Tan Zhangxiao, January 2, 1907, *Zhengxinlu*, 262: "On July 12, 1906, Tan Chang received \$10,000." *Zhengxinlu* appendix, list of loans, 267: "July 27, 1906, \$10,000 from Huayi to Qiongcailou" most likely refers to this loan. It is the first entry in the list of loans.
- c Tom Leung, "Revenue and Expenses over the Years," *Zhengxinlu*, 240: "August 30 received \$2,000 from [Kang] Tongbi." Kang Youwei describes this transaction differently in "Refutation," *Zhengxinlu*, 244: "The younger brother of Zhangxiao's wife [perhaps Huang Xi] wanted to sell his shares in the Chicago restaurant. Zhangxiao piteously entreated me to buy his shares. Reluctantly I paid \$2,000 for the shares. This is the Chicago restaurant stock, not money from Tongbi." Tom Leung, "Revenue and Expenses over the Years," *Zhengxinlu*, 241: "[August-September] [seventh lunar month]: paid \$2,000 for King Joy Lo shares"; Kang in "Refutation letter," *Zhengxinlu*, 246: "This is correct."

¹⁴⁵ Included are the transactions the authors deem most credible.

TABLE 7 Funds from Loans and Investments by the Commercial Corporation to King Joy Lo, 1906 (*cont.*)

Investment	Loan	Date	Source
4	\$2,000 ^d	September 5 or 16, 1906	<i>Zhengxinlu</i> , 262, 247, 240, 241, 267
5	\$10,000 ^e	October 26, 1906	<i>Zhengxinlu</i> , 262, 267; Letter no. 139, Fang and Cai, 233
6	\$11,050 ^f	February–mid-March 1907, May 13, 1907	<i>Zhengxinlu</i> , 247, 275; Letter no. 138I, Fang and Cai, 176

- d Kang Youpei to Tan Zhangxiao, September 5, 1906, in *Zhengxinlu*, 262: "Enclosed is a money order [*huipiao* 匯票] for \$2,000. Please check it." Kang Youpei to Tan Zhangxiao, January 2, 1907 in *Zhengxinlu*, 262: "On September 16, 1906, I sent you \$2,000 in Los Angeles." Kang Youwei, "Refutation letter," "Loans to Qiongcailou," written before June 5, 1908, in *Zhengxinlu*, 247: "September 16, 1906: \$2,000: The New York bureau made this loan without permission." Tom Leung, "Revenue and Expenses over the Years" in *Zhengxinlu*, 240: "September 27 received \$2,000 from Guiyu [Kang Youpei]." Tom Leung, "Revenue and Expenses over the Years," "1906 Expenses," in *Zhengxinlu*, 241: "[September–October [eighth lunar month]: turned over \$2,000 loan for King Joy Lo expenses." *Zhengxinlu* appendix, list of loans, 267: "September 11, 1906, \$2,000 from Huayi to Qiongcailou." The dates for this \$2,000 loan are admittedly disparate, and it is difficult to distinguish it from the previous \$2,000 investment through Kang Tongbi. However, it appears to have been sent from Kang Youpei at Huayi to loan to Qiongcailou, probably without Kang Youwei's approval.
- e The sum of \$10,000 comes from the following two transactions, as explained by Kang Youpei and Tom Leung. Kang Youpei to Tan Zhangxiao, January 2, 1907, *Zhengxinlu*, 262: "On October 26, 1906, I gave you \$12,000 in New York. I received your letter last year in which you said that you had paid back US\$2,000 to Mingsan. What about the rest of the sum?" Tan Zhangxiao to Kang Youwei, July/August 1908, no. 139 in Fang and Cai, 233: "Last fall, Guiyu [Kang Youpei] and [Tang] Mingsan gave me ... \$12,000 in the 9th month [October–November 1906] ... More than ten days later, I sent back \$2,000 to Mingsan. Therefore, the actual amount I received [this] time was \$10,000." *Zhengxinlu* appendix, list of loans, 267: "October 26, 1906, \$10,000 from Huayi to Qiongcailou."
- f Kang Youwei, "Refutation letter," "Loans to Qiongcailou," written before June 5, 1908, *Zhengxinlu*, 247–48: [Quoting Tan Zhangxiao]: "Mid-February–mid-March, 1907 [Guangxu 33, first month]: \$14,600 loan on behalf of headquarters. Also the same month and year, \$13,051 from Huayi chapter office. The two items total \$27,651. The same month and year, paid \$15,000 to King Joy Lo as investment capital (this sum was taken out of the \$27,651 and the balance was a loan to Qiongcailou)." The sum of \$27,651 minus \$15,000 equals \$12,651. *Zhengxinlu*, "Appendix: List of Amounts Paid Back to Huayi Corporation by Qiongcailou," 275: "Other transactions not entered into Qiongcailou accounts: March 25, 1907 [Tan] Zhangxiao handed over \$1,000 to Mai Manxuan [Mai Zhonghua] in London; April 3, 1907. [Tan] Zhangxiao sent to [Feng] Jingquan 馮鏡泉 in New York, \$601." These two sums paid out by Tom Leung equal \$1,601. The previous

TABLE 7 Funds from Loans and Investments by the Commercial Corporation to King Joy Lo, 1906 (*cont.*)

	Investment	Loan	Date	Source
7	\$15,000 ^g		February–mid-March 1907	<i>Zhengxinlu</i> , 247, 275
	Total: \$29,500	Total: \$33,050		

sum of \$12,651 minus \$1,601 equals \$11,050. Feng Jingquan [letterhead: Fong Kan Chun, Manager, Wah Yick Co. 7–9 Mott Street, New York City, U.S.A. [in Chinese: *Daili Xianggang Huayi Fenju* 代理香港華益分局, agent for the Hong Kong Huayi chapter office] to Tan Zhangxiao, Los Angeles, May 13, 1907, no. 138I in Fang and Cai, 176: “Previously you sent us \$501 [written in Arabic numerals], and it has been entered in the account book. Now I am sending you a check of \$11,050 to balance the account.”

g Kang Youwei, “Refutation letter,” “Loans to Qiongcailou,” *Zhengxinlu*, 247–48: [Quoting Tan Zhangxiao]: “Mid-February-mid-March, 1907 [Guangxu 33, first month]: \$14,600 loan on behalf of headquarters. Also the same month and year, \$13,051 from Huayi chapter office. The two items total \$27,651. The same month and year, paid \$15,000 to King Joy Lo as investment capital (this sum was taken out of the \$27,651 and the balance was a loan to Qiongcailou).” [Kang’s response]: “What is this? I never invested \$15,000 in the restaurant in February–March 1907. Could this refer to the previous \$14,500? If so, the total investment money would be \$29,500. I have absolutely no knowledge who instructed this to be done.” *Zhengxinlu* appendix, List of King Joy Lo Shareholders, 275: “Yongfu Corporation 永富公司 \$15,000 [with Xiaoda Caotang 孝達草堂 investment of \$14,500] these two items, altogether \$29,500, are Huayi Corporation shares.”

Tom, instructing him to “grant the loan if [Li] can specify a date when he will pay it back.” Tom partially complied that month, sending \$5,000, and in March 1906, Li returned \$4,000.¹⁴⁶ Although both Tom and Kang asked Li to repay the remaining \$1,000 along with interest, the sum was still in arrears in 1908.¹⁴⁷

Angry letters were exchanged in 1908. Tom explained his financial stress during the restaurant’s establishment, why he could not pay interest on the money that passed through his hands in Los Angeles, and the need for loans:

146 Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, “The Letter which Authorizes Me to Grant a Loan of Business Funds to Meijin,” November 11, 1905; and “Revenue and Expenses over the Years,” (“March 10, 1906, \$4,000 returned by Li Meijin for his loan”), both in *Zhengxinlu*, 265, 240.

147 Kang Youwei, “Refutation letter,” written before June 5, 1908, *Zhengxinlu*, 243: “Meijin still owes us \$1,000. Zhangxiao must ask him to pay it back.” Li Meijin founded the Portland chapter and, as will be discussed in Chapter 11, was a staunch defender of the reform organization in 1912, when he was attacked by local supporters of Sun Yatsen.

Although the Chicago restaurant began to open in June–July 1906 [5th month], the restaurant building had already been rented in December 1905–January 1906 [11th month]. The capital was used to make payments and purchases. Even if there had been no loan to Meijin, this \$7,000 would have been used up by then. How could it bear any interest? How could I pretend that I did not know what it was for and take it for myself? Before June–July 1906, many stockholders had not paid for their shares, and King Joy Lo still owed a lot of money. It was necessary to add more capital to King Joy Lo. How could we pay interest? [Kang] really did not understand the difficult situation I was in.¹⁴⁸

Although Tom may have been fudging the dates in this belated account—the lease payments were not to begin until May 1906, and the restaurant did not officially open until that December—he appears to be confirming what has been found in other sources indicating sizeable funds to pay for elegant decorations and state-of-the-art equipment. Evidence that Tom was making purchases in Hong Kong for King Joy Lo comes from two \$5,000 bills of exchange dated January and February 1906 from Tom to his wife's cousin Wong Yap, who had returned to China in 1905 after being part of the official delegation at the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair.¹⁴⁹ On the back of the bills of exchange, which transferred the two sums from banks in Los Angeles to banks in Hong Kong, there are notations that the sums were for Wong to handle the purchase of goods (*banhuo*) for King Joy Lo.¹⁵⁰ Wong was well-suited for this task because of his earlier mission to purchase and ship local Guangdong and Guangxi products

148 Tan Zhangxiao to Tang Mingsan in reply to President's refutation letter, in *Zhengxinlu*, 250.

149 See Chapter 5 for more on Wong Yap.

150 These monetary instruments were among many saved by Tom Leung in a wallet, now in the private collection of Jane Leung Larson: "First National Bank of Los Angeles, Cal., no. 1838, Jan. 20, 1906, On demand of this Second of Exchange (First being unpaid) Pay to the Order of Mr. Wong Yap [Huang Xi 黃翕, Huang Chuda], Five thousand Dollars/Hongkong Currency, to International Banking Corporation [Xianggang Wanguo Baotong Yinhang 香港萬國寶通銀行], Hong Kong, Cashier" [written on back: "Qiongcaillou, [Huang] Chuda 處達 to handle purchase of goods, 5,000 yuan"]. "First National Bank of Los Angeles, Cal., no. 15980, Feb. 10, 1906, On demand of this Duplicate Check (Original being unpaid) Pay to the Order of Mr. Whong Yap, Five thousand Dollars/Hongkong currency and charge to account of Agency Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation, San Francisco, To Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation [Xianggang Shanghai Yinhang 香港傷害銀行], Hong Kong, China" [written on back: "Remitted to Chuda to handle purchase of goods, 5,000 yuan."].

for display at the 1904 World's Fair, including ornamental wood carvings, porcelain and cloisonné vases, and embroidered silk banners.¹⁵¹

The year 1906 was a stressful time for West Coast Chinese following the April 18 San Francisco earthquake. Los Angeles became a refuge for Baohuanghui leaders such as Tom She Bin, the first president of the San Francisco chapter, but it also was chosen as the temporary home of the Baohuanghui San Francisco newspaper, *Wenxing Bao*. Kang directed Tom Leung first to raise investments for the reestablishment of the newspaper in Los Angeles and then to help edit and manage the publication.¹⁵² At the same time, Kang, who was on his first trip to Mexico, was trying to recruit Tom to be a director of the Hua-Mo Bank in Torreón; in spring 1906, Tom went to Torreón and decided not to take part in the bank project.¹⁵³ Also, in the first half of 1906, Tom's correspondence shows that he was supporting Baohuanghui students from King Joy Lo funds, the recipients including Xue Jinqin and her brother, as well as Tang Mingsan, Mai Zhonghua, and the sons of Chen Yikan and Ou Jujia.¹⁵⁴ Apart from the unsettling earthquake and its consequences, Kang's tendency to ask increasingly more of those disciples he trusted must have affected Tom Leung's ability to juggle numerous tasks during this critical time for King Joy Lo.

Yet another source of tension and confusion between Tom and Kang were two personal loans taken from the Huayi Bank in New York: \$4,000 lent to Tom on May 16, 1906 and \$500 lent at a later date to Tom Leung's nephew Tom Chong.¹⁵⁵ The \$4,000 loan was made when trust was high between Kang and

151 Huang Qijun to Tan Zhangxiao, December 11, 1903, no. 267, Tom Leung Collection, <https://digital.library.ucla.edu/catalog/ark:/21198/zz00252z76>, accessed February 22, 2022. See "Catalogue of the Canton Collection," *China: Catalogue of the Collection of Chinese Exhibits at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, St. Louis, 1904* (St. Louis: Shallcross Print, 1904), 281–351.

152 Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, June 5, 1906, no. 130 in Fang and Cai, 72: "Have you received enough investments for *Wenxing*?" Mai Zhonghua to Tan Zhangxiao, July 6, 1906, no. 148 in Fang and Cai, 194: "*Wenxing Bao* has reopened, and I heard you are in charge."

153 Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, January 17, 1906, no. 125 in Fang and Cai, 69; and Cao Yi 曹毅 to Tan Zhangxiao, June 17, 1907, no. 154 in Fang and Cai, 198. See Chapter 8 for details.

154 Tan Zhangxiao, "Revenue and Expenses over the Years," *Zhengxinlu*, 240–41; Mai Zhonghua to Tan Zhangxiao, May 16, 1906, no. 147 in Fang and Cai, 193; Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, June 5, 1906, no. 130 in Fang and Cai, 72. See Chapter 5 for details on Tom Leung's role in supporting Baohuanghui students abroad.

155 Tan Zhangxiao to the public, enclosing excerpt of [Xu] Junmian's letter about King Joy Lo, June 1909, no. 308 in Fang and Cai, 236: "Tan Zhangxiao borrowed \$4,000 for himself, and Tan Chang borrowed \$500." Kang Youwei, "Refutation letter," *Zhengxinlu*, 243, and relating to the Tan Chang loan; and Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, December 9, 1907, no. 121 in Fang and Cai, 78.

Tom, and Kang was sympathetic to Tom's personal needs.¹⁵⁶ Kang told Tom that the promissory note he wrote for the loan was "just a formality to make things look good at headquarters ... since you are so loyal, righteous, and close" and instructed Kang Youpei and Tang Mingsan of Huayi Bank to charge Tom no interest.¹⁵⁷ However, Tom did not repay the personal loan within a few months as he had promised and in 1908 justified this because he had paid tuition and miscellaneous organizational expenses amounting to \$4,400 out of his own pocket.¹⁵⁸ Tom said the "Teacher should pay me back first and then ask me to pay back the loan." In response, Kang demanded Tom repay the \$4,000 plus interest, because the loan was long overdue, but he also said that Tom should separately be compensated for personally covering organizational expenses and be paid interest for his "loan." As their dispute deepened, both Tom's \$4,000 loan and Tom Chong's \$500 loan continued to rankle Kang, Xu Qin, and others. These were conflated with the much greater sums Tom handled on behalf of King Joy Lo and the Baohuanghui and came to symbolize Tom's violation of Kang's trust. Truly, as Kang concluded, personal, business, and general organizational or "public" funds, should have been kept separate: "I recall that I was very reluctant to grant [Zhang]xiao the loan because I was always very careful with business funds. Once a mistake is made, you will pay interest without end."¹⁵⁹

Being expected to "pay interest without end" seems to have been Tom's fate. The question of which transactions should incur interest and how payment of that interest should be accounted for became a recurring theme in the King Joy Lo scandal. However, during this period of preparation leading up to the opening of King Joy Lo in December 1906, there is no correspondence from Kang or others that states Tom should pay interest on any loan, much less on the funds he held in Los Angeles before their transfer to Huayi Bank to purchase stock shares in King Joy Lo.

The achievements of Tom Leung, Chin Foin, and others in the fifteen months between King Joy Lo's conception in October 1905 and its grand opening as

156 Kang Youwei, "Refutation letter," "Money Passing through the Hands of Gengsheng," *Zhengxinlu*, 248.

157 Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, June 21, 1906, "The Letter about the Loan of \$4,000, as an Item in the Running Account," *Zhengxinlu*, 263.

158 Tan Zhangxiao to Tang Mingsan in reply to President's refutation letter, June 5–August 18, 1908, *Zhengxinlu*, 249 and 251. It is possible that the \$4,400 figure refers to this earlier statement in the letter to Tang: "I also paid \$1,754.25 for miscellaneous expenses and \$2,668.50 for tuition on behalf of the Teacher." These two sums add up to \$4,422.75.

159 "The President's letter approving the accounts after his refutation," August 18, 1908, *Zhengxinlu*, 254–55.

a tourist destination in December 1906 are visible in a single artifact from February 1907. A picture postcard—given to patrons as a souvenir—and hand dated by its sender only two months after the opening—is illustrated with a black-and-white photograph of the entrance hall showing “teakwood carvings inlaid with mother of pearl which line the walls” and “the miniature theater suspended in the lobby with little manikins standing before magnificent carved pagodas,” as described in the 1906 *Chicago Tribune* ad.¹⁶⁰ The postcard touts the restaurant as an entertainment venue: “Opposite the Garrick Theatre. Most magnificent Oriental Restaurant. Chinese Theatre is only one of the many features to be seen. Hear the Famous Royal Hungarian Orchestra. American and Chinese Restaurant, serving both kinds of dishes.”

4.3 *Tom Leung in Charge: 1907–8*

At the helm of King Joy Lo in 1907–8 were Tom Leung as president and his nephew, Tom Chong, as secretary and treasurer, according to the corporation’s annual reports.¹⁶¹ This change in leadership took place on February 15, 1907, with the sudden and unexplained resignation and divestment of company stock by the first King Joy Lo president, Chin Foin. The immediate loss, unless Chin’s shares were purchased by others, would have been \$30,500, a hefty part of the \$100,000 in subscribed capital. In a sign of inexperienced management, Tom Chong in a March 22 letter accompanying the 1907 annual report revealed that King Joy Lo had temporarily lost its corporate status because “neither he nor any of the officers of said company really knew of the existence or requirements of such law” to submit an annual corporate report before March 1. Without the restaurateur Chin Foin and his money, one might have expected such an imprudently lavish enterprise to flounder and fail, but there is no evidence of a temporary, much less a permanent, decline.

Tom Leung remained in Los Angeles, and Tom Chong had onsite responsibility for King Joy Lo in Chicago. Tom Chong immigrated to the United States in 1902 and had embarked on a medical career, both in herbal and naturopathic medicine, so his management of King Joy Lo must have been supplemented by other more experienced restaurant operators, such as shareholders Don Joy of King Yen Lo and Chen Baixin of Joy Yet Lo.¹⁶² But, Tom Chong allied himself

160 King Joy Lo postcard, hand-dated by sender, February 20, 1907, private collection of Chee Wang Ng; “King Joy Lo,” *Chicago Tribune*, December 22, 1906, advertisement, magazine section, 20.

161 Annual Reports of King Joy Lo Company, filed March 23, 1907, with March 22 sworn affidavit of secretary and treasurer Tom Chong, and February 3, 1908, File 783, Box 1006, Illinois State Archives, Springfield.

162 Tom Chong’s granddaughter Vickie Hom has documentation that he landed in San Francisco on August 24, 1902, and attended the National School of Chiropractic in Chicago

to a prominent Milwaukee Chinese restaurant owner by marrying the daughter of Charles Toy, “the wealthiest Chinaman in Wisconsin,” a union reported in the September 12, 1907, *Chicago Tribune*, with the celebrations including “a wedding supper of twenty courses served in a private dining room at the [King Joy Lo] restaurant.”¹⁶³

In early 1907, Tom Leung was forced to take an \$11,050 loan from Huayi Bank to sustain King Joy Lo.¹⁶⁴ At the same time, he faced heavy pressure to repay past loans. Beginning in January, Huayi Bank’s Kang Youpei pleaded with Tom to pay back his outstanding loans so that “I can report to the president [Kang Youwei] in order to avoid a severe rebuke.”¹⁶⁵ King Joy Lo’s massive intake of funds had begun to strain the interconnected, overextended Commercial Corporation, which was burdened by limited liquid capital. Kang’s costly ambitions in Mexico—real estate, a streetcar line, the Hua-Mo Bank, and currency trading—were justified by his conviction that these investments could potentially support both the political and business arms of the Xianzhenghui. Less lucrative businesses like King Joy Lo were thus ripe to be tapped for funds. Kang noted in a letter to Liang Qichao in April 1907 that he could not wire the 10,000 yuan Liang requested because Huayi Bank’s deposits had been borrowed by Tom Leung and others.¹⁶⁶

As a result, in April and May 1907, Kang began to scrutinize King Joy Lo’s financial management and dispatched trusted members to “audit” (*cha*) the restaurant’s bookkeeping.¹⁶⁷ Kang planned a visit to Chicago and wanted the financial report ready for his inspection. Chen Yikan and Linn Chew Sang, Kang’s secretary since late 1905, were sent to Chicago to “straighten things out and make improvements.” Kang told Tom to prepare the books for the audit and personally inform Chen and Linn about “the balances, accounts, and debts.” Kang said that he would agree with whatever they concluded and cautioned Tom to follow suit. Ominously, Tom was informed that Kang planned to withdraw tens

after it opened in 1906; before moving to Chicago, he probably worked with his relatives Tom Foo Yuen [Tan Fuyuan 譚富園] and Tom Leung in the Foo and Wing Herb Company in Los Angeles or one of its branches.

163 “Federal Judges are Guests at Chinese Wedding Feast,” *Chicago Tribune*, September 12, 1907, 8. Also see “Toy’s Daughter to Wed,” *Oshkosh (Wisconsin) Northwestern*, September 5, 1907: “[Clarice Fah Toy] will be wedded soon to Thon Chung, a wealthy Chicago restaurateur, proprietor of the King Joy Lo \$100,000 eating house.”

164 See table above for details; Feng to Tan Zhangxiao, Los Angeles, May 13, 1907, no. 1381 in Fang and Cai, 176.

165 Kang Youpei to Tan Zhangxiao, January 2, 1907, *Zhengxinlu*, 263.

166 Kang Youwei to Liang Qichao, April 8, 1907, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 378.

167 “Letters to Dispatch Mr. Chen and Mr. Lin to Audit the Bookkeeping of Qiongcailou,” Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, April 22, 1907, April 25, 1907, and undated, *Zhengxinlu*, 265–66.

of thousands of dollars from King Joy Lo for other businesses should Chen and Linn's audit by find the restaurant's financial records problematic.

In early May 1907, Kang personally inspected Huayi Bank accounts in New York to trace its transactions with King Joy Lo. He interrogated Huayi manager Feng Jingquan, who in turn begged Tom to send cash: "I was severely scolded many times by the president [Kang] because of your debt."¹⁶⁸ In fact, Tom had begun to repay the King Joy Lo loans.

Tom Leung's "List of Amounts Paid Back to Huayi Gongsi by King Joy Lo" in *Zhengxinlu* shows his first payment of \$50 was made March 12, 1907, and in April he sent three payments totaling \$600.¹⁶⁹ The list of more than one hundred transactions records the date of the payment, to whom it was made, the amount, the duration of the loan, and the amount of interest to be credited to King Joy Lo for early repayment. In 1907, Tom's table shows twelve payments of as little as \$50 and as much as \$2,500 to Huayi, totaling \$5,900, and, in 1908, thirteen payments, the highest being \$8,000, totaling \$15,165.¹⁷⁰ In addition to these direct payments from King Joy Lo to Huayi, Tom's table included many smaller payments to individuals, ranging from \$5 to \$300, that total \$7,886 for 1907 and 1908, only a few specifying the purpose.¹⁷¹ Kang himself was among the payees, receiving \$100 at the train station in Chicago on May 25, 1907, and \$200 in Torreón on June 10, 1907.¹⁷² Apart from several payments for "travel to chapters" (*youbu*) for Baohuanghui leaders such as Tang Mingsan and Kang Youpei, most of the miscellaneous dispersals appear to have been made to Baohuanghui-supported students, including Liang Qichao's brother Qixun, Kang's daughters Tongwei and Tongbi, Ou Jujia's brother Huaqing, and Kang's nephew You Shiyin. Tom credited all of the miscellaneous payments to individuals against the outstanding principal of King Joy Lo's Huayi loans. Thus, Tom claimed that King Joy Lo paid nearly \$29,000 toward the principal of its debt

168 Feng Jingquan to Tan Zhangxiao, Los Angeles, May 13, 1907, no. 138I in Fang and Cai, 176.

169 "Appendix: List of Amounts Paid Back to Huayi Corporation by Qiongcaillou," *Zhengxinlu*, 267.

170 "Appendix: List of Amounts Paid Back to Huayi Corporation by Qiongcaillou," *Zhengxinlu*, 267–73.

171 Note that in Fang and Cai, *Zhengxinlu*, 269–75, the payments for 1908 do not add up to the \$21,703.02 total for the year, because of transcription errors. The original document includes a payment of \$100 for travel for Tang [Mingsan] and Lin [Zhaosheng] omitted by Fang and Cai, 272, for August 11, 1908, and information was garbled in the next several entries for date of payment, payees, and interest deductions, and an extra payment was added of \$50.

172 "Appendix: List of Amounts Paid Back to Huayi Corporation by Qiongcaillou," *Zhengxinlu*, 267–68.

by the end of 1908.¹⁷³ None of the interest had been paid, so Tom calculated both principal and interest owed as of December 31, 1908, to equal \$10,163.44.¹⁷⁴

Kang fell ill as he prepared to leave for Chicago from New York City in spring 1907 and kept delaying his departure. He wrote Tom Leung: "I am sick and cannot see visitors. If I visit you in Chicago, it will do no good for my health. I plan to stay at a small town close to Chicago so I can see you all and convalesce at the same time."¹⁷⁵ Kang spent about a week at the Chicago Beach Hotel, a luxurious Lake Michigan resort about seven miles south of the Loop and King Joy Lo, leaving on May 25.¹⁷⁶ There is no corroboration from contemporary news articles, letters, or subsequent statements by Kang that he actually visited King Joy Lo during this trip. However, since a major purpose of his trip was raising more support from the recalcitrant Chicago chapter and examination of the King Joy Lo audit report, it is surmised that he inspected the premises.¹⁷⁷

Whatever transpired during Kang's visit to Chicago, his anxiety about procuring funds from King Joy Lo kept increasing. Kang no doubt learned directly from Feng Jingquan at Huayi Bank that the restaurant was making a daily profit of only \$50 in September 1907.¹⁷⁸ Feng wrote Tom Leung that although he was pleased to hear about the daily profits, he was "not sure, based on such a small amount, how long it will take you to pay off the debt." Feng continued:

We all are short of money (*jieju*): (1) Hong Kong has sent me an urgent cable to demand a remittance of funds. (2) Torreón has started its

173 The exact figure is \$28,952.22: \$7,249.20 in 1907 and \$21,703.02 in 1908, *Zhengxinlu*, 268 and 275.

174 *Zhengxinlu*, 275. Tom detailed four loans totaling \$32,550 in his table and calculated the total interest on that sum to be \$4,519.42, and the beginning interest and principal as \$37,069.42. The above table of four loans totaling \$33,050 has been judged by the authors to be a more accurate accounting of the principal due.

175 "Letters to Dispatch Mr. Chen and Mr. Lin to Audit the Bookkeeping of Qiongcailou," Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, undated (after April 25, 1907), *Zhengxinlu*, 266.

176 Kang Youwei, Chicago Beach Hotel, to Miss L. D. Gill, May 21, 1907, File no. 710, Central Records Office, Barnard College. Liang Qixun met Kang in Chicago; see Liang Qixun to Liang Qichao, May 26, 1907, in in *Liang Rengong Xiansheng Zhijiao Shou Zha* 梁任公先生知交手札 [Liang Qichao's Personal Letters in His Handwriting] (Taipei: Wenhai Chubanshe, 1974), 595.

177 Liang Qixun in his May 26 letter does not mention King Joy Lo but goes into depth about the disillusion of Chicago members with Kang and subsequent decrease in financial support.

178 Letter from Feng Jingquan (Fong Kan Chun), New York agent for the Hong Kong Huayi branch office, to Tan Zhangxiao, Los Angeles, September 28, 1907, on Wah Yick Company letterhead; no. 138B in Fang and Cai, 169.

streetcar [company], and the president [Kang] wrote to urge me to get the money from you so it can begin operations. Zhuoru [Liang Qichao] also cabled me to demand funds ... I pray with all my heart that you can think of something and will make an effort to send us more money.

That fall and winter, Feng received several loan payments from Tom and reported them dutifully to Kang “in the hopes that he will have sympathy on you and will give you more time.”¹⁷⁹ Kang himself continued to use gentle persuasion on Tom, conceding in October that while “it is hard to repay the more than \$100,000 invested in the restaurant, you must manage to come up with several tens of thousands” to help cover the critical need for several hundred thousand for the streetcar company.¹⁸⁰ Kang reminded Tom that in 1906 “you said that capital turnover would be very easy. Now, you must keep your word.” Furthermore, Kang contended: “The business of the Chicago restaurant must be good ... It should be enough to pay back \$100 or \$200 every day.” Warning Tom of what was imminent, Kang wrote, “You must act extremely fairly ... Otherwise, you will surely lose your credibility and be treated as if you were deceptive.”

The demands of the Mexican investments, along with new needs for funds to develop political activities inside China accelerated Kang’s pressure on his subordinates to come up with the money. In December 1907, “worried and distressed” because he had not been able to raise the funds for the streetcar line, Kang told Tom that he shared responsibility for managing King Joy Lo with Tang Mingsan and Kang Youpei at Huayi Bank because they had “appropriated a huge amount of money to you without authorization,” and one of them must go to Chicago immediately to supervise the restaurant.¹⁸¹

Sometime during winter 1907–8, after relocating from New York to Kors-holmen Island in Sweden, Kang began referring to Tom Leung as “Thief Tom” and accused him of appropriating 160,000 yuan (\$80,000) meant for King Joy Lo. Kang later ascribed his fury at Tom to the combination of severe financial demands and his once boundless trust in Tom, which when seeded by suspicions of wrong-doing, turned to equally boundless mistrust. Kang said his suspicions had been aroused when Tom did not pay back the \$4,000 personal loan and continued to ask for more funds for King Joy Lo. Then, when Kang read King Joy Lo’s annual statement that winter in Sweden and noticed that

179 Letter from Feng Jingquan to Tan Zhangxiao, October 6, 1907, no. 138C in Fang and Cai, 170.

180 No currency is given for this sum. Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, October 9, 1907, no. 120 in Fang and Cai, 77; in Kang’s handwriting.

181 Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, December 9, 1907, no. 121 in Fang and Cai, 78.

\$24,000 in loans was missing, he admitted, "You broke my heart, and I was ill for several days. At that time I not only suspected you but hated you to such a degree that I wanted to sue you."¹⁸² Kang justified his ire because he saw King Joy Lo's debts as the primary cause of the Commercial Corporation's financial distress: "Because of the Chicago matter, the Mexican business, Hong Kong and New York businesses almost entirely collapsed. All the problems stemmed from Chicago inappropriately taking money."

Kang's fraught emotional state must be considered when assessing his financial calculations and his recall of past transactions in his letters concerning King Joy Lo and other Commercial Corporation businesses. Haste and anxiety meant he jumped to conclusions and inflated or even falsified figures, as manifested in the lack of evidence to back his claims. Tom Leung, in an unsent and incomplete letter written to Kang in July–August 1908, shed some light on his perception of Kang's state of mind:

If your suspicions were true, it is no wonder why my teacher feels towering flames of fury and is shaken by massive rage, calling me a robber and a traitor, which I would deserve. I may not be right, but I cannot be as low as that. This is what is called "listening with half an ear and failing to understand, looking with a prejudiced eye and not seeing" (*pianting buming, pianshi bujian*).¹⁸³

Tom speculated further that because his teacher stubbornly held in his mind the amount that he believed Tom owed Huayi Bank, Kang overlooked ("forgot to deduct") both the stock shares that were part of this sum and the amount that Tom had repaid, and "when you saw the year-end report, and the amount owed was much lower than what you had in your mind, of course you became very angry, and small wonder that you called me a thief."¹⁸⁴

As the conflict between Kang and Tom developed in early 1908, Kang did not confront Tom directly. Instead, he wrote long, distraught letters to Liang Qichao and Xu Qin, who also turned against Tom. Liang, Tom's old classmate

182 Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, August 18, 1908, no. 128 in Fang and Cai, 83 (reprinted in *Zhengxinlu*). The sum of \$24,000 is mentioned in several letters, but it is not clear to which loans Kang was referring; for example, see Kang Youwei to Liang Qichao, March 9, 1908, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 443, and "The President's letter approving the accounts after his refutation," August 18, 1908, in *Zhengxinlu*, 253–55.

183 Tan Zhangxiao to Kang Youwei, incomplete draft, July/August 1908; no. 139 in Fang and Cai, 232.

184 Tan Zhangxiao to Kang Youwei, incomplete draft, July/August 1908; no. 139 in Fang and Cai, 232.

and guest in Los Angeles in 1903, replied to Kang in January 1908: "You mentioned that Zhangxiao swindled more than 100,000 [yuan]. I knew nothing about this. Is there any way to save the day? How could a person have such vicious intentions? How treacherous the situation is! I am infuriated!"¹⁸⁵ In March 1908, Kang wrote Liang, castigating Tom at length.¹⁸⁶ He also referenced King Joy Lo's annual statement and its missing \$24,000 in loans: "This means that Zhangxiao pocketed public monies for himself." Kang said he would write a public letter to denounce Tom, take the case to court, and "search his house and confiscate his property under the charge of owing public funds intended to support the students." Kang told Liang that Tom had "hooked me in" (*yici tian wo*) to making an initial \$12,500 investment in King Joy Lo with the promise that the profits from the restaurant would fund students. In fact, said Kang, Tom was not supporting students except by deducting his payments to students from the King Joy Lo loan principal (not mentioning that these payments came from King Joy Lo income). Moreover, "until now, he has not paid back a penny of principal or interest." This claim belies the fact that Kang had met with Feng Jingquan and reviewed the 1907 accounts at Huayi Bank in New York in October, when Feng claimed that he told Kang about Tom's continuing loan payments.¹⁸⁷ Thus, it appears that Kang had concluded Tom had acted nefariously and neglected any information that might contradict this view.

During summer 1908, Kang and Tom communicated indirectly through Tang Mingsan of Huayi Bank in a lengthy exchange that focused on Tom's itemized list of King Joy Lo income and expenses from October 15, 1905, when Kang handed over \$7,296 for the restaurant, until mid-February 1907, a few months after King Joy Lo opened its doors.¹⁸⁸ Kang's refutation decried Tom's accounts as "extremely deceiving and confusing" and accused him of "acting like a bandit," yet he addressed every line item, either approving or refuting their accuracy.¹⁸⁹ Tom's rejoinder by way of Tang emphasized that he was "an indirect agent receiving and paying out money, all based on [Kang's] written instructions" and that as such he should not be expected to pay interest on the

185 Liang Qichao to Kang Youwei, January 26, 1908, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 431.

186 Kang Youwei to Liang Qichao, March 9, 1908, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 443.

187 Feng Jingquan to Tan Zhangxiao, Los Angeles, October 17, 1907, no. 138A in Fang and Cai, 171.

188 "Revenue and Expenses over the Years," no date given but seems to represent lunar years, with the final entry at the end of Bingwu 丙午 or February 12, 1907; "Refutation letter from the President in response to original correspondence," written before June 5, 1908; and Tom Leung's response by way of Tang, Tan Zhangxiao to Tang Mingsan, written between June 5 and August 18, 1908, *Zhengxinlu*, 240–53.

189 Kang Youwei, "Refutation letter," *Zhengxinlu*, 242.

funds for King Joy Lo, which often went directly from New York to Chicago or were briefly held in Los Angeles.¹⁹⁰

Particularly irritating to Kang was Tom's use of King Joy Lo funds to support the student denoted as "Wushi" (Fifty, an alias for Xue Jinqin). He now felt she was "useless," having refused to return to China to assassinate Cixi as she had vowed to do (see Chapter 4), and he ordered Tom to cease paying her tuition.¹⁹¹ Tom rebutted with quotes from Kang's own letters in which he reversed his position several times on whether to support Xue, but after payments of less than \$600 in tuition and other expenses to Xue and her student brother, Tom said he used his own money for her clothes, food, and lodging because he believed she "had extraordinary character and conduct."

The dispute between Kang and Tom came to a temporary halt on August 18, 1908, with what Tom would later call "the President's letter approving the accounts after refuting them."¹⁹² Written directly to Tom almost as a kind of confession, Kang seemingly accepted many of Tom's explanations for the King Joy Lo transactions, dropped some of his most contentious accusations, and expressed some responsibility for inciting the dispute. He made this startling admission:

In short, the entire unworthy [*buxiao*] matter resulted from my excessive suspicions. It started because you did not settle accounts in clear terms. At the same time things got complicated because of the unsuccessful deals in both Hong Kong and Mexico, and caused you misfortune too. Now that everything is over, let bygones be bygones.

Kang appeared mollified, declaring broadly that "the various accounts are in order." He retreated on some issues, concluding that Tom's payments to Xue Jinqin were limited and small, so it was no longer necessary to dwell on Tom's carelessness in dispersing them. Kang still expected Tom to repay the loans to King Joy Lo with interest. As to the \$4,000 personal loan, Kang accused Tom of thinking "that since everybody else [in Huayi Bank] muddled through, you could follow suit." He added that it was "ridiculous talk!" when Tom accused Kang of being "particular about a trifling amount, yet spent money as if disposing of mud and sand." But, Kang magnanimously allowed, "[o]nly because

190 Tan Zhangxiao to Tang Mingsan, *Zhengxinlu*, 249–50.

191 Tan Zhangxiao to Tang Mingsan in reply to President's refutation letter, *Zhengxinlu*, 252. See Chapter 4 for Xue Jinqin's role in Baohuanghui assassination plots.

192 "The President's letter approving the accounts after his refutation of the accounts," August 18, 1908, no. 128 in Fang and Cai, 83–85; also reprinted in *Zhengxinlu*, 253–55.

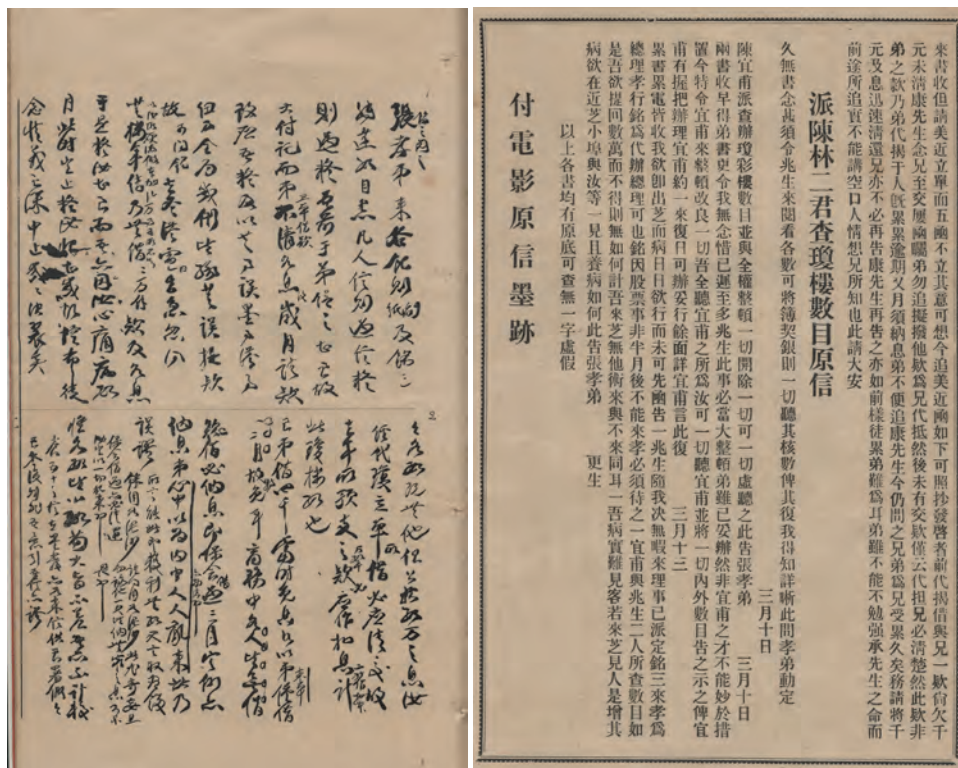


FIGURE 62 From Tom Leung's booklet, *Zhengxinlu* [Report on Financial Management], January 1909; on right, last page of printed letters; on left, first page of reproduced telegrams and letters, beginning with "The President's letter approving the accounts after his refutation."

these are not large sums, if the outstanding balance is not much, I won't haggle over it anymore." Most surprisingly, he told Tom, "After such an experience, you and I should do some soul-searching and thoroughly rectify our mistakes." He instructed that the letter be shown to Huayi's Tang Mingsan and promised to let Victoria leader Li Fuji know the resolution of the situation so that "it will clear up things between you two."

This last surviving letter from Kang to Tom Leung represented a temporary ceasefire at best. By late 1908, Kang's forbearance toward Tom reverted to repudiation. The Guangxu Emperor had died, Xianzhenghui membership fees and donations had dried up, and the Commercial Corporation businesses were in deep trouble. Having failed to corral the stock shares Ye En and others were raising from Xianzhenghui members for the Zhenhua enterprise, Kang turned to King Joy Lo, which he now hoped could be "the major source of income" for sustaining the organization. Two brief letters from Kang to Liang Qixun in

Chicago in November and December 1908 describe “a fight” to wrest control of King Joy Lo from Tom Leung and his nephew Tom Chong, the employee, officer, and investor in King Joy Lo to whom Tom Leung had delegated the repayment of King Joy Lo’s loans after fall 1907.¹⁹³ No longer did Kang show concern about funding students from restaurant dividends. Instead, because member donations (“public funds”) had fallen, “the Chicago restaurant is very critical to the general situation of our party.” To accomplish this turnaround, Kang had to become directly involved and asserted, “Zhangxiao is not the right person [to control King Joy Lo] and must not be allowed to interfere with its business any longer.” Kang had another scheme for earning money to cover Xianzhenghui expenses—the sale of \$100,000 worth of paintings and antiques he had bought in Europe and Mexico and shipped to Hong Kong, where it transpired there was little market for such objects.¹⁹⁴ He wanted to ship the items to Chicago for sale in the United States and store them on the fourth story of King Joy Lo, which was not being commercially used at the time. However, Tom Chong had been living with his new bride on the fourth story since their wedding in September 1907 and had begun to raise a family. From Penang, Kang ordered his cousin Kang Youpei and disciple Li Hua to go to Chicago to take charge, but Tom Chong refused to meet them for several months.¹⁹⁵ Tom Chong “audaciously resisted my orders,” and Kang was determined to remove him from his position at King Joy Lo and evict him from the fourth story. Kang also claimed that in addition to Tom Chong’s \$500 personal loan, he had borrowed \$800 from public funds “to buy a concubine” (likely to pay for his wedding), and in spite of these debts, “dares to sweep over us freely.” Although Tom Leung was pushed aside and *Zhengxinlu* published soon after, King Joy Lo’s 1908 report to the State of Illinois recorded Tom Chong as president and treasurer, with his term ending in October 1909.¹⁹⁶

193 Kang Youwei to Liang Qixun, November 27, 1908, and December 20, 1908, in Zhang, *Kang Youwei Juan*, 16–19. For evidence that Tom Chong had assumed loan repayment to Huayi under Tom Leung’s supervision, see Feng Jingquan to Tan Zhangxiao, Los Angeles, May 13, 1907, to March 10, 1908, no. 138 in Fang and Cai, 169–78.

194 Liang Qichao to Kang Youwei, January 26, 1908, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 431; Kang Youwei to Liang Qichao, March 9, 1908, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 445. As described above, the art objects were displayed in the specially created Euro-American Fine Arts Exhibition Hall in Hong Kong.

195 Kang Youwei to Liang Qixun, December 20, 1908, in Zhang, *Kang Youwei Juan*, 18–19.

196 Annual Reports of King Joy Lo Company, filed February 25, 1909, File 783, Box 1006, Illinois State Archives, Springfield. Tom Chong may not have moved out of the restaurant building as Vickie Hom, Tom Chong’s granddaughter, in an email, April 5, 2018, confirms that her grandparents resided at 100–102 Randolph Street after marrying in September 1907, and their first two children were born there.

Kang and Tom Leung never resolved their differences over King Joy Lo, but the historical record allows tentative answers to key questions that they debated: During Tom Leung's tenure, how much money did King Joy Lo receive from all sources? How much did Huayi Bank invest and loan to King Joy Lo? How much did King Joy Lo receive in loans and investments from other sources? What became of King Joy Lo dividends? How were Baohuanghui students supported by King Joy Lo?

4.4 *King Joy Lo Loans and Investments from All Sources*

There is clear documentation of more than \$100,000 in investments and loans buoying King Joy Lo in its first years, from Kang's first investment of Huayi funds in October 1905 to the end of 1908, when King Joy Lo had been open for two years and Tom Leung had departed the scene. Approximately two-thirds (\$62,550) came from Huayi Bank and one-third from individual investors (\$41,800), totaling \$104,350. Although a portion of these funds was spent to support students, the rest appears to have been put into King Joy Lo.

From an analysis of the available documentation as detailed in the table above, Huayi Bank supplied King Joy Lo with investments of \$29,500 and loans of \$33,050, for a total of \$62,550.¹⁹⁷ In addition to the Huayi infusions, Tom Leung recorded outside investments to King Joy Lo of \$41,800, which are roughly accounted for in the *Zhengxinlu* appendix: Los Angeles (\$18,000), China (\$13,500), Chicago (\$8,200), and other cities (\$2,100).¹⁹⁸ In sum, loans of \$33,050 (Huayi) and investments of \$71,300 (Huayi and outside sources) add up to \$104,350. It is probable that for a short period when King Joy Lo was being established, it held as much as \$133,050, given King Joy Lo's initial \$100,000 capitalization declared in its September 1906 incorporation papers. However, Chin Foin, the King Joy Lo founder and an original shareholder, divested his shares of \$30,500 when he left the restaurant in February 1907, and, from all evidence, only \$1,800 in shares had been resold by December 1908, leaving \$71,300 in investments.¹⁹⁹

197 The authors' calculation of Huayi loans to King Joy Lo totals \$33,050 rather than \$32,550 as in the *Zhengxinlu* appendix, because they conclude the 1907 loan was \$11,050, not \$10,550 as stated in this list. The total Huayi loan sum does not include personal loans of \$4,000 to Tom Leung, \$500 to Tom Chong, or \$10,000 to Chin Yong Quai (Chen Xiankui).

198 Tan Zhangxiao, "Appendix: List of King Joy Lo Shareholders," *Zhengxinlu* 275.

199 *Zhengxinlu*, 275. Feng Mingquan wrote Tom Leung in May 1907: "Your letter and Yifu's [Chen Yikan] letter both mentioned recruiting new shareholders. That's very good." Feng Jingquan to Tan Zhangxiao, Los Angeles, May 13, 1907, no. 1381 in Fang and Cai, 176.

Kang repeatedly contended that Tom Leung had received 160,000 yuan (\$80,000) in loans and investments from Huayi Bank, on which Tom neglected to pay interest. This figure, no doubt rounded off, included \$14,500 in personal loans, which if deducted, leaves \$65,500, as compared to the documented Huayi funding total of \$62,550 to King Joy Lo. Kang frequently mixed currencies (Chinese yuan and U.S. dollars), and it is clear from Tom's responses, calling the 160,000 figure "pure fiction," that he assumed Kang was talking about U.S. dollars, the currency Tom always used for King Joy Lo transactions. In later years, Kang did not repeat the 160,000 yuan or \$80,000 claim, nor did others, such as Xu Qin.²⁰⁰

4.5 *King Joy Lo Dividends and Support of Students*

Kang was led to believe that King Joy Lo would be able pay dividends to fund student tuition. When this did not happen, just as with Tom's unpaid interest, Kang concluded that Tom had taken the dividends for himself. Kang's understanding was that "the dividends were to be 10 percent and were scheduled to be distributed once every two months in order to support the students ... The business of supporting students went only through Zhangxiao and not through the headquarters because he could take money directly from the dividends."²⁰¹ However, only a portion of the dividends could be used to support students, because letters to Tom from his relatives who had invested in King Joy Lo indicate they expected dividends every two months as well.²⁰²

Tom agreed that "the purpose of opening King Joy Lo was to use the dividends to support students."²⁰³ However, he found this impossible during the period he managed the restaurant finances, October 1905 to December 1908. Initially, before the restaurant opened, there were no dividends, and during its first two years of operation, if any dividends were paid they went to the individual investors. Nevertheless, *Zhengxinlu* records eighteen men and women

200 For example, see Kang Youwei to Liang Qixun, Tang Mingsan, and Kang Tongbi, April 13, 1909, in Zhang, *Kang Youwei Juan*, 21–23, and Tan Zhangxiao to the public, enclosing excerpt of [Xu] Junmian's letter about King Joy Lo, June 1909, no. 308 in Fang and Cai, 235–36.

201 Kang Youwei, "Refutation letter," *Zhengxinlu*, 242.

202 He Jiaben 何家本, Jilin, to Tan Zhangxiao, February 20, 1911, no. 257 in Fang and Cai, 212: "According to the rights and obligations set forth in the documents, profit distributions [dividends] will be sent to the shareholders every two months. Yet, we have heard nothing of this during the past five years."

203 Tan Zhangxiao to Tang Mingsan in reply to President's refutation letter, *Zhengxinlu*, 251.

who received scholarship support from King Joy Lo funds during this period.²⁰⁴ Rather than wait for the restaurant to be on a strong enough footing to pay dividends, Tom credited student expenses against what was owed from the Huayi loan principal. The income to support students came from King Joy Lo funds, but it is impossible to tell whether the source was from principal or income. For a time, Kang assented to this procedure. In his August 18, 1908, letter accepting Tom's accounts, he stated, "Regarding the funds for supporting students, the money can be deducted from the capital and dividends of King Joy Lo."²⁰⁵

In *Zhengxinlu*, Tom did not consistently note whether a payment was for tuition or some other purpose, but a conservative estimate of tuition expenses paid through Tom Leung's transactions out of King Joy Lo funds (some of which may be profits) is \$7,500. The great disparity in payments—as little as \$5 and as much as \$300—indicate that a student was paid according to his or her needs, rather than a standard amount or on a regular schedule. In almost all cases, the students were relatives of Baohuanghui disciples, such as Xu Liang, son of Xu Qin, and Ou Huaqing, brother of Ou Jujia, Kang's daughters Kang Tongbi and Kang Tonghe, or the disciples themselves—even Liang Qichao received funds designated as tuition. Tang Mingsan, a Huayi Bank employee and editor of the New York newspaper *Zhongguo Weixin Bao*, was also a part-time student.

Individual investors received few of the promised King Joy Lo dividends.²⁰⁶ In 1911, Tom Leung received a letter from an early investor, his wife's uncle, Huang Qijun, who had been told that after the restaurant opened, "all debts could be paid off in a year, and profits and dividends might then be divided among all shareholders." Now, five years later, "this situation has done an about-face." Huang was at a loss what to tell the Guangdong stockholders—"who

204 The students identified, in order of their appearance in *Zhengxinlu* are: from October 1905, Xue Jinqin [Wushi 五十] and her brother Xue Jinbiao 薛錦標; Kang Tongbi 康同璧; Kang Tonghe 康同荷; Tang Mingsan; Wang Jiaju 王家駒; Liang Qixun; Lin Duo 林鐸; [Li] Riru 日如; Ou Huaqing 歐華清; Luo Chang 羅昌; Mai Zhonghua; Shiyun 師允 (possibly You Shiyan); Xu Liang 徐良; Zhongyuan 重遠 [possibly Chen Huanzhang 陳煥章]; Zhou Guoxian 周國賢; and Peng Da 彭大, with the last payment on December 31, 1908. Liang Qichao also received funds designated as tuition (*xuefei*) by Kang; *Zhengxinlu*, 255.

205 "The President's letter approving the accounts after his refutation," August 18, 1908, *Zhengxinlu*, 254.

206 There is evidence that dividends were paid at least once to individual investors: "The shareholders all expect to receive distributions of dividends and profits. Would you please calculate it and remit it to us to meet our needs. King Joy Lo has not sent us the monthly balance sheet and payment since the eleventh month of last year [December 1909–January 1910]." He Jiaben in Jilin to Tan Zhangxiao, June 7, 1910, no. 256 in Fang and Cai, 210.

are our relatives and friends”—and pleaded with Tom Leung to provide “true information” so the “stockholders will not suspect me to be fraudulent.”²⁰⁷

4.6 1909 and Beyond

In January 1909, Tom Leung published *Zhengxinlu* and sent the nineteen-page booklet to all chapters to clear his name in the wake of his “shame and humiliation” at the hands of “outsiders who did not understand [King Joy Lo’s] real situation and spread errors that mixed lies with truths.”²⁰⁸

I can face Heaven, Earth, and the spirits as well as my teacher. How can I be afraid of powerful people? Even so, I respect our teacher and always honor his teachings, and do not intend to set myself up as an enemy of our party. But, money matters most easily cause suspicions. Without a detailed explanation and clarification of everything, even if I endure humiliation in order to carry out an important mission, what would people say about me? I compiled this file as my ultimate defense because I have no other alternatives.

Few people sympathized with Tom Leung openly, but *Zhengxinlu* stoked doubts and confusion about Kang’s autocratic behavior and chaotic business practices. In the United States where Tom was well known, the publication compounded the crisis of confidence among the members arising from the conflict between Kang and Ye En over another business, Zhenhua, in which Ye En accused Kang of corruption. You Shiyin, Kang’s nephew in New York City, wrote his uncle a frank letter in March 1909 reporting that Tom took advantage of the furor over Zhenhua to publish *Zhengxinlu*: “At this most difficult time for you, Zhangxiao has persuaded people to disobey you because he thought he had popular sentiment (*renxin*) behind him. This is extremely despicable.”²⁰⁹

During his travels in April 1909 somewhere between Jerusalem and Switzerland, Kang wrote a rambling, venomous letter to Liang Qixun (in Chicago), Tang Mingsan (in New York), and Kang Tongbi (in New York): “I am informed that the two Thief Toms [Tom Leung and Tom Chong] stole several tens of thousands of public funds [*gongkuan*], and it has infected the entire situation. Mexico is nearly emptied out, Penang is exhausted from rescuing New York and Mexico. They are guilty of the most heinous crimes. This is

207 Huang Qijun to Tan Zhangxiao, March 12, 1911, no. 265, Tom Leung Collection, <https://digital.library.ucla.edu/catalog/ark:/21198/zz00252z55>, accessed February 22, 2022.

208 Tan Zhangxiao, “Preface,” *Zhengxinlu*, 238.

209 You Shiyin to Kang Youwei, March 25, 1909, in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui*, 394.

impossible to tolerate.”²¹⁰ Kang faulted Liang and Tang for showing favoritism and negligence in dealing with Tom, because they both received tuition from King Joy Lo: “Now, try your best to exhaust all measures to approach the big thief, without a fraction of feeling offered in return.” In fact, he confessed, he himself was deceived by Tom: “When I was in Los Angeles, he treated me well. However, the fact is, he regarded us as fish, and put in a little bit of bait. Now it is time to take the hook out.” Kang had dispatched Zhou Guoxian to audit King Joy Lo and now wished his most trusted disciple Tongbi would assist in the investigation. But, Kang had already made up his mind: “I have rarely seen such treachery as his since I started our association. He has used [the publication of *Zhengxinlu*] to become famous. Thus we can ask each chapter in America to testify against him and attack him as a fake doctor in order to take him down. Otherwise I will confiscate his property in Guangdong. I won’t tolerate his behavior and won’t let him go on working for us.” In the meantime, Kang promised one last payment to a few students from King Joy Lo funds, and “after June, inform everyone their loans will be suspended and ask them to find their own way to continue their studies.” Only if Tom paid the approximately \$10,000 of compounded interest on the loans he took out for King Joy Lo could future tuition be funded.²¹¹

The public battle against Tom Leung was undertaken by Xu Qin, whose feelings about Tom were even harsher than Kang’s. In May, Kang noted, “I never dreamed that Thief Tom would seize King Joy Lo for himself. It is understandable that Mian [Xu Junmian, Xu Qin] wants to kill him.”²¹²

In June 1909, as Tom’s last attempt to defend himself, he sent a second circular letter that excerpted an earlier public letter from Xu Qin.²¹³ Xu’s letter implied he was writing on behalf of a gravely wronged Kang, who was “reluctant to discuss the matter” and was so angered by Tom’s screed that “he has been ill until this day.” Xu presented Tom as a cunning schemer who persuaded Kang to invest in the restaurant to support students and then enticed the Huayi bank staff to repeatedly lend him funds. After Tom “began to start rumors” and accused Kang of free-spending habits, “some comrades who were enthusiastic

210 Kang Youwei to Liang Qixun, Tang Mingsan and Kang Tongbi, April 13, 1909, in Zhang, *Kang Youwei Juan*, 21–23.

211 At this point in time, Kang calculated that King Joy Lo’s unpaid Huayi loans totaled \$24,000. Kang Youwei to Liang Qixun, Tang Mingsan, and Kang Tongbi, April 13, 1909, in Zhang, *Kang Youwei Juan*, 22. Kang was figuring compound interest every three months—he said he based this on Tom’s original charter for King Joy Lo.

212 Kang Youwei to Liang Qixun, May 2, 1909, in Zhang, *Kang Youwei Juan*, 23.

213 Tan Zhangxiao to the public, enclosing excerpt of [Xu] Junmian’s letter about King Joy Lo, June 1909, no. 308 in Fang and Cai, 235–36.

have now been deluded by his words.” Xu wrote this letter before he was able to personally inspect the King Joy Lo accounts, and most of his descriptions of financial transactions are too imprecise to corroborate. Thus, Tom could easily argue that Xu’s statements were “in most respects untrue and incomplete because he doesn’t know the whole story.” Tom appended *Zhengxinlu* to this public letter, implicitly impugning Xu and Kang: “People with whom you have gone through thick and thin for ten years get you in trouble in the end and requite kindness with enmity.”

The uproar surrounding King Joy Lo after the 1909 publication of *Zhengxinlu* was not reflected in the restaurant’s public face. A February 1909 advertisement in the *Chicago Daily Tribune* claimed King Joy Lo was the “most beautiful Chinese restaurant in the world.”²¹⁴ It offered “splendid service” at moderate prices, “American dishes if you prefer,” plus instrumental and vocal music. Moreover, it boasted of “catering exclusively to cultured people.” Perhaps in an effort to attract “cultured people,” King Joy Lo advertised in such publications as the *University of Chicago Magazine* (“The ONLY Oriental place to dine”), *The Bank Man* (“The Pride of Chicago”), and the program of the 1920 Republican National Convention (“A Restaurant unlike any other on the two continents”).²¹⁵ Marketing superlatives aside, the 1909 Illinois factory inspector’s annual report for the “Chinese Restaurant” category showed King Joy Lo with forty-one male employees over the age of sixteen and four females, more than twice the number of employees of any other Chinese restaurant listed.²¹⁶ Dignitaries, both Chinese and American, visited King Joy Lo when in Chicago—among them China’s minister to the United States, Wu Tingfang, in 1908 and U.S. minister to China, William J. Calhoun, in 1910.²¹⁷ In February 1909, well aware of the firestorm that his relative Tom Leung was engulfed in, Liang Qinggui, an imperial commissioner tasked with setting up Chinese-language schools in American cities in 1908 and 1909, wrote Tom after visiting Chicago: “The reputation and business of King Joy Lo is the best in Chicago. If each party forgets his

214 “Let’s Go to the King Joy Lo Tonight,” *Chicago Tribune*, February 7, 1909, Q10.

215 “The ONLY Oriental place to dine,” advertisement, *University of Chicago Magazine*, March 1909, front ill.; “The Pride of Chicago: King Joy Lo Co.,” advertisement, *The Bank Man* (American Institute of Banking, Chicago Chapter) 6, no. 9, (September 1911): 240; “Your JOY is not complete until you have visited King Joy Lo,” advertisement, Republican National Convention program, 1920, 15.

216 *Seventeenth Annual Report of the Factory Inspector of Illinois, Year ending December 15, 1909*, “Restaurants (Chinese)” (Springfield: Illinois State Journal Company, State Printers, 1913), 556. No other Chinese restaurant reported having female employees.

217 “Fine Interview by Minister Wu,” *Boston Herald, Magazine*, March 22, 1908, 4; “Chinese Prepare Way,” *Portland Oregonian*, March 7, 1910, 2.

prejudices and puts the shop in good order, you can expect one hundred times more profit. Please don't give up."²¹⁸

Indeed, You Shiyin estimated in March 1909 that King Joy Lo held \$40,000 in assets and had paid Huayi Bank more than \$34,000, indicating that loan paybacks had continued apace after Tom Leung's departure.²¹⁹ You told his uncle Kang that these numbers were "approximate, because it's extremely difficult to get accurate figures" and gave the King Joy Lo estimates as line items in a rough financial report for all Xianzhenghui business endeavors. He added that Zhou Guoxian, then a student at the University of Chicago, was in charge of the restaurant now, and "although control over King Joy Lo has not been taken back, things are getting better." However, Xu Qin spent twenty days in Chicago in October–November 1909 and reported back to Kang: "I learned that the ownership of King Joy Lo cannot be changed ... it has to wait until May next year [1910] when we will gather and discuss it."²²⁰ The Chicago chapter had hired a lawyer, and Xu found the members intransigent, especially one "detestable" Moy (Mei), who was unwilling to make the changes Xu wanted. This was probably Moy Dong Chew, the most powerful Moy in the Chicago chapter.

Tom Leung was still not clear of King Joy Lo burdens. In 1910 his relatives in China who had invested about \$13,500 in the restaurant began to complain that they had received few monthly balance sheets or bimonthly dividends.²²¹ Tom's brother-in-law He Jiaben, an official in Jilin, had raised more than \$10,000 in shares and had expected the dividends to provide income for his family. Furthermore, He's friends and relatives whom he had recruited to buy shares were now coming to him to ask what had happened. He wrote, "Rumor has it that the management of King Joy Lo has debts of several tens of thousands of dollars. If that is true, the management should take full responsibility and compensate all the losses."²²² In early 1911, Tom alarmed his relatives by announcing that he planned to sell their shares "because of a major change of circumstance"

218 Liang Qinggui 梁慶桂 to Tan Zhangxiao, February 3, 1909, no. 302, Tom Leung Collection, <https://digital.library.ucla.edu/catalog/ark:/21198/zz002530js>, accessed February 22, 2022. Liang was speaking from inside knowledge of the King Joy Lo troubles because he was related to Tom by marriage and was able to report on two of Tom's relatives involved with King Joy Lo, his wife's cousin Wong Yap (Huang Chuda), and his nephew Tom Chong (Tan Beixuan 譚琲軒).

219 You Shiyin to Kang Youwei, March 25, 1909, in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui*, 395–97. The assets likely included cash on hand and any material improvements, such as equipment and decorations, made to the restaurant.

220 Xu Qin to Kang Youwei, October 13, 1909, in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui*, 438–40; Xu Qin to Kang Youwei, November 7, 1909, in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui*, 455–58.

221 He Jiaben to Tan Zhangxiao, June 7, 1910, no. 256 in Fang and Cai, 210.

222 He Jiaben to Tan Zhangxiao, February 20, 1911, no. 257 in Fang and Cai, 212.

and asked for their share certificates to be mailed back to him.²²³ Tom blamed the King Joy Lo troubles on the manager (likely Chen Baixin) who “spent and wasted money at will,” and even suggested that the shares might have to be sold at a 50 percent loss.²²⁴ Anger turned to resignation, when in February 1912, Tom’s uncle-in-law Huang Qijun reported to Tom that the shareholders had signed the backs of their share certificates “in Western script” to return to the United States for reimbursement. Huang’s bitterness at Tom, who had persuaded his relatives to invest in King Joy Lo, only to lose money, was palpable:

Since the opening of the restaurant, business has increased daily, but dividends for the investment capital were not given to the shareholders, not to mention the profits. I often met my friend Yang Mingfeng, also known as Xiangchi [Dr. Mon Fong Young, St. Joseph, Missouri, an investor in King Joy Lo], in Guangzhou. He always told me that the business of the restaurant was the best in the city [Chicago], and the shareholders should have gotten their profits and dividends earlier, but unfortunately the restaurant did not have the right manager and as a result suffered a big loss. Now the shares are being sold for 77 percent of their original price. Apparently it is no longer worth the trouble to maintain what the founders had taken great pains in building up. Nevertheless, there is nothing we can do about it. We should follow the consensus.²²⁵

The redemption of shares by Tom Leung’s relatives in China was but one step in the transfer of power over King Joy Lo in 1912 to a consortium of Boston and New York Xianzhenghui members who bought out the Huayi Bank (\$29,500 in shares) and private investors (\$41,800 in shares). This friendly takeover of the restaurant followed much dispute and indecision described to Xianzhenghui members by Xu Qin in a detailed Commercial Corporation report.²²⁶ As the supervisory agent representing Kang to oversee the troubled North American business ventures, Xu was responsible for the fate of Huayi Bank, which had its own debts of more than \$20,000 but also owned \$29,500 in King Joy Lo shares.

223 Huang Qijun to Tan Zhangxiao, March 12, 1911, no. 265, Tom Leung Collection, <https://digital.library.ucla.edu/catalog/ark:/21198/zz00252z55>, accessed February 22, 2022.

224 He Jiaben to Tan Zhangxiao, July 12, 1911, no. 259 in Fang and Cai; and Huang Chuda in Singapore to Tan Zhangxiao, October 19, 1911, no. 275 in Fang and Cai, 347.

225 Huang Qijun to Tan Zhangxiao, February 10, 1912, no. 261, Tom Leung Collection, <https://digital.library.ucla.edu/catalog/ark:/21198/zz00252z13> and enclosure, no. 262, <https://digital.library.ucla.edu/catalog/ark:/21198/zz00252z2m>, both, accessed February 28, 2022.

226 Xu Qin to virtuous brothers and comrades, public letter (printed), June 25, 1912, Him Mark Lai Papers, Research Files, Box 31, Folder 39 (Wu Xianzi), Asian American Studies Collection, Ethnic Studies Library, University of California at Berkeley, AAS ARC 2000/80.

He could not decide unilaterally whether to sell the Huayi shares, which were controlled by East Coast Xianzhenghui members eager to make back their personal losses from the money-losing bank. At the first of two meetings, the members voted to sell the Huayi shares, which had fallen to 75 percent of their original value. Xu excoriated King Joy Lo manager Chen Baixin for his profligate expenditures on salaries and \$10,000 worth of furniture, which perhaps was to prepare for the addition of a third-story dining room. Chen and others had also formed a new Hong Kong trading arm under King Joy Lo auspices, only to suffer a loss.²²⁷ However, at the second East Coast meeting, the members changed course and decided not to sell the shares after concluding that because of the restaurant's "favorable location and good reputation" and recent economizing measures, King Joy Lo could make a profit of up to \$60,000 a year. If they sold their shares, "King Joy Lo would be gone forever. This is like eating the hen instead of her eggs." This decision brought yet another realization: Huayi shareholders were not in a position to determine King Joy Lo's future because they held a minority of shares in this limited liability corporation with paid-up capital of \$71,300.²²⁸ Tom Leung, who had originally raised \$41,800 in private investments in China and among the chapters, had just sold these to a New York member, Tan Wenji (Tom Mon Kip, an established merchant), now the majority shareholder.²²⁹ To the fore came a well-capitalized group of Boston members led by Moy Wah June (Mei Huazhen, Mei Zhen), who at King Joy Lo's inception had told Kang of his interest in becoming the manager, joined by New York leader Joseph Singleton. They bought the private shares held by Tan Wenji and were entrusted with the Huayi shares as well.²³⁰ This heralded

227 Xu Qin says this was called the Hehe Gongsi 和合公司 or (Wo Hop?) Company.

228 The restaurant's capital stock of \$100,000 was authorized by its 1906 charter. *Biennial Report of the Auditor of Public Accounts to the Governor of Illinois*, November 1, 1912 (Springfield: Illinois State Journal Company, State Printers, 1913), Statement no. 41, Schedule B, "King Joy Lo Company." "Amount of capital stock paid up as reported by company" was \$71,300. *Proceedings of the Illinois State Board of Equalization, Session of 1913*, Schedule A, "King Joy Lo Co."

229 Tom Mon Kip (Cantonese pronunciation of Tan Wenji 譚文汲), see Tom's entry in Warner M. Van Norden, *Who's Who of the Chinese in New York* (New York: no publisher, 1918), 80. Tan Wenji participated in the 1905 New York Baohuanghui plenum.

230 Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, after June 21, 1906 [printed as an addendum to "The Letter about the Loan of \$4,000, as an Item in the Running Account," *Zhengxinlu*, 264. Kang met Moy Wah June [Mei Huazhen 梅華臻, Mei Zhen 梅臻] and his son Howard S. Moy [Mei Yingfu 梅英福] in Boston in 1905. Kang was impressed by Moy Wah June, so when he was seeking talented managers for the restaurant, he wrote Tom Leung that Moy [Mei Zhen] had "asked for this restaurant position, and he is very enthusiastic but I do not know about his English skills." Xu Qin listed the following officers appointed by Boston members: Chen Guorui [Chin K. Shue 陳國瑞] president (*zongli* 總理); Zhao Wansheng 趙萬

a new era for King Joy Lo, stabilizing the management and keeping the restaurant in the hands of long-time members. On New Year's Eve 1912, King Joy Lo celebrated the addition of a third dining level to accommodate two hundred more guests.²³¹

The Boston trio, all well-connected, prosperous merchants assimilated to American culture, steered King Joy Lo victoriously through World War I until 1926 at the peak of Chicago's economic boom before the Great Depression. American-born Chin K. Shue (Charles K. Shue, Chen Guorui) was King Joy Lo's president during most of these years. He was famous for being the first Chinese justice of the peace in the United States, appointed in 1908, and the first Chinese in Massachusetts nominated on a political ticket in 1912, when he ran as a Republican for the Massachusetts House of Representatives.²³² Chin's political life began as president of the Boston Baohuanghui, and he participated in the 1905 and 1907 New York plenary sessions. The King Joy Lo manager was Moy Wah June, who like Chin had met Kang in 1905; Moy was a long-time merchant in Boston Chinatown, investor in Baohuanghui businesses, and stockholder in American companies.²³³ The third and most dynamic officer was Moy's son, Howard (Moy Ying Fook, Mei Yingfu), an enterprising fourteen-year-old in 1901 whose career as "the first Chinese newsboy to set up business [in Boston]"

勝 [Joseph Singleton, New York] director (*sili* 司理); Liu Chi 劉熾 treasurer (*guanku* 管庫); Hu Ji 胡楫 auditor (*guanshu* 管數); and Mei Zhen acting director (*linshi sili* 臨時司理). Xu Qin to virtuous brothers and comrades, public letter (printed), June 25, 1912, Him Mark Lai Papers, AAS ARC 2000/80.

231 "Grand Opening Tonight," advertisement, *Chicago Tribune*, December 31, 1912. The address had changed from 100 East Randolph to 57 West Randolph, reflecting the citywide change in street numbering in 1911. "1909–1911: Chicago Street Renumbering," *Chicagology* <https://chicagology.com/chicagostreets/chicagostreetnumbering/> accessed April 22, 2024. Thank you to Chee Wang Ng for discovering this fact.

232 Chin K. Shue interpreted for Kang during his 1905 visit to Boston. "Chinese Feast Mr. Kang," *Boston Herald*, July 7, 1905, 4. "So far as Mr. Shue [*sic*] is aware he is the only man of Chinese parentage in the country who has been made a Justice of the Peace. He was born in Seattle, Wash., 35 years ago ..." and "Chinese Justice in Boston," *New York Times*, April 29, 1909, 1. Chin, "the first Chinaman ever nominated on a political ticket in Massachusetts," was running for representative from "the Chinatown district." "Plan to Stir New England," *Washington Post*, October 28, 1912, 5. He was not elected.

233 Moy Wah June immigrated to the United States in 1881 and was a partner in the Hop Yick Lung Company, 25 Harrison St., Boston, Massachusetts, an importer and exporter of general merchandise; stockholder (\$2,000) of the Chinese-Pacific Steamship Company operating between Mexican ports and Hong Kong, \$500 stockholder in the Hua-Mo Bank in Torreón, as well as owning \$500 in stocks of the De Forrest Wireless Telegraph Company, statement provided to authors by Herman S. Moy, grandson of Moy Wah June: Moy Ying Fook to J. W. Jenks, Ithaca, New York, November 11, 1908, Boston, Massachusetts, in support of his father Moy Wah June's status as a merchant and his status as a merchant's son.

won him national news coverage; at eighteen, Howard joined Zhou Guoxian in escorting Kang Youwei to Philadelphia in August 1905.²³⁴

The trio was in charge for fourteen years, until February 1926, when King Joy Lo Company filed for bankruptcy and was dissolved officially by the Cook County Superior Court on June 15, 1927.²³⁵ The last extant King Joy Lo annual report for the State of Illinois, submitted in February 1925, illustrates the tenacity of the Baohuanghui connection long after it was organizationally viable: Chin K. Shue (still in Boston and still president of King Joy Lo); secretary Howard S. Moy; treasurer Charles Chann; the directors were Li Wah (Li Hua, who had first been deputized by Kang in 1906 to fill in for management at the restaurant); Joseph Singleton of New York; Moy Dong Chew, former Chicago Baohuanghui president; and Moy Wah June.²³⁶

King Joy Lo appears to have spawned a host of imitators, even spin-offs, bearing the same name, most of them in the Midwest. The first was founded in Kansas City in 1908 by Missouri Baohuanghui leader and original King Joy Lo stockholder, Dr. Mon Fong Young.²³⁷ Most of the eponymous King Joy Los began in the 1910s—two, King Joy Café in Portland, Oregon (“the manager and our chefs are recently from Chicago”) and King Joy Lo of Terre Haute, Indiana (“new chop suey restaurant opened from Chicago”), claimed direct descent in their advertisements.²³⁸ Moy Wah June’s brother-in-law, Lee Han Ng, began a King Joy Lo in Quincy, near Boston, Massachusetts, in 1915, and dozens more emulated King Joy Lo’s style, menu, and marketing to attract American diners seeking exotic surroundings and familiar steak and potatoes, complemented by the occasional dish of chop suey.²³⁹ Not to be outdone by his fellow

234 “Boston has a real Chinese newsboy,” *Boston Globe*, May 8, 1901, 7. Tang Mingsan to Kang Tongbi, August 23, 1905, no. B-13, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

235 “Chinese Place in Chi[cago] Sent into Bankruptcy,” *Variety*, February 17, 1926; Articles of Dissolution of the King Joy Lo Company, decreed by Superior Court of Cook County, June 15, 1927, filed with Secretary of State Louis L. Emmerson, September 7, 1927, File 783, Box 1006, Illinois State Archives, Springfield.

236 Regarding Li Hua 黎華 and King Joy Lo, see Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, August 15, 1906, *Zhengxinlu*, 261; Kang Youwei to Liang Qixun, December 20, 1908, in Zhang, *Kang Youwei Juan*, 19; Annual Report of King Joy Lo Company, filed February 20, 1925, File 783, Box 1006, Illinois State Archives, Springfield.

237 “King Joy Lo” advertisement, *Kansas City Star*, September 20, 1908: “Open to the Public To-Day at 6 P.M.” Thank you to Chee Wang Ng for alerting the authors to this first spinoff of the Chicago King Joy Lo, located at 1217 Grand Avenue, Kansas City, and subsequently tracing as many as forty others.

238 “Opening Today: King Joy Café,” advertisement, *Portland Oregonian*, November 29, 1913; and “King Joy Lo,” advertisement, *Terre Haute Tribune*, May 29, 1915, 3.

239 “New Corporations Formed”: “King-Joy Co., Boston, General merchandise, capital stock \$50,000,” *Department Reports of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts*, August 14, 1915: 1, no. 27, 2282. Email to Jane Larson from Diana Goon, December 22, 2017.

restaurateurs, Chin Foin's King Yen Lo restaurant in Chicago offered as its signature dish "Special Kang Yu Wei Beef Chop Sooy" at fifty cents a serving.²⁴⁰

A King Joy Lo postcard postmarked September 7, 1912 features a semi-candid photograph of the first-story dining hall taken from a slight elevation, with most diners glancing at the camera, some bemused or looking surprised, the men in suits, the women wearing hats, no Chinese in sight, every table occupied—the name of "Chan Pak Sun, Mgr." is stamped over in red with "Moy Wah June, Mgr."²⁴¹ In 1915 a more elaborate photo-illustrated glossy folding advertising piece touts "Chop Suey!" as "the most delicious, nourishing, healthful, and wholesome of all foods."²⁴² However, the full lunch menu for Tuesday, June 15, reproduced on the hand-out lists a great variety of American foods, from relishes to desserts, far outnumbering the few Chinese dishes—a "Special Mandarin Dinner" for \$1.00 and "Chop Sooy." King Joy Lo filed suit twice against the City of Chicago asking for relief from the strict liquor laws forcing "wet" restaurants to close at 1 AM.²⁴³ Since King Joy Lo earned between \$17,000 and \$18,000 per year from liquor sales out of its "yearly business of \$230,000," according to the *Chicago Tribune* in 1917, this was a hardship. Around this time, there were also reports that King Joy Lo had taken a fifteen-year lease for a chop suey restaurant and cabaret above James O'Leary's notorious saloon and gambling spot on the South Side, with plans to use the fake chimney (which allowed gamblers to escape by ladder down to the basement) as a dumb-waiter.²⁴⁴ Another ambitious proposal in 1920 with no evidence of actualization was a twenty-story hotel next door to King Joy Lo, at 61–65 West Randolph, with Moy Wah June and former King Joy Lo manager Chen Baixin signing the property lease.²⁴⁵ On the other hand, the money-losing import arm Chen may have initiated during his management of King Joy Lo seems to have been revived, and in 1922 was described as "a large Chinese merchandise importing business, with warehouses and offices ranged along the Pacific Coast and in China."²⁴⁶

240 King Yen Lo was located at 277–279 Clark Street, Chicago. Thank you to Chee Wang Ng for sharing an image of the menu.

241 King Joy Lo postcard, postmarked September 7, 1912, collection of Chee Wang Ng. Chan Pak Sun is Chen Baixin and Moy Wah June is Mei Huazhen.

242 "When in Chicago meet me at King Joy Lo," folding mailable handout, 1915, collection of Chee Wang Ng.

243 *Chicago Day Book*, December 15, 1914, 7; "Chief Orders List of Saloons Hiding as Cafes," *Chicago Tribune*, January 24, 1917.

244 "Old Gambler Quits," *Bourbon News* (Paris, Kentucky), April 29, 1913; "King Joy Lo is to open a Cabaret show over O'Leary's place in South Halsted," *Variety*, August 8, 1913, 15.

245 "Chinese will Build 20 Story Hotel in Rialto," *Chicago Tribune*, August 14, 1920, 9.

246 "King Joy Lo Restaurant Company," *Official Reference Book, Press Club of Chicago* (Chicago: Press Club of Chicago, 1922), 269. Also see "King Joy Lo," in "Subdivision no. 67, Restaurants, Chinese Restaurants," *Blue Book of Chicago Commerce* (Chicago: Chicago Association of



FIGURE 63 Clockwise from bottom left: King Joy Lo plate. Cover and first page of King Joy Lo menu, circa 1912 or later, Moy Wah June, manager. Souvenir postcard dated February 20, 1907.

The above claim comes from the 1922 reference book published by the Chicago Press Club, which features a full-page article on King Joy Lo, the only Chinese restaurant among many businesses profiled. In presenting the restaurant, the writer went beyond the usual superlatives—"the house of a thousand gastronomic delights" whose cuisine was "unequaled by any of the

Commerce, 1917), 248: "Chinese restaurant and importers of Chinese merchandise of all kinds. Wholesale and retail."

Chinese restaurants in America”—to expose that beneath its “settings, draperies and wood carvings inlaid with ivory,” King Joy Lo was “the rendezvous of republic-makers”:

Over its blackwood tables and in the mystic enchantment of its exotic settings was born the movement which later was to release the shackles welded by a bureaucratic monarchy on the hundreds of million inhabitants of China. Thousands of miles removed in distance from Hongkong or Shantung, the fortunes of this eating-place have been intertwined with those of China.

The writer observed the restaurant was “surcharged with an air of important activity” and had “an association with adventure,” due to its illustrious origins in 1906 as a “dream of Kang Yu Wei come true.” Apparently unaware of the distinction between Kang’s politics and those of Sun Yatsen, the writer noted that Kang founded King Joy Lo to fund his political movement “to supplant the harsh, highly centralized dynasty of China with a republican form of government” and also to support Chinese students. Once these goals were achieved, “a company was organized to take over control and Chin K. Shue was made president. The company has adhered to the same broad policy laid down by the founder. By furnishing them a means to make money during their spare moments, King Joy Lo restaurant has supported hundreds of Chinese students through school in the United States.” In addition to naming the King Joy Lo officers (all of whom appear in the 1925 corporate report), the writer states that \$200,000 in equipment as well as “Chinese paintings, statuary, scroll and wood carvings” procured by Kang were installed in the restaurant. That these details and historical background were included in this article means that Moy Wah June or Howard Moy likely were the sources and provided the reporter with King Joy Lo’s back story. In so doing, they proudly embraced the continuity of King Joy Lo with its political origins.

5 Fate of the Commercial Corporation

Kang left the United States for Mexico in June 1907 with growing concern about the financial resources of King Joy Lo and Huayi Bank. In Torreón, however, he saw signs of progress. Plans for the streetcar and shipping lines were forging ahead, and the future looked bright. But the second half of the year was not as favorable, and Commercial Corporation progress turned to failure during the worldwide Panic of 1907. In October, a severe “bankers’ panic” hit the United States. According to one economic historian, the panic was “due

chiefly to over-speculation in the large money centers and was the culmination of a long struggle between the rapidly rising trust companies acting as commercial banks under inadequate reserve requirements and the more conservative and rigidly regulated commercial banks.”²⁴⁷ The Commercial Corporation conglomerate fit perfectly into this description. In Jung-pang Lo's view, “these companies were so interlocked that financial collapse of one would pull down the others, and records ... indicate the inadequacy of reserves and management.”²⁴⁸ Economic setbacks in the United States had repercussions in Mexico, and the Torreón schemes suffered accordingly. Since the Hua-Mo Bank had been the keystone of the Commercial Corporation, its problems affected the worldwide subdivisions of the company.

Coupled with economic depression were the damaging effects of avaricious and inept management, which drained the profits of the various undertakings. Perhaps for this reason, many of the earliest businesses failed or had to be sold, including the fishing franchise begun by Ye En in Guangdong and the rice brokerages in Malaya and Singapore. Other early ventures, such as the publishing company Guangzhi Shuju and *Shi Bao* in Shanghai, never seemed to be profitable, although both survived years longer and retained their good reputations.²⁴⁹ All of these early businesses received substantial Commercial Corporation investments totaling several hundred thousand yuan, allowing little extra funding for newer ventures.²⁵⁰ On top of this, with the Commercial Corporation stretched across the globe, there were constant demands from the less prosperous businesses to be rescued by whichever companies might be profitable at the moment. In its early days, Hua-Mo Bank in Torreón was an easy source of loans to bail out troubled Commercial Corporation entities. But it would soon need to take funds from other enterprises to cover its own expenses.

Critically for the Xianzhenghui, its political goals began to be realized inside China in late 1907 with the rise of a constitutional movement. Generous

247 Harold U. Faulkner, *American Economic History* (New York: Harper and Row, 1960, 8th edition; originally published, 1924), 523–24; also see George E. Mowry, *The Era of Theodore Roosevelt and the Birth of Modern America, 1900–1912* (New York: Harper and Row, 1958), 217–22.

248 Lo, “Sequel to Autobiography,” 275 n49.

249 Guangzhi Shuju closed in 1915. *Shi Bao* closed in 1939, and although its early editor Di Chuqing 狄楚卿 cautiously distanced himself from the Xianzhenghui, the newspaper remained a reform bastion.

250 For example, Wu Xianzi in his breakdown of initial Commercial Corporation shares of 598,760 yuan, shows two rice brokerages, Xin Kai Mei 新開美 in Penang and Huafeng 華豐 in Singapore, receiving more than 217,000 yuan, more than the 200,000 allocated to the Hong Kong Huayi Bank. Wu, *Dangshi*, 85–86.

funding was needed for Liang Qichao's burgeoning Zhengwenshe (Political Information Society), founded in Japan in November 1907 and shifted to China in March 1908, and for expanding the newspaper and school network in Guangzhou, Hankou, and elsewhere in China and Asia. Kang's attempt to enforce a monthly donation from members in 1907 (see Chapter 10) did not succeed in filling the Xianzhenghui treasury to pay for these political activities, and Kang turned to the Commercial Corporation for loans. These factors, combined with the Panic of 1907, dealt a grievous blow to Kang's financial program.

In November 1907, in the midst of the bank panic, Kang clung to unrealistic financial goals that he described to Liang Qichao, Xu Qin, and Mai Menghua. He hoped to raise \$100,000 in monthly donations from his estimated 200,000 members, although he admitted member donations had been so sparse that at present the "public" fund was empty.²⁵¹ And, lacking foresight about how the panic would sink real estate prices in Mexico, Kang planned to borrow Commercial Corporation funds to buy more land in Torreón, bragging that property he had bought previously was now worth \$100,000, and suggesting that he could either return the proceeds to the Commercial Corporation or put it toward the streetcar and shipping investments in Mexico. More realistically, and presciently, Kang wrote that "no expenditure limitation has been set up for association activities and commercial projects" and that his growth strategy might backfire in the future. Yet, in December, as American banks failed and the stock market collapsed, Kang could not fully accept the folly of his financial projections.²⁵² "I have raised more than 100,000 yuan for the Bao[huang] hui by purchasing land in Mexico. I was sure that this was an unshakable foundation for us. But now the banks in America have gone bankrupt. This affects everything. Nobody shows interest in the Mexican land any longer. The only hope is when the streetcar line is finished next year and ready for sale."

In his public letters, Kang persisted in maintaining a semblance of optimism to lift morale and counteract criticism from members. Canadian members blamed the Hong Kong headquarters, although apparently only its established leader, Kuang Shoumin, rather than one of the other prime movers there, Ye En from Vancouver. Rebutting the Canadian critiques, Kang wrote a sixteen-page

251 Kang Youwei to Liang Qichao, Xu Junmian [Xu Qin] and Mai Rubo [Mai Menghua], November 4, 1907, in Ding and Zhao, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 420–22. He wrote: "We decided (at the plenary session) that everyone should donate eight cents each month. If half that amount is collected, we will have more than \$100,000.00." $\$.04 \times 12 \text{ months} = \$.48$; $\$100,000 / .48 = 208,333$ members.

252 Kang Youwei to Liang Qichao, December 9, 1907, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 424. Kang persisted in calling the Xianzhenghui by its old name that he abbreviated as Baohui 保會.

letter to all chapters dated February 16, 1908. He claimed that Huayi Bank in Hong Kong was valued at one million yuan and had become “quite famous” and the Mexican real estate was “extraordinarily profitable.”²⁵³ While Kang admitted that the land investment in Johor Bahru in Malaya had been lost and the Huafeng Yinhao (Huafeng Company) in Singapore had closed, “the two pieces of land made a profit.”

In reality, Kang was in great distress. This is clear from a letter he wrote to Liang Qichao just three weeks after his reassuring public letter to the members. Although he would soon leave Sweden for travels in Europe and Egypt with his new wife, Lily Haw, Kang said his health had deteriorated during the past few months as he dealt with cascading business crises. He blamed a succession of individuals for their deceit, self interest, incompetence, neglect, or rapaciousness in running the businesses into the ground, which threatened to topple the teetering Commercial Corporation structure. “Our great enterprise,” lamented Kang, “is now almost ruined by a few men.”²⁵⁴ Not since the Hundred Days, he went on, had he faced such difficult problems. First, Kang contended that Tom Leung had extracted 160,000 yuan in loans from the gullible Tang Mingsan and Kang Youpei of New York’s Huayi Bank, ostensibly to establish the King Joy Lo restaurant and support students but actually to “pocket public moneys for himself.” This left Huayi Bank unable to respond to other more critical needs, such as the Torreón streetcar line. Second, he targeted Wang Jueren, Bao Chi, and Huang Gonghu for siphoning off tens of thousands of yuan from the Penang rice brokerage to lend to another man, start a restaurant, and waste on prostitutes in Penang. Now creditors had to be paid 110,000 yuan to reclaim the company. Third, the Torreón streetcar line faced a funding deadline to meet the franchise requirements, and Kang blamed Wong Foon Chuck and his relative Huang Richu for competing with each other to take the middleman’s fee. Li Fuji, one of Kang’s most loyal followers, had gone to Mexico to supervise Xianzhenghui interests there and was so outraged about his inability to get funding from Huayi Bank that he stirred up anger from the Canadian chapters who “joined in the criticism.” The most prosperous segment of the Commercial Corporation in Torreón, already affected by management problems, now faced bankruptcy. Fourth, Kang accused Ye En in Hong Kong of losing 70,000 yuan on a fishing franchise in Guangdong and Zhonghua Jiudian in Hong Kong and blamed Liang Qichao for asking Kang to hire Ye. There was now a halt in the currency circulation among the three Huayi banks, and “the Hong Kong

253 Kang Youwei to all Xianzhengdang chapters, February 16, 1908, AR-24, AAS ARC 2000/78.

254 Kang Youwei to Liang Qichao, March 9, 1908, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 443–47.

headquarters almost collapsed.”²⁵⁵ Kang sensed that the days of his financial schemes were numbered. He wrote Liang desperately, “I am at loss as to what to do ... It has been eight or nine years since I have been in a position as difficult as this.”²⁵⁶

As it turned out, spring 1908 was the calm before the storm whipped up by the Zhenhua Gongsi (Jun Wah Sut Yip, Jun Wah Mining Company) when its directors arrived in Canada and the United States to sell shares. Zhenhua had been organized in cooperation with the Guangxi provincial government by Ou Jujia, Ye En, Liu Kangheng (a New Westminster Xianzhenghui leader), and Liu Shiji, a reform-minded Guangxi industrial intendant (*quanyue dao*). The company sought to establish a broad commercial base for overseas Cantonese in less-developed Guangxi.²⁵⁷ Initially, Zhenhua had Kang’s support. Liu Shiji, an ally since 1889, had bravely memorialized the court in 1902 to cancel the arrest warrants for Kang and Liang.²⁵⁸ Guangxi governor Zhang Mingqi had been persuaded to endorse Zhenhua and the directors’ plan to raise shares in North America, but, apparently, he overlooked the controversial ties of its advocates to the Xianzhenghui.²⁵⁹

After selling 100,000 Zhenhua shares in Guangdong and Hong Kong—and procuring a loan from the Hong Kong Huayi Bank—Ou Jujia, Liu Kangheng, and Liu Shiji embarked on a North America sales trip in summer 1908.²⁶⁰ They

255 In addition to the March 9, 1908, letter from Kang to Liang Qichao, see Kang Youwei in Penang to Liang Qichao, October 18, 1908, in *Kang Youwei Quanji*, vol. 9, 5–6: “Because of the failure of Huibo’s fishing franchise company, Hong Kong had to stop the circulation of funds. They announced this to Mexico and New York, and the banks there nearly closed down.” In this letter, Kang cited Ye’s financial losses not only from the fishery franchise company but also the Xuwen Land Reclamation Company 徐聞墾務公司在 Guangdong and Zhonghua Jiudian 中華酒店 in Hong Kong, totaling least 73,000 yuan, and causing the Hong Kong Huayi headquarters to stop accepting funds from New York and Mexico and the Hong Kong bank to default on its loans from Western banks.

256 Kang Youwei to Liang Qichao, March 9, 1908, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 444.

257 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 348–77. This book’s narrative follows Gao’s lengthy description of Zhenhua’s history, much of it taken from Liang Chaojie 梁朝杰, *Zhenhua Gongsi zai Meizhou Zhaogu Shimou Zhenxiang* 振華公司在美洲招股始末真相 [The True Situation and Full Story of Raising Zhenhua Stock Shares in the Americas], no date, Chinese Empire Reform Association, AR-21, AAS ARC 2000/78.

258 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 370.

259 “Sui Lu” 隨錄 [Random Notes], *Tung Wah Times*, February 15, 1908, 7, states that Guangxi Governor Zhang Mingqi 張鳴岐 had invited Hong Kong businessman Ye Huibo [Ye En] to participate in Guangxi industrial development.

260 Wu, *Dangshi*, 90, states that in 1908 Zhenhua received more than 30,000 yuan as a loan from Huayi bank in Hong Kong, based on an investigation by Lu Yi 陸逸. Also Gong Qiangli 龔強立 reported to Kang that public funds were spent for Zhenhua expenses,

sought out Xianzhenghui members and promoted Zhenhua shares as a first step in taking back overseas Chinese economic rights in China. Ou Jujia wrote Tom Leung in August, raving about the enthusiasm of the Chinese in Canada for purchasing Zhenhua shares and suggesting that the Chinese in the United States would probably be even more eager to invest. Ou told Tom, “You are ambitious and patriotic. It’s time for you to demonstrate your dedication to China.”²⁶¹ Rather than sell Zhenhua stocks through the Commercial Corporation, however, Ye set up collection offices in British Columbia associated with the private companies belonging to himself in Vancouver, Li Mengjiu in Victoria, and Liu Kangheng in New Westminster. More offices were established in Los Angeles (through Tom Leung) and San Francisco (through the Xianzhenghui newspaper *Shijie Ribao*).²⁶²

Zhenhua’s potential North America shareholders assumed the project was completely sanctioned by Kang and the Xianzhenghui.²⁶³ Among those buying hundreds of shares was Victoria leader Li Fuji, who later became a harsh critic of Zhenhua’s management.²⁶⁴ At Zhenhua share-raising events, Liu Shiji consistently praised Kang and spoke of his imminent return to leadership in China. Nevertheless, Kang was dubious about Ye En’s business acumen, having noted how he had squandered Commercial Corporation funds during his years in Hong Kong. Furthermore, Kang observed the success of the Zhenhua fundraising venture among members just as he learned the disturbing news that “people in all chapters are asking to sell their shares” in Commercial Corporation businesses because they feared the fall of the entire conglomerate.²⁶⁵ For their part, Liu and the others behind Zhenhua grew suspicious of Kang when it became clear that he sought to transfer management of Zhenhua to others closer to him, such as Liang Qichao or Xu Qin. In October 1908, while

including 3,000 yuan for Ou Jujia to purchase a provincial official position and 2,000 yuan on propaganda in Guilin. Gong Qiangli to Kang Youwei, July 8, 1909, in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui*, 428.

261 Ou Yungao 歐雲高 (Ou Jujia) to Tan Zhangxiao, August 7, 1908, no. 172 in Fang and Cai, 192.

262 Chen, *Transpacific Reform and Revolution*, 111–13.

263 For example, the announcement of Zhenhua’s plan to issue shares, a description of its projects, as well as Liu’s report on Zhenhua prepared before he came to North America, were published in Xianzhenghui newspapers, such as *Tung Wah Times* (Sydney, Australia). See Chinese Australian Heritage Resources, “Tung Wah Newspaper Index,” from October 1908 to January 1909, https://resources.chineseaustralia.org/tung_wah_newspaper_index, accessed October 13, 2022; likely the reports were published earlier in Canada and the United States.

264 Chen, *Transpacific Reform and Revolution*, 111.

265 Kang Youwei, Penang, to Liang Qichao, October 18, 1908, in *Kang Youwei Quanji*, vol. 9, 5.

Liu was still raising shares in the United States primarily through Xianzhenghui chapters, he received a threatening telegram from Liang Qichao, Xu Qin, Mai Menghua, and Lu Yijun (Lu Dunkui) alerting him that they had learned Zhenhua leaders were secretly discussing breaking away from the Xianzhenghui. They issued an ultimatum that Zhenhua must submit to full Xianzhenghui control by Kang.²⁶⁶ This provoked Liu to threaten Kang and the Xianzhenghui by claiming that Zhenhua was formed “for the country, not for the party,” and “we’ve gone through ten years of trials and tribulations, which were ruptured in one day.”

Open warfare erupted, with revolutionary newspapers siding with Zhenhua to expose corruption within the Xianzhenghui. According to historian Gao Weinong, “Kang was caught in a dilemma and had no way to control the situation. He had to retire backstage. From the beginning of 1909, Xu Qin personally became the head of the Commercial Corporation.” To counter Zhenhua’s accusations, Liang Qichao wrote to Guangxi governor Zhang Mingqi to inform him that “Ye En was a cheat and creating chaos and told him to rescind the agreement with Ye and the others.” In fact, Zhang had told Liu Shiji that he must be cautious in touting Xianzhenghui support while raising shares in North America, after Liang’s new political arm in China, Zhengwenshe, was banned in August 1908 as part of the Qing crackdown on the constitutional petition movement.²⁶⁷

Kang’s nephew You Shiying reported to his uncle on March 25, 1909, that the New York chapter had been in turmoil since fall 1908 but “still didn’t dare to mutiny”:

After people from Zhenhua came, the situation changed rapidly, hearts and minds have been falling apart, and there has been agitation everywhere. And all these things are known in spite of our trying to cover them up, and still we are surrounded by enemies. It’s truly difficult to patch things up. The East Coast chapters have already had two meetings; today the West Coast has talked about gathering. The language used is full of bitter hatred.

... Now people all support Zhenhua, because Zhenhua vigorously reproved the corruption in our Commercial Corporation, causing people to listen to their rumors. They now believe that all our businesses have failed.²⁶⁸

266 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 359–60.

267 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 360–62.

268 You Shiying to Kang Youwei, March 25, 1909, in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui*, 394–95.

You also suggested that the only way to stem the tide was to publish the Commercial Corporation accounts. But he realized that with people's attitudes already negative, publishing the accounts would intensify the problem. "We are truly caught between two equally undesirable alternatives." He also scolded Kang for writing letters to a broad circle of correspondents: "You don't know the situation because you are far away ... 90 percent have turned on us," and "people often use your letters to start rumors." In You's opinion, Kang should write only to his daughter Tongbi, cousin Kang Youpei, and Feng Jingquan, a trusted follower then in New York City. You also pleaded with Kang to urge Xu Qin to come quickly to deal with the dangerous situation.

In late March 1909, the Xianzhenghui took the case against Zhenhua into the American courts. Liu Shiji (identified as Low Sz Ki) and Ye En (Yip Yen) were arrested in Pittsburgh after police were alerted that the pair were swindlers without proper credentials peddling "fake" stock to gullible local Chinese in the "Jun Wah Lut Railroad Corporation in China" for "imaginary" railroads and goldmines.²⁶⁹ Liu and Ye were released after they paid \$100 each in bail and were allowed to go to Washington, DC to enlist the help of China's minister, Wu Tingfang. Wu sent them back to Pennsylvania with his deputy to vouch for them in court. Not only were their credentials found to be in order, but Ye En was discovered to be a millionaire and Liu worth \$50,000 (this may be the amount of funds they had collected in shares). The positive publicity around their release gave further legitimacy to Zhenhua among Chinese in the United States and discredit to the Xianzhenghui. By this time, Liu, Ou, and Ye had raised one million yuan in shares and had "won the game."²⁷⁰ The trio left the United States soon thereafter.

Gao Weinong concludes the story: "On May 15, 1909, Liu [Shiji] smugly returned to Guangzhou. At nightfall on May 27, he was stabbed to death at his home. The murderer was Xu Qin's trusted follower He Qiwu. It's really still an unsettled case, but the blame was put on Kang as instigator."²⁷¹ The scandal surrounding Liu's unsolved killing propelled the upsurge of Xianzhenghui defections.²⁷²

269 "Investigating an Imperial Investigator," *Pittsburg Press*, March 28, 1909, 1; "Chinese Notables are Given Aid by Diplomat," *Pittsburg Press*, March 29, 1909, 1, 2.

270 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 361.

271 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 361. He Qiwu's 何其武 sister was He Huizhen 何惠珍, who founded the Baohuanghui women's association in Honolulu; both met Liang Qichao there in 1901. Qiwu studied at Datong School, and Liang recommended Xu Qin use He Qiwu as an English translator during Xu's time in Hong Kong establishing *Shang Bao*.

272 See Chapter 11.

Xu Qin eventually arrived in North America as Kang's envoy to revive political support for the Xianzhenghui and restructure whatever was left of Commercial Corporation businesses. Reporting to Kang in mid-October 1909, Xu said he had been to New York, Boston, Hartford, Philadelphia, and Baltimore and was on his way to Pittsburgh and Chicago. His message was grim:

The failure of our businesses has disheartened people. Plus, with Zhenhua's attack, it is almost impossible for us to recover. Now if we want to regain people's trust in us, we have to start with the business problems. If we do not succeed in business, we will not change matters for the better and regain popular approval.²⁷³

Xu implied that emphasizing good news on the political front in China, such as the imminent convening of provincial assemblies, was of little interest to members until they could be assured that the businesses in which they had invested would not be total losses. Xu had a radical plan for salvaging the situation and gave Kang a stern warning:

I have observed the situation and suggest that we should send a public letter to every chapter and clear all our accounts and start anew. If you do not take this suggestion, please send another person to replace me. If you worry that restarting our businesses will let power pass into other hands, I don't think so. If we do nothing now, in one year all our businesses will have come to naught. At that time you will have to resign. Even if Hong Kong and China are as strong as a dragon, Huayi Bank is like a stony field that will yield no produce.

Kang must have been convinced, and Xu began the cleansing process. The reorganization and divestment and reinvestment would take at least three years, as Xu sought to extricate what could be salvaged from the Commercial Corporation.²⁷⁴ Some businesses, such as King Joy Lo, were sold to members; others such as the Banco Chino building in Torreón were sold to outsiders, all at a loss. In the case of King Joy Lo, Xu structured the deal so that the Huayi Bank creditors (former shareholders) would be reimbursed over time for their investments from what would have gone to future dividends. Dueling public

273 Xu Qin to Kang Youwei, October 13, 1909, in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui*, 438–40.

274 Xu Qin to virtuous brothers and comrades, public letter (printed), June 25, 1912, Him Mark Lai Papers, AAS ARC 2000/80.

letters between Ye En and Xu Qin caused discord among members and “before one squabble is over, the next one crops up.”²⁷⁵

A letter Xu Qin wrote to Kang Youwei in November 1909 illustrates the obstacles he faced from Kang’s micromanaging of business affairs as he attempted to close down the Commercial Corporation. Even the way Kang treated trusted corporation officials such as Xu himself came in for criticism. In his own words, Xu said:

You are staying at a place tens of thousands of miles from here [in Asia, probably Penang]. None of the several telegrams you sent me since I came here [to the United States] are practical. If I don’t listen to you, it seems I disobey you. If I follow your instructions, it will worsen the situation. If you trust me, please don’t arbitrarily send telegrams, people, or public letters without understanding what’s happening. If you trust me, when the general situation turns in a better direction, I won’t claim credit for myself. But if the general situation gets worse, I will take the responsibility. If you control everything from afar and change your mind all the time, I won’t be able to do anything. I took this risk-prone trip to deal with the mess. Everywhere I went, I had to withstand blame and curses. The shame was indescribable ... It was even worse than the 1898 catastrophe. I only hoped that I could save our association from a total failure. If the power is split among different people, and the plan changes all the time, we won’t achieve anything.²⁷⁶

While complete collapse did not come immediately, continued poor management and narrow-sighted planning further diminished what little profit was left to the Commercial Corporation. Rice brokerage businesses in Singapore and Penang no longer earned the profits that in the past had been invested in the Mexican schemes.²⁷⁷ Instead these Southeast Asian businesses themselves needed investment funds, but they too soon collapsed. “Our broken arms and shattered armor lie scattered throughout the world, and I am truly in pain,”

275 Chen Wenhui 陳文惠 to Kang Youwei, November 7, 1909, in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui*, 436.

276 Xu Qin to Kang Youwei, November 7, 1909, in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui*, 456–57.

277 Kang Youwei to Liang Qichao, March 23, 1910, Ding and Zhao, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 531: “I exhausted tens of thousands of yuan from the rice brokerage to save [the streetcar line]. The failure of the rice brokerage is caused by the Mexican streetcar line business.” Kang had just been informed by Xu Qin in Mexico that if the streetcar line went into operation, it would lose 300 pesos a month.

wrote Kang from Singapore on July 4, 1910.²⁷⁸ He recounted to Liang Qichao why he felt such devastation: The day before, the rice brokerage had been sold. That day the newspaper in Siam would be turned over to others. He also had just learned that the Hua-Mo Bank building, constructed at a cost of 150,000 pesos, had just been sold for 120,000 pesos. Above all, Kang was devastated by the loss of Zhenhua and his well-publicized betrayal by Ou Jujia, Ye En, and others. He lamented in a poem:

Millions of dollars have been annihilated in one sweep.

They committed the crimes of murder, lust, avarice, and evil and fabricated rumors to mislead the people.²⁷⁹

Worse news was to come. In Mexico, Wong Foon Chuck's attempt to seize control of the Torreón assets for himself was dashed by the Mexican Revolution of 1911. Xenophobic revolutionists seized foreign-owned properties, killed more than three hundred Chinese in Torreón, and destroyed what was left of Xianzhenghui commercial holdings, including 150,000 pesos in damage to the Hua-Mo Bank.²⁸⁰

Kang's postmortem on the Commercial Corporation's demise was an emotional and defensive letter to Liang Qichao written February 4, 1912.²⁸¹ Liang had apparently blamed Kang for the failure, and Kang lashed back, pinning the blame on Liang. "If you want me to assume the responsibility for the failure of the Commercial Corporation, my biggest mistake is that I did not ignore your recommendation to appoint Ye [En]" to be the manager in Hong Kong." He regretted not following his instincts, knowing that "Ye was fond of gambling and had no talent for business." If Kang had "declined to appoint Ye, risking [Liang's] anger, the Commercial Corporation would not have failed, there would not have been the murder of Liu Shiji, and the ban on our party would have been lifted. What we could not have avoided was the mandate that the Qing dynasty should end and things would fall apart." It seems that Kang was ready to blame Liang's mistaken endorsement of Ye on everything except for the 1911 revolution. He even suggested that "without Ye, Tan Zhangxiao [Tom Leung] could not have openly stolen much." Kang admitted to "many mistakes

278 Lo, "Sequel to Autobiography," 215; Kang Youwei to Liang Qichao, July 4, 1910, Ding and Zhao, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 533.

279 Kang Youwei, poem, April 16, 1910, in *Liang Qichao Nianpu*, 533.

280 See Chapter 8 for details.

281 Kang Youwei to Liang Qichao, February 4, 1912, in *Kang Youwei Wanglai Shuxin Ji*, 642–47.

when assigning people to posts,” including too readily trusting his former students like Tom and Kuang Shoumin whom he felt betrayed him, yet he also believed that had he been able to return to Hong Kong to take control, “we should have been able to avoid this crushing defeat.”

When Wu Xianzi published his *Party History* in 1951, he sought to put into balance why the Commercial Corporation failed.²⁸² Wu worked and corresponded with Kang during the period of the Commercial Corporation’s collapse in 1909–12 and could be more objective and dispassionate in his assessment of the development and downfall of the Commercial Corporation than Li Fuji or Xu Qin who were assigned by Kang to investigate and rectify the businesses, or Kang himself.²⁸³ It seemed obvious to Wu that Kang’s leadership was to blame: “The Xianzhenghui was a chairman-driven system, and the chairman was the supervisor of the Commercial Corporation. All the association business was gathered under one person, without a tight organization with clear division and limitation of powers. Thus it was certain to fail.” Wu continued, “Party affairs and business affairs fused ... Kang ... was both a party leader and business supervisor. His energy was limited. How could he ascertain accurately all the commercial affairs spread [throughout the world]?”²⁸⁴ Furthermore, Wu stressed the polluting effect of mixing business with politics—instead of funneling business profits to political activities, Kang increasingly held back business funds to expand risky enterprises.²⁸⁵ Being aware of the problems and rectifying them were two distinct processes. Kang was one person, an acknowledged leader, but in more of an honorary way, rather than a powerful political head and financial manager combined. As a scholar and exiled politician, he did not have the management expertise needed for such a precarious organization as the Commercial Corporation. As a leader, Kang felt that initially he had made good choices in his assistants in the commercial endeavors, but, as Wu pointed out, they too were political figures and scholars who often were not wise in the ways of business.

The Commercial Corporation’s grand vision and its failed realization were both Kang’s to claim. Although he may have been guided all along by the goal of creating a Chinese-owned modern business conglomerate, he did not possess

282 Wu, *Dangshi*, 78–92, 160–61.

283 Wu was in charge of *Shang Bao* in Hong Kong (1905–11), until summoned to Japan to serve as a scribe while Kang dictated his book, *Gonghe Zhengti Lun* 共和整體論 [On the Republican Political System], December 1911. “Biographical Note” for Wu Xianzi Papers, University of Washington, <https://archiveswest.orbiscascade.org/ark:/80444/xv08758>, accessed February 18, 2024.

284 Wu, *Dangshi*, 160–61.

285 Wu, *Dangshi*, 92.

the expertise, experience, or character to achieve this dream. Kang's insistence on being Commercial Corporation "supervisor" and the logistical impossibility of carrying out this role because of his travels and political responsibilities—coupled with his combustible personality, tempestuous relationships with underlings, and his own lack of business experience—hobbled the entire enterprise. Kang blamed the managers' avarice, inexperience, and outright defiance for each business's fate, rather than systemic or structural problems of the conglomerate, or the business culture he inspired that emphasized risk and haste over caution and measured growth. He blithely told Tom Leung his strategy in December 1905, referring to the proposed bank in Mexico: "Be resourceful, and the profits will be infinite."²⁸⁶ This set the tone for other Commercial Corporation personnel and gave them license to advance business schemes on their own, with Kang vociferously interfering when he perceived they had gone too far. Oddly, given his interest in broad trends and economic theories, Kang rarely noted the impact of the 1907 bank panic on Mexican land values, or considered the fluctuation of markets. With his tendency to tinker, he frequently attempted structural fixes, such as the checks and balances codified in the June 1906 revised Commercial Corporation charter, but put himself at the top of the structure with powers that he could only sporadically wield, being constantly on the move, almost never in Hong Kong, and running both a large political organization and a growing family.

While short-lived, the Commercial Corporation had done well at a time of easy prosperity in North America and Asia. It was an adventure into investment speculation in an era of widespread over-extension of finances, and, when the bank panic ensued in 1907, the Commercial Corporation was vulnerable. Although successful until 1908, it was a tenuous enterprise in good times, and could hardly have been expected to survive the bad ones. A reverse set of circumstances might have left Kang in a more prestigious and powerful position, but instead, the reform movement's finances collapsed. The reform campaign began to falter seriously after this time as Xianzhenghui members and other Chinese overseas transferred their moral and financial support to Sun Yatsen's revolutionary movement. But the Commercial Corporation's activities contributed to the development of expanding capitalism among Chinese gentry-merchant elites at home and abroad. One modern day analyst has said that the reformers' economic vision as realized in the Commercial Corporation

286 Kang Youwei, [Torreón], to Tan Zhangxiao, [Los Angeles], December 26, 1905, no. 352 in Fang and Cai, 65.

“may be the most proximate ancestor of the phenomenon called ‘Confucian capitalism’ in the Pacific Rim today.”²⁸⁷

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Kang’s interest in economic cures for China dated back to 1888. His initial ideas on currency reforms and railroad construction evolved significantly after China’s defeat in the Sino-Japanese War of 1895. He considered the relevancy of agriculture, industry, science and technology, commerce, social services, business schools, business-related publishing, and trade fairs to economic reform. He observed that wealth could be a source of national power for China and would enhance the well-being of the Chinese people. In an era of Qing decline, Kang’s innovative thinking, if applied as he wanted, would return independence and ownership—“national strengthening”—to China. Had the Hundred Days succeeded, in Kang’s view, many of his ideas would have come to fruition. But 1898 was a year of failure and he needed some successes. Almost as soon as he arrived in Canada in 1899, and before Baohuanghui’s founding, he encouraged investment in North American Chinese industries. By 1904 the Commercial Corporation was founded and the always impulsive reformer saw no limit to what his fellow Chinese could develop and invest in worldwide. Torreón in Mexico became the incubator for developing business opportunities and focal point of Kang’s dream of vast financial achievement. Business hot spots such as Vancouver, New York City, Chicago, Hong Kong, and beyond helped the Commercial Corporation realize its potential. But the international economic downturn in 1907 and thereafter, plus his own unrealistic financial goals and micromanagement, misplaced trust in followers, and bad accounting practices all conspired to bring about the colossal failure of this international web of business ventures by 1909.

287 Prasenjit Duara, “Nationalists Among Transnationals: Overseas Chinese and the Idea of China, 1900–1911,” in Aihwa Ong and Donald M. Nonini, ed., *Ungrounded Empires: The Cultural Politics of Modern Chinese Transnationalism* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 50.

Tumult and Transitions, Peaks and Decline, 1906–8

If you really want to save the country, you have to first establish constitutional government, and if you truly want to establish constitutional government, you must first convene a parliament (*guohui*).¹



Kang Youwei and his fellow reformers failed in their ultimate quest to recreate China as a constitutional monarchy. Nonetheless, their decade of political activism culminated in near universal acceptance that China needed to replace its autocracy with a Western-influenced form of constitutional government. In doing so, they profoundly altered the Chinese political landscape. Their vision won an ever broader following in China, propagated by Kang's reformers through their organizations, newspapers, petitions and mass actions. Yet, in North America, Japan, and Southeast Asia, where those visions had been nurtured and given voice, Kang's organization became submerged in a morass of disillusion and dissension borne of plunging too deeply into risky business ventures.

The tumultuous years of 1906 to 1911 saw the political influence of Kang and his Chinese Empire Reform Association reach a pinnacle inside China, while reeling under Commercial Corporation collapses, the death of the Guangxu Emperor, and the rise of their revolutionary challengers. Kang watched from the sidelines as association members abroad defected to Sun Yatsen's Tongmenghui and as the reformers inside China lost confidence in the Qing government's ability to meet their demands for change. By the autumn of 1911, the political tide had turned, led not by revolutionaries but by frustrated reformers no longer willing to wait to exercise their sovereignty. The Qing dynasty lost its mandate to govern, and the Republic of China was founded.

1 Kang Youwei, "Er bai bu qiaomin qingyuan shu" 二百埠僑民請願書 [Petition from two hundred overseas Chinese cities], *Zhongguo Weixin Bao* (New York), July 28, 1908, Chinese Empire Reform Association, AR-6, Ethnic Studies Library, University of California at Berkeley, AAS ARC 2000/78, hereafter, AAS ARC 2000/78. Translation by Hongmei Sun.

In 1906, Kang and his followers welcomed Qing plans to gradually adopt constitutional monarchy. The next year, Kang organized a plenary meeting in New York to adopt a new organizational name—the Imperial Constitutional Association (Diguo Xianzhenghui). In 1908, Liang Qichao's affiliated Political Information Society (Zhengwenshe) moved from Tokyo to Shanghai and set up provincial chapter, newspapers and schools in China. A lengthy petition written by Kang on behalf of two hundred Xianzhenghui chapters was widely publicized as more and more Chinese citizens were swept into a national movement to petition the Qing to convene a parliament and promulgate a constitution. Kang returned to Asia in late 1908 to await his chance to serve a reform government in China. The year ended with the untimely death of the Guangxu Emperor, and Kang plunged into mourning and fruitless attempts to persuade international governments to expose Yuan Shikai as the emperor's assassin.

During these transition years, Kang Youwei alternated periods of intense travel in Europe, the Middle East, and South Asia with lengthy sojourns in Mexico, the United States, Sweden, Penang, Singapore, Hong Kong and Japan. The prelude to this great transition was 1906, a year of bold moves and high anxiety for Kang and the Baohuanghui (Society to Protect the Emperor).

1 An Earthshaking Prelude: 1906

Kang ended his first trip to Mexico on April 19, 1906, culminating a whirlwind of real estate speculation, incorporation and fundraising for the Hua-Mo Bank in Torreón, interspersed with travel to Mexico City and the Zapotec ruins in Mitla. He had arrived just five months earlier in December 1905. On April 28, Kang returned by ship to New York City and spent nearly four months in the United States.

1.1 *San Francisco Earthquake*

The April 18, 1906, earthquake and fire in San Francisco was the most devastating disaster to strike a Chinese community in North America. The nation's largest Chinatown was in ruins. Its residents fled to Oakland and other Bay Area cities, as well as to Southern California. San Francisco by 1906 had hosted the largest Baohuanghui chapter and the oldest Baohuanghui newspaper in North America, *Wenxing Bao* (*Mon Hing Bo*, *The Chinese World*). Thus, it was fitting that Baohuanghui chapters across the world raised funds for the earthquake victims.

Luo Xiaogao (Luo Pu) of *Shi Bao* in Shanghai wrote Tom Leung on May 23 and enclosed a public letter explaining the disaster relief effort in Shanghai and Guangzhou.² Between 400,000 and 500,000 (Chinese yuan?) had been raised and sent to Chinese Minister Liang Cheng in the United States. Luo hoped that the donations had been well-spent. He expressed relief that *Wenxing Bao* editor Chen Yikan and other Baohuanghui friends in San Francisco had survived and was pleased that the newspaper would be revived in Los Angeles. San Francisco was also the base for Sun Yatsen's revolutionaries and their newspaper, *Datong Ribao*, and Luo crowed, "The opposition party will not be able to find a foothold after this disaster."

Indeed, the Baohuanghui quickly acted to reopen *Wenxing Bao* in Los Angeles under the direction of Tom Leung and Ben O. Young of Fresno. In September 1906, the paper's name was changed to *Xianzheng Bao* (*Hin Jing Bo*, keeping *Chinese World* as its English title).³ One of Tom's first articles, written at the instruction of Kang, was a denunciation of Minister Liang Cheng for taking credit for the donations from China collected by the Baohuanghui for earthquake relief.⁴ The attack on Liang Cheng, a Qing diplomat and alumnus of Yung Wing's Chinese Educational Mission whose political leanings were certainly closer to the reformers than to their revolutionary opponents, was an assertive thrust in the ongoing newspaper wars between the Baohuanghui and revolutionaries. Kang accused Liang Cheng of making false claims about his role in raising relief donations from provinces in China, failing to give a clear accounting of the receipts, and embezzling some of those funds—notably, all accusations that had been made against Kang himself in adversarial newspapers like *Datong Ribao* and *Chung Sai Yat Po* (*Zhongxi Ribao*) of San Francisco. Kang contended that two (unnamed) newspapers in San Francisco "were instigated to defend Liang and attack others," and as a result "the people of San Francisco were manipulated by the Minister."⁵ Tom's article itself is no longer available, but an essay written by Kang that was sent to Tom for his reference

2 Luo Pu 羅普 to Tan Zhangxiao, May 23, 1905, no. 186 in Fang Zhiqin and Cai Huiyao 方志欽, 蔡惠堯, ed., *Kang Liang yu Baohuanghui: Tan Liang zai Meiguo Suocang Ziliao Huibian* 康梁與保皇會: 譚良在美國所藏資料彙編 [Kang, Liang, and the Baohuanghui: A Compilation of Materials Collected by Tom Leung in the United States] (Hong Kong: Yinhe Chubanshe, 2008), 202.

3 Mai Zhonghua 麥仲華 to Tan Zhangxiao, July 6, 1906, no. 148 in Fang and Cai, 194, and Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, September 4, 1906, no. 119 in Fang and Cai, 75.

4 Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, September 15, 1906, no. 118 in Fang and Cai, 76: "Your article criticizing Liang Cheng 梁誠 was rather appropriate. I have sent you another document separately and assume you have read it. It is for your future reference."

5 Kang to unknown, [1906], no. 123 in Fang and Cai, 79.

informs historians of its likely content. Kang's essay opens by describing Liang Cheng as "mediocre, vulgar, greedy, and stupid" and "lower than a fox":

... we are worried that our compatriots will not be able to tell black from white and that quite a few believe that the fundraising for the anti-American boycott and the construction of the Canton-Hankou [Yue-Han] railroad, as well as the earthquake] relief campaign, were the work of Liang Cheng.⁶

Kang argued that the unprecedentedly large donations from China for earthquake relief were the result of telegrams from the Baohuanghui in the United States to their three powerful newspapers in Asia: *Shi Bao* in Shanghai, *Shang Bao* in Hong Kong, and *Nanyang Zonghui Bao* (*The Union Times*) in Singapore, which wrote editorials and called for donations every day. Kang described why the editors of those papers harbored special concern for Chinese in the United States:

[Xu Qin] of *Shang Bao* and [Ou Jujia] of *Nanyang Zonghui Bao* had lived in San Francisco for a long time and have a very good relationship with the overseas Chinese. Therefore, the response was overwhelming ... Because [Di Chuqing] of *Shi Bao* had received a lot of donations from the United States for the [anti-American] boycott [in 1905], this time he stood up to ask the Chinese people to return the favor of the Chinese Americans. Because he explained the meaning of helping one another, whether we are inside or outside [China], he raised a lot of money.

Kang was overplaying the Baohuanghui card, since in fact only five days after the disaster, the Empress Dowager had ordered 100,000 *liang* to be given to United States Minister W. W. Rockhill in Beijing and another 40,000 *liang* sent to Minister Liang Cheng in Washington.⁷ Although these sums were far less than the amount Kang claimed the Baohuanghui had raised, they were gratifying to the San Francisco Chinese nonetheless.

6 Kang Youwei, "Zai Lun Liang Cheng Zhen Shi" 再論梁誠賑事 [Another Comment on Liang Cheng and the Matter of Relief], draft essay appended to no. 123, [1906], no. 122 in Fang and Cai, 92–94.

7 W. W. Rockhill, American Legation, Beijing, to Elihu Root, Department of State, April 26, 1906, Dispatches from U.S. Ministers to China, 1843–1906, vol. 130, RG 59, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/189088978?objectPage=331>, accessed June 1, 2024. Root instructed Rockhill to refuse the 100,000 *tael* gift because it was official U.S. policy not to accept aid from abroad.

Baohuanghui fundraising also had a more self-interested target, namely, rebuilding its American headquarters in San Francisco. A list dated December 1906 shows 158 people who had bought from one to eighty shares at five dollars each for this major project. The investors included leaders of two “fighting tongs” and the founder of the Canton Bank in San Francisco, illustrating the organization’s unifying influence and continued power, according to L. Eve Armentrout Ma.⁸ Thus, while the earthquake was a tragic and disruptive event for the Chinese in North America, it also was an opportunity for the Baohuanghui to display both organizational strength and altruism.

1.2 *Baohuanghui becomes the Xianzhenghui*

Kang’s sojourn in North America from his arrival in Montreal on November 12, 1904, until his departure on August 16, 1906, from New York ended with a triumphal speech on the deck of the Hamburg-American S.S. *Amerika* to five hundred Chinese on the pier. He suggested that China should emulate both the American government and the beauty and freedom of American women.⁹ For the next seven months until his return to New York on March 17, 1907, Kang traveled in Italy, Sweden, Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Monte Carlo, Spain, Morocco (where he was granted an audience by the sultan), Portugal, back to France, and then to London, before returning to New York.¹⁰ Kang’s love affair with Sweden turned serious when he bought a summer home from Captain John Wahlund on Korsholmen Island across from Saltsjöbaden in fall 1906.¹¹ In the winter, the wealthy families who summered there

8 L. Eve Armentrout Ma, *Revolutionaries, Monarchists, and Chinatowns: Chinese Politics in the Americas and the 1911 Revolution* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1990), 115. The original document is titled “Meiguo zhengbu Diguo Xianzhenghui jianlou gufen bu” 美國正部帝國憲政會建樓股份布 [List of shareholders for building the United States headquarters of the Imperial Constitutional Association], archives, Chinese Historical Society of America, San Francisco.

9 “Pleased with American Women,” *Salt Lake City Telegram*, August 17, 1906, 5: “He wished that the women of China were as beautiful and could live as unhampered as women here.”

10 Ship manifest, S.S. *Amerika*, Southampton, England to New York, departing March 8, 1907 and arriving March 17. Jung-pang Lo, “Sequel to the Chronological Autobiography,” *Kang Yu-wei: A Biography and Symposium* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1967), 205. Thank you to Chi Jeng Chang who discovered a portion of Kang’s supplemental travel journal for the Netherlands in 1907, “Bu Helan Youji” 補荷蘭游記 [Supplemental Record of Travels in Holland] on a Chinese auction website, <http://cn.51bidlive.com/Item/6596825#pretty>, accessed May 20, 2024.

11 “Principal Happenings of the Week in Scandinavian Countries,” *Aberdeen American*, December 6, 1911. Most of the details about Kang’s sojourn on Korsholmen come from this article. Jung-pang Lo and many others believed that Kang had bought a Swedish island,

(including Sweden's King Oscar II, a frequent visitor of Kang's) left for their urban homes, and Korsholmen's only inhabitants were herring fishermen.¹² Oddly, although Kang's house (which he dubbed Beihai Lu or North Sea Lodge) would have been dangerously inaccessible in the winter because of ice, most of Kang's stays through the years were during this inhospitable season.¹³ Perhaps this is why Kang named the island Bidao or Hideaway Island, and it seemed that good fortune followed him there. During his first stay, Kang was accompanied by his second wife, Liang Suijue, and their toddler daughter Kang Tongfu, who learned to speak Swedish. A year later, Hideaway Island became Kang's honeymoon retreat with his young third wife, He Zhanli (Lily Haw), and Kang dreamed of retiring there. Kang Tonghuan, Kang's seventh daughter, born to Liang in late 1907, was given a Swedish name, Svea, to honor her birthplace. This home was where Kang, his two older daughters, Tongwei and Tongbi, and Tongwei's husband and Kang disciple Mai Zhonghua, joyfully "reunited from a span of three continents and several years" in summer 1908. Shortly thereafter, Kang, "not knowing when I will hear their singing again, a tone so lingering and heart wrenching," and short of money, sold North Sea Lodge back to its previous owner.

While in Sweden, Kang received the news that on September 1, 1906, the Qing court issued an edict announcing the transition to a constitutional monarchy, which would eventually allow popular participation through an elected parliament. The Proclamation for Preparing for a Constitutional Government (Yubei Lixian zhi Zhao) was a long-awaited step in the New Policies, or Xinzheng, and was widely welcomed by political reformers in China and abroad.¹⁴ It came in response to the recommendations of two missions of imperial commissioners who traveled to Japan, the United States and Europe from December 1905 to

and it is thanks to filmmaker Evans Chan, when making his film, "Two or Three Things about Kang Youwei," who uncovered which island Kang lived on and the nature of his much more modest real estate purchase. However, Korsholmen is sometimes called Kang Youwei Island. According to November 6, 2022 email to Jane Larson from Connie Kang, who visited the island in 2022, there were three structures on his property: the residence, a small building used as a study, and a tiny structure where Kang meditated.

12 Kang Tongbi 康同璧, "Yi yu Xianjun Xie You Ruidian (Daixu)" 憶與沃君攜遊瑞典(代序) [Preface: Recalling Travel to Sweden with My Late Father], in Kang Youwei, *Ruidian Youji* 康有為瑞典遊記 [Travels in Sweden], ed. Ma Yueran 馬悅然 [Göran Malmqvist] (Hong Kong: Commercial Press, 2007), 8.

13 Chan's main informant for "Two or Three Things" was Korsholmen resident Ulla Kassman Rudberg, who appears in the film, and had learned about Kang from the family who lived on the property Kang once owned.

14 Douglas R. Reynolds, *China, 1898–1912: The Xinzheng Revolution and Japan* (Cambridge: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1993), 179–80.

July 1906 to study different political systems. The constitutional commissioners were welcomed and petitioned by the Baohuanghui in the United States. In New York, the fifty-three-member delegation was led by Dai Hongci and the forward-looking Manchu, Duanfang, who briefly held a Hundred Days administrative position in the Bureau of Agriculture, Industry, and Commerce. They were met at the ferry dock by Baohuanghui members who were “distinguished by their close-cropped hair and blue uniforms,” presumably Western Military Academy (Gancheng Xuexiao) cadets. The next day, a Baohuanghui delegation led by New York president Joseph Singleton presented the two commissioners with a “handsomely bound petition,” no doubt making the case for constitutional government.¹⁵

Upon his return to China, heady with enthusiasm for constitutional reform, Duanfang, who was close to the Empress Dowager, took the grave risk of reaching out to Liang Qichao, still a wanted man by Qing authorities. Duanfang asked Liang to draft recommendations for him to present to Cixi. Liang had close contacts with reform-minded officials in China, but Duanfang was the best conduit yet to influence the Qing program. Liang’s proposals ran 200,000 characters and led to a two-year collaboration between the two men. On August 21, 1906, Duanfang, animated by a “passion for constitutional change,” had an audience with Cixi.¹⁶ Nine days later the New Policies constitutional edict was issued.

Encouraged by this advancement for his own program, Kang decided to renovate the Baohuanghui with a major change of name and focus. Kang had evidently considered a name change at least three years before as part of his plan of political evolution, when Ronglu, head of China’s Grand Council, died on April 11, 1903, and Kang felt that a great obstacle to his movement had been removed.¹⁷ Now, with the official preparations underway for transition to constitutional government, Kang had a much grander goal. He would aim

15 Arthur W. Hummel, ed., *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period (1644–1912)* (Washington: Library of Congress, 1943), 780; “Chinese Envoys Here in all their Splendor,” *New York Times*, February 2, 1906, 4; “Envoys Ride in the Subway,” *New York Times*, February 3, 1906, 9.

16 Chang P'eng-yuan, “Constitutionalism in the Late Qing: Conception and Practice,” *Chinese Studies in History* 22, no. 1 (1989): 8; Jun Zhang, “Spider Manchu: Duanfang as Networker and Spinductor of the Late Qing New Policies, 1901–1911,” Ph.D. dissertation, University of California at San Diego, 2008, ProQuest (UMI Microform 3320191), 182–85; Xiaowei Zheng, *The Politics of Rights and the 1911 Revolution in China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2018), 115–16, questions the commitment of Duanfang and the other imperial commission members to Liang’s “deeper principles underlying his advocacy of constitutionalism,” which sought popular sovereignty and transferring political power to parliament.

17 Lo, “Sequel to the Chronological Autobiography,” 269 n25.

the organization to become China's first political party, and in the not-so-distant future, to take over as the governing party in a triumphal return to China. While this overhaul entailed far more than a name change, rechristening the organization came first.

On October 21, 1906, Kang announced from Sweden that the Baohuanghui (Society to Protect the Emperor) would formally change its name on the first day of the lunar new year (February 13, 1907) to Guomin Xianzhenghui (Citizens' Constitutional Association) or Xianzhenghui for short.¹⁸ Kang asked all chapters to celebrate the inauguration of a new organizational era with an assembly featuring speeches, toasts to the emperor, and songs. Addressed to several hundred thousand members in more than 170 chapters, this lengthy notice by Kang was published in Baohuanghui newspapers.¹⁹ No longer was it necessary to protect the emperor, Kang explained, because he was healthy and his life was not in danger. Moreover, he claimed, Guangxu was gradually gaining power. Henceforth, members need not worry about him.²⁰

Kang's proposal of a new name, Guomin Xianzhenghui, elevated constitutionalism and citizenship and implicitly demoted the emperor and the imperial system. While the neologism *guomin* (citizen) was replaced by *diguo* (imperial) in the final permutation of the organization's name, Kang's initial choice of *guomin* is noteworthy. It was the first time a Chinese political organization had included the term in its name.²¹ Kang even noted, "If we do not use this term, other groups will surely take it someday."²² And as he was wont to do, Kang occasionally substituted party (*dang*) for association (*hui*) in the same document, declaring "Our citizens' party (Guomindang) will share the

18 "Bugao Baiqishi yu Bu Huizhong Dingwei Xinnian yuan Li Ju Da Qingdian Gao Chan Baohuanghui Gaiwei Guomin Xianzhenghui wen" 布告百七十余埠會眾丁未新年元裡舉大慶典告藏保皇會改為國民憲政會文 [Notice to Members of Over 170 Chapters to Hold Big New Year Celebrations in 1907 to Announce that the Baohuanghui would Change into the Guomin Xianzhenghui], October 21, 1906 in *Kang Youwei Zhenglun Ji* 康有為政論集 [A Collection of Kang Youwei's Political Writings], ed. Tang Zhijun 湯志鈞 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1981), 597–606.

19 For example, the document appeared in *Zhongguo Weixin Bao* on December 8, 1906.

20 "Bugao Baiqishi yu Bu," in Tang, *Kang Youwei Zhenglun Ji*, 599, 602.

21 Wu Xianzi 伍憲子, *Zhongguo Minzhu Xianzhengdang Dangshi* 中國民主憲政黨黨史 [Party History of China's Democratic Constitutional Party] (San Francisco: Shijie Ribao, 1952), 47–48.

22 "Kang Youwei, "Tonggao Gebu Congxin Dingding Guomin Xianzhengdang Dangqi han" 通告各埠從新訂定國民憲政黨黨旗函 [Letter Informing All Chapters of the Change of the Flag of the National Constitutional Party], November 1906, in *Kang Youwei Quanji* 康有為全集 [Collected Works of Kang Youwei], ed. Jiang Yihua 姜義華 and Zhang Ronghua 張榮華 (Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin Daxue Chubanshe, 2007), vol. 8, 233.

glory of our nation.”²³ Kang revived *guomin* in February 1912, when he formally adopted Guomindang for the now legal political party that he hoped would participate in the Republic, reminding Xianzhenghui members that this was “an old name” he had proposed in 1906.²⁴

What Kang and his cohorts meant by “citizen” in 1906 was quite simple. They were referring to a politically active person concerned with national affairs, who felt as responsible to their country as to their family. “Our party has long taken the responsibility for guarding the interests of citizens,” and now that the court was preparing to introduce constitutional government, said Kang, citizens must not shirk their responsibilities to take part in this preparation.²⁵ Political participation was the key to this concept, whether as a member of a group like the Xianzhenghui or attending a rally in Shanghai to support the 1905 anti-American boycott.

Guomin traditionally meant “people of the kingdom” or “people” until Liang Qichao popularized its use as “citizen.” Adopted from Meiji Japan, Liang introduced this new meaning to a wide audience in the series of articles entitled *Xinmin Shuo* (*The New Citizen*) published between 1902 and 1904. Historian Peter Zarrow, describing the evolution of *guomin*, explains:

That Liang did indeed refer to a citizenry and not merely the nation, the folk, or common people is clear from the context of his remarks on popular sovereignty and participation ... Liang's concept of the citizenry was based not only on the pragmatic realization that if the people were going to be mobilized they needed to feel that the state belonged to them (popular sovereignty), but also on his sense that a national community by its very nature had to involve the people as both rulers and ruled.²⁶

23 “Bugao Baiqishi yu Bu,” in Tang, *Kang Youwei Zhenglun Ji*, 601.

24 Kang Youwei to all chapters, February 19, 1912, in *Kang Youwei Quanji* 康有為全集 [Collected Works of Kang Youwei], ed. Jiang Yihua and Zhang Hualong 姜義華, 張榮華 (Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin Daxue Chubanshe, 2007), vol. 9, 282. Wu, *Dangshi*, 47–48. See Conclusion for the short interlude in 1912 after the Xianzhenghui became a political party and before the Tongmenghui and other revolutionary factions united in Nanjing under the name Guomindang 國民黨; it then took the name Xianzhengdang 憲政黨.

25 Bugao baiqishi yu bu huizong,” in Tang, *Kang Youwei Zhenglun Ji*, 600.

26 Peter Zarrow, “Citizenship in China and the West” in *Imagining the People: Chinese Intellectuals and the Concept of Citizenship, 1890–1920*, ed. Joshua A. Fogel and Peter G. Zarrow (Armonk, New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1997), 17–18. See Chapter 3 for Liang Qichao's concept of the “new citizen” and how it shaped the Baohuanghui.

Nation building was a bottom-up affair in Liang's view, powered by citizens' "voluntarism and dynamism." An effective citizenry must be imbued with group consciousness and political obligations as well as a desire to claim their political rights and powers. Chinese citizens would then be ready to push for governmental reforms. Reformers like Kang and Liang had a twofold task, to critique the Confucian ethos giving precedence to private relationships and responsibilities and to cultivate the public duties and rights of citizenship in the Chinese people. Their impact on Baohuanghui members can be seen in discussion of citizenship in public letters written by American chapters in 1902 and 1903. Below are a few examples of the use of *guomin* or citizen from these letters:

New York City chapter: "Following those who have preceded us [the already established chapters], we wish to wake up those who are still ignorant and help save the deteriorating national situation and carry out our responsibilities as Chinese citizens."²⁷

Philadelphia chapter: "Our people must not blame Heaven or fault others. They should only regret that they don't know how to love their country, and they should blame themselves because they don't know how to collaborate with others. But, regret is of no use. What we should do is to practice patriotic collaboration (*aiguo hequn*) in order to fulfill our duties as citizens."²⁸

Galveston, Texas, chapter: "If people are born in a country and are its citizens, then if the country flourishes it is due to them and if it perishes, that is also their fault."²⁹

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, chapter: "The people are the masters of a country. Affairs of the nation are the affairs of its people. If the people of a nation do not love their country enough to take urgent action, then the country is no longer a country ... Even though we are not wise, we are willing to follow the lead [of the Baohuanghui] and to spread the word to those Chinese citizens who desire to enjoy a wealthy and strong China."³⁰

27 New York Baohuanghui to all comrades and brothers, printed letter, November 21, 1902, no. 569 in Fang and Cai, 370.

28 Philadelphia Baohuanghui to people in our hometown and virtuous brothers, printed letter, no date [probably 1903], no. 571 in Fang and Cai, 372.

29 Galveston Baohuanghui to all virtuous brothers, printed letter, unknown date [probably 1903], no. 573 in Fang and Cai, 374.

30 Pittsburgh Baohuanghui to all virtuous brothers, printed letter, unknown date, no. 572 in Fang and Cai, 373.

Kang and Liang distinguished *guomin* from *gongmin*, a newer term for citizen that supplanted *guomin* during the Republic.³¹ Literally meaning “public person,” *gongmin* was more properly used for citizens who had gained legal rights and responsibilities in a state. For both Kang and Liang, paying taxes and serving in the military should be the minimal responsibilities of citizens. In 1902 Kang had written an influential essay entitled “Gongmin Zizhi” (On Citizen Self-Government), published by Liang in *Xinmin Congbao* (*Sein Min Choong Bou* [New Citizen Journal]).³² Although the emphasis was on local governance by a broad, taxpaying elite, Kang laid out in detail for the first time the concept of building citizen participation from the bottom up to invigorate the local economy and arouse patriotism, not just for one’s district, county or province, but also one’s nation. Between 1902 and late 1906, Kang’s concept of citizenship became more democratic and focused on the nation rather than the locality, and *guomin* replaced *gongmin* as his priority.

Liang Qichao saw Kang’s announcement in 1906 as significant far beyond symbolism: “After the change of name, our association can spread throughout China, and the foundation of the party will be firmly established and everlasting.”³³ However, Liang subsequently suggested to Kang that it was better to use *diguo* (imperial) rather than *guomin* in the organizational name, to associate it with the Baohuanghui’s focus on protecting the emperor and to disassociate it from the political party that he and several other reformers had begun to plan inside China.³⁴ This party would be complementary to Kang’s overseas association—and funded by it—but with a different leadership to appear independent of Kang because of his inflammatory reputation. Thus, Liang wanted the names to be distinct, so that the connection between the two parties would be disguised: “The two parties are different only nominally. Actually, they are the same. In the future, they will be merged. The reason for the split is that we don’t want people in China to know about our party affairs abroad.” Liang hoped to adopt the name Xianzhenghui for the party inside China and suggested Kang

31 Zarrow, “Citizenship in China and the West,” 18, 20.

32 This essay is discussed thoroughly in Philip A. Kuhn, “Local Self-Government Under the Republic: Problems of Control, Autonomy, and Mobilization” in *Conflict and Control in Late Imperial China*, ed. Frederick Wakeman Jr. and Carolyn Grant (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), 272–76. The original essay was serialized in three issues of *Xinmin Congbao* 新民叢報, April and May 1902.

33 Liang Qichao to Tan Zhangxiao, December 11, 1906, no. 145 in Fang and Cai, 128.

34 Liang Qichao to Kang Youwei, last half of December 1906 or first half of January 1907 [tenth month, 28th day, Guangxu 32], in Ding Wenjiang and Zhao Fengtian 丁文江, 趙豐田, ed., *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian* 梁啟超年譜長編 [Uncut Version of Liang Qichao Life Chronicle] (Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin Chubanshe, 1983), 369–76.

name the “overseas party” Diguo Lixianhui (Imperial Association to Establish a Constitution). Among those cooperating with Liang to establish a formal political party in China was Xiong Xiling (Xiong Bingsan), a reform-minded official who had accompanied Duanfang on the 1906 constitutional mission. Liang also claimed that “Yuan Shikai, Duanfang, and Zhao Erxun are secret sponsors. We plan to ask Prince Chun [Zaifeng] and Prince Zaize to be the president and vice president. If you approve, Xiong Bingsan will go to Beijing to persuade them to accept the titles.”

As will be seen, Liang was overly optimistic about official acceptance of such an open political organization. Although Kang had notified members that the Baohuanghui would be renamed Guomin Xianzhenghui, the official name in the 1907 charter was Diguo Xianzhenghui or Imperial Constitutional Association.³⁵ Whether or not “citizen” was part of the association’s new name, Kang continued to suggest that a member of Xianzhenghui was considered a citizen with responsibilities and rights. He presented himself and the party as forerunners, marching ahead of their countrymen and to be rewarded in the end for their leadership:

We celebrate the promising results of the old association and bring together the country and the citizens with a new constitution. We gather around [the emperor] like sunflowers always facing the sun. We are loyal to our emperor as always. We are on stage as the canopy of the heavens opens up. And we are the first political party (*zhengdang*). We as leaders will plan and worry ahead of the people and enjoy the fruits before the people.³⁶

Kang’s promise that Xianzhenghui members would enjoy rewards before others upends the famous maxim of Song dynasty statesman and intellectual Fan Zhongyan: “We as leaders will plan and worry ahead of the people and enjoy

35 Hereafter Xianzhenghui; in English, the Chinese Empire Reform Association terminology, under which many chapters had become legally incorporated, persisted in North America. However, some American newspapers in 1907 referred to Empire Constitutional Party of China or Chinese Empire Constitutional Association. Permutations of the new name in Chinese used by Kang, Liang, and other members at one time or another were: Guomin Xianzhenghui 國民憲政會, Guomin Xianzhengdang 國民憲政黨, Diguo Xianzhenghui 帝國憲政會, Diguo Xianzhengdang 帝國憲政黨, Zhonghua Xianzhenghui 中華憲政會, Zhonghua Diguo Xianzhenghui 中華帝國憲政會, and Diguo Lixianhui 帝國立憲會. Even within the same document Kang would use different names and frequently referred the organization as party (*dang* 黨) rather than association (*hui* 會).

36 “Bugao Baiqishi yu Bu,” in Tang, *Kang Youwei Zhenglun Ji*, 601.



FIGURE 64 Clockwise from left: Boise chapter signboard: Diguo Xianzhenghui [Imperial Constitutional Association] with Kang's painted name and two carved seals, 康有爲印 [Kang Youwei's seal] and 更生 [Gengsheng—Life Renewed, Kang's favored pen name in exile].

the fruits after the people.”³⁷ Kang even asked in his October 1906 letter, “Am I the next prime minister?” Based on his observations of other constitutional nations, whether a monarchy or a democracy, Kang said that members of the ruling party would not only gain patronage positions in government but profit from development of railroads, mines, factories and banks. Those not part of the ruling party were inevitably left out. He pointed to the United States Post

37 Fan Zhongyan 范仲淹, “Yueyang Lou ji” 岳陽樓記 [Notes on Yueyang Tower], “先天下之憂而憂，後天下之樂而樂,” <https://mountainsongs.mishanghai.org/poem.php?id=939>, accessed August 17, 2024.

Office, which he believed filled vacancies only from members of the party of the current president. Embracing corruption as a right, Kang saw this argument as a powerful inducement to recruit and retain members.

Now that the Baohuanghui name was history, Kang decreed that the old flag and seal also were outdated. In his view, the red, white, and blue Baohuanghui flag had no association with setting up a constitution, and Kang challenged members to come up with an appropriate design, which might even be adapted as the national flag when China became a constitutional monarchy. The Qing dragon flag, Kang wrote, symbolized the emperor but not the nation and, while Chinese might find the dragon impressive, “foreigners not only do not respect us but even mock us because they see the dragon as a giant beast and the yellow in the flag’s color as indicating weakness.”³⁸

The Baohuanghui’s much-vaunted past was directed to be preserved on engraved tablets hung in every chapter’s clubhouse, and all chapters were to send their old records and lists of meritorious members to the Hong Kong headquarters for compilation into a history.³⁹ However, the Xianzhenghui would continue to commemorate the founding of the Baohuanghui on July 20, 1899, and other historical markers, including a tribute to the Six Martyrs beheaded after the failure of the One Hundred Days of Reform in 1898. In keeping with the Xianzhenghui aspiration to vault into partyhood, Kang proposed that funds be raised for a new building for its future headquarters in Guangzhou, where the land for the Guangdong Gongxue (Guangdong Public School) was located.⁴⁰ The ample donations for this new headquarters were published in 1908, with gifts recorded from ninety-four chapters and hundreds of individual donors.⁴¹ Donations were also sought to build a navy, which Kang believed

38 “Bugao Baiqishi yu Bu,” in Tang, *Kang Youwei Zhenglun Ji*, 605.

39 Wu Xianzi was in Hong Kong as editor of *Shang Bao* and may have taken on the role of official organizational historian at this time. The official Baohuanghui/Xianzhenghui history by Wu, *Zhongguo Minzhu Xianzhengdang Dangshi* 中國民主憲政黨黨史 [Party History of China’s Democratic Constitutional Party], was not published until 1951, first as a serial in *Shijie Ribao*, and then as a 206-page book in 1952, <https://lccn.loc.gov/c62001381>, accessed August 17, 2024.

40 Bugao Baiqishi yu Bu,” in Tang, *Kang Youwei Zhenglun Ji*, 606.

41 “Juan jian Diguo Xianzheng Zonghuisuo Maidi Zhengxinlu” 捐建帝國憲政總會所買地徵信錄 [Financial Accounting of Donations for Buying Land for Xianzhenghui Headquarters Building], in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui* 康有為與保皇會 [Kang Youwei and the Baohuanghui], ed. Shanghai Shi Wenwu Baoguan Weiyuanhui 上海市文物保管委員會 (Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin Chubanshe, 1982), 529–37. According to Zhongping Chen, *Transpacific Reform and Revolution: The Chinese in North America, 1898–1918* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2023), 104–5, the headquarters was never built since Ye En sold the land to repay the Guangdong Public School’s debt to Huayi Bank in Hong Kong.

was the foundation of a strong nation; this would result in the Guomin Haijunhui or Citizens' Naval Society in 1908. Finally, Kang also called for members to contribute funds to support the dissemination of the Xianzhenghui message throughout China by publishing newspapers in every province. With this shift in activities to China, one can conclude that Kang, more than ever, was determined that the Xianzhenghui be viewed as a government in waiting.

1.3 *Confucian Infusion*

Confucius wrote in the *Spring and Autumn Annals* (*Chunqiu*) that the ruler and his people are subject to the law.

To assign proper rights and obligations (*mingfen*) to both [the emperor and his subjects] is the essential meaning of constitutionalism.

KANG YOUWEI, *Zhonghua Diguo Xianzhenghui Ge Sizhang* (A Four-quatrain Anthem for the Chinese Empire Constitutional Association), 1906⁴²

At the request of American association members, Kang wrote an anthem for the Xianzhenghui. It sang of Kang's hopes that Chinese citizens would share power with the emperor in their own governance. Lacking the highly nationalistic character of earlier songs Kang wrote for the Baohuanghui and harkening back to his arguments for constitutional reform in the 1890s, he redeployed carefully excerpted Confucian texts to justify constitutionalism for China, with only a passing allusion to more fitting models in the phrase, "the peace and prosperity of nations depend on the adoption of a constitution." Kung-ch'üan Hsiao noted that Kang considered the *Spring and Autumn Annals* and the *Gongyang Zhuan* (New Text Commentary) on the *Annals* as the purest expressions of the "principles" of Confucius as they might be applied to China today, selectively quoting those passages that met his purposes and infusing his interpretations with Western political concepts.⁴³ Thus, Kang invoked Confucius and the mythical emperors Yao and Shun in the anthem as promulgators of the idea that the monarch should share power with the people, with the people holding the preponderance of power. This bold assertion was nothing new for

42 "Zhonghua Diguo Xianzhenghui Ge Sizhang" 中華帝國憲政會歌四章 [A Four-Quatrain Anthem for the Chinese Imperial Constitutional Association] in Tang, *Kang Youwei Zhenglunji*, vol. 1, 607. This translation is thanks to Kung-ch'üan Hsiao, *A Modern China and a New World: Kang Yu-wei, Reformer and Utopian, 1858–1927* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1975), 242–43, Yang Zheng, and Peter Zarrow.

43 Hsiao, *A Modern China and a New World*, 72–96.

Kang. In the 1890s, he saw the emperor as primarily a figurehead, “sacred but without responsibility” and forming “one body” with the citizens.⁴⁴ The lyrics proclaim: “The sovereign’s love for the people is poor substitute for their self-rule, and the loving sagacity of the one [the emperor] matches not the insights of the many combined.”

The “many combined” refers not only to the individual talents and contributions of a country’s citizens but to their “joining in groups” to deliberate and support what was best for their nation:

Heaven bestows on the people their innate talent and rights (*quan*),
To enable them to support and defend themselves so that their nation survives.

The way of joining in groups (*hequn*) honors the deliberations of the people (*zhongyi*),
And when private interests yield to public good, constitutional government thrives.

The peace and prosperity of countries depend on the adoption of a constitution.

To split apart the four hundred million people is to render them foolish;
to unite them is to make them wise.

When the constitution is adopted, the ruler and his people will celebrate together.

Kang’s anthem equates constitutionalism with the allocation of rights (*ming*) and obligations (*fen*), or *mingfen* from the *Spring and Autumn Annals*: “To assign proper rights and obligations (*mingfen*) to both [the emperor and his subjects] is the essential meaning of constitutionalism.” *Mingfen* also implies rule of law and checks and balances through limitations on the respective powers of monarch and citizen. Kang explained in a 1907 constitutional petition, discussed in detail below, that in a constitutional monarchy, “The ruler will not seize the people’s rights and responsibilities, and the people will not lose their own rights and responsibilities or that of their families.”⁴⁵

44 According to Peter Zarrow, “Monarchical power (*junquan* 君權) thus virtually disappears in Kang’s reformism.” Peter Zarrow, “Democracy in Twentieth-Century China: Notes on a Discourse,” *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 26, no. 1 (March 1999): 124–25.

45 “Er bai bu qiaomin qingyuanshu,” AR-6, AAS ARC 2000/78.

Kang also proposed a new flag as a fitting emblem for China embarking on constitutional government. Soon after Kang's October 1906 announcement of the organizational transition from Baohuanghui to Xianzhenghui, he sent a group letter to members with an elaborate description of his flag design and its meaning.⁴⁶ "The old three-colored Baohuanghui flag with three white stars on blue flanked by two red stripes against a white background was the symbol of the French Revolution [*tricolore*]," said Kang, in what might be an oblique swipe at Liang Qichao, who likely designed that flag when he was in North America in 1903.⁴⁷ In contrast with the political modernization that adopting a constitution would seem to imply, Kang borrowed freely from traditional Chinese cosmology found in the *Yijing* (Book of Changes) and *Zhouli* (The Rites of Zhou) to describe the Xianzhenghui flag. Rather than symbolizing China as a nation, Kang's flag design sought to evoke China as an eternal civilization in synchronicity with ancient concepts of the patterns of heaven and earth. Kang emphasized China's centrality, constancy and moderation and the symbolism of colors and shapes to give harmony and meaning to his design:

China [Zhongguo, the Middle Kingdom] is the oldest of civilizations, and thus we regard "Central/Mean/Middle" (*zhong*) as our byword. Confucius found Centrality in the Way.⁴⁸

To articulate the Way of Humanity, a circle is contained by its circumference, and all lines to the Center are of equal length.

The movement of the world upholds Heaven and Earth, while in the Center is a fixed point.

The *Yijing* says Heaven is dark (*xuan*), the Earth is yellow (*huang*). The *Zhou Li* (Book of Rites) says the combination of black and white refers to pattern (*wen*; literature and the cultural tradition, doctrine or creed), and the combination of red and white refers to order (*zhang*; insignia, badge, rules, constitution).⁴⁹ This carries the weight of Heaven and Earth and brings together Civilization. Thus it is appropriate that we draw upon all of these [for the flag design].

46 "Tonggao gebu congxin dingding Guomin Xianzhengdang dangqi han," November 1906, in *Kang Youwei Quanji*, vol. 8, 233. Thank you to Yang Zheng, Alvin Cohen, Aida Yuen Wong, and Peter Zarrow for their thoughts about this abstruse document.

47 See Chapter 3 for Liang's description of the Baohuanghui flag's symbolism, which was political in nature, exalting concepts like equality and independence.

48 Kang is referring to *Zhongyong* 中庸 [The Doctrine of the Mean] of Confucius.

49 This description is from the *Zhouli*, *Kaogongji* 周禮, 考工記 [Rites of the Zhou, Record of the Artificers].

Kang's flag appears to be square in shape, encompassing a large circle, which touches the square on four sides against a red background. The circle is white with a black outer band representing Heaven and a yellow center for Earth. "What the *Yijing* means by the Yellow Center comprehends the fundamental principle, occupies the proper position, and dwells in the substantial." Most importantly, the "Yellow Center" (*huangzhong*) is a symbol of China, derived from the Yellow River Valley loess of the Central Plains (*zhongtu*). This design, said Kang, in his immodest estimation, signified "our ultimate civilization." Although there are no extant images of a Xianzhenghui flag, if one was ever produced, Kang's description was sent to all chapters and was in keeping with Kang's resolve to infuse the Xianzhenghui with cultural and even religious significance beyond the straightforward political.

The idea of reviving and renewing Confucianism as a formal religion regained its appeal for Kang in 1907 in New York, where he was asked by his former student Chen Huanzhang to head a newly formed Confucian Academy (*Kongjiaohui*).⁵⁰ Kang was torn between responding to Chen's initiative and focusing on his political mission. A *jinshi* when he arrived in the United States in 1905, Chen became a student of Friedrich Hirth, a Columbia University professor of Chinese. Chen published a monograph in 1911 in which he presented Confucianism as a progressive and potentially utopian creed with pertinent lessons for all cultures, very much in line with Kang's teachings. Chen credited his former teacher as his most important mentor, thanking Kang for sharing the unpublished manuscript of his utopian magnum opus, *Datong Shu*.⁵¹

Writing to Liang Qichao, Xu Qin, and Mai Menghua in November 1907, Kang described how he declined Chen's tempting invitation to retreat into a more inward-looking focus on Confucianism. It was not until 1913 that Kang and Chen proposed to the Chinese parliament that Confucianism be established as the state religion.⁵² For the time being, Kang vowed to rededicate himself to politics:

The whole country expects me to take a leading role; our comrades are working hard; and the emperor has entrusted me as well. I know I have great responsibilities. How can I can lead an upright life (*jieshen*)

50 Kang Youwei to Liang Qichao, Xu Junmian [Xu Qin], and Mai Rubo [Mai Menghua], November 4, 1907, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 420.

51 Chen, *Economic Principles*, XXI, 71.

52 Chen, *Economic Principles*, XXI, 71; Hsiao, *A Modern China and a New World*, 120. See Zhaoyuan Wan, Chapter 4, "A State Religion," in *Science and the Confucian Religion of Kang Youwei (1858–1927): China Before the Conflict Thesis* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2021), 148–87.

and abandon what I have been pursuing? Since I cannot bear to leave behind our cause, I will definitely take great pains to build it up ... Our party (*wudang*) cannot forgo its development into a political party (*zhengdang*).⁵³

2 Inaugurating the Xianzhenghui: 1907

Kang left his island retreat in Sweden in early January 1907 and traveled in Europe until mid-March, all the while monitoring Xianzhenghui progress as it took shape. He sailed from Liverpool to New York on board the S.S. *Amerika*, accompanied by Linn Chew Sang, his secretary, arriving on March 17.⁵⁴ The same evening, he was feted by local reformists in honor of his fiftieth birthday (forty-nine in Western years) at the Port Arthur Restaurant, which shared the building at 7-9 Mott Street with the reform association headquarters.⁵⁵ Chapters worldwide sent telegrams of congratulation, and Kang was presented with as many as 172 gold medals “as a token of the high esteem in which he is held by his brothers.”⁵⁶ The banquet also marked the formal opening of another enterprise of the Commercial Corporation, namely the New York branch of Huayi Yinhang (Wah Yick Bank), located at 12 Mott Street.⁵⁷

2.1 Plenary Session

After celebrating his birthday, Kang convened the first plenary meeting of the Xianzhenghui in New York City on March 23, 1907. Delegates for thirty-one cities, states, and countries attended the multiday meeting, representing China,

53 Kang Youwei to Liang Qichao, et al., November 4, 1907, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 421.

54 Passenger and Crew Lists, Microcopy T-715, Roll 846; S.S. *Amerika* listed no. 11 Kang's place of birth Singapore. See also no. 521, F. W. Berkshire to Commissioner General of Immigration, March 18, 1907, Chinese File 14735-89, Entry 132, Box 162, RG 85, for report of Kang's arrival.

55 “Dinner to Kang Yu-Wei,” *New York Times*, March 18, 1907, 4.

56 “Moy Dong Jou Here,” *Washington [DC] Herald*, April 3, 1907. The Hartford chapter members “have had a New York goldsmith manufacture a very handsome medal in honor of Mr. Khang” for presentation by Hartford members attending the New York banquet: “Chinese Reform Meeting Sunday,” *Hartford Courant*, March 16, 1907, 5.

57 Lo, “Sequel to Autobiography,” 207. However, Huayi Bank in New York had begun in some form by December 1905; see Kang Youwei to Tan Zhangxiao, December 26, 1905, no. 352 in Fang and Cai, 63–68, which states, “Our New York bank has already begun business. You can tell all other chapters to deposit money in this bank.” Letterhead with the 12 Mott Street address first is seen on May 13, 1907, from Feng Jingquan 馮鏡泉 to Tan Zhangxiao, no. 138-1 in Fang and Cai, 176.

Hong Kong, Macau, and Australia but predominately cities and towns in the United States and Canada, among them San Francisco; Los Angeles; Boston; Hartford; New York; Victoria; Honolulu; Walla Walla, Washington; and Billings, Livingston, Helena, and Butte, Montana.⁵⁸ Informed by telegram only on March 17, some of the attendees arrived during the ten-day session. Among the many familiar faces were: Tang Zhao (Tang Mingsan), a major New York leader who represented many of the far-flung chapters; Tom Leung of Los Angeles; Moy Dong Chew of Chicago; Liang Wenchang representing Walla Walla, Washington, and Sacramento; Moy Wah June (Mei Huazhen) of Boston; Li Meijin of Portland representing four northwestern states; Feng Jingquan representing Helena, Livingston, and Billings, Montana; Zhang Bingya of Victoria; and Joseph Singleton and Yee Guy Maine of New York City. East Coast cities had from two to ten delegates, with New York best represented. A group portrait picturing many of the attendees with Kang seated like a king in the center was saved by Moy Wah June, a long-time member who took over the King Joy Lo restaurant in Chicago in 1912.⁵⁹ As at the 1905 plenary, delegates were called “legislators” or members of a deliberative body (*yíyuan*), empowered to discuss and adopt a new charter. “We could visualize a future meeting of our nation’s legislature in this grand occasion!”

In his three-hour opening address to the plenary on March 23, Kang seemed to assume that the Qing would soon allow the Xianzhenghui to progress from an association to a party. He previewed the future implementation of constitutional government in China; outlined the pros and cons of various countries’ constitutions, the duties and rights of a citizen, and the structure of political parties. He stressed the need to prepare his comrades for this transition through study and practice. The secretary read each of the proposed articles for the new charter three times, followed by discussion and voting up or down, the same procedure as at the 1905 plenary meeting.

The 1907 charter broke new ground for a Chinese political organization, in part because it seemed to straddle the line between an organizational document and a national constitution, probably as Kang intended. Among the

58 “Diguo Xianzhenghui Daji Yiyuan Huiyi Xuli” 帝國憲政會大集議員會議序例 [Account of Imperial Constitutional Association plenary meeting], March 23, 1907, in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui*, 487–95. The following description of the meeting and charter comes from this document. Original may be found at AR-5, AAS ARC 2000/78.

59 “Diguo Xianzhenghui Dahui yiyuan yu Niuyue” 帝國憲政會大會議員于紐約 [Imperial Constitutional Association Legislators at New York plenary meeting], spring, second lunar month, 1907. Thank you to Herman Moy, Moy Wah June’s grandson who inherited this photo.



FIGURE 65 Group photo: “Diguo Xianzhenghui Dahui Yiyuan yu Niuyue” [Imperial Constitutional Society Legislators at New York Plenary Meeting], March 1907.

innovations was Kang’s pioneering use of *Zhonghua* for China, a controversial term for the nation because it shed the traditional form that changed with each dynasty (in this case, the Great Qing Empire, or *Da-Qing Guo*). The use of *Zhonghua* also symbolized the unity of Han and Manchu people, a concept that would anger both the Qing and Xianzhenghui’s revolutionary rivals.

This organization’s name is Diguo Xianzhenghui (Imperial Constitutional Association), but for foreign countries it will be known as *Zhonghua Diguo Xianzhenghui* (China Imperial Constitutional Association), or for short Diguo Xianzhenghui. *Zhina* [支那] is a phonetic transformation [*yinzhuān*] from *Zhonghua*, a name of classic elegance and clarity. *Zhonghua* should always be used in the future for our country’s name.⁶⁰

60 “Diguo Xianzhenghui Daji Yiyuan Huiyi Xuli,” 488. In the charter, Kang greatly condensed his argument, elaborated in the constitutional petition written around the same time (1907), that is, the term *Zhina* 支那 (the Chinese pronunciation of *Shina*, the Japanese term for China) is derived from a Sanskrit word *cina*, a transcription of *Zhuxia* 諸夏,

The introductory articles of the charter explained the rationale for a constitutional system modeled after Britain, Germany, and Japan and argued the case against revolution, points absent in the 1905 charter. Explicitly linking the Xianzhenghui with the September 1, 1906, Qing constitutional mandate, Article 2 states that “this association complies with the imperial edict, its name is Constitutional Association, and its goal is constitutional monarchy.” The Hundred Days of Reform foundational doctrine that “the monarch and the people share the rule (*jun min gongzhi*)” was supplemented by a provision looking to the future, when “there will be no distinction made between Manchu and Han.” Given the anti-Manchu sentiment being enflamed by revolutionists, the charter stated that “all members must abide by this goal and must not be enticed by the heresies of the revolutionaries (*geming xieshuo*), which would lead to internal chaos and begin the partition of China.”⁶¹

While the charter maintained that respect for the imperial family was critical to China’s unity, the goals of the Xianzhenghui now advocated for a parliament and asserting citizen supervision of the government:

Article 4: ... The people are the basis of the nation (*guo yi min wei ben*). Constitutionalism entails popular rights (*minquan*) and public discussion (*gongyi*). Our citizens’ rights have not expanded, and we must try hard to expand them to form a parliament and participate in governing the country.

Article 5: ... Our country is not strong because of government misrule, and thus citizens must rise up and supervise it. Citizens must hold the power of the country’s government, because China is a country belonging to the hundreds of millions of Chinese citizens. Sitting by and watching this corruption is not solely the fault of those who hold power, but we citizens are responsible too ...

Because constitutional government was based on concepts different from China’s current government, these two citizen responsibilities—participating politically and supervising government—could be exercised only after

an abbreviation of Zhuxiazuhua 諸夏諸華 [all of the Xia and all of the Hua—or all the small states under China], from which the name Zhonghua was derived. However, the more common Sanskrit origin of Zhina/Shina is thought to be “Qin 秦,” the first dynasty. Lydia H. Liu, *The Clash of Empires: The Invention of China in Modern World Making* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 265 n21, notes that Kang’s analysis of “the historical transformation of the phonetic patterns of *zhuxia* and *cīna* ... still remains speculation.”

61 “Diguo Xianzhenghui Daji Yiyuan Huiyi Xuli,” in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui*, 489.

education and practice. If citizens didn't learn their responsibilities under this new system, they would not enjoy their new rights. Thus, the Xianzhenghui had to teach its members "how to structure a constitutional government, how to set up a political party, how citizens of a constitutional government and their country are interdependent, and how they rely on political parties." If this was ignored, "we would only be paying lip service to constitutionalism and would go against its principles; we could not become a political party and China would never be strong."⁶² Indeed, there was much discussion of these concepts in Xianzhenghui newspapers from 1906 to 1911, both those edited by Liang Qichao, the association's most effective political educator, and others, such as Sydney's *Tung Wah Times* (*Donghua Bao*).⁶³ Much earlier, in 1902 and 1903, Liang had begun to familiarize Baohuanghui newspaper readers with these ideas, linking political rights of the people to constitutionalism, a parliament, and government supervision.⁶⁴

Future popular rights under a constitutional government were previewed in the charter's delineation of the rights of Xianzhenghui members. Kang also conditioned a member's enjoyment of such rights on payment of membership dues, likening it to a citizen paying taxes to support the government (and losing their rights if they do not):

Article 7: The obligations of this association are that of a political party for the citizens (*guomin zhengdang*). What do we mean when we say our party is for the citizens (*guomin*)? The constitutions of Europe and Japan all use the word *gongmin* or citizen to refer to their people. *Gongmin* pay taxes to support national affairs, so they can elect those who legislate for the government and discuss politics. Those who don't pay taxes cannot be called citizens (*gongmin*) and have nothing to do with state affairs ... The members of our political party have long taken national affairs as

62 Article 6, "Diguo Xianzhenghui Daji Yiyuan Huiyi Xuli," in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui*, 489.

63 *Xinmin Congbao* 新民叢報 (Yokohama), *Zheng Lun* 政論, and *Guofeng Bao* 國風報 (Shanghai) were newspapers Liang Qichao either edited or contributed to regularly during this period. An English-language index of *Tung Wah Times* (Sydney) shows articles with the keyword "constitution" rising from 23 (1905), 37 (1906), 59 (1907) to 63 (1908): See Chinese Australian Heritage Resources, "Tung Wah Newspaper Index," https://resources.chineseaustralia.org/tung_wah_newspaper_index, accessed October 13, 2022.

64 For a clear presentation of Liang's amplification of constitutional concepts for his large readership between 1898 and 1907, see Alison Adcock Kaufman, "One Nation Among Many: Foreign Models in the Constitutional Thought of Liang Qichao," Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 2008, ProQuest (UMI Microform 3306191).

their responsibility. If they don't pay party dues, then how can the party carry out activities and expand its strength? Thus those who don't take responsibility for national affairs and strengthening China can't enjoy the rights later if they don't do their duty now.⁶⁵

Chapter 4 of the 1907 charter offered an extensive list of rights and privileges or *quanli*. Some resembled rights that might be found in a national constitution and others the privileges or benefits of Xianzhenghui membership. The latter were the real incentives to join and pay the required membership fee. Most of these privileges, however, had already been granted in the 1905 charter, but of the rights, only the right to make speeches had appeared earlier.⁶⁶ The *quanli* are listed in the charter in the order below:

Article 15: The right to elect officers and be elected to office. "Any member may be elected to be president (*zongli*), board member (*dongshi*), functionary (*zhiyuan*), outreach activist (*zhili*), or councilor (*yi yuan*), and they may elect candidates for these positions."

Article 16: The right to be received as a guest when traveling to other chapters. "Wherever our organization has a chapter—in Asia, Australia, the Americas, Africa, or Europe—and no matter whether the member has business with the chapter or not, the chapter must receive him. The chapter should take questions about business and industry matters from the guest and offer help; if the visitor is ill or in trouble, the chapter must help him."

Article 17: The right to reception when visiting China. "Hong Kong will employ several receptionists to receive visitors. When a steamship arrives, the receptionist will board the ship and meet the member ... His luggage will be handled by the receptionist and he will be taken on a skiff ashore to retire for the night at an inn ... [and on his way to Guangdong] he will be escorted to his boat on a skiff and helped with his luggage."

Article 22: The right to speak at association meetings. "When the association gathers and discusses issues, all members are allowed to speak, according to the charter, and everyone will listen to what they have to say."

Article 23: The right of appeal (*tousu*). "Whether in one's chapter or another chapter, if an innocent person is framed unjustly or is defamed,

65 "Diguo Xianzhenghui Daji Yiyuan Huiyi Xuli," in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui*, 489–90.

66 See Chapter 7 for a description of the 1905 charter.

he is allowed to appeal to this chapter. After he reports his situation, a decision will be made as to how to help him."

Article 24: The right to protection. "If a member meets with adversity, the chapter will find a way to protect (*baohu*) him."

Article 25: The right to attend and speak at big banquets, lectures, and assemblies. "Whenever there is a big banquet and meeting, all members are permitted to be signed up [as a speaker] for their chapter and to mount the platform to make a speech."

Article 26: The right to be honored by the association. "Members of this association who have made meritorious accomplishments or performed philanthropic acts will be praised in the newspaper or receive a gold, silver or bronze medal. Those whose merits are great will be rewarded with a written banner, and their deeds will be being entered into the historical records. We will hang their portraits or cast bronze statues to ensure that they will not be forgotten."

Article 27: The right to take part in association businesses. "This organization's Commercial Corporation [Shanghai] permits only its members to buy shares. Those who aren't members cannot be shareholders."

There were good reasons for including so many membership rights in the charter. Funding the Xianzhenghui was a high priority for Kang, and articles describing the nature and processes of receiving financial support from members made up a significant portion of the charter. A monthly contribution of 25 cents was now required, and the fee to join the association doubled from \$5 to \$10.⁶⁷ To ensure that funds could support the broader organization, chapters were to remit membership fees every quarter to association headquarters in Hong Kong for chapters in Australia and Asia, or in New York for chapters in the Americas and Europe.⁶⁸ An elaborate paper trail with four-part perforated coupons to prove payment (*pingtie*) was managed by the Hong Kong headquarters, with chapters stamping the coupons with special seals to signify receipt of monthly donations. Members were to update their old Baohuanghui membership cards (*huipiao*) promptly and have their monthly contributions up-to-date if they were to receive privileges such as reception when away from their home chapter. Only members who were "poor, unemployed, or seriously ill" could be exempted from the monthly fee, if guaranteed by two persons.

67 Article 9 specifies that the fees of \$10 or 25 cents be in the member's own currency. "Diguo Xianzhenghui Daji Yiyuan Huiyi Xuli," in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui*, 490.

68 "Diguo Xianzhenghui Daji Yiyuan Huiyi Xuli," in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui*, 491. There was only one known European chapter, in Liverpool, England.

The 1907 charter sought to cultivate young reformers by conferring preferential treatment to students. Exempt from the monthly donations, students would receive a membership badge (*huipai*), granting them the same reception privileges as paying members and subsidy for travel to other chapters. Moreover, meritorious students studying abroad might receive financial aid, and, in keeping with Kang's revived concern with popularizing Confucianism, the best students would be recommended for admission to a distinguished Confucian academy, the Nanjing Guanxue (Nanjing official school), and supplied with room, board, and free tuition. An affiliated student society was to be established, with its president and directors selected from the most promising students, whose duties included managing the organization's student financial aid.

Article 33 asked: "A constitutional government (*xianzheng*) takes legislation (*lifā*) as the key. If we do not comply with the legislation, what would be the basis of governance?"⁶⁹ From this general principle, Chapter 6, "Laws" (*falü*), described a kind of court system or "legal division" (*falübu*) to enforce Xianzhenghui regulations. Formerly, members had often ignored Baohuanghui rules, causing rampant embezzlement of funds, late payments, even traitorous behavior undermining the organization. "Since we have constitutional government, we need to strictly follow the laws. We should scrupulously and respectfully honor the charter (*xianzhang*), and only then will our party achieve constitutional government." A two-level system of justice required a legal bureau in each chapter as well as ad hoc higher bodies appointed by and reporting to Kang that served groups of chapters. "The traitors, attackers, agitators, and those who do not pay their dues will be delivered to the legal bureau. After the legal bureau makes its decision, the president's advice will be sought, and the legal bureau will then decide the punishment."

Like the 1905 Baohuanghui charter, Kang (unnamed but universally known to be the *zongzhang* or president) reigned supreme, unelected and the final arbiter of all administrative and legal matters and general policy decisions. In fact, the 1907 charter explicitly stated that wherever the *zongzhang* happened to be, that place would serve as the actual Xianzhenghui headquarters (*zonghui*). Hong Kong was designated as the head office (*zongju*), where funds were remitted or paid out and membership certificates, donation receipts and badges managed. Similarly, the power of the national Xianzhenghui organizations, such as that of the Canadian Xianzhenghui in Vancouver or the American Xianzhenghui based in San Francisco was downgraded from the status of *zonghui* to *lianhui*, or federations of chapters, functioning as a conduit for

69 "Diguo Xianzhenghui Daji Yiyuan Huiyi Xuli," in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui*, 494.

communication and remittances between smaller chapters and the head office in Hong Kong.⁷⁰

The plenary session adjourned on April 2, and at the farewell banquet, the delegates, dressed in their finery, toasted the emperor, China, President Kang, and the Diguo Xianzhengdang until all were “dead drunk.”⁷¹ Tiring of big city life, Kang and his secretary, Linn Chew Sang, retired to the Hotel Gramatan in Bronxville, New York (southern Westchester County), a few days after the banquet.⁷²

Kang's daughter Tongbi had just entered Barnard College as a special student in February or March, and, with her father in New York City, she “went to see him every day after she had attended classes.”⁷³ Kang, in the manner of a concerned parent, was worried that his presence may have been distracting his daughter from her studies. In May, when in Chicago, he wrote to the dean of Barnard College, saying:

On account of absence of my secretary Mr. Linn, I consumed much of her time and am fear that her frequent absence may have affect her studies considerable. However I sincerely hope that you will excuse her being absenced for this reason.⁷⁴

Tongbi also accompanied her father to a grand banquet at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel hosted by the National Arbitration and Peace Conference on April 17. The Conference president was steel magnate and peace leader Andrew Carnegie. Kang probably did not attend the conference at Carnegie Hall, a serious three-day affair with talks on world government, international arbitration, disarmament, and international peace, but its goals resonated with his Datong utopia. At the banquet, Kang and Tongbi sat at a table with other Chinese, including Columbia student Chen Huanzhang, Linn Chew Sang, and Dr. P. C. Chen, described as “the mandarin's private physician.”⁷⁵ Although many nations were represented at the banquet, “the guests paid little attention to

70 “Diguo Xianzhenghui Daji Yiyuan Huiyi Xuli,” in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui*, 490.

71 “Diguo Xianzhenghui Daji Yiyuan Huiyi Xuli,” in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui*, 487.

72 Lo, “Sequel to Autobiography,” 205.

73 Kung-ch'üan Hsiao, “Family Background of K'ang Yu-wei,” unpublished paper presented at the Modern Chinese History Colloquium, University of Washington, August 12, 1959, 10, quoted with permission of author.

74 Kang Youwei, Chicago Beach Hotel, to Miss L. D. Gill, May 21, 1907, Central Records Office, Barnard College, File no. 710. The excerpt here uses the same grammar as in the original.

75 “Flashing Jewel is Apple of Wei's Eye,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, May 19, 1907, 7; “France Decorates Carnegie,” *New York Sun*, April 18, 1907, 2.

anything other than the Chinese visitors until the speaking began.” Tongbi, in a blue Parisian gown, stunned onlookers because she was not wearing Chinese attire. However, it was Kang’s blue robe with its embroidered peacock and “the jewel which flamed and flashed in the front of his blue skull cap” that caught the attention of the American press. Linn told a reporter that the jewel (perhaps a turquoise as described in 1905 news stories) was one of nine perfect stones in the world and had been in Kang’s family for six hundred years.⁷⁶ Kang was “profoundly interested” in Carnegie’s work and, on April 19, requested an interview with him. Linn’s letter to Carnegie was delivered with a gift of embroidery from China, “a token of remembrance of your bountiful love in the cause of peace” that “overwhelmed” Carnegie.⁷⁷ Kang’s interview was gladly granted and was held either on April 23 or 24.⁷⁸

Business matters, not world peace, preoccupied Kang in the spring and summer of 1907, both in Mexico and the United States. His increased understanding of Western economic systems was tested in the burgeoning Commercial Corporation and his propensity for financial risk-taking given a dangerous outlet. The evidences of this have been fully discussed in Chapters 7 and 8. Here, those adventures are chronicled only as they further the story of Kang’s travels and political activities during this time.

While in New York, Kang met his industrialist friend and fellow speculator Charles R. Flint as he planned another trip to Mexico.⁷⁹ It was Flint who was notified by the Mexican ambassador that President Porfirio Díaz had invited Kang to a long-postponed meeting and Flint who wrote a series of letters to Secretary of Labor and Commerce Oscar Straus and Assistant Secretary of State Robert Bacon, appealing on behalf of “one of the ablest Chinamen living” to “obtain the necessary permit so that he would not be detained at the border”

76 “In the forefront of his black velvet skull cap he sports a gorgeous turquoise ...” “Noted Chinese Reformer,” *Worthington* [MA] *Advance*, July 28, 1905. This story also mentions “a big pink coral button” on top of the cap.

77 P[ivate]. Secretary [for Carnegie] to C. S. Sinn [*sic*], April 22, 1907 (copy), Carnegie Papers, vol. 141, no. 26701J. No further mention of this interview was found in the Andrew Carnegie Papers, MSS 15107, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.

78 C. S. Linn, Hotel Gramatan, Bronxville, NY, to Andrew Carnegie, April 19, 1907; Carnegie Papers, vol. 141, no. 26683A.

79 That Kang and Flint had met in New York is verified by Charles Flint’s letter to Oscar Straus, September 9, 1907, in Chinese File 14735-89. Flint mentions that he saw “over some sixty solid gold tablets, on which were engraved expressions of good will and confidence in His Excellency’s leadership as the Chinese reformer, which were recently sent to him by these different Societies on the occasion of his last birthday.”

upon return from Mexico by way of Eagle Pass, Texas.⁸⁰ Flint's "apparent want of influence" in Washington was evident when Straus refused to exempt Kang from the strict Exclusion Act provisions that required all Chinese except diplomats to enter the United States only at designated ports, such as New York City, where Chinese Inspectors were on hand.⁸¹ Flint did not relent in his protests, and after Kang's return from Mexico, again wrote Straus, this time in vehement tones:

I am familiar with the arguments against unlimited Chinese immigration but even our labor leaders must recognize from a business standpoint in the interest of both commerce and labor the desirability of treating distinguished Chinamen with appropriate consideration. For example, on the return of His Excellency [Kang] to this country, under concession granted by the Mexicans he was in a position to place orders for manufactured products from which "commerce" would probably have received a benefit of \$100,000 and "labor" would certainly have received a benefit of much more than \$100,000.⁸²

The manufactured products Flint might have been referring to could have been for the streetcar line in Torreón, which may have been purchased in the United States the next year by Walter Lim and Wong Foon Chuck.⁸³

In May 1907, before an extended trip to investigate the Commercial Corporation businesses in Mexico, Kang visited Chicago. He told Tom Leung that the Chicago trip was delayed because of illness. To recuperate away from the big city bustle, Kang stayed at the resort-like Chicago Beach Hotel, with its own bathing beach and dock on Lake Michigan, in the city's South Side.⁸⁴ Kang's primary purpose for being in Chicago most likely was to investigate the management of the recently opened magnificent but money-draining King Joy

80 Flint to Bacon, May 21, 1907, RG 59, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/19748403?objectPage=284>, accessed May 25, 2024; Flint to Oscar S. Straus, Secretary of Commerce and Labor, May 23, 1907, in Chinese File 14735-89; RG 85. Chapter 8 has details on the Flint-Kang relationship and Flint's influence on Kang's Mexican pursuits.

81 Straus to Flint, June 10, 1907, in Chinese File 14735-89.

82 Flint to Straus, September 9, 1907, in Chinese File 14735-89. Flint also suggested that the Exclusion Act be amended "in the interest of Commerce and Labor" by being retitled as the "Admission Act" and allow "distinguished" Chinese such as Kang to travel in and out of the United States like any other foreigner, without having to suffer humiliation.

83 See Chapter 8.

84 Kang Youwei, Chicago Beach Hotel, to Miss L. D. Gill, May 21, 1907, Central Records Office, Barnard College, File no. 710.

Lo (Qiongcaillou) restaurant, as well as attempt to extract more funds for his Mexican investments from restaurant profits, particularly for the 300,000 (peso?) streetcar line.⁸⁵ But that was not to be, because King Joy Lo was able to produce a daily profit of only \$50, not enough to fulfill its original purpose to support students and to pay off more than \$30,000 in loans from the Commercial Corporation.⁸⁶

Chicago was home to some of Kang's wealthiest supporters like Chin F. Foin and Moy Dong Chew as well as Kang confidant Liang Qixun. Kang valued this opportunity to meet with Chicago members, whose wavering morale and enthusiasm so often vexed him. This was his fourth visit in two years, and, rather than welcoming his return, members expressed indifference or outright resistance. Liang was so alarmed by reports from those close to the Chicago leadership that he wrote his brother Liang Qichao on May 26, describing the growing anger and resentment against Kang in the chapter.⁸⁷

Kang was brusque and arbitrary toward the members, and, according to Liang Qixun, "whenever a sudden thought hits him, he issues new orders regardless of others' sufferings." It was Kang's pressure on Chicago members for contributions that irked them the most. For example, Kang had asked to see the chapter account books, possibly suspecting Chicago was holding back membership fees that should have been forwarded to Hong Kong. Rather than speaking to the leaders directly, he gave back the account book before leaving Chicago, slipping among its pages an imperious note: "This chapter has spent \$1,200 of the public funds. I urge them to repay the full amount [to the headquarters] immediately." The members were in an uproar when they saw this note, as they had understood that 20 percent of the income could be kept for local uses. The resentment had been building for years, said Liang. Before Kang's first visit to Chicago in 1905, the local chapter leaders (*zhili*) donated nearly \$100 monthly to support chapter expenses, but after each of Kang's visits, the contributions decreased, to the current \$40 a month. Liang's informant, Huang Duo, shocked Liang with the news that when the chapter leaders were asked to give money to buy a gold medal in celebration of Kang's birthday that spring, they had refused: "We only wish President Liang [Qichao] good health, so that our properties and wealth will be secure. Kang is not helping us. Why

85 See Chapters 8 and 9 for details.

86 Feng Jingquan to Tan Zhangxiao, September 28, 1907, no. 138B in Fang and Cai, 169. See Chapter 9 for a breakdown of the loans Tom received for King Joy Lo in 1905–6.

87 Liang Qixun 梁啓勳 to Liang Qichao, May 26, 1907, in *Liang Rengong Xiansheng Zhijiao Shou Zha* 梁任公先生知交手札 [Liang Qichao's Personal Letters in His Handwriting] (Taipei: Wenhai Chubanshe, 1974), 595–602.

are we going to celebrate his birthday?" Liang Qixun concluded, "When I heard this, it was like cold water washing down my head. I was speechless. There is no hope for association business in this city." Liang asked his brother to write a public letter to the chapter leaders with positive news about his successful contacts with reform-minded officials in China. "The only person I can talk openheartedly with is Huang Duo. He says that one public letter from you will help. Please do it quickly, or it will become exceedingly difficult." The hostility of Chicago members to Kang's constant demands for funds, coupled with his authoritarian style, presaged the widespread alienation that would plague the organization in 1909.

Kang left Chicago on May 25, according to Liang Qixun, and may have returned to New York before traveling to Mexico. He arrived in Torreón sometime during the first half of June, when he planned to meet President Díaz and survey local Xianzhenghui investments. He delayed his trip to Mexico City to see Díaz until he completed registration of the Hua-Mo Bank as a "one million dollar company." And, he urged Liang Qixun to persuade Chicago members, such as Moy Dong Chew, to convert their shares in the Yue-Han Railroad into bank shares.⁸⁸ Kang had more confidence in the ambitious plans of his Mexican cohorts, Wong Foon Chuck and Walter Lim, having ordered the trusted Canadian leader Li Fuji to go to Mexico for an extended period of oversight over their businesses. Kang's meeting with Díaz on June 29 was notable for its mutual admiration, with Díaz welcoming Chinese immigration and investment and Kang praising Díaz's presidency as a "unique combination of democratic republic and dictatorship ... that guarantees the government will last long a long time."⁸⁹ Buoyed by his convivial discussion with Díaz, Kang left Mexico on July 4 and arrived by way of Havana in New York on July 12.⁹⁰

Smarting again after being prohibited from crossing the Mexican border into Texas solely because he was Chinese, Kang gave a lengthy interview to the *New York Times*. "With deep feeling and earnestness [Kang] expressed his views of the harsh and irritating manner in which the Chinese Exclusion act is enforced in this country." He spoke of the "unspeakable insults, outrages, and humiliations" the exempt classes of Chinese suffer, "treated as criminals are

88 Kang Youwei to Liang Qixun, June 18, 1907, in Zhang Ronghua 張榮華, ed., *Kang Youwei Juan* 康有為卷 [Kang Youwei Documents] (Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin Daxue Chubanshe, 2015), 15. See Chapter 8 for details on Kang's 1907 trip to Mexico.

89 "Ye Moxige Zongtong Duiwen Ji" 謁墨西哥總統對問記 [Record of a Visit to the Mexican President], essay, June 29, 1907, in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui*, 302–4.

90 H. R. Sisson, Chinese Inspector, New York, to Commissioner General of Immigration, July 12, 1907, Chinese File 14735-89. Also see Passenger and Crew Lists, Roll 943, S.S. *Merida*, July 12, 1907, Nos. 25 and 26, final destination was noted as Stockholm, Sweden.

in other countries.” Among Kang’s proposals was to permit exempt Chinese (such as himself) to enter the United States through any port. Kang welcomed foreign capital and expertise to develop China’s manufacturing and transportation capacity and simultaneously raise the wages and living standards of workers in China who could then spend more on (American) consumer goods. “If you would accord the most-favored-nation treatment to the Chinese, your exports would have a boundless field in that great empire.” But, he warned, the current hostility of Chinese toward “Americans, American goods, [and] American capital” could only be alleviated by better treatment in the United States.⁹¹

2.2 *A New Marriage in the New World*

My beloved was born in America’s Fresno and I was born in Asia’s Nanhai,
With nothing common in background, what brought us two together?...
When I was fifty, my beloved just turned seventeen,
Yet our age gap made no difference.⁹²

Amid this year of intense political, investment, and diplomatic initiatives, Kang was preparing to consummate a passionate two-year love affair conducted by correspondence with the precocious teenager he met in Fresno in March 1905 when she was but fifteen.⁹³ Lily Haw became Kang’s third wife in November 1907 in New York.⁹⁴ Soon, she was not only his soulmate and traveling companion but interpreter and secretary, supplanting his daughter Tongbi. American-born Lily had studied at the Fresno Chinese Confucian School and learned to play the *qin*, or Chinese zither, sing and dance in the classical style, and read and write Chinese. With nine years of American public education and facility in four languages, Spanish, English, Chinese and German, Kang considered

91 “Kang Yu Wei Predicts Increasing Chinese Boycott if His Countrymen Are Not Treated Better Here,” *New York Times*, July 28, 1907, Magazine Section, 11.

92 Kang Youwei, excerpt of a poem quoted in Wang Mingde 王明德, *Bainian Jiazu: Kang Youwei 百年家族: 康有為* [One hundred years of a family: Kang Youwei] (Taipei: Lixu Wenhua Shiye Youxian Gongsi, 2002), 251. Thank you to Connie Kang for translating this and other poems about He Zhanli by her great-grandfather, Kang Youwei.

93 See Chapter 2 for details of their meeting in Fresno on March 12, 1905.

94 Lo, “Sequel to Autobiography,” 210; He Zhanli 何旃理 was called Lingfen 灵芬 by Kang. For example, see Kang Youwei, “Ruishi Youji” 瑞士游記 [Record of Journeys to Switzerland] in *Kang Youwei Quanji*, vol. 8, 330.

Lily well educated in both Chinese and Western subjects.⁹⁵ Her father, Haw Gum, was a prominent member of the Fresno Chinese community. He was a Hakka from Kaiping, Guangdong, and immigrated to the United States at age eighteen. His family was considered quite Americanized in comparison to their compatriots. According to Haw's son, Harry Haw, his father "was among the first to plant grapes in California for market output" and gained wealth and respect as a trilingual foreman and labor contractor for the largest Fresno vineyards.⁹⁶ The Haw family physician was Fresno's most famous doctor, Chester Rowell, who delivered Lily in the Haw family home in 1890.⁹⁷

A board member of the Fresno Baohuanghui chapter, Haw Gum's political leanings influenced his daughter, and Lily "admired [Kang] upon seeing his picture" hung on the wall of their home.⁹⁸ On March 12, 1905, Haw Gum and Lily attended Kang's lecture in Fresno. It was a rousing speech that called for men to cut off their queues and he had further excited the crowd by introducing his utopian idea that men and women should be equal. Already infatuated, Lily approached Kang afterward and offered to play her *qin* for him.⁹⁹ More stories, possibly apocryphal, describe instant attraction between them and one hundred love letters were exchanged during the next two years.¹⁰⁰

95 Kang's poem describing Lily's artistic and linguistic talents is in Wang, *Bainian Jiazu*, 252. An affidavit attesting to Lily's status as American-born by her father Haw Gum, Fresno County, California, notarized August 17, 1908, states that Lily attended public schools for nine years in Fresno County until she left home. This and other documents belonging to He Zhanli were donated by Pang Lian, He Zhanli's daughter-in-law, to the Kang Youwei Residential Museum in Qingdao.

96 Mabelle M. Selland, *From China to Fresno: A Love Story* (Fresno: Heritage Fresno Press, 2007), 42. Harry Haw, "Brief Outline of Hoh Koon Tak [Harry Haw]'s History," 1935, photocopy of one-page typed manuscript thanks to Mabelle Selland, who corresponded with Harry Haw, born in 1904, in 1979.

97 Affidavit of Chester Rowell, MD, Fresno County, California, notarized August 19, 1908, attesting to Lily Haw's birth to Haw Gum and his wife in their home five miles southwest of Fresno on October 11, 1890.

98 Affirmation of Haw Gum's role comes from the photo poster of the "Chinese Empire Reform Association of Fresno, Calif., U.S.A., 1905," in which He Chunfang is pictured with the title of *xieli* [協理 assistant manager], Fresno Historical Society Archives.

99 Chinese historians repeat many colorful details of this romance, without providing primary sources, such as Lin Keguang 林克光, "Kang Youwei yu Aiqie He Zhanli" 康有為與愛妾何旃理 [Kang Youwei and his concubine He Zhanli], *Shijie Ribao* [Chinese World], January 5, 1993. Fresno history books and magazines also include elaborate stories about Kang and He, which are a mix of credible information pertaining to Fresno and obvious fiction describing Kang and things Chinese. The authors have selected the most credible details but await primary sources confirming them.

100 Wang, *Bainian Jiazu*, 246. It should be noted that Wang, 243, dates Kang's Fresno visit to 1907, among other major errors.

Standing tall behind her father and older brother in a family photograph circa 1907, Lily's confident, direct gaze belies her innocent schoolgirl looks.¹⁰¹ Lily's parents disapproved of the thirty-two-year age difference between man and wife, but in the end Kang—with Fresno Baohuanghui leader Ben O. Young and his wife as matchmakers at Kang's request—convinced them to let her journey to New York City and his waiting embrace. In July, Young and his wife escorted Lily cross-country.¹⁰² Young was well-known by Kang as the top Chinese officer of the Fresno Western Military Academy branch who accompanied Kang in uniform on much of his 1905 tour and currently was editor of *Xianzheng Bao* in Los Angeles. However, other Xianzhenghui members openly criticized Kang because he continued to take concubines and were scandalized by the union. In a 1909 letter to Zhang Bingya of Victoria (at the time working at Huayi Bank in New York), Kang defended marrying Lily with a traditional argument for concubines. "This is because I was fifty and without a son, and I am not a Christian."¹⁰³ For historical precedent, Kang pointed to the mythical Emperor Shun who had two wives, King Wen of Zhou who "had a maid escort (*ying*) accompanying his bride" (perhaps signifying Kang's other two much older wives), and even Confucius and his concubine. "How could this be a problem?" Sarcastically, Kang asked Zhang, "Is it satisfying to the members of our party that I and my brother [the martyred Kang Guangren] have no heirs?" Kang said he had planned to have a big wedding party and invite all the New York members, but "you argued with me and threatened me with quitting your position." While not having a large public wedding meant that he saved money and members did not have to bring gifts, "my third wife is still angry with me about it now because she is not known among the members."

Instead, a private ceremony was held at the Hotel Astor early in the tenth lunar month (November 6–December 4, 1907), and only those closest to Kang attended, including his cousin Kang Youpei.¹⁰⁴ Several months later, Lily's mother, now exuding pride as Kang's mother-in-law, was the source for a *Fresno Republican* feature article, "From Vegetable Garden to Pomp of Court Life is Romance of Pretty Chinese Girl of Fresno," with a photograph of a solemn Lily

101 Selland, *From China to Fresno*, 43.

102 "From Vegetable Garden to Pomp of Court Life is Romance of Pretty Chinese Girl of Fresno," *Fresno Republican*, February 16, 1908, 3.

103 Kang Youwei to Zhang Bingya 張炳雅, early 1909, AR-25, AAS ARC 2000/78.

104 "From Vegetable Garden to Pomp of Court Life," *Fresno Republican*, February 16, 1908, 3; Lo, "Sequel to Autobiography," 210; Pang Lian 龐蓮, *Kang Youwei de Jiashi he Wannian Shenghuo* 康有為的家世和晚年生活 [Kang Youwei's Family Background and Later Life] (Shanghai: Renmin Chubanshe, 1983), 5.

in a Chinese wedding robe seated in a chair holding a bouquet of flowers.¹⁰⁵ Kang is described inaccurately as China's consul general in Stockholm, with a photo of their home on Korsholmen Island in Sweden, where every wintry morning, Lily practiced ice-skating, and, by her mother's account, lived a "happy, contented life." Kang's seven-year marriage with Lily was a short but golden interlude that invigorated him and matured Lily with world travel and diplomatic-like responsibilities but ended tragically with Lily's death of smallpox at twenty-four in 1915, only a year after they settled in China, Kang's exile over at last. Kang memorialized his deep mourning in many poems, such as this one recalling their life together:

Having lived abroad all that time with you,
Now back at home without you.
What fate predestined you and I,
To work for a cause hand in hand?
A goddess of many worldly desires,
You my love came down to help.

Together we enjoyed trees and flowers,
You roamed with me far and wide,
Britain, Germany, France, Austria, Sweden, Denmark, Switzerland,
And dwelled with me in Penang and Singapore.
You met high officials and went to royal palaces,
You saw national treasures, cultural performances and historical resorts,
Your talent stemmed from your education in America, and, with gentleness and elegance, my bride entered our family ...¹⁰⁶

After their wedding, Kang and Lily departed for Europe. After touring Paris and traveling by way of Reims and Metz in France they arrived in Germany on November 18.¹⁰⁷ Honeymoon or not, Kang was also investigating a purchase of European equipment for the Mexican streetcar line, as detailed in his travel records.¹⁰⁸ On November 23, they reached Switzerland for visits to Zürich, Luzern, Langnau, and Bern, with a romantic trip to Mount Rigi,

105 "From Vegetable Garden to Pomp of Court Life," *Fresno Republican*, February 16, 1908, 3.

106 Wang Mingde, *Bainian Jiazu*, 251–52.

107 Kang Youwei, "Bu Deguo Youji" 補德國游記 [Supplemental Record of Journeys in Germany] in *Kang Youwei Quanji*, vol. 8, 336–65.

108 Kang Youwei, "Ruishi Youji" in *Kang Youwei Quanji*, vol. 8, 328: "In the tenth month [November 6–December 4, 1907], in order to purchase tram equipment for Mexico, I again traveled to Germany, France and Austria, on the way to Switzerland." Thanks to Chi

riding to the peak through a “jade white sea of clouds” for an “unsurpassably wonderful” view of the Alps, its many lakes concealed amid the mountains.¹⁰⁹ They left Switzerland on November 30, and after brief stops in Austria and Poland, entered into domestic life at Kang’s house on Korsholmen, which he called Hideaway Island (Bidao).¹¹⁰ In a poem, Kang recalled their joy as they approached the island together in December 1907:

With mountains closing in on all sides, the island cloaked in green,
A boat sent out in the lake to pick us up.
A pleasant song warming up the foggy waters,
Yi Tao [Lily Haw] humming while I inscribe poems.¹¹¹

At Kang’s North Sea Lodge, Lily met Kang’s second wife Liang Suijue, who with daughter Kang Tongfu had lived in the Swedish house since Kang bought it in fall 1906. Liang was now ready to bear their daughter Kang Tonghuan, conceived before Kang left for the United States in March 1907. Lily did not adjust easily to her role as third wife. During this first episode of family life, Kang and Lily left in a carriage for a performance when Liang rode up to them demanding that she be allowed to accompany them. Lily angrily refused to appear with Kang in public with both wives at his side, and they all returned home.¹¹² Nevertheless, Lily was Kang’s favorite, and with the Swedish home as their base, when the lake ice began to melt in March 1908, Kang decided “not to be bound by a place—following my fate should be the way.”¹¹³ They left the island for two months to tour Egypt, Germany, Austria, Slovenia, Croatia, and from Saxony,

Jeng Chang for pointing out this and other details of Kang’s European itinerary that differ from Lo, “Sequel to Autobiography,” which does not include these supplemental records.

109 Kang Youwei, “Ruishi Youji” in *Kang Youwei Quanji*, vol. 8, 330.

110 Kang Youwei, “Ao Youji” 奥游記 [Record of Journeys to Austria] in *Kang Youwei Quanji*, vol. 8, 386; Lo, “Sequel to Autobiography,” 210.

111 “Zi Mei fan Rui zai you, shao Shibadun hu fan zhou” 自美返瑞再游, 稍士巴頓湖泛舟 [Returning to Sweden from America, in a boat on a lake coming from Saltsjöbaden] in *Kang Youwei Quanji* 康有為全集 [Collected Works of Kang Youwei], ed. Jiang Yihua and Zhang Ronghua 姜義華, 張榮華 (Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin Daxue Chubanshe, 2007), vol. 12, 277; Chi Jeng Chang and Connie Kang, “Kang Youwei Bidao” 康有為“避島” [Kang Youwei’s Hideaway Island] (unpublished paper, 2022). Yi Tao 漪濤 was Kang’s nickname for Lily Haw, meaning ripples on the waves.

112 Wang, *Bainian Jiazu*, 248.

113 Kang Youwei, “Bi Dao Eryue Hu Bing Jian Jie” 避島二月湖冰漸解 [Lake Ice Starting to Melt in the 2nd month on Hideaway Island], *Kang Youwei Quanji*, vol. 12, 284; translated by Connie Kang.

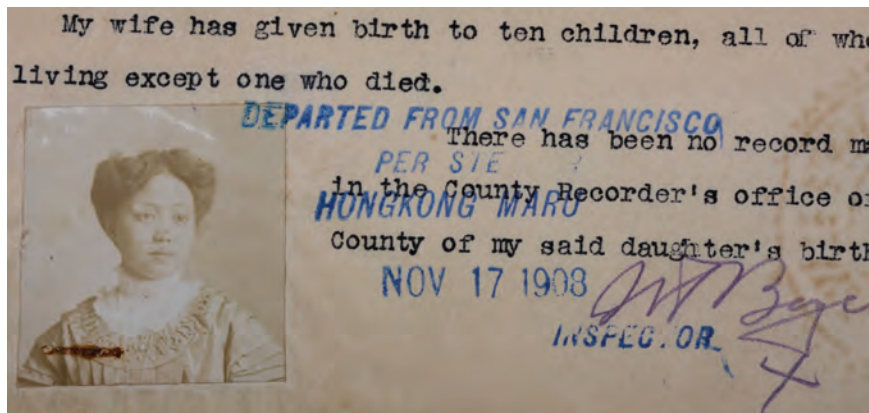


FIGURE 66 Portion of Lily Haw's travel document with departure stamp from San Francisco, November 17, 1908 on *Hongkong Maru*.

Germany returned to Sweden in May when Kang learned that his eldest daughter Tongwei and husband Mai Zhonghua were coming to visit.¹¹⁴

Back at Hideaway Island, Kang noted that Lily at first celebrated gaily with the rest of the family upon the arrival of Tongwei and her husband in May.¹¹⁵ However, with Tongbi soon to join them from New York for her summer vacation and an imminent reunion of Kang and his adult daughters, Lily left Kang's side to return to the United States, perhaps in anger or in jealousy at losing her place at the center of his attention.¹¹⁶ In Fresno with her parents, Lily arranged for several affidavits attesting to her birth in the United States, which she would keep with her so that she could return in the future in accordance with Chinese Exclusion laws.¹¹⁷ When Tongbi returned to the United States to resume her college studies, she was accompanied by Tongwei, who went west to visit

114 Kang Youwei to Liang Qichao, et al., November 4, 1907, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 422, mentions Kang's hope of visiting Egypt. Although Kang's trip to Egypt was not noted by Lo, "Sequel to Autobiography," the trip is verified in early 1908 from his poems—see *Kang Youwei Quanji*, vol. 12, 300–4.

115 Kang Youwei, "Tongwei Nü Jiubie Wunian" 同薇女久别五年 [Separated for Five Years from Lady Tongwei] in *Kang Youwei Quanji*, vol. 12, 285.

116 Chi Jeng Chang, email January 18, 2023, speculates Lily Haw left Sweden at the end of May or early June 1908, before Tongbi arrived.

117 Affidavits attesting to Lily's status as American-born by her father Haw Gum, her mother Chun See, Dr. Chester Rowell who delivered Lily, and J. W. Ragsdale, peace officer in Chinese quarter, Fresno County, California, with departure stamp over photo of Lily Haw, "Departed from San Francisco Per Steamer Hongkong Maru, November 17, 1908." These materials were donated by Kang Tongning's wife Pang Lian to the Kang Youwei Residential Museum, Qingdao, China.

Tom Leung and Wong Bing Woo in Los Angeles that fall. Tongwei then met Lily, now seven months pregnant with Kang's second son. They sailed together from San Francisco to Hong Kong on November 17, 1908.¹¹⁸

Lily stayed in Hong Kong with Kang's first wife, Zhang Yunzhu, and gave birth to son Kang Tongning on January 25, 1909. In August Zhang escorted Lily and her baby to Penang to rejoin Kang.¹¹⁹ During Kang's long exile, Zhang, the mother of Tongbi and Tongwei, lived in Hong Kong and was responsible for the care of her mother-in-law and other family members. After returning to Penang in September 1908, Kang would finally welcome his first surviving son—Kang Tongjian (Kang Shouman, Simon Kang)—who was born there in December to second wife Liang Suijue. Kang's expanding family eventually included three more wives, each of whom married Kang as teenagers. With Lily Haw's approval, in 1914, Kang married his Japanese maid Ichioka Tsuruko (Hezi); in 1915, after Lily's death, Kang took his fifth wife, Liao Dingzheng; and in 1919, Kang wed a sixth wife, Zhang Guang, the sister of two of Kang's servants from a West Lake (Xi Hu, Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province) fishing family. Kang's last three wives went unmentioned in Kang Tongbi's sequel to her father's autobiography, presumably because she disapproved of these marriages.¹²⁰ Sixteen children, including three adopted daughters (one by Kang's sixth wife after his death), were Kang's descendants, although only ten lived to adulthood.¹²¹

Kang's correspondence shows that he continued to be deeply involved both in attempting to salvage Commercial Corporation investments in Mexico and in allocating funds for political activities organized by Xianzhenghui vice president Liang Qichao inside China. However—perhaps because of his intense love life, extensive travels in Egypt, Turkey, Europe, and Ceylon in 1908 and 1909, or because of mutual estrangement with chapters such as Chicago—Kang would never again be an active presence in the Xianzhenghui or the

118 Kang Tongwei 康同薇 to Huang Binghu 黃冰壺, January 29, 1909, no. 103, Tom Leung Collection, Asian Library, University of California, Los Angeles, <https://digital.library.ucla.edu/catalog/ark:/21198/zz002313df>, accessed January 21, 2023.

119 Chi Jeng Chang shared this information from Kang Tongbi's unpublished memoirs. Kang had been traveling with Kang Tongbi and Luo Chang.

120 Zhang Hongping 張紅萍, *Kang Youwei yu ta Shenbian de Nüxing* 康有為與他身邊的女性 [Kang Youwei and the Women by his Side] (Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin Gong'an Daxue Chubanshe, 2012), 140.

121 Kang's third and fourth daughters and first and second sons died in infancy; his eighth daughter Kang Tongtan 康同倓 by He Zhanli died in a car accident at seventeen, and his ninth daughter Kang Tongling 康同令 by Liao Dingzheng 廖定徵 died at age twelve. See Appendix 3, "Kang Youwei's Family."

Commercial Corporation. Although Tongbi records that he returned to Canada in 1909, there is no corroboration of this. Yet in many ways Kang's political power peaked during these last years before the founding of the Republic, borne by his followers and by the greater numbers now carrying out his reform agenda inside China.

3 A Year of Sweeping Change: 1908

Although 1908 ended tragically with the sudden death of the Guangxu Emperor, the year was one of aggressive political activism by the reformers, who took advantage of the Qing's new openness to constitutional government and its apparent encouragement of initiatives by citizen reformers. Coming to the fore as Kang receded, Liang Qichao led the Xianzhenghui deeper into domestic Chinese politics. With the goal of becoming an official political party in China that would reincorporate the Xianzhenghui, Liang attempted to sink organizational roots on Chinese soil by working closely with reformist officials and elite supporters to spread constitutional reform ideas throughout China. In the background, Kang mobilized his overseas followers behind a constitutional petition that pushed the boundaries of the politically acceptable, bringing a hostile response from the Qing that ended Liang's organization and, at the same time, radicalized reformers' demands and broadened their appeal to like-minded Chinese within and outside the government.

3.1 *Organizing Inside China*

Liang Qichao had been preparing his affiliated political organization, Zhengwenshe (Political Information Society), since late 1906. He gathered support from reform-minded officials and sought funding to expand quickly, once the Zhengwenshe was launched inside China. Liang envisioned a cadre of experienced reform activists who could operate in concert with the Qing during the preparatory period for a constitutional government. Liang had long cultivated ties with Duanfang and other Qing court members, and hoped that Kang's toxic reputation with the Empress Dowager would not threaten the new organization. Liang was not as polarizing a figure as his mentor, but he was still a wanted man in China. Thus, he had to work from behind the scenes in Japan, while respectable reformers close to him would be Zhengwenshe's public face. Although Liang had hoped that the organizers could fund the party's initiation with 150,000 yuan, including 50,000 yuan in expected secret contributions from Yuan Shikai, Duanfang, and Zhao Erxun, he clearly depended on Kang's

fundraising to sustain its long-term development.¹²² However, neither support nor tolerance of the budding political party came from Yuan, who quickly became Zhengwenshe's fiercest opponent.

The lengthy organizational development of Zhengwenshe meant that Yang Du, who was originally part of Liang's inner circle of organizers in Japan, split off to form his own political association, even incorporating Xianzhenghui into its name. He called it Xianzheng Gonghui (Association for Constitutional Government) and began activities in China in December 1907.¹²³ Liang did not inaugurate Zhengwenshe in Tokyo until October 1907.¹²⁴ Concurrently with Zhengwenshe, *Zheng Lun* (Political Commentary), a new monthly journal, was published in Shanghai for the purpose of educating Qing officials on implementing constitutional government. An associated educational society—Liudong Gongxuehui (Public Scholarly Association for Chinese Students)—was formed in Tokyo to provide scholarships and cultivate future political cadres for Zhengwenshe. Liang designated seventy-year-old Ma Xiangbo in Shanghai as titular Secretary General of Zhengwenshe, based on his personal respect for Ma's knowledge of constitutionalism and Western thought and his ties with sympathetic officials. Liang sent his close Wanmucaotang classmate Tang Juedun to act as Ma's secretary and do much of Zhengwenshe's lobbying with Prince Pulun and Prince Su (Shanqi), among other important allies in Beijing.¹²⁵ The four-point Zhengwenshe program was an action plan directed to the Qing court. The plan included:

- Setting up a legislative system and establishing a responsible government.
- Collating and stipulating laws and consolidating independent judicial power.
- Firmly establishing local government and setting the jurisdictions of the central government and localities.
- Upholding China's equal powers in foreign relations.¹²⁶

Zhengwenshe's first public meeting in Tokyo, on October 17, 1907, attracted as many as 1,500 people, including 200 new members, as well as Chinese

122 Liang Qichao to Kang Youwei, last half of December 1906 or first half of January 1907 [tenth month, 28th day, Guangxu 32], in Ding and Zhao, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 372.

123 Edward J. M. Rhoads, *Manchus and Han: Ethnic Relations and Political Power in Late Qing and Early Republican China, 1861–1928* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2000), 127.

124 Chang Yu-fa 張玉法, *Qingjide Lixian Tuanti* 清季的立憲團體 [Constitutionalists of the Late Ch'ing Period: An Analysis of Groups in the Constitutional Movement, 1895–1911] (Taipei: Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, 1985), 348–56.

125 Chen Xuezhong 陳學章, "Liang Qichao yu Tang Juedun" 梁啟超與湯覺頓, [Liang Qichao and Tang Juedun], unpublished paper.

126 Published in *Zheng Lun* 政論 [Political Commentary], no. 1, October 1907, see Ding and Zhao, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 419–20. Also see Chang, *Qingjide lixian tuanti*, 349; Joseph R. Levenson, *Liang Ch'i-ch'ao and the Mind of Modern China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), 2d rev. ed., 77–78.

merchants and students, Japanese supporters, and Japanese bodyguards.¹²⁷ Inauspiciously, Liang's speech extolling the Qing move to constitutionalism was violently disrupted by a group of Tongmenghui leaders and revolutionary students, who mounted the stage to take over the meeting.¹²⁸ Liang was physically attacked as he fled the hall. While the open hostility of the revolutionaries to Liang's moderate constitutionalism was the greater challenge in Japan, inside China Zhengwenshe faced more dangerous threats from the Qing.

In December 1907, Liang Qichao received Prince Pulun in Japan. Pulun was drafting the regulations for Political Consultative Council (Zizhengyuan), the Qing provisional proto-legislative body. Their meeting was an attempt to influence how the court implemented its constitutional preparations. Liang specified four key powers that a legislature should hold: legislation, approving a budget, signing treaties, and impeachment.¹²⁹ He soon found that even if the open-minded Pulun were persuaded, Cixi's court would never go so far. Indeed, on December 24, a Qing decree warned that the implementation of constitutional government was being impeded by "people who have made these constitutional reforms a pretext for meddling in the internal and foreign concerns of the government" and had incited many others to join "the general chorus of interference."¹³⁰

Nevertheless, Zhengwenshe pursued openly political activities, compared to the more circumspect China-based arms of the Xianzhenghui, including the influential *Shi Bao* (*Eastern Times*) newspaper in Shanghai and the newly opened Guangdong Gongxue. While Xianzhenghui continued to be banned inside China, Zhengwenshe represented an unparalleled opportunity to enter the Qing political arena. In November 1907, Kang wrote Liang and others leading Zhengwenshe members in Tokyo:

We have a good reputation and should try to keep it. This way, we will unite Chinese people and overseas Chinese alike; a political party is easy to form. We do not have powerful rivals now. We will have a parliament,

127 Xu Fosu 徐佛蘇, "Ji Liang Rengong xiansheng yishi" 梁任公先生逸事 [Record of Anecdotes about Mr. Liang Qichao], in Ding and Zhao, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 417–18; Levenson, *Liang Ch'i-ch'ao*, 78.

128 Ruth Hayhoe and Lu Yongling, ed., *Ma Xiangbo and the Mind of Modern China, 1840–1939* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1996), 42.

129 Hou Yijie 侯宜傑, *Ershi Shiji chu Zhongguo Zhengzhi Gaige Fengchao: Qingmo Lixian Yundong Shi* 二十世紀初中國政治改革風潮: 清末立憲運動史 [Agitation for Political Reform in Early Twentieth Century China: History of the Late Qing Constitutionalist Movement] (Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin Daxue Chubanshe, 2009), 147–48.

130 John H. Fincher, *Chinese Democracy: The Self-Government Movement in Local, Provincial and National Politics, 1905–1914* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981), 98–99.

and there will be a thirst for people of talent. Thus if we accept this [role], we will become a powerful party.¹³¹

In February 1908, Zhengwenshe moved into China, its leaders emboldened by the deceptively liberalized political atmosphere and Liang's alliances with various Manchu imperial family members and officials, including Duanfang and Prince Su.¹³² The organization quickly expanded to five hundred members, with Ma Xiangbo, Xu Fosu, and Mai Menghua in the lead at the Shanghai headquarters and a bureaucratic structure involving more than seventy local leaders.¹³³ Provincial chapters were organized, and newspapers and schools established, with the focal point Hankou, the longtime treaty port with a heavy presence of Guangzhou merchants. In winter 1907, Liang Qichao had founded both a newspaper, *Jiangnan Gongbao* (also known as *Dajiang Ribao*), and a law and politics college, *Jiangnan Gongxue*, in Hankou.¹³⁴ On March 3, 1908, Ma publicly announced Zhengwenshe's intention to engage with a broad range of people and organizations inside China. Zhengwenshe held its first regular meeting on June 18. Ma's inaugural speech disparaged the Chinese people for their submission to autocratic government and blamed himself and "other progressive people" for putting up with evil too long and urged them to seek their redemption in Zhengwenshe.¹³⁵

Kang was in charge of funding Zhengwenshe, initially directing the Huayi Bank in New York to send Liang \$7,000.¹³⁶ Although the organization's expenditures were 1,000 yuan a month in January 1908, Liang Qichao asked Kang for 2,000 a month, or 24,000 yuan a year. Liang wrote: "If we could get the funds from Hong Kong, it would be great, as it is more convenient. Could you please deal with this as soon as possible?"¹³⁷ Ideally, he concluded, "if we could raise 100,000 [yuan] in North, Central, and South America for Zhengwenshe, this would be the best. If we cannot, then just as you have said before, we can try to raise the amount needed month by month." Kang responded that he had asked

131 Kang Youwei to Liang Qichao, et al., November 4, 1907, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 421.

132 Kang Youwei to Liang Qichao, March 9, 1908, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 444.

133 Chang, *Qingjide Lixian Tuanti*, 350–53.

134 Chang, *Qingjide Lixian Tuanti*, 354.

135 Hayhoe and Lu, *Ma Xiangbo*, 214–18.

136 Kang Youwei to Liang Qichao, et al., November 4, 1907, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 420.

137 Liang Qichao to Kang Youwei, January 26, 1908, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 431–34.

Hong Kong to pay Liang a 1,500 yuan monthly stipend, and he said he could raise no money in Central and South America because “they have banned Chinese people; every city there stopped me from going last year.”¹³⁸ With Commercial Corporation businesses stretched to their limits (see Chapter 9), Kang was forced to put his efforts into salvaging the banks, Mexican street-car project, and a rice brokerage in Penang, to the detriment of both political efforts and his own health.

Zhengwenshe's immediate problem was opposition from Yuan Shikai. Liang Qichao hoped to form an alliance with highly placed Manchus and officials in the imperial court who would oust Yuan, but Kang worried that Liang had not recruited people with the needed social status and ability to link up with the five men in the “enlightened group” (*kaiming pai*) who might carry out their plan.¹³⁹ Furthermore, Kang admitted this would require “a huge amount of money.” Indeed, Kang was correct that Liang's trusted assistant in Beijing, Tang Juedun, could not rally official backing for the overthrow of Yuan, and even worse, Yuan got wind that Zhengwenshe was plotting against him.¹⁴⁰ In the meantime, however, Zhengwenshe, blocked from becoming a formal political party, was fomenting popular confrontation with the Qing—an anti-Japanese boycott and a fund to modernize China's navy—while publicizing the constitutionalist message, cloaked in patriotic rhetoric.

China's first mass movement was the 1905 anti-American boycott to protest U.S. Exclusion policy. In 1908, a new target of “boycott nationalism” rose to the fore with the first Chinese boycott against Japan. Just as in 1905, the 1908 boycott was provoked by painful humiliation inflicted on China by a foreign country. More openly than had the Baohuanghui in 1905, the Xianzhenghui played a major organizational and propaganda role, and, as in 1905, overseas chapters were heavily involved. In 1905, the Shanghai newspaper *Shi Bao* took the lead supporting the boycott inside China, but now nationalistic fervor was sparked by Zhengwenshe's exploitation of antforeignism and the pervading sense of China's weakness. Both Zhengwenshe and Xianzhenghui unambiguously advanced what had always been the reformers' core political agenda, constitutionalism. This time, the boycott organizational efforts were amplified by two

138 Kang Youwei to Liang Qichao, March 9, 1908, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 443–47. Kang also claimed to have met his obligation of 2,000 yuan a month to Liang by previous payments from Hong Kong, New York, and himself that added up to 24,500 yuan.

139 The five men were Prince Qing, Prince Su, Tieliang, Duanfang, and Prince Zaize.

140 Chen, “Tang Juedun.”

Xianzhenghui newspapers, *Shang Bao* (Commercial News) in Hong Kong and *Guoshi Bao* in Guangzhou.

The boycott was sparked on February 5, 1908, when Qing naval officers boarded the *Tatsu Maru*, a Japanese ship docked in Macau. The officers seized the ship's contraband—smuggled weapons purchased by Sun Yatsen in Japan for his revolutionaries in Guangdong. They replaced the ship's Japanese flag with the dragon banner and detained the ship at the Huangpu anchorage in Guangzhou. Inflamed by the Qing detention of the *Tatsu Maru* and its cargo, the Japanese government refused to admit wrongdoing and demanded the Qing government apologize and reimburse Japan for the seized rifles and ammunition.¹⁴¹ Widespread public outrage in Guangdong at Japanese intimidation and fear that the Qing court would capitulate moved local merchants into action. They allied with reformers to cable the Foreign Ministry in Beijing insisting that China affirm its sovereignty.

As the reformers feared, the Qing yielded completely to Japan's unwavering demands on March 15, and the reformers turned their wrath on China's government. Xu Qin, Luo Xiaogao, Wu Xianzi, and Ye En, among other staunch Xianzhenghui and Zhengwenshe leaders in China and Hong Kong, joined the Guangdong Merchants Self-Government Association (Yueshang Zizhihui), led by self-made civic activist Chen Huipu, to organize an anti-Japanese boycott.¹⁴² Xianzhenghui publications rallied support as they did in the 1905 boycott. Notably, Chen Yikan, the pioneering editorialist for *Xin Zhongguo Bao* in Honolulu who was credited by Liang Qichao for inspiring the 1905 anti-American boycott, had returned to China to edit *Guoshi Bao* in Guangzhou. It became the official mouthpiece of the Guangdong Merchants Self-Government Association. From Shanghai, Zhengwenshe leaders Xu Fosu and Fan Bingjun rallied their local compatriots from Guangdong and Guangxi to support the boycott, and *Zheng Lun* published boycott speeches, telegrams, and articles.¹⁴³

141 Sin-kiong Wong, "The Tatsu Maru Incident and the Anti-Japanese Boycott of 1908: A Study of Conflicting Interpretations," *Chinese Culture* (Singapore) 34, no. 3 (September 1993): 77–92; Jung-fang Tsai, *Hong Kong in Chinese History: Community and Social Unrest in the British Colony, 1842–1913* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 207–37.

142 Edward J. M. Rhoads, *China's Republican Revolution: The Case of Kwangtung, 1895–1913* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975), 137, 139–40; Akira Iriye, "Public Opinion and Foreign Policy: The Case of Late Ch'ing China" in *Approaches to Modern Chinese History*, ed. Albert Feuerwerker, Rhoads Murphey, and Mary C. Wright (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), 227; Michael Tsing, *Nation, Governance, and Modernity in China: Canton, 1900–1927* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), 33–36.

143 Wu, *Dangshi*, 53.

Although the eight-month-long boycott was primarily limited to Shanghai, Hong Kong, and Guangdong, Xianzhenghui members abroad held meetings, communicated with boycott organizers in China, raised funds, and targeted local merchants who sold Japanese products. This is well-documented in Sydney, Australia's *Tung Wah Times*, which first alerted its readers to the boycott on March 28 and a week later urged them to boycott Japanese goods in solidarity with their Cantonese compatriots.¹⁴⁴ Twenty-three of the fifty issues in 1908 contained at least one and as many as seven articles about the boycott as it developed in Australia, the United States, China, and Hong Kong.¹⁴⁵ Mei-fen Kuo observes that support for the boycott was not universal in Australia, perhaps because the merchants who were its greatest advocates for patriotic reasons were reluctant to sign an agreement committing to neither dealing in Japanese goods nor using Japanese shipping lines, under a stiff penalty of £50 if violated.¹⁴⁶

The impact of the 1908 boycott on Japan's trade was far greater than the 1905 anti-American boycott had been on Chinese business with the United States. Declines were seen almost immediately, affecting Japanese business in shipping, insurance, tobacco, clothing, and even wooden matches.¹⁴⁷ Edward Rhoads notes that wooden matches had always been imported from Japan, and in response, "by October [1908] at least eight large match factories had been started" in Guangzhou and Foshan and that it was "probably no coincidence that at roughly the same time the Japanese match industry in Kōbe experienced a serious slump." Reform-minded Chinese merchants in Kōbe and Osaka had found a way they could participate in the boycott that was both "patriotic" and profitable and would not directly antagonize their Japanese hosts—they established factories in China to manufacture products that they had once exported from Japan and capitalized on the new "native products" craze sweeping their countrymen.¹⁴⁸ In some cases at least, the same merchants behind this broad

144 "Special Report," *Donghua Bao*, March 28, 1908; "Editorial," *Donghua Bao*, April 4, 1908.

145 This figure comes from a search of the *Tung Wah Times* (Sydney) index for the keywords "boycott" and "Japanese" in 1908: Chinese Australian Heritage Resources, "Tung Wah Newspaper Index," https://resources.chineseaustralia.org/tung_wah_newspaper_index, accessed February 29, 2024.

146 Mei-fen Kuo, *Making Chinese Australia: Urban Elites, Newspapers and the Formation of Chinese-Australian Identity, 1892–1912* (Victoria, Australia: Monash University Publishing, 2013), 168–69.

147 Rhoads, *China's Republican Revolution*, 138–39; Tsai, *Hong Kong in Chinese History*, 217–20.

148 Chen Laixin 陳來辛, "20 Shiji Chuqi de Dizhi Meihuo he Dizhi Rihuo Yundong yu Riben Shen-Ban Diqi de Huaqiao" 20 世紀初期的抵制美貨和抵制日貨運動與日本神阪地區的華僑 [Early Twentieth Century Boycotts against the U.S. and Japan and Overseas Chinese Merchants in Kōbe and Osaka, Japan], in *Wenming Kangzheng—Jindai*

surge in manufacturing investment were also leading the boycott. For example, the Guangdong Merchants Self-Government Association saw an opportunity to overcome Japanese domination of the Chinese market for marine products and launched the Seventy-two Guilds Fishing Industry Company in September 1908.¹⁴⁹ Ye En's fishery company, founded in 1905 with Commercial Corporation funding, had already failed before it could benefit from this boost to the marine products industry.¹⁵⁰

The boycott persisted longest in Hong Kong. A riot in November targeted Chinese stores still selling Japanese goods, provoking Japanese government protests to the Chinese authorities that Kang's followers were behind the boycott. They pointed to Xu Qin in Guangzhou and Wu Xianzi in Hong Kong, editor of the well-read Xianzhenghui newspaper, *Shang Bao*, which sold as many as 7,000 copies daily and carried on running battles with revolutionary newspapers.¹⁵¹ Wu's actions provoked the Japanese consul general to pressure the Hong Kong governor general to expel him. In retaliation, Wu convinced Hong Kong merchants to boycott British products and withdraw their deposits from the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank, kicking this action off by withdrawing HK\$30,000 from Xianzhenghui's Huayi Bank account.¹⁵² The defiant Wu hired a lawyer to appeal his expulsion in court, and the Hong Kong government backed down and withdrew the order. In his history of the Democratic Constitutional Party, Wu unabashedly described this as Hong Kong's most important legal case of the past one hundred years, which demonstrated the strength of the Xianzhenghui in asserting China's national sovereignty.¹⁵³ The boycott did not end in Hong Kong until January 1909. The reformers had won the public opinion battle not only over Japan and the British government, but the nationalistic appeal of the movement left the revolutionary faction out of step by opposing the boycott, because it cut off their source of smuggled arms and also benefited the reformers.¹⁵⁴

Zhongguo yu Haiwai Huaren Lunji 文明抗爭: 近代中國與海外華人論集 [Civilized Protests: Essays on Modern China and the Chinese Diaspora], ed. Wong Sin Kiong 黃賢強 (Hong Kong: Commercial Press, 2005), 190–221.

149 Tsai, *Hong Kong in Chinese History*, 226.

150 See Chapter 9.

151 Wu, *Dangshi*, 53–54; Iriye, "Public Opinion and Foreign Policy," 227; Rhoads, *China's Republican Revolution*, 107–108, 139; Hu Yinghan, *Wu Xianzi Zhuanji* [Biography of Wu Xianzi] (Hong Kong, 1953), 8.

152 Tsai, *Hong Kong in Chinese History*, 235.

153 Wu, *Dangshi*, 54.

154 Tsai, *Hong Kong in Chinese History*, 220–23, 237.

More so than in 1905, the protestors turned much of their wrath on the Qing government for its weakness, even holding a number of “national humiliation” (*guochi*) meetings in Guangdong and accusing the Foreign Ministry of disloyalty for agreeing to Japan’s terms.¹⁵⁵ “Our people will not live until this government dies! This case [*Tatsu Maru*] shows the Qing’s buffoonery and incompetence!” So read an essay published during the boycott in Penang’s Xianzhenghui-run newspaper, *Bincheng Xin Bao*.¹⁵⁶

A new twist in the 1908 boycott was fundraising to modernize China’s national defense. The humiliation of the *Tatsu Maru* affair heightened a widespread sense of impending crisis among overseas Chinese, who observed China’s national power at an all-time low and feared their own vulnerability as emigrants without recourse to protection from the Qing. They believed that to survive, China had to be able to defend itself militarily. In 1906, Kang had proposed a fund to revitalize the Chinese navy, thus germinating this idea among his followers.¹⁵⁷ Beginning in the United States, Xianzhenghui leaders solicited donations for a naval fund to strengthen China and prevent future aggression by countries such as Japan. A certificate documents the contribution of \$150 to the Guomin Haijunhui (Citizens’ Naval Society) by Xianzhenghui member Feng Jingquan of Helena, Montana, issued on April 30, 1908.¹⁵⁸ It is illustrated with a photograph of a naval ship and crossed flags, one with an anchor, the other the Chinese dragon. Following the example of Chinese in America, Sydney’s Xianzhenghui newspaper, *Tung Wah Times* reported that after “scrimping on food and clothing,” Australian Chinese donated at least 20,000 taels to the naval fund, with all the donors’ names published in the

155 Rhoads, *China’s Republican Revolution*, 137.

156 “Qing Kou Rimu Gu Kuai Zhuang Ziyong Zhong” 請叩日暮鼓快撞自由鐘 [Please Beat the Evening Drum and Strike the Bell of Freedom], *Bincheng Xin Bao*, April 10, 1908, quoted in Wong Sin Kiong, “Xin-Ma Huaren Zhi Wenming Dizhi—20 Shijichude Xuanchuan yu Kangzheng” 新馬華人之文明抵制—20 世紀初的宣傳與抗爭 [Civilized Boycotts by Chinese in Singapore and Malaya: Early Twentieth Century Propaganda and Protests] in Wong, ed., *Wenming Kangzheng*, 178–79.

157 “Baohuanghui tichang haijun juan” 保皇會提倡海軍捐 [Three-part report from overseas Chinese Empire Reform Association to the Beijing authority suggesting donations to revitalize the Chinese navy] *Tung Wah Times*, September 15, 22, and 29, 1906.

158 Certificate of donation by Feng Jingquan to the Guomin Haijunhui, AR-14, AAS ARC 2000/78; described in Gao Weinong 高偉濃, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui zai Meiguo Huaqiao Shehui zhong de Huodong* 二十世紀初康有為保皇會在美國華僑社會中的活動 [Activities of Kang Youwei and the Baohuanghui among the Chinese in the United States in the First Part of the Twentieth Century] (Beijing: Xueyuan Chubanshe, 2009), 199–200.

newspaper.¹⁵⁹ However, the donors stipulated that the funds would be kept in a bank until a parliament was formed and only then turned over to the Qing government. Through this unusual means, the Australian Chinese hoped to influence Chinese political reform.

3.2 *Kang's Constitutional Petition Turns the Tide of Reform*¹⁶⁰

The last significant political campaign undertaken by the Xianzhenghui overseas and Zhengwenshe inside China was the petition movement calling for the Qing court to convene a parliament and draft a constitution. This movement involved reformers of all stripes, including officials in the Qing government. Most were provincial elites, and almost all had read Xianzhenghui-sponsored newspapers published in Japan or Shanghai and had come to champion nationalism, economic rights, constitutionalism, and representative government, as espoused by the reformers, many of whom joined the first provincial assemblies in 1909. Zhengwenshe and Xianzhenghui were at the vanguard of the petition movement to jolt the Qing court into accelerating its plodding but methodical plan for a lengthy constitutional transition. From 1907 to 1911, Kang and Liang played the role of provocateurs and were treated as such by the Qing.

The original September 1, 1906 edict announcing the court's intention to transition to constitutional government did not specify a timetable for the initiation of reforms, only a vague statement that "after several years" of preparing regulations and educating the people about constitutional government, "we shall then notify the empire. The time limit depends on the rate of progress made."¹⁶¹ A year later, when little had been heard from the court—due largely to the resistance of conservatives who effectively stalled the process—the once-optimistic reformers grew restless and believed the slow progress of the Qing betrayed its resistance to giving up political power. The Qing's

159 Wu Longyun 吳龍雲 [Goh Leng Hoon], "Aozhou Huaren yu 1908 nian Dizhi Rihuo Yundong" 澳洲華人與 1908 年抵制日貨運動 [Overseas Chinese in Australia and the Anti-Japanese Boycott of 1908], in Wong, *Wenming Kangzheng—Jindai Zhongguo yu Haiwai Huaren Lunji*, 222–43; Kuo, *Making Chinese Australia*, 167–71.

160 Much of this section originally appeared in Jane Leung Larson, "Charter 08's Qing Dynasty Precursor," with commentary by Feng Chongyi, *Asia-Pacific Journal/Japan Focus* 9, no. 27 (June 11, 2011), <https://apjif.org/2011/9/27/feng-chongyi/3558/article>, accessed May 20, 2024.

161 Norbert Meinenberger, *The Emergence of Constitutional Government in China (1905–1908): The Concept Sanctioned by Empress Dowager Tz'u-hsi* (Bern: Peter Lang, 1980), 42–44, which cites articles in the *North China Herald* reporting that conservative Grand Councilor Tieliang demanded that Cixi change the preparation period from three years in the draft edict to "several" (*shu* 數).

constitutional preparation top-down approach involved dispatching constitutional study missions abroad, carrying out a census, financial analysis and budgeting, writing a legal code, and reorganizing the government. All these steps were to be completed before “granting” a constitution and forming a parliament. When the Qing court recognized the danger of the growing outcry over its agonizingly slow progress, it issued an edict on July 8, 1907, requesting public recommendations on constitutional preparation for submission to the Censorate (Jianchashu) or by way of provincial officials.¹⁶² This paved the way not only for constitutionalists in the government to gain ground against those fearing change but also allowed the wider elite society to forward their views.

Nationalistic promotion of the anti-Japanese boycott of 1908 by Zhengwenshe and Xianzhenghui allowed the two organizations to segue the boycott's public mobilization into the Qing constitutional preparation process.¹⁶³ In one instance, Zhengwenshe's Xu Qin and Xianzhenghui's Chen Yikan spoke at a March 1908 meeting of the Guangdong Merchants Self-Government Society. Xu and Chen linked financial support for the Chinese navy with popular election of a legislature, arguing that only if people had a stake in government would they willingly pay for national defense.¹⁶⁴ Those attending decided to organize a nationwide petition calling on the Qing to speedily organize a parliament and only then would they help fund the navy.

Kang was in the United States between July and November, 1907, and in response to the July edict soliciting outside recommendations, he drafted a detailed and programmatic petition that made both cultural and political demands reaching far beyond opening a parliament. The petition claimed it was generated by a democratic process: “We are from 200 different cities, representing several hundred thousand people, and after a great deal of discussion and heated argument, we came to this agreement, and this petition is the result.”¹⁶⁵ There is no record of a meeting after the July edict, while Kang was in the United States, but it is possible that comments on drafts were solicited from chapters from which Kang penned the final text. In December 1907, the New York headquarters at the direction of Kang announced the petition to all members and orchestrated the serial publication of the full twelve-point

162 Meienberger, *Emergence of Constitutional Government in China*, 57.

163 Ma, *Revolutionaries, Monarchists, and Chinatowns*, 126–27.

164 Hou, *Ershi Shiji chu Zhongguo*, 148.

165 “Zhonghua Diguo Xianzhenghui Lianhe Haiwai Erbai bu Qiaomin Gongshang Qingyuan Shu” 中華帝國憲政會聯合海外二百埠僑民公上請願書 [Petition Jointly Presented by the Overseas Chinese Members of the Chinese Imperial Constitutional Association in 200 Cities Abroad] in booklet titled “Erbai bu Qiaomin Qingyuanshu,” AR-6, AAS ARC 2000/78. Translation by Hongmei Sun.

petition in Xianzhenghui newspapers.¹⁶⁶ Each chapter was to collect signatures and submit its list of signatories to New York or Hong Kong and elect a representative to present the petition to the court in Beijing. While the Xianzhenghui petition was being circulated openly among overseas chapters, it was not until July 1908 that Kang's petition was widely publicized in China. Meanwhile, Liang Qichao's more nimble political arm, Zhengwenshe, had moved forward with its own actions.

In December 1907, Zhengwenshe joined with other constitutional organizations in China to fan out to the provinces and collect signatures on a simple petition to hasten the convening of parliament.¹⁶⁷ From Yokohama, Liang delegated his disciple Zhang Junmai (Carsun Chang), a Waseda University law and politics student and writer for *Xinmin Congbao*, to lead Zhengwenshe's signature drive in China.¹⁶⁸ In March 1908, Zhang reported to Liang that he had gathered about 3,000 signatures in Anhui, Shandong, Hunan and Jiangsu, and hoped that at least 10,000 more could be collected in Guangdong and Guangxi.¹⁶⁹ At the end of June, with the unanimous endorsement of Zhengwenshe members, a telegram was sent to the Commission for Drawing up Regulations for Constitutional Government (Xianzheng Biancha Guan), the body with responsibility for the establishment of provincial assemblies (Ziyiju) as well as a national proto-legislature, the Political Consultative Council. The bluntly worded telegram stressed the need to calm the volatile political propensities of the public by convening a parliament (*kai guohui*) as soon as possible: "The country is in crisis, and China's survival is at stake. Thus the earliest deadline for opening a parliament is in order ... We've heard that some recommend [waiting] ten or twenty years, which disheartens the patriots and strengthens the rebels. We don't have time, so set three years as the deadline."¹⁷⁰ This telegram accused the Qing court of all talk and no action and was quickly followed by an imperial edict expelling Zhengwenshe member Chen Jingren from his ministerial post for "rash and reckless" suggestions. Chen had sent a similar telegram in his own name, also demanding a three-year deadline for

166 "Huishi jiwen: Bugao Lian Erbai Bu shang Qingyuanshu Qi" 會事紀聞: 布告聯二百埠上請願書啓 [Notice of Uniting the 200 Chapters to Start a Petition to the Emperor], *Tung Wah Times*, February 29, 1908, 6.

167 Hou, *Ershi Shiji chu Zhongguo*, 147–48.

168 Roger B. Jeans Jr., *Democracy and Socialism in Republican China: The Politics of Zhang Junmai (Carsun Chang)*, 1906–1941 (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield, 1997), 13–15.

169 Zhang Jiasen 張嘉森 [Carsun Chang] to Liang Qichao, March 25, 1908 in Ding and Zhao, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 453.

170 Article quoted from *Shen Bao*, 申報 July 3, 1908 in Ding and Zhao, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 453–54.

establishing a parliament and calling for the dismissal of Yu Shimei, a high official involved in the constitutional preparation process who was outspoken in advocating a twenty-year transition.¹⁷¹ Historian Hou Yijie marks this as a turning point when constitutionalists came to distrust the court's intentions and methods, the edict implicitly endorsing the stalling tactics of Yu Shimei and dismissing Chen Jingren's widely supported timeline for convening parliament.¹⁷²

It was just at this time that Kang weighed in with the Xianzhenghui twelve-point petition, far more challenging and wide-ranging than any petition submitted to date. It would accelerate the radicalization of constitutionalist demands and rouse the Qing government to punitive action, even before it could be formally presented to the court. By early 1908, all the Xianzhenghui newspapers had published Kang's December 1907 announcement of the petition, with the most distant Xianzhenghui members in Sydney, Australia finally alerted on February 29.¹⁷³ It took several months before all members were able to read the full petition, as the newspapers published it in eight parts, and some papers were weeklies.¹⁷⁴ On July 28, 1908, *Zhongguo Weixin Bao* (New York City) published the full constitutional petition as a fifty-eight-page booklet.¹⁷⁵ A few days later, the full version appeared in the *Zhengwenshe* paper in Hankou, China, *Jiangnan Gongbao*.¹⁷⁶

Expansively titled "Petition jointly presented by the overseas members of the Zhonghua Diguo Xianzhenghui [Chinese Imperial Constitutional Association] from 200 cities," Kang wrote from the vantage point of "merchants who were born in China but have traveled abroad" and wanted to see their rapidly declining country grow strong by governmental reform.¹⁷⁷ They feared China would suffer the fate of "enslaved" countries like Poland and India that had lost their sovereignty to foreign powers, and as Chinese living abroad suffering from "daily insults," they empathized with the powerlessness of the Polish and Indian peoples. Having lost the chance to reform in 1898, China was confronted

171 Zhang Pengyuan 張朋園, *Liang Qichao yu Qingji Geming* 梁啟超與清季革命 [Liang Qichao and the Late Qing Revolution], *Zhongyang Yanjiuyuan Jindaishi Yanjiusuo Zhuankan* [Modern History Institute, Academia Sinica, special issue] 11 (1964): 191–92. The edict expelling Chen Jingren was issued July 25, 1908.

172 Hou, *Ershi Shiji chu Zhongguo*, 156–57.

173 "Bugao lian erbai bu," *Tung Wah Times*, February 29, 1908, 6.

174 For example, *Tung Wah News* (Sydney) published the petition weekly August 22–October 10, 1908.

175 "Erbai bu qiaomin qingyuanshu," AR-6, AAS ARC 2000/78.

176 Chang, *Qingjide Lixian Tuanti*, 346.

177 "Erbai bu qiaomin qingyuanshu," AR-6, AAS ARC 2000/78.

by mounting foreign aggression, and “people grow increasingly anxious and perplexed. This is because a great undertaking [such as reform] can be accomplished only on the basis of honest intention, not of empty promise.” Implicit in the prologue was the threat of revolution: “The power of the nation is declining, and disorder increases each day. We have suffered troubles within and without, and these dangers are waiting for an opportunity to explode.” Thus, the petition went on, “We are humbly grateful that there was a wise imperial edict that allows public discussion of the affairs of state (*shuzheng gong zhu yulun*). The great words of the emperor were unbiased and fair, and that is why we are jointly presenting this petition without thinking of the executioner’s ax, in order to save the dangerous situation.” The document ended with a note of humility: “Since we business people are citizens (*guomin*), we share the weal and woes, the survival or demise of the country. In fear and trembling and with all sincerity, we submit this petition to the Empress Dowager and Emperor.” However, the language and the proposals within the petition were inflammatory and directly threatening to the Qing.

The petition provoked the court’s wrath because of the breadth of its demands, the organization and “most wanted” political leaders behind it, and the large number of people it claimed to represent. Beyond a challenge to the Qing’s slow implementation of constitutional government and the call for the immediate convening of a parliament to draft a constitution, the Qing court was enraged by the demand that the barriers between Manchu and Han be broken and that this unity be symbolized by a new name for China, which did not acknowledge the ruling dynasty. And, unlike other petitions issued during this time, Kang’s was a coherent political manifesto, laying out transformative visions for China that stood in stark contrast to the existing system. Indeed, in 1913 Kang saw fit to republish most sections of the petition in his *Buren Zazhi* (Cannot Bear Magazine) because the new Republican leaders “only care about changing the calendar and the dress code, without paying attention to the important national problems.”¹⁷⁸

Kang introduced his petition with a scornful critique of the ignorance and inexperience of the Qing court, which wanted to delay political participation by the people in a parliament until they were properly educated and give responsibility to court officials to establish a constitutional system. This was

178 “Haiwai Ya Mei Ou’ Fei Ao Wuzhou Erbai bu Zhonghua Xianzhenghui Qiaomin Gongshang Qingyuan shu” 海外亞美歐非澳五洲二百埠中華帝國憲政會僑民公上請願書 [A Petition Presented by the Overseas Chinese Members of the Chinese Constitutional Association in 200 Overseas Cities in the Five Continents of Asia, America, Europe, Africa, and Australia], *Buren Zazhi* 不忍雜誌 [Cannot Bear Magazine] (Shanghai) no. 4 (1913): 1.

just an excuse by those who opposed constitutional government, Kang said, and the petition's first demand was unequivocal: "Convene a parliament (*guohui*) to realize constitutional government." Elected legislators (*yiyuan*) rather than a few incompetent officials should have the responsibility for drafting and implementing a constitution.

Therefore, we merchants present this petition to ask Your Majesty to promulgate a wise edict and set a date for establishing a parliament. ... If you really want to save the country, you have to first establish constitutional government, and if you truly want to establish constitutional government, you must first convene a parliament. In order to decide whether a constitution is good or not, it's better to trust over one thousand brave and able men in the parliament rather than send abroad a handful of high officials who do not even know any foreign language to study [constitutional government]...

Otherwise, Kang asserted, "To entrust China, an enormous country facing a very dangerous situation, to a few uninformed men is like entrusting a huge ship sailing against winds and high waves to a blind captain and is exceedingly strange indeed." Kang claimed that "most of the officials now serving in the government have never traveled abroad or even in all the provinces." Nor did these officials have practical knowledge of agriculture, industry, commerce, and mining (fields that Kang had investigated while abroad). In a nod to the growing cohort of returned students from Japan and other countries, many of them politicized by their experience abroad and eager to use their education to help China modernize, Kang added, "We can learn from both Chinese and foreign experiences ... In that case we need not worry about having enough competent people." Also, Kang argued, "China's schools have developed and new knowledge has been pursued in earnest, and there must now be countless persons well versed in affairs of the world. To say that we cannot find a few hundred individuals qualified to be members of parliament is unduly to belittle China and her people."

One benefit of establishing an elected parliament was to give people a say in funding the government to carry out needed reforms, such as building a strong navy and defending China's borderlands, as well as implementing the Qing's New Policies. "If the parliament is convened, then the people will have the right to elections and will take responsibility for taxation."

The second point in Kang's petition implored the Empress Dowager to "immediately return the government [to the Guangxu Emperor] so that she can enjoy her great age [seventy-five]." How did it show love for the elderly (*ci*)

and comply with filial piety (*xiao*) to allow the Empress Dowager to suffer the incomparable toil and worry of governing a country in distress? The petition stated that Cixi's "good reputation" would suffer if she continued to hold on to power and reminded her that even the long-ruling Tang Empress Wu Zetian finally had to return the throne to her son late in life. The Qing constitutional reforms could best be led by the emperor who laid their foundation in 1898. "At a time of great reforms, we need a sage sovereign (*sheng wang*) in the prime of life who is able to focus his energies to carry out the reforms and keep up with the changes of the world." Restoration of Guangxu's rule had been demanded by Kang and the Baohuanghui since 1899, but now the petition emphasized the benevolence of granting the Empress Dowager a well-deserved retirement. Of course, Kang knew that with Cixi ruling from behind the screen, the other demands of his petition would never be realized.

Most provocative was calling on the Qing government to update the name for China to Zhonghua and eliminate the legal distinction between Manchu and Han. "Tantamount, in the eyes of the Manchus, to obliterating the dynasty" and "a device to liquidate their status as the ruling class," Kung-ch'üan Hsiao described Kang's language in the fourth point in the petition as "unnecessarily offensive." Its demands were "utterly unacceptable to the Empress Dowager and to the bulk of the Manchu ruling class."¹⁷⁹

We humbly request the court to bring up for discussion the elimination of the name and native birthplace registration for Manchus and Han and the decision that our permanent country name will be Zhonghua. From the country's diplomatic credentials to official documents, all will follow this example [using this name]. Since the Manchus, Han, Mongolians, Hui and Tibetans all are governed by the same country, they should all be compatriots of Zhonghua and not differentiated. The Manchu people should be given Han family names too so that they can be assimilated, and suspicions and jealousy will vanish forever. This way all groups will be unified to strengthen China. Nothing is better than this in terms of unification and strength.¹⁸⁰

179 Hsiao, *A Modern China and a New World*, 244–45.

180 "Manchus were classified differently from Han. They were registered as 'banner people,' whereas non-banner people, who were nearly all Han, were generally registered as 'civilian.' These classifications were hereditary and essentially permanent." Rhoads, *Manchus and Han*, 35.

This multipronged strategy, if it had been adopted by the Qing court, might have salved rising Han resentment of the Manchus' inherited and officially sanctioned privileges, careers, subsidies, territory, and, most of all, their dominant political power. Kang warned in the petition that internal conflict was far more perilous to a country than a foreign invader and could spread like wildfire: "Today, there are many talking about revolution. This all comes from the differentiation between Han and Manchu." The perils of the "separate and unequal" status of Manchus and Han under the Qing had been recognized by Kang and other reformers during the Hundred Days, far earlier than the revolutionaries addressed these issues in a more racially tinged way. Kang had even suggested that the queue be abolished and the emperor dress in Western clothes like the Japanese emperor.¹⁸¹ But, Manchu-Han relations proved too sensitive a matter for Guangxu to touch, and after 1898, Cixi took a few cautious steps to lessen the divisions between the two ethnic groups, removing the ban against Manchu-Han intermarriage, for example. Joseph Esherick in his 2012 reassessment of the 1911 revolution argued that its sudden inevitability emerged only in spring 1911 after Qing prince regent Zaifeng made it clear that under a Qing constitutional government, political power would continue to be dominated by Manchus.¹⁸² Only then did the revolutionaries' blatantly racist anti-Manchu message gain traction enough to unite the diverse political factions against the Qing.

Kang's suggestion that *Zhonghua* henceforth be used as the name for China raised the hackles of the Qing court. Indeed, *Zhonghua* would be appropriated by both the Republic of China (*Zhonghua Minguo*) and its successor, the People's Republic of China (*Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo*). While Kang noted the classical derivation of *Zhonghua*, he saw its adoption in the twentieth century as a modernizing move that would put China in line with other nations, which kept their names no matter who was ruler. A nation's name is like a family name passed on from generation to generation, explained Kang, while the dynasty name could be compared to a given name. "This is just like a person who has only a given name and no family name. In the whole world, only uncivilized people lack family names. How can a civilized country such as China be like this?"

Nine more demands aimed at modernizing and centralizing the government, ridding it of traditional burdens that encouraged rot and corruption,

181 Rhoads, *Manchus and Han*, 64–65.

182 Joseph W. Esherick, "Reconsidering 1911: Lessons of a Sudden Revolution," *Journal of Modern Chinese History* 6, no. 1 (June 2012): 1–14.

improving the lot of people through political participation and more equitable taxation, and resisting foreign economic and military incursions:

- Retire the court's large corps of eunuchs, known for their political intrigue. "Among all the countries of Europe and America, except in Turkey, there is no castration as punishment nor are there eunuchs as officials ... Other countries describe it as barbarous. How can the court bear such humiliation when we call ourselves a country with 5,000 years of civilization?"
- Move the capital from windy, dirty Beijing to the prosperous lower Yangzi River region in the center of China. Beijing's location had lost its strategic advantage because the nomads of the north no longer posed a danger. Jiangnan had better climate and scenery, convenient transportation and thriving commerce, and an outward-facing orientation toward the Pacific Ocean. "Today, China's people and productivity are mostly positioned in the Yangzi River basin, and there is global competition for this thoroughfare. Everything that flows into the Pacific Ocean is flourishing."
- Modernize the administration of the country from top to bottom by getting rid of the provincially based *dufu* (governors and governors general) system and empowering the central government with control over the nation's foreign relations, military, and finances, while expanding the powers of local governments to be responsive both to the central government and to the people. "As for the United States, even though as a federation each state governs its civil affairs, the military and finances are controlled by the government in Washington. But in our country, which claims to be unified, each *dufu* establishes his own borders and acts as if he were governing his own nation (*guo*)."
- Appoint administrators in Beijing to oversee the four border regions of Manchuria, Mongolia, Xinjiang, and Tibet (Liao, Meng, Hui, and Zang), protect the regions from foreign incursion by a strong armed presence and train local people as soldiers, expand local self-government, build railways to move armies for border defense, and open up schools to teach Chinese customs. "The Liao, Meng, Hui, and Zang have hundreds of thousands of *li* containing goldmines [natural resources], yet for dozens of years they have remained without protection by soldiers. And without a plan to provide a better education, this is like giving up the land and the people as hopeless."
- Establish a strong navy by building shipyards and training skilled workers to build warships. The cost of building and maintaining a navy can only be paid for if parliament is convened and finds ways (bonds and taxation) to spread the cost among the people. When citizens have the right to elect their representatives, they will take responsibility for taxation. "Envoys from other countries enter our Foreign Ministry and make unreasonable

demands. When they're rejected, they will strike the table and snap at us, saying they will send troops and warships, whereupon our high officials are frightened, bow their heads, and obey, ever willing to cede territory and give up our rights. It's all because they have a navy, and we have none."

- Muster citizens as soldiers through universal conscription. Defense of the border regions as well as all of China's interior can be assured. Responsibility for defense of China needs to be shared by all Chinese between the ages of twenty and forty. "Once the emperor issues his order, all the people will become soldiers, and after a few years of training, we'll have tens of millions of soldiers. We will also have railroads as transportation to dispatch our troops quickly. No one in the world will be stronger than us."
- Prepare for war by establishing iron munitions factories to produce guns and cannon in all provinces and horse pasturage in Mongolia, Xinjiang, and Manchuria to breed horses for the cavalry. "If a country is rich in military equipment, then it is a world power. If its military equipment is insufficient, then it is weak."
- To balance the incomes of people in poor and rich areas and collect more taxes for expenses like national defense and carrying out reforms, suspend the national land and labor taxes (*diding qianliang*) in favor of revenue collection by local self-government bureaus, with the portion going to the state based on whether the people and land are rich or poor (rather than on quotas for the land and labor taxes that were set two hundred years ago).
- Replace foreign affairs officials (*waijiaoguan*), who are now relatives of the imperial family, with elected officials accountable to the people, who would be less likely to back down to foreign pressure because of fear. "In the foreign relations of the United States, all the power to write and ratify treaties belongs to the Senate. The foreign affairs of our country as well as undertakings that involve territory, railways and mines, industry and commerce all belong to our citizens. The government doesn't have any right to mortgage it to others."

Once the petition was published in China by the Zhengwenshe newspaper in Hankou, *Jiangnan Ribao*, in late July 1908, Kang's strong demands seemed to be radicalizing moderate constitutional petitioners, who were moved to more aggressively call for the opening of a parliament.¹⁸³ Even as the Qing was issuing regulations for electing provincial assemblies to be convened in one year, the reformers were raising the bar to the national level.¹⁸⁴ The Qing had to act.

183 Lo, "Sequel to Autobiography," 212–13.

184 Fincher, *Chinese Democracy*, 100; regulations for the formation of provincial assemblies were issued by the Commission for Drawing up Regulations for Constitutional Government on July 22, 1908.

Although the thousands of Chinese who signed one of the scores of constitutional petitions circulating in China were simply ignored by the Qing court, it could not overlook the organizations and newspapers tied to Kang and Liang. These represented a worldwide political enterprise with increasing activities inside China and posed far more of a threat to the government than the smaller groups forming in support of a constitution on Chinese soil.

The issuer of Kang's petition, the Xianzhenghui, was out of reach overseas. A closer target was the affiliated political organization (almost wholly funded by the Xianzhenghui), Zhengwenshe. By that summer, Zhengwenshe had recruited about one thousand members and established provincial chapters. It had begun to publish newspapers, contact sympathetic reform-minded officials, and issue petitions in its own name. Zhengwenshe had been in the sights of Yuan Shikai, Zhang Zhidong, and Prince Qing since learning that Kang and Liang were secretly plotting to link up with Guangdong governor Cen Chunxuan to topple the three and seize power.¹⁸⁵ No doubt another irritant to the Qing was the two organizations' joint promotion of the anti-Japanese boycott of 1908, which aroused nationalistic enthusiasm that was easily tied into gathering signatures for the constitutional petition.¹⁸⁶ According to *Shen Bao*, a contemporary newspaper not associated with the Kang/Liang reformers, a group of Qing grand secretaries met to discuss Kang's petition and devised this strategy:

One of the officials [Chen Kuilong] said, our court intends to adopt the constitutional system and is planning to set up a parliament so that Chinese people can participate in national politics. However, we cannot tolerate such an absurd petition because this would lead to chaos. A certain grand secretary [Zhang Zhidong] said that Xianzhenghui was far away overseas and therefore hard to disband. The coastal provinces had Zhengwenshe chapters, and they were connected to Liang Qichao. Why don't we start with Zhengwenshe? Most grand secretaries agreed. In a few days they made a plan to arrest the members of each Zhengwenshe chapter.¹⁸⁷

185 Hou, *Ershi Shiji chu Zhongguo*, 157–59.

186 Ma, *Revolutionaries, Monarchists, and Chinatowns*, 126–27; Wu, *Dangshi*, 53–56.

187 *Shen Bao*, August 23, 1908, in Ding and Zhao, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 472–73. The identification of officials is from Hou, *Ershi Shiji chu Zhongguo*, 158.

The August 13 decree banning Zhengwenshe charged the organization with “pretending to study current affairs while secretly pursuing the provocation of unrest and harming national security.”¹⁸⁸ Zhengwenshe members “include many who are disloyal and important criminals,” and “if [the organization] is not strictly banned, the larger situation will be undermined.” Local and provincial officials were ordered to ban Zhengwenshe chapters, round up members and punish them. Other China-based Xianzhenghui undertakings, such as the newspaper *Jiangnan Gongbao*, were closed. Zhengwenshe’s sudden disappearance meant that the constitutional movement lost “a general headquarters for political associations; its suppression left a gap.”¹⁸⁹ Banning of Zhengwenshe and denunciation of Kang’s petition meant that neither Kang nor Liang could return to China to take part in the constitutional petition movement, which became all the more ardent. This was a counterproductive move as the Qing was preparing to issue the first Chinese constitution and implement plans for electing provincial assemblies and a national semi-legislative body. Zhengwenshe members simply shifted their allegiance to other reform organizations and continued to agitate for political participation via petitions and through Qing-endorsed activities, from constitutional education to running for election.¹⁹⁰

On August 27, 1908, two weeks after Zhengwenshe was banned, the Qing government promulgated an outline of principles for the first Chinese constitution (Qinding Xianfa Dagang) and a nine-year implementation plan (Yiyuan Weikai Yiqian Zhunian Choubei Shiyi).¹⁹¹ “The Da-Qing Emperor will rule supreme over the Da-Qing Empire for one thousand generations in succession and be honored forever,” the “Principles of the Constitution” began. An imperially granted constitution, it was to go into effect in 1917, after extensive preparation at the national, provincial and local levels. Kang had long seen the emperor as a necessary figurehead, while the real power resided with the people, whose role was to supervise the government. However the August 1908 “Principles” retained the emperor not as a figurehead but as an absolute ruler, with no restrictions on his authority other than the fact his powers were enumerated in the constitution. Unlike the legislating role for parliament envisioned by Kang in his petition, the constitution and civil, commercial, and criminal laws were to be drafted by the government with parliament having no power to revise or amend the constitution. Nor was the parliament a truly legislative body, as the

188 Chang, *Qingjide Lixian Tuanti*, 348–61.

189 Fincher, *Chinese Democracy*, 103.

190 Fincher, *Chinese Democracy*, 161.

191 Meienberger, *Emergence of Constitutional Government*, 76–89.

constitution gave only the emperor the power to promulgate the laws. It was deliberative only, and any laws it passed had to be imperially sanctioned before enactment. At any point, the emperor could dissolve the parliament, although the constitution provided that the people would then be asked to elect a new parliament. The parliament had no say over military or foreign affairs, but its advice was sought on the budget.

The most consequential element of the Nine-Year Plan was a schedule of elections for representative bodies at different levels. Preparation had begun for 1909 elections of provincial assemblies. In 1910, a national Political Consultative Council would be convened, with one hundred members elected by the provincial assemblies and one hundred members appointed by the emperor. In 1913, all cities, towns and villages (*cheng, zhen, xiang*) would elect assemblies and councils, and in 1914, regional assemblies would convene in subprefectures, prefectures, and counties (*ting, zhou, xian*).

Now that the Qing government had published its constitutional principles and implementation plan, the constitutionalists were handed a number of officially sanctioned paths to influence the political agenda. These new channels for political participation were supplemented by voluntary associations, giving reformers a far larger sphere of action than ever before. Their demands quickly overpowered the abilities of the government to respond. Soon the legitimacy of the imperial institution would be challenged beyond repair.

The officials responsible for implementing the Qing's one-year plan for provincial elections now had to swiftly acquaint themselves with constitutional concepts and practices before dissemination to the wider populace, and they reached out to long-time constitutionalists, many of them followers of Kang and Liang.¹⁹² Because the election plans called for education of the first electorate, officials had to study the once-prohibited reform publications issued by Liang Qichao and others. The court was also encouraging self-government societies to educate and prepare the electorate. Localities such as Guangzhou and Shanghai where reform politics had flourished led the rest of the country in this process.¹⁹³ For example, Shanghai-based *Shi Bao* became the leading champion of constitutionalist activism, and, as it did during the 1905 anti-American boycott, opened the meeting room above the newspaper office for the editors, writers, and their reform-minded colleagues from across the city to debate how to implement electoral politics on the local and national

192 Fincher, *Chinese Democracy*, 115–16.

193 Fincher, *Chinese Democracy*, 123.

level.¹⁹⁴ Decentralized citizen initiative in the absence of sustained central government leadership allowed individuals to become “self-selected election organizers working in their own communities” to compile lists of qualified voters and register them in time for the provincial election in March 1909.¹⁹⁵

3.3 *The Death of Guangxu*

As if the disintegration of the Commercial Corporation and the dissolution of Zhengwenshe were not enough to dishearten Kang Youwei, a third blow hit him. On November 14, 1908, between five and seven in the evening, the Guangxu Emperor died. The Beijing diplomatic corps was informed of the emperor's passing by a statement dated the 15th from Prince Qing (Yikuang), the chief grand councilor and head of the Foreign Ministry (Waiwubu).¹⁹⁶ That afternoon, Empress Dowager Cixi died, less than twenty-four hours after Guangxu. In the short interval between her nephew's death and her own, Cixi declared Guangxu's successor to be his nephew Puyi (son of Prince Chun or Zaifeng, Guangxu's brother).¹⁹⁷ She had set the stage for this transition on November 13, before the emperor died, ordering Zaifeng to move his two-year-old son to the palace immediately and appointing Zaifeng prince regent.

Jung-pang Lo wrote that the news “came as a great shock” to Kang.¹⁹⁸ As shocking as the matter may have been to him, it was not a surprise. Having left Europe in September, Kang was in Penang on November 14 and sent three urgent telegrams to Theodore Roosevelt, acting before Prince Qing officially announced Guangxu's death on November 15. Simultaneously Kang was telegraphing Xianzhenghui chapters throughout the world. Even taking into consideration the time advantage allowed by being west of the International Date Line, Kang was alerted to the rumors and events in Beijing via his informants. The sequence and timing of the messages to Roosevelt are interesting, particularly in light of later accounts of Guangxu's death from officials who

194 Joshua Hill, *Voting as a Rite: A History of Elections in Modern China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2019), 74–75. Di Baoxian 狄葆賢 (Di Chuqing 狄楚卿) and Bao Tianxiao 包天笑, the main *Shi Bao* 時報 figures behind the 1905 movement, played the same role in 1908–11.

195 Hill, *Voting as a Rite*, 84–86.

196 Prince Qing to W. W. Rockhill, U.S. Minister, Peking, November 15, 1908, enclosure no. 10 in Rockhill to Elihu Root, November 17, 1908, State Department Numerical Files, 14911/40–52, RG 59, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/20353760?objectPage=163>, accessed May 25, 2024.

197 Imperial edicts, November 13, 1908, appointing Puyi to the Imperial Palace School, and November 14, 1908, appointing Puyi as successor to the Tongzhi Emperor and heir to the Guangxu Emperor, Diplomatic Posts, China, vol. 731, Miscellaneous Translations of Edicts, U.S. Legation, Peking, Entry UD-10, RG 84, NA-College Park.

198 Lo, “Sequel to Autobiography,” 213.

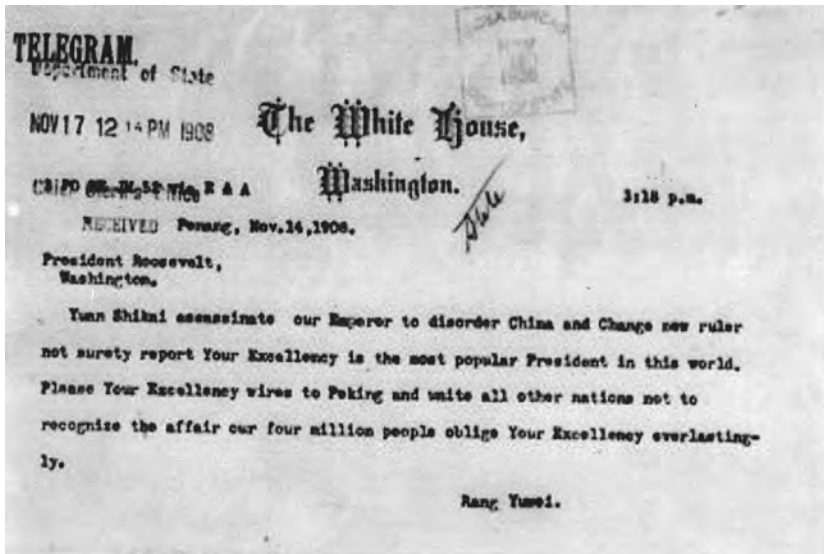


FIGURE 67 Kang's first telegram to President Roosevelt about Guangxu's death, sent from Penang, November 14, 1908, 3:18 PM.

worked in the emperor's household, as well as Qing court records. Kang's telegrams conveyed the contradictory reports he received from Beijing, Hong Kong, and Western newspapers, but unwaveringly emphasized Yuan's machinations and culpability in his pleas to Roosevelt.

Kang's telegrams were transcribed by the White House and transmitted to the State Department for analysis. The first, sent from Penang with the date and time of November 14, 3:18 PM, when Guangxu was on his deathbed, began, "Yuan Shikai assassinate our Emperor to disorder China and Change new ruler."¹⁹⁹ Kang called Roosevelt "the most popular President in this world" and asked him to wire Beijing and unite other nations to oppose Yuan's move.

A few hours later, at 7:10 PM (Penang), Kang wrote that the "Empress Dowager is very ill; others say she died." He reiterated Yuan's intention to murder Guangxu, but "hearing him still alive I entreat your excellency wire to Peking

199 Telegram of Rang [*sic*] Yuwei, Penang, to Roosevelt, November 14, 1908, 3:18 PM, State Department Numerical Files, 1518/178, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/19246300?objectPage=801>, and William Loeb Jr., White House, to Root, November 15, 1908, Numerical Files, 14911/18-20, RG 59, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/20353760?objectPage=163>, both accessed May 25, 2024.

to prevent murder of Emperor also take joint action with other countries for purpose.”²⁰⁰

Nearly twenty-four hours after his first telegram to Roosevelt, Kang sent the last in this series on November 15, 1:20 PM: “Empress Dowager died while they keep rumour [*sic*] [Yuan Shikai] bribes doctors to poison Emperor who I received messages last night is still alive.”²⁰¹ Kang urged Roosevelt to cable his minister in Beijing (W. W. Rockhill) to “enquire the affair and to see his majesty,” preferably in concert with other ambassadors.

Admittedly, these telegrams show Kang’s confusion as he received conflicting information. Similarly, the telegrams sent to Xianzhenghui chapters show that not until November 16 did Kang confirm that the emperor was indeed dead and accuse Yuan of paying a doctor to poison him; he also urged chapters to telegraph Prince Chun asking that Yuan be executed.²⁰² Kang must have felt helpless and frustrated to be in Penang, virtually powerless at a crucial time. The telegrams represent a hasty but daring effort, first, to save the life of the emperor, and, second, once Kang felt the emperor was dead, to prevent Yuan from gaining ascendancy. Guangxu’s death revived Kang’s longstanding grudge against Yuan since 1898, and, given the set of circumstances, it was not unreasonable that Kang applied whatever international influence he had to bring some justice. That there could have been a calculated political gain for Kang in this act of urging Roosevelt to intervene cannot be denied. The sequel of events in Washington, however, proved to negate any political gain this might have had for Kang—at least in the mind of certain officials in the U.S. government.

The telegrams were referred to the Department of State and, on November 17, the Division of Far Eastern Affairs prepared a memorandum for Assistant Secretary of State Robert Bacon.²⁰³ The conclusion was, after reviewing the

200 Telegram of KangYupi [*sic*], Penang, to Roosevelt, November 14, 1908 (“Dated 15”), 7:10 PM, State Department Numerical Files, 14911/18–20, RG 59, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/20353760?objectPage=70> accessed May 25, 2024.

201 Telegram of KangYuwei [*sic*], Penang, to Roosevelt, November 15, 1908, 1:20 PM, State Department Numerical Files, 14911/18–20, RG 59, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/20353760?objectPage=70>, accessed May 25, 2024.

202 “Yao dian” 要電 [Important telegrams], *Tung Wah Times*, November 21, 1908, 2; a series of telegrams in the order received by the newspaper, November 14–16, ends with Kang’s telegram from Penang, November 16, 8:27 PM, in which he also urged members to telegraph Prince Chun demanding Yuan be punished and foreign governments to express their outrage. <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/246928886/26801956>, accessed August 31, 2019.

203 Memorandum, W. S. S., Division of Far Eastern Affairs to Mr. [Robert] Bacon, Assistant Secretary of State, sent November 17, 1908, State Department Numerical Files, 1518/178, RG 59, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/19246300?objectPage=802>, accessed May 25, 2024.

traitorous role traditionally assigned to Yuan Shikai in 1898, that “in light of history these telegrams therefore, are clothed with an astonishing semblance of probability.” Seeking to confirm the significance of Kang’s political role, the Department of State cabled its legation in Beijing on November 20, asking: “Has Chinese reformer Kang Yu Wei such position that would be useful to Yuan Shih Kai to have overtures for reconciliation brought about?”²⁰⁴ In an obviously naive method of seeking the answer, U.S. Minister Rockhill, approached Yuan Shikai himself on the matter. Rockhill reported to Washington that Kang had “no position or strength” in Beijing and that “Yuan Shih Kai said to me yesterday he was nothing but [a] verbose non entity.” Rockhill concluded his message saying that it might be misunderstood if further allusion were made to Kang again.²⁰⁵

In the meantime, the White House had received a telegram from the Chinese Empire Reform Association in New York City stating that the emperor had been “poisoned through the treachery of Yuan Shih Kai.”²⁰⁶ This was followed by a fourth wire from Kang, urging Roosevelt to order the U.S. minister in Beijing to give military protection to “Prince Cheen” (Prince Chun, the father and regent for the new Xuantong Emperor (Puyi), and move him to the minister’s residence.²⁰⁷ This was necessary, Kang felt, because he had received word that Yuan was attempting to make the new empress dowager (Guangxu’s widow Longyu), the regent. No apparent action was taken on these telegrams.

In a two-page dispatch of November 25, Rockhill reported that since his interview with Yuan Shikai, he had made other “discreet inquiries among the Chinese officials and foreigners in a position to be well advised on the subject.”²⁰⁸ The reply from everyone he interviewed, said Rockhill, was that Kang had “no

204 Telegram, Root to American Legation, Peking, sent November 20, 1908, State Department Numerical Files, 1518/181a, RG 59, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/19246300?objectPage=821>, accessed May 25, 2024.

205 Rockhill to Secretary of State, sent November 24, 1908, State Department Numerical Files, 1518/183, RG 59, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/19246300?objectPage=829>, accessed May 25, 2024.

206 Telegram, Chinese Empire Reform Association, New York to Roosevelt, November 18, 1908, State Department Numerical Files, 14911/13–14, RG 59, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/20353760?objectPage=54>, accessed May 25, 2024.

207 Telegram, Kangyuwei [sic], Penang, to Roosevelt, November 30, 1908, State Department Numerical Files, 1518/90, RG 59, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/19246300?objectPage=852>, accessed May 25, 2024.

208 No. 1048, W. W. Rockhill to Elihu Root, November 25, 1908, State Department Numerical Files, 1518/216, RG 59, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/19246300?objectPage=948>, accessed May 25, 2024. A search of Diplomatic Post Records of the Beijing Legation, RG 84, NA-College Park, for this period uncovered no evidence of Rockhill’s alleged interviews.

followers in China and his brief period of influence over the late Emperor in 1898 is now looked upon as having been prejudicial to future reform.” Rockhill’s informants also charged that Kang had gotten “large sums of money from [his] countrymen living abroad to whom he promised offices and wealth when the Emperor should regain his liberty and he—Kang Yü-wei, become again his chief adviser.”

Rockhill further quoted Yuan Shikai as saying of Sun Yatsen and Kang You-wei, that Sun was “a much more able man, a man of action and consequently dangerous.”²⁰⁹ Once again, Rockhill concluded that the matter should be dropped so as to not “arouse suspicion in the minds of the Chinese.” The people Rockhill had spoken to were, as stated, of one mind, and obviously of an anti-Kang persuasion, or ignorant of current political trends. That his information was also based on less than reliable sources is most evident in another dispatch to Secretary of State Elihu Root. In it Rockhill quoted press reports from the *China Critic* of Tianjin that Kang was shortly going to Japan to join Sun Yatsen to continue their revolution.²¹⁰

The final effect from this interchange was the loss of credibility of Kang’s position in the eyes of the U.S. government. The first response of the Department of State to Kang’s telegrams had been one of meaningful interest in Kang’s side of the story. The fact that Root sought Rockhill’s advice on the matter of Kang’s political importance and a possible rapprochement between Kang and Yuan points out the political possibilities Kang might have gained. Rockhill’s persistent and negative replies nullified that effect.

Kang continued his campaign against Yuan, writing Prince Chun to ask for Yuan’s dismissal and had the satisfaction of seeing his desire come true.²¹¹ On January 2, 1909, an edict was issued dismissing Yuan so that he could

209 Rockhill to Root, November 25, 1908.

210 No. 1050, Rockhill to Root, November 27, 1908, State Department Numerical Files, 1518/207–209, RG 59, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/19246300?objectPage=922>, accessed May 25, 2024, enclosure 2, “Revolution From Japan,” *China Critic*, November 26, 1908. The misinterpretation of Kang’s role with Sun had been stated earlier in 1908 in a dispatch that had Kang and Liang as editors of the *Min Bao* (People’s News), the official organ of the “Ke Mong Tong” (Gemindang or Revolutionary Party), of which Sun Yatsen was the head. Alvin W. Gilbert, Deputy Consul General, Chefoo [Yantai, Shandong], to C. L. L. Williams, Vice Consul General in Charge, Chefoo, May 18, 1908, enclosing, “Anti-Monarchist Invasion,” *North China Daily News*, May 11, 1908, 7, State Department Numerical Files, 1518/138–139, RG 59, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/19246300?objectPage=625>, accessed May 25, 2024.

211 Lo, “Sequel to Autobiography,” 214. Yuan Shikai had many enemies in court, whose influence over the inexperienced Prince Zaifeng was no doubt greater than Kang’s; see Cui Zhihai, “Zaifeng’s Dismissal of Yuan Shikai and Sino-U.S.-Japanese Diplomacy,” in *China:*

convalesce from “rheumatism of the leg.”²¹² Publicly, Yuan’s dismissal was seen by Westerners as an obstacle to progress, an endangerment to peace, and an indignity to China.²¹³ To the contrary, Japanese press opinion was either neutral or positive about the firing of Yuan and hinted that Kang and Liang might now be recalled to Beijing.²¹⁴ Kang, of course, was happy with the news and in an interview shortly after the edict, he said that Yuan’s “dismissal will work for the good of the Constitutional party.”²¹⁵ Kang cabled his followers, claiming, “We know Yuan Shi Kai paid a physician 40,000 *taels* (about \$33,000) to poison the Emperor.”²¹⁶ Kang’s former benefactor from 1898, J. O. P. Bland, wrote Kang in late January asking his views on the prospects of the reform movement and the existing political situation in China.²¹⁷ He praised Kang and voiced hopes that he and Liang should soon be recalled to help in the enactment of constitutional government. Kang’s return answer was filled with extreme optimism. He hedged at writing down his views and answers to Bland’s letter as “It would take [him] a long time to write all [his] views and intentions in

How the Empire Fell, ed. Joseph W. Esherick and C. X. George Wei (New York: Routledge, 2014), 197–213.

- 212 Isaac Taylor Headland, *Court Life in China: Court Life in China: The Capital, Its Officials and People* (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1909), 319; Imperial Edict of January 2, 1909, translated in telegram of Rockhill to Root, January 2, 1909, State Department Numerical Files, 1518/194. RG 59, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/19246300?objectPage=872>, accessed May 25, 2024. Also, Imperial Edict of January 1, 1909, Diplomatic Posts, China, vol. 732, Miscellaneous Translations of Edicts, U.S. Legation, Peking, Entry UD-10, RG 84. NA-College Park.
- 213 For example, see “Chinese Regent Dismisses Yuan,” *Portland Oregonian*, January 3, 1909, 1 and 4; “Yuan’s Dismissal Endangers Peace,” *Portland Oregonian*, January 4, 1909, 1; “Diplomats Fear Trouble in China,” *New York Times*, January 4, 1909, 4; “Downfall of Yuan Shih Kai,” *The Times* (London), January 4, 1909, 5.
- 214 No. 562, Thomas J. O’Brien, U.S. Ambassador, Tokyo, to Secretary of State, January 6, 1909, State Department Numerical Files, 1518/239–243, RG 59, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/19247334?objectPage=17>, accessed May 25, 2024, which enclosed translations from *Kokumin Shimbun* (Tokyo), January 5, 1909, and *Jiji Shimpō* (Tokyo), January 5 and 6, 1909; also no. 1085, Rockhill to Root, January 16, 1909, State Department Numerical Files, 1518/258–261, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/19247334?objectPage=88>, accessed May 25, 2024, which said that the Japanese minister in Beijing was “relieved and greatly pleased at Yuan’s dismissal.”
- 215 “Declares Chinese Ruler Murdered,” *Portland Oregonian*, January 9, 1909, 2. Also, “Emperor Killed by Yuan’s Order,” *Portland Oregonian*, January 13, 1909, 4, which reported from New York that the Chinese Empire Reform Association had been informed that the charges against Yuan had been confirmed and that, on Yuan’s order, the emperor had been poisoned by a Fujianese physician.
- 216 “Yuan Shi Kai’s Dismissal,” *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, January 8, 1909.
- 217 J. O. P. Bland, Peking, to Kang Youwei, Penang, January 21, 1909, J. O. P. Bland Papers, Letters Out (copy), Manuscript Collection 81, Rare Book Division, University of Toronto Library.

Chinese ...” Instead, he promised to talk to Bland in person, upon his arrival in Beijing “before very long.”²¹⁸ His rationale followed upon the dismissal of the “treacherous [*sic*] statesman” Yuan Shikai, and his faith in the new regent to enact reforms.

In the United States, two of Kang’s relatives gave interviews to the press, supporting Yuan’s removal as beneficial for the future of reform: daughter Kang Tongbi, who was visiting Chicago during her winter break from classes at Barnard College, and nephew You Shiyin (Y. S. Wan), studying at Columbia University in New York City and active in the local Xianzhenghui chapter.²¹⁹ You told the Associated Press, “The American people have made a mistake in believing that Yuan Shi Kai ... was a reformer. Not only was he not a reformer, but he was a destroyer of reforms.”

Sympathy for Yuan was so strong in the United States, however, that Rockhill was authorized by the Secretary of State to organize joint protests with other foreign envoys in Beijing against Yuan’s ouster, and when Russia and Japan opposed this move, Rockhill and the British envoy attempted unsuccessfully to persuade Prince Qing to reinstate Yuan.²²⁰ No doubt Kang heard of this meeting, and at the end of January, he wrote again to Theodore Roosevelt. He told the president that “the fall of Yuan Shi-kai is a good demonstration with regard to the future prospect of China,” and he included an eleven-page typewritten essay entitled “A Chapter of Chinese History (With reference to the EMPRESS YEHONALA and YUAN SHI KAI).”²²¹

The “Chapter” is a lengthy description of the ills of China under the control of the Empress Dowager, an account of the One Hundred Days’ reform,

218 Kang Youwei, Egypt, to J. O. P. Bland, Peking, March (no date), 1909, Bland Papers, Letters In. Also see Kang Youwei, “The Palace,” Penang, to N. R. [Robert Norman] Bland, February 16, 1909, Letters In, thanking Bland’s brother for the protection he afforded Kang in Penang, upon his departure for Egypt.

219 “Says Reformers Put Out Leader,” *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, January 6, 1909, 10; “Yuan Shi Kai, China’s Enemy,” *San Diego Union*, January 10, 1909. You also wrote a political commentary in English, under the name Yan S. Wan, “Present Conditions of Peking Government,” *Chicago Legal News*, February 19, 1909, 226, outlining the different political factions in China after the two deaths and expressing hope that the new regent would revive the “progressive movement.”

220 Cui, “Zaifeng’s Dismissal of Yuan Shikai,” 200–201.

221 Kang Youwei, “The Palace,” (Penang), to Roosevelt, January 26, 1909, State Department Numerical Files, 1518/267–270, RG 59, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/19247334?objectPage=123>, accessed May 25, 2024, second enclosure is a set of translated letters supporting his “Chapter.” They were “Leong Teng Fun’s Impeachment against Yuan Shi-kai,” no date; “Yuan Shi-t’ung’s letter to Yuan Shi-kai,” July or August, 1908, and “Yuan Shih-kai’s action (written in July or August, 1908 by Ching Chia-sing).” The letter and enclosures were forwarded to the Department of State on March 3, 1909.

the coup d'état, and the aftermath. Kang placed the blame for the failure of the reform movement, the deposition of the emperor, the loss of territory to Britain, France, Russia and Germany, the Boxer Uprising, the Allied intervention, and the indemnity squarely upon Yuan Shikai. "Such shame, carnage and loss brought on China, came from this very traitor, Yuan Shi-Kai." Kang then attributed Guangxu's murder to Yuan. He repeated the charges a number of times in the "Chapter" and cited the madness that accompanied Yuan's control of China since 1898. He enclosed, in further support of his charges, three translations of letters from Liang Dingfen, a censor; Yuan Shitong, Yuan's brother; and Ching Chia-sing, Yuan's former private secretary. All charged Yuan with treachery and complicity with the misfortunes of China.²²²

Once again, Kang sought to keep the U.S. government informed as to his version of the events in Beijing, and once again, Washington chose to ignore the letter out of diplomatic discretion. Kang's hatred of Yuan is quite obvious in both his letter and the "Chapter," and he must have found temporary joy in Yuan's dismissal. It is ironic, therefore, that in 1913 Yuan Shikai, as president of the Republic of China, reportedly invited Kang to proceed to Beijing "to take part in the great reformation" then being pushed by Yuan.²²³ Kang's version of this invitation, with further explanation by his nephew You Shiyin, was conveyed to their American friend Charles R. Flint in September 1913. "Wong Hing [Huang Xing] want me to be their president, and Yuan also asked me to join him. I have refused both."²²⁴ You explained to Flint that Sun Yatsen's General Huang Xing wanted to overturn the Yuan Shikai government and asked Kang to lead his party; when Yuan heard about Huang's offer, he sent an envoy to Suma Ward in Kōbe, Japan, to ask Kang to return to China as his advisor. Kang repeatedly turned down the chance to join the new government.²²⁵ Not

222 All three men are described with letter excerpts in Charles Johnston, "China's Adroit President," *Harper's Weekly*, March 30, 1912, 12, which impugns Yuan's character based on the accusations of these men after the deaths of Guangxu and Cixi.

223 "Kang Yu-wei," *National Review* (Shanghai), July 12, 1913, 27.

224 Kang Youwei, undated note, enclosed with a letter from Y. S. Wan [You Shiyin] to Charles Flint, September 25, 1913, Charles Ranlett Flint Papers, 1872–1930, MssCol 1032, Manuscript and Archives Division, New York Public Library. The two pieces of correspondence indicate that Kang, You, and Flint, an international arms dealer among other occupations, were discussing a major delivery of weapons, but Kang's illnesses and operations in 1913 meant he could not proceed with his plans: "My nephew told me that you are willing to help me 100 guns, 10,000 rifle [*sic*], 2 million shot. I thank you ever so much, at present I shall not need it yet, when I need it, I shall write and let you know."

225 See three articles entitled "Kang Yu-wei," *National Review*, January 24, 1914, 96; March 14, 1914, 313; and *Supplement to the National Review*, January 23, 1915, 14. Also, "The President and Mr. Kang Yu-wei," *Supplement to the National Review*, January 30, 1915, 18.

desiring to compromise his principles, he rejected the offers, not only because of personal dislike but also for ideological reasons.

3.4 *How the Emperor Died: An Inconclusive Conclusion*

Suspicion of foul play emerged immediately upon Guangxu's death, and controversy continues to this day—how did he die and who is to blame? Kang's telegrams of November 14 and 15 lend credence to the scenario of sudden death by acute poisoning, being contemporaneous historical records based on intelligence from Beijing, some of it received shortly before Guangxu actually died. It could be that Kang had been sent the imperial edicts issued at that time, whose content and timing appear contrived to create the appearance of a natural death. The November 13 edicts by Cixi appointed Prince Zaifeng prince regent and installed his son Puyi in the palace, and the November 14 edict from Guangxu summoned the best doctors and medicine in hopes of curing his year-long illness.²²⁶ A natural death is contradicted by the daily records and diaries of attending officials, whose notes indicate that Guangxu had been well enough to carry on normal activities until his health rapidly worsened in the ten days after Cixi's condition grew grave.²²⁷ The edicts describe Cixi becoming critically ill only on November 14 as she grieved Guangxu's death, but officials noted Cixi's decline from her November 3 birthday when she was too ill to receive the emperor's ritual congratulations, and they record the panic in the court on November 7 when she sent Prince Qing to inspect the Eastern Tombs where her mausoleum had been built.

The consensus of Chinese historians has always been that when Cixi realized she would die before Guangxu, she ordered him killed so that he would not outlive her and vengefully destroy her legacy. Whether Yuan Shikai was involved as Kang believed is not known, but it is unlikely that anyone would have carried out such an audacious act without Cixi's consent. Certainly at the time, suspicions rested heavily on Yuan, but others believed the culprit was

226 Cui Zhihai 崔志海, "Guangxu Huangdi he Cixi Taihou zhi Si yu Meiguo Zhengfude Fanying-jian Lun Guangxu Si Yin" 光緒皇帝和慈禧太后之死與美國政府的反應——兼論光緒死因 [The Deaths of Emperor Guangxu and Empress Dowager Cixi and the American Government's Response], *Qingshi Yanjiu* (Studies in Qing History) 清史研究 no. 3 (August 2009): 128–29. "Imperial Decrees," *North China Herald*, November 24, 1908, 456; Headland, *Court Life in China*, 344–46.

227 Cui, "Guangxu Huangdi he Cixi Taihou," 132–33. Cui used the diaries and official notes of the officials in charge of Guangxu on a daily basis: Yun Yuding, Xu Baoheng, and Lu Chuanlin.

Cixi's favorite eunuch Li Lianying or Prince Qing, a close ally of Cixi.²²⁸ Even the cause of death is disputed to this day. The emperor's medical history records Guangxu's death as natural and details his poor general health and physical weakness from an early age, compounded by depression, unhealthy living conditions, and malnutrition during his confinement the last ten years of his life. Skeptics assert that none of Guangxu's ailments would lead to death at age thirty-seven. Qing historian Dai Yi notes that Cixi had publicly promoted the view of Guangxu as dangerously unwell beginning on September 25, 1898, a few days after the emperor was deposed because of his Hundred Days' reforms, hardly the actions of a deathly ill man.²²⁹

In November 2008, it appeared that the mystery of the emperor's death had been solved. A five-year scientific and forensic analysis initiated by a China Central Television (CCTV) documentary production unit, the China Institute of Atomic Energy, and the Beijing police forensic laboratory concluded that Guangxu died of acute arsenic poisoning from a fatal dose of more than 200 mg of white arsenic (arsenic trioxide) found in his hair, clothes, and body.²³⁰ Although this study was widely publicized, a few critics have disputed its methodology as unscientific and inconsistent and its conclusions invalid. They suggested that at the outset the analysts assumed Guangxu died of acute arsenic poisoning and misconstrued the rather contradictory historical materials (such as later recollections of Guangxu's domestic staff, diaries, and daily records of those waiting on the emperor) to prove their point.²³¹ Even the

228 The former Xuantong Emperor later wrote that the Guangxu Emperor's death was "very suspicious" and tended to adhere to the story that Yuan conspired with Prince Qing in poisoning the emperor; see Puyi, *From Emperor to Citizen: The Autobiography of Aisin-Gioro Pu Yi*, V. J. F. Jenner, trans. (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1964), 18.

229 Dai Yi 戴逸, "Guangxu zhi Si" 光緒之死 [The Death of Guangxu], *Qingshi Yanjiu (Studies in Qing History)* no. 4 (November 2008): 27–32. This edict was issued in the emperor's name saying he'd been unwell since June [1898] in spite of medical treatment and calling for immediate help from outside physicians.

230 Zhong Liman 鍾裡滿, et al., "Guojia Qingshi Zuanxiu Gongcheng Zhongda Xueshu Wenti Yanjiu Zhuanxiang Ketu Chengguo: Qing Guangxu Di Siyin Yanjiu Gongzuo Baogao" 國家清史纂修工程重大學術研究專項課題成果: 清光緒帝死因研究工作報告 [Results of Research on Special Study Topics by the National Qing history Compilation Project to Analyze Major Scholarly Problems: Report on the Research Work on the Death of the Guangxu Emperor], *Qingshi Yanjiu (Studies in Qing History)* no. 4 (November 2008): 1–12. "Forensic Scientists: China's Reformist Second-to-Last Emperor was Murdered," *China Daily*, November 3, 2008, http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2008-11/03/content_7169775.htm, accessed July 17, 2019.

231 Fang Delin 房德鄰, "Qing Guangxu Di Siyin Jianzheng' Zhiyi" "清光緒帝死因鑒證" 質疑 [Calling into Question the "Authentication of the Cause of Death of Qing Emperor Guangxu"] (paper, 7th International Scholarly Conference on the History of Modern

integrity of the physical evidence examined by the study group has been questioned. Guangxu's modest Chongling underground mausoleum in the Western Qing Tombs near Baoding, Hebei Province, was the last mausoleum built for an emperor and completed in 1913. The tomb was plundered by grave robbers in 1938 during the chaos of Japan's invasion of China, and Guangxu's body was pulled out of his tomb and exposed to the air. Not until 1980 was the mausoleum resealed, after scientists examined the emperor's remains, saw no evidence of wounds, and declared his death normal.²³² Presciently, they stored a few samples of his hair, clothes, and corpse for future research, and it was these samples that were studied by the 2008 team. Contamination of the samples, as well as the effects of one hundred years of decay and deterioration, not to speak of arsenic's diffusion and chemical changes in the decomposing body and clothing, could have affected the amount and concentration of arsenic found by the 2008 study group and may not reflect the actual amount of arsenic in Guangxu's body at the time of death in 1908.²³³

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Whatever the cause, the death of the Guangxu Emperor robbed Kang Youwei of a great degree of the sanction for his political cause and was a personal blow. Since 1898 the Baohuanghui had championed the mission of the return of the emperor to his rightful position. Its successor, the Diguo Xianzhenghui, while outwardly less determined to reinstate the emperor, still held allegiance to him. The loss of the emperor as the honorary reform leader, however, was not the end of Kang's political life. Nonetheless, when coupled with the other events of late 1907 and 1908, it put severe constraints on his political reserves. The turning point came when Kang began to be seen as the conservative for clinging to the memory of the deceased emperor. But clinging to a dead memory was hardly the whole point of Kang's strategy thereafter, as he found great hope for the future as popular enthusiasm for constitutionalism rose inside China between 1909 and 1911.

Chinese Thought, in Commemoration of 160 years since the Birth of Kang Youwei, Nanhai, Guangdong, March 2018).

232 Dai Yi, "Guangxu zhi Si," 29.

233 Thank you to Chen Xuezhong for reviewing the literature, including Fang Delin's paper, and helping the book team reach this carefully considered if incomplete conclusion.

The Complicated Legacy, 1909–11

Kang's dueling legacies were fixed between 1909 and 1911. He was attacked by his contemporaries and criticized by historians as a failed political leader corrupted by power and money who drove his organization into the ground, losing tens of thousands of idealistic followers to the revolutionaries led by Sun Yatsen. In contrast, the culmination of the constitutional movement highlights Kang's role as a seminal political organizer and thinker who roused hundreds of thousands of his compatriots to seek a modern constitutional system for China. During these three years, Kang largely withdrew from direct involvement in the Xianzhenghui except to communicate multiple orders and vent his frustrations to key disciples. There is no positive evidence that Kang made a quick trip to North America in 1909 as mentioned in the sequel to his autobiography. He also failed to gain entry to Australia, where he hoped to revive his movement. Instead, Kang traveled the world and stayed for extended periods in Singapore, Penang, Hong Kong, and Japan, where he watched the rapidly radicalizing political situation in China, the downward spiral of his own political organization, and, finally, with Liang Qichao, Xu Qin, and military and political allies in China, made a dramatic last attempt to forestall the 1911 victory by the revolutionaries.

Plagued by the messy breakdown of the Commercial Corporation and torn by internal disputes and scandals, the Xianzhenghui began to lose the political loyalty of Chinese overseas. However, a strong contingent of members and leaders in North America and the newspapers and schools they sponsored remained loyal to Kang and the constitutional movement for decades into the future. They closely followed news in China between 1909 and 1911, watching the constitutional petition movement grow quickly in mass and energy. The petition movement gained gravitas when the new provincial assemblies (*ziyiju*) convened October 14, 1909, following the Qing court's nine-year plan for implementation of a constitutional government. The rump parliament or national Political Consultative Council (*Zizhengyuan*) elected in 1910 further accelerated popular demand by China's urban gentry and merchants for full political participation. The new institutions, meant only to be advisory in nature, instead became a vehicle for constitutionalists to organize under official auspices. That reformers were well-prepared to take advantage of these new political bodies stemmed directly from organizational skills and knowledge gained during the decade-long movement begun by Kang and Liang in 1898.

1 1909: Kang on the Move

Throughout most of 1909, Kang not only left behind his nuclear family but abandoned any sustainable effort to stem the mounting troubles of his organization. Instead he pursued the personal pleasures of world travel and reunions with family members studying abroad. Having produced two sons born in December 1908 and January 1909 to his second and third wives, Kang left Penang for Europe in February 1909. On the way, he toured Egypt and Palestine, visiting Cairo, Luxor, and Aswan, saw the moon rise over the Red Sea, visited Jerusalem and the Dead Sea, lingered at the Wailing Wall, and wrote a poem about Christ's sacrifices to save others.

In April, Kang proceeded to Switzerland and the Alps, before traveling in England, Wales, and Ireland in May and June. He was accompanied in London by Mai Zhonghua, husband of eldest daughter Kang Tongwei and at the time an Oxford University student. Kang Tongbi completed her studies at Barnard College on June 2 and sailed from New York on June 6, landing at Plymouth, England on June 11.¹ After a seaside stopover with her father, they left for Ireland.² Together with Tongbi's fiancé, Luo Chang, who had just received a master's degree from Oxford, they spent a week in Dublin at the home of Sir Henry Blake, the supportive governor of Hong Kong during Kang's early exile who became his friend and had previously hosted him when Blake was governor of Ceylon. Kang took a side trip from England through The Hague, Netherlands, to Kassel, Germany where he toured Wilhelmshöhe landscape park, before returning to England. Sometime in July, Kang, Tongbi, and Luo Chang boarded a luxury liner in Southampton and after passing through the Suez Canal, sailed back to Penang, arriving on August 16 to a welcoming crowd of several hundred. En route, Kang wrote a poem about finishing his utopian classic, *Datong Shu*, musing, "I wait for the day when the whole world will be unified."³ Kang spent

1 Ship manifest, S.S. *Deutschland*, New York to Plymouth, England, "Miss Kang Tung Pih" departing June 6 and arriving June 11, 1909.

2 Chi Jeng Chang reconstructed Kang's European travel itinerary from June 11 to July 16, from Kang's writings and his daughter Tongbi's memoirs. The page in Tongbi's memoir covering 1909 describes meeting Kang when she arrived in England, after he had spent a month touring the surroundings. Another month of travel followed, with Ireland as a highlight, before boarding the "White Stare [*sic*] line" steamer.

3 Kang Youwei, poem, "Jiyou liuyue zi Ou gui" 己酉六月自歐歸 [Returning from Europe in the 6th month of 1909], in *Kang Youwei Quanji* 康有為全集 [Collected Works of Kang Youwei], ed. Jiang Yihua and Zhang Ronghua 姜義華, 張榮華 (Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin Daxue Chubanshe, 2007), vol. 12, 308.

only about a month in Penang before sailing to India and Ceylon in October to tour temples and study Buddhism.⁴

Australia was the only destination related to Kang's Xianzhenghui responsibilities that he contemplated visiting in 1909. It had at least twelve chapters led by politically active merchants and Kang had attempted to enter the country several times beginning in 1900 to rally his supporters and raise funds.⁵ Each attempt was rejected by the Commonwealth of Australia, after consultation with London, which had come to see Kang as a dangerous political agitator rather than a deserving political refugee. Kang wrote from Penang on August 26, 1909, to Governor General of Australia Earl of Dudley, William Humble Ward:

I have long heard of the best constitution of Australia and am very anxious to visit it [*sic*]. I have been around the world many a time to study their constitution and Government except never have been to Australia ...

I am a reformer of China therefore there were many people jealous me and often create all sorts of false accusations to block my way wherever I go.⁶

4 Chi Jeng Chang and Zhang Qizhen 張啓祜, 張啓禎 ed., *Kang Youwei zai Haiwai, Meizhou ji: Bu Nanhai Kang Xiansheng Nianpu* 康有爲在海外美洲輯: 補南海康先生年譜 [Compilation of Kang Youwei Abroad: Supplement to Kang Nanhai's Biographical Chronology] (Beijing: Commercial Press, 2018), 132–33; the editors' source is the unpublished "Kang Tongbi Huiyilu" 康同壁回憶錄 [Kang Tongbi Memoirs], compiled by Zhang Cangjiang 張滄江, Kang Tongbi's private secretary 1955–68, in Chi Jeng Chang's private collection. Chang found two poems by Kang referring to the trip from Europe to Asia, with the departure date from Europe between July 17 and August 15, 1909 in a poem written on the ship, "Jiyou liuyue zi Ou gui," and the arrival date in Penang on August 16, 1909 in "Jiyou Qiyue yueshuo you Binglangyu" 己酉七月朔重游檳榔嶼 [Traveling to Penang on the first day of the seventh month of 1909], both in *Kang Youwei Quanji*, vol. 12, 308.

5 Mei-fen Kuo, *Making Chinese Australia: Urban Elites, Newspapers and the Formation of Chinese-Australian Identity, 1892–1912* (Clayton, Victoria, Australia: Monash University Publishing, 2013), 96, 225. In 1910, the Sydney Baohuanghui continued to request that Kang visit Australia for up to six months, and the Australian External Affairs department continued to insist that Kang make his request through the Chinese consul general. Miscellaneous Letters, May 4 to July 12, 1910, NAA: A1, 1910/3933, Department of External Affairs, 17–22.

6 Kang Yu Wei to Earl of Dudley, Governor General of Australia, August 26, 1909, NAA: A1, 1910/3933, Department of External Affairs. The 125-page file of External Affairs papers pertaining to Kang's immigration attempts between 1904 and 1910 are online at <https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRRetrieve/Gallery151/dist/JGalleryViewer.aspx?B=6155&S=2&N=125&R=0#/SearchNRRetrieve/NAAMedia/ShowImage.aspx?B=6155&T=P&S=1>, accessed January 3, 2020.

Kang's letter was accompanied by a character reference from Charles Beresford in London, who asked Lord Dudley to host this "personal friend of mine" whose life Beresford had saved when Kang fled China in 1898. Yet again, Australia refused Kang's entry, this time for the added reason that Kang alludes to in his letter—a report from the Japanese envoy in Stockholm to the British consulate there that Kang had seduced a young Englishwoman (among others) at his home on the island of Korsholmen, Sweden and was thus of immoral character.⁷

Missing from Kang's documented travels is a possible June 1909 visit to North America. There is only one reference to this trip, in Jung-pang Lo's sequel to Kang's autobiography, which is based on Kang Tongbi's 1958 draft chronology: "In the fifth month [June 18 to July 19, 1909] he revisited Victoria, British Columbia, staying again at his former retreat on Coal Island."⁸ Kang Tongbi's memoirs, written with fresher memories in the 1930s or 1940s, makes no mention of this improbable trip.⁹ Nor do Kang's travel poems, which include several poems about his first visit to Ireland during this period.¹⁰ Moreover, for Kang to travel to the west coast of Canada in between visits to England and Germany would require a roundtrip journey across the Atlantic to Montreal and train trip to Victoria, or an even more circuitous ocean voyage around Cape Horn to the western coast of North America.¹¹ However, based on the authority of Jung-pang Lo and his primary informant, his mother, Kang Tongbi, historians have generally taken this 1909 North American journey as fact.

It has been suggested that Kang might have had a strong political motivation to disrupt his European sojourn to travel to Coal Island at this time, distracted

7 Li Hairong 李海蓉, "Yingguo Zhengfu dui Kang Youwei Liuwang Taidu zhi Kaoshi—Jian lun Baohuanghui de Moluo" 英國政府對康有為流亡態度之考釋—兼論保皇會的沒落 [Textual Analysis of the English Government's Attitude toward Kang Youwei in Exile—and the Rise and Fall of the Baohuanghui], *Shi Lin* no. 1 (2019): 98–100.

8 Jung-pang Lo, "Sequel to the Chronological Autobiography," *Kang Yu-wei: A Biography and Symposium* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1967), 214. Zhongping Chen has examined all three handwritten drafts for the sequel at University of California at Davis; two of the three drafts mention the trip to Coal Island. Email from Zhongping Chen to Jane Larson, September 21, 2013.

9 "Kang Tongbi Huiyilu," compiled by Zhang Cangjiang. Coincidentally, or not, Kang Youwei was in British Columbia exactly ten years earlier, in June and July 1899 and on Coal Island from July to October 1899.

10 Zhang Qireng 張啓祜 and Kang Xuepei 康雪培, *Kang Youwei Haiwai Shiji (Kang Youwei's Overseas Poetry Collection)* 康有為海外詩集 (Beijing: Zhongyi Chubanshe, forthcoming). Email to author from Chi Jeng Chang, May 6, 2024.

11 Thank you to Scott Seligman for his extensive search of ship manifests in summer 1909 for clues of travel by Kang to Canada from Europe and back.

by the attacks on his reputation and the fracturing Xianzhenghui in Canada.¹² He may have sought to bolster his support by meeting secretly with his Victoria allies in the shelter of Coal Island (to thwart assassination attempts by hostile Vancouver members). At that time, Kang was accused of being an accessory to the May 27, 1909, assassination in Guangzhou of pro-reform Guangxi Province official Liu Shiji. The murder had occurred not long after Liu's return to China from North America where he sold in shares in the natural resources company, Zhenhua Company, almost all bought by Xianzhenghui members.¹³ Liu, a Zhenhua founder along with two Canadian Chinese Xianzhenghui members, had traveled to North America to sell one million yuan worth of shares. This was a plan backed by Kang, who had neglected to forge a mutually accepted agreement linking Zhenhua to the Xianzhenghui. When Kang and other top Xianzhenghui leaders began to suspect that the Zhenhua partners had no intention of ceding control over the company, they demanded Liu turn over responsibility for Zhenhua to Liang Qichao's management, and if he failed to do this, they should cease selling Zhenhua shares. This ultimatum provoked Liu, Vancouver Xianzhenghui leader Ye En, and Kang disciple Ou Jujia to declare Zhenhua's "independence" and to relentlessly attack Kang, the Xianzhenghui, and the Commercial Corporation. Liu's mysterious assassination inflamed the Zhenhua scandal, especially among Ye En's colleagues in Canada, creating a plausible reason for Kang to make a secret trip to Victoria in June or July to secure support from his remaining Canadian allies. If the trip occurred, it was concealed so well that no direct documentation has emerged: no ship manifest showing Kang's travel to Canada; no newspaper coverage of his visit; no correspondence or other contemporary record mentioning Kang's presence in Canada.

Kang Tongbi wrote both versions of Kang's chronology, but her own memoirs were written earlier and include important markers in her life. Her entries for June 1909, during the time when her father's Coal Island sojourn was to have taken place, include completing college in New York and meeting Kang and Luo Chang in England. Tongbi's fleeting mention of Kang's 1909 trip to Coal Island in Kang's autobiographical sequel may always remain a mystery. If indeed Kang made his last stand in Canada in 1909, he failed to repair the splits

12 Zhongping Chen, *Transpacific Reform and Revolution: The Chinese in North America, 1898–1918* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2023), 115–16.

13 Gao Weinong 高偉濃, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui zai Meiguo Huaqiao Shehui zhong de Huodong* 二十世紀初康有爲保皇會在美國華僑社會中的活動 [Activities of Kang Youwei and the Baohuanghui among the Chinese in the United States in the First Part of the twentieth Century] (Beijing: Xueyuan Chubanshe, 2009), 348–77. See Chapter 9 for details on Zhenhua Gongsi.

in the Canadian Xianzhenghui. Li Fuji, the influential Victoria Baohuanghui founder and Kang's most important Canadian supporter, did not return from his two years in Mexico until the fall (thereby missing Kang in June if he traveled to Canada) and was unable to pacify the anger of the Vancouver members toward Kang. Zhongping Chen deems this internecine struggle between the Victoria and Vancouver chapters to be first in a global series of internal Xianzhenghui fissures that spread to Hong Kong, Australia, and elsewhere.¹⁴

For nearly two years, Kang had seen few of his supporters other than those who lived in Penang and Singapore. He finally came face to face with a close associate who could describe the contentious morass infiltrating the Xianzhenghui. Wu Xianzi, editor of *Shang Bao* and defiant supporter of the 1908 anti-Japanese boycott in Hong Kong, visited Kang for a month in Penang, during the brief period between Kang's mid-August 1909 arrival from Europe and his departure for India in October.¹⁵ Wu later became the Xianzhenghui historian and archivist, and although a partisan favoring Kang's view of events, he was widely respected and well-informed. That November, Wu wrote a full-throated public letter defending Kang and the Xianzhenghui and challenged members to preserve organizational unity just as their path to political ascent was being cleared.¹⁶ The opportunity to take power was near. Wu celebrated the October 14, 1909, nationwide inauguration of China's first elected provincial assemblies, which he felt was due in large part to Kang and his movement:

This is a promising move toward constitutionalism. The 1898 coup d'état inspired people and officials to start thinking seriously about reforms. President Kang and our party have been loudly appealing to the public for more than a decade ... we almost have reached our goal.¹⁷

Wu argued that "the future of China is contingent on the success of our party." He contended that constitutional countries with a few dominant, long-established parties, such as Japan and Britain, were strong, while nations with

14 Zhongping Chen, "Kang Youwei's Activities in Canada and the Reformist Movement Among the Global Chinese Diaspora, 1899–1909," *Twentieth-Century China* 39, no. 1 (January 2014), 21–22.

15 Hu Yinghan 胡應漢, *Wu Xianzi Zhuanji* 伍憲子先生傳記 [Biography of Wu Xianzi] (Hong Kong, 1953), 10.

16 Public letter from Wu Xianzi 伍憲子 and other members of the Hong Kong Xianzhenghui to all chapters, November 2, 1909, in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui* 康有為與保皇會 [Kang Youwei and the Baohuanghui], ed. Shanghai Shi Wenwu Baoguan Weiyuanhui 上海市文物保管委員會 (Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin Chubanshe, 1982), 451–54.

17 Public letter from Wu Xianzi, 451.

many small, competing parties, such as Italy and Portugal, had weak governments. China's constitutional government was in an embryonic state, its political situation unsettled and disorganized. Only a major political party could navigate the transition to a new form of government. The Xianzhenghui had no political rival as powerful as itself and was well-placed to take this role. Now, however, dissidence and rumors were roiling the Xianzhenghui. "So if our comrades are determined to rescue China, we have to try our best to keep our party from falling apart." Rather than be riven by the rumors and attacks of a few "traitors," Wu asked members to embrace the Xianzhenghui ideology and unite, instead of splitting into factions. Much of Wu's open letter dealt with Kang himself, whom Wu depicted as the only person qualified to lead the party:

Our president is a great scholar who has lectured for decades and read extensively. Now every Chinese intellectual should regard him as a teacher. Since the coup, he has traveled for more than a decade in Europe and the Americas. He became friends with aristocrats and high-ranking officials, examined Western politics, customs, and arts and compared them to those of China, and only adopted those he deemed proper for China. How can students who just spend several years abroad compare to him in terms of experience?¹⁸

More difficult for Wu to dispute were the serious allegations about Kang's character and personal style, which were being blamed for the financial and organizational turmoil: embezzlement of public funds for his own and family's use, a wasteful and extravagant lifestyle as Xianzhenghui president, appropriating Commercial Corporation property in Mexico for himself, and allowing his daughters and son-in-law to manipulate Xianzhenghui businesses for their own profits. Wu could only call the attacks irrational and groundless and did not directly address specific criticisms. At most, Wu could point to his own observations of Kang's personal behavior: "In his daily life he sticks to the principle of austerity. When I was in Penang, I saw him wearing patched old cotton clothes. If he lived an immoderate life, he wouldn't be doing this." And only in the postscript did Wu deny that Kang and Liang had anything to do with the assassination of Liu Shiji, cautioning members not to believe the "virulent attacks from our enemies."

To stem the tide of discontent and resolve the failing Commercial Corporation businesses and the divisive fight over control of the Zhenhua Gongsì, Kang

18 Public letter from Wu Xianzi, 453.

had sent his most loyal disciple, Xu Qin, to North America. Xu spent considerable time in October 1909 visiting chapters in Chicago and the East Coast and bluntly told Kang that Xianzhenghui's survival now rested with restoring trust in the Commercial Corporation, not with political achievements.¹⁹ "If I discussed our association affairs without responding to the concerns of business, they all listened with contempt." He felt that the only way to save the organization and revive morale was to reorganize the businesses and start anew.²⁰

A darker shadow hung over Xu's campaign to restore member confidence in the Xianzhenghui—the accusations that Kang, Liang Qichao, and Xu himself were implicated in Liu Shiji's May 1909 murder. The man rumored to be behind the assassination plot was Xu's colleague, He Qiwei.²¹ While the case was never solved, Kang historian Zhang Ronghua points out that before the murder, Kang's letters to the brothers Liang Qixun and Liang Qichao articulated his ferocious hatred of Liu, whom he saw as betraying the Xianzhenghui by promoting Zhenhua shares to members and then disassociating the company from the party when it was to his advantage: "Now even if I could go easy on [Liu], people will follow him in his treachery. What he has done is an example for everyone. Therefore, even if I kill him, justice would not be done unless he were put to death many times."²² Kang's violent turn of phrase was a standard curse, yet his vehemence was real. Zhang contrasts these earlier private letters with Kang's public statements after the murder, which praised Liu and accused Ye En, Ou Jujia, and others of plotting Liu's murder to take Zhenhua profits for themselves. Not only was there an irreparable break between Kang and some of his closest followers, but stoked by the revolutionary press, the unresolved suspicions about Liu's assassination further alienated many Xianzhenghui members from Kang.²³ Contemporary American newspaper

19 Xu Qin to Kang Youwei, October 13, 1909, in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui*, 438.

20 See Chapter 9 for Xu Qin's Commercial Corporation reorganization.

21 Gao, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui*, 361.

22 Kang Youwei to Liang Qixun 梁啟勳, April 12, 1909, in Zhang Ronghua 張榮華, ed., *Kang Youwei Juan* 康有為卷 [Kang Youwei Documents] (Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin Daxue Chubanshe, 2015), 19–21. Zhang lists Kang's 1909–10 public statements made after Liu's murder: "A Letter to Zhenhua Gongsu Shareholders," "A Rebuttal to Ye Huibo's Zhenhua Gongsu Announcement," "A Proposal to Arrest Ou Jujia, the Bandit Chief," and "Zhang Mingqi Takes Bribe and Shields Ou Jujia who Plots a Revolt and the Murder of Liu Shiji, as well as Frames Us."

23 The fact that Liu's murderers were never brought to trial continued to animate the descendants of Liu Shiji and Guangdong scholars into the twenty-first century. See Zhao Liren and Liu Renyi 趙立人, 劉仁毅, *Liu Shiji zhi Si: Kang Youwei Yituan Cehua de Yizhuang Xue'an* 劉士驥之死: 康有為集團策劃的一樁血案 [The Death of Liu Shiji: the Murder Plot of Kang Youwei's Clique] (Guangzhou: Zhongguo Yingshi Wenyi Chubanshe, 2006).

coverage of Liu's death attributed the major cause of member alienation not to anger at his assassination but to rage at Liu's "crookedness," having duped them of considerable funds for worthless stock in dubious projects, all under the name of the Xianzhenghui. As early as June 1909, the New Orleans chapter had "fallen to pieces," and, members, "in disgust finally gave up the work altogether, with the result that the Bow rooms are now closed, and most of the erstwhile reformers affiliate with the Chee Gung Tong."²⁴

Kang's most steadfast ally in Canada, Li Fuji, published a booklet in late 1909 after his return from supervising Commercial Corporation businesses in Mexico. Li wrote from his vantage point as a Baohuanghui founding member and a businessman speaking plainly to his Canadian compatriots and other members dissatisfied with the sorry state of Xianzhenghui businesses.²⁵ He first detailed the storied Canadian origins of the Baohuanghui dating from Kang's arrival in Victoria in 1899 before responding to members' unhappiness with the businesses. It was Liang Qichao who "first suggested that our association start our own businesses in 1901," linking the Commercial Corporation to Kang's more popular disciple. He acknowledged that the business ventures had been poorly managed by inexperienced persons and in the end the meager earnings could not meet investors' expectations. He promised that eventually "the tides would flow back in" and asked that the shareholders "be magnanimous and excuse us. They don't have to mention it all the time." Moreover, Li continued, "even if the commercial projects fail, our association will succeed. We should avoid trying to save a little only to lose a lot. We still need to exert our willpower and from beginning to end keep united, so as not to waste our ten years' achievements in a night. We do not want to be ridiculed by outsiders." Taking a side in the Zhenhua dispute, Li simply stated, "I disapprove of Ye En and Ou Yunqiao [Ou Jujia] despite my long-time personal connections to them. I support Xu Qin and think the charges against him as well as Kang and Liang are ridiculous." Li Fuji was not alone among Victoria Chinese Empire Reform Association leaders who backed Kang against Ye En and his supporters—in 1910, Lin Lihuang assumed the presidency of the Canadian reform association and moved the headquarters from Vancouver to Victoria.²⁶

24 "Local Chinese Avenged by Tragedy in China," *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, June 25, 1909. Other articles in May and June 1909 report the murder and attribute it to revenge by the "Bow Wung Wei" because Liu had peddled "worthless mining stock."

25 Li Fuji 李福基, "Xianzhenghui Jishi Shilüe" 憲政會紀始事略 [A Sketch of the Origins of the Constitutional Association], 1909, 1–11, Ethnic Studies Library, University of California Berkeley, Chinese Empire Reform Association, AR-22, AAS ARC 2000/78, hereafter AAS ARC 2000/78.

26 Zhongping Chen, *Transpacific Reform and Revolution*, 157.

One of the most dramatic defections after Liu's death was Tom She Bin (Tan Shubin), founder of San Francisco's Baohuanghui chapter in 1899. Tom linked up with revolutionary editors of the Zhigongtang (Chee Kong Tong) newspaper *Datong Ribao* to accuse Kang's party of Liu's assassination.²⁷ However, the San Francisco chapter and its newspaper *Shijie Ribao* (*Sai Gai Yat Po*, *Chinese World*) strenuously defended Kang against these attacks.²⁸ Political battles played out daily in dueling newspapers across North America, and, in Canada, landed as libel lawsuits in the courts, with the stronger party, usually the reformers, pursuing their rivals into bankruptcy. Political differences were not the only factor in overseas Chinese rivalries. Personal grudges, different religious affiliations, and conflicting business interests all came into play.²⁹

In addition to the newspaper wars, mass-distribution letters and booklets proliferated in 1909 causing confusion and disenchantment among Xianzhenghui members. Kang's public letters and Wu, Xu, and Li's publications that were intended to restore trust in Kang and the Xianzhenghui were countered by the circulars written by dissidents, including Tom Leung's *Zhengxinlu* and Ye En's denunciations of Xu Qin and Kang. Writing to Kang from Hong Kong, Chen Wenhui attributed the organizational disarray to the spate of accusatory public letters, especially the jointly signed leaflets criticizing Kang and Liang, causing "lengthy arguments which provoked innumerable complications."³⁰ It was not surprising that many patriotic Chinese overseas had come to see the Xianzhenghui and its leaders as "organizationally and morally bankrupt," in the words of historian Cai Huiyao.³¹

27 Chen Zhongping 陳忠平, "Weiduoliya, Wen'gehua yu Haiwai Huarende Gailiang he Geming (1899–1911)" 維多利亞, 溫哥華與海內外華人的改良和革命(1899–1911) [Victoria and Vancouver in Chinese Reform and Revolution at Home and Abroad, 1899–1911], *Shehui Kexue Zhanxian* 269, no. 11 (2017): 90. Luo Yuehu 駱月湖 to Kang Youwei, June 19, 1909, in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui*, 419.

28 L. Eve Armentrout Ma, *Revolutionaries, Monarchists, and Chinatowns: Chinese Politics in the Americas and the 1911 Revolution* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1990), 130, 193 n12.

29 Chen, "Weiduoliya, Wen'gehua yu Haiwai Huarende Gailiang," 90, which describes the three-year series of Baohuanghui ten lawsuits in Vancouver against the Christian- and Zhigongtang-affiliated *Hua Ying Ribao* 華英日報, edited by former Kang disciple Cui Tongyue 崔通約, which bankrupted the newspaper in late 1909. Cui moved to San Francisco to edit *Chung Sai Yat Po* 中西日報. Chen, *Transpacific Reform and Revolution*, 139–40, highlights Cui's Christian, anti-opium stance reflected in his newspaper and at odds with the opium businesses of several Canadian Baohuanghui leaders.

30 Chen Wenhui 陳文惠 to Kang Youwei, October 10, 1909, in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui*, 437.

31 Cai Huiyao 蔡惠堯, "Shilun Baohuanghui Shibai de Neibu Yuanyin" 試論保皇會失敗的內部原因 [On the Internal Reasons for the Failure of the Baohuanghui], *Jindai Shi Yanjiu* no. 2 (1998): 116.

Even as “the party had grown decadent,” in Chen Wenhui’s words, Kang’s loyal followers found hope and opportunity in the death of Grand Secretary Zhang Zhidong on October 5, 1909: “Our progress cannot be stopped. He will not be a hindrance to President Kang’s return to Beijing to turn thistles and thorns into timber.”³² Coincident with Zhang’s demise, the inaugural gatherings of the provincial assemblies in mid-October contributed to the sense that history was turning in the reformers’ direction.

Kang submitted a memorial in late 1909 to the Xuantong Emperor asking that parliament be convened in the autumn of 1910, rather than 1917 as decreed in the nine-year plan.³³ Given the desperate national crisis and external threats, Kang believed there was no alternative to bypassing the Qing court and bureaucracy and allowing an elected national assembly or parliament to draft a constitution. He suggested the parliament convene one year from the opening of the provincial assemblies, on the first day of the ninth month of the second year of Xuantong, or October 3, 1910, allowing the prince regent to make a fresh start and preside over a grand ceremony to pass power to the new body, a move that would please the people and strengthen China’s place in the world. This was the date that the Qing planned to convene the Zizhengyuan, the national consultative council described in the nine-year plan, a much less representative body than a parliament. Kang asserted that no more than a few months was necessary to prepare for an election of parliamentary legislators since there were already rules for electing provincial assemblies. Once parliament was convened, the legislators could design a constitution modeled after those of foreign countries: “Writing of a constitution is the internal affair of parliament, not the duty of court officials.” The results might not be perfect, Kang added, but “one should start by driving a cart in ragged clothes to blaze a new trail. In the end, one will ride in a carriage made of jade and a litter made of gold.” He envisioned that each prefecture, department, and county (*fu, zhou, xian*) would elect parliamentary representatives, and that if one followed the

32 Chen Wenhui to Kang Youwei, October 10, 1909, in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui*, 437.

33 Kung-ch’üan Hsiao, *A Modern China and a New World: Kang Yu-wei, Reformer and Utopian, 1858–1927* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1975), 245. This is reprinted as “Wei Guoshi Pinruo Kong Niang Fenluan Qing Ding Xuantong ernian jiuyue yiri Kai Guohui zhe” 爲國勢貧弱恐釀分亂請定宣統二年九月一日開國會折 [A Memorial to Set the Opening of Parliament for the 1st day of the 9th month of second year of Xuantong (October 3, 1910) to keep the weakened nation from splitting and chaos] in *Kang Youwei Quanji* 康有爲全集 [Collected Works of Kang Youwei], ed. Jiang Yihua and Zhang Hualong 姜義華, 張榮華 (Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin Daxue Chubanshe, 2007), vol. 9, 173–75; it is dated by the editors as 1910 but its text reveals it was written in 1909 as it refers to “this first year of Xuantong” and to the opening of the provincial assemblies on October 14, 1909.

models of England and France, the total number of representatives should be around seven hundred.

Much had changed since Kang's twelve-point constitutional petition kicked off a serious debate in 1908 about China's path to a constitutional system. In that first petition, Kang's primary demand was "Convene a parliament to realize constitutional government," yet he gave no details beyond this general principle and only asked that the court set a specific date for parliament to convene. By the end of 1909, constitutionalism had emerged as a practiced if messy reality in China, and Kang, Liang, and a new cohort of empowered constitutionalists inside China now focused on convening a parliament, a goal they would not realize until the dawn of the soon-to-be new Republic and then only briefly. They had come to understand the truth of Kang's assertion in his 1907 petition, "Setting up a constitutional government is meaningless without a parliament to defend it."³⁴

2 1910–11: "It Is Difficult to Build a House But Easy to Burn It Down"³⁵

With the Xianzhenghui stumbling into political and financial ruin, Kang relocated closer to China, eventually joining Liang Qichao in Japan in June 1911. Together, they contributed to the political debate as constitutionalists struggled to reform the monarchy. Kang was bitterly aware of all that he and the Xianzhenghui had lost. On March 23, 1910, he wrote to Liang Qichao: "We've gone to our doom. I lost all my standing and reputation for nothing ... Now I am ill; the only thing that awaits me is death."³⁶ Yet, the constitutionalist cause would still gain political power and visibility in 1910 and 1911, the Qing arrest orders for Kang would be lifted in October 1911 as a last gesture of commitment to reform, and, even to this day, Kang's reputation rises and falls with the political winds, his character faults and business failures notwithstanding. The revolution that began in Wuchang on October 10, 1911, brought an end to the old regime in China, and two years later Kang returned to his homeland to stay.

Kang spent most of 1910 in the Straits Settlements, both Penang and Singapore, but not without incident. Whether those after Kang's head were

34 "Er bai bu qiaomin qingyuan shu" 二百埠僑民請願書 [Petition from two hundred overseas Chinese cities], *Zhongguo Weixin Bao* (New York), July 28, 1908, 5, AR-6, AAS ARC 2000/78.

35 Kang Youwei to Liang Qichao 梁啟超, January 11, 1911, in Ding Wenjiang 丁文江 and Zhao Fengtian 趙豐田, ed., *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian* 梁啟超年譜長編 [Uncut Version of Liang Qichao Life Chronicle] (Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin Chubanshe, 1983), 534–35.

36 Kang Youwei to Liang Qichao, March 23, 1910, in Ding and Zhao, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 532.

the Qing, the revolutionaries, or former Xianzhenghui members who blamed Kang for Liu Shiji's murder, assassins again targeted him, and he was forced to move into safer quarters in August. It should be noted that Sun Yatsen was in Singapore and Penang from June to November 1910, as the Straits Settlements had also become his headquarters, where he was planning what would be the April 1911 Guangzhou Uprising.³⁷ Kang went to Hong Kong in September to see his mother during her eightieth birthday year.³⁸ He returned to Singapore in January 1911, only to be awakened one night by a hatchet-murderer who mistakenly struck a rickshaw driver instead of Kang. He left Singapore in May for the last time, spending a month in Hong Kong with his mother, and, in June, settled with third wife Lily Haw and their son at Liang Qichao's home in Suma Ward—Shuang Tao Yuan (Garden of Double Waves)—in Kōbe, Japan, until they moved to their own house nearby. He remained in Japan until his return to China in December 1913 to bury his mother, who had died in Hong Kong in August that year.³⁹

"The root of all the absurdities is that I was not able to go back to Hong Kong. As a result, the revolutionary party attacked us. It is difficult to build a house but easy to burn it down." Thus, Kang concluded a letter to Liang Qichao in January 1911 after discovering on his 1910 visit to Hong Kong that the three interconnected Huayi banks in Hong Kong, New York, and Torreón had lost \$2 million.⁴⁰ This had been Kang's first return to Hong Kong, headquarters of the Commercial Corporation, since 1904 when he was banned from the colony by the British government because his presence inflamed antforeign sentiments among his followers and displeased China.⁴¹ Kang now felt that had he been able to supervise Commercial Corporation management in Hong Kong, he could have prevented attacks by revolutionary opponents who were gaining ground as business scandals demoralized Xianzhenghui members. Kang's premonition that the Xianzhenghui house was on fire proved correct in 1911, the battles playing out in fervid "newspaper wars" in North America, and, after Wuchang, in physical attacks on Xianzhenghui members and buildings. Xianzhenghui members defected, sometimes a whole chapter en masse overnight, while others remained loyal to the constitutionalist cause for decades into the future. A different political dynamic propelled the constitu-

37 Marie-Claire Bergère, *Sun Yat-sen* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 192–94.

38 This was Lao Lianzhi's 勞連枝 eightieth birthday following Chinese custom, as she was born in 1831.

39 Lo, "Sequel to Autobiography," 217–18, 226.

40 Kang Youwei to Liang Qichao, January 11, 1911, in Ding and Zhao, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 534–35.

41 Li, "Yingguo Zhengfu dui Kang Youwei," 97.

tionalists in China, led by the elected members of the provincial assemblies and the Political Consultative Council, to finally abandon the Qing and support the emerging Republic.

3 Culmination of the Constitutional Petition Movement

Arguably, the most important legacy of Kang and the Baohuanghui (and Xianzhenghui) was the brief but transformative period between 1910 and 1911 when constitutionalists practiced legislative politics in the provincial assemblies and the Political Consultative Council. When the legislative process failed to yield the progress they desired, they formed national associations to submit constitutional petitions to demand representation through a parliament. Since 1899, the constitutionalists' boycotts, petitions, newspapers, schools, and politicized membership abroad had fostered the organizational capacity and political knowledge of reform-minded people inside China, equipping the assembly members to rapidly advance the constitutional cause once they held power. In 1902 Kang began to popularize the ideal of "local self-government" for the purpose of "mobilization, in which localism and private energies were stimulated and then disciplined in the service of economic development and national vigor," wrote historian Philip Kuhn.⁴²

The Qing constitutional reforms unintentionally catalyzed political activism at the grassroots level, which Kang and the Xianzhenghui continued to encourage from abroad. There was limited coordination between overseas activists and constitutionalists in China. They were allies with the same goals, grounded in years of reform ideology. The most influential exile was not Kang but Liang Qichao, who expounded on constitutional questions and commented on the current political situation through two China-based Xianzhenghui-affiliated newspapers, *Guofeng Bao* (Shanghai, 1910–12) and *Guomin Gongbao* (Beijing, 1910–19). Liang maintained close contacts with former Zhengwenshe leaders, particularly Xu Fosu, who was effective at rallying the many provincial constitutionalists associated with banned Zhengwenshe chapters, some now elected assembly members.⁴³ Xu was a key organizer of the influential coalition of provincial legislators, elected Political Consultative Council

42 Philip A. Kuhn, "Local Self-Government Under the Republic," in *Conflict and Control in Late Imperial China*, ed. Frederic Wakeman Jr. and Carolyn Grant (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), 275.

43 Zhang Pengyuan 張朋園, *Liang Qichao yu Qingji Geming* 梁啟超與清季革命 [Liang Qichao and the Late Qing revolution] (Taipei: Academia Sinica, 1964), 194–95.

members, and other reformers active in civil society that in 1910 submitted three increasingly demanding petitions calling for a parliament. *Guomin Gongbao* was edited by Xu, whose office served as a political base for the constitutionalists as they strategized and presented petitions to Beijing.⁴⁴

Constitutionalism was broadly popular by 1910. “Many powerful men had clearly been reading the proscribed writings of Liang Qichao carefully, and they were prepared to push the Qing toward constitutional government,” writes historian Peter Zarrow of the radicalizing effect of the official constitutional preparations.⁴⁵ Zarrow notes “how quickly what had once been heresy became orthodoxy” among Qing officials who after 1905 had come to accept constitutionalism as a necessary and obtainable goal for China.⁴⁶ On the other hand, the revolutionaries opposed constitutional reform as half measures that would prolong Qing rule; they did not foresee the explosive consequence when ardent constitutionalists increasingly asserted themselves in national politics, any more than did the Qing court. And, likewise, with each dramatic revolutionary act of attempted or successful assassination or uprising, the Qing became more amenable to constitutional reform.⁴⁷ Provincial assemblies opened for fifty-day sessions simultaneously throughout China on October 14, 1909.⁴⁸ Historian John Fincher observed that the energized provincial assemblymen “showed a marked tendency to put off local and provincial problems until they had expressed their views on national or even international problems.”⁴⁹ This cosmopolitan focus was reflected in the backgrounds of the assembly members, who represented a population far more Westernized and youthful than those previously involved in provincial officialdom. Although the men qualified to run for election were largely from the gentry and most had official degrees, there were many who had bought or earned lower degrees,

44 Zhang, *Liang Qichao yu Qingji Geming*, 197–98.

45 Peter Zarrow, *After Empire: The Conceptual Transformation of the Chinese State, 1885–1924* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012), 145.

46 Peter Zarrow, “Constitutionalism and the Imagination of the State: Official Views of Political Reform in the Late Qing” in Peter Gue Zarrow, ed., *Creating Chinese Modernity: Knowledge and Everyday Life, 1900–1940* (New York: Peter Lang, 2006), 78.

47 Zhou Jiming and Hu Xi, “Conflict and Competition: A New Perspective on Late Qing Politics,” in *China: How the Empire Fell*, ed. Joseph W. Esherick and C. X. George Wei (New York: Routledge, 2014), 67–71, gives several examples of Qing policies promoting constitutionalism in response to a revolutionary act.

48 P'eng-yüan Chang, “The Constitutionalists,” in Mary C. Wright, ed., *China in Revolution: The First Phase, 1900–1913* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), 145.

49 John H. Fincher, *Chinese Democracy: The Self-Government Movement in Local, Provincial and National Politics, 1905–1914* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981), 130. The authors' analysis of the impact of the constitutional movement owes much to this book.

such as the prefectural *shengyuan*, a category previously left out of provincial civil service posts reserved for the higher degree-holders, *jinshi* and *juren*.⁵⁰ “Most of the 1,643 members of the twenty-one provincial assemblies in the country were constitutionalists,” concludes historian Ma Mingde, and some of the most influential were Liang Qichao’s committed disciples, such as Tang Hualong, president of the Hubei Provincial Assembly, and Sun Hongyi, president of the Zhili Provincial Assembly.⁵¹ Those taking the lead in the assemblies were educated abroad, graduates of modern schools in China, or journalists, whereas the more conservative but eligible gentry often refused to participate in the assemblies, even when elected.⁵²

Even the most organized constitutionalists running for the assembly had to do so as individuals, because political parties were not allowed. Campaigning was considered vulgar and corruptible (through bribery), and blank ballots required voters to write in their favored candidates. The long-standing Qing ban on political parties as dangerous factionalism was compounded by the Qing view of elections as a means to consensus rather than contestation, a more participative and “democratic” way of selecting the “talented and worthy” than the old civil service examination.⁵³ Those eligible to vote (and hold office) were the fewer than one-half percent of the population who were male and could meet the high educational or wealth requirements.⁵⁴ The daunting and complex indirect election process meant that few eligible voters participated. Although overseas Chinese were seen as a wealthy constituency to be tapped for investment in economic development projects, they did not meet the residency requirement for voters or candidates. There was also a fear that by registering to vote, one would be audited for taxes. Thus, it is remarkable that this highly imperfect system resulted in a predominance of serious, proactive legislators.

50 Chang P'eng-yuan, “Provincial Assemblies: The Emergence of Political Participation, 1909–1914,” *Chinese Studies in History* 44, no. 3 (1984): 15–18.

51 Ma Mingde, “Tang Hualong in the 1911 Revolution,” in Esherick and Wei, *China: How the Empire Fell*, 136–38.

52 Min Tuki, *National Polity and Local Power: The Transformation of Late Imperial Power* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989), 164–65.

53 Joshua Hill, *Voting as a Rite: A History of Elections in Modern China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2019), 63–71, describes the July 22, 1908, provincial assembly election regulations as designed to be “an opportunity for men of good moral character to anonymously nominate their neighbors for public office” who eschewed competition and factionalism.

54 Chang, “The Constitutionalists,” 146–49; the proportion of qualified voters in the 21 provinces was .42 percent.

Since seating for journalists was part of standard procedures mandated across the country, Western reporters closely followed the assembly sessions. A detailed report summing up the inaugural 1909 provincial assembly sessions by the Beijing correspondent of *The Times* of London deemed them the “most important event in China during the past year,” conducted “with dignity and decorum” and justifying the throne having given its subjects “a limited right of speech through their chosen representatives.”⁵⁵ The correspondent listed a variety of local and national issues discussed in the assemblies, the most commonly debated being the suppression of opium and gambling, but ranging widely to currency reform, simplification of Chinese characters, universal education, and abolishing foot binding, all topics familiar to reformers from the writings of Kang and Liang. Another much more critical *Times* article condemned the independence of the assembly members and their widespread “relentless opposition to the favorite projects” of the Qing government, illustrating “how general are the disregard and contempt which are felt for the Central Government.”⁵⁶ In particular, the assemblies passed resolutions opposing certain financial actions of the throne, from the loans for funding railroads to its opium monopoly and an unpopular stamp tax. Nationalistic impulses—which in 1908 had been expressed in the anti-Japanese boycott—emerged again when the assemblies opposed China’s dependence on foreign loans and advisers, challenging the prerogatives of the Foreign Ministry and provincial governors alike.⁵⁷ The 1911 Railway Protection Movement resisting nationalization or foreign control of railroads found nationwide resonance by linking demands for local railway management to the popular rights guaranteed by the representative constitutional system just emerging in the provincial and national legislative bodies.⁵⁸

Likely reckoning that this might be their only chance for legislative participation, the assemblies debated unwieldy numbers of proposals, requiring six-day work weeks and long hours, and even extending the sessions beyond the official fifty-day limit for which legislators were paid. Standing committees of legislators—some of whom had been associated with Kang and Liang as students in Japan—met between the 1909 and 1910 assembly sessions and

55 “China: The Provincial Assemblies,” *The Times* (London), January 20, 1910, 5.

56 “Self-Government in China,” *The Times* (London), November 23, 1909, 11.

57 Fincher, *Chinese Democracy*, 132–34.

58 Xiaowei Zheng, *The Politics of Rights and the 1911 Revolution in China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2018), 156–62, describes the Sichuan Railway Association rhetoric, which “emphasized the dual aim of preserving constitutionalism and the rights of the nation.” The Railway Protection Movement is often seen as the spark that led to the 1911 revolution but was led by constitutionalists.

prepared to tackle such controversial issues as foreign railway loans.⁵⁹ Because many of the issues brought forward in provincial assemblies could only be resolved on a national level, as Fincher points out, “resolution after resolution was referred for consideration to the National Assembly [Zizhengyuan], which was to meet in the autumn of 1910.”⁶⁰ And, although the provincial assemblies elected delegates to attend the 1910 Zizhengyuan session, the assembly members were not content with delaying action on the issue of greatest concern, accelerating the election of a true parliament. The interval between the end of the 1909 provincial assembly sessions and the autumn 1910 provincial and national legislative sessions provided an opportunity for extragovernmental activism and a revival of the constitutional petition movement.

With suppleness and persistence, the petition movement grew exponentially between January and October 1910 under the leadership of provincial assembly members stirred to take action beyond their formal governmental roles. The first petition for a parliament was organized by provincial assembly delegates from sixteen provinces who gathered in Shanghai in November 1909, convened by Zhang Jian, chair of the Jiangsu Provincial Assembly and elder statesman of the constitutionalists.⁶¹ They formed the Association of Comrades Petitioning for a National Congress (Guohui Qingyuan Tongzhahui) and submitted a petition to the Qing Censorate (Jianchashu) on January 26, 1910. Association of Comrades chair Sun Hongyi presented the two hundred thousand-signature petition in Beijing, and remained the dedicated heart of the petition movement throughout 1910. He declared: “Since we have assumed responsibility on behalf of our countrymen, we are trusted by the whole nation. Until we realize our aim, I shall not leave the capital, even if every one of our representatives has left.”⁶²

After the Qing court’s quick rejection of the petition, the Association of Comrades prepared a second petition and widened its signature campaign to a broad span of organizations, from chambers of commerce to industrial and education associations, as well as to overseas Chinese. It garnered three hundred thousand signatures and was submitted on June 22, 1910. Kang sent some of his overseas deputies to Beijing, including newspaper editor and Kang confidant Wu Xianzi to represent Chinese in the Americas.⁶³ Wu became a frequent

59 Fincher, *Chinese Democracy*, 138–40.

60 Fincher, *Chinese Democracy*, 147.

61 Fincher, *Chinese Democracy*, 148–49.

62 Chang, “The Constitutionalists,” 162.

63 Hu, *Wu Xianzi Zhuanji*, 10. Australia and Southeast Asia were represented by Lu Nai-xiang and Japan by Tang Juedun 湯覺頓; Chang P’eng-yuan 張朋園, *Lixian pai yu Xinhai*

spokesman and editorialist for the petition movement, writing progress reports to Xianzhenghui members in North America. Like Liang Qichao, Wu asserted the urgency of opening parliament within one or two years. Otherwise, China would be rocked by revolution and split apart by the Great Powers (*lieqiang*) or lost to the “vaulting ambitions of Japan.” Wu also echoed Liang’s prophesy that “there would be no such date as the ‘fifth year of Xuantong’ [1913] in history.”⁶⁴ “We’ve already decided on a third petition,” announced Wu after the second petition was rejected, in defiance of a court edict that ordered, “You people shall not memorialize us again on this subject.”⁶⁵

Sometime between the second petition in June and the third in October 1910, Kang Youwei wrote a memorial to the emperor and prince regent on behalf of the Xianzhenghui in the United States. Throughout, Kang invoked the need to honor Guangxu’s true intent: constitutional government. The memorial forthrightly declared that the concept of constitutionalism was adopted from Europe and the United States, including three branches of government with distinct responsibilities for legislation, judicature, and administration. The citizenry alone was empowered to legislate. While acknowledging that “our country does not have the tradition of a constitutional government,” Kang claimed that Guangxu believed that China should belong to its people, and “now we urge the realization of his will.” It was fine for officials to carry out a census and other administrative functions in preparation for a constitution, but only parliament could legitimately draft a constitution. “Our emperor and regent should fix this process to be faithful to the dying decree of the late emperor and the wishes of our citizens ... The nine-year preparatory period should be disregarded ... Please issue an edict and set the third year of Xuantong, 1911, for the inauguration of parliament.”⁶⁶

On September 27, 1910, the Canadian Xianzhenghui (Yingshu Jia’nada Qisheng Xianzheng Zonghui) representing chapters in seven provinces, submitted a constitutional petition under the names of the national president Lin

Geming 立憲派與辛亥革命 [Constitutionalists and the Revolution of 1911 in China] (Taipei: Institute of Modern History Academia Sinica, 1969), 6.

64 “Guohui Wenti: Wu Xianzi zhi Xianzhenghui Tongzhi shu” 國會問題: 伍憲致憲政會同志書 [The Issue of Parliament: Wu Xianzi writes to Xianzhenghui Comrades], letter dated July 30, 1910, *Tung Wah Times*, September 17, 1910, 8; Chang, “The Constitutionalists,” 170–71.

65 Fincher, *Chinese Democracy*, 149.

66 Kang Youwei, “Qing Likai Guohui yi Jiuwang Ju Zhe dai Meiguo Xianzhenghui Zuo” 清立開國會以救亡局折代美國憲政會作 [A Memorial on Behalf of the Constitutional Association in the United States to Establish a Parliament to Save the Nation from Extinction], written between June and October 1910, in *Kang Youwei Quanji*, vol. 9, 171–72.

Lihuang and vice president Jiang Naitong.⁶⁷ Possibly drafted by Kang Youwei, the petition stressed to the Qing court the urgency of convening parliament, not only to rally overseas Chinese support but to prevent a foreign partition of China. It also advocated reforming domestic politics by installing a “responsible cabinet” (*zeren neige*), and building military strength.

Xianzhenghui leaders in the United States personally handed their petitions to visiting Qing royalty. Prince Zaitao, half-brother of both Guangxu and Prince Regent Zaifeng, had been selected to form a Palace Guard (Jinweijun) in 1908 and make a mission to Japan, the United States, and Europe to investigate Western army modernization in 1910.⁶⁸ Twenty-three-year-old Zaitao was sympathetic to reform and later secretly allied with Liang Qichao in a plot to effect a military takeover of the Qing government.⁶⁹ Zaitao was handed two petitions on his brief trip in spring 1910 to San Francisco, Chicago, Washington, DC, and New York City. During his one-day stop in Chicago on April 26, the local chapter welcomed the long-awaited visit of a relative of Guangxu to whom they could pass on their petition: “We are sick to heart about the state of the country. Quickly save the nation from extinction when you return, and we’ll eagerly look to the east.”⁷⁰ The petition repeated many familiar themes, appealing for unity in the face of foreign threats and demanded that parliament should “be opened as soon as possible.” A second petition, in the name of the Xianzhenghui in the Americas, was nearly identical to Kang’s late 1909 memorial and called for convening parliament on October 4, 1910.⁷¹ This one might

67 “Yingshu Jia’nada Qisheng Xianzheng Zonghui Bing” 英屬加拿大七省憲政總會稟 [Petition of the Constitutional Association in the Seven Provinces of the British Dominion of Canada], AR-8, AAS ARC 2000/78. Zhongping Chen in an email to authors dated January 12, 2022, stated he strongly suspects that Kang wrote the petition.

68 Edward J. M. Rhoads, *Manchus and Han: Ethnic Relations and Political Power in Late Qing and Early Republican China, 1861–1928* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2000), 145–49 passim.

69 The plot will be described later in this chapter. Ernest P. Young, “The Reformer as a Conspirator: Liang Ch’i-ch’ao and the 1911 Revolution,” in *Approaches to Modern Chinese History*, ed. Albert Feuerwerker, Rhoads Murphy, and Mary C. Wright (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), 244–46.

70 “Yao Zhe: Lü Meiguo Zhicheng Zhonghua Digu Xianzhenghui Chengqing Tao Junwang dai Zouzhe” 要摺：旅美國芝城中華帝國憲政會呈請濤郡王代奏折 [Urgent Memorial: a Memorial to the Throne Submitted by the Chinese of the Chicago (United States) Xianzhenghui to Prince [Zai]tao], *Tung Wah Times*, July 30, 1910, 8; “Chicago Receives Chinese Prince,” *San Francisco Call*, April 27, 1910; “Chinese Prince Guest of Grant,” *Chicago Tribune*, April 27, 1910, 3.

71 “Dailun: Lü Meizhou Digu Xianzhenghui cheng Tao Junwang Dai Zou Su Kai Guohui Qingyuan Shu” 代論：旅美洲帝國憲政會呈濤郡王代奏速開國會請願書 [Petition to the Emperor Submitted by the Imperial Constitutional Association in the Americas via

have been presented by Chin K. Shue, president of the Boston Xianzhenghui at a luncheon in New York City Chinatown hosted for Zaitao's delegation by Chinese merchants and East Coast Xianzhenghui chapters.⁷²

In the five months following Zaitao's American mission, the revolutionary movement inside and outside China grew more brazen. This reinforced the constitutionalists' admonitions against delaying political reforms before it was too late. Zaitao's brother, the new navy minister, Prince Zaixun, experienced firsthand the dangers of revolutionary zeal. He was targeted by assassins on three occasions as he traveled on study missions to Europe and the United States in 1910.⁷³ Police arrested George Fong, a member of the revolutionary Young China Association, just as he was aiming his gun at Zaixun, who was exiting the train in Oakland before boarding a ship to return to China on October 6, 1910.⁷⁴ Fong told police that he considered the prince "an enemy of my people." Earlier in Zaixun's journey, he encountered insistent Xianzhenghui members in New York City and Chicago bearing petitions exhorting him to persuade the prince regent not only to convene parliament but also to lift the ban on their loyal, patriotic "party of 1898" and "rejuvenate the reforms."⁷⁵ The petitions described anti-Manchu revolutionaries ready "to seize the opportunity to carry out their venomous schemes" and take advantage of the "people's accumulated rancor." Worse still, if domestic troubles coincided with foreign

Prince [Zai]tao to Speedily Open Parliament], in two parts, *Tung Wah Times*, June 11, 1910, 2, and June 18, 1910, 2.

72 "Chinatown Misses Tsai," *The Sun* (Baltimore), May 5, 1910, 2.

73 Rhoads, *Manchus and Han*, 153–57.

74 "Tries to Slay Chinese Prince," *Chicago Tribune*, October 7, 1910, 5.

75 "Dailun: Bulu Zhijiagao bu Diguo Xianzhenghui shang Xun Junwang Qing Kai Guohui Jie Dangjin Zhe" 代論: 補錄芝加高埠帝國憲政會上洵郡王請開國會解黨禁摺 [Copy of a Memorial from the Chicago Imperial Constitutional Association Chapter to Prince [Zai]xun asking to Open Parliament and End the Ban on Parties], *Tung Wah Times*, December 17, 1910, 2; "Dailun: Bulu Meidong Gebu lianhe Jia Mo Zhong Nan Meizhou Gebu Diguo Xianzhenghui Su Kai Guohui Qingyuan Shu (zai Niuyue shang Xun Junwang)" 代論: 補錄美東 各埠聯合加墨中南美洲各埠帝國憲政會速開國會請願書 (在紐約上洵郡王) [A Petition from all the Chapters in the Eastern United States jointly with all the Chapters in Canada, Mexico, Central and South America of the Imperial Constitutional Association to Speedily Open Parliament (presented to Prince Xun in New York)], *Tung Wah Times*, December 31, 1910, 2 (this petition has an updated addendum from the same group of chapters, angry about the November 1910 edict [see below] to convene parliament in 1913 claiming it was too dangerous to delay three more years). "Chinese Prince Arrives," *New-York Tribune*, September 30, 1910, 9: "Fong Ken Chun [possibly Feng Jingquan 馮鏡泉], president of the Chinese Reform Association, presented the prince with ... a memorial for the Prince Regent asking that he appoint a Chinese parliament."

aggression, “it would take great strength to save the country.” The Xianzhenghui members emphasized how they had been petitioning for parliament for months, their impatience rising as they waited for the court to shorten the constitutional preparatory time and establish a parliament by 1911. The Qing government feared the consequences of pardoning Kang and Liang and allowing parties to operate in China, yet as revolutionary actions accelerated, an even more disastrous outcome faced the dynasty as Prince Qing and others refused to meet these demands.⁷⁶

After they returned to China, Zaixun and Zaitao both continued to support the reform cause, but their political power paled next to Prince Pulun, the Grand Council-appointed president of the Political Consultative Council. Pulun had much earlier shown sympathies with the reformers—including meeting with Baohuanghui members when he visited the United States in 1904—and came to be “known as a spokesman for ‘the progressives’” for his open approval of the petition movement.⁷⁷ On October 3, 1910, the same day Pulun convened the 200-member council, Sun Hongyi of the Association of Comrades Petitioning for a National Congress submitted the third petition to the censorate, “allegedly with 25 million signatures.”⁷⁸ This time, three key groups joined in the petition—provincial assembly representatives (who were gathering for the second session of the provincial assemblies on October 3), civic organizations, and some governors and governors general.⁷⁹ The desperation of the signers rang out in rhetoric of harangue and ridicule, warning Prince Regent Zaifeng to heed their “bold but honest words” instead of continuing to “[sit] idle until he is placed under the guillotine, when he will be laughed at by the people.” Only a true parliament, not the advisory Political Consultative Council, would satisfy public opinion. Having had their first two petitions rejected without a word, the petitioners massed in front of Zaifeng’s palace and threatened to remain until their petition was accepted in person, and a few, “following the classical tradition, cut off joints of their fingers and wrote

76 The Qing court’s ambivalence and increasing internal conflict over lifting party bans and pardoning Kang and Liang are described in An Dongqiang 安東強, “Xinhai Geming Qianhou Kang Liang zai Guonei de Mouhua Huodong,” 辛亥革命前後康梁在國內的謀劃活動 [Schemes and Actions of Kang and Liang inside China Before and After the 1911 Revolution], *Journal of Sun Yat-Sen University (Social Science Edition)* 6, no. 61 (2021): 56–59.

77 Fincher, *Chinese Democracy*, 173.

78 Chang, “The Constitutionalists,” 162–65.

79 Fincher, *Chinese Democracy*, 168, notes that the second session of the provincial assemblies coincided in time with the first session of the Political Consultative Council, October 3, 1910–January 11, 1911.

petitions in their own blood," according to the London *Times*.⁸⁰ The same article declared that, "eventually, summoned by the Regent, the Commandant of the Peking *Gendarmerie*, and Prince Su came in person and begged them to go away, the prince himself promising to hand in their memorial next morning."

The Political Consultative Council was composed of one hundred court-appointed representatives and one hundred elected by the provincial assemblies; many of the elected members had signed the two earlier constitutional petitions.⁸¹ Although it was the Qing court's clear intent that the court-appointed majority of the council (including the court-appointed president) would protect imperial power against the demands of elected reformers, most of the three-month session was spent debating the petitions and the appointment of a "responsible" cabinet whose authority would be granted by a legislative body. However, not only the presiding officer, Pulun, but other court-appointed representatives "were inclined to the people's side," although they remained silent and unwilling to openly oppose the court.

In a spectacle of democracy in action, on October 22 the Political Consultative Council endorsed by acclamation the third petition demanding an elected parliament in 1911. In the words of Pulun, who presided over the session, "The entire assemblage was swept by a storm of joy ... Princes, nobles, scholars and ordinary subjects all gathered together in one room and, giving expression to the same emotion, afforded a spectacle unseen in China for thousands of years."⁸² Pulun's October 28 memorial to Prince Regent Zaifeng exposed deep rifts within the court: "The specious character of recent constitutional reforms has been patent to everyone in the Empire," and thus "the question of a parliament admits of no delay." Following the council's vote, governors general, governors, and military commanders from almost every province had telegraphed their own demands for the immediate establishment of parliament and a cabinet. "The most significant event in the history of China for the last half century," wrote U.S. Minister to China William J. Calhoun, and "it is proper that this new development be taken into consideration by the [State] Department and the American group."⁸³

The Qing court had to respond and, on November 4, 1910, issued an edict that parliament would convene in 1913, rather than in 1917 as originally planned. At

80 "The Chinese Demand for a Parliament," *The Times* (London), November 2, 1910, 7.

81 Chang, "The Constitutionalists," 165–67.

82 Memorial submitted by Prince Pulun and Shen Jiaben, October 28, 1910, translation, enclosure no. 1 in Calhoun to Knox, November 21, 1910, State Department Numerical Files, no. 893.00/482, Entry A1 205A, vol. 1422, RG 59, NA-College Park.

83 William J. Calhoun, Beijing, to Philander C. Knox, Secretary of State, October 25, 1910, State Department Numerical Files, no. 893.00/449, Entry A1 205A, vol. 1422, RG 59, NA-College Park.

the same time, the court ordered all petitioning for parliament to cease and attempted a broad crackdown on the movement. Further enraging the constitutionalists was the court's May 1911 declaration that before the parliamentary election, it would appoint a cabinet dominated by Manchu royalty, or what came to be known as the "Princes' cabinet" (Huangzu neige).⁸⁴

While the reformers might have celebrated their success in moving the parliamentary timeline ahead by four years, the Political Consultative Council responded to the edict in fiery sessions on November 7 and 9. They boldly telephoned a summons to the Grand Council, including its head, Prince Qing, to come answer questions from the members. On the grounds that the court was making "a farce of constitutional government," they threatened to dissolve unless they were given greater powers.⁸⁵ Receiving no response from the Grand Council to its summons, the Political Consultative Council became ever more assertive, attempting to impeach the grand councilors, demanding that the Grand Council be responsible to it as a representative body, and criticizing Prince Regent Zaifeng, who overruled the impeachment memorial.⁸⁶

The constitutional petition movement was further radicalized by the Political Consultative Council sessions in November when, "Speaker after speaker declared that three years was too long to wait—'Who will save Manchuria during that time?' demanded one ardent patriot—and the only member who attempted to defend the decision of the Government was shouted down by his colleagues."⁸⁷ Indeed, Japan had annexed Korea that July. In a move endorsed by Manchurian Governor General Xiliang, in December Fengtian Province activists, joined by students in Tianjin, presented the final petition for a 1911 parliament.⁸⁸ Numbering in the thousands, they marched to Beijing to make their demands in person. On December 25, Zaifeng issued a scathing edict calling the petitioners "ignorant and stupid" to "have recklessly persisted in their demand, often collecting crowds of people and seeking to force the

84 Zhou and Hu, "Conflict and Competition," 74.

85 Detailed accounts of these two sessions were recorded by the U.S. Delegation Chinese Secretary, Charles D. Tenney, who attended: "The Constitutional Assembly," memorandum, November 15, 1910, enclosure no. 5; "The Constitutional Assembly," report of the 12th meeting, held November 7, 1910, enclosure no. 6; and "The Constitutional Assembly," report of the 13th meeting, held November 9, 1910, enclosure no. 8, all in Calhoun to Knox, November 21, 1910, State Department Numerical Files, no. 893.00/482, Entry A1 205A, vol. 1422, RG 59, NA-College Park.

86 Fincher, *Chinese Democracy*, 173–74.

87 "The Reform Movement in China," *The Times* (London), December 17, 1910, 5.

88 Rhoads, *Manchus and Han*, 159–60.

hands of the authorities.”⁸⁹ He ordered the police to forcefully expel them from the capital and forbade “any further demand or annoying memorial in joint names.” On February 23, 1911, the New York Xianzhenghui chapter telegraphed *Shi Bao* in Shanghai: “The enemies are already on our borders. If parliament is delayed, China definitely will fall. We’d better prepare for the fifth petition.”⁹⁰

As demanded in the Qing court’s November 4 edict, the Association of Comrades appeared to retreat publicly. Contrary to association leader Sun Hongyi’s earlier vow to stay in Beijing until the petitioners had reached their goal, he admitted their failure in a public letter and asked the petitioners to return to their provinces to rouse popular support and cautiously attempt to organize a political party (*zhengdang*).⁹¹ In truth, the November 4 edict provoked a radical shift in tone and strategy by the angry and frustrated petitioners that led the way to the relatively bloodless 1911 revolution. Wu Xianzi wrote in his history of the Chinese Democratic Party:

On the day the petition representatives were ordered to leave the capital, they had a secret meeting. They would proclaim provincial independence in demanding a constitution. That Tang [Hualong] and Pu Dianjun, and many others [including Sun Hongyi] who had been petition leaders and had attended the secret meeting seized the opportunity [to proclaim their provinces’ independence] is no trivial matter.⁹²

Guomin Gongbao editor Xu Fosu hosted the meeting at his office. He described the participants’ decision less ambiguously:

We here decide that we shall lead revolution secretly. All the comrades of the assemblies will form the body of the organization. If there is any

89 “Imperial Decrees,” *North China Herald*, December 30, 1910, 785.

90 “Niuyue Gongdian” 紐約公電 [New York Public Telegram, sent first month, 25th day], *Shi Bao* (Shanghai), February 24, 1911, 2.

91 Sun Hongyi 孫洪伊, “Yao Jian: Beijing Tongzhihui tonggao shu” 要件: 北京同志會通告書 [Important Document: Beijing Society of Comrades written announcement], *Tung Wah Times*, January 7, 1911, 6. The same document, without attribution to Sun, was published in “Jizai di-yi: Zhongguo Da Shiji” 記載第一: 中國大事記 [Report no. 1: Important Current Events in China], *Dongfang Zazhi* (Shanghai) 7, no. 11 (November 1910): 18696–97.

92 Wu’s description of the meeting is quoted in Chang, “The Constitutionalists,” 168–69. Also see Ma, “Tang Hualong in the 1911 Revolution,” in Esherick and Wei, *China: How the Empire Fell*, 138.

event in the future which could lead to an uprising, comrades in each province will respond by proclaiming independence immediately.⁹³

In late 1910, Xu and his comrades—all presidents of provincial assemblies—Sun Hongyi (Zhili), Tang Hualong (Hubei), Tan Yankai (Hunan), and Pu Dianjun (Sichuan) began drafting a platform for what became China's first officially registered political party, initially named Diguo Tongyidang (Imperial Unification Party) by Liang Qichao, and renamed Xianyouhui (Friends of the Constitution) before a plenum held on June 4, 1911.⁹⁴ Its leaders were among the radical constitutionalists and increasingly undertook anti-Qing actions, while pursuing political power.

By spring 1911, the dynasty's demise may have been inevitable. It was a mistake to clamp down on the very elites who, because of their moderate views and strategic positions, had been recruited by the Qing to participate in the early constitutional reforms. Both Chinese and Western historians attribute the end of China's monarchy to the disillusionment of the constitutionalists, who saw no way to achieve their ends under Qing rule. Historians Zhou Jiming and Hu Xi conclude that that "the party that broke the stalemate in the competition between constitutional monarchy and anti-Manchu revolution and gave the historical advantage to the revolutionaries was the Qing government itself—truly a great irony of history."⁹⁵ William T. Rowe writes in *China's Last Empire*: "Both radical students and professional revolutionaries had played important roles in creating a climate favorable to republican revolution. But the influence of both groups had faded after 1908, and neither group was the direct agent of the revolution. The key role fell to a class of persons who had never been overtly revolutionary but who in practice might have been the most revolutionary of all: the reformist elite."⁹⁶

Constitutional petitioners like Sun Hongyi and Xu Fosu no doubt believed that they would prevail after a revolution by using their political power to enact a constitutional system that evolved from the Qing-era provincial assemblies and Political Consultative Council and would transition quickly to an elected

93 Chang, "The Constitutionalists," 168–69.

94 Chang, "The Constitutionalists," 173–74; Hou Yijie 侯宜傑, *Ershi Shiji chu Zhongguo Zhengzhi Gaige Fengchao: Qingmo Lixian Yundong Shi* 二十世紀初中國政治改革風潮：清末立憲運動史 [Agitation for Political Reform in Early Twentieth Century China: History of the Late Qing Constitutionalist Movement] (Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin Daxue Chubanshe, 2009), 341.

95 Zhou and Hu, "Conflict and Competition," 77.

96 William T. Rowe, *China's Last Empire: The Great Qing* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009), 273, 277.

national parliament. However, as the reformers were well aware, Sun Yatsen and the revolutionaries had a different plan for governance once they effected a military overthrow of the dynasty. Sun's nine-year three-stage program for governance after the revolution began with three years of military government, followed by six years of political tutelage with a provisional constitution overseen by the military government, after which Sun's five-power Republican government would rule.⁹⁷ Even the revised Qing plan for convening parliament in 1913 would have granted more power much sooner to elected legislators than that envisioned by the revolutionary hopefuls.

4 House on Fire: The Xianzhenghui Meets Revolutionary Fervor

The sudden radicalization of China's constitutionalists after their petitions failed to bring about an immediate parliamentary transition coincided with the weakening of the overextended and internally divided Xianzhenghui abroad as it faced off against the Tongmenghui (Revolutionary Alliance). Led by Sun Yatsen, the organizationally challenged Tongmenghui was slow to attract its rival's defectors.⁹⁸ The Xianzhenghui maintained its dominance over the revolutionaries until the end of 1911, with more than two hundred chapters on all continents, well-established schools and businesses, twelve years of mass actions from boycotts to petitions, and, most critical, a widespread network of newspapers to spread reform news and ideology. Sun's ten uprisings from 1895 until the April 27, 1911 Guangzhou Uprising did little to inspire new followers or retain his funders, because each successive uprising failed, often at great cost to Tongmenghui morale and financial coffers.⁹⁹ Competing revolutionary organizations kept emerging, and neither Sun nor the Tongmenghui were

97 Michael Gasster, *Chinese Intellectuals and the Revolution of 1911: The Birth of Modern Chinese Radicalism* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1969), 129–36. Sun's five-power division of government included a control branch meant to "prevent the legislative branch from dominating the executive."

98 This summary as it relates to Sun Yatsen and the revolutionary movement reflects the analysis of Bergère, *Sun Yat-sen*; Gasster, *Chinese Intellectuals and the Revolution of 1911*; Shelley Hsien Cheng, "T'ung-meng-hui: Its Organization, Leadership and Finances, 1905–1912," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Washington, 1962; Esherick and Wei, *China: How the Empire Fell*; Tjio Kayloe, *The Unfinished Revolution: Sun Yat-sen and the Struggle for Modern China* (Singapore: Marshall Cavendish Editions, 2017). Zhongping Chen contributed much of the detail from primary sources in this section and shaped the analysis.

99 "Short of funds and manpower, forced to rely upon unpredictable allies such as the secret societies and 'roving braves' or bandits, plagued by inadequate planning, uncoordinated efforts, spies and security leaks, T'ung-meng-hui plots were a series of fiascos." Gasster,

behind the successful but accidental Wuchang Uprising in October 1911. Sun famously learned that he would likely be the Republic's first president from reading American newspapers during a trip to raise funds in the United States.¹⁰⁰

Students, Christians, and secret society members were the most devoted base supporters of revolutionary action, but not necessarily loyal to Sun or the Tongmenghui, described by historian Marie-Claire Bergère as "an extremely loose federation of revolutionary groups, some of which became openly hostile to the Cantonese leader."¹⁰¹ Luckily for the Xianzhenghui, at the very time when it was fracturing in 1908 and 1909, Sun and the Tongmenghui were also under attack, with challengers "printing leaflets which attacked Sun, accusing him of megalomania, of misusing funds, and of causing revolutionary failures through mismanagement and poor organization," a campaign boosted by the reformers and coinciding with Sun's 1909–10 trip to the United States.¹⁰²

In North America, the revolutionaries' most convincing line of attack was exposing the corruption and self-aggrandizement within the Xianzhenghui and vilifying Kang himself. Such attacks fed into the reformers' internal disputes and underscored Sun's integrity and dedication. The revolutionaries dismissed as inconsequential the rapid momentum of constitutional reform inside China—and its genesis with Kang and the Baohuanghui—or labeled it a clever Manchu ploy to retain control over the Han. In response to the reformers' comprehensive political program, the revolutionaries spread a populist message of racially based anti-Manchu revolution, with little consideration of how they would construct a Chinese republic when the dynasty was toppled and incorporate non-Han minorities and territories. A major difference between the reformers and the revolutionaries was how they depicted the outcome of a revolution: chaos, disunity, and the loss of China to imperialist powers, or a sovereign Chinese state that would rapidly evolve and be embraced by friendly democratic nations.

Chinese Intellectuals and the Revolution of 1911, 57; Kayloe, *The Unfinished Revolution*, 183, 200–204.

100 Kayloe, *The Unfinished Revolution*, 212–16. However, Sun was involved to the extent that his primary collaborator Huang Xing had telegraphed him seeking money for Wuchang before October 10. Sun was not able to decipher the telegram while in transit in the United States because he lacked the code key. By the time he read the telegram, the uprising had begun. Rather than return to China immediately, Sun continued his travels in the United States and Europe, both to raise funds as well as to seek diplomatic support from governments. Bergère, *Sun Yat-sen*, 207; Esherick and Wei, *China: How the Empire Fell*, 107–108. On October 13, 1911, many American newspapers began reporting that Sun would likely be elected president of the new republic.

101 Bergère, *Sun Yat-sen*, 153.

102 Ma, *Revolutionaries, Monarchists, and Chinatowns*, 131–35.

Kang's contentious relationship with Sun dated back to the 1890s when Sun reached out to Kang in vain, and it flared during times when those closest to Kang, including Liang Qichao and Yung Wing, openly associated with Sun and took him seriously. Sun's persona as an early migrant (to Hawai'i at age thirteen), modern Western-educated medical doctor and a Christian, modest in lifestyle, and an impassioned champion of a nationalist, anti-Manchu, pro-Han revolution, contrasted starkly with Kang's image among overseas Chinese. Kang initially won their respect because of his classical pedigree and gentry background and his unique distinction as the man most responsible for the Hundred Days' reforms. Furthermore, the Baohuanghui was sustained by Kang's loyal cadre of several hundred articulate former students led by Liang Qichao, sharing a core set of reform ideas developed by Kang and Liang. They confidently took on roles as newspaper editors, school principals, chapter organizers, fundraisers, and business managers for the Baohuanghui. That organizational prowess, combined with a more moderate political agenda with greater appeal to a broader population of potential members, held the Tongmenghui at bay for nearly six years. While Sun, like Kang, was accused by followers of taking money raised for the uprisings, no one could charge him with living extravagantly or spending money on building houses or leisure travel.¹⁰³

Both the Xianzhenghui and Tongmenghui suffered from internal dissension directed against their respective leaders. But it was the conflicts among Kang's associates that ultimately caused the institutional breakdown of the Xianzhenghui in North America, when many dissident members dropped out or defected to the revolutionist camp. Reports of Tongmenghui discord in reform newspapers did not inhibit Sun Yatsen from recruiting Tongmenghui members and raising funds in Canada and the United States. Sun's positive reception in 1911 was underpinned by the political and propaganda base built over many years by a few staunch men, including early Baohuanghui defectors, and by their alliance with the powerful Zhigongtang, also known as Hongmen or in English as Chinese Triads or Freemasons. Ultimately, the greatest boost to the Tongmenghui and Sun came from disenchanted Xianzhenghui leaders, exemplified by Vancouver's Ye En (Charles Yip Yen), who led their followers to rebel against Kang. Ye himself never rejected reform for revolution, but his diatribes against Kang had a radicalizing effect on many others.

The gravitation of reformers to the Tongmenghui in two key cities, Vancouver and San Francisco, illustrates the importance of individuals doggedly dedicated to the revolutionary cause, who overcame the dysfunctional organization

103 Bergère, *Sun Yat-sen*, 190.

behind them. Probably more than any other person, Feng Ziyou of Yokohama enabled the Tongmenghui to ascend rapidly in North America as the Xianzhenghui declined. Politically active from an early age, Feng, whose original name was Feng Maolong, first joined his father, Feng Jingru, and his uncle, Feng Zishan, in 1895 when they helped Sun Yatsen establish the Yokohama chapter of the Xingzhonghui (Revive China Society). After Kang and Liang fled into exile in 1898, the Feng brothers ran printing presses and aligned with the reform cause. They published Baohuanghui journals, beginning with *Qingyi Bao* (*The China Discussion*).¹⁰⁴ As a result, Feng Maolong enrolled in Datong schools in Yokohama and Tokyo where he studied under Xu Qin and Liang Qichao. Feng, although moved by the patriotic spirit of the schools, rebelled against the repression of revolutionary ideas and changed his given name to Ziyou, meaning freedom.¹⁰⁵ By 1900, Feng was a pro-revolutionary student leader and political publicist. After Kang left Japan in March 1899 for Canada, Liang Qichao and other reformers in Japan reached out to Sun Yatsen, advocated Guangdong independence, and openly challenged Kang. This radical, although temporary, pivot influenced young students like Feng Ziyou.¹⁰⁶ He joined the Tongmenghui in 1905 and Sun assigned him to head the Hong Kong office.¹⁰⁷ Feng maintained a steady presence there until 1910, recruiting members from abroad and coordinating activities in the colony as well as in Macau and Guangzhou, while Sun traveled abroad raising funds for uprisings.

As one of the rare Tongmenghui intellectuals equipped to wage editorial battles with the likes of Liang Qichao, Feng was made editor of the Hong Kong newspaper *Zhongguo Ribao* (China News). He wrote theoretical articles for *Min Bao* (People's News) to attack the Baohuanghui and define Tongmenghui ideology.¹⁰⁸ When Feng brought Li Bohai from Victoria, British Columbia, to the Hong Kong Tongmenghui chapter in 1905, it was a stinging rebuke to Li's father, Li Fuji, the first president of the inaugural Baohuanghui chapter. Li and Feng worked to expand the Tongmenghui presence in North America.

104 Eric C. Han, "Narrating Community in Yokohama Chinatown: 1894–1972," Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 2009, 50, 60–66.

105 Cheng, "T'ung-meng-hui," 65–66.

106 Sang Bing 桑兵, *Gengzi Qinqwang yu Wan-Qing Zhengqu, Di-Er Ban* 庚子勤王與晚清政局 (第二版) [The 1900 Movement to "Rush Troops in to Save the Throne" and the Late Qing Political Situation, 2nd ed.] (Beijing: Beijing Daxue Chubanshe, 2015), 192–99, 356–61, 366–81; Chen Min 陳民, "Feng Ziyou" 馮自由, in Xiong Shanghou 熊尙厚 and Yan Ruping 嚴如平, ed., *Minguo Renwu Zhuan* 民國著名人物傳 [Biographies of Historical Figures in Republican China] (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 2002), vol. 11, 83–84.

107 Chen, "Feng Ziyou," vol. 11, 83–85.

108 Bergère, *Sun Yat-sen*, 145, 155, 170.

One adept recruit was Li Bohai's San Francisco clansman, Li Shinan, who in 1909 organized the Youth Study Society (Shaonian Xueshe) in San Francisco and edited the widely read newspaper, *Shaonian Zhongguo Chenbao* (Young China).¹⁰⁹ In 1910 Li and Sun turned the Youth Study Society into the Tongmenghui headquarters in the United States. In the Western press, the Tongmenghui was usually referred to as the Young China Association. Tongmenghui members themselves might admit only to being Young China members, hiding their Tongmenghui membership from all but other members, because the organization was largely clandestine until the establishment of the Republic.¹¹⁰

The Tongmenghui's lack of visible presence in most North American Chinatowns meant that it was the well-established, zealously anti-Qing brotherhood—the Zhigongtang—which swung thousands of its members and tens of thousands of its dollars to support Sun Yatsen in 1911. Feng Ziyou astutely put himself in a position to forge this partnership, after years of uneven and temporary alliances between Sun and his Zhigongtang supporters.

Cooperation between the revolutionaries and Zhigongtang began in April 1904 when Sun Yatsen was detained by the U.S. immigration authorities in San Francisco after attempting to enter the United States using a forged birth certificate from Hawai'i.¹¹¹ He was freed by the joint efforts of Wong Sam Duck (Huang Sande), grand master of the Zhigongtang's American headquarters, and his colleague, Tang Qionghang (once a militant Baohuanghui activist in San Francisco, see Chapters 3 and 4), along with Reverend Ng Poon Chew, chief editor of the Christian newspaper in San Francisco, *Chung Sai Yat Po* (*Zhongxi Ribao*), who also once supported the reformers. Ng and the Zhigongtang then assisted Sun by printing Zou Rong's anti-Manchu, pro-Han booklet, *Gemingjun* (Revolutionary Army), and distributed 11,000 copies in the Americas and Southeast Asia. After freeing Sun, the Zhigongtang also accepted Sun's proposal to reorganize its headquarters and lodges into a centralized political party and to replace Ou Jujia, the editor of the Zhigongtang newspaper *Datong Ribao*, with a revolutionary partisan recommended by Sun.¹¹² In May 1904, Sun and Wong Sam Duck began a tour across the United States to deliver anti-Qing

109 Feng Ziyou, *Geming Yishi* 革命逸史 [An Unofficial History of Chinese Revolution] (Beijing: Xinxing Chubanshe, 2009), vol. 1, 70, 356–57; Chen Xiqi 陳錫祺 ed, *Sun Zhongshan Nianpu Changbian* 孫中山年譜長編 [A Comprehensive Chronological Biography of Sun Yatsen] (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1991), vol. 1, 465, 490.

110 Wen Xiongfei, ed. Him Mark Lai, "Founding of the Chinese Revolutionary League in America," *Chinese America: History and Perspectives* 19 (2005): 24–26.

111 Chen, *Sun Zhongshan Nianpu Changbian*, vol. 1, 308–10.

112 Ma, *Revolutionaries, Monarchists, and Chinatowns*, 88–98; Chen, *Sun Zhongshan Nianpu Changbian*, vol. 1, 310–13.

speeches to Zhigongtang lodges—many of which were allied to the Baohuanghui—with the goal of bringing the lodges under the central control of the San Francisco headquarters and raising funds for the headquarters and Sun's revolutionary movement.¹¹³ Baohuanghui leaders wrote to Kang Tongbi in South Windsor, alarmed at the enthusiasm for Sun shown by Yung Wing in Hartford and Baohuanghui and Zhigongtang leader Huang Xi (Wong Kai, Huang Peiquan) in New York City.¹¹⁴ Meanwhile, Ou Jujia, as instructed by Kang, was among those actively plotting to assassinate Sun during his United States tour. By the time Sun left the United States in December 1904, his Zhigongtang takeover had miscarried, after local lodges refused to subject themselves to the central control of the San Francisco headquarters and some members remained committed to the reform cause.¹¹⁵

Revolutionary fortunes in North America began to change after the Xianzhenghui was shaken by the Zhenhua scandal and Liu Shiji's assassination. When Sun Yatsen returned to the United States in November 1909, he was greeted in New York City by Huang Xi, whom he had met in 1904. Huang, a merchant, and his wife, a former first vice president of the Baohuangnühui (Chinese Empire Ladies Reform Association), helped Sun establish the first American chapter of the Tongmenghui at the end of 1909. The family shop inside their house became the chapter's headquarters with Huang as president.¹¹⁶

It was Feng Ziyou who realized that Canada had the greatest potential for expansion of the revolutionary cause in North America. Former Xianzhenghui leaders in Vancouver, led by Ye En and Ye Chuntian, were loudly airing their grievances against Kang and the Commercial Corporation. As these men also were influential Zhigongtang members, Feng saw a way to gain a Tongmenghui foothold in Canada. In 1910 he left Hong Kong for Vancouver to edit the Zhigongtang newspaper, *Da-Han Ribao* (*Tai-Hon Yat-Bo*, *Chinese Daily News*).¹¹⁷

113 See Chapter 4 for details on Sun's 1904 tour with Wong Sam Duck and widespread alarm in the Baohuanghui about Sun's appeal to its members as well as Kang's fear that he was an assassination target.

114 Ou Jujia 歐集甲 to Kang Tongbi 康同壁, July 29, 1904, no. S-C33; Tang Mingsan 湯銘三 to Kang Tongbi, December 5, 1904, no. B-21; Huang Rongye 黃榮業 in Hartford to Kang Tongbi, December 7, 1904, no. S-C32, all in Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection. For Huang's relations with the New York Zhigongtang, see Feng, *Geming Yishi*, vol. 2, 747.

115 Ma, *Revolutionaries, Monarchists, and Chinatowns*, 96; Chen, *Sun Zhongshan Nianpu Changbian*, vol. 1, 313–23.

116 Zhongping Chen, "Kang Tongbi's Pioneering Feminism and the First Transnational Organization of Chinese Feminist Politics, 1903–1905," *Twentieth-Century China* 44, no. 1 (2019): 23–24, 31; Chen, *Sun Zhongshan Nianpu Changbian*, vol. 1, 479, 483.

117 Chen, "Weiduoliya, Wen'gehua yu Haiwai Huarende Gailiang," 84, 90–91.

This positioned Feng to wage a newspaper war with the Vancouver Xianzhenghui newspaper *Rixin Bao* (*Chinese Reform Gazette*) edited by Kang disciple Liang Wenqing, who also came to Vancouver in 1910, after editing Baohuanghui newspapers in Honolulu and New York City. Feng won over not only Zhigongtang members to support revolution but former Xianzhenghui leaders, including a Vancouver chapter president Huang Kongzhao and former *Xin Bao* editor He Zhuojing.¹¹⁸

Feng's propaganda campaign in Canada created such a receptive climate among Zhigongtang members that when Sun visited between February and April 1911, the lodges donated generously to support Sun's planned Guangzhou Uprising. While thousands attended Sun's lectures on his first stop in Vancouver, Feng's cultivation of the Zhigongtang came to fruition in Victoria.¹¹⁹ On February 22, Sun and Feng were welcomed by Lin Lihuang, treasurer (*sikuyuan*) for the Canadian Zhigongtang headquarters in Victoria and concurrently national president of the Canadian Xianzhenghui, also headquartered in that city. Sun's stirring speeches gave Feng an opening to persuade Lin and other Zhigongtang leaders to mortgage their building for HK\$30,000 so that Sun's imminent uprising would not fail for lack of funds.¹²⁰ Leaving Victoria, Sun traveled with Zhigongtang escorts to smaller towns in British Columbia, and then east to Calgary, Winnipeg, Toronto, and Montreal, raising funds from donations and mortgages on lodge buildings.¹²¹ Canadian donations yielded at least HK\$63,000, more than 40 percent of the total donated by overseas Chinese for the Guangzhou Uprising. Although the uprising failed, Sun's fundraising success in Victoria spurred successful collaboration between the Tongmenghui and the Zhigongtang in both Canada and the United States. Nonetheless, Lin Lihuang and other Xianzhenghui leaders who gladly helped Sun raise funds through the Zhigongtang in 1911 remained loyal to the reform organization up to and beyond the revolution and never joined the Tongmenghui.¹²² Even for revolutionists, loyalty to the Zhigongtang sometimes outweighed devotion to

118 Feng Ziyou, *Geming Yishi*, vol. 1, 170; Feng's account uses the newspaper's former name *Xin Bao* 新報, which was renamed *Rixin Bao* 日新報 in 1911 after the Xianzhenghui took over the paper from the now-antagonistic Ye clan. See Chen, *Transpacific Reform and Revolution*, 141–53.

119 Chen, "Weiduoliya, Wen'gehua yu Haineiwai Huaren de Gailiang," 92–93.

120 "Advocates Armed Revolt in China," *Province* (Vancouver), February 22, 1911, 10; Feng, *Geming Yishi*, vol. 1, 171 and vol. 2, 603; Jian Jianping, *Zhongguo Hongmen zai Jia'nada* [The Chinese Freemasons in Canada] (Vancouver: Zhongguo Hongmen Minzhidang zhu Jia'nada zongzhibu, 1989), 24–25.

121 Chen, "Weiduoliya, Wen'gehua yu Haiwai Huaren de Gailiang," 93–94.

122 Email from Zhongping Chen to authors, December 28, 2021.

revolution, as with Wong Sam Duck who later claimed that he ignored Sun's order to assassinate Kang Youwei in 1905 since a furtive assassination rather than open conflict between the two parties was "not in accord with our Hongmen principles."¹²³

After Sun left Canada in late April 1911 to return to the United States, Feng Ziyou founded the first Canadian Tongmenghui chapters in Vancouver and Victoria. One of the inaugural members was Ye Qiumao, whose father was the former Baohuanghui and Xianzhenghui leader, Ye Chuntian. Here, as with Li Bohai and Feng Ziyou, the Tongmenghui won over the radicalized progeny of powerful pro-Baohuanghui clans, such as Ye in Vancouver, Li in Victoria, and Feng in Yokohama. They became some of the Tongmenghui's most skillful and well-connected leaders.¹²⁴

While the Vancouver Xianzhenghui chapter sustained its heaviest blow from the internal conflict led by Ye En and his relatives in 1909, it remained strong.¹²⁵ The Xianzhenghui was able to claim a short-lived victory in the newspaper war between Liang Wenqing's *Rixin Bao* and Feng Ziyou's *Da-Han Ribao*. Liang Wenqing wrote to Liang Qichao in Japan near the end of 1910, declaring success not only in quieting Feng Ziyou's "impetuous remarks" (*fuyan*) but also in blunting the attacks of the Ye clan on the Canadian Xianzhenghui.¹²⁶ He also reported that a number of leaders in Vancouver, Victoria, and other cities remained loyal to the Xianzhenghui and raised 29,000 Japanese *yen* during a trying time when the business ventures were failing in Mexico, Hong Kong, and Southeast Asia. After fruitlessly requesting Liang Qichao to thank these members personally, Liang Wenqing became irritated. He wrote, "In the past few years, you have not written a word to our [North American] comrades, yet you want us to raise money and seek talent." Nevertheless, he remitted 25,000 *yen* to Liang Qichao in Japan to fund Liang's futile attempt to bribe Manchu princes and Empress Dowager Longyu to extract pardons for himself and Kang and end the ban on the party.¹²⁷

123 See Chapter 4 for details.

124 Chen, "Weiduoliya, Wen'gehua yu Haiwai Hwarende Gailiang," 90–94; Chen, *Transpacific Reform and Revolution*, 154.

125 "Memorandum of Association of the Chinese Daily Reform Gazette Sun Bo Limited," Reference no. BC 284, Reel no. B05120, British Columbia Archives, Victoria.

126 Liang Wenqing to Liang Qichao, November 30, 1910, in Zhang Ziwen 張子文, ed., *Liang Qichao Zhijiao Shouzha* 梁啟超知交手札 [Letters of Liang Qichao and His Confidants] (Beijing: Guojia Tushuguan, 1995), 329.

127 Liang Wenqing to Liang Qichao, December 20, 1910, in Zhang, *Liang Qichao Zhijiao Shouzha*, 329–31. Young, "The Reformer as a Conspirator," 244–46.

The newspaper war that continued into 1911 was brutal. Feng later wrote that he and Liang Wenqing exchanged two hundred editorial rounds over eight months, from about October 1910 to May 1911.¹²⁸ Sometime in summer 1911, after Sun left Canada, *Da-Han Ribao* stopped publication and “accepted surrender,” in the words of a *Rixin Bao* reporter, who asserted that “this paper went on a punitive expedition against Feng Ziyou.”¹²⁹ Sun Yatsen, whose popularity in Canadian Chinatowns had just been on display, was a “despicable wretch.” The “decisive victory” lasted only a few months, however. *Rixin Bao* was shuttered by the end of 1911, and Liang Wenqing left Canada in February 1912 for a long career in journalism and politics in China.¹³⁰

Perhaps around the time that *Da-Han Ribao* closed, Feng Ziyou moved to San Francisco. With Sun, Li Shinan, and others, Feng established a formal institutional and fund-raising alliance between the national Tongmenghui headquarters and the Zhigongtang, which was achieved just before the 1911 revolution erupted.¹³¹ Equally important in building the Tongmenghui was *Shaonian Zhongguo Chenbao* (Young China), the daily newspaper begun by Li Shinan in 1909 that had been radicalizing its readers throughout North and South America.¹³² Many of the most zealous Tongmenghui members were young, some still in high school, and, Eve Ma notes, “almost all were people who could not expect their voices to be heard in the major Chinatown social organizations,” in contrast to the establishment figures who dominated the Xianzhenghui. *Shaonian Zhongguo Chenbao* led the propaganda campaign against the Xianzhenghui in 1911, winning a series of newspaper battles with *Shijie Ribao* (*Chinese World*) edited by Kang disciple Liang Chaojie in San Francisco. *Shaonian Zhongguo Chenbao* exposed the reform organization’s national and local scandals and portrayed the reformers as corrupt, effete, and bound by outdated Confucian ideals of hierarchy and filial piety. In simple terms, *Shaonian Zhongguo Chenbao* said the reformers were “fathers ... afraid of their sons ...

128 Email from Chi Jeng Chang, January 3, 2022, notes that no issues of either newspaper exist from the period of the newspaper wars, and the main source is Feng Ziyou’s history, *Geming Yishi*, which is not always reliable.

129 “Wen’gehua Rixin Bao Da Shengli Kaixuan Wen” 溫哥華日新報大勝利凱旋文 [Vancouver’s *Rixin Bao* Returns Triumphant from Big Victory of the Pen], *Tung Wah Times*, October 14, 1911, 8. *Tung Wah Times* (Sydney) typically reported North American events several months after they occurred.

130 Te-Ping Chen, Liang’s great-granddaughter, a journalist herself, has documented his career in China; see “China Could Have Been a Very Different Country: A Search for Family Reveals a Lost Moment,” *Wall Street Journal*, March 7, 2019.

131 Chen, “Weiduoliya, Wen’gehua yu Haiwai Huarende Gailiang,” 90–94.

132 Ma, *Revolutionaries, Monarchists, and Chinatowns*, 133–34.

mice and cattle, unworthy of the slightest attention.”¹³³ The vilification of the Xianzhenghui eventually so tarnished its reputation in San Francisco that mainstream organizations such as the Chinese Chamber of Commerce and the Ningyang native place association (Ningyang Huiguan) representing San Francisco’s largest population group, from Taishan, Guangdong, ousted well-known Xianzhenghui supporters from their governing boards and brought on pro-revolution sympathizers. The stage was set for a shift in political affiliation among Chinese in North America in late 1911 as it became clear the revolutionaries would prevail in China.

From the time Sun Yatsen arrived in Canada in February 1911, Kang’s deputy, Xu Qin, found himself in the painful position of being the most authoritative face of the Xianzhenghui as it struggled against the revolutionaries in North America, both in newspaper wars and Chinatowns. “The situation is precarious,” Xu wrote Liang Qichao, because members were losing hope and Xu himself was disheartened and felt powerless.¹³⁴ In April, Xu confronted business failures in Mexico and Chicago and difficulties raising donations.¹³⁵ Further damaging Xianzhenghui credibility, the Victoria chapter had mortgaged its building to donate 10,000 yuan for the effort to lift the party ban. But Liang had kept 9,000 yuan in Japan and now the chapter demanded its money be returned. Xu no longer wanted to face members, who had lost trust in Kang and Liang and, unless the Qing allowed the party to act inside China, there was no point in going from chapter to chapter begging for a few thousand dollars. Members hurled abuse and insults at Xu, dissatisfied by what they perceived was the reformers’ passivity and lack of progress inside China. A more aggressive response to both Qing and revolutionary forces was needed to boost member morale. Xu seemed convinced that if the Qing lifted the ban against the Xianzhenghui and its leaders, it could be “the medicine to snatch the patient from the jaws of death.”¹³⁶

There was a ray of hope with the formation in China in early 1911 of the new constitutionalist political party. In February, Xu wrote Wu Xianzi in Beijing that as soon as the Diguo Tongyidang was officially registered by the Qing

133 Ma, *Revolutionaries, Monarchists, and Chinatowns*, 143–53.

134 Xu Qin to Liang Qichao, February 1, 1911, in *Liang Rengong Xiansheng Nianpu Changbian Gaoben* 梁任公先生年譜長編稿本 [Uncut Manuscript of Liang Qichao’s *Nianpu*], ed. Qinghua Daxue Guoxue Yanjiuyuan and Zhonghua Shuju Bianjibu 清華大學國學研究院, 中華書局編輯部 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 2015): vol. 9, 4399–402.

135 Xu Qin to Liang Qichao, April 3, 1911, in *Liang Rengong Xiansheng Nianpu Changbian Gaoben*, vol. 9, 4430–36.

136 Xu Qin to Wu Xianzi, February 1, 1911, in *Liang Rengong Xiansheng Nianpu Changbian Gaoben*, vol. 9, 4403–5.

Ministry of Civil Affairs (Minzhengbu), he would urge Xianzhenghui chapters to recognize the party and raise funds for it. By April there was serious discussion of a merger of the overseas and domestic organizations, yet Xu feared that the Tongyidang would exploit the Xianzhenghui and take advantage of its fundraising generosity while making decisions independently of its overseas partner. Moreover, "if the ban is not lifted, it would be impossible to return to China to preside over everything." Xu may have been referring to potential party leadership of Kang Youwei, who had just written an essay to celebrate the first legal political party in China. In his telling, it had its origin in 1895 with the Qiangxuehui (Society for the Study of National Strengthening) and evolved into the Baohuanghui, Xianzhenghui, and Zhengwenshe.¹³⁷ In May, the party was renamed Xianyouhui (Friends of the Constitution) and formally inaugurated on June 4, 1911.¹³⁸ While it did not successfully unify all constitutionalists, during its short life it was considered to be the most "national" party among the several new political parties as well as the most radical, promoting "people's rights" (*minquan*) and advocating for local militias.¹³⁹ Xu asked Liang Qichao to send the Xianyouhui charter and membership enrollment forms, yet there is no evidence that the party took hold in North America.¹⁴⁰ In the same letter, Xu expressed dark pessimism about the obstruction of officials, such as Prince Qing and Prince Zaize, to lifting the ban: "Seeing the corruption in the government, I am extremely eager to carry out an assassination attempt, to give my life in order to finalize the matter. What is your thought on this?"¹⁴¹ Xu continued to veer between desperation and militancy as challenges to the Xianzhenghui increased.

Shortly after the October 10, 1911 Wuchang Uprising, the Tongmenghui, Zhigongtang, and local revolutionary newspapers organized celebrations in Chinatowns throughout North America. They pulled down Qing dragon

137 Kang Youwei, "Minzhengbu Zhun Diguo Tongyidang Zhuze lun" 民政部准帝國統一黨註冊論 [On the Registration of the Imperial Unification Party by the Ministry of Civic Affairs], April 1911, in *Kang Youwei Quanji*, vol. 9, 192.

138 Hou Yijie, *Ershi Shiji chu Zhongguo Zhengzhi Gaige Fengchao*, 340–45.

139 Joseph W. Esherick, *Reform and Revolution in China: The 1911 Revolution in Hunan and Hubei* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), 97–98. The Xianyouhui disbanded soon after the revolution, and its members joined other parties formed at the beginning of the Republic; Philip C. Huang, *Liang Ch'i-ch'ao and Modern Chinese Liberalism* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1972), 118.

140 Xu Qin to Liang Qichao, [September 15, 1911; the editors date this letter to August 27, 1910 but Xu writes of the Xianyouhui, which did not exist in 1910], in Ding and Zhao, *Liang Qichao Nianpu*, 515. Chen Xuezhang verifies this correction.

141 Note that Prince Qing and Prince Zaize were considered potential reform allies up to the banning of Zhengwenshe in 1908.

banners to raise their red flag with its corner emblem of a white sun in the blue sky.¹⁴² Initially, the euphoria of a promising political future seized most Chinese overseas, and thousands watched parades and donated to the future Republic. San Francisco's Zhigongtang building became the "temporary capital of the Chung Hwa government" and distribution point for the Republican bonds which Sun Yatsen had begun to sell earlier in the year.¹⁴³ The same source revealed that although Sun Yatsen was in the United States until he departed for Europe on November 2, he was absent at a critical meeting of the "Republic of Chung Hwa," chaired by Feng Ziyou (Feng Che You) and Li Shinan (Lee Se Nan) in San Francisco on October 15. Only five days after Wuchang, this secret meeting was attended by key revolutionaries in the United States, including Huang Xi (Wong Kai) of New York City. Sun Ke (Sun Fo), who represented his father, updated attendees on military progress inside China and the Republican plans for governance. A *San Francisco Chronicle* interview with Sun Ke should have been reassuring to Xianzhenghui members: "There is a second strong political party in China which will probably take part in our Government, but they are now standing neutral in the war. This party is the Constitutionalist party, and their leader is Fung Yua Wei [Kang Youwei], who is at present exiled in Japan."

It is striking that Sun Yatsen never appeared publicly or joined the celebrating throngs in American Chinatowns. Instead, he kept his movements as secret as possible, sheltered by Tongmenghui chapters in Denver, Kansas City, Chicago, Washington, DC, and New York City, perhaps with a premonition of his tenuous hold on power or fear of assassination by "royalists."¹⁴⁴ A *New York Sun* reporter, tipped off by a member of the Xianzhenghui, confronted Sun in the hallway of New York City's Young China Association at 12 Mott Street in late October; "Dr. Sun refused to admit his identity" and dashed into a waiting car, saying "Don't talk to me. I have nothing to say."¹⁴⁵

Plotting his next moves, Sun continued to raise funds, and attempted through his "diplomatic envoy" Homer Lea to win diplomatic and financial

142 "Chinese of Portland Express Hope Rebels will Triumph," *Portland Oregonian*, October 23, 1911, 4; "Parade Shows Local Spirit"; "New York Chinese Meet," *San Francisco Call*, October 16, 1911, 5.

143 "Chinese Republic Opens its Treasury Here," *San Francisco Chronicle*, October 16, 1911, 14.

144 "Assassins Trail Sen in Chicago," *Chicago Tribune*, October 15, 1911, 6.

145 "Dr. Sun Yat Sen is in Town," *New York Sun*, October 28, 1911, 6. At least until 1907, 12 Mott Street was a Baohuanghui location, housing Huayi Bank and the Western Military Academy armory; see Chapter 10.

support from the U.S. and British governments.¹⁴⁶ The reemergence of Western Military Academy founder Homer Lea as Sun's closest American advisor after Kang dismissed Lea in 1906 merits explanation. In 1910, Sun Yatsen was introduced to Lea by Yung Wing, the venerable educator, diplomat and reformer, who like Lea had earlier been attracted to revolution. Lea and Yung presented Sun with an enticing scheme, code-named Red Dragon, that Lea had dreamed up in 1908 as a way to realize his military ambitions.¹⁴⁷ In 1908, the Red Dragon conspirators (Lea, Yung, retired New York banker Charles B. Boothe, and investor W. W. Allen) saw Kang Youwei as the best Chinese partner for Red Dragon recruitment because he, compared to Sun Yatsen, had a sizeable organization and financial resources. However, Kang was no longer in the United States when they were ready to act. To Sun, they promised millions of dollars from a consortium of American investors, the expertise of American military officers, and Lea's military genius to aid Sun in a sweeping series of uprisings across China to topple the Qing and form a new government, with the American Red Dragon plotters to receive business rewards or high positions after Sun's victory.

The Red Dragon plan failed when American businessmen could not be persuaded to invest in such a risky scheme. But Lea and Sun forged a close and lasting bond that was not broken until Lea's death in 1912. Thus it was on November 11, 1911, that Sun met Lea in London and, reminiscent of their Red Dragon concessions, they approached the British government for its "friendship and support," offering in return "a [British] Political Officer on his [Sun's] staff" and to "place the new Navy under the command of British Officers," as well as "in regard to any agreement China may make with Japan they would act under advice of the British Government."¹⁴⁸ Just as the U.S. government had already concluded after hearing Lea's similar appeals, the British government

146 "Future Ruler of China Pays Denver a Visit," *Rocky Mountain News* (Denver), October 14, 1911, 2. Patrick Anderson, Appendix 14: "A re-investigation of Sun Yatsen's fifth arrival in England, late 1911," *The Lost Book of Sun Yatsen and Edwin Collins* (London: Routledge, 2017), 253–55, documents Sun's U.S. travels from local news articles, communications with Homer Lea, and other sources to conclude that Sun Yatsen left New York on November 2 on the *Adriatic* and arrived in Liverpool November 10, and London on November 11.

147 Two books present the convoluted story of Red Dragon, primarily based on the correspondence saved by one of its principals, Charles Beach Boothe: Charles Beach Boothe Papers, 1850–1976, Collection Number 65006, Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University. The most comprehensive and thoughtful account is Eugene Anshel, *Homer Lea, Sun Yat-sen, and the Chinese Revolution* (New York: Praeger, 1984), 115–50. Lawrence M. Kaplan, *Homer Lea: American Soldier of Fortune* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 2010), 145–167, describes the conspiracy and provides considerable detail about Lea's personal and authorial life during the Red Dragon years, 1908 to 1911.

148 Anshel, *Homer Lea*, 160–61.

decided neutrality was the best course. Sun then sailed with his “Chief of the General Staff” Homer Lea and Lea’s wife Ethel to Shanghai, arriving on December 25, 1911.¹⁴⁹ Sun’s colleagues in China did not share his esteem for Lea, yet Lea would accompany Sun to Nanjing for his inauguration as Provisional President of the Chinese Republic.¹⁵⁰

After Sun Yatsen left North America, his followers violently attacked Xianzhenghui members and the visual symbols of their organization. Tongmenghui members and sympathizers overlooked the similar goals of the reformers and revolutionaries, and, stirred by anti-Manchu fervor, vowed to “erase” “all vestige of the Empire Reform Association.”¹⁵¹

At the turn of 1912 and the inauguration of the Republic, *Rixin Bao* in Vancouver received a harrowing firsthand report dated January 10 from Huntington, Oregon, a railroad town on the Snake River, whose Baohuanghui/Xianzhenghui chapter had existed for more than a decade.¹⁵² It was now down to about a dozen members, having lost its followers with the Commercial Corporation troubles and the revolution. This letter describes the escalating demands and “tyrannical” behavior the members had endured since Sun Yatsen came to town a few months earlier (probably in spring 1911) to raise funds and denounce the Xianzhenghui. First, they were asked to display the new Republican flag and adopt the solar calendar. “After we compromised and did as they demanded, they said that the sign of our association [Diguo Xianzhenghui] has the two characters, *diguo* (imperial) that are not proper since Sun Yatsen as president has expelled the Manchu government.” The sign then was removed, but “Sun Wen’s party tore apart our association office,” removed the inscribed tablets at the entrance, and tossed everything in the street, chasing those in the office out of the building where they were beaten. The remaining members in the chapter “won’t desert us even if threatened with death.”

From Canada, most likely Vancouver, several members wrote to Kang and Liang on January 20, 1912: “The pawns of the rat party (*shudang*)—the so-called

149 Anschel, *Homer Lea*, 164–73; Kaplan, *Homer Lea*, 174–82.

150 Bergère, *Sun Yat-sen*, 210, 212, 216. Lea suffered a stroke on February 11, 1912 and returned to Ocean Park, California, where he died on November 1, 1912. In 1969 his ashes and those of his wife Ethel were interred at Yangmingshan No. 1 Public Cemetery, Taipei, Taiwan, with the intention they would be reinterred next to the Sun Yatsen Mausoleum in Nanjing; Kaplan, *Homer Lea*, 6, and Find a Grave, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/44063706/homer-lea>, accessed August 19, 2024.

151 “Imperial Society Yields to Rebels,” *Portland Oregonian*, January 12, 1912, 12.

152 Huntington, Oregon, chapter to comrades at *Rixin Bao*, January 10, 1912, in Ding and Zhao, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 602–4. *Rixin Bao* was likely in the process of closing its office when it received this letter.

Tongmenghui members—used savage methods” to destroy the association office, including the photographs on display, and injured five or six Xianzhenghui members in the melee.¹⁵³ “Nobody dared to stop them.” The writers saw a bleak future for the Canadian chapters. Only a few chapters in the Vancouver and Victoria area were able to support themselves, there was conflict in the eastern Canadian chapters, and the small chapters in central Canada struggled to survive. Chapters in San Francisco and Stockton, California were forced to remove the offending word *diguo* from their signs and banners, and in the last month all the chapters were writing each other to share their despondency. The Canadian members urged Kang and Liang, “Please take charge and bolster party morale.”

The word “humiliation” (*chi*) frequently appears in the Canadian and Huntington, Oregon, letters to express not just what the writers personally suffered but humiliation because two prominent Xianzhenghui newspapers, Hong Kong *Shang Bao* and Guangzhou’s *Guoshi Bao*, had been attacked by mobs and now were closed.¹⁵⁴ Yet, only a few weeks later during Chinese New Year in February, the Vancouver leaders displayed a flag on their headquarters building echoing Kang’s globalist perspective—a “flag bearing a huge picture of the world”—a daring move in a “Chinatown ... all ablaze with revolutionary flags.”¹⁵⁵ Perhaps they were inspired by their Portland comrades, whom they informed Kang and Liang, “refused to obey a twenty-four-hour ultimatum to change the flag and banner, and negotiations are still going on.”

Li Meijin (Lee Maginn, Lee Mee Ginn), the Portland Xianzhenghui secretary and 1899 founder of the leading Northwest Pacific chapter, had brought a court injunction against the Young China Association after he was “severely beaten in the effort to protect the property of the [Chinese Empire Reform] association.”¹⁵⁶ Young China members entered the building and attempted to tear

153 Liao Zhao 廖照, Jiang Nai 蔣奈, Lin Henian 林鶴年, Liu Tingyang 劉天錫, and Lin Renzhi 林任之 to Liang Qichao and Kang Youwei, January 20, 1912, Ding and Zhao, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 604. Email from Zhongping Chen, August 19, 2022, identified Jiang Nai as a Vancouver-area leader, mentioned as among other local stalwarts that *Rixin Bao* editor Liang Wenqing asked Liang Qichao to write; November 22, 1910, in Zhang, *Liang Qichao Zhijiao Shouzha*, 328.

154 *The Shang Bao* 商報 attack in November 1911 is described in Jung-fang Tsai, *Hong Kong in Chinese History: Community and Social Unrest in the British Colony, 1842–1913* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 243–45.

155 “Chinatown is all Ablaze with Flags,” *Province* (Vancouver), February 19, 1912, 14. The article reports that the reform association announced publicly that they would hang the revolutionary flag for one hour and then replace it with the world flag. This is the only known instance of a world flag displayed by a Xianzhenghui chapter.

156 “Chinese Fight Anti-Rebel,” *Portland Oregonian*, January 9, 1912, 18. Li Meijin was a staunch reformer, who had been given a personal loan of \$5,000 at Kang’s request from the initial King Joy Lo investment in 1905. See Chapter 9.

down portraits of the emperor and other symbols of the imperial state, including the outdated sign for the Baohuanghui with its inflammatory reference to the Emperor, which had not been replaced when the organization changed its name in 1907. The Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association held a meeting to mediate the dispute between Young China and Li, who “was hooted by the 200 present” when he stated that the Xianzhenghui was “as much designed to protect the President of the Republic, Dr. Sun Yat Sen, as the Emperor.”¹⁵⁷ While Li promised to remove the offending Baohuanghui sign, he stalled, declaring that he would “not be coerced ... by anybody ... not even by the idiotic, autocratic secretary of the Young China Association.” As a Zhigongtang member, Li claimed he was not loyal to the Manchus, but backed a “limited monarchy.”¹⁵⁸ “In choice English and excellent script,” Li wrote, “I doubt if such a pinhead [Lee Quinn, head of the Portland Young China Association] and his retinue are able to distinguish between the meaning of a limited constitutional monarchy and a republican form of government.” Questioning whether the revolutionaries truly understood the civic standards of a republic, Li accused Lee Quinn of threatening to kill a recent reform association visitor if he didn’t leave Portland within twenty-four hours: “Is this true republican spirit of toleration?”

Li’s Portland visitor might have been Xu Qin, who had been in Seattle and Portland in mid-November 1911 to raise funds and assess Xianzhenghui morale.¹⁵⁹ Xu had been traveling in North America since 1909 and experienced firsthand the precipitous swing in allegiance to the revolutionaries during the early months following the Wuchang Uprising. While in Seattle, Xu had warned Kang:

The fate of the Manchus is now set. If we continue our propaganda in defiance of public opinion and advocate preserving the status of the imperial family, we will become the enemies of the whole nation. In the Americas, popular opinion is even more with the republic, so be sure not to advocate preserving the imperial line or we will lose popular support, and the association will be done. Our party has never been prepared, and others with more nimble feet have outstripped us.

Xu Qin countered his despair after Wuchang by rallying loyal members and raising funds for a multipronged political and military campaign that Kang and Liang Qichao had initiated in Japan in October 1911. They hoped to subvert

157 “Imperial Society Yields to Rebels,” *Portland Oregonian*, January 12, 1912, 12.

158 “Chinese Pens Defi,” *Portland Oregonian*, January 19, 1912, 12.

159 Xu Qin to Kang Youwei, November 14, 1911, in Ding and Zhao, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 592–93. More on this letter below.

the revolution and retain the imperial system (under a constitution) if not the imperial line.

5 1911: Final Move

Since 1898, I had advocated constitutional monarchy; since 1911 I have been advocating republicanism under a titular monarch.

KANG YOUWEI, telegram to Republic of China Provisional President Feng Guozhang, 1917¹⁶⁰

After the Wuchang Uprising, Liang Qichao and Kang Youwei, together in Kōbe since June 1911, began to execute a plan to usurp the rapidly moving revolutionary victory and stage their own “political revolution.”¹⁶¹ According to Ernest Young, this plan had been “set in motion” as early as March 1911 under the assumption that it would not be executed until sometime in 1912, and they were not fully prepared.¹⁶² Nevertheless, they swiveled quickly from advocating a constitutional monarchy (*junzhu xianzheng*) to supporting what Kang awkwardly called a “titular monarchical republic” (*xujun gonghe*). Emulating the British system, the government would be led by a parliament, which would draft a constitution and select a cabinet. The monarch would be purely “titular,” bearing a symbolic title but wielding no political power, which would be granted exclusively to the elected parliament.¹⁶³

To introduce such a system in the midst of a republican revolution required quick and forceful action, in effect, a coup. As Xu Qin wrote Kang from Seattle in November 1911, “Today, only military power has any impact, and only when you have this power can you take the floor.”¹⁶⁴ Liang Qichao had been plotting

160 Kang Youwei to Provisional President of China Feng Guozhang, Telegram, sent after the failure of the 1917 restoration of the Xuantong Emperor (Puyi) by Zhang Xun; cited in Hsiao, *A Modern China and a New World*, 248.

161 The main secondary sources used were: Young, “The Reformer as a Conspirator,” 239–67; Edmund S. K. Fung, *The Military Dimension of the Chinese Revolution* (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1980), 216–22; Lo, “Sequel to Autobiography,” 217–21; and Huang, *Liang Ch’i-ch’ao and Modern Chinese Liberalism*, 109–10.

162 Young, “The Reformer as a Conspirator,” 254–55.

163 As Zhaoyuan Wan notes, Kang had earlier described the British political system as a constitutional monarchy, not a republic; Zhaoyuan Wan, *Science and the Confucian Religion of Kang Youwei (1858–1927): China Before the Conflict Thesis* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2021), 149.

164 Xu Qin to Kang Youwei, November 14, 1911, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 592–93.

with several New Army commanders disillusioned with both the revolutionaries and the Qing government and with Prince Zaitao, now in charge of the Imperial Guards in Beijing.¹⁶⁵ It is notable that during this period, Kang and Liang wrote lengthy letters to Xu in the United States, and their correspondence provides substantiation for this secret plot. Not only was Xu Kang's most trusted and oldest disciple, but, being wealthy himself and able to tap Chinese American donations, he was seen by Kang and Liang as uniquely able to supply the tens of thousands of dollars required to support their military campaign.

Liang telegraphed Xu in late October with a terse description of their plan: "Use the Northern Army [Bei Jun] to overthrow the government, immediately set up parliament (*guohui*), use parliament as an expedient tool to pacify the revolutionary party, and the country can be saved. Otherwise, it will perish. The opportunity has arrived. Wire relief. I am in deep distress." Liang told Xu that they were mortgaging association office buildings to pay for the military action and for bribes to the Imperial Guards. Xu did wire funds, which Liang had requested be sent via his daughter Liang Lingxian (Liang Sishun) in Kōbe so as not to alert people to their plans, and, "don't use Nanfo's [Kang Youwei] or my name."¹⁶⁶

Key to the Kang-Liang scheme were three Beiyang Army commanders, graduates of the Japanese Army Officers School in 1902 and 1904—Wu Luzhen of the Beiyang Army's Sixth Division in Baoding, Zhili; his classmate Zhang Shaozeng of the Twentieth Division in Mukden (Shenyang), Fengtian; and Lan Tianwei of the Second Mixed Brigade in Mukden.¹⁶⁷ Whether or not they all met Liang while studying in Japan, each had displayed political activism before 1911. For example, Wu left Japan briefly in 1900 to participate with Tang Caichang in Qinqiang, and after graduation returned to China in 1903, when the reformers were protesting the Russian occupation of Manchuria. Lan organized the Resist Russia Volunteer Corps (Ju E Yiyongdui) with his fellow Chinese students in Japan.¹⁶⁸ Wu corresponded with Liang from China, and it was through him and his advisor, Kang disciple Pan Ruohai, that plans hatched with Zhang, Lan and Prince Zaitao were communicated.¹⁶⁹ Zhang, Lan and

165 Fung, *The Military Dimension*, 219.

166 Liang Qichao to Xu Qin, October 29, 1911 and November 3, 1911, *Liang Qichao Nianpu*, 552, 556, 558.

167 Fung, *The Military Dimension*, 190–92, 263.

168 Fung, *The Military Dimension*, 119–20.

169 Fung, *The Military Dimension*, 191; Young, "The Reformer as a Conspirator," 252–53. Lo, "Sequel to Autobiography," 217, 220, describes how Kang and Liang communicated with the commanders through Wanmucaotang alumnus Pan Ruohai 潘若海. Pan had done

Wu shared a strong antipathy to Yuan Shikai's return to power, and each had "spread revolutionary ideas among their troops."¹⁷⁰

In addition to Prince Zaitao in the court and the pro-constitutionalist Political Consultative Council, Kang and Liang believed they had important political allies in the newly formed revolutionary military government in Hubei. One was Li Yuanhong, "forced at gunpoint to be the military governor." Another was Tang Hualong, civilian chief executive of the Hubei provincial government and former Hubei provincial assembly president and constitutional petition leader who commanded the respect of his fellow provincial assembly leaders.¹⁷¹ Kang's October 26 letter to Xu Qin laid out their basic scheme, asked for an immediate donation of \$50,000 to \$60,000, and cautioned Xu, "Our arrangements are secret, so be sure not to leak them."¹⁷² Kang referred to Li and Tang, to whom he would soon make a personal appeal to enact a titular monarchical republic.



FIGURE 68 Scroll written by former Republic of China president Li Yuanhong for Kang Youwei's sixtieth birthday in 1917: "You look like a celestial being."

Fortunately, the Wuhan [government] is led by General Li Yuanhong (and has nothing to do with Xingzhe [Sun Yatsen]). And, Tang Hualong

the bidding of Kang in the past, making contact with members of the Qing court. Also see Liang Qichao to Wu Shouqing [Luzhen] 吳壽卿, 祿貞 to be delivered by Pan Ruohai, 1911, *Liang Qichao Nianpu*, 562.

170 Fung, *The Military Dimension*, 191–92; for example, Wu Luzhen and Liang Qichao worked together to demote Yuan Shikai in 1908 after the death of the Guangxu Emperor.

171 Fung, 209; Ma, "Tang Hualong in the 1911 Revolution," in Esherick and Wei, *China: How the Empire Fell*, 140–45.

172 Kang Youwei to Xu Qin, October 26, 1911, in *Kang Youwei Quanji*, vol. 9, 200.

is taking part. Both are scholar-officials (and they enlisted many others of their rank). This possibly can turn into a political revolution [*zhengzhi geming*]. It so happens that we have an opportunity in north China with military men in charge who are our friends. There are close relatives of the emperor [such as Prince Zaitao] who want to use force to change the government so that the Political Consultative Council can become a parliament, and the representatives of the eighteen provincial assemblies [*ziyiju*] will become legislators.

Kang revealed that “for the time being, we are blocking the military order for a punitive expedition,” the action that became known as the Luanzhou Mutiny. This refers to General Zhang Shaozeng, who had defied the October 14 order of Qing Second Army Commander Feng Guozhang to move his Twentieth Division troops to Wuhan in a “punitive expedition” against the rebels. Zhang not only kept his troops in the northern city of Luanzhou on the Beijing-Mukden rail line in Zhili Province, but recruited other Second Army generals to hold their troops in Luanzhou and refuse to move south.¹⁷³ Their combined numbers were about 30,000, a major portion of the Second Army. “We’ve already sent several important people to move up north,” wrote Kang. Here, Kang may have been referring to Wu Luzhen, the Sixth Division commander, then in Beijing, who telegraphed Zhang Shaozeng on October 28 to inform Zhang that he was coming to Luanzhou “to discuss matters.”¹⁷⁴ The plan was for Wu’s troops to join with Zhang’s combined troops and march west to the capital in a show of force against the Qing court.¹⁷⁵ There, it was hoped that the sympathetic Prince Zaitao, who commanded the Third Army and the Imperial Guards, would be in a good position to expel Princes Qing and Zaize, the key Qing leaders obstructing reforms.¹⁷⁶ This would allow Zaitao to begin implementing

173 Zhang Huateng, “The Qing’s Three Armies after the Wuchang Uprising,” in Esherick and Wei, *China: How the Empire Fell*, 219–21, 229. New Army troops who took part in the Luanzhou mutiny were Zhang Shaozeng’s Twentieth Division, Lu Yongxiang’s Third Division, and Lan Tianwei’s Second Mixed Brigade. Luanzhou is now in Hebei Province.

174 Wu Luzhen 吳祿貞 to Zhang Shaozeng 張紹曾, October 28, 1911, telegram informing Zhang he was headed for Luanzhou, in Du Chunhe 杜春和, “Xinhai Luanzhou Bingjian Handian Xuan” 辛亥灤州兵諫函電選 [Selected Letters and Telegrams from the 1911 Luanzhou Mutiny], *Jindaishi Ziliao* no. 91 (1997): 54.

175 Young, “The Reformer as a Conspirator,” 255–56.

176 Liang Qichao feared that “[Zai] Tao 載濤 could be swept away in one stroke,” and told Xu Qin that the loyalty of the Imperial Guards was being reinforced by the attempt by “our party people” to infiltrate the Guards over the past few months, consuming all the

their political plan. Kang concluded, "If this doesn't work, we want to enlist several hundred warriors; otherwise, Tutou [Yuan Shikai] will certainly act on his own and then we would have no room for maneuvering."¹⁷⁷

Liang Qichao wrote Xu Qin a few days later with details on their desired political outcome.¹⁷⁸ After the palace coup, said Liang, Zaitao would become prime minister and immediately convene parliament with Zizhengyuan and Ziyiju representatives as legislators, who would serve until there was an election. With the dominant power in the hands of the parliament, punitive expeditions against the revolutionaries would end and negotiations with the rebels would begin. The emperor would issue a penitent rescript blaming himself for the strife, the Eight Banners would be abolished, and the emperor and all Manchus would take Han names. He anticipated that both the Manchus and the revolutionaries would lose power, the parliament would wield the true authority, and "a full constitutional government will result." Liang told Xu he hoped that this would all take place within a month's time.

There was no palace coup, but Zhang Shaozeng and his allied commanders in Luanzhou attained most of what Kang and Liang sought. Between October 27 and 29, Zhang dispatched a series of telegrams to Prince Qing, Yuan Shikai, Prince Zaitao, the Political Consultative Council, governors, generals, and all the provincial assemblies, demanding the acceptance of his twelve-point memorial to the emperor, which in essence and in details echoed the political program proposed by Kang and Liang.¹⁷⁹

"The goals of reform do not conflict with the glorious status of the emperor. Rather, reform benefits our country by solidifying its foundations. The only groups who oppose it are the revolutionaries and the conservative elites."¹⁸⁰

funds Liang had been able to raise; Liang Qichao to Xu Qin, October 29, 1911, *Liang Qichao Nianpu*, 554.

177 Kang Youwei to Xu Qin, October 26, 1911, in *Kang Youwei Quanji*, vol. 9, 200.

178 Liang Qichao to Xu Qin, October 29, 1911, *Liang Qichao Nianpu*, 554–56.

179 Du, "Xinhai Luanzhou Bingjian Handian Xuan," 51–55, 67–69. This article compiles telegrams and correspondence to and from Zhang Shaozeng from October 13 to November 9, 1911, and shows the twelve-point remonstrance was first issued on October 27, rather than October 29, the date commonly used in earlier secondary sources. Signatories to the Twelve Demands were: Zhang Shaozeng; Lan Tianwei 藍天蔚; Lu Yongxiang 盧永祥, commander, Fifth Brigade; Wu Xiangzhen 伍祥楨, commander, Thirty-Ninth Brigade; and Pan Juying 潘榘楹, commander, Fortieth Brigade; Fung, *The Military Dimension*, 218.

180 Appendix 1: "Zhang Shaozeng deng Zouqing Lixian Zhe ji Niding Zhenggang Shi'er tiao" 張紹曾等奏請立憲折及擬定政綱十二條 [Zhang Shaozeng, et al., "Memorial Requesting the Establishment of a Constitution and Twelve-Point Political Program"] in Du, "Xinhai Luanzhou Bingjian Handian Xuan," 67–69.

The twelve-point memorial made it clear that the emperor would retain his position into the future, but it was the parliament that would draw up a constitution and subsequent legislation, to be “endorsed and promulgated by the Throne.”¹⁸¹ The premier would be elected by the parliament and the cabinet appointed by him, with “members of the imperial clan ... forever ineligible to serve as members of the cabinet or as ministers of state.” The military was not to be used to quell domestic trouble unless so directed by the parliament, and political criminals were to be pardoned. The memorial also stated that the differential treatment of Manchus and Han should be eliminated, and the constitutional system should take the British monarchical government as its model. Key to Kang and Liang, “a general amnesty shall be proclaimed for all political offenders.” Haste was of the essence: “Parliament shall be established this year.” The statement came with an ultimatum: “The decision to accept or reject our request should be made within twenty-four hours by a clear announcement of an imperial decree,” and “We’re armed and waiting for a reply.”¹⁸²

In four stunning edicts issued on October 30, the Qing court backed down from its previous refusal to accelerate political reform.¹⁸³ The first imperial edict apologized for past mistakes, abolished the distinction between Manchu and Han, and commenced reforms. Another asked the Political Consultative Council to draft a constitution. The third disbanded the “cabinet with princes and dukes as minister of state” and established a responsible cabinet in keeping with constitutional governments. The fourth edict granted amnesty to all political offenders from 1898, including exiles.¹⁸⁴

The imperial apology was abject:

We now stand before Our People (confessing that) We have accomplished no good, but have caused disaster and have humbled the greatness of Our Ancestors by Our maladministration; and it is now of no use to regret. We have no alternative but to rely upon Our People and Our soldiery that

181 Fung, *The Military Dimension*, 218.

182 Zhang, “The Qing’s Three Armies after the Wuchang Uprising,” in Esherick and Wei, *China: How the Empire Fell*, 229.

183 Rhoads, *Manchus and Han*, 179–81, notes that until threatened by Zhang’s Luanzhou mutiny, Zaifeng had ignored all calls for political reforms, even from the Zizhengyuan 資政院.

184 Appendix C. “Documents of the Revolution: I. An Imperial Apology; A Constitution; A Responsible Cabinet; An Amnesty; Imperial Edicts Issued the 30th October, 1911,” *The China Mission Year Book* (Shanghai: Christian Literature Society for China, 1912), 5–9.

they may help Us to secure the welfare and happiness of Our People, to strengthen Our Imperial Dynasty in an unbroken perpetual line and to establish constitutional government.¹⁸⁵

In memorials on November 1 and 3, Commander Zhang demanded the court move faster, recognizing that Prince Regent Zaifeng was still clinging to power by appointing Yuan Shikai as prime minister with authority to select a cabinet and delaying the establishment of a parliament, among other prevarications.¹⁸⁶ Even as Zhang disparaged the Political Consultative Council as “an organ of the old government, incapable of representing the entire country,” he was lobbying the members of this body, who were largely supportive constitutionalists.¹⁸⁷ An exchange of telegrams with the council included an alert to Zhang on October 31 of the imminent Political Consultative Council announcement “to adopt British constitutionalism based on written statutes and moreover to consult and follow the points listed in your political program,” expressing the legislators’ “deep sympathy with [your great voices and deeds].”¹⁸⁸ On November 3, the Political Consultative Council adopted a nineteen-article draft constitution codifying the principle of a titular monarch whose primarily ceremonial powers were subordinate to the parliament and limited by the constitution.¹⁸⁹ The next day, the council telegraphed Zhang and his allied commanders, assuring them that they had drawn up the Nineteen Articles (Shijiu Xintiao), “based on your memorial to implement the political program,” and added, “If your division has opinions about the constitution, legislative law and electoral law, please hastily inform us by telegram so that we may abide by your views.”¹⁹⁰

With the Political Consultative Council’s prompt cooperation that followed Zaifeng’s shocking compliance with most of the reformers’ demands, Kang and Liang seemed to have achieved their goals by November 3. Their long-cultivated network appeared to have bested both the Qing and the disorganized

185 “Documents of the Revolution: I. An Imperial Apology,” 5–7.

186 Zhang Shaozeng to Junzifu 軍諮府 [Army General Staff], memorial telegrams, November 1 and 3, 1911, in Du, “Xinhai Luanzhou Bingjian Handian Xuan,” 59, 62.

187 Four telegrams to and from Zhang Shaozeng and the Zizhengyuan from October 29 to November 3, 1911, indicate the close contact; Du, “Xinhai Luanzhou Bingjian Handian Xuan,” 55–56, 59, 61–62.

188 Zizhengyuan to Luanzhou Commander Zhang, October 31, 1911, in Du, “Xinhai Luanzhou Bingjian Handian Xuan,” 56.

189 “Demands of the National Assembly Submitted in a Memorial to the Throne on the 3rd November,” in “Documents of the Revolution,” 10–11.

190 Zizhengyuan to Commanders Zhang Shaozeng, Lu Yongxiang, Lan Tianwei, Wu Xiangzhen, and Pan Juying, telegram, November 4, 1911, in Du, “Xinhai Luanzhou Bingjian Handian Xuan,” 64.

revolutionaries. In short order, the authority of the Qing was sapped, due to reform-minded New Army commanders who were pursuing a “political revolution” to prevent civil war. Militarily, the withdrawal of Zhang Shaozeng’s 30,000 troops from the Second Army crippled the Qing’s defense at a critical time, when one province after another was declaring independence.¹⁹¹

On November 3, impelled by the “unexpected success of political revolution,” Liang Qichao informed Xu Qin that he would “go to the battlefield” in China.¹⁹² He explained that with the ban against him lifted and their scheme half accomplished, he had to attempt to “bring order out of chaos” and complete their mission in Beijing. Liang believed that the Political Consultative Council would be a crucial partner, as it “already holds the country’s real power and more than half the legislators are our comrades.” Liang surely imagined a scenario in which the mutinous commanders in the north would enter Beijing, and with the cooperation of Zaitao’s Imperial Guard, force Zaifeng and his government to step aside and make way for Liang to negotiate with Yuan Shikai in the quest for political leadership.¹⁹³

Yang Weixin, a reformer in Japan close to Liang, accompanied him on his journey from Japan. Yang later recalled that “prior to departure [from Japan on November 6], we conferred secretly with Nanhai [Kang Youwei]” and drafted final plans aboard the ship to present to the trusted Sixth Division Commander Wu Luzhen.¹⁹⁴ Just before his arrival in Dalian on November 9, Liang wrote his daughter that after a stay in Dalian and Mukden, he would go to Luanzhou (where Zhang Shaozeng had been stationed), and, perhaps in the company of more than one hundred troops, proceed to Beijing.¹⁹⁵

Ignorant of the fate that had befallen their military allies during the previous three days of travel, Liang and Yang discovered that the Qing court had punished the uncooperative commanders who had proven so politically powerful.¹⁹⁶ On November 6, Zhang Shaozeng lost his Twentieth Division command and was assigned to go to the front as a pacification commissioner (*xuanfu dachen*). Second Mixed Brigade commander Lan Tianwei stationed in Mukden

191 Zhang Huateng, “The Qing’s Three Armies after the Wuchang Uprising,” in Esherick and Wei, *China: How the Empire Fell*, 228–30.

192 Liang Qichao to Xu Qin, November 3, 1911, *Liang Qichao Nianpu*, 558.

193 Some hints of this are in Liang’s two letters to his daughter Liang Lingxian 梁令嫻, written from Dalian, November 9, 1911, *Liang Qichao Nianpu*, 558–59.

194 Yang Weixin 楊維新 to Ding Wenjiang [nianpu editor], no date, *Liang Qichao Nianpu*, 561–62.

195 Liang Qichao to Liang Lingxian, November 9, 1911, *Liang Qichao Nianpu*, 558.

196 Zhang, “The Qing’s Three Armies after the Wuchang Uprising,” in Esherick and Wei, *China: How the Empire Fell*, 220–21.

(Shenyang), Fengtian, whom Liang fully expected to see after his arrival in that city on November 11, was similarly removed from his post in a power struggle with Governor General Zhao Erxun. And most painful for Liang was the news that Wu Luzhen in Shijiazhuang, Hebei Province, had been assassinated on November 6, “apparently by agents of Yuan Shikai.”¹⁹⁷ Realizing the grave danger he was in, Liang found refuge in Japan’s Mukden concession, yet still met with a range of people—close followers, revolutionaries, provincial assembly members, even brigand ringleaders.¹⁹⁸ Liang reported to his daughter Lingxian that Beijing seemed to be spinning out of control, with more than half the Political Consultative Council legislators fleeing, imperial relatives quarreling among themselves, the old imperial cabinet disbanded, and a new more representative cabinet unformed. “The situation over the past few days has changed from moment to moment.” On November 12, Liang wrote that his long-time reform ally from Hunan days, Xiong Xiling, then an official in Manchuria, had telegraphed repeatedly from Dalian advising him to leave Mukden immediately. Powerless without the hoped-for military back-up, Liang abandoned his attempts to change the course of events, and on November 15 boarded a ship in Dalian to return to Japan.¹⁹⁹

On the political front, Kang, in Japan, wrote to members of the provisional military government in Hubei while they were drafting a constitution and proposed they adopt a titular monarchical republic as the most appropriate political system. Kang’s November 9 letter was addressed to his two allies in the new government, General Li Yuanhong and Hubei constitutionalist Tang Hualong, and to Tongmenghui commander Huang Xing, whom the revolutionaries had recently sent to Hubei as commander in chief.²⁰⁰ Quite the opposite of calling the Wuchang Uprising “tragic” as he had described it a few days earlier to Xu Qin, Kang acclaimed the remarkably rapid revolutionary victory over imperial forces as earning “the mandate of heaven” and the support of the people. But, he warned, “The success of this great undertaking will be sealed in a short time. At a distance I hear rumors of the new country seeking to adopt a [presidential] republican system.” Kang contended that he too strove for popular

197 Young, “The Reformer as a Conspirator,” 257; Esherick and Wei, *China: How the Empire Fell*, xxi.

198 Liang Qichao to Liang Lingxian, three letters dated November 11–12, 1911, *Liang Qichao Nianpu*, 560–61.

199 Young, “The Reformer as a Conspirator,” 258–59.

200 Kang Youwei to Li Yuanhong, Huang Xing, and Tang Hualong 黎元洪, 黃興, 湯化龍, November 9, 1911, in *Kang Youwei Quanji*, vol. 9, 202–17. This is the second of three versions of this letter published in the *Quanji*; we use the version quoted by Hsiao, *A Modern China and a New World*, 246–47.

government and had written his utopian *Datong Shu* expressly to expound this ideal. However, Kang implored the new leadership to recognize that China was not ready for a presidential republic and argued that the country had in fact begun the transition to a titular monarchical republic with the November 3 passage of the Nineteen Articles, giving all power to the legislature. Why not, he suggested, declare November 3 the beginning of “New China” and the end of the Qing dynasty, adopt *Zhonghua* or *Zhongguo* as the national name, unite the ethnic groups rather than pit them against each other, and change the calendar system to begin with the mythical Yellow Emperor? The titular monarch could either be the old emperor or the living descendant of Confucius. Kang went to great lengths to describe the chaotic results in countries prematurely adopting presidential republics, particularly in Latin America, where political instability was unceasing and causing harm to the Chinese immigrants caught in the violence. Why continue fighting when China now had a titular monarch in reality, if not in name?

Kang's letter to Li, Tang, and Huang would have arrived in Hubei after Tang Hualong and revolutionary leader Song Jiaoren had drafted a constitution for the new civil government, one which did not preserve the monarchy and was modeled after the federalism of the United States' constitution.²⁰¹ Tang's moderating influence on the revolutionary transition quickly receded, as his revolutionary partners suspected that he and the many constitutionalists working in the new provisional governments would attempt to subvert the revolution and reinstate a monarchical system such as proposed by Kang.²⁰² By the end of November, Tang was demoted, and he decamped to Shanghai.

Kang also had to explain to Xianzhenghui members why he now favored a titular monarchical republic. In a November 1911 public letter, Kang argued that the presidential republic promoted by the “revolutionary party of Wuhan” was a grievous mistake.²⁰³ “Our party has always taken the constitutional system as its goal, and in any case, political reform is our party's aim, whether the monarch is a true or titular one.” He pictured the monarch, whom he now said should be the eldest descendant of Confucius, as virtually powerless over the parliament, which would elect the prime minister, who in turn would select the high officials, explaining in simple terms that “although in name he is a monarch, in

201 Ma, “Tang Hualong in the 1911 Revolution,” in Esherick and Wei, *China: How the Empire Fell*, 146–47. The Hubei constitution became the basis of the first Republic of China constitution.

202 Ma, “Tang Hualong in the 1911 Revolution,” 148–50.

203 Kang Youwei public letter to internal party members, November 1911, in *Kang Youwei Quanjī*, vol. 9, 218–19.

reality he does not have a monarch's power." Kang felt that China's unity could only be assured if it disavowed destructive presidential politics, which had led to violence and internal strife in most countries adopting the presidential system. Why was the United States uniquely able to implement this system? "There are four reasons: The thirteen colonies' legislatures shared the same goals; those who revolted all were Puritans who didn't feel the need to fight each other for power; there were only 3 million people at the time of Washington; they were all English and their constitution was modeled on the charters of the two parties [Tories and the Whigs]." Kang again asserted that with the proclamation of the Nineteen Articles, "in effect, the emperor had already abdicated." He concluded, "Now our party is doing its utmost to protect China's unity. Its goal is nothing other than a titular monarchical republic. All that needs to be done is convene a national parliament and band together the military troops."

Although it had been thirteen years since Kang fled China, he felt turmoil, disquiet and even grief upon learning of the October 30 Qing amnesty promising freedom from arrest upon his return to China. The edict was unequivocal: "all political offenders since 1898, whether purely political offenders or revolutionists, who have taken refuge outside the Empire, and all connected with the present troubles who will come forward and be loyal to Us, are hereby granted pardon of their crimes."²⁰⁴ The Qing court admitted that since ancient times, the suppression of political opinion "prevents the development of men of ability and of the national energy; and moreover, views that are not appropriate at the time at which they are expressed may prove fruitful later."

In October or November 1911, Kang wrote two short poems expressing anguish at both his and his country's tragic fate. The passage of time and his long years away from China as a wanted man, had aged him.²⁰⁵

For more than a thousand years, people lamented the banning of political parties,

And today, the web of prohibitions has finally lifted.

Now, I fear what China will become,

As we see what the Wuchang Uprising has wrought.

Just like Su Wu 蘇武 and Ma Hong 馬宏 [Han envoys to the West captured by the Xiongnu] when they were pardoned, I shed tears of happiness.²⁰⁶

²⁰⁴ Appendix C, "Documents of the Revolution: IV, An Amnesty," 9.

²⁰⁵ Kang Youwei, two poems, 1911, in Wu Tianren 吳天任, *Kang Youwei Nianpu* 康有為年譜 [Chronological Biography of Kang Youwei] (Guangzhou: Guangdong Renmin Chubanshe, 2018), 487. Thank you to Chen Xuezhong, Yang Zheng, Evans Chan, and Connie Kang for translation.

²⁰⁶ Ma Hong 馬宏 and Su Wu 蘇武 were Western Han envoys to the Xiongnu tribal confederation, but were captured and imprisoned; the Xiongnu leader Huandi Chanyu pardoned

Yet, looking back on those lost years, my heart is filled with sadness.
 It makes me sigh that my hair has turned grey.
 Going home is difficult, such a long time I've been away.²⁰⁷

Above all, the poems betray the bitter irony that Kang was granted amnesty thanks to the revolution, when his exile was spent fighting for a different political ideal.

In exile for fourteen years,
 In my wanderings I died ten thousand deaths.²⁰⁸
 My past life was like Su Wu's 蘇武 [Han official in exile for nineteen years], lamenting as his hair greyed in exile.²⁰⁹
 And Su Shi 蘇軾 [Song official leaving his long exile] pointing to the green hills of home fills my eyes with tears.²¹⁰
 Alas, the upheavals of my poor country!
 Now free, I have yet to return to the divine motherland.
 Mourning the past and the approach of the evening of my life,
 I'm perturbed and in turmoil, and my tears fly.

It may be that Kang wrote these poems after Liang Qichao's brief trip to China had ended their best chance for the constitutionalists to assert power. Despite these despondent verses, Kang had not given up. Yet, he did not return to China for two more years.

In November and December 1911, Kang developed his arguments for a hybrid political system in two essays, as did Liang Qichao upon his return to Japan.²¹¹

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- 207 them both in 80 BCE by as a goodwill gesture, and they came back to Chang'an together. This is a reference to Tao Yuanming's 陶淵明 (365–427) poem "Guquilaixi ci 歸去來兮辭 [I'm homeward bound]."
- 208 Kang is using traditional Chinese counting of years, or inclusive counting, thus including both his first year of exile (1898) and the current year (1911) as a full year, totaling fourteen, instead of calculating a span of years by subtracting the beginning year from the ending year.
- 209 In the poem, Zi Qin 子卿 refers to Su Wu 蘇武.
- 210 In the poem, Po Lao 坡老 refers to Su Dongpo 蘇東坡 or Su Shi 蘇軾, one of China's most famous poets and scholars who was also an important government official during the Song dynasty (960–1279). He figured prominently in the political controversies of his times and repeatedly suffered hardships. This refers to Su's verse, "無可奈何新白髮, 不如歸去舊青山" from the poem "Huan xi sha" 浣溪沙 [Silk Washing Stream]. Su died shortly after he was pardoned.
- 211 Kang's two essays on the titular monarchical republic were: *Jiufang Lun* 救亡論 [On Saving China from Collapse] drafted October–November 1911 and published in August 1913 in Kang's journal *Buren* 不忍 in *Kang Youwei Quanji*, vol. 9, 222–39, and *Gonghe Zhengti*

Liang's "Xin Zhongguo Jianshe Wenti" (On the Reconstruction of New China) echoed Kang's preference for a titular monarchical republic, describing it as the system of government proved best by the experience of other countries (*yi wanguo jingyan zui liang*) and lamenting that the Nineteen Articles would have provided a firm base for its implementation in China.²¹²

Liang Qichao, at the urging of Xu Qin, had not abandoned military force to block the revolutionary advance. In late 1911, he was working with a new cast of conspirators, now focused on Guangdong.²¹³ They were discussing how to set up a military base on Hainan Island, overthrow the new revolutionary provincial government, and from this power center in the south, "forge on to the central plains." Xianzhenghui member support for military action against the Guangdong government is unmistakable in the two January 1912 letters from chapters in North America quoted above. The Vancouver members urged Xu Qin to return to Guangdong immediately to force the rich gentry to turn against the revolutionaries for a "thoroughgoing revolution" to "cleanse the land" and allow their party to regain power.²¹⁴ The Huntington, Oregon, chapter recounted a rumor that the Sacramento chapter president had gone back to Guangdong with munitions purchased for the Qing troops with the sad result that "more than ten of our people have been murdered by revolutionaries." The *South China Morning Post* described in great detail several confrontations of Xianzhenghui members or sympathizers and Republican troops between December 10 and December 17 in Guangzhou. "Detectives of the New Government have lately discovered that large numbers of the members of the Emperor Protecting Society are hiding in the City of Canton with intent to stir up disturbances so as to upset the Republican Government."²¹⁵ Firearms were discovered (along with dragon flags) and confiscated; an eighteen-year-old woman was arrested when she was found with documents linking her to the reformers; and Kang's house in Guangzhou was searched for Xianzhenghui members believed

Lun 共和政體論 [On the Republican Political System], December 1911, in *Kang Youwei Quanji*, vol. 9, 241–50.

212 Liang Qichao, "Xin Zhongguo Jianshe Wenti" 新中國建設問題 [On the Reconstruction of New China], 1911, in *Liang Qichao Quanji* 梁啟超全集 [Collected Works of Liang Qichao], ed. Yang Gang and Wang Xiangyi 楊綱, 王相宜 (Beijing: Beijing Chubanshe, 1999), vol. 4, 2437, 2442.

213 Young, "The Reformer as a Conspirator," 259–65. Xu Qin to Kang Youwei, November 14, 1911, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 593.

214 Liao Zhao, Jiang Nai, Lin Henian, Liu Tingyang, and Lin Renzhi to Liang Qichao and Kang Youwei, January 20, 1912, in Ding and Zhao, *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 604.

215 "Canton News: Fight Between Republicans and Imperialists," *South China Morning Post*, December 20, 1911, 8.

to be hiding there. On December 17, imperial soldiers and reformers fought all night until they ran out of ammunition to hold off an assault by Republican troops. The next morning, with casualties on both sides and among innocent civilians, those arrested were taken to the military government headquarters and those guilty of being members of the “Emperor Protecting Society” were shot on the spot.²¹⁶

Liang’s schemes in the south fizzled quickly, no match against the strength and numbers of New Army troops in Guangdong who had defected to support the Republic.²¹⁷ In any case, it was too late to salvage either the monarchy or a constitutionalist alternative, as Sun Yatsen was sailing to China to claim the provisional presidency of the new Republic on January 1, 1912. Liang quickly discarded the notion of restoring a monarchical system; he returned to China in November, greeted with more fanfare than Sun Yatsen had received a year earlier, but with considerably less political influence.²¹⁸

A century later, in 2012, the prominent Peking University Law School constitutional scholar and liberal political critic Zhang Qianfan declared that if the Nineteen Articles had been enacted, “China would have embarked on the gradualist British approach and avoided a century of revolutionary tumult.” He concluded that China’s contemporary authoritarian system “with a constitution without constitutionalism” is more resistant to political participation in policymaking than was China under Empress Dowager Cixi.²¹⁹

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Complicated indeed is Kang Youwei’s legacy, complicated not only for twenty-first-century historians, but also for early twentieth-century observers, including Kang himself. The Hundred Days had failed, forcing Kang and his closest disciples to flee abroad. Qinwang, assassination plots, and the Commercial Corporation all failed. The young emperor that the reformers hoped to restore to power died prematurely, presumably killed on the orders of his aunt. But Kang survived, traveled extensively around the world meeting presidents,

216 “Canton News: Brutal Treatment,” *South China Morning Post*, December 25, 1911, 8. Also see Edward J. M. Rhoads, *China’s Republican Revolution: The Case of Kwangtung, 1895–1913* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975), 241–42; Young, “The Reformer as a Conspirator,” 259–65.

217 “Editors’ Introduction” to Zhang, “The Qing’s Three Armies after the Wuchang Uprising,” in Esherick and Wei, *China: How the Empire Fell*, 214.

218 Huang, *Liang Ch’i-ch’ao*, 120–21; *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian*, 650.

219 Qianfan Zhang, *The Constitution of China: A Contextual Analysis* (Oxford and Portland, Oregon: Hart Publishing, 2012), 14, 259, 261.

kings, and numerous other high-level figures, wrote prolifically, and founded an international political party with tens if not hundreds of thousands of supporters. Even before the emperor died, the Baohuanghui had reinvented itself as a party advocating constitutional monarchy and, after his death, focused its organizing on the rapidly evolving constitutional movement inside China. Revolution in 1911 brought an end to the monarchy and the birth of a New China. Not easily deterred, both Kang, Liang, and others made strenuous but failed efforts to salvage a titular monarchy, this time in the form of a republic. While Kang did not support revolution, the political reform networks he developed had energized and organized Chinese overseas and at home who would come to support the new republican regime. Sun Yatsen's revolution might have happened on its own but, as has been shown, it was significantly although unintentionally facilitated by Kang Youwei's persistent call for reform.

Conclusion

Even though our Party had no part in the destructive revolution, we cannot shirk our responsibility in the task of reconstruction that is to come ... I therefore earnestly beseech you, my comrades, to redouble your efforts [in serving our country].

KANG YOUWEI, letter to all chapters, February 19, 1912¹



“I have just heard that the old dynasty has come to an end with the [emperor’s] abdication,” wrote Kang in a New Year letter to his overseas followers one week after the Qing dynasty was formally dissolved on February 12, 1912. It had been thirteen years since the Baohuanghui was founded on July 20, 1899, in Victoria. In 1906, the organization had optimistically pivoted from “protecting the emperor” to “organiz[ing] our countrymen in a common crusade for constitutional government.” Kang reminded members that his original choice of a new name was Guomin Xianzhenghui (Citizens’ Constitutional Association), but since the goal at the time was a constitutional monarchy, the name taken in 1907 was Diguó Xianzhenghui (Imperial Constitutional Association). A pressure campaign of petitions, telegrams, and letters was mounted to persuade the Qing court to adopt the English political model. If only the Zaifeng regency “had not resorted to sham constitutionalism” and had instead opened parliament in 1911 as the petitions demanded, “the ruler would have relinquished his powers and the people would have taken part in deliberating affairs of the state.” “The objective of our Party would have been attained.” Tragically, the 1911 revolution had brought bloodshed and fear of disintegration. Yet, Kang could not discount the hopeful anticipation that many of his followers felt at the fall of the Qing and the rise of the Republic.

“Now, as times and circumstances have changed, the new has replaced the old.” Kang called for his followers to serve the new Republic while upholding

¹ Kang Youwei to all chapters, February 19, 1912, in *Kang Youwei* 康有爲全集 [Collected Works of Kang Youwei], ed. Jiang Yihua and Zhang Hualong 姜義華, 張榮華 (Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin Daxue Chubanshe, 2007), vol. 9, 282; this quotation and lengthy excerpts from this letter are in Kung-ch’üan Hsiao, *A Modern China and a New World: Kang Yu-wei, Reformer and Utopian, 1858–1927* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1975), 249–50.

the principles of constitutionalism and national unity. Since political parties had become legal, Kang proposed a new name for the Xianzhenghui, one he noted that he had originally suggested in 1906—Guomindang (Citizens' Party)—and a five-star flag to represent the five major nationalities in China.² “Much remains to be done of the great undertaking of making China strong and powerful; we shall exert ourselves and shall advance together toward new achievements.”

Kang's positive attitude to the Republic soon evaporated, as his Guomindang not only never entered the political rolls in China but the name itself was taken over by revolutionary leader Song Jiaoren in August 1912 for the newly founded party that would handily win the majority of deputies in the parliamentary election later that year.³ Confusing many historians, the much-referenced 1913 book, Wong Kin's *International Chinese Business Directory of the World* (Wanguo Jixin Bianlan), contains more than 130 entries for Guomindang chapters with locations on all continents including Africa.⁴ Wong, a Xianzhenghui member who would have received Kang's February 1912 public letter, rendered Guomindang in English as Chung Hwa National Club. One cannot deduce that these chapters were all extant in 1912 or 1913, but Wong presumably included only those chapters that he had located before publication. In the directory, Wong

2 See Chapter 10 for Kang's promotion of “Guomin” 國民 preceding the name Xianzhenghui 憲政會.

3 Wu Xianzi 伍憲子, *Zhongguo Minzhu Xianzhengdang Dangshi* 中國民主憲政黨黨史 [Party History of China's Democratic Constitutional Party] (San Francisco: Shijie Ribao, 1952), 46–48, 76–77. In late 1912, the organizational name reverted to Xianzhengdang 憲政黨 but the party never became active in China. However, in China, Liang Qichao founded the Minzhudang 民主黨 [Democratic Party] in 1912, which merged with other small constitutionalist parties in 1913 to create the influential Jinbudang 進步黨 [Progressive Party], a rival to the Guomindang 國民黨 [Nationalist Party] led by Song Jiaoren. For the August 1912 founding of Song's Guomindang and its electoral success, see Bergère, *Sun Yat-sen*, 223–26.

4 Wong Kin [Huang Jin] 黃金, *International Chinese Business Directory of the World* [Wanguo Jixin Bianlan 萬國寄信便覽] (San Francisco: International Chinese Business Directory Company, 1913). Zhongping Chen notes in a January 3, 2022 email that the original manuscript for the directory (Yuk Ow Collection, carton 26, Ethnic Studies Library, University of California at Berkeley) uses the term Xianzhengdang and deduced that the name Guomindang for Xianzhenghui chapters in the 1913 directory was updated for publication in 1912 by Wong Kin based on Kang's February 1912 announcement. Him Mark Lai wrote that Wong was a clerk for the U.S. Post Office in San Francisco and handled both domestic and international Chinese mail. Dealing with all the lost and misaddressed mail, he saw the need for a directory to Chinese and foreign place names; the original manuscript was lost in the San Francisco 1906 earthquake fire and it took him another six years to rewrite. Wen Xiongfei, ed. Him Mark Lai, “Founding of the Chinese Revolutionary League in America,” *Chinese America: History and Perspectives* 19 (2005): 39.

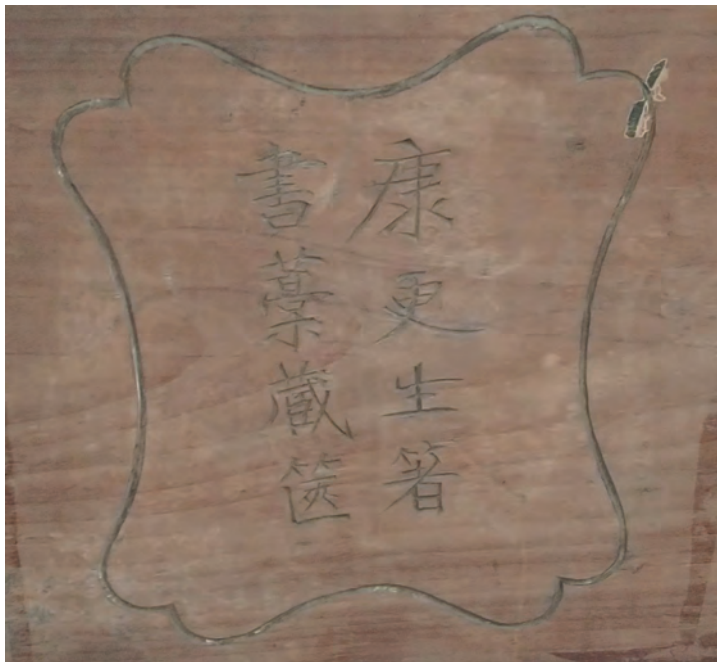


FIGURE 69 康更生著書業藏篋 Inscription on Kang Youwei's "trunk for keeping written works."

translated Tongmenghui as Young China Society, listing a handful of chapters, reflecting both Wong's political bias (he missed some known chapters in the United States, for example) and the less robust organizational structure of the Tongmenghui.

Kang's exile ended in late 1913, not because he had decided to throw in his lot with the Republic, as had Liang Qichao, Xu Qin, Wu Xianzi, Liang Wenqing, and many other exiled reformers, but to bury his beloved mother, Lao Lianzhi, a very significant person in his life, who had died in Hong Kong on August 9, 1913.⁵ It was perhaps this act of filial piety more than anything else that brought Kang back to his homeland. He returned to Guangzhou on December 1 onboard the steamer *Haiming* bearing the remains of both his mother and martyred brother Kang Guangren, escorted by British and Chinese warships sent by the governors of Hong Kong and Guangdong. He had been away from China for fifteen years, two months, and seven days, having traveled more than 180,000 miles throughout the world. On December 13, Kang laid his mother

5 Jung-pang Lo, "Sequel to the Chronological Autobiography," *K'ang Yu-wei: A Biography and Symposium* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1967), 226.

and brother to rest in their Nanhai village of Yintang. He was then reabsorbed into the Chinese scene, sometimes as an observer, other times as a journalist, author, and mentor, and several times, as an activist.

While Kang held some hope for the Republic, and was willing to serve it by encouraging his followers to do so, he believed that the Republic was too premature to ever work. From its inception, it needed refinement. Kang's animosity to Yuan Shikai could not be assuaged, which set him apart from Liang Qichao and others willing to take government posts under Yuan's leadership, even allying with Yuan against Sun Yatsen. For the rest of his life, Kang wrote political critiques that often referenced his earlier analyses forecasting the turbulence and disunity of presidential republics, especially one birthed by revolution. His views only hardened with Sun's Second Revolution in 1913 and China's successive governments, not to speak of the unfulfilled promise of representative government. In a bitter twist of fate for both the reformers and revolutionaries, President Yuan Shikai dissolved the short-lived National Assembly in 1914, in order to carry out his own plan to mount the throne as the Hongxian (Magnanimous Constitution) Emperor, a move opposed by both Kang and Liang. Historian John Fincher reflected in 1989 that "the history of the Chinese polity from about 1908 to about 1913 still provides the best example of democracy yet to appear in China."⁶ For Fincher, the key elements of a democratic state were freedom of the press and free elections. He noted that the 1912 electorate for provincial assemblies and the National Assembly had expanded to more than forty million, twenty times the size of the electorate for provincial assemblies in 1909, and "these freely contested and, at the time, well reported elections produced representative assemblies which ended the world's oldest monarchy, proclaimed Asia's first republic, and practiced liberal democracy."

Kang's post-exile political life is too often remembered for his support of the attempted restoration of the Xuanton Emperor (Puyi) in July 1917. Kang's role, while undeniable, was relatively minor because of his opposition to the dictatorial schemes of the instigator, General Zhang Xun.⁷ Kang joined Zhang's short-lived coup, wrongly believing that Zhang intended for the last emperor, Puyi, to be restored as a titular monarch in a constitutional government under

6 John H. Fincher, *Chinese Democracy: Statist Reform, the Self-Government Movement and Republican Revolution* (Tokyo: Institute for the Study of Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa, 1989), 4. This is a revision of the 1981 edition of *Chinese Democracy* with a new introduction and index.

7 Lo, "Sequel to the Chronological Autobiography," 233–37; Hsiao, *A Modern China and a New World*, 252–59.



FIGURE 70 Kang Youwei in 1917, Shanghai, found in the *Shijie Ribao* office (*Chinese World*) in San Francisco.

the name *Zhonghua Diguo* (Chinese Empire).⁸ Kang's views were ignored by Zhang, who reinstated the name *Da-Qing* (Great Qing) and had no interest in a constitution. The restoration was rapidly put down by Republican forces, and Zhang Xun and other collaborators took refuge in Beijing's Legation Quarter.⁹ Kang, with the expectation of avoiding punitive judicial procedures, hid in the American legation. The State Department quickly reminded Ambassador

8 Peter Zarrow, *After Empire: The Conceptual Transformation of the Chinese State, 1881–1924* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012), 262–63.

9 Paul S. Reinsch, U.S. Minister, Beijing, to Secretary of State, July 1, July 16, July 18, and December 7, 1917, and Secretary of State to Reinsch, July 21, 1917, State Department Records Relating to Internal Affairs of China, 1910–1929, Microcopy M329, Rolls 17 and 18, RG 59, NA-College Park. Reinsch to Secretary of State, July 18, 1917: "Chang Hsun took refuge in the Legation quarter under the protection of Diplomatic body; other participants in restoration movement took refuge in various legations including Kang Yu Wei who is hiding in this Legation." December 7, 1917: "I have the honor to report that Mr. Kang Yeu-wei ... has been quietly dwelling in one of our small houses until yesterday, when he took his departure for Tientsin."

Paul S. Reinsch of standing instructions not to grant asylum so as “to avoid interference with the proper administration of Justice by the Chinese authorities.” However, “if promise of asylum has been given ... the Department will not direct you to break faith,” and allowed that Kang should be aided if safe passage out of China was necessary. Kang stayed “quietly” at the U.S. legation until December 6, 1917, when he departed for Tianjin.

Kang could not give up his advocacy of a titular monarch, no matter how counterproductive it was for his personal legacy or the reputation of his former followers who sought to bring back functioning constitutionalism and a representative government yet had no interest in restoring a monarch. As late as 1926, one year before his death, Kang was still pointing out China’s need for a return to a constitutional monarchy. One of his final essays was written as Chiang Kaishek staged the Northern Expedition against the warlord cliques that had split China into fiefdoms, evoking for Kang the fragmented kingdoms of India before Britain colonized and unified the country.¹⁰ He also considered Chiang and the Nationalists to be puppets of their Russian advisors:

Last year, the system was changed to *zhizheng* [“to hold the reins of government,” perhaps referring to the provisional Nationalist Government formed after Sun Yatsen’s death in Guangzhou on July 1, 1925 to unify China and oppose the warlord government in Beijing]. The provisional constitution was thrown out. The Republic perished long ago. Today half of China is like India and another half belongs to Russia. The demise of China is imminent. Under the dictator’s suppression, people cannot express themselves and just wait for the country to die. Isn’t this sad?

Now, I want to ask all Chinese brothers and their parents: the Republic has been established for fifteen years. What are the benefits to the nation and the welfare of the people compared to the time before 1911?

Kang’s most potent contribution to the Chinese polity—his success in rousing Chinese at home and abroad to care about their country’s political future and to act with others to further their goals in a constructive way—came during the decade between 1899 and 1909, when he was the first Chinese leader to assemble a massive political association and oversee its growth and popularity. This was only possible abroad, because such organizations were forbidden in China. Unlike the revolutionaries who appealed viscerally to anti-Manchu

10 Kang Youwei, “Kang Nanhai moji” 康南海墨跡 [Kang Nanhai’s handwritten work], 8th month (September 7–October 6), 1926, booklet published by Tianjin Yong Baoshe.

identity politics, Kang and the Baohuanghui propagated basic ideas of constitutionalism, citizen participation, a balance of power, cosmopolitan nationalism, and representative government. That he and his followers failed to accomplish their goals should not diminish the magnitude of their ambitions and accomplishments, given that China, with the exception of Taiwan in recent decades, has never institutionalized a competitive, constitutional, and representative political system, bolstered by independent citizen associations, strong political parties and a free press.

It was in North America that Kang exercised his political organizing skills to the fullest. He quickly learned how to appeal to the interests of a far broader group of Chinese than he had inspired in China and associated for the first time with those who would be of the farming and laboring classes in their homeland. In North America, they, along with their wealthier and better educated brethren—merchants, students, even Qing government officials—were despised as a race, forced by various circumstances to live in ghettos, subjected to restrictive exclusion laws or head taxes, massacred by nativists who felt threatened by Chinese immigration, barred from citizenship, and separated from their families. The Baohuanghui enabled Chinese in North America to organize and fund political, commercial, educational, journalistic, even military, endeavors that improved their communities and gave them the skills and political savvy to fight for their rights both in North America and in China itself. The sheer size and number of Baohuanghui (and successor Xianzhenghui) chapters in North America, compared to other regions of the world and to any other overseas Chinese political organization in the twentieth century, sprung from the greater time and energy that Kang and his followers devoted to the organization in North America, but also from the comparative openness of American, Canadian, and Mexican societies to the outside world. Kang cultivated relationships with government officials at all levels in North America, allowing the Baohuanghui to freely expand its activities, save that of the Western Military Academy.

This political legacy should not be tainted by Kang's poor judgment in financial schemes, the questionable character of some of his supporters, or his occasionally autocratic personal style. To the contrary, these episodes have been recounted to illustrate the activities of the man and the reform association in North America. If anything, Kang's North American experience shows the flexibility and multifaceted features of his character. The case does not stand closed on the entirety of Kang's historical role in the twentieth century but this work has attempted to show one phase in the life and work of a man committed to the salvation of his nation.



FIGURE 71 Kang Youwei on his seventieth birthday, 1927, Shanghai.

The words of Kang in his later years show the depth of his concern for China and the world. In a letter to United States Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes in 1923, he wrote:

During all these years I have worked assiduously, trying to solve some of the intricate problems confronting my country, and have done all I could to further the cause of cosmopolitanism; but all my efforts have produced very little results ...

... The incessant struggles for power of the ignorant and unscrupulous militarists renders impossible the formulation of a permanent constitution. After the outbreak of our Revolution in 1911 I foresaw that the republican form of government was unsuited to China and would only bring about endless civil wars ... What I predicted twelve years ago has been borne out by later events ...

I do fervently hope that in my old age it will please the kind Providence to vouchsafe me the enjoyment of undisturbed retirement under a stable government based on the sovereign will and confidence of the whole nation, and that China will then be free from internal turmoil to cooperate worthily in promoting the cause of international peace and concord.¹¹

The term exile brings to mind the Babylonian Exile in Jewish history, just as the concept of the Chinese diaspora draws parallels with the dispersion of the Jewish population worldwide. Philosopher Edward Said writes that exile in the twentieth century evolved from the punishment of individuals to the forced relocation of groups of people due to multiple factors including but not limited to power struggles. In this light, Kang Youwei was an exile in the classical sense. For his Jewish counterparts, exile meant “being a sort of permanent outcast,” and Kang could not predict whether he would ever return to China. Throughout his fifteen-year exile, his efforts were primarily directed toward return to his homeland as a reinstated political figure. His experiences abroad do not necessarily evoke the same feelings of misery, estrangement, and cultural loss described in Said’s essay “Reflections on Exile.”¹² Unlike modern intellectual

11 Kang Youwei, Qingdao, to Charles E. Hughes, Secretary of State, Washington, July 30, 1923, no. 893.00/5211, Microcopy M329, Roll 34, RG 59, NA-College Park. The letter was written in response to an oral message from Hughes to Kang conveyed by a student, Xu Liang 徐良, the son of Xu Qin, on the occasion of the 1921–22 Washington Naval Conference.

12 Edward W. Said, *Representations of the Intellectual: The 1993 Reith Lectures* (New York: Vintage, 1996), 47; and Said, “Reflections on Exile,” in *Reflections on Exile and other Essays* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000), 173–86.

exiles who developed a strong identification with their foreign countries of residence, Kang had no cultural influence on the Western world during his life. These distinctions highlight the unique nature of Kang's exile compared to the mass uprooted populations often found in Western metropolises in the twentieth century. Viewing the conditions of exile through the lens of China's modern history, rather than in the orthodox Western sense, prompts consideration of the nuances of Kang's situation and the cultural context surrounding his experience. One need only reflect on the fragmented and alienated status of exiled Chinese dissidents today to grasp the differential impact of Kang's exile on Chinese political developments in the late Qing.

Midway through his long separation from his homeland—while in the United States and looking forward to visiting Latin America—Kang waxed poetic and philosophical about his travails, his bravery, his achievements, and his ability to find happiness and safety everywhere:

Striving to open up untamed land for a new universe,
 Who should be held accountable for my exile?
 Being driven to cross the vast ocean,
 Has made me courageous and undaunted.
 Hands dispersing clouds shadowing my old country,
 Feet stepping on new continents, finding seaside havens everywhere.¹³

13 Kang Youwei, "Bian you Beimei, jiang wang Nanmei, Baxi pi xindi" 遍游北美, 将往南美, 巴西辟新地 [Having toured around most places in North America, I will go to South America, Brazil for new exploration], October 1905, in Zhang Qireng 張啓祜 and Kang Xuepei 康雪培, *Kang Youwei Haiwai Shiji* (*Kang Youwei's Overseas Poetry Collection*) 康有為海外詩集 (Beijing: Zhongyi Chubanshe, forthcoming). Translation by Connie Kang and Yang Zheng.

Timeline of Kang Youwei and the Baohuanghui, 1898–1978

Year	Month	Day	Event
1898	June	11	Guangxu Emperor launches Hundred Days of Reform, issues nearly 200 decrees, advised by Kang Youwei along with Liang Qichao, Tan Sitong, Yang Rui, Lin Xu, Kang Guangren, and others.
	June	16	Kang has audience with Guangxu, appointed secretary to the Zongli Yamen.
	September	14	Guangxu proposes to Cixi that the Maoqin Dian be opened to facilitate reforms; rejected by Cixi, who begins to take back control. Guangxu understands this is a turning point.
	September	15	Guangxu sends secret edict to the reformers by way of Yang Rui urgently seeking a plan to forestall Cixi's coup to stop reforms. Meanwhile, Kang and others have been planning a military coup to seize back power for Guangxu and recruiting support.
	September	18	On Kang's order, Tan Sitong pleads with General Yuan Shikai to use his military power to arrest Cixi and restore emperor's power; Yuan is noncommittal. Kang learns that Guangxu wants him to leave Beijing immediately. Ultimately Kang's plot is revealed to Cixi and she orders Kang's capture and death by slicing.
	September	20–21	Kang leaves Beijing for Tianjin, bidding his brother Kang Guangren farewell and the next day boards the British ship <i>Chungking</i> for Shanghai.
	September	21	Hundred Days of Reform ends. Empress Dowager retakes throne, emperor loses essential powers, manhunt for Kang and followers begins. The arrests begin with Kang Guangren. Liang Qichao takes refuge in Japanese consulate and will flee to Japan. Eventually Cixi puts Guangxu under house arrest on Yingtai Island.

Year	Month	Day	Event
1898	September	24	Kang intercepted in Shanghai by British correspondent J. O. P. Bland, transferred to <i>Ballarat</i> , escorted by HMS <i>Bonaventure</i> to Hong Kong.
	September	26	Cixi begins rescinding the Hundred Days' reforms.
	September	28	Kang's advisors, the "Six Gentlemen" (Liu Junzi)—including Tan Sitong and Kang's brother—beheaded at Caishikou.
	September	29	Kang arrives in Hong Kong, under British protection; reunites with family who bring him the "South Windsor version" of his <i>nianpu</i> from the family home in Guangdong. Kang lives for three weeks with comprador Ho Tung, meets former Lord Commissioner of the Admiralty Charles William de la Poer Beresford.
	October	19	Fearing arrest or assassination in Hong Kong, Kang sails for Japan.
1899	October	25	Kang arrives in Japan, protected by Prime Minister Marquis Ōkuma Shigenobu; worked on his <i>nianpu</i> , leaves copy with disciple Luo Xiaogao (Luo Pu). During stay, meets Tang Caichang, future commander of failed 1900 uprising to restore Guangxu. Liang Qichao, Xu Qin, Mai Menghua among exiled reformers in Japan.
	March	22	Kang leaves Japan on <i>Idzumi Maru</i> for Victoria, British Columbia, Canada. Before leaving, visits U.S. Legation in Tokyo to ask for letters of introduction to U.S., refused because he was a refugee and wanted man.
	April	7	Kang disembarks in Victoria, BC, accompanied by Japanese interpreter, Nakanishi Shigetaro, and Chinese bodyguard, Li Tang; Kang gives first press interview on board ship to <i>Daily Colonist</i> (Victoria), met at wharf by Li Mengjiu and other Victoria Chinese.
	April	8	Kang has first meeting with elected official, Victoria Mayor Charles Redfern; speaks in Chinatown, meets Chinese suffering from discrimination and exclusion in Canada.
	April	10	Kang meets British Columbia Lieutenant Governor Robert Thomas McInnes, visits naval base, fire brigade, and prison.

Year	Month	Day	Event
1899	April	12	Kang announces comprehensive reform program for China, including representative parliamentary government.
	April	13	Kang travels to Vancouver, meets mayor.
	April	14	Kang speaks in Vancouver City Hall to 1,000 Chinese, Japanese, and Canadians, claims it was first political meeting in Chinese history in which someone involved in the highest levels of government [himself] addressed public directly.
	April	18	After assassination rumors, Canadian government provides Kang with police escort; travels to New Westminster, meets mayor, visits provincial jail, power house, insane asylum, and gold storage facility.
	April	19	Kang addresses 600 Chinese at New Westminster Opera House, advocates changes in social behavior by encouraging personal hygiene and friendly relations with Canadian people.
	May	3	Kang leaves Vancouver for Ottawa, accompanied by bodyguard and valet Li Tang, Staff Sergeant J. H. Heffernan of North-West Mounted Police, secretary Claude Ley Kum (Chen Enrong), and Loo Gee Wing (Lu Zirong).
	May	8	Kang arrives in Ottawa.
	May	10	Kang meets Canadian Prime Minister Wilfrid Laurier, visits Dominion Parliament and invited by Governor General Gilbert Elliot-Murray-Kynynmound, Earl of Minto, to ball at Government House.
	May	20	Having failed to obtain permission to visit U.S., Kang leaves Montreal for London.
	May	31	Kang and two Chinese aides debark at Liverpool.
Summer			Tom Leung, first disciple of Kang Youwei to settle in North America, arrives in Los Angeles to join practice of herbalist cousin Tom Foo Yuen. Tom will lead Los Angeles Baohuanghui chapter.
	June	1–10	Kang hosted in London by Lord Beresford, who fails to convince Parliament to intervene militarily on behalf of Chinese reformers. London burglar steals most of Kang's travel funds.

Year	Month	Day	Event
1899	June	11	Kang leaves Liverpool for Montreal on <i>Tainui</i> accompanied by Loo Gee Wing, Claude Ley Kum, and Lee Tong [Li Tang].
	June	21	Kang arrives in Montreal; British Columbia supporters Li Mengjiu and Ye En send him funds to return to Vancouver.
	July	3	Kang arrives in Vancouver, discovers Ye En and other merchants had publicized formation of overseas Chinese investment conglomerate that evolves into Baohuanghui.
	July	9	In Victoria, Kang, with Li Mengjiu and others, begin to organize association, with Kang first proposing a business group named Baoshanghui (Merchant Protection Society). Instead, they decide on political organization named Baohuanghui (Protect the Emperor Society), with English name Chinese Empire Reform Association.
	July	17–20	After series of meetings at Chinese Theatre in Victoria, Baohuanghui is founded. Li Fuji is president, Ye En president of Vancouver chapter.
	July–October		Kang and secretary, guarded around clock, spend most of summer on Coal Island near Victoria, which he names Wen Island or Literary Island, an idyllic retreat where he writes poetry, learns to fish and row a boat.
	July	28	Kang meets with 2,000 people in Victoria.
	August	4	Celebration of Guangxu's birthday in Victoria, which Kang may have attended. After rumors that Qing officials planned to remove Guangxu as emperor, Kang organizes first circular telegram involving Baohuanghui chapters in North America and Asia asking Qing foreign ministry to wish emperor long life and calling for his restoration.
	August 10– September 16		Away from Coal Island, Kang attends meetings and visits friends in Vancouver, New Westminster, and Victoria; meets Canadian members and Baohuanghui leaders from U.S. on September 11.
	Late September– October		From Coal Island, Kang dispatches Canadian emissaries to establish chapters on U.S. West Coast that fall, carrying first Baohuanghui charter drafted by Kang. Kang begins to plan Qinwang military rising to restore Guangxu to throne.

Year	Month	Day	Event
1899	October	10	Kang leaves Canada on <i>Empress of India</i> for Japan to prepare for Qinwang; on board he meets British Parliament member Ernest F. G. Hatch.
	October	26	Kang arrives in Yokohama; because of assassination fears, Liang Qichao probably does not visit Kang, who likely remained on the ship; <i>Qingyi Bao</i> (<i>China Discussion</i>) office set on fire in Yokohama, Kang's manuscripts written during exile burned.
	October	30	Kang departs on <i>Kawauchi Maru</i> from Kōbe for Hong Kong.
	November		Tang Caichang arrives in Shanghai from Japan and mobilizes Independence Army (Zilijun). He also establishes Zhengqihui (Society of the Righteous Spirit) as political arm of the Independence Army with aim of restoring Guangxu, establishing parliamentary form of constitutional government, and cooperating with foreigners in China.
1900	January		Cixi endorses millennial antiforeign uprising by Yihetuan (Boxers).
	Early January		Tang Caichang meets with Kang secretly in Hong Kong to plot Qinwang.
	January	20	From Hong Kong, Kang sends circular telegram to Baohuanghui chapters alerting them to Cixi's plan to depose Guangxu; Baohuanghui chapters protest by telegram, contributing to abandonment of this plan.
	January	27	Qing assassination attempts drive Kang from Hong Kong to Singapore. Before he leaves, Kang meets with Tang Caichang and others to discuss Qinwang strategy and funding. Kang's "South Windsor <i>nianpu</i> " remains in Hong Kong with his family.
	February	2	Kang arrives in Singapore, where he is protected by Governor Swettenham and hosted by Khoo Seok Wan, Lim Boon Keng, and Zhang Fanglin, moving to escape pursuit by Qing agents. Kang promises Singapore officials that he will not "plot" against Chinese government while "residing in the Colony."
	February	14	Qing edict offers 145,000 tael reward for heads of Kang and Liang.

Year	Month	Day	Event
1900	March		In Singapore, Kang focuses on planning Qinwang, meeting with Yung Wing, who has come from Shanghai, where he has been working with Tang Caichang. Kang and Yung reveal their imminent rising to Singapore police chief and are told that the British government would not support it.
	March		Homer Lea impresses California Baohuanghui leaders with his military expertise and willingness to travel to China to train Chinese troops and lead them in restoring the emperor.
	March	4	Liang Qitian (Liang Qichao's cousin) arrives in Victoria as first Kang disciple to mobilize Baohuanghui chapters in North America, spends four years in North, Central, and South America, leaving in 1904 to return to Asia.
	April		Boxers assault foreigners and Christians in Beijing, resulting in invasion by the Eight Powers Expeditionary Army in mid-July and occupation of Forbidden City in mid-August. Cixi and Guangxu flee into internal exile in Xi'an.
	June	21	Cixi declares war against allied powers.
	June	22	Homer Lea leaves San Francisco for Asia as a "secret agent" to raise reform army and restore emperor; he may be accompanied by one Los Angeles Chinese military student and carrying considerable funds.
	July	6–12	In Singapore, Miyazaki Torazō and another Japanese collaborator of Sun Yatsen are arrested by local authorities after Kang alleged they had come to assassinate him. Sun arrives in Singapore planning to meet Japanese associates and convince Kang to join them in an alliance but is banished from Singapore for five years. There will be no further attempts by Sun to cooperate with Kang.
	July	11	Homer Lea arrives in Yokohama, Japan, and meets with Baohuanghui leader Chen Guoyong. He departs July 12 for Hong Kong and Macau. Sometime before July 30 he is supposed to have met Kang Youwei in Singapore. However, Lea may have come to Singapore when Kang was on an inaccessible island (possibly Tanjong Butun) where he had been moved to avoid assassins.

Year	Month	Day	Event
1900	July	18	Cui Zijian, president of the San Francisco chapter, sends a petition to governments of U.S., Britain, Germany, and Japan appealing for their cooperation reinstating Guangxu to throne and suggesting they form joint protectorate with emperor to govern China. Kang makes similar appeals directly to foreign leaders.
	July	26, 29	Tang Caichang and Yung Wing, among others, convene self-proclaimed national assembly (<i>guohui</i>) at Yuyuan in British Settlement in Shanghai, which they hope will be core of government if Qinwang succeeds in removing Cixi.
	July	30	Reputedly, upon Kang's orders, approximately 100 Baohuanghui volunteers from U.S. and Canada departed Vancouver on <i>Empress of India</i> for "council of war" in Macau to prepare for Qinwang.
	July	30	Homer Lea leaves Hong Kong with Sun Yatsen supporters for Baohuanghui headquarters in Macau, according to Hong Kong Governor Henry Blake. Lea had told Blake that he had been sent to China by reformers in San Francisco, who proposed united front between followers of Kang and Sun to take over Guangdong. Blake reported that in Macau, "Kang Yu Wei's party would have no coalition with the followers of Sun Yat Sen."
	August	9	The original date for Qinwang to be mounted by five armies led by Tang Caichang from Yangzi region. Lacking sufficient funds, Tang postpones start twice, to August 19 and August 23. Commander Qin Lishan in Datong, Anhui, does not hear about delay and leads army into battle. After six days of fighting with Liangjiang Viceroy Liu Kunyi's troops, but with no backup from Tang, Qin's army is defeated. Hubei/Hunan Viceroy Zhang Zhidong learns of Qinwang plot from captured soldiers.
	August	14	Allied forces enter Beijing.
	August	21	Chinese volunteers from North America summoned by Kang to "war council" arrive in Hong Kong too late for Qinwang.

Year	Month	Day	Event
1900	August	21–22	Zhang Zhidong issues arrest warrants for Tang Caichang and his men in Hankou's British Concession and, with British support, raids two houses, capturing Tang and others, as well as weapons and documents of Independence Society (Zilihui, successor to Zhengqihui).
	August	23	Tang Caichang and 15 others beheaded. Thanks to information gained in raids, other viceroys continue weeks-long crackdown. Kang later claims 2,000 were killed. Baohuanghui members blame Kang for Qinwang failure and lack of funds.
	November	14	From Penang, Kang writes U.S. Minister in Beijing indicting Cixi and others for Boxer Uprising.
1901	January	29	Cixi issues edict announcing New Policies (Xinzheng) to begin political reforms.
	March	24	Seventeen-year-old student Xue Jinqin becomes the first female in China to give a speech, protesting Russia's occupation of Manchuria at rally in Shanghai's Zhang Yuan Park. Dubbed "China's Joan of Arc" when she arrives in San Francisco October 1902, she is first Chinese woman to speak publicly there.
	May or June		Baohuanghui envoy Liang Qitian begins first organizing tour of Mexico, where he visits 13 cities in 7 states. He returned to Mexico in 1903.
	May	31	Kang disciple Xu Qin arrives in San Francisco on his first trip to North America for Baohuanghui.
	July		Kang in Penang and He Suitian in Macau hint to members about future military action in Yangzi, Guangdong and Guangxi regions.
	December	7	In search for healthier climate, Kang leaves Penang for India.
	December	12	Kang arrives in Kolkata to start a lengthy stay in India where he travels with second wife Liang Suijue and daughter Kang Tongbi; completes utopian classic, <i>Datong Shu</i> ; remains in India, most of the time in Darjeeling, until Ronglu's death in 1903.

Year	Month	Day	Event
1902	June	13	Yung Wing, naturalized U.S. citizen since 1852 and former associate minister at Chinese Legation in Washington, DC, arrives in San Francisco on <i>Gaelic</i> . Because U.S. Exclusion Act had come into effect since his departure in 1882, banned from entry but manages to escape and resettles in Hartford, Connecticut.
	Summer		Ou Jujia’s booklet, <i>Xin Guangdong</i> (New Guangdong), which proposed making Guangdong independent nation, is published and distributed by Liang Qichao. Later Ou himself published his booklet in San Francisco newspapers he edited, <i>Wenxing Bao</i> and <i>Datong Bao</i> . Kang accuses Ou of inciting revolution. Liang, Ou, and Yung Wing are among Baohuanghui members planning Guangdong Uprising of 1902–3, which was led by Hong Kong-based revolutionary Xie Zuantai (Tse Tsan-tai) and Hong Quanfu (Hung Chuan-fook), nephew of Taiping Rebellion commander Hong Xiuquan.
	November–December		Commercial Corporation (Shangwu Gongsi) charter drafted by Kang and distributed by Canadian headquarters to chapters, soliciting comments.
1903	January	28	Guangdong Uprising ringleaders arrested and executed by Qing authorities before the operation can be launched.
	February		“Suggestions for the Boycott of the Exclusion Law,” by Chen Yikan published in Honolulu Baohuanghui newspaper <i>Xin Zhongguo Bao</i> ; reprinted in <i>Xinmin Congbao</i> in October and promoted by Liang Qichao as blueprint for 1905 anti-American boycott.
	Spring		Share sales begin for Commercial Corporation.
	Spring		Kang leaves India for Burma, Malaya, and Netherlands Indies (Java, where he promotes Baohuanghui, establishes network of schools).
	March	3	Liang Qichao lands in British Columbia to begin 9-month Baohuanghui mobilization in Canada and U.S. By end of visit, including 20 or so chapters organized by Liang, the Americas and Hawai’i hosted 103 chapters. Liang returned to Japan at end of November.

Year	Month	Day	Event
1903	April	11	Ronglu, Manchu official and Cixi ally, dies in Beijing; Kang welcomes news, anticipating Guangxu's quick return to throne.
	May	7	Kang Tongbi arrives in Canada, gives public speeches in Victoria and Vancouver, organizes Chinese Empire Ladies Reform Association (Baohuangnühui) with chapters in Canada and U.S.; later travels across U.S. with Liang Qichao, speaking to Baohuanghui chapters; lives and studies in Connecticut for four years, taking key role in Baohuanghui on behalf of her father. Moves from the home of Dr. Mary Starr Tudor of South Windsor in 1907, leaving behind extensive correspondence, her father's <i>nianpu</i> , photographs, and other documents she saved during her stay; 1907–9, attends Barnard College, New York City, where she is first Asian student.
	Fall		Kang makes his way from Southeast Asia to Hong Kong.
	October		Liang Qichao in Los Angeles is met at train station by Homer Lea and American military officers, who propose idea of Western Military Academy to train young Chinese men as soldiers.
	November		Liang Qichao spearheads petition in U.S. asking Qing foreign affairs officials to refuse to renew soon-to-expire U.S.–China exclusion treaty; movement ultimately becomes 1905 anti-American boycott, with Liang's writings on exclusion an important impetus.
	November		Liang Qichao and Kang, along with Baohuanghui leaders in Canada and Hong Kong, write “Concise Rules for Soliciting Shares for the Chinese Commercial Corporation” (Zhongguo Shangwu Gongsi Zhaogu Jianming Zhangcheng), envisioning China as world's factory, Hong Kong as entrepôt, and Chinese overseas managing international supply chain.
1904			Liang Qichao publishes <i>Xin Dalu Youji</i> (Travel Notes from the New World), account of 1903 North America trip; also publishes <i>Huagong Jinyue Ji</i> (Notes on the Exclusion of Chinese Laborers), read aloud at May 10, 1905, Shanghai meeting to declare anti-American boycott.

Year	Month	Day	Event
1904	January	2	Los Angeles Baohuanghui headquarters dedicated; Homer Lea presented with gold medal saluting loyalty and honor. Western Military Academy organized by Lea formally begun in spring in Los Angeles with as many as 36 branches by fall and winter 1904. Ou Jujia put in charge of initiating other U.S. branches.
	March		In Hong Kong, Kang attends assembly of Baohuanghui leaders, including Liang Qichao and Xu Qin, plans periodicals and newspapers in Hong Kong, Yokohama, Shanghai, and Guangzhou, and Guangdong Public school (Guangdong Gongxue)
	March	7	Commercial Corporation founded at Hong Kong assembly, key corporate officers are supervisor Kang and his deputy Liang Qichao, treasurers Xu Qin and Liang Qitian, and bookkeepers Kuang Shoumin and Ye En.
	March	22	Kang leaves Hong Kong for Europe; British government preparing to banish him from colony for his political agitation and endangering Britain's relations with China; stops in Saigon, Bangkok, Malacca, Penang, and Ceylon, sailing through Suez Canal to Port Said, Egypt.
	April		Liang Qichao takes secret trip to Shanghai to establish <i>Shi Bao</i> (Eastern Times).
	April	6	Sun Yatsen arrives in U.S. to recruit followers, reaching out to Baohuanghui members, inducing deep consternation in Kang Youwei and Baohuanghui leaders. Yung Wing in Hartford is more receptive.
	April	29	U.S. Congress passes new Chinese Exclusion legislation, delinking Chinese exclusion laws from any future treaty with China (which would not sign an extension of 1894 Gresham-Yang Treaty) and eliminating time limit on Chinese exclusion.
	April 30– December 1		Chinese delegates are subjected at St. Louis World's Fair to 61 special rules restricting their entry and movements in U.S., angering Qing government and Chinese in U.S. and abroad.
	June		Official Chinese delegation to St. Louis World's Fair led by Prince Pulun travels throughout U.S., meets Baohuanghui members in New York City, St. Louis, and other cities.

Year	Month	Day	Event
1904	Mid-June–October		Kang in Italy, then to France to meet Kang Tongbi to tour Switzerland, Austro-Hungarian Empire, Denmark, Sweden, Germany, Belgium, Netherlands, England, and Scotland. Sweden evokes a Datong world for Kang who admires both its social institutions and island scenery. In Europe, Kang meets Austrian Rupert Humer, who becomes his valet, bodyguard, and interpreter, and Zhou Guoxian, who rejoins Kang after they parted in Malaya in 1903 and becomes Kang's secretary, interpreter, and press spokesman.
	October		Kang and Tongbi, along with other members of party, stay at Hotel Cecil, London.
	October	25	Kang Tongbi sends a telegram to President Roosevelt requesting customs officials allow her father U.S. admission to attend St. Louis World's Fair; no response, Kang did not attempt to enter U.S.
	November	1–12	Kang leaves Liverpool on <i>Lake Manitoba</i> , arriving in Montreal, welcomed by Ye En of Vancouver, who will escort him to British Columbia.
	November	15–17	Arrives in Toronto, tours Niagara Falls, speaks to several hundred Chinese, many of whom join Baohuanghui; in Ottawa, Kang lectures for first time on "National Salvation through Material Civilization"; leaves for Winnipeg.
	November	19	Stops in Winnipeg, Manitoba.
	November	22	Arrives in Vancouver to great fanfare; 3,000 people listen to speech at City Hall.
	November	29	Kang hosted at Baohuanghui banquet, which is attended by U.S. Consul L. Edwin Dudley, who subsequently issues Kang a Section 6 entry certificate.
	December 4, 1904–February 11, 1905		Kang retreats to Coal Island to recover from bronchitis, visits Harrison Hot Springs and a mountain resort. Writes <i>Ouzhou Shiyi Guo Youji</i> (Travel Notes on Eleven European Countries); occasional visits to Victoria for meetings and speeches; begins to write "Wuzhi Jiuguo Lun" (On National Salvation through Material Civilization).

Year	Month	Day	Event
1904			U.S. Consul Dudley arranges travel documents for Kang and interpreter Zhou Guoxian, which were registered in Vancouver on December 17. Kang's illness lingers, and he fears assassination by Sun Yatsen, who had been in U.S. since April 6; Kang thus delays his departure; begins to plan design and production of Baohuanghui badges.
	December	24	Unknown to Kang or his followers, Sun Yatsen leaves U.S. for London and would not return until 1909. Sun raised little money and left discouraged by failure to recruit many Baohuanghui members to cause of revolution.
1905	January	2	Los Angeles Western Military Academy cadets march in Tournament of Roses in Pasadena, armed with muskets.
	February	11	Kang arrives in Sumas, Washington for first U.S. trip, accompanied by Zhou Guoxian, Ye En, Hip Kwong, and Rupert Humer. Gives destinations as Seattle, Portland, and Washington, DC; proceeds to Port Townsend where his visa is certified by immigration officials.
	February	11–13	Visits Seattle; announces plan to seek “interchange of ideas” in U.S.; still suffering from bronchitis.
	February	13–20	Visits Portland, Oregon, Baohuanghui headquarters for 26 Pacific Northwest chapters; met by contingent of 100 local members; speaks at First Methodist Church.
	February	20–21	Arrives in Salem, Oregon, meets with Governor George E. Chamberlain; inspects mental asylum and state penitentiary. Speaks to several hundred students at Willamette University.
	February	22	Spends about a week at a home in a rural town about 25 miles south of Portland for further recuperation and isolation from people, then returns to the city around March 1.
	March		Ye En takes charge of Commercial Corporation in Macau; among projects he will initiate are fishing franchise and land reclamation company in Guangdong and the Zhenhua mining company in Guangxi.
	March	9	From Portland Kang travels to Astoria, Oregon; addresses large crowd of Chinese at Fisher's Opera House.

Year	Month	Day	Event
1905	March	10	Kang leaves Astoria by train for Los Angeles.
	March	11–15	Speaks before Chinese community groups in Sacramento, Fresno, and Bakersfield, California.
	March	12	Spends several hours in Fresno, speaks to crowd of 500 at China Alley theater, urging men to cut their queues and championing women's equality per <i>Datong Shu</i> ; meets 15-year-old Lily Haw (He Zhanli), daughter of Baohuanghui member, and Kang's future wife. Takes night train to Los Angeles.
	March	15	Stormbound near Bakersfield for two days, Kang met at Los Angeles train station by Western Military Academy military guard; house is rented for Kang and party at 2613 W. Seventh Street across from Westlake Park; lives there for about two months, reunites with former student and Los Angeles Baohuanghui leader Tom Leung.
	March	18	Welcome banquet for Kang by Chinese community and Los Angeles judges, business leaders, and military officers. Among those toasting Kang is Wong Yap [Huang Xi], Tom Leung's relative by marriage and Qing official who had represented Guangdong and Guangxi merchants at 1904 St. Louis World's Fair.
	March	21	Wong Yap questioned in Tom Leung's Los Angeles home by Chinese Inspector, who suspects him of being "one of the Chinese workmen who had made his escape from the St. Louis fair." Wong and Tom protest and publicize case in Los Angeles newspapers.
	March	27	Kang dines with soldier of fortune Richard A. Falkenberg, who came to Los Angeles with Baohuanghui San Francisco leader Tom She Bin. Kang quoted in <i>Los Angeles Times</i> endorsing Falkenberg as "commanding general" of "Chinese Imperial Army," which Kang denies. Falkenberg says he was commissioned by Liang Qichao in San Francisco, October, 1903.
	April	2	Kang leaves for unidentified suburb to escape furor over Falkenberg affair.
	April	7	At Homer Lea's insistence, Kang issues press statement that Lea is only recognized and appointed general of all U.S. Chinese military schools.

Year	Month	Day	Event
1905	April	8	On inspection tour of California branches of Western Military Academy, Homer Lea arouses suspicions of California officials when he tells Fresno press he is organizing army trained in modern war tactics; California Adjutant General's Office and Governor George C. Pardee question Lea's legitimacy as military officer and legality of training foreigners for armed rebellion against friendly foreign government.
	May	1 or 2	From Los Angeles, Kang sends group telegram to Baohuanghui leaders in Shanghai, Hong Kong, Japan, and U.S. to pressure Qing Foreign Ministry to not renew expired 1894 Gresham-Yang Exclusion Treaty, and simultaneously hold meetings and publicize anti-treaty movement in newspapers.
	May	4	Liang Qichao receives Kang's telegram and contacts Baohuanghui activists in Shanghai, Hong Kong, and Beijing to discuss boycott against U.S.; Shanghai selected to initiate movement; it is home of influential Baohuanghui newspaper <i>Shi Bao</i> (Eastern Times).
	May	8	Kang departs Los Angeles by train, accompanied by Ben O. Young, Zhou Guoxian, Rupert Humer, Homer Lea, Tong Chinn, and Chen Yuesong, with plans to visit Washington, DC.
	May	10	Shanghai General Chamber of Commerce announces nationwide boycott of American goods to protest Chinese Exclusion Act. Coincidentally, "An Open Letter to Prepare to Resist the Chinese Exclusion Treaty of the United States" is published in <i>Shi Bao</i> . <i>Shi Bao</i> publisher Di Chuqing and editor Luo Xiaogao coordinate with Shanghai Chamber of Commerce; boycott to begin in July.
	May	10	California Governor Pardee orders Fresno Western Military Academy to immediately desist drilling with arms.
	May	13	Kang arrives in Kansas City and learns about Shanghai boycott; he and Baohuanghui leaders begin to fundraise for Reject the Treaty Society General Headquarters (Juyue zonghui) in Guangzhou.
	May	14	Kang gives a speech in Kansas City and departs for St. Louis.

Year	Month	Day	Event
1905	May	15	Kang and party arrive in St. Louis; learn from local newspaper that California's governor had acted to disband "Chinese Imperial Reform Army" company in Fresno.
	May	18	Kang, Lea, and others feted at St. Louis banquet attended by former Missouri Governor Charles P. Johnson, local judges, and other dignitaries, as well as Baohuanghui members and officers of local Western Military Academy.
	May	19	Kang makes first public address on Chinese exclusion to American Baptist Missionary Union Convention; convention unanimously passes resolution to seek easing of Chinese Exclusion Act. That evening Kang speaks on exclusion at Baohuanghui headquarters.
	May	22	Kang's entourage leaves St. Louis for Chicago.
	May	23	Kang arrives in Chicago, received by 400-cadet Baohuanghui contingent in uniform; Tom Leung joins traveling party as Kang's doctor. Kang speaks at Baohuanghui banquet about exclusion and China's need for American machinery and an "educational revolution."
	May	24	Kang and large Chicago retinue visit City of Zion, Illinois, to meet "First Apostle" John Alexander Dowie and speak to 5,000 followers of his Christian utopian community. Kang speaks on Datong utopian vision, and after other Baohuanghui members speak against exclusion, Dowie receives unanimous acclamation from assembly to write President Roosevelt calling for repeal of exclusion policy.
	May 25–early June		Kang returns to Chicago; among other activities, coordinates boycott activities.
	June	7	Liang Qichao writes lengthy group letter to Baohuanghui chapters incorporating documents on the boycott, including Kang's telegram, and describes Baohuanghui actions to support boycott.
	June	7	Kang and party arrive in Washington; stay at Arlington Hotel; meets with local Baohuanghui leaders and prepares to meet President Roosevelt. Kang waiting for Yung Wing to introduce him to U.S. officials.

Year	Month	Day	Event
1905	June	9	Kang hosts delegation of newspaper reporters in his hotel to explain his goals and plans. He visits Bureau of Engraving and Printing and Baohuanghui headquarters in Chinatown. Delegation of 40 Chinese from Baltimore insist that he visit their city.
	June	10–12	Railroad car reserved by Kang's Baltimore hosts to escort him short distance from Washington to Baltimore; met by 800 local members, gives speeches, and tours Baltimore Country Club.
	June	13	Kang writes Acting Secretary of State Francis B. Loomis requesting an appointment to meet Roosevelt.
	June	14	In executive order, Roosevelt directs Commerce and Labor Secretary Victor Metcalf to instruct immigration officials to treat exempt classes of Chinese courteously.
	June	15	Secretary of War William Howard Taft denounces Exclusion policy as “wrong in principle” in controversial commencement address at Miami University, Oxford, Ohio; same day, Homer Lea visits Roosevelt, probably to speak about Western Military Academy.
	June	16	Kang, Yung Wing, Zhou Guoxian, and Tom Leung tour State and Navy Departments with Acting Secretary of State Francis B. Loomis; then greeted by Roosevelt at White House to discuss Exclusion policy; Roosevelt promises more lenient treatment of tourists, students, and business owners.
	June	17–20	Kang and six members arrive in Pittsburgh where some local Chinese oppose visit, fearing Qing reward for Kang might provoke violence in their city. In speech to 800 at Fourth Avenue Baptist Church, Kang said Roosevelt pledged Chinese exclusion laws “would be modified as to give equal rights with the Japanese.” Kang also advocated for Western education for Chinese students and sought Roosevelt’s assistance to make this possible (likely referring to the Boxer Indemnity funds). Kang’s party visits Homestead mills of Carnegie Steel Company and possibly Westinghouse Electric Company before returning to Washington.

Year	Month	Day	Event
1905	June	24	Kang, accompanied by Yung Wing, has second interview with Roosevelt, joined by Secretary of State John M. Hay; that day, Roosevelt issues executive orders to Departments of State and Commerce and Labor to ameliorate treatment of Chinese merchants, teachers, students, government officials, and travelers, their wives and children who visit U.S.; orders resulted in more predictable and formulaic procedures and fewer applications denied.
	June	24	From DC, Kang takes the train to Philadelphia, where horse-drawn carriage leads parade to Independence Hall and Chinatown; in evening Kang gives four-hour speech calling for emancipation of the people of China.
	June	25–27	In Philadelphia, Kang visits U.S. Mint and large industrial establishments, including Baldwin Locomotive Works; visits Mayor John Weaver to learn about American municipal reforms. Kang also announces upcoming New York City plenary session of Baohuanghui chapters to revise organizational charter; distributes “Baohuanghui Gongyi Gaiding Zhangcheng” [Baohuanghui Group Discussion to Finalize Editing the Charter].
	June	27	Kang, accompanied by Philadelphia Western Military Academy cadets, arrives at Pennsylvania Railroad Station in Jersey City, New Jersey, joined by 70 New York City Chinese cadets and Epworth Band to cross Hudson River to New York City, in defiance of New York Governor Frank Higgins’s ongoing investigation of Western Military Academy; in 22 carriages, party proceeds to Baohuanghui headquarters, 7-9 Mott Street, Chinatown, and then to Waldorf-Astoria Hotel. Traveling party includes Zhou Guoxian, Rupert Humer, Homer Lea, Ben O. Young, Tom Leung, and Kang Tongbi.
	June	29	Kang and party meet with New York City Mayor George B. McClellan Jr.
	July	1	Kang speaks to “hundreds” at Chinese Theatre, 5-7 Doyers Street, Chinatown, about long history and traditions of China and reform movement.

Year	Month	Day	Event
1905	July	3	Farewell reception for Kang at Baohuanghui Mott Street headquarters.
	July	4	Kang, daughter Tongbi and others leave New York City for Boston.
	July	5–15	In Boston, Kang's party meets with Boston Mayor Patrick A. Collins and Massachusetts Governor William Lewis Douglas; Kang and Tongbi speak to Chinese audience at Park Street Congregational Church; Tongbi, in <i>Boston Globe</i> interview, heralds political participation of Chinese women and Chinese Empire Ladies' Reform Association. Kang suffers heat stroke but recovers quickly with "herb tea and a fan" administered by herbalist Tom Leung and Kang Tongbi.
	July	15–19	Kang visits Hartford, Connecticut, Kang Tongbi's adoptive city, calling it "cleanest city he had ever been in." Yung Wing hosts Kang, who may have pressed Yung to translate his biography (Wo Zhuan). Kang's party meets Hartford Mayor William F. Hennessey. At Colt Firearms factory, Tongbi fires a machine gun, and Kang purchases firearms. Both address local Chinese at City Mission Hall, Kang praising U.S. "as the greatest country in the world, and, but for the exclusion act, our best friend." Yung Wing hosts farewell banquet, as Kang is called back urgently to New York City. Kang meets with Homer Lea, likely for last time; Lea does not appear to have gone to New York City, where Western Military Academy cadets were banned from bearing arms in public.
	July	19–20	Kang leaves Hartford for New York by train, stopping in New Haven to tour Yale University. At midnight, Kang takes boat to New York City to prepare for imminent Baohuanghui plenary session.
	July	20	Shanghai Chamber of Commerce initiates anti-American boycott.
	July	21	Kang and party arrive in New York City; stays at Waldorf-Astoria Hotel.

Year	Month	Day	Event
1905	July	24–28	Kang presides over Baohuanghui plenary meeting of chapters at New York City Baohuanghui headquarters, attended by 20–30 members mostly from U.S., in 8 sessions over 5 days. Kang proclaimed it as “like nothing ever held in China before,” and an American newspaper quotes Kang’s admonition: “Adopt for yourselves the principles set forth by Mr. Roosevelt.” Plenary enacts charter intended to govern Baohuanghui’s structure and procedures with elements of constitutionalism.
	July	30	Publication of “Baohuanghui Gongyi Gaiding Xinzhang” [New Baohuanghui Charter Finalized after Public Discussion], adopted at New York City plenary meeting; a revision of June preliminary charter drafted by Kang.
	August	3	After plenary session, makes side trip to state penitentiary in Ossining, New York (formerly Sing Sing).
	August	22	Kang, Zhou Guoxian, and Howard Moy arrive in Philadelphia for several days of sightseeing as well as meetings with Chinese merchants to discuss anti-American boycott in China; Kang meets delegation of New York Baohuanghui members concerned about the tong violence in their city.
	August	29	Kang back in New Haven, Connecticut, at Hotel Pequot, writes to Tongbi to meet him and bring Western clothes.
	August	31	Under pressure from U.S. government, Qing issues edict to end boycott against American goods.
	September	2	Kang takes boat up Hudson River to visit U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York; likely returns to New York City.
	September		Kang and Zhou Guoxian travel by train to Bethlehem, New Hampshire, in the White Mountains, staying about a week at luxurious Maplewood Hotel.
	September	13	Kang, Zhou Guoxian, and Tom Leung arrive in Chicago; inspect work of Chicago Baohuanghui chapter and leave that night by train for Portland, Oregon.
	September	14	Kang and party arrive in St. Paul, Minnesota, where there was a Baohuanghui chapter.

Year	Month	Day	Event
1905	September	14	Letter with this date from Kang Youwei, New York, to Theodore Roosevelt, enclosing a nineteen-page essay indicting Cixi and recounting reformers' achievements since 1880s.
	September	15	Kang met in Billings, Montana, by brass band and local members; at Billings City Hall, Kang introduced by Judge Oscar Fletcher Goddard before speaking on Cixi's obstruction of reform, specifically development of mineral resources and agriculture.
	September	18	Kang arrives in Livingston, Montana, enters Yellowstone National Park for five-day visit; finds Yellowstone's dramatic but treeless scenery uninspiring.
	September	23	In Helena, Montana, Kang lectures to both Chinese and American audiences and meets mayor of Helena and governor of Montana; Helena lead city of 12 Montana Baohuanghui chapters.
	September	26	Kang and party arrive in Butte, Montana; visits local Baohuanghui headquarters.
	September	29	Kang's party descends 2,000 feet into Original Copper Mine, afterward pose for group photo with other mine visitors, the cast of <i>Ben Hur</i> , then being performed in Butte. Western Military Academy militia drills for Kang in Chinatown, followed by farewell banquet at home of Baohuanghui leader Guan Guobin (Guan Lai).
	September	30	Kang and party depart for Spokane, Washington, on Northern Pacific Railroad.
	October	1	Arrives in Spokane; both Kang and Zhou Guoxian interviewed by press; speeches and banquets, as well as tea party for Kang hosted by Dr. William L. Hall, former missionary to China.
	October	4–5	Kang in Walla Walla, Washington, site of Baohuanghui chapter and Western Military Academy branch; receives "grand reception." On the train from Walla Walla, Kang stops briefly at Pendleton, Oregon, speaks to press and local Chinese before taking next train to Portland.

Year	Month	Day	Event
1905	October	5–(16)	Kang arrives for second visit to Portland; attends Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition; meets woman student Xue Jinqin, whose studies were supported by Baohuanghui with intention she would return to China to assassinate Cixi. Kang learns that Western Military Academy in California had been shut down and that he was implicated.
	October	15	In Portland, Kang gives Tom Leung more than \$7,000 as a Commercial Corporation investment in a restaurant whose profits would go to supporting Baohuanghui students abroad. More than \$100,000 in investments and loans, two-thirds from the Baohuanghui's Huayi Bank, would be invested in the Chicago restaurant King Joy Lo until end of 1908.
	October	19	Kang arrives in Baker City, Oregon, greeted by White Swan band and banqueted at Baohuanghui headquarters.
	October	20	Kang and his party arrive at Nampa, Idaho; received with banquet at Chinese temple, escorted by Boise delegation to Idaho capital. Kang and Zhou Guoxian visit Idaho Governor Frank R. Gooding and Boise Baohuanghui headquarters. Kang writes daughter Tongbi, describing possible scenarios for assassinating Sun Yatsen when he next comes to U.S.; Kang says too dangerous for him to return to New York and will go directly to Mexico.
	October	24	Kang and Zhou Guoxian visit Idaho State Penitentiary, east of Boise, meet Yee Wee, who had been convicted on circumstantial evidence of murdering fellow Chinese eight years earlier; Kang appeals directly to Governor Gooding to pardon Yee's life imprisonment.
	October	29	Kang and Zhou Guoxian arrive in Ouray, Colorado, having traveled by train from Boise, Idaho, southeast to Ogden and Salt Lake City, Utah, then further southeast to Grand Junction and Montrose, Colorado. From Ouray, the pair travel by train and horse carriage over the Rocky Mountains on Silverton Trail to 11,000-foot summit of Red Mountain Pass. From Silverton, travel by narrow gauge railroad to Durango, Colorado, then to Aztec, New Mexico.

Year	Month	Day	Event
1905			In Aztec, Kang explores ruins of an eleventh- and twelfth-century walled city and irrigation ditches built by ancestors of Pueblo indigenous people, which he believes resemble those in China and “proves” early Chinese migration to North America.
	November	1	Kang leaves New Mexico by train, traveling westward via Mancos and east to Denver.
	November	2	Kang arrives in Denver, Colorado, then on to Kansas City, Missouri.
	November	6–10	Kang arrives at St. Louis, where he and Zhou Guoxian handle correspondence with Baohuanghui followers and prepare for trip south.
	November	11	Kang, Zhou, and Linn Chew Sang take the Louisville and Nashville Railroad to New Orleans; greeted by 11 carriages filled with local supporters, followed by banquet and lecture by Kang at Baohuanghui’s Chinatown headquarters.
	November	13	Kang Youwei’s party learns about New Orleans history from Mayor Martin Behrman, the city attorney, assistant district attorney, a judge, and school board president.
	November	14	After introduction to the city at New Orleans Progressive Union, Kang visits factories and meets with Baohuanghui and Zhigongtang members in Chinatown; he warns them against pursuing revolution.
	November	15	At Baohuanghui office, Kang again cautions audience against revolution and uses French Revolution and American Civil War as examples of anarchy and disunity that comes from violence.
	November	16	Kang lectures attendees at Chinatown banquet on dangers of smoking and drinking.
	November	19	At farewell banquet, Kang speaks about reform and observes election of the New Orleans Baohuanghui president Hom Kim.
	November	20	Kang and party visit local cotton mills.
	November	22	Kang, secretary Linn Chew Sang, assistant secretary G. Low, and Louis Ott, a new bodyguard sent from Hartford by Kang Tongbi, depart from New Orleans on Southern Pacific Railroad.

Year	Month	Day	Event
1905	November	23	On way to San Antonio, Texas, Kang appears outside train in Beaumont, Texas, and is persuaded by local chapter to spend the night.
	November	24–28	Kang in San Antonio, where he inspects oil wells and attends a rodeo.
	November	29	Kang and party met at border town of Eagle Pass, Texas, by Torreón Baohuanghui leader Wong Foon Chuck, take train to Ciudad Porforio Díaz, Coahuila, Mexico. They are greeted by several hundred men and women from all over Mexico, as well as Central America.
	November	30	Kang writes public letter to Homer Lea for release to the American press abolishing Lea's post as chief of Western Military Academy, which was in process of disbanding because of local government pressure; letter has return address of Torreón, Mexico.
	December	2	Kang leaves Ciudad Porforio Díaz by train for Torreón, Coahuila, Mexico. In Torreón, Kang is hosted by Wong Foon Chuck and Dr. Walter (J. W.) Lim. By end of December Kang eager to invest in Mexican land, establish a bank, and ship silver bullion to China.
	December	24	In Chicago, first reports of a lease signed by Chin Foin and other Baohuanghui leaders for corner property at 100-104 East Randolph Street in the Loop, where King Joy Lo restaurant will be located until closure in 1926.
December 1905–July 1906			Qing government sends two imperial missions to Japan, U.S., and Europe to study different political systems; Baohuanghui members in U.S. meet the commissioners, including Duanfang.
1906	January		Kang begins incorporation process for bank in Torreón; Wong Foon Chuck, Situ Guoyin, and Mexico City physician Huang Richu are bank directors.
	January	23–30	Kang, accompanied by Dr. J. W. Lim, C. S. Linn, Luo Changgen, Huang Jinyuan, and Louis Ott, arrive in Mexico City; meet Huang Richu, sightsee and pursue Kang's interests, inspecting tanneries and dye-making plants and exploring ancient Mesoamerica civilizations. Kang tutored in Mexican history, speculates that Aztecs descended from ancient Han tribe that migrated from Alaska to Mexico; buys chest of Mexican antiques for his family in Hong Kong.

Year	Month	Day	Event
1906	January	30	Kang in Mexico City writes letter with 26-page enclosure to Theodore Roosevelt recapping their two visits in June 1905, describes many cases of abuse by officials implementing Chinese Exclusion policy, seeks to influence debate in House of Representatives on exclusion law revisions.
	January	31	In evening, Kang leaves Mexico City for the Mitla cultural site in Oaxaca state; early February returns to Mexico City for more cultural and industrial sightseeing, while discussing Mexican business opportunities.
	(March)		Back in Torreón, Kang speculates in real estate, buying and selling plots of lands using Baohuanghui and Commercial Corporation funds, hoping to use profits to establish a bank, pay off debts, and support students.
	April	5	Roosevelt receives telegram from Wong Foon Chuck, asking Kang be allowed to return to U.S. via Eagle Pass, Texas, a port Chinese were not permitted to enter, request rejected; Kang travels to Tampico and welcomed by local Chinese.
	April	18	Earthquake and fire destroy San Francisco Chinatown. Baohuanghui raises relief funds, some directed to rebuilding American headquarters.
	April	19	Kang and two secretaries depart Tampico on <i>Niagara</i> via Havana for New York City.
	April	28	Kang arrives in New York City.
	June	6	Kang issues revision of Commercial Corporation charter to modernize management practices to follow Western law and regulations.
	August		Newly established Hua-Mo Bank (Hua-Mo Yinhang, Compañía Bancaria Chino y México, or Chinese-Mexican Bank) publicizes plans to build stone building on main plaza in Torreón and announces it has applied for banking concession from Mexican federal government.
	August	8	Qing authorities arrest Liang Tiejun in Beijing when his plot to assassinate Cixi is discovered; less than month later, Liang fatally poisoned in prison; when Kang learned of Liang's death, he writes a 100-verse elegy in his memory.

Year	Month	Day	Event
1906	August	16	After giving speech on deck of Hamburg-American steamer to 500 Chinese on pier in Hoboken, New Jersey, Kang departs for Europe. For the next seven months, travels in Europe and North Africa.
	August	21	Manchu official Duanfang, having returned from leading constitutional study mission abroad, meets with Cixi to present recommendations for constitutional reform, which Duanfang solicited from Liang Qichao.
	September		San Francisco newspaper <i>Wenxing Bao</i> reopens in Los Angeles, renamed <i>Xianzheng Bao</i> (<i>Hin Jing Bo</i>), under direction of Tom Leung and Ben O. Young (Ouyang Xianzhou).
	September	1	Qing edict to commence a nine-year transition to constitutional monarchy.
	September	8	Chicago's King Joy Lo incorporated by the State of Illinois with \$100,000 capitalization "to buy and sell Chinese merchandise and to conduct and carry on a restaurant and eating house." Tom Leung and Chin Foin top shareholders.
	October	21	Kang announces to 170 chapters that with Qing constitutional preparations underway, Baohuanghui will change its name following lunar new year to Guomin Xianzhenghui (Citizens' Constitutional Association, or Xianzhenghui for short). However, Liang Qichao asked that "Guomin" (Citizen) be changed to "Diguo" (Imperial).
	Fall		Kang buys summer home on Korsholmen Island across from Saltsjöbaden, Sweden. With Kang are second wife, Liang Suijue, and their toddler daughter, Kang Tongfu, who learns Swedish.
	December		1906 blueprint of central Torreón, Mexico shows ownership of 14 blocks by Commercial Corporation, six blocks by Kang (including a house), and eight blocks by Baohuanghui leader Huang Richu; real estate is adjacent to planned eight-mile streetcar line to be owned by Commercial Corporation.
	December	20	King Joy Lo holds formal opening in Chicago with Chin F. Foin as manager; full-page illustrated advertisement in <i>Chicago Tribune</i> describes it as "the finest Chinese-American restaurant in the world."

Year	Month	Day	Event
1907	January	3	Kang travels (until March 8, 1907) to Germany, Netherlands, France, Monaco, Spain, Morocco, Portugal, and England.
	February	13	Baohuanghui officially changes name to Diguo Xianzhenghui to elevate constitutionalism as organizational focus.
	February	15	Chin Foin resigns as president and manager of King Joy Lo restaurant and divests his \$30,500 stock share; Tom Leung and nephew Tom Chong take over as president and treasurer.
	March	8	Kang departs Southampton, England on <i>Amerika</i> bound for New York City.
	March	17	Kang arrives in New York City, Kang celebrates 50th birthday (by Chinese count) at Chinatown's Port Arthur Restaurant, and receives congratulations and gold medals from 172 Baohuanghui chapters. Formal opening of New York branch of Huayi Yinhang (Wah Yick Bank), 12 Mott Street, also celebrated. Kang Tongbi had just entered Barnard College, New York City, as special student.
	March 23– April 2		Kang convenes first plenary meeting of Diguo Xianzhenghui, attended by delegates representing 31 cities, states, and countries. Kang's three-hour opening address discusses implementation of constitutional government in China, duties of a citizen, role of political parties, and how Xianzhenghui can help members practice constitutionalism; session lasts 10 days, produces new charter.
	April		After plenum adjourns, Kang and secretary Linn Chew Sang rest at Hotel Gramatan, Bronxville, New York.
	April	17	Kang, Kang Tongbi, Kang Youpei, and Chen Huanzhang attend closing banquet of National Arbitration and Peace Congress at Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, New York, presided over by steel magnate and peace activist Andrew Carnegie.
	April	23 or 24	Kang meets with Andrew Carnegie.

Year	Month	Day	Event
1907	May		Under Kang's direction, Ou-Mei Meishu Pinwu Chenliesuo (Euro-American Fine Arts Exhibition Hall) opens at 37 Queens Road Central, Hong Kong, to sell European and American antiques he purchased during his travels.
	May	[20]–25	Kang visits Chicago to examine King Joy Lo accounts and attempts to extract profits to support Mexican investments; stays at Chicago Beach Hotel on Lake Michigan. From Chicago, Kang probably returns to New York City before leaving for Mexico.
	June		Kang travels to Mexico, spending month in Torreón to check on investments. Kang reregisters Hua-Mo Bank as “large one million [yuan] company” (<i>baiwan da gongsi</i>), which requires \$300,000 in shares for bank reserves; bank renamed Compañía Bancaria y de Tranvías Wah Yick—the Wah Yick Banking and Tramway Company, combining bank with streetcar company. Earlier in 1907, Walter Lim announced concession granted to Hua-Mo Bank for 18-kilometer [11.18-mile] streetcar line connecting Torreón and Matamoros, with projected opening in two years. In June, Lim as president and manager of Hua-Mo, tells press he had applied for concession for steamship line from western Mexico to China.
	June	27	Kang and Linn Chew Sang arrive in Mexico City and stay at Hotel Palacio.
	June	29	Kang meets with seven-term Mexican President Porfirio Díaz for two hours, discussing economics, politics, and similarities between Chinese and Aztecs. Díaz approves of Kang's vision that Chinese would immigrate to Mexico for investment and economic development.
	July		Li Fuji arrives in Mexico to take charge of Commercial Corporation ventures.
	July	3–4	Kang and Linn Chew Sang leave Mexico City by way of ancient Xochimilco for Vera Cruz; on July 4, sail to New York City on <i>Merida</i> , stopping in Havana, Cuba.
	July	8	Qing court edict calls for public recommendations on constitutional preparation, opening path for both Chinese citizens and officials to submit political views.

Year	Month	Day	Event
1907	July	12	Kang arrives in New York City, staying in city and Long Island until early November.
	October		In Tokyo, Liang Qichao founds Zhengwenshe (Political Information Society) and Liudong Gongxuehui (Public Scholarly Association for Chinese Students) to provide scholarships and cultivate future political cadres for Zhengwenshe. Liang begins publishing <i>Zheng Lun</i> (Political Commentary), monthly journal, in Shanghai. Ma Xiangbo in Shanghai is Zhengwenshe secretary general.
	October 15–November 4		1907 bank panic causes Wall Street to lose half its value, and economic turmoil ensues in U.S.; around same time, Kang and Wong Foon Chuck attempt with little success to raise funds for Mexican streetcar concession.
	October	17	First public meeting in Tokyo of Zhengwenshe, more than 1,000 attend; Liang Qichao's speech extolling Qing move to constitutionalism is violently disrupted by group of Tongmenghui members.
	November		At small ceremony at Hotel Astor in New York City, Kang marries third wife, 17-year-old Lily Haw; soon depart for Europe. Lily became Kang's favorite consort and aide until her death from smallpox in 1915.
	November	18	After touring Paris and traveling by way of Reims and Metz, France, Kang and Lily Haw arrive in Germany.
	November	22–30	Kang and Lily Haw travel in Germany and to Zürich, Luzern, Langnau, Bern, and Mount Rigi in Switzerland.
	November	30	Kang departs Switzerland for Austria; on December 1, he and Lily arrive in Poland, and eventually go to Sweden, where they settle at his Swedish home on Korsholmen (Hideaway Island) for winter sojourn; Lily Haw meets Kang's second wife Liang Suijue.
	December		In Japan, Liang Qichao meets Prince Pulun, who is drafting procedures for Qing provisional proto-legislative body or Political Consultative Council (Zizhengyuan), which Pulun chairs in 1910.
	December		Zhengwenshe joins other constitutional organizations in China to collect signatures in provinces for petition to speed up convening of a parliament.

Year	Month	Day	Event
1907	December		Kang's 12-point constitutional petition announced to members by New York Xianzhenghui chapter and serially published by Xianzhenghui newspapers during next few months; states that petition was written on behalf of several hundred members in "200 different cities." It is not widely seen inside China until July 1908, when court responds in fury.
	December	24	Qing court issues decree warning against making constitutional reforms "a pretext for meddling in the internal and foreign concerns of the government."
1908	February		Liang's Zhengwenshe establishes headquarters in Shanghai with network of chapters, newspapers, and schools in provinces.
	February	5	Qing naval officers detain <i>Tatsu Maru</i> , a Japanese ship docked in Macau carrying smuggled guns for revolutionaries.
	March		Kang tells Liang Qichao that Mexican property had lost half its value in worldwide financial crisis.
	March	15	Qing government accepts Japanese demands for apology and reimbursement after <i>Tatsu Maru</i> seizure, sparking eight-month anti-Japanese boycott led by Zhengwenshe and Guangdong merchants. Xianzhenghui raises funds, promotes boycott of Japanese products; Xu Qin (Guangzhou) and Wu Xianzi (Hong Kong) active in China; Citizens' Naval Society (Guomin Haijunhui) created to receive donations.
	March–May		Kang and Lily Haw leave Swedish home to tour Egypt, Germany, Austria, Slovenia, Croatia; they return to Sweden from Saxony, Germany. Kang's eldest daughter Tongwei and husband Mai Zhonghua join them in Sweden, and with Tongbi to arrive in June, a pregnant and jealous Lily leaves Kang to return to Fresno.
	June	18	First public meeting of Zhengwenshe, in Shanghai, with Ma Xiangbo presiding.
	Summer		Ou Jujia and Guangxi industrial intendant Liu Shiji arrive in North America to sell Zhenhua Company shares to Xianzhenghui members, promote investment as patriotic and sanctioned by Kang Youwei; eventually raise 1 million yuan in shares before leaving in May 1909.

Year	Month	Day	Event
1908	June		Zhengwenshe telegraphs Commission for Drawing up Regulations for Constitutional Government (Xianzheng Biancha Guan) calling for parliament within 3 years.
	Late June		Construction of Torreón streetcar line begins, along with publicity for advanced plant to power electric streetcars and new office buildings along streetcar route.
	Late July		Kang's 12-point constitutional petition published in <i>Jiangnan Ribao</i> , Zhengwenshe newspaper in Hankou; this radicalizes more moderate constitutionalists inside China who joined the anti-Japanese boycott.
	August	13	Unable to reach Xianzhenghui abroad, but as a result of Kang's 12-point petition, Qing authorities ban Zhengwenshe for "pretending to study current affairs while secretly pursuing the provocation of unrest and harming national security." China-based Xianzhenghui endeavors also banned.
	August	27	Qing authorities issue outline of principles for proposed constitution (Qinding Xianfa Dagang) and 9-year implementation plan (Yiyuan Weikai Yiqian Zhunian Choubai Shiyi).
	September		Kang leaves Europe, returns to Asia, first visiting Ceylon, and settles in Penang to write essays on his travels and international economic matters.
	October		Liang Qichao, Xu Qin, and others telegraph Liu Shiji demanding Zhenhua Company submit to Xianzhenghui and Kang's full control; Liu refuses, provoking open conflict between Xianzhenghui leadership and Zhenhua promoters, widespread disillusionment spreads among Xianzhenghui members.
	November	3	Cixi too ill on her birthday to receive emperor's ritual congratulations.
	November	7	Cixi sends Prince Qing to inspect her mausoleum at Eastern Tombs.
	November	13	Cixi appoints Guangxu's brother Zaifeng prince regent, orders him to move his two-year-old son Puyi to palace immediately.

Year	Month	Day	Event
1908	November	14	Guangxu dies between 5:00 and 7:00 PM. Cixi declares Guangxu's successor to be his nephew Puyi. In November 2008, a Beijing police forensic laboratory concludes Guangxu died of acute arsenic poisoning.
	November	14	Kang in Penang sends three urgent telegrams to Theodore Roosevelt and telegraphs Xianzhenghui chapters throughout the world. First telegram to Roosevelt claims that Yuan Shikai assassinated Guangxu "to disorder China and Change new ruler"; asks Roosevelt to wire Beijing and unite other nations to oppose Yuan's move.
	November	15	Cixi dies in afternoon, less than 24 hours after Guangxu. Kang sends third telegram to Roosevelt: "Empress Dowager died while they keep rumour [<i>sic</i>] [Yuan Shikai] bribes doctors to poison Emperor who I received messages last night is still alive."
	November	15	Hua-Mo Bank moves into new Banco Chino building in Torreón, occupies ground story, with 50 rental office spaces on second and third stories, the occupants including local Xianzhenghui chapter.
	November	24–25	In response to Kang's accusation that Yuan Shikai assassinated Guangxu, U.S. Minister W. W. Rockhill reports to State Department that he met with Yuan and other informants in Beijing and concluded that Yuan was not involved and furthermore that Kang had no followers in China.
	December	19	Kang's first son, Kang Tongjian (Simon), born to second wife Liang Suijue in Penang.
	December	25–26	Torreón streetcar company installs railroad crossings connecting streetcar line (under construction) with competitor's line running from Lerdo to Torreón.
1909	January		Tom Leung publishes and distributes <i>Zhengxinlu</i> (Report on Financial Management) to memorialize correspondence between Kang and himself about King Joy Lo, dating from its 1905 formation until Tom was forced out in 1908.
	January		Anti-Japanese boycott ends in Hong Kong.
	January	2	Regent Prince Zaifeng dismisses Yuan Shikai, praised by Kang who had asked regent to punish Yuan.

Year	Month	Day	Event
1909	January	26	In response to U.S. criticism of Yuan's removal, Kang writes Roosevelt and encloses “A Chapter of Chinese History” describing Cixi’s treachery and Yuan's sabotage of reform in China.
	February		Kang leaves Penang for Europe by way of Egypt and Palestine, visiting Cairo, Luxor, Aswan, Jerusalem, and the Dead Sea.
	April		Kang travels in Switzerland.
	May–July		Kang visits England, Wales, Ireland, and Kassel, Germany.
	May	27	Qing official Liu Shiji stabbed to death in Guangzhou; Kang blamed for the assassination, but case is never solved.
	June	2	Kang Tongbi finishes program at Barnard College, joins her father in England on June 11.
	June	19	Victoria Xianzhenghui member Luo Yuehu reports Tom She Bin, founder of the San Francisco Baohuanghui chapter in 1899, wrote article in revolutionary newspapers <i>Datong Ribao</i> and <i>Chung Sai Yat Po</i> accusing the Xianzhenghui of Liu Shiji’s assassination, making Tom one of the first and most prominent Xianzhenghui defectors.
	June 18–July 19		Kang Tongbi in her 1958 “Sequel to Autobiography” noted: “In the fifth month [June 18 to July 19, 1909] [her father] revisited Victoria, British Columbia, staying again at his former retreat on Coal Island.” However, there is no other record of such a trip by Kang, who was in Europe during this time, according to Tongbi’s earlier memoirs and his own poems.
	July		Kang, together with Tongbi and her fiancé Luo Chang, board a luxury liner at Southampton for Penang.
	August	16	Kang arrives in Penang, greeted at dock by several hundred. Later that month Kang’s first and third wives—Zhang Yunzhu and Lily Haw—along with Lily’s infant son Tongning, born in January, arrive in Penang from Hong Kong. Kang reunites with Hong Kong <i>Shang Bao</i> editor Wu Xianzi, who later writes public circular defending Kang against attacks on his character and leadership.

Year	Month	Day	Event
1909	August	26	Kang writes Australia's Governor General Earl of Dudley asking to visit and learn about Australian constitution, his final attempt of several since 1900 to enter Australia; again refused entry, based on a report from Japanese envoy in Stockholm to British consulate that Kang had seduced a young Englishwoman in Sweden and was of immoral character.
	September	17	Li Fuji leaves Torreón to return to Canada, after more than two years in Mexico; he oversaw management of Mexican businesses, reports that interlocking bank, real estate, and streetcar businesses all operating at loss and in process of being sold.
	October		Kang sails from Penang to India and Ceylon to visit temples and study Buddhism. Later in 1909, he returns to Penang.
	October		Xu Qin, now heading the Commercial Corporation and traveling in North America, reports to Kang that business failures were devastating member morale and, until they could succeed in business, they would never regain member support; suggests total overhaul and start anew.
	October	5	Kang's followers welcome death of Grand Councilor Zhang Zhidong, in hopes the removal of this obstruction would enable Kang's return to Beijing.
	October	14	Provincial assemblies convene for the first time throughout China.
	After October 14		Kang submits memorial to Xuantong Emperor asking parliament be convened in October 1910 (rather than 1917 as decreed in nine-year plan).
	November		Xu Qin, in U.S. dealing with King Joy Lo and Zhenhua crises, plans imminent trip to Mexico to take over after Li Fuji's departure and end money-draining Mexican businesses.
	November		Provincial assembly delegates from 16 provinces gather in Shanghai and form Association of Comrades Petitioning for a National Congress (Guohui Qingyuan Tongzhihui), Sun Hongyi chairman.
	November	2	Wu Xianzi writes public letter defending Kang and Xianzhenghui, challenging members to preserve organizational unity and build political party in China to be part of emerging constitutional government.

Year	Month	Day	Event
1909	November 13–December 12 (tenth lunar month)		On return to Victoria from Mexico, Li Fuji publishes and distributes “Xianzhenghui Jishi Shilüe” [A Sketch of the Origins of the Constitutional Association] to defend Xianzhenghui and support Xu Qin and Kang against Zhenhua promoters Ye En and Ou Jujia who had publicized their break from Kang and Xianzhenghui.
1910	January–August		Kang moves between Penang and Singapore to dodge assassins. Sun Yatsen in the Straits Settlements from June to November 1910, planning Guangzhou Uprising.
	January	26	Sun Hongyi presents his group’s first petition, with 200,000 signatures, to Qing Censorate (Jianchashu), calls for early opening of parliament; during ensuing months, Kang sends representatives to Beijing to join petitioning organization; Wu Xianzi represents North American Xianzhenghui.
	April	26	Half-brother of Prince Regent, Prince Zaitao, stops in Chicago on mission to investigate modern military institutions; local Xianzhenghui chapter gives him petition demanding opening parliament “as soon as possible”; second such petition probably presented in New York, East Coast Xianzhenghui host luncheon for Zaitao.
	June		After selling its building to Bank of La Laguna at a loss, Hua-Mo Bank moves to rented quarters in Torreón Chinese department store.
	June	22	Second Association of Comrades petition submitted, signed by 300,000, calls for parliament, signatories include members of chambers of commerce, industrial and education associations, and overseas Chinese.
	Unknown date, June–October		Kang submits Xianzhenghui memorial calling for establishing parliament in honor of Guangxu’s true intent, constitutional government; campaign underway to persuade Qing authorities to cancel Kang and Liang arrest orders.
	July	4	Kang letter to Liang Qichao bemoans Commercial Corporation setbacks, warns of imminent disaster.
	September 1910–January 1911		Kang’s four-month Hong Kong visit to see his mother during her eightieth birthday year, first return to Hong Kong since 1904; finds Huayi banks in Hong Kong, New York, and Torreón had lost \$2 million.

Year	Month	Day	Event
1910	September	27	The Canadian Xianzhenghui submits a constitutional petition for parliament, responsible cabinet and stronger military.
	October		Mexican investors take over Chinese streetcar concession, form new company in Torreón.
	October	3	Court-appointed president Prince Pulun convenes first three-month session of Political Consultative Council; same day as provincial assemblies begin their second session and as third constitutional petition submitted by Association of Comrades, signed by millions, including provincial assembly representatives, civic organizations, and some governors and governors general. Council's main topic of debate is the petition.
	October	6	Navy Minister Prince Zaixun almost shot at the Oakland, California, railroad station by revolutionary Young China member; earlier, in New York City and Chicago, Xianzhenghui members handed him petitions exhorting him to persuade Prince Regent to convene parliament, lift Xianzhenghui ban.
	October	22	Political Consultative Council endorses third petition by acclamation, demanding an elected parliament convene in 1911.
	October	28	Prince Pulun memorializes Prince Regent, backed up by telegrams from governors general, governors, and military commanders from most provinces, demanding immediate establishment of parliament and a responsible cabinet.
	November	4	In response, Qing decrees that parliament would be convened in 1913 rather than in 1917 and orders all petitioning for parliament to cease. Association of Comrades appears to retreat publicly but holds secret meeting, declaring that should uprising appear imminent, "comrades in each province will respond by proclaiming independence."
	December	25	Prince Regent Zaifeng issues edict responding to thousands of Fengtian Province activists and Tianjin students who marched to Beijing to present final petition for parliament, calls petitioners "ignorant and stupid" and orders their expulsion by the police.

Year	Month	Day	Event
1910– 11			Newspaper wars in Vancouver and San Francisco accelerate divisions between reform and revolution factions.
1911	January		Kang returns to Singapore from Hong Kong, again targeted by assassins.
	February–April		Sun Yatsen in Canada raises funds through Zhigongtang for Guangzhou Uprising, Xianzhenghui leaders among donors. After Sun leaves for U.S., his deputy Feng Ziyou founds first Tongmenghui chapter in Canada, Xianzhenghui members join.
	May		Kang leaves Singapore for last time, spends month with mother in Hong Kong.
	May	13–15	Mexican rebels storm Torreón, joined by thousands of local people, slaughter 303 Chinese and destroy their farms, homes and 89 businesses; Xianzhenghui leader Dr. J. W. Lim almost killed by mob. Staff of Hua-Mo Bank and reform association headquarters killed; bank manager Woo Lam Po later claims 150,000 pesos in damages.
	June		Kang leaves Hong Kong for Japan and lives in Kōbe, with Liang Qichao, later in own house nearby; lives in various Japanese cities until December 1913.
	October	10	Republican Revolution begins with Wuchang Uprising. Sun Yatsen is in U.S. Amidst celebrations in North American Chinatowns, Qing flag is replaced by revolutionary flag. San Francisco's Zhigongtang building becomes the “temporary capital of the Chung Hwa government.” Sun never appears publicly during this time but meets furtively with Tongmenghui members in U.S. cities.
	Mid-October		Liang Qichao, Kang, and Xu Qin begin to execute plan to stage a “political revolution” to change China’s system from an autocratic monarchy to a “titular monarchical republic”(xujun gonghe); work with Beiyang Army commanders, sympathetic court members, Political Consultative Council, and other constitutionalists to pressure Prince Regent Zaifeng, leaders of the revolutionary government in Hubei, and Yuan Shikai, among others, to support republic ruled by parliament with powerless monarch, rather than a presidential republic as Sun Yatsen advocates.

Year	Month	Day	Event
1911	October	27–29	Twentieth Division General Zhang Shaozeng in Luanzhou, along with other generals and troops, 30,000 in all, refuse orders to move south to Wuhan to fight rebels. Zhang issues series of telegrams to Qing officials demanding court accept his 12-point memorial to implement constitutional government ruled by parliament; known as Luanzhou Mutiny.
	October	30	Court issues four edicts: an apology for past mistakes, abolishing distinctions between Manchu and Han, and commencing reforms; ordering Political Consultative Council to draft constitution; replacing “cabinet with princes and dukes as minister of state” with a responsible cabinet; and granting amnesty to 1898 political offenders, including Kang and Liang.
	November	3	After series of telegrams from General Zhang Shaozeng to Political Consultative Council, that body issues 19-article draft constitution codifying principle of a titular monarch whose primarily ceremonial powers are subordinate to parliament and limited by constitution.
	November	6–15	Liang Qichao leaves Japan for China with plans to liaise with military allies in Luanzhou and proceed to Beijing to begin political negotiations with Qing. When he arrives in China, Liang learns that Qing has reassigned or assassinated Luanzhou mutiny commanders. In Mukden, Liang sees he is powerless to change course of events, returns to Japan.
	November	9	Kang writes General Li Yuanhong, Hubei constitutionalist Tang Hualong, and Tongmenghui commander Huang Xing, leaders of provisional military government in Hubei drafting a constitution, proposes they adopt titular monarchical republic. His letter arrives after constitution is drafted, which does not include a monarchy.
	November	11	Sun Yatsen meets Homer Lea in London; they unsuccessfully appeal to British government for support in return for allowing Republic's navy to be under British command.

Year	Month	Day	Event
1911	November– December		Kang and Liang write essays supporting titular monarchical republic and critiquing presidential republic advocated by their rivals. Liang also pursues military strategy to establish a Guangdong base, a move supported by Xu Qin in U.S. and some American Xianzhenghui members, a few of whom return to Guangdong and are caught up in raids by new Republican government. Liang's military plans abandoned, he no longer advocates retention of the monarchy.
	December	25	Sun Yatsen and Homer Lea, with title of “Chief of the General Staff,” and his wife Ethel, arrive in Shanghai from Europe.
1912			Xianzhenghui chapters report physical attacks by revolutionaries on their members and offices, forced removal of signs and flags, defection of members. Xu Qin continues to rally members in U.S. to fund Xianzhenghui, military and political actions inside China.
	January	1	Sun Yatsen is inaugurated as Provisional President of the Chinese Republic; Homer Lea is by his side.
	February	11	Homer Lea suffers a stroke and returns to Los Angeles, dies November 1, 1912.
	February	12	Qing Dynasty formally dissolved.
	November		Liang Qichao returns to China to great fanfare.
	December	31	King Joy Lo celebrates third-story addition to accommodate 200 more diners; restaurant had been sold that year to consortium of Boston and New York Xianzhenghui members, including Moy Wah June, Howard Moy, and Chin K. Shue, who remain in charge until King Joy Lo files for bankruptcy in 1926.
1913	August	9	Kang's mother Lao Lianzhi dies in Hong Kong. Kang mourns for three months in Japan before returning to Hong Kong.
	December	1	Kang departs from Hong Kong for China with the remains of his mother and brother, 1898 martyr Guangren, marking the end of Kang's exile of fifteen years, two months, and seven days, and his world travels of more than 180,000 miles.

Year	Month	Day	Event
1913	December	13	Kang buries his mother and brother in Yintang village, Nanhai, Guangdong.
1914			Kang takes fourth wife, his Japanese maid Ichioka Tsuruko.
1915	January	19	Kang's third wife Lily Haw dies of smallpox in Shanghai. Later in year, Kang marries fifth wife, Liao Dingzheng.
1917	June-December		In Beijing, Kang briefly supports the failed July 1–12 scheme by Zhang Xun to restore Puyi to the throne; is granted asylum at the U.S. Legation where he remains until December 6; departs for Tianjin.
1919			Kang marries sixth wife, Zhang Guang, whose brothers were Kang's servants; from fishing family on West Lake (Xi Hu, in Hangzhou).
1926			King Joy Lo closes, after 20 years in business, still under management of former Xianzhenghui leaders.
1927	March	31	Kang Youwei dies in Qingdao.
1969			<i>Shijie Ribao</i> (<i>Sai Gai Yat Po</i> , <i>Chinese World</i>), founded in San Francisco in 1899 as <i>Wenxing Bao</i> , finally closes.
1978			<i>Xin Zhongguo Ribao</i> (<i>New China News</i> ; from 1941, <i>New China Press</i>), founded as <i>Xin Zhongguo Bao</i> in 1899 or 1900 in Honolulu, goes out of business.

Mapping the Baohuanghui

Below are known locations of Baohuanghui chapters, organized geographically by original organizational divisions if these are known. Guesses were made as to which division some cities belonged in. This is a list of cities (that is, Baohuanghui chapters) with associated businesses, schools, newspapers, and dates of existence, if known. Also, for researchers, these towns and cities are where one might expect to find primary source materials, such as letters, newspapers, and so forth. In 1907, the Baohuanghui changed its name to Xianzhenghui [Constitutional Association]. In February 1912, Kang Youwei renamed his organization Guomindang [Citizens' Party], and in the invaluable 1913 postal directory compiled by Wong Kin, Baohuanghui chapters are listed under the name Guomindang/Chung Hwa National Club. The Guomindang name was taken over by Sun Yatsen for his party late in 1912, but is not reflected in Wong Kin's directory which also lists Tongmenghui [Revolutionary Alliance] chapters).¹ This appendix focuses on chapters and related institutions founded between 1899 and 1911.

In addition to the 1913 Wong Kin directory, key sources were a 1908 document naming ninety-four chapters that made donations for a Baohuanghui headquarters building.² A petition supporting the anti-Russian movement reprinted in the Penang Baohuanghui newspaper *Bincheng Xin Bao*, on March 7, 1904, lists 132 signatory chapters.³ The 1907 donor plaque in the Victoria, British Columbia, Baohuanghui building also lists chapters, primarily in Canada.⁴

- 1 Wong Kin [Huang Jin] 黃金, *International Chinese Business Directory of the World* [Wanguo Jixin Bianlan 萬國寄信便覽] (San Francisco: International Chinese Business Directory Company, 1913). Hereafter, Wong Kin, 1913.
- 2 "Juan Jian Diguao Xianzheng Zonghuisuo Maidi Zhengxinlu" 捐建帝國憲政總會所買地徵信錄 [Financial Accounting of Donations for Buying Land for Xianzhenghui Headquarters Building], in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui* 康有為與保皇會 [Kang Youwei and the Baohuanghui], ed., Shanghai Shi Wenwu Baoguan Weiyuanhui 上海市文物保管委員會, (Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin Chubanshe, 1982), 529–37. Hereafter, 1908 list. Original at Shanghai Museum, with names of donors for each chapter.
- 3 "Haiwai Baohuanghui Chengqing Dai Zou Qingzhan Wen" 海外保皇會呈請代奏請戰文 [An Overseas Baohuanghui Petition Memorializing to Ask for a Battle Assignment], reprinted from *Shang Bao* in *Bincheng Xin Bao* [Penang Sin Poe], March 7, 1904, 1. Hereafter, 1904 list.
- 4 Liang Yingliu 梁應驪, *Chang Jian Chuangshi Baohuanghuisuo Beiji* 倡建創始保皇會所碑記 [Plaque of Donors to the Founding Baohuanghui Building], 1907, at 1715 Government Street, Victoria, BC. Hereafter, 1907 list.

The variations in Chinese names for the same foreign city are listed below when known. See *Baohuanghui Guessing Game* at <https://baohuanghui.blogspot.com/2013/12/play-baohuanghui-guessing-game.html> for Chinese chapter names that lack definitive identification. Please provide additions, corrections to this document at <https://baohuanghui.blogspot.com/2012/05/mapping-baohuanghui.html>.

The numbers of confirmed chapters below reflect the most updated totals as of publication, with the worldwide total of 232.

Many individuals helped the authors compile this chart over the years, with Him Mark Lai, Chi Jeng Chang, Zhongping Chen, Chen Xuezhang, Gao Weinong, Phil Choy, Chuimei Ho, and Ben Bronson the most significant.

TABLE 8 Mapping the Baohuanghui: Canada [Vancouver headquarters; from 1910: Victoria] (55 chapters, 40 in BC)

City	字	Year founded	Newspaper	School	Business
Vancouver, British Columbia (BC)	灣哥華, 雲哥華, 雲高華, 呔哥華, 雲埠, 鹹水埠	1899 Also, Chinese Empire Ladies Reform Association chapter, 1903 The national Chinese Empire Reform Association of Canada established a Lianweibu (Mutual Defense Division), 1903	Xin Bao (Sun Bo, Chinese Reform Gazette) 新報 1908–11; [1911, changed name to Rixin Bao] 日新報 ^a	Oi-kiok Hok- tong (Aiguo Xuetaang) 愛國學堂 Gancheng Xuexiao 干城學校 (Western Military Academy) ^b	Commercial Corporation 商務公 司 [Liang Qichao in British Columbia, spring 1903, first shares sold but formally established in Hong Kong in March 1904]

a

Clippings from first issue at Vancouver City Archives, edited by He Zhuojing 何卓競 (Hall Cherk Gin).

b

Not verified; Frederic L. Chapin, “Appendix II: The Chinese Imperial Army” in “Homer Lea and the Chinese Revolution,” Bachelor’s thesis, Harvard University, 1950, 116, includes Vancouver and Victoria under Pacific Northwest Fourth Infantry Regiment.

TABLE 8 Mapping the Baohuanghui: Canada [headquarters: Vancouver; from 1910: Victoria] (*cont.*)

City	字	Year founded	Newspaper	School	Business
Victoria, BC	域多利, 域埠	1899 Headquarters at 1715 Government Street, built 1905. Also, Chinese Empire Ladies Reform Association, 1903		Gancheng Xuexiao (Western Military Academy) ^c	
New Westminster, BC	烏威士晚士 咁埠, 烏威士 綿士打(卑詩 省)二埠, 紐 委市棉地市	1899 Also, Chinese Empire Ladies Reform Association chapter (with Vancouver) ^d			
Agassiz, BC	亞極士				
Arrowhead, BC ^e	亞利血, 煙 利西				
Ashcroft, BC ^f	亞市給; 鴉形 給笠埠	1903			
Barkerville, BC ^g	百架委利埠				
Cache Creek, BC ^h	坎舒架利埠				

c Not verified; Chapin, 116.

d Jim Wolf and Patricia Owen, *Yi Fao: Speaking Through Memory: A History of New Westminster's Chinese Community, 1858–1980* (Surrey, BC: Heritage House Publishing Company, 2008), 41.

e Chi Jeng Chang surmises that 煙利西 in 1904 list is Arrowhead, BC; Wong Kin, 1913, 1354, with PO Box.

f Zhongping Chen, *Transpacific Reform and Revolution: The Chinese in North America, 1898–1918* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2023), 81; Wong Kin, 1913, 1354, with PO Box.

g Wong Kin, 1913, 1354.

h Wong Kin, 1913, 1354.

TABLE 8 Mapping the Baohuanghui: Canada [headquarters: Vancouver; from 1910: Victoria] (*cont.*)

City	字	Year founded	Newspaper	School	Business
Chemainus, BC	占美利, 始緬 尼市埠 ⁱ				
Clayoquot, BC ^j	企李島括埠				
Clinton, BC ^k	企冷頓				
Cranbrook, BC ^l	襟补碌, 很卜 碌埠				
Duncan, BC	黨近市姊 臣埠				
Enderby, BC ^m	典打備埠				
Extension Mines, BC ⁿ	的市但臣, 的 市 贊臣埠				
Falkland or Fort Valley, BC? ^o	火委琳				
Fernie, BC ^p	寬尼埠, 寬利				
Fort Steele, BC ^q	闊市姊路埠				
Fraser Sawmill, BC ^r	啡叻板偈				
Golden, BC ^s	俄而剪埠, 俄崙 ^t				

i Wong Kin, 1913, 1355, with PO Box.

j Wong Kin, 1913, 1355.

k Wong Kin, 1913, 1355.

l Wong Kin, 1913, 1355, with PO Box.

m Wong Kin, 1913, 1357.

n *A. R. Dunbar's International Chinese Directory, 1901* (San Francisco: Chinese Directory Company, 1901) entry for Chinese Empire Reform Association; Wong Kin, 1913, 1357.

o 1907 list.

p 1904 list; Wong Kin, 1913, 1357, miswrites the name as "Fornie."

q 1907 list; Wong Kin, 1913, 1457, with PO Box.

r 1907 list. This is probably the town of Fort Fraser (now Fraser Lake).

s 1904 list; Wong Kin, 1913, 1357.

t 1904 list—a guess by Chi Jeng Chang.

TABLE 8 Mapping the Baohuanghui: Canada [headquarters: Vancouver; from 1910: Victoria] (*cont.*)

City	字	Year founded	Newspaper	School	Business
Grand Forks, BC ^u	加蘭福埠				
Greenwood, BC ^v	企連活, 企連鬱				
Kamloops, BC ^w	錦碌埠				
Kaslo, BC ^x	卡士碌, 卡布碌				
Ladner, BC ^y	列伍尼埠				
Ladysmith, BC ^z	利地吻, 李地市覓埠, 李地士蔑				
Lulu Island, BC ^{aa}	魯地底崙埠				
Mission [City], BC ^{ab}	尾臣埠, 美臣				
Mount Sicker, BC [on Vancouver Island] ^{ac}	網地昔呀埠				

u 1904 list; Wong Kin, 1913, 1357.
v 1904 list; Wong Kin, 1913, 1358.
w 1901 *International Chinese Directory* entry for Chinese Empire Reform Association; Wong Kin, 1913, 1358.
x 1904 list.
y Wong Kin, 1913, 1359.
z Appears both on 1904 and 1907 lists; Wong Kin, 1913, 1359; Chen Zhongping, “Vancouver Island and the Chinese Diaspora” in *BC Studies* no. 204 (Winter 2019–20): 62.
aa Lulu Island, a place of fish processing and canneries visited by Ye En, Li Fuji, and others August 1901 to make speeches and take donations (*Wenxing Bao*, August 5, 1901). Steveston is on Lulu Island, the largest island south of Vancouver in Fraser River estuary. Lulu Island may not have been a separate chapter from Steveston. 魯地底崙埠 in Wong Kin, 1913, 1359.
ab 1904 list; Wong Kin, 1913, 1360.
ac Wong Kin, 1913, 1360.

TABLE 8 Mapping the Baohuanghui: Canada [headquarters: Vancouver; from 1910: Victoria] (*cont.*)

City	字	Year founded	Newspaper	School	Business
Nanaimo, BC ^{ad}	乃磨				
Nelson, BC ^{ae}	爾利順, 爾利 慎, 汝利慎				
Quesnel or Chilliwack, BC ^{af}	乾莛蔚				
Revelstoke, BC	笠巴市篤, 笠 委市足埠				
Rossland, BC	老市崙				
Sidney, BC	申汝				
Steveston, BC	市姊, 市姊話 市頓				
Trail, BC ^{ag}	子李兒				
Union Bay, BC ^{ah}					
Union Mines, Cumberland, BC ^{ai}	壬寅米				
Vernon, BC	口雲寧				
Banff, Alberta ^{aj}	巴父, 板付				
Calgary, Alberta ^{ak}	卡忌利				
Canmore, Alberta ^{al}	根麼, 根舞				

ad 1901 *International Chinese Directory* entry for Chinese Empire Reform Association.

ae Wong Kin, 1913, 1360.

af 1907 list.

ag Wong Kin, 1913, 1361.

ah Chen, “Vancouver Island and the Chinese Diaspora,” 62. Zhongping Chen, personal message to authors, February 11, 2024, notes that there may be only one chapter representing Union Bay and Union Mines.

ai 1901 *International Chinese Directory* entry for Chinese Empire Reform Association.

aj 1904 list.

ak 1904 list.

al May be same as 根麼 in 1904 list; in Wong Kin, 1913, 1372, Canmore is listed under Northwest Territories (NWT); Alberta was a part of NWT until September 1, 1905, when it became a province.

TABLE 8 Mapping the Baohuanghui: Canada [headquarters: Vancouver; from 1910: Victoria] (*cont.*)

City	字	Year founded	Newspaper	School	Business
[Fort] Macleod, Alberta ^{am}	麥孔路埠				
Medicine Hat, Alberta ^{an}	尾大慎血埠				
Brandon, Manitoba ^{ao}	布蘭安埠				
Winnipeg, Manitoba	呔打壁, 呔地 碧埠				
Chapleau, Ontario	作隙 ^{ap}				
Hamilton, Ontario ^{aq}	坎馬頓, 坎 文頓				
London, Ontario	蘭頓; 蘭頓				
Ottawa, Ontario	軻地和, 渥太 華, 阿圖和, 柯地和埠				
Toronto, Ontario ^{ar}	都朗度埠, 吐朗度, 都 浪度, 杜朗 度埠, 粗郎 度埠	1904?			
Quebec City, Quebec ^{as}	柯京, 葵飽埠				

am Wong Kin, 1913, 1373, in NWT [now Alberta].

an Wong Kin, 1913, 1375, in NWT [now Alberta].

ao Wong Kin, 1913, 1383.

ap Chi Jeng Chang thinks this is Cherry Creek, BC; name on both the 1904 and 1907 lists.

aq Wong Kin, 1913, 1378; may be 坎文頓埠 on 1908 list.

ar “Ge Bu Baohuanghui Jinshi,” *Zhongguo Weixin Bao*, September 29, 1904, AR-44 A-B, Chinese Empire Reform Association, Ethnic Studies Library, University of California at Berkeley, AAS ARC 2000/78, about Vancouver leaders helping Toronto start a chapter. In Wong Kin, 1913, 1380, at 196 Richmond St.

as Wong Kin, 1913, 1383, at 39 Crown St.

TABLE 8 Mapping the Baohuanghui: Canada [headquarters: Vancouver; from 1910: Victoria] (*cont.*)

City	字	Year founded	Newspaper	School	Business
Montreal, Quebec ^{at}	滿地可				
Halifax, Nova Scotia ^{au}	喜利福士埠				
St. Johns, Newfoundland ^{av}	聖轉埠				

at Wong Kin, 1913, 1382, at 70 W Laganchetiere St.
au Wong Kin, 1913, 1385.
av Wong Kin, 1913, 1385.

United States (86 Chapters, Not Including Hawai‘i)

TABLE 9 Mapping the Baohuanghui: United States—California [San Francisco headquarters] (16 chapters)

City	字	Year founded	Newspaper	School	Business
San Francisco ^a	大埠, 金山, 舊金山, 三藩市	1899 Chinese Empire Ladies Reform Association chapter, known as Zhongguo Nühuixinhui 中國女維新會, 1903 ^b	Wenxing Bao [Mon Hing Bo, Chinese World] 1899–1906, a daily by 1901 文興報 1906 moved to Los Angeles and named Xianzheng Bao [Hin Jing Bo] 憲政報 Guohun Bao (The New Era); editor Zhang Qihuang; 1907–10 國魂報	Gancheng Xuexiao (Western Military Academy) Jinshan Liangdeng Xiaoxuetang 金山兩等小學堂 [est. 1909] Oi-kwok Hok-tong (Aiguo Xuetang) 愛國學堂	

a Wong Kin, 1913, at 146 Waverly Place, 1445.
b Founded by Xue Jinqin 薛錦琴; see Zhongping Chen, “Kang Tongbi’s Pioneering Feminism and the First Transnational Organization of Chinese Feminist Politics, 1903–1905,” *Twentieth-Century China* 44, no. 1 (2019): 16.

TABLE 9 Mapping the Baohuanghui: United States—California [San Francisco headquarters] (*cont.*)

City	字	Year founded	Newspaper	School	Business
			Shijie Ribao [Sai Gai Yat Po, Chinese World] 1908–(1969) [formerly Wenxing Bao] ^c 世 界日報 Jingang Ribao 金 港日報		
Los Angeles ^d	羅省埠, 羅生技, 羅生技利	1899 or 1900? Chinese Empire Ladies Reform Association chapter, 1903 Lianweihui (Mutual Defense Association)	Xianzheng Bao (Hin Jing Bo), 1906–8, 憲政 報; [sometimes referred to as Xian Bao 憲報]	Gancheng Xuexiao (Western Military Academy) Oi-kwok Hok- tong (Aiguo Xuetang) 愛國 學堂	
Bakersfield	北架斐			Gancheng Xuexiao (Western Military Academy)	
Fresno ^e	非士那, 斐士那	1903 Also, Lianweihui (Mutual Defense Association)		Gancheng Xuexiao (Western Military Academy) Oi-kwok Hok- tong (Aiguo Xuetang) 愛國 學堂 ^l	
Guadalupe	和老臂埠				

c Wu Xianzi and Li Daming 李大明 were editors up until 1950s.
d See Chapter 5; Wong Kin, 1913, 1413, at 417 N. Los Angeles St.
e Liang Qichao's visit brought about chapter; Liang Qichao 梁啟超, Xin Dalu Youji 新大陸遊記 in *Zouxiang Shijie Congshu* 走向世界叢書 [Series of Books on World Travels], ed. Zhong Shuhe 鍾叔河, (Changsha: Yuelu Shushe, 1985), 567; Wong Kin, 1913, 1404, on 1037 G St.

TABLE 9 Mapping the Baohuanghui: United States—California [San Francisco headquarters] (*cont.*)

City	字	Year founded	Newspaper	School	Business
Hanford	顯佛, 軒 佛埠			Gancheng Xuexiao (Western Military Academy)	
Marysville ^f	尾利允埠, 三埠	1903–4 Also, Lianweihui (Mutual Defense Association)			
Napa	粒巴埠 ?				
Nevada City ^g	那必地失 地埠				
Oakland	屋崙			Gancheng Xuexiao (Western Military Academy)	
Oxnard				Gancheng Xuexiao (Western Military Academy) ^h	
Sacramento ⁱ	二埠, 沙 加免 度/图, 沙 加面多, 撒加緬度	1903?		Gancheng Xuexiao (Western Military Academy)	

f “To Revivify the Old China”, *Los Angeles Times*, January 3, 1904, 5, on Los Angeles chapter building dedication by Liang Qitian, who was to dedicate Marysville chapter building next. “Chinese Reform Movement,” *Marysville Appeal*, January. 7, 1904, on visit of Liang [Leong Kai Ten]. 1904 chapter poster at Community Memorial Museum, Yuba City, CA, showing officers and members, including a baby and a woman. Wong Kin, 1913, 1421.

g Wong Kin, 1913, 1426.

h Chapin, 115.

i Philip P. Choy, *Canton Footprints, Sacramento’s Chinese Legacy* (Sacramento: Chinese American Council of Sacramento, 2007), 112, has chapter poster; Liang Qichao, *Xin Dalu Youji*, 566, says newly formed in 1903. Wong Kin, 1913, 1436, at 218 I St.

TABLE 9 Mapping the Baohuanghui: United States—California [San Francisco headquarters] (*cont.*)

City	字	Year founded	Newspaper	School	Business
San Bernardino	山班連拿			Gancheng Xuexiao (Western Military Academy)	
Santa Barbara	山巴罷 埠? 山地 把罷 ^j			Gancheng Xuexiao (Western Military Academy)	
Stockton	三埠, 士 作頓				
Visalia ^k	快些利埠, 快些釐埠			Gancheng Xuexiao (Western Military Academy) ^l	

j Chen Ju-chou, ed., *Meiguo Huaqiao nianjian* 美國華僑年鑒 [Handbook of Chinese in America] (New York: Zhongguo Guomin Waijiao Xiehui zhu Mei Banshi Chuchuban, 1946), 507.

k Wong Kin, 1913, 1371, at 204 East St.

l Not verified.

TABLE 10 Mapping the Baohuanghui: United States—Northwest [Portland headquarters] (23 chapters)

City	字	Year founded	Newspaper	School	Business
Portland, Oregon ^a	鉢侖, 硃崙埠	1899 Also, Chinese Empire Ladies Reform Association, 1903 Lianweihui 聯 衛部 [Mutual Defense Association]		Gancheng Xuexiao (Western Military Academy)	

a Wong Kin, 1913, 1532, at 61 Second St.

TABLE 10 Mapping the Baohuanghui: United States—Northwest [Portland headquarters] (*cont.*)

City	字	Year founded	Newspaper	School	Business
Seattle, Washington ^b	舍路埠	1899 Chinese Empire Ladies Reform Association, 1903		Gancheng Xuexiao (Western Military Academy)	
Bellingham, Washington	貞林罕			Gancheng Xuexiao (Western Military Academy)	
North Yakima, Washington (later called Yakima) ^c	益加磨				
Port Townsend, Washington ^d	砵當臣, 砵黨 順埠	1899			
Spokane, Washington ^e	士卜堅埠, 市 卜頃埠			Gancheng Xuexiao (Western Military Academy)	
Tacoma, Washington				Gancheng Xuexiao (Western Military Academy)	
Walla Walla, Washington ^f	瓜里抓鱒埠, 抓李抓鱒			Gancheng Xuexiao (Western Military Academy)	

b Liang Qichao, *Xin Dalu Youji*, 534; Wong Kin, 1913, 1547, with PO Box.

c 1904 list; Wong Kin, 1913, 1546, at 128 S. First St.

d Sang Bing 桑兵, *Gengzi Qinwang yu Wan-Qing Zhengju, Di-Er Ban* 庚子勤王與晚清政局 (第二版) [The 1900 Movement to “Rush Troops in to Save the Throne” and the Late Qing Political Situation, 2nd ed.] (Beijing: Beijing Daxue Chubanshe, 2015), 45, on cities sending telegrams to ask for Guangxu restoration in summer 1899, includes Port Townsend—from Kang Youwei, “Meizhou zhu sheng shou ji” 美洲祝壽記; Wong Kin, 1913, 1547, with PO Box.

e Wong Kin, 1913, 1548, at 520 Front St.

f Wong Kin, 1913, 1549, with PO Box.

TABLE 10 Mapping the Baohuanghui: United States—Northwest [Portland headquarters] (*cont.*)

City	字	Year founded	Newspaper	School	Business
Astoria, Oregon ^g	挨士多利埠, 埃市朵利, 埃市左利埠, 市左利亞埠	August 1900. Chinese Empire Ladies Reform Association, 1903 ^h			
Baker City, Oregon ⁱ	碧架舌地埠, 碧加失地	Founded by Liang Qitian in 1901			
Dallas, Oregon ^j	打罇市埠				
Huntington, Baker County, Oregon ^k	坦靜頓埠, 美屬市得頓埠, 坦令頓				
La Grande, Oregon ^l					
Pendleton, Oregon ^m	汝利慎埠, 片利頓				

g “Leong Kai Ting ... now in Astoria preaching the gospel of Chinese reform and organizing a society for the advancement of principles of which Kang is the leading champion.” *Victoria Times*, August 16, 1900; “Fu Wen Yan Lun” 復聞讌論 [More News about Banquets], *Zhongxi Ribao*, August 16, 1900; Wong Kin, 1913, 1529, with PO Box.

h “Chinese Women are For Reform,” *Astorian*, September 22, 1903, 4; founded by Kang Tongbi for the ten Chinese women in Astoria.

i L. Eve Armentrout Ma, *Revolutionaries, Monarchists, and Chinatowns: Chinese Politics in the Americas and the 1911 Revolution* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1990), 79; Wong Kin, 1913, 1530, at PO Box 171, 1922 Resort St.

j 1908 list; Wong Kin, 1913, 1530.

k 1904 list. Wong Kin, 1913, 1530, at 216 First St.

l Named as chapter in “War of Chinese Threatens City,” *Portland Oregonian*, January 11, 1912, 4.

m Wong Kin, 1913, 1531, at 108 Alta St., PO Box 542.

TABLE 10 Mapping the Baohuanghui: United States—Northwest [Portland headquarters] (*cont.*)

City	字	Year founded	Newspaper	School	Business
Salem, Oregon ⁿ					
Sumpter, Baker County, Oregon ^o	心打埠				
Boise, Idaho ^p	貝市埠, 貝市 雪地				
Hailey, Idaho ^q	喜利埠				
Hope, Idaho ^r	斛埠				
Pocatello, Idaho ^s	博奇梯拉, 卜 忌斜罇				
Evanston, Wyoming ^t	依云市頓埠				
Rock Springs, Wyoming ^u	洛士丙令				
Sheridan, Wyoming ^v	舍利進埠				

n Named as chapter in “War of Chinese Threatens City,” *Portland Oregonian*, January 11, 1912, 4.
o Wong Kin, 1913, 1535.
p Wong Kin, 1913, 1483, with PO Box.
q 1904 list; Wong Kin, 1913, 1484, with PO Box.
r Wong Kin, 1913, 1484, with PO Box.
s Wong Kin, 1913, 1485.
t Wong Kin, 1913, 1550, with PO Box.
u 1904 list.
v Wong Kin, 1913, 1551.

TABLE 11 Mapping the Baohuanghui: United States—Montana [Helena headquarters] (12 chapters)

City	字	Year founded	Newspaper	School	Business
Helena ^a	氣連打埠,氣連打,希連拿埠	Lianweibu (Mutual Defense Division for the state ^b), est. 1903			
Anaconda	典地港打埠				
Billings ^c	比令士,比令市頓埠				
Bozeman ^d	保市文埠				
Butte ^e	表色地,表舌地,表雪地埠,猫失地埠			Gancheng Xuexiao (Western Military Academy) ^f	
Dillon ^g	爹崙埠				
Havre ^h	哈巴埠				
Kalispell ⁱ	加李士跛埠,茄李士跛阜				
Lewistown ^j	李威市頓埠,立定士頓埠				

a Wong Kin, 1913, 1511, at 312½ Colorado St. (which Mark Johnson notes is the Butte chapter address and must be an error).

b 1904 Lianweizongbu *gupiao* 股票 [share certificate] for the state of Montana, \$10, paid by Tan Yisen 譚裔森 of Butte issued by Feng Jingquan 馮鏡泉 (Helena); unknown source.

c Wong Kin, 1913, 1509, with PO Box.

d Wong Kin, 1913, 1509, with PO Box.

e “Hui Shi Ji Wen” 會事記聞 [News of Chapter Activities], from newspaper [unknown], 1905, re Butte opening Gancheng School; also “Biaoxuedi Gancheng Xuexiao Chengli” 表雪地干城學校成立, *Zhongguo Weixin Bao*, April 19, 1905, in “Gancheng Xuexiao Shi” 干城學校史, AR-3, Chinese Empire Reform Assoc. collection, AAS ARC 2000/78; Wong Kin, 1913, 1509, at 312½ Colorado St.

f “Reform Army a Dream, The Chinese Wake Up,” *Anaconda Standard*, January 8, 1906, 6.

g 1904 list; 1913 Wong Kin, 1511.

h Wong Kin, 1913, 1511.

i 1908 list; Wong Kin, 1913, 1512.

j 1908 list; Wong Kin, 1913, 1512, with PO Box.

TABLE 11 Mapping the Baohuanghui: United States—Montana [Helena headquarters] (cont.)

City	字	Year founded	Newspaper	School	Business
Livingston ^k	粒荣士頓, 笠荣士頓, 笠定市頓埠				
Marysville ^l					
Missoula ^m	美所罇, 尾所罇埠				

- k Wong Kin, 1913, 1512, with PO Box.
l Montana Historical Society has photo of Marysville Baohuanghui poster.
m On 1904 and 1908 lists as 美所罇; Wong Kin, 1913, 1513.

TABLE 12 Mapping the Baohuanghui: United States—Central [Chicago headquarters] (15 chapters)

City	字	Year founded	Newspaper	School	Business
Chicago, Illinois ^a	芝加哥, 芝城, 市加高, 示卡咕, 加埠, 士加古	1903 Chinese Empire Ladies Reform Association ^b		Gancheng Xuexiao (Western Military Academy)	King Joy Lo (Qiongcailou) 瓊彩樓 restaurant, 1906–26
Kansas City, Missouri ^c	壑士雪地, 悬士雪地, 頃沙市失地				
St. Louis, Missouri ^d	新蘆, 聖路易, 勝普埠, 聖蘭埠	1902		Gancheng Xuexiao (Western Military Academy)	

- a Wong Kin, 1913, 1486, at 345 S. Clark Street.
b Kang Tongbi diary July 1, 1904, no. 005, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection: “The members of the Chicago Women’s Chapter invited me to a dinner party. In the evening, I went to their place to give a speech again.” Thanks to Chi Jeng Chang.
c Wong Kin, 1913, 1506, at 113 W. 6th St.
d “Will Elevate the Chinamen,” *St. Louis Republic*, December 30, 1902, 14: “The Chinese Empire Reform Society of Missouri obtained a pro forma decree of incorporation in the Circuit Court Yesterday.” Wong Kin, 1913, 1507, at 25A 8th St.

TABLE 12 Mapping the Baohuanghui: United States—Central [Chicago headquarters] (*cont.*)

City	字	Year founded	Newspaper	School	Business
Cincinnati, Ohio ^e	先絲拿打, 仙仙尼大埠	1903			
Cleveland, Ohio ^f	姬李扶崙, 企李扶崙埠	1904?			
Columbus, Ohio ^g	哥林布市埠	Incorporated 1907			
St. Paul, Minnesota ^h	聖保羅 ⁱ 升譜埠	1904			
Omaha, Nebraska ^j				Gancheng Xuexiao (Western Military Academy ^k	
Ogden, Utah ^l	惡頓埠			Gancheng Xuexiao (Western Military Academy) ^m	
Park City, Utah ⁿ	柏失地埠				

e Wong Kin, 1913, 1527, at 108 6th St.

f “Cue or Revolution,” *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, October 28, 1904, 5; also see “The Pigtailed Fall,” *Plain Dealer*, January 2, 1904, 10, for possible founding of chapter; Wong Kin, 1913, 1527, at 6 Hamilton St.

g Articles of Incorporation, Chinese Empire Reform Association, vol. 122, 95, Office of the Secretary of State, Columbus, Ohio; Wong Kin, 1913, 1528, at 81 E. Spring St.

h “Yihui you Kai” 義會又開 [Another Righteous Association Begins], *Zhongguo Weixin Bao*, August 4, 1904.

i Liang Qichao, *Xin Dalu Youji*, 528.

j Not verified.

k Listed as site of “revolutionary” military company in “Chinese Drilling in All Countries,” *Washington Times*, June 19, 1905, 3.

l Wong Kin, 1913, 1544, with PO Box.

m “Chinese Drilling in All Countries,” *Washington Times*, June 19, 1905, 3.

n Wong Kin, 1913, 1544, with PO Box.

TABLE 12 Mapping the Baohuanghui: United States—Central [Chicago headquarters] (*cont.*)

City	字	Year founded	Newspaper	School	Business
Salt Lake City, Utah ^o	梳嚙埠, 所力, 梳力埠				
Colorado City and/or Colorado Springs, Colorado? ^p					
Denver, Colorado ^q	剪化埠			Gancheng Xuexiao (Western Military Academy)	
Phoenix, Arizona	斐匿			Gancheng Xuexiao (Western Military Academy)	
Tucson, Arizona? ^r	所筭? ^s				

o Wong Kin, 1913, 1544.

p “Local Chinese Will Seek to Aid Emperor,” *Colorado Springs Gazette*, June 20, 1900, 5, about “China Jim” (a prominent Colorado Springs business owner) and three Colorado City Chinese organizing reform chapters in state.

q Wong Kin, 1913, 1476, at 1716 Broadway.

r “Organizing Reformers,” *San Francisco Call*, July 14, 1900, 14, on “Leung Kough” [Liang Qitian?] in Phoenix and going on to Tucson and other Arizona towns.

s 所筭 appears on 1904 list.

TABLE 13 Mapping the Baohuanghui: United States—East [New York headquarters] (13 chapters)

City	字	Year founded	Newspaper	School	Business
New York City, New York ^a	奴約, 紐約, 努約	1899 or 1900 Chinese Empire Ladies Reform Association, 1903	Niuyue Ribao (New York Daily News) (English and Chinese) 紐約 日報, 1902–9 Zhongguo Weixinbao (Chinese Reform News) 中國維新報, 1904–37	Gancheng Xuexiao (Western Military Academy) Oi-kwok Hok- tong (Aiguo Xuetang) 愛 國學堂	Huayi Yinhang 華 益銀行, sometimes called Huayi Gongsi (Wah Yick Company) 華益公局, 1905? ^b Hua-Mei Yinhang 華美銀行 1909?
Boston, Massachusetts ^c	波士頓埠	1899 Chinese Empire Ladies Reform Association, 1903 ^d		Gancheng Xuexiao (Western Military Academy)	

a In Wong Kin, 1913, 1523, the Guomindang chapter is listed in care of Chinese Reform News at 176 Park Row (and Tongmenghui at 12 Mott).

b Kang Youwei, Torreón, to Tom Leung, Los Angeles, December 26, 1905, no. 352 in Fang Zhiqin and Cai Huiyao 方志欽, 蔡惠堯, ed., *Kang Liang yu Baohuanghui: Tan Liang zai Meiguo Suocang Ziliao Huibian* 康梁與保皇會: 譚良在美國所藏資料彙編 [Kang, Liang, and the Baohuanghui: A Compilation of Materials Collected by Tom Leung in the U.S.A.] (Hong Kong: Yinhe Chubanshe, 2008), 63: “Our New York bank has already started business.”

c Wong Kin, 1913, 1495, at 19 Harrison St.

d “The Old Woman as the New Woman,” *Wichita Eagle*, November 1, 1903, 20: “The native Chinese women of New York and Boston have organized the Chinese Empire Reform Society.” Members on sheet written by Kang Tongbi, no. Z-29, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.

TABLE 13 Mapping the Baohuanghui: United States—East [New York headquarters] (*cont.*)

City	字	Year founded	Newspaper	School	Business
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania ^e	費城埠			Gancheng Xuexiao (Western Military Academy)	
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania ^f	必珠卜			Gancheng Xuexiao (Western Military Academy) ^g	
Hartford, Connecticut ^h	哈佛埠, 哈 啡埠				
Meriden, Connecticut ⁱ					
New Britain, Connecticut	紐布烈頓				
New Haven, Connecticut ^j	紐喜允埠				
New London, Connecticut	鈕倫敦				
Norwich, Connecticut					

e Wong Kin, 1913, 1535, at 929 Race St.

f Wong Kin, 1913, 1537, at 509 Second Ave.

g Chapin, 116: Company F, Second Infantry Regiment (Midwest).

h Wong Kin, 1913, 1478, at 556 Asylum St.

i “Funeral of Wong Bing,” *Hartford Courant*, October 9, 1905, mentions Chinese Empire Reform Association chapters in Meriden, New Britain, New London, and Norwich, CT.

j On 1908 list. “Chinese Reformer Comes Tomorrow,” *Hartford Courant*, July 14, 1905, 8, says there were members but no chapter when Kang first visited. Chen, *Handbook of Chinese in America*, 517, uses same characters for New Haven.

TABLE 13 Mapping the Baohuanghui: United States—East [New York headquarters] (*cont.*)

City	字	Year founded	Newspaper	School	Business
Baltimore, Maryland ^k	波利磨, 波地摩	1903		Gancheng Xuexiao (Western Military Academy) ^l	
Norfolk, Virginia ^m	那福埠, 那伏埠				
Washington, DC ⁿ	華盛頓埠	August 1904			

- k Wong Kin, 1913, 1493, at 116 Park Ave. *Polk's Baltimore City Directory*, 1905, 366, 113 Park Ave, 1906, 382, 114 Park Ave.
- l Chapin, 116; under Third Infantry Regiment (Eastern Seaboard).
- m "All the Sing Fats and Ah Fongs Meet in Washington to End War of Tongs," *Washington Times*, magazine, January 20, 1907, 4; record of Baohuanghui membership badge distribution, 1905, no. Z-8, Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection, includes Norfolk, VA.
- n "Patriots in Pigtails: Washington Chinese have a Bow Wong Woy Branch," *Washington Post*, August 7, 1904, 5; Wong Kin, 1913, 1479, at 346 Pennsylvania Ave. [Wong has reversed the English names for this entry and the Chinese legation!]

TABLE 14 Mapping the Baohuanghui: United States—South [New Orleans headquarters] (7 chapters)

City	字	Year founded	Newspaper	School	Business
New Orleans, Louisiana ^a	紐阿蓮埠, 紐柯連, 那柯連			Gancheng Xuexiao (Western Military Academy) ^b	
Beaumont, Texas ^c	布滿埠, 鐮滿埠				
Dallas, Texas	地拉士埠				

- a In list of chapters attending 1907 New York plenary, *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui*, 488.
- b Not verified; "Chinese Drilling in All Countries," *Washington Times*, June 19, 1905, 3.
- c Wong Kin, 1913, 1540, at 487 Bowrie St.

TABLE 14 Mapping the Baohuanghui: United States—South [New Orleans headquarters] (*cont.*)

City	字	Year founded	Newspaper	School	Business
Galveston, Texas ^d	加利委梨頓市頓, 加話市頓埠				
Houston, Texas ^e	敲市頓埠				
San Antonio, TX ^f	美属新村埠, 威市省山寸埠, 山旦村拿埠	1904			
Waco, Texas ^g	伟咕埠, 役咕埠				

- d Wong Kin, 1913, 1542, at 2401 Market St.
- e Wong Kin, 1913, 1543, at 407 Travis St.
- f Wu Hongjin 伍鴻進 and others in the San Antonio, Texas, chapter to all comrades of the Xiangzhengdang [Constitutional Party], December 16, 1909, no. 309 in Fang and Cai, *Kang Liang yu Baohuanghui*, 315, uses 威市省山寸埠. Wong Kin, 1913, 1543, at 124½ Soledad St.
- g Wong Kin, 1913, 1544, as 役咕埠, 51 Austin St.

TABLE 15 Mapping the Baohuanghui: Mexico [Torreón headquarters] (12 chapters)

City	字	Year founded	Newspaper	School	Business
Torreón, Coahuila	菜苑埠	1901 or 1902; known as Asociación Reformista China			Hua-Mo Bank (Hua-Mo Yinhang, Compañía Bancaria Chino y México, Chinese-Mexican Bank) 华墨银行, 1906–11 Hua Yi (Compañía Bancaria y de Tranvías Wah Yick; Wah Yick Banking and Tramway Company) 華益 incorporated bank plus streetcar line, 1907–11

TABLE 15 Mapping the Baohuanghui: Mexico [Torreón headquarters] (12 chapters) (*cont.*)

City	字	Year founded	Newspaper	School	Business
Monclova, Coahuila	高委罈省綱 古魯巴埠			Youmei Xuetang (Escuela Yue Mae) 有美學 堂, est. 1904 ^a	
Mexico City, DF	墨西哥埠		Moxige Chaobao (Mexico Morning News) English- language newspaper 墨 西哥朝報		
Santa Rosalia, Baja California ^b					
Alamos, Sonora	墨屬亞林務 士埠				
Cananea, Sonora ^c	諫拿呢埠, 墨國諫拿 尼埠				
Guaymas, Sonora ^d	威罵士				

a Established by Huang Kuanzhuo (Wong Foon Chuck); Huang Yuanhuo or José Chuck, Wong Foon Chuck's younger brother, was the principal until 1910. Kang wrote an inscription for the school.

b Veronica Castillo Munoz, *The Other California: Land, Identity and Politics on the Mexican Borderlands* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2017), 71, for Santa Rosalia members led by Leon Yuen getting permission to raise the organization flag in downtown for Chinese New Year, 1908. Thanks to Fredy González for pointing this out.

c 1908 list; Wong Kin, 1913, 1579. Lasted at least to 1919, “Moguo Jiannani bu Xianzhengdang zhi Kang Xu zongzhang shu” 墨國諫拿尼埠憲政黨致康徐總長書 [Letter to presidents Kang and Xu from the Cananea, Mexico Xianzhengdang], September 9, 1919, in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui*, 484–86.

d 1908 list; Wong Kin, 1913, 1580, at Calle 19 Casa 326.

TABLE 15 Mapping the Baohuanghui: Mexico [Torreón headquarters] (12 chapters) (cont.)

City	字	Year founded	Newspaper	School	Business
Hermosillo, Sonora	墨屬磨詩 耀埠				
Culiacán, Sinaloa ^e	咭釐亞根 埠, 咭釐 亞根				
Ciudad Madero, Tamaulipas ^f					
Merida, Yucatán ^g	禾加丹省, 尾利打单				
Manzanillo, Colima, or Mazatlán, Sinaloa ^h	嚙山咏由				Zhong-Mo Lunchuan Gongsì [Sino-Mexican Shipping Co.] 中 墨車輪船公司 1903–8? [period of investment; it was never begun]

e 1908 list; Wong Kin, 1913, 1577.

f “News on the Chinese Empire Reform Association,” *Tung Wah Times*, February 2, 1907, 6: Chinese community in Madero, Mexico, sets up a Chinese Empire Reform Association chapter; includes open letter from the chapter.

g Wong Kin, 1913, 1588.

h Huang Kuanzhuo (Wong Foon Chuck) to Tan Zhangxiao, March 31, 1903, no. 561 in Fang and Cai, *Kang Liang yu Baohuanghui*, 185, gives Manzanillo as the company location; “Concession for Steamship Service Between Mexican, Chinese, and Japanese Ports,” *Monthly Bulletin of the International Bureau of the American Republics* 25, no. 6 (December 1907) in *Congressional Serial Set*, Government Printing Office, 1907), 1400, gives Mazatlán as the port.

TABLE 16 Mapping the Baohuanghui: Central America [Panama City headquarters]
(7 chapters)

City	字	Year founded	Newspaper	School	Business
Panama City, Panama ^a	巴拿孖埠, 巴拿 瑪埠				
Bocas del Toro, Panama ^b	卜忌斜罈埠, 卜 忌斜拿埠				
Colón, Panama ^c	個郎埠				
Guatemala City, Guatemala ^d	瓜地馬拉埠				
Limon, Costa Rica ^e	中美洲檸檬埠, 淋文埠				
San Salvador, El Salvador	散島	1901 or earlier ^f			
Bluefields, Nicaragua ^g	布路非埠, 砵 路非				

a Wong Kin, 1913, 1346, with PO Box.

b 1908 list; Wong Kin, 1913, 1337.

c “Banazi, Gelang erbu liuyue ershiliuri dianda Xi'an gongzhu wansui diangao” 巴拿孖, 個
郎埠 二埠六月二十六日電達西安恭祝萬歲電告 [Text of telegram sent to Xi'an by
chapters of Panama City and Colón, Panama, to wish the emperor long life on August 10,
1901], *Wenxing Bao*, 1901, Him Mark Lai Research Files, Box 32 Folder 11, Ethnic Studies
Library, University of California at Berkeley.

d Wong Kin, 1913, 1333, at street address, Sur 62.

e Wong Kin, 1913, 1332.

f Huang Zhuoxing (Alonso Quant) 黃卓興 and Chen Wencun 陳文邨, San Salvador, to
the Association, Victoria, July 13, 1901, no. 527 [postscript] in Fang and Cai, *Kang Liang yu
Baohuanghui*, 293.

g 1904 list; Wong Kin, 1913, 1336, at PO Box 3.

TABLE 17 Mapping the Baohuanghui: Caribbean (3 chapters)

City	字	Year founded	Newspaper	School	Business
Havana, Cuba ^a	亞灣埠	Summer 1900? Located at Virtudes 60, top floor			
Marianao, Havana, Cuba ^b	开李旦堤埠				
Jamaica, British West Indies ^c	西印度占 尾架	1904			

- a Ma, *Revolutionaries, Monarchists, and Chinatowns*, 50; Wong Kin, 1913, 1560, at Virtudes 60.
- b Wong Kin, 1913, 1561, with address of Calle Real 61; this is a municipality of Havana.
- c *Zhongguo Weixin Bao*, August 18, 1904, 15. Probably Kingston.

TABLE 18 Mapping the Baohuanghui: South America [Lima, Peru headquarters] (3 chapters)

City	字	Year founded	Newspaper	School	Business
Lima, Peru ^a	利馬	1905			
Trujillo, Peru ^b	祕魯道禧埠	1904			
Paita, Peru ^c	祕魯必打埠, 跛打				

- a Adam McKeown, *Chinese Migrant Networks and Cultural Change: Peru, Chicago, Hawaii, 1900–1936* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 138; Wong Kin, 1913, 1312.
- b “Gebu Baohuanghui Jinshi,” 各埠保皇會近事 *Zhongguo Weixin Bao*, July 21, 1904, 14; Wong Kin, 1913, 1322.
- c “Gebu Baohuanghui Jinshi,” *Zhongguo Weixin Bao*, July 21, 1904, 15.

TABLE 19 Mapping the Baohuanghui: Hawai‘i [Honolulu headquarters] (7 chapters)

City	字	Year founded	Newspaper	School	Business
Honolulu ^a	檀香山埠, 漢挪路廬	[1899] Chinese Empire Ladies Reform Association, est. 1904?	Xin Zhongguo Bao (Sun Chung Kwok Bo, New China News) 新中國報, 1899 or 1900–1978; name changed in 1941 to Xin Zhongguo Ribao (New China Press) 新中國日報 ^b Longji Bao ^c 隆記報 [ca. 1900–1903; before and after was a revolutionary paper]	Minglun Liangdeng Xuetang [Mun Lun School] est. 1907 [officially opened Feb. 4, 1911] – present ^d 明倫兩等 學堂 Julebu [civil/ military predecessor of Gancheng Xuexiao?] 俱樂部 Gancheng Xuexiao (Western Military Academy) ^e	
Kauai	道威	1900			
Hanalei, Kauai ^f	頓限禮拿 埠				
Hilo, Hawai‘i	希爐	1900			
Maui	茂宜	1900 [Sun Mei head]			

a Wong Kin, 1913, 1553, at 69 King St.

b Him Mark Lai, “The Chinese Community Press in Hawai‘i,” *Chinese America: History and Perspectives* 24 (2010): 100; Wong Kin, 1913, 1555, at 60 King St.

c Ma, *Revolutionaries, Monarchists, and Chinatowns*, 60, 103.

d The only existing American remnant of the Baohuanghui. Wong Kin, 1913, 1555, at Achei Lane. In 2022 at 1290 Maunakea St., <https://www.munlunschool.com/about-us>, accessed August 17, 2024. According to Him Mark Lai, *Becoming Chinese American: A History of Communities and Institutions* (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2004), 277–78, Qingnian Qulubu or Ching Nin Ke Lok Bo [Youth Club] merged with Qingnian Wuxuehui and taught Chinese language, Confucianism and military skills; in 1907 began to raise funds for Munlun School.

e Not verified.

f Wong Kin, 1913, 1552, with PO Box.

TABLE 19 Mapping the Baohuanghui: Hawai'i [Honolulu headquarters] (7 chapters) (*cont.*)

City	字	Year founded	Newspaper	School	Business
Lahaina, Maui ^g	刺軒拿埠				
Wailuku Maui ^h	位碌咕埠				

g Wong Kin, 1913, 1558, with PO Box.

h Wong Kin, 1913, 1558, with PO Box.

TABLE 20 Mapping the Baohuanghui: Australia [Sydney headquarters] (12 chapters)

City	字	Year founded	Newspaper	School	Business
Sydney, New South Wales ^a	雪梨埠	1900	Donghua Xin Bao, Tung Wah News 東華新報 (1898–1902) and Donghua Bao, Tung Wah Times 東華報 (1902–36)] ^b	Xueli Zhonghua Mengyang Liangdeng Xiaoxuetang, Sydney Chinese School, 雪梨中華蒙養兩等小學堂 ^c , Founded 1909; opened 1910	
Tamworth, New South Wales	貪麻埠				
Fremantle, Western Australia	非厘文度舉	1900			

a Wong Kin, 1913, 1225, at 158 George St.

b Wong Kin, 1913, 1226, with name *Donghua Bao* at 158 George St. North. The newspaper is indexed in English and digitized online: <https://arrow.latrobe.edu.au/store/3/4/5/5/1/public/FMProce85.html>.

c Mei-fen Kuo, *Making Chinese Australia: Urban Elites, Newspapers and the Formation of Chinese-Australian Identity, 1892–1912* (Victoria, Australia: Monash University Publishing, 2013), 229; founded by Lu Dunkui.

TABLE 20 Mapping the Baohuanghui: Australia [Sydney headquarters] (12 chapters) (*cont.*)

City	字	Year founded	Newspaper	School	Business
Perth, Western Australia	巴扶埠, 普 埠	1900			
Geraldton, Western Australia	遮爐頓埠	1900			
Adelaide, South Australia	克力				
Ballarat, Victoria	巴刺律	1900			
Melbourne, Victoria ^d	美利畔, 新 金山, 尾利 昨埠	1900			
Brisbane, Queensland	比里斯賓	1901			
Cairns, Queensland ^e	堅市埠				
Rockhampton, Queensland	洛金頓				
New Zealand	鳥絲綸 ^f				

d Wong Kin, 1913, 1237, at 189 Russell St.

e Wong Kin, 1913, 1229, has entry for a Chinese Reform Association, 崇新社團總會. The 1913 directory, 1228, also lists Atherton, Queensland with a Chinese Reform Association and a similar Chinese name, 崇新社團報社.

f A chapter with this name appears under Australia in the 1904 petition; Phoebe Li, email to author, March 17, 2024, confirms that two New Zealand Chinese were known reformers: Louis Kitt (Lü Jie 呂傑) and Shack Horne (Shi Han, 石漢). “Niaosilun Tongxin” 鳥絲倫通信 [Communication from New Zealand], *Tung Wah Times*, February 15, 1908, 6, reports that the population of this island would reach one million that year, which was true of New Zealand in 1908.

TABLE 21 Mapping the Baohuanghui: the Pacific (1 chapter)

City	字	Year founded	Newspaper	School	Business
Tahiti ^a	大溪地埠				

a Tahiti members to Tom Leung by way of Huang Zhuoxing, January 3, 1903, no. 553 in Fang and Cai, *Kang Liang yu Baohuanghui*, 297.

TABLE 22 Mapping the Baohuanghui: Southeast Asia (24 chapters)

City	字	Year Founded	Newspaper	School	Business
Penang, [Straits Settlements]	檳榔嶼		Bincheng Xin Bao (Penang Sin Poe) 檳城新報 est. 1895 ^a	Aiguo Xuetang Shizhong School 時中學校 ^b	Huafeng Yin hao 華豐銀號 (private bank)—connected to rice brokerage (see below); closed by 1909 Xin Kai Mei 新開美 [rice brokerage] ^c 1904–10 Rubber tree plantation ^d

- a Wong Kin, 1913, 1109, at 228 Beach St.
- b Photo of Datong School students with visiting Shizhong and Tongwen School students, 1908, in Craig A. Smith, “The Datong Schools and Late Qing Sino-Japanese Cooperation,” *Twentieth-Century China* 42, no. 1 (January 2017): 9.
- c Referred to in various letters, including Xu Qin to Kang Youwei, September 5, 1907, in *Kang Youwei yu Baohuanghui*, 379; and Wu Xianzi 伍憲子, *Zhongguo Minzhu Xianzhengdang Dangshi* 中國民主憲政黨黨史 [A Party History of the Chinese Democratic Constitutional Party] (San Francisco: *Shijie Ribao* [Chinese World], 1952), 86–87; Wu miswrote the company name as Xinwen Mei 新聞美.
- d Kang Youwei to Liang Qichao, March 23, 1910, in Zhang Ronghua, ed., *Kang Youwei Wanglai Shuxin Ji* 康有為往來書信集 [Collected Correspondence of Kang Youwei], (Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin Daxue Chubanshe, 2012), 627–28.

TABLE 22 Mapping the Baohuanghui: Southeast Asia (24 chapters) (*cont.*)

City	字	Year Founded	Newspaper	School	Business
Singapore [Straits Settlements]	星嘉坡, 星加坡		Tiannan Xin Bao (Thien Nam Sin Pao) 天南新報 1898–1905 China Times [?] English-language paper est. 1900 Nanyang Zonghui Bao (Union Times) 南洋總匯 報, 1905 or 1906–(1946) ^e (previously Nanyang Haiyun Bao 南洋海運報)	Yangcheng Shuyuan羊城 書院 Nütong Xuetang 女童 學堂 [Girls’ Academy]	East Indies Hua- feng Company 華豐銀號 [rice brokerage and bank], 1904–7 ^f
Kedah, Malaya ^g	加釐吉打				
Selangor, Malaya? ^h	雪蘭莪				
Tanjong Rambutan, Malaya ⁱ	紅毛撥埠				

e Wong Kin, 1913, 1115, as Chung Way Be, Daily Newspaper, at 126 Cross St. and Wong, 1123, as Union Times Press, at 83 Cross St.

f Li Fuji 李福基, “Xianzhenghui Jishi Shilüe” 宪政会纪始事略 [A Sketch of the Origins of the Constitutional Association], 1909, 6, Chinese Empire Reform Association, AR-22, AAS ARC 2000/78.

g 1904 list.

h Sent Diguao Xianzhenghui representatives to China for third constitutional petition, 1910: Chang P’eng-yuan 張朋園, *Lixian pai yu Xinhai Geming* 立憲派與辛亥革命 [Constitutionalists and the Revolution of 1911 in China] (Taipei: Institute of Modern History Academia Sinica, 1969), 69.

i 1908 list.

TABLE 22 Mapping the Baohuanghui: Southeast Asia (24 chapters) (*cont.*)

City	字	Year Founded	Newspaper	School	Business
Java, Dutch East Indies (now Indonesia; see below for chapters)			Wudao Ribao 烏 島日報 1904–9? ^j	Educational Association of the Chinese in the Netherland Indies 爪哇 學務總會 est. 1906 (plans drafted by Kang 1903) ^k 20+ Aiguo and Datong schools	
Bandung, Java ^l				School	
Batavia (now Jakarta), Java	巴城, 巴 達維亞, 吧城, 椰 城			Zhongxi Xiaoxuetang 中西小學堂 ^m	
Buitenzorg (Bogor), Java			Zhonghua Weixin Bao (Tiong Hoa Wie Sin Po) 中華維 新報 est. 1906 [in Romanized Malay]		

j Jung-pang Lo, “Sequel to the Chronological Autobiography,” *K'ang Yu-wei: A Biography and Symposium* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1967), 270 n30.

k Lo, 269 n26.

l Lo, 269 n26.

m Established by Qiu Luanxin 邱戀馨.

TABLE 22 Mapping the Baohuanghui: Southeast Asia (24 chapters) (*cont.*)

City	字	Year Founded	Newspaper	School	Business
Cheribon, Java ⁿ				School	
Djoeja, Java ^o				School	
Kediri, Java ^p				School	
Malang, Java ^q				School	
Pekalongan, Java ^r				School	
Pemalang, Java ^s				School	
Probolinggo, Java ^t					
Semerang, Java	三寶壟, 壟川			School	
Surabaya, Java	泗水, 蘇 腊巴亞			Aiguo Xuetang	
Tegal, Java ^u				School	
Makassar, Sulawesi	望加錫			Furu Xuetang 婦儒學堂 [est. by Li Lianxi]	

n Lo, 269 n26.
o Lo, 269 n26.
p Lo, 269 n26.
q Lo, 269 n26.
r Lo, 269 n26.
s Lo, 269 n26.
t “Hui Shi Jiwen” 會事記聞 [Association Chapter News], “Yuan Shoumin 袁壽民 reports on a chapter of the Chinese Empire Reform Association that has been set up in Probolinggo Java,” *Tung Wah Times*, September 22, 1906.
u Lo, 269 n26.

TABLE 22 Mapping the Baohuanghui: Southeast Asia (24 chapters) (*cont.*)

City	字	Year Founded	Newspaper	School	Business
Rangoon, Burma [possibly known as Zhonghua Wenhui 中華 文會] ^v	仰光, 登 公		Yangjiang Xin Bao [Rangoon Daily News] 仰 江新報 1904 or 1905–8 Shangwu Bao 商 務報 est. 1910? ^w	Furen Xuexiao 輔仁 學校 Teong Hwa Chinese School (Zhonghua Yangxue) 中 華義學 1903 ^x	Rice brokerage est. 1904 ^y
Mandalay, Burma ^z	華城				
Bangkok, Siam (now Thailand) ^{aa}	暹羅城, 孟谷, 栢 角埠		Qinan Xin Bao (Kinam Sinpo, The “Kee Nam” Chinese Daily News) 啓南新報 1909–1910 ^{ab} Huaxin Ribao 華 新日報 ^{ac}		

^v Li Yi, *Chinese in Colonial Burma: A Migrant Community in a Multiethnic State* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 210; Wong Kin, 1913, 1083, at “Moung Rhine St.” [same address as Bangkok chapter in Wong Kin, 1069].

^w Li, *Chinese in Colonial Burma*, 187.

^x Li, *Chinese in Colonial Burma*, 182.

^y Kang Youwei to Li Fuji, May 26, 1904, in “Wu Xianzi Xiansheng Yigao ji Suocang Wenjian 伍憲子先生遺稿及所藏文件 [Mr. Wu Xianzi’s Posthumous Manuscripts and Collection of Documents], Special Collections, University of Washington.

^z 1904 list.

^{aa} Wong Kin, 1913, 1069, at “Moung Rhine St.” See Rangoon—same address.

^{ab} Begun by Xu Qin when he visited Bangkok, according to Eiji Murashima, “The Origins of Chinese Nationalism in Thailand,” *Journal of Asian-Pacific Studies* no. 21 (August 2013): 162, https://docplayer.net/25930776-The-origins-of-chinese-nationalism-in-thailand.html-show_full_text.

^{ac} Chang P’eng-yuan 張朋園, “Shi Bao: Weixinpai Xuanchuan Jiguan zhi yi” 時報: 維新派宣傳機關之一 [Shi Bao: a Propaganda Organ of the Reform Faction], *Jindai Yanjiusuo Jikan* 4:152 (May 1973).

TABLE 22 Mapping the Baohuanghui: Southeast Asia (24 chapters) (*cont.*)

City	字	Year Founded	Newspaper	School	Business
Hanoi					
Vietnam ^{ad}					
Manila, Philippines ^{ae}	馬尼刺, 小呂宋 正埠		Yiyou Xin Bao 益 友新報 est. 1899; later changed name to Minyi Bao 岷益報		

- ad Hanoi is among the 46 cities sending telegrams in the movement to protest Cixi’s attempt to depose Guangxu in 1900; “Feili Yaowen Hui Zhi” 廢立要聞匯志 [Report of Important News on Deposing the Emperor in Favor of a New One], *Zhixin Bao*, March 31, 1900, quoted in Sang, *Gengzi Qinwang*, 66.
- ae Wong Kin, 1913, 1256, at 15 Claveria Binondo.

TABLE 23 Mapping the Baohuanghui: Japan (3 chapters)

City	字	Year Founded	Newspaper	School	Business
Yokohama	橫濱	1899	Qingyi Bao (The China Discussion) 清議報 1898–1901 Xinmin Congbao (Sein Min Choong Bou) [New Citizen Journal] 新民叢報 1902–7 Xin Xiaoshuo [The New Fiction] 新小說 1902–5	Datong Xuexiao 大同學校 [Great Unity School] est. 1898 ^a Renamed Dongya School 東亞學校 [by 1901] according to Liang Qichao	
Kōbe	神戸		Yadong Bao 亞東報	Tongwen Xuexiao [Common Culture School] 同文學校 1899–present. ^b	

- a School destroyed in 1923 Great Kanto earthquake: Smith, “The Datong Schools,” 5.
- b Wong Kin, 1913, 991, at Nakayamate 3 Chome; Smith, “The Datong Schools,” 15.

TABLE 23 Mapping the Baohuanghui: Japan (3 chapters) (*cont.*)

City	字	Year Founded	Newspaper	School	Business
Tokyo	東京	(1899) Zhengwenshe [Political Information Society] 政聞 社 est. 1907; headquarters moved to Shanghai early 1908		Datong Gaodeng Xuexiao 大同高等學 校 est. 1899 Liudong Gongxuehui (Public Scholarly Association for Chinese Students) 留東公學會 est. in Tokyo, ca 1907–8	

TABLE 24 Mapping the Baohuanghui: Hong Kong, Macau (2 chapters)

City	字	Year Founded	Newspaper	School	Business
Hong Kong	香港埠		Shang Bao (Sheung Po, Commercial News) 商報 1904–11? ^a		Zhongguo Kezhan (China Hotel) 中國客棧 1905–? ^b Zhonghua Jiudian 中華酒店 1906?–1908? ^c Huayi Company (Wah/War Yick/Yik Co.) 華益公司 est. ca 1904–? ^d

a Jung-fang Tsai, *Hong Kong in Chinese History: Community and Social Unrest in the British Colony, 1842–1913* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 245, describes the physical destruction by revolutionaries of the newspaper office in November 1911.

b Lo, “Sequel to Autobiography,” 200.

c Wu, *Zhongguo Minzhu Xianzhengdang Dangshi*, 90; Ye En 葉惠伯, “Bo Xu Qin Bugaoshu Zai Qi” [Another public denunciation of Xu Qin], 1909, University of California at Berkeley, AR-19, AAS ARC 2000/78.

d Wong Kin, 1913, 527, as “bankers” at 297 Des Voeux Road, Central.

TABLE 24 Mapping the Baohuanghui: Hong Kong, Macau (2 chapters) (*cont.*)

City	字	Year Founded	Newspaper	School	Business
					Huayi Yinhao 華益銀號 (private or remittance bank) est. 1907 Commercial Corporation (Shangwu Gongsi) 商務公司 est. 1904 Zhibuju (Textile Bureau) 織 布局 est. 1906
Macau	澳門埠		Zhixin Bao (China Reformer) 知新 報 1897–1901 Haojing Bao 濠 鏡報 ^e	Dongwen Xuexiao 東 文學校 est. 1899 by He Suitian	

e Founded by He Suitian [He Tingguang], possibly in 1898. No copies are extant today according to Hou Jie 侯杰 and Zhang Yufeng 張宇楓, “Wan Qing Aomen Haoshang He Tingguang yu Zhixin Bao Tanxi” 晚清澳門豪商何廷光與 知新報 探析 [An Analysis of Late Qing Wealthy and Powerful Merchant He Tingguang and *Zhixin Bao*], *Aomen Yanjiu* no. 1 (2021): 68.

TABLE 25 Mapping the Baohuanghui: China (8 chapters)

City	字	Year founded	Newspaper	School	Business
Shanghai	上海	Zhengwenshe 政聞社 [Political Information Society] founded 1907 in Japan;	Shi Bao (Eastern Times) 時報 1904–39 Zheng Lun 政論		Guangzhi Shuju (Diffusion of Knowledge Publishing House) 廣智書局 1901–(1930s) ^a

a Liang Qichao in Yokohama was in charge of Guangzhi Shuju; scholars have pointed to a Yokohama Yishu Ju 譯書局 [Translation Bureau] established *ca.* 1901 or 1902, but Wu Yuhao “Guangzhi Shuju Yanqiu,” Ph.D. dissertation, Fudan University, 2010, 18–21, believes that references by Liang and others were referring to Guangzhi Shuju.

TABLE 25 Mapping the Baohuanghui: China (8 chapters) (*cont.*)

City	字	Year founded	Newspaper	School	Business
		moved to Shanghai, March 1908; closed by Qing in August 1908; may have had chapters in most or all provinces, 1,000 members in China.	[Political Commentary] [1907–8] Guofeng Bao 國風報 1910–12		
Beijing	北京		Beijing Shibao 北京時報 [same as Jingdu Shibao? 京都時報] ^b closed 1908 Guomin Gongbao 國民公報 1910–19		
Guangdong Province	廣東				Qiongzhou Qianhao (private bank) 瓊州銀號; closed by 1909 Xuwen Kenwu Gongsì 徐聞壘務公司 or Xuwen Wuben Gongsì 徐聞務本公司 (land reclamation enterprise)

^b Lo, “Sequel to Autobiography,” 270 n30.

TABLE 25 Mapping the Baohuanghui: China (8 chapters) (*cont.*)

City	字	Year founded	Newspaper	School	Business
					Yupiao Gongsi 漁票 公司 (fishing franchise run by Ye En for which a “certificate” was issued by an official allowing exclusive fishing in a certain area) 1905?–1906
Guangzhou, Guangdong Province	廣州		Guangdong Bao 廣東報 est. 1902? Lingnan Bao [South China News] 嶺南報 est. before 1904 Yangcheng Ribao 羊城日 報 est. before 1905 Guoshi Bao 國事報 1906 ^c –1911? ^d	Guangdong Gongxue [Guangdong Public School] 廣東公學 est. 1905 [name later changed to Nanqiang Gongxue 南強 公學]	Commercial Corporation subsidiary (Ye En in charge) to raise funds in U.S. for Yue-Han Tielu (Canton- Hankow Railway) 粵漢 鐵路 est. 1906 ^e

c Xu Qin to Tan Zhangxiao, October 17, 1906, no. 168 in Fang and Cai, *Kang Liang yu Baohuanghui*, 137, states paper began September 18, 1906.

d Liao Zhao, Jiang Nai, Lin Henian, Liu Tingyang and Lin Renzhi 廖照, 蔣奈, 林鶴年, 劉天錫, 林任之 to Liang Qichao and Kang Youwei, January 20, 1912, in Ding Wenjiang and Zhao Fengtian 丁文江, 趙豐田, ed., *Liang Qichao Nianpu Changbian* 梁啟超年譜長編 [Uncut Version of Liang Qichao Life Chronicle] (Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin Chubanshe, 1983), 604.

e Lo, “Sequel to Autobiography,” 204.

TABLE 25 Mapping the Baohuanghui: China (8 chapters) (*cont.*)

City	字	Year founded	Newspaper	School	Business
Guangxi Province	廣西				Zhenhua Shiye Gongsì (Jun Wah Sut Yip or Jun Wah Mining Company) 振華事業公司 ^f 1907?–9 Tianping Shan Yinkuang (silver mining)—part of Zhenhua ^g 天平銀礦 1907?–
Hankou, Hubei Province	漢口		Jianghan Gongbao 江漢公報 [also known as Dajiang Ribao 大江日報] 1907–8	Jianghan Gongxue 江漢公學 est. 1907 [law and politics college]	
Tianjin (then part of Hebei Province)	天津		Riri Xinwen Bao 日日新聞報 est. 1906		
Xiamen, Fujian Province	廈門			Chucái Sishu 儲才私塾 [directed by Liang Qichao; other teachers and directors Yung Wing, Ou Jujia, Xu Qin]	

f Incorporated silver mines, land reclamation, steamship transportation, railway construction, and a provincial bank.

g Gao Weinong 高偉濃, *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui zai Meiguo Huaqiao Shehui zhong de Huodong* 二十世紀初康有為保皇會在美國華僑社會中的活動 [Activities of Kang Youwei and the Baohuanghui among the Chinese in the United States in the First Part of the twentieth Century] (Beijing: Xueyuan Chubanshe, 2009), 348–9.

TABLE 26 Mapping the Baohuanghui: Africa (7 chapters)

City	字	Year Founded	Newspaper	School	Business
Capetown, South Africa ^a	急當埠				
East London, South Africa ^b	意史倫敦埠				
Johannesburg? ^c South Africa	五釐士				
Kimberley, South Africa ^d	金必利埠				
Natal, South Africa? ^e	南非拿担埠	1904? ^f			
Port Elizabeth, South Africa ^g	坡尼士碧埠, 砵 衣厘是				
Delagoa Bay, East Africa [now Maputo Bay, Mozambique] ^h	低里古巴				

- a Wong Kin, 1913, 1298.
- b 1908 list; Wong Kin, 1913, 1299.
- c Lo, “Sequel to Autobiography,” 193: While in Rangoon, spring 1903, Kang planned to send associates to 五釐士 [guessed as Johannesburg by Lo] in South Africa to set up chapters. However, a Johannesburg chapter not listed in 1913 Wong Kin directory.
- d Wong Kin, 1913, 1301.
- e Melanie Yap of the Chinese in Africa Research Network, email to author, September 1, 2014, guessed Natal by pronunciation and its Chinese population.
- f “Nanfei Nadanbu Ruhui Fangming” 南非拿擔埠入會芳名 [New Members in Natal, South Africa Chapter], *Zhongguo Weixin Bao* no. 26 (September 8, 1904), University of California at Berkeley, AR-44 A-B.
- g Wong Kin, 1913, 1302, at 44 Alice St.
- h Wong Kin, 1913, 1298.

TABLE 27 Mapping the Baohuanghui: Europe (1 chapter)

City	字	Year founded	Newspaper	School	Business
Liverpool, England ^a	李巴普埠				

- a Wong Kin, 1913, 1286, at 21 Frederick St.

Kang Youwei's Family

Prepared by Chen Xuezhong and Robert Worden, with birth/death dates based on Jung-pang Lo's K'ang Yu-wei: A Biography and a Symposium (1967); additions and corrections from Chi Jeng Chang, Mark Kai Keung, Connie Kang, Jane Weizhen Pan, and Annie Wong

Kang Youwei 康有為 (March 19, 1858, Yintangxiang 銀塘鄉, Nanhai 南海, Guangdong 廣東–March 31, 1927, Qingdao 青島, Shandong 山東). Buried Xiang'ershan 象耳山, Qingdao, Shandong. Eldest son of father Kang Dachu 康達初 (1831–68) and mother Lao Lianzhi 勞連枝 (1831–August 9, 1913).

Kang Youwei had 6 wives and 5 sons and 11 daughters, including 3 adopted daughters. Six of his children died in infancy or childhood. North American connections are noted.

Key: ● Wives ■ Children (numbered in order of birth) ◆ Grandchildren

- First wife Zhang Yunzhu 張雲珠 (September 26, 1855–June 16, 1922). Married 1877. After Hundred Days, left for Macau, settled in Hong Kong where she took care of family affairs (her mother-in-law) and helped with the secret burial of Kang Guangren. In later years lived in Shanghai.
 - Eldest daughter Kang Tongwei 康同薇 (1879–1974). Married 1899, husband Mai Zhonghua 麥仲華 (1876–1955)
 - ◆ Eldest son Mai Jianzeng 麥健增 (1900–77). Doctorate in economics from Columbia University
 - ◆ Son Mai Weizeng 麥偉曾
 - ◆ Daughter Mai Qianzeng 麥倩曾
 - ◆ Son Mai Xizeng 麥禧曾
 - ◆ Son Mai Yanzeng (Mark Yim Tseng) 麥儼曾 (1910–86)
 - ◆ Daughter Mai Fengzeng 麥俸曾 (?–1968). Worked at the Finland embassy in Beijing as secretary; in Cultural Revolution under false accusations, committed suicide with her husband
 - ◆ Son Mai Junzeng 麥俊曾 (1914–)
 - ◆ Daughter Mai Jiazeng (Nina) 麥佳曾 (1917–2015)
 - ◆ Son Mai Xinzeng 麥信曾 (1919–)
 - ◆ Daughter Mai Xiangzeng 麥像曾 (1920–)
 - ◆ Daughter Mai Renzeng 麥任曾 (1922–)

- 2nd daughter Kang Tongbi 康同璧 (January 23, 1881–August 17, 1969). Married 1909 to husband Luo Chang [Lo Chong] 羅昌 (October 24, 1884–February 6, 1955). Tongbi arrived in Canada in 1903, formed the Chinese Empire Ladies Reform Association, and traveled across the United States to Hartford, Connecticut, in preparation for college studies; she lived with Dr. Mary Starr Tudor in South Windsor, Connecticut, from 1904 to 1907, and then was a special student at Barnard College, New York City, from 1907 to 1909.
 - ◆ Son Luo Rongbang [Jung-pang Lo] 羅榮邦 (September 28, 1912, Beijing–April 5, 1981, Davis, California; although his birthdate is used as it appears on his tombstone, his mother's memoirs, "Kang Tongbi Huiyilu," recount her son's difficult birth on September 8, 1911). Luo came to the United States in the 1930s, received his master's (1940) and doctorate (1957) degrees from the University of California, Berkeley, serving in the Office of War Information during World War II. An expert on Chinese naval history and the biographer of Kang Youwei, Luo taught at the University of Washington and University of California, Davis.
 - ◆ Daughter Luo Yifeng 羅儀鳳 (1914–April 19, 1977)
- 3rd daughter Kang Tongjie 康同結 (1884)
- 4th daughter Kang Tongwan 康同完 (1885)
- Eldest son Kang Tongguo 康同國 (1890)
- 5th daughter (adopted by Kang Youwei upon death of his brother Kang Guangren in 1898) Kang Tonghe 康同荷 (1891–1938?); husband Huang Yuanwei 黃元蔚 (1883–1929)
 - ◆ Eldest daughter Huang Zijing 黃子京
 - ◆ Son Huang Zizhang 黃子長
 - ◆ Son Huang Zilong 黃子龍
 - ◆ Daughter Huang Zihua 黃子華 (1920–38)
 - ◆ Daughter Huang Zipin 黃子平
- Second wife Liang Suijue 隨覺 (1880–1969). Married 1897. Traveled with Kang in exile to Penang, Darjeeling, Sweden, and Singapore; 1913 returned to Shanghai; 1945 to Hong Kong and followed her son Kang Tongjian to live in Taiwan.
 - 2nd son Kang Tongji 康同吉 (1902, India). Kang's first child born in exile
 - 6th daughter Kang Tongfu 康同復 (1903, Macau–1980), Married 1919, husband Pan Qixuan 潘其璇 (1898–1979)
 - ◆ Eldest daughter Pan Qingduan 潘慶端. Moved to Canada
 - ◆ Eldest son Pan Qingzhi (Pan Fang) 潘慶贊 (潘方) (1923–2008)
 - ◆ Daughter Pan Qinghui 潘慶慧
 - ◆ Daughter Pan Qingzhao 潘慶昭 (1928–)
 - ◆ Son Pan Qingliang 潘慶亮

- ◆ Daughter Pan Qingle 潘慶樂 (–2013)
- ◆ Son Pan Qingguang 潘慶光
- ◆ Son Pan Qingxi 潘慶矜
- 7th daughter Kang Tonghuan 康同環 (1907–). Born in Sweden. Married 1933, husband He Yongle 何永樂. Moved to California
 - ◆ Eldest daughter He Kangde (Sophie Ho) 何康德. Lives in Hong Kong and Montreal
 - ◆ Daughter He Kangyi 何康儀
 - ◆ Son He Kangle (Paul Ho) 何康樂
- 3rd son Kang Tongjian 康同錢 (Kang Shouman 康壽曼, Simon) (December 19, 1908, Penang–1961, Taiwan). Married Cen Dejing 岑德靜 (daughter of Liangguang Governor General Cen Chunxuan 岑春煊). Laurence Thompson worked with him on translation of *Datong Shu* in the 1950s.
 - ◆ Eldest daughter Kang Baozhuang 康保莊. Died in 2017. With sister Kang Bao'e donated a great quantity of Kang Youwei's manuscripts, art work, and calligraphy to the Shanghai Museum and Nanhai Museum in 1961.
 - ◆ Son Kang Baoyan 康保延. Died in September 2020 at age 88; moved with father to Taiwan after his parents' divorce in 1934; when Kang died, he was the one who could carry on the family name as the male descending from Kang's eldest surviving son.
 - ◆ Youngest daughter Kang Bao'e 康保娥
- Third wife He Zhanli 何旃理 (Lillie or Lily Haw, He Jinlan 何金蘭) (October 11, 1890, Fresno, California–January 19, 1915, Shanghai). Married November 1907, New York City
 - 4th son Kang Tongning 康同凝 (January 25, 1909, Hong Kong–February 3, 1978, Shanghai), wife Pang Lian 龐蓮 (1907–97)
 - 8th daughter Kang Tongtan 康同憐 (1911–1928, in a car accident, age 17)
- Fourth wife Ichioka Tsuruko 市岡鶴子 (Hezi 鶴子) (1897, Japan–1974, Japan). Kang's Japanese maid in Suma Ward in Kōbe, Japan; married 1914, Shanghai. In 1925, when she was pregnant, she returned to Japan to visit her relatives and gave birth to her daughter, never returning to Kang's side.
 - Daughter (no seniority) [Kang] Lingzi [康] 凌子 (1925, Japan–?)
- Fifth wife Liao Dingzheng 廖定徵. Married 1915, Shanghai
 - 9th daughter Kang Tongling 康同令 (1915, Shanghai–1927, Japan, age 12)
- Sixth wife Zhang Guang 張光 (1899, Hangzhou–1947). Married 1919, Shanghai
 - 10th daughter Kang Jinggu 康靜穀 (February 6, 1929–March 23, 2012). Adopted daughter after Kang's death; birth mother was Zhang Guang's older sister
 - ◆ Son Lu Kang 陸康, Hangzhou
 - Adopted daughter [no birth rank] Kang Jingjia 康靜佳 (1912–?). Daughter of Kang Youming, son of Kang's third uncle Kang Dashou

Glossary

(Names are organized by Chinese pinyin in alphabetical order, followed by alternate Chinese names in parentheses, Chinese characters and English translation and/or official name in English)

Organizations

Aiguo Xuetang (Oikwok Hoktong) 愛國學堂 Patriotic Academy, network of Baohuanghui schools in North America and Southeast Asia.

Bao Da-Qing Huangdi Hui 保大清皇帝會 Society to Protect the Great Qing Emperor.

Baogongshanghui 保工商會 Preserve Industry and Commerce Society.

Baoguoahui 保國會 Society to Preserve the Nation, established April 12, 1898.

Baohuanghui 保皇會 Protect the Emperor Society, also Chinese Empire Reform Association.

Baohuangnühui or Baojiu Da-Qing Guangxu Huangdi Nühui 保皇女會, 保救大清光緒皇帝女會 Protect the Emperor Women's Society or Protect the Great Qing Emperor Guangxu Women's Society, Chinese Empire Ladies Reform Association.

Baoliangju 保良局 St. Bartholomew's Chinese Guild, New York City.

Baoshanghui 保商會 Merchant Protection Society; the first organizational name proposed by Kang in July 1899.

Baoshangju 保商局 Preserve Commerce Bureau, organized by San Francisco Baohuanghui chapter.

Bei Jun 北軍 Northern Army.

Buchanzuhui 不纏足會 Anti-Footbinding Association.

Chucaí Sishu 儲才私塾 School in Xiamen 廈門 associated with Ou Jujia, Liang Qichao, Xu Qin, Yung Wing.

Datong Xuexiao 大同學校 Great Unity Schools, in Yokohama and Tokyo begun by Liang Qichao.

Diguo Tongyi Dang 帝國統一黨 Imperial Unification Party, original name of political party Xianyouhui.

Diguo Xianzhenghui 帝國憲政會 Imperial Constitutional Association.

Falübu 法律部 Legal Division.

Ganbu 敢部 Bravery Division, in 1905 charter.

Gancheng Xuexiao 干城學校 Shield and Ramparts School, Western Military Academy.

Gansibu 敢死部 Dare-to-Die Corps.

Gelaohui 哥老會 Society of Brothers and Elders, a Yangzi Valley secret society.

Gongbu 工部 Ministry of Works, Qing ministry.

- Gongche (or Gongju) Shangshu** 公車上書 1895 movement known as the Joint Petition of Imperial Examination Candidates to the Emperor.
- Guangdong Gongxue** 廣東公學 Guangdong Public School.
- Guangwanfeng** 廣萬豐 (Quong Man Fung) Li Fuji's company in Victoria, which shared space with the Baohuanghui at 1715 Government Street.
- Guangzhi Shuju** 廣智書局 Guangzhi Publishing House; Diffusion of Knowledge Publishing House.
- Guohui Qingyuan Tongzhihui** 國會請願同治會 Association of Comrades Petitioning for a National Congress.
- Guomin Haijunhui** 國民海軍會 Citizens' Naval Society.
- Guomin Xianzhenghui** 國民憲政會 Citizens' Constitutional Association, first name suggested by Kang to replace Baohuanghui.
- Guomindang** 國民黨 Citizens' Party, Chung Hwa National Club; Kang's name for the Xianzhenghui in February 1912, becoming obsolete in August 1912 when it was adopted by a new revolutionary party in the Republic.
- Hongye Gongsì** 宏業公司 Lumber company formed by Zhu Jinli and other reformers turned revolutionaries.
- Hua-Mei Yinhang** 華美銀行 Chinese-American Bank, New York City.
- Hua-Mo Yinhang** 華墨銀行 Hua-Mo Bank, Compañía Bancaria Chino y México, Chinese-Mexican Bank, Torreón, Mexico.
- Hua Nü Hequn** 華女合群 Chinese Women Coming Together as a Group, Honolulu chapter of Baohuangnühui.
- Huafeng Yinbao** 華豐銀號 Baohuanghui rice brokerage and bank in Straits Settlements.
- Huangzu neige** 皇族內閣 Princes' cabinet.
- Huashanghuishe** 華商會社 New South Wales Chinese Chamber of Commerce, or Merchants Society.
- Huayanlou** 華嚴樓, **Yi Feng** 移風, **Hua Cui** 華粹, **Zhuan Yu** 饌玉 Kang's preferred names for King Joy Lo (Qiongcaillou).
- Huayi Gongsì** 華益公司 Wah Yick Company; headquartered in Hong Kong with a branch in New York City and Torreón, Mexico.
- Jianchashu** 檢查署 Qing Censorate.
- Jiangnan Gongxue** 江漢公學 Law and politics college in Hankou established by Liang Qichao.
- Jiaoshebu** 交涉部 Public Relations Division.
- Jiejingbu** 潔淨部 Cleanliness Division, 1905 charter.
- Jiejingju** 潔淨局 Cleanliness Bureau.
- Jinweijun** 禁衛軍 Palace Guard, formed 1910.
- Ju E Yiyongdui** 拒俄義勇隊 Resist Russia Volunteer Corps, 1903.
- Junjichu** 軍機處 Grand Council.

- Junzifu** 軍諮府 Army General Staff.
- Juyue Zonghui** 拒約總會 Reject the Treaty Society general headquarters.
- Juyuehui** 拒約會 Reject the Treaty Society.
- Kongjiaohui** 孔教會 Confucian Academy.
- Lianwei Neibu** 聯衛內部 Mutual Defense Core Group of Lianweibu.
- Lianweibu** 聯衛部 Mutual Defense Division.
- Lianweihui** 聯衛會 Mutual Defense Association.
- Libu** 禮部 Board of Rites.
- Licaibu** 理財部 Financial Management Division, 1905 Baohuanghui charter.
- Liudong Gongxuehui** 留東公學會 Public Scholarly Association for Chinese Students, Tokyo.
- Minglun Liangdeng Xuetang** 明倫兩等學堂 Mun Lun School, Honolulu Baohuanghui school established in 1907 and sole surviving Baohuanghui institution.
- Nanjing Guanxue** 南京官學 Nanjing Official School.
- Ningyang Huiguan** 寧陽會館 Native place association of Taishan Chinese.
- Ou-Mei Meishu Pinwu Chenliesuo** 歐美美術品物陳列所 Euro-American Fine Arts Exhibition Hall, organized by Kang in Hong Kong.
- Pidibu** 闢地部 Land Reclamation Division, 1905 Baohuanghui charter.
- Qian Jun** 前軍 Front Army, based in Datong, led by Qin Lishan in 1900 Qinqwang uprising.
- Qiangxuehui** 強學會 Society for the Study of National Strengthening, established in 1895.
- Qiongcailou** 瓊彩樓 King Joy Lo, Chicago restaurant run by Baohuanghui.
- Quangongbu** 勸工部 Exhortation to Industry Division, 1905 Baohuanghui charter.
- Quanxuebu** 勸學部 Education Promotion Division.
- Shangbu** 商部 Board of Trade.
- Shanghai Shangwu Zonghui** 上海商務總會 Shanghai General Chamber of Commerce.
- Shangwu Gongsi** 商務公司 Commercial Corporation; also known as Zhongguo Shangwu Gongsi or China Mercantile Co.; often abbreviated as Shanghui 商會.
- Shangwubu** 商務部 Business Affairs Division; from Kang's proposal for 1905 charter (not adopted).
- Shangwubu** 尙武部 Military Affairs Division; 1905 charter.
- Shaonian Xueshe** 少年學社 Youth Study Society.
- Shengli Gongsi** 生利公司 Hong Kong company owning Kang's Euro-American Fine Arts Exhibition Hall.
- Shiwu Xuetang** 時務學堂 Academy of Current Events, a school in Changsha, Hunan founded by Liang Qichao.
- Tanshan Liangshi Dian** 炭山糧食店 Tanshan Food Store, Torreón.
- Tongmenghui** 同盟會 Revolutionary Alliance; Sun Yatsen's political organization founded in 1905 in Tokyo.

- Tongwen Xuexiao** 同文學校 Common Culture School, Kōbe.
- Waiwubu** 外務部 Qing Foreign Ministry (beginning in 1901).
- Wanmucaotang** 萬木草堂 Thatched Hut among Ten Thousand Trees; Kang's school in Guangzhou, 1890s.
- Wuxu Bianfa** 戊戌變法 One Hundred Days of Reform (June 11–September 21, 1898).
- Xianyouhui** 憲友會 Friends of the Constitution; first legal political party in Qing China, registered in early 1911; led by Sun Hongyi, Xu Fosu, and other reformers associated with Kang and Liang.
- Xianzheng Biancha Guan** 憲政編查館 Commission for Drawing up Regulations for Constitutional Government.
- Xianzheng Gonghui** 憲政公會 Association for Constitutional Government.
- Xianzhenghui** 憲政會 Constitutional Association
- Xiaoda Caotang** 孝達草堂 Corporate investor in King Joy Lo.
- Xingzhonghui** 興中會 Revive China Society, revolutionary organization founded by Sun Yatsen in 1894.
- Xuebu** 學部 Education Division, in 1905 charter.
- Xuexiaobu** 學校部 School Division, in proposed 1905 charter.
- Xuwen Kenwu Gongsi** 徐聞墾務公司 Baohuanghui land reclamation company in Xuwen County, Guangdong.
- Yihetuan** 義和團 Righteous and Harmonious Fists, Boxers.
- Yingshu Jia'nada Qisheng Xianzheng Zonghui** 英屬加拿大七省憲政總會 Constitutional Association of the Seven Provinces of the British Dominion of Canada.
- Yishu Ju** 譯書局 Translation Bureau [alternate name for Guangzhi Shuju].
- Yongfu Gongsi** 永富公司 King Joy Lo corporate shareholder.
- Yongsheng Hao** 永生號 (Wing Sang) Victoria company of Ye Chuntian.
- Youmei Xuetaang** 有美學堂 Escuela Yue Mae, school in Monclova, Coahuila, Mexico.
- Yucai Shushu** 育材書塾 Early new-style school in Shanghai, whose first female students were Xue Jinqin and her sister, Xue Jinxia.
- Yue-Han Tielu** 粵漢鐵路 Canton-Hankow (Guangzhou-Hankou) Railway.
- Yueshang Zizhihui** 粵商自治會 Guangdong Merchants Self-Government Association.
- Yuying Xuexiao** 育英學校 School in Kowloon founded by Ou Jujia.
- Zhengqihui** 正氣會 Society of the Righteous Spirit.
- Zhengwenshe** 政聞社 Political Information Society.
- Zhenhua Shiye Gongsi** 振華實業公司 Jun Wah Sut Yip, Jun Wah Mining Company, Guangxi.
- Zhiduju** 制度局 Board of Planning or bureau of institutions proposed by Kang during One Hundred Days of Reform.
- Zhigongtang (Chee Kong Tong)** 致公堂 (Hongmen 洪門) Chinese Triads or Freemasons, secret society active in North America.
- Zhiminbu** 殖民部 Immigration (or Colonization) Division, proposed by Kang for 1905 charter.

- Zhong-Mo Lunchuan Gongs** 中墨輪船公司 Sino-Mexican Steamship Company.
- Zhongguo Shangwu Gongs** 中國商務公司 China Commercial Corporation.
- Zhongguo Weixinhui** 中國維新會 (China Reform Association, shortened to Weixinhui or Reform Society)
- Zhonghua Diguo** 中華帝國 Chinese Empire.
- Zhonghua Diguo Xianzhenghui** 中華帝國憲政會 China Imperial Constitutional Association.
- Zhonghua Huiguan** 中華會館 Six Companies, Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association.
- Zhonghua Minguo** 中華民國 Republic of China.
- Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo** 中華人民共和國 People's Republic of China.
- Zilihui** 自立會 Independence Society; successor to Zhengqihui.
- Zilijun** 自立軍 Independence Army.
- Ziyiju** 諮議局 Provincial assembly.
- Zizhengyuan** 資政院 Political Consultative Council.
- Zongli Yamen** 總理衙門 Qing Foreign Affairs Office (1861–1901), to which Kang was appointed by Guangxu in 1898.

Newspapers and Documents

- Aiguo Ge** 愛國歌 Patriotic Anthem.
- Baohuanghui Ge** 保皇會歌 Song of the Protect the Emperor Society.
- Baohuanghui Gongyi Gaiding Xinzhang** 保皇會公議改定新章 New Baohuanghui Charter Finalized after Public Discussion, July 1905.
- Baohuanghui Gongyi Gaiding Zhangcheng** 保皇會公議改定章程 Baohuanghui Group Discussion to Finalize Editing the Charter, June 1905 public letter from Kang announcing agenda for plenary session.
- Baojiu Da-Qing Huangdi Gongs Xuli** 保救大清皇帝公司序例 Preface and Regulations for the Company to Protect the Great Qing Emperor, the first Baohuanghui charter, or Baohuanghui Xuli 保皇會序例, October 1899.
- Beijing Shibao** 北京時報 Baohuanghui newspaper in Beijing.
- Bincheng Xin Bao (Penang Sin Poe)** 檳城新報 Penang Baohuanghui newspaper.
- Buren Zazhi** 不忍雜誌 Cannot Bear Magazine, published by Kang after his return to China.
- Chunqiu** 春秋 Spring and Autumn Annals.
- Da-Han Ribao (Tai-Hon Yat-Bo, Chinese Daily News)** 大漢日報 Zhigongtang newspaper in Vancouver, BC.
- Datong Ribao** 大同日報 Zhigongtang newspaper in San Francisco.
- Datong Shu** 大同書 Book of Great Community, Kang's utopian classic.

- Diguo Xianzhenghui Daji Yiyuan Huiyi Xuli** 帝國憲政會大集議員會議序例 (Account of Imperial Constitutional Association plenary meeting, 1907)
- Donghua Bao (Tung Wah Times)** 東華報 Sydney, Australia newspaper.
- Donghua Xin Bao (Tung Wah News)** 東華新報 Sydney, Australia newspaper founded in 1898; renamed Donghua Bao in 1902.
- Dong'ou Nühaojie** 東歐女豪傑 Female Heroes of Eastern Europe, probably written by Luo Xiaogao.
- Gancheng Xuexiao Ge** 干城學校歌 Song for the Western Military Academy.
- Gancheng Xuexiao Shi** 干城學校史 History of the Western Military Academy.
- Gemingjun** 革命軍 The Revolutionary Army, anti-Qing booklet by Zou Rong.
- Gongche Shangshu** 公車上書 Memorial of the Examination Candidates, 1895.
- Gonghe Zhengti Lun** 共和政體論 On the Republican Political System, 1911 essay by Kang Youwei.
- Gongmin Zizhi** 公民自治 On Citizen Self-Government, Kang Youwei.
- Gongyang Zhuan** 公羊傳 New Text commentary on Spring and Autumn Annals.
- Guofeng Bao** 國風報 Xianzhenghui newspaper in Shanghai.
- Guohun Bao** 國魂報 San Francisco Baohuanghui newspaper.
- Guomin Gongbao** 國民公報 Xianzhenghui newspaper in Beijing.
- Guoshi Bao** 國事報 Guangzhou Baohuanghui newspaper.
- Guowen Bao** 國聞報 Early reform newspaper.
- Huagong Jinyue Ji** 華工禁約記 Notes on the Exclusion of Chinese Laborers by Liang Qichao.
- Jianghan Gongbao** 江漢公報 (also known as **Dajiang Ribao** 大江日報) Zhengwenshe newspaper in Hankou.
- Jiu Shengzhu Ge** 救聖主歌 The Rescue of the Sacred Emperor, song.
- Jiuwang Lun** 救亡論 On Saving China from Collapse, 1911 essay by Kang Yowei.
- Ju Jinyue Chuandan—Lü Mei Huaren Laigao** 拒禁約傳單—旅美華人來稿 Leaflet Opposing the Exclusion Treaty—Manuscript from Chinese Living in America, June 10, 1905, Rangoon, Burma.
- Juan Jian Diguo Xianzheng Zonghuisuo Maidi Zhengxinlu** 捐建帝國憲政總會所買地征信錄 Financial Accounting of Donations for Buying Land for Xianzhenghui Headquarters Building, August to September, 1908.
- Liji** 禮記 Book of Rites.
- Liyun** 禮運 "Movement of the Rites," chapter in the Liji 禮記 Book of Rites, which inspired Kang's utopian vision.
- Min Bao** 民報 People's Journal, Tongmenghui newspaper.
- Nanyang Zonghui Bao** 南洋總匯報 The Union Times, Singapore Baohuanghui newspaper.
- Niuyue Ribao** 紐約日報 New York Daily News; English and Chinese Baohuanghui New York City newspaper.
- Nüxue Bao** 女學報 Women's Studies News, Chinese Girl's Progress (1898 issues).

- Ouzhou Shiyi Guo Youji** 歐洲十一國游記 Travel Notes on Eleven European Countries, by Kang Youwei.
- Qinding Xianfa Dagang** 欽定憲法大綱 Principles of a Constitution Compiled under Imperial Orders, August 27, 1908.
- Qingyi Bao** 清議報 The China Discussion, Yokohama Baohuanghui newspaper.
- Rixin Bao** 日新報 Sun Bo, or Chinese Reform Gazette, newspaper in Vancouver, BC; previous name was Xin Bao 新報.
- Ruishi Youji** 瑞士游記 Record of Journeys to Switzerland, by Kang Youwei.
- Shang Bao (Sheung Po)** 商報 Hong Kong Baohuanghui newspaper.
- Shaonian Zhongguo Chenbao** 少年中國晨報 Young China, San Francisco Tongmenghui newspaper.
- Shen Bao** 申報 Long-lived Shanghai newspaper.
- Shi Bao (Eastern Times)** 時報 Baohuanghui Shanghai newspaper.
- Shiji** 史記 Records of the Grand Historian, by Sima Qian.
- Shijie Ribao (Sai Gai Yat Po, Chinese World)** 世界日報 San Francisco Baohuanghui newspaper succeeding *Wenxing Bao* and *Xianzheng Bao*.
- Shijing Zhounan** 詩經周南 Odes of Zhou and the South from the Book of Songs.
- Shijiu Xintiao** 十九信條 Nineteen Articles, issued by Zizhengyuan, November 3, 1911.
- Shui Hu [Zhuan]** 水滸傳 Water Margin, classical Ming novel in which the heroes are bandits fighting for a political cause.
- Tianjin Yong Baoshe** 天津庸報社 Newspaper company that published Kang's 1926 essay on the failures of the Republic.
- Tiannan Xin Bao (Thien Nam Sin Pao)** 天南新報 Baohuanghui newspaper in Singapore.
- Wanguo Gongbao (A Review of the Times)** 萬國公報 Shanghai magazine edited by missionary Young J. Allen.
- Wanguo Jixin Bianlan (International Chinese Business Directory of the World)** 萬國寄信便覽 by Wong Kin, 1913.
- Wenxing Bao (Mon Hing Bo, The Chinese World)** 文興報 Baohuanghui newspaper in San Francisco.
- Wo Shi** 我史 My History, Kang's name for what became the "Luo Pu" *nianpu*.
- Wo Zhuan** 我傳 My Biography, Kang's name for the biography ultimately published in 1929, compiled by Lu Naixiang and Lu Dunkui.
- Wuzhi Jiuguo Lun** 物質救國論 On National Salvation through Material Civilization, by Kang Youwei.
- Xiyou Ji** 西游記 Journey to the West, classic novel.
- Xianzheng Bao** 憲政報 Chinese World, following the 1906 San Francisco earthquake, this is the relocated *Wenxing Bao* newspaper as it was called in Los Angeles.
- Xin Bao** 新報 Sun Bo, or Chinese Reform Gazette, Baohuanghui Vancouver, BC newspaper; renamed 1911 Rixin Bao 日新報.
- Xin Dalu Youji** 新大陸遊記 Travel Notes from the New World, by Liang Qichao.

- Xin Guangdong** 新廣東 New Guangdong, pamphlet on Guangdong independence by Ou Jujia.
- Xinmin Congbao** 新民叢報 Sein Min Choong Bou [New Citizen Journal], Yokohama Baohuanghui newspaper.
- Xinmin Shuo** 新民說 The New Citizen, series of articles by Liang Qichao published in Xinmin Congbao.
- Xin Xiaoshuo** 新小說 The New Fiction, Liang Qichao's journal.
- Xin Zhongguo Bao (Sun Chung Kwok Bo, New China News)** 新中國報 Honolulu newspaper; name changed in 1941 to Xin Zhongguo Ribao (New China Press) 新中國日報.
- Xin Zhongguo Jianshe Wenti** 新中國建設問題 On the Reconstruction of New China, by Liang Qichao.
- Yadong Bao** 亞東報 East Asia News, Baohuanghui newspaper in Kōbe, Japan.
- Yijing** 易經 Book of Changes, the oldest parts date to the early Western Zhou dynasty (11th century BCE).
- Yiyao Xin Bao** 益友新報 Baohuanghui newspaper in Manila.
- Yiyuan Weikai Yiqian Zhunian Choubai Shiyi** 議院未開以前逐年籌備事宜 List of Items to be Done Every Year before Parliament is Convened; known as the Nine-Year Plan.
- Yubei Lixian zhi Zhao** 預備立憲之詔 Proclamation for Preparing for a Constitutional Government.
- Zheng Lun** 政論 Political Commentary, Baohuanghui journal in Shanghai.
- Zhengxinlu** 徵信錄 Report on Financial Management, by Tan Zhangxiao (Tom Leung).
- Zhixin Bao** 知新報 China Reformer, newspaper in Macau.
- Zhongguo Minzhu Xianzhengdang Dangshi** 中國民主憲政黨黨史 Party History of the Chinese Democratic Constitutional Party by Wu Xianzi.
- Zhongguo Ribao** 中國日報 "China," Hong Kong paper edited by revolutionary Feng Ziyao.
- Zhongguo Shangwu Gongsì Zhangcheng** 中國商務公司章程 Regulations of the Chinese Commercial Corporation.
- Zhongguo Shangwu Gongsì Zhaogu Jianming Zhangcheng** 中國商務公司招股簡明章程 Concise Rules for Soliciting Shares for the Chinese Commercial Corporation, 1903.
- Zhongguo Weixin Bao (Chinese Reform News)** 中國維新報 New York City Baohuanghui newspaper.
- Zhonghua Diguò Xianzhenghui Ge Sizhang** 中華帝國憲政會歌四章 Four-quatrain Anthem for the Chinese Imperial Constitutional Association.
- Zhonghua Diguò Xianzhenghui Lianhe Haiwai Erbai bu Qiaomin Gongshang Qingyuan Shu** 中華帝國憲政會聯合海外二百埠僑民公上請願書 Petition Jointly Presented by the Overseas Chinese Members of the Chinese Imperial Constitutional Association in 200 Cities Abroad.

Zhongxi Ribao (Chung Sai Yat Po) 中西日報 San Francisco newspaper.

Zhouli 周禮 The Rites of Zhou.

Other Terms

aiguo 愛國 love the country, patriotism

aiguoxin 愛國心 patriotic feeling

baguwen 八股文 eight-legged or eight-part essay

baiwan da gongsi 百萬大公司 large one-million-[yuan] company

baizei 白賊 white thieves

bandian 板店 lumber company

bang 鎊 British pound (currency)

bangjia shi 鎊價事 the matter of the price of the British pound

banhuo 辦貨 to handle the purchase of goods

banshiren 辦事人 staff members

baoguo, baozhong, baojiao 保國, 保種, 保教 preserve the nation, preserve the race,
and preserve [Confucian] teachings

baogong 報功 report achievements

baoxing 寶星 gold and silver-plated badges

beisong 背誦 recite details from memory

bianfa 變法 institutional reform, particularly political reform

bingcao 兵操 military drills

bingfa 兵法 the art of war

bingshi 兵士 soldiers

boluo 博洛 city blocks

bushou xinjin 不收薪金 will not receive a salary

buwu 步武 march in formation

buxiao 不肖 unworthy

cang fu yu min 藏富於民 locating wealth in the people

cha 查 audit

cheng 誠 honesty

cheng, zhen, xiang 城, 鎮, 鄉 cities, towns, and villages

chengbi 城壁 city ramparts

chi 恥 humiliation

chuang zu 創祖 progenitor, originator

ci 慈 love for the elderly

cuimianshu 催眠術 hypnotism

dadan (di daum) 大膽 courageous to the point of boldness

dang 黨 party, faction

danghuo 黨禍 disasters resulting from affiliation to a party

- dangkui* 黨魁 party boss
dangui 丹桂 red cassia
daotai 道台 circuit intendant
Da-Qing 大清 The Great Qing
Da-Qing Guo 大清國 Great Qing Empire
da tuo Riben 大托日本 rely heavily on Japan
diding qianliang 地丁錢糧 land and labor taxes
diduan 地段 areal sector or section of land
diguo 帝國 empire
dizhi 抵制 boycott
dongshi 董事 director, board member
duban 督辦 supervisor
dufu 督撫 governors and governors general
duli 獨立 independence
eryuan 二元 duality
falü 法律 laws
faliibu 法律部 legal division
fanduidang 反對黨 opposition party
fangkuan 放款 make a loan
fengmao 風帽 hood or cowl-like winter hat
fenjin 份金 share
fu, zhou, xian 府州縣 prefecture, department, and county
fuduban 副督辦 deputy supervisor
fuyan 浮言 impetuous remarks
gancheng 干城 defending army
gandun 干盾 shields
ganshiyuan 幹事員 secretary or manager in charge of something
geming 革命 revolution
geming xieshuo 革命邪說 heresies of the revolutionaries
gongche or gongju 公車 special carriages transporting *juren* (provincial graduates) to the capital for the national examinations (Han dynasty)
gongde 公德 civic responsibility or public morality
gonghan 公函 public letter
gongkuan 公款 public funds
gongmin 公民 citizens with legal rights and responsibilities
gongsi 公司 corporation or company
gongsizhang 公司長 company president
gongyi 公議 public discussion
guanku 管庫 treasurer
guanshu 管數 accountant

- guanyinyuan* 管銀員 bookkeeper
- guben* 股本 capital stock
- guo* 國 nation
- guo yi min wei ben* 國以民爲本 the people are the basis of the nation
- guochi* 國恥 national humiliation
- guohui* 國會 parliament, congress, national assembly
- guojia sixiang* 國家思想 idea of the nation, state consciousness, nationalism
- guomin* 國民 citizen
- guoyu guowen* 國語國文 national spoken and written language
- guozhigancheng* 國之干城 heroic defenders of the nation
- he daqun* 合大群 uniting in large groups
- hequn* 合群 gather in groups, grouping
- heshu, heshuyuan, chashu* 核數, 核數員 or 查數 auditor
- hig lo* 系咯 meaning yes (Cantonese)
- huang* 黃 yellow
- huangzhong* 黃中 the "Yellow Center," symbolizing China
- huangzhong* 黃種 the yellow race
- hui* 會 association
- huiguan* 會館 clan or other voluntary association
- huipai* 會牌 association, membership, or organizational badge
- huipiao* 會票 membership certificate or card
- huipiao* 匯票 money order
- jianfasuo* 剪髮所 barber shop
- jiang* 將 general
- jiangshi* 將師 army officer
- jiedan* 揭單 disclosure sheet, IOU
- jiedangyingsi, youyan luan zheng* 結黨營私, 莠言亂政 Forming factions for personal gain and spreading pernicious words to disrupt the government
- jieju* 拮據 short of money
- jinshi* 進士 palace graduate or scholar who passed the highest imperial examination and could directly memorialize the emperor
- jiu shijie* 舊世界 old world
- jiuguo* 救國 save the country
- jizhu yinhang* 積貯銀行 savings bank
- jun min gongzhi* 君民共治 the monarch and the people share the rule
- junji dachen* 軍機大臣 Grand Councilors, officials of the Grand Council
- junquan* 君權 monarchical power
- junzhu xianzheng* 君主憲政 constitutional monarchy
- junzifu* 軍諮府 Army General Staff
- juren* 舉人 successful candidate in provincial examinations

- kai guohui* 開國會 convene parliament
- kai minzhi* 開民智 enlighten the general populace
- kai xin tian* 開新天 opening up a new heaven
- kaiming pai* 開明派 enlightened group
- Kang Dang** 康黨 Kang's Party or Kang's Faction
- Kang Youwei Re** 康有爲熱 "Kang Fever"
- Kang Youwei zhuyi zhe** 康有爲主義者 "Kangists"
- li* 里 traditional measure of distance
- lianhui* 聯會 federations of branches
- lice* 櫟冊 document-checking (Cantonese term)
- lieqiang* 列強 Great Powers
- lifa* 立法 legislation
- linshi sili* 臨時司理 acting director
- Liu Junzi** 六君子 Six Gentlemen (Tan Sitong, Kang Guangren [Kang Youwei's younger brother], Censor Yang Shenxiu, Lin Xu, Liu Guangdi, and Yang Rui)
- lujunxue* 陸軍學 systematic army training
- maobianzhi* 毛邊紙 writing paper made from bamboo
- Meiguo bingxue* 美國兵學 American military schools
- Meiguo jiaoxi* 美國教習 American instructors
- mijiao* 米校 rice brokerage
- mingfen* 名分 rights and obligations (from the *Spring and Autumn Annals*)
- minquan* 民權 popular rights
- mitu* 密圖 secret plot
- moli* 魔力 magical power
- mou dizhi* 謀抵制 plan the boycott
- nianpu* 年譜 chronological autobiography
- nühuizhang* 女會長 president of the Baohuanghui women's association
- pai* 牌 medal
- peijian* 佩劍 sword worn at the waist
- pianti* 駢體 parallel prose
- pian ting bu ming, pian shi bu jian* 偏聽不明, 偏視不見 listening with half an ear and failing to understand, looking with a prejudiced eye and not seeing
- piao* 票 certificate
- pingpiao* 憑票 certificate of proof
- pingtie* 憑帖 coupons to prove payment
- pohuaizhuyi* 破壞主義 "destructivism"
- qin* 琴 Chinese zither
- Qinwang** 勤王 Baohuanghui 1900 military uprising to restore the Guangxu Emperor, the term originating in a Tang dynasty essay, meaning "rush troops to save the throne"
- quan* 權 rights

- quanli* 權利 rights and privileges
- quanye dao* 勸業道 industrial intendant
- renxin* 人心 popular sentiment
- san da du* 三大毒 three great malefactors (Ronglu, Li Lianying, and Cui Yugui)
- sanshi* 三世 the three ages
- shangdeng Huaren* 上等華人 upperclass Chinese
- shanggu* 商股 business shares
- shanghui* 商會 chamber of commerce
- shangkuan* 商款 business funds
- shangwuju* 商務局 bureau of commerce
- shaonian* 少年 youth
- sheng wang* 聖王 sage sovereign
- shengyuan* 生員 prefectural degree-holder
- shezheng* 攝政 regency
- shoupiao* 收票 receipt
- shouyinyuan* 收銀員 treasurer
- shudang* 鼠黨 the “rat” party (Tongmenghui)
- shuji* 書記 secretary
- shuzheng gong zhu yulun* 庶政公諸輿論 public discussion of the affairs of state;
from the July 8, 1907 edict allowing public recommendations on constitutional
preparation to be forwarded to the Qing
- sikuyuan* 司庫員 treasurer
- sili* 司理 director
- telu* 特利 special profits
- teligu* 特利股 special dividend shares
- ting, zhou, xian* 廳州縣 subprefectures, prefectures, and counties
- ti-yong* 體用 Zhang Zhidong’s formula, rejected by Kang, abbreviated from the
phrase, “Zhongxue wei ti, Xixue wei yong” 中學爲體, 西學爲用 “Chinese learning
as the essence, Western learning for utility”
- tongzhi* 同志 comrade
- tousu* 投訴 right of appeal
- tuanli* 團力 strength of the group
- waijiaoguan* 外交官 foreign affairs officials, diplomats
- weiguo* 衛國 defend the nation
- wen* 文 pattern, literature and the cultural tradition, doctrine or creed
- wenke* 文科 liberal arts
- wenming* 文明 cultural achievements, civilization
- wo Zhongghua* 我中華 our Middle Flowering Realm, our China
- wudang* 吾黨 our party
- wuming* 武明 military brilliance
- wuzhi qiji* 物質汽機 the technology of the steam engine

- wuzhi* [zhí] *xue* 物質[之]學 study of science and technology [material]
Xianbei 鮮卑 proto-Mongol nomadic tribe
xianzhang 憲章 charter, constitution
xianzheng 憲政 constitutional government
xiao 孝 filial piety
xiashi 俠士 or *youxia* 游俠 knight-errant; *nüxia* 女俠 female knight-errant
xieli 協理 assistant manager
xin shijie 新世界 new world
xinmin 新民 new citizen, renewing the people
xinmin xinguo 新民新國 a new people and a new country
Xinzheng 新政 New Policies; reforms introduced by Cixi in 1901
xinzhì 新制 new system
Xiongnu 匈奴 tribal confederation on China's northern frontier
Xishenfang 洗身房 Bathhouse
xitong 西童 American [Western] children
xuan 玄 dark
xuanfu dachen 宣撫大臣 pacification commissioner
xuechi 雪恥 to avenge humiliation
xujun gonghe 虛君共和 titular monarchical republic
xunzheng 訓政 political tutelage
yanlu 言路 channel for communicating with leaders
yanqing 延請 employ, engage
yi tu qiangsheng qi guojia 以圖強盛其國家 seek to make their country strong and prosperous
yi wanguo jingyan zui liang 以萬國經驗最良 proved best by the experience of other countries
yici tian wo 以此餞我 hook me in
yi'er xizhuang 一二西裝 one or two sets of Western clothes
Yiguo gudong 意國古董 Italian curios or antiques
yike jian heng mo 一客劍橫磨 warrior who wields a sharpened sword
ying 媵 maid escort, concubine
yinhao 銀號 private [remittance] bank
yinliang or liang 銀兩, 兩 tael
yinzhì 銀紙 banknotes
yinzhuàn 音轉 phonetic transformation
yi'yuán 議員 councilor, legislator
yi'yuán 議院 parliament, congress, legislature
yi'yuán hongguī 議院宏規 the grand plan for this congress
yizhang 議長 chairperson
youbu 遊埠 travel to chapters
yuejuan 月捐 monthly contribution

- yupiao gongsi* 漁票公司 officially issued fishing franchise
yuwu 禦侮 resist foreign aggression
zaojiu 造就 to train
zhang 章 insignia, badge, rules, constitution
zhangzhe 長者 Elder, as his disciples referred to Kang Youwei
zhengdang 政黨 political party
zhengzhi geming 政治革命 political revolution
zhibing 治兵 direct military affairs
zhili 值理 outreach activists
zhilipai 值理牌 Baohuanghui staff badge, as designated in 1905 charter
zhishi 志士 men of high ambition
zhiyuan 職員 functionaries
zhizheng 執政 to hold the reins of government
zhong 中 central, the mean, middle
zhong 忠 loyalty
zhongcheng 忠誠 loyalty and honesty
Zhonghua 中華 China
zhongyi 眾議 deliberations of the people
zhongyuan 中原 central plains [China]
zhongzu 種族 race, ethnic group
zhu tongzhi 諸同志 other comrade
zhuan 傳 biography
zhuang tipo 壯體魄 robust physique
zhiqiang 自強 strengthen ourselves
ziyou 自由 freedom or liberty
zonggongsi 總公司 headquarters of the company
zonghui 總會 headquarters
zongjiaoxi 總教習 head instructor
zongjiaozhang 總教長 chief instructor
zongju 總局 head office
zongli 總理 president, general manager, corporation president
zongtong 總統 president
zongzhang 總長 president
zuye 卒業 advanced study

People

- Ban Chao** 班超 Han dynasty military and diplomatic official admired by Kang.
Bao Chi (Pow Chee) 鮑熾 Sydney, Australia, Baohuanghui leader and interpreter for Liang Qichao.

- Bao Tianxiao** 包天笑 *Shi Bao* writer involved in 1905 and 1908 boycotts.
- Bi Yongnian** 畢永年 Hunan friend of Tan Sitong and part of Kang's military coup plot.
- Blake, Sir Henry Arthur** 卜力 (Buli) native of Ireland and governor of Hong Kong (1898–1903) during Kang Youwei's initial exile (1840–1914).
- Cai Jun** 蔡鈞 Shanghai circuit intendant, 1898.
- Cai Zengji (Jun Ke Choy)** 蔡增基 activist in Chinese Democratic Constitutionalist Party and benefactor of *Shijie Ribao* in San Francisco.
- Cao Jiu (Chu Gow)** 曹九 owner of Port Arthur Restaurant and the 7-9 Mott Street building of New York Baohuanghui headquarters; a Baohuanghui board member.
- Cao Yi** 曹毅 former Kang Youwei student who taught at Youmei School in Mexico.
- Cen Chunxuan** 岑春煊 Liangguang governor general.
- Cen Shouchang** 岑壽昌 San Salvador leader.
- Changshu** 常熟 Kang's nickname for Weng Tonghe, who came from Changshu, Jiangsu.
- Chen Baixin (Chin Pak Sun, Chan Pak Sun, Chan Pack Sun, Chan Pok Sun)** 陳百信 Chicago Baohuanghui leader, manager of King Joy Lo 1910–11.
- Chen Cai (Chang Toy)** 陳才 Vancouver Baohuanghui leader.
- Chen Chunchu** 陳春初 Victoria Baohuanghui leader.
- Chen Dongru** 陳東儒 Victoria Baohuanghui leader (1848–1910).
- Chen Enrong (Claude Ley Kum)** 陳恩榮 Australian Chinese who was Kang's interpreter in Canada and Europe, 1899.
- Chen Gun (Chun Quon, C.Q. Yee Hop)** 陳滾 Honolulu businessman who funded the longest-lasting Baohuanghui newspapers in Honolulu and San Francisco (1867–1954).
- Chen Guorui (Chin K. Shue, Charles K. Shue)** 陳國瑞 president of Boston Baohuanghui chapter; president of King Joy Lo in 1912.
- Chen Guoyong** 陳國鏞 (**Chen Lüsheng** 陳侶笙) Yokohama Baohuanghui editor.
- Chen Hechou** 陳鶴儔 Vancouver Baohuanghui leader.
- Chen Hongxun (Chin F. Foin, Chin Fan Foin, Chan Foon)** 陳宏勳 president of Chicago Baohuanghui, restaurateur and founder of King Joy Lo.
- Chen Huannian** 陳煥年 supervisor of New York's Huayi Bank.
- Chen Huanzhang** 陳煥章 (**Chen Zhongyuan** 陳重遠) Kang's student whose Columbia University education was likely supported by Baohuanghui, promoter of Confucianism.
- Chen Huipu** 陳惠普 leader of Guangdong Merchants Self-Government Association.
- Chen Jingren** 陳景仁 Zhengwenshe member.
- Chen Kuilong** 陳夔龍 Qing official.
- Chen Lanbin (Chin Lan Pin)** 陳蘭彬 head of Chinese Educational Commission to the United States, 1870s.
- Chen Minsheng** 陳敏生 head of Baohuanghui California division in San Francisco.

- Chen Shaobai** 陳少白 revolutionary comrade of Sun Yatsen.
- Chen Wencun** 陳文邨 San Salvador leader.
- Chen Wenhui** 陳文惠 Hong Kong Baohuanghui member.
- Chen Xiankui (Chin Yong Quai)** 陳賢達 Chicago member and investor in King Joy Lo.
- Chen Yikan (Yee Um Chun, Chun Yi Om)** 陳儀侃 (**Chen Yi'an** 陳宜庵, **Chen Jiyan** 陳繼儼, **Yifu** 宜甫) Baohuanghui newspaper editor in Honolulu and San Francisco (1869–1926).
- Chen Yixi** 陳宜禧 raised shares for railroad in Xinning from Chinese overseas.
- Chen Yuesong (Chan Yok Soon)** 陳岳崧 Kang's secretary, Chicago member.
- Chen Zibao** 陳子褒 Kang disciple and writer of textbooks used in Baohuanghui schools.
- Cheng Kang'en** 程康恩 proposed as Baohuanghui-funded student to be supported by Tom Leung in Los Angeles.
- Cixi, Empress Dowager** 慈禧太后 (**Yehenala** 葉赫那拉) (1835–1908).
- Cui Yugui** 崔玉貴 Cixi's second chief eunuch.
- Cui Zijian (Chuy C. Kain)** 崔子肩 president, San Francisco Baohuanghui chapter.
- Dai Hongci** 戴鴻慈 leader of Qing constitutional mission abroad, 1906.
- Deng Xiaoping** 鄧小平 Chinese Communist Party leader (1904–97).
- Deshou** 德壽 Guangdong governor general.
- Di Chuqing** 狄楚卿 (**Di Baoxian** 狄葆賢, **Gaode** 高德) publisher of Shanghai *Shi Bao* (1873–1921).
- Di Renjie** 狄仁傑 Tang dynasty prime minister under Empress Wu Zetian.
- Dong Qiantai** 董謙泰 Victoria leader.
- Prince Duan** 端親王 (**Zaiyi** 載漪) Pujun's father; sympathetic to Cixi.
- Duanfang** 端方 reform-minded Manchu official who collaborated with Liang Qichao to make constitutional reform recommendations to Cixi.
- Fan Bingjun** 范秉鈞 Zhengwenshe leader.
- Fan Jingsheng** 范靜生 (**Fan Yuanlian** 范源廉) instructor at Beijing University who had studied banking; recommended by Kang to the Commercial Corporation.
- Fan Zhongyan** 范仲淹 Song dynasty statesman and intellectual.
- Faxian** 法顯 one of four Buddhist pilgrims thought to be the first Chinese travelers to India.
- Feng Chunlin** 馮春霖 St. Louis Baohuanghui member.
- Feng Cikun** 馮次琨 Philadelphia Baohuanghui member.
- Feng Guozhang** 馮國璋 Qing Second Army Commander in 1911 during Luanzhou mutiny; Republic of China Provisional President, 1917.
- Feng Jingquan (Fong Kan Chun)** 馮鏡泉 manager of Huayi Bank in New York, from Helena, Montana.

- Feng Jingru** 馮鏡如 publisher in Yokohama of Baohuanghui journals; son was Feng Ziyou.
- Feng Junqing** 馮俊卿 founding member of Victoria Baohuanghui.
- Feng Xiushi** 馮秀石 Victoria Baohuanghui leader.
- Feng Zishan** 馮紫珊 Yokohama Baohuanghui leader.
- Feng Ziyou** 馮自由 (**Feng Maolong** 馮懋龍) revolutionary leader active in North America (1882–1958).
- Fuyouguiwei** 富有貴為 “Rich-You Honorable-Wei,” a derogatory play on the name Youwei.
- Guan Boyao** 關伯堯 San Francisco Baohuanghui leader.
- Guan Lai** (**Guan Guobin** 關國斌, **Quon Loy**, **Quon Louie**, **Quong Loue**, **Quong Louis**) 關來 Butte, Montana, leader in 1899.
- Guan Xianghuan** 關祥煥 Butte, Montana, member, 1901.
- Guangxu** 光緒 Qing emperor, reigned 1875–1908 (1871–1908).
- Han Wenju** 韓文舉 Kang’s disciple in Japan (1864–1944).
- Han Xin** 韓信 military hero of the Han dynasty.
- Hay, John Milton** (1838–1905) U.S. Secretary of State (1898–1905).
- He Chunfang** (**Haw Gum**, **Fernando Haw**, **Jim Fernando**) 何騰芳 Fresno Baohuanghui leader and father of Kang’s third wife, He Zhanli.
- He Huizhen** (**Fui Jin Ho**) 何惠珍 leader of women’s association in Honolulu.
- He Jiaben** 何家本 official in Jilin, Tom Leung’s relative, and investor in King Joy Lo.
- He Qingyi** 何擎一 disciple of Liang Qichao, associated with Tongwen School in Kōbe.
- He Qiwu** 何其武 brother of He Huizhen and accused of murdering Liu Shiji.
- He Suitian** 何穗田 (**He Tingguang** 何廷光) Baohuanghui leader in Macau, manager of *Zhixin Bao*.
- He Yanmei** 何燕美 president of Toronto Baohuanghui.
- He You** (**Ho Yow**) 何祐 Chinese consul in San Francisco.
- He Zhanli** (**Lillie** or **Lily Haw**) 何旻理 (**He Jinlan** 何金蘭, **Yi Tao** 漪涛, **Lingfen** 灵芬) Kang’s third wife, married 1907 (1890–1915).
- He Zhuojing** (**Hall Cherk Gin**) 何卓競 Vancouver *Xin Bao* editor.
- Hezi** 鶴子 (**Ichioaka Tsuruko** 市岡鶴子) Kang’s Japanese maid in Suma Ward in Kōbe, Japan, and fourth wife, married in 1914 (1897–1974).
- Ho Tung**, later **Sir Robert Hotung**, **He Dong** 何東 Hong Kong leader who helped house and fund Kang and his family in Hong Kong (1862–1956).
- Hong Quanfu** (**Hung Chuan-fook**) 洪全福 (**Hong Chunkui** 洪春魁) participant in Guangdong Rising plot of 1902–3.
- Hu Ji** 胡楫 accountant [auditor?] of King Joy Lo in 1912.
- Hu Lanfu** (**Woo Lam Po?**) 胡蘭甫 involved with the Baohuanghui streetcar line in Torreón.

- Hu Meifang** 胡梅肪 Boston Baohuanghui member.
- Hu Zhen (Woo Gen)** 胡真 (**Hu Ba'nán** 胡拔南) Seattle Baohuanghui leader.
- Huang Binghu (Wong Bing Woo)** 黃冰壺 wife of Los Angeles Baohuanghui founder Tom Leung and leader of Los Angeles women's association (1875–1957).
- Huang Chunshan** 黃春山 Hartford Baohuanghui member.
- Huang Duo (Wong Dock?)** 黃鐸 Chicago member.
- Huang Gonghu** 黃公祐 involved in Penang rice brokerage.
- Huang Jin (Wong Kin, Wong Kam, Wong Kim)** 黃金 Baohuanghui leader in San Francisco, editor of *International Chinese Business Directory of the World*.
- Huang Jinfeng** 黃錦峰 Victoria Baohuanghui leader.
- Huang Jinyuan** 黃錦源 interpreted for Kang in Mexico.
- Huang Kaijia (Wong Kai Kah)** 黃開甲 Vice Imperial Commissioner, Chinese delegation to 1904 St. Louis World's Fair.
- Huang Kongzhao** 黃孔昭 Vancouver Baohuanghui chapter president who defected to revolutionaries.
- Huang Kuanri (Wong Joe Chuck)** 黃寬日 Torreón Baohuanghui leader, brother of Wong Foon Chuck.
- Huang Kuanzhuo (Wong Foon Chuck)** 黃寬焯 Torreón Baohuanghui leader most responsible for Baohuanghui businesses in Mexico.
- Huang Qijun** 黃啓騫 (probably **Huang Zaozhong** 黃藻仲) King Joy Lo investor in China who recruited relatives of Huang Xi and Huang Binghu to buy shares in the Chicago restaurant.
- Huang Qiongfeng** 黃瓊鳳 Baohuanghui feminist leader in Mexico.
- Huang Richu** 黃日初 Mexico City physician and Baohuanghui leader.
- Huang Rongye** 黃榮業 Baohuanghui leader in Hartford, Connecticut.
- Huang Sande (Wong Sam Duck)** 黃三德 San Francisco Zhigongtang leader and supporter of Sun Yatsen (1863–1946).
- Huang Shaojing** 黃紹經 Honolulu Baohuanghui member.
- Huang Xi (Wong Kai)** 黃溪 (**Huang Peiquan** 黃佩泉) Baohuanghui leader in New York who defected to start the first Tongmenghui chapter in the United States in 1909.
- Huang Xi (Wong Yap)** 黃翕 (**Huang Chuda, Wong Tui That** 黃處達, **Huang Qiaokai** 黃翹開) represented Guangdong and Guangxi provincial governments at 1904 St. Louis World's Fair (1879–19??).
- Huang Xing** 黃興 Tongmenghui commander.
- Huang Xuanlin** 黃宣琳 Victoria merchant who suggested the name Baohuanghui in 1899.
- Huang Yuanhuo (José Chuck Wong)** 黃蘭活 principal of Youmei School, Monclova, Mexico, brother of Wong Foon Chuck.

- Huang Yushan (Wong Soon King)** 黃玉珊 Vancouver leader of Commercial Corporation.
- Huang Zhuoxing (Alonso Quant)** 黃卓興 San Salvador Baohuanghui leader.
- Huineng** 惠能 one of four Buddhist pilgrims thought to be the first Chinese travelers to India.
- Jiang Anlu** 蔣安祿 New Westminster, BC Baohuanghui leader.
- Jiang Lun** 蔣倫 Baohuanghui leader, New Westminster, BC.
- Jiang Naitong** 蔣奈同 vice president of Canadian Xianzhenghui.
- Jing Ke** 荊軻 admired by Sima Qian (and Kang) for attempting to assassinate the man who became emperor Qin Shihuang.
- JingYuanshan** 經元善 reform-minded head of the Shanghai Telegraph Administration.
- Kang Guangren** 康廣仁 Kang Youwei's younger brother and one of the Six Martyrs executed in 1898 (1867–98).
- Kang Tongbi (Kang Tung Pih)** 康同璧 Kang Youwei's second daughter (1881–1969).
- Kang Tonghuan** 康同環 Kang's seventh daughter, born in Sweden.
- Kang Tonghui** 康同惠 son of Kang's cousin Kang Youlin; worked in Mexican Baohuanghui enterprises.
- Kang Tongji** 康同吉 Kang's second son by second wife Liang Suijue, born January 19, 1902, died within a month.
- Kang Tongjian** 康同錢 (**Kang Shouman** 康壽曼, **Simon**) Kang's first son by second wife Liang Suijue (1908–61).
- Kang Tongning** 康同凝 son of Kang and He Zhanli (1909–78).
- Kang Tongwei** 康同薇 Kang's eldest daughter (1879–1974).
- Kang Tongzhao** 康同照 secretary of New York's Huayi Bank and son of Kang's cousin, Kang Yougong.
- Kang Yougong** 康有功 Kang's cousin.
- Kang Youlin** 康有霖 Kang's cousin.
- Kang Youpei** 康有霖 (**Kang Jiyu** 康季雨, 繼寓) Kang's cousin, son of his third uncle Kang Dashou 康達守 and active in the U.S. Baohuanghui, including Huayi Bank in New York.
- Kang Youwei** 康有爲 (**Beijiang** 北江; **Biyan** 庇言 referring to Penang; **Changsu** 長素; **Gengsheng** 更生; **Guangsha** 廣廈; **Sam Muk** 榎木森 or **Jiamusen**, Kang Youwei's Japanese name; **Mingyi** 明夷; **Nanhai** 南海; **Nanfo** 南佛; **Tianyouhuaren** 天游化人; **Xiqiao Shanren** 西樵山人; **Youcunsou** 游存叟; **Zuyi** 祖詒) (1858–1927).
- Kang Zanxiu** 康贊修 Kang Youwei's paternal grandfather (1806–77).
- Kuang Shoumin** 鄺壽民 (**Shouwen** 壽文) Baohuanghui leader in charge of Hong Kong headquarters.
- Lan Tianwei** 藍天蔚 Commander, Second Mixed Brigade in Mukden, Fengtian.
- Lao Lianzhi** 勞連枝 Kang Youwei's mother (1831–1913).

- Lea, Homer (Kan Ma Li 堪罵李, 堪罵利 or Kong Ma Li 孔馬哩, 孔馬李)** American founder and chief instructor of Western Military Academy (1876–1912).
- Lei Weili 雷維利** San Francisco Baohuanghui leader in 1899.
- Li Bohai 李伯海** son of Victoria leader Li Fuji and follower of Sun Yatsen from 1905.
- Li Daming (Dai Ming Lee) 李大明** editor of *Shijie Ribao* in its late years (1904–61).
- Li Duchu 李篤初** Baltimore Baohuanghui member.
- Li Fuji (Lee Fook Kee, Lee Folk Gay) 李福基 (Li Wenhui or Li Man Wai 李文惠)** Baohuanghui founder and loyal Victoria leader.
- Li Hongzhang 李鴻章** Qing military leader and statesman (1823–1901).
- Li Hua (Li Wah) 黎華** King Joy Lo early staff member and on its final 1925 board of directors.
- Li Ji (Lee Kee) 李驥 (Li Qingchi 李清墀)** early Vancouver Baohuanghui leader.
- Li Kuncheng 李昆成** Pittsburgh Baohuanghui member.
- Li Lianying 李蓮英** Cixi's chief eunuch (d. 1911).
- Li Meijin (Lee Maginn; Lee Mee Ginn) 李美近** Portland Baohuanghui leader from 1899.
- Li Mengjiu (Lee Mong Kow) 李夢九 (Li Xianchou 李仙儔)** Victoria Baohuanghui leader.
- Li Shangyin 李商隱** Tang dynasty poet.
- Li Shinan (Lee Se Nan) 李是男** clansman of Li Fuji and Li Bohai; Tongmenghui leader in San Francisco.
- Li Tang (Lee Tong) 李棠** Kang's servant when he fled China and bodyguard on his trip from Japan to Canada, 1899.
- Li Tengfang (Ting Fong) 黎騰芳** Montana Baohuanghui leader.
- Li Yaoxi 黎耀西** Hanford, California Baohuanghui member.
- Li Yiyao 李奕堯** New York Baohuanghui member.
- Li Yiyu (Yade Yee Lee) 李奕榆** student at Whitman College, Walla Walla, Washington who met Kang in 1905.
- Li Yongrao 李永饒** New Westminster, BC, Baohuanghui leader.
- Li Youshu 李祐樞** New Westminster, BC, Baohuanghui leader.
- Li Yuanhong 黎元洪** military governor of Hubei, later president of the Republic of China.
- Li Zesen 李澤森** Philadelphia Baohuanghui member.
- Li Zesheng 李澤生** New York Baohuanghui leader working with *Zhongguo Weixin Bao*.
- Liang Chaojie 梁朝杰** Kang's student who wrote a history of Zhenhua Gongsi and was editor of *Shijie Ribao* in San Francisco.
- Liang Cheng 梁誠 (Liang Zhendong, Chentung Liang Cheng 梁震東, Liang Pixu 梁丕旭)** Chinese Minister to Washington.

- Liang Dingfen (Leong Ting Fun)** 梁鼎芬 censor who blamed Yuan Shikai for murder of Guangxu.
- Liang Hongxuan** 梁鴻軒 Portland Baohuanghui leader.
- Liang Junke** 梁君可 Kang's student whose study abroad was personally supported by Kang.
- Liang Lingxian** 梁令嫻 (**Liang Sishun** 梁思順) Liang Qichao's eldest daughter; married Zhou Guoxian (1893–1966).
- Liang Qichao (Leong Kai Chew)** 梁啟超 (**Zhuoru** 卓如, **Rengong** 任公, **Mingxin** 名心) Kang's most illustrious disciple (1873–1929).
- Liang Qiming** 梁啟明 cousin of Liang Qichao who was in the United States.
- Liang Qinggui** 梁慶桂 imperial commissioner tasked with setting up Chinese language schools in American cities.
- Liang Qitian (Leong Tai Kinn, Leong Kay Ting)** 梁啟田 (**Junli** 君力) Liang Qichao's cousin and important surrogate for Kang Youwei; traveled extensively in North America as Baohuanghui organizer.
- Liang Qixun** 梁啟勳 Liang Qichao's brother, student in Chicago, and Baohuanghui organizer.
- Liang Qun** 梁群 Portland Baohuanghui member.
- Liang Tiejun** 梁鐵君 (**alias: Wu Daoming** 吳道明) Kang ally and wealthy businessman who was arrested and poisoned after attempting to execute a plot to assassinate the Empress Dowager.
- Liang Wenchang (Leong Mon Hain)** 梁文暢 Washington, DC Baohuanghui leader.
- Liang Wenqing** 梁文卿 (**Liang Qiushui** 梁秋水, **Liang Wenxing** 梁文興) New York teacher at Aiguo Xuetang and journalist with Baohuanghui newspapers in New York, San Francisco and Vancouver, BC.
- Liang Xun** 梁詢 (**Liang Hsun**) Chinese chargé d'affaires in Mexico City.
- Liang Yingliu** 梁應騶 (**Liang Shaoxian** 梁少閑) Kang's student and Baohuanghui activist.
- Liang Zigang** 梁子剛 Baohuanghui follower in Japan.
- Liao Dingzheng** 廖定徵 Kang's fifth wife, married in 1915.
- Liao Yipeng (Lew Yick Pen, Dr. Lui)** 廖翼朋 Vancouver Baohuanghui leader.
- Lin Boxiong** 林伯雄 Baohuanghui member in western Canada.
- Lin Duo** 林鐸 (**Lin Tianmu** 林天木) Baohuanghui-supported student in the United States and husband of Xue Jinqin.
- Lin Guoxiang** 林國祥 (**George Lem**) Los Angeles Baohuanghui member.
- Lin Lihuang** 林立滉 president in 1910 of Canadian Baohuanghui; also a Zhigongtang leader in Victoria headquarters.
- Lin Wenqing (Lim Boon Keng)** 林文慶 Singapore supporter of Kang Youwei.
- Lin Xu** 林旭 secretary in the Grand Council appointed by Guangxu during Hundred Days and one of Six Martyrs (1875–98).

- Lin Zhaosheng (Linn Chew Sang, C. S. Linn)** 林兆生 Kang's secretary in the United States, Mexico and Europe, from Astoria, Oregon.
- Liu Bang** 劉邦 founder of Han dynasty.
- Liu Chi** 劉熾 treasurer of King Joy Lo in 1912.
- Liu Guangdi** 劉光第 secretary in the Grand Council appointed by Guangxu during Hundred Days and one of Six Martyrs (1861–98).
- Liu Guanxiong** 劉冠雄 captain in 1898 of *Feiyang*, who failed to capture Kang as he escaped China.
- Liu Jintang** 劉錦堂 Victoria Baohuanghui leader.
- Liu Kangheng** 劉康恆 New Westminster, BC leader.
- Liu Kunyi** 劉坤一 Liangjiang governor general (1830–1902).
- Liu Qiong** 劉瓊 Seattle Baohuanghui leader.
- Liu Shiji** 劉士驥 Guangxi industrial intendant and Zhenhua Gongsì promoter.
- Liu Xuexun** 劉學詢 Qing collaborator tasked with assassinating Kang and Liang in Japan in 1899 (1855–1935).
- Liu Yulan** 劉玉蘭 (Lon Lew) Seattle women's association leader.
- Liu Zhangxuan** 劉章軒 New Westminster, BC, leader.
- Liu Zhenlin** 劉楨麟 Baohuanghui journalist.
- Liu Zikui** 劉子逵 Victoria Baohuanghui leader.
- Lu Chuanlin** 鹿傳霖 official in charge of the daily affairs of Guangxu in 1908.
- Lu Dunkui** 陆敦騷 (Lu Yijun 陆逸君) Kang's student who helped assemble and publish Kang's biography.
- Lu Naixiang** 陸乃翔 Kang's student who helped assemble and publish Kang's biography.
- Lu Renshan** 盧仁山 Victoria Baohuanghui leader.
- Lu Yongxiang** 盧永祥 commander, New Army Third Division, and participant in Luanzhou mutiny.
- Lu Zirong (Loo Gee Wing)** 盧梓榮 Victoria member who interpreted for Kang in 1899.
- Lü Wu** 呂武 Kang's codename for Cixi, short for Han Empress Lü Zhi 呂雉 and Tang Empress Wu Zetian 武則天.
- Luo Bingzhang** 駱秉章 Qing general and official (1793–1867).
- Luo Binwang** 駱賓王 Tang dynasty rebel who led an uprising against Empress Wu Zetian.
- Luo Botang** 羅伯棠 San Francisco Baohuanghui leader.
- Luo Chang** 羅昌 Kang Tongbi's fiancé and Baohuanghui-supported student at Oxford.
- Luo Changgen** 羅長根 one of Kang's interpreters in Mexico.
- Luo Fenglu (Lo Fengluh)** 羅豐祿 Chinese envoy to England.
- Luo Xiaogao** 羅孝高 (Luo Pu 羅普, Gaoshan 高山) editor of Shanghai *Shi Bao*; entrusted with Kang's *nianpu* in 1899 (1876–1949).

- Luo Yuehu** 駱月湖 Victoria Baohuanghui leader.
- Ma Guntang** 馬袞堂 Canadian Baohuanghui member sent to United States to set up chapters in 1899.
- Ma Hong** 馬宏 Han envoy captured by the Xiongnu.
- Ma Xiangbo** 馬相伯 Secretary General of Zhengwenshe.
- Mai De** 麥德 (**Mock Duck**) New York Chinatown gambler and tong leader.
- Mai Menghua** 麥孟華 (**Mai Rubo** 麥如博, 麥孺博) Kang's student active in Japan and China (1875–1915).
- Mai Zhonghua** 麥仲華 (**Mai Manxuan** 麥曼宣) Kang disciple and husband of Kang's eldest daughter Kang Tongwei (1876–1955).
- Mao Zedong** 毛澤東 founder and chairman of the Chinese Communist Party (1893–1976).
- Mason, Pansy** daughter of American Protestant missionaries to China, friend of Kang Tongbi in New York City who later served with the American Baptist Missionary Union in Sichuan (1879–1945).
- Mei An** 梅安 Boston Baohuanghui member.
- Mei Huazhen** (**Moy Wah June**) 梅華臻 (**Mei Zhen** 梅臻) Boston Baohuanghui leader; led a group of Baohuanghui-connected investors to buy King Joy Lo in 1912 and held roles as manager, director, or president.
- Mei Shengjie** 梅勝傑 St. Paul, Minnesota Baohuanghui member.
- Mei Yingfu** (**Moy Ying Fook**) 梅英福 (**Howard S. Moy**) son of Moy Wah June; deeply involved with King Joy Lo in Chicago, 1912–26.
- Mei Zongzhou** (**Moy Dong Chew**) 梅宗周 (**Mei Qishan** 梅岐山, **Xie Long, Hip Lung** 協隆) Chicago Baohuanghui president.
- Mo Yunping** (**Moc Won Ping, Wong Ping**) 莫雲屏 Los Angeles Baohuanghui leader.
- Nie Zheng** 聶政 assassin profiled in the *Shiji*.
- Ou Huaqing** 歐華清 brother of Ou Jujia and student supported by Baohuanghui.
- Ou Jujia** 歐渠甲 (**Ou Yunqiao, On Won Chew** 歐雲樵, **Ou Yungao** 歐雲高) Kang's student and Baohuanghui editor, Western Military Academy organizer, and a founder of Zhenhua Gongs.
- Ouyang Du'er** 歐陽度二 Sydney, Australia Baohuanghui member and Commercial Corporation councilor.
- Ouyang Xianzhou** 歐陽仙舟 (**Ben O. Young, Ouyang Hu** 歐陽湖) Fresno Baohuanghui member.
- Pan Juying** 潘渠楹 commander, Fortieth Brigade, New Army; signed Twelve Demands.
- Pan Ruohai** 潘若海 Kang disciple.
- Perovskaya, Sophia** (**Su Feiya** 蘇菲亞) Russian woman assassin (1854–81).
- Pu Dianjun** 蒲殿俊 constitutional activist.

- Pujun [Prince]** 溥儁 son of Prince Duan whom Cixi attempted to install in place of Guangxu in 1900 (1886–1929).
- Pulun [Prince]** 溥倫 reform-minded prince who represented China at the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair and president of the Zizhengyuan (1874–1927).
- Puyi** (see **Xuantong**).
- Qianlong** 乾隆 Qing emperor (reign: 1735–99).
- Qin Jing** 秦景 one of four Buddhist pilgrims thought to be the first Chinese travelers to India.
- Qin Liangyu** 秦良玉 female general of Ming dynasty (1574–1648).
- Qing, Prince** 慶親王 (**Yikuang** 奕劻) chief grand councilor and head of the Qing Foreign Office (1836–1918).
- Qiu Jin** 秋瑾 woman revolutionary martyr (1875–1907).
- Qiu Shuyuan (Khoo Seok Wan)** 邱菽園 Singapore supporter of Kang Youwei (1874–1941).
- Qu Hongji** 瞿鴻禨 Qing Grand Councilor (1850–1918).
- Rockhill, William Woodville (W. W.) (Roukeyi** 柔克義) U.S. minister to Beijing, 1905–9 (1854–1914).
- Rodgers, James L.** U.S. consul general in Shanghai, 1905–6 (1861–1930).
- Rong Hong (Yung Wing)** 容閔 (**Chun Lao** 純老, **Rong Chunfu** 容純甫, **Rong Chun** 容純) associated with Kang during Hundred Days of Reform, naturalized American citizen and leader of the Chinese Educational Mission, hosted Kang Tongbi in Connecticut, assisted Kang as interpreter and translator (1828–1912).
- Ronglu** 榮祿 head of the Grand Council and Kang's enemy (1836–1903).
- Shen Caiman** 潘財滿 Victoria Baohuanghui member who was Liang Qitian's secretary in the United States.
- Shennong** 神農 legendary founder of Chinese agriculture and medicine.
- Sima Qian** 司馬遷 Han dynasty author of *Shiji* [Records of the Grand Historian] (145?–90? BCE).
- Situ Guoyin** 司徒國蔭 a director of Hua-Mo Bank in Torreón, Mexico.
- Song Jiaoren** 宋教仁 revolutionary leader.
- Su [Prince]** 肅親王 (**Shanqi** 善耆).
- Su Shi** 蘇軾 Song dynasty official who spent years in exile.
- Su Shiyi** 蘇始熠 Yintang, Nanhai man who visited Kang on Coal Island in 1899.
- Su Wu** 蘇武 Han dynasty official who spent many years in exile.
- Sun Hongyi** 孫洪伊 Liang Qichao disciple and president of the Zhili Provincial Assembly.
- Sun Ke (Sun Fo)** 孫科 Sun Yatsen's son (1891–1973).
- Sun Yixian (Sun Yatsen)** 孫逸仙 (**Sun Zhongshan** 孫中山, **Sun Wen** 孫文, **Xingzhe** 行者—Baohuanghui nickname for Sun as the monkey king Sun Wukong 孫悟空) revolutionary leader whom Kang believed was his mortal enemy and

- sometimes called **Sun Zei** 孫賊 (Bandit Sun); first president of the Republic of China (1866–1925).
- Sunzi** 孫子 author, *Art of War* (*Bingfa* 兵法), military general and strategist, Spring and Autumn period.
- Tan Chang** (Tom Chong) 譚昌 (Tan Beixuan 譚璘軒, Tom Jai Chong, Tam Kai Chung) Tom Leung's nephew and president of King Joy Lo, Chicago (1877 or 1878–1957).
- Tan Chaodong** (Tom Chue Thom, Chiu Doong Tam or Tom Chhui Pak) 譚朝棟 prominent New Westminster, BC Christian and Baohuanghui leader.
- Tan Fuyuan** (Tom Foo Yuen) 譚富園 prominent herbalist in the United States and cousin of Tom Leung (1858–1947).
- Tan Liang** (Tom Leung) 譚良 (Tan Zhangxiao or Tom Jerng How 譚張孝, Tan Jiqian or Tom Tsai Hin 譚濟騫) Kang's student and Los Angeles Baohuanghui leader, who founded King Joy Lo (1875–1931).
- Tan Liting** 譚禮庭 Tom Leung's nephew.
- Tan Luolan** (Tom Law Lan) 譚羅蘭 (Mamie Louise Leung) second daughter of Tom Leung, named after Madame Roland by Kang Youwei in 1905 (1905–88).
- Tan Mulan** 譚木蘭 (Lillie Leung) Tom Leung's first daughter, named by Liang Qichao in 1903 after woman warrior Hua Mulan 花木蘭 (1902–72).
- Tan Shubin** (Tom She Bin, Tom Shee Bin) 譚樹彬 major San Francisco Baohuanghui leader.
- Tan Sitong** 譚嗣同 (Fusheng 復生) reformer, advisor to Guangxu, and one of the Six Martyrs in 1898 (1865–98).
- Tan Wenji** (Tom Mon Kip) 譚文汲 New York Baohuanghui member.
- Tan Yankai** 譚延闓 president of the Hunan provincial assembly and prominent constitutionalist.
- Tang Caichang** 唐才常 colleague of Tan Sitong and leader of 1900 Qinqwang uprising.
- Tang Caizhi** 唐才質 editor, *Donghua Bao*, Sydney, Australia.
- Tang Hualong** 湯化龍 Liang Qichao disciple and prominent constitutionalist (1874–1918).
- Tang Juedun** 湯覺頓 Kang student and secretary, Zhengwenshe.
- Tang Mingsan** 湯銘三 (Tong Chew, Tang Zhao 湯昭) New York Baohuanghui activist close to Kang and his daughter Tongbi, worked with Huayi Bank, *Zhongguo Weixin Bao*.
- Tang Qiongchang** (Tong Kai Chong, Tong K. Chong, Tong King Chung) 唐瓊昌 Baohuanghui leader in San Francisco.
- Tang Sanzang** 唐三藏 (Xuanzang 玄奘) one of four Buddhist pilgrims thought to be the first Chinese travelers to India.
- Tao Mo** 陶模 Guangdong governor general.
- Tao Yuanming** 陶淵明 poet admired by Kang (365–427).
- Tieliang** 鐵良 conservative member of Grand Council.

- Tong Qing (Tong Chinn)** 童頃 Chicago member and Kang's secretary in the United States and Mexico.
- Tongzhi** 同治 Qing emperor, reigned 1861–75 (1856–75).
- Tudor, Dr. Mary Starr (Qiude Yisheng)** 秋得医生 Kang Tongbi's host in South Windsor, Connecticut (1840–1917).
- Wang Gongyou** 王公祐 Commercial Corporation auditor.
- Wang Jiaju** 王家駒 son of Wang Jueren and a Baohuanghui-funded student in Los Angeles.
- Wang Jueren** 王覺任 (**Wang Jingyu** 王敬裕, **Wang Jingru** 王鏡如) worked at Hong Kong/Macau Baohuanghui headquarters.
- Wang Kangnian** 汪康年 reformer and journalist.
- Wei Dinggao** 魏鼎高 (**Wei Si** 魏四 or **Wei the 4th**, **Muk Sau**, **Ngai Muk Sow** and **Ngai Sai**) Chinese who owned part of Coal Island, British Columbia, where he hosted Kang (1899–1904).
- Wen [King]** [周]文王 Zhou dynasty King Wen.
- Wen Jinyou (Won Alexander Cumyow, W.A. Cumyow)** 温金有 Vancouver Baohuanghui leader.
- Weng Tonghe** 翁同龢 (**Changshu** 常熟) Guangxu's tutor who introduced Kang's ideas to the emperor (1830–1904).
- Wu Fengming (Wu Foong Ming)** 伍鳳鳴 woman revolutionary activist in the United States.
- Wu Hongyou** 伍鴻祐 San Antonio, Texas, member.
- Wu Jixun** 伍積燠 New York Baohuanghui member.
- Wu Luzhen** 吳祿貞 Commander of Beiyang Army's Sixth Division, Baoding, Zhili; ally of Kang and Liang in 1911 Luanzhou mutiny.
- Wu Panzhao (Rev. Ng Poon Chew)** 伍盤照 editor of *Chung Sai Yat Po* (Zhongxi Ribao) and Chinese Christian leader.
- Wu Tingfang** 伍廷芳 Chinese Minister to the United States; later vice minister in Qing Foreign Ministry who supported anti-American boycott (1842–1922).
- Wu Xianzi** 伍憲子 Baohuanghui journalist, archivist, and historian, whose papers are held at the University of California, Berkeley, and University of Washington (1881–1959).
- Wu Xiangzhen** 伍祥楨 commander, Thirty-Ninth Brigade, New Army; signed Twelve Demands.
- Wu Xilü** 伍希呂 Baohuanghui-supported student hosted by Tom Leung in Los Angeles.
- Wu Yutang (Ng Yuk Tong)** 吳玉堂 staff member, *Shijie Ribao*, San Francisco.
- Xia Xiefu (Sha Kai-fu)** 夏偕復 Chinese Consul, New York City.
- Xie Du (Der Doo)** 謝篤 Baltimore Baohuanghui secretary.
- Xie Zuntai (James See, Tse Tsan-tai)** 謝纘泰 key figure in Guangdong Rising plot of 1902–3 (1872–1938).
- Xiliang** 錫良 Manchurian governor general.

- Xiong Xiling** 熊希齡 (**Xiong Bingsan** 熊秉三) reform-minded official and delegate on the 1906 Qing constitutional study mission (1867–1937).
- Xu Baoheng** 許寶衡 official in charge of daily affairs for Guangxu in 1908.
- Xu Fosu** 徐佛蘇 Zhengwenshe leader and editor, *Guomin Gongbao*.
- Xu Liang** 徐良 (**Xu Shanbo** 徐善伯) son of Xu Qin, student in United States.
- Xu Qin** 徐勤 (**Xu Junmian** 徐君勉, **Xue'an** 雪菴, **Xu Shiqin** or **Su Shih Chin** 徐士芹, or **Choy So Kan**) foremost Baohuanghui political and business leader dispatched by Kang to North America as an organizer and troubleshooter until 1912 (1873–1945).
- Xu Weijing** 徐爲經 (**Xu Quanli** 徐全禮) Victoria founder of the Baohuanghui in 1899 (1847–1906).
- Xu Yuzhi** 徐雨之 (**Xu Run** 徐潤) Shanghai Daotai.
- Xuantong** 宣統 (**Puyi** 溥儀) last Qing emperor, appointed by Cixi in 1908 following Guangxu's death, reigned until February 12, 1912 when the Qing fell (1906–67).
- Xue Jinbiao** 薛錦標 Baohuanghui-supported student in the United States, brother of Xue Jinqin.
- Xue Jinqin** (**Sit Gum Kum**, **Sit Ting Kum**, **Sieh King King**) 薛錦琴 (**Xue Junping** 薛君平, codename **Wushi** 五十) feminist, Baohuanghui student in the United States who promised to return to China and assassinate Cixi (1883–1960).
- Xue Jinxia** 薛錦霞 elder sister of Xue Jinqin.
- Xue Sanyong** 薛三鏞 Shanghai comprador and father of Xue Jinqin.
- Xue Xianzhou** 薛仙舟 (**Xue Songying** 薛頌羸, **Sieh Sung Ying**, **Hsueh Sung Ying**) uncle of Xue Jinqin, student in United States, and father of cooperative banking in China (1878–1927).
- Yang Chongyi** 楊崇伊 censor whose memorial convinced Cixi to begin restricting Guangxu's powers.
- Yang Du** 楊度 founder of Xianzheng Gonghui (1875–1931).
- Yang Lingshi** 楊靈石 Vancouver Baohuanghui leader.
- Yang Mingfeng** (**Dr. Mon Fong Young**) 楊鳴鳳 (**Xiangchi** 香池) Baohuanghui leader, St. Joseph, Missouri.
- Yang Rui** 楊銳 Secretary in the Grand Council appointed by Guangxu during Hundred Days and one of Six Martyrs (1855–98).
- Yang Shenxiu** 楊深秀 censor and one of the Six Martyrs of 1898 (1849–98).
- Yang Weixin** 楊維新 reformer living in Japan and compiler of Liang Qichao's speeches.
- Yang Xingcheng** 樣杏誠 (**Yang Shiqi** 樣士琦) Shanghai official supportive of anti-American boycott (1861–1917).
- Yao** 堯 and **Shun** 舜 Chinese mythological emperors.
- Yao Li** 要離 assassin profiled by Sima Qian in *Shiji* and admired by Kang Youwei.
- Ye Cheng** 葉成 New Westminster, BC, Baohuanghui leader.
- Ye Chuntian** 葉春田 (**Ye Liansheng** or **Yip Sang** 葉連生) Canadian Baohuanghui leader and a founder in 1899.

- Ye En (Charley Yip Yen) 葉恩 (Ye Huibo 葉惠伯)** prominent Vancouver and Canadian Baohuanghui founder and manager of the Commercial Corporation in Hong Kong who broke with Kang over Zhenhua Gongsì, 1861–1930.
- Ye Guang (Yip Quong) 葉光** Vancouver Baohuanghui leader and son of Ye Chuntian (1866–1948).
- Ye Meirong (Yip May Young) 葉美蓉** President of Vancouver Chinese Empire Ladies Reform Association, daughter of Ye En.
- Ye Qiумao 葉求茂** inaugural member of Canadian Tongmenghui, son of Ye Chuntian.
- Ye Tingsan (Yip On) 葉庭三** Vancouver Baohuanghui leader.
- You Shiyin (Yan S. Wan, Y. S. Wan) 游師尹** Kang Youwei's nephew and son of Kang's sister Kang Qiongju 康瓊琚, active in New York City Baohuanghui activities.
- Yu Jiaming (Yee Guy Maine, Guy Maine) 余佳明** New York Baohuanghui leader.
- Yu Shimei 于式枚** Qing official involved in constitutional preparation.
- Yuan Shikai 袁世凱 (Tutou 土頭, Kang's nickname for Yuan)** ally of Cixi, Zhili viceroy, commander of Beiyang Army and president of Republic, 1912–1916, declared himself **Hongxian 洪憲** (Magnanimous Constitution) emperor but reigned less than three months in early 1916 (1859–1916).
- Yuan Shitong 袁世彤** Yuan Shikai's brother who endorsed his ouster in 1909; his letter enclosed with Kang's "The Chapter."
- Yuan Shuxun 袁樹勛** Shanghai Daotai during 1905 boycott (1847–1915).
- Yun Yuding 惲毓鼎** official in charge of the daily affairs of Guangxu in 1908.
- Zaifeng [Prince] 載灃 (Prince Chun 醇親王)** Guangxu's brother, prince regent after Guangxu's death and father of Puyi, the last emperor (1883–1951).
- Zaitao [Prince] 載濤** half-brother of Guangxu Emperor and Prince Regent Zaifeng; led 1910 mission to Japan, the United States, and Europe to investigate Western army modernization (1887–1970).
- Zaixun [Prince] 載洵** brother of Zaitao and Minister of the Navy, who led study missions to Europe and the United States (1885–1949).
- Zaize [Prince] 載澤** Manchu noble first considered sympathetic to reforms, but later an obstructionist (1868–1929?).
- Zaizhen [Prince] 載振** reform-minded member of Qing court (1876–1948).
- Zeng Guofan 曾國藩** Qing political and military leader (1811–72).
- Zeng Shaoqing 曾少卿 (Zeng Zhu 曾鑄)** headed Shanghai Chamber of Commerce during 1905 anti-American boycott (1849–1908).
- Zhang Bingya 張炳雅** Victoria Baohuanghui member who worked at Huayi Bank in New York.
- Zhang Cangjiang 張滄江** Kang Tongbi's personal secretary at the end of her life who inherited many of her personal archives, now in the hands of his sons (1922–2011).
- Zhang Fanglin 章芳林** Singapore supporter of Kang Youwei.
- Zhang Guang 張光** Kang's sixth wife, married in 1919 (1899–1947).

- Zhang Hongsheng (Chang Kung Sing, Jeong Goong Sing)** 張洪勝 Los Angeles Baohuanghui member and military student.
- Zhang Jian** 張謇 elder statesman of the constitutionalists (1853–1926).
- Zhang Junmai** 張君勱 (**Zhang Jiasen** 張嘉森, **Carsun Chang**) Liang Qichao disciple who wrote for *Xinmin Congbao* (1887–1969).
- Zhang Liqing** 張禮清 Hartford, Connecticut, Baohuanghui member.
- Zhang Mingqi** 張鳴岐 Guangxi governor who endorsed Zhenhua investment (1875–1945).
- Zhang Shaozeng** 張紹曾 Commander of the Twentieth Division in Xinmin, Fengtian.
- Zhang Shenglong** 張勝隆 New Orleans Baohuanghui member.
- Zhang Xun** 張勳 General who led 1917 failed monarchical restoration (1854–1923).
- Zhang Yunzhu** 張雲珠 Kang's first wife (1855–1922).
- Zhang Zhidong** 張之洞 Hubei-Hunan Viceroy and later a Grand Secretary (1837–1909).
- Zhao Erxun** 趙爾巽 military governor of Fengtian (1844–1927).
- Zhao Wansheng** 趙萬勝 (**Chu Mon Sing**, **Joseph M. Singleton**) president of New York City Baohuanghui (d. 1928).
- Zhao Yuanxiang** 趙元祥 Vancouver Baohuanghui leader.
- Zhen Xiang** 甄想 Seattle Baohuanghui leader.
- Zhou Guoxian (Chew Kok Hean, Chow Kuo Hsien, Chou Kuo-hsien, Chow Kwo Hean, Chew Kai Ho)** 周國賢 Kang's secretary and interpreter in Malaya, 1903, and Europe and the United States, 1904–07 (1883–1938).
- Zhou Ziqi (Chow Tszchi)** 周自齊 Secretary of Chinese Legation, Washington, DC.
- Zhu Ciqi** 朱次琦 Kang's teacher (1807–81).
- Zhu Jinli** 朱錦禮 (**Zhu Li** 朱禮) originally entrusted by Kang to help set up the Commercial Corporation, he then formed a competitive company, Hongye.
- Zhuo Hai** 卓海 Honolulu Baohuanghui member.
- Zou Rong** 鄒容 author of *Gemingjun* (Revolutionary Army).
- Zuo Zongtang** 左宗棠 Qing general (1812–55).

Authors, Contributors, and Others

(Organized by surname as they themselves use it)

- Cai Huiyao** 蔡惠堯 Kang scholar and coeditor of *Kang Liang yu Baohuanghui: Tan Liang zai Meiguo Suocang Ziliao Huibian*.
- Chan, Evans (Chen Yaocheng)** 陳耀成 New York/Hong Kong director of three films on Kang Youwei and librettist for the opera, *Datong: The Chinese Utopia*.
- Chi Jeng Chang (Zhang Qireng)** 張啓祜 Vancouver-based son of Zhang Cangjiang and independent scholar of Kang Youwei and Kang Tongbi.
- Chen Xuezhong** 陳學章 (**Shawn Chen**) Kang scholar who studied with Fang Zhiqin in Guangzhou and collaborator on this book.

- Chen, Zhongping** 陳忠平 historian of China and overseas Chinese, University of Victoria, and contributing author of this book.
- Ding Wenjiang** 丁文江 compiled one version of Kang's *nianpu* and edited Liang Qichao's *nianpu*.
- Fang Zhiqin** 方志欽 Guangdong and Kang/Liang historian, Guangdong Academy of Social Sciences; coeditor of *Kang Liang yu Baohuanghui: Tan Liang zai Meiguo Suocang Ziliao Huibian*.
- Gao Weinong** 高偉濃 historian, Jinan University, Guangzhou, and author *Ershi Shiji chu Kang Youwei Baohuanghui zai Meiguo Huaqiao Shehui zhong de Huodong*.
- Gu Jiegang** 顧頤剛 one of the scholars who copied Kang's *nianpu*.
- He Fengru** 何鳳儒 one of the scholars who copied Kang's *nianpu*.
- Ho, Chuimei** 何翠媚 researcher of Chinese America, specializing in Chicago and the Pacific Northwest, with her husband Ben Bronson.
- Hsiao, Kung-ch'üan (Xiao Gongquan)** 蕭公權 historian of Kang Youwei, University of Washington (1897–1981).
- Hu-DeHart, Evelyn (Hu Qiyu)** 胡其瑜 Professor of History, American Studies, and Ethnic Studies, Brown University, and contributing author of this book.
- Huang Chunsheng** 黃春生 historian, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Beijing.
- Kang Xuepei** 康雪培 Kang Youwei's great-granddaughter and translator for this book
- Kong Xiangji** 孔祥吉 Kang Youwei historian.
- Lai, Him Mark** 麥禮謙 (Mai Liqian) premier historian and archivist of Chinese American history, San Francisco (1925–2009).
- Li Hairong** 李海蓉 (Phoebe Li) China historian based in New Zealand.
- Luo Rongbang (Jung-pang Lo)** 羅榮邦 grandson of Kang Youwei, son of Kang Tongbi and Luo Chang, and China historian in the United States who, working with his mother, translated and annotated Kang's *nianpu* and wrote an authoritative sequel of Kang's life after 1898 (1912–81).
- Ma Honglin** 馬洪林 historian of Kang Youwei.
- Mao Haijian** 茅海建 historian of Kang Youwei.
- Ng, Chee Wang (Wu Ziyun)** 吳子雲 Malaysian Chinese artist and historian of Chinese restaurants in the United States, based in New York City.
- Ruan Fangji** 阮芳紀 editor of *Lishi Yanjiu Zazhi*, Beijing, who led the first scholarly study of the Tom Leung Collection.
- Tan Jingyi** 譚精意 (Jane Leung Larson) coauthor and coeditor of this book.
- Tang Zhijun** 湯志鈞 Kang Youwei historian, Institute of History, Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences.
- Tong Bingxue** 仝冰雪 expert on early photographs of China, who provided access to the Chinese-owned portion of the Kang Tongbi South Windsor Collection.
- Wong, Sin Kiong (Huang Xianqiang)** 黃賢強 Singapore-based historian of modern China.

- Yung, Yvonne** 容應莢 (**Rong Yingyu, Yung Ying-yue**) historian of Yung Wing (Rong Hong), Tokyo.
- Zhang, Qianfan** 張千帆 constitutional law scholar.
- Zhang Qizhen** 張啓禎 son of Zhang Cangjiang based in Beijing who collaborates with his brother Chi Jeng Chang on research and publications about Kang Tongbi and her father.
- Zhang Ronghua** 張榮華 Kang Youwei historian.
- Zheng, Yang** 張啓禎 (Sylvia) Ph.D. candidate in Chinese history, University of Connecticut; translator and collaborator on this book.

Places

- Anqing** 安慶 city in Anhui Province.
- Baoding** 保定 capital of Zhili Province.
- Beihai Lu** 北海廬 North Sea Lodge, Kang's home on Korsholmen Island
- Bidao** 避島 Hideaway Island, Kang's name for Korsholmen Island near Saltsjöbaden, Sweden.
- Bolang** 博浪 site of the failed assassination of the Qin emperor.
- Caishikou** 菜市口 Beijing execution site.
- Caiyuan** 菜苑 Torreón, Mexico.
- Changde** 常德 city in Hunan Province.
- Chongling** 崇陵 tomb of Guangxu Emperor, Western Qing Tombs, Hebei Province.
- Dalian** 大連 city on the Liaodong peninsula, Fengtian Province.
- Datong** 大通 Anhui Province city where Qinwang uprising began.
- Dong Mei** 東美 eastern United States.
- Fengtian** 奉天 historical province in China's Northeast (approximates today's Liaoning Province).
- Hainan** 海南 large island that was part of Guangdong Province during Qing dynasty.
- Huangpu (Whampoa)** 黃埔 district of Guangzhou.
- Jiangguang** 江廣 region encompassing Yangzi River valley, Guangdong, and Guangxi.
- Kaiping** 開平 county in the Pearl River Delta, Guangdong.
- Liangguang** 兩廣 Guangdong and Guangxi provinces.
- Liangjiang** 兩江 area encompassing provinces of Jiangsu, Jiangxi, and Anhui.
- Liao, Meng, Hui, Zang** 遼蒙回藏 Manchuria, Mongolia, Xinjiang, and Tibet.
- Liaotianshi** 寥天室 Hut under the Vastness of Heaven, Kang's home on Coal Island (Wen [Literary] Island), off of Vancouver Island, Canada.
- Liwan** 荔灣 district of Guangzhou.
- Luanzhou** 灤州 city in Zhili Province on the Beijing-Mukden rail line.
- Maoqin Dian** 懋勤殿 Diligent Court, Forbidden City, Beijing.
- Mei Ao** 美澳 America and Australia.

- Mukden (Manchu name) for Shenyang** 瀋陽 in Fengtian Province.
- Nanhai (Nam Hoy)** 南海 Sam Yup county, Guangdong Province, where Kang Youwei was born.
- Nanyang** 南洋 Southeast Asia, specifically Malay Archipelago.
- Sanyi (Sam Yup)** 三邑 the three countries of Nanhai 南海, Panyu 番禺 and Shunde 順德 in the Pearl River delta, Guangdong.
- Shuangmendi** 雙門底 street in Guangzhou during the Qing.
- Shuang Tao Yuan** 雙濤園 Garden of Double Waves, Liang Qichao's home in Suma Ward in Kōbe, Japan.
- Shunde (Sun Duck)** 順德 a Sam Yup county, Guangdong Province.
- Songyun An** 松筠庵 Songyun Shrine, Beijing.
- Sucun** 蘇村 (Su's Village) or **Yintangxiang** 銀塘鄉 (Silver Pond Village), Jiangpu Subdistrict 江滌巡司, Nanhai District 南海縣, **Guangzhou Prefecture** 廣州府, **Guangdong Province** 廣東省 Kang Youwei's ancestral home.
- Wanshou Gong** 萬壽宮 Longevity Temple, Guangzhou.
- Wen Dao** 文島 Literary Island, Kang's name for Coal Island, British Columbia, which he sometimes called Weijie Dao 未潔島 (Impure Island).
- Wuhan** 武漢 the three Hubei cities of Hankou 漢口, Wuchang 武昌, and Hanyang 漢陽.
- Wusong (Woosung)** 吳淞 port in Shanghai.
- Xi'an** 西安 city in Shaanxi Province where Cixi and Guangxu fled in 1900 with the foreign occupation of Beijing.
- Xiangshan** 香山 Guangdong county [now Zhuhai 珠海].
- Xi Hu** 西湖 West Lake, in Hangzhou; also Kang's name for the lake in Westlake Park, Los Angeles, CA.
- Xin Guangdong Yuan** 新廣東園 New Guangdong Garden, Wong Foon Chuck's estate and farm in Torreón, Mexico.
- Xinning** 新寧 present-day Taishan, Guangdong.
- Xiqiao Mountain** 西樵山 where Kang retreated from his formal studies in 1879 to meditate, in Nanhai, Guangdong.
- Yangzi** 揚子 China's longest river
- Yichang** 宜昌 city in Hubei Province.
- Yiheyuan** 頤和園 Summer Palace.
- Yingtai** 瀛臺 island in Zhongnanhai, on the west side of the Forbidden City, where the Guangxu Emperor was held between the 1898 September coup and his 1908 death.
- Zhang Yuan** 張園 park in Shanghai where Xue Jinqin became the first female to make a public speech in China, 1901.
- Zhili** 直隸 historical province in north China, from the Ming until 1928.
- Zhina** 支那 Chinese pronunciation of Shina, the Japanese term for China.
- Zhongtu** 中土 Central Plains, or China.
- Zhu Jiang** 珠江 Pearl River, Guangdong.

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A Chinese Reformer in Exile is an encyclopaedic reference work documenting the exile years of imperial China's most famous reformer, Kang Youwei, and the political organization he mobilized in North America and worldwide to transform China's autocratic empire into a constitutional monarchy. Chinese in Canada, the United States, and Mexico formed at least 160 Chinese Empire Reform Association chapters, incorporating schools, newspapers, military academies, women's associations, businesses, and political pressure campaigns. Based on Robert Worden's 1972 Georgetown University Ph.D. dissertation, a multinational team of historians contribute new insights from 50 years of additional scholarship and previously unknown archival materials.

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