"Patriots" or "Traitors"?

A History of American-Educated Chinese Students

Stacey Bieler

"Patriots"

or

"Traitors"?

MANCHURIA
JILIN
MONGOLIA
Shenyang
LIAONING
HEBEI
NEI MONGOL
NORTH KOREA
Zhangjiakou (Kalgan)
Chengde (Jehol)
Huang He (Yellow River)
Beijing
Tianjin
Bo Hai
Baoding
Yantai (Cheefo)
Dingxian
Yellow Sea
Taiyuan
Taigu
NINGXIA
Yan'an
SHANXI
SHANDONG
Qinqdao (Tsingtao)
GANSU
Huang He (Yellow River)
SHAANXI
HENAN
JIANGSU
ANHUI
Nanjing (Nanking)
Wuxi
Chang Jiang (Yangtze River)
Suzhou
Shanghai
Bazhong
HUBEI
Hangzhou
SICHUAN
Chang Jiang (Yangtze River)
Wuhan (Wuchang/Hankow)
Chengdu
ZHEJIANG
Chongqing (Chungking)
Baxian
Dongting Lake
Nanchang
East China Sea (Dong Hai)
Changsha
HUNAN
JIANGXI
GUIZHOU
Fuzhou (Foochow)
FUJIAN
Taiwan Strait
TAIWAN
Kunming
Xiamen (Amoy)
GUANGDONG
YUNNAN
GUANGXI
Guangzhou (Canton)
Hong Kong
VIETNAM

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To the Chinese students of this generation

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Introduction

For more than one hundred years, China has sent students to the United States so that they would bring back technological skills in order to build a strong and prosperous nation. The students, who considered themselves to be "patriots" for going abroad, were surprised to find upon their return that they were often labeled as traitors. Their new technical skills and their calls for political, social, cultural, and language reform caused both their traditionalist and revolutionary opponents to view them as a threat. The cultural adjustments the students had made during their time in the United States also made it easier to accuse them of being "denationalized."

During the twentieth century, China oscillated between cycles of attraction to and rejection of Western influence. *He Shang*, the popular program shown on Chinese national television in 1988, explored how these swings created a tortuous century.

> To save our nation from danger and destruction, we should try to keep the foreign pirates at bay beyond our country's gates; and yet to save our civilization from decline, we should also throw open our country's gates, open up to the outside, and receive the new light of science and democracy. These extremely contradictory antiphonal themes of national salvation and modernization have taken turns over the past century in writing China's abnormally-shaped history.[1]

As a consequence, American-trained students were sometimes exalted, but more often they were mistrusted, and even persecuted for being tainted by the West. Their political opponents discredited the returned students for their own political gain, and their professional rivals disparaged the students' accomplishments in education, foreign affairs, science, and technology.

What price has China paid in terms of technological and economic development and social cohesion by choosing the revolutionary path and rejecting these liberal change agents? What role has American pride and policies, including the Chinese Exclusion Act enforced from 1882–1943, played in undermining its cross-cultural educational goal of transferring American values to China and building mutual friendship between the two countries? This book focuses on the significant but often unacknowledged role that American-trained students have played in building modern China.

The Prologue begins by recounting the difficulties experienced by Yung Wing, the first Chinese student to graduate from an American university (Yale, 1854), when he returned to China. With patience and perseverance, he was instrumental in bringing the "first wave" of students, the Chinese Educational Mission (CEM),

to the United States from 1872. This bold experiment was aborted in 1881 due to a conservative intrigue in the imperial court. Despite obstruction by jealous officials, the former CEM students made groundbreaking contributions to their nation's technological development and served as vital mediators between China and the United States and the Western nations during the last decades of the Qing dynasty.

The body of the book focuses on the "second wave" of students who arrived in the United States between 1909 and 1930. In 1909 the United States began offering scholarships financed from the excess of its share of the Boxer Indemnity which had been imposed by seven Western countries and Japan. The Qing court was forced to pay the indemnity for encouraging the Boxers (antiforeign peasants) to kill Chinese Christians and Western missionaries and to lay siege upon the foreign legations in Beijing in 1900. After the Qing Dynasty fell in 1911, the students believed that the leaders of the new Chinese Republic would surely welcome the skills and prescriptions for reform that they had acquired during their time abroad. However, in the climate of rapacious warlords, oppressive dictatorships, and growing nationalism, the returned students were often at odds with China's leaders. The fourteen short biographical sketches of returnees in the book give a glimpse into the struggles that accompanied their service to their homeland. This second wave of students came to an abrupt halt when the Chinese Communist Party, which established the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1949, faced off with the United States in Korea the next year.

The Epilogue briefly overviews the "third wave" of scholars and students who have come to the United States after the two countries signed cross-cultural education protocols in 1978. China had high hopes of quickly catching up technologically after the Cultural Revolution's education hiatus from 1966 to 1976. By 1988 the students from the PRC represented the largest group of international students on American campuses. However, most of the "third wave" students have stayed in the United States, waiting to see the results of transitions in top leadership while enjoying the benefits of American employment and lifestyle. Even though the students have many of the technological and relational skills China needs to fulfill its global agreements and the number of students returning to China has recently risen, they have often been kept at the fringes of influence.

Tsinghua University, China's premier science and technical university, has been a contested ground for almost a century. Tsinghua was built using excess U.S. Boxer Indemnity funds. It opened in 1911 as a preparatory school where U.S.-bound students absorbed American language and culture so they could enter American universities as juniors. After describing the school's first two decades in a turbulent political setting in chapter 2, several short biographies tell Tsinghua's story during World War II and the campaigns against intellectuals from the 1950s through the 1970s. The Epilogue illustrates how the controversies at Tsinghua continued during the 1980s and 1990s.

Resolving the riddle of whether the returned students are patriots or traitors is made more difficult because the government has often attached both labels to the

same individuals, depending on the period in China's cycles of attraction to/rejection of the West. The Chinese proverb, "Victorious, you are king; vanquished, a bandit," may be the best explanation of why the achievements of the returnees who advocated liberal democracy in China were distorted, discounted, or hidden during the last century.

John King Fairbank, a close friend and advocate for many "second wave" returnees, argued that their awareness of their role as cultural leaders and their tenacity or fortitude, which "is a pale word [which] doesn't express the half of it," kept them going despite great hardship. Fairbank wrote in his memoirs about the price that many paid as they tried to serve their country.

> Both groups of these Peking liberal intellectuals [in the PRC and Taiwan after 1949] would continue to be kicked around by history, but they keep on trying to serve their country as best they could under a party dictatorship during civil war and revolution. None of them exactly won his battle, but neither did he quit. Eventually someone will make a balance sheet for them all. They were a generation that met disaster but not a lost generation by any means.[2]

This book is an attempt to fashion part of a balance sheet for evaluating this generation of Chinese intellectuals. Many more stories of those who contributed to the modernization of China out of love for their country, whether in the bright lights or backstage, need to be uncovered.

Today Chinese students in the United States search for a coherent set of values that can give China a new social and political foundation. What wisdom and encouragement can today's "third wave" of students gain by learning more about their intellectual forebears, these creative, bicultural reformers of the "second wave"? Though the Chinese government has offered incentives for students who return, will Chinese leaders be willing to provide a pluralistic society that offers freedom of association and belief and that is hospitable to the returned students' synthesis of Chinese and Western ideas and ideals? Will the leaders create a new "knowledge economy" in order to compete globally, thus altering those aspects of Chinese political culture that have wasted precious talent and destroyed millions of lives during the last century? This book provides both a compelling story of three generations of Chinese students caught in the conflict of bridging two cultures and serves as a reflection on China's continuing struggle to be recognized as a great nation in the eyes of the world.

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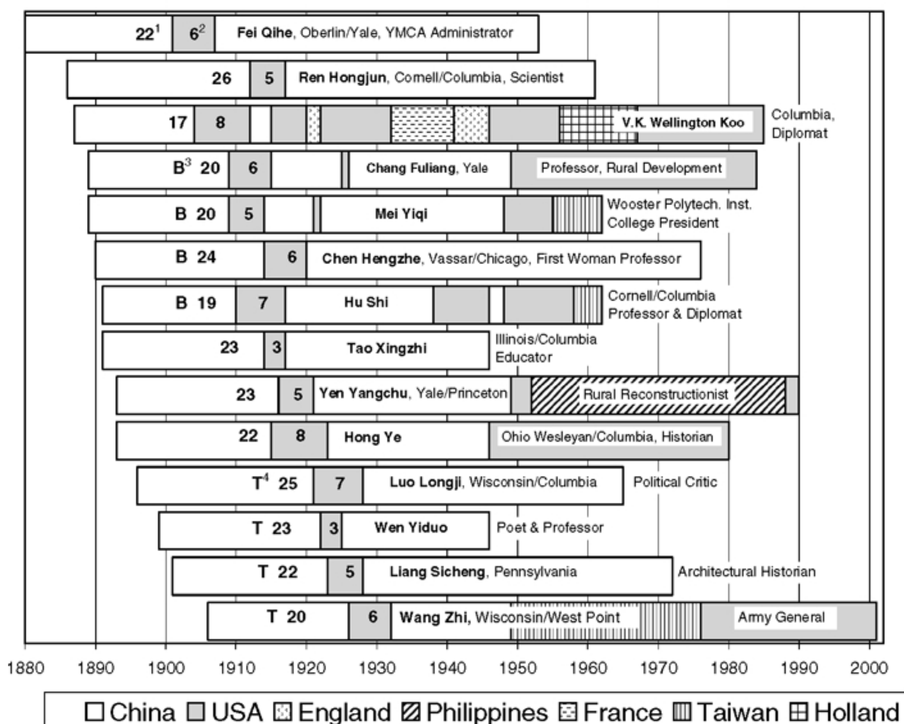
CHRONOLOGY OF CHINESE STUDENT'S LIVES



1. Age when entering the United States
2. Years in the United States Schools
3. B = Awarded a Boxer Scholarship
4. T = Studied at Tsinghua.

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Prologue

Planting Talents for the Future

The Chinese Educational Mission, 1872–1881

"The Closure of the Educational Mission in America"

. . . For since the Court had to take refuge in Jehol,
The country has weakened miserably.
Six or seven Powers around the globe
Are as vultures waiting with covetous glances.
Neither the literary style fit for stately occasions
Nor the rhymes demanded by examinations
can, in the opinion of two or three elder statesmen,
Help the country out of its predicament.
To plant talents for the future,
It is necessary to have foreign education. . . .

—Huang Zunxian, 1881,
a secretary of the Chinese Legation in Japan[1]

At that time China was shut off from the rest of the world. No one had any idea about foreign affairs. High class officials considered Western Education as abnormal training and would not even mention it in their conversation. Moreover to cross the ocean of several thousands of miles would mean incessant obstacles and dangers and generally no one would risk himself for such a voyage. Especially in the villages where the people know little about the outside world, no student would dare to go abroad.

—From the gravestone of Huang Kaijia who came to the United States in 1872 at the age of twelve. He died in Japan in 1906, on his way home after serving as one of China's representatives at the Peace Conference in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, after the Russo-Japanese War.[2]

Although most Chinese parents were suspicious of Christian missionary schools, Yung Wing's parents saw Western schooling as the way to prepare their second son for a career in diplomacy or commerce. Yung Wing (Rong Hong, Jung Hung) was born in 1828 near the Portuguese trading colony of Macao in southern China. He attended missionary schools in Macao and Hong Kong for eleven years. In 1847 Yung was offered an opportunity to study in the United States when his teacher, the Reverend Samuel Brown (Yale, 1832), returned home due to ill health.[3] After Yung attended Monson Academy in Monson, Massachusetts, he went to Yale University in 1950, where he won the first prize in English composition two years in a row and graduated in 1854. Yung never forgot China's desperate state.

> All through my college course, especially in the closing year, the lamentable condition of China was before my mind constantly and weighed on my spirits. . . . I was determined that the rising generation of China should enjoy the same educational advantages that I had enjoyed; that through western education China might be regenerated, become enlightened and powerful. To accomplish that object became the guiding star of my ambition.[4]

Yung's Yale classmates encouraged his vision, expecting him to use the "Power of Knowledge in his hands" to become the "leader of moral reform in China," by emancipating his land from "tyrants' sway and from superstitious chains."[5] Unlike most Chinese who believed in Chinese cultural superiority, Yung had come to believe that Western literature, science, and religion were necessary to strengthen China.[6]

Yung returned to China in 1855 after eight years in the United States. During a visit with his elderly mother, he told her that she should be honored to be the mother of the first Chinese graduate from an American college. When she saw how quickly Yung obeyed her request to shave his mustache, as his older brother had not yet grown one, she was assured that his foreign education had not caused him to forget his early training to be obedient to his elders. Yung was not prepared to take the Confucian examinations required to enter the ranks of officialdom since he had not spoken or read Chinese for several years. He studied the language for six months before working as a businessman and translator.[7] Yung knew that in

order to present his proposal before the throne, he had to develop connections with top officials who were willing to use Western education as a way to strengthen China.

A New World Order

Even before the expansive Han dynasty was established in 202 B.C., the Chinese rulers viewed themselves as the center of the world. Consequently they felt no need to learn anything from outsiders who did not revere the Confucian classics. For centuries, China, viewed as the Central Kingdom or *Zhong guo*, had received delegations from surrounding countries, such as Korea, Vietnam, and Inner Mongolia, who brought native gifts and rendered homage to the imperial court.[8] However, when the Qing dynasty (established in 1644 by the Manchu conquerors from the north) lost the First Opium War to the British in 1842, changes were imposed upon the Chinese court and country. China was forced to open five southern ports to Western traders, to tolerate the entrance of Protestant missionaries, and to allow extraterritoriality, where Westerners accused of crimes were to be tried by their consulate officials rather than by Chinese courts.

In 1860 the emperor fled to his hunting lodge in Jehol, north of the Great Wall, as British and French troops approached the gates of the forty-foot wall surrounding the capital city of Beijing. The soldiers plundered and then burned the emperor’s palace north of the city, the Garden of Perfect Brightness (*Yuanming Yuan*), which included European-style palaces based on plans drawn up by Jesuit missionaries in the eighteenth century. The Chinese were forced to sign the Treaty of Tianjin, which included legalizing opium, promising to pay an indemnity, and ceding Kowloon (opposite Hong Kong) to the British crown.[9]

These military defeats clashed with the belief that the emperor, the Son of Heaven, the great Mediator between Heaven and Earth, governed the whole world from the center of power. Memories of flames illuminating the sky above the capital caused several high officials in the Qing court to argue for alternate patterns for “managing barbarians” since China could no longer ignore the knowledge and power of Western countries.[10]

Learning from the “Barbarians”

In the 1860s Chinese rulers discussed several approaches to strengthen China by introducing Western technology. They could establish modern schools, inviting foreign experts to teach Western languages and technology. They could send delegations on short-term trips to glean information about the West and bring back Western armaments so that the Chinese could learn how to make them.[11] Students sent abroad would then return and teach other Chinese the West’s secrets of wealth and power, including mathematics, military and shipping administration, infantry tactics, and manufacturing. All three proposals reflected the court’s desire to build

a stronger gate against Western intruders by using Western technology, a continuation of China's ancient strategy of "learning from barbarians in order to control the barbarians." They hoped to use Western technology as a way to reestablish the supremacy of China's cultural and political traditions.[12]

In 1863 the Qing court began debating the option of sending students abroad, but many conservative officials opposed the plan. Besides the time and money required, the Chinese would "lose face" for admitting their need to learn from other countries. Most scholars were also against sending students abroad because the plan emphasized technology, rather than the traditional value of right behavior, as the way to ensure national protection and prosperity.[13] But Zeng Guofan, the most influential official at that time, and Li Hongzhang, his protégé, advocated sending students abroad as part of the Self-strengthening Movement. Li argued for a drastic change in policy toward outsiders in response to the country's crisis. "Those scholars confine themselves to some writing, but ignore the big change in the past thousand years. How can they be satisfied with the transient peace, but forget the huge wound [the nation has] received in the recent twenty or thirty years?" He noted that the time required by overseas students was similar to traditional students who "pursued scholarship by studying in a remote temple" (*zhi zhi zhuang yu*) in order to emerge prepared for the imperial examinations and a lifetime of service within the Chinese bureaucracy.[14] Li further argued that overseas study was the quickest, most effective way to acquire Western secrets. Despite those arguments, many top officials still did not want to listen to anyone advocating contact with the outside world.

Yung Wing's Ambition

After Yung became a member of Viceroy Zeng Guofan's personal group of talented men in 1863, he was sent to the United States to order machinery to equip an arsenal in Shanghai. Upon completion of the mission, Zeng sent a memorial or official document to the court, asking that Yung be given an official rank in the hierarchical bureaucracy. When Yung received the fifth civil rank (out of nine), he could wear a robe with back and front squares embroidered with silver pheasants during "full-dress" occasions, as well as a peacock feather, a sign of great honor, attached to his cap. Yung's reputation was raised in the eyes of the Chinese officials who had regarded him more as a foreigner than as a Chinese.[15]

His next opportunity for visibility came in 1870 when Zeng called him to serve as an interpreter during the negotiations with France after rumors stirred peasants to kill ten nuns and two priests who were taking in orphans in Tianjin.[16] The four commissioners who worked with Yung during the settlement approved of his educational plan and submitted his memorial to the emperor. Zeng and Li saw Yung's proposal as an opportunity to implement the overseas study plan that had been thwarted by conservatives in the court for seven years. In order that the proposal be more palatable to the conservatives, they emphasized that education in the West

was a means of strengthening China against the West, not as something desirable in itself.[17]

Several other factors converged to convince the Chinese court to send students to the United States. The diplomacy of Anson Burlingame, the first American minister to reside in Beijing (1861–1867), culminated in a treaty that included a provision to open the "gleaming gates" of any government school in the United States, including military academies, to Chinese students. The court felt that sending students to the United States would show appreciation for the provision.[18] The Chinese officials also believed that a U.S. education was more practical than a European one. In 1871 the throne finally approved the Chinese Educational Mission (CEM) to the United States. The court's plan was to send thirty students each year to the United States for a total of four years (1872–1875). After graduating from American colleges, the students would return to China in 1887 to serve during the prime years of their lives.[19]

High Hopes

Although the court had high hopes for the plan, few candidates from the Shanghai area presented themselves since parents were reluctant to let their young sons, between the ages of ten and fifteen, go to a strange country for many years. Rumors had spread that Americans would skin the boys alive and put dog skins on them in order to display them as strange animals.[20] Yung went quickly to the region around his home in southern China to recruit students from families who had more contact with Westerners. He convinced the parents only by promising them that their sons would receive official ranks and jobs within the Chinese government upon return. The court established a preparatory school in Shanghai, which emphasized Chinese classics rather than English or science.[21] In the summer of 1872, the first thirty students, 90 percent from the southern province of Guangdong, sailed for the United States. Viceroy Zeng, the architect and proponent of the overseas study plan, died before the first group of students left, but his successor, Viceroy Li, who had become the most powerful official, continued to champion the project.

Yung went ahead of the other cocommissioner, the Chinese teachers, and the students in order to establish the mission in the United States. After consulting with Noah Porter, president of Yale, Yung worked with the Connecticut Board of Education to request American families to open their homes to two or three students. Up and down the Connecticut valley, doctors, teachers, and ministers in each town readily agreed to board the students. The townspeople's prompt and overwhelming response (room enough for 244 students) showed their desire to give aid to the largest and "most conservative" nation in the world by hosting boys who "will become the exponents of a higher civilization *and* the benefactors of their country."[22] Next, the Board circulated a letter to teachers to encourage them to "make this experiment a success" by training the students to be self-reliant and persevering, encouraging them to study Chinese at least one hour a day, and trying

to inculcate them with “love of country *and* ambition to become the exponents of our science and culture.”[23] Not taking umbrage at the Americans’ view of offering a “higher civilization,” Prince Kung, regent of the Chinese Empire, wrote a note of appreciation that “such acts of kindness tend to strengthen and make lasting the sympathy and friendship now so happily existing between your country and mine.”[24] Both countries embarked on the educational adventure with high hopes.

Yung set up the mission’s headquarters in Springfield, Massachusetts, where the students would live during the summers in order to study Chinese and assemble at periodic intervals to fulfill their Confucian duty of hearing the “Sacred Book of Imperial Edicts” and of honoring the emperor by bowing toward the direction of his palace in Beijing. After renting a building for two years, Yung was authorized to erect one in Hartford, Connecticut. His purpose for advocating a permanent headquarters was to root the mission in the United States as deeply as possible, so as not to give the Chinese government any chance of rescinding it. The boys later nicknamed the building the “Hell House” because it was there they studied Chinese during the holidays and received reprimands for inappropriate behavior.[25]

After taking a train from San Francisco to Hartford, the first group of thirty students was greeted by their American families. The welcoming hugs and kisses at the train station were an embarrassment to at least one group member, who had not been kissed since he was an infant. The students had many adaptations to make in their new surroundings with their conservative Connecticut families. These Puritan Yankees were proud of their historical sites, including the oldest preserved school building in the nation (1778) and the third oldest university, Yale, founded in 1701. Connecticut was also experiencing a manufacturing boom in hats, typewriters, electrical supplies, textiles, and ammunition, with the gross product more than doubling between 1870 and 1900.[26]

Students who were advanced in English were sent to school, while the others were given private lessons at home. Language acquisition was accelerated in at least one home by not allowing the students to eat if they could not remember the name of the food. Huang Kaijia, whose epitaph opens the Prologue, was one of four boys who stayed in the strict home of Professor David and Fannie Bartlett in Hartford. The other boys nicknamed this chubby, good-natured boy “Breezy Jack” for his eloquence, including his ability to make a fine speech within minutes of being awakened from a sound slumber.[27]

Although the boys quickly changed from long Chinese gowns to American trousers and coats, their American schoolmates could not resist teasing them about their queues, long single braids down their backs that the Manchus made the Chinese wear as a symbol of their subservience. Some wore their “pigtails” inside their clothes, whereas others circled and pinned them to the top of their heads.[28] The boys excelled at baseball, figure skating, and football. They also enjoyed the attention of American girls, much to the consternation of the American boys. Although the families took the students to church, they did not pressure them to believe in Christianity because they knew that the court would not approve. Still a few did

become Christians.[29] One American recalled the sophistication of one of his Chinese classmates who excelled in Latin and Greek classics: "To hear that young gentleman translate Caesar in the classroom *was* a liberal education."[30] The boys' genius for adaptation led Louise Bartlett, an "American sister" of Huang Kaijia, to describe them as "favorites with their schoolmates and delight[s to] their teachers."[31] Huang Kaijia joined nine other Chinese at Yale in 1879. Others who graduated from high school attended Harvard, Amherst, Brown, MIT, and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.[32] Most students were just beginning to enter colleges when their high hopes were shattered.

Court Intrigue

Yung's cocommissioners began to report to the court about the students' adaptive behavior. After Qin Lanpin, an older scholar known for his devotion to Chinese learning, returned to China, Wu Zideng, who was even more conservative, replaced him in 1878.[33] Yung described Wu as measuring things and his pupils only by the Chinese standard. "He must have felt that his own immaculate Chinese training had been contaminated by coming in contact with Occidental schooling which he looked upon with evident repugnance."[34] When Wu called the students to Washington to receive Confucian instruction, he scolded them for not kneeling down to him and accused them of forgetting their ancestors and showing no respect to their elders. Wu was especially upset that some of the students had become Christians and had organized the Chinese Christian Home Mission in order to bring Christ to their native land. He sent secret letters to the court in China denouncing the students for becoming denationalized and recommending that the court recall them without delay and strictly watch them after their return. Viceroy Li Hongzhang wrote to Yung to tell him of Wu's reports, encouraging him to stop overemphasizing Western studies. Yung tried to refute the reports, but the damage had been done.[35]

Mistreatment of Chinese laborers in the United States further dampened the Chinese court's interest in continuing the mission. When competition for jobs increased in the western United States due to the recession after the Civil War and a large migration of settlers from the eastern half of the country, Chinese workers became targets of racial attacks and mob violence. Rather than interfering in the riots against Chinese, the U.S. government deferred, claiming "states' rights." It also did not offer to pay compensation for loss of Chinese life or damage to property, though it demanded recompense from China when the same incidents happened to Americans there. Exaggerated stories of "barbaric" Chinese customs circulated, further intensifying the bigotry.[36] When Yung became China's associate minister to Washington in 1875, he wrote letters of complaint to the U.S. government about the maltreatment of Chinese and about the pending law restricting Chinese immigration. He was confounded as to why U.S. congressmen, "eminent public men," would debate on the Senate floor, using the same offensive language as common people in the western United States.[37]

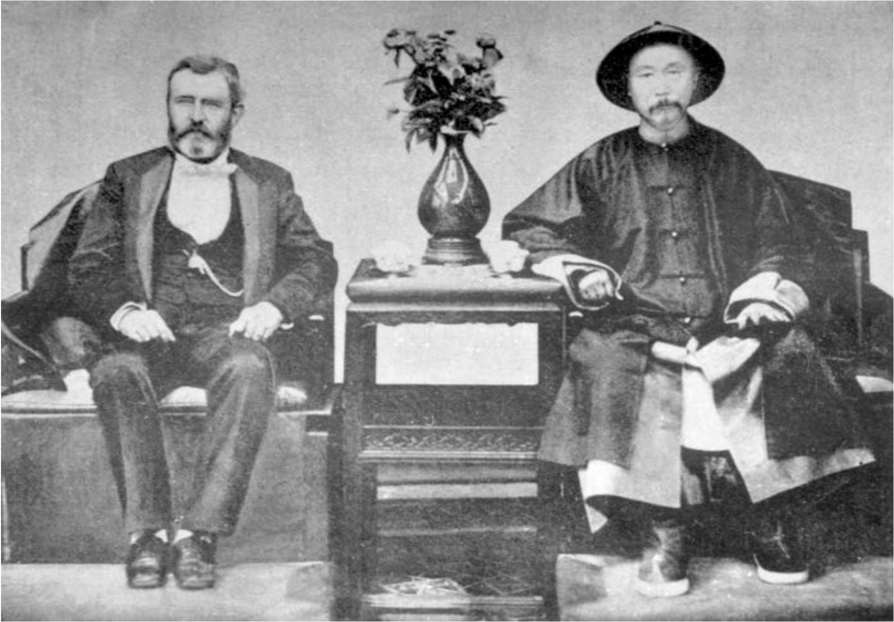

FIGURE P.1 Former U.S. president Ulysses S. Grant talked about the Chinese Educational Mission during his visit with Viceroy Li Hongzhang in Tianjin in 1879 as part of his world tour.

Despite these tensions the mission continued for two more years partly due to the informal diplomacy performed by former president Ulysses S. Grant. Toward the end of his world tour in 1879, Grant, the highest-ranking Westerner to have visited China, spoke with Viceroy Li, the most powerful official in China, in Tianjian. Although Li said the reports from the mission were satisfactory, he told Grant of his "surprise and grief" that Chinese students were not allowed into West Point or Annapolis, since military training was central to his argument for studying abroad. Grant suggested that Chinese students learn military skills by sailing on American men-of-war in Chinese waters. The two soldiers and statesmen formed a lasting friendship.[38]

The conservatives in the court, who had always opposed the Chinese Educational Mission, grew in power after 1872. They hoped to disgrace Li by closing the mission. When Li withdrew support from the mission in the face of growing opposition, it was doomed.[39] The high cost of running the mission—$1,200 per student per year—had always been a source of conflict because China was struggling financially after suppressing the Taiping Rebellion (1850–1865) and fighting wars with Western countries.

Yung's personal and professional choices confirmed the worst prejudices of the conservatives. Having converted to Christianity while studying at Monson Academy in Massachusetts (1847–1849), Yung became a naturalized American citizen in 1852. In 1875, while directing the mission, he married Mary L. Kellogg, the daughter of a prominent local doctor in Hartford.[40] Yung's emphasis on American studies over Chinese further disturbed the officials. His goal of equipping the students with a "wider international outlook" was quite different from the court's objective of training technicians to strengthen China militarily. The court may not have realized the impossibility of separating American technology from its liberal "packaging," which emphasized individualism, promoted the optimistic view of universal human progress, and questioned authority and traditional values. However, Wu, Yung's second cocommissioner, regarded the mission's liberal lessons as "subversive of the principles and theories of Chinese culture." Whether the students' quick adaptation was a natural consequence of teenagers living with American families or due to Yung's emphasis on American studies they *had* become "enclosed by foreign learning," just what the court had most feared.[41]

The Mission Is Recalled

The court recalled the mission in 1881, six years earlier than originally planned. Yale president Porter's petition was signed by a group of prominent men, including Laurenus Seelye, president of Smith College; the Reverend Joseph Twichell, pastor of the Congregational Church in Hartford which many of the students attended; and Samuel Clemens (Mark Twain), an author friend of Twichell's.[42] The petition told how the students were progressing in their studies and about their success as unofficial ambassadors for China. The group expressed their disappointment that China had changed its mind, first asking Americans to teach the students their "language, manners, sciences and arts" and then suddenly removing them. The Americans wrote that the decision seemed "unworthy of the great Empire . . . [and] discourteous to the nation that had extended to these young men its friendly hospitality." They urged that the decision be reconsidered, because of a reproach brought on to America and Americans and because of the "injury and loss which have fallen upon the young men whom we have learned to respect and love."[43] When Twichell, through his connections with Samuel Clemens, visited former president Grant in New York City, hoping to get his signature on the petition, Grant quickly wrote his own letter to Viceroy Li, arguing that recalling the mission would be a mistake. Twichell also wrote to the U.S. minister in Beijing, former University of Michigan president James Angell, asking him to put the petition in Viceroy Li's hand and explain the "rank and weight . . . [and] the character and learning" of the citizens of the United States who signed the letter so Li would not abandon the enterprise.[44]

Pleased that China had recognized the United States as a center of learning, the Americans took pride in their role of "enlightening" the future leaders of China.

They found it difficult to understand why the Chinese government would uproot these students who were being instilled with their responsibility toward China, as well as being equipped with the best that American science could offer to help China modernize.[45] They saw the Chinese students, dressed and acting like "Yale men," as the best gentlemen that America could create. They felt that the recall was a rejection of both their hospitality and educational system before China could reap the benefits from the students completing their education. Almost fifty years later, citizens of Hartford who went to high school with the "China boys" gathered together to greet returning Chinese dignitaries who called Hartford "the Cradle of the Chinese Republic."[46]

Although the letters averted the closure of the mission for several more months, on June 8, 1881, the Chinese government ordered the mission to be abolished and that the teachers and students return to China as soon as possible.[47] Rev. Twichell led the farewell meeting. An "American mother" sent back a letter to the mother of one of the students, saying, "He has pursued an upright, steadfast course in his studies as well as in his general character, and we feel that he will be a useful man and serve his country with honor to himself and to his parents." A Chinese student offered his American friend his gun, which he had used every Saturday when they went shooting together, as a "pledge of eternal friendship." After the boys left Hartford, an editorial in the *Connecticut Courant* stated that the mission's influence would not "utterly perish," because the "bright lads" were carrying ideas in their luggage and "an idea is more dangerous to bourbonism [a ruler who clings obstinately to ideas adapted to a past order] than a cargo of dynamite."[48]

While waiting for their steamer in San Francisco, the boys were challenged to a baseball game by an Oakland, California, team. The home team thought they would have an easy game until they tried to hit the curve balls thrown by Liang Tunyen, who had played at Yale. "The fans were equally surprised at the strange phenomenon—Chinese playing [the American] national ball game and showing the Yankees some of the thrills in the game." Their fellow students and the Chinese living in the Bay Area enjoyed watching the Americans get "walloped."[49]

In August 1882 one hundred students sailed back to China. Over 60 percent of them had only begun their education in colleges or technical schools. Only two had completed their bachelor's degree. Three had died in the United States. A few others had been sent home earlier for insubordination, acquiring debts, or cutting off their queues. Ten students who refused to return to China became engineers, worked in banks, or served as interpreters in the Chinese embassy.[50]

After Huang Zunxian, the secretary to the Chinese Legation in Tokyo, met the students on their way back to China, he wrote a long poem expressing his sorrow at the mission's closure that serves as an opening quotation for several chapters, including this one:

> . . . So we have let a magnificent, far-sighted policy
> Be ruined by mere private quarrels.

FIGURE P.2 Chinese Education Mission students stopped in San Francisco on their way back to China in 1881. Front row, left, Liang Tunyen, baseball pitcher at Yale University; third from left, Zhong Wenyao, a coxswain for Yale; back row, second from left (with hat), Zhan Tianyou, the "Father of Chinese Railroads," who graduated from Yale in civil engineering; and far right, Huang Kaijia, "Breezy Jack," who also studied at Yale.

> The offense calls not for such severe punishment,
> And it is perhaps too late to repair the injustice.
> Alas, the stumbling of one misstep!
> I fear there will never be another chance.[51]

Treated as Criminals

Huang Kaijia wrote Mrs. Bartlett, his "American mother," about the students' cold reception in Shanghai. After disembarking from the ship, they had to walk, carrying their own luggage, "an almost inexcusable act of debasing oneself in the eyes of the so-called Chinese gentleman," while being mocked for their ill-fitted clothing by Shanghai's stylish dandies. After the initial roll call, they were escorted by a detachment of Chinese marines to a building that Huang described as worse than a "Turkish prison." Four days later they were escorted by "enough guards to keep a regiment in quiet subjection" to pay homage to the top Shanghai official. They

were further disheartened when they were not allowed to celebrate the Moon Festival with their families because they had other official duties to fulfill.[52] Another student recalled their return: "All the muck and ruck of lies, falsehood and calumny were raked over and dished out to the public, and we were considered and looked upon as denationalized beings and treated as such."[53]

What crimes had the students committed? The majority had come from southern China, which had been associated with the so-called barbarians, with "deviance, dissent, eccentricity and defection" since the beginning of the Han dynasty [202 B.C.–220 A.D.].[54] So before ever going abroad, Yung and the southern students were not considered completely trustworthy by the conservative Northern court. Further, the students had lived in the "contaminated" West. They had even abandoned long gowns, "the traditional badge of a Chinese scholar," for clothes befitting American teenagers.[55] Nor did the students behave like proper Chinese gentlemen, whose "energy and independence, candor, ingenuity and openheartedness [were usually] all covered up and concealed."[56] Chinese officials saw these attributes as "crimes" against the state, since they did not believe that the students could be *both* patriots and promoters of American science and culture. The students' worst "crime" was the threat they and their dangerous ideas posed to the existing power structure. "[The mission's] very success was what most disturbed the reactionary officials," since it called into question the authority of the Confucian classics which were both the Chinese scholar's knowledge base and the foundation of the state's identity.[57] Most students did not receive the promised official ranks or high-level government jobs, but instead were paid wages little better than day laborers. By keeping the students at lower ranks, the scholars hoped to lessen the students' influence, thus preventing the revelation of their own inadequacies.

However, Viceroy Li, who had supported the mission, rescued many students from obscurity. Realizing their potential, he distributed them among the technical colleges in Tianjin, such as the Telegraph School or the Naval College and Torpedo School, and sent others to supervise the coal mines north of the city. Gradually, other progressive viceroys and governors hired the young men to "manage" foreigners or to assist in industrial, mining, railroad, and telegraph ventures. Huang Kaijia, who became a translator in the office of Shanghai's city magistrate at the salary of an ordinary office clerk, wrote another letter to Mrs. Bartlett describing the students' fate. "The rest of the boys are distributed in various places to finish (?) their education not according to their predilections nor to the course they had been pursuing in America, but more in accordance with the wishes of the Chinese Officials whose ignorance and stupidity render them unfit to judge in such matters."[58]

Most boys waited for Yung Wing's arrival in China, for they hoped they would be liberated from "such outrageous treatment by our government," but some began to doubt his power to influence the viceroy. In a letter to Mrs. Bartlett, Huang Kaijia wrote, "We are like the shoots of young trees transplanted from the rich soil and luxurient [*sic*] climate to the arid desert of ignorance and superstition. We are

not flourishing but withering away slowly though perceptibly." Newspapers commented on the students' fate. While one called them "mixed-up people" (*zaren*), another said that the best thing to do for the students would be to send them abroad again since China was not ready for them.[59]

When Yung returned to China in the fall, he performed his customary duty of reporting to government officials. While visiting Tianjin, Viceroy Li asked him why he had allowed the forced return of the students. Yung replied, "If I had stood out alone against carrying out the imperial mandate, would not I have been regarded as a rebel, guilty of treason and lose my head for it?" Li said he wished that the students had been allowed to continue their studies, to which Yung replied, "How was I supposed to know your mind at long distance?"[60]

When the Foreign Office in China decided to send about ninety of the students back to the United States, they were no longer allowed back. The debate in Congress ultimately led to the adoption of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, which served as a thorn in the two countries' relations for the next sixty years. What happened to the Chinese Educational Mission? "Chinese officialism put its foot on it, and American legislation strangled it."[61]

Loyalty to Their Land

The mission students' allegiance to China can be partially judged by their technical achievements which strengthened China. Despite being given low-level positions, surprisingly few of the students left government service for positions as clerks in foreign firms in coastal cities. After China's disastrous loss to Japan in 1895, some of the leaders deemed the Self-strengthening Movement as a failure and called for radical reforms.[62] Some of the mission students were released from their low positions, becoming directors of railway and mining ventures where they advanced more rapidly up the scale of official promotion. The students, known for their ability to get things done, helped keep many new technologies in Chinese hands.[63] They were the first Chinese to have the following modern careers:

> Thirteen of them served in the diplomatic service of China; six spent most of their lives in connection with the great Kailan coal mining administration; fourteen of them were either chief engineers or served in managerial capacities on China's newly constructed railroads; seventeen were naval officers, seven of whom were killed in action and two of whom became admirals in the Imperial Navy; fifteen were identified with the Government Telegraph administration; four practiced medicine; three were connected with China's new educational institutions.[64]

Some historians have focused on the top ranks achieved by a few of the CEM students. "Any class at Yale or Harvard would be filled with pride if it could point to so many distinguished men among its members."[65] Others have claimed that the

collective effort of the mission students was the chief instrument in "initiating the modernization movement in China."[66]

Huang Kaijia helped modernize China's water conservancy, railway, and telegraphic administration. Later, as secretary to various envoys of the Chinese government, he accompanied princes and delegations to the coronation ceremonies of King Edward VII in England in 1902 and to the St. Louis Exposition in 1904. He also served as one of the Chinese delegates at the 1905 Peace Conference in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, after the Russo-Japanese War. Liang Tunyen, the star pitcher who also boarded at the Bartlett home, became minister of foreign affairs and helped to establish Tsinghua College, which prepared many of the next generation of students for studying in the United States.[67]

The students' allegiance to China can also be judged by their loyalty to the Qing dynasty. It seems that only one student joined Sun Yat-sen's revolutionary party which tried to overthrow the government.[68] As the Qing dynasty was collapsing, the court turned to two students, Tang Shaoyi and Liang Tunyun, sending them on secret missions to try to make alliances with the United States and European countries, but both failed.[69] Most of the mission students chose the obscurity of retirement rather than join the political scuffle after the Qing dynasty collapsed in 1911.

Their Own Badge of Distinction

Despite their allegiance and their many accomplishments, the mission students still felt as if they were strangers in their own land. The Chinese officials saw them as "foreign Chinese" and despised them for their willingness to work with their hands and with machines. In turn, the returned students scorned the Confucian scholars for their lack of Western knowledge. Most students resisted participating in the corruption of the decaying Qing dynasty, though it hurt their own official careers and personal fortunes.[70]

The students sometimes found that many Americans were not as friendly as the families in the Connecticut valley. Many Americans found it easier to group all Chinese as laborers or laundry men rather than as graduates of prestigious colleges like their own sons were. Chong Menyu had been "Munny," a coxswain for the victorious Yale crews of 1880 and 1881. Many years later, while serving on a diplomatic mission in the United States, he attended a Yale-Harvard meeting. A Harvard man expressed doubt as to whether Chong had even seen a university boat race. Chong suavely confessed he had never seen a Harvard crew row; after a pause, he added that they were always behind him.[71]

In the face of rejection by people of both countries, the students created their own community. Not being allowed or willing to join the Confucian scholars' "society of long scholar gowns," they preserved among themselves their *own* badge of distinction—their schoolboy nicknames. Throughout their lives they called each other names such as Alligator, Irish King, Spotted Tail, and Country Cousin. During the group reunions, which were held into the 1930s, they avoided speaking

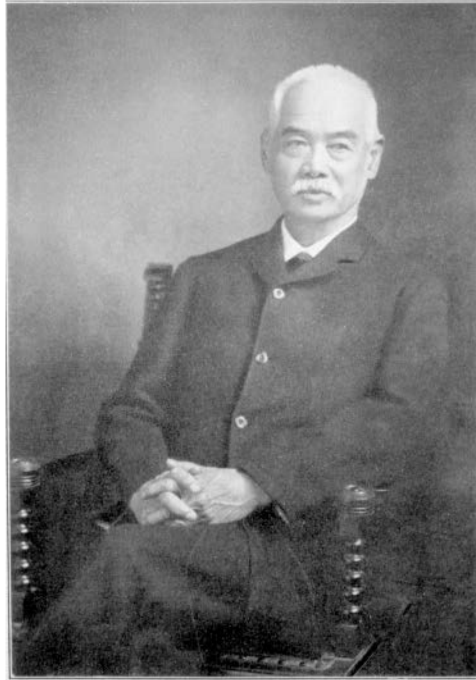

FIGURE P.3 Yung Wing, who graduated from Yale in 1854, became codirector of the Chinese Educational Mission (1872–1881).

about the shameful treatment they received when they returned to China. They encouraged one another to be cheerful when facing another provoking situation by saying, "That's all right, old boy, take it easy."[72] Through their common memories of both carefree and troublesome times, they established lasting bonds that kept them from feeling rootless in a bicultural world. Their time in the United States had left an "indelible stamp upon them."[73] Like most of the mission students, Huang Kaijia visited his high school friends when he was in the United States and sent his four children to preparatory schools and colleges there.[74]

One historian wrote that the "inevitable result" of trying to build a bridge between two totally different worlds was that the students gained neither the gratitude of the West nor of China.[75] Some Americans were impatient because the social and cultural investment did not bring a quick return. The young men forged their own ways to serve China, rather than benefiting U.S. business enterprises.[76] The students found that building a bridge between the Middle Kingdom and the United States was an arduous task. Because the students were the "very point of contact" between China and the West, the Chinese officials opposed them, forgetting that the students

were sent to the United States not to become Confucian scholar-gentlemen, but to be scientists and engineers who could strengthen China.[77] The students faced struggles similar to Yung's, having *dual* loyalty to China as a nation and to the United States for intellectual and emotional ties. Would China ever consider those who studied in the West to be loyal Chinese?[78]

Prophetic Patriot

In 1883 Yung Wing came to the United States to care for his wife, who had returned from China when her health failed. After she died in 1886, Yung found that raising his two sons helped console him in the loss of both his life's ambition and his wife. In 1895, when Yung was recalled to China, the Reverend Twichell and his wife took in his younger son, Bartlett, until he finished high school.[79] After Yung's schemes for banking or building a railroad failed, he joined other reformers in encouraging the young emperor to instigate numerous reforms during the summer of 1898. When the emperor's elderly aunt, Cixi, the empress dowager, brought the "Hundred Days of Reform" to an abrupt halt, Yung fled for his life to Shanghai and then on to Hong Kong after being named one of the most wanted men in the country.

Since his U.S. citizenship had been annulled in 1898 as part of the Chinese Exclusion Act, he was a man without a country. Despite the Chinese Exclusion Act's explicit rules for barring Chinese at ports, the elderly Yale graduate, dressed in European clothes, slipped by the inspector at the gangplank in San Francisco in June 1902 and arrived in New Haven in time to see his younger son graduate from Yale.[80]

Yung went into semiretirement in Hartford, but found he was not always welcome by other guests in boardinghouses who did not want to eat with a Chinese. Yung could not keep his mind off China. When Liang Qichao, a fellow exile following the 1898 reform, visited Yung in 1903 during his tour of the United States, Yung encouraged him about the future of China.[81] Yung lived long enough to see the new Sino-American educational plan, the Boxer Indemnity scholarships, and the Tsinghua School develop after 1908. In August 1910, he encouraged the next generation of students at their annual conference in Hartford, Connecticut, to "aim to make China the leading factor in shaping the destiny of the world."

Yung died on April 22, 1912, in Hartford, having spent almost half of his years in the United States. His old friend, Reverend Joseph Twichell, officiated over the funeral and at Yung's burial in Cedar Hill Cemetery. The next generation of students in the United States praised him as an "Educator, Reformer, Statesman, Patriot." As they reflected on the needs of China, they asked, "[W]ho but men of his loyalty and firmness, of his prophetic insight and high idealism, of his patience and courage to bring possibilities into realities, who but such men can shoulder the responsibilities of peace and reconstruction?"[82]

Chapter 1

Reaping the Whirlwind

China and the United States, 1880–1910

Throughout the ages, the Chinese have had only two ways of looking at foreigners: up to them as superior beings or down on them as wild animals. They have never been able to treat them as friends, to consider them as people themselves.

—Lu Xun[1]

It is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than a Chinaman to enter the United States. . . It seems to me it is very strange for a Christian country [to] treat the Chinese students so very unkindly.

—Fei Qihe[2]

The Empress Dowager is reaping the whirlwind with a vengeance, and it is very doubtful whether she will stay in Peking to gather the harvest. . . . Instead of having one or two Powers to pacify, China is at war with all the Great Powers at once, and she is at war by the choice of the Empress Dowager and her gang.

—**North China Daily News,** ***June 19, 1900***[3]

Fei Qihe: Associate General Secretary of the YMCA in Beijing

In 1879 Fei Qihe (Fei Chi-hao) was born into a Chinese Christian family in Dongzhao, a trading city twelve miles northeast of Beijing. He graduated in 1898 from North China College, a school partially supported by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (Congregationalist), and went to teach at a mission school in Taigu in Shanxi province, southwest of Beijing. During a school break he went sixty miles southwest to visit his sister in Fenzhou, a city of 50,000. She introduced him to her missionary friends, Charles and Eva Price, graduates of Oberlin College in Ohio who had come to China in 1889 to join the Oberlin Mission, which was part of the American Board.[4] After being accused of being too strict with his pupils, Fei moved to Fenzhou to teach. He continued his English lessons with the missionaries since his earlier formal education focused on Chinese classics, the Bible, and Western learning.[5]

During February 1900, the Price family and other missionaries heard rumors of foreigners being killed by men associated with the Fists of Righteous Harmony (*Yihe tuan*), commonly called "Boxers" by Westerners. The secret society of martial arts and spirit possession, whose slogan was "Support the Qing [dynasty], destroy the foreign," arose in the neighboring province of Shandong to the east of Shanxi province. Fifty years of foreign imports to this coastal province had ruined rural economies, and Christian missionaries had destabilized the social structure within villages.[6] In the spring of 1900, the foreign community in Shandong successfully pressured the Qing court to dismiss Yu-xian, the governor who supported the Boxers. Yu-xian was then assigned to the governorship of Shanxi province, where he persuaded Cixi, the empress dowager, and the conservative Manchu princes, who had taken over the throne after the Reform Movement in 1898, to recognize the Boxers as a regular militia organization and as true patriots who would drive the foreigners out of China. Granting this right of association was a radical departure from usual Chinese politics that prohibited private associations.[7]

In June, Fei joined hundreds of spectators watching twenty teenage Boxers practice Chinese boxing and recruit followers inside the East Gate of Fenzhou.

> After muttering a rhymed jargon they bowed toward the southeast, then fell in a trance. Soon they rose, and showing their teeth, brandished their arms, and kicked about wildly for a while, then fell again on their backs. Thus they lay until other boys tapped lightly on their foreheads, when they would get up and go about as usual. . . . I asked afterward the meaning of the rhyme the boys had muttered,

> and learned that it was an invocation to the gods to come down and possess their bodies.[8]

Although Governor Yu-xian encouraged the Boxers by offering titles or money to all who killed foreigners, Fenzhou remained fairly calm because the local magistrate protected the missionaries.

At the end of June, the missionaries heard rumors that all the foreigners in Beijing had been killed. Since the mail had stopped, the rumors could not be confirmed. Eva Price hoped that the rains would come so the people's anxiety about a coming drought would subside and anger toward the missionaries would lessen.[9] As the tensions increased, another Chinese Christian encouraged Fei to recant his faith, but Fei replied that he could not give up his religion for his "heart would never again be at peace."[10] On July 29, a new local magistrate told the missionaries that they would be escorted safely to the coast, but they did not believe him since two days earlier Governor Yu-xian had issued a proclamation calling for the extermination of all foreigners. When news came about the beheading of thirty-three missionaries at Taiyuan in the presence of Yu-xian earlier in the month, Price wrote, "Were I to write a whole book I could not tell of the dreadful suspense of the past six weeks."[11] Although the missionaries encouraged Fei to leave the compound, he returned three days later because he had nowhere to go. While he was gone, the Boxers and government troops had wiped out the Taigu mission, including Fei's sister and some of his former students.[12] The mission station at Fenzhou was the last one in the province.

On the morning of August 15, Charles Price took Fei aside and gave him some traveling money and a piece of cloth, saying, "This is a trustworthy man; he will tell you of our fate. C.W. Price." It would be sure death if the Boxers caught Fei carrying a foreign letter, but the small piece of cloth was easily concealed.[13] As the soldiers escorted the missionaries out of Fenzhou, the villagers lined the streets. After twenty miles, a soldier told Fei that all of the missionaries would be killed in the next village. Having already taken Fei's horse, the soldiers took his money, but allowed him to flee. The next day Fei crept into the village and heard that the Prices, the other seven adults (five missionaries and two Chinese Christians), and three children had been killed and their bodies were dumped outside the village.[14] With all of his friends dead, Fei traveled 400 miles by foot to tell the American consul in Tianjin of their fate and then to Beijing, where he found that his mother and father had both committed suicide at the prompting of another son, who was not a Christian, in order to save the rest of the family.

The whole country was in upheaval. The Boxers killed hundreds of Western missionaries, destroying their churches and homes. They killed thousands of Chinese Christians and ruined their property, chanting the slogan "Destroy Christians root and branch." The arrival of the China Relief Expedition, an army of soldiers from seven Western nations and Japan, did not stabilize the situation. As the Chi-

nese soldiers fled before the advancing Allies, they harried the countryside, and then the foreign soldiers brought a reign of terror that lasted for several months.[15]

Filled with sorrow from losing both his family and his friends, Fei wrote to his missionary friend Alice Williams, whom he had met in Taigu and who was now living in Oberlin. Because of her mother's failing health and serious financial difficulties in the Taigu mission, Alice and her daughters had returned to the United States in 1899. Her husband, George, who had remained at the Taigu mission to care for opium addicts, had been murdered two weeks before the Prices. Fei wrote, "I am more full of sorrow than I can say. . . . I like to go and see my parents and the other friends *now*, because I feel very badly. . . . I fear I never can get peace and happy again. If I am the child of the Lord why He gives me the sorrow so great more than I can bear?"[16]

In 1901 Fei accepted an offer to study in the United States, a dream he had cherished for ten years. He traveled on the *Doric* with American Board missionary Luella Miner, an 1884 graduate of Oberlin College, and his college friend Kong Xiangxi (H.H. Kung), who had remained by the missionaries in Taigu before they were killed.[17] Both men planned to attend Oberlin, hoping to offer condolences to their friends' families and give them their last letters. They planned to equip themselves in order to return to China in the missionaries' place. They joined the trickle of students, mostly supported by American missionaries, and some by provincial governors in China, who came to the United States after 1881.[18]

The two men arrived in San Francisco on September 12, 1901. The immigration officers rejected their passports due to technicalities, even though they were signed by Viceroy Li Hongzhang and accepted by the U.S. consulate in Tianjin. Although Miner vouched that they were genuine students, the omissions and mistakes made by the American consul in China caused the immigration officers to deny their landing. After another week aboard the docked ship, the two men were put in overcrowded detention sheds with barred windows on the wharf.[19] After Kong became ill, they were released on $1,000 bond each which was provided by the Chinese consul-general in San Francisco, and were allowed to study at a mission in the city. When the paperwork arrived back from China, the American immigration officials rejected it again. Hearing there would be another delay, the two men and Miner started for Oberlin, but after the northern train crossed into Canada, they were again barred from reentering the United States at Portal, North Dakota. While the Chinese counsel in New York made many appeals, they waited in Toronto for the third set of papers to be accepted. They were disappointed when they were not able to be in Oberlin on October 16, 1902, for the laying of the cornerstone of the Martyrs' Memorial Arch, which honored the ten Oberlin graduates and their children who had been killed during the Boxer Uprising.

They finally reached Oberlin on January 10, 1903, sixteen months after landing in San Francisco. On the morning of May 14, they attended the dedication of the Arch. Two plaques, engraved with the names of the Oberlin alumnae whom the men knew, hung on the inner walls of the rough Indiana limestone arch.[20] In his

dedication speech, the Reverend Frank S. Fitch, a member of the American Board and an alumnus and trustee of Oberlin College, said,

> They had gone to a remote and quiet province and engaged in the usual forms of missionary service: preaching, teaching, caring for the sick. They at no time failed to inculcate patriotism. They taught a spiritual religion such as has been found most favorable to industry, sobriety, and reverence for authority. . . . They were quiet men and women—lovers of peace, schooled in the doctrine of non-resistance, made heroes by necessity. . . . It must be a chastened optimism that draws hope from this scene, yet who can despair of the republic of God when such lives are lived and such deaths are endured joyfully.[21]

For years Oberlin students commemorated the sacrifice by parading through the arch as part of their graduation ceremonies.

The two men served as mascots for their classmates. In their first yearbook, the two of them are sitting with the caption, "Heroes of Cathay," along with jokes, poems, and drawings. In the following year's class picture, they were dressed in Western-style clothes making them almost indistinguishable from their classmates. In their junior class picture they were in Chinese dress, sitting prominently on pedestals beside the steps. Although the Martyrs' Memorial had been erected several years earlier, a color picture of the arch was on the yearbook's cover the year they graduated. The quotation accompanying Fei's senior picture was "How the girls all love him!" while Kong's was "You blooming heathen."[22]

The only campus organization the two of them belonged to was the Student Volunteers for Foreign Missions, whose slogan was "The Evangelization of the World in This Generation."[23] After graduating from Oberlin in 1906, Fei had plans to go to Yale for an M.A. in education. At a Student Volunteers conference in Northfield, Massachusetts, an American Board missionary tried to pressure him into forgoing graduate school and immediately becoming an evangelist. Fei wrote an emotional letter to "Mother" Alice Williams.

> He said I must not teach, which work I am preparing and praying for twenty years, but go back to tell my people only about Jesus. . . . *I do not know where I am going*, but this I know that I can not continue my higher education and get my second degree which I will get much respect from my people for my work but must go to some Bible school and study to be a preacher, which I feel God did not call me to do. Had I not the sorrow of 1900, this condition will make me crazy. . . . Pray for me that the Lord may open the way.[24]

He studied education at Yale for a year receiving an M.A.

Before Fei returned to China, he wrote an article describing his change in attitude toward America. When he was in China, the missionaries had told him that America stood for liberty, but after six years abroad, he was bitter toward America despite having made many sincere American friends. He recounted his time in the

FIGURE 1.1 After Fei Qihao graduated from Oberlin College in 1906, he went to Yale for a master's degree in education.

detention shed in San Francisco where neither friends nor letters were allowed. "There were no tables, no chairs. We were treated like a group of animals, and we were fed on the floor." He wrote that he was not surprised to hear that a Chinese man had hung himself after four months' imprisonment to "end his agony and the shameful outrage." After the Treasury Department further complicated their stay by prohibiting the two students from working for their board or college expenses, Luella Miner published a book of their stories; the proceeds went to supporting their studies.[25] Fei wrote,

> What shall I say to my people about America? Shall I tell them, as an old lady kindly advised me, everything that is good about America, but nothing bad? . . . Shall I tell them of the close attention the American government paid to me, and how kind they are not to let me do any kind of hard labor, and thus to injure my delicate constitution? How can I keep quiet? . . . Don't expect, then, my friends, to reap good fruit from the thorn that you are now planting.
>
> . . . [China] will never forget the bitterness of the cup of humiliation, of shame and degradation, forced upon her by Christian America.[26]

Unlike Kong who had located a sponsor to support him as director of the Oberlin Shanxi school in Taigu, Fei's future was uncertain. As graduation approached he had two job offers, one from Yale and another from the YMCA in Beijing. Onboard

FIGURE 1.2 Fei Qihe and family in Beijing, May 1925. From left to right: Lydia, Alice, Samuel, his wife Wang Yurong, Luella, Oberlin, Fei holding Brooks, and Clara. The girls were named after American missionary friends.

the ship from New York to Europe, he wrote "Mother" Williams, "I don't know how much I shall be able to do for my people, but I will do my best so to return the love of my many friends and to God."[27]

After a year doing education work with the YMCA in China, he was asked to serve as president of the Zhili Provincial College at Baoding, the second highest educational institution in the province. Fei and his friends in China rejoiced because it was the first time the government had asked a Christian to lead such an important institution. In a letter to his friends in Oberlin, he told how they were praying that he could be a "real help to the government," as well as serve as "one of the many workers for the Kingdom of God."[28] From 1910–1929, he became associate general secretary for the YMCA in Beijing, which promoted the American social gospel to Chinese students and society. He named his first four daughters after his missionary friends and his first son Oberlin.[29]

From 1929–1939, Fei worked in various financial departments in the Guomindang government. During the war he worked as director of personnel at the Central Trust of China in Chongqing, the wartime capital. After the Japanese surrender, he was appointed as one of five officials to establish a new municipal government of Beijing. Over the years he served on the boards of Yanjing University (a combination of his alma mater, North China Union College, and three other missionary institutions), the Government Railway College, Beijing YMCA, and the Beijing

Deaf and Dumb School. When the Chinese Communist Party established the People's Republic of China in 1949, Fei retired at the age of seventy. Fei's dream of educating his children abroad came true when his second and third sons received master's degrees from Bowling Green State University in 1950. Fei lived in Beijing until 1953, when he died of a heart attack.[30]

Between 1880 and 1910 both China and the United States were in the midst of transitions that caused many to question their own country's basic values and assumptions. Both were recovering from destructive uprisings—the Taiping Rebellion in southern China (1850–1865) and the Civil War in the United States (1861–1865). Due to social ills in both, the political leaders hoped for reform (but not revolution) in politics, education, and culture. Although both countries felt superior and civilized, both were examining their national character: What did it mean to be Chinese? What did it mean to be American?

Both countries were emerging from self-satisfied isolationism and acting from a position of weakness. The Chinese blamed Western traders and missionaries for internal disruption, whereas Americans blamed European immigrants on the East Coast and Chinese immigrants on the West Coast for social and economic upheaval. Ironically, Fei got caught in both xenophobic movements—as a Chinese Christian in China and as a Chinese in the United States. The desire of both countries to increase their military strength brought the feeling of impending international conflict.

Competing Civilizations

Even after China's defeat to Japan in 1895, some conservative Qing officials wanted to withdraw within their cultural walls. Others, who were jolted out of their complacency, wondered why the thirty-year-old Self-strengthening movement had failed to protect China from foreign encroachment.

Zhang Zhidong, viceroy of Hubei and Hunan from 1889 to 1907, seemed an unlikely advocate of Western reform.[31] The great scholar, who was known for his elegant literary style and political incorruptibility, had written a memorial to the throne in 1876, encouraging it to rid China of the barbarians by "informing everyone of the evil propensities of foreigners, that the indignation of all may be aroused." He had also written, "Let the High Provincial authorities be instructed to burn all foreign churches, and lead on the people to exterminate this wicked brood."[32] When Zhang recalled Yung Wing to China in 1895 to help settle the war with Japan, Yung found him "as reticent and absorbent as a dry sponge" to his suggestions about engaging foreigners as advisors and mentors in foreign affairs, the military, and the treasury departments.[33]

Yet, three years later, during the spring of 1898, Zhang wrote a reform tract, *Quan Xue Pian* (An Exhortation to Learn), in which he encouraged reform of everything except politics. Zhang popularized the slogan, commonly called the "ti-yong dichotomy": "Chinese learning for the essence, Western learning for practical

FIGURE 1.3 Viceroy Zhang Zhidong proposed educational reforms.

use (*zhong xue wei ti, xi xue wei yong*)."[34] Even the tract's structure served as a model: The first part was about moral reform and the second, practical reforms.

Zhang wrote that maintaining the dynasty and Confucianism and protecting the Chinese race were necessary to save China. He blamed China's weakness not on the foreigners' presence, but on the Chinese officials' stubbornness and pride, and on the spread of opium, which sapped the strength from the Chinese people.[35] He argued that China would become a healthy body if the ears and eyes were open (to foreign periodicals) so reliable information could enter, if the heart and brain were exercised (by colleges teaching Western subjects), and if the circulation (railroads) were built.[36] This represented a tremendous change in emphasis in China's method of gaining wealth and power; China went from importing guns and training soldiers (1870s) to encouraging Western education (1890s).[37]

Believing that a republican revolution would bring manifold calamities, Zhang argued that those who admired the U.S. political system did not know its defects. He wrote how the reformers were making the greatest mistake by believing that every human should have personal liberty, an idea based on the Christian doctrine that God gave each individual certain mental and spiritual faculties that enabled

him to act freely, since every individual, family, and village would serve its personal ends and "mankind would soon be annihilated."[38]

He argued that Westerners *were* civilized even though they did not follow the Confucian moral code that emphasized three cords of relationships: a subject to his sovereign, a son to his father, and a wife to her husband. Western people loved their rulers more than the Chinese did theirs and took a personal interest in the affairs of their own nation even when they lived abroad. Although Westerners did not have ancestral halls or tablets of deceased relatives, the Ten Commandments listed the duty of honoring their parents next to worshiping Heaven. (Furthermore, he wrote that they placed photographs of their dead parents and made offerings to them!) Zhang admitted that the Westerners' restraints around their women seemed lax, but that it was illegal to take a concubine in the West.[39] Responding to several uprisings against missionaries during the 1890s, he called for religious toleration. After describing the rumors circulated about the missionaries, he called upon the educated Chinese, who considered Christianity a threat to their authority, to stop spreading rumors that Chinese scoundrels and ruffians used to create disturbances.[40]

Zhang argued that China needed both Chinese and Western learning. To people who wanted to discard Confucian classics because they would not have time to also acquire Western learning, he responded,

> Without a basis of native literature the Chinese who acquires this Western learning, will loath his country in proportion as his scientific knowledge increases, and, although his knowledge may be perfected to a high degree, how can our country employ him if he does not know Chinese?[41]

He confronted those "proud and bigoted obstructionists," who believed that anything not mentioned in the Six Classics and the Histories of China should be contemptuously flung aside, by arguing that some of Western education had Chinese origins and that China would perish if changes were not made. To those who attempted to reconcile every discrepancy between Chinese and Western learning by saying that "our Classics already contain all Western learning," he replied that they were deceiving themselves. He concluded that Western government and literature would be beneficial to China and would not supersede Confucianism since studying them would bring no harm to the country for their principles agreed with what the Chinese classics taught.[42]

In the summer of 1898, the young reformist emperor, Guangxu, endorsed Zhang's tract, and even the conservatives praised it, causing its sales to soar throughout the country. However, the Hundred Days of Reform ended when Cixi, the empress dowager, who had ruled from behind imperial yellow curtains for almost four decades, first as regent for her young son and then for her nephew, exiled the emperor to an island near the Summer Palace. She took the throne with the conservatives and killed or hunted down the reformers who called for the end of the dynasty. She did not purge Zhang because of his long friendship with her.[43]

FIGURE 1.4 Cixi, the empress dowager. She reigned over China through her son and then her nephew, from behind the yellow curtains, for almost half a century until her death in 1908.

The conservatives' coup led to further encouragement of antiforeign feelings, in order to promote Confucianism and their positions of power.[44]

The Siege in Beijing

The tragedy of the missionaries' deaths in remote Shanxi province was overshadowed by the Boxers' siege on the legations (pre-embassies) in Beijing during the summer of 1900. Ironically, this outbreak of antiforeignism in China would ultimately bring the next wave of Chinese students to the United States.

In May, Louise Galt and other missionaries of the American Board stationed in North China gathered for the annual meeting at North China College in Dongzhou. On May 28, Boxers tore up the railroad at Dongzhou because they blamed the

FIGURE 1.5 Map of Beijing. The American legation and the British legation are just northeast of Qianmen (Chienmen), the gate between the Imperial City and the Southern (Chinese) City. The northeast section of the city was where the Manchus lived. The examination halls for the Confucian national civil service examinations are north of Peking University (Methodist), which joined four other schools to create Yanjing University in 1928. The West Gate (Xizhimen) and the road to the Summer Palace, to Tsinghua and Yanjing University, are in the upper left. The roads to the North China Union College in Dongzhao (Tungcho) are to the east. Peking Government University moved to the Yanjing campus after 1950 and is known as Beijing University or "Beida" today.

"steam dragon" for the demise of the prosperous town since people could no longer pilfer the tribute rice on its way to Beijing.[45] After the missionaries fled to the safety of the Methodist Mission in Beijing on June 8, all of the American Board buildings in Dongzhou, including the college, the new church, and homes, were

burned to the ground. Several days later the Imperial Post Office at Dongzhou was wrecked, and the telegraph poles were cut down. The last telegraph link connecting Beijing with the rest of the world, at Zhangjiakou north of the Great Wall, was severed on June 17. On June 21 the empress dowager formally declared war on the Powers (Japan, Holland, Italy, Belgium, Austria, Spain, Russia, Germany, England, and the United States). About 1,000 missionaries and many more Chinese Christians walked wearily from the Methodist Mission to the more defensible British Legation in Beijing.[46]

The Boxers entered the capitol, burning Western buildings throughout the city. The Methodist Mission was the first of many buildings to be destroyed. Catholic cathedrals and orphanages, hospitals, the post office, the telegraph office, the electric light plant, and the Russian bank were also set ablaze. When shops selling Western goods were also set on fire, the fire traveled through the wooden structures and engulfed Qianmen, the huge gate south of the Forbidden City. The court took this as an omen predicting the dynasty's downfall. Galt wrote, "The Boxers rose up not so much against Christianity, as against everything foreign."[47]

Government troops were sent to join the Boxers in laying siege on the legations in Beijing, where over 3,000 people, roughly 900 Westerners and the rest Chinese Christians and local staff, were living. The seventy Americans, fifteen of them children, made their home in a chapel. On June 25 Galt wrote, "This morning I was sitting within three or four feet of a lady when a bullet came through the window glass directly back of her shoulder, and passed within a few inches of her cheek." As the women drew their hunger-belts tighter each week, they thought, "The less there was of us, the less the likelihood of being hit."[48]

The siege in Beijing drew attention around the world that summer. The *New York Times* published rumors as headlines—"All Foreigners in Peking Dead" (July 5)—and labeled a map of Beijing as the "scene of the supposed massacre of foreigners by Chinese." Eleven days later the headline read, "Foreigners All Slain after a Last Heroic Stand—Shot Their Women First." After twenty-five days of contradictory reports, the *Times* reported that the hostages were still alive.

As the news of the siege spread, eight countries began coordinating the China Relief Expedition, but it took time to organize since each feared the others would rush in and take the spoils. The United States sent three infantry regiments and one cavalry regiment from the Philippines, believing its participation in rescuing the legations would give it some influence in the treaty negotiations. Galt wrote on July 7, "There is a bit of fear in some minds that the relieving army have gotten up a fight among themselves. . . . [O]ne would think they would postpone [the settlement and division of China] until they relieve us. We don't much care which nation comes in first at present. Welcome even Russia!"[49] The hostages were wearing down due to lack of sleep and proper food. On July 16 Galt wrote, "Last night was one of the hardest yet. We had two sharp attacks, one at nine and one at twelve o'clock, and in between times the poor sick babies in the church cried. Then the mosquitoes bit until the flies got ready for their attack." After a messenger brought

FIGURE 1.6 American missionaries present during the Boxer siege on the legations in Beijing during the summer of 1900 included Emma Jane Smith (3), Arthur Smith (10), Luella Miner (15), and Louise Galt (25).

back news about the approaching Allied troops on August 10, she wrote, “The first announcement I heard was ‘Eat all you want now; the soldiers will be here in five days.’ ”[50]

When the expedition came within a day of the capital of Beijing, the empress dowager disguised herself by cutting her long fingernails, twisting her hair into a knot, and wearing a common dress. She and more than thirty members of the court fled northwest to Zhangjiakou along the same escape route she had followed forty years before as a young concubine. On August 14 those in the legations greeted the various divisions entering Beijing with great joy. Louise Galt wrote about a regiment from Montana that was almost overcome by marching in the hot sun from Dongzhou and by capturing more of the city wall. One soldier said a little while later, “It is worth it all to see you alive here; we were so afraid you would all be killed.”[51] Sixty-six foreigners had been killed, two adults and six babies had died, and over 150 had been wounded within the legations during the fifty-five-day siege.[52] The day after the legations in Beijing were relieved, Charles and Eva Price and the other missionaries of Fenzhou were executed in a village.

On Sunday, August 19, American Board missionary Arthur Smith, who was well known for his books describing the Chinese people, spoke to the legation

survivors, pointing out some of the many ways that God had protected them. While one listener wrote, “He might have spoken for hours without exhausting his topic,” the Marines who had guarded the legations during the siege felt indignant that their efforts were not recognized.[53]

Although the U.S. and Japanese troops prevented the sack of the Forbidden City, the foreign soldiers looted the partially deserted Beijing. It seemed to Smith that the foreign troops had come to China “for the express purpose of committing within the shortest time as many violations” as possible of the commandments not to murder, commit adultery, or steal.[54] On the evening before the Allies marched through the Forbidden City, a fire once more spread to Qianmen. It was still smoldering the following morning, August 28, as representatives from each of the Allied countries marched through the inner sanctum, displaying their national colors and playing music from their countries in order to “impress the Chinese court with a sense of humiliation, and convince the Chinese people of the victory of the foreign forces.”[55]

Slowly to the Rescue

Two weeks earlier the Qing court had appointed Viceroy Li Hongzhang as Plenipotentiary to negotiate a treaty with the Powers. Li, whom he had served as viceroy of Zhili province for twenty-five years, arrived in Tianjin on September 18, a month *after* the expeditionary forces marched into Beijing.[56]

For years Li had acted as an unofficial diplomat of the court because Zhili province, which included the Dagu forts on the coast and the city of Tianjin, was the protective corridor for Beijing from invaders from the sea. He had sponsored numerous reforms, including the aborted Chinese Educational Mission and the creation of a navy and arsenals that were destroyed by the war with France in 1883–1885 and the war with Japan in 1895. The court blamed Li for the defeat to Japan, stripping him of his post as viceroy, the yellow jacket that he had received for defeating the Taiping Rebellion in 1853, and a recently awarded three-eyed peacock feather, the highest award given to a Chinese subject. Although Li felt that the way to deal successfully with foreigners was to have direct personal intercourse, other officials frequently denounced him as “the friend of foreigners.” Li’s guiding principle in the peace negotiations was “to oppose what was impossible and to accept what was inevitable.” His opponents, including his chief rival, Viceroy Zhang Zhidong, accused him of cowardice and treason and called for his death. Only protection by the empress dowager saved him.[57]

To get him out of harm’s way, Li was sent, his yellow jacket restored, to represent China at the czar’s coronation in 1896. Li took this opportunity to visit former diplomats in Europe and America. When he arrived in New York harbor, he was greeted by ten warships and escorted by a cavalry detachment through streets lined with sightseers who wanted to see “the greatest man the Chinese race has produced since Confucius.” Being the first Chinese official to travel overseas,

he was feted by President Cleveland, American diplomats, the mayor of New York City, the Merchants Club, and representatives of foreign mission boards in China. The drills and reception at West Point, where he had hoped that some of the CEM students would have studied, were canceled due to rain. He was known for asking impertinent questions and creating an atmosphere of "Oriental subtlety and mystification." After putting a wreath on the tomb of his friend, General Grant, he visited the home of Grant's son and offered gifts of silk, china, and tea to Grant's widow. After seeing the Liberty Bell and Independence Hall in Philadelphia, Li traveled by train to Vancouver, letting the American press know that he was avoiding San Francisco in order not to face his countrymen whom he had failed to protect from mistreatment.[58]

When Li returned to China in the fall of 1896, he was suddenly denounced by the Board of Punishments, stripped once more of his yellow jacket and peacock feather, and fined half a year's salary. The Guangxu Emperor was furious with the agreement Li had signed with Russia. The emperor did not want to admit China's weaknesses and suspected that Li had financially benefited from the agreement. Without the empress dowager's intervention, Li's fate would have been worse.[59]

When Li was appointed viceroy of Guangxi and Guangdong in south China in 1899, his moderating influence on the court weakened. Disagreeing with the court's support of the Boxers, he feigned illness when the empress dowager sent twelve imperial edicts for him to appear in Beijing. He also joined several other southern viceroys, including his rival, Zhang Zhidong, in not sending their armies north and encouraging the court to protect the foreign envoys. Li was prudent to stay away as five other high officials, who advocated some compromise with the Powers at the end of July, were executed by the court.[60]

It took several months for the eight countries that participated in the Relief Expedition to agree on China's punishment. Although the Allies had initially wanted to reinstate the banished Guangxu Emperor, Li persuaded the Russians to advocate that the empress dowager retain power. The 12 Articles of the Protocol demanded that the Chinese government pay an indemnity for the loss of lives or property of 450 million taels ($330 million U.S.), of which the U.S. portion was $25 million or 7.5 percent of the total. The court was ordered to punish nine high officials who supported the Boxers, including Governor Yu-xian of Shanxi, by either beheading, exile, forcing them to commit suicide, or being posthumously degraded. The court was also to convict 119 provincial officials of pro-Boxer acts. The elite and their children who had supported the Boxers would be punished by the suspension of the Confucian civil service examinations for five years in forty-five cities where foreigners had been murdered or maltreated. The fortifications between the port of Taigu and Beijing, which Li had overseen, were to be dismantled. Although the Qing court did not want to accept the demands, Li agreed to them in order that the nation not be further endangered. On September 7, 1901, Prince Qing and Li, who walked to the negotiating table by leaning on his servants, signed the Boxer Protocol in front of the representatives of the eight countries.[61]

Although the Chinese military was handed back possession of the Forbidden City in mid-September, the empress dowager waited until the next month to begin her three-month journey back to Beijing. On the last leg of their journey from Baoding to Beijing, the Qing court, which had been so antiforeign, took their first railroad ride. Once the empress dowager returned to the Forbidden City, she invited the women from the legations for tea. She followed Li's suggestion and declared herself a reformer, especially of education.[62]

During the empress dowager's journey back to Beijing, Li Hongzhang died at the age of seventy-eight. She issued several imperial edicts extolling Li: "He struggled with difficulties, made peace for both the foreign and the Chinese people, and worked wisely and devotedly for the country." Posthumously, Li was given the honorific name Wenzhong, meaning "learned and loyal."[63]

Seven years later the American government returned the surplus amount of their portion of the Boxer Indemnity to support Chinese studying in the United States. Would Li, the patron of the Chinese Educational Mission, ever have dreamed that the next wave of students to the United States would result from the antiforeign chaos of the summer of 1900?

"To Play a Great Part in the World"

When the forty-two-year-old Theodore Roosevelt became the youngest president of the United States on September 14, 1901, he inherited a number of international problems, including the Philippines, Puerto Rico, Guam, and Hawaii. Using personal diplomacy rather than relying on his diplomatic corps, he described his policy for conduct in foreign relations as to do justice and not to tolerate injustice being done to the United States. Although he boasted about the United States being ready and willing to make good his words, Roosevelt also recognized the country's military limitations.[64]

In a speech in 1899 called "The Strenuous Life," Roosevelt had warned his hearers that in order to "play a great part in the world," the United States could not follow China's example.

> We cannot, if we would, play the part of China, and be content to rot by inches in ignoble ease within our borders, . . . until suddenly we should find, beyond a shadow of question, what China has already found, that in this world the nation that has trained itself to a career of unwarlike and isolated ease is bound, in the end to go down before other nations which have not lost the manly and adventurous qualities.[65]

Roosevelt judged the Chinese to be lower on the hierarchy of civilization because they had lost their martial values, were unable to assert themselves, and were unable to organize their economy efficiently. However, he could not ignore the country since he was convinced that whoever controlled China controlled the future.[66]

American anti-imperialists opposed the shift from isolationism for they regarded taking land and ruling subjects as mimicking European imperialism instead of living up to U.S. democratic ideals. In a biting satire, Mark Twain responded to news about Boxer reparations by arguing that the "Blessings of Civilization," such as love, justice, gentleness, Christianity, liberty, equality, and education, were adulterated when weapons were used to force them onto the rest of the world. Because Twain focused on the shadows of American foreign policy rather than on the "goodness and light," Roosevelt called him a "prize idiot."[67]

Luella Miner, the missionary who accompanied Fei and Kong when they tried to enter the United States two days before Roosevelt became president, warned about the possible long-term consequences of continuing policies against China, such as the Chinese Exclusion Act. "A student who receives a repulse is a most dangerous foe, for often he wields a trenchant pen, and an article which he sends back to a newspaper in Shanghai, Canton or Tientsin [Tianjin] may circulate all over the empire." She further warned that Russia, which was taking advantage of the court's purpose to send students abroad, would have returned students in powerful positions in twenty years who would make another land steal similar to the resource-rich northern provinces of China (Manchuria) taken following the Boxer uprising. She pointed out the glaring anomaly in Sino-American relations: The United States cries, "An open door for our merchants, our railway projectors, and our missionaries," then slams the door in the faces of Chinese merchants, travelers, and students. She encouraged congressmen to revise the act to be "more in accord with our matchless Constitution, and with the teaching of the Master who said, 'All ye are brethren.' "[68]

In 1904 Supreme Court justice David Brewer gave another warning in the dissenting opinion in a citizenship case for thirty-two Chinese. He warned that the poor treatment of Chinese over the previous twenty years by the United States was just cause for China switching from being a friend to becoming a great antagonist. "[T]he careful student of history will recall the words of Scripture, 'they have sown the wind and they shall reap the whirlwind.' "[69]

Although Roosevelt believed that Chinese laborers should be kept out of the United States because he feared social upheaval from racial mixing, he ordered that U.S. immigration officers be reprimanded for behaving harshly or rudely toward higher-class Chinese. Believing that the United States could influence China's modernization as it had Japan's in the 1870s, he ordered that Chinese students be treated with respect as stated in the law, in order to "make ever firmer our intellectual hold upon China."[70] However, Roosevelt's fears of angering voters on the West Coast during an election year caused him to sign the renewal of the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1904.[71]

When Japan defeated the Russian Navy in 1905, Roosevelt, wanting to quickly stabilize the balance of power in the Pacific, hosted the Portsmouth Peace Conference in New Hampshire. In order to impress his rivals, including his new one, Japan, he sent the U.S. Fleet around the world from December 1906 to February

1908, including the ports of Tokyo and Shanghai. At a time when many considered the Japanese to be racially inferior, Roosevelt was impressed with their strong military which American-sponsored modernization had helped.[72]

At the turn of the century, the United States was also facing various social questions that had been causing upheaval on both coasts.

America's Social Question

From 1880–1897, the United States experienced social and economic turmoil, including strikes and the depression of 1894–1895. A nationwide nativist movement blamed the economic and social problems on the large numbers of immigrants from Europe. American society was being transformed from an agrarian frontier to complex industrialized cities, causing Americans to feel anxious about their identity and the future of democracy. The progressive movement from 1898–1914 encouraged gradual political, economic, and social changes rather than revolutionary restructuring. Many felt that the wisdom from the past was no longer applicable to the new conditions.

Reformers advocated civil service reform because they believed that political patronage overpowered decent citizens and destroyed the people's confidence in popular government. Moral deterioration was seen as a matter of life or death since a corrupt monarchy might endure by rule of force whereas a corrupt republic would soon perish.[73] Economic problems were addressed in best-sellers such as *Looking Backward, 2000–1887* (1888), written by Edward Bellamy. In this utopian novel, the Ten Commandments had become obsolete by the year 2000 since human nature, which was tender and self-sacrificing, was allowed to flourish. In his postscript, Bellamy promised: "[T]he Golden age lies before us and not behind us, and is not far away."[74]

Some felt that Christianity needed to change from emphasizing individual salvation to transforming the social structure in order to cure the "evils that threatened modern civilization." Writing that "the social question is the absorbing intellectual problem of our time," Walter Raushenbusch, a Baptist pastor and church historian, stated that the Kingdom of God would transform the life on earth into the harmony of heaven. Charles Sheldon popularized these ideas in his best-selling novel, *In His Steps* (1896), in which a pastor changed his sermon's emphasis from the work of Christ on the cross to the work of his people in the streets to bring about the Kingdom of God in an urban society ("What would Jesus do?"), so there would be no need for a socialist revolution.[75]

Many felt that education, which had long been viewed as the way to preserve and entrench democratic ideals, also needed to be adapted to the new conditions. Nineteenth-century university education focused on Greek and Roman classics, with university presidents teaching the seniors' capstone class on moral philosophy, a broadly Christian philosophy. At the turn of the century, universities that had only offered degrees in divinity, law, and medicine were called to train experts

who would work within an industrial society.[76] Claiming that democracy was on trial, William James, a professor of philosophy at Harvard from 1872–1907, called for the small force of college-bred to steer the country in the midst of alternating winds by offering the "more permanent ideals, the steady tug of truth and justice." The number of graduates were rising and more people were seeking graduate degrees, first in Germany, and later in the United States.[77] James warned that the United States was beginning to suffer from the "Mandarin disease" of gaining titles only for honor. He considered this odd since the "recognition of individuality and bare manhood have so long been supposed to be the very soul" of the American people.[78]

Professors, who had often been seen as impractical "men of letters," were becoming "men of action" in order to help make the country materially, intellectually, and spiritually strong. Roosevelt recognized their expertise and created a "New Whirlwind" in Washington by inviting them to serve on commissions such as public lands, inland waterways, and national conservation.[79] This ideal of service was to be extended from the United States to all mankind, for the "whole contemporary movement stresses . . . the fundamental oneness of interest among all people of this swiftly narrowing earth."[80]

The rise of science, which in the late nineteenth century chiefly meant evolution, caused some to question the biblical description of the nature of humanity. Unlike the founding fathers who believed that a democracy needed to take into account the fallibility of man, some reformers believed that "democracy must stand or fall on the platform of possible human perfectibility."[81] While some tried to accommodate science and Christianity into a great synthesis, others exchanged heaven in the next world for the gospel of progress in the present.[82] Marvelous advances in science caused some to reject "history" with its emphasis on traditions, customs, and problems, and to accept "evolution" with its hope of the perfectibility of man. Educational philosopher John Dewey summarized these hopes that have "led men to look to the future, instead of the past. . . . Now they face the future with a firm belief that intelligence properly used can do away with evils once thought inevitable."[83]

When William James's younger brother Henry returned to the United States in 1904, after almost a quarter century of self-imposed exile in Europe, he commented on the American scene. James felt that the businessman's face was America's strong first impression, for the "money-making" skyscrapers were overshadowing the spires of churches in New York City. He saw Americans' "perpetual repudiation of the past" in the city's architecture. Putting up commemorative tablets that celebrated the birth, sojourn, or death of renowned persons was pointless as buildings would soon be destroyed to make room for yet another skyscraper. Americans mixed their optimism with feelings of superiority. The collective voice said, "We have everything, don't you see? every capacity and appetite, every advantage of education and every susceptibility of sense; no 'tip' in the world, none that our time is capable of giving, has been lost on us."[84] America's new educational plan for Chinese stu-

dents sprouted from this soil of zeal, optimism about the future, and tension between morality and materialism.

China's Puzzle

While many Chinese still felt superior to all other nations due to their ancient traditions, some Chinese reformers were puzzled about why it was taking so long to reform their country. Some shifted their focus from trusting in transferring technology to transforming the Chinese national character (*minzu xing*).

Liang Qichao was born in 1873 in Guangzhou into a farmer's family. After studying the classics with his grandfather and father, he passed the second (or provincial level) of the Confucian examination at sixteen with great honor. After failing to pass the third level examination in Beijing, he came across a world map in Shanghai that visually demonstrated that China was not the world, but a nation among many. He then studied with Kang Youwei, a reformer within the Qing court, who offered him a wide-ranging curriculum of ancient Chinese and foreign thought, including Bellamy's *Looking Backward*, serially published in Chinese by American missionaries. Liang began asking how Western philosophy, not just technology, could be used to change China. When the reforms of 1898 were crushed by the empress dowager, Liang and Kang escaped to Japan while six others were charged with treason and beheaded. Liang influenced many Chinese youth by publishing journals on Western thought that were smuggled in and circulated in China.[85]

In order to raise funds for Kang's political organization, the Society for the Protection of the Emperor, Liang spent five months in the United States in 1903.[86] After reading one of Roosevelt's speeches about the U.S. role in the world, Liang feared that the United States would become China's next foe. "All his speeches take war as the means for building up a nation; from this his character can be seen." Liang was received by Secretary of State Hay and President Roosevelt, whom he thought of as having "great ambition and talent and the aura to create a new epoch."[87]

Liang was both in awe and dismayed by his travels in the United States. When he heard that students returned books to university libraries, he saw this as evidence for a high level of public morality. After meeting with Chinese students at Harvard, Yale, Columbia, and Berkeley, he wrote that most of them were hardworking, "not arrogant, but patriotic."[88] Although he thought New York's large Central Park was wasteful, he appreciated its peaceful setting that helped him clear his mind and spirit. He saw the U.S. political spoils system as a weakness and the constant electioneering as an opportunity for corruption. After seeing the extreme unequal distribution of wealth, he thought that the United States was sure to become socialist. He was shocked that lynching happened in a civilized country. He was shamed when he visited a museum in Boston and saw Chinese treasures taken from the palace Yuanming Yuan in 1860 and after the Boxer uprising in 1900.[89]

FIGURE 1.7 Liang Qichao, a revolutionary whose writings influenced the second wave of Chinese students. He became one of the "four great teachers" in the Department of National Studies at Tsinghua in 1925.

Liang visited Chinatowns in New York and San Francisco in order to see how Chinese were influenced by their republican surroundings. He listed their strengths as love for their hometown, a strong sense of justice, industriousness, thriftiness and reliability, an ability to endure hardship, and their unwillingness to be assimilated into another culture because of their tenacious hold onto the essence of Chinese culture.[90] But he was dismayed with their seemingly intrinsic weakness when he saw how they were splintered into factions or ruled by autocrats. He concluded that "Our character is that of clansmen rather than citizens. . . . We have a village mentality and not a national mentality. . . . We can accept only despotism and cannot enjoy freedom. . . . We lack lofty objectives." Becoming convinced that adopting a democratic system of government in China would be committing na-