

# PORTRAYING SUN YAT-SEN IN THE VANCOUVER-BASED *CHINESE TIMES*: *A Trans-Local Perspective*

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XUEQING XU AND HUA LAURA WU\*

SUN YAT-SEN (孫逸仙 1866–1925), the founder of the Republic of China, visited Canada at least a couple of times over the period of a decade at the turn of the twentieth century to seek essential financial support for his planned armed uprisings to overthrow the Qing government and to build a republic.<sup>1</sup> Although encountering some obstacles in the early years, he successfully raised significant and much-needed financial aid from Chinese communities abroad. Among the overseas Chinese communities, the most outstanding contribution was made by the Chee Kung Tong (致公堂 the Chinese Freemasons, hereafter CKT) in Canada. The period of the new nation building shortly before and after 1911 witnessed a honeymoon relationship between Sun and the CKT since the latter was the strongest overseas financial supporter of Sun's revolution. Nevertheless, the alliance did not last long. Though the establishment of the Republic of China generated great enthusiasm in Chinese diaspora communities in Canada, it soon witnessed the bitter end of this once celebratory bond between Sun Yat-sen and the CKT.

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<sup>1</sup> Accounts of Sun Yat-sen's visits to Canada differ on their timing. One account suggests three occasions, in 1897, 1910, and 1911, respectively. See Lee Tunghai, *Jianada huaqiao shi* [A history of Chinese in Canada] (Vancouver: Jianada ziyou chubanshe, 1967), 301; and Edgar Wickberg, ed., *From China to Canada: A History of the Chinese Communities in Canada* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1982), 76. However, in Cao Jianwu's report, the three years given are 1897, 1902, and 1911. Cao provided the place where Sun Yat-sen stayed in 1902: "Sun Wen lives secretly in the Yingchanglong Store in Victoria." See Cao Jianwu, "Hongmen canjia Xinhai geming shishi" [Historical facts about Hongmen's participation in the Xinhai Revolution], *Chinese Times*, 27 October 1978, 3. This date for the second visit is supported by Sun Huifang, Sun Yat-sen's granddaughter, according to CKT's special issue commemorating the 110th anniversary of the Xinhai Revolution. See *Xinhai geming 110 zhounian jinian tekan* [The special issue for the 110th anniversary of the Revolution of 1911] (Vancouver: Dart Coon Club Headquarters of Canada, 2022), 29. Another account suggests he visited twice, in 1897 and 1911, respectively. See David Chuenyan Lai, "Contribution of the Zhigongtang in Canada to the Huanghuagang Uprising in Canton, 1911," *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 14, no. 3 (1982): 95.

The process of this dramatic change in their relationship was recorded over the years in the *Tai Hon Kong Bo* (大漢公報 *Chinese Times*, 1910–92), a newspaper operated by the CKT.

The events and history discussed in this article took place largely in Vancouver, British Columbia, unceded territory of the Coast Salish peoples.

Based in Vancouver, the *Chinese Times* was one of the oldest Chinese newspapers in Canada and one of the most dynamic of the Chinese diasporic media that helped shape the cultural values and identities of the community it served. As an official organ of the CKT, the *Chinese Times* bore the trademark of Chinese nationalism in its reception, and, under the leadership of its first editor, Feng Ziyou (馮自由 1882–1958), it functioned as a community organizational vehicle that actively engaged in China's politics, especially with Sun Yat-sen's revolution.

The narratives of the shifting relationship between the CKT and Sun Yat-sen offered by the *Chinese Times* reflect a place-based yet trans-local perspective: the newspaper provided an alternative voice that challenged homeland nationalist discourse on China's political ideology and disapproved of Sun Yat-sen's political practices around the mid-1910s. Diaspora studies regard homeland politics as a vitally important topic for diasporic media, especially those run by first-generation migrants, whose ties to the country of origin remain strong.<sup>2</sup> Since diaspora are located in "the third space" of the cultural border between the country of origin and the country of residence,<sup>3</sup> their media meet and interact with different views, ideas, and information. This border-crossing practice provides Chinese transnational publics with "alternatives to state ideologies for remaking identity."<sup>4</sup> By generating and voicing its different narratives on China's politics and the CKT's vision of nation building, the *Chinese Times* created a specific media culture characterized by its local and diasporic identity.

This article examines the narratives the *Chinese Times* offers on the affiliation between Sun Yat-sen and the CKT as it turned from political ally to antagonist, focusing especially on how the newspaper portrayed and conveyed the CKT's view of Sun Yat-sen from its local perspective in the transnational context. It uses historical and empirical media approaches to inquire into the newspaper's instrumental function as diaspora media in political disputes and the role it played in illustrating cross-national political landscapes, instructing its readers' perception of transnational politics, and

<sup>2</sup> H. Karim, ed., *The Media of Diaspora* (London: Routledge, 2003), 3.

<sup>3</sup> Karim, 5; Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994).

<sup>4</sup> A. Ong and D. Nonini, eds., *Ungrounded Empires: The Cultural Politics of Modern Chinese Transnationalism* (London: Routledge, 1996), 25.

shaping public opinion. It also reviews how the *Chinese Times* served as a platform for public opinion and as a medium for open criticism in the transnational media sphere while acting as the mouthpiece of the CKT.

## BACKGROUND

The first two decades of the twentieth century witnessed passionate involvement in China's politics by the Chinese communities in Canada, from the Constitutional Monarchy reform movement to Sun Yat-sen's revolutions. The most significant action that the Chinese communities engaged in was to provide substantial financial support, which both the Reformists and Revolutionists were earnestly seeking.

In his early period of looking for support from the Canadian Chinese community, Sun Yat-sen was far behind the Reformists Kang Youwei (康有為 1858–1927) and Liang Qichao (梁啟超 1873–1929), who founded the Chinese Empire Reform Association in Victoria in 1899 and were aiming to establish a constitutional government.<sup>5</sup> Though he arrived in Canada in 1897, two years earlier than Kang Youwei, Sun Yat-sen's first visit was not fruitful, partly because he was passing through on his way to Japan from London and spent only about a dozen days in Vancouver and Victoria, and partly because the CKT chose not to provide any assistance since Sun was not one of its members. Since Kang's and Liang's first visits to Canada, the Chinese communities in British Columbia, including the CKT, had been greatly influenced by Reformist ideology, which was premised on the restoration of a constitutional monarchy. After Kang's three visits, made between 1899 and 1904, the Chinese Empire Reform Association had expanded to twelve branches and, by 1905, had further spread to more than forty cities. Its membership accounted for 35 percent of the Canadian Chinese community, and it had support from the CKT. Many members of the CKT joined the Chinese Empire Reform Association and vice versa.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Zhongping Chen, "Kang Youwei's Activities in Canada and the Reformist Movement among the Global Chinese Diaspora, 1899–1909," *Twentieth-Century China* 39, no. 1 (2014): 3–23. According to L. Eve Armentrout Ma, the official founder and the head was Kang Youwei, and "Liang Qichao came to the second in the party hierarchy." See L. Eve Armentrout Ma, "A Chinese Statesman in Canada, 1903: Translated from the Travel Journal of Liang Ch'i-ch'ao," *BC Studies* no. 59 (Autumn 1983): 30.

<sup>6</sup> See L. Eve Armentrout Ma, "A Chinese Association in North America: The Pao-Huang Hui from 1899 to 1904," *Ching-shih wen-t'i* 4, no. 9 (1978): 91; Wickberg, *From China to Canada*, 74–75; and Zhongping Chen, "Vancouver Island and the Chinese Diaspora in the Transpacific World, 1788–1918," *BC Studies* 204 (Winter 2019/20): 61–62. Zhongping Chen's research on the timeline of Kang's visits to Canada shows that his first and second visits occurred in 1899 and the third in 1904–05. This timeline is different from Ma's and Wickberg's accounts, which state the visits took place in 1899, 1902, and 1904, respectively. See Zhongping Chen, "Kang Youwei's Activities in Canada," 16.

Having realized the extensive influence of the CKT through its large number of followers among overseas Chinese, Sun took action in 1904, joining the CKT in Hawai'i and becoming an official of the organization with the purpose of winning support for his proposed revolution.<sup>7</sup> Sun's strategy was very effective and helped him obtain the trust of CKT leaders in the United States and Canada. He further exerted his ideological influence on the association by helping the CKT to draft a new charter, changing its political goal from "overthrow Qing Dynasty and restore Ming Dynasty" to "expel the northern barbarians, to revive China, to establish a republic, and to distribute land equally among the people." These goals later became the objectives of the Chinese Alliance founded by Sun Yat-sen in Japan in 1905.<sup>8</sup>

As L. Eve Armentrout Ma observes, the Christians and CKT in North America had switched their support from the Chinese Empire Reform Association beginning in late 1904 in the United States and in 1906 in Canada.<sup>9</sup> In Canada, a severe political dispute erupted as a newspaper war between *Yat Sun Bo* (日新報 *Daily News*, 1903–11), founded by the Empire Reform Association, and *Wa-Ying Yat-Po* (華英日報 *Chinese-English Daily Newspaper*, 1906–09), the first Christian newspaper in the Chinese language published by Canadian Methodist churches, signalling a significant division between the Christians and the Reformists in Canada. During this dispute the CKT firmly backed the Chinese Christians, supporting the *Chinese-English Daily's* advocacy for a new China. When the *Chinese Times* began operating in 1910, "revolutionary sentiment had begun to develop among Canada's Chinese" after several years of promotion by Chinese political advocates,<sup>10</sup> and the Empire Reform Association's influence had been gradually weakened by rising national concerns over China's future.

By the time of Sun's visit in early 1911, the CKT had become his strongest supporter in North America, especially under the influence of his lieutenant Feng Ziyou, who was installed by the newly founded *Chinese Times* as its chief editor in 1910–11. Making use of the newspaper as a powerful voice, Feng Ziyou had successfully advanced Sun's republican revolutionary ideas in the Chinese communities and mobilized them to become Sun's followers.

<sup>7</sup> See Chen Xiqi, *Sun Zhongshan nianpu changbian* [A detailed chronicle of Sun Yat-sen's life], vol. 1 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1991), 303; and Jonathan D. Spence, *The Search for Modern China* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1990), 257.

<sup>8</sup> David Chuenyan Lai, *Hongmen ji Jianada Hongmen shilun* [Discourse on the Freemasons and the history of Canadian Freemasonry] (Hong Kong: Shangwu yinshuguan, 2015), 111–12.

<sup>9</sup> Armentrout Ma, *Revolutionaries, Monarchists, and Chinatowns: Chinese Politics in the Americas and the 1911 Revolution* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1990), 111.

<sup>10</sup> Wickberg, *From China to Canada*, 76.

Inspired by Sun's revolutionary ideas and the ultimate goal of a republic, the Chinese communities looked forward to a strong, modern China that would help protect overseas Chinese from racial discrimination in their host countries and would enhance their social status. Among these communities, the most significant contribution made to Sun was by the CKT in Canada, whose original political aim was in line with Sun's: to uproot Manchu rule and to restore China to the Chinese.

## ALLIANCE

During the anti-Qing campaign under Feng Ziyou's editorship, the *Chinese Times* took on the task of disseminating republican revolutionary ideology and fostering the vision of a new China. Feng Ziyou was Sun's vigorous and able lieutenant. Born in Japan in 1882, he assisted Sun by founding Tongmeng hui (同盟會 the Revolutionary Alliance), becoming one of its first members in 1905. The following year, Feng was appointed as the chair of the Hong Kong branch of the Revolutionary Alliance and as the chief editor of *Zhongguo ribao* (中國日報 China daily), engaging in organizing revolutionary activities in Southern China.

In 1910, a year after *Wa-Ying Yat-Po* ended its publication, the CKT launched a newspaper named *Tai Hon Yat Bo* (大漢日報 *Chinese Daily News*, 1910–15, renamed *Tai Hon Kong Bo* in 1915; ceased publication in 1992). Chen Wenxi (陳文錫), the general secretary of the CKT in Vancouver, and Huang Bifeng (黃璧峯), the branch's treasurer, wrote to Feng asking for a recommendation for chief editor for the *Chinese Times*. Seizing the opportunity, Feng self-recommended and assumed the chief editorship of the newspaper,<sup>11</sup> fully aware of the importance of media in promoting revolutionary ideas and intent on disseminating revolutionary propaganda through the Chinese media in North America.

Feng Ziyou arrived in Vancouver in June 1910,<sup>12</sup> when the *Chinese Times* had published for half a month with Zhang Zeli (張澤黎) and Huang Xichun (黃希純) in charge of the editing. Although Feng worked as the chief editor for just over a year, he effectively mobilized members of the CKT and, in a heated media debate, defeated *Yat Sun Bo*, a Reformist newspaper in Vancouver, which was competing with the CKT for community support. During the dispute, more than two hundred articles were printed by both

<sup>11</sup> See Feng Ziyou, *Geming yishi* [An unofficial history of revolution] (Chongqing, Hong Kong: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1939), 327; and his *Huaqiao geming kaiguo shi* [A revolution history of overseas Chinese] (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1946), 105.

<sup>12</sup> Feng's account on his arrival in Vancouver applies the Chinese lunar calendar, the fifth month of Gengxu, which is 6 June–7 July 1910.

the *Chinese Times* and *Yat Sun Bo* on topics such as revolution versus reform, what China's future should be, and what changes should be made, as well as on questions such as "in whose hands and under what kind of political forms would those changes take place."<sup>13</sup> The battle between the two associations in their respective newspapers created a record for one of the longest disputes in Chinese overseas media.<sup>14</sup> As a result of this political debate, the "members of the CKT in Canada were enlightened. None of the members did not wish the revolutionary army in their home country ... swift success," and many followers of the Empire Reform Association announced in the *Chinese Times* the resignation of their membership as they joined the CKT.<sup>15</sup> Feng was particularly proud that he also successfully persuaded a former branch chair of the Empire Reform Association and a journalist of *Yat Sun Bo* to convert to the cause of republic revolution,<sup>16</sup> pointing out that "all the members of the CKT have had a new mindset, so eager to see rapid revolutionary movement in the motherland."<sup>17</sup>

The Chinese Canadians' enthusiasm for the Sun Yat-sen revolution had greatly encouraged Feng Ziyou. By the winter of 1910, Feng believed that it was time to raise urgently needed funds for Sun's proposed revolution. While in Malaysia with Huang Xing (黃興 1874–1916) and other revolutionaries to plan a revolt in Guangzhou, Sun received Feng's telegraph. Thrilled by the news and Feng Ziyou's encouragement, Sun immediately came to Canada via the United States and arrived in Vancouver on 6 February 1911.<sup>18</sup>

The CKT in Vancouver welcomed Sun Yat-sen with heartfelt enthusiasm, about one thousand people greeting him at the train station. In the following days, Sun Yat-sen lectured at the Chinese theatre four times, attracting an audience of thousands each time. With deep gratitude, Sun wrote to the CKT headquarters in San Francisco, describing the scene:

Since I arrived in Vancouver on January 8th [of the lunar calendar] I have been loyally received by all. Every day I lectured at the [CKT] hall of the theater to audiences of 2–3,000. Even though it rains heavily there is enthusiasm unprecedented in Vancouver. If people feel this way, the success of the Revolution is inevitable.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Wickberg, *From China to Canada*, 102; Feng, *Huaqiao geming kaiguo shi*, 105.

<sup>14</sup> The *Chinese Times* later engaged in political disputes with the *New Republic Chinese Daily* in 1916, 1917–18, 1919, 1927–28, and so on.

<sup>15</sup> Feng, *Huaqiao geming kaiguo shi*, 105; Feng, *Geming yishi*, 330.

<sup>16</sup> Feng, *Geming yishi*, 330.

<sup>17</sup> Feng, *Huaqiao geming kaiguo shi*, 105.

<sup>18</sup> Feng dated Sun's arrival as 2 January of the lunar calendar (31 January) in his *Geming yishi*, 330; but Lee Tunghai, in his *Jianada huaqiao shi*, quoted Sun's letter to the CKT headquarters in San Francisco, which gives the date as 8 January. See also Wickberg, *From China to Canada*, 103.

<sup>19</sup> Wickberg, *From China to Canada*, 103.



Vancouver Chinese zeal for a new China was far beyond Sun's and Feng's expectations. Grasping this opportunity, Feng Ziyou proposed to set up a fundraising bureau for revolutionary salvation.

Although members of the CKT in Vancouver contributed willingly to the cause of revolution, the majority of them were labourers and merchants running small businesses, and therefore the individual sums were small. By then, the organizers of the revolution were prepared for another revolt in Guangzhou and were in urgent need of money. Frequent telegraphs arrived pressing Feng to send funds. Since small amounts of personal savings and cash could hardly meet the imminent great need, Feng advised Sun to encourage the CKT to sell its properties in various cities, committing the money to the revolutionary military fund. With Sun's approval, Feng put forward his proposal at a welcome banquet hosted by the CKT's headquarters in Victoria. Although the majority of the audience, who were prominent members, supported this idea, some opposed it because property was the official base of the CKT and should never be sold. Thus, the proposal was not approved at a CKT general assembly. However, Feng's nationalistic anti-Manchu propaganda persuaded general members, and the proposal to mortgage the office building was passed straightforwardly at the second general meeting on the following day.<sup>20</sup> The headquarters office building in Victoria was thus mortgaged to B.B. Land Investment Agency, while other branches in Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver "responded readily" to mortgage their office buildings.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Sheng Gong, "Sun Zhongshan chongyou Jianada zhi hui" [A recollection of Sun Yat-sen's revisits to Canada], *Chinese Times*, 28 March and 1 April 1929, 1.

<sup>21</sup> There are several accounts of cities' office buildings being mortgaged or sold to raise funds. Feng Ziyou named three cities in which the CKT mortgaged its office buildings: Victoria, Toronto, and Montreal. See Feng, *Geming yishi*, 334–35. According to the report of Cao Jianwu, the CKT's office buildings were mortgaged in Victoria and sold in Toronto. He did not mention the buildings in Vancouver and Montreal. See Cao Jianwu, "Hongmen canjia Xinhai geming shishi" [Historical facts about Hongmen's participation in the Xinhai Revolution], *Chinese Times*, 1, 2, and 15 November 1978, 3. Jian Jianping, senior member of the CKT, and editor of the *Chinese Times*, referred to the CKT's office buildings in Vancouver and Victoria as mortgaged and that in Toronto as sold. See Jian Jianping, "Hongmen Jianshi" [A brief history of Hongmen (Chee Kung Tong)], *Chinese Times*, 24 September 1980, 9. Lee Donghai only mentioned a mortgaged office building in Victoria. See Lee, *Jianada huaqiao shi*, 303. Lin Hanyuan, the chief editor of the *Chinese Times* for several decades, writes that the office building in Vancouver was mortgaged to a Canadian bank in 1910 and was redeemed one year after Japan's surrender at the end of the Second World War. See Lin Hanyuan, "Yunbu Minzhidang louyu zhi weiji" [The great deeds about Minzhidang's (Chee Kung Tang's) office building in Vancouver], in *Hongmen gongxian Jianada 140 zhounian jinian tekan* [The Chinese Freemasons' contributions to Canada for 140 years, 1863–2003, a special issue] (Vancouver: The Chinese Freemasons Headquarters of Canada, 2003), 89. The CKT office in Vancouver still retains a handwritten copy of the Redeem Agreement reached in 1945.

As Feng recalls, "My proposal was endorsed by everyone. The CKT Vancouver Branch donated 10,000 Hong Kong dollars taking the lead" among the Chinese communities in the world.<sup>22</sup>

In addition, Sun Yat-sen also went to New Westminster, Kamloops, Ashcroft, Kelowna, Nanaimo, Revelstoke, Calgary, Winnipeg, Toronto, Montreal, and other places to raise money. In his "Historical Facts about Hongmen's Participation in the Xinhai Revolution," Cao Jianwu (曹建武), a senior member of the CKT and chief editor of the *Chinese Times* from 1924/1925 to 1932, provides a detailed report on Sun's travel to other parts of Canada, highlighting that, whenever Sun Yat-sen arrived, he was enthusiastically received by local members of the CKT. All his trip expenses were paid by the association, including the hiring of security guards. Many invoices for hotels, train and boat fares, and meal expenses are still kept in the archives of the CKT.<sup>23</sup> In 1978, under the auspices of the chief editor Lin Jieshan (林介山), the *Chinese Times* serialized Cao Jianwu's manuscript in full between 25 September and 18 December.

The fundraising in Canada was an astounding achievement, raising a total of HK\$100,000, or CDN\$35,000,<sup>24</sup> and placing the CKT in Canada as the largest financial supporter among overseas Chinese communities. As Feng observed, the amount inspired Sun's "bewildering surprise."<sup>25</sup> Feng maintained that the contributions by overseas Chinese were essential to Sun's revolution: "It is truthfully right to say there would have been no revolution without overseas Chinese."<sup>26</sup> A widespread saying attributed to Sun Yat-sen – "Huaqiao (overseas Chinese) is the mother of the Chinese revolution"<sup>27</sup> – further acknowledges the crucial role that overseas Chinese played in furthering his political agenda.

<sup>22</sup> Feng, *Geming yishi*, 333.

<sup>23</sup> Cao Jianwu, also named Cao Maosen (曹懋森), completed the manuscript in 1930 under the title of *Zhigongdang fuguo lishi* [The history of the CKT's role in reviving China]. When the manuscript was serialized in the *Chinese Times*, the title was changed to "Hongmen canjia Xinhai geming shishi" [Historical facts about Hongmen's participation in the Xinhai Revolution], *Chinese Times*, 25 September–18 December 1978. In his "Contribution of the Zhigongtang in Canada to the Huanghuagang Uprising in Canton, 1911" David Chuenyan Lai provides a detailed analysis of Cao's serialized history and amends some of its inaccuracies. See *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 14, no. 3 (1982): 95–104.

<sup>24</sup> Wickberg, *From China to Canada*, 103.

<sup>25</sup> Feng, *Huaqiao geming kaiguo shi*, 107.

<sup>26</sup> Feng, *Huaqiao geming kaiguo shi*, 1.

<sup>27</sup> Though one cannot find this saying in Sun's writings, it is recorded in several personal memoirs. See also W.E. Willmott's "Approaches to the Study of the Chinese in British Columbia," in which he writes: "Sun Yat-sen declared that 'the Overseas Chinese are the parents of the Revolution,' by which he meant not only that they were the main source of money, but also that they provided the ideological direction for his party." See *BC Studies* 4 (Spring 1970): 38–52.



While Sun Yat-sen was successfully raising funds in North America, the Xinhai Revolution occurred in Wuchang in October 1911, and this soon led to the end of 267 years of rule by the Qing Dynasty. The birth of the Republic of China led to great enthusiasm in Chinese diaspora communities. Unfortunately, this was soon replaced by disillusionment.

#### FRICTIONS

The Republic of China was established by a weak authority. Sun Yat-sen himself had neither a unified military force nor enough financing for his idealistic republicanism. As described in the *Chinese Times*, Sun returned to China after the Wuchang Revolution “with nothing ... except for the spirit of revolution, and the money donated by overseas Chinese.”<sup>28</sup> His provisional presidency lasted for less than three months, strategically passed on in March of 1912 to ambitious and powerful Yuan Shih-k'ai (袁世凱 1859–1916), former commander of the Beiyang Army. In the following year, the assassination of Song Jiaoren (宋教仁 1882–1913), an early republican politician and the Kuomintang's chief planner, triggered Sun Yat-sen and his followers to organize the unsuccessful “Second Revolution” against Yuan, who was obviously abusing his power. In exile once again, Sun sought support from the Japanese government in order to uproot Yuan's domination.

During this chaotic period, the CKT in Canada took a different standpoint. Its view of Sun's ideas and projected programs was in line with some of Sun's close associates and reflected the opinions of the different factions within Sun's Nationalist Party. Numerous articles in the editorial column of the *Chinese Times* appeared in 1914 and 1915,<sup>29</sup> criticizing Sun's policies and his efforts to win Japanese funding, revealing contradictions and hostility between the CKT and Sun Yat-sen. The conflicts stemmed mainly from the following three events: first, Sun's not carrying out his promise that he would approve the CKT's registration as a legitimate party in the republican government; second, Sun's downplaying of the CKT's contribution after he was elected as the provisional president, which further infuriated the association; and third, Sun's search for Japan's help to assist his anti-Yuan campaign, which caused the CKT to condemn his new revolutionary plans and eventually to break from him.

<sup>28</sup> Xia Qing, “Lun Minguo sinian zhi Sun Wen” [On Sun Wen in the fourth year of the Republic], *Chinese Times*, 12 May 1915, 1.

<sup>29</sup> The period from the beginning up to 31 July 1914 of the *Chinese Times* is not extant. Thus, unfortunately, some significant editorials published in the newspaper during this period could be missed.

### *Party Registration*

Although, next to Zhonghua huiguan (中華會館 the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association, CCBC, 1884–), the CKT was the largest and most influential Chinese association in Canada. It originated as a secret society named Hongmen (洪門), which was formed in the seventeenth century and whose goal was to overthrow the Qing and restore the Ming of the Han nation.<sup>30</sup> Because of its opposition to Manchu rule, Hongmen were illegal in China during the Qing Dynasty. After numerous failed revolts against the Qing court, surviving members fled the country, many to Southeast Asia and North America. The first branch of Hongmen in Canada was founded in 1863 in the gold rush town of Barkerville, British Columbia;<sup>31</sup> decades later the organization spread to other parts of the country. By then, the CKT's chief aim had transformed into looking after its members' welfare and to "maintain[ing] a friendly relationship among our countrymen and to accumulat[ing] wealth through proper business methods for the benefit of all members."<sup>32</sup>

In early 1911, when Sun Yat-sen was in Canada and was relying on the CKT to fundraise, he repeatedly guaranteed that the CKT would be registered and approved as an official party once the Republic of China was established. Nevertheless, after Sun established a Provisional Government of the Republic of China, CKT's application for registration was ignored. As argued by a *Chinese Times* journalist in an editorial entitled "Rebutting Sun's Letter to Huang Sande": "Except for expelling the Manchurians, the CKT has no second aim. Since the Manchu regime has stepped down, and the Republic has been established, we support anyone who is elected to be the president," and, therefore, the CKT rightfully deserved official recognition.<sup>33</sup>

In this editorial the author comments on and refutes a letter by Sun to the head of the CKT of America, Huang Sande (黃三德). In the letter, Sun attempted to defend himself for not helping the CKT with its registration.

<sup>30</sup> See Lai, *Hongmen ji Jianada Hongmen shilun*, 12; and Stanford M. Lyman, W.E. Willmott, and Berching Ho, "Rules of a Chinese Secret Society in British Columbia," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 27, no. 3 (1964): 532.

<sup>31</sup> Lai, *Hongmen ji Jianada Hongmen shilun*, 82. See also Wickberg, *From China to Canada*, 30. Lyman, Willmott, and Ho point out that some sources showed that 1862 was the year when the first Canadian CKT was established. See Lyman, Willmott, and Ho, "Rules of a Chinese Secret Society in British Columbia," 531.

<sup>32</sup> This mandate was included in the CKT's rules. See Lyman, Willmott, and Ho, 531–34.

<sup>33</sup> Jizhe, "Pi Sunzei yu Huang Sande wangfushu" [Rebutting Sun's letter to Huang Sande], *Chinese Times*, 4 May 1915, 1 and 2. Jizhe used very strong language, calling Sun a "rascal." The use of this term shows the CKT's anger. Similar expressions of rage appear in other of the newspaper's articles as well.

Sun emphasized that he initiated the motion of registration; he shifted the responsibility for the application to Hu Hanmin (胡漢民 1879–1936);<sup>34</sup> and, ultimately, he blamed Chen Jiongming (陳炯明 1878–1933) for its rejection.<sup>35</sup> The CKT, however, was not convinced. When Huang Sande came to Guangzhou to discuss the registration with Sun, Sun urged him to talk to Hu Hanmin, who, like Sun, passed the problem on to Chen Jiongming. The author concludes: “Treachery Sun and Hu are acting in concert with each other. This is why they are condemned by CKT in North America. They shirk the responsibility to Chen. Who will believe them?”<sup>36</sup>

In 1913, the CKT in Canada again applied for official recognition as a legal association. The application was submitted to Lu Bingtian (盧炳田), consul general in Canada, and Lin Xiyuan (林錫垣), consul in Vancouver and the state council of Beijing. Both of the consuls strongly supported the application and highly praised the CKT’s contribution to the revolution and to the building of the Republic.<sup>37</sup> This time the appeal was approved without any trouble, and the approval statement was signed by Yuan Shih-kai, then president of the Republic of China. The CKT thus officially became a legal party, but the initial difficulties experienced in processing the application left the organization angry at Sun Yat-sen. In his farewell lecture at a Victoria CKT assembly, Cui Tongyue (崔通約), chief editor of the newspaper, stated: “The public acknowledges the CKT’s contribution and sacrifice [to the Republic] and accepts it as an official society. Isn’t it outlandish that we were not able to register in Sun’s time but in Yuan’s?”<sup>38</sup>

In his “Historical Facts about Hongmen’s Participation in the Xinhai Revolution,” Cao Jianwu points out that the purpose of Sun’s rejection of the CKT registration was to annex the association as a subordinate. “Sun Yat-sen claimed that the CKT did not need to be an independent party. It’s better to merge it with the Tongmen hui (reorganized as Guomin dang [國民黨], the Chinese Nationalist Party, in 1912) ... He further wrote to the CKT’s headquarter in the USA, asking to change the association’s name to The Association of the Republic of China.

<sup>34</sup> Hu Hanmin was then the governor of Guangdong and chief secretary of the Provisional Government of the Republic of China.

<sup>35</sup> Chen Jiongming was the military governor of Guangdong from 1911 to 1912 and from 1920 to 1923.

<sup>36</sup> Jizhe, “Pi Sunzei yu Huang Sande wangfushu,” 1.

<sup>37</sup> Cao Jianwu provided the two consuls’ commentaries and the written version of the approval by Yuan Shih-kai in his “Hongmen canjia Xinhai geming shishi” [Historical facts about Hongmen’s participation in the Xinhai Revolution], *Chinese Times*, 5–6 December 1978, 3.

<sup>38</sup> Cui Tongyue, “Jizhe zai Yubu Chee Kung Tong zhi yanci” [Lecture at a Victoria Chee Kung Tong’s assembly], *Chinese Times*, 27 July 1915, 3.

This made the members of the CKT in North America realize Sun's intention to annex the association."<sup>39</sup> The CKT firmly resisted Sun's attempt to merge it with his party of Tongmenhui but was willing to participate in the republican government as an independent party to continue its transnational political exercises.

Subsequent analysis validates the CKT's account, as published in the *Chinese Times*, of Sun's motives for rejecting CKT's registration. After analyzing the negative evaluation of the CKT that Sun made during the post-revolution period, Li Gongzhong (李恭忠), in "Discourse on 'Hongmen Nationalism' before and after the Xinhai [Revolution]," concludes that Sun Yat-sen joined the CKT only to serve his own purpose. In the post-revolutionary period, Li argues, Sun planned to disband the CKT and reorganize it as a branch of the revolutionary party. The alternative was to end affiliation with the CKT since gaining its support was no longer a necessity.<sup>40</sup> David Chuenyan Lai's view is similar to Li Gongzhong's. In his analysis of the conflict, he writes: "Although Sun Yat-sen recognized the great contribution the CKT performed in overthrowing the Manchu regime, he regarded the CKT as a gang after all. It would be difficult for them to adjust to the needs of the revolution. Moreover, Sun believed that, since overthrowing the Manchu regime had always been Hongmen's sole goal, which had been achieved, there wasn't any need for the CKT to register and to participate in the governance of the Republic."<sup>41</sup>

### *Honours Ranking*

Accompanying the registration problem was Sun's undervaluing of the CKT's contribution to his revolution. During Sun Yat-sen's brief administration of the Provisional Government of the Republic of China, he set up the Bureau of Merits to honour those who had rendered significant services to the revolution and appointed his secretary Feng Ziyou as its chief. What enraged the CKT most was that Feng credited the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association as first among North American Chinese associations, the Constitutional Party (the Empire Reform Association) as second, and the CKT as only third. This ranking, which ignored the CKT's unique and outstanding contribution, outraged its

<sup>39</sup> Cao, "Hongmen canjia Xinhai geming shishi" [Historical facts about Hongmen's participation in the Xinhai Revolution], *Chinese Times*, 4 December 1978, 3.

<sup>40</sup> Li Gongzhong, "Xinhai qianhou de 'Hongmen minzuzhuyi' lunshuo" [Discourse on 'Hongmen Nationalism' before and after the Xinhai Revolution], *Modern Chinese History Studies* 6 (2016): 4–22.

<sup>41</sup> Lai, *Hongmen ji Jianada Hongmen shilun*, 140–41.

members. It further confirmed the CKT's view of Sun's and Feng's functional attitude towards the association, acknowledging it only when it was needed. Given what the CKT had done for Sun, providing full support for his revolution, even mortgaging its office buildings in various cities and contributing half of its total overseas donations, the association believed that it deserved first place in Feng's ranking. Cui Tongyue writes in the *Chinese Times*, "Feng Ziyou has been ignorant, unfaithful, ungrateful and treacherous in wiping out the CKT's most outstanding deeds,"<sup>42</sup> although "the CKT has never boasted of its feats, but the Republic Bureau of Merits is blatantly unfair."<sup>43</sup> On 11 June 1915, the CKT in North America announced that it had expelled Feng Ziyou from the association. A full account of the case against Feng was published in the *Chinese Times* on 14 June 1915 under the title "Hongmen (the CKT) Announcement of Charges against Feng Ziyou." Among the charges were "undermining and slandering the CKT" and being "ungrateful."<sup>44</sup>

Many years later, when Feng Ziyou recalled this piece of history in his memoir, he admitted, "The CKT was resentful for not being awarded the medal issued by the Nanjing Provisional Presidential Government," and he lamented: "Vancouver's CKT made a great contribution to the fundraising for the Huanghuagang (黃花崗) revolt in March of the Xinhai year. Yet, because of the backlog of processing awards, the CKT so changed their mindset, truly it was a pity that our all previous efforts to retain their support were gone." His explanation for this incident was different from that of the CKT. In Feng's account, "groups all over America should be given awards. During the time when the North and the South were about to be unified, I made a list and submitted it to President Sun to sign and issue them one by one. I then sent the list to Zhu Zhuomin (朱卓民), Chief of the General Affairs Section, who would mail the award certificates to various places. When the Provisional Presidential Government was disbanded, it was said that Zhu had not paid the postage for some of the mailed award certificates. I suppose those not sent included that for the CKT, which caused its accusation that it received no reward for merits."<sup>45</sup>

Though describing the problem from his own perspective, Feng Ziyou's account nevertheless confirmed that the CKT held a grudge over the honours issue and that it never let this matter go. In his "Historical Facts

<sup>42</sup> Cui Tongyue, "Feng zei Ziyou zhi moyun" [Doom of treachery Feng Ziyou], *Chinese Times*, 15 June 1915, 2.

<sup>43</sup> Cui Tongyue, "Shou Shi" [Poetry of longevity], *Canghai shengping* (My memoirs) (Shanghai: Canghai chubanshe, 1935), 29.

<sup>44</sup> "The CKT in America expelling Feng Ziyou," *Chinese Times*, 14 June 1915, 3.

<sup>45</sup> Feng Ziyou, *Feng Ziyou huiyilu* [Feng Ziyou memoir] (Beijing: Dongfang chubanshe, 2011), 646.

about Hongmen's Participation in the Xinhai Revolution," Cao Jianwu exhaustively records the CKT's all-round assistance to Sun Yat-sen before the Revolution of 1911 during his fundraising tour in Canada, providing various historical materials (including original letters) and documenting every stage of the campaign. Cao Jianwu stressed that his intent when writing this manuscript was to demonstrate that the CKT's key role in assisting Sun's campaign in Canada was motivated by its commitment to the revolution, not by its desire to contend for a merit award. In his view, the CKT deserved to be acknowledged in Chinese history as one of the founders of the Republic of China.<sup>46</sup>

Zheng Jinhou (鄭今後), former chair of Canada's CKT, published an article entitled "Canadian Hongmen and the Xinhai Revolution" in the *Chinese Times* in 1981, in which he also pointed out the injustice that Feng Ziyou's Bureau of Merits handed to the CKT. Various historical relics preserved in the CKT's office building in Vancouver provide strong historical proof of the CKT's efforts, such as Sun Yat-sen's handwritten letters praising it and expressing to it his deep gratitude, the inscription Huang Xing made for it, and so on. Moreover, Zheng quotes a letter written in 1913 by Zhang Kangren (張康仁), consul of the Chinese Consulate in Vancouver, to Feng Ziyou, director of the Bureau of Merits. In this letter, Consul Zhang professed that it was his duty to report to Feng Ziyou about the Canadian CKT's extraordinary dedication to Sun's grand cause. He regarded it as a shame that the republican government had not issued the CKT the much-deserved merit certification of recognition.<sup>47</sup>

### *Political Disputes*

The CKT broke completely with Sun Yat-sen when he initiated the Second and the Third Revolutions against Yuan Shih-k'ai from 1913 on. Numerous editorials in the *Chinese Times* criticized Sun's attempts to overthrow Yuan's power by force, especially when he sought Japanese help. The CKT's difference of political opinion regarding China's current problems and its future direction demonstrated its local perspective but also indicated its transnationality.

Shortly after the establishment of the Republic, Sun Yat-sen stepped down and passed the provisional presidency to Yuan Shih-k'ai. This strategic resignation of power did not occur because Yuan could be

<sup>46</sup> Cao, "Hongmen canjia Xinhai geming shishi" [Historical facts about Hongmen's participation in the Xinhai Revolution], *Chinese Times*, 3 October 1978, 3.

<sup>47</sup> Zheng Jinhou, "Jianada Hongmen yu Xinhai geming" [Canadian Hongmen and the Xinhai Revolution], *Chinese Times*, 8–9 October 1981, 16.



deemed one of the founders of the Republic or as a practitioner of the ideals of the new Republic but solely because of his military power. Although Yuan Shih-k'ai advocated military reform when he served in the Manchu court as the governor of Beiyang and played a pivotal role in terminating Manchu rule while serving as prime minister, unlike Sun Yat-sen, he had never been in contact with Western political systems and culture, and only had experience in centralized authority. Yuan was disgruntled with the republican political structure because it restricted his power. He was particularly displeased that the Constitution, Parliament, and cabinet had the authority to vote for or veto various proposals. Yuan's political disagreements with Sun Yat-sen, Song Jiaoren, and the Kuomintang quickly deteriorated into fierce confrontations and finally led to violent conflicts, including the assassination of Song Jiaoren. The tragic death of Song Jiaoren in March 1913 changed the direction of China's political system and ended China's attempt to develop into a republican democracy.

The assassination of Song Jiaoren was the decisive factor in Sun Yat-sen's break with Yuan Shih-k'ai. Firmly believing that the assassination was manipulated by Yuan Shih-k'ai, who was intent on undermining the new Republic, Sun launched the "Second Revolution" a few months later, attempting to repeal Yuan's presidency. However, a month later, after the failure of the Second Revolution, he found himself in exile in Japan. Sun Yat-sen established the "Chinese Revolutionary Party" in June 1914 and lobbied hard for aid from the Japanese government, hoping to remove Yuan Shih-k'ai with Japan's help.

During the chaotic years of 1914 and 1915, the *Chinese Times* spoke out strongly against Sun Yat-sen's current strategies for China's future. In the CKT's view, the top priority of the Republic was to build a strong and modern China, not to engage in revolutions or wars that would only bring disaster upon the country. Above all, the CKT vigorously criticized Sun's endeavour to build up the Sino-Japanese relationship and to seek help from Japan to defeat Yuan Shih-k'ai. Japan had eyed China's resources for a long time and was regarded by many Chinese as the most dangerous threat to China's sovereignty. In 1914 and 1915, the *Chinese Times* published an unusually large number of articles that expressed these critical views.

Like many Chinese associations and politicians, the CKT viewed Japan as a grave, potential enemy that could jeopardize China's future. The CKT thought that Sun's continuous revolutions would only weaken China and result in Japan's taking advantage of it, and so the *Chinese*

*Times* forcefully voiced the CKT's opposition to Sun's proposed Second and Third Revolutions, which it believed would only serve to create chaos in China. These views are well expressed in two editorials the *Chinese Times* published in 1915: "China's Current Revolution Is Not a Revolution but a Rebellion" on 9 January and "Third Revolution? – A Suicide" on 22 May. Both argued that "there was no room for revolution when external aggression was imminent. We believe revolution would only ruin China."<sup>48</sup>

The *Chinese Times* printed many news reports that exposed Japan's intention to interfere in Chinese affairs and its strong interest in Sun, many of them taken from either Western or Chinese media. For instance, "*New York Daily News* reports Japan would take this opportunity to strongly back up Sun Yat-sen's revolutionary movements. As soon as China falls in turmoil, Japan's troop will enter China."<sup>49</sup> It also quoted news or reports from China, for instance, "Most of the members of the Alliance stand up for rejecting Japan, and [do] not approve of the revolution against Yuan,"<sup>50</sup> and news items about Huang Xing's splitting from Sun Yat-sen due to political disagreements over these issues.<sup>51</sup>

With quick access to world media, the *Chinese Times* was aware of a version of the Sino-Japanese relationship that differed from that which Sun had portrayed. It stood with Yuan Shih-k'ai, endorsing China's unification against Japan's threat. On 2 and 3 September 1914, a commentary entitled "Foreign Media's Insight into the Truth of Factions [within the Chinese Nationalist Party]" reported views and analyses of other countries' media regarding the high stakes China was facing. These views were translated from English, German, Japanese, and other languages.

On 26 October 1914, an editorial by Senong (穰農) in the *Chinese Times* entitled "On Putting Down Internal Turmoil to Stop Foreign Aggression" stressed the importance of unity and sovereignty, and denounced any effort to rely on external support. The article analyzed Japan's use of Sun's plans and activities to intimidate the Chinese government and to force Yuan to accept its demands.<sup>52</sup> This view was the

<sup>48</sup> Yikong, "Lun woguo jinri zhi suowei geming fei geming ye" [China's current revolution is not a revolution but a rebellion], *Chinese Times*, 9 January 1915, 1; Yue, "Sanci geming hu: zhi zisha eryi" [Third Revolution? – a suicide], *Chinese Times*, 22 May 1915, 1.

<sup>49</sup> *Chinese Times*, 12 October 1914, 2.

<sup>50</sup> *Chinese Times*, 16 April 1915, 3.

<sup>51</sup> "Sun Huang fendang zhi xianzhuang" [The status quo of Sun Huang's division of the party], *Chinese Times*, 27 February 1915, 3.

<sup>52</sup> Senong, "Lun ping neiluan yidu waiwu" [On putting down internal turmoil to stop foreign aggression], *Chinese Times*, 26 October 1914, 1, 3.

same as that of Dr. H.H. Kung, Sun's brother-in-law, who believed that Japan had intended to use Sun to "facilitate her hegemony over China."<sup>53</sup>

Enraged by Japan's threats and imposition of the Twenty-One Demands, some of which were based on Sun's promise to Japan, the *Chinese Times* printed a series of editorials, news reports, and articles critical of Sun's secret deals with Japan for financial aid, such as "Conclusive Evidence on Traitor Sun,"<sup>54</sup> "Repeated Warnings of Sun's Traitorousness,"<sup>55</sup> "Sun Wen in the Fourth Year of the Republic of China – An Offender of the Republic,"<sup>56</sup> and "Sun Wen's Traitorous Secret Clauses."<sup>57</sup> These articles bluntly brand Sun Yat-sen as a schemer and criticize his shortsighted approach, which would have enabled Japan to force the Chinese government to agree to its extorting demands. They also describe Sun as "Li Wanyong, the second,"<sup>58</sup> a criminal of the Republic and a Japanese pawn who had betrayed China's interest. The articles cite historical examples of Chinese rulers who had brought ruin to the country by relying on external help. Albert A. Altman and Harold Z. Schiffrin, in their article "Sun Yat-sen and the Japanese: 1914–16," describe in detail how Japan financed Sun's revolutions against Yuan: "altogether Sun and Wang [T'ung-i] received 1,400,000 yen from Kuhara (The exchange rate for the yen was about \$.50, thus the total amounted to \$700,000). This sum was greater than the total amount Sun received from overseas Chinese in America during his three-year campaign against Yuan Shih-k'ai."<sup>59</sup>

Based on its hostile view of the Sino-Japan relationship, the CKT advocated solidarity and resistance to Japan's expansion in China, and urged Chinese support for Yuan Shih-k'ai, who resisted Japan's notorious Twenty-One Demands. Yuan "finally accepted [Japan's proposals] in [a] truncated and less drastic form in May 1915,"<sup>60</sup> after Japan had made

<sup>53</sup> Albert A. Altman and Harold Z. Schiffrin, "Sun Yat-sen and the Japanese: 1914–16," *Modern Asian Studies* 6, no. 4 (1972): 388.

<sup>54</sup> "Sun Wen maiguo zhi xinyan" [Conclusive evidence on traitor Sun], *Chinese Times*, 27 April 1915, 1–2.

<sup>55</sup> "Sun Wen maiguo zhi jinggao diedie" [Repeated warnings of Sun's traitorousness], *Chinese Times*, 29 April 1915, 3.

<sup>56</sup> Xian Qing, "Lun Minguo sinian zhi Sun Wen" [Sun Yat-sen in the Fourth Year of the Republic of China], *Chinese Times*, 12 and 14 May 1915, 1.

<sup>57</sup> "Sun Wen maiguo zhi mimi tiaokuan" [Sun Wen's traitorous secret clauses], *Chinese Times*, 18 and 19 May 1915, 2.

<sup>58</sup> Li Wanyong was a pro-Japanese minister of Korea who signed the Japan-Korea Annexation Treaty, which placed Korea under Japanese rule in 1910.

<sup>59</sup> Altman and Schiffrin, "Sun Yat-sen and the Japanese," 393. Fusanosuke Kuhara (1869–1965) was a Japanese businessman and a cabinet minister in the Empire of Japan before the Second World War.

<sup>60</sup> Altman and Schiffrin, "Sun Yat-sen and the Japanese," 390.

some concessions and had withdrawn its most injurious demand. After signing the treaty, Yuan declared 9 May as “National Humiliation Day.” The *Chinese Times* praised those “who had accepted the President’s offer of an amnesty”<sup>61</sup> and had joined the resistance campaign.<sup>62</sup> From 26 to 30 April 1915, on its front page the *Chinese Times* posted a daily “Important Bulletin” signed by the CKT, which clearly stated its disapproval of Sun Yat-sen:

The CKT, the announcer said, only supported and sponsored the *Xinhai* Revolution that overthrew the Qing Dynasty and the Republic of China thus was founded as the result. The CKT’s office organ, the *Chinese Times*, has been denouncing the Second and Third Revolutions, and rejected the dishonest Sun Wen. The CKT abides by stable and balanced norms. We have never fashioned nonsensical ideas of being reshuffled into a Chinese revolutionary party. The CKT in Canada has always been patriotic ... It has been registered and approved by the State council as an official association. The registration is seal inscribed and documented. Canadian Hongmen has always supported the government, and wishes it to be cautious, not confused by deluding ideas.

Sincerely,

All members of the Chee Kung Tong in Canada<sup>63</sup>

Two points made by the bulletin are noteworthy. First, it served as a declaration of the official breakup between the CKT and Sun Yat-sen. This breakup was motivated in part by patriotism, a principle behind the diasporic sentiment that informed the CKT’s view of Sun’s Second and Third Revolutions as well as its transnational vision of China’s politics in general. Like many other members of the Chinese diaspora, the CKT believed a strong republican China would increase the social status of the Chinese diaspora in their residential countries, while continuous revolutions would only weaken, not strengthen, China. Second, the bulletin’s emphasis on the CKT’s independence and its refusal to amalgamate into Sun’s Nationalist Party reflected its approach to transnational political practice. As Ong and Nonini point out, Chinese transnationalism is characterized by being “increasingly independent of place.”<sup>64</sup> The CKT’s relationship with Sun Yat-sen around the mid-1910s

<sup>61</sup> Altman and Schiffrin, “Sun Yat-sen and the Japanese,” 389.

<sup>62</sup> Xia Qing, “Lun Minguo simian zhi Sun Wen,” *Chinese Times*, 14 May 1915, 1.

<sup>63</sup> *Chinese Times*, 26–30 April 1915, 1.

<sup>64</sup> Ong and Nonini, *Ungrounded Empires*, 26.

demonstrated that its attention to and involvement in China's politics expressed the concerns of the Chinese diaspora in Canada, which were both local and transnational in nature.

The CKT's political stance towards the Second and Third Revolutions was similar to that of some of the contemporary Chinese political activists and groups. Even Sun Yat-sen's staunch followers, such as Huang Xing, believed that another revolution at this time would be harmful to China. They did not openly oppose Sun Yat-sen but, instead, went to the United States and/or other countries and did not participate in organizing the Third Revolution.<sup>65</sup> In June 1915, the column "Breaking News" reported that Chen Qimei (陳其美 1878–1916), commander-in-chief of the "Crusade against Yuan Shih-k'ai" in Shanghai during the "Second Revolution," urged Huang Xing to return to China to help Sun and Chen's revolution. The report referred to Huang Xing as "a true scholar," who "remained unmoved by Chen, choosing to stay in the United States" and not support Sun Yat-sen's continued revolutions.<sup>66</sup>

During the period when Yuan Shih-k'ai "took on the trappings of [an] emperor" in late 1915 and early 1916,<sup>67</sup> the CKT immediately switched its position, turning from support to opposition. Numerous critical articles poured out of the *Chinese Times*, attacking any intention to restore the monarchy. From 12 December 1915, when Yuan announced his intention to name 1916 as the first year of Hongxian (洪憲), with him as the Hongxian Emperor, to Yuan's death in March 1916, lengthy editorials appeared on the front page almost every other day, expressing their enthusiasm for the Republic for China's future. Articles from various perspectives, such as "Do Chinese Really Not Have a Republic Psychology?,"<sup>68</sup> "Fate of Monarchy and Fate of the Country,"<sup>69</sup> "Ugly Emperors,"<sup>70</sup> "Usurping Throne Past and Present,"<sup>71</sup> "There Will Be a Time When the Republic Is Restored,"<sup>72</sup> "Monarchy and Republic,"<sup>73</sup>

<sup>65</sup> T'ang Leang-li, *The Inner History of the Chinese Revolution* (New York: G. Routledge and Sons, 1930), 121–22.

<sup>66</sup> "Chen Qimei zai shuo Huang Keqiang shu" [Chen Qimei's second letter persuading Huang Keqian], *Chinese Times*, 7 June 1915, 3.

<sup>67</sup> Spence, *The Search for Modern China*, 281.

<sup>68</sup> Qiang, "Zhongguo ren guowu Gonghe xinli hu?" [Do Chinese Really Not Have a Republic Psychology?], *Chinese Times*, 20 January 1916, 1.

<sup>69</sup> Sun, "Diyun yu guoyun" [Fate of monarchy and fate of the country], *Chinese Times*, 5 January 1916, 1.

<sup>70</sup> Han, "Yuchou zhi Huangdi" [Ugly emperors], *Chinese Times*, 26 January 1916, 1.

<sup>71</sup> Menggong, "Cuanqie huangwei zhi jinxiguan" [Usurping throne past and present], *Chinese Times*, 27 January 1916, 1.

<sup>72</sup> Qiang, "Gonghe biyou fuxing zhi ri" [There will be a time when the Republic is restored], *Chinese Times*, 23 February 1916, 1, 2.

<sup>73</sup> Dazhong, "Dizhi yu Guomai" [Monarchy and republic], *Chinese Times*, 25 February 1916, 1.

“Monarchy and Uprising,”<sup>74</sup> and many others, placed China in historical context and compared its political system with that of the United States. These articles argued that the existence of thousands of years of Chinese imperial, dynastic rule had cultivated a Chinese psychology accustomed to and approving of monarchy. As China was lingering at the crossroad of political determination, the CKT urged the Chinese government to follow the world’s trend towards democracy. The editorial “Differentiation between Compliance and Opposition” quoted ancient Chinese politicians to support this argument: “One would thrive when being in compliance with the heavenly path, but would perish when going opposite.”<sup>75</sup>

When Tang Jiyao (唐繼堯 1883–1927), the commander-in-chief of the National Defence Army, sent a letter asking the CKT to raise funds to fight against the restoration of the monarchy, the American Hongmen immediately responded and set up the General Bureau of Funds to encourage the Chinese in North America to make donations. As the Declaration of the Fundraising states: “The national affairs have changed dramatically and [Yuan Shih-k’ai] is trying to restore the monarchy and abolish the Republic. The Chinese at home and abroad share the indignation and work together to save the country. The General Office of the CKT has immediately organized the fundraising to assist rescuing the Republic ... We hope that all the members of the CKT will fervently donate money to save China and revive the Republic.”<sup>76</sup> After Yuan’s forced abolition of the monarchy, which lasted only over three months, the CKT in North America received Cai E’s (蔡鶚 1882–1916) and Tang Jiyao’s Badge of Protecting the Country, which honoured the CKT for its “significant financial contribution for reviving the Republic.”<sup>77</sup>

## CONCLUSION

The CKT in Canada kept its distance from Sun Yat-sen, and it did not develop a close relationship with China’s Nationalist Party in the remaining years of the Republic of China.<sup>78</sup> It continued, however, to be

<sup>74</sup> Junsu, “Dizhi yu minbian” [Monarchy and uprising], *Chinese Times*, 7 March 1916, 1.

<sup>75</sup> Aping, “Shunni bian” [Differentiations between compliance and opposition], *Chinese Times*, 17 February 1916, 1.

<sup>76</sup> Cao, “Hongmen canjia Xinhai geming shishi” [Historical facts about Hongmen’s participation in the Xinhai Revolution], *Chinese Times*, 6, 9, 11 December 1978, 3.

<sup>77</sup> Cao, “Hongmen canjia Xinhai geming shishi” [Historical facts about Hongmen’s participation in the Xinhai Revolution], *Chinese Times*, 11 December 1978, 3.

<sup>78</sup> Edgar Wickberg interprets this distancing in his *From China to Canada*: “The resentment of CKT leaders in Canada and the United States toward Sun and the Kuomintang seems to be the



an independent and influential association in the Chinese communities in North America. Polemics between the *Chinese Times* and the Chinese media in Canada run by the Nationalist Party continued after Yuan's death and the failure to restore the monarchy. It was nearly 1923 before the *Chinese Times* shifted its chief focus to protesting and attacking the racially discriminatory *Chinese Immigration Act*, which came into effect on 1 July 1923. Yet, in the meantime, it continued to follow China's national affairs, especially with regard to the Resistance War against Japan's invasion during the Second World War. Using the *Chinese Times* as its platform, the CKT launched numerous relief and military fundraising drives, not only to back the Resistance War, as it did for Sun Yat-sen's republican revolution, but also to support Canada Bonds (e.g., the Rice Bowl fundraising campaigns). In spite of Canada's discriminatory policies, the CKT joined with other Chinese associations and made a substantial contribution to Canada Bonds in support of Canadian efforts to help refugees and wounded soldiers.<sup>79</sup>

Intermittent criticism of Sun Yat-sen and his Chinese Nationalist Party continued to be printed in the newspaper. Nevertheless, even while expressing unhappiness with Sun and its disapproval of his Second and Third Revolutions, the CKT never denied Sun Yat-sen's leadership role in the founding of the Republic, which it strongly supported, and always regarded him as the "Father of the Republic." Cao Jianwu applauded Sun as a hero in his "Historical Facts about Hongmen's Participation in the Xinhai Revolution": "The two heroes, Sun and Huang, are both great men who established the Republic of China, and they are also the strong generals of our Hongmen."<sup>80</sup> Chen Deguang (陈德光), current president of the CKT, calls Sun Yat-sen "a great national hero, revolutionary pioneer, patriot, and the forerunner of the Chinese democratic revolutions" in the CKT's special issue commemorating the 110th anniversary of the Xinhai Revolution.<sup>81</sup>

Like other diaspora media actively involved in their homeland politics, the *Chinese Times* played an important role in Sun Yat-sen's political

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origin of the CKT-KMT friction, which was intense during the period 1911–1923 and reappeared periodically over the next several years." See Wickberg, *From China to Canada*, 104.

<sup>79</sup> Wickberg records that the "Chinese bought Canadian Victory Bonds in the total amount of \$10 million." Wickberg, *From China to Canada*, 200; also see *Chinese Times*, 1 August 1940, 4; 3 June 1941, 3; 21 June 1941, 3; 24 June 1941, 3; 10 July 1941, 4.

<sup>80</sup> Cao, "Hongmen canjia Xinhai geming shishi" [Historical facts about Hongmen's participation in the Xinhai Revolution], *Chinese Times*, 20 November 1978, 3.

<sup>81</sup> Chen Deguang, "Juanshou yu: Hongyang Xinhai geming jingshen shixian Zhonghua minzu fuxing" [Preface: advance the spirit of the 1911 Revolution to realize the great rejuvenation of the nation], *Xinhai geming 110 zhounian jinian tekan* [The special issue for the 110th anniversary of the Revolution of 1911], 1–2.

campaign for overthrowing the Manchu regime and building the new Republic of China at the transnational level. While connecting the Chinese diaspora with their home country and the world via the media sphere it created, the *Chinese Times* presented an alternative voice that contested the mainstream political opinion of the homeland. Its subsequent negative portrayal of Sun Yat-sen and criticism of his policies demonstrate the newspaper's norm of being situated in a place-based "local culture" while also being part of the transnational "Sinophone world" (as Wanning Sun and John Sinclair characterize the Chinese diasporic media). "Sinophone world" is derived from Shu-mei Shih's theory of Siniophone culture, which, she argues, is produced around the world in different locations by the communities who speak and write Chinese, and that each site is "a place-based, local culture, in dialogue with other cultures of that location."<sup>82</sup> Sun and Sinclair apply Shu-mei Shih's concept of "Sinophone culture" to interpret the Chinese diaspora media's contribution to the Sinophone world and its culture, which is independent of the mainstream culture in their home country.<sup>83</sup> The *Chinese Times's* discourse on the conflicts between the CKT and Sun Yat-sen exemplifies the role the Chinese diaspora media play, as described by Sun and Sinclair: "the Chinese-language press reflects, represents, and often advocates on behalf of the political, economic, social, and cultural interests of Chinese communities in their host societies."<sup>84</sup> Through its history, the *Chinese Times* experienced a progression from a Sino-centric vision to a de-centralized vision – one grounded at the intersection of multiculturalism. Over the years, it helped shape the Chinese community's place-based yet trans-local perceptions of China's nation building. As the official voice of the Chinese Freemasons, the *Chinese Times* also functioned as a social institution that disseminated cultural values and transnational political ideas within the Chinese community, perhaps never more so than during this particularly consequential period in China's and Chinese Canadian communities' early twentieth-century political history.

<sup>82</sup> Shih, Shu-mei, Chien-hsin Tsai, and Brian Bernards, eds. *Sinophone Studies: A Critical Reader* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), 8.

<sup>83</sup> Wanning Sun and John Sinclair, *Media and Communication in the Chinese Diaspora: Rethinking Transnationalism* (London: Routledge, 2015), 8.

<sup>84</sup> Sun and Sinclair, *Media and Communication in the Chinese Diaspora*, 9.