

UNDERSTANDING THE ORIENT: DR. KIANG KANG-HU AND THE FOUNDATION TO CHINESE STUDIES IN CANADA

Kenneth Lan

Between 1930 and 1934, McGill University of Montreal was becoming a leading Centre of Chinese research in North America. It housed prestigious Gest Chinese Research Library, a collection with 110,000 volumes which was recognized as one of the finest in the world. It was also the home of Canada's first School of Chinese Studies. In the fall of 1930, a Chinese intellectual named Kiang Kang Hu was recruited to be the first head of a department in the Canadian academe. Unlike many of his Chinese compatriots who endured racism, Kiang became an honorable individual among the well-to-dos in Canada. This paper examines Kiang Kang Hu's three-year tenure at McGill University. What kind of work routine did he have to go through? Were Canadians keen on learning about the Orient? Why did Kiang choose to leave Canada?

Keywords: Education, Academic Studies, China, North America, Canada, McGill University

Introduction

Like the United States, Canada is undoubtedly an Asia-Pacific nation. Unlike its influential southern neighbor, however, Canada is a latecomer in the development of East Asian Studies in the academe. From 1867, when the Dominion of Canada was established, to the late-1920s, when the dominion took a greater independence from Great Britain by formulating its own foreign policy, Canada's contact with the Asia-Pacific region was minimal. Canada's relationship with the region was confined to the frequent missionary presence in China, Taiwan and Japan and the small numbers of Asian immigrants primarily in British Columbia. Canada, in short, was better known internationally as a young Euro-centric nation which still retained strong diplomatic ties with the British Empire. Yet, with Canada took a more importance presence in world affairs, Canadian foreign relations policy gradually shifted to its relations with the United States and Asia. This was evidently shown in 1928 and 1929 when Canada established its own legations in Washington and Tokyo respectively.

Address for communications: Kenneth Lan is Division of Humanities and Social Sciences, Government and International Relations Programme, Beijing Normal University-Hongkong Baptist University, United International College, 28 Jingfeng Road, Tangjiawan, Zhuhai, Guangdong, China-519085

As Canada looked beyond the scope by taking a greater attention to the Asia-Pacific region, the Canadian academe followed suit by taking the initiative to offer pertinent university courses related to East Asia. The first Canadian institution to take this helm was surprisingly not located in the Pacific Coast but in Canada's most important metropolis: Montreal.¹ For three consecutive academic sessions since 1930, McGill University was the home of Canada's first Chinese Studies program – the first of its kind that was solely founded for Chinese scholarship and not for missionary training. The university had one of the only four such schools in North America. It was supported by an impressive Gest Chinese Research Library. With a collection of over 110,000 volumes of valuable Chinese historical works in the late-1920s, the Gest Chinese Library was known to be the second of its kind in North America behind the Chinese collection at the U.S. Library of Congress. To confront the traditional racial barrier in the Canadian academe, the McGill University hired a prominent but politically controversial Chinese intellectual named Dr. Kiang Kang Hu as the first head of this Chinese Studies program.

This paper does not aim to discuss the precious holding of the Gest Chinese Research Library. Nor will it explore its reasons why its founder, a New York businessman name Guion Gest, chose McGill University as the home of his private collection.² This paper will also not discuss the interesting but sensitive of Dr. Kiang Kang Hu. Kiang was once a prominent leftwing political activist in China who joined the Communist Party and spent some time in the Soviet Union in the early-1920s. He is well remembered in contemporary China as a Japanese collaborator for being the Minister of Education in Wang Jing Wei's puppet Nanking regime. Rather, this paper examines the rise and fall of Canada's first School of Chinese Studies. It unveils the main objective of the School and the vision of the Principal of McGill University, Sir Arthur Currie, had on Canada. It also examines the three-year experience of Canada's first full-time academic of Chinese origin. What was his daily job routine at the university like? Did the Oriental background assist or serve as a hindrance to his career in Montreal at the time? What non-academic activities did he involve in? This paper will lastly give reasons to why this promising program in Chinese Studies had such a short history.

All in all, Kiang Kang Hu's three-year stint at McGill University was mixed. The university became his individual platform to launch his personal political ideas. The University also became his personal springboard to attain his reputation on the Who's Who list in Canada, United States, and China. Indeed, his name appeared frequently on both the Canadian and US press at anytime issues on China appeared on the headlines. Furthermore, he helped to raise the prestige of the Canadian Chinese community for he was, perhaps, the only professional of Chinese origin at the time who was widely respected in the Canadian mainstream.

A comfortable and well-paid academic position in a leading Canadian university and the personal reputation which came along were, however, not the

endeavors which the Dr. Kiang was happy with. He desired for something more ambitious and challenging in life. In 1933, he took a leave of absence from McGill University to proceed with this dream he had in life. While the effects of the Great Depression was a cause to the suspension of Chinese Studies program and the termination from his teaching appointment at McGill, Kiang maintained his future lied in constructing a prosperous China and had no desire to return to Montreal.

Foundation of the School of Chinese Studies

The foundation of Canada's first Department of Chinese Studies was indeed a unique story. Unlike many other comparable Chinese studies programs at the time (such as the University of Toronto School of Chinese Studies which was established about a decade later during the 1941-42 academic year), McGill University specified its Chinese Studies Department had no affiliation with the Canadian missionary community in China. The department was straightly created for Canada's commercial and diplomatic interests in the Orient. In light of the fact that the young country was stepping out from the cocoon of the British Empire, in 1927, the McGill Board of Governors saw the pragmatic need for Canadians to expose themselves to developing markets around the world. The momentum for creating this program was later supported by the Montreal Star when McGill University welcomed Canada's first Chinese Studies students on September 29, 1930. Its editorial of the day stated the following:

“Canada's interest in the Orient is already large, and is growing steadily. Our trade relations are extensive, and will in due course be far more important than they are today. We have already sent a Japanese Envoy to Japan, and as soon as China has a stable Government to whom he can be accredited, we shall doubtless send one to China. We shall also be sending commercial agents there. It is in the highest degree essential that all such agents should be able to talk the language of the country in which they may be required to do business.”

Obviously, through its creation of a new School of Chinese Studies, McGill University was keen to maintain its crucial advantage as the leading academic institution in Canada. McGill's Board of Directors had the vision to transform the program into the hub for all research activities in North America—rivaling the others in the United States. They saw the presence of the distinguished Gest Chinese Collection to be the key attraction to world scholars in the field. The School, furthermore, had the ambitious dream to offer various China-related subjects that stretched across different disciplines. It further wished to offer programs both at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels. As a result of this, they needed someone who was unique to fill an important position as the head of the School of Chinese Studies. The March, 1927 issue of McGill News certainly describes the ideal who the ideal candidates should be able to give “firsthand information through an acquaintance with actual sources- with the historical and literary

treasures of China and with an interpretation of Chinese life by those whose birth or experience qualifies them to explain the Chinese mind to the Canadian mind.” In essence, the people to head this new department should be a scholar of Chinese origin who had attained a high proficiency in the English language. In 1930, the university finally found its ideal candidate: Dr. Kiang Kang Hu.

The Appointment of Dr. Kiang Kang-hu

Unlike McGill University’s controversial recruitment renowned radicals into its payroll, Sir Arthur Currie’s appointment of Kiang Kang Hu never caused the anticipated uproar to his governance. Nor did Kiang’s skin color serve as an impediment to his appointment. Even so, Kiang’s appointment as Canada’s first Professor of Chinese Studies stirred mild concerns among Currie’s academic colleagues and friends around the world. It took considerable courage and enlightenment for a university principal to recruit the first non-white head of a university department when racism remained part of life in Canada. It was even more unusual this appointment was made to an iconoclastic intellectual of Oriental ancestry in times of the 1930s Depression.

The recruitment of Kiang Kang Hu to McGill University came unexpectedly. Neither this prime Canadian institution nor Kiang himself expected his appointment would have opened a chapter on Area Studies in Canada.⁴ Kiang came from a long descendent of Confucian scholar. His father and grandfather were both holders of the Jinshi () examination – the third and highest rank of the Imperial Examination system and were appointees to the Hamlin Academy. Kiang himself had completed the second rank Juren () examination and was said to have taken the Jinshi examination had it not been for its postponement in 1900 due to the Boxer Uprising and its complete abolishment in 1905.⁵ Denied the opportunity for further social advancement through the traditional examination system, Kiang followed many of his young intellectual contemporaries at the time and departed for Japan where he attended Imperial University of Tokyo in 1900 at the age of 17. Following a stint in the Pei Yang Translation and Compilation Bureau while serving as a professor in the Peking Imperial University, he made his second trip to Japan in 1903 when he was elected the Vice-President of the Chino-Japanese Publication Bureau. This was probably the time which Kiang acquired his knowledge of the English language and his firm belief toward socialism. Following his return to China in 1904, he became an active promoter of socialism. Soon after the 1911 Revolution, he publicly advocated for “anarchism in China” and founded the Socialist Party of China that November ().⁶

Due to his political sensitive points of view in the 1910s and 1920s, Kiang was frequently persecuted under different Chinese political leadership and was reported to have traveled across the globe. He made his first trip to the West in 1910-11 and resided in the United States from 1914 to 1920 which he served as the

Chinese instructor and Lecturer on Chinese culture at the University of California - Berkeley. Kiang was credited in Berkeley for carrying out the detailed system of indexing Chinese materials which was without parallel in any Chinese library of its size in the Western world.⁷ He arrived in the United States for the second time in 1928 which he was recruited by the Library of Congress in Washington to compile the Chinese sources there. Kiang Kang Hu's three-year stint with the Canadian academe began at this time.

In May 1929, Harvard University hosted a conference on the Promotion of Chinese Studies. Since the Gest Chinese Collection consisted primarily of ancient Chinese classics related to medicine, it was only appropriate for the Dean of Medicine, Dr. Charles F. Martin, to represent McGill University. On that occasion, Dr. Martin had an informal conversation with Dr. P.W. Kuo, the Director of China Institute in America, regarding McGill's requirement for a new Chair of Chinese Studies and the development of the Chinese library collection.⁸ Not long thereafter, Dr. Martin received a mail from Dr. Kuo stating that Kiang Kang Hu could be interested in this privileged academic position. At that time, the future McGill professor himself was busy completing his writing on Chinese Civilization which contained approximately 500 pages and which McGill University took enormous effort to assist him for publication in world class publishing houses (more about that book later).

After having been informed about this exciting opportunity from his friend, Dr. P.W. Kuo, Kiang Kang Hu took the personal initiative by writing to Guion Gest and Dr. C.F. Martin respectively himself.⁹ In his letters to the two men, he had bolstered his exceptional educational experience as five years as professor in Peking Imperial University; two years as professor in Nanking Government University; five years as president of two Nan Fang Universities in Beijing and Shanghai and six years at Berkeley. Kiang also boasted his extensive publication record including his recently published work *The Jade Mountain*. While we have no record of Mr. Gest's response, Dr. Martin seemed to have been impressed with his credentials even though they obviously did not meet up with Western standard. Martin promptly notified Principal Currie and Kiang was shortly informed to visit McGill University for an interview in December, 1920.

On his way to his interview at McGill, Kiang encountered his first problem which adversely affected his opinion about Canada's treatment of the Chinese population. Despite having all the necessary documentation and having reported to both the Immigration Office in Ottawa and the Canadian Legation at Washington, he was detained for one night by the Canadian authorities and was issued a deportation paper issued by the Canadian immigration inspector on board the train.¹⁰ Despite being a candidate for such a highly honorable position in one of the world's notable tertiary institution, Kiang could not believe that he had to endure this kind of racial treatment. This unhappy experience had made him enormously

concerned with why Chinese students had avoided Canada as the destination for postsecondary studies.

While Kiang Kang Hu was met with a memorable snag at the Canadian border, his interviews with the top McGill officials went more smoothly than anticipated. The rapport between him and Sir Arthur Currie was particularly positive. After this pre-Christmas short visit to Montreal, Kiang was swiftly recruited to the McGill payroll without question. Colonel Wilfrid Bovey, McGill's first director of Extramural Relations and Extension, highly appreciated Kiang's articulation and thoughtfulness on Chinese matters which he shortly prepared to invite the renowned Chinese scholar to offer courses on China to his non-academic audience.¹¹ Gerhard Lomer, the University Librarian, was, likewise, impressed with Kiang's charm. In his correspondence to Sir Arthur Currie, he remarked that Kiang's addition to McGill will foster better result for promoting Sino-Canadian cooperation than accepting Chinese students into the country.¹²

Kiang Kang-hu Coming to Canada

With the prospect that no other non-white (and, needless to say, "preferred") candidate to come abroad, Kiang Kang Hu's appointment as the chair of Canada's first Chinese studies program and the first Oriental head of the nation's academic department was well set. However, this did not immune the Chinese intellectual from scrutiny. In fact, Kiang's political and academic history had continued to affect his professional life. In a letter to E.T. Williams, head of University of California - Berkeley's Oriental Language Department, Arthur Currie was warned that Kiang would probably be unqualified to teach beginners Chinese to a Canadian university audience. Williams asserted that Kiang's in depth knowledge of classical Chinese and poetry made his teaching method comparable to "the use of a trip hammer to crack walnuts".¹³ He was expected to drive many promising students away. Kiang's association with left-wing politics in China also worried Currie. The McGill Principal wrote a confidential letter to his friend the Canadian ambassador to Washington and future Governor General, Vincent Massey to request the British and US secret services to provide any potentially subversive information on Kiang. Currie specially focused on the scholar's background as an "ardent socialist" who was forced to leave China and had his property confiscated in the early-1910s by Yuan Shi Kai's regime. He was, moreover, concerned with the "alleged" membership in the Communist Party¹⁴ and his one-year residency in Moscow "to acquaint more fully with Communist at its headquarters".¹⁵ The McGill principal, furthermore, was suspicious with Kiang's credentials. Kiang acquired his educational qualifications through the Imperial Qing Civil Service Examination and not by the Western university system.¹⁶ Currie doubted the value of Kiang's "self-taught" education.

While Kiang did not have a formal Western education, Arthur Currie and his senior university left this matter aside. The charm of Kiang Kang Hu

during his Montreal interview and the university's eagerness of showing off its unique reputation for having the first Oriental head of department outweighed the intellectual's questionable credentials. Moreover, prior to the Second World War, it was common to find notable citizens without university degrees to occupy positions of high standing. Sir Arthur himself never held a university degree. He was a Canadian World War I hero who had been an insurance broker and estate agent and was known to be a foul-mouthed and overbearing officer. His reputation came about in midst of the war for the planning and the execution of the success assault against Vimy Ridge, which brought his knighthood in 1917 along with the acceptance of various other honors.¹⁷ In addition, after making enquiries from the British and US secret services, Currie was informed that there was nothing subversive about this Chinese intellectual by this time in his life.¹⁸ Unlike the 1910s, Kiang had lost his enthusiasm with politics and had become disillusioned with socialism following his harsh life in Moscow in 1920-21. By 1930, he was three years shy from turning 50 who had a well-educated Chinese-American wife and two young children to support. Kiang's mission, in short, was to raise his young family while promoting Chinese scholarships in the Western world. As McGill was still unable to find a more suited candidate for its first Chair of Chinese Studies¹⁹, Kiang's appointment as was a done deal.

Despite being an Oriental at the time when racial inequality was the norm in North America, McGill offered Kiang a salary which would certainly make many well-to-do Canadians envy. While the intellectual himself originally asked for a \$5,000 Canadian per year, the university agreed to offer a \$4,500 during his first year appointment.²⁰ Though this was slightly short of Kiang's wish, his salary was comparatively far larger than many academics at the time. In 1944 - fourteen years after Kiang Kang Hu's recruitment by McGill, the icon of Canadian history Frank Underhill was paid \$4,700 per annum by the University of Toronto. Underhill's colleague, the Chair of Chinese Studies Bishop William Charles White earned no further than \$3,500 a year.²¹ We should keep in mind that in the year 1930, the world was suffering from the Great Depression. In Toronto, milk was approximately 10 cents a quart and a loaf of bread was about the same. A typical employee should expect to take home \$8 a week.²² Meanwhile, Chinese market gardener in Alberta would be lucky to make roughly \$300 a year. (Dawson, 1991, p. 64) McGill University's offering of such a generous salary to Kiang Kang Hu suggests one major spectacle. It had a strong desire to develop the School of Chinese Studies into the prime center of Chinese research. It firmly believed that Kiang Kang Hu was the right man to carry forward this dream. Sir Arthur personally had this vision in mind. He wished for a Head of Chinese Studies who could not only be a competent organizer, but a scholar who could "interpret the spirit of Oriental philosophy and literature" as far as possible.²³ Yet, an interest on any China and the Asia-Pacific region at large had so far not developed in the

minds of ordinary Canadians. With Kiang Kang Hu's McGill appointment, we will learn later in this paper that ordinary Canadians became more sympathetic to the suffering of the Chinese people under Japanese imperialism due to his effort appeals to the Canadian audience and media.

Kiang Kang Hu in McGill

During his three year appointment at McGill University, Kiang Kang Hu was the Chinese historian, political scientist, sociologist, geographer, religious, philosophy, and language teacher at one. In addition, he was responsible for carrying all administrative duties in the School of Chinese Studies. Kiang, after all, was the one and only faculty member in his program. In the first full year as an academic staff, he was in charge of two full courses. In the first term of the 1930-31 academic year, which his class was reported on the Montreal Daily Star on October, 18, 1930, Kiang offered a general survey course on Chinese culture.²⁴ This was followed by another course offered by the Philosophy Department in the second term on the study of Chinese religion, philosophy, literature and art.²⁵ On top of that, Kiang was also kept busy in offering two Chinese language courses in each academic year which he had to devote two hours per week. Since McGill required its first year liberal arts students to complete three compulsory courses in Latin or Greek, English and Mathematics and two elective courses from the departments of history, classics, French, German and the Science Faculty, Kiang's courses were only available to second, third and fourth year levels.

Fascination with the Orient obviously made Kiang initially a very popular man on campus. In the fall of 1930, over 32 students registered in his culture studies course.²⁶ Yet, by examination time on May 11, 1931, only six students remained to take his three-hour exam.²⁷ Enrolment for his two Chinese language courses was more consistent. The approximate enrolment of 8 or 9 students remained the same during examination. Almost all of his students were of English-speaking households from the Montreal area. Among them, many were of Jewish ancestry.²⁸ At least one student was of Chinese ancestry. Man Fong Law of New Westminster, British Columbia, who received a Bachelor of Science degree from McGill in 1934, was registered both in the Chinese Culture and Chinese language classes in the academic year of 1930-31²⁹ Kiang also had a full-time professor registered in his Chinese language class list. Dr. Laurens Graff, the Associate Professor of German at McGill took part in Kiang's course in order to acquire a little knowledge of the Chinese language. We do not know if Dr. Graff eventually took the final exam as Kiang did not write the attendance of May 12, 1931 on his language examination paper.

Through the contents of his examination papers and his personal correspondences with the senior university staff, it is believed that Kiang Kang Hu designed his courses in McGill through his personal imagination. There is no evidence which

indicates that he ever consulted secondary materials other than his own. By examining the contents of his “Sixty-Four Lectures” and his Chinese culture exam dated May 11, 1931, we can fairly appraise that the Chinese scholar had clearly misrepresented Chinese history to his McGill students. He described China’s Warring State Period as the “Ancient Republican Government”. He rationalized this by claiming Warring State rulers held “elections” among themselves while appointing senior officials to assist them—similar to the US presidential system. Kiang also argued that the development of the Civil Service Examination system in the Han Period was a form of the “Democratic Empire” as this “democracy” led to the “separation of nobility and office which provided equal opportunities to all Chinese citizens under the competitive examination and public education”. (Kiang, pp. 1-3) In McGill, while Sir Arthur Currie believed Kiang was no longer political, it was evident that the scholar retained his socialist conviction as his political hero in history, the Taiping Rebellion leader, Hong Xiuquan. He also evidently propagated the value of his political body, the Socialist Party of China, in Chinese history to his McGill students.³⁰ Kiang’s political biases might have been a major reason behind the substantial drop in class enrolment.

From the academic year of 1932-33, Kiang Kang Hu took the helm in offering Canada’s first Master of Arts program in Chinese Studies. All students were required to complete two courses. The first was called the “Classical reading and Translation” they were instructed to recite the original text of Chinese standard classics and translate them into modern English. The other was the “Research on Special Topics” which investigated the subjects selected for thesis. During his three-year at McGill, Kiang Kang-hu supervised two graduate theses. One was completed by a Queen University graduate named Gordon R. Taylor who had a three-year teaching experience in a secondary school prior to his studies in McGill. The other was Reverend Gladstone McIntosh. Originated from Guelph, Ontario, McIntosh once served as a Canadian missionary in the Chinese province of Henan. By the time he came to Montreal to study with Kiang, he was already a Master degree holder from the University of California. He originally wished to obtain a doctorate in Chinese Studies under Kiang’s supervision. Both M.A. candidates performed well in their studies. Gordon Taylor completed a dissertation which investigated the Chinese schools in Canada; the first study of its kind not only on the ethnic Chinese schools in the country, but also the first on Chinese Canadians at the time. Gladstone McIntosh, on the other hand, wrote a thesis on the literary development of the Tang Dynasty. His study on the “Father of Chinese Renaissance”, Han Yu, was praised highly by Kiang. The Chinese scholar was particularly delighted by the presence of these two individuals. Unfortunately, in light of McGill’s worsening budgetary constrain in the Depression, Kiang was unable to reaccept Gladstone McIntosh as his first doctorate student. He nevertheless encouraged him to carry on his literary studies on Han Yu into the

next level in another institution. Kiang obviously completed his duties for his two graduate students, but the financial circumstances of the 1930s prevented him from doing anything more.

Kiang Kang Hu as Canada's First Chinese Specialist

Besides Kiang's teaching and administrative engagements, he was also a prolific writer during his stint at McGill University. Between 1932 and 1933, he was known to have completed eleven short articles both in Chinese and in English.³¹ Topics which he covered ranged from ancestral Chinese oil portraits to giving Canadian exporters advice on how to target the gigantic Chinese market (and not to loose the race with the Americans). Moreover, his writings were evidently pro-China and carried a straightforward message to promote Chinese Studies in the Western world. For example, in March, 1931, he wrote a 7-page essay on the McGill News periodical which intentionally entitled "Chinese Studies". In this article, he specially addressed the problems which he had to pursue with daily in McGill. He was especially critical of the popular Canadian academic notion to lump all different aspects of Chinese Studies into one. He was disappointed with the reality that Chinese Studies program in McGill could not be as diversified as the French and German programs which had separate professors and courses looking at language, history and politics. Kiang's writing was also quite provocative against Japanese militarism. In another article in McGill News named "The Cultural Bond between China and Japan", dated September, 1932, Kiang was deeply critical of Japanese militaristic invasion against China. He also utilized his academic experience in Japan in the 1910s to justify his expertise on this topic. Like his McGill lectures, Kiang's writings seem to contain a number of unproven flaws. He exaggerated the worshipping of Hsu Fu ()'s Japan expedition of 219BC by ordinary Japanese in the 1930s. He also gave unproven facts that Chinese surnames were common in Japan and many of the Japanese nobles and scholarly clans had Chinese origins.

Kiang's research background had only invited rejections from different international publishers. He requested McGill University to connect him with a number of reputable British and US publishers for his book manuscript. However, aside from the renowned Sinologist, Reginald Johnson (Emperor Pu Yi's private tutor in the Imperial Palace), no one in the academic world had a positive opinion on his research. Professor William Soothill of Oxford University even called his manuscript Introduction to Chinese Studies. In spite of this setback, Sir Arthur Currie and McGill University maintained their high regards of Kiang Kang Hu. Indeed, Currie even wrote a private letter to encourage him not to be disheartened by the rejections of different British publishers.³² McGill still had high hopes for Kiang.

Though his expertise lied on ancient Chinese poetry, Kiang Kang Hu's prestige had made him a celebrated person to turn to in Canada regarding everything that

happened on China. When the Canadian and American presses had an issue to write on China (particularly regarding the recent Japan's military takeover of Manchuria), they all preferred to turn to Kiang due to his proficiency in spoken English. Furthermore, in this period, Kiang was avidly involved in invited talks on China across Canada and the United States. Not long after his arrival in McGill, he was immediately invited to speak in Toronto at the prestigious Empire Club of Canada in October, 1930. Between December 1932 and January 1933, he was invited to three public speaking engagements. They were the St. Lambert Women's Club in Montreal on December 13, 1932 and the Writers Club and Young Men's Canadian Club (YMCC) in Toronto on January 21 and 23, 1933 respectively. In YMCC, he spoke on Chinese social organization and the Eastern crisis. Kiang Kang Hu was indeed a popular figure among the affluence of Canada.

After three-years of living and teaching in Canada, Kiang Kang Hu made a sudden announcement to a prestigious Montreal audience that he would "temporarily depart" from McGill. His temporal departure eventually led to his permanent resignation and the discontinuation of Canada's first and only Chinese Studies Program. It was widely believed that Kiang's departure from McGill had to do with the impact of the university's financial constrain in times of Great Depression. I, however, disagree with this point of view. He certainly had the strong desire to return to China to fulfill his political vision in life.

As his academic career progressed, Kiang has become quite unhappy with his work condition and his salary he received at McGill University. In addition, he personally saw the opportunity to find better interest to serve China in light of Japan's invasion of China since 1931. As a result of this, he asked Arthur Currie for a temporary leave so that he could return to China to make any humanitarian contribution he could make for his people. Before his departure from Montreal, Kiang made a passionate speech to the Montreal branch of the Hung Tao Society explaining his reason to return to his homeland:

"China, my country, is now in great danger. I feel too comfortable here (Montreal). It is my duty to help save my people, or at least, serve and suffer with them. If I can do something of more direct service to China than I am now doing I will remain there; if not, I hope to return to my friends here. Peking, my home, is under the cloud of war. I do not know whether Japan, or myself will reach there first".³³

Prior to his departure, Kiang proposed three names as his replacement.³⁴ The three gentlemen were W. M. Goong (), Chun Chui and Cheo Ming San (). Work was already been under way for W. M Goong to replace Kiang in Montreal. Yet, with further deterioration of the university's finances, none of the three gentlemen could be recruited as Kiang's temporary replacement. McGill's severe financial strains also denied its opportunity to hire an additional Chinese speaking staff for the Gest Chinese Research Library.³⁵ The School of Chinese Studies at McGill University was suspended until Kiang return. While Kiang was in China, an unhappy incident

occurred. Soon after his arrival in Shanghai, he was immediately arrested by the Kuomintang secret police.³⁶ The reason for his arrest was unknown. However, we can speculate that it had to do with his early political activities in China. Kiang was soon released but this incident which, for a while, prompted him to reconsider his return to McGill in the fall of 1934.³⁷ Indeed, his letter to Wilfred Bovey which was reprinted by Montreal Gazette which shows Kiang's full intention to resume his teaching at McGill.³⁸ In this letter, he informed Bovey his decision to cancel all lecture engagements in China and his desire to return to Canada as soon as possible. Yet, Kiang obviously gave a second thought to his future and chose not to resume his duties in Montreal.

Kiang Kang Hu's decision not to return to McGill in 1934 brought an end to Canada's dream of becoming an influential actor in the Asia-Pacific region. The sudden death of Principal Currie on November 30, 1933 and the eventual discontinuation of McGill's School of Chinese Studies in the spring of 1934 essentially deferred the progress of Asian Studies in the Canadian academe by two decades. In 1937, the much cherished Gest Chinese Collection was sold to Princeton University. As Canada's prime postsecondary institution, McGill decision to scrap the School provided a disincentive for other university's across Canada to set up parallel programs of their own. This, in effect, allowed American universities and colleges to win the race for the academic research and study on East Asia.

Until now, it is unclear the kind of activities which Kiang Kang Hu was involved in since his permanent return to China in 1933. We also do not know how he became associated with the Wang Jing Wei's puppet government during World War II despite having been a staunch critic of Japanese militarism in China since 1931. Was he forced into becoming Wang's Minister of Education? Or did he actually foresee Wang as the real alternative to Chiang Kai Shek? Only further research can tell us the answer. To our knowledge, Kiang and his family did not have any rapport with McGill University until the end of the war. In May, 1946, the professor's wife, Lillian Kiang of San Francisco wrote a letter to Principal Cyril James. She pleaded James to appeal to Dr. Hu Shih, the renowned Chinese intellectual and a McGill honorary doctorate holder who was the outgoing Chinese ambassador to the US, to save her husband from imprisonment in Beijing (Peiping at the time).³⁹ Lillian Kiang claimed her husband was already political inactive before the end of the war and could not have been a serious Japanese collaborator. Cyril James accepted her plea and wrote a private letter to Dr. Hu Shih in June, 1946. Nevertheless, no positive results had come about and Kiang Kang Hu died from tuberculosis in a Nanking prison in 1954 at the age of 71.

Conclusion

Had Kiang Kang Hu set aside his political visions on China and carried on his duties at McGill University in 1933, Asian Studies would certainly have a more

promising development in the Canadian academe. Different universities would have established Chinese studies programs of their own in order not to lose the competitive edge with McGill. University of Toronto, for one, considered the recruitment of its first Chair of Chinese Studies in 1932 partially because McGill had Kiang as its staff.⁴⁰ In fact, as its academic rival, senior officials at the University of Toronto kept close attention to the demise of McGill's School of Chinese Studies.⁴¹ Furthermore, Kiang could now be remembered as the forefather of East Asian Studies in Canada and not as a Japanese collaborator. Given by his association with the affluence of Canada, he could well have been a key spokesperson for the repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Act and the enfranchisement of Chinese Canadian in 1947. Yet, he chose to fulfill his dream in China and died as a humble prisoner who collaborated with the wartime enemy.

The discontinuation of the School of Chinese Studies in 1934 not only allowed the US academe to dominate Asian studies, but it also led other Canadian universities to surpass McGill in offering courses on East Asia during the postwar period. The University of Toronto offered its first Master of Arts program on Chinese archeology and culture in 1936. This was followed by the establishment of the School of Chinese Studies in 1941 and the eventual expansion into the Department East Asiatic Studies in 1948. University of British Columbia introduced its first course on China in the History Department in 1948. It established its East Asian Studies Department in 1961. Meanwhile, since Kiang's departure in 1933, McGill students had to wait until the 1952⁴² for the first course on Asia when Professor Frederick M. Watkins offered "Political Thought and Institutions of China and Japan" in the Political Science Department. The Department of East Asian Studies at McGill University was not established until 1968. (Frost, pp. 143-44) By this time, the Montreal institution certainly had very much to catch upon to become one of Canada's leading center on Asia-Pacific research.

Notes

1. The current leading academic center of Asia-Pacific research in Canada, University of British Columbia (founded in 1908) did not offer its first course solely to an Asian topic until 1948, when Professor Ho Ping-ti offered History 320, "Modern Chinese History Since 1644". It did not establish a Department of Asian Studies until 1961. (See Daniel L. Overmyer, "Glowing Coals: The First Twenty-Five Years of the Department of Asian Studies at UIC 1960-1985" in www.asia.ubc.ca)
2. For a thorough study on the history of the Gest Chinese Research Library, see Su Chen & Juming Zhao, "Gest Chinese Research Library at McGill, 1926-1936" in *East Asian Library Journal* Vol. 11, #2 (Autumn, 2004). A biographical profile of Kiang could be found in Wang Peiwei's *Jiang Kanghu Yanjiu* (Research on Jiang Kanghu) (Wuhan: Wuhan Chubanshe, 1997).
3. Notably Canadian leftists such as F.R. Scott at the Department of Law and Eugene A. Forsey in Department of Economics and Political Science.
4. Areas Studies are interdisciplinary subjects commonly offered by many Canadian universities today. York University, for example, offers programs such as African Studies, South Asian Studies and East

Asian Studies. Foundation of University of Toronto's School of Chinese Studies in not only led to the evolution of the Department of East Asian Studies in 1948, but it also served as base to the founding of Canada's first Russian Studies program in 1947.

5. "Memorandum Regarding Dr. Kiang Kang-hu" in McGill University Archive, "Correspondence with Dr. Kiang Kang-hu, Lectures by Kiang Kang-hu" RG32 c.735 f.4440.
6. <http://myy.cass.cn/file/2006011823168.html>
7. "Memorandum Regarding Dr. Kiang Kang-hu" in Kiang Kang Hu Files, McGill University Archive
8. "Charles Martin letter to P.W. Kuo" (May 29, 1929), in McGill University Archive, Chinese Studies: Dr. Kiang Kang Hu 1929-35. R.G. 2, c.59, 2207d, Box 5.
9. "Kiang letters to Guion Gest (Sept. 21, 1929) and C.F. Martin (Oct. 25, 1929)", in Ibid.
10. A. L. Jolliffe letter to Wilfrid Bovey (Dec. 20, 1929); Kiang Kang-hu, "Prospect of Cultural Relations between China & Canada" (Speech, Oct. 23, 1930), The Empire Club of Canada Speeches, (Toronto, The Empire Club of Canada, 1931), p. 263.
11. Wilfrid Bovey letter to Kiang Kang-hu (Dec. 30, 1929).
12. Gerhard Lomer letter to Arthur Currie (Dec. 30, 1929).
13. E. T. William letter to Arthur Currie (Jan. 14, 1930).
14. There is no evidence which indicates that Kiang Kang-hu ever serves as a Chinese Communist Party member.
15. Arthur Currie letter to Vincent Massey (Jan. 8, 1930)
16. Kiang attended the Imperial University of Tokyo but never received a degree or a diploma in Japan.
17. First World War.com – Who's Who – Sir Arthur Currie
18. Vincent Massey letter to Arthur Currie (Jan. 16, 1930).
19. In fact, McGill had difficulty recruiting white scholars to offer special lectures on China. In January 1929, the Office of the Principal approached Dr. Paul E. Pelliot (Lecturer on History of Chinese Arts, Harvard University) and Baron Alex Von Stael-Holstein (Visiting Lecturer on Chinese Language, Harvard University) to come to Montreal that winter and lecture some subjects related to Oriental Art or archaeology of their choice. Both men did not even respond. Acting Principal letters to Dr. Pelliot (Jan. 17, 1929) and Baron Von Stael-Holstein (Jan. 24, 1929).
20. Arthur Currie letter to Kiang Kang-hu (Apr. 10, 1930).
21. See University of Toronto Report of the Board of Governors for the Year Ended 30th June, 1944.
22. Joy Taylor, "There Is Too Much Greed, Too Little Comparison", Toronto Star (July 2, 2007).
23. Arthur Currie letter to E.T. Williams (Jan. 8, 1930).
24. This course eventually expanded into a one-year course at the School of Chinese Studies "The Geography, History, Political and Social Institutions of China" in the 1931-32 academic year. McGill University Calendar for Session 1931-32, (Montreal, 1931) p. 178.
25. This also became a separate one-year School of Chinese Studies course "Chinese Religions, Philosophies, Literature and Arts" by the 1931-32 academic year. It was offered to McGill students in 1932-33 sessions. Ibid.
26. Currie letter to Lionel Curtis, (Oct. 25, 1930).
27. Kiang Kang-hu File, "McGill University, CHINESE STUDIES I. Examination Questions, May 11, 1931"
28. Some of Kiang's Jewish students included Beatrice Rosenbaum, Nettey V. Klineberg, Brenda Joseph, Sylvia Cohen and Frances Glasberg. See "Class List, 1930-31" in Dr. Kiang Kang Hu File (M.G. 4025 1205B).

29. On the examination paper, Kiang intentionally crossed out Man Fong Law's name from the attendance list.
30. "McGill University, CHINESE STUDIES 1. Examination Questions, May 11, 1931"
31. McGill University Annual Report of the Principal, p. 116.
32. Currie letter to Kiang (June 29, 1931)
33. "Hung Tao Society Honours Dr. Kiang", Montreal Gazette (May 9, 1933).
34. Kiang letter to Currie, (February 1, 1933)
35. Currie letter to Earl A. James (May 19, 1933)
36. "Social Democrats; Mr. Wang Ching-wei's Friend Arrested", South China Morning Post (January 21, 1934); "Dr. Kiang "Safe" is Only Word Cabled", Montreal Gazette (January 20, 1934).
37. "Coming Back to McGill, Freed Professor Says", Montreal Herald (February 27, 1934).
38. "Letter to Colonel Bovey", Montreal Gazette (February 1, 1934)
39. Letter from Lillian Kiang to Cyril James (May 28, 1946).
40. University of Toronto President's Reports for the Year ending June 30, 1933, p. 10.
41. C. T. Currelly letter to Cody (Aug 19, 1934) in H.J. Cody Paper, University of Toronto Archive.
42. McGill University Calendar (1952-53).

References

- Chen, Su & Juming Zhao (Autumn, 2004), "Gest Chinese Research Library at McGill, 1926-1936" in *East Asian Library Journal* Vol. 11, #2
- Dawson, J. Brian (1991). *Moon Cakes in Gold Mountain*, Calgary: Detselig Enterprises Ltd.
- Kiang, Kang Hu (1929?). *Chinese Civilization: Sixty-Four Lectures*.
- Kiang, Kang Hu & Witter Bynner, trans. (1929). *The Jade Mountain: A Chinese Anthology, Being Three Hundred Poems of the Tang dynasty, 618-906*, New York : Alfred A. Knopf.
- Kiang, Kang Hu (1935). *Chinese Civilization: An Introduction to Sinology*, Shanghai : Chung Hwa.
- Daniel L. Overmyer (UNDATED). "Glowing Coals: The First Twenty-Fiver Years of the Department of Asian Studies at UIC 1960-1985" in www.asia.ubc.ca
- Wang Peiwei (1997). *Jiang Kanghu Yanjiu (Research on Jiang Kanghu)*, Wuhan: Wuhan Chubanshe.