

APPENDIX: THE ASSOCIATION BYLAWS (MC 1872, no. 370)

[The author's translation of the Association Bylaws is a preprinted appendix of a working article, "Laboring Between Empires: Coolie Solidarity and the Limits of the Chinese Civic Association in Havana, 1872," to be published in *Verge: Global Asias 2.2 (Fall 2016)*.]

Everyone says that officials have national regulations, and the people have [the right] to public discussion. Travelers far from home should have plans to guard against calamity. As sojourners in an unfamiliar land, [we] should prepare good strategies to protect ourselves, considering we Chinese have, for many years in this place, been bullied and insulted by the Spanish colonists to the extreme point that [we can] no longer bear the suffering and hardship. The reason all that has happened is because our Chinese people lack the heart to unite and furthermore because we lack leadership. Thinking back to September of last year, corrupt officials [issued a] cruel order to oppress the Chinese people. Within one night, everyone—the law-abiding and criminal alike—was arrested as quickly as a thunder-clap strikes, without time to cover the ears. At that time, although we called out to Heaven and Earth, it was of no use. Fortunately, thanks to august Heaven, a benevolent U.S. businessman witnessed these unjust events and strove to save and release [the Chinese prisoners]. The businessman approached the official colonial government to appeal and petition and finally obtained the release [of the Chinese prisoners]. But our laments for these insults,

how could we forget? However, presently, although we are temporarily in a period of peace, we still worry about whether the previous calamity will occur again. We planned many strategies, and have failed each time. Recently, Heaven fortunately bestowed an extraordinary encounter with a U.S. benefactor, ["Langluofu," 浪羅付 or Adolfo D. Straus], of renown and authority, who is furthermore extremely honest and upright, and was willing to act on behalf of us Chinese. With his backing, we are establishing the Chinese Civic Association to prepare against future misfortune. Already [he] has reported these matters for consideration and obtained approval from the barbarian [Spanish colonial] officials in order to rescue our people from [dying in] the waters and fire, and to save our people from utter misery. This truly is an unprecedented encounter, and if we pass it up, we will not find it again. A day ago, the barbarian [Spanish] officials already issued official documents to inform all Chinese and barbarian people [about this matter]. Now, we especially convene those who respect what is just and those with resources to lead in donating money to establish the association, to found a hospital, and furthermore, to petition Luzón [i.e. Spanish] officials for a permit to install a plaque [for the formal establishment of the Chinese Civic Association], and to collectively strategize a plan for long-term tranquility. Now, we list below the following items [that arose from] public consensus.

First Article. The rationale of establishing the Association was originally a plan for long-term peace. No matter one's age, all people of reason have the right to discuss [these matters] collectively.

Second Article. It is unnecessary to discuss those Chinese who have already gained manumission after fulfilling their contracts of eight years. If one has not gained manumission, he may tell the board members [of the Association]. If a man has not redeemed himself, he may tell the board members, and he needs to pay eight and a half pesos for the executive board to draw up the paperwork on his behalf, in order to avoid any problems with fake documentation.

Third Article. When Chinese people without registration numbers are arrested, they may be re-contracted. After the establishment of the Association, the board members will report to the Spanish officials to release that man, and handle the paperwork on his behalf. The man himself pays the expenses of eight and a half pesos for the board members to draw up the documentation for him. Even if the man does not have a centavo to his name, the Association will advance the fees for him. Every month, two and a half pesos will be deducted from his salary [to reimburse the Association]. The man will not be allowed to find an excuse to renege on the debt, and after four months, it will be repaid in full.

Fourth Article. From now on, those who have not yet been released from their contracts, upon fulfilling the terms of their contracts, [will have the option of allowing] the board members to handle documentation on their behalf, so they need not worry.

Fifth Article. All we Chinese people should abide by the law, and should not steal other people's property. Upon discovery of such crimes, [the Association will] send [those criminals] to the authorities to be tried and punished.

Sixth Article. One should not protect or hide fugitives. According to public consensus, those [who do] will be fined seventeen pesos exactly. There is no room for further discussion.

Seventh Article. As to the aforementioned monthly contribution, every shop--no matter large or small--needs to contribute exactly two pesos every month. Each peddler contributes exactly one peso every month. Those who have already fulfilled their contracts must donate half a peso every month, but those who have not yet fulfilled their contracts must only pay 8 centavos.

Eighth Article. Recently, [two missing characters] the expenses [to process paperwork for legal residency] have become exorbitant; everyone should try his best to donate and to contribute to accomplish this great deed collectively.

Ninth Article. If any board member incurs expenses or financial discrepancies, [he] must disclose [the discrepancy] to settle it properly. One

should not act arbitrarily, but should clearly note the monetary amounts within the association records in order to attain the public good and selfless altruism.

[The undersigned:]

First Executive Zhuang Yi 莊意 [Chon Yeck in the document in the Archivo

National Cuba]

Second Executive Li Qisheng 李奇[sic.奇]生 [name stricken, presumably replaced

by] Luo Hexing 駱和興[sic.興] [Lok Woo hing]

Third Executive Li Rongshui 李榕水 [Leo Yun Sui]

Fourth Executive Fang Laishun 方来顺 [Fon Lay Sun]

Fifth Executive Chen Long(guan) 陳乾¹官 [Chun Kin]

Sixth Executive Zhang Jiangshui 張江水 [Cheong Kan Sui]

Seventh Executive Su Chaodang 蘇朝党 [Soe Chevo Ton]

Eighth Executive Luo Hexing 駱和興 [here, not written in shorthand, as above;

presumably, when he replaced Li Qisheng, he was replaced by] Luo Pan 羅磻

[Loo Pun]

Ninth Executive Chen Pinghe 陳平和 [Chun Ping Voo]

Association President Ceng Yu(guan) 曾玉官 [Chang Yu]

The Great Luzón [Havana], April 1872

ⁱ The handwritten character includes the medal radical “金”, but this formulation cannot be found among Chinese character variants 異體字.