

# Court of the Empress Dowager Cixi

## Delegate Roles and Personalities



**Chair: Ryan Kaminski**

**Crisis Director: Danielle Zheng**

### **1. Li Lien-ying: Chief Eunuch**

Officially, Li Lien-Ying is the head of the imperial household and court. All court eunuchs report directly to his authority. Unofficially, Li Lien-Ying is considered extremely corrupt, vindictive, and aggressive and is thought to be one of Empress Cixi's most trusted friends and advisors. Without exception, the Empress depended on his counsel and knowledge of inner court politics. The Chief Eunuch is so close to the Empress he was recently given a 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Rank, a status usually reserved for the highest of court officials and normally completely out reach for any Eunuch. In some instances, it believed Li Lien-Ying has more authority, although implicit, than the Emperor.

### **2. Li Hong Zhang: Viceroy of Chihli**

Li Hongzhang is the Viceroy of Chihli (Zhili) as well as a Grand Secretary. A highly regarded member of the Progressive Party, Li Hongzhang won his claim to greatness during the Taiping Rebellion. However, Li Hongzhang knew he was influential and was watched carefully by the court in case he manifested signs of rebellion. Li Hongzhang has had a prominent role in diplomacy, although he has always pushed for strengthening the empire. In Zhili, he kept a well-maintained and trained army. Li Hongzhang is very loyal to the Empress Dowager, and helped to arrange the conditions that eventually got her the regency.

### **3. Jung Lu: Secretary of State**

A former Manchu General, Jung Lu is one of Empress Cixi's closest friends and advisors. His relationship with Cixi dates back to her adolescence. He carries substantial implicit influence in the Court. Following the first British and French occupation of Beijing, Jung Lu was instrumental in providing troops to secure Cixi's return and ascendance to power. Throughout his career, Jung Lu has depended on the influence of Cixi to advance his position in the court. For example, Jung Lu never passed an imperial examination and is widely considered politically inept. Jung Lu was also named General of the "Grand Army of the North" by Cixi.

### **4. Prince Ching: Head of Commandery**

Head of the Progressive Party, Prince Ching (Qing) is one of the few officials never to have his official honors lost due to bad judgment. Prince Ching was always consistently open and friendly to foreigners as well as restraining potential anti-Chinese sentiment. Prince Ching has held the offices of President of the Admiralty Board, Member of the Zongli Yamen (Office of Foreign Affairs), and most recently, Commander in Chief of the Peking army.

### **5. Prince Kung/Gong: Directorate General For the Affairs of All Foreign Countries**

Prince Gong is considered one of the foremost capable and respected of Qing diplomats, and runs the Tsungli Yamen. During the first French and British occupation of Beijing he served as the de-facto ruler of China, and was instrumental in the establishment of the Tsungli Yamen (Office in Charge of the Affairs of All Foreign Countries). Prince Gong carries high favor with Empress Cixi as a result of being her personal tutor as well as presiding over the trial of Su Shun, which precipitated Cixi's rise to the regency. Prince Gong also has substantial authority concerning the administration of China's foreign policy. Most foreign dignitaries and ambassadors genuinely respect him as a statesperson.

### **6. Wen Xiang: Director of Intelligence Related Affairs at Tsungli Yamen (Foreign Office)**

Wen Xiang is a Manchu belonging to the Plain Red Banner. In 1858, he was appointed vice president to the Board of Rites. After the Second Opium War, Wen Xiang became one of the founders of the new foreign office, the Zongli Yamen. He was also involved in the self-strengthening movement. Currently, Wen Xiang is on the Zongli Yamen as the Director of Intelligence.

## **7. President of the Censorate**

The Censorate has the obligation to criticize ineffectual or counter-productive Qing Policy. Disapproval from the Censorate is considered extremely serious, and tends to precipitate some sort of punishment (i.e de-ranking, exile, policy review). The Censorate is immune from both the Emperor and Empress' influence and is generally considered an independent authority. The Censorate has the capability to openly expose potential corruption, bribery, and poor policymaking on the committee.

## **8. Zhang Zhidong: Viceroy of Huguang (Hunan and Hubei)**

Zhang Zhidong is an eminent Chinese politician who advocates controlled reform. He is not only a notable Grand Secretary in the Grand Council but also a member of the progressive party. During the Sino-Japanese War, he generally encouraged the idea of asking for foreign aid from European forces. However, He also holds a very strong view on not ceding Taiwan to the Japanese or even advocating taking loans from Britain to protect Taiwan.

## **9. Kang You Wei: Court Scholar**

Kang You Wei was invited to the imperial Court by the reformist minded Emperor Guangxu to advise the Qing government on potential reform. A leading scholar in China, Kang You Wei is an intense advocate of revolutionizing China's governmental and societal institutions. Once stating, "Westerners all pursue useful studies, while we Chinese pursue useless studies," Kang You Wei favors rapid and unyielding Westernization in virtually all matters of life. Empress Cixi is extremely suspicious of his activities.

## **10. Prince Tuan: Representative of the Foreign Office (1856-1922)**

Prince Tuan (Duan) is the son of Xianfeng's half-brother. He is part of the conservative faction, and fears that Western power will weaken the Qing government and destroy Chinese culture. A favorite of Cixi, he was appointed to the Foreign Office, and his son was selected as heir-apparent to Tongzhi. Prince Tuan wants to declare war on the Western powers, regardless of cost. He has numerous contacts with underground anti-Western groups in the Beijing area.

## **11. Prince Chun: Controller of the Admiralty (Navy)**

Prince Chun, brother of Prince Gong and married to Empress Cixi's sister, is responsible for the Administration of China's admittedly antiquated and sub-standard navy. Following the Sino-Japanese War of 1894, China's navy is virtually destroyed and severely underfunded. While Chun is generally considered to be a man of honor at home and abroad, there are growing suspicions that he diverted the navy's funds to building a new Summer Palace for the Empress.

## **12. Court Exchequer**

The Court Exchequer is responsible for the budget of the Imperial Palace in all external affairs. The office of the exchequer is responsible for allocating money for the various new projects of the Grand Council, although it is not directly in charge of any boards that are already funded (the Admiralty, any regional offices, etc.), or for funding internal Forbidden City affairs. The Court Exchequer is also responsible for revenue collection and financial management of the government.

## **13. Li Ping-heng: Generalissimo of forces of Yangtse:**

Li Ping-Heng is the former Governor of Shantung Province, and controls several Manchu Army Banners. His appointment is direct from Empress Cixi, and he forces are considered the bulwark against any potential foreign offensive in China. It is also rumored that he extremely anti-Christian and has contacts with several anti-Western groups.

## **14. Kang Yi: Civil and Military Fortifications Inspectors/Fundraiser**

Kang Yi as appointed by Cixi to inspect fortifications and garrisons of the empire and to raise money for the depleting Imperial Treasury. In his visits to the southern provinces, Kang Yi was able to raise a substantial sum over two million taels, most likely through 'questionable' practices. Politically, Kang Yi is a conservative and among the most anti-foreign in the Council. In Beijing, Kang Yi is very powerful, and good friends with Prince Duan. New military infrastructure must have his signature to be built.

## **15. Yu Hsien: Governor/Viceroy of Shanxi:**

Besides his governorship, Yu Hsien is rumored to be very active in underground anti-western groups. Yu hsien is also traditionally know for his anti-western policies, harsh treatment of missionaries, and firm rule. In the West, he is generally described as a "cruel wretch." He has a strong and growing relationship with Empress Cixi.

## **16. Yuan Shih-kai: Governor of Shantung**

Yuan Shikai is a Chinese military official and politician. In 1885, he was appointed the Imperial Resident of Seoul, and helped create a treaty between Japan and China on the subject of troops in Korea. In 1894, Yuan Shikai was recalled to the mainland. Yuan is good friends and an ally of Li Hongzhang, and has good standing in military affairs. He is especially knowledgeable of matters pertaining to the Korean peninsula and Japanese activity there.

### **17. Tuan Fang: Governor/Viceroy of Shaanxi**

Relative of Prince Tuan, Tuan-Fang is generally considered a moderate pro-foreign governor. Independent minded and educated, Tuan Fang tended to overcome the intense politicking the saturated Qing Leadership. His progressive policies and openness to foreigners makes him a popular figure in the West.

### **18. Liang Qi Chao: Court Scholar and Journalist**

Liang Qichao is a scholar and philosopher. At the age of 16 (in 1884), he passed the Juren (second level provincial exams), but in 1890 he failed the national examinations, mainly because the examiner thought his paper was Kang Youwei's. Both Liang Qichao and Kang Youwei are advocates of constitutional monarchy, and are very interested in western ideologies and reform in China. However, Liang was also a traditional Confucian scholar who argued that China should protect the ancient teachings of Confucianism while learning from successes of the West. Liang Qichao was also a journalist and historian, and can send press releases and editorials through publications that he owns.

### **19. Tan Si Tong: Court Scholar and Poet**

Tan Si Tong, a preeminent scholar and poet in China, was invited to court by Emperor Guangxu in the hopes of advising the government on needed reforms. Tan Si Tong was dedicated to reforming what he considered antiquated institutions and social practices in China. Will probably not as radical as Kang You Wei, Tan Si Tong has in interest in bettering relations with the West and modernizing many of China's social institutions.

### **20. President of the Board of Rites**

The Board of Rites is responsible for all matters of imperial court protocol, including religious rites (ancestor worship and sacrifices to the gods) and looking after the welfare of ambassadors from tributary nations. The Board of Rites was also responsible for overseeing the nationwide civil examinations. The Board of Rites had the power to censor individuals for wrongful behavior and to implement Confucian standards.

### **21. President of the Civil Office**

The President of the Civil Office has the responsibility of monitoring public order and keeping the Qing leadership informed about the sentiment of the common people. Its jurisdiction includes all matters related to the maintenance of public security, health, and order.

## **22. President of the Han-lin College (Hanlin Academy)**

The Hanlin College was founded in the Tang dynasty to be the greatest literary institution of the Chinese empire. The members are generally the most learned individuals of the country. One of the main tasks of the Hanlin College is to interpret the Confucian classics, which then form the basis of the national examinations. The President of the Hanlin College is also in contact with the students and the intellectuals.

## **23. Representative from The Holy Dali Lama (Thubten Gyatso)**

The Dali Lama's representative has the primary responsibility of advising the Qing Leadership on the current state of Buddhism across China and approves all honorary titles granted to imperial court members (i.e. Cixi is the "Great Buddha"). The Dali Lama's representative is regularly consulted on matters pertaining to religion and the spiritual state of China and its people. In matters of foreign policy, the Dali Lama, Thubten Gyatso, is increasingly concerned about foreign interventionism on the continent.

## **24. Imperial Consort Zhen Pearl Concubine**

Consort Zhen was the favorite concubine of Guangxu Emperor. She entered the Forbidden City in 1888 and married the Emperor in 1889. Although Cixi liked Consort Zhen at first, she soon found the concubine to be too strong and independent, and frowned upon Consort Zhen's urging the Emperor to reform and learn foreign languages. Consort Zhen also had the peculiar habit of dressing in men's clothes.

## **25. Court Astrologer**

The astrologer carries significant influence both inside the imperial court and with the common population. Both the Emperor and Empress would routinely consult the astrologer, and act based on their recommendations. Commoners in China take the words of the astrologer extremely seriously when planning special celebrations.