

上海扶輪社員顧維鈞博士 -- 中國外交第一人

Shanghai Rotarian Dr. Vi Kyuin Wellington Koo
The Most Eminent Diplomatist in China's Foreign Affairs

By Herbert K. Lau (劉敬恒) (Rotary China Historian)

1 May 2024



Dr. Vi Kyuin Wellington Koo (顧維鈞博士), *HonLLD (St. John's)*, *HonLLD (Columbia)*, *PhD (Columbia)*, *MA (Columbia)*, *BA (Columbia)* (1887–1985), Honorary Member of the Rotary Club of Shanghai, Republic of China (中華民國上海扶輪社), was one of the first Chinese Rotarians reported by *《The Rotarian》* Magazine. As early as in the January 1921 Issue, Page 25: “London, England -- Dr. V. K. Wellington Koo, newly appointed Chinese Ambassador to the Court of St. James and formerly Chinese Minister to the United States, is an honorary member of the Rotary Club of Shanghai, China. Dr. Koo, although his country's representative at the world's most important court, is only 35 years old. He is a graduate of Columbia University, New York, and was head of the Chinese delegation to the Peace Conference. In conjunction with another Chinese Rotarian, C. T. Wang, also a member of the Shanghai Club, Koo fought strenuously throughout the Peace Conference for China's interest in Shantung and thereby won the undying regard of his countrymen.”

In the March 1922 Issue, Page 104: “Dr. V. K. Wellington Koo, a member of the Rotary Club of Shanghai, and one of the Chinese representatives to the Washington Conference.” Page 152: “V. K. Wellington Koo, one of the leading delegates from China, as you probably know, is a member of the Rotary Club of Shanghai. There is no finer example of the highly educated and cultured Chinaman than Koo. Still in his thirties, he has already served his country as diplomatic representative in Washington and at present is ambassador to the Court of St. James. He is a graduate of American colleges, speaks beautiful English, and is a most charming fellow to converse with. Since becoming a member of Rotary, he has taken

an active interest in its affairs and was one of the speakers invited to address the Rotary convention at Edinburgh, although urgent matters connected with his responsible post unfortunately prevented his acceptance.”

Also in the February 1924 Issue, Page 12: “Dr. Wellington Koo (Wellington)---Minister of Foreign Affairs, former Minister to the United States, and also to Great Britain. In the absence of both president and premier, Rotarian Koo is the ranking officer of the Chinese government in Peking, and faces a problem of almost unparalleled difficulties.”

Koo was a Chinese diplomat and statesman instrumental in advancing the Republic of China’s position on the international stage amid domestic turmoil and foreign encroachments. Educated at Saint John’s University in Shanghai (上海聖約翰大學) and later at Columbia University, U.S.A., where he earned a Ph.D., Koo entered government service in 1912 and quickly rose in the Foreign Ministry. At the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, he led arguments against awarding Imperial Japan the former German Confederation and Empire concessions in Shantung (*Shandong*) Province (山東省), citing their cultural and historical significance to China as the birthplace of Confucius, which prompted China’s unprecedented refusal to sign the 《Treaty of Versailles》. Koo represented China at the League of Nations’ (國際聯盟) formation, served as ambassador to the United States, France, and Britain, and acted as premier during the 1926–1927 Peking (*Beijing*) (北京) government’s instability. Throughout the 1930s and World War II, he invoked international law to challenge Japanese expansionism and unequal treaties, while in 1945 becoming the first signatory for China to the United Nations Charter 《聯合國憲章》. His career culminated as a judge on the International Court of Justice from 1957 to 1967, spanning crises from the May Fourth Movement (五四運動) to the Cold War era.



1945年6月27日－《聯合國憲章》簽署儀式，圖片顯示中華民國代表團成員排成一列，而顧維鈞博士是代表第一個國家中華民國在《聯合國憲章》上簽署的人。

27 June 1945 -- In this general view the 《United Nations Charter》 was signed with members of the Republic of China delegation lined up while Dr. V. K. Wellington Koo the first signer on the Charter for his country.

The Story of Koo

Early Life and Education

Koo Vi-Kyuin, better known as “V. K. Wellington Koo” internationally, was born into a prosperous merchant family on 29 January 1888 in Jia Ding County, Kiangsu (*Jiangsu*) Province of the Ch’ing Empire (大清國江蘇省蘇州府嘉定縣). As the third son, he grew up in the cosmopolitan environment of Shanghai International Settlement (上海公共租界), where exposure to Western influences facilitated his early fluency in English and French.

In 1895, Koo was greatly affected by Ch’ing Empire’s defeat at the hands of Imperial Japan in the First Sino-Japanese War (甲午戰爭), which led to the humiliating 《Treaty of Shimonoseki 馬關條約》. Koo later wrote: “Ever since I was seven years old, when I heard with depressed heart the news of China’s defeat by Japan, I had desired to work for China’s recovery and the removal of the Japanese menace.” Koo’s father resolved to give him a “modern” education to help him prepare for the coming 20th century and to work for China’s modernization. The naval battles during the recent war where the modern British-built warships of the Imperial Japanese Navy had blown out of the water the antiquated junks of the Imperial Chinese Navy (大清海軍) had dramatically shown that modern, industrial powers had the advantage over backward nations. In 1897, the German Empire occupied the Shantung Province after a short campaign, which again showed to the young Koo that as long as China was backward, it would be bullied by stronger powers.

Aged 11, Koo was sent to be educated at the Anglo-Chinese Junior College (中西書院) in Shanghai, where he was taught in English various subjects such as modern science and geography, though his studies were cut short when he contracted typhoid fever. While at the college, Koo once rode a bicycle down the streets of Shanghai into the International Settlement and followed an English boy also riding a bicycle onto the sidewalk, where an Indian policeman allowed the English boy to continue while stopping Koo to give him a fine for riding his bicycle on the sidewalk. Koo was shocked to discover that owing to extraterritoriality, the laws and rules that applied to Chinese in China did not apply to British subjects---in this instance, laws prohibiting riding a bicycle on the sidewalk---and that a foreign policeman had power over the Chinese police. Koo was left with a lifelong desire to end the status of extraterritoriality that had been imposed by the 19th-century “unequal treaties”.

Koo received his initial higher education at Saint John’s University in Shanghai, an Anglican institution emphasizing English-language instruction and Western curricula. While attended the university as a student from 1901 to 1904, he served as editor of the school publication《The Dragon》. He did not receive his primary academic degrees there. Instead, at the age of 16, he left for the United States in 1904 first attending Cook Academy, a preparatory school in New York, before enrolling at Columbia University.

At Columbia, Koo earned his Bachelor of Arts (BA) in liberal arts in 1908, distinguishing himself as a brilliant student who managed to participate in a remarkable number of extracurricular activities. He served as editor-in-chief of the 《Columbia Daily Spectator》, won the Columbia-Cornell Debating Medal, and was a member of both the track team and Delta Epsilon Rho. He earned his Master of Arts (MA) in political science in 1909; and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in international law and diplomacy in 1912. His dissertation 《The Status of Aliens in China》 was published that year by Columbia University Press. These academic achievements positioned him for a career in diplomacy upon his return to the newly established Republic of China (中華民國) since 1 January 1912.

Diplomatic Foundations

Early Diplomatic Career

Upon completing his studies at Columbia University in 1912, Koo returned to China and was appointed English Secretary to Grand President Yuan Shi-Kai (大總統袁世凱), initiating his involvement in the new republican government's affairs. This position provided direct exposure to high-level political decision-making and diplomatic precedents, fostering Koo's understanding of international relations amid China's fragile post-imperial transition. Yuan's personal guidance emphasized pragmatic engagement with foreign powers to stabilize the regime and counter internal fragmentation.

In 1913, Koo transitioned to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as a counselor, where he began shaping China's responses to escalating global tensions. With the outbreak of World War I, he drafted China's declaration of neutrality in August 1914, intended to avert the conflict's spread into Asia and preserve territorial integrity against opportunistic advances. His tenure involved scrutinizing Imperial Japan's occupation of German concessions in Shantung Province in late 1914, which he viewed as a violation of China's sovereignty, prompting early advocacy for Allied intervention.

The 1915 Japanese 《Twenty-One Demands 對華二十一條要求》 crisis marked a critical test, during which Koo leaked confidential documents to U.S. and British diplomats to rally Western opposition and expose Tokyo's expansionist aims. He also authored Peking's formal reply to Japan's May ultimatum, underscoring the duress imposed and rejecting expansive territorial and political concessions. That August, Koo received appointment as China's Minister to the United States and Mexico, positioning him to cultivate trans-Pacific alliances, though his immediate duties centered on mitigating domestic fallout from the unequal Sino-Japanese treaty.

By 1917, Koo endorsed China's declaration of war on German Confederation and Empire, calculating that Allied membership would bolster claims to recover lost territories and revise extraterritorial privileges at the postwar settlement. These actions reflected Koo's reliance on legalistic arguments and multilateral pressure to defend national interests against asymmetrical power dynamics.

Fighting for China at the Paris Peace Conference

Koo served as one of China's five plenipotentiaries at the Paris Peace Conference in France, which convened on 18 January 1919, to negotiate the《Treaty of Versailles》and related settlements following World War I. As a key member of the delegation led by Lou Tseng-Tsiang (陸徵祥), Koo emerged as the primary advocate for China's territorial claims, particularly regarding the Shantung Peninsula, where Japan had seized German concessions in November 1914 after declaring war on Germany. China, having entered the war against Germany on 14 August 1917, anticipated the direct restoration of these territories under principles like U.S. President Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points (美國總統威爾遜「十四點原則」), which emphasized self-determination and the end of secret treaties.

Koo had become close to President Woodrow Wilson, who invited him to visit the White House, where he was given to understand that the United States would support China's demands regarding the Shantung Peninsula against Japan at the Paris Peace Conference. Wilson asked for Koo to attend the Peace Conference in Paris, and moreover, Koo travelled on the same ship that took Wilson and the rest of the American delegation to France in December 1918. The Canadian historian Margaret MacMillan wrote: “Koo, who was only thirty-two in 1919, was a forceful and distinguished personality...At Columbia University, in New York, where he earned an undergraduate and graduate degree, he had been an outstanding student...He had also been on the university debating team, as the Japanese delegates would learn to their cost.”

As a young diplomat, Koo was strongly opposed to the acceptance of the Japanese demands. Koo rejected Japan's assertion of rights by conquest and Peking's initial instructions to defer to Japanese positions, instead presenting China's case before the Council of Ten---the principal Allied decision-making body. He argued that Shantung, home to a population of approximately 36 million and the birthplace of Confucius, held profound cultural and historical significance as the “cradle of Chinese civilization”, rendering its transfer to Japan incompatible with justice and international law. In a notable session on 22 April 1919, at Wilson's residence in Paris, Koo, alongside Lou, addressed Wilson, Georges Clemenceau, and David Lloyd George, contending that the 1915 Sino-Japanese treaties---stemming from Japan's Twenty-One Demands and enforced via an ultimatum on 7 May 1915---were invalid due to coercion, as China had only 48 hours to comply under threat of war. He detailed Japanese military penetration into Shantung, the imposition of civil administration and taxes, and resulting local disturbances, while opposing both the succession of German rights to Japan and any direct German return, favoring outright restoration to Chinese sovereignty.

Despite Wilson's initial sympathy and private advocacy for China, the Allied powers, bound by prior secret agreements with Japan (including Anglo-Japanese and Franco-Japanese pacts from 1917), upheld Japan's claims to economic privileges, the Kiautschou Bay

Leased Territory (膠州灣租借地), and the Shantung Railway on 30 April 1919. Koo warned that denying justice could push China toward alignment with Japan or an “Asia for the Asiatics” stance, potentially destabilizing the region, but the decision stood, prioritizing Allied unity over China’s appeals. Consequently, the Chinese delegation, led by Koo’s principled stance, refused to sign the 《Treaty of Versailles》 on 28 June 1919---the only major belligerent to abstain---sparking the May Fourth Movement (五四運動) protests in China against perceived diplomatic betrayal and foreign imperialism. This episode underscored Koo’s role in elevating China’s voice on the global stage, though it yielded no territorial gains.

Domestic and Political Engagements

Political Roles in Republican China

Following his prominent role at the Paris Peace Conference, Koo transitioned to domestic political positions within the Beiyang Government (北洋政府), serving as Minister of Foreign Affairs starting in August 1922. In this capacity, he managed China’s diplomatic relations amid the Washington Naval Conference and ongoing internal fragmentation under warlord control. That same year, Koo also briefly held the position of Minister of Finance, reflecting the fluid cabinet reshuffles typical of the era's unstable administrations.

In 1926, amid escalating civil strife during the Northern Expedition (國民革命軍北伐) led by the Kuomintang (中國國民黨) (literally Nationalist Party), Koo was appointed Minister of Finance from May to October. On 1 October 1926, following the resignation of Acting Premier Tu Hsi-Kuei (代理國務總理杜錫珪), Koo assumed the role of Acting Premier while concurrently retaining the Foreign Ministry portfolio, a dual responsibility necessitated by the Peking government’s precarious position under Marshal Zhang Zuolin (安國軍政府大元帥張作霖). During this tenure, which extended until at least 11 January 1927, and reportedly into June, Koo also acted as interim President, attempting to stabilize the regime against advancing Nationalist forces.

Koo’s brief premiership occurred in a period of acute political volatility, marked by military defeats and diplomatic isolation for the Beiyang regime. His efforts focused on maintaining administrative continuity and seeking international support, though the government's collapse in mid-1927 limited substantive achievements. After the Nationalist victory and the establishment of the Nanking (*Nanjing*) (南京) Government, Koo shifted primarily to diplomatic postings abroad, with no further major domestic cabinet roles in the Republican era on the mainland.

European Diplomatic Postings

Ambassadorship to France

Koo served as the Republic of China’s first ambassador to France from 1936 to 1940, following the elevation of bilateral relations from legation to embassy status. In this capacity, he represented Chinese interests in Europe during a period of escalating tensions with Imperial Japan, particularly after the Marco Polo Bridge Incident (盧溝橋事變) on 7 July

1937 which gave excuse to the Japanese militarism to launch full scale aggression to China. Koo coordinated diplomatic efforts to garner international sympathy and support for China, including appeals through the League of Nations (國際聯盟), where he acted as chief delegate following the War's outbreak.

As ambassador, Koo engaged in high-level discussions with French officials on financial and military aid amid China's resistance to Japanese aggression. For instance, in July 1937, he participated in conferences in London alongside Chinese Finance Minister H. H. Kung (財政部長孔祥熙) before returning to Paris to advance these initiatives. Conversations with French authorities in the late 1930s focused on Chinese financial needs, reflecting efforts to secure loans or assistance to sustain the war effort against Japan. France's responses were tempered by its own strategic concerns, including maintaining relations with Japan, yet Koo's fluency in French and established diplomatic networks facilitated ongoing dialogue.

Koo's tenure extended into the early stages of World War II in Europe. Following the Nazi Germany's invasion of France in May 1940 and the subsequent armistice on 22 June 1940, he briefly managed relations with the Vichy government before transferring to the ambassadorship in Britain in April 1941. His role underscored China's alignment with Western democracies against Axis powers, laying groundwork for later wartime alliances.

European Maneuvers in the Late 1930s

In the wake of the Marco Polo Bridge Incident on 7 July 1937 which precipitated the Second Sino-Japanese War, Koo, serving as China's Ambassador to France, shifted focus to mobilizing European powers against Japanese expansionism. He immediately appealed to the French government for diplomatic and material support, emphasizing the parallels between Japan's actions in China and broader threats to international order. French authorities initially permitted the transit of arms and supplies to China via Indochina, a critical lifeline amid Japan's naval blockades, though quantities remained limited to approximately 50,000 tons of munitions by late 1937. Koo's negotiations secured temporary French commitments to non-recognition of Japanese gains in China, but Paris prioritized its own rearmament against Germany, constraining deeper involvement.

Koo represented China at the League of Nations Assembly in Geneva on 12 September 1937, delivering a vehement condemnation of Japanese aggression and urging collective sanctions, including economic measures to halt Japan's advance. His address highlighted Japan's violation of the 《Nine-Power Treaty》 (九國公約) and the 《Kellogg-Briand Pact》 (非戰公約), framing the conflict as a test of the League's credibility, yet the Assembly adopted only a mild resolution calling for mediation, reflecting European reluctance amid rising tensions with Nazi Germany. In November 1937, Koo led the Chinese delegation to the Brussels Conference (November 3–24), where he outlined Japan's systematic aggression since the 1931 Mukden Incident (九一八事變), asserting China's resolve to defend its sovereignty “at all costs” and demanding enforcement of treaty obligations by the attending

powers. The Conference concluded without binding action, issuing instead a vague appeal for ceasefire and withdrawal, underscoring Koo's inability to forge a unified anti-aggression front as European priorities shifted toward appeasement in Central Europe.

Throughout 1938, amid the Sudetenland crisis and Munich Agreement, Koo intensified lobbying in Paris and Geneva to link European resistance to aggression with support for China, warning that concessions to Hitler would embolden Tokyo. On 19 September 1938, at a League session coinciding with the Czech impasse, he renewed calls for economic sanctions against Japan, arguing that failure to act undermined global stability. Britain and France expressed sympathy but deferred action, prioritizing their Munich negotiations. Koo's efforts yielded modest French loans---totaling about 100 million francs for Chinese stabilization---but no military alliance, as France halted significant arms transit via Indochina by mid-1938 under pressure from Japan and its own strategic hesitations. These maneuvers highlighted Koo's strategic use of multilateral forums to pressure Europe, though systemic biases toward continental security concerns limited tangible aid to China.

Response to the Outbreak of War in Europe

Upon the German invasion of Poland on 1 September 1939, and the subsequent declarations of war by France and Britain on September 3, Wellington Koo, serving as Chinese Ambassador to France, recognized the global implications for China's ongoing conflict with Japan. In his diary entry for September 3, Koo described the events as "momentous days in history", marking "the beginning of a war which may engulf the whole world". He viewed the European conflict as an opportunity to intensify diplomatic pressure on Japan, given its alignment with Germany through the Anti-Comintern Pact, though a formal Axis alliance would not materialize until 1940.

That same day, September 1, Koo met urgently with U.S. Ambassador to France William C. Bullitt in Paris, advocating for a unified Allied hardline stance against Japanese aggression to facilitate resolution of the Sino-Japanese War, which had begun in 1937. This reflected Koo's broader strategy to link the European and Asian theaters, urging Western powers to treat Japan's expansionism as part of a common fascist threat and thereby secure increased military and financial aid for China. His efforts built on prior conversations with Bullitt regarding Chinese loans and support, emphasizing that European hostilities could divert Japanese resources if Allies coordinated effectively.

Koo also cabled advice to Chinese leaders, including Chiang Kai-Shek (蔣中正), recommending exploitation of the European crisis to bolster ties with Britain, France, and the United States while isolating Japan diplomatically. He suggested leveraging mediation offers from Western powers to negotiate territorial concessions from Japan, anticipating that a prolonged European war would weaken Tokyo's position in Asia. These recommendations aligned with Nationalist China's policy of seeking de facto alliance without formal belligerency, as Chiang avoided declaring war on the Axis until December 1941 following

Pearl Harbor, to preserve flexibility amid internal divisions and limited resources. Koo's advocacy underscored his belief in collective security, informed by his earlier experiences at the League of Nations, though he privately expressed concerns over potential Soviet opportunism after the August 23 Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact.

During the ensuing Phoney War period (September 1939–May 1940), Koo continued pressing French officials for sustained aid routes through Indochina, warning against concessions to Japan that could undermine China's resistance. However, French priorities shifted toward European defense, limiting substantive gains, and transit restrictions on war materiel to China intensified under Japanese pressure despite initial Allied sympathies. Koo's initiatives, while yielding modest financial credits, highlighted the challenges of aligning peripheral Asian interests with Europe's immediate crises, as documented in U.S. State Department records of his persistent appeals.

Ambassadorship to Britain

Following the German occupation of France in June 1940, where Koo had served as ambassador since 1936, he relocated to London and was appointed Republic of China Ambassador to the United Kingdom on 9 May 1941, succeeding Kuo T'ai-Ch'i (郭泰祺). He retained the post until December 1946, overseeing Chinese diplomatic interests amid World War II.

Koo's tenure focused on fostering Anglo-Chinese wartime cooperation, particularly in securing British aid for China's resistance against Japanese invasion. He collaborated closely with British authorities on operations in the China-Burma-India Theater, advocating for supplies, intelligence sharing, and military coordination to sustain Chinese forces. In October 1942, Koo undertook his first return to China in a decade, traveling to Chungking (*Chongqing*) (重慶) to consult with Nationalist government leaders on Allied strategy and lendings under Lend-Lease arrangements.

A pivotal accomplishment occurred on 11 January 1943, when Koo signed the 《Sino-British Treaty for the Relinquishment of Extra-Territorial Rights in China》, which abrogated British extraterritorial privileges, tariff autonomy restrictions, and control over concessions like Weihaiwei (威海衛) in Shantung and the New Territories (新界) lease extensions post-1997 in Hong Kong (香港). This agreement, negotiated amid Allied solidarity against the Axis, symbolized the end of 19th-century “unequal treaties” and elevated China's sovereign status, with Britain relinquishing approximately 500 square miles of leased territory and judicial immunities affecting over 10,000 British subjects in China. Koo emphasized that the treaty aligned with wartime mutual interests, stating it would strengthen China's capacity to contribute to global victory.

Throughout 1943–1945, Koo engaged in high-level discussions on postwar planning, including appeals for British recognition of China's Great Power role and support for its territorial integrity, including recovery of Japanese-held territories. He hosted British

parliamentary missions to bolster public and official sympathy for China's plight, countering perceptions of inadequate Allied assistance despite over 3 million Chinese casualties by mid-1943. By War's end, Koo's efforts contributed to China's inclusion as a founding United Nations Security Council permanent member, though domestic Nationalist challenges and emerging Cold War tensions foreshadowed his 1946 transfer to Washington as ambassador.

Wartime Diplomacy and Global Crises

Second Sino-Japanese War Efforts

Upon the outbreak of full-scale hostilities in the Second Sino-Japanese War on 7 July 1937, following the Marco Polo Bridge Incident, Koo, then serving as Chinese Ambassador to France since 1936, immediately engaged in diplomatic appeals to rally international opposition to Japanese aggression. Representing China at the League of Nations, Koo urged member states to invoke the Covenant against Japan, emphasizing the threat to peace and calling for collective sanctions and intervention to halt the invasion. Despite the League's procedural delays and ultimate inaction---exemplified by its failure to declare Japan the aggressor outright---Koo persisted in multiple appeals, including a formal notification to the League Council on 22 September 1937 regarding Japanese aerial bombings of Nanking and other open cities, which he described as indiscriminate attacks on civilians. These efforts, conducted amid France's own policy of appeasement toward aggressor states, yielded limited tangible aid but kept China's case before European audiences, underscoring the inadequacies of the League system that Koo had helped establish nearly two decades earlier.

Appointed Chinese Ambassador to the United Kingdom in April 1941 amid escalating global war, Koo shifted focus to securing British and Allied wartime cooperation, positioning China as a co-belligerent deserving of strategic and material support against Japan. From London, he negotiated permissions for Chinese expeditionary forces to reinforce Allied positions in Southeast Asia. In late 1941, Koo proposed deploying Chinese troops to bolster British defenses, facilitating the eventual entry of approximately 100,000 Chinese soldiers into Burma in early 1942 under the China Expeditionary Force (中國遠征軍) to counter Japanese advances alongside British and Commonwealth units. This coordination proved critical during the Burma Campaign's early phases, though logistical challenges and Japanese successes limited its impact, with Chinese forces suffering heavy losses before withdrawing in May 1942. Koo's advocacy extended to pressing for accelerated Lend-Lease shipments and airlift routes over the Himalayas (the "Hump") to supply Nationalist China, arguing that bolstering Chinese resistance would divert Japanese resources from Pacific theaters.

End of Unequal Treaties and Hong Kong Question

Koo's tenure in London culminated in key treaty negotiations that advanced China's postwar sovereign interests. On 11 January 1943, the 《Sino-British New Equal Treaty 中英平等新約》 was signed in Chungking. This treaty in its full title [Treaty Between His Majesty in Respect of the United Kingdom and India and His Excellency the President of the National

Government of the Republic of China for the Relinquishment of Extra-Territorial Rights in China and the Regulation of Related Matters 聯合王國及印度國王陛下和中華民國國民政府主席閣下關於放棄在中國治外法權有關事項的規定的條約] relinquished British extraterritorial rights, concessions, and treaty ports in China---privileges dating to the 19th-century unequal treaties---in explicit recognition of China's alliance contributions and sacrifices.

Regarding the “Hong Kong Question”, Koo attempted to put onto the two parties' agenda, suggesting that the Kowloon concession (九龍租借地) (the New Kowloon 新九龍 and New Territories 新界 beyond north of the Boundary Street 界限街) should be returned to the Republic of China along with the other foreign concessions. This was fiercely rejected by the United Kingdom's prime minister at the time, Winston Churchill. The United Kingdom also demanded that the Republic of China give their written consent that the Kowloon concession was not included within the unequal treaties, or else they would refuse to sign, so the Republic of China was forced to drop the concession of Kowloon from the agenda. The two sides signed the treaty, with the Republic of China writing a formal letter to the United Kingdom and securing the right to raise the issue of Hong Kong on a later occasion.

Paralleling this, Koo coordinated with Washington to secure a concurrent 《Treaty between the United States and China for Relinquishment of Extraterritorial Rights in China and the Regulation of Related Matters 中美關於取消美國在華治外法權及處理有關問題條約》, signed at Washington on the same day with an accompanying exchange of notes. Ratifications were exchanged at Washington on May 20 and treaty and notes came into effect on that day thereby dismantling longstanding imperialist structures amid wartime exigencies.

These agreements, while symbolic of Allied goodwill, reflected pragmatic concessions by Britain and the United States to incentivize continued Chinese engagement, though implementation faced postwar delays. Koo viewed them as vindication of decades-long diplomatic struggles against foreign encroachments, enhancing China's international standing on the eve of victory over Japan.

Involvement in the United Nations Formation

Koo served as acting chairman of the Chinese delegation to the United Nations Conference on International Organization (UNCIO), convened in San Francisco, U.S.A., from 25 April to 26 June 1945, to draft the Charter of the United Nations. The Conference built upon the Dumbarton Oaks proposals of 1944, involving delegates from 50 nations, with China as one of the sponsoring Big Four powers alongside the United States, Soviet Union, and United Kingdom. Koo, a veteran diplomat, substituted for delegation chairman T. V. Soong (宋子文) in several plenary sessions, representing China's positions on key structural elements of the proposed organization.

During committee deliberations, the Chinese delegation, under Koo's leadership when Soong was absent, advocated for limited amendments to the Dumbarton Oaks framework,

focusing on refinements rather than major overhauls; for instance, Koo noted in discussions that China endorsed only a few additional changes beyond those pre-agreed at Dumbarton Oaks. He participated in negotiations on trusteeship arrangements and other provisions, emphasizing conciliation amid tensions, such as those over Security Council veto powers and regional interests. Koo also delivered a public address titled 《The Conference and China》 to the Commonwealth Club of California, outlining China's vision for the postwar international order and its commitment to collective security.

On 26 June 1945, at the ceremony in San Francisco's Herbst Theatre, Koo became the first delegate to sign the United Nations Charter on behalf of the Republic of China, affixing his signature to the document that established the organization's foundational principles, including sovereign equality of members and the prohibition of force in international relations. This act symbolized China's status as a founding member and permanent Security Council seat holder, reflecting Koo's long career advocating for China's equitable treatment in global affairs following earlier diplomatic setbacks like Versailles. The Charter entered into force on 24 October 1945, after ratification by the required number of states, marking the formal birth of the United Nations.

Later International Role

Judgeship at the International Court of Justice

In January 1957, Koo was elected by the United Nations General Assembly as a judge of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) for a nine-year term, filling a vacancy for the Republic of China seat following the sudden death of Judge Dr. Hsu Mo (徐謨博士) (Charter Member and President 1935-1936 of Nanking Rotary Club 南京扶輪社). He assumed duties in The Hague, The Netherlands, leveraging his extensive background in international law and diplomacy to adjudicate disputes under the ICJ Statute. Koo's election reflected the Republic of China's status as a permanent United Nations Security Council member at the time, with judges selected by absolute majority vote in both the General Assembly and Security Council.

Koo served from 1957 until the end of his term in 1967, participating in 17 contentious cases and several advisory opinions during a period marked by decolonization tensions and Cold War influences on international adjudication. In 1964, he was elected Vice-President of the Court by fellow judges, holding the position alongside President Sir Percy Spender until 1967, a role entailing substitution for the President in proceedings and administrative duties as outlined in Article 21 of the ICJ Statute.

Throughout his tenure, Koo frequently authored dissenting or separate opinions, advocating a positivist approach that emphasized textual fidelity to treaties, state consent, and evidentiary rigor over policy-driven interpretations. In the South West Africa cases (Ethiopia vs. South Africa; Liberia vs. South Africa), he dissented from the 1966 judgment dismissing the applications, arguing that the Court's restrictive view of applicants' legal

interest undermined the supervisory role of the United Nations General Assembly under the Mandate system and Article 22 of the League of Nations Covenant, prioritizing objective legal accountability over procedural hurdles. Similarly, in the Temple of Preah Vihear case (Cambodia vs. Thailand, 1962), Koo's dissent critiqued the majority's reliance on ambiguous maps and Thai acquiescence, insisting on precise boundary delimitation per the 1904 and 1907 Franco-Siamese treaties and rejecting inferences that eroded sovereignty without unequivocal proof. He also joined joint dissents, such as in interpretations of jurisdictional clauses under Article 36 of the ICJ Statute, defending narrow compulsory jurisdiction to preserve state autonomy.

Koo's opinions often highlighted causal linkages between historical diplomatic instruments and contemporary obligations, resisting expansive judicial activism amid pressures from newly independent states. His service concluded without re-election, amid evolving United Nations dynamics on Chinese representation, though he remained on the bench through 1967 as the last ICJ judge nominated by the Republic of China Government in Taipei (臺北).

Personal Dimensions

Family and Marriages

Koo entered into four marriages over his lifetime. His first union, arranged by family in 1908, was to Chang Jun-O (張潤娥), daughter of a family friend and physician. Koo consented only after his father undertook a hunger strike to persuade him. The couple divorced in 1913, with no children born from the marriage.

In 1912, following his divorce, Koo married Tang Pao-Yueh (唐寶玥), known as May Tang, daughter of the prominent politician Tang Shao-Yi (唐紹儀). They had two children: a son, Koo Teh-Chang (顧德昌), and a daughter, Patricia Koo Tsien (顧菊珍). Tang died in 1918 at age 27, shortly after Koo had begun his diplomatic career in earnest.

Koo's third marriage occurred in 1921 to Oei Hui-Lan (黃蕙蘭), a socialite and daughter of the wealthy Javanese sugar magnate Oei Tiong-Ham (黃仲涵). The union lasted until their divorce in 1956. They had two sons: Yu-Chang Wellington Koo Jr. (顧裕昌), born in 1922 and who died in 1975, and Fu-Chang Freeman Koo (顧福昌). Oei Hui-Lan accompanied Koo during his diplomatic postings and became known as "Madame Wellington Koo" for her prominent role in international social circles.

In 1959, Koo married Yen Yu-Yun (嚴幼韻)---Mrs. Juliana Young---a widow with three daughters. With Juliana, Koo remained until his death in 1985. No additional children are recorded from this marriage.

Lifestyle and Personal Challenges

Koo adopted a Westernized lifestyle shaped by his early education in the United States and decades of international diplomacy, including fluency in English honed at Columbia University and a preference for tailored Western attire during formal engagements, as

depicted in contemporary photographs from the 1920s and 1930s. His daily routine often involved hosting or attending high-society events, facilitated by his third wife's social prominence, which blended Chinese traditions with European elegance in residences across capitals like Paris, London, and New York. This peripatetic existence, marked by frequent relocations---such as from wartime Chungking to Washington, D.C., in the 1940s---demanded constant adaptation to foreign customs and climates, contributing to a sense of impermanence in his personal affairs.

One profound personal challenge was the sudden death of his second wife, Tang Pao-Yueh, in 1918 from the Spanish influenza pandemic while residing in the United States. She had given birth to their son earlier that year, amplifying the loss amid the global crisis that killed an estimated 50 million people worldwide. Koo, then 30 and establishing his diplomatic career, confronted this bereavement without extended family support abroad, compelling him to balance immediate paternal duties with professional obligations at the Paris Peace Conference the following year.

Additional strains arose from the political upheavals of his era, including family separations during the Second Sino-Japanese War, when Japanese advances disrupted communications and safety for relatives in China, though Koo himself remained in diplomatic exile.

Final Years and Death

In later decades, post-1949 displacement from the Mainland---following the Communist victory---exiled him to New York, where he lived modestly in full retirement since 1967, estranged from his homeland yet loyal to the Republic of China on Taiwan. By 1972, declining health, compounded by age (84 at the time), prevented travel back to Asia despite overtures, marking a final personal barrier to reconciliation with his roots. He resided in Manhattan, maintaining a low public profile following decades of high-level diplomatic service. Though he outlived two of his sons, Koo died surrounded by his family on the night of 14 November 1985 peacefully at his home in New York City, aged 97. He was survived by his fourth wife, 2 children, 19 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren. He was buried at Ferncliff Cemetery and Mausoleum in Hartsdale, New York.

Legacy: Achievements and Historical Reappraisals

Koo's diplomatic achievements spanned decades, notably his advocacy at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, where he eloquently defended China's claims to Shantung Province against Japanese demands, contributing to China's unprecedented refusal to sign the 《Treaty of Versailles》 despite Allied pressure. This stance elevated his status as a symbol of national resistance, influencing the May Fourth Movement and subsequent Chinese nationalism. Koo played a key role in securing the 《Nine-Power Treaty》 at the 1921–1922 Washington Naval Conference, which reaffirmed China's sovereignty and the Open Door Policy. During World War II, he formulated strategies aligning the Republic of China with the United States,

enhancing China's wartime position and leading to his signing the 《United Nations Charter》 on 26 June 1945 as the first representative. As a judge on the International Court of Justice from 1957 to 1967, serving as vice-president from 1964 to 1967, Koo issued influential dissenting opinions, such as in the 1962 South West Africa case, advancing interpretations of international law aligned with decolonization principles.

In an interview conducted in 1969 on the 50th anniversary of the 《Treaty of Versailles》, Koo stated that the Paris Peace Conference, which launched the May 4th movement, was a turning point in Chinese views of the West as he observed that many Chinese intellectuals believed the victorious powers of 1918 would allow China to be treated as an equal, and the outcome of the Paris Peace Conference had turned public opinion against the Western powers. There was a widespread feeling in China that given the suffering of the Chinese coolies on the Western Front that France, Great Britain and the United States would reward China for its sacrifices. Koo stated: “Looking back at China's stand at the Paris Peace Conference and the developments preceding, it appears that these events are...a turning point in China's history, both from the domestic and international point of view...One could wonder what would be the situation in China [today] either if China had succeeded in settling the Shandong question in Paris to her satisfaction or if she had signed the treaty without the reservation. These are questions which probably can never be fully answered now.” Koo noted that the new Communist government in Russia, which denounced liberalism as a device for Western imperialism and renounced all of the special Russian rights in China gained under the Tsarist regime, won tremendous prestige in China as the one power that seemed willing to treat China as an equal, which led directly to the founding of the Chinese Communist Party in 1920.

Historical reappraisals, particularly in Stephen G. Craft's 2004 biography 《V. K. Wellington Koo and the Emergence of Modern China》, recast Koo as a foundational figure in Republican China's diplomatic modernization, countering earlier neglect in historiography dominated by revolutionary narratives. Scholars commend his integration of legal expertise into statecraft, bridging Western international norms with Chinese sovereignty assertions, as evidenced in his Ph.D. thesis on international law administration. Recent assessments, including a 2019 Columbia University lecture, emphasize his strategic foresight in U.S. alliances, crediting him with elevating China's global stature despite internal chaos. While acknowledging factional distrust, contemporary views prioritize his principled stands and longevity in crises over personal flaws, positioning him as a pioneer of professional diplomacy in a semi-colonial context.

Decorations

- (1) 10 October 1934 – Order of Brilliant Jade Second Class, Republic of China (中華民國—二等采玉大勳章)
- (2) 5 August 1940 -- Grand Cross of the Military Order of Christ, Portuguese Republic (Grã-Cruz da Ordem Militar de Cristo, República Portuguesa)

Wellington Koo: the man who stood up for China

By ZHAO XU in New York 《China Daily Global》 11 January 2020

Back in the very beginning of the 20th century, a teenage Chinese boy went to a barber's shop to have his queue braid cut. The barber, who agreed to take up the scissors only after having repeatedly confirmed with his young client about his bold decision, charged him double. The boy wrapped his queue in a ribbon and took it home to his mother, and the mother cried.

The boy was Koo Vi-kyuin (Gu Weijun), more famously known as V. K. Wellington Koo, viewed today by many as the first truly modern Chinese diplomat to have stepped onto the international stage representing the world's most populous country.

In retrospect, the cutting of the queue provided a potent metaphor for Koo's life, in which he tried very hard to break loose of the constraints imposed on him by family and tradition.

Right after his daring hair move, Koo went on to find himself a set of Western suits and sported them as he appeared in a family photo with his father and two elder brothers, standing symbolically away from the cheongsam-donning three.

However, one thing was never up for severing, and that is the tie between Koo and his country. In 1904, the 16-year-old boarded a ship for the United States, where he first entered the Cook Academy in New York and then Columbia University.

Shirley Young became Koo's stepdaughter when her mother, Juliana Yen Yu-ying (Yan Youyun) married Koo in 1959. Today, the 83-year-old is able to reconstruct her stepfather's Columbia years by looking into the school records, including test sheets.

"There were a number of C's and D's, especially in his first year," she said. "Koo was never this Chinese nerd who just studied hard — he was extremely active in all extra-curriculum activities. These included joining the drama club, becoming the editor-in-chief of the University's Spectator Magazine, which is still in existence today, and leading Columbia's debate team against Harvard, Yale and Princeton.

"I have all the records of the debates — they won so many times that Koo was personally congratulated by the president of the university," Young continued. "Can you imagine that this was for a Chinese person with English being his second language?"

Formidable linguistic capability — Koo would be tapping into this natural endowment in the coming years as he spoke for China on such occasions as the Paris Peace Conference and the San Francisco Conference. But back at Columbia, he had another reality to grapple with.

"Koo came with his first wife, the daughter of a family friend whom Koo had agreed to marry only when his father went on a hunger strike," said Young. "But the marriage was

never consummated, according to Koo, who put his new wife in a boardinghouse while he studied at Columbia.”

Nationwide revolution broke out in China in October 1911, resulting in the overthrowing of the Qing Dynasty early the next year. An empire no more – China was finally a republic.

In February 1912, a letter from the Chinese embassy in Washington landed on Koo’s desk. It was an invitation to serve in the President’s Office as his English secretary.

By late 1915, Koo was already appointed the Chinese minister to the US. He was only 27. The year before, he married Tang Pao-yueh (Tang Baoyue), aka May Tang, daughter of veteran politician Tang Shaoyi, after finally obtaining a divorce from his first wife the previous year.

The second marriage, a happy one, ended abruptly three years later, as Tang died in the influenza epidemic of 1918 in the US, having borne Koo a son and a daughter. Many years later, that daughter, Patricia Tsien, born one year before her mother’s passing, would tell her own daughter, Ying-Ying Yuan, about going back to China with Koo at the age of 5, for her mother’s burial 4 years after her death. Both Tsien and Yuan later became the guardians of Koo’s legacy.

Back in 1918, Koo had little time to grieve. In January 1919, he was appointed one of China’s five plenipotentiaries to the Paris Peace Conference, where the victorious Allied Powers gathered following the end of World War I to set the peace terms for the defeated Central Powers.

China, which had seen its rights as a sovereign country repeatedly infringed on since the mid-19th century, was within the Allied camp.

One focal point concerned the disposal of the leased territory and other rights previously held by Germany in East China’s Shandong province, things that had been “wrung out of China by force”, to use the words of Koo. In the beginning of World War I, Japan, which had long been eyeing this strategically important piece of land, declared war on Germany, won, and became the land’s de facto occupier.

Facing Japan’s attempt to have the German rights and interests “legally” transferred to them during the meeting, Koo fought fervently, basing his argument squarely on his study of international law at Columbia.

“The territories in question were an integral part of China. They were a part of a province containing 36 million inhabitants, of Chinese in race, language and religion. ... On the principles of nationality and of territorial integrity, principles accepted by the Conference, China had a right to the restoration of those territories. The Chinese delegation would feel that this was one of the conditions of a just peace,” he said. “If, on the other hand, the Congress were to take a different view and were to transfer these territories to any power, it would, in the eyes of the Chinese delegation, be adding one wrong to another.”

In order to strike a chord with representatives from the West, Koo went on to say that to ask the Chinese to willingly give up Shandong, the home province of Confucius, was akin to asking the Christians to abandon Jerusalem.

Well deliberated and forcibly delivered, the speech was a big success — US President Woodrow Wilson walked up to Koo and congratulated him on the spot. (The president had previously invited Koo to his wedding to Edith Bolling Galt.)

That history was powerfully reenacted in the 1999 Chinese movie *My 1919*, with veteran Chinese actor Chen Daoming impersonating Koo. However, as the diplomat later noted, “it was one thing to make an impressive speech yet quite another to receive a favorable resolution”. Japan threatened to walk away from the meeting and render all its decisions ineffective. The Allied Powers, eager to solidify their own interests, folded.

“I made it clear that China had no choice but to refuse signing,” recalled Koo in his memoir.

According to Young, although a telegram from Beijing did arrive later telling them not to sign, Koo was most likely to have arrived at that decision independently, with another young man in the delegation.

“Some more senior members had left, and it was up to them, the bottom guy and next-to-the bottom guy, to fulfill their last-minute duty,” she said, reflecting on the fact that Koo’s famous speech at the conference was delivered only when an impromptu decision was made for him to replace another member of the group for the occasion.

Back home, China’s failure at the peace conference was met with immense disillusionment and outrage, moods palpably felt even in Paris.

“When members of the delegation came out of their residence in the suburb of Paris, they were confronted by some emotional Chinese students, among whom was Zheng Yuxiu, who at that point declared that she had a gun in her coat,” said Young.

“Many years later, Zheng as a social friend of us came to dinner at our house. Koo asked, ‘Did you really have a gun?’ She said, ‘No, it was a stick.’ Koo smiled and said, ‘I thought so,’” Young recalled.

It took many years before they could laugh at certain aspects of the incident. Back then, the pain was acute. And China, fought over by its warlords, slid further into darkness.

In July 1928, the Chinese Nationalist Party completed its military campaign known as the Northern Expedition and toppled the incumbent warlord government. Koo, who had acted as foreign minister, finance minister and even interim premier and president under various warlords, was initially put on the “wanted” list but was later invited to work for the new government.

It was only three years before Japan’s incursion into the northeastern part of China known as Manchuria and nine years before the Chinese war against Japanese aggression officially broke out on July 7, 1937.

For most of World War II, Koo, who had appealed to the international community over the Japanese invasion, served as the Chinese ambassador to Britain. “His big job was to get help from the rest of the world for the Chinese position against Japan,” said Young, who recalls Koo arriving at Winston Churchill’s residence for a meeting in the afternoon, when the latter was “coming downstairs famously dressed in his pajamas”.

According to Young, at certain points during the many meetings they had throughout the war, Koo raised with the British prime minister the issue of Hong Kong, having gained support from President Roosevelt on it. “Churchill said something like ‘In principle I agree, but let’s wait until the end of the war’,” Young said.

Many years later, when Koo, having been long retired and living in New York, read in a local newspaper that a date was finally set for Hong Kong’s return to China, he carefully cut that piece out.

Throughout those warring decades, Koo had by his side “a strong and talented woman” – to use the words of Yuan the granddaughter – whom he married in 1921 and whom Yuan described as “a major contributor to my grandfather’s diplomatic career”.

Daughter of Oei Tiong Ham, a Chinese Malaysian businessman and arguably the wealthiest person in the Far East at the start of the 20th century, Oei Hui-lan (Huang Huilan) spoke six languages: English, French, German, Spanish, Chinese and Malay.

“Her linguistic abilities matched his,” said Yuan, referring to Koo’s mastery of English and French on top of his native Chinese. “She’s a modern diplomat’s wife who could not only entertain guests from different cultural backgrounds but also give speeches in a foreign country, on behalf of China to which she was just as committed.”

On June 26, 1945, while the bloody fighting of World War II was finally drawing to a close, Koo led an eight-person Chinese delegation at the signing of the United Nations Charter at the Herbst Theater in San Francisco.

“Wellington Koo was the first person to sign because alphabetically China was the first country. It was on the front page of the newspaper that people brought to me in the hospital ward,” recalled Young, who at the time was recovering from appendicitis, which she suffered shortly after her arrival in San Francisco from the Philippines, accompanied by her mother and two sisters.

Young’s father, Clarence Kuangson Young (Yang Guangsheng) had served as the Chinese consul general in Manila between 1938 and 1942, before his secret execution by the Japanese in April that year. Not knowing what had happened to her husband until the end of the war, Young’s mother, known at the time as Juliana Young, managed to take care of her own family – as well as those over-30 widows and children of the consulate staff who had come to share the three-bedroom bungalow house with her and her three young daughters – through the darkest days.

Looking back to that historic moment, Shirley Young calls “getting China on the UN Security Council” Koo’s “big, big long-term contribution, one that’s still very much relevant today”.

“When people see success, they don’t know what went on before: along the way China was continuously not invited to meetings, cut out of things, not given a seat,” she said.

One example was the Dumbarton Oaks Conference held in Washington DC, formally known as the Washington Conference on International Peace and Security Organization. It was at this conference that the United Nations was formulated and negotiated among international leaders. The fact that China was excluded from the main body of the conference led Koo, who was there representing China, to describe it as “a step backward” for his country.

With that in mind, it seemed highly unlikely if not illogical that China would be able to sign in as one of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council merely 10 months later, at the San Francisco Conference, or the United Nations Conference on International Organization. Young believed that’s where “diplomacy was evident”.

“All previous setbacks aside, Koo remained optimistic, and kept on working with America, England and France,” said Young, who called Koo “a great relationship person” whose friendship with President Roosevelt went back to the days when Roosevelt was an assistant secretary of the Navy in the Wilson administration and Koo himself the Chinese minister to Washington.

“He networked not just with Roosevelt, but a lot of people underneath — the secretary of state, the entire state department, etc. — to build good, trusting relationships,” said Young. “He showed people that he could help them get what they wanted. But in return, they needed to support what he had envisioned for China.”

Having done research into Koo’s life over the past three decades, Jin Guangyao from Shanghai’s Fudan University lauded Koo’s perseverance and foresightedness. (It’s worth noting that Juliana Young, who later married Koo, was among the first group of female students enrolled at the university, in the late 1920s.)

“Koo insisted that China send her own delegation to the Dumbarton Oaks Conference despite any possible sidelining during the event, with the clear goal of making China one of the ‘Big Four’ (The others were the US, UK and Soviet Union),” he said. “He did accomplish that, when China became one of the four signers for the papers issued by the end of the conference in regard to the founding of the UN. This effectively laid the basis for China’s future role at the international organization.

“But of course, an evaluation of Koo’s effort must be put into the bigger context of what was happening in the China theater of the war, where hard-won victories by the Chinese Army against fascist Japan had certainly served to greatly elevate the country’s international status,” he said.

The history professor saw a clear strategy consistently followed by Koo as a diplomat. “Allying with the United States against Japan — that was what Koo had formulated and championed in the ‘20s and ‘30s, before finally putting it into practice in the ‘40s during WWII,” Jin said. “Koo saw Japan as China’s biggest enemy as far back as 1915, when the former imposed on China its Twenty-One Demands aimed at establishing sole control over Chinese territory.

“And he believed that to ‘engage with the distant US ... would be sufficient to contain an approaching, menacing Japan’,” Jin continued, quoting Koo’s own words. “It’s fair to say that as a member of the US-educated elite, Wellington Koo played an important role in shaping US-China policy for more than two decades.”

In the years after World War II, Koo acted first as the Nationalist government’s ambassador to the US, and then after the founding of the People’s Republic of China on the Chinese mainland in 1949, continued to represent in Washington the government in Taiwan until his retirement in 1956. Also in that year, Koo divorced his third wife Oei Hui-lan.

For the three years between 1946 and 1949, when the Communists and the Nationalists fought the Chinese Civil War, Koo had been trying actively to draw American support for the latter, but to little avail, as the American confidence in Chiang Kai-shek and his government flagged.

On Oct 25, 1971, the United Nations General Assembly voted to admit the People’s Republic of China and to expel the Republic of China (Taiwan). The PRC therefore assumed Taiwan’s place in the General Assembly as well as its place as one of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council. On Jan 1, 1979, China and the US officially established diplomatic ties.

Reflecting on Koo’s political stance, Young, the stepdaughter, said that he was “China oriented instead of party oriented”. “I believe that his major concern during the civil war years was that China was being split up. And this is something he had spent his entire career preventing from happening,” she said. “Koo almost never talked about the historic events in his life,” said Young. “When we were together, it’s just really all family talk. But one thing he always said — I heard this many, many times — was that ‘wo shi yi ge wu dang wu pai zhong guo ren’, meaning ‘I’m a non-partisan Chinese.’

“If you looked at his record throughout the 1920s, he had never ever participated in those internecine battles of the warlords,” continued Young. “He never joined any of them but whoever seized power came back to him. He started to work for the Nationalist government around 1929, but was only compelled to join in 1941, when he was appointed the Chinese ambassador to Britain. Why? Because per usual diplomatic convention, the appointment of an ambassador required the approval of the British government, which thought it would be better for the Chinese government to appoint a Nationalist party member.”

In 1945, Koo was responsible for providing a list of candidates whom he would then lead to the San Francisco Conference. Among others, Koo recommended Tung Pi-wu (Dong Biwu), a veteran Communist. "I believed that there was no one line of political thought which could be absolutely right to the exclusion of others," he later said in the oral history project he did with Columbia University, his alma mater.

According to Young, Koo, who had never lived in Taiwan, was invited to return to Chinese mainland when Zhang Hanzhi, Mao Zedong's English teacher and a young diplomat, visited him in New York in 1972.

"Age, health and Grandma Juliana – that's the three main factors for him deciding not to go back," said Yuan, the granddaughter. "But he found a representative in my mother, who first went to the Chinese mainland with my father in 1972, a trip followed by others over the years. Every time she went, she went back to talk with Grandpa about what she saw."

Koo and Juliana Young, who had been working at the UN between 1946 and 1959, married in 1959, three years after Koo's divorce from Oei. The couple lived in The Hague between 1957-67, when Koo was elected a judge on the International Court of Justice, before retiring as its vice-president and moving permanently to New York.

Yuan credited "Grandma Juliana" for taking good care of her grandfather during the 17 years between 1959 and 1976, when Koo, working with 5 scholar interviewers, recorded 500 hours of spoken memoirs as a Columbia University oral history project.

"It was very intense, and everything was done in English," said Yuan, whose mother, Patricia Tsien, later started another gigantic project lasting for 13 years, to translate Koo's oral history into Chinese. The result was more than 6 million characters.

"After initially being contacted by someone from the Chinese mainland, my mother, with approval from my grandfather, worked with a big group of translators based in Beijing and the neighboring Tianjin city – there were about 34 of them in total," Yuan continued. "She went to China to meet every one of the group, who later wrote constantly to her asking all sort of questions like 'What is this person's Chinese name?' and 'Where was Mr. Koo exactly at this time?'"

"With oral history, there can be gaps, gaps that my mother worked very hard for many, many years to fill," said Yuan, a Harvard-educated anthropologist who herself helped with researching and fact-checking. "Let's not forget that this was in the late '70s and '80s, with China still being a very politically sensitive place. To push ahead with such a project required a lot of foresight from our partners on the mainland."

Along the way, pictures were collected and part of them eventually went to the memorial museum for Koo in the Jiading District of Shanghai, where he was born in 1888.

Tsien passed away in 2015, at age 97, pleased with the fact that her father was able to see the very first of the 13-volume translation before his own passing, also at the age of 97, in 1985.

Both Yuan and Young have become the torch bearers for Koo's legacy over the years.

After Koo's passing, Young, together with her mother, donated to the memorial museum the cases of books from his bedroom, books in which Koo "circled things".

"Koo kept everything, including a thank-you note I wrote him at age 11, after receiving a box of chocolates he sent to me," said Young. "All those records were given to Columbia and put into their Rare Book & Manuscript Library at the end of the oral history project.

"Four years ago, I brought Columbia and a number of Chinese institutions together, in an effort to digitalize the materials and make them available to researchers in China," said Young, who described Koo's marriage with her mother as "one of great affection and devotion" and Koo himself as "fun-loving".

"He took up skiing in his early 70s, got himself on the Time magazine page before getting my mother to ski with him. And that was before he accidentally fell off and hurt his shoulder while we skied in Austria. He was trying to show off to my mother," recalled Young, laughing. On the day of the interview, she was wearing a seal-shaped jadeite given to her mother by Koo as a gift.

"Every night, my mother would put a glass of Ovaltine, which is a chocolate milk drink, outside his room, in the hallway. And then the next morning, she would check to make sure that he had drunk it — he would usually get up at around midnight after he went to bed."

V. K. Wellington Koo died peacefully on Nov 14, 1985, and was buried at the Ferncliff Cemetery and Mausoleum in Hartsdale, New York. There was a diary entry that day in the morning. It says, "A quiet day."

Juliana Young Koo, as she signed her name on the cover of her autobiography *109 Springtimes — My Story*, published in 2015, passed away in 2017, at the age of 111.

Oei Hui-lan, known by her friends as Madam Koo, died in 1992 at the age of 100. Her autobiography, published in the 70s, is titled *No Feast Lasts Forever*.

"Everything looked so sad to me — the color of the sky, the shade of the trees and the deserted streets. I thought the day must remain in the history of China as the day of sorrow," he wrote in his diary.

Young, who organized a memorial concert for Koo at New York's Carnegie Hall last year, understands all that.

"If he died in his 60s or 70s, he might have felt a sense of failure. But he lived a long life, which allowed him to take great comfort in the fact that China was finally on its way to become a major world power. Koo was a true globalist with a distinct vision for China in the global community," said Young.

Appearing at the memorial concert in New York, Chinese Consul General Huang Ping called Koo's achievements "difficult for us to reach". "These books (his 13-volume oral history) are must-reads for Chinese diplomats," he said.

Huang's words were echoed by Max Baucus, the former US ambassador to China, when the latter, attending the opening of Koo's redesigned memorial museum in December 2018, pulled out his mobile to take a picture of a Koo quote printed on the wall.

"In foreign affairs, one should aim for 51 percent of his goals and should be quite happy with 60 percent or more," the quote goes.

Yet the materialization of that humble 51 percent demands a 100 percent input, as Koo's career has demonstrated.

Back in the late 1890s, Koo was passing a bridge over the Huangpu River in Shanghai when he saw a plump Englishman whipped a rickshaw puller, despite all the difficulty the Chinese was having pulling the cart up slope against the wind.

At a time and a place where, to use Young's words, "foreigners were king", the teenage boy stood in the wind on the sidewalk and shouted to the man what must be the biggest insult he could possibly thought about — "Are you a gentleman?"

"It was too much for a boy of that age to understand political reforms, but I could feel that something was wrong and needed to be corrected," wrote Koo, who years later would argue on a world stage for China to take back the concessions and abolish all unequal treaties. "I made up my mind to be a diplomat."



*剪掉辮子後，年輕的顧維鈞（左一）穿著西裝與身著傳統服飾的父親和兄長合影。
Having cut his queue braid, the young Wellington Koo (first left) in western suit had picture taken with his traditionally dressed father and elder brothers.*

V. K. Wellington Koo

and the History of an International Attaché

by Debra Schmidt Bach, curator of decorative arts and special exhibitions

19 May 2022



In celebration of Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month, the New-York Historical Society is proud to present a remarkable recent gift---a gentleman's traveling dressing case owned by Dr. V. K. Wellington Koo, an esteemed statesman, diplomat, and a judge of the International Court of Justice in The Hague, whose long and distinguished career shaped modern China and U.S.-China relations.

Vi-Kyuin Wellington Koo (1888–1985) was born near Shanghai and educated there before attending Columbia University. After completing a Ph.D. in international law and diplomacy, Koo returned to China in 1912 to become secretary to Yuan Shikai, the first president of the newly formed Republic of China after the fall of the Qing dynasty (1636–1912) that ended 2,000 years of imperial rule. Koo was only 24 years old.

Koo advanced China's interests in a succession of diplomatic roles, most notably for leading China's delegation to the 1919 Paris Peace Conference and refusing to sign the Treaty of Versailles to cede control of Chinese territories to Western and Japanese demands. Koo's act of defiance against imperialist powers spurred thousands of Chinese students to

demonstrate in front of the Tiananmen Square, which led to a nationalist political and cultural movement known in Chinese history as the May Fourth Movement. In the 1920s, Koo served as the Republic of China's acting president and acting prime minister.

Koo participated in nearly every significant international event of the mid-20th century. A representative to the League of Nations, he was a founding delegate to the United Nations and the first member to sign the U.N. Charter in 1945. An exceptionally accomplished ambassador, he served as China's representative to France (1936–40), Great Britain (1941–46), and the U.S. (1946–56) before being appointed as a judge to the International Court of Justice at The Hague, at which he later served as vice president. Retiring in 1967, Koo settled permanently in Manhattan, where he died in 1985 at the age of 97.

Koo donated his extensive papers to Columbia University in 1976. This remarkable collection includes over 300 boxes (120 linear feet) of official correspondence, diaries, notes, meeting minutes, speeches, photographs, video and audio files, and memorabilia. Together, this vast archive documents the history of modern China and U.S.–China relations, as well as 20th-century world affairs and many of the most influential leaders of the period. Reading through the voluminous finding aid is akin to traveling back in time to sit in on meetings with Chiang Kai-shek, Winston Churchill, Dwight D. Eisenhower, Andrei Gromyko, or Richard Nixon. (A finding aid can be found [here](#).) Koo, himself, also used the papers as references during a series of in depth oral history interviews conducted by Columbia's Rare Book and Manuscript Library for its Oral History Archives.

New-York Historical Society curators interpret objects like this dressing case by analyzing them as three-dimensional documents of American life. So, how does the dressing case add to our knowledge about Koo and his incomparable career? Koo traveled extensively throughout his life to all corners of the globe, beginning during a time when international air travel was not yet an option. He probably acquired this dressing case in 1919 before attending the Paris Peace Conference. As a young diplomat, he took advantage of the latest transportation technologies of the day. Whether voyaging by steamship, railway, or automobile he was likely accompanied by this well-traveled dressing case.

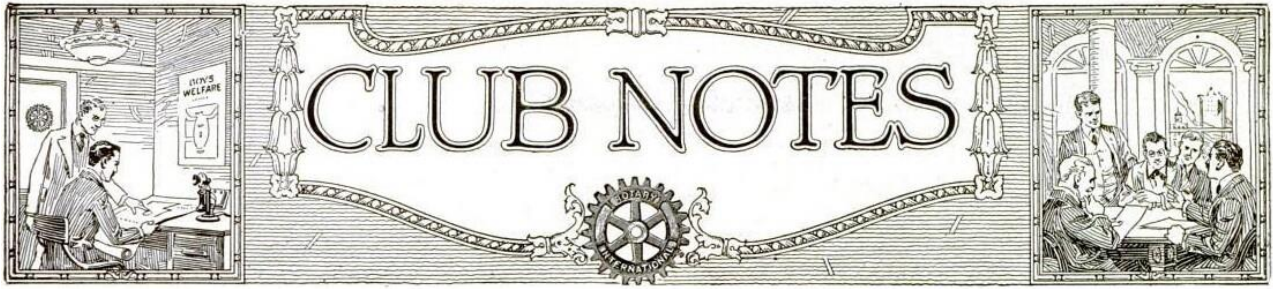
Gentleman's traveling dressing cases evolved with the advent of transportation technology and the development of railroads, steamships, and automobiles. Early 20th-century travelers required portable but strong luggage for hand carrying. Luxury leather manufacturers like Finnigans Ltd., the maker of this case, responded to the needs of wealthy, increasingly mobile travelers by offering lighter weight, handmade dressing cases with flat sides for easy stacking, covered in a variety of leathers, skins, or exotic woods. Like this example, each case's well-appointed interior contained an ever-growing selection of bottles and jars, shaving and grooming accessories, and writing implements that could be easily carried or transported. Often made of steel, brass, silver, or sometimes ivory, the interior accessories were an important part of the craftsmanship of these portable dressing rooms.

International travel was complicated during the early 1900s. Long journeys by ocean liner, train, and car required passengers to pack clothing, toiletries, and other necessities for trips that took days or weeks over sea and land. This dressing case---essentially a dapper gentleman's portable dressing chamber---is outfitted with 31 accessories kept handy during long journeys: silver boot jacks and a combination shoe horn and button hook, a standing travel clock and barometer, ample storage boxes for jewelry, razors, and other small items, a shaving mirror, liquor flask, clothing and shoe brushes, folding travel cup, and a wallet with ivory-handled grooming tools. The case is also equipped with a removable canvas cover used as protection when it was loaded into or transported from baggage holds. Stenciled "S[pecial] E.[nvoy] Dr. W Koo," the cover protected the case's luxurious crocodile exterior.

A significant addition to New-York Historical's Museum collection, the case is a key document that brings a prominent 20th-century's statesman to life. More importantly, it is a vivid reminder of the significant contributions of the Chinese diaspora to the growth and development of the United States.



1919 年顧維鈞博士的男士梳妝箱內部，附旅行箱套及配件，使用貴重材料製造：
鱷魚皮、皮革、黃銅、其他金屬；純銀、鍍金、黃銅、不銹鋼、玻璃、軟木、馬鬃、象牙、天鵝絨。
1919 -- The interior of Dr. V. K. Wellington Koo's dressing case with travel cover and accessories---
,. Made by precious materials: crocodile skin, leather, brass, other metals;
sterling silver, gilding, brass, stainless steel, glass, cork, horsehair, ivory, velvet.



KANKAKEE, ILLINOIS.—Len Small, a Kankakee Rotarian, was elected Governor of Illinois in the recent Republican landslide. This makes two Rotarian Governors of the 12th district,—Jack Fisher of Rock Island and Len Small of Kankakee.

JACKSON, TENNESSEE.—The Rotary Club, is to be congratulated on the exquisite program gotten out for Ladies Night, November 23rd. The book was published in green on marble de luxe paper stock. The anthem for the evening was printed on the first page and was—
 "Ladies: Our arms your defense;
 Your arms our recompense:
 Fall in!"

LONDON, ENGLAND.—Dr. V. K. Wellington Koo, newly appointed Chinese Ambassador to the Court of St. James and formerly Chinese Minister to the United States, is an honorary member of the Rotary Club of Shanghai, China. Dr. Koo, altho his country's representative at the world's most important court, is only 35 years old. He is a graduate of Columbia University, New York, and was head of the Chinese delegation to the Peace Conference. In conjunction with another Chinese Rotarian, C. T. Wang, also a member of the Shanghai Club, Koo fought strenuously thru-out the Peace Conference for China's interest in Shantung and thereby won the undying regard of his countrymen. Dr. Koo's wife, who died recently, was a daughter of the present President of China, Hsu Shih Chang.

PORTSMOUTH, ENGLAND.—Profit-sharing and labour co-partnership are subjects considered by this club as of great importance, and in view of this fact, addresses have been given on the subject by George W. Paton, Managing Director of Messrs. Bryant & May, Ltd., and by Theodore C. Taylor, Chairman of Messrs. J. T. & J. Taylor, Ltd. Secretary Smith arranged a tour for Mr. Taylor which included all the clubs in the south of England. The President, Rotarian W. H. Porter, has had a most successful year and the club has made great strides.

BUTTE, MONTANA.—In conjunction with the American Legion, the Butte Rotary Club thru its Galen Entertainment Committee, has instituted a series of entertainments for the inmates of the Galen or Montana State Tuberculosis Hospital lo-

cated at Galen, Montana. Working with them is the Bagdad Patrol. Some of the inmates at the hospital were boys that were gassed in the war and some of them

Rotarian Diplomat



Dr. V. K. Wellington Koo, Shanghai Rotarian, formerly Chinese Minister at Washington, now representing his Country at the Court of St. James

have become tubercular thru work in the mines. These entertainments are being given every other Wednesday night. The program consists of quartet singing, young women entertainers, comedians in monolog, comedy films and some eats and smokes. The entertainment for Wednesday, November the 24th, the night before Thanksgiving, was given entirely by Rotarian Marx of the Louis S. Cohn Company, who asked to be allowed to foot all the expenses on that occasion.

CHATTANOOGA, TENNESSEE.—The Rotary Club produced its Fourth Charity Benefit, *A Prince There Was* at the Bijou Theatre, Wednesday and Thursday nights, December 15th and 16th, with a Thursday matinee. This was the first presentation of George M. Cohan's Broadway success in Chattanooga. The play was dramatized by Cohan from Darragh Aldrich's story, *Enchanted Hearts*.

VIRGINIA, MINNESOTA.—William J. West, chairman of the Boys Work Committee for the 15th Rotary District, reports that the Virginia Rotary Club's Boys Work Department has now completed payment of \$2,300.00 for the purchase of 43½ acres of land which will be deeded to the Boys of Virginia. The tract is located on a beautiful lake near the city. The boys of the 1921 class of the Virginia High School assisted by selling shares of stock in the Boys of Virginia Corporation at \$1.00 a share. Plans are now going forward under the direction of Billy West for the erection of an Administration Building on the tract. The building will be donated by the Rotary Club when completed. A site for a County Hospital has been obtained thru the untiring efforts of Jack Hultquist, Chairman of the Public Affairs Committee, with some outside co-operation. The site was donated by the Village of Gilbert and at the meeting of the County Commissioners of St. Louis County a promise was made to erect a building. Proper legislation and the use of state funds will be secured.

A big deer hunt under the direction of Carl Shapiro, the lariat artist, and several other Virginia Rotarians is now in progress at the Duluth Rotary Club's Jungle Lodge on the White Face River. The lodge is owned by E. J. Filiatrault, past President of the Duluth Club.

CHAMPAIGN, ILLINOIS.—The seventy members of the Champaign Rotary Club went over to Danville recently to visit their Rotarian neighbors and were received with a brass band at the train. Senator McKinley who is a member of the Champaign Rotary Club donated his private car for the use of the Rotarians in their travelling.

ATLANTIC CITY, NEW JERSEY.—Among the Rotarians at the recent Convention of Hardware Jobbers and Manufacturers held here in the interest of the National Hardware Association were A. H. Decatur, President of the Rotary Club of Boston and W. D. Biggers, past President of the Rotary Club of Detroit.

The Rotary Club recently entertained the entire membership of the Kiwanis Club at the Alamac Hotel on the Boardwalk. Both President Godfrey and President William S. Emley of the Kiwanians were roundly applauded.

BLOOMINGTON, ILLINOIS.—President-elect





1917年 -- 美國哥倫比亞大學授予顧維鈞公使榮譽法學博士學位。

1917 -- Dr. V. K. Wellington Koo, Chinese Minister to America, was conferred Doctor of Laws honoris causa by Columbia University. On his left was Professor John Bassett Moore of the University.



出席1921-22年華盛頓會議（右起）中華民國駐英國公使顧維鈞、顧夫人黃蕙蘭、大理院院長王寵惠

Attending the 1921-22 Washington Conference (from right)

Chinese Minister to Great Britain V. K. Wellington Koo, Madame Koo, Justice Minister Wang Ch'ung-Hui



1932年10月13日 -- 法國總統勒布倫（左 2）在愛麗舍宮接見中華民國駐法國大使顧維鈞。
13 October 1932 – French President Lebrun (left 2) receiving at The Elysee
the Chinese Ambassador to France V. K. Wellington Koo. (Getty Images)



1936年—中華民國駐法國大使顧維鈞坐在巴黎中國大使館的冬日花園。
1936 – V. K. Wellington Koo, Chinese Ambassador to France,
seated in the winter garden of the Chinese Embassy in Paris. (Getty Images)



1939年3月12日－中華民國大使顧維鈞（前中）在梵蒂岡接受教宗庇護十二世授勳後，加入了合照。
12 March 1939 – Chinese Ambassador V. K. Wellington Koo (front centre) joined the group photo after receiving decoration by Pope Pius XII at the Vatican.



1944年8月28日－中華民國首席代表顧維鈞與美國國務卿斯泰蒂努斯（中）
在華盛頓特區參加敦巴頓橡樹園會議。

28 August 1944 – China's Chief Delegate V. K. Wellington Koo with U.S. Secretary of State Edward Stettinus (centre) at Washington D.C. to attend the Dumbarton Oaks Conference.



1944 年 -- 顧維鈞大使迎迓瑪麗王太后訪問中華民國駐英國大使館。
1944 – Ambassador V. K. Wellington Koo welcomed Queen Mother Mary
to the Republic of China Embassy in Great Britain.



1945 年—美國總統杜魯門（左）、顧維鈞博士（中）和副國務卿格魯（右）在美國白宮橢圓形辦公室。
1945 -- U.S. President Harry S. Truman (L), Dr. V. K. Wellington Koo (C)
and Under Secretary Joseph C. Grew (R) in the Oval Office, White House, U.S.A.



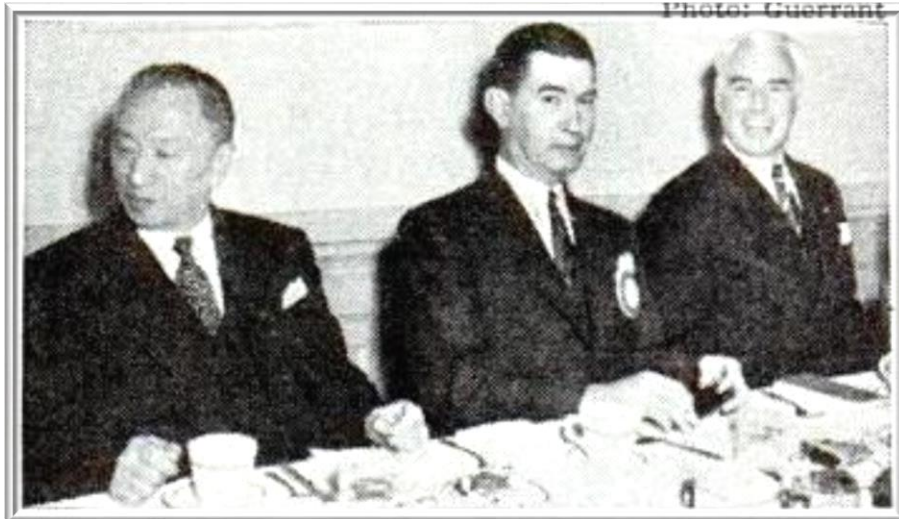
1945年5月8日--美國舊金山歌劇院，在播送歐洲戰爭勝利日廣播後，戰勝國五強的四大代表合照。（左起）中華民國駐美國大使顧維鈞、英國外交大臣安東尼伊甸、美國國務卿斯特蒂紐斯、法國外交部長喬治皮杜爾。

8 May 1945 -- Representatives of four of the Big Five pose for photograph after broadcasting V-E day statements from San Francisco's opera House. (from left) V. K. Wellington Koo, Chinese Ambassador to U.S.A., Foreign Secretary Antony Eden of Great Britain, U.S. Secretary of State Edward R. Stettinius, Jr., and Georges Bidault, Foreign Minister of France. (AP Photo)



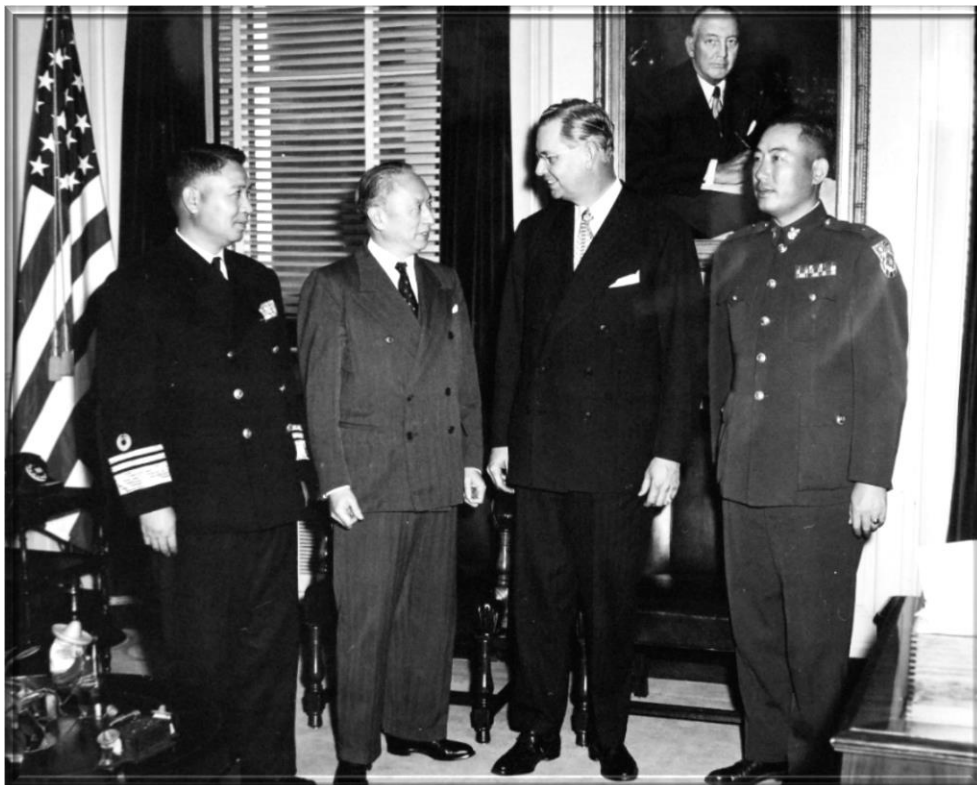
1946年11月--中華民國駐美國大使顧維鈞，代表中華民國總統授予美國空軍元帥阿諾德特種大綬雲麾勳章，旁觀者中華民國陸軍總司令何應欽、中華民國空軍總司令毛邦初。

November 1946 -- Ambassador V. K. Wellington Koo, on behalf of The President of the Republic of China, conferred U.S. Air Force General Henry Harley Arnold the Order of Resplendent Banner with Special Grand Cordon. Side looking were Chinese Army Commander-in-Chief Ho Ying-Chin, and Chinese Air Force Commander-in-Chief Mao Bang-Chu.



1947年—中華民國駐美國大使顧維鈞博士（左）和美國前國務卿斯特蒂紐斯（右）應邀訪問了堪薩斯州章克申城扶輪社。與他們合照的是1946-47年度社長甘迺迪。

1947 – Republic of China’s Ambassador to U.S.A., Dr. V. K. Wellington Koo (left), and Edward R. Stettinius, Jr. (right), Former U.S. Secretary of State, were guests of the Rotary Club of Junction City, Kansas. With them is William S. Kennedy, the 1946-47 Club President.



1953年—中華民國（臺灣）駐美國大使顧維鈞（左二）在華盛頓特區。
1953 – V. K. Wellington Koo (second from left) in Washington, DC, as Republic of China (Taiwan) Ambassador to the United States.



1953年9月30日華盛頓特區—美國總統艾森豪威爾原著的《歐洲遠征》中文版昨天在白宮舉行呈獻儀式，正在翻閱該書（左至右）：艾森豪威爾總統；中華民國駐美國大使顧維鈞博士；蔣中正總統之子蔣經國中將。
30 September 1953 Washington, DC -- A Chinese edition of the 《Crusade in Europe》, which was authored by U.S. President Eisenhower, was presented to him yesterday at a White House ceremony. Looking at the book are (L-R): President Eisenhower; Dr. V.K. Wellington Koo, Ambassador of China; and Lt. General Chiang Ching-Kuo, son of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-Shek.



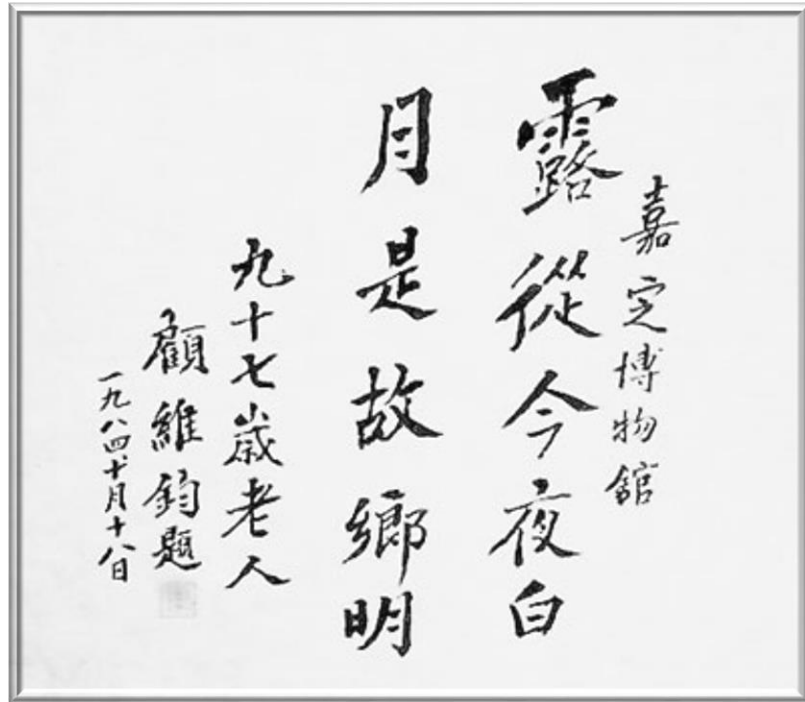
1963年10月2日—哥倫比亞大學中國口述歷史項目，（由左至右）圖書館館長洛格斯登、歷史學家韋慕庭、顧維鈞、歷史學家唐德剛、歷史學家曹開復。
2 October 1963 -- Chinese Oral History Project, Columbia University, (left to right) Director of Libraries Richard H. Logsdon, Historian C. Wilbur Martin, V. K. Wellington Koo, Historian T. K. Tong, Historian Kai-Fu Tsao.



1961年5月1日--荷蘭，海牙，國際法庭的法官合照--顧維鈞（二排左一）

1 May 1961 -- The Hague, The Netherlands,

Group photo of the judges of the International Court of Justice -- V.K. Wellington Koo (second row left 1)



2013年9月2日--顧維鈞博士的雕像在上海嘉定博物館(顧維鈞舊宅)落成。

2 September 2013 -- Dr. V. K. Wellington Koo Statue was erected
at Jiading Museum (Koo's former residence), Shanghai.

上海扶輪社員顧維鈞博士 -- 中國外交第一人



顧維鈞博士 (Dr. Vi Kyuin Wellington Koo, *HonLLD (St. John's), HonLLD (Columbia), PhD (Columbia), MA (Columbia), BA (Columbia)*)(1887-1985)，中華民國上海扶輪社 (Shanghai Rotary Club) 榮譽社員，是英文《扶輪》雜誌報道的首批華人扶輪社員之一。1921 年 1 月號，第 25 頁：「英國倫敦—新任中國駐聖詹姆斯宮大使、前中國駐美國公使顧維鈞博士是上海扶輪社的榮譽社員。雖是中國在世界上最重要的宮廷的代表，顧博士卻年僅 35 歲。他畢業於紐約哥倫比亞大學，曾擔任中國代表團團長出席巴黎和會。」(原文參見第 28 頁)

1922 年 3 月號第 104 頁：「顧維鈞博士，上海扶輪社社員，華盛頓會議中國代表之一。」第 152 頁：「正如您可能知道的，來自中國的代表之一顧維鈞先生是上海扶輪社的社員。顧先生堪稱受過高等教育、文化修養極高的中國人的典範。他年僅三十多歲，已在華盛頓擔任過外交代表，目前是駐聖詹姆斯宮大使。」

1924 年 2 月號第 12 頁還刊登了以下內容：「顧維鈞博士—外交總長，曾任駐美國和駐英國大使。在總統和總理均缺席的情況下，扶輪社員顧維鈞是中國北京政府的最高官員，面向著幾乎前所未有的難題。」

顧維鈞是一位中國外交家和政治家，在國內動盪和外國侵略的背景下，他為提升中華民國在國際舞台上的地位做出了卓越貢獻。他先後就讀於上海聖約翰大學和美國哥倫比亞大學，並在哥倫比亞大學獲得博士學位。1912 年，顧維鈞進入政府部門工作，並在外交部迅速晉升。1919 年巴黎和會上，顧維鈞帶頭反對將原德意志邦聯和帝國在山東省的租界割讓給日本帝國。他指出山東是孔子的故鄉，對中國具有重要的文化和歷史意義，這促使中國史無前例地拒絕簽署《凡爾賽條約》。顧維鈞代表中國參與了國際聯盟的組建，曾任駐美國、法國和英國大使，並在 1926 年至 1927 年北京政府動盪時期擔任國務總理、代總統。在整個 1930 年代和第二次世界大戰期間，他援引國際法挑戰日本的擴張主義和不平等條約，並於 1945 年成為中華民國在《聯合國憲章》上的首位簽署代表 (圖見第 2 頁)。他的職業生涯在 1957 年至 1967 年擔任國際法院法官期間達到頂峰，經歷了從五四運動到冷戰時期的危機。



國史教育中心(香港)

文景

歷史人物簡介——顧維鈞

顧維鈞 (1888~1985)

顧維鈞，字少川，英文名 V.K. Wellington Koo，江蘇嘉定人。1888 年 1 月 29 日(清光緒十三年十二月十七日)生於上海。父顧溶，字晴川，曾任大清銀行總裁。

顧維鈞自幼讀私塾，十一歲入上海英華書院。1901 年考入聖約翰書院，三年間修完了四年的課程，還擔任學生會創辦的《龍》報文學編輯。1904 年自費旅美，在紐約州伊薩卡市的庫克學院讀大學預科。一年後考入哥倫比亞大學普通文科，後攻讀政治學研究生。1909 年獲碩士學位，1912 年獲哲學博士學位，哥倫比亞大學出版社出版了他的博士論文《外國對中國政府的權利要求》。顧維鈞在校期間非常活躍，是語言社、學生辯論團的成員，並獲得語言文學獎金和哥倫比亞、康奈爾辯論獎。他還擔任《哥倫比亞每日旁觀者》編輯和總編、《哥倫比亞月刊》的業務經理和《哥倫比亞人》年鑒經辦人。在中國留學生中也頗有影響，曾擔任全美中國同學會會長，主編過《中國學生月刊》和《中國學生年刊》。

1912 年 3 月，袁世凱任臨時大總統，唐紹儀為內閣總理。早在 1908 年唐紹儀任清朝特使出使美國時，就認識了顧維鈞，當時在一次會上，顧作為受邀的中國留學生代表發言，給唐紹儀留下深刻的印象。顧維鈞在博士論文尚未完成之時，即被唐紹儀推薦，回國就任總統府和國務院的英文秘書。唐紹儀因善後借款及任命王芝祥等事，與袁世凱產生矛盾，於 6 月 16 日辭職。顧維鈞也隨之辭去兩秘書職務，去上海同唐紹儀三女唐梅結婚。不久，顧開始在外交部工作，10 月升任外交部參事。

1915 年 7 月，顧維鈞被任命為駐墨西哥公使，未到任即調往華盛頓，任駐美兼駐古巴公使，開始了他半個世紀的職業外交官生涯。在美國任職期間，顧維鈞還不滿三十歲，因他儀錶堂堂，善於辭令，頗受美國總統威爾遜及各國駐美使團人員賞識。為肯定他的外交才幹，1916 年授予他耶魯大學名譽法學博士學位。1917 年美國參加第一次世界大戰協約國陣營，策動中國亦加入協約國一方。顧維鈞認為這將有利於提高中國的國際地位，便積極活動並密電北京政府敦促參戰。

1918 年 11 月第一次世界大戰結束。顧維鈞因妻子唐梅患流感在華盛頓去世，先於 10 月請假回國。北京政府隨即派他出席 1919 年 1 月召開的巴黎和會。他因喪妻原擬請辭，但

國史教育中心(香港)

文景

歷史人物簡介——顧維鈞

為爭取國家權益毅然赴任。因團長陸徵祥身患重病，顧維鈞實際上負責主要工作，並被推選為發言人。北京政府忌諱觸犯列強，沒有準備在這次和會上提出山東問題。但國內知識界對和會寄予希望，期望爭得在國際上的平等地位。顧維鈞以這種愛國熱潮為後盾，在1月28日的會議上與日方代表牧野展開了關於山東問題的舌戰，慷慨陳詞，據理力爭，反對日本繼承德國在山東的權利，認為青島、膠州租界地、膠濟鐵路及其附屬財產，都應交還中國。顧維鈞的論點在會上引起廣泛同情，而日本代表的強詞奪理卻受到普遍的譴責。但是，操縱和會的“三巨頭”美國總統威爾遜、法國總理克雷孟梭、英國首相勞合·喬治為了平衡列強之間的利益，對山東問題竟然作出了違反公理的決定，在凡爾賽和約上規定德國在山東的權利轉讓給日本。消息傳到中國後，人民群眾義憤填膺，從而引發了反帝反封建的五四運動。北京政府不顧人民的反對，大總統徐世昌於6月23日電諭中國代表團在和約上簽字。顧維鈞與陸徵祥商議決定，斷然不顧政府訓令，拒絕在和約上簽字。在巴黎和會上顧維鈞脫穎而出，被譽為“青年外交家”，受到許多國家首腦及代表的敬重和欽佩。

巴黎和會決定發起成立國際聯盟，顧維鈞當選為五國代表之一，參與擬訂國際聯盟公約。與此同時，他改任駐英國公使。1920年11月14日，國聯第一次大會在日內瓦召開，顧作為中國首席代表出席該會。就在前一天，他與印尼華僑、新加坡“糖業大王”黃仲涵之次女黃惠蘭結婚。自此，這對夫婦開始了在外交場合多彩而顯赫的社交生活。在國聯大會上，顧維鈞以其外交和政治的廣闊博識，闡述了按地區出代表的原則。從此這條原則被所有國際組織公認，也使中國選入了國聯理事會，顧成為理事會第一名中國代表，並當選為非常任理事。1921年他當選為第十四屆理事會主席。

1922年5月顧維鈞奉召回國，至1928年一直在國內任職。1922年4月第一次直奉戰爭後，以美英為依附的直系控制北京政權，內閣幾經更迭。顧維鈞不屬於任何黨派和軍事集團，但他在外交上是親美派人物，因此於1922年8月開始被直系任命為外交總長。其後，在頻繁更換內閣人選的“閣潮”中，由於顧維鈞亦學亦仕的職業外交家身份，及他個人與直、奉兩系軍閥首領均無衝突的和善關係，使他一直得以在內閣任職。除1924年10月至1926年4月段祺瑞執政一年半的間斷外，他在八屆內閣中擔任外長，其中兩屆由他本人組閣，出任總理，還兩度出任財長。

國史教育中心(香港)

文景

歷史人物簡介——顧維鈞

這一階段，顧維鈞的主要外交活動是與蘇聯談判並建立外交關係。1922年8月，蘇俄派遣特使全權代表越飛來中國。顧維鈞主張以1919年和1920年蘇俄政府宣佈廢除沙俄與中國的不平等條約為基礎，進行中蘇談判，並締結新邦交，蘇俄對此沒有異議。顧維鈞要求在談判前蘇俄紅軍撤出外蒙，並認為1919年蘇俄宣言宣佈放棄中東鐵路的權利，因此東北的中東鐵路應無條件歸還中國。但越飛聲明他沒有承擔履行1919年和1920年宣言的任務，並對中東鐵路的中蘇共同管理辦法表示反對。雙方意見一時難以統一。1923年9月，蘇聯派加拉罕來華，擔任恢復兩國外交關係的全權代表。顧維鈞任命王正廷為中蘇交涉督辦，全權處理中蘇建交談判。但王正廷處事不力，被顧解職，由外交部直接處理對蘇交涉事宜。當時各界人士不清楚內情，使顧受到來自各方面的極大壓力，甚至家中發生一起爆炸事件。但他堅持最初的原則，迫使蘇聯方面做了讓步，於1924年5月31日正式簽署了“中蘇協定”。這個協定廢除了帝俄時代與中國簽訂的一切不平等條約，取消了治外法權和領事裁判權，取消了租界地和庚子賠款，取消了中東鐵路除商務外的一切特權等等，是鴉片戰爭以來我國外交史上第一個平等協定。

1924年10月，馮玉祥在北京發動政變，囚禁總統曹錕，解散了內閣。在顏惠慶內閣任外長的顧維鈞離開北京，在天津小住，不久即去上海。

1926年初，在日、英帝國主義策劃下，張作霖與吳佩孚以“反赤”為共同目標，將馮玉祥逐出北京，不久段祺瑞的執政府也垮臺。北京政府自此不再有“總統”、“執政”，而以內閣總理“攝政”。5月，原顏惠慶內閣在吳佩孚慫恿和支持下復職，引退一年半的顧維鈞也在吳佩孚勸說下出任財政總長。顏閣因奉張的反對而很快倒臺，7月由杜錫珪組閣，顧維鈞留任原職。10月，顧維鈞在奉張的延請下繼杜錫珪任代理國務總理“攝政”，並兼外長。1927年6月，張作霖另組軍政府，由潘復組閣，顧維鈞遂退隱於北京西山，但仍常接受張作霖諮詢。

1928年6月，蔣介石與閻錫山、馮玉祥、李宗仁共同北伐的大軍即將進佔北京時，張作霖等撤往關外，顧維鈞專程送他們到天津。國民政府因顧維鈞支援奉張，又歷任北京政府要職而下令通緝。顧於年底出國去歐洲，後去加拿大旅行。1929年冬應張學良邀請回國到達瀋陽，任張的高級顧問。張學良請求蔣介石取消對顧維鈞的通緝，蔣准張所請，並派張群、方本仁等向顧解釋。1931年夏，顧維鈞曾勸告張學良注意對日政策，並提示他要小心

國史教育中心(香港)

文
景

歷史人物簡介——顧維鈞

日本對東三省的垂涎，但沒有引起張學良的重視。不久“九一八”事變爆發，張學良奉行蔣介石的不抵抗政策，以待國聯公理之判斷。蔣介石對日本採取妥協讓步的誤國政策，急需外交人才為其效勞，特派飛機接顧維鈞去南京。從此，顧維鈞轉入國民政府任職，先任特種外交委員會秘書長，專事應付對日本交涉；11月繼王正廷、施肇基為外交部長。時日軍又逼向錦州，國民政府一味依賴國聯，顧維鈞電令駐日內瓦代表施肇基向國聯提出：劃錦州為中立區，以中國駐軍退入山海關為條件，希望日軍不要繼續進逼。這個劃錦州為“緩衝區”的方案於27日公佈後，遭到全國人民的強烈反對，12月初，南北各地學生紛紛赴外交部質問，顧維鈞於12月21日辭去外交部長職。

1932年1月，國聯組織“李頓調查團”調查中日爭端，顧維鈞代表中國參加該調查團。顧維鈞不顧日本方面的威脅，堅持至東北調查，向調查團提出了揭露日本侵略行徑的長篇備忘錄，並在10月的國聯理事會上，堅持中國立場。

顧維鈞於1932年8月被任命為駐法公使，但在1936年前幾乎未去巴黎履職，一直忙於參加各種國際會議。

1937年7月，日本發動對華全面侵略戰。顧維鈞在歐洲及國聯頻繁活動，但終因綏靖空氣籠罩西方，國聯事實上已經失去作用，顧的一再努力沒有獲得具體成果。

中國希望西方國家用武力制裁日本的幻想破滅後，轉向努力爭取列強給予物資援助。1938年7月，美國財政部長莫根索(Henry Morgenthau, Jr.)訪問巴黎，顧維鈞與之長談經濟援華問題，得知美方願與上海商業儲蓄銀行董事長陳光甫洽談。顧將此意電達國內，以後果然使中國政府獲益。1939年—1941年間，美國對華借款一億二千萬美元，信用貸款五億美元。駐法期間，他極力謀求法國援華，經多次商談，法國同意開放滇越鐵路，使國外援助物資得以源源流入。

1941年5月顧維鈞調任駐英大使。同年10月，顧回國與蔣介石商討對英外交方針，他主張先簽約廢除治外法權，其他雙邊問題留待日後計議。他的建議得到採納，1943年1月11日，中國與美、英兩國分別在華盛頓和重慶正式簽訂“取消治外法權並處理有關問題之條約”，繼蘇聯之後開其他各國相繼放棄對華治外法權之先河。

國史教育中心(香港)

文景

歷史人物簡介——顧維鈞

1944年秋，中、美、英、蘇四國在華盛頓敦巴頓橡樹園舉行商討創立聯合國的會議，顧維鈞以中國首席代表身份參加該會。1945年4月25日，聯合國制憲會議在三藩市召開，顧維鈞是中國代表團第二代表，並任大會區域辦法審查委員會報告員。6月10日，宋子文回國，顧任代理首席代表，在6月25日制憲會議第九次大會上，他代表中國第一個簽署《聯合國憲章》。1946年1月，顧維鈞率領中國代表團出席在倫敦召開的聯合國大會第一屆會議。

1945年抗戰勝利。次年6月，顧維鈞調任駐美大使，兼任中國駐聯合國代表團團長。此時，以蔣介石為首的國民政府發動了內戰，顧維鈞的外交活動也大多是為爭取美援而奔波。1948年間，顧為國民政府要求美國三年內提供三十億美援進行了一系列努力。1949年1月，顧爭取美國出面調處國共兩黨和平解決內戰，但其努力毫無結果。中華人民共和國成立後，顧維鈞繼續留任臺灣當局的“駐美大使”，為保住臺灣當局的席位而奔走，並繼續為臺灣爭取美援。1954年12月，顧維鈞協同臺灣“外交部長”葉公超與美國國務卿杜勒斯簽訂“中美共同防禦條約”，求得美國幫助蔣介石當局維護對臺灣、金門、馬祖及澎湖列島的統治。

1956年3月，年近七十的顧維鈞打算退休，回臺灣請求辭職。5月，被任命為蔣介石的駐美高級諮議，即赴紐約定居，他與黃蕙蘭協議離婚，不久和嚴幼韻結婚。

1956年6月，海牙國際法庭法官徐謨病逝，顧維鈞於1957年1月被聯合國安理會選舉繼徐謨任期。10月顧再度當選，連任九年，其中後四年任國際法庭副庭長。1967年2月5日任滿退休，獲終身國際法官的榮譽稱號。此後複定居於紐約。

顧維鈞自1912年起，一生從事外交政治活動超過半個世紀，在民國外交史上地位卓著，在西方外交界享有聲譽。他曾先後被美國哥倫比亞大學、伯明罕大學、曼徹斯特大學等許多大學授予名譽博士學位；還獲得許多國家授予的各種榮譽勳章。

顧維鈞多年養成寫日記的習慣；另外凡是接見或拜會外國政界要人後，他一定馬上把交談內容說給打字員記錄下來。他退休後，把自己積累的珍貴外交史料，以及用中、英兩種文字寫的三十五冊日記，全部贈送給哥倫比亞大學。1963年，哥倫比亞大學校長格雷森·柯克

等人邀請顧維鈞口述回憶錄，回憶錄口述時間五百小時，編纂歷時十七年。由於顧維鈞親身參與了許多重大政治、外交事件，他的回憶錄記錄了不少為外人所不及知的內幕情況，是研究中國近現代史，尤其是中外關係史的第一手資料。1976年5月，顧維鈞將這部長達八卷、共一萬一千頁的英文回憶錄原稿贈予母校哥倫比亞大學。後由紐約時報附設美國微卷公司製成縮微膠捲。中國社會科學院近代史研究所從1982年起翻譯這部回憶錄，將長達五百萬字的中文譯本分十三冊陸續出版。

顧維鈞於1985年11月15日上午(紐約時間11月14日晚)，在他的紐約曼哈頓寓所逝世。

作者：何小清

撮錄：李新主編，中國社會科學院近代史研究所中華民國史研究室編：《中華民國史·人物傳》第二卷(北京：中華書局，2011年)。

生平年表

1888年1月29日生於大清國江蘇省蘇州府嘉定縣(今上海市嘉定區)。

1892年進私塾讀書。

1899年進上海公共租界基督教會所辦中西書院讀書。

1901年考入基督教會所辦的上海聖約翰書院讀書。

1904年自費隨施肇基率領的湖北官費生赴美國留學。入紐約州庫克學院讀英語。

1905年考入哥倫比亞大學，主修國際法和外交。

1908年獲文學學士學位。

與張雲驤中醫家之女張潤娥結婚後，同返美國。

1909年獲文學碩士學位。秋，在哥倫比亞大學與孫中山相見。

1912年3月以《外人在華地位》論文通過博士答辯，美國哥倫比亞大學授予哲學博士學位。

4月返回中華民國首都北京。

5月7日任大總統袁世凱英文秘書兼國務總理唐紹儀秘書。

8月16日任外交部秘書。

12月10日分掌外交部統計科秘書。

1913年4月5日署理外交部參事，參與中英關於西藏問題的談判。

與張潤娥離婚，6月與唐紹儀之女唐寶珮在上海結婚。

8月14日任外交部關稅改良委員會委員。

9月23日任外交部參事。

1915年春，參與中日《二十一條》交涉。

7月3日特授少大夫。

7月11日特命駐墨西哥國全權公使。

7月15日授上大夫兼少卿。

10月25日任命駐美利堅合眾國特命全權公使兼駐古巴國特命全權公使。

- 1916年11月1日特派中美國際公會會員。
- 1916年4月簽署中美《六厘金幣庫券合同》。
- 11月簽署中美《芝加哥銀行借款合同》。
- 1917年4月建議北洋政府追隨美國參戰第一次世界大戰。
- 11月就《藍辛石井協定》向美國遞交照會。
- 同年，美國哥倫比亞大學授予榮譽法學博士學位。
- 1918年10月夫人唐寶珮病故，遺一子德昌，一女菊珍。
- 12月奉派參加巴黎和會任中國全權代表。
- 1919年1月21日特委任赴歐洲參與巴黎和會全權委員
- 1月28日代表中國就山東問題在巴黎和會上發言，駁斥日本要求。
- 6月28日拒簽對德和約。
- 7月31日派任國際保工會委員。
- 1920年接受上海扶輪社邀任榮譽社員。
- 8月9日派任國際聯盟代表。
- 9月29日調任駐英吉利國特命全權公使。
- 11月與華僑富商黃仲涵之女黃蕙蘭結婚。
- 12月25日派任國際聯盟中華民國行政院代表。
- 1921年4月15日呈報參與國際聯盟第一屆大會情形。
- 10月6日任參與太平洋會議全權代表。
- 11月2日加銜駐美利堅合眾國全權大使，任中華民國全權代表出席華盛頓會議。
- 12月華盛頓會議會外與日本交涉山東問題。
- 1922年2月簽署《解決山東懸案條約》和《九國公約》。
- 6月20日特派全國財政討論委員會委員長。
- 8月5日-9月19日署任外交部總長。
- 9月20日請辭全國財政討論委員會委員長。
- 11月23日-12月8日兼任關稅特別會議籌備處處長。
- 1923年7月特任外交部總長。
- 1924年1月12日特任外交部總長。
- 5月簽訂《中蘇解決懸案大綱協定》。
- 1924年7月2日-9月14日暫行兼代國務總理。
- 9月14日特任外交部總長。
- 9月17日派任中華教育文化基金董事會董事。
- 10月「北京政變」北洋政府直系軍閥統治垮台，棄職離京，寓居上海。
- 1926年5月12日調任財政部總長。
- 6月22日特任鹽務署督辦。
- 7月14日特派關稅特別會議委員會全權代表。
- 10月1日署任外交部總長兼代國務總理。
- 11月6日北洋政府正式發表《中國與比利時條約宣言》，單方面廢除《中比通商條約》。

1927年1月12日呈請辭職財政部財政總長；特任外交部總長兼署國務院國務總理。
6月，張作霖組織軍政府，顧維鈞內閣總辭職。

1928年3月5日特派任關稅自主委員會委員。
7月被南京國民政府通緝，離國赴歐洲旅居。

1929年應張學良之邀，返國抵瀋陽。

1930年往來于瀋陽、北京之間，為張學良提供外交諮詢。

1931年9月18日九一八事變發生，任國民黨特種外交委員會委員。
11月1日派任接收東北各地事宜委員會委員兼委員長。
11月23日代理外交部部長。
11月28日-12月30日署理外交部部長。

1932年1月23日敦聘任國難會議會員。
3月任國際聯盟李頓調查團中國顧問。
4月陪同國際聯盟李頓調查團赴東北調查。
8月5日任中華民國駐法蘭西國特命全權公使。
8月16日特派出席國際聯盟第十三屆大會代表。
10月15日特派國際聯盟中華民國行政院代表。

1933年3月4日特派中華民國出席日內瓦國際軍縮大會全權代表。
6月24日特派出席倫敦經濟會議代表。
9月13日特派出席國際聯盟第十四屆大會代表。

1934年1月22日派任海牙公斷院公斷員。

1935年6月28日特派出席國際聯盟第十六屆大會代表。

1936年中法外交關係升格，2月8日特任中華民國駐法蘭西國特命全權大使。
9月3日特派出席國際聯盟第十七屆大會代表。
10月16日特派出席國際聯盟中華民國行政院代表。

1937年4月9日特派出席國際聯盟特別大會代表。
7月23日特派出席國際聯盟第十八屆大會代表。
9月，在國際聯盟呼籲制裁日本侵略。
9月6日派任議訂中利友好條約全權代表。
10月22日特派出席布魯塞爾九國公約會議代表。

1938年年初，與法國交涉中國軍火從越南過境事。
6月8日派任中華民國與利比里亞互換《中利友好條約》全權代表。
7月與美國財長摩根索接洽援華事宜。
8月12日特派出席國際聯盟第十九屆大會代表。

1939年3月10日特派慶賀羅馬新教皇加冕典禮專使。
3月，接國民政府電令，與法國探討中、法、英合作事。
7月21日特派出席國際聯盟第二十屆大會代表。
11月召集中國駐歐使節商討外交方針，建議國民政府加強對美外交。

1940年4月20日特派慶祝葡萄牙國建國第八百年紀念獨立第三百年紀念專使。

1941年5月9日免任駐法蘭西國特命全權大使；特任中華民國駐英吉利國特命全權大使。
9月18日派任倫敦購料委員會委員長。

1942年春，交涉英國對華五千萬英鎊貸款。
12月參與中、英新約談判，對條約簽訂起了重要作用。

1943年加入中國國民黨。
3月返英途中抵美，力促宋美齡訪英，未果。
7月外交部部長宋子文訪英，安排並參加與英國政府會談等事宜。

1944年8月12日派任英、美、中三國戰後和平機構會議出席代表。
8月18日指定任英美中三國戰後和平機構會議首席代表，赴美國參加敦巴頓橡樹園會議，商討第二次世界大戰戰後事務和筹建聯合國。

1945年3月29日特派中華民國出席聯合國大會代表。
4—6月任出席三藩市「聯合國制憲大會」代表，並代理團長，代表中華民國第一個在《聯合國憲章》上簽字。
12月4日特派出席聯合國籌備會議代表。

1946年1月28日派任聯合國安全理事會第一屆會議代表。

1946年6月26日特任中華民國駐美利堅合眾國特命全權大使。

1947年5月向美國政府提出10億美元貸款要求。
5月28日特派中華民國出席聯合國大會第二屆會議代表。

1948年2月9日特派中華民國出席國際小麥會議特別會議全權首席代表。
10月19日特派中華民國出席聯合國糧食農業組織第四屆年會首席代表。
11月向美國杜魯門總統提出援華要求。
12月被中國共產黨宣佈為戰犯。

1949年3月2日呈請辭職兼遠東委員會中國代表。
3月31日特派中華民國出席聯合國大會第三屆常會第二期會議首席全權代表。
5月與胡適等人向蔣中正總統建議推行改革，任用新人；隨後，勸說胡適出山，組織由留美學生組成的新內閣。

1950年6月朝鮮戰爭爆發，就美國杜魯門總統聲明向(臺北)中華民國總統府提出應對建議。

1951年6月向美國國務卿杜勒斯聲明臺灣有關對日和約的立場。

1952年10月向(臺北)中華民國外交部部長葉公超提出辭職要求，被勸阻。

1953年3月向美國提出締結美臺《共同防禦條約》的要求。

1954年11月和葉公超一起與美國談判《共同防禦條約》。
12月2日，《共同防禦條約》簽字。

1955年1—2月與美國交涉國民黨軍隊從大陳島撤退和美國協防金門、馬祖事宜。

1956年4月11日呈請辭職駐美利堅合眾國特命全權大使，同時被聘為(臺北)中華民國總統府資政。同年與黃蕙蘭離婚。

1957年1月經聯合國大會和安全理事會多輪投票，當選海牙國際法院法官。

1959年9月3日與嚴幼韻結婚。

1960年開始口述回憶錄的工作。

1964 年當選為海牙國際法院副院長。
1966 年 10 月退出國際法院法官競選。
1967 年定居美國紐約，開始退休生活。
1972 年 9 月中華人民共和國外交官章含之受毛澤東委託前來紐約拜訪。
1976 年口述回憶錄完成，文稿捐贈母校哥倫比亞大學。
1985 年 11 月 14 日於美國紐約寓所無疾而終，享年 98 歲。

家庭 -- 顧維鈞有過四段婚姻

第一段婚姻：

元配張潤娥，父親是上海著名中醫家張雲驥。雙方家長很早就訂親，1908 年結婚。婚後與太太同赴美國，1909 年顧提離婚，張不置可否。1914 年友好離婚後，張落髮上海陸家觀音堂。

第二段婚姻：

唐寶珮，是唐紹儀（中華民國首任國務總理）與妾室所生庶女。1912 年，唐寶珮看上已婚的顧維鈞，要求顧離婚與其結婚。1914 年顧維鈞與元配妻子離婚，與唐寶珮結婚。唐寶珮外形不出眾，但通曉英語，受過良好的西方教育。在顧維鈞擔任駐美國公使期間，積極出席各種社交活動。但不幸在 1918 年，唐寶珮一次代替丈夫到費城出席外交場合，感染當時肆虐歐美的西班牙流感，在美國病逝。留下一雙稚齡兒女，兒子顧德昌才兩歲，女兒顧菊珍出生才幾個月，令顧維鈞十分悲痛。

第三段婚姻：

黃蕙蘭，是號稱「亞洲糖業大王」的印尼華僑富商黃仲涵元配妻子魏明娘所生的次女。1904 年(15 歲)赴美留學，1909 年與英國駐三寶壟領事館的官員結婚，生下一子。二人 1915 年分居，1919 年正式離婚。1920 年 8 月在巴黎的晚宴上與喪偶的顧維鈞相識，兩人隨後在 10 月 10 日雙十國慶酒會上宣布訂婚，11 月 9 日在比利時布魯塞爾的中華民國領事館結婚。生兩子顧裕昌、顧福昌。黃蕙蘭對於丈夫外交事業，有極其重大的幫助。她擅長交際，通曉英、法、荷、馬來等語言，擅長音樂、舞蹈、書法、騎馬、開車。加上娘家鉅富，金錢用之不盡，讓顧維鈞與各國王公政要往來，毫無後顧之憂。黃蕙蘭當時的時尚、藝術和當代文化均有重要影響。不過這段婚姻卻在 1956 年劃下句點：黃蕙蘭晚年回憶，顧維鈞事業心重，一心一意為工作打拚，經常冷落妻子；自己也因為出身富豪而太驕縱，被丈夫抱怨開銷奢侈、生活隨便，兩人逐漸貌合神離。另外根據張學良口述的回憶（由唐德剛執筆），早在 1930 年代，還作為楊夫人的嚴幼韻即已經同顧維鈞有染。顧黃二人 1956 年離婚。她出版過兩本英文撰寫的自傳：1943 年和華盛頓郵報專欄作家泰勒（Mary Van Rensselaer Thayer）合作的《顧維鈞傳 Hui-lan Koo (Madame Wellington Koo): An Autobiography as told to Mary Van Rensselaer Thayer》；以及 1975 年和記者塔夫斯（Isabella Taves）合作的《No Feast Lasts Forever》中譯書名《沒有不散的筵席：外交家顧維鈞夫人自述》。

第四段婚姻：

太平洋戰爭日軍攻佔馬尼拉，中華民國外交官楊光注遭殺害，遺孀嚴幼韻攜三女前往紐約投奔顧維鈞。1959 年 9 月 3 日顧維鈞與嚴幼韻結婚，白頭偕老。2015 年嚴幼韻慶祝 110 歲生日，特出版口述自傳《一百零九個春天：我的故事》。

中國軍事外交風雲人物之顧維鈞

何文光 / 2011 年 9 月 20 日



從清朝滅亡到國民黨退出中國大陸的 38 年中，中華民國外交舞臺上自始至終活躍著一些職業外交官。不論是在北京政府還是南京政府（抗日時遷往重慶），他們不多涉足國內政治鬥爭，而致力在外交上為中國爭權，顧維鈞就是其中一位佼佼者。

顧維鈞，字少川，英文名叫威靈頓，江蘇嘉定人，生於 1888 年。顧維鈞少年時先在本鄉封建式私塾受啟蒙教育，後到上海衛理公會辦的英華書院受新式教育，學習英語、數學和地理等課程。1900 年考入聖約翰書院。1904 年，顧維鈞的父親顧溶出資送他和施肇基等一批學生赴美留學。顧先在紐約的柯克學院就讀，1905 年轉到哥倫比亞大學，主修國際法和外交學。課餘，他參加「語言社」、「辯論會」等活動，主編《哥大旁觀者》、《哥大人年鑒》。課外活動培養了他敏捷的思路、風流的文采和雄辯的口才。他曾作為哥大學生代表之一（共 3 名）與康奈爾大學學生代表進行辯論比賽，大勝而歸。哥大學聯選舉時，顧得票數為第三多。他以國際法為專業，志向就是為貧弱的祖國力爭國權。他因主編《中國學生》月刊而受到當時清朝赴美專使唐紹儀的器重，唐拜見美國總統希歐多爾·羅斯福時，特帶顧維鈞一同前往。後來，唐紹儀招顧為女婿。唐與顧的字都是少川，按中國習慣晚輩應避長輩諱，後顧氏行文未用少川字，但諸多史書仍稱「顧少川」。

1912 年 2 月，中國駐美公使張蔭棠約見正在撰寫博士論文的顧維鈞（24 歲）。通知他說，袁世凱總統來電邀請他回國擔任總統英文秘書，此與唐紹儀推薦有關。哥倫比亞大學立即安排顧通過博士論文答辯，使他及時回國就職。此前，顧氏獲得了該校文學士和政治學碩士學位。

顧博士回國後不久，1914年日本帝國主義用戰爭要脅中國承認亡國的「二十一條」。1915年1月，日本公使會見袁世凱總統，正式提出「二十一條」並要袁保守秘密。聲言如果洩密，日本就要對中國採取行動。袁世凱一時沒了主張，陸軍總長段祺瑞說只要總統下令抵抗，中國軍隊可以抵抗日軍48小時。顧維鈞當時任總統秘書，他認為此時應利用世界各國同日本的矛盾，特別是美日、英日矛盾。他建議總統把「二十一條」內容公佈於眾，因為中國過去許諾保守秘密是在威脅之下作出的，沒有義務遵守。總統和外交總長同意這一不得已的辦法，顧氏便在美英公使之間求得同情。不久，外國報紙登載了「二十一條」內容，日本非常難堪。雖然它後來更進一步向北京政府施加外交壓力，但終於沒敢貿然採取軍事行動。

顧維鈞初任外交部主事，不久升為國務院參事，一度任總統秘書，充任重大外事翻譯。陸徵祥、唐紹儀對顧十分器重。

1915年，顧維鈞（27歲）派駐墨西哥國公使，這是近現代乃至當代中國外交史上最年輕的全權正使。不久，調任駐美國兼駐古巴公使。哥倫比亞大學人才輩出，又以培養像顧氏這樣的傑出外國學生為榮。

在1919年初的巴黎和會上，由顧維鈞等人組成的中國代表團，在收回戰敗的德國原在山東的權益作了不懈的鬥爭。他們把和會上出賣中國的卑鄙交易透露給巴黎的華人和國內新聞界，引發了中國現代史光輝的第一頁——五四運動。國內民眾情緒激憤，使北京政府不得不順應民心。代表團在巴黎得到國內人民的鼓勵和聲援。顧維鈞，施肇基，王正廷等在國內政府態度不明、代表團團長陸徵祥病入醫院的情況下，堅決拒絕在大大損害中國主權的巴黎和約上簽字。他們的愛國行動是，偉大的五四運動的一部分。31歲的顧博士當時失去愛妻（唐紹儀之女）不久，但國難勝過家哀。1月27日，顧維鈞在與大會歐美代表交談中，言中國孔子好比西方的基督，中國的山東好比基督教的聖城那路撒冷，中國不能放棄山東就像基督教不能放棄那路撒冷一樣。

1919年1月28日，和會舉行五國會議。討論山東問題時，日本代表牧野伸顯提出德國原在山東的一系列侵華權益，均應無條件讓與日本。顧維鈞即席發言，駁斥日本的無理要求。據法引典，陳情說理。雖無底稿，卻條理清楚，言詞得體。演說完畢，美、英、法、意政府首腦紛紛與顧握手擁抱讚揚致賀。巴黎和會使顧維鈞聲名大振，國外人士感歎中國的國力與外交官的辯才差距太大。

由於巴黎和會中國拒絕在對德和約上簽字，山東問題遂移到華盛頓會議上得到較合理的解決。巴黎和會上中國5位代表中，團長陸徵祥與施肇基不和；王正廷與顧維鈞不和，都是愛國人士和外交能手。而顧氏在才思和駁辯上，又似高於眾人。

1919年9月，顧維鈞調任駐英公使，並被指派出席國際聯盟會議。1921年8月，美國總統哈定邀請中、日、英、法、意、荷、比、葡等國集會華盛頓，討論裁減海軍軍備和遠東太平洋地區問題。中國地位與巴黎和會時有所不同，美國不滿日本獨霸中國，有意抬高中國的地位，以繼續推行「門戶開放」政策。中國代表團正式代表有4人：施肇基、顧維鈞、王寵惠、伍朝

樞。顧維鈞又一次在國際舞臺上充分發揮他傑出的外交才能，和顯示他維繫內部團結的能力。美英兩國恐日本退會抵制，壓中國與日本直接交涉，由美英居間調停。中國交涉主要由顧維鈞出面。1922年2月，顧與日本代表簽訂了《解決山東懸案問題條約》及《附約》，為後來收回山東權益和膠濟鐵路打下了基礎。

華府會議結束後，顧維鈞回倫敦住所。1922年5月回上海，時值第一次直奉戰爭，他呼籲停戰以共同對外。8月，到北京民國政府王寵惠內閣代理外交總長。至1927年，顧氏多次出任頻繁替換的諸內閣外交總長，兩次代理內閣總理，一次實任內閣總理和北京政府三人攝政之一。顧氏受到重用，完全是以他的外交才幹、學者風度和超黨派影響力所取得的。他的工作重點，主要放在對外關係上。顧氏辦外交，不盡為黨派主張所挾制，因為中國任何一個軍閥或黨派都有外國背景；也不常附和輿論或民眾情感，因為民眾多為一時熱情所推動而忽略外交的綜合操作藝術。不卑不亢，溫文爾雅，態度堅定而言辭不致使談判破裂，這些都是顧維鈞能贏得國內外普遍稱讚的原因。顧維鈞認為外交官不能像激進的知識份子那樣，任憑感情衝動。

顧維鈞學識淵博，對所使各國文化背景、歷史、政情有近似學者般的研究。精通國際法，使他在對外交涉中掌握了有力的武器。顧維鈞承認國家實力在外交中起著關鍵作用，但他同時認為實力弱的國家不能自怨自艾。他曾經對人說過：「我不相信弱國無外交之說。唯其弱，故依賴外交較強國更為重要。當然，有時候其遭遇的痛苦是難以言喻的。一般而論，法律與理由是交涉的最好武器，武力與感情不能正式應用。一個國家無論如何強，不能事事都用飛機戰艦原子彈去威脅人。」顧維鈞本人熟練掌握了英文、法文、德文和拉丁文。他不需國際顧問，也不用翻譯隨員前呼後擁一大堆。對外交涉中常單槍匹馬，令當時中外外交界稱讚不已。就外交職業素質、才能及風度品格而論，中國近現代職業外交官罕有出其右者。

顧維鈞經歷任袁世凱、黎元洪、馮國璋、段祺瑞、曹錕、徐世昌、張作霖各期北京政府的要職。在各派鬥爭中顧以對外大局為重，穩健自重，周旋有方，故能長立政壇，具政治家獨特風範。顧氏對這些人物以及一些擁兵軍人評價都不壞，一是感激知遇之情，二是顧氏認為這些人物都是以不同方式愛國家。

抗日戰爭中，顧維鈞對國家貢獻巨大。在國聯聽證會上，力陳日寇在東北製造的侵略事實。國聯雖然沒有採取制裁日本的措施，卻也沒有承認日本製造的「既成事實」。抗戰全面爆發後，顧維鈞在國外特別注重收集日本與其他國家外交關係的情報。力爭列國擴大對華援助；在國外購買抗戰急需的物質；招募飛行員，為中華民族的反侵略戰爭做出了特別的貢獻。此間，中國與其他反法西斯盟國合作的大部分談判，都有顧氏參與或主持。英美蘇盟邦對華援助的很多款項，都是經他和其他外交官努力爭取遊說而得來的。他在各國政治家和外交官中有廣泛的個人交往：他充分運用這些「私交」為「國交」服務。此外，他充分利用公共場合宣傳中國抗日的正義性。1941年以前，中國獨立抗日，各國對日姑息妥協。為了爭取國際支援，顧維鈞發揮其無比之辯才，在集會、廣播和外交場合下發表多次演講，為的是爭取美歐朝野儘早放棄綏靖政

策。直到反法西斯統一戰線建立後，顧維鈞仍在盟國之間穿梭往來，不停地為中國抗戰竭盡一個外交官的最大努力。

1946年至1949年，顧維鈞任駐美大使，誰都知道這時的中美關係的意義。顧維鈞作為國民政府外交官，發揮了他的影響力去爭取美國支援國民黨。但美國對蔣介石從不完全信任；蔣對美國用美式民主標準衡量國民黨也不滿，顧維鈞為協調這種矛盾也作出了努力。顧維鈞的外交主張是外交相對獨立（與陸徵祥主張相近），是否正確此處不評，但也意識到了國民黨在中國大陸的前途。他對自己這段時間，服務於一個形像不好的政府而頗有煩言。他在回憶錄中說：「中華民國成立以來，將國內政治和對外關係混為一談，一直是中國的災難之源。」

顧維鈞一般不對主義進行評價。這個受西式民主思想陶冶的知識份子對蘇聯、對中國共產黨也不發攻擊之詞。相反，他對所接觸的共產黨人評價很高。聯合國成立之初，顧維鈞力主共產黨派代表參加中國代表團以顯視中國一致對外。在聯合國制憲會議期間，顧與中共代表董必武合作很好。顧維鈞對董及其助手章漢夫等，評價很高。顧到晚年有回歸大陸的願望，可惜因病不能成行。中華人民共和國政府對顧在北京的舊居舊物保存完好，也歡迎顧回大陸來。

顧在中華民國38年的歷史中幾乎沒有中斷過外交業務，他經歷了兩次世界大戰和中國的政局幾次重大變遷。不僅為國內公論所推崇，更為國際外交界所欽佩。巴黎和會，剛過而立之年的顧維鈞一席臨時發言，令全世界為之感動。當時世界幾巨頭——美國威爾遜總統，英國首相勞合喬治、法國首腦克里孟梭、義大利首相奧蘭多等向這個來自東亞弱國的年輕外交官，伸出了忘情的雙手。他們內心未必不想，中國內政官員如與這樣的外交官相稱，亞洲不久就要出現又一個強國。

在國際聯盟時代，顧維鈞活躍於各國代表中間，是很有影響力的外交家。1919年，顧維鈞是國際聯盟條約的起草委員之一。1937年顧維鈞擔任第九十六次國聯理事會主席，對調解西方與蘇聯之關係作了努力。顧在協調反法西斯統一戰線內部矛盾的出色工作受到普遍的讚揚。

1943年10月，美、蘇、英、中發表莫斯科宣言，計畫建立一個普遍性國際組織。中國躋身於「四強」實乃美國總統羅斯福之支持，而蘇聯反對「提攜」中國。妥協結果，中國在三強既定宣言上簽了字。1944年9月，美國邀請蘇、英、中國集會華盛頓附近敦巴頓橡樹園，討論新的聯合國憲章，中國政府派顧維鈞率團出席。蘇聯認為中國不足以稱為強國，英國也有同感。但顧維鈞作為國際組織和國際法權威，為爭得中國作為強國的發言權而竭盡全力。顧維鈞反對在檔中對發起國用「三國」、「四國」等歧視中國的字樣，得到了其他國家的贊同。在聯合國組織設置、表決程式、權力與分配等問題上，美、蘇、英三國頗有分歧，顧維鈞常居間調停。三藩市制憲會議，由中國不同黨派、無黨派和學者組成的代表團，沒出現同巴黎和會、華盛頓會議時中國代表團的內部大分歧，也有顧氏從中協調說服的功勞。關於顧氏對聯合國制憲會議的貢獻，美國當時的國務卿斯退汀紐斯稱讚顧氏「在各種委員會討論微妙問題時，善能運用機智，貢獻殊多」。杜魯門總統在會議結束時，對顧維鈞重複其國務卿的上述讚語。

1956年，顧維鈞遞補去世的國際法院法官徐謨留下的一年半任期。設在海牙的國際法院（又稱國際法庭、國際常設法院）曾選舉中國的王寵惠、鄭天錫和徐謨為國際法官。10月，國際法院重新選舉國際法官，顧維鈞的競爭對手為日本法官栗直茂。在兩輪投票選舉中，顧維鈞分別以42：8、36：3擊敗對手，成為國際法院法官，任期10年。不久又當選為國際法院副院長，直到1967年退休，定居美國。

退休後的顧維鈞應哥倫比亞大學之請，將個人的經歷和中國外交、國際仲裁等歷史口述回憶錄，經助手整理成巨篇回憶錄，英文稿列印字一萬一千多頁。於1976年5月28日，他將回憶錄及他留存的信函、電文、講話稿及35冊日記等珍貴的史料，交給哥大圖書館保存。他拒絕了美國出版機關給他的50%的版權。80年代，顧氏後代將顧的回憶錄副本交由中國社科院陸續譯行，是大陸難得的研究中國近現代史資料。

顧維鈞在海外華人華僑中，享有崇高的聲譽。1977年6月，紐約華人名流自發籌辦了規模甚大的顧維鈞博士90大壽的慶祝活動，有500多華、美人士參加，為華人界盛事。1985年11月14日，這位傑出的愛國外交家在紐約去世，終年97歲。

***** ***** ***** ***** *****

顧維鈞：傑出的「半個」外交家

王淑霞《留學生雜誌》2022年10月25日



顧維鈞晚年時，有人曾問過他，搞了一輩子外交，最得意之舉是什麼？他毫不遲疑地答道：巴黎和會。在當時列強環伺的背景下，顧維鈞在巴黎和會上的表現，是中國人第一次對西方列強說不。這段歷史不僅是顧維鈞的驕傲，也是近代中國外交的驕傲。

巴黎和會：弱國也有外交

1918年11月第一次世界大戰宣告結束後，勝利的協約國集團為締結和約，決定召開巴黎和會。

中國作為一戰的戰勝國，當時的北洋政府派出由陸徵祥、顧維鈞、王正廷、施肇基、魏宸組5人組成中國代表團參加巴黎和會，參加和會的目的包括收回德國在山東的一切權益等。

在回憶錄裡，顧維鈞這樣描述自己對此行的期望：「即將召開的和會是一次非同尋常的機會，中國可以借此謀求某種程度的公平待遇，並對過去半個世紀以來所遭到的慘痛後果加以改正。」

1919年1月27日中午，中國代表團第一次獲悉將被邀請出席下午和會領導機構的「十人會議」，即由操縱會議的英、法、美、日、意五大國各派兩名代表參加的所謂最高會議。而之前，日本已提出由它繼承德國在山東的權益，並公佈了一戰期間日本與英、法、意等國簽訂的關於山東問題的秘密協定。當時，中國代表團並未對此做專門準備，只好將時間推遲到28日，重擔即刻落在最年輕的顧維鈞身上，當時他31歲。

翌日，在「十人會議」上，顧維鈞承認中國的確在1915年和1918年簽訂協定，許諾日本將得到德國在山東的權益。但中國當時是被迫的，因此不應該履行。無論如何，任何有關德國所有權的問題都必須由和會解決。按大會所接受的民族自決和領土主權完整等原則，中國有權要求收回山東權益。

顧維鈞發言結束後，會場上掌聲連連。時任美國總統威爾遜、英國首相勞合·喬治、英國外相貝爾福紛紛過來祝賀。不久後，顧維鈞的辯詞「中國的孔子有如西方的耶穌，中國不能失去山東正如西方不能失去耶路撒冷」出現在《費加羅報》等多家重要報紙上，轟動了整個巴黎以至歐洲。

然而，正如顧維鈞在回憶錄裡所說，聲明受到稱讚是一回事，最終得到有利的解決又完全是另一回事。山東問題並未因顧維鈞的精彩演說，在和會上得到公平合理的解決。

中國代表在和會上提出廢除外國在中國的勢力範圍、撤退外國在中國的軍隊和取消「二十一條」等正義要求，均遭到拒絕。和談失敗的消息傳到國內，轟轟烈烈五四運動爆發。在1919年6月28日這個歷史性的一天，顧維鈞等代表中國拒絕簽署對德合約。

中國社會科學院世界歷史研究所所長汪朝光曾評價說，顧維鈞能把握大勢，積極進取。「他在一戰結束後巴黎和會期間的外交交涉中，一方面，有理有利有節，儘量爭取列強內部不同國家的不同力量的支持；另一方面，適當向外透露交涉進展以及中國的態度，爭取輿論的支持。將中國在秘密外交中的不利，轉變為公開外交中的有利。從而成功地為中國贏得了有利的形象，最後勇敢地對列強說『不』。這不僅沒有造成特別不利的結果，反而為中國爭取了時機，緩和了局面。並通過以後持續不斷的努力，最後收回了中國的權利。可謂是近代以來，中國在弱勢和不利地位下，通過外交努力挽回局面的經典一役。」

長立政壇：不為有害國家之事

雖然顧維鈞在對外交涉的講壇上侃侃而談，據理力爭，不辱使命，顯示出大國風範。但在講臺下，總是保持一種謙謙君子的形象。他待人和藹可親，行事低調，且特別注重細節。在擔

任民國政府的外交部部長期間，他的臥室擺放有一面三角玻璃鏡。每次出門前，他都要對鏡而立，將禮服的前後左右仔細檢查。看看是否有頭髮或者灰塵掉在衣服上，皮鞋是否清潔有光澤。

顧維鈞每次會見外賓，出於禮貌，每次握手之前，他都摩擦雙手，讓自己的手溫暖以後，再和對方握手。每次宴請外賓的時候，顧維鈞特別注重細節。總是事先進行調查研究，按照外賓習慣、嗜好上的不同加以細心周到的籌畫。比如他宴請時任荷蘭公使歐登科時，事先得知歐登科餐後有喝一口涼開水的習慣。於是特意吩咐準備，讓歐登科既驚訝又感動。當顧維鈞宴請時任英國公使藍博森時，事先得知他飯後有喝一大杯咖啡的習慣。於是特意讓人準備，餐後立即端上，藍博森非常高興。

在那個國力虛弱的年代，外交事務始終是北洋政府的頭等大事，而顧維鈞恰恰又是享有國際威望的外交家。自從華盛頓會議結束之後，一批英、美留學背景的中國有識之士紛紛投身政壇，開始在國內謀求實現自己的政治理想。他們力求通過直接參與國內中央政府的政治決策來實現其外交理想，並進而通過外交來謀求國家的發展和進步，因此被國內輿論歸為「外交系」。而在「外交系」諸人中，顧維鈞無疑是最成功的。

當代著名華人歷史學家唐德剛認為，顧維鈞只能算是近代以來最傑出的「半個」外交家。正是這特殊的「半個」外交家，憑藉外交才幹、學者風度和超黨派影響力，加上其一向以對外大局為重，穩健自重，周旋有方。在民國政壇上幾乎始終屹立不倒，時間長達半個世紀。

多年以後，當有人向顧維鈞請教為何能在風雨飄搖的北洋政壇角逐中左右逢源時，他淡定地回答說：「問題很簡單，我從不介入派系之爭。我的活動純以國家民族利益為依歸。凡是有益國家的事，我必盡綿薄之力。反之，有害的事，我寧願掛冠而去。」

立志報國：歐美同學會首任「主任幹事」

顧維鈞和周詒春是歐美同學會的主要發起人和創建人。特別是顧維鈞，不僅是倡議者、發起者，還是具體籌辦者，是同學會首任「主任幹事」、同學會成立時實際主持會務工作的人。

顧維鈞是江蘇省嘉定縣（今上海市嘉定區）人，早年入上海聖約翰書院讀書，1904年赴美留學，1906年9月考入哥倫比亞大學，主修政治和國際外交。1909年同時獲得學士和碩士學位，接著師從國際法和外交學專家莫爾教授攻讀博士。他熱情活躍，興趣廣泛，曾是全校性的學生刊物《旁觀者》的編輯、總編輯。經常參加演講、辯論比賽，還加入戲劇社、法語學會等學生社團，並熱愛體育活動。留美期間，他曾擔任過美東中國學生聯合會主席，熱衷於留學生的組織與聯絡工作。1913年4月起供職北洋政府外交部，任署理參事、參事。在這段時間裡，他籌辦、組織了歐美同學會，並被推舉為首任主任幹事。1915年7月，他奉派出任中國駐外公使，卸任同學會主任幹事。

顧維鈞回憶說，「成立一個歸國留學生同學會很有必要。它可以定期集會，請美國或中國著名人士講演，或對大家關心的問題召開討論會。這個意見深為清華大學校長周詒春所贊許……由於他的贊助，我組織了留美同學會，會員包括美國大專院校畢業的中國學生，年齡不限。」同時，顧維鈞還和當時在北京的留英學生接洽過。據他回憶，「我們花了一些時間，才一致認為聯合起來是個好主意，他們（伍朝樞等在北京的留英學生）這才和別的留英學生聯繫……然後我們著手討論如何合作，成立另一個組織，稱為‘歐美同學會’。不久這個聯合會就在聚餐會上正式成立了。」

熱心組織歐美同學會的時候，顧維鈞 25 歲，周詒春 30 歲，正是立志報國、幹一番事業的年齡。明年，歐美同學會將迎來建會 110 周年，這個擁有百餘年光榮歷史的人民團體，正引領廣大留學人員在新時代新征程上昂首前行。

回望歷史，掃去煙塵。就是這樣一個顧維鈞，讓我們懷念至今，崇敬至今。

追憶民國第一外交家顧維鈞

王豫元（中華民國前駐梵帝岡教廷特任大使）2024 年 5 月 23 日



王豫元大使（左）與顧維鈞大使（右）合影

對中國近代外交史有興趣的人應該都知道顧維鈞大使（V. K. Wellington Koo），但這句話對台灣新世代似非事實，在台灣若干有心人士推動去中國化的浪潮下，學校教的素材不一樣了，筆者發現目前一般的年輕人幾乎都沒有聽過顧維鈞大使。

顧大使出生於 1888 年 1 月 29 日的滿清時代，1904 年赴美留學，1912 年 24 歲取得哥倫比亞大學法學博士返國時已改朝換代成為中華民國。

他先應聘擔任袁世凱大總統的英文暨外交祕書，後來陸續在北洋政府及國民政府徵召出任的職務包括：署理大總統、國務總理、外交總長、財政總長、外交部長、出席巴黎和會代表、出席國際聯盟代表、駐法國大使、駐英國大使、出席華盛頓會議代表，駐聯合國首席代表、駐美大使。由駐美大使卸任後自 1956 年至 1967 年出任海牙國際法院法官、副院長。

顧大使經歷兩次世界大戰，參與或見證無數國際會議、國際組織、雙邊多邊談判等重大外交事務超過半個世紀。才華橫溢，治學嚴謹，貢獻卓著。筆者何其榮幸，在 41 年前有緣以私人身分前往拜見親炙警歆，終生受益。

1981 年元月筆者即將由駐美代表處祕書調返台北前，由於旅居華府的初中好友董常新夫婦與顧大使夫婦頗有私誼，所以特別懇請他們安排而且陪同我及內人於 1 月 11 日由華府駕車前往紐約拜見。

我們於下午兩點多抵達位於 Park Avenue 靠近 91 街的一座摩天大廈，大門前有穿制服的門僮，顧大使寓所在第十層，進門就看到兩幅顧大使伉儷的油畫肖像，室內布置典雅。

筆者當時 30 歲出頭，顧大使已高齡 93 歲，從許多檔案照片中，想像他似乎是一位很嚴肅的外交官，預期這是一個「禮貌性拜會」，備一個伴手禮，行禮如儀，合照留念，就告辭了。但見面時我看到的是一位滿臉笑容，和藹可親又很風趣的長者，他先問我在駐美代表處擔任什麼職務，看到我名字又問我籍貫是那裡，我說祖籍江蘇常州，先祖父是前清癸未年進士被派往河南為官，先父及我都出生在河南開封。

由於顧大使曾任北洋政府袁世凱大總統的祕書，所以我告訴他，民國成立後先祖父曾在北洋政府任職數年才返回江蘇老家，他顯得很有興趣的問我先祖父在北洋政府什麼時候做過什麼事。他又問我年齡多大，屬什麼生肖？我說屬豬時，他突然眼睛一亮，說「我也屬豬」而且馬上從口袋掏出一隻小豬，說這個小豬送你做紀念，接著說他陰曆是光緒 13 年歲次丁亥豬年 12 月 17 日生，所以屬豬。這隻顧大使親送的小豬我仍保留至今。

顧大使又提及，1932 年 3 月他陪同國際聯盟李頓調查團到東北調查「九一八事變」時，聘用一位 24 歲年輕祕書王湧源先生，此君英文打字很快，速記也做的很好，後來一直追隨他到駐法大使館，駐英大使館，駐美大使館工作，現在還留在華府的駐美代表處，不知近況如何，願聞其詳。又談了一些他當年住在雙橡園的有趣軼事，然後吩咐管家端出蟹殼黃、生煎包、酒釀湯圓，江浙點心等請我們享用。不久我們看到有些賓客陸續上門，晚上顯然家有餐敘，就起身告辭。

顧大使說請等一下，「我的好友董霖博士（William L. Tung）1977 年祝賀我 90 大壽時寫了一本英文書《V. K. Wellington Koo and China's Wartime Diplomacy》，1978 年董博士與龐曾濂先生又合譯為中文版《顧維鈞與中國戰時外交》，並轉載《東方雜誌》、《傳記文學》等雜誌上有關他生平事蹟的 5 篇專文。謝謝你來看我，我贈送你這兩本書留念」。說完就拿出這兩本紅色封面、燙金字體的硬皮精裝版，並當場用中文在中文版的扉頁上寫下我的名字及他的簽名，寫的是「豫元仁兄惠存，顧維鈞手贈，中華民國 70 年元月」。

當我看到他這樣寫的時候立即說「顧大使您是前輩，這樣我承擔不起！」他馬上回答「這是中國人的規矩，應該這樣寫！」寫完還很慎重的用印，用印的位置也四平八穩，證明他的眼力很好，手也不抖。英文版的扉頁寫的是「To Mr. & Mrs. L. Y. Wang, with regards, V. K. Wellington Koo, New York, NY, January 11, 1981」。

兩本書的題字居然蘊含著中西文化的差異，中文版稱呼我「仁兄」，使用中華民國年號還用印，英文版受贈人多了內人「Mrs.」及顧大使住的城市「New York, NY」並使用西曆紀元。外交無小事，由這些小地方可見顧大使心思慎密又貼心，至此我已對顧大使既感動又心悅誠服。

筆者認為顧大使送我這兩本書是有其道理的。雖然中英文版分別僅有 210 頁及 185 頁，但董霖博士能執簡馭繁，內容仍範圍廣博嚴謹，尤其附註特多且準確精采，誠屬難得。本書可說是董霖博士事先徵得顧大使同意而縮編的「顧維鈞回憶錄」極精簡版。僅拜讀這兩本書就感到獲益極多。在我們談話家常的時候，顧大使的夫人嚴幼韻女士也進進出出跟我們打招呼聊天，顧夫人本身也是一位傳奇人物，上海復旦大學第一屆女學生，被譽為上海最後的名媛，溫文嫻雅，曾在聯合國處理禮賓業務 14 年。對顧大使的身體健康無微不至的呵護，他們夫婦的互動處處流露出鶼鶼情深。

顧夫人說他們家族親友及晚輩住在紐約的人很多，而且他們夫婦二人都是聯合國退休的公務員，中外友人也多，所以家裡經常熱鬧非凡。2015年她109歲的時候出版一本自傳名為《109個春天——我的故事》。

顧大使把我們當晚輩一樣的親切招呼，告辭前我要求合照，他欣然接受。在整個見面的過程中我感受到一位偉大外交家的謙虛，周到，溫暖，敏銳，細膩，他完全沒有官架子，思路敏捷、記憶力強、侃侃而談，中規中矩，即使筆者這個資淺外交官非正式的拜見，他也非常慎重，事後想想這一切似乎還是照著禮賓程序進行，先坐下寒暄交談，再移往餐廳享用點心，告辭前主動贈書、題字用印、然後合影留念，有條不紊，偉人風範展現無遺。

談話中我深深感受到他具有強烈的國家意識及對國家的責任感，是一位愛國主義者。顧大使1985年11月14日逝世，享年97歲、距離我拜見他之後4年10個月。嚴幼韻女士2017年5月24日逝世，享年112歲。

1960年哥倫比亞大學開始邀請顧大使做英文口述回憶錄《Reminiscences of Vi Kyuin Wellington Koo 1975》，8卷11000頁歷時17年終告完成。1976年5月顧大使將其連同文卷檔案捐贈母校哥倫比亞大學並婉謝一切酬勞版權。高風亮節，令人敬佩。

中國大陸的中華書局自1983年起到1994年陸續出版了13卷600萬字中文翻譯版的《顧維鈞回憶錄》。這幾年英美的國家檔案局及歷史悠久的國際媒體陸續推出許多國際外交活動的影音檔案，我們現在由YouTube可以看到許多顧大使當年活耀在國際舞台上維護國家利益的歷史影音，如日內瓦國際聯盟控訴日本侵華案、參加巴黎和會、布魯塞爾遠東會議的演講，舊金山會議代表中國簽署《聯合國憲章》，出席聯合國安理會演講、美國電視台的專訪節目，流利的英語，鏗鏘有力的演說辯論，翩翩的風采氣度，令人感佩不已。

儘管當時中國積弱，仍有世界大國地位及格局，使顧大使的才略能有揮灑的空間，一生功業在中國近代外交史上堪稱前無古人後無來者，絕對是民國第一外交家！

