

Coolie Trade

The confession of Liang Lihong delivered by Huang Xianbiao, *qianzong* (commander of 1,000 men) of *guangxie* (some office of Guangdong Province) on the 20th day of the 11th month. Aged thirty-six, Liang Lihong was a native of Bai? Village, Jiangpu *si*, Nanhai County. Both of his parents were dead, and he had no siblings. His wife lived on silver mining by washing the sand at the river at Shanian in Guangzhou. He was found guilty of robbery and exiled to Lufeng County in the 2nd month of Daoguang 16 (1836). His period of exile ended in Daoguang 19 (1839) and he returned to the livelihood of washing sand.

【The following was Liang Lihong’s confession:】

On the 12th day of the 2nd month of Xianfeng 5 (1855), a man called Toothless Luo Jin came to visit Liang Ajin at the end of the Thirteen *Hongs*. I was also there having a chat with Liang Ajin, so I met Toothless Luo Jin. Luo said he was staying at the Yiyi shop at Xinzhou, Huangpu. He had connections with the “selling piglets” (i.e. illegal trafficking of cheap labour) people. I then got the idea that I could abduct someone and sell them for money. Thereby I went to a drug store and bought naoyanghua to make drugs and hid it on me. On the 15th day of the 8th month, when I was walking on Qingyuan Street, I saw a man of about thirty with worn clothes, so I knew he was unemployed and in reply to my enquiry, he said his name was Zhang; he had no contacts anywhere. So I lied to him that I would take him to Huangpu to work for a foreign *hong*. The wage was four dollars per month. He agreed so I took him to Thirteen *Hongs*. Another man in his thirties was talking with Zhang. His clothes were also worn-out, so I intended to abduct and sell him together with Zhang. He said his name was Huang. I also said that I would take him to work for a foreign *hong*. After Huang also agreed, I took them both to Xinzhou, Huangpu. Toothless Luo Jin and I took them to a French ship and sold them. There were some Chinese: Agen, Agou, Big Guy and Beiya or Biya. I did not know their surnames, all four of them were employers of the foreign ship. We handed over Zhang and Huang to them. Each one was sold for eight dollars, together we received sixteen dollars. Toothless Luo Jin and I each got eight dollars. This was one incident.

On the 14th day of the 9th month, I was walking down Lianxing Street when I met two old acquaintances Chen Ayou of about thirty-two and Huang Acheng of thirty-six. I lied to them that I would recommend them to work for a foreign *hong*. They agreed, so I took them to Xinzhou, Huangpu, again with Toothless Luo Jin, I took them to the French ship and handed them over to Agen and others. Each was sold for eight silver dollars, yielding sixteen dollars in total. Toothless Luo Jin and I each got eight dollars. This was another incident.

Again, on the first day of the 9th month, I saw a teenager at the ferry at Xinji. I talked to him and learned that his name was Luo Afu. He ran away from a job at a residence in Lower Jiufu. I had the idea of abducting him to have tea at a tea house, then I put the drug in his tea. After he drank it, he followed me to Xinzhou, Huangpu. Again with Toothless Luo Jin, I took him to the French ship and sold him as a personal servant to a foreigner. We handed him to Agen and others. We received 10 dollars and shared it between ourselves. This was also another incident.

On the 18th day of the 11th month this year, while I was walking near the Cypress Wood Market, I was unexpectedly arrested by the officers. The informer asked me to help track down the traitors. If I could lead them to a few traitors, I may be able to be a follower of the deputy. Because of that, I told them about Agen and the others, four in total. In truth, I have only abducted Chinese to sell. All together I did it three times. I have never been a traitor. I am willing to be an informer and lead to the arrest of Agen and others. This is the true confession.

Toothless Luo Jin is about 45 years of age and a native of Luogewei of Nanhai County. He is in the coolie trade at Macau.

梁洪洪年三十六歲南海縣江浦司百滘村人父母俱故無兄弟
 妻子平日在省河沙面淘銀沙度活道光十六年二月內犯拾
 擬徒發配陸豐縣署置十九年徒滿釋回仍淘沙度日咸豐五
 年八月十二有羅有牙進來省到十三行尾探聖淘沙的梁五
 合小的也在某處生談與羅有牙進認識羅有牙進說起
 他現在黃埔新洲怡興店內住歇有賣豬仔的路數小的就
 起意誘拐賣錢使用隨往藥店買有開楊花梨備送藥
 敵致身還八月十五小的在靖遠街行走見有一人年約廿餘
 歲衣衫破爛知他沒人在情隨向那人詢問那人說係姓
 張現在並無頭緒小的就向他騙說帶他往黃埔鬼行在工
 每月銀四元張姓的人應允就帶他同行到十三行地方又見

有一人年約三十餘歲與張姓的講話亦係破爛隨起意
 一併拐賣即向問係姓甚仍說帶他往黃埔鬼行雇工黃姓
 人應允後即一併帶往黃埔新洲同羅有牙進帶往佛喃
 西鬼船售賣有唐人不知姓甚根互狗仔天隻九互伊們四人
 在那兒船傭工把張姓黃姓二人交與互根們收管每人賣銀
 八元共得銀十六元的與羅有牙進各分得銀八元一次九月
 十四小的在聯興街行走與羅有牙進三十二歲的陳五又三十
 六歲的黃五成二人撞過小的向陳五又們騙說舉荐他們往
 黃埔鬼行雇工陳五又們應允小的就帶往黃埔新洲仍同羅有
 牙進帶往佛喃西鬼船交互根們收管每個賣得銀八元
 共得銀十六元的與羅有牙進各分得八元一次又九月廿

一日在新基渡頭見有一人年十餘歲的孩子問名羅五隔係
 在下九甫住家雇工逃出去意拐帶他到峇居啟茶把送菓
 放落茶杯給羅五隔飯了就根隨小的隨即帶往黃埔新洲
 仍同羅有牙進帶往佛喃西鬼船售賣與英人近身服
 後交與互根們收管得銀十元小的與羅有牙進分用一本
 年七月十八小的在杉木欄行走不想就被官兵擊獲解案
 同線人叫小的做路投得三兩個漢奸可以在副爺處出入
 這話小的以把互根們四人說出的定止誘拐唐人轉賣
 三次並沒做過漢奸及情願做線引等互根們的事是實
 供實
 羅有牙進年四十五歲南海縣龍岡人現在澳門販賣豬仔