UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, IRVINE

Shanghai's Wandering Ones:
Child Welfare in a Global City, 1900–1953

DISSERTATION

submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in History

by

Maura Elizabeth Cunningham

Dissertation Committee:
Professor Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom, Chair
Professor Kenneth L. Pomeranz
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2014

DEDICATION

To the Thompson women—

Mom-mom, Aunt Marge, Aunt Gin, and Mom—

for their grace, humor, courage, and love.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Dissertation writing, like all writing, is a deceptively collaborative activity. Though mine is the name on the title page, I could never have produced this thesis without the wisdom, friendship, and assistance of countless people.

I simply could not have asked for a better doctoral advisor than Jeff Wasserstrom. Through hundreds of hours of face-to-face conversations and thousands of emails (and a few tweets as well), Jeff has offered encouragement and advice on an almost daily basis for the past six years. He's given me latitude to create my own path, but has always been ready to help out whenever I needed to talk things through. I especially thank Jeff for supporting—and furthering—my freelance writing career; thanks to him, I've learned to write fast, pitch often, and maintain a sense of humor in the face of rejection. Ken Pomeranz has taught me the values of thoroughness and persistence in scholarship. Anne Walthall and honorary dissertation committee member Roberta Wue unfailingly responded to queries and offered suggestions on a topic very far outside their respective fields of expertise.

At the University of California, Irvine, I've benefitted from a strong community of faculty and graduate students who have helped me proceed along this road and have some fun on the way. Professors Vinayak Chaturvedi, Laura Mitchell, and Jon Wiener have inspired and motivated me to push my work to the next level. I was fortunate enough to land in a world-class group of China studies students at UCI, all of whom have assisted me in various ways over the years: Nicole Barnes, Leksa Chmielewski, Pierre Fuller, Chris Heselton, Miri Kim, Silvia Lindtner, Jennifer Liu, and Shi Xia. Silvia and Leksa, as well as Amy O'Keefe of UCSD, were also great friends and working companions in Shanghai. Jen and Brian Staver deserve special

thanks for being not only wonderful friends, but also for welcoming me into their home during my too-infrequent visits to San Diego. The research trips Jen and I made together to Berkeley and New Haven are some of my fondest memories of the past six years; I wouldn't have had nearly as much fun on my own. Kate Merkel-Hess has been generous with her advice and friendship throughout my time in graduate school.

Paul Pickowicz of UC San Diego invited me into his seminar on Republican Shanghai visual culture during the winter and spring of 2011, where I began to piece together some of the ideas that have wound up in this thesis. I spent the summer of 2011 conducting preliminary dissertation research while an instructor at CET Shanghai, and I thank Jeremy Friedlein for making that important trip possible—and for being a good friend, neighbor, and sometimes employer ever since. When I looked to move back east in mid-2011, Orville Schell offered me a place to land with a fellowship at the Asia Society's Center on U.S.-China Relations. He, David Barreda, Laura Chang, Susie Jakes, Sara Segal-Williams, Sun Yunfan, Leah Thompson, and Michael Zhao were all great colleagues during my year there.

In Shanghai, Professor Gao Jun arranged for me to become a visiting scholar at the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences and freely offered his time and assistance as I researched and wrote this thesis. Zhang Sen, Li Li, and Sun Weidi skillfully guided me through the SASS bureaucracy and helped me stay on the visa authorities' good side. Librarians and archivists at the SASS Institute of History's library, the Shanghai Municipal Archives, Bibliotheca Zi-ka-wei, and the Shanghai Library helped me find what I was looking for, even when I didn't know exactly what that was. Staff at Princeton University's Cotsen Children's Library, the Yale

Divinity School Library's Special Collections, and the Harvard-Yenching Library assisted me with alacrity during my research in the U.S.

I had the privilege to serve as editor of The China Beat for more than two years. In this capacity, I worked with innumerable contributors to the site, all of whom helped me grow as an editor, a writer, and a person. My humble thanks to any China Beatniks who might read this.

I owe an enormous debt to the dozen or more language instructors who patiently tutored me in Chinese over the years. Professors at Saint Joseph's University, Yale University, and the Hopkins-Nanjing Center have all, in ways both large and small, shaped the scholar I am today. I wouldn't be the woman I am today if not for the teachers of Merion Mercy Academy and my classmates there.

Jay Carter has been impressive for his unflagging conviction that I would reach this finish line, even though I didn't always believe it (and others probably had doubts as well!). I am enormously lucky to have him as a friend and colleague.

My parents, Terrence and Mary Cunningham, have gamely learned to deal with a daughter who regularly spends large chunks of time on the other side of the world. They've also helped me and all my heavy books move more times than I can count, provided financial assistance in a pinch, and tolerated my habit of falling off the grid for days on end when immersed in work. I'm not sure "thanks" is sufficient to cover all that, but I hope it's a start. Brendan, my brother, has been called on to serve as my own personal Geek Squad more than once, and in return he's only mocked my technological skills (or lack thereof) a little bit. My heartfelt appreciation to the many members of the extended Cunningham and Thompson families, who understood when I disappeared from their lives for months at a time.

I feel a little bit silly, being well past the age of 12, using the term “best friend”—but there is truly no other way to describe Laura Buenzle. From three-hour lunches in the Hawk’s Nest during college to three-hour phone calls between Philadelphia and China in the years following, Laura has provided a sympathetic ear and wise counsel throughout all of my professional and personal crises. In so many ways, I couldn’t have done any of this without her friendship, support, and encouragement.

I have previously presented sections of this research at meetings of the American Historical Association, the Association for Asian Studies, the Historical Society for Twentieth-Century China, and Heidelberg University’s “Seeing Matter(s)” workshop on visual culture, as well as a number of other talks in the United States and China. Many thanks to the following organizations for providing me with financial support during the research and writing of this dissertation: UCI Center for Asian Studies, UCI International Center on Writing and Translation, UCI Associated Graduate Students, the Association for Asian Studies, the Children’s Literature Association, the UC Pacific Rim Research Program, and Harvard-Yenching Library. Thanks also to all the staff members of the UCI History Department for their help and good humor in the face of paperwork over the years. Special thanks must go to Marc Kanda and Arielle Hinojosa for walking me through the dissertation filing process from afar—a task that has turned out to be considerably more complex than I expected in the digital age!

I could go on and on thanking friends, colleagues, and countless other people for their contributions to my life and work. But lest I write an entire extra chapter just to acknowledge those debts, I’ll stop here and simply say—thank you, so much, to everyone.

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EDUCATION

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PUBLICATIONS

Books and Book Chapters

"The Modern Girl in Motion: Women and Sports in *Liangyou*." In *Liangyou, Kaleidoscopic Modernity and the Shanghai Global Metropolis, 1926-1945*, eds. Paul G. Pickowicz, Shen Kuiyi, and Zhang Yingjin (Leiden: Brill, 2013).

Contributing author to Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom, *China in the 21st Century: What Everyone Needs to Know*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

Book Reviews

"Thought Reform and China's Dangerous Classes: Reeducation, Resistance, and the People," by Aminda Smith. *Twentieth-Century China* (October 2013).

"Life Goes On," review of *Northern Girls: Life Goes On*, by Sheng Keyi. *Los Angeles Review of Books* (August 2013).

"Ai Weiwei's Eighty-One Days," review of *Hanging Man: The Arrest of Ai Weiwei*, by Barnaby Martin. *Times Literary Supplement* (June 2013).

"Remembering and Forgetting: New Books on China and the World in the Nineteenth Century." Review essay for *World History Connected* (September 2012).

"Dead Ringers: How Outsourcing Is Changing the Way Indians Understand Themselves," by Shehzad Nadeem. *Asian Review of Books* (December 2011).

"Ghetto at the Center of the World: Chungking Mansions, Hong Kong," by Gordon Mathews. *Los Angeles Review of Books* (October 2011).

"Holding Up the Entire Sky," review of *The Gender of Memory: Rural Women and China's Collective Past*, by Gail Hershatter. *Ms. Magazine* blog (September 2011).

"It's a Boy," review of *Unnatural Selection: Choosing Boys Over Girls, and the Consequences of a World Full of Men*, by Mara Hvistendahl. *Time Asia* (July 4, 2011).

"China Voices," by Oxfam Hong Kong. *Cha: An Asian Literary Journal* (July 2011).

"How Chinese Women Dismantled the Master's House with the Housewife's Tools," review of *Keeping the Nation's House: Domestic Management and the Making of Modern China*, by Helen M. Schneider. *Ms. Magazine* blog (April 2011).

"Chinese Whiskers," by Pallavi Aiyar. *Asian Review of Books* (February 2011).

"Exotic Commodities: Modern Objects and Everyday Life in China," by Frank Dikötter. *World History Connected* (March 2009).

Commentaries and Shorter Pieces

"The Price of Living in Shanghai." The Billfold (June 30, 2014).

"China's Para-Police." *Dissent* online (July 24, 2013).

Co-author with Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom. "China's Peripatetic Xi Jinping Still Must Mind His Es and Cs at Home." *Pacific Standard* (June 12, 2013).

"The Costs of China's Mega-Cities." *Dissent* online (May 20, 2013).

"In 2012, It Was Full Speed Ahead on China's Rails." Asia Society Asia Blog (December 26, 2012).

"China's Urban Immigrants: A Diet of Bitterness." *Pacific Standard* (April 20, 2012).

Co-author with Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom. "Authoritarianism: there's an app for that." *Chinese Journal of Communication* (March 2012).

"Protest and Repression in China: An Update to 'Interpreting Protest in Modern China.'" *Dissent* blog (April 11, 2011).

Co-author with Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom. "Interpreting Protest in Modern China." *Dissent* 58, no. 1 (Winter 2011): 13-18.

Co-author with Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom. "Liu the Laureate." *The Nation* (November 1, 2010): 5.

"Against All Expectations, Commonwealth Games About to Begin." History News Network (October 4, 2010).

Co-author with Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom. "China Discovers World Expo Is No Olympics." YaleGlobal Online (August 17, 2010).

"China's Coffee Culture." Forbes.com (April 28, 2010).

Co-author with Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom. "Obama's Trip to China—The View from the Seventies." History News Network (November 23, 2009).

Contributor to The China Beat, 2008-2012

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Shanghai Correspondent and China Blog co-editor, *Los Angeles Review of Books*, 2013-present

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CONFERENCES AND INVITED PRESENTATIONS

"Wandering in the City of Refuge: Child Refugees and Warphans in Shanghai during the Anti-Japanese War." Historical Society for Twentieth-Century China biennial meeting, Taipei, Taiwan, August 2014.

"Taking Comics Seriously: Popular Culture, Art, and Politics in Twentieth-Century China." University of Michigan Stamps School of Art & Design China study tour, Shanghai, China, May 2014.

"Beyond the Dissertation: The Politics and Practicality of Doing Public History in Grad School." Roundtable, Western Association of Women Historians annual meeting, Pomona, CA, May 2014.

"Digital Media and Dissent since 1989." Panelist, Saint Joseph's University "Tiananmen at 25" symposium, Philadelphia, PA, April 2014.

"China's Past/China's Present: Using History to Put the Headlines in Perspective." With Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom. Foreign Correspondents' Club of China, Beijing, March 2014.

"China's Past, China's Present: Historical Perspectives on Recent Events." With Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom. University of Nottingham, Ningbo, China, March 2014.

"History in the Headlines: How Does China's Past Inform the Present?" With Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom. Shanghai Foreign Correspondents' Club, March 2014.

"Mao's Children in the New China: Transnational Child Welfare Organizations in the Early People's Republic Era." 对外开放与上海城市发展：国际学术研讨会 (International

Conference on the Opening and Urban Development of Shanghai), Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, Shanghai, February 2014.

"Mao's Children in the New China: Transnational Child Welfare Organizations in the Early People's Republic Era." American Historical Association annual meeting, Washington, D.C., January 2014.

"Comic Critiques: Politics and Humor in Zhang Leping's *Sanmao* Cartoons." "Political Humor in Modern China" conference, Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong, December 2013.

"China's 99%." Panel organized by *Dissent* magazine and The New School's India China Institute, New York, NY, May 2013.

"Abandoned by Society, Saved by the State: Sanmao the Orphan on the Streets of Shanghai, 1947-1959." Association for Asian Studies annual meeting, San Diego, CA, March 2013.

"Sanmao the Orphan." Shanghai International Literary Festival, Shanghai, China, March 2013.

"Abandoned by Society, Saved by the State: Chinese Childhood in the *Sanmao the Orphan* Cartoons, 1935-1992." Rutgers University-Camden, Visions and Voices of Childhood Graduate Conference, Camden, NJ, May 2012.

"Making Sense of a Fast-Changing China: Historians as Bloggers and Analysts of Current Events." Roundtable presentation with Kenneth L. Pomeranz and Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom, Sidwell Friends School, Washington, D.C., November 2011.

Asia and the 2008 Global Financial Crisis. Panel moderator, "Global Asias 2" conference, Pennsylvania State University, November 2011.

"*Last Train Home* and Migration in China Today." Film screening and presentation for University of California, San Diego students, Shanghai, China, July 2011.

"Shanghai, 1800-2011." Saint Joseph's University, SJU-in-China Modern China course, Nanjing, China, June 2011.

"The Modern Girl in Motion: Women and Sports in the *Liangyou huabao*." "Popular Print Media, Visuality, and the Zigzag Road to Modernity in the Shanghai Global Metropolis, 1926-1949" conference, UC San Diego, San Diego, CA, June 2011.

"Taking Comics Seriously: Sanmao the Orphan on the Streets of Shanghai." Historical Society for Twentieth-Century China biennial meeting, Philadelphia, PA, June 2010.

"The 2010 Expo and the 'World's Fair Effect': The Making of a Global City" (presenter; paper co-authored with Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom). "China on Display: From 19th-Century Museums to 21st-Century Expos" workshop, Washington, D.C., June 2010.

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Managing Editor, GradHacker, August 2014-present

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Shanghai's Wandering Ones: Child Welfare in a Global City, 1900–1953

By

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Doctor of Philosophy in History

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The large-scale migration that resulted in the rapid growth of Shanghai during the early twentieth century brought wealth and international recognition to the city, but also created a number of social problems that reformers and philanthropists struggled to address. These social problems included several issues related to child welfare, and both foreign and Chinese residents of the city attempted to save children from kidnapping, abuse, poor living conditions, and poverty. Working together and in parallel, expatriate and Chinese advocates created a child welfare system that was private, fragmented, and voluntary.

After the start of the Second Sino-Japanese War in 1937, child welfare work focused on addressing the needs of young refugees and homeless children; resolving these social problems stood as the primary goal of private charities and the local government throughout the civil war (1945–1949) and into the early years of the People's Republic of China. Although private charity institutions, both foreign and Chinese, continued to operate in the city after the communist government took over, by 1953, they had been consolidated under the auspices of the Shanghai Municipal Government.

This dissertation traces the history of child welfare work in Shanghai from the beginning of the twentieth century until 1953. It presents child aid efforts in the city as a site of Chinese-foreign cooperation, and examines the attitudes that foreigners and Chinese displayed toward Chinese children, their lives, and their futures. Through this research, we can gain a better understanding of the history of children and childhood in China during decades of great change, as well as see the ways that Shanghai's Chinese and foreign communities worked together to improve the welfare of the city's smallest and most vulnerable residents. The examination of popular culture materials produced for children offers insight into how social ills like child homelessness and poverty were explained to a juvenile audience, and how that message changed after the implementation of communist rule in 1949. Child welfare work in Shanghai reflected discourses about children and society's obligations toward them that circulated far beyond China in the first decades of the twentieth century.

“The Song of Wandering Children”

... All day long, we pace to and fro on the streets,
We are forever adrift at the ends of the earth;
Our food is the spoiled soup and cold rice of the world,
Our sleeping spots are on tumbledown streets, wind and rain approaching,
Our clothes are filthy tatters and rags.
We find nothing to eat—how much longer must we go hungry?
A bitter winter approaches—and we can do nothing but shiver!
Could it be that we are lowly dogs by nature?
Could it be that we are not born of mothers and fathers?
Why does the country not give us jobs to go to?
Why does society silently ignore us?
Could it be that our lives are really to be spent in this wandering burial?

... 我們整日祇是在街頭躑躅徘徊,
我們永遠祇是漂泊在海角天涯;
我們吃的是人間的敗羹冷飯,
我們睡的是風雨來臨的頹垣街間,
我們穿的是污濁的破衣不全。
找不到食物的當兒還要挨餓幾餐!
嚴寒侵臨的時候祇有顫抖連連!
難道我們是天生的賤骨狗胎?
難道我們不是爸媽生育出來?
為什麼國家不給我們工作的所在?
為什麼社會對我們無聲無睬?
難道我們的一生真要在流浪中葬埋?[1]

[1] “Liulang ertong de ge” (The Song of Wandering Children), *Xin sheng* 1 (1934), Shanghai Municipal Archives (hereafter SMA) D2-0-849-765. Many thanks to Brendan O’Kane for reviewing my translation of this poem and offering crucial suggestions to help its flow better match that of the original Chinese.

Frontispiece: Two sides of childhood in Shanghai, c. 1915. Source: Virtual Shanghai digital archive, image ID 2137.

INTRODUCTION:

THE CENTURY OF THE CHILD

In 1900, Swedish educator and author Ellen Key published *Barnets århundrade*, translated into English nine years later as *The Century of the Child*. In this international bestseller, Key argued that promoting child welfare needed to be the central project of society and government during the twentieth century: every youngster, she believed, had the right to a childhood unimpeded by labor, corporal punishment, and unhappiness. Although the particulars of Key's plans were not widely implemented—among other things, she hoped to see mothers leave the workforce and return to the home, where they could devote themselves to educating their offspring—her work tapped into a broader turn-of-the-century discourse about children, childhood, and development.[2] Across Western Europe and the United States, Progressive-era reformers, doctors, and educators worked to establish childhood as a protected period of one's life, a time when parents and the government shared responsibility (though not necessarily in equal measure) to ensure that youths received education and healthcare and did not suffer exploitation or abuse. Childhood as a legal category that brought with it certain rights and protections had grown out of the nineteenth century. Not just protecting children but actively fostering their development would, Key and others hoped, be the chief project of the twentieth century—the Century of the Child.

Many of these ideas found their way to China, where both expatriate Euro-Americans and reform-minded Chinese sought to implement improvements in child welfare throughout the first

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[2] Ellen Key, *The Century of the Child* (New York and London: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1909).

three decades of the twentieth century. Though they often shared similar goals, members of these groups did not necessarily pursue them for the same reasons. Foreign missionaries hoped that children educated in their schools would become Christians; Chinese nationalists expected that youngsters who received Western educations would help their country compete on the world stage. Western women opened residential homes where they taught rescued Chinese girls the skills of a middle-class London housewife, turning them from "slaves" to aspiring ladies; Chinese philanthropists founded workhouse-orphanages that trained boys in crafts like woodworking and printmaking, seeking to keep the children of the lower classes from falling into a life of vagrancy. But by working in parallel—and sometimes together—foreigners and Chinese created an informal, piecemeal child welfare system during decades when Chinese governments at several levels were largely unable to step in and provide such services.

The outbreak of war with Japan in 1937 brought a focus and intensity to child welfare work that it had lacked in the preceding decades. Caring for displaced and orphaned children became an international project, as both the Nationalist government and foreign aid organizations sought to protect China's youth. These efforts continued into the civil war years (1945–1949), when fighting, natural disasters, and famine continued to wreak havoc on the population. After the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1949, the hybrid Sino-foreign nature of the child welfare field remained intact for several years, before foreign workers eventually found themselves unable to continue their mission in China due to political opposition both in their home countries and in the PRC.

This dissertation is a social and cultural history that considers child welfare work and the place of the Chinese child in both foreign and Chinese imaginations during the first half of the

twentieth century. It explains how urbanization and government involvement made twentieth-century child welfare institutions different from those of imperial China and attempts to trace various discourses about childhood and explain how they translated into on-the-ground efforts to "save" Chinese children, both from their present circumstances and future possibilities. It examines the links that different groups saw between children and the Chinese polity, and the importance of children as "the future of the nation." Finally, it analyzes the figure of the Chinese child as a political symbol and site of political contestation, particularly in the wartime and early-PRC eras.

In many subtle ways, the twentieth century *was* the Century of the Child in China. From the beginning of the century, as imperial China was disintegrating, educators, doctors, psychologists, philanthropists, legal professionals, and government officials assigned a new importance to fostering the healthy development of children and sought to create the conditions that would enable it. Entrepreneurs promoted a children's market of goods that held the promise of transformation in the youngsters who consumed them, and parents eagerly purchased those products in the effort to improve their children's lives. During the long years of wartime that China endured in the middle of the century, children became a potent political symbol, both in China and the United States, and the treatment of youths was regarded as a way of measuring the humanity of the enemy. In Mao's China, improvements in child welfare were held up as proof of communism's superiority to capitalism. Although post-Mao China lies outside the scope of this dissertation, aside from a brief discussion in the Epilogue, Chinese children have remained prominent in the Western imagination throughout the Reform decades, often as stock characters that hint at Western fears of China: the Abandoned Daughter; the Little Emperor; the Super

Student. Children and child welfare rarely appear as "must-discuss" topics in surveys of twentieth-century China, but they are there, running like a thread through the larger tapestry of political events and social change that have transformed China since the late Qing dynasty. Investigating the history of children and childhood reveals links with China's experiences of modernity, urbanization, consumerism, nationalism, and communism.

In each of the following chapters, I move between two units of scale: large-scale discussions of abstract thinking about children and childhood in both China and the West, and small-scale descriptions of actual child welfare work performed in the city of Shanghai. I chose Shanghai as the focus of my research for a number of reasons, but primarily because of its cosmopolitan nature and multi-national treaty-port status between 1843 and 1943. In Shanghai's Chinese city and international concessions, many foreigners and Chinese worked to address the various child welfare issues that emerged in this growing metropolis. At the beginning of the twentieth century, those problems included child abuse and child labor; by the end of the civil war period, years of crisis had led to an enormous population of displaced children living on the city's sidewalks.

Twentieth-century Shanghai was often described as a city of highs and lows (a framing device still regularly employed today). It was a city where extreme wealth and extreme poverty existed side-by-side. At a discursive level, this frequently resulted in written or visual juxtapositions like the photograph I have selected as a frontispiece, which shows a young beggar on the street, clad in rags and eating from a tin can, while a well-dressed and happy child grins from inside his or her house. At the level of action, the city's wealth meant that a strong cohort of Chinese philanthropists emerged to fund social welfare projects, including orphanages and child

aid societies, throughout the late Qing and Republican years.[3] These institutions, as well as those operated by foreign groups, provide the case studies that I examine in the following chapters. The communist government, however, wanted social welfare services centralized under its control, and Shanghai's fragmented system of private charities was dismantled by the mid-1950s.[4] For this reason, I have ended my study in 1952, shortly after most foreigners had stepped down from their leadership roles and the Shanghai Municipal Government had consolidated or closed most of the pre-1949 orphanages and poor children's homes.

PRIMARY SOURCES

My research draws on a range of primary sources: newspapers and periodicals from both China and the United States, government documents, institutional papers and publications, and works of children's literature that attempted to explain child welfare issues to a juvenile audience. I have found newspapers particularly rich sources of material, as they contain detailed stories of day-to-day activities in child welfare work, as well as Letters to the Editor and Op-Ed pieces that illuminate how people thought about the needs of children and the obligations of society and government toward youngsters. In the post-1949 years, newspapers help us understand the stance of the PRC government toward foreign child advocacy workers (especially religious ones) and the story it sought to tell about Chinese society before and after Liberation. While the government positioned 1949 as a rupture—an irreparable break between the Old

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[3] Nara Dillon, "The Politics of Philanthropy: Social Networks and Refugee Relief in Shanghai, 1932–1949," in *At the Crossroads of Empires: Middlemen, Social Networks, and State-Building in Republican Shanghai*, eds. Nara Dillon and Jean C. Oi (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008), 179.

[4] Nara Dillon, "New Democracy and the Demise of Private Charity in Shanghai," in *Dilemmas of Victory: The Early Years of the People's Republic of China*, eds. Jeremy Brown and Paul G. Pickowicz (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 80-102.

Society and New China—I join other historians of the early 1950s in considering these years as a transition period, a time of initial cooperation followed by increasing governmental pressure on society and voluntary organizations to submit to state authority.[5]

As is the case for many scholars working in the field of childhood studies, while researching this dissertation I found myself unable to locate sources written by children that described their life experiences in their own words. The difficulty of obtaining sources authored by children themselves is what Peter N. Stearns describes as the "granddaddy issue" of childhood studies, one which is further compounded by the near impossibility of finding materials that speak to the experiences of children at the low end of the socio-economic spectrum.[6] We can learn quite a lot about what adults thought when they looked at China's impoverished children, and the actions they took in response to those ideas, but practically nothing about how those children experienced poverty or what they thought about their own lives. Unfortunately, conventional libraries and archives rarely contain documents authored by children, such as diaries, essays, short stories, or drawings, and I have been unsuccessful so far in my attempt to locate such materials through other means (antique markets and the kongfz.com used book website being the two I consider most likely to yield fruit). As a result, like many works in the field of childhood studies, this dissertation is a story about children and childhood, but lacks children's voices. I have tried to compensate for that by seeking out children's stories in newspapers and archival documents, hoping that in some limited way, this will provide insight into the lives of Shanghai's youth during the first half of the twentieth century.

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[5] For detailed examinations of how this transition period played out in various sectors and regions of the country, see Jeremy Brown and Paul G. Pickowicz, eds., *Dilemmas of Victory: The Early Years of the People's Republic of China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007).

[6] Peter N. Stearns, "Challenges in the History of Childhood," *Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth* 1, no. 1 (Winter 2008): 35-37.

Many foreigners who traveled to China in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries took numerous photographs of the poor conditions they saw in the country. They often selected children as the subjects of their photos, composing shots that formed a narrative about China that emphasized its dirt, its poverty, and the tragic plight of its youth. An enormous number of their photographs has been collected by the Virtual Shanghai digital archive.[7] Though I use only a select few of these photos in the pages that follow, I have spent many hours clicking through the Virtual Shanghai archive and considering the images it contains, pondering the story that foreign photographers sought to tell about China as they directed their viewfinders toward these scenes. Photographic frames, of course, exclude far more than they include, and the choices that photographers make about what to document and what to bypass can reveal a great deal. I have tried to remain mindful of the limitations of these photographs as historical sources, but also value them for the glimpses of children's lives that they do offer.

Finally, I also make extensive use in Chapters 4 and 5 of *Sanmao the Orphan* cartoons drawn by artist Zhang Leping in the late 1940s and 1950s. Zhang's comic strips followed the travails of a homeless boy named Sanmao in Shanghai during the time of the Civil War, depicting Sanmao's struggles to stay alive and find a home amid chaos. Though the cartoons were decidedly fictional—I am not arguing that they were an exact representation of 1940s Shanghai—Sanmao's plight was definitely based on the lives of vagrant children Zhang saw living on the city streets, and the comic strips called public attention to the needs of displaced and family-less youth. After the founding of the PRC, Zhang began drawing Sanmao as a child of Mao's New China, who finally found happiness as a cared-for ward of the state, and the

[7] Available at http://www.virtualshanghai.net/Photos/Images (accessed July 13, 2014).

narrative increasingly followed the Old Society/New China break that I discuss above. I use Zhang's cartoons to explore the interactions between children's popular culture and political issues in 1940s and '50s China.

SECONDARY LITERATURE

Childhood Studies

This dissertation engages with the history of children and of childhood, a comparatively new area of historical research—the Society for the History of Children and Youth was only founded in 2001, and its related journal began publication in 2008. Despite the relatively recent arrival of childhood studies as a general research field, studies of childhood as a subfield within Euro-American history has a somewhat longer history, almost unanimously dated to the 1960 publication of Philippe Ariès's *L'Enfant et la vie familiale sous l'ancien régime*, translated into English two years later as *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life*. Ariès attempted to historicize childhood by tracing the European discovery of childhood between the thirteenth and seventeenth centuries and argued that before this period, society had no conception of childhood as a distinct phase of life.[8] Over the following decades, historians endlessly debated the assertions of *Centuries of Childhood*, becoming mired in arguments over the accuracy of Ariès's thesis and the strength of the evidence he used to support it. In a 2010 article marking the book's 50th anniversary, Colin Heywood called for an end to this dissection of *Centuries of Childhood*, suggesting that although Ariès's study was a pathbreaking work in its day and had

[8] Philippe Ariès, *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life*, trans. Robert Baldick (New York: Vintage, 1962), 34.

sparked a surge of interest in the history of childhood, the time had come to "retire" it and focus on fresher contributions to the field.[9]

Depending on the geographic focus of one's work, the quantity (to say nothing of quality) of those newer publications on childhood studies varies greatly. Historians of Western Europe and the United States were the first to bring childhood studies into their disciplines in a sustained manner, and these regions continue to dominate the field.[10] Many monographs consider the history of child poverty and the experiences of lower-class youth in industrializing cities like London and New York; I have drawn inspiration from a number of these studies in the course of my research.[11] In the 1990s, scholars of Latin America whose research centered on questions related to slavery, gender, and marriage began to notice that children often danced around the edges of these topics, and historians increasingly moved children from the periphery to the center of their work.[12] Scholars of the former Soviet Union have also authored several useful studies of childhood under a communist regime, which offer material for comparative analysis of the Soviet Union and post-1949 China.[13]

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[9] Colin Heywood, "*Centuries of Childhood*: An Anniversary—And an Epitaph?" *Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth* 3, no. 3 (2010): 344.

[10] Stearns, "Challenges in the History of Childhood," 38-39.

[11] Laura Lee Downs, *Childhood in the Promised Land: Working-Class Movements and the Colonies de Vacances in France, 1880–1960* (Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press, 2002); Timothy A. Hacsi, *Second Home: Orphan Asylums and Poor Families in America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997); Kriste Lindenmeyer, *"A Right to Childhood": The U.S. Children's Bureau and Child Welfare, 1912–46* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1997); Lydia Murdoch, *Imagined Orphans: Poor Families, Child Welfare, and Contested Citizenship in London* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2006).

[12] For a history of childhood studies in Latin America and a survey of the field, see Bianca Premo, "How Latin America's History of Childhood Came of Age," *Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth* 1, no. 1 (Winter 2008): 63-76.

[13] Alan M. Ball, *And Now My Soul Is Hardened: Abandoned Children in Soviet Russia, 1918–1930* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994); Lisa A. Kirschenbaum, *Small Comrades: Revolutionizing Childhood in Soviet Russia, 1917–1932* (New York: RoutledgeFarmer, 2001); Ann Livschiz, "Growing Up Soviet: Childhood in the Soviet Union, 1918–1958" (PhD diss., Stanford University, 2007).

In the China field, however, the bibliography of childhood-related works is a brief one. The most well-known scholar to focus on this topic is Hsiung Ping-chen, author of *A Tender Voyage: Children and Childhood in Late Imperial China* and *Childhood in the Past: A History of Chinese Children* (童年憶往—中國孩子的歷史 *Tongnian yi wang—Zhongguo haizi de lishi*), as well as a 2008 *Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth* state of the field article.[14] In reviewing English-language publications on Chinese childhood studies, Hsiung cites only three book-length works: her own *A Tender Voyage*; Jon L. Saari's *Legacies of Childhood: Growing Up Chinese in a Time of Crisis*, and *Chinese Views of Childhood*, a collection of essays edited by Anne Behnke Kinney.[15] Hsiung's research, and nine of the eleven essays in Kinney's volume, focus on studies of Chinese childhood in the nineteenth century and earlier, exploring topics such as family relations, the development of pediatric medicine, infanticide, and education across the various dynasties of imperial China.

Saari's book on Chinese schoolboys in the Qing-Republican transition period aside, studies of children and childhood in twentieth-century China have been lagging behind in this already tiny field, although a few recent dissertations reflect a growing (though still very small) interest in the topic. Norman Apter's thesis surveys child welfare work from the Song dynasty through the Reform Era, focusing primarily on changes and continuities in such efforts across the

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[14] Hsiung Ping-chen, *A Tender Voyage: Children and Childhood in Late Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005); *eadem*, *Tongnian yi wang—Zhongguo haizi de lishi* (Childhood in the Past: A History of Chinese Children) (Guilin: Guangxi shifan daxue chubanshe, 2008); *eadem*, "Treading a Different Path?: Thoughts on Childhood Studies in Chinese History," *Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth* 1, no. 1 (Winter 2008): 77-85.

[15] Hsiung, *A Tender Voyage*, 5-8; "Treading a Different Path?", 78. Jon L. Saari, *Legacies of Childhood: Growing Up Chinese in a Time of Crisis, 1890–1920* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990); Anne Behnke Kinney, ed., *Chinese Views of Childhood* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1995).

twentieth century.[16] Colette Plum examines the figure of the "warphan," or war orphan, during the Anti-Japanese War, analyzing the programs undertaken by the Chinese state to provide for these children and indoctrinate them with patriotic values, as well as the symbolic weight of the warphan in Chinese political discourse.[17] Although Jia-Chen Fu's work does not strictly fall into childhood studies, as she traces the development of biomedical nutrition research in China during the first half of the twentieth century, Fu considers the link between discussions of children's health and ideas of Chinese national strength.[18] Over the past several years, I have met a number of other graduate students just embarking on research into related topics, and expect that our understanding of the child's place in twentieth-century China will continue to grow in the decades to come as the childhood studies field expands.

Shanghai Studies

In its focus on Shanghai, this dissertation joins a body of literature that has grown remarkably large since the 1990s. In recent decades, scholars have conducted in-depth investigations of late Qing and Republican Shanghai's commercial economy, newspapers,

[16] Norman D. Apter, "Saving the Young: A History of the Child Relief Movement in Modern China" (PhD diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 2013).

[17] M. Colette Plum, "Unlikely Heirs: War Orphans During the Second Sino-Japanese War, 1937–1945" (PhD diss., Stanford University, 2006).

[18] Jia-Chen Fu, "Society's Laboratories: Biomedical Nutrition and the Chinese Body, 1910–50" (PhD diss., Yale University, 2009).

prostitution, student protests, artistic sphere, migrant communities, and quotidian life.[19] Shanghai's archives—comparatively open and accessible at a time when those in other regions of the country were still closed—as well as its unique Sino-foreign nature and cosmopolitan ties during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries made the city an attractive and intriguing place to conduct research. With each publication, historians are adding a piece to the puzzle, gradually creating a more comprehensive picture of what life in the city was like in the decades before 1949, a period generally termed "Old Shanghai."

Many of the books published in the past two decades have attempted to correct a previous trend in writing about the city, which focused almost exclusively on the lives and activities of foreigners in Shanghai. Autobiographies by "Shanghailanders," or British/American expatriates in the treaty-port era, generally paid little attention to the presence of Chinese in the city, beyond their occasional mentions of "coolies" and "amahs." (This tendency was exemplified by a tongue-in-cheek 1936 guidebook written by two foreigners, who titled their final chapter "There Are Also Some Chinese In Shanghai."[20]) Between the 1950s and 1980s, as Jeffrey Wasserstrom notes in a 2001 review article considering trends in literature on Shanghai, former

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[19] The books alone dealing with Shanghai during the century preceding 1949 are almost too numerous to count, but major works in English that I have drawn on throughout my research (in addition to the many others cited in the following chapters) include Marie-Claire Bergère, *Shanghai: China's Gateway to Modernity*, trans. Janet Lloyd (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009); Bryna Goodman, *Native Place, City, and Nation: Regional Networks and Identities in Shanghai, 1853–1937* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995); Gail Hershatter, *Dangerous Pleasures: Prostitution and Modernity in Twentieth-Century Shanghai* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997); Leo Ou-fan Lee, *Shanghai Modern: The Flowering of a New Urban Culture in China, 1930–1945* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999); Hanchao Lu, *Beyond the Neon Lights: Everyday Shanghai in the Early Twentieth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999); Lynn Pan, *Shanghai Style: Art and Design Between the Wars* (San Francisco: Long River Press, 2008); Christopher A. Reed, *Gutenberg in Shanghai: Chinese Print Capitalism, 1876–1937* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2006); Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom, *Global Shanghai, 1850–2010: A History in Fragments* (London: Routledge, 2009); Frederic Wakeman, Jr., *Policing Shanghai, 1927–1937* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995); Frederic Wakeman, Jr. and Wen-hsin Yeh, eds., *Shanghai Sojourners* (Berkeley: University of California, Berkeley Institute of East Asian Studies, 1992); Wen-hsin Yeh, *Shanghai Splendor: Economic Sentiments and the Making of Modern China, 1843–1949* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

[20] Maurine Karns and Pat Patterson, *Shanghai: High Lights, Low Lights, Tael Lights* (1936; reprint, Hong Kong: Earnshaw Books, 2011.

Shanghailanders attempted to defend their presence in the city by pointing to its economic growth during the treaty-port century (which they claimed credit for), while Marxist historians, both Chinese and foreign, celebrated stories that told of "bold Chinese efforts to rid the city and the nation of imperialist institutions."[21] Whether these books celebrated or condemned the pre-1949 foreign presence in the city, they shared a conviction that the most important feature of Old Shanghai was its large community of Euro-American expatriates.

With new access to archives in the 1980s, as well as the rise of urban history and social history, both Chinese and foreign historians began breaking new ground in their research as the Reform Era got underway.[22] Many of the books I have read and drawn on throughout my years in graduate school have primarily focused on the lives of Chinese in Shanghai—acknowledging the foreign community and the contribution its culture made to the metropolis's unique cosmopolitan flavor, but paying more attention to the daily lives of *Shanghairen* (上海人), or the Chinese inhabitants of the city. This move toward a China-centered history of Old Shanghai is perhaps most clearly exemplified by Hanchao Lu's *Beyond the Neon Lights: Everyday Shanghai in the Early Twentieth Century*. Lu argues that previous urban histories of Shanghai placed far too much emphasis on the cosmopolitan, treaty-port side of the city, which affected the lives of comparatively few Chinese. He seeks to bring out the texture of everyday life among residents of the city's shantytowns and alleyway communities (弄堂 *longtang*). This focus on the "little urbanites" (小市民 *xiaoshimin*) and urban poor helps to shed light on what life was like for the

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[21] Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom, "New Approaches to Old Shanghai," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* XXXII (Autumn 2001): 268.

[22] As Joshua Fogel writes in a 2010 survey of literature on Shanghai that serves as a useful update to Wasserstrom's 2001 article, one of the notable recent developments has been research done by some Chinese and Japanese historians on the Japanese community in twentieth-century Shanghai, a group almost entirely ignored by those in the Anglophone academic world. Joshua A. Fogel, "The Recent Boom in Shanghai Studies," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 71, no. 2 (April 2010): 313-333.

large group of Chinese who sat at the bottom of Shanghai's socio-economic hierarchy. Lu's work is a valuable one for its insight into the daily lives and practices of Shanghai's *xiaoshimin* and urban poor, but he perhaps over-corrects in his attempt to focus on Chinese stories and bypass those of foreigners.[23]

In this dissertation, I attempt to chart a middle course between the two previous approaches of Shanghai studies, demonstrating that the history of child welfare work in the city is a story in which both Chinese and Westerners play important roles. Members of both groups set up orphanages and child aid organizations; both saw reasons to be concerned about the lives of children in Shanghai and acted to resolve these problems. Foreign-run children's homes employed Chinese workers, and Chinese-led child welfare organizations included expatriate members. Focusing on one group and ignoring the other would result in an incomplete study of a topic that demonstrates cooperation and coordination between expatriates and Chinese in Shanghai.

This dissertation also differs slightly from many of the works cited above in its time span, which stretches from the turn of the twentieth century to 1952. Most previous histories of Old Shanghai also began sometime in the nineteenth or early twentieth centuries, but then ended either in 1937 (when the Second Sino-Japanese War broke out) or 1949 (when the Communists won their civil war with the Nationalists). This periodization implies that social, cultural, economic, and political structures did not survive the wartime years and were certainly wiped out with the advent of communist rule. In extending my discussion of child welfare into the first years of the PRC, however, I am joining other historians who look "beyond the 1949 divide" to

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[23] Wasserstrom, "New Approaches to Old Shanghai," 274-279.

understand how those earlier structures fared under the new government, asking what were the conditions of their endurance, and what were the circumstances of their end.[24] As discussed above and in Chapter 5, I believe that historians must do more to move away from the "everything changed in 1949" narrative promoted by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and often reflexively taught in surveys of twentieth-century history in American classrooms. By undertaking such work, we can achieve a more fine-grained understanding of Sino-foreign relations in the early PRC years, as well as the mechanisms and political discourses used by the CCP when it did move to consolidate its power and eliminate not only foreigners but also other non-governmental bases of action after an initial period of toleration.

Overview of the Dissertation

This dissertation consists of an introduction, five chapters divided into two parts, and an epilogue. Part I, "Save the Children!", encompasses Chapters 1 and 2, and extends from the nineteenth century through 1937. Chapter 1, "Child Welfare and International Shanghai in Late-Qing China," offers a quick history of child welfare work in imperial China before turning to the child-saving efforts of foreigners living in Shanghai during the first decade of the twentieth century. It considers how Shanghai resembled industrializing global cities in the West, and how Progressive-era ideas about children and childhood influenced the actions of expatriates in Shanghai. In Chapter 2, "Child Welfare and Chinese Nationalism," I explore the connection between changes in ideas about childhood and fears of Chinese national extinction. In the name

[24] Two recent monographs that stretch from the early twentieth century to the first years of the PRC are Janet Chen, *Guilty of Indigence: The Urban Poor in China, 1900–1953* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012) and Andrew David Field, *Shanghai's Dancing World: Cabaret Culture and Urban Politics, 1919–1954* (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 2010). Hershatter, *Dangerous Pleasures*, also devotes considerable attention to changes and continuities in Shanghai's prostitution trade after 1949.

of bulking up national strength, philanthropists opened workhouse-orphanages and entrepreneurs offered *xiaoshimin* parents a panoply of goods to purchase for their children. I draw on some of the periodicals put out by Shanghai's massive publishing industry to detail the messages about child welfare and child poverty that were being disseminated to readers (both adults and children). Together, these two chapters describe a child welfare apparatus that was wide-ranging but haphazard, largely funded by private donors and dependent on committed individuals rather than government agencies to keep it afloat.

Part II, "Crisis and Recovery," covers the years from 1937 to 1953 and describes the increasing cohesion of the child welfare system under the Nationalist and Communist states. Chapter 3, "Child Welfare and the Second Sino-Japanese War," is set between 1937 and 1945 and describes new challenges that wartime conditions brought to those workers and activists, both Chinese and foreign, attempting to help the ever-increasing number of vagrant children and orphans in Shanghai. In Chapter 4, "Child Welfare in Civil War Shanghai," I recount the plight of Shanghai's displaced children between 1945 and 1949, and the various efforts to assist them in the face of tremendous obstacles. I again employ print culture as a window into social issues, using Zhang Leping's *The Wandering Life of Sanmao* to describe how one artist understood the troubles these children faced. The first three years of the PRC is the backdrop for Chapter 5, "Child Welfare in Early PRC Shanghai," which describes the end of foreign aid to children in Shanghai and the CCP takeover of existing institutions in the city. I argue that political conditions in both China and the United States as the Cold War and Korean conflict got underway made the continued presence of foreign child aid workers in China a near impossibility, but that this eventuality was far from clear in October 1949. In the Epilogue, I

bring the story into the present day, when child welfare is again a pressing concern for both the Chinese government and society and many of the gains made during the Mao era seem to be eroding in the face of new social forces, particularly migration.

Throughout the first half of the twentieth century, intellectuals and reformers debated child welfare in the abstract, attempting to decide what obligations society and government have toward children. At the same time, child welfare problems presented very real day-to-day issues that aid workers, philanthropists, local governments, and parents had to contend with. My dissertation considers both sides of this topic, looking at both abstract debates and concrete responses. It examines how Chinese and foreigners worked, both together and in parallel, to address child welfare problems in Shanghai, and the role that international aid organizations and religious groups played in this endeavor. Finally, it blends social and cultural history to consider how popular culture reflected the on-the-ground experiences of Shanghai's vagrant children and the story the government sought to tell about how the lives of these "wandering children" changed after 1949.

A NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY

What is a child? There's no simple answer to this question that holds true across time and place. I have found it impossible to set a clear boundary around the childhood years—to say that anyone under the age of X should be considered a child—and so must fall back on a less satisfactory and more relativist understanding of childhood. For the purposes of this study, a child must simply be whomever others identify as a child and seek to help in the name of child welfare. In Chinese, the salient distinction is between an *ertong* (兒童) and a *qingnian* (青年), or

youth. *Qingnian*, as Fabio Lanza has argued, generally has a political connotation in twentieth-century China, while *ertong* lacks this association.[25]

To be sure, not all the "children" helped by various child welfare institutions would have recognized themselves as such, particularly those entering what we would now call the teenage years. A 14-year-old boy who had been living on his own and scrapping for survival on the street might not consider himself a "child," yet if he were picked up by the police and brought to the Shanghai International Settlement's Mixed Court, he could easily be sent to a residence home for indigent children. Thus, that boy has a place in this dissertation, despite his ambiguous identity as a child.

"Orphan" (孤兒 *gu'er*) is a similarly slippery word to employ. Many of the children residing in Shanghai's orphanages were not, strictly speaking, orphans: they might have had one living parent, or even two, but been placed in a residential institution because their indigent families were unable to care for them, as will be explained in Chapter 2. For simplicity's sake—particularly since in many cases, I am unable to know the specifics of a child's family situation, unless it is noted in the relevant records—I employ "orphans" as a general term to describe those children living in Shanghai's orphanages. With the arrival of the Second Sino-Japanese War, the term *nantong* (難童), or "refugee child," also entered the phrasebook.[26]

For children living on the city's streets, Chinese offers us the lyrical term *liulang ertong* (流浪兒童), or "wandering children." More commonly translated as "homeless," "vagrant," or

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[25] Fabio Lanza, "Springtime and Morning Suns: 'Youth' as a Political Category in Twentieth-Century China," *Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth* 5, no. 1 (2012): 31-51. Though I regularly use the word "youth" in this dissertation, I mean it in its English form—as a variant for "child," lacking a political connotation—unless otherwise noted.

[26] M. Colette Plum, "Orphans in the Family: Family Reform and Children's Citizenship during the Anti-Japanese War, 1937–45." In *Beyond Suffering: Recounting War in Modern China*, eds. James Flath and Norman Smith (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2011), 189-190.

"stray" children, the phrase nevertheless captures the sense of youth being tossed about by fate: *liulang* is formed by joining characters that mean "to circulate or drift" and "wave" (as in an ocean wave). I use various translations of the phrase interchangeably, but consider "wandering children" an especially apt description for the youngsters cast about on the streets of Shanghai.

Determining age can be difficult, as the traditional Chinese and Western systems do not match up. Traditional Chinese ages are given in *sui* (歲), which considers a child one year old at the time of birth. Westerners, of course, count a child's age in months until a full year has passed from the time of his or her birth. In the interest of simplicity—and because I cannot know otherwise—I have retained the original usage for all ages taken from historical records: in general, this means that Chinese authors refer to *sui*, while foreigners talk in terms of years. As a result, we might consider all ages for children mentioned here approximations, rather than absolute values.

Part I:

“Save the Children!”: 1900–1937

CHAPTER 1:

CHILD WELFARE AND INTERNATIONAL SHANGHAI IN LATE-QING CHINA

The Jesuits never intended to open an orphanage. The scholars and theologians who made their home in the sprawling French Jesuit complex that sat in southern Shanghai's Xujiahui (徐家匯) district occupied their days with academic pursuits: they built an astronomical observatory, zoological and botanical museums, a seismographical center, and a library reputed to hold 100,000 volumes, many of them in Chinese.[27] They also ran a small college for Chinese students, some of them destined for the priesthood. Settling in Xujiahui in the early nineteenth century, the Jesuits regarded their mission as an intellectual one; they would recruit Chinese souls for Catholicism through nourishing their minds.

The Small Swords Uprising (1853) and Taiping Civil War (1851–1864), however, forced the Jesuits to reconsider their Shanghai endeavors. Battles in the countryside around the city ravaged the population, leaving behind enormous numbers of children with no parents and no homes. The missionaries began taking in these orphans on an ad hoc basis, but quickly found themselves asked to consider broadening their relief efforts. In 1864, leaders of Shanghai's Chinese community approached the order with a big request: would the Jesuits consider providing refuge to 600 needy children?[28]

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[27] D.J. Kavanagh, S.J., *The Zi-ka-wei Orphanage* (San Francisco: The James H. Barry Company, n.d.), 5; Li Tiangang, "Xujiahui: Shanghai de 'Lading qu'" (Xujiahui: Shanghai's "Latin Quarter"), in *Lishi shang de Xujiahui* (Zi-ka-wei in History), ed. Zhou Xiufen (Shanghai: Shanghai wenhua chubanshe, 2005), 16-21. "Zi-ka-wei" and "Siccawei" are both alternative romanizations of Xujiahui.

[28] Kavanagh, *The Zi-ka-wei Orphanage*, 11.

The Jesuits agreed, and the Tushanwan Orphanage (土山灣孤兒院 Tushanwan gu'eryuan) was born.[29] Its initial years did not go smoothly. Because of the haste with which the institution was founded, as well as the chaos of wartime, the orphanage suffered from resource shortages and had to house its nearly one thousand residents in straw huts. Typhoid broke out and raced through the population, killing huge numbers of children and causing the deaths of many adult caretakers. When a new building was constructed in 1866 as a home for the orphanage, only 343 boys moved in.[30]

Despite this inauspicious beginning, Tushanwan would right itself and remain in operation for nearly a century. Until its closure in 1960, it would stand as one of the leading child welfare institutions in Shanghai, dedicated to the mission of housing, feeding, and educating thousands of young boys whose families had died or been unable to care for them. Tushanwan went far beyond simply warehousing children or preparing them for lives as unskilled laborers: the institution also trained its residents in fine arts, teaching the boys crafts such as painting, woodworking, and printmaking. Those who emerged from the orphanage craft workshop (孤兒工藝院 *gu'er gongyi yuan*) had the knowledge needed to find gainful employment in Chinese society. Tushanwan became a leader in Shanghai's artistic community, enjoying such success that the workshop's students sent an elaborately carved wooden entrance arch, as well as a variety of other workshop products, to display at the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco (Figure 1.1). The stunning arch now enjoys pride of place in the foyer of the museum that occupies the old Tushanwan buildings today (Figure 1.2).

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[29] The orphanage's name is frequently romanized as "T'ou-sè-wè" in older English- and French-language sources.

[30] Kavanagh, *The Zi-ka-wei Orphanage*, 11-12.

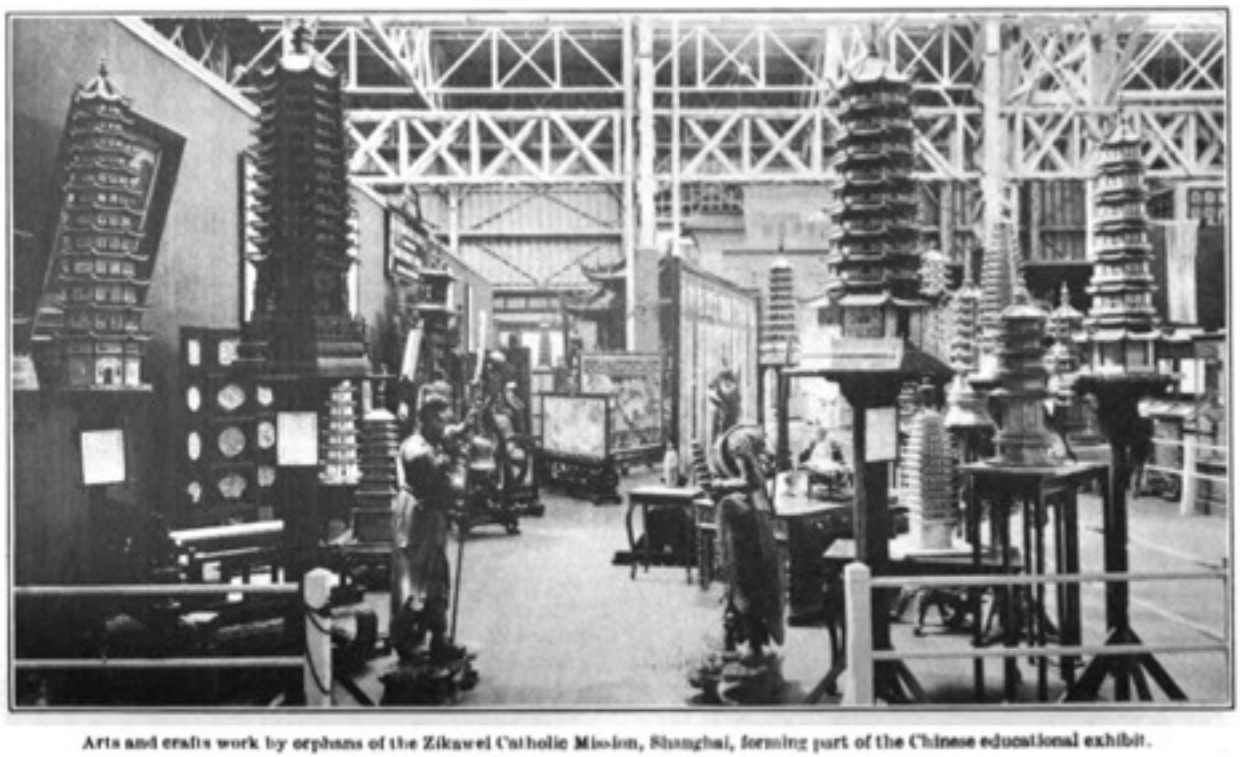

Figure 1.1: Products made by the students at the Tushanwan Orphanage Craft Workshop on display at the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco. Source: W. Carson Ryan, Jr., *Education Exhibits at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1916), 76.

Figure 1.2: The carved wooden arch that Tushanwan students sent to display the 1915 Panama-Pacific Exposition in San Francisco, California. The arch now stands in the foyer of the Tushanwan Orphanage Museum in Shanghai's Xujiahui District. (Photo by author)

The Jesuits of Tushanwan acted *in loco parentis*, not only preparing boys for future employment but also stepping in to assume the roles that their families might have otherwise performed. Like other residential institutions for family-less youth, Tushanwan tried to send its "graduates" out into the world with a partner, arranging marriages between young men and girls

whose families wanted a respectable match but could not afford marriage on the open market.[31] Religious instruction represented a major component of Tushanwan life, and the Fathers worked hard to ensure that "the dangers to faith and morals which the young men have to face when they leave the orphanage" would not prove the undoing of their former charges. To this end, they encouraged "old boys" to remain part of the Tushanwan community, living nearby and returning for regular reunions.[32] Though Tushanwan was at its core a charity institution, its institutional framework, curriculum, and promotion of an alumni network resemble those of private Catholic schools around the world (understandable, perhaps, given that the Jesuits were far more accustomed to running schools than orphanages). Students participated in sports and even had an orphanage marching band.

Tushanwan, then, was far more than a foundling home or orphan asylum—residential facilities that provided for children's basic needs but did not necessarily nurture them. It was instead an institution that sought to raise children, the Fathers taking on the task of looking out for the welfare of the Chinese youths who entered through its doors and seeking to ensure that they would become productive members of society after they exited.

By the early twentieth century, Tushanwan was just one of many child welfare institutions in Shanghai ministering to the needs of the city's growing population of indigent and family-less children. Both Westerners and Chinese founded homes that provided refuge to stray

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[31] Similar matchmaking practices in institutions for women are described in Ruth Rogaski, "Beyond Benevolence: A Confucian Women's Shelter in Treaty-Port China," *Journal of Women's History* 8, no. 4 (Winter 1997): 54-90; Vivienne Shue, "The Quality of Mercy: Confucian Charity and the Mixed Metaphors of Modernity in Tianjin," *Modern China* 32, no. 4 (October 2006): 436-437; and Chris White, "'To Rescue the Wretched Ones': Saving Chinese Slave Girls in Republican Xiamen," *Twentieth-Century China* 39, no. 1 (January 2014): 44-68. Tushanwan's matchmaking efforts are related in video interviews with former residents that play in the museum exhibit that now occupies the former orphanage.

[32] Kavanagh, *The Zi-ka-wei Orphanage*, 16; Zhang Hua, "Shanghai Tianzhujiao hui de zhongyao jigou" (The Important Organization of the Catholic Church in Shanghai), in *Tushanwan jiyi* (The Memory of T'ou-sè-wè), ed. Song Haojie (Shanghai: Xuelin chubanshe, 2010), 69-72.

children, youths who were rescued from child labor, and those whose parents could not afford to provide for them. These facilities drew together members of Shanghai's Chinese and Western populations, who worked side by side as they tended to the needs of the city's wandering children. Several children's homes received financial assistance from the Shanghai Municipal Council (SMC), the governing body of the British-American International Settlement, and the Settlement's Mixed Court also facilitated their work by sending children who appeared before the Court to reside in the homes.

These orphanages and refuges supplemented those already in existence, such as Tushanwan and other Catholic facilities, as well as traditional Chinese foundling homes. Often religious (meaning Protestant Christian) in nature, they promoted a Progressive-era vision of childhood as a protected time in a person's life, while simultaneously teaching their residents useful skills that would prepare them for futures in middle-class society. The history of these institutions sheds light on many facets of turn-of-the-century Shanghai: the city's growth, which was accompanied by an increase in needy populations; the emergence of child welfare as an issue of concern to both Chinese and foreigners; and the ways in which both groups worked, sometimes together and sometimes in parallel, to address emerging social problems in a rapidly changing metropolis.

This chapter first briefly introduces the history of child welfare work in imperial China before turning to focus on Shanghai at the beginning of the twentieth century and the growth of child welfare institutions there. In this chapter, I primarily discuss foreign efforts at child-saving, while Chinese work will be examined in greater detail in Chapter 2.

EARLY CHILD WELFARE WORK IN CHINA

Foundling Homes and Philanthropy

Orphaned or unwanted children occupied an uneasy place in the Confucian-oriented society of imperial China. They did not belong to a family, and therefore sat outside the accepted social order, representing a threat to stability if their numbers grew too large. In the eyes of nervous bureaucrats, "People without homes and families were people out of control."[33] The Confucian ideal was to see such children adopted, which would re-insert them into the familial structure and thus ensure that they had a secure spot in Chinese society. During the Southern Song dynasty (1127–1279), the imperial government began offering incentives to families willing to adopt children under three *sui* (歲) of age, providing a daily rice stipend to alleviate the financial burden of taking on another mouth to feed. The government also offered grain to destitute families, in the hopes that this assistance would discourage them from abandoning children due to hardship.[34] The Song state, therefore, took an active interest in working to prevent a significant population of family-less children from developing.

Despite the government's efforts to keep children in their families, however, some parents nevertheless chose or were forced to abandon their young ones, while other children were left orphaned by the death of their parents. To care for these family-less children, Southern Song-era local officials began to establish foundling homes (育嬰堂 *yuyingtang*[35]) where parents could deposit unwanted babies, or where abandoned children could be taken by those who discovered

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[33] Philip A. Kuhn, *Soulstealers: The Chinese Sorcery Scare of 1768* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), 44.

[34] Apter, "Saving the Young," 7-10.

[35] Foundling homes and similar organizations went by several other names, including *ciyouzhuang* (慈幼壯), *ciyouju* (慈幼局), and *ying'erju* (嬰兒局). Since *yuyingtang* is the term most commonly employed by scholars and its use has continued into the present day, I will use only that here for the sake of clarity.

them. Foundling homes employed wet nurses to provide sustenance to the children; some institutions permitted nurses to take their charges home with them and simply check in on a regular basis so the home's managers could ensure that the child was healthy. Other foundling homes required wet nurses to reside on site, keeping all the children together in a communal setting. Regardless of the home's setup, they all shared the same goal: to arrange for the adoption of foundlings as quickly as possible, with the promise of state-provided subsidies to help out adoptive parents with the costs of raising a child. When the Southern Song fell to the Yuan dynasty (1271–1368), however, government support dissolved and foundling homes foundered for the next four centuries.[36]

Child welfare institutions emerged again during the early Qing (1644–1912) period, although this time they relied not on state support but rather the efforts of elite philanthropists, who were increasingly active in addressing social-welfare issues.[37] Joanna Handlin Smith draws a clear distinction between the state-supported but often temporary charitable institutions of the Southern Song period, which were generally created in response to emergencies such as famines and closed once the crisis had passed, and the ones that grew in the Ming-Qing transition era, which were "locally sponsored, voluntary, widespread, and enduring."[38] In her study of late Ming-early Qing benevolent societies, Handlin Smith argues that their emergence was not solely a result of the poverty and dislocation that accompanied the dynastic transition—indigence and need, after all, were not unknown in earlier periods during Yuan or Ming rule.[39] Instead, she

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[36] Apter, "Saving the Young," 10-15.

[37] Liang Qizi (Angela Ki Che Leung), *Shishan yu jiaohua: Ming Qing de cishan zuzhi* (Taipei: Lianjing chubanshi yegongsi, 1997), 71-75; Joanna F. Handlin Smith, "Benevolent Societies: The Reshaping of Charity During the Late Ming and Early Ch'ing," *Journal of Asian Studies* 46, no. 2 (May 1987): 309-310.

[38] Handlin Smith, "Benevolent Societies," 310.

[39] Handlin Smith, "Benevolent Societies," 314.

views new elite interest in philanthropy during this era as a far broader phenomenon, which treated charitable deeds as the expression of moral purpose and also enabled civic-minded merchants and scholar-officials to dispose of the surplus wealth entering their wallets due to the influx of New World silver into China.[40] Though Handlin Smith's work only glances on the growth of foundling homes, they are one example of the institutions made possible by this new generosity.

In cities of the Lower Yangzi River (江南 Jiangnan) region, local elites funded foundling homes, though their concentration in urban centers meant that women in the countryside were still likely to engage in infanticide or child abandonment after giving birth to unwanted children.[41] In 1724, the Yongzheng Emperor (雍正 r. 1722–1735) granted the imperial imprimatur of approval to these institutions, issuing a decree that their work should be supported and expanded throughout the empire.[42] The number of foundling homes in Qing China increased significantly after this decree, reaching close to 1000 by the collapse of the dynasty in 1912 (Graph 1.1).[43]

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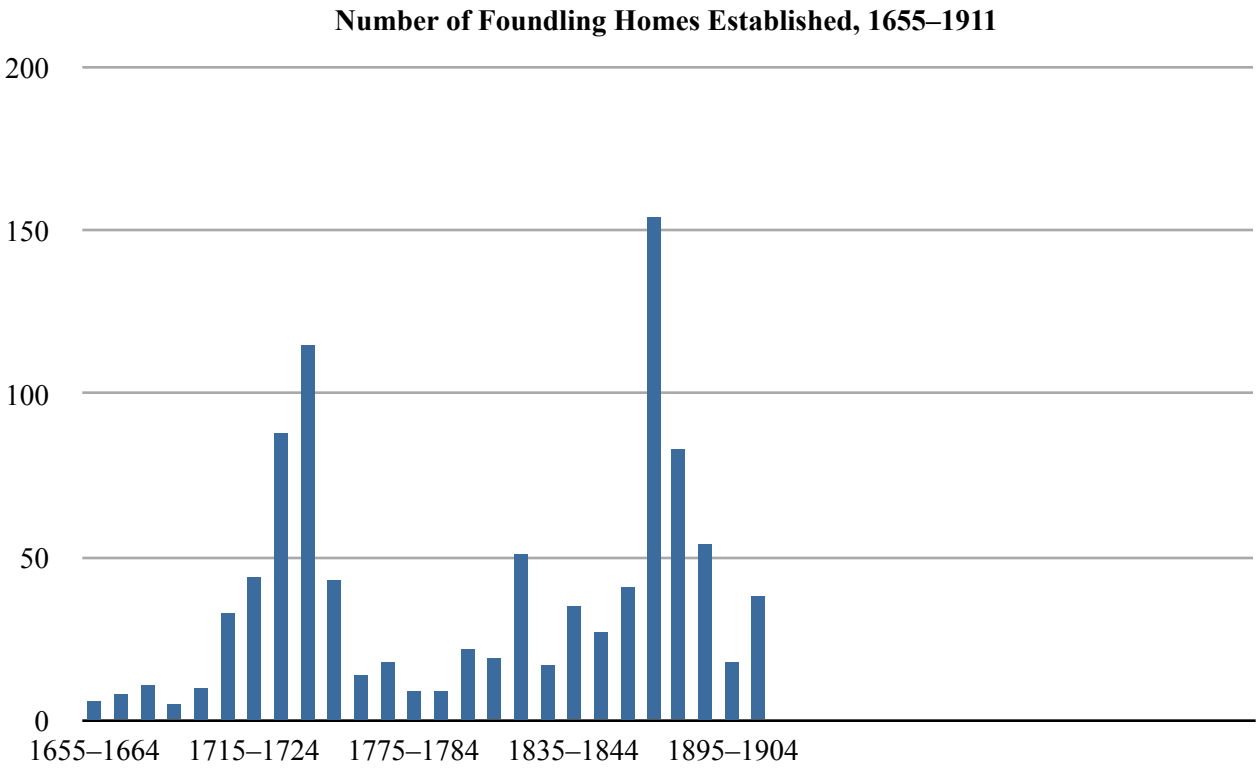
[40] Handlin Smith, "Benevolent Societies," 318, 323-324, 325; Joanna Handlin Smith, *The Art of Doing Good: Charity in Late Ming China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), Chapters 2-5.

[41] Angela Ki Che Leung (Liang Qizi), "Relief Institutions for Children in Nineteenth-Century China," in *Chinese Views of Childhood*, ed. Anne Behnke Kinney (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1995), 252.

[42] Apter, "Saving the Young," 21-22.

[43] Liang, *Shishan yu jiaohua*, Appendix 1, 259-284. Liang lists 973 Chinese-run foundling homes and similar institutions. In the seven decades before the 1724 edict, a total of 118 homes were founded; in the two decades following, new homes numbered 203.



Graph 1.1: Foundling homes established in China between 1655 and 1911. Each bar represents one decade. The two largest spikes occur in 1725–1744, after Yongzheng's 1724 edict approving foundling home work and ordering its spread throughout the country, and 1865–1874, after the devastation of the Taiping Civil War. Data from Liang Qizi, *Shishan yu jiaohua*, Appendix 1, 259-284.

Unfortunately, conditions in foundling homes were not always ideal: as Angela Ki Che Leung notes, by the Qianlong period (乾隆 r. 1735–1796), complaints had emerged about the poor direction and hazardous conditions of many foundling institutions. Leung mentions one home in Yangzhou that became known as the "hospice for killing infants" due to its high

mortality rate.[44] And, as stated above, their geographic spread was primarily limited to cities, meaning that families in rural areas still had nowhere to turn when circumstances prevented them from keeping their children. Beginning in the early nineteenth century, "halls for receiving infants" (接嬰堂 *jieyingtang*) were constructed in some parts of the countryside, forming a network of relay stations that linked up with urban foundling homes, but the devastation of the Taiping Civil War in mid-century limited their growth.[45] Another early-nineteenth-century social institution, the "society for the preservation of infants" (保嬰會 *baoyinghui*), mobilized local elites to donate funds that would be distributed to indigent parents, in the hope that financial assistance would enable families to remain together, or prevent parents from committing infanticide.[46] The goal remained to maintain proper family structures: children should be with their parents, if at all possible. If not, they should be adopted by new families and raised in a stable family setting, in accordance with Confucian ideals.

The massive population decline that resulted from the Taiping Civil War, which is estimated to have caused the deaths of approximately 20 million people, drove philanthropists to look at foundling homes and infant preservation societies with renewed interest.[47] China could not afford to lose any more people; to rebuild its population, every single life needed to be preserved. There was another spike in the number of new foundling homes established, as 154

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[44] Leung, "Relief Institutions," 251-252. Fuma Susumu also discusses the high mortality rate of foundling homes in the late nineteenth century, which he attributes to two primary factors: infants who suffered treacherous journeys to the homes too soon after birth and died as a result, and wet nurses who favored their own children over the foundlings when nursing, depriving abandoned children of milk. Fuma Susumu, "Infant Protection Societies in the Late Qing," trans. Peter Perdue, *Sino-Japanese Studies* 7 (April 1995): 48-49.

[45] Apter, "Saving the Young," 29-31; Leung, "Relief Institutions," 252.

[46] Apter, "Saving the Young," 31-33; Leung, "Relief Institutions," 257-258; Fuma, "Infant Protection Societies," 49-51.

[47] Leung, "Relief Institutions," 254-255.

Chinese-run child welfare institutions opened their doors between 1865 and 1874 (Graph 1.1).[48] The war had also, as the Xujiahui Jesuits discovered, created a large group of older children orphaned by the war who had nowhere to go. Chinese elites worried that without proper guidance and vocational training, the newly orphaned would simply grow up to lead lives as vagrant beggars. Previous child welfare work had focused on the needs of the very young; by the latter half of the nineteenth century, Chinese elites sought to develop institutions that could care for children of all ages. In the years after the Taiping Civil War, family-less children increasingly attended charity schools (義學 *yixue*) or lived in new training institutes, such as the Shanghai Bureau for Education and Rearing (滬城撫教局 Hucheng fujiaoju, founded 1866), where they learned skills such as printing and weaving.[49]

But even with the founding of new institutions, Chinese child welfare work could only do so much, and there was still a large population of children who needed assistance. In part, the gap was filled by the large-scale arrival of foreign missionaries in China after 1860. Many missionaries opened orphanages, which reared Chinese children in an environment that stressed Western, Christian principles.[50] This work caused a considerable amount of anxiety among Chinese merchants and philanthropists, and as a result, local elites took a new interest in the work of native foundling homes, aiming to increase their number and improve their quality and thus prevent foreigners from exerting too much influence over the lives of Chinese children.

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[48] Liang, *Shishan yu jiaohua*, 275-279.

[49] Apter, "Saving the Young," 37-43.

[50] This work could be taken to an extreme, such as in Hong Kong's Findelhaus Bethesda, where German missionary women aimed "to create the perfect Chinese Christian woman, free from all traces of Confucian thinking and popular religious beliefs." To do so, the missionaries sought to isolate the young Chinese girls they had taken in and prevent them from having any contact with Chinese society until they had reached the age of maturity and married fellow Christian converts, who were to be their partners in the creation of an indigenous Christian society. Julia Stone, *Chinese Basket Babies: A German Missionary Foundling Home and the Girls It Raised, 1850s–1914* (Wiesbaden, Germany: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2013), xii, Chapters 2-3.

"Anxiety over the missionary foundling homes," Leung argues, "more than any other factor, accounts for the renewed bureaucratic interest in native institutions after the Taiping Rebellion."[51] Vivienne Shue observes the same in her study of a home for chaste widows in Tianjin, which also operated an orphanage that housed 150 children between the ages of five and 14.[52] Missionary successes in social welfare work inspired Chinese philanthropists to bolster existing institutions and found new ones, with the hope that they could head off the foreigners and take care of their own.

Western Missionaries and China's Children

Foreign missionaries had been permitted to enter treaty ports after the Opium War (1839–1842), but the missionary enterprise expanded considerably with the signing of the Treaty of Tianjin (1858) and Convention of Beijing (1860) to conclude the Second Opium War (1856–1860).[53] These treaties allowed missionaries to conduct their work throughout China, as well as to acquire property and construct buildings upon it, which enabled them to establish schools, hospitals, orphanages, and more with greater ease than before.[54]

Missionary ranks swelled in response to this new openness. Catholics had already established a solid base in China, and quickly augmented their missionary forces under the protection of the new laws; Protestants, who had not quite one hundred missionaries in the country when the Treaty of Tianjin was signed, would have nearly 3,500 working in China by

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[51] Leung, "Relief Institutions," 258.

[52] Shue, "The Quality of Mercy," 425.

[53] Paul A. Cohen, *China and Christianity: The Missionary Movement and the Growth of Chinese Antiforeignism, 1860–1870* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1963), 68-70.

[54] Daniel H. Bays, *A New History of Christianity in China* (Chichester, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 67.

1905.[55] As Daniel Bays cautions, however, this growth should not be taken as an indication that hundreds of eager missionaries were waiting back in the U.S. or Europe, impatient for the China field to open up. Rather, the spectacular increase in the number of Protestant missionaries during the last decades of the nineteenth century came about due to "increasingly efficient and professionalized missionary societies based in the homelands of Europe and North America." Missionary societies used speaking tours and newsletters to publicize their overseas work and recruit new volunteers to go abroad—some of whom, for the first time, were women.[56] Mission numbers also increased due the Student Volunteer Movement (SVM) of the late 1880s, which asked college graduates to pledge themselves to become foreign missionaries if the opportunity arose. About 8,000 did go into the field, and more went to China than anywhere else.[57]

Missionaries, however, quickly found that simple proselytizing was insufficient to convert large numbers of Chinese to Christianity: they needed to persuade people not by word but with deed. Medical missionaries opened hospitals, while others without such specialized training devoted their energies toward founding schools and orphanages.[58] Children were both potential converts and a population in need of assistance.

Missionaries (and their wives) worried a great deal about the lives of Chinese children. In letters, pamphlets, and books published for home audiences, foreign observers described what

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[55] Bays, *A New History of Christianity in China*, 68. For a complete listing of all missionary societies operating in China, see R.G. Tiedemann, *Reference Guide to Christian Missionary Societies in China, from the Sixteenth to the Twentieth Century* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2009).

[56] Bays, *A New History of Christianity in China*, 68-69.

[57] Bays, *A New History of Christianity in China*, 72.

[58] Jonathan D. Spence, *To Change China: Western Advisers in China* (New York: Penguin, 1969), Chapter 2; Jonathan D. Spence, *The Search for Modern China*, 2nd ed. (New York: W.W. Norton, 1999), 206. Spence notes that the successes of the medical missionaries in treating Chinese patients, particularly those who required surgery (a field in which Western medicine enjoyed a clear advantage over traditional Chinese medicine), resulted in medical missionaries gaining greater numbers of converts compared to missionaries who did not possess such technical skills.

they saw of Chinese childhood. For some youths, life was good; as one Seventh-Day Adventist missionary woman would write around 1920,

> Many Chinese fathers and mothers love their children dearly, and hold them in their arms for hours at a time when they are small, playing with them, and carrying them up and down the road in the evening when the day's work is over. Often a poor Chinese mother, with bound feet, goes staggering along carrying her seven-year-old son, who surely looks much more able to trot along on his own sturdy little legs than this mother does to carry him. [...] when they have money to care for their children and educate them, they prize them highly.[59]

But even as writers spoke of how many Chinese parents loved and cherished, even coddled, their offspring, they also described the indifference other parents appeared to feel toward their children, particularly daughters. While sons were the guests of honor at elaborate family parties celebrating the child's first month of life, one mission woman wrote, daughters were considered practically disposable: "Not unfrequently [sic] when a little girl is born, its parents will drown it rather than have the trouble of bringing it up. Some women have destroyed as many as five or six little girls in this way."[60] Although the same author noted the existence of foundling homes for unwanted or abandoned children, she also described "baby towers," where the corpses of infants could be disposed of. "If the little one is a girl," she explained, "the parents are not always particular to ascertain if it is quite dead or not."[61] The practice of female infanticide caused great distress among foreigners encountering China (whether in person or through published accounts), and as they catalogued the many ways in which Chinese and

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[59] Adelaide Bee Evans, "The Children of China," in *With Our Missionaries in China*, ed. Emma Anderson (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1920), 304.

[60] Mary Isabella Bryson, *Child Life in China* (London: The Religious Tract Society, 1900), 20.

[61] Bryson, *Child Life in China*, 22.

Western cultures differed, the lack of interest in having daughters was cited as one of the most significant.[62]

Yet as Michelle T. King notes in her groundbreaking new study of female infanticide in nineteenth-century China, the practice was not unknown in the West: in the mid-nineteenth century, British society went through a period of a panic about widely publicized cases of lower-class women who were allegedly killing their illegitimate children.[63] Indeed, King argues, female infanticide only became constructed as a *uniquely Chinese* phenomenon when it was viewed through foreign eyes during the late nineteenth century.[64] Foreign writers, particularly missionaries, marked female infanticide as one more example of China's lack of civilization when compared to Western countries, and they used the allegedly widespread practice as the basis for fund-raising campaigns to save the children of China.[65] The Oeuvre de la Sainte-Enfance (Holy Childhood Association, hereafter HCA) led this charge, collecting donations from schoolchildren elicited through a textual and visual propaganda campaign that "foregrounded the suffering bodies of abandoned Chinese children, by depicting the numerous dangers that awaited them in an uncaring, alien environment."[66] Despite the presence of native foundling homes and

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[62] Bryson, *Child Life in China*, 20. When Hong Ren'gan, the prime minister of the Taiping, sought to Westernize the Heavenly Kingdom in 1859, one of his proposals included bringing the practice of infanticide to an end. Spence, *The Search for Modern China*, 179.

[63] Michelle T. King, *Between Birth and Death: Female Infanticide in Nineteenth-Century China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2014), 2-3, 6-7, Chapter 3.

[64] King, *Between Birth and Death*, 7-8. This perception continues today, as female infanticide is thought to be a particularly Asian practice and is especially associated with China and India.

[65] King, 79-80. King argues that Westerners actually had very little direct knowledge of the prevalence of female infanticide in China; rather, they considered child mortality rates, the existence of Chinese writings condemning the practice, and sightings of child corpses that had not received full burials as proof that female infanticide rates must have been high. King, Chapter 3.

[66] King, 114. For an extensive history of the HCA, see Henrietta Harrison, "'A Penny for the Little Chinese': The French Holy Childhood Association in China, 1843–1951," *American Historical Review* 113, no. 1 (2008): 72-92 and King, Chapter 4.

orphanages, foreign missionaries increasingly positioned themselves as both the physical and moral saviors of Chinese youth.

To fill the gaps left by Chinese families that could not or would not care for their children, both Protestant and Catholic missionaries built orphanages throughout the countryside during the last decades of the nineteenth century. Missionaries often found that opening children's homes facilitated their acceptance by Chinese society. As Henrietta Harrison explains in her study of the HCA, "Despite constant hostility to Christian missions, elite opposition to the orphanages was not particularly apparent in the early years of the Holy Childhood's work," as the institutions provided a needed social service and safety net that supplemented the one already in place via Chinese-run foundling homes.[67] Often, the children residing in orphanages had living parents, and their placement in the facilities would not be permanent: during lean times, parents sent their children to orphanages to relieve the family's financial burden and ensure that the youngsters would receive food, clothing, and shelter. When the crisis had passed, the children would leave the orphanage and rejoin their families.[68] In this way, foreign child welfare workers helped Chinese families weather hard times.

To be sure, foreign-run religious children's homes were not universally welcomed by the Chinese, some of whom were suspicious of the motivations of Western child aid workers and found the secrecy that often surrounded orphanage operations a sign that nefarious practices

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[67] Harrison, "'A Penny for the Little Chinese,'" 88.

[68] Harrison, "'A Penny for the Little Chinese,'" 88. The same was true for late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century London and the United States, where parents relied on institutional care for their children in times of illness or extreme poverty, but then retrieved them as soon as possible. Murdoch, *Imagined Orphans*, 95-99; Hacsi, *Second Home*, 104-110. See Chapter 2 of this dissertation for more on institutionalization of children as a family survival mechanism.

were going on behind their doors.[69] Rumors ran rampant that Catholic missionaries "were kidnapping children, eating them, tearing out their eyes and hearts, or burying them under the foundations of the huge churches they were building."[70] People accused missionaries of buying children, a charge that they denied, though Harrison explains that they did often pay a token sum to anyone bringing in abandoned or unwanted children, which could be (mis)understood as the missionaries purchasing children.[71] The Catholic penchant for taking in terminally ill infants with the objective of baptizing them before death gave rise to rumors that missionaries desired the deaths of Chinese youngsters as they "collected" souls to send to heaven.

In 1870, rumors about missionary activities turned deadly, as anti-Catholic riots broke out in the city of Tianjin and ended with the murder of 16 nuns inside the orphanage they ran.[72] In the aftermath of the massacre, China's foreign relations board, the Zongli Yamen (總理衙門), circulated a letter and eight proposals to the foreign countries operating missions in China. The first of the eight proposals called for the abolition of Catholic orphanages; failing that, the Yamen suggested that only children of Chinese Christian families should be admitted to foreign-run orphanages, with all other children falling under the purview of Chinese philanthropic institutions.[73] Ensuing negotiations, chiefly between the Chinese and French (who had declared

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[69] Cohen, *China and Christianity*, 91-92.

[70] Harrison, "'A Penny for the Little Chinese,'" 89.

[71] Harrison, "'A Penny for the Little Chinese,'" 86.

[72] For more on conflicts between missionaries and Chinese, see Cohen, *China and Christianity*, Chapter 5; Spence, *The Search for Modern China*, 202-204. The Tianjin Massacre is described in far more detail in Cohen, *China and Christianity*, Chapter 9. Rogaski notes that Tianjin was experiencing a period of social chaos and dislocation in the late 1860s, part of which involved a rise in the kidnapping of girls and young women, and the secretive work of missionaries fed suspicions that they were involved in this practice. Rogaski, "Beyond Benevolence," 59-60. Chinese suspicions of missionaries' work continued well into the twentieth century, and stories of foreign nuns murdering Chinese children emerged again in 1951—circulated not by alleyway gossip, but front-page headlines in the *People's Daily*. See Chapter 5 of this dissertation for more.

[73] Cohen, *China and Christianity*, 250-252.

themselves unofficial overseers of all Catholic missions in China[74]), eventually reached a stalemate and collapsed, with none of the eight regulations ever implemented.[75]

Despite outbreaks of opposition and violence, missionary-run orphanages continued their work in China's interior. By the end of the nineteenth century, though, there would be a clear need for many more children's institutions in Shanghai, a city that was quickly growing into a world-class metropolis—and experiencing the social problems that accompanied such growth.

Industrial Cities and Child Welfare in the Progressive Era

Shanghai: City of Migrants

At the turn of the twentieth century, Shanghai had become the kind of city that needed not just Tushanwan, but also a variety of other child welfare institutions. While Shanghai might not have yet been transformed into the glittering "Paris of the East" that it would become in the 1920s and '30s, it was quickly developing into one of East Asia's most dynamic urban centers. Long dependent on trade, Shanghai's economy was being revitalized by the construction of foreign-owned factories, permitted by the Treaty of Shimonoseki that ended the First Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895).[76] Migrants from surrounding provinces arrived in the city hoping for work in those factories, or wherever they could find it. In 1852, Shanghai's population numbered

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[74] Ernest P. Young, *Ecclesiastical Colony: China's Catholic Church and the French Religious Protectorate* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 23-34.

[75] Cohen, *China and Christianity*, 260.

[76] Wasserstrom, *Global Shanghai*, 49.

around 544,000 people; half a century later, that figure had roughly doubled.[77] It is possible that the city's population passed 1 million residents for the first time around 1900, in part fed by this migration from China's countryside, as well as the arrival of new foreigners—missionaries, entrepreneurs, and wanderers in search of unknown opportunities and uncounted fortunes.[78] Increasingly, foreign men traveled to Shanghai with their wives accompanying them, and this group of women would play an important role in early-twentieth-century child-saving work.

Among those million people were thousands of children in need of assistance: children whose parents had died, dissolving the family; child "slaves," as foreigners termed them, rescued from inhumane working conditions; trafficked children who had been saved from their kidnappers but were unable to tell the authorities where the homes to which they should be returned were located. In the area of child welfare, Shanghai at this time was little different from New York or London or Chicago or any other large industrial city whose population had boomed as a result of nineteenth-century immigration.

Growing Cities, Growing Problems

The living conditions of the millions of people crowding into industrializing urban areas had become a source of concern for many late-nineteenth-century writers and activists in the

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[77] Zou Yiren, *Jiu Shanghai renkou bianjian de yanjiu* (Research on Population Changes in Old Shanghai) (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1980), 90. Though Zou does not have exact population figures for all of Shanghai in the years between 1866 and 1910, looking at census numbers from the city's International Settlement and French Concession gives some idea of the massive growth occurring in the last decade of the nineteenth century. In 1890, the International Settlement held close to 172,000 people; in 1900, its population stood at over 352,000. The French Concession grew from 41,600 residents to 92,200 in those same years. The people pouring into these districts were overwhelmingly Chinese.

[78] It is unclear exactly when Shanghai's population exceeded 1 million people, but it definitely had by 1910, when the entire city's population figure stood at over 1.2 million. Zou, *Jiu Shanghai renkou*, 90. For more on the various Chinese migrant groups making their homes in Shanghai, see Goodman, *Native Place, City, and Nation* and Wakeman, Jr. and Yeh, *Shanghai Sojourners*.

United States and Western Europe, who sought to raise social awareness of these problems by publishing their accounts of the squalid conditions that they found in the homes of the working class.[79] They often paid special attention to the health and welfare of children growing up in such environments, believing that a childhood in unhealthy conditions would affect not only the individual's physical health, but also mental health and character.[80]

In 1883, the Reverend Andrew Mearns published an exposé of life among London's impoverished class, *The Bitter Cry of Outcast London*. In this brief pamphlet (a version of which also appeared in the *Pall Mall Gazette*),[81] Mearns described the horrific living conditions he observed during visits to the tenements of South London, where entire families crowded into a single room and the air lay thick with the stench of refuse. Page after page, Mearns wrote in a tone of sustained outrage tinged with disgust, reaching an apex when he addressed the subject of South London youngsters:

> The child-misery that one beholds is the most heart-rending and appalling element in these discoveries; and of this not the least is the misery inherited from the vice of drunken and dissolute parents, and manifest in the stunted, misshapen, and often loathsome objects we constantly meet in these localities. From the beginning of their life they are utterly neglected; their bodies and rags are alive with vermin; they are subjected to the most cruel treatment; many of them have never seen a green field, and do not know what

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[79] Janet Chen notes that Japanese journalists also published widely on the emergence of social problems in their cities at the turn of the twentieth century—stories that Chinese reformers living in Japan, like Liang Qichao, would have been exposed to. Janet Y. Chen, *Guilty of Indigence: The Urban Poor in China, 1900–1953* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), 12.

[80] Murdoch, *Imagined Orphans*, 17-24. Murdoch points out that such written accounts often relied on melodramatic tropes to stage "an overwhelming attack on the domestic identity of the poor" (24), and at least some of the photographs that philanthropists used to raise money for child welfare work were staged and showed children in far worse conditions than they would have actually lived in.

[81] Barbara Leckie, "'The Bitter Cry of Outcast London' (1883): Print Exposé and Print Reprise," *BRANCH: Britain, Representation and Nineteenth-Century History*, http://www.branchcollective.org/?ps_articles=barbara-leckie-the-bitter-cry-of-outcast-london-1883-print-expose-and-print-reprise (accessed February 16, 2014).

> it is to go beyond the streets immediately around them, and they often pass the whole day without a morsel of food.[82]

Mearns did not present any new information with his pamphlet; the wretched conditions of London's poor had been widely known since the 1820s. And yet, *The Bitter Cry of Outcast London* nevertheless stirred people to act, motivated, perhaps, by shame at the recognition that numerous previous exposés had failed to result in widespread or lasting change.[83] Mearns is credited with inspiring the 1884 creation of the Royal Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes, as well as the Housing Act of the following year.[84]

Similarly, in 1890, muckraking photojournalist Jacob Riis published *How the Other Half Lives*, an account of life in New York's tenements. Riis devoted several chapters to the squalid conditions in which poor (and often immigrant) children were raised. Riis lamented the plight of these youths, and worried that their impoverished upbringings would do permanent harm to their characters. But Riis also seemed to view the social phenomena he observed as an inevitable stage in urban development: "[New York's] poverty, its slums, and its suffering are the result of unprecedented growth with the consequent disorder and crowding, and the common penalty of metropolitan greatness." The presence of charitable institutions and reform-minded activists, however, was another byproduct of urban growth, Riis argued, and every year more and more people were brought out of unfit living conditions due to the efforts of those people and

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[82] Andrew Mearns, *The Bitter City of Outcast London: An Inquiry into the Condition of the Abject Poor* (London: James Clarke & Co., 1883), 21.

[83] Leckie, "'The Bitter Cry of Outcast London.'"

[84] Anthony S. Wohl, "The Bitter Cry of Outcast London," *International Review of Social History* 13, no. 2 (August 1968), 228, 234.

organizations.[85] Urban industrialization and growth had created the environment in which such squalor emerged, but the city would also provide the means to address the problem.

Written and photographic reports like these sparked public interest in improving labor conditions, hygiene, child mortality, diet, and family planning. In the United States and England, the Progressive Era (1890–1920) became known as a time of social activism with the goal of ensuring better living and working conditions for the laboring classes. Child-saving became a large-scale social and political project, as activists both sought "to protect children from the dangers of urban society and to protect society from dangerous children."[86] Orphan asylums and reformatories took in youngsters who could not remain at home, either due to family conditions or behavioral problems in the child, while settlement houses offered immigrant and working-class children a place to learn music, arts and crafts, and English. In France, solutions to child welfare problems among working-class youth in the Parisian suburbs included the *colonies de vacances*, or summer camps founded by philanthropic, religious, and political groups where children enjoyed several weeks of fresh air in the countryside as an antidote to the unhealthy urban environment they lived in most of the year.[87] Euro-American expatriates in Shanghai brought all of these ideas over to the global city that was growing at the mouth of the Yangzi River.

Shanghai was exceptional as a Chinese city, but looks much less unusual if we approach it as one of several developing global cities that were characterized by having large populations of low-income migrants who had arrived in search of economic opportunities offered by a

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[85] Jacob Riis, *How the Other Half Lives* (1890; Reprint, ReadaClassic.com, 2010), 131.

[86] Steven Mintz, *Huck's Raft: A History of American Childhood* (Cambridge: MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2004), 155.

[87] Downs, *Childhood in the Promised Land*.

growing numbers of factories and businesses. Conditions in these cities concerned activists and reformers, who worried about children put to work in dangerous factories, or left to look out for themselves as their parents labored all day.[88] It should not be surprising, then, that child welfare institutions similar to those found in places like London's East End or New York's Lower East Side emerged in Shanghai, though they acted in response to specific local needs. Many of them came about thanks to the efforts of Westerners, particularly Western women who had traveled with their husbands to Shanghai and viewed supporting philanthropic causes as a worthy way of spending their days. But these women could not have achieved much on their own; their success also depended on the assistance of Chinese associates and the support of municipal authorities in Shanghai's British-American International Settlement.

Changing Views of Childhood in the Progressive Era

Orphanages and refuges founded by Westerners held at their core certain attitudes about child welfare, and childhood, that had developed in the United States and Western Europe during the nineteenth century. The most important change in Western children's lives in the 1800s involved "the conversion of childhood from work to schooling."[89] Youngsters were no longer automatically put to work, as families realized that investment in education could pay off—

[88] Peter N. Stearns, *Childhood in World History*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2011), 77. As Stearns notes, childhood had always been dangerous in agricultural societies, as youngsters fell victim to contagious illnesses and accidents. Though Stearns does not fully explain why activists paid new attention to child welfare in nineteenth-century urban settings, I hypothesize that the reason for this is twofold: (1) Child mortality rates were falling, so the death of a child was not accepted with the same equanimity that it might have been in previous centuries, and (2) The conditions that put children at risk in cities were largely man-made (dangerous factories, substandard housing) and could thus be addressed in a way that random farm accidents could not.

[89] Stearns, *Childhood in World History*, 72.

though the child's entry into the workforce was delayed, s/he could likely start out at a higher position and salary than someone with no literacy or mathematical skills.[90]

As a correlation to this increased time spent in school, the gap between childhood and adulthood grew larger than it had been in agricultural society, and childhood in turn increasingly became regarded as a period of innocence, during which youth were to be protected and sheltered from corruption by the adults in their lives.[91] Children had a right to happiness.[92] Safeguarding that right was a job that not only fell to parents, but also to governments, which were called on to take greater and greater responsibility for overseeing and protecting the welfare of children. By the turn of the twentieth century, "Advocates shared a dedication to the idea that no modern nation could progress without providing special protections for its youngest citizens."[93] Nation-states were increasingly expected to provide public schooling, enforce child-labor laws, and assist in improving pediatric health and hygiene.[94] In the first decade of the twentieth century, American reformers asked the U.S. government to create a Children's Bureau, which would take charge of all issues relating to child welfare, "doing for our future citizens what the Department of Agriculture does for the farmer in the way of disseminating information,

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[90] Sociologist Viviana A. Zelizer notes that there was initially a lag between middle-class children (who could delay entry into the workforce) and working-class youths (who could not), but that this gap had largely disappeared by the 1930s, largely due to compulsory education and laws prohibiting child labor. Viviana A. Zelizer, *Pricing the Priceless Child: The Changing Social Value of Children* (1985; Reprint, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 4-5.

[91] Stearns, *Childhood in World History*, 75, 79.

[92] Edward T. Devine, "The New View of the Child," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 32, Supplement 22. Child Labor and Social Progress: Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Meeting of the National Child Labor Committee (July 1908): 8.

[93] Kriste Lindenmeyer and Bengt Sandin, "National Citizenship and Early Policies Shaping 'The Century of the Child' in Sweden and the United States," *Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth* 1, no. 1 (Winter 2008): 50-51.

[94] Lindenmeyer and Sandin, "National Citizenship," 50.

and furnishing protection for crops and trees, for lobsters and fish."[95] In 1912, the U.S. Children's Bureau was born.[96]

There was no Children's Bureau in Shanghai, but the International Settlement's Municipal Council, Mixed Court, and residents (both Chinese and foreign) worked together to address issues related to child welfare. Like Janet Chen in her study of the urban poor in twentieth-century Beijing and Shanghai, I am examining a topic that calls us to be mindful of "specific moments of cross-cultural fertilization."[97] American and European expatriates came to Shanghai with their own ideas about what a "good" childhood involved; once in the city, those foreign ideas mixed and mingled with domestic understandings of a child's place in society. It is difficult, if not impossible, to determine the relative influence of foreign versus Chinese ideas in formulating new concepts of childhood at the turn of the twentieth century, and I do not wish to suggest that expatriates simply transplanted Progressive-era concepts of childhood into China.[98] Instead, I am arguing that the concerns of Progressive reformers in the United States and Western Europe became an important part of the social and cultural landscape in turn-of-the-century Shanghai—a landscape that was, like the city, composed of a vibrant blend of people and ideas from around the world.

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[95] Lillian D. Wald, "Child Labor," *The American Journal of Nursing* 6, no. 6 (March 1906): 368. Two years later, Columbia University professor Edward T. Devine would use very similar phrasing in remarks before the National Child Labor Committee: "The Federal Government should study continuously the problems of illegitimacy, infant mortality, illiteracy, feeble-mindedness, orphanage, child dependence, and child labor-just as it studies, and properly studies, the soils, the forests, the fisheries, and the crops." Devine, "The New View of the Child," 8.

[96] Julia C. Lathrop, "The Children's Bureau," *American Journal of Sociology* 18, no. 3 (November 1912): 318-330; Lindenmeyer, *"A Right to Childhood,"*, Chapter 1.

[97] Chen, *Guilty of Indigence*, 5.

[98] Rogaski discusses a similar issue in respect to new ideas of womanhood in twentieth-century Tianjin. Rogaski, "Beyond Benevolence," 82.

CHILD WELFARE WORK IN SHANGHAI

Chinese children appeared sporadically in the pages of the *North-China Herald*. When they did, the stories were rarely good ones.[99] The paper celebrated the school performances and Boy Scout parades of British and American children living in Shanghai; when Chinese youth entered the *Herald*, however, it was usually because they had been victims of kidnapping, household enslavement, or child abuse. Plenty of Chinese children in Shanghai, of course, enjoyed lives closer to those of their foreign counterparts, but stories and crime reports printed in the *Herald* and *Municipal Gazette* offer us a glimpse into the challenges that poor Chinese children faced in their country's largest and most cosmopolitan city.

Some of the youngsters mentioned in the *Herald* had been rounded up on the streets and tagged as "stray children" by the International Settlement's police force; the Mixed Court would usually send them to one of a number of residential institutions operating within the city. A 1906 law prohibited the presence of children under the age of 14 in brothels, so Settlement police likewise turned girls found in such establishments over to the Court for placement; the Door of Hope Mission (discussed further below) was established in 1900 specifically to shelter girls and young women escaping lives of prostitution. And many children who were brought into the Court had either been victims of kidnapping or had been sold into slavery by their families, then subsequently mistreated. If possible, the Court would reunite children with their parents, but Mixed Court statistics published in the weekly *Municipal Gazette* indicate that such familial

[99] The *North-China Herald* served as a weekly digest of stories from the *North-China Daily News*, Shanghai's main English-language newspaper from 1849 to 1951. *The Municipal Gazette*, also cited here, was an insert in the *Herald* that ran stories about city infrastructure projects, public health, crime, and other matters relating to government in Shanghai's jointly administered British-American International Settlement.

reunifications were comparatively rare. Most of the time, a child's next destination after a court appearance would be one of the orphanages or refuges with which the Court had a relationship.

Foreign residents of the International Settlement worried about the plight of impoverished Chinese children living within their district. These were not the coddled and cherished children that foreigners wrote about elsewhere. Instead, they were children who had been kidnapped, sold into slavery or future prostitution, and frequently abused. Occasional news clips in the *North-China Herald* recounted the cruel treatment that children sold into slavery suffered at the hands of their new owners; at times, such stories would provoke a Letter to the Editor in response. These letters, when compared to other foreign writings on children in China, reveal a bifurcated view of the Chinese treatment of children. On the one hand, some Chinese parents loved and treasured their little ones—perhaps more than parents in the West did, and perhaps even more than was good for the child. On the other hand, parents also sold their children into dangerous situations, condemning them to lives in which they would be mistreated and abused in ways that would be completely unacceptable in the West.[100] One such Letter to the Editor, saturated with a heavy dose of cultural superiority, can serve as an example:

> Sir,—Another one of those cases of barbarous treatment of slave children came up in the Mixed Court the other day. The sentence was eighteen months, which is some improvement on the trifling punishment often allotted by the Chinese in these cases, but not enough. […] Cruelty is a difficult thing to extinguish by law, but it would be useful if the Chinese fortunate enough to live in this Settlement could know by repeated demonstration that a strong Chinese woman cannot deliberately and systematically torture and mutilate a little child month by month without paying the penalty in honest Anglo-Saxon fashion. We have the Door of Hope to receive the victims when mercifully discovered, but what we need is a public sentiment that will fill with terror the tormentors of child life and shame Chinese reformers into reforming something worth while.
> I am, etc.,

[100] Even in the West, however, efforts to prevent cruelty to children were relatively recent; as Steven Mintz points out, the first organizations dedicated to the protection of children from abuse emerged only in the mid-1870s. Mintz, *Huck's Raft*, 167-168.

Parent
Shanghai, April 7, 1911[101]

Foreigners working in Shanghai's International Settlement in the early twentieth century focused their child-saving efforts on rescuing children, particularly young girls, from dangerous living and working conditions. Children, often so difficult to find in the historical record, entered Shanghai's when they appeared before the Mixed Court or were written about in the *North-China Herald*. Through these brief accounts of their lives, we come to know some of the major child welfare issues that concerned foreigners engaged in child-saving and the governing bodies of the Shanghai International Settlement.

Kidnapping, Slavery, and Child Abuse in Early-Twentieth-Century Shanghai

As a major center of trade, Shanghai sat at the nexus of transportation networks extending throughout eastern China and deep into the country's interior. These shipping routes enabled goods from the city's port to reach inland communities. Those same shipping routes, however, also facilitated a child trafficking trade in which Shanghai was a major node, serving as a gathering point for kidnappers who then either sold the children in the city or sent them on to other places, such as Guangzhou.

Child trafficking was not a new phenomenon in early-twentieth-century China; for centuries, Chinese elites had complained about the trade, which tended to emerge in times of flood or famine. But with the new institution of the newspaper, elites and reformers gained the ability to voice their concerns on a much larger scale. A late-1870s famine in Tianjin offers one of the first examples of this, as elites composed letters to Shanghai's *Shenbao* (申報) "expressing

[101] "Cruelty to Slave Children," Letter to the Editor, *North-China Herald*, April 15, 1911, 162.

their outrage at the large influx of girls and women from the North, unloaded on Shanghai's docks like so much chattel."[102] As the years passed, Chinese elites grew even more self-conscious about the child-trafficking trade, as they became aware of foreign observation and condemnation of this practice.

But even attention from both Chinese and foreigners could not stem the steady stream of trafficked children that flowed through Shanghai. Children could be taken from the streets when sent out on errands, enticed into going along with the kidnapper, or grabbed directly from their homes when parents' backs were turned.[103] Once in the kidnapper's custody, the children might be sold within Shanghai to work as household servants or prepared for lives as prostitutes, or they could be taken elsewhere in the country—or even Japan—and sold. Although many of the kidnappers who appeared before the Mixed Court seem to have been small-time operators, taking advantage of an opportunity that had unexpectedly presented itself, occasionally the *Herald* reported on larger kidnapping rings or skilled traffickers who had learned how to lure children into coming with them:

> A venerable-looking old native, 62 years of age, was charged with being concerned, with others, not yet in custody, in kidnapping several girls from Kiangsi and disposing of them to various brothel-keepers in Shanghai, on various dates.
>
> From the evidence tendered, it seems that the defendant and others in partnership with him had for some time past been decoying girls from Kiangsi, bringing them down to Shanghai and selling them to brothel-keepers here. The victims were taken with the defendant's countenance and quite believed his stories that the streets of Shanghai were paved with gold and that there were innumerable situations to be had here at very

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[102] Rogaski, "Beyond Benevolence," 64, 82.

[103] There are far too many kidnapping cases to list them all here. For a representative sample of the different circumstances surrounding kidnappings, see Mixed Court Notes, *North-China Herald*, January 24, 1900, 168; October 3, 1900, 739-740; January 9, 1901, 79; December 18, 1901, 1201; June 11, 1901, 1158; October 22, 1902, 864.

> remunerative wages. On their arrival in Shanghai, however, they had their enlightenment.[104]

This case attracted a considerable amount of attention in the *Herald*, as well as the Chinese-language *Xinwenbao* (新聞報), which weighed in on the kidnapper's punishment (seven years' imprisonment and 1,200 blows, administered 300 at a time[105]) and the necessity of ending, or at least institutionalizing, the sale of children. If the practice were going to continue, the writer suggested, it should come under the oversight of the Shanghai Municipal Council and the Mixed Court, which could look out for purchased children and try to ensure their safety. The writer also put forth a proposal that children could only put in three years of service from the date of sale, as a way of ensuring that they would not remain captives forever.[106]

Sometimes, however, the distinction between kidnapping and child-selling grew muddled: parents (or the husbands of older girls) turned to child traffickers when they needed to reduce the economic burden on the family.[107] It was also possible that parents and traffickers sometimes disagreed on the amount to be paid, and parents reported "kidnapping" to the police as a way of getting their children back.[108]

The vast majority of kidnapping cases reported in the *Herald* involved girls who were taken to brothels or sold as household "slaves" in the city. Foreigners generally looked on the practice of household slavery, or bonded labor, with a judgmental eye. Since the 1870s, colonial

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[104] "Kidnapping Extraordinary," Mixed Court Notes, *North-China Herald*, September 2, 1904, 545.

[105] "Kidnappers Fittingly Punished," Mixed Court Notes, *North-China Herald*, September 2, 1904, 545.

[106] "The Recent Kidnapping Case," Notes on Native Affairs, *North-China Herald*, September 9, 1904, 586-587.

[107] For a thorough discussion of child trafficking during the late Qing-early Republican years, see Johanna Sirera Ransmeier, "'No Other Choice': The Sale of People in Late Qing and Republican Beijing, 1870–1935" (PhD diss., Yale University, 2008), Chapter 3.

[108] Mixed Court Notes, *North-China Herald*, February 28, 1900, 382.

authorities in Hong Kong and French Indochina had debated the morality of permitting child slavery in their jurisdictions.[109] This discussion revolved around the treatment of *mui tsai*, or girl bondservants (妹仔 in Cantonese, 婢女 *binü* in Mandarin), who were often "adopted" by the families that they worked for, but who also often suffered abuse in those homes. Other *mui tsai* whose parents thought they would be adopted into respectable homes in fact wound up in houses of prostitution. But although there was a spirited debate and much investigation of the *mui tsai* issue, colonial authorities repeatedly classified it as a local "custom" that they would not interfere with, save for periodic attempts to crack down on the trafficking of very young children.[110] Abolitionists in Hong Kong found that their most effective argument drew on new ideas about childhood as a time of innocence and happiness, and they achieved some success by contending that the *mui tsai* trade deprived girls of their childhoods.[111] Retaining older bondservants (14 years of age and up), however, was permitted to continue.[112]

In Shanghai, concerns about the physical welfare of slave girls were validated by a seemingly unending string of stories in the *North-China Herald* detailing cases of abuse. These short news clips often offer scant details about the names or backgrounds of the girls; at most, they provide the victims' ages. And it is very likely that the abuse cases that came to the attention of Settlement authorities represented only a small fraction of the actual incidence of abuse in Shanghai. There are, in other words, large gaps in the historical record that prevent us from

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[109] David M. Pomfret, "'Child Slavery' in British and French Far-Eastern Colonies, 1880–1945," *Past and Present* 201 (November 2008): 175-213; John M. Carroll, "A National Custom: Debating Female Servitude in Late Nineteenth-Century Hong Kong," *Modern Asian Studies* 43, no. 6 (November 2009): 1463-1493.

[110] Carroll, "A National Custom," 1464; Pomfret, "'Child Slavery,'" 182-184.

[111] Pomfret, "'Child Slavery,'" 186-187.

[112] Pomfret, "'Child Slavery,'" 191.

understanding the true scope of this problem, but a few selections will suffice to convey the ill-treatment that slave girls suffered:

> [The defendant, a woman] had inflicted torture upon a slave girl, aged 12 years, by heating a pair of iron pincers, and nipping the child upon the arms, legs and face. The child was not expected to live, and had been taken to the hospital in a repulsively mutilated condition.[113]

> ... Tsang Ping-zung was charged with ill-treating a girl, Kyoch Hyang, thirteen years of age. It appears that Tsang Ping-zung bought the girl from her mother near Hangchow for $140. Kyoch Hyang had brought something into the house which did not please the accused. The people living in Taku Road heard screams coming from the house and on investigation being made found that accused had tied the girl up by her thumbs and was beating her with a bamboo.[114]

> The medical certificate from a foreign doctor [...] testifies to the most barbarous and brutal treatment on the part of the woman who owned the slave girl. Incredible as it may sound[,] over 400 wounds were found on the child's body. Her arms, hands, chest, back, stomach and legs were more or less covered with ulcers and wounds in size ranging from a split pea to a dollar, most of them covered with scabs and many of them suppurating. The girl has every appearance of having been most cruelly tortured and must have suffered intense pain. Her body is in a filthy condition and she has been much neglected.[115]

Such reports often provoked responses from the foreign community, such as the Letter to the Editor quoted at the beginning of this section, which was written in reaction to the final case cited above. But Shanghai's Chinese community was far from complacent in its attitude toward the ill-treatment of slave girls. Indeed, one notable aspect of the Mixed Court notes concerning these cases is how frequently child abusers were turned in to Settlement authorities by Chinese witnesses and neighbors who overheard abuse occurring; they were clearly willing to work with the police and the Court in the interest of protecting children.

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[113] Mixed Court notes, *North-China Herald*, March 28, 1900, 576.

[114] "Cruelty Cases," Mixed Court notes, *North-China Herald*, February 28, 1908, 508.

[115] "Report of the Captain-Superintendent of Police for March," *The Municipal Gazette*, April 13, 1911.

Also notable are the punishments the Mixed Court handed down to those convicted of abusing children. Most of the time, they combined a period of incarceration (which could range from one month to 18, though most sentences seem to have been about six months long) with physical punishment, generally several hundred lashes, often delivered to the back of the hand. Though it was not unusual for the Court to order a lashing—convicted kidnappers also often received them—here there is the suggestion of "an eye for an eye," as those who had perpetrated violence on others found themselves subject to the same.

Slave girls who had been removed from dangerous households did not necessarily have anywhere to go. Those who were kidnapped or sold when they were very young, or outside Shanghai, would have most likely been unable to inform authorities where their families could be located. Others were truly orphans and had no families to return to. Instead, the Mixed Court sent them to live in one of several new institutions created by foreigners in Shanghai and staffed by Chinese women.

Two Foreign-Run Children's Institutions in Early-Twentieth-Century Shanghai: The Slave Girls' Refuge and the Door of Hope Children's Home

In March 1901, a group of foreign women in Shanghai announced their intention to start a refuge for rescued Chinese slave girls. Frederick Graves, the Anglican bishop in Shanghai, agreed to house the refuge under the umbrella of his mission, presumably because this would offer it some legal protection and also make it easier for the home to obtain land and buildings for its work.[116] The institution, however, was not run by a single mission, but instead received

[116] G. James Morrison, "A Refuge for Chinese Slave Children," Letter to the Editor, *North-China Herald*, March 13, 1901, 495.

support from various groups in Shanghai, not all of them necessarily religious. Mrs. Graves led the Refuge Committee, which began as eight women who coordinated the fundraising and operation of the Slave Girls' Refuge. Every year, this committee issued a report on its work that was printed in the *North-China Herald*. These reports tended to follow a format used in many mission newsletters: they began with a rundown of the past year's business, then proceeded to narrate the personal story of one or more of the girls, emphasizing the ill-treatment she suffered as a slave and the progress she had made while at the Refuge. The reports then concluded with a lamentation about the difficulty and expense of operating a facility like the Refuge, followed by a plea for donations, particularly monthly subscriptions from people who would commit to providing the home with a regular sum of money.

By the beginning of 1904, the Committee reported that the Refuge housed 14 former slave girls, most of them sent to the home by the Mixed Court. At the home, they were cared for by a Chinese woman whose daughter operated a school for the girls, where they were taught basic housework and sewing skills.[117] But although the Refuge had grown quickly and enjoyed the support of the Court and the Shanghai Municipal Police, two letters from *Herald* readers suggest that the Committee needed to improve its publicity machine. "Like many others," a correspondent known as "A Mere Man" wrote, "I had not paid particular attention to the report when it appeared in the newspapers, and had not my interest been awakened by personal pleading, should have given the matter no heed."[118] "Another Male" echoed his suggestion that the Committee hold a public meeting to raise awareness of its work and facilitate fundraising:

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[117] "The Refuge for Chinese Slave Children," *North-China Herald*, January 8, 1904, 23-24.

[118] "The Refuge for Chinese Slave Children," Letter to the Editor, *North-China Herald*, January 15, 1904, 73.

> Why should they not hold a public meeting to inform us of what is being done and what is to be done? It is only too obvious from a perusal of their meagre subscription list for this last year that some change is necessary, at least in their method of appealing to the sympathy of the public. Those who have heard the dreadful stories of wanton cruelty, up to the point of murder [...] know what a crying need there is for a very much larger work for these poor helpless little unfortunates than it has been so far possible to carry on. The Committee of the Slave Refuge is in a position to tell Shanghai of these things.[119]

It seems that the Committee took these suggestions to heart, because within two years they were able to move the Refuge into a larger building with more land around it, which enabled the girls to enjoy "plenty of fresh air, and ground which gives them ample room for playing, and growing their cabbages." The Refuge Committee had also set about hiring a foreign woman to serve as co-matron with the Chinese one already in place, and begun imagining a future in which some of the brighter girls would be able to train as teachers.[120] In addition to rescuing the girls from their previous plights, the Committee was doing its best to provide them with a happy, healthy childhood and a bright future.

But this work was not accomplished cheaply, and the single most common reason for the Slave Girls' Refuge to appear in the pages of the *North-China Herald* was to beg readers for funds. By the fall of 1906, the Committee issued an emergency appeal to offset the cost of its quick expansion, and two months later the Shanghai Municipal Council decided to support the Refuge with an annual grant of 1,000 *taels*. At the same time, the Council hoped that the Refuge would consider expanding its mission to take in stray children from the street, not just girls who had been rescued from slavery.[121] This seems to have been a not entirely successful move, as the

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[119] "The Refuge for Chinese Slave Children," Letter to the Editor, *North-China Herald*, January 15, 1904, 73.

[120] "The Refuge for Chinese Slave Children," *North-China Herald*, February 2, 1906, 210.

[121] Margaret White-Cooper, "The Slave Refuge," Letter to the Editor, *North-China Herald*, October 19, 1906, 147; "Refuge for Chinese Slave Children," Municipal Council Meeting notes, *North-China Herald*, December 21, 1906, 652.

1907 annual report indicated that several older girls brought in as stray children "have not altogether appreciated their privileges" and run away from the home.[122] Nevertheless, the Refuge was crowded, with 55 residents jockeying for space in the building that had seemed adequate only two years earlier. By the end of 1908, the Committee had embarked on a fundraising campaign to construct a new facility, supplementing its usual call for donations with an art exhibit and sale.[123] Fundraising proceeded slowly, due to an economic downturn, but the project was supported by both foreigners and Chinese—one of the city's Opium Commissioners pledged $500, and several of his friends (or colleagues) made donations in his wake.[124] When the Refuge issued another emergency call for donations in October 1909, the home was again backed by a combination of foreigners and Chinese, including Shanghai's Daotai (道台, Circuit Intendant) and the Shanghai-Nanking Railway.[125] Still, the building fund fell 2,500 *taels* short of its goal, and the Committee turned once again to the Shanghai Municipal Council, asking it to push the fund over the finish line. After a brief back-and-forth, the Council approved the donation.[126]

As seen in the discussion above, the Slave Girls' Refuge interacted with and received important support from various governmental bodies in the International Settlement. The Shanghai Municipal Police removed slave girls from abusive households, or collected wandering children on the street. The Mixed Court heard these girls' stories, then sent them to live at the Refuge. And the Shanghai Municipal Council provided critical financial backing, as did leaders of the Chinese community. Clearly, the need for this work was evident to both foreigners and

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[122] "Refuge for Chinese Slave Children," *North-China Herald*, February 7, 1908, 308.

[123] "Refuge for Chinese Slave Children," *North-China Herald*, December 19, 1908, 745.

[124] Donald MacGillivray, "Chinese Slavery," Letter to the Editor, *North-China Herald*, March 6, 1909, 581.

[125] *North-China Herald*, October 23, 1909, 218.

[126] "Refuge for Chinese Slave Girls," *The Municipal Gazette*, December 23, 1909, 395-396.

Chinese in Shanghai, and the Slave Girls' Refuge performed it in a manner that received approval from many.

A similar institution came into being several years after the founding of the Slave Girls' Refuge, though its inception followed a slightly different path. In 1900, foreign women associated with the international Florence Crittenton Mission organization founded the Door of Hope Mission, a home for Chinese women escaping lives of prostitution.[127] Within a few years, however, the mission's leadership realized that the home had unexpectedly filled with residents of various ages, ranging from ten to 30 years old, and having them all mixed together in one facility was proving troublesome and difficult to discipline. In 1904, the home split into two facilities, with older girls in one and younger girls in the other, and in 1906, the mission founded a Children's Home specifically for very young residents.[128] Its original location, on Wusong Road north of the Bund, was quickly deemed too close to the city center, so in 1906 the home moved to the northern suburb of Jiangwan, where the residents could enjoy an expanse of ground to play on and a garden in which to raise produce (Figure 1.2).[129]

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[127] Door of Hope's association with the Florence Crittenton Mission dissolved in August 1905. For a complete history of the institution, see Sue Ellen Gronewold, "Encountering Hope: The Door of Hope Mission in Shanghai and Taipei, 1900–1976" (PhD diss., Columbia University, 1996).

[128] "Fourth Annual Report of the Shanghai Florence Crittenton Home," January 1, 1905, 2; "Sixth Annual Report of the Door of Hope," 1906, 6.

[129] "A Story of the Good Shepherd, or the Seventh Annual Report of the Door of Hope," 1907, 11-12.

Figure 1.3: Door of Hope Children's Home in Jiangwan, Shanghai, 1907. Source: "A Story of the Good Shepherd, or the Seventh Annual Report of the Door of Hope," 1907, n.p.

Like the Slave Girls' Refuge, the Children's Home received the majority of its residents through the referral of the Mixed Court. In 1907, 56 of the 59 children who entered the home that year did so via the Court, in large part due to the enforcement of the 1906 law prohibiting youths under the age of 14 in brothels.[130] The Shanghai Municipal Council also provided the Door of Hope with financial support, as it did the Slave Girls' Refuge. Although the Council explicitly stated that operating relief institutions was not within its purview, it is clear that the Settlement's governing body was willing to give its support to such institutions.[131]

[130] "Seventh Annual Report," 9-10.

[131] Chen, *Guilty of Indigence*, 38.

The Door of Hope and its "Love School" (愛育學堂 Aiyu xuetang), as the Children's Home was named in 1908, was more aggressively Christian than the Slave Girls' Refuge appears to have been. Door of Hope annual reports were written in flowery, religious language, with regular entreaties and expressions of thanks to God, while the Slave Girls' Refuge issued reports written in much more straightforward, businesslike language. Door of Hope reports also informed readers about the growth of Christianity among their resident population, who attended Sunday School and studied the Bible in their regular classes. Though the home's schoolteachers "by no means adhere[d] to the old style of Chinese primary schools," they did instruct children in the traditional Chinese practice of text memorization—except, instead of committing the Confucian classics to memory, they learned to recite large chunks of the Bible.[132]

At the Children's Home, children lived in a "cottage system," meant to mimic the family life that they would otherwise have lacked. Each small cottage housed a "family" of girls of varying ages and was headed by a Chinese "mother." In describing this residential system, the Door of Hope leadership explained that the move to it was motivated by a desire to respect the girls' individuality, as well as prepare them for future family life:

> We hope through this arrangement to give the children a far more natural life, with more opportunity to develop their individuality than is possible in one large household where the discipline must necessarily be to a large extent uniform whereas the children's needs and dispositions are multiform. We also hope to keep more of the family spirit, the absence of which is such a distinct loss to children brought up in large institutions, and constitutes a serious hindrance to their best preparation for their future lives.[133]

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[132] "Treasures of Darkness: Ninth Annual Report of the Door of Hope," 1910, 13.

[133] "Stones of Remembrance: The Eighth Annual Report of the Door of Hope, Shanghai," 1908, 18. Use of the cottage system came about in the West in the late nineteenth century in response to the charge that orphan asylums were too "institutional" and did not socialize residents in a way that would prepare them for adult life. However, the cost of establishing and staffing so many small residences prohibited the widespread adoption of the cottage system, even though child welfare advocates agreed it was superior to traditional orphan asylums. Hacsi, *Second Home*, 166-170.

To equip the girls with practical skills for the future, the Children's Home emphasized training in different handiworks, including sewing, knitting, crochet, and embroidery. The girls got paid for their efforts, and in turn were expected to put that money toward their upkeep, as the home hoped to cultivate "self-dependence," rather than an expectation that all would be provided.[134]

In this respect, as I will discuss in Chapter 2, the Door of Hope Children's Home was very much like Chinese industrial institutions founded throughout the first decades of the twentieth century, which sought "to reform traditional relief institutions in favor of more productive practices."[135] Philanthropists and reformers worried that charitable handouts would make Chinese children weak and dependent, and in turn the country as a whole would become the same. While foreigners were primarily concerned about what crowded urban living conditions were doing to children *as children*, Chinese reformers worried about what childhood conditions said about their nation and its future.

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[134] "Eighth Annual Report," 17.

[135] Chen, *Guilty of Indigence* 30.

CHAPTER 2:

CHILD WELFARE AND CHINESE NATIONALISM

救救孩子…
Jiu jiu haizi ...
Save the children ...[136]

With this closing line of "Diary of a Madman" (狂人日記 *Kuangren riji*), his first vernacular short story, the celebrated author Lu Xun (魯迅 1881–1936) issued a plea to his readers. Or was it a challenge?

If Lu Xun meant the line as a challenge, there were plenty of Chinese ready to take it on. "Diary of a Madman" first appeared in the Beijing journal *New Youth* (新青年 *Xin qingnian*) in April 1918, in the midst of the New Culture Movement (新文化運動 *Xin wenhua yundong*) and a year before the May Fourth Era (五四時期 *Wusi shiqi*) would start, as Chinese intellectuals and reformers worried about their country's vulnerability to colonialism by Japan and the West. The story, structured as a series of diary entries written by a man suffering hallucinations, condemned traditional Chinese culture by equating its values and customs with cannibalism. China, obsessed with the past, was "eating" itself, oblivious to the menacing world around it. But there was hope for the future, Lu Xun suggested, if someone would intervene to "save the children" and prevent the perpetuation of the grim practice.

Heeding Lu Xun's call to "save the children" (救孩子 *jiu haizi*) could in turn help to save the country (救國 *jiu guo*) in the face of foreign encroachment. Intellectuals and reformers

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[136] Lu Xun, "Diary of a Madman," in *The Real Story of Ah-Q and Other Tales of China: The Complete Fiction of Lu Xun*, trans. Julia Lovell (London: Penguin Classics, 2009), 31. Chinese original available at http://www.millionbook.net/mj/l/luxun/lh/002.htm (accessed February 25, 2014).

argued that strengthening the nation could best be accomplished by casting off everything that imperial China had held sacred: Confucianism, hierarchy, the Classics. But adults, even progressive ones, had already been tainted by this culture. Children—blank slates—were China's hope for the future.

How, exactly, to save the children? Over the first decades of the twentieth century, Chinese intellectuals, reformers, parents, teachers, businessmen, and government officials answered this question in countless ways. Among other things, they rewrote textbooks, studied Western child-development theories, encouraged children to experiment and play, sought to foster creativity and inquisitiveness in the young, founded Boy Scout troops, and created an entire commercial industry in products and publications for children. As Andrew F. Jones notes, the years between 1917 and 1937, when war with Japan broke out, "witnessed an unprecedented explosion of discourse for and about children, childhood, and child development."[137] Raising healthy, worldly, patriotic children became a national project.

But there was also the *actual* day-to-day work of child-saving to do, and it had taken on new importance in the years before "Diary of a Madman" appeared, as Chinese philanthropists and child welfare workers collaborated to found vocational training homes and orphanages in cities, including Shanghai. In these institutions, (sometimes) family-less and (always) impoverished children received instruction in skills that would enable them to become productive members of society and prevent them from falling into a life of "parasitism." The interest in building such institutions reflected new ideas about the relationship between individual poverty and national strength, and forestalling the growth of what Marx had termed

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[137] Andrew Jones, *Developmental Fairy Tales: Evolutionary Thinking and Modern Chinese Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011), 103.

the *lumpenproletariat*, or "vagrant proletariat," became—even to non-Marxists—an important step in the drive toward national progress.[138]

By the end of the period discussed in this chapter (from roughly 1900 through 1937), another group would join its voice to the cacophony arguing over children and China's future. Pointing to the continued presence of impoverished and vagrant children, particularly in cities like Shanghai, the Chinese Communist Party (共產黨 *Gongchandang*, CCP) claimed that far from addressing child welfare issues, the various groups named above had not done nearly enough. In the decades to come, the CCP would make child welfare work a key component in its reform agenda.

This chapter will begin with a look at the growth of orphanages and vocational institutes in the early twentieth century and their fight against social parasitism. I will then turn to a discussion of the May Fourth child consumer before considering the institutionalization of child welfare work under the Nationalist regime between 1927–1937.

PRODUCTIVITY FOR THE NATION: WORKHOUSE-ORPHANAGES

By 1905, those in China who were concerned with the country's future had good reason to worry that their country might not *have* a future. Ten years earlier, China had suffered a surprise defeat at the hands of a rising Japan, which then went on to victory in the Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905), the first time that an Asian power had won against a European one.

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[138] Worries about the size of China's "nonproductive class" (an elastic group that included beggars, orphans, prostitutes, drug addicts, thieves, and more) were shared by communists and enemies of communism alike. As Aminda Smith notes in a discussion of the *lumpenproletariat* in the pre-1949 era, "Chinese Marxists shared with other so-called 'new culture' intellectuals the belief that social worth could be measured in terms of one's productive output." Reformers and revolutionaries of all political stripes sought to eliminate parasitism and idleness from Chinese society. Aminda M. Smith, *Thought Reform and China's Dangerous Classes: Reeducation, Resistance, and the People* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2013), 22.

In addition to this new threat only a few hundred miles off its eastern coast—and in the city of Tianjin, where Japan had established a foreign concession—China also faced the ongoing incursion of Western colonialism, which continued to creep forward. From the limited settlements of the treaty ports established after the First Opium War, European governments and the United States had expanded their territory within China in fits and starts, and Chinese nationalists now declared that their country was being "carved up like a melon" (瓜分 *gua fen*). The domestic situation was no less worrisome, as memories of the 1899–1900 Boxer Uprising were still fresh in everyone's minds; a restive streak of anti-Qing nationalism had also emerged, and in 1905, several revolutionary groups in exile came together in Tokyo and allied themselves into the powerful Tongmenghui (同盟會), led by Sun Yat-sen (孫中山 1866–1925). In the social Darwinist "survival of the fittest" competition of the early twentieth century, China appeared to be far from fit.

By 1905, however, the Qing had come to acknowledge the necessity of embracing reform in the interest of preventing a full-scale collapse. Taking a page from the playbook of Meiji Japan, the court undertook the "New Policies" (新政 *Xinzheng*) Reforms, which included abolishing the traditional exam system for scholar-officials and promoting an emphasis on Western-style learning in its place. Education, which for so many centuries had been rigidly focused on the mastery of a small number of Confucian classics, suddenly became an expansive terrain that swept across geography, science, foreign languages, literature, and history. In the eyes of reformers, education—particularly of young children—represented one of the keys to revitalizing the nation and restoring China's place on the world stage.[139]

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[139] Limin Bai, "Children as the Youthful Hope of an Old Empire: Race, Nationalism, and Elementary Education in China, 1895–1915," *Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth* 1, no. 2 (Spring 2008): 210-231.

But impoverished or family-less children did not necessarily benefit from this new growth in elementary education, since they did not always have the financial resources or ability to attend school. Instead, philanthropists and reformers worked to address their needs on a much more pragmatic level: how could these youths be given vocational training that would enable them to grow up as productive members of society and avoid the plague of "parasitism"? The answer was to be found in orphanages and training institutes that began to dot the country's major cities in the last years before the fall of the Qing in 1912.[140]

This fear of parasitism went beyond a worry that vagrant children would depend on the charity of the wealthier classes and grow lazy from the expectation that their needs would always be fulfilled by others; it reflected new ideas about the relationship between poverty and national welfare. Hanchao Lu argues that until the late-Qing era, the general Chinese attitude toward the indigent was that they were an unfortunate group deserving of compassion.[141] As both Lu and Janet Chen have demonstrated, the early twentieth century witnessed an important change in the way educated Chinese thought about the impoverished living in their midst. This new discourse about poverty viewed it not as a temporary condition or the result of bad fate, but instead as reflective of a weakness that had to be reformed out of an individual's character. If allowed to persist, this personal weakness would have a negative effect on national strength, as the combined force of China's large indigent population would impede the country's progress.[142]

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[140] My discussion of these institutions below is limited to two in Shanghai. Zhou Qiuguang offers an in-depth look at a Beijing orphanage that offered vocational instruction—though more focused on agricultural education rather than training for city-based jobs—in "Modern Chinese Educational Philanthropy: Xiong Xiling and the Xiangshan Children's Home," trans. Edward McCord, *Republican China* 19, no. 1 (November 1993): 51-83. For a broader look at the workhouse-orphanage movement across China in the early twentieth century, see Apter, "Saving the Young," 46-59.

[141] Hanchao Lu, *Street Criers: A Cultural History of Chinese Beggars* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005), 34-38.

[142] Lu, *Street Criers*, 45-53; Chen, *Guilty of Indigence*, 17-19.

Poverty, Chen writes, "was contextually correlated to scenarios of possible national extinction, and inflected with a new valence of national deficiency."[143]

The form that reformers and government officials chose to eliminate the character flaw of poverty was the workhouse, imported to China from the West via Japan. In the name of rehabilitation, criminals and the homeless (the line between the two was often blurry in the eyes of the state) were sent to these institutions, where they were meant to learn the meaning of labor and the pleasure that one derived from contributing to national productivity. To the dismay of workhouse administrators and idealistic reformers, however, they soon found that the recidivist rate for vagrancy was quite high.[144] Additionally, workhouses and other charities to assist vagrants suffered fluctuations in funding (via both charitable donations and government assistance), which prevented them from embarking on sustained, large-scale programs to address urban poverty.[145] The prospects for bringing beggary and vagrancy to a permanent end by incarcerating and/or providing vocational training to adults appeared dim.

Children, though, represented hope for future change. Perhaps, like the children in "Diary of a Madman" who had been exposed to cannibalism, these youngsters had already been introduced to the life of the poor and vagrant. But they didn't have to go down that path, if they could be diverted in time. Residential institutions that engaged in "productive education" (生產教育 *shengchan jiaoyu*) to teach children useful skills could perform an early intervention and steer them away from a lifetime of non-productivity and dependence on charity. Parents of impoverished children, in turn, looked to these new workhouse-orphanages to provide their

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[143] Chen, *Guilty of Indigence*, 19.

[144] Chen, *Guilty of Indigence*, 19-30.

[145] Lu, *Street Criers*, 10-11.

offspring with valuable vocational skills that held the possibility of secure employment in the future.

Shanghai Industrial Orphanage

In the winter of 1906, several Shanghai philanthropists came together to found the Shanghai Industrial Orphanage (上海孤兒院 Shanghai gu'eryuan[146]), an institution modeled after others in Japan and the West, and which also bore a resemblance to Shanghai's Tushanwan Orphanage, discussed in Chapter 1. At an informational meeting for Shanghai expatriates, one of the orphanage's organizers explained that he had been inspired by hearing of an industrial home for children in Bristol, England several years earlier and had made information-gathering visits to several orphanages in Japan. Other Chinese presenters at the meeting also explicitly linked Shanghai's new children's home to similar institutions in Europe and Japan, suggesting that they wished the Shanghai Industrial Orphanage to be associated not with the foundling homes of traditional China, but the modern workhouse-orphanages of the West.[147] In its annual report covering the first two years of operation, the Industrial Orphanage stated that, following methods established in the West and Japan, it would give children a basic education and train them in crafts "for the benefit of society" (社會之益 *shehui zhi yi*).[148]

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[146] The strict translation of the home's Chinese name is simply "Shanghai Orphanage." However, the orphanage referred to itself as the Shanghai Industrial Orphanage when materials included an English title or the institution's bilingual chop. I agree with Janet Chen's argument that the home's leadership did so to underscore its emphasis on labor. Chen, *Guilty of Indigence*, 40.

[147] "A Chinese Industrial Orphanage," *North-China Herald*, December 14, 1906, 611. In what appears to be the first annual report of the Shanghai Industrial Orphanage (covering the years 1906 to 1908), there is a lengthy section on the history of Japan's Okayama Orphanage. This institution seems to have served as a model for Shanghai's workhouse-orphanage. *Shanghai gu'eryuan baogao* (Reports of the Shanghai Industrial Orphanage), 1906–1908, 33-42.

[148] *Shanghai gu'eryuan baogao*, 1906–1908, 51.

At the Industrial Orphanage, boys (and soon also girls) between the ages of six and 18 *sui* received their education and vocational instruction at the aptly named "Work-Study School" (工讀學堂 Gong-Du xuetang). The vocational studies were separated by sex: boys could train in one of seven disciplines (woodworking, rattan-working, watercolor/oil painting, weaving, printing, gardening, or sandal/shoemaking), while girls were limited to four vocational majors (sewing, embroidery, spinning thread, or cooking).[149] In Shanghai, the orphanage advertised that its students could fill orders for either Western- or Chinese-style furniture, leather shoes and wallets, or any national flag a buyer might desire.[150] The sale of the handicrafts helped support the orphanage's bottom line—a recurring source of trouble for the institution's leadership in years of economic, political, and social uncertainty.

Though it enjoyed the backing of some important Shanghai philanthropists, the Industrial Orphanage had to maintain a regular fund-raising program to sustain its work. The institution had begun with 30 boys in its care; by its fifth anniversary, in 1911, the home's size had grown to 140 children and its income had reached a height of 55,000 *yuan*.[151] The instability and uncertainty that followed the revolt against the Qing in October 1911, however, hit the orphanage hard. By December 1911, the institution had to reach out to the city's foreign community by placing a call for donations in the *North-China Herald*, admitting that it was struggling to feed and clothe the home's residents.[152] A year after the Xinhai Revolution, the orphanage reported an

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[149] *Shanghai gu'eryuan Yi-mao nian baogao* (Report of the Shanghai Industrial Orphanage in the *Yi-mao* Year), 1915, 97-98.

[150] "Shanghai gu'eryuan faxing suo men shi fapiao" (Receipt, Shanghai Industrial Orphanage Sales Department), c. 1921.

[151] "Linian shouru zongshu bijiao biao" (Table of Income Over the Years), *Shanghai gu'eryuan baogaoce* (Report and Accounts of the Shanghai Industrial Orphanage), 1934, SMA Y3-1-271.

[152] "Shanghai Industrial Orphanage," *North-China Herald*, December 9, 1911, 680.

income of only 11,000 *yuan*.[153] For the next two decades, its income and donations would fluctuate wildly, and the orphanage seems to have been constantly flirting with debt.[154]

But the orphanage pressed on, despite its financial difficulties, and Shanghai's population of indigent and family-less children was large enough that the institution continued to grow.[155] By 1915, it was operating four facilities: the main orphanage, a receiving home (收養所 *shouyangsuo*), the training institute (工藝所 *gongyisuo*), and a home for young children (幼稚所 *youzhisuo*).[156] It could not have been easy to attract donations, given that at this time, China's often shaky political situation likely made potential donors unwilling to part with their savings. Additionally, there were a number of other children's homes also competing for charitable dollars in Shanghai, including the Shanghai Poor Children's Home.

Shanghai Poor Children's Home

In 1907, a year after the Shanghai Industrial Orphanage opened its doors, leaders in Shanghai's Chinese business community began organizing to found the Shanghai Poor Children's Home (上海貧兒院 Shanghai pin'eryuan).[157] In 1909, the Poor Children's Home began accepting children, who, like their peers at the Shanghai Industrial Orphanage, attended

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[153] "Linian shouru zongshu bijiao biao." The tables in the report do not indicate the monetary unit in use beyond referring to *yuan*. While this vagueness means that numbers must be considered with care, it does appear clear from the orphanage's charts of income and expenses that both figures varied greatly throughout the Republican period.

[154] "Linian shouru zongshu bijiao biao" and "Linian zhichu zongshu bijiao biao" (Table of Expenses Over the Years), *Shanghai gu'eryuan baogaoce*, 1934.

[155] Shanghai's overall population grew significantly during the Republican era; between 1910 and 1930, the number of residents in the city more than doubled, from 1.2 million to 3 million people (Zou, *Jiu Shanghai renkou*, 90). As always, this growth was fed by migrants from the countryside coming to Shanghai for work. The children of these migrants seem to have been one of the largest sources of workhouse-orphanage residents.

[156] *Shanghai gu'eryuan Yi-mao nian baogao*, 97.

[157] "Zuzhi Shanghai pin'eryuan zhi xiansheng" (The Precursor to Organizing the Shanghai Poor Children's Home), *Shenbao*, October 4, 1907, 19.

basic educational classes and received vocational training. In declaring its mission, the institution explained that "uneducated children are fearsome; poor children are fearsome; but poor and uneducated children are even more fearsome" (兒不教可怕，兒貧可怕，兒貧不教更可怕 *er bu jiao kepa, er pin kepa, er pin bu jiao geng kepa*).[158] Its goal was to prevent poor and uneducated children from growing up into nonproductive, parasitic adults.

In its regulations, the home emphasized cleanliness, order, and routine. Residents were to eat breakfast at 7am, lunch at noon, and dinner at 6pm before their bedtime of 10pm. Breakfast consisted of one serving of rice porridge (粥 *zhou*) and lunch one bowl of a rice-based dish. All clothing was to be labeled with its owner's name, and unlined clothes washed once a week, while quilted clothing only needed to be washed once per month. Children received a quarterly health check and were instructed to clean their faces using only cold water. Students in the nursing track (保姆生 *baomusheng*) looked after younger residents to ensure that proper procedures and hygiene were followed.[159] It is impossible to know how closely the home's extensive list of rules was followed, but the Poor Children's Home at least presented itself as a highly organized and orderly institution.

Like the Industrial Orphanage, the Shanghai Poor Children's Home grew quickly. By 1915, it had more than doubled in size, housing 162 children (the vast majority of them boys), and its string band had traveled to the Panama-Pacific Exposition in San Francisco, where it won a gold medal.[160] Due to its solid support from Shanghai's Chinese business community, the Poor Children's Home built up an endowment and seems to have suffered less from financial

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[158] *Shanghai pin'eryuan di yi ci baogao* (First Report of the Shanghai Poor Children's Home), c. 1909, 1.

[159] *Shanghai pin'eryuan zhangcheng* (Regulations of the Shanghai Poor Children's Home), n.d., 5-13.

[160] *Shanghai pin'eryuan gaikuang* (Survey of the Shanghai Poor Children's Home), 1915.

fluctuations than the Industrial Orphanage did.[161] The home also offered student-residents a broader range of specialized fields in which to receive training. Its 15 vocational majors included the usual woodworking, weaving, embroidery, and print-making, but also midwifery, lacquer-work, nursing, and machine-knitting.[162] Some of the girls were married from the Poor Children's Home, either to other "graduates" of the institution or men in the community who had solid jobs (in 1915, for example, the professions of these new husbands included print-making, medicine, government work, and telegraph operator).[163]

The Door of Hope orphanage and Slave Girl's Refuge also trained their residents in practical skills to ensure that they would have the knowledge needed to lead a productive life, either in the workforce or at home. Unlike these foreign-run institutions, however, the Shanghai Industrial Orphanage and Poor Children's Home drew their residents from a very different population. It turns out that the majority of children living in these workhouse-orphanages were, in fact, not orphans at all.

Workhouse-Orphanage Demographics

Both the Industrial Orphanage and Poor Children's Home were located within the boundaries of the International Settlement, and like the foreign-run institutions discussed in Chapter 1, they both formed relationships with the Mixed Court that made them receiving facilities for children in the court's custody. While the Door of Hope and Slave Girls' Refuge largely sheltered children who had been rescued from dangerous living environments, however,

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[161] Chen, *Guilty of Indigence*, 41-42.

[162] *Shanghai pin'eryuan zhangcheng*, 2-3.

[163] *Shanghai pin'eryuan gaikuang*, 47-48.

the Industrial Orphanage and Poor Children's Home took in children who were first and foremost escaping poverty. In the majority of cases, workhouse-orphanage residents came from indigent families that had made the decision to send their children to a vocational training home, presumably because the youths would obtain tutelage in a skill that would provide them with a secure financial future. Parents signed a letter of guarantee (保證書 *baozhengshu*) affirming that their families were genuinely poor and could not afford to support the children.[164] Once in the home, children were largely separated from their parents—the Shanghai Industrial Orphanage's rules, for example, included a regulation preventing its residents from returning to visit their families more than twice a year.[165]

For the most part, children entering these homes hailed from Shanghai or areas close to it; nearly all of them came from Jiangsu (which included Shanghai) and Zhejiang Provinces, with a much smaller number from Anhui Province.[166] The Shanghai Poor Children's Home also seems to have been interested in what sorts of families its residents were coming from: in its annual reports, the institution broke down the percentages of children whose parents were employed versus unemployed, and what type of work the employed performed (mostly manual labor and peddling).[167]

A relatively small number of children in these homes were true orphans, with two deceased parents, but an even smaller number had two living parents. Drawing from lists of

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[164] For a sample letter of guarantee, see *Shanghai gu'eryuan baogao*, 1906–1908, 56.

[165] *Shanghai gu'eryuan baogao*, 1906–1908, 52.

[166] On at least one occasion, children came to the orphanage from beyond this usual area: the 1915 Poor Children's Home report states that due to a natural disaster, it had accepted 20 children from Henan Province. *Shanghai pin'eryuan gaikuang*, 44-45.

[167] *Shanghai pin'eryuan di yi ci baogao*, 19; *Shanghai pin'eryuan gaikuang*, 11.

orphanage residents published in the institutions' annual reports, it is evident that many of them came from families in which one parent had died (Graph 2.1).

Year	Institution		Orphaned	Father deceased	Mother deceased	Both parents living	Other/ unknown
1908	Shanghai Industrial Orphanage		29	20	1	-	3
1909	Shanghai Poor Children's Home	Boys	15	17	12	8	-
		Girls	6	1	4	8	1
1910	Shanghai Industrial Orphanage	Boys	39	49	9	-	2
		Girls	4	28	5	-	-
1915	Shanghai Industrial Orphanage	Boys	43	48	13	7	10
		Girls	-	45	10	5	16

Graph 2.1 Parental Status of Workhouse-Orphanage Residents

Sources: *Shanghai gu'eryuan baogao* (1906–1908), 21-26; *Shanghai pin'eryuan di yi ci baogao* (c. 1909), 19-25; *Shanghai gu'eryuan baogao* (1908–1910), 15-27; *Shanghai gu'eryuan Yi-mao nian baogao* (1915), 1-15.

Notes: The 1906–1908 report for the Shanghai Industrial Orphanage does not indicate the sex of the home's residents on its name lists. The numbers for the Shanghai Industrial Orphanage in 1915 are only for residents of the main orphanage, due to gaps in data about children entering the receiving home and facility for young children. Only the first annual report of the Poor Children's Home included a category for parental status.

In the majority of cases, particularly when the workhouse-orphanage resident was female, the deceased parent was the father. It seems likely, then, that widowed mothers placed their children in the orphanage as a family survival method after their husbands' deaths: the children would have their basic needs taken care of and also be prepared for future employment. For girls, the institution could also help find a husband when the time came, without the family needing to provide a dowry.

While the foundling homes of late imperial China had sought to place children in stable family situations as quickly as possible, these twentieth-century workhouse-orphanages encouraged the removal of children from their families in the name of productivity and strength (both individual and national). Placing children in a vocational training home was likely an economic act that made individual sense at the family level, but one that also lined up with reformers' concerns about national strength and prosperity. Children of the impoverished risked growing up to become members of the nonproductive classes; by being removed from their family situations and reared in an environment that instilled a love of labor, however, they were more likely to become productive adults who contributed to the nation. Workhouse-orphanages like the Shanghai Industrial Orphanage and Shanghai Poor Children's Home did not only save the children—they could also help save China.

CONSUMPTION FOR THE NATION: CHILDHOOD IN THE INTERWAR YEARS

While some poor Shanghai parents chose to send their children to workhouse-orphanages for vocational training, many "petty urbanite" (小市民 *xiaoshimin*[168]) parents sought to secure their offspring's future in a variety of other ways. During the interwar period, educators, child development specialists, and entrepreneurs fostered a new discourse of childhood that equated taking an active role in child-rearing with supplying one's offspring with material goods that would facilitate the child's exploration of his/her natural inquisitiveness and creativity. In turn, they advised parents, Chinese children would become more like their counterparts in the West, and the nation would become stronger as a result.[169]

Lu Xun was not the only member of his family with an interest in children and China's future: his brother, the translator and essayist Zhou Zuoren (周作人 1885–1967), also wrote extensively on questions of childhood and had a special interest in children's literature. Both brothers encouraged authors and readers to break free from the stilted, highly formalized constructions of classical Chinese literature and embrace a freer, more creative style that would

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[168] The *xiaoshimin* have proven a slippery group to identify, and as Hanchao Lu notes, "It was less clear who should be included in the category than who should be excluded" (*Beyond the Neon Lights*, 61). Broadly speaking, the petty urbanites spanned everyone from factory workers and shop assistants to office clerks and small merchants. My interest here is in those who sat at the higher end of the socio-economic spectrum but did not quite make it into the elite—parents who were literate and had the disposable income to invest in material goods meant to improve their children's chances of success in the future. For more on defining the *xiaoshimin*, see Lu, *Beyond the Neon Lights*, 61-64; Wen-hsin Yeh, "Progressive Journalism and Shanghai's Petty Urbanites: Zou Taofen and the Shenghuo Enterprise, 1926–1945," in *Shanghai Sojourners*, eds. Frederick Wakeman, Jr. and Wen-hsin Yeh (Berkeley: Institute of East Asian Studies, 1992), 190-191.

[169] A similar discourse of parental investment in children has taken hold in urban China over the past two decades, as aspirational parents have sought to provide their children with music lessons, foreign-language tutoring, travel experiences, and much more. In contrast to the interwar emphasis on promoting healthy child development and attending to children's unique emotional and psychological needs, however, the current "Tiger Mom" approach focuses on discipline and achievement. See Ann Anagnost, "Children and National Transcendence in China," in *Constructing China: The Interaction of Culture and Economics*, eds. Kenneth G. Lieberthal, Shuen-fu Lin, and Ernest P. Young (Ann Arbor, MI: Center for Chinese Studies, 1997), 195-222.

foster children's imaginations.[170] In a 1920 essay, "Children's Literature" (兒童的文學 *Ertong de wenxue*), Zhou Zuoren argued that children were not simply tiny adults, trapped in limbo until they grew up, but were in fact psychologically different from adults, with their own interior and exterior lives.[171] Children's literature had to recognize and encourage this difference; it should satisfy their instinctive interests and tastes (順應滿足兒童之本能的興趣與興味 *shunying manzu ertong zhi benneng de xingqu yu xingwei*), such as, for example, for anthropomorphic animals.[172] Actually, Zhou did not suggest that there should simply be a division between literature for children and adults—he argued that the genre of children's literature itself needed to be further subdivided into four age-specific categories: for infants/toddlers (1-3 *sui*), young children (3-10 *sui*), children (10-15 *sui*), and youths (15-20 *sui*). Children in each age group would receive the reading materials best-suited to their developmental stage.[173]

In this essay, Zhou touched on a key element of educated urban childhood in the interwar era: the production and consumption of child-specific goods. Between the end of World War I and the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War, thanks in part to the high-profile encouragement of Zhou's brother Lu Xun, the children's publishing industry would surge forward with an explosion of periodicals, textbooks, encyclopedias, fairy tales, and more. But the supply of child-specific products entering the May Fourth market went far beyond books and magazines. To grow into an inquisitive, productive adult who would contribute to the advancement of the Chinese nation, it seemed, children needed to consume a nearly infinite

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[170] Mary Ann Farquhar, *Children's Literature in China: From Lu Xun to Mao Zedong* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1999), Chapters 1-2; Jones, *Developmental Fairy Tales*, Chapters 3, 5.

[171] Zhou Zuoren, "Ertong de wenxue" (Children's Literature), in *Zhou Zuoren lun ertong wenxue* (Zhou Zuoren on Children's Literature), compil. Liu Xuyuan (Beijing: Haitun chubanshe, 2012), 122.

[172] Zhou, "Ertong de wenxue," 124.

[173] Zhou, "Ertong de wenxue," 124.

number of specially designed products from practically the moment of birth forward. In Republican China, Andrew Jones argues persuasively, "children and commodities were consistently linked together as part of a larger narrative of national development."[174]

Many of these items, like toys and children's literature, were not suitable for all ages. Parents had to match up their child's age and developmental status with appropriate products. This reflects one of the most insidious aspects of the children's market that developed in the interwar era: once a parent entered the marketplace, it was impossible to escape. Each set of toys or books was only intended for use during a limited period of time—if the objects worked as intended and helped stimulate a child's intellectual and psychological growth, the youngster would soon reach a new developmental stage, which required the purchase of more toys and more books calibrated to that level. Parents, motivated by a genuine and understandable desire to see their offspring succeed, were providing a healthy income to those who produced and sold child-specific products. And in its new multi-story department stores, Shanghai, the consumer capital of China, offered anxious parents a never-ending parade of goods to buy for their children.[175]

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[174] Jones, *Developmental Fairy Tales*, 129. This commodification of a modern, foreign-inflected childhood resembles the selling of *weisheng*, or "hygienic modernity" that Ruth Rogaski explores in *Hygienic Modernity: Meanings of Health and Disease in Treaty-Port China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 227-233. A similar commodities-based "children's world" emerged in Japan at the beginning of the twentieth century, as discussed in Mark A. Jones, *Children as Treasures: Childhood and the Middle Class in Early Twentieth Century Japan* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2010).

[175] On consumer culture in Republican Shanghai, see Sherman Cochran, ed., *Inventing Nanjing Road: Commercial Culture in Shanghai, 1900–1945* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2000). For a brief discussion of the "children's market" and its place in Shanghai's largest department stores, see Lien Ling-ling, "From the Retailing Revolution to the Consumer Revolution: Department Stores in Modern Shanghai," trans. Yang Kai-chien, *Frontiers of History in China* 4, no. 3 (2009): 376-379.

The Children's Market

Some of these child-specific products were literally consumed. Beginning in the late-Qing era, both Western and Chinese medical practitioners had collected biomedical data about the Chinese, particularly children, in an effort to asses their physical characteristics, nutrition, and "normality" when compared to people elsewhere.[176] For many of the examiners, Jia-chen Fu argues, "the physical examination was touted for its ability to enable the examiner to glean vital information about the broader community and the country as a whole through the body of the individual child."[177] What these examinations concluded was that Chinese children (and by extension the entire Chinese nation) suffered from various deficiencies when compared to their Western counterparts. One response to this perceived physical inadequacy was to emphasize the importance of nutrition in an effort to improve children's diets and increase their intake of vitamins.[178] Some of that education was carried out by medical practitioners, but entrepreneurs were quick to recognize the potential profits within this discourse of individual and national weakness and new emphasis on products that had been "scientifically" designed for maximum nutrition.

As Susan Glosser has written, when Cornell-educated agriculturist and Shanghai businessman You Huaigao returned to China in 1918 and began a dairy business soon after, he

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[176] Fu, "Society's Laboratories." Fu offers readers an extensive history and analysis of this data-collecting and its importance. Her chief interest, however, is in the development of biomedical nutrition as a scientific discipline and discourse that circulated throughout China during the Republican period, and thus she does not devote much discussion to the consumerist and profit-driven side of this story.

[177] Fu, "Society's Laboratories," 138.

[178] Fu, "Society's Laboratories," 218-222. Fu focuses on the linkage between national health and nutrition in the 1930s and '40s, but as the following paragraph suggests, this connection also existed earlier in the interwar period. For more on the perception of Chinese bodily weakness vis-à-vis Japan and the West, see Andrew D. Morris, *Marrow of the Nation: A History of Sport and Physical Culture in Republican China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), especially Chapter 4. See Anagnost, "Children and National Transcendence," 216-217 for a brief discussion of national strength and "children's food" in the post-Mao era.

saw the opportunity to profit from fears about weakness in Chinese children's bodies by encouraging mothers to give their children milk for strength and nourishment. You started an "Infant Milk Drinking Society" and in the pages of his promotional magazine, *Jiating xingqi* (家庭星期 Family Weekly), argued that China's two major problems were widespread illiteracy and the fact that Chinese lagged far behind Westerners in consuming milk.[179] You was far from alone in capitalizing on parents' concerns about their children's health to sell his product. In the pages of the popular Shanghai-based glossy pictorial *Liangyou huabao* (良友畫報 The Young Companion), which began publication in 1926, Quaker Oats and Kellogg's Corn Flakes placed advertisements that positioned their cereals as the ideal, balanced meal for growing children. Many powdered milk brands advertised the nutritional benefits of their products for youngsters, while producers of cod liver oil, health tonics, and "Baby's Own Tablets" promised catch-all remedies for virtually any childhood ailment one could imagine.

These advertisements targeted educated urban women, who performed the role of "good wife and loving mother" (賢妻良母 *xianqi liangmu*) by demonstrating their mastery of the new academic discipline of home economics, of which nutrition was an important specialty.[180] Not all of these advertisements included such overt nationalistic elements as You Huaigao employed in his writings. They did, however, repeatedly invoke the word *jiankang* (健康 health) and incorporate pictures that contrasted weak, sallow children with the fleshy and strong ones who consumed their products. In the atmosphere of the interwar years, when China was still attempting to catch up to Japan and the West and prove itself as "modern" and advanced as they

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[179] Susan L. Glosser, "The Business of Family: You Huaigao and the Commercialization of a May Fourth Ideal," *Republican China* 21 (April 1995): 90-91.

[180] Glosser, "The Business of Family," 100-107; Helen M. Schneider, *Keeping the Nation's House: Domestic Management and the Making of Modern China* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2011).

were, it is easy to imagine that the specter of presumed Chinese bodily weakness lurked behind this commercialization of health and nutrition.

After purchasing the foods necessary to ensure a child's proper physical development, a mother would next turn to the goods that promised to foster her offspring's healthy intellectual and psychological growth. These were toys—which Susan Fernsebner argues represented "the most important material tool in this new regime of child rearing."[181] Educators, child development specialists, and entrepreneurs all imbued toys with the ability to stimulate a child's imagination and teach him/her to exercise creativity. Improper or "unnatural" toys, however, could negatively affect the youngster and impede his or her healthy psychological development.[182]

Like so much else during the Republican period, toys were regarded as indicative of China's status in the world: children in the advanced countries of the West and Japan were said to play with more sophisticated, "scientific" toys, while "primitive" youth elsewhere played with crude and simple objects.[183] Desiring, of course, to move closer to the "advanced" end of this spectrum, educated urban Chinese parents followed the advice of educators (and toy companies) and sought to purchase American- or European-designed playthings for their children. (The Shanghai Industrial Orphanage must have noticed this, as it advertised that students in the training institute could produce "German toys" [德國玩具 *Deguo wanju.*][184]) Nationalists

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[181] Susan R. Fernsebner, "A People's Playthings: Toys, Childhood, and Chinese Identity, 1909–1933," *Postcolonial Studies* 6, no. 3 (2003): 271. For a related discussion of toys in Japan during the same period, and Japanese ideas about how toys related to children's mental and psychological development, see Jones, *Children as Treasures*, 268-274.

[182] Fernsebner, "A People's Playthings," 271-272.

[183] Fernsebner, "A People's Playthings," 276.

[184] "Shanghai gu'eryuan faxing suo men shi fapiao." As Fernsebner notes, Germany was widely considered to be the leader in quality toy production. "A People's Playthings," 283-284.

writing on toys warned that China's over-reliance on the import of playthings was giving foreigners too much influence over the minds of Chinese children.[185] It was acceptable to acknowledge that Westerners were more advanced in their understanding of child psychology and development and to draw on that knowledge in child-rearing, it seems, but parents were encouraged to guard against a weakening of their children's Chinese identity. Echoing the "Chinese essence, Western form" (體用 *ti-yong*) movement of the late nineteenth century, nationalist toy-makers sought to produce playthings that were as good as Western ones in shaping Chinese children's minds, but which were somehow innately "Chinese." In turn, they hoped, youngsters who played with these toys would mature into adults who had benefitted from the best of Western knowledge, yet still retained a sense of their national identity.

Import-substitution was not such a concern in one of the largest industries devoted to producing goods for children: publishing, which was dominated by Shanghai.[186] The city's presses churned out between 80 and 90 percent of China's newspapers, literary journals, pictorial magazines, novels, comics books, lifestyle magazines, and much more.[187] Bookstores flourished on Fuzhou Road and young boys hawked newspapers on the street, while sidewalk libraries

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[185] Fernsebner, "A People's Playthings," 282-285.

[186] On the Shanghai publishing industry, see Christopher A. Reed, *Gutenberg in Shanghai: Chinese Print Capitalism, 1876–1937* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2004); Yeh, "Progressive Journalism and Shanghai's Petty Urbanites."

[187] Reed, *Gutenberg in Shanghai*, 208. The scholarly literature on specific genres of publishing in Republican Shanghai is extensive. In addition to Reed and Yeh, cited above, a sampling of works includes Alexander Des Forges, *Mediasphere Shanghai: The Aesthetics of Cultural Production* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007); Leo Ou-fan Lee, *Shanghai Modern: The Flowering of a New Urban Culture in China, 1930–1945* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999); Perry Link, *Mandarin Ducks and Butterflies: Popular Fiction in Twentieth-Century Chinese Cities* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981); Paul G. Pickowicz, Kuiyi Shen, and Yingjin Zhang, eds., Liangyou*, Kaleidoscopic Modernity and the Shanghai Global Metropolis, 1926–1945* (Leiden: Brill, 2013); Kuiyi Shen, "*Lianhuanhua* and *Manhua*—Picture Books and Comics in Old Shanghai," in *Illustrating Asia: Comics, Humor Magazines, and Picture Books*, ed. John A. Lent (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001), 100-120.

enabled readers to easily access books, even if they lacked the funds to purchase them (Figure 2.1).

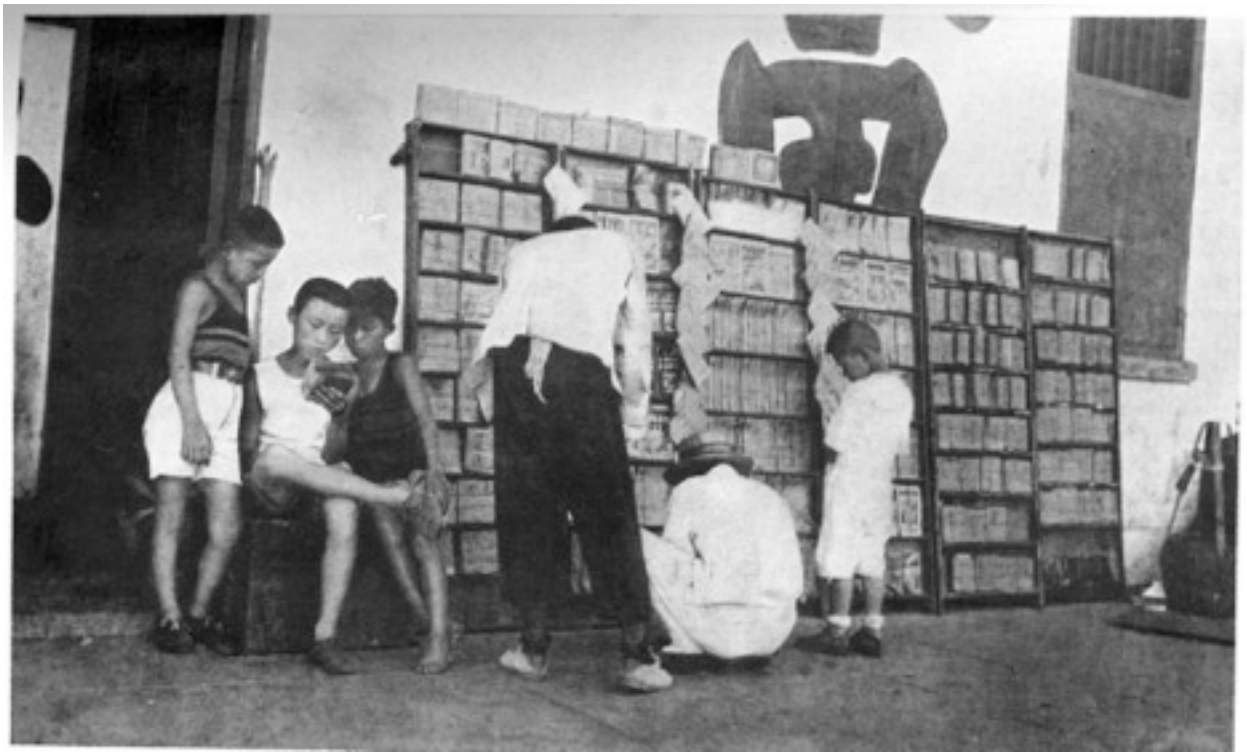

Figure 2.1: Street library, 1935. Source: Virtual Shanghai digital archive, image 25010.

One segment of this publishing industry was devoted to producing material *about* children; periodicals like *Funü zazhi* (婦女雜誌 The Ladies' Journal) and *Linglong* (玲瓏 Elegance) offered *xiaoshimin* women articles on the latest knowledge about child-rearing practices, pediatric health, and child psychology. But another robust publishing genre was in works written *for* children, including magazines, encyclopedias, textbooks, novels, and cartoons.[188] Like toys, children's literature was supposed to nurture the youthful imagination and

[188] Andrew Jones and Mary Ann Farquhar both discuss the children's sector of the publishing industry in their works cited earlier in this chapter, but a thorough, comprehensive survey of the children's publishing world in interwar Shanghai has yet to be written.

spark the inherent curiosity of its readers; as Andrew Jones writes, publishers like the Commercial Press (商務印書館 Shangwu yinshuguan) and Chunghwa Books (中華書局 Zhonghua shuju), which realized huge profits from the sale of children's materials,[189] promoted the idea that "reading itself was the best means of humanizing the child and stimulating his or her development."[190] Lu Xun, Zhou Zuoren, Ye Shengtao (葉聖陶 1894–1988), and other literary reformers, even if they did not enjoy the same financial windfall from the growth of the children's publishing market, agreed with the presses that reading was pedagogically beneficial for children and could help them achieve "civilization" (文明 *wenming*).[191] Early in the May Fourth era, they encouraged the publication of fairy tales—some translated from Western stories, others newly written by Chinese authors—for young children.[192] Zhou Zuoren considered fairy tales (童話 *tonghua*, literally "children's talk") good introductory literature for small children, who had naturally fanciful imaginations. He argued that as youngsters grew older, though, their reading material should include more content linked to the real world.[193]

Although Zhou Zuoren carefully delineated the genres and content that were most appropriate for children at each age range or developmental stage, not all publications marked the boundaries as precisely as he did. Children's magazines jumbled together different types of writing, and materials could cut across reading levels. Even if they did not strictly accord with the ideal practices set out by literary reformers, though, children's periodicals multiplied in Republican Shanghai. Commercial publishers churned out copies of *Xiao pengyou* (小朋友 The

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[189] Jones, *Developmental Fairy Tales*, 104.

[190] Jones, *Developmental Fairy Tales*, 85.

[191] Jones, *Developmental Fairy Tales*, 151.

[192] Farquhar, *Chinese Children's Literature*, 42-43, Chapter 3.

[193] Zhou, "Ertong de wenxue."

Little Friend), *Ertong zazhi* (兒童雜誌 Children's Magazine), *Ertong shijie* (兒童世界 Children's World), *Xiao xuesheng* (小學生 The Little Student), and *Xiandai ertong* (現代兒童 The Modern Child), just to name a few. What were youngsters consuming in the pages of these magazines? Through an examination of *Xiao pengyou*, we can see that the answer is: seemingly everything.

Xiao pengyou

Starting in 1922 and continuing until the Japanese invasion in 1937, Shanghai's Chunghwa Books published a weekly children's magazine titled *Xiao pengyou*, or *The Little Friend*.[194] Between the covers of this periodical, young readers found a miscellany of content: short stories (some complete within one issue, some serialized over weeks or months), songs, poems, riddles, jokes, instructions for art projects, travelogues, articles introducing the history and customs of foreign countries, cartoons, biographies of famous figures from China and abroad, and word puzzles. The children who read *Xiao pengyou* were invited to participate in it, by sending in their responses to questions or submitting their own writing in contests; the magazine also published reader-submitted (or perhaps parent-submitted) photographs of themselves on the inside back cover, giving them a brief moment of fame. From these pictures, we can see that the magazine circulated beyond Shanghai, though still within the greater Jiangnan region: children (primarily boys) from Jiangsu, Hunan, Henan, Fujian, and Zhejiang

[194] *Xiao pengyou* resumed publication in the wartime capital of Chongqing in 1945, then relocated back to Shanghai the following year. Chunghwa Books continued publishing the magazine until December 1952. In 1953, the Young Children's Publishing Company (少年兒童出版社 Shaonian ertong chubanshe) took over *Xiao pengyou* and relaunched it, starting with a new issue number 1. Publication was again suspended during the Cultural Revolution, then restarted in 1977.

Provinces all appeared, some dressed in traditional scholars' robes, others wearing Western-style pants and shirts.[195]

Chunghwa Books unquestionably used *Xiao pengyou* as a vehicle to sell its other products. The first issue of the magazine included an advertisement aimed at young readers:

> Little friends! In your schools, there is a "children's library," in your houses you can also set up a "library." You only need to buy the types of books listed below, and you too will be able to establish a small "library."
> 小朋友！你的學校裏有 "兒童圖書館，" 你的家裏也可以辦一個"圖書館。"你只要買些下列的各種書籍，就可以成立一個小小的"圖書館。" *Xiao pengyou! Ni de xuexiao li you "ertong tushuguan," ni de jia li ye keyi ban yi ge "tushuguan." Ni zhi yao mai xie xia lie de gezhong shuji, jiu keyi chengli yi ge xiaoxiao de "tushuguan."*[196]

What followed was a list that, if followed to the letter, would have pleased both Zhou Zuoren and the accountants of Chunghwa Books. The ad recommended that children build a home library that included collections (叢書 *congshu*) of short stories, children's songs, and jokes. A four-volume set entitled *Quan shijie de xiao haizi* (全世界的小孩子 Small Children Around the World) introduced the lives and customs of youngsters in other countries, while the 50 volumes of *Shijie tonghua* (世界童話 World Fairy Tales) would acquaint Chinese readers with the stories read by those other children. (The companion *Zhonghua tonghua* [中華童話 Chinese Fairy Tales] only ran to 20 volumes.) Altogether, the Chunghwa Books-approved children's home library would total close to 200 volumes, if a youngster could convince his or her parents to buy them all.

This list of suggested readings provides a succinct overview of the content in *Xiao pengyou*, which mixed together games, projects, and stories to exercise the reader's mind, as well as materials that acquainted Chinese children with the history and practices of people in other

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[195] For examples of such a photo array, see *Xiao pengyou*, no. 49 (1923); no. 161 (1925); 175 (1925).

[196] *Xiao pengyou*, no. 1 (1922), special insert page 5.

countries, offering them the knowledge needed to grow into cosmopolitan adults familiar with the world beyond China's borders, even if they never traveled abroad. A child reading *Xiao pengyou* regularly would learn the basic biography of Benjamin Franklin (which concluded with an admonition to work hard and strive to become the "Chinese Franklin") and become familiar with the different ways that people around the world greeted each other (handshakes, bows, kisses).[197] He or she would also read short fairy tales translated or adapted from Western ones—a preview of the stories available in *Shijie tonghua*. *Xiao pengyou*, in short, acquainted juvenile Chinese readers with the world around them and helped to explain its mysteries and complexities.

One of those complex issues was why some children lived with their parents in comfortable houses, shelves filled with books, while others struggled to survive on the street, and what the haves should do to assist the have-nots. For young children living in a large city like Shanghai, child poverty would not have been an abstract issue, but rather a social reality that *Xiao pengyou* readers might encounter on the street. A short story published in a 1923 issue of the magazine explained this aspect of modern urban life.

"Ah Xi's Lantern"[198]

Ah Xi is a young girl who enjoys a comfortable lifestyle with her parents, brother and sister, and nanny—likely in Shanghai, though the author does not specify. The family is celebrating the New Year with new clothes and meals including fish and meat; on the day of the Lantern Festival (which concludes the New Year holiday), Ah Xi's mother gives her some money

[197] *Xiao pengyou*, no. 60 (1923), 5-7; *Xiao pengyou*, no. 196 (1925), inside front cover.

[198] "A Xi de huadeng" (Ah Xi's Lantern), *Xiao pengyou*, no. 48 (1923), 33-40.

and sends her with Zhou Ma, the nanny, to buy a lantern for herself. As the pair walk along the sidewalk, Ah Xi hears a pitiful sound off to the side: the trembling voice of a child beggar (小叫化子 *xiao jiaohuazi*), no more than ten *sui* in age, dressed in tattered rags. The young beggar kneels by the side of the street, pleading for money, but people pass back and forth and pay no attention to him.

Ah Xi naively questions Zhou Ma as to why the boy is not at home celebrating the New Year with his family, and Zhou Ma explains that the boy's family circumstances must be dire, or that his parents have perhaps died. Ah Xi turns around to talk to the beggar; when Zhou Ma objects, Ah Xi replies, "Is a beggar not a person?" (叫化子不是人嗎？ *Jiaohuazi bu shi ren ma?*) and continues to question the boy. He explains that he has gone several days without eating, and Zhou Ma asks if he has a father:

> The little beggar tearfully said, "Ai, to speak of my father is really painful! Last year, he was pulling a rickshaw when a car ran over him and he died." Ah Xi, astonished, asked, "It ran him over?" The little beggar responded, "Yes. Miss, cars run over poor people and kill them—it's the same as squashing an ant. It happens all the time."
> 小叫化流淚道："唉說起我爸爸來真苦呀！他去年拉洋車，被汽車壓死了。"阿細駭道："壓死了嗎？"小叫化道："是的。小姐，汽車壓死窮人，好像壓死一個螞蟻，是很平常的事啊。" *Xiao jiahua liulei dao: "Ai, shuo qi wo baba lai zhen ku ya! Ta qunian la yangche, bei qiche yasi le." A Xi hai dao: "Yasi le ma?" Xiao jiahua dao: "Shi de. Xiaojie, qiche yasi qiongren, haoxiang yasi yi ge mayi, shi hen pingchang de shi a."*

The boy's mother, he tells them, is sick, and they cannot afford medicine. Ah Xi decides to give her lantern money to him, and Zhou Ma again objects. It's fine to give the boy a few coppers, she tells Ah Xi, but not *all* of her money. Ah Xi's mother is certain to scold her daughter for giving the money away instead of spending it on a lantern as intended (and, Zhou Ma adds, will surely blame the nanny for allowing this encounter to occur). But Ah Xi stubbornly hands over the money, and the boy murmurs a word of thanks, then rises and walks away (Figure 2.2).

Figure 2.2: Ah Xi, Zhou Ma, and the little beggar. Source: "A Xi de hua deng," *Xiao pengyou* 48 (1923).

When Ah Xi and Zhou Ma return home, Ah Xi's mother listens to the story and praises the girl for her generosity. As a reward, she buys Ah Xi a large and beautiful lantern to display at the next night's Lantern Festival celebration.

"Ah Xi's Lantern" takes care to assert that the poor are people, whose misfortune is due not to immorality or a lack of work ethic, but rather circumstances beyond anyone's control. The beggar boy's father had been a rickshaw-puller, and his death came about as he was trying to provide for his family.[199] The mother is prevented from working by her untreated illness. They are the "deserving poor," whose difficult circumstances do not stem from social evils like gambling or opium addiction, but simple bad luck.

Ah Xi serves as a proxy for the *Xiao pengyou* readers, who might have the same questions she does about why the rich and poor lead such different lives. Yet although the story treats the indigent with sympathy (only the harried Zhou Ma, worried that she'll get in trouble and impatient with Ah Xi's generosity, comes across as indifferent to the plight of the beggar child), the final message of the tale is not that the boy received what he needed, but rather that Ah Xi was rewarded for her good deed. The beggar boy has no name; he benefits from Ah Xi's generosity and melts back into the anonymous mass of urban poverty. The story served to acquaint young readers with the figure of the child beggar, a common sight on the streets of Shanghai or other major cities, and explained that there were reasons that some children suffered from poverty while others did not. It introduced the *Xiao pengyou* audience to one aspect of urban life and taught readers that generosity toward the needy was good. But unlike the Marxist

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[199] This is the clue that suggests Ah Xi's story takes place in Shanghai (or perhaps Beijing): the juxtaposition of rickshaws and automobiles was often used as a visual or literary shorthand for the jumble of tradition and modernity that one would encounter in large Chinese cities. Collisions between cars and vagrant children in Shanghai were later used by the leftist cartoon artist Zhang Leping (discussed in Chapter 4) to signal the indifference of the rich toward the poor.

children's stories of later years, it did not question the presence of a gulf between a *xiaoshimin* or upper-class youngster like Ah Xi and a child of the urban poor like the little beggar boy.

Despite the chasm between the youth of the *xiaoshimin* and the urban poor, both groups of children were objects of concern in a society increasingly worried about the future of its young. As the instability of the first decade and a half of the Republican period gave way to the state-building of Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist (國民黨 *Guomindang*, GMD) regime, children and childhood became one more element of modern Chinese life that was targeted for organization by the state.

THE FUTURE OF THE NATION: CHILD WELFARE IN THE NANJING DECADE

After Chiang and the GMD established their capital at Nanjing in 1927, they quickly set about remaking the city into their image of a modern, Western-style capital with Chinese characteristics.[200] Nationalist leaders hoped that Nanjing would set a standard for other major Chinese cities to emulate, showcasing the nation's ability to construct "a new, clean, and efficient urban environment."[201] In addition to GMD efforts to transform the city physically with the construction of new government buildings and plans for infrastructure projects, they sought to clear Nanjing of its "backward" elements—most notably, beggars, wandering children, and other members of the vagrant classes. As Zwia Lipkin explains, the rationale was that if the GMD could clean up the city in a literal sense, this would result in a cleaning up of China's reputation

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[200] Charles D. Musgrove, "Building a Dream: Constructing a Nationalist Capital in Nanjing, 1927–1937," in *Remaking the Chinese City: Modernity and National Identity, 1900–1950*, ed. Joseph W. Esherick (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1999), 139.

[201] Zwia Lipkin, "Modern Dilemmas: Dealing with Nanjing's Beggars, 1927–1937," *Journal of Urban History* 31, no. 5 (July 2005), 590. For more on urban planning and modernization during the Republican years, see Rogaski, *Hygienic Modernity*, Chapter 8.

as a poor, backward country in the eyes of both foreign visitors and the Chinese themselves.[202] Despite round-up campaigns and the construction of asylums and winter shelters, the Nanjing government was never able to get ahead of the beggar population, which swelled as refugees fled natural disasters, famine, and war over the course of the 1930s.[203]

Although it was not successful, the attempt to clear Nanjing of its vagrant population reveals an important goal of the Nationalist regime: for the state to take a firm hand and make real its leaders' vision of China—both its cities and its people—as efficient, modern, and rational. As government officials, social reformers, and academics looked at China, they saw a country that was, by almost every measure, behind Japan and the West. One of the notable aspects of the late Republican period is how important scientific and quantitative methods became in these comparisons: China's deficiencies were increasingly measured on a scale that set the West as the benchmark of normality and judged other nations in relation to it.[204] Achieving modernity meant improving China's numbers, whatever those numbers happened to be measuring.

Children, of course, could be measured, and the results of those measurements used to construct a narrative of child welfare. This was not, in and of itself, a new concept: as discussed in the preceding section, the children's market of the 1920s was built on a foundation of anxiety about Chinese youngsters' deficiencies vis-à-vis youth in more advanced countries. This discourse was circulated by entrepreneurs, child welfare advocates, and child psychologists. What was significant about the Nanjing Decade was the entrance of the state into this endeavor,

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[202] Lipkin, "Modern Dilemmas," 592-593.

[203] Lipkin, "Modern Dilemmas," 594-602.

[204] Tong Lam, *A Passion for Facts: Social Surveys and the Construction of the Chinese Nation-State, 1900–1949* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), especially Chapters 4-6; Chen, *Guilty of Indigence*, 86, 88.

as it led the charge to monitor, evaluate, and improve children's lives (and the lives of the poor more generally), while placing responsibility for policy implementation on local governments.[205] In Shanghai, the newly created Social Affairs Bureau (社會局 Shehuiju) took on the majority of the oversight, though most of the relief institutions in the city continued to be funded and operated through private channels.[206]

More and more, child welfare was made scientific, numerically based, and quantifiable in the Nanjing Decade. While Lu Xun and Zhou Zuoren had spoken of the need to foster children's creativity and inquisitiveness, children during the GMD years were weighed, measured, observed, and plotted along a spectrum that ranged from normal to abnormal.

Promoting Ciyou

On December 1, 1929, Shanghai's *Shenbao* newspaper announced the publication of a new handbook about child welfare, simply titled "*Ciyou*" (慈幼), a classical term that expressed the act of performing charity toward the young.[207] The handbook, published by the China Children's Aid Society (中華慈幼協濟會 Zhonghua ciyou xiejihui), covered a broad range of topics over its 15 chapters. Some topics were general ones, such as "The Question of *Ciyou*" (慈幼的問題 *ciyou de wenti*) and "The Status of Chinese Children under the Law" (中國兒童於法律上的地位 *Zhongguo ertong yu falü shang de diwei*). Other chapters covered topics specific to child welfare work in Shanghai, such as "An Overview of the Shanghai School for Blind and

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[205] Chen, *Guilty of Indigence*, 87, 91-92.

[206] Chen, *Guilty of Indigence*, 111.

[207] "Ciyou xiejihui de xin kanwu" (The New Publication of the Children's Aid Society), *Shenbao*, December 1, 1929, 14. As the English translation of *ciyou* as "charity/benevolence toward children" is rather wordy and awkward, I will simply use *ciyou* in the following discussion.

Mute Children" (上海盲啞兒童學校概況 *Shanghai mangya ertong xuexiao gaikuang*). Chapters 2 and 3, getting pride of place directly after the introductory chapter on "The Question of *Ciyou*," explained "The *Ciyou* Campaign and the Construction of the New China" (慈幼運動與新中國的建成 *ciyou yundong yu xin Zhongguo de jiancheng*) and outlined "The Goals of the *Ciyou* Campaign" (慈幼運動的目的 *ciyou yundong de mudi*).

"*Ciyou*" was released just days before the Children's Aid Society convened a four-day conference in Shanghai to kick off the *ciyou* campaign (慈幼運動 *ciyou yundong*) referred to in the book. Each day of the conference was devoted to discussion of a different topic related to child welfare: hygiene, child-rearing, legal protections, and, finally, happiness (幸福 *xingfu*).[208] These topics, and those discussed in the "*Ciyou*" handbook, demonstrate how broad a concept *ciyou* was; child welfare work did not just apply to obviously needy children (those who were homeless or begging on the street, for example), but *all* children in the new GMD-led China. Attendees at the meeting came from major cities across the country and represented residential institutions (such as the Shanghai Industrial Orphanage and Beijing's Xiangshan Children's Home), as well as government departments of public health and education.[209] *Shenbao* covered the conference thoroughly, with daily updates on its discussions.

The goal of the *ciyou* campaign was clear: to improve children's lives and, in turn, improve China's future prospects. The campaign promoted health and good living for children several years before the New Life Movement (新生活運動 *Xin shenghuo yundong*) would make those national priorities in 1934. Although education and proper psychological development

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[208] "Ciyou yundong da hui" (*Ciyou* Campaign Conference), *Shenbao*, December 7, 1929, 14.

[209] "Ciyou yundong ertong xingfu ri" (Children's Happiness Day in the *Ciyou* Campaign), *Shenbao*, December 11, 1929, 14.

were both important to this project, leaders in the *ciyou* campaign paid special attention to children's physical growth; public health and hygiene were the focus of the first day of the conference.[210] "A country's strength and prosperity can be seen in the bodies of its youth" (國的強盛都要觀察在青年身上 *guo de qiangsheng dou yao guancha zai qingnian shen shang*) declared a *Shenbao* article published after the conference ended.[211] Since children (*ertong*) would grow up into youths (*qingnian*), measures had to be taken to ensure that proper development was starting early. At the conclusion of the conference's fourth day, those assembled awarded prizes to children who had come to compete in a beauty pageant-like "physique" (體格 *tige*) contest. Divided by age (1, 2, 3, 4, and under 7 *sui*), the winners received prizes donated by a milk-powder company and Quaker Oats.[212]

Susan Fernsebner has previously discussed such "baby contests," which occurred regularly throughout the Nanjing Decade. In reference to a photo-based baby contest that *Liangyou* magazine held in late 1926 and early 1927, Fernsebner writes that the competition was "a way to direct parents in the crafting of the child."[213] The criteria of the contest were strength and health, and parents had to pose their children in a manner that would best convey those qualities via a photograph. When the parents saw the pictures of their own children published alongside snapshots of babies from all over the country, however, they might realize that they needed to do more to promote their child's healthy growth (perhaps by feeding him or her the powdered milk sold by the company sponsoring the contest). Commercial interests, medical

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[210] "Ciyou yundong da hui yu gao: ertong weisheng ri jiemu pilu" (Announcement in Advance of the *Ciyou* Campaign Conference: Children's Health Day Program), *Shenbao*, December 2, 1929, 14.

[211] "Ciyou yundong ertong xingfu ri, 14."

[212] "Ciyou yundong ertong xingfu ri, 14."

[213] Fensebner, "A People's Playthings," 280.

professionals, and government bodies came together to voice a unified message: parents needed to do more for their children.

A decade later, however, Chinese children were still being judged and found wanting. When the Shanghai Municipal Health Education Committee (上海市健康教育委員會 Shanghai shi jiankang jiaoyu weiyuanhui) conducted an investigation among 9,000 children in the city in 1937, members of the committee expressed despair at the results. More than 90 percent of the children, the committee said, suffered from some type of "shortcoming" (缺點 *quedian*) in their health.[214] The committee placed the blame for this squarely on the heads of the children's parents, writing in a magazine article that health problems arose because "the average adult doesn't understand how to care for children" (一般成人不懂得如何保育兒童 *yiban chengren bu dong de ruhe baoyu ertong*). Far from being an innate instinct, parenting was something that had to be taught, as professionals conveyed their advanced knowledge to the masses. The Health Education Committee announced that it would hold a children's health contest (兒童健康比賽 *ertong jiankang bisai*), intended to both showcase examples of children who were developing according to the committee's standards for normality, and to teach parents tips for raising healthy children.[215] The article concluded with a rallying cry:

> A robust country is built on robust citizens; robust citizens come from robust children. Here, we pray for success in rearing robust children throughout the country!
> 健全的國家，建設於健全的國民，健全的國民，基於健全的兒童，我們在這裏馨香禱祝着全國健全兒童的保育成功！ *Jianquan de guojia, jianshe yu jianquan de guomin, jianquan de guomin, jiyu jianquan de ertong, women zai zheli xinxiang daozhu zhe quan guo jianquan ertong de baoyu chenggong!*[216]

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[214] "Juxing ertong jiankang bisai zhi zhiqu" (The Purpose of Holding a Children's Health Contest), *Shanghai ertong* (supplement to *Jiankang jiating*) (July 1937), 1.

[215] "Juxing ertong jiankang bisai zhi zhiqu," 1.

[216] "Juxing ertong jiankang bisai zhi zhiqu," 1.

Other articles in the magazine provided readers with advice for aiding their children's proper physical development, such as explaining how and why it was necessary to brush a child's teeth. An insert in the magazine featured a health record form that parents could fill out, detailing the condition of a child's body (height, weight, etc.) and whether or not the child had suffered any major illnesses.

Even if health professionals were not seeing the results they desired, it is unlikely that this came from a lack of public awareness about child welfare issues. Throughout the Nanjing Decade, government agencies and private associations worked to spread the gospel of *ciyou.* (In Shanghai, this work seems to have been primarily carried out by the Children's Aid Society.) In 1931, the Nationalist regime instituted Children's Day (兒童節 *ertong jie*), a holiday celebrated every year on April 4, often with public assemblies that taught children their importance as the future of the nation. In 1935, this expanded to an entire Children's Year (兒童年 *ertong nian*), which both celebrated the young and tried to improve their lives.

The Shanghai municipal government even created a health-focused summer camp (健康營 *jiankang ying*) that sought to instill good habits in the children who attended it. Stressing the camp's scientific approach (科學方法 *kexue fangfa*), a *Liangyou* photo feature followed campers' daily schedules, which began with nurses taking the children's temperatures first thing in the morning, followed by group exercise and healthy, balanced meals, and ending with the nurses writing brief reports for each of the children under their care.[217] Measuring and recording children's vital statistics took on an almost talismanic quality in the Nanjing Decade, as if all of

[217] "Xialing ertong jiankang ying de yi tian" (A Day at the Children's Healthy Summer Camp), *Liangyou* 108 (August 1935), 18-19.

China's problems could be solved if someone figured out how to make the numbers add up and suddenly equal those of Japan and the West.

Despite these efforts, the GMD government never really got ahead of the country's child welfare problems; the need was too great and the central government too thinly spread. But the Nanjing Decade did mark an important transition in child welfare work, as it introduced the state as a key player in the effort to help Chinese youngsters. Although plenty of child aid organizations and institutions continued to operate as private entities, the government now asserted itself as the overseer for such work. After the communist victory in 1949, many of the government bureaus that the GMD had formed (such as the Social Affairs Bureau) would be reconstituted under the new CCP regime. Eventually, the CCP would realize the goal that the Nationalists had been unable to reach: that of cities cleared of their vagrant classes and potential members of the *lumpenproletariat* guided by the state into productive labor.

CONCLUSION TO PART I

Child Welfare work had a history in China that stretched back to the Southern Song dynasty, when literati-officials and philanthropists worked to ensure that abandoned and orphaned infants found families to care for them. In the decades after the Taiping Civil War, the scope of child welfare work expanded to include not just abandoned babies, but also older orphaned children. At the same time, more and more Westerners (primarily missionaries) began playing a significant role in taking care of and educating such children, and Chinese philanthropists applied themselves to child welfare work with renewed vigor.

In the early twentieth century, discussions about children and childhood in China joined an international discourse regarding youth, modernity, and nationalism. The wandering children who populated the streets of cities like Shanghai posed a threat not just to social order, as traditional Confucian doctrine held, but to China itself, as their presence was thought to undermine the country's claims to modernity. Even children who had homes and families, reformers worried, risked lives of "parasitism" if they did not receive an education that stressed the importance of an honest day's work.

Throughout the late-Qing and Republican years, plenty of people—both Chinese and Westerners—tried to "save the children." Philanthropists who founded workhouse-orphanages saw salvation in discipline and labor. *Xiaoshimin* parents who wanted to see their offspring grow up to lead better lives than they had could select from a whole array of consumer products that promised to deliver a brighter future. After 1927, the Nanjing government emphasized health and hygiene as the key to child welfare—believing that if one nurtured a strong body, a strong nation would follow.

But the problems of child welfare ran along a spectrum: some youngsters had no homes or parents, while others needed access to better health or educational resources. Child welfare work was chaotic and fragmented, as different groups with different primary concerns focused on providing different solutions. They often seemed to be working in parallel, but not in unison, even after the Nationalist state began taking an active interest in coordinating child welfare projects. That unity came after 1937, when the Anti-Japanese War gave a shape and direction to child welfare work that it had never had before. Amid the chaos of war, many in China—and a

large number of foreigners as well—banded together with a once-abstract goal that had turned frighteningly real: save the children.

Part II:

Crisis and Recovery: 1937–1953

CHAPTER 3:

CHILD WELFARE AND THE SECOND SINO-JAPANESE WAR

The photograph first appeared in American newsreels in mid-September 1937. It showed a Chinese baby sitting on the edge of a railroad platform at Shanghai's South Station, his—or her; no one ever found out—light-colored clothes soaked with what appeared to be large splotches of blood. In the background, enormous sheets of corrugated metal lay strewn across the train tracks, and a bridge arching over the rail lines had collapsed halfway, poised to crash to the ground if more Japanese bombs fell from the sky. Still, even looking at all this destruction, it was easy to imagine that no sound—not falling bombs, not screeching metal—could be louder or more piercing than the scream emanating from the baby's open mouth (Figure 3.1). A second photograph, released later, showed a woman—assumed to be the child's mother—lying dead on the railroad tracks just a few feet away.

H.S. "Newsreel" Wong, a photographer for Hearst Metrotone News, had snapped the photos two weeks earlier, on August 28, 1937, soon after Chinese and Japanese troops began fighting for control of Shanghai. Wong sent the film via U.S. Navy ship to Manila, where it was transferred to a Pan Am flight for New York and delivered to Hearst, which immediately started featuring the image of the crying child in its newsreels and newspapers.[218] *Life* published it in the magazine's October 4 issue, estimating that between newsreels and newspapers, 136 million

[218] Curiously, Wong claimed in a 1945 interview that he never noticed the child when he was taking photos at the station, intent only on using up his roll of film. In later interviews, however, Wong indicated that he had total knowledge of the pictures he was taking and then followed the child to make sure he or she received help. Lowell Thomas, "The Baby on The Track," *Los Angeles Times*, September 1, 1945, A4; John Faber, *Great News Photos and the Stories Behind Them*, Revised edition (New York: Dover Publications, 1978), 74.

Figure 3.1: "Motherless Chinese Baby," H.S. Wong's iconic photo taken at Shanghai's South Railway Station, August 28, 1937. Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:BattleOfShanghaiBaby.gif (accessed July 27, 2014).

people worldwide had viewed Wong's photo in less than a month.[219] It quickly became an iconic image of the war in China, the baby's anguish used to garner financial and emotional support from abroad for the Chinese cause as the nation tried to fend off the Japanese invasion.[220] The

[219] "The Camera Overseas: 136,000,000 People See This Picture of Shanghai's South Station," *Life*, October 4, 1937, 102.

[220] As Rana Mitter notes, international support initially came in the form of lukewarm messages of solidarity with the Chinese, rather than the funding and military supplies that the country needed. *Forgotten Ally: China's World War II, 1937–1945* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2013), 102-103.

Japanese government denounced the photograph as staged, and Wong received death threats that forced him to flee with his family to Hong Kong.[221] The picture proved so memorable that 35 years later, a reader would write in to *Life*:

> Sirs: H.S. Wong's picture "Motherless Chinese baby" has haunted me since I was a little girl. Was it a boy or girl? What happened to the child?
> Mrs. Richard Cameron
> Washington, Pa.[222]

A former colleague of Wong's responded to the letter, but admitted that he had no answers to the questions it posed. The "Motherless Chinese baby" of Shanghai had become one of millions of other war orphans (or "warphans"), nameless and untraceable in the chaos of the conflict.

The Second Sino-Japanese War, known as the Anti-Japanese War (抗日戰爭 Kang Ri zhanzheng) in Chinese, dragged on for eight long years, from 1937 to 1945. It left 14 million Chinese dead and devastated the country's infrastructure.[223] Tens of millions of refugees took to the road, moving their families, schools, and businesses—often multiple times—from the coastal provinces to the interior in an attempt to escape the war's devastation.[224] At least 2 million Chinese children became war orphans (難童 *nantong*[225]), and several hundred thousand of them

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[221] Faber, *Great News Photos*, 74. Wong was also questioned and released by the Shanghai Municipal Police in February 1938, allegedly at the request of the city's Japanese authorities. "'Newsreel' Wong Arrested," *North-China Herald*, February 23, 1938, 288.

[222] "The Child," Letter to the Editor, *Life*, January 21, 1972, 27.

[223] Mitter, *Forgotten Ally*, 5.

[224] R. Keith Schoppa, *In a Sea of Bitterness: Refugees during the Sino-Japanese War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011). Mitter notes the impossibility of counting the refugee population with any precision, but cites the "best estimates" that place the number at 80 to 100 million people over the course of the eight-year war. *Forgotten Ally*, 123.

[225] As M. Colette Plum explains, *nantong* was generally used to mean "war orphan" even though the direct translation of *nantong* is "refugee child." Though the youngsters taken in to children's homes might have had one or two living parents and simply been separated from them, they were classified by home administrators and the government as orphans, yet rarely described using the actual Chinese term for orphan, *gu'er*. Refugee children, on the other hand, continued to live with their parents and were not targets of state aid in the way that war orphans were. "Unlikely Heirs," 6-9.

were taken to live in state-funded children's homes built by relief organizations in Nationalist-controlled areas.[226] More than ever before, the Nationalist government became an overseer and direct provider of child welfare services. Song Meiling (宋美齡 1898–2003), wife of Chiang Kai-shek, took a leading role in child welfare work (as did her sister, Song Qingling [宋慶齡 1893–1981], widow of Sun Yat-sen and later a top official in Communist China) and became closely identified with projects to assist war orphans. Song Meiling worked with overseas child aid organizations, particularly those in the United States, to raise money in the name of Chinese war orphans, and the victimized Chinese child, such as the baby photographed by H.S. Wong, became a potent symbol of Japanese aggression and inhumanity during the war.

Colette Plum has written extensively on child welfare work in China during the Anti-Japanese War, but her research focuses on the Nationalist wartime capital of Chongqing and its surrounding territory.[227] Shanghai, as is so often the case, was different: the foreign concessions existed as neutral zones for the first four years of the war, and as the rest of the city was occupied by the Japanese, the child welfare apparatus put in place by Song Meiling and the GMD in other parts of the country did not exist in Shanghai. Thus, while Plum points to the war as a turning point in child aid work due to the Chinese state's new involvement in the enterprise, the organizations and institutions struggling to save Shanghai's children during the war years were largely the same ones that had been active in the city pre-1937; child welfare work in Shanghai

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[226] The statistic of 2 million war orphans appears to be a commonly cited number with no specific or official source. Plum, "Unlikely Heirs," 11, n8.

[227] Plum, "Unlikely Heirs"; *eadem*, "Orphans in the Family: Family Reform and Children's Citizenship during the Anti-Japanese War, 1937–45," in *Beyond Suffering: Recounting War in Modern China*, eds. James Flath and Norman Smith (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2011), 186-206; *eadem*, "Lost Childhoods in a New China: Child-Citizen-Workers at War, 1937–1945," *European Journal of East Asian Studies* 11 (2012): 237-258. Also see Apter, "Saving the Young," Chapter 3 for a discussion of the GMD state's involvement in child welfare work during the Anti-Japanese War.

continued to be characterized by its private, voluntary, and fragmented nature,[228] as well as the cooperative work of Chinese and foreigners on aid committees. State control of Shanghai's child welfare system would not come until after the first years of the People's Republic of China (see Chapter 5).

In Shanghai, as elsewhere in the country, the sight of orphaned and displaced refugee children served as a powerful indictment of Japan's attack on China. Journalists and child advocacy workers, both Chinese and foreign, drew on these images to raise money for the country's children. Continuing and intensifying the prewar discourse that hailed children as "the future of the nation," child welfare activists spoke of the pressing need to save children in the face of a supposed Japanese desire to exterminate the Chinese.[229] Still, as the war dragged on and inflation rose while resources dwindled, caring for China's war orphans became an increasingly difficult task.

This chapter begins with a discussion of American aid to China during the war years, and how Song Meiling and her activities on behalf of warphans figured into fund-raising campaigns. In the second half of the chapter, I examine wartime child welfare work in Shanghai and discuss the successes achieved and challenges encountered by the city's child aid workers.

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[228] Dillon, "The Politics of Philanthropy," 186-195. Although Dillon notes that the Nationalist government funneled money to support Shanghai welfare work via international aid organizations even after the city fell to the Japanese (191), the point I seek to emphasize is that the social welfare projects that were carried out by government-affiliated organizations in the GMD-controlled parts of the country continued to be administered by private organizations composed of foreigners and Chinese in wartime Shanghai.

[229] On the connection between Chinese children and fears of genocide by the Japanese, see Plum, "Unlikely Heirs," 113-115.

American Aid to Chinese Children

Fluent in English (which she spoke with a Georgia accent), a Christian, and a graduate of Wellesley College, the fashionable and elegant Song Meiling was the perfect unofficial Chinese ambassador to the United States during the war. "Madame Chiang," as the American press always styled her, worked tirelessly to promote the Chinese cause to Americans, placing special attention on the needs of war orphans, and her efforts paid off: throughout the war, the United States treated China as an ally in the fight against fascism, and leading figures in both high society and pop culture raised funds on behalf of Chinese children, even as relations between Chiang and his American counterparts soured.[230]

Song Meiling moved quickly to ensure American support for China. On September 11, 1937, as Chiang Kai-shek's troops attempted to defend Shanghai, Song delivered a radio address in English that was broadcast in the U.S. She detailed Japan's history of aggression against China, going back to its invasion of Manchuria in 1931 and bombing of Shanghai in 1932, and described China as vulnerable and under-prepared for battle, but compelled by moral force to take a stand against the Japanese attempt to absorb China into its empire. Song also pointed out that American lives and institutions were being targeted in the Japanese attacks, and expressed dismay that "All the American mission institutions, contributed to so liberally by the people of America, who have done so much for the progress of China, have been crippled in their work, if not destroyed."[231] Song had strong words for Americans in her speech, reminding them that the League of Nations—an institution conceived of by an American president—had failed to protect China from the war. She positioned China as a brave and willing defender of Western democratic

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[230] On the disintegration of relations between Chiang and American officials, see Mitter, *Forgotten Ally*, 296-298.

[231] "Mme. Chiang Asks for Aid for China," *New York Times*, September 12, 1937, 41.

values against Japanese imperialism, while reminding Americans that they had built businesses and institutions in China that would collapse if the country were lost. China couldn't go it alone, and the United States had long-standing interests in the country and an obligation to help.

Still, American aid to China got off to a slow start, especially when compared to the efforts that would come in 1940 and after. As Shanghai and Nanjing fell to Japanese troops toward the end of 1937, their residents faced a long winter cut off from the retreating Nationalist government and its resources. Mothers in Shanghai, the Associated Press reported, were abandoning their children or even throwing them in the Huangpu River out of desperation.[232] American churches and charity organizations were attempting to raise money to assist the growing refugee population, but the response was sluggish (in contrast, donations in Shanghai itself reached their height during this early period, as will be discussed below).

Efforts ramped up in early 1938; China Famine Relief, a decade-old aid organization, set a goal of raising US$1 million, and in late January, Franklin Roosevelt stamped the Red Cross's efforts to raise the same amount of money with the presidential seal of approval.[233] Colonel Theodore Roosevelt, Jr. (known as Ted), a cousin of FDR's, headed up a coalition of five aid agencies that banded together in April to deliver assistance to China.[234] In June, Roosevelt's group organized a nationwide "Bowl of Rice" dining event—participating restaurants (Chinese ones, if possible) sold tickets for a set dinner and entertainment program, with proceeds put toward the aid of refugees in China. An estimated 2,000 restaurants took part.[235]

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[232] "Shanghai Mothers Abandoning Babies," *New York Times*, October 17, 1937, 38.

[233] "China Relief Funds Being Sought Here," *New York Times*, January 16, 1938, 32; "Roosevelt Backs Fund to Aid China," *New York Times*, January 25, 1938, 8; "The Red Cross to China," *New York Times*, February 5, 1938, 14.

[234] "Five Groups Combine for Relief in China," *New York Times*, April 29, 1938, 4.

[235] "Nation to Rally Tomorrow to Aid Civilians in China," *Los Angeles Times*, June 16, 1938, 18; "China in Dire Need, Priest Declares," *New York Times*, June 17, 1938, 2.

These "Bowl of Rice" parties offer one example of the Orientalism that tinged many of the charity events held to aid China throughout the war. China was an ally of the United States, but it was also an exotic "other" in the minds of many, and benefits that raised money for the China cause rarely failed to involve some sort of Chinese theme or cultural performance. A 1939 Bowl of Rice party in Chicago was held as a Chinese costume ball ("suitable outfits will be for rent at the door"), and a 1940 soirée in New York featured "twenty-five Chinese girls in native costumes" acting as hostesses. Ted Roosevelt's wife organized a fashion show and sale of "dresses trimmed with Chinese motifs," while New York mayor Fiorello La Guardia proclaimed "China Week" in May 1941, which included a Chinese junk on display at Battery Park and "fifty of the prettiest girls from the city's Chinese community" joining a hundred debutantes as they canvassed the streets of New York asking for contributions.[236] Participating in fund-raising events for China was not only showing support for a good cause, but it also often involved some amount of cultural education (though that "Chinese culture" might have been filtered through an American chop-suey-style lens at times).

Once war broke out in Europe in the fall of 1939, the needy of China were suddenly competing for American charity dollars. Song Meiling wrote to New York's Golden Rule Foundation in October 1939 asking for funds to support 20,000 Chinese warphans, stating in her letter, "No matter how much the people in Europe suffer, I do not believe there could be such suffering anywhere on earth as there is in China."[237] (Plenty of people in Europe might have taken issue with Song's assertion.) The Children's Crusade for Children sponsored a nine-day

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[236] "Launch Plans for City's Bowl of Rice Party," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, October 20, 1939, 25; "25 Girls to Help China Aid Party," *New York Times*, December 1, 1940, D65; "Sale Aids China Fund," *New York Times*, January 30, 1940, 10; "Mayor Officially Proclaims 'China Week'; Relief Fund Drive Will Start Tomorrow," *New York Times*, May 17, 1941, 7.

[237] "Seeks War-Orphan Aid," *New York Times*, October 16, 1939, 3.

"penny drive" across the country in April 1940, which asked American youngsters to donate one penny for each year of their age, with the money collected to be divided among children's causes in China and Europe. The first disbursal of funds collected, in the amount of $22,500, was made three months later to a women's committee for China headed by renowned author Pearl S. Buck, the money earmarked for the purchase of medical supplies to be given to Chinese children.[238]

These initial activities, though significant, would be dwarfed by the achievements of United China Relief (hereafter UCR), formed in early 1941 with the consolidation of seven committees whose leaders decided that funds could be raised and distributed more effectively if there were less duplication of effort (Figure 3.2). The program's projects encompassed medical work, education, child care, and promotion of small-scale industry, and UCR set an initial goal of raising US$5 million by the end of July to support these endeavors. Its board of directors brought together leading political and cultural figures of the day, including Pearl Buck, Wendell Willkie, Henry Luce of *Time* magazine (a great admirer of Song and Chiang), John D. Rockefeller III, director David O. Selznick, and Ted Roosevelt.[239]

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[238] "Child Penny Drive Will Open Monday," *New York Times*, April 16, 1940, 28. "Children's $22,500 Goes to China's Aid," *New York Times*, July 27, 1940, 7.

[239] "$5,000,000 Sought for China Relief," *New York Times*, March 3, 1941, 1; "United Relief for China," *New York Times*, March 9, 1941, E8; "Dinner to Raise Fund for China," *New York Times*, March 16, 1941, D2; "China Week," *New York Times*, May 22, 1941, 20; "China Relief Drive Mapped," *Los Angeles Times*, June 22, 1941, A2; "China Aid Drive Will Open Today," *Los Angeles Times*, July 10, 1941, A2.

Figure 3.2: "China ... Looks to US!" poster for United China Relief, 1941. Source: University of North Texas Digital Library, available at http://digital.library.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc371/ (accessed July 29, 2014).

UCR had a number of programs in which different groups of people could participate, and it never failed to attract big-name talents to lead these efforts. Older Americans could join former New York governor Alfred Smith in becoming "Esteemed Grandparents," who would agree to donate in their own grandchildren's names to the Chinese warphan cause. A "Campaign for Young China" was headed by Walt Disney, with actors Mickey Rooney and Judy Garland leading the "China Stamp Club," which sold collectors' stamps to raise money for war orphans.

Shirley Temple headlined a UCR radio broadcast to China that also featured Claudette Colbert and Tyrone Power. In charity shops sponsored by UCR, American customers could select from Chinese specialties such as shrimp chips, tea, cloisonné, or porcelain, and children in New York City participated in a "Drink Tea for China Day," during which they sold cups and packages of "Meiling Tea" (named, of course, for Song Meiling; Al Smith bought the first cup). As the holiday season approached, women across the United States were asked to donate a quarter (enough to feed a Chinese child for a week, they were told) and sign their names to scrolls that would be bound into a "Book of Life" and delivered to Song Meiling as a sign of American women's solidarity with her.[240] To express her thanks to UCR and other organizations that had aided China's children, Song sent two pandas to the Bronx Zoo.[241]

In its publicity materials, UCR consistently emphasized the point that China was fighting a war in the name of freedom and democracy. Many Americans might have still thought of China as tradition-bound and hierarchical, but supporters of the Chinese cause worked hard to educate potential donors concerning the ways that China had embraced American-style values in the decades since the Xinhai Revolution. In a 1941 publicity film, *China Shall Have Our Help*, UCR addressed the viewers' presumed question, "Why shall China have our help?" by describing the trade ties between China and the United States that stretched back to the late eighteenth century and depicted Sun Yat-sen as "China's George Washington," intent on bringing freedom and democracy to his country. "Is such a unified, democratic China harmful or beneficial to the

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[240] "Grandparents to Aid China's War Orphans," *New York Times*, August 24, 1941, 37; "Disney Heads Drive for China," *New York Times*, May 12, 1941, 4; "Rehearsal for an American Broadcast to China," *New York Times*, May 27, 1941, 30; "Specialties in Pleasant Surroundings—U.S. Discovers Tea, and Helps China," *New York Times*, July 24, 1941, 12; "New Shop to Assist United China Relief," *New York Times*, December 16, 1941, 40; "Former Governor Smith Aids Campaign for China Relief," *New York Times*, September 11, 1941, 10; "8,000 Sign Scrolls to Supply Relief for Chinese Children," *New York Times*, November 23, 1941, D5.

[241] "Two Baby Pandas Reach U.S. After Trip From China," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, December 26, 1941, 12.

world?" the movie asked. (The answer, though not given directly, was obviously "beneficial.") "This is the war for the preservation of the world's democracy—whoever wins the war must have China on her side," the film's final placard read before urging the audience to donate to UCR.[242]

Here Is China, a UCR film produced after the United States joined the war, similarly depicted China as a land of rice paddies and peasants that was moving toward American-style modernization and urbanization. "Once almost as remote as the moon to us here in America," China was suddenly no longer quite so distant; it had become the Pacific Rim partner of the United States. The film was more about China's history and people than the ongoing conflict with the Japanese, but the narration urged Americans to learn more about their new ally, as the two countries were only expected to grow closer as the years passed.[243]

In such publicity materials, children were positioned as the next generation, the group upon which peace and security would depend. "It is the children of today who will guide the China of tomorrow—the China which is to stand by the side of America and other nations in preserving world peace and justice," UCR wrote in one of its pamphlets, then went on to say

> It is the privilege of Americans to share in the work of bringing up healthy, freedom-loving children, eager to make China a great fortress of democracy in the heart of Asia. China is the world's most populous nation. A democracy in China will mean that we Americans can feel more secure, because we can rely on the Chinese to help maintain peace in the Far East.
>
> So, you see it really does matter to us what happens to the children of China.[244]

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[242] *China Shall Have Our Help*, United China Relief, 1941, available at https://archive.org/details/6122_China_Shall_Have_Our_Help_01_00_49_07.

[243] *Here Is China*, United China Relief, c. 1943, available at https://archive.org/details/0176_Here_Is_China_19_28_40_00.

[244] United China Relief Advisory Committee on Child Care and Development, *One-Fifth of the World's Children* (New York: United China Relief, n.d. [c. 1941]), 4.

By supporting China and fostering pro-American feelings among Chinese children, these propaganda materials suggested, the United States would be securing its interests across the Pacific. By the end of 1941, of course, China and the United States were more than unofficial allies in the war, and UCR continued to lead Americans in a massive fund-raising campaign to aid the Chinese.

The escalating size of fund-raising objectives reflected not simply that more people in China needed assistance (though this was certainly the case), but also rising prices that made previous donation levels insufficient to meet current needs. In early April 1942, Song Meiling wrote to UCR that the cost of caring for an orphan in one of the GMD-sponsored homes had risen from CH$5 per month to CH$150 a month.[245] UCR launched a fund-raising drive that set its target at US$7 million, with Franklin Roosevelt lending his support to the effort; later in April, 8,000 people marched in a UCR parade in New York City that drew 30,000 spectators and featured a float of Chinese children and their mothers that declared, "Millions of refugees need your help."[246] Earlier reports had routinely cited US$20 per year as the cost of caring for a Chinese warphan. By June 1942, that figure had risen to US$95; by October 1942, it was US $154; and by the end of 1943, providing for one Chinese child required US$250 per year.[247] UCR announced that it disbursed slightly over US$5 million in funds over the course of 1942, of which approximately US$700,000 went directly to child welfare projects (though nearly US$3

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[245] "War Orphan Cost Rises," *New York Times*, April 5, 1942, 3. For comparison, an annual subscription to the *North-China Herald* cost CH$18 in 1937.

[246] "President Asks $7,000,000 Help for China In a World-Wide Broadcast to Aid Fund," *New York Times*, April 12, 1942, 34; "China Relief March Witnessed by 30,000," *New York Times*, April 20, 1942, 4.

[247] "$125,000 Sent to China," *New York Times*, June 9, 1942, 28; "The Fifth Child," *New York Times*, October 30, 1042, 18; Lennig Sweet, "Child Care in China," *Journal of Educational Sociology* 17, no. 4 (December 1943): 212.

million went to medical and educational projects, which also benefitted children). In 1943, the aid sent by UCR totaled US$8,612,155.[248] Though costs in China were rising, UCR worked hard to ensure that donations kept pace, as best they could, with inflation.

Song Meiling traveled to the United States in 1943 to shore up American support for the war in China and ensure continued donations to the cause. She first addressed a joint-session of Congress, then toured the country, speaking to community groups and Chinese American associations and describing the incredible destruction China had suffered at the hands of Japan and the urgent need for American backing as the war dragged on. Her campaign was successful, and she received gifts both large and small, many of them intended for children's aid projects: the International Ladies Garment Workers Union donated US$100,000 for the construction of an orphanage, while 20 third-graders from Saratoga Springs, NY sent US$2 that they asked be put toward the care of "poor Chinese children." A minister's wife sold her heirloom engagement ring for US$250 and mailed the money to Song, writing, "If it is all right for me to specify any part of China's great need, I should like it to go toward helping China's children, for they are the future of China."[249] In Chicago, 15-20,000 people turned out in the city's Chinatown to watch Song arrive for an event, each of them carrying either a Chinese or American flag (or both). Inside the event hall, Song accepted donations sent from Chinese American groups throughout the Midwest, then watched an assembly of "chubby Chinese boys and girls" sing "Down with Japan," lyrics set to the tune of "Frère Jacques."[250] Song next traveled to Los Angeles, where she "took the city by charm" and had a holiday declared in her honor by the mayor. At the

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[248] "China Relief Spent $5,096,359 Last Year," *New York Times*, March 15, 1943, 11; "United China Relief Reports Rise in Aid," *New York Times*, February 8, 1944, 4.

[249] "Mme. Chiang Receives $310,000 In Gifts for Chinese War Relief," *New York Times*, March 17, 1943, 7.

[250] "Mme. Chiang Receives $68,087 War Aid Fund in Chinatown," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, March 22, 1943, 1.

Hollywood Bowl, nearly 30,000 people turned out to hear Song speak. She recounted a short history of China's war of resistance against Japan, repeatedly emphasizing her country's determination to prevail over its better-equipped enemy and achieve "a just and permanent peace"—a goal that she trusted the United States shared and would continue to promote in any way it could.[251]

UCR kept up its fund-raising work throughout the war's final two years, sending more than US$9.5 million to China in 1944.[252] Even after the fighting ended in August 1945, UCR's president urged Americans to continue making contributions, given the high level of need that was expected to persist as the country moved into the postwar reconstruction phase (not realizing, of course, that China would in fact quickly move into a destructive civil war).[253] UCR, and the other fund-raising organizations that took a backseat after United China Relief came onto the scene, managed to mobilize an impressive amount of support for China throughout the eight years of war. The fund's publicity machine consistently positioned China as a partner of the United States in the fight for democracy and peace, and images of needy Chinese warphans being helped by the glamorous and American-friendly Song Meiling no doubt prompted donors to open their wallets again and again. When viewed from the twenty-first century, these events and publicity materials look simplistic and essentializing, as they depicted China as a backward country filled with peasants and bound to its traditions. But fund-raising also emphasized the

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[251] "Mme. Chiang 'Captures' City," *Los Angeles Times*, April 1, 1943, 1; "Mme. Chiang Stirs 30,000 at Bowl," *Los Angeles Times*, April 5, 1943, 1; "Text of Address by Mme. Chiang," *Los Angeles Times*, April 5, 1943, 9.

[252] "$9,500,000 Sent to China," *New York Times*, February 26, 1945, 4.

[253] "Aid for Chinese Urged," *New York Times*, September 15, 1945, 12. UCR president Dr. James L. McConaughy stated that the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) was "expressly forbidden to expend funds for education and child care." In fact, UNRRA would support a number of child welfare programs in postwar China, as will be discussed in Chapter 4.

close relationship and common cause shared by the United States and China, and in hindsight, the World War II years might still represent the apex of U.S.-China relations.

CHILD WELFARE WORK IN WARTIME SHANGHAI

Shanghai, City of Refuge[254]

Not all of Shanghai went to war in August 1937. As Chinese and Japanese soldiers prepared to fight for control of the Chinese districts in the city, refugees poured into the foreign concessions, which were still neutral and became known as the "solitary island" (孤島 *gu dao*), zones of peace surrounded by a country at war (Figure 3.3). Some foreigners living in the concessions initially expressed annoyance at the arrival of refugees on their streets; "the exodus [from the Chinese city] has been, and still is, tremendous owing to the machinations of the rumour-mongers," a *North-China Herald* story declared, blaming greedy moving companies and concession landlords for spreading rumors about a coming Japanese invasion so they could profit from refugee movement as panic rose.[255] Rural refugees fled to Shanghai, too, where they hoped to find safety from the approaching Japanese army.

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[254] "Shanghai, City of Refuge" was the theme of the annual conference of the Joint Committee of Shanghai Women's Organizations in 1939. It was an apt title, as several types of refugees flowed in and out of Shanghai during the early years of the war. In addition to Chinese refugees, who are the focus of my discussion here, the *North-China Herald* referred to expatriates (Europeans and Japanese) leaving China via Shanghai to return to their home countries as "refugees." Approximately 30,000 European Jews also sought refuge from life under the Nazis in Shanghai—an important episode in history that cannot, for reasons of scope, be dealt with here. "Shanghai, City of Refuge," *North-China Herald*, May 24, 1939, 327.

[255] "Scaremongers Amass Wealth," *North-China Herald*, August 11, 1937, 231.

Figure 3.3: Refugees moving from the Chinese city to safety in Shanghai's international concessions, August 1937. Source: Virtual Shanghai digital archive, image ID 2416.

As a result, even though the foreign concessions were still at peace, they were far from calm. Concession authorities and native-place associations (同鄉會 *tongxianghui*) scrambled to deal with the influx of more than 1 million refugees in the late summer and fall of 1937.[256] Shanghai's private philanthropic organizations quickly jumped in to help: in mid-August, a group of foreign and Chinese bankers formed an association to aid refugees, and the Red Swastika Society worked to find living situations for refugees, in addition to establishing two hospitals to address their medical needs.[257] The National Child Welfare Association of China (中華慈幼協會 Zhonghua ciyou xiehui, hereafter NCWA[258]) took an immediate interest in overseeing the care of child refugees and created a camp for 150 war orphans between the ages of six and fourteen, as well as a small nursery that could care for 20 infants at a time.[259] At the end of August, representatives from a varied list of organizations that included the Red Cross, the Chinese Catholic Mission, the YMCA, the Buddhist Association of China, and the Chinese-Foreign Famine Relief Committee created the Shanghai International Relief Committee (hereafter SIRC), meant to oversee refugee assistance. Three SIRC refugee camps (administered

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[256] Christian Henriot, "Shanghai and the Experience of War: The Fate of Refugees," *European Journal of East Asian Studies* 5, no. 2 (2006): 220-221. The estimation of 1 million refugees was also repeatedly invoked in the *North-China Herald* at the time.

[257] "Plight of Refugees Wins Attention," *North-China Herald*, August 18, 1937, 270; "4,000 Refugees Taken Care Of," *North-China Herald*, August 18, 1937, 277.

[258] Although the NCWA was a private organization, its head was H.H. Kung (孔祥熙 1881–1967), husband of Song Ailing and therefore brother-in-law of Song Meiling and Chiang Kai-shek, so the group had close relations with the GMD government.

[259] SMA U1-16-1037, 134; "Child Welfare Assn. Report," *North-China Herald*, September 8, 1937, 375; "Infant Refugees Find Shelter," *North-China Herald*, September 17, 1937, 417; "Model Creche for Unclaimed Babies," *North-China Herald*, September 17, 1937, 420; "Child Refugees in North Cared For," *North-China Herald*, October 20, 1937, 98. The NCWA camp for war orphans soon moved to larger facilities that enabled it to house a maximum population of 650 children. "Children's Camp: More Help Wanted," Letter to the Editor, *North-China Herald*, September 21, 1938, 501.

by the YMCA, the Salvation Army, and the Catholic Church) were established to house the new arrivals.[260]

Foreigners' concerns about the "refugee problem" grew: the sudden presence of so many thousands of people in the foreign concessions threatened the order and stability that expatriates in Shanghai had carefully cultivated over the decades, and they feared that refugees would become a permanent non-productive class in the city.[261] The Shanghai Municipal Council and native-place associations worked hard to convince refugees to move back to their homes as soon as danger had passed, and approximately 375,000 did so before the end of 1937.[262] Still, this left an estimated 700,000 refugees crowded into Shanghai's foreign concessions, and winter was quickly approaching while the Nationalist government was in retreat. Foreign and Chinese organizations moved to set up emergency facilities to house the refugees, though the majority lived either with relatives or on the streets of the foreign concessions.[263]

In the 200 or so hastily built shelters and refugee camps that dotted the foreign concessions, conditions varied widely.[264] In addition to the SIRC, two Chinese-led organizations

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[260] "Relief Committee Formed," *North-China Herald*, August 25, 1937, 307.

[261] "The Refugee Problem," *North-China Herald*, September 8, 1937, 364; "Relief Works," *North-China Herald*, November 3, 1937, 168.

[262] "Refugee Evacuation Goes Apace," *North-China Herald*, September 1, 1937, 345; Henriot, "Shanghai and the Experience of War," 224.

[263] During this early period of the war, most charitable activities were focused on people residing in the refugee camps, with less attention paid to those living on the street. Aid work directed at homeless children will be discussed in the next section.

[264] Counting refugee camps, like counting refugees, proved a tricky business, as shelters and camps opened and closed quickly, and not all of the facilities were "official" camps in the eyes of the authorities. The International Settlement's Department of Public Health counted 161 refugee camps containing 97,000 refugees on December 15, 1937, and Christian Henriot's data indicates another 40 camps in the French Concession, containing slightly less than 26,000 refugees, around that date, so it seems that there were approximately 200 camps in the two international concessions at the height of the refugee crisis. SMA U1-16-1032, 19; "Shanghai and the Experience of War," 228, Table 1. Additionally, the French Jesuit missionary Father Robert Jacquinot de Besange arranged for the creation of the "Jacquinot Safe Zone," a neutral area in the Chinese section of the city that housed 250,000 refugees. See Marcia R. Ristaino, *The Jacquinot Safe Zone: Wartime Refugees in Shanghai* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008).

had also been formed to oversee refugee relief: the Federation of Shanghai Charity Organizations and the Shanghai Emergency Relief Committee.[265] These three committees attempted to impose health and hygiene standards in refugee facilities by vaccinating residents for contagious diseases such as smallpox and cholera, and also set standards for the quality of food and housing.[266] Results were mixed: some shelters held large numbers of people and encountered few difficulties, while others were plagued by sanitation problems and treated residents like prisoners.[267]

With limited resources, keeping children healthy in refugee camps proved challenging. In September, the *North-China Herald* asked readers to consider donating milk or milk powder (or volunteering as wet nurses) to feed babies whose mothers were having difficulty breastfeeding in the camps, presumably due to stress and inadequate nutrition. Never one to miss a teachable moment when poorer Chinese were concerned, the *Herald* suggested that the situation offered health workers a chance to educate refugee mothers in the scientific benefits of infant formula and cow's milk: "A unique opportunity exists for infinite good to be done during this crisis in explaining to women in humble and poor circumstances the principles of child welfare."[268] (Though it used slightly less patronizing language, the International Settlement's Department of Public Health made the same point in an internal memo.[269]) The shortage of milk products persisted, however, and in late October, the Shanghai Municipal Council made an urgent request

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[265] SMA U1-16-1032, 3.

[266] Henriot, "Shanghai and the Experience of War," 227.

[267] Chen, *Guilty of Indigence*, 144. For example, the Shanghai Red Cross received a letter of complaint that one refugee camp was only permitting its residents to leave the premises once every three to five days; SMA U1-16-1032, 83.

[268] "Infant Feeding in Refugee Camps," *North-China Herald*, September 8, 1937, 381.

[269] SMA U1-16-1039, 4.

for donations of milk and cod-liver oil after four infants died of malnutrition in the refugee camps within two weeks.[270] By early November, a mixture of Chinese and foreign donors had given sufficient quantities of cod-liver oil, but shortages in milk and milk products continued.[271]

A group of Chinese physicians and social workers formed the Shanghai Refugee Children Nutritional Aid Committee in early November to address this problem, and with a CH$6,000 grant from the city's German community, began grinding soybeans to make soy milk for young children (under six years old) and a nutritious soy-based biscuit, comparable to a graham cracker, that was distributed to children between the ages of seven and 14 years. Between the milk and biscuits, the committee estimated that its products reached 37,000 children per day at the height of its work, which it performed in the name of both charity and nationalism. "Children in the refugee camps of Shanghai today will be the citizens of Shanghai tomorrow and it was to safeguard the future generation that this work of supplying additional nourishment to refugee children became so imperative," the *North-China Herald* explained to its readers, linking nutrition and national strength. Doctors on the committee kept careful records of the children's height and weight to monitor their health—as well as to continue research into nutrition and the national body that the physicians had begun earlier in the 1930s.[272]

Camp leaders prioritized the delivery of food to children and, in certain circumstances, women. At a large camp in Xujiahui, where Catholic priests and nuns, both French and Chinese, oversaw a population of 7,000 refugees from the countryside, children and ante- or post-partum

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[270] "Milk Products Needed for Refugees," *North-China Herald*, October 20, 1937, 102.

[271] "Refugees Are on the Increase," *North-China Herald*, November 10, 221.

[272] "Beancake for Youngsters," *North-China Herald*, August 31, 1938, 368; "The Soya Bean Product," Letter to the Editor, *North-China Herald*, December 13, 1939, 453; "Soya Bean Milk Praised," *North-China Herald*, December 20, 1939, 491. For more on the Shanghai Refugee Children Nutritional Aid Committee and how its doctors combined charity work with medical research, see Fu, "Society's Laboratories," 275-277.

women received three meals a day instead of the two that other refugees got. Nevertheless, at the height of the refugee crisis in November-December 1937, children in the camp regularly succumbed to common ailments that their weakened immune systems could not fight off.[273] In early February 1938, the SIRC saw that 60 percent of the deaths in its refugee camps were in patients under 16 years of age, and the most common killer was measles, a disease of childhood.[274] The child mortality situation improved somewhat over the course of the next year: when the Hospital for Refugee Children issued its annual report in December 1938, it stated that 268 deaths had occurred in the facility since it opened in December 1937, with the highest mortality rate seen in its first few months of operation. Although 38 percent of the hospital's pediatric patients suffered from infectious diseases, "Malnutrition was the worst enemy which doctors and nurses had to face."[275]

The refugee crisis occasioned by the start of the Second Sino-Japanese War in Shanghai challenged the city's residents in virtually unprecedented ways. Although Shanghai had dealt with large numbers of refugees before, when rural residents fled to the city during times of fighting or famine, the scale of the 1937 refugee crisis was immense, and authorities in the foreign concessions struggled to impose order on the people who poured into their communities. The crisis required massive mobilization of money and other resources, and Shanghai responded: as Nara Dillon notes, "The Battle of Shanghai in the fall of 1937 probably represents the peak of

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[273] "Siccawei Cares for Thousands," *North-China Herald*, November 3, 1937, 186.

[274] "Deaths Among Refugees Jump," *North-China Herald*, February 2, 1938, 170. Though the article's author called the death rate in the SIRC camps "appalling," he did not specify how many people had actually died, or how significant an increase this was over previous months. In August 1938, the International Settlement's Department of Public Health conducted an investigation into rumors of high infant mortality rates in the refugee camps. The investigation did not come up with a total number of all who had died in the camps, but determined that during the months when mortality was generally agreed to be highest—November and December 1937—644 and 670 camp residents (both adults and children) had died, respectively. SMA U1-16-1032, 24, 26-28.

[275] "Child Refugee Hospital Issues Annual Report," *North-China Herald*, December 28, 1938, 537.

private philanthropy in the city's history."[276] Relief organizations paid particular attention to ensuring that the needs of children were met, a tendency that would continue after the initial emergency passed and attitudes toward adult versus child refugees would diverge.

The Wandering Children Problem

Shanghai's refugee population began dropping in size by early 1938, as people either decided to return home on their own or were strongly encouraged to do so by the local relief organizations. Shanghai's expatriates feared the development of a permanent class of "idlers" who would subsist on charity handouts, so foreign concession officials strived to ensure that refugee status was temporary by planning to close shelters within six months and sending refugees to work.[277] When it came to war orphans and displaced children, however, no one could deny that relief institutions had to continue caring for the children they housed, and even after most other refugee camps were closed, children's shelters remained open.

As with adult refugees, child welfare institutions emphasized "active relief" (積極救濟 *jiji jiuji*) that taught youngsters vocational skills they would be able to carry forward after they left the children's home. Photo spreads of refugee camps in mass-market publications rarely failed to show institutionalized children engaged in some sort of productive activity: making lace curtains, toys, shoes, or soap; learning to knit; weaving baskets; sewing.[278] These homes followed the work-study (半工半讀 *ban gong ban du*) model that had been in use in many

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[276] Dillon, "The Politics of Philanthropy," 195.

[277] "Relief Works," *North-China Herald*, November 3, 1937, 168; Chen, *Guilty of Indigence*, 129-131, 147-148.

[278] "Shanghai Refugee Camps," *North-China Herald*, January 26, 1938, photo insert; "Shanghai nantong jiaoyang yuan" (School for Refugee Children in Shanghai), *Da mei huabao* 2, no. 6 (1938), SMA D2-0-2410-15; "Nanmin shengchan yundong" (Refugee Production Campaign), *Liangyou*, 144 (July 1939), 24-26; "Nantong jiaoyang" (Caring for Refugee Children), *Zhanwang* 3 (1939), SMA D2-0-2353-25.

Shanghai children's institutions since the beginning of the century, providing residents with basic lessons while also ensuring that they learned a trade and would not become a burden on society.

Philanthropic groups worried that war orphans ran the danger of turning into beggars (乞丐 *qigai*), filling Shanghai's streets with "wandering children" (流浪兒童 *liulang ertong*) who would subsist on a combination of charity handouts and criminal behavior. Pre-war Shanghai had already contained a notable number of such children, but the refugee emergency produced even more: children whose parents died from disease or starvation; children who became separated from their families in the chaos of the crisis; children who took the opportunity to run away from bad home situations. Wandering children were often depicted as simultaneously pitiful and menacing, as they had suffered misfortune at a young age but also represented a potentially large population of future non-productive adults. As many of them survived on the streets through a combination of begging and petty theft, charitable organizations and press reports often spoke of the need to reform (感化*ganhua*) their criminal tendencies.

In November 1938, the NCWA launched a two-week campaign to round up, house, and clothe every one of Shanghai's estimated 40,000 homeless children, fighting what the *China Press* termed "a serious social problem, [which is] threatening to produce in the near future a crop of dangerous young criminals."[279] The association collected CH$11,000 in its fund-raising drive to support the campaign, but failed to eliminate the presence of wandering children from Shanghai's sidewalks.[280] The Salvation Army was tackling the problem at the same time, and in old jail facilities donated by the Shanghai Municipal Council, it housed 96 boys who had been

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[279] "Campaign Started to Clear City Streets of Homeless War Orphans," *The China Press*, November 6, 1938, SMA U1-16-997, 57; "Ming ri kaishi zhengmu" (Conscription Begins Tomorrow), *Shenbao*, November 6, 1938, 9.

[280] "$11,000 Netted in China Child Welfare Warm Clothing Drive," *The China Press*, December 1, 1938, SMA U1-16-997, 60.

picked up for various crimes by the Municipal Police and turned over for reeducation. Brigadier Bert Morris of the Salvation Army opined that with vocational training, each boy in the institution would become "a useful citizen instead of a criminal."[281]

Rounding up and institutionalizing all of Shanghai's homeless children proved impossible, but various organizations tried repeatedly to accomplish this task throughout the war years, in addition to performing other aid work directed at this population. In the fall of 1939, philanthropists in the International Settlement founded the Street Children's Shelter (街童收容所 Jietong shourong suo) to house some of the youngsters who had been living on Settlement streets, and by the following summer, the facility was able to provide for 300 children.[282] In 1942, renowned Buddhist scholar Ding Fubao (丁福保 1874–1952) led a group that created the Shanghai Child Welfare Home (上海福幼院 Shanghai fuyou yuan), where 200 former wandering children received nutritious meals, medical care, a basic education, moral instruction, and vocational training in the areas of wood-carving (雕刻 *diaoke*), oil painting (油漆 *youqi*), shoemaking (鞋工 *xie gong*), or gardening (園藝 *yuanyi*) so they could be self-supporting (自立 *zili*) in the future.[283]

Wandering children were an especially vulnerable population when winter arrived and Shanghai was seized by cold weather. The last week of January 1940 brought freezing temperatures to Shanghai, and benevolent societies collected an average of 100 corpses a day

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[281] "Parentless Urchins from Shanghai Streets Taught Trades by Salvation Army," *The China Press*, October 31, 1938, SMA U1-16-1037, 239-241; "Tuijin jiaoyang gongzuo" (Promoting Education and Work), *Shenbao*, October 24, 1938, 11; "The Beggar Problem," *North-China Herald*, January 25, 1939, 139.

[282] "Shefa shourong" (An Attempt at Shelter), *Shenbao*, November 17, 1939, 9; "Ben shi jianxun" (Shanghai News in Brief), *Shenbao*, June 13, 1940, 7.

[283] "Shanghai fuyou yuan," *Shenbao*, October 27, 1943, 3; "Shanghai fuyou yuan," *Shenbao*, October 28, 1943, 3;

from the concession sidewalks, 90 percent of which were children.[284] Brigadier Morris announced that the Salvation Army was immediately organizing a "Hot Rice Van," which would patrol concession streets at night and hand out bowls of rice to wandering children, as well as collect the youngsters to deliver them to shelters during the cold snap.[285] Morris asked the readers of the *North-China Herald* to donate money, rice, or warm clothing to the Hot Rice Fund (Figure 3.4). "If adults through their own vicious habits come to starvation this is terrible," Morris wrote in a letter published in the *Herald*, "but, when innocent little children are allowed to die on the streets of one of the world's richest cities, this is a public scandal."[286] Both the foreign and Chinese communities in the city responded to Morris's appeal, and the Shanghai Municipal Council also donated CH$1,000 to the Hot Rice Campaign.[287] Nevertheless, benevolent societies continued to collect corpses for burial—most of whom were children who had apparently died of starvation.[288]

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[284] "An Urgent Appeal," *North-China Herald*, January 31, 1940, 163.

[285] "Yong che yantu shi song" (Delivering Roadside Aid by Car), *Shenbao*, January 26, 1940, 9.

[286] "Shanghai's Waifs: Ghastly Tale of Daily Deaths," Letter to the Editor, *North-China Herald*, January 31, 1940, 182.

[287] "Zhong wai rechen zanzhu" (Chinese and Foreigners Assist with Enthusiasm), *Shenbao*, January 27, 1940; "S.A. Receives Large Donations," *North-China Herald*, February 7, 1940, 214; "Grant to Salvation Army," February 28, 1940, 339.

[288] "Starvation Takes Big Toll Here," *North-China Herald*, February 21, 1940, 291.

Figure 3.4: Sapajou, "Let's Do Our Duty!" cartoon for Salvation Army Hot Rice Campaign, 1940. Source: *North-China Herald*, January 31, 1940, 163.

In addition to the physical health of wandering children, child advocacy workers worried about their mental fitness as well. In the spring of 1940, a group established a treatment center to address the psychological health of wandering children and solve the "criminal problems" (犯罪問題 *fanzui wenti*) it saw among homeless youth. Caregivers at the center recognized that many of their young residents had suffered physical and emotional traumas with the onset of war and dislocation from their previous lives. Their treatment of these children sought to resolve psychological issues with the goal of setting the youngsters on course for a happy and productive life, rather than the criminal path that all wandering children were imagined to follow.[289]

In the fall of 1943, as Shanghai charities were preparing their annual winter push to move people off the streets and into shelters, the needs of wandering children came to the forefront of the conversation. "Children are the lifeline of the nation" (兒童是國家的命脈 *ertong shi guojia de mingmai*), a *Shenbao* Op-Ed declared, as it announced the formation of a Committee for the Care of Wandering Children (流浪兒童教養委員會 Liulang ertong jiaoyang weiyuanhui) in the city. The committee's core belief was that without their parents to care for them, wandering children were society's responsibility, and every person had an equal obligation to take on his or her share of the work.[290] A second Op-Ed two days later added that readers should recognize that homeless children had the same potential as "ordinary" (一般 *yiban*) youths to grow up and become productive members of society. Wandering children had seen their lives thrown off track, but with help, they could overcome the bad luck that fate had handed them. The editorial also drew a careful distinction between vagrant children, who begged for alms due to their survival

[289] "Ganhua jietou liulang ertong" (Reforming Wandering Children of the Street), *Shenbao*, April 26, 1940, 10; "Shourong liulang ertong" (Sheltering Wandering Children), *Shenbao*, May 27, 1940, 7.

[290] "Jiaoyang jietou liulang ertong" (Caring for Wandering Children of the Street), *Shenbao*, October 18, 1943, 1.

instinct, and adult beggars, whom the Op-Ed writer described as "having abandoned themselves to despair" (自暴自棄 *zibaoziqi*).[291] The adult homeless, in other words, had given up on having productive lives, but wandering children should not be tarred with the same "parasitic" brush, and deserved assistance from the more fortunate. However, if not given aid and vocational training, wandering children would grow up into parasitic adults, as a February 1944 *Shenbao* Op-Ed warned in an essay on the need to provide wandering children with an education. The author pointed out the difference between public opinion of beggar children versus adults: "Today we pity them [the children,] but in eight or ten years, we will hate them" (我們現在是可憐他們，過了十年八年之後，我們就要可恨他們了 *Women xianzai shi kelian tamen, guo le shi nian ba nian zhihou, women jiu yao kehen tamen le*).[292] If Shanghai continued to hold a large population of homeless children, these editorials suggested, residents had no one to blame but themselves.

The war years established wandering children as a social problem in Shanghai, and various groups attempted to address it by offering either temporary (usually wintertime) aid, or by moving homeless children into residential institutions where they could be "reformed" and set on the path to a productive adulthood. Despite all these efforts, the wandering child problem would persist—and grow—in Shanghai long after the Anti-Japanese War ended, as will be discussed in Chapters 4 and 5.

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[291] "Jiji tuijin liulang ertong jiaoyang gongzuo" (Actively Promote Welfare Work with Wandering Children), *Shenbao*, October 20, 1943, 1. Similarly, a *North-China Daily News* Op-Ed writer had earlier reminded his readers that the professional beggar "is not in fact destitute ... he has chosen that means of making a livelihood." "Sick and Malingerers," *North-China Herald*, November 29,1939, 359.

[292] "Zai lun guomin yiwu jiaoyu" (Further Discussion of Mandatory Education for Citizens), *Shenbao*, February 19, 1944, 1.

Funding Children's Programs

By the summer of 1940, concession authorities were determined to eliminate the remaining refugee camps within their boundaries; the war had gone on for nearly three years, and concession governments were no longer willing to tolerate or indirectly subsidize their continued presence.[293] If so many other refugees had returned to their homes, the thinking seemed to be, there was no excuse for the rest not to. But war orphans and displaced children were another story: without homes or parents, they relied on charity organizations and the local government to care for them. Even as other refugee camps were shut down, ones catering specifically to children were allowed to continue, and between December 1943 and the end of the war in August 1945, of Shanghai's seven (later six) refugee camps, four specifically sheltered children.[294]

Public donations played a significant role in refugee relief, even after the initial outpouring of financial support during the 1937 refugee crisis receded. The Salvation Army collected donations from the city's foreign and Chinese communities with an annual appeal and special campaigns like the Hot Rice Fund discussed above. On Children's Day (April 4) in 1939, Shanghai's Sun Sun Broadcasting Station devoted the entire day's programming to a fund-raising drive for refugee children, and local stores sold "tags" that donors could wear to identify their support for child refugee relief.[295] In 1942, the NCWA set out to raise CH$200,000 to offset the CH$450,000 needed to continue its two child refugee camps in Shanghai, and two years later, the

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[293] Chen, *Guilty of Indigence*, 157-158.

[294] The four children's refugee camps were the Yu Yu Children's Institution, the Pure Karma Vocational Institution for Children, the Shanghai YWCA Children Educational Institution, and the Buddhist Foundling Asylum for Children. SMA U1-16-1036.

[295] "Children Celebrate Own Day," *North-China Herald*, April 12, 1939, 58. The article does not explain what it meant by "tags," but they were presumably small pieces of paper or cardboard that could be pinned to one's lapel.

organization collected CH$100,000 over a three-week fund-raising drive.[296] The NCWA also received an annual grant-in-aid from the Shanghai Municipal Council—one of only a few organizations to enjoy this support.[297]

As Janet Chen has demonstrated, throughout the early twentieth century, the International Settlement's Shanghai Municipal Council repeatedly refused to provide poor relief, as it insisted that such work was the responsibility of local charities.[298] But on the question of dispensing aid for children, the SMC had wavered, offering small "grants-in-aid" to child welfare organizations it deemed worthy. When the time came to allocate funds for child welfare grants in 1941, however, the Council's treasurer objected, declaring that "however desirable Child Protection work may be, it cannot be regarded as of such importance as the provision of hospital service for the sick poor of Shanghai."[299] A brief debate via memo followed, which was ended when G. Godfrey Phillips, Secretary and Commissioner General of the SMC, wrote that "Rightly or wrongly—in my opinion rightly—the Council has accepted a degree of responsibility for child-welfare."[300] The grants continued, and after the foreign concessions were dissolved in 1943, the Shanghai Department of Social Welfare took responsibility for distributing the last of the money allocated by the SMC.[301]

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[296] "$200,000 to Be Raised by Relief Body," *Shanghai Times*, June 3, 1942, SMA U1-16-997, 61; "Donations to Child Welfare Ass'n Fund Tops $100,000 Goal," *The China Press*, October 31, 1944, SMA U1-16-997, 61.

[297] In 1942, the NCWA was one of eight institutions to receive a child welfare grant from the SMC, and its grant was by far the largest (CH$20,000 of the CH$47,000 disbursed in total); SMA U1-4-226, 2. The following year, the NCWA received CH$45,000, one of 14 groups chosen for the last of the SMC grants; SMA R22-2-36-1, 7.

[298] Chen, *Guilty of Indigence*, 38-39, 77-79.

[299] SMA U1-4-266, 17.

[300] SMA U1-4-266, 24.

[301] SMA R22-2-36, 7.

When, in August 1943, the director of the Christian Home for Orphans & Refugee Children (上海基督教難童教養院 Shanghai Jidujiao nantong jiaoyang yuan) found coffers running dry and the SMC no longer around to offer one of the grants-in-aid his facility had previously received, he wrote to the Department of Social Welfare for assistance, requesting a monthly grant of CH$10,000 to offset the home's CH$15-16,000 per month expenses.[302] The Director of Social Welfare, H.W. Ling, sent a memo to his finance department explaining that he planned to reject the petition for the same reason the SMC had always refused to provide ongoing funding: "There are more than 40 child welfare institutions caring for Chinese children ... It is not logical that a regular grant of an amount of $10,000 be given to any one institution." He further suggested that the Fujianese Christians who had earlier provided support for the institution were wealthy enough to continue doing so.[303] The Christian Home received a polite but negative reply from the government, with a note that the institution was welcome to apply for funds whenever grants-in-aid were again available.[304] The former International Settlement may have had new people in charge, but they demonstrated the same reluctance to take on responsibility for regular charity support that the SMC had always shown. The needs of children were given slightly more consideration, but even this had its limits.

Child welfare work in Shanghai during the Second Sino-Japanese War continued trends that had begun in the early twentieth century. Assistance, in the form of refugee camps and fund-raising campaigns, was encouraged by the local government, but not provided by it; charitable work largely fell into the realm of the private sector. While foreign residents and concession

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[302] SMA R22-2-36-1, 8.

[303] SMA R22-2-36-1, 5.

[304] SMA R22-2-36-1, 3.

authorities expressed an ambivalent attitude toward the presence of war refugees in their city and sought to disperse them as quickly as possible, child refugees attracted more sympathy and ongoing care. However, if young refugees became wandering children and turned to begging or thievery for survival, they were regarded with the same wary eye as adult beggars. Unlike the adult poor, who were often considered to have "given up" or chosen the mendicant lifestyle, wandering children were targeted for institutionalization and reform in the hope that charitable assistance and vocational training would turn them away from the criminal path. As the Anti-Japanese War ended and civil war broke out, however, the problem of child homelessness in Shanghai would only grow, both in terms of actual numbers and in its place in public discourse about child welfare.

CHAPTER 4:

CHILD WELFARE IN CIVIL WAR SHANGHAI

On April 4, 1949—Children's Day—Shanghai's Sun Company department store opened a special exhibition of artwork by the cartoonist Zhang Leping (張樂平 1910–1992). The exhibit featured over 300 sketches from Zhang's landmark work, *The Wandering Life of Sanmao* (三毛流浪記 *Sanmao liulang ji*), which had appeared in the city's *Da gong bao* (大公報) newspaper beginning in June 1947 and told the story of a young orphan boy struggling to survive on the streets of Shanghai. Zhang, despite suffering ill-health as he worked around the clock preparing for the exhibition, had also painted a special set of 30 watercolors that were to be auctioned off at the Sun Company in conjunction with the exhibit's opening; the proceeds would go toward the Shanghai Children's Programme of Song Qingling's China Welfare Fund (中國福利基金會 Zhongguo fuli jijin hui, hereafter CWF). Wang Xiaolai (王曉籟 1886–1967), President of the Shanghai Chamber of Commerce, had agreed to serve as auctioneer, while children who participated in CWF programs sold Sanmao badges and comic books, in addition to soliciting memberships in the "Sanmao Paradise Club" (三毛樂園會 Sanmao leyuan hui). Members of the club "adopted" a CWF child and pledged financial support for his or her schooling and medical care. Children who wanted to help, or adults who could not afford to make a regular monetary donation, could offer gifts-in-kind of school supplies, clothing, or food and become "Friends of Sanmao."[305]

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[305] "CWC Campaign for Kiddies to Start Apr. 4," *North-China Daily News*, March 20, 1949, 3; "San Mao Comes To Life on April 4," *North-China Daily News*, March 26, 1949, 3; Zhang Leping jinianguan, ed., *Bai nian Leping* (One Hundred Years of Zhang Leping) (Shanghai: Shanghai shehui kexue yuan chubanshe, 2010), 47-49.

The exhibit, auction, and membership drive were all successful—every one of the watercolors was sold at the auction, and 200 people pledged monthly donations to sponsor real-life "Sanmaos" over the course of the five-day exhibit[306]—and they brought together two major figures in the child advocacy movement in late-1940s Shanghai, Zhang Leping and Song Qingling. But they also put a happy, even celebratory, face on one of the most devastating problems affecting Shanghai during the civil war years. As the city filled with refugees fleeing war-stricken provinces, the numbers of wandering children on Shanghai's streets also increased. Organizations like Song's CWF, various committees of citizens wishing to help, and the city's dozens of orphanages struggled to assist as many of these children as they could, but the problem persisted. Although the municipal government recognized the presence of wandering children as a social problem and potential source of anti-government discontent, its own limited resources prevented the city's leadership from taking significant steps to reduce the number of homeless children in Shanghai. Epidemic illness and bitterly cold winters struck this population the hardest, and each year benevolent societies collected thousands of bodies from Shanghai's streets, the vast majority of them the corpses of children. These "real-life Sanmaos" needed far more assistance than the sale of Zhang Leping's 30 watercolors could provide, and even children who were lucky enough to have homes or spots in Shanghai's orphanages suffered the deprivations of war. Year after year, the situation deteriorated further, affecting all but the city's wealthiest residents.

Curiously, the civil war era has been largely overlooked by social historians of modern China. There is a substantial body of political science analysis trying to decide whether Mao

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[306] "Sa fu shuicai hua yimai chengji hao" (Thirty Watercolors Successfully Sold for a Good Cause), *Shenbao*, April 5, 1949, 4; "Sanmao huazhan huaxu zhuiji" (Notes from the Sanmao Exhibition), *Shenbao*, April 9, 1949, 4.

Zedong won or Chiang Kai-shek lost, but relatively few studies of daily life during the war years.[307] The cultural sphere has received slightly more attention, such as Paul Pickowicz's examination of civil war films and Chang-tai Hung's work on popular culture in support of the revolutionary cause.[308] Overall, however, scholars have done significant work on the Anti-Japanese War period and even more research on the first decade of the People's Republic, but the years between the Japanese defeat and CCP victory largely remain a void in the historiography of twentieth-century China.

This blank space is certainly not due to a lack of sources to work with. Archival documents, newspaper stories (from both the domestic Chinese press and publications abroad), and popular culture products like the *Sanmao the Orphan* comic strips I discuss below all offer historians insight into the civil war experience. Foreign organizations active in China during the post-World War II years, most notably the United Nations, likely also hold materials in their archives that would be of interest to modern Chinese historians. Though archival gaps remain and runs of newspapers may be incomplete because of the chaos of the era, there is still more than enough research material out there for several studies of civil war China. This period represents an important avenue of future research for both myself and other historians.

In this chapter, I first describe the various child welfare issues in Shanghai during the civil war years, then explain some of the steps taken to address them. The second part of the

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[307] For a thorough discussion of poverty and the refugee problem in civil war Shanghai, see Chen, *Guilty of Indigence*, Chapter 5.

[308] Paul G. Pickowicz, *China on Film: A Century of Exploration, Confrontation, and Controversy* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2012), Chapter 5; Chang-tai Hung, "The Fuming Image: Cartoons and Public Opinion in Late Republican China, 1945–1949," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 36, no. 1 (January 1994): 122-145; *idem*, "Reeducating a Blind Storyteller: Han Qixiang and the Chinese Communist Storytelling Campaign," *Modern China* 19, no. 4 (October 1993): 395-426.

chapter focuses on the story of Zhang's *Wandering Life* cartoons and the interest in child welfare issues that they generated.

SHANGHAI'S REFUGEE CHILDREN

In September 1945, John Ahlers, a journalist and economics lecturer at Shanghai's St. John's University, evaluated the city's situation at the end of the Second Sino-Japanese War and declared it to be in a comparably favorable state. Ahlers considered the toll that bombings had taken on other major trade centers, notably Guangzhou and Hankou, and noted that Shanghai had been largely spared such devastation. Although he admitted that the future was uncertain—China's currency was unstable and vital supplies were running low—Ahlers wrote in the *Far Eastern Survey* that "there is an undercurrent of tremendous optimism" among the members of Shanghai's business community as they looked toward the future and expected to rebuild their companies quickly.[309] Very soon, however, that optimism would vanish, as fighting in the interior drove refugees toward Shanghai and the civil war inflicted a toll that the Anti-Japanese War had not.

Shanghai's streets filled with refugees throughout the civil war years. Between 1946 and 1947, the city's population increased from 3.83 million to 4.49 million people; a year later, that number had grown by nearly a million more.[310] The *Da gong bao* reported that in one month—between May and June 1947—90,000 new refugees arrived in the city.[311] By March 1949, two months before the CCP took control of the metropolis, Shanghai's population stood at 5.45

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[309] John Ahlers, "Shanghai at the War's End," *Far Eastern Survey* 14, no. 23 (November 21, 1945), 329.

[310] Zou, *Jiu Shanghai renkou bianqian de yanjiu*, 91.

[311] "Liu yue fen renkou tongji: bi wu yue zengjia jiu wan duo ren" (June Population Statistics: An Increase of Over 90,000 People From the Month of May), *Da gong bao*, August 3, 1947, 5.

million residents.[312] Fleeing their rural homes in surrounding provinces, refugees streamed into the city hoping to find better conditions there. More often than not, they were disappointed: Shanghai, like the rest of China, was teetering on the edge of collapse. The increasingly crowded conditions in the city made the situation worse, as epidemic diseases swept through the population and crowds fought for limited food supplies.

Children living in alleyways and sleeping on sidewalks became a familiar sight during these years (Figure 4.1). Some of the displaced children were able to find refuge at orphanages or poorhouses, but others lived on the streets—stealing bits of food from itinerant vendors, performing odd jobs to earn whatever money they could, and seeking shelter wherever possible, such as under the bridges along Suzhou Creek. Adults scrambled to help, establishing child welfare organizations and collecting funds to aid existing ones, but nevertheless, homeless children continued to live—and die—on Shanghai's sidewalks at an alarming rate.

[312] Zou, *Jiu Shanghai renkou bianqian de yanjiu*, 91. This number quickly fell after the communist victory, as the CCP sought to alleviate the refugee crisis in Shanghai by sending people back to their home provinces en masse. See Chapter 5 for more.

Figure 4.1: Wandering children on the steps of a building in Shanghai, 1949. Source: Virtual Shanghai digital archive, Image 253

It's difficult to know exactly how many wandering children were in Shanghai during the civil war years; the size of such fluid populations at any given time is often impossible to fix. Some triangulation using available sources can give us a general, if highly imprecise, idea of the scale of homelessness and indigence among children in Shanghai. In early 1947, over 6,700 children resided in orphanages and poor children's homes, which indicates that needy children were far from rare in the city.[313] When the public Children's Training Center (兒童教養所 Ertong jiaoyangsuo) opened a new home in Caohejing (漕河涇, southwest of the city center) in September 1947, it planned to house 1,400 youngsters, but expanded to accommodate more when necessary: at its height before the CCP victory in 1949, the home sheltered 1,600 children.[314] Sweeps conducted by relief organizations during the cold winter nights rounded up anywhere between 50 and 500 or more children, who were brought to temporary shelters or placed in orphanages that had room for new arrivals.[315]

It is also possible to get a sense of the size of this problem by examining the numbers of homeless children who died, which happened so regularly during the winters that it drew attention in the American press. Readers of a May 1947 Associated Press (AP) story would have learned that in the first four months of the year, benevolent societies in Shanghai had already

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[313] "Weilao guku ertong" (Bringing Gifts to Orphaned Children), *Da gong bao*, January 5, 1947, 4.

[314] The Children's Training Center was split off from the existing Refugee and Refugee Children's Shelter (難民難童收容所 Nanmin nantong shourongsuo), so at least some of those 1,400 children would have been included in the 6,700 institutionalized children as of earlier in 1947. "Shanghai de shao nian cun" (Shanghai Boy's Town), *Da gong bao*, September 28, 1947, 4; Fan Jingsi, *Shanghai minzheng zhi* (Gazetteer of Shanghai Municipal Affairs) (Shanghai: Shanghai shehui kexue yuan chubanshe, 2000), 161. In February 1948, a *Shenbao* reporter interviewed Director Zhou of the training center, who said that the facility held 1,500 children at that time, and he hoped to build more dormitories that would enable another 500-1,000 youths to enter the home. "Shi li Ertong jiaoyangsuo: Ben niandu shi da mubiao" (Ten Main Goals for the Municipal Children's Training Center This Year), *Shenbao*, February 16, 1948, 4.

[315] "Ertong fuli tuanti jiji jiuji jietong" (Child Welfare Organizations Vigorously Provide Emergency Relief to Street Children), *Shenbao*, December 2, 1947, 4; "Jiaoyang jiguan jijiu jietou liulang ertong" (Welfare Organizations Give Emergency Treatment to Wandering Children), *Shenbao*, January 8, 1949, 4.

collected 8,462 bodies from the streets of the city: 8,074 were children, while only 388 were adults.[316] In January 1948, the AP reported that the corpses of 130 homeless children in Shanghai had been collected in one night, victims of 24-degree Fahrenheit weather.[317] Another AP clip from later that year about a measles epidemic ravaging the city's population added that in the first three months of 1948, 7,307 people had died of disease, starvation, or cold in Shanghai, 6,957 of them children.[318] In January 1949, the *New York Times* reported that "5,792 children have died from starvation and exposure on the streets of Shanghai this winter."[319] Local readers of the *North-China Daily News* would have seen that children represented more than 80 percent of the corpses recovered by the Shanghai Benevolent Society between early November 1948 and the first week of January 1949; many of the deceased were abandoned infants.[320] Though these stories contain only fragments of the bigger picture, they give present-day readers some idea of the scale of the problem.

Foreign residents in Shanghai railed against the deaths of these homeless children. In the pages of the *North-China Daily News*, they asked why so much effort was given to collecting corpses for burial, but not enough to saving the lives of the city's wandering youth. An Op-Ed in early January 1949 condemned the city's leadership and wealthy citizens for not adequately addressing the plight of homeless refugees; the essay's author dismissed local authorities as too

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316 "New Controls Invoked," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, May 8, 1947, 13.

317 "130 Children Found Dead in Streets of Shanghai," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, January 27, 1948, 29. Although the news clip was published on January 27, it was dated a day earlier. The *New York Times* printed a similar story, also dated January 26 and attributed to the United Press news wire, that set the number of children's bodies at 150 and specified that the deceased were between six and 13 years old. "Chinese Children Freeze: 150 Bodies of Waifs Are Found in Shanghai," *The New York Times*, January 26, 1948, 13.

318 "405 Dead Infants Found on Shanghai Streets in a Week," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, April 10, 1948, 5

319 "Words—But No Action," *The New York Times*, January 24, 1949, 18.

320 "Over 800 Bodies Picked Up in Streets, Jan. 1-7," *North-China Daily News*, January 8, 1949, 3.

concerned with "planning ahead" and not willing to devote the necessary attention to the very real crisis facing their city at the present.[321] Similarly, a Letter to the Editor published the next day scornfully declared that "the most credulous people are apt to wonder as to what extent those authorities concerned are doing, if at all, in the way of their reported nightly round-ups of those destitutes found sleeping on sidewalks and in alleyways late at night, and these to be given shelter in relief camps."[322] Another Op-Ed decried "rich, comfortable Shanghai, casually, even lightly spending daily those very few dollars which otherwise devoted would mean so much to some wretched waif of humanity."[323] The shockingly high death rates of children seemed an indictment of the municipal government and local charity institutions.

In fact, both the government and private charities were scrambling to address the problem, and they frequently worked in conjunction with or received financial support from international aid organizations. Shanghai's leaders understood that the city's homeless child population, and its high death rate, did not reflect well on the metropolis, especially on the global stage. In September 1947, the Municipal Consultative Assembly (上海市參議會 Shanghaishi canyihui) requested that the city government take a more active role in rounding up the growing numbers of street children and providing them with shelter as winter approached. The Consultative Assembly framed its request in international terms: saying that a country's future strength or weakness could be seen in its treatment of children (一國將來之盛衰強弱，端視現在兒童之教養如何 *yi guo jianglai zhi shuangshuai qiangruo, duanshi xianzai ertong zhi jiaoyang ruhe*), it recommended that the government act quickly to improve its appearance in the

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[321] "Who Will Give Heed?" *North-China Daily News*, January 7, 1949, 5.

[322] Letter to the Editor signed "Sub-Zero," *North-China Daily News*, January 8, 1949, 5.

[323] "Will Someone Help?" *North-China Daily News*, January 10, 1949, 5.

eyes of foreigners (國際觀瞻 *guoji guanzhan*). The government replied that its resources were limited, but it would do the best it could.[324]

Municipal leaders also worried that vagrant children—and the homeless population as a whole—represented a potential source of social instability. In a 1948 letter to the municipal government suggesting that it open more shelters and job-training programs, the Consultative Assembly warned that the "idle" (游手 *youshou*) and "parasitic" (寄生 *jisheng*) children and unemployed could easily join together to become an unstable force that would "disrupt social order" (攪亂社會秩序 *jiaoluan shehui zhixu*).[325] But despite all their efforts, international aid organizations, the Shanghai Municipal Government, and local charity groups found that the vagrant child problem was too large to handle, given the limited resources and volatile political situation of the time.

International Aid Organizations

Shanghai was far from the only place that had seen an increase in the number of needy children during the 1940s: postwar Japan and Europe also contained significant numbers of displaced youths who required assistance.[326] In those regions, however, the battles of World War II had ended and countries could begin the long process of recovery, while in China, the civil war

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[324] SMA Q109-1-259, 3, 5-6, 10-11. A much clearer version of the Consultative Assembly's memo is available at SMA Q109-1-1028-30. For discussion of efforts to improve the "city's appearance" (市容 *shirong*) by clearing beggars, peddlers, and other itinerant groups in Beijing and Shanghai during the late 1940s, see Chen, *Guilty of Indigence*, 184-186, 190-193.

[325] SMA Q109-1-261, 12.

[326] Tara Zahra, "Displacement, Family, and Nation in Postwar Europe," *The Journal of Modern History* 81, no. 1 (March 2009): 45-86; John W. Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (New York: W.W. Norton 1999), 62-64. A feature article in a Sunday edition of the *New York Times* in October 1947 drew an explicit link between displaced children in Europe and Asia. The author stated that while conditions were dire in Europe, the situation in Asia presented a "stranger tragedy," given the low standard of living that had been in place even before war broke out. Gertrude Samuels, "The Unheard Cry of the World's Children," *The New York Times*, October 12, 1947, 12.

prevented society from reaching the level of stability that would enable either the government or child welfare organizations to make real inroads in addressing the problem. Realistically, the most they could hope to do was provide support on a continued emergency basis.

Although Shanghai's international settlements had been dissolved in 1943, foreign aid organizations were still active in their efforts to assist the city's vagrant youth. As in Europe, international social welfare organizations sent aid to impoverished and orphaned children in China after World War II ended. One of the most important international bodies to deliver aid at the war's end was the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA), though it was not specifically focused on assistance to children. Around the world, UNRRA provided emergency services for youngsters, such as feeding programs, clothing deliveries, and hygiene campaigns, in addition to initiating long-term programs that worked with national governments to place children in foster or adoptive homes, as well as planning summer camps.[327] Beginning in 1947, UNRRA's work was gradually taken over by the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), newly founded as a permanent child-assistance agency. UNICEF'S early efforts, however, were hindered by what the *New York Times* called an "amateurish and expensive fund-raising machinery" that failed to raise enough money to support its programs around the world, and it took until January 1949 for the agency to fully establish its China division.[328]

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[327] Samuel K. Jacobs, "The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund: An Instrument of International Social Policy, Part I," *The Social Service Review* 24, no. 2 (June 1950), 145-146.

[328] "Words—But No Action"; Jacobs, "The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund," 168. Gertrude Samuels also condemned the bungled launch of UNICEF in 1947, which she wrote came about due to a "disease called lack of interest and support." While the UN set an initial annual budget of US$450 million for UNICEF, member countries proved reluctant to donate, and the total collected was expected to be only US$70 million. Samuels, "Unheard Cry."

By February 1949, UNICEF had begun to distribute food and supplies in seven major Chinese cities, including Shanghai, and stated that it was aiding 156,000 mothers and children with its work.[329] The agency quickly found that it had launched its China program rather late in the game, however, as Nationalist cities fell one by one into CCP hands during the spring of 1949 and UNICEF had to constantly reorganize and reevaluate its programs in the country. After only a few months of activity, the organization ended its feeding programs and decided to focus on health-education efforts instead.[330]

UNICEF's change in direction came about not only because of the looming CCP victory, but also as a result of the hyperinflation that paralyzed China's citizens during the civil war years. The GMD government had pledged to match donations for food supplies and contribute money toward the UNICEF clothing campaign, but soon reneged on its promise, unable to afford the burden.[331] Hyperinflation hindered other foreign aid organizations in their efforts to provide money and supplies to China's needy. China's Children Fund (CCF), a Richmond, Virginia-based pan-denominational Christian organization founded in 1938, solicited Americans to "adopt" Chinese youth with a yearly donation intended to support a resident of the more than 40 orphanages CCF operated in China, including at least one in Shanghai. Inflation in China hit CCF hard, even before hyperinflation took off: while a May 1943 newsletter advertised that supporters could sponsor a child for US$24.00 per year, by the Fall 1945 issue of the newsletter, the annual cost of an informal "adoption" had risen to US$120.00, though the organization

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[329] UNICEF had begun sending supplies over to China earlier than January 1949, but it seems that it took some time to put the full organizational and distribution apparatus in place. "Jiuji wo guo ertong naifen zi Mei qiyun" (Milk Powder to Save Chinese Children Ships from America), *Shenbao*, May 9, 1948, 2; "Aid to China's Children Gains," *The New York Times*, February 10, 1949, 6.

[330] Jacobs, "The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund," 168-169.

[331] Jacobs, "The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund," 168.

hastened to assure existing sponsors that they could continue to contribute at the previous rate and CCF would find other donors to make up the difference.[332] What had begun as a religious mission took on a political cast in the emerging Cold War world. By 1948, CCF was combining its usual pleas for donations with a warning that China's continued state of emergency increased the possibility that the country would fall to communism, and that the drying up of funds from sponsors in the United States was only serving to push China further into the arms of the Soviet Union.[333] As the world slid into the Cold War era, Americans seemed more and more reluctant to send money to a country whose children might soon grow up regarding the United States as their enemy (discussed further in Chapter 5).

Local Aid Organizations

Chinese child welfare activists in Shanghai struggled to obtain financial support for their work as well. By the spring of 1947, there were 53 child welfare institutions operating in the city, 50 of which were privately run and dependent on donations. Twelve of the 53 had been founded in the last year alone, indicating how rapidly child welfare problems had developed in Shanghai after the start of the civil war.[334] Although the recently reconstituted municipal government

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[332] "Adoptions Still Figured at $24.00 a Year," *China News* I, no. 1 (May 1, 1943), 1, 4; "Sunday School Provides for Four Children," *China News* IV, no. 2 (Fall 1945), 3, Yale University School of Divinity Special Collections (hereafter YDS), Records of the China's Children Fund, 1943–1951, HR1083. What CCF and other international child welfare organizations called "adoptions" were really just child-sponsorship programs built on a language of fictive kinship and sustained through the exchange of letters between child and sponsor. The child and his/her sponsor rarely, if ever, met, and there was no legal basis to their relationship.

[333] "China," *China News* V, no. 2 (Winter 1948), 1, YDS, Records of the China's Children Fund, 1943–1951, HR 1083.

[334] These child-welfare institutions were of many different types, divided as follows: 14 orphanages (*gu'eryuan*); 6 homes for street children (*jietong shourongsuo*); 3 homes for refugee children/war orphans (*nantong jiaoyangsuo*); 2 homes for girls (*nütong jiaoyangyuan*); 5 homes for poor children (*pin'er jiaoyangyuan*); 12 nurseries (*tuo'ersuo*); 4 foundling homes (*yuyingtang*); 3 homes for disabled children (*canjiyuan*); 4 unspecified. "Shanghai ertong fuli jiguan de fenxi" (Analysis of Shanghai's Child Welfare Institutions), *Funü* 2, no. 1 (April 15, 1947), SMA D2-0-1241-26.

required all of Shanghai's private child welfare institutions to register with the Social Affairs Bureau, the bureau did not provide them with any direct funding or assist them with operations, restricting itself to a supervisory role and serving as a mediator between local institutions and the national government when necessary.[335] These institutions were fighting an uphill battle: as Janet Chen suggests, even in the early 1940s, the city's wealthier citizens had been feeling "charity fatigue" from being solicited for donations so frequently. There was simply too much need and too many good causes competing for too few resources.[336] By the latter half of the decade, escalating inflation meant that middle and upper-class Shanghainese were even less able to share their earnings with the poor. The GMD state found itself in similar dire straits, and children's homes and child aid projects needed more funding than they could obtain.

Newspapers like the *Da gong bao* and *Shenbao* assisted in this fund-raising endeavor by making readers aware of child assistance efforts in the city and their need for funding. Even regular news clips that reported the work of child welfare organizations regularly included information at the end about how to contact those groups to make donations.[337] The papers also offered charity organizations a medium through which they could spread awareness of their efforts and deliver their appeals to a wide audience. In February 1947, for example, an article written by Xu Jingzhi (徐静之) appeared in the *Da gong bao* to advertise the work of the crèche at the Industrial Home for Women (職業婦女託兒所 Zhiye funü tuo'ersuo), a facility she ran to

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[335] These registration documents asked residential institutions to list their basic details (official name, address, any religious affiliation), goals, capacity, the process for admission, and organizational structure. For examples of such registration documents, see SMA Q6-9-165-6 (Morning Star Orphanage), Q6-9-160-5 (Shanghai Gu'eryuan), and SMA Q6-9-154-7 (Emmanuel Orphanage).

[336] Chen, *Guilty of Indigence*, 159.

[337] For example, "Ertong fuli tuanti jiji jiuji ertong" (Child Welfare Groups Vigorously Save Children), *Shenbao*, December 2, 1947.

care for the children of working women. In the essay, Xu made it clear that while the crèche had accomplished a great deal in its first six months of existence, it needed ongoing financial support to continue its mission, especially as its fees were rising far beyond what the working mothers of the children could afford. If mothers could not afford the cost of sending their children to the facility, Xu feared, they would simply leave the young ones at home alone, or with inadequate supervision, while they went to work. At the conclusion of her article, Xu suggested that while the government should contribute to such projects, so should individuals, who also had a responsibility to assist society's poorest and most vulnerable members: "We ask the government, we ask society, to give us a greater amount of financial support; for us, for the mothers, and for the innocent and blameless children!" (我們要求政府，要求社會，給我們更大的援助，為了我們，為了母親們，為了天真無邪的孩子們！*Women yaoqiu zhengfu, yaoqiu shehui, gei women geng da de yuanzhu; weile women, weile muqinmen, weile tianzhen wuxie de haizimen!*).[338]

Xu Jingzhi and her colleagues in Shanghai's child advocacy sector seem to have spent much of 1947 founding associations and attending meetings. In April of that year, as the UNRRA's work in the city was coming to a close, a group of Shanghai's Chinese leaders came together to found the Shanghai Advisory Committee for Child Welfare (上海兒童福利促進會 Shanghai ertong fuli cujin hui, hereafter SACCW). An effort spearheaded by Shanghai's mayor and four other municipal leaders, though the Executive Board also included foreigners, the association was meant to facilitate the coordinated delivery of child welfare services in the

[338] Xu Jingzhi, "Zai shenghuo gaoya xia, wei haizimen hu yu" (Under Great Pressure in Daily Life, an Appeal for the Children), *Da gong bao*, February 28, 1947, 4.

city.[339] "Shanghai has more than 40 child welfare organizations," Mayor Wu Guozhen (吳國楨 1903–1984) said at the group's opening meeting, "but as for how to move forward as a whole, there's no plan" (上海有四十多個兒童福利機構，但關於整個之推進，則無籌劃 *Shanghai you sishi duo ge ertong fuli jigou, dan guanyu zhengge zhi tuijin, ze wu chouhua*). With a 50,000,000 *yuan* grant from the city as seed money, SACCW could get to work.[340]

The group's leaders envisioned SACCW more as an umbrella organization to oversee and coordinate child welfare services than an agency that would provide direct aid, though it soon began offering health and nutrition services for children and mothers, and later opened a processing station for vagrant children to get cleaned up, examined, and sent to orphanages.[341] In SACCW's original registration with the Shanghai Municipal Social Affairs Bureau, its work was divided into five areas that encompassed research, coordination, publicity, standardization of practices among child welfare workers, and problem-solving, but not direct aid.[342] Members of SACCW had to pay an annual membership fee (the amount unspecified in the registration

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[339] A piece of SACCW letterhead lists the members of the Executive Board; two of the Vice Chairmen have identifiably non-Chinese names (SMA Q112-1-22-37); the organization's membership roster also included a scattering of Western names on it, though not a large number (SMA Q6-9-134, 9-17).

[340] "Fuchi ertong fuli jigou: Shanghai ertong fuli cujin hui zuo ri chengli" (Supporting Child Welfare Organizations: Shanghai Advisory Committee for Child Welfare Founded Yesterday), *Da gong bao*, April 17, 1947, 4.

[341] When reporting on the committee's activities in October 1947, SACCW leaders said that their work to date had focused on researching the lives and needs of the poor, as well as opening a children's health and hygiene station; see "Baogao gai hui gongzuo qingxing" (Report on the Committee's Work and State of Affairs), *Da gong bao*, October 1, 1947. In early 1949, SACCW reported that over the previous year, it had distributed milk powder, cod liver oil, lard, and rice to needy children via its feeding stations, as well as vaccinated children through its medical program, and also provided direct aid to 200 children whose cases came to the committee's attention; see "Child Welfare Body Makes Annual Report," *North-China Daily News*, February 9, 1949, 3. On its processing station for homeless children, see "Ertong fuli xie jin hui zhaodai canguan shourongsuo" (Child Welfare Promotion Group Holds Reception and Tour at Receiving Station), *Shenbao*, May 19, 1949, 3.

[342] SMA Q6-9-134, 4-5.

documents), and the leadership also planned to fund-raise, as well as seek financial support for its work from the UNRRA and the city government.[343]

The United Child Welfare Organizations of Shanghai (上海市兒童福利團體聯合會 Shanghaishi ertong fuli tuanti lianhehui, hereafter UCWOS) formed in early June, this group composed of representatives from more than 40 child welfare institutions in the city.[344] UCWOS sought to foster connections and communication among child welfare workers so they could offer each other mutual aid and improve the quality of services delivered.[345] In August, SACCW and UCWOS came together to hold a seven-day meeting in which they discussed how to address child welfare issues in Shanghai more efficiently.[346] These two organizations served as Shanghai's leading child welfare groups and often worked together on projects. In the winter of 1947, for example, they formed a joint committee to address the wandering children problem and established two temporary stations to provide assistance to youths who sought shelter. Children who came to the stations would be cleaned up and examined, then receive fresh clothes and bedding. Resources were tight, though, and they could only help 200 wandering youngsters.[347]

SACCW and UCWOS played the largest role in Shanghai's child welfare work during the following years, but other organizations emerged as well. After workers in various nurseries across the city met at one of SACCW's meetings, they decided to form an association specifically focused on the needs of creches; thus, the Shanghai Child-Care Union (上海市托兒

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[343] SMA Q6-9-134, 7-8.

[344] "Ertong fuli tuanti zuo chengli lianyi hui" (Child Welfare Organizations Established a Mutual Aid Group Yesterday), *Da gong bao*, June 8, 1947, 5.

[345] SMA Q6-9-136, 10-12.

[346] "Yantao ertong fuli" (Studying and Discussing Child Welfare), *Da gong bao*, August 25, 1947, 4.

[347] SMA Q6-9-143, 2.

事業聯合會 Shanghaishi tuo'er shiye lianhehui) was born in September 1947.[348] The Child Welfare Workers Federation of Shanghai (上海兒童福利工作人員聯誼會 Shanghai ertong fuli gongzuo renyuan lianyihui) registered with the Social Affairs Bureau that month as well.[349]

The founding of these various groups demonstrates that local leaders—both inside and outside the government—recognized the presence of significant child welfare problems in their city. To the extent that they could, they sought to take action and figure out ways to provide for children's health and welfare despite having limited resources at their disposal. But as the civil war ground on, parents and workers in the city's children's homes confronted a massive problem: how to keep children across Shanghai from starving to death.

Feed the Children

Those children who did find sanctuary in one of Shanghai's crowded orphanages were subject to the same shortages and deprivations that gripped other residents of the city. When Mayor Wu visited the public children's home at Caohejing in August 1948, the top complaint he heard was that the facility's 1,500 residents were "malnourished and sickly" (面黃肌瘦 *mianhuangjishou*),[350] and the Rose Orphanage (若瑟孤兒院 Ruose gu'eryuan) resorted to a charity bazaar to raise money when it faced a critical lack of funds and had a hundred orphaned girls in need of sustenance that year.[351] The directors of residential homes fought desperately for food and other necessary goods, in the face of shortages and hyperinflation that reduced the

[348] "Tuo'er shiye lianhehui chengli dahui zuo juxing" (Founding Meeting of Child-Care Union Held Yesterday), *Da gong bao*, September 14, 1947.

[349] SMA Q6-9-135.

[350] "Xiang qian yu nantong xunhua" (Admonishment to More than One Thousand Refugee Children), *Shenbao*, August 4, 1948, 4.

[351] SMA Q-6-9-148-48.

value of their monetary donations on a daily—and sometimes hourly—basis. This dire financial situation led many orphanage directors to seek donations in kind, beseeching government agencies and international aid organizations to contribute food to their institutions. Poor parents at home also looked to social relief agencies to help them feed their children by any means possible.

Milk powder (奶粉 *naifen*) was in particularly short supply, and various organizations (such as SACCW and the Red Cross) set up stations in districts across the city to distribute milk to children. This was not, however, simply a matter of "come and get it." Though the requirements for individual programs varied, they followed a general form. Parents first had to register their young ones (who had to be under a certain age—sometimes one *sui*, sometimes two) with the local milk distribution station in their district, after which the station sent a representative to inspect the family's home, presumably to affirm that they were indeed indigent and in need of assistance, as well as to confirm that they lived in that district. Children granted access to the free milk powder received a registration card to be presented at the station to demonstrate that they were eligible to receive it. There was a medical supervision element to the program as well, as children were examined by a physician before being enrolled and then weighed monthly afterward.[352] This formal process, of course, meant that children without parents to apply on their behalf, or children with parents who did not understand how to navigate the local bureaucracy, could not benefit from the availability of donated milk powder.

Due to the limited supply of milk powder, only a certain number of families could be helped at any given time. In March 1949, for example, one milk distribution station reported that

[352] "Er sui yi xia yinghai mianfei peiji naifen" (Free Milk Powder Allocated for Children under Two *Sui*), *Shenbao*, January 16, 1946, 5; "Mianfei naifen" (Free Milk Powder), *Shenbao*, May 7, 1946, 4; "Pin'er fuyin" (Glad Tidings for Poor Children), *Da gong bao*, February 28, 1947, 4.

it had capped the number of infants receiving milk at 300 per month, but the number of parents applying far exceeded that. Forty households were on a waiting list, having already been inspected and approved for receipt of milk powder, while another 30 had applied and were awaiting evaluation.[353]

Orphanages sought deliveries of milk powder from the Shanghai Children's Emergency Relief Committee (上海區兒童急救工作審議委員會 Shanghaiqu ertong jijiu gongzuo shenyi weiyuanhui, hereafter CERC[354]). Institution directors sent endless numbers of appeal letters to the committee, which detailed the number of children in the home, the poor conditions of the orphanage, and the need for milk powder to supplement the children's meager diets. In one representative example of such letters, the director of a home that housed women, children, and the elderly told the committee that his shelter contained 46 children who were unable to swallow regular food and badly needed milk for nutrition, but that due to limited resources (因限於經費 *yin xian yu jingfei*), the home was unable to purchase nutritious foods for the youths.[355] Similar stories came from home directors across the city, and the CERC responded as best it could.[356]

This situation was even more complicated for those administering relief to foreign refugees in Shanghai, who were not eligible for China-directed aid from international organizations. Though small in number, this group still had to be fed. In January 1949, the Executive Secretary of the local Co-ordinating Committee for Foreign Refugees wrote to his counterpart at a Chinese committee under the Bureau of Social Affairs asking for evaporated or

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[353] SMA Q112-1-28, 102.

[354] The CERC was the local branch of a national organization set up by the Guomindang government using money from the United Nations.

[355] SMA Q112-1-7-12.

[356] For numerous examples of appeal letters, see SMA Q112-1-7, SMA Q112-1-30-1.

powdered milk, as well as rice and lard, that he could distribute to the several hundred people assisted by the organization who were not considered true "refugees" by the United Nations and therefore could not benefit from UN assistance programs.[357] St. Tichon's Orphanage, a home for indigent White Russian children that had been founded in 1935, sheltered more than 60 stateless residents in 1947 and had to rely on donations for its support. In the face of spiraling inflation, the president of its appeal committee wrote in a fundraising letter, the orphanage required 1 million Chinese dollars a month to feed, clothe, and educate just one child—though he hastened to mitigate the impact of that figure by adding that this worked out to "less than US$.050 per child per day."[358]

Requests for assistance could run up against bureaucratic walls and regulations that changed frequently. The Fishery Rehabilitation Administration (FRA), run under the auspices of the UNRRA, responded in different ways at different times when approached for donations in the name of child welfare. In March 1947, T.T. Tsung, the manager of the FRA's Business Operation Division, ordered 10,000 catties of fish from one vessel delivered to four unnamed relief institutions in Shanghai; 11 months later, however, Tsung sent a letter to the director of the Good Shepherd Convent, a home for Chinese girls, informing her that the FRA had decided to cease its donations of fish and would therefore no longer be making a regular delivery to the convent as it had done during the previous several months.[359] The home's director appealed to General C.M. Chao, director of the FRA, and the two exchanged a string of letters. In the end, however, Chao

[357] SMA Q112-1-30-19.

[358] SMA Q6-9-151.

[359] SMA Q460-2-452, 1; SMA Q460-2-452, 33.

stood firm and Good Shepherd received no fish.[360] Father M. Arduino, who oversaw more than 300 Chinese boys residing in St. Joseph's Salesian Orphanage, received a similarly negative response in April 1948 when he appealed to the FRA for 100 catties of fish per week to feed the children at the home.[361] By the following April, only weeks before the People's Liberation Army would take Shanghai, the FRA's leadership had reversed its decision of the previous year. In internal memos, the directors of the administration agreed to set aside 500 catties of fish per month for distribution to Shanghai's charitable organizations, though they wished to limit their donations to "the better managed institutions for charitable welfare," a list of which someone at the FRA compiled.[362] The first donation, of 80 catties, went to Father Arduino at St. Joseph's Orphanage, who had again requested assistance from the administration.[363] General Chao suggested that the FRA not volunteer any donations until it was approached, and his associate director, Colonel R.B. Ennis, added that he thought publicity "was neither wise nor necessary."[364] Though Ennis did not explain the reasoning behind his suggestion, it seems likely that he recognized that with so much desperation among Shanghai residents, word that the FRA had fish to share would spark a run on the administration's supplies.

As this quick snapshot shows, by mid-1947, a number of different people and organizations were grappling with the question of how to provide for Shanghai's impoverished and homeless children. Plenty of people, both in Shanghai and around the world, did their best to help the wandering children of the city, who had been orphaned or abandoned and left to survive

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[360] SMA Q460-2-452, 25-26, 28, 32.

[361] SMA Q460-2-452, 22-23.

[362] SMA Q460-2-452, 10, 15.

[363] SMA Q460-2-452, 10-11.

[364] SMA Q460-2-452, 10.

as best they could on the streets. The problem was far from ignored. But in the chaos of the civil war and in the face of a constantly growing refugee population, neither foreign organizations, nor Shanghai's municipal government, nor private child welfare institutions could keep up with the needs of all the city's vagrant children. While newspaper articles and appeals for donations could serve to bring the issue to the attention of some in the city, the plight of wandering children grew much more visible in the second half of 1947, as Zhang Leping's *Wandering Life of Sanmao* comic strip reached an audience ranging from small children to the widow of the Republic of China's legendary founder.

THE WANDERING LIFE OF SANMAO

Zhang Leping did not develop the Sanmao character specifically for the *Wandering Life* comic strip in 1947.[365] Zhang had begun drawing *Sanmao* cartoons in 1935, about a decade after he moved to Shanghai from his rural hometown in Zhejiang Province to work as an artist. In the first iteration of the *Sanmao* cartoons, the little boy with three hairs (*san mao*) was a mischievous child who often found himself befuddled by the strange actions of adults around him. These lighthearted comics ran in Shanghai newspapers for two years, until Zhang left the city when war broke out with the Japanese. He spent the next eight years traveling around China with a cartoonists' propaganda troupe (漫畫宣傳隊 *manhua xuanchuan dui*), then returned to Shanghai and set about drawing his second major *Sanmao* collection, *Sanmao Follows the Army* (三毛從軍記 *Sanmao cong jun ji*), published serially in 1945–46. While some of Zhang's prewar work

[365] For previous English-language scholarship on the *Sanmao* cartoons, see Mary Ann Farquhar, "*Sanmao*: Classic Cartoons and Chinese Popular Culture," in John A. Lent, ed., *Asian Popular Culture* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1995): 139-158; Barbara Rosen et al., "The Wandering Life of Sanmao," *Children's Literature* 15 (1987): 120-138. The most complete biography of Zhang Leping to date, which covers his creation of all the *Sanmao* comics, is *Bai nian Leping*, though the book was written by employees of the Zhang Leping Memorial Hall in his hometown of Haiyan, Zhejiang Province, and therefore might not offer the most objective version of his life story.

had included elements of social critique, *Sanmao Follows the Army* demonstrated that his brush grew sharper during the war; Zhang's use of cartoons as a tool of social activism would reach its full expression in *Wandering Life*. *Sanmao Follows the Army* shows the character (still a young boy, nearly identical in appearance to his 1935 incarnation) as a lowly recruit in the Chinese army, subject to the whims and exploitation of the corrupt and indifferent senior officers. Based on Zhang's observations as he followed the army during the war years, the collection retains some of the humor of the prewar *Sanmao*, but, as Mary Ann Farquhar notes, "it has a bitter edge; the situations are often funny, but it is clear that Sanmao is at the bottom of the pecking order and is, indeed, cannon fodder."[366]

Back in Shanghai, Zhang saw the plight of wandering children in his city and spent time talking with them to get a sense of the difficulties they faced. Taking up his brush, he set about drawing a new serialized *Sanmao* story, which the *Da gong bao* began publishing in mid-June 1947. *The Wandering Life of Sanmao* initially appeared on the general news page at the front of the paper; after Sanmao reached Shanghai from the rural home he had fled, however, the *Da gong bao* moved the daily *Wandering Life* offering to the paper's Shanghai news page. Here, it could reach any adult reading about events in the city. But like his previous *Sanmao* comics, Zhang drew *Wandering Life* without any text, seeking to make the story accessible to anyone—literate or not, old or young—who viewed the cartoons.[367]

Wandering Life consists of nearly 260 individual panels, usually featuring four pictures each, which are broken down into shorter story arcs following Sanmao (again, still a child of

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[366] Farquhar, "*Sanmao*," 150.

[367] Though each day's panel was published with a four-character title that summarized the main point of the panel, it is still possible to get an accurate idea of the storyline without reading any of the titles.

perhaps six or seven years) through his trials and tribulations in Shanghai.[368] He begins alone in the countryside, where his parents have died, and soon decides to try his luck in Shanghai, a city he imagines as the promised land of never-emptying rice bowls. Upon arriving in the metropolis, however, Sanmao finds—as thousands of others before him have—that conditions in Shanghai are only a slight improvement over those in the countryside, and riots have broken out over rice shortages (Figure 4.2).

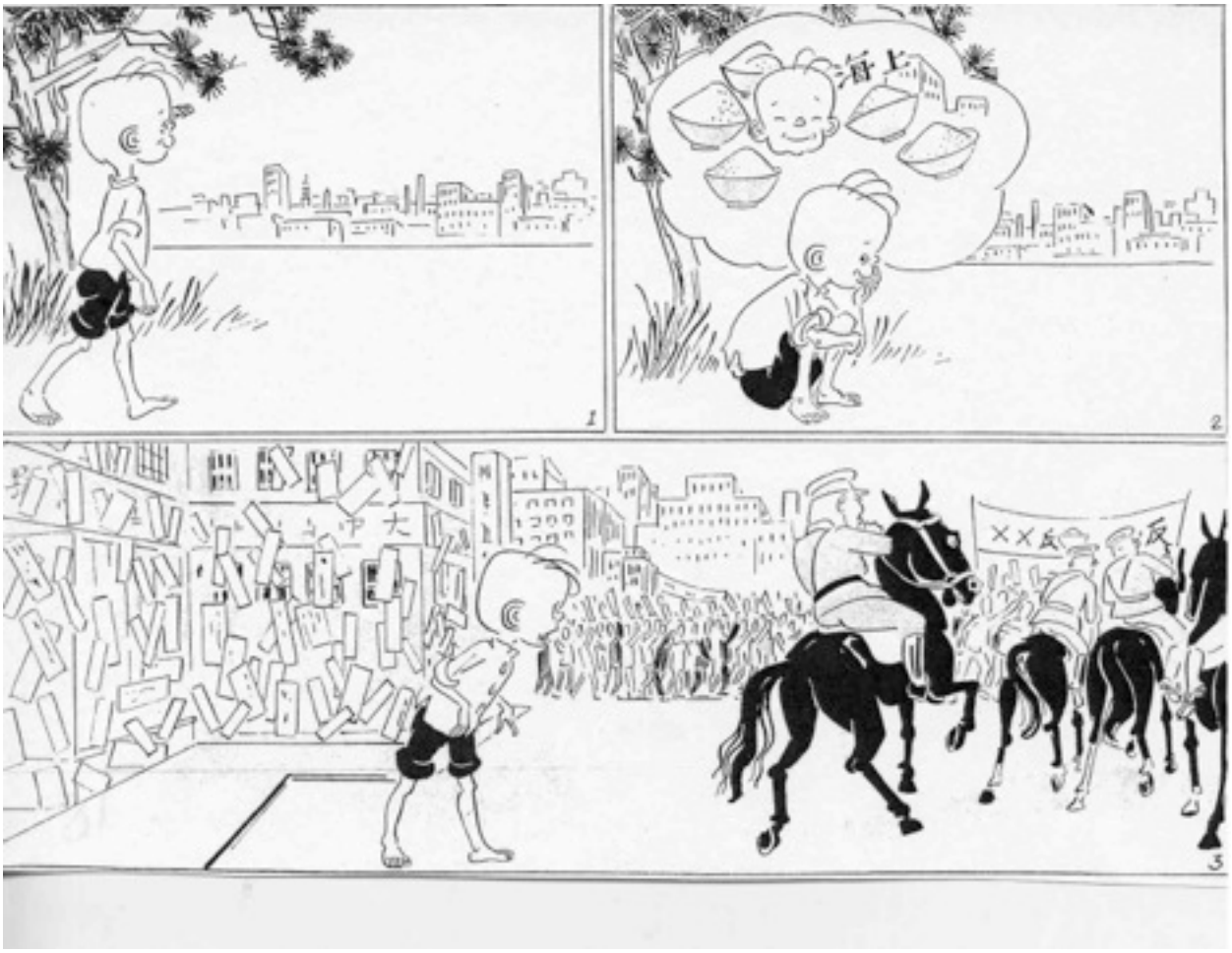

Figure 4.2: Sanmao approaches Shanghai with dreams of rice dancing in his head, but finds food shortages and riots when he arrives in the city. Source: *The Wandering Life of Sanmao*.

[368] All of the *Wandering Life* descriptions that follow are based on Zhang Leping, *Sanmao liulang ji* (The Wandering Life of Sanmao) (Shanghai: Shaonian ertong chubanshe, 2011).

Sanmao joins the ranks of Shanghai's homeless, at first sleeping in a wheelbarrow before its owner reclaims it, then drifting from one temporary refuge to another. He encounters all sorts of people, whose attitudes range from indifferent to predatory. Zhang reserved his harshest treatment for the upper-class and Westernized Chinese in Shanghai who looked down on and mistreated the city's wandering children; there is nothing worse, his drawings suggest, than a lack of sympathy toward children, who bear no responsibility for their suffering.

Many of the *Wandering Life* panels examine the survival practices of Shanghai's impoverished classes, such as parents who sell their offspring and wandering youth who perform odd jobs for small amounts of cash. Sanmao tries his hand at everything, but his money-making ventures generally come to nothing. There are too many forces working against him: policemen who run him off when he tries to set up shop; other vagrant children who compete with him for work; thieves and con men who erode any gains Sanmao manages to eke out.

But this is not to say that Sanmao sees no kindness from strangers. Indeed, Zhang repeatedly emphasizes that those most sympathetic to Sanmao's plight and most willing to assist him are the ones who have the least to give, and Sanmao feels a similar impulse. At one point in the story, for example, Sanmao has lucked into a full set of warm clothes (a rarity for him), and at first he luxuriates in his new acquisition. But upon seeing another child shivering in the cold, clad only in a pair of shorts, Sanmao decides to share his bounty and literally gives the boy the shirt off his back. In the final frame of the panel, two overweight adults swaddled in thick full-length fur coats sweep past the thin and barefoot children, indifferent to their plight (Figure 4.3). While Sanmao is quick to share what little he has with another child who shows even greater

need, those in the city's upper classes disdain to even acknowledge the existence of Shanghai's wandering youth.

Figure 4.3: Sanmao shares the shirt off his back. Source: *The Wandering Life of Sanmao*.

Over and over again, Zhang juxtaposed the lifestyles of Shanghai's haves and have-nots, depicting the upper classes as self-involved and cruel, while the urban poor were left to scramble for survival. Without text in his comics, Zhang employed extreme visual contradictions to express his anger at those who enjoyed comfortable lives without recognizing the needs of the impoverished. He also regularly showed the wealthy and powerful lavishing attention on inanimate objects and pets while ignoring Sanmao. This is the central conflict in what might be

Wandering Life's most famous panel, "Dogs are better than people" (Figure 4.4), which features a woman wearing a fur coat, muff, and headscarf as she walks her two sweater-clad dogs. At the edge of the frame, Sanmao clutches his arms to his chest in a feeble attempt to stay warm on a cold and bleak winter day. While one dog glances back at Sanmao, the woman herself spares him only a sideways glare, her mouth pursed tightly. She clearly has no intention of stopping to aid a needy child on the street. Such scenes were not unthinkable in Shanghai, as we can see from a 1949 photograph of a similar real-life encounter between a beggar child and well-dressed Shanghai women (Figure 4.5).

Figure 4.4: "Dogs are better than people," from *The Wandering Life of Sanmao*.

Figure 4.5: Child begging from women on the street in Shanghai, 1949. Source: Virtual Shanghai digital archive, Image 278.

From time to time, Zhang did include representations of the child welfare workers struggling to aid wandering children like Sanmao, though such efforts were generally impeded by the workers either being overwhelmed or clueless. A foreign Santa Claus, for example, offers Sanmao a toy tank and bugle, surprised when, as the cartoon's caption declares, Sanmao rebuffs his gifts and explains sorrowfully, "I want bread" (我要麵包 *Wo yao mianbao*). On another occasion, Sanmao attempts to commit himself to an orphanage, only to be turned away by the institution's director because the orphanage and its residents are being forced to move elsewhere.

As a caption for this installment of the comic strip, Zhang selected a four-character Chinese expression that summed up Sanmao's situation: "Unable even to fend for oneself" (自身難保 *zi shen nan bao*).

By drawing on real-life social problems that could be viewed on the streets of the city, Zhang's *Wandering Life of Sanmao* blurred the line between fact and fiction. Some young viewers of his cartoons believed *Wandering Life* to be the nonfiction account of the life of an actual boy in Shanghai, and the occasional breaks in the comic strip's appearance spurred some to write letters to Zhang such as this one:

> Dear Mr. Leping,
> I have not seen Sanmao for three days and I am really worried about him. Where has he gone? Has he starved or frozen to death after all or has he gone to school? Please tell me the truth. Yao Shuping (8 years)[369]

The presence of "real Sanmaos" on the streets of Shanghai reinforced the message of Zhang's comics: the city had a problem with child poverty that was being insufficiently addressed by both the government and private social service institutions. Even more troubling was the extreme indifference that Zhang saw as coming from Shanghai's upper classes; through his brush, we see the depiction of a group that observed the plight of the needy but did not feel called to address it, even though its members had the means to do so.

The Wandering Life of Sanmao appeared at a time when dissatisfaction with China's state of affairs was increasing, but so too were the GMD government's efforts to suppress criticism. As Chang-tai Hung has chronicled, this resulted in "a wide-spread, albeit uncoordinated, campaign by cartoonists to use their art as a weapon in attacking the government."[370] Like other

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[369] Quoted in Farquhar, "*Sanmao*," 149.

[370] Hung, "The Fuming Image," 123.

cartoon artists working in the civil war period, Zhang delivered a political message without directly attacking the Nationalists; he pointed out the inequality and injustices in Shanghai society, which served as an implicit indictment of Chiang Kai-shek and the GMD regime, but did not accuse the party by name. The fact that the *Sanmao* cartoons were allegedly for children (and they did have many young fans) offered Zhang an extra layer of protection from censorship that other cartoonists, such as Liao Bingxiong and Ding Cong, did not enjoy.[371] They are a prime example of how, as Hung writes, "A cartoon can mask a forceful intent behind an innocuous facade."[372]

The question of what effect Zhang's *Sanmao* cartoons really had on public opinion, however, is an impossible one to answer. Hung alleges that late-1940s cartoons had "a considerable impact" on the public and its views of the GMD government, but does not offer evidence to support this statement.[373] There was certainly widespread discontent with the Nationalist regime, and political cartoons encouraged discussion of the government's shortcomings. But figuring out their relative importance in pushing the CCP to victory—compared to, for example, the public's anger at the daily woes caused by hyperinflation—is a task that we cannot really attempt.

It is somewhat easier to talk about the "impact factor" of *The Wandering Life of Sanmao* if we look at how the central character became, and has remained, a symbol of China's poverty and oppression before 1949. Using Sanmao as a mascot for CWF fund-raising enabled Song Qingling to capitalize on the character's popularity and package her fund-raising apparatus in a

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[371] Hung, "The Fuming Image," 140-141.

[372] Hung, "The Fuming Image," 124.

[373] Hung, "The Fuming Image," 138-139.

way that appealed to both children and adults. *Sanmao* cartoon collections, New Year's posters, and a movie soon followed, and by the early 1950s, the character was an entrenched part of the CCP's cultural sphere, as will be discussed in Chapter 5. Zhang's depiction of Sanmao's plight might not have had a direct effect on the lives of homeless children in Shanghai, but his cartoons put a face and a name (albeit both fictional) on the innumerable "Sanmaos" of the city.

Inadequacy in the provision of child welfare was among the many serious problems facing Shanghai in the late 1940s. Private charities and the municipal government did their best to address these issues, with the assistance of financial support from international organizations, but their efforts could not keep up with the growing population of homeless and malnourished children. After winning control of China in 1949, the CCP would point to the poor treatment of indigent children as a sign of the GMD's corruption and inhumanity, and this narrative quickly became part of the party's stock depiction of the "Old Society." But the situation on the ground was more complicated, and though the government might have fallen short, there were plenty of child advocacy workers in Shanghai trying to alleviate the plight of the city's poor children. As the years of war dragged on, however, persistent shortages in money and other resources prevented aid workers and organizations from making any real progress in their fight to improve the lives of Shanghai's "Sanmaos."

CHAPTER 5

CHILD WELFARE IN EARLY PRC SHANGHAI

Little friends: perhaps you still remember that before Shanghai was liberated, on the street there was always a group of children who begged for food, who ate cold *zhou* and cold rice, and who slept outdoors? However, [among those children] now running around the streets, you wouldn't be able to find even a single one of this type of pitiful child. So where exactly did they all go?

Before, not long after Shanghai was liberated, the People's Government became concerned about this group of wandering children living on the streets and expended a great deal of energy to round them up from every single street and send them to the Caohejing children's home; by the spring of 1950, the home had already received more than 500 children. These children were destroyed and abandoned by the Old Society; luckily, they are growing up during the era of Mao Zedong, which has ended their wandering lives.[374]

A New Life for Wandering Children (流浪兒童的新生 *Liulang ertong de xin sheng*), published in 1952, introduced young readers to an idealized version of the post-1949 lives of Shanghai's abandoned children. The book describes a pre-1949 "Old Society" (舊社會 *jiu shehui*) in which wandering children were left to fend for themselves, often vulnerable to exploitation and likely to develop bad behaviors such as stealing. In the New China, however, their lives have changed completely: *New Life* explains that after Liberation (解放 *jiefang*), Shanghai city authorities rounded up all the homeless and abandoned children they could find and first took them to a group home within the city limits. After a short period of labor and study, the government had moved the children to a new settlement in northern Jiangsu Province (an area known as 蘇北 Subei), where they now reside in a children's home designed to address their every need. Most of the book is devoted to celebrating the "comfortable and regulated life" (舒適而有規律的生活 *shushi er you guilü de shenghuo*) that these former wandering children now

[374] Wang Xiaoshi and Chen Danxu, *Liulang ertong de xin sheng* (A New Life for Wandering Children) (Shanghai: Shanghai beixin shuju chubanshe, 1952), 5.

enjoy. At the Subei settlement, they attend school (many of them for the first time), labor on the farm surrounding the children's home, and engage in group leisure activities like playing basketball and singing revolutionary songs. Life in Subei is so pleasant, in fact, that two children who had been reunited with their families have chosen to return to the school. When asked why, the students respond "This place is better than home!" (這兒比家裏還好! *Zher bi jiali hai hao!*).[375]

The new CCP-led Shanghai government did seek to clear the city's streets of wandering children, as part of a broad campaign to clear China of "feudal" elements such as prostitutes, thieves, drug addicts, and vagrants,[376] and in the early spring of 1950, the government did move huge numbers of detainees to Subei, including thousands of children. In contrast to the idyllic scenario depicted in *New Life*, the Subei relocation program foundered due to a combination of cadre resistance (few wanted to leave Shanghai to administer the new settlement up north), inadequate facilities, and frequent runaways.[377] Children, of course, were less able than adults to resist the hand of the state.

New Life provides an example of the discourse that the CCP employed in speaking of the transformation that Liberation had wrought in the lives of the Chinese people. The book describes the erasure of the Old Society as nearly instantaneous; within the first year of communist rule, it suggests, the Shanghai leadership had solved the city's vagrant child problem

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[375] Wang and Chen, *Liulang ertong de xin sheng*, 17.

[376] Gail Hershatter describes the anti-prostitution campaign of the early 1950s in *Dangerous Pleasures: Prostitution and Modernity in Twentieth-Century Shanghai* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), Chapter 12; Aminda M. Smith examines Beijing's efforts to rid the city of its "dangerous classes" during the 1950s in *Thought Reform and China's Dangerous Classes*; see also Lu, *Street Criers*, 197-198. For an overview of post-Liberation CCP campaigns in Shanghai, see Frederic Wakeman, Jr., "'Cleanup': The New Order in Shanghai," in *Dilemmas of Victory: The Early Years of the People's Republic of China*, eds. Jeremy Brown and Paul G. Pickowicz (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 21-58.

[377] Chen, *Guilty of Indigence*, 219-221.

and firmly established a new path for former wandering children, who would henceforth be hard-working, disciplined, and productive members of society. Similar imagery was employed in an illustration published in the *Da gong bao* in October 1950, which contrasted a bald and emaciated child of the Old Society with a plump youth of the New, wearing a pair of overalls that proclaimed him a "little friend" (小朋友 *xiao pengyou*). Coincidentally—or perhaps not—the artist's name was given as Zhou Zuoren (周左人); a different middle character, but the same pronunciation as the intellectual and reformer of the 1920s who had taken such interest in children's welfare (Figure 5.1).

Figure 5.1: "New Society and Old Society." Source: *Da gong bao*, October 28, 1950, 8.

A similar rupture between the past and present appears in the final scene of the movie version of *The Wandering Life of Sanmao*, which was released in late 1949 and extends the hero's adventures past the point where Zhang Leping's comic-strip version ends. While the cartoons concluded on an ambiguous note, leaving Sanmao's future uncertain, the movie's final scene reassures viewers that the communist victory will ensure a new life for Sanmao. As a parade snakes through the streets of Shanghai announcing Liberation, a dancer invites Sanmao and other vagrant children to leave their spot on the sidelines and join in the celebration. This is in contrast to an earlier scene, in which Sanmao and his friends had attempted to join a Boy Scout parade, only to be chased away and beaten for their participation. The message is clear: while the Old Society had rejected this group of homeless youths, the New China was welcoming them into its arms.[378]

In fact, it took the new Shanghai city government several years to consolidate its rule and successfully assume administration of social services like caring for family-less children. During the first years of the People's Republic, a period the CCP referred to as "New Democracy" (新民主主語 *xin minzhu zhuyi*), pre-Liberation institutions continued to operate, providing a crucial safety net in a city struggling to rebuild after more than a decade of war. Although this transition period might not have been ideologically ideal, it served the new government well: unlike in the early Soviet Union, where efforts to care for orphaned and abandoned children were hindered by

[378] *Sanmao liulang ji* (The Wandering Life of Sanmao), directed by Gong Yan and Ming Zhao (1949).

famine and economic crisis, the CCP was able to take over the child welfare system gradually as it transitioned from the civil war era into a period of state-building.[379]

Scholarly assessments of the New Democracy period vary: some view these years as a golden era of cooperation, hope, and possibility before the brutal political crackdowns of the Hundred Flowers Campaign/Anti-Rightist Movement and the unimaginable tragedy of the Great Leap Forward famine in the latter half of the decade.[380] Others, most recently Frank Dikötter, argue that Liberation itself was secured through violence and coercion, and that CCP rule had always included a brutal side.[381] Both strains of argument are borne out by the history of child welfare work in Shanghai, making it impossible, as Jeremy Brown and Paul Pickowicz write, "to provide a definitive answer to the question of whether the early 1950s represented a relatively peaceful 'honeymoon' or an ominous foreshadowing of disasters to come, a time of dashed promises and betrayed hopes."[382] What *is* evident in this story is that although the CCP leadership preferred to emphasize the break between the "Old Society" and the "New China," examining the history of child welfare institutions in Shanghai between 1949 and 1952 reveals how this was, more than anything else, a time of transition, rather than a dramatic rupture with the past.

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[379] As Alan M. Ball notes in his study of wandering children in the early Soviet Union, significant numbers of new homeless youth continued to enter cities there even after the worst of war and famine had ended in the early 1920s. In China, by contrast, the rate of child vagrancy in urban areas seems to have leveled off and then dropped relatively soon after the CCP took over. See Alan M. Ball, *And Now My Soul Is Hardened: Abandoned Children in Soviet Russia, 1918–1930* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 12-16. A comparative look at early Soviet and Chinese child welfare work, as well as a study of the Soviet involvement in designing the PRC child welfare system in the 1950s, are both important avenues of research that I intend to explore more in the future.

[380] For an overview of the New Democracy era, see Jeremy Brown and Paul G. Pickowicz, "The Early Years of the People's Republic of China: An Introduction," in *Dilemmas of Victory: The Early Years of the People's Republic of China*, eds. Jeremy Brown and Paul G. Pickowicz (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 1-18.

[381] Frank Dikötter, *The Tragedy of Liberation: A History of the Chinese Revolution, 1945–1957* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2013), ix-xiii.

[382] Brown and Pickowicz, "The Early Years," 8.

At the same time, larger geopolitical conflicts, particularly between the PRC and the United States, were affecting child welfare work in China, as foreign organizations increasingly found their efforts impeded by ideology both at home and abroad. Thus, this chapter begins with an overview of Sino-American relations in the New Democracy era, focusing on the effect that relationship had on child advocacy work in the PRC, before turning to a more specific discussion of the situation in Shanghai during the early years of CCP rule.

THE FIGHT FOR CHINA'S CHILDREN

Transnational Child Welfare Organizations in China, 1949–1951

International child welfare organizations did not vanish from mainland China on October 1, 1949. No one knew, after all, whether or not Mao Zedong's new government would survive; as long as the PRC leadership permitted them to stay, child welfare advocates would remain in the country.[383] In fact, Cold War politics made their work more urgent than ever: American politicians argued over who bore responsibility for having "lost China," and no one wanted to lose China's children as well. In the late 1940s, child-focused American aid agencies and private welfare organizations had turned their attention from Europe, which mostly seemed to be on the path toward postwar recovery, to Asia, where China was only the largest of the countries poised

[383] Though many foreigners did leave the mainland in advance of the communist victory, others remained in the PRC until the end of 1950 or later, waiting to see what changes the new regime might impose and whether or not accommodation with the CCP might be possible. Wasserstrom, *Global Shanghai*, Chapter 5. Daniel Bays observes that most Protestant missionaries remained in China throughout 1949 and '50, and many Chinese Christians who had gone overseas returned to their homeland. Though some looked to a future under CCP rule with a degree of unease, Bays writes, "many others were hopeful that some kind of Sino-foreign Protestant community could continue to exist under communism, and make a Christian contribution to the 'new China.'" Bays, *A New History of Christianity in China*, 149.

to turn communist.[384] Providing material aid to homeless and indigent youngsters in the PRC represented one means of fighting back the incursion of communist ideology among the country's youth.

In the United States, American child welfare organizations sought to publicize their work and ensure that potential donors were not frightened off by China's new communist government. In early 1950, the Foster Parents Plan for War Children announced that it would double the number of Chinese orphans under its care by the end of the year, adding that the PRC government was "enthusiastic" about the group's work in the country.[385] Several months later, two officers of the China Welfare Appeal published a Letter to the Editor in the *New York Times*, in which they detailed the ongoing work of the association, carried out in China with the assistance of Song Qingling, who had become a vice chairperson of the Central People's Government.[386] Very soon, however, impediments to such activities began to crop up on both sides of the Pacific, as the leadership of China's Children Fund quickly discovered.

China's Children Fund Leaves China

China's Children Fund, which had operated dozens of orphanages across the mainland during the war years, sought to continue its work under the new communist government. As the organization's founder, J. Calvitt Clarke, wrote in a letter to CCF donors several months after the

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[384] For a thorough history of post-WW2 American aid to children around the world and analysis of its relationship to Cold War politics, see Sara Michel Fieldston, "Bringing Up the World's Boys and Girls: American Child Welfare and Global Politics, 1945–1979" (PhD diss., Yale University, 2013), especially Chapter 3.

[385] "Foster Parents Plan to Enlarge Aid for War Orphans," *New York Times*, January 4, 1950, 32.

[386] Talitha Gerlach and Gerald I. Shapiro, "Aid for the Needy of China," *New York Times*, April 22, 1950, 14.

PRC's founding, however, the CCP did not pose the greatest initial impediment to its continued operations in China—Americans did:

> Frankly, a good many have just stopped giving. Their attitude is, "I'm not helping any child to be brought up a Communist." Actually, CCF orphanage children are not now Communists and are less likely to become Communists if they remain in our orphanages than if they are thrown out into the streets. Those thrown out will die in large numbers, while any that the Communist Government may save naturally will be taught Communism.[387]

Clarke contributed a lengthy column, "Can We Do Business With Communist China?", to the Winter 1949–50 issue of the CCF newsletter, in which he argued passionately for the necessity of ongoing aid to Chinese children. Reassuring his readers that the CCP government had not made any attempts to interfere in orphanage operations, he pleaded for funds to support CCF institutions, some of which, he wrote, were on the brink of closure due to the shortfall in donations.[388] A year later, the CCF orphanages remained open, but still suffered from insufficient financial support from American donors. "What About CCF Orphanages in Communist China?" a Winter 1950–51 newsletter headline asked. The unsigned article that followed declared in the plainest terms possible that the organization viewed its mission as serving the needy children of China, regardless of the country's government. "CCF is certainly not desirous of helping Communism in any way," the article's author wrote. "Nevertheless it is very definitely anxious to continue its fifty orphanages located in Communist China."[389]

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[387] J. Calvitt Clarke, appeal letter, January 12, 1950, YDS, Records of the China's Children Fund, 1943–1951, HR1083.

[388] J. Calvitt Clarke, "Can We Do Business With Communist China?", *China News* VII, no. 2 (Winter 1949–50), 1, 3-4, YDS, Records of the China's Children Fund, 1943–1951, HR1083.

[389] "What About CCF Orphanages in Communist China?", *China News* VIII, no. 1 (Winter 1950–51), 3-4, YDS, Records of the China's Children Fund, 1943–1951, HR1083.

CCF newsletters argued that abandoning its child welfare institutions in mainland China would only serve to push Chinese children into the arms of the CCP, which otherwise, the newsletters maintained, enjoyed only shallow support among the people. Victory in the Cold War would require that for at least a short period of time, American donors accept the seeming contradiction in supporting children living under a communist regime. Despite Clarke's pleas for both financial and moral support for CCF's efforts in the PRC, however, he found himself unable to persist in the new political environment, as CCF's conservative religious and political stances came under fire from Chinese authorities and the outbreak of the Korean War in June 1950 further strained U.S.-China relations. The American and Chinese governments threw up an additional roadblock in late December 1950, as each side froze the other's assets within its borders. Unable to move funds from one country to the other, CCF and other transnational child welfare organizations found themselves mired in logistical problems.[390]

Throughout January 1951, Clarke (writing from CCF headquarters in Virginia) exchanged a series of letters with V.J.R. Mills, CCF's director in Asia, debating how—or if—CCF would continue its work in China.[391] The biggest problem was moving money around: Clarke would have to get a dispensation from the U.S. State Department every time he wished to cable money to Mills in Hong Kong, swearing that the funds would not be relayed into

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[390] Bays, *A New History of Christianity in China*, 163. A Chinese CCF staff member in Shanghai who anticipated that foreign funds in China would be frozen in December 1950 moved quickly to disburse funds to the organization's orphanages, distributing $3,000 and leaving only $306 in CCF's bank account (presumably fearing that it he emptied it, the authorities would suspect him of embezzlement). Letter from V.J.R. Mills to J. Calvitt Clarke, January 29, 1951, CFI.

[391] Many thanks to Sara Fieldston for sharing with me her photographs of these letters after I was unable to view the originals during my visit to ChildFund International headquarters.

communist hands, directly or indirectly.[392] Even if Mills could then somehow manage to send money from Hong Kong to the PRC, however, Chinese authorities would not allow orphanages there to accept funds that had originated from the U.S.[393] Additionally, an injunction on mail between the PRC and United States meant that CCF children would not be able to send letters of thanks to their sponsors—a key element of the organization's public relations and fund-raising strategy.[394] But although the CCP made no secret of its disdain for foreign religious organizations, Mills reported to Clarke, the Chinese government would not permit any of the orphanages to close down or release their children onto the streets, presumably to prevent an influx of wandering children in Chinese cities.[395] The authorities were, however, forcing orphanage residents to participate in propaganda events like "Down with America" marches.[396] The situation was frustrating. "Some day I would like to tell some of those Communists in China what I think of them," Clarke fumed to Mills.[397]

For all of their back and forth, by both letter and telegram, it seems that both Mills and Clarke knew what their decision about CCF's work in the PRC would have to be—and also that the decision was not really theirs to make. Within a month of CCF's Chinese assets being frozen,

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[392] Letter from J. Calvitt Clarke to V.J.R. Mills, January 17, 1951, CFI. Six days later, Mills wrote to Clarke saying that CCF might be able to obtain a "Statutory Declaration" from the State Department, which would allow Clarke to send money to Hong Kong without having to go through the authorization process each time. Since Mills distributed money from the Hong Kong accounts to CCF orphanages elsewhere in Asia, some sort of financial transfer arrangement would have to be worked out, regardless of whether or not CCF continued its work in China. Letter from V.J.R. Mills to J. Calvitt Clarke, January 23, 1951, CFI.

[393] Letter from J. Calvitt Clarke to V.J.R. Mills, January 16, 1951, CFI. For more on the centrality of letters in the work of international child welfare organizations, see Fieldston, "Bringing Up the World's Boys and Girls," "A Note on Sources."

[394] Letter from J. Calvitt Clarke to V.J.R. Mills, January 11, 1951, CFI.

[395] Letters from V.J.R. Mills to J. Calvitt Clarke, January 10, 1951; January 12, 1951, CFI.

[396] Letter from V.J.R. Mills to J. Calvitt Clarke, January 2, 1951, CFI.

[397] Letter from J. Calvitt Clarke to V.J.R. Mills, January 11, 1951, CFI.

Clarke wrote to Mills that "for the time being we will just have to wipe ... all Communist China orphanages off the slate. Even if we could get money to them, it would probably cause them more trouble than good."[398] By the spring of 1951, CCF had withdrawn from its mainland orphanages, though it served many refugee children from the PRC in its Hong Kong facilities, and renamed itself the Christian Children's Fund.[399]

The CCF experience is one example of how in both China and the United States, public opinion and political battles combined to work against the continued presence of foreign child welfare advocates in the PRC. This was not a sudden break, but rather came about as a result of a sequence of events that unfolded as the 1950s got underway. American and Chinese troops squared off in Korea after war broke out in June 1950, contributing to a Red Scare that had begun creeping into American politics and society. As part of the "Resist America Aid Korea" (抗美援朝 *kang Mei yuan Chao*) campaign that it launched in early 1951, the CCP required charities to divest themselves of American involvement.[400] The government permitted charities run by Chinese Catholics to remain operational, but foreign Catholic workers increasingly found themselves targets of the regime as an anti-Catholic drive played out throughout the country in 1951.[401]

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[398] Letter from J. Calvitt Clarke to V.J.R. Mills, January 24, 1951, CFI.

[399] Even before it dropped "China" from its name, CCF had begun working in other Asian countries, such as Japan, Korea, and India, and it expanded its work to Africa and South America in the decades that followed. Now ChildFund International, the organization continues to support indigent children in dozens of countries around the world. For a general history of CCF, see Larry E. Tise, *A Book About Children: The World of Christian Children's Fund, 1938–1991* (Falls Church, VA: Hartland Publishing for the Christian Children's Fund, 1993).

[400] "China Assumes Control Of US Subsidized Bodies," *North-China Daily News*, January 1, 1951, 1; Nara Dillon, "New Democracy and the Demise of Private Charity in Shanghai," in *Dilemmas of Victory: The Early Years of the People's Republic of China*, eds. Jeremy Brown and Paul G. Pickowicz (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 89.

[401] Dillon, "New Democracy," 89.

The Anti-Catholic Campaign of 1951

The new PRC leadership did not eliminate religion from Chinese society, but it did seek to ensure that the government was firmly in control of it. In late 1950, the Chinese government began moving to exercise greater oversight over religious organizations in the country, launching the "Three-Self Patriotic Movement" (三自愛國運動 *San zi aiguo yundong*) to consolidate Protestant churches and eliminate foreign influence in Catholic churches.[402] Father Jin Luxian (金魯賢 1916–2013), a Chinese Jesuit priest who went on to spend 27 years in jail and then become the bishop of Shanghai after his release, looked back on the early 1950s and recalled that the government's directive was that "Religion had to separate itself from colonial control and should be taken in hand by the Chinese."[403] Catholics had to join Catholic Patriotic Association groups, while Chinese church leaders who opposed them found themselves subject to harassment by the authorities (later, many of them would be arrested as counter-revolutionaries). Foreign priests and nuns first lost their leadership positions in Chinese churches, then were either driven or expelled from the country.[404]

Catholic orphanages faced particular difficulties because they often took in sick and abandoned infants who had little chance of survival, and their high mortality rates were used as "evidence" by the CCP that foreign missionaries were killing Chinese babies.[405] In early March 1951, the *People's Daily* (人民日報 *Renmin ribao*) ran a front-page story detailing horrific

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[402] The "three-selfs" were self-government, self-support, and self-propagation (自治，自養，自傳 *zizhi, ziyang, zizhuan*). Self-governance posed a problem for Roman Catholics, who regard the Vatican as their religious authority. See Bays, *A New History of Christianity in China*, 159-160, 169-175.

[403] Jin Luxian, *The Memoirs of Jin Luxian, Volume One: Learning and Relearning, 1916–1982*, trans. William Hanbury-Tenison (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2012), 162.

[404] Jin, *Memoirs*, 162-168.

[405] Foreign-run Catholic orphanages had faced such accusations since the late nineteenth century, as discussed in Chapter 1 of this dissertation.

conditions that journalists allegedly found during a visit to Guangzhou's Holy Infant Crèche (聖嬰嬰兒園 Sheng ying ying'eryuan).[406] The article's author(s) reported that the five Canadian nuns who ran the facility were responsible for the deaths of over 2,000 children between the communist victory and early 1951. Additionally, the article recounted gruesome details about the institution's sickly orphans and the unhygienic conditions they lived in, while the nuns who operated it were said to reside in "richly decorated" quarters and appeared to observers as healthy and "full of vigor" (精神飽滿 *jingshen baoman*).[407] Two days later, the paper ran a story levying similar charges against nuns running two orphanages in Nanjing, again stressing the plight of the children and the indifference of the women in charge of their care.[408]

These articles marked the opening volleys in a public relations offensive against Catholic orphanages and foreign religious child advocacy workers that continued for the next several weeks. A March 12 front-page *People's Daily* cartoon proclaimed, "This is the 'charitable work' of imperialism!" (這就是帝國主義的'慈善事業'! *Zhe jiu shi diguo zhuyi de 'cishan shiye!'*); it showed a smiling nun accepting a plump child at the door of the Holy Infant Crèche, while

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[406] The Chinese name of the orphanage is inconsistent in the *People's Daily* articles cited here: sometimes it is referred to as the Sheng ying ying'eryuan or Sheng ying yingyuan, while other times its name is given as the Sheng ying yuyingyuan. Regardless of these minor inconsistencies, it is clear that all articles are referring to the same institution in Guangzhou, the Holy Infant Crèche, run by Les Soeurs missionnaires de L'Immaculée Conception (Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception).

[407] "Diguo zhuyi 'cishan shiye' zai wo guo zao xia tao tian zuixing!" (The "Charitable Work" of Imperialism Has Released a Torrent of Crime in Our Country!), *Renmin ribao*, March 7, 1951, 1. It is entirely possible that the sisters did enjoy a comfortable situation; Jin Luxian wrote that he later felt guilty when thinking of how he and his fellow priests lived in the early 1950s, "in comfortable rooms, drinking milk and eating steak," while knowing that their congregations were suffering under the government's anti-Catholic policies. Jin, *Memoirs*, 166.

[408] "Nanjing 'Sheng Xin Ertong Yuan,' 'Ci'ai Yuying Yuan' waiji xiunü canhai Zhongguo ertong" (At Nanjing's Sacred Heart Children's Home and Love Home, Foreign Nuns Slaughter Chinese Children), *Renmin ribao*, March 9, 1951, 3. The story about poor conditions at Nanjing's Sacred Heart Children's Home had first emerged in the spring of 1950, when one of its resident died from burns suffered (allegedly) due to lack of proper oversight by the home's caregivers. However, while that story appeared in newspapers and aroused a public outcry, it did not lead to a sustained anti-Catholic campaign led by the government, as would happen when the story resurfaced in 1951—a clear indication of how the leadership's stance toward foreign religion had changed in only a year. "Sheng xin tuo'ersuo tangsi ying'er" (Child Burned to Death at Sacred Heart Children's Home), *Da gong bao*, May 21, 1950, 2; "Bu duan cuican shoutuo ertong" (Continuously Destroying the Children It Was Entrusted With), *Da gong bao*, June 3, 1950, 2.

behind her, with her other hand, she deposited a skeletal corpse on a stack of infant bodies (Figure 5.2).[409]

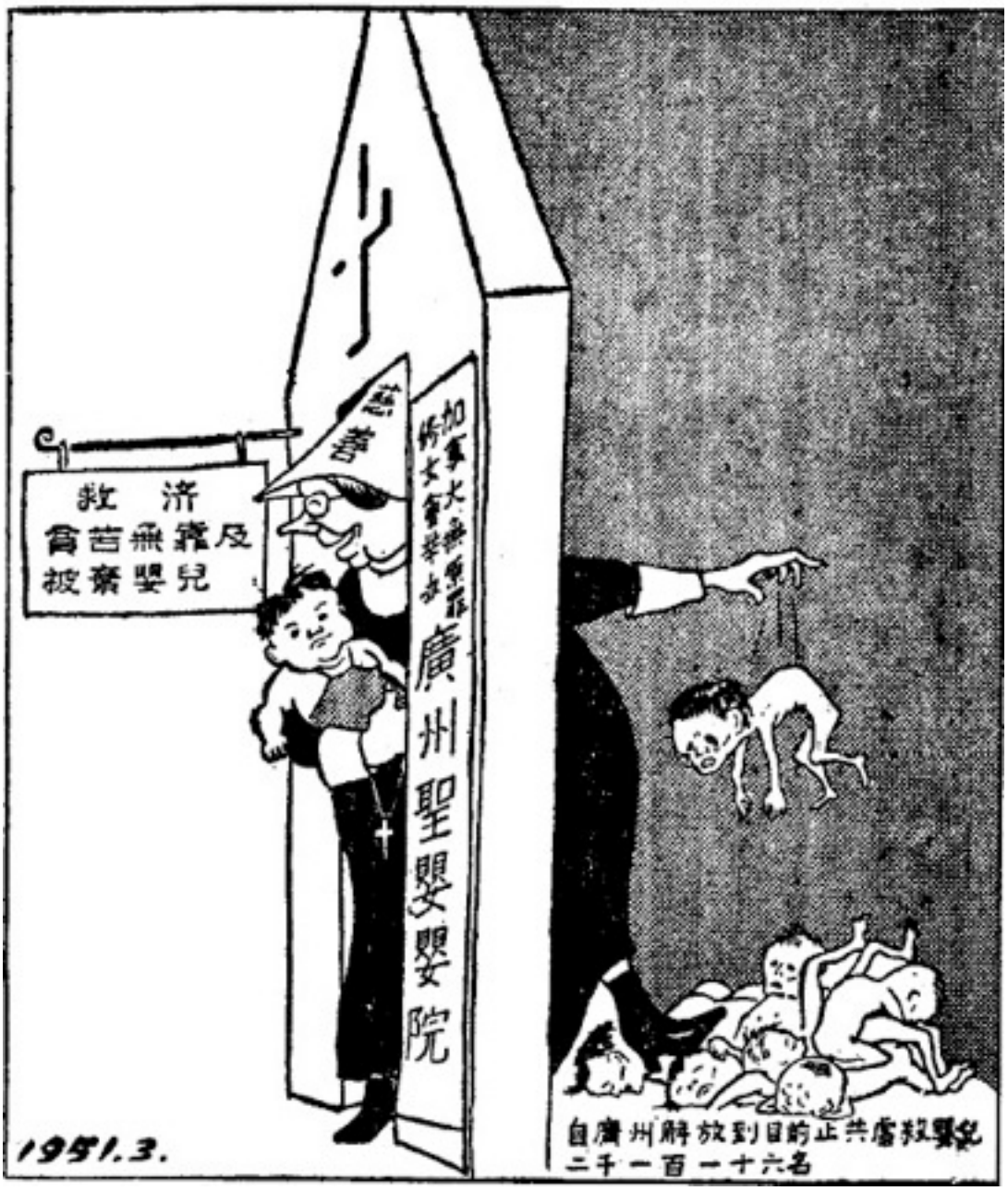

Figure 5.2: "This is the 'charitable work' of imperialism!" Source: *Renmin ribao*, March 12, 1951, 1.

[409] "Zhe jiu shi diguo zhuyi de 'cishan shiye'!" (This is the "charitable work" of imperialism!), *Renmin ribao*, March 12, 1951, 1.

The following day, the *People's Daily* published an article proclaiming that the stories from these orphanages had given rise to widespread anger among the Chinese people, who were allegedly signing petitions denouncing the atrocities that Catholic children's homes were said to have committed behind the façade of charity.[410] Later in March, the newspaper ran a series of Letters to the Editor recounting personal traumas related to Catholic orphanages: a former home resident described his or her painful upbringing in one, while a mother whose child had died in an orphanage related her grief at the young one's death and the coldness shown by nuns at the home.[411] A March 20 *Da gong bao* editorial called on Shanghai's Catholics to get their priorities straight: they were Chinese first, Catholics second. In the face of foreign imperialism and crimes committed against children, national ties had to come before religious ones: "Religious belief is free, but the freedom of religious belief cannot jeopardize the interests of the Chinese people" (宗教信仰是自由的，但宗教信仰的自由不能危害中國人民的利益 *zongjiao xinyang shi ziyou de, dan zongjiao xinyang de ziyou bu neng weihai Zhongguo renmin de liyi*), the editorialist lectured.[412]

Were any of these orphanage horror stories true? Their presence in the country's leading newspaper (and subsequent re-printings in papers like the *Da gong bao* and Shanghai's *Liberation Daily* [解放日報 *Jiefang ribao*]) renders the question of accuracy irrelevant: the government's objective was to stir up anger at foreign Catholic aid workers in the country, and the newspaper propaganda campaign served this purpose. As Chang-tai Hung writes of

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[410] "'Sheng Ying Ying Yuan,' deng shijian jiqi guangda qunzhong fennu" (Holy Infant Crèche and Other Incidents Arouse Widespread Public Anger), *Renmin ribao*, March 12, 1951, 1; "Investigation Into Canton Orphanage Urged," *North-China Daily News*, March 15, 1951, 1.

[411] "Baowei zuguo ke'ai de ertong" (Protect the Adorable Children of Our Homeland), *Renmin ribao*, March 21, 1951, 6.

[412] "Tianzhujiao renshi qi lai!" (Catholics, Stand Up!), *Da gong bao*, March 20, 1951, 2.

newspaper editorial cartoons in the 1950s, these visual statements "were designed primarily to project official viewpoints."[413] The same can be said about newspaper articles themselves, particularly those selected to appear on the front page, which emphasized their importance to the regime. Truth or falsehood were beside the point.

On March 23, 1951—Good Friday, the most solemn day of the Catholic calendar—the campaign entered the next stage, as authorities in Guangzhou announced that they had arrested the five nuns and charged them with murder.[414] This was only the first of several similar cases. In August of that year, two French priests and six nuns were convicted of murdering 13,000 Chinese children and subsequently deported from the mainland; the following month, the PRC government expelled a number of foreign Catholic priests and imprisoned several others, "all for alleged mistreatment of orphans."[415]

The government used these arrests and subsequent trials to educate the public in the correct ideological stance against foreign religious missionaries. The December 1951 trial of the five Immaculate Conception nuns in Guangzhou was held in the public square before the city's Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall, with a crowd of 6,000 watching, and broadcast on the radio. After the women were convicted, the judge ordered them marched through the city "so that all could

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[413] Chang-tai Hung, *Mao's New World: Political Culture in the Early People's Republic* (Ithaca, NY and London: Cornell University Press, 2011), 156.

[414] "Guangzhou Sheng Ying Yuying Yuan yi bei jiuji fenhui jieshou" (Guangzhou's Holy Infant Crèche Has Already Been Rescued, Branch [of Government] Has Accepted It), *Renmin ribao*, March 24, 1951, 1; "Nuns in China Accused of 2000 Orphan Deaths," *Los Angeles Times*, March 25, 1951, 23; "Canton Orphanage Taken Over: Five Nuns Held," *North-China Daily News*, March 26, 1951, 1.

[415] "Two French Priests Ordered Out of China," *Los Angeles Times*, August 17, 1951, 14; "Red China Jails Priests," *New York Times*, September 8, 1951, 2.

'recognize their vicious features.'"[416] Two of the nuns were sentenced to five years' imprisonment, while the other three were deported from the PRC in February 1952. Several days later, the three nuns who had been deported described to foreign reporters how after their conviction, they "were paraded through Canton's streets and stoned and spat upon by inflamed crowds" before their eventual expulsion from the country.[417] Such government actions, and the public outrage they encouraged, soon made it impossible for foreign Catholic aid workers to continue their missions in the PRC, and also served to further turn foreigners against the country's new CCP-led government.

These anti-Catholic actions were part of a much broader anti-American and anti-foreign-influence campaign that the Korean War had sparked. Examining the claims made against Catholic child advocacy workers reveals the specific fears that the PRC government fanned among its population. Reports that foreign Catholics desired the extermination of Chinese children invited a clear parallel with actions of Japanese soldiers during the Second Sino-Japanese War. Just as American observers worried that communist governments were brainwashing the children under their control (discussed further below), one *People's Daily* letter writer recounted stories of Chinese youngsters who had been raised as "little Americans" within the walls of their Beijing orphanage, unable to sing the Chinese national anthem when asked and unaware that Chiang Kai-shek was no longer in control of the mainland.[418] Articles and Letters to

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[416] "Reds Sentence Canadian Nuns as Mob Howls," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, December 3, 1951, B1; Harrison, "'A Penny for the Little Chinese,'" 90-91; "China Deports 3 Nuns," *New York Times*, February 29, 1952, 2. Though both the *Tribune* and *Times* stories identify the institution run by the nuns as the Sacred Heart Orphanage, all of the other details in the stories, including the number of children allegedly killed (2,116), match up with Chinese reports about the Holy Infant Crèche.

[417] "Nuns in China Tell of Orphan Deaths," *New York Times,* March 9, 1952, 3.

[418] "Baowei zuguo ke'ai de ertong"

the Editor about Catholic orphanages invariably invoked the word "imperialism" (帝國主義 *diguo zhuyi*) when discussing child welfare work, and the notion that foreign agents were trying to colonize the minds of Chinese youths under their care seems to have been especially threatening. The fact that these actions were carried out in the name of charity made for an even more effective propaganda campaign. But it is possible that the CCP needn't have worked so hard to push foreign child aid workers out of the country: in the United States, at least, government actions and public sentiment were making it safer to dissolve ties with organizations in states under communist control.

McCarthyism and Child Welfare Work in China

In the United States, the Red Scare and the cloud of McCarthyism rendered Americans wary of forming any connection with those living under communist rule abroad, even children in desperate need of funds. Programs that fostered building bridges across national borders could, in the heat of the Cold War, just as easily be accused of disloyalty and a lack of patriotism. Organizations including the Girl Scouts and the Foster Parents Plan for War Children found themselves forced to defend their work with children overseas.[419] None of these groups was ever formally investigated, but their promotion of international friendship and assistance made them suspect in a time of heightened fear.

Though China and the United States had been wartime allies, previous aid work in the country could now become cause for suspicion. When Dr. Philip C. Jessup, a prominent diplomat with extensive China experience, was nominated by President Truman in 1951 to serve in the

[419] Fieldston, "Bringing Up the World's Boys and Girls," 144-151.

American delegation to the United Nations and came up for confirmation before a Senate subcommittee, Joseph McCarthy grilled him at length.[420] One of the Wisconsin senator's charges against Jessup was that his wife had formerly served on the board of directors of the China Aid Council and worked with Song Qingling on the American Committee for Chinese War Orphans, which had combined with the council. In 1942, a House of Representatives committee had labeled the China Aid Council a communist front; though Mrs. Jessup had not been active in the organization since 1941, her previous connection with Song, by 1951 a high-profile PRC figure, posed problems for her husband. McCarthy did concede that "it is very possible and very easy for well-meaning people to lend their names to a high-sounding organization" like the American Committee for Chinese War Orphans,[421] his statement implying that communist agents might capitalize on foreign sympathy for needy Chinese children to advance their political cause, but he continued to grill Jessup about his wife's activities. Most on the subcommittee appeared to consider the charge a weak one, several of them commenting that they didn't know which causes their own wives were involved in, and wouldn't want to be held accountable for them. The Senate found McCarthy's other charges against Jessup convincing enough, however, to deny his appointment.

"Communism's Child Hostages"

Yet while individuals who had direct contact with PRC nationals fell under suspicion of being communist sympathizers, there was simultaneously a broader concern for the bodies,

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[420] William S. White, "Jessup Denies Any Red Ties, Calls McCarthy Charges False," *New York Times,* October 4, 1951, 1.

[421] *Nomination of Philip C. Jessup: Hearing Before a Subcommittee of the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, Eighty-second Congress, First Session, October 3, 1951,* 82nd Cong. 73 (1951) (testimony about the Foreign Policy Association).

minds, and souls of "Communism's Child Hostages," as a *Saturday Evening Post* article styled them, around the world.[422] Anti-communists feared that the CCP and other communist parties would take advantage of the malleable minds of children and poison them against American values like freedom and democracy (just as Americans hoped to turn those same malleable minds against communism and repression). In countries recently devastated by war, providing children with much-needed material aid offered the communists an entry point into their lives that then made ideological work possible. "With every cup of milk," one journalist visiting Czechoslovakia wrote darkly, "the children are given their dose of Marx, Lenin and Stalin."[423] American publications printed stories describing how communist regimes separated children from their parents at a young age, placed them in state-run nurseries and kindergartens, and began a course of indoctrination so thorough that the youngsters would soon turn in their own parents for reactionary thinking.[424] Orphans and abandoned children who lived in state-run homes represented particularly fertile ground for indoctrination, since they had no parents to contradict or dilute the party's message.

But while American politicians and journalists were describing the fearsome armies of juvenile "automatons" that communist regimes were producing, the situation on the ground in Shanghai was far more chaotic. Time and time again, ideological goals would bump up against

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[422] Joseph Wechsberg, "Communism's Child Hostages," *Saturday Evening Post*, April 1, 1950, 28, 124-126.

[423] Wechsberg, "Communism's Child Hostages," 125.

[424] Wechsberg, "Communism's Child Hostages"; Frank Moraes, "China Visit Bares Robot Education Imposed by Reds, Indian Declares," *New York Times*, June 13, 1952, 4; Joseph Wechsberg, "They're Afraid of Their Own Children," *Saturday Evening Post*, April 18, 1953, 38-39, 132, 134, 137, 139; Gwen Morgan, "One Idea, Reds' Creed, Is Fed to Polish Child," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, June 2, 1954, 15; P.K. Padmanabhan, "Red China's Children Brain-washed Early," *Los Angeles Times*, August 10, 1960, A12.

the harsh realities of the post-civil war chaos that reigned in Shanghai.[425] As the city's new communist government moved to secure its hold on what had been the country's most globalized metropolis, assuming control over Shanghai's thousands of wandering children would prove an often slippery undertaking.

RESTORING ORDER IN SHANGHAI

The CCP's first task after it liberated Shanghai in May 1949 was to bring order to the city. It would not be easy, and most party cadres were unprepared to work in such a setting. Only two months earlier, Mao Zedong had announced that the "center of gravity" for the CCP's work would no longer be in rural areas, where the party had grown up, but rather in China's urban centers.[426] This shift in policy forced cadres whose primary experience was in the countryside to confront a new set of challenges as they learned what went into the running of a major city like Shanghai.[427]

Many of the new government's initial projects targeted infrastructure that had been destroyed during the war years: work teams repaved broken roads and restored public bus routes that had stopped operating, as others repaired electrical and telephone lines. The CCP also strove to catalogue, organize, and register everything and everyone it now ruled, from multi-national

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[425] A similar situation confounded Bolshevik reformers in the post-1917 Soviet Union, who often struggled to resolve the high ideological priority they gave to child welfare projects with the budgetary and logistical limitations of their fragile new state. See Lisa A. Kirschenbaum, *Small Comrades: Revolutionizing Childhood in Soviet Russia, 1917–1932* (New York: RoutledgeFalmer, 2001), 52.

[426] Mao Zedong, "Report to the Second Plenary Session of the Seventh Central Committee of the Communist Party of China," (March 5, 1949), available at https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-4/mswv4_58.htm (accessed June 27, 2014).

[427] For analysis of the shift from rural to urban mobilization and the challenges it posed for the CCP, see James Z. Gao, *The Communist Takeover of Hangzhou: The Transformation of City and Cadre, 1949–1954* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004).

foreign businesses to street peddlers, automobiles to dogs. Thousands of people received inoculations against potentially epidemic diseases as a result of public health drives, and in the first weeks of 1950, municipal leaders urged Shanghai residents to literally get their houses in order, sponsoring a city-wide cleanup campaign that sought to clear the streets of refuse. It would prove somewhat more difficult, however, to remove the thousands of refugees and homeless, many of them children, who continued to live on city sidewalks in the months after Liberation.

To a certain degree, the new government's solution to this problem was simply to move people out of the city. This was accomplished through a massive "repatriation" of refugees to their home provinces (mostly Anhui and Jiangsu), which was meant to perform the double duty of increasing production in the countryside and alleviating some of the pressure on Shanghai's services and resources.[428] With nearby provinces still devastated by the civil war, however, as well as floods and famine, Shanghai's leadership often found that new refugees were arriving as quickly as existing ones were being ushered onto trains. And many of the urban poor had no home province to return to, forcing the city government to turn to different tactics.

With the arrival of cold weather in November 1949, the authorities had the perfect pretext for a roundup of beggars and vagrants; over the following months, several thousand people—hundreds of children among them—were moved from Shanghai's frozen streets into shelters overseen by the Winter Relief Committee (上海市冬令救濟委員會 Shanghaishi dongling jiuji

[428] Though some rural refugees might have decided to leave Shanghai on their own, the repatriation campaign is likely responsible for the dramatic decline in the city's population between December 1949 and January 15, 1950: Shanghai's population dropped by over 81,000 people during that brief period. Zou, *Jiu Shanghai renkou bianqian de yanjiu*, 90.

weiyuanhui, hereafter WRC).[429] The committee was a pre-Liberation institution, but its work in the winter of 1949–50 differed slightly from that of earlier years.[430] Inmates at the shelters were granted a place to sleep and one meal of rice porridge a day (all the WRC could afford to offer); in return, however, they had to attend evening political lectures.[431] The work of the WRC was also closely tied to that of the municipal committee in charge of sending refugees to the countryside, as the two organizations worked together throughout the winter to prepare for the forced exodus to Subei that would come in the spring.[432]

The 1949–50 Winter Relief Committee sought to draw on Shanghai's remaining foreign community for financial support, and also worked to differentiate itself from the WRCs of previous years. In a fundraising letter published in the *North-China Daily News* on February 10, 1950, two of the group's leaders assured readers that in contrast to earlier winter relief efforts, the post-Liberation WRC "is well planned, well organized, and it will be unquestionably well done." Relief would no longer be a "passive measure" comprised of providing food and shelter with no demands on the recipients; instead, the WRC was overseeing a "constructive programme" that worked to re-educate the beggars and thieves living in shelters in preparation

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[429] In addition to the general Winter Relief Committee, a special group focusing on providing aid and shelter to wandering children formed in mid-December, though there are few references to that group's work in the historical record. "Jiuji liulang ertong chengli gongzuo wei hui" ([Committee to Rescue] Wandering Children Establishes Working Group), *Jiefang ribao*, December 17, 1949, 2.

[430] The WRC was first formed in the 1930s, when it was composed of prominent Shanghai philanthropists. During the civil war years, the GMD took control of the WRC and appointed members based on political ties, rather than their experience in philanthropy. The Committee was returned to private control in the winter of 1949, as the GMD prepared to withdraw from Shanghai. Dillon, "The Politics of Philanthropy," 199-203.

[431] "Winter Relief Started in Fifteen Camps," *North-China Daily News*, January 24, 1950, 2.

[432] "Dongling jiuji weihui chengli" (Winter Relief Committee Founded), *Da gong bao*, December 30, 1949, 4.

for their resettlement in Subei, where they would have the tools to embark upon "a new, healthy, and useful life."[433] In Mao's New China, there was no place for idlers.

"Rescue the Sanmaos of the Street!"

Before the PRC was officially a month old, Song Qingling convened a meeting in Shanghai to rally children and child welfare advocates to the work of creating a New China for the country's youth.[434] The scope of child welfare work was broad: it included efforts to improve education, public health, and nutrition, as well as a drive to open creches that would enable women to leave their young ones in a safe environment so the mothers could join the workforce. In contrast to these long-term projects, the move to address Shanghai's wandering children problem was a short-term campaign that lasted little more than a year after the founding of the PRC.

Clearing the streets of wandering children was a project that had both political and emotional angles to it. While adult beggars were not necessarily sympathetic—as members of the *lumpenproletariat*, they lacked the proper political mindset and work ethic, and had to be reformed—vagrant children were mostly depicted as victims of the Old Society who needed to be saved by the government and the people of the New China. "Rescue the Sanmaos of the Street!" (救濟街頭三毛 *Jiuji jietou Sanmao*) proclaimed the headline on a two-part *Da gong bao* Letter to the Editor in late October 1949 (shortly after the *Wandering Life of Sanmao* movie hit theaters). Both letter writers lamented the presence of so many street children in Shanghai, which

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[433] Chun-liang Liu and Tisheng Yen, "An Appeal," *North-China Daily News*, February 10, 1950, 3.

[434] "Liang qian ertong shengli huishi" (Two Thousand Children Successfully Join Forces), *Da gong bao*, October 29, 1949, 4.

they both claimed represented an evil vestige (孽跡 *nieji*) of the years of Nationalist rule. During the GMD era, one writer asserted, homeless children had been simultaneously ignored and looked down upon, regarded as "filthy, smelly, and stupid" (髒，臭，愚蠢 *zang, chou, yuchun*). But, the writer stated, this disparaging attitude ignored the fact that many of the children were more intelligent and more gifted than others who did not live on the street. It was the responsibility of the new government and its citizens to recognize that wandering children would also be the future leaders of the PRC (流浪兒童也是我們中華人民共和國將來的一些人才 *liulang ertong ye shi women Zhonghua renmin gongheguo jianglai de yi xie rencai*) and to collect money to assist them. Using very similar language, the second letter-writer also invoked the notion of children as the future of the nation and called for Shanghai's citizens to put together a benefit performance (義演 *yiyan*) or similar fund-raising activity to save the children (拯救起來 *zhengjiu qi lai*).[435] In their clear-cut bifurcation of the recent past into an evil and soulless Old Society and a bright and promising New China, these letter-writers very much followed the party line regarding the divide between GMD and CCP rule.

By March 1950, thousands of juvenile delinquents and former wandering children were being moved to Subei. "The opportunity to leave the prison and participate in the project made the youthful prisoners break into frenzied rejoicing and started singing and yelling in the prison compound," the *North-China Daily News* reported when inmates of a juvenile detention center were sent to the province,[436] and the *Da gong bao* featured a lengthy article that reported the same, including a photograph of young boys singing as they prepared to leave the city.[437] A

[435] "Jiuji jietou Sanmao" (Rescue the Sanmaos of the Street!), *Da gong bao*, October 27, 1949, 6.

[436] "Prison Youths to Join in Farm Project," *North-China Daily News*, March 17, 1950, 2.

[437] "Ertong fan jiang fu Subei kenhuang" (Juvenile Offenders to Go to Subei Reclaimed Wasteland), *Da gong bao*, March 16, 1950, 4.

similar article several days later described the departure of over 1,200 former wandering children from the Caohejing Children's Home for Subei, cheerfully preparing their luggage, receiving a send-off from representatives of the People's Liberation Army, and marching through Shanghai on their way to the train station. Again, a photo accompanied the article, showing boys in padded jackets smiling and waving at the camera as they marched forward into their new lives.[438] Was the life they found in Subei really as rosy as the one depicted in *A New Life for Wandering Children*? Without firsthand accounts from the youngsters who embarked on this journey, unfortunately, it's impossible to say.

Despite these efforts, wandering children remained a problem into 1950. In anticipation of Children's Day (兒童節 *Ertong jie*)—moved to June 1 that year, to distinguish it from the pre-Liberation, Nationalist Children's Day of April 4—an editorial in the *North-China Daily News* lamented the continuing plight of Shanghai's indigent children. "The streets of Shanghai continue to show the sad sight of child beggars, in many cases apparently purposely exploited by parents or other adults for the purpose of gaining alms," the editorialist wrote before proceeding to argue for more health services and free schooling for poor children in the city.[439] The *Da gong bao* likewise admitted that the city's new government had addressed, but not solved, the wandering children problem: shortages in resources meant that "for the moment, [the government] is still not able to solve the problem completely" (一時還不能完全解決 *yishi hai bu neng wanquan jiejue*).[440]

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[438] "Di er pi kenhuang dui qu Subei" (The Second Group of the Wasteland Reclamation Corps Goes to Subei), *Da gong bao*, March 19, 1950, 4.

[439] "Children's Day," *North-China Daily News*, May 23, 1950, 3.

[440] "Guanxin kunku zhong de ertong" (Be Concerned about Children Undergoing Hardship), *Da gong bao*, June 2, 1950.

Even if child welfare problems were not being resolved all at once, such issues were certainly not going unaddressed: part of Shanghai's Children's Day celebrations included the opening of a receiving center for destitute children, run under the auspices of the Shanghai Production and Famine-Relief Association.[441] The new city authorities might not have been able to address child poverty and homelessness in one fell swoop, but they sought to chip away at the problem from multiple angles, while also continuing to permit the operation of foreign-run and private orphanages in Shanghai for the time being.

By the beginning of 1951, city authorities were proclaiming victory over the worst of the vagrancy problem. Comparing the number of corpses found on Shanghai's sidewalks during the first nine months of 1950 with those of previous years, a *Da gong bao* journalist named Chen Tianci (陳天賜) observed happily that the incidence of death on city streets had fallen dramatically. Chen wrote that the decline was due to the government's opening of winter shelters, though the authorities' determination to sweep Shanghai's sidewalks clear of beggars and vagrants surely played a greater role. Two of the organizations that collected corpses for burial reported that in the first 13 days of January 1951, they had picked up a total of only 19 bodies—a remarkable contrast with the civil war years, when finding over 100 corpses in a single night was not unheard of. Winter, which had been a season of death and despair during the late 1940s, no longer seemed so fearsome. Chen knew who should get the credit: "This is entirely bestowed by the Communist Party!" (這全是共產黨賜予的！*Zhe quan shi Gongchandang ciyu de!*).[442]

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[441] "Linshi shourongzhan jintian chengli" (Temporary Shelter Opens Today), *Da gong bao*, June 1, 1950, 4.

[442] Chen Tianci, "'Lu dao shi' da da jianshao le!" ("Corpses on the Street" Have Declined Greatly!), *Da gong bao*, January 15, 1951, 4.

Taking Control of Child Welfare Institutions

When Shanghai was liberated in May 1949, the orphanages and poor children's homes in the city numbered 32—all but one (affiliated with the public Shanghai Relief Home) under private control.[443] The majority of these institutions had a religious affiliation and relied on foreign donors for financial support. The homes' overseas ties certainly made them ripe targets for the CCP, but equally vexing to the new municipal government was surely the fragmented nature of child welfare work in the city. The piecemeal, often haphazard nature of child welfare work that had been characteristic in Republican Shanghai would not satisfy a Communist Party that sought to centralize everything under its oversight.

The institutions continued to operate under the new municipal government for a time, but by the spring of 1950, the Bureau of Civil Affairs (民政局 Minzheng ju) was moving to impose centralized control over the city's social services. In an undated report composed within several months of the PRC's founding, the Shanghai Child Welfare Work Committee (上海市兒童福利事業聯合會 Shanghaishi ertong fuli shiye lianhehui) decried the scattered (分散 *fensan*) nature of child welfare work and called for all the city's organizations to join together under the leadership of the government and the Democratic Women's Federation (民主婦女聯合會 Minzhu funü lianhehui) and move forward in a "planned and methodical" manner (有計劃有步驟 *you jihua you buzhou*).[444]

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[443] Fan Jingsi, ed., *Shanghai minzheng zhi* (Gazetteer of Shanghai Municipal Affairs) (Shanghai: Shanghai shehui kexue yuan chubanshe, 2000), 161. The public institution did not last long: its residents were sent to Subei in March 1950, and the home closed permanently in 1952.

[444] "Shanghaishi ertong fuli shiye lianhehui faqi ren xuanxin" (Shanghai Municipal Child Welfare Work Committee Declaration), SMA C45-2-4, 1.

Joining together with other institutions and accepting the government's guidance was anything but voluntary, especially for foreign-associated homes after the Korean War broke out. During the second half of 1950, the municipal government ordered the Shanghai branch of the China Relief Committee (中國救濟總會 Zhongguo jiuji zonghui) to conduct an investigation of all the child welfare institutions in the city and report back on the conditions found within. In June 1951, the government made its move, taking control of 16 foreign-subsidized children's homes; some were shut down entirely, while others were consolidated or turned into schools. By 1953, Shanghai authorities had successfully consolidated the city's 32 pre-Liberation children's homes into a single facility, the Shanghai Welfare League No. 1 Children's Home (上海市救濟分會第一兒童教養院 Shanghaishi jiuji fenhui di yi jiaoyangyuan), later simply the Shanghai Children's Home (上海市兒童教養院 Shanghaishi ertong jiaoyangyuan).[445] The city's four pre-Liberation foundling homes underwent a similar reorganization, as one was closed down and two others merged.[446]

In under two years, the Shanghai Municipal Government had dismantled the pre-Liberation child welfare system and eliminated all the elements that had characterized child welfare work in the city in the decades before 1949: its blended Sino-foreign nature, its often religious bent, and its position as an essentially private enterprise. Child welfare work in the city had certainly not been perfect pre-1949—it was too scattershot, and often too small in scale to have the impact that its leaders envisioned. But, despite the rhetoric employed by the CCP as it denounced the indifference of the Old Society, hundreds of people had done what they could to aid thousands of children, in an effort that has been largely forgotten in Shanghai today.

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[445] Fan, *Shanghai minzheng zhi*, 162.

[446] Fan, *Shanghai minzheng zhi*, 163.

ABANDONED BY SOCIETY, SAVED BY THE STATE

Like Shanghai's real-life wandering children, the beginning of the PRC era marked a turning point for Zhang Leping's fictional Sanmao. Sanmao had become an important symbol of pre-Liberation China's weakness and inferiority, and Zhang soon had to decide what his character's "new life" would look like. Others did not lack for opinions: at a May 1950 meeting of the Cartoonist Workers' Association (漫畫工作者聯誼會 Manhua gongzuozhe lianyihui), attendees suggested potential storylines for Zhang to consider. Sanmao should go to school; he should spend time on a farm and develop a love of labor; he should be shown struggling to understand the workings of the new society and gradually becoming accustomed to a world that did not ignore or denigrate him. Chen Bochui (陳伯吹), editor of *Xiao pengyou*, voiced an essential aspect of Sanmao's new adventures—one which likely could have gone unspoken—by reminding Zhang that "You want to put forward that the changes in Sanmao came about due to the loving care of the Communist Party and the People's Government" (要提出三毛的轉變是由於共產黨的人民政府的愛護 *Yao tichu Sanmao de zhuanbian shi youyu Gongchandang he renmin zhengfu de aihu*).[447]

Zhang published a number of Sanmao cartoons during the early 1950s that showed the young boy participating in the daily life and political campaigns of the New China. Sanmao denounced American imperialism in *Sanmao's Accusation* (三毛控訴 *Sanmao kongsu*, 1951) and recounted his bitter life pre-Liberation in a "speaking bitterness" campaign shown in *Sanmao*

[447] "Jiefang hou Sanmao zen yang zhuanbian?" (How Will Sanmao Change Post-Liberation?), *Da gong bao*, May 24, 1950, 4.

Stands Up (三毛翻身記 *Sanmao fanshen ji*, 1951).[448] In *Sanmao's Diary* (三毛日記 *Sanmao riji*), a collection that eventually spanned the years 1950 to 1965, Zhang showed Sanmao leaving behind the hard life of the streets and becoming just another Shanghai boy. Sanmao, once the embodiment of suffering, now faced typical childhood situations like learning to share and play well with others.[449]

Nowhere was the contrast between Sanmao's old life and his new one more explicit than in *Sanmao Today and Yesterday* (三毛今昔 *Sanmao jin xi*), a collection that Zhang Leping released in 1959 to coincide with the ten-year anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic. Each panel in the collection paired a scene from *Wandering Life* with a new picture Zhang had drawn that contrasted Sanmao's pre- and post-1949 lives. While "yesterday," one panel had shown a policeman chasing Sanmao out of a park for eating the bark off trees, for example, "today" Sanmao, a friend, and a policeman work together to water and care for the trees in their public parks (Figures 5.3 and 5.4). Sanmao no longer sleeps under newspapers or in wheelbarrows—he now wakes up in a proper bed, his head atop a fluffy pillow and body warmed by a thick quilt. Even Sanmao's appearance has been revolutionized from the frail orphan dressed in ragged clothing that marked the *Wandering Life* era: the PRC Sanmao wears a school uniform and Young Pioneer red bandanna around his neck, and his formerly emaciated frame has become stocky. By placing old and new cartoon panels side by side, Zhang emphasized the disparity between Sanmao's time as a wandering child on the streets of Shanghai and the comfortable life he now leads as a cared-for child in the New China.

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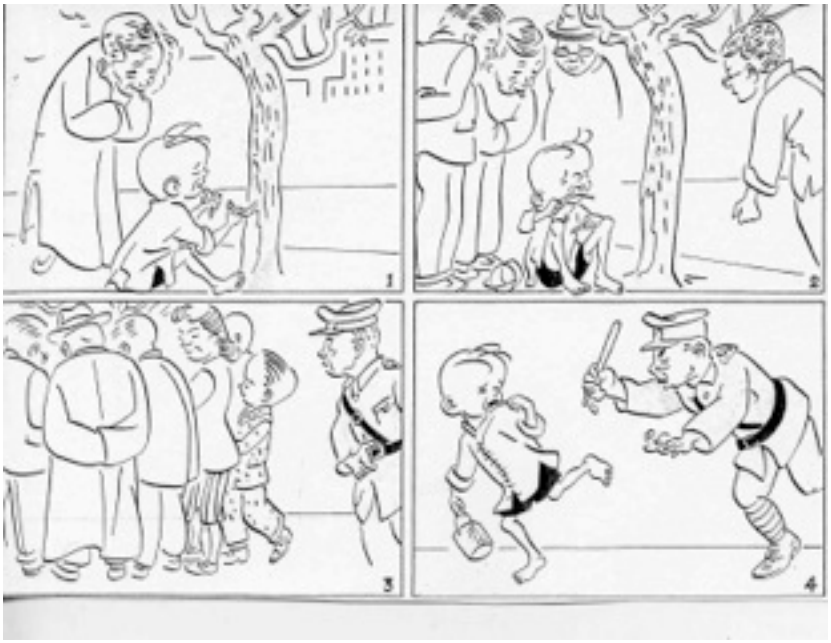
[448] Selections of both collections are included in Zhang Leping, *Sanmao jiefang ji* (Sanmao's Liberation) (Shanghai: Shaonian ertong chubanshe, 2005).

[449] Zhang Leping, *Sanmao xinsheng ji* (A New Life for Sanmao) (Shanghai: Shaonian ertong chubanshe, 2011).



Figures 5.3 and 5.4: Sanmao eats bark off trees in a public park to survive, only to be chased away by a policeman in *The Wandering Life of Sanmao* (1947–8). This cartoon is juxtaposed in *Sanmao Today and Yesterday* (1959) with a scene depicting him receiving assistance from a policeman as he and a friend care for a tree.

Such a before-and-after rhetorical device served as an important as a tool of ideological education among both adults and children. Thought-reform classes during the 1950s taught adults to narrate their own lives in a framework that drew a clear distinction between the harshness of the Old Society and the pleasures of the New. Through "speaking bitterness" (訴苦 *suku*) sessions, cadres encouraged their thought-reform students to develop and refine life stories that featured a before-and-after transformation similar to that depicted in *Sanmao Today and Yesterday*.[450] This transformation narrative was not an invention of the CCP: the Soviet Union had required party members to write political autobiographies in the 1930s, and the North Korean state did so as well after 1947. In both cases, the authors of autobiographies were expected (or learned that it was best) to use the writing of their stories as an opportunity to demonstrate their class consciousness, disdain for the old society, and appreciation for the new regime. While Soviet autobiographies tended to focus on class struggle, autobiographical forms in North Korea, as in Chinese speaking-bitterness sessions, focused on how personal and national liberation were intertwined. Assessing a number of North Korean autobiographies, historian Suzy Kim explains that

> self-professed "180 degree" ideological reforms were made into tangible narratives of transformation through national liberation as a dramatic marker that offered the possibility of a clear before and after, delineating without ambiguity. [...] narratives of liberation that effectively merged individual histories with the nation focused very specifically on the appropriation of national liberation as an occasion for personal liberation.[451]

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[450] Gail Hershatter, *The Gender of Memory: Rural Women and China's Collective Past* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011); Smith, *Thought Reform*, 122-124.

[451] Suzy Kim, *Everyday Life in the North Korean Revolution, 1945–1950* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013), 167.

Adults wrote or spoke their personal histories and mapped them onto an arc of national history that followed the general form of oppression, rising awareness of that oppression, enlightenment, struggle, and victory. Collectively, they formed the narrative of revolution.[452]

But children born around Liberation or after would have no memories of life before the Mao era, and therefore ideological education directed at youngsters had to take a different approach. Adults undergoing consciousness-raising were taught to speak in the declarative ("This is what my life *was like* before Liberation"), while children learned to think in the conditional ("This is what my life *could have been like*, if not for Liberation"). Simple pedagogical texts, like *A New Life for Wandering Children* and *Sanmao Today and Yesterday*, recounted the horrors of pre-1949 China, then described the measures the CCP had taken to address them, simplifying and smoothing out the process to eliminate any suggestion that things had not always gone as planned.

The black-and-white nature of these texts also meant that they overlooked any suggestion that groups other than the CCP had made any attempt to mitigate social problems in the years before 1949. The efforts of the GMD government, international child welfare organizations, and foreign missionaries to work on behalf of Shanghai's wandering children were written out of the story. Ideological education in the PRC required that youths view all accomplishments as coming from the CCP, led by Chairman Mao. There was no room for nuance or the acknowledgement of continued work by private welfare organizations after the founding of the PRC, even though such organizations had enabled the Shanghai government to ensure continued care for needy children through the first years of the new regime.

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[452] Suzy Kim offers an extensive analysis of the rhetorical devices and narrative structures used in autobiographies in Chapter 5 of *Everyday Life in the North Korean Revolution.*

Publications like these are illustrative of the new political culture that Chang-tai Hung argues the CCP worked to instill in the Chinese mind during the early years of the People's Republic. Propagandists working to mobilize support for the new regime, Hung writes, "saw the revolution in stark Manichaean terms of the exploited versus the exploiter, good versus evil, light versus darkness."[453] Mao had championed this division of the world into an "us versus them" framework in earlier writings, such as his 1926 "Analysis of the Classes in Chinese Society," which opened by asking the reader, "Who are our enemies? Who are our friends?"[454] There could be no one in between, a point that Mao reiterated in a June 1949 article, "On the People's Democratic Dictatorship": "all Chinese without exception must lean either to the side of imperialism or to the side of socialism. Sitting on the fence will not do, nor is there a third road."[455] In a corollary to this line of thinking, artists, writers, and other propagandists employed by state publishing houses (as Zhang Leping was) used their work to put forth a party-approved version of history, in which the counterrevolutionary-dominated pre-Liberation Old Society was inherently corrupt and exploitative, while the post-Liberation New China had swept away such problems. There was no third road.

Yet using the history of child welfare work in post-Liberation Shanghai shows us that there *was*, at least for a time, a third road, when the CCP permitted foreign aid workers to continue their activities and support the city's thousands of needy children. This might have grown out of simple pragmatism—cadres recognizing that they were unable to stage an

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[453] Hung, *Mao's New World*, 14.

[454] Mao Zedong, "Analysis of the Classes in Chinese Society" (1926), available at http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-1/mswv1_1.htm (accessed October 8, 2013).

[455] Mao Zedong, "On the People's Democratic Dictatorship" (1949), available at http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-4/mswv4_65.htm (accessed October 8, 2013).

immediate takeover of all social services. But it also sheds light on the flexibility of the very early PRC years, when policy had not yet been imprisoned by ideology and public goods were prioritized over political correctness.

CONCLUSION TO PART II

The outbreak of war with the Japanese in the summer of 1937 and the refugee crisis that this conflict sparked in Shanghai ushered in a new era in child welfare work. While pre-war child advocacy activities had been fairly scattershot and dependent on small groups of individuals (Chinese, foreign, or both) taking an interest in a specific problem, the war brought a coherence to child welfare work, as aid groups attempted to assist child refugees, war orphans, and wandering children. This approach continued into the civil war era.

In Shanghai, pre-1937 systems of delivering aid to children remained largely intact throughout the war years: the government played a subsidiary role, mainly serving to oversee and facilitate child welfare work, while private charities and residential institutions actually carried it out. Wandering children were a particularly visible group in need of assistance and aroused public sympathy, but also worried people who feared that a homeless child would grow into a parasitic adult. Programs to rescue homeless children from the streets sought to reform (感化) them, working to eliminate any criminal or idle tendencies they might have developed and seeking to turn them into productive and self-sufficient adults.

Foreign aid played a large role in Chinese child welfare during the Anti-Japanese War years, as American aid organizations mobilized financial support on behalf of Chinese war orphans. During the civil war era, as it became increasingly clear that Mao and the CCP would

win their fight against Chiang and the GMD, American support began to wane. Still, international aid organizations continued their work in China as long as they possibly could, only leaving the country in 1951–1952, when domestic Chinese sentiment and international anti-communist attitudes forced workers to return to their home countries.

In the late 1940s, Zhang Leping's *The Wandering Life of Sanmao* brought the plight of Shanghai's street children into the realm of popular culture and gave a face to the thousands of homeless youths in the city. After the CCP victory, Zhang turned his *Sanmao* cartoons into a tool of Party pedagogy, spreading the state's discourse of an immediate break between the Old Society and New China. Although the transformation was in fact achieved over years, not overnight, Zhang and other producers of popular culture helped encourage the Chinese public to regard Mao and the Party as having bestowed upon them a new life (新生 *xin sheng*) upon coming to power.

By 1953, the Shanghai Municipal Government had successfully closed all of the pre-Liberation child welfare institutions in the city, centralizing child aid work under government control. The dozens of children's homes that had been founded by Chinese and foreign philanthropists during the first decades of the twentieth century disappeared, and their residents' stories of life in the homes have gone almost entirely untold. With a growing scholarly interest in the history of childhood and of children's experiences, perhaps those stories will emerge in the coming years.

EPILOGUE:

CHILD WELFARE IN THE 21ST CENTURY

On the evening of November 15, 2012, five homeless boys between the ages of nine and 13 years old who were living on the streets in the Guizhou Province city of Bijie sought refuge from the cold. The boys apparently built a fire in a dumpster, then climbed inside to keep warm. But instead, they died, likely killed by carbon monoxide poisoning in the enclosed space.

After the boys' bodies were found on November 16 and news reports spread on November 18, Chinese online commentators quickly expressed their outrage at news of the deaths. Posts on the popular Weibo (微博 Chinese microblog) platforms lamented the indifference of contemporary Chinese society, many of them referencing Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tale "The Little Match Girl" (a story the CCP has long approved of and which is commonly read by Chinese schoolchildren), others criticizing corrupt officials who had grown rich while ignoring the plight of the poor. One Weibo post quoted the poet Du Fu (杜甫 712–770 CE): "Wine and meat rot behind vermilion gates while at the roadside people freeze to death" (朱門酒肉臭，路有凍死骨 *zhu men jiu rou chou, lu you dong si gu*). Another vented his anger with less literary language: "The tragedy of the old society reoccurs in the Socialist New China??? What do those local officials and party members do for a living? 'Serve the People,' damn bullshit!!!"[456]

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[456] News story and netizen reactions collected at "5 homeless children in SW China die from hiding in trash bin to get warm," Ministry of Tofu, November 19, 2012, available at http://www.ministryoftofu.com/2012/11/5-homeless-children-in-sw-china-die-from-hiding-in-trash-bin-to-get-warm/ (accessed November 20, 2012). See also Bernhard Zand, "Rest in Peace: The Dead Children of Guizhou," *Der Spiegel*, January 7, 2013, available at http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/reports-on-death-of-children-highlights-repression-of-journalists-in-china-a-876073.html (accessed August 5, 2014).

Figure E.1: “Sanmao Comes to the Dumpster to Avoid the Cold.”

One Weibo user connected the past and present in a different manner, posting a cartoon he had drawn in which four of the homeless children of Bijie cluster in and around the dumpster while Sanmao approaches their group (Figure E.1). Captioned “Sanmao comes to the dumpster to avoid the cold” (三毛來垃圾箱里避寒啊 *Sanmao lai laijixiang li bi han a*), the image shows three of the children as happy and welcoming, even playful, while Sanmao and the oldest boy have grim and uncertain expressions on their faces. Sanmao, as almost any Chinese adult would recall from *The Wandering Life of Sanmao* (still widely read by Chinese children), has been down this road before and knows that the life of a homeless child in China’s cities is not a happy

one. But there are few visible "Sanmaos" in China today—which is why the story of the boys of Bijie drew so much attention.

Today, foreigners visiting Shanghai for the first time will often remark on the lack of widespread poverty, the absence of slums, and the comparatively few beggars asking for change from passers-by. It's more likely, I have found during my years living in the city while researching and writing this dissertation, to spot a Rolls-Royce on any given day than a homeless or starving child begging for money or food. In contrast to the mega-slums in mega-cities like Mumbai and Rio de Janeiro, Shanghai appears to have largely solved the problem of urban poverty, despite the yawning divide between the haves and have-nots that concern both the Chinese government and social activists.

Predictably, there is more to Shanghai than what meets the eye, though conditions in China's largest metropolis are certainly better than those in other mega-cities around the globe. There are beggars on the sidewalks and in the subways, many of them disabled by illness or injury, but very few of those beggars are children.[457] Plenty of families, particularly migrant workers who come from poorer nearby provinces like Anhui, live in sub-standard housing that lacks indoor plumbing or electricity, generally in "urban villages" (城中村 *chengzhongcun*) that sit far from the wealthy city center. Migrant children, who do not possess a Shanghai *hukou* (戶口, household registration) that would permit them to enroll in local elementary schools, must attend makeshift "migrant schools" that suffer from uncertain funding, shortages of materials and personnel, and the constant threat of closure by the city.[458] Despite the improvements in living

[457] On the rare occasions when a beggar woman pleading for assistance brings along a youngster in her arms, potential donors will often react with cynicism, declaring that the heads of "beggar gangs" distribute children to panhandlers to evoke sympathy.

[458] See "Migrant Schools Closed in Chinese Capital," BBC, August 17, 2011, available at http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-pacific-14556906 (accessed August 6, 2014).

standards, life expectancy, and health that have been achieved during the six decades of CCP rule —and they are considerable—social welfare issues in general, and child welfare issues in particular, remain crucial areas that need to be addressed by the government.

It is more accurate, actually, to say that child welfare issues have "once again" emerged in urban China, rather than that they "remain" problems in need of government attention. For at least a brief period of time during the Mao era, it might have seemed that the CCP had accomplished what it had set out to do for Shanghai's youth. The city's streets were empty of wandering children; life expectancy and child mortality rates improved; public schools provided a basic education. As Zhang Leping drew in his post-1949 *Sanmao* comics, the government really was looking out for the children it ruled, although life was far from idyllic due to disruptions and, in the late 1950s, famine, caused by recurring political campaigns.

But in the post-Mao decades, a number of child-welfare issues have surfaced, worrying observers both inside and outside of the country. The promulgation of the One-Child Policy in 1979 resulted in large numbers of unwanted baby girls being abandoned by their parents, who hoped to try again for a son. That so many of these girls were adopted by foreigners, especially Americans, called the world's attention to "the lost daughters of China."[459] Since the early 1990s, demographers have also noticed that China is "missing" millions of girls, as parents who can only have one child decide to abort female fetuses due to a widespread preference for sons.[460] This practice has resulted in a skewed sex ratio that reached a peak of 121.2 boys for every 100 girls born in 2004; since then, the sex ratio has fallen, and it currently stands at just under 118

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[459] Karin Evans, *The Lost Daughters of China: Adopted Girls, Their Journey to America, and the Search for a Missing Past* (New York: Penguin, 2000).

[460] Amartya Sen, "More than 100 Million Women Are Missing," *New York Review of Books*, December 20, 1990, available at http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/1990/dec/20/more-than-100-million-women-are-missing/ (accessed August 5, 2014).

boys for every 100 girls born.[461] The full consequences of this imbalance are still a decade or two in the future, as today's boys grow into men and find a shortage of potential marriage partners.[462] Parents have also shown a reluctance to take on the care of children born with disabilities, which has led local governments to create "baby hatches," or sites where infants can be abandoned to government care.[463] And China's child protection system is severely under-developed and reluctant to intervene in issues that are considered family affairs, such as allegations of child abuse.[464]

For the most part, the Sanmaos of today's China don't live in Shanghai; like the five boys of Bijie, they are the "left-behind children" (留守兒童 *liushou ertong*) of migrant workers. An estimated 61 million children live in small interior cities and the countryside with their grandparents, aunts/uncles, or other kin while their mothers and fathers find employment along the coast. These youngsters often have a distant emotional relationship with their parents, whom they see only once or twice a year, and cannot necessarily look to elderly relations for advice or assistance with things like schoolwork.[465] Observers worry that left-behind children lack access to developmental and educational opportunities, and that they are not properly cultivating their

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[461] Christina Larson, "In China, More Girls Are on the Way," Bloomberg Businessweek, July 31, 2014, available at http://www.businessweek.com/articles/2014-07-31/chinas-girl-births-ratio-improves-as-country-gets-more-educated (accessed August 5, 2014).

[462] Mara Hvistendahl, *Unnatural Selection: Choosing Boys over Girls and the Consequences of a World Full of Men* (PublicAffairs, 2011).

[463] "China Expands Abandoned Baby Hatch Scheme," BBC, February 16, 2014, available at http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-26219171 (accessed August 5, 2014); "China 'Baby Hatch' Inundated with Abandoned, Disabled Children," CNN, June 30, 2014, available at http://www.cnn.com/2014/06/30/world/asia/china-baby-hatches-jinan/ (accessed August 5, 2014).

[464] Tania Branigan, "Baby 59 Case Highlights Shortcomings of Child Protection System in China," *The Guardian*, May 31, 2013, available at http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/may/31/baby-59-child-protection-china (accessed August 6, 2014).

[465] *Last Train Home*, directed by Lixin Fan (2009); *China Voices* (Hong Kong: Oxfam Hong Kong, 2010), Chapter 5.

"inner quality" (素質 *suzhi*), a concern that echoes those of early twentieth-century reformers who despaired that the Chinese were not as civilized as people in Japan or the West. Even more worrisome, left-behind children have suffered physical and sexual abuse, often lag behind other groups in school performance, and are at greater risk for kidnapping.[466]

In the early years of the PRC, the new CCP-led government derived some of its legitimacy from improving the lives of children, who, like women, had been a vulnerable group in pre-1949 China. But all of the child welfare problems I have listed above were in fact created by actions of the state: the One-Child Policy has pushed couples to abandon baby girls or abort female fetuses; the erosion of the public healthcare system leads parents to deposit their disabled children in baby hatches; child welfare departments are under-staffed and under-sized; the creation of Special Economic Zones along the coast has resulted in massive migration; and the restrictive *hukou* system deters parents from taking their children with them when they migrate. From time to time, usually in response to public uproar over a tragedy involving a child, the government has created programs aimed at resolving specific issues, and it is currently in the process of relaxing both the One-Child Policy and the *hukou* restrictions. But neither of these will be eliminated in the foreseeable future, and they will likely continue to create social welfare problems like the ones discussed here.

As a result, we are once again seeing children—not only in Shanghai, but across China—fall to the extreme ends of the economic and social welfare spectrum. Education, for example, is an area in which a child's opportunities are significantly affected by where he or she is born.

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[466] Maura Elizabeth Cunningham, "The Vulnerability of China's Left-Behind Children," *Wall Street Journal* China Real Time blog, March 21, 2014, available at http://blogs.wsj.com/chinarealtime/2014/03/21/the-vulnerability-of-chinas-left-behind-children/ (accessed August 5, 2014). On kidnapping, see Charles Custer, "China's Missing Children," *Foreign Policy*, October 10, 2011, available at http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/10/06/china_missing_children (accessed August 6, 2014).

Shanghai high-school students made headlines earlier this year when they again came out on top of the Programme for International Student Assessment test, which reflects the city's excellent educational institutions and the money invested in them by the government, as well as the time, energy, and financial resources devoted to children by Shanghai parents.[467] But I have taught at a school for migrant children in Nanjing, where two or three students had to share each textbook and the unheated cement-walled classroom was so cold and drafty in the winter that my fingers grew too stiff to write on the blackboard, and I've visited far poorer schools than that in rural Yunnan Province. The Chinese government is quick to trumpet the achievements of its high-performing students in Shanghai, but slow to address the needs of the migrant youth in Nanjing or the left-behind children in Yunnan. It needs to do a better job at distributing resources more evenly across the country.[468]

The contours of child welfare problems that concern both Chinese and foreign observers have changed over the past century, but many of the core questions that people grapple with have not. We are still trying to decide: What makes for a "good" childhood? What are the state's, and society's, obligations toward their youngest members? Who is responsible for ensuring that children receive adequate food and shelter, healthcare, and education? The twentieth century might have been, as Ellen Key hoped, the Century of the Child, but child welfare work still has a long way to go—in Shanghai, in China, and around the world.

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[467] Gady Epstein, "Chinese Schools: Evaluating Shanghai's High Test Scores," *The Economist* Analects blog, January 21, 2014, available at http://www.economist.com/blogs/analects/2014/01/chinese-schools (accessed August 5, 2014).

[468] The United States, of course, suffers from an equally unequal school system—education is one area in which the two countries have more in common than observers might expect.

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