

RAISING CHINA'S REVOLUTIONARIES

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STUDIES OF THE WEATHERHEAD EAST ASIAN INSTITUTE,
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Raising China's Revolutionaries

MODERNIZING CHILDHOOD FOR
COSMOPOLITAN NATIONALISTS AND
LIBERATED COMRADES, 1920S–1950S

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For my parents, Hoyt Cleveland Tillman and Cristina Mih Tillman

The great person is one who does not lose his childlike heart.

—Mencius

Is not the character of every epoch revived, perfectly true to nature, in the child's nature? Why should the childhood of human society, where it had obtained its most beautiful development, not exert an external charm as an age that will never return? There are ill-bred children and precocious children.

—Karl Marx, *Grundrisse*

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Preface

In the 1970s and 1980s Communist China opened its doors to the United States. Upon reentering China for the first time in decades, Americans marveled at the distinctiveness of ordinary life in the People's Republic (PRC). For example, educational psychologists enthusiastically reported that preschool children demonstrated Communist visions of justice.¹ Many were impressed with "how social restraint and amity are achieved so early and so generally" among Chinese children.² Because "the main purpose of the crèches and kindergartens is socialization, rather than the development of individual capabilities," school plays, songs, and textbooks taught children to cooperate as comrades.³ In the 1980s many American experts explained early childhood socialization in China by pointing either to communism or to deeply rooted Confucianism.⁴

At this time, my family was among the first to benefit from cross-cultural exchange in the normalization of relations between the United States and China. My father, a China historian, had received grants from both the Fulbright Foundation and the American Academy of Sciences' Committee for Scholarly Communication with the PRC. With these grants, we spent two years in Beijing. My older brother attended the elementary school, and I attended the preschool, attached to Peking University in the early 1980s.

Preschool regulations governed my small world, and I brought those rules home. For example, as a preschooler walking on the streets of Beijing, I

ordered my family to march in a line according to height—it simply followed that, as the smallest, I was of course also *first*. There we were: a toddler at the helm, leading a green-eyed boy, a Chinese American woman, and a blue-eyed American man. Passing us, a bicyclist once flipped over his bike, laughing uncontrollably. No doubt we were a strange sight.

When U.S. experts toured Chinese classrooms, they often watched kindergartners perform plays about fairness, sharing, and justice. I absorbed these lessons and took them with me to Taiwan when we visited my grandmother. Years after Mao Zedong died, I echoed the lines, “I’ll tell Chairman Mao on you!”—I was threatening to report a bully. Of course, those words assumed special meaning because *that* little “reactionary” was on a *Taiwanese* playground. My grandmother, amused, repeated the story.

Such stories inevitably raise questions while both challenging and reinforcing assumptions. When children speak politically, we can reflect on our assumptions that children are innocent and ignorant of the world. It also becomes more obvious, in those situations, that we need to examine more closely our preconceptions about authentic political action as slogans are repeated, mimicked, and performed.

Similar stories are preserved in archives. In the Beijing Municipal Archives, I opened a set of files, written by kindergarten staff and administrators in the early 1950s, reporting on the behavior of children. They recounted children surpassing teachers at classroom management by exerting peer pressure. If one child began to wander away from the marching line, for example, the remainder would quip, “Little ducky fell out of line!” And the errant child would return. Similarly, kindergartners sometimes sat in a circle to criticize and reform the behavior of misbehaving classmates. Taking charge of the curriculum through committee work, the children in these reports infused science lessons with political slogans, which they drafted and revised collectively. Then they returned home to instruct their parents. Unencumbered by the influences of feudal “Old China,” kindergartners led the vanguard of communism.

To what degree can a historian trust such stories to represent the authentic voices of children? After all, teachers—especially holdovers from previous regimes—have been known to obfuscate their resistance to top-down policy directives such as in Nazi and Communist Germany, as well as in the United States.⁵ During the socialist transformation of China, private-school teachers may have downplayed their own responsibility by highlighting the agency of their students. They certainly emphasized children’s

revolutionary behavior to a degree that sometimes even surprised municipal bureaucrats, as shown by the overseers' question marks in the margins of the archives.⁶ And yet my own personal experiences—and those of others—encouraged me to believe that such stories were also not *purely* fictional.

In the course of my research, I have enjoyed discussions with multiple generations of Chinese people who have shared with me their stories about kindergarten. Some of these stories were very similar to mine and were also told in a bemused way by adults enchanted with the incongruence of childhood innocence and adult politics. Other people felt hurt by what they now consider the imprint of political manipulation.⁷ This range reflects a diversity of experiences among people who learned to embrace particular social identities in the political life of China over the course of its history.

Especially given my own place of privilege as an American guest in Chinese society, I do not attempt to reconstruct the subjectivities of Chinese individuals. This book is about the discursive construction of modern *childhood* and the institutional mechanisms used to construct it; it is not a social history of demographical changes among Chinese children, nor is it an anthropological study of *children's* perspectives. Because this book examines the efforts of adults on behalf of children, my methodology sometimes results in privileging top-down perspectives over the voices of children themselves.

This study offers instead historical context for the early childhood education in socialist China that might have eluded U.S. experts who visited China in the 1980s. U.S. experts, of course, approached their task through the lens of established disciplines and professions. And I had, over the years, invested meaning in my early experiences in a rather desultory and disconnected way. Research for this book has transformed my recollections into historicized appreciation of the particularity of those distinct moments when I happened to be a child in the system. Family conversations meanwhile have oriented my research into a vast and open-ended subject that could have gone in many directions.

Thanks to my grandmother, for example, I can envision Chinese women donating money and clothing to poor children in an effort to save the nation. Born in 1908, my grandmother attended Ginling Women's College, where she was exposed to classes on child study and home economics. As Christians, my maternal grandparents attended church in Shanghai and heard the call to donate to children's charities. In 1940 they bought

Republic of China (ROC) war bonds, dusty tickets still molding in our closet. In other words, they invested in a new vision of patriotic philanthropy—a vision that was deeply connected to the idea of caring for China’s children in order to improve China’s future.

Ultimately, I believe, it was that historical investment in the importance of childhood that eventually allowed me, as a child, to feel so empowered to regulate the norms of the playground. I could even report a bully to the utmost (deceased) political leader in China.

Thus this book has two somewhat contradictory premises: that childhood, as a construct, is inherently tied to the politics of particular historical eras; and that certain childrearing practices and institutions continue across regimes. On the one hand, this book contextualizes childhood in the Nationalist era, to show that Western-style “sentimental” childhood was every bit as much a political construct as Communists later claimed. In other words, Chinese child experts had intended to conduct scientific research but had also been motivated by important civic goals. Certainly, child welfare proponents justified their actions through nationalistic goals, especially during wartime. Their actions helped to push changes in state-society relations, on the basis not simply of a priori biology but of new political circumstances. People assume that their own construction of childhood is natural only because they cannot see outside of its parameters; they may be confronted with the social construction of childhood on witnessing other cultural examples.⁸ On the other hand, I also argue that there are long-term legacies that endured regarding the significance of childhood in China. Chinese reformers introduced modern childhood to the Chinese public and helped to establish and popularize preschools and kindergartens in the Nanjing decade. It was only after urban parents entrusted their children to such institutions that the state could assume a greater degree of control over schools and, through them, children.

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As someone who has spent her entire life in the company of China historians, it would be impossible for me to discharge all my intellectual and personal debts here. This book reflects a lifetime of curiosity about global traditions, transnational identities, and the charitable sympathies that move us to embrace the plight of others. Always making time for me at the Association for Asian Studies, Wen-hsin Yeh provided wisdom and guidance for revisions. I am grateful to Paula Fass for her enthusiasm, encouragement, and generosity, and I thank Andrew Jones for his support and advice. I especially remember Professor Tian Yuqing (1924–2014) for introducing me to one of Chen Heqin’s daughters, Chen Xiuyun, who generously answered questions and gave me materials, frequently cited here. I often recall the advice offered by Frederic Wakeman, Jr. (1937–2006), and Christina Gilmartin (1947–2012) early in my training.

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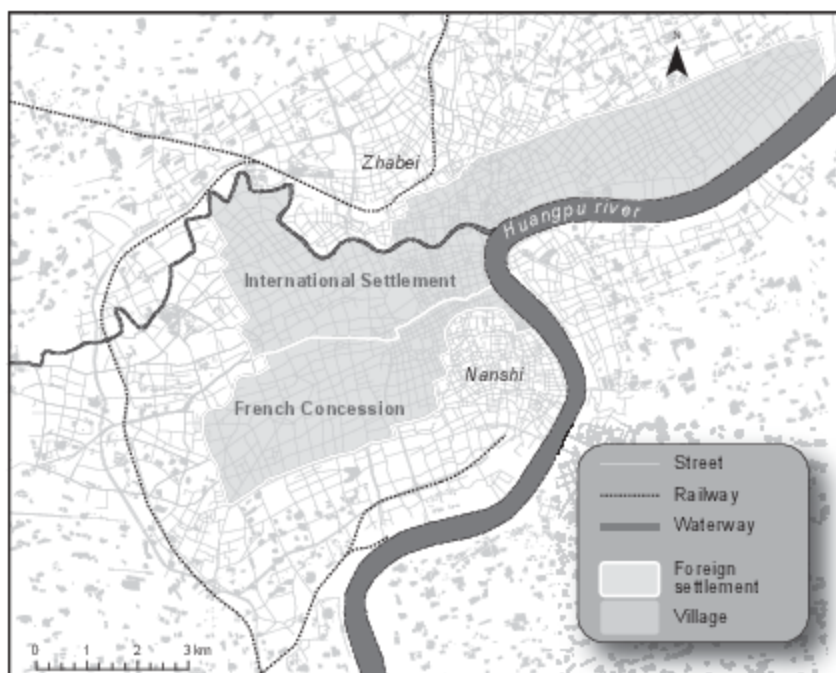
Abbreviations in Text

AMBAC	American Bureau for Medical Aid to China
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CCWC	China Child Welfare Committee
CDL	China Defense League
CLARA	Chinese Liberated Areas Relief Administration
CNRRA	Chinese National Relief and Rehabilitation Administration
GMD	Guomindang
NARC	National Association for Refugee Children, also translated as Wartime Association for Child Welfare
NCC	National Christian Council
NCWA	National Child Welfare Association
NGO	nongovernmental organization
PRC	People's Republic of China
ROC	Republic of China
SFCO	Shanghai Federation of Charity Organizations
UCR	United China Relief
UNRRA	United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration
USC	United Service to China
WAC	Women's Advisory Council

The Romanization system *pinyin* is used for Chinese characters, except in the following cases: Chiang Kai-shek (rather than Jiang Jieshi) and

Sun Yat-sen (rather than Sun Zhongshan); in the official titles of documents; where scholars alive today prefer other systems; and where Chinese adopted a Western first name for major correspondence (e.g., Caroline Tsu rather than Xu Lingyu). For more information, see the appended character list.

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Introduction

In the wake of the Sputnik crisis, one man remembers, “my parents, like the rest of America, were terrified,” marching their sons into the living room to tell them, “You boys are going to study math and science so we can beat the Soviets!” He now comments, “And I thought that was a lot of pressure to put on a six-year-old.”² Even with the passing of the Cold War, American anxiety over childhood education has persisted and evolved. Whether the Soviet Union in the 1950s, Japan in the 1980s, or China in the 2010s, international competitors are held as standards that indicate domestic failures but also, even more fundamentally, as threats to the American way of life. Many worry that *overschooling*, now ubiquitous among elites, threatens the ideal of a carefree childhood.³ Upper-class “helicopter parents” hover over their broods, shuffled from piano lessons to soccer practice to Mandarin tutoring.⁴ Americans often assume that they need to compete against Asian or Asian American “tiger mothers,” who even more relentlessly push their young children to ever more precocious standards of success.⁵ According to Paula Fass, Amy Chua’s didactic memoir *Battle Hymn of a Tiger Mother* “hit a very sensitive nerve” in a period of unprecedented global competition and U.S. decline as a world superpower.⁶

A little over a century ago, this situation was entirely reversed when China faced its own kind of Sputnik moment. Unmoored from its former dominance in East Asia, China surrendered to Western powers after the

Opium Wars (1839–1842 and 1856–1860). Because the Qing dynasty relinquished sovereign control over settlements in major treaty ports, the Treaty of Nanjing in 1842 marked the beginning of what many called “China’s century of humiliation.”⁷ To borrow Maoist terminology, “semi-colonial, semifeudal” treaty ports gave Western powers multiple footholds into exploiting China’s inland territories. As so often is the case today, reformers looked to childhood education as an instrument of national survival. But they rarely praised overschooling or tiger mothers; instead, childhood creativity was, at that time, beginning to be “viewed as the source of American competitive strength.”⁸

Childhood creativity was also validated by the emerging field of child study. Around the world, child experts founded academic centers and advocated for child protective legislation in the early decades of the twentieth century. Countering critiques that child study was a soft discipline, they established scientific credentials as authoritative experts who brought laboratory inspection to childrearing; they instructed mothers who had previously inherited grandmothers’ traditional practices within the home. Child experts directed the proper biological development of children through the appropriate material conditions. For example, Mark Jones shows that, at the turn of the century, Japanese child experts asserted themselves as public intellectuals guiding children’s displays in new department stores.⁹ Exaggerating the break between tradition and modernity, they often referred simply to “childhood”; I employ the term “modern childhood” to demarcate notions that more specifically gained traction in the early twentieth century. In part because this particular formulation of childhood seemed so modern, commentators often evaluated children to compare national progress around the world—the healthier and happier the children, the better the prospects for the nation-state.

There was still, however, tension between health and happiness. As Ann Hulbert notes in the U.S. case, child experts vacillated between “hard” discipline and “soft” sentimentalism—two interconnected pillars of modern childhood: the science of informed childrearing and the sentiment of childhood innocence.¹⁰ We may think of this as the relationship between enlightenment (e.g., researching biological knowledge) and enchantment (e.g., celebrating childhood innocence). This duality intersected in interesting ways with another tension in the history of Chinese education—that between scientific expertise and political loyalty, culminating in struggles over “Red vs. expert” in Mao Zedong’s China. Contextualizing

these debates within the global rise of child experts, we may embed the category of scientific expertise within the framework of *professionalizing* career opportunities, not only for child experts (often men but increasingly women) but also for female teachers, nurses, philanthropists, and social workers; this process of professionalization often relied on new academic credentials that recognized the study of childhood as a science, while also sometimes challenging the applicability of Western models. We may also contextualize the drive for political loyalty within a framework of *indigenizing* global trends to meet China's material needs—a complex process that elevated the political status of childhood but often for the instrumental purposes of the state. Far from simple dichotomies, these dual considerations were deeply intertwined in a modern state based on both the “enlightenment” of modernizing projects and the “enchantment” of civic values. These terms will take on more specific meaning in context, but it is important to note, briefly, that these dynamics complicated the advocacy for modern childhood in China.

Viviana Zelizer helpfully defined modern, sentimental childhood as protected, educated, and valued—so much so that children become “priceless” rather than economically productive.¹¹ But we need not adhere too rigidly to that high standard when we consider the larger international context of *instrumentalizing* childhood to evaluate and advance national modernity. Chinese politicians and social workers signaled their sentimental value of childhood through many terms, from “happiness” (*xingfu*; also well-being, welfare) to “innocence” (*nianzhen*) to “blamelessness” (*wugu*). The same people also propagated slogans to emphasize the national importance of children as “seeds of the nation,” “future leaders,” and the “life veins of the folk.” Paradoxically, the instrumentalization of children was deeply tied to the protection of childhood. Like Sabine Frühstück in her study of Japan, I show that a modern, sentimental childhood was conducive to fostering national discipline, but my focus is less on military order than on the notion of childhood as an investment in the nation's future.¹²

This book tells the story of the Chinese adaptation of modern childhood, focusing in particular on the National Child Welfare Association (NCWA) as an institution that established programs and brought together many actors, with sometimes conflicting and evolving assumptions about how best to protect and educate Chinese children. The NCWA served a range of underage children in different capacities, but to unearth their

approaches to childhood, I focus especially on new theories about early childhood education (from infancy to about seven years), especially in kindergartens.¹³ As Helen May, Baljit Kaur, and Larry Prochner argue in their history of British colonialism, early childhood education has often been marginalized in scholarship, despite its vital importance to missionary and colonial projects.¹⁴ In this introduction I will first outline the historical background that lent weight to the political struggle to shape early childhood education, as well as the social spaces that provided arenas for experimenting with new paradigms to increase the significance of childhood in Chinese society. This context indicates the importance of childhood in modern Chinese history and situates the NCWA within a larger spectrum of concerned civic actors.

Historical Background: Struggles to Control Childhood

In the nineteenth century missionaries provided education in colonies around the world as a means of inculcating discipline within larger empires. Not a full colony, China nevertheless resisted the introduction of colonial education, especially for the very young. In treaty ports, missionaries clashed with Chinese over the control of children. Famously, in the 1870s rioters in Tianjin accused Catholic nuns of kidnapping infants to cannibalize during the Eucharist.¹⁵ These rumors were based on high infant death rates, which Fuma Susumu estimates at as much as 50 percent, in nineteenth-century foundling homes.¹⁶ Chinese parents also intuited the high stakes of relinquishing control over children's tastes and predispositions when they condemned the "slave education" of mission schools, where Chinese children dressed and behaved like "little foreign devils."¹⁷ These suspicions anticipated scholarly critiques of colonial education, which subordinated and refashioned colonized subjects in terms of both academic knowledge and social behavior.¹⁸ Social mimicry seemed to portend the loss of China's cultural heritage. Examining the aftermath of the Tianjin uprising, Angela Leung persuasively argues, "Indeed the establishment of native foundling homes was no longer simply a manifestation of compassion, but was now seen by the authorities as an essential political measure to counter imperialism."¹⁹ Western imperialism pushed early childhood education, especially in the form of welfare, as a social engineering project for political purposes.

Protestant Encounters with Confucian Family Education

Nineteenth-century Protestant missionaries (especially nonconformists independent of the state) presented themselves not as handmaidens of colonialism but as saviors of children around the world.²⁰ They condemned the veneration of Confucius, in private schools called *sishu*, as pagan worship in violation of the first commandment. Although missionaries frequently misunderstood Confucianism, their critiques bequeathed a legacy, as Lydia Liu argues, for Chinese revolutionaries to reject Confucian traditions.²¹ For the purposes of this book, it is useful to outline missionary views on three interrelated issues: academic pressure, child health, and family education, especially for girls. By arguing that academic demands and parental pressure unduly burdened small children, missionaries implicitly advocated for China to introduce modern childhood.

Upon encountering a civilization deeply steeped in learning, Protestant educational missionaries were in a strange position of criticizing China for overschooling. On the “Children’s Page” of the *North China Mission*, one pastor warned English children that the rigors of Chinese schooling dwarfed English boys’ trivial complaints about homework. In part chastising English children, he described Chinese education: boys spent long days memorizing Classics, “just as an English boy might be required to commit to memory a paragraph of Virgil, repeating every word accurately, [but] without the slightest idea of the meaning or of the structure of the language.”²² A Chinese pupil as young as six stood with his back to the teacher, his body swaying as he recited a text.²³ Academic pressure weighed down small bodies. Westerners invented images of the stooped Confucian scholar as the “sick man of Asia.”²⁴ (This is not a completely fair characterization, as Leung notes, in terms of classroom chores as a form of “physical exercise for the pupils,” but Westerners would advance their own political and moral values through sports.²⁵)

From a Western perspective, memorization resulted in mimicry rather than true understanding—a distinction that, as Sanjay Seth argues, helped colonizers distinguish Western learning as universal truth.²⁶ Protestant missionaries observed that in traditional Chinese classrooms, “the pupils study out loud, and all separately, quite independent of one another, and without being organized into classes.”²⁷ They also considered this an antisocial process. As John Cleverley notes, missionaries introduced grade levels to

encourage school loyalty among cohorts of classmates.²⁸ According to Philippe Ariès, developmental “grammars” (textbooks based on incremental learning across grade levels) had provided an institutional basis for disciplining children according to age.²⁹ Some missionaries probably supposed they were accomplishing the same feat in China, but, since at least the Song dynasty, Chinese educators had imparted literacy acquisition to young students through primers for “minor learning,” which began with rhyming “three-character” formulations and then graduated to more difficult texts of “greater learning.” Chinese educators recognized that young children enjoyed a special capacity for memorization, and older children wielded greater interpretive powers. Far from insensitivity to age distinctions, they had long tailored learning to children’s capacities at particular ages.³⁰

Although many simply acquired basic literacy, the Classics formed the basis of the curriculum as well as the civil service examination system, which qualified men to become officials.³¹ As competition for civil service exams intensified with the burgeoning population in the late imperial era, elite boys began learning roughly one year earlier with the passing of every century and a half.³² Pregnant women read the Classics aloud not only to help shape the morality of their children, but also in hopes the cadence of the words would someday resonate with their future sons.³³ Fetal education may have given some boys a competitive edge, but Limin Bai shows that elites were beginning to reexamine childhood education by the late Qing.³⁴ Chinese elites understood the negative effects of studying to the test.³⁵ Intense competition obscured genuine love of learning that, Thomas H. C. Lee demonstrates, was central to the Confucian tradition.³⁶ Scholars like Michael Puett are now reclaiming Confucian practices of self-inspection, and Erin Cline shows that Confucian principles are still useful today for fostering positive family bonds.³⁷ Social relationships provided appropriate contexts for personal self-cultivation, which began with “family education” in the home, for children before the age of seven *sui* (roughly six years of age).³⁸

Since early imperial China, classicists had taught children to obey their fathers with the same reverence that officials served the emperor. Michael Nylan demonstrates that, as early as the Han dynasty, officials rewarded filial obedience and selflessness with political recognition and opportunities for imperial service.³⁹ In times of crisis in China, when the followers of the Confucian tradition lost ground to Huang-Lao Daoism or to Buddhism, Confucians survived by reaffirming family values. As scholars such

as Patricia Ebrey and Bettine Birge have shown, the contours, practices, and norms of Chinese families changed significantly over time, in conjunction with demographic, social, and political factors.⁴⁰ But the political significance of the family perhaps only waxed alongside the increasing power of the court over its Confucian officials. Family roles were often analogized and extrapolated to state-society relations between “parent-officials” and the people as “children.”⁴¹ In long-standing metaphorical connections between family education and political authority, according to Jesse Lutz, Protestant missionaries perceived a submission to despotism.⁴²

Among the strongest arguments against Confucianism was its mistreatment of women. Missionaries often blamed patriarchal order for Chinese resistance to conversion.⁴³ They pointed to Qing laws granting fathers authority to punish and even execute adult children.⁴⁴ One missionary reported that in China, “men are at liberty even to *sell* their wives and daughters to obtain money for opium, or to pay their gambling debts. Picture it! Ponder it! Pray over it! And think—do they not need us?”⁴⁵ In contrast, Johanna Ransmeier argues that Chinese families needed these strategies to survive famine or, in times of plenty, to acquire labor, in the form, for instance, of an adopted future daughter-in-law.⁴⁶ As Westerners moved further away from agrarian society in which the family operated as a unit of economic production, it became harder for them to accept the unsentimental treatment of children as objects of exchange.⁴⁷ Worse still was outright discarding of newborn daughters, which missionaries understood as endemic to the Confucian directive to bear sons for ancestor worship. Michelle King demonstrates that missionaries misinterpreted Confucian moral injunctions *against* infanticide out of context to overstate the practice and thereby exaggerate the need for missions to rescue abandoned babies.⁴⁸

Mission Schools as Charity and Indoctrination

Missionaries often operated schools as a form of child welfare. In the nineteenth century missionaries subsidized tuition to attract students, especially girls.⁴⁹ As a Christian Chinese teacher explained to Western readers in 1932: “When they first started the work [of educational missions,] the method, by which they persuaded students to enter the schools, was to promise to furnish all the personal needs [such] as clothes, room, board

and books and sometimes something extra. The parents took this opportunity to send their children to school, purposely for material benefit.⁵⁰ It was a worthwhile investment. Missionaries presented girls' schools as an opportunity to reform the Chinese family from within. In 1868 one missionary wrote, "Woman in China, as everywhere else in this fallen world, is the foster mother of religion and of religious ideas."⁵¹ Mission girls became "cultural hybrids."⁵² Missionaries commented, "The contrast between the home of a woman brought up in a Christian school and that of one trained after the Chinese fashion is wonderful!"⁵³ Christian brides brought the Gospel home.⁵⁴

After the Reformation, Christians had fostered internalized sectarianism in children from a young age. Philip Greven argues that this was especially true for Protestants, who prioritized personal faith over ritual efficacy.⁵⁵ Whatever the intentions of colonizers to exploit rather than uplift local populations, missionaries had a greater imperative to shape children's personal subjectivity.⁵⁶ Westerners generally misinterpreted Chinese ways of being, especially, in the words of one Western observer, the "blank, dead-wall Chinese stolidity" cultivated by Cheng-Zhu Confucian injunctions to extinguish budding emotion at its root.⁵⁷ Instead, missionaries praised Chinese children for expressing affection and interpreted such behavior as "not merely book-reading, but as *character-building*."⁵⁸ Missionaries hoped to raise Chinese children with "high moral and religious tone" rather than just the trappings of Western culture. Yet, as Julia Stone shows in the case of German foundling homes, missionaries unintentionally Westernized Chinese children, sometimes to the point that they could not cook rice for their mothers-in-law.⁵⁹ At stake was not merely China's culinary culture but rather the social identity and political loyalty of children—and also, more fundamentally, an indictment of the Qing dynasty's inability to care for its own people.

Henrietta Harrison discerns in nineteenth-century mission charities the deep roots of the nongovernmental organization (NGO).⁶⁰ Niall Ferguson even describes missions as "Victorian NGOs" with a "self-consciously modernizing project."⁶¹ Critics note that Ferguson understates the importance of evangelism in this assessment.⁶² Seen in a different light, these roots point to inherent problems with even the most localized (and well-intentioned) transnational aid programs today, which sometimes suppress local economies.⁶³ Historically, transnational charity was also complicated. As Shirley Ye shows, early twentieth-century charities drew contributions

from bankers and engineers as well as Christians and Buddhists and may genuinely be seen as precursors to postwar U.S. developmental aid.⁶⁴ Charting the secularization of “proto-nongovernmental organizations” in the 1930s, Margherita Zanasi notes the difficulties of differentiating between “missionaries and ‘experts’”—especially in cases of liberals influenced by the Social Gospel.⁶⁵ Even with the emergence of transnational aid and developmental experts, there was significant institutional and personnel continuity in child welfare across the first half of the twentieth century. In other words, scientific expertise alone did not secularize charity. As was the case elsewhere, it was often exposure to, and cooperation with, governments that eroded the autonomy of charities, muting their religious distinctiveness.⁶⁶

Late Qing Reformers

In a manner similar to unearthing the deep roots of transnational development in nineteenth-century Christian charities, scholars such as Meredith Woo-Cumings trace the early emergence of “the East Asian developmental state” in response to Western imperialism.⁶⁷ This framework highlights the complex intellectual contributions of social elites toward the foundation of the developmental state, which invests heavily in modern economic programs to spur growth. In the crucible of clashes over Western imperialism, a heavy strain of social Darwinism pervaded experiments for educating girls and young children. As James Pusey notes, national *extinction* loomed so heavily that Yan Fu (1854–1921) introduced and propagated social Darwinism. Inspired by Yan Fu’s recommendation to amass individual strength for national wealth and power, Liang Qichao (1873–1929) promoted girls’ education as a venue to improve childrearing and even, through physical education, childbearing.⁶⁸ He saw in malleable childhood the opportunity to raise the level of a “childish” citizenry in the face of national extinction.⁶⁹ (In this manner, children were perhaps “linked to the survival of entire nations” earlier in China than in Europe.⁷⁰) Intellectuals, independent of the state, thus envisioned individuals as contributing to the wealth and power of the nation. The urgency of these educational experiments increased along with the Qing’s military defeats and economic decline. In the first decade of the twentieth century, the Qing dynasty encouraged the establishment of new schools.⁷¹ Loyalists like Yan

Xiu (1860–1929) established girls' schools and new institutions for early childhood education in service to the authoritarian state. Such changes were so dynamic that, according to Elizabeth VanderVen, the late Qing transformation eclipsed later educational reforms in the twentieth century.⁷²

Perhaps the most important development was in the realm of experimentation as the basis for new institutions. In her history of kindergartens, Mechthild Leutner observes a shift from theoretical models to experimental praxis in the context of the social and political struggles emerging from the late Qing.⁷³ Consequently, schools increasingly became centers that published information about pedagogical practices. For example, the Shanghai Kindergarten Society, established in the late Qing, sent Wu Zhuzhe to Japan for further study. The influx of scientific thinking transformed *practices* into *skills*, accredited in normal schools to train young women. The increased demand for trained governesses may have been tied to uncertainty about the cultural capital necessary for upward mobility in the wake of the abolition of the examination system in 1905—which, as Wen-hsin Yeh notes, created new contexts for an “urban salaried class of educated workers.”⁷⁴

Self-strengtheners proposed indigenous forms of modernization by distinguishing “Western utility” from “Chinese essence.”⁷⁵ After the abolition of the civil service examination voided the economic incentives for study, Qing official Zhang Zhidong (1837–1909) attempted to create more formal systems—of curricular regulations and approved textbooks—to fashion Chinese children into well-disciplined Qing subjects.⁷⁶ One ramification was to formalize Confucian ethics in the educational curriculum.⁷⁷ Ironically, according to Sally Borthwick, these reforms placed greater power in the hands of provincial elites and thereby hastened the coming of revolution in 1911.⁷⁸ Even after the fall of the empire, moral considerations continued to influence the production of knowledge. As Wen-hsin Yeh argues, by valuing *both* scientific expertise and political loyalty, the Qing spawned twin and competing priorities that would plague the Chinese state across regimes in the twentieth century.⁷⁹

Self-strengtheners' categorizations perhaps also lent credibility to missionaries' claims regarding the universal truth-value of Western scientific knowledge. In some sense, it did not behoove missionaries to disaggregate the political/cultural from the scientific/technological, since they associated cultural Christianity with the efficacy of Western science.⁸⁰ But Zhang's

formulation, intended to downplay Western knowledge as merely functional, also rendered the “West” as somehow synonymous with science and engineering, while also reifying the cultural category of “Chinese essence.” This framework was useful to missionaries. In the face of antiforeignism, they asserted the need for the “indigenization” (*bentuhua*) of Chinese administrative leadership, without, necessarily, Chinese creative adaptation of Western theory (whether scientific knowledge or biblical interpretation). Westerners thus counterposed indigenization with Westernization, which they also implicitly aligned with modernization. In the process, they enacted epistemological violence, and scholars are now reassessing native or precolonial scientific epistemologies “on their own terms.”⁸¹ Likewise, this book takes seriously the efforts of Chinese educators to experiment with new models that were *both* modern and tailored to local conditions.

Debates about early childhood education reflected major political concerns. In the late Qing, conflicts coalesced around the fault lines of Christian imperialists disrupting Confucianism as the state ideology. But with the fall of Qing rule in 1911 and the subsequent founding of the Republic of China, the terms of the contemporary political debates shifted to emphasize tradition versus modernity. The minister of education, Cai Yuanpei (1868–1940), called for “new” education for “new” citizens, and this slogan became a common refrain across regime changes.⁸² When President Yuan Shikai (1859–1916) attempted to reinstate dynastic rule in 1915, adherents of the New Culture Movement responded by discarding Confucian traditions and hierarchies inside and outside the classroom. With Yuan’s death, the country fragmented into competing warlord states, with an even greater diffusion of central power. While often promoting nationalism, intellectuals ironically gained freedom (in inverse proportion to state control) to experiment with education and to push forward new ideas about childhood and youth.⁸³

Social Contexts for Paradigm Shifts (1915–1927)

The Discovery of Childhood as a Paradigm for Revolution

New Culture Movement intellectuals invested youth with the potential for revolutionary action. In his journal *New Youth*, Chen Duxiu (1879–1942)

complained in 1915 that Chinese parents traditionally celebrated precocity and encouraged children to mimic adults. Instead, he argued, Chinese children should remain true to their own innovative and revolutionary spirit.⁸⁴ As a college professor, Chen may have discerned the global formation of youth subcultures on college campuses.⁸⁵ He witnessed the growth of student activism in Beijing, especially after May 4, 1919, when youth across the city protested the bargaining away of Chinese national sovereignty in the Treaty of Versailles at the conclusion of World War I. In this context, the personal became the political. Mingwei Song, Lanjun Xu, and Andrew Jones have explored the impact of developmental concepts analogizing individual and national growth.⁸⁶

Many conflated “modern childhood” with “childhood.” Writing in 1920, Zhou Zuoren (1885–1967) even argued that the Chinese had traditionally depicted children as “miniature adults,” and he borrowed from scientific disciplines like anthropology, psychology, and pedagogy to argue for the need to “discover childhood.”⁸⁷ Andrew Jones deduces that Zhou presaged Philippe Ariès’s thesis connecting childhood to the emergence of Western modernity.⁸⁸ According to Ariès, Europeans traditionally viewed children as “miniature adults,” especially before the sixteenth century.⁸⁹ The discovery of innocent childhood, in need of “careful, gradual conditioning,” accompanied the break from feudal to early modern society as a new marker of difference.⁹⁰ Likewise, the discovery of modern childhood promised to usher in a new era for China: from empire to nation-state, from feudalism to capitalism, from status to class. Jones argues that for many May Fourth intellectuals, “the scientific recognition of the child as a distinct epistemological entity entails nothing short of a ‘Copernican Revolution’ in the study of childhood psychology and education.”⁹¹

One should interject a distinction between the historical inaccuracy of Zhou’s statement and its political value. As Ping-chen Hsiung demonstrates, New Culture intellectuals mischaracterized Chinese traditions.⁹² A wealth of new scholarship has verified that since at least the tenth century, Chinese understood many special dimensions of childhood—and had, in fact, employed distinct medical and educational categories for children.⁹³ Furthermore, as Hsiung and others explore, Chinese parents attached sentimental value to childhood.⁹⁴ Nevertheless, Zhou’s major point was that childhood had not *functioned as a catalyst* for modernization in the way that it seemingly had for Euro-America. For Zhou and many of his

contemporaries, China's late industrialization indicated the need to reapproach childhood in a call for revolutionary action.

All over the world, people were drawing on Darwinism for new social projects. By keeping a diary of his son, Charles Darwin (1809–1882) had helped to make childhood a legitimate field of scientific inquiry and thereby inspired the field of child study. Especially given the importance of social Darwinism in East Asia,⁹⁵ Chinese and Japanese intellectuals quickly picked up on the evolutionary implications of child study. For example, Cai Yuanpei analogized “anthropological development” to “stages of childhood development.”⁹⁶ He charted a clear, analogous relationship between individual growth and national development and included the imminent death of overwrought civilizations (such as China's). In this context, Chen Duxiu's call to youth was a cry to transcend Chinese civilization. Some Chinese radicals even proposed reorganizing society around the “natural development” of childhood.⁹⁷ This rejuvenation necessitated discarding outdated norms and establishing new institutions. For example, some Chinese radicals, like Russian Communists, believed that preschool could help free both women and children from the “tyranny of the family.”⁹⁸

The Family as Locus for Reform

No text better crystalized critiques against the Chinese family system than Ba Jin's novel *Family* (1931).⁹⁹ *Family* illustrated the psychological and social enslavement of the younger generation, especially the girls, in a large, multigenerational and multibranch household with servants. The ideal of the Confucian household was overstated as a representation of actual practices. Lau Nap-yin, Matthew Sommer, and other scholars demonstrate the various ways that families contested norms and transgressed Confucian patriarchy, even with polyandry and uxori-local marriage.¹⁰⁰ Margaret Kuo vividly illustrates the social life of small stem families with one elder (usually the husband's mother) in urban Beijing in the early twentieth century.¹⁰¹ As with Zhou Zuoren's modern childhood, Ba Jin's (1904–2005) primary emphasis was on a political call to action rather than an accurate representation of Chinese society.

Chinese revolutionaries sought to disrupt the traditional Chinese family as a remedy for China's social ills. Revolutionaries blamed the Chinese

“clan” system for diverting attention away from civic or national duty.¹⁰² Sun Yat-sen (1866–1925) described the Chinese as a “sheet of loose sand,” without the solid bedrock of national patriotism. In the words of one revolutionary, children had been property of the clan under feudalism but should become citizens of the nation under the new Republic.¹⁰³ In some ways, these arguments aligned with Mary Ann Mason’s analysis, in the U.S. context, of shifts in the legal standing of children, from patriarch’s property to autonomous persons. In contrast to the thrust of Mason’s historical schema, Sun advocated for children to belong to the *fatherland*. Yue Du argues that the cult of Sun as the father of the nation, as well as accompanying laws severing adult children’s responsibilities to their parents, were intended to redirect personal filial duty toward national patriotism.¹⁰⁴

There were also economic benefits to liberating individuals from the tyranny of the Confucian family. Witnessing the impact of industrialization on the disintegration of the extended family in the West, some Chinese reformers advocated the breakdown of the so-called large family in China in a misguided attempt to facilitate industrialization. As Susan Glosser notes, part of the logic was that the ideal “large family” encouraged economic dependence on a multigenerational household with communal property and shared wages.¹⁰⁵ These economic considerations seeped into childrearing manuals in remarkable ways. For example, one child psychologist recommended that “large families” especially needed to allot individual toothbrushes—because children needed to experience ownership over private property.¹⁰⁶ The text was silent about oral hygiene, presumably a more obvious consideration than the way material conditions contributed to the personality development required for a capitalist society.

Personal liberation and individual rights promised national modernization. As Benjamin Schwartz (1916–1999) has argued in regard to individual freedoms (as a philosophical abstract) and Glosser in regard to women’s rights (as contentious discourse), the protection of children was instrumentalized for national advancement and economic modernization and was therefore always secondary to state control.¹⁰⁷ Whereas Schwartz focused on the intellectual dangers of subordinating rights to state wealth and power, scholars are now delineating new functions of government. In James Scott’s terms, the state (or rather actors working on behalf of the state) “saw” issues of managing children through the lens of new technologies and institutional practices.¹⁰⁸

The major problem with Confucianism, as the defunct state ideology, was that filial duty encouraged adults to *remain* metaphorical children in perpetual service to the patriarch. The Confucian family system sometimes conflated the two meanings of child (as an age category and as a relational role), as when, in one of the traditional exemplary tales of filial service, a man comforts his aged parents by acting childishly to remind them of his boyhood.¹⁰⁹ Highlighting the grotesqueness of a man babbling like a child, Lu Xun (1881–1936) implicitly argued that filial duty *infantilized adults*; Chinese adults remained trapped in a state of arrested development.¹¹⁰ Tapping into global research on childhood, Lu Xun thereby posited that when their vivacity was suppressed, Chinese children could not mature into full adulthood. In one of Lu Xun's short stories, a madman likewise reinterpreted Confucian values as a form of social cannibalism, in which the young girls were especially vulnerable. His cry "Save the children!" indicted Confucian traditions.¹¹¹ But the madman eventually recognized that even children were already corrupted. As Andrew Jones notes, in the drive to use childhood as a blueprint for revolution, Lu Xun discerned a teleological paradox between raising children and studying childhood development.¹¹²

In one example of this dilemma, educated youth attempted to shape the political consciousness of their students. One young teacher found that 70 to 80 percent of his primary-school students agreed that "children should always obey their parents." A student explained, "Our parents gave us our lives, so we should obey them. Even if they told us to die, we should die. We should obey our fathers, and our fathers should obey the emperor."¹¹³ The teacher was flabbergasted, and not just because the conservative student had so accurately parroted late Qing Confucian primers. By this time, the Qing emperor had already abdicated, and so the boy was directing his loyalty to a vacant throne. As Lu Xun's madman had discovered, elementary school was often too late to "save the children" from Confucian indoctrination. The responses of these children demonstrate the endurance of Confucian ways of thinking about the family and state.

Whereas scholars previously emphasized the revolutionary nature of May Fourth intellectuals (especially as a vehicle for Western Enlightenment ideals), a new generation of scholars is exploring a greater degree of complexity regarding the transformation of Chinese traditions.¹¹⁴ Wen-hsin Yeh argues that a deep commitment to filial duty to his mother's health, against the preferences of his father to invest in her funeral, led Shi Cuntong (1899–1970) to write the essay "Decry Filial Piety!"¹¹⁵ Susan Glosser

shows that activists drew on a Confucian system of logic embedded in the “Great Learning,” positing a continuum from personal self-cultivation through family management and community service to the nation and even the universe.¹¹⁶ The family remained the basis for the social good, and family reform was rooted in a continued appreciation for the social value of Confucianism despite its diminished currency in the modern age. There was a spectrum between anarcho-communists who rejected the tenets of marriage and family altogether and the emergence of more fluid notions of family, as Elizabeth LaCouture notes, based in part on imported material comforts in cosmopolitan cities.¹¹⁷ As Wen-hsin Yeh explores from a variety of angles, Shanghai provided a dynamic space for the collision of cultures and the spark of new ideas.¹¹⁸

Shanghai as Locus for Modernization

Modern childhood developed as a response to economic conditions in China’s treaty ports. Rural famine pushed migration to cities. Overcrowding and squalor contributed to infant mortality. On the basis of French efforts to extricate corpses from the concession in prewar Shanghai, Christian Henriot estimates that the percentage of children among the dead was roughly 85 to 96 percent.¹¹⁹ The sight of piling corpses confronted Westerners, causing feelings of unease as, some believed, they were repeating the worst historical abuses of industrialization anew in an ancient land.¹²⁰ As Hugh Cunningham notes for Europe, urban life made visible the plight of poor children and moved elites to develop child welfare.¹²¹

Another visible problem was child labor—the antithesis of a protected, modern childhood. Although sequestered in elite pockets of international settlements, Westerners witnessed the movement of an “army of little girls” marching into and “pouring out of the factories after they have labored there all night for a small pittance.” At the first National Christian Council meeting in Shanghai in 1922, Reverend A. M. Sherman confessed his distress at the sight of yet “another army of little girls who are going to spend the whole day there [in the factories of Wuchang], without any play or opportunity for schooling or recreation, without any childhood at all; a veritable slaughter of the infants.”¹²² It was specifically factory labor, as social gospeler Sherwood Eddy (1871–1963) observed during a trip to Shanghai in 1922, that harmed children; he offered, as an example, a young Chinese

boy suffering from “phossy jaw,” a disease resulting from working with phosphorus in match factories.¹²³ Industrialization seemed, to humanitarians, a global problem requiring the attention of transnational organizations like the YMCA and YWCA. In the early 1920s Christians agitated for the abolition of child labor in the United States, including—in the words of one editorialist of the *North China Herald*—in a border city with “a large Mexican and negro population, in addition to many other foreigners.”¹²⁴ Such statements reveal the racial biases embedded in Christians’ genuine efforts to help the poor. The concurrent efforts to regulate child labor in both the United States and China were thus no coincidence but corners of a global movement for Protestant humanitarianism.

Child advocacy gave women around the world a platform to develop scientific skills and gain professional employment as social workers. Given “maternalist politics,” women were considered especially capable of rescuing children.¹²⁵ Elite Chinese and Western women pressured the Shanghai Municipal Council to commission an investigation of child labor in the International Settlement in 1922. Elizabeth Littell-Lamb observes that organizations like the YWCA and the Child Labor Commission empowered elite Chinese women with leadership opportunities.¹²⁶ For example, serving as a secretary on the Child Labor Commission, Song Meiling (1898–2003) learned to leverage child advocacy for political purposes. Later, as the wife of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek (1887–1975), she wielded child welfare as a tool of international diplomacy and national control.

Chinese industrialists also favored reform. As early as 1914, Chinese factory managers had already proposed the abolition of child labor under the age of ten, to protect children’s safety and ensure their “greater safety and happiness.”¹²⁷ The word “happiness,” in its meaning as “welfare,” points to the sentimental value of childhood; the focus on “safety,” to biology. When the Child Labor Commission recommended restrictions, it aligned with economists and factory managers against factory women, who demanded the right to breastfeed babies at work.¹²⁸ By removing disruptive infants and children from factory floors, managers sought to enforce discipline. While defending the Child Labor Bylaw, Thomas Tchou (Zhu Mao-cheng, 1895–1965), industrial secretary of the Chinese YMCA, argued:

The fact that these children are employed in industry points to the corollary that they are taking the places of adults and older children

who would be employed in their stead, if the younger children were liberated. For the sake of the economic welfare of the community, the question ought to be asked: Should able-bodied adults now unemployed and therefore tempted to become beggars and thieves be employed so that they might find some support for their needy families, or should young, feeble-bodied and industrially inefficient children continue to be employed?¹²⁹

For Chinese economic theorists like Tchou, who later became director of the ROC Labor Department, “feeble-bodied and industrially inefficient” child laborers crippled the Chinese economy and state. Child labor was unskilled labor. Children robbed adults of wages and prevented industrialists from investing in heavy machinery.

At the same time, factory conditions seriously endangered children and stunted their growth. Health inspectors reported that factory women placed infants in covered baskets in a vain attempt to shield them from industrial fumes. Commenting on this practice, Dr. Jefferson Lamb (Lin Donghai, b. 1895) concluded, “The result of this practice cannot be but racial suicide”—in this context, the self-destruction of the Han Chinese.¹³⁰ Lamb also wrote that factory laws should prevent anything “seriously affecting the child-bearing capacity of women and arrest[ing] the physical growth of children.”¹³¹ Lamb’s rhetoric reflected a strong strand of “positive eugenics” in the thrust for national survival, embedded in the orientation of China’s emerging developmental state.

When the bylaw to abolish child labor was put to a vote on the humid day of April 15, 1925, too few ratepayers arrived to achieve a quorum. On the crowded streets of Shanghai, workers were striking. On May 30 foreign guards shot into the crowd, killing a demonstrator, thereby further inciting strikers and galvanizing their supporters. Chinese Communists circulated the Child Labor Report as evidence of the abuses of imperialist corporations.¹³² Although some Western residents in Shanghai resented the negative publicity, Christians continued to campaign for global support.¹³³ China Child Welfare, Inc., was established, operating out of New York City Bank (now Citibank), to fund child advocacy efforts in China in a spirit of international cooperation. Amid the rising tensions between labor and capital, as well as between Chinese and imperialists, Chiang Kai-shek’s Guomindang (GMD) overtook Shanghai in 1927, and local gang members mercilessly slaughtered Communists, expelling them from

the city or driving them underground.¹³⁴ In control of the ROC, Chiang sought to renegotiate structures of Western dominance.

Investing in Modern Childhood

In narratives of modern Chinese history, scholars rightly focus on China's struggle for national survival in a context of international competition and Western imperialism; this context highlights the important stakes of early childhood education in social engineering projects for Confucian subjects, Republican citizens, or Communist comrades. Not only was early childhood education a venue for political indoctrination, but child welfare also reflected, positively or negatively, on the state. Furthermore, the state also leveraged childhood for a host of political purposes—as a measure of progress and international standing in a bid for sovereignty, and as a fulcrum for revolutionary change in service to the nation.

Nevertheless, that narrative of competition overlooks the importance of cooperation, both nationally and internationally. Childhood attracted widespread concern across the political spectrum in China. During the Nanjing decade (1927–1937), a rare period in which early twentieth-century Chinese enjoyed relative political stability, people generally agreed about the need to “save the children,” even if they disagreed about how and why. This observation challenges old stereotypes about the alienation and inefficiency of the Guomindang government; for example, John Fairbank (1907–1991) viewed the GMD's reliance on Anglo-American models as a limitation that ultimately cost the ROC its legitimacy.¹³⁵ Rather than teleologically focusing on the political contributions of revolutionaries who heralded the coming of the People's Republic of China in 1949, many scholars now recognize the creative innovations of Chinese Nationalists and are also uncovering more nuance and fluidity of ideas across the political spectrum.¹³⁶ Both adapting New Culture approaches to modern childhood and countering what they interpreted as Communist antifamilialism, Chinese Nationalists sought to resurrect the dream of peaceful industrial reform through the shared value of childhood. Leveraging paradigms of childhood as a catalyst for positive social change, family reform, and modern industry, Chinese Christians cooperated with a range of actors—international funders, government officials, and Buddhist philanthropists—to advocate for modern childhood. *Raising China's*

Revolutionaries takes seriously Nationalist aspirations for revolutionary change.

In the early twentieth century the need for child advocacy was not unique to China. Rather, it was a global trend—a reaction to poverty but also an expression of the rising middle class. According to Gary Cross, the drive to protect innocent children from labor exploitation became popularized along with the rise of consumer culture in the United States.¹³⁷ Mark Jones similarly shows that in Japan, sentimental childhood was embedded in the sensibility of the rising middle class.¹³⁸ Although economic factors alone do not explain causation,¹³⁹ modern, sentimental childhood has nevertheless often been deeply embedded in the economic fabric of a consumer economy. Like philanthropic organizations in the West, Chinese charities imposed middle-class values on the poor. Despite the global reach of child advocacy and the supposedly universal standards of hygienic care, the Chinese middle class articulated its own specific vision of the sentiment of modern childhood; hence Communists rejected GMD cultural expressions, including the cultural interpretations of biology, even as they retained, to varying degrees over its history, the institutional machinery and intellectual standards of Western science.¹⁴⁰

Scope and Sources of This Study

This book examines the introduction and development of modern childhood in China through the child advocacy efforts of a philanthropic organization called the National Child Welfare Association. A unique organization, the NCWA was not representative of traditional Chinese charities, which, as Norman Apter notes, generally prioritized children's social integration over their individual rights.¹⁴¹ In contrast, the NCWA did discuss children's rights, petition for juvenile courts, and advocate on behalf of individual children from abusive families. This advocacy work did not champion the autonomous individual but rather state patriotism. The NCWA celebrated what Helen Schneider calls the GMD's "ideology of the happy family" as the foundation of the Republic of China.¹⁴² In accordance with that vision, the NCWA both published the work of child experts and cited the Classics of Confucian thinkers in the radically conservative 1930s. In its Chinese title, the NCWA employed a traditional

Confucian term for “cherishing the young” (*ciyou*) and helped to launch and direct a broad-based movement in that name.

The NCWA was so influential in part because of its deep connections to government powerholders. The NCWA was established in 1928 by the minister of industry, Kong Xiangxi (H. H. Kung, 1880–1967), a descendent of Confucius and brother-in-law to Chiang Kai-shek. The organization supported the scientific study of children, economic and medical welfare for children, and the political symbolism of children as investments in China’s future. It also triangulated relationships between its funders, China Child Welfare in New York, and various mission homes in the Chinese hinterland. By improving their standards, the NCWA conferred legitimacy to mission homes, often targets of suspicion by the Chinese population. Thus, although partially financed by Americans, the NCWA was a venue for the indigenization of child welfare, or the assumption of control, regulation, and leadership by Chinese themselves. It created not only publishing opportunities for child experts but also professional jobs for young women, as preschool teachers, medical administrators, and social workers. Child advocacy thus led to greater opportunities for Chinese leadership at various levels of the organization. Therefore we can see in the NCWA a compatibility between indigenization and professionalization, including the incorporation of scientific ideas into a new academic curriculum and institutions for early childhood education.

In writing this book, I gained a deeper appreciation for the shifting meanings or locations of the “indigenous” across different landscapes. In archival documents in the Shanghai Municipal Archives, the NCWA (especially as represented by the Shanghai Children’s Bureau) appears to be a secular agency. Its parenting manuals and journals (found in Fudan University Library, Taipei’s National Educational Research Institute, Stanford University Library, and the Shanghai Municipal Archives) also reflect a modern bourgeois mentality but not necessarily a strong Christian flavor. These materials contrast sharply with U.S. and Chinese Christian print media, which presented the organization as fundamentally Christian. But the minutes of the NCWA meetings, now archived at the New York Public Library, indicate that the members did have a heart of Christian charity, despite muting religious expression while working for the government or alongside Buddhists. The more removed the historical document from the origins or workings of the NCWA, the less Christian its appearance;

for instance, in documents of the postwar United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) held at the Hoover Institution, the organization appears completely secularized, in a manner in keeping with the transformation of Protestant charity organizations in the United States. Nevertheless, officials also often categorized mission charities within the rubric of “indigenous” institutions, with much deeper roots than UNRRA.

As discussed at greater length in the preface of this book, childhood entered the political agenda because of its potential social functions, and so my sources often reflect adult concerns rather than children’s experiences—or, in Peter Cave and Aaron William Moore’s words, “the use of documents about children to critically examine adult discourse.”¹⁴³ There is an epistemic gap between studies of adult discourse and children’s lived experiences, especially given that many of the children, in need of protection, were preschool aged (infant to seven years). Nevertheless, children’s primers and magazines also convey what the NCWA’s campaigns might have meant for children, from free kites and vaccinations on Children’s Day to suggestions that children distribute red envelopes of petty money to their neighbors on that holiday. Visual sources depict children even when their voices remain silent. On the pages of primers at the Cotsen Children’s Collection in Princeton Library, children left crayon scribbles—the imprint of their hands, claiming ownership but not authorship of the books. I draw on wartime remembrances and tales to illustrate the daily schedules sent to funders and the newspaper advertisements for the schools. Most notably, I examine a set of school reports in the Beijing Municipal Archives that provide some sense of how children responded to the directives of adults in the 1949–1950 transition.

Methodologically, I also see fundraising as a language of communication. Kong Xiangxi’s correspondence first alerted me to this possibility. As I found certified accounting charts within campaign materials at Nanjing Library, as well as detailed budgets in Second Historical Archive and the Hoover Institution, I realized that organizers increasingly reached smaller, individual donors—not only out of economic necessity but also in order to draw broad-based support. I consider this a democratization of philanthropy, and also a new venue for international diplomacy. Archives at Academia Historica and the Hoover Institution record the contributions of Song Meiling to the organization, as well as her instrumentalization of child welfare for political purposes. Through the NCWA and United China Relief’s merchandise and compensatory badges, *Raising China’s*

Revolutionaries shows that donors became consumers and transnational philanthropy became embedded in a consumer economy. As historical factors, congruency between immediate economic needs and long-term ideological goals is an important subtheme of this book.

Raising Chinese Revolutionaries is situated at the intersection of institutions and ideology, with an emphasis on the machinery or instrumentality of the institution, specifically the NCWA and the preschools, kindergartens, and child welfare centers it established and/or supported. The first half of this book, “The Science of Sentiment,” charts the establishment of these institutions by scientific experts in cooperation with politicians. The second half, “Child Experts and the Chinese State,” follows the ways in which the government began to assume control over these institutions and eventually, in the early 1950s, removed child experts from positions of prominence as public intellectuals. Despite this Foucaultian arc, it is important to recognize that, instead of absoluteness of power, this period was marked by *limited* governmental control. State weakness drove the ROC to rely on civil actors like the NCWA, which both facilitated and restrained government instrumentalization of childhood by asserting the sentimental value of childhood independent of its social function. The archeology of the institution thus uncovers conflicting ideological stances.

To examine the intellectual substance of the NCWA more carefully, two chapters are devoted to one of its secretaries, child psychologist Chen Heqin (1892–1982), who is also considered the “father of Chinese kindergartens.” An examination of his career trajectory helps to illustrate the changing social context from the late Qing through the Republic, especially the formation of a specific brand of Chinese Christian child welfare. With only a master’s degree from Columbia (in contrast to some of his coauthors), Chen focused an important niche of his expertise first on early childhood education and then on its pedagogical instruction at the college level. He answered calls for “indigenization,” not merely through political administration but also by tailoring kindergartens to Chinese child psychology, which he pioneered as a distinct area of scientific inquiry. Based on his selective adaptations of social Darwinism, Chen argued in favor of the cohesive family unit and reformed the companionate father without completely overturning the Chinese patriarch. The same reasons for his popularity among Christians also subjected him during the 1920s to criticism from non-Christians, who accused him of social mimicry. After 1949 an extensive criticism campaign against him provided a kind of public

referendum against the pro-Christian, pro-Western contingent of the ROC. Nevertheless, we can discern in Chen's study of the Chinese child his valiant effort to parochialize Western knowledge as just one room in the edifice of scientific truth—and, in the PRC rejection of Chen's formulations, an assertion that all knowledge, even that of biological development, is socially constructed.

This intellectual foundation is important for understanding how Chinese understood the contribution of modern childhood to the formation of a developmental state in China. Chinese educators drew from global history to show that preschools and kindergartens would supplant factories as places for children.¹⁴⁴ In *The Evolutionary History of Kindergartens* (1935), Chen Heqin's student Zhang Zonglin (1899–1978) argued that kindergartens reflected broad social trends: from charity institutions to state schools, and from elite privilege to mass right.¹⁴⁵ His paradigms reveal the deep associations between early childhood education and social welfare as forms of national advancement. Furthermore, Zhang described kindergartens as both catalyst and venue of democratization and secularization. To some degree he was correct, as the government attempted to gain national oversight over charities and to improve the quality of their service. He anticipated social science models that map a progressive transition from family obligation to community responsibility and ultimately to state welfare.¹⁴⁶

In keeping with what Maggie Clinton calls the Guomindang's "revolutionary nationalism," the radical reinvigoration of Confucian traditions extended to the (modernized) Chinese family.¹⁴⁷ As one Western missionary woman wrote in 1938, "It is the family that has held the [Chinese] nation together for more hundreds of years than any other nation has ever held together. A look at modern Chinese government reveals that great Song family with their husbands—Dr. Sun Yat-sen, Dr. H. H. Kung [Kong Xiangxi], and Generalissimo Chiang Kai Shek [*sic*]—a strong adhesive force in the nation. The strengths and weaknesses of the family have always been and still are the strengths and weaknesses of the Chinese nation."¹⁴⁸ As Amy O'Keefe argues, Christians had formulated new theological approaches for valuing the Chinese family.¹⁴⁹ The missionary's statement indicates that another important reason for Westerners' newfound appreciation of the Chinese family was that the NCWA had, often through the Song sisters and their husbands, successfully projected a reformulated image of modern domestic and civic relationships. Publicity was a key strategy for the

NCWA's consciousness raising, but Nationalists also hoped to increase the international standing of the ROC.

Raising China's Revolutionaries charts the rise of the NCWA in the late 1920s and its eclipse, in ROC-held areas during the pivotal moment of war, by a proliferation of nationally sponsored children's charities and government institutions. By the postwar period, the NCWA had lost so much of its Christian distinctiveness that it appeared, to UN officials, to be a secular philanthropic organization. The scope, scale, and focus of child advocacy had shifted even further in the direction of facilitating state building. Ironically, the overburdened government needed volunteer organizations even more than ever. Furthermore, child advocacy helped increase the symbolic value of childhood in ways that the Communist state capitalized on. Despite their rejection of the Nationalists' cultural expressions of childhood enchantment, Communists nevertheless accepted many aspects of modern childcare, including funding structures emphasizing model institutions and the social function of preschools to unleash the female workforce.

In short, the adaptation of modern childhood opens a fresh window on social campaigns in service to building the Chinese nation-state. Reformers instrumentalized childhood symbolically, diplomatically, and discursively but also established institutions that brought real changes to the life of children in the form of modern hygiene and structured schedules outside the home. The tension between the scientific and the sentimental helps us to reapproach our dichotomies between expertise and politics, as well as between Westernization and indigenization, especially as we see how child experts related the material conditions of childhood to the formation of new subjectivities. They predisposed children's relationships to political cultures and embedded child welfare in new educational and economic structures. By examining the intertwined relationship between enlightenment and enchantment, I hope this book sheds new light on the allure of state paternalism and the imposition of state discipline.¹⁵⁰

Child Study in Chinese Kindergartens

Chen Heqin's Approach to "Family Education"

In 1900, when Chinese kindergartners visited a science classroom in a mission school, one small girl began to cry upon seeing “blood” on a physiological chart of the human circulatory system. “Never mind, never mind,” an older student comforted her; “it’s only a foreigner!”¹ In the wake of the Boxer Uprising against Christians that year, what troubled the missionary who recounted the tale was not the students’ failure to understand the human body but the political implications of their attitude toward Euro-Americans. This example indicates missionary claims of scientific universality (human physiology) in opposition to assertions of cultural particularism (Chinese uniqueness)—as well as missionaries’ prioritization, in the face of potential martyrdom from angry crowds, of ameliorating ethnic tensions over imparting scientific knowledge.

In the context of Chinese antireignism, missionaries promoted “indigenization.”² Across dominations and fields, indigenization became the dominant Anglo-American missionary policy in the late nineteenth century. Indigenization, then also called “devolution,” meant relinquishing control to native leadership in order to offset financial and personnel costs.³ According to this model, Chinese leaders would not necessarily challenge Western ideas (whether scientific or biblical), but greater representation would increase Chinese receptivity. Missionaries associated Christianity with the efficacy of Western science in order to assert truth claims. In general, as Sanjay Seth argues, Westerners assumed the universality of Western

knowledge and thus posited an inverse relationship between Westernization (connoting Western scientific knowledge) and indigenization (indicating native political demands).⁴

Scholars such as Seth are now questioning this bundle of assumptions. One way is to recognize the intellectual agency of converts (and another, the diversity of Western influences).⁵ As Jun Xing argues, “The Chinese YMCA workers were not passive victims of foreign influence, but active adapters and creative developers of their own cosmopolitan ideals.”⁶ One such Christian convert and YMCA member was Chen Heqin. Chen responded to the call for indigenous leadership to tailor modern Chinese kindergartens specifically for the Chinese child. Somewhat like the child in the story above, he thus presumed biological distinctiveness. Chen upheld the universality of science but argued in favor of Chinese child psychology as a unique subject, and therefore a unique object, of scientific inquiry; this became, for Chen, the basis of a new academic program, not only for educators but also for parents. For Chen, indigenization could facilitate what Chinese called “scientization.”⁷

Drawing on observations of his own son and the kindergarten run from his own home, Chen Heqin combined the sentimental and the scientific. He thereby projected a new vision for Chinese family education, which dovetailed with both modern ideas and Christian values. As a public intellectual and child expert, Chen sought to instruct youth who had become radicalized during the May Fourth protests against the Treaty of Versailles in 1919. “New Youth” need not overthrow the Chinese patriarch, in the aftermath of the abdication of the Chinese emperor, when they could instead embrace a friendly father figure like Chen Heqin. Where youth sometimes raised the possibility of overturning the Chinese family with new institutions like preschools and elder homes, Chen proposed using modern institutions to buttress the family. Thus there were clear political implications for his theories, not only for Christians but also for the new Republic.

Treaty Port Disruptions of Early Childhood

Confucian Sishu vs. Christian Mission Schools

By the time Chen Heqin was born in 1892 in the town of Baiguanzhen in Zhejiang province, Protestants had been proselytizing in nearby Shaoxing

for three decades, but Chen was not to encounter missionaries for some time. In 1897 he began attending a traditional private school, called a *sishu*. He remembered waking up early and carrying his own stool.⁸ Five or six children waited in a room for the teacher to arrive. The teacher led the bowing to Confucius, and then the children sat down. They returned home for lunch, and their only toys were the little paper boats they folded and raced on their desks. Confucian rituals, Chen later noted, strengthened social bonds among students.⁹

Although Chen argued against the traditional system at the start of his career, he would recognize, after three decades of teaching, the advantages of *sishu*, many of which derived from their small size. Students developed close bonds there, he claimed, whereas students in large, modern schools often could not remember one another's names. With so few students, teachers tailored assignments according to their students' abilities. Students progressed at their own pace; instead of competing with one another on the same tests, each child was encouraged to improve individually. Chen's observations align with Thomas H. C. Lee's research on premodern Chinese education and its emphasis on a love of learning.¹⁰ Children memorized instructional texts and Confucian Classics, not only as basis of the Chinese civil service exam but also as the foundation for self-cultivation. After 1912 such books were often condemned as "dead books." Writing in the 1940s, Chen clarified that these books had "a great deal of merit," but the problem was the way they were taught. From the age of eleven to fourteen, Chen studied at his dan school, where the master, an opium addict, lay in a stupor—no one's conception of a responsible teacher.

Missionaries saw boarding schools as "the only way of obtaining a really strong influence over the boys."¹¹ The reality may have been more complex, as Chen Heqin's example indicates. In 1906 Chen moved in with his married sister in Hangzhou, where, impoverished and fatherless, he turned to mission schools for education. He converted to Christianity while attending Hangzhou Baptist Middle School. After his baptism, Chen's "worldview completely changed," and he became less selfish and more compassionate. He explained, "Other people allowed their 'little egos' to become their 'larger selves' (*dawo*), but I transformed my 'little ego' (*xiaowo*) into 'selflessness.' At that time, 'selfless' (*wuwo*), those two syllables, become my hidden [personal] name (*yinming*)."¹² Chen's valuation of the "nonself" counters Chinese Communist Chen Duxiu's (1879–1942) public rejection of traditional Chinese humility and an embrace of a new, Western-style

individualism, which he proclaimed in the inaugural issue of *New Youth* in 1915.¹³ Instead, Chen Heqin's baptismal resolutions resonated with traditional Chinese views of cultivating "selflessness" that had been advocated by some Confucians since the late Han and also by many Buddhists.¹⁴ Thus he described a Christianized identity that resonated more deeply with Chinese traditions than Chen Duxiu's secular modernity. I contend that in the context of radical rejections of the past, Christianity offered some converts, like Chen Heqin, a venue to adapt and retain certain aspects of Chinese traditions.

Chen Heqin's most pronounced transformation was probably in the realm of his daily habits. When Chen "offered [his] body up to Christ," he vowed to abstain forever from alcohol, narcotics, and prostitution. Thus Christianity provided him with a rationale for refusing opium and other vices from the West. According to Chen, a daily regimen was an essential component of good health and academic success.¹⁵ His account suggested that he understood Christianity primarily in terms of public service and personal virtue, manifest in self-discipline and personal hygiene, as an expression of identity and a strategy for achievement.

Some Chinese scholars today still accuse Western missionaries of having taught Chinese children to adopt Western dress, language, and customs in ways that deprived them of their traditional heritage.¹⁶ One mother reportedly said, "I do not want to send my girl to the Mission school as she will become foreign and even speak in the same tone as missionaries" (i.e., without tones necessary to differentiate words).¹⁷ In another example, Chen's teetotalism prevented him from toasting those who congratulated him with wine on his wedding day.¹⁸ Thus he willingly snubbed relatives and transgressed norms in order to maintain Christian principles. Like many other converts, his lifestyle alienated him from local society. In the context of the rights to evangelize won through the Opium Wars, some Chinese linked evangelism to a larger imperialist agenda to "enslave China."¹⁹ Many saw missionaries—and eventually their Chinese partners—as creating a kind of "slave education" (*nulhua jiaoyu*) in the semicolonial context of China's treaty ports.

The Meiji Challenge: Science and Indigenization

Missionaries faced an important intellectual challenge from East Asians. As Thomas Curran notes, early Protestant missionaries often lacked

pedagogical training and began to improve their qualifications in the 1890s, in response to Chinese interest in scientific training.²⁰ These efforts coincided with new Chinese institutions, such as the Shanghai Kindergarten Society, which sent one of its female members, Wu Zhuzhe, to study modern childcare in Japan.²¹ In the early twentieth century Chinese scholars studied education in Japan in ever greater numbers.²² Although most of them were men, Japan offered young Chinese women an alternative venue for education and professionalization in the field of early childhood education. It is important to acknowledge that missionaries were not the only, or even most important, source of pedagogical models in China at the turn of the century.²³

Missionaries were often in competition with Japanese influences over the construction of a new style of modern education in China. In the late Qing some Chinese referenced Japanese sources to cast skepticism over the ideological agenda of missionaries as Western imperialism.²⁴ They also championed Meiji Japan (1868–1912) as an emerging leader to compete with Euro-American imperialism.²⁵ Citing the authoritarian regime of Japan as inspiration, Qing loyalist Yan Xiu employed a Japanese headmistress to help establish his girls' schools. Missionaries responded by accusing Japanese teachers of incompetence and disregard for local conditions, such as the need to learn spoken dialects.²⁶ Even when missionaries and Japanese drew on the same sources for the kindergarten movement in the West, Japanese educators emphasized their mediating roles in adapting scientific knowledge to strengthen imperial order in East Asia.

The most important example is perhaps Friedrich William August Fröbel (1782–1852), considered the “father of kindergartens.” In contrast to a missionary text that alluded to Fröbel’s fraught relationship with his “church friends,” Japanese texts presented him as an anticleric progressive who challenged church authorities and the feudal nobility.²⁷ This characterization dovetailed with Meiji reformers’ own struggles, as they overturned Tokugawa (1600–1868) norms of samurai privilege.²⁸ Japanese educators observed that kindergartens could promote egalitarianism when bringing together children from every rank.²⁹ According to missionary Francis James (1851–1900), Fröbel’s educational toys resonated with Chinese philosophy about the materialism of “myriad things,”³⁰ thus allowing—as in the case of Chen Heqin—a degree of latitude among Christians to respect Chinese traditions. In contrast, Japanese texts firmly couched Fröbel in the scientific field of childhood cognitive development.

Banned in Germany for “rejecting” Christianity after the Revolution of 1848, kindergartens emerged as important tools for social engineering.³¹ In the United States, middle-class educators were Americanizing the children of poor immigrants in kindergartens. Kindergarten teachers visited homes and ran mothering classes.³² Many immigrants resisted the inculcation of Americanized values in their children and the disruption of home life by public workers.³³ Kindergarten proponents interpreted this conflict not as one between American and foreign cultural norms but between modern, democratic values and outmoded traditions; moreover, they “imagined a community beyond national borders, encouraging world citizenship and internationalism.” In the early twentieth century, many American missionaries were likewise motivated by international liberalism.³⁴

To make their missions more locally relevant and accepted, missionaries compared their kindergartens to others around the world, including American Chinatowns.³⁵ By exporting the kindergarten abroad, missionaries further compounded dimensions of racial and economic inequalities in the classroom. And yet because the 1890 Imperial Rescript on Education prohibited Christianity in elementary schools in Japan, early childhood education increased in prominence in East Asian missionary circles.³⁶ Missionaries Young J. Allen, Arthur Smith, and Timothy Richards helped introduce kindergarten and girls’ education, often closely interconnected because women taught young children.³⁷ By the turn of the century the Educational Association, run by missionaries, included a committee on kindergartens as a form of evangelical work.³⁸ One missionary wrote, “The significance of the Kindergarten for the salvation of neglected childhood and its efficiency in the unfolding and filling of child life in its earliest stages has been brought out so unmistakably that we yearn to secure, for the little ones of this great land, the power and beneficent influences involved.”³⁹ The problem, of course, was that missionaries were conflating their sense of modern childhood with childhood itself. What I call “modern childhood” in this book was arguably “neglected” in the sense that missionaries could offer, by the early twentieth century, a different kind of curriculum, one with educational toys and modern hygiene. But anti-Christian sentiment, such as the Tianjin Uprising of 1870 over the alleged abuse of foundlings at the hands of Catholic nuns, suggested that local Chinese were in fact very protective of children.

How could missionaries respond to this push for both indigenization and professionalization (or adherence to the latest pedagogical standards)?

One method was through the emerging field of child study, researching childhood and tailoring curricula to the needs of the child. According to a missionary writing in 1895, “The study of Chinese child nature holds the key to the easy adaptation of Western methods of education to the mass of China.” Just as kindergartens had been indigenized around the world, “any system of kindergarten for China cannot use the particular methods of any Western country with success, but must be worked out from a study of the habits of thought and life of the Chinese child.”⁴⁰ To better understand Chinese children, missionaries collected Chinese nursery rhymes, folk stories, and children’s games.⁴¹ While positing the uniqueness of “Chinese child nature,” missionaries also asserted children’s universal needs for play, education, and Christ’s love. Regarding a photograph of a mission kindergarten in Fuzhou, the *Chinese Recorder* reflected, “just as interesting, just as susceptible to good or evil are they as the little kindergarteners [*sic*] in Europe and America.”⁴²

Missionaries collected information about Chinese students to foster sentimental bonds among children around the world. Journals named individual Chinese children on prayer lists, circulated to children in England.⁴³ Henrietta Harrison shows that French children invested financially in children’s missions in China.⁴⁴ Priests allowed French children to select the baptismal names of Chinese infants, thus fostering deep emotional ties.⁴⁵ Nevertheless, missionary stories of “heathen” children, according to Karen Sánchez-Eppler, shaped the spiritual identity of American children and their connections to religious and political imperialism.⁴⁶ In contrast, the Chinese child convert was expected to challenge traditional social hierarchies.

Missionaries ascribed to Chinese children agency to evangelize.⁴⁷ The *Child’s Paper* published a story in Chinese about a girl who, “although a small child,” converted her mother after listening to a foreign preacher’s sermon.⁴⁸ In the *Children’s Quarterly*, a missionary reported that when she tried “in vain to interest” a “crowd of young folks” in the Gospel, her adopted Chinese daughter suddenly began to preach and “so completely won their attention, that I could not help feeling that my little one had taught them more than I had done.” She then quoted the scripture, “Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings Thou hast perfected praise.”⁴⁹ Missionaries sometimes exaggerated the youth of Chinese children (who were often in fact teenagers) to highlight youthful heroism in the face of antiquated traditions.⁵⁰ In short, missionaries recognized their own limitations

and their need to rely on Chinese converts to evangelize; it was easier to imagine the convert as a child in need of instruction than as an autonomous adult.

Mutual competition—among missionaries, Japanese, and Chinese—encouraged experimentation with early childhood education as a venue for social engineering. Childhood socialization was no longer something one could take for granted; education became unfamiliar, a subject to explore anew. By introducing new childrearing practices from the West, missionaries helped to expand a variety of possibilities. As missionaries encountered local resistance, they increasingly imparted these skills to Chinese women who could serve as intermediaries. Zhang Zonglin noted that mission schools were much more successful at attracting young women to normal schools than small children to kindergartens and elementary schools.⁵¹ Historian Xiaoping Cong attributes this relative success in overcoming Chinese parental hesitancy to place children in mission schools to contact with Chinese women rather than Westerners and argues that indigenization created more educational and professional opportunities for Chinese women.⁵²

Scientific Childcare in a Revolutionary Age

In 1912 the minister of education, Cai Yuanpei, promised that education under the Republic would “adhere to the principles of childhood developmental psychology.”⁵³ Holder of a doctorate in experimental psychology from Germany, Cai encouraged the establishment of departments of psychology in China. New universities opened up positions for Chinese academics. Many faculty were returned students who had won Chinese government scholarships, stipulated by the Boxer Protocol, to study in the United States. Tsinghua University, founded with funds from the Boxer Indemnity, provided training for Chinese students preparing to study abroad. Among these was Chen Heqin, who had won a government scholarship in part on the basis of prevaricating about his age. At Tsinghua, Chen boycotted traditional Confucius “worship” required of students.⁵⁴ He enrolled in a course in food etiquette at the Shanghai YMCA, modeled on Edith Bremer’s YWCA International Institutes in the United States, which “pursued both cultural pluralism and social integration of newcomers in

American society.⁵⁵ According to later Communist critics, Chen epitomized the self-fashioned, semicolonized elite.

As so frequent in his later writing, health and culture were conjoined threads in Chen's reflections. But as an entering college freshman embarking on his studies in the United States, he vacillated between medicine and education. Given intense competition for employment, medicine seemed to offer a more stable and lucrative career. Chen also considered medicine the more patriotic option for serving society. However, on board the ship to the United States, fellow student Tao Xingzhi (1891–1946), who would later become one of John Dewey's most famous students in China, convinced Chen of China's need for educational professionals. Already enrolled in Johns Hopkins as a premedical student, Chen received his undergraduate degree there before pursuing a master's degree in education at Columbia Teachers College. He intended to continue studying educational psychology at Columbia University but exhausted his scholarship funds. Without a Ph.D. degree, he fortified his credentials in educational psychology by becoming a public intellectual, especially within Christian circles, on the basis of his publications and outreach. His early interest in medicine influenced his writings on childrearing.

Chineseness and Racial Self-Strengthening

Key to his assertions that Chinese childhood represented a distinct category was an assumption of racial distinction. Chen's experiences in the United States helped him to see "Chineseness"—or what it meant to be Chinese—as a racial category rather than a civilizational designation as had been the case in traditional China. According to Joseph Levenson, Chinese intellectuals in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries confronted the dilemma of either preserving Chinese civilization, at the expense of national power, or modernizing the state by rejecting tradition.⁵⁶ Chen circumvented this question—defining China as a civilization or a nation-state—by incorporating transnational notions of racial solidarity. In his view, because Chinese Americans suffered racial discrimination in the United States, they were linked to China in an international context of Western imperialism. Race helped to bind Chinese and Chinese Americans together in a form of cultural patriotism that included a civic concern

for China's national interests rather than simply a Darwinian push for Chinese racial advancement.⁵⁷

Americans (and later Chinese Communists) readily interpreted Chen's activities within the rubric of assimilation to American cultural values. Chen served as scoutmaster to the first Chinese American Boy Scout troop, which Americans saw as a triumph in race equality, proving that "Chinese youngsters are no different than youngsters of any other race."⁵⁸ But the troop was segregated. Chen guided scouts in reading Booker T. Washington's *Up from Slavery* as a model of self-improvement in the face of institutional prejudice. The troop gave the adolescents an opportunity to be "among their own people," and Chen encouraged scouts to learn about Chinese culture and society.⁵⁹

Chen presented himself as a cultural ambassador for China rather than a religious convert to Christianity, and thus reversed conventional conversion narratives. At a Christian summer camp "in the American South, [they] don't often see Chinese people, so they asked us [two Chinese students] about the strengths and weaknesses of China," Chen noted. "I took this opportunity to spread Chinese culture."⁶⁰ As a corollary to their mission work, Christian churches often asked international students to speak about their home culture.⁶¹ The first time Chen gave a public lecture, a teacher introduced him with heartfelt gratitude for the opportunity to learn about Confucius from "a real Chinaman." No expert on Confucius, Chen failed miserably and cried afterward.⁶² He must have understood that he derived authority among American audiences because of his race. In China, he would continue to draw on the authority of personal experience as an important resource for knowledge production.

In his studies in the United States, Chen also learned about racial difference as an analytical factor in the social sciences. The chair of Columbia's psychology department "assigned" Chen to write a dissertation on "a comparison of intelligence capacities among different races," and he completed one year of research before his Chinese-government scholarship expired.⁶³ Cross-racial analysis was common in psychology research in the early twentieth century; Chinese doctoral students, leveraging their community service in local schools, often conducted research in their own ethnic communities.⁶⁴ In their research, Chinese students often questioned the innate or learned characteristics between Chinese and Americans (sometimes to counter what they perceived as bias by Caucasian researchers).⁶⁵ Chen accepted the premise that Chinese children were inherently

distinct, no matter what their educational training, cultural habits, or learned behavior. Instead of importing established conclusions, Chen employed scientific methods to formulate his own principles, based on the unique nature of Chinese childhood.

Chen's Child Study in the May Fourth Era

As Chen returned to China in 1919, Chinese youth were becoming radicalized through increased engagement in politics. Responding to Japan's designs on Chinese territory at the conclusion of World War I, Chinese youth publicly protested in waves of Chinese nationalism. Because of Japan's aggressive stance in China, U.S. models gained popularity despite continued critiques of Christianity and disillusionment over President Woodrow Wilson's perceived failures at the Treaty of Versailles.⁶⁶ Limin Bai notes that this shift in preference from Japan to the United States applied to kindergarten models, especially in terms of the ideas of John Dewey.⁶⁷ Lecturing in China from 1919 to 1921, Dewey attracted so much approbation that the Congress of the Provincial Education Association requested the Republic's educational aims be revised to include "the Deweyian statement 'the cultivation of a healthy personality and the development of the spirit of democracy.'"⁶⁸ In this context, Columbia University rose in prominence, along with the career trajectories of its graduates. The cachet of Columbia intersected with the demand for indigenization, and these trends opened doors for Chen.

The May Fourth Movement also marked a general shift away from the imitation of foreign models, Western or Japanese.⁶⁹ Female normal school students demanded the indigenization of childhood psychology and early childhood education. In 1920 the Peking Women's Normal College compiled a volume that reflected both the political and intellectual urgency for an indigenous childhood education. Their definition of "indigenization" differed significantly from that of missionaries; it was not enough that teachers have Chinese faces. In the words of one student, "we need to research a specifically Chinese kind of childhood education." She employed the metaphor of "slavery" to describe "blindly following" foreign pedagogical models. Experts had not yet created an indigenous model to reflect the modern Chinese child.⁷⁰ By asserting that modern Chinese children differed from both their foreign and ancient counterparts, Chinese students

implied that modern Chinese children had a complex psychology all their own.

When Chen Heqin claimed to pioneer Chinese childhood psychology, he drew on the model of Charles Darwin.⁷¹ Darwin's article "A Biographical Sketch of an Infant" (1877) had placed "child observation" in the realm of scientific inquiry. By extending his scientific methods of detailed journal keeping and evolutionary analysis to his own offspring, Darwin included human infants within the same categories of species evolution as other animals. Guarding against age conflation in his observations, he carefully described his son's behavior in terms of what "would be considered" a particular emotion "in an older child." Often behaviors seemed surprising only given misconceptions about age-related development but could be readily explained through the lens of animal instinct. For example, Darwin was at first surprised that at only three months his son laughed, but then he reflected on the playfulness of kittens and puppies. Infants exhibited behaviors considered precocious for their age but natural given their species evolution.⁷² Darwin's explanations influenced Sigmund Freud to question the natural innocence of children and spurred the observation of childhood in the fields of pedagogy and pediatrics in the United States after the turn of the century.⁷³ Darwin's scientific gaze radically challenged sentimental conceptions of childhood.

In keeping with Darwin's methods, Chen Heqin recorded his observations of his son as the basis of his scientific work. He carefully recorded time with precision, both relative to the child's life and to real time, beginning with the first notation, "This child was born at 2:09 on December 26, 1920."⁷⁴ Referring to his son as "this child" and himself as "the father," Chen maintained a scientific tone of critical distance. For instance, he wrote that on the 179th day, the child cried until his parents returned home at 9:00. There were two possible explanations for the child's discomfort: "one, extreme hunger; two, the absence of those he most intimately loves."⁷⁵ With these two alternative explanations, Chen juxtaposed physical instincts and emotional needs. Because he erased any personal reference to himself in an effort to remain scientifically neutral, he referred to his son's growing affection for him in tentative terms that belie a degree of anxiety.

Chen's visual records tended to express, more clearly than his textual notes, sentimental depictions of childhood and family life. Carefully cataloged and enumerated as amendments to his journal, many photographs

captured the warmth of family affection. For example, one caption read, “Grandma loves to hold the baby,” thus preserving a moment of family intimacy. Other annotations described the toddler’s play, celebrating his cognitive abilities and physical achievements at particular milestones.⁷⁶ The photographs had brief, scientific captions in *Child Psychology Research*, but the same or similar photographs gained much more sentimentalized captions in his popular parenting manual, *Home Education*. Thus his work researched the science of sentiment and also sentimentalized science.

Scientific Motherhood, Companionable Fatherhood

To gain a broader audience outside of academia (and in part because of the relative limitations of holding only a master’s degree), Chen Heqin presented himself as a child expert in the popular media. By the turn of the century in the United States, child observation had influenced not only established scientists but also public intellectuals, called “child experts,” who advised mothers on childrearing in terms of both physical and emotional growth. The earliest child experts “envisaged mothers as their able collaborators in a data-gathering enterprise that had just begun.”⁷⁷ They also used academic credentials to gain credibility, especially since many educational psychologists valued quantitative measurement over child study. Chen translated scientific studies,⁷⁸ and he promoted his authority as a child expert and public intellectual by granting newspaper interviews.⁷⁹

Chen repackaged his data into *Home Education*. In contrast to his scientific articles, this publication incorporated anecdotal information in a conversational writing style. Chen drew heavily on personal experience, from both his own children and his kindergarten students. He evaluated these experiences through the lens of physical hygiene and mental health. To assert the novelty of scientific childrearing, he aggressively criticized old-fashioned approaches and claimed that “Fröbel was a revolutionary.”⁸⁰ Like many other twentieth-century intellectuals, Chen assumed that traditional Chinese had muted the exuberance of childhood: “Our old-fashioned families often viewed children as ‘miniature adults’ (*xiao chengren*). Not only do they put a lively child into long-sleeved mandarin gowns to restrict their movement, but they also tell children to imitate adults in every single movement. No wonder there are so many ‘precocious’ children in our country.”⁸¹ Such evaluations echoed Zhou Zuoren’s disparagement of traditional

society treatment of children as miniature adults in 1920, and both presaged Philippe Aries's historical paradigm, along much the same lines. Echoing New Culture ideals, Chen described Confucian injunctions, mirrored in cultural sayings, as restrictive, and the reason so many Chinese people grew "prematurely weak." Asserting that it was the patriotic duty of parents to raise their children correctly or else betray the nation, Chen urged parents to rejuvenate China.⁸²

In the context of May Fourth radicalism, Chen softened the family patriarch but did not overthrow him. According to Chen, in the new Republic, fathers should be companions rather than old-fashioned disciplinarians. He contrasted his companionable relationship with his son with his painful memories of his "extremely strict" father.⁸³ Because Chen advised fathers to be less strict and mothers to be less permissive, his classmate Tao Xingzhi observed, "I can see that he has taught [his son] Yimin to feel that he has a maternal father, a sister-like father, but he [Chen] has never lost his fundamental role as a father."⁸⁴ For both Tao and Chen, companionate fatherhood was intrinsically somewhat feminine. Chen prided himself on his feminine relationality with his children (and later his students), who playfully called him "mother Chen." While contrasting his "loving methods" with his father's strictness, Chen nevertheless strongly warned against "weakly doting on children."⁸⁵ His student and colleague Zhang Zonglin noted their unusual position of being male kindergarten teachers. Nevertheless, his maleness, as well as his overseas credentials, helped to propel Chen as a child expert rather than just another female normal school graduate. Chen drew on his personal experiences to make his arguments more compelling, much in the manner that his contemporaries were publishing personal stories of victimhood for political revolution.⁸⁶

In his childrearing manual, Chen employed sentimental details in ways that contradicted the scientific observations of his journals. In *Home Education*, he used captions to encourage the reader to view children through a sentimental rather than scientific lens. As a caption to a photograph of his daughter in a garden, Chen wrote, "Children are especially cute" and "Today's children are tomorrow's citizens." (See figure 1.1.) These sentimental and political messages were unequivocal. The photographs often served as proof that the children responded positively to the childrearing methods he prescribed. Chen explained child psychology in terms of proclivities—what children naturally "like" to do, and how parents could

花 固 可 愛

小 孩 子 尤 其 可 愛

教 小 孩 子 要 從 小 教 起 的。



優 良 的 天 賦，

美 備 的 環 境，

健 全 的 教 育，

是 小 孩 子 一 身 幸 福 的 根 源

今 日 之 孩 子

即 他 日 之 國 民

Figure 1.1 *Jiating jiaoyu* 家庭教育 (1927)

Stanford University Library

manipulate that information to their own advantage. He presented child psychology as a parenting tool to correct children's misbehavior and form their character.

Although Chen criticized "old-fashioned" parents, he maintained traditional parenting goals. Despite the pejorative language about "long-sleeved gowns," Chen facilitated the parental goal of encouraging academic success. He simply asserted that the best path toward adult maturation was a playful and naturally "childlike" childhood—as well as regular diet and exercise. His parenting advice would benefit not only children but also parents. Chen argued that kindergartens would give parents a respite from "pestering" children.⁸⁷ Here, Chen perhaps envisioned overwhelmed fathers like Zhu Ziqing (1898–1948), who sought in vain to delight in his rowdy brood.⁸⁸ Chen also warned parents against committing the same mistakes that he and his wife had, in rocking infants to sleep too long, which accustomed children to sleep with parents at night. Thus, for all his concern for children, Chen also sought to alleviate parental burdens through expert advice and early childhood education outside of the home.

Chen viewed children within the framework of species evolution but in ways that supported the family as the foundation of society. He selectively translated and cited the ideas of Darwinian philosopher John Fisk (1842–1901). In *The Meaning of Infancy*, Fisk argued that "the lengthening" of human infancy had contributed to the evolution of man's "capacity for progress."⁸⁹ After comparing species, Chen concluded that the extended duration of human pregnancy had benefited human evolution by allowing a longer period of growth.⁹⁰ This analytic framework thus reinforced a new movement among educators to protect an extended period of childhood and to curb long-standing trends toward academic precocity. Despite Chen's disparagement of Confucian dictates, he, like many others, cited Mozi's analogy between dyed silk and the imprint of environment on character; this metaphor gave experts a Chinese equivalent to John Locke's notions of childhood as a "blank sheet of paper" but emphasized social engineering over childhood innocence.

Chen's study of scientific evolution reinforced his emphasis on family values. He drew on Fisk to argue that the family as an organizational unit had evolved according to the needs of children. Fisk lauded the family as an advancement in civilization: "Real monogamy, real faithfulness of the male parent, belonged to a comparatively advanced stage."⁹¹ Thus Chen's

stance—widely accepted among May Fourth intellectuals—against concubinage adhered to a particular conceptualization of social Darwinism and Christian notions of practical morality. For Chen, the moral center of the family was the parent-child bond because it necessitated husband-wife monogamy. Chen commented that children had an “important status” because of their “cohesive force” in maintaining marriages. By enlivening family life, children encouraged “sympathetic sentiments,” “the spirit of sacrifice,” and “mutual cooperation” in both the family and society.⁹² Whereas his European and American counterparts asserted that Western childhood *had* contributed to advancing civilization, Chen elevated the “status” of children *to encourage* family reform.

Chen demonstrated that some remnant of Confucian values endured in his commitment to the family. Susan Glosser categorizes Chen as among a relatively conservative group of middle-class reformers.⁹³ Chen’s emphasis on “good childrearing” was emblematic of the small Chinese school of positive eugenics, led by his contemporary Pan Guangdan (1899–1967), whose publications were funded by the Shanghai YMCA.⁹⁴ Both Chen and Pan conducted surveys of college youth. One young man claimed that public institutions for elder care and childcare would one day replace Confucian expectations for grown sons to “respect the elderly and cherish the young”; Chen responded that such abnegation of responsibility was neither possible nor advisable.⁹⁵ This comment illustrates Chen’s commitment to eldercare—despite Chinese trends to fragment the extended family. According to Glosser, Chen misread student surveys when he claimed that young men remained at home to support their parents rather than to gain emotional support.⁹⁶ But that interpretation was in keeping with his own sense of duty toward his widowed mother, who lived with him throughout her old age. Chen certainly appreciated her contributions looking after her seven grandchildren.⁹⁷ Like Mao Zedong, Chen sided emotionally with his mother when he saw, at a young age, his father beat his mother, but Chen’s solution was scientific reform and emotional transformation rather than political revolution.

Chen envisioned public institutions buttressing, rather than replacing, the family. In his parenting manuals, he indicated that educational institutions could never substitute for families. It was the role of the kindergarten teacher, and Chen’s parenting manual, to help inform and supplement family education within the home. Chen and Pan asserted their roles of authority about modern childrearing, and thus also proper family

relationships. In this way Chen took on the mantle of teacher vis-à-vis the relatively more radical (and sometimes anti-Christian) May Fourth youth.

Reception of Drum Tower Kindergarten

Because of his background and values, Chen Heqin found the most receptive audience to be Christians who accepted race-based definitions of Chineseness and models of indigenization. Christians welcomed Chen's basic arguments about the child's centrality to the family. For example, in her M.A. thesis in 1932, Chu I Yang echoed Chen when she wrote, "Children mean a great deal to the family, even though they hold only a little place according to the old Chinese family system."⁹⁸ Chen and other Christians worked to elevate children's status and to modernize the Chinese family in the Republic.

While May Fourth intellectuals argued that modern scientists had dismissed religions (including Christianity) as superstition, foreign missionaries increasingly emphasized the common ground among Christianity, Confucianism, and progressivism.⁹⁹ For example, the YWCA journal the *Green Year* (*Qingnian*, which could also be translated as "youth") introduced Freudian child psychology with rhetoric and images of playful childhood drawn by famed artist Feng Zikai (1895–1975), inspired lovingly by his own brood.¹⁰⁰ Thus in both the *Green Year* and *Home Education*, illustrations depicted childhood in sentimental terms in contrast to the scientific content of the text. The enchantment of childhood helped to mask, in the *Green Year*, the more unsavory aspects of Freud, just as it obscured the more unpleasant aspects of Darwinian influences in *Home Education*. In the *Green Year*, Chinese women echoed the long-standing missionary drive to tailor education to the Chinese child and cautioned, "If instructors who guide children neglect the principles of child psychology, their work will betray God's purpose."¹⁰¹

Chinese child educators agreed with the need to indigenize early childhood education based in part on numbers of Chinese kindergartens. In 1920 the female students of early childhood education had charted the growth of kindergartens around the world and lamented China's lack of statistics: "China is the most childish [*youzhi*, in this context, backward] country, in terms of early childhood education."¹⁰² In the 1930s child experts cited Chen Heqin's statistics from 1924 that China had 156 mission

kindergartens in contrast to only 34 native ones.¹⁰³ Chen established the Drum Tower Kindergarten to serve middle-class faculty at Dongnan University.¹⁰⁴ His kindergarten provided him with a basis for conducting educational experiments and publishing children's textbooks. He admitted that a "huge problem" was the kindergarten's reliance on "foreign materials." Reiterating the concerns of students at Peking Women's Normal School, he complained that, without a unified national curriculum, "All kindergartens follow mission-school methods and outdated Western precedents." When importing foreign theories, teachers failed to adjust them to Chinese children. Chen adapted a metaphor from Cinderella (recalling China's tradition of foot binding) to describe the unsuitable "fit" of Western models for Chinese children: "It's as if they are forcing traditional methods by cutting off toes in order to force feet into ill-fitting shoes."¹⁰⁵ Chen thus depicted psychology as biologically innate, in the manner of foot size and shape. Furthermore, like the female students at Beijing Normal, he aimed to surpass Fröbel and Montessori to address the needs of Chinese children.

Chen's answer to the problem of indigenization was to study his students and to tailor curricula and toys to their needs. As Susan Fernsebner notes, the kindergarten movement intersected with the "native-goods movement" to boycott foreign goods on patriotic grounds. Educational toys were merely one tool in a larger philosophical and institutional program for the kindergarten movement. Chen helped to introduce American influences that inspired a greater degree of creativity through a new focus on the happiness of children. According to new national standards, which Chen would help to outline, the main goals of kindergartens were to increase children's mental and emotional health, to facilitate children's happiness, and to assist parents in family education.¹⁰⁶ Children's happiness thus became an explicit part of the curriculum. Normal school psychology textbooks also asserted that educators had a responsibility to develop the individuality and unique traits of each child.¹⁰⁷ "Work," in the context of the kindergarten, was defined by such activities as drawing, folding origami, playing with clay, and singing. As in the Qing, the goal was to develop the habit of physical exertion, increase working capacity, and inculcate a spirit for community service but, in the Republic, with a greater degree of attention to each child's sense of fun.¹⁰⁸

The daily schedule of the kindergarten included play, work, and learning. When Chen Heqin and Zhang Zonglin wrote *Kindergarten Curriculum*, they defined the modern kindergarten as different from old methods, with

health inspections, outside play, snack time, and naptime, according to the Montessori Methods, in a six-hour day.¹⁰⁹ Qing educators had sought to increase motor skills through carefully controlled exercises, but Chen championed relatively more unrestricted “free play” in natural settings. Drum Tower Kindergarten included lessons about the school’s garden, petting zoo, and class pets. As advocated by Dewey, the kindergartners took field trips to learn about the post office or public transportation.¹¹⁰ Like Rousseau, Chen championed children’s “observational research” of natural phenomena like the changing of the seasons.¹¹¹ He complained that parents were too afraid of allowing their children to play outside, in nature, but also recommended they wash with antibacterial soaps.

Chen fostered children’s personal hygiene and health. “Homework” included brushing teeth. Chen reinforced trends to measure and monitor the growth of children, and he also educated families about medicine. Each year the kindergarten curricula included a discussion of the need for vaccinations. In November the school ran medical examinations and conducted home visits. The kindergarten also invited parents to the school for student performances and art displays that showcased their happy achievements.¹¹² A questionnaire surveyed parents about sleeping patterns, diet, and digestion, and Chen used some of their examples in his parenting manual. These measures aimed to cooperate with parents rather than challenge parental authority.

Just as Chen sought to educate mothers through instruction on Chinese child psychology, he also professionalized teachers through institutions for Chinese children. In 1926 he helped to found the Chinese Educational Society, which aimed to “promote a professional spirit among educators,”¹¹³ especially those in primary and kindergarten education.¹¹⁴ Members were originally drawn from the local organizations with personal connections to Chen, but by 1934 it had expanded to include 1,600 members. Chen emphasized its scientific goals: he described the society as “a pure research organization that studies primary school, childhood education, and family education, and [as] having an emphasis on practical problems concerning childhood education and [as] providing practical reference materials for childhood education.”¹¹⁵ Through publications by the Chinese Educational Society, his kindergarten’s curriculum became widely influential. His educational materials would provide the standard reference for kindergarten instructional materials for years to come.¹¹⁶

In 1926 Chen Heqin, his student Zhang Zonglin, and other prominent educators contributed to the Republic's curricular standards for kindergartens. In those national standards, kindergartens promoted citizenship training and patriotic education about Sun Yat-sen, the national flag, patriotic stories, and Chinese folk tales. General knowledge included information about history, geography, and citizenry rituals for the new Republic. Kindergarten teachers mediated between child and state. For example, as modeled in Drum Tower Kindergarten, teachers enforced public health standards and reinforced new civic practices (such as bowing to the national flag).¹¹⁷ Because most kindergartens were private and thus not under direct state control, state influence was transmitted through private publications, model kindergartens, and educational associations like Chen's. As Peter Zarrow has noted, the ROC did not direct the production of textbooks, but authors nevertheless closely followed new political currents.¹¹⁸

The professional society allowed elementary school and kindergarten teachers a venue to circulate their ideas. The Chinese Educational Society met annually during the 1930s to discuss particular themes in childhood education. Through Drum Tower Kindergarten, the society published a periodical, *Children's Education*, as well as a series of children's books and textbooks. The society offered primary school teachers opportunities for professional advancement by allowing some members to tour Europe and America.¹¹⁹ The Chinese Educational Society expressed hope to reach the poor as well as the elite. Among the professional goals of the organization was to "push for progress in children's welfare services."¹²⁰

It is worth comparing the Drum Tower Kindergarten to its contemporary, Fragrant Hills Orphanage, a genuine charity. Founded by the former premier of the Republic, Xiong Xiling (1870–1937), as an extension of his famine relief, Fragrant Hills was a large home for unattached children of various ages, rather than a private kindergarten for middle-class parents. Nevertheless, the two shared some important characteristics, especially in terms of the overlap between education and research. In 1923 Xiong's first wife, along with Chen Heqin's friend Tao Xingzhi, established the National Association for the Promotion of Mass Education, and this organization became connected with Fragrant Hills by 1930.¹²¹ Likewise, the Drum Tower Kindergarten published materials produced by the Chinese Educational Society, with a strong affiliation with Dongnan College's research department. Both institutions thus became vehicles for research, which

helped to bridge between charitable instruction for the poor and kindergartens for the wealthy.¹²²

Although Chen Heqin's efforts could be seen within the larger movement to create "native" kindergarten institutions, some contemporaries criticized him for lacking progressive values. In the preface to a reprinting of *Home Education*, Chen responded to charges of sexism and Western assimilation. He defended himself by arguing that his choice of documenting his son rather than his daughter, and of speaking English rather than Chinese at home, reflected circumstantial resources rather than preferential bias. As the eldest, his son served as the first possible research subject; moreover, his children could easily integrate into the larger Chinese environment.¹²³ Foreshadowing Pierre Bourdieu,¹²⁴ Chen thus assumed that the social habitus of local Chinese society had more power to absorb than to be absorbed. The context of Chen's kindergarten curriculum, coupled with his assertions that he was paving new ground in "Chinese" child psychology, indicate an underlying assumption that his children would always remain Chinese, no matter how they dressed or what language they spoke. Chen appropriated academic definitions about the biological demarcation of race as a form of distinction, but his non-Christian audience was relatively more sensitive to the possibility of ethnic mimicry and cultural assimilation.

Chen's definitions of indigenization could thus appear ephemeral to those who did not share his understanding of racial distinctions. Within the parameters of studying the "Chinese" child, Chen rarely if ever explicitly compared Chinese and non-Chinese children beyond their social contexts; hence it is difficult to pinpoint the way that Chen arrived at the "indigenous" within his work. It is unclear what made the Chinese child biologically or even ethnically distinct for Chen. In contrast to the work of Pedro Orata, for example, in emphasizing music for Filipino children,¹²⁵ Chen defined the characteristics of childhood in much broader terms, about the need for proper diet and play, which may hardly seem unique to the Chinese child (except in terms of their supposed historical neglect, which he highlighted). The "indigenous" innovations of his curriculum appear largely political. For example, Chen generated new political content, such as the commemoration of national leader Sun Yat-sen, when he published children's stories based on Chinese history and folklore. While an important component of indigenization, these contributions point to China's particular political environment rather than innate racial differences.

Conclusion

Missionaries had long hoped to unleash the potential of Chinese youth to challenge Confucian patriarchy, but Chinese youth of the May Fourth Movement far outstripped missionary critiques of Chinese traditions. The movement arose on college campuses in response to Japanese claims on Chinese territory (conceded by Germany) at the end of World War I; the rise of age-graded curricula culminated in higher education thus indirectly contributed to the phenomenon of “New Youth.” Chen Heqin applauded some aspects of the New Culture Movement’s efforts to overturn Confucian traditions and to “discover” modern childhood. Nevertheless, he sought to reform but conserve the Chinese family along Western lines and in accordance with social Darwinian theory. While many Chinese may have considered Chen a Westernized convert, he drew on racial definitions to develop an indigenous form of childhood education and eugenic childrearing.

Chen responded to the call to indigenize early childhood education, first by studying the Chinese child and administering Chinese schools, and then by creating an academic program in higher education. He asserted that as a unique subject, the Chinese child formed a unique object of scientific study. Although adhering to the legitimacy of science, he in some ways also challenged the universal claims of Western knowledge—perhaps in a process somewhat similar to what Sanjay Seth describes in colonial India. As Seth notes, one dominant aspect of Western thought since Weber has been to desentimentalize objects of scientific inquiry;¹²⁶ in contrast, Chen negotiated the emotional tension of analyzing his own child by claiming that Western-style sentimentalization could be instrumentalized for what he considered revolutionary political purposes.

By increasing the sentimental value of a happy childhood within the family unit, Chen implicitly critiqued May Fourth proposals for envisioning public institutions as serving the purely functional needs of dependent children and elders; the emotional labor of parenting (and grandparenting) was an important part of traditional values of “respecting values and cherishing children.” In the context of May Fourth denunciations of the Chinese family, more radical than Christian critiques of Chinese patriarchy, Chen also advocated a version of family reform far more palatable to Christians, and thus in 1928 he became the minister of Chinese education in the International Settlement in Shanghai. Chen’s elevation to minister, a position

rarely granted to native Chinese, was a response to ROC regulations in 1927 limiting mission evangelism and promoting Chinese administrators.¹²⁷ Ignoring his efforts at indigenization, critics in the 1950s labeled Chen a “comprador” almost indistinguishable from imperialists.¹²⁸ Their criticism perhaps indirectly confirms his influence. Chen helped substantiate the scientific justification for a specific Chinese Christian approach to child welfare, which would facilitate cooperation between Chinese Christians, Americans, and non-Christian Chinese under the Republic of China.

Cherishing Children

*The National Child Welfare Association
in the Nanjing Decade, 1928–1937*

Conflict and competition dominate our narratives of Sino-Western encounters, even those of transnational charity. This emphasis is due in part to the traditional welfare obligations of the Chinese state. The Qing empire had derived legitimacy from its considerable ability to mobilize grain relief in the eighteenth century, but by the end of the nineteenth, Westerners often managed famine relief—the political implication being, to Chinese audiences, to discredit state authority.¹ Furthermore, charities could undermine Chinese state control. Caroline Reeves notes that charities like the Japanese Red Cross were sometimes even leveraged to encroach on Chinese national territory.² According to Thomas DuBois, foreign imperialism compromised international relief efforts.³ Chinese elites readily understood and condemned connections between foreign imperialism and evangelical charity.

While compelling, such narratives overlook the ways in which the Republic of China promoted new models of international cooperation and national solidarity in the name of shared civic values.⁴ In 1927 ROC officials encouraged all religious organizations to pursue public welfare.⁵ This injunction reframed charitable activities as a civic responsibility, rather than a religious calling.⁶ Likewise, through rights-recovery regulations, the ROC also restricted latitude to evangelize. Zeng Guilin traces negotiations between the state and religious organizations to increase transparency

and minimize the likelihood of corruption.⁷ As a result, religious charities increasingly secularized as a form of civic philanthropy.

As a “foreign religion,” Protestant charities especially sought to improve their public image through government connections. One organization tackled the fraught issue of child welfare in ways that complicated international lines of diplomacy and cut across sovereign boundaries in Shanghai. In 1928 Chinese Christian leaders, such as Chiang Kai-shek’s brother-in-law Kong Xiangxi, founded the National Child Welfare Association in Shanghai with the financial backing of its sister organization, China Child Welfare, Inc., based in New York. The association lobbied the ROC for greater legal protections on the basis of its scientific research. In the 1940s child welfare worker Doris Ho called the NCWA the oldest child welfare organization *of its kind*.⁸ Maura Cunningham also credits the NCWA with executing the lion’s share of child welfare services in Shanghai during the Nanjing era.⁹

The NCWA aimed to improve quality of aid rather than simply extend its coverage. With Americans relegated to financing rather than directing projects, the Shanghai headquarters evaluated Christian mission homes across China and channeled money from the United States to improve their services. American funders thus implicitly acknowledged their dependence on Chinese leaders to improve the services and reputation of Christian missions in China. With experts like Chen Heqin as secretary, the NCWA furthered the standing of Chinese Christians and provided them with service and professional opportunities. In the NCWA Chinese Christians also reached out to non-Christian allies to lobby for legal protections and state-sponsored programs for children.

If American funders demonstrated their support for Chinese (especially Christian) political leaders in the ROC, Chinese Nationalists signaled their competence to retake treaty ports, such as the International Settlement and French Concession of Shanghai. As part of a nationalistic enterprise to reestablish authority over a country fragmented by semicolonialism and warlordism, Chiang Kai-shek, then head of the Guomindang, adopted modern state institutions. After positing this thesis in relation to police work, Frederic Wakeman inspired scholars to recognize the ROC’s (and even the Qing’s) need to prove modern self-sufficiency in other areas such as health and law.¹⁰ In the arena of child welfare, the ROC’s assertions of sovereign independence complicated Sino-Western cooperation. This environment gave rise to what Andrea Janku terms a “dual system” of Chinese and

international aid.¹¹ When modernizing charity, urban Chinese elites cooperated not only with international organizations but also with traditional Chinese charities in rural areas.

Cooperation between Shanghai and New York masked tensions about child welfare. Although Western funders promised to defer to Chinese leaders, they also insisted on financial transparency, office management, and photographic documentation that significantly Westernized the organization. By challenging Chinese nepotism, Western funders further pushed elite Chinese away from familial modes of organization. Chinese and Western leaders also clashed over fundraising techniques. For example, U.S. funders preferred photographs of needy children in fundraising campaigns, whereas Chinese leaders captured images of well-run institutions and circulated attractive portraits of donors' families to inspire confidence and draw investment in their organization. The NCWA showcased the health and patriotism of children as a symbol of China's vigorous future.

Money and Leadership, Between China and the United States

The National Child Welfare Association lobbied to protect childhood from labor, abuse, and exploitation. In 1925, soon after the failure of the Child Labor Bylaw, Chinese leaders had begun to plan for the NCWA.¹² In his capacity as minister of industry and commerce, Kong Xiangxi continued the efforts by the Child Labor Committee to impose minimum age requirements for child labor but expanded its activism to include other areas of child protection, such as medical care and juvenile law. Chief among its new tactics was providing welfare services with international funding and ROC government cooperation.

Meanwhile, American Christians founded China Child Welfare to support its sister organization in China financially. In the spring of 1927 its leaders applied for legal status as a philanthropic organization in the United States and then traveled to China to formalize the relationship the following year.¹³ In June former missionary J. S. Nagle became the head of China Child Welfare. Operated out of the headquarters of the City Bank of New York (now Citibank), one of the first American banks to enter China after the Opium Wars, the organization remitted donations via the bank's branch office in Shanghai for philanthropic work in China.

In 1931 the NCWA formally registered with the ROC and was then “licensed” to conduct work in child welfare “throughout the country.”¹⁴ Headquartered in Shanghai, the association soon established branches in major Chinese cities.¹⁵ The NCWA coordinated the efforts of existing organizations and sometimes inspected alleged misconduct among local missions. Western funders triangulated the relationship between national and local elites in China. Through the NCWA, urban elites cooperated with bureaus at different levels of government and across national and ethnic lines. In terms of political networking, curricular content, and symbolic function, the NCWA projected an image of Chinese leadership both in society and within the home. Leaders presented childhood as a site of social intervention, both in terms of the deterrence of crime among poor children as well as fostering of leadership among elite children.

The NCWA embedded a traditional term, “cherishing the young” (*ciyou*), in its Chinese title to refer to Confucian values of extending love for one’s own children to those of others.¹⁶ The term was traditionally paired with “respecting elders” (*zunlao*) and connected to Confucian values of filial reverence. The association defined “child welfare” as the holistic “well-being” of all children and often used the term synonymously with “happiness.”¹⁷ Like child psychologist and NCWA board member Chen Heqin, the NCWA sought to raise the status of children and thereby modernize the Chinese family. The association emphasized benefits to *all* children but nevertheless differentiated children along the lines of gender and class.

In the early 1930s the NCWA spearheaded a national movement to cherish the young. The association first published *Child Welfare Monthly*¹⁸ but then targeted middle-class parents much more specifically in its second journal, *Modern Parents*. Notwithstanding this shift, the organization continued to champion “cherishing children” as an impetus for philanthropic programs for the poor. The association aimed to uplift all children as a strategic measure to ease class tensions. In 1934 the Shanghai Municipality formed the Children’s Bureau (more technically translated from the Chinese as the Child Happiness Committee) with members of the NCWA.¹⁹ The word “happiness” in the Chinese title of the Children’s Bureau emphasized the importance of child welfare, but the committee operated along the lines of the U.S. Children’s Bureau.²⁰ The Shanghai Children’s Bureau undertook specific tasks for child protection. The association also received ROC tax breaks on the publication of its journals.²¹ In return for performing paragonovernmental functions, such as sheltering

street children, the NCWA received substantial subsidies by 1935 from the Chinese Ministry of Finance.²²

The association provided an important platform for political leaders to assert their concern for all Chinese children as future leaders of the nation. In addition to Kong Xiangxi, it drew support from national-level officials like former premier Xiong Xiling and nominated Chiang Kai-shek and Dai Jitao (1891–1949), the first head of the Examination Yuan, as honorary presidents.²³ Dai and Xiong also contributed to founding lay Buddhist charity institutions, and so their inclusion bespoke a willingness to cooperate with government leaders for secular progress. The advisory committee also included Alfred Sze (1877–1958), ROC ambassador to the United States, as well as Dr. Timothy Lew (1891–1947), dean of Peking University.²⁴ Xiong and Sze became especially prominent as members of cross-ministry commissions for charitable aid in the Nationalist era. These Chinese politicians had extensive ties with Westerners and helped to facilitate international diplomacy with regard to child welfare. Western funders asserted that the NCWA's government ties would facilitate real change.²⁵

The executive level of the national NCWA included nationally recognized figures, but its committee members generally stemmed from the professional middle class—especially in urban branches, including the Shanghai NCWA. These members often had extensive connections to the International Settlement of Shanghai. Dr. Zhu Zhanggeng (1900–1978) served as both a health officer for the School Health Division of the Shanghai Special Municipality and a member of the NCWA Child Study Committee. Chen Heqin became the minister of Chinese education for the Shanghai Special Municipality. Hu Yigu (b. 1876), a judge in the Shanghai Municipality, also served as the head of the NCWA Child Protection Committee. They conducted survey work for the NCWA in the foreign concession. The organization thus promoted Western-trained Chinese men as professional experts. These reformers could also “stimulate governmental interest and responsibility in the welfare of China's children.”²⁶

*Christian and Non-Christian Connections:
Welfare as a Strategy*

The NCWA recruited members from business circles and Christian communities in Shanghai. The association drew on the financial help and

voluntary support of the Shanghai Women's Club. The president of the Shanghai General Chamber of Commerce endorsed the association and permitted it to conduct general meetings in the chamber.²⁷ Garfield Huang (Huang Jiawei), secretary of the National Committee of the YMCA and the founder of the National Anti-Opium Association, served as acting secretary of the NCWA. Fundraising practices targeted local Chinese Christians. In 1929 local Chinese churches contributed clothes and 4,000 U.S. dollars for famine in North China.²⁸ Kong Xiangxi suggested a "Child Welfare Day," with Sunday services designated for preaching the importance of child welfare and collecting special contributions from the offertory box.²⁹ The church calendar thus inspired new fundraising strategies.

New York emphasized to U.S. donors that NCWA leaders were Christian.³⁰ Kong, a descendent of Confucius, had converted to Christianity and graduated from Oberlin College. He temporarily convened meetings, which he opened with a prayer, in his own office to save on overhead costs.³¹ Christian journals also identified the religious motivation for the NCWA. As member of the NCWA and in his capacity as editor of *The China Mission Yearbook* and the *Chinese Recorder*, Dr. Frank Rawlinson (1871–1937) analogized the association to "an infant facing Goliath" and proclaimed that Christians had a special mission to protect children and thereby build a strong Chinese nation.³² Chinese-language Christian periodicals also identified the NCWA as Christian charity.³³

The New York office further suggested that the NCWA affiliate itself with the National Christian Council of China (NCC).³⁴ The secretary of the NCC was at the time also one of the founding members of the NCWA.³⁵ And yet the NCC voted against supporting the child welfare movement as a possible distraction from its mission to spread the Gospel.³⁶ Apparently, child welfare could potentially divert funds and resources to activities that were not specifically evangelical. Both Chinese and Americans also agreed that the NCWA should be inclusive and broadly ecumenical.³⁷ The NCWA, for example, sometimes helped remit dedicated donations to Catholic charities in China.³⁸ As the NCC had predicted, Christian belief was not a requirement for the NCWA's social services, nor were such services integrated into evangelical recruitment.

Despite its Christian connections, the NCWA also cooperated with non-Christian institutions. It remitted funds from the Golden Rule Foundation to former premier Xiong Xiling's Western Hills Orphanage and

showcased the institution in its publicity material as a model.³⁹ The NCWA also willingly relinquished some of its wards to the non-Christian organization. For example, in 1930 ten boys, ages fourteen to seventeen, originally from Shandong, left the Longhua Orphanage in Shanghai for Western Hills to learn a trade.⁴⁰ Established in 1906 in response to a famine, the orphanage (also called the Shanghai Industrial Orphanage) emphasized vocational training. The board of directors included such prominent Buddhist philanthropists as Wang Yiting (1867–1938). As Janet Chen notes, the orphanage did not punish wards for refusing to convert but cultivated a Christian environment by setting aside time for daily prayers and Sabbath rest.⁴¹ Child welfare was thus an important arena for cooperation for a variety of Republican-era power holders.

Professional Women in Child Services

The NCWA followed global trends, shifting from elite female volunteerism to professional welfare services. Recognizing the importance of Christian women in promoting child welfare, Kong Xiangxi suggested hiring “a lady” to serve as second vice-chair. The association approved Lucy Kuo, the Christian wife of educator Guo Bingwen (1880–1969).⁴² Already active in the Women’s Social Service League, she traveled among circles in the Chinese Christian community.⁴³ She was fluent in English and communicated regularly with the New York office.⁴⁴ Acting Secretary Garfield Huang argued that, given Lucy Kuo’s “training and experience,” the NCWA should hire her full-time with a stipend of 100 yuan.⁴⁵ Huang valued her “motherly heart,” especially for girls, and defended her “Christian principles” in continuing to honor her marriage vows even after her husband had abandoned her.⁴⁶ Allegedly without her knowledge, to avoid causing “embarrassment” regarding her financial difficulties, her friends petitioned the association to ensure her salary.⁴⁷ Private funders secured her stipend.⁴⁸ When Lucy Kuo recommended her friend for a position, she also highlighted both the woman’s need, as a widow, and her qualifications after completing a professional course in kindergarten training. Even while creating salaried work for professional women, the NCWA rewarded traditional Confucian chastity in the guise of Christian morality.

In the 1930s the NCWA worked in conjunction with Christian colleges and mission schools to professionalize child welfare education. According

to the New York office, one of the goals of the organization was “the training of Chinese child welfare workers” in accordance with the medical advice of Dr. Josephine Baker; her “The Little Mother’s League” was translated by the Christian Literature Society and taught to high school girls in treaty ports.⁴⁹ Christian colleges like Yenching University provided accreditation in a “kindergarten–primary normal course” and required students to investigate local conditions.⁵⁰ The home economics department taught a class on “Child Care and Child Welfare.” The sociology department also offered coursework on child development and social welfare.⁵¹ The University of Shanghai not only operated its own school (kindergarten through junior middle) for training its education majors but also worked closely with the NCWA in establishing the Yangshupu Social Center.⁵² These programs helped to inform investigations surveying children, as part of their coursework, and provided young women with the credentials to join the employ of organizations offering child welfare services.

Those seeking education and employment in child welfare were often elite young women or daughters of public figures. Lucy Kuo wrote to New York about her daughter Maida’s prospects for studying child welfare during her master’s program in sociology at the University of Michigan.⁵³ The “precious daughter” of former Peking University professor and UC-Berkeley instructor Jiang Kanghu (1883–1954) became the chief of staff at the Zhabei Children’s Clinic (funded by the NCWA) in 1934.⁵⁴ Nora Hsiung (b. 1902), the daughter of former premier Xiong Xiling, received NCWA funding and support and eventually went to Columbia University for a master’s degree.⁵⁵ New York leaders also wrote letters of recommendation for young Chinese women trained in the United States and associated with the Rockefeller Foundation.⁵⁶ These women matriculated in new programs devoted to social welfare and child psychology and thus obtained more professional accreditation than had the elite female volunteers, or even salaried workers in transnational humanitarianism, of the previous decades. As Matoe Sasaki argues, they were part of a new generation of New Women who contributed to professional fields in China.⁵⁷

Precisely because of connections to politicians and funders, the NCWA was vulnerable to allegations of nepotism, which led to the resignation of Garfield Huang and the termination of his salaried younger brother.⁵⁸ Given that Huang had advocated so strongly on behalf of Lucy Kuo on the basis of her need and virtue, he probably thought of the NCWA as a form of charity (rather than sinecure) for its employees, as well as for its beneficiaries.

Allegations of nepotism reinforced Western stereotypes about the Chinese style of conducting family-run businesses. Such suspicions reveal larger underlying cultural differences between the New York and Shanghai offices.

Checking Missionary Abuses

Chinese and American partners envisioned the NCWA as a model of indigenization and Chinese leadership. In anticipation of the political sensitivity regarding Chinese nationalism, in an early letter dated August 18, 1928, the New York office assured the Shanghai office, “Our desire is that your Association shall be regarded strictly as the parent society and ours as the cooperating organization.” It explicitly denied any intention of “planting another exotic or foreign institution in China.” Instead, it celebrated NCWA connections with the ROC, in keeping with contemporary efforts for an “indigenous” leadership.⁵⁹

In a handwritten note among its files, the New York office listed under “some difficulties” “foreign organization,” “criticisms of the Xi’an [Christian] movement,” and “unstable elements in China.”⁶⁰ This note indicates that New York elites sought to address Chinese complaints about mission work for children by relying on Chinese intermediaries to cooperate with established power holders; they could thus aid child victims of famine while avoiding the common accusation of kidnapping and forced transplantation. The NCWA, in conjunction with China Child Welfare, thus sought to remedy the Sino-Western conflicts over control of children in a new vision for humanitarianism.

In the late 1920s, especially before establishing its own centers, the NCWA funneled money to improve Christian charitable homes across China.⁶¹ The New York office frequently expressed the aim to fund “existing institutions” rather than establish new ones.⁶² In 1928 a representative of China Child Welfare had discovered subpar conditions among mission homes.⁶³ For example, in the Anglin family’s Pentecostal Home in Shandong, some children were going blind. The NCWA gave the Anglins a monetary grant and relocated the sick children to Shanghai for medical treatment. Such concerns convinced the executive committee to establish a relief center to model best practices.

The NCWA surveyed, regulated, and supported Western mission orphanages in China in order to improve them. With a government license

obtained in 1931, the Shanghai headquarters enjoyed the authority to regulate private Christian charities throughout China and thus made itself a powerful umbrella organization. Of course, U.S. churchgoers could contribute to missionaries like the Anglins directly, but the NCWA had the advantage of embodying the results of successful evangelization through the very presence of Chinese Christians. Chinese leaders also conferred a greater degree of legitimacy and assurance that the money would be well spent. Given language, throughout the documents, about respecting the authority of the ROC, as well as the constant requests from the New York office for expressions of Chinese approval, they clearly considered the NCWA as crucial for gaining positive recognition among the Chinese.

Given Chinese rumors about missionaries kidnapping children, the NCWA provided a legitimate conduit through which to channel destitute children into welfare homes and orphanages. For example, it rescued impoverished children from famine conditions in Shandong in 1928 and relocated them to the Bethel Mission in Shanghai.⁶⁴ It also corresponded with the ROC minister of health about assuming responsibility for fifty children who had fled rural famine and escaped to Nanjing.⁶⁵ (Thus, as in Shanghai, the NCWA contributed to the city by removing needy children from the streets.) In 1928 Vice-Director Lucy Kuo traveled with a delegation—including a Chinese pastor and a Western doctor—to conduct relief work in Shandong and returned to Shanghai with one hundred children for placement in the orphanages.⁶⁶

The NCWA also presented itself as checking some provincial government embezzlement of famine funds. According to the association, the Henan provincial government allegedly misappropriated the 120,000 USD remitted by the China Famine Relief Committee of Shanghai, even while children were reportedly fleeing cannibalism in the famine-struck area.⁶⁷ In 1929 Lucy Kuo helped carry a motion within the NCWA to remit 1,000 USD to Henan and pledged to ensure that aid would be safely delivered. Indeed, as reported by the newspaper *Shen bao*, in her capacity as vice-director Kuo administered medical and food aid to 333 child victims of a famine in North China.⁶⁸ In the relief campaign of 1929, the association focused on providing “educational and hygienic resources,” especially by vaccinating children to prevent an outbreak of smallpox. By May 1929 the NCWA had taken responsibility for 230 children, many from famine-struck regions.⁶⁹ The association entrusted some of these responsibilities to its associates, for example, remitting money to the YMCA and YWCA for

relief in Zhengzhou in a pledge of four months of funds for children, “preferably girls.”⁷⁰ It was tricky to support or place children without entering the business of child trafficking; noting an increased volume of sales as a result of particularly intense famine conditions in 1931, NCWA member Andrew Wu petitioned the government to restrict the practice.

As early as April 1928, the NCWA developed plans for “model centers”⁷¹ of their own.⁷² In 1929 the association planned to build a special center, with a model kindergarten, child study bureau, and clinic, as an experiment for developing further projects.⁷³ Serving also as a receiving home, the center would allow the NCWA to accept more children.⁷⁴ Some members of the Shanghai office argued in favor of Shanghai as a location, but the New York office was eager to retain the good graces of ROC politicians who proposed building the center in China’s new capital. Kong Xiangxi helped to secure a donation of seven acres of valuable land from the ROC.⁷⁵ Just outside of the Old Wall of Nanjing, the land was idyllically situated near the Jade Lake with a view of the Purple Mountains.⁷⁶ The land abutted Ginling College, a Christian women’s college known for its curriculum in domestic science and child welfare.⁷⁷ Notwithstanding these ideal conditions, the final choice of Nanjing indicated a capitulation on the part of the Executive Committee in Shanghai to Nanjing and New York.

The New York office envisioned the Nanjing Center as a high-profile building to attract attention at the national level with cooperation from “Madame Chiang Kai-shek and other Nanking [Nanjing] friends.” With important political connections, the center could serve as a “model for the Chinese government to use in erecting similar buildings in different parts of China.”⁷⁸ The New York office offered blueprints to construct a high-profile monument to the importance of child welfare. The model of a children’s receiving home constructed by wealthy philanthropist Edwin Gould (1866–1933) in New York was regarded as “clearly a splendid piece of work but entirely unsuitable for our Nanking needs.” Another set of blueprints by architect Henry Murphy (1877–1954), who had also designed Peking Union Medical College and many benevolent associations in San Francisco Chinatown, was praised as better suited to China.⁷⁹ Architecture may serve as an analogy for Sino-Western cooperation, in which a Chinese façade sometimes belied Western designs.

Despite the active contribution of local Chinese experts and politicians, the New York office aimed to direct development of the Nanjing project. Chinese leaders assigned prominent educational affiliates of the

YMCA, like Chen Heqin and Tao Xingzhi, to serve as executives for planning the center's kindergarten, hospital, and research center.⁸⁰ Nevertheless, New York representative Peggy Dougherty complained that "the Committee [members in China] at present are lost in the maze of plans on paper with no money with which to make a beginning of the construction program."⁸¹ In addition to their regular funds, the New York office promised 40,000 USD for the center. As American money dwindled during the Great Depression, the NCWA delayed the construction of the Nanjing Center, even while building other projects in Shanghai instead, thus further indicating the NCWA's preference for investing in Shanghai. Not only did Shanghai and New York have different priorities, but strategies for fundraising also reflected specific cultural concerns in China and the United States.

Fundraising for Children

Child welfare necessitated sustained financial maintenance. Because the organization housed and fed orphans in its own custody, the NCWA required steady funds. However, when the U.S. Internal Revenue Service investigated the China Child Welfare's status as a nonprofit in late 1928,⁸² cash flow from New York stalled for five full months, thus placing the orphans in jeopardy.⁸³ As early as 1928, New York leaders began to question its ability to commit "financial responsibilities so heavily."⁸⁴ To meet the demands of the IRS, New York needed detailed accounts.⁸⁵ The Chinese side responded by remitting English-language minutes, authenticated receipts from certified public accountants, and reports from its treasurer and auditor.⁸⁶ These adjustments demonstrate how, despite assurances that there would be no interference with operations in China, U.S. involvement Westernized the financial accounting and actual language of operations and administration.

Children's charity was often a response to the *public* spectacle of suffering children.⁸⁷ Given their different visual languages for describing the needs of Chinese children, Shanghai and New York disagreed about fundraising tactics. The New York office requested photographs, "to tell the story of need as spoken or written words will not."⁸⁸ Individual donors often asked for "a little photograph of the child and a brief story of the child's life."⁸⁹ The New York office warned that future donations would

“depend on what news you receive from China.”⁹⁰ In January 1929 New York reported “disappointing returns on the Christmas appeal” because they were “handicapped” by lack of information from China on famine conditions and Chinese endorsements.⁹¹ Executive secretary Dr. J. Stewart Nagle even suggested hiring a “first class photographer” to produce the “very best kind of pictures” for their fundraising campaigns.⁹² Originally planning to tour China under the auspices of the China Famine Relief Committee, Nagle sent Peggy Dougherty in his place, due to poor health. Dougherty had instructions to facilitate communication between the two offices, including the need for more materials from China.⁹³

In China, Dougherty insisted, “photographs will be helpful” for fundraising because illustrations extend a “human touch.”⁹⁴ Dougherty herself tried to photograph the “child beggars” who crowded around her. Upon eyeing the camera, the children scattered. Dougherty had to content herself with the photographs that the Shanghai office used for educational purposes regarding best practices for child hygiene. Despite her frustrations, the leadership in New York categorized photography as “publicity material” for the sake of fundraising campaigns. Also included were Chinese statements of appreciation to demonstrate not only need for relief but also gratitude for it.⁹⁵

In contrast, the NCWA captured images of orderly, clean charity institutions. Starting in 1930, the NCWA’s *Child Welfare Monthly* circulated images of the association’s welfare efforts, such as campaigns to vaccinate children in famine-struck areas.⁹⁶ In contrast to close-up images of individual children, favored by Americans, Chinese photographs showcased their own modern institutions. The NCWA’s *Modern Parents* reproduced photographs of the Zhabei Children’s Clinic with orderly lines, clean examination rooms, and modern equipment. Kong Xiangxi’s recognizable portrait hung above the nurse’s consulting table as she examined a child.⁹⁷ These images emphasized strong Chinese leadership rather than dire Chinese poverty and showcased Chinese competence in line with ROC strategies to retake sovereign control of treaty ports like Shanghai.

Peggy Dougherty straightened out a miscommunication about the U.S. request to “adopt” children, language that she claimed had caused Chinese “alarm.” She explained to the NCWA that Americans merely wished to foster a *sentimental* attachment between donors and the photographs of a particularly attractive child. Although the NCWA could not easily identify specific children for “adoption,” it willingly responded to Dougherty’s

suggestion that it photograph the “best-looking” children already in their care for foreign fundraising campaigns. It also “quickly satisfied” the request for “designated funds” to sponsor specific children.⁹⁸ American donors expected updates from their “children,” who would ask “aunties” for special birthday gifts.⁹⁹ These efforts resulted in the inclusion in solicitation letters of individual headshots of smiling children.¹⁰⁰

Through the influence of New York, the NCWA initiated modern philanthropic and fundraising practices. In 1929 it introduced a system of tiered fees from special membership to life membership, based on minimum amounts of donation.¹⁰¹ This measure helped associate charitable donations with social prestige even at the middling level among Chinese residents of Shanghai. In addition to galas and other traditional fundraising events, the association incorporated elements unique to childhood.¹⁰² Plays, performed by children in NCWA institutions, helped raise money. This strategy dovetailed with the association’s growing interest in displaying the vigor and health of children and continued during and after World War II.

From among the Westerners in the association, Dougherty appointed a small Advisory Committee in China to help facilitate communication with New York. These members were all prominent businessmen from important companies, including the Shanghai branch of the National City Bank of New York. Armed with numerous letters of introduction, Dougherty also made “personal contacts” with ROC officials, and with representatives of private organizations, such as the Rotary Club, the YMCA, the YWCA, and the Ginling Women’s College Alumna Association. She noted with satisfaction that Chinese politicians promised “utmost cooperation.”¹⁰³

Dougherty reported that Westerners in the NCWA more forthrightly requested funds, while Chinese leaders offered “no complaints”; this difference may have been due, in part, to the ROC’s attempts to assert national sovereignty. Through the 1930s Western expats like Reverend George Fryer, the son of prominent Sinologist John Fryer (1839–1928), directly confronted the New York office with mutual allegations of unnecessary overhead expenses.¹⁰⁴ Fryer scornfully denied allegations about nepotism or local mismanagement in Shanghai. Yet the NCWA often promoted the work of its affiliates, including Fryer as the superintendent of the Institution for the Chinese Blind, which directed its children to weave

goods for NCWA fundraising campaigns and received money as a result.¹⁰⁵ Such connections could increase the perception of corruption.

Despite early legal and communication errors, by February 1929 Dr. J. Stewart Nagle had secured enough funds to promise monthly payments, in gold, of 700 USD for overhead expenses in Shanghai, 1,200 for supporting 300 orphans, and 600 for general welfare in Nanjing and Shanghai. Despite the stock market crash, from January to March 1930 the National City Bank of New York *increased* its payments from 500 to 2,500 USD per month. The New York office established several branches devoted to fundraising around the United States. But in 1930 Nagle was forced to resign because of allegations of gross overhead expenses and financial mismanagement. From the perspective of the Shanghai office, however, due to his resignation, “consequently the wonderful structure he had built is in a very tottering state.”¹⁰⁶

According to Peggy Dougherty, American donors were demoralized by reports of continued anti-Christian demonstrations in China. In a letter in 1930, she explained that American churchgoers responded negatively to news about the destruction of missionary property in anti-Christian riots in Changsha.¹⁰⁷ They needed reassurance that Chinese welcomed and appreciated aid from American Christians, if they were to continue sacrificing for China despite their own hardships during the Great Depression. Here again, the New York office wished to receive statements of gratitude on the part of Chinese beneficiaries. Such letters strengthen my claim that China Child Welfare aimed to legitimize mission work in the context of China’s anti-Christian movement.

Despite the active cooperation of an American Executive Committee, Shanghai leaders remained ignorant of the conditions for U.S. fundraising during the Great Depression. While the New York office slashed its own overhead budget, the Shanghai office requested a full list of donors from the New York office, perhaps in order to conduct their own direct campaign.¹⁰⁸ The New York branch demurred, arguing that the long list of small donors would hardly be worth the time and paperwork. Given that the New York office had previously encouraged the Shanghai office to send thank-you notes to donors with the potential to become regular subscribers (with a pledge for recurring donations), the response of China Child Welfare indicates a substantial change in the attitude toward the Chinese side’s involvement.

One reason for the NCWA's ignorance was the delayed effect of the Great Depression on East Asian markets. As the wellspring of money from New York dwindled, the NCWA turned increasingly to Chinese sources for funding. It lobbied the ROC and the International Settlement for special considerations and services. For example, Sun Fo (1891–1973), the son of the founding father of the Republic, promised the NCWA transportation on Chinese railways, but owing to miscommunications on the ground, refugee children were stranded; Shanghai philanthropist Wang Yiting volunteered funds during this emergency. Lucy Kuo handled these mishaps and persuaded hospitals to secure special rates for children to receive more advanced medical attention than the Shanghai Children's Clinic could provide.¹⁰⁹

Perhaps because Chinese members wished to assert Chinese national sovereignty, the NCWA appealed to its own leadership for substantial donations. The NCWA published vanity-style photographs of middle-class families active in the association to reward the largest donors and financial contributions to the organization.¹¹⁰ Photographs encouraged donations by upwardly mobile middle-class families, especially politicians and businessmen who sold the products deemed necessary for a comfortable modern childhood (see figure 2.1). For example, in May 1931, half of all donations for that month were made by Kong Xiangxi.¹¹¹ Kong personally paid for the salaries of some clerks,¹¹² and he also gave private gifts, such as a radio



Figure 2.1. Martha Job Collection, Hoover Institution Archives

set, to the Child Health Clinic. The association thus leaned heavily on its Executive Committee for financial contributions, which is a philanthropic strategy continued by Chinese NGOs today.¹¹³

By promoting modern childrearing among the elite, the association celebrated positive models of happy private lives. It showcased beautiful children as examples of normative growth. Sometimes, family photographs and cover photographs illustrated major ideas presented in the articles, such as the importance of fresh air for children. This technique dovetailed with a new scientific method, championed by U.S.-trained psychologists like Chen Heqin, of observing child life as a basis for projecting models of “best practices.” Nevertheless, such methods both celebrated and investigated domestic life. Therefore, viewed from the long-term historical perspective of the growth of state supervision, the association opened the door to observing and investigating elite families, as well as poor families, for evidence of child abuse and neglect.

Childhood as a Site of Prevention

When requesting government funding, the NCWA harkened to the increasingly popular rhetoric that children were the future of the nation. Kong Xiangxi issued clichés that children were “the life of a civilization,” and thus China had a “patriotic duty to protect children.”¹¹⁴ Childhood was seen as an arena for the prevention of future social ills, including industrial welfare to forestall Communist revolution, vaccinations to prevent disease, and early legal intervention to deter crime, specifically prostitution among girls and theft among boys. In doing so, the four major divisions of the NCWA (Child Protection, Child Study, Child Welfare Homes, and Child Health) aimed to study and shape Chinese childhood according to the most progressive modern theories. These efforts allowed the association to reach more deeply into private family life.

The NCWA appointed a special committee on Child Study, which surveyed children in Zhabei, Nantao, and Yangshupu. Its investigations were certainly facilitated by the fact that two members of the small committee were also officials in the Special Municipality. As a health officer for the School Health Division of the Shanghai Special Municipality, Dr. Zhu Zhanggeng conducted a study of the physical health of ten thousand Chinese schoolchildren in Shanghai. Like Chen Heqin, the NCWA

charted normative growth, in an effort to “study the best modern methods of child training and parent education.”¹¹⁵ In addition to collecting information on developmental norms, the association also aimed to distribute those data through its publications and libraries.

To combat Shanghai’s high Chinese infant and child mortality, the NCWA established clinics and hospitals.¹¹⁶ It opened a child health clinic in the Shanghai Baptist Church but later relocated it to West Jukong Road. The Zhabei Health Clinic also operated as a receiving home for destitute children. Taking in sixty children at a time for prolonged medical treatment, the home then placed children in foster care on an experimental basis. In 1929 the NCWA consulted medical experts when building the Child Hygiene Area in Yangshupu, the industrial section of Shanghai.¹¹⁷ The University of Shanghai erected three buildings in that area and set aside one for the Second Child Health Clinic with the understanding that the NCWA would be responsible for running the operation.¹¹⁸ The clinic opened on June 20, 1930.¹¹⁹ These institutions provided a platform for professional experts, affiliated with NCWA, to conduct social work and scientific research.

Medical Welfare to Prevent Disease

Doctors applauded the NCWA’s efforts to provide vaccines and medical services to poor children from the industrial sectors of Yangshupu and Zhabei. The association supported the Yangshupu Industrial Clinic (which received child workers with industrial injuries).¹²⁰ David New (Niu Hui-sheng, 1892–1937) and other doctors offered free vision and dental exams.¹²¹ Throughout the 1930s the Child Welfare Clinic provided free baths to hundreds of children each month. Nurses from these clinics made 154 home visitations, attended to 12,965 cases, and spoke publicly 649 times in its first year alone.¹²² In 1934 the *Chinese Medical Journal* predicted that the proposed Children’s Hospital would facilitate medical research on children’s diseases.¹²³ In addition, the NCWA supported the establishment of a children’s tuberculosis ward.¹²⁴

In keeping with the middle-class goals of child advocacy elsewhere, the Child Health Division emphasized “educating the people of moderate and small means to bring up their children properly.”¹²⁵ The NCWA also hosted special events intended to entice poor families to accept



Figure 2.2. Martha Job Collection, Hoover Institution Archives

vaccinations and medical advice. To raise awareness, it planned a publicity campaign to coincide with Golden Rule Sunday on December 8, 1929. The association claimed that this Child Welfare Exhibit was “the first of its kind ever held in China,” with street parades, health clinics and examinations, and the distribution of information through literature, statistics, and equipment (see figure 2.2).¹²⁶ The association screened films advertising good hygienic practices. The first exhibit ran for four days and cost 1,543.66 U.S. dollars, exceeding the estimated budget of one thousand dollars,¹²⁷ but the NCWA must have deemed the well-attended event a success because it continued a two-day campaign each summer thereafter. In June 1930 a thousand primary school students paraded through the streets with banners; 88 babies entered baby health contests; and 1,166 people received anticholera injections.¹²⁸ In 1931 the NCWA administered free vaccines to 990 children over the course of only two days.¹²⁹ Free gifts, like kites, drew children and their families.¹³⁰ Fun toys helped to curb resistance against vaccination while also emphasizing the importance of family bonding and outdoor recreation.

Building on the success of its Child Welfare Exhibit of 1929, the association petitioned the Chinese government to recognize Children’s Day,

starting in 1931.¹³¹ Whereas the Child Welfare Exhibit overtly distributed aid to poor children in industrial sectors of Shanghai, Children's Day provided a veneer of celebrating strength rather than ameliorating weakness. Children's Day thus helped to downplay the aspect of charity that remained an integral part of the day of free services for children. Children's Day shared many of the same activities as the Child Welfare Exhibit, such as baby health contests, public parades of children, and free entertainment.¹³² Government aid helped to underwrite expenses for Children's Day, to expand free admission for children to museums and films, and to provide prizes for children.¹³³

Children's Day provided the NCWA an opportunity not only to raise awareness of the needs of children but also to promote its own activities and institutions. The organization gained even greater official recognition in 1933, when the Shanghai Bureau of Social Affairs entrusted the Children's Bureau to organize the event. The Children's Bureau scheduled performances by children sponsored by the NCWA, such as those in the Shanghai Orphanage, the Worker's Preschool, and the School for the Blind.¹³⁴ Children's Day thus showcased the association's fundraising activities through the direct performance by children themselves.

These public celebrations coincided with the increased prominence of childhood in the wake of Japanese military encroachment. In response to the Manchurian Incident of 1931, Chen Tiesheng, a banker and the associate general secretary of the NCWA, traveled to North China to supervise the distribution of 300,000 Chinese dollars' worth of food, clothing, and medicine to 157,000 children.¹³⁵ In this crisis, the NCWA relocated poor children away from combat zones. In August 1931 the Ministry of Education outlined its "Plan to Commemorate Children's Day" as a method for promoting the "spirit of patriotic families."¹³⁶ This rhetoric reflected contemporary interest in mass mobilization for national militarization.¹³⁷ Just as Chiang Kai-shek's New Life Movement encouraged the inculcation of national spirit through habituated daily practice, the NCWA organized public rituals in which children could internalize and inspire patriotism. Practice soon turned to reality. When the battleground moved from Manchuria to Shanghai in 1932, Chinese Boy and Girl Scouts contributed valiantly to the war effort amid intense aerial bombing; their visible sacrifice helped to convince the Chinese public that patriotic youth would indeed save the nation.¹³⁸ Kong Xiangxi explicitly argued that these

activities provided a visual reminder of China's hope for its vigorous future, embodied in the health of children.¹³⁹

Legal Protections to Reform Children and Prevent Crime

Children's Day was just one example of NCWA efforts to "raise children's status" and ensure "children's happiness."¹⁴⁰ On Children's Day in 1934, Shanghai mayor Wu Tiecheng (1888–1952), the president of the Shanghai branch of the NCWA, advocated for an amendment to the Chinese constitution to codify the protection of children's rights as a distinct legal status.¹⁴¹ The NCWA drafted a declaration of the "rights of the child" and also petitioned the ROC to establish a Juvenile Court.¹⁴² The International Settlement of Shanghai more quickly established such a court, which the NCWA called "the first of its kind in China" but was similar in operation to those in the United States.¹⁴³ These measures conferred, or at least envisioned, special legal protections for children.

The NCWA advocated for children both in the court system and in the press by publicizing cases of neglect. The Child Protection Division of the NCWA retained lawyers and doctors as advisors in cases of suspected child abuse, and NCWA doctors assessed material evidence of physical violence. In 1931 the NCWA examined sixty-two of seventy-two suspected cases of child abuse brought to the International Settlement court.¹⁴⁴ In many of these cases, women allegedly tyrannized their servant girls or underage daughters-in-law. In 1935 NCWA lawyers represented 123 children brought to court.¹⁴⁵ The association also advocated on behalf of apprentices and child workers, as well as "adopted children," including young female domestic servants, a practice associated with child labor and the abuses of traditional Chinese families.¹⁴⁶ Through the courts, the association extracted promises from adoptive mothers ensuring the well-being of child brides.

In conjunction with the NCC, the NCWA moved to prohibit the sale of women and children.¹⁴⁷ In 1931 a thirteen-year-old orphan girl was about to be sold abroad into forced prostitution before she was rescued by the NCWA;¹⁴⁸ this sensational case renewed the association's affirmation of its commitment to prohibiting the sex trade.¹⁴⁹ In this way, the NCWA carried forward the commitment, outlined by the League of Nations and further relayed by the Shanghai Child Labor Committee of 1922–1924,

against sex trafficking.¹⁵⁰ In 1934 the NCWA reported that it had rescued eighteen girls from prostitution in the previous year. In 1935 it explained its mission in terms of preventing poor girls from slipping into prostitution.¹⁵¹ It received international accolades in support of its stance against the practice of employing servant girls in Chinese families, often criticized by colonialists and also by Chinese as a form of slavery.¹⁵²

The NCWA also helped to professionalize services for child delinquents. Among the three hundred children remitted to the association's care were "problem children" who showed signs of criminality. Press releases implied that petty criminal behavior arose from the inability to overcome trauma from former abuse. As in state-sponsored patriotism in the New Life Movement, there was thus a strong psychological thrust in child advocacy work. To help children "forget their sorrowful past and begin anew," the NCWA employed a young woman who had graduated from Ginling College and the University of California as a clinical psychologist for its institutions.¹⁵³ The Community Church of Shanghai also hired a Chinese woman, trained at a Christian college, as an industrial welfare worker in the Child Guidance Clinic, with a loose connection to the Shanghai Municipal Council.¹⁵⁴ Child advocates thus facilitated the professional employment of women in social work.

The long-range goal of social welfare work was to reintegrate abused children into modern and loving families. The association celebrated individual cases of rehabilitating abused children. Judge Hu Yigu officiated at the wedding of a young woman who had been rescued, as a girl by the Shanghai Public Safety Bureau and the Child Protection Department of the NCWA; her marriage to a respectable dry cleaner indicated her successful reentry into society.¹⁵⁵ This case illustrates the association's commitment to Chen Heqin's vision for the monogamous and modern Chinese family. In 1937, representing the NCWA, Chen joined three people with close connections to Western Hills—former premier Xiong Xiling of the International Red Cross of China, Xiong's wife Mao Yanwen of the Women's Red Cross, and Yenching University sociology professor Guan Ruiwu—to attend a League of Nations conference against the international human trafficking; the representatives gave their papers to Chen to compile in a report called "Chinese Women and Children Are Sold."¹⁵⁶ This rhetoric reinforces the notion that NCWA members saw themselves as liberating Chinese children from the tyranny of unjust practices.

Industrial Welfare to Ease Class Tension

Through the NCWA and in his capacity as minister of industry, Kong Xiangxi lobbied for the abolition of child labor, an effort the *New York Times* lauded as “one of the most important administrative acts of the Nanking [Nanjing] Government since it gained control of China.”¹⁵⁷ Continuing the work of the International Settlement’s Child Labor Commission, the NCWA investigated industrial conditions.¹⁵⁸ Rather than relying solely on legal directives, in the vein of the failed Child Labor Bylaw of 1925, the Shanghai Children’s Bureau established a preschool for workers’ children.¹⁵⁹ The resulting First Industrial Preschool was located in the southern part of the city.¹⁶⁰ In 1934 the bureau encountered conflicts with industrial workers when appropriating land for a preschool because it demolished workers’ shanties and challenged their squatters’ rights.¹⁶¹ In 1936 the preschool petitioned the Shanghai International Settlement and the Chinese city for subsidies.¹⁶² With limited finances, the NCWA aimed to demonstrate that a factory crèche could be economical and beneficial in order to inspire industrialists to create their own nurseries for workers.¹⁶³ The NCWA thus actively promoted the conjoined “paternalism and discipline” at the heart of 1930s industrial experiments in the ROC’s struggling developmentalist state.¹⁶⁴

The NCWA solicited the aid and involvement of industrialists for their welfare projects as a method of easing class tensions. In the pages of journals like *International Labor Information*, it championed its work in building charity preschools and clinics in heavily industrial areas.¹⁶⁵ Speaking at the NCWA Conference in 1933, the Western economic manager of the British-American Tobacco Company (widely known for its employment of child labor) urged everyone in the community to contribute to the alleviation of child poverty. Also speaking at the conference, Reverend Andrew Wu (Wu Weide) of Hangzhou was elected general secretary in part because of his work in establishing charity schools for the children and wives of railway workers.¹⁶⁶ Shanghai Mayor Wu Tiecheng served as the head of the Shanghai branch of the NCWA in the mid-1930s, at the same time he shut down factory strikes.¹⁶⁷ In other words, corporate managers presented industrial welfare as a venue to prevent worker agitation (and perhaps to improve their own public image in the face of labor disputes).

Family Reforms to Prevent Communism

The NCWA promoted and published the work of child experts, institutionally affiliated with the association, as a form of outreach to change parenting habits and styles. Educational psychologist Chen Heqin published his primer *Home Education* through the NCWA. As editor of *Modern Parents*, psychologist Chen Zhengfan also contributed articles to the journal, and the association provided a venue to publish his parenting manuals.¹⁶⁸ The association also arranged for its members to conduct a radio broadcast on Tuesdays on the subject of childrearing.¹⁶⁹ Echoing the self-discipline encouraged by the government-sanctioned New Life Movement, child experts argued that sloppy habits and a pessimistic attitude were “no less evil than communicable diseases.”¹⁷⁰

The NCWA adapted missionary tactics to reform Chinese parents’ attitudes toward family life. According to YWCA general secretary Ding Shujing (1888–1936), the YMCA and NCC served as historical forerunners for the child advocacy work of the NCWA. In 1925 the YMCA had begun the Better Home Campaign in China to promote domestic hygiene, parental training, and family happiness. Starting in 1930 the NCC launched an annual Home Week in the last week of October and hosted a conference for Christian parenting and homemaking courses. Whereas the Home Week Campaign “was carried out in churches and mission schools throughout China . . . [resulting in] immense good to Christian homes,”¹⁷¹ the NCWA extended these efforts to an even broader Chinese audience.

By the mid-1930s the promotion of “family education” was integrated into an international Christian effort to combat the perceived insidious influences of communism. In July 1935 the association sent Ding as a delegate to Brussels to attend the Fifth International Congress of Family Education.¹⁷² This conference, organized by the Catholic Church, criticized communism for “its artificial simplification” of labor issues. Focusing primarily on social problems in the West, the organizers asserted, “Communist propaganda in these outlying sectors, where today it is coming into direct conflict with the missionary work of the Church, would receive inspiration from increased interest in social problems at home.”¹⁷³ Christians thus saw, in Communist critiques, a challenge to redefine “family education” and social work.

Ding's trip to Brussels was a part of a larger diplomatic mission spearheaded by the NCWA. In 1935, in addition to Ding, the association sent the wife and daughter of Premier Xiong Xiling, child expert Chen Heqin, Chen Tiesheng, and Reverend Andrew Wu in a team of over thirty dignitaries to the United States and Europe on a fact-finding mission about child welfare programs. When Xiong's daughter Nora returned to China, she gave a series of public lectures on international trends in child welfare.¹⁷⁴ Despite contact with anti-Communist elements in Europe, Nora favorably presented the Soviet Union's efforts to support childcare for factory workers and argued against misperceptions that Soviets were antifamily.¹⁷⁵ Nora Hsiung's viewpoint indicates that midlevel urban professionals might have rejected some of the political goals of Kong Xiangxi and the executive leadership in the NCWA.

Conclusion: Childhood, Authority, and Power

The NCWA advocated the "care and advancement of their country's future leaders."¹⁷⁶ Just as Western missionaries encouraged Western children to donate to children in the mission field, so too did the NCWA cultivate elite children as potential philanthropists for fellow Chinese children. The association's emphasis, after all, was on strong Chinese leadership. For example, Children's Day was an occasion to encourage elite Chinese children to practice charity for the poor. Children's textbooks depicted middle-class children distributing gifts of cash in red envelopes to impoverished neighborhood children on Children's Day.¹⁷⁷ Children's Day could thus inspire cross-class solidarity among patriotic young children.

Because these reforms primarily targeted mothers and then children, the dissemination of scientific information created the possibility that women and even children could be better informed than the family patriarch. With the advent of parenting journals and "mothers clubs," mothers had more opportunities than fathers to seek professional instruction from doctors and professors about scientific childcare. Manuals specifically warned women against flaunting superior knowledge of scientific childrearing in arguments with their husbands in front of the kids.¹⁷⁸ Likewise, some children's textbooks challenged children to evaluate pathological elements of their parents' behavior but depicted teachers, rather than children, correcting

parents.¹⁷⁹ Even though science increased the authority of experts—and by extension women and children who consumed that knowledge—to question the family patriarch, NCWA leaders nevertheless buttressed the social position of the reformed patriarch in the modern Chinese family.

According to the NCWA, the modern Chinese family needed to be regulated and supported by public institutions. This chapter has demonstrated the range of efforts undertaken by the NCWA to coordinate philanthropists, scientific experts, and politicians on behalf of both middle-class and poor Chinese children. The association entertained a spectrum of responsibilities and functions, which shifted in response to individual cases and historical events but remained centered on childhood as a special site of prevention and development. The Chinese family was not sacrosanct but required investigation, especially through positive images of model experts and Chinese leaders. In an era of GMD politics and the New Life Movement, the NCWA gave experts a platform to articulate the ways in which the architecture of modern institutions and the adherence to scientific practices could generate a new foundation, in childhood, for Chinese society.

The NCWA aimed to extend these experimental measures to the nation as a whole. Toward that end, the association received official sanction to observe a year, spanning 1935–1936, as the “Year of the Child in China.” Chen Heqin oversaw the association’s events for Children’s Year.¹⁸⁰ Among its other events, the NCWA held a series of leadership conferences on child welfare. At the conference in Qingdao in 1936, the association discussed establishing a nationwide child welfare program, which would include pre-schools, kindergartens, mother’s clubs, and midwifery training.¹⁸¹ NCWA child experts would help to inform professional training for social workers under a national program. These plans were interrupted by the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War in 1937.¹⁸² Full-scale warfare redirected attention from national institutions and toward local measures to cope with wartime devastation. The retreat of the ROC from Shanghai in 1937 also exposed the NCWA’s reliance on Western power, because the association would have to rely more than ever on the territorial autonomy of the International Settlement to bring welfare relief to Chinese children.

The Calculus of Child Welfare

The Democratization of Fundraising for Shanghai, 1937–1942

In July 1937, after years of mounting tensions, the Japanese Army overran Beijing and reached Shanghai by August. Fleeing the smoldering industrial districts of Zhabei and Yangshupu, Chinese refugees flooded into the French Concession. As Christian Henriot shows, even salaried Chinese workers watched their children die from disease, squalid living conditions, and malnourishment in the industrial sectors of the city.¹ To the dismay of the public, child corpses accumulated on the streets.² Wartime carnage alarmed Westerners still in control of treaty ports. Japan maintained China's "unequal treaties" to avoid conflict with Western powers, but Japanese slogans about "Asia for the Asians" further highlighted the special privileges extended to Chinese Christians. The retreat of the Republic of China from Shanghai thus exposed the Western, imperialistic ties of global humanitarianism. Because of both the Japanese occupation and Anglo-American protection, it perhaps became even more complicated than before the war to argue that child welfare strengthened the Chinese nation.

Nevertheless, the ROC negotiated the porous boundaries of treaty ports to exert some influence in occupied areas. It contributed financially to refugee relief in Shanghai and cooperated so much with private organizations that lines between state agents and private charities often blurred.³ At the same time, the ROC retreat created more freedom for philanthropists to experiment with solutions to the growing refugee crisis.⁴ Within the Buddhist-dominated field of philanthropy, Chinese Christians capitalized on the

increased importance of the International Settlement to evangelize. During the 1930s the National Child Welfare Association had highlighted its legitimacy through connections to powerful politicians, but the Shanghai branch worked independently of the ROC after its retreat from the coasts in 1937. In that context, the NCWA dropped the word “Chinese” (originally translated by the organization as “national”) from its title, while shedding political claims to national influence; its sister organization and funding branch, China Child Welfare, also began operating under its own name. (For consistency, this chapter will continue to refer to the remaining Shanghai branch as the Shanghai NCWA.) In 1939 the NCWA donated a grant to spearhead relief work, directed by the National Christian Council and executed by existing Christian missions, in fourteen cities “in ‘occupied’ areas.”⁵⁵ The NCC’s Child Welfare Project provided food, shelter, and education for orphaned refugee children so that they could “become good citizens of the future.”⁵⁶ In the context of Japanese occupation and the absence of the ROC, what did such civic-minded appeals for child welfare signify?

Because the war fragmented China, it also diversified the political significance of childhood. Dire wartime conditions increased the need for fundraising and connections with overseas philanthropic organizations, especially those in the United States. Perhaps even more important than the tenuous relationship between childhood protection and various political affiliations were new fundraising techniques. In both China and abroad, relief organizations relied increasingly on small donors. These measures democratized philanthropy and, especially in the United States, tied fundraising efforts with new consumer products that represented China, targeted youth, or showcased one’s status as a donor through a compensatory badge or emblem. As much as aid campaigns illustrated the material needs of children, they also began to advertise the political gains and consumer rewards of participating in a global movement to help the innocent. Both war and fundraising shaped the material foundations for childhood in China and its image around the world.

Battlegrounds

The Crisis in Shanghai

On August 13, 1937, the Japanese Army began a three-month protracted war with ROC armies for territory in downtown Shanghai. Western

expatriates remembered the bombings of 1932 as mere “child’s play” in comparison to the offensive of 1937.⁷ Japanese “indiscriminately” bombed even the International Settlement. Children were trampled to death in stampedes as frightened crowds fled the city.⁸ Western noncombatants were encouraged to evacuate. As many departed, U.S. warships docked in the port as a visual reminder of the International Settlement’s status, which sheltered Chinese charities and refugees.

As Nara Dillon notes, the Battle of Shanghai in 1932 laid the institutional groundwork that facilitated relief work in 1937.⁹ On “Bloody Saturday” (August 14, 1937), local civic leaders coordinated relief efforts to create the Shanghai Federation of Charity Organizations (SFCO).¹⁰ To an unprecedented degree, as SFCO records show, NCWA leaders cooperated with Buddhists while also maintaining their own special focus on childhood. For example, as a member of SFCO, Kong Xiangxi’s wife Song Ailing (1888–1973) laid plans for a hospital for poor children, with provisions for free milk and other relief.¹¹ The war sparked, in Dillon’s assessment, “the very peak of private philanthropy” in Shanghai.¹² Although the Shanghai Municipal Council offered some financial grants to charities like the NCWA,¹³ relief organizations bore the brunt of this new responsibility.

The NCWA struggled to increase its services at a time when its own infrastructure was under attack.¹⁴ With Zhabei and Yangshupu in flames, the NCWA temporarily closed all its clinics and nurseries, except for the child welfare home in the relatively unscathed French Concession.¹⁵ This institution, which cared for poor children from the ages of six to twelve, housed 140 children in 1941.¹⁶ Japanese authorities refused permission to build refugee centers on Japanese-occupied land, and 280 refugee camps proliferated in the French Concession and the British-American International Settlement.¹⁷

Chinese fled into the Western settlements. In response to the incoming flood of refugees, estimated at 256,000 during the fall of 1937, philanthropic organizations organized an emergency relief drive.¹⁸ As a part of that effort, the NCWA established receiving homes.¹⁹ For example, the Refugee Children’s Home admitted 150 children between the ages of four and fourteen in October and November 1937²⁰ and reached 637 by the peak of the refugee crisis in 1938.²¹ Originally located on Burkill Road, it moved to the safety of St. John University’s YMCA Middle School, technically on U.S. soil, less than a year before Pearl Harbor. The NCWA also established the Refugee Babies’ Home on September 1937 especially for infants.²² In 1938

the home collected eighty-six abandoned infants.²³ The NCWA continued to monitor and direct these institutions remotely from Chongqing.²⁴

When the Nationalists retrenched, first in Hankou and then in Chongqing, they transported important welfare institutions. For example, in ROC-controlled areas, the NCWA directly reported to the Central Relief Committee. The association continued to be directed by Kong Xiangxi, who was concurrently head of the Executive Yuan. The NCWA applauded the “emphasis that the government placed on child welfare services” through events like Children’s Day and resources like children’s libraries, gymnasiums, and children’s hospitals and clinics.²⁵ The Shanghai Children’s Library opened on Children’s Day in 1941.²⁶ The simultaneous celebrations of Children’s Day in Nationalist, Communist, and Occupied China may seem to divorce childhood from specific political content, but it may be more accurate to recognize that new political territories multiplied the associated meanings of childhood at a local level.

American Funding

The geography of power shifted as the ROC withdrew in 1937. Kong Xiangxi directed child welfare activities through agents who had stayed behind in Occupied Shanghai, Xi’an, Luoyang, and other areas.²⁷ Despite clandestine efforts of the GMD in occupied territories, the presence of the central Chinese state was no longer felt as strongly along the coasts. Westerners responded to the absence of the ROC by emphasizing, more than in the 1930s, their own priorities.

In a dramatic example of the wartime respatialization of power, the NCWA abandoned plans to build a children’s center in Nanjing. Florence Roberts, the wife of Owen Roberts, a former chairman of China Child Welfare, had personally pledged support, in the form of funding and prayers, for the Nanjing Center in 1935.²⁸ By 1936 those plans gained traction. Then the war broke out, and in August 1937 New York reassessed its commitment.²⁹ Because the ROC had donated money and land for the project, the organization needed government authorization to suspend operations. After Kong Xiangxi granted approval, U.S. philanthropists further asserted that they were “no longer bound to build the Welfare Center later.”³⁰ Once Nanjing lost its status as the ROC capital, its funding

disappeared.³¹ Funds were redirected toward temporary measures for war victims, for example, the 10,000 refugees who crammed into a space allotted for only 2,700 in Ginling Women's College in December 1937.³² On the Christian campus, faculty enjoyed more latitude to evangelize than would have been possible in the NCWA center.³³

Some Westerners argued against helping the most able-bodied refugees who fled along with the Nationalists. The neediest were left behind in coastal regions—precisely where treaty ports allowed Americans some autonomy to help.³⁴ One of the most unrelenting advocates of welfare work in Japanese-controlled areas was Florence Roberts, who advocated that China Child Welfare in New York, now free from the direction of the NCWA headquarters in Shanghai, should reallocate resources to occupied areas, especially her home base of Beijing (then called Beiping). In response to her requests, the New York office extended a financial grant to her soup kitchen but would not “limit” itself to any particular organization, including the NCWA.³⁵ In November Roberts again argued that “the need for relief among Chinese mothers and children is greatest in Japanese controlled areas.”³⁶ Unrelenting, she energetically remitted telegrams through the U.S. Embassy in Beijing, emphasizing that relief needs in occupied areas were “extremely urgent.”³⁷ Christians also continued to serve in the northern countryside, despite new boundaries of Japanese territory.³⁸

The Nationalists sought to channel funds from the West. By carefully cultivating relationships, the Song sisters successfully elicited sympathy and money from Americans to redirect funds to ROC-controlled areas. By January 1941 Florence Roberts, who had become chair of China Child Welfare in New York, was donating to children's charities in Nationalist China.³⁹ The office of the generalissimo passed along Madame Chiang's thanks, together with a receipt from the Ministry of Finance for 138,888.89 yuan for U.S. tax purposes.⁴⁰ Madame Chiang also wrote to Roberts personally to thank her for donations remitted through a bank in Shanghai.⁴¹ Given Roberts's staunch preferences for allocating money to occupied areas, it is a testimony to the Chiangs' diplomacy that she redistributed funding to ROC-controlled areas even before the United States officially entered the war.

Even after its withdrawal in 1937, the ROC continued to fund welfare in Shanghai. In 1939 the largest funder of relief in Shanghai was the Nationalist government.⁴² Without ROC funding, Shanghai's refugee relief

program would not have survived.⁴³ The ROC, through the Ministry of Finance and Education, helped relocate Chinese refugees to the expensive French Concession.⁴⁴ The government allowed grants for welfare projects as a means to maintain influence and political legitimacy among Chinese behind enemy lines. For example, as Kristin Mulready-Stone shows, the ROC coordinated the Youth Corps across Occupied and Free China.⁴⁵ The Nationalists therefore maintained institutional ties in Shanghai. As a public statement of Chinese unity, *Shen bao* and other Chinese newspapers reported on the NCWA's events in Hankou and then Chongqing together with those in Shanghai.⁴⁶ In these public statements, Nationalists emphasized both the victimization of children at the hands of the Japanese Army and the future role of Chinese children as ROC soldiers.

Shanghai, the Lone Island

Treaty ports granted Shanghai, as a so-called lone island, some measure of autonomy from Japanese occupiers and their collaborators. Despite the often tenuous control of the Japanese, as Timothy Brook notes, Japanese pacification teams claimed to oversee the "Reformed Government" since its inception on March 28, 1938.⁴⁷ The Japan-aligned Shanghai Municipal Commission tried to monitor the activities of foreign charity associations and translated into Japanese information for the Shanghai Bureau of Sanitation about receiving homes for street children. As with other regimes, this information included itemized lists of supplies and registration of members involved in those organizations.⁴⁸ Hospitals released patients either to their own homes or to refugee camps. Nevertheless, the Bureau of Sanitation acknowledged the difficulty of monitoring the activities of hospitals and receiving homes, especially in the chaos of war.

Given these dire circumstances, the war gave Western philanthropists opportunities to experiment with relief. The wartime period witnessed, to some degree, a decoupling of the NCWA and China Child Welfare, so the latter began in October 1937 to operate as an independent organization in its own name. Along with prominent local Germans and the International Red Cross, it funded the Refugee Children Nutritional Aid Committee, which distributed soybean milk to refugee children and pregnant and nursing women.⁴⁹ The Nutritional Aid Council included

Chinese pediatricians and the former public health commissioner for Shanghai Municipality. The program measured and monitored the height and weight of recipients.⁵⁰ Welfare organizations remitted this information for U.S. fundraising campaigns to aid vitamin-deficient Chinese war orphans.⁵¹ As Jia-chen Fu concludes, the organization accepted both international funding and scientific norms that redefined social concerns regarding hunger in biomedical terms regarding malnutrition.⁵² As shown in Chen Heqin's involvement in the NCWA, the impetus to measure children as an integral aspect of philanthropic work was also rooted in longer historical trends in child study.

Despite Japanese efforts to isolate flows of people, communication, and money, as well as its own reputation as a "lone island" of Western influence, Shanghai served as an important hub for welfare relief.⁵³ Despite the wartime fragmentation of China, Shanghai also provided a basis for welfare relief work in other areas of the country. For example, Chung Wai Bank transmitted money into the interior, especially for child welfare and famine relief in Huabei. Christian welfare workers distributed educational materials, published in Shanghai, across the countryside as they administered child welfare. After the ROC's retreat, the NCWA continued to receive funding from the Allied countries.⁵⁴ The ROC currency *fabí* circulated throughout the mainland until frustrated Japanese military officers blockaded international settlements in July 1939.⁵⁵ Writing in Chongqing in 1940, NCWA general secretary Chen Tiesheng noted the flow of money via the Shanghai branch, which shows that Chinese people effectively circumvented the fragmentation of political regimes during the war.⁵⁶

In accordance with previous requests from the New York Office, the NCWA continued to send photographs and information about individual Chinese children for U.S. fundraising campaigns.⁵⁷ As Lu Liu has argued, the Nationalists adeptly wielded visual images to elicit international aid for the refugee crisis.⁵⁸ The NCWA published accounts of lost children in Chinese newspapers, principally to unite them with their parents but perhaps secondarily in recognition of the efficacy of publicizing individual cases. Thus wartime needs pushed the NCWA to comply with American fundraising tactics and even to expand and invent new schemes. Jack Neubauer concludes that China was soon at the forefront of international fundraising.⁵⁹ Despite challenges with production and distribution of media, wartime conditions unexpectedly improved publicity systems among charities.

New Fundraising Techniques

Christmas Drives

The NCWA continued traditional rhythms of highlighting Christmas and Children's Day as seasons of extending charity for children. These special seasons highlighted the contributions of Christians. For example, in December 1937 the association organized local churches to support a Christmas toy drive for its Refugee Children's Home and its refugee centers for famine victims in the hinterland.⁶⁰ Such support began with Christian communities. On Christmas Eve in 1937 Tian Guiluan (1882–1977), Ginling alumna and wife of a prominent doctor, David New, who had headed the child health division of the NCWA, opened her home for a “Children's Party” with presents and candies for the “poor children.” They “soon discovered” the identity of Santa Claus—a prominent Chinese Christian and member of the Rotary Club.⁶¹ As the war continued, the focus of the Christmas drives turned increasingly toward winter clothing as a basic necessity rather than toys.⁶² These drives provided the basis for annual relief efforts, even after the ebbing of the refugee crisis and the shift from emergency measures to refugee relief.⁶³

In winter, many died of cold.⁶⁴ The Chinese Medical Association identified the need for winter clothing in the refugee camps, and the work was coordinated among three charity associations.⁶⁵ Chinese Christian women began a clothing drive in October 1937 with donations from Hong Kong and Singapore.⁶⁶ Clothing was gathered at the YWCA and dispatched to refugee women, who sewed together tropical summer fabrics to create colorful, padded winter suits likened to Joseph's “coat of many colors.”⁶⁷ A financial gift from New York provided for overhead and small remuneration for the refugee seamstresses so that Christians would not have to draw funds from the International Relief Fund (and thus would avoid squandering social capital in the cross-religious umbrella organization, heavily represented by Buddhists).⁶⁸ Tian Guiluan created flowcharts to increase efficiency, and these models launched the NCWA's annual winter clothing drive.⁶⁹ Women in Shanghai sewed as many as 250,000 children's outfits each winter.⁷⁰

The Shanghai NCWA invented new ways of inspiring local support for the clothing drive in publications and places patronized by Westerners and Chinese Christians. The association distributed posters in churches, schools,

and businesses like the Race Club. Likewise, the *Happy Family Journal* and the *Shanghai Evening Post* ran free advertisements. The NCWA also advertised the clothing drive on the radio.⁷¹ In a radio appeal, the chairman starkly commented, “The strength of Euro-American countries and the weakness of our country are rooted in child welfare.”⁷² With China’s vulnerabilities ever more apparent in wartime, Chinese Christians thus continued to associate child protection with national salvation. The association promoted itself through its new fundraising techniques. When donors contributed more than twenty cents, they received a special badge with the slogan “cherishing the young”—words taken from the Chinese title of the NCWA.⁷³ In conjunction with the professional artists’ guild of the city, the association held an exhibit in 1938 with proceeds dedicated to children’s relief.⁷⁴ Despite its success, some commentators condemned the commercial nature of the event, which crassly rewarded charity with material goods and exposed the deep economic divide between donors and recipients.⁷⁵ Such commentaries were lost on the American president of China Child Welfare, who boasted that the clothing drive’s success revealed a strongly “favorable impression” among both the foreign and Chinese communities in Shanghai.⁷⁶

The clothing drive successfully attracted local donations and clothed 151,488 child refugees in the 1937–1938 season.⁷⁷ With 41,717 Shanghai dollars collected, the Shanghai NCWA surpassed its original goal of obtaining 30,000 dollars, or 10,000 winter suits for children. In addition, local people donated 12,305 pieces of clothing. In particular, 15,400 dollars were donated via 254 schools, indicating the contributions of students.⁷⁸ Middle school students in Shanghai donated two thousand items of clothing in November 1939 alone.⁷⁹ In December 1940 elementary school students collected over a thousand yuan of donations.⁸⁰ Philanthropists smiled on the efforts of the young to help their poorer brethren. In early 1940 the association began to store children’s discarded winter clothing for future use.⁸¹ The association affixed clothing with tags specifying for charitable distribution only (rather than for resale).⁸² Even after the refugee crisis had abated, in February 1941, the NCWA collected 33,735.70 yuan in local currency and over 500 new suits of clothing, as well as sewing 6,000 suits for children.⁸³ The NCWA distributed clothes to poor and refugee children in hospitals in Shanghai.

Like Christmas, Children’s Day continued as a seasonal event for child welfare. Whereas Children’s Day had previously masked its welfare

component with celebrations of children, wartime events perhaps more blatantly offered direct aid in the form of food and clothing.⁸⁴ Notices advertising Children's Day contained special appeals to donate to refugee children.⁸⁵ On the day itself, sixty-three hospitals and clinics offered free medical care, including free dental exams. Thirteen theaters and amusement parks opened their doors.⁸⁶ Children performed in public as a patriotic statement of China's future. In 1945 Kong Xiangxi claimed that the NCWA had been responsible for Shanghai's Children's Day in 1940.⁸⁷ Shanghai NCWA members like Tian Guiluan and Reverend Andrew Wu helped to direct the event and thus provided some institutional continuity from before the war.⁸⁸

With the withdrawal of the ROC, relief organizations became more explicitly evangelical and perhaps more democratic. Christmas drives marked the NCWA as Christian, and Children's Day also helped highlight the organization's special focus on children. Despite its religious tone, the Shanghai NCWA's mobilization of schoolchildren reinforces Harriet Zurndorfer's argument, in the realm of female volunteerism, that wartime charities engaged "a much wider scope of Shanghai society."⁸⁹ Christian charity certainly expanded the NCWA's appeal to Americans. In fundraising drives directed to the United States, the organization specifically targeted Christian themes, such as a photograph of a refugee Chinese Madonna and child to grace the cover of its Christmas cards. These appeals reinforced to American donors the notion that the philanthropy was Christian in nature. Americans capitalized on the idea of using charity as a vehicle for evangelism and cultural exchange.

Dollar Diplomacy

Given the dire circumstances of war, China leveraged fundraising, especially for children's welfare, as a diplomatic tool before the United States entered the war. As early as 1938 the Overseas Chinese Service Committee printed receipts for donors, along with documentation from the Hankou Branch of the Bank of China (when the ROC was temporarily based in Hankou).⁹⁰ ROC diplomats raised funds abroad.⁹¹ Overseas Chinese all over the world volunteered time and donated money.⁹² Although ostensibly soliciting charity for women and children, Madame Chiang and other Chinese women goaded the U.S. public to enter the war.⁹³ Starved for funds,

the Song sisters also sold Chinese antiques, via the FAR Gallery, to raise funds for refugee relief and the war effort.⁹⁴ Although the loss of priceless antiquities may seem a crass battering of Chinese national sovereignty, this measure illustrates ROC wartime desperation.

The war profoundly changed fundraising tactics and encouraged a much greater degree of transparency and participation. Charities such as the NCWA began to insert, in their publicity materials, certificates from professional accounting firms to verify the accuracy of their budgets, as well as itemized receipts.⁹⁵ Before the war, the NCWA submitted budgets to New York but did not widely disseminate them. The Shanghai NCWA, headed in the early war years by Chen Heqin, encouraged local donors to reach the next level of membership by meeting specific targets. In contrast to prewar trends relying on large gifts, in wartime charities rewarded small donors by publishing the names of even those who had sacrificed a single dollar.⁹⁶ The war thus fundamentally changed the tactics of fundraising in China and shifted the spotlight from philanthropists like Kong Xiangxi to contributions by ordinary citizens.

Banks in Shanghai provided an important conduit through which money was channeled into China. Even after the entrance of the allies into the war, relief organizations like the NCWA remitted donations through banks during wartime fundraising campaigns and also solicited money directly from banks.⁹⁷ Bankers played an important role as financial managers of wartime charities. Given the difficulty of transporting goods to isolated inland areas, it was relatively attractive for Americans to donate cash—specifically “American relief dollars.” As Americans explained in propaganda material, “Even though transportation facilities may be largely or wholly cut off, it will continue to be possible to transmit funds by radio.”⁹⁸ In other words, cash transfers could be wired through airwaves, and technology could thereby overcome some of the physical obstacles of distributing relief or the Japanese Army’s enforcement of Japan’s Federal Reserve Bank currency.⁹⁹

According to Rachel McCleary, before Pearl Harbor the U.S. government also leveraged humanitarianism to galvanize public support for the Chinese war effort.¹⁰⁰ Charities in the United States proliferated. The ROC formed the National Relief Commission, sometimes called the Development Relief Commission, in 1928 to coordinate and distribute Allied relief funds.¹⁰¹ The U.S. government likewise moved to eliminate duplicate programs and to streamline administration,¹⁰² and in 1940 United China

Relief (UCR) was founded as an umbrella organization to coordinate the fundraising activities.¹⁰³ Despite the religious background of many of these bodies, the UCR categorized its work as primarily humanitarian rather than evangelical; the China Aid Council and the American Bureau for Medical Aid to China (AMBAC) were more expressly nonreligious.¹⁰⁴ The war thus helped to secularize international humanitarianism.

The UCR aimed to elevate China in U.S. public opinion through its fundraising campaigns. In 1941 its director approvingly noted the large number of small contributors in the United States.¹⁰⁵ Individual donations could be counted as votes indicating public support for China's war effort. Fundraising campaigns therefore explicitly targeted small donors. The advertisement "Are You a Penny Saver?" featured a photograph of a Chinese child whose life was implicitly at risk. The advertisement instructed readers to cut out the photograph to paste onto an empty bottle. Americans would then "drop in a coin for humanity" into the bottle, and they could send the accumulated funds, as a money order, to AMBAC.¹⁰⁶ These fundraising tactics, instructing Americans on saving techniques, dovetailed with new propaganda material that emphasized the purchasing power of the U.S. dollar. With the bottle on the kitchen counter, a "penny saver" could tangibly imagine that his or her penny would feed a child one balanced meal. These campaigns thus appealed to even poor Americans because in China "a little goes a long way." In 1940 the NCWA reported that thousands of starving refugee children were wandering the streets of Shanghai and claimed that only 180 dollars were needed to care for one child each year.¹⁰⁷ By democratizing fundraising, the American public could be persuaded to save Chinese children—and perhaps also to support Chinese troops.

In advertising pamphlets, the UCR increasingly emphasized the purchasing power of the U.S. dollar. Local humanitarian organizations provided information about human-interest stories that could measure the impact of relatively small sums of dollars.¹⁰⁸ The Church Committee for China Relief included a list of what U.S. donations could potentially buy in China. When the China Aid Council revised the list, editors changed the equations so that the dollar, rather than the aid, fixed the amounts; instead of writing, for example, that three cents would provide food, shelter, and medical care for one day for an adult, the China Aid Council noted instead that a single dollar would provide such relief for a month.¹⁰⁹ In other words, relief organizations rounded up to the nearest sensible unit in U.S. currency to speak to American audiences.¹¹⁰

Fundraising conveyed something about those in need. For example, Christmas drives often highlighted the contributions of Chinese Christians. The sister schools of Chinese women's colleges ran a successful Christmas card drive for China.¹¹¹ AMBAC thereafter sold the cards in the off-season as little gifts or "bridge prizes."¹¹² The bureau also sold records of traditional Chinese stringed music in its Christmas drive for 1940.¹¹³ In December 1941 opera singer Paul Robeson sang, in English and Mandarin, Chinese children's music; the proceeds went to war orphans in China.¹¹⁴ New York's World Fair sold goods, like tea and silk, to raise money for Chinese refugees.¹¹⁵ Americans could experience the sounds, tastes, and textures of China as reminders of its sacrifice and plight. The commercialization of funding structures transformed donors into consumers and could also link humanitarianism with consumerism. As had critics of the Shanghai NCWA's charity art show, leftists could caricature humanitarianism as the liberal handmaiden of capitalism; these materials do indicate consumerism and even exploitation of the photographs and representation of poor children in ways that may have compromised their dignity. But a more charitable, and perhaps more accurate, characterization would be that wartime international humanitarianism intersected with the development of American consumer culture in the mid-twentieth century.

Nowhere is that more evident than in the UCR's novel fundraising tactics aimed directly at children.¹¹⁶ While still offering elite Waldorf dinners and Hollywood fashion shows as the bulk of fundraising work,¹¹⁷ the UCR also democratized fundraising, such that even youth and children could participate. It produced Chinese-themed attractions with special appeal to American youth, such as "the Chinese [female] aviatrix,"¹¹⁸ a junk in New York Harbor, and a pagoda in Times Square. It also mass-produced commercial products, such as comic strips and penny buttons, targeted at young audiences. Walt Disney, as head of the UCR's Children's Division, donated the license to the 1940 *Fantasia*-animated character "Hop Low" (with stereotypical Asian characteristics).¹¹⁹ Wartime merchandise reflects the development of a new consumer youth culture with global appeal. Charitable proceeds must have helped children justify, to themselves, spending their pocket money during a period of global crisis. The interface between Chinese and American charitable activism thus became, more than ever, enmeshed in consumer capitalism.

Mass marketing represents a slight departure from ongoing trends, since the nineteenth century, of *elite* children's philanthropy. In the 1930s the

NCWA hired daughters of famous politicians and philanthropists. During the war, daughters of that milieu contributed to fundraising campaigns. For example, General Joseph Stilwell's daughter held an exhibit in New York of her paintings, done in traditional style under a Chinese master, and donated proceeds to Chinese medical relief.¹²⁰ The daughter of the Chinese ambassador (and NCWA member) Alfred Sze gave a lecture at a fundraising dinner hosted by the Campfire Girls.¹²¹ In mid-1941 the three daughters of author Lin Yutang wrote a memoir of their wartime experiences and donated the proceeds to wounded soldiers in Chongqing.¹²² These girls not only served poor children but also mobilized ordinary children to join their cause. As we have seen with Shanghai schoolchildren, wartime fundraising pushed the democratization of philanthropy all over the world.

As the war continued, inflation complicated relief efforts. As Madame Sun Yat-sen (1893–1981) noted, inflation increased the cost of living and depreciated the buying power of the U.S. dollar; the price of sustaining and training a child for a year rose from 20 USD to 30 USD (presumably in border regions).¹²³ Her sister, Madame Chiang, wrote that in her orphanages, the cost of raising a child had risen to 40 USD per year. Inflation hit Chongqing and Kunming especially hard in the period between 1940 and 1941 and rendered those areas relatively unattractive to Western donors. Certified accountants as well as Western China experts verified financial estimations for proposed budgets.¹²⁴ Wartime inflation and increased competition for foreign funding made it even more necessary to keep accurate accounts of financial records.¹²⁵

Americans continued to see charitable donations as a means to improve the reputation of Christian missions in China, but wartime conditions exacerbated Chinese needs and increased American opportunities to meet them. The UCR portrayed Chinese leaders as welcoming of Christianity and democracy.¹²⁶ As such, the UCR continued the work of China Child Welfare in using U.S. dollars to elevate the quality and reputation of Christian child welfare in China. By donating, Americans also invested in a Christian, democratic China, relatively amenable to U.S. influences. Americans were told exactly what their five-dollar bill would buy in China, and that amount was “multiplied a hundred-fold in the service that it renders, and in the friendship and goodwill it creates and maintains.”¹²⁷ The UCR called these “Bargains in Charity.” In short, during global crises, Americans bought international diplomacy on the cheap.

Child Welfare in Occupied Shanghai

Medical Aid

International enthusiasm for Shanghai relief declined as the refugee crisis abated; nevertheless, war shortages continued to plague medical and social services. In response, charity groups cooperated to offer specialized services for women and children. For example, on May 17, 1939, community leaders decided to merge the Hospital for Refugee Children and the International Red Cross Emergency Children's Hospital to form the Shanghai Public Children's Hospital (also sometimes called the Shanghai Public Hospital for Children).¹²⁸ Although not explicitly stated, the merger was probably a financial response to the growing scarcity of medical drugs.¹²⁹ Each had treated over a thousand patients for roughly the same cost per patient.¹³⁰ Among the named patrons of the new hospital were leaders of the Shanghai NCWA. Their involvement helped to ensure the financial investment of the foreign community, with plans for making the hospital fiscally sustaining. The manager of the Sino-German Bank gladly remitted funds from around the world.¹³¹ As with the Nutritional Aid Council, American and German expatriates cooperated to benefit child welfare in Shanghai.

The new Shanghai Public Children's Hospital offered a sliding scale of payment in order to be "self-supporting" while also "non-profit-making."¹³² Those in need could receive free out-patient care, including medicine and X-rays from a machine donated in the memory of a deceased businessman. Patients had to pay a fee of one Shanghai dollar to schedule an appointment and thereby circumvent the waiting line. Likewise, in-patient care included tiered rooms at different price points. In addition, charity beds were available and endowed at 300 dollars per year by local community organizations and commercial firms. The sliding scale was a common tactic among wartime hospitals.¹³³ Yet these measures failed to ensure the continued maintenance of the Shanghai Public Children's Hospital. Even with medical equipment on loan from the Bureau of Sanitation in the French Concession, the hospital chronically lacked equipment and supplies.¹³⁴ Shanghai Municipality's Bureau of Public Health also had to take over the YWCA Children's Hospital, which had fallen into a state of disrepair.¹³⁵

Chinese Christian women responded to the need for maternity welfare. Hospitals overflowed with pregnant women, and babies were delivered on the streets and sometimes abandoned there by destitute women.¹³⁶ In June 1938 Caroline Tsu (Xu Lingyu, 1897–1970), a graduate of Columbia Teacher's College and chair of the Shanghai YWCA, petitioned the Shanghai branch of China Child Welfare for a grant of 5,000 Shanghai dollars to help build the Maternity Receiving Center (also called the Shanghai Maternity and Child Hospital). China Child Welfare granted the award, thus “giving the newborn a better start in life.”¹³⁷ Philanthropists deemed this “exceptionally good work.”¹³⁸ With lobbying on the part of these elites, the Shanghai Emergency Relief Committee authorized Maternity Center control over Refugee Camp No. 34 at 110 Robinson Road. The center was entirely funded through donations rather than patient payment.¹³⁹ Some 972 refugees, including husbands and older children, lived at the center. Committee leaders argued that transportation to hospitals for delivery would otherwise be too challenging for the women, who feared separation from their families.

In this instance, wartime conditions created an opportunity for Shanghai Christians to guide some aspects of family life. Because the maternity center encompassed both a hospital and a refugee camp, the organizers could approach the operation as an educational experience over the course of the mothers' confinement. Doctors taught mothers infant care.¹⁴⁰ The International Red Cross enlisted the Christian child expert Chen Heqin, minister of Chinese education in the International Settlement, to direct educational programs.¹⁴¹ Bible study was included in the curriculum, and both children and adults learned literacy, calisthenics, hygiene, singing, and games. Not only did Chen's textbooks and lectures emphasize hygiene and modern childrearing practices, but the center could also regulate the quotidian habits of its wards. What Chen's daughter remembers from these days was not the nostalgia of her own carefree youth, but the awkward responsibility of teaching literacy to adults. Like so many children and young people during the war, she assumed adult responsibilities.

As the refugee crisis subsided, the Maternity Center shifted its attention to providing services for the poor. In 1940, despite a decreasing number of refugees, Dr. Amos Wong (b. 1899) made a compelling case for continuing the operations of the Shanghai Refugee Maternity Center in the “crowded and congested conditions” of Shanghai. With an urban

population of roughly four million, Wong estimated that there were roughly 100,000 births per year in Shanghai, only 15,000 of which were in hospitals, and that the mortality rate was generally roughly 15 to 20 percent for infants and 5 percent for mothers. Public maternity hospitals improved the infant mortality rate to roughly 10 percent. Owing to the superior training and medical staff, the Shanghai Refugee Maternity Center had the best infant mortality rate of only 4.4 percent for infants and 1 percent for mothers.¹⁴² The center thus disparaged “old type midwives” and home births.¹⁴³ It opened clinics in the Industrial Center of the YMCA and at the Tunsin Road Refugee Camp to promote antenatal care.¹⁴⁴ The Shanghai NCWA thus enacted measures to enforce Chinese pronatalist policies during the war.

Like many other relief centers, the Shanghai Public Maternity and Children’s Hospital suffered from skyrocketing real estate costs in Shanghai. The maternity center borrowed nurses and equipment from an existing sanatorium and clinic.¹⁴⁵ In 1939 the Shanghai Refugee Maternity Center moved to 737 Weihaiwei Road, where the International Red Cross Hospital for Children had previously been located, before merging to become the Shanghai Public Children’s Hospital. In 1940 China Child Welfare helped to support the Shanghai Public Hospital for Children as it transitioned to a new and permanent location.¹⁴⁶ That same year the resulting Shanghai Public Maternity and Children’s Hospital faced a lawsuit regarding its occupation of land and had four months to vacate the Weihaiwei Road premises.¹⁴⁷ In February Superintendent Wong applied for a grant from China Child Welfare for 15,000 Shanghai dollars to continue operations during its relocation.¹⁴⁸ The finance head of China Child Welfare issued two grants, in 1940 and 1941, of 25,000 Shanghai dollars to defray the hospital’s operating costs but also required that the additional 100,000 Shanghai dollars necessary for new construction be raised locally.

By March 1941 Wong had secured a permanent location for the hospital in a factory district. He reported that the hospital had relocated to an area in which it could best care for infants before and immediately after birth; he also requested additional funding because its budget had increased to 60,000 Shanghai dollars.¹⁴⁹ In the assessment of China Child Welfare, the cost of the proposed property at 51 Rue Moliere, estimated at 152,000 Shanghai dollars, was too expensive for the hospital to sustain.¹⁵⁰ Wong had chosen a location near the French Park for its size, rooms, and enclosed

veranda facing south.¹⁵¹ Welfare projects shared space as well as funding resources. Because the Shanghai Public Hospital for Children acquired the space previously occupied by the Shanghai Children's Nutritional Aid Committee (funded by the NCWA), the hospital "should be the logical center for future experimentation" in soybean milk and cakes.¹⁵² The Shanghai Public Hospital had a long-standing interest in expanding children's nutrition,¹⁵³ but its service in loaning space perhaps stemmed from an appeal for grants from China Child Welfare. Welfare organizations responded to contingent crises, such as medical outbreaks in refugee camps, as they arose.¹⁵⁴

Before the war, the NCWA had begun to fund child victims of tuberculosis, then a common disease in China. China Child Welfare continued to support the Children's Ward of the Tuberculosis Hospital. In July 1939 the organization provided a grant of 750 USD to run the Children's Ward for six months on a renewable basis. In 1940 while in the United States, diplomat Alfred Sze, in his capacity as chair of the Shanghai Anti-tuberculosis Association, inquired about the balance of money that had been promised for the Tuberculosis Hospital. Sze also pushed the organization to relay the unused funds that the Refugee Children Nutritional Aid Committee had remitted after its termination. The New York office had been unaware of the reimbursement,¹⁵⁵ and the Shanghai branch immediately convened a meeting of its finance committee.¹⁵⁶ Within two days of Sze's original notice, China Child Welfare granted the hospital an additional 5,600 Shanghai dollars. The Children's Ward consequently expanded from forty-two to fifty-two beds.¹⁵⁷ Sze's intervention reveals that a well-connected ROC diplomat could uncover available funds even before reports reached the funding organization.

Emotionally and financially, children represented the best return on investment for philanthropists. Although allocations for children amounted to only a quarter of the total expenses for the free hospital, children were much more likely than adults to survive. Dutch missionary Dr. Lee S. Huizenga (1880–1945) made both emotional and practical arguments about directing aid specifically to children. Perhaps to illustrate cases concretely (as American funders had persuaded the NCWA to do), Huizenga provided a list of the names of the child patients, along with their ages, sex, diagnosis, and remarks.¹⁵⁸ He described the "youngsters" (between the ages of two and fifteen) in the hospital; moreover, he wrote that with

funding from China Child Welfare, “these unfortunate penniless young sufferers are made happy and some of them have good chances of recovery.”¹⁵⁹ His use of the word “happy” echoes the NCWA’s sentimentalization of childhood.

Among Huizenga’s arguments were utilitarian considerations about survival. Although children were more susceptible than adults to contracting tuberculosis, he noted, they were also better able to recover.¹⁶⁰ The hospital could release children whose illnesses were “arrested” and thereby rotate beds to treat even more patients.¹⁶¹ In his many letters, Huizenga appealed to the practicality of focusing funds and attention on children. While asking for a renewal of the grant two years later, Huizenga again wrote that the Children’s Ward was “by far the most promising” area of the hospital: “Being young in years, and free from the worries of adult age, the youngsters respond more readily to treatment and your grants have enabled us to give far more nourishing food.”¹⁶² Like Chen Heqin, Huizenga assumed the qualities of an innocent, sentimental childhood, which worked to the advantage of his patients. Here he issued a call to aid dependent children not because of children’s vulnerability but because of their strength and likeliness to survive.

Huizenga’s report indicates some of the complexity of promoting a sentimental childhood during wartime. In the case of switching from a toy drive to a clothing drive, the NCWA focused increasingly on material necessities rather than sentimental luxuries. Organizations like the UCR emphasized child welfare in order to serve larger political and diplomatic ends, such as galvanizing reluctant Americans to support entry into the war. Propaganda encouraged investment in children as a means to an end. The NCWA explicitly connected China’s backwardness to its neglect of children, further associating childhood growth with national development. And yet, whether it be the textual descriptions in Huizenga’s grant application or the face of a Chinese child staring out from a collection bottle on the kitchen table, to Americans, children elicited special sympathy.

Child Advocacy and Industrial Welfare in Occupied Shanghai

Although the National Child Welfare Association was establishing receiving homes in areas in the interior, it listed advocacy work only in

Shanghai. By “advocacy work,” the NCWA referred to efforts to rescue children from cases of parental neglect and abuse.¹⁶³ The burdens of war had torn many families apart, but the NCWA maintained its goal of legally and morally enforcing parental responsibility. The association also continued to promote consciousness-raising and bring forward legal cases of child abuse.¹⁶⁴ Street waifs were sent to centers like the Friends’ Home, a Quaker organization established in 1940 and funded by the Shanghai Municipal Council.¹⁶⁵ Not originally intended as an orphanage, the Friends’ Home took in only small numbers of children with “special problems,” but these cases accumulated to over a hundred a year.

By fragmenting families, wartime conditions paradoxically underscored the need for good parenting. The Shanghai NCWA retained its commitment to the Chinese family by making provisions for entire families to enter the Shanghai Maternity Center. The association collected abandoned children.¹⁶⁶ Many waifs were too young to identify themselves or were unwilling to move to refugee centers, lest they lose their parents forever.¹⁶⁷ The association publicized information about lost children to help their parents recover them.¹⁶⁸ As an extension of the National Christian Council’s Christian “home campaign,” the Shanghai YMCA invited Chen Heqin and other child experts to offer instruction at its wartime parenting class.¹⁶⁹ It also translated a manual on child welfare training centers that was distributed to the hinterland.¹⁷⁰ Many journals dealt with the issue of how to help children cope with the psychological pressures of war.

The outbreak of war provided further impetus to solidify the trends, already championed by the NCWA, to professionalize childcare and child welfare. Before the war, local churches hired industrial welfare workers who were loosely connected to the Shanghai Municipal Council and the YWCA; with the outbreak of war, these women strengthened their contributions to the International Settlement’s Social Services Department. The YWCA continued to inspect industrial conditions in Shanghai’s wartime economy. The Shanghai NCWA, headed by Chen Heqin, arranged to survey child laborers.¹⁷¹ The organization planned to pay surveyors to interview child workers about their experiences in factories. Chen thus envisioned a much more extensive investigation, on an ethnographic level, than the 1924 Child Labor Report. These plans may have been cut short when Chen fled Shanghai in the aftermath of America’s entry into the Pacific Theater. The war justified professional interventions in family life, but also rendered it more difficult to do so.

Conclusion

In these early days of the Japanese Occupation, Westerners continued to run “the lone island” in ways that belied their true status as Western imperialists rather than auxiliary modernizers of the Chinese state. Nevertheless, the International Settlement also gave Chinese elites, especially those oriented to the West, an independent base to continue their operations during the war. Tensions in the International Settlement mounted as the United States increasingly came into conflict with Japan. In early 1941 the United States issued a blockade on Shanghai.¹⁷² Owing to concerns about the flight of financial assets from China, the U.S. Treasury froze Japanese and Chinese assets in the United States, rendering it difficult to wire money to China.¹⁷³ The year 1941 thus marked a nadir for U.S. funding for Chinese child welfare, which halted temporarily before famine conditions forced the ROC to assume greater responsibility.¹⁷⁴ In that same year Western missionaries noticed that collaborationist governments (established in 1938) also ramped up anti-Western sentiment and advised “loyal Chinese subjects” to build their own Christian Church, since all “religion must be united to the State,” in accordance with Japanese policies.¹⁷⁵

Even after the retreat of the ROC in November 1937, those who remained behind continued the work of the Shanghai NCWA. National leaders like Kong Xiangxi left to serve the ROC, but many middling professionals stayed in Shanghai. Among them were Christians like Chen Heqin and Reverend Andrew Wu, as well as the Chinese Christian women who executed much of the wartime relief work.¹⁷⁶ NCWA accountant Lin Kanghou (1876–1949), who had during the warfare of 1937 suggested diverting SFCO funds to attend to the wounded military, remained in Shanghai throughout the war.¹⁷⁷ In 1938, acting as Shanghai NCWA treasurer from the Chung Wai Bank Building, Lin appealed to the French Settlement for funds to care for children sent by the court.¹⁷⁸ To continue these operations after 1941, Lin registered the Shanghai NCWA with the Social Welfare Bureau of the Occupation government.¹⁷⁹ He succeeded in petitioning the collaborationist Shanghai municipal government for subsidies.¹⁸⁰ (In 1945 Lin was sentenced to six years imprisonment on charges of collaboration with the Japanese.¹⁸¹) In Chongqing, Kong Xiangxi also continued correspondence via the International Settlement of Shanghai even after the bombing of Pearl Harbor.¹⁸² Kong probably considered these

channels a clandestine maneuver to fortify ROC legitimacy behind enemy lines.

If 1937 witnessed a sharp decline in Nationalist cultural influence as well as political control along the coast, 1942 similarly marked a sharp decline of American influence as residents fled or were interned. A woman of means, Dr. David New's widow, Tian Guiluan, deposited her son safely in a New York boarding school before returning to Nationalist areas to train social workers.¹⁸³ As enemy combatants, expatriates like Dr. Lee Huizenga were interned in Japanese detention camps. Before Huizenga resigned, he provided a list of possible funders, and the Japanese Dr. Tashiro helped the Tuberculosis Hospital to acquire a half ton of coal to provide heating through the winter.¹⁸⁴ As Nara Dillon argues, "Pearl Harbor removed the veil over the unspoken cooperation that had emerged between the Refugee Relief Association, Shanghai's collaborator governments, and the Japanese military."¹⁸⁵ To shore up Allied support, Westerners formally relinquished control of the treaty ports in 1943. The International Settlement came under the jurisdiction of Wang Jingwei's (1883–1944) collaborationist government. With the slogan of "Asia for the Asians," Wang encouraged Sino-Japanese Buddhist charities in allegiance to the Japanese empire, rather than Western-oriented Christian charities.¹⁸⁶ After 1942 Chinese Christians were in a relatively more difficult position for continuing child welfare—or, in fact, for arguing for their social significance as contributors to the civic good.

The (collaborationist) Reorganized Nationalist Government refitted celebrations with their own vision of a peaceful childhood dominated by "self-regulation." The occupation government celebrated "national" (*quan-guo*) Children's Day, echoing rhetoric of patriotism and future leadership. In keeping with previous celebrations, the government opened the doors of its public parks and awarded prizes for childhood health and patriotism.¹⁸⁷ However, in stark contrast to Nationalist and Communist wartime discourse about children as "natural" soldiers, it promoted instead an image of the "peaceful" nature of childhood.¹⁸⁸ As Jeremy Taylor illustrates, "peace" figured prominently in occupation slogans and images (often featuring women and children).¹⁸⁹ One key component of Japanese pacification was Chinese complicity and self-regulation. In 1944 the Shanghai NCWA also highlighted its efforts to foster children's self-governance (also, of course, in compliance with educational trends of the time).¹⁹⁰ In the context of puppet regimes, the term "self-governance" could refer obliquely to Chinese

self-regulation or collaborationist Shanghai mayor Chen Gongbo's (1892–1946). In Shanghai, children even “celebrated” the anniversary of Japanese Army’s invasion.¹⁹¹ As instrumental as Nationalist visions of heroic children or American visions of suffering children were, so too were occupation visions of peace.

Pearl Harbor marked the imminent end of treaty-port privileges and, to some degree, a disruption of welfare funding. Even after the declaration of war between Japan and the Allies, the Shanghai NCWA assured U.S. funders that it could still receive funding to continue much-needed child welfare services.¹⁹² Without direct aid, Chinese Christians had diminished resources to operate charities.¹⁹³ After Pearl Harbor, Americans diverted resources away from Occupied China and toward what they called “Free China.” In the words of Mrs. James Roosevelt, “China’s cry for help for her helpless—the sick and wounded, the war orphans and refugees—is not only an appeal to our compassion. For a China in which the will to be free remains alive makes our own ideals and values more secure.”¹⁹⁴ Roosevelt eloquently explained Americans’ philanthropic diplomacy, no longer directed only for evangelism but also democracy more broadly. The next chapter will trace the influx of American expertise and funding to “Free China” and the ways that NCWA humanitarians exported models of childhood sentiment, developed first in Shanghai, to national projects during and after the war.

Wartime Paternalisms

Mobilizing Child Advocacy for the State

World War II pushed states, across the globe, to promise entitlements to citizens in exchange for engaging in total and protracted war.¹ Men marched to the front; women went to factories or craft societies. When leaving home, for a few hours or perhaps forever, parents entrusted their children to others. States supported childcare, and sometimes even evacuated children, to protect future soldiers. War thus pushed the instrumentalization, rather than the sentimentalization, of childhood. In this context, charities like the National Child Welfare Association willingly cooperated with the government—even to the point of limiting their autonomy—to mobilize and protect children. Humanitarians nevertheless continued to draw on the sentimental value of childhood in order to lend poignancy to their plight and to solicit support from Allies around the world. This chapter interrogates how this process occurred across Nationalist and Communist areas.

They had an uneasy wartime alliance. After loosely reuniting China in 1927, Chiang Kai-shek had mounted military campaigns against Communists. As a result of the Long March (1934–1935), Communists relocated to camps, eventually behind front lines in the war against Japan. Chen Jian argues that geography artificially buttressed Communist claims of winning the war.² Whereas other guerrilla regions fluctuated with the vicissitudes of war, the Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia (Shanganning) Border Region was relatively secure.³ There, in the capital Yan'an, Mao Zedong consolidated

power and enforced his own vision of Communist discipline. Originally one of many base camps, Yan'an rose to prominence and profoundly influenced future PRC policies. Meanwhile, the Japanese Army pushed the Republic of China into the remote mountains of Sichuan. Chiang increasingly relied on American funding to supply the remote capital of Chongqing, heavily bombed by aerial attacks.

Despite these tensions, Communists hung a portrait of Madame Chiang Kai-shek (Song Meiling) on an orphanage's wall in Yan'an.⁴ This seeming anomaly illustrates real cooperation, particularly for child welfare. Song Meiling's portrait also indicates her political manipulation of child welfare. Notwithstanding genuine concern for children, she projected herself and her sisters as national leaders for their stewardship of children. Even before Pearl Harbor, she successfully elicited American sympathy and funds for "warphans." The U.S.-based United China Relief established an office in Chongqing. This office also channeled funding to Communists.⁵ Stationed in Chongqing, Communists Li Dequan and Zhou Enlai lobbied for U.S. funding, especially after the dissolution of the Comintern in 1943.⁶ It is vital to recover this history of wartime cooperation from postwar Communist denunciations of Nationalist recalcitrance and unfeeling incompetence. Wartime alliances between Nationalists and Communists opened doors for cross-pollination of ideas regarding scientifically informed childcare. They agreed on reasons for establishing pre-schools: to improve hygiene, to increase population, and to allow women to work. The war heightened the need to expand labor markets, replenish military pools, and support partisan families. Both Nationalists and Communists leveraged child welfare for statist purposes, including increased government surveillance and inspection of children.

Juxtaposing Nationalists and Communists also helps to illuminate their differences. Nationalists had to negotiate with civic associations more than Communists did. The ROC built on the work of private organizations like the NCWA, which provided resources but also maintained its own agenda. Although noting the apparent tension between sentimentalizing childhood and instrumentalizing children, NCWA administrators posited that protecting children was necessary for ensuring their "happiness" and "innocence."⁷ At this time, Nationalists were more invested than Communists in the sentimentalization of childhood and the idealization of the family as a unit somewhat autonomous from state control. Especially after 1942, Communists relocated the children of cadres from surrogate peasant

families to preschools for greater oversight. Where Nationalists edified mothers, Communists trained staff. Communists projected images of medical care and robust health, mischaracterized in sentimentalized descriptions by American observers.⁸ Americans interpreted signs in Yan'an of sentimental childhood, when in reality the Border Region Government did not idealize the bourgeois family (or what Helen Schneider calls the Nationalists' "ideology of the happy family"). Owing to the absence of Chinese civic charities in Yan'an and the discipline of cadres (party officials) in the Rectification Campaign, Communists were relatively freer to assume an even more instrumental, rather than sentimental, approach to modern childhood.

Childcare and the Functions of the Nationalist State

Childcare to Increase Population and Labor

Especially in the context of the dearness of life in wartime, the ROC improved medical services in Sichuan. One of the major ruptures was a shift away from neo-Malthusian theories of the 1920s to pronatalist needs in wartime. As Nicole Barnes observes, wartime Chinese states prioritized maternal and child health to combat wartime mortality.⁹ Both regimes outlawed abortion.¹⁰ Because midwives had traditionally performed infanticide on behalf of mothers,¹¹ modern nurses acted as arbiters for enforcing anti-infanticide laws. Over loudspeakers, hospitals broadcast warnings against the dangers of abortion and the evil of infanticide.¹² Nationalists sought to lower death rates by teaching women about hygiene.¹³ Trucks broadcast information and offered medicine in the areas surrounding Chongqing,¹⁴ as part of municipal government outreach.¹⁵ As in wartime Shanghai, institutions often conjoined services for childbirth and early childhood education to consolidate resources. For example, in 1940 the ROC Bureau of Social Affairs built a preschool, a children's receiving home, and a midwifery institute with the goal of increasing life expectancy for infants and young children.¹⁶ Children's homes and maternity hospitals thus reinforced the state's pronatalist orientation. These measures succeeded: by 1944 the population in Chengdu surpassed prewar figures.¹⁷

The ROC benefited from Allied funding and civic organizations. Before the war the NCWA had planned for a nationwide child welfare program

to include training in midwifery and kindergarten care.¹⁸ In 1939 NCWA's partner organization donated funds to Dr. Marion Yang (Yang Chongrui, 1891–1983), director of maternal and child health.¹⁹ Yang resigned in protest when the male Dr. Zhu Zhanggeng, a long-standing member of the NCWA, was appointed head of the National Institute of Health.²⁰ In 1942 Zhu established a day nursery in Chongqing for children of working mothers with an operational budget of 4,000 USD per year and four additional day nurseries.²¹ He noted in an interview: “As a result of women going into industry in this period, day or night nurseries are becoming a virtual necessity.”²² Nurseries had the “purpose of releasing working women of their family burdens so that they can serve China in her war crisis.”²³ The nursery also operated as a “demonstration center” to educate mothers about childcare and nutrition. This center thus continued the NCWA's emphasis on scientific childcare and family education. Zhu's words indicate that a major impetus for creating nurseries was not only instructing women in modern childcare but also freeing women to contribute economically during the war.

The war created a labor shortage and thus a demand for women to enter the workplace. In an effort to “free women from their yolk and allow them to single-mindedly serve the nation,” the Women's Advisory Council (WAC) to the New Life Movement established nurseries. In the words of a government circular, “The burdens of childcare prevent women from more actively participating in work for the war effort.”²⁴ Preschools helped alleviate that burden.²⁵ At the same time, employment was a type of wartime government benefit for displaced populations. WAC sought jobs for the wives of soldiers and also provided social welfare services to improve family life.²⁶ The Bureau of Social Affairs funded WAC's own day nursery—staff salaries, toys, clothes, and medicine.²⁷ The head of the preschool intended for every two children to share a wash basin, but the bureau generously provided individual wash bowls to prevent disease.²⁸ Its regulations also stipulated individual towels and toothbrushes for each child. Hygienic childcare was not cheap, and the government subsidized these services for working women from partisan families.

Demand for preschools came from working women in Chongqing. For example, in July 1942 a female ROC member petitioned the Bureau of Social Affairs to establish more preschools.²⁹ Provinces advocated for the transfer of funds from the central government for that purpose.³⁰ Allied aid helped subsidize industrial preschools,³¹ and requests were coordinated

by the office for the United China Relief in Chongqing. Allied funding thus triangulated different levels of the Nationalist government to facilitate the movement of relief. By 1943 the ROC Executive Yuan issued directives to encourage the establishment of industrial preschools in its effort to mobilize the female workforce.³² Labor unions opened nursing stations at preschools.³³ When founding preschools, organizers sent reports to the Bureau of Social Affairs with rhetoric about the national importance of children during wartime.³⁴ For example, in Chongqing the Yuhua Silk Factory operated a factory crèche. One twenty-nine-year-old woman, assisted by older female helpers, cared for forty children. The daycare provided breakfast, lunch, and dinner, and children played games and learned simple characters.³⁵ Although its documents claim that the factory employed the wives of soldiers, worker Ye Qingbi remembers that the factory hired unmarried teenaged girls, whom it locked inside the factory and imprisoned in a system of indenture. One must surmise that the crèche was for children of management.³⁶

The ROC is often faulted for the host of socioeconomic problems that infested Chongqing during wartime, including the skyrocketing price of housing and inflation, as a result of corruption. But the ROC, as a developmental state, did at least legislate to improve and regulate new institutions, even if they did not reach a majority of the population. Private preschools and children's homes were also held accountable for the well-being of children. They reported deaths and run-aways.³⁷ Furthermore, WAC audited children's homes for the Bureau of Social Affairs.³⁸ These reports indicate child losses in wartime conditions, even in the Communist-run branch in the border region.³⁹ Such information is important because it counteracts the claim made by some Communists after 1949 that the ROC had neglected to monitor high rates of infant mortality in child welfare institutions.

Child Welfare as a Venue for Nationalist Patriotism

The Song sisters' philanthropic efforts for children were widely publicized as part of their national fundraising efforts. Susan Glosser notes that Chinese reformers drew on traditional philosophy to align family with the nation. But in asserting a special role for the Songs' own family in particular, the Christian political family perhaps also drew on social gospelers'

hope, in the words of Susan Curtis, that the U.S. government “would become the head of the American family and household.”⁴⁰ As fictive mothers, the Song sisters introduced orphans to Christian charity, for example, giving Christmas gifts.⁴¹ Song Meiling projected Christian womanhood to American audiences and galvanized support for China during the war.⁴² Many Westerners saw, in their promotion of the extended Song family, a uniquely Chinese vision of family and state.

The Song sisters leveraged such applause. The widow of founding father Sun Yat-sen, Song Qingling, was sometimes called the “national mother” and helped to ensure that child welfare funds were distributed to Communist areas.⁴³ Song Ailing, the wife of Kong Xiangxi, founder of the NCWA, played a crucial but sometimes overlooked role for her contributions.⁴⁴ The Song sisters personalized fundraising campaigns in the United States to attribute paternalistic bonds over “warphans” victimized by the war. Government journals often depicted photographs of the sisters, or of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek and his wife Song Meiling, among warphans. The sisters visited children’s institutions, watched children’s performances, and distributed candy as signs of their personal favor and intimate relationships with the children who called them “mama.” In the absence of her own biological children, Song Meiling consciously projected maternalism as “national mother.”⁴⁵ This was a transferrable gender identity; as Danke Li shows, in wartime child welfare institutions, ordinary “women activists assumed the role of mother of the nation.”⁴⁶

What looked on the surface to be Song Meiling’s innocent pet project actually formed a basis for supporting the military. As early as 1927 she assumed leadership of the Schools for Children of Revolutionary Heroes, which provided for the children of soldiers killed in Nationalist Army campaigns to unify China against warlords.⁴⁷ This school, located at Zhongshan Memorial Park near Sun Yat-sen’s grave in Nanjing, inculcated patriotism.⁴⁸ As head of the Chinese Aviation Commission, Song Meiling also supported the Chinese Air Force, especially in the context of intense bombing campaigns during World War II.⁴⁹ The ROC built air-raid shelters for the preschools attached to the air force in Chongqing.⁵⁰ Its preschools, for 251 children ages two to six, were presumably among the best and drew applications from mothers.⁵¹ The air force combined its preschools with a receiving home and maternity clinic, which offered prenatal care to roughly thirty women each month and delivered nearly nine hundred babies each year. In 1941 this institution created an exhibit to promote

its work in child welfare and “protecting pregnancy.”⁵² The coordination of health services indicates the close connection between child and maternity health as an overall pronatalist policy, especially for the Nationalist military. Kevin Landdeck also shows that government entitlements incentivized military service by providing care for families of servicemen and were necessary to counter the difficulties of conscription.⁵³

Humanitarian Mediators Between State and Society

The National Child Welfare Association

Institutions for children were built across Nationalist and Communist areas during the Second United Front. The National Association for Refugee Children (NARC) cared for as many as 28,900 children in Nationalist areas alone.⁵⁴ With fifteen regional branches, NARC also oversaw child protection services.⁵⁵ Scholars note the importance of NARC, established especially during the war to demonstrate international and domestic cooperation on behalf of children.⁵⁶ Notwithstanding the importance of NARC and other institutions established during war, one major distinction between Nationalist and Communist areas was that the ROC also cooperated with already established civic institutions like the National Child Welfare Association.

In 1937, when the Japanese military swept across North China, the war interrupted the travels of the associate general secretary of the NCWA, who was then on a mission to provide famine relief in West and Northwest China.⁵⁷ Unable to return home, he established refugee camps.⁵⁸ Through these stations, the NCWA laid the groundwork for the wartime mobilization of children.⁵⁹ During the war, the organization established three institutions in Henan, three in Shaanxi, and three in Sichuan. The NCWA assisted the ROC in relocating children to safer zones, relatively less impacted by war.⁶⁰ Between 1937 and 1942 the NCWA rescued 12,368 children in fourteen child welfare camps, not including those run by missionaries in occupied territories.⁶¹ In Liulin (Shanxi), Luoyang (Henan), and Yichang (Hubei), the association’s transit stations temporarily housed children on their journey. The NCWA’s aid in relocating children was vital given the dangers of wartime migration.⁶² This example illustrates how the NCWA responded strategically to wartime contingencies. Where

possible, it facilitated the reunion of children with their parents.⁶³ Thus, as in Shanghai, the NCWA remained committed to the family as the proper place for children but relocated them in cases of abuse, abandonment, or death.

Like their counterparts in the United States, the NCWA became even more explicitly at the service of their government. U.S. funding was also restructured during wartime into larger and more government-aligned institutions. Christopher Jespersen shows that the U.S. government streamlined charities during the war to allow for a greater degree of oversight.⁶⁴ Their funders (China Child Welfare, later the China Aid Council) were increasingly (and somewhat uncomfortably) subsumed under United China Relief as it coordinated with an expanding field of welfare organizations in China. These large bureaucracies complicated the relatively simpler relationship between China Child Welfare and the NCWA. With special funds going toward the care of war orphans, and with the support of Kong Xiangxi, the Executive Yuan donated 120,000 yuan in supplemental funds for the NCWA in 1942 alone.⁶⁵ As a result of these political and economic relationships, the NCWA increasingly operated through public rather than private channels.

Charities conformed to ROC expectations. For example, in 1939 the ROC distributed via telegram new regulations for patriotic education, which explicitly asserted the need to foster capable soldiers.⁶⁶ The NCWA responded by building a school for the relatives of those in the armed services.⁶⁷ According to the association, it was protecting defenseless children whose fathers and brothers were absent and fighting at the front.⁶⁸ The NCWA inculcated national and partisan loyalty to the ROC in these seven- to ten-year-olds.⁶⁹ One administrator noted that this school was a unique experiment in children's patriotic education.⁷⁰ In other words, the scouting requirements for that specific institution were particularly intense by NCWA standards. He also promised that "in only a few years, they [the children] will appear with honor at the front." It was thus "necessary to start with children."⁷¹ Colette Plum demonstrates that many such schools were feeding grounds for the army, and she also notes Nationalists' attempts to channel children's deep trauma and rage into patriotism.⁷²

Humanitarians noted this shift toward instrumentalization. For example, one NCWA administrator argued against the common misperception that child welfare had to be "purely philanthropic" or else it was exploitative.⁷³ Not only did such assumptions overlook the special contingencies

of war, the administrator asserted, but they also downplayed the agency of children themselves, who willingly sacrificed for the war effort. Thus, like Plum, the administrator stressed children's agency and heroism. Yet children's sacrifices were poignant precisely because the NCWA had already invested sentimentalized meaning into childhood. Chen Heqin's progressive student Zhang Zonglin even argued that the wartime mobilization of children would potentially liberate them from the strictures of their parents.⁷⁴ The NCWA's ultimate goal was to convince ROC officials of the inherent value of childhood, in both utilitarian and sentimental terms.

Staff remained attuned to children's psychological needs. When children entered receiving homes, they were often dirty and diseased. Of course, staff first bathed them and provided medical care. But much more worrisome were the emotional scars that the children endured. Because of the persistence of notions about the meaning of the "whole child," staff attended to the emotional traumas of war. They "slowly restored their [children's] lively innocence."⁷⁵ This wording indicates that, whereas a bath or vitamin might instantly help a child, emotional wounds ran deeper and required more time to heal—in almost Mencian terms, to regain the child-like heart. To meet these emotional needs, staff read childrearing manuals produced in the Nanjing decade, like *Child Psychology* and *How to Parent*, which included lessons in psychological development.⁷⁶ Echoing these primers, NCWA members described children's innocence and happiness.⁷⁷ Thus administrators tried to reconcile the apparent contradiction between wartime mobilization of children and the sentimentalization of childhood.

Furthermore, the instrumentalization of children in service to the nation tacitly committed the government to a longer-term social contract. Humanitarians expected the state to continue responsibility for the nation's children after the war. In the context of the Social Relief Act of 1943, Chinese American Rose Hum Lee proclaimed the war a "revolutionary" turning point for child welfare in China.⁷⁸ No longer merely the property of fathers, Lee argued, children would now be recognized as seeds of the nation. (This trajectory, from clan property to national citizen, recalled that of early Chinese radicals and shows the degree to which some New Culture ideals had become mainstream, in part through the advocacy work of the NCWA.) Lee's vision of governmental responsibility over childhood aligned with that of the NCWA in the previous decade. Lee predicted that, after wartime popularization, this seismic shift would transform China as a whole. Especially crediting Madame Chiang for her

dedication, Lee's statements indicate the degree to which international humanitarians applauded her promises and the efforts of the ROC. The NCWA surely lost some autonomy by accepting statist directives for patriotic education; nevertheless, its members, along with other child advocates, expected and in fact demanded that the ROC continue child welfare services.

Christian Promotion of Family Education

Within the China Aid Council (CAC), the New York Child Care and Development Committee encouraged the professional development of trained childcare workers. In New York, the Institute on Personality Development offered evening classes in child welfare to encourage Chinese students studying in the United States to enter "the child care field" upon their return to China.⁷⁹ Pearl Sun, granddaughter of Sun Yat-sen, attended college in the United States, "preparing for social work in postwar China."⁸⁰ Some returned for wartime service.⁸¹ For example, a female Chinese doctor returned after graduating in the United States to teach in one of the ROC's two-week training programs, available in eight health-care centers.⁸² There, young peasant women lived together in a collegiate setting with their female teachers, as a new experience intended to be liberating. The school emphasized sound hygienic practices, such as boiling medical utensils. Like medical missionaries, instructors used microscopes to allow students to examine bacteria. These classes included household management for the women in their roles as mothers and wives.⁸³ This shows an effort by the Nationalists to bring not only modern childrearing but also a degree of women's liberation to the rural countryside. Nevertheless, as Helen Schneider demonstrates in her study of family education undertaken by WAC and women's colleges, much of this instruction underscored women's domestic roles as wives and mothers, and often met with limited success outside of those who were already educated.⁸⁴

Nationalist Sichuan benefited from the relocation of mission universities, where Christian Chinese women taught rural women about modern childcare.⁸⁵ Tian Guiluan became director of research and training at NARC. In February 1942 the CAC supported short-term courses in childcare at Chinese universities.⁸⁶ Ginling Women's College's Sichuan campus had its own Pei Yü Nursery School, as well as a child welfare center, where

students volunteered.⁸⁷ Thus these centers continued scientific training of mothers, and even of welfare workers during the war. Helen Schneider discusses the ways in which women's colleges created demonstration centers, often in conjunction with rural agricultural outreach. As Danke Li notes, the infusion of urban women into rural Chongqing significantly challenged gender norms, both in public spaces and on school campuses.⁸⁸

Nationalists sometimes disagreed with Allied funders. For example, the Geleshan Children's Home moved to the picturesque mountain just outside the wartime capital Chongqing. The China Aid Council suggested elevating Geleshan to a "model orphanage." Even though that investment would have allowed an even greater platform for the Song sisters to display their patronage, since they were often photographed on its idyllic grounds, the CAC met with lukewarm responses.⁸⁹ One possible reason may have been the ROC's obligation to expand child welfare projects across China.

Child expertise, as somewhat independent from state control, continued in wartime with, for example, child expert Chen Heqin. In 1941, with funds borrowed from a friend in the Anglican Church, he fled to Jiangxi, where he established the Early Childhood Normal School. Under the direct auspices of the Nationalist Bureau of Social Affairs in 1942, Chen also opened the Jiangxi branch of the NCWA.⁹⁰ Offering shelter for homeless children, the NCWA was warmly received by locals.⁹¹ Chen thus continued to extend the work of the NCWA in the countryside. He also published a journal to disseminate information on effective parenting.⁹² The title of the journal, *Living Education*, recalled his friend Tao Xingzhi's maxim to promote creativity over memorization, and the journal included a special issue on John Dewey.⁹³ The journal serially published Chen's autobiography, *My Half Life*, on the occasion of his fiftieth birthday. These Deweyan influences illustrate Chen's enduring connections with the NCWA, the ROC, and Americans, even as (according to his children) he reportedly began to doubt the leadership of the ROC.

During the war, missionaries continued a movement to "Christianize" the home in West China. One missionary explained, "I have found no better way of presenting Christianity to a non-Christian community than through talks on better ways of handling children."⁹⁴ Amy O'Keefe shows that this movement, while generally sympathetic to Nationalist campaigns, regarded their own evangelism as a superior method for transforming the hearts and minds of the people.⁹⁵ Christian women like Guan Cuizhen trained childcare workers as well as mothers. The organization

also published a bimonthly journal called *Today's Children* with Kong Xiangxi's signature on the masthead, and it reinforced popular messages about the importance of ROC efforts to protect children.⁹⁶ In other words, the movement provided an opportunity for politicians like Kong to extend their influence in areas not directly controlled by the ROC. A topic deserving its own historical inquiry, Kong was also the titular head of the China Industrial Cooperatives (INDUSCO), a broad-based and generally leftist program to bring industrial equipment from the coast to the countryside, which also capitalized on rural missions.⁹⁷ Christian missions thus provided important channels for semigovernmental reforms in the absence of direct ROC control.

The YWCA Christian home movement facilitated the wartime expansion of community projects. In a Shanghai YWCA textbook on sericulture cooperatives, a "smart" woman suggested, "Since we can cooperate together in agricultural labor, why can't we use a cooperative method to rear our children together?" Working women could place children, ages three to six, in a preschool for 4 jiao per month in tuition fees and 3 jiao a month for food supplies. With forty children per class, a manager could also earn a decent salary of 15 yuan per month, while training a couple of teenaged girls as assistants. In daycare, children would acquire hygienic habits. Ideally, mothers would work more productively knowing that their children were receiving good care.⁹⁸ This lesson illustrates how preschools might have been typically organized in the countryside. The explanations offered were very much in line with later Communist arguments about the importance of female mobilization, communal dining, and collective production—modernizing policies that enjoyed broad-based support.

During the war, work cooperatives assumed some of the traditional responsibilities of daughters-in-law. Although often directed by the Chinese Communist Party, this cross-partisan effort also included the ROC.⁹⁹ The Women's Advisory Council to the New Life Movement created women's cooperative "work societies."¹⁰⁰ When their husbands marched to the front, women acquired vocational training through industrial cooperatives.¹⁰¹ For example, the Guizhou Work Society established twenty-four nurseries, twenty-four factories, child health classes, women's friendship societies, and mothers' discussion groups.¹⁰² It also ran "frugal cafeterias." These institutions also promoted regular feeding schedules, then in vogue among childcare experts as a form of internalized discipline.¹⁰³ Thus the

war created opportunities for state organizations to intervene more deeply than before in family life and assume some of the domestic responsibilities of young women. Administrators also sought to elevate the status of women through antifootbinding campaigns and thus indicate a commitment to liberating rural women from traditional norms.

As Xiaoping Cong notes, the ROC retreat to the hinterland allowed educators to rethink the traditional “village contract.” In terms of early childhood education, Chen Heqin’s student Zhang Zonglin wrote that preschools, for weaned infants from two to three years of age, and kindergartens, for children ages four to six years, could help alleviate the childcare burdens of agricultural families.¹⁰⁴ As caretakers, teenage girls would also learn responsibility, citizenship, and female empowerment. Through hygiene and diet, modern childcare promised to decrease infant mortality.¹⁰⁵ According to the NCWA, not only would collective daycare help farming women to contribute to economic production, but schools for young women would also allow them to improve standards of childcare in the countryside.¹⁰⁶

For Western-influenced elites, preschools provided modern childcare as well as, to some extent, a sentimental childhood. According to Zhang, kindergartens should facilitate play and music to allow children to feel “genuine happiness.”¹⁰⁷ Zhang’s reference to “happiness” illustrates the continued importance of childhood sentimentality, especially among those who had participated in NCWA child advocacy work in the 1930s. These non-government actors, who enjoyed independence from the ROC in the wartime countryside, maintained an interest, even during the ravages of war, in the sentimental value of childhood.

Red Star Over Babies

From Subsidies to Government Institutions in 1941–1942

Under the auspices of a branch of the National Association for Refugee Children, a United Front organization, the Border Region Children’s Orphanage was established in 1938 in Liulinzi, south of Yan’an.¹⁰⁸ The orphanage was run by Gao Gang (1905–1954) and Lin Biao (1907–1971). Madame Chiang and her sister, Madame Sun Yat-sen, were honorary

members of the board.¹⁰⁹ In keeping with trends since the late Qing, the orphanage included a “nanny training institute.”¹¹⁰ The use of the term “nanny” also harkens to Qing precedents. This institute was necessary because childrearing was “a professional occupation” and an “important duty.”¹¹¹ By 1940 the institution cared for 535 children whose ages ranged from under a year old to seventeen years of age.¹¹² The Borderland Orphanage remitted financial reports and the resumes of its teachers and even sent a new year’s greeting to Nationalist Chongqing in 1940.¹¹³ Thus the orphanage provided a channel of communication and funding between Communists and Nationalists.

As in ROC areas, CCP hospitals facilitated instruction on modern childcare. In 1938 the Chinese Red Cross sent “a woman’s unit” to Yan’an to improve the infant mortality rate, estimated at 60 percent.¹¹⁴ The Chinese Red Cross opened a well-baby clinic at the Bethune Memorial International Peace Hospital and reported that it “made a great impression” on locals.¹¹⁵ Health exhibits featured public vaccinations.¹¹⁶ The hospital established for cadre parents a local nursery for children between the ages of six months and three years. By September 1938 it had grown from twenty children to fifty. The Yan’an government subsidized the nursery and a hospital nurse oversaw its staff.¹¹⁷ Nurses also informed mothers about infant hygiene and modern childrearing.

As a part of its commitment to childcare and public health, the China Defense League (CDL) proposed in 1941 a “Nursery Training Centre” attached to the Border Region Hospital in Shaanxi to provide training for “child welfare workers” across the Northwest border region.¹¹⁸ In 1941 Yan’an’s Border Region Government created, in conjunction with the Women’s Federation, a Program for Child Welfare within its Civilian Department.¹¹⁹ The hospital provided training for sixty men and women.¹²⁰ After a one-year course in midwifery, childcare, and nursery schooling, specialists led local “village nursery school work.”¹²¹ The Child Welfare Section of the Health Department supplied medical instruments necessary for childbirth and infant care. The Civilian Department also planned to publish a “Handbook on Hygiene of Pregnancy, Childbirth and Child Welfare.” Trained childcare cadres toured southern Yan’an as an “experimental area for nursery work.” While conducting health inspections and recording demographic information, welfare workers taught hygiene and consulted with mothers.¹²² In part counteracting parental resistance, they also dispensed government subsidies for raising healthy children over one

year of age.¹²³ Welfare specialists thus became “important cadres for nursery work in the villages.”¹²⁴

Americans interpreted these measures, undertaken with Allied funding, as in keeping with their own goals for a sentimental childhood and a happy family. For example, in 1941 a former medical missionary visited a maternity hospital in the caves of the Northwest. He commented, “I never saw anywhere else so many happy young mothers, and so many healthy, fat babies.” His description recalled illustrations of robust health in NCWA journals of the 1930s. In 1942 the CAC (the latter incarnation of New York’s China Child Welfare, the original funding arm of the NCWA in the 1930s) included these impressions in a memo with a request for a further monetary grant for the Border Region Hospital.¹²⁵ Indeed, in 1942 the CAC’s Child Care and Development Committee in New York identified deficiency in scientific training, rather than lack of proper sentiment or social motivation, as the major obstacle for daycare work.¹²⁶

That same year Zhou Enlai, then stationed in Chongqing, successfully lobbied Robert Bartlett, a representative of the CAC, to increase funding for child welfare services through preschools. Zhou argued that in 1940 fourteen children’s nurseries had admitted roughly five hundred children in the Yan’an region, but by 1942 that the number had increased to sixty day-nurseries, with over one thousand children.¹²⁷ Twelve of those nurseries were subsidized by the Border Region Government. CCP figures were corroborated by the CAC’s external investigations.¹²⁸ The influx of children in preschools coincided with a constriction of services to institutions (rather than subsidies). The policy thus had the effect of placing more children under institutional care. Although “child welfare workers” had monitored the developmental progress of children within homes, preschools provided a much more direct platform for supervision. After 1942 the CAC began to fund twenty-one nurseries in what it called “Madame Sun’s Children’s Program in the Border Region,” presumably to obfuscate the Communist nature of those institutions.¹²⁹

The spring of 1942 witnessed a contraction of outreach initiatives in favor of such institutions through the Child Welfare Program in the area surrounding Yan’an.¹³⁰ Lowering its direct subsidy for children and pregnant women, the Border Region Government allocated 11,000 yuan to promote childcare services for an area with only about seventy children.¹³¹ Two additional training schools for infant and maternity welfare were also established in the area.¹³² Thus, rather than distribute welfare more broadly, guerrillas

concentrated child welfare efforts near Yan'an. This shift was in keeping with the CAC's suggestions to the Nationalists to invest in a "model orphanage." The practice also had the effect of redistributing humanitarian aid in favor of officials. The families of military officials and cadres were not, as the rural population was, eligible for remuneration for raising healthy children, but they were entitled to enter subsidized preschools.¹³³ A long-standing goal of preschools, with child-to-nanny ratios of three to one, was to "lessen the worries of revolutionary cadre for their families."¹³⁴ Like Nationalists, Communists rewarded military and partisan families with state care.

The influx of funding in 1942 had an impact on preschools in Yan'an. For example, the Lu Xun Art Academy established a nursery in 1941.¹³⁵ In 1942 NARC transmitted through Hong Kong funds donated by the Los Angeles Patriotic Society, and the nursery was expanded and renamed the Los Angeles Preschool, also sometimes referred to in English-language documents as a kindergarten or nursery.¹³⁶ The Border Region Government continued to provide millet and a subsidy of 2,500 yuan a month, and the Lu Xun Academy contributed a subsidy of 600 a month.¹³⁷ With increased funding, the preschool accommodated an additional thirty children, who had been temporarily placed in local peasant homes; these additions doubled the total number of children.¹³⁸ Later in 1942 several children left and only thirty-seven remained, owing to parental movement, lack of supplies, and the difficulty of employing nurses.¹³⁹ Most children were young: eight were under one year, twenty-four were between one and five, and seven were five to seven years of age.¹⁴⁰ The example of the Los Angeles Preschool illustrates that children were sometimes simply reshuffled into preschools rather than remaining under the care of peasants.

These changes suggested that it would be preferable to place children in preschools rather than in conservative, surrogate peasant families—and by extension, they also challenged the sole authority of even biological families to care for children without the expertise or oversight of the state. For example, after training in child management and childhood psychology, and with job experience, caregivers learned how different modern childrearing was from traditional practices. They saw that "our children are healthy while theirs are often sick" because of requirements for boiled water, hygienic conditions, and regular exercise.¹⁴¹ Thus, according to cadres, institutions more efficiently provided scientific childcare than private homes could.

Training Caregivers in Yan'an

Like their counterparts in Chongqing, women in Yan'an demanded childcare. As in Chongqing, Yan'an witnessed an influx of coastal refugees whose daily practices challenged gender norms. Yan'an also generally attracted revolutionaries further left on the spectrum than did Chongqing, so these cultural differences were perhaps even more manifest. Writer Ding Ling (1904–1986) famously complained that women could not contribute to the Communist Party until it effectively addressed their double burden of domestic work.¹⁴² Scholars have studied the imposition of party discipline on urbane women like Ding Ling, whose rejections of traditional marriage and preferences for free love and domestic equality frustrated peasant men.¹⁴³ Most striking is the greater imposition of discipline in Yan'an on young staff who were often initially reluctant to enter professions that would alleviate the burdens of married women. Both Communists and Nationalists trained mothers and childcare workers, but, as Helen Schneider shows, Nationalists had the advantage of important civil institutions with years of experience in teaching domestic science.¹⁴⁴

Professional childcare had, since the late Qing dynasty, been a job for women—so much so that child expert Chen Heqin had even advocated feminizing, to a degree, companionate fathers. Looking to Soviet models, Communists also saw women as “natural child educators.”¹⁴⁵ Nevertheless, the larger ethos in Yan'an on discipline tended to defeminize the profession. For example, a male custodian was praised for forestalling tantrums due to his greater ability to inspire awe.¹⁴⁶ Official titles also reflected this trend. In 1919 the young women of Peking Women's Normal College had argued that the need to “protect” and to “mother” were etymologically embedded in the word “nanny” (*baomu*). In Yan'an, cadre replaced the character for “mothering” with one for “rearing” children in a new term for caregivers (*baoyuyuan*). Administrators added a third qualification about “the necessary oversight of cadres.”¹⁴⁷ Cadres introduced this term perhaps to combat discontentment among the young women that they were simply “mother's helpers” (*laoma*).¹⁴⁸ Thus the new title was intended to increase the status of female staff in the eyes of mothers of enough means or stature to send their children to nursery.

There was a clear hierarchy between teachers and staff. By 1944 the Los Angeles Preschool had attracted highly trained specialists, specifically two

nurses from the Advanced Nurses Vocational School attached to the International Peace Hospital at Yan'an. One specialized in the field of public health, and the other in the field of child welfare. The nursery also boasted employing a college student and a student of kindergarten education.¹⁴⁹ These were the "essential staff" of the nursery, which also included "governesses" and "general service personnel." Teachers and staff attended courses separately. Teachers who had already attained a higher level of literacy took "higher-level" classes that included politics, child psychology, managerial classes about accounting, and general knowledge about raising pigs and picking cotton; they were also responsible for improving the "cultural and political standards" of the caregivers and custodians.¹⁵⁰ In contrast, staff harkened from relatively poor backgrounds: four local peasant women, four wives of guerilla soldiers, and two factory workers.¹⁵¹ For example, originally vetted as a nanny for Mao Zedong, Zhou Guizhi bathed the children and washed their clothes, winning the distinction of "model staff worker" in Yan'an.¹⁵² Staff took weekly classes in basic literacy, first-aid, and "culture and hygiene."¹⁵³ Literacy training allowed staff to "write letters, record diaries, compose paragraphs, and some could even read the newspaper for the masses."¹⁵⁴ Literacy thus helped staff to improve record keeping that increased government surveillance.

Whereas Nationalists directed their training with an eye for women's domestic roles, Communists instructed staff. In contrast to industrial workers who resisted (according to the Child Labor Commission) allowing their children to attend preschools in the 1920s, Yan'an officials willingly entrusted their children to nurseries. Cadres met resistance not from parents but from caregivers. From the perspective of cadres, "When [caregivers] didn't put their hearts into the work, we cadres often had to micro-manage many details." Administrators had "to avoid mishaps" by performing basic tasks themselves, such as "washing the children's faces and bathing them, helping them eat and go to the bathroom, wiping their behinds, watching over the children as they slept." The ultimate responsibility for the children rested with cadres rather than caretakers.¹⁵⁵ Their comment also indicates that they derived a certain amount of legitimacy from their labor and direct contact with children.

Childcare was difficult. Cadres complained, "When the children were disobedient, sometimes they would make the childcare workers so nervous that they [the caregivers] cried."¹⁵⁶ Administrator Zhang Chichang described four caretakers as "insane," and doctors diagnosed the young women as

“hysterical.”¹⁵⁷ Cadres warned that when staff would “cry and scream,” they negatively influenced the children.¹⁵⁸ Here, they were perhaps reinforcing traditional notions that environment influenced a child’s emotional development, even in the womb.¹⁵⁹ Cadres praised caregivers for learning to cry softly and discreetly on their beds, so as not to attract notice.

Young women only reluctantly agreed to become childcare workers.¹⁶⁰ For example, in an oral history recorded by a Chinese scholar, Wang Youping admitted that she had “gone to Yan’an to join the Revolutionary Army, not to look after little children.” A professor at the Women’s University handpicked Wang to care for the son of General Liu Bocheng (1892–1986). The general argued that childcare was “honorable work” and reassured her that “caring for children also has revolutionary value.” Kang Keqing (1911–1992), General Zhu De’s wife, assured Wang that she would be assisting, indirectly, military work.¹⁶¹ Later, Zhu De repeated these ideas in a lecture during the Rectification Campaign. Cadres like Zhu interpreted labor dissatisfaction almost tautologically as a symptom of undervaluing the profession. They explained, “The reason they [staff] were uneasy is that they wanted to study to improve themselves. They feared that [in childcare] they had no future.” According to cadre management, “these peasant women weren’t interested in professional childcare because they didn’t understand the importance of childcare work; furthermore, they hadn’t received collective thought education.” A negative attitude meant that caregivers were “not conscientious and not responsible, and all that was in their heads were thoughts of finding employment [in professional areas outside of childcare].” Cadres saw training as a response to dissatisfaction with limited upward mobility and professionalization. They patiently applauded the contributions of the caregivers, who were “happy [because] those above respect us, and [we] slowly understood the problems that [we] didn’t understand before.”¹⁶²

In the spring of 1943 the Rectification Campaign addressed, to some degree, the cultural gulf between teachers and staff. The First Child Welfare Institute experimented with allowing teachers and caregivers to “give friendly criticism” of one another’s work. They attended a weekly “political class” together.¹⁶³ Political study sessions helped staff to understand that “personal benefit needed to follow party interests.” High-level cadres also led meetings. Noting that caregivers would miss their families during Mid-Autumn Festival, Hu Yaobang (1915–1989) ordered politically informed theater to entertain and inform the staff, in what Timothy Cheek more

broadly calls Yan'an's "pedagogical state."¹⁶⁴ Cadres attributed to the Rectification Campaign an improvement in the emotional well-being of the staff. Childcare staff later remembered the movement as validating their work.¹⁶⁵ Scholars now see antecedents of the Cultural Revolution in the discipline of the Rectification Campaign as a mechanism for consolidating Mao's power; nevertheless, these reports indicate the ways that political campaigns could potentially uplift service workers within Yan'an's larger social hierarchy.¹⁶⁶

Medical Monitoring in Yan'an Preschools

Nurseries in Yan'an continued modern practices of monitoring children's health to prevent disease. Children were inoculated, and nurses inspected them each day, performed physical examinations each week, and recorded height and weight every three months.¹⁶⁷ Given wartime shortages of medical supplies, staff prevented disease through diet and vigilance. Nurses oversaw weekly menus.¹⁶⁸ Despite water scarcity, caregivers bathed each child daily, washed their hands, and made them rinse their mouths out after every meal. In contrast to traditional Chinese childrearing practices, and in keeping with the modern advice of missionaries and Nationalists, the managers of Yan'an warned against overfeeding and regularly gave children enemas to expel parasites.¹⁶⁹ The ill were quarantined and received daily doctor's visits.

Even with these measures, nurseries were hotbeds for disease. For example, in June 1942 influenza quickly spread through the damp caves of the Los Angeles Preschool. Over two-thirds of the children fell ill, and even mothers became infected. By July the nursery had to close for the duration of the rainy season.¹⁷⁰ Such outbreaks motivated the Border Region Government to lobby for medical supplies from the Allies.¹⁷¹ Vitamins combated malnutrition.¹⁷² Photographs of Yan'an's preschools, remitted to the China Defense League, showcased attention to medical care, such as washing children's eyes to prevent trachoma and examinations for tuberculosis at the Bethune International Peace Hospital, with "the only functioning X-ray machine in Yan'an."¹⁷³ This machine was a personal gift of General Joseph Stilwell and represented an important shift in U.S. favor toward Chinese guerillas.

Hygienic practices sometimes confused children. For example, one young child demanded food and the company of other children during an initial period of quarantine and strict diet, implicitly asserting that austerity departed from a more comfortable family environment.¹⁷⁴ Caregivers wore cotton masks to protect the children from airborne germs. Their long white coats emphasized their roles as nurses rather than maternal figures. Children could easily see preschool as state discipline rather than family warmth. But scientific practices were effective: during a bout of gastrodia rash in the spring of 1945, cadres directed caregivers to monitor temperatures and to quarantine infected children. After witnessing that “their own skills had improved,” staff eagerly sought more instruction. Cadres noted, “Afterwards, they wanted to learn more nursing skills, and felt that their previous unwillingness to study had been wrong.”¹⁷⁵ Both children and staff acclimatized to the austere hygienic practices of the modern preschool.

Social Engineering in Communist Kindergartens

Kindergartens had long been recognized as a way to incorporate children into Chinese society, but Communists more specifically described preschool as a step toward collectivization and intervention into family life.¹⁷⁶ Chinese Communists thus aligned more closely with the ideals of Russian Marxists.¹⁷⁷ The Yan'an Preschool provided an institutional setting for children to acquire “the habits of collective living,” including a “spirit of cooperative friendship.” Cadres drew from Soviet models (as they had in the 1920s, when “young pioneers” was transliterated as *pi'ami'er* rather than *xianfeng*). A new generation of Chinese Communists could be trained from childhood. Learning the “love of labor,” even kindergartners cultivated a “fondness for work” through classroom chores. As a forerunner of educational campaigns in the PRC period, elementary school children also contributed to fly-killing campaigns and manufactured small articles like soap. Teachers worked with children in production, perhaps in activities like gardening, to signify their relationship in a “big family”—denoting here not the large, multigenerational household of traditional Confucianism but a new socialist communitarianism.¹⁷⁸ These activities would become hallmarks of childhood educational policy in Chinese communism in the 1950s.

And yet these activities can also be interpreted within the framework of late Qing or early Republican trends. Like Nationalists, Communists also had reservations about physical exertion. Cadres cautioned, “We need to be careful that when children do labor, they do not cause harm to their childhood development and physical strength.”¹⁷⁹ The CCP warning to “allow them [children] to train slowly” also resonates with missionary warnings against undue pressure on children. The notion that strain was potentially dangerous for children had been the starting point for segregating childhood as a protected category for the specialization of labor and the advancement of a modernist state. Nevertheless, the emphasis of this line of thought was less overtly sentimentalized than that of the NCWA. Whereas Communists, like Qing educators, carefully monitored labor within the limitations of overexertion, Nationalists more consciously celebrated play.

The kindergarten curriculum in Yan’an also reflected some influences from the Nanjing decade. Following established child psychologists, cadres in Yan’an followed much of the same kindergarten curricula: simple character recognition based on pictures, numbers, maps, crafts, play, dance, stories, physical education, outdoor activities, and hygienic checkups and the inculcation of hygienic habits.¹⁸⁰ The daily schedule was also organized along similar lines, with hour-long courses in general knowledge on alternating days, or storytelling, literacy, and singing. The lessons, including “Children’s Day,” “Dogs,” and “Dr. Sun Yat-sen,” echoed Chen Heqin’s primers. Added to these ROC lessons were specifically Communist stories inspiring respect for revolutionary soldiers and the superiority of the Chinese Communist counteroffensive to combat Japanese and Nazi atrocities. Teachers, for example, drew on articles from the *Liberation Daily* to celebrate Communist soldiers and labor heroes as part of a larger CCP publicity campaign.¹⁸¹

Nursery and kindergarten children enjoyed free play but were carefully observed. During afternoon recess, children were monitored to prevent thumb-sucking and masturbation, habits deemed unhealthy by the administrators. There seem to have been a variety of policies for behavioral management. In a report to the China Defense League, the First Child Welfare Institute emphasized that teachers always addressed children’s questions and that they resorted to “collective criticism . . . as little as possible.”¹⁸² The Los Angeles Preschool held meetings allowing children to criticize one another’s errors.¹⁸³ Staff strongly felt the impulse to bring in

the methods of the Rectification Campaign, but it was not a uniform or top-down command; as in the “Five Love” campaign, this impulse anticipated teachers’ innovations in the early 1950s.

*Attending to Children’s Emotional Needs
in the “Large Family” in Yan’an*

Along with attention to discipline, caregivers also attended to the emotional needs of children. Some children, especially those who were orphaned or left behind when parents fought at the front, felt jealous when others received gifts or visits from their parents. Schools worked to address children’s psychological needs. Caregivers and other local women “adopted” children for Saturday excursions (when other children visited with their parents).¹⁸⁴ Likewise, the Second Childcare Institute established a “mothering competition” to improve staff’s maternal instincts and thereby reduce instances of sickness among children.¹⁸⁵ Even here, the emphasis was on modern childcare rather than sentimentalizing childhood. Despite the austere discipline of the Los Angeles Preschool, its caregivers recognized children’s needs for individual attention and emotional bonding in a “large family.”¹⁸⁶

Despite the heavy emphasis on discipline, regulation, and hygiene, cadres taught caregivers about child psychology in ways that would have been familiar to child psychologists like Chen Heqin. As Chen had in the 1920s, caregivers in Yan’an wielded child psychology to command obedience with gentle suasion. For example, two caregivers noted, “Today we followed the principles that we learned in class to encourage children, and as a result, the children obeyed us. From now on, we will attend childcare methods and skills class more regularly. [We] truly feel interested in the subject [now].”¹⁸⁷ Experiential praxis thus illustrated the effectiveness of psychological theories and helped caregivers to inspire obedience. Like Chen, cadres also warned that children could manipulate adults with tears and tantrums and advocated closer attention to the emotional character of individual children. One particular boy in the First Child Welfare Institute was especially stubborn and lazy, which staff attributed, after careful observation, to lacking “a mother’s love.” They responded gently to the boy, who became the first in his class. Likewise, in the Los Angeles Preschool, staff corrected negative behavior by praising model exemplars.¹⁸⁸ While

cadres sometimes explained these theories in terms of children's natural tendencies and susceptibilities, as Chen Heqin had done, their ultimate goals for childhood socialization, in terms of emotional adjustments to collectivization, had Communist overtones.

American Impressions of Sentimental, Modern Childcare

As in ROC areas, child welfare facilitated international diplomacy. Leftists such as Edgar and Helen Snow celebrated an idealized vision of Yan'an, and those accounts became CCP cannon of revolutionary resistance; nevertheless, bankers, missionaries, and U.S. soldiers were also among those who mediated with Yan'an (perhaps also sent, as Zhang Baijia intimates, to pressure Chiang Kai-shek to capitulate to U.S. demands).¹⁸⁹ These cases illustrate broad networks of Allied funding for childcare. For example, when Lady Isobel Cripps (1891–1979), president of the United British Aid to China Fund, visited Yan'an, she toured the Los Angeles Preschool.¹⁹⁰ Yan'an remitted information to funders, which became a stock part of Allied fundraising campaigns. For example, photographs show preschools in the caves of the Communist-controlled Northwest, with children singing the Communist National Anthem, the ideological connections of which were omitted from American renditions of the song for fundraising purposes.

Communists impressed American visitors. In February 1943 the school warmly received an American banker for the Chongqing branch of the City Bank of New York, who visited Yan'an on behalf of the American Aid Council and UCR. He reported on the good health of the children in the Borderland Orphanage supported by Madame Chiang. According to his report, Madame Chiang's contributions were allegedly the only ROC money coming into the Border Region. (After the "New Fourth Army Incident" of January 1943, Nationalists had allegedly even stopped paying the salaries of Communist military divisions.) Child welfare was the one arena in which Nationalists willingly supported Communists and thus indicates the ROC's genuine protection of children as a special category, despite its concurrent leveraging of childhood for political purposes.¹⁹¹ As an object of transnational aid, child welfare attracted and demanded cross-partisan support.

Allied impressions of Yan'an tended to depict childcare as very much in keeping with a sentimentalized childhood and family education. One American visitor noted that the children at the Los Angeles Preschool wore white cotton aprons and looked like "a flock of white-breasted ducklings."¹⁹² Such little outfits had also been worn in Chen Heqin's Drum Tower Kindergarten in Nanjing. The American visitor also noted that mothers rotated duty as caregivers and encouraged children to play outdoors with hand-made clay dolls. The simplicity of life in Yan'an charmed Americans. The Border Region Bank's preschool also ran a cooperative with four mothers who rotated responsibilities.¹⁹³ Americans thus saw Yan'an daycare as community-based rather than Communist.

The influence of U.S. and even Nationalist preschool education was evident in Yan'an. Semiotic markers identified those influences on Yan'an's preschools—from the portrait of Madame Chiang hanging on the wall of the orphanage, to the little "ducklings" in Yan'an's preschool. These superficial signs did not necessarily mean that Yan'an shared a culture of sentimentalizing childhood, despite the pervasiveness of modernizing projects regarding childcare. Communists emphasized the arenas they had in common with their counterparts—especially the impetus to use preschools as venues for public health, childhood socialization, and government monitoring.

Conclusion

When Nationalists and Communists retreated to the countryside, they promoted new childrearing practices within a dynamic field of intersecting cultures. Whether in short-term collegiate courses in Chongqing or in on-the-job training in Yan'an, urban women taught relatively more traditional, rural women in the science of modern childcare. Institutions like hospitals, daycare centers, and industrial collectives gave (sometimes very reluctant, in the case of Yan'an) women new career opportunities. In both Nationalist and Communist areas, women themselves agitated for government services to relieve the double burden of motherhood and work. Communists had trouble convincing revolutionary youth to enter the field of childcare as a serious profession, whereas domestic science had long been part of the curricula of women's mission colleges. Conversely, Nationalists

had to negotiate with civic organizations that promoted sentimental childhood as a deeply embedded value. As Megan Greene shows, the GMD was also a Leninist party state that sought to capitalize on the war effort to impose intellectual discipline but was hindered by “the comparative autonomy that higher education” (or, we might add, other institutions, such as the NCWA) had previously enjoyed.¹⁹⁴ In contrast, the CCP’s Rectification Campaigns much more effectively imposed discipline on idealistic young intellectuals removed from established nongovernmental institutions with the authority to confer expertise independent of the state.

Both Nationalists and Communists leveraged childcare to facilitate the war effort. Their statist objectives were remarkably similar. Both groups trained women to serve as professional childcare providers who collected and remitted demographic information. Welfare work was very much tied to increasing the state apparatus, and both parties agreed that child welfare work could help modernize China. In some sense, the war provided space for each camp (especially the previously persecuted Communists) to build government infrastructure. As a reward for partisan families, childcare services also attracted support for each government. In those institutions, patriotic education further heightened partisanship. The split between Communist and Nationalist army units in 1941 widened the political gulf. Wartime fragmentation facilitated independent or parallel government building and would hinder postwar unification.

Contested Service

*Building a National Social Welfare Program
in the Civil War, 1945–1949*

By the time Japan surrendered in 1945, China had paid a high price for victory, as “*the critical theater in World War II*” for eight years—and as a major battleground for fourteen.¹ The Allies had started planning for postwar reconstruction since at least 1941, but international aid was a delicate issue.² With the revision of the unequal treaties in 1943, the Republic of China had officially emerged as a nation among equals. Sensitive to the potential for foreign manipulation, Minister of Foreign Affairs Song Ziwen, Chiang Kai-shek’s brother-in-law, insisted on ROC control over funds from the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) in 1943;³ hence in January 1945 the ROC established the Chinese National Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (CNRRA).⁴ Communists later founded the Communist Liberated Areas Relief Administration (CLARA) in order to demand more equitable distribution of resources. Eschewing wartime cooperation, in the ensuing Civil War, Nationalists and Communists vied to win the hearts of the people.

The ROC thus sought to organize a nationwide, professional field of social welfare with transnational funding. UNRRA expanded educational and career opportunities for those interested in serving children in need. Its very presence demanded bureaucratic symmetry on the Chinese side, through corresponding personnel in both CNRRA and Chinese municipal Bureaus of Social Affairs. In the vocabulary of James Scott,

welfare staff needed “legible” academic credentials across transnational bureaus.⁵ To this end, UNRRA facilitated college scholarships and scholarly exchanges, thereby reinforcing U.S. ties even as individual officials championed the ideal of innovation by Chinese experts. In both China and Europe, postwar relief programs became a “social laboratory” for experimentation.⁶ Child experts like Chen Heqin and Nora Hsiung Chu (Xiong Xiling’s daughter) sought new solutions to transcend the dichotomy between Westernization and indigenization, but the idea of transnational expertise still left unanswered the question of the universality of modern childhood.

Even within UNRRA, officials could not precisely define “relief and rehabilitation.” While cautioning against oversimplification, Jessica Reinisch delineates three broad paradigms to historicize UNRRA: first, as a continuation of longstanding mission charity; second, as an extension of the New Deal; and third, as an opportunity for genuine innovation.⁷ These competing visions often overlapped when, in applications for funding, humanitarians referenced all these goals. For example, child welfare centers, often affiliated with mission colleges and associated with U.S. training, experimented with solutions for local problems.⁸ In the process, an emerging group of welfare specialists often obfuscated the boundaries between secular and religious (or mission-directed), and between indigenized and Americanized (often inspired by the New Deal or by John Dewey and other American experts). Much of this blurring was due to UNRRA’s willing reliance on mission charities in the face of economic shortages. Americans and Nationalists envisioned social work as supporting, rather than diminishing, civil society, either as community groups (including religious organizations) or as individual families. Nationalists were deeply committed to preserving the integrity of the family through the creation of a national government welfare program.

Economic difficulties during the Civil War were an important factor shaping child welfare services. Especially in the realm of child welfare, UNRRA relied on private donors, often through Christian channels; thus dwindling funds pushed child welfare further toward what might be considered “Westernization”—alliances with mission colleges and Christian donors. As temporary institutions, UNRRA and CNRRA created burdensome programs and then relinquished them to the ROC, thus increasing the ROC’s overextended financial commitments.⁹ By requiring coordination among professional experts, UNRRA also unwittingly

duplicated large bureaus, further engorging the ROC's inflated infrastructure. Despite the influx of foreign aid and personnel through UNRRA, China still lacked the human and financial resources necessary for economic reconstruction or even distribution of relief. At the same time, as George Wei notes, the ROC's focus on large-scale modernization projects gave the impression of unfeeling disregard for humanitarian relief—and thus alienated some Americans as well as Chinese.

Child Welfare, Between Family Values and National Oversight

As Tara Zahra has discovered in the case of Europe, child welfare was a highly visible component of postwar international welfare relief.¹⁰ According to the China-UNRRA director in 1946, "In their concern for the categories requiring special care, UNRRA welfare officers have placed much emphasis upon programs for children. Advisory Child Welfare Committees have been organized, with UNRRA participation, to continue the child-care programs set up during the war."¹¹ He thus implicitly acknowledged Americans' concern for the global plight of children in the aftermath of the war. Nevertheless, also in 1946, UNRRA proposed dissolving the National Association for Refugee Children to discharge its financial obligations.¹² Child welfare institutions thereafter had to rely on private sponsors or U.S. organizations like the United Service to China (USC), an outgrowth of the wartime United China Relief. Responding to immediate issues like postwar inflation, welfare institutions nevertheless turned to long-standing partnerships and perennial concerns.

Building National Committees

In 1937 the National Child Welfare Association had envisioned a nationwide child welfare program; returning to these plans after the war, child savers pushed for a greater degree of government regulation and national coordination at the 1946 Child Welfare Planning Conference in Shanghai.¹³ The conference produced an outline that was routinely referenced in UNRRA policy and allocations decisions. Participants addressed many of the NCWA's concerns, especially the creation of legal categories and social

services to protect children.¹⁴ Organizers expressed a need to coordinate child welfare services in health, education, and social work on both the national and the local level. National oversight was especially important because funding responsibilities for social services, like child welfare generally, shifted from central to municipal control.

The introduction of UNRRA changed the landscape of social services in China. The vocabulary of “indigenization” shifted along with the fundamental landscape of international relief in the postwar period. For example, in the “Revised Directive to Establish Relief Associations,” Lu Guangmian (b. 1905), director of the Bureau of Relief, grouped “Chinese and foreign” together but disaggregated charitable organizations, religious bodies, and government bodies.¹⁵ Lu categorized his list by institutional type rather than national origin, as a reflection of the transnational cooperation in organizations like the NCWA. In some regional reports, officials even included Christian missions under the heading “indigenous,” perhaps as long-term, local organizations in contrast to UNRRA and CNRRA.¹⁶ Nevertheless, while discussing Christian missions under the rubric of “indigenous social agencies,” a Guangdong UNRRA official also noted the “salutary effect” of having a Western vice-chairman to provide guidance.¹⁷ Categorizations reflecting transnational cooperation aside, Americans remained in positions of relative power.

Relief associations had become somewhat subsumed within national, or at least public, organizations. For example, the NCWA had relinquished much of its autonomy to the ROC during the war and its members agreed to yield its functions to a new public body. At the Child Welfare Conference in 1946, participants proposed “a child welfare agency for the promotion of child welfare in general giving attention to the care of children.”¹⁸ UNRRA officials thus envisioned increasing government oversight over charities through the centralizing organ of the China Child Welfare Committee (CCWC). By coordinating child welfare programs, the CCWC aimed to increase national cohesion, and as the NCWA had, “improve the quality of” existing programs and extend their services.¹⁹ Even more than the NCWA, however, the CCWC would be an official ROC organ with command over its own fundraising campaigns and programs abroad.²⁰

Increased government oversight did not entail the abandonment of community groups. Social workers especially solicited the support of religious organizations. Far from dismissing church groups, the CCWC called on

“seminaries and normal schools to develop leaders” to teach parental education and to raise public consciousness about child welfare. It recommended that hospitals and “church agencies” organize “child study groups.”²¹ It also listed religious organizations (NCC, the Ys, NCWA) alongside ROC ministries (National Health Administration, National Institute of Health, Ministry of Social Affairs) as agencies “available for the welfare of Chinese children.”²² Especially given its imminent termination date, UNRRA relied on all such organizations, particularly commending the NCWA for its child welfare work.²³ Regardless of how UNRRA or ROC officials viewed secularization, neither institution enjoyed the economic means to assume full responsibility for social welfare.

Children's Rights to Families

As in Europe, Chinese child experts drew on the discourse of children's rights and the best interests of the child.²⁴ At the conference in Shanghai, the first plank in the Child Welfare Platform stated: “Every child has the right to health, wholesome environment, and happiness. This should mean, except for a very small minority of children, the opportunity for every child to grow up in a family of his own.”²⁵ Chinese humanitarians emphasized the child's rights within the framework of the family, rather than as autonomous individuals outside of it. Although European efforts likewise focused on the family in the aftermath of war, these trends intersected with long-standing efforts by the NCWA to provide a modernized Confucian platform of “cherishing children” as a rich and legitimate heritage.²⁶

The war had broken up families and relocated over two million Chinese children to state-run institutions.²⁷ Many UNRRA officers noted, in the aftermath of the war, the continued need for orphanages, which received the majority of child welfare funds in most regions, such as Hubei.²⁸ Many had mission ties. Some Westerners persisted in perceiving weaknesses in Chinese family practices that they hoped to remedy through missions. In the words of the French Catholic apostolic prefect of Hainan in a letter to UNRRA, “Thanks to God there's a means to relieve such an evil [early adoption for arranged marriage of girls] of the community, that is to open orphanages.”²⁹ Although the prefect received financial support from UNRRA, his statements reflected an earlier era, one vehemently critical of Chinese families. In contrast, most transnational child advocates were

staunchly profamily. In Europe, UNRRA workers responded to postwar trauma by emphasizing the Nazi “assault on family sovereignty.”³⁰ Despite different circumstances in the Pacific, child experts likewise advocated reuniting with their families those Chinese children who had been removed to safer zones. The ROC Women’s Advisory Council relocated children, in a larger reshuffling of the displaced population to their home areas.³¹ The China Aid Council asserted, “It should be made possible for every one of them to go back to their homes, since home is the normal and proper place for children.”³²

Nationalists presented orphanages as a wartime necessity rather than a new normative standard. Writing in 1946, Doris Ho noted that the Social Relief Act of 1943 “recognized the fact that it’s better to give relief to homes rather than [place children] in institutions but due to the lack of case work service, foster homes and high standards of living under the inflationary conditions it is necessary to provide basic food, and shelter on the institutional basis for dependent children [as] during the past few years.”³³ In the words of the CCWC, orphanages should offer “temporary rather than permanent shelter.” Instead, “Such institutions as are retained should be so operated as to provide outstanding examples of good institutional care for children.”³⁴ In other words, the ROC should not replace parents but inform and support them. Welfare workers further adapted orphanages to mimic the benefits of the family. In the words of a USC memo, children’s homes should “demonstrate fully the advantages of this approximated ‘family life’ in a Chinese orphanage” in, for example, small “cottage” settings.³⁵ In place of “the far too numerous servants now found in orphanages and nurseries,” “mature cottage mothers (and fathers)” should nurture children.³⁶ One example was the Yu Ying Tang, a Christian organization for abandoned children, some of whom were anonymously deposited as infants in a “Life Saving Cabinet,” a borrowed European practice. The home projected itself as a haven for children to return to all their lives, and a true home with lifelong relationships.

Rather than establishing orphanages, many UNRRA workers argued that Chinese children had too frequently been placed in institutions rather than with extended family. Vinita Lewis (1907–1969) complained that Chinese children had rarely been “true” orphans without any kin.³⁷ These comments seemingly reversed May Fourth radicals’ critiques of the extended family. Before the war, orphanages like Fragrant Hills had

rescued children from poverty, rather than abandonment, to provide them with improved material conditions and moral habits.³⁸ Lewis's memo thus prioritized demonstration centers, as auxiliary support, over orphanages as replacements for families. These views reflect the influence of Chen Heqin and other members of the NCWA who had supported the ROC's "ideology of the happy family." Tian Guiluan wrote an article in the 1940s challenging public assumptions about child welfare as exclusively for orphans. Instead, she argued, the "love of parents and the warmth of the home" made the *family* the best home for the child and therefore the most ideal site for child welfare.³⁹ Casework could address health concerns in young children before they reached school age, a goal maintained in article 31 of the ROC's revised Protection of Childhood and Youths Welfare and Rights Act (2001). Thus, social workers asserted, "Underprivileged parents need to be paid a living wage so as to be able to provide for their children adequately."⁴⁰ Rather than skirting financial responsibility, caseworkers sought to facilitate direct relief for individual families.

Social workers instructed parents on modern childcare. In accordance with the Social Relief Act of 1943, social workers acted as liaisons between families and institutions like child welfare stations. For example, in addition to hosting a parents' association, the Banqiao Rural Welfare Center in Nanjing employed a "home visitor" for individual consultations with parents. Textbooks modeled how teachers and social workers might handle home visits to address behavioral problems; to gain the cooperation of parents, social workers needed to show respect or allow parents to retain "face" or dignity.⁴¹ With increased numbers of social workers as intermediaries, there was more potential for interference in family life, but social workers consciously elicited cooperation.⁴² In addition to the interventions of social workers, the CCWC coordinated other programs for parental education. As Chen Heqin had long advocated, child savers planned to integrate parental education into higher primary school.⁴³ The China Aid Council subsidized mothercraft programs begun in the Nanjing decade.⁴⁴ The NCWA provided parental instruction in child welfare centers.⁴⁵ Utilitarian demonstration centers served "children whose parents were alive as the largest group of children needing care."⁴⁶ They showed parents how to guide the emotional, physical, and moral development of children under the age of six. In the words of a USC press release in 1948, "YWCA Nurseries, in Shanghai and Chungking [Chongqing], are the first projects

of their kind in China, and are particularly important as demonstration centers where visitors from all parts of the country can study their methods for use elsewhere.”⁴⁷ Notwithstanding the grandiose claims of innovation, the notion of demonstration centers harkened back to at least the NCWA’s child welfare centers in the 1930s and can even be traced back to the late Qing shift to experimental praxis.

The Function of Child Welfare in National Reconstruction

UNRRA reports give credence to the accusation that UNRRA leveraged welfare relief as a measure to contain social unrest. Always the second category on reports, welfare relief was often correlated with living expenses. Sensitive to local reception, UNRRA offices frequently translated local newspaper articles, either praising CNRRA or alleging graft, nepotism, and embezzlement.⁴⁸ When the locals in Jiangsu rose up to demand aid, UNRRA suspended distribution—pending further investigation—of relief to all but the poor, infirm, and orphaned.⁴⁹ This case indicates that UNRRA officials withheld aid to punish protestors and, in other cases, strikers. Protected from these vicissitudes were “state dependents,” including “unattached children,” along with the aged, disabled veterans, displaced persons; as in Europe, children were “given first priority” among these groups.⁵⁰ The Chinese Civil War highlighted children’s presumed *political* innocence in mutual bartering over resources.⁵¹

Urban Daycare

While also acknowledging the contributions of housewives in their larger commitment to families, the ROC recognized the continued necessity of daycare initiatives.⁵² Daycare ideally not only benefited children but also increased women’s labor output.⁵³ Work programs were designed to provide relief on multiple levels. WAC paid poor women to work in “sewing projects,” and their textiles produced winter clothing relief. Thus different components of relief programs theoretically worked together to sustain an internal system. In this ecosystem of women’s labor and relief

production, a key problem was lack of daycare and food supplies.⁵⁴ Female labor thus created high demand for nurseries with subsidized food sources. As a result, YWCA nurseries in Chongqing and Shanghai had “long waiting lists because of limited funds.”⁵⁵ Nanjing’s YWCA Preschool had a capacity of only seventy-five, but the nursery accepted eighty-nine children; an additional two hundred families had to be turned away in 1947.

One type of preschool, “professional women’s nurseries” or “working women’s nurseries,” was often patronized by salaried mothers who could pay tuition for basic literacy training. In 1947 the majority of children who entered nurseries in Chongqing did so for educational reasons (429 children) or because both parents were employed (161 children), rather than because of family illness or parental absence (13 children).⁵⁶ Working women’s nurseries in Nanjing, Chongqing, and Shanghai received funding from a variety of ROC sources and charged fees only according to need. The preschool schedule operated around the workday; parents dropped off their children, ages two to five, at 8:30 in the morning and picked them up after work at 5:00.⁵⁷ Some children boarded. Staff carefully monitored dietary, sleeping, and toilet habits to prevent illness. Children in Nanjing were given clothes, a washbasin, and a face cloth.⁵⁸ Attentive staff in Chongqing monitored the “undesirable habits and personality traits” with “individual habit-clinic procedure” and instituted methods to correct these tendencies. Children in Nanjing spent time on a playground and engaged in music, stories, drawing and painting, paper cutting, and “good habit formation”; they also had an extensive library.⁵⁹ Working parents probably saw early childhood education as a means to further their children’s educational prospects, which countered a goal, among leading educators since the late Qing, to shield children in kindergartens from academic pressure.

Whereas professional women’s nurseries sometimes grew from mother’s initiatives, YWCAs directed “YWCA nurseries” more intentionally as charity. Chongqing’s YWCA accepted only children whose parents made less than 600,000 yuan, and the average family income was roughly half that. Run by Chinese Christian women, the YWCA’s highest salaries went to those with the most prestigious degrees, especially sociology with a specialization in child welfare. The center also received funding from the USC and collected fees from parents on a sliding scale of need. Nurses visited the center on Saturday afternoons to monitor the growth of the children. The YWCA hosted a mother’s club monthly to provide lectures on

childcare.⁶⁰ In Shanghai, the Professional YWCA Women's Nursery sometimes merged with the YWCA nursery out of financial necessity, and thus these distinctions should not be overdrawn.

These examples nevertheless demonstrate some variation in daycare options. In some sense, industrial welfare was at odds with relief goals because working mothers earned a wage and could therefore pay at least a token amount of tuition. Despite overt commitment to aid industrial workers, that demographic was in fact relatively low among nurseries. In 1950 Communists pointed to the statistic that only two of three hundred children had working mothers in a factory preschool in Shenyang and thus claimed that Nationalists "misdirected industrial welfare funds to create a professional preschool" rather than an industrial crèche.⁶¹ Ironically, Shenyang was only briefly under ROC control after the war; Communists were obviously most concerned about the misdirection of UN funds away from Communist areas. The record here is complex given the sliding scale of tuition and different types of preschools available for parents. Relatively affluent families willingly paid more in tuition, sometimes despite Protestant-oriented environments, because of a stronger emphasis on educational instruction and greater access to Allied food relief.

Rural Reconstruction for Agricultural Farmers

The war helped to develop childcare as part of not only industrial welfare but also agricultural development, especially through daycares that allowed peasant women to work in craft societies. In contrast to misperceptions that the GMD was unconcerned about rural mobilization, the CCWC asserted that "needs in rural areas should take precedence over needs in urban centers."⁶² Concern for agricultural reconstruction was due in part to the pressing need for food relief as the world food shortage became increasingly acute in 1946.⁶³ As a result, UNRRA allocated dairy cattle at Christian missions to provide milk to poor children.⁶⁴ CNRRA ordered that each district open at least one "milk feeding station" and celebrated their subsequent proliferation.⁶⁵ Milk relief was considered necessary for children, and the price of powdered milk soared, through inflation, to 80,000–10,000 yuan per pound.⁶⁶ In Anhui, local communities helped to establish five hundred to a thousand daycare centers.⁶⁷ UNRRA nutrition specialists

advised them regarding the right amount and kinds of foods for children of specific ages.⁶⁸ Proper nutrition was necessary “if future generations are to be assured a healthy start.”⁶⁹ CNRRA reported staggering numbers of children fed—for instance, fifteen thousand children across the province of Hubei.⁷⁰ UNRRA officials planned to convert milk stations into soup kitchens during winter. These institutions were thus meant to benefit not just children but also the general population.

The Agricultural Extension Commission became involved in child welfare as one aspect of rural reconstruction. The commission, as well as CNRRA and Farmer’s Assistance, provided substantial funding for the Fujia Child Welfare Center in the greater Nanjing area.⁷¹ Some 95 percent of the 170 children came from farming families. Children, ages two to eighteen, were divided into classes based on age. Very small children enjoyed singing and storytelling and graduated to more advanced classes in mass education, handicrafts, and nutrition. Teachers, who were college graduates, focused on instilling hygienic habits. Children assisted at the center’s milk station. The center complained about the need to convince farmers of the necessity for daycare and schooling and sometimes discharged children when parents were uncooperative. Children lived at the center, and parents were expected to attend their performances on Children’s Day, Mothers’ Day, and Fathers’ Day. The center also organized pregnant women and mothers to participate in community projects, focused on sewing, gardening, singing, and making toys. Thus this center provided welfare and instruction to entire families rather than just children and channeled agricultural knowledge into the countryside.

The state integrated institutional childcare into much larger developmental programs in both urban and agricultural areas. In general, there was more evidence of resistance among the rural population than among urban residents to daycare. The government also faced a choice between serving the destitute and facilitating the most productive workers to contribute to the economy. Some relief projects were large and unwieldy, and others were small and experimental. But whether providing an extra cow to a mission to increase milk rations or looms for a sewing project, developmental aid was meant to be circulatory and therefore somewhat self-sustaining. Children were considered especially worthy of protection and help; nevertheless, child welfare was but one part of a much larger system of economic reconstruction.

Training Child Experts

Professionalizing Social Welfare and Expanding Government Institutions

UNRRA introduced professional specialists to the social work field in China. In 1945 the number of all foreign personnel, including medical experts, was reduced, and CNRRA established night schools to train locals to fill those positions. In the words of the director of the China Office of UNRRA, “We agree with Dr. Tsiang [Jiang Tingfu, 1895–1965, a Columbia University Ph.D. who then headed CNRRA] that this emphasis on field and supplementary training may turn out to be the best approach to this problem, but the answer has not been found without tears.”⁷² Commitment to indigenization notwithstanding, UNRRA officials expressed tearful reluctance to be displaced by Chinese workers trained only in short-term field courses. These attitudes drove UNRRA to invest in guiding the training of Chinese experts.

The very presence of UNRRA pushed the ROC to expand its bureaucracies. Each province would ideally employ a regional welfare officer, under whom experts monitored specialized areas like child welfare, work relief, and relocation of displaced persons. UNRRA cooperated with analogous personnel in CNRRA and local Bureaus of Social Affairs to coordinate policies and decide appropriations. CNRRA assumed responsibility not only for distribution but also for the collection, translation (into English), and publication of information. Nevertheless, regional welfare officers, such as Louise Mumm of Guangdong, reported delays in receiving bulletins.⁷³ Welfare varied across regions, from UNRRA officials in Taiwan who routinely truncated their comments on the “welfare” section of their weekly reports, to those in Guangxi who reported that “the best utilization of skills was in the welfare field.”⁷⁴ (Here, as elsewhere, the emphasis was on utilitarian appropriation of skilled expertise.) Even where locals expressed dissatisfaction with the general distribution of relief, the *Tientsin Republican Daily News* nevertheless reported, “Real gains have been made in child welfare.”⁷⁵ Certain regions particularly suffered from lack of human resources because skilled workers had fled Japanese-occupied areas during the war.⁷⁶

As a response to the unevenness of personnel, the China Child Welfare Committee called for the circulation and mobility of child experts. One Guangdong UNRRA officer imagined that “the child welfare specialist might be loaned to help in developing an expansion of much needed orphanages or to help screen out of orphanages children who need to be in special institutions or with their parents who might receive another type of relief.”⁷⁷ UNRRA recommended that “roving teams” reach into the countryside, as in wartime, to educate mothers on ways to combat infant mortality.⁷⁸ UNRRA officials also proposed the creation of “field welfare specialists” to train social workers, identify needs, and relay on-the-ground information directly to UNRRA (rather than relying solely on CNRRA reports). When drafting proposals for field welfare specialists, Guangdong officials consulted Hunan. As in Hunan, they assigned at least five members to each “work team” at the county level. They sometimes employed philanthropists “already there,” such as longtime NCWA member Reverend George Fryer and a Catholic priest. UNRRA noted that social workers needed to operate as generalists, rather than “concentrate on one aspect of service only, such as child welfare or dependent groups.”⁷⁹ In Anhui, for example, a field administration officer assumed responsibility “in the absence of the child welfare specialist.”⁸⁰ In Hebei, an officer expressed “hope that some improvement in the CNRRA Welfare Division may eventuate” with the arrival of a dedicated UNRRA welfare officer in 1946.⁸¹ Thus UNRRA accommodated local demand for generalists but often expressed preference for specialists trained outside of China.

Training and technical expertise had emerged as a state-driven concern for the wartime Guomindang state, in keeping with Allied trends.⁸² UNRRA had foreseen social workers as necessary for distributing relief to 29,400,000 children under the age of fourteen and 4,700,000 older people above the age of sixty, as well as large numbers of disabled war veterans. During the war, the China Aid Council’s Child Care and Development Committee had also noted the need for further training nursery staff.⁸³ Given the history of Chinese anxieties over mission orphanages, UNRRA officers were especially attentive to *quality of care* as demonstrated through medical knowledge. For example, when Jiangxi UNRRA officials discovered “low quality of care” at the Jiujiang Catholic Hospital, they delayed providing a subsidy “until a medical officer is present.”⁸⁴ This example

illustrates how similarly UNRRA functioned to the NCWA of the 1930s: UNRRA, like the NCWA, both allocated foreign funding to local charities and monitored potential neglect. As with social unrest, UNRRA leveraged funds as a form of soft power to encourage adherence to international standards.

When the USC initially appointed members of the China Child Welfare Committee, it selected among a small circle of long-standing Chinese members of the child advocacy community.⁸⁵ It claimed only twenty “truly qualified” child welfare experts in all of China at the end of the war.⁸⁶ Because the USC emphasized that selection would thereafter be handed to Chinese, it continued to champion indigenization. To expand the pool of trained leaders, training was first among the priorities of the Child Welfare Conference in 1946.⁸⁷ That year the Shanghai Office of the Bureau of Relief and Welfare trained, in conjunction with the Office of Technical Personnel, 150 people specifically “as welfare workers, dietitians, and camp and shelter technicians, child specialists, mass feeding specialists and teachers.”⁸⁸ These functions indicate a holistic approach to the “whole child” and the need for a range of skilled experts. Postwar reconstruction solidified social welfare, which included child welfare and advocacy, as a public profession rather than private charity.

The China Aid Council funded programs in the “child welfare field” at Chinese universities—nearly all of which were mission colleges.⁸⁹ In the case of the former mission college Lingnan University in Canton, the president of the university concurrently directed the child welfare center. Dr. Li Yinglin (b. 1892) had studied social work and education at Oberlin College (1916–1920) and had served as secretary of the Shanghai Municipal Council’s Committee on Social Welfare Work and as director of CNRRA.⁹⁰ He directed a nurse, laboratory assistant, and nursery school teacher who ran the center and provided free services at the health clinic and parents’ club. The university covered the welfare home’s expenses, and CNRRA provided food. Parents, who paid tuition, included teachers and office clerks, in addition to factory foremen, janitors, farmworkers, and domestic servants. Two faculty members at Lingnan University’s Child Welfare Center offered courses in child psychology and nursery school education and thus trained its student workers in the field.

University grants were considered an investment in *children*, as one report noted: “On a long range level, USC is working for China’s children by supporting child welfare training programs in colleges and universities

throughout China.”⁹¹ Five colleges opened child welfare institutes that were “entirely self-supporting” with external funding.⁹² Scholarships also encouraged young female college students to enter the field of child welfare and early childhood education, relatively unpopular majors.⁹³ By 1947, 160 college students, 2 nurses, and 4 assistants had entered child welfare training centers.⁹⁴ According to Guan Ruiwu (1907–1986), a professor of sociology at Yenching University who had long worked with Chen Heqin and attended meetings at the League of Nations, these centers should foster interdisciplinary research through a range of courses, from sociology to domestic science, education, and biology. The professionalization of social welfare and case work is attested to by the direction of Ginling Women’s College’s Sociology Department over its experimental child welfare center.⁹⁵

Although Communists later complained that ROC schools were unstructured and lacked discipline, nearly all institutions planned an itinerary of activities—and even scheduled specific times to accompany children to the toilet. At Ginling, staff inspected children’s health during morning playtime. Children were responsible for putting away their own toys and cots, but they did enjoy free indoor play, paper cutting, and drawing. Lunch and milk were provided. Children were taught singing, simple handiwork, and good habits. Like primers since the turn of the century, weekly themes self-reflexively described “our center” and “our friends.” Many curricular themes echoed those outlined by Chen Heqin for the Drum Tower Kindergarten in the 1920s and indicate the persistence of a basic nursery school curriculum centered on nature and citizenship training.

In addition to university training centers, short-term programs also certified social workers.⁹⁶ Among the most prominent child experts, Chen Heqin directed an early childhood normal school in Shanghai, which received government funds for courses with hundreds of students.⁹⁷ Chen’s school, originally specifically for women interested in early childhood education, was less prestigious than a university but still afforded placement opportunities. For example, whereas the director of the Professional Women’s Day Nursery in Chongqing had graduated from Ginling College, the head teacher had attended a three-year course in preschool education at a normal school. In Chongqing, the headmistress of the working women’s nursery graduated from Zhonghua University, and four kindergarten teachers had degrees from the Chengdu Kindergarten Normal School. In

Nanjing, the child welfare center employed women who had graduated from nearby Ginling as its head caseworker and two nursery school teachers. Likewise, at the Quaker Friend's Receiving Home in Shanghai, teachers even held degrees from far-away Yenching in Beijing. Work-study helped to ease college students into full-time jobs as teachers and administrators.

Children's centers also functioned as a form of work relief for students and employees. CNRRA paid local workers, including girls who served "on sewing and feeding projects and as nurses' aides, kindergarten and nursery assistants, playground leaders, welfare assistants, clerical workers, telephone operators, et cetera, according to their vocational interests and potential skills."⁹⁸ Such staff were necessary for the daily operations of child welfare centers but also formed one arm of the Welfare Division's work relief program. CNRRA noted when nursery staff qualified for CNRRA-funded "work-relief status." College women, who worked part-time in child welfare demonstration centers, also received salaries based partially on need.⁹⁹ Regional Student Relief Committees provided welfare,¹⁰⁰ but students were assigned to work opportunities by the Employment Department, coordinated by the local Nationalist Party Office and the Three People's Party's Youth Corps.¹⁰¹ In Canton, the YMCA and YWCA sponsored a Student Relief Committee and paid students small stipends, for example, to provide vaccinations.¹⁰² Such measures may have been a way to neutralize student protest against the ongoing Civil War and the intrusive presence of U.S. troops.¹⁰³

Child welfare centers and demonstration centers facilitated in-field training. For example, the Professional Women's Day Nursery in Nanjing had its own training program and hired six of its own graduates, at a reduced salary, as governesses. The training program probably also reduced fees, contingent on the future labor of the staff. Even the housekeeper at the Quaker Friend's Receiving Home graduated from a training class affiliated with a missionary girls' school. At the Friend's Home, teachers and staff discussed compassionate ways to address behavioral problems, such as nighttime bathroom trips to help prevent bed-wetting. In a bid to demonstrate innovation for grant funders, staff thus described tailoring solutions to children's individual needs. Although women had trained as caregivers since the late Qing, they had at that time more often become private governesses for individual families. UNRRA funding dramatically expanded career opportunities for young women interested in early childhood education.

Local Innovation in a Transnational Scientific Field

Work-study helped to fulfill expectations for innovation in the field. In grant applications, centers described developing special techniques or innovative curricula with “demonstrative value.” And, as in the past, these institutions provided venues for researching the intellectual and physical strength of children.¹⁰⁴ UNRRA field program director Dwight Edwards experimented with allocating small grants to university centers to “initiate certain aspects of modern child care.” Students could expand or improve existing programs to stimulate local interest. For example, Edwards suggested funding bicycles to facilitate the students’ transportation into surrounding neighborhoods.¹⁰⁵ (This example echoed the wartime initiatives that sent nurses into rural areas to conduct child welfare work and mirrored UNRRA proposals calling for greater circulation of welfare experts.) Edwards thus hoped for “much good done with small amounts of money.”

Innovation was also meant to allow for indigenization, rather than mimicry of American models. Child expert Nora Hsiung Chu wrote that educational institutions must adapt to “fit China’s practical needs.”¹⁰⁶ Democratic education had indigenous roots in the ancient teachings of Confucian sages, who had advocated “instruction without discrimination.”¹⁰⁷ Thus Chu advanced a form of meritocracy in keeping with the Confucian tradition. She also asserted that American debates over a “child-centered education” versus a standardized curriculum were irrelevant in China.¹⁰⁸ Instead, education should allow children to “adjust to large social changes”—from tutelage to self-government, and from clan-structured relationships to professional networks.¹⁰⁹ Her periodization followed Sun Yat-sen’s projections for China’s political modernization. The China Aid Council agreed that it would be inadvisable to “endow the Chinese student with rigid ideas based on American practice which are inapplicable to conditions in the child health and child welfare fields of China.”¹¹⁰

At the same time, the CCWC helped bring transnational experts, like the director of the Merrill Palmer School, to China to expand resources for the university training centers.¹¹¹ The committee sought specialists with “prestige and outstanding leadership, able to give ‘direction’ based on a broad experience to improve the child welfare program,” for short-term stays and also welcomed “an experienced paragon trained in child welfare” who could offer long-term direction over projects while in residence in

China for a few years.¹¹² The CCWC saw the need for a “child guidance specialist” to train child experts.¹¹³ In 1946–1947 the Fulbright Foundation brought professors from Columbia Teachers College to teach in the child welfare training programs at Ginling, Lingnan, and Yenching.¹¹⁴ Their prominence also increased the social standing of Chinese experts. As the NCWA had, WAC hosted a weekly radio broadcast on the Central Chinese Radio to showcase the work of child experts like Chen Heqin and Nora Hsiung Chu.¹¹⁵ By innovating new models, they countered impressions of Anglo-American dominance.

Some Americans celebrated a new era of global equality and nondiscriminatory advancement. When possible, the U.S. press showcased Black and Latina medical experts, often with a specialization in childhood, in UNRRA.¹¹⁶ In these examples, gender implicitly additionally qualified women to serve young children, and their ethnicity also portrayed UNRRA and its affiliates as a field of equal opportunity.¹¹⁷ For example, in 1945 UNRRA hired child welfare specialist Vinita Lewis, a graduate of the Chicago School of Social Services and Columbia University School of Social Work.¹¹⁸ Lewis, an African American, had worked for the U.S. Children’s Bureau from 1936 to 1945 as a specialist on “the Negro child” and “interracial conflict.”¹¹⁹ Her selection suggests that UNRRA, like Chen Heqin, perceived racial tensions within the United States as a microcosm for global inequalities. As had the social worker who had offered advice for Shanghai’s child labor problem in 1925 on the basis of her work serving “a large Mexican and negro population, in addition to many other foreigners,” this analogy potentially reduced the citizenship of African American children as cultural outsiders¹²⁰ or, as Communists later alleged, subordinated China as an informal colony of the United States. Nevertheless, Lewis also worked in postwar Germany, suggesting that the United Nations envisioned child welfare as genuine transnational expertise.¹²¹ In sum, child welfare experts like Chen and Lewis embraced a new era of global parity that intentionally rejected white hegemony but could easily be reduced to older frameworks because they so often had to rely on pre-existing connections and discourses.

Scholarly exchanges often reinforced existing Sino-American networks. Child welfare specialists were encouraged to establish schools for social welfare often along the lines of U.S. models. For example, Tian Guiluan (Nanjing WAC member and former director of research and training at NARC) described the University of Chicago’s School of Social Service

Administration as a model for elevating child welfare training centers to a similar position of national importance in China. These scholarships strengthened existing ties within the child advocacy community in China and its connections to the United States, especially via Vassar College and the New York School of Social Work.¹²² New York networks were further reinforced by the prominence of graduates of Columbia Teacher's College, such as Tao Xingzhi and Chen Heqin, on the CCWC.¹²³ Thus, like the NCWA, transnational organizations continued to popularize American liberal education influenced by John Dewey.¹²⁴

Postgraduate study could elevate social workers to the status of child experts. For example, the director of the Shanghai YWCA Working Mother's Nursery received a scholarship to study in the United States.¹²⁵ As early as 1944, CNRRA director Jiang Tingfu had planned to send 150 Chinese students to the United States for training, and thirty of those would be welfare workers, of whom at least ten would be women.¹²⁶ The CCWC selected candidates for scholarships to study "social assistance, child care, infant hygiene," among other areas, in the United States.¹²⁷ Seven female students in 1946–1947 and four female students in 1947–1948 studied child-care and development there for one year.¹²⁸ All candidates were required to have proven their commitment with at least five years of work experience, and many had worked for WAC, YWCA, or CNRAA. The selection process thus heavily favored Nationalist women with wartime service records.¹²⁹ The committee sometimes rejected applicants because they were disinclined to remove the best workers from the field.¹³⁰ Professional certification was often more attractive to students than practical experience, and many requested extensions in order to obtain a master's degree in the United States.¹³¹ The committee "took a very serious attitude" regarding the students' failure to "keep their promises to return to China after one year's study."¹³² At the same time, the CCWC monitored the job placements of graduates from the Child Welfare Training Program and was invested in their long-term career trajectories.¹³³ Thus the CCWC vacillated between the twin goals of training professionals and providing service.

Kate Merkel-Hess writes, "Instead of mass mobilization, reformers invested energy in training a cadre of young people (mainly men, but also women in fields like education and nursing)."¹³⁴ This formulation echoes the conclusions drawn by frustrated American UNRRA workers like Irving Barnett.¹³⁵ The ROC certainly attempted to build a national infrastructure of intermediary social workers rather than directly mobilize the

masses. However, for both UNRRA and CNRRA, training and distribution were essentially a positive-sum game because the ultimate goal of professional training was to provide better service in the field. The CCWC planned for “in service training” to “improve the quality of child welfare work” in existing agencies. In the words of the committee, “Educational institutions undertaking child welfare training should assist service agencies to improve the quality of work so as to provide adequate laboratory for students in training.”¹³⁶ Training, however, required time, and the ROC was running short of it. Problems with distribution ultimately compromised the attempts to integrate welfare relief into larger national construction projects in industry and agriculture and thereby undermined the GMD’s political legitimacy.

The American Problem

A Western Undercurrent: The Expediency of Mission Ties

One major problem was perceived collusion with missionaries. In 1944 representatives from the National Christian Council of China attempted to persuade the British ambassador that mission colleges would be the most receptive to foreign experts sent by UNRRA.¹³⁷ Here, the NCC elided any distinction between modernization and Westernization. Such lobbying reinforced preexisting ties to Christian organizations. Many participants in the Child Welfare Conference in Shanghai in 1946, and most of the CCWC, were affiliated with mission colleges and relied heavily on Christian networks. USC Advisory Committees worked through existing childcare institutions, many of which had missionary ties.¹³⁸

Mission colleges often had existing infrastructure to support child welfare programs. Of the thirteen Protestant Christian colleges and two Catholic colleges partially funded by the USC, seven offered programs in child welfare training; they drew from existing departments of social work, psychology, medicine, and domestic science. UNRRA economic analyst Frank Williston predicted child welfare centers would provide a means of “carrying on the present program well beyond the span of UNRRA existence.”¹³⁹ Yenching University’s Child Welfare Training Program apprenticed students in a nursery and health clinic, including the Christian orphanage Yu Ying Tang in Beijing.¹⁴⁰

Many of those who served at these Child Welfare Training Programs were Christians with extensive contacts in both the mission field and in Nationalist politics. One example is the director of the Child Welfare Leadership Training Program, Huang Cuifeng. After graduating from the True Light Middle School in Canton, the Presbyterian Huang studied at Lingnan University and the University of Michigan, where she received a master's degree in sociology. During the war she served as chief of the WAC's training department, as well as secretary-general of the National Chinese Women's Association for War Relief.¹⁴¹ Child experts thus emerged from wartime women's service and from a milieu of middle-class, U.S.-trained, and often Christian women. As a historian of the YWCA observed in 1947, "The great contribution of the China Association at this point was the trained leadership it supplied."¹⁴²

Nevertheless, mission colleges cooperated with prominent programs, regardless of religious orientation. Longtime partner of the NCWA, Fragrant Hills also cooperated with Yenching University's Child Welfare Center. Originally founded by Premier Xiong Xiling, Fragrant Hills had important political connections to Dr. Zhu Jingnong (1887–1951), vice Minister of Education and former president of the Christian Cheeloo University. A large organization, the home employed twenty-six staff, including a physician, a social worker, and nursery workers who had all graduated from Fragrant Hills's own training classes.

The CCWC also deliberately sought Catholic representatives in recognition of their contributions child welfare.¹⁴³ By supporting Catholic orphanages and centers connected to the French Aurora College in Shanghai, the USC substantially increased the number of children it supported, from only 7,035 to 33,218 children altogether.¹⁴⁴ CNRRA also donated food to Catholic and Buddhist children's homes in Henan.¹⁴⁵ In Guangdong, UNRRA officials planned to subsidize a Buddhist voluntary association's projected orphanage and four day-care centers in Canton.¹⁴⁶ The association withdrew its application after failing to meet the necessary requirements.¹⁴⁷ Given the difficulty that Americans had in communicating even with the NCWA, there may have been even greater linguistic and cultural obstacles to cooperating with Buddhists. Information about Buddhist and Catholic services was generally collected and collated separately from Protestant groups, which had closer ties to UNRRA.¹⁴⁸

Many American experts harbored an unconscious Protestant bias. For example, UNRRA child expert Vinita Lewis considered the NCWA a

modern, secular alternative to traditional orphanages sponsored primarily by Buddhists and Catholics.¹⁴⁹ This characterization is especially striking in the context of the NCWA's origins as a Protestant charity to improve the quality of missionary care. Her comment suggests that the NCWA had become so subordinated that it lost Christian distinctiveness. In the postwar period the NCWA seemed even more aligned with modern progress than with religious evangelism.¹⁵⁰ As had happened in the West, the normalization of Protestant charity led to a secularized loss of religious distinctiveness in welfare bureaucracies.

At the same time, economic contingencies pushed the government to rely on charities. UNRRA leaned on voluntary relief organizations with foreign economic funding, like the China Relief Mission, to fulfill humanitarian needs.¹⁵¹ UNRRA workers sent destitute children to orphanages run by the China Children's Fund, a Christian charity.¹⁵² Former Peking YMCA secretary and then current USC director Dwight Edwards explicitly referenced biblical allusions in his appeal for donations.¹⁵³ Jun Xing situates Edwards among a group of YMCA men at Yenching University who embodied a "cultural synthesis" between Chinese traditions and Christian religion. Edwards may have posited a distinction between Christian fundraising and nonbiased implementation (as per the NCWA in the 1930s). Nevertheless, Communists could easily construe such biblical references as outright evangelism.

Distribution Problems

Across the postwar world, UNRRA encountered problems with locals needing to sell supplies on the black market to cover distribution costs.¹⁵⁴ During the war, American advisors had correctly predicted that China would encounter difficulties with distribution due to lack of infrastructure.¹⁵⁵ They later observed that the cost of implementation, or the unloading and registration of materials, amounted to 35 or 40 percent of the value of delivered materials.¹⁵⁶ As a result, materials often remained in ROC-controlled port cities. Thus Nationalists had difficulty equitably distributing humanitarian relief, not only because they preferred to invest in trains but also because they lacked enough trains to transport goods inland.

In the context of the long-term indigenization of welfare in China, UNRRA often left enforcement to "the local level."¹⁵⁷ Acquiescence to

local leadership contributed to the “de facto recognition and legalization of the Nationalist’s blockade” against the Communists.¹⁵⁸ In a bid to gain direct access, CLARA representatives Zhou Enlai and Dong Biwu (1886–1975) reported systematic “delays, stalling, and obstruction.”¹⁵⁹ CLARA alleged “flagrant discrimination by CNRRA.”¹⁶⁰ In 1946 Zhou Enlai complained that UNRRA wielded supplies as a “political weapon.”¹⁶¹ These conflicts contributed to the breakdown of peace negotiations in 1946. The ROC blockade became a fixture in Communist propaganda about GMD corruption and American collusion. The unequal distribution of material aid would support accusations, in the 1950s, that Americans had extended economic aid in exchange for ROC acquiescence to American capitalists. George Wei shows that U.S. businesses did leverage U.S. aid to push their economic agenda onto China but met with resistance by suspicious ROC officials.¹⁶²

CLARA found in the China Aid Council a receptive audience for its complaints. Head of the China Aid Council Mildred Price (b. 1899) remained in communication with Communist base areas and mediated on their behalf. For example, Price monitored medical supplies pledged to CLARA.¹⁶³ She also visited General Nie Rongzhen (1899–1992), the military head of the Shanxi-Chahar-Hebei Border Region, in what he considered to be an “expression of friendship” between their countries. She edited his official statement, from “Reactionaries are trying to provoke ill feeling between the Communists and the American people” to “Some are trying to provoke ill feeling between us and the American people.”¹⁶⁴ By changing the pronouns, Price deliberately downplayed Communist ideology in an attempt to improve diplomatic relations. Likewise, the China Defense League emphasized serving the Chinese people “in all sections of our land” and “without discrimination.”¹⁶⁵ In the context of fraught accusations, such terms were code words for service to Communist-liberated areas.

Price and others allocated welfare to the Northwest. In 1947 the CCWC issued 299,700,000 CNC to support the maintenance of ten nurseries in Yan’an, including the Los Angeles Preschool. At that time, the number of children had increased to 2,840 children with 656 staff across ten units.¹⁶⁶ The organization outfitted the children with summer and winter clothing as well as with funds “needed to maintain the educational and play facilities of the ten units.” The committee sent books on infant care and childrearing to these areas, contributing to the scientific training of childcare workers.¹⁶⁷ Female cadres Shen Yuanhui and Chou Zigang oversaw the

nurseries, which gave preference to children of cadres or soldiers, 504 of whom were dependent on the institution.¹⁶⁸

CLARA sought scholarships for women.¹⁶⁹ The CCWC selected two women, probably Shen and Chou, for a scholarship to the United States—indicating that, from the U.S. perspective, the real issue was one of recognizable experience rather than political background. The ROC delayed issuing their passports.¹⁷⁰ U.S. officials detained the entire group in Shanghai, but ROC officials urged the U.S. major general to allow those with ROC clearance to depart. When CLARA representatives complained, the major general responded that the United States would not have knowingly funded a discriminatory program.¹⁷¹ Such statements deflected American responsibility over distribution while implicitly threatening to pull scarce resources from China. The major general's comment coincided with UNRRA director Fiorello LaGuardia's threat to withdraw funding from China in 1946. Such actions indicated growing American frustration with the ROC for its inability to resolve the Civil War (as well as a growing reluctance, especially among American fiscal conservatives, to contribute to international programs).¹⁷²

When the GMD blockade forced the evacuation of children from Yan'an in 1946, leaders articulated a specifically Chinese Communist equivalent of childhood sentimentality. Reports emphasized the suffering that innocent (*wugu*) children faced as a result of Chiang's attacks.¹⁷³ Somewhat different from Nationalists' discourse on the childhood purity (*tianzhen*), Communists emphasized that children had committed no wrongdoing to merit persecution. The evacuation of Yan'an recalled the Long March. In both instances, Communists expressed moral indignation because of their blameless *political identity*. By contrast, Nationalists focused on a "naturalness" of the family as a Chinese cultural legacy and as bourgeois sentimental institution. This difference indicates competing visions of modern childhood.

The USC continued to support the North China Children's Program even after its evacuation from Yan'an. In late 1947 Madame Sun Yat-sen requested 157,400 USD (28,552,800,000 CN) for medicine and child welfare.¹⁷⁴ The USC exceeded that request. The organization requested for 1948 funding for fourteen nurseries that had been evacuated "because of Nationalist bombings."¹⁷⁵ Americans also funded medical aid.¹⁷⁶ The UN International Children's Emergency Fund sent a team of foreign doctors to improve maternal and child healthcare in Communist-controlled areas in 1948. ROC representatives vigorously opposed this mission and

considered it a loss in a larger diplomatic war with the Communists.¹⁷⁷ By pointing to the CCP's commandeering of supplies for military purposes, the ROC implicitly argued that humanitarian aid had become instrumentalized as a tool for war.

Economic Crises

To reinforce the legitimacy of China's position among global leaders at the end of the war, the ROC promoted, according to Rana Mitter, "transnational welfarism" across borders.¹⁷⁸ Already in 1943, perhaps because of the geographical proximity of the wartime capital, Chinese women in Xi'an had raised over 10,000 Chinese dollars for famine relief in India.¹⁷⁹ During the war Madame Chiang had emphasized that child welfare was crucial "not only for China's future but for the future of democracy all over the world."¹⁸⁰ Her rhetoric mirrored that of U.S. funders like the Roosevelts, who had championed international aid in support for global democracy. After the war the ROC increased aid to democratic allies while blockading Communist rivals.

In general the postwar era witnessed a turn away from the wartime democratization of fundraising. During the war charities had invented new fundraising techniques to gain popular support. Kong Xiangxi argued that, even though the war was over, the experience had proven that children were "a source of national strength and the life veins of the folk," and his words prefaced booklets of fundraising receipts; with the encouragement of Kong, the Ministry of Finance donated 240,000 yuan to the NCWA.¹⁸¹ But postwar deprivation rendered it difficult to collect funds from ordinary citizens, and it was easy to revert to old networks and fundraising techniques. For example, at the 1946 conference, Shanghai Mayor Wu Tiecheng, a longtime member of the NCWA, catered afternoon tea. Such etiquette anticipated the reinstatement of prewar social clubs and elite activism. The Shanghai Children's Theater performed for fundraising drives, and children continued to play a role in international diplomacy. As late as 1949 Chen Heqin joined members of the NCWA, including the notorious gangster Du Yuesheng (1888–1951), in welcoming U.S. child experts to fancy dinners in Shanghai.¹⁸² This return to elite fundraising may have been a missed opportunity for building solidarity on a more popular level.

Economic contingencies pushed aid toward traditional missions and, by extension, international Christian charity. With inflation increasing by 100 to 150 percent, the CCWC requested allocations be doubled for high-priority projects in 1946.¹⁸³ The USC suspended its fundraising in child welfare for 1947.¹⁸⁴ During the UNRRA's withdrawal from China in 1947, the New York Committee suggested that "the financial prospect is not hopeful for the rest of the year."¹⁸⁵ As Mildred Price wrote privately to Nora Hsiung Chu, "If USC fails, China Aid Council will try to raise funds on its own," but she cautioned that U.S. wealth had depreciated in the post-war period, and along with it, philanthropy. Price concluded, "We can't begin to raise as much as USC raised, especially when the War Fund was in existence, but we might raise some as Chinese children pull at the heart strings."¹⁸⁶ Price correctly predicted that private funding would allow Chinese children's charities to weather the funding crisis of 1947. When funding dramatically declined in 1947, the United Nations Appeal for Children (UNAC) closed the gap. Notwithstanding UNAC and the International Children's Emergency Fund, because children more easily elicited private donations, public programs often deprioritized funding for child welfare.

Withdrawing from China in 1947, UNRRA officials blamed CNRRA for difficulties in the transition. CNRRA reported seventy-two daycare centers in the Hebei-Jehol region, serving roughly 18,000 children and 1,300 pregnant and nursing mothers, and twenty-seven centers in Zhejiang serving 2,800 children; by January 1947 UNRRA/CNRRA had withdrawn funding, but local agencies had not assumed responsibility.¹⁸⁷ In Guangdong, for example, UNRRA officers reported, "Nothing happened [to relocate dependent populations] and when the shelters closed these approximately one hundred aged and crippled and one hundred children were dumped on the street."¹⁸⁸ They blamed CNRRA for withholding assistance. UNRRA officers also complained that CNRRA estimates were groundless and further alleged that CNRRA had simply fabricated its numbers of milk stations and other child welfare programs.¹⁸⁹ By 1948, when American funds were truly expiring, Chinese journalists critically reappropriated photographs depicting milk distribution at child welfare stations to argue that the rations were insufficient.¹⁹⁰ Thus the very photographs that once proved relief aid were later used as evidence of neglect.

In the context of funding withdrawal, the ROC struggled to maintain its overextended commitments to nation-building projects like Nanjing's Banqiao Rural Welfare Center, with a budget of 70 million CN, funded

by the ROC, during the UNRRA withdrawal of 1947. Madame Chiang toured child welfare stations and hosted an international children's meeting in Nanjing in February 1948.¹⁹¹ As the president of the UNAC in China, she urged Chinese elites to repay Allied wartime aid by donating to European children. Acknowledging China's own struggle with post-war reconstruction, she argued that the sacrifice would be that much dearer. The *China Child Welfare News* published photographs of starving mothers and children in India and Eastern Europe to rally support for children around the world.¹⁹² These images explained the reduction of UN aid and an increased burden for China. "New transnationalism" (or equal partnership in a new structure of international power) overburdened the ROC and diverted humanitarian efforts abroad during a period of internal division.

Conclusion

George Wei convincingly argues that UNRRA and CNRRA clashed in part because the ROC prioritized state building over humanitarianism, and that agenda certainly contributed to a loss of confidence in the commitment of the ROC to its citizens.¹⁹³ Rather than positing humanitarianism and state building as a zero-sum game, however, the ROC leveraged humanitarian relief to launch larger modernizing programs. Humanitarianism was an explicit goal in many public projects, from stimulating textile production and clothing relief to building the trains to transport supplies. Demonstration centers would both provide services and train personnel. Milk stations could become soup kitchens, and preschools facilitated women's work relief. These centers were also a form of job training and welfare relief for students. The ROC had integrated welfare into larger agricultural and industrial projects—what Communists later decried as "multifunctionality" (*wanmeng*). In the end, the ROC was so overburdened by these large projects that it neglected basic services when funding evaporated.

These projects failed to receive American approbation because, without sufficient capital, they remained ineffective. Furthermore, as Wei observes, U.S. standards of economic liberalism conflicted with Chinese designs for a planned economy (which included state welfare through the mediation of social workers).¹⁹⁴ The ROC and the United States even clashed on the issue

of political democracy, as Chen Jian notes, since Americans sought a place for Communists in postwar Chinese democracy.¹⁹⁵ In contrast, supporting another notion of democracy, Nationalists prioritized humanitarian aid to democratic allies abroad rather than to Communists at home. The uneven distribution of UNRRA aid would overshadow other examples of American service to Communist bases and colored Communist perceptions of ROC social welfare as evangelical, self-interested, and exploitative.

When its state-building programs faltered in the wake of dwindling resources, the ROC lost even the appearance of providing humanitarian relief. Demonstration centers may have done more to hurt than to help CNRRA's reputation. Given widespread homelessness and starvation, the agenda to professionalize childrearing seemed "absolutely ridiculous" to some commentators, who associated kindergartens with extravagance rather than basic necessities.¹⁹⁶ Despite the perception that UNRRA had failed to "feed the children," a major goal of the CCWC was to distribute milk and vitamin pills.¹⁹⁷ Huge equipment and idealized models, in the context of dire circumstances, only highlighted the bourgeois origins of kindergartens and preschools. Commentators objected to hauling X-ray machines "far into the hinterland."¹⁹⁸ The critiques of the ROC superficially aligned with Communist complaints about distribution, but these specific examples ran counter to the CCP's demands for aid. Those measures were among the few gestures undertaken for equitable distribution to the Communist-controlled countryside. X-ray machines, while appearing frivolous to bystanders, were actually important instruments for the early detection of tuberculosis.¹⁹⁹ Ironically, Communists lobbied for this equipment as much as Nationalists; however, with less heavy equipment, the Communists had an advantage of greater mobility in the Civil War.

Charities like the NCWA had reinforced the idea that economic prosperity and modern childhood should be achieved in tandem. All over the world, as Tara Zahra notes, the war sparked interest in healing emotional scars and rebuilding the family.²⁰⁰ Given ambitions for Chinese rehabilitation and the restoration of the Chinese family, child welfare became primarily focused on individual interventions and demonstrating models. In the waning years of the Civil War, these demonstration centers received scant U.S. funding and declined in quality. In a period of rampant inflation, joblessness, and poverty, the "ideology of the happy family" and its aspirations for upward mobility, sentimental childhood, economic stability, and modern hygiene seemed particularly misguided. As the Civil War

continued, the ROC lost support even among its beneficiaries. For example, Chen Heqin had received subsidies for the Children's Normal College and applied for research funding from the government.²⁰¹ Yet by 1948 ROC officials regarded Chen's school as a hotbed of antigovernment leftism and noted that his secretary had joined the underground Communist movement.²⁰² Nationalists lost the political legitimacy that would have accompanied continued state-led welfare relief.

In the context of UNRRA's and CNRAA's ideological divisions and economic difficulties, it is easy to see how Communists in the postwar period formed a critique of U.S. and ROC aid. Relying on existing charity programs to supplement economic aid for child welfare, UNRRA tended to favor Christian institutions, which underscored Communist accusations of evangelism. Because UNRRA helped to introduce vocational training, Communists claimed that U.S. programs subordinated the Chinese economy to an auxiliary position in the context of late modern capitalism. And because funding was concentrated in demonstration centers, Communists pointed to limited distribution. Most important, despite UNRRA promises for equitable distribution of international aid, the GMD blockaded Communist areas. Even as U.S. relations with the ROC declined, tensions between CNRRA and CLARA resulted in perceptions that the United States was propping up the ROC as a failed state in exchange for conformity to American political ideology.²⁰³ The People's Republic of China would strive to excise those influences.

The Reeducation of Child Experts

Chen Heqin as a Model of Self-Criticism

At the ceremony establishing the People's Republic of China in 1949, Mao Zedong proclaimed that China was finally standing up to foreign imperialism. As a part of this national reclamation, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) assumed control over mission-run orphanages and schools to make children feel "safe and protected."¹ The PLA documented child abuse as evidence of U.S. cultural imperialism and probably influenced the memoirs of those who recounted that the PLA "saved" them from the corrupt wives of Guomindang officials (presumably in the Women's Advisory Council to the New Life Movement).² More than simply appropriating institutions, the Chinese Communist Party sought to reclaim the hearts and minds of "the people."

As the Chinese Communist Party consolidated power in the context of mounting tension over Korea, Chinese educators were increasingly implicated in campaigns against Americans and counterrevolutionaries.³ In 1951 Mao spearheaded an attack on ROC bourgeois reformers.⁴ Communists denounced John Dewey as a means to excise American influences.⁵ As Dewey's students came under attack, the subsequent generation of *their* students began to distance themselves from their Chinese "pragmatist" teachers.⁶ As a venue for demarking separation between self and others through reading and small-group discussion, "thought reform" extended to nongovernmental bureaus in a complex process of coercion and willing self-participation.⁷ In the context of confusion over new directions and concepts, public

self-criticism served as a model for self-transformation according to Socialist enlightenment.⁸ For example, Chen Heqin, famous for establishing Chinese kindergartens, served as a spokesperson for denouncing Dewey's influences on his own teaching philosophy. Some kindergarten teachers took the initiative to extend principles of self-criticism into their classrooms.

Money ties and political alliances had shifted. But these campaigns moved beyond simple identity politics by questioning the very nature of childhood itself. Despite CCP educators' "considerable agreement" with Deweyan thought, Anita Chan explains that "Dewey's teachings clashed with that second half of the party's conception of the 'new socialist man': a consciously self-abnegating personal response to collective needs."⁹ In other words, liberal humanism precluded the CCP's new social engineering project for socialist collectivization. By claiming that childhood was a political construct, PRC critics deconstructed the assertion, frequently repeated after Minister of Education Cai Yuanpei in 1911, that education should follow the natural development of child psychology. This claim had allowed the National Child Welfare Association to sentimentalize the natural innocence of childhood—a notion that, according to some Communist hardliners, had been exploited by Westerners to control Chinese children as objects of charity. Thus when Chen denounced Dewey and American imperialists in the 1950s, he also had to renounce his own scientific claims to have researched a uniquely Chinese childhood. Notwithstanding the CCP's hardline stance, it was difficult for PRC administrators to completely ignore enduring categorizations of childhood, or to reject fully the socialist idealization of innocence in Communist children (specifically vis-à-vis their capitalist attackers).

War with America and the Bourgeois Past

Many, but not all, Western missionaries fled China in 1948.¹⁰ Because Communist leaders had previously tolerated foreign missionaries, some remained optimistic about continuing to contribute to social welfare programs in the People's Republic.¹¹ In October 1949 a group of prominent Chinese Christians published a letter assuring Western missionaries of their continued support. Their advocacy was key. Throughout anti-Christian movements, Chinese Christians had suffered the brunt of the consequences.

But by July 1950 Chinese Christians, represented by 1,500 signatures across denominations, denounced Western missionaries as conduits of cultural imperialism. Their manifesto signaled a new era for Christian social welfare programs.¹²

The government sought to replace charity with state-sanctioned social services.¹³ Nara Dillon concludes that the goal of PRC campaigns in the early 1950s was to eliminate all voluntary associations, regardless of religious affiliation, not directly connected to the state.¹⁴ The PRC increased taxes on mission schools and expelled missionaries.¹⁵ Westerners continued to sponsor charities in the PRC until Washington froze bank accounts for Chinese mission schools on December 16, 1950, in effect severing U.S. mission ties to China.¹⁶ Beijing informed mission schools in 1951 that it would replace foreign aid in order “to combat the influence of imperialism.”¹⁷ For example, the Beijing Municipal Board of Education subsidized new textbooks in conformity with PRC views.¹⁸ Mission schools were reappropriated.¹⁹ By 1953 the government controlled all former missionary welfare services, including 247 American and 451 European charities, 198 of which were sponsored by Protestant churches and 208 of which by the Catholic Church.²⁰ As the case in Beijing indicates, the responsibility for welfare services often fell to municipal governments, which tended to prioritize schools with the highest enrollments rather than the neediest children.²¹

As tensions over Korea mounted, educational journals increasingly depicted Americans as “fascists.”²² Children’s magazines graphically depicted a boyish Uncle Sam as a playground bully, offering money in exchange for political subordination (see figure 6.1).²³ Some even questioned if the United States had donated any real money. For example, Zeng Zhao-lun (1899–1967), who held a Ph.D. degree in Physics from MIT, publicly denounced Christian charity in his new role as vice minister of education. Alluding to Boxer Indemnity funds, Zeng argued that mission schools had actually been funded by “a small part of the spoils derived from the Chinese people.” Ignoring extensive ROC regulations that required Chinese school administrators, Zeng claimed that Western missionaries had “exercised absolute control over school administration.” Mission schools thus represented “a far more pernicious” form of imperialism than outright warfare and taught Chinese children “pro-America, revere-America, and fear-America sentiments.” Asserting the “spiritual enslavement of Chinese children,” Zeng characterized education as primarily political.²⁴



Figure 6.1. Cover of *New Children*
Cotsen Children's Collection, Princeton University Library

By extension, his critique also implicated child welfare training centers at mission colleges.

Investigative teams targeted Christian universities, mission schools, and orphanages. In keeping with Chinese suspicions since the 1870 Tianjin Uprising, investigators alleged physical harm. Photographs of malnourished children and child corpses indicated neglect. Unlike wartime photographs, which had often memorialized specific moments of deprivation at the hands of the Japanese, these photographs often focused on a “before-and-after” comparison that illustrated the ways in which the children became fat and healthy only after receiving care from the People's Relief Administration (see figure 6.2). Just as wartime propaganda had promoted international diplomacy, these investigative reports, translated into English, also addressed audiences overseas. The authors of the book cited evidence of physical abuse to prove that “‘charity’ was a convenient means rather than a genuine aim”;



In August 1950, when the abuses at Tze-ai were revealed, the 58 babies found still living looked like this.



These babies looked well six months after the Tze-ai Home was taken over by the People's Relief Administration of China.

Figure 6.2. Tears of Children
Stanford University Library

instead, they asserted that the true goal of mission schools was to indoctrinate children “in a spirit of subservience to everything foreign.” As many Chinese had long intimated, Christian conversion alienated children from Chinese society. Thus the authors’ main point was that missionaries’ “genuine aim” had been to mold Chinese children into subservient followers. The authors appealed to the overseas Chinese to “dissociate themselves from the corrupting influence of imperialism and its ‘racial superiority’ myths, which lead both to murder and to war,” and to respect the PRC’s sovereignty, in the spirit of “international peace and friendship.”²⁵

In part because the book was intended for international audiences, *Children’s Tears* inculpated local Chinese leadership in the previous regime. In many of the testimonies, ROC managers and staff allegedly committed the worst atrocities against children and embezzled most of the funds. Blaming local Chinese managers rather than overseas Chinese funders, the authors faulted the “reactionary regime of Chiang Kai-shek” for being “so uninterested in the fate of its own people, so afraid of offending any foreigner, that it did not institute a single inquest or require a single certification of death among the countless cases we report.”²⁶ (As previously noted, these accusations ignored state monitoring of population records in orphanages and homes.) These accusations against the ROC implied that Nationalists had betrayed their race. Thus, even though “ethnic nationalism” helped secure the Communist victory,²⁷ Communists looked beyond racial kinship as the primary qualification for national leadership in the PRC.

According to critics, physical abuse was second only to the offense of political indoctrination, or what they often called “slave education” (a term that had also been used to describe Japanese colonial education). Chinese Communists reevaluated traditional mistrust of missionary education through the lens of in-group politics. For example, Zhang Shunan, an orphan from the Catholic Renci Orphanage in Beijing, recounted her story to the *People’s Daily* in 1951. When the editors of *Children’s Tears* translated her story into English, they modified her testimony. In the original newspaper account, Zhang condemned the harmful “poison” of imperialism and the “slander” of the nuns, who frightened her so much that she cloistered herself in the orphanage rather than greet the PLA soldiers.²⁸ (The word “poison” echoed Mao Zedong’s attack on missionary cultural imperialism in 1939.²⁹) Substituting the Chinese word “poison” (*duhai*) for the English translation “sacrilege,” *Children’s Tears* emphasized the

hypocrisy of the nuns in a way that liberal Christians could readily condemn.³⁰ In the *People's Daily* version, the children's "alienation from their own families and countrymen" more specifically meant rejection of Chinese communism. Translators thus rendered Zhang's testimony more palatable to overseas Chinese and/or liberal Christians. Especially for international audiences, the PRC condemned U.S. cultural imperialism rather than Christian religious thought.

The government instructed teachers on the political implications of international connections. In 1950 the journal *New Educator* explained that American charities had facilitated cultural imperialism.³¹ These articles were circulated in teachers' political study groups, so integral to thought reform.³² For example, at a private kindergarten in Beijing, teachers learned that American charity had functioned as a venue for extracting resources from China, unlike Sino-Soviet short-term loans.³³ Likewise, at another private kindergarten, teachers wrote in their Semester Report for 1950: "At first, we had some misunderstandings about the nature of Russian aggression in the Northeast [of China], but after we studied, we realized that the Soviet Union is not an imperialist country that wants to invade our country, in the way that the United States is an imperialist country that wants to help us [in order to invade us]. . . . A truly great and strong country does not need to rely on the help of other countries; only this sort of country can truly be called a state."³⁴ By implication, the ROC was a failed state propped up by American imperialism.

The teachers distinguished Soviet loans from U.S. charity that had infringed on China's national sovereignty. Government officials, in turn, summarized these reports with an expression of satisfaction that "the masses understand that the demonstration of spirit by the USSR is notably different from the GMD's relationship to the American alliance."³⁵ As in the late Qing, foreign humanitarianism could encroach on the political legitimacy of the Chinese state, and for the early PRC, it was the formulation of economic aid (as relief or loans) rather than institutional structure that determined undue influence.

In the 1950s education also shifted from U.S. to Soviet influences.³⁶ The journal *Educational Research* exhorted teachers to "learn from the achievements of Soviet education."³⁷ Soviet experts inspected Chinese schools.³⁸ Normal schools replaced English with Russian in their curricula and established Sino-Russian translation bureaus.³⁹ Journals introduced educational psychology and institutional practices from Russia; psychologists replaced

Dewey with Pavlov and explored the role of dialectical materialism on cognitive perception. While celebrating Soviet advances, they criticized Japanese education under the U.S. Occupation.⁴⁰ An older generation of childhood specialists, such as Chen Heqin, had difficulty differentiating Soviet influences from American ones.⁴¹ And rightly so. As Lisa Kirschenbaum concludes, Russian Marxists had projected “the revolutionary potential of the full-day kindergarten” but ultimately “failed to articulate a specifically Communist kindergarten program.”⁴² This intellectual task fell to a rising generation of Chinese Communist administrators who sought to shape a new Socialist subjectivity.

Criticizing Deweyan Liberalism

The National Ministry of Education founded the journal *People's Education* in 1950 as a government mouthpiece to communicate with school administrators at every level; in December of that year the journal celebrated the People's Education publishing house with a calligraphic inscription written by Mao Zedong.⁴³ *People's Education* thus pointed to a large apparatus of research and publishing, often attributing collective authorship for book publications, as well as editorials on policy decisions in the journal. In the first page of its inaugural issue in May 1950, *People's Education* printed Mao Zedong's calligraphy, urgently calling for the recovery and development of a program for People's Education. (The inaugural issue also contained a short comment by Tao Xingzhi and Chen Heqin's former protégé, Zhang Zonglin, whose prominence was rising along with the new regime.⁴⁴) An imperative component of *People's Education* was Socialist enlightenment. As Aminda Smith notes, a wide range of activities, under the rubric of thought reform, was “homogenizing the meanings” of personal experiences through larger national scripts.⁴⁵

Thus, along with deconstructing missionary intervention in China's schools, the PRC also criticized American influences on Chinese educational theories and methods. In the early 1950s the main target of attack was American educator John Dewey and secondarily his Chinese followers.⁴⁶ Dewey's influence had been pervasive among Chinese intellectuals as a result of his two-year stay in China and his prominent students. For instance, Dewey's student Hu Shi had once introduced him to an audience at Yenching University by predicting that Dewey would someday surpass

Confucius in his influence over China.⁴⁷ Dewey had represented a new democratic spirit in the Republic, and the campaign against him amounted to a rejection of liberalism.⁴⁸ The effect of this campaign was to distance teachers from American influences while promoting socialist-style discipline among their ranks.

Although Dewey claimed that his educational theories could be adapted to socialist education,⁴⁹ the editors at *People's Education* argued that his theories “manipulate the rhetoric of the Left” while capitulating to capitalist forces and therefore only “mimic progressivism.” Dewey admitted that social institutions and economic structures needed to change, but—according to the editors—he clung to the “blind optimism” of bourgeois French philosophers, rather than embracing revolutionary Marxism. Initiating a sustained and substantial intellectual critique against Dewey, *People's Education* editor Cao Fu explained that Dewey eschewed violence in favor of education as the primary tool of social change. Cao quoted Dewey as asserting that the aims of Marxism were democratic, but the means were not.⁵⁰ By contrasting Dewey and Marx, Cao championed a form of democracy that did not require a process of open discussion and public deliberation. According to Cao, Dewey denied the inevitability of historical progress by positing Communism as only one possibility among many. Cao argued that Marx's historical determinism did not deny human agency (often associated with, but not limited to, liberalism); instead, Cao claimed, Dewey withheld the weapons of radicalism.

In terms of classroom technique, Cao championed revolutionary interventionism in opposition to what he regarded as Dewey's “aimless” approach. Cao explained Aristotelian ideas of latent potential to underscore the foundation for Dewey's flawed process of following the growth of children rather than enforcing discipline in them. Dewey had, Cao explained, inherited the precedent of “directionless” education from Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Émile*. Like Rousseau, Dewey had encouraged children to discover the world for themselves. Cao ridiculed the inefficiency of student-centered education: “He did not want students to accept valid scientific conclusions or systems but wanted students to primitively search for their own scientific conclusions and systems!”⁵¹ According to Cao, a student-centered approach retarded children's development by denying them Marxist intellectual tools.

Cao considered Dewey's pedagogy philosophically flawed because Dewey had confused intellectual development with physical growth.

According to Cao, physical growth did not necessarily correlate to intellectual development; instead of likening children to seeds that naturally grew, Cao emphasized that children were seeds in want of the rich soil of a *systematic* socialist education. Students would otherwise remain confused, their insights diffuse rather than cohering into a larger social movement: “Although he [Dewey] admitted that education should be a tool for social change, he was unwilling to allow schoolteachers to show the blueprints for a new society to children and youth, which he portrayed as adults pressuring children to go toward the direction and aim of social change. Obviously, social change without direction or aim is simply society without change!”⁵²

In the new revolutionary age, Cao offered schoolteachers the “blueprint” for Marxist social change, previously denied them by Dewey. According to Cao, Dewey’s influences would impede the establishment of the People’s Republic and must be excised. With a strong theoretical grasp of the issues, Cao led the vanguard in criticizing American educational models more broadly, and Dewey and his followers more specifically. His critiques were published not just in *People’s Education* but in other educational journals and were then reprinted as a book.⁵³ The scope of Cao’s critique soon expanded to American pragmatism in general, with a specific critique of Living Education in the pages of *New Education*, followed by a denunciation by Chen Heqin’s former secretary, the underground Communist Zhang Wendou.⁵⁴

Dewey’s students were thus implicated. In the case of Tao Xingzhi, this required a complete reversal. Lauded as a national hero by the CCP at his death in 1946, Tao was remembered by many Communists as a great patriot.⁵⁵ Nevertheless, Cao Fu criticized him for accepting Dewey’s principles with only minor improvements. At *People’s Education*, Dai Baitao, Pan Kaipei, and Tao’s former colleague Dong Chuncai (1905–1990) debated not whether Tao was a petty-bourgeois thinker but to which *subcategory* of petty-bourgeois thinker he belonged. Pan traced Tao Xingzhi’s funding, as far back as 1921, to missionary support. According to Pan, petty-bourgeois intellectuals had rejected the CCP by creating a “third party” in February 1927; more progressive than the independent property classes, it had also opposed the GMD. Tao had popularized peasant literacy campaigns across party lines. “Rural education became a fashionable slogan among the independent property class,” Pan explained, but only in order to strengthen the political status quo, rather than to oppose the ROC.⁵⁶

Just as the Nationalists had prosecuted collaborators regardless of their wartime charity work, it was not enough to have served the public good. Pan's message was clear: there could be no progressive liberalism as an alternative to either the GMD or the CCP. Apolitical service to the nation was self-contradictory; apolitical education for children, impossible.

In 1951 the vice-editor of *People's Education*, Zhang Lingguang (1904–1974), criticized Chen Heqin for “plagiarizing” John Dewey without reference to Tao as an intermediary, and even Tao's theory of Living Education was considered derivative of Dewey's philosophy.⁵⁷ Eventually, Chen was accused of “uncritically accepting” Tao's theory of Living Education, further minimizing Chen's creative contribution.⁵⁸ One of Chen's students, who had worked with him for thirteen years, called Chen a “major disciple” of Dewey's and labeled Chen a “slave to the comprador class educators.”⁵⁹ Even though he had apparently never taken a formal class from Dewey during his time at Columbia,⁶⁰ Chen had devoted an entire issue of *Living Education* in 1948 to John Dewey's influence and included a picture of Columbia Teachers College. To disassociate himself from his teacher since 1937, Yu Zhijie accused Chen of modeling Drum Tower Kindergarten on Dewey's ideas. Through the process of self-criticism, Chen admitted that his own work simply copied Dewey's; by 1952, Chen began to launch “the most violent attacks on Dewey.”⁶¹ Through Chen, CCP enlisted a cultural insider to destroy the credibility of Nationalist projects indigenizing modern childhood.

The Reeducation of Chen Heqin

Historian Li Gang opines that Chen's background as a “quintessential follower of Dewey” doomed him during the antipragmatist campaign.⁶² But Chen himself did not anticipate his ostracism. In 1949, at the age of fifty-nine, he remained president of the Shanghai Women's Normal College, with an attached experimental preschool with forty-five infants, ages four months to three years. Chen applied for government funding to create a research laboratory in connection to the school.⁶³ Expecting continued government support, he welcomed liberation in 1949. His secretary Zhang Wendou had for years been an underground CCP member, and Chen attended the first Political Consultative Conference in Beijing. In 1950 he vehemently criticized U.S. imperialism during the antipollution campaigns

in Nanjing.⁶⁴ But it was not so simple to align with the new regime. As we will see, Chen could not simply disavow his former benefactors, nor could he convincingly parrot new educational slogans immediately. Chen had to struggle with his previous understanding of science, which was indicted for overemphasis on “natural development”—which, in the eyes of administrators like Cao Fu, masked U.S. cultural imperialism.

There are some indications that Chen had already been growing dissatisfied with Nationalist rule. Today, Chen’s children stress that he had rejected offers to serve as an ROC official in Chongqing when he moved his school to Jiangxi, one of the Communist heartlands during the Sino-Japanese War; therefore the family implicitly argues that Chen had sympathized with the Communists.⁶⁵ However, just as Pan had criticized Tao Xingzhi’s rural education movement, Chen’s service in Jiangxi failed to exonerate him.⁶⁶ Like Tao, Chen had received foreign funding for rural education; moreover, he had established a branch of the National Child Welfare Association under the auspices of Kong Xiangxi. Critics must have interpreted these moves—unauthorized by CCP headquarters and funded by a “loan” from a friend in the Anglican Church—as acts of attempted sabotage of the Communist base camp.⁶⁷

On October 11, 1949 (only ten days after the PLA arrived in Beijing and seven months before it would arrive in Shanghai), Chen traveled to Beijing Normal University’s Number Two Affiliated Primary School to give a lecture on “New Trends in Education” that embraced the political goals of the Communist Revolution.⁶⁸ His long-standing respect for work-study and educational psychology dovetailed, he indicated, with an orientation toward “workers’ education” and “scientific learning.” Chen’s conflation of vocational training with workers’ education belied a deep ignorance of the differences between liberalism and communism. Critics pointedly asked how Chen’s educational philosophy, so deeply embedded in Deweyism, could possibly qualify to be the “basis of New Nationalism.” Long acculturated by his early Christian conversion, Chen had gained entry into Western circles so easily that he perhaps did not foresee how difficult it would be to join the new leadership.

The January 1950 issue of *Living Education* illustrated Chen’s ignorance. The leading article celebrated the “Los Angeles Preschool” in Mao Zedong’s base camp in Yan’an.⁶⁹ Given the lengths to which the government meant to expel U.S. cultural imperialism, which (it claimed) had entered China through “charity” to the complicit and corrupt GMD, Communists might

not have appreciated the way the article drew attention to the preschool's Allied funding.⁷⁰ Chen continued to reference Dewey as a source of authority because he did not anticipate the antipragmatist campaign, which would not appear in print until October.⁷¹ Chen not only misunderstood the PRC's international relationships but also misinterpreted its educational agenda.

Chen's 1949 lecture reflects the degree to which Chen misunderstood basic policies. His speech, notwithstanding references to the masses, exposed a weak grasp of current trends. He continued to emphasize the central importance of children's development and even advocated eliminating grade levels, despite his previous work to institutionalize them.⁷² As his autobiography indicated, large, modern schools overlooked individual needs, as the children either struggled to keep pace or wasted time when they could potentially advance. Chen had already come to this conclusion during the war as part of an effort to indigenize education, which represented, to some degree, a return to long-rejected traditional *sishu* Chinese models. But Communists rejected "feudal" practices. Instead, new PRC educators like Cao Fu emphasized strict discipline and political conditioning rather than even more individualized attention to childhood growth.

From 1951 to 1953 the government scrutinized Chen's approach, which he had termed "Living Education," through interviews, school surveys, and textual analysis. In September 1951 Chen issued a self-examination in Beijing. Between September 1951 and April 1952 he participated in eleven discussion meetings in his previous offices in Beijing, Shanghai, and Nanjing. Each meeting began with Chen's self-criticism. Then, he faced critiques from students and colleagues—all of whom had to indict him, and some of whom had to implicate themselves.⁷³ Chen expressed gratitude for the "help" of his "comrades" in these meetings, but he also described the accusations as "painful" and "difficult to accept."⁷⁴ Under intense interrogation and prolonged pressure, he made concessions that fundamentally undermined his previous claims to scientific authority.

The Nature of Childhood

These critiques are important as a window on to how Chinese Communists viewed human nature; this understanding, in turn, influenced Chinese models of self-criticism and the possibility of reform. One critic, Gong

Qichang, labeled Chen's emphasis on childhood development as "childhood-in-itself" (*yi ertong wei bentu*), which had obscured the role of class as the determining factor of social identity. In the pages of *People's Education*, Gong identified a fundamental, philosophical flaw in the methodology of childhood-in-itself: "The principle of the so-called 'reification of psychology' does not need to consider the particular characteristics of children's ages and bodies and minds. Children's physical and emotional development cannot be ignored, but [we] definitely cannot allow children's physical and emotional conditions to limit education and pedagogy. We should believe that children's physical and emotional development and adaptability is mainly due to the result of education and to the result of society's complex influences. To believe that the result is the cause is incorrect."⁷⁵

The main point was not to deny biology but to engage critically in the political dimensions of scientific knowledge production. It is important to note here that, contrary to Gong, some experts continued to focus on childhood psychology and age-appropriate education—drawn not from the tradition of John Dewey or Cai Yuanpei, however, but from Soviet models. Gong went further than others in the general trend of emphasizing discipline over play. Furthermore, he anticipated scholar Andrew Jones's critique of May Fourth ideology: only a few intellectuals, such as Lu Xun, had understood the tautology of simultaneously shaping children and studying childhood.⁷⁶ Chen Heqin, who reared a child while analyzing that same child to form the basis of new pedagogical principles, had (like Darwin) indeed committed a serious methodological error. Like Cao Fu, Gong presented childhood as a political construct that complicated its biological foundation. When Chen denounced Dewey in February 1952, his criticisms hewed closely to Gong's and Cao's—that experiment-based, child-centered education had prevented teachers from offering students the means necessary to build a new China. As further attacks clarified, the problem with Deweyan philosophy was its unfounded assumptions regarding biological determinism and social evolution. The main issue for Communists was that Nationalists had uncritically accepted American political and cultural interpretations alongside their investigations of science.

Chen Heqin "conceded a major point to Gong" by agreeing that the flow of knowledge should be from teachers to students. Chen admitted that he had hoped to manipulate that process, not to discover Chinese childhood but rather to change the very nature of what it meant to be Chinese. He wrote in his "early stage" of self-reflection:

Later, I thought even more about how Chinese people were inferior to foreigners and had been humiliated [by them] because Chinese people's bodies were "not good." If we could train the Chinese "person" well, so that he had complete health, a cooperative attitude, and a cosmopolitan vision, creative ability, and the spirit of service, then foreigners would not humiliate us. Therefore, I selected education as my method of saving the country, and I always thought that the backwardness of Chinese society was the reason imperialists could invade us, and that poverty and weakness of the people would result from opposing the [global] system. But if we do not oppose the system, we could not save the country; in these ten years, I've hidden in the beautiful dream of education's multifunctionality and have not been able to wake up.⁷⁷

In the 1950s the catch-phrase "multifunctionality of education" elsewhere pointed to liberal miscalculations that education could solve multiple social problems without the aid of socialism—as well as statist plans to embed early childhood education into larger modernizing projects.⁷⁸ Chen called the promise of that multifunctionality a "dream." Chen played with the words "beautiful dream" (*meimeng*), which was only one character shy of "the American dream" (*Meiguo meng*). Chen had seemingly bought into the American dream of self-improvement for the advancement of his own career, even though he had intended to promote education for national achievement.

By asserting his inability awaken from this dream, Chen echoed Lu Xun's famous imagery describing China's predicament of sleeping in the "iron house."⁷⁹ In Chen's formulation, the iron house was not Confucian traditions but American promises of self-advancement through education. By disavowing his complicity in U.S. imperialism, Chen had to reverse his previous self-presentations as a proud representative of China to the West (rather than as an importer of the West to China). An ardent patriot, he was forced to admit to a certain amount of disdain for his own people, especially in terms of their imperfect bodies; Chen's critics perceived his descriptions of the malleable immaturity of childhood as inherent racial imperfections. In other words, where Chen had followed global scientific categories identifying childhood as a transitory condition, Communists ossified his alleged mischaracterizations as unchanging ontologies. Moreover, Chen conceded to manipulating his scientific observations of children

for political purposes. Thus his self-criticisms fundamentally undermined the scientific value of his work. These statements, made under duress, may not have indicated Chen's true feelings. Nevertheless, they did reflect larger educational trends: Chen articulated the tension between studying human nature and encouraging educational improvement in a way that reflected a shift from biological developmentalism to self-conscious political education.⁸⁰

The Personal and the Political

Critics had access to a prolific body of evidence because Chen had propelled the transformation of the private family into a site for media attention—and, by extension, public intervention—by the National Child Welfare Association. Critics mined Chen's writings for weaknesses, especially his autobiography, *My Half Life*. One of his critics, Luo Han, assumed that, as a legacy for his own children, Chen's autobiography was always absolutely sincere (rather than sometimes playful and hortatory). Just as his journal had combined the scientific and the personal, so too did his autobiography cross the boundaries of public and private in ways that invited criticism in the new PRC context. For critics, Chen's tendency to brand his name on his educational toys, textbooks, and journals indicated self-aggrandizement. He admitted as much in his autobiography.⁸¹ Critics ignored the context of Christian self-confession and his struggles to transcend desire for personal gain and toward Christian selflessness. They were perhaps responding instead to Chen's audacity in attempting to remain in school administration in the new regime.

Critics felt that Chen was still deeply embedded in the "old" order of Chinese education, with origins not only in the ROC but also in the Qing dynasty. For example, Luo Han took out of context a story in which Chen's grandfather once hit Chen's six-year-old father so hard that the young boy bled. Anticipating the shock of his own children, he explained traditional patriarchy; he also noted that a doctor (who happened to be present at the time as a customer in the grandfather's shop) scolded his grandfather for endangering the life of his only son, certainly a grave transgression for any good Confucian intent upon maintaining the family lineage. In the narrative, the doctor prefigures the medical advice offered by Chen to

parents. However, failing to mention Chen's diatribes against traditional Chinese "stern fathers," Luo excerpted Chen's apology of filial piety to suggest that Chen was rationalizing child abuse.⁸²

Luo also drew on Chen's regret that his elder brother—whom he called a "child genius" because the brother had passed the county examinations at just thirteen *sui* (perhaps twelve years of age)—was unable, because of local village politics and insufficient funds, to test further.⁸³ For Luo, Chen's lament indicated that he was still deeply entrenched in the hierarchy of the imperial examination system (rather than as an outsider in local village society). Whereas Chen had criticized the old order, his new comrades presented him instead as a feudal conservative with designs to revive the imperial system of Chinese education.⁸⁴ The issue was really that his critics would not disaggregate the modernity and science of Chen's innovations from their Western aesthetic packaging; his pivot away from those influences seemingly placed him, in the eyes of his critics, back toward the Qing rather than the PRC. In other words, Chen's brand of scientific childcare was too deeply embedded in the enchantment of a Nationalist-style sentimental childhood. For Chen, forging a modern system of education meant applying scientific principles and methodologies to the situation in China, but the form and structure of his education felt—to his critics as well as perhaps to us today—to be very Western in style and flavor.

America Worship

The CCP drew a clear link from GMD complicity to U.S. imperialism. As Matthew Johnson observes in his study of the early PRC, "America worship" was a key term for criticizing the GMD.⁸⁵ Communists often noted that Chen's educational philosophy was "full of the color of religion."⁸⁶ Chen's colleagues confessed that they had "worshipped" *him*, and Chen also admitted that he "followed foreigners too much."⁸⁷ Moreover, the religious tinge in Chen's pedagogy tainted him and his associates. One example was Tu Zhemei, who had coauthored books about kindergarten education with Chen Heqin (and edited by Tao Xingzhi) in the mid-1930s.⁸⁸ When Chen wrote a glowing letter of recommendation for Tu to become a primary school principal in 1951, the Shanghai Ministry of Education dismissed the application with a note that "her connections to

Christians are deep, and her knowledge of politics is superficial.”⁸⁹ This comment distinguished politics as a form of “knowledge,” in opposition to religion as a system of social networks. Normally, the debate between “red and expert” pitted political loyalty against scientific expertise, but here the two were aligned against Christian indoctrination.

In their self-confessions, educators often reiterated the phrase “worship of America”—usually in the context of disclosing their backgrounds in mission schools or foreign universities.⁹⁰ In an application to open a kindergarten, one woman, who had also served as a nanny in a Yan’an preschool while married to a CCP member, admitted that she had wanted to study abroad in America because of both career ambitions and “America worship.”⁹¹ Her father, she explained, had been an honest, low-level trader who had sought the legal protection of missionaries against the machinations of conniving merchants, and she had consequently acquired an education through mission schools. Thus, as Eddy U shows regarding Yan’an revolutionaries during the Rectification Campaign,⁹² this woman tried to re-present the weaknesses in her biography as elements of victimization while highlighting her connections to the CCP. Unfortunately, in Chen Heqin’s case, he had published ill-fated exaggerations about believing, before he left China to study abroad, that America would be “Heaven on Earth.”⁹³

Chen Heqin was attacked for reducing the status of Chinese to that of a “minority” in the International Settlement. Critics pointed to Chen’s praise for Booker T. Washington and for Chinese education in the “American colony of the Philippines” to illustrate his willingness to make Chinese education subservient to the white imperialists. The “Living Education Investigation Team” found evidence that, as minister of Chinese minority education in the International Settlement, Chen had “emphasized America, the English language, and the Christian religion.” They believed Chen had stressed Christian values and Western customs so that Chinese children would become “Westernized little devils” (*Yanghang xiaogui*) who could better serve Western imperialism. Specifically, the “most observable characteristic” of middle-elementary school students in the International Settlement was the tendency to “worship foreign countries, enjoy foreign languages, and wear foreign clothes [thus imitating] foreigners’ lifestyles in the hope one day of working in a foreign firm.”⁹⁴ Thus, whereas Chen had assumed the immutability of race, Communists criticized him for ethnic mimicry, which, in the context of semicolonialism, was allegedly tantamount to slave education.

In essence, Chen assumed a much greater degree of flexibility in terms of identity than his critics. He had praised African American teachers for appropriating multiple roles, as both teachers and pastors—just as he himself combined the roles of father and researcher when he clinically researched his son. He prided himself in the fact that his students called him “mother” because he had softened or somewhat feminized traditional Chinese “stern fathers.”⁹⁵ From a scientific perspective, Chen approached childhood as a period of malleable growth, perhaps influenced by what Thomas Metzger calls the “epistemological optimism” of human improbability in traditional Chinese political thought.⁹⁶ In general, Communists ignored the transience or multiplicity of categories or considered such flexibility to be a denial of class-consciousness and a betrayal of Chinese ethnicity and political nationalism.

Modeling Self-Criticism

Mao Zedong’s and Stalin’s reflections on self-criticism were published in the pages of educational journals to instruct teachers and to prevent them from diluting the power of self-criticism through overuse.⁹⁷ As Frederick Teiwes explains, there was a continuum between self-criticism (*ziwo piping*), self-examination (*jiantao*) for potential cadres, and confession (*tanbai*), as well as between criticism meetings (*pipinghui*) and struggle sessions (*douzhenghui*).⁹⁸ Chen’s series of self-criticisms were demonstrably public and therefore provided an instructional model for kindergarten teachers. Chen’s journal graphically depicts a sea-change after the editors of *People’s Education* had attacked him. In January 1950 his journal reproduced a photograph of Drum Tower Kindergarten, harkening back to his contributions to the Chinese kindergarten movement in the 1920s. Just one month later, after critiques by *People’s Education*, his journal instead ran a portrait of a patriotic mother and son saluting the family patriarch, who would fight in the Korean War. These covers indicate the ways in which the journal became radicalized through the mechanism of self-criticism campaigns. The content of the journal became much more overtly political and included criticism of Chen, arising from the investigation of him.

The process of this prolonged thought reform was publicized in two journals, *Living Education* and *People’s Education*. As the mouthpiece of the

Ministry of Education, *People's Education* directed the size and layout of other educational journals. Through the process of criticizing Chen Heqin, *People's Education* radicalized *Living Education* and challenged its readers. After *People's Education* criticized Chen's principles as a formulation of Deweyism, the editors of *Living Education* issued a statement asking readers for help in identifying the editors' errors.⁹⁹ *People's Education* responded with "disappointment" about the insufficient statement and implicitly demanded a self-criticism.¹⁰⁰

Chen's subsequent self-reflection was widely disseminated as a model. It appeared simultaneously in the October 1951 issues of *Living Education* and *People's Education* and thus indicates a strong level of coordination. *Living Education* began to publish critiques written by the regular contributors to *People's Education*. Thereafter *Living Education* was transformed; first its name changed to *New Childhood Education*,¹⁰¹ and then the title page dropped Chen Heqin's prominent byline as editor.¹⁰² *Living Education* also published a series of self-criticisms by its editors and contributors, alongside the criticisms from *People's Education*. The Living Education Investigation Team invited readers to criticize Living Education. This protracted dialogue subordinated Chen's journal to the People's Education Society as the authority in all areas of education, even such specialized areas as childhood education.¹⁰³ As a result, this dialogue also dramatically politicized the tenor of *New Childhood Education*. The tone of these journals was important because teachers referenced them for pedagogical materials and sources for classroom content.¹⁰⁴

In 1955 the editors of *People's Education* published a collected volume of these articles, called *Criticism of Living Education*. The editors began the volume with a conclusive verdict against Chen Heqin. They then separated the essays into "early criticism," ending with Chen's first self-reflection, followed by the school surveys conducted by the Living Education Investigation Team. "Theoretical critiques" analyzed Chen's prolific body of work. The final section included a selection of "criticisms and self-criticisms," which ended, again, with Chen's. Thus Chen's self-criticisms always appeared as concessions, even when they had preceded some of his accusations. As the afterword, the editors republished a didactic article, "What We Should Learn from the Criticism of Living Education." Despite the rearrangement of these texts, this book revealed how Communist critics understood the process of thought reform—from early inquiries to research, analysis, and interviews that reinforced initial allegations.

Despite this heavy-handed criticism, Chen was also sometimes commended for his willingness to serve as a model. Especially among those who obviously genuinely still admired Chen, he was credited for his humility and spirit of self-improvement.¹⁰⁵ Chen tried to change.¹⁰⁶ As a result, he became president of Nanjing Normal College in 1954 and vice-chairman of the Jiangsu Provincial Education Committee in 1956.¹⁰⁷ The major focus of the campaign against Living Education was excising American influences by targeting John Dewey.¹⁰⁸ Before applying for membership in the CCP, Chen published a book vociferously denigrating Dewey in 1956, but he was still rejected.¹⁰⁹ Likewise, many others would soon discover that they could not escape their class background or personal histories as easily as they had hoped.¹¹⁰

The Reeducation of Kindergarten Teachers

With deep roots in Confucian self-reflection and ROC rehabilitation, thought reform promised to awaken socialist subjectivity in its participants and thereby enlighten them.¹¹¹ The government relied on public self-criticism campaigns, like Chen's, to reform personnel rather than completely replace them. Many kindergartens continued to employ existing staff.¹¹² In Beijing, staff had been working at the Fragrant Hills Orphanage for several decades; municipal officials underlined information, in reports, explaining that the mature nannies lacked the energy necessary for childcare. According to new staff, older women assumed they already understood modern childcare and were unwilling to attend political meetings.¹¹³ Picking up on these threads, government regulations identified young women as best "suited" for childcare.¹¹⁴ Government leaders tried to reconfigure the composition of the teaching population by emphasizing the age and gender of young, female Han Chinese caregivers—who, still undergoing training, were politically malleable.

In addition to promoting a new teaching demographic, the PRC also encouraged thought reform among older teachers as part of its larger efforts to reeducate the old intelligentsia through "self-education." Despite the relatively low status of kindergarten teachers, they nevertheless participated in rectification campaigns. They attended "daily one-hour group political study sessions" (beyond self-study).¹¹⁵ In one kindergarten, teachers arrived at school an hour early for study sessions but were often interrupted because

students were arriving earlier with the lengthening of summer days; they moved their political study sessions to coincide with the children's afternoon siesta.¹¹⁶ In these sessions, teachers learned about the Sino-Soviet Pact, the Marriage Law, and other new policies. They also learned through large lectures about the revolutionary history of the CCP and the material basis of historical change. Small-group meetings were the venue for potential criticism and self-criticism.

In political education meetings, younger teachers had an advantage over older and more experienced teachers. Eddy U points to the importance of generational divides in conflicts over administrative control of Shanghai schools in the 1950s.¹¹⁷ Similarly, a kindergarten report from 1950 described a teacher named Zhao, who complained about being displaced after twenty-nine years of experience. "However," the report noted, "through Marxist self-study and official classes, this teacher was able to reform previous ways of thinking and admit mistakes."¹¹⁸ The archival file further noted misperceptions that criticism sessions must be disruptive and acrimonious. This school administrator admitted that older teachers were difficult to reform but argued that the goal of criticism sessions and Marxist study was personal reform rather than dismissal; this would become especially true in the context of teacher shortages in the mid-1950s.

Classroom Discipline and Thought Education

On some level, the critique of Chen facilitated a greater degree of classroom discipline. One criticism, written by Sun Zhaoying, a former student at Shanghai's Women's Childhood Normal College, crystallized the ways that the Christianized elements of Chen's principles deviated from new socialism. "In this revolutionary period, a young person should struggle," she wrote, but Chen had urged his students instead to "reflect upon the cross" and to respond to degrading humiliation with thoughtful humility, which Sun considered a sign of a "slave" mentality. Sun further contended that Christianity devalued teachers' status and constrained their classroom management. "When [in class] a boy shirks his responsibilities, causing a girl to scold him, and he hits her in response," she wrote, it is "clear" to a teacher who is in the wrong, but according to Chen's principles, the teacher "could not express too much anger" but needed "patiently" to explain to the boy his error rather than disciplining him.¹¹⁹

Sun thus alleged that Christianized elements thereby oppressed female teachers and prevented justice. Her examples also indicated a feminist stance regarding the power of young women to discipline schoolboys. Sun's analysis also followed Cao Fu's notions of empowering teachers to impart the blueprints of Marxist revolution to students.

The process of thought reform greatly influenced the ways in which even kindergarten teachers instructed students. Even if some teachers, like Sun, emphasized a greater degree of top-down discipline, others internalized the government's overarching message that reform of individual character was possible.¹²⁰ Semester-end reports in the Beijing Municipal Archives showed the teachers' efforts to deal reform "special children" into "regulation-abiding children."

Because children do not come from the same families, some children manifest special phenomena. For instance, in the morning class for older children, there are several people who fight and lose their tempers. . . . Some children are impossible to care for, especially because one such child was already seven years old, he had lost all interest in kindergarten work. [We] held a discussion meeting for him [underlined by a different hand with an annotated question mark], and little friends [children] raised many issues with him, and told him that the teacher loves and protects all little friends. As a result, he accepted the criticism of the little friends, and was willing to be a good child.¹²¹

Here the teacher at the Yongguang Temple Street Kindergarten attributed students' bad behavior to their family backgrounds and particular circumstances. The child in question had been intractable before his peers criticized him in a discussion meeting; his classmates convinced him to "be a good child" by pointing to the loving protection of their teacher. Already too mature to enjoy classroom activities, the student needed another model of correction; teachers positively reinforced good behavior by co-opting him as a teacher's helper. In this example, the benevolent teacher relied on the support of the entire class to correct misbehavior—as well as to recognize the authority of the teacher, which was understood in terms of kindness rather than discipline.

The extension of these techniques to kindergartners, while based on published models, was neither conventional nor expected. The teacher's report in many ways followed the advice of Zhang Wendou's *Elementary*

School Education for Children with Special Needs (here, as above, “special” referred to behavioral problems).¹²² As suggested in the book, the teacher at the Yongguang Temple Street Kindergarten had “investigated” the situation by recording the child’s erratic behavior. Like Zhang, the teacher had provided some analysis of conditions (such as age) that contributed to problem behavior. However, Zhang never suggested “discussion meetings” (*taolunhui*). In the government’s files, a bureaucrat from the Childhood Education Bureau had underlined the words “held a discussion meeting” and placed a question mark in the margins. Thus the bureaucrat may have been surprised or confused by the idea of thought reform for kindergartners. In circulars, government cadres gainsaid suggestions that middle school and high school students be entrusted with the duty of criticizing teachers; cadres reasoned that since the students’ knowledge of the old society was superficial, their participation could potentially confuse them rather than enlighten their teachers.¹²³ If high school students were presumably too immature to accompany teachers to criticism sessions, how could kindergartners reasonably criticize each other (albeit in muted and friendly “discussion sessions,” rather than “criticism sessions”)?

If teachers were not required or even encouraged to hold discussion sessions for children, why did they do it? As wartime reports to New York funders indicated, kindergarten teachers at the Los Angeles Preschool had also used discussion meetings to correct children’s behavior during the Yan’an Rectification Campaign. Obviously, teachers did not see misbehaving children as “innocent” to the point that they needed protection from peer criticism. (And in some ways, peer pressure alleviated teachers’ need to be authoritarian.) These teachers had also initiated applying the model of their own reeducation campaigns as a form of discipline for their students; they thus employed, in their classrooms, the same disciplinary devices that had been used to reform their own behavior and ideology.

Nonetheless, these reports continued the trend, begun in the Republic, of privileging the expert advice of teachers over the natural intuition of parents. In the reference above, Zhang Wendou (the underground Communist who had broken with Chen Heqin after serving as his secretary for five years) maintained an interest in child psychology, to explain the problem behavior of children in terms of their home life, such as their disadvantaged position as poor children within the clan, or their intense jealousy of younger siblings.¹²⁴ These comments (and the structure of analyzing case studies) echo ROC primers.¹²⁵ Continuing ROC trends, Zhang urged

that teachers investigate psychological causes for pupils' behavioral problems. In contrast to earlier creative experimentation, Zhang suggested that teachers place "special children" in separate classes. This solution was bureaucratic and institutional rather than confrontational and interventionist. Especially when encountering conflicts with mothers, kindergarten teachers needed to alert first-grade teachers to avoid exacerbating problems in elementary school.¹²⁶ Thus while Zhang incorporated elements of psychology developed during the Republic, he took a much more institutional approach in the PRC.

Politics also served as a tool for kindergarten discipline. Teachers resolved conflicts through the means of storytelling colored with political innuendos. At the Dafangjia Hutong Kindergarten, after a six-year-old class clown named Gao attacked another child with a bicycle wheel, a teacher told a story to reconcile the two children. After they made peace, the teacher prodded them: "Whom do we fight?" Both responded: "The GMD reactionaries!"¹²⁷ The teachers relied not only on children's stories but also on the children themselves to reinforce their understanding of the stories to one another.

Teachers reported that they "enacted thought education" in the kindergarten classroom. Children sang in praise of Chairman Mao and in condemnation of "Old Chiang [Kai-shek]."¹²⁸ In reports, teachers described the language they used to explain Mao's love for children to them:

"Who are our national leaders?" "Chairman Mao" is an answer that all children know [because] teachers tell the children that Chairman Mao loves children the most. "Do you know that Chairman Mao loves little children?" "Yes, he loves children," the children not only answer this question, but they also want to be [the sort of] child whom Chairman Mao favors. Furthermore, we let the children know that the reason we can live happily today in kindergartens is because of the [good] fortune that Chairman Mao has provided for us. This way, the love that children have for the leaders is true and ardent; children love their parents, sisters, families, friends, and kindergarten and are even more willing to live happily. Teachers must emphasize to students: American imperialists do not want us to be happy, so they have invaded our neighbor Korea, destroyed Korea's kindergartens and preschools, and killed our little Korean friends' [i.e., children's] fathers and mothers; moreover, they still want to invade China.¹²⁹

This window on to patriotic education offers a good point of comparison with the past. First, these comments continued long-standing (global) trends elevating politicians into familial roles over the nation's children (even among social gospellers in the United States). Whereas ROC journals juxtaposed photographic portraits of Chiang Kai-shek and his wife (somewhat akin to Japanese customs depicting the emperor and empress), Chairman Mao was much more singularly identified as the great helmsman and savior, a "much higher position," in Yue Du's historical estimation, "than that of a *Pater Patriae*." Du argues that the PRC fulfilled ROC efforts to cultivate national patriotism through loyalty to the founding father.¹³⁰ This vision of patriotic education was rooted in psychological principles; as Chen Heqin had explained in the 1920s, children responded positively to a benevolent father-figure. Second, the repetition of the word "happiness" recalls the National Child Welfare Association's sentimentalization of childhood, especially in relationship to wartime trauma. Whereas the NCWA tended to emphasize a natural state of childhood purity, PRC teachers depicted children's innocence as blameless political victimization at the hands of U.S. soldiers.

This example also illuminated the role of teachers. Noting that American soldiers "destroyed Korean kindergartens and preschools," teachers stressed, by extension, their own importance in mediating between children and the state.¹³¹ This picture is political rather than scientific. Teachers protected children but did not research them as extensively within a distinctive system of knowledge regarding child expertise; instead, the Women's Federation would marshal educational, medical, and labor statistics for even more explicitly statist purposes. As the editors of *People's Education* attacked an older generation of teachers who had been influenced by Deweyan liberalism, these educators also circumscribed their own power by arguing that educational policy should be determined by political values rather than informed by developmental biology (as observed by teachers themselves). Although PRC journals continued to publish on pedagogy under the leadership of Soviet specialists in the 1950s, the era of prominent child experts as public intellectuals had passed. Despite growth in the field of psychology in the early 1950s, Cao Fu's criticisms also foretold the indictment of the discipline as a bourgeois, derivative human science during the Cultural Revolution.

Conclusion: Teachers, from Citizens to Comrades

From the perspective of 1950s Communists, child experts like Chen Heqin had failed to articulate a specifically Chinese vision of early childhood education. PRC educators judged them according to a new political definition of “the people,” and new requirements for national sovereignty and indigenization. By accepting foreign funding, Nationalists had allegedly capitulated to U.S. political hegemony. Their mission schools and welfare centers were considered conduits of cultural imperialism that would keep Chinese children *as* children—that is, dependent. Charity was merely a guise for continued subservience. Under the employ of these institutions, scholars had also supposedly unknowingly parroted Deweyan liberalism in ways that impeded a revolutionary break with Western capitalism. Communists critiqued Chen’s basic understanding of childhood and development. Chen had couched race as an inherent marker of difference, and Chineseness as the dominant habitus. In contrast, politics, rather than race, qualified leaders as true members of the Chinese polity in the 1950s. In other words, their criticism was really based on a shift in terms about what qualified “the people” as “Chinese.” As a result, it was somewhat unfair for critics to hold Chen accountable for regime changes he could never have anticipated.

Chen’s example was among larger efforts, in the 1950s and into the 1960s, by the PRC to transform subjectivity into what Yinghong Cheng calls the “Socialist new man.” This radicalization required a denial of previous Chinese efforts for Enlightenment reform. As Ryan Dunch argues, the rubric of cultural imperialism diminishes the agency of the Chinese Christians who adapted and adjusted Western models.¹³² Indeed, Communists reduced Chen to a mere plagiarizer—and, in fact, eliminated the scientific dimensions of his previous research. They labeled him a “comprador” who mimicked and served white America. Today, especially as elders fret anxiously about the prevalence of blond hair dye, K-pop, and cosmetic surgery, political and social leaders have responded to “spiritual pollution” by promoting the resurgence of Confucianism, which had long been so vehemently denigrated by Communists as “feudal.” It will be difficult to tell—in this context of growing Westernization under the continuation of Communist leadership—how future generations will define the parameters of “true” Chineseness as opposed to “little foreign devils.”

Women's Mobilization and Childcare
for the Masses

Collective Childcare in the 1950s

Despite the new policies of the People's Republic of China, a myopic focus on change would, as Paul Cohen argues, obscure important continuities, or enduring problems, across the "1949 divide."¹ Gail Hershatter further demonstrates that a gendered lens provides an important framework for analyzing periodization, one that more adequately considers personal experiences in "domestic time" as distinct from political directives in "campaign time."² As advocates, teachers, nurses, and social workers, women had, across the twentieth century, profoundly shaped the implementation of modern childhood, but especially as the social status of male child experts declined, the state relied increasingly on women, especially through the Women's Federation, to contend with perennial obstacles, such as parental resistance.

One reason for these continuities is that the history of the Chinese Communist Party began nearly three decades before 1949. Inspired by scholarship uncovering the party's early intellectual diversity, this book points to the widespread flow of ideas regarding modern childhood across the political spectrum, from New Culture paradigms to Chen Heqin's primers. Child welfare truly attracted broad appeal, despite disagreements over its construction and implementation. Although critical of mission charity in the 1920s, the Chinese Communist Party accepted humanitarian funding, mediated through Allied channels, during World War II. Cadres did not adopt wholesale GMD or U.S. notions of a sentimental childhood, but they

emphasized initiatives, such as medical health in childcare institutions, that resonated with U.S. funders' standards for modern childcare. Communists independently promoted their own aesthetic of a happy, modern childhood. Like the Soviets, they envisioned preschool as the first step away from private family life and toward social collectivization. Political education was conveyed not only through curricular content but through classroom relationships. And yet preschools and kindergartens charged tuition and were not guaranteed by the state. Given these economic barriers, how could the children of peasants and factory workers diversify the "big family" of the kindergarten?

The CCP's political goals added urgency across 1949 to the enduring issue of distribution. One legacy of American funding was a focus on investing in "demonstration centers" with high-quality care. During the Civil War, prestigious childcare institutions evacuated from Yan'an, and they eventually relocated to major urban areas after 1949. This institutional continuity illustrates the Chinese state's ongoing difficulty with reconciling early childhood education for the elite and for the disadvantaged. Under the ROC, the National Child Welfare Association had attempted to redress basic social inequalities through humanitarian aid by projecting middle-class values through welfare institutions. In contrast, the PRC sought to overturn inherited notions of class privilege through political education. Nevertheless, the PRC retained the ROC strategy of subsidizing elite "key schools" and maintained government entitlements.³ Cadre schools posed a problem regarding how youth would learn to interact with the masses.

Financial constraints hindered not only an ideological commitment to educate the masses but also an economic mandate to alleviate women's burdens. Childcare remained primarily (female) gendered work outside of the home, as well as within it. As industrialists had predicted, the promise of daycare as an instrument for mobilizing female labor found greater fruition with a relatively strong state.⁴ Communists continued wartime trends, alleviating the traditional burdens of daughters-in-law to allow young women to work. As Hershatter shows, the Women's Federation helped the state to intervene in the daily lives of women. In some sense, the federation inherited from the Women's Advisory Council, as well as social workers of the past, techniques of overseeing institutions and visiting homes.⁵ The early 1950s represented a temporary decline in volunteerism, as those roles were assumed instead by the Women's Federation.⁶ Much in keeping with WAC, the Women's Federation promoted preschool education of

children in institutions outside the home in order to mobilize the female workforce and modernize the Chinese economy. This move also provided the state with greater access to children at an earlier age. Child welfare thus contributed to the construction of the modern Chinese state.

Female Mobilization and the Women's Federation

In the May Fourth era, Chinese intellectuals had noted the importance of public childcare as a remedy for social ills.⁷ During the Yan'an period, the Chinese Communist Party celebrated what Kimberley Ens Manning calls "Marxist Maternalist Equality."⁸ Yet women like Ding Ling criticized leaders for their inattention to women's double burden and pointed to the need for institutional support. Perhaps as a result, leaders began to prioritize boarding preschools for cadre children in 1942. Whereas the ROC, in keeping with the NCWA, envisioned social workers as supporting rather than replacing the family, the Women's Federation more directly assumed some traditional responsibilities of the family.

Throughout the 1950s Communists opened ever more preschools and kindergartens as a means to liberate the female workforce.⁹ Through its Department of Welfare for Women and Children, the Women's Federation supervised these institutions.¹⁰ Through its Department of Propaganda and Education, it printed material on subjects that ranged from model female workers to infant care. Using information derived from preschools, the federation published and disseminated books on childcare; thus it continued the trend, since the Shanghai Kindergarten Society of the late Qing dynasty, to publicize research on childhood gathered from schools. In contrast to the ROC period, this information did not promote public child expertise (as nongovernmental authority) so much as it facilitated greater efficiency in explicitly statist projects.

The Women's Federation included elite, educated women and Christian converts.¹¹ Established in March 24, 1949, it accepted as institutional members the Women's Federations in Liberated Areas, Women's Christian Temperance Union, YWCA, and Women's Friendship Association. By accepting women from former Nationalist and Christian organizations, it sheltered some women (often the wives of midlevel cadre) with undesirable class backgrounds.¹² The Women's Federation thus facilitated historical continuity with women's charities. Membership in the organization

appeared as a qualification on applications to become school administrators.¹³ Under the supervision of the CCP, the federation trained women to become local cadres.¹⁴

The top leadership of the Women's Federation held concurrent roles in other political bureaus, which reinforced ties to the government. For example, Cai Chang (1927–2009) was the chair of the Women's Federation and concurrently head of the Women's Movement Committee of the Chinese Communist Party. Cai had overseen women's industrial production during the war and had criticized Ding Ling for complaining about the double burden of women in Communist base areas.¹⁵ Vice-chairs included Minister of Public Health Li Dequan (1896–1972) and Minister of Justice Shi Liang (1900–1985). Shi had played an integral role in the development of the National Association for Refugee Children, a United Front organization during the war. Honorary chairs included Song Qingling, who had advocated on behalf of Communist-area childcare centers during and after the war and then become vice president of the Central People's Government, and He Xiangning (1879–1972), head of the Overseas Chinese Affairs Bureau.¹⁶ Delia Davin argues that these interlocking positions predisposed the Women's Federation to accept the major interests of the party.¹⁷ By extension, the federation facilitated government appropriation of early childhood education for state purposes.

By the mid-1950s municipal departments of education provided an external check on the Women's Federation's leadership of preschools and child welfare stations.¹⁸ Political scientists often consider organizations like the Women's Federation or the Communist Youth League as government-organized nongovernmental organizations. Sustained and therefore constrained by the state, such organizations generally follow "tacit sanctioning behavior" by acting on behalf of the state.¹⁹ As the previous example of the NCWA indicates, Nationalist charities had also sought connections to ROC leadership. Both the NCWA and the Women's Federation were relatively autonomous during periods of state weakness and derived authority from their efforts to support state governmentality; as regimes became more entrenched in power, these organizations (as Elisabeth Croll notes in the case of the Women's Federation) subsequently declined.²⁰

As women set off to work in the 1950s, childcare facilities proliferated. The Women's Federation helped to expand the number of daycare centers from the existing 147 facilities in 1949 to 15,700 in 1952; women workers increased threefold during that period. Among these daycare facilities,

2,738 were factory daycare centers; 4,345 were neighborhood-based; and 148,200 were “busy season” agricultural daycare centers serving roughly 850,000 children whose mothers were working in the fields in the countryside.²¹ Davin asserts that “crèches and nurseries were a natural extension of such arrangements” of ad-hoc babysitting, “especially [with] the formation of mutual-aid teams and co-operatives.”²² Thus, as institutions, they shared many similarities with prewar and wartime rural cooperatives. One difference was in the training—at least according to Zhang’s prescriptions—of young girls as scientifically informed helpers. In the countryside, these “busy season” or “mutual help” daycare centers employed older, often illiterate, ladies in exchange for extra meals or personal gifts.²³ During the expansion of preschools in agricultural areas during the Great Leap Forward, the educational background of caregivers further declined.²⁴ Here we can see a growing distinction between daycare staff and kindergarten teachers, who were recognized for academic credentials and were awarded for excellence.²⁵

The Women’s Federation vigorously argued that the institutionalization of childcare spurred women to greater economic production. The federation offered specific examples of increased productivity from female workers after their children entered a factory preschool: from twenty yards to thirty yards of cotton per day in a Shanghai textile mill, and even from twenty to one hundred nets per day for one particular “model worker.” The federation commented, “According to the statistics of the crèche of the same factory, in April 1949, the productive efficiency of the 985 female employees there increased by 65 percent since they were able to send their children to the new factory crèche.”²⁶ The Women’s Federation implied that previous efforts had failed because of poor conditions that had not overcome mothers’ suspicions.

The federation reassured mothers about the quality of care. For example, *Childcare and Women’s Hygiene* noted, “Women were at first reluctant to send their children to daycare . . . but after an initial group of women sent their children, the other mothers saw how clean and fat the children were, so they were then willing to send their children as well.” According to the organization, once the mothers actively supported the preschool, their children grew healthier and livelier.²⁷ Thus, as in wartime daycare centers, the physical well-being of children demonstrated the superior methods of scientific childcare. As places where children grew rotund and robust, there was also a social welfare dimension to industrial crèches and

“temporary nurseries and kindergartens” in the countryside. In the words of cadre, “The coming of the commune [in the Great Leap Forward] has in particular basically solved the problems of those who lack labour power but have many children to feed.”²⁸

Of course, we should be skeptical of these fantastic reports, published as much to persuade women and officials to support childcare as to record results. Despite overt comments on the part of the Women’s Federation, oral reports indicated that women, especially in the countryside, were uncomfortable leaving children in daycare, preferring instead to bring children with them or to place them with relatives.²⁹ Wang Zheng argues convincingly through oral histories that archival materials have often concealed the “quiet resistances” of female members.³⁰ Although the Women’s Federation celebrated the social achievement of persuading women to place children in daycare, it may be that women were much more resistant than the federation suggests.

One potential reason for maternal resistance was the need to breastfeed. In the 1920s the CCP had supported the Pudong Weavers’ Strike in their demand for the right to breastfeed at work.³¹ By the 1950s, however, the Women’s Federation discouraged workers from bringing infants onto factory floors. Individual companies experimented with solutions. One factory in Shanghai allowed female workers into the nursery to breastfeed their infants for up to “a half an hour at most.” During that time, the staff lectured the mothers on hygiene and childrearing. The federation reported a dialogue between the two groups: “Some of the mothers said to the nannies, ‘How tired are you after a day of caring for the children?’ The childcare workers responded, ‘Simply do your best to increase production, and it doesn’t matter if we are a little bit tired.’ This [response] moved the mothers even more, and the managing director, Dong Xiuzhen, said to everyone, ‘The childcare workers [*baoyuyuan*] treat our children so well that we need to be even more diligent in production in order to express our thanks!’”³² This somewhat stifled language points to the awkwardness of the power dynamics in the breastfeeding room. Nevertheless, the dialogue indicates that urban factory workers had become acculturated to the idea of daycare. The factory manager included herself with the pronoun “our” to show that she, too, benefited. Women participated as leaders in managing industrial discipline by putting infants in crèches and enforcing, rather than merely following, regulations about scheduled breastfeeding. Although an initiative rather than a regulation, regular breastfeeding breaks were

championed by the Women's Federation—not only for the health of the infants but also for the democratization of social relationships in the factory.³³ As the proletarian owners of the means of production, female workers were theoretically in control.

Whenever mothers truly were in control, they presumably succeeded in running efficient collective daycare. For example, a small-group cell of the Women Workers' Organization of Shanghai started a collective daycare to allow working mothers to share the burdens of childcare.³⁴ As with the Nationalists during the war, credit was accorded to women at the grassroots for initiating such projects. According to a municipal report, female comrades first voiced the issue at a Women's Federation meeting. They funded the drive to create the daycare center. One comrade donated the use of her own home and two-thirds of the expenses for daycare, while another covered the remaining one-third. Together, they opened the Shanghai Heng-feng Private Kindergarten.³⁵ Mothers' initiatives notwithstanding, the Women's Federation oversaw these projects.

But what about wayward workers? Labor alone did not indicate political identity. The history of Nationalist patronage dogged certain factories. In internal memos, the Women's Federation condemned these laborers as counterrevolutionaries. According to an internal memo in 1949, in a factory formerly subsidized by the ROC, female workers "dreamed of marrying cadres, just as they had once dreamed of marrying bureaucrats."³⁶ "Bureaucrats" seems to refer to the imperial era, but the ROC had provided employment as a kind of benefit to women with husbands in the military. Chinese Communists implicitly accused Nationalists of having fostered expectations for handouts based on political identity. Ironically, the PRC continued ROC trends rewarding partisan loyalty with employment while punishing, in Janet Chen's terms, "indulgence."³⁷ Political shifts had redefined who was parasitic or patriotic but did not fundamentally challenge these categories.

Like the WAC, the Women's Federation also guided training programs for childcare staff. As they had during the war, cadres evaluated reluctance to labor as a symptomatic of women's ideological failings. In an internal memo, the federation disapprovingly wrote about women's workers desire to acquire new skills for upward mobility (and thus their expressions of discontent with physical labor).³⁸ Especially at the level of daycare, childcare remained an undesirable job, and the Women's Federation complained when women refused low-skilled jobs in the field. For example, in a

published report, the federation criticized the young women of Jinsui who resisted training in childcare:

At first, most of the mothers had the mentality of simply shipping off their children and were not willing to partake in childcare work. Some feared that once they entered the profession [of childcare], they would not be able to leave it; others dismissed the job, saying that it “had no future,” even saying that it was something for family relations and farming women to deal with. At the same time, there were some who were willing to manage children’s groups, and some childless female comrades took the attitude of spectators, and others had no confidence in the project: “Female comrades, after all, are only a farce [*yitai xi*], and can’t do it!” Thus, there was a need to combat these mental obstacles [*sixiang zhang’ai*].³⁹

This report depicted mothers not as distrustful of the crèches but as simply uninterested in their own duties of mothering. Otherwise, there are many echoes between this report and those of the Los Angeles Preschool in wartime Yan’an. In both cases, cadres accused female staff of fearing that childcare had “no future.” In another continuity with Yan’an, cadres ascribed women’s fears to “mental obstacles” or *ideological* confusion. In both cases, caregivers improved only when they understood the *political value* of their social contribution. Furthermore, the viability of young women’s economic contributions was linked to the placement, and the care, of children outside the home.

This speaks to the issue of the valuation of childcare as a profession. Like the Nationalists, the Women’s Federation sought to train childcare workers. But the federation also replaced ROC social workers as mediators between families, schools, and the state. Given that CCP administrators were complaining of the glut of overqualified social workers trained by the Nationalists, the government clearly sought to introduce new personnel to an effort to restructure state access to children. Whereas Nationalists pushed for institution building and scholarships for higher education, the Women’s Federation funded publications and institutionalized group meetings.⁴⁰ Or, as Miriam Gross demonstrates in the arena of public health, political egalitarianism allowed the PRC to challenge scientific experts while promoting popular science.⁴¹ Nevertheless, in a culture that so highly

valued education, the Women's Federation implicitly lowered the social standing of childcare workers, especially as opposed to primary school teachers.⁴²

The federation also handled special cases of institutional mismanagement. For example, it assumed leadership of the Shengci Preschool of Beijing during its legal controversies. Shengci was founded in 1942 by a woman named Zhao Shixia, whose training at Huabei Medical School substantiated her credentials in infant care. Shengci housed fifty-five displaced children ages two to thirteen. All had families, except eight wards who "belonged to the institution."⁴³ In February 1950, after a doctor confirmed that a kindergartner from the school was seriously ill, his mother joined three others to sue Zhao. At court, Zhao's perceived connections to Japanese collaborators may have hurt her. A slew of accusations dogged her: failing to quarantine sick children, reserving medical rations for teachers rather than distributing them to children, watering down the children's powdered milk, and even selling orphans.⁴⁴ While Zhao faced criminal charges, the Women's Federation directed the Board of Trustees.⁴⁵ The federation submitted detailed lists of monthly expenditures to ensure the proper running of the school while waiting for the repayment of embezzled funds.⁴⁶

This exceptional and lengthy case expressed ongoing parental concerns about mistreatment, especially malnutrition, and even kidnapping. The Women's Federation intervened to assuage parental fears as well as to elevate the quality of care. As missionaries had also found, parental fears were difficult to assuage, especially in the countryside. Even in 1958, rumors circulated in the relatively rural Chaoyang district of Beijing that mothers would not be allowed to breastfeed in new daycare centers, and that boys were being kidnapped for adoption in the Soviet Union to rectify its gender imbalance.⁴⁷ These rumors reflect long-standing anxiety about China's relative disadvantage in relation to foreign powers, which endured despite the disappearance of missionaries and perhaps reflect mounting tensions with the Soviets. In Chaoyang, women reportedly cried, "If you want to take my child, you will have to kill me first!"⁴⁸ Given parental resistance, cadres noted approvingly when women enrolled children in preschools.⁴⁹ The Women's Federation had argued that well-run preschools would grant mothers the peace of mind necessary for efficient production, but these examples illustrate that mothers, especially those in relatively rural areas, continued to harbor suspicions about institutional childcare.

Developing Regulations

Aside from the interventions of the Women's Federation, early childhood education was overseen on the municipal level. In Beijing, preschools reported to the Municipal Department of Health, while kindergartens reported to the Municipal Board of Education (then called the Wenjiaojū). The government also created a Bureau of Childhood Education (Youjiaoke) to coordinate health and educational files on preschool and kindergarten education. These distinctions indicated that kindergartens sometimes fell into the category of academic learning, and sometimes into the category of public health. In previous eras, schools and child welfare centers had adjusted age divisions according to the contingent numbers of children in attendance, but local governments slowly developed uniform standards.

The Women's Federation justified reforms by referring to the pro-tem constitution of 1949 as an impetus for change. When establishing clinics or publishing books, the federation cited article 48, promoting public health and safeguarding the health of mothers, infants, and children. Educational policy dovetailed with constitutional law. Article 42 called for love of fatherland, the people, labor, science, and public property as the "five loves" educational campaign. These themes had already appeared in wartime Yan'an but were further developed in a series of conferences from 1949 to 1951, with feedback from schoolteachers who experimented with the program.⁵⁰ Thus this campaign grew organically. Nevertheless, these articles in the pro-tem constitution were replaced with relatively vague guidelines in the official constitution on September 20, 1954, and reflected the difficulty of mandating such policies.⁵¹ The Women's Federation acted as an enforcement mechanism in helping to execute some of these directives.

Whereas child advocates had striven to protect kindergartners from adult labor in the 1930s, Communists more explicitly embraced labor as a conduit for political education. In the Five-Love Educational Movement, teachers fostered "a love of labor" and a positive "labor attitude." Teachers defined kindergartners' "work" primarily in terms of cleaning up after themselves. After attending kindergarten, children purportedly volunteered with household chores. Teachers approvingly reported that "the little friends [children] all volunteer to help their comrades move desks and chairs,"⁵² thus adding a political dimension to the simple cooperation of kindergarten

life. When students tarried in the school vegetable plot, teachers noted, “Our kindergartners love labor to an extreme,” and reminded them of the need to study.⁵³ Instead of couching children’s joy in the outdoors as a “natural” characteristic of childhood, as Chen Heqin had done, these teachers categorized gardening as “labor” in a Marxist political context. Thus, the lighthearted complaint that kindergartners were overzealous in their love for “labor” seriously affirmed this work as important training for future service to China. The focus on “inculcating good habits” is reminiscent of childhood psychology in the era of the Republic, despite important differences in the projected goal.

The collection of data about families, a trend throughout the twentieth century, culminated in regulations and practices by the PRC. Private kindergartens and preschools directly reported each semester to the Municipal Board of Education. In these reports, administrators and teachers responded to questions published in periodicals. With varying degrees of specificity, the reports evaluated political study sessions among teachers and their implementation of educational directives.⁵⁴ As in the Republic, teachers monitored students’ health, performed medical examinations, and recorded height and weight. But they also systematically enumerated—sometimes with pie charts and graphs—the socioeconomic backgrounds of parents, which they passed along to the municipal government in their semester reports. These socioeconomic categories varied and were sometimes idiosyncratic. Government officials then retabulated this information into larger statistical data about the socioeconomic composition of schools. Even though the ROC had also monitored schools, PRC kindergarten reports sometimes included individual names of children with special disciplinary problems and thus reached a much more detailed level of oversight. Perhaps school records were integrated into government dossiers.⁵⁵

The detail was overwhelming. The Beijing Municipal Government addressed the practical problem of processing paperwork from so many small, private kindergartens. In 1950 the central government began a program of directly monitoring only selected kindergartens but complained about the level of minute narrative detail seemingly unrelated to political concerns.⁵⁶ Outside of these special cases, school administrators began to provide more streamlined reports to the municipal government over the next decade. Administrators filled in the blanks of preprinted forms rather than extemporaneously responding to general questions. For example, forms later provided tables about the numbers of ethnic minorities and

socioeconomic groups among the students and faculty rather than allowing teachers to compose their own responses.⁵⁷ This process reflects, as Thomas Mullaney observes, a growing standardization of ethnic categories. In addition to their work in schools, kindergarten and elementary school teachers often helped conduct census work with household registration.⁵⁸ PRC teachers, especially primary school teachers with a relatively higher status than daycare staff, thus assumed some of the data-collection functions of ROC social welfare workers in the previous era.

In the early 1950s teachers began to employ class analysis as a lens to understand their students. One teacher wrote that her unspoiled, working-class students walked to class, even in the rain, at the Yongguang Kindergarten; government officials highlighted complaints in this particular report about insufficient funds for vaccinations and health programs.⁵⁹ However, most private-kindergarten teachers admitted that their students had acquired improper attitudes from their elite upbringing. Elite parents could be guilty of either overregulating or underpolicing their children. In 1950 Yiwen Kindergarten complained that when “parents watch over their children too carefully, even though their children seem to understand matters and can talk about hygiene, the children are spoiled and retiring, and show no signs of loving hard work or the masses”; when artistic and bohemian “parents have completely loosened their grip on their children, the children seem refined . . . but do not follow the rules.”⁶⁰ In other words, elite parents understood the science of modern childcare but had the wrong kind of sentimental enchantment regarding childhood. Teachers linked parental class background to children’s psychological disposition.

Access to preschools also reflected preexisting socioeconomic patterns. In 1950 the Beijing Municipal Government mapped all the city’s schools, from kindergartens to middle schools and factory schools, by district and also charted plans to establish schools within the first Five-Year Plan.⁶¹ Although the distribution appeared to be equitable when sorted by district, the map visually showed that schools were clustered in economically prosperous neighborhoods. The government faced logistical difficulties when staff had long commutes.⁶² When archivists in the Beijing Municipal Archives viewed the map, they voluntarily commented to me that Beijing continues to suffer from this unequal distribution; they still found it difficult in the twenty-first century to find preschools and kindergartens in the relatively underdeveloped southwestern quadrant of the city. Yet the existence of this map, coupled with government incentives to private

citizens to open daycare, indicates that the government recognized the need to address geographical equity in access to daycare.

In Beijing, kindergartens expanded enrollment in order to bring the advantages of childcare to a greater number of people, especially the working class. In terms of kindergartens in Beijing, from 1949 there was growth in the number of municipal and work-unit kindergartens but a slight reduction in private kindergartens; one additional elite, national-level kindergarten for cadre children (beginning at ages two and three) had been established in the intervening years.⁶³ This resulted in increasing numbers of classes offered by municipal, affiliated, and private kindergartens and indicates, by contrast, the privileged category of national-level boarding kindergartens for cadres.⁶⁴ The number of kindergartners rose from 1,312 children in 1949 to 2,509 in 1953 in municipal kindergartens; 663 in 1949 to 2,042 in 1953 in private kindergartens, and no children in work-unit kindergartens at the start of the PRC to 1,231 by the end of 1949 (since this type of institution was a PRC invention). By contrast, the number of children in national-level kindergartens increased only from 280 in 1949 to 364 in 1953.⁶⁵ In terms of teaching personnel, the number of staff at all schools increased, but at a far greater ratio per student for national-level schools than for private schools.⁶⁶ These numbers indicate that resources were concentrated in national-level kindergartens from 1949 to 1953, especially relative to other types of kindergartens. Furthermore, to facilitate the ultimate goal of mobilizing the female workforce, the government prioritized preschools for cadre and factory workers.

As in the wartime Yan'an, administrators emphasized discipline, especially of teachers. In 1949 government files reported that extant schools lacked order.⁶⁷ Kindergartens and preschools were reorganized with greater oversight by administrators as well as more input from teachers.⁶⁸ For example, the Beijing Municipal Women's Federation organized the June First Kindergarten (formerly the Los Angeles Preschool) according to interlocking divisions of teachers and administrators, with each group meeting once every two weeks; in conferences, teachers and staff discussed their "research" on childhood and childrearing issues, engaged in "criticism and self-criticism," and reviewed the leadership of the small-cell groups. The division heads, who also met once every two weeks, discussed their observations of the teachers and reviewed suggestions proposed by teachers.⁶⁹ Teachers created more detailed curricula, and schools outlined regular menus according to nutritional guidelines.⁷⁰

The Beijing municipal government proposed changing the term for “kindergartens” from “childish gardens” (*youzhiyuan*) to “children’s gardens” (*youeryuan*) as early as 1950, in part because kindergartens needed to be less “childish” and unruly.⁷¹ Assessing trends, administrators aimed to “change the classroom atmosphere of unruly, screaming children” and old practices of “spoiled habits.”⁷² The ethos of health and discipline and the sensibility of communalism and regimentation structured even the kindergarten classroom. Thus in the 1950s regulations emphasized health and hygiene, enforced through strict discipline, rather than the play and exploration that had relatively distinguished Chen Heqin’s kindergartens in the 1920s.

Demands for access mitigated against the desire for quality and oversight. In the 1950s government laws encouraged the private expansion of kindergartens to meet the needs of working parents. Because of economic constraints and social need, the government gave latitude to early childhood education and rewarded private citizens who established kindergartens with prizes and plaques.⁷³ There was a far greater demand than supply. For example, in Beijing in July 1954 there were 1030 applicants but only 190 spaces available for the Dafangjia Hutong Kindergarten. When kindergartens became full-day schools, they often explained the change in terms of the need to mobilize the female workforce.⁷⁴ In 1956 the Beijing Municipal Department of Education wrote, “There are diverse types of kindergartens and there is no need, at present, to unify or standardize them.”⁷⁵ As Eddy U notes, by the mid-1950s the need for middle school teachers resulted in a loosening of the standards for the political background of teachers.⁷⁶

Political Dimensions of Kindergarten Science

As Ruth Rogawski argues, public hygiene offered the state a foothold to promote a greater degree of oversight.⁷⁷ In the ROC era, child experts used hygienic and scientific aspects of modern childhood to justify intervening in factory floors, domestic spaces, and family life. Like the NCWA, the Women’s Federation associated preschool institutionalization with factory safety, and the government filed provisions for the creation of preschools for working mothers under the same rubric as factory safety and accident prevention.⁷⁸ Such regulations also increased factory discipline and were part of a larger goal of modernizing the economy according to scientific

standards (through, for example, the specialization of labor by skilled workers).

Teachers echoed the constitutional goal of “imparting a love of science” and hygiene (as one of the “five loves”) in a new political relationship to children. As Megan Greene shows, the ROC had long emphasized science education.⁷⁹ What was perhaps new were, as Miriam Gross indicates, political relationships in the process of learning.⁸⁰ Many teachers focused on the importance of workers and soldiers as new clientele. For example, in the words of private kindergarten teachers in a 1950 municipal report: “Another misconception that we had in the past was that we felt satisfied with ourselves because we worked hard every day, and we were never late arriving or early leaving, so we could consider ourselves good citizens. Now we understand that this is not enough. . . . Workers and soldiers do so much for us, and we need to guide them in loving science and improving their hygienic habits. Only by accomplishing this can we be considered teachers of the people.”⁸¹

If teachers and students had transitioned from subjects to citizens during the early Republic, PRC teachers clearly saw themselves as transforming from citizens to comrades. Like the childcare workers in Shanghai factory crèches, kindergarten teachers reportedly envisioned a reciprocal relationship among labor classes. As “teachers of the people,” they popularized science education and integrated hygiene into the daily habits of children of workers and soldiers.

While allowing more children of workers into kindergartens, the government challenged teachers’ attitudes about those parents. In political reform meetings, teachers recognized that, during the previous regime, they had served middle-class housewives due to their own “petty capitalist class consciousness.” Some teachers admitted to having favored “white, plump, pretty, and clean children” but realized, while accepting students according to new recruitment guidelines, that they needed to “care for workers’ children” and restrain their inclination to favor the plump white children of the elites.⁸² Teachers often repeated that they now needed to “serve the children of workers and soldiers.”⁸³ In 1951 the government passed legislation recognizing the importance of early childhood education, especially from the standpoint of facilitating the economic and political contributions of working parents.⁸⁴ From 1952 to 1958 enrollment of students of proletarian and peasant origins steadily climbed in universities, from 20.46 to 36.42 percent.⁸⁵ As kindergartners, these

students often arrived with a more diverse set of emotional and physical needs than wealthy children.⁸⁶ (Ironically, this situation may have contributed to the impression among new kindergarten teachers that they were inheriting an unruly institution from the ROC.) Thus an important aspect of reeducating teachers was to direct their sympathy and attention to the needs of students from previously less privileged socioeconomic backgrounds, who were newly favored among applicants to private kindergartens.

Teachers mediated between family and state to help the government with its childhood vaccination campaigns. Vaccinations had been integrated into Chen Heqin's Drum Tower Kindergarten curriculum in the 1920s, and the NCWA had provided free vaccinations on Children's Day in the 1930s. Teachers continued these trends. For instance, in one private kindergarten in 1950, teachers "used red balls and praise as incentives for children to comply with vaccination shots; sometimes, when the children resist, the teachers model for the students."⁸⁷ According to teachers, parents were initially reluctant to vaccinate their children from tuberculosis with the experimental drug BCG. But after school administrators offered a lecture and promises to pay for hospital fees if the children experienced any negative side effects, parents vaccinated not only their kindergartners but also the younger siblings in their families.⁸⁸ Thus, with the help of teachers, kindergartens provided a venue for government campaigns that intervened into the realm of family life. In Women's Federation publications, the director of the Children's Hospital in Beijing claimed that the government had "fundamentally eliminated" diseases like smallpox through public health campaigns and also reported that infant mortality dropped from 124.9 per thousand in 1948 to 46.1 per thousand in 1954. He stated, "I firmly believe that in our prosperous and happy big family under socialism, all children will be able to enjoy a happy and healthy childhood, and grow into well-developed men and women."⁸⁹ What was new was the guise of specifically *socialist* collectivization.

Teachers integrated science and political education. In an article for a government educational journal, one teacher advocated reinforcing political messages through the curriculum and included an example about protecting national property in a lesson about personal hygiene.⁹⁰ (Her message recalls a psychologist's advice from the 1920s that traditional, multigenerational, and multibranch "big families" give children toothbrushes as

personal property in a capitalist society;⁹¹ here, the desired objective was state collectivization rather than bourgeois ownership.) Likewise, in archival reports to the municipal government, teachers reported drafting political slogans in science lessons. For example, in a lesson on combating pests, a group of kindergartners volunteered observations and comments that culminated in the following lines:

Swatting a fly seems like [throwing] a hand grenade;
Fight, quickly slap, slap.
Don't wait for it to lay eggs.
More and more [flies] come to harm humanity,
Quickly strike the enemy.

The teacher was obviously impressed with the powerful imagery of warfare. The slogan associated pest control with combat. The forceful image of the hand, claimed the report, “was one that the teachers would never have imagined.”

Were the children really so innovative? Ruth Rogawski observes that such slogans were quite common during the Korean War.⁹² Although the class must have regularly sung about Chinese comrades in Korea,⁹³ the teacher credited her students. When she proudly described their enthusiasm, initiative, and ongoing class discussions to revise these slogans, the teacher may have been pointing, in keeping with Sigrid Schmalzer's conclusions regarding agricultural technology, to the incorporation of applied knowledge with theory, and the collective socialist approach to amassing knowledge.⁹⁴ After one child commented that his mother “said to spray DDT,” the children decided to add the lines:

Throughout the kitchen and bathroom, we spray DDT
and reduce the enemy thoroughly.⁹⁵

In Chinese, the word-compound for “enemy” (*diren*) contains the element of “person,” so the original implies a transition from the pestilent insect to the human foe. As James Pusey argues, patriotic rhetoric dehumanized political outsiders with animal metaphors.⁹⁶

In the report, the teacher emphasized the voices of the students themselves and named each child individually as a contributor to a larger

discussion about pests and politics. Thus the class worked as a committee to create content that the teacher deemed to be more imaginative than, and thus superior to, top-down curricula. Her attitude reflects other teachers' comments about the kindergartners, who were deemed more "revolutionary" and "progressive" than their old-fashioned teachers. These teachers may have simply been exaggerating the importance of political education to impress municipal officials. In the context of public criticisms of educators, teachers may have been effacing their own roles by depicting children as the vanguard of the classroom. The creative authorship of the students may never be entirely clear, but these classroom strategies contributed to the development of "scripts" for childhood performance.

As in the Soviet Union, Chinese kindergarten teachers expected children to be on the forefront of a new revolutionary vanguard that would "transform parents."⁹⁷ Teachers provided officials not only with examples of how parents shaped children but also how children influenced parents. In 1950 at the Dafangjia Hutong Kindergarten, for instance, a report asserted, "Because of the ~~parents'~~ [word struck and replaced in document] family's negative influence, there are also those who dislike labor, but for these little friends [i.e., children], the teachers have already had contact with the elders in order to enact education in a timely manner." This revision in the document reflected the reality that it was often the grandparents and other family members—rather than merely the parents—who cared for young children at home. The report also offered two examples of ways that children positively influenced their parents. When one child was walking with his mother past a flag-raising ceremony, he instructed her to stop at attention; the mother related this story to his teachers, who praised the student for his patriotism. The report was careful to note that these children were helpful and respectful to their elders, even when one child, for example, refused to drink the cold water that his mother had given him because, according to his teachers, only boiled water was hygienic.⁹⁸ Their emphasis on tact surely underscores an effort to ameliorate the tensions that arose when teachers contradicted parents (and recalls the Nationalists' emphasis on the need for social workers to give parents "face," or respect, during house visits). In these stories, parents were sometimes less willing to listen to the advice of the teachers than to cave to the directives of children.

A Model Kindergarten

Yan'an continued to inspire educational practices in the PRC. After 1949 Yan'an's child welfare institutes transferred campuses to Xi'an and Beijing, as well as retaining a campus in Yan'an.⁹⁹ In Beijing, the school was renamed June First Kindergarten as a national-level school. June 1, in fact, became the new date of Children's Day in the PRC. The redating of Children's Day indicated a break with the bourgeois NCWA, and yet China continued to celebrate Children's Day as a special commemoration of the importance of children. The selection of June First Kindergarten as a "model" school was in keeping with not only U.S. funding traditions but also Soviet precedents in Moscow. As in Stalinist Russia, cadre schools in the PRC attracted foreign dignitaries from the Soviet bloc. Officials could have justified investing in these schools as a form of diplomacy. However, as Larry Holmes shows in Russia, Soviet schools competed for awards in contests that advantaged high-performing cadre schools like the No. 25 School in Moscow.¹⁰⁰ In contrast, Beijing grappled with the ideological ramifications of creating new privileges for families of cadres. Although cadre schools mirrored GMD social benefits for military families, cadres justified these privileges given the socioeconomic disadvantages in their revolutionary backgrounds. Officials also identified immense difficulties of eradicating inequality deeply embedded in education. Doing so, they anticipated some of the debate and criticisms regarding the PRC's new "caste system," as later characterized by Yu Luoke.¹⁰¹

Within the unique political jurisdiction of Beijing as both the national capital and its own province, June First Kindergarten was among few schools directly subordinate to the central government. The government in 1952 shifted this kindergarten, along with two elementary schools, from central to municipal control. The central government would continue to pay a partial subsidy 1,247,043,844 yuan and expected the municipal government to cover the remaining 8,353,956,156 yuan for the kindergarten.¹⁰² To put these expenses in perspective, the budget for this full-time kindergarten was far greater than the estimated 2,115.05 yuan allocated for the second-semester 1958 budget of a part-time kindergarten in the Xuanwu district of Beijing.¹⁰³ A full-time nursery required extensive funds, and June First Kindergarten was the premier institution for the children of

government officials. Especially as the initial Soviet loans dwindled, the government reevaluated educational costs. The State Council also proposed eliminating subsidies for middle school normal students from relatively affluent families.¹⁰⁴ As the ROC discerned in the postwar period, it was difficult to push costs for entitlements onto parents and the municipal level without some backlash.

In 1957 the municipal government discussed increasing tuition fees to cover growing costs, or otherwise finding ways to reduce the costs of cadre schools.¹⁰⁵ Cadre parents directly protested to the Beijing mayor, Peng Zhen (1902–1997). In a letter, one anonymous parent complained that the tuition for June First Kindergarten would be raised to 40 RMB per month; yet the average cadre's salary was only 80 to 100 RMB per month, so the educational expenses of a *single* child could constitute half of the parents' income.¹⁰⁶ Because of pronatalist government policies,¹⁰⁷ many cadre families had multiple children, so the tuition increases made schooling prohibitive. (The parent further complained that these fee increases were announced *after* the school year had started and other schools had already been filled, so there were no other options available.) Because the parent was familiar with internal government documents, he or she knew that the government had increased the school budget from 38,189,000 yuan in 1957 to 40,540,000 in 1958.¹⁰⁸ Thus parents' positions inside the government directly influenced their assessment of school policy.

Responding with vehement offense at reports of “special privileges” of cadre schools, the parent protested against labeling all cadre families as elite. Critics in the central government had warned against forming “a new class of nobility who were separated from the masses.” In response, the parent insisted those leaders failed to appreciate the unique childcare needs of ordinary cadre households. Cadre mothers sent “their children to boarding schools,” the parent wrote, “not because they hoped to receive special treatment, but because they need to resolve practical childcare problems.” The parent further parsed class categories to create new divisions, claiming that an analysis of the tuition and salary figures showed that the new tuition costs would divide the “high-class cadre” (*gaoji ganbu*) from “middle- to low-level cadre” (*zhongxiaceng ganbu*), who would not be able to attend school at all; thus “high-class cadre will not only be cut off from the masses but be cut off even from the middle- to low-level cadre.” This assault on high-level government administration continued: “Furthermore, if ‘Northern Sea,’ ‘June First,’ and other kindergartens’ equipment are relatively

better [than noncadre schools], with some ‘gentrification’ (*guizuhua*), in order to impress foreign visitors; this was the illness (*maobing*) of contemporary leaders [who established the schools] and was definitely not the demand of the kindergartners’ parents, so if we push the burden of this overexpansion onto the shoulders of the parents, it is not entirely fair.”¹⁰⁹

Thus the letter writer levied a familiar complaint—that Chinese were toadying to impress foreign powers—at the government administration itself. Such accusations had first emerged in terms of Qing dynasty capitulation to Western semicolonialism and missionary “slave education,” and continued with PRC insistence that Nationalists had blindly practiced “America worship.” The letter writer also incorporated long-standing Communist claims that the impoverished classes had suffered because of ROC mismanagement. Both the critique (that cadre elites enjoyed special privileges that had “separated [them] from the masses”) and the response (that cadres should be further disaggregated into separate subclasses) foreshadowed repeated refrains during the Cultural Revolution.

Municipal response to this letter was swift and decisive. The letter was stamped as urgent, copied, and circulated. Under the leadership of Zhang Youyu in the Bureau of Childhood Education, in cooperation with the mayor and vice-mayor of Beijing, the government committed itself to lower tuition increases to 5 yuan for living expenses while investigating other ways to reduce costs.¹¹⁰ For example, they eliminated school uniforms. Belt tightening was still a struggle, however. A bus service delivered children home on weekends, and parents were loath to sacrifice this costly entitlement because the boarding schools were located in remote and idyllic suburbs.¹¹¹

Conclusion

In some ways, the legacy of the Nationalist period had actually helped further the statist goals of the PRC. State modernizers had predicted that preschools would help to galvanize the Chinese economy by allowing women to work and by facilitating discipline in factories. Preschools would also help prevent the spread of disease through vaccinations and hygiene. The PRC continued these modernization projects under the guise of communism and the goal of socialism. Some of the PRC’s successes may also be attributed to the Nationalists. For example, the Women’s Federation had

much greater success in opening industrial preschools than agricultural daycare centers, and this may have been due to the extensive efforts undertaken by missionaries and philanthropic associations to convince middle-class women and factory workers to vaccinate children and send them to daycare. Especially with the relative demotion of prominent male child experts in the PRC, childcare at the grassroots level remained women's work. Institutional childcare also allowed women to work outside the home; the government had to rely on private kindergartens to help expand those opportunities for working women. The Great Leap Forward continued and heightened wartime measures of collectivizing the traditional burdens of daughters-in-law, such as childcare and cooking, to new extremes.

Despite government measures to bring the benefits of childcare to the masses, it was difficult to ensure the standards of institutional childcare. In 1949 the government consciously sought to increase opportunities for previously disadvantaged groups, but there remained huge discrepancies between national-level boarding schools like June First and private kindergartens like the Yongguang Kindergarten. Early childhood education was meant to acclimate children into society, and cadres in Yan'an base camps had also articulated a vision of kindergartens allowing children to enter socialist collectivization. Government leaders therefore worked to forestall the possibility that cadre children at the elite June First Kindergarten would grow up separated from the masses; however, without overnight care, many cadre mothers would be unable to work. Female mobilization thus chafed against political education for children in a truly mass-driven classroom.

By providing parents with additional resources, information, and support, preschool education had been intended, since the late Qing dynasty, to buttress "family education" and the strength of the Chinese family as the foundation of the state. As Helen Schneider shows, "family education" modernized in the Republican period and became integral to the "ideology of the happy family." In the revolutionary 1950s the CCP continued to champion the vision of a happy, healthy family, but it was a decidedly socialist family; thought reform and other new policies encouraged increased state intervention into domestic life. In educational journals, the words "happy large family" then referred to the socialist kindergarten. More explicitly than before, young children were entrusted with educating

their parents. As regulatory bodies were developing more concrete categories for overseeing schools, teachers imagined that children could become leaders in both the family and the classroom. By downplaying their own potential culpability, these teachers implicitly contradicted *People's Education* editors, who had instructed teachers to impart the tools of revolution to children; however, these teachers also anticipated the role that these children, as the first generation to grow up under Chinese Communism, would later assume as Red Guards in the Cultural Revolution.¹¹²

Conclusion

State-sanctioned social engineering projects predate the Cold War. International competition is an enduring legacy inherited from nineteenth- and early twentieth-century nation building, and, in the case of China, the revolutionary transition from empire to nation-state.¹ In the Republic of China, Nationalists envisioned child welfare as potentially benefiting modern economic development and envisioned the state as based on the bourgeois family and harmonious social relationships. Confidence in this brand of industrial paternalism, Wen-hsin Yeh shows, was eroded by the devastation of war.² Around the world, postwar reconstruction promised social welfare,³ but the ROC engineered relief programs too elaborate to sustain. Traditionally tied to the dynastic mandate, problems with relief must have contributed, in addition to the ROC's military and economic problems, to a loss of confidence in the regime. Especially since 1989, the People's Republic of China has leaned increasingly on "people's livelihood," rather than revolution, as the basis of its legitimacy, providing a further impetus for the modern developmental state's investment in high economic growth.⁴ As Ann Anagnost explains, East Asian boom-and-bust models push governments around the world to invest in the prospect of economic miracles in a new knowledge society.⁵ The Chinese state adopts "neoliberal methods of good governance," with enhanced capacities for technocratic "social engineering," to foster "quality" citizens.⁶ As a result, increasing pressure is placed on early childhood education, now consumed

as a luxury product among China's rising middle class.⁷ Childrearing, as a social engineering project, has developed in conjunction with shifting notions of the nation-state, governmental obligations, and even the nature of scientific knowledge itself.

In this context of social engineering for state purposes, the Enlightenment project for child welfare has often been tied, somewhat awkwardly, to political emancipation of various kinds in China. Through the political revolutions of 1911, 1927, and 1949, teachers promised to liberate Chinese children from the shackles of the past—from patriarchal tyranny and Confucian empire in 1911, from territorial fragmentation in 1927, and from global capitalism and class exploitation in 1949. With these promises came a sense that previous or competing systems had metaphorically enslaved children, especially by indoctrinating them with mental frameworks that suppressed their maturation. A major point of contention across these periods was how to handle Western influences that entered China through treaty ports, inherited as a legacy of the Opium Wars. Nationalists adopted modern Western techniques of governance—such as through hygiene, policing, and welfare—to demonstrate their ability to administer treaty ports, a goal achieved during wartime in 1943. During the escalation of the Korean conflict, Communists reevaluated prominent educators as conduits of U.S. cultural imperialism. According to the most vehement Communist critiques, educational psychologists like Chen Heqin had reified race in their endeavor to indigenize U.S. directives as their own; they had overlooked the ways in which education could facilitate control.

As Cold War Communists like Cao Fu claimed, funding had created channels of information and influence between U.S. capitalists and the ROC Nationalists (and, we may add, wartime and even postwar Communists); nevertheless, these channels of communication cannot be accurately maligned as willing subordination or passive reception on the part of the Chinese. Resisting Anglo-American representations of abject poverty among Chinese children, Nationalists projected Chinese strength, leadership, and parity with the West. Americans promised donors that they could leverage aid to promote core values like Christianity, democracy, and economic liberalism, but the Chinese often countered with slightly different strategies or priorities; indigenization was a complex process that included creative contributions from Chinese themselves. As most strikingly evident in Communist acceptance of U.S. wartime funding, American dollars could not buy political subservience or even allegiance.

Since the Enlightenment, philosophers like Jean-Jacques Rousseau had questioned corrupted traditions by promising to recover a truer understanding of the human condition, as represented in its purest form in childhood.⁸ After the turn of the twentieth century, Chinese educated elites had likewise charted new paradigms of political and economic development based on the “discovery” of childhood as an ontological subject. Communists condemned those hopes as naïve. Instead, they assumed that Nationalists’ child advocacy belied ideological indoctrination. I would counter, somewhat more neutrally, that reformers invested children with aspirations for the future. By studying their reforms, we can discern their vision for state-society relations and their invention of new tools for governance. This history shows the difficulty of transcending important contributions of the previous era and the endurance of certain basic tools for organizing and leveraging early childhood education.

The Nationalists explicitly tied children’s education, especially in preschools and kindergartens, to blueprints for modernizing reform. “The advancement of a nation,” wrote then finance minister Kong Xiangxi in 1934, “depends upon the pitter-patter of little feet.”⁹ How and why Kong could make such an outrageous claim has been an underlying question of this study. Nationalists drew on the discovery of child study as an academic subject dating back to the late Qing. Child advocacy gave scientific experts, who investigated childhood as a means to improve the cognition and health of children, a platform for proposing national reform. While women worked, preschools and kindergartens offered safe environments for children outside of the home, where children could also receive a properly patriotic education. In Christian universities, middle-class women trained to become child welfare workers who could oversee new and creative initiatives for children’s advocacy.

Child welfare was a venue for negotiating political diplomacy between China and the West. While minister of industry, Kong Xiangxi established the National Child Welfare Association with funding from a sister organization of American Christians in New York. As critiques of the Child Labor Commission of 1922–1924 show, Chinese Communists readily interpreted foreign charity as an indication of Western imperialism. In some cases, mission homes were truly subpar. Through the NCWA, elite Chinese Christians helped to evaluate and improve the conditions of Protestant Christian missions to Chinese children in the famine-stricken hinterland. Implicitly, the leaders of New York’s China Child Welfare acknowledged the poor

conditions of mission homes as a legitimate reason for Chinese resistance to Christianity. Given their donations, even during the early years of the Great Depression, American funders grew frustrated by the persistence of anti-Christian riots in China. U.S. funders explicitly asked for reassurances of Chinese recognition of American goodwill.

The Shanghai elite thus mediated between Western funders and traditional Chinese philanthropies. Western funders also triangulated the relationship between emerging coastal elites and traditional charities in the hinterland. Although U.S. funders claimed to avoid interfering with welfare work on the ground, the U.S. Internal Revenue Service demanded financial reports, which fundamentally Westernized the language and operations of the NCWA. The NCWA was not only the product of a hybrid Chinese-Western elite in Shanghai but often also an amalgam of public, state, and private roles.

ROC leaders promoted industrial welfare as a means to ameliorate class tensions. In Shanghai, the NCWA also experimented with the distribution of goods and services to the children of factory workers. Children's Day established seasons for distributing charitable aid and medical services to children, as well as celebrating childhood. In addition to their welfare work, Chinese leaders photographed the happy families of wealthy donors as models for ideal childrearing and to encourage the next generation to become philanthropists. Chinese disagreed with Americans on the presentation of Chinese children as impoverished and preferred instead to emphasize the benefits of the reforms for the physical and emotional well-being of children. Political goals thus influenced fundraising tactics, inasmuch as foreign funds facilitated international cultural exchange.

Shanghai was an important arena for the Chinese elite, like Chiang Kai-shek and Kong Xiangxi, to prove that the ROC could successfully administer treaty ports. Missionaries, too, encouraged Chinese leaders to adopt and enforce Western models more effectively than Westerners could. In this context of indigenization, the NCWA demonstrated the ROC's acceptance of universal standards of child welfare and its ability to enact those reforms. Thus child welfare could be seen as both cause and effect—by freeing the female workforce, childcare could aid industrialization; as a measure of modernity, child welfare could also justify revising the unequal treaties. Because of this need to argue in favor of China's national sovereignty, Chinese members of the NCWA trumpeted the wisdom of Chinese leaders rather than the poverty of Chinese children. Ironically, official

connections to the International Settlement and the French Concession empowered Chinese members of the NCWA to conduct surveys, establish institutions, and enact reforms. This dynamic became even more manifest after the retreat of the Nationalists from Shanghai in late 1937. Even though the NCWA's rhetoric connected Chinese children to national salvation, its funding and tactics depended on conditions of semicolonialism.

One way in which Chinese elites indigenized Western models was through their patronage of child experts like Chen Heqin. Chen emphasized racial distinctions between (Han) Chinese and Westerners to argue that Chinese children had a unique child psychology worthy of independent study. With a method based on Charles Darwin's diaries and graduate education at Columbia Teachers College, Chen claimed that his observations of his own infant allowed him to extrapolate a specifically "Chinese" child psychology. He offered advice for improving the health of children, through good nutrition and healthy habits, which he regarded as the basis for psychological well-being. The category of racial difference, while essentialist, allowed Chen the necessary space to pioneer his own field. For him, the formal scientific claims of child psychology were universally true, but race created a material condition, which constituted a distinct subject and thus a distinct object of study. When Chen selectively translated the work of social Darwinists, he did so in agreement that the monogamous couple with children best aided family cohesion, parental investment, and political stability. Thus Chen's rejection of concubinage was not an endorsement of May Fourth radicalism but the underpinnings for a Western-oriented morality among Chinese Christians. He thus helped to forge a new vision of a modern Chinese family that both retained certain traditional Confucian values (like eldercare for grandparents) and embraced scientific reforms for bourgeois domesticity.

Using his own personal life as the basis for becoming a public intellectual, Chen reported to the Child Labor Commission and then served as secretary to the national NCWA and general secretary of the Shanghai NCWA. The NCWA had wide-ranging goals to protect childhood as an arena for promoting public health and preventing crime. Tapping into connections with journal editors, medical doctors, and local judges, it also protected children from the abuses of stepmothers, apprentices from the tyranny of masters, and other excesses of traditional social hierarchies undergirding a premodern economy. Reformers like Chen projected their own lives as exemplary models of the modern Chinese family. Chen

implemented his new ideas in his Drum Tower Kindergarten, which he operated through his home; this kindergarten, too, became a model of best practices. He drew on stories from his “family kindergarten” in public lectures broadcast on the radio and reprinted in newspapers. Educated women likewise published essays on modern childrearing in the pages of journals published by the NCWA and the YWCA. In this context, the personal became the political; the scientific, the sentimental.

The NCWA promoted consciousness raising as an important part of its agenda. Kong Xiangxi and other leaders turned public health exhibits into opportunities to distribute vaccines, as well as toys and games, to poor children in Shanghai. The NCWA lobbied for the creation of Children’s Day, which celebrated children and argued in favor of children’s rights as future leaders of the nation. Japanese military aggression, starting in 1931, helped to strengthen the case for protecting children through public measures. Yet these overtly political messages were tempered by the NCWA’s emphasis on the happiness of children. Children’s Day was an occasion to open the doors of museums, parks, and movie theaters to the poor. The holiday reminded elite children to recognize their duty to charity. Through the joyful solidarity of children, Chinese people could remember that national patriotism trumped class distinctions and class struggle.

One may see in the NCWA’s national solidarity project some echoes of Giovanni Gentile (1875–1944), the Italian philosopher and ghostwriter of Benito Mussolini’s *A Doctrine of Fascism*. The most prominent similarities relate to the state ultimately consuming all “false” dichotomies, such as the distinction between public and private, as well as all class tensions and distinctions internal to the nation.¹⁰ Not only did NCWA leaders operate as both public officials and private philanthropists, but they also publicized their own lives as a platform for national reform. Children could act as emissaries, both in their local networks and on the international stage, regarding the need for national solidarity and a shared culture of transnational modernity. Kong Xiangxi’s 1937 visit to Adolf Hitler (as well as to Franklin D. Roosevelt and Benito Mussolini) has been widely studied as part of the Nationalists’ admiration for military order and a disciplined lifestyle.¹¹ As Maggie Clinton argues, revolutionary Nationalists in the ROC demanded a radical reinvigoration of Confucian traditions;¹² similarly, the present book shows that Chinese Christians also reflected this brand of reclaiming Confucian filial norms, such as “respecting elders and cherishing children,” in service to the Chinese state.

During the Second United Front, Nationalists and Communists faced many of the same problems, especially economic privation and the decimation of the Chinese population at the hands of the Japanese Army. Nationalists lost their industrial base along the coast and aimed to regenerate both human and industrial capital in the hinterland. Both Nationalists and Communists outlawed abortions and trained midwives (the traditional executors of infanticide) in order to save infants and record births. Such policies reflected governmental mobilization of the entire Chinese population as a resource for war. The war also expanded social services for children. Responding to appeals for daycare for working women, the ROC supported industrial crèches and collective preschools for working women in the countryside. Nationalists also trained women in child welfare centers during the war in an attempt to professionalize the field and improve conditions.

Communists also accepted foreign funds to support a variety of childcare initiatives in the Shanganning Border Region and even adopted the name “Los Angeles Kindergarten” for a flagship institution in recognition of U.S. funding. The United China Relief funded twenty-one childcare institutions in the region, especially nurseries for cadre children. In congruence with U.S. recommendations, the Border Region Government also opened childcare training institutes that dispatched welfare workers into the countryside to collect demographic information and to improve public health. Like the Nationalists, Communists emphasized hygiene and science-based childcare. Both Nationalists and Communists also incorporated anti-Japanese political education into their curricula. However, Communists emphasized their own unique political goals and drew on Soviet models emphasizing kindergartens as the first step to shaping a predisposition for collective living. One could say that Communists developed their own sense of the enchantment of childhood—one that defined childhood’s innocence specifically in terms of unfair treatment due to political identification as the children of Communists.

During the war the NCWA expanded child welfare services across China and also intensified the political nature of their work. Unsurprisingly, those NCWA institutions devoted to military dependents especially encouraged their wards to enlist. Echoing concerns about missionary education, Chinese feared that Japanese occupiers were, in figurative terms, enslaving Chinese children to another brand of imperialism. These conditions encouraged the NCWA to further politicize childhood education

with promilitary, pro-GMD messages. The NCWA also adopted an even greater degree of transparency in its monetary practices. Despite the relative impoverishment of some of these institutions, they perhaps do not deserve the accusation, made by Communists in the 1950s, of unfeeling neglect and unguarded nonregulation. For instance, the Women's Advisory Council to the New Life Movement tallied and regulated children in state-sponsored homes, although the government did rely on intermediaries to collect information about mission orphanages. The importance of child welfare for the Nationalists can even be seen by its continued insertion in presidential debates in Taiwan.

The formula that the war increased politicization and patriotism in child welfare is somewhat complicated by the example of wartime Shanghai. The ROC invested in child welfare in Shanghai even after its retreat from the city in 1937. Allies also funneled money into China through banks in Shanghai. Because Nationalists could continue to operate through the bases of the International Settlement and the French Concession, Japanese occupiers highlighted the degree to which the child advocacy of the NCWA relied on the protection of Western imperialists. The Shanghai NCWA innovated further in fundraising campaigns during the war and cooperated even more closely with Buddhist organizations to bring relief to war refugees. Innovations in fundraising, in both the United States and China, led to an important democratization of tactics that elicited support from ordinary people, in addition to elite philanthropists. After the U.S. entrance in late 1941, transnational welfare relief became more difficult when Japan's puppet governments assumed control over treaty ports. The Reorganized Nationalist Government in Nanjing emphasized the role of children as peacekeepers, while Nationalist Chongqing and Communist Yan'an projected children's contributions as future soldiers. Occupied Nanjing's pacifism was also a departure from Japanese trends toward the militarization of childhood not only in Japan but also in Korea.¹³

This history also reveals the shifting frontier of foreign models. In the early decades of the twentieth century, Japan offered the most accessible source for information on educational science. Japanese intellectual models declined in popularity as its military became increasingly aggressive in China. Chinese educators looked to Germany, Britain, France, and other nations. But as more Chinese studied abroad in the United States, they could see the utility of U.S. educational theories, such as John Dewey's, even after widespread disillusionment with the Wilsonian moment after

the Treaty of Versailles. American influences solidified with greater degrees of U.S. funding and support during World War II. These connections formalized in the postwar period, as UNRRA opened doors for transnational experts to teach in China and opportunities for Chinese social workers for advanced study in the United States. Particular sectors of UNRRA actively promoted innovation, experimentation, and indigenization by Chinese professionals and facilitated the circulation of nonwhite transnational experts to usher in an era of global parity.

Child welfare advocates emphasized the professionalization of childcare, informed by modern science and public health. The NCWA supported the state to such a degree that by the end of the war it seemed to have lost much of its religious distinctiveness; thus, as in the United States, when the government established public welfare, it incorporated secularized versions of charity, but often with a remaining residue of Protestant bias.¹⁴ Often relying on Christian organizations with which Americans had historical connections, aid from the United Nations funded scholarships and scholarly exchange programs in the field of child welfare services. The United Nations directly funded a range of child welfare institutions, from preschools for children of working mothers to homes for teenage delinquents but expected all institutions to innovate new approaches for dealing with local problems. The localization of innovation reinforced inequalities in distribution. Already during World War II the Second United Front had disintegrated, and political tensions soon escalated into Civil War. With some notable exceptions, UN funding rarely reached Communist base areas, which contributed to the perception that Americans and Nationalists were deploying relief as a political weapon.

By examining the efforts of the National Child Welfare Association, this study shows that child advocates had outlined vigorous modernizing campaigns that were then implemented during and after World War II. Communists' relationship to those early contributions is complex. As Joseph Levenson argued, from the perspective of cosmopolitan Communists, the Nationalists failed in their attempt to combine universal theories while retaining a place for China's exceptional contributions. In other words, as products of semicolonial education in treaty ports, Nationalists, especially Chinese Christians, allegedly remained alienated coastal elites, unable to extend modernizing reforms to the nation as a whole. Nevertheless, this study shows that by disrupting traditions and establishing institutions, Chinese Christians facilitated the PRC's eventual appropriation of the

contributions of experts in order to direct the ideological socialization of children. Christians began social engineering projects that were later adopted by non-Christians and even Communists.

Especially after the Deng Xiaoping's reforms, scholars in China and elsewhere have taken the opportunity to reassess the innovative contributions of the Nationalist period. In China, this has often meant a re-evaluation of missionary contributions to modernization and Chinese nationalism, and even interest in the biography of Chiang Kai-shek, made newly relevant by the publication of his diaries.¹⁵ This reevaluation has coincided with transnational and global approaches to understanding state development. Instead of defining the state as an ideological entity, scholars now study how government functions.¹⁶ For example, Kate Merkel-Hess finds, in the Mass Education Movement, Nationalist antecedents to Communist mobilization techniques among the rural population.¹⁷ The ROC also experimented with quantitative measurement and census data, as Tong Lam and Thomas Mullaney demonstrate.¹⁸ As a result of these recent historical studies, we may now examine more carefully the complex transitions between regimes. *Raising China's Revolutionaries* shows that ROC child welfare advocates contributed to the long-term integration of child welfare and education in the public arena.

It is a testament to the strength of these initiatives that many of these reforms were adapted by Communists in the wartime period and in the 1950s. Despite the vociferous Communist criticism of the Child Labor Commission in 1925, the PRC during the 1950s would adopt many of its general policies to liberate the female workforce and free factory floors of infants. Cynics may argue that the CCP upon assuming power was merely adopting theories of state modernization. But, echoing earlier critiques of Christian charity, the party rejected larger structures of inequality that had, perhaps, undermined previous philanthropic endeavors; the PRC tried to further remove residual elements of traditional charity in professional welfare for childhood protection in the 1950s. PRC officials thus had a more skeptical approach to philanthropists and civil society than had the ROC, and it placed relatively more emphasis on state institutions. Nevertheless, like Nationalists, Communists continued to support the notion that childcare would facilitate female labor outside of the home and thus become an integral part of economic modernization. Notwithstanding the importance of social welfare in new work units, a subject for future study, preschools and kindergartens inherited important legacies in 1949.

Teachers continued many of the same practices: to break up the day in terms of a regular schedule of activities that included some rest and play time; to draw, from newspapers, materials for curricular development; to stress the importance of science and hygiene, and so forth. However, kindergarten teachers also began to attend political study sessions and to learn from public thought reform.

The campaigns against Dewey and his followers illustrated new ways to approach fundamental assumptions about childhood and society. According to Communist critics at the new journal *People's Education*, child experts had failed to see that biology itself was often a social construct, especially in the applied realm of education. Whereas child experts in the early twentieth century had claimed to follow the biological principles of childhood as the basis for social reform, they had actually—according to critics like Cao Fu—been denying children and teachers the tools for a socialist revolution. In the shift from ethnicity to class as the primary qualification for inclusion in the Chinese polity, re-education campaigns against Chen Heqin also exposed the class-based elitism of the National Child Welfare Association. Championing Booker T. Washington, Chen had admired indigenous administrative control over minority education, but the translation of that model to China placed the majority population in the position of the political “minority.” Echoing New Culture critiques of Confucianism, Communists saw in semicolonial education the suppression of true maturity in Chinese children. Foreshadowing criticisms against psychology as bourgeois in the Cultural Revolution, Chinese Communists further claimed that childhood education, even when grounded on biological needs, had always been constructed.

Although the sources for 1949–1950 depict stark change, in terms of personnel or re-education campaigns, we should keep in mind that this initial push was perhaps limited. As Eddy U demonstrates, many teachers were rehired in the mid-1950s, when the demand for personnel overshadowed the state's focus on politically loyal teachers.¹⁹ This pattern was similar to that of Socialist East Germany. Charles Lansing shows that in the town of Brandenburg, teachers only superficially complied with the Nazification and then Communization of their teachers unions.²⁰ Given the record elsewhere, it is important to acknowledge that Communist transformation probably proceeded much more slowly in rural or remote areas. This is supported by evidence of resistance among rural women to sending their children to preschool.

In contrast, the response of private-kindergarten teachers in Beijing, undoubtedly the seat of power, to comply with Communization was remarkable. Some private-kindergarten teachers implemented the PRC's new political directives in their classrooms in ways that administrators did not anticipate. As archival materials demonstrate, these teachers allowed children to criticize one another in discussion sessions that mirrored their own criticism sessions, in terms of the idea of collective criticism and the purpose of behavioral reform and individual enlightenment. They also allowed children the space to voice political messages, revise those slogans by committee, and incorporate them into the science curriculum. By projecting these roles onto children, teachers somewhat delegated their own responsibilities to inform the political consciousness of their students. In this way, they ignored a key injunction, espoused in *People's Education*: that teachers aggressively direct children's political growth. Thus they projected their students as the vanguard of the revolution, which became a reality in the Cultural Revolution.

These are the classrooms that welcomed the first cohorts of children after 1949, including those born under the new regime. As adults, some members of this cohort have shared with me their memories of kindergarten as a period relatively free from political overtones and the potential consequences of friendships among classmates. Certainly, they would later encounter a much more heavily politicized environment in the Cultural Revolution. Sent-down youth returned to the cities, especially after the reintroduction of the college entrance examination in 1977. Among those who had delayed marriage and childbirth as a strategy to return to the cities, many educated youths began their careers and family lives as China opened up to the West under Deng Xiaoping's reforms in the 1980s. *Raising China's Revolutionaries* provides a prehistory of this exceptional generation, who later evolved from Red Guards to entrepreneurs and college professors.

Cold War history seems somewhat arcane today, as many young people in China prioritize materialistic gain over political ideology, but that very focus on acquiring wealth recalls the economic modernization of the Nanjing decade. To what degree does economic modernization, then or now, require "Americanization"? Conversely, what are the economic requirements for a "sentimental" family life? If it is impossible to lead the "good life" in the midst of social injustice, do personal wealth and individual philanthropy uplift the community, or does traditional charity impose elite

standards and entrap the poor—not only as Chinese Communists claimed but also as some Western liberals now argue? Modern childhood, defined as a form of economic dependency, exposes issues of class and trends in consumerism more than perhaps any other arena. The enjoyment of a “happy childhood,” in the midst of postwar deprivation, could appear callous. Instead of creating cross-class solidarity, as Kong Xiangxi had projected, modern childhood seemed to liken elite children around the world. Reformers endeavored to create specifically “Chinese” toys and folk tales but often relied on an aesthetic that revealed their inspiration from the West. In the 1950s artists and photographers also sought to create a new aesthetic of robust Chinese childhood, but these, too, have a feel of Soviet socialist realism. As anthropologists of China note, corporations like McDonald’s and Disney have thrived in postreform China by catering to children.²¹ Today commercials regarding President Xi Jinping’s “Chinese dream” juxtapose the consumerism of wealthy, urban children with the suffering of poor, rural children in a call for national unity and charity that harkens back to the National Child Welfare Association.

Nothing did more to achieve the NCWA’s goal of “elevating the status of the child in Chinese society” than family planning policies, labeled in English as the “one-child policy,” of 1978–2015. Western scholars note that the one-child policy allowed the Chinese state an unprecedented degree of control into the private lives of individual citizens and further fragmented the traditional Chinese “large” family with its extended branches. However, this state intervention was preceded by the critiques of the large family issued by reformers across the political spectrum in the Nationalist period. The ROC had envisioned social workers, or entities like the NCWA, supporting and correcting family abuses, including those that might arise in the modern, bourgeois Chinese family. The PRC built on some of those institutions, such as preschools and kindergartens, for a different family and state-society ideal.²² While exacerbating problems of infanticide and child abandonment, the one-child policy elevated the status of the lone child to a “little emperor” within the Chinese household.²³ Especially in the 1980s, as some educated youth were still returning from the countryside, many urban Chinese couples often found themselves in long-distance marriages, with the need to place their child in overnight schools. Chinese children faced a great deal of academic pressure, continuing truly long-term trends from the imperial era (which some ROC kindergarten teachers had sought to interrupt). Perhaps to compensate for

heavy academic demands (and, sometimes, parental absence due to work), parents today often indulge children with the toys and trappings of a “happy childhood.”

Given the paucity of child experts in the People’s Republic after the anti-Dewey campaigns, many parents again turned to the expertise of the Nationalist era, particularly Tao Xingzhi and Chen Heqin. In 1980, with the implementation of the one-child policy, Chen found himself rehabilitated. He was invited to reapply to the Chinese Communist Party, and this time his application was accepted. Chen died a party member, and his seven children set to work on publishing his opus and organizing academic societies to promote his work. East China Normal University republished his *Home Education* six times within two years, and it now joins shelves of books from contemporary writers about rearing only children for academic achievement. The reemergence of Chen’s work demonstrates his contributions and, in fact, his success as an actor across two shifts of his career—both his appropriation of racial categories for scientific analysis and for popular consumption in the Nationalist era and his later embrace of education for service to Chinese socialism.

The revival of interest in Chen Heqin reveals larger eugenic and aspirational trends as a result of the shift in emphasis, due to ramifications of the one-child policy, from quantity of children to quality of children. According to Susan Greenhalgh, in the desire for “quality offspring,” parents accept the authority of child experts as well as the technocratic state. Child-centered toys and products, she notes, aim to construct “world-quality children.”²⁴ “Quality” refers to both “elite consciousness/aspirations” and character formation amid a perceived “moral crisis” in China today. Anthropologist Jing Xu shows that parents of preschool children emphasize morality over academics, while also worrying that virtue is no longer rewarded in the post-socialist marketplace. Given the tendency of parents to spoil their child, preschool is increasingly seen as the first and most important place to cultivate the socialist-style “group consciousness” and morality that so pervaded the ethos of schools during and after the war.²⁵ The dual meaning of “quality” harkens to the intertwined democratic and social Darwinian influences of Chen and others in the National Child Welfare Association; the quandary of reconciling utilitarian science with sentimental values is perhaps its most enduring legacy today.

Even after the relaxation and removal of the one child policy in 2015, the birth rate remains low, as the opportunity costs of bearing “economically

priceless” children soar. With the disintegration of work-unit social welfare, decentralization (coupled with the diffusion of state services) means, for example, that access to early childhood education is more geographically concentrated; demand has increased as supply has decreased.²⁶ Such measures contribute to inequality while also circulating neoliberal discourse about the need for “quality” citizens. Amid these pressures, Chinese recognize that economic liberalism comes at a profound social cost, as is made poignant by stories of poor children, left behind in the countryside, saving up their pennies to call their parents who are working as migrant laborers in the city. Nevertheless, as Greenhalgh notes, this larger rhetorical framework openly condemns the “backwardness” of a major segment of the Chinese population, often as defined by their physical bearing and mental capacity;²⁷ it was precisely this tacit nonpatriotism, embedded in his instruction for modern childrearing and even his promotion of charity for poor children, to which Chen eventually confessed and was criticized.

In some ways, the CCP seems to be returning to ethnocentric valuation of Chinese modernity from the 1920s and 1930s. Among many others, President Xi Jinping champions China’s Confucian cultural heritage and has even welcomed programs for kindergarten and elementary school children to memorize the Classics. These policies often reify Chinese traditions for the sake of inculcating nationalism. President Xi is also interested in reawakening a native ethic to combat the prevalence of corruption. His “Chinese dream” conjoins individual social mobility with national economic modernization in ways somewhat reminiscent of Chen’s failed adaptation of the “American dream.” China welcomes a bourgeois, sentimental image of childhood, even in the corporate packaging of a consumer youth culture with global reach. However, the utilitarian subservience of this ideal of childhood to the relentless pursuit of academic achievement and upward mobility reveals that questions of ideological drive behind its sentimental appeal still remain pertinent. Chineseness—especially “little” Chineseness—remains a contested site for the introduction of new forms of modernity and plans for economic progress.

Character List (as identified in text)

- Agricultural Extension Commission, Zhongyang nongye tuidong weiyuanhui 中央農業推動委員會
- American Bureau for Medical Aid to China, Meiguo yiyao zhu Hua hui 美國醫藥助華會
- Ban Chiao Rural Welfare Center, Banqiao fuli shiyanqu 板橋福利試驗區
baomu 保母 (nanny) vs. *baoyuyuan* 保育員 (childcare staff) vs. *laoma* 老媽 (mother's helper)
- bentuhua* 本土化 (indigenization)
- Bethune Memorial International Peace Hospital, Baiqiu'en guoji heping yiyuan 白求恩國際和平醫院
- Border Region Bank Preschool, Bianqu yinhang tuoersuo 邊區銀行托兒所
- Border Region First Children's Orphanage, Shanganning bianqu diyi baoyuyuan 陝甘寧邊區第一保育院
- Bureau of Childhood Education, Youjiaoke 幼教科
- Cai Yuanpei 蔡元培 (1868–1940)
- Cao Fu 曹浮 (1911–1968)
- Chen Duxiu 陳獨秀 (1879–1942)
- Chen Gongbo 陳公博 (1892–1946)
- Chen Heqin 陳鶴琴 (1892–1982)
- Chen Tiesheng 陳鐵生
- Cheng Wanzhen 程婉珍

Child Hygiene Area, Shanghai ertong weishengchu 上海兒童衛生處, also called Yangtsepoo Child Hygiene Area

China Child Welfare, Inc., Zhonghua ciyou Mei xiehui 中華慈幼美協會

Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, First Session 首屆政治協商會議

Chou Zigang, Chow Ze-kang 丑子岡 (ca. 1905–1963)

City Bank of New York (now Citibank), Huaqi yinhang 花旗銀行

Civilian Department (Yan'an), Minzhengting zhangli shiwu 民政廳掌理事務

Chinese Liberated Areas Relief Administration (CLARA), Zhongguo jie-fangqu jiuji lianhehui 中國解放區救濟聯合會

Chinese National Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (CNRRA), Zhongguo shanhou jiuji zongshu 中國善後救濟總署

Chu, Nora Tse Hsiung, Niu Xiong Zhi 牛熊芷

Dai Baitao 戴白韜 (1907–1981)

Dai Jitao 戴季陶 (1891–1949)

dawo 大我 (larger self) vs. *wuwu* 無我 (selfless) vs. *xiaowo* 小我 (little ego); *yinming* 隱名 (personal name)

Ding Shujing, Ting Shu-ching 丁淑靜 (1890–1936)

Dong Biwu, Tung Pi-wu 董必武 (1886–1975)

Dong Chuncai 董純才 (1905–1990)

Dougherty, Peggy, translated as Tao Aide 陶蕾德

Du Yuesheng 杜月笙 (1885–1951)

Edwards, Dwight (1905–1982), translated as Ai Defu 艾德敷

Early Childhood Normal School (Shanghai), Youzhi shifan xuexiao 幼稚師範學校

ertong baojianban 兒童保健班 (child health classes)

Feng Zikai 豐子愷 (1895–1975)

taijiao 胎教 (fetal education)

Friends' Receiving Home for Children, Shanghai Gongyihui huaiyouyuan 上海公誼會懷幼院

Gao Gang 高崗 (1905–1954)

Geleshan (Koloshan) Children's Home (Chongqing), Geleshan baoyuyuan 歌樂山保育院

guizuhua 貴族化 (gentrification)

Ginling College Welfare (experimental) Center, Jinling nüzi wenlixueyuan ertong fuli shiyansuo 金陵女子文理學院兒童福利實驗所

Gong Qichang 龔啓昌 (1905–1989)

Gu Yunyu 谷韞玉, also known as Yun Yu Ku
Guan Ruiwu, Kwan Jui-Wu 關瑞梧 (1907–1986)
gudao 孤島 (lone island)
Guizhou Work Society, Guizhou gongweihui 貴州工委會
Guo Bingwen, Kuo Ping-Wen 郭秉文 (1880–1969)
Hu Shi 胡適 (1891–1962)
Hu Yaobang 胡耀邦 (1915–1989)
Hu Yigu 胡詒穀 (b. 1876), also known as I-ku Hu, W. Y. Hu, and Wenfu
Yiko Hu
Huang Cuifeng, Huang Tsuifeng 黃翠峰
Huang, Garfield, Huang Jiahui 黃嘉惠
Huaren jiaoyu 華人教育 (Chinese education in the International
Settlement)
Huo yiaoyu 活教育 (Living Education)
Jiang Kanghu 江亢虎 (1883–1954)
Jiang Tingfu, Tsiang Ting-fu 蔣廷黻 (1895–1965)
jiantao 檢討 (self-examination) vs. *ziwo piping* 自我批評 (self-criticism) vs.
tanbai 談白 (confession)
Jiujiang (“Kiu Kiang”) Catholic Hospital, probably St. Vincent’s Hospital,
Weizengjue yiyuan 味增爵醫院, located in Jiujiang, Jiangxi
Kang Keqing 康克清 (1911–1992)
Kang Youwei 康有為 (1858–1927)
kexuehua 科學化 (scientization)
Kong Xiangxi 孔祥熙 (1880–1967), also known as H. H. Kung
Kuo, Lucy, referred to as Mrs. Guo Bingwen 郭秉文夫人
Lamb, Jefferson Duon-Hoy, Lin Donghai 林東海 (b. 1895)
Lew, Timothy, Liu Tingfang 劉廷芳 (1891–1947)
Li Dequan 李德全 (1896–1972)
Li Ting’an 李廷安 (1899–1948)
Li Yinglin 李應林, Lee Ying Lam (1892–1954)
Lin Biao 林彪 (1907–1971)
Lin Boqu 林伯渠 (1886–1906)
Lin Kanghou 林康候, Ling Kong Hou (1876–1949)
Lingnan University, Liangnan daxue 嶺南大學
Liu Bocheng 劉伯承 (1892–1986)
Longhua Orphanage, Longhua gu’eryuan 龍華孤兒院, also known as
Shanghai Industrial Orphanage
Los Angeles Preschool, Luoshanji tuo’ersuo 洛杉磯托兒所

Lu Guangmian 盧廣綿, also known as K. M. Lu
 Lu Xun 魯迅 (1881–1936)
maiban jieji 買辦階級 (comprador class)
maobing 毛病 (“sickness”; problem)
Meiguomeng 美國夢 (American dream) vs. *meimeng* 美夢 (beautiful dream)
 mothers’ discussion groups, *muqin zuotanhui* 母親座談會
 Municipal Board of Education, Wenjiaoju 文教局
 Nanjing Child Welfare Center, Nanjing ciyou shiyanqu 南京慈幼實驗區
 Nanjing Drum Tower Kindergarten, Nanjing gulou youzhiyuan 南京鼓樓
 幼稚園
 Nanjing Professional Women’s Day Nursery, Soudu zhiye funü rijian tuo-
 ersuo 首都職業婦女日間托兒所
 National Association for Refugee Children, Zhanshi ertong baoyuhui 戰
 時兒童保育會, also translated as Wartime Association for Child Welfare
 National Child Welfare Association, Zhonghua Ciyouxiehui 中華慈幼協會
 Nie Rongzhen, Nieh Yunchen 聶榮臻 (1899–1992)
 Niu Huisheng 牛惠生 (1892–1937), also known as David New
nuhua jiaoyu 奴化教育 (“slave” education)
 Pan Guangdan 潘光旦 (1899–1967)
 Pan Kaipei 潘開沛 (1919–2003)
 Peng Zhen 彭真 (1902–1997)
pi’anni’er 匹安尼爾 vs. *xianfeng* 先鋒 (as translations for “young pioneers”)
pipinghui 批評會 (criticism sessions) vs. *douzhenhui* 鬥爭會 (struggle sessions)
 vs. *taolunhui* 討論會 (discussion meetings)
 Qingsheng Elementary School, Qingsheng xiaoxue 慶聲小學
 Refugee Babies Home, Shanghai zhanqu ying’er shourongsuo 上海戰區嬰
 兒收容所
 Refugee Children’s Home, Shanghai zhanqu ertong shourongsuo 上海戰
 區兒童收容所
 Ren Tze Orphanage, Rencitang 仁慈堂
 School for the Blind, Mang tong xuexiao 盲童學校
 Shan Dexin 單德馨 (1893–1980), also known as Tak-Hing Sin
 Shanghai Child Hygiene Area, Shanghai ertong weishengchu 上海兒童衛
 生處
 Shanghai Children’s Bureau (“Child Happiness/Welfare Committee”),
 Shanghai ertong xingfu weiyuanhui 上海兒童幸福委員會
 Shanghai Industrial Preschool, Shanghai gongchang tuersuo 上海工廠
 托兒所

Shanghai Orphanage, Shanghai gu'eryuan 上海孤兒院
Shanghai Refugee Children's Nutritional Aid Committee, Shanghai nan-
min ertong yingyang weiyuanhui 上海難民兒童營養委員會
She, Louise, Yu Louyi 余露漪
Shen Yuanhui 沈元暉
sishu 私塾 (traditional private schools)
sixiang gaizao 思想改造 (thought reform)
sixiang zhang'ai 思想障礙 (ideological obstacles)
Social Relief Act of 1943, Shehui jiujiifa 社會救濟法
Song Ailing 宋靄齡 (1888–1973), also known as Madame Kong 孔夫人
Song Meiling 宋美齡 (1898–2003), also known as Madame Chiang 蔣夫人
Song Qingling 宋慶齡 (1893–1981), also known as Madame Sun 孫夫人
Song Ziwen 宋子文 (1894–1971) also known as T. V. Song
State Council (PRC), Guowuyuan 國務院
Sun Ke 孫科 (1891–1973), also known as Sun Fo
Sun Yat-sen (1866–1925), also known as Sun Zhongshan 孫中山
Sweeney, Mary (1879–1968), translated as Xue Ni 薛尼
Sze, Alfred Sao-ke, Shi Zhaoji 施肇基 (1877–1957)
Tao Xingzhi 陶行知 (1891–1946)
Tchou, Moutchen Thomas, Zhu Maocheng 朱懋澄 (1895–1965)
teshu ertong 特殊兒童 (special children) vs. *wenti ertong* 問題兒童 (problem
children) vs. *hen shou jilü de haizi* 很守紀律的孩子 (regulation-abiding
children)
Tian Guiluan 田貴鑾 (1882–1977), also known as Mrs. Way-Sung New
tianzhen 天真 (innocent, naïve) vs. *wugu* 無辜 (innocent, blameless)
Tsu, Caroline, Xu Lingyu 許靈毓 (1897–1970), also known as Caroline Huie
Zhu
Tu Zhemei 屠哲梅
Wang Jingwei 汪精衛 (1883–1944)
Wang Yiting 王一亭 (1867–1938)
Wang Youping 王茜平
wanneng 萬能 (multifunctionality)
Western Hills Orphanage, *Xiangshan Ciyoyuan* 香山慈幼院
women's friendship societies, *funü lianyishe* 婦女聯誼社
Wong, Amos, Wang Yihui 王逸惠 (b. 1899)
Worker's Preschool (Shanghai), *Zhigong tuersuo* 職工托兒所
Wu, Andrew, Wu Weide 吳維德
Wu Tiecheng 吳鐵城 (1888–1952)

Wu Zhuzhe 吳朱哲 (1897–1949)
xiao (de) chengren 小(的)成人 (miniature adults)
xingfu 幸福 (happiness, well-being, welfare)
Xiong Mao Yanwen 熊毛彥文 (1898–1999)
Xiong Xiling, Hsiung Hsi-ling 熊希齡 (1870–1937)
Yan Xiu 嚴修 (1860–1929)
Yang, Marion, Yang Chongrui 楊崇瑞 (1891–1983)
yanghang xiaogui 洋行小鬼 (Westernized little devils)
yi ertong wei bentu 以兒童為本體 (childhood-in-itself)
yitai xi 一台戲 (a farce)
youchiyuan 幼稚園 vs. *youeryuan* 幼兒園 (as translations for kindergarten)
Yu Zhijie 余之介 (1907–1980)
Yuan Shikai 袁世凱 (1859–1916)
Yuhua (裕華) Silk Factory
Zeng Zhaolun 曾昭掄 (1899–1967)
Zhang Chichang 張熾昌 (1928–2014)
Zhang Lingguang 張凌光 (1904–1974)
Zhang Shunan, Chang Shounan 張淑南
Zhang Xuemen 張雪門 (1891–1973)
Zhang Zhidong 張之洞 (1837–1909)
Zhang Zonglin 張宗麟 (1899–1978)
Zheng Zhaolun, Tseng Chao-lun 曾昭掄 (1899–1967)
zhiyehua 職業化 (professionalization)
Zhou Enlai 周恩來 (1898–1976)
Zhou Guizhi 周桂枝
Zhou Zuoren 周作人 (1885–1967)
Zhu De 朱德 (1886–1976)
Zhu Jingnong, Chu Ching-nung 朱經農 (1886–1951), also known as King
Chu
Zhu Zhanggeng, Chu Chang-Kan 朱章廣 (1900–1978)
Zhu Ziqing 朱自清 (1898–1948)
zongjiao secai 宗教色彩 (color of religion)
zunlao ciyou 尊老慈幼 (phrase “respecting the elderly, cherishing the
young”)

Notes

Preface

1. See Ruth Gamberg, *Red and Expert: Education in the People's Republic of China* (New York: Schocken Books, 1977); "1973 Delegation to China on Child Development and Education," Eleanor Maccoby Collection, Box 1, Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University; and William Kessen, ed., *Childhood in China* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975), 216–17.
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Conclusion

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Abbreviations Used in Citations

Archival Sources

AH	Academia Historica, <i>Guoshiguan</i> 國史館
BG	Bettis A. Garside Collection, Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University
BMA	Beijing Municipal Archives, <i>Beijing shi dang'anguan</i> 北京市檔案館
GMDR	Zhongguo Guomindang Records, New Life Movement Files, Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University
DNR	David Nelson Rowe Collection, Box 65, Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University
HHK	HH Kong Collection, Box 1, Folder 13 (microfilm reel 2), Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University
JFR	J. Franklin Ray, Jr., Collection, Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University
SHAC	Second Historical Archives of China, <i>Zhongguo di'er lishi dang'anguan</i> 中國第二歷史檔案館
SMA	Shanghai Municipal Archives, <i>Shanghai shi dang'anguan</i> 上海市檔案館
UBCHEA	United Board for Christian Higher Education, Yale University Divinity School
UCRNYPL	United China Relief records, New York Public Library

- UNRRA United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration Collection, Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University
- UNRRACO UNRRA China Office Collection, Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University

Edited Compilations

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Periodicals

- AB *ABMAC (American Bureau of Medical Aid to China) Bulletin*, New York
- CP *China Press*, Shanghai
- CQ *Children's Quarterly: Echoes from the Light and the Life*, Boston
- CR *Chinese Recorder*, Shanghai
- CW *China Weekly Review*, Shanghai
- CY *Ciyu yuekan* 慈幼月刊, Shanghai
- DZ *Dongfang zazhi* 東方雜誌 [Eastern Miscellany], Shanghai
- EF *Ertong fuli tongxun* 兒童福利通訊 [China Child Welfare News]
- EJ *Ertong jiaoyu* 兒童教育, Shanghai, Nanjing
- ES *Ertong yu shehui* 兒童與社會, Shanghai
- FX *Funü xinyun* 婦女新運, Chongqing
- FY *Funü yuebao* 婦女月報, Shanghai
- GL *Guoji laogong xiaoxi* 國際勞工消息 [International Labor Information], Shanghai
- JS *Jiaoyu shijie* 教育世界, Shanghai
- JSY *Jiaoshi zhi you* 教師之友 [The Friend of Teachers], Shanghai
- JY *Jiaoxue yanjiu* 教學研究, Harbin
- JZ *Jiaoyu zazhi* 教育雜誌
- ND *North-China Daily News*, Shanghai
- NG *Neizheng gongbao* 內政公報, Nanjing, Chongqing, Baxian
- NH *North China Herald*, Shanghai
- NM *North China Mission Quarterly Paper*, Yantai, Tianjin, Beijing, Pingyin
- NQ *Nü qingnian* 女青年 [The Green Year], Shanghai
- NUCR *News of the United China Relief*

NYT	<i>New York Times</i>
NZ	<i>Nanjing zhongyang ribao zhoukan</i> 南京中央日報周刊, Nanjing
PNC	<i>Beijing nūzi gaoshi youzhi jiaoyu de yanjiu</i> 北京女高師幼稚教育的研究 [Peking Normal College for Women Child Study Journal], Beijing
RJ	<i>Renmin jiaoyu</i> 人民教育, Beijing
RM	<i>Renmin ribao</i> 人民日報, Beijing
SB	<i>Shen bao</i> 申報, Shanghai
SE	<i>Shanghai Evening Post and Mercury</i> , New York
SF	<i>Shanghai funü</i> 上海婦女, Shanghai
TT	<i>Tuanmei tongxun</i> 團內通訊, Beijing
XE	<i>Xin ertong</i> 新兒童, Tianjin
XEJ	<i>Xin ertong jiaoyu</i> 新兒童教育, Shanghai
XF	<i>Xiandai fumu</i> 現代父母, Shanghai
XFN	<i>Xin funü</i> 新婦女, Nanjing
XG	<i>Xin guancha</i> 新觀察, Beijing
XH	<i>Xin guomin huabao</i> 新國民畫報, Nanjing
XH	<i>Xing Hua</i> 興華 [The Christian Advocate], Shanghai
XJ	<i>Xin jiaoyu</i> 新教育, Shanghai
XJP	<i>Xin jiaoyu pinglun</i> 新教育評論, Beijing
XJS	<i>Xin jiaoshi</i> 新教師, Henan
XQ	<i>Xin qingnian</i> 新青年, Shanghai
YJ	<i>Youzhi jiaoyu</i> 幼稚教育, Nanjing
YP	<i>Yiyao pinglun</i> 醫藥評論 [Periodicus Medico-Pharmaceuticus], Shanghai
ZF	<i>Zhiye funü</i> 職業婦女, Chongqing
ZG	<i>Zhonghua guizhu</i> 中華歸主, Shanghai
ZJ	<i>Zhonghua jiaohui gongbao</i> 中華教會公報, Shanghai
ZQC	<i>Zhongguo qingnian</i> 中國青年, Chongqing, Nanjing
ZQS	<i>Zhongguo qingnian</i> 中國青年, Shanghai
ZS	<i>Zhonghua shiyejie</i> 中華事業界, Shanghai

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