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Printing Technology and the Transfer of Knowledge

The Cultural Nexus of Power in Early 20noneth-century East Asia

Tze-ki Hon*

In *Imagined Communities*, Benedict Anderson argues that print capitalism was a driving force of modern nationalism. 'Nothing perhaps more precipitated this search [for national identity],' Anderson writes, 'than print capitalism, which made it possible for rapidly-growing numbers of people to think about themselves, and to relate themselves to others, in profoundly new ways.'[1] The heart of Anderson's argument is that print capitalism—the mass production of texts by mechanised printing to satisfy an expanding reader market—provided a cultural and intellectual linkage among people who previously had no way of communicating with one another. For Anderson, the mass circulation of texts (such as newspapers, novels, journals, and magazines) gave rise to a collective identity among people who used the same language, shared the same culture, and lived in the same land. This sense of sameness—partly real and partly constructed—promoted a 'homogeneous, empty time' that transcended different local times of the readers. Regulated by calendar, clock and rituals, this transposition of time brought Europe into 'the age of nationalism.'[2]

Thoughtful and elegant notwithstanding, Anderson's argument overly emphasises the power of technology as the vehicle of social and cultural changes. It sees the advancement of printing technology as the sole engine of historical progress. When being applied to East Asia, Anderson's argument is even less convincing. First, as a foreign import, East Asian print capitalism was not simply a technological advancement as it had been in Europe; rather, it was a result of negotiation between foreign technology and local print cultures. This dialogue between the foreign and the local was particularly clear in China, which had developed sophisticated printing technology centuries ago and had had a long history of print culture serving the civil service examinations. In *Gutenberg in Shanghai*, for instance, Christopher Reed highlights the creative negotiation between 'print culture' and 'print market' of China's imperial period and 'print capitalism' of her modern era. According to Reed, the Chinese adopted the Western mechanised printing technology not only because it was a faster and more efficient means of reproducing texts, but also because the rapid expansion of the reader market made the cost of importing a foreign technology affordable.[3]

* Ph.D. in History from University of Chicago, he is Professor of History at the State University of New York at Geneseo. He is the author of *The Yijing and Chinese Politics: Classical Commentary and Literati Activism in the Northern Song Period, 960-1127* (State University of New York Press, 2005) and *Revolution as Restoration: Guocui xuebao and the Chinese Nationalist Modernity* (Brill, 2013). He has edited two collections of essays, *The Politics of Historical Production in Late Qing and Republican China* (Leiden: Brill, 2007) and *Beyond the May Fourth Paradigm: In Search of Chinese Modernity* (Lexington Books, 2008).

Doutorado em História pela Universidade de Chicago, é Professor de História na Universidade do Estado de Nova Iorque em Geneseo. É autor de The Yijing and Chinese Politics: Classical Commentary and Literati Activism in the Northern Song Period, 960-1127 *(State University of New York Press, 2005) e de* Revolution as Restoration: Guocui xuebao and the Chinese Nationalist Modernity *(Brill, 2013). Co-editou duas séries de ensaios:* The Politics of Historical Production in Late Qing and Republican China *(Brill, 2007) e* Beyond the May Fourth Paradigm: In Search of Chinese Modernity *(Lexington Books, 2008)*

A 1914 advertisement of the Commercial Press announcing the publication of a series of secondary school textbooks for the new Republic of China.

Another problem of Anderson's argument is that being a foreign import, print capitalism in East Asia was mediated through the cultural networks in the region. It was not a direct transferring of technology from Europe (the centre) to East Asia (the periphery), but a circuitous, multifarious 'travel' among European and East Asian cities.[4] This 'travel'—involving a fluid dialogue between what was global and what was local—was particularly apparent during what Douglas Reynolds calls 'the golden decade' (1898-1912) of Sino-Japanese relations. The period was 'golden' not only because it was in sharp contrast to what happened later when the two countries went to war in the 1930s and 1940s. More importantly, it was 'golden' because China and Japan were closely tied in a network of cultural and technology sharing to build an 'East Asian modernity.' Underlying this cultural and technological network was the belief that East Asia (encompassing China, Japan, and Korea) was a region with a unique culture that could achieve modernity equal to, and yet different from, Europe and America.[5] A major characteristic of this network was that it attempted to mimic the Western model on the one hand, and to assert the Asian uniqueness on the other.

What Reed and Reynolds have shown is that print capitalism in East Asia was more than a technological advancement—i.e., the replacement of an old technology by a new technology, or the displacement of the traditional and family-based production by modern, industrial, and machine-based production. Instead, East Asian print capitalism was facilitated by a creative mixing of foreign and local cultures, and was disseminated through a regional web of knowledge circulation. More significantly, East Asian print capitalism was tied to (and in some cases, a result of) the expansion of the reader market where the demands for printed texts increased by leaps and bounds due to social and political changes.

To elucidate the complexity of technology transfer in early 20th-century East Asia, this essay focuses on two Chinese presses in Shanghai: The Press for the Association for the Preservation of National Learning (*Guoxue baocunhui yinshua suo* 国粹保存 会 1905-1911) and the Commercial Press (*Shangwu yinshuguan* 商务印书馆 1897-present). In the early 20th century, the former made profits by reprinting ancient books and artworks, and the latter became the largest textbook publisher in the country. In both

cases, the Western mechanised printing technology allowed the publishers to produce large numbers of books, journals, and texts at a lightning speed. Together, they demonstrate the broad range of audience that the modern Chinese presses served as the Chinese society became more fluid and diverse at the end of the imperial period. Above all, they show the importance of the East Asian web of knowledge circulation when both presses relied on Japanese technology to improve the quality of reproducing texts.

TIME GAP IN TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER

Until the late 19th century, printing in China was done mainly by making impressions on papers from wood blocks. Known as xylography, the method of wood-block printing satisfied the need for printing thousands of Chinese characters at a low cost. Requiring no fixed cost of building and maintaining heavy machines, wood-block printers were able to print as many copies as they liked after they carved a wood block. In addition, they could bring along the carved blocks when they travelled from city to city to look for employers.[6] Thus, the economy and flexibility of wood-block printing created a decentralised printing industry that suited the loose structure of the Chinese imperial system that was based on lineages, clans, and villages. More significantly, the low cost and the low technique of wood-block printing helped to make printing more a job of untrained labourers than that of skilled workers in Europe.[7]

While wood-block printing was the preferred method of printing in late imperial China, other printing technologies (including semi-mechanised printing based on movable-type fonts) were available in China for a long time. Yet, despite the availability of other printing technologies, the Chinese publishers still preferred to use wood-block printing because of its low cost and flexibility. Even after the Western mechanised printing technology was introduced into China by the missionaries in the early 19th century, it took a long time for the new printing technology to spread. Thus, in China, the availability of a new mechanised technology did not automatically lead to a revolution in printing. Rather, it was after a bigger demand for printed materials had been developed, a more efficient (albeit, more costly) printing technology was adopted.[8] This time gap in technology transfer was also expressed

in spatial terms. The Western technology first took foothold in foreign concessions on China's coast, and then it spread from the coast to the hinterland as the reader market expanded inland.[9]

The time gap in China between the availability of Western mechanised printing technology and its widespread use was partly due to how the technology was transferred. When the missionaries first introduced Western mechanised printing into China, they used it to print the Bible and other religious texts. Limited to the evangelical purposes, the mechanised printing technology was practiced mainly in missionary presses, such as the London Missionary Society Press. Although some 'foreign experts' (such as John Fryer, Alexander Wylie and Young J. Allen) also helped to introduce the mechanised printing technology when they worked in the translation bureaus of the Qing government, their main work was confined to translating texts rather than printing texts. It was when the Chinese workers in missionary presses opened their own printing shops in coastal cities in the late 19th century, that the mechanised printing technology began to spread. And when there were clear market demands for efficient and high-quality printing, particularly after the founding of the national school system in 1905, Chinese businessmen began to invest heavily in upgrading printing technology. Some of them bought defunct missionary presses; some formed partnerships with Japanese publishers to gain access to advanced printing technologies.

MECHANISED PRINTING AND THE NEW EDUCATED ELITE

A prime example of this circuitous adoption of Western printing technology was the Press for the Association for the Preservation of National Learning. The press was located on the Fourth Avenue (*simalu*) in the Anglo-American Concession in Shanghai. By the end of the 19th century, Shanghai had become the hub of domestic and foreign trade. It was the terminus of the trade and transport along the Yangzi River as well as the centre of international commerce and communication between China and the world. Despite perpetual conflicts among residents of different races, the foreign concessions in Shanghai provided a lively environment where advanced foreign technology was introduced, corporate finance was

readily available, and skilled workers were abundant.[10] With these advantages, Shanghai quickly became the capital of the burgeoning Chinese print capitalism. By Xiong Yuezhi's 熊月之 counting, there were 514 newspapers published in Shanghai from 1850 to 1911, almost one-third of the total number of newspapers published in the entire country.[11] Among the newspapers published in Shanghai was the foreign-owned *Wanguo gongbao* 万国公报 (Globe Magazine) which enjoyed, at its height in 1898, a circulation of 38,400 copies.[12]

In the early 20th century, the Fourth Avenue in Shanghai was known to the locals as the 'culture street' (*wenhua jie* 文化街) because of hundreds of retailer outlets, trade associations, stationers, calligraphers, painters, printing presses, and shops selling traditional 'four treasures' of scholars (brushes, ink, inkstones, and paper). Due to its location, the Press for the Association for the Preservation of National Essence was a hub for writers, artists, calligraphers, painters, and printing press owners. It was part of the public realm of professionals that was developing in various Chinese urban cities.[13]

Formed by workers previously working in missionary presses, the press provided the main source of income to the Association for the Preservation of National Learning. The list of publications of the press was long. It included the *Guocui xuebao* 国粹 学报 (Journal of National Essence), the *Shenzhou guoguang ji* 神州国光集 (Cathay Art Book), the *Guocui congshu* 国粹丛书 (Collected Works of National Essence), the *Fengyu lou congshu* 风雨楼丛书 (Collected Works of the Pavilion of Wind and Rain), and history and geography textbooks. From 1905 to 1911, the press had published altogether fifteen volumes of the *Shenzhou guoguang ji*, hundreds of titles of reprinted writings, and several sets of textbooks for seven provinces.

As the list of publications shows, some publications of the press were clearly for profit. For example, the *Shenzhou guoguang ji* and the *Guocui congshu* were aimed at wealthy and cultured customers who could afford to pay the high prices for refined and exotic works.[14] This was particularly true of the *Shenzhou guoguang ji*, which contained photo-reproductions of large-size art works printed with the most advanced collotype printing technology imported from Japan. In a 1909 advertisement in

the *Guocui xuebao*, it was stated that, printed with the new collotype technology from Japan, the photo-reproduction in the *Shenzhou guoguang ji* was so 'close to real' (*bizhen* 逼真) that those who brought it would feel like they possessed the original art work.[15] Partly selling commercial products and partly preserving ancient art work, the *Shenzhou guoguang ji* catered to genteel customers who wanted to own a piece of art. As for the *Fengyu lou congshu*, it contained reprints of major literary and historical writings of authors from the 11th to the 19th centuries. Most of the reprints were rare editions, banned books, or newly discovered manuscripts, intended to satisfy the bibliophilic interest of the genteel class.

But, as the list of publications also shows, not all of the publications of the press were for profit. From 1905 to 1907, the press published textbooks for seven provinces, including subjects like history, geography, literature, ethics, and classical studies.[16] Considering the fact that there were only eighteen administrative provinces in Qing China, the press published textbooks practically covering more than one-third of the country. More importantly, the press published textbooks immediately after the Manchu government issued the plan for building a national school system in 1904. Despite its anti-Manchu standpoint, the press showed strong support of the late Qing educational reform, viewing it as part of building a modern Chinese nation. And for a short while, the press was a major player in the textbook market, competing with the Commercial Press in supplying textbooks to the new school system.

The crown jewel of the press was the publication of the *Guocui xuebao*. In six years, from 1905 to 1911, the press used the mechanised printing technology to print hundreds of copies of the journal monthly. Combining classical scholarship with art connoisseurship, the *Guocui xuebao* stood out with its high quality of printing and its clear reproduction of art works and artefacts. More importantly, the journal was founded to win the support of the young literati who were disillusioned by the abolition of the civil service examinations in 1905. For more than a millennium, the civil service examinations bestowed power to successful candidates to rule the country, and established a body of knowledge and a cluster of texts to define the membership of the learned community. Because of the central role that the

civil service examinations had played in defining the membership and self-identity of the educated elite, the abolition of the examinations in 1905 triggered a profound soul-searching among the educated elite. For those who had passed the examinations, they needed to find ways to keep their elite status in the new political and social environment. For those who were yet to pass the examinations, they needed to make sure that the time and effort they had spent in preparing for the examinations would not be wasted. The *Guocui xuebao* was aimed at the educated elite who were perplexed and frustrated by the abolition of the examinations.

The journal published three different types of writing. First were short essays. They were written in argumentative style intended to persuade readers to adopt a certain perspective. Usually the theme was the moral responsibility of the learned community to save the Chinese race, to defend the Chinese nation, and to preserve the Chinese culture. Occasionally, the writings offered rebuttal to current viewpoints, such as the 'uselessness' (*wuyong* 无用) of classical learning and the adoption of Esperanto or *shijie yu* 世界语 in China. Second were long articles: these writings were longer and full of detail, sometimes so long that they had to be serialised for months. Historically and textually grounded, the long articles offered new accounts of historical events and new interpretations of philosophical writings to support the arguments in the short essays. Third were poems and excerpts: the writings were short but artistic, intending to suit the aesthetic taste of the educated elite. They were often written by established cultural figures. To show that the journal was neutral to academic debates, the journal included writings of both the Old Script School scholars (e.g., Zhang Taiyan 章太炎 and Liu Shipei 刘师培) and the New Script School scholars (e.g., Liao Ping 廖平 and Wang Kaiyun 王闿运).

Every issue of the journal was accompanied by visual illustrations (such as paintings, drawings, and calligraphy) that were reprinted with the most advanced printing technology from Japan. The visual art in the journal was not just for illustrations, but for two important purposes. One purpose was to prove that the journal had the full support of the academic and art circles. For instance, in February of 1908 the editors published a series of calligraphy and paintings by established scholars to celebrate the third year
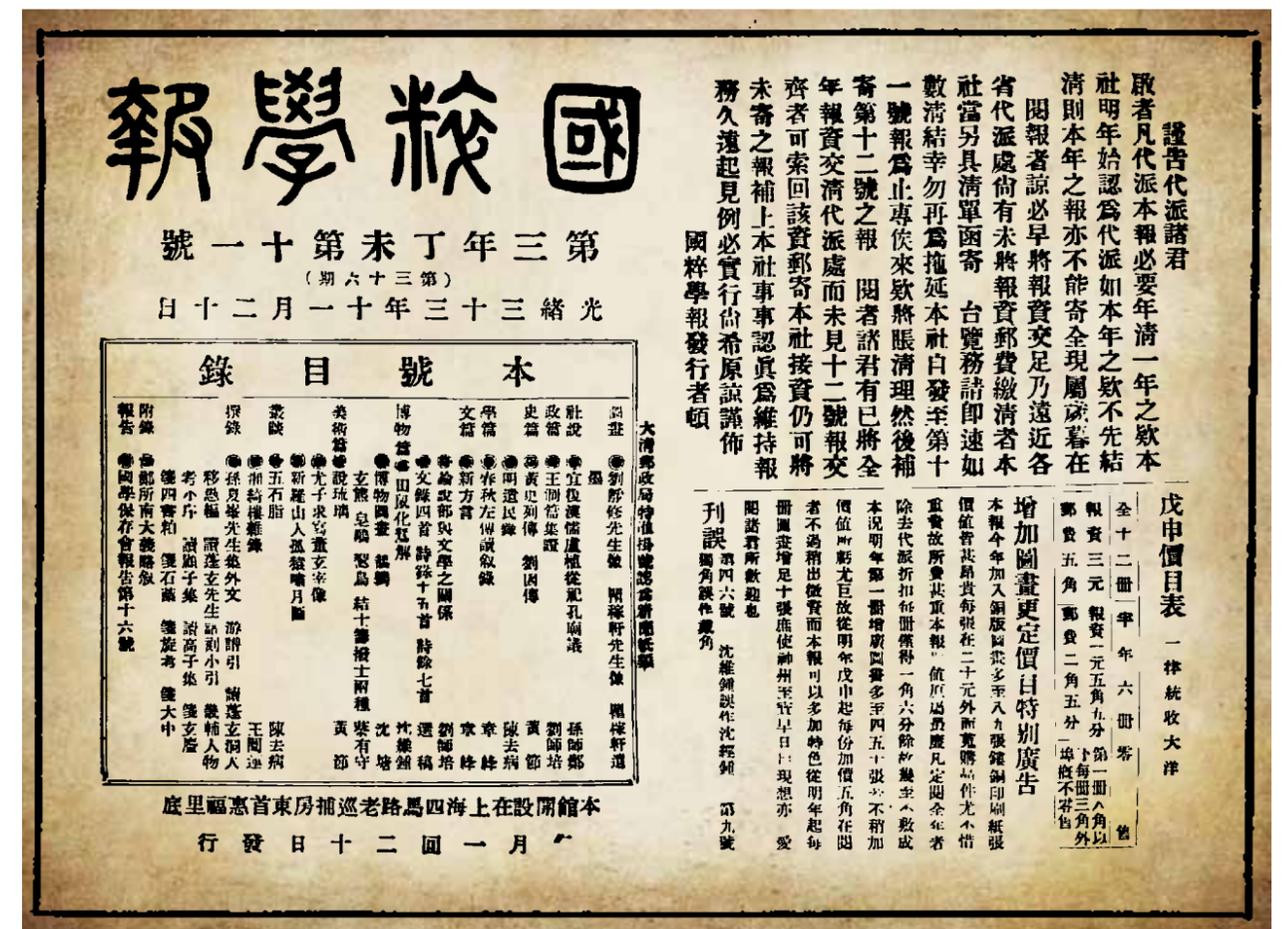
The title page (left) and the back cover page (right) of *Guocui xuebao* 11 (1908). On the back cover page, readers were urged to subscribe to the journal.

anniversary of the journal. Another purpose was to include art into the discourse of the nation so that 'national art' (*guohua* 国画) would be an expression of the nation. In the final two years of the journal, from 1909 to 1911, the editors went even further to promote art and literature. They rearranged the sections in the journal such that that it included special sections on art and the history of aesthetics.

The contributors of the *Guocui xuebao* came from two different groups of scholars. The first group were scholars in their late 20s and early 30s, including the two chief editors and the major contributors. By age, they belonged to the lower-level educated elite who were competing to pass the civil service examinations. Others, such as the chief editor Huang Jie, failed the recent 1902 metropolitan examination, and were deeply frustrated by the examination system. For these young

scholars, the abolition of the examination provided them with the opportunity to examine the problems of the imperial system. And writing for the journal gave them the chance to become cultural leaders in the new social and political environment.

As a whole, the success of the Press for the Society of National Glory demonstrates the close relation between technology transfer and social change. Aiming at the literati who supported a revolution against the Manchu dynasty, the press was among the first to adopt Western mechanised printing technology to mass produce books, journals and copies of paintings. Located in the foreign concessions in Shanghai, the press was able to make a profit from reprinting ancient texts and traditional Chinese printings to finance the publication of a high-quality academic journal. Its success indicates the importance

of the reader market that pushed the use of modern printing technology.

COMMERCIAL PRESS AND
THE SINO-JAPANESE COLLABORATION

Much older than the Press for the Association for the Preservation of National Essence, the Commercial Press was founded in 1897 by four former workers of missionary presses. Small in size at the beginning, the Commercial Press served the Protestant community in Shanghai by printing fliers and notices.[17] Later, the press expanded in size and in its printing capacity by incorporating a defunct Japanese press in Shanghai, *Guangwen shuguan* 光文书馆 (the Press for Expanding Knowledge). Taking advantage of the demand for 'Western learning' after the Sino-Japanese War in 1895, the press made a name by printing English dictionaries and English grammar books. It also made profits in reprinting popular classical and historical texts. As with the Press for the Association for the Preservation of National Essence, the Commercial Press stood out because of its access to mechanised printing. At short notice, it could print thousands of copies of a text with stunning clarity and efficiency.[18]

The Commercial Press was transformed from a small and peripheral press into a giant printing house at the turn of the 20th century. From 1901 to 1914, the Commercial Press formed a partnership with Kinkodo 金港堂, a major textbook publisher in Japan. During the fourteen-year partnership with Kinkodo, the Commercial Press adopted advanced printing technology and a modern management style. First, it was turned into a corporate company with hundreds of small investors but governed by a board of directors. In so doing, it possessed more financial resources to purchase advanced printing machines from Europe and Japan.[19] Second, the press followed in the footsteps of Kinkodo in developing a specialty in printing school textbooks. It brought Japanese specialists and craftsmen to Shanghai to build one of the biggest production units in the country to publish textbooks.[20]

The press's decision to specialise in printing textbooks came at the most opportune time. In 1905, just four years after forming a partnership with Kinkodo, the Qing government announced the abolition of the civil service examinations and

the founding of a national school system. With a strong editorial board and a superb team of printing technicians, the Commercial Press quickly monopolised the textbook markets, ensuring the press with a constant flow of income. With its success in printing textbooks, the Commercial Press overshadowed other presses after the 1911 Revolution.[21]

The success in the partnership between the Commercial Press and Kinkodo demonstrates the circuitous route that European technology took in transferring to East Asia. As the most advanced nation in East Asia at the turn of the 20th century, Japan was the hub for disseminating and reinventing Western technologies. With respect to printing technology, Kinkodo brought to China the colour printing, photo reproduction, and collotype printing. In addition to printing technology, Kinkodo brought to China new management techniques that reshaped the Commercial Press into a modern company. Yet, there was liability of international collaboration as well. As the Chinese became increasingly anti-imperialist and anti-Japan after the 1911 Revolution, the Commercial Press had difficulty in continuing its partnership with Kinkodo. After several unsuccessful attempts, the board of directors of the Commercial Press finally gathered enough capital to buy off the shares of Kinkodo in 1914, and ended the fourteen years of commercial and technological partnership with the Japanese company.[22] Still, by all accounts, the Commercial Press would not have developed into the largest press in 20th-century China had it not formed a partnership with Kinkodo for fourteen years.

TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIAL CHANGE

Certainly printing thousands of copies of books, journals, and textbooks every month, the two presses directly benefited from the new technology of mechanised printing and the sprawling nation-wide distribution networks. But, to a great extent, the success of the two presses was directly linked to the abolition of the civil service examinations in 1905. In their own ways, the two journals targeted educated individuals who were both perplexed and enticed by the founding of the national school system. Replacing the civil service examinations that had defined the literati culture for centuries, the national school system provided modern professional training to tens of

thousands of young students, thereby creating a huge market for textbooks and supplementary readings.[23] By targeting their cultural products at students of the national school system, the two presses produced what Joan Judge calls the 'middle realm' in modern Chinese society—i.e., journalists, editors, columnists, academicians, and school teachers who became the new leaders of political discourse.[24] As such, the two presses exemplified a momentous change in early 20th-century Chinese society where the old literati

(who served the imperial dynasty) gave way to a new generation of intellectuals (who competed in the cultural market).[25] RC

Author's note: This paper is drawn from my research on early 20th-century Chinese modernity. For a more detail discussion of the role of print capitalism in shaping the social and cultural landscape of modern China, see my book *Revolution as Restoration: Guocui xuebao and China's Path to Modernity, 1905-1911*, especially Chapters 1 and 2.

NOTES

1 Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, revised edition, p. 36.
2 Ibid., pp. 9-24.
3 Christopher A. Reed, *Gutenberg in Shanghai: Chinese Print Capitalism, 1876-1934*, pp. 12-22.
4 Regarding the 'travel theory' of knowledge transfer in East Asia, see Lydian H. Liu, *Translingual Practice: Literature, National Culture, and Translated Modernity—China 1900-1937*, pp. 1-44.
5 Douglas R. Reynolds, *China, 1898-1912: The Xinzheng Revolution and Japan*, pp. 1-14, 111-126.
6 Cynthia J. Brokaw, 'Introduction: On the History of the Books in China', in *Printing and Book Culture in Late Imperial China*, edited by Cynthia J. Brokaw and Kai-wing Chow, pp. 8-9.
7 Cynthia J. Brokaw, *Printing and Books Culture*, pp. 9-10. For the rise of a new type of cultural businessmen due to the expansion of the print market in late imperial China, see Kai-wing Chow, *Publishing, Culture, and Power in Early Modern China*, pp. 1-18, 241-251.
8 Joan Judge, *Print and Culture: 'Shibao' and the Culture of Reform in Late Qing China*, pp. 17-31.
9 For a study of the spatial differences in technological transfer, see Li Renyuan 李仁渊, *Wanqing de xingshi chuanbo meiti yu zhishi fengzi: Yi baokan chuban wei zhongxin de taolun* 晚清的新式传播媒体与知识份子：以报刊出版为中心的讨论 (The Modern Mass Media in Late Qing and the Intellectuals: A Study of the Publishing of Newspaper), pp. 213-287.
10 For a discussion of the cultural changes in Shanghai and their impact on the lower Yangzi region, see Xiong Yuezhi 熊月之, 'Yanjiang chengshi yu xixue zhuanbo' 沿江城市与西学转播 (Cities along the Yangze River and the Dissemination of Western Learning), in *Changjiang yuanjiang chengshi yu Zhongguo jindaihua* 长江沿江城市与中国近代化 (Cities along the Yangtze River and Chinese Modernization), edited by Zhang Zhongli 张仲礼, Xiong Yuezhi 熊月之, and Shen Zuwei 沈祖炜, pp. 653-707.
11 Ibid., p. 683.
12 Ibid., pp. 685-686.
13 Christopher A. Reed, *Gutenberg in Shangai*, pp. 16-18, 188-199; Li Renyuan, *Wanqing de xingshi chuanbo meiti*, pp. 213-224.
14 For the publication of *Cathay Art Book*, see the advertisements for *Cathay Art Book* in *Guocui xuebao* 国粹学报 41-70 (1908-1910). For some of the titles of reprinted texts, see the advertisements for the first volume of *Guocui congshu* 国粹丛书 in *Guocui xuebao* 27 (1907) and the first volume of *Fengyu lou congshu* 风雨楼丛书 in *Guocui xuebao* 69 (1910).
15 See the advertisement for *Cathay Art Book* in *Guocui xuebao* 52 (1909).
16 For the publication of school textbooks, see the advertisement in *Guocui xuebao* 28 (1907).
17 Li Jiaju 李家驹, *Shangwu yinshuguan yu jindai zhishi wenhua de chuanbo* 商务印书馆与近代知识文化的传播 (The Commercial Press and the Dissemination of Modern Knowledge and Culture), pp. 27-34.
18 Ibid., pp. 43-44.
19 Ibid., pp. 50-60.
20 Ibid., pp. 38-39, 54-60.
21 Ibid., pp. 54-60; Li Renyuan, *Wanqing de xingshi chuanbo meiti*, pp. 281-284.
22 Li Jiaju, *Shangwu yinshuguan*, pp. 50-51.
23 For a discussion of how the founding of the national school system impacted the print market, see the chapters by Peter Zarrow, May-bo Chang, and Tze-ki Hon in *The Politics of Historical Production in Late Qing and Republican China*, edited by Tze-ki Hon and Robert J. Culp, pp. 21-105.
24 Joan Judge, *Print and Culture: 'Shibao' and the Culture of Reform in Late Qing China*, pp. 17-31.
25 For a discussion of this change from literati to intellectuals, see Xu Jilin 许纪霖, *20 shiji Zhongguo zhishi fenzi shilun* 20 世纪中国知识分子史论 (A Study of the History of the 20th Century Chinese Intellectuals), pp. 1-4.

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Faith and Charity
The Christian Disaster Management in South China

Joseph Tse-Hei Lee*

一段虹霓出海隅，八风如战雨倾衢。
楼头绿树连根拔，陌上青秧贴水枯。
正拟望秋差有庾，那思卒岁更无襦。
推窗一望天初霁，早有排年说晚租。

A rainbow rises from the sea,
Wind blows from all directions like the heavy rain pouring in the battlefield.
The big green tree in front of the house is uprooted,
Grain crops and water in the fields completely dry up.

People have little left in the granaries by autumn,
People cannot afford to buy clothing by the end of the year.
When opening the window and seeing the blue sky after the typhoon,
People talk about delaying tax payment under the *lijia* system.
> (Puning shi difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui 普宁市地方志编纂委员会 [Committee of the Puning District Gazetteer], comp. *Puning xianzhi* 普宁县志 [Puning District Gazetteer]. Guangzhou: Guangdong renmin chubanshe, 1995, p. 540. Author's translation)

* Ph.D. from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London, he is professor of history at Pace University in New York City. He authored *The Bible and the Gun: Christianity in South China, 1860-1900* (New York: Routledge, 2003; Chinese edition, Beijing: Social Sciences Academic Press, 2010), and coedited *China's Rise to Power: Conceptions of State Governance* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012) and *Marginalization in China: Recasting Minority Politics* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009). His current research focuses on the experience of Christian prisoners in Maoist China, and the globalisation of Hong Kong and Bollywood cinemas.

Doutrorado pela Escola de Estudos Orientais e Africanos da Universidade de Londres, é professor de História na Universidade Pace, em Nova Iorque. Autor de The Bible and the Gun: Christianity in South China, 1860-1900 *(Routledge, 2003; edição chinesa, Academia da Ciências Sociais Social Sciences Academic Press, 2010), e co-editor de* China's Rise to Power: Conceptions of State Governance *(Palgrave MacMillan, 2012) e* Marginalization in China: Recasting Minority Politics *(Palgrave MacMillan, 2009). Actualmente, a sua investigação concentra-se na experiência dos prisioneiros cristãos na China maoista, e na globalização das cinematografias de Hong Kong e Bollywood.*

Late imperial scholar-official Li Zhi 李质 captured lucidly the destructive power of a typhoon in the Chaozhou-speaking region of northeast Guangdong Province (Fig. 1). The severity of typhoon seasons badly affected coastal areas and implored district authorities to relieve stricken communities. However, when the Qing dynasty collapsed in October 1911 and a modern nation-state was not yet established, it fell on the shoulders of non-state actors to undertake disaster relief efforts. This was particularly true for the Chaozhou-speaking Christians in Shantou during the early 20th century (Lee, 2003).

This article examines how Chaozhou Baptists and Presbyterians employed socio-religious resources to cope with the devastating effects of a typhoon on 2 August 1922 (*baer fengzai* 八二风灾). The typhoon lifted a vast mass of seawater and hurled it on cities and villages along the coast, sweeping away countless people, animals, and fishing boats. Farther inland, violent winds flattened buildings and huts and caused more casualties. There was utter devastation, including entire settlements being washed away, paddy fields becoming strewn with corpses and dead animals, and survivors sleeping in the rough outdoors.

The disaster galvanised foreign missionaries, native Christians, local merchants, municipal officials, and village elders into action. The relief operation was a large-scale, multi-layered organisational task, and differed from that of traditional chambers of commerce, temples, and lineages. Seeking help from treaty-port communities in China and from overseas Chinese in Hong Kong and Southeast Asia, the Chaozhou