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Faith and Charity
The Christian Disaster Management
in South China

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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)

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

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Fig. 1. Map of Chaozhou, designed by Pui-Shan Lee.

Christians activated their global church networks to gather managerial, capital, medical, and labor resources for fundraising and post-disaster reconstruction—resources that the Shantou municipality did not possess. The operation mobilised Western medical and ministerial missionaries, Chinese medical staff, mission schoolteachers and students, and local congregants to assist stricken communities. Its success highlights the remarkable organisational capacity of Christian missions and native churches.

Much has been written about faith-based disaster management in China and it pivoted on two major issues. The first issue was the need to make charity an inherent part of religious teachings. In times of crisis, increased interactions between religious proselytisers and the needy led to new opportunities for faith-based philanthropy, and many religious groups engaged in disaster relief as a means of teaching the faithful about unique ethical values over the mundane concerns of health and wealth (Yang, ed., 2008). Prasenjit Duara (2004, pp. 104) refers to numerous redemptive

societies, which, ‘armed with a strong this-worldly orientation and rhetoric of worldly redemption’, encouraged their members to do good works in this life and to contribute to state-building in Manchukuo. Similarly, James Brooks Jessup (2010; 2012) looks at the Shanghaiese Buddhist household leaders whose welfare enterprises helped fellow Chinese to endure the hardship of Japanese military rule. As a religious act, charity entailed a proactive and participatory approach to addressing natural and wartime disasters.

The second issue concerned the transfer of relief efforts from government authorities to non-state actors. The disintegration of state institutions prompted various faith-based communities to step in to provide aid in late imperial China (Antony and Leonard eds., 2002, pp. 1-26). During the devastating famine of 1876-1879, Timothy Richard of the English Baptist Missionary Society administered emergency relief in the famine-stricken provinces of Shandong and Shanxi (Bohr, 1972). Whalen Lai (1992) and Andrea Janku (2004) reveal a competitive edge to the Buddhist and

Christian relief efforts. Kathryn Edgerton-Tarpley (2008) draws attention to the Jiangnan literati who competed with Protestant missionaries in the post-famine reconstruction and called for a reformist agenda in governance. Because of their efficacy in reaching out to refugees, these non-state actors replaced the dysfunctional officials as new ‘shepherds and saviors of the people’ (Janku, 2007, p. 286).

Following this line of reasoning, the Christian disaster management in Chaozhou transformed traditional faith-based charity from a mere religious act to modern philanthropy with its active pursuit of coordinated responses to unpredictable crises. In this increasingly autonomous managerial public sphere, the Chaozhou churches acted as a quasi-state agency that channeled aid from afar and implemented recovery programs to rehabilitate the affected regions.

THE TYPHOON OF 2 AUGUST

On 2 August, 1922, the wind burst furiously from the ocean for hours, and at midnight it brought a tidal wave that lashed across the coast of Chaozhou. Everyone was frightened by the violent winds. When the tidal wave hit the Baptist mission compound in Rocky Corner opposite the harbour of Shantou, American missionary Abbie G. Sanderson (6 August 1922) had to save herself:

The only thing visible was a wall of seawater which appeared to be volleying full speed into our front yard. Talk about surf—and breakers—there they were, at our very door! I have no words to tell the thrill of horror and yet of fascination that gripped me as I stood watching that surge of water beating towards us. In reality it was much lower than it had been in the night; nevertheless the impression was that of an onrushing flood that must swallow us up the next moment.... The terrific tidal wave had rolled on past us up into the fields in back of the house, carrying broken shutters, parts of boats that washed ashore, and all the planks and crossbeams of our lower veranda!

The timing of the storm caught everyone off guard. Several patients inside the American mission hospital drowned, and the shores were lined with the wrecks of fishing boats. Communication between Rocky Corner and Shantou was cut off because boatmen and sedan-chair carriers ‘were all busy cleaning up

their own houses or carrying coffins’ (Sanderson, 6 August 1922). The settlements of Small Rocky Corner (Xiaoqueshi 小礮石) and Centipede Field (Wutian 蜈田), adjacent to the Baptist mission compound, suffered heavy loss of life, and the missionaries heard ‘the wailing at all hours of day and night’ (Sanderson, 6 August 1922) (Fig. 2).

The situation in Shantou was disastrous. Several thousand bodies were found from the ruins and refugees were everywhere (Sanderson, 6 August 6, 1922). Seventh-day Adventist missionary F.E. Bates (1922) saw ‘piles of wreckage’ in two large and prosperous villages west of Shantou. The six-foot seawall in Ox-Field Sea collapsed and thousand acres of the reclaimed land were flooded by several feet of ‘the saltiest seawater’. It would take at least two years to restore the fertility of these farmlands. The bund in Shantou was littered with ‘boats, docking facilities, wharves, gangways, bamboo and log rafts, and broken-down houses’ (Bates, 1922). The French Catholic Mission, a block from the bund and two blocks next to the English Presbyterian Mission headquarters, was badly damaged. One of the nuns, Marie du Rosaire, was caught in the tidal current. She caught a drifting bed and was lucky to be rescued by other Catholics. As she described the disaster:

Swatow alone has 50,000 dead—either lost or drowned. At every moment of the day or night the stretcher-bearers pass in front of the [Catholic] bishopric with their dead. At first they had coffins; but now the bodies are simply put in matting. They have been picking them up now for five days. The Chinese are very respectful of their dead and will not let anyone go without burial. The way the Chinese have taken this disaster is truly remarkable. They don’t seem to be crushed. They collect the debris from their houses and their little bamboo huts as though it were something quite ordinary. (Mahoney, 1996, pp. 35-36)

Shantou came out of the typhoon a devastated city. The bund was buried under a mass of broken tiles and debris, oil oozed out of broken jars, warehouses were smashed up, and boxes of goods were scattered round. ‘The trees that remained were either broken and withered as if there had been a great fire, or bereft of leaves and branches pitifully extending a few giant mutilated stumps towards the sky’ (Our Sisters in Other Lands, January, 1923). English Presbyterian missionary

T.W. Douglas James (1922) explained the reasons for such destruction:

Swatow is in many parts barely above high water level and probably no part is more than ten feet over that level. The result was that the tide had swept in using junks, sampans and everything that could float as battering rams and with the help of the wind had knocked down boundary walls, telegraph and telephone and electric light poles, broken in doors and windows on the ground floor of the houses and go-downs and on its retreat had swept out most of the contents.... The Bund presented an indescribable scene of wreckage. All the pontoons were washed from their moorings and sunk right at the edge of the bund. A dreadful air hung over the place from the rotting vegetation, dead fish, chickens, pigs, cows and human beings that lay everywhere, some floating on the water, some piled on the bund and some buried under walls. Three inches of slime was over everything and in all the houses. All the wells in Swatow and to within a hundred feet of the A.C.C. [Presbyterian-run Anglo-Chinese College] had been rendered unusable by the mud and salt water....The A.C.C. has suffered very severely...most of the roof beams have been blown off too....The Industrial school which is just behind has two parts blown right away, upper storey as well as roof. One of the remarkable things about the effect of the wind is that the leaves have been combed right off the trees. Even the bamboos which yield to the wind have been stripped bare and the whole place has taken on the appearance of winter.

This was an image of utter destruction. Rotten bodies polluted the drinking water and created a health crisis. All buildings were damaged beyond recognition. It was a miracle that the city did not fall into anarchy. The poor suffered the most. Many coolies, labourers, and hawkers in the city's hutments were killed. One hundred and thirty-nine dead bodies were found in Yongtai Street (永泰街), and 55 in Yonghe Street (永和街). The hut dwellers refused to evacuate in order to protect their belongings, but they were swept away by the tidal wave. The heaviest casualties were in Haiqi Street (海墘街), where 269 residents were killed and 125 stores were destroyed (Wang, comp., 1994, pp.

24-35). The devastation posed new challenges for a fragile government struggling with warlord conflicts and economic woes. Because it was beyond the Shantou municipality to deal with the aftermath without outside aid, the chamber of commerce, different Christian denominations, and charitable bodies formed the Shantou Relief Organisation to assess damages, raise funds, and bury the deceased.

For survivors, collecting dead bodies and keeping them away from drinking water was of top priority. The chamber of commerce hired several hundred coolies and rickshaw pullers to remove the dead and clean the streets. Many dead were buried under collapsed buildings and some bodies were decaying under the hot sun. A temporary morgue had 300 bodies to be identified and buried, and the unidentified bodies were buried in large trenches using lime powder (Bates, 1922). A Presbyterian missionary reported,

The first duty was to collect the dead, and this was chiefly in the hands of the Charitable Guild connected with the Temple near us. There were not enough coffins to bury the dead and thousands were interred in gunny bags. In a Temple on the Bund, 1,000 human bodies were piled at one time awaiting burial. Six days after the disaster, the local Chamber of Commerce issued an official statement, in which it was reported that 28,000 bodies had been recovered. An entire theatrical company was killed in a theatre, and in one village of 10,000 inhabitants there are 25 survivors. (Our Sisters in Other Lands, January 1923)

The coastal settlements took the brunt of the storm. The storm caused a huge surge upstream and pushed seawater inland. When the wave came at midnight, the mud walls melted and it was too dark for people to climb to the roofs. Only a handful of people survived, and the survivors wept so hard that their eyes got sore and required medical treatment (Our Sisters in Other Lands, January, 1923). Many fishing communities around Double Island (妈屿岛) lost seven-tenths of their population, including a Presbyterian preacher with his wife and seven children (James, 1922). In the Presbyterian congregation in White Water Lake (Baishuihu 白水湖), officially known as Yihu 奕湖, Xie Yuanlian 谢沅莲, the second daughter of preacher Xie Zehong 谢泽鸿, was killed (Xie, 15 March, 1983). The plain of Chenghai and Raoping districts was badly

hit. According to Baptist missionary Fannie Northcott (1922),

Before the typhoon, this plain was more or less densely populated by fishermen and a few farmers, who lived in groups of villages. It is very level—no hills or any elevations of any kind for a distance of about forty square miles. Because the land was level, large numbers of villages were exposed to the tidal wave. When it washed in over the plain, it carried on its course, houses and humans across the plain inland, in some instances 5, 7, or 9 miles; then to be thrown up on the side of a hill, or to be left floating on a roof beam. In one village we visited ... the two women survivors, pointed to a distant range of hills about 9 miles away, and said, 'We were floated over to those hills'. Two days and two nights, they walked or crawled or waded back to their village only to find it in ruins; not one wall of one house standing. Of a village of over

500 inhabitants, there were two women and 65 men left! When the wave receded, it carried out to sea, hundreds of bodies, the exact number will never be known. Of course all their household goods were washed away at the same time. All but a few tens of men were drowned, and they have gone other places to look for work. Their fields are soaked with salt water and their houses down; boats washed away, women and children drowned, and they go away from the fearful sorrow of all.

The typhoon crippled the agricultural and fishing economy. When the fields were flooded with seawater, farmers lost a season of crops and needed to spend months using freshwater to flush the salt out of the fields. Many families lost their livestock and suffered months of hunger, and Presbyterian evangelist Wang



Fig. 2. The destruction of houses in Rocky Corner (Queshi), Shantou after the typhoon of 2 August 1922.

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Chaoying saw drowned pigs as large as water buffalos (Interviews with Wang Ruifang and Wang Jianyuan, 1 and 2 August 2009). When the boats were gone, fishermen had to go elsewhere to look for work. Northcott (1922) continued,

In another place (i.e., Hongguo 鸿沟), where before the typhoon, there was a village of nearly 600 inhabitants, now there are 48 men and one woman. No children; no women; every cow, pig and chicken washed away. While we were talking with the men, one of them said with tears in his eyes, ‘It is so lonely now; so quiet and so lonely at night that we cannot sleep’. And looking around on the masses of fallen walls which at one time had been a village; a few lonely men wandering around here and there among the ruins, we could almost appreciate what they were suffering.

Many men stayed alive by grasping bamboo trees, but few women and children were strong enough to hold onto the trees until daybreak. With such losses came a dehumanising process that deeply affected the survivors and produced social and cultural scars. One aspect was survivor’s guilt, as the men felt alone and hopeless without their family members around. They blamed themselves for their failure to rescue relatives from the wave. Among the ruins, they found themselves trapped in a vanishing world. The typhoon took away their social and moral orientation, the source of their livelihoods, and their attachment to longstanding social ties and emotional identities. The survivors were reluctant to accept the shock of family and community breakup, the loss of farmlands, orchards, and fishing boats, the destruction of ancestral tombs, and the difficulty of living alone. Talking among themselves about ‘this world’ and ‘the other world’, they wondered whether the departed were better off than the living (Northcott, 1922).

Equally tragic were the tales of how the sick and the elderly perished in the sweeping water (Sanderson, 17 September, 1922). Magistrate Chen Yuan 陈沅 of Raoping district recalled,

When the tidal wave came, the most vulnerable died tragically: some parents who carried several children were forced to let go the daughters and babies to save themselves from drowning. Some mothers carried the babies with them and floated in the water, but the husbands took away the babies in order to save their wives.

Some elderly parents could not swim and their sons did not abandon them, and they were all drowned. Some parents could not hold too many children together and they griped the children’s hair and little arms, but when they reached the high grounds, the younger ones had already died. Some elderly parents did not want to burden their adult children and they drowned themselves in order to save the family line. There were couples tied themselves together with strings but they were drowned. After the disaster, some people could not bear the deaths of their loved ones and they committed suicide. (Wang, comp., 1994, p. 42)

Such stories were depressing and everyone suffered in agony. Once the floodwater receded, Chen Yuan found ‘rotten corpses, puppets, broken boats, bamboos, furniture and coffins’ in the water and ‘fallen trees, tied straw bales, bamboos, coffins, ancestral tablets, torn mats, books, furniture and dead animals’ on the ground (Wang, comp., 1994, p. 42). The survivors could not identify the bodies for proper burials, and the shore was full of mass graves as Margaret Dryburgh (1923) saw ‘a pathetic group of sand-covered mounds in a stretch of sand—a witness to the terrible tolls of lives taken by the waves’.

There were, however, stories of miraculous survival. Some reports were apocryphal—they were distorted from being passed from one person to another, and acquired additional meanings with each retelling. Two of these narratives provided grim hope for the survivors. The first story recalled the rescue of a woman from Hongguo, who attended the Presbyterian girls’ school in Shantou. When the wave swept her village, she and her younger brother grasped a large beam of the roof. They held onto the beam and drifted at sea for 50 kilometres from her home. When they were saved by the Presbyterian fishermen from Cheh Na village on Haishan Island, they were taken to the chapel. Because that woman was engaged to a young Christian at Cheh Na, the preacher sent for the young man’s family to take the woman and her brother back to Hongguo (Northcott, 1922).

The second story concerned a pregnant woman in Jieyang district. She gave birth to a son on the morning of 2 August. When the wave came at night, she caught the baby in the dark and wrapped him in a sheet. When she un-wrapped him, she was shocked to

find that she had grabbed a tiny pig instead of her son. ‘Trembling and sobbing, she stepped down, and in the water which had risen high above the bed boards, she searched until she stumbled against him. She picked him up and climbed to safety once more’. Miraculously, the baby survived (Sanderson, 17 September 1922).

Everyone along the coast faced death on 2 August. A Presbyterian family of 21 people was trapped during the typhoon. They changed into white garments—the Chinese funeral clothes—and prayed together. When the house collapsed, they were swept away by the wave (Our Sisters in Other Lands, January, 1923). This courageous family relied on their faith to overcome the unbearable pain of dying together and to prepare for life after death. Baptist missionary George W. Lewis (19 August 1922) inspected the damage for the Shantou Relief Organisation:

I passed the Iam-tsau [Yanzao] and saw Chia-chiu and other badly damaged villages up there. It also still seems to me like a nightmare. Many of the houses on the seafront whose walls were fully above the average of pounded walls as indicated by the broken parts—fully up to proportion in lime—yet these walls lay flat... The water marks indicated on the seafront that the water must have been upwards of twenty feet deep, and must have been driven in with great violence... People were drowned in twenty feet deep water and then crushed into the crumbling walls of the houses.

Because of the violent wind and the tidal wave, fishing boats became uncontrolled weapons of destruction that crushed into mud houses and killed people (Lewis, 19 August, 1922). Although the Christians were little prepared for it, the mission headquarters in Shantou and the numerous native churches were the only viable institutions after the disaster and bore the burden of relief work. Missionaries, preachers, Biblewomen, medical staff, mission schoolteachers, and students became relief workers on the spot.

THE TRANSNATIONAL CHRISTIAN FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGNS

After the floodwater receded, the Christian missionary enterprises undertook the daunting task of disaster relief operations. Whenever the missionaries and their Chinese co-workers inspected a village, they

contacted the surviving headmen and compiled a list of recipients’ names. Then they erected a bamboo shelter as a temporary relief center. The recipients’ reactions were mixed, as Margaret Dryburgh (1923) reported: ‘Human nature is very much the same everywhere, and some [refugees] were delighted with what they got, others were rather supercilious; some indignantly enquired why they had been left out, while others looked disappointed, but seemed to understand that we could give only to those whose names had been handed in to us’. It was indeed hard to satisfy the needs of everyone.

The medical mission showed the practical side of Christianity. The sick received free treatment. Almost every kind of diseases spread in the villages. Eye disease topped the list and was caused by ‘salt water, the glare of the sun in their homeless condition, and weeping’ (Brander, October 1923). Skin disease, dysentery, typhoid fever and malaria were everywhere. Children were malnourished and suffered from intestinal troubles. When the cold weather set in, the elderly died from bronchial troubles and pneumonia. The medical team relieved the survivors’ sufferings and was most welcomed by the poor. ‘The old coolie who carried our baskets of medicine each day, poor though he was and depending on his daily wage to provide food for himself, wife and family, offered to carry our baskets day by day, for much less than he could earn doing other work. The boatmen on the ferries and on the boats were glad to take us from place to place, and very often would not take any money’ (Northcott, 1922). The outpouring of kindness gave the refugees a glimpse of hope. A wealthy non-Christian household loaned their home to the medical missionaries because the village chapel was destroyed. The generosity earned the respect of the missionaries and helped the family access more medical supplies (Northcott, 1922).

In Shantou, Chaozhou Christians partnered with the larger society to work towards economic recovery. Post-disaster recovery was more than a bricks-and-mortar restoration project. Christians devoted much effort to ensuring the economic wellbeing of the refugees. The first step was to combine the transnational, regional, and local mechanisms of fundraising and resource distribution. The English Presbyterians created a committee to administrate ‘the funds raised by British and Chinese merchants in Hong Kong, and granted by the Hong Kong Government’

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(James, 2 October 1923). Then they worked with the Foreign Missions Committee of the Presbyterian Church of England in London to launch an aggressive advertisement campaign to solicit disaster relief funds.

In September 1922, the Presbyterian missionaries sent stories of victims and survivors to London, and in October, the Foreign Missions Committee and the Women’s Missionary Association circulated an appeal entitled ‘Swatow Typhoon, 1922’, urging churches in England and Scotland to give generously for the displaced refugees. The leaflet cited the remarks of Captain MacWhirr about a typhoon in the South China Sea from Joseph Conrad’s fiction, *Typhoon*, in which Conrad depicted the horrors of a typhoon as ‘a faint burst of lightning [quivering all around the sky]’, ‘the storm with a senseless, destructive fury [looting the ship]’, and ‘the running wall of water [crushing the ship]’. Many people in England and Scotland knew nothing about Shantou. Neither did they see any typhoons, so common in tropical and subtropical Asia. The heavy losses of human lives and properties, the sensational stories about local Chinese helping each other, and the photos of collapsed churches and devastated villages were aimed at arousing public sympathy. Although such representations seemed patronising to the Chinese victims, these images exerted powerful influence on the British donors. An anonymous donor gave £1,000 to the Foreign Missions Committee for post-disaster reconstruction (Swatow Mission Council, 16 November, 1922). The fundraising campaign succeeded in strengthening ‘the bond of mutual affection and sympathy’ between the Chaozhou Presbyterians and their patrons in Britain (Swatow Mission Council, 29 December 1922).

The American Baptist missionaries conducted their own transnational fundraising campaign and presented an image of utter destruction to donors in the United States:

Can you imagine what it could be to go to bed peacefully at night, and in the morning to have nothing left of your house but flattened bits of broken wall; to find all your clothing and furniture and everything else washed away, your pigs, cows and sheep drowned, your crops ruined, and all your family gone, leaving you dazed and hopeless in the face of such calamity? There are thousands of people who had just this experience. (Sanderson, 4 November 1922)

However, on many occasions the Board of American Baptist Mission Committee in New York misappropriated the funds sent by generous donors for typhoon survivors (Sanderson, 8 October 1922). Compared with the English Presbyterians, the Baptist missionaries had little control over their transnational resources and were at the mercy of the home board for support.

THE YANZAO CASE OF CHRISTIAN REBUILDING EFFORTS

An important component of the Christian disaster management was to build a mechanism that engaged local Chinese in post-disaster reconstruction, injected cash into the rural economy, and promoted individual and community decision-making. The recovery efforts focused on three types of services: providing clothing, giving medical and economic aid, and empowering typhoon survivors. The missionaries frequently referred to the Yanzao Presbyterian church as the success of the post-disaster reconstruction.

Founded in 1849, the Yanzao church was the oldest Presbyterian congregation in the Chaozhou-speaking region. Before 1949, it was the largest rural church in Chaozhou and its congregants, mostly members of the dominant Lin lineage, benefited from conversion. The typhoon shaped the collective memory of Yanzao Presbyterians (Lee, forthcoming). On 2 August 1922, the Yanzao church lost 119 members, including 50 baptised adults, 35 children, and 34 unbaptised adherents. The figure represented one-fourth of the total 476 deaths in the village. Deacons Lin Junjie 林俊杰, Lin Xingyong 林性涌, and Liao Yuna 廖愈纳 were killed. Church elder Chen Shunsan 陈顺胜, who lived in a three-storey house around the fish pond outside the church, lost 18 relatives. His wife, a member of the Presbyterian Xie lineage in White Water Village, perished too. His third son, Chen Lingzhi 陈令芝, survived because he was in charge of the family business in Hong Kong at the time. Lingzhi returned and helped his father rebuild the home. The tidal wave also left 60 orphans and large numbers of injured congregants (Wei, 1949, pp. 5-6).

The spirits of the surviving Christians were not defeated, however. Church elder Chen Sinsan and ordained minister Guo Jingyun 郭景云 devoted much attention to the relief work (James, 2 October 1923).

Lin Zhangchong 林章宠 organised the survivors and village defense forces to rescue people and survey the damages. Many Yanzao sojourners contributed to the disaster relief. Lin Zhangzao 林章造, Lin Fang 林芳, and Lin Chongshan 林重三, who pastored churches elsewhere, mobilised their congregations to support the suffering brothers and sisters in Yanzao. Lin Shoutian 林受天, Lin Wenhe 林文和, and Chen Yiting 陈益廷, merchants and elders of the Bethel Church in Shantou, channeled resources to their home village. Lin Shangdao 林性道, son of Lin Zhangzao, ran a successful pharmacy in Chao’an and immediately sent medical supplies to Yanzao.

There was also a strong religious component in the relief operation. Liu Zerong 刘泽荣, an ordained pastor and a tutor at the Presbyterian seminary in Shantou, ‘spent weekend after weekend in visiting the area, making careful investigation, and seizing the extraordinary opportunity which he discovered for preaching’ (James, 2 October 1923). He visited victims’ families in Yanzao and nearby villages. The disaster eliminated pre-existing inter-village tensions and created a social bonding between Christians and non-Christians. As T.W. Douglas James (2 October 1923) observed:

Just as at Iam-tsau [Yanzao] ancient village feuds which had long separated that village from its neighbor and reacted unfavorably on Christian preaching were swept away, and so many new hearers came to Church as to fill up in numbers the gap which the disaster had caused in membership, so the work of this and of the Women’s Committee opened up new opportunities, and at a subsidiary relief station in this district it has been possible to organize regular Christian work. All expenditure of money on directly evangelistic work has been separate from relief funds, and met by evangelistic societies.

With the support of the English Presbyterians, Liu Zerong reaped the fruits of evangelisation and founded a new church in the neighboring village of Nanshengbu (南生埔). In the summer of 1923, Patrick J. MacLagan visited ‘the stricken congregation’ of Yanzao on behalf of the London-based Foreign Mission Committee of the Presbyterian Church of England. That visit was of high symbolic significance because ‘the Church at home in the person of the Convener should stand at the salute

before those heaps of stones that had been Christian homes, and where Christian families had perished’ (James, 2 October 1923). In China, where ancestry was so much honored, ‘there could have been no more significant act than the visit to the grave on the slopes of the Lotus Hill of the first Christian of the Hoklo Church’ (James, 2 October 1923). The high-profile visit renewed the historic ties between Chinese Christians and their missionary patrons, and also conveyed a clear message that the English Presbyterians would always stand by the ‘Hoklo Church’ in good and bad times. The transnational Christian networks stood the test of time and remained unbreakable.

Chen Chunsheng (1997) asserts that after the typhoon many emigrant villages in Chenghai district turned to their relatives in Southeast Asia for help. The wealthy emigrants of Zhanglin market paid for all of the local relief efforts and set up the Biansheng Hospital to cater to the sick. Li Longqian (2006, p. 313) points out that the Chaozhou Eight Districts’ Chambers of Commerce in Hong Kong sent large amounts of rice to Shantou. But what distinguished the Yanzao church from these organisations were the faith-based charity networks. Through extensive religious ties, the Yanzao congregants called for financial assistance not only from their missionary patrons in Shantou and fellow Christians in unaffected areas, but also from churches in Southeast Asia and Britain. The Chaozhou migrants in Hong Kong, Siam, and British Malaya supported an orphanage to discourage the kidnapping and sale of children by starving refugees. Any children who had lost their fathers were admitted as orphans because patriarchs were considered to be the pillar of a household economy, and the mothers would be given work at the Shantou Gospel Hospital or at missionaries’ homes. The orphans were taught vocational skills and studied with other children at the Presbyterian Zhishang Elementary School (Interviews with Wang Ruifang and Wang Jianyuan, 1 and 2 August 2009). The Presbyterian Mission gave \$3 a month to each household willing to support an orphan.

Concerned with long-term community recovery, the missionaries recognised the need to empower the refugees and make them responsible for reconstruction. They organised church leaders to work with representatives of nearby villages to clear the debris and bury the dead. They employed a large number of workers to reconstruct a dike in Yanzao, and paid

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them in rice and cash. They bought water buffaloes for farmers, and offered grants and loans to fishermen to rebuild their boats (James, 2 October 1923). They also provided temporary shelters made of new bamboo poles and mats, oversaw the building of houses, and gave out ‘literally bushels and gallons of medicine’ (Sanderson, 4 November 1922). These capacity-building measures enabled survivors to acquire the necessary skills and resources for community survival. Thus, the transnational church networks constituted an invisible maritime highway that channeled overseas resources for the Yanzao Presbyterians to keep alive their Christian homeland. This explained why many Chaozhou Christians were always orientated towards the overseas churches in Southeast Asia, Europe, and North America.

CONCLUSION

The Christian disaster management in early 20th century Chaozhou manifested hybrid values and worldviews. The missionaries and church leaders characterised their charity through the language of Christian benevolence and Western efficiency. The relief efforts exhibited the Christians’ embrace of social activism and the longstanding Chinese values that informed the compassion of local officials, community elites, and relief workers. For the Chaozhou people in August 1922, the Christian disaster relief was made up of small stories of humble survivors whose lives were badly affected by the typhoon. This article has uncovered some of these stories, and there are still many more from Chaozhou and beyond that require a closer analysis.

On the whole, the Christian relief operation was decentralised and flexible, involving large numbers of Chinese and foreigners. The overheads were low because most of the work was done by volunteers, its bureaucracy was minimal, and its services were provided without ideological constraints. Local preachers continued their usual church duties, especially looking after the sick and ministering to the needs of the dead or dying.

Equally remarkable was the collaboration between local churches and the larger Chinese society. The missionaries and church leaders positioned themselves as efficient relief workers. They acquired widespread contacts and prestige among the municipal officials

and local merchants. They relied on extensive church networks to reach out to the victims and exerted some influence in areas where the authorities failed to operate (Band, 1948, p. 351). The local officials, merchants, and village leaders never saw the Christian charity as a threat to their power. They regarded the Christians as irreplaceable partners in handling the aftermaths of natural disasters. As a result, the Christians safeguarded the interests of local society without undermining the influence of traditional power holders. This partnership between Christians and local elites was a common phenomenon throughout the early Republican era (Dunch, 2001; Carter, 2002; Wang, 2007; McElroy, 1996). As R.G. Tiedemann (2004; 2005) argues, in areas affected by natural disasters, the Church played a vital role in providing food relief and medical assistance throughout the late Qing and early Republican eras, and this form of Christian aid was appreciated by ordinary people.

Added to this success was the juxtaposition of transnational and local church networks. The Chaozhou Christians succeeded in using international and regional church ties to organise a global fundraising campaign. The total amount of aid given by Christians in Hong Kong, Southeast Asia, Europe, and North America made up a large portion of relief expenses. Therefore, the Chaozhou Christians belonged to more than one social circle. Horizontally, they developed an extensive network of support among their peers across the region, and vertically they cultivated a patron-client relationship with international churches. This type of church ties was a form of social capital that allowed local Christians to access outside resources in times of crisis. The resilience of such faith-based networks was essential for the empowerment of Christian communities in the turbulent period of modern China. **RC**

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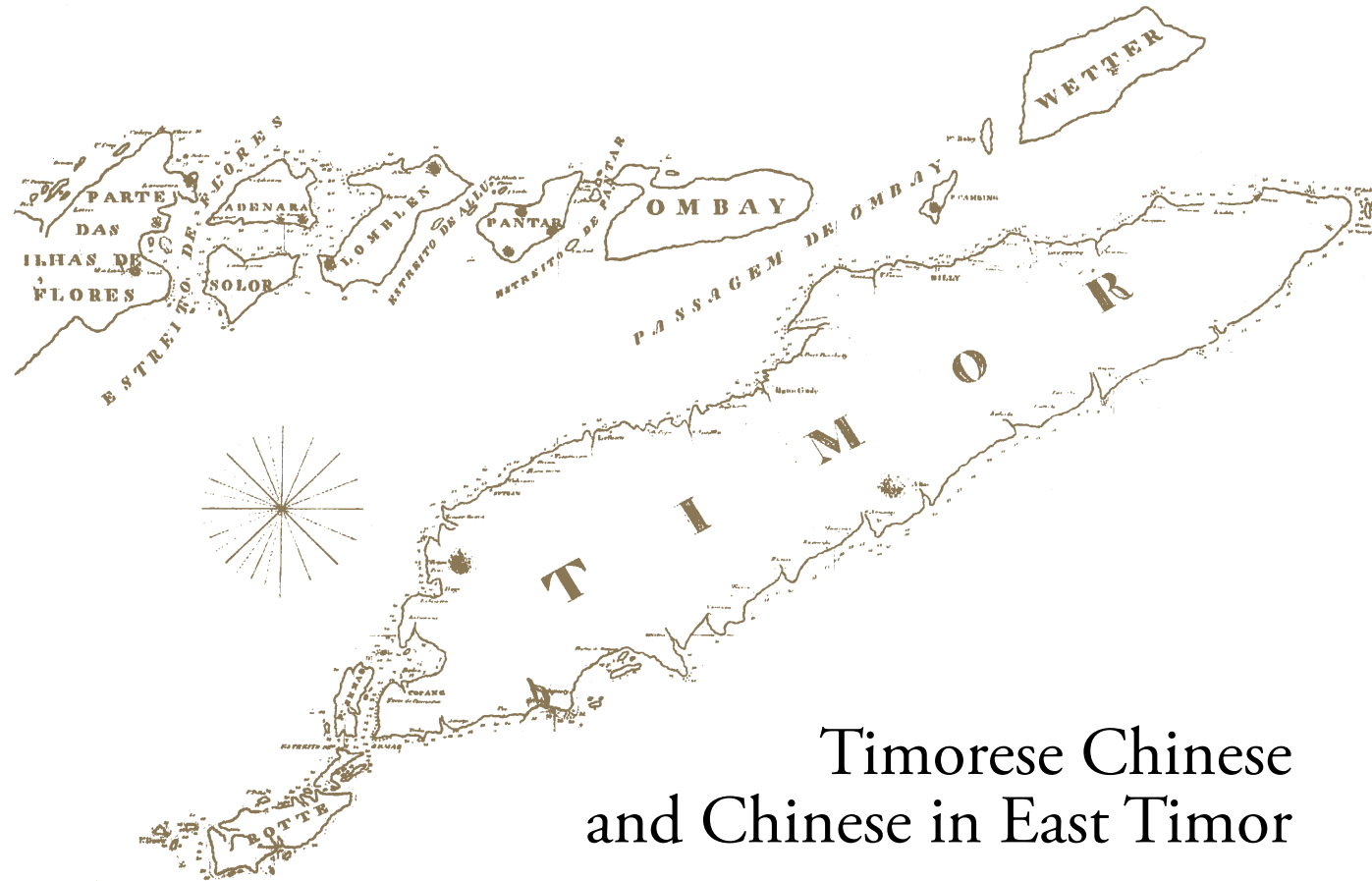
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Timorese Chinese and Chinese in East Timor

JEAN A. BERLIE

INTRODUCTION

During the Ming Dynasty and later, Chinese traders interested in sandalwood arrived on Timor Island, that is, many years before the first Hakka 客家 (*Kejia*) who did not start to come, from Macao and Guangdong Province till the 17th century. The great majority of Chinese in East Timor before independence in 2002 were Hakka.

Chinese from Fujian and Guangdong Provinces are numerous in South East Asia. In 1830, one million Chinese were residents of South East Asia, i.e. 3 per cent of the population. In the 1930s they had grown to three million, but represented a significantly smaller percentage. At present, overseas Chinese are probably 2 per cent of the total resident population of Southeast Asia.

Chinese in Southeast Asia (percentage of population): 1) 6 million in Malaysia (34 per cent); 2) 6 million in Indonesia (3 per cent); 3) 6 million in Thailand (14 per cent); 4) 4.1 million in Singapore (76 per cent); 5) 1 million in Vietnam (2 per cent); 6)

600,000 in the Philippines (1 per cent); 7) 300,000 in Cambodia (4 per cent); 8) 25,000 in Laos (0.8 per cent). These numbers do not always reflect the full extent of Chinese presence. Partially assimilated Chinese are often not counted as Chinese. (CSEA).

This article studies the Hakka of Timor Island and tries to understand why recently many Chinese came to East Timor to develop their entrepreneurial talent. I place in parallel the slow economic development of a new country, and East Timor’s attraction for Chinese entrepreneurs and specialists. Currently, there are Chinese residing in East Timor who work as computer, factory and supermarket entrepreneurs, and as cell phones sellers and repairers, who want to take a calculated risk: travel ‘global’ in the new world of the 21st century.

After the Independence of East Timor in 2002, the Embassy of China became one of the most active diplomatic representations in the country, and coordinated the construction of the Palace of the President of East Timor.