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Author:	Fitzgerald, John; Kuo, Mei-Fen
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# DIASPORA CHARITY AND WELFARE SOVEREIGNTY IN THE CHINESE REPUBLIC: SHANGHAI CHARITY INNOVATOR WILLIAM YINSON LEE (LI YUANXIN, 1884–1965)

JOHN FITZGERALD AND MEI-FEN KUO

*Swinburne University of Technology, Australia*

William Yinson Lee (Li Yuanxin), an influential charity innovator, introduced many modern fund-raising techniques into Shanghai from the 1920s to the 1940s, a time of growing foreign intervention in charitable services to China's poor and disadvantaged. From the late nineteenth century, foreign charities and humanitarian agencies had drawn attention to inequality and injustice in China and tried to remedy them through charitable investments in education, health, and social welfare. These efforts were welcome as substantial support to the needy but unwelcome in drawing international attention to China's failure to care for its own. Underlying ambivalence toward foreign charities was reflected in efforts to recover China's welfare sovereignty by Chinese émigrés returning to China from Anglophone settlements around the Pacific Rim. For Lee and his associates in Shanghai, charity served as an entrée into elite social and political circles and as a medium for cross-cultural negotiations, for participating actively in civic life, for promoting trans-Pacific trade, and for recovering welfare sovereignty for modern China.

KEYWORDS: Australia, civil society, charity, China, diaspora, entrepreneurship, William Yinson Lee (Li Yuanxin), patriotism

## INTRODUCTION

The voluntary work and charitable contributions of foreign missionaries and charity workers in the development of modern China have been recurring themes in Western social and cultural histories of the country for a century and more. The work of Protestant educators and health workers, in particular, and the efforts of big American philanthropy in China, each forms a distinctive subfield of historical inquiry.<sup>1</sup>

1 On Protestant engagements, see "Christianity in China: Bibliography," accessed February 5, 2016, <http://www2.kenyon.edu/Depts/Religion/Fac/Adler/Reln270/Christianity-bib.htm>; also Dong Wang,

From the evidence, it would appear that donors and volunteers from North America and Europe contributed significantly to the building of schools, colleges, clinics, hospitals, orphanages, museums, research laboratories, and medical institutes and to the provision of large-scale flood and famine relief, at a time when Chinese governments and social institutions were incapable of supporting public welfare at scale.

In contrast, the development of China's indigenous charity sector from the late Qing through the early Republic and the growth of domestic contributions to popular education, health clinics, orphanages, disaster relief, and so on began to draw historical attention only recently.<sup>2</sup> The historical rediscovery of the growth of indigenous charity alongside foreign charity in China draws attention to one of the major drivers that shaped and animated local charity development in the Chinese Republic. This was a felt need on the part of local elites to recover China's welfare sovereignty from overseas-based charities and humanitarian agencies operating within China's sovereign territory—in effect, a patriotic recovery effort on behalf of “a nation in peril, taking action to save itself” to demonstrate to foreigners and itself that China did not need help.<sup>3</sup>

Welfare sovereignty was by no means the only driver behind the growth and development of domestic charity in early twentieth-century China. Inherited moral codes highlighting the responsibility of the affluent to care for the poor, of elders to educate the young, of communities to provide for widows and orphans, and of fellow townspeople to care for one another in times of need all continued to play a part in the evolution of charity in the modern period. Changes to the ways in which local charity was conceived and delivered were also stimulated by new technologies, by new transport and logistical systems, by the emergence of national media platforms such as *Shen bao*, and by

“Introduction: Christianity as an Issue in the History of U.S.-China Relations,” *Journal of American-East Asian Relations* 13 (2004–2006): 7–9. Recent publications on secular American philanthropy in China include Mary Brown Bullock, *The Oil Prince's Legacy: Rockefeller Philanthropy in China* (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2011) and Jennifer Ryan, Lincoln Chen, and Tony Saich, eds., *Philanthropy for Health in China* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014).

2 See Qiuguang Zhou and Guilin Ceng, *Zhongguo cishan jianshi* [Brief history of charity in China] (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2006); Susumu Fuma, *Zhongguo shantang shanghui shi yanjiu* [Historical study of benevolent societies and benevolent halls in China] (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 2005); Vivienne Shue, “The Quality of Mercy: Confucian Charity and the Mixed Metaphors of Modernity in Tianjin,” *Modern China* 32, no. 4 (2006): 411–52; Nara Dillon and Jean Chun Oi, eds., *At the Crossroads of Empires: Middlemen, Social Networks, and State-building in Republican Shanghai* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008); Nara Dillon, “Politics of Philanthropy: Social Networks and Refugee Relief in Shanghai,” in Dillon and Oi, *Crossroads of Empires*, 179–205; Bryna Goodman, “What is in a Network? Local, Personal, and Public Loyalties and Conceptions of the State and Social Welfare,” in Dillon and Oi, *Crossroads of Empires*, 155–78; Caroline Reeves, “Sovereignty and the Chinese Red Cross Society: The Differentiated Practice of International Law in Shandong, 1914–1916,” *Journal of the History of International Law* 13 (2011): 155–77; Caroline Reeves, “The Red Cross Society of China: Past, Present and Future,” in Jennifer Ryan, Lincoln C. Chen, and Tony Saich, eds., *Philanthropy for Health in China* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014), 213–33; Thomas Dubois, “The Salvation of Religion? Public Charities and the New Religions of the Early Chinese Republic,” in Rajeswary Ampalavenar Brown and Justin Pierce, eds., *Charities in the Non-Western World* (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2013), 115–46.

3 Shue, “Quality of Mercy,” 425–26; Reeves, “Sovereignty and the Chinese Red Cross” and “Red Cross Society of China.” See also Alfred H. Y. Lin, “Warlord, Social Welfare and Philanthropy: The Case of Guangzhou under Chen Jitang, 1929–1936,” *Modern China* 30, no. 2 (April 2004): 151–98.

ongoing status competition among local and provincial elites and between social institutions and government ones.<sup>4</sup> Local competition with foreign charitable interventions was only part of the story.

Nevertheless, local charity advocates could not help but observe the spread of charitable schools, clinics, and orphanages run by foreigners in every province and in many towns and cities in China. Every week they could read stories in their new media about the failure of local and national authorities to provide for the welfare and education of China's citizens and read as well of the often admirable contributions that foreign charity agencies were making to China's welfare. While local charity champions were prepared to acknowledge that there was much to be learned from the work of foreign charities in China, few would concede that the welfare of China's people should be left to foreigners. Where foreign learning and borrowing were concerned, the patriotic recovery of sovereign authority over the provision of popular welfare played a catalytic role in the development of indigenous charity in modern China and, arguably, in the development of the Chinese welfare state.<sup>5</sup>

In this setting, the contributions of returning members of the Chinese diaspora (*huaqiao* 華僑) to the development of modern charity in China deserve particular attention. *Huaqiao* histories make frequent reference to the overseas diaspora's patriotic contributions to the welfare and development of China.<sup>6</sup> Nevertheless the patriotism of diaspora donors is generally illustrated by reference to the sums they contributed or to the infrastructure they built rather than by reference to their actual engagement with charity as a field of activity or personal vocation. Diaspora charity was implicated in competition for social status in the early Republic no less than other locally based charity. It was highly innovative, introducing new kinds of social organizations, novel modes of civic engagement, and fashionable models of social entrepreneurship and cosmopolitan identities into China. And returning Chinese were no less concerned with the recovery of China's welfare sovereignty than their compatriots at home. Some were even committed to charity as a calling. On each point, Chinese born overseas brought skills and experience acquired abroad that could be applied within China to advance national welfare sovereignty through social innovation and entrepreneurship in competition with foreign charity agencies in China.

Citizens returning to China from the "Cantonese Pacific"<sup>7</sup> brought personal experience of large-scale charity events, including bazaars, lotteries, fashion shows, and beauty

4 Fuma, *Zhongguo shantang*; Shue, "Quality of Mercy," 411–52.

5 Nara Dillon, *Radical Inequalities: China's Revolutionary Welfare State in Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2015).

6 Ch'ing-huang Yen, *The Overseas Chinese and the 1911 Revolution, with Special Reference to Singapore and Malaya* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1976); Michael R. Godley, *The Mandarin-Capitalists from Nanyang: Overseas Chinese Enterprise in the Modernization of China, 1893–1911* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); Gungwu Wang, "The Southeast Asian Chinese and the Development of China," in Leo Suryadinata, ed., *Southeast Asian Chinese and China: The Politico-economic Dimension* (Singapore: Times Academic Press, 1995); Khun Eng Kuah-Pearce and Evelyn Hu-DeHart, *Voluntary Organizations in the Chinese Diaspora* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2006).

7 Henry Yu, "The Intermittent Rhythms of the Cantonese Pacific," in Donna R. Gabaccia and Dirk Hoerder, eds., *Connecting Seas and Connected Ocean Rims: Indian, Atlantic, and Pacific*

contests. They were familiar with innovative social organizations such as luncheon clubs and youth societies, which they introduced to China. Through foreign borrowing and indigenous adaptation, they helped to fashion a stylishly modern Chinese charity sector that reflected a cosmopolitan bourgeois urban lifestyle at once consistent with ideals of social citizenship and state welfare provision while at the same time enabling local charities to compete with Western charities on a more equal footing.<sup>8</sup> Some set up local versions of Western-style charitable societies, others became involved with indigenous Christian charities and youth groups, and some mirrored and competed with foreign and international charities to recover welfare sovereignty through social entrepreneurship. In each case, their commitment to the recovery of welfare sovereignty elevated patriotism as an overarching framework for charitable engagement within which returning Chinese could negotiate what it meant to be a loyal citizen of the Republic of China.

Comparatively speaking, the overarching patriotic framework of charitable innovation in the Chinese Republic appears to have been distinctive. In the broad European tradition, charity is generally associated with humanitarian ideals rather than with patriotic intent. In the Anglophone tradition, the terms “charity” and “philanthropy” are rarely applied in cases where patriotism drives donations.<sup>9</sup> Still, nations have significant roles to play in humanitarian models of charity: the notion that charity begins at home anchors humanitarian gestures in local communities, and charitable institutions are generally registered in local and national jurisdictions. Dominant styles of humanitarian charity also take different forms in different national jurisdictions.

In the American case, conversations on the place of charity in public life accelerated along with the growth of humanitarian charities, community chests, and institutional philanthropy beginning in the late nineteenth century. A combination of circumstances, including massive growth in private wealth in the postbellum period, the political evolution of state and federal governments, recent experience of large-scale wartime fund-raising, and the emergence of a broad culture of giving in American associative life, together encouraged widespread public discussion on the value, purpose, and techniques of effective philanthropy into the early decades of the twentieth century.<sup>10</sup> As charitable trusts and clubs proliferated across the country, new theories were advanced on the importance of “scientific philanthropy” for addressing the underlying causes of poverty and destitution by drawing on the insights and methodologies of “the sociologist, the economist, the ethicist, the statesman.”<sup>11</sup> A number of Chinese students took courses on scientific philanthropy in American colleges and returned to China to practice what they had learned.<sup>12</sup>

*Oceans and China Seas Migrations from the 1830s to the 1930s* (Leiden: Brill, 2011); Elizabeth Sinn, *Pacific Crossing: California Gold, Chinese Migration, and the Making of Hong Kong* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2013).

8 T. H. Marshall, *Citizenship and Social Class, And Other Essays* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1950).

9 Eugene F. Miller, “Philanthropy and Cosmopolitanism,” *The Good Society* 15, no. 1 (2006): 51–60.

10 Olivier Zunz, *Philanthropy in America: A History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012), 8–11; Robert H. Bremmer, *American Philanthropy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988).

11 Yu-Yue Tsu, *The Spirit of Chinese Philanthropy: A Study in Mutual Aid* (New York: Columbia University, 1912), 15–16.

12 Tsu, *Spirit of Chinese Philanthropy*, 15–16.

China also had a distinctive charity culture, which was being remolded under the impact of industrialization, new modes of communication, and increasing contact with foreign models of giving over the late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries.<sup>13</sup> In combination, these experiences framed domestic charitable innovations within larger conversations about anticolonial nationalism in China. Charitable giving by Chinese overseas—whether for hospitals, schools, roads, bridges, famines, or flood relief—was then subsumed within a broad nationalist paradigm of territorial integration, rights recovery, and nation building.<sup>14</sup> An overarching patriotic framework came to envelop charity innovation in China, such that the meaning of patriotism itself was under negotiation in public discussions of charity in the early Republic.

Among *huaqiao* moving frequently between continents and often professing values and preferences distinct from those prevailing in China, charity served as a medium for negotiating citizenship and loyalty to the Republic. A number of returning *huaqiao* introduced to these domestic conversations a cosmopolitanism outlook and international business acumen that envisioned China engaged in a rapidly developing world of trade and commerce in which charitable giving *by Chinese* was thought to play an important part.

The range of cultural negotiations made possible through diaspora charity is well illustrated in the charity work and social networking of an Australian business entrepreneur and charity pioneer, William Yinson Lee (Li Yuanxin 李元信 1884–1965), in Shanghai from 1923 to the outbreak of war with Japan. Born in Sydney in 1884, Lee acquired his business acumen and charity craft under the tutelage of an earlier generation of Chinese-Australian community leaders, including prominent women. At the age of 20, he elaborated them through close association with elite charity circles in Hong Kong, and he honed his skills further in American clubs and diners over the course of a year spent in the United States before he settled with his family in Shanghai in 1923.

For almost two decades, Lee drew on an extensive network of influential Chinese-Australian friends in Shanghai, including the owners and managers of the “four great department stores” on Nanjing Road and benefactors associated with *Liangyou* (良友) pictorial magazine, to promote new forms of charitable fund-raising and welfare investment that bore little relation to customary forms of overseas Chinese patriotic donations. He promoted charity as a form of social engagement, often in association with entertainment, and he advanced charity work as a profession. His charity innovations in China reflected his personal experiences of everyday life in Australia, Hong Kong, and America, and the skills that he acquired as a cross-cultural negotiator and charity pioneer abroad were put to the test in Shanghai.

For Lee and his circle of friends, charity was a currency for cross-cultural negotiations between returning Chinese and home-based citizens and between Chinese and foreigners about who was responsible for the welfare of the Chinese people and who was

13 Zhou Qiuguang, Guilin Zeng, Changshui Xiang, and Yongtian He, *Zhongguo jindai cishan shiye yanjiu* [Research on modern Chinese philanthropy] (Tianjin: Tianjin gu ji chubanshe, 2013), vol. 1, 173–75; Joanna Handlin Smith, *The Art of Doing Good: Charity in Late Ming China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009).

14 Glen Peterson, “Overseas Chinese and Merchant Philanthropy in China: From Culturalism to Nationalism,” *Journal of Chinese Overseas* 1 (2005): 87–109.



best equipped to deliver it. Lee's experience invites us to consider the role of returning trans-Pacific Chinese in the creation of a new style of civic charity that came to be closely associated with the city of Shanghai in the Republic, a city that sat at the center of the developing field of modern Chinese philanthropy.<sup>15</sup>

## CHINESE CHARITY ABROAD: THE AUSTRALIAN CASE

Charity meant many things to the Chinese communities that settled around the Pacific Rim from the mid-nineteenth century. It served to bring and to bind communities together, to mark the boundaries separating one community from another, and at the same time to overcome boundary markers through intercultural exchanges and institutional innovations. It engaged large numbers of people, including hometown communities coming together around the repatriation of the remains of deceased fellow townsmen, business communities negotiating relations with their host societies through donations to hospitals and church halls, and metropolitan communities experimenting with new kinds of charitable associations that had few counterparts in China. Alongside other institutions such as Chinese-language newspapers, language schools, restaurants and produce stores, churches, shrines, temples, and periodic festivals, charity was one of the markers by which people could identify one another, from day to day, as Chinese, collectively shaping a sense of modern ethnicity in societies of immigrants around the Pacific.<sup>16</sup>

The charitable practices and institutions that evolved in the Pacific were neither particularly Chinese nor particularly American, Canadian, or Australasian. They were nevertheless distinctive within the larger Chinese diaspora, reflecting distinctive ways of doing business in Pacific settlements. Diaspora charity elsewhere, for example among Chinese communities in continental Southeast Asia and the British Straits Settlements, generally reflected a business model in which a small number of individual merchants accumulated immense wealth through extraction industries carried out under license with local and colonial authorities.<sup>17</sup> Consistent with this experience, the charitable legacy of the Southeast Asian Chinese diaspora is one of wealthy individuals making memorable contributions to their communities and to favored causes in China, while refraining from engaging in contentious politics.<sup>18</sup>

15 Dillon, "Politics of Philanthropy."

16 Yong Chen, *Chinese San Francisco 1850–1943* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002); Sinn, *Pacific Crossing*; Mei-fen Kuo, *Making Chinese Australia: Urban Elites, Newspapers and the Formation of Chinese Australian Identity, 1892–1912* (Melbourne: Monash University Publishing, 2013); Alison Marshall, *Cultivating Connections: The Making of Chinese Prairie Canada* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2014).

17 Allen Chun, "Pariah Capitalism and the Overseas Chinese of Southeast Asia: Problems in the Definition of the Problem," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 12, no. 2 (1989): 233–56; Kunio Yoshihara, *The Rise of Ersatz Capitalism in South-East Asia* (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1988); Godley, *Mandarin-Capitalists*; Mei-fen Kuo, "From Ethnic Chinese to Multicultural Australia—Centenary History of Chinese Citizen's Society of Victoria and its Charitable Contributions," in *Chinese Community Society of Victoria Centennial Commemorative Publication* (Melbourne: Chinese Citizen's Society of Victoria, 2014).

18 Gungwu Wang, *Wang Gengwu fangtan yu yanlunji* [Selected interviews and essays of Wang Gungwu] (River Edge, NJ: Bafang wenhua qiye gongsi, 2000).

The prominence of wealthy merchants in Southeast Asian philanthropy was further sanctioned, Michael Godley has noted, through the extension of the British ethic of the modern “gentleman.”<sup>19</sup>

In North America and Australasia, diaspora philanthropy similarly reflected local modes of doing business, although in this instance it was derived from a different range of local business practices, including small-to-medium business networking and a style of entrepreneurship that characterized the Cantonese Pacific. Few fabulously wealthy individuals loom large in the history of Chinese philanthropy around the Pacific as they do in Southeast Asia. Chin Gee He (Chen Yixi 陳宜禧 1844–1929) may be considered an outstanding personal celebrity in Taishan for constructing the Sun Ning (Xinning 新寧) railway, but his investment model reflected the collective joint-stock company vehicles favored by Chinese small traders and merchants when marshaling large-scale social and economic investments around the Pacific.<sup>20</sup> Diaspora philanthropy in the Pacific region, we would suggest, is historically associated with coordinated social networking, civic and political activism, collective investment, and entrepreneurial innovation.

A particular feature of Chinese-Australian community networking was its focus on charity events and on charitable giving as a medium of cross-cultural negotiation with the dominant Anglo-settler society. From the late nineteenth century, Chinese community leaders working through civic associations pioneered models of public charity that challenged color boundaries and in effect demanded acceptance of Chinese Australians as equal citizens of colonial society. In 1879, for example, the Chinese Association of Bendigo, an old gold-mining town that attracted tens of thousands of Chinese gold-seekers in the mid-nineteenth century, merged its annual Lunar New Year festival with the city’s Easter Fair to raise funds for the local public hospital. From 1892 to the present day, the annual Bendigo Easter Parade, incorporating the Chinese Lunar New Year, has culminated with an “awakening” ritual for the town’s Golden Dragon, followed by a dragon dance through the streets and lanes of Bendigo. “The uniquely shared Chinese-European experience of the Easter Fair,” Amanda Rasmussen explains, “empowered, incorporated and celebrated the Bendigo Chinese community” through a charitable fund-raising spectacle for 120 years more or less without interruption.<sup>21</sup>

In 1897, Chinese community leaders in Sydney transported the Bendigo Golden Dragon 700 miles north to feature in the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee Charity Carnival held in the harbor city that year. In this case the initiative was led by the Lin Yik Tong (Lianyi-tang 聯益堂), founded in Sydney in 1891 as a relatively inclusive and representative body embracing firms associated with each of the eight major émigré counties of China represented in the city. Part of its earnings went to charity.<sup>22</sup> Led by wealthy Heungshan

19 Godley, *Mandarin-Capitalists*.

20 Madeline Yuan-yin Hsu, *Dreaming of Gold, Dreaming of Home: Transnationalism and Migration between the United States and South China, 1882–1943* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000), 156–75; Kornel S. Chang, *Pacific Connections: The Making of the Western U.S.-Canadian Borderlands* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012).

21 Amanda Rasmussen, “Networks and Negotiations: Bendigo’s Chinese and the Easter Fair,” *Journal of Australian Colonial History* 6 (2004): 79–92.

22 The eight counties were Xiangshan, Dongguan, Zhengcheng, Gaoyao, and the four counties known as the See Yap (Siyi). C. F. Yong, *The New Gold Mountain: The Chinese in Australia, 1901–1921* (Richmond, Australia: Raphael Arts, 1977), 80–83.



(香山 Xiangshan) County native William Robert George Lee (Li Yihui 李益徽 1844–1911), the father of William Yinson Lee, the Lin Yik Tong played a coordinating role in negotiating with the Anglo community for Chinese participation in the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Charity Carnival, in bringing the Bendigo Dragon to Sydney, and in selecting 600 representatives from across the Sydney Chinese community to take part in the public event.<sup>23</sup>

As a platform for cross-cultural exchange, the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Charity Carnival was a success. The Chinese-language *Chinese Australian Herald* (廣益華報 *Guangyi huabo*) claimed that the Chinese community's participation in planning the charity event was in every respect equal to that of Sydney's British Empire loyalists. The English-language press welcomed and celebrated Chinese participation. The *Sydney Morning Herald* reported Chinese taking part in football and cricket matches and in bicycle races associated with the carnival. The *Sydney Mail* featured the role of the Bendigo Golden Dragon, and the *Evening News* welcomed local Chinese participation as citizens of colonial society. The *Chinese Australian Herald* in turn commented with gratification on signs of growing public recognition of equal membership in colonial society. In explaining these signs of growing public recognition, the *Chinese Australian Herald* highlighted "a key moral value for both the Chinese and colonial society—charity."<sup>24</sup>

## WILLIAM YINSON LEE

William Yinson Lee, son of Lin Yik Tong founder W. R. G. Lee who pioneered cross-cultural charity events in Sydney, carried charity as a medium of cross-cultural exchange into the twentieth century and beyond Australia to Hong Kong, Shanghai, and other cities in China. Few official records survive of the years Lee spent in Shanghai as a charity entrepreneur. A 1929 official report on Shanghai charities lists him by name as president of the Chinese Mission to Lepers, a role he performed from 1927 to 1933.<sup>25</sup> His name appears briefly in recent historical studies of the anti-imperialist movement in Republican Shanghai and in studies of public health and nation building in the Republican era.<sup>26</sup> Lee's life in Shanghai and his earlier experience in Sydney and Hong Kong as a social entrepreneur and charity pioneer remain unexplored.

In 1903, at the age of 20, William traveled with his father, W. R. G. Lee, to Hong Kong. With a certificate from Stott's Business College in Sydney and a period of tutelage under Liang Qichao during Liang's six-month tour of Australia from late 1900 to early 1901, Lee secured articles with Wei On (dates unknown), a solicitor in the law firm of Johnson Stokes in Hong Kong. Rather than complete his term of articles, he pursued a

23 Kuo, *Making Chinese Australia*, 66–76.

24 Kuo, *Making Chinese Australia*, 75.

25 Q215-1-68 (1929), Shanghai Municipal Archives; "William Yinson Lee," *World Chinese Biographies* (*Huanqiu Zhongguo mingren zhuanlue*) (Shanghai: Huanqiu chubanshe, 1944), 134.

26 Jeffrey Wasserstrom, "Cosmopolitan Connections and Transnational Networks," in Dillon and Oi, *Crossroads of Empires*, 206–23; Zhenzhu Wang, "Popular Magazines and the Making of a Nation: The Healthy Baby Contest Organized by The Young Companion in 1926–27," *Frontiers of History in China* 6, no. 4 (2011): 525–37; Qizi Liang [Angela Ki Che Leung], *Mafeng: yizhong jibing de yiliaoshehuishi* [*Leprosy in China: A History*], trans. Huiying Zhu (Beijing: Commercial Press, 2013), 75.

career in business, community affairs, and local politics. His family was well connected with the colonial elite and with revolutionary nationalists. One of his sisters married the eldest son of Sir Shou-son Chow (Zhou Shouchen 周壽臣 1861–1959), and his brother James served as English instructor to the young Chiang Kai-shek in Hong Kong.<sup>27</sup>

William Lee himself served as confidential secretary to Sir Boshan Wei Yuk (Wei Boshan 韋寶珊 1848–1921; also known as Wei Yu), chair of the Tung Wah Hospitals charity from 1881 to 1883, cofounder in 1882 of the charitable Po Leung Kuk (保良局 Baoliangju; Society for Protection of Women and Children), and one of the most formidable figures in philanthropy of his day.<sup>28</sup> In 1909, however, William Lee was implicated in an abortive attempt by followers of Sun Yat-sen to capture the viceroy's yamen in Guangzhou, leading to the arrest and execution of several friends and associates. Fearing for his family, Lee returned to Sydney with his wife in 1910.<sup>29</sup>

On returning to Sydney, Lee threw himself into business activities, party politics, social networking, and community charities. In 1913 he registered an import-export firm under the name Pekin, in Sydney, and in 1918 he launched a business preserving and bottling fruits. He acquired membership in a local lodge of the British Freemasons where he is said to have been the youngest Master Mason in the English Masonic order.<sup>30</sup> In 1912 he founded the Australian Chinese Association in Sydney as a platform to promote closer engagement between Chinese and Anglo-Australians and between Australia and China. In 1921 he was appointed English secretary of the Australia and Oceania head office of the Chinese Guomintang (known in Australia at the time as Kuo Min Tang) and was elected vice president of the Zhigongtang Chinese Masonic Association in Australia.<sup>31</sup>

During his time with these two organizations, Lee assisted in the renovation of the Guomintang and Chinese Masonic Association from conspiratorial brotherhoods into organizations serving charitable purposes. The transition in the Chinese title of the Chinese Masonic Society from Yixinggongsi (義興公司) to Zhigongtang (致公堂) during his time in Sydney highlights a significant change in the organization's self-representation from a brotherhood committed to "righteous rebellion" (義興 *yixing*) to one contributing privately to "public welfare" (致公 *zhigong*).<sup>32</sup> As English grand secretary of the Chinese Masonic Society, Lee explained the transition by reference to British freemasonry: although not institutionally related, British and Chinese freemasonry were each founded

27 "William Yinson Lee," *World Chinese Biographies*, 132–35; Chen Jieru [Ch'en Chieh-ju], *Chiang Kai-shek's Secret Past: The Memoir of His Second Wife*, Ch'en Chieh-ju, ed. Lloyd E. Eastman (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1993); *Liangyou* 24 (1927): 29.

28 "William Yinson Lee" *World Chinese Biographies*, 132–35; *Hong Kong Daily Press*, December 17, 1921, 5; Elizabeth Sinn, *Power and Charity: A Chinese Merchant Elite in Colonial Hong Kong* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2003).

29 "William Yinson Lee—Exemption Certificates for Family," A1, 1916/31599, National Archives of Australia (Canberra).

30 *Evening News* (Sydney), August 18, 1903, 4; John Fitzgerald, *Big White Lie: Chinese Australians in White Australia* (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2007).

31 *Sydney Morning Herald*, November 25, 1921, 9; *The Argus* (Melbourne), January 11, 1922, 11.

32 *Chinese Republic News* (Sydney), September 13, 1919, 6; a copy of the revised 1919 regulations is held in the Golden Dragon Museum, Bendigo, Victoria.

on the “practice of moral and social virtue,” on “brotherly love, relief and truth,” and by their distinctive support for charity.<sup>33</sup>

Similarly, in 1920 Lee attended the inaugural convention of the Australasian and Pacific branches of the Chinese Guomindang in Sydney as honorary secretary-general. In August of the following year, the Sydney Nationalists registered their new association under the New South Wales Companies Act as a nonprofit charity under the title of Chinese Nationalist Party of Australasia.<sup>34</sup> According to its memorandum and articles of association, the party’s principal objectives were to promote a democratic form of government in China and friendly relations between the Great Powers, but it also aimed to establish libraries and reading circles for cultural education and gymnasiums for physical education.<sup>35</sup> This eclectic mix of literary, political, and charitable purposes highlights the conversion of the Guomindang Nationalist movement in Australia and the Pacific Islands from a conspiratorial brotherhood to a public welfare organization on a trajectory similar to that of the Chinese Masonic Society’s conversion from a rebellious clique to a public-spirited organization.<sup>36</sup>

At every point Lee combined his social networking and political activities with charitable work. In December 1911, in the style of his father’s precedent in organizing Chinese participation in the 1897 Queen’s Diamond Jubilee Charity Carnival, Lee joined the management committee of Chinese business leaders responsible for arranging Cantonese opera performances and stalls for a public charity fund-raiser planned for that year, the Sydney Hospital Charity Carnival.<sup>37</sup> Also in 1911, Lee was appointed to the executive committee for a festival of nations “art union” charity fund-raising event for Sydney’s Royal Prince Alfred Hospital.<sup>38</sup> Art unions were a novel form of charitable fund-raising by public lottery, initially launched to encourage the sale and appreciation of works of art but increasingly popular in Europe, Britain, the United States, and Australia as fund-raisers for health and welfare charities.<sup>39</sup> Still in his twenties, Lee was elected honorary life governor of Sydney’s Royal Prince Alfred Hospital in 1912 in recognition of his charitable contributions.<sup>40</sup>

33 William Yinson Lee, “Chinese Freemasonry and its Connection to British Freemasonry,” *The Keynotes*, October 1919, 2.

34 “Memorandum and articles of association—Chinese Nationalist Party of Australasia” (1921), no. 523-1-320, Collection of Chinese Nationalist Party of Australasia (Sydney).

35 Mei-fen Kuo and Judith Brett, *Unlocking the History of the Australasian Kuo Min Tang, 1911–2013* (North Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2013), 30–32.

36 See John Fitzgerald, “Revolution and Respectability: Chinese Masons in Australian History,” in Ann Curthoys and Marilyn Lake, eds., *Connected Worlds: History in Transnational Perspective* (Canberra: Australian National University E-Press, 2006), 89–110.

37 *Sydney Morning Herald*, December 16, 1911, 19.

38 *Book of the Fair in Aid of the Extension of the Nurses’ Home, Royal Prince Alfred Hospital: All Nations’ Fair and Art Union, Town Hall, Sydney, April 5th to 12th, 1911* (Sydney: S. D. Townsend, 1911).

39 Wendy Selby, “Social Evil or Social Good: Lotteries and State Regulation in Australia and the United States,” in Jan McMillen, ed., *Gambling Cultures: Studies in History and Interpretation* (London: Routledge, 1996), 60–78; Orsi Husz, “Private Dreams and Public Expectations: Lotteries and Dilemmas of Progress and Social Welfare in Early 20th-Century Sweden,” *Journal of Consumer Culture* 2, no. 1 (2002): 53–79; Joy Sperling, “Art, Cheap and Good: The Art Union in England and the United States, 1840–60,” *Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide* 1, no. 1 (2002): 1–29.

40 “Annual Report of Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, 1911,” 43–44.

In addition to his personal contributions, Lee took part in organized charitable activity. In 1918 the Chinese Masonic Society, Chinese Chamber of Commerce, and Chinese Nationalist League came together to convene a public charitable bazaar to mark Red Cross Day and raise funds for the families of Australian soldiers returning from the Great War. The Australian Red Cross Day Committee called for participation to set up fund-raising stalls in Martin Place in Sydney. Mrs. James Ah Chuey (dates unknown), wife of the Grand Master of the Chinese Masonic Society, was listed as charity manager for the Chinese community. The Chinese stalls erected in Martin Place collected and contributed over £600 to the returned veterans' fund. Chinese community organizations participated in a further two bazaars organized by the Red Cross Society in Sydney later in the same year.<sup>41</sup> The community's successful experiment with public Red Cross stalls led the Chinese Masonic Society to extend the innovation to its own fund-raising efforts for flood relief in Guangzhou, on which progress had stalled. The wives, daughters, and sisters of prominent Chinese Masonic Society members, including William Lee's wife, organized a Guangzhou flood-relief bazaar at the Chinese Masonic Hall and raised £91 in one evening.<sup>42</sup>

Although William Lee's cross-cultural fund-raising activities were undertaken to support charitable causes, they served the further purpose of securing cross-cultural recognition from the Anglophone community of his status and that of his peers and friends in the Chinese community. When charitable activities failed to secure recognition, Lee did not refrain from demanding it. He frequently resorted to the letters columns of the English-language press to demand recognition of the Chinese community's generosity and civic engagement. At the time of the Red Cross Day bazaar, for example, Lee wrote to the Sydney press to complain that Chinese contributions to the war effort were being insufficiently recognized in Australia. In response to Lee's complaint, the Sydney City Council raised the five-color flag of the Chinese Republic over Sydney Town Hall, for the first time, to acknowledge the Chinese community's contributions to the patriotic war effort.<sup>43</sup>

The public credibility Lee earned through his cross-cultural charitable activities and civic engagement emboldened him to speak out frequently in defense of China and its people. The *Sydney Morning Herald*, the *Sunday Times* (Sydney), the *Brisbane Courier*, and other newspapers frequently published his opinions on Japanese aggression, the Washington Conference, "unwarrantable" slurs upon Sydney Chinese communities on one pretext and another, and in defense of China's contributions to the Great War. He lectured frequently on Australia-China relations in the early Republic. Much that he published on intercultural and international relations was important in itself, some was important because he wrote it, but in every case newspaper editors took seriously whatever William Lee had to say on matters of public interest.<sup>44</sup>

41 *NSW Red Cross Record* 4, no. 5 (1918): 12; *Sydney Morning Herald*, April 27, 1918, 13; *Sydney Morning Herald*, June 5, 1918, 7; A 2741, vol. 1, L. Harvey Papers, Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales; *Chinese Republic News*, June 15, 1918, 6.

42 *Chinese Republic News*, July 20, 1918, 6.

43 *Evening News*, May 28, 1918; *Sydney Morning Herald*, May 7, 1918, 8; *Sydney Daily Paper*, May 16, 1918. See also William Yinson Lee, *China and the War* (Sydney: R. P. Paterson, 1918).

44 *Sydney Stock and Station Journal*, September 5, 1922, 8; *Brisbane Courier*, March 17, 1923, 7.

His charity work, elite networking, and public advocacy paid dividends for Lee's family as well. Toward the end of 1913, Lee's brother Duncan was kidnapped for ransom, near Guangzhou; he was rescued in the following year without harm or payment after William sought Australian government intercession through the British consulate in Guangzhou, which led to a successful raid on the bandit's lair.<sup>45</sup> His Sydney connections also served him well in the United States. Detained by immigration officers in San Francisco in 1921 as a Chinese seeking to enter America without a permit, he succeeded in gaining entry to the port after presenting a letter of introduction from the Lord Mayor of Sydney certifying that he was an Australian British subject of high repute.<sup>46</sup> William Lee's charitable engagements worked on many fronts as an effective intercultural and international negotiation strategy.

Lee carried these Australian lessons with him when he relocated to Shanghai, where he found a number of his Sydney compatriots managing the big department stores on Nanjing Road—in particular, Wing On and Sincere—and developing their own styles of private and corporate philanthropy at the time of his arrival. Leading shareholders among the Kwok, Ma, Choy, and Lee families who managed these stores were among the founders of chapters of the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) and Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) chapters in Hong Kong, Shanghai, and elsewhere, and they contributed personally to defray the costs of building and running hospitals, schools, and colleges.<sup>47</sup> Wing On extended its business ethic of "serving the customer" to "serving the masses" through public welfare activities undertaken in the firm's name. These included building Guangdong Hospital and Guangdong Middle School, assigning company staff to fund-raising teams for the Chinese Christian Association's annual charity drives, picking up the establishment and running costs of Shiguang (世光) Girls' School in Zhongshan County and of the local county hospital, contributing periodically to north China flood and famine relief, and in due course supporting refugee relief efforts responding to the Japanese invasion of North China and Shanghai.<sup>48</sup> Wing On also convened fund-raising events on behalf of particular charities. In 1930 alone it hosted eight shows that raised 25,000 yuan for the Shanghai Orphanage.<sup>49</sup> William Lee drew on these connections in designing and implementing his own fund-raising innovations in China.

Among historians of Shanghai, Lee is represented as a natty social comprador straddling the boundaries of the Anglo-American and Chinese speaking worlds and prone to writing cranky letters to the press. To be sure, he quickly transferred to Shanghai his habit of submitting letters to the editors of English-language journals to protest perceived indignities against Chinese persons. A number of his letters appeared in the *Chinese Press*, *Chinese Daily News*, and the *North China Herald* in Shanghai around the time of the 1925 May Thirtieth incident, when feelings were running high over British police officers firing upon an unarmed crowd of protestors on Nanjing Road, killing several of the protestors.

45 *Sunday Times* (Sydney), April 19, 1914, 10.

46 *Daily Herald* (Adelaide), December 9, 1922, 5.

47 Song Zuanyou, *Guangdongren zai Shanghai, 1843–1949* [Cantonese in Shanghai, 1843–1949] (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 2007), 309–15; Denise Austin, *Kingdom-Minded People: Christian Identity and the Contributions of Chinese Business Christians* (Leiden: Brill, 2011)

48 *Zhuxiyuan yuebao* 8 (1921), 71 and 73 (1926), and 101 (1929); *Yongan yeukan* 9 (1939).

49 *Xinshangye jikan* 2 (1936): 47.



In the lead-up to the incident, in letters published in March and April 1925, Lee wrote of the “unfortunate circumstances among Chinese and foreigners” brewing in Shanghai and urged greater respect for Chinese claims on home territory. He appealed in particular to foreign-language media to correct hostile foreign public opinion by showing greater respect for China.<sup>50</sup>

Lee also submitted several letters protesting the refusal of foreign private clubs in Shanghai to grant admission to Chinese members, complaining of British members’ reluctance to invite Chinese guests into their clubs. Historian Jeffrey Wasserstrom has highlighted one of Lee’s letters protesting Chinese exclusion from foreign clubs that prompted rebuttals in the *North China Herald* on August 8, 1925 and an editorial on the subject in *China Weekly Review* a week later. Lee responded to the editorial in turn. Apart from periodic gatherings of Oxford or Cambridge alumni at Shanghai clubs, he wrote to the editor, “I have yet to hear of a single Chinese gentleman who has been invited to visit the Shanghai Club as a guest of a Chinese member. The policy is obviously race discrimination as if it meant loss of prestige for a Britisher to associate with a Chinese.” To a gentleman such as himself, who had socialized freely with “the distinguished orders, merchant princes and captains of industry” in Australia, it was galling in Shanghai to be “considered not good enough to converse with junior clerks of British nationality if they happen to be members of the Shanghai Club.”<sup>51</sup> Lee was a decorated English Freemason in an Australian order of Freemasons, he had been invited into many private clubs in Sydney, and in 1923 he had hosted former Australian prime minister Sir Joseph Cook and distinguished guests at a private dinner party.<sup>52</sup> No door was closed to William Lee in Sydney or London, but in Shanghai even a junior British clerk outranked him. The indignity revived his letter-writing habits.

Lee also imported into Shanghai lessons drawn from his brief experience touring the United States after successfully negotiating entry in 1922. Lee liked what he saw of America. He was prepared to make an exception for Americans in penning his letters to newspaper editors, pointing out that a young Chinese like himself “finds some foreigners, generally of inferior social position to those with whom he fraternized abroad, assuming such airs as to make it impossible to continue his foreign associations.” In contrast, “bighearted” Americans shared with cultivated Chinese a contempt for petty snobbery.<sup>53</sup> American generosity appeared to him a variant of the common international currency of charity that lubricated intercultural exchange and built mutual respect.

America was also a land of opportunity. Lee took advantage of his admission to San Francisco to secure exclusive American business agencies for himself in Shanghai. When he returned to China in 1923, his business card listed him as a codirector of Brewer & Company, Inc., with Chinese distribution rights for Brewer pharmaceuticals and powdered milk. In this capacity he was the first to promote the benefits of newly discovered

50 *North China Herald*, March 28, 1925, 526 and April 4, 1925, 318.

51 *North China Herald*, August 1 and August 8, 1925; Wasserstrom, “Cosmopolitan Connections,” 206–23, 218, 264–65.

52 *The Register* (Adelaide), May 31, 1923, 9.

53 *North China Herald*, March 28, 1925, 526.



vitamins in the Chinese language, chiefly through newspaper and magazines articles and promotional advertising for Brewer.<sup>54</sup>

Lee also secured international rights over the latest American civic innovations. Broadly speaking, he helped to extend to Chinese in Shanghai the American innovation of the luncheon club. Early in the twentieth century, luncheon clubs such as Rotary were bringing professional men (and, in time, women) together across the United States for mutually profitable social and business connections under a common ethic of community service.<sup>55</sup> From 1923, Lee joined various dining clubs and community service organizations in Shanghai, including Rotary and the YMCA, and himself created or introduced to China and Hong Kong a number of clubs and associations, including the Y's Men's Club, the Chinese Mission to Lepers, the Sino-Japan Friendship Association, and the Pan-Pacific Association.

For Lee, international trade, community service, and intercultural charitable activity were complementary lines of work. For over two decades, from 1923 to 1946, he ran a succession of business agencies in Shanghai and Hong Kong marketing powdered milk, vitamins, pharmaceuticals, insurance, and industrial products, all the while extending his business and social networks among local and foreign communities through his associational and charitable activities. His business interests at times intersected with his charitable work—particularly relating to milk powder, vitamins, and child health—but his business was rarely promoted *as* business. Despite his foreign affiliations, his business ventures were promoted as instruments of patriotic and charitable nation building.

Lee's promotion of child health and education through his business and charitable activities coincided with intensive promotion of "hygiene" for nation building in the Chinese Republic.<sup>56</sup> Advertisements promoting William Lee's imported powdered milk products—to the effect that healthy babies make strong nations—were among the earliest examples of successful utilization of the modern discourse of health and hygiene to promote a style of business that would make money and make China strong.<sup>57</sup> William Lee was conscious nevertheless that his efforts in promoting child health in China were undertaken as a Chinese national working on behalf of a foreign business firm. So he introduced himself through an advertisement for a charitable baby contest that he sponsored in 1926 as follows:

He spares no efforts to improve social welfare and especially devotes himself to the health of children and the education of youth, expecting to cultivate strong and well-rounded talents for our Chinese nation. Though working for a foreign country, he gives priority to our own nation building.<sup>58</sup>

54 Yinson Lee, "Changshi: lun weishengsu" [Common sense: on vitamins], *Guangji yuekan* [Guangji medical journal] 2, no. 8 (1925): 1–4; Yinson Lee, "Yinger shidang zhi yinshi" [Proper infant diet], *Shen bao*, December 20, 1926, 17; *Liangyou* 3–7 (1926).

55 *Rotarian* 6, no. 1 (1915): 91. Shanghai Rotary attracted Chinese members before 1920 but began actively recruiting in that year and in 1922 issued its regulations in Chinese. Chinese membership grew from 38 in 1919 to 98 in 1923. AC 0033, box 11, Shanghai China, vol. 1 (1918–1922) and vol. 2 (1922–1925), Rotary History and Archives, Chicago.

56 Ruth Rogaski, *Hygienic Modernity: Meanings of Health and Disease in Treaty-Port China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004).

57 *Liangyou*, 1 and 8 (1926); 13 (1927).

58 *Liangyou*, 7 (1926); Zhenzhu Wang, "Popular Magazines and the Making of a Nation," 534.



Figure 1. Y's Men's Club baby clinic (William Yinson Lee, front row, center). Source: "Y's Men's International," box 154, Kautz Family YMCA Archives, University of Minnesota.

In the same year, Lee established a free children's health clinic in the Zhabei (閘北) District of Shanghai (Figure 1). The initiative was clearly related to his interests in children's health but linked as well to growing domestic concern over international criticism of the use of child labor in Shanghai's industrial sector. Zhabei was concurrently the focus of an international campaign targeting child labor led by anticolonial champions of "international citizenship," including Australian humanitarian

and feminist Eleanor Hinder (1893–1963), also resident in Shanghai at this time.<sup>59</sup> Through the international media, foreign activists circulated images of children in Zhabei as emblematic of the brutality of modern factory life, as irrefutable evidence of Chinese inhumanity, and as a metaphor of China's subservient relationship to foreign capital.<sup>60</sup> William Lee's child health clinic in Zhabei was intended to help children materially, while addressing China's reputation as a fundamentally inhumane society in the absence of an effective state welfare sector.

Similar conditions prevailed in children's education. Assuming that the welfare of the nation's children was the foundation of national strength, as Lee asserted in his advertisements, it followed that government should provide for the welfare and education of children. Charity could only achieve so much. This point was conceded by local charity activists of the early Republic, including China's first modern philanthropy theorist, the Reverend Tsu Yu-Yue (朱友漁 1885–1986) of Shanghai, who predicted in 1912 that the government of China would eventually emerge as primary provider of public education and welfare services, with charitable providers playing a supplementary role.<sup>61</sup> Lee adopted a similar position a decade later when he appealed to the Shanghai Municipal Council to extend and improve basic education for children living in Shanghai's slum districts. Universal basic education was not, he pointed out, a matter for private charitable provision but a matter for public investment. Educating future citizens of the Republic was the duty of governments, not charities.<sup>62</sup> When Chinese governments failed to deliver, overseas charities and foreign champions of "international citizenship" invariably intervened in their place. Responsibility then fell to local charity to do what governments would not and uphold China's good name and standing in the humanitarian imaginary.

The failure of government to meet public expectations to deliver education, health, and welfare services catalyzed many charitable education, health, and welfare initiatives in the Republic. Lack of elementary schools, for example, prompted the rise of a Popular Education movement among political radicals, including anarchists and communists, but also prompted the rapid growth of Christian mission schools funded by foreign charities.<sup>63</sup> In January 1926 William Lee launched his own variant of the Popular Education movement through another of his initiatives, the Y's Men's Club movement, which he introduced and expanded through major urban networks in China. Lee introduced the Y's Men's Club movement from America to China to encourage fund-raising for local charities and promote "substantial" Chinese patriotism through civic engagement. Non-Chinese were

59 Sarah Paddle, "For the China of the Future: Western Feminists, Colonisation and International Citizenship in China in the Inter-war Years," *Australian Feminist Studies* 16, no. 36 (2001): 325–41.

60 Sophie Loy-Wilson, "The Smiling Professions: Salesmanship and Promotional Culture in Australia and China 1929–1939" (PhD diss., University of Sydney, 2012), 140.

61 Tsu, *Spirit of Chinese Philanthropy*; Dillon, "Politics of Philanthropy."

62 *North China Herald*, April 12, 1924, 64.

63 James Yen, "Popular Education Movement" and "The National Association of the Mass Education Movement Bulletin," no. 1 (1924), in *International Work in China*, box 95, Kautz Family YMCA Archives, University of Minnesota; also "Social Service by the Student Association in 1915" and "Study of the Christian Colleges of China" in the same archival series and box. Charles W. Hayford, *To the People: James Yen and Village China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990).

not especially welcomed into the membership.<sup>64</sup> Under his popular education program, two classes of a hundred pupils each were supported by club members who volunteered their services.<sup>65</sup>

Lee was ahead of his time in favoring native Chinese leadership of YMCA institutions in China to the exclusion of foreigners. Before the 1925 May Thirtieth movement, 89 foreign secretaries were overseeing about 100 city and student YMCA associations in China. Following the movement, however, Chinese were encouraged to assume leadership positions on local boards and on the National Committee, which eventually came to be dominated by local Chinese.<sup>66</sup> Lee launched his Chinese Y's Men's Club (Lianqingshe 聯青社) network as a native Chinese organization that was unremittingly generous, fervently patriotic, and dedicated to the public good, sometime before the May Thirtieth movement,

Lee secured the right to introduce to China the YMCA's new charitable arm under Chinese leadership and management during his 1922 visit to America. The Y's Men's Club was initially seeded in Ohio, in 1922, emerging from a 1920 experiment when the Toledo YMCA Club or Tolymca Club was set up as a new-style luncheon club on the model of Rotary, which had been founded in Chicago 14 years earlier. In 1922 the Tolymca Club adopted the name "Y's Men's Club" to reach beyond Toledo while retaining brand recognition in association with the national and international YMCA network. William Lee visited and toured America in the same year, and he established the first overseas branch of the Y's Men's Club, the Shanghai chapter, in 1924.<sup>67</sup>

Lee served as president of the men's club network from 1924 to 1926 and again from 1932 to 1933. In 1933 he was formally endorsed as the clubs' regional president for China, overseeing 11 clubs with about 500 members drawn from "the leading business and professional men" of Shanghai and other cities, including Hong Kong, Nanjing, Suzhou, Wuhu, Hankou, Fuzhou, and Xiamen.<sup>68</sup> Beyond China, the international club network expanded to 196 clubs in 16 countries by 1939.<sup>69</sup> In that year, Lee was awarded the permanent title of director emeritus for the Chinese region in the International Association.<sup>70</sup> Lee's stated aim in establishing Y's Men's Clubs in China was to "encourage young men to take interest in civil, economic and social affairs and to support by active services deserving philanthropic and social movements."<sup>71</sup> His implicit purpose in encouraging more young Chinese men to take on voluntary public service was to contest the hold of foreign charity organizations over China's modern welfare sector.

Nevertheless, the primary goal was charitable. Reflecting back two decades later, Lee was proud to claim that the network had made a significant contribution to public

64 "William Yinson Lee," *World Chinese Biographies*, 134–35; "International Y's Men's Club," box 1, Archives of the University of Hong Kong; U120-2-22, Shanghai Municipal Archives.

65 *Chinese Press* (Shanghai), March 14, 1926, 1.

66 "YMCA International Work in China," Kautz Family Archives, accessed March 4, 2015, <http://special.lib.umn.edu/findaid/html/ymca/yusa0009x2x4.phtml>.

67 George W. Keitel, *A Topical History of Y'sdom, 1920–1953; The Story of the International Association of Y's Men's Clubs: The Service Club of the YMCA* (Lawrence, KS: International Association of Y's Men's Clubs, n.d. [ca. 1953]).

68 *China Press* (Shanghai), January 5, 1933, 2.

69 "William Yinson Lee," *World Chinese Biographies*, 134.

70 "Hong Kong Wisebits," no. 83, December 30, 1937, Archives of the University of Hong Kong.

71 *North China Herald* (Shanghai), January 16, 1926, 104.

welfare, “especially for the underprivileged, such as medical clinics for children as well as for adults, playgrounds, educational and vocational classes, clubs for street boys, student hostels, assistance to distressed patients discharged from hospitals, letter writing for the illiterate, etc.”<sup>72</sup>

In August 1929, Lee helped launch a further initiative to reclaim welfare sovereignty through the creation of the Chinese Child Welfare Association, which, as we shall see, advocated improved nutrition and supported health clinics for children.<sup>73</sup> Another public health issue around which he mobilized local charitable support was leprosy. In 1926 Lee established the Chinese Mission to Lepers, mobilizing his social, business, and charity connections to extend the work of the mission to a number of cities and provinces in China in competition with the foreign Mission to Lepers, run chiefly by Britons and Americans.<sup>74</sup> In extending his Chinese Mission to Lepers throughout China, Lee professed to be an internationalist who also championed Chinese national sovereignty. Ridding China of leprosy, he declared in the mission’s official magazine, *Lepers Quarterly* (癩瘋季刊 *Mafeng jikan*), required an international effort, as it entailed a global war against a deadly foe and the use of quasi-military tactics and modern scientific knowledge to eradicate the disease.<sup>75</sup> The first step was effective fund-raising. China needed to partner with other countries to ensure that the nationwide fund-raising campaign to build a healthier and stronger “Chung Wah” nation was undertaken in concert with international efforts to eradicate the disease.<sup>76</sup> At the same time, Lee’s Chinese Mission competed with foreign-controlled leprosy agencies in raising funds within China and reclaiming Chinese sovereignty over the management of one of China’s key public health challenges.<sup>77</sup>

The movement to recover welfare sovereignty was ritually elaborated in the style of events Lee organized to support his charitable activities, including a conscious emphasis on indigenous traditions of music and dress to accompany fund-raising events in Shanghai. The theme of Lee’s first fashion fund-raiser (Figure 2), held in November 1926, was the history of Chinese dress from ancient times to the present day, accompanied by musical performances on traditional instruments and contemporary colloquial comedy skits. The *Chinese Press* (Shanghai) and *Shen bao* applauded the show for illustrating the Chinese “art of costume” to the accompaniment of traditional Chinese music in support of charitable purposes.<sup>78</sup> The show attracted the participation of several prominent young

72 “William Yinson Lee,” *World Chinese Biographies*, 134.

73 *North China Herald* (Shanghai), August 17, 1929, 256.

74 In association with Kuang Fuzhuo and others. See Chi Wai Cheung, “Kuang Fuzhuo,” in Carol Lee Harmin, ed., *Salt and Light 2: More Lives of Faith that Shaped Modern China* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2010).

75 *Lepers Quarterly* 3 (1930): 1–5.

76 *Chinese Press*, June 19, 1926, 2.

77 *Lepers Quarterly* 3 (1930); Leung, *Leprosy in China*; Jiafeng Liu, “Gospel, Medicine and Politics: Leprosy Treatment in Modern China” in Liu Xinli, ed., *Shenti, linghun, ziran: Zhongguo jidujiao yu yiliao, shehui shiye yanjiu* [Body, soul, nature: research on Christianity, medicine, and social services in China] (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 2010). Donghua Zhou, “Gong-gong lingyu zhong de cishan fuyin yu minzuzhuyi: yi jindai Hangzhou mafeng jiuji weili” [Charity, gospel, and nationalism in the public sphere: the case of leprosy treatment in modern Hangzhou], *Shehuixue yanjiu* 3 (2010): 1–18.

78 *Chinese Press*, November 28, 1926, 1; *Shen bao*, December, 19 1926, 17.





Figure 2. Y's Men's Club fund-raising fashion show. Top: *Eastern Times Photo Supplement* (圖畫時報 *Tuhua shibao*), December 19, 1926. Bottom: *Tienming Pao Pictorial Supplement* (天民報圖畫附刊 *Tianminbao tuhua fukan*), December 18, 1926.

Chinese women, including Western educated daughters of the political elite and emerging movie stars, and raised more than 10,000 yuan.<sup>79</sup> With funds raised through the event, Lee opened his first free children's clinic in Zhabei the following year.

Lee's inaugural fashion fund-raiser inspired many imitations, including a similar event in support of Russian refugees and children in 1928, also in Shanghai, and a fashion fund-raiser staged by the National Chinese Women's Association in 1931.<sup>80</sup> Lee did not stop at one show himself. When the Chinese Mission to Lepers was imperiled by military activity in and around Shanghai, bringing street-based fund-raising campaigns to a standstill in 1928, he decided to convene another fashion fund-raiser.<sup>81</sup> Some of his other charities were also falling short of funds. Lee came up with a combined fashion and entertainment fund-raising event involving the Y's Men's Club, the Chinese Mission to Lepers, and the Pan-Pacific Association, on the understanding that half of the funds would go to the Chinese Mission to Lepers and the remainder would be shared between the Zhabei child health clinic and a fund to pay the travel expenses of Chinese women delegates to the forthcoming Pan-Pacific Women's Conference, in which humanitarian internationalist Eleanor Hinder played a key role.<sup>82</sup>

<sup>79</sup> *Eastern Times Photo Supplement*, December 18, 1926, 16; *Shen bao*, October 14, 1927, 14.

<sup>80</sup> *Shen bao*, February 20, 1931, 10. Lee's example extended as far as Batavia, where the Chinese Mission to Lepers arranged a fashion fund-raising show in 1927.

<sup>81</sup> *Chinese Press* (Shanghai), May 19, 1928, 1; May 30, 1928, 4; June 16, 1928, 466.

<sup>82</sup> *Shen bao*, June 3, 1928, 18; *Shen bao*, June 4, 1928, 21; *Shen bao*, June 16, 1928, 16, 24; *Brisbane Courier*, July 19, 1928; Eleanor M. Hinder, "Pan Pacific Women's Conference in Relation to



On this occasion, in June 1928, Chinese and Western fashions were paraded with the aid of sponsorship from local and foreign fashion houses. Commercial businesses participated in the event because Shanghai's most charitable donors were among its largest consumers of luxury goods and readers of glossy pictorial magazines, including *Liangyou*, which was partly sponsored through charitable donations from Mrs. A. O'Ben (?–1921), wife of the managing director of Sydney-based Sincere Company in Shanghai. Several participants donated personal items for the charity auction. The highest bid at auction went to a folding fan painted by Miss Yu Danhan (虞澹涵 dates unknown), daughter of the chairman of the Shanghai Chinese Chamber of Commerce, Yu Xiaqing (虞洽卿 1867–1945), which sold for 6,000 yuan.<sup>83</sup> From this time forward, donations by women members of the Shanghai elite to the Chinese Mission to Lepers are reported to have accelerated appreciably, enhancing Lee's position in fund-raising competition with foreign agencies. By the 1940s, the Chinese Mission was operating more than twice the number of leprosaria as the British and American Mission to Lepers.<sup>84</sup>

As local president for Shanghai and regional director for China, Lee pressed the Y's Men's Clubs into carrying out charitable works in keeping with their charter. It was the Shanghai Y's Men's Club that convened the inaugural Chinese fashion show that raised funds for a new baby clinic offering free medical care for children of poor families in the Zhabei District of Shanghai. Lee served as honorary secretary of the Zhabei clinic, which continued to receive financial support through the clubs' fund-raising activities until the outbreak of war with Japan in the summer of 1937. In 1936 the club convened a benefit ball to fund two children's playgrounds in Shanghai for the model villages of Shanghai mayor Wu Tiecheng (吳鐵城 1888–1953). In May 1937, one of the Shanghai Club's charity fairs raised over 10,000 yuan for a vocational education program and for a local social center.

Beyond his prolific letters to the editor, William Lee was an accomplished media communicator and public events organizer for his charities. As regional director, he edited the *Y's Men of the East Review*, through which he coordinated communications among all club branches in China, promoted philanthropy as a cause, and introduced innovative philanthropy practices from around the world. Some of these practices did not transfer readily into China. To support his leprosy centers, for example, Lee introduced a variety of novel fund-raising techniques, including China's first charity beauty pageant.

Lee was familiar with beauty pageants from his Sydney days. The 1911 Sydney Hospital Charity Carnival for which he organized Chinese community participation ended with a beauty contest. Within China, however, beauty pageants were customarily associated with prostitution. Lee invited the wives and daughters of the Shanghai commercial elite to compete in a new-style beauty contest that was promoted in the local press as a Chinese-Western cross-cultural innovation serving a charitable purpose.<sup>85</sup>

World's Conferences" (1928), in Maureen Moynagh and Nancy Forestall, eds., *Documenting First Wave Feminisms* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011), vol. 1, 88ff.

83 *Shen bao*, June 11, 1928, 15.

84 *Lepers Quarterly* 1, no. 1 (1926): 3; *Lepers Quarterly* 3, no. 4 (1929): 3–4; Leung, *Leprosy in China*, 161.

85 *Sydney Morning Herald*, December 16, 1911, 19; Elizabeth J. Remick, *Regulating Prostitution in China: Gender and Local State-Building, 1900–1937* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2014).

The 1929 pageant was held at the New World Theater on Nanjing Road along with a fund-raising art exhibition for the Leprosy Hospital.<sup>86</sup> The winner was selected from among several hundred women candidates through a count of the charity-tickets purchased on their behalf. Would-be voters purchased a ticket in a lottery, which came with a voting coupon for the election of their favored candidate. Some fans launched ticket syndicates to buy and resell large numbers of tickets while retaining the voting coupons for the election of their favorites. Over the weeks leading up to the event, the organizers published in *Shen bao* the names of enrolled candidates and the numbers of tickets bought on their behalf. The lead changed several times, and leading candidates competed at the level of 10,000 and more votes each.

One powerful syndicate supporting Yu Danhan, whose painted fan had earlier attracted the highest bid at a charity auction, bought a large number of tickets and submitted them for the final count.<sup>87</sup> At first it appeared that the syndicate's efforts had prevailed. An informal count indicated that Yu Danhan had earned the highest number of votes, with Miss Elsie Kwok (Guo Anci 郭安慈 1904–1980) in second place. Before the winner was announced, however, another candidate, Miss Helen Yun (Yin Hailun 尹海倫 dates unknown), transferred 8,900 of her voting coupons to Elsie Kwok, who was declared the winner.

Outraged, Yu Danhan's supporters commenced legal action against William Lee on behalf of the aggrieved young lady, seeking to have the count declared illegal, the outcome nullified, and costs awarded to the defendant. At this point, Yu intervened, issuing a public statement that she had participated in the pageant for "public benefit" (*gongyi* 公益), not for private gain, and hence would gracefully decline to pursue the matter through the courts. The case was dropped. It remained nevertheless a subject of controversy in the Chinese language press, which questioned the ethics, procedures, and outcomes of what turned out to be a memorable fund-raising charity event.<sup>88</sup>

The 1929 beauty pageant remains a matter of some interest in the Chinese-speaking world today.<sup>89</sup> Still, its roots in cross-cultural charity practices in Sydney a century ago have passed unnoticed, as have the role of interpersonal networks among Chinese-Australian business leaders in Shanghai. William Lee's many years staging high-profile Anglo-Chinese charity events in Sydney framed the Chinese-Western Festival at the heart of his Shanghai experiment. This was an Anglo-Chinese spectacle on the model of the charity bazaars, exhibits, and fashion shows that he had been involved with in Sydney, in this case designed to draw attention to his Leprosy Hospital and to himself as a pioneering charity fund-raiser.<sup>90</sup>

Personal connections also played a part. The initial winner, Yu Danhan, was the daughter of one of the most powerful figures in the Shanghai business elite, Yu Xiaqing,

86 *Shen bao*, November 24, 1929, 15.

87 *China Press*, November 22, 1929, 1.

88 *Shen bao*, November 24, 1929, 15.

89 See, for example, the blog entry "Zhongguo jindai yiyishang de shouci xuanmei" [Historical significance of the first beauty pageant in modern China], accessed August 22, 2015, [http://14756038.blog.hexun.com.tw/79155332\\_d.html](http://14756038.blog.hexun.com.tw/79155332_d.html). See also Hongjing Wu, *Lao Shanghai modeng nüxing* [Modern women in old Shanghai] (Shanghai: Zhongguo fulihui chubanshe, 2004), 53.

90 Annette Shiell, *Fundraising, Flirtation and Fancywork: Charity Bazaars in Nineteenth Century Australia* (Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012).

Ningbo business leader and chair of the Shanghai Chinese Chamber of Commerce. Only a Shanghai parvenu such as William Lee would have dared to give offense to Yu Xiaqing and his influential circle of friends and supporters. As it happened, the young woman who shot to victory in the final round, Elsie Kwok, was the daughter of William Lee's esteemed Australian friend George Kwok Bew (郭標 1868–1932), co-owner and manager of the popular Wing On Department Store on Nanjing Road. Lee had served with Bew on the board of the Australasian Guomindang and on charitable committees in Sydney, spent time sailing with Bew on Sydney Harbor, and attended Bew's farewell party when he left Sydney for Shanghai in October 1917.<sup>91</sup> Bew himself was one of China's early corporate philanthropists, pitching company funds into major charity projects and painting the Wing On company logo on its welfare and relief investments. His daughter's victory would not have disappointed William Lee even if it meant alienating the entire Ningbo gang.

The Shanghai beauty pageant was a minor distraction for the Y's Men's Clubs, which expanded further over the following decade. In these efforts, William Lee was supported by the clubs' deputy director, Kwong Kong Lim (Kuang Guangling 鄭光林 1897–1955), a fellow Cantonese born in Australia into the extended family of prosperous Chinese-Australian herbalist and businessman Kwong Sue Duk (Kuang Shide 鄭士德 1853–1929).<sup>92</sup> Lee's Chinese Mission to Lepers also prospered with the induction of the former premier of the Republic, Tang Shaoyi (唐紹儀 1862–1938), as honorary president and the subsequent enlistment of a number of prominent dignitaries as honorary vice presidents, including Malaya-born medical expert Dr. Wu Lien-teh (伍聯德 1900–1972), former mayor of the city of Shanghai Wu Tiecheng, president of Shanghai Rotary Dr. Fong Foo Sec (鄭富灼 1869–1938), Australian journalist (and private secretary to Song Meiling, Madame Chiang) William Henry Donald (1875–1946), and underworld fixer Du Yuesheng (杜月笙 1888–1951). With the aid of a substantial grant from the Burmese-Chinese entrepreneur and philanthropist Ah Boon Haw (胡文虎 1882–1954), the Chinese Mission opened its major Shanghai Leprosy Hospital in 1935.<sup>93</sup>

When Japanese imperial forces occupied Shanghai in 1937, William Lee retreated to Hong Kong, where he established a local chapter of the Y's Men's Club in 1937. From there he branched out to Singapore, establishing a local chapter in 1941. After the war he returned to Shanghai, and over the fall of 1945 he turned his entrepreneurial skills to helping support 100,000 or so US servicemen then billeted in China. Lee mobilized around 500 local men and women from among members of the Shanghai Y's Men's Club, the YMCA, the YWCA, and Rotary to serve as volunteer guides offering information, maps, tours, interpreting services, introductions to stores and markets, and "wholesome" entertainment for US forces. All expenses were borne by a coordinating committee and Lee's Chinese business associates.<sup>94</sup>

91 *Sydney Morning Herald*, May 15, 1916, 4; *Evening News* (Sydney), October 25, 1917, 4.

92 "Kwang Lim Kwong," in "Australians at Harvard," accessed March 17, 2015, <http://harvaus.fas.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do?keyword=k61661&pageid=icb.page507224>; *Shen bao*, May 20, 1925, 19.

93 Q580-13-6, Shanghai Municipal Archives; 11-ERU-00849, Archives of Academia Historica (Taiwan).

94 Commander of American Forces in China Lt. Gen. Albert Coady Wedemeyer, no. 87042, Norwood F. Allman Papers, 1929–1987, Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University.

In 1946, Lee was invited by the International Association of Y's Men's Clubs to visit the United States, where he renewed his civic and charitable activities by organizing US Army veteran fund-raisers, arranging charity fashion shows, and assisting with a children's welfare organization. He also served in a senior role in Rotary International. In 1951 he was granted US citizenship by a special act of Congress.<sup>95</sup> In New York, he revived his fund-raising skills and experience with health charities that he had developed in Australia and Shanghai, founding the Chinese-American Association for Good Will and Eyes Right, Inc., a charity supporting the sight impaired in North America. He also served as director of Chinese-American relations within the United Service to China organization.<sup>96</sup>

In 1963, with his brother James Lee, who had served as Chiang Kai-shek's tutor in Hong Kong four decades earlier, William helped to edit the controversial dairies of Chen Jieru (陳潔如 1906–1971), the second wife of Chiang Kai-shek. The brothers held Chiang responsible for the Nationalist debacle and Communist victory. On his part, Chiang is reported to have dispatched senior officials to New York to retrieve the manuscript and prevent publication. The book did not appear for another three decades, when eminent American historian Lloyd Eastman was invited to secure publication of a clandestine copy of the manuscript through an academic press.<sup>97</sup> By then, William Lee had passed away. An obituary for William Y. Lee appeared in the *New York Times* on April 13, 1965.

## CONCLUSION

In retrospect, *huaqiao* charity was a relatively minor contributor among the many fund-raising and service charities that together made Shanghai a hub of social innovation in the Chinese Republic. Diaspora charities contributed alongside local chambers of commerce, benevolent halls, relief homes, guildhalls, and hometown associations for residents of other provinces, and alongside temples, mosques, synagogues, indigenous churches, and a formidable network of foreign charities in providing charitable services for Shanghai's indigent residents and transient populations of refugees and immigrants. Further, the charitable work of the small circle of *huaqiao* returnees from the Cantonese Pacific that we have been tracing through the work of William Lee and his circle comprised just a small part of wider diaspora charity, which was more often channeled through hometown associations in Shanghai and directly to hometowns in Guangdong and Fujian.<sup>98</sup>

It was not the scale of their charity work that made returning Pacific Cantonese contributions to the development of indigenous charity in China notable or significant. Rather, it was their capacity for social innovation and their explicit commitment to com-

95 Correspondence of William Yinson Lee and Alfred Kohlberg, 1950 to 1951, no. 61002, box 109, "Alfred Kohlberg Papers, 1927–1967," Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University; 65 Stat. A 54 "An Act for the Relief of William Yinson Lee" in 82nd Congress, 1st Session, 1951 at <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/STATUTE-65/pdf/STATUTE-65-PgA54.pdf>, accessed on 23 January 2016.

96 No. 61002, box 109, "Alfred Kohlberg Papers, 1927–1967," Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University; John R. Seeley et al., eds., *Community Chest: A Case Study in Philanthropy* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1989), 38.

97 See Lloyd Eastman, foreword to *Chiang Kai-shek's Secret Past* by Chen Jieru.

98 Song, *Guangdongren zai Shanghai*.

peting with foreign charities by imitating them in providing for the welfare of China's poor and disadvantaged. They were early in recognizing the value of foreign charitable methods and techniques, and they were confident of their abilities to introduce and adapt foreign methods and institutions to recover welfare sovereignty from well-resourced and technically capable foreign charitable organizations in China. When they had resources to expend or to leverage for their charitable work, returning Cantonese deployed their resources effectively, in William Lee's case with the aid of the commercial facilities and social networks of the families who owned the four great department stores on Nanjing Road. When further resources were required, they raised them through popular fund-raising events, including China's first modern beauty contest in 1928 and a variety of celebrity engagements, fund-raising auctions, and institutional innovations such as charitable luncheon clubs and volunteer societies.

While the wider contest for welfare sovereignty was embedded in mainstream anticolonial nationalism, for Cantonese Pacific returnees the contest was heightened by perceptions of Anglophone racism and intensified by a sense of shame at the manifest failure of local and national governments to provide for the welfare needs of Chinese citizens sufficient to divert the foreign humanitarian gaze and preempt foreign charitable intervention. If governments would not do so, responsibility fell upon private citizens to restore China's standing in the world as a country capable of taking care of its own.

In the case of William Lee, charity and welfare sovereignty were also matters of business. A number of Lee's charitable causes, particularly those focusing on child nutrition, health, and welfare, dovetailed neatly with his commercial interests as an importer and distributor of dairy products and vitamins. Through his charity events, he achieved minor celebrity status, further extending his business brand and social networks. At the same time, his extensive business networks supported his charity fund-raising and his institutional innovations, including the establishment of a national network of Chinese Y's Men's Clubs and the founding of the Shanghai Leprosy Hospital.

It follows that the idea of welfare sovereignty at issue in this contest was not one that pitted the private sector or civil society against the state in the provision of welfare in China. Leaders of China's modern charity sector generally conceded that responsibility for the universal provision of basic education, health, and welfare services rested with governments. What was at stake in the contest to recover welfare sovereignty was not the nature of the responsible service provider but the vulnerability of China as a country and a people in the eyes of foreign observers. To divert the international humanitarian gaze, it was essential that governments, business leaders, fashionable elites, and citizens of means recognized the social rights of all citizens to basic education, health, and welfare in a modern republic, and that they worked together to achieve them. Governments should provide as best they could, but in the meantime all persons who enjoyed a measure of wealth and status were called upon to accept a measure of responsibility for upholding the country's reputation by bringing charity into their business lives, their social circles, and their everyday lives as active citizens of the Republic.

Returning citizens from the Cantonese Pacific were rapidly attuned to these issues in China because they grew up with them abroad. They knew about racism, they were fluent in English, they appreciated the value of equal citizenship and equality before the law, and they were comfortable living a cosmopolitan, bourgeois lifestyle that placed them

at ease in dealing with their Western counterparts. They also had experience as members and leaders of independent social organizations, in William Lee's case, as a member of several national and international civic associations that paid scant regard to the boundaries of kinship and native place and which had few local counterparts within China itself. Returning citizens had personal experience of large-scale charity events overseas, including bazaars, lotteries, fashion shows, and beauty contests. They were also skilled cross-cultural negotiators, and they understood that charity was a valuable international currency for cross-cultural negotiations over what it meant to be an active and patriotic Chinese citizen of a modern liberal republic, competing for standing in a competitive world.

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### NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

John Fitzgerald directs the Asia Pacific Diaspora Philanthropy project in the Centre for Social Impact in the Swinburne Business School. His publications include *Awakening China* and *Big White Lie: Chinese Australians in White Australia*.

Mei-fen Kuo was employed on the Asia Pacific Diaspora Philanthropy project before taking up her current position as ARC DECRA Research Fellow at the School of Historical and Philosophical Inquiry, University of Queensland, where she is researching Chinese-Australian business enterprises and diaspora networks 1850–1949. Her publications include *Making Chinese Australia: Urban Elites, Newspapers and the Formation of Chinese Australian Identity, 1892–1912* and, with Judith Brett, *Unlocking the History of the Australasian Kuo Min Tang, 1911–2013*.

Correspondence to: John Fitzgerald. Email: johnfitzgerald@swin.edu.au.