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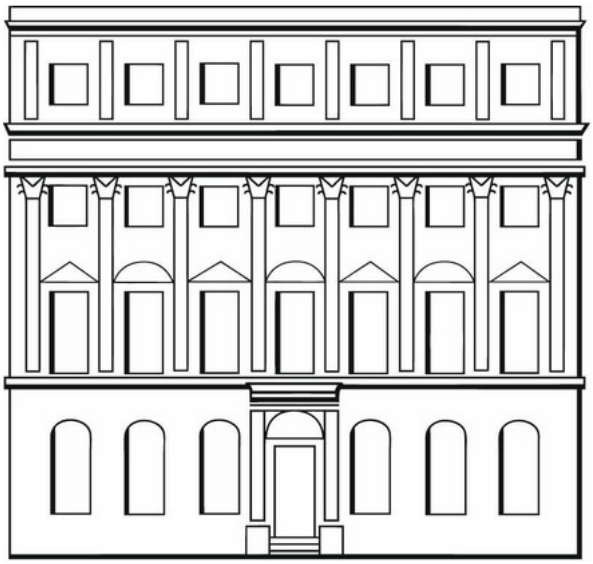

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Caroline Reeves

In the early morning of 6 May 1923, Chinese bandits swooped down from the hills of Shandong overlooking the Tianjin–Nanjing train line and derailed the elegant and opulent *Blue Express*, a luxury train carrying foreigners and Chinese between Nanjing and points north. The bandits kidnapped twenty-six foreigners, killing one, and took more than a hundred Chinese passengers captive.

As the first reports of the incident slipped out, the international press exploded. Outrage in China! The Worst Insult to the Civilized Powers since the Boxers![1] The Lincheng Outrage (as it came to be called in the Western press) burst onto the world stage. In a matter of days the name 'Lincheng', previously no more than a remote way station on the Tianjin–Nanjing railway line, was on the lips of the world. The story dominated local and international newspapers for weeks. It riveted Chinese and non-Chinese alike with details of foreigners (including women) held captive by a band of Chinese outlaws.[2] The media frenzy did not begin to subside until 12 June,

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[1] Comparisons with the events of the 1900 Boxer Uprising were frequent. See e.g. *North China Herald*, 26 May 1923, cited in John Fitzgerald, *Awakening China: Politics, Culture, and Class in the Nationalist Revolution* (Stanford, Calif., 1996), 141; also Sir Ronald Macleay, British Minister in Peking to Marquess Curzon of Kedleston, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, no. 356, conf., 20 June 1923, FO 371/9192, cited in Chan Lau Kit-ching, 'The Lincheng Incident: A Case Study of British Policy in China between the Washington Conference and the First Nationalist Revolution', *Journal of Oriental Studies*, 10/2 (1972), 172–86 n. 11.

[2] Newspapers covering the event within China included the *China Press*, *Peking*

when, after lengthy and acrimonious negotiations, at last all foreign prisoners had been released. Less pivotal to world politics, the Chinese prisoners remained hostage for yet another two weeks before they, too, were freed.

The Lincheng Incident brought to a head the antagonism building through the post-First World War period between China and the Western powers on precisely the subject most sensitive to both sides: China's ability to govern itself.[3] Extraterritoriality, the judicial system denying native jurisdiction over non-Chinese, had been well entrenched in China since the Opium Wars, supported by the Great Powers' superior armaments as well as by their firm belief that China lacked the degree of 'civilization' to be entrusted with the care of foreign nationals (or, frankly, of the Chinese people themselves).[4] To the foreign community, the Outrage proved quite simply that China's increasingly strident calls for the repeal of the unequal treaties were irrational and premature. China could not safeguard its own railway lines, never mind guarantee the well-being of foreigners and their property in China.[5]

For the Chinese, for whom the events of 1919, the betrayal of the Versailles Treaty, and the disappointments of the 1921 Washington Conference still festered ominously, the Westerners' intervention in the resolution of the affair highlighted the degree of meddling to which the colonial powers felt entitled on China's soil. It also

Leader, *Peking Daily News*, *Peking and Tientsin Times*, *China Weekly Review*, *North China Daily News*, and *North China Herald*; in the Chinese press, *Shenbao*, *Xinwen Bao*, *Shuntian Shibao*, and *Dongfang Zazhi* [*Eastern Miscellany*]. International coverage was found in the *New York Times*, the *New York Evening Post*, *The Times* (London), and the *Manchester Guardian*, among others.

[3] Xu Guoqi covers this period in part III of his book *China and the Great War: China's Pursuit of a New National Identity and Internationalization* (Cambridge, 2005).

[4] For a comprehensive look at the system of extraterritoriality in China and Japan see Par Cassel, *Grounds of Judgment: Extraterritoriality and Imperial Power in Nineteenth-Century China and Japan* (Oxford, 2012). The recent literature on issues raised by the existence of American military bases abroad highlights many similar issues and provides an interesting contemporary comparison. On the concept of civilization in the early twentieth century see Gerrit W. Gong, *The Standard of 'Civilization' in International Society* (Oxford, 1984); Tongchai Winichakul, 'The Quest for "Siwilai": A Geographical Discourse of Civilizational Thinking in Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth-Century Siam', *Journal of Asian Studies*, 59/3 (2000), 528–49; and Prasenjit Duara, 'The Discourse of Civilization and Pan-Asianism', *Journal of World History*, 12/1 (2001), 99–130.

[5] Schurman to Secretary of State, 20 June 1923, United States Department of State, Decimal Files, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, DC (hereafter RG59), 393.1123; see also Memorandum, Secretary of State to Italian Chargé d'Affaires, 21 July 1923, ibid.

emphasized the insecurity and indignity to which China was subjected at the hands of foreign powers. Yet at the same time, as John Fitzgerald points out in his analysis of the event, 'this was a tale of captivity with a difference: it was not China that was held against its will, but uninvited Westerners. . . . [A] distinct sound of cheering could be heard emanating from the Chinese quarter.'[6] The potential for 'China', writ large, to stand up to foreign interlopers was a subtle yet powerful subtext of the affair. These issues played out not only in diplomatic circles, but among the relief community as well. A closer look at this discrete area of action will highlight the attitudes of both sides towards China's international position.

As William Kirby has written, foreign relations in the Republican era were 'quite simply, all penetrating, all permeating, all prevailing . . . ultimately forcing their way into every part of Chinese society'.[7] Worthy in its own right, and indeed the subject of books, articles, and films,[8] the Lincheng story exposes this penetration of everyday society by foreign relations. It reveals the all-pervasive impact of the humiliation of compromised sovereignty, so overwhelming in this period of China's history. Earlier English- and Chinese-language scholarly literature focuses on the diplomatic impact of the affair, concentrating for the most part on the negotiations between the Chinese government and the offended powers for reparations and future guarantees.[9] However, the fact of extraterritoriality and the lack of sovereignty were felt not only in diplomatic

[6] Fitzgerald, *Awakening China*, 143.

[7] William C. Kirby, 'The Internationalization of China: Foreign Relations at Home and Abroad in the Republican Era', *China Quarterly*, 150 (1994), 433–58, at 433.

[8] English-language literature on the event includes books such as the contemporary account by John B. Powell, *My Twenty-Five Years in China* (New York, 1945), and the more recent study by Michael J. Nozinski, *Outrage at Lincheng: China Enters the Twentieth Century* (Macomb, Ill., 1990). This event also spawned a whole genre of books written by released victims, including Harvey J. Howard, *Ten Weeks with Chinese Bandits* (New York, 1926). More scholarly works include Phil Billingsley, *Bandits in Republican China* (Stanford, Calif., 1988), which, however, bases much of its information on Japanese sources and makes numerous factual errors about the event. Along with contemporary articles filling the daily newspapers, more substantial pieces were also produced from the incident, including Lucy Truman Aldrich, 'A Week-End with Chinese Bandits', *Atlantic Monthly* (1923), 672–86, a wonderfully revealing and entertaining essay. Scholarly English-language articles include Chan Lau Kit-ching, 'The Lincheng Incident'. Films loosely based on the affair were *Shanghai Express* (1932), starring Greta Garbo, and its sequel, *Peking Express* (1952).

[9] In Chinese, see e.g. Chen Wuwo, *Lincheng Jieche An Jishi* [*The Lincheng Train Highjacking Case*] (Changsha, 1987), and documents included in the PRC's Number Two Archives' collection *Zhonghuaminguoshi Danganziliao Huibian* [Compilation of Archival

circles but in all spheres of Chinese life. The philanthropic realm was no exception. Thus this story captures my attention not only for the very real drama of the attack and kidnapping, but also for the less known but equally revealing story of the humanitarian responses the Incident inspired among the non-official, non-diplomatic Chinese and foreign communities in China. The sensational nature of the case and the prominence of the foreign captives made the situation especially vulnerable to grandstanding, and thus a particularly revealing moment to analyse the underlying assumptions of the involved parties.

My specific interest in the case lies with two relief operations mounted to send aid to the kidnapped passengers: the first under the aegis of the American Red Cross Society (ARC) in China, and the second organized by the Chinese Red Cross Society. The management of these two operations reveals much about the state of humanitarian activity in China, including the disjuncture between the Western perception of China's ability to conduct humanitarian relief and China's actual activities. In its second decade of existence, China's Red Cross Society was already an internationally recognized and functioning entity, participating in the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and involved in national, regional, and international relief activities. Yet, in keeping with the prevailing attitudes of the day, the members of the American Red Cross Society working in China and, indeed, many other members of the foreign community refused to acknowledge the functionality and accomplishments of the group.[10] Instead, they insisted that Chinese humanitarian relief (and Chinese Red Cross relief in particular) was still desperately inferior to Western practice. They felt its organizers were still in dire need of Western tutelage in order to raise Chinese philanthropy to world standards (by which they clearly meant their own). In fact, in yet another blow to Chinese sovereignty, the Americans insisted on maintaining their own Red Cross organization on Chinese soil, a clear violation of international Red Cross policy.[11]

Material on the History of Republican China] (Nanjing: Jiangsu Guji Chubanshe, 1991), iii, pt. 7, *waijiao*, 215–34.

[10] For a quintessential, unflinching summary of these attitudes see Rodney Gilbert, *What's Wrong with China?* (London, 1926).

[11] For a discussion of the short-lived American Red Cross Overseas Division see Caroline Reeves, 'American Red Cross as Agent of US Expansion', in Chris J. Magoc

Although well under way by 1923, the internationalization of Chinese philanthropy was thus studiously ignored by many Westerners in China, particularly Americans, who felt that the Chinese would only succeed in reaching acceptable standards of charitable activity when they had established 'an American-style, progressive reform organization' mirroring American social priorities.[12] Although just one battle in the overall struggle for Chinese sovereignty, the Lincheng Episode reveals many Western attitudes about the internationalization of China, including the role of more 'advanced' countries in bringing China into (and into line with) the world community.[13]

Lincheng

The capture in May 1923 of the *Blue Express* was no ordinary kidnapping. Apart from the fact that Chinese bandits were daring to attack foreigners, these were no ordinary foreigners. In the words of Lucy Truman Aldrich, daughter of Senator Nelson Aldrich and sister-in-law of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., who herself was kidnapped, this train was 'much the most luxurious . . . ever seen in the East, quite the last thing in modern sleeping-cars, more like the *Twentieth Century Limited* than Chinese'.[14] Accordingly, the foreign passengers were mostly wealthy and well-known citizens, 'accustomed to rather soft and luxurious lives'.[15] The list of the captured included, besides Miss Aldrich: Giuseppe Musso, a rich and influential Italian lawyer based in Shanghai's international settlement; two American army majors, Robert Allen and Roland Pinger, and their families; John B. Powell, American journalist and publisher of the *China Weekly Review*; and a wealthy Mexican couple, the Vereas, on a world

and David Bernstein (eds.), *Imperialism and Expansionism in American History: A Social, Political, and Cultural Encyclopedia and Document Collection*, 4 vols. (Santa Barbara, Calif., 2015), iii. 895–8.

[12] Karen Brewer, 'From Philanthropy to Reform: The American Red Cross in China, 1906–1930' (Ph.D. thesis, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, 1983), 332.

[13] For an earlier incident once again connecting the Red Cross organization with Chinese sovereignty see Caroline Reeves, 'Sovereignty and the Chinese Red Cross Society: The Case of Longkou, Shandong, 1916', *Journal of the History of International Law/Revue d'histoire du droit international*, 13/1 (2011), 155–77.

[14] Aldrich, 'A Week-End with Chinese Bandits', 672.

[15] Crow to Bassett, 16 July 1923, Box 721, DR-88, NA, 3 (hereafter 'Crow Report').

tour celebrating their first wedding anniversary.[16] The attack and kidnap of such prominent citizens created a titillating story. The victims' high profiles also meant that the pressure for their release felt by their governments and, in turn, by China's government was considerable. With no immediate prospect of freeing the passengers, whether through Western military intervention (as was suggested by many non-Chinese)[17] or otherwise, the situation demanded that these captives be cared for in the most delicate manner possible. On the other hand, the Chinese victims, who were also relatively privileged, were mostly ignored.[18]

On 11 May, six days after the derailing of the *Blue Express*, Carl Crow, American journalist, entrepreneur, and general man-about-town,[19] arrived in Zaozhuang, a coal-mining depot near Lincheng and the closest rail juncture to the bandits' mountain stronghold where the captives were being held. Crow had come to arrange aid for the hostages, and his access to the area was facilitated and safeguarded by all the Chinese authorities involved in the Incident, including the military governor of Shandong, Tian Zhongyu; inspector-general and Zhili military clique leader Cao Kun;[20] and even President Li Yuanhong himself, who personally offered to ransom the foreign captives.[21] The American Chamber of Commerce in Shanghai sponsored Crow financially,[22] and Crow acted on behalf of the American Red Cross China Central Committee (CCC), on whose board of directors he served. The American Minister to China, Jacob Gould Schurman, himself honorary chairman of the CCC, had arranged for Crow's presence on the scene and his

[16] Details of the attack and lists of the captives were widely published in the Chinese newspapers (e.g. *Shenbao*, 7 May 1923 and following days; *Shuntian Shibao*, 8 May 1923 and following days), although many of the foreign names are listed incorrectly. The *Shenbao* also published numerous photographs of the foreign captives once they were released; see e.g. *Shenbao*, 14 June 1923.

[17] Schurman to Secretary of State, 18 (?) May 1923, cited in Nozinski, *Outrage at Lincheng*, 79.

[18] The Chinese passengers had to be relatively wealthy to be travelling on this train. See Yin Zhizhong, 'Hongdong Guoji de Lincheng Dajieche An' ['An International Sensation: The Lincheng Train Hijacking Case'], *Shandong Wenxian*, 3/4 (1978), 16 (Shandong Documentary).

[19] Paul French, best-selling author, has written a biography of Crow in his usual engaging manner, *Carl Crow—A Tough Old China Hand: The Life, Times, and Adventures of an American in Shanghai* (Hong Kong, 2006), which covers the incident from Crow's perspective on pp. 11–130.

[20] *Who's Who in China*, 3rd edn. (Shanghai, 1926), 736–8.

[21] Nozinski, *Outrage at Lincheng*, 106.

[22] Schurman to Secretary of State, 22 June 1923, RG59: 393.1123.

activities on behalf of the foreign captives.[23] Schurman's oversight of Crow's work gave it a distinctly semi-governmental status.[24]

The Chinese central government, at this point represented by Cao Kun (acting on behalf of President Li Yuanhong, whose position he would usurp by October)[25] and by V. K. Wellington Koo, foreign minister designate,[26] recognized the delicacy of the situation in which the bandits had placed them. Immediately responsive to the Westerners' crescendo of explosive rhetoric, these officials were most eager to accommodate as many wishes of the foreign legations as possible, especially since the main desideratum, the immediate release of the captives without the use of Chinese force, seemed hopelessly out of reach.[27] Given the gravity of the situation, the publicity it received, and the importance and number of captives, it would have seemed a perfect opportunity for Chinese relief organizations to move quickly to the scene and assume the high-profile task of providing aid to the captives—at least to the Chinese victims.

But only the American Red Cross appeared in Lincheng. Where were the Chinese? To answer that question, we need to go back into the history of both the Chinese Red Cross Society and the American Red Cross effort in China after the First World War.

The Red Cross Society of China[28]

The Chinese Red Cross Society, with headquarters in Shanghai and branches in Shandong Province, was well established and well

[23] Powell, *My Twenty-Five Years in China*, 107.

[24] Julia Irwin discusses how the ARC intentionally promoted this conflation of the two bureaucracies in the First World War and post-First World War period, resulting in the fact that 'ARC workers represented not only the [Red Cross] organization but indeed the entire United States' (Julia Irwin, *Making the World Safe: The American Red Cross and a Nation's Humanitarian Awakening* (Oxford, 2013), 121).

[25] See Edward Dreyer, *China at War, 1901–1949* (New York, 1995), 103–7, for Cao Kun's trajectory to president.

[26] *Who's Who in China*, 416–17.

[27] *Dongfang Zazhi*, 20/8 (1923), 2–6, captures the tension of the Chinese situation well; for the American position see Schurman to Secretary of State, 9 May 1923, RG59: 393.1123.

[28] This section is based on my unpublished Ph.D. thesis, 'The Power of Mercy: The Chinese Red Cross Society, 1900–1937' (Harvard University, 1998). For a briefer, more recent piece see Caroline Reeves, 'The Red Cross Society of China: Past, Present and Future', in Jennifer Ryan and Lincoln Chen (eds.), *Philanthropy for Health in China* (Indianapolis, 2014), 214–33. This topic has garnered much attention in China in the past decade, spawning an enormous Chinese-language literature, much of it extremely derivative.

equipped to handle a crisis such as the Lincheng Incident. By May of 1923 the Chinese Red Cross had existed for almost twenty years, and had acquired a significant record as an internationally recognized organization. Founded in 1904 during the Russo-Japanese War, the Chinese Red Cross Society had a well-regarded history of providing aid and co-ordinating relief activities during natural and man-made catastrophes in China. The creation of the Society had been the brainchild of cosmopolitan Shanghai entrepreneur and modernizer Shen Dunhe, who had studied international law at Cambridge University in England and was also a high-ranking Qing official.[29] In 1904 the Russo-Japanese War, fought on Qing territory in Manchuria, had brought devastation to the Chinese residents of the area. But unlike non-Chinese residents, evacuated by their governments at the beginning of the hostilities, Chinese civilians were trapped in the war zone. Qing officials[30] sent ships to bring the Chinese nationals out, but the Russians blockaded the ports and refused to allow the ships to enter. The Qing government, worried about being drawn into the hostilities, would not challenge the blockade.[31]

Shen Dunhe, with his background in international law, turned to the Red Cross organization, well known to international jurists and immensely popular at the turn of the twentieth century. Founder of the Red Cross movement Henri Dunant had received the Nobel Peace Prize for his work just three years earlier.[32] Shen broadcast widely his view that this organization would offer exactly what the Chinese needed in this situation: a well-publicized political neutrality, which would allow the Chinese access to their own territory to help their besieged compatriots.[33] Working in concert with other concerned Shanghai élites, Shen moved quickly to create such a Red Cross group. But his cosmopolitan shrewdness did not stop there. Anticipating the probable reaction of the Japanese and the Russians

[29] Tiao Shui Waishi (pseud.), *Shen Dunhe* (Shanghai, 1911).

[30] Yuan Shikai, then viceroy of Zhili, and Yang Shixiang, then governor of Shandong.

[31] *Zhongguo Hongshizihui ershi zhounian jiniance* [*The Twentieth Anniversary Commemorative Volume of the Red Cross Society of China*] (Shanghai, 1924) (hereafter *ZHEJ*), *dashi gangmu* section 1; *Zhongguo Hongshizihui Zazhi* [*Chinese Red Cross Society Magazine*], 1 (1913), 1; *Shenbao*, 2 Apr. 1904, 1 and 3 (and passim throughout late March and April).

[32] Caroline Moorehead, *Dunant's Dream: War, Switzerland, and the History of the Red Cross* (New York, 1998), 168.

[33] Articles in the *Shenbao* written by Shen prominently proclaim the Red Cross's intrinsic neutrality; for example, he provides a translation of the Red Cross treaty, which specifically discusses neutrality, in *Shenbao*, 30 Mar. 1904, 3.

to a newly created Chinese organization, Shen crafted an international Red Cross group to represent China, composed of prominent foreigners living in Shanghai who were nationals of neutral Western countries (Britain, France, Germany, the Netherlands, and the United States), as well as Chinese. He called his new organization 'The International Red Cross of Shanghai'.[34] Using the foreigners' influence to the Society's best advantage, Shen was able not only to persuade the Japanese and Russian armies to recognize the new Red Cross group and allow it access to the previously closed war zone, but also to recruit Western medical doctors to work on behalf of the Chinese refugees trapped by the fighting. Thus China's first indigenous Red Cross group was born, a masterful feat of transnational engineering. By the close of the Russo-Japanese War, the new group had evacuated over 130,000 refugees from Manchuria and co-ordinated more than twenty relief centres and hospitals across the area, ultimately aiding more than a quarter of a million people.[35]

Building on its initial successes, instead of shutting down its operations after the war, the new Red Cross organization continued to grow, funded and manned primarily by the Chinese themselves. The Revolution of 1911 once more brought the Red Cross Society into the public eye in China. Active on and off the battlefields, the Chinese Red Cross Society took its place as an important national philanthropic organization and symbol, trumpeted by the press and widely recognized across the country. At the same time, China's Red Cross also became a symbol of the increasing autonomy, international recognition, and adherence to Western standards of China's philanthropic endeavours.

Until the founding of the Chinese Red Cross, Chinese philanthropy was considered by many foreign observers of the period to be inward-looking, meant only to help one's own family or clan.[36] The scope of the new organization helped change that perception. In 1904 the Qing adopted the international Geneva Conventions,

[34] K. Chimin Wong and Wu Lien-Teh, *History of Chinese Medicine*, 2nd edn. (Taiwan; repr. Taipei, 1985), 571; also Timothy Richard, *Forty-Five Years in China* (New York, 1916), 322, and *Shenbao*, 14 Mar. 1924 and passim throughout late March and April.

[35] *Shanghai International Red Cross News Bulletin* (1938), 2.

[36] See 'Crow Report', 8, for a succinct summary of this attitude. Recent scholarship, such as Kathryn Edgerton-Tarpley, *Tears from Iron: Cultural Responses to Famine in Nineteenth-Century China* (Oakland, Calif., 2008), and the classic work by Mary Rankin, *Elite Activism and Political Transformation in China* (Stanford, Calif., 1986), has shown this notion to be false.

laws of war also known as the Red Cross Treaty, paving the way for international recognition of China's Red Cross group.[37] After 1911, with the help of Japanese jurist and adviser to President Yuan Shikai Dr Ariga Nagao, a new constitution and by-laws were drawn up for the Society, based on the regulations of other countries' Societies.[38] With a letter of introduction from the Japanese Red Cross Society, China's Red Cross was officially recognized by the International Committee of the Red Cross in Switzerland in 1912, and became a full member of that group.[39] The underlying mission, the form of the association (a national headquarters co-ordinating a network of mutually supporting local chapters), the governing structure, the Western-style bio-medicine dispensed in Chinese Red Cross hospitals, and the name itself all linked the Chinese Red Cross to the international organization.

In fact, the Chinese Society was indeed quite involved with the international Red Cross organization and with other national Societies around the world, particularly in areas where there were large Chinese communities. From its inception, the Chinese Red Cross donated significant funds to Red Cross disaster relief in other countries—for example, after earthquakes in San Francisco in 1906, in Kagoshima in 1914, and in Tokyo and Yokohama in 1923. The Chinese Society also worked to help overseas Chinese outside the Red Cross network. For example, in 1919 the Society put forward $20,000 to repatriate Chinese workers who were stranded in Germany and Austria-Hungary after the First World War. In turn, China's Red Cross was a recipient of internationally co-ordinated Red Cross aid.[40] In 1917, for example, during record-breaking floods in Zhili, Japan's Red Cross sent the Chinese Society a donation of 5,000 yen.[41]

China's Red Cross Society was engaged in a conscious campaign to raise both its own international prestige and China's, and participated in many international and regional Red Cross conferences in order to build connections and its reputation. The Chinese Society

[37] *Bulletin International des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge*, 139 (1904), 190. For documents on China's participation in the early Geneva Conventions see the Academia Sinica's Waiwubu Archives, section 02-21, Baohehui, Hongshizihui [The Hague Conventions and Red Cross Society], Academia Sinica, Nangang, Taiwan.

[38] *Linshi Zhengfu Gongbao* [*Bulletin of the Provisional Government*], 25 Feb. 1912, in Luo Jialun (ed.), *Linshi Zhengfu Gongbao* (Taipei: Dangshi shiliao bian weiyuanhui, 1968), 467.

[39] *Bulletin International des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge*, 169 (1912), 8–9.

[40] *ZHEJ*, 25–6.

[41] Ibid.

sent delegates to all international conferences, despite the financial hardship that such trips involved. These conferences provided an invaluable forum for international networking. In 1912 the Society sent four representatives to the Ninth International Red Cross Conference in Washington, DC.[42] In 1919 Dr B. Y. Wong was sent to represent China in Geneva at the 1920 International Red Cross Conference.[43] In 1922, when the first regional Red Cross conference for Oriental Societies was held in Siam, China's Society sent a six-man delegation to Bangkok. The reports sent home by the delegates after each of these events stress the cordial welcome the Chinese delegates received, the willingness of the other Societies to work with the Chinese Society, and the interest and respect the Chinese Society's activities aroused.[44]

The success of China's Red Cross association could be measured not only by its national growth (by 1924 boasting over 40,000 members and 286 chapters)[45] and the international recognition it commanded, but also by its influence on other philanthropic groups within China. The Red Cross was so widely appreciated that it inspired the formation of other international charitable groups in China. For example, the Red Swastika Association (Hongwanzi Hui) was explicitly modelled on the Red Cross pattern, but took a Buddhist symbol as its namesake, adopting the syncretic Dao Yuan (Society of the Way) ideology as its creed. This association, founded in October 1922 and still extant today, initially established its international headquarters in China.[46] In 1936 another 'knock-off' was created, the International Red 'Fo' (Buddha) Society, also intended to become a worldwide charitable network.[47] Thus the international Red Cross movement not only became a success within

[42] Conference report of Dr John C. Ferguson to Lu Haihuan, 15 Sept. 1913, Number Two Archives (Dier lishi danganguan), Nanjing, PRC (hereafter Number Two Archives) *quanzong* 1039(2).591.

[43] *ZHEJ*, 26–7, 30; B. Y. Wong to Vice President, Red Cross Society of China, 2 Jan. 1920, Number Two Archives, *quanzong* 476.218.

[44] 'The Oriental Red Cross Conference', *World's Health*, 4/3 (1923), 1–10.

[45] *ZHEJ*, 55; *Hongshizihui Lishiziliao Xuanpian, 1904–1949* [*Selected Historical Materials of the Red Cross Society, 1904–49*] (Nanjing, 1993), 155.

[46] Thomas David DuBois, 'The Salvation of Religion? Public Charity and the New Religions of the Early Republic', *Minsuquyi*, 172 (June 2011), 73–126; also Rebecca Nedostup, *Superstitious Regimes* (Cambridge, Mass., 2009), 60–6. Documents on the Red Swastika Society are available in the Number Two Archives, *quanzong* 257.

[47] *Shenbao*, 2 Mar. 1936; also *Hongshizihui Yuekan* [*Chinese Red Cross Monthly*], 10 (1936), 63–4.

China, but also inspired other Chinese philanthropic associations to branch out internationally.

Undertaken in the early Republican period, these activities were an index of the growth of China's national philanthropic network and its increasingly optimistic international position. By the early twentieth century the Red Cross movement was 'flourishing mightily, and the meaning of the Red Cross was well understood throughout the European–American dominated world. The National Societies . . . had become natural features of the landscape of modern civilization.'[48] By being an active participant in the international Red Cross movement, China established a degree of credibility as a functional, international state that countries without these trappings of civilization could not hope to claim.[49] Furthermore, the increasing penetration of Chinese consciousness by the Red Cross organization infused a new internationalism into what was once considered one of China's most parochial spheres: philanthropy. By almost all accounts, China's Red Cross philanthropy had risen to world-class status.

The American Red Cross in China

One of the Chinese Red Cross Society's strengths was its ability to work with other charitable groups, including international agencies, and to co-ordinate with them to maximize the impact of its limited resources. From its very inception, the Chinese Society worked with the China International Famine Relief Commission, international public health officials, and foreign doctors and hospitals within China to ameliorate the overload of suffering that constantly ravaged China and its citizens. The Chinese Red Cross also worked with the American Red Cross in China, until 1918 in an amicable relationship.[50]

Before the First World War the relationship between the Ameri-

[48] Geoffrey Best, *Humanity in Warfare* (New York, 1980), 151.

[49] The lack of an internationally recognized national Red Cross Society is still regarded as a tell-tale sign of a certain international precariousness; consider, for example, the recent cases of Israel and Taiwan. Conversely, groups and states that do not recognize the sanctity of the Red Cross symbol are dismissed as 'barbaric' or 'rogue states'; see e.g. Michael Ignatieff, *The Warrior's Honor: Ethnic War and the Modern Conscience* (New York, 1997), esp. 109–63.

[50] Irwin discusses this early period from the ARC perspective, particularly President Taft's interest in the role voluntary humanitarian aid could play in creating an internationalist society in an American mould (Irwin, *Making the World Safe*, 42–5).

can Red Cross Society and the Chinese Society was a workable one. The American Red Cross bankrolled and organized a number of large-scale relief projects in China, smiled upon by the Chinese Red Cross and much appreciated by victims of flood and famine as well as by concerned Chinese philanthropists. In 1905 the ARC raised $500,000 to send to China during famine in Jiangsu and Anhui;[51] in 1911 and 1912 two more national appeals were made by the ARC in the USA, soliciting aid for China during terrible famines.[52] All these appeals were met with tremendous enthusiasm by the American people, and contributions to China were unremittingly generous. After 1918, however, the ARC embarked on a new venture in China, an aggressively expansive campaign that seriously compromised China's control of its own relief activities. The operations of the American Red Cross in China after the First World War reflected the dual nature of American foreign policy of the 1920s. While the United States ostensibly trumpeted its support of national independence and the Open Door in a worldwide nation-state system, the drive to shape the world in the American image was equally compelling to Americans, especially Americans abroad, faced with what they viewed as the inferior civilizations of the world. The American Red Cross organization suffered from this same contradiction, and nowhere more clearly than in China.

During the First World War the overseas American community had been particularly anxious to make its national patriotism and predilections felt. In response, the American Red Cross called for the creation of foreign chapters to help in the war effort under the aegis of the ARC's Territorial, Foreign, and Insular Division (the 'Fourteenth Division').[53] The rationale extended beyond the war, however, as Henry Davison, American Red Cross War Council chairman, explained. 'One result [of the creation of these new chapters] will be to stamp a new Americanism upon the world,' he predicted. This effort, he continued, would have 'an undying effect' around the globe.[54] In China, the call to charity was eagerly answered by American communities scattered across the country,

[51] Brewer, 'From Philanthropy to Reform', 53.

[52] Ibid. 83, 124.

[53] Reeves, 'American Red Cross as an Agent of Expansionism', and Brewer, 'From Philanthropy to Reform', 222–3.

[54] Brewer, 223.

and fourteen chapters and six branches of the American Red Cross in China were quickly formed by American men and women anxious to be a part of the American war effort.[55] Bandages were rolled, parades organized, cookbooks produced,[56] and 'home-made' clothes, often stitched by hired Chinese seamstresses, were sent from China to the war zones.[57] Julean Arnold, former commercial attaché from the American legation, was appointed China's American Red Cross field representative, and his vision for the ARC in China came to dominate the American Red Cross presence there.[58]

Arnold was devoted to the idea of reaching all Americans in China with the Red Cross mission, but even more, he had a larger dream—to bring the Chinese themselves to an understanding of the American way of humanitarian activity:

> I doubt very much [if the Washington ARC Headquarters] realizes the strength of our position with the Chinese, the true significance of our friendly relations with these people and the potentialities of American Red Cross work among the Chinese population. It probably does not realize the ineffectiveness and the unbusiness-like administration of the Chinese Red Cross, and the extent to which the Chinese organization has been abused. Americans in China now have a magnificent opportunity to furnish to the Chinese a model of proper and effective Red Cross activity. . . . Furthermore, the reflex action of all this on the Chinese people would be most wholesome.[59]

Arnold's position, especially his emphasis on inspiring an 'effective' and 'business-like' administration for the Chinese Red Cross Society, reflected the attitudes of many other Americans in China at the time, especially businessmen. The linkage of proper American business practice and the improvement of the Chinese people had become an American formula during the Republican period. As Michael Hunt explains, the 'U.S. economic enterprise occupied an important, arguably even the central, role as a force for progressive change in

[55] Brewer, 'From Philanthropy to Reform', 223; *The American Red Cross: China Central Committee Bulletin*, 1/1 (15 Feb. 1919), 3, lists 14 chapters and 10 branches by early 1919. American National Red Cross Archives, National Archives, Washington, DC. China Central Committee, ARC in China (hereafter CCC, ARC/NA), Box 673: 798.5.

[56] e.g. the *American Red Cross Book of Recipes for the Use of Chinese Foodstuffs*, prepared by the Committee on War Time Economy for the Household of the Nanking Chapter, American Red Cross in China (Shanghai, 1918).

[57] Brewer, 'From Philanthropy to Reform', 226.

[58] Arnold to American Consuls in China, 15 Mar. 1918, Box 673: 798.5, CCC, ARC/NA.

[59] Ibid.

China'.[60] Arnold brought his background and fervour as commercial attaché with him to his new position.

In fact, Arnold's dream was at odds with the policy of the International Red Cross and, ironically, with that of the American Red Cross as well. The International Committee of the Red Cross had stringent guidelines for the creation of Red Cross groups, guidelines that the ARC was clearly bending with its newly expanded Fourteenth Division. In fact, more than two decades earlier, the ICRC had already specifically ruled on non-Chinese Red Cross groups establishing themselves on Chinese territory. During the 1894–5 Sino-Japanese War a group of well-meaning Western missionaries conducting medical relief work in Manchuria under an unofficial Red Cross aegis had applied to the Geneva-based International Red Cross to recognize their group. Gustav Moynier, head of the international organization, had replied: 'We can only recognize a single Society per state, and this Society must have a national character; yours, however, being composed exclusively of foreigners, would not fulfil this essential condition.'[61] The American Red Cross itself forbade the establishment or maintenance of agencies representing any other national Red Cross Society at home in the United States;[62] this charter was directly contradicted by their own post-1917 policy of encouraging American overseas chapters.

Yet despite these apparent restrictions, the Americans in China were anxious to engage in American Red Cross work on Chinese soil and in so doing to bring their civilizing force with them. And as Julean Arnold pointed out, what better way to inculcate those values in the Chinese than by bringing them explicitly into the American Red Cross fold, especially as paying members? Thus, not only did Arnold hope to get 'every American man, woman and child in China enlisted in the American Red Cross', but he also wanted 'several tens of thousands of [China's] people' to join the American Red Cross in China.[63] This plan ignored the fact that parallel membership

[60] Michael H. Hunt, *The Making of a Special Relationship: The United States and China to 1914* (New York, 1983), 273.

[61] Pierre Boissier, *Histoire du Comité International de la Croix-Rouge de Solferino à Tsoushima* (Paris, 1963), 420; the translation of Moynier's letter is mine.

[62] *The American National Red Cross Annual Report for the Year Ending June 30, 1924*, 73 (Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies Archives, Geneva, Switzerland, China Box; hereafter Federation Archives).

[63] Arnold to American Consuls in China, 15 Mar. 1918, Box 673: 798.5, CCC, ARC/NA.

drives among the Chinese could only undermine the legitimacy of the already existing, indigenous national Chinese Red Cross Society.

The Chinese were aware of the resources the ARC commanded, and were grateful for the many, often massive, relief projects the ARC sponsored and managed. Yet even Shen Dunhe, founder and committed internationalist, baulked when Arnold started his major membership drive for the American Red Cross in China in 1918, soliciting over 50,000 Chinese members for American chapters in China.[64] Shen wrote both to Arnold and directly to US President Taft in Washington to protest against what he saw as a breach of sovereignty.[65] Although Shen's protests were legitimate according to international Red Cross strictures, his protests brought only opprobrium from the CCC upon the Chinese Red Cross. Accusations against the Chinese Society and against Shen himself, of everything from corruption to abuse of the Red Cross symbol, flew back and forth from Shanghai to Washington, until finally minister Paul Reinsch himself was called on to investigate the affair.[66]

The semi-governmental position of the ARC was taken very seriously in China, and the importance of the American relationship with China proved to be an overriding concern for China's national government. When China's central government officials learnt of the American accusations against Shen, immediate action was taken. Although ostensibly democratically elected to his office, Shen Dunhe was fired from his posts as vice-president and director of the Chinese Red Cross in April 1919.[67] Shen was quickly replaced by someone more agreeable to the Americans. The new director was former chairman of the Tariff Revision Commission Admiral Cai Tinggan, sent to school in America from 1873 to 1881 as a member of the Yong Wing educational mission, and a good friend of the foreign community in Peking.[68] As the secretary of the CCC observed in reporting the personnel change to Charles Forster: 'it is interesting to note [the apparent coincidence] that our Mr. Julean Arnold is Chairman of the American Delegation of the China Tariff Revision

[64] Arnold to Cutler, 15 Aug. 1918, Box 45: 041, CCC, ARC/NA.

[65] Shen to Taft, 10 Aug. 1918, includes a copy of his letter to Arnold, 10 Aug. 1918. Box 45: 041, CCC, ARC/NA.

[66] For Reinsch's report and the documents he collected pertaining to the situation see report dated 25 Apr. 1919, Box 45: 041, CCC, ARC/NA.

[67] *ZHEJ*, 26; see also *Shenbao*, 18 July 1919; 26 July 1919; 2 Aug. 1919; 13 Aug. 1919; also Julean Arnold to W. A. B. Nichols, 6 May 1919, Box 45: 041, CCC, ARC/NA.

[68] *Who's Who in China*, 728–9.

Commission [and Cai served as Chinese Chair].'[69] Cai immediately ingratiated himself with the Americans, condemning the Society as 'reeking with corruption' and vowing to extirpate the 'Chinese nature' of the organization.[70] The CCC of the American Red Cross was very pleased with the personnel change, and saw a new future for the Red Cross in China—a future, no doubt, that looked very American.

Despite the positive response in China, in 1919 Charles H. Forster, managing director of the Fourteenth Division, wrote to clarify the inherently contradictory American Red Cross platform in China, and particularly to put an end to the project of soliciting Chinese members for the American Red Cross chapters.

> It is not the business of the American Red Cross to decide the character of any National Red Cross anywhere—even in semi-civilized countries; nor is it our business, especially in peacetime, to enlist other nationals to such a procedure. The American Red Cross, being, in a way, a semi-governmental organization, should guard against any move that might cause unpleasant relations.[71]

But his words were to have little effect on the CCC. Although Washington Headquarters was able to curtail some of the more exceptional projects of the China Central Committee, it could not dampen the zeal of these Americans in China for the potential impact they could have on the benighted Chinese. Although not the only country playing host to American Red Cross chapters, China, 'vast, populous, and teetering between renovation and collapse—[holding] out boundless opportunity to the American impulse in all its guises',[72] ultimately proved to be the most fertile ground for the Fourteenth Division. By 1924, the final year the Fourteenth Division operated ARC chapters overseas, fifteen out of twenty-nine overseas ARC chapters were located in China, more than 50 per cent of all such chapters.

In clearer moments, representatives of the ARC in China realized their unusual position vis-à-vis the local Red Cross group. In a speech delivered in the United States by a representative of the China Central Committee of the ARC in the early 1920s, the speaker admitted the singularity of the American position:

[69] Harris to Forster, 17 July 1922, Box 45: 041, CCC, ARC/NA.

[70] Arnold to Bassett, 28 June 1923, Box 45: 041, CCC, ARC/NA; also Y. S. Tsao, 'The Red Cross Society in China', *China Quarterly* (1936), 55–63, for a similar Chinese point of view.

[71] Brewer, 'From Philanthropy to Reform', 297.

[72] Hunt, *The Making of a Special Relationship*, 302.

China is unique in many ways and this is one of them, for what other country will you find agreeable to allow a foreign Red Cross to step in and take command of its relief situations to the extent we have done? Most of them would not permit it no matter how badly their own Red Cross was organized.[73]

Despite moments of clarity such as these, when disaster struck, as it did in Lincheng, the China Central Committee of the American Red Cross moved swiftly and without hesitation to 'take command' of the relief situation, without letting any considerations of engendering 'unpleasant relations' stand in its way.

Lincheng: Americans to the Rescue

In May 1923, with the confidence of five years of calling the shots in China, the ARC's China Central Committee and their representative Carl Crow did not hesitate to move swiftly when the news of the Lincheng Disaster reached Shanghai. By 11 May 1923, five days after the attack, Crow was in Zaozhuang, summoned by American Minister to China Jacob Gould Schurman, settling in at the Zhongxing Coal Mines, which would serve as emergency headquarters for the next six weeks. To overcome the lack of adequate housing and facilities, the Tianjin–Pukou railway line brought in luxury train cars to serve as offices, sleeping quarters, and eventually a Red Cross hospital for the foreign relief team. At no point did Crow contact the Chinese Red Cross. Only Luella DeLamarter, the Shanghai-based secretary of the CCC, thought to write to the Chinese Society, asking them about their plans for relief at the disaster site.[74]

Crow immediately took charge of the relief operations for the foreign captives, procuring extensive supplies and setting up elaborate systems to send them to the prisoners in the bandit stronghold. Crow's understanding of his relief mission extended far beyond providing for the foreign victims' subsistence needs. Before he arrived, Chinese officials had brought food and clothing for the foreign captives: 'brandy, sardines, and soda biscuit'.[75] These provisions, according to Crow, were completely inadequate. He explained: 'The food and clothing provided by the Chinese officials, while quite suit-

[73] Speech delivered in the USA, probably 1922, Box 673: 798.5, CCC, ARC/NA.

[74] Forster to DeLamarter, 19 June 1923, Box 45: 041, CCC, ARC/NA. The correspondence suggests that she acted on her own initiative, rather than being deputized by other CCC members.

[75] 'Crow Report', 6.

able for Chinese captives, did not meet the needs of the foreigners, who were, of course, unaccustomed to a coarse Chinese diet. The clothing was in all cases too small for use by foreigners.'[76] Crow's task of providing properly for the captives was made considerably more difficult by the fact that Zaozhuang was, as he wrote in his report of the relief operations, 'the last outpost of civilization in the bandit country. The land . . . is the poorest I have seen in China, and the people the poorest and most ignorant. They are almost without exception poorly clad and exist on a diet much inferior to that enjoyed by the average coolie laborer in Shanghai.' Thus Crow had to rely on the British American Tobacco Company, which had offered him their services, to relay the appropriate supplies from Xuzhou, or even from Shanghai or Nanjing, in order to supply the captives in the manner to which they were accustomed.[77]

These supplies included, along with bottled water, tinned meat, butter, jam, and vegetables, a daily delivery of 'one bottle brandy, 2 tubes toothpaste, 6 bars laundry soap, 6 tablets toilet soap, 6 bottles kerosene, 12 sterno tins, 1 package toilet paper, 2 boxes cheap cigars, 1 box good cigars, 1000 cigarettes, 50 envelopes, 30 small tins of milk, 12 boxes matches, 1 tin coffee, 1 tin cocoa, 1 tin tea, 1 tin sweet biscuit . . . magazines and other reading matter', and a large variety of other items, including a one-time delivery of beds for each of the foreign captives and other bedding and clothing supplies.[78] This daily delivery was accomplished by a force of coolies eventually numbering forty men, each of whom carried a daily load of 90–133 pounds of materials between twelve and eighteen miles to the bandit stronghold in a ten-hour day.[79] The bandits, who also shared this bounty, allowed these shipments to the foreign captives to arrive unhindered, and Crow noted with pride that 'with the exception of the theft of a lantern, a bar of soap, and a pair of socks by one of the bandit outposts, nothing was lost in transportation except, of course, the last day's supplies, which reached the bandit camp after the captives were released'.[80]

While this largesse was travelling daily to supply the sixteen foreign captives and their nine impromptu Chinese interpreters,

[76] Ibid. 2. [77] Ibid. 4.

[78] *Peking and Tsientsin Times*, 25 May 1923.

[79] See also Carl Crow, *The Chinese are Like That* (New York, 1938), 320.

[80] 'Crow Report', 4; also Crow, *The Chinese are Like That*, 321, and French, *Carl Crow*, 123–5.

Crow chose not to make any provision for the more than a hundred Chinese captives taken from the *Blue Express*. According to Crow, 'From the beginning, I made no attempt to take care of the relief of the Chinese captives, feeling that this was a problem which the Chinese authorities and organizations were well able to take care of.'[81] Although Crow felt this way, he also complained that for the most part, the Chinese captives were *not* being taken care of. Nonetheless, by his own admission, at no point did he offer his already established supply lines to his Chinese counterparts, nor did he offer to continue relief services after the foreign captives were released, despite the dire conditions the Chinese prisoners still faced. This contradictory position was further evident in Crow's description of the conditions of the Chinese captives, particularly the children. 'If the spectacle of a group of little children in a semi-starved and diseased condition at the top of a bandit stronghold dying one by one does not arouse human compassion, then nothing will.'[82] This censure was reserved for the Chinese, however, and did not apply to his own operations, which continued to ignore the Chinese captives, little children and adults alike, for the duration of the crisis.

The Chinese Red Cross in Lincheng

The principals of the Chinese Red Cross were undoubtedly equally aware of the Lincheng Crisis as soon as the news reached Shanghai.[83] The international sensitivity of the Incident, however, meant that it was not immediately clear who would be responsible for managing the crisis, nor even who would be able to gain admittance to the site. The first humanitarian intervention from the Chinese side came directly from the Chinese government. Chinese officials from the Ministry of Communications sent food and clothing via Zaozhuang, particularly for the foreigners, using local messengers to reach the bandit camp.[84] Later, Military Governor Tian of Shandong also sent food for the Chinese captives.[85] But these officials were quick to defer to Carl Crow and his operatives as soon as they appeared on the scene. Chinese relief was no one's first priority, and even the admission of Chinese relief workers into the area was disallowed,

[81] 'Crow Report', 6.
[82] Ibid. 8.
[83] *Shenbao*, 7 May 1923.
[84] Schurman to Secretary of State, 9 May 1923, RG59: 393.1123; also 'Crow Report', 2.
[85] 'Crow Report', 8.

given the urgency of catering to the foreigners' needs. Within the first week of the Incident, Luella DeLamarter of the ARC in China had contacted and received word from the Chinese Red Cross headquarters that they had deputized a Shandong chapter of the Red Cross to lead relief operations for the Chinese. DeLamarter was apparently the one American Red Cross member to think of contacting the ARC's Chinese counterpart.[86]

Although there are few details of what happened to the Shandong Red Cross mission, it seems that the Shandong chapter was denied access to the crisis site.[87] Only the Chinese Red Cross Headquarters was allowed in. Given the international attention the Incident commanded, first priority was given to permitting foreign officials and representatives to enter the area, rather than any Chinese group. The Chinese Society had none of the clout of the American Red Cross, and certainly none of their overt military backing (American troops in China were standing ready to attack the bandit camp, in case a military evacuation of the hostages was deemed necessary).[88] What was clearly most important to almost everyone involved (except, of course, to the Chinese captives themselves, their friends and their families) was the safety and well-being of the foreigners.

In fact, when the headquarters of the Chinese Red Cross first applied for permission to send a relief squad to Zaozhuang, its personnel, too, had difficulty in securing government approval to proceed to the area. Only repeated telegrams to the military governors of Shandong and Jiangsu, as well as to the Ministry of Communications over a number of days, brought favourable replies to the team's request for official co-operation and protection on their journey to Zaozhuang.[89] With the area already overrun by government representatives from all the involved nations (plus Japan), by friends and relatives of the captives trying to negotiate individual releases,[90] and by hangers-on of all varieties,[91] the Chinese

[86] Forster to DeLamarter, 19 June 1923, Box 45: 041, CCC, ARC/NA. DeLamarter probably acted on her own here; see n. 74.

[87] It is possible, however, that the food supplies provided by Governor Tian of Shandong somehow involved the Shandong Red Cross.

[88] *Dongfang Zazhi*, 20/8 (1923), 2–6, for rumours of Western, especially American, military preparations; also Schurman to Secretary of State, 18 (?) May 1923, cited in Nozinski, *Outrage at Lincheng*, 79.

[89] *Zhongguo hongshizihui yuekan*, 22 (1923), 10–13.

[90] *Peking and Tientsin Times*, 17 May 1923.

[91] Nozinski, *Outrage at Lincheng*, 75–6.

Red Cross was actually denied space for their operations by the officials of the Zhongxing Colliery, who notified the Society that although they would like to welcome them in the most suitable way, all their space had already been taken by 'other guests'.[92] Eventually the Chinese team members were housed in two specially designated train cars.[93] Despite its parallel mission, the Chinese Red Cross received none of the special treatment afforded the American Society.

The Chinese Red Cross was finally able to secure the requisite permissions and obtain passes for their team to travel to Zaozhuang. Because of the privilege of extraterritoriality, these formalities had not been required of Carl Crow's operations. The Ministry of Communications finally gave its blessing to the Chinese relief mission on 25 May, stressing the 'special nature' of the Incident in its telegram and advising caution.[94] A team of eleven people, a mixed group of Red Cross doctors, members of the Chamber of Commerce, and members of the All-Shanghai Sojourners Association (lu Hu geshengqu Tongxianghui),[95] prepared to make their way to Zaozhuang.[96] Accompanied by eleven cases of medicines and supplies, the group took off from the Shanghai railway station. The occasion was a festive one, and the send-off impressive. There to see them off were members of the Fujian Tongxianghui, the Ningbo and Shaoxing Tongxianghui, the Yinzhou Tongxianghui, the Guang-Zhao Gongsuo, representatives of the Federated Commercial Associations of each street (gelu shangjie zonglianhehui),[97] as well as the Chinese Red Cross Society's own staff. 'The train whistle blew, and the spectators waved their hats and cheered. The bystanders felt moved and inspired.'[98] The Shanghai daily *Shenbao* also prominently covered the event, featuring a large photograph showing Red Cross ambulances with insets of relief team members dressed in elaborate Red Cross uniforms, captioned: 'The Red Cross

[92] *Zhongguo hongshizihui yuekan*, 22 (1923), 13. [93] Ibid. 15.

[94] Ibid. 11; also *Shenbao*, 27 May 1923, 4.

[95] See Bryna Goodman, *Native Place, City, and Nation* (Berkeley, 1995), for a discussion of these groups' philanthropic roles.

[96] This group was called the Quanguo Gongtuan Zaozhuang Linshi Lianhehui [The Zaozhuang All-China Temporary Federation of Public Associations]. *Zhongguo hongshizihui yuekan*, 22 (1923), 14; *Zhonghuaminguo Shishijiyao* [*Summary of Current Events in Republican China*], 645; *Dongfang Zazhi*, 20/9 (1923), 5.

[97] See Henrietta Harrison, *The Making of the Republican Citizen* (Oxford, 2000), for an interesting discussion of 'jie', 117–23.

[98] *Zhongguo hongshizihui yuekan*, 22 (1923), 12; also *Shenbao*, 27 May 1923, 4.

relief team sets off.' The accompanying article identifies the *Shenbao* as a sponsor of the supplies carried by the team, and notes sternly:

> The Lincheng Bandit Affair has already lasted a fortnight, and still remains unresolved. The foreigners who were kidnapped have already received the utmost in aid from international consular bodies [*lingshituan*] and from the Chinese government; *they* are not lacking in the least for food or clothing. Only the Chinese captives are suffering in difficult and unusual living conditions in the mountains. Now the weather is getting hotter and the victims are held prisoner in a wild mountain area. Food and water are lacking; their clothing is inadequate. As the duration of their captivity lengthens, it is likely that there will be outbreaks of disease. The situation is urgent.

This contrast between the treatment of the foreign and the Chinese captives was beginning to be noticed widely by both the Chinese and the Western press, as well as by the captives themselves. Reports on the disparity between the relative luxury enjoyed by the foreign captives and the abject conditions of the Chinese prisoners were confirmed by Mr Yang, son-in-law of late president Yuan Shikai, who was also taken captive on the *Blue Express*. Yang was released to negotiate for the bandits, and gave this report on 17 May: 'The foreigners receive fairly good treatment; they have plenty of food to eat and sleep on straw mattresses over three feet in thickness. They can move about freely. . . . The Chinese captives, however, are suffering tremendously, and sickness is increasing daily among them.'[99] His report was further corroborated by a letter from Mr C. Chang, a Chinese captive acting as an interpreter for the foreigners, who commented, 'I am one of the lucky Chinese who is allowed to share [food] with [the foreigners]. The rest of the Chinese captives are struggling along without proper provisions and clothing. . . . The little food they send in every now and then was [*sic*] stolen by the bandits, so these poor Chinese prisoners get nothing at all.'[100]

The interpretations given to this disparity, however, varied widely. The Chinese public and concerned philanthropists focused on the fact that they were not given access to the area to help the captives, whereas the Westerners frequently blamed the Chinese, including the victims themselves, for their perceived apathy in face of the crisis. John Powell, the American journalist held by the bandits, wrote a

[99] Diplomatic circular 112, Lincheng Incident, Peking, 17 May 1923; RG59: 393.1123.
[100] *Peking and Tientsin Times*, 31 May 1923.

letter published in the *Peking and Tientsin Times* of 22 May reporting that:

> It has been very interesting to note the difference between the foreigners and Chinese camps in adapting themselves to conditions. In the 'white' camp . . . as soon as we are dumped into a new camp we immediately get organized . . . and proceed to make ourselves comfortable. The Chinese prisoners, on the other hand, drop where they are dumped and do absolutely nothing to provide themselves with either food or comforts. They simply give up, and accept what is given to them, whether it is blows or food. It also seems surprising to us that the Chinese on the outside have done nothing to send in either food or clothing for the Chinese captives who are suffering severely for both.

Powell fails to note that the Chinese were not actually given anything to 'get comfortable' with, and that what is headlined as their 'fatalistic' attitude might stem in large part from that deprivation.

Given these reports, the arrival of the Chinese Red Cross delegation must have been much appreciated by the Chinese captives. Yet the foreign press was much less enthusiastic about the arrival of the Chinese team in Zaozhuang than the Chinese press, which covered it with great fanfare, for example in the *Shenbao*. On 1 June the *Peking and Tientsin Times* included a small column under the heading 'Chinese Red Cross Arrives':

> The Chinese Red Cross Unit has announced its intention to look after the Chinese captives. They arrived here a day or two ago from Shanghai, and are resplendent in new uniforms, freely emblazoned with the Red Cross. They are very proud of the fact that it took them only three days to get their equipment and uniforms ready after they were asked to come.

Given the juxtaposition of this article (entitled 'Chinese Prisoners are Fatalists') with one directly above it, entitled 'Mr. Crow's Invaluable Work', the belittling tone of the news clipping is clear. The article on Crow praises the American Red Cross representative highly, commenting that 'there can be no doubt that [the foreign captives'] continued optimism is due in no small measure to the successful issue of his determination that they should always have proper and sufficient food'.

Crow himself dismisses the arrival of the Chinese Red Cross team as useless, despite his stated desire to see the Chinese captives taken care of. 'On May 27th the first representatives of the Chinese Red Cross arrived in Tsao Chuang,' he writes in his report of the Incident. 'I met them on their arrival and learned that they had no definite

programme and had brought only medical supplies. Indeed, the expedition was not only very late in arriving, but appeared to me as being very ill-advised, as it was all designed for the purpose of giving medical relief and was not needed.'[101] Crow's assessment of the team, here frankly inaccurate, also reveals his unwillingness to work with the Chinese Red Cross or to cede any authority to them. His stated desire to see the Chinese authorities take over their own rescue operations was not reflected in his attitude when the Chinese team actually arrived.

Once they arrived, the Chinese Red Cross Society representatives were outspoken in voicing the Chinese position on how relief should have been handled. They made their views explicitly known through an interview given to the English-language newspaper the *Chinese Press* [*Dalu Bao*] on 28 May and reprinted in *Xinwen Bao* on 1 June. Interviewed in Zaozhuang, one Chinese Red Cross spokesman, probably medical head Dr Way Sung New (Niu Hui-sheng),[102] was quoted as saying that having 'the foreigners send food into the mountains to relieve the captives damages China's face [*shang Zhongguo yanmian*]; we [the Chinese, and explicitly China's Red Cross] want to take care of this issue ourselves.'[103]

Crow had also heard of this interview, which he dismisses in his report on the Incident. The Chinese Red Cross was interested in assisting the captives for 'purely political reasons', and 'the amount of trumpet-blowing' accompanying their relief efforts was proof of this fact, according to Crow.[104] Crow finishes his comments on the Chinese Red Cross group by concluding that a Chinese Red Cross Society was no 'more than an opportunity for soft jobs for a few men and a pawn in the political game'.[105] In fact, given the parochial and clannish nature of the Chinese in general, he adds, it was unlikely that the lofty ideals of the Red Cross movement would ever be realized by the Chinese themselves.

Success at Last

Despite the high spirits and hopes for success with which the Chinese team set off, the relief team's arrival in Zaozhuang only

[101] 'Crow Report', 6.
[102] *Who's Who in China*, 618–19.
[103] Cited in *Zhongguo hongshizihui yuekan*, 22 (1923), 15.
[104] 'Crow Report', 7.
[105] Ibid. 8.

heralded further delays in reaching the captives.[106] The team set up a temporary hospital with the co-operation of the Zhongxing Colliery, but could administer their aid only to those already in the Zaozhuang camp. By 4 June, however, their supplies began to reach the Chinese prisoners. These supplies were significantly more modest than those provided for the foreigners. The first shipment included eight towels, fifty pairs of shoes, thirty-two cans of tinned vegetables, forty pairs of trousers, and one large case of biscuits.[107]

The great desire of the Chinese Red Cross team was to visit the Chinese captives and provide them with medical attention. Dysentery and malaria were rife.[108] Their wish, however, was not to be granted by the Chinese authorities until after the foreign prisoners were released on 12 June.[109] Once the foreign prisoners were set free, the foreign relief and negotiation operations were immediately disbanded. Finally, the Chinese relief squad was allowed into the mountains to care for the remaining captives—all Chinese. Their work continued for the next two weeks until all these prisoners were freed on 24 June 1923.[110]

After the relief operations were concluded, the diplomatic negotiations which the kidnapping of the foreign passengers had precipitated continued through the summer and autumn. The Diplomatic Corps, represented by a committee formed in early June and made up of the foreign ministers of America, Belgium, Britain, France, Holland, Italy, and Japan, had presented three demands to the Chinese government: (1) compensation for the victims; (2) safeguards and guarantees for the future protection of foreigners and foreign interests in China; and (3) sanctions, primarily punishments for Chinese officials involved in the affair. A tense summer ensued, with the threat of military intervention, especially by the British, looming large. Crippled by Li Yuanhong's departure in mid-June, the Chinese central government did not even reply to the demands until the end of September.[111]

Divided among themselves, the foreign ministers ultimately had to accept the watered-down terms to which the new government of

[106] *Dongfang Zazhi*, 20/9 (1923), 5.
[107] *Zhongguo hongshizihui yuekan*, 22 (1923), 19.
[108] French, 121.
[109] *Zhongguo hongshizihui yuekan*, 22 (1923), 12; also *Shenbao*, 27 May 1923, 4, for the denial of access; also Crow, *The Chinese Are Like That*, 9.
[110] *Zhongguo hongshizihui yuekan*, 22 (1923), 24.
[111] Chan, 'The Lincheng Incident', 184.

Cao Kun finally agreed. The inflamed rhetoric gave way to less than lukewarm results. This outcome was particularly disappointing for the British, whose Foreign Office 'recognized gloomily that the Lincheng incident had resulted in a "bad rebuff" for the powers, especially Britain'.[112] Although all but forgotten today, the Lincheng Affair made a powerful impact on both the Chinese and the Western powers at the time, and discussion of the event remained current for years afterwards.

Conclusion

The events of the Lincheng Incident highlight the contradictory nature of the American Red Cross's involvement in China and, in fact, the contradictory nature of extraterritoriality in general. Although the Americans involved in the ARC's activities in China insisted that they were working to bring the Red Cross mission to China and to raise the standard of humanitarianism there to acceptable world levels, in fact their work in China served primarily to undermine already considerable indigenous efforts to develop Chinese philanthropy along international lines. As the Lincheng Episode reveals, the prerogatives of extraterritoriality robbed the Chinese in all walks of life of the opportunity to be masters of their own crises, and put foreigners in charge where the rights of sovereignty would normally demand local control of events. Both the Chinese Red Cross and the American Red Cross were ready to provide relief aid in the Lincheng Crisis; yet by dint of the foreigners' special position within China, it was the American Red Cross that was first granted access to the kidnapping site, and which thus first provided aid. By robbing Chinese philanthropists of the opportunity to manage these relief activities on their own territory, the ARC also robbed the Chinese Red Cross of stature in the eyes of the international community and of its local constituents.

By operating their own chapters on Chinese territory and stepping in during crises such as the Lincheng Incident, the ARC's China Central Committee ostensibly intended to demonstrate international standards and American procedures to the Chinese Red Cross Society. But this model and these standards were available to the Chinese Society's directors in many other venues, all at much less cost to the Chinese: through participation in international meetings,

[112] Ibid. 186.

through exchanges of information and materials with other national Societies, and through direct observations gleaned while Chinese delegations were visiting abroad. Thus despite the Chinese Red Cross's active attempts to become an internationally respected philanthropic organization, purportedly the same goal that the ARC desired for the Chinese Society, the ARC in China consistently undermined those efforts.

Although much of the ARC's work in China was done with the sincere intention of helping the Chinese people, and indeed many of its projects were important and successful in so doing, by usurping the Chinese Society's initiative in high-profile situations, the ARC did more harm than good to the cause of promoting a functioning, national Red Cross in China. Moreover, the actions of the American Red Cross in China during the Lincheng Incident compromised the greater mission of international humanitarianism promoted by the International Red Cross organization. By insisting on conducting relief operations unilaterally, ignoring the Chinese captives, and refusing to co-operate with the Chinese Red Cross organization, the American Red Cross actually hindered the cause of globally internationalizing philanthropy, instead insisting on a parochial definition of humanitarianism and taking a hegemonic stance on the conduct of relief efforts.

But this fact begs the question of the true intent of the ARC's China Central Committee. Literature on Sino-American relations during this period, particularly on America's philanthropic involvement in China,[113] often focuses on the Americans' reformist impulse in China. Taking contemporary writings at face value, many scholars have stressed the Americans' stated goal of providing a model for China to emulate, of educating China by example, of raising China up—up to God, up to civilization, up to efficient, rational, 'business-like' behaviour. But events such as the Lincheng Episode belie this interpretation, and unmask the rhetoric.

Carl Crow's attitudes regarding the Chinese Red Cross Society, which, presumably, the American Red Cross was in China to assist, reveal a darker side of the 'reformist' intent of the supporters of extraterritoriality. Beneath the rhetoric lurked the conviction that

[113] e.g. Karen Brewer and Andrew Nathan, *A History of the China International Famine Relief Commission* (Cambridge, 1965), as well as Mary Bullock, *The Oil Prince's Legacy: Rockefeller Philanthropy in China* (Stanford, Calif., 2011), which briefly covers the Lincheng Incident and completely ignores its implications for the Chinese.

the West could not really reform China; China simply needed to be mastered. Although American treaty-port philanthropists (together with businessmen and missionaries) may well have believed that they were working towards a reformed China—an international, not colonized China—these platitudes frequently disguised underlying beliefs more similar to those of Rodney Gilbert, author of the 'confidently racist'[114] *What's Wrong with China?* Gilbert mocks his countrymen's reformist attitude: 'It is thought abroad', he writes, 'that the Chinese . . . are in all humility trying to pattern themselves after us because of the ostensible superiority of our ways.'[115] This is not true, Gilbert asserts, and any Westerner acting on this impulse is fooling himself. The deeper message that Crow imparts in his report on the Lincheng Crisis, and which Gilbert resoundingly echoes in his work, is that the Chinese, despite anyone's best efforts, could not really be changed for the better.

These attitudes of the American Red Cross members in China, as well as of many newspapermen and other foreign nationals living and writing there during the Republican era, leave a tangible legacy that provides a dangerous snare for the historian working on subjects such as philanthropy in China. Because English-language sources almost (but not quite) unanimously omit, downplay, or distort Chinese accomplishments in the realm of charitable relief activity, it is easy for historians working on the period to succumb to this same distorted picture of Chinese philanthropy during the Republican era that many Westerners in China, particularly long-term treaty-port residents, subscribed to themselves, and thus to ignore the very real achievements of the Chinese. For example, it is quite possible to read about the Lincheng Episode and never to know that the Chinese Red Cross came to the scene to help the captives, despite the local importance of their arrival there.

This attitude, prevalent among many of the foreign men and women providing charitable aid in China at that time, became increasingly obvious and intolerable to the Chinese throughout the Republican period. Voices of private citizens such as Shen Dunhe in 1918 and Dr New in Lincheng in 1923 helped create the atmosphere that finally led to the abrogation of the legal system buttressing those attitudes.

[114] Fitzgerald, *Awakening China*, 140.
[115] Gilbert, *What's Wrong with China?*, 41.

Epilogue

Just a few years later Shen Dunhe would be vindicated at last, when, on 5 April 1924, the Washington Headquarters of the American Red Cross voted to abolish the foreign chapters of the Fourteenth Division for precisely the reasons Shen had suggested:

> Notwithstanding the admirable record of [the foreign] Chapters, it has been deemed wise to discontinue them for the following reasons: During the last few years, and particularly since the close of the late war, many new National Red Cross Societies have been created and many of the older societies which had theretofore been comparatively inactive have been revivified and have placed themselves in a position to take a leading part in the relief of important emergencies arising from calamities within their own countries. With the growth in number and power of these societies, there has arisen a steadily increasing possibility that the presence of American Red Cross Chapters in foreign territory might lead to confusion or possibly to competition or friction.[116]

True to form, the China Central Committee of the American Red Cross resisted this action, appealing against the decision by pleading 'what it considered the unique circumstances of China: the importance of their aid to the Chinese Red Cross, the need for an American relief agency to protect Americans who, because of extra-territoriality, would therefore not be cared for by the Chinese Red Cross, and the importance of China experience to validate claims for disaster relief need in the various districts of China'.[117] Julean Arnold, writing on behalf of the CCC, tried every justification to maintain the American group in China, including promises that when the Chinese Red Cross Society became 'so organized as to be able effectively to handle the situation [of being the sole Red Cross in China]', the CCC would cease to function.[118] These protests and blandishments continued through August of 1924, but finally the American headquarters put its foot down. 'It was the feeling here, after mature consideration, that nothing remained for the Red Cross to do but to absolutely wipe off the slate all its foreign operations, thus once and for all removing the embarrassing question from the field

[116] *The American National Red Cross Annual Report for the Year Ending June 30, 1924*, 73 (Federation Archives).

[117] Brewer, 'From Philanthropy to Reform', 313.

[118] Arnold to Schurman, 11 June 1924, Box 673: 798.5, CCC, ARC/NA.

of discussion.'[119] Just one year too late for the Lincheng Episode, the ruling would have made all the difference to the manner in which the affair was handled.

[119] Bicknell to Dollar, 11 Sept. 1924, Box 673: 798.5, CCC, ARC/NA.