What Maketh the Man?
Towards a Psychobiographical Study of Lin Yutang

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Abstract

Dr Lin Yutang, philologist, philosopher, novelist and inventor was America’s most influential native informant on Chinese culture from the mid-1930s to the mid-1950s. Theoretical analysis of Lin’s accomplishments is an ongoing focus of research on both sides of the North Pacific: this study suggests why he made particular choices and reacted in specific ways during his lifetime. Psychobiographical theory forms the framework for this research because it provides a structure for searching within texts to understand why Lin made choices that led to his lasting contribution to transcultural literature. It looks at foundational beliefs established in his childhood and youth, at why significant events in adulthood either reinforced or altered these and why some circumstances initiated new beliefs. Lin’s life is viewed through thematic lenses: foundational factors; scholarship and vocation; the influence of women; peer input; and religion, philosophy and humour. Most of his empirical life journey is already documented: this thesis suggests why he felt compelled to act and write as he did. In doing so, it offers possible scenarios of why Lin’s talents developed and why his life journey evolved in a particular manner, place and time. For example, it shows the way in which basic beliefs—formed during Lin’s childhood and youth and later specific events in adulthood—affecte his life’s journey. It analyses how his exposure to the theories of Taoism, Confucianism and Buddhism affected his early childhood basic belief—Christianity—and argues that he accommodated traditional Chinese beliefs within Christianity. It suggests how women played a central role in influencing the specific directions of Lin’s life. This study shows how Lin’s writing, resulting from his beliefs and the themes and patterns evident throughout his life, is useful information for third millennium global societies. Acknowledging his basic beliefs and how significant events reinforced or changed the patterns built on these beliefs may aid educators in creating environments that enrich learning outcomes. This information shows how writing can inform readers and sway societal opinion and it confirms the importance of contact with nature in early childhood. Contact with nature cannot be underestimated in forming sound structures for concentration and emotional stability in later life. In suggesting why Lin took particular directions and not others, it is acknowledged that
although the circumstances of his birth, childhood and youth (which created his foundational beliefs) cannot be unerringly reproduced temporally or spatially, it is possible to recreate some of the significant events that stimulated this transcultural writer during his adult years. These include learning new languages and experiencing travel: events that can be reproduced to shape twenty first century learning environments.
Declaration

I certify that this work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. In addition, I certify that no part of this work will, in the future, be used in a submission for any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution without the prior approval of the University of Adelaide and where applicable, any partner institution responsible for the joint-award of this degree.

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Signed:

Roslyn Joy Ricci

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# Contents

Abstract................................................................................................................................................ii

Declaration...............................................................................................................................................iv

Acknowledgements.....................................................................................................................................v

Contents ......................................................................................................................................................vi

List of Figures .............................................................................................................................................xi

Abbreviations in Citations..........................................................................................................................xii

Chapter 1: Introduction..............................................................................................................................1

1.1 Introduction ..........................................................................................................................................1

1.2 The Significance of Lin Yutang ...........................................................................................................3

1.2.1 Importance to Western Society .....................................................................................................3

1.2.2 Importance to Chinese Literature ..................................................................................................4

1.2.3 Importance to World Literature .....................................................................................................5

1.2.4 Contribution of This Study to Asian Studies ..................................................................................5

1.2.5 Importance of This Research to Psychobiography .......................................................................6

1.3 Thesis ..................................................................................................................................................6

1.4 Objectives, Driving Questions and Definitions ...................................................................................6

1.4.1 Objectives .....................................................................................................................................6

1.4.2 Driving Questions .............................................................................................................................7

1.4.3 Definitions .....................................................................................................................................7

1.4.4 Methodological Approaches Employed .........................................................................................8

1.5 Psychobiographical Theory .................................................................................................................10

1.5.1 Why Psychobiographical Research for Lin Yutang? ...................................................................12

1.5.2 Michael J. Howe: A Multidisciplinary Approach .........................................................................12

1.5.3 J. W. Anderson: The Challenges of Psychobiography ...................................................................13

1.5.4 William Todd Schultz: Framework for This Study .......................................................................16

1.6 Perspective and Biases ........................................................................................................................19

1.7 Chapter Plans .......................................................................................................................................20

1.8 Chapter Summary .................................................................................................................................23

Chapter 2: The Empirical Journey and Literature Review......................................................................24

2.1 Introduction .........................................................................................................................................24

2.2 The Formative Years: 1895–1904 .......................................................................................................24

2.3 School Days: 1905–1910 .......................................................................................................................25

2.3.1 College and Early Career: 1911–1915 .............................................................................................26

2.4 Marriage and Postgraduate Journey: 1919–1923 ...............................................................................27

2.5 Children and Career: 1923–1929 .........................................................................................................30

2.6 Vocation as Author: 1928–1934 ..........................................................................................................32

2.6.1 Establishing Transcultural Credentials: 1935–1937 ....................................................................35

2.7 Pre-War and WWII: 1938–1945 ...........................................................................................................37

2.8 Post-WWII: 1946– ...............................................................................................................................43

2.8.1 Singed in Singapore: 1954–1955 .....................................................................................................45

2.8.2 Travel and Writing: 1955–1961 .....................................................................................................46

2.8.3 Taiwan 1965–1972 .........................................................................................................................48

vi
Chapter 3: The Formative Years

3.1 Introduction ................................................................................................................. 60
3.2 Foundational Beliefs and Infant Memory ................................................................. 61
  3.2.1 Schacter and Moscovitch ................................................................................... 61
3.3 Historical and Geographical Space ........................................................................... 62
  3.3.1 Geographical Space ............................................................................................ 63
  3.3.2 Educational Cultural Space: Amoy—Xiamen and Gulangyu ......................... 66
3.4 Familial Effect ............................................................................................................. 67
  3.4.1 Lin Zhizheng ...................................................................................................... 68
  3.4.2 Yang Shunming ................................................................................................. 69
  3.4.3 Siblings .............................................................................................................. 71
  3.4.4 Meigong ............................................................................................................ 73
3.5 Women and the Child Lin ......................................................................................... 78
  3.5.1 Childhood Sweetheart ....................................................................................... 78
  3.5.2 Mannia and Mulan ............................................................................................. 80
  3.5.3 Missionaries and Temperance Women .............................................................. 81
3.6 Education .................................................................................................................... 84
  3.6.1 School Days: 1900–1910 .................................................................................. 84
  3.6.2 St John’s College ............................................................................................... 85
3.7 Scholarship .................................................................................................................. 89
3.8 Childhood and Invention ............................................................................................ 90
3.9 Chapter Summary ...................................................................................................... 91

Chapter 4: How Scholarship and Vocation Shaped Lin Yutang ...................................... 94
4.1 Introduction .................................................................................................................. 94
4.2 Scholarship ................................................................................................................ 96
  4.2.1 Academic Writing .............................................................................................. 96
  4.2.2 Western Scholarship ......................................................................................... 98
4.3 Academic Writing ...................................................................................................... 100
  4.3.1 Translated Texts: Understanding His Choices ................................................. 102
  4.3.2 Do Lin’s Translations of Traditional Chinese Texts Reveal Evidence of
        Isogesis? .............................................................................................................. 103
  4.3.3 Marrying the Old and the New ....................................................................... 103
  4.3.4 Language as ‘Soft-Power’ .............................................................................. 104
  4.3.5 ‘The Pen is Mightier Than the Sword’ .............................................................. 107
  4.3.6 The Tongue as Whip ..................................................................................... 111
4.4 Creative Writing ......................................................................................................... 113
  4.4.1 Publishing ....................................................................................................... 114
4.5 Invention .................................................................................................................... 115
4.6 Transcultural Architecture ....................................................................................... 120
4.7 Chapter Summary ..................................................................................................... 124
Chapter 5: The Significance of Women in the Life of Lin ............................. 126
  5.1 Introduction ........................................................................................................ 126
  5.2 Historical Perceptions of Women ........................................................................ 127
  5.3 Youthful Perceptions .......................................................................................... 128
      5.3.1 The Eros of Youth ...................................................................................... 128
  5.4 Liao Cuifeng ......................................................................................................... 132
The wedding photo below shows a confident maturity in Cuifeng’s face, while Lin’s face is one of emotional immaturity. ........................................................................ 132
  5.5 The Daughters ...................................................................................................... 135
      5.5.1 Loss of a Child ............................................................................................. 139
  5.6 Significant Women .............................................................................................. 142
      5.6.1 Liu Hezhen .................................................................................................. 142
      5.6.2 The Landladies of Leipzig .......................................................................... 143
      5.6.3 Vocational Peers ......................................................................................... 144
      5.6.4 Pearl Sydenstricker Buck .......................................................................... 145
      5.6.5 Anna May Wong ......................................................................................... 146
      5.6.6 Huang Zhaoeng .......................................................................................... 147
  5.7 Rejection and Parting .......................................................................................... 148
  5.8 Lin: Feminist or Humanist? .................................................................................. 149
  5.9 Women and Writing ............................................................................................ 151
      5.9.1 Writing on Women ...................................................................................... 151
      5.9.2 Writing about Women ................................................................................ 153
  5.10 Smoking as Sensual Addiction .......................................................................... 156
  5.11 Chapter Summary .............................................................................................. 160

Chapter 6: The Influence of Peers ........................................................................... 162
  6.1 Introduction .......................................................................................................... 162
  6.2 Academic Peers .................................................................................................... 162
      6.2.1 Hu Shi and Lu Xun ....................................................................................... 163
      6.2.2 Hu Shi .......................................................................................................... 164
      6.2.3 Lu Xun (Zhou Shuren) ................................................................................ 170
  6.3 Political Plight ....................................................................................................... 172
      6.3.1 Zhang Zongchang ......................................................................................... 172
  6.4 Social and Literary Peers ...................................................................................... 173
      6.4.1 Chiang Kai-shek and Soong Mei-ling ......................................................... 173
      6.4.2 The Shanghai Circle .................................................................................... 174
  6.5 Publishing Peers ................................................................................................... 177
      6.5.1 Richard John Walsh (1902–1975) ............................................................... 177
      6.5.2 The Paris Circle ........................................................................................... 183
      6.5.3 Departure of Friends .................................................................................... 184
      6.5.4 Chapter Summary ......................................................................................... 185

Chapter 7: Spiritual Survival: Philosophy/Religion/Humour .................................... 186
  7.1 Introduction .......................................................................................................... 186
  7.2 Religion ................................................................................................................. 188
      7.2.1 Formative Belief .......................................................................................... 188
      7.2.2 The Melding of Philosophy and Religion .................................................. 190
      7.2.3 Autumn Years ............................................................................................ 191
      7.2.4 Contradictions ............................................................................................ 192
  7.3 Philosophy ............................................................................................................. 194
      7.3.1 Lin the Multidisciplinary Philosopher ......................................................... 197
List of Figures

Figure 1.1: The yin and yang of psychology and biography .................................................................10
Figure 2.1: Banzai (Poa-a); Pinghe (Siokhe); Zhangzhou (Chang-Chow) .......................... 25
Figure 2.2: Wedding Day Photo: Liao Cuifeng (23 years) & Lin Yutang (24 years).... 27
Figure 2.3: 1931—Cuifeng Holding Hsiangju; Lin with Anor & Adet ......................... 34
Figure 2.4: An Estimated 11,500 Bombs Fell on Chongqing bw 18 Feb 1938–23 August 1943 ............................................................................................................................................... 39
Figure 3.1: Portrait of Emperor Guangxu in Court Attire .......................................................... 63
Figure 3.2: A = Banzai Township ....................................................................................................... 64
Figure 3.3: River Near Lin’s Birth Home ......................................................................................... 64
Figure 3.4: River Rapids Banzai–Siokhe ......................................................................................... 65
Figure 3.5: Lin Yutang at 7 Years ..................................................................................................... 72
Figure 3.6: Zhizheng Lin Family 1903: Lin Yutang 3rd from left/Meigong 2nd from right ............................................................................................................................................... 72
Figure 3.7: Deborah Kerr .................................................................................................................. 75
Figure 3.8: Meigong .......................................................................................................................... 75
Figure 3.9: Missionary Temperance Women ..................................................................................... 83
Figure 3.10: Lin Yutang, 1911 .......................................................................................................... 86
Figure 3.11: Childhood Poem ........................................................................................................... 89
Figure 3.12: Well and Water Chute (outside) 2008 ......................................................................... 91
Figure 3.13: Chute to Butler’s Sink (inside) 2008 ......................................................................... 91
Figure 4.1: Lin’s Chinese character typewriter ................................................................................ 116
Figure 4.2: Original Lin Family Home Banzai c.1900 .................................................................... 121
Figure 4.3: Replica of Lin’s Banzai Home 2008 .............................................................................. 121
Figure 4.4: Courtyard of Lin Yutang House .................................................................................... 121
Figure 4.5: Plan of Lin House, Yangmingshan .............................................................................. 122
Figure 4.6: Plan of a Siheyuan Courtyard Home ............................................................................ 122
Figure 5.1: The Chen Home No. 44 ............................................................................................... 130
Figure 5.2: Chen Home Juxtaposing Liao Home .......................................................................... 130
Figure 5.3: The Liao Home No. 48 ............................................................................................... 130
Figure 5.4: Liao Cuifeng and Lin Yutang ....................................................................................... 132
Figure 5.5: Cuifeng, Hsiangju, Anor, Lin & Adet ......................................................... 135
Figure 5.6: Anna May Wong ......................................................................................... 147
Figure 5.7: Woman with Cigarette ............................................................................... 158
Figure 5.8: Lin Yutang with a Cigar ............................................................................. 159
Figure 5.9: Lin Yutang Lighting a Pipe .......................................................................... 159
Figure 6.1: Lu Xun (taken 1930) & Hu Shi (taken 1944) .............................................. 163
Figure 6.2: The ‘Thread of Language’ Writers ............................................................ 170
Figure 6.3: The CCRL with GB Shaw .......................................................................... 175
Figure 6.4: GB Shaw, Soong Ching-ling, Agnes Smedley, Cai Yuanpei & 
           Hu Shi ................................................................................................................. 175
Figure 6.5: [Sun Xifu, Lin Yutang,] Sun Fuyuan, Zhou Jianren, Xu Guangping & 
           Lu Xun .................................................................................................................. 176
Figure 6.6: Walsh and Buck ......................................................................................... 178
Figure 7.1: ‘Awakening’ ballet .................................................................................... 197
Figure 7.2: Stefan Doose’s diagram .......................................................................... 206
Figure 7.3: Doose’s Venn Diagram in English ............................................................. 207
Figure 7.4: ‘Mickey Mouse meets Confucius’ ............................................................... 212
Figure 7.5: ‘What I like about America’ ...................................................................... 212
Figure 7.6: Lin’s Comic Sketches ................................................................................ 212
Abbreviations in Citations

Books by Lin Yutang


Other

OED for The Oxford English Dictionary

Websites


Note on Transliteration

Pinyin is used for the transliteration of Chinese names and terms except those used in direct quotes, book titles or authors and names widely known in other forms, such as Sun Yat-sen.
Human history is not the product of the wise direction of human reason, but it is shaped by the forces of emotion—our dreams, our pride, our greed, our fears, and our desire for revenge.

Lin Yutang

1.1 Introduction

Lin Yutang (1895–1976) was a renowned Chinese philologist, linguist, philosopher, and inventor, political commentator, poet, novelist, translator of classical Chinese texts, and interpreter of Chinese culture for Western readers. From the mid-1930s to the mid-1960s, when his writing was predominantly in English, Lin was the most sought after voice on Chinese thought in America. His publications became information documents on Chinese culture for the American public. Lin became one of the most influential transcultural writers of his time. His books provided insight into Chinese culture and challenged philosophical issues for Western readers: several of his books were best-sellers, first in America, and subsequently when in translation throughout the world. Lin’s influence on a twentieth century global readership is predominantly found in: his book of philosophical essays, The Importance of Living, which still motivates readers in diverse ways; though his novels, such as Moment in Peking; his translations, such as The Wisdom of China and India; and through digital media, such as the worldwide-web and YouTube. Although Lin’s character and personality are well researched through particular aspects of his writing, they serve best for this study as sources for his foundational beliefs from childhood and youth and then for exploring behavioural patterns and dominant themes that occurred throughout his life. His perceptions of Chinese culture presented throughout his writing, not always accepted by his reviewers, and his momentary lapses into harsh criticism of other cultures, are overwhelmingly subsumed by the plethora of writing supporting the value of his work. Understanding the influences in Lin’s life journey that established his basic beliefs, along with those experiences that led to change or reinforcement of his beliefs or values during his adult years, provides a means of interpreting his life. Exploring meaningful experiences or

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1. Lin Yutang, Confucius Saw Nancy (A Drama) and Essays about Nothing, Shanghai: Commercial Press Ltd, 1936, p. 95. This play had Confucius interacting with Queen Nancia, wife of the King of Wei.
   Paul Newall, ‘Philosophy of Religion, Part 1’, The Galilean: Magazine and Library, 2005: ‘a properly basic belief is one that is held in an immediate, basic way; not on the foundation of other beliefs but because it is certain for us.’
themes in Lin’s life—the people, places and historical factors central to these events—shows how these factors may have affected what he wrote – in particular the extent to which women affected his life choices and oeuvre.

The primary purpose of this thesis is to establish Lin’s foundational beliefs from his childhood and teenage years and to trace themes that run through his adult life; consolidating, changing these beliefs or establishing new themes. In writing Lin’s life story it is necessary to consider why he chose certain approaches to life and to discern possible motivations behind what he wrote and said. The best approach in ascertaining why is a case study employing psychobiography because, as William Runyan points out, ‘it is the method which defines the limits of our ability to understand the course of events and experiences in human lives.’ Lin’s life choices did not result from any one specific cause, but came from a composite of environmental sources, such as familial, historical, political, cultural and psychological impost.

The secondary purpose of this thesis is to examine meaningful influences that shaped Lin’s character, beliefs and actions; suggesting why he became an important transcultural writer of the twentieth century and why his writing continues to influence Chinese, Taiwanese and Western cultures in various arts and social science spheres, into the twenty-first century. Lin’s beliefs and themes show patterns of behaviour that may help educators to produce young writers as transcultural mediators. His writing, particularly his philosophy of life, provides rare insight into how readers can equip themselves better for the pressures of a twenty-first century global society.

Previous books and dissertations on Lin’s life and writing took specific approaches. For example, in 1993, his daughter Anor (Taiyi) published a biography of her father based on her 1989 dissertation in Chinese from a filial perspective. In 1991, Diran Sohigian submitted a thesis on Lin in English from a historical and political perspective and in 1996, Qian Jun produced a thesis on Lin from historical and cross-cultural perspectives. Shuang Shen’s 1998 PhD dissertation is a comparative re-reading of work by Lin and two other writers. Madalina Lee defended her dissertation on the origins of Lin’s ‘cultural internationalism’ from 1928 to

1938, and in 2008, Lu Fan focused specifically on Lin’s representations of women in his writing, limiting his examination to four specific texts. Minor dissertations, world-wide-web biographies, book chapters, journal and magazine articles, websites and presentations on Lin are too numerous to acknowledge here, but some are cited throughout this thesis. However, none of these studies investigated his life from a psychobiographical perspective, or drew attention to key underlying motifs, such as the role of women or religious imposts in affecting his philosophy of life as conveyed through his writing.

This chapter examines the aims, importance of and methods used in this study, the theories underpinning these and definitions of terminology used throughout. In particular, this chapter explores psychobiography as a tool for analysing Lin’s life journey. It will consider theories from William Todd Schultz, Dan McAdams and Michael J. Howe, with reference to those of William Runyan and Erik Erikson, drawing from them methodology for discerning possible causes for, and results of, Lin’s life scripts. It will highlight critical events to identify major episodes in Lin’s life and the effect of these on the choices he made and used in the literature he created. Finally, it will provide an overview of subsequent chapter contents for this thesis.

1.2 The Significance of Lin Yutang
1.2.1 Importance to Western Society

Lin popularised classical Chinese literature in the West. He created a new method of Romanising Chinese characters and a new system for indexing them. After 1930, he lived mainly in the United States (US), where his translations of Chinese texts and philosophy of life remained popular for many years. His numerous works represent an attempt to bridge the cultural gap between the East and the West. Although he was frequently nominated for the Nobel Prize in Literature, winning the prize eluded him.

Along with Bertrand Russell’s The Conquest of Happiness (1930), and Dale Carnegie’s How to Stop Worrying and Start Living (1948), Lin’s second book in English, The Importance of Living (1937), is considered one of the pioneer ‘self-help’ books that flourished in Western

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Fan Lu, ‘Constructing and Reconstructing Images of Chinese Women In Lin Yutang’s Translations, Adaptations and Rewritings’, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Beijing: Simon Fraser University, 2008.
countries during the latter half of the twentieth century. This was the most widely sold book in the US during 1937–1938, topping The New York Times best-seller list for 52 consecutive weeks. As we shall see later, it continues to inspire people in diverse walks of life. In 2005, it was cited by business lecturer Mark Skousen, chairman of ‘The Oxford Club U Investment’, as the basis for his paper ‘How Lin Yutang Can Make You a Better Investor: Investing in Thought, Not Stock…When All Sectors Are Down’. After a period of being persona non grata in China from the mid-1950s to the mid-1990s, Lin has since been rediscovered and valued by literary academics in China.

1.2.2 Importance to Chinese Literature

Lin is a prime example of a writing style called Thread of Language, adopted by a group of eminent Chinese writers in 1920s and 1930s China. They opposed another group during the same period, the Modern Review writers. Together, these two groups formed the basis of a literary revolution in China that paralleled the period’s nationalist revolutionary struggles. The significance of these two renegade literary groups and the influence of their leaders—Lu Xun (1881–1936) and Hu Shi (1891–1962)—on Lin’s life journey choices are explored in Chapter 6.

China has rediscovered Lin as a writer, but has not followed the Euro-American adoption of Lin as a mentor for the challenges of third millennium global society. In China, Lin published Skirmishes in 1928, followed by Letters of a Chinese Amazon and Wartime Essays (by Hsieh Ping-Ying), 1930. From 1930 to 1933, he published nine books on English language learning. From 1928 to 1936, Lin was the editor-in-chief of three Shanghai published magazines: Lunyu (Analects), Renjianshi (This Human World) and Yuzhoufeng (Cosmic

IL.
12 Lin Yutang, Jian Fu Collection, Shanghai: Bei Hsin Book Company, 1928.
_______, Letters of a Chinese Amazon and Wartime Essays (by Hsieh Ping-Ying), Shanghai: Kaiming Book Company, 1930.
_______, English Literature Reader, (2) Shanghai: Kaiming Book Company, 1930.
_______, Kaiming English Grammar, (2), Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1930.
_______, Reading in Modern Journalistic Prose, Shanghai: The Oriental Book Co., 1931.
Wind). His quick wit, combined with political comment, produced pithy journalism that appealed to Chinese readers, making Lin an esteemed writer and editor of the 1930s. His popularity with Chinese readers makes his oeuvre important to the discipline of Chinese Studies.

1.2.3 Importance to World Literature

Lin’s defining book for Western audiences, My Country and My People (1935), was a best-seller in America, setting the pattern for his subsequent 35 books published in English (and later in other European languages). By 1973, Lin had completed arrangements for all of his novels to be translated and published in Chinese. Lin’s writing was unpopular with leaders of the Communist Party from 1949 until after the death of Deng Xiaoping (1904–1996). From 1956 to 1996, it was not wise politically to either publish Lin’s work or read it in China, because Lin was declared a Rightist by the Chinese Communist Party: his views were viewed as counter-revolutionary during that time. Since then, Lin’s writing has regained popularity in China, reaffirming the importance of his writing there.

Since readers of both Chinese and English, along with readers of the many European language translations, are privy to his writings, the factors affecting his life choices and writing are important for critical analysis of his texts and their effect on cultural sensitivities between China and Western readers. Understanding the influences that moulded Lin and thus his writing, aimed at fostering awareness between Chinese and Western cultures, will strengthen the value of his writing for third millennium readers.

1.2.4 Contribution of This Study to Asian Studies

Through the example of devoting his life to better understanding between Chinese and Western societies during the twentieth century, Lin lit a path for cross-cultural intercourse that remains a prototype for twenty-first century transcultural writers and philosophers. The global marketplace of the third millennium and the consequent need for increased interaction and

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14 Ibid.
understanding between Chinese and Western cultures ensures the continued value of transcultural communication through literature. Transcultural communication demands an understanding of Lin’s position as one of the twentieth century’s pre-eminent transcultural writers and interpreter of Chinese values for Western readers. His philosophy and fiction writing show influences that affected his life and his creative produce. This research provides a forum for exploring Lin’s life through using his inspired output, exposing the events and patterns of behaviour that developed and enhanced his unique social philosophy, translation of fiction and non-fiction writing.

1.2.5 Importance of This Research to Psychobiography

The effect of Lin’s artistic output makes him a notable person of the twentieth century, fulfilling a prerequisite for a subject of psychobiography. According to William Schultz, the ‘typical focus’ of psychobiography ‘is an individual of obvious historical importance’.17 This study of Lin will add to the diverse body of writing under the canopy of psychobiographical research. Most existing works about Lin’s life and thought have focused on analysis of theoretical aspects of his life, such as his contribution to East–West modernity, or literary humour in Chinese literature. As a consequence, there has been a benign neglect of the importance of physical environments, the people around him and the key events that shaped his philosophical outlook and literary output: a lacuna that psychobiography addresses.

1.3 Thesis

This thesis exposes the importance of environmental factors on the character and personality development of Lin by detecting patterns of behaviour stemming from his foundational childhood beliefs that reoccurred throughout his life and new patterns or changes that arose and strengthened in adulthood.

1.4 Objectives, Driving Questions and Definitions

1.4.1 Objectives

Firstly, this research aims to reveal relationships between Lin and environmental factors (people, places, politics and religion) that formed his foundational beliefs in childhood and

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teenage years and the patterns or shifts in these relationships in adulthood. It examines Lin’s life journey through his writing, writing about him and writing about his writing. Secondly, it explores the proposition that a life-long quest to accommodate traditional Chinese beliefs within Christianity, coupled with a rapport and insight into particular aspects of his life such as women, humour and peace, helped to produce Lin’s wisdom. This study will suggest to readers some understanding of what motivated his choices of texts for translation, characters for his novels and topics for philosophical debate. It will demonstrate that women played a key role in formulating Lin’s empirical and literary life and show how much of his writing springs from his relationships with women.

1.4.2 Driving Questions

What environmental factors formed Lin’s foundational beliefs? What events consolidated or changed these and what themes developed in his adult years? Why do his ideas still resonate with global readers into the third millennium?

1.4.3 Definitions

This study uses particular words to denote specific ideas and relationships. Two terms are used to describe Lin’s interaction with Chinese and Western cultures: cross-cultural and transcultural. For the purposes of this study, cross-cultural is defined as ‘pertaining to or involving different cultures or comparison between them’ and transcultural is defined as ‘transcending the limitations or crossing the boundaries of cultures’, that is, ‘Cross-cultural’ signifies separation, while ‘transcultural’ signifies unity. Accordingly, this study will use cross-cultural in the context of comparison, and transcultural in the context of bridging Chinese and Western cultures. These terms are ways of understanding the challenges facing textual interpretation: for Martin Heidegger, interpretation is the development of understanding when interpretation articulated becomes meaning. Lin’s interpretation of life, articulated as text, develops meaning for readers because it arouses empathy. Wilhelm Dilthey reasons that all human sciences assume an innate ability of humans to connect with ‘the mental life of others’. Writing is a medium for interpreting the ‘mental life’ of the writer. Readers unwrap and reconstruct texts ‘by the mediation of units of meaning’, transferring the

‘mental life’ of the writer to the ‘mental life’ of the reader.\textsuperscript{21} Interpretation, for the purpose of this thesis, is the meaning taken from the text of the writer—Lin—by the reader—the researcher.

Three other definitions are relevant for this research: firstly, the question of whether to use familiar or family names, or both. Lin describes the mixed uses of familiar and family names in referring to characters as being within the traditions of ‘Chinese practice’, exposing problems with name transliteration.\textsuperscript{22} This thesis will use both for succinctness and use in the text being considered. Secondly, the calculation of age for Chinese or English cultures: throughout this thesis year-of-age will denote the age of Lin from the date of his birth, as with Western custom, to avoid confusion between Chinese and Western age calculations.\textsuperscript{23} Thirdly, this thesis acknowledges unavoidable researcher bias, ‘isogesis’, based on a Western academic perspective.\textsuperscript{24}

Andrew Tuck warns that researchers from different academic disciplines may read and record information differently, because of their specific training: he coined the term ‘isogesis’ as employing one’s ‘personal cultural perspectives’, to make the appropriation of ‘other’ intelligible.\textsuperscript{25} Tuck defines isogesis as an ‘act of productive understanding … an integral part of the interpretive process’ – a filtering of information – making isogesis unavoidable because everyone is inscribed by their academic training.\textsuperscript{26} This bias must always be considered in assessing results. Ultimately, because each individual perceives and records experience in his or her own particular way, it is not the reality of the situation as the researcher perceives it that matters, but how the subject perceives it.\textsuperscript{27} This study will attempt to see patterns in Lin’s life that demonstrate his perceptions.

\subsection*{1.4.4 Methodological Approaches Employed}

This study starts with an empirical biography of Lin’s life, followed by a thematic psychobiographical study as outlined by William Todd Schultz on his website ‘What is

\textsuperscript{21} Ricouer, p. 53.
\textsuperscript{22} Lin Yutang, \textit{Lady Wu}, Melbourne: William Heinemann Ltd, p. xii, 1957
\textsuperscript{23} Chinese custom calculates age from the time of conception, allowing for the time a foetus is \textit{in utero}, so that a child is age 1 year at the time of birth. Western custom calculates age from the time of birth.
\textsuperscript{24} Andrew Tuck, \textit{Comparative Philosophy and the Philosophy of Scholarship: On the Western Interpretation of Nagarjuna}, New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 12–15, 1990
\textsuperscript{25} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{26} Ibid, p. 16.
\textsuperscript{27} Michael Howe, ‘Beyond Psychobiography: Towards More Effective Syntheses of Psychology and Biography’, p. 243–244.
Psychobiography? For example, ‘historical and biographical research’ and ‘analyses of personal experience’ in a psychological approach will expose how events in Lin’s life affected his writing in the framework Schultz advocated. This method is sympathetic to studying Lin because his life evolved during tumultuous historical events like the Xinhai Revolution in China (1911), the warlord period in China (1916 to 1928), WWII and its aftermath. Psychobiography, however much it may add to a full knowledge of Lin, cannot be the whole and only reading of his life to the exclusion of all other studies.

Morris Massey’s ‘significant emotional events’ will be used to complement and support Schultz’s methodology. According to Massey, significant emotional events are experiences that result in noticeable changes in behaviours or beliefs. He claimed that adults are a result of past experiences acquired during youth: ‘What You Are Is Where You Were When’ video tapes by Massey argue that these events in youth ‘guide our adult behavior, determine our worldview, and influence how we feel about what is normal and abnormal’. The assertions of Schultz and Massey form a mutual relationship for this psychobiographical study.

Finding a suitable structure for a psychobiography requires specific terminology with an open approach to methodology. One example is the ‘effects of early life history on personality and achievement’, undertaken by investigation of provision and deficiency in Lin’s childhood and education. Fieldwork in China and Taiwan allowed me to experience place physically, regarding the early and later life of Lin: his birthplace in Banzai, Pinghe County, his education place of Gulangyu and his museum in Zhangzhou Prefecture, all in Fujian Province, China. In Banzai, I experienced the rural environments of Lin’s boyhood. The buildings have been rebuilt after more than one hundred years, but the topography remains basically the same. Fieldwork also exposed several interesting aspects that have not been mentioned in earlier biographies, providing explanations of why certain events in Lin’s life may have causally stimulated consequences in later years. One of these was his penchant for his teenage years’ sweetheart, which followed through to an observable phenomenon on the island of Gulangyu in Xiamen, China. In Taiwan, I was able to experience the architecture that Lin favoured and the legacy that he left on Yangmingshan, Taipei.

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28 WP.
32 Ibid.
33 Appendix G, p. 239: Notes from Lin Yutang Home, Yangmingshan.
Following an empirical biography of Lin’s life, which will establish a temporal and spatial base for readers, and a literature review of past research, the body of this study will employ psychobiographical discourse. It will use a variety of media sources such as memoirs, letters, novels, speeches, philosophical discourse and journal articles to discern Lin’s mental life as he perceived it. Psychobiography will guide my argument, but first it must be examined and validated as an effective method to support this thesis.

1.5 Psychobiographical Theory

Schultz describes psychobiography as ‘biography informed by psychological theory and/or research’.\(^{34}\) Biography is both empirical and complex, but it covers only the surface of an individual’s life story. While biographies aim at telling what an individual did, psychobiography attempts to explain why: for Schultz, biography is ‘chiefly descriptive’, while psychobiographies are ‘more explanatory, more interpretive.’\(^{35}\) If biography is viewed as the yang, the empirical observations of psychobiography and psychology as the yin, the unconscious hidden part, a graphic representation of this might look something like Fig.1:

![Figure 1.1: The yin and yang of psychology and biography](image)

It is the intersection set, the binary of empirical facts (yang) and mental life observations (yin), which creates the knowable life story or psychobiography of an individual. Preferably, the intersection set will dominate the whole of each—physical and mental life stories—to create the greatest possible insight into an individual’s life. This holistic coverage of a life story points to mental processes affecting the overall physical life journey.

\(^{34}\) WP.

\(^{35}\) Ibid.
Schultz claims that although understanding personality is the main goal of psychobiography, the historical, political, social and economic setting must be taken into consideration: all of these factors influence the results. McAdams supports Schultz in recommending that personality study be approached from at least three perspectives: ‘dispositional traits’, ‘characteristic adaptations’ and ‘integrative life stories’. Viewing the life of an individual using a multipronged approach has a far greater chance of accuracy, because ignoring social factors increases the risk of researchers’ selection bias fitting their particular perceptions. Another problem for personality analysis is the possibility of transference or projection, where researchers reproduce or project their emotional responses onto the life story of the subject. Yet, if the risk of misinterpretation by mono-focus or transference is so great in psychobiography, why attempt it at all and why is it valid as an effective method for this particular study?

For Schultz, ‘prototypical scenes’ are ‘shorthand’ for a life story: they ‘summarize lives and life conflicts’ and have an element of ‘fantasy’. His prototypical scenes are ‘recalled vividly, with specificity and emotional intensity’; ‘ordinarily issue from developmental crises’; ‘most often depict family conflict, directly or indirectly’; and ‘creatively rehearse varying degrees of thrownness’ in a life journey. McAdams calls autobiography a ‘subject’s first-person account’, which they have established over a lifetime, their ‘narrative identity’. Autobiography may ‘reveal the essential parameters of the self-defining myth’, making it invaluable to a psychobiographical study. Religion can be read as a prototype scene in Lin’s life, based on his foundational belief in Christianity. In his youth, he rejected the dogma of Christianity. Yet he still continued teaching it to others in his early adult years, researched and wrote on the religions of China and India, until later when he found a way of justifying his return to Christian worship by rejecting the burden of its dogma and adding elements of Chinese religious beliefs that could be accommodated within it.

36 Ibid.
39 Ibid, 49–51.
1.5.1 Why Psychobiographical Research for Lin Yutang?

Understanding what circumstances made certain individuals grow into outstandingly creative, productive and contented people, improves society’s chances of providing opportunities for people to achieve their best in life. Schultz chooses psychobiography ‘to uncover the private motives behind public acts’ be they ‘making of art or the creation of scientific theories, or the adoption of political decisions’ of people with ‘historically significant lives’. Lin fits these requirements. Psychobiography questions why the subject of a biography made particular choices that contributed to their personality and character. Howe explains it as:

The question of how particular children develop into unusually competent or creative men and women has intrigued scholars in the very different disciplines of biography and scientific psychology … [making imperative] an approach that would maximize the impact of scientific psychology on our understanding of the development of exceptional individuals.

Lin was such an ‘exceptional individual’. Schultz warns that although childhood events are important to understanding the behaviour of an individual, adolescent and mature age events may be just as crucial in ‘shaping the contours of a life.’ While childhood establishes patterns of behaviour that may last a lifetime, dramatic emotional incidents in later life can, nevertheless, alter or terminate behaviour.

Howe claims that the most important aspects of psychological research lie in ‘explaining and demystifying’, ‘avoiding false inferences’ and providing accurate ‘evidence’. These are also the tenets of sound biography: each achieves its own goal by embracing aims common to both. Using psychobiography as the basis for examining the life of Lin will provide readers with a broader perspective of why he took certain directions and consequentially produced writing that benefitted both him and a global readership.

1.5.2 Michael J. Howe: A Multidisciplinary Approach

Howe argues that an effective combination of biographical and psychological knowledge will allow ‘forces that shape each person’s unique qualities to be more fully understood.’ He suggests a ‘broad approach’ to psychobiography by listing factors to guide:

42 WP.
44 WP.
46 OEC.
... scholars from diverse intellectual backgrounds, having various goals and perspectives, and differing priorities, wish in their different ways to make use of psychological findings in order to know more about the development of individual men and women.  

Howe suggests practical approaches for this task: psychobiography needs five foci. First, an acknowledgement that an analytical result made from group studies does not necessarily apply to an individual. Second, biographical records of the subject's life need to be as complete as possible—no ‘gaps’ in his or her life story.  

Third, one must start from a descriptive stance ‘to avoid preconceptions and unjustified assumptions.’ Fourth, it is most important for the researcher to register the events of the subject in as close an approximation as possible.  

Finally, psychobiographers must take a holistic approach: in deciding how an individual grows into a person who is ‘capable of substantial achievements’, one must look at all of the traits that affected that subject. Exceptional individuals usually have certain characteristics in their makeup. These traits can include: ‘intellectual and artistic’, ‘personality’, ‘temperament’, ‘self-confidence and sense of direction’, ‘powerful motivation and an ability to persist in the face of difficulties’. In reaching outstanding creative pinnacles, exceptional individuals draw on a multiplicity of skills and qualities, compounding the need for a ‘whole person’ approach.  

I expect that an overview of Lin’s life and work will reveal the following characteristics: an even temperament, a vibrant personality and a transcultural sense of humour. Psychobiography has much to offer a biographer with some psychological knowledge; however, it is not without its problems.

1.5.3 J. W. Anderson: The Challenges of Psychobiography

Anderson perceives six critical challenges to psychobiography: reductionism, inflated expectations, disparagement, applying contemporary psychology to another era, inadequacies in psychological theory and analysing an absent subject. Reductionism explains all adult

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51 Ibid, 243.
52 Ibid, 244.
53 Ibid.
behaviour in terms of early childhood experiences, instead of looking at the formative years of youth and significant emotional events in adulthood.\textsuperscript{55}

To diminish the risk of reductionism, I acknowledge that the explanations arrived at in this research are only one of many possible explanations.\textsuperscript{56} Inflated expectations will be addressed by establishing that the conclusions reached in this study neither replace other forms of interpretation; neither are they infallible. They simply offer a logical explanation for behaviour not easily explained by other methods.\textsuperscript{57} Disparagement of a subject increases the risk of counter-transference but it can be diminished by recognising the counter-transference and employing empathy towards the subject.\textsuperscript{58}

Applying twentieth century psychology to Lin is not a problem because he lived during that century. However, researchers need to address the challenge of the space and culture of which he was a product. Lin was an interpreter of Chinese culture for Western readers and it is his own perception of Chinese culture that he transmits. Therefore, immersing oneself in his thoughts is a positive way of producing the \textit{why} of Lin. The inadequacy of psychological methodology is best overcome by using it as ‘a starting point’ or a ‘guide’ and refining it as the research progresses.\textsuperscript{59} Psychobiographers of a deceased subject have an advantage over psychologists: while they cannot interview the subject, they have ‘access to informants other than the subject’, such as family like Lin’s daughter Taiyi, along with writers who were Lin’s contemporaries.\textsuperscript{60} Psychobiography is ‘able to look at the subject’s whole life’, is ‘not limited by therapeutic considerations’, and can consult ‘individuals who knew the subject’.\textsuperscript{61} A living subject has the advantage that the writer can interview them. A disadvantage is possible bias discovered in the interview process and the constraint of the subject being able to read the assumptions suggested.\textsuperscript{62}

\textsuperscript{55} Ibid, 456.  
\textsuperscript{56} Ibid, 459.  
\textsuperscript{57} Ibid, 461.  
\textsuperscript{58} Ibid, 465.  
\textsuperscript{59} Ibid, 469.  
\textsuperscript{60} Ibid, 470–471.  
\textsuperscript{61} Anor Lin, \textit{Lin Yutang zhuan}.  
\textsuperscript{62} Sohigian, ‘The Life and Times of Lin Yutang’.  
\textsuperscript{63} Qian, ‘Lin Yutang: Negotiating Modernity Between East and West’.  
\textsuperscript{64} Lu, ‘Constructing and Reconstructing Images of Chinese Women In Lin Yutang’s Translations, Adaptations and Rewritings’.  
\textsuperscript{66} Ibid, 471.
Anderson noted that psychobiography provides a ready opportunity for writers to present their subject in a disparaging way.\(^6^3\) When a researcher is biased against his or her subject it is discernible either because they use ‘extravagantly reductionistic interpretations’, draw conclusions from ‘shades of meaning’ or have an ‘over-reliance on a central, pathologically based thesis’ to form opinions.\(^6^4\) To reduce the risk of disparaging a subject, a writer must first honestly examine his or her feelings about the subject to become aware of any hidden agendas. Even experienced psychobiographers can warp their analysis of a subject by ‘their own inner, potentially distortive forces’.\(^6^5\) This distortion or ‘counter-transference’ is caused by the analyst projecting his or her way of viewing the world, the ‘unconscious strivings’ of his or her life onto the subject, resulting in distorted analyses.\(^6^6\)

In contrast, according to Anderson, if counter-transference is recognised by the writer, this negative attribute can become positive by historical research indicating how the people of his or her time and place may have reacted to the subject.\(^6^7\) Another possible advantage of counter-transference is empathy. By creating a ‘mental model’ of the subject and ‘listening’ to the subject through it (in the same way that Stanislavski’s Method Acting advocates an actor taking on the subject’s persona is a means of getting into character), a psychobiographer can employ a mental ‘model’ of the subject and ‘listen to the subject through the model.’\(^6^8\) A useful tool supporting this ‘mental model’ is Silvan Tomkins ‘script theory’ that employs:

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\text{… the metaphor of the person as a playwright constructing his or her personal drama from the earliest weeks of life. The most basic unit of analysis is the scene an idealized, affect-laden ‘happening’ that is constructed (rather than passively experienced and objectively recorded).}\]

Both Anderson’s ‘mental model’ and Tomkins’ ‘script’ model enable the psychobiographer to enter the subject’s life story.

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\(^{63}\) Ibid, 461.  
\(^{64}\) Ibid, 463.  
\(^{65}\) Ibid, 463–464.  
\(^{66}\) Ibid, 464.  
\(^{67}\) Ibid, 367.  
\(^{68}\) Ibid, 465.  
\(^{69}\) Ibid, 465.


Turning the problem of counter-transference into a positive method of analytic observation involves recognising it, acknowledging it and developing empathy for the subject. Anderson asserts that ‘immersing oneself in the materials helps the psychobiographer develop a complex understanding of his subject and therefore counteracts the tendency to be reductionistic.’\(^{70}\) In this study, the author often assumes the mantel of the subject, using counter-transference in a positive way. For example, walking the streets of Gulangyu, standing in the space between the home of Lin’s first sweetheart and his wife’s childhood home, observing their close proximity, I can empathise with his melancholy. When rejected by his first love’s family, he had no option but to walk in full view of his sweetheart’s family home to visit his wife’s family. Despite the challenges (perhaps because of them), psychobiography offers a rich source of information and understanding for the researcher and subsequently, the reader. Schultz proves a wide yet deep framework suitable for a study of Lin.

**1.5.4 William Todd Schultz: Framework for This Study**

A theorist with a wide range of alternatives is Schultz, who describes seven approaches that may be employed in psychobiography. The first approach investigates the ‘effects of early life history on personality and achievement’.\(^{71}\) This requires researching and recording the formative and youth years of the subject as a basis for their ‘personality and achievement’ in adult life.\(^{72}\) It implies a psychodynamic or psychoanalytic approach where the infant, childhood and teenage years of a subject affects them throughout their life: an individual repeats early childhood patterns of interaction over their lifetime. In his last book, *Memoirs of an Octogenarian*, Lin recalled enough noteworthy elements of childhood, and key moments throughout his adult life, to allow reasonable inferences to be drawn about repetitive scripts.\(^{73}\) To fully use Schultz’s ‘historical and biographical research’ from written records, I will use Massey’s significant emotional events to support Schultz’ approach where appropriate.\(^{74}\)

The second approach locates ‘habitual modes of psychological defence’ employed by the subject.\(^{75}\) Rationalising success or failure is a typical response of individuals who employ this tactic for defending their behavioural responses. In the patterns of defending behaviour lies

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\(^{71}\) WP.

\(^{72}\) Ibid.


\(^{74}\) Massey, *The People Puzzle*.

WP.

\(^{75}\) WP.
the *why* of some behaviour.*76* Lin developed a philosophical approach to challenges founded on cultural mores: for example, it is more than possible that Lin was surprised and perhaps hurt when reporters told him that his eldest daughter, Adet, had eloped with a stranger.*77* Reporters had no doubt expected action—a display of hurt or anger—from him. His outward calm kept his feelings internal: this was a family matter and any action was manifested as inaction. Later we shall see this as indicative of a Taoist cultural response: instead of action resulting in reaction, action resulted in inaction.

The third approach is discerning the subject’s ‘preferred life story sequences or themes’. *78* This approach necessitates locating patterns of behaviour used by the subject throughout his or her life and finding the stimuli for them in foundational years or later life. Lin followed several life scripts. These included: belief in family as the base of life; nature as a restorer of vitality; education as a door to knowledge; religion for moral guidance; writing as a means to disseminate his ideas and women as the guardians of morality. A change of pattern necessitates referring to the beginning of a change in these responses to find an event, or a series of events, that caused the shift in behaviour. Lin made a series of decisions during his adult years that reflected the path his father and sister had wished for him in his childhood and youth.

The fourth approach notes and records particular beliefs from the subject’s early years that appear to have affected his or her ‘attitudes and concerns’ in later life.*79* This approach is similar to the previous one, but the aim is different: this approach seeks to locate and record what initiated a subject’s response to challenges later in life and what concerns make their reactions different from those of other people. One instance of this in Lin’s life was disclosed when a friend, Pearl Buck ignored his financial plight when he was almost bankrupt in 1947. He labelled her ‘American’ when she snubbed his need for financial assistance.*80* Although raised in China, Buck did not exhibit the behaviour Lin expected of a Chinese-raised friend. His childhood understanding of friendship was based on mutual trust and support: in this case, supporting him financially in his hour of need and trusting him to repay the debt. Buck did not live up to Lin’s expectations of a friend.

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*WP*


*MO, 77.*
The fifth approach searches for a subject’s ‘history of reinforcement’ or any ‘consequences’ that he or she gains from environmental stimuli.\(^{81}\) If a subject is rewarded for poor behaviour, such as Lin exhibited in his college years, unsound learning habits may well result. Lin indulged in non-academic pursuits while his classmates studied, yet he achieved academic success.\(^{82}\) He went on after college to write *The Importance of Living*, with subtitles such as ‘The Importance of Loaﬁng’ and ‘The Cult of the Idle Life’, and calling ‘efﬁciency, punctuality and the desire for achievement and success’ the ‘three great American vices’.\(^{83}\)

For Lin, ‘an apostle of the philosophy of Loaﬁng’ as he later claimed, the reward of his apparently poor behaviour was success, hence his life-long campaign through writing for rest and relaxation as productive attributes.\(^{84}\) In reality Lin advocated a balance of work with rest and reﬂection. Overtly, Lin appeared to praise poor study habits; however, he claimed to be the ‘hardest working man in China outside President and Madame Chiang Kai-shek’, conﬁrming his love of contradiction.\(^{85}\)

Schultz’s sixth approach for psychobiography involves revealing ‘sets of enduring traits’, such as ‘extraversion or introversion’ that tend to underlie ‘patterns of behavior’.\(^{86}\) By noting responses to new stimuli—for example, movements in place such as changes of address or intercontinental travel or reactions to new situations such as marriage, employment or political change—and ﬁnding when these patterns are consistent over long periods of time, overriding personality traits are revealed. Written records, both primary and secondary sources, expose patterns of behaviour based on facts that allow assumptions to be drawn. Enduring traits and ‘underlying patterns of behaviour’ are observable in the life journey of Lin: for example, his self-conﬁdence in childhood and educational achievements, as seen in his *Memoirs of an Octogenarian*, became conﬁdence in his ability to escape poor consequences and led to Lin taking unwise risks in vocational and ﬁnancial affairs.\(^{87}\)

The seventh approach identiﬁes ‘common “scripts”’ resorted to by the subject as he or she tells us who they are.\(^{88}\) Lin repeatedly tells his readers who he is and what he thinks about life. According to McAdams, Josselson and Lieblich, this gives us the information needed to understand why Lin acted in particular ways: they follow the Erikson theory that identity

\(^{81}\) WP.
\(^{82}\) *MO*, 30.
\(^{83}\) *IL*, pp. 157, 164, 175.
\(^{84}\) *MO*, p. 3.
\(^{85}\) *MO*, pp. 1, 3.
\(^{86}\) Ibid.
\(^{87}\) Ibid, pp. 16-17.
\(^{88}\) WP.
evolves through ‘successive ego syntheses and resyntheses throughout childhood’ and is consolidated during the turbulent adolescence years.\textsuperscript{89} Habermas, Bluck and McAdams agree that: ‘It is not until adolescence, some researchers and theorists have argued, that we are able and motivated to conceive of our lives as full-fledged, integrative narratives of the self.’\textsuperscript{90} Identifying adolescence as the script-confirming years supports this. It parallels Erikson’s ‘identity development’ in adolescence, where the challenges for the subject are: ‘Who am I?’ and ‘How do I fit into the adult world?’\textsuperscript{91} Identity then establishes the scripts on which adult choices are made, but identity is only one part of the life narrative of an individual. Each of the seven approaches needs support from the other six. ‘Common scripts’ needs a study of behavioural ‘reinforcement’ and ‘consequences’ to discern the reason for a particular life script developing.\textsuperscript{92} This study exposes ‘common scripts’ in Lin’s life by following his beliefs and actions through his writing, and writings about him, to identify behaviours as common threads and record them as evidence of ‘patterns’ or ‘themes’.\textsuperscript{93} It will predominantly use Schultz’s seven approaches because they complement Lin’s ‘common script’ that ‘the wisdom of life consists in the elimination of non-essentials’.\textsuperscript{94} Having accepted the challenges of psychobiography, it is essential to define the study perspective and note possible biases.

\section*{1.6 Perspective and Biases}

My research is limited to English texts except where translations have been made and translators cited. There is no doubt that the use of Chinese language material would have strengthened the thesis, however, this limitation notwithstanding, there is ample material in English to allow investigation of many substantial influences in Lin’s life, and for tentative conclusions to be drawn. Lin provides primary sources of biographical information and creative writing in English and there is a plethora of secondary records available in English. The geographical locations throughout Lin’s life provided him with opportunities to excel in English: Lin was born in China, but received his education there – up to undergraduate level – predominantly in English; he then studied and lived in Western countries – in America for over 30 years. There, Lin gained his higher education degrees and became a ‘native informant’ – an interpreter of Chinese culture for readers of English from other cultures –

\textsuperscript{91} McAdams \textit{et al}, 3, 2006.
\textsuperscript{92} Ibid, 4.
\textsuperscript{93} WP.
\textsuperscript{94} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{96} \textit{IL}, 11.
from 1935 to the mid-1960s.95 This study of Lin is undertaken in the temporal space of the third millennium and is subject to imposts of the scholarship of its time.

Discerning Lin’s thought is achieved by accessing materials written by and about him in English, as it was a key medium for him. English was the dominant language for most of his academic training and also for most of his adult years. Certainly, understanding what motivated Lin is subject to cross-cultural challenges, but by using only the language in which he wrote the majority of his work as the resource medium reduces the risk of confusing analysis with cultural imposts or textual interpretation. In their efforts to present specific aspects of his life, researchers have taken different approaches to Lin’s journey and produced different outcomes. For this thesis, it is important to not only acknowledge research already undertaken in English but also to investigate meaningful events embracing Lin’s physical, emotional, social, intellectual and spiritual development throughout his life.

1.7 Chapter Plans

Chapter 2 follows the empirical journey of Lin from birth to death and provides a review of noteworthy past research on him. His writing provides the bulk of evidence supporting this thesis’s arguments. A review of dissertations, books and key papers on Lin will acknowledge previous research and their contribution to understanding his life choices. Chapter 3 considers the historical space into which Lin was born; the environmental factors from his childhood and youth that affected his philosophy of life; and the choices that ultimately sculpted his life.96 It shows how the political space into which Lin was born, his family members, the geographical locations of his youth, the education he received and the cultural environments that he lived in during these formative and consolidative years affected his contribution to society during his adult life. It follows the changes made to Lin’s religious beliefs during his time at St John’s College and how the loss of his sister Meigong challenged Lin’s faith, contributing to his change of academic direction from theology to linguistics. This chapter also shows that the effect of natural environments on the developing Lin cannot be underestimated: a pattern of behaviour for him, such as returning to nature for safety and healing, became a theme in much of his fictional writing.

95 Juan Williams, ‘Native Informant’, updated 18 November 2009, accessed 15 April 2011, http://abagond.wordpress.com/2009/11/18/native-informant/ ‘A native informant is someone from a particular race or place who is seen as an expert on it simply by virtue of belonging to it.’

96 WP.
Chapter 4 explores scholarship and Lin’s vocational life. It includes his academic writing, fiction writing, articles on philosophy, culture and politics, his inventions such as his Chinese typewriter and his foray into architectural design and the affect these endeavours made on him. It follows his experiences in obtaining a Masters of Comparative Literature from Harvard in abcentia in the US, and a Doctorate in Linguistics at Leipzig University, Germany. On his return to China, Lin became one of the Thread of Language writers, published three Chinese language magazines and wrote for the English version of the magazine China Critic Weekly. Lin’s first book published in America, My Country and My People, set Lin’s career course for most of his adult years. It will record how his desire to invent an effective Chinese typewriter became a traumatic fixation, altering the course of his life. This invention for facilitating peace between the Chinese speaking and the English speaking world, the Ming Kwai typewriter, brought him to the brink of financial ruin. This chapter will show how a ‘pattern of behaviour’ guided his recovery. Finally, it links Lin’s transcultural home, designed in his senior years, to his passion for creating bridges between Chinese and European cultures.

Chapter 5 investigates the impact of women on Lin’s formative years and considers those who were influential in his adult years. It establishes the women who affected Lin’s basic beliefs and those who either provided or were part of significant emotional events confirming his beliefs, motivating change or establishing new patterns during his adult years. This chapter will trace the arrival of his three daughters into his marriage, and his subsequent dedication to their educational and vocational opportunities. It will examine the importance of women in Lin’s teen years and adult life and discuss the choices made by Lin in the light of a failed love-affair and subsequent marriage. It will then look at how these affected his later life and creative writing production and it will discuss why Lin was considered a feminist.

Chapter 6 explores the themes of male role-models, peers and friends who affected Lin throughout his adult life. It shows how his literary peers in China, and later an eclectic group of friends and acquaintances, added to Lin’s academic and cultural experiences and views on life: Hu Shi and Lu Xun are especially notable. Hu, the pioneer of modern Chinese literature, was central to a rival group of modernist writers, but he was also a Christian and a trusted friend. Although Lin and Lu were academic and literary colleagues, their religious beliefs were different. In later years, Lin had an eclectic group of friends, including Chiang Kai-shek

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97 Ibid.
and his wife Soong Mei-ling, who played important roles throughout Lin’s adult life. Richard Walsh and his wife Pearl Buck were key players in Lin’s success as a writer in America.

Chapter 7 looks at how philosophy affected Lin’s life, his exploration into religion and his theory of humour and its consequences. It follows how his investigation of Confucian humanism and Taoist philosophy affected his basic Christian belief, the importance of his analysis of humour and his love of contradictions. It will show that Lin’s return to Christian worship was not without change: his Christianity was tempered by humanism and Taoist philosophy. It explores the philosophical writing of Lin Yutang and the inexorable link to his writings on, and use of, humour. It will explore how Lin’s expressed love of contradiction stems from his sense of humour and his understanding of irony. It is Lin’s philosophical writing that still rates highly worldwide. It shows Lin’s view of Western philosophy’s position on the question God’s existence. It also examines why Lin’s philosophical writing is less lauded by Western philosophers, for example, his mantra of simplicity (a highly valued attribute of Eastern cultures), and assertion of humour as the highest form of intellect.\(^{98}\)

Humour was integral to Lin’s childhood. He was teased by his siblings for his light-hearted poems and remedies for ill-health, laying a foundation for the pursuit of humour in his writing. Lin provided theorists with concrete language to describe ‘patterns of behaviour’, such as ‘elimination of non-essentials’, ‘enjoyment of home’ and wisdom as the pinnacle of endeavour leading to positive outcomes for various situations: a position supported by contemporary transcultural use of his analysis of humour.\(^{99}\)

Chapter 8, the conclusions, examines Lin Yutang’s life and legacy: it collates the research materials gathered and measures them against psychological traits, as well as the possibility this gives for understanding why Lin took certain courses of action and held certain beliefs. It discusses what Lin says about the challenges to his religious beliefs wrought by particular events, and his observances about practitioners of religious rites. This chapter observes how major events in Lin’s life influenced his choice of vocation and forays into other arenas, such as invention. It notes women and peers who entered his life and argues they had a noteworthy effect on his vocational choices for translation, novels and values throughout his life.

The chapter further suggests what influenced his beliefs and values and how they moulded him as a productive, creative member of a global community. The themes explored in

\(^{98}\) PC, 205.
\(^{99}\) IL, 78.
Chapters 3 to 7 provide examples of the enduring effect of his life on a global society and how these achievements validate his pursuit of the goals laid down in early childhood and youth, along with the themes developed during his adult years. It will confirm Lin’s contemporary importance to local Chinese and Taiwanese economies as a tourist attraction on billboards, and in museum buildings. The use of Lin’s philosophy of life in third millennium global society ranges from ballet choreography in Taiwan to theories for stock exchange practices in America, to methodology at a European conference on caring for people with disabilities. This chapter is a testament to the importance of understanding Lin Yutang’s life.

1.8 Chapter Summary

This introduction has established the aim of this thesis and why achieving it is important to a contemporary, global society. It examined psychobiography as the methodology and confirmed why Lin is a suitable candidate for psychobiography. It heralded the presentation of evidence to support my assumption that the life journey of Lin was a product of his foundational childhood and youthful events, tempered or changed by significant events that he encountered during his lifetime, and new scripts that developed in his adult years. A meta-thesis—that women made a substantial contribution to his choices throughout his life—will be supported from materials produced by and about Lin. His own writing will provide the bulk of evidence to support the main argument of this thesis, augmented by information gathered from what has been written about him and what was gleaned during fieldwork in Xiamen, Banzai in Fujian Province, China and Taipei in Taiwan. Chapter 2 will provide the temporal and spatial background on which the thematic Chapters 3 to 7 rest.
Chapter 2: The Empirical Journey and Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter records Lin’s empirical life journey from birth to death; it notes the historical events that affected the space into which he was born, and the events that occurred during his life journey. It reviews pivotal past research on him. Lin was born during the reign of Qing Emperor Guangxu, an advocate of modernisation and Western education. Lin’s father was an admirer of Guangxu’s ideals and imparted these values to his children. Lin was educated in English throughout his missionary education: primary, secondary and tertiary years. After graduating from St John’s College, Lin taught in Beijing, married and completed postgraduate studies in America and Europe. Returning to China, Lin taught in Shanghai and entered the magazine publishing business. In 1935, Lin published his first book in English, My Country and My People, from which he launched a career as a popular writer. After 30 years in America, Lin retired to Taiwan, publishing his magnus opus – Chinese-English Dictionary of Modern Usage, in 1972 – and his final work, Memoirs of an Octogenarian in 1975.

Lin’s writing provides most of the evidence supporting the arguments of this thesis. This chapter acknowledges what has been written about Lin in previous dissertations and establishes how this study provides a new and unique interpretation of his life—the why and how of his life. It will stipulate primary texts: Lin’s non-fictional and fictional writing and it will acknowledge previous research—theses, dissertations and academic papers, along with internet resources and academic papers. It will show how this thesis will add to a body of research on Lin, by examining previously unexplored facets of his life.

2.2 The Formative Years: 1895–1904

Lin, was born on born 10 October 1895, to Lin Zhizheng, father, and Yang Shunming, mother. He was born in the rural town of Banzai, Pinghe County, Zhangzhou Prefecture, Fujian Province, Southern China. Lin was the fifth-born of six sons: Yulin, Yuwen, Heqing, Heping, Lin and younger brother Yuyuan; and two daughters: Yizhen and Meigong. He was given the birth name Lin Holok: Lin Hele in the family register. Lin’s early and

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100 MO, p. 9.

101 Banzai is Poa-ah in local Minyu dialect and Banzizhen on www maps.

middle childhood years, between 1895 and 1904, were spent in predominantly in the ‘very fertile valley of more than 300,000 people’ surrounding Banzai.\textsuperscript{102}

Lin’s infancy was spent in home instruction from his father, including memorising Chinese classics. From 1900 he attended the Christian Mingxin Primary School in Banzai.\textsuperscript{103} In his free time, Lin played in the foothills of the mountains with the other Christian-raised children of the village; in particular Juniper Loa, his mother’s goddaughter. Apart from Banzai village and regular visits to Siokhe, a small town of approximately four thousand people, the Lin family had a tradition of making yearly visits to Lin Zhizheng’s parents at their farm on the outskirts of the city of Zhangzhou, travelling by boat.\textsuperscript{104} Lin Zhizheng preached in Banzai, Siokhe and Zhangzhou, offering Lin the opportunity to observe his father at work and the reactions of the parishioners to him in three different settings.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure2.1.png}
\caption{Banzai (Poa-a); Pinghe (Siokhe); Zhangzhou (Chang-Chow)\textsuperscript{105}}
\end{figure}

\textbf{2.3 School Days: 1905–1910}

As was the custom for boys in Lin’s family, in 1904 Lin transferred to missionary school on Gulangyu (part of Xiamen), situated on the coast of his home province of Fujian.\textsuperscript{106} Lin and his brothers travelled home once a year on river craft for the long summer holidays.\textsuperscript{107}

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item\textsuperscript{104} Ibid. Siokhe is now called Pinghe.
\item\textsuperscript{107} Ibid.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
2.3.1 College and Early Career: 1911–1915

Lin studied at St. John’s, an Episcopal college in Shanghai, from 1911 to 1915. He enrolled to study theology, but later changed to literature.108 According to Stacey Bieler, this was not detrimental to Lin’s future career, because the President of St John’s, Dr. F. L. Hawks Potts, ‘created a perfect foundation for a future bilingual writer.’109 In his second year at St John’s, his sister and mentor, Meigong, died of bubonic plague while eight months pregnant.110 In 1913, during his second year of university, Lin won the St John’s gold medal award for a short story written in English. This was Lin’s debut work, eerily predicting his future vocation. During his teenage years at St John’s, Lin courted the sister of a school friend from his Gulangyu schooldays, Chen Jinduan. It was a romance destined for rejection by her father, Dr Chen.111

In 1915, Lin became engaged to Liao Cuifeng (1896–1987), daughter of a wealthy businessman, Liao Yuefa, and next-door-neighbour to Jinduan. After graduating from St John’s College in 1916, he accepted a position teaching English in Beijing’s Qinghua University. In 1917, while teaching at Qinghua, Lin published a book entitled Chinese Index System, with a preface written by Cai Yuanpei (1868–1940), Chancellor of Beijing University, and Qian Xuantong (1887–1939), a renowned Chinese philologist.112 In 1918, at 23 years-of-age, Lin published his college thesis Compiling Method for a Categorized Idiom Dictionary, in the Journal of Qinghua University, drawing even more attention to his linguistic prowess.113 Hu Shi returned from America triumphant from postgraduate studies and already well-known to Chinese readers as an advocate of liberalism and vernacular writing. Hu noticed a newspaper article by Lin on the ‘use of colloquial’, and contacted him. This started what became a long friendship between the two writers.114

109 Ibid.
110 Ibid, 19.
111 MO, 35–36.
By 1919, The Ministry of Education had established a ‘Preparatory Committee for Standardizing the National Language’. As a result of his research into Chinese phonology, Lin was co-opted into this government committee to restructure the classification of Chinese characters. However, his input there was short-lived because his aim was to complete postgraduate studies in an English speaking country. Having fulfilled his three-year teaching term in Qinghua, Lin was granted a half-scholarship, sponsored by the university to pursue further education in America.

### 2.4 Marriage and Postgraduate Journey: 1919–1923

In the summer of 1919, Lin married Liao Cuifeng. This was four years after their engagement; for Lin, the marriage was based on duty rather than passion.

In August, the couple sailed to America aboard the Columbia, and in September Lin entered the graduate programme in Comparative Literature at Harvard University. Lin and Cuifeng arrived in Cambridge, Massachusetts in 1919, after a long and eventful voyage. In America they established themselves at No. 51 Mount Auburn Street in Boston, Massachusetts.

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**Figure 2.2: Wedding Day Photo: Liao Cuifeng (23 years) & Lin Yutang (24 years)**

In August, the couple sailed to America aboard the Columbia, and in September Lin entered the graduate programme in Comparative Literature at Harvard University. Lin and Cuifeng arrived in Cambridge, Massachusetts in 1919, after a long and eventful voyage. In America they established themselves at No. 51 Mount Auburn Street in Boston, Massachusetts.

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115 Ibid.
116 MO, 27.
117 Ibid, 35–36.
118 Ibid, Photograph Appendices.
During 1919 and part of 1920, Lin undertook a Masters Degree in Comparative Literature at Harvard under ‘Bliss Perry, Irving Babbitt, Von Yargerman (Gothic) and Kittridge (Shakespeare)’; Lin claimed that the best thing about Harvard was its Widener Library.\(^{122}\) This library allowed Lin full reign to explore literature and science to his heart’s content, and contented he was. He captured an America readership at this stage, albeit a small one, when he won several small literary prizes that covered minor expenses. However, after completing one year of a master’s degree at Harvard, funds from Qinghua University were ‘mysteriously cancelled’.\(^{123}\) Added to the cost of Cuifeng’s medical care, the money sent to and budgeted by her for their living expenses eventually ran out. Lin, with his fame yet to materialise, found himself without the funds to continue as a student at Harvard. Through his friend Hu Shi (1891–1962), he applied to the Peking University for US$1,000 and the money was promptly forwarded to him.\(^{124}\) It was not until Lin returned from his studies in Europe and America that he learnt where this ‘grant money’ really came from—Hu Shi.\(^{125}\)

Again Cuifeng took care to budget the money for their living expenses wisely but eventually it ran out.\(^{126}\) Chester Greenough, Acting Dean of Harvard, noted Lin’s results from St John’s College and suggested that he study Shakespeare at Jena University in Germany. Therefore, in 1920, with this aim in mind, Cuifeng and Lin sailed to Europe.\(^{127}\) They travelled to Le Creusot, France, where the YMCA offered Lin work teaching Chinese labourers and paid the fares for both Lin and Cuifeng from America to France. One hundred and 50 thousand Chinese labourers were brought to France to bury the dead from WWI (1914–1918), and were then left without employment when the task was completed.\(^{128}\) Among these labourers, Lin hoped to find his paternal grandfather, who had been forcibly conscripted by the Chinese Changmao (long haired) rebel army when his father was a baby.\(^{129}\) The YMCA, with the help of Lin and other expatriate Chinese-Americans, provided education for the workers, helping

\(^{122}\) Lin, Memoirs of an Octogenarian, p. 40.
\(^{124}\) MO, 41.
\(^{125}\) Ibid.
\(^{126}\) Ibid, 44.
\(^{127}\) Ibid, 46.
\(^{128}\) Ibid, 47.
\(^{129}\) Taiyi Lin, Lin Yutang zhuang, 50–51.
Wu, ‘Lin YuTang (1)’.
them to communicate. At the end of his teaching contract in Le Creusot, Lin applied to complete his master’s degree at Jena University in Jena, Germany. Knowing neither French nor German on arrival, Lin was pleased with himself for learning both, and more particularly for his ability to write unaided an application in German for entry to Jena University. Lin’s transfer to Jena University in 1921 proved challenging but rewarding: the German culture held Lin in thrall. The Lins settled into German university life; in Lin’s case with great delight at the ‘old customs, habits and dresses, and languages.’ However, the lack of adequate plumbing facilities did not impress him. Lin was already used to American plumbing and lamented the lack of an inside toilet at the house he and Cuifeng rented. In February 1922, Lin was granted a Harvard MA in absentia.

Lin then applied to the University of Leipzig for candidature in its renowned PhD linguistics programme. Again, he applied for and received financial assistance from Peking University, through the mediation of Hu Shi. In 1922, Lin shifted to the University of Leipzig to undertake a PhD degree in Chinese phonology. This was the second time that Lin applied for and received financial assistance from Peking University through the mediation of Hu Shi, and the resultant US$1,000 enabled Lin and Cuifeng to shift from Jena to Leipzig with some confidence. Lin and Cuifeng had few friends in Leipzig, but did form a friendship with sinologist Dr Bruno Schindler and Frau Schaedlich, his landlady. Lin passed his PhD after literally rushing from one department to another gaining the signatures of the relevant professors to submit his doctorate. His haste was caused by Cuifeng, who was pregnant with their first child and wished to give birth in China. Lin was awarded a PhD in linguistics by the University of Leipzig in 1923, with a dissertation entitled ‘Altchinesische Lautlehre’ (‘Ancient Chinese Phonetics’) and the Lins returned to China for Cuifeng to deliver their first child.

130 Wu, ‘Lin YuTang (2)’.
131 Lin, Memoirs of an Octogenarian, 46.
134 Ibid, 51.
135 Ibid.
136 Wu, ‘Lin YuTang (1)’.
137 Lin Taiyi, 'Introduction', in IL.
138 Lin Taiyi, Lin Yutang zhuan, 42.
139 Wu, 'Lin Yutang (1)'.
140 Ibid.
141 Lin, Memoirs of an Octogenarian, 53.
142 Dr Bruno Schindler founded Asian Major journal in Leipzig in 1920.
143 Murray, ‘Lighting a Candle and Cursing the Darkness’.
2.5 Children and Career: 1923–1929

Lin’s eldest daughter Fengru, later called Rusi and finally Adet (1923–1971), was born in Xiamen on 26 May 1923. The Lin family stayed in Xiamen, where Lin continued to teach at Xiamen University, edit several English language journals and contributed to Chinese literary magazines. In September 1923, Lin accepted the concurrent positions of professor of the English Department at Peking University and lecturer of the English Department at Peking Normal Women’s University. Lin also began to publish his popular press writing, under the pen name ‘Yu-tang’. In 1923, Lin created a method of indexing the Chinese language, the ‘Chinese Number Index Method’, and a ‘New Chinese Phonology Index’. Lin then turned his attention to another matter—the importance of humour in literature and life.

In 1924, Lin coined a Chinese term for literary humour, youmo, to represent tongue-in-cheek humour in writing. There was no comparable term in Chinese for this type of literary humour at that point in time. Youmo is still widely accepted by Chinese readers. By December of 1924, Lin had started publishing articles for Yusi, a weekly magazine offering social comment and political critique, which ultimately attracted the attention of the dominant leaders. He continued to teach and write until his political views reached crisis point in 1926. On the academic front, as a result of Lin’s publications on linguistics, in 1925 he was invited to join the ‘Chinese Roman Phonetic Transcription Research Committee’ under the auspices of the Chinese Ministry of Education. In the same year, he published the ‘Last Stroke Index

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142 Adet Lin also used the pseudonym Tan Yun.
147 Ibid.
Method’ and continued to experiment with index methods, with the goal of inventing a simple Chinese typewriter.\textsuperscript{152}

In 1926, Lin took a position as Dean of Arts at Beijing Women’s Normal University, where he struck a rapport with literary revolutionary Lu Xun (1881–1936), who Lin saw as ‘China's profoundest critic and about the most popular writer with Young China.’\textsuperscript{153} One of Lin’s students, Liu Hezhen (1905–1926), was killed during a political protest in March 1926. On April 1 1926 in Beijing, Lin’s second daughter Anor—called Yuru, then Wushuang and later assuming the pen name of Taiyi—was born.\textsuperscript{154} By then, Lin was reaping the consequences of his forthright articles on contemporary Chinese politics and fraternising with dissidents in Beijing Central Park.\textsuperscript{155} Lin’s conflict with Zhang Zongchang (1881–1932), popularly called ‘Dogmeat General’ for his love of ‘pai gow’ poker, was one of the most disruptive and life-changing events in Lin’s life during this period.\textsuperscript{156} Zhang took charge of Beijing in April 1926 and placed Lin on a list of wanted dissidents. Concerned for his family’s safety, haunted by the murder of his student Liu Hezhen, and by the execution of two journalists, Lin sought refuge in Xiamen, taking Lu and several other close friends with him to teach at Xiamen University.\textsuperscript{157}

In 1927 Lu, unhappy with the administration at Xiamen University, moved first to Guangzhou and later to Shanghai. Following a student revolt against the treatment endured by Lu and with the provincial government in disarray, Lin moved his family from Xiamen.\textsuperscript{158} He was invited to take office as ‘secretary to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ by (Eugene) Chen Yuren (1878–1944) of Wang Jingwei’s left faction of the KMT, the Chinese Nationalist Party set up in Wuhan Province in March 1927, but he soon tired of the position.\textsuperscript{159} After six months, Lin resigned from the position, just as the Wuhan government fell to the communists, and shifted his family to Shanghai for safety. He lectured at Dongwu University, continuing

\textsuperscript{152} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{153} ‘Lusin’, \textit{The China Critic I}, No. 28, 6 December, 1928, 547–548.
\textsuperscript{155} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{157} ‘Pai Gow’ is a common north-eastern China gambling game comparable with two-handed poker.
\textsuperscript{159} Murray, ‘Lighting a Candle and Cursing the Darkness’.
\textsuperscript{152} The House of Lin Yutang, ‘Lin Yutang: Biography’.
\textsuperscript{158} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{159} Wu, ‘Lin YuTang (1)’.

Taiyi Lin, ‘Introduction’, in \textit{IL}.
his writing with forays into inventing and educational administration.\textsuperscript{160} It was here that Lin formed a friendship with a literary giant whom he greatly admired, Xu Zhimo (1896–1931), modernist and pro-Western poet and translator.\textsuperscript{161} After 1927, encouraged by Xu, he abandoned teaching to concentrate on publishing.\textsuperscript{162}

2.6 Vocation as Author: 1928–1934

From the late 1920s to the mid-1930s, apart from a year of overseas travel, Lin lived in Shanghai, where he spent possibly the most stable part of his adult life in China. The ‘Chinese Roman Phonetic Transcription’ was formally accepted and put into practice in 1928. In that same year, Lin became the Chief English Editor for Academia Sinica, an academic institution founded in Nanjing China by the educator Cai Yuanpei in 1928.\textsuperscript{163} Lin also published teaching texts, the \textit{Kaiming English Books} in 1928, earning him the title of ‘King of Copyright Royalty’ and had articles published in \textit{The China Critic}, an English language magazine.\textsuperscript{164} Also published in 1928 was Lin’s ‘Confucius Saw Nancy’; a provocative, one-act play in Chinese.\textsuperscript{165} In December 1928, Lin reorganised and published his left-wing youthful works as the \textit{Jian Fu Collection}, and spent a great deal of time working on his Chinese typewriter invention.\textsuperscript{166} In 1929, still in Shanghai, Lin held two positions: the first as a historical science researcher for Academia Sinica and the second as Law College English Professor at Suzhou University in Shanghai.\textsuperscript{167} He continued to publish as well as teach.\textsuperscript{168} On 8 June 1929, Lin’s play ‘Confucius Saw Nancy’ was enacted by students of the Second Normal College in Qufu, Shandong Province, the birthplace of Confucius. This created a national sensation when descendants of Confucius complained to the Ministry of Education.

\textsuperscript{160} Wu, ‘Lin YuTang (1)’.
\textsuperscript{161} Ibid. Eugene Chen also used the names Zhangxu, Yousen and Zhimo.
\textsuperscript{163} The House of Lin Yutang, ‘Lin Yutang: Biography’.
Academic Sinica was relocated to Taipei after the Chinese Civil War ended.
\textit{The China Critic I}, Shanghai, 1928.
\textsuperscript{166} Lin, \textit{Jian Fu Collection}.
\textsuperscript{167} The House of Lin Yutang, ‘Lin Yutang: Biography’.
\textsuperscript{168} \textit{The China Critic II}, Shanghai, 1929.
Lin, \textit{The Kaiming English Books}.
that their ancestor was dishonoured by both the content and the poor casting of the production.\textsuperscript{169} Lin settled into the Shanghai literary circle.

In July 1930, Lin became the writer of ‘The Little Critic’, a column in the English edition of a Shanghai newspaper, \textit{The China Critic}. This established him as an accomplished writer in English for a Chinese audience.\textsuperscript{170} Later that year, Lin published \textit{Letters of a Chinese Amazon and Wartime Essays (by Hsieh Ping-Ying)}, a collation of essays written and published in Chinese by the author Xie Bingying (1906–2000) as \textit{War Diaries} in 1928 and which Lin had translated ‘for foreign newspapers’ in 1927.\textsuperscript{171} The same company published two volumes of \textit{English Literature Reader} and three volumes of the \textit{Kaiming English Book} (1930) and two volumes of \textit{The Kaiming English Grammar} (1930) for Lin, making him a dominant force in English language education in China.\textsuperscript{172}

Lin served on the Chinese affiliate board of International PEN in Shanghai in the early 1930s, along with Madame Soong Ching-ling (1893–1991), Yang Hsingfu, Agnes Smedley (1892–1950), Lu Xun, Hu and Cai, President of Universities Academy and first Education Minister of the 1912 established Republic of China.\textsuperscript{173} On July 11 1931, the Lin’s third daughter Hsiangju, familiarly referred to as Meimei, was born in Shanghai and Lin’s and Cuifeng’s family was complete.\textsuperscript{174}

\textsuperscript{169} Lin, \textit{Confucius Saw Nancy}, ‘Preface’.
\textsuperscript{171} Murray, ‘Lighting the Candle and Cursing the Darkness’.
\textsuperscript{172} Lin, \textit{Letters of a Chinese Amazon and Wartime Essays (by Hsieh Ping-Ying)}.
\textsuperscript{174} Lin, \textit{English Literature Reader}, Vol. 1 & 2.
\textsuperscript{174} Kaiming English Grammar, Vols 1&2.
\textsuperscript{174} Answers.com, ‘Lin Yutang Biography’.

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Lin’s *Reading in Modern Journalistic Prose* was published in Shanghai in 1931 and he continued to write for *The China Critic* until 1936. Lin became a researcher at the Institute of History and Philology and editor-in-chief of Western languages for Academia Sinica in 1936. He represented that research institution at the annual assembly of the International Alliance for Cultural Cooperation Committee in Switzerland that same year. From Switzerland he flew to England to explore technology for his Chinese typewriter. In England, Lin sought an engineer to design a model of the Chinese typewriter according to his specifications, returning to China with only a few cents left in his pocket, but a positive attitude to recovering financial stability. On his return to the United States in 1931, Lin was briefly detained ‘for Chinese inspection’ at Ellis Island.

In 1932, Lin founded *The Analects Fortnightly*, a magazine devoted to bridging Chinese and Western culture, writing by ‘universal intellectuals’ and to encourage the use of humour in literature. In 1932, he also became an Academia Sinica Research Fellow in Philology. In September 1932, a phenomenon that Diran Sohigian calls ‘the humor phenomenon’ arose in

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**NOTE:**
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176 Lin, *Reading in Modern Journalistic Prose*.  
177 The *China Critic IV*, Shanghai, 1931.  
178 Ibid.  
179 Wu, ‘Lin YuTang (2)’.  
180 Ibid.  
Shanghai. This led to 1933 becoming the ‘Year of Humor’ for China.\(^{183}\) Lin was given the unofficial title of ‘Master of Humor’ by Chinese readers.\(^{184}\) On 17 February 1933, Bernard Shaw visited Shanghai for a day as the guest of the ‘League Civil Rights’ in China and Lin was among the guests.\(^{185}\) A photograph was taken to honour the occasion: as we shall see later, this photograph had major implications for Lin.\(^{186}\) By May of 1933, Lin’s *Collection of Essays on Linguistics* was published and he continued to write for *The China Critic*.\(^{187}\) On 2 October 1933 Pearl S. Buck (1892–1973) an American writer—born in West Virginia but raised in China—visited Shanghai.\(^{188}\) Buck met Lin in Shanghai at a dinner party for writers.\(^{189}\)

In April 1934, Lin launched another fortnightly magazine, the *World of Mankind*, promoting a relaxed style of writing for pleasure. This was the first publication in China that was based on prose exclusively, but it ceased publication after the forty-second issue.\(^{190}\) He founded a fortnightly magazine in September that ‘discussed life in a frank and open manner, avoiding always sentimentalizing reality’. It ran for 152 issues. Later in 1934, as a result of Buck’s encouragement, Lin started writing his perceptions of Chinese life and culture for a Western audience in Shanghai retreating ‘to the mountains ‘for the summer of 1934’.*\(^{191}\)

### 2.6.1 Establishing Transcultural Credentials: 1935–1937


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\(^{183}\) Sohigian, ‘Contagion of Laughter’, p. 137.

\(^{184}\) Taiyi Lin, ‘Introduction’, in *IL*.


\(^{190}\) Wu, ‘Lin Yutang (1)’.


\(^{192}\) *MCMP*.
Essays, Satires and Sketches on China, Second Series: 1933–1935 and My Words First Volume. He also published Confucius Saw Nancy and Essays about Nothing in English in 1935. In September, Lin, in collaboration with Tao Kangde, Huang Jiade and Huang Jiayin, started publishing a fortnightly magazine, West Wind, based on open, logical discussion. This magazine continued to be published for six years. Lin also published numerous essays and articles for magazines and newspapers: for example, ‘The Chinese Art of Eating’, with Readers’ Digest in America.

Lin published his English translation of ‘Six Chapters of a Floating Life’, in instalments in the Common Wealth Magazine. Lin, along with others, established this magazine, like those before it, for a specific purpose: to promote understanding of Western culture and popular literature. However, it had a relatively short run-life of 118 issues. During in 1936 in China, Lin published My Words Second Volume and his first autobiographical article, ‘The Autobiography of Lin Yutang’, which is mirrored and expanded in his last autobiography, Memoirs of an Octogenarian (1975). Later in 1936, foreseeing a war between China and Japan, and encouraged by Walsh and his wife Buck, Lin and his family moved to America, where the Lin family lived in a cottage on the Walsh estate, Green Hills Farm, in Bucks County, Pennsylvania. After a few months in the countryside, and after hearing that the 52 volume draft of a Chinese dictionary that he had left in China had been destroyed by militants, Lin settled his family in New York. Although Lin travelled to other countries during the next 30 years, he was based in America and made it his home. He followed My Country and My People with further books in English: A History of the Press and Public Opinion China; Confucius Saw Nancy and Essays about Nothing and A Nun of Taishan and

197 Lin, Confucius Saw Nancy.
198 Lin Yutang, Lin You-ho, Shanghai: The Oriental Book Co. 1935
202 Ibid.
204 ________, My Words, Second Volume (Pi Jing Ji), Shanghai: Shanghai Times Book Company, 1936.
205 Conn, Pearl S. Buck: A Cultural Biography, 175.
Towards the goal of educating Americans about Chinese cultural matters, Lin published ‘How to Pronounce Chinese Names’. His ‘Impressions on Reaching America’ explained the challenges of cross-cultural travel. Lin’s publications were not the only part of his career that blossomed during 1935: social relationships became more prominent in his life. In New York, Lin worked with Song Qingling, widow of Sun Yatsen, to form the China Democratic Rights Insurance League.

### 2.7 Pre-War and WWII: 1938–1945

The 1937 Marco Polo Bridge Incident signalled the start of the second Sino–Japanese War (1937–1945): the Republic of China’s National Revolutionary Army resisted invasion by the Imperial Japanese Army. Following this invasion, *TIME* magazine published Lin’s article ‘Japan will not conquer China’. Lin wrote to the editor of *The NY Times* and followed this with a stream of articles for this newspaper and various American magazines. Lin’s second book in English, *The Importance of Living*, was published in November 1937. In this work, Lin gave his perspective of Chinese people’s attitude to life, based on his personal experience and understanding of classical texts such as *The Travels of Mingliao*.* The Importance of Living* was proclaimed ‘Book of the Month’ by the American ‘Monthly Book Club’ in December 1937, and became the US best-seller the following year. The book topped the best-seller chart in *The NY Times* for 52 consecutive weeks and became Lin’s most widely translated and best-selling work globally.

205 The Marco Polo Incident, where a ‘lost’ Japanese soldier caused a breakdown in Japanese–Chinese understanding, was also known as ‘July Seventh Incident’ or 77 of Lugouqiao Emergencies.
208 These articles serve only to illustrate the diverse topics and popular media in which Lin published.
The Lin family travelled to Menton, France, in February 1938. A month later, for the sake of his wife—she was lonely in the countryside—and his daughters’ education, Lin relocated his family to Paris. Here he met some of the literary, artistic and revolutionary Western thinkers of the time: feminist writer Gertrude Stein (1874–1946); sculptor Jo Davidson (1883–1952); aviator and peace activist Charles Lindbergh (1902–1974) and his author wife Anne Lindbergh (1906–2001). The Lindberghs, Davidson, Stein and her partner Alice B. Toklas (1877–1967), were among a bevy of friends and acquaintances that became part of the Lins’ social life. During the time Lin lived and travelled in Europe, he wrote ‘Peking Cloud’, ‘Wind and Crane’s Tear’, and ‘The Red Door’.

Lin returned to America in November 1938, to continue his writing, aware that a political storm was brewing in Europe. Among Lin’s acquaintances in NY were Dagmar Godowski (1897–1975), daughter of the composer Leopold Godowsky and lover of composer Igor Stravinski. Numbered among his eclectic ensemble of friends were:

… playwright and soon-to-be Nobel Laureate Eugene O’Neill, poet Robert Frost, German writer and 1929 Nobel Laureate Thomas Mann, American dancer Isadora Duncan, poet Edna St. Vincent Millay, actress Lillian Gish, drama critic George Jean Nathan, critic Carl Van Doren and his poet brother Mark Van Doren, photographer Carl Van Vechten, and Chinese actress Anna May Wong.

This was the environment in which Lin developed his view of the world and his claim to global citizenship. In 1938, Lin published The Wisdom of Confucius and in 1939 Buck helped Lin prepare his first novel Moment in Peking for publication. It was patterned on the twentieth century Chinese classic The Dream of the Red Chamber, but described contemporary Chinese events. Ironically, at the same time that Moment in Peking was banned by the Japanese government, Lin’s Importance of Living was translated into Japanese and sold well there.

WWII China affected the Lin family fortunes from afar. Lin had invested heavily (US$40,000 in Chinese banks) for his daughters’ futures; a decision that he came to regret with the
outbreak of war. His annual income of some US$36,000 provided for Cuifeng’s family back in China because the failure of Chinese banks made the Liao family penniless. It was probably at this time that Lin purchased not only the Liao family home on Gulangyu but also the Chen home next door. In 1939, Lin’s daughters, Adet and Anor, published their first book Our Family, with a forward by their younger sister, Hsiangju. Their book offers a unique opportunity to view Lin through the eyes of his children, during their childhood. Lin’s daughters were shortly to see their parents in a new setting with a common enemy. At a reception given in his honour by the Authors’ Guild, at the Hotel Commodore on 15 February 1940, Lin announced he would depart for China in the near future. He said his wife and daughters would accompany him to the capital Chongqing, but offered no reason why; only stating they would stay there ‘for the duration of the war’.

According to F. Tillman Durdin, reporter for The NY Times, Lin returned to America on Wednesday 21 August 1940, ‘after a month’s visit to China’, but this was misleading:

Lin Yutang, famous Chinese writer; his three daughters and his wife weathered the raid in a dugout that survived two direct hits and the explosion of three bombs at its entrance. The family was badly jolted, but otherwise unhurt. Mr Lin will return to the United States on Thursday after a month’s visit to China. His house near Chongqing was recently destroyed by Japanese bombs.

An article in TIME magazine a fortnight later, stated that Lin was ‘a visitor to Chongqing for the last bomb-cracked month’, supporting Durdin’s claim that Lin was only in China for a

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220 Wu, ‘Lin YuTang (2)’.
221 Ibid.
222 See Chapter 4.
225 Ibid.
227 Ibid.
month. This report paints Lin’s journey as solo: his wife and daughters’ presence with him in China is not mentioned. Neither report mentions that the Lin family spent more than the stipulated month in China, recording only the month spent in Chongqing. This may well be why Lin’s visit to China in 1940 is so often described as one month in length. These articles led some Lin biography writers, such as Ryan Murray, to conclude that the Lin family spent only one month, instead of ‘the duration of the war’, as had previously been announced. However, he repudiated this in a report for *The NY Times* on 23 August 1940:

> The Japanese raid Monday was the climax of my air-raid experiences. It outdid any of the 40 raids I had gone through in the preceding three months.

Murray’s acceptance of the information contained in Durdin’s report does Lin a great disservice: it paints Lin as unreliable and lacking the courage to stand the pressure of the enemy’s onslaught, whereas he and his family endured three months of the war in China, including the most horrific month of the war in Chongqing, before deciding that they could better support the Chinese effort by continuing to raise awareness of China’s plight and need for support from the Western world back in America.

At first, the Lin family lived in Beibei near Chongqing, Sichuan Province, Central China, but soon removed to the mountains nearby to escape the constant bombing. In Chongqing, Lin met with Chairman Chiang Kai-shek and Madam Chiang. He returned to America to promote China by explaining Japan’s intentions towards its mainland neighbour and denouncing the political stance of America towards China. The Lin family lived at ‘88 Morningside Drive, then 90 Morningside Drive, till June, 1942’. During 1940, Lin also published reworked articles from *The Little Critic Weekly* into a book entitled *With Love & Irony*, and his English translation of *The Travels of Mingliaotse*. Elmira College in NY granted Lin an honorary PhD degree in 1940 and The John Day Company published a second book by his elder daughters. Adet and Anor (Taiyi) wrote their own interpretation of the Chinese warrior woman *Hsieh Ping-ying—Girl Rebel: The Autobiography of Hsieh Ping-ying*.

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231 Ibid.
232 Wu, ‘Lin YuTang (2)’.
235 Qian, ‘Lin Yutang: Journey of a World Citizen’.
237 T’u Lung, *The Travels of Mingliaotse*, Lin Yutang (trans), in *IL*. 

— presumably aided by their father’s translations of 1927. Lin’s second novel, *Leaf in the Storm*, was published in 1941 along with his English translations of ‘Six Chapters of a Floating Life’. Lin continued to write for and be quoted in *The NY Times* and American magazines, as well as raising money for supplies for the Chinese military as a guest speaker. In 1942, he published translations in English of Chinese and Indian classical texts as The *Wisdom of China and India*, including selected translations of the works accredited to Chinese philosophers Laozi (6th cBCE), Confucius (AD551–479) and (Zhuangzi (4th c BCE). In 1942, Rutgers University (New Jersey) granted Lin a honorary PhD and with the royalties from his books he ‘bought a two-story apartment’ on 84th Street in East Manhattan; ‘7 Gracie Square, NY’ that Qian called ‘an upscale apartment’, as a family home. His building was opposite the Charles Schurz Park, where Lin loved to walk on the grass, and half a block from the East River. In March 1943, Lin received news of the death of his elder brother, Lin Hanlu, who died in Kweilin (Guilín), Guangxi Province, in Central China. This may have motivated Lin’s return to China, because at the end of 1943 and the start of 1944 Lin spent a further four months in China.

Lin went to seven Chinese provinces that year, researching for his 1943 publication, *Between Tears and Laughter*, a discussion of world peace issues from a Chinese perspective. However, this book ultimately fractured American readers’ perception of him as a genial philosopher. From 1943 to 1947, Lin was Director of United Service to China (UCR). Notably, 1943 was the year that UCR joined the National War Fund; until the end of WWII, this proved a profitable fundraising organisation. In October 1943 Lin returned to China for a month.

During his third and final visit to China during WWII, Lin delivered a speech on, ‘Eastern & Western Cultures and Psychological Construction’ at Chongqing’s Central University.

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239 Lin Yutang, *Six Chapters of a Floating Life, by Shen Fu, Rendered into English by Lin Yutang*, Shanghai: His Feng She, 1941.
240 Wu, ‘Lin Yutang (2)’.
241 Qian, ‘Lin Yutang: Journey of a World Citizen’.
247 Reporter, ‘Mr Lin Learns About Life’.
returned to America and became a foundation member of a company aimed at raising money for the KMT army in China. He worked with Soong Qingling, widow of Sun Yat-sen, to form the China Democratic Rights Insurance League. On 16 September 1944, Lin and Buck were jointly elected as Honorary Presidents of the India League of America. During 1944, Lin published Vigil of a Nation, a novel based on the tension between the Communist Party of China and the KMT or Nationalist Party of China. A year later, Ethel Ewing placed Vigil of a Nation on her list of ‘What to Read on China’, but warned that Lin presented only the official KMT version of political events. This book, like Between Tears & Laughter, further ruptured the serial successes that Lin Yutang’s books had experienced since 1935. It did not destroy his already solid readership base to the extent that his career as a writer was ruined. He continued to write for magazines throughout WWII, advocating America’s responsibilities to China in its defence against the Japanese invaders. Lin Yutang continued to write for, and be quoted in, The NY Times and magazines and he raised money for supplies for the Chinese military as a guest speaker.

In 1945, Lin started financing the construction of his Chinese typewriter: he needed expertise to complete a model of his invention. To this end he engaged an Italian engineer in New York, but this took all of his savings and more. Lin borrowed from a Chinese merchant friend in America, an antique dealer called Lu Qingcai. The results of this venture will be discussed later: it will suffice at this point to note that investing in this invention brought Lin to the brink of financial ruin; he fought his way back to fiscal stability by writing. In New York, October 1945, Lin along with Hu and other dignitaries saluted a parade of twelve thousand Chinese-Americans celebrating China’s triumph over the Japanese.

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Lin Yutang, ‘Eastern & Western Cultures and Psychological Construction’, Speech, Chongqing’s Central University, 1944.
248 Conn, Pearl S. Buck, 282, 1996
249 Lin Yutang, The Vigil of the Nation, New York: John Day Company, 1944.
251 The House of Lin Yutang, ‘Lin Yutang Bibliography’.
254 Wu, ‘Lin Yutang (2)’.
256 Ibid.
On 2 February 1946, at the age of 51, Lin gave a speech entitled ‘Philosophy in the New Century’ at the Centennial celebrations of the Beloit College in Wisconsin and was awarded an honorary ‘Doctorate of Humane Letters’. This was also the year in which Lin patented his Chinese typewriter plans. Lin was still the Director of the United Service to China Incorporated (USC) when, after an independent but unsuccessful fundraising campaign from 1946 to 1947, the USC joined other charitable groups to launch a united fundraising campaign called the ‘American Overseas Aid–United Nations Appeal for Children’. It was also in 1946 that his first daughter, Adet, then 22 years old, secretly married Richard Biow, 26, the son of an American advertising magnate.

In 1947, after three years of research, Lin completed The Gay Genius: The Life and Times of Su Tungpo, who was a key poet from the Song period. That year, at a cost of over US$120,000, Lin completed his ‘Chinese Fast Typewriter’, which he claimed could do a ‘Secretary’s Day’s Work in an Hour’. However, his timing was unfortunate, because China was experiencing internal political turmoil with a resultant financial recession; the funds to buy his patent were not forthcoming. Borrowing from a friend, an antique dealer named Lu Qingcai, Lin completed the typewriter model. Lin’s typewriter was a prototype built for him by Carl E. Krum Company in New York, and it completely drained his finances. He received an offer to be Head of the Arts and Letters Division of UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation) in Paris and he accepted. Lin had a debt to the American Internal Revenue Service to settle before he took up the position, and he managed to pay this off in a relatively short space of time by selling his NY apartment. Whether this debt was a result of poor bookkeeping or whether it was a result of Lin pouring all of his funds into the typewriter project is not explained in any records.

257 Fred Burwell, Beloit College Archivist, email, ‘Lin Yutang at Beloit’, recipient R. J. Ricci, 2 March 2009: ‘Lin Yutang received an honorary degree (Doctor of Humane Letters) at the college’s centennial of the signing of its charter, on February 2, 1946.’
Brooks, ‘Lin Yutang’.
In 1948, Lin signed a contract with the ‘Mergenthaler Linotype Company’ to produce his Chinese typewriter but it failed to deliver. He flew to Paris to take up his position with UNESCO but tired of this within six months, resigned and resumed writing full-time again. He published two books in 1948: a novel, Chinatown Family, and Taoist translations, The Wisdom of Laotse.\textsuperscript{266} The Lins returned to NY in 1949, just as the communist Chinese proclaimed mainland China as the People’s Republic of China. Lin had published a small book Peace is in the Heart in 1948 as a protest against this domination of China and a revenue raiser for the anti-communist cause there.\textsuperscript{267} On 25 June 1950, war was proclaimed between North and South Korea, which escalated when the United Nations (UN), through America and its allies, stepped in to support South Korea, and communist forces countered by supporting North Korea. This political move in East Asia merely confirmed Lin’s concern that communism would dominate the region.

In 1950, Lin published Miss Tu, ‘Miss Tu Sinks the Jewel Box in Anger’ from Feng Menglung’s General Speaking for Warning Mankind, On the Wisdom of America and ‘The U.S. Policy on Taiwan’ in Taipei’s Citizens’ Daily newspaper.\textsuperscript{268} During the 1950s, Lin and Buck served on the advisory board of East and West magazine, with notables such as John Dewey and Ernest William Hocking.\textsuperscript{269} Lin and his family re-settled in ‘Apartment 8-F, Riverdale Towers, 3103 Fairfield Ave, NY’ until mid-1966.\textsuperscript{270}

Retaining only the rights to the keyboard, Lin sold his ‘Chinese Fast Typewriter’, with a patent pending, to the Mergenthaler Linotype Company in 1951.\textsuperscript{271} A patent and trademark were granted in 1952, allowing the Mergenthaler and IBM to develop a prototype machine, the Sinewriter, for the American Airforce based on Lin’s invention.\textsuperscript{272} It was in 1951 that Lin published his translated trilogy of women’s stories, Widow, Nun and Courtesan: Three

\begin{thebibliography}{99}

\bibitem{268} Lin Yutang, Peace is in the Heart, Sydney: Peter Huston, 1948.
\bibitem{269} Lin Yutang, Miss Tu, Melbourne: William Heinemann Ltd., 1950.
\bibitem{271} Qian, ‘Lin Yutang: Journey of a World Citizen’.
\end{thebibliography}
Novelettes From the Chinese Translated and Adapted by Lin Yutang, as a single volume that reinforced his focus on the lives of traditional Chinese women.\textsuperscript{273}

In New York, in April 1952, Lin, his second daughter Anor and her husband Richard Lai established and co-edited the monthly Tian Feng magazine.\textsuperscript{274} It was modelled on West Wind magazine and accepted work from diaspora Chinese writers based in America, England and Hong Kong.\textsuperscript{275} In 1952, Lin published classical Chinese short stories: The Widow Chuan: Chuan Cia Chu by Lao Hsiang as an individual volume and Famous Chinese Short Stories: Retold by Lin Yutang, twenty classical stories from the Tang Dynasty (618–907).\textsuperscript{276}

Lin published The Vermillion Gate in 1953, forming a trilogy of novels based on contemporary Chinese life, with Moment in Peking and the political exposé, Leaf in the Storm.\textsuperscript{277} This was at a time when his professional ties with Walsh, and his friendship with both Buck and Walsh, were dwindling. Lin’s continuing financial crises precipitated his split from The John Day Company due to copyright royalty and taxation problems and Lin’s perception of how Buck and Walsh treated him during this critical time.\textsuperscript{278} In May 1954, Lin was invited to be President and Vice Chancellor of the yet to be built Singapore Nanyang University; in September he was part of a Nationalist Chinese delegation to the UN General Assembly in NY; and in October sailed to Singapore to take up residence there.\textsuperscript{279}

2.8.1 Singed in Singapore: 1954–1955

Singapore’s Nanyang University was officially established in 1954.\textsuperscript{280} Lin had accepted the position there on the condition that facilities and staff reached the highest international academic and structural standards; however, the money to facilitate this was not forthcoming because of underlying social tensions at the time.\textsuperscript{281} By April 1955, Lin’s family members

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{273} Lin Yutang, Widow, Nun and Courtesan: Three Novelettes From the Chinese Translated and Adapted by Lin Yutang, New York: The John Day company, 1951.
  \item \textsuperscript{274} The House of Lin Yutang, ‘Lin Yutang Biography’.
  \item \textsuperscript{275} Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{276} Lin Yutang, The Widow Chuan: Based on Chuan Cia Chu by Lao Hsiang, London: William Heinemann Ltd, 1952.
  \item \textsuperscript{277} Lin Yutang, Famous Chinese Short Stories: Retold by Lin Yutang, New York: The John Day Company, 1952.
  \item \textsuperscript{278} MO, 77.
  \item \textsuperscript{279} Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{280} Letter from Elizabeth Mauff, secretary to the president, to J.B. Lipincott Co, re. LYT’s Singapore address, October 20, 1954, Archives, Princeton University Special Collections, John Day Co., Box 329, Folder 4.
  \item \textsuperscript{281} Lin Taiyi, ‘Introduction’, in IL.
  \item \textsuperscript{281} Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{281} Staff Reporter, ‘Murder in Singapore’, TIME, 2 May 1955.
\end{itemize}

### 2.8.2 Travel and Writing: 1955–1961

Following her recovery from depression caused by the stressful conditions in Singapore, Cuifeng rested in France, then launched a foray into the cuisine genre, which was the only book published by the Lin family in 1956. Cuifeng and Hsiangju published their first Chinese cookbook, with Lin writing the forward.\footnote{288}{Lin Tsuiifeng and Lin Hsiangju, \textit{Cooking with the Chinese Flavor}, New York: Prentice-Hall, 1956.} This collection of Chinese recipes, along with a further two editions—\textit{Secrets of Chinese Cooking} (1960) and \textit{Chinese Gastronomy} (1972)—is credited with popularising Chinese cooking in America at that time.

In 1957, Lin and Cuifeng toured Buenos Aires, Argentina, delivering lectures and establishing him as an author in South America. Returning to NY, Lin began accompanying his wife to the
local Presbyterian church. In the same year, he published a historical Chinese biography—Lady Wu—and republished The Wisdom of Laotse with an English publisher, Michael Joseph.  

Free from the dictates of Walsh and Buck, an emboldened Lin launched a full-scale attack on Soviet communism in 1958: a book entitled The Secret Name: The Soviet record 1917–1958, an historical examination of Russian communism. At the invitation of Ma Xingye of the Central Daily News in Taipei, Lin and Cuifeng made their first visit to Taiwan in October 1958. This visit lasted three weeks and included a visit to one of the Taiwanese indigenous tribes, where he met with elders; and Japan, where he adopted financial responsibility for an orphaned boy.


In 1962, Ma Xingye, editor of the Taipei newspaper Central News Agency, arranged a lecture tour of six Central and South American countries for Lin, starting at the San Marcos University, Peru. He published his speeches from this tour as The Pleasures of a Nonconformist, calling them ‘candid shots into the realm of thinking.’ Unfortunately, Lin

297 Ibid, 12, 13.
fell ill in Lima, Peru. He was hospitalised and had surgery for an infected kidney.\textsuperscript{298} In 1962, Lin also published a novel, \textit{Juniper Loa}.\textsuperscript{299} Published in 1963, \textit{Juniper Loa} is extensively quoted by Lin as autobiographical in \textit{Memoirs of an Octogenarian}.\textsuperscript{300} The accuracy of this genre label will be discussed later. Following the death of Hu Shi in 1962, Lin succeeded his friend as President of Republic of China PEN Centre (RCPC) in Taipei and later served as Honorary President of this branch until 1975.\textsuperscript{301}

In May 1963, Hsien-Wu Chang, an electrical engineer, acknowledged Lin’s early typewriter experiments as crucial to the keyboard of the latest IBM machine that translated Chinese into English.\textsuperscript{302} In 1964, Lin was acknowledged for this invention in \textit{Scientific American}.\textsuperscript{303} Lin published an anti-communist novel, \textit{The Flight of Innocents}.\textsuperscript{304}

\textbf{2.8.3 Taiwan 1965–1972}

During America’s involvement in the Vietnam War (1965–1973), Lin and Cuifeng relocated from NY to Taipei. In February 1965, Ma invited Lin to write a column, ‘All World Talk,’ in Chinese for his Taiwanese newspaper.\textsuperscript{305} Lin accepted and his column in Chinese, \textit{Wu Suo Bu Tan}, had five million readers. The popularity of this column motivated him to collate them into a book, \textit{All World Talk} (Volume One), which he published along with an essay, ‘Objective Discussion About Gao E’.\textsuperscript{306}

In 1966, when Chiang Kai-shek offered Lin a residence of his own design in Taipei, Lin revisited Taiwan, with the object of making it his home.\textsuperscript{307} The house combined elements of both Chinese and European architecture and was built under the guidance of Taiwan architect Wang Dahong (1918–).\textsuperscript{308} In that same year, Lin stimulated debate on ‘redology’ (\textit{Hong
Xue)—a critical, allegorical, investigative and literary study of The Dream of the Red Chamber—by exploring his reality of this Chinese classic. 309

As a research professor for the Chinese University of Hong Kong, in 1967 Lin started what was to become his greatest writing challenge, Lin Yutang’s Chinese-English Dictionary of Modern Usage. 310 Lin created an ‘Instant Index System’, patented with the Taiwan Ministry of the Interior, using ‘Simplified Chinese Roman Characters’ as his phonetic transcription. He also published his re-edited New Kaiming English Books, his second book of Central News Agency columns, All World Talk (Volume Two) and translations and annotations of writings by artists and critics from Confucius (551–479 BCE) to Shen Zongqian (1893–1973), The Chinese Theory of Art: Translations from the Masters of Chinese Art. 311

In 1968, Lin became a board member for Mandarin Daily News and represented Taiwan at the International Association of University Presidents in Seoul, where he presented a paper, ‘Promoting the Integration of West and East’. 312 On 16 June 1969, as President of the RCPC, Lin launched the third Asian Writer's Conference of International P.E.N. in Taipei and on 29 June 1970, by delivering a paper entitled ‘Humour in the East and West’ at the Annual Conference of International PEN in Seoul. 313 Although his writing output was slowing down, Lin’s dedication to writers’ organisations continued until his death.

1971 was a fateful year for Lin: his eldest daughter, Adet, hung herself in the gardens of the National Palace Museum where she was a curator. Lin and Cuifeng were devastated by their daughter’s death. From the time of her death, he no longer felt the need to spend much time in Taiwan, so from this point onwards Lin and Cuifeng spent most of their time in Hong Kong, where their other two daughters lived and worked.

310 Lin Yutang, Chinese -English Dictionary of Modern Usage, Hong Kong: Chinese University of Hong Kong, 1972.
2.9 Hong Kong: 1972–1976

In Hong Kong, Lin worked on the culmination of his life’s work, *Lin Yutang’s Chinese-English Dictionary of Modern Usage*. In October 1972, he completed it. Proud but exhausted, Lin viewed this book as the pinnacle of his writing career because of the degree of difficulty in compiling it and the exhaustion caused by his failing health. When the dictionary was complete, Lin suffered his first stroke.\(^{314}\) He wrote *Memoirs of an Octogenarian* in 1973, and in 1974 Lin published an *All World Talk Collection*.\(^{315}\) This was the year that his book *Moment in Peking* saw him nominated for the Nobel Prize in Literature for the third and last time: it was the one prize that he did not obtain.\(^{316}\) In 1975, Lin was elected as Vice President of PEN International in Vienna; *Hwa Kang Journal* published a thesis collection in celebration of 80-year-old Lin Yutang, and Arthur Anderson edited a volume of Lin’s writing, *Lin Yutang: The Best of an Old Friend*, with a forward by Lin written in Hong Kong on 19 May.\(^{317}\) In that same year, a weak and aged Lin published *Memoirs of an Octogenarian*.\(^{318}\)

On 23 March 1976, while visiting Hong Kong, Lin suffered gastric haemorrhage, developed pneumonia and was taken to St Mary’s Hospital where he later died of heart failure on 26 March.\(^{319}\) His body was flown back to Taipei and his funeral was held at Grace Baptist church.\(^{320}\)

The plethora of writing by and about Lin in English has proven useful to this investigation. Primary sources and secondary sources, including dissertations, are acknowledged below, along with contemporary media sources such as YouTube.

2.10 Acknowledging Previous Research: Literature Review

2.10.1 Language Sources

Discerning Lin’s thought can be achieved by accessing materials written by and about him in English, because this language was the dominant language for most of his academic training and also for a wide range of his eclectic writing for most of his adult life. However, it does limit this thesis by excluding the possibility of undertaking cross-cultural analysis between the

\(^{316}\) Lin Yutang was nominated for the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1972, 1973 and 1974: each time it was for his 1939 novel *Moment in Peking*.
\(^{318}\) Lin, *Memoirs of and Octogenarian*.
\(^{320}\) Grace Baptist Church: 90 Hsin Shen S. Rd., Sect 3, Taipei, Taiwan.
Chinese and English languages. Certainly, understanding what motivated Lin is subject to transcultural challenges, but using only the language in which he wrote the majority of his work, reduces the risk of confusing analysis with cultural imposts. This does not undermine the importance of the large body of contemporary research and literature on Lin in Chinese. In their efforts to present holistic records of his life, researchers take different approaches to Lin’s journey to produce different outcomes. This thesis focuses on English writings by and on Lin to investigate meaningful events central to his physical, emotional, social, intellectual and spiritual development throughout his lifetime.

2.10.2 Primary Sources

What Lin published provides the bulk of the evidence to support the claims of this thesis: his autobiographical writing, philosophical writing, novels, translations of traditional Chinese novels, short stories, plays, introductions, newspaper articles and pamphlets. These all provide primary textual evidence for this study. Drew Faust expresses why these texts are the most meaningful:

> We create ourselves out of the stories we tell about our lives, stories that impose purpose and meaning on experiences that often seem random and discontinuous. As we scrutinize our own past in the effort to explain ourselves to ourselves, we discover — or invent — consistent motivations, characteristic patterns, fundamental values, a sense of self. Fashioned out of memories, our stories become our identities.  

Archival correspondence between Lin and his publisher Walsh is also used. Newspaper articles are a consistent source of information during Lin’s time in America. The NY Times alone published more than one hundred articles by or about Lin and his family. Since 1937, TIME magazine has published no less than 50 articles quoting or mentioning Lin, and since 1935 Harpers Magazine has published nineteen reviews and other critical analyses of Lin’s writing, providing support material. Written materials are augmented by information gathered during fieldwork in Xiamen, Zhangzhou and Banzai in Fujian Province, People’s Republic of China, and Taipei in Taiwan.

Lin published several books based on his personal beliefs and philosophy of life, for example, My Country and My People, The Importance of Living, With Love and Irony, Between Tears

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and Laughter and The Pleasures of a Nonconformist, along with numerous magazine and newspaper articles, including ‘Reading—The Key to Personality’, ‘When East Meets West’ and ‘Lin Yutang Twits Orient and West’. All of Lin’s publications are written from a subjective perspective. Throughout his life, Lin wrote about his own life, his beliefs, values and predictions, in several books including From Pagan to Christian.325

One of the most important texts written by Lin is a slim volume of memories written and published a year before he died, Memoirs of an Octogenarian. Lin used a third person approach to introduce his personal story for the first chapter of his eightieth birthday publication. He listed his likes and dislikes, setting a pattern for the rest of the book. This book is quintessential to a psychobiographical study of Lin, because it records what remained important to him at the end of his life. In Memoirs of an Octogenarian, Lin devotes a chapter to each of the following: childhood; earliest contacts with the West; time at St John’s College; marriage; time at Harvard; German universities, Jena and Leipzig; the literary scene in China in the 1930s; and his perceptions of Chinese politics viewed during his 30 years in America. It is the last two chapters, ‘On Growing Old. The Rhythm of Life’ and ‘Taking Stock’ that encapsulate Lin’s personal ruminations on what he believed were the most critical events in his life. Lin’s list of publications in Memoirs of an Octogenarian shows the English writings that Lin chose to be translated into Chinese at the end of his life, offering insight into Lin’s last assessment of his contribution to cross-cultural literature. Juxtaposing Lin’s personal evaluation of his work with an objective appraisal will expose patterns of behaviour as possible causes for his choices. Other texts by Lin will be accessed and used as sources to research his motivations and beliefs. Biographies on his life, written from a variety of perspectives, will provide access to the greatest possible range of views and reduce the risk of misinterpretation.

324 Lin, MCMP.
________. IL.
________. Between Tears and Laughter.
________. ‘Reading—The Key to Personality’, Readers Digest, February 1938, 137–138.
326 MO, Taipei: Mei Ya, 1975.
328 MO, 82–93.
2.10.3 Familial

Books and articles by his daughters provide insight into his family relationships. The 1939 biography, *Our Family*, was written by Lin’s daughters: Adet, Anor (Taiyi) and Hsiangju (Meimei). Taiyi later submitted a PhD dissertation on her father in Chinese. Taiyi also wrote a succinct biography of Lin as the foreword to a 1998 edition of her father’s best-selling book, *The Importance of Living*, but this adds little to what can be sourced through her father’s *Memoirs of an Octogenarian*. Perceptions by Taiyi provide filial insight into Lin’s behaviour that is frequently cited in other biographies, but they remain secondary sources to Lin’s own writing. Taiyi also wrote a succinct biography of Lin as the foreword to a 1998 edition of her father’s best-selling book, *The Importance of Living*. This adds little to what can be sourced through her father’s *Memoirs of an Octogenarian*. Perceptions by Taiyi cannot rate as highly because they depend on her recall of her father. These provide filial insight into Lin’s behaviour frequently cited in other biographies; however, these remain secondary sources to Lin’s own writing. Even though Lin may ‘forget or distort past events’ in his autobiographical writing, primary recall must take precedence over the secondary.

2.10.4 Major Dissertations

Taiyi Lin’s dissertation on her father’s life sowed the seeds for future biographers because of her closeness to Lin that no other researcher could emulate. Later published as a book, its weakness lies in the fact that it is only available in Chinese. Only small segments of Taiyi’s book have been translated into any European language. One such translator is Eugene Wu, who credits most of his biographical papers on Lin to her book. In this there are obvious discrepancies between what Lin reported and Wu’s interpretation of Taiyi’s book. For

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329 Taiyi Lin, *Lin Yutang zhuan*.
330 Taiyi Lin, ‘Introduction’, *IL*.
334 Eugene Wu, ‘Midterm Paper Topic: Lin YuTang, for Calligraphy’, Parts 1 & 2, Baltimore, Maryland: John Hopkins University, March 2006, accessed 24 October 2006, [https://jshare.johnshopkins.edu/twu7/LinYuTang1.pdf](https://jshare.johnshopkins.edu/twu7/LinYuTang1.pdf); [https://jshare.johnshopkins.edu/twu7/LinYuTang2.pdf](https://jshare.johnshopkins.edu/twu7/LinYuTang2.pdf) ‘Note: I must credit Mrs. Anor Lin for a substantial amount of the material in this paper. In fact, much of what I have written was directly translated from her Chinese text. In addition, all the pictures I have used are scanned from her book as well.’

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example, Wu claims that in childhood, Lin journeyed along his local river, travelling by ‘raft’ with ‘the captain and his passengers’, carrying the vessel over shallow sections; in contrast Lin, in his *Memoirs of an Octogenarian*, claims that this water vehicle was a ‘shallow-bottomed skiff’, with ‘the boatman and his daughters’ carrying it.\(^{335}\) This difference between Taiyi’s biography and the autobiography by Lin has ramifications for my thesis about the importance of women in his life. Whether by accident or by design, Taiyi does not give women particular force in her father’s boyhood journey. Neither does she show women as a pattern in her father’s life in this biography. Diran Sohigian, in his dissertation submitted in 1991, acknowledges Taiyi’s familial knowledge of her father, in *Lin Yutang zhuàn*.\(^{336}\)

Diran Sohigian’s dissertation thesis ‘The Life and Times of Lin Yutang’ focuses on ‘Lin’s place in literary and intellectual history’, with an emphasis on filling in the gaps of events not mentioned by Taiyi: religious doubts and convictions; controversies in his life and his relationship with the Kuomintang (KMT).\(^{337}\) The political intricacies in Lin’s life journey are covered expertly by Sohigian, pre-empting the need for further analysis: for that reason this study does not involve political analysis.\(^{338}\) Sohigian plunges deeply into the political history and missionary history of Fujian during WWI. He argues that an inability to access documents on Lin in Chinese has resulted in ‘seriously flawed Western understanding and appreciation’, making his interpretation of the facts better because he accessed material in both Chinese and English. Yet there are two reasons why this argument is weak. First, Sohigian does not account for the plethora of materials published in English by Lin, nor does he allow for research in other languages, particularly German, which he may have missed. There will always be more materials than it is possible to access and use when undertaking a time-limited thesis. Secondly, Sohigian does not acknowledge isogesis: the unconscious cultural biases that all writers carry into their work from the learnt recognition of their training.\(^{339}\) Nevertheless, there is an obvious advantage in the ability to read documents in Chinese; for example, one has the ability to access at first hand the Lin biography written by Taiyi.

Jun Qian acknowledged the Lin biographies by Taiyi and Sohigian as ‘quite helpful’, but he claims that his dissertation is ‘not a biography’ and ‘not even concerned with Lin Yutang *per se*’ but is a study of Lin’s ‘literature and cultural discourses and practices’ in the context of

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\(^{335}\) Ibid.


\(^{337}\) Ibid, 9.

\(^{338}\) Ibid, 11–12.

\(^{339}\) Tuck, *Comparative Philosophy and the Philosophy of Scholarship*, 12–15.
Chinese modernity, both at home and abroad.\textsuperscript{340} To this end, Qian compares Lin’s writing with that of other Chinese and Sino-American writers—‘Gu Hongming, Lu Xun, Zhou Zuoren, Liang Shiqiu, Maxine Hong Kingstone and Frank Chin’—to highlight ‘the historico-cultural problematics such as politics, aesthetics, individuality, traditionality, nationalism, gender and immigrant identity’.\textsuperscript{341} All of these are important areas of focus in understanding the importance of Lin Yutang in his geographical-temporal context. Therefore, they are all important, as they assist in understanding why Lin’s character and beliefs developed as they did, and why he wrote what he did on the subjects he chose.

Qian aimed to discover Lin’s personality as disclosed in his writing, in particular, Lin’s assertion that ‘a writer is a man who reacts to his period with the whole force of his personality’, leading Qian to undertake an ‘interpretive analytic’ of his claim.\textsuperscript{342} This moves Qian close to the goal of this thesis, of understanding the life of Lin through his writing and other’s observations about him. It differs from this thesis because to find out why Lin made certain choices, this thesis will concentrate on how the influences in his formative years and the effect of meaningful events throughout his life created the person who was Lin Yutang. In his later book \textit{Liberal Cosmopolitan}, Qian argues that his cross-cultural critique of Lin as a ‘liberal cosmopolitan in modern Chinese intellectualty’ shows the possibility of ‘a middling Chinese modernity’ in contemporary China.\textsuperscript{343} This strays from the focus of this thesis, but is useful in defining the popularity of Lin’s writing on both sides of the northern Pacific.

Lu Fan added to the body of Lin’s ‘translingual literary practice’ dedicated to ‘images of women’ in 2008, with his dissertation ‘Constructing and Reconstructing Images of Chinese Women In Lin Yutang’s Translations, Adaptations and Rewritings’.\textsuperscript{344} Lu examines representations of Chinese women by ‘the missionary A. E. Safford, the bilingual Chinese intellectual Gu Hongming and the American novelist Pearl Buck’.\textsuperscript{345} Lin’s feminist thought is examined in the context of his ‘familial, educational, cultural and political background’, and his writing.\textsuperscript{346} Lu’s analysis is limited to four specific characters: Yun from \textit{Six Chapters of a}

\textsuperscript{340} Qian, ‘Lin Yutang: Negotiating Modernity Between East and West’, 2.
\textsuperscript{341} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{342} Ibid, 3.
\textsuperscript{344} Lu, ‘Constructing and Reconstructing Images of Chinese Women In Lin Yutang’s Translations, Adaptations and Rewritings’.
\textsuperscript{345} Ibid, iii.
\textsuperscript{346} Ibid.

Floating Life, Yiyun, Widow Quan and Miss Du from Widow, Nun and Courtesan. Thirdly, two courtesans – Parisian Marguerite Gautier from Alexandre Dumas Jr’s La Dame Aux Camelias and Chinese Du Shiniang in Lin’s Miss Tu – are examined as an example of ‘cross-cultural symbiosis’.\(^{347}\) Lu’s focus is on how Lin used his writing, the translations and novels, to re-interpret representations and assumptions about Chinese women both from the past and in the present. This focus does not examine in any depth how women formed a crucial pattern throughout Lin’s life by affecting his thoughts and perceptions, often changing the course of his life and his creative output.

Jue Wang-Rice produced a PhD dissertation on ‘Moment of Freedom from the Symbolized World—A Semiotic Study of Lin Yutang’s Depiction of Women’. However, this work only analysed how Lin portrayed women in fiction.\(^{348}\) Wang’s research exposed a ‘recurrent pattern of female nonconformity … creatively unchained’ historical female stereotypes and ‘offering an alternative comprehension of history’ in his fiction writing.\(^{349}\) Wang’s thesis explains why Lin’s fictional writing labelled him a feminist; however, it neither examines the effect of women from his childhood and youth who helped to formulate Lin’s beliefs and behaviours, nor those of his adult years, who were essential to his life story, as this thesis does.

Shuang Shen’s PhD dissertation, ‘Self, Nations, and the Diaspora—Re-reading Lin Yutang, Bai Xianyong, and Frank Chin’, analysed Lin’s writing in the context of a ‘complex interplay of culture and politics’ from a multidisciplinary approach in both Asian and Asian-American studies.\(^{350}\) Lin’s life in Shanghai during the 1930s, followed by his removal to America, provided Shen with a specific study: Lin’s ‘perceptions of cultural crossing and national identity’. However, his research comprised neither a study of Lin’s life journey nor themes that evolved as focal, such as women, humour and religion as this study will.


Lin, ‘Ancient Feminist Thought in China [sic]’, ‘Women’s Life’ in My Country My People; and Confucius
Saw Nanzi.

Ibid.

Alexandre Dumas Jr., La Dame Aux Camelias, London: William Heinemann, 1902.

Ibid.


Ibid.

unique methodology as a case study to prove this. She acknowledges previous Lin researchers, including the dissertations above. Lee argues that Akira Iriye championed ‘the coming of age of symmetrical cultural internationalism’ in 1997, when third world countries were appealing for this concept as a more equitable cross-cultural exchange, but Lin had already accomplished this in the 1930s. Lee’s thesis examined how Lin produced ‘symmetrical cultural internationalism’ against a tide of ‘asymmetrical cultural nationalism’, ‘cultural nationalism’ and ‘cultural iconoclasm’. Her thesis confirms that Lin pioneered symmetrical cultural internationalism by establishing ‘Chinese culture as worthy culture for cultural exchange’. Lee’s study neither analysed what factors motivated Lin to pursue this line of scholarship, nor what may have determined his development and life choices towards cross-cultural exchange. Lee also tells readers that 433 theses on Lin were produced in China between 1994 and 2005 and no doubt there have been more since; these go beyond the scope of my research.

2.10.5 Minor Dissertations, Online Theses and Papers

Ryan Murray produced a minor e-thesis on the life of Lin, ‘Lighting a Candle and Cursing the Darkness: A Brief Biography of Lin Yutang’, in 1999. This thesis details Lin’s empirical journey ‘tirelessly laboring to bridge the gap’ of understanding between China and the West. It is useful as a resource for biographical material but it does not link the stimulus-response mechanisms at play throughout Lin’s life. This thesis will extend Murray’s biographical material but also ascertain some recurring patterns of behaviour for Lin, such as retreating to nature for safety and rejuvenation.

Suoqiao Qian also published a short biography of Lin as a book chapter in Multicultural Writers from Antiquity to 1945 (2002). In this he used biographies of Taiyi, Jun Qian (his own), and Sohigian and three Chinese publications: Shi Jianwei’s Lin Yutang Zai Dalu (Lin Yutang in Mainland China) (1991); Zhang Shizhen’s Lunyu shiqi de Lin Yutang Yanjiu

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352 Ibid, 3, 4.
353 Ibid, 2.
354 Ibid, 5.
356 Murray, ‘Lighting a Candle and Cursing the Darkness’.
(Study of Lin Yutang During the *Lunyu* Period) (1993); and Wan Pingjin’s *Lin Yutang Pingzhuan* (A Biographical Commentary on Lin Yutang) (1996). This cross-cultural paper concentrated on the multicultural nature of Lin’s life and how this affected criticism of his writing. In 2004, Qian published ‘The Two–Way Process in the Age of Globalization: Lin Yutang’s Masterpiece’. This webpage examines Lin in the context of his writing, and more specifically the relationship between Lin and his editors, Buck and Walsh. Surprisingly, it does not examine his familial relationships or the impact these had on his later life as this thesis does.

Bruce Brooks published a synopsis of Lin’s life in 2004. This biography confirmed the importance of Lin in the twenty-first century, but it did not analyse why he may have made particular choices based on his exposure to certain circumstances in his formative and teenage years and meaningful events as an adult. This thesis will use an interdisciplinary approach to expose causal links between events and behaviour.

Steven Miles submitted his masters’ thesis, ‘Independence and Orthodoxy: Lin Yutang and Chinese Journalism in the Republican Era, 1923–1936’, in 1990. Miles examined the importance of Lin to the literary movement prior to his shift to America. Although this aspect is important for this thesis, it will be examined in the context that journalistic writing is only one theme in an analysis of Lin’s life journey.

Joseph C. Sample’s thesis, ‘Lin Yutang and the Revolution of Modern Chinese Humor’, is a survey of Lin’s English columns written for *The China Critic* from 1928 to 1936. It provides insight into Lin’s writing that earned him the title of ‘Master of Humour’ in China but does not, as this study does, discuss why Lin pursued literary humour as a theme throughout most of his life.

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Qian, ‘Lin Yutang: Negotiating Modernity between East and West’.


359 Brooks, ‘Lin Yutang’.


A webpage entitled ‘Learning Life of Dr. Lin Yutang’, created by Lin Menghai and Lin Mengru, cites Wan Pingjin and Shi Jianwei as the ‘pioneering scholars’ on Lin in the 1980s. Wang Zhaosheng is mooted as the most prolific twenty-first century publisher in Chinese on Lin. In 2007, Chen Yulan edited papers on Lin by scholars from the Zhangzhou Teachers’ College, including Chen Yulan, Shen Jinyao, and Li Shaodan, from ‘different perspectives of national trait and spirit, cultural integrity and language application.’ Their webpage, translated by Lei Tianfang in 2011, although small, provides some unique information on Lin that is not available elsewhere and was consulted for this thesis.

2.11 Chapter Summary

Lin Yutang led a roving life from his school days to his last days. He moved from country to country learning new languages as the need arose, building on the three languages of his formative years: scholarly Chinese, his mother’s Chinese dialect and English, the language that made him a global author. Lin’s vocation as a writer spanned almost 60 years, ensuring a major influence on both his Chinese and American readers. Even death did not prevent Lin’s thought from continuing to influence creative thinkers. The challenge lies in deciding which aspects of Lin’s life had sufficient effect on him to reinforce or change his character or behaviour, influencing his life journey. These will be examined in subsequent chapters: formative years, scholarship and vocation, women, peers, religion, philosophy and humour. Necessarily, this study will differ from bilingual studies because it accesses sources only in English and is based on a Western perception of Lin.

362 Lin Menghai and Lin Mengru, ‘The Learning Life of Lin Yutang’.
Chapter 3: The Formative Years

3.1 Introduction

Much of Lin’s approach to life is a consequence of the temporal and spatial setting into which he was born and raised. This chapter will provide an explanation of memory systems affecting autobiography, necessary in assessing its reliability because Lin’s autobiographical writing is the primary source of material for this thesis. Then it will note the impact of historical, political and environmental spaces on Lin’s goals. It will examine his relationships with his kinfolk, including his playmate Juniper Loa and his early forays into scholarship and inventing. The environmental factors of childhood are more extensive imposts on Lin’s character than factors for any other period of his life because they laid the foundation of his beliefs. This chapter notes the elements of Lin’s childhood and teenage years that established his basic beliefs. It is these beliefs that were supported, strengthened or modified during his adult years, some becoming themes. Factors affecting Lin’s childhood will form the base for revealing ‘the effects of early life history on personality and achievement.’

The geographical and historico-political environments of Lin’s foundational years produced ‘behaviours’ that, through a ‘history of reinforcement’, became enduring ‘common scripts’ for life. Retreating to mountains (or at least nature) and rural environments became a ‘psychological defence’ to threat and ultimately a ‘common script’ for life: his belief from childhood was that mountains were protective, ‘near God’s greatness’, giving him ‘inner strength’. Zhizheng, Shunming, Meigong and other women from his childhood modelled ‘preferred themes’ for Lin: Zhizheng modelled a Taoist gentleman; Shunming modelled motherhood, Meigong mentorship and his cousins, along with missionary and the temperance women on Gulangyu, modelled virtuous womanhood. Zhizheng and Meigong encouraged Lin to aspire to higher education and to use it to benefit humanity. Western education and science, ideals Lin’s father instilled in him, were an effect of his ‘early life history’, shaping his ‘personality and achievement’ by becoming patterns for life. Christianity was a properly basic belief instilled in Lin from birth, but it also became the ‘isolated formative event’ that robbed his childhood of Chinese myths and legends. His scholarship was founded on ‘achievement’ in childhood: a ‘history of reinforcement’ in the form of positive reinforcement

363 WP.
364 Ibid.
365 PC. 21.
366 WP.
367 Ibid.
368 Ibid.

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from his father, siblings and teachers gave Lin the confidence to build a career in writing. Positive reinforcement and even negative reinforcement, in the form of attention from his family, encouraged Lin to invent. Facts for this chapter come predominantly from Lin’s biographical writing, so it is necessary to look at the reliability of childhood memories.

3.2 Foundational Beliefs and Infant Memory
3.2.1 Schacter and Moscovitch

Daniel Schacter and Morris Moscovitch maintain that humans have only two memory systems: an “unconscious” or “procedural” memory—from birth onwards—and a “conscious” or “episodic” memory from six months of age onwards. This latter type of memory allows humans to ‘access recently established representations of events and information’. All changes to these two mnemonic memory systems in infants occur as a result of learning; ‘language and self-concept’ and ‘growth in general knowledge and strategies’. This theory of memory provides a basis on which to build a more comprehensive model for analysis of Lin’s early childhood.

However, Katherine Nelson raises an issue not covered by Schacter and Moscovitch: the ability of humans to reminisce using an ‘autobiographical memory’ established in early childhood. Nelson deems the period between two years-of-age and five years-of-age as one of ‘critical cognitive development’, where two ‘dramatic transitions’ take place. The first and greatest leap is from prelinguistic infancy to language use by children. The second leap in memory development towards autobiographical memory takes place at whatever age the child enters a formal education process. Autobiographical memory rarely exists before the full development of language, usually in the five-year-old to eight-year-old period, leading Nelson to conclude that this system of memory is dependent on language. In the final step in

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369 Ibid.
370 Ibid.
372 Ibid. 178.
373 Ibid. 209.
375 Ibid, p. 129.
378 Ibid, 147.
memory development—‘procedural memory’, joined by ‘episodic memory’, develops into ‘autobiographical memory’—in turn, this ‘serves as a self-history defined in collaboration with the important others who exchange and redefine experiences from the past.\textsuperscript{378} Autobiographical memory is of particular importance to this study because it is an ability used liberally by Lin in his writing throughout his lifetime. The stages of memory in early childhood are essential to understanding why Lin made the life choices he did and how he acquired the skills necessary to attract readers in both China and America, as well as the global influence when his writing was translated into European languages. Understanding Lin’s early childhood development is tantamount to understanding Lin, and knowing the political and historical/political environment into which he was born is a key to understanding what underpinned his beliefs.

3.3 Historical and Geographical Space

Lin was born in turbulent times: it was the twenty-first year in the reign of Qing Emperor Guangxu (1871–1908), a puppet ruler under his aunt, Empress Dowager Cixi (1835–1908), who governed with an ‘iron fist in a velvet glove’.\textsuperscript{379} Reigning at the end of the first Sino-Japanese war, (1894–1895) Guangxu was an advocate of modernisation and Western science, but against foreign interference in Chinese affairs.\textsuperscript{380} Chinese nationalism rode on a wave of anti-foreignism, stirring the populous for the next few decades into the twentieth century. Fortunately, nestled in the southern coastal mountains of Fujian, the Lin family were remote enough to escape from the antiforeign sentiments fuelling the embedded angst of these political hailstorms. The historical and political climate into which he was born affected Lin’s values through his father, who admired the ideals of Emperor Guangxu, necessitating a look at this leader’s values.

Guangxu, born Zaitian, was the last emperor of China. A picture of Guangxu, perhaps like the official portrait below, hung in Lin’s family home.\textsuperscript{381}

\textsuperscript{378} Ibid, 147–148.  
\textsuperscript{380} Qian, ‘Lin Yutang’, in \textit{Multicultural Writers from Antiquity to 1945}, 266.  
\textsuperscript{381} Ibid, p. 21
In the period that Guangxu asserted his power, from 1889 to 1898, he instigated the ‘One Hundred Days’ Reform’, from 11 June to 21 September 1898, 104 days of political, educational and cultural change. He is remembered, among other things, for his desire to modernise China by embracing Western scientific methods. Guangxu’s reign was the political climate into which Lin was born, affecting his father Zhizheng and through him, his children. Zhizheng embedded Guangxu’s ideas of Western modernisation in Lin’s psyche in his formative years. The Lin progeny grew up with a healthy respect for new ideas, Western education and Western scientific principles, as well as basic beliefs in Christian values and Chinese family values. However, it was the physical environment where he grew up that was tacitly embedded in his psyche.

3.3.1 Geographical Space

The geographical setting that made a deep and indelible impression on Lin’s young and impressionable psyche was that of the mountains and water dominating the natural landscape surrounding his childhood home. In his last book, he listed what he believed were the major factors affecting his foundational beliefs:

These influences on my childhood were the greatest: 1, the mountain landscape, 2, my father the impossible idealist, and 3, the upbringing of a closely knit family.

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382 Anonymous, Late Qing Dynasty (c. late 19th–early 20th century), Hanging scroll, colour on silk, ‘Portrait of Emperor Guangxu in Court Attire’, Civil and Municipal Affairs Bureau of Macao S.A.R.
384 MO, 21.
385 Ibid, 8.
Mountains were first on Lin’s list of foundational influences. His birth place, the hamlet of Banzai, was often called ‘Eastern Lake’ because of the amount of water from the drainage off surrounding mountains. Looking at a relief map of the area surrounding Banzai (below) it is easy to see how this name came about.

Retreating to the mountains, or places by water, became an predictable response for Lin. It was a physical preservation technique throughout his life and in his writing, whenever he was confronted by threats to his life or those of his wife and children. Lin’s home in Banzai was on a bank of the Huashan River surrounded by the southern mountains of Fujian. The river today in Banzai is impressive in its physical magnitude and peacefulness, with almost no watercraft in sight. It is difficult to fit the serene nature of the river today to the pictures conjured up by Lin’s childhood memory of the river in 1975, when people were dependent on the river for transport to the major cities of Zhangzhou and Amoy.

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386 Ibid, 9.

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The vegetable plot and the two inner-tyre tubes in the photo above are approximately 50 metres from the front door of the replica Lin family home in Banzai, rebuilt on the same site as the original. It is easy to see why Lin developed a relationship with both river and mountains, seen in the background, when his formative years were spent in such close proximity to both.

The journey from Banzai to Zhangzhou to visit grandparents and to Amoy (Xiamen and Gulangyu) for boarding school needed two different types of boats to suit the different water levels of rivers and sea. The journey from Banzai to Siokhe (Pinghe), a distance of six miles (9.66kms), was accomplished by skiff with the help of the boat crew. When the ‘shallow-bottomed skiff’ reached the rapids:

The boatman and his daughter, in navigating the rapids, would jump into the water, stripped bare to the legs and literally heave up the boat over their shoulders.

This recall of the journey from Memoirs of an Octogenarian varies from his earlier description in From Pagan to Christian, where Lin credits only ‘boatwomen’ with lifting the skiffs over the rapids. This shift may merely be the result of time altering memories, but it could also have been influenced by traditional Chinese values that would have a man at the centre of such a physical activity. Lin remained impressed with the strength of these Fujian Hakka boatwomen to the end of his days.

From Siokhe, a ‘regular houseboat called by [sic] Go-p’ang-chun’, conveyed Lin and his three brothers to Zhangzhou and beyond. Lin recalled these journeys and the scenery experienced with great nostalgia.

Here the view broadened, our boat meandered through undulating hills of unforgettable beauty. It was unlike the bare landscape of North China, but full of green vegetation, orchards, men and cattle on the fields, sprinkles of leechi and dragon-eye trees and pomeloes, and the heavy of [sic] umbrage of banyans giving pleasant shelter for people, while at [sic] winter, reds dot the hills in a riot of color, when the oranges were in bloom.

Not only were the different types of boats referred to in his autobiographic texts—*From Pagan to Christian* and *Memoirs of an Octogenarian*—but his passion for the mountain scenery of his childhood, as well as scenery viewed on the boat trips of his boyhood, was central to his novel *Juniper Loa*. The theme of the southern Fujian mountains and rivers as psychological solace was life-long for Lin, as was his retreat from violence from warlords and wars. Mountains and rivers were his dominant themes.

### 3.3.2 Educational Cultural Space: Amoy—Xiamen and Gulangyu

At the end of the first Sino-Japanese war (1894–1895), when China was defeated and the Treaty of Maguan was signed, Lin’s home province of Fujian was vulnerable to foreign trade infiltration through its major ports: Amoy, now Xiamen City, which includes the island of Gulangyu; and Zhangzhou City, along with their close proximity to Taiwan and Guangzhou (Canton) for smuggling. However, perhaps the greatest vulnerability for Fujian lay in the nature of its people.

Philip Pitcher suggested that the meaning of Fujian, ‘established happiness’, is reflected in the general friendliness of the people towards strangers. He based this on the observation that only four political events in between 1850 and 1900 motivated the people of Fujian to oppose strangers: ‘The Taiping Rebellion (1850–1864); the War with France (1884); the War with Japan (1894); and the Boxer Movement (1900).’ None of these specifically influenced the Lin family, nestled in their rural village of Banzai, surrounded by mountains and 60 miles upriver from the nearest seaport of Xiamen. However, Lin was influenced by the international

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396 *MO*, 9–10.
397 Ibid.
398 Ibid, 9, 10,11.
399 *Lin, Juniper Loa*, 95–98.
401 Ibid.
environment that he encountered on the island of Gulangyu in his boarding school days. The physical and cultural environment is only one factor affecting foundational beliefs. People have great influence on a child’s development. The historical/political background in which Lin was educated stamped their mark on his psyche, just as his family and missionaries did.

3.4 Familial Effect

Immediate family, involved in the early childhood education of individuals, is usually the most quintessential influence on the development of an individual’s character and basic beliefs; in this, Lin is no different. Although he states that he was one of six boys, and implies that they were educated equally, Lin also writes that: ‘My parents sent me to Kulangsu with my three brothers away from my mother.’ What happened to the other two brothers is not mentioned, although his younger brother is mentioned during college days. His father, Zhizheng, was a Presbyterian minister and local teacher. Both of Lin’s parents raised him with a reverence for Christianity and respect for Western culture. His father upheld the English language as a medium for accessing both these ideals.402

The Banzai Lins were a close-knit family, partly because of their father’s vocation and partly because of their particular familial circumstances. Christian communities in small, rural villages were in the minority, left out of local celebrations. They were isolated from the rest of the community because Christians did not believe in folklore and consequently could not take part in activities and feast days celebrating local and national Chinese gods, ghosts and myths.403 Lin expressed his ire at this deprivation of his cultural heritage when education and location in adulthood finally opened the door to his Chinese heritage.404 Lin’s parents succeeded in giving all of their children primary and secondary education. However, due to the cost of tuition and boarding in major cities (in this case Shanghai) only the boys received a tertiary education.405 This privileged educational experience created a burden of responsibility for Lin that weighed heavily on him throughout his life.

403 MO, 34–35.
404 PC, 36–38.
405 MO, 9.
3.4.1 Lin Zhizheng

According to Lin, his father Zhizheng, was born and raised a Christian on his family’s farm in Wulisha Cun, Tianbao Zhen, Xiangcheng Qu, Zhangzhou Shi. His father was ‘unconventional’, ‘a pioneer progressive’ and ‘an incorrigible optimist, keen, imaginative, humorous’ and ‘eternally restless’.\footnote{PC, 21–22. \( \text{MO, 12.} \)} This might well describe Lin in later life. After Zhizheng’s father was forcibly conscripted into the army, one of his siblings, a boy, was adopted by a wealthy, childless couple called ‘Liu’, who lived on Gulangyu.\footnote{Fieldwork research, by author Sept. 2008, including grave-stones, Lin farm, Tianbao Zhen.} Zhizheng maintained contact with his brother: ultimately Lin and his brothers reaped the reward from this relationship when they were nurtured by this uncle’s family on Gulangyu while on school breaks.\footnote{\textit{MO}, 49.} Zhizheng was a farmer until he entered a seminary at 24 years-of-age to study for the Christian ministry. When he returned home he continued to practice Christianity as a pastor for the Presbyterian Church. Zhizheng’s mentor, Reverend W. L. Warnshuis, helped him subscribe to a magazine called \textit{Christian Intelligence}. This kept Zhizheng informed of world events, which he shared with his children.\footnote{Ibid.} Reading about the scientific research conducted at prestigious Western universities, Zhizheng dreamt that one of his sons would one day attend just such a university.\footnote{\textit{MO}, 15.} Aspiring to Guangxu’s Western modernisation goals through education triggered Zhizheng to sell his paternal home and then borrow from friends and past pupils to support this ambition for his sons.\footnote{Ibid.} Calling in favours was a custom that Lin adopted throughout his life. When the need arose, he asked relatives and friends for loans and prided himself in repaying these. It became a pattern for Lin to use when confronted by lack of capital.

Zhizheng valued the Chinese classical texts and transmitted some Confucian values when tutoring his children.\footnote{Bieler, ‘Lin Yutang 1895–1976’.} His command of poetry and knowledge of Chinese classics impressed his children and modelled a script, a love of language, for Lin in particular.\footnote{Ibid.} He gave them a disciplined respect for the printed word, ‘poetry, the classics … and some of the usual lessons in couplet-making.’\footnote{\textit{MO}, 15.} Zhizheng ‘dreamed of the University of Oxford and Berlin’ for his sons, because he believed that Western science was the way of the world’s future. He wanted
access to Western education for his sons: such was the thinking of his time and place that sons were the key to familial fortunes, while daughters produced the next generation. Even after his children had started their formal education at school, Zhizheng tutored them daily during the long summer vacation, reinforcing the importance of education.\textsuperscript{415} Zhizheng asked a friend (one of his past pupils) for the money necessary to send Lin to college, such was his desperation to give him a tertiary education.\textsuperscript{416} Lin’s siblings became a ‘family of incorrigible dreamers’ under their father’s tutorage.\textsuperscript{417}

In Lin’s memory, his father was strict as a parent, kind as a husband and beloved by his Christian congregation.\textsuperscript{418} He had the knack of delivering a serious message with humour.\textsuperscript{419} With this image in his mind, Lin could be content with his father as a role model for the person that he became. Lin was living in Germany at the time of his father’s death.\textsuperscript{420} Unable to attend his father’s funeral, Lin had already shown filial respect by fulfilling his father’s ambition of having a son attend a major European university. Unsurprisingly, the Christian religion of Lin’s childhood was an enduring legacy from his father, although not all of Zhizheng’s childhood memories were positive. The story of Zhizheng being abused by a preacher’s wife, making him carry an unnecessary and injuring load six miles fortnightly when thirteen years old, leaving him with permanent scars, did nothing to endear Lin to clergymen.\textsuperscript{421} He mentioned this story in his memoirs, so perhaps this was the impetus that developed into Lin’s full-blown challenge to Christian dogma in his youth.\textsuperscript{422} His mother converted to Christianity, so he did have non-Christian maternal grandparents.

\textbf{3.4.2 Yang Shunming}

Lin’s mother Shunming modelled a conservative image burdened not only with caring for her husband and eight children, but also with the duties of a minister’s wife: gentle, humble and providing Christian hospitality to all. Lin recalled that his mother welcomed visitors and cared for their needs in the way expected of a Christian pastor’s wife. This was despite being born into a non-Christian family, and having her feet bound as a child.\textsuperscript{423} Although marrying

\textsuperscript{415}Ibid, 15–16.
\textsuperscript{416} PC, 27.
\textsuperscript{417} Ibid, 24.
\textsuperscript{418} Ibid, 12–14.
\textsuperscript{419} MO, 13.
\textsuperscript{420} Ibid, 39.
\textsuperscript{421} PC, 17.
\textsuperscript{422} MO, 13–14.
\textsuperscript{423} Ibid, 23.
Zhizheng meant that her feet were released from bondage, the physical damage was already done. Caring for her husband and children, household duties and pastoral support caused Shunming considerable pain, but she gave her children unconditional love. By the time Lin was ‘ten or twelve’ his sisters were old enough to take over the heavier household duties, allowing her to rest more. In adulthood, Lin wrote against foot-binding. He deemed the introduction of foot-binding to his prefecture by a Zhangzhou magistrate Chu Shi in the twelfth century as a failure; ‘the bound feet of the women were neither small nor shapely’ as Chu had claimed the practice would make them.

Lin wrote that his mother was ‘a simple soul’, who ‘married late’ and could read the Bible only in her native dialect. Shunming read only in peoh-ōe-jī, a version of Min Nan, making it difficult for her to interact intellectually with her precocious son, Holok. In and around Zhangzhou, the local dialect of Min Nan is still spoken as it was a century ago. This no doubt affected Lin’s passion for a colloquial style of writing, using a language common to readers, rather than following traditional, classical Chinese language and style. Shunming’s significant educational limitations contributed to Lin’s passion for writing in the vernacular. As a writer, Lin advocated the use of ‘baihua’ writing for his Chinese essays. Baihua, a ‘semiclassical vernacular’ style of writing, is more formal than his mother’s local vernacular, but it is reasonable to suppose that his early childhood (with his mother confined to the reading in peoh-ōe-jī) affected his desire to write for a wider audience than just those formally educated in Mandarin. His use of baihua gave Lin recognition as a major subscriber to modern Chinese writing; in this way, Shunming did affect her son’s vocation. Lin’s deep and abiding respect for his mother, and his sense of loss at learning so little of his Chinese written and oral heritage during his early childhood, may well have helped form his passion for Chinese vernacular writing, even more than literary tastes of the time. She also represented a lack of sophistication that made her the recipient of hoaxes perpetrated by her brood, but she took these in good humour. Shunming represented two archetypes for Lin: she was the model of an unconditional wife and mother, but she was a reminder of the hardships endured.

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424 MO, 14–15.
425 PC, 23.
426 Ibid, 14.
427 Wikipedia, ‘POJ’, accessed 20 June 2008, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pe%CC%8Dh-%C5%8De-j%C4%AB ‘Peoh-ōe-jī (POJ) is orthography in the Latin alphabet created and introduced to Fujian and Taiwan by Presbyterian missionaries in the 19th century.’
428 Min Nan dialect is also common to Taiwan because many of the mid-twentieth century settlers were from the Hakka Chinese of Fujian Province.
429 Qian (ed.), Selected Bilingual Essays of Lin Yutang, Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, xxii, xxiii, 2010
by Chinese women, including a lack of higher education. As mother and homemaker she influenced Lin in more subtle ways, too.

Shunming hung a picture of a young Western girl gathering eggs into a basket in her parlour. Lin believed this came from an American magazine, such as *The Saturday Evening Post*, in which his mother used to roll up her sewing.\footnote{Ibid, 20.} This early connection with American magazines may be why he showed no disdain in writing for a popular audience in American magazines, such as *Harper’s Magazine*, *Reader’s Digest*, *TIME Magazine*, *The Atlantic*, *Saturday Review*, *Life* and *Argosy*. Indeed, writing for the popular press in America kept Lin and his family in funds, as well as in the public eye during their time in that country. Lin was certainly loved by his mother, who always seemed to sense when he was upset and comforted him.\footnote{MO, 14, 37.} Shunming provided Lin with unconditional, maternal and emotional support by allowing him to fondle her breasts until he was ten and sleeping in his bed, at his request, on the night before he married.\footnote{Ibid, 37.} Lin obviously loved his mother, but she neither inspired him to academic heights, as his father did, nor stimulated his intellectual skills, as his siblings did.

The impact of maternal modelling is intricately woven with the character of the child. From a psychosocial perspective, Erikson’s three first stages of childhood ‘hope’, where ‘trust versus mistrust’; ‘will’, where ‘shame versus doubt’ and ‘purpose’, where ‘initiative versus guilt’ all lie in the formative time that Lin spent with his mother, birth to eight years.\footnote{Studer, Jeannine R., 2007, ‘Erik Erikson’s Psychosocial Stages Applied to Supervision’, *Guidance & Counseling*, Vol. 21, No. 3.} Language and linguistics with access for all remained a primary aim of Lin throughout his career. After marriage, Shunming handed her maternal nurturing of Lin over to his wife.

### 3.4.3 Siblings

Lin’s siblings feature firmly in his autobiographical memory as supporters of his earliest endeavours in writing, study and play.\footnote{Ibid, 16.} Lin showed no sign of false modesty proclaiming himself ‘an adorable child’, but concedes that he was ‘full of mischief’.\footnote{Ibid, 19.} According to Lin, his father found it difficult to show other than kindness when Lin was naughty.\footnote{Ibid, 18.} Certainly he was an appealing child, as his memories were of being indulged rather than disciplined.\footnote{Ibid.}
The influence of Christianity on Lin and his siblings is summed up in his assertion that they never quarrelled because they were raised to the principles of ‘Christian piety and harmony’. Although they teased each other, the Christian strictures of patience, tolerance, forgiveness and peace tempered their emotions, forming for Lin similar behavioural responses in later life.

Taken in 1903, the photograph above shows Lin’s parents, an amah (nanny/maid), Lin wearing a Tam O’Shanter knitted by Meigong and all but his three older brothers, possibly away at boarding school.

There was a clear demarcation of tasks along gender lines in the Lin household: boys filled the kitchen water-jar and watered the vegetable garden from a well, while the girls helped with cooking and washing. All the siblings could attend the lessons held by their father during the summer vacations from school, however, Lin’s second sister, Meigong, who

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440 Lin, From Pagan to Christian, 22.
441 Taiyi Lin, Lin Yutang zhuany.
442 Ibid.
443 MO, 15–16.
craved a formal tertiary education, was not allowed the same access to this well-conducted tutoring as her brothers, because her primary role was to provide household help for their mother.\footnote{444} This took her away from lessons while the boys stayed on in class.

### 3.4.4 Meigong

Meigong was Lin’s sister, friend and mentor during his formative years. Her impact on his later life was powerful and long-lasting:

My second sister had vivacious eyes, and a set of very even white teeth. To her fellow students she was regarded a beauty, but this was not what I am going to tell about. She was brilliant in her studies and should be going to a college. But my father had other sons to support; for a son. Yes, but for a girl, no.\footnote{445}

From this, we gain a picture of Meigong from Lin’s perspective: attractive, graceful and intelligent. Although she was only a few years older than Lin, he describes her as his ‘mentor and companion’, who virtually raised him and who had a thirst for knowledge.\footnote{446} When their father tutored the children in their summer school holidays Meigong attended whenever she could. Her secondary education at the Middle School for Women in Siokhe was highly successful, but after graduation Meigong had to return to Banzai to help her mother in household duties and await an offer of marriage.\footnote{447}

Lin recalled that while her brothers spent time—from the first bell ring in the morning until the evening shadows fell in summer studies with their father—Meigong was frustrated by household duties interrupting her learning routine. At eleven in the morning she bemoaned having to leave her studies to ‘do the washing’, and in late afternoon to ‘take in the laundry’.\footnote{448} Being a girl, Meigong’s priorities were set as housework first and lessons second. Her craving for knowledge was important to Lin because she acted as both sister-friend and mother-mentor for him throughout his formative years – from infancy to his sixteenth year.\footnote{449}

The distance between these two siblings is unclear: in Memoirs of an Octogenarian Lin claims that Meigong was ‘only four years older’, but then states on the next page that Meigong was 22 years old when she married and he was sixteen, making them six years apart.\footnote{450} This may be miscalculation or a result of taking Meigong’s age in Western age

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\footnote{444}{Ibid.}
\footnote{445}{Ibid, 18.}
\footnote{446}{Ibid, 16.}
\footnote{447}{De Jong, The Reformed Church in China, 1842–1951, 121.}
\footnote{448}{MO, 13–14.}
\footnote{449}{Ibid, 18.}
\footnote{450}{Ibid, 18–19.}
calculation and his own in Eastern age calculation. Whatever the case, the bond between them was writ large in developing Lin’s life goals.

Lin recalled Meigong, her physical and emotional closeness to him, with fondness and regret: fondness for the games they played and regret for his childhood pranks. This shows the high esteem in which he held this sister. Lin admits that he had ‘tantrums’ and was ‘very naughty’, although he tended to recall these as hallmarks of a precocious intellect, rather than signs of poor character.  

I remember that my second sister loved me (all Freudians, get out!) because I was a brilliant but rather erratic and rather mischievous boy! … I remember her telling me when I was older that as a child I was very naughty, and that in one of my tantrums, after a quarrel with her, I threw myself into a muddy hole in the back yard and wallowed there like a hog, to revenge myself on her, on getting up said, “Now, there, you have to wash it!” I must have looked terribly dirty and adorable at that moment.

Perceiving his poor behavioural choices as positive outcomes became a defence mechanism for Lin. For example, he claimed that his truant behaviour at St John’s and his subsequent academic successes—three medals and a cup in his sophomore year—proved that his attendance was unnecessary. He foresaw judgement about claiming that his sister loved him, so he denounced Freud, admitting in later writing that he was not an advocate of that neurologist’s theories.

Lin’s admonition to Freud is a timely reminder that love comes in many forms: maternal, paternal, storge, phileo, erotic and agape to name the most commonly used terms. He felt maternal love from his mother in the form of nurturing and caring. He felt paternal love from his father in his provision of a home, food and shelter, but also from his teaching by example, formal tuition and spiritual guidance. Lin’s love for his parents was agape, an unconditional, respectful and obedient love expressed through filial piety, a highly respected Confucian value. He received storge love, a fondness through close association, from at least one teacher, and the women of his uncle’s home on Gulangyu. Storge love from and towards his siblings was the love he felt in abundance from his sister, Meigong. Yet, even as he expressed her love for him, Lin credited this to his intellect and precocity, rather than a deep sibling or spiritual bond. This lack of humility regarding ability and potential from early childhood is common in precocious children, but Lin’s self-confidence falls short of arrogance. Phileo, the
love of friendship, and eros, romantic love I shall leave until later; they encompass his adult peer support and romantic attachments.

Lin described Meigong’s hunger to continue the secondary education in which she had fared so well by writing that at home she read works by Sir Walter Scott, Charles Dickens, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and Rider Haggard, translated into Chinese by a Fujian scholar, Lin Shu (1852–1924). Lin remembered Meigong as a beautiful woman who ‘had an expression of intelligent delicacy like Deborah Kerr’. In the picture below, taken when Kerr starred in a film wearing a Chinese style garment, we can see the posture and delicacy that Lin saw in Meigong when he likened her to the American actress.

![Figure 3.7: Deborah Kerr](image1) ![Figure 3.8: Meigong](image2)

Meigong’s resemblance to the film actress shocked Lin as he watched Kerr on screen in the company of his family. He pointed to Kerr’s screen image and told his daughters that their late aunt had looked like her and appealed to his wife, who had been at school with Meigong, for confirmation and she readily agreed. It was not only Meigong’s deportment or even her nurturing relationship towards her little brother that made her so memorable to Lin. It was Meigong’s passion for learning, her passionate desire to further her education that planted a strong goal in his impressionable, young mind. Chinese women had less opportunities in life

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459 Anor Lin, Lin Yutang zhuan.
460 PC, 26.
than Chinese men. Through his deep attachment to Meigong, Lin suffered her loss of education entitlement vicariously: it created a strong sense of loss in him.

Lin heard Meigong pleading with their father to allow her to attend the Hua Nan Women’s College in Fuzhou and heard his reply that their family could not afford a tertiary education for a daughter. A scholarship was available to cover her fees, but the ‘fifty or 60 Chinese dollars a year’ needed for travelling expenses and pocket money was just not possible, so Meigong taught in the local school instead. She rejected offers of marriage, until the age of 22 years, when she finally gave up all hope of extending her studies, gave in to her mother’s entreaties and married her ‘long-standing suitor’. Although Meigong gave up on her own higher education ambitions, she saw a chance to achieve her goal through the young brother she had mentored and nurtured from an early age.

Lin embarked on his journey to Shanghai to attend St John’s College, after attending Meigong’s wedding, where she slipped her younger brother 40 cents from her wedding money. This was first mentioned in Lin’s writing in 1959:

“He-lok, you have a chance to go to college. Your sister, being a girl, can’t. Do not abuse your opportunity. Make up your mind to be a good man, a useful man, and a famous man.” That was all part of the idealistic mould of the family.

Meigong’s final plea to Lin was to not waste the opportunity offered to him in gaining a tertiary education and her younger brother did not forget this. This entreaty by Meigong had far-reaching consequences. Its enduring influence on Lin is confirmed when in his 1973 written memoirs, he recalled this edict with a different last line, ‘That is your sister’s wish for you’, adding the rider, ‘It was part of my father’s enthusiasm for college education.’

The underlying message remains the same: Meigong wanted Lin, who she had helped to raise, to fulfil her ambition and life goals. She was trapped, by both her gender and her family’s genteel poverty, into a life of marriage and domestic service. Meigong’s death from ‘bubonic plague’ two years after Lin started at St John’s College, when she was eight months pregnant,
amplified the impact of her stricture to Lin. It enhanced his guilt about having opportunity for higher education when his sister did not. Lin reminisced:

Knowing her desire so well, I felt the full force of these simple words. It made me guilty about the whole thing. They burned into my heart with the oppressive weight of a great load, so that I had the feeling I was going to college in her place.  

The evidence that this particular incident had a powerful effect on Lin lies in his memoirs, and also in the recalling of his religious journey in From Pagan to Christian, published in his sixty-fifth year. In hindsight, Lin explained the significance of Meigong’s final words to him: ‘I tell you these things because they have so much to do with the influences that shape a man’s moral being.’ The most important part of this statement is that the incidents are significant emotional events, because for Lin they ‘shape a man’s moral being’. This disclosure verifies Meigong’s entreaty to Lin as the impetus to achieve success in his life. In the last words that he wrote, he remembered and cited her words as his motivation for seeking fame and doing so in a way that was honourable. The biblical edict—‘Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it’—accounts for Lin’s motivation to seek higher degrees in America and Europe, but Meigong’s final edict to him was what haunted him and shaped his goals throughout his life.

Lin’s actions in his youth did not display overconfidence: he sought advice from both of his sisters when confronted with major decisions. After Meigong’s premature death, Lin looked to his surviving sister for advice, even as an adult. For Lin, his first sister’s advice that Hong, whom she knew from schooldays, would make a good wife, was key to his acceptance of the match. This established an underlying theme in Lin’s life: he established a motif of women playing a major role in the choices he made throughout his life. However, his family members were not the only women helping to mould his character during his formative years: one particular friend featured in Lin’s memoirs.

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468 Ibid.  
469 PC, 28.  
471 MO, 36.  
472 Ibid.
3.5 Women and the Child Lin

3.5.1 Childhood Sweetheart

According to Lin, his first love was Juniper Loa, a childhood friend who shared his love of nature. The writing of Juniper Loa, close to his seventieth year, offered Lin the opportunity to experience unachieved goals vicariously through his narrator Silok. This may have offered closure of unresolved issues. Lin claimed that his novel Juniper Loa was ‘autobiographical’; however, the plot hardly follows the reality of Lin’s life journey. The narrative is more wishful thinking, a record of a youthful fantasy woven around Juniper Loa, his childhood friend. There was a girl of that name in Banzai and she was a playmate in Lin’s childhood and she had a blind grandfather to care for and eventually married a local man. She was the goddaughter of his mother. These details are all fact. That both Lin and his character Silok believed in the nurturing qualities of mountains, as both spent their early childhood in mountainous regions, is also fact.

In Juniper Loa, Lin presented the title’s namesake as the generous partner of the narrator in his first sexual encounter and the mother of his illegitimate son. In his Memoirs in 1975, he recalls his playmate:

We were fond of each other, and she was capable of unselfish love, giving and asking for nothing in return, but we were separated by circumstances. Eventually I was going to Peking, and she was married to a local merchant of Poa-ah.

Perhaps the child was wishful thinking on Lin’s part, because in From Pagan to Christian, while teaching at Qinghua University in Beijing, he categorically states that he was a virgin until his wedding night:

While some of my colleagues went whoring on Sundays, I conducted a Sunday school in Qinghua, which was a non-Christian college. A fellow professor called me a virgin, which I was till my marriage.

The reality of Lin’s relationship with his playmate seems more a storge or philos than eros love. That Lin had an understanding of marriage with Juniper Loa, or that she bore his love-

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473 MO, 12.
475 Lin, Juniper Loa.
476 MO, 34–35.
477 Lin, Juniper Loa, 95–98.
478 MO, 35.
479 PC, 42.
child, a son, appears to be authorial licence created through writing two things that he failed to achieve in life: a sexual relationship with his youthful love Jin, and a son. 480

The sexual intercourse scene is what Lin desired in his youth in his courting days with Jin, manifesting itself in the novel’s character Juniper Loa:

Then she gave herself to him entirely. Soon they fell asleep in each other’s arms.
Later he said to her, “I’m sorry I did this to you.”
She replied, “Do not feel sorry. I would rather lose my virginity to you than to anyone else. This is what I do because I love you, that you may remember me always.” 481

While the passage from the novel is explicit and fantasy, the label of autobiography carries an implicit message of a sexual relationship which is not substantiated by Lin’s autobiographical writing elsewhere. This is further borne out by his fear of the intimacy of marriage, displayed by his pre-wedding anxieties:

I must tell about the night before my wedding. I asked my mother to sleep with me. We were so close together. It was to be the last night I could sleep with her. I had the habit of playing with her breasts until I was ten. It was that inexpressible longing to be by her side. I was still a virgin. 482

Lin appears to have no embarrassment in disclosing that he ‘played with her [his mothers’] breasts’ until almost puberty or, that he slept in his mother’s bed at the age of 24; however, he does harbour misgivings about how his ‘love’ for his sister might be viewed by Freudians. 483 Considering his lack of embarrassment over such a personal disclosure, it is likely that Lin called Juniper Loa ‘autobiographical’ to draw attention to his emotional involvement with the narrative.

If Juniper Loa was ‘autobiographical’, why did Lin never mention that he had a son, as the character Siloh had with Juniper Loa in his novel, in his final memoirs? 484 Although Juniper Loa does not provide entirely empirical biographical knowledge, it does give us insight into the values from his youth that may otherwise not have been recorded. For example, Lin held strong views on the importance of love relationships—storge, phileo, erotic, and agape—that tend to come from close-knit and nurturing early childhoods, yet he let his imagination reign when he devoted a book to this childhood memory, by mingling fact with fiction to express the fulfilment of his lost opportunities in youth. Lin’s childhood friend Juniper Loa, one may venture to claim, became his first sexual partner in his book as she never had in real life.

480 Lin, Juniper Loa, 31, 119, 251.
481 Ibid. 119.
482 PC, 42.
483 Ibid. 25.
484 Ibid.
What enables this book to be semi-autobiographical is that although Lin did not have a son by a woman in Banzai (neither did he return to her after a torrid affair with a Singaporean woman), these fictitious scenarios are built on Lin’s actual childhood in Banzai and his adventures with a friend called Juniper Loa. She lived in Banzai and there were family ties through her mother as the goddaughter of Lin’s mother Shunming. Lin portrays the Juniper Loa of his novel as taking up the wearing of a ‘cheong-sam’ and claims this as true also of his childhood. His childhood Juniper Loa was nick-named Olive. She is described as ‘tall and thin’ which mirrors Lin’s description of his childhood friend but also describes an American cartoon character, ‘Olive Oyl’, in vogue in America during the 1920s. Possibly Lin gave his childhood playmate this name in hindsight after exposure to the comic strip in America after arriving there in 1919. The sexual relationship and the resultant son are a ploy by Lin to reinvent his past exploits as a response to lost opportunities made from the safety of hindsight. It provides us with new insight into one of Lin’s motivations for writing: he used his skill as a writer to fulfil his dreams. On the other hand, models of feminine purity were very much a part of his childhood: apart from his nucleus childhood family and friends there were the cousins on Gulangyu.

### 3.5.2 Mannia and Mulan

Mannia and Mulan were women invited into the Gulangyu household of Dr Liu, Lin’s paternal uncle adopted in infancy. They were asked to take care of the Lin boys, like siblings, on weekends during the time they studied at the mission boarding schools. This experience became a familiar script for Lin as he grew up discerning models of behaviour among his childhood carers. Mannia was assigned to Lin: she became the Mannia of his most famous novel—*Moment in Peking*—while Mulan became the dutiful, scholarly hero. Mannia’s fiancé in the novel, Pingya, died just as her fiancé of the same name had in real life; in both cases, Mannia chose not to marry but remained single. To Lin, this virgin widow was ‘an ideal of ancient womanhood’, imprinted in his ‘early life history’. Lin re-created Mannia as a character true to her real life situation. She remained the ‘closest’ of his women characters in

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485 PC, 34.
486 Ibid.
487 Ibid.
488 Ibid, 35.
490 PC, 49
490 MO, 49.
Moment in Peking to his childhood ideal widow, contributing to a ‘history of reinforcement’ regarding women. Mannia held the highest sexual ideals of the Christian missionary woman, as well as the highest ideals of traditional Chinese women. In so doing, Mannia became a transcultural pattern for Lin to judge other women in his life, both real and fictional. Other women who shaped stereotypes for Lin were his missionary teachers on Gulangyu.

3.5.3 Missionaries and Temperance Women

The basic beliefs and behaviours practised by Lin—avoidance of drunkenness and fornication and teaching Sunday school—all speak for the behaviours that missionary women instilled in him in childhood. Missionary women, such as Mrs Warnshius, who represented Western women for Lin in his infancy; Susan Rankin Duryee Fahmy, a Dutch Reform church missionary teacher and Lin’s first teacher on Gulangyu; and Mrs Pitcher, conductor of the Gulangyu missionary ladies’ choir, made powerful impressions on Lin’s appreciation for Christian values and Western music. Warnshius, Fahmy and Pitcher are cited by Lin in his autobiographical writing, singling them out as important in his early life. They reinforced Lin’s model of virtuous Western women, as Mulan and Mannia provided regarding virtuous Chinese women.

Dr and Mrs Warnshius took up their positions in Xiamen in 1900, and they stayed at the Lin family home in Banzai, creating experiences of strange foods and habits in his childhood memories. One of these memories was of the distasteful smell of butter, with which Mrs Warnshius cooked, taking days to clear out of the house when the Warnshiuses left after one of their periodic visits. Lin considered his earliest experiences of the West were from the Christian teachings of his parents; his primary and secondary education at the hands of English missionaries; and a painting of a young Western girl on a wall of his childhood home. Lin credits Dr Warnshius’s influence on his father as important for the Lin family, because he introduced English literature in the form of Christian magazines, books and pamphlets; however, of even greater importance to the young Lin was his missionary teacher on Gulangyu: Susan Fahmy.
Fahmy taught Lin as a boy in the missionary school on Gulangyu Island. In 1905, the Reformed Church in America sent her to China as a missionary teacher, where she met Dr. Ahmed Fahmy, medical missionary of Zhangzhou, 24 years her senior. On May 3 of that same year they married.497 When her husband retired, Fahmy and her husband returned to the US to raise funds for medical missions in China. During his almost 30 years in America, Lin regularly visited this sterling lady, rating a mention in her obituary notice as one of her first pupils in China.498 Lin said of Fahmy: ‘Whenever I come near this old lady I stand in the presence of the true spirit of Christianity.’499 The life-long example of Christian values may well have influenced Lin’s return to the Christian faith in 1959, after 46 years as ‘a pagan’.500 His wife, as we shall see later, is credited with his return to Christianity, but Fahmy provided a powerful positive witness over an even longer period of time and she was by no means the only missionary lady to impress Lin as a child.

Mrs Pitcher, described by Lin as ‘a sweet English lady’, with her ‘choral soprano … missionary’ ladies’ rendition of ‘Sa-loh’ on Gulangyu, had a profound impact on the developing musical tastes of the young Lin.501 He expressed his fascination with Western music as the result of the ladies’ missionary choir having made ‘a great impression on my Chinese ears.’502 How important these women were in forming the values espoused and exhibited by Lin in adulthood can be drawn from his own yardstick for Christianity:

The sight of a Christian who actually practices Christian kindness and concern for individuals always tended to bring me closer to the Christian church. … There were missionaries in my boyhood days who cared nothing about Christian converts and who did not love them as individuals, as Jesus undoubtedly would, or as missionaries should. Now Chinese people are an intensely practical people. We size up missionaries and judge them, not by what they preach but by what they are, and classify them simply as ‘good men’ or ‘bad men’.503

The term ‘men’ here may be more generic than specific, because Lin wrote at a time before political correctness and non-gender specific language became the norm. He wrote of the Christian men of his childhood exhibiting negative qualities, such as the pastor whose demands on Lin’s father meant scarring his posture for life – yet it was the missionary’s wife who demanded this chore.504 Missionary women, on the other hand, are more often labelled

499 PC, 234.
501 MO, 25.
502 Ibid.
503 PC, 233.
504 MO, 11–12.
‘sweet’, with ‘humility’ and ‘gentleness’ by Lin, showing a distinct bias.\textsuperscript{505} This shows Lin’s early pattern-making differentiating between men and women.

Although some missionary women, according to Lin upheld these qualities there were others with less soothing natures that also had a profound effect on Lin as a boy. The temperance arm of the missionary women was a determined group indeed as the expressions on the faces of the women below indicate:

![Missionary Temperance Women](image)

Temperance women’s power lay in what Lin called the ‘real authority’ of women—the ‘traditional old throne the hearth’.\textsuperscript{507} Lin believed that women ruled in the home, making them powerful guardians of family and culture.\textsuperscript{508} He was mainly speaking of traditional Chinese women, but it is also testament to the effectiveness of the powerful influence these missionary ladies had on Lin’s behaviour during what is traditionally a rebellious phase of development – youth. Hu and other friends calling Lin ‘a puritan’ reinforced this idealism in his early adult life.\textsuperscript{509} Lin put his high moral standards down to his ‘Puritan education’.\textsuperscript{510} Lin blamed his love of Parisian nightclubs on his puritan streak, claiming that ‘No one can properly appreciate nude shows so well as a good Puritan.’\textsuperscript{511} Here Lin turned a harsh stricture into a positive experience. As we shall see later, puritan values affected Lin’s journey further afield than just attending Paris nightclubs: his anxiety about his wedding night; his reaction to a flirtatious landlady in Germany; and his attitude to alcohol drinking with his

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{505} PC, 234.
  \item \textsuperscript{507} IL, 177.
  \item \textsuperscript{508} MCMP, 137-142.
  \item \textsuperscript{509} Murray, ‘Lighting the Candle and Cursing the Darkness’.
  \item \textsuperscript{510} PC, 41, 42.
  \item \textsuperscript{511} PC, 42.
\end{itemize}
colleagues in Beijing. Women teachers and temperance ladies were not the only teachers to have an effect on Lin’s education, ultimate life choices and productivity.

3.6 Education
3.6.1 School Days: 1900–1910

From the start of his formal learning in his home village of Banzai in 1900, Lin affirmed that his parents and siblings were strong imprinters on his young and impressionable mind.\textsuperscript{512} For their early childhood education, Zhizheng sent his children to the local missionary school, the Christian Mingxin Primary School. Here Zhizheng taught, and in vacation periods he tutored his children at home. After they were ten years old, the boys were sent to the Christian missionary teachers for their secondary education on Gulangyu, and the girls to nearby Pinghe.\textsuperscript{513} Christian missionaries provided free primary schooling and the equivalent of secondary schooling in Xiamen, so Zhizheng started his campaign by sending his sons there. This meant separation from their mother when each boy reached ten years-of-age. For Lin, this parting meant both the pleasure of new experiences and the pain of leaving loving parents and siblings.

Following the tradition of his family, from 1904 to 1910 Lin, attended the American Yangyuan Missionary School (Xunyuan zhongxue) on Gulangyu.\textsuperscript{514} This island exposed him to a cultural ‘salad bowl’: trade and war had attracted a large contingent of Westerners to the island, making it a unique environment for transcultural learning that enhanced Lin’s opportunity to observe and later write essays and short stories on his experiences there. In Banzai and on Gulangyu, Lin was under the direction of American missionary teachers.\textsuperscript{515}

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Chinese modernizers – patriots, statesmen, entrepreneurs, and ambitious young students – eagerly absorbed the Western knowledge dispensed in increasing measure through missionary literature and schools.\textsuperscript{516}
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\textsuperscript{512} Wu, ‘Lin YuTang (1)’. Murray, Lighting the Candle and Cursing the Darkness: A Brief Biography of Lin Yutang, \url{http://www.g8ina.enta.net/lin.htm}
\textsuperscript{513} \textit{MO}, 9, 10, 15, 16.
\textsuperscript{514} Wu, ‘Lin Yutang (1)’.
\textsuperscript{516} \textit{MO}, 10.
\end{flushright}
Equally important is the missionary motivation for providing this free education. Lin’s principal, Philip Pitcher, deemed early childhood the best time to receive the message of Christianity, because the child’s mind is soft and pliable and ready to adopt new ideas.

It is the law of the human mind... that in its beginning it is soft like wax, susceptible to all kinds of impressions, joyous to receive new ideas, but as it grows it hardens and become like adamant, retaining what it has received, like the stone slabs in our museums retain the footprints of birds or animals that have walked across the beach ‘in old, old times.’

Pitcher was also concerned with the tempo of change in approaches to self-control among his Chinese elementary and middle school students. He found that ‘Chinese parents either do not possess the power, or having it, do not exercise the power of control over their children making teaching a tussle of wills between student and teacher. This may explain the anomalies that Lin found at the mission schools after he experienced a broader education system later in life.

After finishing secondary school studies, Lin attended St John’s College, Shanghai, for tertiary studies. All of Lin’s educational institutions, primary, secondary and St John’s College, specialised in the teaching of English, which steered him towards an appreciation of Western culture through proficiency in that language. Lin formed a firm foundation in English; however, for him this was at the expense of his knowledge of Chinese culture. It took time and attention away from learning the heritage of his mother-tongue—the tales, philosophy and folklore of China. This fractured cultural foundation caused Lin heartache, but it also generated outstanding creative products in the genres of cross-cultural and transcultural literature in his adult years.

3.6.2 St John’s College

The portrait below, taken just before Lin started at St John’s College, shows a rather serious youth without the natural good humour that became his trademark in America during his adult life. There are few photographs of Lin in China where he is smiling. An assumption from this observation is that the serious pose is culturally inscribed, just as the smile is for the photographs taken in many Western cultures.

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520 Ibid. 12, 27.
521 PC, 34.
Lin had little to smile about at St John’s because its library did not offer him the scholarly depth that he craved. Apart from reading and finding the academic side of life there no great challenge, Lin excelled at athletics, which was introduced to the curriculum of St John's University in 1890. He created records for the one mile run at St John’s, and in 1915 participated in the second Far Eastern Games held in Shanghai—a feat which failed to impress his father who wanted his son to concentrate on academic success. Lin also learnt to play tennis, football and baseball. Apart from this brief interlude with physical fitness, Lin does not mention any other physical activity along his life’s journey, perhaps as a consequence of his father’s lack of interest in this side of personal development. However, on the intellectual front, Lin asserted his right to educate himself at St John’s despite the institution surrounding him.

At St John’s, Lin read as widely as possible from a library of 5000 books, one third of which were theological. Reading widely was a theme for Lin that he reinforced at every possible opportunity. He described his thirst for knowledge as a manic zest:

My adolescent mind was now on a rampage, looking about for what it could find and devouring whatever was edible, like a squirrel in the park. Whatever it ate was absorbed and nourished. The thinking mind, once launched, voyaged upon an endless and sometimes tempestuous sea.

This reflection of his university days is accompanied by an anecdote about his foray into preaching. During his first year at St John’s, Zhizheng allowed Lin to compose and deliver a
sermon for Sunday service in Banzai. Zhizheng had often allowed his bright son to preach to his congregation during his teenage years, but was ill prepared for the result on this occasion. Lin chose the topic of ‘The Bible To Be Read as Literature’, where he proclaimed Jehovah ‘a tribal god’ evolving into ‘a monotheistic God of all peoples and all nations’, with no particular ‘chosen’ people.\textsuperscript{528} This sermon proved insightful later in life when Lin wrote in a preface to \textit{From Pagan to Christian}:

> There is so much about the religions of the world, and Christianity in particular, which has been hardened and encased and embalmed and which admits of no discussion. For, curiously, in this matter of religion, every individual likes to think that he has the monopoly of truth.\textsuperscript{529}

So Lin the youth set in place a view of religion that guided his research and reflection for almost half a century.

Lin developed an understanding of theism without completely discarding the basic beliefs of childhood. However, Zhizheng feared his son was heading down the path ‘of atheism’, for he had known a man who was good at English who made this exact decision.\textsuperscript{530} The pastor began to see a link between expertise in English and conversion to atheism.\textsuperscript{531} It was perhaps reading philosophy, Voltaire in particular, rather than English \textit{per se} that enticed Lin down that path.\textsuperscript{532} Although Lin publically renounced Christianity in the same year that paradoxically he kept teaching Sunday school.\textsuperscript{533} This must have caused his Sunday school students to ponder his motivation, but no doubt it appeased his father’s concerns. It shows the strength of early childhood imprinting on Lin’s behaviour.

It was at St John’s College that Lin changed his given name, Holok, to Yutang, meaning ‘elegant language’. This became a self-fulfilling prophecy.\textsuperscript{534} A teenager changing his or her name was unusual in Western culture during the early 1900s, but Lin’s name change barely rated a mention by Lin or his biographers, highlighting an act of cross-cultural difference. When Lin graduated from St John’s University he was invited to give the philosophical oration on behalf of the graduating class. This honour was usually given to the second-highest marks for the year, and may explain why Lin felt it necessary to share with his readers that he never had the top marks in his class; there was always some other student willing to study the

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{528} Ibid.
\bibitem{529} Ibid, 16.
\bibitem{530} Ibid, 30.
\bibitem{531} Ibid.
\bibitem{532} Ibid, 32.
\bibitem{533} Ibid, 44.
\bibitem{534} Liong, ‘Lin Yutang: Fujian’s Literary Giant’.
\end{thebibliography}
set texts to the exclusion of all other reading.\textsuperscript{535} The inference being that for Lin, reading widely on topics of interest to him was much more important than attending lectures. This theme became a regular script, and was particularly noticeable when he was directing the education of his daughters in France. Wu says that:

Although Lin YuTang knew some French from his previous stay with the YMCA, the Lin daughters were completely foreign to the language. Lin YuTang educated his daughters rigorously in Chinese at home, again urging them not to read for study, but to read for pleasure and personal enjoyment. A dictionary in hand was a necessary prerequisite for any reading, so they could learn any words they did not understand.\textsuperscript{536}

Lin claimed that his success in English at St John’s was due to the \textit{Pocket Oxford Dictionary}, which presented words in the context of a sentence.\textsuperscript{537} Lectures bored him and, according to Lin, he enjoyed fishing in the nearby Suzhou Creek instead of attending classes at St John’s yet he still:

… created a sensation at the graduating ceremony by going up to the platform four times in succession to receive all three medals and a cup as leader of my team in an oratory contest.\textsuperscript{538}

Lin advocated that the best education was attained by reading what one enjoyed rather than reading a set list of books as a curriculum.\textsuperscript{539} His belief stems from experience: although reading for enjoyment cannot be classified as essential to literacy, it is nonetheless an important component in understanding where Lin gained such deep philosophical insight and consequently such a widespread readership. Lin’s belief was a consequence of his youth where eclectic reading was motivated by a desire to learn, along with freedom of choice in the back-street bookshops of Beijing, and in the Widener Library at Harvard. It proved beneficial to Lin, contributing to a history that established a life-long theme for him. His depth of reading classical and modern literature in both Chinese and Western traditions, gained through self-interest and opportunity, provided Lin with the background for success in writing cross-cultural and transcultural texts that appealed to global audiences.

\textsuperscript{535} \textit{MO}, 30.
\textsuperscript{536} Wu, ‘Lin YuTang (2)’.
\textsuperscript{537} \textit{MO}, 27.
\textsuperscript{538} Wu, ‘Lin YuTang (2)’
\textit{MO}, 30.
\textsuperscript{539} Ibid, 30.
3.7 Scholarship

Even in his early childhood, Lin was acknowledged as a debater, writer and poet by his siblings.\textsuperscript{540} Lin accepted these labels and built a career on them. Asked what he would do as an adult, Lin answered: ‘(1) be a teacher of English, (2) a teacher of physics, and (3) to open a shop for arguing.’\textsuperscript{541} His first ‘desire for authorship was a textbook’, a one page poem that, when discovered by Meigong and made known to her siblings, made Lin the subject of teasing.

\begin{center}
\textbf{Figure 3.11: Childhood Poem}\textsuperscript{542}
\end{center}

Christianity may be the basis of Lin’s poem—gentleness overcomes strength—but this is also a basic tenet of Taoism. In later life, Lin found he could accommodate this in his Christian values.\textsuperscript{543}

Other attempts by Lin at authorship included a short story, ‘A Bee Seeking Honey’ and a retort to his teacher’s criticism of his literary composition:

\begin{quote}
My teacher wrote down the remark: ‘It is like a big snake crossing a narrow footpath’, showing my awkwardness in expressing my ideas. I wrote in reply ‘it was like a small earthworm crossing a great desert’, and I am still proud of the couplet.\textsuperscript{544}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{540} MO, 16, 17, 24.
\textsuperscript{541} Ibid, 24.
\textsuperscript{542} Ibid, 16–17.
\textsuperscript{543} Bible (KJV)–Job 40: 12; Psalm 25:9; Proverbs 18:12.
Fish should be left in the deep pool,
And sharp weapons of the state should be left
Where none can see them.’
\textsuperscript{544} Ibid, 17.
The fact that Lin remained proud of these early efforts all his life, despite the teasing of his siblings and his teacher’s lack of positive reinforcement, shows an unusual consistency of confidence in his own creative ability. His siblings teased him, but this was tempered by store and admiration of their brother that strengthened his self-esteem rather than weakened it. He never lost confidence in his ability to achieve his life goals as an author. Certainly, one must consider Lin’s siblings and teachers and their attitudes to him during these early childhood years as establishing this foundational belief in his creative ability.

3.8 Childhood and Invention

Invention was part of Lin’s repertoire from early childhood. His first record of an invention was a healing recipe:

I also played at inventing a Chinese powder for curing wounds, named ‘Good Four Powers’. My childish fancy led me to believe seriously in its efficacy. This became also a joke with my sisters.\(^{545}\)

It is important that Lin remembered that this recipe gained attention from his sisters in his memoirs.\(^{546}\) Although their remarks are described as ‘a joke’, usually interpreted as negative reinforcement, all attention has a consequence. Since this childhood incident did not deter Lin from continuing to invent devices, he probably interpreted their teasing as positive reinforcement. This supports the notion that one of Lin’s psychological strategies of coping with negativity was to interpret it in its most favourable light. As a child Lin also admired the tools that a missionary brought to his childhood home:

During the building of the church, Dr Warnhuis had also sent us a set of Western carpenter’s tools, including a rotating drill, and I marvelled greatly at them and thought they were extremely well made.\(^{547}\)

This possibly encouraged Lin to try his hand at inventing useful devices. For third millennium Banzai residents, concrete evidence of Lin’s inventiveness at an early age is a plumbing device. They credit Lin with inventing a chute for delivering water from the outside courtyard of his family home, along a box-shaped pipe to the inside, without carting it by bucket.\(^{548}\) Lin loathed his childhood duty of drawing water daily for kitchen needs and described it thus:

The trick of letting a bucket into the well and letting it incline slowly when it reached the bottom was soon acquired; the well was provided with a curb, and though the full bucket might be heavy, I soon

\(^{545}\) MO, 17.
\(^{546}\) Ibid.
\(^{547}\) PC, 23.
\(^{548}\) Curator, Lin Yutang Museum, personal communication, 17 September 2008, Banzai, Fujian, China.
enjoyed it, except the water-jar which was all water for use in the kitchen held about twelve buckets and I soon delegated it to my second sister.549

Perhaps this was the impetus for Lin’s first plumbing device. Fortunately, an exact reproduction of Lin’s childhood home has been built on the site of his original home in Banzai and it features a working model of the device.

![Figure 3.12: Well and Water Chute (outside) 2008](image1)

![Figure 3.13: Chute to Butler’s Sink (inside) 2008](image2)

Whether it is fact or fancy that Lin invented this plumbing, it demonstrates that Banzai locals today are proud of his creative produce.

Lin’s early inventions set the scene for inventing machines to improve the everyday lives of people, thus proving he was useful. Lin applied the maxim, ‘What can be the end of human life except the enjoyment of it?’ to inventing machines that take the tedium out of daily life.552 These childhood forays into invention set the precedent for a sequence of inventions useful to humankind: an automatic toothbrush that dispenses toothpaste as one brushes; an automatic bridge playing machine; an automatic door lock; an English typing keyboard; and his pièce de résistance invention: a Chinese type writer.553

### 3.9 Chapter Summary

Early childhood experiences created behavioural patterns based on foundational beliefs, desires and goals for the young Lin. Both temporal and spatial factors affected the way in

549 MO, 15.
550 Author’s photograph: Bottom left is the rectangular pipeline leading from the well into the kitchen eliminating the need to carry buckets of water to the end of the courtyard, through the door (top left) and back down the living area to the kitchen sink.
551 Author’s photograph: The square pipe conveys water into the kitchen from the well in the courtyard.
552 IL, 134.
Appendices D (1) and (2), 236, 237.
which Lin grew, and strengthened his theories of life through beliefs. Primary care givers such as parents and siblings, in particular Meigong; along with missionaries and a childhood playmate affected Lin’s developing beliefs.

Historical influences such as the views of Emperor Guangxu on modernising China using Western scientific methodology affected Lin’s father, and causally his children as he home-tutored them. Basic beliefs were seeded in Lin’s psyche in his formative years by his father, who upheld Emperor Guangxu’s ideas of Western modernisation. Tensions between Zhizheng’s wish to embrace Western learning while living in rural China were reconciled in Emperor Guangxu’s modernisation goals. Major political upheavals in China were peripheral to Lin’s childhood village of Banzai but, in a holistic sense, created the canvas on which he wrote in later life.

No political events directly impacted on the Lin family; however, the resultant shift in Chinese political power and cultural norms, such as the backlash against European infiltrators, Japanese invasions, and widespread opium use encouraged by Western traders, generated the climate in which he was nurtured and educated. Lin, raised in a Christian home visited by Western missionaries and educated at Western missionary schools in an international treaty port, was fortunate not to have suffered familial loss through military action or cultural backlash during childhood.

For Lin, the natural environment of his home in Banzai, on the bank of a large river surrounded by mountains, set a pattern of trust in nature as a healing theme. This theme was reinforced by school days on Gulangyu, a hilly island surrounded by sea, and in Shanghai by fishing in a river near St John’s College, where he escaped from structured learning to reflect by a watercourse. Built artificial environments such as Jena and Leipzig, Beijing, Paris, Singapore and NY challenged Lin in later life. He flourished in combined built and natural environments, like his birthplace of Banzai and Gulangyu, where environmental features surrounded him. Gulangyu also modelled the value of multicultural architecture that Lin put to good use in later years.

Lin’s education was unorthodox for a rural-born Chinese child, because it was dominated by the English language from his father’s encouragement; with missionary teachers in Banzai and on Gulangyu; followed by Christian lecturers at St John’s College in Shanghai. For his father, the Christian faith meant English and Western science, so it easy to see why Lin held these two attributes as goals throughout his life. Lin’s formal educational environments
developed his literary skills in the English language. Zhizheng’s wish to have a son educated at Oxford University in England, or the University of Berlin in Germany, created an aspiration for Lin to continue his formal education until his father’s wishes were fulfilled.\textsuperscript{554} In Lin’s imprint years of childhood, Western education and Christian religion were enduring legacies from his father. Just as English became Lin’s route to fame and fortune, through his cross-cultural and transcultural writing, so his invention of a water chute from courtyard to kitchen foreshadowed his invention of a Chinese typewriter character keyboard in later life.

While parted from family for his upper-primary and secondary education on Gulangyu, Lin certainly missed his mother who gave him unconditional love; however, he acknowledged his second-eldest sister, Meigong, and his father as the key motivators for his life-goal of academic excellence and fame, which is further explored later.\textsuperscript{555} In both his 1959 and 1976 autobiographical publications, Lin refers to Meigong’s premature death; her unfulfilled academic ambitions; and his childhood pranks that created unnecessary work for her—in terms of the Christian beliefs that he renounced after she died. Meigong’s effect on his later life was powerful and long-lasting, through her craving for a tertiary education. She was crucial to some of the important decisions in his life. It was the words of Meigong directing Lin that spurred him to accomplish her goals for him. That his childhood mentor was denied a tertiary education, and had an untimely death, induced Lin not only to strive for academic excellence but also to empathise with women’s universal struggle for equity in education.

Zhizheng and Meigong set a pattern for Lin’s life that was only challenged and altered by what biographers and lay people alike recognise as significant emotional events: such as success, love, war and financial pressure.\textsuperscript{556} However, there were many influences in Lin’s formative years that are discernible as patterns or themes from choices made during his adult years. One recognisable theme for Lin is the influence of women, starting in childhood and affecting him throughout his life. Patterns of repeated scenarios confirmed Lin’s values or created changes to his basic beliefs brought about by significant emotional events throughout his life, will be explored during the following chapters.\textsuperscript{557} The next chapter will discuss some of the consequences of Zhizheng’s wish to have a son educated at a major Western university, and Lin’s drive to fulfil Meigong’s aspirations for him.

\textsuperscript{554} Taiyi Lin, ‘Introduction’, in \textit{IL}.
\textsuperscript{555} PC, 28.
\textsuperscript{556} Massey, \textit{The People Puzzle}, 8.
\textsuperscript{557} Massey, ‘Original Massey Tapes’.
Chapter 4: How Scholarship and Vocation Shaped Lin Yutang

I wrote on my fortieth birthday: ‘One mind seeks the learning of ancients and moderns; two legs straddle the cultures of East and West.’ I had to interpret the Chinese conscience and intuitive perceptions in the more exact frame of [Western] logical thinking, and subject the propositions of Western thinking to the test of Chinese intuitive judgement.

Lin Yutang

4.1 Introduction

This chapter builds on the effect of foundational imposts in Lin’s in life, where mentorship by Zhizheng and Meigong endowed him with a thirst for knowledge and an indelible desire to make his mark on the world while his siblings encouraged his creative forays. It shows the effect on Lin’s ‘personality and achievement’ in his early career years, establishing him as an extraordinary student and promising literary scholar. St John’s College provided him with the opportunity to read deeply in Christian theology, but not the resources to read widely in areas such as philosophy and Chinese classics. Lin craved the chance to feast in libraries with greater depth and breadth of knowledge and he found them in the universities of America and Europe. After first completing an Arts Degree at St John’s, Lin followed this with a Masters of Comparative Literature through Harvard, completed in absentia at Jena University, Germany, and a Doctorate in Linguistics at Leipzig University, Germany. On his return to China, Lin’s friendship with Hu and his association with Lu, leaders in the debate on modern Chinese writing, and other like-minded writers influenced his writing. This will be discussed in greater depth in Chapter 6. Through close interaction with Hu and Lu, Lin observed deep unrest in the Chinese academic world.

This chapter examines Lin’s ‘preferred life story sequences’ that became life-long scripts for him. An early childhood education dominated by the English language was unorthodox for a rural Chinese child. Zhizheng’s perception of the Christian faith as interwoven with English and Western science makes it easy to appreciate why Lin held English and science as attributes of his life scripts. Lin’s ability to conquer languages, implanted by his father’s approval of bilingualism, was nurtured during his life into a confident approach to new languages and cultures. Multilingualism became a skill that gave Lin the courage to turn setbacks in one part of the world into opportunities in another. For example, the mysterious

558 PC, 58.
559 WP.
560 Ibid.
disappearance of his scholarship allowance from China became the impetus for his relocation to France, where there was employment and subsequent entrée to European universities, such as his father had dreamt of for his sons.\textsuperscript{561} Lin returned to France twice more during his lifetime when he needed change from negativity in other part of the globe, revealing a pattern of behaviour that suggested a predictable response to anxiety. He employed his ‘habitual mode of psychological defence’ of leaving urban environments for rural ones, where he relied on his childhood experience of gaining solace from the mountains.\textsuperscript{562}

After completing a doctorate in classical Chinese linguistics, Lin built a career based on scholarly, philosophical and fiction writing, social comment and translation. He wielded his pen in explanation and defence of his motherland and he tried his hand at establishing a university. For Lin, writing was his ‘preferred life story theme’, his staple career, however, he also maintained a theme of inventing, including architecture.\textsuperscript{563} Lin’s diverse skills can be traced to family, education and culture. They led him from international fame to near bankruptcy and back to solvency, all without destroying his self-confidence.

English was the focus of all Lin’s formal education until his final masters and doctorate years, when he studied in a German language environment. The emphasis on English deprived Lin of an opportunity to immerse himself completely in his mother-tongue, Chinese, resulting in a thirst for Chinese classical and other cultural texts during his adult years. This ‘isolated formative event’, the deprivation of local myths and legends in childhood, became a gnawing desire to devour every text on traditional Chinese texts that he could access in university libraries and back-street bookshops, until his thirst was assuaged.\textsuperscript{564}

The ‘Renaissance’ or ‘Literary Revolution’ that swept through Beijing in 1917 and 1918 primed Lin for the vocational choices made by him in later life. His penchant for writing in a colloquial style that readers could easily relate to was a deliberate attempt to capture wide audience appeal: this became an ‘enduring trait’.\textsuperscript{565} In his approach to writing in English for American audiences, Lin credited them with educated palettes, and wrote accordingly with as near an approximation of their daily conversational language as he could. This use of conversational speech was an approach that became Lin’s life script for his primary vocation, writing.

\textsuperscript{561} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{562} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{563} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{564} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{565} Ibid.
4.2 Scholarship

4.2.1 Academic Writing

All independent thinking persons who honestly hold their personal opinions will, at some time or other, become abusive. But this abusiveness is exactly what upholds the dignity of scholars. The scholar who never criticizes anything, only loses his self.566

A pivotal moment of Lin’s entrée into the world of Chinese scholarly acceptance was when his essay ‘An Index System for Chinese Characters’ was published in 1917, with a preface by Cai Yuanpei and Qian Xuantong.567 The system suggested simplification of Chinese radicals, an essential part of Chinese characters.568 It was a remarkable feat for such a young and inexperienced scholar as Lin to capture the attention of two academics influential in the field of Chinese characters – Cai and Qian – and have them write a preface for the article.569 Cai, Chancellor of Peking University and a prime mover of the politico-cultural revolution, May Fourth Movement (1915–1921), was a celebrated critical appraiser of Chinese literary culture. Qian was acclaimed for his expertise in Chinese phonology, such as contribution to the simplification of Chinese characters and pinyin.570 The acknowledgement of Lin’s work by two leading Chinese educators helped him gain academic acceptance in Chinese phonetic circles in a relatively short time frame. The publication had far-reaching consequences and reinforced Lin’s confidence regarding his expertise in Chinese linguistics, a genre that became his doctoral subject. It is interesting to note that though Lin’s father wanted his sons to study at Harvard or Oxford Universities, Cai studied ‘philosophy, aesthetics, anthropology and experimental psychology’ at Leipzig University, where Lin ultimately undertook his doctorate.571 It may be coincidence but it seems likely that at the very least that Cai provided some impetus for Lin’s choice of this university by recommending it as one of the European universities held in high esteem by Western academics.

The article endorsed by Cai and Qian confirmed Lin as a philological scholar, a label that followed him throughout his novel writing, translations of classical Chinese texts and expounding of philosophical views through to his last major work, a Chinese-English dictionary of exceptional quality. This thread of pursuit shows sequential reinforcement creating a favoured literary theme and consequently a persistent script throughout his adulthood. Publishing his thesis on ‘Compiling Method for a Categorized Idiom Dictionary’

568 Chinese characters employ radicals as the basis for their semantic element and a phonetic element for sound.
570 Ibid.
571 Zhang, ‘Cai Yuanpei (1868–1940)’, 148.
in 1918 served to reinforce Lin as a philologist and confirmed a literary thread.\textsuperscript{572} A theme of linguistic competence in his literary produce followed Lin throughout his life: his PhD thesis, ‘Ancient Chinese Phonetics’ (1923); a ‘New Chinese Phonology Index’ (1925); through to his obsession with inventing a Chinese typewriter using his Chinese phonology expertise (1947); finally culminating in his last scholarly publication, \textit{Lin Yutang’s Chinese-English Dictionary of Modern Usage} (1972).\textsuperscript{573} Lin’s dictionary is still held in high esteem by scholars and is used for specific purposes. For example in 2010, Maurice Cotterell—author, engineer and scientist—decoded the facial expressions and elaborate hairstyles of the terracotta warriors of Xian, China, using Lin’s dictionary to provide English equivalents for the Chinese characters used in the codes.\textsuperscript{574} This theme reinforced Lin’s determination to be ‘a good man, a useful man, and a famous man’, Meigong’s stricture to him in their last meaningful conversation. Yet Meigong’s maxim and literary abilities were not the only motivations that steered Lin into a writing career. There can be no doubt that having all of his formal education in English was a foundation that equipped Lin for his career as a transcultural writer. Equally as important to this success were Lin’s tertiary achievements in different cultures. English and tertiary qualifications were legacies of his father’s goals for him.

Many other Chinese scholars obtained university degrees in Western institutions during this period, including Hu, Kuang-ti Mei, Lou Kuang-lai, Albino Z. SyCip, Dee K-Chiong, Wu Mi and Sze Ping-yuan, became pioneers of modernism on their return to China.\textsuperscript{575} What is remarkable about Lin is that he completed his university degrees in three different continents where three different languages were spoken: his Arts and Science degree at St John’s College in China; half of his Masters of Comparative Literature through Harvard in America, with the other half completed at Jena University along with his doctorate in linguistics at Leipzig University in Germany. Lin also worked in France so, by necessity, French was added to his language skills, reinforcing and confirming his self-confidence in linguistic abilities. He was not only interested in contemporary writing but also embraced the classics of languages he worked in – Chinese, English (American), French and German – and often quoted them, particularly their philosophers, in his English works; however, the absorption of

\textsuperscript{572} Ibid.


Liong, ‘Lin Yutang: Fujian’s Literary Giant’.

\textit{MO}, 43.
Chinese classics was Lin’s prime goal in his early adult years. In the early 1920s, his motivation was stimulated by working with Chinese literary giants, such as Hu and Lu.

Along with their ideas, those of another Chinese literary peer impressed Lin. Zhou Zuoren (1885–1967) alerted Lin to the fact that a sixteenth century Chinese theorist, Yuan Zhonglang (1568–1610) had advocated that a writer’s natural mode of expression and ‘intelligence’ were of greater importance than ‘form’. Yuan challenged Lin’s properly basic belief that vernacular, as a superior form of encounter with audiences, was a contemporary theory. However, Lin argued that Hu’s ‘writing-in-the-vernacular movement’ had greater implications for contemporary Chinese literature, so his original belief held true. It comes as no surprise to find that Lin was also influenced by Western scholars, because of his father’s belief in Western education.

4.2.2 Western Scholarship

At Harvard under Bliss Perry (1860–1954), Irving Babbitt (1865–1933), Hans Von Jargerman (1859–1926) and George Kittridge (1860–1941), Lin found his critical tastes extended and refined, but he remained aloof from the scholarly discipleship that followed American literary analysis. His penchant for playing ‘the Devil’s advocate’ for Joel Spingarn (1875–1939), against the dominant theories of Babbitt at Harvard, divided Lin from his Chinese student peers. It raises the question of whether Lin’s formal education in English meant that he interpreted Western scholarship from the perspective of his Chinese cultural roots, or if he was just being contrary. Was it a form of cultural isogesis, where Lin had a bias formed by undertaking all of his previous scholarship in English in a non-English speaking culture?

No further mention is made by Lin of Von Jargerman and Kittridge; however Perry, according to Lin, was not only the most popular lecturer with all of his students, but also had ‘charming daughters’. This is an example of Lin’s open appreciation of women. Arguably, his championing of women’s causes gives weight to his recognition of their academic abilities and also savouring their aesthetic attributes. Championing women through fictional and non-fictional choices became a chosen theme for Lin.

576 PC, 41.
578 Ibid.
579 MO, 42–44.
581 Tuck, Comparative Philosophy and the Philosophy of Scholarship, 12–15.
582 Ibid, 42.
Babbitt, it seems, had no ‘charming daughters’, and little else to redeem himself in Lin’s eyes but he was an impetus for debate. While Babbitt was not the great influence on Lin that many claim, he did offer an alternative viewpoint for Lin to align his theories against.\footnote{MO, 42–43.} Lin had left Chinese literary circles struggling to find a path for contemporary writing and here he found an American academic, who one might expect to be leading the way in a literary revolution, championing a return to the standards of yesteryear. Lin’s dogged defence of Springarn was possibly more about being a devil’s advocate than providing a counter-position to the Babbitt’s stance, particularly when he saw his fellow countrymen Lou Kuang-lai and Wu Mi lauding Babbitt’s views.\footnote{Ibid, 43.} Much to the disgust of Lin, he had to sit in lectures with Lou and Wu and was even ‘forced to borrow the Port-Royal’ textbook to look at, fleetingly.\footnote{Aldridge, ‘Irving Babbitt and Lin Yutang’, 318–327.} Wu and Lou returned to China, taking Babbitt’s views with them to disseminate. Lin’s disdain for Babbitt’s views motivated his defence of the claims of Springarn, and by aligning these with the Italian critic, Benedetto Croce (1866–1952), who also supported a view that ‘all criticism is “expression”’.\footnote{Ibid, 43.} In this academic debate, Lin denied his oft preferred stance of a Taoist or pacifist approach and employed what he later called his love of contradiction.\footnote{MO, 1.}

Owen Aldridge believed that by pointing out Babbitt had ‘only an MA by degree’, Lin possibly did not know that the Harvard system exempted its distinguished professors from obtaining a doctorate. It is more probable that he was expressing his ‘amused antipathy’ to the ‘tyranny of the American fetish for advanced degrees’; an obsession which Lin openly mocked.\footnote{Ibid.} Yet, here is the love of contradiction that Lin claimed affinity for: Lin mocked American admiration for higher degrees, whilst striving to attain them for himself. What Aldridge reads as Lin’s ignorance of the Harvard system of academic credentials for employing staff, I read as humour with a touch of arrogance, tempered with the excuse and humility that he pursued higher degrees at acclaimed Western universities merely to fulfil his father’s dream. In this observation, Lin embraced three of his favoured life-themes: ironic humour, a balance of arrogance with humility and upholding academic achievement.

Lin’s desire for higher degrees from American or European sources was a consequence of his father’s ambition, rather than Lin’s own aspiration, but he accepted his father’s goal and

\footnotetext[80]{MO, 42–43.}
\footnotetext[81]{Ibid, 43.}
\footnotetext[82]{Aldridge, ‘Irving Babbitt and Lin Yutang’, 318–327.}
\footnotetext[83]{Ibid.}
\footnotetext[84]{Ibid, 43.}
\footnotetext[85]{Ibid.}
\footnotetext[86]{Ibid, 43.}
\footnotetext[87]{MO, 1.}
\footnotetext[88]{Aldridge, ‘Irving Babbitt and Lin Yutang’, 320.}
reinforced it by making it his own.\textsuperscript{589} Values ingrained in early childhood, by parents desiring to fulfil their own ambitions vicariously through their children, are a cultural norm in traditional Chinese culture. C. John Sommerville claims that:

[Chinese] literature of all sorts only supports a cultural history of ‘childhood’ - a cultural construct comprised of adult expectations, hopes, and fears concerning the rising generation as opposed to the social history of the actual treatment of children.\textsuperscript{590}

The Harvard experience did more than just provide Lin with access to the Widener Library. It provided him with experience functioning in an English speaking society. Lin’s discomfort in Babbitt’s classes undoubtedly honed his critical skills, and his hard-won educational experiences of Euro-American institutions ultimately paid dividends when American readers embraced Lin’s writing style polished at these very institutions. It was also the consequence of a childhood where his siblings fuelled and confirmed his self-belief in his ability to capture the attention of readers. On his return to China, Lin became an academic before building on his childhood successes into the profession of writing.

\subsection*{4.3 Academic Writing}

Lin’s earliest memory of writing was of a ‘textbook’ at eight years old, with a poem on one page and an illustration on the opposite page.\textsuperscript{591} His siblings teased him about his early ventures, but through this Lin learnt to accept criticism. This may well have equipped him with the confidence to strike out into diverse genres including: literary satire; the self-disclosure of philosophical writing; the challenging genre of novel writing; and the dangerous genre of social commentary. In Shanghai, he spearheaded writing in the contentious genre of literary satire. Lin set about carving a career in writing. In the Shanghai literary circle, this proved both peaceful and fruitful. His decision to write and publish for a living gave him greater freedom than lecturing at tertiary institutions, but his almost obsessive push to achieve greatness drove him to constant change genres: firstly, his translations of letters of war hero Xie Bingying in book form; then text books on English grammar; and finally the preparation for his first book in English for an English speaking audience.\textsuperscript{592} To a degree, Lin was

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{589} Ibid.
\bibitem{591} \textit{MO}, 16–17.
\bibitem{592} Lin, \textit{Kaiming English Books}.
\textit{\textsuperscript{\_\_}} English Literature Reader, (Two Volumes).
\textit{\textsuperscript{\_\_}} Reading in Modern Journalistic Prose.
\textit{\textsuperscript{\_\_}} \textit{A Collection of Essays on Linguistics}, Shanghai: Kaiming Book Company, 1933.
\textit{\textsuperscript{\_\_}} Shanghai: Living Book Company, 1934.
\textit{\textsuperscript{\_\_}} \textit{My Words First Volume (Sing Su Ji)}, Shanghai: Times Book Company, 1934.
\end{thebibliography}
insulated from the political pressures of less well-known freelance writers in China. He had no academic duties, no material pressures and no personal crises. He established magazines promoting satirical humour, published textbooks on English grammar and became further entrenched in the Chinese literary revolution. All of these were related to his aspirations for fame and usefulness.

Lin reached the peak of his Chinese literary success during the early 1930s, when he published periodicals, promoting ‘social satire and Western-style journalism’ in Shanghai.\(^{593}\) Lin described the function of periodicals:

> Periodicals are the best indication of a country’s cultural progress. After all, the function of a periodical, as distinct from that of books, is to serve as a medium for educating the public, surveying the most important tendencies and domestic and foreign situation, introducing or advocating new movements of art and literature and thought, and constantly guiding the current of thought and rectifying its errors.\(^{594}\)

He published three noteworthy magazines, wrote for the English version of the magazine *China Critic Weekly* and established a reputation as an outstanding writer in Chinese and English in China. Lin’s first magazine, *The Analects Fortnightly* (1932), proved so successful that Lin started two more magazines: the bi-monthly *World of Mankind* (1934) that nurtured the human spirit during political turmoil in China, and another fortnightly magazine, *Cosmic Wind* (1936).\(^{595}\) Lin’s philosophy of literature differed from that of other writers, but was complementary to the thrust of the ‘Chinese Renaissance’, also called ‘The New Culture Movement’.\(^{596}\) It was his style of writing that set him apart and confirmed the wide appeal of his creative produce.

Although Lin’s fame in China escalated with his magazine publications focusing on writing in vernacular or spoken Chinese rather than classical (Han) Chinese, his greatest appreciation during the twentieth century came from his writing in English about Chinese cultural traditions. He followed the ‘literary revolution’ of Hu, who advocated the use of ‘modern spoken Mandarin in place of classical Chinese as the medium of literary expression.’\(^{597}\) Lin returned to the mountains for writing part of what became a significant emotional event – a focal turning point – in his career. It was in the security of his beloved mountains that he wrote part of his first book in English, *My Country and My People*. This move reinforced his

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\(^{593}\) Answers.com, ‘Lin Yutang Biography’.


psychological belief in the solace of nature to nurture him through what proved to be Lin’s first American best-seller. This book inscribed him as a native informant of his motherland’s culture; however, his interpretations of Chinese culture were not always appreciated. Reviewers originally critiqued the book as ‘authoritative’ and more recently, Lin’s representation of Chinese people and culture has suffered from another wave of adverse criticism.598 My Country and My People was translated into several European languages, launching Lin as a writer world-wide and creating an audience beyond Chinese and English language readers. This reinforced his one of his life-goal’s – achieving fame.599

4.3.1 Translated Texts: Understanding His Choices

This section will suggest motivations for Lin’s choices of Chinese texts for translation, and topics for philosophical arguments and novels. Lin translated selected texts of Confucius, Laozi and Zhangzhi because of his belief that Confucianism and Taoism were not merely religions of choice in China but tacitly stored the traits Chinese people inculcated into their cultural behaviour.600 In hindsight, Lin recognised Confucianism in his father’s values and Taoism in his own. He attributed these anomalies between his father’s belief system and his own to them being an inculcated part of Chinese culture that formed part of every Chinese person’s psyche.

Lin’s choice of texts was as much for his own edification as for his readers: for example, the classics of Taoism and Confucianism and the life of a poet, Su Tungpo, were not only a means of educating Western readers but also an addition to his own knowledge of Chinese historical literature.601 This compensated for the loss of his Chinese literary and mythological heritage in childhood. Lin also read widely on Chinese literature and used this knowledge in creating translations of Chinese short stories in English, such as Famous Short Stories (1952), and stories of historical women that will be addressed further in Chapter 5.602

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601 Ryan Murray, ‘Lighting the Candle and Cursing the Darkness’.
It took Lin 40 years to fully accommodate his Confucian and Taoist leanings in his basic Christian beliefs. During these 40 years, he claimed to be a pagan, but was in fact a humanist. His reason for choosing the term ‘pagan’ came from that word’s association with nature. Lin claimed, ‘I am essentially a boy from the country, which is what the words “pagan” and “heathen” meant etymologically.’ When he returned to Christian worship he used the best philosophical values of humanism and Confucianism and the psychologically healthy traits of Taoism to merge with his foundational belief of Christianity. It is this presumably complex, yet plausibly simple, accommodation of Chinese cultural values in the foundational belief system that he received interwoven with the English language that created Lin’s philosophical and spiritual strengths and made his writing on these topics compelling. The classical texts of China informed and guided Lin in his life-long quest for discerning and transmitting understanding between Chinese and Western cultures.

4.3.2 Do Lin’s Translations of Traditional Chinese Texts Reveal Evidence of Isogesis?

Lin interpreted the *Lun Yu (The Analects)* of Confucius in his own inimitable style for lay readers; however, this makes it more difficult for comparative analysis with other translations. Comparing Lin’s interpretation of passages of the *Lun Yu* to those of Arthur Waley shows that Lin’s early childhood exposure to Christian texts, such as the Bible, affected the choice of vocabulary in his adult translation. Both interpretations were published in the same year, 1938, and each knew of the other’s existence. What is more important about Lin’s translation of this classical Chinese text is his acknowledgement of Waley’s superior translation of a particular passage. This shows not only a generosity of spirit but a lack of bias against a non-Chinese translation of a Chinese text. It demonstrates openness to a scholar with a different academic background and it shows Lin taking a different stance to many of his peers. This aspect of Lin’s character shows the reinforcement of his basic nature: he had respect for others, in this instance, the creative skill of another.

4.3.3 Marrying the Old and the New

Undeterred by the climate of literary anti-classicism promoted by both KMT and communist politics in China during the 1930s, Lin threw himself into studying the literature of his

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603 PC, 42.
606 Brooks, ‘Lin Yutang’.
607 Ibid.
mother-tongue.\textsuperscript{608} It is easy to see a link between Lin’s disappointment when he realised what he had missed out on in the myths and legends of his motherland, and his desire to absorb these in his early adult life.\textsuperscript{609} Lin appeared to be filling a void created in youth: a consequence of deprivation in childhood confirmed his loss as a life-long script. Nevertheless his sense of deficiency in this knowledge motivated Lin to research his Chinese literary heritage. Whether deprivation in childhood is the sole reason for this choice can only be reasoned conjecture. Suffice it to say that Lin was driven by a thirst for knowledge of classical Chinese texts and for conversation with people from all walks of life: one giving him the past, and the other the present. There appears to be little other motivation for his behaviour at this time. In early adulthood, Lin was living in a cosmopolitan environment in Shanghai with plenty of stimulation from the four languages he was familiar with – Chinese, English, German and French – but his focus was firmly placed on using the classical Chinese literary theory that supported his contemporary Chinese writing.\textsuperscript{610} He found that the work of Yuan and the ‘xingling school’ (School of Innate Sensibility) fitted snugly with the ‘Crocean aesthetics of expression’, which he had admired since his Harvard days.\textsuperscript{611} A behavioural pattern underlying Lin’s goal of developing a life-theme of marrying old world theory with new world theory – Chinese scholarship with Western scholarship – became synonymous with his quest for literary uniqueness and fame.

4.3.4 Language as ‘Soft-Power’

As the WWII battle between Japan and China dragged on, Lin used every opportunity to bring China and America together in the hearts and minds of US readers. In a radio tribute to President Roosevelt on 21 January 1941, Lin claimed that the democratic principles mooted by Confucius some 2,500 years previously were now becoming reality in the democratic and social justice aims of American politics.\textsuperscript{612} Lin translated a Confucius passage as:

When the great order prevails, the state will exist for the benefit of all. Rulers will be elected according to their wisdom and ability and mutual confidence and peace would prevail. The old would retire in comfort, the young would be able to enjoy their talents, the juniors would have their elders’

\textsuperscript{608} Ibid, 31.
\textsuperscript{609} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{612} Qian, ‘Lin Yutang’, in Multicultural Writers from Antiquity to 1945, 268.
protection, the widows, orphans, lonely old people and the crippled and deformed would all be taken
care of.\textsuperscript{613} 

Lin described a utopian vision of society in \textit{Looking Beyond}: it promoted his preference for a political theme melding Eastern and Western philosophy; for example, Confucius’s ‘doctrine of filial piety’ and Plato’s ‘dream for a peaceful society’.\textsuperscript{614} In this novel he promoted ideas that are still evolving in the twenty first century, such as: ‘Motherhood was motherhood, wed or unwed. All children were “natural” and all were legitimate.’\textsuperscript{615} Lin used novels and translations to promote his theme of Western thought valuing Eastern thought. Lin’s \textit{The Wisdom of China and India} introduced English language readers to the classical texts of China and India through his interpretive voice.\textsuperscript{616} His newspaper and magazine articles became a tool for teaching Americans to appreciate Chinese culture using gentle persuasion.

Towards his life script of educating Americans in Chinese cultural matters, Lin published ‘How to Pronounce Chinese Names’, an article for \textit{The NY Times}, in which Lin demonstrated a rapport with an American audience that had no knowledge of his mother-tongue:

\begin{quote}
In pronouncing Chinese names the only important thing to remember is that all vowels in the ordinary spellings have their Latin values and not their English values, that is, a, e, i, o, u are pronounced ah, eigh, ee, oo, oo.\textsuperscript{617}
\end{quote}

This assertion raised two valuable points. Firstly, basic Chinese vowel values mirror Latin languages such as Italian, Spanish, French and Portuguese, so early missionaries from these countries found it easier to handle the Chinese language.\textsuperscript{618} Secondly, his article makes identification of Romanised Chinese less intimidating for non-Chinese speakers; however, to simplify pronunciation rules, Lin failed to mention that without the use of tones—for example, four tones in Mandarin and nine in Cantonese—or the support of context, the semantics of spoken Chinese, particularly dialects, are difficult to interpret. This may be an example of Lin being overeager to simplify pronunciation at the expense of necessary information. He went on to make a claim about ‘aspirated and unaspirated consonants’, but then introduced humour to dampen the alarm that he may have aroused in his readers about the difficulty of learning Chinese:

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{613} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{615} Ibid, 147.
\item \textsuperscript{616} Lin Yutang, \textit{The Wisdom of China and India}, New York: Random House, 1942.
\item \textsuperscript{617} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{618} China has always had an official or bureaucratic spoken form of Chinese and a multiplicity of dialects although the semantics of Chinese characters remains constant throughout the Chinese speaking world.
\end{itemize}
The Chinese make an important distinction between aspirated and unaspirated consonants: k and k’, ch and ch’, p and p’, &c. But Americans can ignore this distinction since they cannot make it and especially since this distinction is usually ignored in newspaper spellings.\(^{619}\)

There is a hint of arrogance, even a touch of condescension, in the tail of this message that may have resulted from a familiarity with his audience combined with his unique sense of humour. The passage also reveals Lin’s use of irony: he laid the poverty of Americans’ ability to pronounce Chinese names at the doorstep of the very medium that he was using to deprecate it: newspapers. The gap in this piece between the literal meaning of some of his remarks and the inferred meaning makes the article of limited value. The article uses Lin’s favoured trait of ironic humour to capture audience attention; more will be said on this in Chapter 7.

The two quotations above also demonstrate self-assurance in explaining the Chinese language to the American public through their daily newspaper. Whether his writing or inventions were well-accepted or not, Lin maintained a positive attitude towards his future and that of his family, based on his ability to recoup financial losses through his talent for writing novels and claiming royalties from translations of his works.\(^{620}\) His philosophical writing is still used as motivational material today in countries all over the world.\(^{621}\) Lin’s philosophical arguments are considered simplistic – folk philosophy – by Western philosophers, but Western readers are keen to find uncomplicated alternatives to living in the fast pace of twenty-first century Euro-American life. Lin wrote by the KIS premise—Keep It Simple—but he did realise the difficulty that this edict involved:

Simplicity, then, paradoxically is the outward sign and symbol of depth of thought. It seems to me simplicity is about the most difficult thing to achieve in scholarship and writing. How difficult is clarity of thought, and yet it is only as thought becomes clearer that simplicity becomes possible.\(^{622}\)

The premise of doing nothing, rather than doing something merely for the sake of being industrious, comes from the Taoist philosopher Zhuangzi (c.369–286BCE). Lin interpreted Zhuangzi’s position as:

… when a gentleman is unavoidably compelled to take charge of the government of the empire, there is nothing better than inaction (letting alone). … Rest in inaction, and the world will be reformed of itself. … Honour through inaction comes from the Tao of God: entanglement through action comes from the Tao of man.\(^{623}\)

\(^{619}\) Lin, ‘How to Pronounce Chinese Names’.

\(^{620}\) Ibid.


\(^{622}\) IL, 87.

\(^{623}\) Lin, The Wisdom of China and India, 676, 680. Taoism is a philosophy/religion: ‘the Tao’ is ‘the Way’.
As the source of Chinese culture for non-Chinese readers, Lin used his love of contradiction to confront readers with shock statement, followed by softening qualifiers:

Culture, as I understand it, is essentially a product of leisure. The art of culture is therefore essentially the art of loafing. From the Chinese viewpoint, the man who is wisely idle is the most cultured man.\(^{624}\)

Lin’s ‘art of culture’ might equate with his oft-quoted ‘art of loafing’ – an enduring theme for him. *Prima facie*, reading the phrase ‘the art of loafing’ shocks Western readers because it seems outrageous, but the qualifier ‘wisely’ before ‘idle’ tempers the suggestion of unproductive inactivity.\(^{625}\) From a Chinese perspective, Lin argued that the ‘cultured man’ must be ‘wisely idle’. Lin’s writing appears simplistic but on closer inspection its depth is apparent. In considering his audience when he decided what to write and how to approach the topic, Lin became the wise and cultured man.

Lin’s decision to devote his attention to writing for the popular press and editing literary journals in the late 1920s was a life-altering decision, prompted by a series of major events: the threat of execution by order of the warlord Zhang; disillusionment with politics at both Xiamen University and the KMT revolutionaries; and his success in both popular and literary publishing. This sequence of events steered Lin towards Shanghai and into writing as a full-time vocation built on a robust foundation of scholarship and insight of human nature.

### 4.3.5 ‘The Pen is Mightier Than the Sword’\(^{626}\)

Xiaohuang Yin, a Chinese/English bilingual scholar, noted that long after Lin’s death, Asian-American critics wrote of the difference between what Lin wrote for American audiences and what he wrote for Chinese audiences in the ‘1930s and 1940s’.\(^{627}\) These criticisms included the charge that Lin misrepresented China to Westerners as unduly exotic and different to arouse the interest of his readers, hence capitalising on his popularity and the subsequent financial benefit that came with it.\(^{628}\) To answer this censure one must question whether this is any different from what other oriental writers did at that time and also whether there is

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\(^{624}\) Ibid, 150.

\(^{625}\) *IL*, 150.

\(^{626}\) Edward S. Gould, *Good English*, New York: W.J. Widdleton, 63: ‘“The pen is mightier than the sword” is a metonymic adage coined by English author Edward Bulwer-Lytton.’


\(^{628}\) Xiaohuang Yin, *Chinese American literature since the 1850s*, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000.

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anything ethically wrong with an author attracting an audience by appealing to their desires? Without capturing the interest of an audience Lin could not voice a message that may otherwise be less palatable. He built his audience of Western readers by tempting their interest with the quirky and quixotic of Chinese culture, establishing a rapport with readers. He used this as a lure to launch into the more politically sensitive issues of peace and war. This shows an intuitive understanding of human nature that is either an innate character trait of Lin or an acquired skill for American audiences nurtured by his editor and mentors, Buck and Walsh. Lin’s approach demonstrates either self-confidence or an attitude reinforcing trust in previous leadership: confidence in his own ability or trust in his mentors. How did Americans read him?

In America during the 1930s, Orville Prescott condescendingly described Lin as a ‘benign little man who wrote of his country and his people with urbane charm, such tolerance and such humor’. A good example of Lin’s empathy with his audience and their psyche is his hypothesis about the pride of Chinese workers revealed in this disclosure:

The greatest charm of Peking is, however, the common people, not the saints and professors, but the rickshaw coolies. … you might think that you are getting cheap labour; that is correct, but you are not getting disgruntled labour. You are mystified by the good cheer of the coolies as they babble all the way among themselves and crack jokes …

Lin continued by saying that if one hires an ‘old rickshaw coolie’ late at night and, feeling sorry for him, terminates the journey, he will insist on you continuing. However, if one terminates the journey and gives the full fare, the rickshaw man will be consumed with gratitude. In this precept, Lin showed his insight into the pride of a worker from one of the poorest of livelihoods in China. Lin’s discernment regarding the integrity of one of the lowest-paid worker groups in China demonstrates his insight into human nature and his sensitivity for Chinese rationale. This is the key to Lin’s success as a writer: his strategy was to have ‘courage and speak his mind’ for both individuals and masses. Just as he felt compassion for an elderly rickshaw puller, he felt empathy for his people when China was invaded during the second Sino-Japanese war (1937–1945). Compassion and empathy were staple attributes of Lin’s character. The Japanese invasion of China had consequences for the proudly Chinese Lin: it was a significant emotional event, ‘because they cause a person to

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631 Ibid.
632 Taiyi Lin, ‘Introduction’, in IL.
“closely, critically examine” re-evaluation of one’s “original values”.

This caused a change in Lin’s approach to writing on Sino-American relations.

Published in 1943, *Between Tears and Laughter* challenged Western readers. Written during WWII, it evoked negativity from British and American readers because of its potent message about Eurocentrism. In it, Lin drew a parallel between the Sino-Japanese war and the fall of the Greek empire, by embracing the notion that Eurocentrism would lead to WWII:

That is to say, if we are naïve enough to think that all we need to do is transfer the standards of Europe to Asia and impose the white man’s power politics on a world scale, we shall have the whole world instead of Europe, as an arena of periodic bloodshed and slaughter.

It is obvious that the American political approach of not supporting, China, was so troublesome for Lin that he allowed his anger to spill over onto the pages of this book. Lin’s championing of China through a berating of England’s and America’s lack of support for her was a script based on reinforcement of his belief in the undervaluing of China by Western powers. America’s and Britain’s response to China’s appeal for material support became a significant emotional event for Lin, causing him to throw caution to the winds and write exactly what he was thinking at that time. He drew a parallel between the Sino-Japanese war and the fall of the Greek empire, by embracing the notion that Eurocentrism would lead to WWII. His humour turned to anger at the way he perceived that America was treating his mother land’s pleas for help via military supplies. Prescott wrote that Lin had ‘lost both his temper and his sense of values’ by writing what is essentially a discussion and analysis of war. Prescott’s review of *Between Tears and Laughter* maintains that:

Were it not for his name upon the title page and jacket it would be difficult to believe that the good Dr Lin is actually the author of this shrill, abusive and vituperative book. In the first place, Dr Lin’s attitude throughout is smug, condescending and self-righteously superior. … [Lin] claims the advantage of ‘intuitive insight’ but he writes more like a man exasperated into a blind fury. He can expect that many of his readers will be exasperated, too.

This stinging rebuke was in response to Lin’s fervent criticism of America and Britain, for what he saw as their Eurocentric neglect of China and India during WWII, and his prediction of China’s retribution in the future. Lin’s lack of humour reflects what he sees as a want of respect for something dear to his heart – his mother country.

634 Lin, *Between Tears and Laughter*.
635 Ryan Murray, ‘Lighting the Candle and Cursing the Darkness’, 37.
637 Prescott, ‘Books of the Times’.
638 Ibid.
The NY Times reviewer, William Schlamm, supported Prescott’s opinion of Between Tears and Laughter:

Lin Yutang, a gentle and just man, has written a book which is neither. Conceived in disgust, borne with pain, offered with wrath, this book tells the Western World to go where it is going anyway - to hell.... The West he says... has been only superficially baptized, has lost its soul and its spiritual values on a binge of ‘scientific’ materialism and sacrificed the natural sense of peace to the crude gods of egotism and power.640

On the other hand, four weeks later a reviewer for TIME magazine declares Between Tears and Laughter:

… a small but potent charge of moral and political explosive laid under this new, hateful Great Wall of China. … if the mistakes of her allies anger China as they have angered Dr. Lin—if now or later they warp China out of the democratic line-up—the things that Dr. Lin complains of will be very serious indeed.641

In hindsight, these two perspectives highlight the tightrope that Lin walked as a Chinese writer for an American audience during WWII. If Prescott represents the reactions of the greater majority of readers, then Lin had lost the goodwill of the American public, who had until this point placed Lin on a pedestal as their oriental advisor on all things Asian. However, if Schlamm represents the reaction of a majority of readers of this book then Lin eloquently predicted for Western powers China’s post-WWII political turn to communism for survival, and her part in the subsequent Cold War (c.1947–1991). Lin ruminated in this book on the probability of the rise of Asia post-WWII, based on sheer population growth and an intuition: ‘From these reflections I regained my calm. Now I can be amused by these self-important nations who think they can dominate the world by sheer force, when Hitler has failed.’642

Between Tears and Laughter mounted an argument ‘in defence of the mob’, which sounds remarkably like Marxism, but this social movement was never part of Lin’s creed.643 Ironically, Schlamm claims that as Lin’s book was being printed, a riot based on colour, creed and national origin race took place in Detroit.644 Considering Lin’s self-confessed love of contradictions, the book may also be a facetious argument meant merely to arouse empathy in readers. This is the dilemma in trying to pinpoint Lin’s beliefs and values: should one take his writing literally or apply a critical eye, considering the implications of his penchant for

640 Schlamm, ‘A Chinese Philosopher Upbraids the Western World’.
642 Lin, Between Tears and Laughter, 5–6.
643 Ibid, 93–110.
644 Schlamm, ‘A Chinese Philosopher Upbraids the Western World’.
contradictions? Contradiction, a preferred theme for Lin, makes one hesitant in taking his writing at face value without supportive evidence.

While Lin’s book, *My Country and My People*, was vaunted as ‘the best book on China in the English language’, Prescott argued that *Between Tears and Laughter* had the potential to negate all the goodwill of America towards China that Lin’s previous writing had engendered.\(^645\) It certainly precipitated the breakdown of his relationship with Buck and Walsh. It is possible that his post-WWII book, *The Wisdom of America* (1950), featuring the thoughts of great American thinkers, was a placatory offering to his American readers. During WWII, Lin’s attitude of benevolence towards American culture is damned with faint praise: ‘Nothing impresses me more in American civilization than the fact that soap here is good and cheap and available to all.’\(^646\) However, writing was not Lin’s only medium for promoting Eastern culture, specifically Chinese culture, to Western audiences.

### 4.3.6 The Tongue as Whip

During the 1920s and 1930s, several notable Chinese writers, including Lin Yutang, were invited to speak at Pettus College, now Claremont Graduate College, California.\(^647\) On the strength of the success of *My Country and My People*, Lin was asked to address a graduating class at Pettus College in California. Entitled ‘Remark on Pettus College’, his paper focused on ‘the Chinese Renaissance Movement and on Chinese civilization in general’ and supported his script of promoting Chinese literature and culture to Western readers.\(^648\) Assistant Secretary Beamus read part of a letter from Lin, dated 22 November 1935, to an audience there.\(^649\) Lin used positive comments coupled with constructive advice for improving the relationship between China and the West:

> China and the West have come to a stage today where they feel they must understand each other not only politically and commercially but more intimately and in a human way. This could be brought about only by training a greater number of Chinese who can intelligently appreciate the Western way of life and a greater number of westerners who can read and talk Chinese and in this way gain an insight into the Chinese way of thinking, feeling and living.\(^650\)

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\(^{645}\) Prescott, ‘Books of the Times’.

\(^{646}\) Lin, *Between Tears and Laughter*, 62.


\(^{648}\) Ibid.


\(^{650}\) Ibid.
This was arguably Lin’s entrée into public speaking, albeit by proxy presentation, leading to him becoming a highly sought after speaker on the American talk tour scene. He was blatant in his use of the American speaking circuit as a conduit for expounding his political views. As well as using the written form of language, Lin used his stage presence to woo audiences: his timing was impeccable.\(^{651}\)

Six years later, his opinion changed: Lin’s voice became one of discontent at the duplicity of political leaders in their relationships with each other. In his speech to the American Bureau for Medical Aid to China, he quipped:

> I have complete faith in Stalin’s duplicity against Japan. … That’s why Stalin personally saw Matsuoka off at the Moscow station. As he was waving his hands, I could imagine Stalin saying in his mind, ‘Now Matsuoka, go and plunge yourself straight into hell.’\(^{652}\)

While Lin employed sarcasm tempered by humour to present his case here, it is useful to compare the two quotations above and note the difference between this political remark and the address for the college graduating class before WWII, to verify the effect of a particular event and its consequences. After visiting China twice during the bombings by Japan—with bombs possibly made from American or Australian scrap metal—Lin had shifted his stance. The trauma of being in a war zone was shocking enough for Lin to bring anger against America into his writing for its lack of support for China. America’s paltry support invested Lin’s speeches and interviews with cynicism and demonstrated a shift in his beliefs.\(^{653}\)

Poverty in the Sino-American relationship regarding arms-support became a focus for Lin in speeches, articles and interviews, as it had in his book. The subtitle of the article for The New York Times sums up his feelings: ‘Praise is Pleasant but Arms Would Be Better’.\(^{654}\) In lashing out in print at the West’s political response to China’s needs Lin often muddled his pronouns, aligning himself with America, although he never became an American citizen. For example: ‘It is time that we export more than words of praise and anti-Japanese propaganda to China.’\(^{655}\) Lin was, as Prescott phrased it, ‘like a man exasperated into a blind fury’.\(^{656}\) This lack of Western support for China during WWII stands out as a significant emotional event that precipitated Lin’s shift from his normal position of Taoist passivity as a writer and

\(^{654}\) Ibid.
\(^{655}\) Ibid.
speaker, to one of righteous angst. Political writing aside, Lin’s creative works continued to impress readers of fiction with their combination of Eastern and Western cultural form.

4.4 Creative Writing

Lin’s decision to devote his attention to writing for the ‘popular press’ and editing literary journals in the late 1920s, was a life-altering decision prompted by a series of events: threat of execution by order of Zhang; disillusionment with politics at Xiamen University and the KMT revolutionaries and success in both popular publishing and literary publishing.657 This series of events steered Lin towards Shanghai and writing as a full-time vocation, built on a robust foundation of scholarship and insights about human nature.658 After relocating to America in 1936, he added novel writing to his list of writing successes: it extended Lin’s transcultural writing with great success.659 The reinforcement of his versatility in writing genres provides a pattern that formed a dominant script: a belief that change yields reward.

Yet there were dissenters claiming that ‘his lack of intellectual standards in creating serious modern literature’ made him a lesser writer. However, according to Daniel Ramsdell, Lin was ‘the second most influential interpreter of China for American popular audiences through the medium of best-sellers’ from 1930 to 1980, and the only ‘native Asian’ writer among these.660 Although there are errors in Ramsdell’s assumptions, he summed up Lin’s writing style well: ‘Lin loved to make predictions and to pontificate.’661 What he failed to acknowledge was that most of Lin’s predictions held an element of, if not total, truth. Ramsdell’s chart (Appendix E), shows that Lin entered the American writers’ market at the start of a peak period for best-sellers, and rode the wave to produce five best-sellers during the period recorded.662 This creative produce reinforced his goal to be famous and useful, seared on his psyche as an aspiration of Meigong. Zhizheng’s goals for Lin were already appealed by Lin’s academic

657 Brooks, ‘Lin Yutang’.
658 Murray, ‘Lighting the Candle and Cursing the Darkness’.
659 Lin, *Moment in Peking*.
____, *A Leaf in the Storm*.
____, *The Vermillion Gate*.
____, *The Red Peony*.
____, *The Flight of the Innocents*.
661 Ibid.
662 Ibid, 10.
Lin’s best sellers: *MCMP*, 1935; *IL*, 1937; *Moment in Peking*, 1939; *With Love and Irony*, 1940; *The Vermillion Gate*. 
successes in a Western environment and acknowledgement in the Chinese academic world. As a result of a significant emotional event, financial loss in the late 1940s, he changed his relationship with his editor, publisher and publishing company. Lin’s motivations may best be seen by noting his publications during this period.

4.4.1 Publishing

Between 1935 and 1953, The John Day Company published no fewer than thirteen books in English by Lin: philosophy, novels and translations from Chinese to English. It was a partnership based on trust and friendship; two qualities that were inextricably linked for Lin. This element of his beliefs will be discussed further in Chapter 6. During this time he also published work with other publishers through The John Day Company, with Lin trusting Walsh to ensure that his rights were protected. Any break in this trust for Lin ruptured a personal value that Erikson mooted as ‘successive ego syntheses and resyntheses throughout childhood’ and adolescent years. Broken trust challenged his preferred pattern of tranquillity in relationships. This will be explored more fully in Chapter 6. Lin sought and found other publishers after he left, what he felt was, the questionable protection of The John Day Company. When their father left The John Day Company, Adet and Anor also found other publishers for their work. Even though they were raised predominantly in America, Lin’s daughters may well have acted from embedded Confucian edicts, such as filial piety.

Murray Goldberg included Lin and his two eldest daughters, Adet and Anor, in his 1945 lists of ‘Design for Reading: Six Bibliographies for Intercultural Understanding’. He named Lin in the ‘Fiction’ section for Leaf in the Storm and Moment in Peking; in the ‘General’ section for The Importance of Living and My Country and My People and all three of his daughters in the

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663 Massey, The People Puzzle, 8.
       ________. Between Tears and Laughter.
       ________. The Wisdom of Laotse.
665 Erikson, Identity: Youth and Crisis, 211.
       Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, The Secret Name.
‘Biography’ section for Our Family. For the Lin family to have five books out of 40 listed under ‘The Chinese’ section after only ten years in American publishing circles, shows just how influential this family was to American perceptions of Chinese culture. Lin was the dominant writer of the family and fame and usefulness, youthfully embedded goals as markers of success for Lin, were reinforced by this acclaim. Contemporary references to Lin’s writing demonstrate his continuing influence in Sino-Western understanding, but it is the work of his early American publications that are still cited in the twenty-first century. Lin maintained fame with his dominant expertise, writing, as his dominant life script and encouraged his wife and daughters to do likewise.

Lin’s translations of classical Chinese short stories based on women, such as the trilogy Widow Nun and Courtesan; his foray into political expose, The Secret Name; and a ‘tongue-in-cheek’ Pacific Island utopian fiction, Looking Beyond, demonstrate his genre versatility. In all Lin reinforces his preferred life-goal of making his mark as a person useful to humanity.

Not content with making his mark in the literary world, Lin always kept up a parallel vocation in his repertoire, inventing. He invented useful devices from an early age. Ironically, it was a result of his single-minded approach to one of his inventions, along with China’s financial downturn, that left Lin without a buyer, without funds and facing financial ruin.

4.5 Invention

Lin’s dalliance with inventing as a child was a hobby that became a lasting pattern throughout his life. Much of his youthful interest in inventing stems from a love of solving problems; however, in his adult life, it reinforced his goal to become useful and perhaps famous. The Western world in which Lin lived for a great deal of his life was driven by compulsive mechanisation—a drive that later focused on computerisation. Although it did not bring fortune to Lin, his Chinese typewriter did bring him increased fame in the form of recognition by Western science and later computer theorists, albeit posthumously.

669 Taiyi Lin, ‘Introduction’, in IL.
Figure 4.1: Lin’s Chinese character typewriter

‘[Lin] found a printer in NY to mold the types, and he found a small engineering firm to make the model. …The thing was undeniably ingenious. Its 72-key input allowed the operator to search and combine in order to produce a total of 7,000 characters, on a machine no larger than a regular office typewriter.’

Financing the invention was the problem: bills mounted, and Loo Chin-tsai, an antique dealer and friend, ‘loaned Lin tens of thousands of dollars to finish the model’. Anor called her father’s concentration on making a working model of his invention ‘obstinacy’, but perhaps it was nearer to an obsession because he invested all his capital into the production of a model. For Lin, it was his childhood goal to be useful to society. This typewriter was his vision to improve the efficiency with which written Chinese characters were used in the modern, daily lives of literate Chinese language writers. International Business Machines Corporation (IBM) cites 1946 as the year that ‘the Chinese typewriter’ was invented. According to Thomas Mullaney, IBM cites ‘inventor Gao Zhongqin’ with the 1946 invention of a Chinese typewriter, but Gao’s patent was lodged with on 3 May 1946, 16 days after Lin’s on 17 April 1946. It may be because Gao was in partnership with IBM that his final patent was issued three and a half years earlier than Lin’s, perhaps showing the strength of industry

Brooks, ‘Lin Yutang’.
Ibid.
Ibid.
Ibid.
Lin, ‘Ming Kwai’.
Gao Zhongqin, Chinese Typewriter Patent number: 2458339; Filing date: May 3, 1946; Issue date: Jan 4, 1949
Lin Yutang, Chinese Typewriter Patent number: 2613795; Filing date: April 17, 1946; Issue date: October 14, 1952. Appendix D (3), 236.
industrial backing. Nevertheless John Savard credits Lin’s Ming Kwai typewriter as the ‘ancestor’ of Japanese, Chinese, Taiwanese and ‘phonic input systems’. This endorsement reinforces one of Lin’s primary goals – usefulness to humanity.

In 1947, Lin publicly unveiled his working typewriter model, but due to the downturn in the Chinese economy he received no offers to produce his machine.

Lin suffered financial disaster with the downturn of the Chinese economy. He needed to launch his Ming Kwai Chinese typewriter to recoup his massive outlay, ‘well over 100,000 dollars. I was down to a cent.’ His inability to sell his invention to Chinese manufacturers did not deter him from making the best of the situation by selling the patents to American companies. He ultimately sold some of his rights to the Mergenthaler Linotype Company in America and later the rest to the Taiwanese company Mitac, but made far less profit than the patent deserved. In hindsight, Lin shared his thoughts on this unfortunate turn of events with his daughter Taiyi:

Father was playing with a cardboard mock-up of the keyboard, he said, “The crux of the invention is here. The mechanical problems were not hard.” Then, could you have just used this mock-up to sell your invention? Was there any need to build the model?” I asked. He looked at me for a few seconds. “I suppose I could have,” he whispered, “but I couldn’t help myself. I had to make a real typewriter. I never dreamed it would cost so much.”

Clearly, Lin felt compelled to complete this project: a Chinese typewriter was a long time ambition that he felt the need to complete. He pushed his resources to the brink of bankruptcy to complete his invention. It was not the only time that he pushed himself to complete a project, as we shall see later.

As a result of his single-mindedness in producing a model of his Chinese typewriter, and China’s financial downturn post-WWII, Lin was left without a buyer and consequently without funds. He borrowed from his publishing company and tried to borrow more from Buck but was rebuffed. As we shall see later, this proved a turning point in his relationship

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678 Ibid.
681 Lin, Memoirs of an Octogenarian, 77.
682 Savard, ‘Keyboards for Genuinely Large Character Sets 2’.
684 MO, 77.
with Buck, Walsh and The John Day Company. Not that Lin could have foretold the immense changes in technology due to revolutionise the second half of the twentieth century, but his keyboard proved a useful tool for computerisation.\textsuperscript{685}

Lin’s ingenuity, coupled with his knowledge of Chinese linguistics and his persistent nature, drove him to complete the typewriter no matter what the cost.\textsuperscript{686} He had the typeface carved in NY’s Chinatown and manufactured the typewriter parts in country NY with the help of an Italian engineer.\textsuperscript{687} The completed machine was put to the test at the Remington Typewriter Company offices in NY.\textsuperscript{688} At its first trial it failed but at the second, staged in Lin’s apartment for a media release in The Times, it was a complete success.\textsuperscript{689} George Kennedy of Yale, himself the inventor of Mandarin shorthand, pronounced the finding system to be “the most efficient yet devised.”\textsuperscript{690}

Based on Thomas Mullaney’s research, William Sima relegates Lin’s typewriter to a system of character retrieval rather than the pioneer of Chinese typewriter:

Lin is often said to be the inventor of the Chinese typewriter, but Thomas Mullaney (Stanford University) dissected this claim to show that, far from inventing the machine, his innovation was in developing a novel system of character retrieval (jianzifa 檢字法)—a project itself embroiled in debate about language reform and the Chinese script’s compatibility with modernity and modern technology.\textsuperscript{691}

IBM eventually bought the rights to Lin’s machine from Ming Kwai and in the latter part of the twentieth century this keyboard proved invaluable for an American Airforce translation program and for Chinese character programs for computers.\textsuperscript{692} Inventing a useful aid for writers using Chinese characters was part of Lin’s goal to achieve what Meigung had wanted for him. According to Taiyi, her father found solace in the keyboard’s usefulness:

\begin{itemize}
\item Lin Taiyi, ‘Introduction’, in IL.
\item IBM and Itek Corporation later used ‘the keyboard to design a Chinese-English translation machine.’
\item Ibid.
\item Lin Taiyi, ‘Introduction’, in IL.
\item Brooks, ‘Lin Yutang’.
\end{itemize}
In 1985, the Mitac Automation Company of Taiwan bought Father’s “Instant Index System,” as his character classification is called, and made it the input system for its computers. “It is my legacy to the Chinese people,” Father said.693

Lin’s typewriter failed as a marketable product because of circumstances at that time. Even though his goal of being useful was not attained then, it later proved useful for computer programs.694 Down to a few cents in his pocket, nothing in his bank accounts and in debt to friends, Lin did not succumb to self-pity or even a lack of self-esteem.

In fact, I am almost tempted to dismiss Lin’s financial downturn as a significant emotional event, although it does confirm his ability to rise above failure. In times of crisis, Lin maintained his composure and used his intellect to recover financial stability again, showing his supreme self-confidence stemming from a stable and supportive childhood. Lin may well have felt conflicting emotions that his invention was used to develop a defence tool for America, when this country had rejected his pleas for defence tools for China only a few years before. It is a testament to his character that Lin did not let this sobering thought depress him, particularly when he received a pittance in return for his investment in producing the machine.

His lack of success with his Chinese typewriter did not turn Lin away from investing energy in his products, but changed his direction more towards less fiscally demanding tasks.695 Finances were always something secondary to Lin, and for the most part detached from his life goals, but nevertheless they continued to plague him. Although the financial failure through the production of a working model for his Chinese typewriter was one of the most traumatic episodes in Lin’s mid-life, it allowed Lin to achieve one of his father’s dreams: one of Zhizheng’s sons was acknowledged in a Western scientific journal. Lin’s contribution to the mechanisation of recording the Chinese written language is recorded in the June 1963 edition of *Scientific American*:

> We have investigated a geometric-recognition scheme that the Chinese author and scholar Lin Yutang had devised for a typewriter. A prototype machine, called the Sinowriter, was developed jointly by IBM and the Mergenthaler Linotype Company for the Air Force. In using the Sinowriter the operator is forced to recognize particular shapes in the upper and lower portions of the character.696

Currently, Lin’s index system, ‘the Lin Yutang code’, is named as one of only ‘six index systems’ listed by Chinese University Hong Kong computer theorists for computer translation

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694 Ibid.
systems. The mechanism for Lin’s Chinese translation typewriter is described in detail in Savard’s paper, ‘Keyboards for Genuinely Large Character Sets’. Appendix D (3) gives more details about this invention, with pictorial documentation of the prototype model.

This failure to create a production line Chinese typewriter showed a determination to complete tasks undertaken that held Lin in good stead as a writer.


It was a ‘common script’ lasting from youth to old age. Lin knew that his dominant script of Chinese philology, traceable from his youthful essays to his *opus magnum*, the Chinese-English dictionary, was a fulfilment of his father’s hope and Meigong’s entreaty. As his autumn years progressed, Lin had the opportunity to venture into architecture, and he chose to build a transcultural home on the side of a mountain. He chose nature as the backdrop for a structure that clearly illustrates elements of East and West.

### 4.6 Transcultural Architecture

Lin’s interest in architecture was first aroused when he was about twelve years-of-age: his father built a new church in Banzai and experienced design difficulties. It was an event from childhood important enough for Lin to write about it in his memoirs. Lin moved house frequently during his adult life, however, two imprints of house as home – one at the start of his life and the other at the end – allow observation of the similarities between them. The foundations for Lin’s concept of a model home were imprinted from his childhood home in Banzai: a U-shaped building around a courtyard with a water source. The family living area

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699 Appendix D (3), 236.
700 Lin, ‘Chinese Index System’.
701 Lin, ‘Compiling Method for a Categorized Idiom Dictionary’.
703 WP.
704 MO, 22.
706 PC, 22.
is on the ground floor with a bedroom above. When Lin was given the opportunity to design a home he broached it from two perspectives: the notion of a home as a physical and emotional structure, as described in *With Love and Irony*. Here, Lin claimed Peking was a model city because ‘every house has a courtyard, and every courtyard has a jar of goldfish and a pomegranate tree’.

Offered the opportunity to create his own design for a new house in Taiwan, Lin kept close to his ideal for a home: on a mountainside abutting Yangmingshan National Park overlooking Taipei. In 2004 Gavin Philips, journalist for the *Taipei Times*, cited the ‘Lin Yutang Residence’ as one of the finest examples of Taipei’s ‘historic buildings’.

Built in 1966, the uniqueness of its style, coupled with its celebrated designer, Lin Yutang and architect, Wang Dahong (1918–), a fellow Harvard graduate, ensured its heritage listing.

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706 Taiyi Lin, *Lin Yutang zhuan*.
Yet is it really a modern design? Comparing a plan of Lin’s Taipei home juxtaposed with a model of a siheyuan or courtyard design, below, dating from the Zhou Dynasty (c. 1046–256BCE) shows both a reinforcement of a Chinese architectural template and a remarkable resemblance to his original home in Banzai.

Lin designed his home arranged around a courtyard; as with his childhood home in Banzai and a siheyuan Chinese home. The courtyard, with its fish-pond and bamboo features, is the focus, with most rooms opening onto it. Lin’s floor plan is a close approximation of a siheyuan, a common template for buildings across China for the past 2,000 years. However, it also contains elements of Western architecture in its Spanish style, tiled-roof, white walls and spiral columns. It is considered representative of both Eastern and Western architecture, reflecting a transcultural construct by Lin and a product of his cross-cultural life.

Lin’s choice of a traditional Chinese style with modern European components reflects his early life experiences: an Eastern style incorporating elements of Western structures, claiming the best of both cultures. The Lin Yutang House on Yangmingshan describes Lin the man: predominantly a product of the East with just enough of the West inculcated into his makeup to have his social commentaries on both cultures accepted by worldwide audiences. Lin’s taste in architecture is self-reflective: the house personifies Lin’s plan for his autumn and spring years, with his eldest daughter close at hand. It was only the emotional disruption of Adet’s death that sent Lin and Cuifeng retreating to Hong Kong to be with their remaining daughters and grandchildren.

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713 Ibid.
Lin’s rendering in English of a Li Yu paragraph on the rules for an ideal home allows us to compare this with his design for the house built on Yangmingshan. The description in Appendix F, viewed as a causal continuum, started from the front gate and continuing along the path, ending in the emotional space created by the balance of nature and cultural structure that ensured peace for visitors and implied a relaxing emotional environment for the householders. The detail, even down to dictates for the behaviour between hosts and guests, is an example of Lin’s expertise with classical Chinese scholarship.

It is in this attention to detail that Lin’s principles hold true: nature and culture must be balanced. Lin adheres to Taoist strictures for structured familial space, such as ‘pavilion’ and ‘house’ and divisions of space, such as ‘screens’ and ‘walls’, while embracing natural features in the setting to stimulate a tranquil environment for nurturing human psyches. His childhood in a home within a small rural town in a setting of mountains and rivers allowed Lin to foster his talents and develop a strong sense of self-worth that carried him through his nomadic life journey. His thirst for the mountains, while living in NY, demonstrated his reluctance to move on from his early childhood experience of rural security and embrace the urban concrete jungle environment, no matter how rich a resource its universities, libraries and art galleries might provide:

Sometimes, while walking in the streets of Manhattan at night, I scandalized my wife by letting out a loud yawn or a sudden deliberate and prolonged scream. I was liberating myself. For though I walked upon the sidewalks of Manhattan, mine eyes still saw the untrammelled spaces of mountain peaks and mine ears still heard the sweet laughter and chatter of the mountain streams, and I was unafraid.

Lin’s use of biblical language, ‘though I walked’ and ‘mine eyes’, to describe his visualisation of urban NY and connecting it to the natural environment of his childhood, allowed him to link mountains with his spiritual journey. His behaviour was a consequence drawn from his early childhood experience: embracing nature then, even if only through visualisation, was necessary for Lin to feel comfortable.

A new house was not necessarily meaningful in Lin’s life journey and there are no facts supporting that assumption; however, making his home in a new country without the support of his two younger daughters and their grandchildren was a bold move for Lin and Cuifeng.

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714 Appendix F, 238: Li Yu Ideal Home.  
715 *IL*, 267–268.  
716 *IL*, vii.  
717 *IL*, 267–268.  
718 *PC*, 42.  
719 *Bible*, 23rd Psalm.
The shift to Taipei, in itself was a significant emotional event: next to death of close family members, changing houses comes second as the most stressful period in life and Lin was looking forward to the tranquillity of their autumn and winter years. In fact, Lin changed from his usual psychological protection—threat or emotional insecurity driving him to rural environments—when he left the semi-rural Yangmingshan home to live in the urban environment of Hong Kong. This is the ‘thrownness’ of a ‘prototype’, confirming its authenticity.\textsuperscript{719}

### 4.7 Chapter Summary

Based on an education and scholarship in Chinese and English, gained in China, America and Europe, Lin launched a career in writing. He brought with him a plethora of knowledge built on Western philosophy and Chinese classics that he drew from in founding his own theories. However, Lin’s fervour to absorb Chinese folklore was the consequence of a childhood deprived of it.\textsuperscript{720} He established a readership that followed his penchant for editing and publishing magazines, particularly in his genre of youmo writing.

Encouraged by Buck, Lin wrote his first book for an American audience that set a career course for the rest of his life. Lin took this ‘specific event’ and built on it with further books to establish a ‘history of reinforcement’, making cross-cultural and transcultural writing a ‘common script’ for life.\textsuperscript{721} In America, Lin built his readership by writing on topics that he was connected to – narratives from within his motherland – allowing him to reinforce his approach and confirm his influence in his adopted language and culture. His appeal to audiences equally in Chinese and English, to say nothing of the other languages his major successes were translated into, is a unique quality that makes his contribution to global society lasting. With America as his base, Lin travelled extensively during the next 30 years while publishing articles in magazines and producing books for worldwide publication. Buck and her husband Walsh continued to support him as mentors, editors, publishers and advisors. Lin risked his popularity in America during WWII by publishing irate comments against America’s lack of support for China. Following his Chinese typewriter invention that almost bankrupted him and a disagreement over royalties with Walsh, Lin left the protection of The John Day Company. Lin used a script of adversity as a basis for opportunity: unfruitful


\textsuperscript{720} \textit{WP}.

\textsuperscript{721} Ibid.
ventures became the motivation for new enterprises—university leadership, invention and lecturing. Lin Yutang’s *Chinese-English Dictionary of Modern Usage* was the culmination of a sequence of writing that fulfilled a lifetime ambition to be useful and famous, fired by his father and sister in early childhood.

Just as English became his means to fame and fortune through his cross-cultural writing, so his invention of a Chinese-character keyboard for a typewriter was the guide for future internet character writing and translation programs. Acknowledgement in *Scientific American* for his typewriter meant achieving yet another of his father’s dreams: Zhizheng wanted his children to contribute to Western science because he saw it as the future of humanity. Lin used his creative skills to design a cross-cultural home in Taipei. The ‘effect of early life history on achievement’ emerged as a forceful agent in Lin’s later scholarly and creative vocational life. Lin embraced the acceptance of his work as native informant making him one of the most popular twentieth century interpreters of Chinese culture for Western readers. While the imprint of childhood was life-long, it was not the only theme in Lin’s life. Women influenced Lin’s character and personality development, as well as the choices he made for his writing: they were a discernible presence in his life from birth to death.

722 WP.
Chapter 5: The Significance of Women in the Life of Lin

My view of woman is not due to a motherhood complex, but is due to the influence of the Chinese family ideal.\textsuperscript{723}

Lin Yutang

5.1 Introduction

Women provided a framework for Lin’s choices and a theme affecting his writing, generating a ‘prototypical scene’ with a touch of fantasy that goes with such themes.\textsuperscript{724} Apart from his father, women were central to Lin’s early childhood experiences. In adult years sometimes these were simply meetings over the dinner table, but at other times they were full-blown encounters that affected Lin’s life in a substantial way. There is no doubt that women, Western women in particular, fascinated Lin, while Chinese women modelled the high moral ideals of womanhood that he held throughout his life. He wrote a plethora of books, short stories, translations and magazine articles about women, and recalled them with fondness in his memoirs: his mother, sisters, women missionaries, girlfriend, sweetheart, wife, daughters, political figures, friends, an actress, other writers, landladies and dinner party guests.

This chapter reviews the role that women played in confirming Lin’s basic beliefs, ultimately resulting in choices made during his youth and creating ‘attitudes and concerns’ for his adult years.\textsuperscript{725} He entered a world dominated by an empress who ruled through her nephew: Lin’s ‘early life history’ was affected by that nephew’s beliefs.\textsuperscript{726} Lin’s mother and sisters established foundational patterns for his values and beliefs. His mother, who could only read in her local dialect, may well have motivated his stance promoting colloquial language in modern writing and his sister’s strictures for him to become ‘good’, ‘famous’ and ‘useful’ were foremost in his mind until his last productive days. Other women essential to Lin’s foundational beliefs were his childhood playmate, Juniper Loa, and missionary and temperance women who set the mould that shaped Lin’s lifetime attitudes against fornication, music, drugs, alcohol and course language. These values flowed into his creative output of writing. Following Lin’s beliefs and judgements about women over his lifetime will help to ‘generate new hypotheses and insights’ about him.\textsuperscript{727}

\textsuperscript{723} JL, 182.
\textsuperscript{725} WP.
\textsuperscript{726} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{727} McAdams, ‘What Psychobiographers Might Learn from Personality Psychology’, 79.
5.2 Historical Perceptions of Women

Lin maintained a unique view of women in China, based on his early childhood and youthful experiences. A conventional view of Chinese women in the 1900s was one of educational disempowerment and servitude that Lin explained as part of Imperial Chinese culture.\textsuperscript{728} Although arguing against such imposts as foot-binding and educational restrictions for women, Lin held a conservative view regarding the role of women and family.

Lin is, for historian Li Yu-ning, one of a number of writers using ‘the humanist strain of Chinese thought, which informed much of the writing about Chinese women and the attempts to improve their status.’\textsuperscript{729} In adult life, Lin ruminated on Western perceptions of Chinese women by posing the question:

Have women really been suppressed in China, I often wonder? The powerful figure of the Empress Dowager immediately comes to mind. Women have suffered many disadvantages, have been prevented from holding stenographic positions or judicial posts, but women have ruled nevertheless in the home, … Marriage is women’s only inalienable right in China, and with the enjoyment of that right, they have the best weapon for power, as wife and as mother.\textsuperscript{730}

Throughout his life, Lin held the view that the greatest strength for women lay in their sexual and reproductive powers as wives and mothers. He viewed pre-Confucian times as analogous with the decadence of ancient Rome:

… with numerous cases of incest with stepmothers, with daughters-in-law, with sisters-in-law, the presentation of one’s wife to a neighbouring ruler, the marrying of a son’s wife for one’s own benefit, illicit relations between the queen and the prime minister, etc,... Woman, who is always powerful in China, was powerful then.... Then came Confucianism with its seclusion of women.\textsuperscript{731}

The separation of men, with duties outside the home, and women, with duties inside the home, mandated obedience to the head-of-household. The household is a model for the state in obedience to the head-of-state. Even with this edict in mind, Lin held that women were not bound totally to disempowerment.

The importance of Empress Dowager Cixi to Lin’s beliefs about women should not be underestimated. It may go too far to acknowledge her as a major influence, but certainly her

\textsuperscript{729} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{730} Lin, MCMP, 144.
\textsuperscript{731} Ibid, 138.
power in the political world of the young Lin is documented in his acclaimed first best-selling book in America, *My Country and My People*. When Lin was born:

The Empress Dowager ruled the nation, whether Emperor Hsienfeng was living or not. There are many Empress Dowagers in China still, politically or in common households. The home is the throne from which she makes appointments for mayors or decides the professions of her grandsons. ... The more one knows Chinese life, the more one realizes that the so-called suppression of women is an Occidental criticism that somehow is not borne out by a closer knowledge of Chinese life. The phrase certainly cannot apply to the Chinese mother and supreme arbiter of the household.

Cixi established a pattern of behaviour for Lin regarding Chinese women’s power, at least the potential of power, notwithstanding the physical limitations of foot-binding and lack of sport and exercise or lack of educational opportunities.

### 5.3 Youthful Perceptions

In youth and romance and love, the world is pretty much the same, only the psychological reactions differ as a result of different social traditions.

Lin Yutang

#### 5.3.1 The Eros of Youth

While at St John’s College, an all-male tertiary institution, Lin courted the sister of one of one of his St John’s peers from his school days on Gulangyu. Jinduan, who studied at nearby St Mary’s Girls’ School in Shanghai, majored in art while Lin changed his major to literature after opting out of theological studies during his first year. Lin recalls his school friend as one ‘whose sister I loved passionately.’ This is the first recorded experience of Lin’s feeling of *eros* being seriously engaged: research supports the claim that he never lost touch with those feelings, by recalling them through stories. Robyn Fivush and Catherine Hayden explain the importance of our life stories:

> We are all storytellers, and we are the stories we tell. The stories we tell about our personal experiences grow in complexity and detail as we move through childhood and into the adolescent and young adult years (Fivush & Haden, 2003).

Lin courted Chen during his time at St John’s College and, on a trip to Gulangyu, visited her home with the aim of asking for her hand in marriage. He was rebuffed by her father, Dr Chen, a wealthy banker and Christian. Two main factors made Lin ineligible: his loss of

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732 Ibid.
733 Ibid, 145.
734 *MCMP*, 155.
735 *MO*, 35.
737 *MO*, 35–36.
738 Ibid, 36.
faith and his family’s farming background, albeit that his father was a Christian minister. Dr Chen cunningly introduced Lin to a neighbour, Liao Cuifeng (1896–1987), daughter of a wealthy businessman Liao Yuefa.\footnote{The House of Lin Yutang, ‘About Lin Yutang’} Lin interpreted this move by Dr Chen as an emphatic rejection of his desire to wed Jinduan and returned home to Banzai so desolate that he ‘broke down and wept’ when his mother asked him what was wrong.\footnote{MO, 36.} When Lin explained that Jinduan’s father had recommended him to the family next door for their daughter, mother and son both knew that it was hopeless to pursue a match with Jinduan any further.\footnote{Ibid.}

That this heartbreak of youth was a significant emotional event for Lin is witnessed by the words he recorded near the time of his death:\footnote{Massey, The People Puzzle, 8.}

> I was in love with C-, a girl of fabulous beauty. It was hopeless because C’s father was interested in a big catch for one rich boy from a well-known and solid family, and almost succeeded.\footnote{MO, 36.}

The subtle humour expressed in this statement provides insight into how Lin dealt with rebuff, negativity and unsympathetic reviews—his defence theme.\footnote{WP.} His humour was renowned in China long before Western literary circles acknowledged it. For Lin, humour showed the highest form of intelligence and he obviously practised what he espoused. It is in light of his humour that a second witness of Lin’s rebuff by Dr Chen as a suitor for this daughter arises. Two properties on Gulangyu are identified as Lin Yutang’s: one was the property of his wife’s family and the other is the property of Jinduan’s family.\footnote{Title search, government staff on Gulangyu, 2008: confirmed that these were previously the property of the Liao and Chen families.} Lin acquired both houses when the heads of these households, as bankers, fell prey to declining fortunes in post-WWII banking.\footnote{Bank of China, ‘Bank of China Fought against the Foreign Exchange Transfer Order of Nanjing Government but Failed(1947–1948)’, accessed 23 April 2013, http://www.boc.cn/en/aboutboc/ab7/200809/t20080926_1601860.html. Wu, ‘Lin YuTang (2)’.
No. 44 and No. 48, the only two residences at the end of a private laneway, are clearly marked as ‘Residences of Lin Yutang’ on tourist maps of the area.\footnote{\textit{Lin houses on Gulangyu}, the author, September 2008.} One can sense the elation that Lin experienced by both saving the home of his wife’s family (who had supported him in times of need early in his marriage, while believing that Cuifeng was marrying beneath her station), and buying the property of the man who rejected him as a suitor (on the grounds of his lack of material prospects later in life), when their financial fortunes had reversed. It is this dual use of textual humour and practical deed satisfaction—irony without the vindictiveness often associated with it—that shows a fatalism requiring patience.\footnote{Wu, ‘Lin YuTang (1)’.}

It is hard to prove that Jinduan lingered in Lin’s affections, except that whenever she visited Lin’s home after he was married, Lin fussied with concern and made much of his old sweetheart’s comfort.\footnote{Ibid.} That the rejection by Jinduan’s family was a significant emotional event in Lin’s life is evident in his long term goals and his action in buying her family home when their fortunes were reversed in the 1940s.

In 1916, at the age of 21 Lin, accepting that marriage to Jinduan was a lost cause, became engaged to Cuifeng. Lin’s sisters had been at school with Cuifeng – although she was younger and in a lower class than either of them – and his father, mother and surviving sister Yizhen argued Cuifeng’s virtues Lin as a possible wife.\footnote{Ibid.} She had excellent housekeeping skills and therefore, in Chinese terms, was sound wife material. Cuifeng was not as well-educated as Jinduan; however, with Lin’s sister’s backing, the engagement was arranged while Lin was in Shanghai and his bride-to-be on Gulangyu, Xiamen.\footnote{Ibid.} Cuifeng found it vastly amusing...
whenever Jinduan’s name was raised in conversation because she had accepted Lin without formal introduction – although he had been aware that someone in the Liao household did his laundry when he visited the Chen family. He did not marry her until four years later perhaps because the marriage was based on arrangement rather than passion. Lin’s tardiness in marrying Cuifeng demonstrated his lack of interest in the match and his final acquiescence may have been more to gain access to Cuifeng’s dowry than to appease his family. It confirmed Lin’s goal of commitment to his father’s goal for a son, to study at a Western university, and his duty to marry a practical wife. This led to a life-long marriage with a woman who, despite being both practical and conservative, defied parental directions to follow her heart. The troubled political and economic times, along with Lin’s restless nature, saw this partnership tested but never crumble; showing his commitment to a ‘preferred life story sequence’ – faithful monogamy. Lin used Cuifeng’s dowry money to finance a honeymoon in America where he had been accepted as a Masters candidate at Harvard University.

The boat trip to America was challenging for both Lin and his bride: Cuifeng had an attack of appendicitis that forced her to lie in her cabin for most of the voyage with Lin constantly at her side. Although the other passengers thought them reclusive honeymooners, in reality it was anything but romantic. In Hawaii, Lin considered taking her ashore for an operation, but Cuifeng rallied and the need passed. However, not long after they arrived in America Cuifeng underwent emergency surgery. The cost of this drew heavily on their financial resources, leaving Lin with a liquidity problem. The reciprocal devotion of Lin to Cuifeng throughout her medical ordeal and Cuifeng’s concern for Lin’s welfare as her dowry money ran out shows the strength of this union from its earliest days. The draining of their meagre resources for living meant that Lin needed to earn money soon after his arrival in America. His ability to gain financial support from China, his brother-in-law, Hu and from Harvard by winning minor literary contests without resorting to undue drama emphasises his underlying

753 Wu, ‘Lin Yutang (1)’.
754 MO, 35–36.
755 Wu, ‘Lin Yutang (2)’.
756 WP.
757 MO, 39.
758 Wu, ‘Lin YuTang (1)’.
759 Taiyi Lin, Lin Yutang zhuan, 37.
760 Ibid.
761 Murray, ‘Lighting the Candle and Cursing the Darkness’.
confidence in his ability to provide. Lin reinforced his pattern of relying on his skill as a writer and his pattern of appealing to family and friends for temporary financial support. His response to each fiscal challenge during his higher degree studies confirmed his youthful belief that confidence in his expertise could overcome all adversity. Yet in the years that followed his marriage, Lin found that the women in his life forced changes to his life choices.

5.4 Liao Cuifeng

The wedding photo below shows a confident maturity in Cuifeng’s face, while Lin’s face is one of emotional immaturity.

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Figure 5.4: Liao Cuifeng and Lin Yutang

After Lin married Cuifeng the linguistic chasm between them showed in their domestic conversations. According to their daughters, when Lin tried to share his amusement at what he found in books Cuifeng faked her understanding and appreciation. Taiyi wrote that:

Every time he spoke at home it was only about the contents of books, his thoughts or his theories. Cuifeng did not understand what he was talking about. Sometimes the books made him laugh or moved him to tears but although he would tell her the funny bits and she listened attentively, she did not necessarily find them humorous. Still she would laugh with him.

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762 MO, 41.
763 MO, 37.
764 Taiyi Lin, Lin Yutang zhuan, 38.
Cuifeng was not unintelligent, but Lin’s grasp of the English language far surpassed her own familiarity and understanding of the nuances and humour that lies in a complex comprehension of a language. Lin reinforced his life-theme of peace within the family from the Christian values instilled by his parents. Lin never expressed disappointment that Cuifeng was less able intellectually than he and in this showed empathy absent in his youth when he teased his mother for her lack of quick-wittedness.\textsuperscript{765} Lin neither condescended in conversations with women nor weakened his arguments with them, but chose his topics with sensitivity to their expertise and strengths. He later encouraged Cuifeng to publish books on her expertise, Chinese cuisine.\textsuperscript{766}

Lin’s appreciation of Cuifeng’s financial management of their funds grew during this time, just as her admiration for her husband’s unwavering support for her during a period of ill-health nurtured their new relationship. This was reinforcement, a consequence of values instilled in childhood. Lin said:

\begin{quote}
In the old tradition, girls were brought up for boys; they were to cook and wash and sew, in fact, trained to be able to do ordinary household affairs so as to fit them for any family they may marry into. They were not to show themselves in the front rooms or in public except on occasional outings of a religious character. An outstanding result of this discrimination was that the girls turned out to make beautiful wives while boys, pampered and spoilt, and lacking the initiative, never amounted to much.\textsuperscript{767}
\end{quote}

The birth of his first two daughters affected Lin’s preferred script for pursuit of his goals: both rapid changes of location were made because of Cuifeng demanding the shift. The first change was when the birth of his first daughter, Adet, was imminent: her advent was a delightful surprise to the Liins because Cuifeng had been told that her appendectomy in 1920, had destroyed her chances of conceiving.\textsuperscript{768} Cuifeng demanded that they return to China for the birth, forcing Lin to literally run from professor to professor at the University of Leipzig, collecting their signatures to complete his doctorate degree before leaving by ship for China.\textsuperscript{769} Here Lin demonstrated a behavioural pattern developed in adulthood—sensitivity towards the needs of women.

Another shift in location came three weeks after the birth of his second daughter, Anor, when Lin was on Zhang’s list of dissidents: Cuifeng found that Lin ‘had a rope made’ to use as an

\textsuperscript{765} MO, 15.
\textsuperscript{766} Lin, Tsuifeng and Hsiangju Lin, \textit{The Secrets of Chinese Cooking}.
\textsuperscript{767} MO, 35.
\textsuperscript{768} Murray, ‘Lighting the Candle and Cursing the Darkness.’
\textsuperscript{769} Wu, ‘Lin Yutang (1).’
escape route from an attic window if the soldiers came for him.\textsuperscript{770} She demanded that they leave the province so Lin, after hiding in the home of ‘Dr Robert Lin … for three weeks’, took his family to Xiamen and safety.\textsuperscript{771} So Cuifeng — with the vulnerability of birthing and nursing a newborn baby — sought Lin’s support for a change in location and was given it. Lin’s consideration for Cuifeng shows an empathy that denies an egotistical nature, even though he displayed supreme confidence in his abilities.

After the Singapore misadventure, where communist activists threatened the Lin family, Lin’s commitment to Cuifeng’s return to full health is summed up by Bruce Brooks: the Lins ‘moved to the south of France, where the two of them lived in extreme simplicity, growing potatoes on their terrace, and putting Lin’s pen to work to rebuild their fortunes’.\textsuperscript{772} His return to a simple life was a Taoist reaction to stress. The severe emotional strain of six months of stress in Singapore was counter-balanced by a year of country living in rural France. Lin returned to rural life after the trauma of Beijing and because of Cuifeng’s emotional state after Singapore. This reinforced Lin’s preferred script of returning to the countryside as the ultimate healer: for Lin, mountains and rivers healed emotional wounds and restored physical strength. Lin’s belief in the pace of rural living as an antidote to the pressures of urban living comes from his prototypical scene stemming from childhood and reinforced by his Taoist research of Laozi (6\textsuperscript{th}c BCE) and Zhuangzi (4\textsuperscript{th}c BCE).\textsuperscript{773}

Lin showed no antipathy towards his wife raising her profile in America. After their trip to China in 1940, the women of the Lin family forged their own campaign to raise funds for war-torn China.\textsuperscript{774} In her discussion with members of the American Women’s Association in October 1941, Cuifeng reportedly said that women in China would sooner die than be enslaved and that they were working in factories for ‘patriotism, nationalism and self-emancipation’.\textsuperscript{775} As the marriage progressed, Lin held Cuifeng in deep affection: this shows in the way he honoured her in his publications, ultimately earning his accolade of ‘An Old Sweetheart’, using the title of a poem by James Whitcomb Riley for her unswerving loyalty.\textsuperscript{776} There is no doubt that Lin was devoted to Cuifeng and their daughters, who he encouraged to conquer educational challenges and social ones.

\textsuperscript{770} Murray, ‘Lighting the Candle and Cursing the Darkness.’
\textsuperscript{771} MO, 63–64.
\textsuperscript{772} Brooks, ‘Lin Yutang’.
\textsuperscript{773} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{775} Unknown reporter, ‘China’s Women Fight On: Mme Lin Yutang Says They Prefer Death to Enslavement’, The New York Times, 17 October 1941.
\textsuperscript{776} MO, 38.
Lin wrote about the influence of women on his life in several books, but in *From Pagan to Christian* he wrote in particular about the example of living their faith. Lin’s return to Christian practise was initiated by the example of Cuifeng, who remained constant in her church attendance throughout their marriage. Her example of faithfulness is reflected in Lin’s history of advocacy to improve the universal educational rights of women: this became a ‘prototypical scene’ in Lin’s life story. At 37 years old, and married for only 13 years, Lin announced his spousal virtue—‘I have never abandoned my wife’—and there is no evidence that he was untrue to this declaration of fidelity. Lin claimed that he had the opportunity to do otherwise but rejected the offer. All one can say empirically is that Lin always considered himself an honourable man and a faithful husband, in act at least, if not in mind. Lin believed that he was a caring spouse who held high ethical values regarding women as his standard life-theme throughout his life and little that he did or wrote proves otherwise.

5.5 The Daughters

The plight of his beloved sister Meigong yearning for a tertiary education was of such importance for Lin the boy that Lin the man became an advocate for women’s right to access higher education. His daughters were raised in a different time and place to their parents, America post-WWII. Unlike Cuifeng and Meigong, having worked in munitions factories and farms during WWII American women demanded access to education and vocations after the war. Lin’s daughters were given every possible chance to fulfil their academic potential. For example, Adet attended the Dalton School in NY, while Anor and Hsiangju attended the Ethical Culture School; all three opportunities thanks to their father’s influence.

NOTE:
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Figure 5.5: Cuifeng, Hsiangju, Anor, Lin & Adet

777 PC.
780 PC, 53.
781 Wu, ‘Lin YuTang (2)’.
Lin promoted the potential of women as a concrete example by encouraging his daughters to write and helping them to publish from an early age.

Adet (Ju-ssu) and Anor (Taiyi) first published *Our Family* in 1939 and *Dawn over Chongqing* in 1941.\(^{782}\) Although only eight years old, Hsiangju, with the pet name of Meimei, is acknowledged on the front cover as author of the ‘Foreward’ and ‘Commentator’ for the text of *Our Family*: but the most interesting fact is that Buck is also on the front cover, credited with the ‘Introduction’. This gave the book literary credibility: Buck had won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1938, in part ‘for her biographical masterpieces’ that surpassed Lin’s own reputation.\(^{783}\)

With three daughters developing into young women during the 1940s and 1950s, it is understandable that Lin honed his preferred script of writing about women. In 1940 The John Day Company published a second book by Adet and Anor: it was their own interpretation of the Chinese warrior woman Hsieh Ping-ying – *Girl Rebel: The Autobiography of Hsieh Ping-ying* – presumably aided by their father’s translations of 1927.\(^{784}\) The women in Lin’s family were the backdrop to his writings on the feminine that increased noticeably during the time his daughters were establishing their independence.\(^{785}\)

At 18 years old, Adet made an acceptance speech for her father when his book *With Love and Irony* was judged as ‘one of the ten most important books of non-fiction in 1940’ by eminent critics for *Current History and Forum*.\(^{786}\) By entrusting his eldest daughter to make this public speech on his behalf, he empowered her. Lin wanted his daughters to have the opportunities that his mother and sister-mentor, did not. However, I question his decision to take his wife and daughters with him on a four month trip to a war zone to make a political statement.\(^{787}\) It makes him at least reckless with his family’s lives and at worst uncaring and does not seem to fit his pattern of protecting women.

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\(^{787}\) Staff Reporter, ‘Dr. Lin Going Home’, *The New York Times*, 16\(^{th}\) February 1940.
The incidents when Lin removed his family from possible harm reveal attributes of a prototypical scene by providing us with a series of cause and effect scenarios. Lin reacted to the threat of harm in Beijing by shifting his family and self to a safe place, Xiamen. This became a predictable behaviour: when the bombing of Chongqing threatened his family’s safety, Lin took them back to America and when his family’s safety was under threat in Singapore he moved them to France. Lin consciously repeated the act of removal on each occasion. In all cases this was possibly more about the safety of his family than his own and as such it demonstrates dedication to his wife and daughters.

After completing her studies at Columbia University, Adet returned to China in 1945, followed by Anor in 1946: both sisters had attained ‘captain commissions’ in the Chinese army.\(^{788}\) Adet had a rebellious streak: believing that her family attracted too much attention in America: she craved a return to China to help her ‘fellow Chinese’ in the aftermath of WWII.\(^{789}\) Adet worked in a ‘medical ward’.\(^{790}\) She became engaged to a doctor and wedding invitations had been printed. However, Wu tells us that:

> Days before the wedding invitations were sent out from the Lin home, however, Adet eloped with a white friend, named Dick. Lin YuTang and Cuifeng would never really grasp her reasons behind the change.\(^{791}\)

In this scenario, her first act of major rebellion, Adet essentially separated herself from the scrutiny of the American press. Her parents received the news of her marriage a fortnight later through a reporter for *TIME* magazine and Lin responded saying: ‘She will come home after a short period—I have no doubt of it.’\(^{792}\) Her parents were shocked but they did not disown her In his reaction, Lin exhibited a Taoist-like passivity to what was a significant emotional event of ‘family conflict’\(^{793}\). Twenty years later, Adet returned to live with her parents when they moved to Taipei.\(^{794}\) Her marriage also severed the authorial partnership that Adet shared with her younger sister, Anor.


\(^{789}\) Wu, ‘Lin YuTang (2)’.

\(^{790}\) Ibid.

\(^{791}\) Ibid.

\(^{792}\) Staff Reporter, ‘Holy Ned’, *TIMES*, 13 May 1946.


\(^{794}\) Brooks, ‘Lin Yutang’.
After Anor completed her secondary schooling in 1944, she became an assistant teacher in Chinese Studies at Yale University, through Lin’s influence. Anor adopted the pen name of Taiyi early in her writing career and was the closest to following in her father’s footsteps, working with him on projects such as her second solo book, *The Golden Coin*, and the presentation of his Chinese typewriter. After returning from China, Anor commenced in earnest her solo writing career, ultimately leading to her recognition as a noteworthy ‘Asian-American novelist’. She was Lin’s assistant in presenting his typewriter and made her doctoral dissertation on the life of her father. Anor became the editor of the Chinese *Readers’ Digest* in Hong Kong in 1965 and continued in that position until 1988. Anor was the daughter who became her father’s supporter and followed in his footsteps in a writing career; however, there is no evidence that she was the stimulus for any changes to Lin’s behavioural patterns. She did provide reinforcement for his creative output.

Lin’s youngest daughter, Hsiangju, under her Chinese pet name of Mei Mei, was included in her older sisters’ books at the tender ages of nine and eleven years. Hsiangju also co-authored Chinese recipe books with her mother, with a forward by Lin demonstrating his support for their writing. Hsiangju, completed a doctorate in biochemistry, worked at St Mary’s Hospital, Hong Kong and authored or co-authored ‘more than 70 scientific articles’ during her working life.

Like Anor, Hsiangju’s accomplishments reinforced her father’s goals: both obtained doctorates and Hsiangju by contributing to Western scientific research. Both of these goals Lin had acquired from Zhizheng. It is easy to see how Adet might well have measured her lack of success as an author (with one translation of Chinese folk tales after she married and

795 Wu, ‘Lin YuTang (2)’.
798 Ibid, 206.
801 Adet Lin, Anor Lin and Mei Mei Lin, *Dawn over Chungking*.
802 Lin, Tsui-feng and Lin Hsiangju, *Cooking with the Chinese Flavor*.
Answers.com, ‘Lin Yutang’.

138
left the family home), as failure in her father’s eyes. Lin encouraged his three daughters as much as possible, but perhaps he was still fulfilling his own goals vicariously, much as he had pursued his father’s and sister’s goals. Each daughter ostensibly pursued their own passions; however, it is easy to see Lin’s influence, and that of their grandfather, in Anor’s and Hsiangju’s choices. Here we see one of Lin’s patterns of behaviour fulfilling his dreams first through his writing and inventing and then through his children.

5.5.1 Loss of a Child

When Lin and Cuifeng accepted Chang Kai-shek’s offer to build them a home in Taipei, they had thought they would be close to their eldest daughter, Adet, who had settled in Taipei, taking a position as curator at the National Palace Museum. Adet’s marriage had failed, unlike those of her two sisters, and where they both had children, she had none. Her parents thought their presence would provide her with the family support she needed. This proved otherwise when she took her own life in 1971.

Lin theorised suicide as but one end of a spectrum of life’s desires: ‘After all the desire for immortality is very much akin to the psychology of suicide, its exact opposite. Both presume that the present world is not good enough for us.’ He theorised suicide by drawing a musical analogy with life as poetry or a grand musical masterpiece and suicide as a result of a discordant leitmotif caused by ‘lack of good self-education.’ In poetry, this discordant leitmotif acts like Ezra Pound’s imagist style, where ‘throwing of an image on the mind’s retina’ repeatedly eventually makes an impact.

Adet was privy to her father’s writing on suicide in *The Importance of Living*. Although Adet’s cryptic suicide note is commonly taken to refer to her failed marriage, Sohigian suggests that there may have been ‘other unknown troubles.’ Brooks says:

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803 Brooks, ‘Lin Yutang’.
804 *IL*, 82.
805 Ibid, 33.
806 OED: Leitmotif is ‘a recurrent theme throughout a musical or literary composition, associated with a particular person, idea, or situation.’
807 *IL*, 33.
808 Brooks, ‘Lin Yutang’.

Murray, ‘Lighting a Candle and Cursing the Darkness’.
Adet, presumably in despair over a failed marriage, hanged herself on the Palace Museum grounds. Her note said, "Forgive me, I can't live on. My heart is spent. I love you so much."  

The content of Adet’s note is well-known but biographers, with the exception of Sohigian, all have interpreted the words to mean that she was depressed because of the failure of her marriage, implying that the ‘you’ that she loved was her ex-husband. It is Lin’s conservative values regarding women that give rise to an alternative scenario for the farewell note left by his daughter. Based on her love for her parents and the fact that they lived in Taiwan, where she chose to take her own life, while her ex-husband lived in America, it is not the only conclusion one can draw.

There is no doubt of the romantic appeal in the notion that Adet committed suicide because of her failed marriage. However, I propose an equally compelling theory that also supports the words in her suicide note. After implying that the suicide was because Adet was ‘emotionally hurt by the divorce, and at times so depressed that she worried her parents and sisters’, Sohigian says that she left a note ‘for her parents’ and I agree with him. Sohigian’s assumption is sound not only because the note was left for her parents, who lived in Taipei, but also because it was not addressed to her ex-husband (as it would need to be for him to receive it). My proposition is that Adet felt a failure in the eyes of her parents—particularly her father—because he was the centre of her familial universe. There are two crucial factors that support this alternative theory of Adet’s suicide.

Firstly, Lin was Adet’s childhood mentor, her literary muse and, along with her mother, her support in her new life as a divorcée. Her father’s views on motherhood and the ‘independence’ aspirations of the women of modernity questioned: ‘What is wrong in protected motherhood?’ His strictures in The Importance of Living argued that motherhood is the greatest right of women and that:

\[
\text{Philosophy, therefore, has gone far astray when it departs from nature’s own conception and tries to make women happy without taking into account this maternal instinct which is the dominant trait and central explanation of her entire being.}
\]

Lin venerated motherhood as a woman’s right: he vaunted motherhood as an imperative for women:

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809 Brooks, ‘Lin Yutang’.
811 Murray, ‘Lighting the Candle and Cursing the Darkness’.
813 MCMP, 147.
814 IL, 186.
Thenceforth she has no doubt whatever in her mind as to her mission in life or the purpose of her existence. She is wanted. She is needed. And she functions.\textsuperscript{814}

Even more devastating for Adet was her father’s declaration that:

Women therefore, suffer most psychologically when this central motive power of their being is not being expressed and does not function.\textsuperscript{815}

In Adet’s case Lin’s prediction was profound and ingenuously intensified by his claim on the subject of childless people:

My point of view is, whatever the reason may be, the fact of a man or woman leaving this world without children is the greatest crime he or she can commit against himself or herself.\textsuperscript{816}

Added to these views, Lin’s novels appear to hold suicide as an option for women under pressure, for example, childless women in Lin’s most famous novel, Silverscreen and Redjade in \textit{Moment in Peking}, both committed suicide.

Secondly, divorce was not as accepted in her new country, the conservative Chinese community of Taiwan, as it was in America where she had lived as a married woman. Added to her unsuccessful marriage, Adet had no children to show for her married years and therefore no grandchildren to present to her parents (as had both of her sisters). These two factors alone were enough to make her feel depressed and to see herself a failure in her father’s eyes. It is far more probable that a perceived failure in her parent’s eyes would take Adet to the end of her self-esteem and shake her sense of self-worth more than the failure of a marriage she had left behind years before. Just as his failed romance with Jinduan devastated Lin in his youth, Adet’s suicide demoralised him in his old age.

The trauma of Adet’s suicide in a public garden adjacent to her place of work and the enigmatic note that she left explaining her action shattered Lin and Cuifeng.\textsuperscript{817} Adet’s workplace had played a major part in Lin’s decision to settle in Taipei so from the time of her death to his own death, Lin and Cuifeng moved to Hong Kong where their other two daughters and grandchildren lived.\textsuperscript{818} This indicates how traumatic Adet’s untimely death was for him. Following her death, Lin, who was in good health up until this time, suffered a minor stroke and aged quickly, both mentally and physically.\textsuperscript{819} His wife and daughters reinforced Lin’s script of women being central to changes in his private life, but there were public events

\textsuperscript{814} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{815} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{816} Ibid, 182.
\textsuperscript{817} Sohigian, The Life and Times of Lin Yutang, 672.
\textsuperscript{818} Ibid, 673.
\textsuperscript{819} Ibid.
that contributed to change too; for example, the death of a student in Lin’s early vocational life.

5.6 Significant Women

5.6.1 Liu Hezhen

At the Peking National Women’s Normal College, at 8am on 18 March 1926, one of Lin’s students, Liu Hezhen, on behalf of her classmates asked Lin to cancel their lecture for that day due to a demonstration in Tiananmen Square. Permission was granted, albeit with the admonition that earlier notice would be required on future occasions. The government, under the leadership of Duan Qirui (1865–1936), a local warlord and Provisional Chief Executive of Republic of China (1924–1926), declared the protestors ‘rioters’ and ordered they be treated as such.

At two o’clock that afternoon Lin entered the staffroom to hear that approximately two hundred protesters had been shot down by government troops at the demonstration in front of Government House. Some 40 protesters were killed: Liu Hezhen along with another young woman from Lin’s college, Yang Dequn, were both shot in the back while trying to present the petition. The incident was a major blow for Lin:

Three days after the massacre, Lin wrote in his ‘Elegy to Miss Liu Ho-chen [Hezhen] and Miss Yang Te-chun’: ‘Today is Sunday, I had some spare time and tried to pick up the pen and describe the pain embedded deep within me for three days but I just don’t know where to begin. For three days I’ve been in a confused muddle. Superficially, I’ve been rushing about taking care of business; I’ve had scarcely a moment’s rest to think to myself. But without any conscious effort on my part, I’m beginning to realize that I have just known the most tragic experience of my life.

This admission by Lin gives us a firsthand account of the impact that Liu’s death had on him and confirms it as a significant emotional event. If it were not for this primary evidence from Lin, one might have placed Liu’s death as a minor part of the three-pronged motivation for him to leave Beijing: the massacre of the protestors; compounded by the threat of execution by the warlord Zhang for writing a tongue-in-cheek essay about him; and his wife’s appeal to find a safer environment for their family. These three events precipitated the Lin

820 Taiyi Lin, Lin Yutang zhuang, 8.
821 Ibid.
823 Ibid.
824 Ibid.
825 Murray, ‘Lighting the Candle and Cursing the Darkness’.
826 Massey, The People Puzzle, 8.
family’s move to Xiamen. Again a woman compelled Lin to change location. Zhang’s threat was the first of two threats to Lin’s life that activated his predictable psychological defence of physical removal to a place of greater security. The second was his flight from Singapore to France, explored more fully in Chapter 6.\textsuperscript{827} More importantly, Liu’s death was personal for Lin because he had spoken to Liu the morning of her demise and felt an attachment that concerned teachers usually have for their students. It is an example of 	extit{storge} love, with teacher and student having an apprentice-master or pupil-mentor relationship. Lin did not relate to all women in this light, in fact some aroused an element of fear in him.

5.6.2 The Landladies of Leipzig

Lin speaks of his first landlady in Leipzig as an ‘alleinstende witwe’, a ‘living-alone widow’, and a ‘nymphomaniac’.\textsuperscript{828} Hopefully, these terms were not synonymous in Lin’s mind, but he did place them together. He based the accusation of ‘nymphomaniac’ on two observations. Firstly, this landlady had a regular visitor during the Leipzig Messe and she confided in Lin that ‘they had fun together’.\textsuperscript{829} Secondly, she fainted as Lin passed her open doorway forcing him, as a gentleman, to catch her.\textsuperscript{830} His discomfiture showed when he called out for Cuifeng to help him terminating what he saw as embarrassing behaviour on the landlady’s part.\textsuperscript{831} Lin’s concern over this landlady’s behaviour may be a consequence of his religious upbringing by missionary women and his ideal of womanhood formed in childhood of woman ‘as Chinese family ideal’.\textsuperscript{832} The second incident is cited by Anor in her father’s biography so its effect must have been talked about within the family circle, and is in contrast to the description that Lin wrote about his other of Leipzig landlady.

Frau Schädlich was a landlady considered as a friend: she and Cuifeng spent time together ‘chewing anchovy’.\textsuperscript{833} This lady, who Lin describes as ‘a Jewess’, had a son, later killed in Hitler’s rise to power: she fled to England for sanctuary after his death.\textsuperscript{834} There is no explanation of why the Lins changed accommodation, but from his descriptions of these two landladies, Lin experienced uneasiness at the first widow’s behaviour while holding the other in high esteem. Lin’s judgement of these ladies harks back to the models of his childhood

\textsuperscript{827} Taiyi Lin, \textit{Lin Yutang zhuan}, 8.
\textsuperscript{828} \textit{MO}, 53.
\textsuperscript{829} Ibid, 53. ‘During the Leipzig Messe, now called the Frankfurter Messe, all book publishers came from all over Europe.’
\textsuperscript{830} \textit{MO}, 53.
\textsuperscript{831} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{832} \textit{JL}, 182.
\textsuperscript{833} \textit{MO}, 53.
\textsuperscript{834} Ibid.
where virtue was paramount in the harsh scrutiny of missionary standards. By retreating to safer lodgings away from temptation, Lin conformed to his psychological defence script: he preferred women who fitted his ideal of women with high moral principles for both his life script and as characters for his writing.

Undoubtedly the key women of influence in his life were his immediate family; however, his vocation regularly brought him in contact with outstanding women, such as the soldier Hsieh Ping-ying, and those who wrote about China from a sound knowledge base, such as Buck and Agnes Smedley. Prominent writers and political figures were among the women in Lin’s life that affected his personality and character development during his adult years.

5.6.3 Vocational Peers

In his memoirs Lin recalled the actions of women in committee groups; for example, the short-lived Committee for Civil Liberties, formed by Tsai Yuan-pei, a famous Chinese ethnologist. Lin recalled that the action of this group was taken by women like Madam Soong Ching-ling and Agnes Smedley, who petitioned for the release of a communist activist.835 Likewise, Lin recalled a meeting between Madame Soong and Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, sister of India’s first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, suggesting a sequence or thread of joining women of influence aiding the disempowered.836 At a gathering at Madame Soong Ching-ling’s home, Lin met a communist writer, Mrs Frome, with whom he later published a daily English news-sheet; however, it was Madame Soong’s ‘lady-like figure, shy of publicity and devoted to her husband’s ideals’ that drew his praise.837 This contradicted Lin’s assertion that ‘The only correct way to write about women is to regard them as men’.838 Lin found his pattern of women’s behaviour difficult to apply, especially when women were partnered with men. He usually regarded these women as part of a pair, rather than a stand-alone identity; for example, he introduced Mrs Pandit as ‘the sister of President Neru’ and Madame Soong as ‘the wife of Dr Sun Yet-sen’.839

839 *MO*, 67–68.
Key figures in Lin’s rise to fame in the Western world during the 1930s were the writer Buck and her publisher and later husband Walsh. Lin met Buck at a dinner party for authors of English publications in 1933: she was only there for a few days, passing through on her way to Nanjing, the then capital of the Republic of China.\footnote{Conn, Pearl S. Buck: A Cultural Biography, 159. Emma E. White, ‘Pearl Buck to Emma Edmonds White’, The Emma Edmunds White Collection, RS/40/19/3, archives, c.fall 1936, Randolph-Macon Women’s College.} According to John Zou, Buck was impressed with Chinese authors writing in English for The China Critic magazine.\footnote{John Zou, ‘English idiom and Republican China: repatriated subject in Wong-Quincey’s Chinese Hunter’, World Englishes, 2002, vol. 21, iss. 2, 291–303.} She wrote to all of them, but only Lin replied. Politeness gained him the support of Buck; just as a perceived lack of politeness was central to Lin’s later break with Buck. Buck, already a manuscript reader and advisor for Walsh and The John Day Company, encouraged Lin to write a book explaining Chinese culture and tradition to American readers and to relocate to America to promote the publication.\footnote{MO, 71.} With Buck and Walsh’s support, Lin published My Country and My People, which gave American readers a unique perspective of Chinese people and culture, beginning Lin’s script as a native informant of Chinese culture for Western readers.

When My Country and My People became a best-seller, Lin and his family shifted to America, staying with Buck and Walsh in a cottage on their Green Hills Farm estate in Pennsylvania, until they could find lodgings of their own.\footnote{White, ‘Pearl Buck to Emma Edmonds White’, 175.} Buck’s desire to protect the Lins from racial slurs shows a stanchly protective attitude towards them:

> When the Lins were denied housing in Princeton because a professor’s wife would not rent to a Chinese, Pearl reported to Emma White that she got ‘perfectly furious and wrote a terrific letter to the woman,’ attacking her for ‘her appalling ignorance,’ her ‘superstitions and prejudices.’\footnote{Ibid, 411.}

Buck and Walsh were also protective of Lin as an author. From their first encounter, and Lin’s willingness to follow through on Buck’s suggestion of writing a book on Chinese culture for Western readers, this couple advised Lin, with Buck personally editing his writing.\footnote{Suoqiao Qian, ‘The Two-Way Process in the Age of Globalization: Lin Yutang’s Masterpiece,’ City University of Hong Kong 2004, accessed 11 July 2007, http://www.cityu.edu.hk/ccs/Newsletter/newsletter4/Masterpiece/master.htm} Lin’s willingness to uproot his family and settle them in America shows an amazing level of trust in Buck, who had issued the invitation.
Moving from China to America, despite having been there as a student with Cuifeng, signified a major change in Lin’s life. It challenged him to shift his career focus from one of continuing to hold the attention of a Chinese audience to that of capturing the attention of a Western audience to provide a livelihood for his family. Lin’s traits of trust and intuitive discernment regarding character stood him in good stead for the wide variety of personalities with whom he came into contact in China and abroad.

After nearly 20 years of friendship and mentorship, Buck ignored Lin’s approach for a loan to ease the Lin family losses made by investing in the Chinese typewriter, causing Lin to comment:

I was down to a cent. I had to borrow money. I saw a change in attitude. I was not treated with [the] same courtesy. There I saw an American. … Pearl Buck one time came to see me, but more to see how I was getting on, and we never picked up again.846

What Lin fails to say here is that Buck’s family business, The John Day Company, had already given advances to him for his typewriter project. Lin credits Buck with knowing Chinese customs and therefore condemns her lack of support as ‘American’, as opposed to what a ‘Chinese’ friend would do. One can also read a slight upon American respect between friends as inferior to Chinese respect between friends. This was a specific event that had major consequences for the relationship between Lin and Buck. What is important here is how this incident affected Lin’s behaviour: he had expected Buck to financially support him because she grew up within Chinese culture. Lin’s changed perception of Buck allowed no room for second chances. Exposing Buck as an ‘American’ friend (and therefore a fair-weather friend), sealed her fate. While Buck, central to Lin’s writing career, lost his trust, a Chinese-American actor, Anna May Wong, became a lasting family friend.847

5.6.5 Anna May Wong

Friendship with Anna May Wong (1905–1961) allowed Lin to compare the values of Buck, an American woman raised in China, with those of Wong, a Chinese woman raised in America. Born Wong Liu Tsong in Los Angeles on 3 January 1905, Wong was a third generation American who frequented film studios as a child.848

846 MO, 76, 77.
847 Wu, ‘Lin YuTang (2)’.
848 Jon C. Hopwood, ‘Mini Biography for Anna May Wong’, accessed 15 May 2007, 
http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0938923/bio
Figure 5.6: Anna May Wong

She was a frequent guest at Lin’s home and he commented that she ‘chattered endlessly, like any other typical housewife.’ \(^{850}\) Wong became a film star, despite being rejected for many starring roles; US law at that time forbade her kissing a white man on screen. Neither could she buy a home in Beverly Hills, or marry a Caucasian man until the law changed in 1947. \(^{851}\) The Lin family must have been privy to stories of the racist prohibitions that Wong endured in the American film industry at the time. There can be little doubt that the constraints on Wong’s career became a subject of conversation and consideration in the Lin household; although there is no evidence of this overtly affecting either Lin or his family, perhaps it exposed differences between American and Chinese cultures and gave Lin reason to later perceive Buck’s rejection as lacking in ‘courtesy’.

5.6.6 Huang Zhaoheng

In one of his last non-fiction publications, Lin held true to his preferred theme that ‘in ability to do efficient work and keep a cool head’, women are the equal of men. \(^{852}\) His action in choosing a Taiwanese woman, Huang Zhaoheng, for his ‘guest secretary’ in the difficult task of compiling his modern Chinese dictionary upheld his trust in women’s abilities. \(^{853}\) All of the six books either written by or contributed to by Huang held in Australian libraries are in Chinese and were published following her completed research support for Lin in 1972. It seems highly likely that he hired her for her ability in Chinese, and her skill in collating complex Chinese linguistics, rather than her expertise in English. Huang was a journalist for the Central Daily News, Taipei, although her report of an interview with Lin was published


\(^{851}\) Wu, ‘Lin YuTang (2)’.


by a rival newspaper, *New Life News*.\(^{854}\) Lin trusted her because he could ‘communicate and cooperate with her’.\(^{855}\) It was her rapport with Lin during this interview that gained her the position as his research assistant, and made her his confidant regarding his friendship with Hu Shi. Huang drew on the Hu’s manuscripts by his secretary, Hu Songping, for Lin’s reminiscence of Hu’s financial help in the 1920s:

Standing in front of Hu Shi’s tomb at Nangang, Lin Yutang recalled this event of the past. He said: ‘This has lain buried in my heart and my wife’s heart for more than 40 years. Although we gradually paid off our debts later, we shall always remember this ‘silent assistance’ that Hu Shi gave to his friends.’\(^{856}\)

Huang holds Hu Songping’s account as clearer than Lin’s own because if there were any discrepancies Lin was still alive at the time of its publication in 1962, and could have refuted it.\(^{857}\) In fact, it does not contradict Lin’s own account: Hu Songping’s account merely provides another perspective. Lin’s ideal psychological defence to cope with loss through rejection or death was sorely tested during the last two decades of his life.

### 5.7 Rejection and Parting

Just as the death of Hu Shi left an abyss in Lin’s heart in his autumn and winter years, the women of significance in his life started leaving him. Buck rejected him after his financial losses in the early 1950s; Susan Fahmy died in 1961; Anor and Hsiangju were lost to marriage and distance in Hong Kong. However, the most significant loss during these years was that of Adet to depression, resulting in her death. Lin must also have felt a failure as he had not recognised the depth of her depression and helped her as he had with Cuifeng, many times throughout their married life.

Adet’s suicide followed the death of Mrs Fahmy, one of Lin’s first teachers at the mission school on Gulangyu, on 23 November 1961.\(^{858}\) Fahmy was the teacher of whom Lin wrote:

> Every time I came near this grand old lady I stood in the true presence of Christianity. It always worked as a reminder of a lost world. In other words, Christians breed Christians, but Christian theology does not.\(^{859}\)

\(^{855}\) Ibid.
\(^{857}\) Huang, ‘Hu Shi and Lin Yutang’, 42.
\(^{859}\) *PC*, 234.

Incidentally, Lin’s devoted wife Cuifeng passed away on April 8 1987.
Lin’s Christian beliefs were inextricably bound up in his relationships with Christians, and Christian women were an integral part of this childhood foundation belief. It was not unexpected that Fahmy should die as she was in her ninety-fifth year; nevertheless, her death ended a student-mentor relationship that had lasted on two continents over a 56 year period. Although there were many positive significant emotional experiences, such as achieving his doctorate and the birth of his daughters, the thread of loss of family and friends to death or rejection impacted on Lin throughout his life. It started with Meigong and Liu Hezhen and was rekindled in later life by the death of Fahmy and Hu to climax with the death of Adet: these ruptured Lin’s favoured life-theme – tranquillity and humour.

5.8 Lin: Feminist or Humanist?

Lin admits that his views on filial conduct and duty were considered, even in 1937, as ‘feudalistic’ and laughed at by the ‘proletarian writers of China’.\textsuperscript{860} This did not dissuade him from recommending filial duty as meaningful and rewarding.\textsuperscript{861} His mother needed help with household work from the time. When Lin was ten years old his contribution was water cartage, while his sisters took on the washing and cleaning, modelling filial piety in action.\textsuperscript{862} Lin was not there for his parents when they were frail and elderly as Confucian values dictate: his father died while Lin was overseas fulfilling his father’s dream of having a son educated in a distinguished European university (hence demonstrating filial duty). His mother’s death is neither mentioned in his autobiographical writing nor the biographical writing of his daughters, nor in any newspaper reports.\textsuperscript{863} It was in 1933, during the time that Lin worked in Shanghai, that his mother died: the only reference to her death is a passage about weather conditions and its significance to burying procedures in *The Importance of Living* but one can assume from this that he was present.\textsuperscript{864} Her passing not being mentioned in his memoirs, indicates that her influence was in his early years, before his marriage. *Prima facie*, this is odd because Lin claims such a close emotional attachment to his mother; however, his mention of her in his writing ceased at his marriage, suggesting his transference of maternal affection to his wife.

\textsuperscript{860} IL, 216–217.
\textsuperscript{861} Ibid, 209.
\textsuperscript{862} MO, 14–15.
\textsuperscript{863} Murray, ‘Lighting the Candle and Cursing the Darkness’, 18.
\textsuperscript{864} Ibid.
Lin not only engaged with the women physically present around him, such as his mother and sisters or wife and daughters, but also with the women characters in his writing, earning Lin an unofficial title of ‘feminist’. However, Lin did not come from a feminist stance but rather from a humanist stance, as Owen Aldridge argued:

… there can be no doubt that the most widely-known and perhaps the most influential of the great humanist’s students was a native Chinese, Lin Yutang (1895-1976), who was enrolled in Babbitt's classes in 1919–1920.\(^{865}\)

It is noteworthy that Lin is claimed as a humanist, while pioneer psychobiographer, Sigmund Freud, was also called a humanist. Lin’s humanist approach to writing did not divorce him from supporting feminist causes.\(^{866}\)

Lin argued that Chinese feminists had a different fight to that of Western feminists.\(^{867}\) The general trend might be the same, Lin suggested, for example, a single standard devoid of gender bias and providing equal opportunity for education. However, Chinese women had to fight specific evils, such as concubinage, foot-binding, chastity suicide and widowhood celibacy.\(^{868}\) Lin blames ‘Neo-Confucianism’ for the ‘puritanico-sadistic’ values towards women in China from the Sung Dynasty (969 CE–1279 CE) onwards:\(^{869}\)

> These scholars, calling themselves Li-hsüeh or ‘scholars of reason’ (which term in time became synonymous with goody-goody hypocrites), had drifted a long way from the sane and healthy humanism of Confucius and turned into a killjoy doctrine.\(^{870}\)

Lin cited Buddhism as the source of dualist thought in China—separating mind and body—that set intellectual thought above bodily passions ‘drifting into a pseudo-intellectualism, which has relevant parallels in the West.’\(^{871}\)

Lin Yutang’s most profound self-disclosure on the potential of women came at the age of 45 years in his book *With Love and Irony*, when he wrote:

> After long hours of philosophizing, I am now willing to make the brave and hard admission that women are just human beings like men - equal in ability to make judgements and mistakes, if you give them the same world experience and contacts; in ability to do efficient work and keep a cool head, if you give them the same business training; in social outlook, if you don’t shut them up in the

\(^{866}\) Ryan M. Murray, ‘Lighting a Candle and Cursing the Darkness: A Brief Biography of Lin Yutang’, last update 12 December accessed 12 December 2009, [http://www.g8ina.enta.net/lin.htm](http://www.g8ina.enta.net/lin.htm)
\(^{868}\) Lin Yutang, ‘Feminist Thought in Ancient China’, 36.
\(^{869}\) Ibid.
\(^{870}\) Ibid.
\(^{871}\) Ibid.
Although the final statement shows more disenchantment with his gender than acknowledgement of equality in the ability of women, most of this statement gives insight into why he believed that women had been disenfranchised in careers traditionally geared towards men. This announcement defined where Lin was coming from and where he was going to in his life, including his writing. It gives us reason to call him a feminist from a humanist perspective and to understand why others thought him so too. It offers a specific point in his life when Lin invoked a ‘prototypical script’ as ‘shorthand’ for ‘a longer life story’, justifying his promotion of vocational rights for women.  

5.9 Women and Writing

5.9.1 Writing on Women

When Lin published his 1930 translations of the letters a Chinese woman warrior Xie Bingying (1906–2000), *Letters of a Chinese Amazon and Wartime Essays* (by Hsieh Ping-Ying) and narrative essays, he launched a career slanted towards a sequence of dedication to writing about women: Lin published representations of women in fiction and non-fiction papers and books throughout his life. Women’s rights maintained a script status in Lin’s writing from the time he published an essay with long-lasting repercussions, ‘Feminist Thought in Ancient China’ (1935). Lin was so far ahead of his time in matters relating to feminism that ‘Feminist Thought in Ancient Times’ is still cited in third millennium research.

Lin’s writing exposes his attitudes towards women. He is considered a feminist, but with quotes like ‘A gentleman’s speech is like a woman’s skirt—the shorter the better’, one might wonder why. Careful examination of his texts reveals that for each thought contradicting most feminist thought, Lin has a dozen others that would endear him to proponents. These

874 Lin, Letters of a Chinese Amazon and Wartime Essays (by Hsieh Ping-Ying).
877 MO, 58.
include ‘I have a hunch that if we leave the planning of world peace to women, we shall have it.’

Closer examination of Lin’s texts shows a pattern of feminist thought.

Lin’s novel *Moment in Peking* follows the fortunes of two Chinese families, pre-WWII, predominantly through the eyes of an intelligent, well-educated woman called Mulan. This book earned Lin a Nobel Prize nomination in 1975 and became a television series in 2005.

Writing through the thoughts of the opposite gender is by no means easy: it requires a particular form of empathy. Lin is one of a handful of writers of the time that handled this skill well and he did so cross-culturally. This is not to suggest that Lin neglected writing about the qualities of masculinity he admired, but these were predominantly historical figures; for example, Confucius, Laozi, Zhuangzi and the Tang poet Su Dongpo.

Lin conceded that Chinese ethics is ‘essentially a masculine ethics’, just as Chinese history is predominantly masculine. The form of this ‘masculine ethics’ was revealed whenever Chinese societies were in a downward cycle, for example, accusations against women:

Queen Ta-chi was made, by common consent, responsible for the downfall of the Shan dynasty during the reign of the tyrant King Chou. Another queen, Pao-szu, was by the common edict of the men historians, responsible for the fall of the Eastern Chou dynasty under another tyrant, King Yu. It seems very curious that these scholars never notice the point that it was the virtue of Queen Pao-szu and not her immorality, that provoked the catastrophe.

To make his queen smile, King Yu sent out false alarms of war to trick his military into running to the palace, but it was the queen who was blamed while the king eluded culpability.

In *With Love and Irony* Lin disclosed his reasons for enjoying the company of women:

I like women as they are, without any romanticizing and without any disillusionment. With all their contradictions, light-mindedness, and superficialities, I have an immense faith on their common sense and their instinct for life – their so-called sixth sense. Beneath their superficiality, they live a deeper life and are closer to this business of living than men, and I respect them for it. They live life while men talk about it.

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878 Lin, *Between Tears and Laughter*, 75–76
879 Liong, ‘Lin Yutang: Fujian’s Literary Giant’.
881 Ibid.
882 Ibid.
883 Ibid.
884 Ibid.
886 Ibid.
Lin admired ‘contradictions’, so perhaps ‘light-mindedness’ and ‘superficialities’ can be read in this context, weighted against ‘common sense’ and ‘instincts for life’. Lin acknowledged that women of the 1940s – in America, Europe and China – behaved differently to men, but he honoured and respected what he considered their gender specific talents. Lin’s approach to his daughters’ education and publications, considered along with his choice of translation texts, shows a predilection for venerating women. His writing about women created a history of reinforcing his theme of conservative values but with modern educational and occupational equality for women.

5.9.2 Writing about Women

Lin’s predilection for translating texts about traditional Chinese women continued his theme of promoting women transculturally through print medium. Lin established a script—translating stories of traditional Chinese women—as part of his prototypical scene focused on women. For example, Miss Tu, Lady Wu and The Red Peony. His magazine writing grew to vast proportions throughout America: in this his pictorial piece for Argosy, ‘She’s Mystery ... She’s the East ... She’s Woman’, stands out.

Lin planned his epic novel of war-torn China, Moment in Peking, modelled on facets of the Chinese classic The Dream of the Red Chamber. Key women characters of Moment in Peking are based on real women from his childhood student days on Gulangyu: Mannia and Mulan. Once, during the writing of this novel, Anor found her father in tears such was his sensitivity to the plight of his characters. Ironically, at the same time that Moment in Peking was banned by the Japanese government, Lin’s Importance of Living was translated into Japanese and sold well there. Lin’s early childhood and youth were periods of great input by women, with his adult writing continuing to reinforce his script of women as crucial vital to his creative produce.

886 Ibid.
888 Lin, (trans), Miss Tu, 1950.
___, (trans), Lady Wu.
889 Lin Yutang, ‘She's Mystery ... She's the East ... She's Woman’, Argosy, August, 56–57, 91–92, 1958.
890 Lin, Moment in Peking.
891 Wu, ‘Lin YuTang (2)’.
892 MO, 49.
893 Wu, ‘Lin YuTang (2)’.
894 Political Reporter, ‘Moment in Peking’.
Lin’s novel, *A Leaf in the Storm* (1940), was a story of love and tragedy in a war-torn China and a sequel to *Moment in Peking, The Vermillion Gate* (1953) completed the trilogy.\(^{894}\) *A Leaf in the Storm* did not receive the acclaim of *Moment in Peking*; however, *The NY Times* reviewer Katherine Woods, cites it positively as a novel of ‘love in various aspects’, where the ‘personal theme is of human growth.’\(^{895}\) Using Woods’ perception, Lin continued to reinforce his skill as a writer promoting personal growth, a reputation that he had established with *The Importance of Living*.

In his historical biography, *Lady Wu*, Lin debunked the belief that all women of traditional China were powerless, by describing the Empress’s character as difficult to compare to other famous women of the past: ‘Not Cleopatra, not Catherine the Great; a bit of Elizabeth I, a bit of Catherine de Medici, the strength of the former and the ruthlessness of the latter combined.’\(^{896}\)

I have written this biography of Lady Wu Tsertien rather than empress, as the study of a unique character combining criminality with high intelligence, whose ambitions reached truly maniac proportions, but whose methods were cool, precise and eminently insanity?\(^{897}\)

Here Lin describes a woman very much in charge of her own destiny and quite the reverse of the Orientalist view that all traditional women are powerless because of their gender. Lin used ‘the two official Tang histories, the Old Tangshu and the New Tangshu’, as his source material because ‘all other historical works dealing with the period go back after all to these primary sources’, upholding the theme of researching primary sources established during his tertiary education.\(^{898}\)

Li Yuning claims that Lin writes on women in a ‘characteristically witty and pungent vein’ demonstrating his forte: ‘erudition combined with wit and humour.’\(^{899}\) This falls neatly into one of Lin’s behavioural traits, a rapport with feminist values that support vocational equity. In *The Red Peony*, Lin presented his protagonist as ‘an idealistic, beautiful and intelligent’ woman from upper class Qing dynasty China.\(^{900}\) Peony’s sexual freedom and choice of lovers

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\(^{894}\) Lin, *A Leaf in the Storm*.
\(^{895}\) Lin, *The Vermillion Gate*.
\(^{896}\) Lin, Menghai and Lin Mengru, ‘Learning Life of Dr. Lin Yutang’.
\(^{898}\) Lin Yutang (trans), *Lady Wu*, ix.
\(^{899}\) Ibid, viii.
\(^{900}\) Ibid, x-xi.
in her widowhood, at a time when widows in China were expected to remain chaste in memory of their late husbands (unless they remarried at their mother-in-law’s behest), supported female empowerment. Giving witness to Lin’s love of contradictions, sandwiched between these two novels he produced a magazine article – ‘She’s Mystery... She’s the East... She’s Woman’ – comparing the freedoms of Western women through feminist movements, with the attributes of women from East Asia upholding traditional values.\textsuperscript{901} In this article, Lin’s reservations regarding Western feminism culminated in an observation expressing what he believed about the Western women’s movement of the late 1950s and women’s intelligence:

The modern concept of sexual equality and emancipation has done much to correct the restrictions and social handicaps placed on women in the Orient. Yet sexual equality runs the danger of oversimplification. Masculine intelligence and feminine intelligence are different; certainly there is no way of comparing them and saying which is superior, any more than we can say a great composer is “superior” to a great mathematician. They are just different. Perhaps much of the emotional stress of Western women is that they simply will not glory in their sex, but seek constantly to simulate and ape the male in their manners and social qualities. What they gain in “equality” they lose in feminine charm and mystery.\textsuperscript{902}

Here Lin reveals the consequence of a childhood exposed to the loftiest values held by oriental women. From this article it is difficult to see why Lin was considered a feminist; however, some science now claims that there are different types of intelligence and that women access different sections of their brains more actively than men and vice versa.\textsuperscript{903} Taken from this particular scientific perspective, Lin has grounds to question the approach taken by some Western feminists. His choice of the approach that Eastern women adopted towards men in the 1950s, in contrast to that taken by Western feminists, indicates his preference for male empowerment over female empowerment. It is interesting to note this pictorial article depicted numerous oriental women in photographs, yet not one was of a Chinese woman. This is an example of his veneration of Chinese women as the bastions of a China’s moral fibre. If not a pattern, then this was at least a singular event protecting his wife, daughters and other women kinsfolk from a label by association. No matter how contented he was with his wife and daughters there were perhaps unachieved goals, such as youthful sexual experience and producing a male heir, the latter being culturally inscribed as important. The sexual experience and subsequent son that his childhood playmate supposedly bore him in the novel \textit{Juniper Loa} are figments of Lin’s imagination, but they reveal the fact that sometimes Lin created a life story in a literary scenario to fulfil his unattained life goals.\textsuperscript{904}

\textsuperscript{901} Lin, ‘She’s Mystery ... She’s the East ... She’s Woman’.
\textsuperscript{902} Ibid, 92.
\textsuperscript{903} Renato Sabbatini, ‘Are There Differences between the Brains of Males and Females?’, Brain and Mind, No. 11, accessed 21 July 2010, \url{http://www.cerebromente.org.br/n11/mente/eisntein/cerebro-homens.html}
\textsuperscript{904} Ibid.
Lin’s writing indicates that a great deal of his time in later adulthood concentrated on stories and articles concerning women. Between the women of his family, his translations based on women and his novels focused on women, Lin was steeped in the life stories of women. What this reveals is that Lin had the strength of character to feel at ease with his sense of sexual identity. He chose to translate women’s stories without concern that his masculinity might diminish in the eyes of his readers. In fact, Lin might well be described as a ‘sensitive new-age man’ in contemporary society, however, he certainly made women holders of the moral lamplight for matters such as smoking.

5.10 Smoking as Sensual Addiction

Lin used women in a cross-cultural divide to excuse his weakness for smoking: Western women were temptresses while Chinese wives, like his own, allowed him to smoke for comfort. In his rationalisation of giving up a smoking habit and then returning to it, in his essay ‘My Turn at Quitting Smoking’, Lin culturally stereotypes women into either the morally repressive missionary women or the sexual temptresses of the wider Western world.905 This essay is interesting in hindsight: medical science has now shown the damage of both active and passive smoking.906 Lin’s reasons for abandoning his attempt to give up smoking are sad in the light of third millennium biomedical research, but interesting in what they reveal about Lin and women. Lin makes three specific references to women in this essay. The first is his reference to the ‘busybody women from the Temperance Society of the YMCA’, who advocated abstinence from smoking as well as alcohol.907 His comment concerning the bond that confirmed smokers formed with tobacco as ‘beyond the imagination of the men and women from the Temperance Society’ proposes a psychological justification: Lin rejected abstaining from tobacco by claiming that the Temperance Society members were incapable of understanding the merits of smoking.908 Yet they are further admonished in Lin’s second comment that social smokers could ‘rest easy at night, having read through a few Æsop’s Fables with the women of the Temperance Society.’909 The inference here was that

907 Lin, ‘My Turn at Quitting Smoking’, 616.
908 Ibid, 616, 618.
909 IL, 253.
the bothersome women from the Temperance Society were the only reason that Lin had for trying to give up smoking. However, he implies that ‘a true smoker’ must be in communion with tobacco for him to sleep with a clear conscience, affirming his psychological excuse for smoking.\textsuperscript{910} What this essay shows is that Lin lays the guilt of smoking at the feet of certain women – the temperance women – as they condemned the habit. According to Lin, dispensation for the moral evil of social smoking also comes from reading the Bible with these same women.\textsuperscript{911} In this, Lin reinforced the notion that these temperance women were the moral guardians of the right to smoke guilt-free. Lin fought the guilt shaped by the missionary teachers by setting the smoking habit up as a creative source, and therefore necessary for him as a writer – his preferred theme.\textsuperscript{912}

The moral tones of Lin’s rationalisation included covert sexual pleasure with the third reference exploring the sexual undertones of smoking:

One afternoon, I went to visit a Western woman friend. She sat at a table, one hand holding a cigarette, the other resting on her knee. Her body listing slightly, she cut an entrancing figure, and I felt that my moment of awakening had arrived. When she extended her box of cigarettes towards me, I withdrew one slowly and calmly, knowing that from this moment on I would again [attain] salvation.

When I got home, I immediately asked the servant to go out and buy a pack of English cigarettes.\textsuperscript{913}

Lin perceived the cigarette in the woman’s hands as a tool of seduction. Where he might have refused the cigarette and claimed that he resisted a temptation, he made the cigarette a tool of redemption, allowing his return to smoking as taking the moral high ground. In this way, Lin used his writing to reposition anything that might detract from his image as a moral man without bad habits. He argued that his poor choices were the result of temperance women teaching him that certain behaviours were bad, when really they were essential behaviours for his salvation and creativity: a psychological ploy once again. The firm foothold that Lin’s missionary teachers made in his primary school years was still a source of resentment for him, making it difficult for him to completely justify continuing the habit without referring to it as a creative necessity.

Lin later used this same anecdote with the Western woman in his essay ‘On Smoke and Incense’, where he changed the event to a time when he was ‘mentally prepared for the re-

\textsuperscript{910} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{911} Lin, ‘My Turn at Quitting Smoking’, 618.
\textsuperscript{912} Ibid, 616.
\textsuperscript{913} Ibid, 255.
\textsuperscript{913} Lin, ‘My Turn at Quitting Smoking’, 619.
conversion’.\(^{914}\) There was ‘nobody else in the room’ and the scene was set for ‘a real tête-à-
tête’, the lady was ‘slightly inclined forward’ and ‘looking wistful in her best style’.\(^{915}\)

![Figure 5.7: Woman with Cigarette](http://www.flickr.com/photos/trialsanderrors/3438131929/)

A mere five years had passed since Lin wrote the first anecdote, but the first version was written for a Chinese audience, while the second version was written for an American audience. Lin describes a ‘Western woman’ for his Chinese audience, but a ‘young lady’ for his American audience. In so doing he acknowledged that he culturally inscribed ‘Western women’ as sexual temptresses for a Chinese audience, with ‘young women’ having the equivalent appeal for American audiences. Whether Lin exhibits cultural sensitivity here or succumbs to cultural stereotyping for audience appeal is open to interpretation.

‘On Smoke and Incense’ gives readers insight into Lin’s script in defence of smoking, often attaching values to women in the process.\(^{917}\) While accepting smoking as a ‘moral weakness’, Lin calls relinquishing the smoking habit as ‘moral degradation’.\(^{918}\) That Lin wrote with a cigarette, cigar or pipe in his mouth and a hole in his desk where ash fell testifies to that.\(^{919}\) According to Lin, a clever wife uses her husband’s habit of pipe-smoking to avoid quarrels:

… when a wise wife sees her husband about to fly into a fit of rage, she should gently stick a pipe in his mouth and say, ‘There! Forget about it!’ This formula always works. A wife may fail, but a pipe never.\(^{920}\)

Lin’s claim that ‘wives can be trained even to tolerate their husbands smoking in bed. That is the surest sign of a happy and successful marriage’, is clearly a resort to his psychological

\(^{914}\) Lin Yutang, ‘On Smoke and Incense’, in *IL*, 255.

\(^{915}\) Ibid.


\(^{917}\) *IL*, 247–257.

\(^{918}\) Ibid, 250, 255.

\(^{919}\) Ibid, 255.

\(^{920}\) Ibid, 251.
gambit centred on his desires; but no doubt true to the extent that a subservient wife gives up her own comfort for the sake of connubial peace.  

Lin recalls ‘attempting to abjure his allegiance to Lady Nicotine’, but that his conscience took him back to it whenever he tried to drop the habit: He gives the smoking habit a female nomenclature and reclassifies the habit as fidelity. Lin blames his conscience for his return to smoking: he absolves his conscience of guilt by making smoking a necessary creative stimulus for a writer. Lin relinquished the habit of smoking for three weeks at one period, but lost his creative urges.

After this, my conscience began to gnaw upon my soul. For, I said to myself, what was thought without imagination, and how could imagination sour on the wings of a drab, nonsmoking soul?

Lin used his need for imagination and creativity as reasons for his conscience guiding him back to smoking; again Lin provided a history of script reinforcement by linking smoking and the feminine:

I swore I would never relapse, but would keep on being a devotee and a worshipper at her shrine until second childhood, when I might conceivably fall prey to some Temperance Society wives.

Lin wrote of smoking in religious metaphors: it was ‘a spiritual act’, ‘soul-uplifting’, ‘soul satisfying’, ‘devotee’, ‘worshipper’ and ‘shrine’. While these reverent images drew Lin back to smoking, the image of Temperance Society women held him in fear of judgement day. Using role-reversal, the Temperance Society women were signifiers of evil, while ‘Lady Nicotine’ was a signifier of good. Lin rationalised his change in behaviour, his return to

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921 Ibid, 249.
923 IL, 251.
924 Ibid, 255.
925 Ibid.
926 IL, 251.
927 Ibid, 251–252.
smoking, as showing strength of character rather than weakness. He painted tobacco as feminine and good; however, at the same time he painted the temperance missionary women, signifiers of the feminine, as negative. Good overcomes evil – both dressed in feminine robes – with the positive invalidating the negative and a return to the status quo, his original behaviour. Lin, as master of the pen, was able to justify his actions to himself, if not to anyone else, by gendering his argument and neutralising the effect. This ability to use his writing to argue his case – his perception of an action or event as good or evil – became a weapon in defence of his motherland during WWII. By endowing smoking with female nomenclature, Lin used the feminine to validate his claim of smoking as a positive force.

5.11 Chapter Summary

I always depend on the judgement of a woman rather than that of a man.928

Women were dominant features on the screen of Lin’s life, from the cradle to the grave. His education and faith firmly established them as agents of both foundational beliefs and changes to these beliefs. They were central to Lin’s properly basic beliefs established in his formative years, through his mother and second sister and Western missionary women. Lin’s childhood playmate, Juniper Loa, inspired a novel that rewrote his history as a chaste youth, whose emotional growth was affected by Dr Chen’s rejection of his suit for Jinduan, and the practicality of taking a wife. Having three daughters was a test of Lin’s values regarding nurturing the academic abilities of women: his dedication to the education of, and providing vocational opportunities for, his daughters is witness to his sincerity in promoting educational and vocational equity for women. The importance of women in establishing Lin’s properly basic beliefs and providing emotional challenges to strengthen or alter his initial values from childhood and youth demonstrates them as primary influences in creating and affirming the character, personality and values of Lin.

Rejection for marriage by his sweetheart, Jinduan, became a source of life-long inspiration for Lin. Marrying Cuifeng was a duty, but her unswerving dedication to him throughout married life earned his love and respect. Their three daughters were given every opportunity to reach their potential through education and careers. Lin is considered a feminist because of what he wrote about women: he chose to translate traditional stories featuring strong women and he made women powerful characters in his fiction. Although he argued that women are equal to men in all but physical strength, Lin did not subscribe to all Western feminist values. He used

928 MCMP, 85.
many Western women as characters in stereotypical role-reversal as temptresses luring him to possible misdeeds, such as fornication and smoking. Lin found women in all cultures alluring, although traditional Chinese women represented far less threat than Western women. He showed his trust in the intellectual abilities of women by hiring them to support his creative products: Taiyi for the typewriter and Huang for his dictionary researcher.

Throughout his careers as educator and writer, women commanded positions of note. Writers like Buck and Smedley and political activists such as the Soong sisters were influential to varying degrees to the twists and turns in his vocation and character shaping. Lin wrote books based on strong Chinese women who defied tradition to carve their life-journeys and defended the traditions of Eastern women against some of the changes mooted by Western feminists. It is in these that Lin exposes his biases and argues his case for the traditional values of Chinese women in their relationships with men. It was good manners that defined Lin’s critical decision to accept an invitation to meet Buck when other authors ignored it, and from Lin’s perspective his friendship with Buck terminated with poor manners when she ignored his financial plight.

Initially, Lin did not succumb to the stress of loss, but with the deaths of family and close friends, including some of the key women in his life, his strength slowly eroded. Undoubtedly, the most important significant emotional event for Lin during his last years was the loss of his first-born child. Adet’s death precipitated the onset of strokes that led to his own death. Women were the catalysts for a ‘history of reinforcement’ of several of Lin’s ‘preferred life sequences’ and ‘psychological defences’, and were a hence a ‘common script’ for writing and living. Yet Lin was also subject to the imposition of his literary peers, most of whom were not women.

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929 Brooks, ‘Lin Yutang’.
930 WP.
Chapter 6: The Influence of Peers

6.1 Introduction

This chapter considers the influence of scholarly peers, such as Hu Shi and Lu Xun; publisher Richard Walsh Jnr. (1887–1960); playwright George Bernhard Shaw and social peers such as Chiang Kai-shek and his activist wife Soong Mei-ling; and aviator Charles Lindbergh and his wife: how these peers helped to shape, enrich and sometimes change Lin’s life. It discusses if friendship with these peers had consequences for Lin’s personality or character by affecting his ‘attitudes and concerns’. Peers made impressions of different strength and duration: sometimes a small action or event had a lasting impression; for example, a doctored photo that confirmed Lin’s predictions on communism and sometimes a major event, such as not offering financial support in his hour of need, which severed friendships and work colleagues. It looks at any effects on Lin’s ‘patterns of behaviour’ that occurred as a result of his relationships with these people. Finally, this chapter explores how loss by death or distance affected Lin’s behaviour and attitudes.

6.2 Academic Peers

The first academics who made a major impact on the life of Lin were Cai Yuanpei and Qian Xuantong. Cai was Chancellor of Peking University and a prime motivator for the May Fourth Movement through his critical appraisal of Chinese culture. Qian was acclaimed for his expertise in Chinese phonology and for his contribution to the simplification of Chinese characters and pinyin. The support of Cai and Qian for Lin’s early academic efforts cemented Lin’s self-belief in what became his academic area of expertise, Chinese phonology. Lin’s achievements in this area became a springboard for his higher degree successes: it built on his foundational self-confidence, creating an adult pattern of reactions that allowed him to take risks like changing countries with little financial backing to pursue scholarship and vocation.

Lin’s knowledge of Western philosophy and his link with Chinese vernacular prose writers of the 1920s – such as Liang Shihchiu, Chu Tzuching, Hsia Mientsun, Feng Zikai and Hsu Chihmo – made him a person of note in journals, for example:

931 WP.
932 Ibid.
The impassioned critiques of Liang Qichao (1873–1929), the cogent lucidity of Hu Shi, and the caustic wit of Lu Xun were often expressed in ‘wars of the pen.’ Standing in contrast to this high level of social involvement were writers such as Chou Tso-jen and Lin Yutang, who rediscovered the informal essays of the 16th and 17th centuries. They advocated an easygoing humor and the savoir-vivre of sipping tea and copying old books; but were at the same time conversant with Freud and D.H. Lawrence.  

Both sets of writers produced essays in colloquial language that were steeped in traditional knowledge of their creative product, but they were not attached to academic institutions or publishing houses. Like his Chinese peers writing-in-the-vernacular, Lin was an independent writer free of the dictates of government. Each was answerable only to himself for what he published; however, each risked the wrath of offending political leaders and this had consequences for Lin. The shift to professional writing as his main source of income, due to political hounding, was a major life change. The fact that he stayed in Shanghai for seven years, 1927 to 1935, is important in itself, for assessing his pattern of changing geographical location during his life time. Lin’s friends among his writing peers were the new siblings for his early adult years: their success and encouragement provided him with the mettle to risk insolvency by becoming a professional writer.

6.2.1 Hu Shi and Lu Xun

Two peers stand out as influences during Lin’s early adult life—Hu and Lu. Both were Lin’s literary peers; however, while Hu stands out as central to Lin’s life story, Lu was more a literary peer who shared experiences with Lin but did not necessarily provide a lasting influence on his beliefs. It may also be noteworthy that Hu remained a Christian throughout his life or it may be his actions alone that bonded him to Lin.

![Figure 6.1: Lu Xun (taken 1930) & Hu Shi (taken 1944)](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:LuXun1930.jpg)


935 Ibid.

936 Unknown photographer, ‘Hu Shi’, Watson Collection on East Asia, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library, 1944.  
Lin expressed admiration for Hu’s writing in America, which earned him the respect of readers in two nations, China and America. This made Lin already an admirer of Hu long before Hu’s return from America to Beijing University. Only five years older than Lin, Hu had already made a name for himself as an author: he was outspoken about the need for change in approaches to writing in contemporary China. According to Lin, in 1916–1917 China was in a period of ‘Renaissance’, ‘Literary Revolution’ and ‘intellectual convulsion’, instigated by Hu from his base in NY. In 1915, while at Cornell University undertaking a PhD supervised by John Dewey, Hu made the observation that ‘pai-hua (vernacular language)’ was not only a useful literary tool but also ‘the major form of literary expression’ used in Chinese literature. Lin was in the right place at the right time to catch the excitement of this observation when it was acclaimed by Hu in NY. In 1918, while part of the Tsing Hua faculty, Lin went to meet Hu on his return to Beijing. Later, Hu became a personal friend through his admiration of Lin’s writing style in local newspapers and Lin’s article on the use of the vernacular in Chinese writing. Lin said ‘we quickly became good friends.’

Hu asked Lin for advice about his 1929 essay ‘Studies on the Entering Tone: Afterword’, because Lin was the first to notice that the linguistic analyses in Hu’s work closely paralleled that of Swedish Sinologist Bernhard Karlgren. Later, Lin and Hu published a collection of political essays together. They had similar perceptions of Western civilisation and identical beliefs regarding ‘the balance of dialectical relationship between material civilization and spiritual civilization’. Hu influenced Lin’s sequential theme of using literature. This is evident in Lin’s ideal use of literature that mirrors Hu’s tenets for ‘new literature’ in China:


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938 MO, 32.
940 Huang, ‘Hu Shi and Lin Yutang’, 38.
941 Ibid, 38.
942 Ibid, 44.
943 Ibid, 44.
945 Ibid, 44–45. This is apparent in Hu’s 1926 paper, ‘Our Attitude Toward Modern Western Civilization’, and his December 1929 speech entitled ‘Machine and Spirit’ at Guanghua University in Shanghai.
Hu’s principles provided Lin with a firm base for developing his literary style and his distinctive use of humour. It reveals how Hu’s values fitted Lin’s preferred theme.

Hu brought it to Lin’s attention that Qinghua offered postgraduate scholarships for America after three years of teaching on their staff, so Lin took a position there.\textsuperscript{946} Hu became Dean of the College of Liberal Arts at Beijing University, while Lin taught English at Qinghua.\textsuperscript{947} After completing his three-year teaching term at Qinghua, Lin applied for and received a half-time scholarship from the university to pursue further education in America.\textsuperscript{948} Unfortunately, depending on this scholarship for his livelihood in America almost proved disastrous for Lin. Armed with Hu’s assurance that Qinghua University would support his scholarship in America at USD40 per month, Lin, accompanied by Cuifeng and her $1,000 dowry, set sail for America and Harvard, creating challenges for the couple as they ventured head-first into Western culture and all the challenges that dislocation from family and culture entails.\textsuperscript{949} This started a new script for Lin: one of venturing into foreign cultures in pursuit of his goals.

On arrival in America, Cuifeng fell ill. Her surgery exhausted their money so Lin telegraphed Hu and he immediately sent over a check for US$500, ‘that saved their lives’. However, the penury of living on Quakers’ Oats did not make Lin abandon his focus on pursuing his academic goal.\textsuperscript{950} After completing a year of study at Harvard, his scholarship from Qinghua was cancelled without explanation, but Lin blamed Dr. Sze Ping-yuan, the ‘supervisor of students in America’, saying: ‘Dr Sze was cutting off my neck. Never have I exulted so much on anybody’s death, when later I learnt Dr Sze had committed suicide.’\textsuperscript{951} As Lin said, this was unusual for him; however, it fits with an underlying script of karma on the rare occasions that people caused what he perceived as harm. Their money was once again exhausted, so Lin took a position in France teaching illiterate Chinese workers how to read.\textsuperscript{952}

Conscripts from China were brought into France after WWI to bury the dead.\textsuperscript{953} Lin had hoped to multitask by finding his paternal grandfather, who was forcibly conscripted and

\textsuperscript{946} Huang, ‘Hu Shi and Lin Yutang’, 39.
\textsuperscript{947} Ibid, 39.
\textsuperscript{948} PC, 41.
\textsuperscript{949} MO, 40.
\textsuperscript{950} Huang, ‘Hu Shi and Lin Yutang’, 40.
\textsuperscript{951} Taiyi Lin, Lin Yutang zhuan, 38.
\textsuperscript{952} MO, 41.
\textsuperscript{953} Wu, ‘Lin YuTang (1)’.
\textsuperscript{954} Ibid.
'disappeared during the Taiping Rebellion’, perchance to France, but this came to nothing. After saving for a year he entered Jena University and later Leipzig University for further studies: Hu sent another cheque for US$1,000, which solved their immediate problems yet again. Lin let nothing deter him from his goal of academic success. The friendship between Lin and Hu is best summarised by the Roman adage: ‘Amicus certus in re incerta cernitur’ (‘A sure friend is seen in an unsure matter’). In this sense, Hu became an even more focal figure in Lin’s life after his sojourn in America and Europe.

Returning to Beijing from Europe to what he perceived as his commitment to the Beijing University, Lin approached the Acting President of the Beijing University, Jiang Menglin, to thank him for the university’s support while he was studying overseas. A surprised Jiang denied that the university had indeed supported Lin in his time of need and Hu’s generosity was disclosed. The shock for Lin at finding that his debt to Beijing University for completing his higher degrees was in fact a debt to a friend became a significant emotional event for Lin. The strong bond between these two literary gentlemen was now a friendship reinforced by trust. Taiwanese journalist, Huang Zhaoheng, who interviewed Lin in 1966, wrote:

Upon learning of his difficulties, Hu Shi, who was then teaching at Beijing University, said to him: ‘If you will come to Beijing University to teach when you return to China, we can now give you a subsidy of US$40 a month.’ With just these words and no written agreement, the newly wedded couple started on their journey.

That Hu was their anonymous benefactor during this time created one of the most important relationships for Lin outside of his immediate family. Hu was noted for his generosity towards friends he certainly epitomised friendship for Lin. Huang concluded her record of this friendship with a paragraph that encapsulated the depth of Lin’s gratitude:

Standing in front of Hu Shi’s tomb at Nangang, Lin Yutang recalled this event of the past. He said: ‘This has lain buried in my heart and my wife’s heart for more than forty years. Although we gradually paid off our debts later, we shall always remember this ‘silent assistance’ that Hu Shi gave to his friends.’

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954 Murray, ‘Lighting the Candle and Cursing the Darkness’, WP.
955 Huang, ‘Hu Shi and Lin Yutang’, 40.
956 Ibid, 41.
958 Huang, ‘Hu Shi and Lin Yutang’, 40.
962 Huang, ‘Hu Shi and Lin Yutang’, 40.
The standard of friendship displayed by Hu during this period of Lin’s life altered his childhood psychological ploy of laying the blame at other doors rather than accepting responsibility for his own poor choices. When Lin needed support, Hu responded, providing Lin with a lens through which to view friends in adulthood. It could be argued that Hu knew Lin was an honourable Chinese gentleman and that custom would dictate he repay any loan, but the anonymity of the gesture suggests either altruism or – again a possibility due to Chinese custom – a sense of duty to support Lin, since he had encouraged him to study overseas with Beijing University’s backing. Whatever the case, Hu did support Lin when the need was critical: Lin credited him with this and it created a precedent for future friendships.

There was store warmth between Hu and Lin in their verbal banter, reminiscent of Lin’s familial sibling banter. The camaraderie and jocular nature of their friendship showed when Lin recalled Hu calling him ‘a puritan’ because he, Lin, held such prim moral views.962 Murray claims that if Lin was a puritan ‘it was not a conscious lifestyle but merely his natural response to situations’. There are two considerations here: while ‘avoiding alcohol and brothels’ probably stemmed from his early childhood years in a strong Christian home, missionary teachers and temperance zealots, rejecting the ‘soundness of Christianity’ while ‘continuing to teach Sunday school’ adds to Lin’s history of preferring contradictions.963 Lin held basic beliefs and habits that were embedded in his early childhood years. Not even the teasing of his friends and peers made him give up these values, so we can safely say that either Lin was a contrary character (and to a certain extent this is true) or that Lin’s foundation values from childhood surpassed his desire to be one with his peers. Lin’s responses were in fact core traits that endured through his adult years.

Lin’s character-discrimination skills were evident in his childhood pranks when he relied on strong paternal and sibling patterns of protection. Lin acknowledges the source of this pattern of behaviour from childhood: ‘We sisters and brothers were not supposed to quarrel, and we never did. The idea was that everybody was supposed to be “friendly”’.964 This was a consequence of formative Christian values reinforced in later life when Lin embraced the Taoist philosophy that advocated restraint rather than conflict.965 While Lin had a supportive childhood, Hu had a difficult one. No matter how exalted Lin’s political friends were (for

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963 PC, 41.  
964 Murray, ‘Lighting a Candle and Cursing the Darkness’.  
965 MO, 16.  
966 Genesis 13:8.  
example, the Soong sisters and their husbands), he remained sensitive to their needs by backing away from confrontation, unlike Hu, who ‘drew fire against himself’ by offending those around him whose politics upheld less than his own ethical standards. 966

Lin and Hu held shared political views, particularly on communism. They both spoke out through their writing about perceived political injustice; both were censured for it: Lin, when he used his writing to censure American leaders on their lack of support for China during WWII and Hu when his periodical, *Free China Journal*, published in Taiwan from 1949 to 1960, was terminated by the Republic of China government for criticising its leader Chiang Kai-shek. 967 Lin summed up why he admired Hu so much in an essay published in 1963: ‘Hu Shi did not seek fame and fortune. He was unassuming, amiable, and easy to approach.’ 968 These characteristics married with Lin’s own life-long traits.

In a comparison between the lives of Hu and Lin, Huang argues that Hu believed ‘that one should face reality squarely, improve life, develop it, and make it sound and healthy’ and thus lived an uncomfortable existence experiencing both the best and worst of life. In contrast, Lin remained removed from the challenges of bearing office, and apart from a few provocative essays and an abrasive book, had ‘never been involved in any acute human conflict … [and] … never found himself in any perilous situation’ and therefore ‘spent his life in peace and tranquillity.’ 969 That Lin never found himself involved in conflict or in dangerous situations are assumptions that I challenge. While it is true that Lin lived, on the whole, a comfortable adult life by not taking on the rigors of public office, he certainly suffered poverty and want during his student days in America and Europe, and later in the loss of his financial security by overinvesting in his Chinese typewriter and Chinese banks. Lin also drew the wrath of the warlord Zhang in Beijing; by taking his family into war-torn China in 1940; and from the threats of radicals in Singapore. It is how Lin handled these and other situations involving conflict that sets Lin apart from his friend Hu.

It was an ideological difference: while Hu confronted conflict, Lin moved out of danger in the Taoist way: ‘Who is advanced in Tao seems to slip backwards.’ 970 Lin certainly did face threats, in Beijing, in Chongqing and in Singapore: he dealt with all of these in the same way. In all three cases, Lin’s history of response to danger held true: he settled his affairs, packed

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966 Huang, ‘Hu Shi and Lin Yutang’, 57, 59.
967 Sisters Soong Mei-ling (married Chiang Kai-shek) and Soong Ching Ling (married Sun Yat-sen).
up his family and beat a rapid retreat. From Beijing he retreated to Xiamen; from Singapore he retreated to Cannes; and from Chongqing to NY. In each case he employed the tactic of ‘retreat being the better case of valour.’ The Taoist principle of inaction as a response was always an ideal for Lin:

By doing nothing everything is done.
He who conquers the world often does so by doing nothing.
When one is compelled to do something, the world is already beyond his conquering.

Lin moved away from the source of the threat. One could define this as ‘doing nothing’, in contrast to Hu who chose to stay and enter into conflict with his opposition, or ‘doing something’. Lin’s preference for a Taoist approach to threat proved wise because he found peace and safety by removing his family from danger, positive reinforcement, and on each occasion struck out again with his barbed pen, albeit from afar.

The enduring nature of this friendship, even when separated by death, was geographically aided by Hu and Lin occupying the same temporal space: Hu and Lin were both in Beijing from 1918 to 1926; Hu was the Republic of China (ROC) Ambassador to America from 1938 to 1942 based in NY, a period when Lin was resident in NY. In later life, Lin followed Hu’s example of retirement location: Hu made Taipei his home from 1958 until his death 1962, while Lin made Taipei his primary residence from 1965 until his death in 1976. Both men fell out of favour with the politicians of the mainland Chinese regime, made their homes in Taipei and were buried there: Hu at Academia Sinica University in Nangang, Taipei, and Lin at his Memorial House, Yangmingshan, Taipei. In the 1920s and 1930s, Lin was outspoken, ‘I had established myself as an independent critic, neither a Kuomintang man, nor for Chiang Kai-shek, and at times a merciless critic.’ In later years, Lin stayed in favour with Chiang while Hu fell out of favour by voicing his criticism of the Taiwanese leader. These contrasting behavioural consequences were a result of accepting or rejecting a political environment. Lin’s underlying behaviour from childhood of not quarrelling with peers laid a pattern that saved him from the same fate as Hu.

971 William Shakespeare, Henry IV, Part One, 1596.
972 Lin, The Wisdom of Lao Tse, 229.
973 Wikipedia, ‘Hu Shi’.
974 MO, 69.
6.2.3 Lu Xun (Zhou Shuren)

Lin valued Hu as friend and mentor but, regarding literary styles, he preferred the ‘Thread of Language’ group headed by Lu, to Hu’s ‘Modern Review’ group.\footnote{Huang, ‘Hu Shi and Lin Yutang’, 42.}{\footnote{Lu, ‘In Memory of Miss Liu Hezhen’.}{\footnote{Huang, ‘Hu Shi and Lin Yutang’, 41–42.}} Lin also wrote and presented the eulogy for Liu Hezhen, Lin’s student at Beijing University.\footnote{Huang, ‘Hu Shi and Lin Yutang’, 42.} Lin felt that the ‘Thread of Language’ style of writing suited his approach better than the ‘Modern Review’ style.\footnote{Huang, ‘Hu Shi and Lin Yutang’, 42.}

In general, the ‘Modern Review’ writers – Wang Shijie (1891–1981), Jiang Tingfu (1895–1965), Zhou Gengsheng (1889–1971), Ding Xilin (1893–1974) and Hu – felt superior to the ‘Thread of Language’ writers – Lu, Chen Yuan (1896–1970), Zhou Zuoren (1885–1967) and Lin – but Lin argued that the division between these two schools of literature (supposedly based on the academic status of its members) was unreasonable because the members of both groups were scholars of merit.\footnote{Huang, ‘Hu Shi and Lin Yutang’, 42.}

Hu too supported a climate of tolerance. He wrote a letter to Lu, Zhou and Lin, calling for peace between the two groups and suggesting differences that were originally based on ‘conscience at first have now gradually become written polemics’, which had strayed far from the original arguments until they were not comprehensible to their peers.\footnote{Hu Shi, Selected letters between Hu Shi and his friends, Beijing: Section of the Republic of China, Institute of Modern History, 378–380, 1979.} During this
argument, Lin did not stray from his enduring script regarding friendship: Hu and Lin remained friends and supportive colleagues throughout the debates.

Lu was much admired by Lin as a writer; however, Lin had little to say on the subject of friendship with him. Certainly Lin took Lu, along with ‘Shen Chien-shih and a very distinguished group’ of academics from Peking University, to Amoy (Xiamen) University when he fled there with his family in 1926, but this was the extent of his interest.\(^{981}\) Lin expressed regret that he was not more hospitable to Lu when science professor Liu Shu-chi drove Lu from one apartment to another, resulting in Lu resigning and leaving Xiamen for Guangzhou where, as Lin commented, ‘his lover Miss Hsü’ awaited him.\(^{982}\) Lin also resigned, as a form of protest against this unfair treatment of Lu, but did not follow him to Guanzhou. Lin’s interests were in Lu’s professional ability and in his unjust treatment *per se* rather than as a friend. It is interesting that Lin mentioned ‘Miss Hsü’ and labelled her Lu’s ‘lover’, rather than his sweetheart or fiancé, for indeed Lu already had a wife.\(^{983}\) Although Lu’s own family were delighted with the news that Xu bore him a son, Lin may well have judged this relationship ill-founded because of religious values embedded from childhood. He showed this by distancing himself, for not only did Lu have a relationship with Xu, but his own brother, Zhou Zuoren, accused him of dalliance with his wife too.\(^{984}\)

Lin could admire the intellectual views of Lu and defend his right to fair treatment, yet dislike his behaviour that did not sit well with Lin’s entrenched Christian beliefs. Indeed, Lin often showed a love of titillating topics: for example, female nudity in Parisian nightclubs because only one starved of this vice could truly appreciate it.\(^{985}\) His essay titles, such as ‘Celibacy a Freak of Civilization’ and ‘On Sex Appeal’ in *The Importance of Living* offer further evidence of Lin’s penchant for intriguing titles.\(^{986}\) For 1937, these were outrageous titles. Lin’s edicts on gaining entry to heaven reflect values, both his own and those of others.\(^{987}\) His statements regarding his moral behaviour, according to the social behavioural standards of the

\(^{981}\) MO, 64.

\(^{982}\) Ibid.


\(^{985}\) PC, 42.

\(^{986}\) *IL*, 1937.

time, becomes a stricture for others: only one who bothers young women will regard them as ‘disasters’. True to another of his habitual psychological traits Lin laces his arguments with humour.

6.3 Political Plight

6.3.1 Zhang Zongchang

His [Lin’s] viewpoint is not that of an earnest leftist (like Zou Taofen) but rather that of a more Daoist humorist, a cultivated, slightly cynical observer who likes to see pretensions punctured. David Arkush and Leo Lee

David Arkush and Leo Lee suggest that Lin is ideologically more a ‘Daoist/humorist’ than a socialist and more likely to draw laughter from his readers than militancy but this still drew the threat of physical harm upon him. Lin looked about him for characters that fulfilled this criterion as motivation for stories, without it seems having concern for his personal safety. He showed little trepidation in writing about warlords from his unique perspective and ultimately one warlord took umbrage at his quirky comments, causing Lin to flee Beijing for safer climes.

Zhang, ‘the Dog Meat General’, drew up an inventory of 54 outspoken journalists and two of these were taken into the street and shot. According to Chiang Kai-shek’s biographer, Jonathon Fenby, Lin called Zhang ‘the most colourful, legendary, mediaeval and unashamed ruler of modern China.’ This remark would surely not have offended Zhang, because he was a notorious figure of his time and revelled in his fame. According to Hui-lan Koo, wife of Vi Kyuin Wellington Koo (1887–1985) Zhang was known everywhere as the ‘Three Don’t Knows’: he didn’t know ‘how much money he had, how many concubines, or how many men in his army.’ In his ‘Little Critic’ column of humorous, political shafts, Lin depicted a comical description of China following the future death of Zhang, ‘In Memoriam of the Dog Meat General.’ This touched a raw nerve in Zhang that resulted in him listing Lin for arrest.

988 Arkush and Lee, Land Without Ghosts, 159.
989 Ibid.
990 Taiyi Lin, Lin Yutang zhuan, 8.
Encyclopedia of World Biography, ‘Lin Yutang’.
Answers.com, ‘Lin Yutang Biography’.
with the strong possibility of execution. Lin moved his family to the safer environment of Xiamen and in so doing confirmed his response to danger – retreated to a more rural location.

This action of Lin removing his family from possible harm allows an examination of Lin’s life to see if there is a pattern in his behaviour: it provides us with a series of cause and effect scenarios. Lin reacted to the threat of harm by shifting his family and self to a safe place. This became a predictable behaviour: when another war with Japan loomed large, Lin took his family to America; after the bombing of Chongqing Lin removed to America; under threat in Singapore he moved to rural France. Lin repeated the act of removal on each occasion. In all cases this was possibly more about the safety of his family than his own peace of mind. If so, this demonstrates his dedication to his wife and daughters. Lin’s reaction to threat follows a predictable behavioural pattern consolidating a life script for Lin: threat causing a flight to nature – mountains and water or a smaller city – the safe environment of his childhood. In general, Lin favoured harmony over adversity in his relationships with family and friends.

6.4 Social and Literary Peers

6.4.1 Chiang Kai-shek and Soong Mei-ling

Two of the more lasting friendships Lin made in China were those with Soong Mei-ling (1897–2003) and her husband Chiang Kai-shek (1888–1975). This relationship waxed and waned during Lin’s life, ultimately influencing a decision of major change, moving to Taiwan, making his connection with this couple a significant emotional event. In the case of Chiang, the friendship was based on belief in this man’s character and political ability. Wu summed up Taiyi’s memory of this relationship:

Lin YuTang firmly believed Chiang Kai-shek was a great leader who would counter the Japanese invasion and resolve the country’s internal disputes through his wisdom and morals.

However, Chiang had not always been of sound character. In his youth, Chiang had an unsavoury reputation for ‘armed robbery’, and aiding in the assassination of Tao Chengzhang, a rival of his mentor Chen Qimei, an early leader in the KMT movement. Nevertheless, Lin placed great trust in both Chiang and Soong throughout his life, claiming ‘President and Madame Chiang Kai-shek’ the hardest workers in China. Lin’s lack of self-modesty allowed him to claim parity with their productivity, but hard work was not the only attribute.

995 Lin, Taiyi, ‘Introduction’, in IL.
996 Ibid.
997 Chiang Kai-shek had the birth name Jiang Jieshi.
998 Wu, ‘Lin YuTang (2)’.
999 MO, 3.
that Lin and Chiang had in common. There was also an underlying bond, the Christian connection.

Xiaoqun Xu claims that both Sun Yatsen (1866–1925), the first leader of the KMT, and Chiang ‘were at least nominally Christian’ therefore ‘Christianity and nationalism became to some extent intertwined.’\(^{1000}\) Chiang’s youth record of untypical Christian behaviour challenges anything more than a nominal belief in his youth; however, Christianity may account for the trust Lin placed in him later in life. This joint faith belief in the lives of all three men (Sun, Chiang and Lin) suggests an underlying complexity in their relationships, particularly on Lin’s part because he was always a steadfast pacifist, using the pen as his sword. Another pen-wielding writer who came into Lin’s early adult life was George Bernhard Shaw (1856–1950).

### 6.4.2 The Shanghai Circle

Shaw visited Shanghai in April 1933 but was reticent to leave the safety of his cruise ship ‘The Empress of Britain’, because of safety concerns in Shanghai during the 1930s.\(^{1001}\) It took some time to persuade Shaw to go ashore; however, an invitation to luncheon with Soong Ching-ling and prominent authors of China at that time, changed his mind.\(^{1002}\) The event was held at Soong’s home, ‘29 Rue Moliere’, as both she and Shaw were ‘honorary chairpersons of the World Committee against Imperialist War.’\(^{1003}\) It was momentous for Lin not only because of Shaw’s presence, but because of a photograph taken that day.

The luncheon gathering provided an opportunity for a group photograph of Shaw with members of the China Civil Rights League (CCRL).\(^{1004}\) The original photo (below) included George B. Shaw, Madame Chingling, Harold Isaacs, Lin Yutang, Agnes Smedley, Cai Yuanpei and Lu Xun.

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\(^{1001}\) Ibid.

\(^{1002}\) Ibid.


\(^{1004}\) Ibid.
This photo was altered by editors during China’s Cultural Revolution period (1966–1976) to eliminate those opposed to communist ideology: Lin, who favoured the Nationalist Movement of Chiang, and Harold Isaacs (1910–1986), who favoured Trotsky-style communism. Isaacs was shocked when shown the altered photo. He claimed that he and Lin ‘had vanished, brushed away into the limbo of non-personhood as totally as if the brusher had been executioner seeing to it that we existed no longer’. Lin and Isaacs were *persona non grata* with communist officials from the Mao Zedong (1893–1976) and Deng Xiaoping (1978–1992) governments, explaining the disappearance of the Lin and Isaacs images during these periods. Isaac and Lin began reappearing in the first photograph after the demise of the Cultural Revolution.

The passion in Isaac’s description of the manipulation of this photo shows its importance to him as signifying existence/non-existence; and there is little reason to think that Lin would have reacted differently, although humour might have tempered his initial reaction. The photo doctoring held deep implications for Isaac’s and Lin’s temporal and spatial existence. For Lin,
because the photo doctoring took place in his motherland, for which he had emotional bonds, and because it reinforced his distrust of the communist regime.

A 1977 a group photo of Lin’s peers (originally taken in 1927) shows Lin and Sun Xifu removed, again for political purposes.

![Figure 6.5: [Sun Xifu, Lin Yutang, Sun Fuyuan, Zhou Jianren, Xu Guangping & Lu Xun](image)]

Qian conjectured how Lin may have reacted to these doctored photos:

> Still, drawing on the appropriate wisdom he left behind, one can make some speculations on what he might have said. While such changes would have amused Lin, they would not have surprised him, for he had felt for a long time that the communists were capable of ‘astounding, chameleon-like changes.’

Significantly for Lin, these doctored photos challenged the empirical evidence of Western science, a concept that he was raised to revere. During the early part of the twentieth century, cameras and photography were considered by the Chinese as part of Western science, which Lin’s father had upheld to his children as a beacon for the future. However, the earliest record of the principle of camera action, *camera obscura*, was by a Chinese philosopher, Mo Tzu (c.470–c.391BCE), who observed that ‘the reflected light rays of an illuminated object passing through a small dark enclosure result in an inverted but exact image of the object.’

Such an observation confirms Lin’s and indeed that of others of his generation’s belief that ‘the camera never lies’. Here was evidence that had the power to shake his basic belief, just as

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1012 Qian, "The Life and Times of Lin Yutang", 682.

‘Photoshop’ and its digital peers have shaken present day trust in photographs and films as empirical representations of objects and events.\textsuperscript{1014} Lin’s removal from these two photos challenged his foundational belief in the empirical evidence of a mechanical device, the camera. Physical events were not alone in destroying long-held beliefs for Lin: his trust in friendships was severely shaken by events that exposed their weaknesses.

6.5 Publishing Peers

Three factors contributed to the breakdown of the winning literary combination of Lin, Buck and Walsh. Firstly, Lin over-invested in his invention of a Chinese character typewriter; secondly, as we have seen in Chapter 5, Buck ignored Lin’s financial plight; and thirdly, Walsh ignored Lin’s hand of friendship after a bitter battle about taxation and royalties.

6.5.1 Richard John Walsh (1902–1975)

Lin’s perception of failure in his long friendship with the editor Buck, set the scene for the loss of yet another friend, his publisher Walsh. Qian says of the relationship:

Professionally, Richard Walsh was Lin’s editor, publisher, literary agent, press agent and public relations advisor. Not only did Walsh personally edit (in some cases heavily) all of Lin’s works, but the choice of subjects, sometimes even character shaping and plot development in a fiction, were very much collaborative acts between Walsh and Lin.\textsuperscript{1015}

The rift between Lin and Walsh firmed in 1955, when Walsh did not reply to Lin’s telegram about his shift to Singapore.\textsuperscript{1016} The loss of his savings in Chinese banks and in developing his typewriter meant that Lin had to recoup his finances from his productive income, writing. Buck’s refusal to help Lin financially, combined with Walsh’s failure to wish him well on his venture to Singapore, led him to severe ties with Buck, Walsh and The John Day Company.\textsuperscript{1017} There was one further challenge to this friendship initiated by Lin’s financial need. Lin became aware that John Day Company authors were entitled to claim 50 per cent of overseas royalties for their writers but he had been paid only 10 per cent.\textsuperscript{1018}

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{1015} Qian, ‘The Two–Way Process in the Age of Globalization’.
\item \textsuperscript{1016} Murray, ‘Lighting a Candle and Cursing the Darkness’.
\item \textsuperscript{1017} MO, 77.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
friends, ‘Mr. and Mrs. Hank Holzer’, who advised Lin that he had been underpaid by his publisher, he demanded his rightful recompense from The John Day Company. Lin allowed the Holzers to pursue the company for what he was owed. This dogged pursuit of The John Day Company was so out of keeping with Lin’s normal response to financial matters – placid acceptance – that it may, in part, be a response to the slight he felt when Buck turned her back on his financial needs. That Lin delegated this pursuit is also out of character for him and is perhaps an anomaly that is a feature of a ‘prototypical scene’.

The John Day Company also withheld taxation on Lin’s overseas publications, on the grounds that Lin was a citizen of America, and therefore taxable on these products. Lin’s lawyers asserted that his status was that of ‘non-resident alien’, and therefore not liable for taxation within America. The correspondence between Walsh and Lin, including those by their respective office staff and lawyers, took place over a five month period from 14 January to July 30 1954. It started out as a query about Lin’s 1953–1954 tax liability and became a debate about all overseas taxation commitments from 1943, 1944, 1945, 1947 and 1948. This dispute over whether Lin should pay domestic taxation on foreign royalties was clearly the breaking-point in the relationship from Walsh’s side.
According to the lack of correspondence in The John Day Company files after this point, this appears to be an unresolved issue. Nevertheless, Lin expected Walsh to respond to his farewell salutation, but he received only a formal message from Walsh’s secretary wishing him ‘success and happiness in your new home.’ Walsh had known of Lin’s appointment in Singapore from newspapers as early as 11 March 1954. The relationship deteroiated purely because of money, something that Lin had not been concerned by since university days; however, he now needed to recoup finances lost from the economic failure of his typewriter invention and the collapse of the Chinese banking system. The correspondence between Walsh and Lin during this disagreement reveals a tenacious element to Lin’s character that is a recognisable script supported by his trait of persistence that sustained him through difficult times. In December 1954, Lin was still addressing Walsh as ‘Dear Dick’ and Walsh was replying ‘Dear Y.T.;’ however, the content of Lin’s letter suggests that Walsh’s publishing company staff had not been vigilant custodians of royalties from Lin’s books in France and South America. Lin asked permission to take over both of these matters: he asked to research and challenge those handling the royalties in these two domains. He became cool in his dealings with Walsh, who handed the task of answering Lin’s correspondence over to staff. Subsequent letters from Lin to Walsh are addressed to ‘Dear Sir’ and replies to Lin are all written by Mary Lombard or Elizabeth Mauff in lieu of Walsh. The fracture in the friendship was based predominantly on monetary matters. For Lin, the situation was clear: it was his duty to provide for his family and part of that duty involved ensuring that his creative product received correct recompense. For Buck and Walsh it may have seemed that Lin was irresponsible in pouring all of his funds into his typewriter project and churlish of him in seeking to recoup his losses by overly diligent scrutiny of his past foreign royalties handled by their publishing house; but it was predominantly a consequence of one of Lin’s traits, persistence.

Lin was disappointed when Buck showed her ‘American’ nature; however, in fairness to Buck, her husband’s publishing company had already given a US$5,000 loan to Lin to complete his typewriter model in 1946, with the loan repayable upon the fruition of this invention recouping Lin’s investment. Walsh’s company had also encouraged G. P.

1027 Elizabeth Mauff, ‘Letter to Dr Lin’, 12 October 1954, John Day Co. Archives, Box 329, Folder 4, Rare Books and Special Collections, Princeton University Library.
1030 Ibid.
1031 Ibid.
Putnam’ & Sons, publishers, to advance Lin an equal amount with the security of his future royalties and income from books as protection against the loan.\textsuperscript{1033} Records do not show the repayment of this money, but as Lin prided himself on repaying loans (in fact it was one of his scripts), it is likely to have been repaid before leaving for Singapore. Buck’s reluctance to broker further advances for Lin is understandable, as her family had already invested heavily in supporting Lin’s typewriter. This rupture of such long-standing friendships shows a recalcitrant element to Lin’s nature. When confronted with financial rejection by Buck, Lin had immediately branded her nationality as a negative quality. This reaction from Lin evoked him to a psychological retreat as a defence to rejection and in so doing exposed his reliance on the attributes of friendship formed in childhood and early adulthood. Lin blamed Buck and Walsh – in his eyes they did not have the strength of character to sustain life-long friendships – rather than accept responsibility for his own actions in mishandling his finances. Referral of blame sits well with his response to poor behaviour in childhood and youth, when he believed that his intellect excused him from guilt. This means a reversal of the attitude change caused by Hu’s support of him in his early twenties so Lin reclaimed his childhood belief.

Lin’s lack of success in publications after the cessation of his agreement with The John Day Company, that is, without the support of Buck and Walsh, supports the notion that his extraordinary popularity in America in the 1930s was at least in part due to the editorial guidance of that couple. He acknowledged this in his first best-seller in America, \textit{My Country and My People}, and in 1937, in his Preface to \textit{The Importance of Living}:

\begin{quote}
Again I owe my thanks to Mr and Mrs Richard J. Walsh, first, for suggesting the idea of the book, and secondly, for their useful and frank criticism.\textsuperscript{1034}
\end{quote}

Lin later acknowledged Buck and Walsh by dedicating his book of ‘simple statements and restatements of simple truths’, \textit{Between Tears and Laughter}, to them: ‘\textit{Dedicated to Richard J. Walsh and Pearl S. Buck in abiding friendship}'.\textsuperscript{1035} For his part, Lin claimed an enduring friendship with this couple who had launched his global career as a writer, but there were always professional tensions. Although Lin acknowledged the support of Buck and Walsh, he was also saddened by their disapproval when they rejected his writing. They did this in 1942, when Lin presented 35 pages of a new book for Walsh to peruse.\textsuperscript{1036} Lin suggested titles such as ‘A Man Thinking’, ‘Journey to Peace’, ‘Listen, Amelia!’ and ‘Eirenicon–A Journey to

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{1033} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{1034} \textit{MCMP}, xiv.
\textsuperscript{1035} \textit{IL}, ix.
\textsuperscript{1036} Lin, ‘Dedication Page’, \textit{From Tears to Laughter}.
\end{footnotes}
Peace’, but Walsh tried to dissuade Lin from continuing, because neither he nor Buck enjoyed blank verse and the book was entirely in blank verse.\textsuperscript{1037} Walsh, claiming Buck agreed with him, argued that American readers in general did not enjoy blank verse and after all, Lin was ‘Chinese’: it was his writing from a Chinese foundation that made his writing saleable in America. Conversely, Lin argued that the book ‘deals essentially with the character of the time we are living in, trying to dissect the roots of the ills of modern civilization’ and as such Lin felt that it was his ‘most important book’.\textsuperscript{1038} A protracted debate over some six months ensued on the merits of this book, with the completed manuscript rejected. This was seemingly accepted by Lin.\textsuperscript{1039} Qian argues that although Lin hinted at changing his publishers, his final words on the subject were: ‘I will never submit it to another publisher unless with your approval.’\textsuperscript{1040} It aligns with his behaviour patterns that Lin did not assert himself and did not insist the book be published. It shows patience in achieving his goals that he displayed until the end of his life. Yet an 11cm x 7.5cm book of only 62 pages, \textit{Peace is in the Heart}, was published by Lin in Australia in 1948. This is not mentioned in even the most comprehensive bibliography of Lin’s writing in English by Arthur Anderson.\textsuperscript{1041} Anderson records \textit{Peace is in the Heart} as published in England in 1949, which makes it after the market had been tested in Australia.\textsuperscript{1042} Lin’s love of contradictions may have allowed him to circumvent his pledge to Buck and Walsh by first test-publishing his work through an obscure publisher in a distant country.

On August 18 1954, Lin wrote to Richard Walsh Jnr., addressing him as ‘Dear Dick’ and extending the offer of hospitality to Walsh if he should ever be in Singapore.\textsuperscript{1043} Murray describes the moment of decision when Lin cut his ties with Walsh as a friend:

> For Lin, what ‘finished it’ was what he perceived as a lack of courtesy. When he telegraphed Walsh in 1954 to announce his departure to Singapore, he received no reply. As Lin would say at the end of his life, ‘we never picked up again.’\textsuperscript{1044}

In this display of poor manners, Lin accepted that Walsh no longer wished to remain on terms of friendship with him and, stoically accepting the rebuff as final, he turned to other avenues...
to publish his writing. Such was his confidence there is no self-pity or anxiety that other
publishers might reject his work. In his calm acceptance of the breakdown in his personal and
professional relationships with Buck and Walsh, Lin displayed behaviour akin to that of his
character Yao Sze-an, the Taoist father of Mulan, in his novel *Moment in Peking*: a peaceful
moving-on with life. Lin’s decision to cut ties with The John Day Company, which had been
until now been his anchor to the American publishing scene, had several consequences.

In 1955, free from the dictates of Buck and Walsh, Lin developed a relationship with
Prentice-Hall, who gave him carte blanche to write whatever he wished.\(^{1045}\) It appears that Lin
then became more of a freelance writer because his name is linked to other publishers.\(^{1046}\) A
newspaper clipping of unknown origin, but held in The John Day Company files in Princeton
University library archives, claims that Lin left a manuscript entitled ‘Eurydice’s Chance’
with his publishers William Heinemann Limited when he left America for England en route to
Singapore.\(^{1047}\) There are no further references to this manuscript; however, unexpectedly Lin
produced his first and only utopian fiction, a full-length novel entitled, *Looking Beyond*,
published by Prentice-Hall, and *The Unexpected Island*, published by William Heinemann
Limited, in the same year.\(^{1048}\) It seems likely that *Eurydice’s Chance* was an earlier name for
the same book but it was not the book that Lin wanted published by The John Day Company
years earlier. That book was proclaimed by Lin as his ‘most important book’ Buck and Walsh
rejected, because it was philosophical in nature. However, it was a considerable shift in genre
from all his previous books and perhaps demonstrated another incidence of ‘thrownness’ in
his ‘prototypical scene’ of creative produce.\(^{1049}\) Lin, the global writer citizen, made shifts in
locations as well as genres.

In another pattern of behaviour, Qian sees Lin as a ‘world citizen’, reinforcing his ‘preferred
life story sequence’ of spatial movement: in childhood and youth travelling to educational
institutions and in adulthood crossing oceans for higher education and vocational
opportunities and to represent institutions.\(^{1050}\) He visited Paris twice, obviously feeling
comfortable there, despite its being distinctly urban.

\(^{1045}\) MO, 77.
\(^{1046}\) E.g. William Heinemann Ltd; Prentice-Hall Inc.; World Book Co.; Farrar, Straus and Cudahy; The World
Publishing Co.; articles for Hong Kong Reader’s Digest Kong.
\(^{1047}\) Staff Reporter, ‘Dr Lin Yutang’, 9 November, 1954, John Day Co. Collection, Archives, Princeton University
Special Collections, Box 329, Folder 4.
\(^{1050}\) Qian, ‘Lin Yutang: Journey of a World Citizen’. WP.
6.5.2 The Paris Circle

Charles (1902–1974) and Anne (1906–2001) Lindbergh were part of the Lin’s circle of friends in Paris, possibly introduced by Buck, a friend of the Lindberghs. Charles Lindbergh was an aviator, author, inventor, explorer and a social activist. This diversity of talents immediately suggests why Lin and Lindbergh were such avid dinner conversationalists.\(^{1051}\) They had writing, inventing and social commentary in common even though their politics may have differed. The Lin’s circle of friends included Jo Davidson, a Paris based sculptor, and Gertrude Stein, modernist writer and poet.\(^{1052}\) In her collation of events from her European sojourn, Anne Lindbergh related her encounter with Lin’s second novel, *The Importance of Living*, by quoting this passage from her diary:

> By ‘bosom friends’ I do not mean necessarily those who have sworn a life and death friendship with us. Generally bosom friends are those who, although separated by hundreds or thousands of miles, still have implicit faith in us and refuse to believe rumours against us; those who on hearing a rumour, try every means to explain it away; those who in given moments advise us as to what to do and what not to do; and those who at the critical hour come to our help.\(^{1053}\)

This definition of a ‘bosom friend’ by Lin becomes a profound statement in light of the challenges thrown at both the Lindberghs and the Lins during WWII: Lin’s views on America’s role in WWII were unpopular, as were those of Lindbergh, who was alternatively acclaimed and deprecated for his pacifist views on America in regard to Europe.\(^{1054}\) Lin was alternatively praised and denounced for his views on America in regard to war-machinery aid to China.\(^{1055}\) Both men saw the Japanese invasion of China as a greater threat to America than the German invasion of Europe. Back in America, the Lins formed a new circle of friends, including Eugene O’Neill, Robert Frost, Thomas Mann, Isadora Duncan and photographer Carl Van Vechten.\(^{1056}\) Lin attempted to encourage American readers to empathise with China’s need rather than succumb to Eurocentrism. In talks with friends and in his writing, Lin dwelt on the topics of peace and war during the last two decades of his life, but he found the loss of friends to death as great a challenge as the loss of nations in wars.

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\(^{1052}\) Ibid, 501, 552, 544.


\(^{1054}\) IL, 350.


\(^{1056}\) Lin, *Between Tears and Laughter*.


Reviewer, ‘Angry Asia’.

Wu, ‘Lin YuTang (2)’. 183
6.5.3 Departure of Friends

An early indication of Lin’s usual script for dealing with death was his reaction to the 1933 murder of Yang Chien, a member of the China League for Civil Rights movement to which Lin and other writers from the International Settlement in Shanghai belonged.\(^{1057}\) The relative protection of foreign powers in the settlement shattered, Lin ‘shrank away’ from the League’s ‘bold attempt to challenge Chiang Kai-shek’s regime of terror against opponents.’\(^{1058}\) In the same year that Lin was shaken by Chien’s death, a familial death magnified Lin’s concern. Five months after Shaw’s visit, Lin’s nephew Lin Huiyuan was murdered. Huiyuan was active in an anti-Japanese political movement and was about to hold a press conference in Fujian Province, urging his countrymen to boycott Japanese products.\(^{1059}\) The loss of a close family member at the hands of Japanese activists on Chinese soil shook Lin’s sense of security and paved the way for Buck to entice him to America. Faced with the threat of death, Lin retreated to America, changing his psychological response to harm from a retreat to the country to a change of country. America offered Lin the peace and stability of his childhood, albeit in an urban environment. It was three decades more before loss by death became an issue for him.

The deaths of two men who had made major contributions to Lin’s fame and fortune—Richard Walsh Jnr in 1960 and Hu Shi in 1962—signalled a downward spiral in his own health.\(^{1060}\) The death of Hu, a peer with whom he held not only a long and trusted friendship but also close literary, philosophical and political views, was a significant emotional event for Lin: it prompted him to take over his friend’s presidency of Republic of China PEN Centre, now International PEN in Taiwan, adding this duty to his already heavy load.\(^{1061}\) At this stage of his life, Lin might have been expected to reduce his commitments to society but this was a debt to a real friend, forcing him to follow a script of an enduring debt repayment.

While he mourned at the graveside of Hu and wrote of his admiration of his childhood teacher, Susan Fahmy, Lin felt no obligation to acknowledge the passing of his friends and publishers of two decades—Buck and Walsh—both of whom predeceased him. Lin’s business and friendship ties with them had long since been severed; nevertheless they had been a valued part of the Lin family for almost two decades. It shows the completeness with which

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\(^{1057}\) Isaacs, ‘Re-Encounters in China’, 324.

\(^{1058}\) Ibid.

\(^{1059}\) Lin Taiyi, Lin Yutang zhuan, 92.


Lin cut his ties with Buck and Walsh that he made no attempt to acknowledge the passing of either of them. In this, Lin held to his foundational values where friends had an obligation to those who had helped them achieve their goals. This had been the case with his father’s old scholar and friend, who had financially supported Zhizheng’s wish to send Lin to St John’s College and Hu, who had anonymously supported him financially in a time of need.

6.5.4 Chapter Summary

There is no doubt that literary peers played their part in confirming Lin’s foundational values and forging new ones. Lu and Hu reinforced attributes of Lin’s ‘preferred life story’: Lu strengthened Lin’s foundational goal of fame as a member of the ‘Thread of Language’ writers, while Hu epitomised Lin’s ideal of friendship. Lin’s friendship with Hu demonstrated his ability to maintain long and solid relationships and commitment to friends: that behaviour was challenged by his relationship with Buck and Walsh in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Lin acknowledged Buck and Walsh as the orchestrators of his early success as a writer in America. Their professional position gave Lin entrée to the rarefied institution of Western literary society, but their rejection of him in his time of need annulled their right to be mourned. Lin felt the loss of family and peers: it challenged his attitudes and raised his anxiety to complete goals in his own life before his end came. Loss changed Lin’s script from retreat to the countryside, to flight across the North Pacific to peace and security for his family. This became a life-long script for Lin: henceforth he crossed oceans, taking with him a transcultural philosophy of life.

1062 Ibid.
1063 Ibid.
1064 Ibid.
Chapter 7: Spiritual Survival: Philosophy/Religion/Humour

I distrust all dead and mechanical formulas for expressing anything connected with human affairs and human personalities. Putting human affairs in exact formulas shows in itself a lack of the sense of humour and therefore a lack of wisdom.1065

Lin Yutang

7.1 Introduction

A product of a Christian home in an essentially non-Christian community during his childhood and youth, Lin was not privy to many commonly-held Chinese beliefs. The dominant schools of religious thought in China during Lin’s early years were: Confucianism and Taoism, which have been practised in China since approximately 6th c BCE; Buddhism since the 1st c CE; Islam since the 7th c CE; and Christianity since the 13th c CE. In China, the syncretic complexity of Chinese religion sanctioned the practice of folklore based on mythology, particularly when it was mixed with traditional religions and included some historically valid facts. The line between superstition and religion was blurred. Lin rode the waves of acceptance and the troughs of doubt and denial regarding his religious beliefs, until he conceived a way of accommodating dominant Chinese spiritual beliefs in the Christian practices of his formative years. The effect of his combined early childhood experiences—Christian family and Christian missionary teachers—and the deprivation of his cultural folklore because of these Christian values, cannot be underestimated when considering why Lin chose to dedicate his life to certain goals, such as philosophical writing. Lin’s religious belief was interwoven with both Chinese and Western philosophies from his Harvard years onwards; they produced both positive responses and thought-provoking challenges for the youthful Lin. As his relationship with this cross-cultural line of reasoning mellowed in adulthood, he used his familiarity with both to conceive intuitive predictions regarding peace as a global prospect.1066

These perceptions gave birth to the remarkable insights into human behaviour and relationships that make his books so compelling. Lin’s promotion of humour as an agent of communication and an indicator of intellect complemented his theory of youmo as a genre of writing. In this chapter I will argue that the themes of religion, philosophy and humour underscored Lin’s adult life, resulting in his wide-based appeal as a transcultural writer.

1065 IL, 6.
The first theme investigates how Christianity had far-reaching effects on Lin. Throughout his life he was constantly challenged and disenchanted by the dogma of Christianity. It is because of his early childhood Christian experiences, combined with deprivation of cultural folklore, that religious values cannot be underestimated in evaluating why Lin chose to dedicate his life to certain goals, such as philosophical writing. Taken together, these influences help us understand his pursuit of religion as important to a balanced self-image and to provide suggestions for why he promoted certain personal beliefs in his writing. This chapter will show how the omission of a determined relationship with Chinese religious culture in Lin’s childhood became a concern and substantial in his adult life. Mingled with these religious values were philosophical opinions.

Lin’s second theme, philosophy, is prominent in his creative produce: his philosophical views permeate most of his non-fiction writing. *The Importance of Living* stands out as the book that had the greatest impact on readers globally. This chapter will explore Lin’s cross-cultural views of life, his ‘common script’, that fascinated Western audiences because his interpretation of Eastern philosophies and cultural traits, gained through research in adult life, suggested alternatives to contemporary Western life-styles that were becoming increasingly stressful.

This chapter will also investigate how Lin justified a position when his stance might be challenged. For example, his admission in his memoirs that he enjoyed being ‘a bundle of contradictions’ circumvents instances of contradiction uncovered and critiqued by discerning readers. Pre-emptive disclosure of flaws helped Lin to ward off criticism of his seeming about-face in thought. It was a ‘habitual mode of psychological defense’ that rationalised, gave him an excuse for, and provided for, that ‘degree of thrownness’ that signifies a ‘prototypical scene’. Lin also espoused a healthy balance of physical activity and productive idleness, but preferred the latter. Lin’s transcultural philosophical voice is qualified by his confession that he is using the thoughts that have been expressed before by

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1067 Ibid. 
________. *The Wisdom of Laotse*.
1069 WP. 
1070 WP. 
1071 MO, 1.
1072 WP. 
1073 IL, 122.
both Eastern and Western philosophers. However, philosophy and religion were not the only elements of Lin’s convictions that appealed to readers.

The third theme investigates how Lin’s fascination with humour as a product of writing had a ‘history of reinforcement’, becoming a ‘common script’ in his life. Sibling jests about the writing of light-hearted poems and remedies for ill-health established humour as part of Lin’s childhood; this childhood play became an ‘underlying theme’ in his life. His pre-1936 writing in China, particularly through his magazines, formed a firm foundation for his later writing on humour. His use of humour is effective in his non-fiction writing with the exception of *Between Tears and Laughter*, for reasons already discussed. Observing Lin’s stance on humour through its contemporary cross-cultural and transcultural uses provides us with greater insight into its effect on his personality and character growth.

This chapter will demonstrate how Lin’s analysis of humour provided theorists with concrete language to describe behaviours and transcultural uses, leading to positive outcomes. Exploring how others perceived his theories offers the opportunity to appreciate Lin’s unique thought more comprehensively. It will explore his argument that humour tempered by idealism maintains a sense of reality, and that bodily chemical balance achieved by healthy habits and humour sets the tone for a peaceful society. Peace, a precept of Lin’s basic belief Christianity, was fundamental to both his fiction and non-fiction writing. The theme of peace stemmed from his childhood, when the parental decree of sibling harmony became one of his life scripts. This chapter will show how Lin’s claims for humour continue to stimulate its transcultural use, allowing us to observe other outcomes from his creative contributions.

### 7.2 Religion

#### 7.2.1 Formative Belief

Lin’s father Zhizheng saw Christianity as inextricably linked to the English language and Western science: these principles are visible in Lin’s determination to carve a successful niche in the English speaking world by creating understanding of Chinese thought in Western readers. Western science became a goal through which Lin glimpsed fame, but then was denied through an inability to sell his typewriter patent for full production. However, his
youngest daughter fulfilled this goal, becoming a well-published author in biochemistry. Lin’s Christian belief was most strongly challenged at the tertiary level.

A year of theology at St John’s College and the loss of his sister Meigong challenged Lin’s faith, contributing to his change of academic direction from theology to language. While teaching in Beijing, Lin acted on his sense of loss that being raised as a Christian had deprived him of, his heritage: traditional Chinese thought, beliefs and folklore. As an adult, Lin investigated the humanism of Confucius and the independence of Taoism, selecting and absorbing those elements that he could accommodate within Christian values without causing tension to his foundational beliefs. *From Pagan to Christian* describes a shift from theist to ‘pagan’ or ‘heathen’, allowing Lin to explore the beliefs of his heritage without an associated guilt imposed by Christian dogma.¹⁰⁷⁶ Mark Skousen remarked that although Lin ‘approved of the Christian emphasis on technology and education’ and rejected ‘foot-binding and drug use in China’, he did not accept ‘the austerity and social isolationism’ as practised by the missionaries who taught him.¹⁰⁷⁷ For him, the dogma of Christianity as practised in the early twentieth century challenged his participation in church life, however, it did not challenge his faith in God as the superior being of the universe.¹⁰⁷⁸

Murray said that Lin’s approach to Christianity was not that of ‘a monopoly of truth’ for any one belief, but a superiority of one belief system over another.¹⁰⁷⁹ Lin yearned to grasp the spiritual and mythical elements of the birth-culture that had eluded him as a Christian-raised child. He acknowledged the humanism and self-improvement ideals of Confucianism, the passivism of Taoism and the contemplative doctrine of Buddhism, but claimed that the philosophy of Christ was of a higher order than that of other prophets.¹⁰⁸⁰ His views on paganism were equally as unique:

A pagan always believes in God but would not like to say so, for fear of being misunderstood. All Chinese pagans believe in God, the most commonly met with designation in Chinese literature being the term chaowu, or the Creator of Things. The only difference is that the Chinese pagan is honest enough to leave the Creator of Things in a halo of mystery, toward whom he feels a kind of awed piety and reverence.¹⁰⁸¹

¹⁰⁷⁶ *PC*, 42.
¹⁰⁷⁷ Skousen, ‘Tranquility: The Art of Letting Go’.
¹⁰⁷⁸ *HL*, 133.
¹⁰⁷⁹ Ibid.
¹⁰⁸⁰ *IL*, 133.
¹⁰⁸² Murray, ‘Lighting the Candle and Cursing the Darkness’.
¹⁰⁸³ Ibid.
¹⁰⁸⁴ *IP*, 444.
In *From Pagan to Christian* Lin spoke of his inner struggles with religious beliefs during his life up until then. It represents Lin’s ‘quest for the noblest truths’:

For religion is, first and last, an individual facing up to the astounding heavens, a matter between him and God. It is a matter of individual growth from within, and cannot be “given” by anybody. … This is therefore necessarily a story of personal experience, for all worthwhile accounts of this kind must necessarily be based on personal inquiry, on moments of doubt and moments of insight and intimation. … It is by no means a smooth voyage of discovery, but one full of spiritual shocks and encounters.\(^{1082}\)

The main ‘spiritual shocks and encounters’ must be considered significant emotional events in Lin’s life because they challenged his foundational beliefs to mould his life-theme on theism.\(^{1083}\) His rejection of church-based Christianity in his youth, and his return to it after the trials of careers as an author and inventor, is an almost complete circle of beliefs. He articulates and justifies the fluctuations in his religious beliefs with the reason and eloquence that one might expect of a gifted wordsmith, but to what degree did he really change? Lin’s behaviour tells us that his spiritual stability throughout life was a result of selecting the parts of each religious system that best suited his mental stability—Confucian values, Taoist and Buddhist methodologies and Christian core beliefs.

### 7.2.2 The Melding of Philosophy and Religion

Lin made a comparison of Western and Chinese beliefs in ‘Views of Mankind’ by melding religious and philosophical thought and concluding succinctly that life is circular—birth, life and death—and rhythmic in the way nature conforms to seasons.\(^ {1084}\) He showed cross-cultural thought in his admiration for Shakespeare, which was based on that writer’s lack of reference to religion: as Lin put it, Shakespeare ‘merely lived, observed life and went away.’\(^ {1085}\) This placed Shakespeare in a Chinese belief space. In *The Pleasures of a Non-Conformist* Lin presented the position of Western philosophy on the question of the existence of God: ‘You can never prove the existence of God in the laboratory sense of scientific proof; nor can you disprove it.’\(^ {1086}\) He argues that the limitation of science is that it can answer ‘how’ things occur but not ‘why’.\(^ {1087}\)

As we know more and more we understand less and less. My point is that as science knows more and more, we wonder more and more also, as any good scientist can tell you. Science, and this covers all

\(^{1082}\) *PC*, 14.
\(^{1083}\) Massey, *The People Puzzle*, 237.
\(^{1084}\) II, 16–24.
\(^{1085}\) II, 34.
\(^{1087}\) Ibid, 85.
branches of science, can answer the question ‘How?’ but can never answer the ultimate question ‘Why?’

For Lin, the importance of knowing the ‘why’ of nature was linked to the existence of God. Paramount to his belief in theism, Lin imagined a conversation after God had revealed to a professor of science the secrets of a spider’s innate ability to build webs:

Just at parting, God might say to the professor:
‘I have shown you the chemical formulas hidden in the genes.’
‘You have, God Almighty.’
‘And I have helped you to get a complete mechanical explanation of the spider’s instinctive behavior.’
‘You have, Lord God, indeed.’
‘And are you satisfied?’
‘I am. Don’t you think I should be?’
‘So you think you know now.’
‘I think I know. I always thought that if I could get hold of the chemical formulas for things, we humans would be able to explain everything.’
‘Do you ever wonder?’ asks God.
‘Certainly I am impressed.’
‘That’s not what I mean,’ says God. ‘I have given you these formulas which show you merely how these things happen, but not why they happen. For the two questions how and why are different. I have let you know the how, but you still have not found out the why.’
Tears fill the professor’s eyes and he asks, ‘Oh, God, why? why? why?’
‘That you will never find out by chemical formulas,’ says God. ‘But if you cannot find out the why, you still don’t know the secrets of the spider.’
‘No, I don’t.’

Lin used his imagination and writing skills to create this conversation exposing his deep-seated concerns about the relationship between Western science and God. The conversation may have been written for his audience, but it also served to clarify his own thoughts regarding his beliefs in the context of a post-WWII science-dominated world. In his autumn years (60 to 80 years old) Lin’s Christian values received a renewal: a change from the dogma of the 1920s, along with more mature perceptions, allowing Lin return to church attendance.

7.2.3 Autumn Years

Loss and gain were part of the autumn years for Lin: his reflection on his advancing age gave him the motivation to look anew at his formative beliefs. Lin’s return to Sunday worship in his later years was the result of two factors: his wife’s perseverance in inviting him and her choice for worship – the Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church in NY City (MAPC) – that accommodated scripture within Western science, just as Lin’s father had promoted this acceptance in his childhood. Brooks recorded Lin’s return to Christina worship:

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1088 Ibid.
1089 PC, 205.
1090 PC, 237–238.
Lin was persuaded in 1959 by his wife, who unlike himself had remained a Christian through the intervening years, to attend her church, the Madison Avenue Presbyterian [MAPC]. He became interested. He re-joined the church, and, convinced that this was a matter of public interest, published *From Pagan to Christian* in that same year. The move had its sympathizers, but it ‘cemented forever the disdain in which Lin is held by American academics’.1091

Encouraged by Cuifeng, Lin continued to attend each Sunday for the quality of sermons that he heard there:1092

I no longer ask, “Is there a satisfying religion for the modern educated man?” I know there is. Returning to the Bible, I have found in it not merely a record of historical events but an authentic revelation that brings God, through Christ, within my reach. I have returned to the church. I am happy in my accustomed pew on Sunday morning. I believe we go to church not because we are sinners, and not because we are paragons of Christian virtue, but because we are conscious of our spiritual heritage, aware of our higher nature and equally conscious of our human failings and of the slough of self-complacency into which, without help from this greater power outside ourselves, we so easily fall back….1093

Reverend Henry Sloane Coffin Jr. set the tone for sermons for this particular congregation.1094 His approach to Christianity reconciled Lin’s respect for Christianity and science: his sermons melded Lin’s foundational belief in theism with Western science. It was the sermons of Coffin’s successor, Scottish preacher David H.C. Read that enticed Lin to return to the formative pattern of his childhood – regular church attendance. Lin was always seduced by logic from the pulpit, but never by dogma. He had tried his hand at preaching during his years at St John’s College, but had disappointed his father by raising many queries regarding faith for parishioners and offering them no solutions.1095 This would seem to indicate a complete loss of faith on Lin’s part; however, it takes insight along with intuition to interpret what appears *prima facie* to be statement of fact in Lin’s memoirs, because by his own admission, contradictions appealed to him.

7.2.4 Contradictions

Lin used a third person approach to introduce his autobiography in the first chapter of his eightieth birthday publication, *Memoirs of an Octogenarian*.1096 This unusual start to an autobiography attracts a reader’s attention and continues to hold readers’ attention by claiming an enjoyment of contradictions.1097

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1091 Brooks, ‘Lin Yutang’.
1092 Murray, ‘Lighting the Candle and Cursing the Darkness’.
1093 Ibid.
1095 Ibid, 30.
1097 Ibid, 1.
‘Lin Yutang, who are you?’ once one of his friends asked him. ‘I don’t know him, God alone knows,’ he replied. At another time, he said, ‘I am a bundle of contradictions, and I enjoy it.’ He loves contradictions.\textsuperscript{1098}

These first words in his memoirs strike a chord with what we have already witnessed in his writing and interactions with others. Does it really matter if Lin contradicts himself, considering that by his own admission, he enjoyed contradictions? It does make empirical definition of his beliefs a difficult task: it is important for knowing his intention; or rather, in trying to interpret his intention in a text or speech. Neither time nor place affected his assertion that he enjoyed contradictions. As a cultural construct, contradiction can be seen in Lin’s architectural taste: the aesthetics of Chinese with the practicalities of Western architecture becoming a cross-cultural icon.\textsuperscript{1099}

Another example of his use of contradiction concerns Lin’s public declarations of devotion to his wife, Cuifeng. Lin states, in the third person, that he ‘won’t dedicate his books to her, because it would make it too public’; however, he had already dedicated The Wisdom of Confucius (1938) ‘For Cuifeng’, and From Pagan to Christian (1959) ‘To My Wife’, making his claim to enjoyment of contradictions obvious.\textsuperscript{1100} This inconsistency allows readers to consider all of his writing: should we take what Lin has written literally as his belief or consider the possibility that his unique sense of humour is challenging readers through contradiction? This opens the door regarding the whole of his writing: should readers take what Lin has written as literal or is he teasing his readers to seek their own interpretation of his meaning?

In The Importance of Living, Lin wrote that ‘The greatest regret a Chinese gentleman could have was the eternally lost opportunity of serving his old parents with medicine and soup on their deathbed, or not to be present when they died’; yet he was in Germany when his father died and, as far as we know, he was in Shanghai when his mother died.\textsuperscript{1101} There is no evidence that he travelled to her deathbed, except for one remark about the weather at the time of her burial.\textsuperscript{1102} The essay on ‘Growing Old Gracefully’ from The Importance of Living was quoted in total by Christian and Fred Sommers in 1993, testifying to its appeal more than a half a century after Lin wrote it.\textsuperscript{1103} A study of his stated philosophical beliefs exposes what

\textsuperscript{1098} MO, 1.
\textsuperscript{1099} The House of Lin Yutang, Yangmingshan, Taipei, Taiwan.
\textsuperscript{1100} MO, 3.
\textsuperscript{1101} IL, 209.
\textsuperscript{1102} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{1103} IL, 207–217.


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Lin wanted to say about his philosophy of life that attracted readers, Western readers in particular.

### 7.3 Philosophy

Life, according to Lin, was not based upon material achievements, but on eccentricities, whimsical pursuits, and the enjoyment of merely existing. Logical thinking and hard work had their place, but not in the enjoyment of life.

Ryan Murray

Lin believed that a ‘philosophy of life’ needed a ‘sense of realism’ and ‘the elimination of all non-essentials’: this captivated twentieth century Western readers. It contrasted with Western philosophy and offered possible solutions to the stress of Western living. He saw his philosophical writing as stripped to basics, realistic and sensitive to the needs of humankind and therefore artistic. For him, high sensitivity indicated an ‘artistic approach even to philosophy.’

According to Lin, Chinese philosophy is close to a view of life from a poet’s perspective, whereas Western philosophy is closer to a scientific viewpoint. Lin aligned his philosophical writing to a Chinese perspective, which he claimed consisted of three elements: ‘a gift for seeing life whole in art’; ‘a conscious return to simplicity’ and ‘an ideal of reasonableness in living’, and he promoted this perspective in his writing.

Lin explained that he believed his writing was popular because:

… deprived of academic training in philosophy, I am less scared to write a book about it. Everything seems clearer and simpler for it, if that is any compensation in the eyes of orthodox philosophy. I doubt it. I know that there will be complaints that my words are not long enough, that I make things too easy to understand, and finally that I lack cautiousness, that I do not whisper low and trip with mincing steps in the sacred mansions of philosophy, looking properly sacred as I ought to do.

This may explain why Western philosophers, in the main, are less than impressed by Lin’s philosophical writing: along with his mantra of idleness as a highly valued skill he moots ‘the cult of idleness … [is] … bound up with a life of inner calm’.

There was criticism of Lin’s representations of Chinese culture, Chinese Marxist critic Wan Pingjin being the most outspoken of these, but none managed to reduce his popularity in China or America. Lin promoted Chinese philosophy of life as a montage of beliefs ‘greater than Confucius and

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1104 Murray, ‘Lighting the Candle and Cursing the Darkness’.
1105 *IL*, 11.
1106 Ibid, 10.
1107 Ibid.
1108 Ibid, 12.
1109 Ibid, vi.
1110 Ibid, 167.
1111 Qian, ‘Lin Yutang’, in *Multicultural Writers from Antiquity to 1945*, 268. WAN, LIN YUTANG PINGZHUAN.
greater than Laotse’, transcending the thoughts of ancients and as a whole creating a robust *jouissance* of living and a wisdom born of ‘disenchantment’.\(^\text{1112}\)

Lin’s ultimate philosophy was of melding Taoist and Confucian edicts.\(^\text{1113}\) Lin challenges Western philosophers to invalidate his claim that this ‘half and half’ philosophy is ‘the most human’ ideal.\(^\text{1114}\) In true transcultural vein, he mooted the Taoist ‘scamp’ or scallywag as the ideal person and proposed Nietzsche’s ‘gay science’ as an apt description of the ‘Chinese art of living’.\(^\text{1115}\) Using a Western philosopher to illustrate a Chinese ideal is an example of Lin rising above cross-cultural thought to produce transcultural thought. His transcultural ideals had an intercultural connection and this was their appeal to readers from all walks of life in a diversity of cultures. The writing that he produced, with these ideals embedded in them, was born of a skill adopted and exercised in his early adult years in Chinese writer’s circles.

Chinese literary giant Yuan Zhonglang (1568–1610) impressed Lin with his theories on writing because they reinforced his own script of freedom of expression and humanist goals. Yuan advocated that a writer’s natural mode of expression was of the highest order: ‘today’s people writing in today’s language’.\(^\text{1116}\) Lin agreed with Zhou Zuoren that Yuan had pioneered self-expression through ‘writing-in-the-vernacular’, because under this mode China had produced its richest expression rather than regurgitating the narrowness of Confucian/humanist ideals.\(^\text{1117}\)

For Chinese Humanism in its essence is the study of human relations (*jenlun*) through a correct appreciation of human values by the psychology of human motives to the end that we may behave as reasonable human beings (*tsuo jen*).\(^\text{1118}\)

Zhou held the opinion that ‘the greatest threat to the excellence of literature in China had always been the idea that literature should be a vehicle for ‘the Way’ – a Taoist and therefore religious focus. He held that ‘this utilitarian thesis’ stifled freshness and creativity, whereas a ‘philosophy of self-expression’ yielded stimulating results.\(^\text{1119}\) Lin admired this approach and strove to develop his writing and philosophical style in the way that Zhou held true.

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\(^\text{1112}\) *IL*, 15.
\(^\text{1113}\) Ibid, 122–123.
\(^\text{1114}\) Ibid, 14.
\(^\text{1115}\) Appendix J, 143: ‘The Half and Half Song’.
\(^\text{1116}\) Ibid, 14.
\(^\text{1117}\) Huang, 47.
\(^\text{1118}\) Ibid.
\(^\text{1118}\) Lin, *The Wisdom of China and India*, 571.
It is clear that Lin’s definition of philosophy is based on Eastern premises because he believed that philosophy is:

… the study of values, of relative values, the ruling out of all of all non-essentials from the essentials of living [and] Chinese humanism means a just conception of the ends of life, a sharp focus on the true end of living and the weeding out of all non-essentials. 1120

Lin conjectured that the underlying fear and confusion in the modern world was caused by a lack of a ‘philosophy of living’: ‘We have, to me, a rather horrifying spectacle of specialized knowledge without a tolerably deep and satisfactory sensitized philosophy of living.’ 1121 Lin declared that views expressed in *The Importance of Living* were:

… personal testimony, a testimony of my own experience of thought and life. It is not intended to be objective and makes no claim to establish eternal truths. In fact I rather despise claims to objectivity in philosophy; the point of view is the thing. 1122

Taken from this perspective, Lin does not describe his thought as philosophy and in this he makes a sound defence his views by making no claim to truth as a goal as Western philosophy does. It is his adherence to his ‘own experience of thought and life’, rather than trying to ‘establish eternal truths’, that made his writing so popular in America. 1123 Lin often preempted an attack by philosophy reviewers by providing a defence of his viewpoint before any critical argument arose:

Courage seems to be the rarest of all virtues in a modern philosopher. But I have always wandered outside the precincts of philosophy and that gives me courage. …There is a method of appealing to one’s own intuitive judgement, of thinking out one’s own ideas and forming one’s own independent judgements, and confessing them in public with a childish impudence, and, sure enough, some kindred souls in another corner of the world will agree with you. 1124

Lin appeals to ‘courage’ as a common virtue to justify his ‘intuitive judgement.’ 1125 Neuropsychologist Roger Sperry claims that intuition is a product of the right hemisphere of the brain and that ‘modern society discriminates against the right hemisphere.’ 1126 It was, however, Lin’s reliance on intuition that appealed to readers: his reliance on common human values such as ‘courage’ and ‘intuitive judgement’ that reached across cultural barriers – the cross-cultural divide. That *The Importance of Living* sold well in so many languages and cultures throughout the world makes Lin’s personal-witness writing a transcultural phenomenon.

1122 *IP*, v.
1123 Ibid.
1125 Ibid, vi.
7.3.1 Lin the Multidisciplinary Philosopher

Not only was Lin’s philosophy of life transcultural, it was also interdisciplinary. His ideals were fruitful because they appealed to readers or listeners at an unconscious level, producing a response that defied the boundaries of nations and cultures. For example in 2005, Mark Skousen, American Austrian School economist, investment analyst and author, wrote to investors:

Yutang says, ‘Those who are wise won’t be busy, and those who are too busy can’t be wise.’ If you’re too busy to understand this profound statement, you need to read and practice [sic] The Importance of Living.\textsuperscript{1127}

Skousen provided an example of Lin’s philosophy of living for his business-investor audience, continuing to serve scholars into the twenty first century and in so doing continued to reinforce his thought even after his death.

In 2008, Taipei choreographer Dominique Yen stated that ‘the idea’ for the ballet ‘Awakening’ came from ‘the first few sentences’ of the first chapter of The Importance of Living.\textsuperscript{1128}

\begin{figure}[h]
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\includegraphics[width=0.4\textwidth]{awakening_ballet.jpg}
\caption{‘Awakening’ ballet\textsuperscript{1129}}
\end{figure}

This ballet, creative produce, reinforced the plea that Meigong made to Lin—that he become ‘famous’ and ‘useful’. Although his primary goal was to bring Eastern thought into the lives


\textsuperscript{1129} Ibid.
of Western readers, Lin’s philosophical thought endures through the interpretation of his writing by creative artists.

### 7.3.2 Lin the Cross-Cultural Philosopher

Lin set out to make Eastern thought comprehensible for Western readers:

> I am not an original. The ideas expressed here have been thought and expressed by many thinkers of the East and West over and over again; those I borrow from the East are hackneyed truths there. They are, nevertheless, my ideas; they have become part of my being. If they have taken root in my being, it is because they express something original in me, and when I first encountered them, my heart gave an instinctive assent. I like them as ideas and not because the person who expressed them is of any account.\(^{1130}\)

Here Lin indulged in a script of pre-emptive defence by taking a stance justifying his position before any objection was raised. Yet Lin’s opinion on Western philosophy was hardly flattering:

> Perhaps it would be simpler to describe a Western philosopher merely as a man who doubts he exists. … Modern philosophy has the gift of missing the obvious. At the same time, its lack of adaptability is immense.\(^{1131}\)

Lin’s clash with Western philosophy was a clash of cultural principles: in being what Gayatri Spivak called a ‘native informant’ for Chinese thought for Western audiences, he often attracted criticism from both cultures.\(^{1132}\) Spivak traced the ‘native informant’ in the writing of Kant, Hegel and Marx: authors that Lin was familiar with. Lin describes his writing process while pre-empting a possible critique of plagiarism:

> I have sometimes let these souls speak directly to the reader, making proper acknowledgement, and at other times I have spoken for them while I seem to be speaking for myself. … I have also chosen to speak as a modern, sharing the modern life, and not only as a Chinese; to give only what I have personally absorbed into my modern being, and not merely to act as a respectful translator of the ancients.\(^{1133}\)

Lin liked nothing better than to pit his wits against intellectual opponents, particularly in English where he felt comfortable. His position on Western philosophers and literary academics was born of his comfort with the English language, where Lin’s self-confidence reigned, combined with a love of contradiction to create a substantial comment out of nothing more than a point of view.

\(^{1130}\) Ibid, v–vi.  
\(^{1131}\) Lin, On the Wisdom of America, 3, 13.  
\(^{1133}\) Ibid, vii.
It comes as no surprise that Lin was also influenced by Western thinkers. In his texts he named a multitude of Western philosophers and writers who influenced his thinking: from Socrates (469BCE–399BCE) and William Shakespeare (1564–1616) to Croce, Spingarn and Shaw, to name but a few. Though conversant with Western philosophy, Lin wrote on topics he felt a connection with: the philosophical thought of China and India. His education, both formal and informal, built a base for his cross-cultural philosophical perspective, his interpretation of his Chinese cultural heritage and his acquired Western heritage.

In Lin’s youth, his admiration for the work of Croce may have had equal roots in both his views on literary criticism and his views on philosophy and religion, for Croce was also a Christian. In his essay on ‘The Identity of Philosophy and the Moral Life’, Croce claimed that ‘philosophy is nothing but intellectual coherence’. He clarified this thought further:

We must make up our minds to give up the traditional distinction between plain thinking and philosophical thinking, between empirical and speculative thinking; and consequently we must also give up the idea of philosophy as a study of what is beyond ordinary empirical thought.... It may be enough to remark that this dualistic idea of two kinds of thinking either rendered ordinary thought and experience as superfluous or made the boasted philosophy useless, since all thought is ordinary thought and always linked with experience.

In these claims, Croce describes Lin’s writing as philosophy, although it challenges what is generally held as philosophy in traditional Western academia. Lin-upholds Croce’s non-traditional definition: ‘I rather despise claims to objectivity in philosophy; the point of view is the thing.’ Lin explained his view of traditional Western philosophy:

I rather think that philosophers who start out to solve the problem of the purpose of life beg the question by assuming that life must have a purpose. This question, so much pushed to the fore among Western thinkers, is undoubtedly given that importance through the influence of theology. I think we assume too much design and purpose altogether.

In My Country and My People, where he shares his perception of Chinese culture with readers, Lin aligns himself with the OED definition of philosophy—‘the love, study, or pursuit of wisdom, truth, or knowledge’. Other OED definitions of philosophy, such as ‘the study of the fundamental nature of knowledge, reality, and existence’ or a ‘theory or attitude which acts as a guiding principle for behaviour’ are apt descriptions of Lin’s non-fiction writing, such as The Importance of Living and Between Tears and Laughter. This ‘practical or proverbial wisdom’ combined with Lin’s ‘virtuous living’ provided the stimulus

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1135 Ibid, 226.
1136 Ibid, v.
1137 Ibid, 133.
for books like *From Pagan to Christian.*\(^{1139}\) Finally, the proposal that a philosopher needs to have the attributes of ‘mental or emotional equilibrium; calmness or serenity of temperament; uncomplaining acceptance of adverse circumstances; stoicism, [and] resignation’ provides a fair description of how Lin lived his life.\(^ {1140}\) He had strong reservations about how his philosophy of life might become useful to Western society:

> Chinese philosophy will never make any lasting impression on the West, because Chinese philosophy, with its moderation, restraint and pacifism, which are all physically conditioned by the decrease of body energy, can never suit the Western temperament with its aggressive exuberance and vitality.\(^ {1141}\)

It may hearten his descendants to see how relevant a guide his philosophy of life is to twenty-first century life: the longevity of his influence through his writing is perhaps due to the universality of his thought in a global society; his far-sightedness in seeing the imperfections of political credos; and his predictions regarding peace.\(^ {1142}\)

### 7.3.3 The Credo of Lin Yutang

In assessing how Lin Yutang approached life and why he acted in certain ways, it is helpful to look at what he said about his thoughts and beliefs: he did this in an early edition of his magazine, *The Analects Fortnightly*. His list of edicts is written in the negative, on the premise that he chose ‘not to do certain things’, because eliminating certain antisocial behaviours would ensure his entry into heaven.\(^ {1143}\) Examining these edicts against what Lin actually did during his adult life allows analysis of the sincerity of these edicts. The 21 assertions were Lin’s beliefs at the age of 36.\(^ {1144}\) Three of these illustrate his self-analysis and implications for what he did during this life time.

Lin’s first claim—‘I don’t ask famous people to write congratulatory words to show off my connections’—suggests humility but, even more, confidence in his own ability to reach the pinnacle of his vocation, without the accolades of those who have already earned the respect of their audiences.\(^ {1145}\) Lin did not need to rely on platitudes or even sincere praise; however, the fact that he did not curry favour from celebrities does not mean that he did not want their praise: he enjoyed hearing that his literary peers, particularly academic peers or literary

\(^ {1139}\) MCMP, 9, 287, *OED.*  
\(^ {1140}\) Ibid.  
\(^ {1141}\) MCMP, 287.  
\(^ {1142}\) Lin, *The Secret Name.*  
\(^ {1144}\) Appendix C, 235: Credo of Lin Yutang.  
\(^ {1145}\) Ibid.
notables, enjoyed his work.\textsuperscript{1146} Beat poet Jack Kerouac used Lin’s interpretations of Chinese and Indian thought several times and Witter Bynner, re-creator of Chinese poetry in English, admired Lin’s re-creations of Li Bai’s (701–762CE) poems in English.\textsuperscript{1147}

Lin’s second claim is a declaration of fault: ‘I can never memorize the founding father’s will. During the three-minute silence when the will is being read, I can’t help having a lot of things in mind.’\textsuperscript{1148} Almost every person reading this confession by Lin will relate to it. It is his articulation of familiar human experiences that endears Lin to readers. It is also a rare honesty, for I wonder how many members of civil society would admit to their mind wandering when commemorative celebrations are enacted. Honesty in self-disclosure promotes trust in readers: Lin was a shrewd judge of human nature and he carried this skill into his writing, even when it produced contradiction, one of his quirky traits.

Lin’s fourth claim—‘I am not qualified to be an education leader’—is concerning because he accepted the position as Chancellor of Nanyang University in 1954.\textsuperscript{1149} This was an administrative position as his mandate was to set up a new university rather than to teach. However, the educational institution was subject to political pressure, so educational content was an issue from the outset. This is another example of Lin’s claim that he loved contradictions.\textsuperscript{1150} Perhaps in the intervening 24 years—from his claim in 1931 to his action in 1954—Lin felt that he had gathered the skills to lead an embryonic educational institution. Perhaps his success as a writer and motivator, which have lasted until the present day, gave him the confidence to change his stance. Taking on this task supported the stricture from Meigong for him to be a useful person. Lin never lacked confidence, except perhaps with women: his two edicts regarding women in his creed were ‘I never molest young women, so I don’t regard them as “disasters”’ and ‘I have never helped a city girl or a county girl’. The first of these places the onus of criticism of young women onto the men who make allegations, and the second implied placing himself on higher moral ground than men who kept mistresses.

\textsuperscript{1146} Wu, Lin YuTang (1).
\textsuperscript{1148} Appendix C, 235.
\textsuperscript{1149} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{1150} MO, 1.
It was Lin’s opinion that the goal of philosophy is to build one’s life on happiness. He saw philosophy as a vehicle for living:

The world I believe is far too serious, and being far too serious, it has need of a wise and merry philosophy. … To me personally the only function of philosophy is to teach us to take life more lightly and gaily than the average businessman does …

He tried to live this way, but in both Eastern and Western societies he found barriers to enjoyment often caused by radical politics. Living in modernity, he yearned for the simplicity of classical China:

… that attitude which will make possible a whole-hearted enjoyment of this life and a more reasonable, more peaceful and less hot-headed temperament. Find thereby the philosophy of the Chinese people. It draws from Confucius and Laotse and other ancient philosophers; it draws from these fountain springs of thought and harmonizes them into a whole, and has created an art of living in the flesh, visible, palpable and understandable. It has become quite clear to me that the philosophy of a wise disenchantment and a hearty enjoyment of life is their common message and teaching.

For himself, it was the ‘Doctrine of Half and Half’ that became Lin’s ideal as a person:

… a compounding of Taoistic cynicism with the Confucian positive outlook into a philosophy of the half and half. And because man is born between the real and earth and the unreal heaven, I believe that, however unsatisfactory it may seem on the first look to a Westerner, with his incredibly forward-looking point of view, it is still the best philosophy, because it is the most human.

It is the ‘compounding of Taoistic cynicism with the Confucian positive outlook’ becoming a ‘harmonious personality’ that is the hallmark of Lin’s personality. Lin built his ‘half and half’ theme into many facets of his life: Eastern/Western; European/Chinese; homes in New York/Taipei; Chinese gowns/Western suits; Chinese/Western languages for himself and taught to his daughters. This was the cross-cultural life of Lin.

For Lin, the combined messages of his heritage, from Laozi, Confucius, and Zhuangzi are that humanism practised with humour in a peaceful society reaches the heights in the best possible lifestyle. Lin composed a poem to illustrate Taoist thought:

There is the wisdom of the foolish,  
The gracefulness of the slow,  
The subtlety of stupidity,  
The advantages of low.

In his speeches and non-fiction writing, Lin balanced his philosophy with creativity: ‘lectures on Chinese philosophic method and ideas, random sketches of things that amuse me, and

1151 IL 14.  
1153 Ibid, 123.  
1154 Ibid, 124.  
1155 Ibid, 117.
essays on Chinese art and letters. In *Looking Beyond* Lin used Chinese thought and Western thought to create universal goals; in so doing, he drew a transcultural picture of Utopia. Lin’s Utopia had religious belief, a philosophy of life and humour.

7.4 Humour

I have never read a dissertation on humor, the psychology and anatomy of it, without getting furious. The great thing about laughter is laughter itself.

In his speech for the American Bureau for Medical Aid to China Lin quipped: ‘I have complete faith in Stalin’s duplicity against Japan.’ Here we can see Lin’s effective use of ironic humour to send a serious message to his audience. Lin had a unique skill: he used humour in both Chinese and English contexts. This is a rare skill. Humour permeated his writing and oratorical discourses. It was a transcultural theme that defined Lin’s personality and character.

7.4.1 Master of Humour

Lin’s theory of humour permits exploration of his thought processes: he placed great faith in humour as a moderator of base human instincts. Sohigian says that after Lin coined the term *youmo* as a Chinese transliteration of the Western term ‘humour’, it ‘took on a life and meaning of its own in semicolonial Shanghai during the 1930s’.

What is called *youmo* then, is gentle and sincere, unbiased, and at the same time concerned with the destiny of humankind. This is what the West calls humour.

In a study of Lin’s essays, Wangheng Chen and Shu Jianhua declared:

It appears the equivalent of the word ‘humour’ (with a similar meaning) only existed in the English language and the word *youmo*, meaning humour, did not exist in the Chinese language until it was introduced by the Chinese scholar, Lin Yutang, in 1924.

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1157 Lin, *Looking Beyond*.
1160 Sohigian, ‘Contagion of Laughter’, 137.
One of the prominent achievements for Lin during his time in Shanghai was his promotion of youmo writing in his magazine *The Analects* and subsequently throughout his life.

Qian suggests that youmo ‘appropriates cultural meaning between East and West’ and that it is in this:

… cross-cultural interaction that Lin Yutang developed his philosophical notion of youmo as ‘tolerant irony’ based on the Taoist ironical stance towards life as well as the Confucian ‘Spirit of Reasonableness.’

This definition seems closer to the mark, summing up how Lin pictured the ideal man and perhaps how he wanted others to perceive him.

Coining the term youmo, his subsequent essay ‘On Humour’ and modelling youmo in his magazine *The Analects Fortnightly*, earned Lin the title of ‘Master of Humour’ in China during the 1930s. It was an honorary title bestowed on him by his readers, but it became the norm to speak or refer to him by this title in China; to a certain extent this still holds true for many older Chinese readers. Accepting the title had consequences: it locked Lin in to humour as a signifying character trait.

*The Analects Fortnightly* was a magazine of critical resistance. It challenged the status quo and teased its critics into responding. Most of all, it resisted definitive linguistic argument and opposed closed language. It is ironic that Lin used language to denounce language, just as the Tang poet Po Chu-i (772–846), did in his poem about Laozi (6th century BCE):

Lao-tzŭ
“Those who speak know nothing;
Those who know are silent,”
These words I am told,
Were spoken by Lao-tzŭ.
If we are to believe that Lao-tzŭ
Was himself one who knew,
How comes it that he wrote a book
Of five thousand words?
P'o Chu-i [Bai Juyi]

Bai Juyi’s poem uses humour born of contradiction—exactly what appealed to Lin.

Humour had been part of Chinese literature, particularly in this satirical form, since the

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1164 *IP*, 113.
1166 Sohigian, ‘Contagion of Laughter’, 158.
written form of language began. Sohigian argues that Lin’s aim in *The Analects* was to stimulate the truth of a political climate rather than the comedy of a situation for his readers. For example, Sohigian said: ‘Humor, which Lin valued more than satire, grew out of the suffering of the times, and was also a search for the wisdom gained through knowing folly.’

*The Analects* burst over Chinese literary circles in 1932 like rain on the parched earth of a drought-stricken land: *youmo* spread from Shanghai all over China. It became fashionable to use *youmo*. That encouraged Lin to accept the challenges not only of establishing a new magazine but also of pioneering the ‘Analects School of Writers’, thus creating change in the status quo of writing in China in the early 1930s. Initiating change through his creative produce was a dominant script for Lin.

Worldwide, Lin’s analysis of humour provided theorists with concrete language to describe positive outcomes for human life. In *The Importance of Living*, Lin argued that ‘idealism and realism are the two great forces moulding human progress’ and that a ‘sense of humour... seems to be very closely related to the sense of reality or realism’. He argued further that humour is used to temper idealism, so that a sense of reality is maintained. Lin often created empirical formulas for ‘human progress and historical change’, so that he could analyse characteristics, for example:

- Reality - Dreams = Animal Being
- Reality + Dreams = A heartache (usually called Idealism)
- Reality + Humour = Realism (also called Conservatism)
- Dreams - Humour = Fanaticism
- Dreams + Humour = Fantasy
- Reality + Dreams + Humour = Wisdom

Lin used the binary principle of *yin-yang*: on the one hand ‘dreams’, ‘humour’, ‘fantasy’ and ‘idealism’ record the relaxed but barely plausible elements of character, while on the other hand ‘reality’, ‘fanaticism’ and ‘wisdom’ record the tangible elements. Components of both groups need to balance so character can achieve the ultimate goal of ‘wisdom’. Wisdom was


1173 *IL*, 4–5.

the trait that Lin held in the highest esteem, as his choice of book titles for people and cultures shows: *The Wisdom of Confucius; The Wisdom of China and India; The Wisdom of Laotse; On The Wisdom of America*. He called his formula ‘pseudo-scientific’ because he distrusted ‘dead and mechanical formulas for expressing anything connected with human affairs or human personalities’. This makes his formulas contradictory to his proclaimed tenets of distrust, but pardoned by his disclaimer of ‘pseudo-scientific’. For Lin, reinforcing his sister’s appeal to be useful, this enjoyment of life was the ultimate use of humour. Readers of his books found other similar uses for his model, demonstrating the longevity of his usefulness.

Stefan Doose employed Lin’s equation, ‘Reality + Dreams + Humour = Wisdom’, to create the diagram below explaining the importance of humour in ‘personal future planning’ for people with disabilities: Doose launched his paper ‘I Want My Dream: Personal Future Planning’ at a conference for carers of the disabled in Germany: “‘Perestroika’ in the Disability Assistance? From the Central Utilities to Subject Orientation”.

English rendering of Doose’s Venn diagram model of Lin’s analysis of humour (below) allows cross-cultural examination and analysis of his argument.

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1175 Lin, *The Wisdom of Confucius; The Wisdom of China and India; The Wisdom of Laotse.*
1176 *IY*, 6.
1177 Schultz, ‘What is Psychobiography?’
1179 Ibid.
1180 Bugdahl, *Kreatives Problemlösen im Unterricht*. 
Doose’s ‘The Lin Yutang Model’ in English

Reality + Dreams = Idealism
Reality – Dreams = Bare Existence

Figure 7.3: Doose’s Venn Diagram in English

Humour + Dreams = Reality
Humour - Dreams = Silliness
Dreams + Humour = Imagination
Dreams - Humour = Fanaticism

Doose’s use of Lin’s formula in the German language, confirms it as a useful tool for social theory in a European context. It demonstrated the transcultural and multidisciplinary qualities of Lin’s philosophical thought, making him useful and famous. Lin’s formula is therefore a simplified transcultural tool, for understanding a complex attribute of social interaction—humour as essential to wisdom. Doose concludes that:

For Lin Yutang, wisdom is achievable only by a blend of dreams and humour tempered by reality. If a single component is missing, then unfavourable conditions prevail: reality without dreams is bare existence; dreams without humour and fantasy or humour without reality are foolishness. Without wanting to take this model too seriously, I find it an exciting premise on which to reflect our work. Don’t we reduce the life situation of humans with handicaps, supported by us, to a bare existence, if we do not listen to their dreams and only apply the cold reality? Sometimes we miss not only the humour but also the joy of success to celebrate our work?

Hence, Doose endorses Lin’s theory as a motivational tool for third millennium life, both in the specific area of caring for others and as a tool for everyday living.

Why was humour so important to Lin? Was this the character trait that gave Lin such a relaxed temperament throughout his life? To answer these questions, look at what Lin wrote about importance of humour:

1181 Ibid. Translation by the author.
I doubt whether the importance of humour has been fully appreciated, or the possibility of its use in changing the quality and character of our entire cultural life - the place of humour in politics, humour in scholarship, and humour in life. Because its function is chemical, rather than physical, it alters the basic texture of our thought and experience.\textsuperscript{1183}

Based on his premise that ‘reality + dreams + humour = wisdom’, Lin advocated that all diplomats should be comedians.\textsuperscript{1184} This was not a flight of fancy for Lin, but a well-reasoned argument that on a level playing field of intelligent and creative minds, where wisdom is produced by reality, dreams and humour, diplomats would seek peaceful solutions for problems.\textsuperscript{1185} Lin described the result of sending a nation’s best ‘humourists’ to represent it at a conference of world leaders. He argued that:

As humour necessarily goes with good sense and the reasonable spirit, plus some exceptionally subtle powers of the mind in detecting inconsistencies and follies and bad logic, and as this is the highest form of human intelligence, we may be sure that each nation will thus be represented at the conference by its sanest and soundest mind.\textsuperscript{1186}

Politicians who dared to dream, tempering vision with reality and approaching all in the mood of good humour, would scarcely rush into war.\textsuperscript{1187} He argued that diplomats with uplifted spirits would necessarily be conducive to amicable international relationships. In this scenario, Lin was implementing humour as a useful instrument of peace – one of his scripts for wellbeing. He believed it was possible to use humour for political purposes, because ‘the chemical function of humour [is] to change the character of our thought.’\textsuperscript{1188}

Third millennium medical research supports Lin’s assumption that humour is a chemical reaction, and that it can be used in a positive way. In 2008, Arnold Glasgow claimed:

Fortunately research has indicated that just as chronic, unmanaged stress can disturb this neurochemical balance, coping techniques like humour, exercise, talking therapies, relaxation, healthy eating can have beneficial effects on the neurochemical balance.\textsuperscript{1189}

Lin envisaged that bodily chemical balance achieved by healthy habits and humour would lead to a peaceful society. World peace was a theme arising from his observations of political struggle in his motherland throughout his life. Lin dreamt of a ‘Reasonable Age’, where humanity was ‘imbued with a greater reasonable spirit, with greater prevalence of good sense, simple thinking, a peaceful temper and a cultured outlook.’\textsuperscript{1190} His ‘Reasonable Age’ was
neither ‘rational’ nor ‘perfect’, but one in which ‘imperfections are readily perceived and quarrels reasonably settled.’ Here the Christian strictures from childhood – piety and harmony – came into play in his adult life. Humour holds the key to his ‘Reasonable Age’ because its characteristics are the basis of a contented society: ‘simple common sense’, ‘gaiety in philosophy’ and ‘simplicity of thinking’.

Lin again turned to the ‘pseudo-scientific’ by extending his formula for wisdom into a table of character traits for the nations that he believed the most important, forming a hypothesis to work from when considering the people from these nations:

Let ‘R’ stand for a sense of reality (or realism), ‘D’ for dreams (or idealism), ‘H’ for a sense of humour, and – adding one important ingredient – ‘S’ for sensitivity. And further let ‘4’ stand for ‘abnormally high’, ‘3’ stand for ‘high’, ‘2’ for ‘fair’, and ‘1’ for ‘low’, and we have the pseudo-chemical formulas for the following national characters. ...

\[
\begin{align*}
R_3D_2H_2S_1 &= \text{The English} \\
R_3D_1H_3S_1 &= \text{The French} \\
R_3D_1H_2S_2 &= \text{The Americans} \\
R_3D_1H_1S_3 &= \text{The Germans} \\
R_1D_2H_1S_1 &= \text{The Russians} \\
R_1D_2H_1S_2 &= \text{The Japanese} \\
R_2D_3H_1S_1 &= \text{The Chinese} \\
\end{align*}
\]

Lin took his formula for national characteristics one step further by applying it to poets from within different national communities: William Shakespeare (English); Christian Heine (German); Percy Shelley (English); Edgar Poe (American) and Li Po, Tu Fu and Su Tungp’o (Chinese). From this, he made the deduction that poets have a high level of sensitivity ‘or they wouldn’t be poets at all’ and that this high sensitivity level parallels that of the ‘Chinese national mind’, concluding that a ‘Chinese philosopher’s view of life is essentially the poet’s view of life’ – an artistic view of life. Lin saw himself as a poet, artist and philosopher. He argued that the strong realism of the Chinese national character allowed for acceptance of what is, rather than wasting energy on what is not, necessary. Lin claimed that ‘the wisdom of life consists in the elimination of non-essentials’ and a concentration on what is important in life: ‘the enjoyment of the home (the relationship between man and woman and child), of living, of Nature and of culture’. Lin always aimed for his writing, his linguistic endeavours and his inventions to be useful, just as Meigong had commissioned him to do in his youth.

1191 Ibid.
1192 Ibid.
1193 Ibid, 7
1194 Ibid, 9.
1195 Ibid, 10.
1196 Ibid, 11.
But what did Lin’s passion for *youmo* and his title of ‘Master of Humour’ tell us about his personality? Did it have any special significance or was it just a natural progression of his interest in all aspects of language and literature? Receiving the title of ‘Master of Humour’ from his Chinese readers consolidated his respect for humour, both in literature and in human character. Humour became a pattern discernible in his writing and in his personality. Lin wrote a small but vital chapter of his *Memoirs of an Octogenarian* dedicated to ‘Humor’: first his theory about this attribute and then examples. His short story titles, such as ‘On Having a Stomach’, ‘On Having a Mind’, ‘Celibacy as a Freak of Civilization’, ‘Some Good Uses for our Bad Instincts’ and ‘Easter Without Hats’ reinforced Lin’s public image as a person with a robust sense of humour, even in his efforts to promote the rights of women.\(^{1197}\)

### 7.4.2 Women and Humour

Li Yuning argued that Lin wrote on women in a ‘characteristically witty and pungent vein’, demonstrating his forte of ‘erudition combined with wit and humour.’\(^{1198}\) Lin is, for Li, one of a number of writers using ‘the humanist strain of Chinese thought’, which informed much of the writing about Chinese women and attempts to improve their status.\(^{1199}\) After recounting a simile of women’s skirts being like gentlemen’s speeches, ‘the shorter the better’, in an address in Taiwan, Lin recalled humour from one of his speeches:

> In another saying that has gone around the world, I said: ‘The ideal of a cosmopolitan life is to have an English cottage, American plumbing, a Chinese cook, a Japanese wife and a French mistress.’\(^{1200}\)

From this humorous quip in his memoirs, we can see the pride that Lin held for his ability to make light of serious topics with quick repartee. The value of this ability is revealed in the fact that he was publically a popular American circuit speaker and privately a valued dinner guest.\(^{1201}\) Lin did not promote himself as a comedian, but he certainly enjoyed being known as the ‘Master of Humour’, and theorised humour as a valued characteristic. This defined Lin’s approach to writing and more importantly his approach to life. The consequences for him were both positive and negative: positive in arousing the attention of his readers and negative when his lack of humour, such as on the topic of America not supporting China
adequately in WWII, lost him American readers later in life. Lin’s view of humour affected more than just his writing: humour carried through to all parts of his life.

Lin’s theory on humour as a positive agent in human affairs holds merit, but did he apply his theory of humour to the women in his private life? His quip that Dr Chen wanted to marry his daughter to someone of great social standing than Lin – ‘and almost succeeded’ – shows that he used humour as a technique to recover his emotional equilibrium. Those three words turned what was at the time a painful experience for the youthful Lin into acceptance in adulthood, by employing dry humour—fact with a twist of irony. It is delivered in such a matter-of-fact manner, without embellishment or further explanation, that the sting in the tail of the sentence might easily be overlooked; it falls snugly into the category of humour that is realistic and close to Lin’s cornerstone of humour, wisdom. Cuifeng also used humour to deal with Lin’s reactions when Jinduan visited him after his marriage. Reportedly, Lin’s ‘eyes would light up at news of Jinduan being in town’ and he would ‘merrily prepare to receive her at his home, bubbling with excitement like a mere child’. It might have taken enormous restraint for Cuifeng to welcome Jinduan into their family home on these occasions, but this was not the case: Cuifeng received Jinduan into her home with good humour. It appears that Cuifeng considered she had won the prize.

7.4.3 Humour in Creative Produce

In 1933, proclaimed as the Year of Humour by Chinese literary society, Lin confirmed his leadership through *youno*. His sense of humour influenced his essay titles, which in turn attracted the attention of readers to what otherwise might have seemed boring issues, including ‘Do Bed-Bugs Exist in China’, ‘More Prisons for Politicians’, ‘The Model Bandit’ and ‘Confucius As I Know Him’. At the beginning of each chapter in *With Love and Irony* Lin sketched a cartoon, examples of which are below.
His use of this visual medium reinforces Lin’s use of humour as an agent of communication that he previously used in oral and written mediums. Lin’s use of sketches to promote his philosophical thought continues his presence into twenty first century society: below is a cartoon by Magnus and Mingxing, based on Lin’s writing.

Magnus, an American cartoonist, and his wife Mingxing, from Shanghai, are a team devoted to cross-cultural cartooning and internet publications: their bilingual use of Lin’s philosophical values is an example of how his theories of humour still affect global culture in twenty first century technology. It further confirms that his scripts of usefulness and fame are embedded in his creative produce.

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1209 Ibid, 80.
1210 Ibid, 23.
7.5 Chapter Summary

As a result of a Christian upbringing, Lin waxed and waned in his commitment to his foundational religion, until his autumn years, when he saw a way to accommodate Chinese humanism and spirituality within Christian values. Religion was a dominant force in Lin’s life: raised as a Christian, he questioned humanity’s interpretation and practice of Christianity from his teenage years to his autumn years. His investigation of his cultural heritage, particularly the religions/philosophies of Taoism and Confucianism, exposed ideals that he valued. His later return to Christianity meant that a common script in his belief system accommodated the compatible elements of all three—Christianity, Taoism and Confucianism. Lin’s claim to paganism was tempered with the basic tenet that pagan belief relied on an acceptance of God. This made his return to Christian worship easier, because his real disenchantment with his foundational belief was the dogma of clergy not Christianity per se. Lin’s return to Sunday worship in his later years was the result of two factors: his wife’s perseverance and her choice of church, because sermons there accommodated Western science in scripture, just as Lin’s father had promoted these attributes in his childhood.1212 Here we see Lin’s return to an early childhood value through a change in environment – geographical position. It is easy to see a link between Lin’s disappointment when he realised that he had missed out on his literary heritage – the myths and legends of his motherland – and his desire to absorb these in his early adult life through immersing himself in classical Chinese literature. His unique approach to religion and philosophy had each area relying on the other, in much the same way that Schultz’s common scripts rely on the evidence of the other six approaches.

Lin’s religious beliefs were interwoven with Western philosophy from his Harvard days onwards. Both Chinese thought and Western philosophy produced positive responses and questioning challenges from the youthful Lin. As his relationship with these mellowed in adulthood, he used his familiarity with both to conceive intuitive predictions regarding peace as a global prospect. These perceptions also held true of Lin’s remarkable insight into the human condition, human relationships and political predictions. He accepted that his philosophy was a guide for life more Chinese than Western. He considered that Western audiences would not readily accept Chinese philosophy – a mixture of half and half Confucian humanism and Taoist liberalism. Nevertheless, Lin’s views are still expounded by scholars from Western cultures and his philosophy of life is used by many in Western society.

trying to cope with the pace of modern life in the third millennium. Peace was a ‘common script’ for Lin, stemming from his religious upbringing and his personal philosophy of life.\textsuperscript{1213}

Humour too was a principal part of Lin’s life: it became a ‘common script’ for him in both oral and written presentations.\textsuperscript{1214} His scientific view of humour as an element of change through chemical reactions in the brain has since been upheld by science. It is the continued use of Lin’s philosophy and humour scripts in multidisciplinary areas into the twenty first century that makes his creative produce valuable. Lin’s professed love of contradiction, however, makes empirical interpretation of his scripts more difficult. A holistic view of his writing and speeches reveals the formative beliefs and significant emotional events during his life that either reaffirmed foundational beliefs or generated new traits during his adult life.

\textsuperscript{1213} WP.
\textsuperscript{1214} Ibid.
Chapter 8: Conclusions

‘He [Lin] was a total man, stubbornly going his own way through the criticism of lesser minds to become a universal genius.’

Prof. Nelson I. Wu

8.1 Introduction

Whatever is garnered from a psychobiographical study, in assessing results it must be acknowledged that to a certain extent the bias of the researcher’s academically inscribed training, isogesis, is unavoidable therefore what is presented here is one view of the life of Lin Yutang. The rider covering the conclusions drawn in this study do not claim to either supersede other interpretations or exactitude but they do offer rational explanations for why Lin chose to take certain courses in his life journey that are not easily explained in empirical biography. Understanding why Lin Yutang held certain beliefs and made certain choices is crucial to comprehending his objectives; psychobiographical research helps in understanding why he made those choices. Lin is an important subject for psychobiography because he was a key native informant on China for America during three decades of the twentieth century, when today’s leaders or their parents or grandparents were forming opinions on that country. A psychobiographical study is not a biography per se, but a methodology that engenders deeper insight into why Lin made major decisions and developed his career in particular ways. His ideas still resonate with global readers in the third millennium, because his personal philosophy or opinions on life, such as the value of humour as a healer, or rest and relaxation in the form of productive idleness, provide thought-provoking guidelines for mental and physical health in contemporary Western societies. Lin’s ideas are thus reaching a new global audience through worldwide social media. That creative and academic products of the twenty-first century cite Lin’s ideas as inspiration for diverse theories and preferences is why psychobiographical research is necessary. This methodology explores what lies behind the printed pages of Lin’s writing by seeking patterns or themes in his life. It then follows these throughout his life to find common scripts or themes that steered him in particular directions; that influenced his choices; ingrained particular patterns or challenged his basic beliefs. Appreciation environments and sequences of events that produced this transcultural writer, inventor and astute social commentator can provide parents, educators and politicians with the possibility of creating similar stimulating environments for the children, students or citizens in their care. This is what psychobiography does well: it provides the framework for reading

1215 Murray, ‘Lighting a Candle and Cursing the Darkness’. 215
behind the words of savants such as Lin Yutang. The diverse backgrounds of researchers undertaking psychobiography ensure that it is primed to gather even greater acclaim as an interdisciplinary methodology in the future. Wider academic use of psychobiography is essential to provide source material supporting basic biography.

In this study, psychobiography provided the researcher with methodology for interpreting what Lin said about himself in his writing and using observations made by other researchers, to make reasoned assumptions about why he acted in particular ways, what motivated his unique talents and by exposing how this knowledge ultimately benefits others. In particular, psychobiography offered a structure that exposes scripts developed during Lin’s life, allowing the researcher to draw assumptions about how these are proving useful in contemporary society. This study confirmed that environmental factors and significant emotional events from Lin’s childhood and youth were of paramount importance to his character and personality development; and that important events in adulthood affected change in his patterns of behaviour or instigated new behaviours. It shows that some patterns and themes that originated in Lin’s foundational beliefs from childhood and youth and strengthened through reinforcement in his adult years consolidated to form reoccurring scripts. It must always be kept in mind that this study is one person’s perspective on Lin’s life and should be considered in the context of other research; however, there is little contention that his earliest years were foundational to his personality and character.

8.2 Factors Affecting Lin’s Beliefs

8.2.1 Childhood

Childhood and youth made greater imprints on Lin’s personality and career achievements than any other period of his life, therefore many of Lin’s patterns of behaviour and enduring scripts originated during this period of his life. The historico-political climate that Lin was born into was important primarily because his father instilled the ideas of Emperor Guangxu on Western education, modernisation and veneration of Western scientific principles into his children.

Lin’s parents, Zhizheng and Xunming; his siblings, particularly Meigong; playmate Juniper Loa; missionary women; clergymen and teachers all played roles in forming Lin’s foundational beliefs and his unique personality. Zhizheng played a major part in establishing and moulding Lin’s belief about education, Western science and religion and was a role
model for character values, which he inculcated into enduring scripts that patterned his adult life, straying from these only to enrich and reinforce them. Lin interpreted his father’s particular attention to him as proof of his precocity, strengthening his script of confidence in his intellectual abilities. As father and one of Lin’s primary teachers in early childhood, Zhizheng modelled the attributes of a prototypical educated pacifist and productive dreamer for his children. Lin’s personality and character traits owed much to the goals of his father, but others contributed to his foundational values too.

8.2.2 Lin and Women

Guangxu’s aunt, Empress Dowager Cixi, was perhaps the stereotype for the strong women characters about whom Lin chose to write or translate: he translated the diaries of the contemporary warrior woman Hsieh Ping-Ying and wrote on the Empress Lady Wu. Lin’s parents and siblings, along with their local Christian community, provided a supportive childhood cocoon for him to explore his talents and find those that he wanted to cultivate and incorporate into his career and those he would rather abort. The women in Lin’s childhood – Xunming, Meigong, Juniper Loa and his missionary teachers – set high standards for the women throughout his life to live up to. They also planted the seed of a compassionate stance towards women’s issues that ran throughout his life. Xunming provided the unconditional love of a mother: her feet bound in childhood had crippled her; her inability to read other than in her colloquial alphabetised language limited her access to literature; and her ability to take teasing from her children modelled good humour. She provided the impetus for Lin’s vocational aspirations regarding the use of colloquial language in writing and anti-foot-binding essays. His sister Meigong filled the role of mentor-mother to Lin: she cared for his physical needs when their mother’s crippled feet prevented her from undertaking physical tasks and his intellectual growth where Xunming’s lack of formal education stopped her from doing so. He remembered Meigong as one susceptible to his boyhood charm: her reaction to his pranks fed his ego, reinforcing his psychological defence of interpreting negative acts as stimulus for positive reinforcement. Juniper Loa shared with Lin the innocence of puppy-love and the generous spirit of a childhood playmate. She was closely associated with nature in both Lin’s memories of her and her character in Juniper Loa: nature was earth-mother and feminine in Lin’s psyche. The role women played in helping him to formulate characters and plots for novels and topics for non-fiction cannot be overrated, because they are fundamental for much of his creative produce. The influence of women permeates almost every facet of Lin’s life, making them an essential part of his character and personality formation.
8.2.3 Religion

With a mother who gave him unconditional love, and education from either his father, as leader of the local Christian community, or missionary teachers, he was well-drilled in Christian beliefs. Lin was raised to revere God and Christian principles, but as a Christian he was safeguarded from experiencing the tales of local storytellers of traditional Chinese myths and folklore. During his college years, while retaining a belief in God, Lin rejected the dogma of the church. Meigong’s death, during a time of youthful questioning, contributed to his rejection of Christian worship for much of his adult life. Throughout his life, Lin’s religious belief relied on a pastoral theme that affected his attitudes and values and thus his character and personality. Raised in a rural environment, Lin developed a rapport with nature that he embraced as pagan belief during much of his adult years. Only through the persistence of Cuifeng, a regular church attender, and the acceptance of science in the sermons at a particular church, attracted his return to Christian worship, albeit with the accommodation of some Taoist and Confucian values. This cycle of belief maturation took Lin a half a century of research and reflection on the foundations of Chinese and Indian spirituality. Nature was never far from Lin’s beliefs.

8.2.4 Nature

Wherever he lived during his lifetime, Lin was always sensitive to his physical surroundings: mountains and rivers or seas were never far from where he lived. His script is easily followed: Banzai is surrounded by mountains and built on the banks of a river; G ulongyu is a hilly island surrounded by sea and St John’s College in Shanghai is near the outlet of the Yangtze River into the East China Sea. He adjusted to the villages, towns and cities of his lifetime by reading urban settings as rural landscape. Reading Chinese traditional literature, found in Beijing’s back-street bookshops, allowed Lin to escape the confines of this city by projecting himself into the more natural temporal and spatial landscapes of these narratives. New York skyscrapers posed a challenge for Lin until he learnt to view them as mountains. His apartment for the greater part of his time in New York was opposite a large park close the East River. In France, Le Creusot is built on the edge of three large lakes with a backdrop of the French Alps and the River Seine, dominating Paris, provided ample opportunity for Lin to stay close to nature. Singapore, an island surrounded by the Singapore Strait with the South China Sea and the straits of Malacca on either side, not only housed Lin for a few months, but was also the location for his last novel. The island of Singapore had tall buildings that reminded him of the New York skyscrapers and hence the mountains of his childhood.
Menton, France, where Lin chose to take Cuifeng to recover from the ordeal of Singapore, nestles on the cusp of the Mediterranean Sea. Later on Yangmingshan, Lin had the solace of living on a mountain, the geographical form that he so admired. Finally, living with his surviving daughters on Hong Kong Island, a mountain in its own right (with the mountains of the New Territories in the distance), Lin was surrounded by a mountain and water landscape at the time of his death. This clear chain of movement between spaces of a particular descriptive design is a theme formed by Lin in childhood of what constitutes a nurturing and enriching environment for creative production. Lin claimed that landscapes of mountains and water were essential to his wellbeing and character formation; his love of rural landscapes continued a script reinforced by a life of relocation.

8.2.5 Travel

Travel was always part of Lin’s life: definitely his annual boat rides to visit grandparents in Zhangzhou and later to attend school on Gulangyu, were a source of sensual pleasure for him. His travel to Shanghai and later Beijing are not mentioned by Lin, whereas his childhood boat rides were, perhaps showing development of a blasé attitude towards travel in adult life. His honeymoon voyage is the only ship journey that Lin mentions, although there were many of these in his postgraduate days and later life, along with aircraft flights of some length, again showing that travel may have become mundane script for him. The theme of constant relocation and movement between countries helped Lin achieve a sense of global ownership, allowing him to eventually describe himself as a world citizen. Lin’s use of boats to reach educational institutions during childhood, youth and adult years helped to foster his love of water travel at an early age.

8.2.6 Scholarship, Peers and Publishing

Education became a script in Lin’s life from his father tutoring him, to compiling his last scholarly work at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. As well as his arts degree and masters and doctorate degrees, Lin was awarded at least two honorary doctorates by American institutions. Although he held these awards in esteem, he believed that self-education by reading was the best educator, placing responsibility for education on the individual. Personal experience also took Lin along a linear path from a paternal home built in a traditional Chinese style, through exposure to multicultural architecture on Gulangyu, coupled with Mediterranean, French and German architecture in Europe, to designing his own home in Taiwan. The composite Mediterranean-Chinese style home complemented his
transcultural philosophical writing: it combined two cultural styles, but transcended both with a unique design defendable under Li Yu’s traditional rules for a home design. Exposure to multinational learning institutions and multicultural architectural designs developed Lin into a cross-cultural and transcultural thinker and writer.

Lin’s academic writing was a script that wound its way through his life from childhood offerings to his exam papers at St John’s to his published thesis attracting the attention of notable academics of the time. Later, his essay prizes at Harvard helped him financially, and his ability to apply in German to attend Jena University delighted him. Following the completion of his MA degree, his PhD dissertation at Leipzig University signalled his final tertiary success and completed Zhizheng’s goal for his son. Returning to China, Lin’s friendship with Hu Shi and his association with Lu Xun other ‘Thread of Language’ writers – Chen Yuan and Zhou Zuoren – honed his writing. During the 1930s in China, Lin established a reputation as an outstanding writer in Chinese and English. The penultimate major step in Lin’s academic thread was his Chinese typewriter that built on his original successes in Chinese linguistics, started by publication of ‘Chinese Index System’ in 1917: Lin acknowledged that the greater part of his typewriter invention came from this paper. This academic thread culminated in Lin’s magnus opus, his Chinese/English dictionary, taking his sequence for academic fame one step further than either his father or Meigong could have foretold. The linguistic thread from childhood poems to a Chinese-English dictionary was not heavily orchestrated, but unfolded sequentially as a script of seeking fame and usefulness that lasted almost until his last word was uttered. Yet parallel with Lin’s academic produce was another thread best called non-academic writing – his livelihood and the income that he depended on novels, freelance writing for magazines and newspapers and editing of magazines in China.

Lin’s first attempts at creative writing received responses from his siblings and teachers that initiated confidence in his ability to attract an audience. It was this attention that gave him confidence to make a career from writing, even when other avenues of income let him down. He used negative comments as affirmation by interpreting them as positive attention. Childhood stories were a foundation for Lin’s story-telling, although these were likely to have been mainly Bible stories. It was not until he had experienced Chinese traditional myths, legends and historical figures in works such as Six Chapters of a Floating Life and The Dream of The Red Chamber that he let his creative writing take on the narrative voice of men and women from traditional China. It is interesting to note that he used his last novel Juniper Loa to assuage the lost opportunities of his youth, and it is only through psychobiographical
research that nuances such as these are interpreted. In America, Lin was equally as well-known for his contribution to American readers as a native informant on China and global social commentator in newspapers and magazines, as he was for his books – both fiction and non-fiction. His non-fiction writing included philosophical writing.

8.2.7 Philosophy

His books in America, and later worldwide translations, started with native informant books, essays and articles and his personal philosophy essays and intuitive prophesizing in newspapers; although it is debatable whether any of these are non-academic. As his confidence grew in knowing what appealed to American audiences, he shifted into translations of Chinese and Indian classical religious and philosophical texts, all the while accessing his script of aiming to increase understanding between Chinese and Western people. Lin reinforced his theme of informing audiences about Chinese culture via these classical texts in translation, choosing his topics by the popularity of essays from his first two books published in America – My Country and My People and The Importance of Living. Lin’s translation of his contentious play about Confucius into English was a leap between fact and fiction, where he conjured up a mythical conversation between two historical figures—Confucius and the Duchess of Wei. This started his foray into creative writing. His novel writing began in earnest with Moment in Peking, a book that had Lin nominated for the Nobel Prize for Literature, and ended with Juniper Loa. In both of these books, he modelled some of his strong women characters on living acquaintances, a choice that continued until Juniper Loa. Between books, Lin managed to publish a plethora of short stories and magazines articles in America: many of these were excerpts from his previously published books. His last book, Memoirs of an Octogenarian, was also the last in his thread of non-academic writing. To the wider population of readers throughout the world, it is this non-academic preferred life sequence of writing that is also the most revealing of Lin’s thoughts; it provides confirmation of the importance of psychobiography in revealing motivations and goals.

In America, Lin’s role as native informant and social commentator for his homeland placed a burden on his shoulders: WWII brought with it the responsibility of raising China’s needs through his writing, calling America to task about being Eurocentric in its neglect of material supplies for his homeland. In his prediction that China would turn to other political avenues after WWII became fact in its adoption of Communism and the Cold War, Lin demonstrated a skill that became a more pronounced script in adulthood – his predictions of future political
and social behaviours. Another script in which Lin showed productive insight was his theory of humour and its usefulness.

8.2.8 Humour

What began with tricks on his mother stayed with him for life, developing into humour within his writing, although this somewhat abated during the Japanese invasion of China during WWII. Lin’s thread of humour was twofold: one was his theory on humour and the other was his practical use of humour. Lin’s theory on the value of humour is developing recognition in Western academia for its usefulness in contemporary societies. In a practical way, he used humour in his writing to make light of the rejection of his suit for Jinduan, by making a negative memoir into subtle productive humour. Lin’s unique observation, his tongue-in-cheek remark about Dr Chen’s hope of capturing an affluent suitor from a prestigious family (and that he ‘almost succeeded’), becomes meaningful only in the light of psychobiographical research, because nuances such as this shine light on the covert thoughts of a subject rarely touched on by empirical biographers. Humour became a psychological defence: painful memories became positive opportunities for the future. *Youmo* as a style of literature is evident in hindsight from Lin’s childhood recipes for health and retaliation to a teacher’s criticism to mature as a genre in its own right during his adult years in Beijing. It became one of Lin’s most easily recognised legacies for Chinese literature by present day literary scholars, but it was also a psychological ploy to protect him when speaking out against political leadership.

Lin’s mantra of humour as peacemaker started in childhood when sibling squabbles were vetoed in the name of Christian principles: it was a parental mandate of peace and tolerance between the siblings and with their wider community. Although peace was inscribed in childhood, as an adult Lin reasoned that peace was a product of intellect when good sense and a reasonable spirit combined with humour. Only through righteous peace could humans achieve a contented life. The negative outcomes of peaceful relations were reinforced throughout Lin’s life by the volatile politics of China and the deaths of one of his brothers and one of his students through political activism. His predictions regarding the future of Chinese-American political relations and world peace have been eerily close to the mark. It is unfortunate that his perspicacity did not extend to his investment in his major invention – his typewriter.
8.2.9 Invention

Inventing was another theme that began in Lin’s childhood: a recipe for healing powder and a kitchen plumbing device in childhood led to an automated toothbrush, then a poker-playing machine and finally a Chinese typewriter. Inventing was a way of achieving recognition and reward that grew into an obsession with his typewriter. It finally returned him to his successful publishing enterprise, culminating in the auspicious tome, his Chinese-English dictionary. All of these were creative products that gained acclaim for his intellect. Lin’s quest for fame through invention formed an enduring script throughout his life, yet only the typewriter and dictionary are remembered as useful tools by contemporary society. Locating and recording these threads confirms the value of psychobiography; it raises possibilities as to why Lin took certain directions, chose to write certain novels, propagated particular social commentaries and translated particular texts.

8.3 Patterns Changed by Significant Emotional Events in Adulthood

Meigong’s death was a significant emotional event that reinforced Lin’s drive to achieve well in his university studies, with the aim of ultimately becoming famous and useful. His rejection by Dr Chen as a suitor for his daughter Jinduan was a significant emotional event that resulted in his marriage to the practical Cuifeng. She provided marital stability for Lin the creative breadwinner. Rejection inspired him to become all that he could be in life, including providing well for his family. These significant emotional events are examples of negative experiences causally creating positive outcomes: the confirmation of affirmative consequences from negative experiences became a preferred life sequence and sometimes a psychological defence for Lin. Positive experiences confirmed Lin’s life choices and scripts contributing to the reinforcement of themes and goals. Marriage and the bread-winning role was a significant emotional event that matured Lin through his bride’s illness, and the subsequent withdrawal of his scholarship money. Later his financial loss, through the failure of his typewriter model and the collapse of the Chinese banking system, were significant emotional events that led to the loss of backing by Buck and Walsh. Even the loss of his publisher turned into a positive outcome by Lin venturing into other genres with other publishers; something he had not pursued while with Buck, Walsh and The John Day Company. It is this resilience that shines whenever Lin is confronted by crisis: it is a personality trait that sustained him through times of loss and negativity.
Another of Lin’s support mechanisms for intellectual and social enrichment was peer support. Hu and Lu included Lin in a circle of scholarly enterprise and debate on the merits of literary change that swept Chinese reform movements in the early part of the twentieth century. Social peers, such as Chiang Kai-shek, Soong Mei-ling and members of the Shanghai and Paris circles, stimulated Lin’s outlook on life and helped to give him a baseline to measure his writing by: he wanted to write for mainstream readers and this entailed knowing how they thought. Admittedly, his friendship circles were predominately made up of artistic and political thinkers, but nevertheless they provided a baseline to guide Lin’s creative thought and some wider extension of ideas.

Other challenges Lin’s beliefs were the deaths of relatives and friends: Meigong and Hezhen, had provided significant emotional events in his youth, while the deaths of Hu, Fahmy and most important of all Adet, accompanied a decline in health during his autumn years. Adet’s suicide was pivotal for Lin’s grief, however, the common interpretation shielded him from far greater guilt. Psychobiography encourages considering the background of writing, and the context in which it is made, to make a reasoned assumption about the intention of the message. Reading Adet’s words with her father’s writing on suicide and the geographical location of the note in mind, it is possible that her message was directed at her parents, predominantly her father, not her ex-husband in America. Accepting my alternative interpretation of the note she left behind means Lin accepting a greater burden of guilt. He noted the passing of family members and friends with a sense of loss from his overall picture of life.

**8.4 Character Traits and the Wisdom of Lin Yutang**

The coincidence of Lin’s birth in a particular time and place, and the aspirations derived from family and educational opportunities formed a base of themes that were either eliminated or reinforced by significant events during his lifetime. Employing psychobiographical study has exposed many of the patterns and themes forming the common scripts that accrued during Lin’s lifetime. Lin’s rapport with and insight into aspects of life such as humour and productive idleness, were basic to his ultimate engagement with audiences. His choice of texts for translation reflected his philosophical roots steeped in Chinese tradition: these texts strengthened his resolve to be a balanced and useful human being. Characters in his novels and topics based on his intuition became outlets for Lin’s imagination and opportunities to express a vicarious life that helped him resolve some of his unfulfilled desires.
Lin’s reverence for women as a whole, and his courage to acclaim their specific aptitudes, such as intuition (as a right-side brain activity) provided him with insight into human behaviour. A cognitive experience valued by Lin was humour, which became a substantial part of his personality. His proposal of humour as a reasoned theory helped him to interact comfortably with a wide range of cultures and still proves thought-provoking to third millennium readers. Simplicity and humour helped Lin produce profound thought through a mantra of global peace. On the same theme as peace, Lin’s attitude of calm in the face of crises often resolved itself as a positive outcome arising from a negative experience. The rewarding result reinforced his adoption of a calm demeanour as an enduring trait. Yet a calm exterior did not mean that he forgot slights, such as Dr Chen’s rejection of him in his youth. He demonstrated his financial superiority by buying the Chen family home on Gulangyu: Lin could have flaunted his success in life but was satisfied with silent personal satisfaction. Turning rejection into opportunity, he added this theme to his lifetime script. Only by following the leads from Lin’s writing and experiencing some of the rural and urban landscapes that he lived in and wrote about could I begin to understand Lin the boy and Lin the man at a deeper level. Psychobiography encourages researchers to delve behind the texts and empathise with the author: through field research in Banzai and Zhangzhou, on Gulangyu, at Xiamen University, on Yangmingshan in Taipei and Hong Kong Island, I was able to sense Lin’s passion for the rural in his choice of home sites. Psychobiography allows the researcher to take on the mantle of the subject, looking behind the two-dimensional text to make three-dimensional constructs and observe the consequences of environmental input. It exposes scripts bypassed by biographers, because Lin’s overt life story was their focus; whereas psychobiographical study explores the covert elements of his personality and character.

8.5 What Can be Learnt from this Study

The life of Lin Yutang provides us with transcultural patterns that offer suggestions for familial, educational, travel access, philosophical, religious and creative possibilities through non-fiction and novels, social commentary and humour change. It is obvious that validation and encouragement by close family members set a child up to achieve its personal best in life; this can have a life-long effect on a person’s personality and character, as it was with Lin. An education system that encourages reading eclectically as an individual goal has merit that challenges formal education methodologies although this has been ventured in some Western
education systems during recent decades. It is also evident that with a particular attitude to failure changing goals is not necessarily harmful: viewed as opportunities, failures may give rise to future successes. For Lin, Eastern philosophies provided a source of information for strengthening Western philosophical values and complementing his philosophical arguments. These provide ways of viewing life that offer balance in emotional health for Western modernity. Lin’s accommodation of traditional Chinese beliefs within Christian values is a key that may help some who struggle for search for spiritual enrichment. His stipulation of religion as a personal experience allows each reader to come to their own unique acceptance or rejection of doctrine and to form their own creed to sustain and support them. Lin’s hopes for world peace are praiseworthy: his hope of humour achieving this goal is visionary, but not easily realised considering the diversity of cultures in the world each with its own humour style. The profoundness of his philosophy, the perspicacity of his predictions and the intuitiveness of his understanding of human nature combine to produce the wisdom of Lin Yutang – a wisdom that generates transcultural opportunities for the future.
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Appendices

Appendix A

Book Publications by Lin Yutang

Published in China

1928, Jian Fu Collection, Shangha: Bei Hsin Book Company.
1930, Letters of a Chinese Amazon and Wartime Essays (by Hsieh Ping-Ying), Shanghai: Kaiming Book Co.
1930, Kaiming English Books (Three Volumes), Shanghai: Kaiming Book Co.
1930, English Literature Reader (Two Volumes), Shanghai: Kaiming Book Co.
1930, Kaiming English Grammar (Two Volumes), Shanghai: Kaiming Book Co.
1931, Reading in Modern Journalistic Prose, Shanghai: Oriental Book Co.
1933, A Collection of Essays on Linguistics, Shanghai: Kaiming Book Co.
1934, Da Huang Ji, Shanghai: Living Book Co.
1934, My Words First Volume, Sing Su Ji: Shanghai Times.
1935, Kaiming English Materials (Three Volumes), co-written by Lin Yutang and Lin Youho, Shanghai: Oriental Book Co.
1936, My Words Second Volume (Pi Jing Ji), Shanghai: Shanghai Times Book Co.
1936, A Nun of Taishan and other translations, Shanghai: Commercial Press Ltd.
1941, Lin Yutang’s Articles, Vol 1, Shanghai: Shanghai Publishing Co.
1976, Index to the People’s Names in A Dream of Red Mansions, Shanghai: Hwa Gang Publishing Co.
Published in America/Worldwide

1945 – Lin started financing the construction of his Chinese typewriter model.
1946 – Lin patented his Chinese typewriter.
1947 – Lin also completed his ‘Chinese Fast Typewriter’.
1948, *Peace is in the Heart*, Sydney: Peter Huston.
1948 Lin signed contract with the ‘Mergenthaler Linotype Company’ to produce his Chinese typewriter.
2005, ‘Moment In Peking’, DVDs, Zhang Zien (Director), Hong Kong: Chang Zhi En.
Appendix B

Lin Yutang Family Tree

From Tombstone Above

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pastor Lin Zhizheng</th>
<th>Yang Shumming</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date of birth: 16 November 1855</td>
<td>Date of birth: 20 November 1856</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of death: 3 October 1923</td>
<td>Date of death: 22 July 1933</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>SONS</th>
<th>DAUGHTERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lin Yulin</td>
<td>Lin Yizhen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lin Yuwen</td>
<td>Lin Meigong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lin Heqing</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Lin Yutang</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Lin Heping</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lin Yuyuan</td>
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</table>

From thesis Chapter 2:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Lin Yutang</th>
<th>Liao Cuifeng</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DAUGHTERS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lin Adet (Fengru, Rusi)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lin Anor (Yuru, Wushuang, Taiyi)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lin Hsiangju (Meimei)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


244
Appendix C

Credo of Lin Yutang

‘My friends often ask me why I decided on this name. And, what are the big things I intend not to do? This would be a difficult question for anyone, not just me. I really don't know how many things I intend not to do. Besides, I had not thought about this at all until someone brought up these questions to me for the first time. Now everything is popping up in my mind as I sit here in front of the typewriter. I originally felt that what I do should be to beg for God's mercy. However, that I choose not to do certain things is indeed my merit and this will help me go to heaven. Here they are:

I don’t ask famous people to write congratulatory words to show off my connections.

I can never memorize the founding father’s will. During the three-minute silence when the will is being read, I can’t help having a lot of things in mind. I have never abandoned my wife. And I am not qualified to be an education leader. I have not been and will never be a government official who wears Western clothes while presenting local products respectfully to the ruler, depreciating our own culture while flattering foreign ones. I will never go to a sports event by car to promote sports.

I don’t take those who have done the above-mentioned things seriously. I abhor those who abuse their power. I have never thought about leaning on powerful connections. I never changed my stance upon a change in the situation. Whether physically, spiritually or politically, I don't even know how to judge the situation.

I have never written a line of words to flatter or please rich and influential people. Nor will I ever write an article to praise them.

I have never said any word to flatter others: I haven’t even ever considered it.

I never say today the moon is square and, one week later, say it is round, because I have very good memory.

I never molest young women, so I don't regard them as ‘disasters.’
I don’t agree with long-legged general Chang Chong-chang who claims that young women should be banned from entering parks in order to ‘protect their virtue’.

I have never been paid for doing no work.

I always like revolutions, but I dislike revolutionaries.

I never feel self-congratulatory. I can’t help feeling ashamed when looking at my face in the mirror.

I have never beaten or scolded my servants. Instead, I ask them to see me as a good man. My servants never expect me to earn big money. They know how I make a living.

I would never like my servants to blackmail me as if they were entitled to. I don’t want to give them impression that they have the right to blackmail me because they thought I blackmailed other people and I should be punished.

I have never sent any article about me to a newspaper. Nor have I asked my secretary to do so.

I have never printed handsome enlarged photos, given them to my sons, and asked them to hang them in the living room.

I have never pretended to like those who don’t like me. I have never shrunk away from troubles nor tried to deceive people.

I extremely dislike low-class politicians. I will not join any group that has something to do with me in which I will argue with them. I always stay away from them because I hate their attitudes.

When discussing the politics of my country, I have never shown any indifferent attitudes, thought it to be none of my business, or changed my stance depending on the situations. I never pretend to be knowledgeable, criticize other people’s shortcomings, or boast about myself.
I never pat people on their shoulders and act as a generous man. Nor have I ever joined any Rotary Club election. I like the Rotary Club as much as I like the Young Men’s Christian Association.

I have never helped a city girl or a county girl.

I think I am no less of a person than anyone else. If God loves me, just half as much as my mother loves me, then he will surely not send me to hell. However, if I can't go to heaven, then the world is surely coming to its end.”

1217 Lin Yutang, You-Bu-Wei-Jhai [The Analects Fortnightly], Iss. 31, 22 December 1932.
Appendix D (1)

Lin Yutang Toothbrush

![Diagram of Lin Yutang Toothbrush]

Figure 4. Lin Yutang. Design of a toothbrush with paste-feeding mechanism, 1950. Ink on paper, The Lin Yutang House, Taipei.

Lin’s Toothbrush

Appendix D (2)

Ming Kwai Typewriter

NOTE:
This figure/table/image has been removed to comply with copyright regulations.
It is included in the print copy of the thesis held by the University of Adelaide Library.

Lin with Taiyi (Anor) Lin Demonstrating Lin’s Ming Kwai Typewriter

\textsuperscript{1219} Taiyi Lin, Lin Yutang zhuan.
Appendix D (3)

Typewriter Patent

Lin Yutang and the Chinese Typewriter

Figure 4  Patent images for Lin Yutang's Chinese typewriter; U.S. Patent #2,613,795.

[Image of patent images]

Appendix E

American Best-sellers 1931–1980

Ibid, 5.
Appendix F

Li Yu (937c–978c CE Southern Tang), Ideal Home

Lin rendered a Li Yu paragraph on the rules for an ideal home:

Inside the gate there is a footpath, and the footpath must be winding. At the turning of the footpath there is an outdoor screen, and the screen must be small. Behind the screen, there is a terrace, and the terrace must be level. On the banks of the terrace there are flowers, and the flowers must be fresh. Beyond the flowers is a wall, and the wall must be low. By the side of the wall there is a pine tree, and the pine tree must be old. At the foot of the pine tree there are rocks, and the rocks must be quaint. Over the rocks there is a pavilion, and the pavilion must be simple. Behind the pavilion are bamboos, and the bamboos must be thin and sparse. At the end of the bamboos there is a house, and the house must be secluded. By the side of the house there is a road, and the road must branch off. At the point where the several roads come together there is a bridge, and the bridge must be tantalizing to cross. At the end of the bridge there are trees, and the trees must be tall. In the shade of the trees there is grass, and the grass must be green. Above the grass plot there is a ditch, and the ditch must be slender. At the top of the ditch there is a spring, and the spring must gurgle. Above the spring there is a hill, and the hill must be deep. Below the hill there is a hall, and the hall must be square. At the corner of the hall there is a vegetable garden, and the vegetable garden must be big. In the vegetable garden there is a stork, and the stork must dance. The stork announces that there is a guest, and the guest must not be vulgar. When the guest arrives, there is wine, and wine must not be declined. During the service of the wine, there is drunkenness, and the drunken guest must not want to go home.

1222

1222 *IL*, 267–268.
Brooks, ‘Lin Yutang’.
Appendix G

Lin Yutang Home Yangmingshan

‘Exhibits in this showroom include models, photos, design manuscripts, as well as letters for the patent application of the “Chinese Fast Typewriter,” “Automatic Toothbrush,” “Automatic Bridge Playing Machine,” “Automatic Door Lock,” and “English Typing Keyboard.” From these displays, the scientific creativity and ingenuity of Lin's inventions can be easily seen.

‘In fact, Lin was not merely just a literary master, English education specialist, or a doctor of linguistics, he had also shown a keen interest in science, mechanics, mathematics, natural science, and topography since childhood. With the series of exhibits here, the scientific side of Lin fully unfolds before the public’s eyes.’

‘One of the most amazing inventions by Lin on display here is the one-and-only Chinese typewriter in human history that requires no memorization of the letters’ location and codes, which Lin named the “Fast Typewriter.” This typewriter was made using Lin's self-designed keyboard using the Instant Index System, and cost US$120,000 dollars to be produced in 1947. The typewriter contains only 64 keys, and can type up to 50 words in a minute. Typing vertically from up to down, it can spell and type up to 90,000 Chinese characters, and is extremely light and easy to use without training.

Unfortunately Lin’s invention was a victim of the civil strife in China during the time. Manufacturers were unwilling to produce the typewriter, leaving Lin on the verge of bankruptcy. Later, the Chinese Fast Typewriter’s keyboard was authorized to be used in IBM’s Chinese-English translation machine, as well as Itek’s electronic translators. After Lin passed away, Mitac also devised the “Simplex” Chinese character input method from the Instant Index System, which has now become one of the most common Chinese input methods in computers, widening the impact of Lin’s invention.’

TO Mrs. Lombard

FROM Nancy Lindblom

SUBJECT Lin Yutang - Tax Report

Hereewith are the royalty statements for the year 1953, for the periods ending January 31st and July 31st. The tax reported is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Gross Amount</th>
<th>U.S. Tax, 30%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 31st</td>
<td>$2911.01</td>
<td>$873.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 31st</td>
<td>$11500.76</td>
<td>$3450.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot; &quot;</td>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>.96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: $11835.01

I am enclosing royalty statements for the royalty period ending January 31st this year, showing earnings of $4572.95, from which we withheld tax of $1371.88 and also a statement on VESPERMILLION GATE showing earnings of $1228.50 on English Rights, from which we deducted a tax of $368.55. These two items will be included in our 1954 tax report.

Appendix I
Memorial Hall of Lin Yutang

Sign for Literature Hall of Lin Yutang

Courtyard—from fire escape

Literature Hall of Lin Yutang entrance

One of the two round-houses

Statue of Lin Yutang in forecourt

Inside the Literature Hall of Lin Yutang

Foundation stone

Replica of Lin’s study in Taipei
Appendix J

The Half and Half Song:

By far the greater half have I significant emotional eventn through
This floating life - Ah, there’s a magic word -
This ‘half’ - so rich in implications.
It bids us taste the joy of more than we
Can ever own. Halfway in life is man’s
Best state, when slackened pace allows him ease;

A wide world lies halfway ‘twixt heaven and earth;
To live halfway between the town and land,
Have farms halfway between the streams and hills;
Be half-a-scholar, and half-a-squire, and half
In business; half as gentry live, And have a house that’s half genteel, half plain,
Half elegantly furnished and half bare;
Dresses and gowns that are half old, half new,
And food half epicure’s, half simple fare;
Have servants not too clever, not too dull;
A wife who’s not too simple, nor too smart.

So then, at heart, I feel I’m half a Buddha,
And almost half a Taoist fairy blest.
One half myself to Father Heaven I
Return; the other half to children leave -

Half thinking how for my posterity
To plan and provide, and yet half minding how
To answer God when the body’s laid at rest.

He is most wisely drunk who is half drunk;
And flowers in half-bloom look their prettiest;
As boats at half-sail sail the steadiest,
And horses held at half-slash reins trot best.

Who half too much has, adds anxiety,
But half too little, adds possession’s zest.
Since life’s of sweet and bitter compounded,
Who tastes but half is wise and cleverest.

Li Mian (717–788 CE)\footnote{Lin, IL, 122–123.}

\footnote{Lin, IL, 122–123.}
Appendix K

‘Dear Roslyn,
This is not attributable to St Ignatius.
This question comes up every few years. Once before I wrote:
‘Jesuit maxim... “Give me a child for the first seven years, and you may do what you like with him afterwards” is based. This was undoubtedly paraphrased by Lenin in a speech to the commissars of Education in Moscow in 1923 when he said “Give us the child for eight years, and it will be a Bolshevist forever.”’
http://www.in2it.ca/jcotton.htm, (some have Lenin saying something similar in 1917 - no proof is offered that he is paraphrasing!).
However, see:
http://www.lili.unibielefeld.de/~paetzold/SoSe02/ChildrensClassics_ss2/cc03_values.pdf

Nursery rhyme. In: Traditions of Devonshire (A. E. Bray; 1838) Give me a child for the first seven years, and you may do what you like with him afterwards.
(I'm not sure where the rhyme is! Devonshire accent maybe...)

I have heard claims that the attribution to Jesuits dates from France several centuries ago (one suggests circa Descartes). But ‘donnez-moi un enfant’ doesn’t yield anything helpful on the web (Rousseau uses the phrase in Emile IV, but not this quote.)

As with nursery rhymes, no one significant emotional eventms to be able to give a specific earlier attribution.

As for the original inspiration, Proverbs 22:6 looks pretty good:

‘Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.’ Then there are the *contrasting* sentiments in the Ratio Studiorum, reflecting St Ignatius’ attitude of “give me a child once he can read and write...” In other words, this maxim is the opposite of St. Ignatius' approach.

The 'Seven Up' series which has now reached ‘49 up’ is an exploration of this maxim.
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seven_Up!

Blessings,
Paul Fyfe SJ.1226

1226 Paul Fyfe SJ, ‘Dear Roslyn’, personal communication, info@jesuit.org.au.
## Chinese Character Chart

### People
- Agnes Smedley 艾格尼丝·史沫特莱
- Lin Anor Yuru 林玉如
- Lin Adet Fengru 林鳳如
- Cai Yuanpei 蔡元培
- Chen JinDuan 陳錦端
- Chen Qimei 陳其美
- Chen Yuren 陳友仁
- Chiang Kai-shek 蔣介石、蔣中正
- Confucius 孔夫子
- Deng Xiaoping 鄧小平
- Duan Qirui 段祺瑞
- elegant language 語堂
- Emperor Guangxu 光緒帝（載湉）
- Empress Dowager Cixi 慈禧太后
- Feng Zikai 陸穆
- He Qing 和清
- Lin Hsiangju 林相如
- Hu Shi 胡適
- Huang Zhaoheng 黃肇珩
- Laozi 老子
- Li Po 李白
- Li Yu 李漁
- Liang Shiqiu (Liang Shih-chiu) 梁實秋
- Liao Cuifeng (Cuifeng) 廖翠鳳
- Liao Yuefa 廖悅发
- Lin Hanlu
- Lin HeLe （Holok） 林和樂
- Lin Shu 林紓
- Lin Yutang 林語堂
- Lin Zhicheng 林至誠
- Liu HeZhen 劉和珍
- Lu Xun 魯迅
- Ma Xingye 馬興業
- Mao Zedong 毛澤東
- Meimei 美眉
- Menton 蒙頓
- Mo Tzu 墨子
- Po Chu-i 白居易
- Qian Xuantong 錢玄同
- Rusi 如斯
- Shen Zong-Qian
- Soong Ching-ling 宋慶齡
- Su Tungpo 蘇東坡
- Taiyi 太乙
- Tu Fu 杜甫
- Vi Kyuin Wellington Koo 顧維鈞
- Wang Dahong 王大珩
- Wang Jingwei 汪精衛
- Xie Bingying 謝冰瑩
- Xu Zhimo (Hsu Chih-mo) 徐志摩
- Yang Shunming 楊順命
- Ye Shengtao (Hsia Mien-tsun) 葉聖陶
- Yuan Hongdao 袁宏道
- Yuan Zhonglang 袁中郞研究
- Zhang Zongchang 張宗昌
- Zhu ZiQing (Chu Tzu-ching ) 朱自清
- Zhuangzi (Chuangtse) 庄子
Books Magazines Essays Play
A History of the Press and Public
Opinion China 新聞輿論與中國的歷史
Analects Fortnightly文選，半月刊
A Nun of Taishan and Other Translations泰山一位修女和其他翻譯
All World Talk Volume One 世界各國通話音量

Central Daily News中央日報
Chinatown Family 唐人街家庭
Chuangtse: Translated by Lin Yutang 莊子：林語堂譯
Common Wealth Magazine 天下雜誌
Confucius Saw Nancy and Essays about Nothing 孔子見南散文沒有
Cosmic Wind 宇宙風
Famous Chinese Short Stories: Retold by Lin Yutang 英譯重編傳奇小說
Free China Journal 自由中國半月刊
From Pagan to Christianity信仰之旅
Imperial Peking大城北京
Jian Fu Collection 福建收藏
Juniper Loa 賴柏英
Kaiming English Books 開明英文讀本
Leaf in a Storm 葉在風暴
Leaf in the Storm 風聲鶴唳
Letters of a Chinese Amazon and Wartime Essays 林語堂時事事譯匯刊
Lin Yutang’s Chinese-English Dictionary of Modern Usage 當代漢英詞典
Looking Beyond 尋找超越
Mandarin Daily News 國語日報
Memoirs of an Octogenarian 一個八十

Moment in Peking 京華煙雲
My Country and My People 吾國吾民
Kaiming English Materials — three volumes 開明英文教材三冊
My Words First Volume 我的話第一輯

Peace is in the Heart 內心的寧靜
Reading in Modern Journalistic Prose 當代報紙散文精選
The Analects Fortnightly 論語半月刊
The China Critic Weekly 中國周評

The Chinese Theory of Art: Translations from the Masters of Chinese Art
The Chinese Way of Life 中國人的生活方式
The Dream of the Red Chamber 紅樓
The Gay Genius: The Life and Times of Su Tungpo 一個快樂的天才：蘇東坡

The Importance of Understanding 生活的藝術
The Little Critic: Essays, Satires and Sketches on China, First Series: 1930-

1932 小評論家：中國雜文，諷刺和

草圖，第一系列

The Little Critic: Essays, Satires and Sketches on China, Second Series:

1933-1935 小評論家：中國雜文，諷刺和草圖，第二系列
The Pleasure of a Nonconformist 不羈
The Red Peony 紅牡丹
The Secret Name: The Soviet Record
1917-1958 蘇聯記錄1917至1958年的秘密名稱
The Travels of Minglaotse 旅行的老子
The Unexpected Island 意外的島
The Vermillion Gate 硃紅色的們
Vigil of a Nation 一個國家的守夜
The Widow Chuan: Chuan Cia Chu by Lao Hsiang 寡婦傳: 传中情局楚老舍乡
The Wisdom of Confucius 孔子的智慧
The Wisdom of Laotse 老子的智慧
Widow, Nun and Courtesan: Three Novelettes From the Chinese Translated and Adapted by Lin Yutang 寡婦,尼姑和歌妓：三篇中篇小說林語譯編譯
Wisdom of China and India 中國印度之智慧
World of Mankind 人世間

Places
Academia Sinica 中央研究院
Banzai坂仔
Bay of Liaodong 遼東半島
Beibei 北碚
Chongqing 重慶
DongWu University 東吳大學
Fujian Province 福建省
Fuzhou 福州
Guangxi Province 廣西壯族自治區
Guangzhou 廣州
Guilin桂林
Gulangyu (Kulangsu) 鼓浪嶼
Huashan River 花山溪
Le Creusot 樂魁素
Lin Yutang Residence 林語堂故居
Min Nan 閩南語
Min River 閩江
Mingxin Primary School
Nangang 南港
Nanjing 南京
Paris 巴黎
Pinghe County 平和縣
Qinghua University 清華大學
Shanghai 上海
Sichuan Province 四川省
Southern China 中國南方
St. John’s College 聖約翰大學
Suzhou Creek 蘇州河
Suzhou University 東吳大學
Taiwan 臺灣
Xiaoqi (Siokhe) 小溪
Xiamen (Amoy) 厦门
Xian 西安
Xunyuan Academy 勋遠經理學院
Yangmingshan 陽明山
Yangyuan Missionary School陽原教會學校
Zhangzhou Prefecture 漳州

Others
‘redology’ 紅學
baihua zi 白話字
Changmao (long haired) 長毛
Chinese Index System 漢字索引制說明
classical Chinese/Han Chinese 漢語
Communist Party of China 中國共產黨
KMT 中國國民黨
Eight-Nation Alliance 八國聯軍
Gutian (Kuchien) Massacre 古田教案
Head of the Arts and Letters Division of (UNESCO)美術與文學組主任（聯合國教育，科學及文化組織）
Marco Polo Bridge Incident 瓊州橋事變
Ming Kwai 明快
Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ 武漢國民政府外交部英文秘書
New Culture Movement 新文化運動
On Humour 在幽默
One Hundred Days Reform 戊戌變法
peoh-oe-ji 白話字
siheyuan 四合院
Sino-Japanese War 中日甲午戰爭
spoken Chinese 中國話
Tang Dynasty 唐朝
Thread of Language [Yusi] 語絲社
Treaty of Maguan 馬關條約
xingling school 性靈派
Year of Humor 幽默的年份
yumo 幽默
Publications/Presentations on Lin Yutang

Published Papers on Lin Yutang


Papers Presented on Lin Yutang


