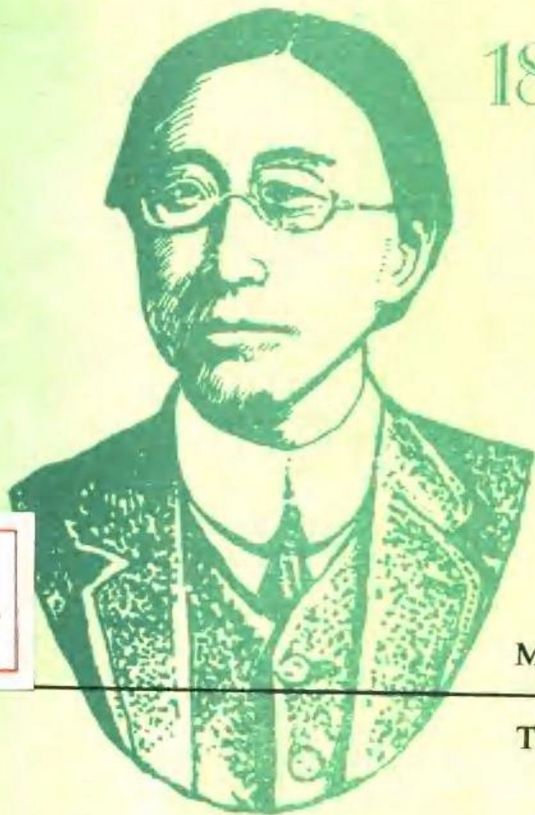


THE LIFE
AND TIMES
OF ZHANG
YUANJI

1867—1959



Manying Ip

The Commercial Press

59/2

*From Qing Reformer to Twentieth-
century Publisher*

The Life and Times of
Zhang Yuanji 张元济

1867—1959

Manying Ip 叶宋曼瑛

The Commercial Press
1985, Beijing

B

358

ZHANG YUANJI DE SHENGPING YU SHIYE

张元济的生平与事业

叶宋曼瑛

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从清代改革家到
二十世紀出版家
——張元濟的生平
與事業 1867—1959

顧廷龍題



Zhang Yuanji,
London, *circa* 1910



Outside the Nanyang Public Library where he worked as head of the translation bureau and then President. Photo taken in 1900.



In 1906, at forty *sui*.



In 1936, at seventy *sui*.



Front page of Yan Fu's translation of Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*. It was published by Zhang Yuanji as part of the 'Nanyang Gongxue Series' in 1901-2.

The *Ci Yuan* — a pioneering dictionary of terms and phrases first published in 1916. Still a standard reference tool to modern scholars, it was a brainchild of Zhang Yuanji.

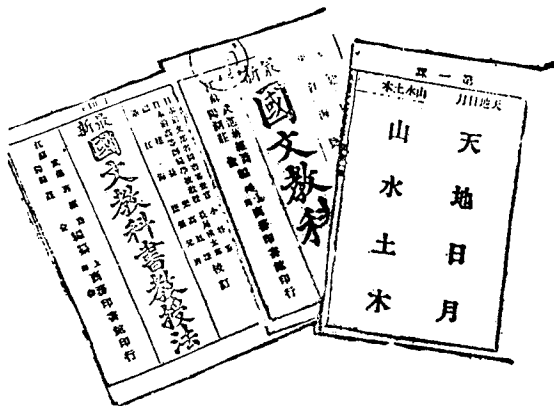


Front page of the first issue of *The Diplomatic Review* which Zhang published in 1902. It was China's first magazine dealing with international affairs.

武進將維
陽湖非
編發上
商務印書館印行

最新
國文教科書

浙江
建長
樂高
鳳謙
校訂



Commercial Press's New Primary School Text Books.

— THE —

METHODS FOR TEACHING

CHINESE NATIONAL READERS.

No. II.

SHANGHAI
COMMERCIAL PRESS
1932

初等小學堂國文教科書教授法第二
第一課 學堂
要旨

本課意義，就暑假後開學時，使學生起勤學之念，文字則為記事體。

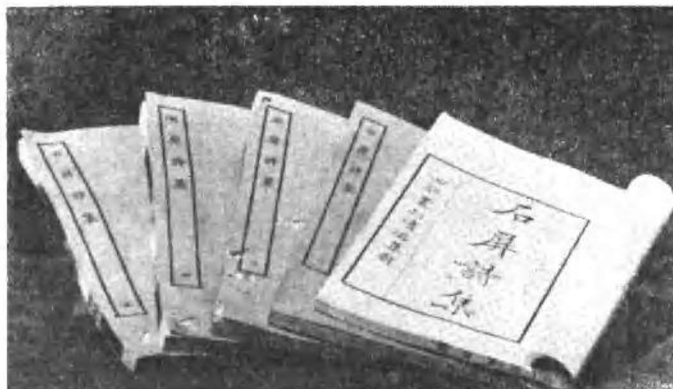
教授次序

(一)預備 取右圖示學生，國中為課堂之式，有凡案，教員立於上，學生侍於下，即暑假後開學情景也。令知文中前五句之意義，教員以書授學生，學生在旁接之，即第二冊國文教科書暑假後所讀者也。令知文中後五句之意義。

(二)教授 先將上方所列生字，注意於讀法，令學生次第仿讀，而矯正其音之輕重不準者，又令仿寫，而注意於起筆先後，然後教員將全文朗讀數遍，并注意於讀法之停頓，(首二句，一停頓，中三句，一停頓，末五句，一停頓)既畢，任指學生中一人，令之朗讀，餘則靜聽，如讀有差誤，問本生自知誤否，如不知，則依次問他生，又在指一生令讀之，(每讀讀法停頓，與運用項所言分段之法相

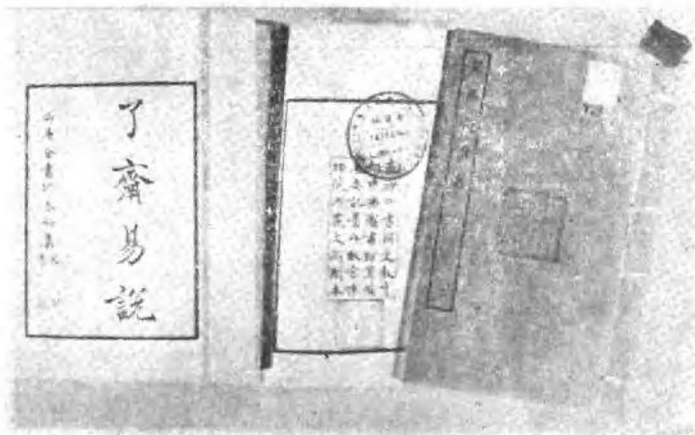
As head of the Compilation and Translation Centre of the Commercial Press, Zhang Yuanji launched a series of modern textbooks and teachers' handbooks which took the lion's share of China's untapped textbook market.

The *Sibu congkan*
— a great compendium
of classical literature.



The *Baina* edition
of the 24 dynastic
histories.

The *Siku quanshu*



These monumental photolithographic facsimile editions compiled and published by Zhang Yuanji in the 1920s and 1930s made hitherto inaccessible rare books available to the public.

南
先生頌

吏部教習部書又一通
前抵紙所載事查
得并前見前稿載

先置之而後取之以修我之廢如魏陸秀
翁吳國彙邦不許字樹勳師講授達亦文
學說世界認爲奇說明身國作學樹史之資
料供後人之評議云耳 壬午秋向

赴店

弟張元清

十月

沈休文同年寄示七十自述詩
讀再四於聚書遊山三事三言
之特詳因成二小詩為獻伏乞
教正

先生節度半天下西南未制
遙相望與君預太平日同上羅浮涉點蒼

學術新陳今代謝
懸齋決以
待斯人著書歲月
渾無盡
我亦更生欲步塵

身已中秋後十日

年十弟張九濟拜撰

積年七十有五

LINE

和沫若先生歸國書懷五步原韻
張元濟
報國男兒肯後時
手揮慧劍斬情絲
孤懷猛擊中流楫
遠志徐摩旭日旗
甘冒網羅寧結舌
編規澤祀更陳詩
懸余亦學深宵舞
起視星河淚滿衣

Zhang's poem in answer to Guo Moruo's, 1937. Written in the same rhyme as a famous Lu Xun patriotic poem, this poem expresses Zhang's enthusiasm for the war of resistance.

歐邏霸業行將於故蹟
常河項民片壤留餘臭
日昔共銷廢

欣聞埃及政府收回蘇士河

因口占一絕誌喜 張元濟

一九五六年七月二十三日

張元濟

Zhang Yuanji's jubilant poem on Egypt's success in nationalizing the Suez Canal. Here, the event is depicted as a significant sign of the imminent demise of European Imperialism. Dated in 1956, this poem shows both the old man's lucid mind and his continuing concern for world politics.

Preface

This book examines the role of Zhang Yuanji, both as a liberal patriotic reformer in late Qing and as China's leading publisher after 1900. A historical figure hardly known to the West, Zhang contributed substantially to China's modernization in his quiet pragmatic style. When China was challenged by the imperialist West, the response of the nation's scholar-gentry elite ranged from spirited calls for wholesale westernization to a stubborn clinging to the 'national essence'. Individuals at the extremes of this range have received more attention from historians than the middle-of-the-road group of moderates, who in the twentieth century worked for modernization without discarding tradition totally. Zhang Yuanji was a typical figure in this group who attained intellectual maturity under Confucianism and yet was open-minded enough to accept Western philosophies and to adopt Western practices of entrepreneurship.

Zhang Yuanji's intense sense of patriotic obligation to introduce progressive learning for China's benefit while popularizing the best of the classical heritage was coupled with a culturalistic viewpoint that there could be no genuine changes unless a certain percentage of China's thinking population became modernized in outlook, well-informed of world affairs, and imbued with a progressive spirit. Zhang pioneered in modern education from 1896 and remained a

dedicated educationalist all his life. His publishing career in the Commercial Press can be viewed as a logical extension of his early aim of modernizing China through the spread of new knowledge.

The history of the Commercial Press and in particular Zhang's part in it have received little scholarly attention, previous treatments of the subject have relied heavily on two official Commercial Press histories and the autobiographical writings of Wang Yunwu, which neglect Zhang's major contributions. The Commercial Press, as the largest publishing house in modern China, was in the forefront of educational, scholarly, and literary development in China from 1900 to the 1950s, and Zhang played a vital role in promoting progressive publications as well as preserving the best editions of classics and histories. Zhang's efforts to run the Commercial Press successfully through all the political upheavals that beset China from late Qing to after 1949 reveal both the scholar's attempts to keep up with all the latest ideological trends as well as the entrepreneur's ambition to run a modern business efficiently. A study of Zhang Yuanji's life and career is in part a study of the evolution of China's gentry-elite and the emergence of the native capitalists.

The book draws on newly-available primary materials, both in the original and in manuscript, including over a thousand of Zhang's letters, several hundred poems and essays, and the extant sections of his business diary. These materials are supplemented by information provided by Zhang's surviving literary and editorial colleagues. Internal publications and source-materials of the Commercial Press are also used to reconstruct this biography of a little-known man who worked for China's modernization by drawing on his solid learning about China's past.

Acknowledgements

This book has evolved from my Ph. D. dissertation submitted to the University of Auckland. It was most encouraging to me that even during the process when it was being written, the Commercial Press had expressed a keen interest to publish this study on the life and career of a man so closely tied to the history of the publishing house.

This study would not have been possible without access to a large collection of private papers and manuscript. For this, I am greatly indebted to Mr. Zhang Shunian, who enthusiastically supplied me with a wealth of primary source materials on his late father. His perceptive, scholarly, and very objective comments on parts of my draft helped to put a lot of records straight. Similar gratitude must be extended to Mr. Gu Tinglong of the Shanghai Library, who directed me to an amazing collection of uncatalogued original letters, manuscripts, and private albums by late nineteenth and early twentieth century literary and political figures. He also offered his expert advice on textual research and bibliography, and helped me to understand much better the materials used in Chapter VI and Chapter VIII. The Commercial Press has been most helpful in its generous supply of old book catalogues, employees' handbooks, memoirs of former editors, and a lot of other relevant materials. The special symposium which Mr. Chen Yuan, the Com-

mercial Press Manager and Editor-in-chief, arranged for me during my visit in 1979 yielded fruitful results. The old editors, writers, collators, and workers at the symposium all knew Zhang Yuanji in person, their spontaneous reminiscences pinpointed certain aspects and events of Zhang's life and character and led me onto further research in various directions. Without their leads, many events and trends might have been overlooked. Mr. Wang Jiarong, archivist of the Commercial Press, generously showed me various long-lost documents and shared with me his interpretations on several crucial points of controversy.

My sincere thanks must also go to the late Mao Dun, Hu Yuzhi, Li Shengwu, and Ye Shengtao, who kindly received me at a series of interviews. For my benefit, they made great efforts to recall exactly what happened over half-a-century ago. As editors of important Commercial Press magazines in the 1920s and early 30s, they revealed invaluable materials which helped to build a more balanced and truthful picture of China's cultural scene following the great fermentation of the May Fourth. Similar thanks must go to the families of the late Xia Ruifang, the late Gao Mengdan, and the late Zheng Zhenduo. Mr. Ding Yinggui, of Shanghai, former Secretary of the Commercial Press Board of Directors (during the late 1930s and 40s) supplied me with materials on the Press during the War years and the Civil War Period. Formerly, Wang Yunwu's voluminous works have been the sole source of information on the Press during this crucial period. I also thank Mr. Stephen Soong of Hong Kong for supplying me with source materials on his father-in-law, the late Dr. Fong F. Sec of Pomona College, who worked for over twenty years as head of the English Department in the Compilation and Translation Centre of the Commercial Press. Both Mr. C.Y. Wang of Macau and Mr. Huang Yinpu of Hong Kong kindly lent me letters, poems, and essays written by Zhang Yuanji.

During my overseas stay, I was much indebted to Dr. Wang

Techao and Dr. Wang Ermin of the Chinese University of Hong Kong for their interpretations of modern Chinese intellectual history. Dr. Yuehim Tam explained many points about the interflow of Chinese-Japanese culture and pointed out examples of cross influences during the period. I also thank Professor Saneto Keishu of Tokyo for answering my various queries on early Commercial Press-Kinkodo ties.

Special thanks are also due, for helpful suggestions and perceptive advice on Chapter VI, to Professor Chow Tse-tsung of Wisconsin. Dr. Adrian Chan of the University of New South Wales read the entire manuscript, and gave specific textual comments and useful criticisms for improvement.

I thank my supervisor Dr. Richard T. Phillips for his close guidance and constant encouragement. He taught me to override some widely-accepted assumptions and preconceptions of earlier western historiography on China's cultural history and arrive at new conclusions by analysing the available source materials. I am also grateful to Ms. T.H. Han, who first suggested Zhang Yuanji to me as a subject of research. Special thanks must go to my colleague Mr. D.M. Campbell, who not only undertook the painstaking task of proofreading, but also offered inspiring criticisms on the correct lines of presentation and style, and helped me with the preparation of the glossary and index.

Finally, I thank my husband and children for their understanding and tolerance.

University of Auckland
August, 1984.

叶宋曼瑛
Manying Ip.