

Pure Sport or A Gambling Disgrace? Greyhound Racing and the Formation of Modern Shanghai

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From its beginnings, the sport of greyhound racing has been closely related to betting. The racing of greyhounds in pursuit of a mechanical hare first appeared in the United States in 1922 and was embraced by Britain in 1926. Two years later, thanks to British expatriates' management and investment, it came into vogue in Shanghai. By this time, Shanghai had developed into a highly industrialized city, an Asian business center with not only clusters of foreigners but also a Chinese bourgeoisie eager to indulge in any new sport or gambling. Greyhound racing was, of course, not the first Western sport related to betting in China. Horse racing and a racing culture, pioneered in the nineteenth century, already existed in the treaty ports. It is therefore not surprising to find that greyhound racing was first introduced through members of the Shanghai Race Club. What is surprising is that greyhound racing instantly attracted tens of thousands of Chinese, not through its similarity to the horse racing, but through the modernity it reflected—a world of light and speed. Greyhound racing soon became a novelty “copied from Europe and the USA,” and “going to the dogs” turned into the latest fashion in the city.

As greyhound racing came into vogue, track betting drew severe criticism from local Chinese organizations, among which the Chinese Ratepayers' Association of the International Settlement (CRA) was the most persistent. Established in 1920 to campaign for Chinese representation on the Shanghai Municipal Council (SMC), the governing body of the International Settlement, the CRA had been the loyal opposition to the SMC. The CRA called dog racing pure gambling and an incentive for crime, and insisted the SMC stop it. The SMC, dominated by the British and influenced by the fact

that greyhound racing developed from the British sport of coursing (setting greyhounds to chase a hare), was reluctant to cooperate. A seesaw battle between the CRA and the SMC took place over the next three years. The SMC refused to act, while the CRA allied with the Chinese municipality and bombarded the SMC with letters and protests. In the meantime, the greyhound racing companies developed into big business and greatly enriched the night-life of Shanghai. This was a nightlife that included jazz, taxi dancing, the cinema, amusement centers and *hai alai*, a Basque ball game.¹

Influenced by British hunting culture, the SMC believed that greyhound racing was a kind of sport and that the tracks should not be treated as gambling houses. It was only in the later stages of the debate that political considerations got the upper hand. With the push of its only American high official, the SMC finally made a U-turn and closed the racetracks in the International Settlement in 1931.

So far few studies have been done on the impact of greyhound racing on China's urban life and the politicized discourse surrounding its nature as sport or mere gambling. Frederic Wakeman Jr. is the only scholar to have touched on this issue. In his masterly study on the Shanghai police, Wakeman approached dog racing from the political and "Chinese" angle, emphasizing how the Chinese municipality used this case to demonstrate their efficiency and superior ability in governing Shanghai.² This essay will instead approach the issue from the cultural and "foreign" angle, focusing on the cultural element implicit in the SMC's deliberations. The rich discourse on greyhound racing from 1928 to 1931 also reveals the formation of modern Shanghai in at least three respects.

First, as Leo Ou-fan Lee has pointed out, one of the vivid expressions of modernity was LIGHT, HEAT, POWER!—the three English words which Mao Dun 矛盾 chose to describe Shanghai in his famous novel *Midnight* (Ziye, 子夜).³ Greyhound racing fits this description perfectly. Most of the greyhound race meetings were held in the evening. The powerful arc lamps round the track, the amazing speed of the greyhound, and the compressed ex-

¹ *Hai alai* was originally played by the Basques on the slopes of the Pyrenees. It was first popular on the French-Spanish frontier and then spread to Latin America. At the beginning of the twentieth century, it was introduced to the United States and provided a major forum for gambling. A very swift game with long rallies, *hai alai* victories were unpredictable, which encouraged betting.

² Frederic Wakeman, Jr., *Policing Shanghai, 1927–1937* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), pp. 99–105.

³ Leo Ou-fan Lee, *Shanghai Modern: The Flowering of a New Urban Culture in China, 1930–1945* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999), pp. 4–5, 75.

citement of the audience were the embodiment of the light, heat and power of the metropolis. Greyhound racing itself was undoubtedly one of the material emblems of advancing modernity. Second, the CRA's campaign against gambling showed that Shanghai gentry and merchants were trying to create a cleaner sort of modernity. As leaders of the Chinese community, they sought a cultivated, reasoned and orderly "modern" society. The excitement, disturbances, mass gambling and crime caused by dog racing did not fit this definition of modernity. In pursuing this form of political modernity they decided to ally with the Chinese municipality and campaign against the racetracks.

And third, the influential sociologist Anthony Giddens has pointed out that with the dwindling hold of tradition and nature on human life, risk management became one of the distinctive characteristics of modern society. The rise of insurance companies, forward contracts and even national health services are obvious cases.⁴ Less obviously, perhaps, but similarly, the special betting method adopted by greyhound racing, pari-mutuel betting, was a form of risk management as it led to more people winning. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Western societies started to consider betting as entertainment, which could be monitored through institutional devices to enhance chances to win while reducing risk. Betting was therefore not necessarily immoral, nor was it an incentive to crime. Such an attitude can clearly be observed in the SMC's internal discussions. This is also one of the reasons why the SMC was reluctant to close down the racetracks.

From Western Sport to Shanghai Modernity

Athletic competitions and gambling have probably been joined for centuries. From the British point of view, especially, gambling had nothing to do with defining an activity as a sport. Greyhound racing also could claim a distinguished pedigree, traced back to coursing and in turn to the hunting culture of Britain. Greyhounds are specially bred hounds characterized by their long and narrow muzzles, slight build, and elongated limbs. In Saxon and Norman times English nobles and landowners often kept them for hunting deer and wolf. During the reign of Elizabeth I, the rules for coursing were drawn up by the Duke of Norfolk and gradually became popular in the following centuries. Clubs were formed and after the passing of the Game Laws in 1831 the sport became even more popular. A competition was usually held by first starting a hare and then releasing the greyhounds. The judge followed the run

⁴ Anthony Giddens and Christopher Pierson, *Conversations with Anthony Giddens: Making Sense of Modernity* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998), pp. 100–106.

on horseback. As the hare tried to throw off the pursuers by suddenly turning its course, the winning greyhound had to adjust its direction swiftly so as to maintain its lead in the group. Speed was of course highly important, but cleverness and skill in killing were also essential to win points.⁵

Though the sport of coursing was exciting, it was an entertainment for a limited audience. To make it suitable for the masses, several changes had to be introduced. Open courses had to be replaced by enclosed ones, with good lighting and a panoramic view from the stands. The race had to be judged purely by speed, leaving vague criteria such as intelligence and skill behind. Even more importantly, a way had to be found to make the race a straight run. These requirements were finally fulfilled around 1922 when Americans started using mechanical devices for the race. A dummy hare was made to move around a track and as it passed the starting point the hounds were simultaneously released from the gates. As greyhounds hunt by sight, not by scent, they chased the lure at full speed. There was, however, no chance of them overtaking the mechanically controlled "hare." The contest became simply a race between the dogs while the audience watched the competition from the stands. Thus emerged a new sport called greyhound racing that soon became popular in the United States.⁶

In 1925 an American, C. A. Munn, brought this new sport to Britain. He allied with Major Lyne-Dixon, a well-known coursing judge in Southern England, to popularize the new sport. At the beginning they met with little encouragement, but once they opened the Belle Vue track in Manchester and started racing in July 1926, the new sport caught the fancy of the British public.⁷ Some 1,700 enthusiasts attended the first meeting. Within weeks the figure rose to 17,000 and many thousands of pounds were bet.⁸ A Greyhound Racing Association of Great Britain was established to form the rules of racing and build up affiliations. Suddenly, greyhound racing came into vogue across all of Britain. Tracks sprung up in cities including London, Birmingham, Edinburgh, Liverpool, Leeds, Plymouth, Leicester, Stoke, Bradford, Brighton, Portsmouth, Cardiff, Nottingham and Newcastle.⁹ Some of them were originally football pitches.¹⁰

⁵ "Coursing," *Everyman's Encyclopedia* (London: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1950), vol. 4, pp. 310-311.

⁶ "Greyhound," *Everyman's Encyclopedia*, vol. 6, p. 606.

⁷ *The North China Herald and Supreme Court & Consular Gazette* (hereafter *NCH*), 14 January 1928, p. 54.

⁸ "Our History," http://www.ngrc.org.uk/pages/about_us/our_history.asp.

⁹ *NCH*, 14 January 1928, p. 54.

¹⁰ "Ji Shanghai saiquanchang" 記上海賽犬場, *Jingbao* 晶報, 12 February 1928, p. 2.

The biggest attraction of greyhound racing was speed. Six dogs took part in a race. Once it started, it went as fast as lighting. A five hundred yard flat race took less than thirty seconds, leaving the fans amazed and enchanted (and often a little richer or poorer). Before the opening up of the Belle Vue, Mrs. Carlo F. Culpeper Clarke, a great lover of greyhound racing and a part-time sports journalist who originally covered coursing events, was instructed to travel to Manchester to report on the new sport. Denigrating this "tin rabbit" game, she made the trip with some reluctance, but completely changed her mind after watching the trials. She later recalled her feelings after her first meeting, "Mere words are powerless to describe the thrill of it. The only sensation I personally could recall were, first 'how I wish they (the dogs) were going round a second time,' and next, amazement that so much excitement and emotion could be compressed into less than half a minute."¹¹

This vogue soon caught the attention of the British in Shanghai. As horse racing had been practiced in Shanghai for more than half a century and betting was widely accepted by both the foreign and Chinese communities, it was thought greyhound racing as a similar sport, and a profitable one as well, was worth introducing. Members of the Shanghai Race Club were particularly interested. Among them, W. R. B. McBain, partner of the firm of Messrs. George McBain, was the first to take action. McBain was the prime mover behind Luna Park, the first greyhound track in China. He was from an old British-Shanghai family. Born in Shanghai in 1891, McBain was educated at St Francis Xavier's College, Shanghai, and then Cambridge University, England. After the outbreak of World War I, he joined the British forces, received many decorations, and was demobilized with the rank of major. He then returned to Shanghai and joined the family business. His father, George McBain, was a notable figure in the foreign community in the 1890s, being a member of the French Municipal Council, the governing body of the French Concession in Shanghai, for several years. W. R. B. McBain himself was also elected as a member of the Shanghai Municipal Council for the years of 1926/27 and 1927/28. He was only thirty-six in 1927, and was known to have strong business instincts and enjoy horse racing and novelty.¹²

McBain allied with other members of the Race Club, including Ellis Hayim, partner of Messrs. Benjamin & Potts; N. L. Sparke, manager of

¹¹ Mrs. Carlo F. Culpeper Clarke, *Greyhounds and Greyhound Racing: A Comprehensive and Popular Survey of Britain's Latest Sport, etc.* (London: Methuen & Co., 1934), p. 23.

¹² George F. Nellist, *Men of Shanghai and North China: A Standard Biographical Reference Work* (Shanghai: The Oriental Press, 1933), pp. 271-272; Huang Guangyu 黃光域, *Waiguo zaiHua gongshang qiye cidian* 外國在華工商企業辭典 (Chengdu: Sichuan chubanshe, 1995), p. 326.

Shanghai Land Investment Co.; and H. E. Arnhold, governing director of Arnhold & Co. Ltd., to form the Greyhound Racing Association (China) Ltd. (GRA) in 1927. They first applied to the Greyhound Racing Association of Great Britain for affiliation and then asked the Shanghai Municipal Council for permission to build a track in the Settlement.¹³ At the same time they ordered greyhounds, mechanical hares, and other necessary equipment from London, and invited track experts such as Duncan E. Campbell and Harry Husbands to Shanghai to superintend the project.¹⁴

Other Shanghai businessmen did not ignore the potential of the new sport. Once GRA started operating, two other groups established similar organizations: the Shanghai International Greyhounds Ltd. (SIG) and Le Champ de Courses Français. The former was headed by C. F. Evans of C. F. Evans & Co., and the latter by Joseph Julien Chollot, chairman of Foncière et Immobilière de Chine, and Michel Speelman, chairman of the International Savings Society. Each group worked vigorously to prepare their new tracks. Thus in 1928 three tracks appeared in Shanghai. GRA's Luna Park opened on 26 May, SIG's Stadium on 31 July, and Le Champ's Canidrome on 18 November.¹⁵

The three tracks were located at the eastern, western and southern sides of the foreign-controlled area of Shanghai, respectively, making them like three legs of a tripod (see Map 1). Luna Park and the Stadium were situated in marginal and sparsely populated areas of the International Settlement. Starting from scratch, each occupied around ten acres.¹⁶ On the other hand, Canidrome was situated at the heart of the French Concession. Originally the garden of Henry Morriss, the famous British horse owner and landlord in Shanghai, it was slightly larger, around thirteen acres.¹⁷ The location of these tracks corresponded to the nationalities of their directors. Most of the directors of Luna Park and the Stadium were British, while the majority of Canidrome were French.

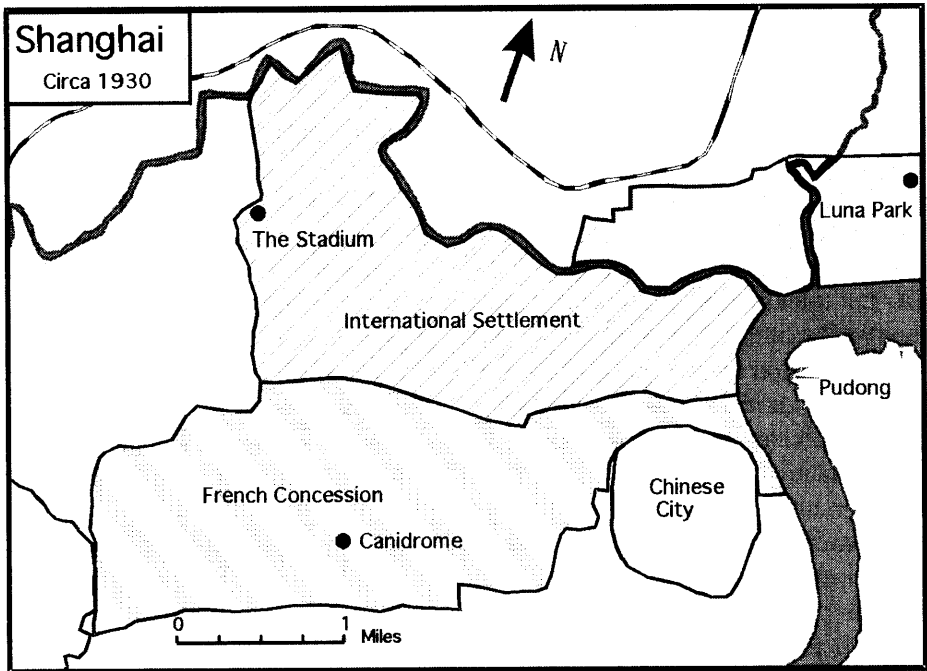
¹³ Shanghai Municipal Archives (hereafter SMA) U1-3-3332, Messrs. White-Cooper & Co. to J. M. McKee, 12 August 1927, enclosed in Statement by the Directors of the Greyhound Racing (China) Association, 8 November 1930.

¹⁴ "The Greyhounds in Shanghai," *NCH*, 31 December 1927, p. 571; "The Opening of Luna Park," *NCH*, 26 May 1928, p. 334.

¹⁵ "Mingyuan saiquanji" 明園賽犬記, *Jingbao*, 24 May 1928, p. 2; "The Opening Night at the Stadium," *NCH*, 4 August 1928, p. 202; "Jixu jiaoshe chajin saigouchang" 繼續交涉查禁賽狗場, *Shenbao* 申報, 29 December 1928, p. 15.

¹⁶ "Mingyuan saiquanji," *Jingbao*, 24 May 1928, p. 2; "Shenyuan shiquanji" 申園試犬記, *Shenbao*, 14 July 1928, p. 21.

¹⁷ Yang Tianliang 楊天亮 ed, "Shanghai yiyuan paogouchang shiliao" 上海逸園跑狗場史料, *Dangan yu shixue* 檔案與史學, 1997: 4, p. 24.



Map 1. Location of greyhound racetracks in Shanghai

Not just in Shanghai but around the world, greyhound racing was associated with the most up-to-date fashions. Electricity, speed and clever marketing devices all contributed to this image. Urban populations admired the world of light. It was said that when greyhound racing first started in the United States, it did not meet with a ready success. A horse racing course was even laid out near one of the first tracks in Florida, stealing away the potential audience. As a last resort, the track owner installed powerful arc lamps round the track in an attempt to attract the race crowd to the dogs in the evening. The trick worked and greyhound racing grew in popularity. Henceforth, except in the height of summer, most races were run in artificial light. A. R. Cardew, a greyhound correspondent of the *Daily Mail* in England, described the fine spectacle of the track by electric light in 1928: "The darkening of the stadium, just before the start of a race, makes the brilliantly illuminated green track stand out like a thin emerald-colored ribbon, upon which the racing greyhounds show up in bold relief."¹⁸

¹⁸ A. R. D. Cardew, *All about Greyhound Racing* (London: Mathews & Marrot, 1928), p. 8.

The contrast between darkness and brightness was even sharper in Shanghai, a single industrial city surrounded by a large, endless rural area. Neither Luna Park nor the Stadium spared any expenses in providing electric lights. They equipped the tracks with state-of-the-art lighting systems so that the audience could see every move on the course from the stands, even down to the numbers on the backs of the hounds. The contrast between the dazzling tracks and the dark wilderness surrounding them was so obvious that the lighting provided the first impression to Chinese race-goers. It was reported that the tracks were “ablaze with electric torches” and “as bright as the daytime in the evening.”¹⁹

In addition to the lighting of its track, the Stadium went a step further by building a decorated archway along the road outside its gate. The owners copied the most recent design in England and used myriads of lamps winding round the arch, making it “shine on the wild plain, like the Arc of Triumph, being grand and imposing beyond description.”²⁰ It was so lofty and shining that visitors could see it from a distance and never need to ask for directions. In the late 1920s few towns outside Shanghai used electricity on a large scale. By using so many and bright electric lights, the tracks built up an image of modernity “transplanted directly from Europe and America.” The tracks thus literally contributed to Shanghai’s nightlife, racing it forward to a new stage.

Like the first British race-goers in Manchester, Chinese audiences in Shanghai were thrilled by the hounds’ speed. This could be observed from the news coverage in *Shenbao* 申報, the leading newspaper in Shanghai, if not China. Two types of reports could be found. One was more elegant and replete with classical references; for example: “once the silver horn blew, the greyhounds started flying simultaneously with their feet...which moved so fast that the dirt on the ground was barely disturbed. They passed like a blast of wind, as a sudden dart, as a meteoric shower at a glance.”²¹ Other reporting was more prosaic sports coverage; for example: “after the mechanical hare came the brave dogs dashing past the audience like lightning. Under the gaze of twenty thousand people they flew around the elliptical course and set a record that no human being could break: 35.4 seconds for a six-hundred-yard race.”²² Elegant or not, all the reporting focused on the amazing speed of the races, which resonated with the pace of life in Shanghai. Ordinary people

¹⁹ “Shenyuan shiquanji,” *Shenbao*, 14 July 1928, p. 21; “Shenyuan tekan” 申園特刊, *Shenbao Shanghai Supplement* 申報本埠增刊, 31 July 1928, p. 1.

²⁰ “Shenyuan tekan no. 2” 申園特刊第二期, *Shenbao Shanghai Supplement*, 6 August 1928, p. 2.

²¹ “Shenyuan tekan no. 3” 申園特刊等三號, *Shenbao Shanghai Supplement*, 10 August 1928.

²² “Yiyuan sumiao” 逸園素描, *Shenbao*, 17 February 1934, p. 2.

could paradoxically take a break from Shanghai's hectic pace by seeking even greater thrills at the track.

Marketing tactics comprised a third factor that connected greyhound racing with modernity. Track owners displayed a sophisticated understanding of public relations, and the tracks became a place where various levels of Shanghai society could meet both literally and metaphorically. Before their opening, both Luna Park and the Stadium tried to win the support of the leading personalities in the city by inviting them and their families to be the greyhound owners. For example, the daughter-in-law of Ye Ziheng 葉子衡, the famous sportsman and founder of the International Recreation Club, became the owner of Solario, the leading dog in the opening race of the Stadium.²³ Margot and Tina Stephen, the twin daughters of the late manager of the Hongkong and Shanghai Bank and active members in the social circles of the foreign community, owned Merry Sinner and Merry Go Round, which were Luna Park champions.²⁴

Other personalities on the list of the dog owners of Luna Park and the Stadium included the Shanghai business tycoon Sir Victor Sassoon; A. W. Burkill, the chairman of the Shanghai Race Club; and the wife of Huang Mingdao 黃明道, the standing director of the China Amateur Athlete Federation 中華體育協進會.²⁵ On the whole, the membership of Luna Park covered most of the celebrities in the foreign community, a large proportion coming from the Shanghai Race Club. On the other hand, the Stadium had close relations with the International Recreation Club, the Chinese counterpart of the Shanghai Race Club, and was composed of the upper-middle class of the Chinese community. As for the Canidrome, as a new-comer, it tried to put itself under the patronage of the personalities of the French Concession. For example, by sending Du Yueheng 杜月笙, the notorious Green Gang leader and philanthropist, a winning greyhound as a gift, it boosted its status in the Concession.²⁶ The support of well-known personalities helped make greyhounds fashionable and gave the sport further momentum.

²³ "Shenyuan zuori juxing kaimuli" 申園昨日舉行開幕禮, *Shenbao*, 1 August 1928, p. 15.

²⁴ "Thrilling Scenes at Luna Park," *NCH*, 2 June 1928, p. 383; "Greyhound Racing at Luna Park," *NCH*, 30 June 1928, p. 558; "Obituary: Mr. A. G. Stephen," *NCH*, 6 September 1924, p. 382; "Big Society Wedding: Miss Tita Stephen Married to Mr de Gherardy," *NCH*, 11 November 1930, p. 194; "Wedding: Stephen-Storich," *NCH*, 24 March 1931, p. 398.

²⁵ "Thrilling Scenes at Luna Park," *NCH*, 2 June 1928, p. 383; "A Record Attendance at Luna Park," *NCH*, 14 July 1928, p. 70; "Shenyuan tekan," *Shenbao Shanghai Supplement*, 31 July 1928, p. 1.

²⁶ "Yiyuan zhi gou" 逸園之狗, *Jingbao*, 23 May 1934, p. 3.

Luna Park and the Stadium adopted modern marketing techniques to sell the sport to the Chinese masses. Before the openings, they held a series of trials, in which “all were welcome and entrance was absolutely free.”²⁷ The Chinese responded to this unprecedented opportunity enthusiastically—they came in throngs. According to one report, “ten thousand people attended the trials. Even the villagers in the neighborhood brought along their aged and young to attend this grand gathering. All exclaimed what a spectacular and wonderful sight!”²⁸ The newspapers, both foreign and Chinese, sent people to cover the new sport. Thus even before the tracks opened, greyhounds had become a Shanghai subject of discussion. The Chinese gasped in admiration, “Foreigners are really able—they can even bet on dogs!”²⁹

Moreover, the tracks made good use of the press, the only mass media of the day, to publicize the races. The Stadium was the most vigorous among them. It convinced *Shenbao* and *Xinwen Bao* 新聞報 to print several special supplements on the races.³⁰ These supplements gave minute descriptions of the location, bus lines, parking areas, entrances, and the price of the pari-mutuel tickets, and even printed pictures of the leading dogs, their owners, and the track managers. On the opening night, ladies were given free silk fans displaying a map of the Stadium. Thousands of elegant handkerchiefs and cosmetics were also given away. Before the races there was a fireworks display. At intervals the pipes and drums of the Scots Guards played round the course. The Stadium thus exhausted every means to create an atmosphere of novelty and excitement.³¹

While resorting to sensational attractions, the Stadium management tried to add some refinement and taste to the greyhound racing culture by borrowing features of the traditional lifestyle of the literati. It designed the track with an elegant Chinese garden with trees, grass and a rockery. It thus gave the audience a pleasant feeling of refreshment on Shanghai’s hot summer nights. In their advertisement, the Stadium further emphasized that it was far away from the downtown hubbub: “The Stadium is located in a peaceful and quiet area of Western Shanghai, with the shade of trees and green grass looking like a velvet carpet. It’s easy to reach while its design is appropriate. Pay-

²⁷ “Shenyuan shiquanji,” *Shenbao*, 14 July 1928, p. 21.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ “Paogou” 跑狗, *Shenbao*, 6 November 1933, p. 3.

³⁰ “Shenyuan zuori juxing kaimuli,” *Shenbao*, 1 August 1928, p. 15.

³¹ “Shenyuan tekan,” *Shenbao Shanghai Supplement*, 31 July 1928, p. 1; “Shenyuan tekan no. 2,” *Shenbao Shanghai Supplement*, 6 August 1928, p. 2.

ing a visit can be treated as touring a tasteful garden as well as going for greyhound racing."³²

Such marketing tactics combined modern entertainment with traditional leisure, targeting both the upper-middle classes and the rank and file. In this sense, the new tracks both reflected modernity—the world of light and speed—and brought it further into the lives of ordinary residents of Shanghai. No wonder both Luna Park and the Stadium met with immediate success. The attendance once reached 25,000,³³ of which over two-thirds were Chinese. Each track held meetings two or three times a week. At the end of 1928, the Canidrome joined in. The meetings increased to six days a week, except for a closed season in winter. Greyhound racing thus became one of the most popular and fashionable activities in Shanghai.

Criticism from the Chinese Ratepayers' Association

While most Shanghai residents embraced the new entertainment, Shanghai's gentry and leading merchants believed in a different sort of modernity. As leaders of the Chinese community, they sought a cultivated, reasoned and orderly "modern" society, and not the excitement, disturbances, mass gambling and crime associated with dog racing. They thus decided to ally with the Chinese municipality and campaign against dog racing. The Chinese municipality also wanted to take this opportunity to recover control over the concessions, another "modern" political ideal. Bound by the longing for a modern society and polity, the CRA and the Chinese municipality formed a strong alliance to agitate for the suppression of greyhound racing.

Though similar to horse racing, greyhound racing was more threatening in the eyes of Chinese gentry and leading merchants. Whereas horse racing was more or less regarded as a high society form of entertainment (and gambling), dog racing targeted all classes. Critics worried that the lower classes could less afford to gamble. They noted that meetings usually started around eight in the evening and finished at eleven or even later. Each meeting was composed of at least six races, and a run every twenty minutes provided more chances for placing bets. In addition, the entrance fees were inexpensive—only 0.6 *yuan*—so even workers could attend, at least occasionally.³⁴ Even more importantly, there was a wide range in betting. While a whole set

³² "Shenyuan tekan no. 3," *Shenbao Shanghai Supplement*, 10 August 1928.

³³ "A Record Attendance at Luna Park," *NCH*, 14 July 1928, p. 70.

³⁴ "Mingyuan saiquanji" 明園賽犬記, *Jingbao*, 24 May 1928, p. 2.

of cash sweep tickets cost fifteen *yuan*, there were also pari-mutuel tickets for only one *yuan*.³⁵ If this was still unaffordable, people could jointly invest in one ticket to try their luck.³⁶

Low entrance fees and a wide range of ticket prices, plus the frequent races and excitement formed a huge attraction to ordinary Chinese residents. It was reported when evening arrived, "even the primary school students and the daughters of respected families, if they had one or two *yuan* in the pockets, would run to the tracks to bet."³⁷

The strong gambling element and the forceful marketing of the tracks soon aroused opposition from Chinese organizations, including the Chinese General Chamber of Commerce and the CRA. The CRA was the most persistent, its tradition of loyal opposition to the SMC having no doubt prepared it for this role. The CRA had been established in 1920 to campaign for Chinese representation on the Municipal Council. Its leaders included prominent political figures such as Wang Zhengting 王正廷, Nie Yuntai 聶雲台, Shi Liangcai 史量才, Yu Qiaqing (Yu Ya Ching) 虞洽卿, and Fang Jiaobo 方椒伯. After the Guomindang took over Shanghai in 1927, it won support from the Nationalist government. The CRA then allied with the GMD municipal branch in pushing the SMC to create more seats for Chinese representation on the Council, to open public parks to the Chinese, and to eliminate discrimination against Chinese residents in the Settlement.³⁸

Two months after Luna Park opened, the CRA petitioned the Commissioner of Foreign Affairs for Jiangsu to request the foreign consulates in Shanghai to ban dog racing. When news about the construction of the Canidrome became known, Yu Qiaqing and Feng Shaoshan 馮少山, the CRA co-chairmen, telegraphed the GMD central party committee and the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Interior, and also sent dispatches to various bodies concerned including the doyen of the consular body, the French consul-general, the Commissioner of Foreign Affairs for Jiangsu, the GMD Central Supervisory Committee, the Chinese councilors in the Municipal Council

³⁵ "Mingyuan erci shiquanji" 明園二次試犬記, *Shenbao*, 25 May 1928, p. 16; "Shenyuan tekan," *Shenbao Shanghai Supplement*, 31 July 1928, p. 1.

³⁶ "Luna Park's Action," *NCH*, 15 March 1933, pp. 424-427.

³⁷ "Zujie dangju yi qudi paogouchang" 租界當局宜取締跑狗場, *Jingbao*, 24 August 1928, p. 2.

³⁸ Ren Jianshu 任建樹 comp., *Xiandai Shanghai dashiji* 現代上海大事記 (Shanghai: Shanghai cishu chubanshe, 1996), pp. 75, 325, 326; Joseph Fewsmith, *Party, State, and Local Elites in Republican China: Merchant Organizations and Politics in Shanghai, 1890-1930* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1985), pp. 59, 135-136.

and chambers of commerce. They even directly complained to Shanghai's citizens in a public letter.

The CRA's position was that foreigners had taken advantage of the curiosity of Shanghai's residents and tempted them to gambling. The entrance fee to the tracks was so cheap that "all classes, from the profligate son of rich parents down to street peddlers and coolies, had no hesitation in spending money earned by hard toil in order to try for an impossible win." The CRA further complained, "If they won, they would throw money about like dirt. If they lost, they would turn reckless. Consequently, kidnapping, burglary, robbery and suicide have become major social problems." As well, the tracks were usually located in lonely places, and the meetings were held late at night. "If the gambler won and returned with lots of cash, an incentive to crime. If he lost, that gave him sufficient reason to take a desperate risk." The CRA asked the consular body to close all the dog tracks in order to maintain public order. If the concession authorities were incapable of banning dog racing, extraterritoriality should be abolished and policing returned to the Chinese municipality.³⁹

The CRA's stance linking morality, social order, and nationalism was closely related to the support of the GMD municipal branch. Since the establishment of the Nationalist government, which more or less unified China from the new capital of Nanjing in 1928, one of its main goals had been the purification of China's leading city, Shanghai. The Nationalists spared no effort to reform popular mores, ranging from suppression of gambling to overseeing proper dress rules. The GMD's purification campaigns culminated in the New Life movement in 1934, when party-led and police-run meetings and parades were held in schools, streets and various public places in China to promulgate new rules of behavior.⁴⁰ As Frederic Wakeman has pointed out, the ideology of the GMD was to seek modernization without undue Westernization, to create a new civic culture, and ultimately to make modern Chinese citizens.⁴¹ The GMD in effect pictured greyhound tracks as Western gambling dens immune to Chinese administration—a perfect example of the evils of extraterritoriality.

At the end of August 1928, the Chinese municipality and the GMD municipal branch took action, instructing Chinese newspapers to print neither

³⁹ "Nashui huarenhui jieli fandui saigou" 納稅華人會竭力反對賽狗, *Shenbao*, 25 August 1928, p. 14; "Agitation against Greyhound Racing," *NCH*, 1 September 1928, p. 366.

⁴⁰ Wakeman, *Policing Shanghai*, pp. 229–243.

⁴¹ Frederic Wakeman, Jr., "Licensing Leisure: The Chinese Nationalists' Attempt to Regulate Shanghai, 1927–49," *Journal of Asian Studies* 54, no. 1 (February 1995), p. 20.

advertisements for the tracks nor even race results.⁴² On 18 September, the GMD further petitioned the central party headquarters and the Chinese municipality to order all the Chinese shareholders of the tracks to withdraw their investment.⁴³ Over the next three years the Chinese municipality and the CRA worked together to constantly press the SMC to close the tracks in the Settlement.

After the CRA and the GMD made their attitudes known, the opinions of leading newspapers also made a U-turn. On 24 August, *Jingbao* 晶報, then the leading tabloid in Shanghai, started criticizing the betting element of the tracks. It said, "Though horse racing is also related to betting, it contains a certain sporty element.... As for dog racing, its appeal is purely based on betting.... If you want, you could bet in every part of the city and almost every evening. Moreover, the ticket price is so flexible that you can bet even with one *yuan*."⁴⁴ Four days later, *Shenbao* reported that a Chinese clerk in an American firm misappropriated the company's funds for dog racing. *Shenbao* had previously given the racetracks extensive coverage, but it now stated, "Dog racing is actually disguised gambling. It has caused even more harm to society than lotteries and *huahui* 花會 gambling."⁴⁵

Even *The North China Daily News (NCDN)*, the influential mouthpiece of the British community in Shanghai, expressed its unhappiness about the news that some Chinese merchants were thinking of building a fourth track on Bubbling Well Road. The *NCDN* suggested that it was time to stop, since the tracks in the concessions had reached their saturation point. If the SMC did not take action to restrict their numbers, the effect on the younger generation would be beyond imagination.⁴⁶ In retrospect, one wonders if the *NCDN* was concerned about the evils of gambling or the evils of competition.

In sum, in less than three months, the image of greyhound racing changed from the epitome of modernity to the epitome of urban vice. This could be considered the dark side of modernity, or it could be considered the result of Shanghai's Chinese elite trying to create a cleaner sort of modernity. Though political factors played a role in this transition, local leaders were also genuinely concerned about Shanghai's social problems. Social reformers had, indeed, long taken notice of Shanghai's dark side: narcotics, gambling,

⁴² "Jindeng gouguanggao" 禁登狗廣告, *Jingbao*, 30 August 1928, p. 2.

⁴³ "More Agitation Over Greyhounds," *NCH*, 22 September 1928, p. 504.

⁴⁴ "Zujie dangju yi qudi paogouchang" 租界當局宜取締跑狗場, *Jingbao*, 24 August 1928, p. 2.

⁴⁵ "Saigousheng zhong zhi qicanzhe" 賽狗聲中之悽慘者, *Shenbao*, 28 August 1928, p. 15. *Huahui* gambling is defined below.

⁴⁶ "Yet More Greyhounds," *NCH*, 4 August 1928, p. 186.

and prostitution. Gambling, for example, took various forms such as *yaotan* 搖灘 (a gambling game with dice), *paijiu* 牌九 (a kind of Chinese dominoes), roulette, and *huahui*, perhaps the most popular. In this game, usually thirty-six names were taken, one of which was secretly placed in a receptacle, after which the gamblers made their selection. Those who put their money on the one in the receptacle could win about thirty times their stake. In addition to this chance of high return, those running the game made it convenient to play by dispatching people called “passenger ships” (航船) to collect bets and return prizes throughout the city. Bettors thus did not have to go to the headquarters. In addition, the amounts that could be wagered were also flexible.⁴⁷

These advantages suited housewives and laborers in particular. As the results came out twice per day, it was said that men and women frequently gathered around street corners from 5 to 6 and 11 to 12 in the evenings waiting anxiously for the “ships” to bring in the results. Asking in chorus “which one?” became part of Shanghai’s street culture.⁴⁸ The CRA and other organizations had advocated strict prohibition of this form of gambling. However, the elusive character of *huahui* prevented it from being eliminated. While native gambling remained to be rooted out, greyhound racing as an imported form of gambling with modern facilities caused the CRA even greater concern.

At the same time, the suicide rate in Shanghai in the late 1920s reached new heights. Taking a random selection from *Shenbao*, on the single day of 25 August 1928 five youths tried to drown themselves; three were saved and two died. Reasons for such rash acts included frustration in love, economic difficulties, false accusations, and depression from prolonged illness.⁴⁹ Although these particular cases had nothing to do with gambling, the CRA reckoned suicide and gambling were related. In the above-mentioned public letter, the CRA earnestly exhorted Shanghai citizens to stop going to the tracks so as to avoid such tragedies.

Just think about the number of bodies found in the Huangpu River. Were they born to die that way? Certainly not! They simply departed from the right course. When it was too late to return, they resorted to such a stupid move. We have seen and heard so many cases. Why are you still not vigilant? You go to the tracks today. You go to

⁴⁷ Wang Dinjiu 王定九, *Shanghai Menjing* 上海門徑 (Shanghai: Zhongyang shuju, 1932), pp. 6–10.

⁴⁸ Yu Muxia 郁慕俠, *Shanghai Linzhua* 上海鱗爪 (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian chubanshe reprint of 1933 edition, 1998), p. 168.

⁴⁹ “Huanian ruci, hebi fuyu qingliu” 華年如此，何必付與清流, *Shenbao*, 25 August 1928, p. 15.

the tracks tomorrow. Don't let dog racing in the end lead you to the river—you will never be able to return home.⁵⁰

Even more alarming than the suicide rate was the crime wave. Due to the Nationalists' take-over of Shanghai (the Chinese city) and the purge of Communists, 1927 was extremely turbulent. Law enforcement was also transferred from the old Mixed Court to the new Shanghai Provisional Court. These conditions, augmented by the disbanding of warlord troops, provided a happy hunting ground for crooks. The result was that cases of burglary, armed robbery and kidnapping increased sharply, all targeting the wealthy class of the Chinese population in the concessions. Taking the International Settlement as an example, 448 cases of armed robbery occurred in 1926. This increased to 1,458 cases in 1927, up by a factor of 2.2 over the previous year.⁵¹ The police found it difficult to cope. The situation was so serious that at the end of 1927 the SMC decided to request the assistance of the foreign troops and conducted a general search in the Settlement. The French Concession Chinese Ratepayers Association also formed a militia corps in January 1928 to protect Chinese residents from being robbed and kidnapped.⁵² Under these circumstances, Shanghai's Chinese elite was eager to eradicate any factor detrimental to peace and order—especially any temptations for poor migrants from other provinces to rob wealthy Shanghai natives.

Luna Park and the Stadium were not indifferent to the criticism from Chinese circles. They abolished the one-*yuan* pari-mutuel tickets soon after the agitation started.⁵³ The British consulate also tried to mediate. On 3 September 1928, C. F. Garstin, the British deputy consul-general in Shanghai, arranged a meeting between the Chinese Bureau of Foreign Affairs, the SMC and the consular authorities. Although they only decided to limit the sale of sweep tickets to members of the greyhound clubs, the value of greyhound shares in the Shanghai Stock Exchange fell immediately.⁵⁴ Two days later, Garstin agreed to an interview in *Shenbao* stating that both greyhound and horse racing were legal in England, but “the scope of greyhound racing in this port is too vast and the track owners act too ostentatiously,” and so some restrictions had to be imposed.⁵⁵ On the other hand, the SMC gave a news

⁵⁰ “Nashui Huaren hui jieli fandui saigou” 納稅華人會竭力反對賽狗, *Shenbao*, 25 August 1928, p. 14.

⁵¹ “Shanghai Crimes and Politics,” *NCH*, 31 March 1928, p. 548.

⁵² Ren, comp., *Xiandai Shanghai dashiji*, pp. 339, 351.

⁵³ “Agitation Against Greyhound Racing,” *NCH*, 1 September 1928, p. 366.

⁵⁴ “The Authorities and Greyhounds,” *NCH*, 8 September 1928, p. 418.

⁵⁵ “Qudi saigou zuixin qushi” 取締賽狗最新趨勢, *Shenbao*, 6 September 1928, p. 15.

conference on the same day, denying it held any responsibility. It stated that as the function of the SMC was purely administrative, it was powerless to put a stop to greyhound racing so long as there was doubt whether betting on the pari-mutuel was legal; currently the greyhound clubs were carrying on with expired licenses from the SMC; and in the future the question of the control or suppression of greyhound racing clubs rested entirely with the consular authorities.⁵⁶

These statements failed to appease the agitation. On 12 September 1928, the CRA petitioned Sir Miles W. Lampson, the British Minister to China, and rebutted the statement of the SMC. It pointed out that Luna Park and the Stadium were operating unlawfully since their licenses had expired; and it complained that neither the SMC nor the British consul-general took any action and that even the judge of H. M. Supreme Court failed to institute legal proceedings. It asked, "Was it because the victims were Chinese that the British authorities thought the tracks could be dealt with more leniently?" The CRA further pointed out that the problem of greyhound racing was so thorny due to its status under extraterritoriality, which guaranteed that a foreigner in China could only be arrested and punished by consular authorities in accordance with the laws of his nation. Since the shareholders of Luna Park and the Stadium were composed of many nationalities, it was difficult for the consuls reach a consensus. The CRA argued that once this out-dated extraterritorial right was abolished, all problems could be readily solved.⁵⁷

Not only did the CRA link greyhound racing to extraterritoriality, but it also bypassed the SMC and tried to appeal to the British Foreign Office directly. On 22 September, Xia Qifeng 夏奇峰, delegate of the General Chamber of Commerce and half a dozen other Chinese organizations of Shanghai in Geneva, addressed a letter to G. T. L. Locker-Lampson, the British representative to the League of Nations, lodging a strong protest against the establishment of greyhound tracks by British subjects in Shanghai. Xia argued that greyhound racing was detrimental to the moral welfare of the public but the British consular authorities in China, to preserve the interests and benefits of their nationals, were sacrificing the moral and economic development of the Chinese people. This justified the Chinese government's demands for abolition of all out-dated and unjustifiable treaties.⁵⁸ This letter later reached Lord Cushendun, Acting Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of Britain, and un-

⁵⁶ Ibid.; "The Authorities and Greyhound," *NCH*, 8 September 1928, p. 418.

⁵⁷ "Nashuihui guanche jinzhi saigou zhuzhang" 納稅會貫徹禁止賽狗主張, *Shenbao*, 13 September 1928, p. 15.

⁵⁸ "Kangyi baohu saigouchang" 抗議保護賽狗場, *Shenbao*, 26 September 1928, p. 6; "The Ubiquitous Greyhound," *NCH*, 29 September 1928, p. 542.

der his instruction a polite reply was sent to Xia indicating that power and responsibility in this matter rested with the SMC, but the Foreign Office had instructed the British Minister in Beijing to keep an eye on developments.⁵⁹

With the opening of the Canidrome approaching, the agitation extended from the Settlement to the French concession. On 23 October, the Commissioner of Foreign Affairs for Jiangsu wrote to Jacques Meyrier, the French consul-general, requesting him to put a stop to the new track.⁶⁰ On 15 November, the General Federation of Commerce in the French Concession also wrote and requested the consul-general to withdraw the permit for the opening of the Canidrome.⁶¹ After the Canidrome opened on 18 November, the French Concession Chinese Ratepayers Association distributed circulars and put up posters exhorting Chinese to stay away from the track.⁶² On 28 December, the Commissioner of Foreign Affairs wrote to Meyrier again, complaining that the Canidrome tempted vendors and shop clerks by giving complimentary tickets.⁶³ Though the protests against the Canidrome were vociferous, the main concern of the Chinese organizations was still the tracks in the Settlement. In any event, French authorities took no action.

From Hesitation to Final Action

Though bombarded with letters and protests by the CRA and other Chinese organizations, the SMC remained reluctant to act. Several factors lay behind this attitude. First, the SMC was influenced by the British hunting culture and regarded greyhound racing as sport—in a different category from *huahui* gambling and roulette. Second, the SMC had taken a supportive attitude when Luna Park and the Stadium applied for permission to build tracks. Not only did it extend municipal roads, arrange traffic, and provide police services during the meetings,⁶⁴ but also it was involved directly in the estab-

⁵⁹ “Ying waibu dui saigou wenti biaoshi” 英外部對賽狗問題表示, *Shenbao*, 16 October 1928, p. 15.

⁶⁰ “Xuqing qudi saigou” 續請取締賽狗, *Shenbao*, 24 October 1928, p. 15.

⁶¹ “Shangzong lianhehui han Fazonglingshi jin saigou” 商總聯會函法總領事禁賽狗, *Shenbao*, 16 November 1928, p. 15.

⁶² “Anti-Greyhound Agitation,” *NCH*, 24 November 1928, p. 309.

⁶³ “Jixu jiaoshe chajin saigouchang” 繼續交涉查禁賽狗場, *Shenbao*, 29 December 1928, p. 15.

⁶⁴ SMA U1-3-3330, Duncan E. Campbell to S. Fessenden, 6 June 1929; “Shenyuan tekan,” *Shenbao Shanghai Supplement*, 31 July 1928, p. 1.

ishment of Luna Park. Two of its councilors were directors of Luna Park.⁶⁵ At least one of its high-ranking police officers invested in the same track.⁶⁶ Third, the betting method adopted by greyhound racing, i.e. pari-mutuels, allowed more people to win, which accorded with the developing idea of risk management in Western societies. It was thought that so long as betting was monitored through sound institutional devices, enhancing the chances of winning while decreasing the risk of losing, it could be treated as entertainment instead of “vicious gambling” or an incentive to crime.

The types of bets in greyhound racing could be divided into two distinct groups: pari-mutuel wagering and cash sweeps. The former, later also called “totalizator,” was created in 1865 by the Frenchman Pierre Oller. The idea was that all the money bet would be divided up among those who had winning tickets, after taxes, commissions and other deductions were made. As this system insured that the punter never wagered against the track but only against other players, Oller named it “parier mutuel,” meaning “mutual stake” or “betting among ourselves.” When this type of wagering was introduced to England, it became known as “Paris mutual,” which soon became “pari-mutuel.”⁶⁷ The merit of this system was that everybody stood a good chance of winning so long as the punter followed the tips and forecasts provided by the tracks. The wide variety of betting further added to the chances of winning, which included “win” 獨贏, “place” 位置, and multiple bets. For win bets, the punter bet on a winner and collected only if it came in first across the finish line. A wager for place meant that the punter collected if the selected hound finished either first or second. Multiple bets included “straight forecast” 連位, a bet placed on two greyhounds to finish first and second in exact chosen order, and the “daily double” 雙獨贏 in which the punter made simultaneous selections on the winners of two consecutive races of that day. It was not difficult to win by pari-mutuels, but as the odds of favorite were deemed to be low, only a bet on an outsider would return high odds.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ W. R. B. McBain was SMC councilor for the years of 1926/27 and 1927/28, while H. E. Arnhold was councilor for 1928/29, vice-chairman for 1932/33 and 1933/34, and chairman for 1929/30, 1934/35 and 1935/36.

⁶⁶ M. O. Springfield, Assistant Commissioner of the Shanghai Municipal Police, was listed along with McBain on the prospectus of the Greyhound Association of China, Ltd. See “‘Exposer of Bolshevism’ Faces Criminal Charges in Shanghai,” *China Weekly Review* (hereafter *CWR*), 15 June 1929, p. 103.

⁶⁷ “Horse Racing Glossary: Parimutuel(s),” http://www.ildado.com/horse_racing_glossary_02.html. English spellings vary.

⁶⁸ Liu Lun 劉崙, “Shanghai de dubo jiguan yu suo yinqi de shehui wenti” 上海的賭博機關與所引起的社會問題, BA thesis, Shanghai College, Shanghai, 1943, pp. 23–24; Peng

As for the cash sweeps system, it included drawing 搖彩 and championship tickets 香檳票. The former were drawn every meeting while the latter were for the season-end championship race. The tracks first issued tickets and then drew the numbers of the tickets and the dogs they represented on the eve of the champion race. The punter who chose the number of the winner would receive seventy percent of the total money pool after deduction for the management, while those who chose the numbers of the second and the third received the remaining twenty and ten percent, respectively. This kind of betting could yield huge dividends; however, the chance of winning was extremely slim.⁶⁹

Pari-mutuels and cash sweeps were not new in Shanghai. They had been introduced to China through the horse race clubs nearly half a century earlier. However, the horse clubs seemed to focus more on the cash sweeps—the selling and drawing of the championship tickets had always been a grand event in the treaty ports—while the greyhound clubs concentrated on pari-mutuels. This explains the appeal of greyhound racing to ordinary people and the tracks' claim to be a place of public entertainment. Defenders of dog racing argued that ninety percent of the money taken to the courses was returned to patrons in the shape of dividends and that any regular patron, when asked about the results last season, would usually reply, "Oh, just about square and lots of fun for nothing."⁷⁰

Anthony Giddens has pointed out that one of the distinctive features of modernity is risk management. He argues that the idea of risk first emerged from the early modern period when Europeans set off to explore previously unknown territories and seek trade opportunities. Facing extreme dangers, society developed the idea of "risk" and created vehicles of risk management such as insurance. Taking active decisions about future events thus became a marker of modern life. Notions of fate or God's will tended to fade away, replaced with increasingly carefully calculated risk management. With the rise of modernity, the concept of risk has become generalized; the need to face, assess and manage various risks in life, ranging from the decision about reproduction to investment strategies, is now taken for granted.⁷¹

The idea of risk management can be applied to greyhound racing. Pari-mutuel was an institutional device that managed risk: "win," "place," or mul-

Zhongwei 彭重威, *Shanghai paogouchang heimu* 上海跑狗場黑幕, in *Shanghai shi wenshiguan* 上海市文史館 comp., *Jiu Shanghai de yanduchang* 舊上海的煙賭娼, Shanghai: Baijia chubanshe, 1988, p. 100.

⁶⁹ Liu, "Shanghai de dubo jiguan yu suo yinqi de shehui wenti," p. 24.

⁷⁰ "Why Not Stop Ordinary Business Activities?" *CWR*, 27 April 1929, p. 351.

⁷¹ Giddens and Pierson, *Conversations with Anthony Giddens*, pp. 100–106.

tiple bets all increased chances of winning while reducing the risk of losing. Pari-mutuels reflected distinctive features of rising modernity, and indeed Britain formally approved the system to be used for horse racing in 1928. After the Betting and Lotteries Act of 1934, it was further legalized on greyhound tracks.⁷² Even earlier, when the future of pari-mutuels on greyhound tracks was uncertain, court verdicts in Britain were not always to the disadvantage of the tracks.⁷³ No wonder the SMC hesitated about the propriety of suppression.

Nonetheless, the anti-roulette campaign in 1929 led the SMC to impose certain restrictions on dog racing. At the end of May, the council resolved to limit the number of the meetings to one per week for each track, starting from 15 June.⁷⁴ This abrupt decision was coordinated with police raids on the Settlement's roulette casinos. Roulette first appeared in Shanghai in the 1900s. At that time it was only played in foreign hotels beyond the limit of the Settlement.⁷⁵ In the late 1920s, however, roulette became so widespread in both foreign and Sino-foreign casinos that contemporaries thought it more popular than *yaotan*, *paiju* or *shimi* 詩謎 (a kind of gambling featuring the use of ancient Chinese poems).⁷⁶ Unlike *huahui* gambling, whose headquarters drifted from place to place, roulette casinos were sited in luxurious mansions with heavily guarded entrances. Cigarettes, wine, liquor and food were provided free of charge. For big-stakes patrons, even chauffeured pickups were provided.⁷⁷ Many foreigners as well as wealthy Chinese frequented these casinos and spent money recklessly.

⁷² Roy Genders, *The NGRC Book of Greyhound Racing: A History of the Sport Completely Revised and Updated by the National Greyhound Racing Club* (London: Pelham, 1990), p. 310.

⁷³ SMA U1-3-3330, Assistant Police Advocate to Assistant Commissioner of Police, 1 October 1929; SMA U1-3-3332, Fessenden to N. S. Brown, 7 November 1930; SMA U1-3-3332, Victor Priestwood to J. F. Brenan, 12 November 1930; SMA U1-3-3332, Assistant Municipal Advocate's Opinion on Pari-Mutuel on Dog Racing Tracks, no date; SMA U1-3-3333, Court of Criminal Appeal, 27 October 1930, enclosed in Fessenden to A. G. Mossop, 28 January 1931; SMA U1-3-3333, Mossop to Fessenden, 5 February 1931; SMA U1-3-3334, Extract from "The Police Review and Parade Gossip," 28 November 1930, enclosed in R. M. J. Martin to The Municipal Advocate, 16 February 1931.

⁷⁴ SMA U1-3-3330, Extract from Council Minutes dated 21 and 29 May 1929.

⁷⁵ Shanghai Municipal Council, *Report for the Year Ended 31st December 1904 and Budget for the Year Ended 31st December 1905* (Shanghai: Kelly & Walsh, 1905), p. 55.

⁷⁶ Shanghai shehui yanjiusuo 上海社會研究所 ed., *Shanghai Shenmi zhinan* 上海神秘指南, Shanghai: Shanghai shehui chubanbu, 1930, p. 81.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 83-86.

Under the pressure of the consular body, the SMC started a campaign against roulette in 1929. A downtown casino at 151c Bubbling Well Road known as "The Wheel" was targeted. However, before the municipal police took action, one problem had to be solved—the greyhound controversy. The casinos were often registered in local Latin American consulates so as to take advantage of extraterritoriality—under the penal code of these countries the crime of gambling was only a minor offence.⁷⁸ To protect their subjects, these consuls requested sworn information before issuing a warrant to raid. This often delayed the police enough so that their searches were fruitless. In 1928 the consuls found one more excuse to refuse to cooperate—the SMC suppressed only roulette but ignored greyhound and horse racing. The SMC was forced to abandon the proceedings against "The Wheel" in 1928 due to the Mexican consul's unwillingness to assist the council in this matter.⁷⁹

To avoid making the same mistake, on 21 May 1929, the council resolved to restrict the meetings of the tracks, hoping this would pacify the greyhound controversy. Five days later, during the early hours of May 26, a Sunday, the police staged a spectacular siege at 151c Bubbling Well Road. They employed barbed-wire barricades, a large red police van and a large searchlight. They found 184 foreigners and 55 Chinese were in the building, forcing them to pass through the spotlight and leave their names and addresses.⁸⁰

It was obvious that the SMC intended to use this siege to demonstrate its determination to suppress gambling. However, its gesture was not well received. *The China Weekly Review*, an American newspaper that often adopted an oppositional stance to the Settlement government, bitterly accused the SMC of distracting the public's attention from greyhound racing.⁸¹ It also hinted that the SMC was helping the tracks by removing their competition.⁸² The *NCDN*, while applauding the council's determination, pointed out that its vacillations had caused the sudden drop of the price of the greyhound shares, which enriched only those who had insider's information. To protect the interests of ordinary investors, the *NCDN* suggested the council make a clear-cut statement of what it proposed to do to with greyhound rac-

⁷⁸ SMA U1-3-2660, R. T. Bryan, Jr. to Fessenden, 11 April 1929.

⁷⁹ SMA U1-3-3330, Extract from Council minutes dated 21 May 1929.

⁸⁰ "Fooling the Public on the Gambling Question," *CWR*, 1 June 1929, pp. 5-6; "Gongbuju gongbao lun dubo yu fan'an guanxi" 工務局公報論賭博與犯案關係, *Shenbao*, 28 June 1929, p. 15.

⁸¹ "Fooling the Public on the Gambling Question," *CWR*, 1 June 1929, pp. 5-7.

⁸² "What Cunningham Should Do about Gambling," *CWR*, 3 November 1929, p. 96.

ing.⁸³ In the following trials of the “Wheel Case,” the defendants and the defense attorney accused the council of siding with the British-owned greyhound gambling resorts against the Latin American- and Chinese-owned roulette casinos, which further embarrassed the council.⁸⁴

The council’s restrictions on greyhound meetings were supported by neither the foreign community nor the CRA. The CRA accused the SMC of protecting “the interests of certain British subjects whose business is gambling the Council cannot do otherwise.” If the council would not close the tracks completely, it should prohibit the admission of Chinese to the tracks. “Should any Chinese attempt to enter by force, they should be charged in a Chinese court in the same way as those who frequent the ‘Wheel.’”⁸⁵ From June to August 1929, the CRA repeatedly requested the council to prosecute Chinese frequenting the tracks.⁸⁶ It even suggested the council hang a sign at the gates of Luna Park and the Stadium bearing the clause “Only dogs and foreign gamblers admitted,” or “Chinese not admitted”—a satire on the sign “Dogs and Chinese not admitted,” which was widely believed to hang at the entrances of Shanghai’s parks ten years previously.⁸⁷

On the other hand, the greyhound tracks were unhappy with the restrictions. Luna Park requested the council publish the correspondence between the track and the Settlement government in 1927 so as to prove it was lawfully established.⁸⁸ Both tracks then lengthened the period of their meetings, increasing the number of races as a countermeasure. This, plus the patronage of former roulette customers, made the business of the tracks even more brisk. No wonder the CRA satirized the council’s policy as absurd, likening it to restricting a thief formerly stealing everyday to steal once a month, or allowing a daily murderer to kill once every four weeks.⁸⁹ In August, the Chinese

⁸³ “The Council and Gambling,” *NCH*, 1 June 1929, p. 343.

⁸⁴ “Ying jingwuting shenxun ba dutu zhi jizai” 英警務庭審訊八賭徒之紀載, *Shenbao*, 28 June 1929, p. 15; “Dadu’an zuori bianlun” 大賭案昨日辯論, *Shenbao*, 18 July 1929, p. 15; “Dadu’an xubianji” 大賭案續辯記, *Shenbao*, 20 July 1929, p. 15; “Dadu’an xuanpan youqi” 大賭案宣判有期, *Shenbao*, 21 July 1929, p. 15; “Jinansilu dadu’an shangsu kaishen” 靜安寺路大賭案上訴開審, *Shenbao*, 11 September 1929, p. 15; “Jinansilu dadu’an zuokai bianlun” 靜安寺路大賭案昨開辯論, *Shenbao*, 20 September 1929, p. 15.

⁸⁵ SMA U1-3-3330, Translation, Chinese Ratepayers’ Association of the International Settlement (hereafter CRA) to S. M. Edwards, 27 May 1929.

⁸⁶ SMA U1-3-3330, Translation, CRA to Edwards, 30 June and 16 July 1929.

⁸⁷ SMA U1-3-3330, Translation, CRA to the Senior Consul, 2 August 1929, enclosed in E. S. Cunningham to H. E. Arnhold, 8 August 1929.

⁸⁸ SMA U1-3-3330, Campbell to Fessenden, 6 June 1929; C. F. Evans to Fessenden, 15 June 1929.

⁸⁹ SMA U1-3-3330, Translation, CRA to the Senior Consul, 3 August 1929.

found another reason to protest against the tracks—most of the Stadium was situated in Chinese territory. Xu Mo 徐謨, the Commissioner of Foreign Affairs for Jiangsu, was instructed to make representation to the doyen of the consular body against the use of the municipal police at the Stadium during the meetings.⁹⁰ On February 1930, the Young Men's Christian Association of Shanghai also requested the council to suppress greyhound racing and roulette so as to support its recent campaign for thrift and honesty.⁹¹

To these protests and requests, the council remained unmoved. Not only did it continue to dispatch the municipal police to the tracks during the meetings, but also when the Stadium requested to postpone meetings on account of bad weather on 14 August 1929 and 3 July 1930, the council quickly obliged.⁹² On 1 March 1930, municipal land at the corner of Ward and Whashing Roads leased by Luna Park expired. The SMC renewed the lease for another two years with the option of the lessee to purchase the area on expiration of the lease.⁹³ These gestures all indicated that the council had no intention of suppressing greyhound racing.

Closing the Tracks

Seemingly unanimous on the surface, the SMC began debating how to deal with the agitation as early as May 1929. Stirling Fessenden, the director general and the only American high official in the Settlement government, played a key role in this debate. When the CRA suggested the council disallow Chinese frequenting the tracks, Fessenden reckoned it one way of appeasing the protests and requested the police department to give its opinion.⁹⁴ R. T. Bryan, Jr., the police advocate, considered it practical from the legal point of view. He pointed out that the Chinese law treated gambling strictly. Except for mah-jongg or dominoes during the Chinese New Year holidays or on festival days, it was an offence to be present where gambling took place in a public place, with or without the proof that the defendant actually was gambling. In that case, the council might as well prosecute Chinese citizens

⁹⁰ SMA U1-3-3330, Translation, Commissioner of Foreign Affairs for Jiangsu to the Senior Consul, 2 August 1929, enclosed in Cunningham to Arnhold, 8 August 1929.

⁹¹ SMA U1-3-3330, Translation, L. T. Chen to SMC, 25 February 1930.

⁹² SMA U1-3-3330, Evans to Arnhold, 14 August 1929; Evans to J. R. Jones, 2 July 1930; Jones to Evans, 15 August 1929; Jones to Evans, 3 July 1930.

⁹³ SMA U1-3-3330, Jones to Messrs. Thomson & Co., 25 March 1930.

⁹⁴ SMA U1-3-3330, Comment by Fessenden on Secretary to Director General, 29 May 1929.

in the provisional court for frequenting the tracks.⁹⁵ R. M. J. Martin, the Acting Commissioner of Police, however, opposed such a proposal. He argued that such actions would be illogical in view of the council's recent restriction on the number of the meetings. It would also lead to criticism of discrimination against Chinese. In addition, if such prosecution was possible, there was no reason why it should not extend to horse racing.⁹⁶

Martin represented the interests of the tracks in the council, stating that existing restrictions were enough, while Bryan's opinion represented those who advocated suppression. Fessenden commented on these opinions, "To my mind the question isn't so much whether or not dog racing should be allowed or suppressed as it is the extent to which the Council is prepared to go to suppress all illegal gambling. American and British subjects are all to be prosecuted for attending 151 Bubbling Well [Road]. If they can be prosecuted for attending 151 Bubbling Well they can be prosecuted for attending dog racing."⁹⁷

Fessenden's comment revealed his determination to suppress all sorts of gambling in the Settlement. His attitude towards the greyhound controversy was closely related to his background and unusual former career. Fessenden first came to China in 1903 and started a law practice in Shanghai in 1905.⁹⁸ In 1920, he was elected to the SMC, remaining a member until 1929 and chairing the council from 1923 to 1929. It was under his leadership that the council went through the critical years of 1925 and 1927 when political turbulence included the May Thirtieth Incident, the Nationalist' capture of Shanghai, and the following purge of the Communists.⁹⁹ Fessenden's firmness in these crises led Chinese writers to describe him as "a well-known diehard, behaving very badly,"¹⁰⁰ while the foreign community called him "Lord Mayor of Shanghai" with respect and affection. In September 1927, the foreign community gave him a dinner party to celebrate his fifty-second birthday. Leading figures in consular and business circles congregated, and

⁹⁵ SMA U1-3-3330, Bryan to Martin, 5 June 1929, enclosed in Martin to Edwards, 6 June 1929.

⁹⁶ SMA U1-3-3330, Martin to Edwards, 6 June 1929.

⁹⁷ SMA U1-3-3330, Comment by Fessenden on Secretary to Director General, 7 June 1929.

⁹⁸ Nellist, *Men of Shanghai and North China*, p. 129.

⁹⁹ Shanghai Municipal Council, *Report for the Year Ended 31st December 1939 and Budget for the Year Ended 31st December 1940* (Shanghai: North-China Daily News & Herald, 1940), p. 9.

¹⁰⁰ Zhongguo shehui kexueyuan jindaishi yanjiusuo fanyishi 中國社會科學院近代史研究所翻譯室, *Jindai laiHua waiguo renming cidian* 近代來華外國人名辭典, Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1984, p. 141.

Peter Grain, the newly-appointed judge of the Supreme Court, praised Fessenden's "discretion, courage and integrity" in time of trouble.¹⁰¹

In 1929, Fessenden informed the council that he could not act as its unpaid chairman any more. The council offered him a stipendiary position with the title of director general.¹⁰² This was originally an honorary post, but under Fessenden it became the head of the administration until his retirement in 1939.¹⁰³ Fessenden could work in the British-dominated SMC for nearly twenty years because he acted very much like the British (which made him a perfect example of the internalization of Settlement identity). The *NCDN* once described him as British by nature though not by name.¹⁰⁴

Nevertheless, Fessenden was no mere near a puppet of the British. His American origins freed him from such myths as greyhound racing being essentially a sport. He pointed out as early as August 1928 that the dog racing companies were different from the horse race club as the latter operated only occasionally, without seeking profit, while the former existed for the purpose of profit and actually showed very large returns.¹⁰⁵ In his correspondence with Luna Park, he further called dog racing "commercialized gambling under the thinly disguised veil of sport."¹⁰⁶ When the anti-greyhound criticism became loud, his concern was not whether pari-mutuel wagering was legal or how to protect the interests of the investors, but the stability of the International Settlement. The CRA and Chinese municipality held up the racetracks as an evil of extraterritoriality. The council had to respond to this charge with great care so as to prove to the three chief foreign Powers—Great Britain, America and Japan—that the Settlement was worthwhile protecting. Fessenden thus determined to suppress greyhound racing.

But to do so would be difficult without support from the foreign community. Fortunately, the British authorities in China had begun to take a stand on the greyhound controversy. At the beginning of the agitation, Sir Sydney Barton, the British consul-general at Shanghai, adopted an equivocal attitude and refused to take the initiative in suppressing dog racing.¹⁰⁷ However, after Xia Qifeng's petition in Geneva and the formal protest from the Nationalist government, the Foreign Office in London started following the controversy.

¹⁰¹ "Shanghai Tribute to Mr. Fessenden," *NCH*, 1 October 1927, p. 15.

¹⁰² "A New Role for Mr. Fessenden," *NCH*, 9 February 1929, p. 235.

¹⁰³ Shanghai zujiezhì bianzhuān weiyuanhui 上海租界志編纂委員會 ed., *Shanghai Zujiezhì* 上海租界志, Shanghai: Shanghai Shehui kexueyuan chubanshe, 2001, p. 210.

¹⁰⁴ "Cautionary Tales for Poor Politicians," *NCH*, 7 May 1927, p. 266.

¹⁰⁵ SMA U1-3-3339, Extract from Council Minutes dated 31 August 1928.

¹⁰⁶ SMA U1-3-3330, Fessenden to Campbell, 10 June 1929.

¹⁰⁷ SMA U1-3-3330, Extract from Council Minutes dated 21 May 1929.

It was said that in May 1929 Sir Miles Lampson, the British Minister to China, took advantage of a visit to Shanghai to instruct the consulate that something had to be done.¹⁰⁸ At the end of that month, Barton left Shanghai for his new appointment as Minister to Abyssinia.¹⁰⁹ After the arrival of the new consul-general, J. F. Brennan, in February 1930,¹¹⁰ the consulate changed its attitude completely. Brennan actively pressed the council to suppress dog racing and was even ready to give his support publicly when necessary.¹¹¹

In addition to the consulate, Fessenden found two other allies in the council, the above-mentioned R. T. Bryan, Jr. and J. W. Gerrard, the newly appointed commissioner of police. Bryan was born at Shanghai in 1892, the son of a famous American missionary. After graduating from the University of North Carolina in 1916, he returned to Shanghai and started his career as a lawyer.¹¹² In 1928 Fessenden recommended Bryan to serve the council as the police advocate. Two years later he became commissioner of the SMC's newly-established legal department, a branch under the direct leadership of Fessenden. During his term of office, he further introduced Chinese graduates from the Faculty of Law at Soochow University to the council.¹¹³ Bryan shared not only the same nationality, but also a similar background to Fessenden. He could provide Fessenden with useful legal support.

Police Commissioner Gerrard was another ally. While an undergraduate at Aberdeen University in Scotland in 1908, he was selected for the Indian police. He then worked in the police and military services over a wide geographical range, including India, Mesopotamia and Arabia. In 1929 at the special request of the SMC, he was transferred from British India to Shanghai to reorganize the police department.¹¹⁴ His varied police experience in the colonies, and his lack of association with Luna Park and the Stadium, made him a perfect ally for Fessenden.

In the latter half of 1930, Fessenden was ready to take action. On 8 September, he wrote Commissioner Gerrard, quoting a statement by a former police commissioner of New York City. According to that officer, the sure way to curb crime was to eliminate gambling. He said that commercialized gam-

¹⁰⁸ "What Cunningham Should Do about Gambling," *CWR*, 15 June 1929, p. 95; "American and Chinese Members of the Council and the Gambling Question," *CWR*, 13 July 1929, p. 284.

¹⁰⁹ "Sir Sidney Barton Leaves," *NCH*, 25 May 1929, p. 307.

¹¹⁰ "Knight Conferred on Mr. J. F. Brennan," *NCH*, 7 June 1932, p. 374.

¹¹¹ SMA U1-3-3332, Extract from Watch Committee Meeting, 6 November 1930.

¹¹² Carroll Lunt comp., *The China Who's Who 1927 (foreign)* (Shanghai: 1927), p. 34.

¹¹³ *Shanghai Zujiezhì*, p. 626.

¹¹⁴ "New Commissioner of Police," *NCH*, 12 October 1929, p. 52.

bling had to exist on easy money and it had to obtain some kind of protection; once the word had spread that a gambling business had protection, the rush of criminals started; then came robbers, stick up men, and wanton murderers. He finally claimed, "Show me where there is protection and I will show you a city where there is a high rate of crime of every kind." After quoting this statement, Fessenden said that commercialized gambling existed on a relatively large scale in Shanghai; dog racing, horse racing and *hai alai* were freely permitted; and the Chinese claimed that there was a direct connection between these enterprises and the crime wave. He asked Commissioner Gerrard whether in his opinion there was any foundation for such a claim.¹¹⁵

Gerrard wrote a long letter in reply, completely agreeing with the New York officer. He said that from his experience in the Near East and in India, wherever there was gambling on an extensive scale, there would be a high incidence of crime. He argued that gambling was the greatest incentive to crime in the East, as "it attracts old criminals, makes new criminals and has a seriously corrupting influence on the police force." He further pointed out that commercialized gambling was a greater evil than the common gambling den as the latter could be suppressed by police action while the former flourished without fear of interference. Gerrard concluded that all forms of gambling, commercialized or otherwise, should be suppressed.¹¹⁶

This line of thinking was exactly what Fessenden had been waiting for. With the endorsement of two police commissioners who had served in the leading cities in the world, Fessenden circulated this correspondence to members of the council to test their attitudes. There were fourteen councilors that year, including five British, two Japanese, one American and five Chinese. The five Chinese were S. L. Hsu 徐新六, O. S. Lieu 劉鴻生, T. D. Woo 胡孟嘉, L. T. Yuan 袁履登, and Yu Qiaqing. Except for A. J. Hughes, a British councilor, most of the council members did not dispute the association between gambling and crime. O. S. Lieu even mentioned the recent absconding of his cashiers as an example.¹¹⁷ Seeing that, Fessenden published the correspondence in the *Municipal Gazette*. It was immediately reprinted in full by leading newspapers in Shanghai. *Shenbao* gave it the heading, "Herald of gambling suppression in the International Settlement."¹¹⁸

In addition to the endorsement of the police commissioners, two other developments worked to the advantage of Fessenden's policy. One was the

¹¹⁵ SMA U1-3-3331, Fessenden to J. W. Gerrard, 8 September 1930.

¹¹⁶ SMA U1-3-3331, Gerrard to Fessenden, 22 September 1930.

¹¹⁷ SMA U1-3-3331, Councilors' Comments on Secretary to Members of Council, 23 September 1930.

¹¹⁸ "Gonggong zujie jindu xiansheng" 公共租界禁賭先聲, *Shenbao*, 24 October 1930, p. 9.

application for a second auditorium for the game of *hai alai*, and the other was the attitude of the Japanese community. Shanghai businessmen had originally introduced the ball game of *hai alai* in 1930, when Felix L. Bouvier, managing director of Union Mobilière, and A. du Pac de Marsoulies, a well-known French advocate and counsel for the French Municipal Council, built the a palatial Pare des Sports or "Auditorium." Players were recruited from Spain and Egypt to lend an authentic touch, while the pari-mutuel system was used for betting. It immediately attracted Shanghai urbanites. Every evening people were crowded into the dazzling indoor courts, "sometimes cheering in jubilation, sometimes heaving a deep sigh, wearing a tense expression and restless the whole time."¹¹⁹ The excitement and emotion provided by *hai alai* was no less than greyhound racing.

On 12 September 1930 Federico Sarda, a Spanish attorney-at-law representing a group of foreign investors, made an application to the SMC to erect a second auditorium in the International Settlement to promote the game. It would be even larger than the first one, with a restaurant, orchestra stand, wide halls and corridors, and even a sliding roof so that the building could be both closed and open-air, depending on the weather. Sarda also stated that the applicant would be willing occasionally to lend the new building to the council as a town hall free of charge.¹²⁰ Though a town hall sounded attractive, the dog racing controversy had left the council wary of any betting-related sport. The SMC unanimously refused to issue the applicant a license. Councilor Hughes commented candidly, I "do not approve not merely because the game is associated with gambling but also because the Council would not be justified in permitting any further forms of entertainment of this kind in the Settlement of which it has already more than is desirable."¹²¹

This application was a warning to the council. It revealed that the equivocal attitude of the council had given the impression that the council did not oppose betting-related sports. Worse still, actions of the Japanese community also showed their dissatisfaction with the SMC's policy. On 30 Sept, the *Shanghai Nippo* reported that sixty leading Japanese residents had petitioned the Japanese Consulate to prohibit Japanese from frequenting gambling dens. Two days later, it further reported that in response the Japa-

¹¹⁹ Lin Zhisan 林之三, "Hairen buqian de huili qiuchang" 害人不淺的回力球場, Shanghai renmin chubanshe 上海人民出版社 compiled, *Shanghai jingji shihua* 上海經濟史話, vol. 2 (Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin chubanshe, 1963), pp. 28–30.

¹²⁰ SMA U1-3-3331, Application, enclosed in Federico Sarda to The Secretary of SMC, 12 September 1930.

¹²¹ SMA U1-3-3331, Comment by A. J. Hughes on Secretary to Members of Council, 16 September 1930.

nese authorities had dispatched consular police to racecourses, dog tracks, and *hai alai* courts to secure the names of Japanese visitors.¹²² The Japanese were the largest foreign community in Shanghai with around 18,000 residents in the Settlement in 1930, twice the number of British.¹²³ Their influence on the council, however, was marginal, a fact which the Japanese had long resented. But the prospect of their acting alone against gambling worried Fessenden greatly, and he decided that it was time to take further action to consolidate the position of the council.

“We Have to Rule Better than the Others”

On 1 October 1930, Fessenden circulated a twelve-page memorandum among the foreign councilors (not including the Chinese representatives), in which he analyzed the political implications of the greyhound controversy. He pointed out that the International Settlement used to be called a “Model Settlement” due to its high level of policing, public health and infrastructure; the recent crime wave, however, had given the Chinese an opportunity to make a case against the Settlement. The Chinese were trying to show that all sorts of abuses were taking place under the privileges of extraterritoriality, according to Fessenden; these accusations not only damaged the Settlement’s reputation but also raised doubts in the minds of the Powers whether the Settlement was worth protecting. Fessenden argued that to remove these doubts the council had to crack down on crime; it was estimated that the Settlement’s crime rate was as great as Chicago’s; since the members had agreed gambling and crime were related, the council should take action to suppress all gambling, not just prohibiting roulette and *hai alai*. He cited several cases to show that the council’s equivocal attitude had already caused the municipal police difficulties.

Fessenden then pointed out that Luna Park and the Stadium, though limiting their meetings to one night each week, had greatly expanded the number of races run on a single night and diminished the effect of the council’s action. The leaders of the Japanese community had recently taken action independent of the council to protect Japanese residents against the allurements of public gambling. Fessenden argued that if the council’s policy was neither effective nor reassuring to the Japanese community, there was obviously a need for the council to reconsider it. Last but not least, Fessenden empha-

¹²² SMA U1-3-3331, Translation from *Shanghai Nippo*, 30 September and 2 October 1930.

¹²³ H. G. W. Woodhead, ed., *The China Year Book 1931* (Nendeln, Liechtenstein: Kraus Reprint; Division of Kraus-Thomson Organization, 1969), p. 694.

sized that the existence of the Settlement depended on its superiority to Chinese administration; if administration of the Settlement deteriorated, foreign control would be threatened. He indicated that nothing would be gained by attempting to excuse defects by pointing to the same or even worse defects in Chinese territory or the French concession; in short, to prolong foreign administration of the Settlement, "we have to rule better than the others."¹²⁴

Though Fessenden's memorandum was not without exaggeration—Acting Police Commissioner Martin refuted his examples of difficulties facing the police¹²⁵—his object was to remind the councilors that the Settlement was a target of public criticism both in China and at home. This was not the time to take a *laissez-faire* attitude toward public gambling.¹²⁶ After reading the memorandum, no members of the council made an objection. The Japanese councilors had always been in favor of suppression. Among the six British and American councilors, the chairman, E. B. Macnaghten, though sympathetic to the race tracks, declined to express his opinion while Hughes, the only councilor who might object, was away. On 28 October, Fessenden announced in *Xinwen Bao* that he had obtained the council's support and would start an all-round campaign against gambling soon.¹²⁷

If Fessenden's memorandum reflected the council's political considerations, Hughes's later refutation showed an alternative view of greyhound racing. After learning of Fessenden's action, Hughes hastily sent a seven-page letter from Manila to his fellow councilors on 30 October to refute Fessenden's arguments. He first denied that gambling was necessarily associated with crime. He pointed out that there was nothing inherently immoral in gambling, nor could it be suppressed, not only because it had existed from time immemorial but also because it was embedded in daily life. Games of chance, insurance policies and speculation on the stock market all contained an element of gambling. He then argued that even if gambling was an incentive to crime, the possession of property was an immeasurably greater temptation to criminals. The crime wave in the Settlement was due to the fact that a large proportion of the wealth of China was concentrated in Shanghai, which was also surrounded abject poverty; indeed, that crime had not assumed much greater proportions was a testimony to the efficiency of the police.

¹²⁴ SMA U1-3-3331, Circular for Foreign Members by Fessenden, 1 October 1930.

¹²⁵ SMA U1-3-3331, Martin to Fessenden, 14 October 1930.

¹²⁶ SMA U1-3-3331, Fessenden to Martin, 16 October 1930.

¹²⁷ SMA U1-3-3331, Translation from *Sin Wen Pao* [*Xinwen Bao*], 28 October 1930.

Hughes granted that social evils associated with gambling should be controlled, but he argued that an absolute ban would deprive a large proportion of the population of a legitimate form of pleasure and liberty. Sports like dog racing were lifeless without betting; in any case, most gamblers were white-collar workers enjoying their leisure hours. Hughes gave an example of an employee of his company whom he bumped into at the Stadium recently. He told Hughes that he and his wife visited the track almost every fine night as they lived nearby; he took a keen interest in the records of the dogs and generally bet 4 *yuan* on his choice—2 *yuan* to “win” and 2 *yuan* for a “place”; he thought in the long run he was probably a small loser but he got ample return in the form of entertainment.

Hughes pointed out that Shanghai was a densely populated city with few facilities for public recreation: few parks or playgrounds were free to the general public; there were no public art galleries or museums, or even a proper town hall; the only facility worth mentioning was a municipal orchestra. The racetracks provided facilities which the public desperately needed. He stated that Luna Park and the Stadium were better organized and regulated than any other in the world; each provided 10,000 to 12,000 people recreation every week during most of the year. In the absence of other facilities on an adequate scale, it would be far better to keep them open and under close supervision than drive them under cover and thus convert them into haunts of vice under criminal control. Moreover, Hughes argued that unless the SMC could arrange to close the Canidrome in the French concession at the same time, to force the closure of the racetracks in the Settlement would be tantamount to discrimination and serve no useful purpose. Hughes then directly refuted the argument of Fessenden that “we have to rule better than others.” He stated outright that the life of the Settlement did not depend on its better administration but on the time China took to be in a position where she could impose her views on the foreign Powers; when that position was attained, any actual superiority of the Settlement administration would not carry the least weight.¹²⁸

Why did Hughes defend the tracks? He seems to have had no special connection with them. Hughes’s company, the China United Assurance Society, owned a large part of the land leased by the Stadium.¹²⁹ But, according to Hughes, owing to the original option to purchase, the company’s interests would be better served if the Stadium closed. While we cannot entirely rule out the possibility of a conflict of interests, Hughes’s attitude toward gam-

¹²⁸ SMA U1-3-3332, Hughes to E. B. Macnaghten, 30 October 1930.

¹²⁹ Lunt, *The China Who's Who 1927 (foreign)*, p. 122.

bling seems simply to have been opposed to Fessenden's. He believed so long as it was monitored through institutional devices, betting should be treated as public recreation instead of a vice, and greyhound racing was particularly acceptable due to the pari-mutuel system.¹³⁰

Nonetheless, Fessenden had already started making arrangements for total prohibition. On 3 November 1930, Consul-General Brenan announced publicly that the British authorities opposed greyhound racing in Shanghai and would give the council full support to stop it entirely.¹³¹ On 10 November, Fessenden appealed to the foreign community through leading newspapers. He argued that if the foreign community wished to continue controlling the Settlement with the support of the Powers, they would have to show that it was not another Monte Carlo.¹³² Two days later, the council agreed that the racetracks should be closed as early as possible. As for the staff who would suffer from hardship due to the closure, the council was willing to make reasonable compensation.¹³³ The last blow came on 7 January 1931 when the council finally passed a resolution to terminate greyhound racing in the Settlement after March 31.¹³⁴

Realizing the uselessness of further protests, the Stadium resolved to wind up its affairs and go into liquidation in May 1931.¹³⁵ Luna Park decided to restrict admission to meetings to members only and insisted on holding meetings after 31 March as a club.¹³⁶ But on the evening of 4 April, the municipal police closed all roads around Luna Park and formed human barriers at all entrances to the tracks. Nobody was allowed entrance after 7 pm. With only forty participants including trainers, Luna Park insisted on holding one last race. After that, the electric lights were shut down and the dogs were taken back to the kennels.¹³⁷ Thus ended the controversial three-year history of greyhound racing in the Settlement.

¹³⁰ SMA U1-3-3332, Hughes to Macnaghten, 30 October 1930.

¹³¹ SMA U1-3-3332, Extract from *Shanghai Evening Post & Mercury* dated 3 November 1930.

¹³² SMA U1-3-3332, Cutting from *The Shanghai Times*, 11 November 1930.

¹³³ SMA U1-3-3332, Extract from Council Minutes dated 12 November 1930.

¹³⁴ SMA U1-3-3339, Extract from Council Minutes dated 7 January 1931.

¹³⁵ "Shanghai Inter'nl Greyhounds," *NCH*, 19 May 1931, p. 229.

¹³⁶ "Greyhound Racing Association," *NCH*, 10 March 1931, p. 326; "Luna Park's Intentions," *NCH*, 31 March 1931, p. 445.

¹³⁷ "Dog Racing Prevented," *NCH*, 7 April 1931, p. 12.

Conclusion

The SMC closed down the tracks at great cost. Luna Park filed appeals to the Supreme Court for damages against Chairman Macnaghten and Police Commissioner Martin.¹³⁸ The lawsuit became tied up in many legal issues and did not end until 1933.¹³⁹ There was no evidence of a decrease in crime after the tracks closed down. The only certainty was that the Canidrome was the chief beneficiary.¹⁴⁰ It finally became a financial success, blossoming in the following decade in such radiant splendor that it became a synonym for greyhound racing in Shanghai. Luna Park was changed into an amusement park, while the Stadium was used as a football ground.¹⁴¹ Both soon disappeared due to financial difficulties and were then forgotten by history.

From the founding of the tracks, the SMC spent four years deciding how to deal with the controversies they had engendered. Files piled up, recording the opinions of all circles of society year after year. The SMC's hesitation resulted from differences in the views held on the nature of greyhound racing and the morality of gambling. To most of the foreigners, especially the English, greyhound racing was associated with the traditional sport of coursing. In addition, pari-mutuel was a clever institutional device that decreased the risks of betting. Racetrack sympathizers described greyhound racing in such terms as "sport and pastime," "a legitimate form of pleasure," "a pleasant and innocent form of entertainment," and a "clean, healthy and legitimate recreation." They also argued that dog racing promoted social intercourse between Chinese and foreigners.¹⁴² The idea of sport and risk-management, however, was not considered by the Chinese elites in Shanghai. Taking a strong moral stand, they considered dog racing to be pure gambling and an incentive to crime. To pursue a cleaner sort of modernity, they linked morality, social order, and nationalism to campaign against dog racing.

¹³⁸ "Greyhound Action Fails," *NCH*, 14 July 1931, pp. 57-58; "Defence in Damages Suit Expected," *NCH*, 5 January 1932, p. 11.

¹³⁹ "Pari-Mutuel Millions in Dog Racing," *NCH*, 15 February 1933, pp. 265-267; "Luna Park's Action," *NCH*, 15 March 1933, pp. 424-427.

¹⁴⁰ "Yiyuan paogouchang gupiao fanzhang" 逸園跑狗場股票反漲, *Shenbao*, 15 January 1931, p. 15.

¹⁴¹ "Mingyuan paogouchang jiuzhi gaijian xin yulechang" 明園跑狗場舊址改建新娛樂場, *Shenbao*, 27 May 1931, p. 11. "Tixiehui yu xilianhui heban shenyuan chongpi zuqiuchang" 體協會與西聯會合辦申園重闢足球場, *Shenbao*, 9 December 1933, p. 12.

¹⁴² SMA U1-3-3332, "Observer" to E. Haward, undated, received 11 November 1930; SMA U1-3-3332, Hughes to Macnaghten, 30 October 1930; SMA U1-3-3333, Evans to Fessenden, 19 January 1931; "The Need for Improvement," *NCH*, 3 August 1932, p. 185.

As for the public, especially the Chinese, greyhound racing was a symbol of modernity and public recreation from its inception. While the politicized discourse surrounding greyhound racing became heated, attendance at the tracks actually increased. In the following decade, more and more novels and magazines used racetracks as a reference to modernity. As Leo Ou-fan Lee has pointed out, greyhound racing thus became a material emblem of a both real and imagined modernity, along with horse racing, *hai alai*, skyscrapers, coffeehouses, department stores, hotels, ballrooms, cinemas, gramophones and records, sofas, high-heels and fountain pens.¹⁴³ A lively nightlife began with amusement centers, dance halls and cinemas were established in the 1910s. The literally electric excitement the racetracks provided, however, was on a much larger scale. The introduction of greyhound racing pushed Shanghai's nightlife to another stage. Powerful arc lamps, dazzling tracks, excited and restless patrons, the ebb and flow of large amounts of cash, amazing speed—only a metropolis could provide such excitement. Mao Dun's Shanghai of LIGHT, HEAT, POWER! was indeed embodied by race-tracks. Greyhound racing was the most splendid chapter of the nightlife of Shanghai.

¹⁴³ Lee, *Shanghai Modern*, p. 75.