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The Protestant Quest For Modernity in Republican China

by

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Abstract

Elite Protestants were a very small group in Republican China, but they were surprisingly influential among the ranks of Chinese modernizers, with Sun Yatsen as the preeminent example. They represented one of the most significant fruits of Sino-Western cultural exchange in the early twentieth century and left a lasting mark on China, yet as a group they have been largely overlooked in histories of the period. This dissertation, therefore, restores these individuals to history at the same time that it probes a deeper affinity between Protestantism and modernity that helps to explain the rise of this group and their particular vision of a modern China.

The first three chapters of this work provide the theoretical framework and necessary background for the study. To start, modernity is carefully defined and its affinity with Protestantism is analyzed in such areas as individualism, modern education, nationalism, democracy, civil society, women's rights, and the nuclear family. Following this, the role of Protestant mission institutions in transmitting modern ideas and practices into China is examined, with a particular focus on mission schools. Lastly, data on a group of 479 elite Chinese Protestants is carefully analyzed to generate a profile of them as a nationwide group, and they are also

compared with Protestant modernizers in other parts of the world at the time.

The last three chapters of this project consist of three separate case studies of elite Chinese Protestants in the Republican era that demonstrate concretely the larger themes of this work. The first of these studies is on a woman named Wang Liming, who led the Women's Christian Temperance Union for many years in China and was a leading advocate of women's rights. The second is on a prominent church minister and activist educator named Liu Tingfang, who was instrumental in the early history of Yanjing University and edited the leading Protestant journal of the day. And the final chapter is on Zhang Boling, founder of the renowned Nankai Middle School and Nankai University, as well as a prominent lay leader in the Young Men's Christian Association. In closing, the conclusion explores the question of Protestants and modernity in contemporary China.

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Introduction

Revolution is a fire and religion is fuel. People only see my revolution, but fail to notice my faith. Actually, without fuel there would be no fire.[1]

Sun Yatsen

Sun Yatsen's 孫中山 determination to overthrow the Qing dynasty and establish a republican government grew out of his desire to make a new and modern China, and as the quote above indicates, this desire was closely intertwined with his Protestant faith. Born in Guangdong Province in 1866, Sun had traveled as a youth to Hawaii, where he lived with his older brother's family and studied at a local Anglican high school, where he first came into contact with Christianity. After graduation and a move to Hong Kong, these ties were further deepened, as he was baptized there in 1884 by the American Congregational missionary Charles Hager and subsequently completed a five-year course of instruction at a British missionary medical school. Sun's vision of building a new China found crucial early support among Protestants both in China and overseas.[2] Indeed, though Protestants made up only a tiny sliver of China's vast

[1] Xi Xiande 習賢德, *Sun Zhongshan xiansheng yu Jidujiao* 孫中山先生與基督教 [Sun Zhongshan and Christianity] (Taibei 台北: Jinxuan chubanshe 浸宣出版社, 1991), 7.

[2] See Carl T. Smith, *Chinese Christians: Elites, Middlemen, and the Church in Hong Kong* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985). Most relevant is Chapter Five, "Sun Yat-sen's Baptism and Some Christian Connections." See also Yansheng Ma Lum and Raymond Mun Kong Lum, *Sun Yat-Sen in Hawaii: Activities and Supporters* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1999), 6-9.

population at the end of the nineteenth century, they constituted a majority of the early leadership in Sun's revolutionary Revive China Society (*Xingzhonghui* 興中會) and roughly thirty percent of the insurgents who participated in the failed Waichow uprising of 1900.[3] Once his efforts to topple the Qing dynasty finally succeeded in 1911, he spent his remaining years striving to bring into being the new China that he had envisioned.

Elite Protestant Modernizers in Republican China

Sun Yatsen stands as a particularly striking example of a significant and largely overlooked phenomenon, namely the surprising prominence of Protestants among the ranks of elite Chinese modernizers during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This group, which was determined to make Chinese society anew through a full engagement with modernity, grew in size considerably after 1900 and had a major impact on China's modernization during the Republican period. One indication of their influence can be found in Boorman's authoritative *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China*. Out of the 595 leading Chinese whose life stories are recorded in the four volumes of this work, more than one in ten were baptized Protestants and active proponents of a modern China, even though fewer than one in five hundred Chinese were Protestants during

[3] Harold Schiffrin, *Sun Yat-Sen and the Origins of the Chinese Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), 16-19, 66, 89-90, 172-74, 228-29.

this period. The following sample of Protestants from Boorman's dictionary gives some sense of the diversity of this group:

Feng Yuxiang 馮玉祥: Feng was one of the major warlords of the Republican period, who became known as the "Christian General" after his conversion to Christianity at a John Mott evangelistic crusade in 1914. He wielded great authority in Northwest China between 1924 and 1931. Feng was an ardent Christian until the mid-1920s, encouraging his troops to convert and seeing religion as a way to help strengthen the nation. Subsequently his religious fervor cooled, and he incorporated elements of Communism and the Three People's Principles of Sun Yatsen into his ideology.[4]

Shi Meiyu 石美玉 (Mary Stone): Shi was one of China's first female doctors, having trained at Methodist mission schools and at the University of Michigan. She helped establish a successful medical clinic for women in 1897 called Danforth Hospital and managed the facility until 1920. That year she and an American missionary named Jenny Hughes founded the Bethel Mission in Shanghai. The Bethel Mission consisted of a hospital and nursing school run by Shi, the latter being the largest in China at the time,

[4] "Feng Yu-Hsiang," in *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China*, ed. Howard L. Boorman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968), 37-43. In addition, see Miner Searle Bates, "Some Chinese Christians and Their Views," RG 10, Box 122, Folder 1084, Miner Searle Bates Papers, Yale Divinity School Library Special Collections, New Haven, 10-18.

and a fundamentalist Bible school run by Hughes that sent small bands of evangelists, including the revivalist John Sung, throughout China.[5]

Yan Yangchu 宴陽初 (James Yen): Yan was a dynamic advocate of mass literacy and rural reform in China. Trained at mission schools and at Yale and Princeton, he worked with Chinese laborers in France under YMCA auspices during World War I, which is where he developed the idea of teaching literacy to China's rural masses. Upon returning to China in 1922, he developed the Mass Education Movement, which taught millions to read. Later in the 1920s, he shifted his focus to rural reform, helping peasants in the Hebei county of Dingxian to attain literacy, learn modern agricultural and health methods, and develop village self-government.[6]

Song Ziwen 宋子文 (T. V. Soong): Song was part of the famous Song clan, a Protestant family that gained great influence in Republican China (his sisters were married to Sun Yatsen, Chiang Kaishek, and the financier H. H. Kung respectively). Song studied at the missionary school St. John's University in Shanghai and at Harvard. In 1923 Sun Yatsen tapped him to be finance minister for his regime in Canton. Song continued in this capacity under the Nationalist government of Chiang Kaishek in Nanjing

[5] "Shih Mei-Yu," in *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China*, ed. Harold Boorman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968), 128-30. See also Connie Shemo, "Shi Meiyu: An "Army of Women" In Medicine," in *Salt and Light: Lives of Faith That Shaped Modern China*, ed. Carol Lee Hamrin and Stacey Bieler (Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2008), 50-63.

[6] "Yen Yang-Ch'u," in *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China*, ed. Harold Boorman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968), 52-54. See also Stacey Bieler, "Yan Yangchu: Reformer with a Heart for the Village," in *Salt and Light: Lives of Faith That Shaped Modern China*, ed. Carol Lee Hamrin and Stacey Bieler (Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2008), 171-90.

and was also head of the Central Bank, helping China establish a modern financial system. He served as China's foreign minister from 1942 to 1945. Later he was suspected of corruption, though this was never decisively proven.[7]

Wu Yifang 吳貽芳: Wu was China's first female college president, serving as the head of Ginling College from 1928 to 1952. Ginling was a Protestant institution and one of China's earliest women's colleges. Wu herself was a graduate of the school and also studied at the University of Michigan. Besides overseeing the expansion of Ginling, Wu was also involved in a wide variety of other charitable and political activities. She was chairperson of the National Christian Council in 1935, was high up in the People's Political Council during the war years in Chongqing and was the only woman in China's delegation to the United Nations Conference in 1945.[8]

Lin Yutang 林語堂: Lin was one of China's most famous writers during the Republican period, versatile in both Chinese and English. The son of a Presbyterian minister, he studied at St. John's University and originally considered entering Christian ministry. Instead, he was drawn to the study of China's rich cultural tradition, something he had not done

[7] "Sung Tze-Wen," in *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China*, ed. Harold Boorman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968), 149-53.
[8] "Wu Yi-Fang," in *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China*, ed. Harold Boorman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968), 460-62. See also Mary Jo Waelchli, "Wu Yifang: Abundant Life in Training Women for Service," in *Salt and Light: Lives of Faith That Shaped Modern China*, ed. Carol Lee Hamrin and Stacey Bieler (Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2008), 152-70.

while growing up, and ended up abandoning Christianity. He became a leading interpreter of Chinese culture to the West and wrote many best-selling books. He was also editor of the influential journal *Tianxia* 天下. Lin turned back to Christianity in later life.[9]

The central premise of this thesis is that Protestantism was a major factor behind the commitment of these individuals to making a new and modern China, and shaped their vision of modernity in important ways, whether their faith was devout or nominal. From an institutional standpoint, the various organizations established by Western missionaries, such as schools and reform societies, were vital conduits for transmitting the concepts and practices of modernity to those Chinese who were associated with them and often became a platform for them to advance modernity in the broader society as well. From an ideological standpoint, the substantial affinity of Protestantism with modernity facilitated their embrace of such modern ideas as individualism, mass literacy, science, nationalism, democracy, women's rights, and an expansion of civil society. In other words, participation in Protestant institutions and exposure to Protestant ideas made it easier for these elite Chinese Protestants to identify with modernity than it was for many of their compatriots. And this accounts for their relative prominence among the ranks of Chinese modernizers in the Republican era.

[9] "Lin Yu-T'ang," in *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China*, ed. Harold Boorman (New York: University of Columbia Press, 1968). In addition, see Lin Yutang, *From Pagan to Christian* (Cleveland: World Publishing Company, 1959).

Methodological Issues

This Chinese Protestant elite was a very diverse group, which makes it especially important to clarify the parameters of this term as I use it in this study. "Chinese" here refers to those who were ethnically and/or culturally Chinese, and who spent the majority of their lives in China. Thus, this group could and did have some individuals who were not ethnically Chinese, but who belonged to peoples that strongly identified with Chinese culture, such as the Manchus. Likewise, this circle included a number of overseas Chinese, who shared Chinese ethnicity, but experienced a more culturally hybrid upbringing. In addition, though many people in this category spent a considerable portion of their lives overseas—either due to schooling, work, being born outside of China, or fleeing China after 1949—they are still included as long as they spent the majority of their lives in the country.

The "Protestant" part of this term I define quite simply as those who at some point in their life made a public profession of Christian faith and were baptized as members of a Protestant church. Since my concern in this study is to explore the connections between Protestantism and modernity, I focus attention primarily on how Protestant ideas and organizations were linked with modernity in the thinking and behavior of these converts, rather than attempting to exhaustively analyze their

particular theological beliefs or reflect on the nature of their religious commitment. This thesis argues that even for those Chinese Protestants whose Christian faith was nominal, the concepts and values implicit in Protestantism as a worldview still had a profound shaping influence on their lives.

Finally, I define the "elite" aspect of this term as a group exercising social dominance within a given geographical area (e.g. local, provincial, national) through control of valuable resources (e.g. material, political, intellectual, symbolic).[10] This category in Republican China included a diverse range of individuals, whether the source of their social dominance was education, wealth, political position, military power, or some other attribute. The Chinese Protestant elite that I examine in this thesis was a nationwide phenomenon, but naturally the majority of its members exercised influence primarily at the county or provincial level. Its appearance was closely linked with broader changes in the role and composition of social elites in China. Key to its development was the arrival of Protestant missionaries and their schools, which gained access to China as a result of the imperial power of the West with the treaty ports and extraterritoriality it imposed. Also vital was the abolishing of the examination system in 1905 and toppling of the Qing dynasty in 1911,

[10] In this definition, I largely follow Joseph Esherick and Mary Rankin in their discussion of Chinese elites, though they are studying the influence of sub-county elites. See Joseph W. Esherick and Mary Backus Rankin, eds., *Chinese Local Elites and Patterns of Dominance* (Berkeley: University of California Press,1990), 10-12.

which significantly expanded the number of paths to elite status during these decades.[11]

In order to demonstrate how Protestantism and modernity were linked for members of this group, I first lay out a theoretical framework by analyzing the points of affinity between Protestantism and modernity, considering the role of mission institutions in transmitting modernity, and detailing the profile of this group as a distinct nationwide phenomenon. The main evidence for my argument, however, consists of three case studies of prominent Protestants from this period: Wang Liming, an influential crusader for women's rights and reform of the family; Liu Tingfang, a leading Christian educator and Protestant spokesman; and Zhang Boling, a pioneer of private modern education in China. This approach has the advantage of making it easier to combine both social and intellectual history by delving into the thinking and social activity of these individuals. It also facilitates mapping some of the connections between religious ideas and personal behavior, while giving abstract ideas about the relationship between Protestantism and modernity much more tangible form.

I have chosen these three individuals—Wang Liming, Liu Tingfang, and Zhang Boling—with a number of considerations in mind. Obviously it was vital to find figures prominent and prolific enough to leave behind a

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[11] Lloyd E. Eastman, *Family, Fields, and Ancestors: Constancy and Change in China's Social and Economic History, 1550-1949* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 192-216.

significant amount of written material that could be used to analyze their thinking and social activity. Those in fields such as business or medicine typically did not do a great deal of public speaking or produce a body of published writing, and therefore were not as suitable for this study. Equally important for this project was to find Protestants who spoke openly about their faith in and views of Christianity, since this greatly facilitated efforts to demonstrate how Protestantism and modernity intersected in their lives. Such openness was by no means a given, since many converts said little on the subject, perhaps out of a desire to minimize the social stigma often attached to being a Christian, or because they considered it a private matter, or due to their not being actively religious. Finally, these three figures were chosen to reflect some of the rich diversity of this group and to increase awareness of important Chinese about whom little has been written in the English language.

Studies on Elite Chinese Protestants and Modernity

The role of Chinese Protestants in China's modernization has not been a major focus for scholars. To date there are only four main books that deal directly with this topic, one written over each of the past four decades. The first of these, *Between Tradition and Modernity* (1974) by Paul Cohen, is the only one to examine an individual Protestant

modernizer.[12] The other three—*Chinese Christians: Elites, Middlemen, and the Church in Hong Kong* (1985) by Carl Smith; *Chinese Women and Christianity 1860-1927* (1992) by Pui-lan Kwok; and *Fuzhou Protestants and the Making of a Modern China* (2002) by Ryan Dunch—are concerned with groups of Chinese Protestants.[13] Given the very different issues raised by these two types of research, in the following discussion, I will deal with Cohen's book individually and then with the other three books as a related group.

Cohen's *Between Tradition and Modernity* examines the life and thought of the nineteenth century Chinese Protestant reformer Wang Tao 王濤. Wang worked with James Legge as a translator for the London Missionary Society and was baptized, then later embarked on a career as a newspaper editor and writer who became one of the earliest public advocates of modernization in China. What is striking about Wang is just how closely his support for various aspects of modernity resembles that of the twentieth century Chinese Protestants I examine in this study. For instance, his favoring modern education, schools for women, advancement of science, industrialization, democratic forms of government, and a cosmopolitan nationalism all fit the basic pattern for Chinese Protestants

[12] See Paul A. Cohen, *Between Tradition and Modernity: Wang T'ao and Reform in Late Ch'ing China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974).
[13] Smith, *Chinese Christians: Elites, Middlemen, and the Church in Hong Kong*; Pui-lan Kwok, *Chinese Women and Christianity 1860-1927* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992); Ryan Dunch, *Fuzhou Protestants and the Making of a Modern China 1857-1927* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001).

that is evident in the Republican period. The key question is to what extent Protestant faith helped to generate this outlook.

In Cohen's estimation, there is no significant connection. His conclusion is based on the fact that Wang Tao hid his Christian identity from public sight and did not seem to share the missionary view that the goal of reform was to produce a Christianized China. Cohen also briefly examines seven other Christian reformers of the nineteenth century (five Protestants and two Catholics) in the final chapter of his book and finds that these individuals likewise shared a similar commitment to modernity, but said little or nothing publicly about Christianity. Thus he argues it was not Christianity, but the treaty port environment where these reformers lived that was the decisive factor in shaping their commitment to modernity.[14] Yet even Cohen recognizes that Wang's silence on the issue of religion was at least partly due to his desire to maintain credibility with traditional Chinese power brokers, whom he hoped to influence.

In this study I challenge Cohen's argument that a deep personal religious faith and overt reference to Christianity and Christian moral teachings were necessary prerequisites for establishing that Protestantism influenced the commitment of these Chinese to modernity. I argue instead that even for those Chinese Protestants whose religious

[14] See also Paul A. Cohen, "Littoral and Hinterland in Nineteenth Century China: The "Christian" Reformers," in *The Missionary Enterprise in China and America*, ed. John K. Fairbank (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974). Cohen explores the Christian aspect of these figures in greater depth in this article than he does in the book on Wang Tao.

faith was nominal, their identification with Protestantism to the point of being baptized effectively oriented them towards a worldview having significant points of affinity with modernity and thus facilitated their embrace of the modern world more quickly than was the case with many of their contemporaries. Moreover, I suggest that the values associated with this worldview also shaped the vision of modernity that they affirmed as ideal, which included support for democracy and civil society. This is not to deny in any way the importance of the treaty ports or of travel overseas in forging the commitment of these individuals to modernization, but rather to say that religion was also a crucial factor and perhaps even the most crucial.

The other three books on this subject—those by Smith, Kwok, and Dunch—provide valuable support in demonstrating the links between Chinese Protestants and modernity in late Qing and Republican China. Carl Smith's *Chinese Christians* focuses on the development of a Protestant elite in Hong Kong during the years 1841 to 1872. Smith has done a great deal of careful research into the background of many of the Chinese Christians who became part of this elite class. His work shows convincingly how missionary schooling shaped the thinking of Chinese converts, making it possible for them to enter the world of Western modernity and to eventually become leaders in the new occupations that it opened up. Many of these elite Protestants became interpreters for the Hong Kong

Government, compradors helping build industrial enterprises, skilled medical doctors, influential journalists, members of Hong Kong's legislature, advisers to reformist officials in China, and even revolutionaries. They were a key constituency in mediating Western modernity into the Chinese context, both in Hong Kong and beyond.

Pui-lan Kwok's study *Chinese Women and Christianity 1860-1927* focuses exclusively on Protestant women, though not on elites per se. She demonstrates how church membership gave women a rare opportunity to develop leadership skills by organizing activities for women, while also serving as a powerful catalyst in their attainment of literacy. She also describes how the Protestant emphasis on social service empowered Chinese Protestant women to enter the public domain in the name of social reform. In addition, Kwok examines the writings of elite Protestant women during the first few decades of the twentieth century as they led the way, along with other socially influential Chinese women, in attempting to redefine the roles of women in light of modernity.

Ryan Dunch's *Fuzhou Protestants and the Making of a Modern China 1857-1927* traces the development of the Chinese Protestant community in the city of Fuzhou from the late Qing era to the nominal unification of China by the Nationalists in 1927. He shows how the mission schools became a highly effective ladder of social mobility for Chinese Protestants, opening doors for them into a wide variety of new and modern

occupations that were directly connected with the impact of the West, such as educators in modern schools, physicians practicing Western medicine, compradors for Western firms, and employees for the Maritime Customs. He also demonstrates how Chinese Protestants were influential and active participants in many of the aspects of modernity beginning to take root in Fuzhou at the time, including new types of volunteer societies (e.g. the Anti-Opium Association and the YMCA) in an expanded civil society, democratic institutions (short-lived though they were), and national rituals such as the use of flags and singing of patriotic songs.

What is striking in surveying the historiography above is that three major issues related to elite Chinese Protestants and modernity have yet to be addressed. The first of these is the need to explore this group as a nationwide phenomenon during the Republican period. Chronologically, Cohen and Smith focus exclusively on higher status Protestants in the nineteenth century, when numbers were small and influence limited largely to the treaty ports, while Kwok and Dunch deal more with the late Qing period than with the Republican era. Geographically, Kwok is the only one to consider socially privileged Protestants on a national level, but she does not include men, who made up the vast majority of this group. Smith and Dunch, on the other hand, do local studies, while Cohen researches a single individual. My study addresses this issue by analyzing a group of hundreds of socially influential Chinese Protestants active in

the Republican period, including both men and women. In addition, my three case studies focus on individuals who came from different parts of China and worked in different areas of the country.

The second issue still in need of scholarly attention is an analysis of exactly how Protestantism and modernity intersected in the thinking of these individuals. Cohen's detailed study on the thinking of Wang Tao would have been the most likely of these four books to provide such an analysis. However, as mentioned above, Tao said little about Christianity in his writings and Cohen assumed that religion had little impact on his thinking. The studies by Smith, Kwok, and Dunch, useful as they are, do not help us a great deal in this area. They quote from a large number of Protestants, but they do not have the space to delve deeply into the thinking of any one individual, and regardless are not concerned primarily with the question of how Protestantism and modernity were linked in their minds. Thus, I have chosen only three Chinese Protestants for this study, each of whom spoke extensively regarding different aspects of modernity and Christianity, which makes it possible to analyze how these two dimensions were related in their thinking and behavior.

The final area that previous studies have not attempted to deal with is the matter of providing a theoretical framework to help explain the affinity between Protestantism and modernity that they all show in practice existed. These authors are all conscious to some degree of this

affinity and they convincingly demonstrate how Chinese Protestants were influential advocates of modernity. However, none of them tries to explain the roots of this phenomenon. At most, they note the impact of mission institutions on shaping the thinking of this group, but do not consider any deeper explanation. This leaves the reader with a sense of uncertainty as to what exactly accounts for the commitment of these Protestants to modernity. My thesis, therefore, attempts to define modernity more carefully and to analyze its points of affinity with Protestantism. Naturally, I do not claim to have a "definitive" model, but I do hope that this theoretical framework provides some insight into the Protestant-modernity nexus.

Overview of Chapters

My dissertation is composed of six main chapters, the first three of them providing theoretical support and background and the last three consisting of case studies that explore the thinking and social activity of three prominent Chinese Protestants. The first chapter addresses the question of modernity and how to understand its ties with Protestantism. It traces some of the major ideas implicit in the modern mindset and how they developed in the West over centuries, while also exploring what leading thinkers have said about modernity and its global expansion. It then considers the question of religion and modernity, which many

scholars have viewed as inherently opposed, arguing that this is by no means necessarily the case. Part of this section also considers Max Weber and his famous thesis concerning the link between Protestantism and the rise of modern capitalism. I end this chapter by reflecting on the points of affinity between Protestantism and modernity. I do not attempt to exhaustively cover all of the various points of overlap, but focus on those areas that are most relevant to my dissertation topic, such as individualism, science, modern education, the modern public sphere, expanded civil society, nationalism, internationalism, democracy, and women's rights.

The second chapter examines the role played by missionaries and mission institutions in transmitting modern ideas and practices into China. The Protestant missionary enterprise was a vital part of the overall Western engagement with China from the early 1800s to the middle of the twentieth century. It mobilized thousands of missionaries, won hundreds of thousands of converts, and built powerful institutions. In order to show the scale of its influence, I paint a broad overview of Protestant mission development in China from 1807 until 1950, providing a concise account that is absent in the wider literature. Beyond merely looking at the statistical dimensions of Protestant missions, I consider how their institutions acted as conduits for modern notions and practices to enter Chinese society. Most important in that regard were the Christian colleges,

which equipped thousands of Chinese with modern knowledge that they used to help transform Chinese society. Other mission organizations played vital roles as well, such as the YMCA and Christian hospitals. I close this chapter by examining some of the academic discourse on the issue of missions and imperialism and note the complex impact of Protestant missions, which empowered Chinese converts at the same time that they reinforced aspects of Western hegemony.

Chapter Three, which is the final background chapter, endeavors to position elite Chinese Protestants as a group from a number of different angles. I start by briefly tracing the growth of the Protestant community in China from its beginning until 1950, after which I describe the four major streams of Chinese Protestantism during this period—mission denominational, Social Gospel, mission fundamentalist, and Chinese indigenous. The heart of this chapter consists of a collective portrait of higher status Chinese Protestants that emerges from careful analysis of a lengthy list of these individuals compiled by the American missionary Miner Searle Bates. The Bates' list is the best source of data available for understanding what the influential circles of Chinese Protestantism looked like, and this is the first time it has been systematically analyzed to that end. Following this, I consider Chinese Protestants within the broader context of Republican society in order to explain why they were so prominent as modernizers. And finally, I view them from a global

perspective, comparing them with the rise of mission-trained Protestant modernizers in other parts of the world during the twentieth century and reflecting on how collectively they contributed to the formation of a global modernity.

The fourth chapter of my dissertation, which is also the first of three individual case studies, focuses on a woman named Wang Liming 王立明. As longtime leader of the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), Wang was a major figure in efforts to raise the position of women in Chinese society during the Republican period. This chapter begins with a short biography of Wang that also demonstrates some of the ways that she experienced modernity on a practical level. In Wang's case, this includes such things as the impact of missionary education on her thinking and life direction, her modern romance, her success as a public speaker, and her support for democratic political institutions. The latter half of the chapter examines Wang's work with the WCTU, an organization she led for more than thirty years, and how these efforts were closely tied to modernity. Some of the aspects of her social activism that I discuss include her campaigns to ensure that women's rights (including suffrage rights) were included in the constitution; her promotion of monogamy and the nuclear family; her role in establishing clinics to encourage "morally responsible" birth control; and her vigorous support for the cause of Chinese nationalism.

Chapter Five centers on Liu Tingfang 劉廷芳, a Protestant minister who was a leading Christian educator and literary figure during the Republican period. The biographical section of this chapter highlights some of the modern themes evident in Liu's life, such as his strong sense of nationalism, his efforts to promote modern education both inside and outside mission school circles, and his enduring support for the programs and goals of the YMCA. The remainder of the chapter explores three major aspects of Liu's life and work. The first of these was his role as the editor of *Truth and Life*, which was one of the most important Protestant journals of the period. Liu used this platform to disseminate modern ideas and contribute to the development of a modern public sphere in China. This chapter also describes Liu's deep patriotic sentiments, which were expressed in his founding of a secret society to strengthen China, his presiding at Sun Yatsen's funeral in Beijing, and his fight against the Unequal Treaties imposed on China by the West. The last main area it examines are Liu's views on gender and family, which demonstrate his belief that Christianity was a powerful force for improving women's position in society and also for elevating the value of the individual within the Chinese family structure.

The sixth and final chapter is about Zhang Boling 張伯苓, an immensely influential educator and the founder of Nankai University, who converted to Christianity in his early thirties. The summary of Zhang's life

that opens this chapter describes such modern elements as his fierce nationalism, his resolute commitment to modern education, his melding of Christianity and concepts of citizenship, and his zeal in promoting athletics and physical fitness in China. The remainder of the chapter consists of three separate sections. The first of these considers Zhang's conversion to Christianity, which he perceived to be compatible with modernity and with his educational efforts. The second focuses on Zhang's work with the YMCA and how his vigorous supported for decades, both in his home city of Tianjin and nationally, helped to make the organization a major force in the expansion of Chinese civil society during this period. The chapter ends by examining how Zhang blended Protestant faith and the YMCA with his philosophy of education and the practical methods he used in developing his famous Nankai school system.

Elite Chinese Protestants of the Republican era were a fascinating and important group. They were part of a new breed of Chinese men and women who were devoted to making China strong by making China modern. Their influence as catalysts of change was far-reaching and profound, and their efforts achieved much in making Chinese society anew according to the dictates of global modernity. Yet sadly this group has long occupied a historical no-man's land. In China, scholars have done little research on its members from a religious angle, which probably reflects the fact that official Communist ideology regards Christianity as a tool of

Western imperialism and a form of false consciousness. Likewise in the West, academic circles have paid little attention to this group and how Christianity shaped their thinking and social activity, which fits with a general pattern of assuming that religion is explained by other factors, rather than being an important causative agent in its own right. This dissertation, therefore, aims to restore this group of individuals to history by taking them on their own terms, both as Chinese and as Protestants, and showing how religion informed their vision of a modern China.

Chapter One

Modernity and Protestantism

Modernity and religion are often viewed as being in conflict with one another, but this chapter argues that Protestantism and modernity actually share significant points of affinity. Indeed, the underlying resonance between the two helps to explain why Chinese Protestants became zealous advocates of modernity in the early twentieth century. However, in order to demonstrate the close connections between Protestantism and modernity, it is necessary first to consider carefully how scholars have understood the concept of modernity. Though commonly used in academic discourse, it is not always clearly defined, in part because it refers to such a broad range of phenomena. Therefore, in what follows, the term modernity as it is used in this dissertation is defined more precisely, while consideration is also given to how the concept has been used in other works on Republican China. Then the latter half of the chapter turns to the general subject of religion and modernity, and specifically the intriguing issue of how Protestantism and modernity are related.

The Meaning of Modernity

The English word *modernity* is drawn from the Latin term *modernus*, which has for its root *modo*, meaning "now, recently." The word can be traced back to the fifth century, when Augustine used it to refer to the new Christian era he lived in, as compared with the preceding era of pagan antiquity. The term *modern* was typically utilized to describe and confer legitimacy upon new institutions or scholarly paradigms.[1] According to Michael Gillespie, *modern* was first used to identify the present in a general sense as a distinct age contrasted with the past in 1460, and it was only in the 1500s that it came to refer to the new era following previous "middle" ages. This meaning of modernity marked the first time in history that people defined their being in the world in terms of time, and it became the dominant self-understanding of European society from the seventeenth century onward. This outlook viewed time as linear and believed in the continual progress of human civilization, with preceding ages considered to be inferior by comparison.[2]

Besides its existence as a word and a mindset, the term modernity refers to a social paradigm that has profoundly shaped, and continues to shape, our contemporary world. Scholars associate a broad range of attributes with modernity, which grow from cultural roots and take

[1] Alberto Martinelli, *Global Modernization: Rethinking the Project of Modernity* (London: Sage, 2005), 5.
[2] Michael Allen Gillespie, *The Theological Origins of Modernity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 2-5.

tangible social and institutional forms. Some of the features most frequently mentioned are individualism, rationalism, science, secularism, capitalism, industrialization, urbanization, globalization, nationalism, democracy, the rule of law, women's rights, a transformed public sphere, and an expanded civil society.[3] These different aspects of modernity are generally seen as interconnected and reinforcing one another, but can also generate profound contradictions and conflicts. It is important to recognize that the concept of modernity is a theoretical construct rather than an objectively existing reality. However, the empirical social phenomena that it seeks to explain are real, and many scholars have found it to be a useful tool in making sense of the unprecedented changes that have taken place in human societies around the globe, particularly over the past two centuries.

The Origins and Development of Modernity

Most scholars agree that modernity originated in Western Europe, but differ on when it first began to emerge. Anthony Giddens argues that modernity began sometime during the seventeenth century, when such key phenomena as complex nation-state bureaucracies, modern capitalism, and industrialization first began to clearly emerge.[4] Alberto Martinelli considers the Enlightenment of the eighteenth century and its

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[3] Martinelli, *Global Modernization: Rethinking the Project of Modernity*.

[4] Anthony Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), 1.

emphasis on rationality to be the crucial phase in forming modernity.[5] Louis Dupres, meanwhile, traces the birth of modern culture back to Renaissance Europe in the fifteenth century, and conceives of it as subsequently developing in waves right up until the twentieth century.[6] And Zygmaunt Bauman regards any attempt to identify clear historical parameters for the emergence and development of modernity as inherently problematic, since any number of possible dates can be given.[7]

I take the position in this dissertation that modernity was a gradual process of comprehensive social transformation that started in Western Europe during the Renaissance in the fifteenth century, and had developed into a coherent new paradigm of social organization by the middle of the nineteenth century, with Britain representing the leading edge of these changes. This process of development was not the inevitable achievement of a predetermined and teleological destiny, but grew out of a combination of cultural factors and historical contingency. Modernity as a social paradigm has continued to deepen and develop in the West and to spread around the world up to the present day. Below I trace more fully some of the broad contours of its emergence.

The Renaissance in the fifteenth century encouraged a renewed emphasis on ancient sources of Greek and Roman civilization and the use

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[5] Martinelli, *Global Modernization: Rethinking the Project of Modernity*, 9.
[6] Louis Dupres, *Religion and the Rise of Modern Culture* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2008), 5.
[7] Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and Ambivalence* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991).

of critical reason in evaluating them. It also fostered a broader interest in "secular" affairs and learning, while through the development of Humanism, it significantly enhanced conceptions of human dignity and the central importance of the individual in ordering the world.[8] The sixteenth century witnessed the first colonial expansion of Europe, led by the Catholic powers of Spain and Portugal, which demonstrated one of the tragic outcomes of growing Western modernity, namely the use of superior knowledge and military power to gain overseas possessions and dominate non-Western peoples.[9] Another vital development of the sixteenth century was the Protestant Reformation, which was instrumental in effecting a separation between the spheres of government and church that was crucial to the later emergence of religious liberty.

The rise of rationalism and empiricism in the seventeenth century spurred the development of modern science. Descartes' insistence that

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[8] McKnight argues that the Renaissance not only had a secularizing trend, where God was seen as remote from the world and therefore human affairs were increasingly considered to be autonomous from God and the Church, but also a sacralizing tendency, which erased the distinction between secular and sacred and changed views of human nature so that man became a kind of terrestrial god capable of creating an earthly paradise. See Stephen A. McKnight, *Sacralizing the Secular* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1989). Gillespie regards William of Ockham's thought as instrumental in fostering a new emphasis on the individual during this period. See Gillespie, *The Theological Origins of Modernity*.

[9] Todorov considers 1492, the year Columbus discovered America, to be a critical marker in the emergence of modernity, since the colonization of the Americas forged a link between knowledge and the subjugation of other peoples, which he views as a dominant trait of modernity. See Tzvetan Todorov, *The Conquest of America: The Question of the Other* (New York: Harper and Row, 1984). In a similar manner, Pomeranz argues that the colonization of the Americas was critical to the rise of the Industrial Revolution and the resulting global dominance of the West post-1800, since overseas colonies provided Western Europe with raw materials and reduced population pressure. See Kenneth Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence: China, Europe, and the Making of the Modern World Economy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

knowledge be based on reason alone was immensely influential in this regard, as was Bacon's scientific method. The remarkable theories of Galileo and Newton reinforced the notion that reliance on reason was superior to the authority of the ancients and thereby fostered a growing conviction of the possibility of human progress. During this period, the Dutch pioneered new methods of capitalist enterprise, primarily the corporation and stock markets, which generated considerable wealth and also influenced the development of capitalism in other parts of Western Europe. By the end of the seventeenth century a modern public sphere was beginning to emerge in Britain that allowed citizens to gather together as equals to discuss matters affecting the common good. In addition, a more cohesive and purposive nationalism was developing, one that emphasized the idea of citizenship.[10]

With the dawn of the Enlightenment in the early part of the eighteenth century, emphasis on reason as the only valid basis of knowledge became central, and religious authority was viewed more negatively and increasingly displaced. The concept of history as cyclical was gradually rejected in favor of the idea of progress without limit. Enlightenment thinkers also identified modernity with the here and now, so that from their day until the present, the sense of being modern has

[10] Smith provides a useful overview of the development and types of nationalism in Europe. See Anthony D. Smith, *Nationalism: Theory, Ideology, History* (Malden: Polity Press, 2001).

been the dominant self-understanding in Western societies.[11] The latter part of the eighteenth century saw the start of the Industrial Revolution in Britain, whereby scientific investigation led to the development of technology that was then used to increase the efficiency of economic production. Concurrently, political revolutions in both America and France attempted to use "emancipated" reason to create new governing structures, the former fostering democracy and the latter a centralized and ideological nation-state. This tension between freedom and control has continued to characterize modernity.[12]

By 1850, then, the major institutional elements that constitute modernity as a multifaceted social paradigm had already appeared in the West, and a fundamentally new type of society was beginning to emerge. This process of development was neither smooth nor inevitably uni-directional, but the general trend towards increasing acceptance of the institutions and practices of modernity was clear. Moreover, while modernity brought in its wake constant change—the advance of technology, the growth of industry, the rise of great cities, and so on—the basic elements of the new system remained constant, even if for various reasons they were not everywhere present or always developing at the

[11] Martinelli, *Global Modernization: Rethinking the Project of Modernity*, 6-7.
[12] Wagner discusses the tension in modernity between human autonomy and the institutional controls required to manage the complexity of modern society. See Peter Wagner, *A Sociology of Modernity: Liberty and Discipline* (London: Routledge, 1994).

same rate. Thus, modernity is constantly evolving and yet its larger contours stay the same.

Some of the different elements of modernity described above had ancient precursors. For instance, the Athenian polity as far back as 500 BC developed a limited form of democratic government. China by 1000 AD had established a sophisticated civil service bureaucracy with certain similarities to the complex administrative infrastructure of the modern nation-state. Islamic societies from Baghdad to Cairo saw significant scientific advances in the fields of astronomy, medicine, mathematics, and optics between 900 AD and 1300 AD. The Northern Italian city-states in the 1400s developed proto-capitalist societies, with systems of banking and insurance that resembled those of the modern world. And the Catholic Church by the 1500s had already achieved a considerable degree of globalization through a process of missionary expansion that spread its authority to such distant parts of the globe as the Philippines, Japan, India, Brazil and Quebec.

However, while some of the individual facets of modernity as we have described them here can be found in nascent form in times prior to the nineteenth century and places outside of Western Europe, the various societies in which they appeared certainly did not display the broader range of attributes characteristic of modernity as a social paradigm. This underlines the nature of modernity as a comprehensive social

transformation. Giddens refers to it as a social discontinuity, since the new society produced is so radically different than what preceded it. He likens the onset of modernity to the shift from nomadic to agrarian society that occurred thousands of years ago, since in both cases, every facet of society was profoundly affected by the change.[13]

The development of modernity in the West dramatically increased its material and cultural power relative to other parts of the world, at the same time that it enhanced the ability of the West to project that power. This resulted in a major expansion of Western colonialism around the globe that was led by the Protestant power Great Britain. This period of Western colonial domination peaked between 1800 and 1950 and, along with its exploitative aspects, also served to spread the cultural and institutional aspects of modernity to non-Western parts of the globe. Some scholars such as Peter Van Der Veer have even argued that modernity was a product of global enounters between the West and the colonial periphery, rather than being purely Western in origin. While this is an important and valid point, it needs to be qualified by the recognition that the driving force of modernity originated in the West, and the colonialism that engendered these global encounters was a Western project.[14]

[13] See Anthony Giddens, "A Reply to My Critics," *Theory, Culture and Society* 1, no. 2 (1982): 107.
[14] See Peter Van der Veer, *Imperial Encounters: Religion and Modernity in India and Britain* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).

Western Thinkers on Modernity

Many major thinkers in the Western tradition have attempted to grapple with the epochal shift to modernity, exploring both its promise and its peril. Immanuel Kant in the eighteenth century considered modernity to be an attitude and "a mode of relating to contemporary reality." This kind of critical self-awareness no longer assumed as given the current form of society or way of life or even notions of identity. Instead, it called for engagement in a continual critique of one's historical circumstances. For this reason, contemporary scholar Dilip Gaonkar has defined modernity as an attitude of questioning the present.[15] Such ongoing interrogation is predicated on a quest for truth that seeks a more authentic, rational, and just form of existence. But this questioning has its cost, namely "the loss of markers of certainty" about the world, which stimulates an unending quest to discover new ones.[16] The tentative quality of modern society derives from this lack of a sense of rootedness in unchanging verities or a fixed natural order.

Max Weber saw modernity as animated by an "inner-worldly asceticism," an attitude of moral self-discipline in pursuit of a secular vocation that when combined with the processes of rationalization and

[15] Dilip Parameshwar Gaonkar, "On Alternative Modernities," in *Alternative Modernities*, ed. Dilip Parameshwar Gaonkar (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), 13. The following discussion draws significantly on Gaonkar's useful analysis of some of the major thinkers of modernity.
[16] S. N. Eisenstadt, "Multiple Modernities," *Daedalus* 129, no. 1 (2000): 395. Eisenstadt attributes this phrase to Claude Lefort.

bureaucratization helped bring into being such powerful institutions of modernity as capitalism and the nation-state. Weber welcomed the practical benefits of this bourgeois modernity—technological advancement, material prosperity, and political freedom. Yet he perceived with dismay the deadening routinization of life and gradual loss of larger meaning that accompanied it, which trapped humanity in an "iron cage" of its own making.[17] Nineteenth century French poet and literary critic Charles Pierre Baudelaire meanwhile, reacting against this soulless bourgeois materialism, located the essence of modernity in the continual transience of the present and an endless production of the new. He regarded the detached and ironic contemplation of this spectacle of ever-changing novelty that was so characteristic of modern society to be a form of self-cultivation, yet a form that was always in danger of lapsing into hedonism.[18]

More recently, Jürgen Habermas has vigorously defended the emancipatory potential of modernity. He regards modernity as an unfinished project, but one that holds great promise because of its emphasis on reason. For Habermas, reason need not be identified only with instrumental rationality, which has no regard for moral ends, but can take other forms that are conducive to building a modern society that is

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[17] See Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, trans. Talcott Parsons (New York: Routledge, 2002).
[18] Charles Baudelaire, *Baudelaire in English*, ed. Carol Clark and Robert Sykes (New York: Penguin, 1996).

free and harmonious. His theory of communicative reason presents just such a concept, subordinating individual reason to a social process of consensus achieved among equal and conscious subjects.[19] Michel Foucault, on the other hand, takes a more pessimistic view, associating modernity with the emergence of a "disciplinary society" that seeks to gain mastery over both nature and culture. It does this through a "regime of truth" based on reason, but this reason breeds oppression because it is inextricably intertwined with power. Though individuals can resist such oppression through self-cultivation, they are unable to transform the coercive nature of modern society.[20] This sense of ambivalence about modernity in academic discussions of the phenomenon reflects its power both for good and for ill.

<u>Modernization and Multiple Modernities</u>

Modernization refers to the multifaceted process whereby a society attains modernity, and in the decades following World War Two, this was the term most commonly used in academic discourse on the modern, particularly by sociologists. Modernization theory was used to analyze what kept nations from modernizing in order to help them overcome

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[19] Jürgen Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity: Twelve Lectures*, trans. Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1987). See also Jürgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action*, trans. Thomas McCarthy (Boston: Beacon Hill Press, 1987).

[20] See Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archeology of the Human Sciences* (New York: Vintage Books, 1973).

these obstacles and develop. From the time of the Vietnam War, however, scholars have tended to avoid the term because of its association with Western hegemony and with attempts by the United States to maintain influence in the Third World during the Cold War rivalry with the Soviet Union. Though modernization theorists had many valid insights, they too often lacked sufficient awareness of their Western cultural bias and were not attuned to local cultural dynamics in non-Western societies, which led to significant distortions. Many studies equated modernization with westernization. The distinction between "traditional" societies and modern societies was overdrawn, failing to register the many ways in which elements of the old order are often incorporated in the new. Modernization was frequently portrayed as a uniform process consisting of the same order of stages in each society, whereas in reality the speed and sequence of changes could vary greatly. And the impact of global forces on local modernization was often overlooked or assumed to be benign, which was not always the case.[21]

More recent research has addressed many of these deficiencies. Studies on the historical sociology of modernization, research into modernization in Europe itself, and the development of world systems theory have all contributed to a more nuanced picture of the growth and spread of modernity. Moreover, as modern concepts and practices have taken deeper root in societies around the world, it has become

[21] Martinelli, *Global Modernization: Rethinking the Project of Modernity*, 55-61.

increasingly clear that modernization does not equal westernization, at least at the cultural level. Some scholars argue that modernity no longer has a governing center or master narrative, and advocate instead the idea of *multiple modernities* or *alternative modernities* as a way to explain the different paths that societies take as they modernize.[22] Such theories reject the notion that Western forms of modernity will necessarily be adopted throughout the world and that modernity leads to institutional convergence on the Western model. Indeed, they consider such an assumption to be hegemonic. Instead, they view the cultural dimension of modernity as primary, which inevitably creates divergence among societies as they modernize.[23]

The multiple modernities perspective highlights the important fact that cultures outside the West are not only able to resist being erased by modernity, but to shape the local form that modernity takes in profound ways. However, this recognition must be counter-balanced by the awareness that modernization also produces some degree of institutional and cultural convergence. The reasons for this are straightforward. The central elements of modernity developed first in Western Europe and grew gradually in organic fashion from the soil of Western cultural values. This is why the spread of modern ideas and institutions in the West, though creating huge social dislocation, did not fundamentally threaten

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[22] Gaonkar, "On Alternative Modernities," 14.
[23] Martinelli, *Global Modernization: Rethinking the Project of Modernity*, 113.

the cultural foundation of Western civilization. However, when modernity was spread to distant parts of the globe, it often challenged many of the core cultural assumptions of the societies it entered. This made the process of modernization more traumatic and also shifted the cultural and institutional matrix of these societies closer to the West. At the same time, it should also be noted that as a result of the profound changes caused by modernization both inside and outside the West, modernized cultures now have more in common with each other than with their own previously existing social systems.

I am arguing, then, that modernity does lead to limited convergence with Western models over time. In this regard I differ from scholars like Charles Taylor, who favor cultural theories of modernity (i.e. each culture configures modernity and produces difference) over acultural ones (i.e. the institutions of Western modernity are reproduced across cultures and produce convergence). Taylor considers the institutions of Western modernity to have emerged from the particularities of Western culture and therefore takes the position that other cultures shape the institutional expressions of modernity in a similar fashion. However, his insistence on the unity of the cultural and institutional aspects of modernity produces a contradiction, because it implies that if modern

Western institutions are imported into another culture, they will shape it accordingly.[24]

My position in this thesis is that Western institutions cannot be completely separated from Western cultural values and therefore do shape the cultures they enter. Yet local cultures can also partially alter these Western institutions and the values they reflect. Therefore, the cultural and acultural dimensions of the shift to modernity exist in tension, producing both convergence and divergence. Given this conviction that modernity displays a strong core of common characteristics across cultures, I prefer to speak of *varieties of modernity* rather than *multiple modernities* or *alternative modernities*. I also argue that the limited convergence generated by modernity across cultures need not inevitably imply Western hegemony. This is because people in non-Western societies actively appropriate various aspects of modernity for their own purposes, just as they adapt it to their own culture, even though the degree to which they can do so is limited.

Modernity in Recent Studies on Republican China

The first half of the twentieth century has become a major focus for scholars of Chinese history. This reflects many different factors, such as greater accessibility to archives in China, the growing distance in time

[24] See Charles Taylor, "Two Theories of Modernity," in *Alternative Modernities*, ed. Dilip Parameshwar Gaonkar (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001).

required for historical perspective, and a sense of the important parallels that exist between the Republican era and contemporary China since the adoption of the country's Reform and Opening policies. There has been a particularly strong interest in studying the Chinese experience of modernity during these years, given that the period was such a major transition to the modern in so many different areas of society, from politics and ideology to the economy and lifestyles. Thus, over the past ten years Western scholars have produced a considerable number of studies on modernity in Republican China.

These studies are well worth examining, both in order to understand how historians utilize the concept of modernity to analyze this period in Chinese history and to place this work in its broader historiographical context. Some of the main books to emerge on this subject include *Nation, Governance, and Modernity in China: Canton, 1900-1927* by Michael Tsin (1999);[25] *Becoming Chinese: Passages to Modernity and Beyond*, edited by Wen-hsin Yeh (2000);[26] *Hygienic Modernity: Meanings of Health and Disease in Treaty-Port China* by Ruth Rogaski (2004);[27] *Between Heaven and Modernity: Reconstructing Suzhou, 1895-*

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[25] Michael Tsin, *Nation, Governance, and Modernity: Canton, 1900-1927* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999).
[26] Wen-hsin Yeh, *Becoming Chinese: Passages to Modernity and Beyond* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).
[27] Ruth Rogaski, *Hygienic Modernity: Meanings of Health and Disease in Treaty-Port China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004).

1937 by Peter Carroll (2006);[28] and *Creating Chinese Modernity: Knowledge and Everday Life, 1900-1940*, edited by Peter Zarrow (2006).[29] Though certainly not an exhaustive list of the academic works on this period that explicitly focus on modernity, the above books are a good representative sample. It should also be mentioned that there are many other books on this period that do not directly discuss modernity, but investigate various aspects of the phenomenon, such as the nation-state or democracy.

Among these works, Carroll's *Between Heaven and Modernity* and Zarrow's *Creating Chinese Modernity* both directly discuss the concept of modernity, and it is worth comparing how they conceptualize it in order to understand how this notion is used in the historiography of Republican China. First, they both acknowledge the challenge of defining modernity with any degree of precision. Carroll describes the term evocatively as an "indistinct yet nonetheless dominant temporal marker" and a "constantly evolving, hence elusive, social state."[30] Zarrow, meanwhile, notes that scholars who try to define modernity generally either provide long lists of features or else cagily refuse to be pinned down. In his estimation, the former approach has more historical substance, but is susceptible to the temptation of drawing overly sharp lines between "tradition" and

[28] Peter J. Carroll, *Between Heaven and Modernity: Reconstructing Suzhou, 1895-1937* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006).
[29] Peter Zarrow, ed. *Creating Chinese Modernity: Knowledge and Everyday Life, 1900-1940* (New York: Peter Lang, 2006).
[30] Carroll, *Between Heaven and Modernity: Reconstructing Suzhou, 1895-1937*, 8, 243.

modernity; the latter highlights certain qualities that are generally recognized as modern, but leaves readers with only a vague sense of the contours of modernity.[31]

Both of these scholars also recognize the multiple dimensions of modernity, and make some attempt to identify those they consider to be most salient. Carroll describes modernity as a "multivalent phenomenon" with a "bewildering array of avatars." Among these he points to science, technology, nationalism, and market capitalism. Less justifiably, he includes popular culture, fine arts, and commerce as well, though these domains were more influenced by modernity than they were new types of phenomena that drove its development.[32] Zarrow is more thorough in his description, referring to globalization, urbanism, industrialism, consumerism, iconoclasm, a linear progressive sense of time, and an ever-increasing pace of change. He emphasizes two aspects of modernity in particular that he considers to be most central: one is the sense it produces of a fundamental break with the past; the other is its concern with the secular and the rational, which he sees as powering the rise of the disciplinary nation-state.[33]

In the five historical works we have chosen to examine here, certain aspects of modernity appear repeatedly, usually not as the central

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[31] Zarrow, ed. *Creating Chinese Modernity: Knowledge and Everyday Life, 1900-1940*, 18.
[32] Carroll, *Between Heaven and Modernity: Reconstructing Suzhou, 1895-1937*, 9.
[33] Zarrow, ed. *Creating Chinese Modernity: Knowledge and Everyday Life, 1900-1940*, 18-19.

thematic focus but in the background. The first of these aspects is the city. Urbanization is a fundamental part of modernity and urban settings were the major locus of Chinese modernity during this period. This is where modern ideas usually first entered China and were then disseminated to more remote regions. Thus, it should not come as a surprise that the city is a major element in all five of these books. For instance, each of the three monographs we find among these five works is focused on a different urban area: Canton, Tianjin, and Suzhou. In addition, Yeh's influential edited volume *Becoming Chinese* organizes half its essays around the theme of "The City and the Modern." This section of the book includes an essay by David Strand on the role of the city in China's modernization. Focusing on Lanzhou, he demonstrates that China's provincial cities were quick to adopt modern innovations, thanks in large part to their rail connections with major metropolises.[34]

The nation is another marker of modernity that is pervasive in these works. This is fully to be expected, given that the nation was such a dominant part of Chinese discourse of the modern during the Republican era. Indeed, it is even part of the title of Tsin's book: *Nation, Governance, and Modernity in China*. Tsin describes the vital part that the idea of the nation played in efforts by the Nationalists (KMT; *Guomindang* 國民黨) to establish a modern government in Canton that could not only unify the

[34] David Strand, "'A High Place Is No Better Than a Low Place'," in *Becoming Chinese: Passages to Modernity and Beyond*, ed. Wen-hsin Yeh (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).

city, but also position the Party to extend its rule over the rest of China. Zarrow's essay in *Creating Chinese Modernity*, titled "Constitutionalism and the Imagination of the State," also refers to the nation in understanding China's constitutional reforms in the final years of the Qing. In it, he observes that while these reforms did not succeed in producing a truly democratic government, they were nevertheless modern in the sense that they promoted a "mystical" union between the emperor and the people that was based on the concept of the nation.[35]

The third aspect of modernity that frequently appears in these works, though usually more implicit than explicit, is globalization. Given the rise of modernity in the West, its transmission to China of necessity required a global process. Rogaski's book *Hygienic Modernity* depicts this reality vividly, since Tianjin was what she creatively terms a "hypercolony" due to the mulitude of colonial powers that had concessions there. Thus, modern notions of hygiene entered the city from a variety of global sources, including Europe, the United States, and Japan. Globalization of a more subtle nature is evident in Carroll's *Between Heaven and Modernity*. For instance, he opens his book with an account of the construction of Suzhou's first macadam road in 1896, which not only used foreign technology, but was made necessary by the fact that Japan had claimed Suzhou as a treaty port after her victory in the 1894 Sino-

[35] Peter Zarrow, "Constitutionalism and the Imagination of the State: Official Views of Political Reform in the Late Qing," in *Creating Chinese Modernity: Knowledge and Everyday Life, 1900-1940*, ed. Peter Zarrow (New York: Peter Lang, 2006), 76-82.

Japanese War. It is also apparent in the fate of the city's main Confucian temple, which became a center of modern Japanese-style education following abolition of the examination system in 1905 and then a sadly neglected site frequented by Japanese and Western tourists following the 1911 Revolution.

The city, the nation, globalization—these are the aspects of modernity that appear most often in these works, generally as recurring sub-motifs. However, there are other dimensions of the modern that constitute the author's central theme, and these also deserve mention. The first of these is the notion of governmentality, which refers to the various ways in which the modern state attempts to control its subjects, whether by inculcating values or using disciplinary mechanisms. This is most explicitly manifest in Tsin's *Nation, Governance, and Modernity in China*, as he exposes the mechanisms used by the KMT in Canton in the 1920s to establish its control over the city and unify its population, a project that Tsin considers inherently problematic. The same idea is also present in an essay in *Creating Chinese Modernity* by Jilin Hwang, which is titled "Authority over the Body and the Modern Formation of the Body."[36] Hwang explores how various youth organizations started by the KMT and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP; *Gongchandang* 共產黨) were tasked with subordinating youth to state goals through ideology and physical

[36] See Jinlin Hwang, "Authority over the Body and the Modern Formation of the Body," in *Creating Chinese Modernity: Knowledge and Everyday Life, 1900-1940*, ed. Peter Zarrow (New York: Peter Lang, 2006).

training, while also examining the global nature of this trend in the twentieth century.

Consumerism is another important theme in some of the works we are examining. This phenomenon derives from the relative material abundance of modern societies and the tendency for consumption to be increasingly linked with identity and social utility. Weipin Tsai writes on this theme in an essay that appears in *Creating Chinese Culture*.[37] She analyzes how patriotism and "gracious living" were seamlessly blended in Shanghai tobacco advertisements, making them a powerful medium for communicating modern ideas of consumption, individualism, and the nation. The most creative exploration of this issue is Leo Lee's essay "The Cultural Construction of Modernity in Urban Shanghai," which appears in *Becoming Chinese*.[38] Lee focuses on how Shanghai's publishing houses were crucial in spreading concepts of modernity through textbooks, magazines, newspapers, calendars, and advertisements. Thus, he argues that Chinese modernity was not solely the preserve of May Fourth intellectuals, but was also created by the market-driven print culture of the masses. This emphasis on the "everyday" aspect of modernity is one that has received significant scholarly attention in recent years.

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[37] Weipin Tsai, "Having It All: Patriotism and Gracious Living in Shenbao's Tobacco Advertisements, 1919 to 1937," in *Creating Chinese Modernity: Knowledge and Everyday Life, 1900-1940*, ed. Peter Zarrow (New York: Peter Lang, 2006).
[38] Leo Ou-fan Lee, "The Cultural Construction of Modernity in Urban Shaghai: Some Preliminary Explorations," in *Becoming Chinese: Passages to Modernity and Beyond*, ed. Wen-hsin Yeh (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).

A final facet of modernity that is prominent in some of these works is the new role of women. The social transformation wrought by modernity leads to significant changes for women, such as the opportunity to receive formal education and greater access to the public domain. Ling-ling Lien writes about these issues in an essay included in *Creating Chinese Modernity* that focuses on the Chinese Career Women's Club and its founder, Mao Liying.[39] Founded in 1938, Mao's club came to an abrupt end a year later after she was murdered, apparently because of her ties to the CCP. Lien downplays the official CCP narrative of Mao as a revolutionary martyr, and instead examines the club as a means for encouraging women in such modern choices as following a career path and playing sports. Prasenjit Duara explores related issues in his article in *Becoming Chinese*, which focuses on middle class women members of a group called the Morality Society in Japanese-controlled Manchuria.[40] He argues that this modern group paradoxically both empowered and constrained women by identifying them with the "timeless" values of the national tradition. This tied them to submissive "feminine" virtues, yet also allowed them to express these same values in public service to the nation.

[39] Ling-ling Lien, "Leisure, Patriotism, Identity: The Chinese Career Women's Club in Wartime Shanghai," in *Creating Chinese Modernity: Knowledge and Everyday Life, 1900-1940*, ed. Peter Zarrow (New York: Peter Lang, 2006).
[40] Prasenjit Duara, "Of Authenticity and Woman: Personal Narratives of Middle-Class Women in Modern China," in *Becoming Chinese: Passages to Modernity and Beyond*, ed. Wen-hsin Yeh (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).

My dissertation overlaps with the broad contours of the field in a number of ways. In defining modernity, I have followed the second approach described by Zarrow, which involves listing various qualities associated with the phenomenon, since I believe this provides a more solid foundation for analysis. My project also deals directly or indirectly with many of the attributes of modernity that are prominent in the works discussed above. For instance, though I do not focus explicitly on the city, the elite Protestants I examine were overwhelmingly an urban group. The nation and globalization appear as frequently here as they do in these books, and I also explore the issues of women and family. In addition, I bring in other aspects of modernity like civil society and the public sphere that are not addressed by these authors. My dissertation also differs in choosing as its object of analysis a nationwide group of individuals, as well as being centrally concerned with the relationship between religion and modernity.

Religion and Modernity

For the past one hundred years or more, the dominant conception of the relationship between religion and modernity among intellectuals in the West has been one of opposition and conflict. However, this perspective appears to have been due more to certain cultural and historical factors than to the existence of any deep underlying

incompatibility. S. J. Barnett addresses some of these issues in his persuasive monograph *The Enlightment and Religion*.[41] He challenges the dominant narrative of the Enlightenment as a movement led mainly by numerous anti-clerical philosophes and Deists who attacked religion and ushered in an Age of Reason. Instead, he marshals strong evidence to show that the number of philosophes was quite small, and the number of Deists smaller still, and that neither group played a significant role in bringing about such major "enlightened" changes of the period as suppression of the Jesuits or increased religious toleration. Rather, it was the large majority of Enlightenment thinkers and commoners who were still basically Christian in their orientation that was primarily responsible for depoliticizing religion, which had been so badly tarnished by Europe's brutal religious wars. Yet ironically, one of the most common narratives of the Enlightenment to subsequently gain currency was one that viewed it as a battle between religion and reason in which the latter won.

Given the influence of this conception in nineteenth and twentieth century Europe, it is not surprising that the early theorists of the modern such as Durkheim and Weber assumed a fundamental incompatibility between religion and modernity. These scholars believed that modernity would lead to the inevitable weakening and eventual demise of religion

[41] See S. J. Barnett, *The Enlightenment and Religion: The Myths of Modernity* (New York: Manchester University Press, 2003). Barnett argues that church leaders were prone to exaggerate the threat of Deism, while prominent philisophes and Deists often overstated their influence.

through a process called secularization. For example, the shift in the place of religion from the center of society out to the periphery weakened religion by dissolving its previously close link with political authority. The emphasis on reason and empiricism led to a demythologizing of worldviews and thereby undermined the supernatural claims made by different religions. The spread of subsystems of instrumental knowledge governed by experts and professionals (e.g. law, medicine, higher education) decreased the influence of religion over these aspects of society. Compounding these changes, industrialization and urbanization tended to break down the social bonds of pre-modern society that had helped religion maintain its vital place in community life. And the growth of religious pluralism in modern societies was thought to increase doubts about the ultimate validity of any single system of belief.[42]

The dominance of this narrative in Western academic circles has recently begun to be challenged, since rather than disappearing as predicted, religion has stubbornly continued to flourish even with the spread of modernity. While the phenomena associated with secularization are still evident, they coexist with many signs of religious resilience and resurgence, from Africa and Asia to North and South America. Moreover, religion remains a vital aspect of identity for many people and a central

[42] David A. Martin, *A General Theory of Secularization* (New York: Harper Row, 1978). See also Steve Bruce, *Religion and Modernization: Sociologists and Historians Debate the Secularization Thesis* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992).

node in ordering their lives. Indeed, the decline and weakness of religion in Western Europe appears to be the only major exception to this trend.[43]

It may well be that the cause of this decline in Europe has more to do with the peculiarities of its history than it does with any irresolvable conflict between religion and modernity. Hugh McLeod observes that there was a sharper trend toward secularization in France and Germany during the second half of the 19th century than in England, and argues that this was because in the former two countries, powerful state churches formed alliances with reactionary political regimes. As a result, progressive elites attacked religion as a way to undermine these governments, and in the process weakened the influence of religion in society.[44] Indeed, the assumption that religion and modernity are incompatible quite likely reflects a Eurocentric viewpoint that is well overdue for revision.[45]

A more balanced view of the relationship between religion and modernity would see modernity as presenting both challenges and opportunities for religion, and vice versa. In the discussion above about secularization, we have already mentioned some of the aspects of modernity that can undermine religious vitality. But other elements can

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[43] Peter L. Berger, ed. *The Desecularization of the World: Resurgent Religion and World Politics* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999).

[44] Hugh McLeod, *Secularisation in Western Europe, 1848-1914* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000).

[45] Michael Saler does a fine job of showing how this old view is breaking down and space is emerging to consider the ways in which modernity and religion are compatible. See Michael Saler, "Modernity and Enchantment: A Historiographic Review," *American Historical Review* 111, no. 3 (June 2006).

provide openings for religious influence. For instance, the anomie associated with modern society can spur people to seek for or be receptive to religious ideas, increased leisure time can give them more opportunity for such pursuits, and advances in various kinds of technology can make it easier to spread religious ideas. Another significant way in which modernity can actually help to revitalize religion is related to its displacement from the public realm. This change reduces the danger of religious organizations losing credibility due to association with corrupt politics, while also encouraging them to focus on the needs of their grassroots constituents and to get more involved in the local community. This in turn can increase the social influence of religion, raise its profile in the public sphere, and even lead to re-engagement in the political realm, though no longer on the basis of official ties with the state.[46]

Religion can likewise hinder or facilitate the spread of modernity. Shamita Basu has done a valuable study on how Hinduism played both roles in nineteenth century India. Conservative Hindu leaders such as Krishnaprasanna Sen rejected modernity on the grounds that it was equivalent to Westernization and a threat to Hindu beliefs. The Brahmos, a reform-minded Hindu group, reconstructed Hinduism according to the dictates of Enlightenment rationalism (which included embracing the notion of monotheism). Between these two opposing camps was the

[46] See *Islam in an Era of Nation-States: Politics and Religious Renewal in Muslim Southeast Asia*, ed. Robert W. Hefner (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1997). Hefner's introduction to this volume provides a valuable analysis of this phenomenon.

central figure of Basu's study, Vivekananda. He successfully bridged this divide by arguing that the elements of modernity were already present in ancient Hindu society, and by cleverly turning Hinduism into a nationalist ideology that could win the support of the masses.[47] Basu's monograph thus demonstrates how religion can frequently be a source of opposition to modernity, but that progressive elites are able to reform religion in order to make it more compatible with and receptive to modernity. This process is evident across a broad range of religions and societies.

Another useful study challenging the assumption that modernity and religion are incompatible is a book by Birgit Meyer titled *Translating the Devil: Modernity and Religion among the Ewe in Ghana*. This monograph examines the encounter with modernity of the Ewe people in Western Africa by considering three different Protestant churches. Contrary to the commonly held view among scholars that modernity leads inevitably to disenchantment, these Ewe Christians drew on Protestant images of the Devil and demons as a vital aspect of how they addressed the attractive and destructive aspects of globalization. For this reason, Meyer argues that modernity and religion should not be conceptualized as mutually opposed, a view she regards as rooted in Western European conceptions of modernity as a continuous rupture with the past that is

[47] Shamita Basu, *Religious Revivalism as Nationalist Discourse* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).

inherently secular in nature. Rather, she believes both elements should be kept together, since this best explains the global data.[48]

Weber on the Protestant Ethic and Capitalism

Meyer is not alone in recognizing an affinity between Protestantism and modernity. In fact, there is a long tradition in Western scholarship contending that Protestantism enjoys a privileged relationship with modernity, a tradition that traces its roots back to Max Weber's famous 1905 work, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*.[49] In Weber's view, Protestantism was a crucial element in creating the spirit of modern capitalism because it enabled the transfer of ascetic values from the monastic confines of medieval Catholicism to the broader society of post-Reformation Northern Europe. Weber attributed this capacity to the "inner worldly asceticism" of Protestantism, by which he meant its affirmation of secular activity and business as a legitimate part of Christian "vocation" to be conducted in accordance with Christian ethical principles.

Weber regarded the Calvinist sects of Protestantism as the primary catalysts of modern capitalism, postulating that the uncertainty about salvation generated by Calvin's emphasis on God's inscrutable sovereignty and election led to the notion that success in the pursuit of a secular

[48] Birgit Meyer, *Translating the Devil: Religion and Modernity among the Ewe in Ghana* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999).
[49] Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*.

vocation was a sign of divine favor (which ironically Calvin himself did not teach). As Weber saw it, this conviction acted as a powerful incentive for believers, driving them to pursue the "irrational" path of striving to continually generate wealth without yielding to dissipation or indolence, which had the unintended consequence of creating the spirit of modern capitalism.

Weber's thesis stirred significant controversy when it was first published in 1905, and continues to do so even today. Many of Weber's critics misunderstood his argument. For instance, some believed he was saying that Protestantism was the sole cause of modern capitalism, when in fact he regarded it only as a necessary factor, but not sufficient in and of itself to create modern capitalism.[50] Others thought Weber was claiming that Protestantism strongly affirmed the accumulation of wealth, and pointed to the many Protestant preachers who inveighed against the danger of riches in order to refute him. But in actuality Weber acknowledged the strong anti-mammon strain in Protestant circles and

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[50] Weber contributed greatly to this misunderstanding by not stating clearly his view of multiple causes in *The Protestant Ethic* itself, though he did make it explicit later. See Wolfgang Schluchter, *The Rise of Western Rationalism: Max Weber's Developmental History*, trans. Guenther Roth (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), 139-47. An example of recent research that falls into this trap would be Jacques Delacroix and Francois Nielsen, "The Beloved Myth: Protestantism and the Rise of Industrial Capitalism in Nineteenth-Century Europe," *Social Forces* 80, no. 2 (December 2001).

considered that modern capitalism was the unintended result of Protestant teaching.[51]

Of course, many critics have challenged Weber's views based on a correct understanding of his thesis. Some have argued that he has no sound historical basis for saying that the capitalism which appeared after the Reformation was modern, since the capitalism of the northern Italian city-states that developed prior to the Reformation was essentially identical to what came after.[52] Others have suggested that Weber's thesis reflects the lingering influence of the anti-Catholic thinking that dominated Germany during the Kulturkampf of the 1870s and 1880s, when the Protestant majority sought to limit Catholic influence in society.[53] Scholars have also noted the relative lack of evidence to support Weber's theory that Calvinist angst regarding salvation was a key force in motivating capitalist behavior among Protestants.[54]

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[51] Malcolm H. MacKinnon, "The Longevity of the Thesis: A Critique of the Critics," in *Weber's Protestant Ethic: Origins, Evidence, Contexts*, ed. Hartmut Lehmann and Guenther Roth (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

[52] See Rodney Stark, "SSSR Presidential Address, 2004: Putting an End to Ancestor Worship," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 43, no. 4 (2004): 465-66.

[53] Paul Munch, "The Thesis before Weber: An Archaeology," in *Weber's Protestant Ethic: Origins, Evidence, Context*, ed. Hartmut Lehmann and Guenther Roth (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997). See also Anthony J Carroll, *Protestant Modernity: Weber, Secularisation, and Protestants* (Scranton: University of Scranton Press, 2007), 235-37.

[54] MacKinnon, "The Longevity of the Thesis: A Critique of the Critics," 215-23. MacKinnon makes some useful points, though his understanding of Calvin is rather caricatured and he overstates the degree of conflict between Puritan preaching against the dangers of wealth accumulation and Weber's view that the Protestant affirmation of secular vocation led to wealth accumulation. See Margaret C. Jacob and Matthew Kadane, "Missing, Now Found in the Eighteenth Century: Weber's Protestant Capitalist," *The American Historical Review* 108, no. 1 (February 2003).

Yet despite these criticisms, important elements of Weber's thesis continue to find academic support. Though evidence of a link between Calvinist angst and capitalist activity has been weak, historians have convincingly shown how Puritanism in seventeenth century England provided adherents with a powerful motivation to regulate their behavior, including their economic actions, in a way that conformed with Weber's understanding of the capitalist spirit.[55] Scholars have demonstrated a similar phenomenon in early American history.[56] Likewise, Weber's basic contention that mainstream medieval Catholicism attached a degree of ethical stigma to business activity, in contrast to Protestant sects that provided a religious sanction for it, has been supported by historical research.[57]

My own view is that Weber's thesis postulating a link between Protestantism and the spirit of capitalism has significant merit, even if his attributing it primarily to Calvinist angst was off the mark. More broadly, his insight that the Protestant deemphasis on church sacraments and sacred images, along with its simultaneous sacrilizing of such formerly mundane spheres as work, helped to create the new focus on secular

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[55] Kaspar von Geryerz, "Biographical Evidence on Predestination, Covenant, and Special Providence," in *Weber's Protestant Ethic: Origins, Evidence, Contexts*, ed. Hartmut Lehmann and Guenther Roth (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).
[56] James A. Henretta, "The Protestant Ethic and the Reality of Capitalism in Colonial America," in *Weber's Protestant Ethic: Origins, Evidence, Contexts*, ed. Hartmut Lehmann and Guenther Roth (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).
[57] Christopher Hill, *Change and Continuity in Seventeenth Century England*, Revised Edition (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991). See in particular the chapter titled "Protestantism and the Rise of Capitalism."

human activity so central to modernity, is certainly a useful one.[58] Thus, despite its flaws, Weber's work represents an important and pathbreaking effort to explore how religious faith—and Protestant belief in particular—can impact social development, and engages in a creative manner the question of the relationship between Protestantism and modernity. My dissertation is concerned with some of these same issues, but with two major differences. The most obvious of these is that my focus is on Protestantism and modernity in early twentieth century China, rather than seventeenth century Europe. And I deal with the affinity between Protestantism and modernity more broadly, rather than specifically examining the issue of capitalism.

Affinity Between Protestantism and Modernity

I define Protestantism in this study as the heterogeneous group of Christian churches and denominations with theological and ecclesiastical roots in the Reformation that have arisen from the movement's beginning in sixteenth century Europe down to the present day.[59] The sheer variety of churches that are included within this category makes any attempt at definitive description difficult. Their institutional structures can range from the episcopal structure of Anglicanism to the congregational

[58] Edward A. Tiryakian, "Dialectics of Modernity: Reenchantment and Dedifferentiation as Counterprocesses," in *Social Change and Modernity*, ed. Hans Haferkamp and Neil J. Smelser (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 84.
[59] Alister E. McGrath and Darren C. Marks, eds., *The Blackwell Companion to Protestantism* (Malden: Blackwell Publishing,2004), 1-3.

framework of Presbyterianism to the fluid networks of China's house churches. Their theologies can vary from the Calvinist predestination of Puritanism to the Arminian "perfectionism" of Methodism to the "speaking in tongues" of Pentecostalism. While no attempt will be made here to define Protestantism, it is both possible and useful to identify certain common elements that are typical of the broad spectrum of Protestant groups and that lend the movement a certain degree of ideological and institutional coherence. These include the following:

- Emphasis on Jesus Christ as the source of human salvation;
- Belief in the Bible as the basis of Christian faith and practice;
- Greater emphasis on the individual's relationship with God than on priestly mediation and ecclesiastical sacraments;
- Encouragement of believers to read Scripture and rationally evaluate it for themselves, rather than depending solely on others to interpret it for them;
- Generally investing more authority in local congregations than in centralized religious bodies;
- Animated by a conviction that church and state are responsible for different social spheres and therefore should be institutionally separate;

- Emphasis on cultivating personal ethics for all believers through religious teaching rather than relying primarily on ecclesiastical ritual;
- Decreased emphasis on the spiritual distinction between clergy and laity, and a concomitant affirmation of secular activity as a form of spiritual vocation.

A central part of the argument I make in this dissertation is that Protestant Christianity demonstrates a considerable degree of affinity with many aspects of modernity, which helps to explain the prominence of Chinese Protestants as modernizers in early twentieth century China. However, this does not mean that Protestantism "caused" modernity in the West. Rather, it was one factor among many in the emergence of modernity, though certainly a significant one. Other major elements that deserve mention are the universities and Renaissance humanism of Catholic Europe; the laws and imperial methods of Rome; and the ideals of reason and democracy that flourished in classical Greece. Historical chance was obviously involved as well, such as England's opportunity to colonize the New World, which was instrumental in helping the Industrial Revolution to get off the ground in the latter half of the eighteenth century.[60]

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[60] Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence: China, Europe, and the Making of the Modern World Economy*.

While Protestant ideas shaped the development of modern society, the influence was not just one way. The emergence of modernity also impacted the evolution of Protestantism. One of the best examples of this is how Protestantism was affected by trends associated with the Enlightenment. For instance, Bebbington has shown how the revivalism that characterized Evangelical Protestantism from the 1730s on was fueled in part by such Enlightenment concepts as confidence in the power of human reason, which made the joyful assurance of salvation preached by church figures such as Jonathan Edwards possible.[61] Hilton has carefully detailed how British Evangelicals blended Protestant notions of grace with Enlightenment ideas of empiricism and common-sense philosophy, and as a result powerfully shaped conceptions of political economy in the broader society.[62] In similar fashion, Noll has demonstrated how this same synthesis represented the leading intellectual tradition of American society prior to the Civil War.[63] Finally, Stanley has written on some of the ways in which Enlightenment ideas are clearly discernable within the Protestant missionary enterprise that began in earnest at the end of the eighteenth century, such as its emphasis on the

[61] David W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989).
[62] Boyd Hilton, *The Age of Atonement: The Influence of Evanglicalism on Social and Economic Thought, 1785-1865* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986).
[63] Mark A. Noll, "The Rise and Long Life of the Protestant Enlightenment in America," in *Knowledge and Belief in America: Enlightenment Traditions and Modern Religious Thought*, ed. William M. Shea and Peter A. Huff (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

unity of humanity and its belief in the power of education to transform the individual.[64]

We now turn to a more detailed consideration of the major points of affinity between modernity and Protestantism. The facets of modernity that we examine below do not represent an exhaustive list, but are those aspects of the phenomenon most relevant to this dissertation and our analysis of the three individuals profiled in the case studies. These attributes of modernity should be viewed as ideals that are never fully attainable in the real world, but which societies that modernize can nevertheless approach with varying degrees of closeness. While not all Protestant groups have always and at all times displayed a close affinity with these attributes, and in some cases have even opposed aspects of modernity, the majority have had significant ties with these dimensions of the modern. These ties have been particulary evident in the case of Protestantism, but other religious traditions have demonstrated some degree of overlap as well, especially after coming under the influence of modernity. We now turn our attention to describing these attributes of modernity and the links that Protestantism shares with them.

Individualism: Modernity is characterized by a great elevation in the importance of the individual. Increasingly the individual is seen as responsible for ordering the world through their free will, rather than

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[64] Brian Stanley, ed. *Christian Missions and the Enlightenment* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001). See in particular Stanley's introduction to this book, and his chapter titled on "Christianity and Civilization in English Evangelical Mission Thought, 1792-1857."

being subject to the dictates of the group or resigned to fate. Forces associated with modernity tend to weaken identities based primarily on family, locality, or custom, and thus lead to greater emphasis being placed on the human individual as the primary element in social organization.[65] Protestant beliefs have likewise made the individual more central. This is evident in the Reformation concept of the priesthood of all believers, which makes the individual the key locus of salvation, rather than the Church. The individual is seen as responsible before God for choosing to accept or reject the Christian message, as well as to live according to Christian ethical teachings. In this way, individual choice becomes central to the enactment of God's will in the world, and to the transformation of mundane reality to reflect transcendent truths.[66]

Rationalism: Reason, or appeal to reason, becomes the primary basis of social legitimation under modernity, gradually displacing both religious authority and the weight of tradition. Growing confidence in reason as a reliable and effective way to order the world fosters the rise of empiricism, which seeks to ground knowledge of the natural world in repeatable and observable experimentation. Empiricism, in turn, leads to the development of modern science as a systematic and collective

[65] See Aron Gurevich, *The Origins of European Individualism*, trans. Katherine Judelson (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1995).
[66] Louis Dumont, "A Modified View of Our Origins: The Christian Beginnings of Modern Individualism," in *The Category of the Person: Anthropology, Philosophy, History*, ed. Michael Carrithers, Steven Collines, and Steven Lukes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985). See also Steven Lukes, *Individualism* (Essex: ECPR Press, 2006).

enterprise aimed at increasing knowledge of the natural world and improving humanity's material environment. The tangible benefits produced by empiricism and science contributes to a growing belief in progress and critique of "superstition."[67] Protestantism helped to foster rationalism through its emphasis on the use of reason in evaluating Scripture to determine legitimate religious belief and praxis. This represented a major departure from the Catholic approach, which privileged the tradition and authority of the Church. The Protestant concern with rationality was evident as well in the frequent critique of Catholic "superstition" during the Reformation, and of pagan "superstition" once Protestant missions got underway towards the end of the eighteenth century. Protestantism also contributed to the rise of modern science, since many Protestant groups have regarded Nature to be the "second book" of God's revelation after the Bible, and one that reflects the rational nature of God. This belief encouraged careful investigation of the natural world, since study of "the works of God" was considered a worthy enterprise that ought to be approached with reverence.[68]

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[67] See *A Companion to Rationalism*, ed. Alan Nelson (Malden: Blackwell, 2005). See also Andrew J. Kirk, *The Future of Reason, Science, and Faith: Following Modernity and Post-Modernity* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2007). Chapters 2 and 3 provide a useful overview of these issues.

[68] John Hedley Brooke, *Science and Religion: Some Historical Perspectives* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991). In addition, see John Dillenberger, *Protestant Thought and Natural Science* (New York: Doubleday, 1960). Also useful is R. Hooykaas, "Science and Reformation," in *The Protestant Ethic and Modernization*, ed. S. N. Eisenstadt (New York: Basic Books, 1968). On the issue of superstition, see Helen Parish and William G. Naphy, eds., *Religion and Superstition in Reformation Europe* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002).

Modern education: The forces of modernity steadily shift the focus of education from religion, morality, and tradition to secular knowledge, empirical inquiry, and the cultivation of critical reasoning. This phenomenon is most clearly embodied in the modern university, but is evident in lower levels of the education system as well. Such education fosters reflexivity, which is the continual quest for knowledge and understanding in order to "improve" society. Education is no longer limited to a small minority, but is greatly expanded so that a much higher portion of the population becomes literate, facilitating social and economic development.[69] Protestantism, drawing on the tradition it received from medieval Catholicism, contributed to the rise of modern education in a variety of ways. The affirmation of secular pursuits and empirical investigation that characterized Protestantism led to a strong emphasis on science at many Protestant institutions, and a willingness to embrace more "practical" subjects in the curriculum. The separation of church and state promoted by Protestantism led to increased state control over education, but weakened ecclesiastical control in the academic sphere, which on balance helped to produce a more open and reflexive intellectual climate. Protestantism was also immensely influential as a catalyst for raising literacy rates in Europe and North America, and provided strong support for efforts to make education more widely

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[69] David Vincent, *The Rise of Mass Literacy: Reading and Writing in Modern Europe* (Malden: Polity, 2000). Refer also to Willis Rudy, *The Universities of Europe, 1100-1914: A History* (Rutherford: Farleigh Dickinson Press, 1984).

accessible. This reflected a Protestant concern with making the Scriptures and religious knowledge widely available that subsequently carried over to general education as well.[70]

Public sphere: Modernity is characterized by the rise of a new kind of public sphere as a result of printing technology and the expansion of literacy. This allows private individuals to come together in public as equals to share their personal experience, debate issues related to the common good on the basis of rational argument, and promote social change. This public interaction may occur either in physical spaces such as churches and coffee houses, or in the virtual spaces created by print culture. The locus of "the public" is shifted from local rulers and monarchs to the common people and "public opinion" becomes an important factor in the governing of the polity. The public sphere also becomes the basis for developing democratic institutions such as parliaments that incorporate part of this realm within the state structure as a means for regulating political power.[71] Protestantism was a significant factor in the development of the modern public sphere in Western Europe through the widespread printing and public debate engendered by the Reformation.

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[70] See James Bowen, *A History of Western Education*, vol. 3 (New York: Routledge, 2003). See also Thomas Albert Howard, *Protestant Theolgy and the Making of the Modern German University* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006). Also useful is George M. Marsden, *The Soul of the American University: From Protestant Establishment to Established Non-Belief* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994). Regarding literacy see C. M. Cipolla, *Literacy and Development in the West* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1969). Also see Kenneth A. Lockridge, *Literacy in Colonial New England: An Inquiry into the Social Context of Literacy in the Early Modern West* (New York: Norton, 1974).

[71] Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Burger (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1989).

Protestants were pioneers in using print media on a large scale to more effectively disseminate their message and later played an important role in developing newspapers for the same purpose. This religious public sphere was much earlier and more populist in nature than the literary public sphere that appeared during the latter half of the seventeenth century. [72]

Nationalism: The chief form of political organization under modernity is the nation-state, which is characterized by a highly developed administrative structure that is able to exercise far greater control over its population and territory than pre-modern states. The authority of the nation-state is bolstered by nationalism, which is a form of collective identity based on elements that may include common ethnicity, culture, religion, history, and ideology. Individual members of the polity are referred to as citizens, who have specific duties to the state and the society it governs, as well as rights and privileges. There is constant competition among nation-states for greater political power.[73] For better or for worse, Protestantism was central to the emergence of the modern nation-state in Europe. Particularly important was the Protestant teaching

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[72] David Zaret, "Religion, Science, and Printing in the Public Spheres in Seventeenth-Century England," in *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, ed. Craig Calhoun (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1993). Also see Mark U. Edwards, Jr., *Printing, Propaganda, and Martin Luther* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004). For newspapers see Göran Leth, "A Protestant Public Sphere: The Early European Newspaper Press," *Media History* 1, no. 1 (1993).
[73] See Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983). Also relevant is Eric J. Hobsbawn, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990). Another useful piece is Charles Taylor, "Nationalism and Modernity," in *The Morality of Nationalism*, ed. R. McKim and J. McMahon (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

on separating the spheres of church and state, which resulted in major powers previously claimed by the Catholic Church being transferred to the civil authorities. It also effectively placed the churches under the power of the state and in the process largely removed religion as an ideological competitor to the state. Moreover, Protestantism frequently played a prominent role in the formation of national identity. For instance, Protestant state churches in Europe drew on biblical notions of a "chosen people" to shape social discourse, naturalize the concept of the nation, and cultivate a sense of national community. In addition, Protestant emphasis on translating the Bible into local vernaculars proved to be a powerful catalyst in the forging of national identities both in the West and around the world once Protestant missions got underway.[74]

Globalization: Modernity has strong globalizing tendencies. Capitalism fosters increasing economic exchange and interdependence between different parts of the world. Technology vastly increases the speed of travel, resulting in greater flows of people and goods around the earth. In addition, huge improvements in communications and mass media make interaction and the exchange of ideas between distant regions much easier. These trends spur the development of international

[74] Adrian Hastings, *The Construction of Nationhood: Ethnicity, Religion, and Nationalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997). See also Pasi Ihalainen, *Protestant Nations Redefined: Changing Perceptions of National Identity in the Rhetoric of the English, Dutch and Swedish Public Churches, 1685-1772* (Leiden: Brill, 2005). On the global impact of Protestant translation of the Bible see Lamin Sanneh, *Translating the Message: The Missionary Impact on Culture* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1989).

institutions and global networks, creating levels of identity above the nation-state.[75] Protestantism contributed in significant ways to globalization, and continues to do so. The Reformation quickly crossed ethnic and political boundaries in Europe and produced many interlinked communities of Protestants around the Continent and in Britain. Protestantism was also a vital dimension of the exchange and interaction between Britain and the New World. Most important of all was the Protestant missionary enterprise, which by the late nineteenth century saw thousands of Western missionaries travel to the far corners of the earth to spread Christianity. They knit themselves and their converts into large and sophisticated global networks that became significant conduits for the exchange of ideas and personnel around the world. This process was facilitated by the transcultural nature of Christianity, and had the effect of forging transnational identities both for the missionaries and their local converts.[76]

Democracy: A central ideal of modernity is the equality of individuals, and this egalitarian tendency is most evident in the development of democratic political institutions. Such institutions typically include a constitution, political parties, free elections, and the

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[75] Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity*. See also Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996). Also useful is Malcolm Waters, *Globalization*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2001).

[76] Dana L. Robert, *Christian Mission: How Christianity Became a World Religion* (Malden: Blackwell, 2009). See as well Andew N. Porter, *Religion Versus Empire? British Protestant Missionaries and Overseas Expansion, 1700-1914* (New York: Manchester University Press, 2004).

formation of legislative bodies that allow for the popular will to be reflected in government policy. The democratic dimension of modernity stands in tension with the disciplinary powers of the nation-state. It is also much slower to take root than some of the other aspects of modernity, given the need to develop a cultural foundation for it. Nevertheless, democracy continues to gradually spread along with modernity, and its greater credibility as a basis for political legitimacy is clearly testified to by the fact that even those regimes not willing to allow genuine democracy still adopt its outer forms.[77] Protestantism, with its doctrine of the equality of all human beings before God, reinforced the egalitarian tendency of modernity. In addition, Protestant belief in human sinfulness encouraged the idea that rulers should be accountable to their subjects. In this way, Protestant groups provided important cultural resources for the cultivation of democratic ideals and practices in the West. The Calvinist sects were particularly influential in this regard, since their teachings called for church leaders to be chosen by election, and civil officials as well in those contexts where Calvinists had political control, though adherence to church teaching was demanded of the entire community. Baptist groups later challenged this approach by calling for liberty of conscience.[78]

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[77] *Democracy and Modernity: International Colloqium on the Centenary of David Ben-Gurion*, ed. S. N. Eisenstadt (New York: E. J. Brill, 1992). See also Wagner, *A Sociology of Modernity: Liberty and Discipline*. Relevant here as well is Martinelli, *Global Modernization: Rethinking the Project of Modernity*.

[78] Steve Bruce, "Did Protestantism Create Democracy?," in *Religion, Democracy, and Democratization*, ed. John Anderson (New York: Routledge, 2006). See also Robert D. Woodberry and Timothy S. Shah, "The Pioneering Protestants," *Journal of Democracy* 15,

Civil society: In this dissertation, civil society is understood as the social space where private citizens organize activities to promote the moral well being of society. It is regarded here as a part of private society, along with the realms of family, economy, and culture, and distinct from the public realm of the state and democratic institutions. The forces of modernity change civil society from being a relatively small sphere led primarily by elites with ties to the state to a greatly expanded realm in which ordinary citizens play an increasingly prominent role. Such activities build up social capital and therefore contribute to social stability, while also providing a counterweight to state power.[79] Protestantism was an important contributor to the development of civil society in the West. Protestant sects succeeded in establishing a private space in which they could worship and associate freely apart from state control, a vital aspect of civil society. Churches also inculcated ethical values that promoted the common good and were active in organizing forms of social philanthropy, such as caring for the poor and educating indigent youth. While Protestantism could at times cause civil discord, with the privatization of

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no. 2 (April 2004). For a treatment of the American case, see Ellis Sandoz, *Republicanism, Religion, and the Soul of America* (Columbia: University of Missouri, 2006). For a dated (1912) but still useful work, refer to Ernst Troeltsch, *Protestantism and Progress: The Significance of Protestantism for the Rise of the Modern World* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986).

[79] John A. Hall, ed. *Civil Society: Theory, History, Comparison* (Cambridge: Polity,1995). Also helpful is John Keane, *Civil Society: Old Images, New Visions* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998).

religion following the Enlightenment, such instances became relatively rare.[80]

<u>Women's rights</u>: Modernity, with its core values of individualism and equality, significantly reduces the degree of patriarchal control and barriers to female participation in the public realm that typically characterize premodern societies. Women are increasingly seen as individuals with rights who can contribute to the development of the broader society, apart from their role as wives and mothers. They gain greater access to education and a wider range of employment opportunities, while their presence in the public realm is increasingly accepted. In addition, as the bourgeois ideal of a monogamous nuclear family becomes more normative under modernity, women obtain greater autonomy due to the diminished influence of kin and the wider social community.[81] Protestantism was a major factor in the advance of women's rights in the West due to its emphasis on the equality of all persons, though this concept was often counter-balanced by efforts to maintain patriarchal authority. Thus, while Protestants pioneered in the education of women, they also generally expected women to make family and home

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[80] David Fergusson, *Church, State, and Civil Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004). Also insightful is Ernest Gellner, "The Importance of Being Modular," in *Civil Society: Theory, History, Comparison*, ed. John A. Hall (Cambridge: Polity, 1995). On abolition, see John Wolffe, *The Expansion of Evangelicalism* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2007).

[81] See Sylvia Paletschek and Bianka Pietrow-Ennker, *Women's Emancipation Movements in the Nineteenth Century: A European Perspective* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004). See also Lynn Walter, ed. *Women's Rights: A Global View* (Westport: Greenwood Press,2001). In addition, refer to *The Changing Position of Women in Family and Society: A Cross National Comparison*, ed. Eugen Lupri (Leiden: Brill, 1983).

their primary focus. Protestant women, particularly in British and American societies, helped to increase female access to the public sphere through widespread involvement in social reform and charitable activities. Protestantism also helped to modernize the Western family by promoting mate selection on the basis of romantic attachment, monogamous and companionate relations in marriage, the nuclear family structure, and greater equality for women within the family.[82]

Rule of law: Modernity is characterized by a growing emphasis on the notion of rule of law as a way to limit the arbitrary exercise of power by those in authority and to promote a regulated and predictable system of government. This may take the form of both administrative laws for guiding bureaucratic action and legislative laws for governing the broader society. There is increasing pressure for rulers and elites to be subject to the law, and for all individual citizens to have equal standing before the law. The prosperity generated by modern economic methods provides more citizens with greater incentives and expanded leverage in promoting the rule of law. Along with this, the notion of human rights develops as a way to protect the individual against arbitrary or oppressive state power.[83] Protestantism proved supportive of many of these trends. The

[82] Rosemary Radford Reuther, *Christianity and the Making of the Modern Family* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2000). Also relevant is William R. Garrett, "The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of the Modern Family," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 37, no. 2 (1998).
[83] *Transformations in Medieval and Early-Modern Rights Discourse*, ed. Virki Mäkinen and Petter Korkman (Dordrecht: Springer, 2006). See also Jack Donnelly, *Universal Human Rights in Theory and Practice* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003). An older but still

concept of law was a natural part of the Protestant mindset, since moral and ceremonial law figured prominently in the Bible, which Protestants took as their rule of faith. They advanced the egalitarian notion that since all people are equal before God, they should all likewise stand equal before the law, including the rulers of the polity. To this end, they called for laws to be clearly codified so that the common people would know their proper duties and the rulers could be held accountable. In addition, Protestant teaching emphasized the biblical concept that all human beings are created in the image of God, which provided a powerful religious justification for human rights.[84]

Physical fitness: Modern societies are more complex and place greater demands for discipline and productivity on their citizens than their predecessors. For this reason, physical fitness becomes more important, since it increases both stamina and discipline. Under modernity, physical training often becomes an integral part of childhood education, while athletic competition in various forms is developed to encourage fitness, and also to inculcate discipline and teach values of cooperation and fair play. In addition, sports teams and competition become an important medium for building both local and national

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valuable work is Roberto Mangabeira Unger, *Law in Modern Society: Toward a Criticism of Social Theory* (New York: Free Press, 1976).

[84] John Jr. Witte, *The Reformation of Rights: Law, Religion, and Human Rights in Early Modern Calvinism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007). See also H. J. Berman, *Law and Revolution: The Formation of the Western Legal Tradition* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983).

identities and providing entertainment.[85] Protestantism supported this aspect of modernity by evolving into a major vehicle for promoting physical fitness and athletics. In the face of increasing urbanization, mechanization, and routinization, Protestants saw fitness and sports as a way to promote the common good through wholesome recreation, while also cultivating the moral qualities of discipline and teamwork. The most influential Protestant organization in this regard was the YMCA, which organized such activities on a large scale in Anglo-American societies and increasingly around the world as part of an ambitious program of mission outreach. Through this and other means, Western habits of fitness and sport increasingly became globalized.[86]

The affinity between Protestantism and modernity analyzed above is central to this dissertation and is vital to understanding why Chinese Protestants were so numerous in modernizing elite circles during the Republican period. The argument in this dissertation is that the Protestant worldview these individuals absorbed to varying degrees made it easier for them to accept many aspects of modernity that higher status Chinese subscribing to a Confucian outlook would generally have been more

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[85] *The Sports Process: A Comparative and Developmental Approach*, ed. Eric G. Dunning, Joseph A. Maguire, and Robert E. Pearton (Champaign: Human Kinetics Publishers, 1996). Another resource is *Europe, Sport, World: Shaping Global Societies*, ed. J. A. Mangan (London: Frank Cass, 2001).

[86] Allen Guttman, *From Ritual to Record: The Nature of Modern Sports* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979). In addition, see Clifford Putney, *Muscular Christianity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003).

reluctant to embrace. In this way, Protestant identity facilitated the transition of these individuals to the modern world, while still allowing them to retain their sense of Chineseness. The question of how this Protestant worldview and the concepts of modernity it resonated with were transmitted to these Chinese by means of missionaries and their institutions is the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter Two

Modernity and Missions

The close affinity between modernity and Protestantism originally only had important social ramifications for the West, since that is where the Protestant communities were situated. All this changed, however, with the development of Protestant missions, which carried not only the message of Christianity, but also the practices of modernity to the far corners of the earth. Since China was one of the largest of the Protestant mission fields during the crucial period from 1800 to 1950, it provides a particularly valuable illustration of this process. To help give a sense of the scale of Protestant missions in China, this chapter starts with a concise yet thorough overview of the enterprise that is largely lacking in the broader historical literature. It then considers the institutions that the missionaries founded, and especially the Protestant schools, to show how they became conduits of modern ideas and practices into China. Finally, it probes the extent to which these institutions and their transmission of modernity to the Chinese were implicated in the larger project of Western imperialism.

The Development of Protestant Missions in China

Protestant missionary activity in China occurred mainly from 1807 to 1950, but there were instances of small scale Protestant missionary outreach in other parts of the world well before this. For example, in the 1600s the Dutch had carried out limited religious work in Batavia, and during the 1700s the German Moravians established Protestant churches in the Caribbean, while American colonists proselytized the Indians. The extent of Protestant missions expanded significantly following the "Evangelical Revival" in Britain and the two "Great Awakenings" that swept America in the mid-18th century and early 19th century. By greatly increasing the size of Protestant communities in Britain and North America and fostering a strong evangelical piety among them, these revivals eventually helped to produce an overseas religious enterprise comprised of many thousands of missionaries. British and Americans made up more than eighty percent of this missionary force and China was a major focus of their efforts, becoming the largest Protestant mission field by the late 1800s.[1]

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[1] See David W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989). Chapters 2 and 3 are particularly relevant. Also useful is Murray A. Rubinstein, *The Origins of the Anglo-American Missionary Enterprise in China, 1807-1840* (Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 1996). Chapters 2 and 5 are the most germane.

The first Protestant missionary to reach China was the Englishman Robert Morrison, who landed in Canton on an American clipper in 1807.[2] At the time, Canton was the only city the Qing dynasty allowed Westerners access to, and even that was limited to six months of the year and was solely for the purpose of trade. Christian proselytism in any form was strictly forbidden and even teaching Westerners to speak or read Chinese was illegal. Gradually the number of missionaries increased, some based in Canton and others going to parts of Southeast Asia where there was easier access to Chinese communities. British missionaries were preeminent in this early phase, though Americans and Germans played an important secondary role. Of the early American missionaries, many hailed from small towns in New England and were graduates of small denominational colleges.[3]

Prior to the First Opium War in 1839, missionaries out of necessity relied primarily on the written word to spread their message. The London Missionary Society (LMS) was particularly influential, with Morrison translating the Bible into Chinese, William Milne producing Christian tracts and literature, and Walter Medhurst printing works on the achievements of Western civilization in an effort to enhance the credibility

[2] For a recent biography of Morrison, see Christopher Hancock, *Robert Morrison and the Birth of Chinese Protestantism* (London: T & T Clark, 2008).
[3] See Valentin H. Rabe, "Evangelical Logistics: Mission Support and Resources to 1920," in *The Missionary Enterprise in China and America*, ed. John K. Fairbank (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974), 75. Less than one percent of Americans at the time graduated from college, which meant that these missionaries had some claim to elite status.

of the missionaries.[4] The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) was the first Protestant mission from the United States to arrive in China, with Elijah Bridgman in 1834 helping to found the Society for the Diffusion of Christian and General Knowledge (SDK; *Yizhihui* 益智會) to disseminate information about Western nations and modern science to the Chinese, while Peter Parker became the first medical missionary in the country.[5] One of the more unusual and influential of the early missionaries was the flamboyant Prussian Karl Friedrich Gutzlaff, who not only engaged in translation and publishing, and also started a Chinese Bible Union that sent converts into China to distribute Bibles and start churches, but later ended in controversy and failure.[6]

After the conclusion of the First Opium War in 1842, missionaries gained access to five treaty ports as well as Hong Kong, which China officially ceded to the British in perpetuity. Access to the treaty ports made it much easier to win converts, start churches, and found schools. By the time of the Arrow War in 1857, there were twenty Protestant mission

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[4] Suzanne Barnett and John King Fairbank, eds., *Christianity in China: Early Protestant Missionary Writings* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press,1985), 494. For more on Milne, see Richar Bohr, "The Legacy of William Milne," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 25, no. 4 (October 2002).
[5] Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of Christian Missions in China* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1929), 217-18. For a relatively recent biography of Bridgeman, see Michael C. Lazich, *E. C. Bridgman (1801-1861): America's First Missionary to China* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 2000). Regarding Parker, see Edward V. Gulick, *Peter Parker and the Opening of China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973).
[6] For a recent biography on Gutzlaff, see Jessie G. Lutz, *Opening China: Karl F. A. Gutzlaff and Sino-Western Relations, 1827-1852* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008).

societies and eighty missionaries in China. The Treaty of Tianjin that ended the war in 1858 imposed many demands on China and also gave Western missionaries greater access to China by implicitly recognizing their right to travel in the interior of the country to win converts. Though the Qing initially resisted implementing the terms of the treaty, after British troops occupied Beijing in 1860 and burned the magnificent Summer Palace to the ground, the dynasty reluctantly yielded.

As a result, the number of mission organizations and missionaries entering China in the years after 1860 increased dramatically, with the statistics reflecting this trend. By 1864, there were 24 mission groups and 190 missionaries; by 1874 these numbers had increased to 36 societies and 430 missionaries; and by 1889 they had increased again to a total of 41 mission societies with 1300 missionaries. Of the 1300 missionaries in 1889, 56 percent were British and 39 percent from America, meaning that these two nations together accounted for 95 percent of the missionary force in China.[7] In terms of the number of ordained missionaries in 1890, China was the second largest field for both British and American missionaries after India.[8] Morever, an increasing number of women were traveling to China as missionaries, not just as wives but also as singles. By 1890, some sixty percent of the Western missionaries in China were

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[7] Latourette, *A History of Christian Missions in China*, 405-06.
[8] James A. Field Jr., "Near East Notes and Far East Queries," in *The Missionary Enterprise in China and America*, ed. John K. Fairbank (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974), 35.

female, and engaged mainly in the areas of education, medical services, and evangelistic and visitation work among Chinese women.[9]

The increase in missionaries led to greater conflict with local Chinese and Qing officials. Local officials often viewed missionaries as a cultural and political threat, which led them to oppose their efforts to proselytize and establish mission stations. In addition, converts sometimes requested missionary assistance in disputes with neighbors and officials, hoping in this way to be protected by the treaty provisions China had signed with the imperialist powers. Many of these conflicts required Qing mediation to resolve, and they became known as the so-called "missionary cases" (*jiao'an* 教案). Such friction contributed to occasional outbreaks of violence against both missionaries and Chinese Christians, the worst of which was the Boxer Uprising in 1900.[10]

During the latter half of the nineteenth century, the major Protestant mission societies gradually became established throughout China. British groups were dominant during this period. The LMS, from its

[9] Jane Hunter, *The Gospel of Gentility: American Women Missionaries in Turn-of-the-Century China* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984).

[10] Protestants on the whole were less often embroiled in these conflicts than Catholics, since the latter already had many churches in the interior in the mid-nineteenth century from earlier mission efforts and because the French government was very active in defending Catholic interests in China in order to expand its political influence. For an early but still valuable study on this topic, see Paul A. Cohen, *China and Christianity: The Missionary Movement and the Growth of Chinese Antiforeignism, 1860-1870* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963). For a helpful article on Protestant missionary cases, see R. G. Tiedemann, "Protestant 'Missionary Cases' (Jiao'an) in Shandong Province, 1860-1900," *Ching Feng* 8, no. 1-2 (2007). For the influence of these conflicts on the Boxer Uprising, see Joseph W. Esherick, *The Origins of the Boxer Uprising* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987).

base in Hong Kong where James Legge worked, expanded into Central China under the leadership of Griffith John and then into North China through the efforts of Joseph Edkins.[11] The provinces of Hubei and Zhili (now Hebei) eventually became their major fields. The Church Missionary Society, a major mission agency with ties to the Church of England, began its China work in Hong Kong, Fuzhou, and Shanghai. It then expanded into Sichuan, which later became it's largest field. Meanwhile, the English Baptists built up their work in Shandong, which was revived and expanded by Timothy Richard.[12] Finally, the China Inland Mission (CIM), an interdenominational group founded by J. Hudson Taylor, sent missionaries to almost every part of China and became the largest of all the Protestant mission societies.[13]

American Protestant groups also had a major presence. The ABCFM started its work in Guangdong and Fujian, after which they expanded into North China, with Zhili becoming their main field. The American

[11] Legge was an influential missionary translator and Sinologist. For major biographies on Legge, see Laren F. Pfister, *Striving for 'The Whole Duty of Man': James Legge and the Scottish Protestant Encounter with China*, 2 volumes (New York: Peter Lang, 2004); and Norman J. Girardot, *The Victorian Translation of China: James Legge's Oriental Pilgramage* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002). For Griffith, see W. Robson, *Griffith John: Founder of the Hankow Mission Central China* (London: Partridge, 1889).
[12] See Richard's memoirs, Timothy Richard, *Forty-Five Years in China: Reminiscences* (New York: Stokes, 1916). See also Richard Bohr, *Famine in China and the Missionary: Timothy Richard as Relief Administrator and Advocate of National Reform, 1876-1884* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972).
[13] For a biography of Taylor, see John C. Pollock, *Hudson Taylor and Maria: Pioneers in China* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1962). For a comprehensive and sympathetic treatment of Taylor and the CIM, see A. J. Broomhall, *Hudson Taylor and China's Open Century*, 7 volumes (London: Hodder and Stoughton, Overseas Missionary Fellowship, 1981-1989). For a more critical appraisal, see Alvyn Austin, *China's Millions: The China Inland Mission and Late Qing Society* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007).

Presbyterians began their efforts in Guangdong and Shanghai, subsuequently built a powerful movement in Shandong led by John Nevius and Calvin Mateer, and eventually reached Beijing through the labors of W. A. P. Martin.[14] Their main fields were Guangdong and Shandong. The Northern Methodists initially were centered in Fuzhou, with their work growing to include Central China and Peking. The Southern Methodists, whose ranks included the missionary editor Young J. Allen, focused on Jiangsu and Zhejiang.[15] Finally, the Episcopal Church was established first in Shanghai and then developed along the Yangtze River valley.[16]

The Protestant missionaries in China also became active purveyors of Western science during the latter half of the nineteenth century, since they regarded modern science as the fruit of Christian civilization and believed it would win a more receptive hearing for their religious message. Apart from the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge mentioned previously, an important groundbreaking effort on this front was the translation of modern medical texts into Chinese by British missionary Benjamin Hobson in the 1850s. The London Missionary Society press in Shanghai, called Inkstone Press (*Mohai shuguan* 墨海書館

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[14] On Nevius, see Helen S. C. Nevius, *Life of John Livinigston Nevius, for Forty Years a Missionary in China* (New York: Revell, 1895). On Mateer, see Daniel W. Fisher, *Calvin Wilson Mateer: Forty-Five Years a Misionary in Shantung, China* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1911). On Martin, see Ralph R. Covell, *W. A. P. Martin: Pioneer of Progress in China* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978).
[15] For a biography on Allen, see Adrian A. Bennett, *Missionary Journalist in China: Young J. Allen and His Magazines, 1860-1883* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1983).
[16] For more information on the spread of different Protestant missions in China, see Latourette, *A History of Christian Missions in China*, 363-78. See also Milton T. Stauffer, ed. *The Christian Occupation of China* (Shanghai: China Continuation Committee, 1922), 313.

), was the leading mission publisher in China after 1850 and also played a central role in this process. Under the capable leadership of Alexander Wylie and Joseph Edkins, Inkstone produced numerous translations of Western scientific works, ranging from mathematics and astronomy to mechanics and botany. It should also be mentioned that starting from the 1860s a growing number of Protestant missionaries such as John Fryer and Alexander Wylie were employed by the Qing dynasty as translators at its Jiangnan Arsenal, which had a translation bureau that printed a wide variety of scientific works, including basic science textbooks.[17]

The publishing of Chinese language newspapers and periodicals was another arena in which Protestant missionaries were deeply involved and through which they expanded their influence in China during the second half of the nineteenth century. The extraterritorial status of Westerners in China resulting from the Unequal Treaties made it possible for the missionaries to establish independent newspapers and periodicals that effectively broke the longstanding dynastic monopoly on public communication in China. These efforts represented the beginnings of a modern press in China, even though Protestant publications were still fairly marginal in social influence prior to 1890 due to literati rejection of

[17] Benjamin A. Elman, *On Their Own Terms: Science in China, 1550-1900* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005). Chapters 8, 9, and 10 are most relevant. See also David Wright, *Translating Science: The Transmission of Western Chemistry into Late Imperial China 1840-1900* (Leiden: Brill, 2000).

Christianity.[18] From the 1840s to the 1890s, missionaries published 170 different newspapers and journals for varying lengths of time, which represented 95 percent of the total in China during this period.[19] Starting in the 1870s, Protestant missionaries also helped to pioneer use of the vernacular for printing by using it in their publications in order to reach a wider audience, a radical innovation that did not become the norm in China until the early twentieth century.[20]

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the number of college educated American missionaries began to grow significantly, due primarily to the emergence of the Student Volunteer Movement (SVM), which started in 1886 as the result of a student Christian conference organized by the famous American evangelist Dwight Moody.[21] The SVM was devoted to the task of motivating students to become missionaries and was organized nationally under the YMCA. Led by the indefatigable John Mott, it had already recruited some 2200 “Volunteers” in the first two years of its existence. SVM recruits came predominantly from the ranks of

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[18] See Xiantao Zhang, *The Origins of the Modern Chinese Press: The Influence of the Protestant Missionary Press in Late Qing China* (New York: Routledge, 2007). Zhang notes that in China from the Song dynasty onward public communication and news was controlled by dynastic authorities that published an official gazette in Beijing and in the provinces while strictly controlling unofficial gazettes. Thus, though China had an advanced print culture from the Ming dynasty onward, which included a great deal of popular fiction and didactic works, it did not have a highly developed press.

[19] Fang Hanqi 方漢奇, *Bao shi yu bao ren* 報史與報人 [The History of Journalism and Journalists] (Beijing 北京: Xinhua chubanshe 新華出版社, 1991), 18.

[20] Milena Dolezevola-Velingelova, "The Origins of Modern Chinese Literature," in *Modern Chinese Literature in the May Fourth Era*, ed. Merle Goldman (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1977), 20.

[21] By comparison, British missionaries were generally from the middle class, but fewer were university trained. See Latourette, *A History of Christian Missions in China*, 408.

the many student YMCA and YWCA chapters in the United States. As the SVM grew, its focus shifted from the task of basic evangelism to that of Christianizing "heathen" societies by influencing local elites. Missionaries active in working with socially influential Chinese such as Gilbert Reid, A. P. Happer, and Robert Gailey addressed its annual gatherings. From 1886 to 1919, the SVM recruited 8100 missionaries who went to foreign fields, and a remarkable 31 percent of them went to China.[22] These were the individuals who staffed and led the Protestant colleges and social reform organizations such as the YMCA that flourished after 1900.[23]

The period prior to 1900 was primarily one of pioneering evangelism, but after the turn of the century Protestant missionaries put increasing emphasis on education and social reform. This meant that education, once seen as secondary to the main goal of evangelism, gained greater legitimacy among the missionaries. Americans were dominant in the field of higher education in China, and started more than a dozen Christian colleges. Meanwhile the British continued to hold primacy in the field of medicine.[24] The "Social Gospel" vision of seeking to realize God's Kingdom on earth through social reform guided by Christian ethical

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[22] Clifton J. Phillips, "The Student Voluteer Movement and Its Role in China Missions, 1886-1920," in *The Missionary Enterprise in China and America*, ed. John K. Fairbank (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974), 92-107.
[23] See Terrill E. Lautz, "The SVM and Transformation of the Protestant Mission to China," in *China's Christian Colleges: Cross-Cultural Connections, 1900-1950*, ed. Daniel H. Bays and Ellen Widmer (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009).
[24] Stauffer, ed. *The Christian Occupation of China*, 34-39.

principles found growing support in missionary circles.[25] The many Christian colleges started by the missionaries, along with the YMCA and YWCA became the primary vehicles for advancing these aims.

From 1900 to 1927, the Protestant mission enterprise reached its zenith in China. The Boxer uprising in 1900 and the fall of the Qing dynasty in 1911 were watershed events during this period, and in conjuction with the strong giving to missions back home and the increase in new recruits for the field, resulted in a major expansion in the scale of Protestant missions in China.[26] The 1300 Protestant workers recorded in 1889 grew to 3400 in 1905, to 5400 in 1914, to 6400 in 1918, and reached the high point of 8300 in 1926.[27] As the number of missionaries expanded, the American contingent became the largest. While in 1907, 52 percent of missionaries were British and only 37 percent American, by 1920 these figures were reversed, with Americans making up 52 percent of the force and Britishers 37 percent.[28] The number of mission societies was also on the rise, reaching well over 200 by 1920.[29] Some 57 percent of these

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[25] In some ways, the missionary experience in China and the pressures of Chinese nationalism contributed to the development of Social Gospel thinking. See Xi Lian, *The Conversion of Missionaries: Liberalism in American Protestant Missions in China, 1907-1932* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997).
[26] For more information on how American support helped to drive the expansion of Protestant missions in China during this period, see Valentin H. Rabe, *The Home Base of American China Missions* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978).
[27] See Latourette, *A History of Christian Missions in China*, 606, 773. See also Charles Luther Boynton, *1936 Handbook of the Christian Movement in China* (Shanghai: National Christian Council of China, 1936), ix.
[28] British included those not just from the United Kingdom, but also from colonial territories such as Canada, Australia, and New Zealand.
[29] See Part IV of R. G. Tiedemann, *Reference Guide to Christian Missionary Societies in China: From the 16th to the 20th Century* (New York: M. E. Sharpe, 2009).

missionaries lived in China's seven coastal provinces, while two-thirds were to be found in cities of over fifty thousand people.[30]

After 1927, Protestant missions in China began to decline. One of the most important reasons for this change was the dramatic rise of Chinese nationalism and Marxism, which led to Western missionaries being attacked for their reliance on the Unequal Treaties in carrying out their work in China.[31] When the Nationalist Party nominally unified China in 1927, troops in some places attacked mission properties and six Westerners were killed, resulting in thousands of missionaries temporarily fleeing.[32] Statistics show that the number of missionaries plummeted from 8200 in 1927 to 4300 in 1928. Gradually numbers increased again, reaching 6000 in 1936, but it was clear the high water mark had passed.[33]

Other factors also contributed to the decline of the mission movement. The Great Depression that struck in 1929 and lasted throughout the 1930s significantly reduced the financial resources of the missions, which made it difficult to maintain missionary numbers on the field and continue running expensive institutions such as schools and hospitals. The growing divide between theological conservatives and

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[30] Stauffer, ed. *The Christian Occupation of China*, 34.
[31] See Jessie G. Lutz, *Chinese Politics and Christian Missions: The Anti-Christian Movements of 1920-1928* (Notre Dame: Cross Cultural Publications, 1988).
[32] Dwight W. Edwards, *Yenching University* (New York: United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia, 1959), 197.
[33] Boynton, *1936 Handbook of the Christian Movement in China*, ix.

modernists weakened the enterprise internally and led to doubts about the validity of the missionary enterprise.[34] And of course the dangers accompanying war acted as a further damper on missions with the Japanese invasion of China in 1937 and the civil war between Nationalists and Communists that followed after.[35] By the time of the Communist victory in 1949, there were only about 2100 missionaries residing in China.[36] Due to Communist pressure, nearly all of them had left China for good by 1952, thus bringing to a close an important chapter in the history of Christianity in China.[37]

The Rise of Protestant Schools in China

As noted above, Protestant missionaries discovered that education was an effective way to advance their religious goals in China and eventually Christian education became a major pillar of the missionary enterprise, consuming large amounts of human and financial resources. These schools went all the way from primary to college level and represented a vital medium for the dissemination of modern ideas and

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[34] For more on the split between liberal and conservative Protestants, see Lian, *The Conversion of Missionaries: Liberalism in American Protestant Missions in China, 1907-1932*. For more information specifically on the fundamentalists, see Kevin Xiyi Yao, *The Fundamentalist Movement among Protestant Missionaries in China, 1920-1937* (Lanham: University Press of America, 2003).
[35] See James C. Thomson, *While China Faced West: American Reformers in Nationalist China, 1928-1937* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969), 36-37.
[36] *Revised Directory of Protestant Missionaries in China*, (Shanghai: National Christian Council, 1950), Section II, 1-50.
[37] For more on the end of the missionary era, see Bob Whyte, *Unfinished Encounter* (London: Collins, 1988), 219-28.

practices. These institutions, and particularly the Christian colleges, were instrumental in forming the Chinese Protestant elite that is the subject of this study, and through them impacting the development of Chinese modernity. For that reason, this section provides detail on the scale of Protestant education in China, while the next explores the ways in which these schools communicated modernity. This latter aspect in particular deserves attention, for despite the global scale of Protestant missions education and its intimate links with modernity, there is not a great deal of scholarly research on the subject.

The close link between Protestant missions and education in China was true of Protestant missions globally. From early on, missionaries debated whether the preaching of Christianity should take priority, or if it was necessary instead to first introduce Western "civilization" to them by means of education before they could understand and accept the message. British scholar Brian Stanley has shown that although emphasis oscillated between these two approaches depending on various factors, the pressing pragmatic needs on the field almost always made it necessary to use both.[38] In China, fierce opposition of the gentry and distrust from the common people led missionaries eventually to place greater emphasis on education. They found that opening schools for the children of the poor who had no access to education was an effective way to win converts. In

[38] See Brian Stanley, "Christianity and Civilization in English Evangelical Mission Thought, 1792-1857," in *Christian Missions and the Enlightenment*, ed. Brian Stanley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 2001).

addition, it allowed the missionaries to train church workers and impart basic literacy for Bible reading to their congregants.[39]

Nearly all of the Protestant missions in China founded primary schools and many established middle schools as well. The American missions were dominant, with more than half of the primary school students and two-thirds of the middle school students by 1920.[40] These institutions, though initially small and attended only by children of converts and the poor, eventually grew and became an attractive option even for families of means. This was because the Protestant schools offered one of the few avenues to modern education in China, which a large majority of the Chinese elite favored by the time the examination system was abolished in 1905.[41] Also appealing was the excellent instruction that most of these schools provided in English, which opened up numerous practical opportunities in business and other fields, especially in the major urban centers and treaty ports of China.[42] Moreover, the Protestant institutions often had higher academic standards and better facilities than the modern-style Chinese alternatives available at the time, which were few in number.[43]

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[39] Latourette, *A History of Christian Missions in China*, 268.
[40] Stauffer, ed. *The Christian Occupation of China*, 37, 322.
[41] Thomas Curran, *Educational Reform in Republican China: The Failure of Educators to Create a Modern Nation* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 2005), 124.
[42] In many cases the adoption of English at the mission schools was driven to a large degree by the demands of Chinese Christians. For an illustration of this dynamic at work, see Ryan Dunch, *Fuzhou Protestants and the Making of a Modern China 1857-1927* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 38-40.
[43] Latourette, *A History of Christian Missions in China*, 622.

Available statistics indicate that the number of primary and middle school students at the mission schools rose steadily during the latter part of the nineteenth century and through the first three decades of the twentieth century. Increases were especially dramatic after the Qing abolished China's official examination system in 1905 and again after the Qing dynasty was toppled in 1911. In 1877 these mission institutions had over 5900 students; by 1889 the number had grown to 16900; by 1905 it increased again to 57000; by 1915 it had risen to 168000; and by 1925 the number of pupils had reached approximately three hundred thousand.[44]

The Protestants initially taught a significant percentage of the students in modern primary and middle schools in China, but this figure steadily decreased as new schools became more common, dropping from 24.7 percent in 1905 to 4.3 percent in 1925.[45] They also pioneered in the education of women, which was rare under China's dominant Confucian order and consistently enrolled a higher percentage of female students than the government schools.[46] For instance, women made up 16 percent of Protestant middle school students in 1920, compared with only 3.1 percent at government middle schools in 1922.[47] While data on the

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[44] Latourette, *A History of Christian Missions in China*, 623. See also Paul Monroe, *China: A Nation in Evolution* (New York: Macmillan, 1928), 306.
[45] Curran, *Educational Reform in Republican China: The Failure of Educators to Create a Modern Nation*, 224-25.
[46] Protestant missionaries started the first girls' schools in China in the 1840s, but the first official Chinese schools for girls were not founded until the end of the century.
[47] Miner Searle Bates, "1907-1922 Education: Christian Girls Middle Schools," RG 10, Box 120, Folder 1066, Miner Searle Bates Papers, Yale Divinity School Library Special

growth of Protestant primary and middle schools during the decades of the 1930s and 1940s is scarce, one piece of information showed that by 1936, the number of students at Protestant middle schools had grown to 48000, which was three times the number in 1920.[48] Thus it is likely that these schools also experienced significant growth until at least the time of the Japanese invasion of China in 1937.

The move into the realm of higher education was initially controversial among the missionaries in China. A considerable number in their ranks felt that it distracted from the priority task of preaching and yielded inadequate results in terms of converts won and numbers of men entering the ministry. But by 1890, these objections had been overcome, and nearly all the Protestant missionaries were agreed on the legitimacy of and need for Christian higher education.[49] They were convinced that college training under Christian auspices promised significant benefits. These included the development of the Christian community through the training of pastors, teachers, and medical personnel; the more effective winning of converts, especially from among the upper classes; and the

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Collections, New Haven, 35. See also Ruth Hayhoe, *China's Universities 1895-1995: A Century of Cultural Conflict* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1996), 48.

[48] Boynton, *1936 Handbook of the Christian Movement in China*, 167. Stauffer, ed. *The Christian Occupation of China*, 405.

[49] Jessie Gregory Lutz, *China and the Christian Colleges* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1971), 17.

leavening of society with Christian values by enabling converts to attain positions of influence, including in the political realm.[50]

As early as 1877, the American missionary Calvin Mateer, who had founded Tengchow College in Shandong, made a vigorous plea to the broader missionary community in China to offer Western higher education to the Chinese Protestants under their care, so as to ensure that China's entry into the modern world would be guided by Christian principles. "It is a grand opportunity which the Christian Church has," he declared emphatically, "to train up the men who will take the lead in, and leaven with Christian truth the great mental and physical transformation, which Western science and civilization is soon to make in China."[51] Echoing these sentiments, the missionary Frank Ohlinger noted in 1881 that the purpose of the Anglo-Chinese College he had established in Fuzhou was to train "men who shall be leaders of thought, who shall carry the banner of Christianity and western Science into every part of these Eighteen Provinces."[52]

The formation of the Protestant colleges in China was a complex process. Nearly all of them were founded by American missionaries and

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[50] See Gael Graham, *Gender, Culture, and Christianity: American Protestant Mission Schools in China 1880-1930* (New York: Peter Lang, 1995), 10-13. See also World Missionary Conference, "Special Purposes of Missionary Education in China," in *Education in Relation to the Christianisation of National Life* (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1910).

[51] Calvin Mateer, "Relation of Protestant Missions to Education," in *Records of the General Conference of the Protestant Missionaries in China Held at Shanghai, May 10-24, 1877* (Shanghai: Presbyterian Mission Press, 1878), 177.

[52] Quoted in Ryan Dunch, "Mission Schools and Modernity: The Anglo-Chinese College, Fuzhou," in *Education, Culture, and Identity in Twentieth-Century China*, ed. Glen Peterson, Ruth Hayhoe, and Yongling Lu (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001), 115.

were incorporated in the United States.[53] This reflected the relatively high number of American mission personnel who were college educated and also the tradition of American Protestant denominations operating small religious colleges, which made church involvement in higher education more natural.[54] Only the largest and wealthiest of the American missions had the financial and human resources necessary to engage in such work, which meant primarily the Methodists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Episcopalians.[55] Missionaries modeled the schools after denominational colleges back home.[56] Their institutions reflected the tradition of pragmatism that often characterized American higher education.[57] Initially religious instruction and proselytism of non-Christian students constituted the primary focus of these schools, but by the early twentieth century, this emphasis gradually shifted to Christian general education for the purpose of serving society.[58]

Many of the Protestant colleges in China were first begun at the end of the nineteenth century, often as extensions of previously existing middle schools that had the name of college but had not yet attained the

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[53] The only Christian college not incorporated in the United States was Shantung Christian University, which was incorporated in Canada. See William Purviance Fenn, *Christian Higher Education in Changing China 1880-1950* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), Appendix D, 241.
[54] Hayhoe, *China's Universities 1895-1995: A Century of Cultural Conflict*, 18.
[55] Lutz, *China and the Christian Colleges*, 37. See also E. W. Burt, "Christian Education in Shantung," *Chinese Recorder* 45, no. 7 (July 1914): 445.
[56] Latourette, *A History of Christian Missions in China*, 447.
[57] Hayhoe, *China's Universities 1895-1995: A Century of Cultural Conflict*, 8.
[58] Stauffer, ed. *The Christian Occupation of China*, 37.

reality.[59] By 1900, there were more than twelve such schools with a total of 160 students, though one observer estimated that only four of them qualified as actual colleges, a figure he increased to eight in 1905.[60] These colleges offered a liberal arts education, and some developed professional and vocational training in medicine, theology, nursing, and law as well. By 1906, the number of colleges had risen to fourteen and by 1910 they reported a total enrollment of 900 students, which represented a remarkable 54.5 percent of all the university students in China at the time.[61] Also during this period, English had become the primary language of instruction in the schools.[62]

As of 1913, Protestant missionaries had founded three women's colleges, which were the first in China, since government colleges did not allow women students until 1920.[63] By 1920 the number of Protestant colleges remained at fourteen (due to amalgamation and the founding of new schools) and the student population had risen to 2000, some two-

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[59] Lutz, *China and the Christian Colleges*, 36, 161.
[60] See Miner Searle Bates, "Education: General Schools," RG 10, Box 119, Folder 1031, Miner Searle Bates Papers, Yale Divinity School Library Special Collections, New Haven, 50-51.
[61] University education was just getting off the ground in China at this time, which is why the student population was so small. China Christian Educational Association, *Handbook of Christian Colleges and Universities, 1926, Including Statistical Report for the Year 1925*, Bulletin no. 14 (Shanghai: 1926), 35-37. See also Latourette, *A History of Christian Missions in China*, 627. In addition, refer to Hayhoe, *China's Universities 1895-1995: A Century of Cultural Conflict*, 42.
[62] The use of English rather than Chinese as the primary language of instruction at the mission schools was controversial at first, but by 1900 most of the Christian colleges had adopted this policy. Besides the pressure from Chinese Christians, practical dictates such as the availability of textbooks and the desire to attract students from elite families motivated missionary educators to take this route. See Lutz, *China and the Christian Colleges*, 70-71.
[63] Hayhoe, *China's Universities 1895-1995: A Century of Cultural Conflict*, 39, 48.

thirds of them baptized Christians.[64] A significant number of students left the schools before graduating, having obtained enough English to find employment.[65] Christian college graduates were strongly represented among early recipients of Boxer indemnity funds for overseas study in America because of their strong English skills. As of 1917, they constituted 132 out of 401 returned students, which was almost one-third of the total.[66]

During the period from 1915 to 1925, the colleges branched out into other areas of professional training, such as agriculture, law, engineering, and library science.[67] By 1922, there were approximately 4000 students in the Christian colleges, which represented 23.4 percent of China's national total. 8.7 percent of these were women, compared with only 2.5 percent in the government schools.[68] During the 1930s, the largest schools began accepting more non-Christian students and emphasizing general education over religious education. Fewer than half of the students at these institutions were baptized Protestants.[69]

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[64] Stauffer, ed. *The Christian Occupation of China*, 35, 419.
[65] For instance, the Anglo-Chinese College in Fuzhou reported in 1940 that of the 10000 students who had studied there for one year or more, only 1000 had actually graduated. See Dunch, "Mission Schools and Modernity: The Anglo-Chinese College, Fuzhou," 117.
[66] Lutz, *China and the Christian Colleges*, 74-74, 496-97.
[67] See Lutz, *China and the Christian Colleges*, 180-85. See also Fenn, *Christian Higher Education in Changing China 1880-1950*, 136-58.
[68] China Christian Educational Association, *Statistical Report of Christian Colleges and Universities in China, 1924*, Bulletin no. 8 (Shanghai: 1925), Table XVII. See also Hayhoe, *China's Universities 1895-1995: A Century of Cultural Conflict*, 47-48. Hayhoe quotes Chinese statistics that indicate there were 13098 students at modern universities in China in 1923.
[69] China Christian Educational Association, *Statistical Report: Christian Colleges and Professional Schools of China, 1930-1931*, Bulletin no. 28 (Shanghai: 1931), Tables 2-8.

Increasingly the schools were staffed and administered by Chinese. This trend was significantly accelerated by the rise in Chinese nationalism during the 1920s and the requirement for greater Chinese control over the mission schools that the new Nationalist Government imposed in 1928. Some of the colleges also united in order to build stronger and larger institutions, so that by 1936 the number of schools had decreased to thirteen, but the number of students had risen to 5600, which was twelve percent of China's total.[70] They became leaders in fields such as agriculture, medicine, journalism, and sociology.[71] By 1937 they had produced a total of some ten thousand graduates.[72]

After the Japanese invasion of 1937, some schools closed, others fled west and operated in Nationalist-controlled "Free China," while still others carried on in occupied areas. Despite these difficulties, enrollments kept climbing during the war years and the Christian colleges trained approximately fifteen percent of China's university students during this period. There was a dramatic rise in the number of women students during the war years as well, with some Christian institutions reporting that a third of their students were women.[73] This was considerably higher

[70] Boynton, *1936 Handbook of the Christian Movement in China*, 150. See also Lin Ching-jun, "Christian Education in China," in *China Christian Year Book* (Shanghai: 1936), 215-16.
[71] John King Fairbank, "The Many Faces of Protestant Missions," in *The Missionary Enterprise in China and America*, ed. John King Fairbank (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974), 13.
[72] Fenn, *Christian Higher Education in Changing China 1880-1950*, 157.
[73] Lutz, *China and the Christian Colleges*, 379, 494.

than the nineteen percent recorded at government universities.[74] After the war with Japan, the Christian schools worked hard to reestablish themselves in the midst of civil war. By 1950, the colleges had graduated a total of some 26000 students since their inception in the late 1800s and perhaps 40000 others had attended the schools but did not graduate[75] However, the victorious Communists deemed these institutions incompatible with socialism and so merged them with secular universities in the early 1950s, thus bringing their existence to an end.

Protestant Schools as Conduits of Modernity

Protestant schools in China—and around the world—were effective in spreading modernity because they significantly shaped the worldview and mental categories of their students. Ian Maxwell brings out this aspect of mission education in his valuable study of Church of Scotland mission policy in the early eighteenth century, which ends by considering the founding of a mission school by Alexander Duff in Calcutta in 1830. After several years of experience in the field, Duff argued persuasively to church leaders back in Scotland that missionary attempts to convert Hindus through street preaching were largely fruitless, since their listeners could not understand the "proofs" of Christianity being

[74] Hayhoe, *China's Universities 1895-1995: A Century of Cultural Conflict*, 55.
[75] Fenn, *Christian Higher Education in Changing China 1880-1950*, 158.

offered. In contrast, he found those Indians who had received some Western education far more ready to respond.[76]

Duff attributed the capacity of these young Hindu converts "to comprehend the nature of evidence" to the fact that they "had studied our language, our histories, and our science. They were acquainted with the sources and facts of history and chronology. They were inititated into the first principles of inductive reasoning. They knew the laws that regulate the successions of state in the material universe."[77] Though Duff's assumption that instructing Indians in Western knowledge would lead to significantly more Christian conversions among them turned out to be wrong, his conviction that it would produce a new and modern worldview proved abundantly accurate. And to be fair, missionary schooling often did produce numerous conversions, even if this was less the case in India.

One of the key means by which mission schools in China and elsewhere inculcated a modern mindset in their students was by teaching math and science. Indeed, the Protestant schools there were one of the few places where quality training in these subjects was available during this era.[78] As renowned Columbia educator and China specialist Paul

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[76] Ian Douglas Maxwell, "Civilization or Christianity? The Scottish Debate on Mission Methods, 1750-1835," in *Christian Mission and the Enlightenment*, ed. Brian Stanley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 138-39.

[77] Ian Douglas Maxwell, "Civilization or Christianity? The Scottish Debate on Mission Methods, 1750-1835," 139.

[78] The Chinese had a long-established native tradition in science and mathematics and one of the main reasons missionaries published works in these areas was because of a strong interest in such learning among a minority of intellectuals. See Elman, *On Their Own Terms: Science in China, 1550-1900*. However, mathematics and science were mostly

Monroe stated in 1925, "Most of China's 'modern education' and knowledge of western science has begun with the mission schools…. The earliest and, to the present, most of the effective modern schools have been mission schools."[79] The emphasis on Western science in the curriculum of the Christian colleges was of central importance, and unlike other elements such as instruction in the Chinese classics, remained constant up until 1920.[80] Indeed, on average a full one-third of the courses taught at the Christian colleges in the 1920s were in the areas of science and math, even though at the time Chinese students had a much stronger interest in the social sciences.[81]

Many missionaries saw instruction in mathematics and science as valuable not only because it imparted "useful" knowledge to students, but because it broke down the deeply rooted reliance on Confucian tradition that they regarded as an obstacle to progress. One missionary described in this way the impact he believed teaching mathematics had on Chinese students: "When he comes to those problems, which require clear

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excluded from the official examinations, particularly under the Qing, which meant that instruction in these subjects was limited. Moreover, the Chinese tradition in these areas lacked the coherence and power of the modern forms of science and mathematics introduced from the West. See Benjamin A. Elman, *A Cultural History of Civil Examinations in Late Imperial China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 460-520.

[79] Monroe, *China: A Nation in Evolution*, 305.

[80] See Ryan Dunch, "Science, Religion, and the Classics in Christian Higher Education to 1920," in *China's Christian Colleges: Cross-Cultural Connections 1900-1950*, ed. Daniel H. Bays and Ellen Widmer (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009). Available evidence suggests that the emphasis on math and science at the Christian colleges continued right up until 1950, since starting in the 1930s the KMT offered extra funding to schools (including the Christian colleges) for increasing the number of math and science courses, and a growing number of Chinese students began to choose science-related majors.

[81] Lutz, *China and the Christian Colleges*, 188.

reasoning in order to arrive at a solution, he becomes aware of a new world of thought in which Confucius is no longer his guide. He must rely upon first principles, axioms which are true not because some man has proclaimed them, but because God has so constructed the universe of mind and matter."[82] Many other modern subjects that the Christian colleges transmitted to China—from geography and world history to journalism and sociology—likewise challenged tradition and helped to form a new modern mindset in their Chinese pupils.

The Protestant colleges inculcated other aspects of modernity as well. One of them was nationalism, as Ryan Dunch points out in his study of the Anglo-Chinese College (*Yinghua shuyuan* 英華書院) in Fuzhou. He observes that the school's powerful emphasis on patriotic service contained within it "a conception of the nation in which each individual is a participant, a citizen with a responsibility toward the whole," an understanding that is "fundamentally and radically modern."[83] He also argues that this modern conception of the nation was central to the educational mission of the school from its founding in 1881 to its demise in 1949. Promotion of service to the nation was typical of the Christian colleges and grew out of the Christian ethic of love and self-sacrifice that was fundamental to their idenity.

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[82] Miner Searle Bates, "Christian Schools and Concerns in Education," RG 10, Box 119, Folder 1031, Miner Searle Bates Papers, Yale Divinity School Library Special Collections, New Haven, 20. Bates quotes here from a paper titled "Mission Boarding Schools" presented by W. E. Manly in 1899 at the West China Missionary Conference.
[83] Dunch, "Mission Schools and Modernity: The Anglo-Chinese College, Fuzhou," 111.

The campus life of the Protestant schools in China, especially the colleges, served as an incubator of various facets of modernity as well. Debate societies and newspapers taught notions of the public sphere, YMCA student chapters cultivated basic concepts of self-organization and civil society, while various sports programs encouraged physical fitness and discipline of the body.[84] Apart from community life, there were many other ways in which these institutions served as catalysts of modernity that could also be mentioned, such as by educating women, contributing to the expansion of China's civil society and fostering internationalism through their highly developed global networks.[85]

For more than seven decades, the Protestant schools constituted a vital source of modern knowledge in China. This was during a crucial period when Chinese elites were forced to come to grips with the challenge of the West. As microcosms of modernity in China, these institutions trained a corps of young Chinese who possessed a modern worldview and had been shaped by Protestant values. They filled the new modern professions and occupations that were starting to appear in the treaty ports and large cities of China at the time, such as educators,

[84] Edward Yihua Xu, "Liberal Arts Education in English and Campus Culture at St. John's University," in *China's Christian Colleges: Cross-Cultural Connections, 1900-1950*, ed. Daniel H. Bays and Ellen Widmer (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), 117-22.
[85] For a good study of a local mission in China that includes a section on the various ways in which mission schools promoted modernity, see Lawrence D. Kessler, "The Social Gospel and the Impact of Christianity on China: A Case Study of an Eastern Kiangsu Mission," in *Jidujiao yu Zhongguo xiandaihua* 基督教與中國現代化 [Christianity and China's Modernization], ed. Lin Zhiping 林治平 (Taibei 台北: Yuzhouguang chubanshe 宇宙光出版社, 1994), 606-13.

Western-style doctors, civil servants, business managers, church workers, social reformers, and even revolutionaries.[86] Their knowledge and training was a catalyst in promoting modern change in China, even if their efforts to Christianize Chinese society in the process saw only limited success.[87]

Other Mission Institutions and Modernity

Though the Protestant schools were the primary medium by which missionaries communicated modernity to the Chinese, they were by no means the only one. A broad variety of organizations grew out of the Protestant endeavor in China, including churches, hospitals, social reform societies, and printing presses. There is not space here to describe the full range of these institutions, but below I examine some of the most influential ones and reflect on how they transmitted notions of modernity to the Chinese.

Churches: The establishing of Christian congregations was naturally a central aspect of the missionaries' work in China, second in importance only to the proclamation of the Christian message. By 1920, there were some 6300 active churches that had been established around the country.[88] By 1936, this number had risen to 7200 and by 1949 it had

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[86] Dunch, "Mission Schools and Modernity: The Anglo-Chinese College, Fuzhou," 118.
[87] Lutz, *China and the Christian Colleges*, 80, 529.
[88] Stauffer, ed. *The Christian Occupation of China*, 340.

grown slightly to a maximum of 7300.[89] These figures suggest that Protestantism had a considerable public presence in Chinese society through the churches, with each of these congregations representing a small community that shaped the thought and behavior of its members in various ways. Though less obviously a medium of modernity than such institutions as the Christian colleges, there is a strong case to be made that the churches still played an important and often neglected part in this process.

There are a number of elements on which such a case could be built. The emphasis of churches on spiritual conversion, which often required overcoming strong social pressure, could be seen as fostering individualism and personal autonomy.[90] Allowing men and women to worship together and providing opportunities for women to serve and even lead in certain domains of church life effectively modeled a new place for women in society.[91] The role of Protestant congregations in zealously promoting literacy and the vernacular to facilitate understanding of the Bible could be regarded as advancing modernity. Indeed, statistics for 1920 showed that two-thirds of the men and more than half of the women in Protestant churches were literate, which was far above the average in

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[89] Boynton, *1936 Handbook of the Christian Movement in China*, xi. See also *Revised Directory of Protestant Missionaries in China*, Section I, 1-36. This latter source is used here to calculate the number of churches in China as of 1949 by adding the number of congregations for each of the denominations listed there.

[90] Field, "Near East Notes and Far East Queries," 42.

[91] Pui-lan Kwok, *Chinese Women and Christianity 1860-1927* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992). For a nuanced discussion of these issues, see Chapter Three in Kwok on "Women's Religious Participation and Leadership."

Chinese society at the time.[92] Finally, mention could be made of how churches naturally encouraged local self-organization and the cultivation of social virtue, thereby contributing to the expansion of Chinese civil society.

Society for the Diffusion of Christian and General Knowledge (SDK): Scotsman Alexander Williamson founded the SDK (*Guangxuehui* 廣學會) in Shanghai in 1887 in order to influence Chinese elites through "the publication and circulation of literature based on Christian principles throughout China."[93] Timothy Richard took the helm of the organization in 1890 with Williamson's passing and was the driving force in its remarkable success for the next 25 years. The SDK produced numerous works on Christianity and other subjects demonstrating the fruits of Western "Christian" civilization. Veteran American missionary Young J. Allen supported the venture by resurrecting his *Wanguo gongbao* 萬國公報 (Review of the Times) and publishing it under SDK auspices until 1907.[94] This paper enjoyed wide circulation during the 1890s and its numerous articles on various aspects of modernization had a significant

[92] Stauffer, ed. *The Christian Occupation of China*, 340.
[93] The SDK should not be confused with the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge in China (*Yizhihui*; 益智會) mentioned previously, which missionaries and merchants founded in Canton in 1834 and which included the well-known figures Elijah Bridgeman and Karl Gutzlaff as secretaries.
[94] Christian Literature Society, *Twentieth Annual Report of the Christian Literature Society for China* (Shanghai: Shanghai Mercury, 1907), 9.

impact on many of the Chinese officials who later led the 1898 Reform Movement.[95]

Richard devised a wide-ranging plan to influence Chinese elites by such means as periodicals, books, pamphlets, and essay contests.[96] As a result, the SDK became a major source of Christian and secular works in China. For instance, in 1903 the SDK published 35 new books totaling 194000 copies, and reprinted another 48 totaling 89000 copies. These included such titles as *International Law*; *Human Anatomy*; *Fifty Years of Science*; *Patriotism, True and False*; *On Electricity*; *Physical Education*; and a wide variety of religious works. That same year, their *Wanguo gongbao* reported a circulation of 54000.[97] In 1912, after the SDK had been renamed the Christian Literature Society (CLS), they began publishing the *Nüduobao* 女鐸報 (Women's Messenger) , one of China's first women's magazines.[98] The CLS gradually declined in influence after Richard's departure in 1915 due to flagging health, but remained a significant force in Christian publishing in China right up until 1949.

The SDK was one of the most important Protestant channels for modern ideas into China during the late nineteenth and early twentieth

[95] Bennett, *Missionary Journalist in China: Young J. Allen and His Magazines, 1860-1883*, x.
[96] D. MacGillivray, *A Century of Protestant Missions in China* (New York: American Tract Society, 1907), 631-33.
[97] Society for the Diffusion of Christian and General Knowledge, *Sixteenth Annual Report of the Society for the Diffusion of Christian and General Knowledge among the Chinese* (Shanghai: Shanghai Mercury, 1903), 15-18. The SDK achieved this level of output in 1903 with a staff of thirteen missionaries and seventy Chinese workers.
[98] Christian Literature Society, *The Twenty-Sixth Anuual Report of the Christian Literature Society for China* (Shanghai: Shanghai Mercury, 1913), 24.

centuries, exerting considerable influence on both Christian and non-Christian Chinese. The materials they published promoted a vision of modernity shaped by Protestant values and their wide circulation helped to popularize a wide range of modern ideas among China's literate classes. The work of the SDK also symbolized the emphasis that Protestant missionaries in China placed on the power of the printed word. The missionaries were instrumental in introducing modern Western printing technology to China and they also pioneered the publishing of newspapers in the country, which was then taken up by Chinese elites. In this way, the SDK and Protestant missions more generally contributed significantly to the emergence of a modern public sphere in China.[99]

Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA): The YMCA was started by the Englishman George Williams in 1845 in order to provide the multitudes of young men flooding to London with wholesome entertainment and Christian community. The group was founded and led by Christian laymen rather than clergy and this remained a central part of its ethos. It spread quickly to other cities in Great Britain and by 1851 had reached the United States, where it soon became one of the nation's largest and most influential Protestant organizations, with dozens of city

[99] For a discussion of how Protestant missions impacted the development of a modern press in China, see Xiantao Zhang, *The Origins of the Modern Chinese Press* (New York: Routledge, 2007).

associations and hundreds of student chapters on college campuses.[100] It was the American branch of the YMCA that provided most of the missionaries sent out by the organization's International Committee to establish Associations in other parts of the world, including China.

The first YMCA missionary to China, David Lyon, started work in Tianjin in 1895, and this marked the beginning of the Chinese YMCA (*Zhonghua Jidujiao Qingnianhui* 中華基督教青年會, usually abbreviated to *Qingnianhui* 青年會). Following John Mott's 1896 visit to the country, a national YMCA organization was formed (the Chinese name for the YMCA was.[101] The YMCA experienced remarkable growth in China, especially during its first 25 years. From a single city association in 1895, it grew to 26 in 1914, 39 in 1926, and to 45 in 1939. The organization's total membership, of which about ten percent were baptized Christians, grew steadily from 11718 in 1914 to a high point of 53812 in 1922 and still had 35653 members in 1932.[102] Apart from its city associations, the YMCA also established numerous student chapters in high schools and colleges. By 1920 it had 174 of them with a total of more than 29000 student

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[100] For more information on the development of the YMCA in North America, see Charles Howard Hopkins, *History of the YMCA in North America* (Association Press, 1951). In 1855 the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) was founded in London as a female counterpart to the YMCA, and later developed into a global organization as well.
[101] MacGillivray, *A Century of Protestant Missions in China*, 598-99.
[102] Zhao Xiaoyang 趙曉陽, *Jidujiao Qingnianhui zai Zhongguo: bentu he xiandai de tansuo* 基督教青年會在中國: 本土和現代的探索 [The YMCA in China: A Quest to Indigenize and Modernize] (Beijing 北京: Shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe 社會科學文獻出版社, 2008), 148, 300.

members, a third of them baptized Christians.[103] In addition, the YMCA actively cultivated local leadership and was the first Western mission to hand over control to a Chinese when C. T. Wang took the helm in 1912.

The YMCA adopted innovative strategies and methods in China, many of which effectively promoted modernity in China. For instance, its city associations had regular lectures on various topics such as science, democracy, and nationalism. Such themes were also frequently found in the group's popular monthly magazine *Qingnian jinbu* 青年進步 (Association Progress), which sold at least 5000 copies per issue from its founding in 1917 to its close in 1932.[104] The YMCA organized a broad variety of activities that significantly expanded civil society in China, from public health campaigns to night schools for urban laborers.[105] Through their city and school Associations, they successfully introduced athletics and physical exercise around the country, which spurred the formation of

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[103] Stauffer, ed. *The Christian Occupation of China*, 372.

[104] *Association Progress* was formed by the amalgamation of two YMCA publications. One of these was *Qingnian* 青年 (Youth), which was a monthly magazine edited by Xie Honglai (謝洪萊) from 1906 until his death in 1916, and had a circulation as high as 69000 in 1912. The other publication was *Jinbu* 進步 (Progress), which was edited by Fan Zimei 範子美 from 1911 to 1916 and had an average monthly circulation of about 3000. After Xie's death, the two publications were merged with Fan as chief editor. See Zhao Xiaoyang 趙曉陽, *Jidujiao Qingnianhui zai Zhongguo: bentu he xiandai de tansuo* 基督教青年會在中國: 本土和現代的探索 [The YMCA in China: A Quest to Indigenize and Modernize], 219-22.

[105] See Garrett for a good overview of the remarkable variety of activities the YMCA engaged in during its first thirty years. Shirley Garrett, *Social Reformers in Urban China: The Chinese YMCA, 1895-1926* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970). For the latter part of the period, see Jun Xing, *Baptized in the Fire of Revolution: The American Social Gospel and the YMCA In China, 1919-1937* (Cranbury: Lehigh University Press, 1996).

native athletic associations.[106] They also actively advanced literacy in China through the mass literacy campaigns of James Yen and smaller local efforts as well.[107] In all these ways, and many others as well, the YMCA was at the forefront of Protestant efforts to promote social uplift through the dissemination of modern ideas and practices during the Republican era.

Hospitals: Establishing hospitals and promoting Western medicine were a major element of the Protestant mission enterprise in China. Whereas many Chinese opposed the religious work of the missionaries, they generally received missionary doctors more favorably because of the physical benefits that their knowledge could bring.[108] During the early decades of Protestant medical work in China, Western medicine had not yet undergone the modern tranformation that marked the period from the 1840s to the 1940s, and so it did not have a decisive advantage over Chinese traditional medicine.[109] Consequently, the missionary doctors focused on two areas that native practitioners had little experience with, namely eye diseases and surgical procedures, which they handled with

[106] See Andrew D. Morris, *Marrow of the Nation: A History of Sport and Physical Culture in Republican China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004). The YMCA is particularly prominent in the introduction and first chapter.
[107] See Charles W. Hayford, *To the People: James Yen and Village China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 32-59.
[108] For a good illustration of this at the local level, and how medical missions transmitted concepts of modernity, see Kessler, "The Social Gospel and the Impact of Christianity on China: A Case Study of an Eastern Kiangsu Mission," 601-06.
[109] Paul U. Unschuld, *Medicine in China: A History of Ideas* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 235-36.

considerable success.[110] But with the advance of Western medicine and its firm establishment on a scientific basis by the end of the nineteenth century, the influence of medical missionaries increased greatly, as did their impact on Chinese medical practice.[111]

The first medical missionary to China was the American Peter Parker, who began work in Canton in 1835. The number grew to nineteen in 1881, to three hundred in 1912, and to 462 in 1920 before decreasing to 297 in 1936. The 1920 figure of 462 physicians represented seven percent of the total missionary force in China.[112] Naturally, the number of hospitals grew as well. In 1889 there were 61 hospitals, in 1912 the number had grown to 235 hospitals and by 1936 it declined to 232 hospitals.[113] These institutions were usually located in or near major cities along with the Western mission stations. A study conducted by the Rockefeller-funded China Medical Commission in 1914 reported that these mission hospitals were the dominant institutions for providing modern medical knowledge to the Chinese, since Western-style hospitals

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[110] G. H. Choa, *"Heal the Sick" Was Their Motto: The Protestant Medical Missionaries in China* (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 1990), 34-35.
[111] G. H. Choa, *"Heal the Sick" Was Their Motto: The Protestant Medical Missionaries in China*, 85-86.
[112] Latourette, *A History of Christian Missions in China*, 452. See also Miner Searle Bates, "1907-1922: Service--Social, Medical, YMCA," RG 10, Box 120, Folder 1067, Miner Searle Bates Papers, Yale Divinity School Library Special Collections, New Haven, 21. See as well Stauffer, ed. *The Christian Occupation of China*, 314; Boynton, *1936 Handbook of the Christian Movement in China*, 188.
[113] China Medical Commission of the Rockefeller Foundation, *Medicine in China* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1914), 10-13. See also Boynton, *1936 Handbook of the Christian Movement in China*, 188. Also relevant *Revised Directory of Protestant Missionaries in China*, Section III, 14-22.

run by the government had only a weak grasp of the new medicine.[114] By 1931, Protestant medical work accounted for 47 percent of the modern hospitals in China.[115]

Medical missionaries were also instrumental in developing modern medical education in China. At least as early as 1877, missionary doctors started formal medical school training, though only on a small scale.[116] By 1920, eleven of the 27 medical colleges in China were run by Protestant missions.[117] These institutions used modern methods that differed dramatically from the practices of traditional Chinese medicine, including making the study of science foundational to medical training, using cadavers for anatomy class (previously a taboo in China), conducting laboratory experiments, and inculcating both professional standards and ideals of service.[118] Many of the Western-style doctors in China were trained in these schools. Moreover, the Protestant missionaries wrote or translated many of the medical works that became standard textbooks at

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[114] China Medical Commission of the Rockefeller Foundation, *Medicine in China*, 12-13. Another report a few years later showed that while Protestant missionaries had done a great deal to spread modern medicine in China, many mission hospitals there still suffered from facilities that were very inadequate compared to standards in the West. See Harold Balme, "China and Modern Medicine: A Study in Medical Missionary Development," (London: United Council for Missionary Education, 1921).
[115] W. G. Lennox, "A Self Survey by Mission Hospitals in China," *Chinese Medical Journal* 46(1932): 484-534.
[116] Latourette, *A History of Christian Missions in China*, 458.
[117] Stauffer, ed. *The Christian Occupation of China*, 425.
[118] Lutz, *China and the Christian Colleges*, 525.

Chinese medical schools and also influenced Chinese outside of Christian circles.[119]

Missions and Imperialism

Considering the role of Protestant missionary institutions in transmitting notions of modernity into China inevitably raises the question of the extent to which missions were implicated in the larger Western imperial project and the related issue of whether the efforts of local converts to promote modernity reflected genuine agency or simply a subjection to Western hegemony. Arthur Schlesinger Jr. penned an early and seminal exploration of this question in the early 1970s, which was borne of his ruminations on the origins of the Vietnam War. His essay, titled "The Missionary Enterprise and Theories of Imperialism," starts by observing that Christian missions were largely absent from most theories of imperialism. He attributed this to the fact that missionaries did not fit into the classic theories of imperialism. The historical record indicated they were not obviously aligned with the political, economic, or military aspects of Western imperialism. In fact, they were often at variance with them. Consequently, Schlesinger posited the idea of "cultural imperialism" as a more useful way to explain the role that missionaries played in the

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[119] See Elman, *On Their Own Terms: Science in China, 1550-1900*, 283-302. Also see Harold Balme, *China and Modern Medicine: A Study in Medical Missionary Development* (London: United Council for Missionary Education, 1921), 46-48.

process of Western expansion. This term he defined as "purposeful aggression by one culture against the ideas and values of another."[120]

In Schlesinger's view, the "spiritual aggression" that missionaries engaged in against other peoples was one of destroying their cultures through the proclamation of a foreign faith. Moreover, he believed this form of aggression was ultimately more damaging than either political or economic imperialism. As he explained, "Cultural imperialism maintained that one set of values was better than another, and this was far more demoralizing."[121] Referring to Jean-Francois Revel's statement that cultural defeat is the most humiliating kind, he concluded that in the category of cultural defeat, "… religious defeat would presumably be the most humiliating of all."[122]

Schlesinger's theory of cultural imperialism drew some of its basic ideas from a group of scholars who had done work on the psychohistory of French North Africa, which included Fanon, Mannoni, and Memmi. However, given the tentative nature of his theory, he was careful to offer some qualifications of these ideas. In particular, he noted that the concept of cultures being in total conflict could be problematic, since societies are not homogenous. Thus, even in places where Christianity was considered a foreign religion, some people still chose to convert for social and political

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[120] Arthur Schlesinger, "The Missionary Enterprise and Theories of Imperialism," in *The Missionary Enterprise in China and America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974), 363.
[121] Arthur Schlesinger, "The Missionary Enterprise and Theories of Imperialism," 365.
[122] Arthur Schlesinger, "The Missionary Enterprise and Theories of Imperialism," 366.

reasons of their own, which could include using Christianity as an "instrument of modernization."[123]

Despite some helpful insights, Schlesinger's theory on the whole remains fundamentally flawed, and the empirical evidence presented in this study does not support it. In characterizing Christian missions in China as "spiritual aggression," Schlesinger implies that the motives and effect of missionary efforts was to destroy Chinese culture. Yet this fails to adequately explain the fact that many missionaries were active defenders of Chinese interests and made considerable efforts to preserve Chinese culture, even if they sought to change those aspects of it they regarded as inconsistent with Christian moral teaching. Moreover, as this dissertation shows, far from demoralizing the Chinese, missionary influence in many cases "remoralized" them by providing them with a new framework of values that enabled them to respond in a positive and proactive way to the challenges of modernity and so strengthen Chinese society.

Schlesinger was right to qualify his theory by noting that societies are complex and some members of a given polity may embrace a "foreign religion" for their own reasons. Yet if we take his ideas seriously, it is hard to avoid the implication that those who willingly embrace a foreign religion associated with imperialist powers because they believe it will improve their society are guilty of abetting cultural imperialism and commit "spiritual aggression" against their own people. The Chinese

[123] Arthur Schlesinger, "The Missionary Enterprise and Theories of Imperialism," 371.

Protestants in this study demonstrate the problematic nature of this position. Rather than "demoralizing" Chinese society and abetting foreign encroachment, they drew on the resources of Christianity to strengthen China and actively resist the forces of imperialism. In their own minds, Protestantism was a powerful aid in more effectively defending legitimate Chinese interests.

Another important scholarly attempt to understand the relationship between missions and imperialism is the work of Jean and John Comaroff, anthropologists at the University of Chicago. Their influential work *Of Revelation and Revolution* looks at how British Wesleyan missionaries introduced aspects of modernity to the Tswana people of South Africa in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. They argue that British missionaries engaged the Tswana in a "long conversation" that over time fundamentally altered the latter's mental and cultural landscape, even for those who did not convert. They described their research thus: "Hence our focus on the manner in which Christian images and rites were received and redeployed in everyday contexts: how plows were put to use, transforming agrarian production and relations among producers; how money changed senses of value; how cotton dresses, brass bedsteads, and windowpanes were implicated in the refashioning of people and their habitations; how discourses of individual

and collective rights refigured personal and political being."[124] This process they referred to as "colonization of consciousness," since they believed it opened the door to the subsequent incursion of British colonialism and capitalism.

In some respects, the Comaroff's thesis about the role of missionaries as conduits of modernity provides strong support for the argument I am making in this thesis and paints a convincing picture of how this process worked in the very different context of colonial South Africa. However, I differ with their evaluation of the missionary impact on the Tswana as unambiguously negative. "The evangelists were not just the bearers of a vocal Protestant ideology, not merely the media of modernity," they assert. "They were also the human vehicles of a hegemonic worldview."[125] What is problematic here is that the Comaroffs appear to argue that the modern Protestant worldview of the missionaries was inherently hegemonic in a way that made the eventual subjection of the Tswana to British colonial capitalism (and later to apartheid) all but inevitable.

This reading of the history is unduly teleological, and fails to capture the complexity of the role Christianity played in South Africa. The Comaroff's seem to regard the missionaries as being closely aligned with

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[124] Jean and John Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution: The Dialectics of Modernity on a South African Frontier*, vol. 2 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 498.
[125] Jean and John Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution: Christianity, Colonialism, and Consciousness in South Africa*, vol. 1 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 310.

the larger British imperial project so that their efforts lead inexorably to colonial oppression. As they say of the missionaries, in language reminiscent of Schlesinger: "Nonetheless, their assault was driven by a universalizing ethos whose prime object was to engage Africans in a web of symbolic and material transactions that would bind them ever more securely to the colonizing culture."[126] Yet in reality the missionaries were often in conflict with imperial designs and advanced causes such as education that empowered native peoples. Thus, oppression was far from the only possible outcome, though given the colonial regime that developed in South Africa, it is not surprising that this turned out to be the case. This study shows by way of contrast that in the semi-colonial context of Republican China, missionaries frequently contributed to China's modernization in ways that ended up reducing the power of imperialism, whether intentionally or otherwise. The best example of this was their role in training the group of highly educated and patriotic Chinese that are the focus of this study.

The other significant flaw in the Comaroff's analysis of missions in South Africa is that their focus on the overpowering hegemony of Western imperialism ends up diminishing the agency of the Tswana, and neglects the ways in which Tswana converts used Christianity to resist the forces of colonialism. It is worth noting that one of the primary criticisms of the

[126] Jean and John Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution: Christianity, Colonialism, and Consciousness in South Africa*, vol. 1, 310.

Comaroff's work has been that it is based primarily on mission and colonial sources, rather than on Tswana materials. Given this fact, it is not surprising that the "unfiltered" voices of Tswana converts are largely absent from their account. Had these voices been given the attention they deserve, they may well have revealed ways in which Christianity empowered Tswana converts to appropriate modernity and resist imperial hegemony, and so could have significantly altered the Comaroff's overall thesis. This dissertation, therefore, makes Chinese Protestants and their thinking central to its analysis, and in the process demonstrates how Christianity and the agency of converts were in fact highly compatible.

Ryan Dunch's article "Beyond Cultural Imperialism" represents another important exploration of the issue of missions and imperialism. He criticizes the concept of "cultural imperialism" for having three basic flaws: first, that the notion cannot be separated from essentializing discourses of national or cultural authenticity; second, that it has a consistent tendency to diminish or ignore the agency of those subject to it; and third, that its casting of cultural change as invariably coercive in effect fixes the gaze of the researcher on instances of subjugation, rather than on complexity. Dunch argues for a new kind of framework that can better explain the role of the missionary in the emergence of modernity around the world. He wants this model to show how missionaries fostered homogeneity at the global level (by spreading modern concepts claiming

universal validity such as the nation, science, rationality, and individualism) and differentiation at the local level (since native peoples adapted and reacted against these concepts). He sees such a model as not only emphasizing coercion and Western imposition, but also allowing for native agency and the creative potential of cultural encounters.

Dunch's critique of the term cultural imperialism is a valuable one and helps to restore greater balance to scholarly views of the missionary enterprise. In addition, his analysis of how Western missionaries contributed to the formation of a global modernity provides valuable support for the argument I am making in this thesis. One aspect of his argument that I would partially modify, however, relates to the emergence and extension of modernity around the globe. Dunch appears to argue that this process was essentially the same both in Europe and in other parts of the world, as his critique of the Comaroff's term "colonization of consciouness" shows: "The changes described by the Comaroffs were not just experienced by the Tswana. The introduction of clock time; … rationality; the medicalized body; the nation-state; economic development; the desirability of literacy and so on are all aspects of a new world order which has defined the experience of modernity in Western societies just as surely as it did for the Tswana…. From this perspective, the question becomes, have we all been colonized?"[127]

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[127] Ryan Dunch, "Beyond Cultural Imperialism: Cultural Theory, Christian Missions, and Global Modernity," *History and Theory* 41, no. 3 (October 2002): 313.

While it is certainly true that modernity produces similar changes across cultures, there were also important differences in how the West and other parts of the world experienced modernity. In the West, this process occurred over a long period of time and was largely an indigenous process, so the accompanying social transformation did not fundamentally threaten Western civilization as a cultural tradition, but built upon it in new ways. For many non-Western peoples, on the other hand, modernity was externally imposed over a short period of time and often resulted in a collapse of the old order and its cultural underpinnings. This obviously made the transition to modernity a much more painful process. It also helps to explain in part why Christianity was attractive to some in other cultures, since as the case studies in this thesis show, it allowed them to reorient their worldview in a way that aligned more closely with modernity, and thus eased the inner stress generated by this transition.

Dunch is right that scholars need to move beyond the concept of cultural imperialism in understanding the role of missionaries in modern world history, and his suggestion to look instead at how their influence generated both homogeneity and differentiation is a useful one, since it opens up the possibility of seeing both the positive and negative aspects of the missionary impact, rather than just the latter. However, there are two potential pitfalls to avoid in conceptualizing this model. The first is seeing homogenization (i.e. the cultural uniformity fostered by dissemination of

modern concepts claiming univeral validity) and differentation (i.e. the cultural diversity that results as these modern concepts are applied locally) as two separate phenomena, the former being the domain of the missionaries and the latter of native converts. Instead, these represent indivisible parts of the same process, namely the inculturation of modernity. In other words, the missionaries proclaim one culturally bound version of modernity, which acts as a catalyst for another culturally bound version of modernity. In both cases, the universal aspects of modernity and its local cultural expression are inseparable.

Closely related to this is a second danger that needs to be avoided, namely, thinking that native agency is evident only in the differentiating aspect of the spread of modernity, but not in the homogenizing aspect of it. What needs to be grasped here is that native agency is frequently operative in both dimensions, since even when embracing homogenization, locals usually do so to advance local purposes, rather than simply in submission to Western imperial power. Moreover, their adoption of such aspects of modernity often empowers them to more effectively resist Western imposition. Elite converts are especially important in examining how natives preserved some measure of autonomy in the process of engaging with and appropriating modernity, since they were early adopters and key agents in the spread of such ideas and practices. They are also vital to more accurately gauging the actual

impact that missionaries had, since missionary influence was mediated most powerfully through these converts. As we shall see in the three case studies of Chinese Protestants in this dissertation, the reality of native agency is readily apparent in both the homogenizing and differentiating aspects of modernization.

The Protestant missionary enterprise in China was a large and sophisticated undertaking, one that provides a particularly valuable illustration of how missions mediated modern ideas into societies outside of the West. With thousands of missionaries and powerful institutions like the Christian colleges and the YMCA, Protestantism exerted broad influence in China throughout the Republican period. Had it not been for the opposition of secular movements such as Communism, this influence would have reached even farther. While much of the research that has been done on Protestantism in China during this period focuses on the missionaries, in reality it was the Chinese Protestant elite they were instrumental in forming that played the more important role. Not only were these Chinese Protestants far more numerous than the missionaries, they were also able to operate far more effectively within a Chinese cultural context. It is to this group and its place in Chinese society that we now turn our attention.

Chapter 3

Positioning Protestantism

The elite Chinese Protestants that the missionaries trained through their schools and religious organizations ended up playing a significant part in China's modernization during the Republican period, yet surprisingly little is known about this group, and few historians have done research on them. This chapter pioneers an analysis of these Protestants as a larger national group, revealing their collective social composition based on the biographical data of several hundred individuals. Beyond this, it situates this group within its larger national and international contexts. Thus, a good portion of the chapter is devoted to describing the growth of Chinese Protestantism, the ways in which the Republican era was conducive to the rise of this elite group, and how they were part of a larger global trend of elite Protestant modernizers around the globe in the early twentieth century. Positioning elite Chinese Protestans in these various ways allows the nature and significance of this group to emerge with greater clarity.

The Development of Chinese Protestantism

Robert Morrison was in Canton seven years before he baptized his first convert, and in the first 25 years, he and his London Missionary

Society colleagues baptized a total of only ten Chinese.[1] By the time of the Opium War in 1840, the missionaries had made fewer than one hundred Chinese converts.[2] This number began to increase more rapidly after the war with the opening of treaty ports and arrival of more missionaries, reaching 350 Chinese Protestants in 1853. Following the opening of inland China to missionary activity in 1860 as a result of the Second Opium War, the ranks of the converts expanded further, to 5700 in 1869, 13000 in 1876, 37000 in 1889, and 80000 in 1898 just prior to the Boxer Uprising.[3] Thus, by 1900, the Chinese Protestant community was beginning to attain a size that made it possible to have a discernible impact on the broader society. This was not only a result of increasing numbers and institutional growth, but also because Chinese elites gradually grew more open to Christianity following China's defeat in the Sino-Japanese War of 1895.[4]

In the fifty years from 1900 to the beginning of Communist rule in China, the Protestant community continued to expand significantly. While the rate of increase was somewhat slower than the preceding period, the absolute number of converts won was far greater. Indeed, the large majority of Protestant converts were made between 1900 and 1950. From approximately 80000 members in 1900, the community grew to 235000

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[1] Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of Christian Missions in China* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1929), 212-13.
[2] Walter Henry Medhurst, *China: Its State and Prospects, with Especial Reference to the Spread of the Gospel* (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1838), 361-62.
[3] Latourette, *A History of Christian Missions in China*, 479, 96.
[4] Tsou Mingteh, "Christian Missionary as Confucian Intellectual: Gilbert Reid (1857-1927) and the Reform Movement in the Late Qing," in *Christianity in China from the Eighteenth Century to the Present*, ed. Daniel H. Bays (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 82.

in 1914, and then to 365000 in 1920.[5] Thus, in the space of twenty years, four times the number of converts had been added to the church than in the ninety-plus years preceding.

This comparatively idyllic time for Christianity in Republican China came to an end with the anti-Christian movement of the 1920s, but the churches continued to expand, if more slowly. By 1935, the mission churches in China reported 512000 members.[6] Even during the chaos years of war with Japan and civil war between the Nationalists and the Communists, the growth continued, so that by 1949 there were 615000 Chinese Protestants in the mission churches.[7] Thus, approximately eleven out of every ten thousand Chinese were Protestants in 1949, since China's estimated population at the time was 549 million.[8] The biggest of these denominational groups as of 1949 were the Church of Christ in China (CCC; *Zhongguo Jidujiaohui* 中國基督教會) with 175000 members, the Methodist denominations (*Xundaohu*i 循道會) with 100000, the China Inland Mission (CIM; *Zhongguo neidihui* 中國內地會) with 85000 members, the Anglican communion (*Zhongguo shenggonghui* 中國聖公會)

[5] Milton T. Stauffer, ed. *The Christian Occupation of China* (Shanghai: China Continuation Committee,1922), 38.
[6] Charles Luther Boynton, *1936 Handbook of the Christian Movement in China* (Shanghai: National Christian Council of China, 1936), ix.
[7] *Revised Directory of Protestant Missionaries in China*, (Shanghai: National Christian Council, 1950), Section I, 1-36.
[8] See Zhang Kaimin, "The Evolution of Modern Chinese Society from the Perspective of Population Changes, 1840-1949," in *China's Quest for Modernization: A Historical Perspective*, ed. Frederic Wakeman Jr. and Wang Xi (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 51.

in China with 65000 (formed in 1909 by the union of the Church Missionary Society, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, and the American Episcopalians), the various Lutheran missions (*Ludehui* 路德會) with 48000, and the Baptists (*Jinxinhui* 浸信會) with 39000.[9]

The 615000 members in these denominational churches represented the mainstream of Protestantism in China, but in the 1910s, indigenous Christian sects began to develop that added considerably to the size of the Protestant population. The largest of these groups was the *Zhen Yesu jiaohui* 真耶穌教會 (True Jesus Church), which was founded in 1917 and had 125000 members by 1949. Also influential were the *Juhuisuo* 聚會所(Assembly Hall), or *Xiaoqun* 小群 (Little Flock) churches started in 1928, which had 70000 followers by the time the CCP came to power. Smaller, but still important in these circles, was the *Yesu jiating* 耶穌家庭 (Jesus Family) with 18000 adherents in 1949, and the more Western-style Chinese Independent Churches, which had a membership of more than 10000 by this time.[10] When these groups are added to the figure above, the total number of baptized Chinese Protestants in 1949

[9] *Revised Directory of Protestant Missionaries in China*, Section I, 1-36. Note that the Anglican Communion in China consisted of a union that was forged in 1909 between the Church Missionary Society, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, and the American Episcopal Church.
[10] Bob Whyte, *Unfinished Encounter* (London: Collins, 1988), 200. See also *Revised Directory of Protestant Missionaries in China*, Section I, 24, 28, 32.

rises to some 840000, which represented approximately 15 of every ten thousand Chinese in a population of 549 million.

The above statistics do not fully reveal the number of Chinese influenced by Protestantism during these decades, since the figures given above for the mission churches included only so-called communicant members, who were those both baptized and still attending church. If baptized non-communicant individuals and those under instruction for baptism but not yet baptized are included, then the ranks of those within the Protestant orbit expand considerably. For instance, the total size of the mission churches in 1920 goes from 367000 members to 807000, in 1936 from 512000 to one million, and in 1949 from 828000 to nearly 1.5 million.[11] Based on these figures for the broader Protestant community, roughly 27 out of every ten thousand Chinese had some form of personal tie to Protestantism by the time the Republican period ended.

The distribution of these Chinese Protestants was concentrated mainly in the coastal provinces. These were also the areas that had first been entered by the Protestant missionaries, since they were more easily accessible, and where the missionaries were most numerous. Statistics for 1920 reveal that China's seven coastal provinces (out of a total of eighteen provinces) had 71 percent of the country's Protestant population and 57

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[11] Stauffer, ed. *The Christian Occupation of China*, xci. See also Boynton, *1936 Handbook of the Christian Movement in China*, vi. In addition, see Whyte, *Unfinished Encounter*, 200.

percent of the Western missionaries.[12] These seven provinces, ranked according to the size of their respective Chinese Protestant populations, were as follows: Guangdong, Shandong, Fujian, Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Zhili (now Hebei), and Manchuria (now the three provinces of Liaoning, Jilin, and Heilongjiang).[13]

Chinese Protestants and missionaries also demonstrated a strong tendency to concentrate in urban areas, a fact brought to light by the 1920 statistics as well. These figures show that although only six percent of China's population lived in cities of over fifty thousand inhabitants at the time, some 24 percent of Chinese Protestants and 66 percent of missionaries resided there.[14] This mission source, the *Christian Occupation of China*, defined the rural population as those living in cities of 10000 or less, a category that included 88 percent of China at the time.[15] Using this definition, the number of Protestants residing in urban areas in 1920 must have significantly exceeded the 24 percent in cities with over 50000 people. One study of three provinces in East China conducted in 1936 appears to give solid indication of this, since it reported that the six major

[12] Stauffer, ed. *The Christian Occupation of China*, 34.
[13] Stauffer, ed. *The Christian Occupation of China*, 293.
[14] Stauffer, ed. *The Christian Occupation of China*, 385. For further corroboration of the percentage of Chinese living in cities with over fifty thousand inhabitants at the time, see Zhang, "The Evolution of Modern Chinese Society from the Perspective of Population Changes, 1840-1949," 61.
[15] Stauffer, ed. *The Christian Occupation of China*, 34.

denominations operating in the region had an average urban membership of 39 percent.[16]

Major Streams of Chinese Protestantism

The Protestant community in China during the Republican period was far from being monolithic, and is better understood as consisting of several major streams. The largest of these might be called the "mission denominational" stream, which was composed of churches founded by Western Protestant denominations that sent missionaries to China. The major groups in this stream were the chief agents in establishing the numerous Christian schools, colleges, and hospitals in various parts of the country. The Western missions were usually based in urban areas, and this was where their institutional strength was centered, even though in many cases more than half their membership was in the countryside and attended rural churches.[17] These denominations—primarily the CCC, Methodists, Anglicans, Lutherans, and Baptists—accounted for about three-fifths of all the Protestants in China in 1949.[18]

Churches belonging to this stream of Protestantism often adopted Western ecclesiastical structures and traditions, and were dependent to a significant degree on Western leadership and financing throughout the

[16] Frank Wilson Price, *The Rural Church in China*, vol. 9, Studies in World Christianity (Lebanon: Sowers Printing Company, 1948), 19.
[17] Alan Hunter and Kim-Kwong Chan, *Protestantism in Contemporary China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 133-34.
[18] This is based on the statistics given in the previous section, minus the CIM.

Republican era. Nevertheless, highly qualified Chinese Christian leaders began to emerge from the ranks of these denominational churches in the 1910s and gradually gained significant influence in the churches. Daniel Bays has referred to this group of Chinese Christians and Western missionaries who led mainstream Protestantism in China during this period as the "Sino-foreign Protestant establishment."[19] Evidence of growing Chinese clout in church circles can be seen in the fact that while the 1907 national conference of Protestant leaders in Shanghai had no Chinese delegates, the one that followed in 1922 was more than half Chinese.[20] While the growth of this indigenous Protestant leadership started prior to the nationalistic fervor and anti-Christian sentiment of the 1920s, it was greatly accelerated as a result.[21]

An important sub-category of denominational Protestantism in China was the "Social Gospel" stream. Most influential in this sector were the YMCA and YWCA, which pioneered many methods of social reform and Christian "uplift" in China.[22] But there were many other similar groups large and small, such as the Women's Christian Temperance Union, the Chinese Mission to the Lepers, and the National Child Welfare Association.

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[19] Daniel H. Bays, "The Growth of Independent Christianity in China, 1900-1937," in *Christianity in China: From the Eighteenth Century to the Present*, ed. Daniel H. Bays (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 308-09.
[20] Stauffer, ed. *The Christian Occupation of China*, 34.
[21] See Lutz, *Chinese Politics and Christian Missions: The Anti-Christian Movements of 1920-1928*.
[22] For more information on the ties between the Social Gospel and the YMCA, see Jun Xing, *Baptized in the Fire of Revolution: The American Social Gospel and the YMCA In China, 1919-1937* (Cranbury: Lehigh University Press, 1996).

Besides these independent reform organizations, in 1922 the larger denominational missions also established the National Christian Council (NCC; *Zhonghua quanguo Jidujiao xiejinhui* 中華全國基督教協近會). This was a cooperative venture aimed at helping them more efficiently pursue common objectives, some with a direct social impact. These included the promotion of rural reform, opium prohibition, and efforts to improve relations between China and Japan.[23]

The Social Gospel was a school of Christian thought that developed in America in the late nineteenth century. It was based on the premise that the full salvation of the human individual required not only personal spiritual conversion, but also the transformation of society to bring it into conformity with Christian ethical principles.[24] A significant precursor of the Social Gospel can be found in eighteenth century British Protestantism, when many churches took action to address the social ills caused by the Industrial Revolution.[25] This outlook grew increasingly common among both American and British missionaries beginning around

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[23] "The Seventh Annual Meeting of the National Christian Council of China," (Shanghai: 1929), 18-22, 55-57, 67-70. For more on the NCC, see Peter Chen-Mian Wang, "Chinese Christians in Republican China," in *Handbook of Christianity in China Volume Two: 1800-Present*, ed. R. G. Tiedemann (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 600-07.

[24] For a concise overview of the term, see Erwin Fahlbusch and Geoffrey William Bromily, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Christianity*, vol. 5 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 67-69. For an older but classic treatment of the subject, see Charles H. Hopkins, *The Rise of the Social Gospel in American Protestantism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1940). See also Ahlstrom's chapter "The Social Gospel" in Syndey Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972).

[25] Dan Cui, "British Protestant Educational Activities and the Nationalization of Chinese Education in the 1920s," in *Education, Culture, and Identity in Twentieth-Century China*, ed. Glen Peterson, Ruth Hayhoe, and Yongling Lu (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001), 137.

the turn of the twentieth century. It was frequently associated with liberal "modernist" theology, which was primarily concerned with building God's Kingdom on earth rather than with calling people to membership in a spiritual Kingdom of God through faith in Christ. Thus, these missionaries promoted secular causes such as expanding literacy and improving public hygiene far more than their forebears had and taught their converts to do likewise. The schools and hospitals run by the denominational missions were important allies in this work, since their goals often aligned closely with Social Gospel ideals.[26]

A third major branch of the Protestant community in China during the Republican period was what might be called the "mission fundamentalist" stream. During the nineteenth century, the majority of missionaries could be placed in this category. They were theological conservatives whose primary concern was to win converts to the faith, rather than engage in social reform. The well-known quote of Griffith John at the 1877 missionary conference in Shanghai captures their outlook: "We are here, not to develop the resources of the country, not for the advancement of commerce, not for the mere promotion of civilization, but to do battle with the powers of darkness, to save men from sin, and

[26] See Miwa Hirono, *Civilizing Missions: International Relief Agencies in China* (New York: Palgrave Macmillen, 2008), 79-80.

conquer China for Christ."[27] However, by the second decade of the twentieth century, most Western denominational missions in China had embraced Social Gospel thinking, with only a minority of missions holding fast to the former view, the largest of them being the China Inland Mission.[28] Some other Protestant groups that could be considered part of this stream were the Christian and Missionary Alliance (CMA) and the many Pentecostal churches that began entering China during the early years of the twentieth century.[29]

Fundamentalist groups regarded involvement in "secular" pursuits such as education and social reform to be secondary to spiritual goals. Consequently, they established relatively few schools and hospitals and often concentrated on direct evangelism in more remote areas.[30] These groups were also firmly opposed to the "modernist" theology that frequently went hand in hand with Social Gospel views. The split between fundamentalists and theological liberals that divided Christian communities in the West during the early decades of the twentieth century also fractured the relative unity that had prevailed among

[27] See Griffith John, "The Holy Spirit in Connection with Our Work," in *Records of the General Conference of the Protestant Missionaries in China Held at Shanghai, May 10-24, 1877* (Shanghai: Presbyterian Mission Press, 1878), 32.
[28] See Alfred Feuerwerker, "The Foreign Presence in China," in *The Cambridge History of China: Republican China 1912-1949 Part 1*, ed. John King Fairbank and Denis Crispin Twitchett (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 168-69.
[29] Fundamentalist and Pentecostal groups are usually classified separately in the West because they have radically divergent views regarding the Holy Spirit. Nevertheless, they are combined here since both tend to share a conservative theological framework and focus on the spiritual side of Christianity rather than on social engagement.
[30] See Lauren F. Pfister, "Rethinking Missions in China: James Hudson Taylor and Timothy Richard," in *The Imperial Horizons of British Protestant Missions, 1880-1914*, ed. Andrew Porter (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 187-88.

Protestant missionaries in China for more than a century. As a result, fundamentalist missions were less willing to participate in joint endeavors with denominational groups. Thus, the CIM and the CMA decided to withdrew from the NCC in 1926.[31]

The fourth and final type of Protestant Christianity in China was the "Chinese indigenous" stream. The Protestant groups in this category were founded and run by Chinese, rather than depending on the resources or leadership of the Western missions. The earliest of them were Chinese churches that had originally been part of a Western denominational mission and then separated from it. Many were short-lived, but some thrived, like the model pioneered by Zhang Boling in Tianjin. They typically utilized Western ecclesiastical structures and theology.[32]

The other major groups in this stream had deeper Chinese roots, and thus their theology and forms of church life were more influenced by Chinese culture. The first of these was the True Jesus Church started by Wei Baoluo 魏保羅 (Paul Wei) in 1917, which sprung from Pentecostal roots and subsequently spread throughout China. The Jesus Family, founded in 1921 by Jing Dianying 敬奠瀛, was a Pentecostal group based

[31] See Latourette, *A History of Christian Missions in China*, 797.

[32] For more on the independent churches, see Jonathan T'ien-en Chao, "The Chinese Indigenous Church Movement, 1919-1927: A Protestant Response to the Anti-Christian Movements in Modern China" (dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1986), 63-94. In addition, a discussion of independent Chinese churches in Shandong can be found in Daniel H. Bays, "A Chinese Christian 'Public Sphere': Socioeconomic Mobility and the Formation of Urban Middle Class Protestant Communities in the Early Twentieth Century," in *Constructing China: The Interaction of Culture and Economics*, ed. Kenneth G. Lieberthal, Lin Shuen-fu, and Ernest Young (Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, University of Michigan, 1996), 110-112.

mainly in Shandong that espoused communal living. The last major homegrown Protestant movement to emerge during this period was the Little Flock started in 1928 by Ni Tuosheng 倪柝聲(Watchman Nee). Strongly evangelical rather than Pentecostal, this group adopted an informal ecclesiastical structure. By 1949, these indigenous churches together represented nearly a quarter of China's Protestant population.[33]

We have broken Chinese Protestantism into these four major streams as a way to better describe the development of Protestantism during the Republican era. However, such distinctions should not be pressed too far, since in reality there was significant overlap between these different branches. For instance, we have already noted that the Social Gospel organizations had close ties to Western denominational missions. As for the independent Chinese churches that broke away from Western missions, they remained far closer to the denominational stream of Protestantism structurally and culturally than to Chinese groups like the Jesus Family. And the conservative theology of the CIM had much more in common with that of the Little Flock than it did with the more liberal viewpoint evident within some groups like the YMCA during these decades.

[33] See Xi Lian, *Redeemed by Fire: The Rise of Popular Christianity in Modern China* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010). Chapters 2, 3, and 5 to 8 give detailed information on the main indigenous groups of Chinese Protestants. In addition, see Bays, "The Growth of Independent Christianity in China, 1900-1937," 309-12. See as well Hunter and Chan, *Protestantism in Contemporary China*, 119-34.

Nevertheless, this framework helps to highlight the important fact that Western denominational missions and their Social Gospel allies represented the mainstream of Chinese Protestantism during this period. Since these were also the branches of Protestantism that were the most socially engaged, we may say that a defining characteristic of Chinese Protestantism during the Republican era was its social engagement. The Chinese Protestants that are the focus of this study were very much a part of this mainstream Protestantism and their lives suggest the power that socially engaged religion can wield. While the version of Protestantism they embraced may have lacked the deep roots in Chinese culture that indigenous groups had, it exerted a far greater impact on the development of Chinese modernity.

Protestantism and Modernity in the Historiography on China

A survey of the historiography on modern China reveals that little scholarly attention has been given to Protestant missions, and still less to the question of how Protestants contributed to the formation of a Chinese modernity. This is rather surprising, given the scale of the Protestant missionary enterprise in China and the central role it played in the dissemination of modern ideas and practices in China during the late Qing and Republican eras. On the other hand, it is easier to see why Chinese

Protestant modernizers as a distinct religious subgroup have not been studied, since a significant number of these individuals were only nominally religious and even the more devoted ones among them often did not say much publicaly about their Christian faith, especially with the rise of strong anti-Christian sentiment in the 1920s. At any rate, below we discuss the place of Protestantism in the broader historiography of modern China as a way to show where this study fits and to demonstrate why there is a need for more research in this field.

One indication of the marginal status this subject has had in the academy is the small number of references to the missionary enterprise and its social impact in such leading introductory Chinese history texts as Immanuel Hsu's *The Rise of Modern China* and Jonathan Spence's *The Search for Modern China*.[34] Hsu briefly describes the work of missionaries in the nineteenth century and notes their influence on the quasi-Christian Taiping uprising and on the leaders of the 1898 Reform Movement, but has nothing on Protestant missions in the twentieth century. Spence has slightly more, including a description of how missionaries transmitted modern ideas into China during the nineteenth century and information on mission schools and the YMCA in the twentieth century. However, excluding the Taipings, only about two percent of both texts discuss

[34] See Immanuel C. Y. Hsu, *The Rise of Modern China* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990). See also Jonathan D. Spence, *The Search for Modern China* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1990).

Protestantism, with little mention made of Protestant converts or their impact on Chinese society.

This pattern is also evident in some of the books that have come out in recent years focused on issues related to Chinese modernity. Among those works dealing with aspects of modernity in China where Protestantism had a discernible impact, often little effort is made to explore the nature and extent of Protestant influence. One example of this phenomenon is Marie Claire Bergere's otherwise excellent biography of Sun Yatsen.[35] Bergere's book duly notes Sun's training at missionary schools, his baptism and subsequent ties with missionary and church circles in Hong Kong, as well as the fact that many of his early supporters were Protestants. However, she mentions these facts about Sun only very briefly and makes little attempt to probe deeper. Yet there are many aspects of this subject that deserve to be explored, such as why Sun maintained a Protestant identity to the end of his life, or the connection that Protestant ideas had to his outlook as a revolutionary and his commitment to modern ideas such as the nation or democracy.

Another example of this is Weili Ye's important book *Seeking Modernity in China's Name*, which describes the experiences of Chinese intellectuals who travelled to the United States for higher education between 1900 and 1927. As noted earlier in this study, a considerable

[35] See Marie Claire Bergere, *Sun Yat-Sen*, trans. Janet Lloyd (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998).

number of these students were graduates of Christian colleges in China, with numerous baptized Protestants in their ranks. However, Ye says little about this group of Christians and how religion shaped their commitment to modernity. For instance, in her discussion of the associational life of these students, she spends 24 pages on the Chinese Students' Alliance, which was the main group representing Chinese students in America, but only one page on the Chinese Students' Christian Association, even though she herself notes that it was the only Chinese student group "large enough to rival the Alliance."[36] Ye does a better job of showing the strong Protestant links that Chinese women students in America had, yet misses the opportunity to reflect on the role of Protestantism in helping these women forge a sense of modern identity.[37]

Of the small number of books in English that deal extensively with the issue of Protestantism and modernity in China, most were published more than thirty years ago and focus primarily on the work of missionaries. The most influential books in this category include James Thomson's *While China Faced West*, which describes the largely unsuccessful attempts of American Protestant missionaries to promote

[36] Weili Ye, *Seeking Modernity in China's Name: Chinese Students in the United States, 1900-1927* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001).
[37] Ye also fails to note the Protestant identity of one her main case studies in this chapter, Hu Binxia 胡彬夏 (also known as Zhu Hu Binxia 朱胡彬夏). See Weili Ye, *Seeking Modernity in China's Name: Chinese Students in the United States, 1900-1927*, 137-41.

rural reform in China during the Nationalist era;[38] Shirley Garrett's *Social Reformers in Urban China* recounting the diverse activities of the YMCA in the early decades of the twentieth century;[39] and Jessie Lutz's *China and the Christian Colleges*, a major work detailing the development of mission institutions of higher learning in China.[40] All three of these books are fine studies that show how the Protestant missions became conduits of modernity. However, they do so in an indirect manner, since their main focus is on mission history and social reform, rather than on modernity per se.

Many recent books dealing with subjects related to Protestantism and modernity in China are the work of Chinese scholars. These include such works as Dan Cui's *The Cultural Contribution of British Protestant Missionaries and British-American Cooperation to China's National Development during the 1920s* on how British missionaries significantly contributed to China's modernization in the areas of medicine, education, social reform, and the emancipation of women;[41] Wang Lixin's *Meiguo chuanjiaoshi yu wan Qing Zhongguo xiandaihua* 美國傳教士與晚清中國現代化 (American Missionaries and China's Modernization in the Late Qing

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[38] See James C. Thomson, *While China Faced West: American Reformers in Nationalist China, 1928-1937* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969).
[39] See Shirley Garrett, *Social Reformers in Urban China: The Chinese YMCA, 1895-1926* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970).
[40] See Jessie Gregory Lutz, *China and the Christian Colleges* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1971).
[41] See Dan Cui, *The Cultural Contribution of British Protestant Missionaries and British-American Cooperation to China's National Development During the 1920s* (Lanham: University of America Press, 1998).

Dynasty) on how American missionaries became the primary conveyors of Western knowledge to the Chinese during the final decades of Qing rule;[42] and Xiantao Zhang's *The Origins of the Modern Chinese Press* describing how Protestant missionaries introduced modern newspapers and printing technology to China, which then spurred the development of a modern public sphere and modern journalism.[43] These books are important studies on their respective topics, and deepen our understanding of the Protestant impact on China. What they lack, however, is a strong focus on Chinese Protestants and detailed analysis of how their thinking and behavior reflected modernity.

From this brief survey of the historiography on Protestantism and modernity in China, it is evident that this area has not been a major focus of scholarly research, despite the fact that Protestantism was a central part of the Western engagement with China during this period. Of the studies that have been done, the large majority of them focus on the missionary aspect of Protestantism, rather than on the role played by Chinese converts. Yet ironically, during the early decades of the twentieth century, these Chinese converts figured more prominently than the missionaries themselves in the actual work of disseminating modern ideas and practices in Chinese society. Therefore, if we wish to accurately

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[42] See Wang Lixin 王立新, *Meiguo chuanjiaoshi yu wan Qing xiandaihua* 美國傳教士與晚清現代化 [American Missionaries and China's Modernization in the Late Qing Dynasty] (Tianjin 天津: Tianjin renmin chubanshe 天津人民出版社, 1997).

[43] See Xiantao Zhang, *The Origins of the Modern Chinese Press: The Influence of the Protestant Missionary Press in Late Qing China* (New York: Routledge, 2007).

position Protestantism in China during this period, it is vital that we study this group more carefully to understand how they influenced the emergence of a Chinese modernity.

Bates' List of Chinese Protestants

This section represents the first attempt to empirically analyze elite Chinese Protestant as a nationwide community in Republican China. In order to understand the characteristics of this group and their place in Chinese society, I utilize a list of prominent Chinese Protestants compiled by the American missionary Miner Searle Bates. Bates was a member of the United Christian Missionary Society who taught history at the Protestant-run University of Nanking from 1920 to 1950. A Rhodes scholar and highly respected missionary with intimate knowledge of the Protestant enterprise in China, Bates put together his list after returning to the United States in 1950. He had originally intended to incorporate it as part of a history he was writing on Christianity in China from 1900 to 1950, but he passed away before completing the work.

Bates' list is a unique historical resource, because it is the only rigorous and extensive collection of data on influential Chinese Protestants during the first half of the twentieth century that is available. The list has a total of some 816 names, with basic biographical information provided for each. Bates has divided his list into five separate

sections labeled A through E. The first three sections—A with 169 names, B with 153 names, and C with 169 names—contain a majority of the more prominent individuals. They also have the most complete data, usually including the date and place of birth, education, vocation, and notable achievements. Section D with 262 names is the longest, but has significantly less data for each person. Finally, Section E with 93 names is the shortest and consists of those with close ties to Protestant circles, but without definitive evidence that they were baptized Christians.

Bates drew on a number of different sources in constructing his list. Naturally his many years of experience in China were immensely useful, since he had gained broad exposure to both missionary circles and the Chinese Protestant community. This gave him a solid familiarity with elite Chinese Protestants, as well as valuable contacts that could help him supplement and correct the information he gathered.[44] Bates also made extensive use of biographical lists that others had compiled, each with a different focus. Some of the major sources included the following:

Biographical Dictionary of Republican China: Edited by Howard Boorman, a scholar at Columbia University, this work is concerned with figures prominent in public life and in politics, particularly those who embraced modernity and reform of Chinese society. Of the 595 Chinese

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[44] Bates received input on his lists from at least 52 different individuals, as the materials related to his documentation of prominent Chinese Christians attest. See RG 10, Box 74, Folders 621-651, Miner Searle Bates Papers at Yale Divinity School Library Special Collections, New Haven.

profiled in its pages, Bates counted 59 who were known to be Protestants, and ten who could be identified as Catholic.[45]

China Christian Year Book: This series was published annually in China from 1910 to 1940 by the Christian Literature Society and provided an overview of recent developments within the Protestant community in China. The 1936-1937 issue of this series had a section by Zhu Lide 朱立德 (L. D. Cio) that profiled leading figures active in contemporary Chinese Protestantism. Bates found 58 Protestants in this source apart from those whose names appeared in Boorman's work.[46]

Frank Price List: Price was a Presbyterian missionary in China from 1923 to 1952 who taught at Nanjing Theological Seminary and was heavily involved in rural reform work. He published a list of Chinese Protestants in 1956 that focused on church leaders of the 1930s and 1940s, which he intended as a supplement to Boorman's work, since he knew it would include mainly those Chinese Protestants involved in medicine, university teaching, and the YMCA. Bates drew forty names from this material that were not found in the Boorman or Cio lists.[47]

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[45] Miner Searle Bates, "Christians in Boorman, Biographical Dictionary of Republican China," RG 10, Box 71, Folder 607, Miner Searle Bates Papers, Yale Divinity School Library Special Collections, New Haven.
[46] Miner Searle Bates, "First Additional List, from L. C. Cio for the China Christian Year Book 1936-1937," Bates, RG 10, Box, 71, Folder 607, Miner Searle Bates Papers, Yale Divinity School Library Special Collections, New Haven.
[47] Miner Searle Bates, "Second Additional List, Typed by Frank Price 1956-1957," RG 10, Box 71, Folder 607, Miner Searle Bates Papers, Yale Divinity School Library Special Collections, New Haven.

Who's Who in China: Bates utilized on the list of influential Chinese found in the first issue of this work, which was published in 1918. He also referred to *The China Year Book*, a few issues of which had similar lists. As with Boorman, these sources were concerned broadly with those Chinese who were visible in public life and politics. Bates discovered 129 Protestants in these Who's Who lists that did not appear in Boorman, Cio, or Price.[48]

Chinese Students Christian Association: The CSCA was founded in 1909 by Chinese Christian students in the United States, with the support of the YMCA. The aim of the CSCA was to promote and nurture Christian faith among overseas Chinese students. Bates made a list of the group's officers and prominent members using the group's monthly magazine. This source yielded an additional nineteen names not recorded by Boorman, Cio, Who's Who, or Frank Price.[49]

Bates had several aims in putting together his list, which he made clear in the version of it that he sent to a small circle of knowledgable individuals seeking their input. Among these were a desire to establish a truthful record before important sources were lost, to aid historians and other scholars unaware of the Christian identity of these prominent

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[48] Miner Searle Bates, "Third Additional List of Names Found in Who's Who in China (1918-1919) and in the Few Issues of the China Year Book Which Carried Such Sections," RG 10, Box 71, Folder 607, Miner Searle Bates Papers, Yale Divinity School Library Special Collections, New Haven.

[49] Miner Searle Bates, "Further Christians, Known Solely or Chiefly as Officers or Prominent in Chinese Students Christian Association in the U.S.," RG 10, Box 71, Folder 607, Miner Searle Bates Papers, Yale Divinity School Library Special Collections, New Haven.

Chinese from available sources and to reduce the danger of historical misrepresentation. In constructing a list that indicated the extent of Chinese Christian social influence during the Republican period and also transcended narrow loyalties, Bates chose to incorporate both prominent men and women from all of the major Protestant denominations, as well as from the Roman Catholic Church. He considered all who were members of a Christian church or denomination and had made a public profession of faith to be eligible for inclusion.[50]

While the Bates list provides a valuable window into the social composition of elite Christian circles during the Republican period, there are limits to what it can tell us as an historical source. Clearly Bates did not conduct a formal sociological survey of this group, but rather wove together information from a wide variety of sources to construct his list. Moreover, such a project as this is more likely to focus on the most prominent individuals belonging to the circle, since information can more readily be found on them. However, these people may not represent the norm for the larger group in some areas, such as the number who were educated overseas. Therefore, we should not regard the Bates list as an objective and fully authoritative profile of this group, but simply as an informed approximation of it and the conclusions we draw from it should be considered tentative in nature. Nevertheless, it remains the best source

[50] Miner Searle Bates, "To Select Friends Whose Interest and Cooperation Are Trusted," RG 10, Box 71, Folder 607, Miner Searle Bates Papers, Yale Divinity School Library Special Collections, New Haven.

available on Chinese Protestant elites and it deserves to be taken seriously as an overview of higher-level members of this group during the early decades of the twentieth century.

The Bates list provides compelling evidence of extensive Chinese Protestant influence in Republican society. Moreover, it shows that the endeavors of these individuals were closely connected to the broader effort to advance modernity in China during this period. The following brief biographical sketches, which include some of the leading figures in various fields who appear in the Bates list, help to illustrate this point:

Politics: Sun Ke 孫科 (in Cantonese, Sun Fo), born in 1891, was the son of Sun Yatsen and an influential political leader in his own right, especially during the Nationalist period. Sun studied at the University of California and at Columbia. After returning to China, he served as the mayor of Canton while his father was still alive (1921-1925) and was appointed a member of the provisional Central Executive Committee of the KMT in 1923, a post he was confirmed in after the KMT party structure was official ratified in 1926. He later served as president of the Legislative Yuan from 1932 to 1948 and in this position he played an instrumental role in formulating the national constitution (ratified in 1935) that committed the KMT to eventually implementing democratic rule.[51]

[51] See Miner Searle Bates, "List A Drafts," RG 10, Box 71, Folder 611, Miner Searle Bates Papers, Yale Divinity School Library Special Collections, New Haven, A 123. Also see "Sun Fo," in *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China*, ed. Howard L. Boorman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967-1979), 162-65.

Diplomacy: Wang Zhengting 王正廷 (C. T. Wang), born in 1882 in Zhejiang, was an important political leader and diplomat during the early Republic and Nationalist period. The son of a Methodist pastor, Wang studied at Yale University and was the first Chinese to lead the YMCA in China (1913-1916). After this he served as Vice Speaker of the Senate (1916-1917) and held foreign affairs posts under various cabinets in Beijing (1922-1926). In 1928, he was made Minister of Foreign Affairs by the KMT, a position he held until 1931. His last major portfolio was as Ambassador to the United States (1936-1938) during the beginning of the war with Japan.[52] Protestants were significantly represented among the ranks of Chinese diplomats during this period.[53]

Education: Mei Yiqi 梅貽琦, born in 1889 in Zhili (Hebei), was president of Tsinghua University for many years and one of China's leading educators during the Republican period. Mei was an early graduate of Zhang Boling's Nankai School in Tianjin and went on to study engineering in the United States, first at Worcester Polytechnic Institute and later the University of Chicago. Mei taught physics and mathematics at Tsinghua University (*Qinghua daxue* 清華大學) for ten years (1915-1925),

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[52] See Miner Searle Bates, "List A Drafts," A 143. See also "Wang Cheng-T'ing," in *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China*, ed. Howard L. Boorman (New York: Columbia Univeristy Press, 1967-1979), 362-64.

[53] Other prominent Protestant diplomats included Diao Zuoqian 刁作謙 (chief secretary to the Chinese delegation to the Washington Conference in 1921, minister to Cuba), Huang Rongliang 黃榮良 (minister to Austria, Chinese representative to the League of Nations), and Jiang Tingfu 蔣廷黻 (ambassador to the Soviet Union, permanent representative to UN Security Council).

served as dean for four years (1926-1930), and was president of the school for another seventeen years (1931-1948). He was also the primary leader of Associated Southwest University in Kunming, which was China's major center of higher learning during the war with Japan.[54] He was part of a very influential group of Protestant educators during this period.[55]

Law: Wang Chonghui 王寵惠, born in 1881 in Guangdong, was one of China's leading jurists during the Republican period and held important diplomatic and political posts as well. Wang's father was a pastor who had close ties to Sun Yatsen. Wang studied law at Beiyang Law School and at Yale, as well as in Britain and Europe. He was Minister of Justice under the early Republican government and then served as chairman of the Law Codification Commission (1916-1919). After a stint at the World Court (1923-1925), he was appointed Minister of Justice in Nanking (1926-1928) and after that president of the Judicial Yuan (1928-1931). During the war with Japan, he served as foreign minister (1937-1941) and had other high level posts in Chongqing.[56]

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[54] See Bates, "List A Drafts," A 103. See also "Mei Yi-Ch'i," in *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China*, ed. Howard L. Boorman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967-1979). In addition, see Stacey Bieler, "Mei Yiqi: University President in Wartime," in *Salt and Light: Lives of Faith That Shaped Modern China*, ed. Carol Lee Hamrin and Stacey Bieler (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2009), 29-31.

[55] Some other well-known Protestant educators of the period included Chen Yuguang 陳裕光 (long-time president of Nanjing University), Li Denghui 李登輝 (founder and president of Fudan University), and Tao Xingzhi 陶行知 (widely influential promoter of "life education" and rural education).

[56] See Bates, "List A Drafts," A 147. See also "Wang Ch'ung-Hui," in *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China*, ed. Howard L. Boorman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967-1979), 376-78.

Military: Zhang Zhijiang 張之江, born in 1881 in Zhili (Hebei), was an important military figure in China with close ties to the "Christian General" Feng Yuxiang. Zhang entered the military in 1903 and advanced quickly, becoming a staff officer by 1912. He was a supporter of the 1911 Revolution and, through his association with Feng after 1911, was appointed to numerous high positions, including governor of Manchuria (1924) and high posts in Northwest China (1926-1927). After Feng allied himself with the KMT in 1927, Zhang served in the State Council and the Central Executive Commission (1927-1928), continuing in the latter post for many years. In 1927 he founded the National Institute of Boxing to promote Chinese martial arts and long served as head of the organization.[57]

Business: Liu Hongsheng 劉鴻生, born in 1888 in Shanghai, was a highly successful industrialist also active in public service and philanthropy. After studying at St. John's University in Shanghai, he entered business in mining and by 1920 established his own small firm, the East China Coal Mining Company. Subsequently, he helped to found and became general manager of a new and profitable venture called Shanghai Cement Company. In 1924, he established a match factory, which

[57] See Bates, "List A Drafts," A 1. See also "Chang Chih-Chiang," in *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China*, ed. Howard L. Boorman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967-1979), 39-41. In addition, see Fuk-tsang Ying 刑福增, *Jidu xinyang yu jiuguo shijian: ershi shiji qianqi de ge an yanjiu* 基督信仰與救國實踐: 二十世紀前期的個案研究 [Christian Faith and Practicing National Salvation: Early Twentieth Century Case Studies] (Xianggang 香港: Jiandao shenxueyuan 建道神學院, 1997), 329-67.

through mergers was able to overcome Japanese and Swedish competition to emerge by 1935 as one of the largest match suppliers in China. Liu served for three years on the Shanghai Municipal Council (1931-1933) and was president of St. John's first Board of Directors in 1928.[58]

Publishing: Bao Xianchang 鮑咸昌, born in 1863 in Zhejiang, was co-founder in 1897 (along with his older brother Bao Xian'en, brother-in-law Xia Ruifang, and friend Gao Fengchi) of Commercial Press (*Shangwu yinshuguan* 商務印書館) in Shanghai, which became one of the largest publishing firms in China prior to 1949. Bao Xianchang, who was trained in modern publishing at the Presbyterian mission press in Shanghai, used his skill to help the company get off to an excellent start. Bao was manager of the publishing department after his brother's death in 1910 and became general manager of the firm from 1915 until he passed away in 1929.[59]

Periodicals: Luo Yunyan 羅運炎 (R. Y. Lo), born in 1890 in Jiangxi, was editor of the influential Christian weekly journal *Xinghua zhoubao* 興華週報 (Chinese Christian Advocate) in Shanghai from 1920 until the 1930s and was active in social reform and politics as well. Luo studied law at the University of Michigan and political science at Syracuse University.

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[58] See Miner Searle Bates, "List C Drafts," RG 10, Box 71, Folder 613, Miner Searle Bates Papers, Yale Divinity School Library Special Collections, New Haven, C 106. See also "Liu Hung-Sheng," in *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China*, ed. Howard L. Boorman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967-1979), 398-400.
[59] See Bates, "List C Drafts," C 122. See also *Shangwu yinshuguan zhilüe* 商務印書館志略 [Brief Chronicle of the Commercial Press] (Shanghai 上海: Shangwu yinshuguan 商務印書館, 1930), 1-5.

Besides his editing activities, he was part of the National Christian Council and, with its support, helped to found the National Anti-Opium Association in 1924. He was an active leader in the organization until its dissolution in 1937. From 1932, Luo was a member of the Legislative Yuan and helped draft labor laws. He was also an important lay leader in the Methodist Church.[60]

Journalism: Dong Xianguang 董顯光, born in 1887 in Zhejiang, was an important journalist and later in charge of international publicity for the Nationalists during the war with Japan. Dong was educated at University of Missouri and Columbia and, after early experience in journalism in Beijing, became editor of the *Tianjin yongbao* 天津庸報 (1925-1931). After this, he became managing director of *China Press* in Shanghai. His success in handling these posts led to his appointment by Chiang Kaishek (a friend from his youth) as minister responsible for censoring foreign press reports out of China, which evolved into having responsibility for overseas publicity after 1937.[61]

Literature: Xie Wanying 謝婉瑩, born in 1900 in Fujian, was one of China's first prominent female writers, who continued her successful

[60] See Bates, "List A Drafts," A 94. See also Miner Searle Bates, "Lo Yun-Yen," RG 10, Box 75, Folder 648, Miner Searle Bates Papers, Yale Divinity School Library Special Collections, New Haven. In addition, see Edward R. Slack Jr., "The National Anti-Opium Association and the Guomindang State, 1924-1937," in *Opium Regimes: China, Britain, and Japan, 1839-1952*, ed. Timothy Brook and Bob Tadashi Wakabayashi (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 250.

[61] See Bates, "List A Drafts," A 142. See also "Tung Hsien-Kuang," in *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China*, ed. Howard L. Boorman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967-1979), 337-40.

career throughout the Republican period. Xie, whose pen name was Bing Xin 冰心, was educated at Yanjing University and Wellesley College. Her writings were especially popular in the early 1920s and attracted large numbers of young readers, who were drawn by the deep emotional content and rich themes that centered on maternal love, childhood and adolescence, and the beauty of nature. Xie taught literature at Yanjing University from 1926 to 1937 and continued to write stories during the war years, including many for children.[62] She was one of a number of writers to emerge from Protestant circles in the Republican era.[63]

Religion: Cheng Jingyi 誠靜怡 (C. Y. Cheng), born in 1881 in North China, was the foremost leader of the dominant denominational stream of Chinese Protestantism during the Republican era. Cheng's father was an LMS pastor and Cheng Jingyi was educated at the Anglo-Chinese College in Beijing that was run by the LMS. In 1910, Cheng was one of only three Chinese delegates chosen to attend the important World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh and was the only Chinese member chosen for the China Continuation Committee (*Zhonghua xuxing weibanhui* 中華續行委辦會) that resulted from it. Cheng was the first general secretary of the NCC

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[62] See Bates, "List A Drafts," A 56. See also "Hsieh Wan-Ying," in *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China*, ed. Howard L. Boorman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967-1979), 103-05.

[63] Two other leading Protestant writers were Lao She 老舍 (professor for a time at Yanjing University and Cheeloo University, then a full-time writer of influential novels about the common people in China) and Xu Dishan 許地山 (professor at Yanjing University and the University of Hong Kong, author of important studies on Chinese religion and widely read novels).

from its formation in 1922 until 1933. When the China Christian Church was formed in 1927 as China's largest Protestant group, he was chosen as its first moderator and later its general secretary (1934-1939).[64] Cheng was one of the earliest and most significant Chinese church leaders to rise to prominence, but others soon followed.[65]

Medicine: Liu Ruiheng 劉瑞恆, born in 1890 in Zhili (Hebei), was a major figure in the advancement of Western medicine in China, particularly during the Nanjing decade. Liu was educated at the Anglo-Chinese College in Tianjin and trained in medicine at Harvard University. He was on the staff of the Peking Union Medical College from 1918 to 1929 and was superintendant of the institution for the last six years of this time. From 1926 to 1928 he served as president of the National Medical Association (*Zhonghua yixuehui* 中華醫學會). In 1929, he embarked on public service in the health arena under the Nationalist government. In 1931, he was made director general of the National Health Administration, a cabinet-level post that he held until 1937. During this period, he helped

[64] See Bates, "List A Drafts," A 27. See also "Ch'eng Jing-Yi," in *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China*, ed. Harold L. Boorman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967-1979), 284-86.
[65] Some other influential church leaders of this period included Xu Baoqian 徐寶謙 (leader of Beijing YMCA , General Secretary of Jiangxi Christian Rural Service Union), Zhao Zichen 趙紫宸 (long-serving professor of theology at Yanjing University, leading Chinese theologian of the Republican period), and Zhu Youyu 朱友漁 (chaplain at Peking Union Medical College, executive secretary of International Red Cross in China).

lay the foundations for a national public health service in China.[66] Liu was part of a large contingent of Chinese medical experts who were trained by the missionaries.[67]

Reform: Yu Rizhang 余日章 (David Yui), born in 1882 in Hubei, was leader of the YMCA in China from 1916 to 1932 and helped to forge the organization into a powerful instrument for promoting modern social reform. Yu, the son of a Chinese pastor, was educated at St. John's University and Harvard University. From 1913 to 1915, he was head of the Lecture Bureau of the YMCA, in which capacity he gave lectures all over China promoting such causes as literacy and modern education. In 1916, he was appointed general secretary of the YMCA and oversaw its development into one of the most influential Protestant reform organizations in the country. He also a leader of the NCC from 1922 to 1932, and founder and chairman of the Institute of Pacific Relations (*Taipingyang guojiao taolunhui* 太平洋國交討論會).[68] Many other Protestant social reformers were active during the years of the Republic.[69]

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[66] See Bates, "List A Drafts," A 88. See also "Liu Jui-Heng," in *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China*, ed. Howard L. Boorman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967-1979), 402-03.

[67] Some other major Protestant figures in the world of medicine were Diao Xinde 刁信德 (chief physician at St. Luke's Hospital in Shanghai, professor at St. John's Medical School, president of National Medical Association), Niu Huisheng 牛惠生 (founder and superintendent of Shanghai Orthopedic Hospital, first president of the China Medical Association), and Wu Liande 伍連德 (founder and then president of the National Medical Association, first head of China's National Quarantine Service).

[68] See Bates, "List A Drafts," A 168. See also "Yu Jih-Chang," in *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China*, ed. Howard L. Boorman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967-

The individuals described above were among the most prominent of the Chinese Protestants on Bates list and are mentioned here to emphasize the extent of Protestant influence during this period, as well as the strong orientation towards modernity that members of this community shared. Though the number of Protestants who attained such national stature was fairly small, they were especially evident in the fields of education, medicine, diplomacy, religion, literature, and reform. Moreover, there were numerous other less prominent Protestants in these various sectors of society who still wielded considerable influence. While the Chinese Protestant community produced more than its share of pioneering women, the list above includes only one female, which in part reflects the fact that far fewer of them attained prominence at the national level.

Analysis of Bates' List

In this section, I will analyze the data on Bates' list to determine what it tells us about the social profile of elite Chinese Protestants in the

1979), 64-66. In addition, see Yuan Fanglai 袁訪賚, *Yu Rizhang zhuan* 余日章傳 [Biography of Yu Rizhang] (Shanghai 上海: Qingnian xiehui shuju 青年協會書局, 1948).

[69] Other influential Protestant social reformers included Ding Shujing 丁淑靜 (first Chinese secretary of the YWCA in China), Yong Tao 雍濤 (founder and leader of the Peking Social Reform Association with more than 20000 members), and Zhang Fuliang 張福良 (head of rural reform efforts for the NCC, later in charge of Nationalist rural reform work in Jiangxi Province).

Republican era. First of all, since a large portion of the 816 individuals on Bates list have very incomplete data, I have chosen to narrow the pool down to those whose information is relatively complete. The standard I use to sift them is fairly straightforward. Those chosen must have at least three out of the following five items in their profile: name, gender, date of birth, province of origin, and church denomination. In addition, they need to have at least one piece of information related to vocation, as well as one more on either vocation or education. Thus, to be included in the final pool, an individual must have at least five different elements in their profile. Using this method reduces the size of Bates' list to 469, which is about 58 percent of the total. Bates himself had intended to narrow his larger list down to those three or four hundred names with the most complete data for inclusion in his planned book, so my approach is actually similar to his original intention.[70]

Gender

Gender	Number	Percentage
Male	438	93.4
Female	31	6.6
Total	469	100

[70] Miner Searle Bates, "Not to Be Cited or Publicly Referred to While in Labored Trial and Error," RG 10, Box 71, Folder 607, Miner Searle Bates Papers, Yale Divinity School Library Special Collections, New Haven.

The percentage of prominent women among this Protestant elite is low, but would still have to be considered very high in comparison with the broader society. Since the smaller pool of 469 people with more complete information naturally favors those who were better known and men were more highly represented in such circles than women, the number of women is somewhat lower than for the broader group of elite Protestants. Out of the 764 people from the Bates list with data on gender, 9.4% of them are women. This greater prominence of women in elite Protestant circles is consistent with the trend of modernity.

Protestant/Catholic Affiliation

Affiliation	Number	Percentage
Protestant	457	97.4
Catholic	12	2.6
Total	469	100

The percentage of Roman Catholics on Bates' list is very small, though it is significant that Bates made the effort to include them. The fact that he did not find more elite Catholics for his list reflects in part the fact that Bates was naturally more familiar with the Protestant community and had easier access to information about its members. However, in part it was also because Catholic missionaries in China put primary emphasis on

elementary and secondary education.[71] As a result, they had fewer institutions of higher learning in China and established them later than the Protestants. The tertiary institutions founded by the Catholics in China included Aurora University (Zhendan daxue 震旦大學) in Shanghai in 1903; the College of Industry and Commerce in Tianjin (Tianjin gongshang daxue 天津工商大學) in 1923; and Furen University (Furen daxue 輔仁大學) in Beijing in 1927.[72] The scale and timing of their activities in this domain meant that there were far fewer Catholics than Protestants in the ranks of China's elite modernizers during the Republican era.[73]

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[71] See Xiaoxin Wu, "A Case Study of the Catholic University of Peking During the Benedictine Period (1927-1933)" (University of San Francisco, 1993), 27.

[72] For more information on Furen University and Zhendan University, see Xian Liu, "Two Universities and Two Eras of Catholicism in China: Fu Ren University and Aurora University, 1903-1937," *Christian Higher Education* 8, no. 5 (2009). For a monograph focusing on Furen University, see John Shujie Chen, *The Rise and Fall of Fu Ren University, Beijing: Catholic Higher Education in China* (New York: RoutledgeFalmer, 2004). For more on the College of Industry and Commerce, see Richard Madsen, "Hierarchical Modernization: Tianjin's Gong Shang College as a Model for Catholic Community in North China," in *Becoming Chinese: Passages to Modernity and Beyond*, ed. Wen-hsin Yeh (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).

[73] The larger context of Catholicism and Catholic missions in China also contributed significantly to this state of affairs. Though the Roman Catholic Church experienced a powerful missionary expansion during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, with the Jesuit order playing a central role, this momentum was lost due to the suppression of the Jesuits from 1773 to 1814 and the tribulations suffered by the Vatican at the hands of Napoleon Bonaparte. Catholic mission efforts recovered only slowly over the course of the nineteenth century. Further compounding this, the Catholic Church adopted an attitude of firm opposition to some of the values of modernity following the French Revolution, which naturally meant less support for higher education. See Brian Stanley, ed. *Christian Missions and the Enlightenment* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 2.

Denominational Affiliation

Denomination	Male	Female	Total	Percentage
Methodist	38	8	46	26.6
Southern Methodist	11	1	12	6.9
CCC	13	1	14	8.1
Presbyterian	12	1	13	7.5
Congregational	10	2	12	6.9
LMS	3	0	3	1.7
Anglican	23	2	24	13.9
Episcopal	11	0	12	6.4
Baptist	14	2	16	9.2
Southern Baptist	8	0	8	4.2

Altogether 173 individuals out of the pool of 469 we are using have their denominational affiliation listed, which includes 156 men and 17 women. On the chart above, these denominations are grouped as four main families: Methodist, CCC, Anglican, and Baptist. As these figures show, the Methodist churches produced the largest number of prominent Protestants, with fully one third of the total, even though in 1949 they were only the third largest Protestant group in China. Also significant is

the fact just over half of the total of seventeen women on Bates' list with a known denominational affiliation belonged to Methodist groups.

The CCC, largest of the Protestant denominations in 1949, has only 8.1 percent of the total above. However, since the CCC incorporated the Presbyterian, Congregational, and LMS churches into a single denomination when it was formed in 1927, the figures for these groups should be added to the CCC number to get a more accurate reading. When we do this, the total comes to 24.2 percent, nearly a quarter of the pool. However, the number of women listed is only half that of the Methodist groups.[74]

Two other significant elite groupings should be noted here. Anglicans compose 13.9 percent of our sample, second only to the Methodists as a single denomination. When combined with the Episcopalian branch of this tradition, the number rises to 20.3 percent, which is fully one-fifth of the total pool. Baptists are the last major group worth mentioning here, since they make up 13.4 percent of the pool when combined with the Southern Baptists, which represent more than one-eighth of the total.

A number of large Protestant groups had little representation among this pool of 173 individuals. The CIM was the second biggest Protestant group in China in 1949, but had only one person in its ranks,

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[74] For more on the history of the CCC, see Wallace Merwin, *Adventure in Unity: The Church of Christ in China* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974).

which no doubt was due to their emphasis on rural evangelism and church planting.[75] The Lutherans were the seventh largest Protestant group in China in 1949, yet have only two people out of the pool of 173, which likely reflected their comparatively lower degree of involvement in the Christian colleges in China.[76] Turning to indigenous groups, we find that Chinese independent churches emerging out of Western denominational missions have only one individual listed. Meanwhile, the True Jesus Church and Little Flock have no representatives in the pool, since they developed mainly after 1920 and, like the CIM, did not emphasize higher education or social engagment.

Births by Decade

Decade	Number	Percentage
1840s	1	0.3
1850s	1	0.3
1860s	7	2.1
1870s	31	9.4
1880s	99	30.1
1890s	147	44.7

[75] Some members of this group came from a CIM background and later affiliated with other denominations. Two examples would be the rural reformer James Yen, who attended CIM schools as a boy in Sichuan, and church leader Liu Tingfang (one of the three case studies in this dissertation), whose parents belonged to the CIM.
[76] William Purviance Fenn, *Christian Higher Education in Changing China 1880-1950* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), Appendix E, 242.

1900s	40	12.2
1910s	3	0.9

Information on date of birth was available for 337 persons out of the total pool of 469. As the statistics above indicate, the largest contingent of prominent Protestants on Bates' list was born in the 1890s, followed by the 1880s and the 1900s. Together the individuals born in these three decades accounted for 87 percent of the total. This predominance of prominent Chinese Protestants born during the last two decades of the nineteenth century was tied to three important factors: the growth of the Protestant community; the development of modern higher education in China (particularly Protestant institutions); and the new opportunities that became available to Chinese Christians following the end of Qing rule in 1911.

It is not surprising that Chinese Protestants born before 1880 and after 1910 were less likely to become influential modernizers during the Republican period, since they were not as well placed to take advantage of these changes. Those born prior to 1880 were fewer in number, had less access to modern higher education and were already over thirty at the time of the 1911 Revolution, meaning that their career trajectories were already largely set. Those born after 1910 only completed their education in the mid-1930s or later, which meant they had little opportunity to

influence Chinese society before the chaotic years of war with Japan began in 1937. Protestants born in the 1890s, on the other hand, were reasonably numerous, had good access to modern higher education by the time they were college age, began their careers in the more open post-1911 period, and still had enough time to leave a lasting mark on China prior to the outbreak of war in 1937.

Province of Origin

Province	Male	Female	Total	Percent of Elite	Percent of Protestants in 1920	Percent of Missionaries in 1920
Guangdong	52	1	53	14.4	17.7	11.0
Jiangsu	37	3	40	10.7	8.6	14.1
Shanghai	24	2	26	6.9	See Jiangsu	See Jiangsu
Zhejiang	51	6	57	15.2	8.1	5.2
Fujian	40	8	48	12.8	11.2	6.8
Hebei/Chih-li	36	3	39	10.4	6.4	10.6
Shandong	22	1	23	6.1	12.1	7.6
Hubei	22	0	22	5.9	4.3	5.9
Anhui	18	1	19	5.1	3.4	2.6
Hunan	14	1	15	4.0	3.2	6.0
Jiangxi	6	2	8	2.1	2.3	3.4
Sichuan	7	0	7	1.9	3.7	8.2

Liaoning/Fengtien	2	0	2	0.5	Unavailable	Unavailable
Taiwan	2	0	2	0.5	Unavailable	Unavailable
Shanxi	1	0	1	0.3	3.8	3.6
Henan	1	0	1	0.3	3.6	5.9
Guizhou	1	0	1	0.3	2.7	0.6
Guangxi	1	0	1	0.3	1.4	1.1
Overseas	6	0	6	1.6	Unavailable	Unavailable

The figures above are based on analysis of the 371 individuals (343 men and 28 women) out of the pool of 469 who have information available on their province of origin. Note that the table uses the current naming system for Chinese provinces with former province names for Hebei and Liaoning. Also, it should be noted that Taiwan was controlled by Japan from 1895 to 1945. In addition, the table lists Jiangsu and Shanghai separately in order to show the influence of Shanghai, even though at the time the Chinese section of Shanghai was under the jurisdiction of Jiangsu, while the large foreign concessions there were controlled by the Western powers and Japan.

From the results we see that Jiangsu (including Shanghai), Guangdong, Zhejiang, Fujian, and Hebei were the provinces that produced the largest number of prominent Protestants, accounting for more than two-thirds of the total of 371. These same provinces also were five of the

top six largest in terms of Protestant population (making up just over half of the total), and four of the top six in terms of the number of missionaries (making up just under half of the total). Particularly noteworthy are the coastal provinces of Jiangsu (including Shanghai) and Zhejiang, which together produced 32.8 percent of the total pool of 371 Protestants, though in 1920 they had only 16.7 percent of the Protestant population and 19.3 percent of the missionaries. In addition, Fujian, Zhejiang, and Jiangsu (including Shanghai) accounted for 19 of the 28 women Protestants in the pool. As these statistics demonstrate, China's coastal provinces produced the large majority of influential Protestants, both male and female. Nevertheless, it is also evident that China's Protestant elite was nationwide in its dimensions.

Domestic Education

Type	Male Number	Male Percent	Female Number	Female Percent	Total Number	Total Percent
China Classic	7	3.1	0	0	7	2.9
China Modern	53	23.5	0	0	53	22.0
Protestant	171	75.7	15	100	186	77.2
Catholic	3	1.3	0	0	3	1.1
Military	7	3.1	0	0	7	2.9

Some 241 individuals (226 men and 15 women) out of the sifted pool of 469 names from Bates' list had information about their type of education in China. The figures given show the number and percentage of individuals among the group of 241 who received a particular type of education. As the data above reveals, a small degree of overlap exists between the categories, since the number of male instances recorded comes to 241, even though there are only 226 men in the pool. What these statistics establish with certainty is the extremely significant role of the Christian colleges in training this Protestant elite. Just over three-quarters of those who have education information available studied at the colleges, a figure that is three times larger than the next highest category, namely Chinese universities.

The Christian colleges constituted a vital path to social advancement for China's Protestant community. Particularly for Protestant women, it is clear that these institutions were essentially their only route to higher education. Protestant colleges were also vital in opening doors to study overseas. Of course, the above statistics analyze only those Protestant in the larger pool of 469 with information listed on their educational background. The actual number who received tertiary education was almost certainly much higher, as vocational data and other aspects of the Bates' profiles indirectly suggests. Therefore, the statistics

above likely apply to our larger pool of 469, and not just to the subset of 241 that we analyze here.

Overseas Education

Location	Number	Percentage
United States	261	91
Britain	29	10
Japan	10	3.5
Germany	5	1.7

A total of 288 individuals out of our pool of 469 elite Protestants studied overseas and this number may well have been higher if data was available on this point for the entire pool. This suggests that perhaps 60 percent of the Protestants on Bates' larger list had overseas education, which is a very high proportion indeed, particularly when one considers how rare such opportunities were in China at the time. Nevertheless, this figure is quite likely accurate, since high quality graduate education in China was very scarce and the Christian colleges provided students with the requisite language skills and connections to make study in the West a feasible option. These figures also indicate that elite Chinese Protestants were a very cosmopolitan group possessing strong global ties.

The figures above have a small degree of overlap, mainly due to students studying in both the United States and Britain. It is not surprising that such a large percentage of Chinese Protestants who studied overseas went to the United States. Most of the Protestant colleges in China were started by American missionaries and were accredited in the United States. Moreover, they provided their students with excellent English training and an opportunity to receive letters of recommendation from American missionary faculty. Britain was the next most common destination, which no doubt reflected the significant British missionary involvement in China's Christian colleges and the fact that students were trained in English.[77] It is striking how few Protestants studied in Japan, even though this was a major destination for Chinese students going abroad throughout the period.[78] This highlights the role of the Protestant educational institutions as conduits of Western cultural influence in China.

[77] Other Western countries had minimal representation on Bates' list: three students went to France, two to Italy, and one to Canada.

[78] Japan was by far the leading destination for Chinese students prior to 1911 and, though its influence declined somewhat after 1911, remained a leading center for Chinese students right up until war broke out in 1937. Some approximate numbers for Chinese students in Japan are as follows: 13 students in 1896, 1000 students in 1903; 12000 students in 1906; 1400 students in 1912; 5000 students in 1914; 2500 students in 1916; 500 students in 1919; and 5000 students in 1936. See Paula Harrell, *Sowing the Seeds of Change: Chinese Students, Japanese Teachers, 1895-1905* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992), 1-2, 218-20. By contrast, the number of Chinese students who went to America was very low before 1911, but gradually grew, so that in time the United States became a top destination for study. Some estimated numbers for Chinese students in the United States are as follows: 300 students in 1906; 650 students in 1911; 1000 students in 1915; 1200 students in 1918; and 1600 students in 1925. See Ye, *Seeking Modernity in China's Name: Chinese Students in the United States, 1900-1927*, 9-10.

Degrees Obtained

Degree Obtained	Male Number	Male Percent	Female Number	Female Percent	Total Number	Total Percent
Bachelors	246	98.0	18	100.0	264	98.1
Masters	174	69.3	10	55.6	184	68.4
Doctorate	87	34.7	3	16.7	90	33.5
Medical Doctor	28	11.2	5	27.8	33	12.3
Law	6	2.4	0	0	6	2.2
Confucian	16	6.4	0	0	16	5.9

The figures on degrees obtained by the Protestant on Bates' list are based on the 269 individuals (251 men and 18 women) with such data available out of our pool of 469. Clearly there is significant overlap between the categories, since lower degrees were stepping-stones to higher degrees and some individuals started with Confucian education and then shifted to modern education. It should also be noted that those who studied for medical and law degrees at Protestant institutions in China (a minority of those with such degrees, since most obtained them overseas) were typically only required to do two years of undergraduate work before starting their professional program.[79] Nevertheless, I

[79] See Lutz, *China and the Christian Colleges*, 146-58.

consider them here to have both a bachelor's degree and a graduate degree.

Looking at the statistics, we see that nearly all of the 269 people in the group had a bachelor's degree, two-thirds had a master's degree, and fully one-third had a doctoral degree. If we combine the number of master's degrees with the number of medical and law degrees, we see that the total number of elite Protestants having a graduate degree of some kind was 82.9 percent, which is remarkably high in an era when even a college education was extremely rare. Since it is evident that nearly all of the people on Bates' list were well educated, these statistics most likely represent a reasonable approximation of the educational profile of the larger group. More than half of the eighteen women had master's degrees and more than a quarter of them were medical doctors, which is noteworthy given that Chinese universities did not start accepting women students until 1920.[80]

Occupation

Occupation	Male Number	Male Percent	Female Number	Female Percent	Total Number	Total Percent
Christian	174	39.7	12	38.7	186	39.7

[80] Normal schools to train women teachers had been started in China as early as 1905, but these were at a lower level than universities. See Sarah Coles McElroy, "Transforming China through Education: Yan Xiu, Zhang Boling, and the Effort to Build a New School System, 1901-1927" (dissertation, Yale University, 1996), 74-85.

Education						
Government	169	38.6	4	12.9	173	36.9
Christian Ministry	129	29.5	10	32.3	139	29.6
Write/ Publish	111	25.3	7	22.6	118	25.2
Secular Education	113	25.8	4	12.9	117	24.9
Diplomacy	43	9.8	0	0	43	9.2
Medicine	30	6.8	8	25.8	38	8.1
Business	38	8.7	0	0	38	8.1
Seminary Education	37	8.4	0	0	37	7.9
Military	26	5.9	0	0	26	5.5
Social Service	22	5.0	2	6.5	24	5.1
Finance	17	3.9	0	0	17	3.6

These statistics on occupation include all 469 individuals (438 men and 31 women) in our pool, since data on vocation was a requirement for inclusion in this group. I have created the different categories of

occupations listed above in order to facilitate analysis of this group. Most of these categories are self-explanatory, but a few require some clarification. Government includes both involvment in such bureaucratic divisions as the Customs Service and Postal Service, as well as more explicitly political positions. Writing/Publishing combines such vocations as editors, translators, journalists, novelists, and publishers. Finally, Social Service applies to those who were engaged in various types of social reform on a full-time basis, as opposed to those involved as part-time volunteers.

The numbers above indicate the percentage of the 469 Protestants in the pool who engaged in a given profession at some point in their lives. Most of these individuals had more than one vocation, as indicated by the fact that when the percentages for each occupation are combined, the total is well over one hundred percent. What the figures in the table reveal is that education was by far the main occupational field of these Protestants. Combining the statistics for Christian and secular education, some 64.6 percent of our pool was involved in the educational sector for at least part of their lives. Though seminary education could conceivably be considered part of this category as well, in this study it is combined instead with Christian ministry. These two categories together total 37.5 percent, and represent another important vocational focus. Thus, roughly two-thirds of

the 469 Protestants that we examine here were involved in education and more than a third in Christian ministry.

Another common occupation for this group was public service, with a sizeable 36.9 percent holding some kind of government position during their working lives. Many of these posts would have been in the expanding realm of China's modern bureaucracy, but some were more overtly political, which reflects the comparative freedom that Chinese Christians had to participate in Republican society. A fourth career path with high representation among elite Protestants was writing and publishing. Just over one-quarter of our pool was employed in such occupations for a least a time, which indicates that Protestants were active participants in the formation of a modern public sphere in China. And the three vocations of diplomacy, medicine, and business each had nearly ten percent of the total. This survey of the occupations held by Chinese Protestants indicates that a considerable number were involved in careers with Church connections and their primary impact as a group was in the realm of shaping culture through education and the written word.

Social Service

Social Service	Male Number	Male Percent	Female Number	Female Percent	Total Number	Total Percent
Community	191	100.0	11	100.0	202	100.0

YMCA	96	50.3	0	0	96	48.0
YWCA	0	0	6	54.5	6	3.4
NCC	40	20.9	3	27.2	43	21.1

The figures for social service above are based on the 202 individuals (191 men and 11 women) who had such information available out of our sample of 469 Protestants. The community service figures include only those individuals who engaged in social service work (whether religious or otherwise) on a voluntary basis and not those who did so as a profession (this latter group is represented in the Social Service category in the preceding section). The 202 men and women in this category represent 43.1 percent of the pool of 469, which suggests a strong participation in such activity by these Protestants. Their commitment to expanding civil society was another way in which their outlook harmonized with modernity. The figures also reveal that the YMCA and YWCA and, to a lesser degree, the NCC were the primary vehicles of Protestant voluntary efforts, which shows the strong identification this group had with denominational and Social Gospel Christianity.

Summary

Based on the profile of elite Chinese Protestants that emerges from this analysis of the Bates list, we can now describe the "typical" member of this group. Such a person was male, born in the 1890s in a coastal province of China (most likely either Jiangsu, Zhejiang, or Guangdong), was a member of a major Western denomination (usually the Methodist Church or the CCC), graduated from one of the Christian colleges, studied overseas in the United States, obtained at least a master's degree, took up more than one vocation (usually in the fields of education, ministry, and/or public service), and was actively engaged in community service (often with the YMCA, YWCA, and/or NCC). Of the three figures I examine in this dissertation, Liu Tingfang fits the above profile most closely, with Wang Liming a close second. Zhang Boling, on the other hand, is more of an outlier, yet still embodied many key characteristics typical of this group.

Why Elite Protestants Became Prominent Modernizers

We are now in a position to engage in some preliminary reflections on the question of why Chinese Protestants were disproportionately represented among the ranks of the modernizers in Republican China. Clearly there was a convergence of factors that accounts for the emergence of this group, and which helped to make this era a kind of

"golden age" for Protestantism in China. Some of these factors were internal to the Protestant community, while others were related to China's external environment. This alignment of forces experienced its greatest flowering from the establishment of the Republic in 1912 to the Japanese invasion of 1937, a span of only 25 years. Nevertheless, the social impact of Chinese Protestants during this period was quite remarkable.

From an internal standpoint, the single factor within Protestant circles that was most responsible for the emergence of this group was the development of the Christian colleges. These schools trained Chinese Protestants in modern knowledge and provided a path to study overseas at a time when very few Chinese had such opportunities. Indeed, as we noted earlier, they trained a considerable portion of those Chinese who received a modern university education during this period—more than half of the total prior to 1912, more than a fifth before 1925, and a seventh up until 1949. And three-quarters of the individuals on Bates' list were trained at these institutions. Thus, Chinese Protestants had earlier and greater access to modern university education than most of their compatriots.

The rise of Chinese Protestant modernizers capable of exerting significant social influence reflected the growing maturity of Protestantism in China and in turn contributed to it. One manifestation of this coming of age was the increasing size of the Chinese Protestant

population. Another was the increasing scale and sophistication of Protestant institutions, from the Christian colleges to the YMCA and hospitals. There was a strong trend for these mission institutions to be staffed and led by native converts, which helped make these organizations more Chinese while also providing this new class of elite modernizers with an effective platform for influencing the broader society. The kind of synergy that resulted from this cooperation significantly expanded the modernizing impact of Protestantism in China.

In their position as part of a relatively small number of Chinese with access to modern knowledge and modern institutions, these Chinese Protestants were well placed to advance modernity in Republican society. And given their elite status, they naturally helped to shape the response of the broader society to the challenges of modernity.[81] What was most significant about this group, though, was not simply their social position or possession of modern knowledge. Rather, it was the fact that they were oriented toward modernity at a cultural level, which was related to the affinity that their Protestant outlook had with this new paradigm. This was important, since in the process of modernization, cultural change generally lags behind technological change.[82] Thus, a chief reason for the prominence of Chinese Protestants among the modernizing Chinese elite

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[81] For more on the key role of elites in modernization, see S. N. Eisenstadt, "A Reappraisal of Theories of Social Change and Modernization," in *Social Change and Modernity*, ed. H. Haferkamp and N. J. Smelser (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992).
[82] William Fielding Ogburn, *Social Change: With Respect to Culture and Original Nature* (New York: Huebsch, 1922), 211-12.

was that their worldview made it easier for them to embrace some of the key cultural tenets of this new outlook. It also supplied them with considerable inner motivation to urge their compatriots to likewise embrace the modern world.

External factors also played a crucial role in the rise of a Protestant elite in China, and by far the most important of these was the fall of the Qing dynasty in 1911. This event was not simply the end of a political regime, but of an imperial order and a Confucian ideology that had held sway in China for more than two millennia. Not surprisingly, this profound socio-political cataclysm left China without a strong central government or a powerful unifying ideology for the remainder of the Republican era. While such a situation generated considerable social chaos and made China more vulnerable to the encroachment of foreign imperialism, it also resulted in greater openness and social freedom. Chinese Protestants benefited greatly from this change.

Under the old system, Protestant converts typically occupied a marginal social position. Their association with the West, their mission school training, and their rejection of Confucianism as a belief system meant that they were effectively excluded from positions of social influence except in the treaty ports. But all this changed with the establishment of the Republic in 1912. The new regime embraced the notion of religious freedom, even if this was understood and implemented

in a more limited sense. Thus, religion was no longer a basis for automatic exclusion from elite circles and this policy remained largely in place for the remainder of the Republican era.[83] Moreover, Chinese Protestants with social influence found that they had considerable common ground with early Republican regimes and the Nationalist government that followed, since they shared with them a strong commitment to making China a modern nation.[84]

One indication of the expanded opportunity that elite Chinese Protestant enjoyed during the Republican era is the considerable access they had to high-level political circles, particularly within the Nationalist Party. The clearest example of this was the fact that Sun Yat-sen and Chiang Kaishek were baptized Protestants, but there were many others besides them. Christians occupied seven out of ten KMT cabinet positions after the Nationalists nominally unified China in 1929 and two of them had formerly been YMCA secretaries.[85] One missionary estimated that there were nearly two hundred posts in the new central government

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[83] Sun Yatsen believed that Chinese citizens should be free to choose their own religion, though Chinese folk beliefs were labeled as "superstition" and often restricted in various ways. This policy of relative religious freedom and official secularism at times met with fierce opposition, such as the campaign in 1913 to make Confucianism China's official religion and the later attempt by some KMT leaders during the early years of the Nanjing Decade to make religion more subservient to state ideology. However, none of these efforts succeeded in overturning the state's policy of religious toleration. See Vincent Goossaert, "Republican Church Engineering," in *Chinese Religiosities: Afflictions of Modernity and State Formation*, ed. Mayfair Mei-hui Yang (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 211-13. Another important study on this subject is Rebecca Nedostup, *Superstitions Regimes: Religion and the Politics of Chinese Modernity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009).

[84] See Feuerwerker, "The Foreign Presence in China," 167.

[85] See Philip West, *Yenching University and Sino-Western Relations, 1916-1952* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), 21.

occupied by Christians.[86] Another missionary in the 1940s calculated that up to ten percent of those in the upper echelons of the KMT had some Christian affiliation, while cautioning that many of these individuals may have been only nominally religious.[87]

The Republican period was not a "golden age" for Chinese Protestantism in every respect. The Anti-Christian Movement that arose in the 1920s, which was orchestrated primarily by the Comintern and Chinese Communist intellectuals, linked Christianity to imperialism and thus made Chinese Christians a target of criticism for the rest of the decade.[88] Japan's invasion in 1937 and the civil war between the Nationalists and the Communists that followed wreaked social havoc and hindered the development of Protestant institutions in China. Yet on the whole, Protestantism in China flourished during this period and Chinese Christians were actively engaged in the building of a new nation. They represented a highly significant movement in modern China because of

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[86] See Paul Varg, "The Missionary Response to the Nationalist Revolution," in *The Missionary Enterprise in China and America*, ed. John King Fairbank (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974), 320.

[87] See Susan Rigdon, "National Salvation: Teaching Civic Duty in China's Christian Colleges," in *China's Christian Colleges: Cross-Cultural Connections, 1900-1950*, ed. Daniel H. Bays and Ellen Widmer (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), 215. Rigdon notes that American Methodist missionary Ronald Rees made this estimate in 1947 based on a postwar roster of government officials in important positions.

[88] For a helpful treatment of this subject, see Tao Feiya 陶飛亞, "Gongchan Guoji daibiao yu Zhongguo feiji yundong 共產國際代表與中國非基運動 [Comintern Representatives and the Chinese Anti-Christian Movement]," in *Bianyuande lishi: Jidujiao yu jindai Zhongguo* 邊緣的歷史: 基督教與近代中國 [History at the Margins: Christianity and Modern China] (Shanghai 上海: Shanghai guji chubanshe 上海古籍出版社, 2005).

their estensive social involvement and their impact on an emerging Chinese modernity.

Elite Chinese Protestants in Global Context

Looking at the Protestant missionary enterprise in China from a global perspective can help us to understand better why it was successful in producing a modernizing Protestant elite and what was unique about the Chinese manifestation of this phenomenon. First, it is important to understand that from the 1880s to the 1920s, Protestant missions experienced a major expansion, both in terms of personnel and in terms of effort to transform non-Western civilizations. Earlier in the nineteenth century, such influential missionary statesmen as Henry Venn and Rufus Anderson had encouraged the missionaries to focus primarily on saving individual souls and building native churches. However, with the rapid expansion of Western imperialism and the resistance of native cultures to direct evangelism, greater emphasis was placed on the cultural side of the mission mandate.[89]

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[89] Andrew Porter, "Missions and Empire, C. 1873-1914," in *The Cambridge History of Christianity: World Christianities C. 1815 - C 1914*, ed. Sheridan Gilley and Brian Stanley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006). For background on Henry Venn, see William R. Shenk, "Henry Venn 1796-1873: Champion of Indigenous Church Principles," in *Mission Legacies: Biographical Studies of Leaders of the Modern Missionary Movement*, ed. Gerald H. Anderson, et al. (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1994). For a valuable study on Rufus Anderson, see Paul William Harris, *Nothing but Christ: Rufus Anderson and the Ideology of Protestant Foreign Missions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

The goal was to change the inner dynamic of these societies through education and reform, thus moving them closer to the West and reducing the obstacles to Christian conversion. At the same time, missionaries felt a sense of responsibility to counter the negative impact of Western imperialism and contribute in a positive way to the development of non-Western societies. Thus, the close link between Protestantism and modernity evident in these case studies was especially characteristic of Protestant missions during the early decades of the twentieth century. After 1930, the Protestant presence was diminished due to economic crisis, world war, and the rise of nationalistic and anti-Western political movements. By the 1960s, conservative and fundamentalist groups predominated in the missionary enterprise and many of them were more inclined to focus on spiritual conversion than on broader social engagement.[90]

The Protestant mission movement was global in scale and the techniques and strategies it developed were evident across different geographical contexts. This was especially true of missionary education, which became a powerful tool for creating a Protestant elite in many different cultures and nations. Let us look briefly at the rise of influential

[90] See William R. Hutchison, *Errand to the World: American Protestant Thought and Foreign Missions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987). Also relevant on this subject is Dana L. Robert, "Introduction," in *Converting Colonialism: Visions and Realities in Missions History, 1706-1914*, ed. Dana L. Robert (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008).

Protestants in other parts of the world to see what was similar and different about the Chinese Protestants that are the focus of this study.

Japan: Proscription of Christianity was lifted in 1873 and a large percentage of the Japanese converts to Protestantism during the decades immediately following came from the elite Samurai class, many of whom had been effectively dispossessed in the wake of the Meiji Restoration of 1868. The modern education missionaries provided for this group and for subsequent converts by means of their schools and colleges and hospitals, not to mention the YMCA, produced an influential class of Protestants who contributed significantly to Japan's modernization in such areas as industry, education, the public sphere, civil society, medicine, and politics. While this group grew quickly during the first two decades after the Meiji Restoration, starting from around 1890 their growth was greatly slowed and their influence diminished by the rise of powerful emperor-centered nationalism in Japan. Thus, while the achievements of elite Japanese Protestants were evident much earlier than in China, they never gained as much social influence as Chinese Protestants later did, in large part due to the central role of Shintoism in constructing modern Japanese national identity.[91]

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[91] See Mark R. Mullins, ed. *Handbook of Christianity in Japan* (Boston: Brill, 2003). See the dated but still valuable work by Irwin Scheiner, *Christian Converts and Social Protest in Meiji Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970). See also Richard Henry Drummond, *A History of Christianity in Japan* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971).

Korea: Protestant missionaries entered Korea in 1884 and initially were permitted only to open schools and hospitals. The modern education of the mission schools proved particularly attractive to the younger generation of the aristocratic Yangban class, who realized that Korea's social order had to be reformed to meet the challenge of a modernizing Japan. Before long the government permitted proselytism and the number of Protestant converts and churches began to grow rapidly, bolstered by a large revival in 1907 and the continuing existential threat posed by Japanese imperialism. A few mission colleges were founded by the early twentieth century that produced educated Protestants who were early leaders in such modern fields as medicine, the press, and education. After Japan's annexation of Korea in 1910, the mission schools became an especially important avenue for the education and advancement of Koreans. Elite Protestant also played a central role in the development of Korean nationalism. Though Protestantism grew faster in Korea than in China, the impact of Protestants during this period was more limited due to the discriminatory policies of the Japanese colonial state.[92]

India: After the establishment of British rule in India under the aegis of the East India Company in the latter half of the eighteenth century, parliament required that missionaries be permitted to enter the country for the purposes of religious work and to found schools and hospitals.

[92] See Robert E. Buswell and Timothy S. Lee, eds., *Christianity in Korea* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2006).

Eventually a two-tier system of mission education developed that received significant funding from colonial authorities, with lower-level schools usually teaching in local vernacular languages, while colleges and universities used English. These latter institutions, along with the YMCA, trained a sizeable group of elite Protestants (particularly in the South, where Christians were most numerous) and many of them became influential in fields like journalism, law, ministry, and social reform, as well as staffing the British colonial civil service. However, the majority of the students in the Protestant colleges were Hindu or Muslim, few of whom converted to Christianity. Moreover, the barriers presented by caste and religion in Indian society, not to mention British colonial rule, significantly limited the influence of higher status Protestants. Finally, the vigorous efforts of British colonial administrators to promote modernization in India meant that elite Protestants had a much less prominent role as catalysts of modernity there than in China.[93]

Asia Minor: Protestant missionaries, most of them from the United States, began work in Asia Minor during the first half of the nineteenth century. They focused on renewing the ancient Christian communities already present there (primarily the large Armenian population) by founding hospitals and schools. Protestant colleges trained doctors, journalists, engineers, and professors who helped introduce modern ideas

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[93] See Robert Eric Frykenberg, *Christianity in India: From Beginnings to the Present* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

into local society. Most of these students came from the Christian communities the missionaries worked with, but a small number of Muslim parents also allowed their children to attend the Christian schools in order to get a modern education. This Christian elite prospered more than other social groups, but also faced discrimination from the Muslim majority, which limited their opportunities in society and resulted in many emigrating overseas. Eventually, the Armenians were almost wiped out in an awful genocide that broke out in 1915. Under the secular republic of Turkey established by Ataturk after the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, Protestant missionaries and the Armenian Christians who remained continued to face major restrictions, significantly more severe than what Christians faced under the Nationalist regime in China.[94]

Nigeria: Modernity was slower to develop in Africa than in some other parts of the world, but the role of elite Protestants in spreading various modern ideas and practices was in some ways more pronounced. This was because African access to literacy and modern education came primarily through Protestant mission schools and because the Protestant population in many parts of Africa grew to be quite large, neither of which was the case in China. Protestant missionaries first arrived in Nigeria in the 1840s, and worked in the west and east of the country, since British colonial officials refused them entry to the Muslim-dominated north. They

[94] See Hans-Lukas Kieser, "Mission as Factor of Change in Turkey (Nineteenth to First Half of Twentieth Century)," *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 13, no. 4 (2002).

won converts fairly quickly, and many local elites started sending their children to Protestant mission schools. For a long time these schools only went up to the secondary level, but by the 1930s Protestant colleges were also established. Graduates of the Protestant schools became the backbone of a modern elite in Nigeria, pioneering in such fields as commerce, education, social welfare, and eventually politics, within the limitations of colonial society. They also played a central role in shaping a sense of national identity and promoting independence.[95]

South Africa: The tragic history of South Africa during this period, with its heavy colonial footprint and growing racial oppression, saw both the missionary cultivation of elite Protestants and their social confinement by colonial authorities. During the nineteenth century, Protestant mission schools were instrumental in training the children of converts and of African elites in literacy and modern knowledge. The many Protestants who emerged from these schools became influential figures in black society, laboring in fields like commerce, education, ministry, the press, and literature. Gradually Africans even began to win some political rights. However, with the continued influx of settlers, and especially the discovery of major gold and diamond deposits, these rights were gradually taken away. With Britain's acceptance of Boer racial policies after 1910, the dispossession of Africans was almost inevitable. Though the colonial

[95] See Adrian Hastings, *The Church in Africa: 1450-1950* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994). Also useful is J. D. Y. Peel, *Religious Encounter and the Making of the Yoruba* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000).

government promoted capitalist modernity, African participation was limited largely to providing cheap labor. Missionaries continued to train a smaller number of Protestants, who supported a vision of modernity on African terms. They became core members of the African National Congress, which sought to overturn apartheid policies and finally succeeded.[96]

The above section provides a brief sketch of the impact that elite Protestants had outside of the West.[97] What this overview demonstrates is that Chinese Protestant modernizers were by no means an isolated group, but were part of a much larger global phenomenon. These diverse Protestant elites played a major role in the spread of modernity around the world in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. However, little research has been done on these Protestants and their links to modernity, whether from an individual, national, or global perspective. In other words, the gap in the historiography on China described earlier is evident in the historiography of other regions as well. Thus, this dissertation represents an attempt to fill in at least one piece of a much larger picture by exploring in detail a particular group of national

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[96] See Bengt Sundkler and Christopher Steed, *A History of the Church in Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

[97] South America is the one major region of the globe not mentioned here, since Protestant mission activity in that part of the world was minimal during the first half of the twentieth century, which means that this region had very few of the elite Protestants that constitute the focus of this inquiry.

Protestant elites—in this case Chinese—and how they contributed to the spread of modernity.

Looking at these global Protestant elites, it is evident that many of them shared a similar conception of modernity that might be described as progressive and bourgeois. They usually absorbed this outlook at the mission schools where they studied. It included support for such ideas as mass literacy, a modern public sphere, an expanded civil society, new rights for women, a vigorous nationalism, and representative democracy. Though Protestant attempts to implement these ideas were often opposed by governments or other social groups with radically different ideologies, their influence was still considerable. Indeed, these elite Protestants were important agents in the adaptation of Western modernity to particular local contexts, which is something the missionaries could never have achieved on their own. In this way, they profoundly shaped the development of global modernity, even if the ideals they espoused were often not fully realized or were ultimately implemented by other groups.

Examining the global context of Protestant modernizers reveals that this phenomenon was perhaps at its strongest in China. There are several reasons for this, the most significant being the simple fact that the Protestant missionary enterprise in China was the largest in the world, with numerous personnel and schools and auxiliary organizations, and these were the practical means by which this Chinese elite was cultivated.

But other factors played a part as well. China's immense size, combined with its strong literati tradition and its high degree of cultural and ethnic homogeneity, meant that the potential for producing a large group of national-level Protestant elites was greater there than in probably any other part of the world. And the sophistication of Chinese civilization meant that modernity could be absorbed more quickly and in more advanced form than in less developed places like Africa, so that the connections between Protestant elites and modernity are richer.

Viewing China from a global perspective also reveals a less obvious reason that elite Protestants in China became so influential as modernizers. While much scholarship on Christianity in late Qing and Republican China has focused on the considerable opposition of Chinese elites, from a global standpoint the picture appears distinctly more positive. This is because China's barriers to elite conversion and Protestant social participation—especially after the fall of the Qing—were less formidable than those in some other countries, such as the potent quasi-religious nationalism of Japanese society or the determined Islamic resistance in Asia Minor.[98]

Thus, a global view of Chinese Protestantism in the early twentieth century suggests that mission schools, and indeed the larger mission enterprise in China, were more successful in creating an influential

[98] Even during the late Qing, when there were large political barriers to Protestant social participation in China, the existence of numerous treaty ports still allowed for the rise of socially engaged elite Chinese Protestants.

community of Chinese Christians than has often been recognized. This can help to partially qualify the narrative of failure that has often been used to characterize the impact of Christianity on China during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This narrative reflects in part the traumatic end in 1950 of a long period of Anglo-American influence in China, when there was much soul searching in the West about what went wrong and who was to blame for having "lost China." It is also a result of the many scholarly works that focus on instances of Chinese resistance to Christianity, such as the Boxer uprising and the anti-Christian movement of the 1920s. While these conflicts have naturally drawn significant attention, they were only one part of a larger picture. As such, they should not blind us to the fact that Protestantism was a growing movement in China throughout the Republican period and during these years put down deep roots into Chinese soil, roots that help to account for its resurgence today. The elite Chinese Protestants that we turn our attention to in the following chapters were a prominent manifestation of this reality and provide ample evidence that Christianity in China was a powerful force for modern change that saw surprising success despite the difficult environment of the Republican era.

Chapter Four

Wang Liming, the WCTU, and the New Chinese Woman

Introduction

Wang Liming 王立明 (also known as Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明; Frances Willard Wong Liu, 1896-1970) was one of the leading female Protestant social reformers in Republican China, and an energetic advocate of both women's rights and the nuclear family. A native of Anhui Province, Wang was educated in mission schools and in the United States. Her life work centered on the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), an organization started by American Protestant women in the latter part of the nineteenth century that soon found its way to China. Like its American parent, the Chinese WCTU was concerned with "home protection" by fighting against vice and promoting virtue. The former included opium, tobacco, alcohol, gambling, and prostitution; the latter compassion, filial piety, chastity, and frugality.

As leader of the WCTU from 1926 to 1957, Wang built the organization into one of the largest women's groups in China, with more than ten thousand adult and student members. Through the WCTU, she pioneered such methods as anti-smoking campaigns, social welfare for needy women and children, and the establishment of birth control clinics. She also made the organization a vehicle for promoting the nuclear family,

monogamy, and free choice in marriage. Apart from her work with the WCTU, Wang was an energetic crusader for women's suffrage and legal rights. Her efforts in these areas, which carried into the early part of the Communist era, represented an important aspect of the Protestant contribution to modernity in Republican China.

Biography

Wang Liming was born in Taihu County in the eastern Chinese province of Anhui on 1 January 1896.[1] Her father, Wang Langzhong 王郎中, was a Chinese doctor from a line of locally renowned physicians.[2] With two older brothers and one younger one, Wang was the family's only daughter and later recalled being much loved by her parents.[3] About the age of six, however, Wang's mother began to bind her feet in order to make them smaller, a common but painful practice in China at the time considered necessary to ensure good marriage prospects. Further troubling Wang, her brothers began studying at a local Confucian school during the day while she had to stay home, since women at the time were

[1] Liu Shaotang 劉紹唐, *Minguo renwu xiaozhuan: Wang Liming* 民國人物小傳: 王立明 [Short Biographies of Republican Figures: Wang Liming], vol. 33 (Taibei 台北: Zhuanji wenxue chubanshe 傳記文學出版社, 1975), 144.
[2] Wu Xiao 吳曉, "Liu-Wang Liming de rensheng zhi lu 劉王立明的人生之路 [Liu-Wang Liming's Life Path]," *Zong heng* 縱橫 [Length and Breadth], no. 10 (2005): 38.
[3] Wang Liming 王立明, "You jiating dao shehui 由家庭到社會 [From the Family into Society]," in *Chenggong zhi lu: xiandai mingren zishu* 成功之路: 現代名人自述 [The Path to Success: Famous Contemporary People Tell Their Story] (Shanghai 上海: Liangyou tushu yinshua gongsi 良友圖書印刷公司, 1931), 106.

rarely educated.[4] After pleading with her father for a chance to study, he agreed to teach her himself during quiet moments, using his medical texts as well as Confucian and Buddhist works.[5]

This instruction did not last for long, however. When Wang was only nine years old, her father died unexpectedly of an illness, and the family was reduced to penury. Wang's mother managed to earn some money by doing embroidery work, which she supplemented periodically by selling items at the local pawnshop and asking relatives for assistance. Wang helped out by collecting firewood and feeding pigs, like many poor children in the area, and this direct experience of poverty and hardship fostered in her a fierce independence.[6] But a stroke of good fortune when Wang was ten years old enabled her to continue her education. The Gospel Church in Taihu, founded by Methodist Episcopal missionaries in 1903, opened a school for girls from poor families in the area, and Wang's mother decided to send her there.[7] The school, Become Beautiful Girls

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[4] China's Confucian tradition was strongly patriarchal, so education was almost exclusively for males prior to the twentieth century. The one major exception was elite gentry families, especially those in the Jiangnan region, which often provided education for their female members. However, these women did not take the imperial exams or hold political office. Instead, social custom dictated that they focus their energy primarily on the domestic sphere. See Susan Mann, *Precious Records: Women in China's Long Eighteenth Century* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997).

[5] Wang Liming 王立明, "You jiating dao shehui 由家庭到社會 [From the Family into Society]," 106-07.

[6] Liu Guanghua 劉光華, "Wo de muqin Liu-Wang Liming 我的母親劉王立明 [My Mother Liu-Wang Liming]," *Renwu* 人物 [Personages], no. 6 (1981): 143.

[7] Milton T. Stauffer, ed. *The Christian Occupation of China* (Shanghai: China Continuation Committee,1922), Appendix A, i.

School (*Chengmei nüxue* 成美女學), had about twenty students taught by a young woman who had recently been widowed.[8]

Wang's thinking was shaped in profound ways by her time at this Christian primary school. During her second year there, when she was twelve years old, Wang was taught that the practice of footbinding was wrong. As a result, she decided to remove the bandages from her feet and subsequently refused to have them bound again, even though her mother beat her and many of the townspeople scorned her.[9] With the bandages off, her feet gradually began to recover and she was later able to walk freely, though her feet remained partially misshapen for the rest of her life.[10] Wang also developed a desire during her time at this school to devote herself to promoting women's rights in China. A powerful catalyst in her decision was seeing firsthand the injustice that a number of her classmates suffered because they were female, such as being forced into arranged marriages or sold by poor families as maids (*bi* 婢) or concubines (*qie* 妾). This reality that would have jarred harshly with the

[8] Wang Liming 王立明, "You jiating dao shehui 由家庭到社會 [From the Family into Society]," 108-09.
[9] Liu Guanghua 劉光華, "Wo de muqin Liu-Wang Liming 我的母親劉王立明 [My Mother Liu-Wang Liming]," 144. Also *Frances Willard Wong Liu*, (New York: Women's American Baptist Foreign Mission Society, 1944), 1.
[10] Wang Huiji 王惠姬, "Liu-Wang Liming yu minchu Zhongguo de funü yundong 劉王立明與民初中國的婦女運動 [Liu-Wang Liming and the Women's Movement in Early Republican China]," *Guoli zhongzheng daxue lishi yanjiu xuekan* 國立中正大學歷史研究學刊 [National Zhongzheng University Historical Research Monthly], no. 5 (2002): 40.

Christian ideals Wang learned at school.[11] As she said later, "At the time, their suffering, the tears they shed, their cruel deaths, had already stirred up my deepest sympathy; so my first aspiration was to join the women's movement after I grew up and help to right the wrongs they suffered."[12]

After three years of study at Become Beautiful Girls School, Wang placed first on the comprehensive exam that all students took before graduation. This performance, along with the strong recommendations she received because of her upright character, won her a full scholarship to Rulison High School for Girls (*Nuoli shuyuan* 諾立書院). This Christian middle school and high school for girls was thirty miles away in the city of Jiujiang in Jiangxi Province. Founded by Methodist Episcopal missionaries, Rulison had more than two hundred students when Wang arrived in the fall of 1909 at the age of thirteen. The acting headmistress of the institutions was the prominent Chinese female doctor, Shi Meiyu 石美玉 (Mary Stone), who had founded a successful medical clinic for women and

[11] Maids were generally sold to a family where they labored without pay until they were of marriageable age, at which point their owner had a responsibility to find them a husband. Once married their period of servitude came to an end. In some cases, daughters were sold as maids for a specified time as repayment of a debt and after the debt was repaid they were returned to their original family. Concubines, meanwhile, were sold to a family as consorts of the male head of the household and typically would secure their position in this new family by bearing a son. Failure to do so could lead in some cases to their expulsion. For more on these various practices see Rubie S. Watson, "Wives, Concubines, and Maids: Servitude and Kinship in the Hong Kong Region, 1900-1940," in *Marriage and Inequality in Chinese Society*, ed. Rubie Sharon Watson and Patricia Buckley Ebrey (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).

[12] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Kuaile jiating* 快樂家庭 [The Happy Family] (Shanghai 上海: Shangwu yinshuguan 商務印書館, 1931), preface, 1.

children in Jiujiang along with another Chinese woman physician named Kang Cheng.

For Wang, the chance to study at Rulison was a rare opportunity and she was determined to make the most of it. She was a gifted student and a hard worker and continued to excel in her studies. She also made a connection at the school that would later prove highly significant. This occurred when her chemistry and physics teacher had to leave unexpectedly during her first year at the school, which meant that she and her classmates had to attend science classes at the nearby Methodist Episcopal boy's school called William Nast Academy (*Jiujiang tongwen zhongxue* 九江同文中學). One of her new classmates was a boy named Liu Zhan'en 劉湛恩 (Herman C. E. Liu), who later become Wang's husband.[13]

During her final year of study at Rulison in 1914, Wang forged a link with an organization that would shape the course of her life work and provide her with an effective platform for promoting women's rights in China. The Woman's Christian Temperance Union (*Zhonghua funü jiezhihui* 中華婦女節制會) was started by Protestant women in the United States in 1874 to fight against alcohol abuse and its destructive impact on the family and society. The group grew rapidly during the 1880s and 1890s under the dynamic leadership of Frances Willard, a charismatic educator and evangelist who mobilized several hundred thousand

[13] Wang Liming 王立明, "You jiating dao shehui 由家庭到社會 [From the Family into Society]," 108-10.

Christian women to support the temperance cause. The WCTU played a major role both in efforts to secure a constitutional amendment prohibiting alcohol and in the campaign for women's suffrage, which was seen as crucial for women to more effectively promote their social agenda.[14]

The WCTU founded the World's WCTU in 1883 and in 1886 sent Mary Leavitt on a round-the-world tour to investigate opportunities for expansion in other countries. Leavitt visited China in 1886 as part of her trip and started the earliest WCTU chapters in the country. Four years later, another WWCTU leader named Jessie Ackermann traveled to China, where she attended the 1890 general missionary conference in Shanghai and helped to formally establish a Chinese WCTU.[15] The local chapters initially established by the group often proved to be short-lived due to a lack of WCTU workers to provide support. The most robust branch was in Zhenjiang at a mission school for girls, a branch first started during Mary

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[14] See Ruth Bordin, *Woman and Temperance: The Quest for Power and Liberty, 1873-1900* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1981). Bordin has also written a biography of WCTU leader Frances Willard, see Bordin, *Fraces Willard: A Biography* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986). For a valuable study on the WCTU's overseas development see Ian Tyrrell, *Woman's World, Woman's Empire: The Woman's Christian Temperance Union in International Perspective, 1880-1930* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991).
[15] See Clara C. Chapin, ed. *Thumb Nail Sketches of White Ribbon Women* (Chicago: Women's Temperance Publishing Association, 1895), 1. See also Tyrrell, *Woman's World, Woman's Empire: The Woman's Christian Temperance Union in International Perspective, 1880-1930*, 108.

Leavitt's visit in 1886. Other early branches were in Shanghai and Nanjing.[16]

The WCTU in China did not experience significant expansion until Sarah Goodrich became president in 1909.[17] Goodrich was the wife of a Congregational missionary who lived in Beijing. She expanded the WCTU focus in China from opium to include the problems of growing alcohol and cigarette consumption.[18] Goodrich started five branches of the WCTU in Beijing, working mainly with students and the wives of Chinese officials. She also had Chinese workers travel to other cities to spread the WCTU message, which led to a significant increase in the number of chapters around China. However, the WCTU still lacked a national structure to coordinate the activities of these groups.[19] When Goodrich handed control of the WCTU to the Chinese in 1916, the organization had approximatley forty chapters spread over seven provinces, most of them in central China.[20]

Wang's connection with the WCTU was due indirectly to Shi Meiyu, who was not only the acting headmistress of Rulison in Jiujiang, but was

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[16] See *Report of the Fifth Biennial Convention of the World's Woman's Christian Temperance Union* (no publisher, 1900), 48-49. See also *Report of the Ninth Convention of the World's Women's Christian Temperance Union* (no publisher, 1913), 57-58.
[17] Pui-lan Kwok, *Chinese Women and Christianity 1860-1927* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992), 122.
[18] See Mrs. Chauncey Goodrich, "Woman's Christian Temperance Union," in *China Mission Year Book* (Shanghai: Christian Literature Society for China, 1911), 452-55.
[19] *Report of the Ninth Convention of the World's Women's Christian Temperance Union*, 58.
[20] See Goodrich, "Woman's Christian Temperance Union," in *China Mission Year Book* (Shanghai: Christian Literature Association for China, 1916), 489.

chosen to lead the national WCTU in 1916 after Goodrich stepped down.[21] Shi focused her energies on expanding WCTU work among girl students in China, which she had already been doing at Rulison.[22] One instance of this was in 1915 when she invited a World WCTU guest speaker to address the Rulison student body. The person who spoke depicted in graphic detail the destructive impact of opium and alcohol abuse on Chinese society, and the girl students were so alarmed at hearing how these addictions endangered the very survival of the nation that they decided to form a student chapter of the WCTU on their campus. Wang, because of her gifts as a leader and her reputation for strongly opposing all forms of vice, was chosen by her fellow students to be president of the group.[23]

Wang graduated as valedictorian from Rulison in 1915.[24] After her graduation, she worked for a year as a teacher at the school. At the same time, she applied for a scholarship from the WCTU to study abroad, and Shi Meiyu wrote her a recommendation.[25] To her delight, she won the award, which covered all expenses for study at Northwestern University

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[21] "Zhonghua Jidujiao funü jiezhi xiehui jianzhang 中華基督教婦女節制協會簡章 [Regulations of the Chinese WCTU]," *Jiezhi jikan* 節制季刊 [Temperance Monthly] 1, no. 1 (1922): 16.
[22] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, "Liu nian lai de jiugai yundong 六年來的救丐運動 [The Beggars Movement for the Past Six Years]," *Jiezhi yuekan* 節制月刊 (Temperance Monthly) 7, no. 10 (1928): 3.
[23] Wang Liming 王立明, "You jiating dao shehui 由家庭到社會 [From the Family into Society]," 110-11.
[24] Liu Guanghua 劉光華, "Wo de muqin Liu-Wang Liming 我的母親劉王立明 [My Mother Liu-Wang Liming]," 144.
[25] Wang Liming 王立明, "You jiating dao shehui 由家庭到社會 [From the Family into Society], 111.

in Chicago, a Methodist school with close ties to the WCTU. Renowned WCTU leader Frances Willard had been in charge of the Ladies' School at Northwestern for a time and the headquarters of the World's WCTU and Northwestern University were both located in Evanston, on the north side of Chicago.[26] At that time in China, women still had almost no opportunity for higher education and Wang was one of the fortunate few with a chance to study overseas.[27] Initially, her mother opposed the idea of Wang traveling so far from home, but eventually gave her blessing.[28]

So Wang sailed to Vancouver in the spring of 1916, and from there traveled by train to Chicago, where she was welcomed by the head of the World's WCTU.[29] Wang's accommodations were in Frances Willard's former residence, Rest Cottage.[30] She made many friends among her new classmates and before long got over her homesickness. In 1918, a letter arrived unexpectedly in the mail from her old classmate in middle school, Liu Zhan'en. In it he told her he was studying for a master's degree at the

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[26] Kwok, *Chinese Women and Christianity 1860-1927*, 124.
[27] Government universities in China did not open their doors to women until 1920, and there were only two Christian colleges for women in China at the time, one being the North China Union College for Women in Beijing (founded in 1905) and the other Jinling Women's College in Nanjing (founded in 1915). In addition, a small number of women in the 1910s received Tsinghua University scholarships (which drew on returned American Boxer indemnity funds) for study in the United States.
[28] Wang Liming 王立明, "You jiating dao shehui 由家庭到社會 [From the Family into Society], 111.
[29] Wang Liming 王立明, "You jiating dao shehui 由家庭到社會 [From the Family into Society], 112. Also see Wang Huiji 王惠姬, "Liu-Wang Liming yu minchu Zhongguo de funü yundong 劉王立明與民初中國的婦女運動 [Liu-Wang Liming and the Women's Movement in Early Republican China]," 40.
[30] Tyrrell, *Woman's World, Woman's Empire: The Woman's Christian Temperance Union in International Perspective, 1880-1930* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 86.

University of Chicago and would like to pay her a visit at Northwestern. The next Saturday they met and talked for hours.[31] The two had a great deal in common. Both had lost their fathers at a young age and grew up poor, both had studied at Protestant schools as youngsters and had chosen to become Christians, and both saw study overseas as a chance to acquire learning that would help to save China.[32] Over the next two years, a romance blossomed, and in 1920 they were officially engaged.[33]

Wang graduated from Northwestern University in the spring of 1920 with a master's degree in biology, having earlier completed her bachelor's program at the school.[34] While a student there, she had naturally heard the full story of Frances Willard's life and had decided to take as her English name Frances Willard Wong.[35] This reflected her commitment to the WCTU and to the cause of women's rights, a commitment that was made all the more evident when she was commissioned as a World WCTU missionary and secretary for the Far East

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[31] Wang Liming 王立明, "You jiating dao shehui 由家庭到社會 [From the Family into Society]," 112-13.

[32] Liu Zhan'en 劉湛恩, "Wo de muqin 我的母親 (My Mother)," *Jiezhi yuekan* 節制月刊 [Temperance Monthly] 11, no. 1-3 (1932): 17-18. Also see the following sources: Wang Huiji 王惠姬, "Liu-Wang Liming yu minchu Zhongguo de funü yundong 劉王立明與民初中國的婦女運動 [Liu-Wang Liming and the Women's Movement in Early Republican China]," 40, 43; Liu Guanghua 劉光華, "Wo de muqin Liu-Wang Liming 我的母親劉王立明 [My Mother Liu-Wang Liming]," 143.

[33] Wu Xiao 吳曉, "Liu-Wang Liming de rensheng zhi lu 劉王立明的人生之路 [Liu-Wang Liming's Life Path]," 40.

[34] Zhuang Yan 庄嚴, "Liu-Wang Liming: yi wei gaoju aiguo zhuyi daqi de nüxing 劉王立明: 一位高舉愛國主義大旗的女性 [Liu-Wang Liming: A Woman Who Held High the Great Flag of Patriotism]," *Dangshi zonglan* 黨史總攬 [Party History Panorama] no. 6 (1994): 28.

[35] *Frances Willard Wong Liu*, 1.

shortly after graduation and prior to returning to China.[36] Wang was now officially part of the WCTU global network.

When Wang arrived in Shanghai in the spring of 1920, she turned down many lucrative job offers so she could engage in the work of social reform with the WCTU.[37] She later said that her decision to devote her life to women's causes was a result of encouragement from friends, her own childhood aspirations, and her first-hand observation of the expanded rights that women enjoyed in the United States.[38] Her fiancé Liu Zhan'en, meanwhile, studied for a Ph.D. in philosophy at Columbia University under renowned educational philosopher John Dewey. After returning to China, he and Wang Liming were married on 1 September 1922.[39]

When Wang began work as a WCTU Secretary, the organization lacked gifted leaders, so she started a Student Division with the aim of bringing the temperance message to the educated female youth of China.[40] Wang was an indefatigable advocate for the WCTU, traveling to fourteen

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[36] Wu Xiao 吳曉, "Liu-Wang Liming de rensheng zhi lu 劉王立明的人生之路 [Liu-Wang Liming's Life Path]," 39. Also Tyrrell, *Woman's World, Woman's Empire: The Woman's Christian Temperance Union in International Perspective, 1880-1930*, 111, 292. This latter book draws on WCTU financial records to show that Wang was a fully commissioned World's WCTU missionary.

[37] Wang Liming 王立明, "You jiating dao shehui 由家庭到社會 [From the Family into Society]," 115. Also Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Zhongguo funü yundong* 中國婦女運動 [The Chinese Women's Movement] (Shanghai 上海: Shangwu yinshuguan 上海印書館, 1934), preface 1.

[38] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Zhongguo funü yundong* 中國婦女運動 [The Chinese Women's Movement], preface, 1.

[39] Wang Liming 王立明, "You jiating dao shehui 由家庭到社會 [From the Family into Society]," 118.

[40] "Zheng wen 徵文," *Jiezhi yuekan* 節制月刊 [Temperance Monthly] 5, no. 4 (1926): 1. Wang's work with students built on the earlier efforts of Chauncey Goodrich and Shi Meiyu, who both had expanded the number of WCTU student chapters.

different provinces of China (as well as to Hong Kong and the Philippines) and speaking both in schools and in public venues.[41] Often when she traveled to inland parts of China, people had never heard a woman give a speech in public, and so the auditorium would be packed with curious listeners. On occasion, Wang would speak five or six times in a single day, and once in Hankou she caught pneumonia because of the physical strain.[42] Though the task was difficult, she embraced it with a passion.

Wherever Wang spoke, it seems, she inspired her listeners to form local WCTU chapters and support the temperance cause.[43] After two years of strenuous effort, she reported that the number of WCTU student members had increased from two thousand to five thousand.[44] According to her own estimate, she had addressed more than one hundred thousand youth, over ten thousand of whom signed pledges to follow the precepts of temperance.[45] Wang's travels in China brought her into contact with a broad range of women leaders around the country and expanded her horizons in numerous ways. She also won many admirers, and prominent men asked for her hand in marriage, including some politicians. In order

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[41] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, "Sishi nian lai Zhongguo funü jiezhi yundong 四十年來中國婦女節制運動 [The Chinese Women's Movement for the Past Forty Years]," *Jiezhi niankan* 節制年刊 [Temperance Yearbook] (1934): 2.

[42] Wang Liming 王立明, "You jiating dao shehui 由家庭到社會 [From the Family into Society]," 115-16.

[43] "Zheng wen 徵文," *Jiezhi yuekan* 節制月刊, 1.

[44] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, "Xueshengbu weihe yu benhui you he guanxi 學生部為何與本會有何關係 [Why the Student Department Has Such a Relationship with This Organization]," *Jiezhi jikan* 節制季刊 [Temperance Monthly] 1, no. 1 (1922): 10.

[45] Wang Liming 王立明, "You jiating dao shehui 由家庭到社會 [From the Family into Society]," 115.

to forestall such proposals, Wang added her husband's surname to hers after she was married, thus referring to herself as Liu-Wang Liming. Though unusual among "modern" Chinese women at the time, who typically continued using their own surname after marriage, Wang grew accustomed to it and eventually decided to keep using Liu-Wang Liming.[46]

In the winter of 1920, the WCTU moved its headquarters from Jiujiang to Shanghai, and convened the group's first national convention there in January 1922. More than twenty representatives from different parts of the country were present.[47] The conference established a strong centralized structure for the WCTU that knit together the local chapters and more effectively advanced temperance goals. Delegates also enacted a constitution and elected officers.[48] Shi Meiyu was chosen as president, Wang became head of youth work, and two others were elected to take responsibility for adult work and for editing a newly established official

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[46] Wang Huiji 王惠姬, "Liu-Wang Liming yu minchu Zhongguo de funü yundong 劉王立明與民初中國的婦女運動 [Liu-Wang Liming and the Women's Movement in Early Republican China]," 52. Chinese women traditionally took their husbands surname after marriage, but in the early twentieth century, many educated women began to insist on keeping their own surnames, which became the norm with the founding of the People's Republic in 1949. See Susan Mann, *The Talented Women of the Zhang Family* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), xv. See also Yanmei Wei, "Congratulations, It's a Girl!: Gender and Identity in Mao's China," in *Some of Us: Chinese Women Growing up in the Mao Era*, ed. Xueping Zhong , Zheng Wang, and Bai Di (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2001), 180.

[47] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, "Wu nian lai zhi Zhonghua funü jiezhi xiehui 五年來之中華婦女節制協會 [The WCTU for the Past Five Years]," *Jiezhi yuekan* 節制月刊 [Temperance Monthly] 6, no. 7 (1927): 17-18. Also Mrs. Herman C. E. Liu, "The Woman's Christian Temperance Union of China," in *The China Mission Year Book*, ed. Henry T. Hodgkin (Shanghai: Christian Literature Society, 1923), 257.

[48] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, "Wu nian lai zhi Zhonghua funü jiezhi xiehui 五年來之中華婦女節制協會 [The WCTU for the Past Five Years]," 18.

WCTU magazine called *Jiezhi jikan* 節制季刊 (Temperance Quarterly). The assembly also called for an active expansion of the membership and the resulting efforts quickly bore fruit.[49] In 1922, 380 new adult members joined the WCTU, bringing membership in the group (including students) to 6,300.[50] Since five thousand of these were students, there were roughly 1300 adult members in the group. By mid-1923, membership had grown to more than seven thousand.[51]

In the fall of 1925, Shi Meiyu resigned her position as head of the WCTU, citing the pressure of her medical duties. Her main associates resigned as well, reflecting a larger generational shift occurring in the WCTU.[52] A long debate ensued over the future direction of the group, and by early 1926, Wang had been chosen as the new leader of a restructured WCTU. Rather than having a president with officers, the group was now led by a general secretary (Wang) with subordinate secretaries, all under the guidance of a board of trustees. The WCTU was also divided into three departments (General Affairs, Editing, Social Service) and three working

[49] Wang noted that it was after this meeting that the WCTU began to grow more rapidly. Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, "Sishi nian lai Zhongguo funü jiezhi yundong 四十年來中國婦女節制運動 [The Chinese Women's Movement for the Past Forty Years]," 2.

[50] "The WCTU in China," *The Chinese Recorder* 55, no. 10 (1923): 568.

[51] "Zhonghua Jidujiao funü jiezhi xiehui chengli yu 1921 nian 中華基督教婦女節制協會成立於1921年 (The Chinese WCTU Established in 1921)," *Jiezhi jikan* 節制季刊 [Temperance Monthly] (1923): 54.

[52] There was no open conflict during this transition, but the fact that Shi and her top associates resigned together reflected the fact that her leadership did not have strong support among the majority of the group's influential members. This may have been due to the fact that Shi, with a very conservative theology, was more focused on fighting vice than on promoting broader social reform, which was the concern of the younger leadership. In addition, Shi had started her own hospital and nursing school in Shanghai in 1920, along with an attached Bible school, and this took much of her time and energy.

groups (Women, Students, Children), each managed by a different secretary.[53]

These changes were more than simply structural. The group's original aim of fighting against alcohol, tobacco, opium, and gambling was deemed inadequate and subsumed under a new and broader slogan, "Promoting the blessing of the family." This slogan was understood to entail not only "rejecting cigarettes (*yan* 煙), alcohol (*jiu* 酒), gambling (*du* 賭) and prostitution (*xie* 邪)," but also "advocating compassion (*ci* 慈), filial piety (*xiao* 孝), chastity (*zhen* 貞), and frugality (*jie* 節)."[54] Wang was a strong supporter of this broader approach and had expressed such sentiments as early as 1923: "The WCTU realizes that poverty and illiteracy are just as much enemies of the country as drinking, smoking and gambling," she said. "This organization therefore advocates and promotes education, child welfare, and woman's economic independence as necessary lines of work."[55] The final change made in this revamping of

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[53] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, "Wu nian lai zhi Zhonghua funü jiezhi xiehui 五年來之中華婦女節制協會 [The WCTU for the Past Five Years]," 18.

[54] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, "Wu nian lai zhi Zhonghua funü jiezhi xiehui 五年來之中華婦女節制協會 [The WCTU for the Past Five Years]," 20. The virtues of filial piety and chastity were harshly denounced by Chinese intellectuals during the New Culture and May Fourth movements because of their close association with Confucianism, but the WCTU continued to use the terms, which were understood in a Protestant sense rather than a Confucian one.

[55] Kwok, *Chinese Women and Christianity 1860-1927*, 125.

the WCTU was the decision to publish its *Temperance* magazine every month, rather than quarterly.[56]

The WCTU continued to grow under Wang's leadership and became the largest Christian women's organization in China during the Republican period. By 1927, the student department of the WCTU had ten thousand members and the children's department another thousand.[57] The number of adult members for this year was not reported, but if the proportion from 1923 is any indication, it would have been more than two thousand. In 1933 Wang noted that the WCTU had more than ten thousand members spread over fifteen provinces, the large majority of whom lived in urban areas.[58] This was larger than even the YWCA, which peaked at ten thousand members in 1937.[59] However, the YWCA was still the more influential group due to its stronger organization, its city buildings, and its adult membership of more than three thousand. Zheng Wang confirms this in *Women in the Chinese Enlightenment*: "As a

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[56] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, "Sishi nian lai Zhongguo funü jiezhi yundong 四十年來中國婦女節制運動 [The Chinese Women's Movement for the Past Forty Years]," 2.
[57] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, "Wu nian lai zhi Zhonghua funü jiezhi xiehui 五年來之中華婦女節制協會 [The WCTU for the Past Five Years]," 19.
[58] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Zhongguo funü yundong* 中國婦女運動 [The Chinese Women's Movement], preface, 3. Also refer to Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, "Zhonghua Funü Jiezhi Xiehui 中華婦女節制協會 [The Chinese WCTU]," in *Zhonghua Jidujiaohui nianjian* 中華基督教會年鑑 [The Chinese Church Year Book], ed. Zhonghua xuxing weibanhui 中華續行委辦會 (Shanghai 上海: Shangwu yinshuguan 商務印書館, 1933), 173. The WCTU made some modest efforts to "liberate" rural women, but no significant results were obtained.
[59] Elizabeth A. Littell-Lamb, "Going Public: The YWCA, "New" Women, and Social Feminism in Republican China" (Carnegie Mellon University, 2002), 462.

nonpartisan women's organization, the Chinese WCTU's influence and achievements were second only to those of the Chinese YWCA."[60]

Busy as she was with the WCTU and various women's causes, Wang still found time to raise three children and support her husband, who in 1928 became President of Hujiang University, a Baptist institution in Shanghai. In 1924, she gave birth to her first son, Guangsheng 光生; in 1926 she had a second son, Guanghua 光華; and in 1928 she gave birth to a daughter, Guangkun 光坤.[61] Wang was unwilling to give the responsibility of caring for her children to others and in her writings spoke of the great enjoyment she found in being a mother. This meant reducing the time she devoted to the WCTU and other activities, though she still did a great deal and this made it a challenge to balance the demands of work and family. When her brother saw the extent of her hard work and sacrifice, he was upset and said, "Sister, leave the WCTU! Here you are working without ceasing, while others say that you would never endure such trouble unless you were driven by greed. And now you no longer accept reimbursement for travel expenses. Why suffer so?!" But Wang was clearly too committed to her work with the WCTU to give it up,

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[60] Zheng Wang, *Women in the Chinese Enlightenment: Oral and Textual Histories* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 137.

[61] "Geren xiaoxi 個人消息 [Personal News]," *Jiezhi yuekan* 節制月刊 [Temperance Monthly] 5, no. 4 (1926): 26. Also see Wang Liming 王立明, "You jiating dao shehui 由家庭到社會 [From the Family into Society]," 118-19.

and reports laboring on with a clear conscience, undeterred by criticism or gossip.[62]

Wang appears to have drawn considerable motivation for her work from Christianity. In one of the clearest statements she made about her personal beliefs, she declared in 1931: "I am a Christian, and I believe in the character and spirit of Jesus. For the sake of religious liberty, I have suffered persecution at the hands of both friends and family. I greatly admire the social engagement of Christianity, and even more do I believe that the essence of religion—truth, beauty, goodness—is the means to save the world. Whenever I feel sluggish, I just need to encourage myself with the example of Christ's life, and I feel I have power."[63] While Wang found great strength in her Protestant faith, she did not often engage in theological reflection and her writings do not contain much on explicitly religious topics. Rather, she focused on action in accordance with the ethical commands of Jesus in order to influence society.

Wang's loving family was also a major source of strength for her. She was happily married to Liu Zhan'en and credited his support and encouragement with making it possible for her to be so actively involved in women's causes while still raising three children.[64] According to her

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[62] Wang Liming 王立明, "You jiating dao shehui 由家庭到社會 [From the Family into Society]," 119.
[63] Wang Liming 王立明, "You jiating dao shehui 由家庭到社會 [From the Family into Society]," 119.
[64] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Zhongguo funü yundong* 中國婦女運動 [The Chinese Women's Movement], preface, 6.

husband, Wang also enjoyed a warm relationship with her mother-in-law, who lived with the family in Shanghai from 1923 until her death in 1926, during which time she assisted Wang at home and in her WCTU work.[65] Even Wang's children did their part to help out. For instance, when Wang was writing books on various causes in the early 1930s, they would go to another room or outdoors and play quietly by themselves whenever she took up her pen.[66] As a result, Wang was able to complete *Kuaile jiating* 快樂家庭 (The Happy Family) in 1930; *Ziqiang zhi lu* 自強之路 (translated by the publisher as The Road to Prosperity) in 1932; and *Zhongguo funü yundong* 中國婦女運動 (*The Chinese Women's Movement*) in 1934, which was the first book on the women's movement by a Chinese woman.[67]

Japanese imperialism in China entered a dangerous new phase with the military annexation of Manchuria in September 1931 and a subsequent military assault on Shanghai in January 1932, and this galvanized patriotic Chinese into action. Liu Zhan'en and Wang Liming became prominent opponents of Japanese imperialism. As President of Hujiang University, Liu vigorously promoted patriotic sentiment and resistance to Japan among his students and took on a leading role in many

[65] Liu Zhan'en 劉湛恩, "Wo de muqin 我的母親 (My Mother)," 118.
[66] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Zhongguo funü yundong* 中國婦女運動 [The Chinese Women's Movement], preface, 5.
[67] Wang Huiji 王惠姬, "Liu-Wang Liming yu minchu Zhongguo de funü yundong 劉王立明與民初中國的婦女運動 [Liu-Wang Liming and the Women's Movement in Early Republican China]," 53.

patriotic organizations such as the Chinese Red Cross.[68] In December 1935, as part of the nationwide December Ninth protests against Japanese imperialism, both Liu and Wang were among 23 prominent Chinese Christians in Shanghai who signed a public proclamation calling for rejection of Japanese demands on China. "We love peace, but we love justice more," the document stated. "We are against any action that will lead to unnecessary sacrifice, but we are not afraid to shed our blood for the sake of truth and justice."[69] Circumstances would soon test their commitment.

In July 1937 the Japanese launched a full-scale invasion of China. Wang fled with her husband and children to the nearby International Settlement in Shanghai, which was safe from Japanese attack since it was controlled by the Western powers. There they quickly plunged into efforts to help resist the Japanese. Wang formed the Plum Garden Refugee Relief Center to help the multitudes displaced by the war, while Liu led the Shanghai Society-wide National Salvation Association (*Shanghai gejie jiuwang xiehui* 上海各界救亡協會) and became one of Shanghai's most prominent anti-Japanese intellectuals. Wang encouraged him in these efforts despite the danger involved.[70] The risks were even higher after Liu

[68] Wang Huiji 王惠姬, "Liu-Wang Liming yu minchu Zhongguo de funü yundong 劉王立明與民初中國的婦女運動 [Liu-Wang Liming and the Women's Movement in Early Republican China]," 55.
[69] "Chinese Christians and China's Crisis," *The Chinese Recorder* 67, no. 2 (1936): 123.
[70] Liu Guanghua 劉光華, "Wo de muqin Liu-Wang Liming 我的母親劉王立明 [My Mother Liu-Wang Liming]," 145.

rejected an offer in 1938 to be head of the Department of Education under the Japanese-controlled Reformed Government of the Republic of China, which was based in Nanjing.[71]

Before long, Liu began to receive threatening letters and phone calls, and then a hand grenade was thrown into their apartment, though fortunately no one was hurt. Wang was understandably shaken by this latter incident and spoke to her husband about leaving Shanghai for the sake of the children. Liu suggested that she and the children leave, but was determined himself to continue his resistance efforts in the city. "Moreover," he said, "I am a Christian and, when I think of our leader Jesus Christ on the cross, what do I have to be afraid of?"[72] Eventually Wang convinced him to leave for Hong Kong, but in April 1938, several days before the boat they had tickets on departed, Liu Zhan'en was gunned down at a bus stop near his home. The assailants were two Chinese men apparently in the employ of the Japanese. When the grief-stricken Wang saw her husband's bloodstained corpse in the hospital morgue, she saw on his face what she described as an expression of courage and victory. Parting there with her dead husband, she was overcome by grief, and

[71] Wang Huiji 王惠姬, "Liu-Wang Liming yu minchu Zhongguo de funü yundong 劉王立明與民初中國的婦女運動 [Liu-Wang Liming and the Women's Movement in Early Republican China]," 55.
[72] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Xianfu Liu Zhan'en xiansheng de si* 先扶劉湛恩先生的死 [The Death of My Former Husband Liu Zhan'en] (Xianggang 香港: Zhonghua funü jiezhihui 中華婦女節制會, 1939), 15.

cried out, “Almighty God, Creator of the universe, why must your way be so cruel?”[73]

After the funeral, which was attended by five thousand people, Wang took her three children and fled to Wuhan, where the Nationalist government had been forced to move the capital to escape the advancing Japanese armies. There she was appointed to the People’s Political Conference (PPC; *Guomin canzhenghui* 國民参政會), which was a quasi-democratic consultative body founded by the government to promote broader popular support for the war effort against the Japanese. This body, which met for the first time in June 1938, consisted of one hundred KMT-appointed eminent Chinese with experience serving in public or private organizations, and one hundred representatives selected by local government officials. Wang was qualified to gain appointment in the former category because of her extensive work as leader of the WCTU and other women’s organizations. She was one of only ten women in the first council of the PPC. Later, due to the advance of the Japanese armies, the Nationalist government moved its wartime capital to Chongqing and the PPC moved with it. Wang was one of fifteen women in the second council of the PPC that met in Chongqing in March 1941, and one of fourteen women in the third council that was convened in October 1942.[74]

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[73] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Xianfu Liu Zhan'en xiansheng de si* 先扶劉湛恩先生的死 [The Death of My Former Husband Liu Zhan'en], 29.
[74] Louise Edwards, *Gender, Politics, and Democracy* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008), 200-15. See also Edmund S. K. Fung, *In Search of Chinese Democracy: Civil*

In Chongqing, Wang soon resumed her involvement in social service to women. She used the money she received from the KMT in recognition of her husband's death as a martyr, along with other donations, to start an orphanage called Zhan'en Refugee Children Relief Institute. This orphanage took in several hundred children whose parents had been killed fighting the Japanese and raised them to adulthood.[75] Wang also started the Victory Childcare Center for children of women with full-time employment, which operated 24 hours a day and was the only childcare center in Chongqing.[76] She also continued to lead the WCTU, though on a much smaller scale than before, since most of the group's local chapters were in the eastern part of the country that was controlled by the Japanese.[77] With all of these organizations, Wang strove to maintain political independence and firmly resisted KMT control. Her Zhan'en Institute was one of the few orphanages at the time that did not belong to Madame Chiang Kaishek's orphanage network.[78]

Wang used her position in the PPC to press her concern for women's issues and the war effort. She was a forceful advocate for having

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Opposition in Nationalist China, 1929-1949 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 144-82.

[75] "Wang Liming 王立明," Geren dangan 個人檔案 [Personal Files], Taiwan guoshiguan 台灣國史館, Taibei 台北. Also see Wang Huiji 王惠姬, "Liu-Wang Liming yu minchu Zhongguo de funü yundong 劉王立明與民初中國的婦女運動 [Liu-Wang Liming and the Women's Movement in Early Republican China]," 56.

[76] Liu Guanghua 劉光華, "Wo de muqin Liu-Wang Liming 我的母親劉王立明 [My Mother Liu-Wang Liming]," 145-47.

[77] Wang, *Women in the Chinese Enlightenment: Oral and Textual Histories*, 140.

[78] Liu Guanghua 劉光華, "Wo de muqin Liu-Wang Liming 我的母親劉王立明 [My Mother Liu-Wang Liming]," 147.

a minimum quota of women in China's yet-to-be elected National Assembly. Her efforts and those of other women members of the PPC won inclusion of a ten percent minimum quota for women in the national constitution, also called the Double Fifth Constitution, which was implemented by the KMT in 1946 following the defeat of Japan.[79] Wang also used her position in the PPC to push for more active military engagement with the Japanese, and for maintaining unity between the KMT and the CCP.[80] Such was her zeal for preserving national unity that she sent her eldest son Guangsheng to the Nationalist military school in Sichuan, while having her second son Guanghua attend the Communist military academy in Yan'an.[81]

From her first year in the PPC, Wang opted not to join either the KMT or the CCP, but to affiliate with the China Democratic League (CDL;

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[79] Louise Edwards, "Liu-Wang Liming," in *Biographical Dictionary of Chinese Women: The Twentieth Century*, ed. Lilly Lee (New York: M. E. Sharpe, 2003), 375. Also Edwards, *Gender, Politics, and Democracy*, 196. Due to the civil war that started between the Nationalists and the Communists in 1945, this constitution was not fully implemented by the Nationalists at the time. It remained the official constitution under KMT rule after they fled to Taiwan in 1949, though it was only fully implemented after martial law was lifted in 1987.

[80] Liu Guanghua 劉光華, "Wo de muqin Liu-Wang Liming 我的母親劉王立明 [My Mother Liu-Wang Liming]," 146.

[81] Wang, *Women in the Chinese Enlightenment: Oral and Textual Histories*, 140. Zheng Wang states that Wang Liming sent her eldest son to the CCP military school in Yan'an and her youngest son to the KMT military school, but it appears that the reverse was true. This can be inferred from the fact that her eldest son studied theology in the US, was accused of being a rightist back in China, served time in a labor camp, and then fled to Hong Kong during the Cultural Revolution, where he became a university professor. Meanwhile, her youngest son stayed in China and worked in the CCP Culture Department in Beijing. He did not finish his studies at the CCP military school, probably because Wang told him to withdraw once the civil war started in 1946. See Wang Huiji 王惠姬, "Liu-Wang Liming yu minchu Zhongguo de funü yundong 劉王立明與民初中國的婦女運動 [Liu-Wang Liming and the Women's Movement in Early Republican China]," 60.

Zhongguo minzhu tongmeng 中國民主同盟), a smaller party that was situated ideologically between the two. Its platform called for a combination of constitutional democracy and socialism, both of which Wang had long advocated.[82] She hoped that this "third force" party might help to bridge the gap between the Nationalists and the Communists.[83] While Wang resolutely maintained this middle position between the main parties, her political sympathies clearly shifted from right to left during the war years as a result of her increasing disillusionment with the KMT. One sign of this was that Wang interacted more with those on the political left and developed a strong friendship with fellow PPC delegate Zhou Enlai and his wife Deng Yingchao. Eventually, Wang's stinging criticisms of the Nationalists for alleged corruption and mishandling of the war with Japan led to her being expelled from the PPC in 1943.[84] Wang and her family suffered financial hardship after losing the PPC salary, but Zhou Enlai provided them with extra food and clothing.[85]

Right after the war ended in 1945, Wang moved back to Shanghai, where she revived the work of the WCTU and continued her activities with the CDL. However, when civil war erupted between the KMT and the CCP,

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[82] Wang spelled out her support for this position explicitly in her 1934 book on the women's movement. Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Zhongguo funü yundong* 中國婦女運動 [The Chinese Women's Movement], 159.

[83] For more information on the CDL and third force movement, see Fung, *In Search of Chinese Democracy: Civil Opposition in Nationalist China, 1929-1949*, 230-62.

[84] Liu Guanghua 劉光華, "Wo de muqin Liu-Wang Liming 我的母親劉王立明 [My Mother Liu-Wang Liming]," 146. Also Edwards, *Gender, Politics, and Democracy*, 201.

[85] Liu Guanghua 劉光華, "Wo de muqin Liu-Wang Liming 我的母親劉王立明 [My Mother Liu-Wang Liming]," 147.

the left-leaning CDL was outlawed and Wang fled to Hong Kong, where the party was reconstituted and openly endorsed cooperation with the CCP. After the Communists took control of Beijing early in 1949, the new regime invited major nonpartisan organizations, including the CDL, to join the Chinese People's Political Consultative Congress (CPPCC; *Zhongguo renmin zhengzhi xieshang huiyi* 中國人民政治協商會議), a quasi-democratic institution designed to give non-Communist groups a measure of input in the new government. Wang was the official CDL representative at the first congress of the CPPCC. At this time the CCP also founded the All-China Women's Federation (ACWF; *Zhonghua quanguo funü lianhehui* 中華全國婦女聯合會) as a way to unite non-Communist women's groups under the regime's banner and Wang was selected as a standing member of the executive committee, reflecting her stature in the women's movement.[86] When Mao declared the founding of the People's Republic of China at a huge official ceremony in Tiananmen Square on 1 October 1949, Wang was one of those present for the occasion.[87]

Wang retained her high official posts during the consolidation of Communist Party rule in the early 1950s. However, rather than taking advantage of the political or bureaucratic opportunities that such positions might have afforded, she opted to keep her focus on her work

[86] Wang, *Women in the Chinese Enlightenment: Oral and Textual Histories*, 141.
[87] Liu Guanghua 劉光華, "Wo de muqin Liu-Wang Liming 我的母親劉王立明 [My Mother Liu-Wang Liming]," 148.

with the WCTU, which now had its offices in a spacious Qing-era compound in the city. Wang started a nursery school on the office grounds and later a children's library and a night school were added as well.[88] In 1956, she led a four-person delegation to attend the tenth conference of the World WCTU in West Germany. In her address to the assembly, Wang hailed Communist China's great progress in the areas of women's rights and social welfare programs for women and children, refuted the claims of an Egyptian delegate that the CCP was growing and exporting opium, and successfully urged that the delegation from Taiwan not be allowed to attend the conference under the name Republic of China. Her speech elicited tremendous applause from the audience and Wang was chosen as a vice-chairperson of the World WCTU. Zhou Enlai later praised her patriotism publicly.[89]

But Wang's largely successful transition to cooperation with the CCP came to an abrupt end with the Hundred Flowers campaign of 1956, when Mao encouraged the masses to freely voice criticism of the CCP and then swiftly attacked those who dared to do so. Though Wang had not criticized the party, she refused to denounce two of Mao's main political targets and consequently in 1957 was labeled a rightist of the ninth grade. The CCP stripped her of all her titles and positions, including that of

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[88] Wang Huiji 王惠姬, "Liu-Wang Liming yu minchu Zhongguo de funü yundong 劉王立明與民初中國的婦女運動 [Liu-Wang Liming and the Women's Movement in Early Republican China]," 58-59.

[89] Liu Guanghua 劉光華, "Wo de muqin Liu-Wang Liming 我的母親劉王立明 [My Mother Liu-Wang Liming]," 148.

president of the WCTU, a post she had held for more than thirty years. The WCTU and all other women's organizations lost their independent status and were placed under the direct control of the ACWF, which had become an organ of the party state.[90] Wang still lived in the same hutong, except now she occupied only a single room about ten square meters in size, and had to do all her own cooking and cleaning. Having been through difficult times before, she took the hardship in stride and busied herself with attending as many study classes and exercise activities as the Party allowed.[91]

Early in 1966, at the age of seventy, Wang broke her arm trying to squeeze onto a crowded Beijing bus so she could get to a meeting on time. She decided to go to her daughter's home in Shanghai to recuperate.[92] In August 1966, while she was still in Shanghai, Mao started his Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, which was a radical attack on traditional Chinese culture and on his perceived adversaries within the Communist bureaucracy. On 1 September 1966, Wang was arrested on charges that she was a spy for the American CIA. "Evidence" of her crimes was found among the possessions she had brought to her daughter's home—a small

90 Wang, *Women in the Chinese Enlightenment: Oral and Textual Histories*, 142.
91 Liu Guanghua 劉光華, "Wo de muqin Liu-Wang Liming 我的母親劉王立明 [My Mother Liu-Wang Liming]," 149.
92 Liu Guanghua 劉光華, "Wo de muqin Liu-Wang Liming 我的母親劉王立明 [My Mother Liu-Wang Liming]," 149. Wang's daughter was a middle school English teacher in Shanghai. See Wang Huiji 王惠姬, "Liu-Wang Liming yu minchu Zhongguo de funü yundong 劉王立明與民初中國的婦女運動 [Liu-Wang Liming and the Women's Movement in Early Republican China]," 60.

suitcase full of manuscripts (including poems she had written to her rightist son when he was in labor camp) and a typewriter believed to be a secret transmitter. As she was taken away, she said to her daughter in English, "I am carrying the cross of Jesus Christ."[93] After being subjected to a struggle session, Wang was sent off to a labor reform camp outside of Shanghai and her family never saw her again. Three years and eight months later, on 15 April 1970, Wang died there at the age of 74.[94]

Wang insisted on her innocence to the very end. Before she died, she asked a fellow prisoner to tell her children that she had lived her life with a clear conscience and to urge them to find Deng Yingchao, Zhou Enlai's wife and a personal friend, to have her posthumously rehabilitated. This rehabilitation finally happened in 1981, when the CPPCC, CDL, and ACWF held a joint memorial service in Wang's honor in Beijing and praised her as a patriot. In addition, she was given a tomb at the Babao Shan Cemetery, a burial ground reserved for high officials. Since all her belongings had been confiscated when she was arrested, the only thing her daughter could put in the tomb was a comb that Wang had left behind.[95]

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[93] Wang, *Women in the Chinese Enlightenment: Oral and Textual Histories*, 142. Wang Liming's daughter had heard her mother say this once before, when she accused of being a rightist in 1957.

[94] Wang Huiji 王惠姬, "Liu-Wang Liming yu minchu Zhongguo de funü yundong 劉王立明與民初中國的婦女運動 [Liu-Wang Liming and the Women's Movement in Early Republican China]," 60.

[95] Wang, *Women in the Chinese Enlightenment: Oral and Textual Histories*, 143.

Christianity, the WCTU, and Women's Rights

Christianity and the WCTU

The Women's Christian Temperance Union was Wang Liming's primary platform for advancing a Protestant vision of modernity in China and it was an organization with deep religious roots. In North America, where the group started during the nineteenth century, the WCTU drew the vast majority of both its leaders and membership from evangelical Protestant circles. Carolyn Gifford emphasizes this dimension of the organization in her introduction to a reprint of the WCTU classic, *The Ideal of "The New Woman" According to the Woman's Christian Temperance Union*: "Religious faith was an integral aspect of the WCTU woman's self-definition; WCTU members, were above all, *Christian* women. They thought in the language patterns and framework of nineteenth-century Evangelical Protestant Christianity."[96]

The WCTU in China likewise had its foundation in the Protestant churches and institutions built by the missionaries and their Chinese converts. When it first began, the WCTU depended heavily on married and single women missionaries affiliated with denominational groups to maintain its existence. For instance, the first president of the WCTU in China was Mary Farnham, wife of a Presbyterian missionary in Shanghai.[97]

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[96] Carolyn De Swarte Gifford, "Introduction," in *The Ideal of The "The New Woman" According to the Woman's Christian Temperance Union*, ed. Carolyn De Swarte Gifford (New York: Garland Publishing, 1987), 3.
[97] See Chapin, ed. *Thumb Nail Sketches of White Ribbon Women*, 84.

Meanwhile, in establishing local chapters, the WCTU recruited members from among Chinese women connected with the Protestant mission enterprise through its churches, hospitals, and schools.[98] Full members had to be baptized Christians, but those who were not baptized could sign temperance pledges and be admitted as associate members.[99] Eventually it appears that this two-tier system was discarded, since WCTU membership regulations published in 1934 made no mention of it.[100]

Nevertheless, it is likely that most of the members and all the leaders of the Chinese WCTU were Protestant Christians throughout the organization's existence. Indications of this can be found in the group's magazine, *Temperance Monthly*. For instance, the October 1927 issue announced the appointment of a secretary for the South Shanghai branch, who was described as an active Christian with several years of experience working at a women's mission school in Shanghai. Another notice in the December 1932 issue announced that a new director had been hired for the WCTU family department, a woman who graduated from Ginling Women's College, a Christian institution.[101] Meanwhile, the May 1932 issue of the journal reported that a group of WCTU women in Nanjing had

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[98] See *Report of the Fifth Biennial Convention of the World's Woman's Christian Temperance Union* (no publisher, 1900), 48-49. See also *Report of the Ninth Convention of the World's Women's Christian Temperance Union* (no publisher, 1913), 57-58.
[99] Liu, "The Woman's Christian Temperance Union of China," 258.
[100] "Benhui Guizhang 本會規章 [Rules of This Organization]," *Jiezhi niankan* 節制年刊 [Temperance Yearbook] (1934): 67-69.
[101] "Benhui xinpin zhiyuan 本會新聘職員 [The Newly Hired Workers of This Organization]," *Jiezhi yuekan* 節制月刊 [Temperance Monthly] 9, no. 7-9 (1930): 38.

formed the Christian Mothers' Association to help mothers teach their children WCTU principles at home, and sent letters to all the members of the Nanjing chapter urging them to join.[102]

In some ways, the Protestant nature of the WCTU was less outwardly evident in China than in the West. For instance, the name WCTU was translated as "Chinese Women's Temperance Union" (*Zhonghua funü jiezhihui* 中華婦女節制會), which omitted the word "Christian" present in the English version. In addition, *Temperance Monthly*, the magazine put out by the WCTU, rarely spoke about Christian teachings. Nevertheless, Protestantism was deeply interwoven into the structure, values and activities of the WCTU, and was discernable in numerous ways. One example of this was the official motto that the Chinese WCTU adopted at its founding in 1921: "For God, for Home, for Country" (*Wei zhu*, *wei jia*, *wei guo* 為主, 為國, 為家). In addition, the opening line of the group's founding statement said it stood for "the universal love preached by Christianity."[103]

Further evidence of the Christian nature of the Chinese WCTU can be seen in the close ties the organization enjoyed with a wide variety of Protestant churches in the country. In July 1923, the WCTU sent an open letter to more than a thousand churches around China with three

[102] "Nanjing fenhui xiaoxi 南京分會消息 (Nanjing Chapter News)," *Jiezhi yuekan* 節制月刊 [Temperance Monthly] 11, no. 1-3 (1932): 27-28.
[103] "Zhonghua Jidujiao funü jiezhi xiehui chengli yu 1921 nian 中華基督教婦女節制協會成立於1921年 (The Chinese WCTU Established in 1921)," 54.

requests: first, that they pray for the WCTU; second, that they start local branches of the WCTU; and third, that they contribute financially to the work of the WCTU as they were able. In addition, church pastors periodically spoke at WCTU events in support of the group's work. Li Qiongjie, a man who was a member of the Chinese Homeland Evangelistic Association, spoke on "The Future of Chinese Women" at a WCTU meeting at the end of 1926. In his address, he noted that in whatever nations Protestantism flourished, it led to an elevation of women's status, and he cited America as the preeminent example. Since women relied on the power of the Christian religion to raise their position in society, he urged women to use this elevated influence to promote further social progress by teaching their children, serving society, and nurturing Christian faith.[104] On another occasion, a minister from a local church in Shanghai spoke at the WCTU Settlement House for beggars on the subject of "The Prodigal Son."[105]

Wang herself spoke frequently at churches to help advance the WCTU cause. *Temperance Monthly* reported her addressing the Women's Evangelistic Association of a large Shanghai Church in April 1927 on the topic "Women under the Nationalist Government." In her talk, Wang observed that China continued to experience many problems despite

[104] "Hubei jiezhihui 湖北節制會 [The Hubei WCTU]," in *Jiezhi yuekan* 節制月刊 [Temperance Monthly] 6, no. 4 (1927), 36-37.
[105] "Jiaoyangyuan xiaoxi 教養院消息 [News of the Settlement House]," *Jiezhi yuekan* 節制月刊 [Temperance Monthly] 10, no. 5 (1931): 64.

having been recently unified under Nationalist Party rule, and attributed this turmoil to the fact that most Chinese people, and especially women, could not participate in the political process. Her solution was to call upon women to arise and fulfill their responsibilities as modern citizens, first by reforming their families according to the moral principles of the WCTU, and then by joining with other women to promote social reform and fight against social evils. On another occasion later that year, Wang gave an address to an American church in Shanghai on the "Save the Beggars Movement." Her passionate appeal stirred the audience to give generously to support WCTU efforts aimed at helping beggars.[106]

At times, Wang tied her temperance message directly to the Bible, such as when she addressed the fifth annual meeting of the Northern Shanghai branch of the WCTU in June 1928. The meeting opened with a singing of the "World Peace Song" and a prayer, at which point Wang addressed the thirty or so members who had gathered on the subject of temperance. She reasoned that temperance was as necessary for the development of a society as the gaining control over limbs and senses was for the healthy growth of a child. She believed temperance not only could empower people to overcome such temptations as gambling, indulging in luxury, and foul language, but could also motivate them to follow God's principles and practice charity. To help those involved in social reform

[106] "Xiren rexin jiugai shiye 西人熱心救丐事業 [Westerners Enthusiastic About Effort to Help Beggars]," *Jiezhi yuekan* 節制月刊 [Temperance Monthly] 6, no. 7 (1927): 39.

cultivate temperance, Wang highly recommended reading the Bible, which she considered a compass for guiding personal behavior. After Wang's talk and some other activities, the meeting closed with a song and a blessing.[107] As her message shows, there was a close link in Wang's mind between Christianity and her reform work with the WCTU. Moreover, the close resemblance of the meeting to a Protestant church service further reflects the general Christian orientation of the group.

Another vital connection the WCTU had with institutional Christianity was the student chapters it founded in many Protestant schools around China. Of the 71 schools with WCTU chapters in 1922, at least 24 were Christian institutions, and the number may well have been considerably higher. Wang herself had helped to form a WCTU chapter in 1915 at the Christian school she attended, and her early work as a secretary for the WCTU consisted of establishing student chapters in various parts of China, no doubt some of them at Christian schools. Moreover, Christianity was an important part of Wang's work among students, as can be seen in an open letter on personal health that she addressed to them in a 1923 issue of *Temperance Monthly*. In the letter, Wang offered practical advice on healthy living and enumerated some of the personal benefits to be gained as a result, but the primary reasons she gave to motivate these students to upright living reflected her Christian

[107] "Hubei funü jiezhihui diwujie nianhui 湖北婦女節制會第五屆年會 [Hubei WCTU Fifth Annual Meeting]," *Jiezhi yuekan* 節制月刊 [Temperance Monthly] 7, no. 1 (1928): 31-32.

outlook. The first was the notion that the body is God's temple, which Christians should take care not to defile, and the second was love for God.[108]

The Chinese WCTU was a Protestant organization and its commitment to modernity was closely connected with the Christian worldview that animated its activities. Wang was shaped by this WCTU culture as a youngster and she in turn expanded its influence in Chinese society as leader of the organization. For Wang, the WCTU melding of Protesantism and modernity was a compelling vision that could help China to enter the new modern age that was dawning. As she said, "Therefore, in all civilized and progressive nations, women have stepped out to serve society; the fact that China today has the WCTU is certainly a good omen for the Chinese people."[109] Now we will turn our attention to the specific ways in which Wang's work with the WCTU helped to advance this Protestant vision of modernity in Republican China.

Protestant Modernity and the "New Woman"

Wang Liming actively participated in the transformation of social role that urban women in China experienced during the first few decades of the twentieth century. The roots of these changes went back to the

[108] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, "Zhi qingnian de dierfeng xin 致青年的第二封信 [The Second Letter to Youth]," *Jiezhi jikan* [Temperance Monthly] 2 (1923): 79-82.
[109] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, "Funü Jiezhihui 婦女節制會 [The WCTU]," *Zhonghua Jidujiaohui nianjian* 中華基督教會年鑑 [The Chinese Church Year Book] (1925): 243.

nineteenth century. Protestant missionaries had been among the earliest to call for expanded rights for Chinese women and had a significant impact as pioneers of female education.[110] The process of change was greatly accelerated when leading Chinese reformers such as Kang Youwei 康有為 and Liang Qichao 梁啓超 took up the cause in the latter 1800s. They pushed for an end to footbinding and for women to be educated in order that they could become productive citizens capable of helping the Chinese nation stave off the threat of foreign imperialism.[111] Chinese culture was subjected to radical critique with the rise of the New Culture intellectuals in 1915, followed by the May Fourth movement in 1919. Thinkers such as Hu Shi and Chen Duxiu, who led these cultural reform efforts, attacked Confucianism as fostering the oppression of women and made this a central argument for discarding it in favor of modern and Western social

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[110] Graham, *Gender, Culture, and Christianity: American Protestant Mission Schools in China 1880-1930*, 20-27. See also Jessie Gregory Lutz, *China and the Christian Colleges* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1971), 132-37.

[111] See Kazuko Ono, *Chinese Women in a Century of Revolution, 1850-1950*, trans. Kathryn Bernhardt et. al. Joshua A. Fogel ed. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989). See also Paul J. Bailey, "Active Citizen or Efficient Housewife? The Debate over Women's Education in Early Twentieth Century China," in *Education, Culture, and Identity in Twentieth-Century China*, ed. Glen Peterson, Ruth Hayhoe, and Yongling Lu (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 2001).

ideals.[112] Also at this time, women gained access to higher education and became increasingly prominent as activists themselves.[113]

The term “new woman” (*xin funü* 新婦女) became a central part of the May Fourth discourse that was prominent in China during the 1920s and 1930s. Though the term did not have a single definition, it generally referred to urban Chinese women who had received a modern education, possessed a strong sense of independent personhood that led them to insist on personal choice in marriage and career, participated actively in the public domain, and had a concern for other oppressed women.[114] Many of these modern women were secular in outlook and subscribed to ideologies such as May Fourth humanism or Communism, but a sizeable minority had been educated at mission schools and professed Christianity. This latter group generally took a more favorable view of marriage and family, and usually regarded their involvement in the public domain as an extension of the female domestic role.[115] Wang herself was clearly a member of this circle, and this was the type of woman she believed could be a constructive agent of change in society.

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[112] See Vera Schwarcz, *The Chinese Enlightenment: Intellectuals and the Legacy of the May Fourth Movement of 1919* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986). In addition, see Christina K. Gilmartin, "Introduction: May Fourth and Women's Emancipation," in *Women in Republican China: A Sourcebook*, ed. Hua R. Lan and Vanessa L. Fong (Armonk: M. E. Sharpe, 1999).

[113] Paul John Bailey, *Gender and Education in China: Gender Discourse and Women's Schooling in the Early Twentieth Century* (New York: Routledge, 2007). See in particular Chapter Five on “The ‘Woman Question’ and Education in the May Fourth Period.”

[114] Wang, *Women in the Chinese Enlightenment: Oral and Textual Histories*, 16.

[115] Littell-Lamb, "Going Public: The YWCA, ‘New’ Women, and Social Feminism in Republican China,” 7-12.

Not much research has been done to date on this Christian and middle class women's movement. In Mainland China, due to the CCP labeling of non-Communist women's organizations as "bourgeois" groups that failed to integrate workers or the poor, Chinese historiography has focused almost exclusively on Communist figures, so that leaders like Wang Liming have been largely ignored or forgotten.[116] Western scholars have given somewhat more attention to Chinese Christian women, though by no means extensive. We have a few studies that examine the lives of Kang Cheng and Shi Meiyu, influential female doctors trained by missionaries at the end of the nineteenth century. These include Weili Ye's *Seeking Modernity in China's Name*, Hu Ying's article "Naming the First Chinese Woman," and Connie Shemo's dissertation "An Army of Women."[117] Then we have a small number of works that describe some of the main mission organizations these Chinese Christian women participated in during the early part of the twentieth century, especially the YWCA. Among them are Pui-lan Kwok's *Chinese Women and Christianity*, Emily Honig's *Sisters and Strangers*, and Elizabeth Littell-Lamb's dissertation "Going Public."[118]

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[116] Wang, *Women in the Chinese Enlightenment: Oral and Textual Histories*, 16, 122.
[117] Weili Ye, *Seeking Modernity in China's Name: Chinese Students in the United States 1900-1927* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001). See also Hu Ying, "Naming the First New Woman," *Nan Nü: Men, Women, and Gender in Early and Imperial China* 3, no. 2 (2001). Also relevant is Connie Shemo, "'An Army of Women': The Medical Ministries of Kang Cheng and Shi Meiyu, 1873-1937" (State University of New York, 2002).
[118] See Kwok, *Chinese Women and Christianity 1860-1927*. Chapter IV, titled "Christian Women and Social Reform," is most relevant. Also valuable is Emily Honig, *Sisters and Strangers: Women in the Shanghai Cotton Mills, 1919-1949* (Stanford: Stanford University

Finally, a few scholars have done research that provides a limited personal glimpse at specific Christian women who were active in women's causes in China from the 1920s to the 1950s. These include Zheng Wang's *Women and the Chinese Enlightenment* with information on Wang Liming, Weili Ye's *Seeking Modernity in China's Name* with a treatment of *Funü zazhi* 婦女雜誌 (Ladies' Journal) editor Hu Binxia 胡彬夏, and Emily Honig's "Christianity, Feminism, and Communism" looking at YWCA leader Deng Yuzhi 鄧餘志.[119] However, the former two say little or nothing about the Protestant faith of these women, while Honig discusses Deng's religious faith without attempting to understand exactly how Christianity shaped her thinking and social action. This chapter centers on Wang Liming in an effort to explore the nature of Protestant involvement in China's independent women's movement, and to show how a Protestant worldview motivated the action of Chinese women in this sphere.

Fighting for Women's Rights in China

The expansion of women's rights, an important social change associated with modernity, emerged in the West during the nineteenth

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Press, 1986). Chapter 8, "Visions of Change," is relevant here. In addition, see Littell-Lamb, "Going Public: The YWCA, 'New' Women, and Social Feminism in Republican China".

[119] See Wang, *Women in the Chinese Enlightenment: Oral and Textual Histories*, 135-43. See also Ye, *Seeking Modernity in China's Name: Chinese Students in the United States 1900-1927*, 136-41. Also relevant is Emily Honig, "Christianity, Feminism, and Communism: The Life and Times of Deng Yuzhi," in *Christianity in China: From the Eighteenth Century to the Present*, ed. Daniel H. Bays (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996).

century and then began to spread to other parts of the globe primarily during the twentieth century. It brought women increased access to the public domain, education, legal protection, and employment.[120] Wang's efforts to advance the cause of women's rights in China were considerable, and helped shape a new and modern conception of the Chinese woman. She saw her work as simply obtaining for women the rights that all human beings ought to enjoy, so that women could work together with men to build a more ideal society. There were three main rights for women that Wang fought for and that we examine here—the right to vote, economic independence, and equal educational opportunities.[121]

Wang was a prominent advocate of women's suffrage in Republican China. She considered the notion of inalienable human rights, which she credited to Rousseau, to be one of the foundational ideas of the suffrage movement. Wang strongly affirmed the emphasis of this theory on the equality and rights of all persons, both male and female. Therefore, she viewed human rights as a powerful basis on which to argue that women, like men, should have the right to vote and that to deny them this right was a violation of their personhood. As an inalienable right, she also

[120] See Sylvia Paletschek and Bianka Pietrow-Ennker, *Women's Emancipation Movements in the Nineteenth Century: A European Perspective* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004). See also Lynn Walter, ed. *Women's Rights: A Global View* (Westport: Greenwood Press,2001).
[121] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Zhongguo funü yundong* 中國婦女運動 [The Chinese Women's Movement], 17-19.

believed that women had a duty to fight for suffrage and not simply passively yield their rights.[122]

For Wang, another important factor behind the suffrage movement was the influence of "revolutionary thinking," such as that advocated by Sun Yat-sen. Sun had emphasized democracy and argued that "authority over the Chinese republic belongs to all of the nation's citizens." Referring to this slogan, Wang noted that Chinese women could not be legitimately denied status as citizens, since they made up half the population, and this was why there had been continual calls for women to be given voting rights.[123]

Wang considered the awakening of women themselves to be a powerful force driving the women's suffrage movement. In her view, once women started to be educated, they soon realized just how awful their plight was, and that "they were treated worse than cattle and horses." As they then reflected on the root cause of their low position in society, they came to the conclusion that inequality before the law was chiefly to blame, and saw women's suffrage as the key means to righting this injustice. Wang therfore affirmed the Nationalist Government for recognizing the

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[122] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Zhongguo funü yundong* 中國婦女運動 [The Chinese Women's Movement], 22.
[123] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Zhongguo funü yundong* 中國婦女運動 [The Chinese Women's Movement], 23.

equality of men and women as citizens, including the right to vote, in its 1931 Tutelary Constitution.[124]

Wang was a determined advocate of expanded rights for women in the economic sphere. One aspect of this was her involvement in the campaign to secure inheritance rights for women, which were first partially recognized by the Nationalist Party at its second party congress in 1926. She regarded inheritance rights as a matter of human dignity. Since daughters were born of the same parents as sons, she saw no reason why they should not likewise be qualified to receive an inheritance. She believed that if this policy were widely implemented, it would help to raise the position of women in society.[125] But Wang was convinced that legal equality and inheritance rights alone would not be enough to ensure women an equal place in society. "To sum up," she noted with in one of her books, "if women want to obtain freedom and enjoy equality with men, they must be economically independent, and the only way to economic independence is to have a real occupation."[126]

Wang believed that having a job was a fundamental part of being human and contributing to society. "Since women are human beings, and must enjoy the rights of human beings," she declared, "they should not only support themselves, but should provide a real service to humanity.

[124] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Zhongguo funü yundong* 中國婦女運動 [The Chinese Women's Movement], 21-24.
[125] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Zhongguo funü yundong* 中國婦女運動 [The Chinese Women's Movement], 56-58.
[126] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Kuaile jiating* 快樂家庭 [The Happy Family], 123.

Therefore, every woman, after she has grown up, should have a real occupation."[127] To this end, Wang boldly called for the opening of all social institutions in China to women, including the fields of industry, academia, agriculture, the military, and politics.[128] Nor would she settle for mere token measures. In a 1927 article written for *Temperance Monthly*, Wang explained the need for women to participate in politics, but rejected the idea that a few women as stenographers in a courtroom or as publicists in a government department would suffice. Rather, she insisted that if women were to truly participate in politics, they should also have a chance to fill such roles as president, legislator, provincial governor, and magistrate.[129]

Education was another arena in which Wang pushed vigorously to increase women's rights. While arguing that economic independence was essential to raising the status of women, she recognized the obvious fact that without proper training and skills, women would be unable to enter a vocation and earn their own income. Wang was convinced that given an opportunity for study, women would prove their ability was equal to that of men. "That women are not independent and must rely upon men is not because they are less capable than men," she said, "but actually is because

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[127] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Kuaile jiating* 快樂家庭 [The Happy Family], 124-25.
[128] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, "Funü wenti 婦女問題 [Women's Issues]," *Jiezhi yuekan* 節制月刊 [Temperance Monthly] 5, no. 10 (1926): 8.
[129] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, "Zhongguo funü yundong 中國婦女運動 [The Chinese Women's Movement]," *Jiezhi yuekan* 節制月刊 [Temperance Monthly] 6, no. 6 (1927): 5.

women have received so little education. If we want women to recover their original personality and to be equal to men regardless of the task, then all we need to do is raise women's level of education."[130]

As this quote indicates, Wang considered women's education important not simply for the practical benefits it brought, but because it showed respect for and promoted the development of women's "personhood" (*renge* 人格). Consistent with the high value that Wang placed on women's education, she declared that, "Among the important tasks of the women's movement, universalizing women's education should be placed first."[131] She envisioned such an effort involving two tracks, one using remedial classes to teach illiterate adult women to read, and the other pressuring the Chinese government to institute compulsory education for girls. Wang's goal was that women should have the same educational opportunities as men, and she believed that if everyone, regardless of gender, was self-sufficient and able to help others, it would result in a stronger nation and a happier people.[132]

Wang did not draw explicit connections between Christianity and her views on raising the position of women in Chinese society, but her

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[130] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, "Funü wenti 婦女問題 [Women's Issues]," 8.
[131] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, "Zhongguo funü yundong 中國婦女運動 [The Chinese Women's Movement]," 7.
[132] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Zhongguo funü yundong* 中國婦女運動 [The Chinese Women's Movement], 88-89.

arguments in many ways reflect Christian assumptions.[133] For instance, the notion of "rights" that she makes frequent reference to had deep roots in Christianity, such as Protestant teachings on the Ten Commandments, which regarded them not only as negative prohibitions, but also as positively implying rights.[134] Likewise, Wang's conviction that men and women should be equal was an idea heavily indebted to Protestant emphasis on the equality of all individuals before God.[135] In similar fashion, the belief that women possessed a fundamental human personhood just as men did, which deserved to be respected and developed, found strong support in Christian teachings about men and women being created in the image of God. These were beliefs that Wang had been exposed to from childhood and that were an integral part of the Protestant culture of the WCTU in which she was so deeply absorbed. Quite likely these convictions were an important source of motivation for her, whether at a conscious or unconscious level.

Wang's views overlapped closely with some of the humanist ideals that characterized the liberal stream of the May Fourth movement. These included her emphasis on rights, on the equality of men and women, and on the personhood of women. It is significant that Wang called for

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[133] This may have been in part because the fullest expression of her thinking on this subject was contained in her book *The Chinese Women's Movement*, which was clearly intended for a broader audience, rather than only for Christian circles.

[134] John Jr. Witte, *The Reformation of Rights: Law, Religion, and Human Rights in Early Modern Calvinism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 25-29.

[135] This notion existed in tension with patriarchal ideas in the Protestant tradition, but was still a powerful resource used in elevating the position of women in Protestant communities.

improvement of women's position in society not primarily as a way to strengthen the nation, as Liang Qichao had done and as Communist thinkers at the time were doing, but rather because they were presumed to have intrinsic value as human persons. This emphasis on personhood and considering the fulfillment of the individual as a necessary precondition for the flourishing of the nation were important elements of May Fourth liberalism.[136] Thus, we can say that Wang's Protesant outlook shared a considerable affinity with May Fourth ideals.

Wang Liming did more than simply embrace these ideas; she vigorously sought to implement them in society. Besides her primary focus on the WCTU, she also became actively involved in the broader women's movement that had emerged in China at the time, especially the effort to promote women's suffrage. Initial attempts by women to win the right to vote following the 1911 revolution had failed. However, by the time the May Fourth movement arose in 1919, there were enough women being educated in major Chinese cities to build momentum for women's suffrage.[137] Wang's arrival in Shanghai in 1920 put her in an ideal position to be a leader in the suffrage movement from its early stages.

Wang's initial involvement in promoting women's rights was with a group called the Women's Suffrage Association (WSA; *Nüzi canzheng*

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[136] For more on Chinese liberalism, see Fung, *In Search of Chinese Democracy: Civil Opposition in Nationalist China, 1929-1949*. Most relevant to this subject is Chapter Four, titled "Liberalism in China and Chinese Liberal Thought."

[137] Wang, *Women in the Chinese Enlightenment: Oral and Textual Histories*, 15.

xiejinhui 女子參政協近會), which was founded in 1922 by women students in Beijing. The WSA was devoted to three goals: ensuring that women's rights were included in the nation's constitution, obtaining inheritance rights for women, and replacing China's patriarchal family structure with male-female equality. The group sent representatives to various provinces around China to start branch chapters. A woman named Wan Pu 萬璞 was sent to Shanghai, where she convened a meeting of the city's leading figures in women's circles on 15 October 1922 and formally established a branch of the Women's Suffrage Association.[138] Wang was one of three women chosen to lead the group. The Shanghai WSA was relatively short-lived, but did submit a petition to the central government in Beijing in December 1922 asking that the right of women to vote and hold office be included in the nation's constitution. In addition, members gave lectures at women's schools and started a short-lived journal in the spring of 1923 called *Nüguomin* 女國民 (Women Citizens) in order to disseminate their ideas.[139]

Two years later, Wang played a leading role in another effort to promote women's rights. In November 1924, Sun Yat-sen had called for the convening of a National Assembly as a way to try to unify the country,

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[138] Wang Huiji 王惠姬, "Liu-Wang Liming yu minchu Zhongguo de funü yundong 劉王立明與民初中國的婦女運動 [Liu-Wang Liming and the Women's Movement in Early Republican China]," 44.

[139] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Zhongguo funü yundong* 中國婦女運動 [The Chinese Women's Movement], preface, 1. Also see Edwards, *Gender, Politics, and Democracy*, 135.

which was split at the time between warlord factions in the North and South. Women's groups were eager to participate in the assembly in order to ensure that equality for women would be written into any future national constitution. Consequently, women activists in Shanghai from both the Nationalist Party and Communist Party joined together to establish the Women's National Assembly Promotion Association (WNAPA; *Nüjie guomin huiyi cuchenghui* 女界國民會議促成會). This organization united women's organizations from across the political spectrum to lobby for their rights, including political rights, marriage laws, inheritance rights, employment opportunity, and access to education.[140]

On 9 December 1924, the WNAPA held its first official meeting and Wang was chosen as one of the group's six directors.[141] As a show of strength, the group then held a general meeting in Shanghai on 21 December that was attended by more than six hundred people attended, with Wang serving as the master of ceremonies. Subsequently, WNAPA branches were founded in a number of large cities around China.[142] In the end, these efforts proved fruitless, since Sun Yat-sen's unexpected death in March 1925 prevented the National Assembly from being held. However, the goals and strategies developed by the WNAPA later helped to make

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[140] Edwards, *Gender, Politics, and Democracy*, 154-56.
[141] Wang Huiji 王惠姬, "Liu-Wang Liming yu minchu Zhongguo de funü yundong 劉王立明與民初中國的婦女運動 [Liu-Wang Liming and the Women's Movement in Early Republican China]," 45-46.
[142] Edwards, *Gender, Politics, and Democracy*, 157.

leaders of the women's movement more effective in advancing their agenda in the political sphere.

Wang Liming's commitment to women's suffrage remained steadfast until decisive breakthroughs were achieved in the early 1930s. After the Beijing Women's Suffrage Association disbanded in the mid-1920s due to flagging interest, she took the initiative in 1927 to have the Shanghai Women's Suffrage Association renamed the Chinese Women's Suffrage Association (CWSA; *Zhonghua funü canzheng xiehui* 中華婦女參政協會). Wang was the group's president and main leader.[143] In November 1930, the Nationalist Party announced a citizens' convention would be held in May 1931 to discuss and promulgate a Tutelary Constitution in order to help the nation prepare for full democracy at a later date. Many women's groups that had been dormant sprang back into action, including the CWSA. Once again, their goal was to have equality of men and women enshrined in the constitution, and thus make possible women's future political participation.

The CWSA was one of twenty Chinese women's organizations that sent representatives to the capital in Nanjing in April 1930, where ten were then chosen as "observers" to the convention. Permitting this special group of women observers to attend the convention was a concession by

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[143] Wang Huiji 王惠姬, "Liu-Wang Liming yu minchu Zhongguo de funü yundong 劉王立明與民初中國的婦女運動 [Liu-Wang Liming and the Women's Movement in Early Republican China]," 45. Also Wang, *Women in the Chinese Enlightenment: Oral and Textual Histories*, 136.

the government to increase female representation at the assembly, since only six out of the 520 official delegates were women. These women activists rejoiced when the convention eventually passed a Tutelary Constitution that granted women equality with men.[144] As a result of this major victory, the CWSA was renamed the Chinese Women's Movement Alliance (CWMA; *Zhonghua funü yundong tongmenghui* 中華婦女運動同盟會) and shifted its goal from achieving suffrage to the broader aim of promoting the political, educational, economic, and cultural progress of Chinese women.[145]

The WCTU and the Modernization of the Chinese Family

Marriage, Monogamy, and Modernity

Monogamy became more common around the globe during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, along with the idea that men and women should have greater freedom to choose their own spouse, rather than have others choose for them. The spread of these ideas and practices outside the West was a result of various factors, including Western imperialism, missionary influence, and the perception of local

[144] Edwards, *Gender, Politics, and Democracy*, 176-81.
[145] Wang Huiji 王惠姬, "Liu-Wang Liming yu minchu Zhongguo de funü yundong 劉王立明與民初中國的婦女運動 [Liu-Wang Liming and the Women's Movement in Early Republican China]," 45.

peoples that these ideas were connected with being modern.[146] Wang made the promotion of free and monogamous marriage a central part of her work with the WCTU. In fact, in 1927 the WCTU announced that the goal of seeing monogamy recognized as the legal form of marriage in China was the third of its three main policy priorities and it was expected that ten years of effort would be required to achieve it.[147] Wang Liming's energetic involvement in promoting free and monogamous marriage was another area in which her Protestant beliefs and modernity were synergistically combined.

Wang was a firm advocate of the view that young people should be given "absolute freedom" in deciding whom to marry.[148] This was because she considered China's traditional system of arranged marriage to be dysfunctional, often pairing together individuals whose personalities, life direction, and education level were incompatible, and resulting in many broken families that posed a burden to society. While Wang believed that parents still had a role to play in helping their children to identify a suitable mate, and she urged young people to seek parental approval of

[146] The classic study of these trends from the perspective of modernization theory is William Josiah Goode, *World Revolution and Family Patterns* (New York: Free Press, 1970). A recent major work that highlights the continuing pluralism of marriage and family structures after the onset of modernity is Goran Therborn, *Between Sex and Power: Family in the World 1900-2000* (New York: Routledge, 2004).

[147] The first goal was fighting opium, expected to require three years of effort, and the second was solving the problem of beggars, which would need five years of work. Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, "Wu nian lai zhi Zhonghua funü jiezhi xiehui 五年來之中華婦女節制協會 [The WCTU for the Past Five Years]," 20.

[148] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, "Jiating wei shehui fuwu 家庭為社會服務 [The Family Serves Society]," *Jiezhi yuekan* 節制月刊 [Temperance Monthly] 5, no. 3 (1926): 2.

their choice if at all possible, yet she insisted that the final decision belonged to the couple getting married. She was firmly convinced that allowing individuals to make their own choices would improve families and help society.[149]

Besides emphasizing free choice in marriage, Wang also believed that matrimony should be based on love. She defined this love as the physical and emotional intimacy between a husband and wife, characterized by unconditional acceptance of and respect for the personhood of one's spouse. Wang reasoned that the intensity of love in marriage could determine the rise and fall of a whole people, because without the motivation generated by intense love, it was not possible to create a noble society with the vigor to defend itself. In her view, the Christian teaching that "God is love" was just the kind of sacred understanding of love that Chinese youth of the day needed. This kind of love had the power to lift a marriage beyond a merely sexual and material union into an exalted kind of friendship and deeper spiritual unity.[150] Given the importance of love in Wang's understanding of marriage, it is not surprising that she advised young people that it was better for them not to marry if they did not feel this deeper love for their companion.[151]

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[149] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, "Zhongguo funü yundong 中國婦女運動 [The Chinese Women's Movement]," 103.
[150] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, "Zhongguo funü yundong 中國婦女運動 [The Chinese Women's Movement]," 92-100.
[151] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Kuaile jiating* 快樂家庭 [The Happy Family], 100.

In Wang's estimation, monogamy was "the only blessed form of marriage."[152] This was because she believed that it reduced the family dissensions associated with polygamy and thus provided a stable foundation for the home.[153] Moreover, it was also compatible with the principle of equality between men and women, especially in the crucial area of chastity, which was one of the four main virtues promoted by the WCTU.[154] Wang saw China's social order as blatantly favoring men in the matter of sex, and she used the concepts of monogamy and chastity to challenge such mores. First, she rejected the conception of chastity derived from the Confucian tradition that had been used to pressure widows not to remarry and was quick to explain that the WCTU supported the freedom of widows to find a new spouse. Beyond this, she objected to the double standard common in Chinese society whereby women were expected to be chaste, but men were free to indulge their sexual appetites as they pleased. Instead, she called for chastity to be expected of both men and women prior to marriage, and sexual fidelity after wedding vows

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[152] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, "Zhongguo funü yundong 中國婦女運動 [The Chinese Women's Movement]," 109.

[153] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, "Zhongguo funü yundong 中國婦女運動 [The Chinese Women's Movement]," 103. Also see Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, "Funü jiezhihui shiye 婦女節制會事業 (The Work of the WCTU)," *Zhonghua Jidujiaohui nianjian* 中華基督教會年鑑 [The Chinese Church Year Book] (1936): 141.

[154] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Zhongguo funü yundong* 中國婦女運動 [The Chinese Women's Movement], 103.

were taken. She saw this as vital to protecting the family, which she regarded as the cornerstone of a healthy society.[155]

Wang endeavored to promote monogamy, chastity, and equality between men and women by opposing social practices that she considered to hinder the realization of these ideals. The most significant of these was polygamy. Wang was unsparing in her criticism of this aspect of Chinese society: "Polygamy is another form of women selling sex, a great demon that destroys family blessing, an instrument for shortening the life span of men and destroying their character, a sharp blade that ruins a people."[156] Wang pointed out that all the "civilized" nations of the world were monogamous, and argued that China should be also.[157] To achieve this goal, she outlined three steps: reminding women to maintain their self-respect, awakening society to the problem, and engaging in efforts to legally prohibit the custom.[158]

The other major vice that Wang tirelessly fought against was prostitution.[159] "Women are human beings, too," she reminded readers in *The Road to Prosperity*, "so why do men want to make them into

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[155] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Ziqiang zhi lu* 自強之路 [The Road to Prosperity] (Shanghai 上海: Liangyou tushu yinshua gongsi 良友圖書印刷公司, 1932), 72.
[156] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, "Zhongguo funü yundong 中國婦女運動 [The Chinese Women's Movement]," 4.
[157] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Kuaile jiating* 快樂家庭 [The Happy Family], 4.
[158] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, "Zhongguo funü yundong 中國婦女運動 [The Chinese Women's Movement]," 4.
[159] For a history of prostitution in Shanghai, see Gail Hershatter, *Dangerous Pleasures: Prostitution and Modernity in Twentieth Century China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997). Chapter 10 on reformers efforts to deal with prostitution is the most relevant for the discussion here.

instruments for satisfying their lusts and into playthings? It is simply too inhumane!"[160] With the help of the WCTU, Wang carried out a detailed investigation of prostitution in Shanghai and discovered that most prostitutes were engaged in the trade due to economic hardship.[161] Therefore, she devised practical strategies to help prostitutes gain economic independence and actively lobbied Nationalist Government officials to tackle the problem of prostitution, arguing that this would help eradicate gender inequality, advance women's rights, and raise the morality of the people.[162]

Wang's convictions about the importance of monogamous marriage, as well as her opposition to polygamy and prostitution, were obviously directly tied to her Protestant beliefs. After all, support for monogamy and rejection of polygamy and prostitution were part of the basic teachings of Christianity. While freedom of choice in marriage was not in this category, it was the norm for Protestant societies in the West and Wang herself had taken this route with favorable results, so it was quite natural for her to support it. As with her effort to expand women's rights discussed above, Wang did not justify her position on these issues by making explicit reference to Christian teaching. Instead, she appealed to modern concepts such as individual autonomy, personhood, and the

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[160] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Ziqiang zhi lu* 自強之路 [The Road to Prosperity], 31.

[161] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, "Fei chang 廢娼 [Abolish Prostitution]," *Jiezhi yuekan* 節制月刊 [Temperance Monthly] 6, no. 4 (1927): 2.

[162] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, "Liu nian lai de jiugai yundong 六年來的救丐運動 [The Beggars Movement for the Past Six Years]," 3.

equality of men and women. Here again, Wang drew on ideas that overlapped considerably with important parts of her Protestant outlook, which suggests an affinity between Protestantism and modernity in her thinking. Moreover, in the case of monogamy and free choice in marriage, they were also positions that characterized May Fourth discourse.

Nuclear Families and the New Woman

Modernity has been associated with a reduction in the number of extended family living arrangements and a growing preference for the nuclear family as the main family unit. This trend was evident in China during the Republican period, when the social ideal of the joint family came under attack by reformist intellectuals, and the conjugal family became increasingly common in urban areas.[163] Wang Liming was among those calling for adoption of the nuclear family (*xiaojiating* 小家庭) as the universal norm in China, replacing the ideal of the joint family (*dajiating* 大家庭), and viewed this as a necessary step to raise the position of women in Chinese society. Her concern for these issues was reflected in

[163] For a detailed discussion of this subject, see Susan L. Glosser, *Chinese Visions of Family and State, 1915-1953* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003). The introduction and first chapter of this work are most relevant to the themes examined here. Although the joint family in China was long held as a social ideal, only a fairly small minority of the population actually achieved it, since such a family structure required considerable economic resources to maintain. For an older but classic study of the Chinese family during this period, see Olga Lang, *Chinese Family and Society* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1946). In particular, see Chapter XII, titled "The Type and Size of the Family."

the new slogan the WCTU chose when she became president of the organization in 1926: “To Promote the Blessing of the Family.”[164]

Wang was unequivocal in stating that reform of the Chinese family meant embracing a nuclear family structure. “The type of family that suits the trend of the modern age,” she said, “is ‘two opposite sex partners—one man and one woman—who after establishing a socially recognized marriage union, according to mutual purpose and economic ability, manage their lives together and form a unit for reproduction.’”[165] While noting that some feared the Chinese family was headed for extinction, Wang was confident that the institution would endure because it was based on the complementary nature of men and women and was able to meet the needs of both individuals and society. Wang even wrote a short poem in praise of the family, which implicitly reflected her view of the conjugal family as the ideal model:

> What does the world have to compare with our families?
> Whether lowly, whether ornate,
> The tenderness between husband and wife,
> The vitality of little sons and daughters,
> Somehow makes our human world more like heaven.
> What else do we hope for?
> Only that we might forever dwell under its wings![166]

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[164] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, "Sishi nian lai Zhongguo funü jiezhi yundong 四十年來中國婦女節制運動 [The Chinese Women’s Movement for the Past Forty Years]," 2.
[165] Wang does not specify the source she quotes here. Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, "Zhongguo funü yundong 中國婦女運動 [The Chinese Women’s Movement]," 130.
[166] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, "Zhongguo funü yundong 中國婦女運動 [The Chinese Women’s Movement]," 136-39.

Though clearly favoring the nuclear family, Wang still confessed that the traditional Chinese family ideal, with its multiple generations all forming a single household, had certain qualities to recommend it. Chief among these were the interdependence between parents and children that it fostered and the greater willingness of family members to sacrificially help one another. She also favored the Chinese tradition of having elderly parents live with the family, since she believed this would ensure that they were properly cared for.[167] But Wang judged that the advantages of this traditional model were more than offset by the problems it created. Most serious among these were the increased conflict among family members it engendered and a tendency for weaker members of the clan to depend on the largess of more competent relatives rather than taking steps to provide for themselves.[168]

Wang believed that "new women" should lead the way in adopting this new family ideal. Yet her vision of the reformed family in some ways reflected more traditional conceptions. For instance, she considered women to be the main source of love within the family, describing their role with some measure of hyperbole as follows: "But developing in the midst of it [the family], this profound love finds its origin entirely from a

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[167] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Zhongguo funü yundong* 中國婦女運動 [The Chinese Women's Movement], 135.

[168] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, "Zhongguo funü yundong 中國婦女運動 [The Chinese Women's Movement]," 133-34.

woman, so the source of love is the woman....”[169] Wang also favored a more conventional division of labor in the home, with the husband focused mainly on his career and providing economically for the family, while the wife took primary responsibility to care for the children.[170]

Her strong support for women having an occupation operated within the limitations of this framework. Thus, Wang encouraged married women to work until they had children, to care full-time for their families until the children started school and then afterward to find part-time employment or volunteer work.[171] She believed that to be a good mother, women needed to be out in society and aware of how the world was changing.[172] Moreover, she was convinced that free marriage and the nuclear family would make housework less onerous and involvement in outside activities therefore much more possible.[173] Wang had demonstrated in her own life how a modern woman could combine work and family, and had even managed to keep up her work with the WCTU during her children’s pre-school years. Of course, Wang was an unusually capable woman, and for at least part of this time she benefited from the

[169] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, "Funü wenti 婦女問題 [Women's Issues]," 3.
[170] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Kuaile jiating* 快樂家庭 [The Happy Family], 130-31.
[171] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Kuaile jiating* 快樂家庭 [The Happy Family], 126.
[172] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Kuaile jiating* 快樂家庭 [The Happy Family], 12-13.
[173] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Kuaile jiating* 快樂家庭 [The Happy Family], 85. Wang was convinced that free marriage would lead to more husbands who genuinely loved their wives and would therefore be willing to help out more around the house. She also argued that the smaller nuclear family unit would mean less work was involved in running the household.

help of a maid who had been a beggar before her life was turned around through the efforts of the WCTU.[174]

Wang's commitment to preserving and promoting women's traditional role as mothers, albeit in modified form, sprung in part from her belief in the value of family and motherhood. It also reflected her concern that many young women in China were taking the wrong message from the women's movement and concluding that domestic life was somehow inherently degrading to women. Wang felt that if this trend continued unchecked, it would create a crisis for the Chinese people. Therefore, she argued that educated women needed to recover a sense that motherhood was valuable and that the greatest contribution a married woman could make was to raise outstanding citizens for the nation.[175] She also pressed leaders of the women's movement to adopt as one of their main goals the building of healthy families.[176]

Wang's views on motherhood appeared to overlap to a certain degree with Liang Qichao's ideology of the "virtuous wife and good mother" (*xianqi liangmu* 賢妻良母), a modernized reworking of traditional Confucian feminine virtues that he popularized in China at the

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[174] "Jiaoyangyuan jinxun 教養院近訊 [Recent News of the Settlement House]," *Jiezhi jikan* 節制季刊 [Temperance Monthly] 9, no. 7-9 (1930): 37. The name of the maid Wang hired was Yang Shuping 楊淑平. The WCTU took in a significant number of beggar women and taught them a practical skill. A number of these women were subsequently placed as helpers with families connected directly or indirectly to the organization. This aspect of the WCTU 's work is discussed in detail below.

[175] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Kuaile jiating* 快樂家庭 [The Happy Family], 3, 126.

[176] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Zhongguo funü yundong* 中國婦女運動 [The Chinese Women's Movement], 136-37.

end of the nineteenth century. Liang argued in 1896 for the advancement of women as crucial to strengthening the Chinese nation, which was threatened on all sides by the forces of imperialism. In particular, Liang called for women to be educated so that they could contribute to the economic prosperity of the nation, help educate their children, and improve their health, which would ensure better births and a stronger race. While Liang did not oppose women going into public occupations, he wanted to limit them to positions that could be viewed as an extension of women's domestic role, such as doctors, nurses, and teachers.[177] During the May Fourth era, many "new women" and radical intellectuals criticized Liang's ideas as old-fashioned and oppressive to women.[178]

Wang Liming shared Liang Qichao's view that the education of women was vital for strengthening the nation and that motherhood and the domestic sphere should be a primary focus for women. But her outlook also differed in important respects from Liang's "virtuous wife and good mother" ideal. First of all, Wang did not make strengthening the nation her primary justification for women's education and women's rights. Rather, as noted above, she based it on her belief in the equality of men and women and the notion that women had inherent rights as human beings. Nor did Wang propose limiting the range of occupations that

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[177] Sally Borthwick, "Changing Concepts of the Role of Women from the Late Qing to the May Fourth Period," in *Ideal and Reality: Social and Political Change in Modern China 1860-1949*, ed. David Pong and Edmund S. K. Fung (Lanham: University of America Press, 1985), 71-74.
[178] Wang, *Women in the Chinese Enlightenment: Oral and Textual Histories*, 131.

women could enter, but argued that they should be free to choose whatever career they desired. Thus, Wang's view was closer to the ideals of May Fourth than it was to Liang's outlook.

But without a doubt, the most important influence on Wang's view of the family was Protestantism, which was the dominant influence on her thinking throughout her youth. Protestant ideas about the family and the individual had played an important part in shaping such modern Western notions as romantic courtship, companionate marriage, and the nuclear family structure, and they provided vital support for these views in Wang's thinking as well.[179] Likewise, Wang's conviction of inherent differences between men and women that oriented the former mainly towards career and the latter primarily towards family had a long basis in the Protestant tradition.[180] Indeed, many of Wang's ideas about the nuclear family, women's rights and marriage were common among elite Protestant women in China during this period.[181]

Yet the concept of domesticity so prominent in Protestant mission circles in China was used to justify not only marriage and motherhood, but also active participation by women in the public domain and affairs of the nation. As Ryan Dunch points out in an essay on Protestant girls' schools

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[179] William R. Garrett, "The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of the Modern Family," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 37, no. 2 (1998).
[180] Rosemary Radford Reuther, *Christianity and the Making of the Modern Family* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2000).
[181] Kwok, *Chinese Women and Christianity 1860-1927*. See in particular Chapter V, titled "Women's Consciousness of Faith."

in China, missionary educators considered the country's needs far too great to limit the role of educated women solely to the home.[182] The WCTU itself had long encouraged women's involvement in the public realm. In North America, the ideology of home protection provided justification for women to hold prayer meetings in saloons and gambling dens, to speak from church pulpits, to move the levers of government through public petitions, and to seek the right to vote through suffrage movements. Wang clearly inherited this rich tradition and used it effectively as a way to expand women's sphere in Chinese society while still affirming motherhood as a defining female characteristic.[183]

Birth Control, Science, and the Protestant Improvement of Society

Attempts to limit the number and regulate the frequency of births have a long history around the world, ranging from the "rhythm method" to infanticide. However, with the advent of modernity and the development of modern science, this capability entered a new era. Diaphragms, rubber condoms, intrauterine devices, and eventually the pill were far more effective in preventing births than more traditional methods, but also presented moral dilemmas. The most influential early

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[182] Ryan Dunch, "'Mothers to Our Country': Education and Ideology among Chinese Protestant Women, 1870-1930," in *Pioneer Chinese Christian Women: Gender, Christianity, and Social Mobility*, ed. Jessie G. Lutz (Bethlehem: Lehigh University Press, 2010), 338.
[183] Carol Mattingly, *Well-Tempered Women: Nineteenth-Century Temperance Rhetoric* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1998). Chapters 1 and 2 give helpful background on the development of the WCTU.

advocate of modern birth control was the American Margaret Sanger, whose confrontational methods and association with the eugenics movement made her a controversial and polarizing figure. Starting from the 1910s, she led highly publicized efforts to make birth control legally available in the United States and was instrumental in shifting the issue from upper class and radical socialist circles to mainstream middle class and working class circles. She also played a major role in spreading birth control ideas internationally.[184]

Chinese intellectuals were first drawn to the subject of birth control during the May Fourth movement, particularly as the result of a 1922 lecture tour in China by Margaret Sanger. Public debate on the subject was fairly circumscribed due to social attitudes that viewed open discussion of sexuality and contraceptives as inappropriate. Neverhtheless, there was heated debate in elite intellectual circles following Sanger's visit. Many Chinese women's rights activists were supportive of birth control, but eugenics advocates were largely opposed, fearing it would lead to fewer births among the "superior" classes.[185] The Nationalists did not have a unified position on the issue, while mainstream Communist thinking opposed the practice on the grounds that poverty was the result of an unequal distribution of resources, rather than excessive population

[184] For more on Margaret Sanger, see David M. Kennedy, *Birth Control in America: The Career of Margaret Sanger* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970).
[185] Yuehtsen Juliette Chung, *Struggle for National Survival: Eugenics in Sino-Japanese Contexts, 1896-1945* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 107-12.

growth. At the popular level, however, the spread of birth control knowledge was significantly accelerated as a result of the marriage advice literature that was widely published during the 1920s.[186]

Wang Liming's involvement in family issues through the WCTU and her prominent role in the Shanghai women's movement naturally brought her into contact with the new ideas about birth control. Indeed, she may well have had exposure to these developments during her student days in Chicago. While influenced by Sanger's thinking on birth control in a number of ways, Wang did not uncritically accept it, but rather sought to integrate those elements that she considered legitimate within the Christian moral framework of the WCTU. She was convinced that "appropriate" use of birth control could be beneficial both to the Chinese family and the broader society. Consequently, Wang and the WCTU were in the vanguard of efforts to introduce birth control to the city of Shanghai.

One of the earliest efforts to promote birth control in Shanghai was the Birth Control Research Society (BCRS; *Jieyu yanjiushe* 節育研究社), which was started in the early 1930s in order to disseminate information about birth control to doctors, nurses, and midwives.[187] Though it is unclear if Wang played a role in this organization, she certainly knew about it and supported its work, since in 1934 the WCTU linked up with

[186] Frank Dikotter, *Sex, Culture, and Modernity in China: Medical Science and the Construction of Sexual Identities in the Early Republican Period* (London: Hurst and Company, 1995), 116-21.
[187] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Kuaile jiating* 快樂家庭 [The Happy Family], 82. Also Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Ziqiang zhi lu* 自強之路 [The Road to Prosperity], 49.

the BCRS to found the Birth Control Guidance Clinic in Shanghai.[188] The clinic was established in order to shape public opinion on the subject of birth control, spread basic scientific knowledge about birth control among the populace, and provide convenient access to birth control products. Wang's goal was to establish clinics in various parts of Shanghai, with each clinic under the supervision of a medical committee to ensure high professional standards.[189] The aim was to make birth control available to married couples that already had a large number of children, and refer interested couples to local hospitals for sterilization procedures.[190] The practice of abortion was opposed on the grounds that it was both immoral and dangerous.[191]

In addition to her efforts through the WCTU, Wang also served as the vice president of the Shanghai Birth Control League, which opened its first birth control clinic in early 1935 with goals very similar to those of the joint clinic started earlier by the WCTU and the BCRS.[192] She worked hard to promote broader cooperative efforts in this sphere in part because she hoped Shanghai could become a template for other parts of China to

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[188] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, "Funü jiezhihui shiye 婦女節制會事業 [The Work of the WCTU]," 141.
[189] Zhou Zhong Huiqing 周鐘慧卿, "Weishenma yao ban jieyu zhidaosuo 為甚麼要辦節育指導所 [Why We Want to Run a Birth Control Guidance Clinic]," *Jiezhi niankan* 節制年刊 [Temperance Yearbook] (1934): 34.
[190] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, "Funü jiezhihui shiye 婦女節制會事業 [The Work of the WCTU]," 141. The article does not specify exactly what forms of birth control the clinics made available to patients.
[191] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Ziqiang zhi lu* 自強之路 [The Road to Prosperity], 44.
[192] "Meeting of Shanghai Birth Control League," *The Chinese Recorder* 66, no. 5 (1935): 322.

imitate. This ambition was evident at a meeting on birth control that Wang attended in March 1937 at St. John's University in Shanghai. The honorary president of the Shanghai Birth Control League, a woman named Mrs. Robertson, asked those present if the time had come to establish a National Birth Control Federation in China, but Wang demurred. She argued that more time was needed to achieve progress in Shanghai first so that the city could provide a sound model for other urban centers around the country.[193]

For Wang, there were numerous and compelling reasons to promote birth control in China. She rejected the view of some that birth control was "unnatural," pointing out that it was no more unnatural than clothing or homes, which were invented by human beings as a way to adapt to their environment.[194] Instead she emphasized the benefits that birth control could bring to society, the first of which she suggested would be significant improvement in the health of mothers. Wang noted that if births were too close together or too numerous, then the health of the mother suffered, but she believed that using contraception could ensure that births were "scientific" and would avoid impairing health. In addition, Wang argued that birth control could improve family life by reducing the economic burden placed on parents, especially parents with limited

[193] "Birth Control Meeting," *The Chinese Recorder* 68, no. 5 (1937): 333.
[194] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Ziqiang zhi lu* 自強之路 [The Road to Prosperity], 44.

resources.[195] She believed this would have the added advantage of alleviating the social problems that occurred when poor families grew too large, such as abortion, begging, and abandoned children.[196]

Wang's thinking about birth control contained some elements characteristic of eugenics theory and the ideology of population control and probably reflected the influence of Margaret Sanger. For instance, Wang suggested that birth control could help improve the Chinese race by preventing pregnancies for older women that were less likely to produce strong and healthy offspring.[197] More problematically, she believed that certain conditions like syphilis and serious psychological disorders were genetically transmitted and that therefore such people should not be allowed to reproduce, a belief that was surprisingly common among professional Chinese during the Republican period.[198] Wang was also convinced that birth control could increase the prosperity of China by reducing population pressure, and that applied internationally, birth control would help to reduce wars and unemployment, which she saw as closely connected with overpopulation.[199]

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[195] Zhou Zhong Huiqing 周鐘慧卿, "Weishenma Yao Ban Jieyu Zhidaosuo 為甚麼要辦節育指導所 [Why We Want to Run a Birth Control Guidance Clinic]," 34-35.

[196] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Ziqiang zhi lu* 自強之路 [The Road to Prosperity], 42-43. Other sources include: "Meeting of Shanghai Birth Control League," 322. Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Zhongguo funü yundong* 中國婦女運動 [The Chinese Women's Movement], 114.

[197] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Ziqiang zhi lu* 自強之路 [The Road to Prosperity], 49.

[198] See Frank Dikotter, "Eugenics in Republican China," *Republican China* 15, no. 1 (1989).

[199] Zhou Zhong Huiqing 周鐘慧卿, "Weishenma Yao Ban Jieyu Zhidaosuo 為甚麼要辦節育指導所 [Why We Want to Run a Birth Control Guidance Clinic]," 34.

While Wang strongly favored the adoption of birth control, she was also concerned about its potential pitfalls. The most obvious one, of course, was that overuse could lead to the extinction of a people, since there would not be enough births to maintain the population. Another worry was that birth control would allow unmarried youth to engage in promiscuous sex without any fear of consequences, resulting in the corruption of social values. Wang also noted the issue of health risks, since some birth control methods, such as intrauterine devices, could adversely affect the human body when used frequently. And she speculated that couples using birth control to avoid having any children would be more likely to divorce if their relationship went sour.[200]

Given these hazards, Wang considered the "central issue" of birth control to be the moral framework that guided its use, since that would determine whether it brought benefit or harm to humanity.[201] To ensure the proper use of birth control, she assumed it should be limited to married couples, and offered what she regarded as the key moral principle directing its use: "This moral concept is: we should make an already married couple feel that if they have too many children, it is ignorance; and if they don't have any children, it is selfishness."[202] In her view, most Chinese women should use birth control to prevent further pregnancies

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[200] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Ziqiang zhi lu* 自強之路 [The Road to Prosperity], 46-47.
[201] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Kuaile jiating* 快樂家庭 [The Happy Family], 102.
[202] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Kuaile jiating* 快樂家庭 [The Happy Family], 120.

only after they had given birth to four or five children.[203] She also advised leaders of the birth control movement to not merely disseminate technical knowledge, but to impart to Chinese youth a sound moral outlook on the subject as well.[204]

Wang's efforts to promote birth control in China reveal a striking affinity between Protestantism and modernity in her thinking. Scientific birth control represents a manifestation of modernity in its use of instrumental rationality and empirical knowledge to more effectively regulate human reproduction. For Wang, this practice was compatible with the Protestant ethos of the WCTU and her own Christian outlook. Her activities demonstrated a Protestant affirmation of reason and science as tools to understand and better manage human behavior. Wang's purpose was to increase the health of mothers and families, while also creating a more peaceful and prosperous world through avoidance of overpopulation. The moral framework that she offered to guide the use of

[203] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Kuaile jiating* 快樂家庭 [The Happy Family], 112. This figure may seem high, but it was considerably smaller than the number of children found in larger families at the time. In an interesting passage in Chung's book on eugenics in China and Japan, Chung discusses a Chinese female doctor named Yang Chongrui 楊崇瑞 (Marion Yang), who was a graduate of a Christian college in China and worked at the Peking Union Medical Center, where she founded the pioneering First Midwifery School in Beijing in 1929. Yang began to actively promote birth control after she treating numerous women patients with serious health problems as a result of intensive multiple births. Statistics from the First Midwifery School from 1929 to 1932 showed that some women had as many as fifteen births over their reproductive lifetime. After the Communists came to power in 1949, Yang served as deputy director of the Bureau of Maternal Health and Child Welfare, but like Wang Liming was purged during the Anti-Rightist Campaign of 1957. She was rehabilitated when Deng came to power and lived on into the 1980s. See Chung, *Struggle for National Survival: Eugenics in Sino-Japanese Contexts, 1896-1945*, 119-27.

[204] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Kuaile jiating* 快樂家庭 [The Happy Family], 120.

birth control clearly drew upon Protestant ideals, among them an emphasis on chastity, monogamy, family, and duty to society over selfish desires. This emphasis on the moral dimensions of birth control distinguished Wang's Protestant understanding of birth control from its secular counterparts.

Promoting Protestant Values, Building a Modern World

Calling Women to Serve

The ethos of female service to society was deeply rooted in the Christian culture of the WCTU and in Wang Liming's own outlook. "Women make up half of humanity," Wang noted, "and apart from their responsibility to the family, they should also make a contribution to society, together with men shouldering responsibility for national affairs and seeking the blessing of all humanity."[205] In recruiting women for social service, Wang's work with the WCTU contributed to the spread of modernity in two significant ways. The first was in increasing women's access to the public domain in China, which had been quite limited by the Confucian ideology that was dominant prior to 1911. And the second was by expanding the self-organizing capacity of society for the purpose of promoting the public good, which meant a strengthening of civil society.[206]

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[205] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Kuaile jiating* 快樂家庭 [The Happy Family], 12.

[206] Scholars have debated the validity of applying Western concepts such as civil society to the Chinese context. This is a question that will be explored more fully in Chapter Six, which is a case study on Zhang Boling. For the moment, suffice it to say that I do consider

Since the WCTU was one of the largest private social service groups for women operating in China during the Republican period, its influence in these two respects was considerable.

Confucianism in China, though changing over time and not ideologically monolithic, nevertheless consistently assigned women a subordinate place in society. Central to the Confucian understanding of gender roles was the binary of *nei*/*wai* 內 / 外 (inner/outer). This conceptual dualism was applied to a variety of different contexts.[207] When applied to gender roles, the nei/wai distinction meant that women were to stay within doors, in the secluded inner quarters, and were to do "women's work" such as cooking and embroidery. Their domestic seclusion and dependence on men was increased by the practice of footbinding, which severly limited women's mobility. Chinese men, meanwhile, were to reside in the outer quarters and be engaged in "men's work" in the public domain, such as plowing and governing. While these boundaries were not rigidly fixed, they nevertheless greatly restricted the ability of women to engage in the broader society.[208]

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such an application to be valid, since I regard modernity as a transcultural phenomenon, but at the same time, I recognize that specific manifestations of modernity are significantly influenced by the local cultural context.

[207] Some of the main examples were the distinction between the imperial court and the surrounding Chinese society; the territory controlled by the Chinese state and the outer regions; and related to this, the symbolic boundary between civilization and barbarism.

[208] These gender roles reflected elite ideals, since poor peasant women of necessity had to labor outdoors and typically did not have their feet bound. For a detailed analysis of *nei*/*wai* as a cultural concept, see Li-Hsiang Lisa Rosenlee, *Confucianism and Women: A Philosophical Interpretation* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006). Chapter Four, titled "Nei-Wai, Gender Distinctions, and Ritual Propriety," is most relevant.

Scholars such as Dorothy Ko and Susan Mann have shown that educated elite women in China's prosperous Jiangnan region during the early and middle Qing period were able to considerably extend the boundaries of the domestic sphere through the writing and exchanging of poetry with other women.[209] However, it deserves mentioning that the number of such educated women in Chinese society was always very small, and though their public activity was tolerated, it was never formally sanctioned and was therefore quite tenuous in nature. Though Chinese women could gain formal access to the public domain when filling roles of male relatives who had died or were unable to perform their duties, such behavior was justified by the age and gender based Confucian kinship hierarchy.[210] Therefore, these exceptions underline the strict limits that Confucian ideology placed upon female access to the public domain in China prior to the twentieth century.[211]

Wang and the leaders of the WCTU directly challenged these Confucian mores regarding the role of women in society. They were able to do this in part because their Protestant worldview provided a solid

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[209] See Dorothy Ko, *Teachers of the Inner Chambers: Women and Culture in Seventeenth-Century China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994). See also Mann, *Precious Records: Women in China's Long Eighteenth Century*.

[210] Rosenlee, *Confucianism and Women: A Philosophical Interpretation*, 88-94.

[211] Mann argues that the view of Chinese women as being oppressed by Confucian culture until liberated by education and Western ideas is largely an orientalist construct (222-223). However, while Mann is right to note that the Western and May Fourth rhetoric surrounding women's subjugation and emancipation in China was often exaggerated, there is no denying that many Chinese women in the early twentieth century who had experienced life under the traditional culture regarded such rhetoric as having a strong basis in Chinese social reality. Therefore, in my view, this discourse should not be seen as a foreign construction.

basis for imagining a new vision of gender relations. Equally crucial was their ability to effectively inculcate these ideals of service and commitment to the goals of the WCTU among their members, which made the group a major force for social change. As Wang observed of the WCTU with pride: “The greatest power of this organization is the loyalty and courage of its members, and adult women are especially welcomed by our association. It is a funny thing, as soon as these members join our organization, they are able to display a spirit of sacrifice. They immediately start saving money, which they then send to the association in order to achieve their benevolent task.”[212]

Nor were the actions of WCTU members limited to giving money. Wang noted in 1927 that thanks to the organizational skills of one of her deputies, even local chapters far from Shanghai had begun to participate enthusiastically in the various activities that were planned by the national WCTU. These included an anti-opium campaign, a “Purity Ceremony” for Western New Year, an anti-gambling meeting during Chinese New Year, and a springtime “entertainment assembly” to promote wholesome fun.[213] Wang also encouraged WCTU members to look for practical ways to contribute to their local communities, with suggestions like organizing a “summer hygiene meeting” to warn about the danger of flies and opening

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[212] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Zhongguo funü yundong* 中國婦女運動 [The Chinese Women’s Movement], 183.

[213] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, "Wu nian lai zhi Zhonghua funü jiezhi xiehui 五年來之中華婦女節制協會 [The WCTU for the Past Five Years]," 18.

a "common school" to give poor children a basic education.[214] The student chapters got involved in serving society as well. For instance, in 1922 a student group in Shanghai started the WCTU work with beggars, while in 1924 members of student chapters in Fujian and Shanxi joined in anti-opium demonstrations.[215]

The adoption of mass mobilization techniques was another way in which the WCTU advanced its agenda that enabled women to enter the public domain and also fostered the expansion of civil society. These campaigns were designed to educate the masses about a particular social reform and win popular support for it. The YMCA had pioneered the introduction of such methods in China, and after the influential May Fourth student demonstrations in 1919, these methods became increasingly common.[216] The WCTU was one of the first women's organizations in China to adopt these techniques. One good example of this occurred in June 1922, when the Ningbo chapter of the WCTU organized an anti-smoking campaign only three months after it was founded following a visit and powerful temperance lecture by Wang Liming.

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[214] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, "Jiating wei shehui fuwu 家庭為社會服務 [The Family Serves Society]," *Jiezhi yuekan* 節制月刊 [Temperance Monthly], 4.

[215] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, "Liu nian lai de jiugai yundong 六年來的救丐運動 [The Beggars Movement for the Past Six Years]," 3. Kwok, *Chinese Women and Christianity 1860-1927*, 125.

[216] See the chapter titled "The YMCA and Community Action" in Shirley Garrett, *Social Reformers in Urban China: The Chinese YMCA, 1895-1926* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970).

On the first day of the campaign, WCTU women paraded through the streets accompanied by more than five hundred girls from local Christian schools, all of them carrying anti-smoking signs and handing out tracts on the dangers of smoking, a public display by women never before witnessed in the city. The next day, WCTU members gave lively illustrated street lectures in different parts of the city that described the harmful effect of smoking on health. That same day, Wang spoke to large audiences at two different venues, urging her listeners to improve their health, their finances, and their morality by not smoking, and thus to make China a stronger nation. On the third and final day of the campaign, a citizens' rally was held that was attended by more than five hundred people, and a telegram was sent to the governor of the province urging him to impose a tax on cigarettes.[217]

One of the most significant ways in which the WCTU developed civil society was the group's pioneering work in establishing welfare institutions for poor and needy women in Shanghai.[218] At the center of WCTU efforts in this domain was the Shanghai Settlement House (*Shanghai furu jiaoyangyuan* 上海婦孺教養院), which represented one of the first attempts to help the city's large population of beggars and,

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[217] "Ningbo Funü jiezhihui quanjie zhiyan dayundong 寧波婦女節制會勸戒紙烟大運動 [The Ningbo WCTU Great Anti-Smoking Campaign]," *Jiezhi jikan* 節制季刊 [Temperance Monthly] (1923): 49-54.

[218] The Shanghai branch of the WCTU played a leading role in developing the organization, since the WCTU had its headquarters and its largest concentration of resources there. From the available materials, it is difficult to determine how active the local chapters were in comparison, though there is some evidence of significant activity.

according to Wang, was also the first welfare institution in China started by Chinese women.[219] The aim of the Settlement House was not simply to give alms to the poor, but to teach them basic skills and help them find work. Wang founded the institution in 1924 after receiving a modest donation of money and the free use of two buildings. In 1928, with more funds donated by supporters, the WCTU built its own facility in the Jiangwan section of Shanghai.[220] In addition to having an auditorium and space for a variety of activities, it also provided rooms for more than fifty people.[221]

Besides the beggars who lived in the Settlement House dormitory, the WCTU helped many other poor people who had basic shelter, but were forced to beg part time due to insufficient income.[222] Initially the WCTU accepted both male and female beggars, but after a time the leaders decided they should limit the focus to women and children and sent male beggars to other charitable organizations for care.[223] A quarter of the beggars that the WCTU took in were physically or mentally handicapped. Staff members taught these handicapped beggars, as well as those who

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[219] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Zhongguo funü yundong* 中國婦女運動 [The Chinese Women's Movement], 183.

[220] Chong Jiu 重九, "Furu jiaoyangyuan zonghengguan 婦孺教養院縱橫觀 [A Wide Ranging Look at the Settlement House]," *Jiezhi niankan* 節制年刊 [Temperance Yearbook] (1934): 22.

[221] Wang Liming 王立明, "You jiating dao shehui 由家庭到社會 [From the Family into Society]," 117.

[222] *Shanghai's Beggar Problem* (Shanghai: Woman's Christian Temperance Union of China, no date), 4.

[223] Chong Jiu 重九, "Furu jiaoyangyuan zonghengguan 婦孺教養院縱橫觀 [A Wide Ranging Look at the Settlement House]," 23.

were elderly and enfeebled, the basic skill of rope making and put them to work. Meanwhile, those women and children with sound bodies and minds received basic schooling in the morning and worked in the afternoon, learning skills and producing goods in one of four areas: agriculture, flower arranging, making socks, and sewing. Later a Sunday school was opened for the children and a Western female physician provided basic medical care.[224]

Wang and the WCTU continued to build up their work with beggars during the 1930s. The Settlement House added housing for beggar children in 1932 and a second dormitory for women in 1934.[225] It appears that most of the women and children who lived in the Settlement House would enter together and stay for about three years, at which point most of them had learned to read and write at a simple level, were able to do housework, and had acquired a basic skill. At the end of these three years, the WCTU would help them to either find work, go on to further study, or get married and then a new group of beggars would move in.[226]

Since teaching these women a skill so they could transition back into mainstream society was central to the WCTU philosophy, training

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[224] "Geren xiaoxi 個人消息 [Personal News]," *Jiezhi yuekan* 節制月刊 [Temperance Monthly] 9, no. 7-9 (1930): 37. See also "Furu jiaoyangyuan tianshe yike 婦孺教養院添設醫科(The Settlement House Adds a Medical Department)," *Jiezhi yuekan* 節制月刊 [Temperance Monthly] 5, no. 9 (1926): 24.
[225] Chong Jiu 重九, "Furu jiaoyangyuan zonghengguan 婦孺教養院縱橫觀 [A Wide Ranging Look at the Settlement House]," 23-25.
[226] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, "Funü jiezhihui shiye 婦女節制會事業 [The Work of the WCTU]," 141.

programs were established for this purpose. One of these was a Vocational Training Primary School, which gave the beggars instruction in a particular skill, and offered both beginning and advanced levels. In December 1928, there were more than forty students participating in its courses.[227] Another successful effort to help women at the Settlement House was started in 1932 with the founding of the Home Economics Vocational School.[228] This popular program was devoted to imparting "scientific" knowledge of home economics and arranged internships in order to reinforce the instruction received.[229] An advanced level of the school was established in 1935.[230] Wang estimated that by 1931 the WCTU had already provided help for more than one thousand beggars through its various programs.[231]

The WCTU work with beggars strengthened civil society not only by means of the Settlement House and its activities, but also by forming a larger network with other charities in Shanghai committed to this cause. In 1933, Wang invited leaders from the city's major charitable organizations to gather and discuss forming an association to coordinate

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[227] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, "Liu nian lai de jiugai yundong 六年來的救丐運動 [The Beggars Movement for the Past Six Years]," 4.
[228] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, "Funü jiezhihui shiye 婦女節制會事業 [The Work of the WCTU]," 141.
[229] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, "Zhonghua funü jiezhi xiehui 中華婦女節制協會 [The Chinese WCTU]," 171.
[230] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, "Funü jiezhihui shiye 婦女節制會事業 [The Work of the WCTU]," 141.
[231] Wang Liming 王立明, "You jiating dao shehui 由家庭到社會 [From the Family into Society]," 117.

their efforts so they could deal more effectively with Shanghai's beggar problem. Response to the initiative was positive, and in April some twenty-one representatives from different Shanghai charities met together and formed the Shanghai Beggars Association, the goal of which was to eliminate begging in Shanghai. Wang was chosen as secretary of the group, and also served on the committee dealing with economic support for women beggars. The association had plans to expand into a nationwide organization to eradicate the problem of begging throughout the country, but these plans were interrupted by Japan's invasion in 1937.[232]

Christianity was a major catalyst in motivating the efforts of Wang and the WCTU to help their fellow human beings in need, which fostered an expansion of civil society. For her, the teachings of Jesus could lift people above narrow self-interest and energize them to serve others. She declared: "Jesus Christ wanted to fundamentally cure the disease of selfishness in every person, to teach us to love others as ourselves and be as close as brothers. His movement has been carrying on for more than nineteen hundred years, and though the results are still quite modest, we should never make slowness of effect a reason not to do what he said."[233] This Christian zeal to serve society and help the needy was a central part

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[232] "Jiugai xiehui de yiye shi 救丐協會的一頁史 (A Page in the History of the Beggars Association)," *Jiezhi niankan* 節制年刊 [Temperance Yearbook] (1934): 30-33.
[233] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Ziqiang zhi lu* 自強之路 [The Road to Prosperity], 82.

of the WCTU ethos and provided a powerful justification for Wang and many of the other women in the organization to enter into the public domain to promote the common good. In this way, Protestantism contributed to the emergence of a Chinese modernity in important ways.

Protestant Morality, the WCTU, and Saving the Nation

Wang Liming, along with most elite Chinese of her generation, was intensely concerned about the fate of China. She wanted to see China become a modern nation capable of protecting its interests and maintaining its independence in the face of Western imperialism and Japanese aggression. In her view, the root cause of China's weakness and chaos during the Republican period was simple: "The reason for this is because even though we have gone from despotism to a republic, the foundation of the nation—the family—still remains an obstacle."[234] Thus, Wang considered her work with the WCTU to be a way to help make China a modern nation by improving the Chinese family. As she explained: "The family is the foundation of the nation; if the foundation is stable, then the nation naturally becomes strong; therefore, while this association directly seeks the blessing of the family, it also indirectly serves the nation."[235] For Wang, then, the Protestant ethos of the WCTU was closely linked with this

[234] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Kuaile jiating* 快樂家庭 [The Happy Family], 8.
[235] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, "Zhongguo funü yundong 中國婦女運動 [The Chinese Women's Movement]," 182.

central aspect of modernity, namely the construction of a modern nation-state.

The key link for Wang between her work with the WCTU and her aim of making China a strong and modern nation was Protestant morality. In this regard, her thinking was fully in harmony with the tenor of early twentieth century Protestantism in China, which was highly attuned to the moral dimensions of nationalism. Ryan Dunch has demonstrated how Protestants in Fuzhou during the first two decades of the century, along with secular thinkers such as Liang Qichao and Yan Fu, saw patriotism as a moral duty, and the transformation of the Chinese people into patriotic "new citizens" as a matter of moral education.[236] Similarly, Peter Wang has documented how Yu Rizhang, as leader of the YMCA in China, coined the phrase "saving the nation through character" (*renge jiuguo* 人格救國) in 1920, which became the group's guiding theme until 1934, and led to the organization actively promoting major programs in character building and citizenship training throughout this period.[237] Thus, Wang's outlook fit squarely within this broader tradition of Chinese Protestantism.

Naturally, the formulation of Protestant morality that Wang drew on in her effort to build up the Chinese nation was that of the WCTU. This moral code, mentioned earlier, consisted of four prohibitions and four

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[236] Ryan Dunch, *Fuzhou Protestants and the Making of a Modern China 1857-1927* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 121-22.
[237] Peter Chen-main Wang, "A Patriotic Christian Leader in Changing China: Yu Rizhang in the Turbulent 1920s," in *Chinese Nationalism in Perspective: Historical and Recent Cases*, ed. C. X. George Wei and Xiaoyuan Liu (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2001), 37-40.

precepts that were considered the essence of the WCTU ethic. The four prohibitions were against smoking opium or cigarettes, drinking alcohol, gambling, and seeing prostitutes. The four precepts were compassion, filial piety, sexual purity, and frugality. The direct association that Wang made between these values and building a strong nation is evident from a book she wrote following the Japanese annexation of Manchuria in 1931. Titled *The Road to Prosperity*, this work was an impassioned plea for the Chinese to embrace moral renewal in order to resist the Japanese menace and each of its chapters focused on one of the eight moral principles constituting the WCTU ethic. According to Wang, implementing these eight principles in daily life would raise the character of individuals, thereby lifting the character of the Chinese as a people, with the result that China would become a stronger nation.[238]

Among the eight WCTU moral guidelines, Wang pointed to three as the most crucial for saving the nation because they directly strengthened the family. First of the three was compassion, which she specified to mean compassion for children. Wang saw children as the "lifeblood of the nation" and therefore was greatly concerned that parents understand how to raise them properly so they could contribute to their country.[239] In addition, she devoted considerable space to the subject of showing social concern for needy children as a way to build up the nation. Wang

[238] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Ziqiang zhi lu* 自強之路 [The Road to Prosperity], 1.
[239] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Ziqiang zhi lu* 自強之路 [The Road to Prosperity], 51.

encouraged her readers to get involved in different ways: to support settlement homes for poor women and children, such as the one operated by the WCTU; to start day care centers for children in factory districts of Shanghai whose mothers had to work and could not provide adequate care; to establish schools for blind and lame children so they could learn skills and contribute to the nation; and lastly to build orphanages.[240] She was convinced that these neglected members of society could still be made into useful citizens.

The two other values Wang identified as vital for building healthy families, and thereby strengthening the nation, were filial piety and chastity. She recognized that many Chinese considered filial piety to be an outdated tradition, but noted that the WCTU actively promoted it as part of its campaign to renew and modernize the Chinese family. While this reflected the fact that honoring parents was part of basic Christian teaching, Wang also considered it to bring great benefits to the nation by stabilizing society and fostering patriotism. As she said, "If a person is unwilling to honor the parents who bore them, what hope is there that they will love the more distant motherland?"[241] In similar fashion, Wang regarded chastity and marital faithfulness as the "good medicine" needed to ensure healthy families and a strong foundation for the nation. Thus, she framed her opposition to polygamy, the taking of concubines, and the

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[240] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Ziqiang zhi lu* 自強之路 [The Road to Prosperity], 56-57.
[241] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Ziqiang zhi lu* 自強之路 [The Road to Prosperity], 69.

culture of "free love" among some of China's urban youth as born of patriotic concern.[242]

What is striking here is how in Wang's mind, Protestant values and the work of the WCTU combined seamlessly with her commitment to making China a modern nation. Indeed, it can be argued that her Protestant belief in a transcendent moral order applicable to all provided a powerful basis for advancing the abstract notion of shared community on which the modern nation-state depends. By fostering a sense of moral community and mutual responsibility, it oriented individuals and families toward the interests of the larger group in how they lived their lives and encouraged care for the weak on the grounds that they were also part of the whole.

Wang's response as leader of the WCTU to the Japanese annexation of Manchuria in 1931 demonstrated in a more concrete way how Protestantism and commitment to the nation were central to Wang's work and identity. Four days after the Japanese attack, Wang and the trustees of the WCTU met to discuss what they could do about the crisis. As a result of the meeting, Wang sent a telegram to leaders of the WCTU in Europe and America urging them to rally overseas support for China, and also began contacting various women's groups in Shanghai in order to organize collective resistance to the Japanese aggression. Wang and the leaders of

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[242] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Ziqiang zhi lu* 自強之路 [The Road to Prosperity], 72-73.

these other organizations established the Women's National Salvation Alliance (WNSA; *Funü jiuguo datongmeng* 婦女救國大同盟) in order to coordinate their efforts. More than two thousand women attended the group's first meeting that October, with Wang serving as a co-chair. Later the membership increased to over three thousand.[243]

When the Japanese subsequently attacked and occupied Shanghai for a time in 1932, Wang and the WNSA were quick to respond. The WCTU and other member groups of the WNSA raised funds for the government war effort, provided supplies for Nationalist troops, set up makeshift hospitals to care for wounded soldiers, and established camps for refugees.[244] Only later, after partisan politics had begun to divide the group, did Wang decide to decrease her involvement, sending a young associate to the meetings instead.[245] Later Chiang Kaishek prohibited the WNSA and other anti-Japanese groups from continuing to hold meetings as part of a compromise agreement with the Japanese to avoid all-out war. This decision angered Wang and contributed to her later disillusionment with the KMT.[246]

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[243] Wang Huiji 王惠姬, "Liu-Wang Liming yu minchu Zhongguo de funü yundong 劉王立明與民初中國的婦女運動 [Liu-Wang Liming and the Women's Movement in Early Republican China]," 54.

[244] Wang Huiji 王惠姬, "Liu-Wang Liming yu minchu Zhongguo de funü yundong 劉王立明與民初中國的婦女運動 [Liu-Wang Liming and the Women's Movement in Early Republican China]," 54-55.

[245] Liu-Wang, *Women in the Chinese Enlightenment: Oral and Textual Histories*, 139, 97.

[246] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Zhongguo funü yundong* 中國婦女運動 [The Chinese Women's Movement], 185.

Protestant Internationalism and the WCTU

Wang's Protestant worldview overlapped closely with her commitment to the modern idea of the nation, but it also nurtured in her a strong international outlook and determination to promote harmony between nations and peoples. This internationalism, as an important dimension of globalization, was inextricably tied to modernity. Wang's involvement with the WCTU both reflected and reinforced this orientation, since it linked her with a global Protestant network and committed her to the group's pursuit of world peace. As early as 1925, the Chinese WCTU had a department specifically tasked with promoting world peace by working to eliminate war, discrimination, racial hatred and religious bigotry.[247] And of the five main goals Wang listed for the Chinese WCTU, the fifth was, "Awaken and unite women from each country to oppose war and enable all of humanity to enjoy the Great Unity."[248] The Great Unity (*datong* 大同) was a concept Wang borrowed from the Chinese cultural tradition that referred to an idyllic future time when all under heaven would enjoy peace and prosperity. In her view, this was the destiny toward which the world was inevitably moving, and it was only a matter of time until it was achieved.[249]

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[247] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, "Funü jiezhihui 婦女節制會 [The WCTU]," 245.
[248] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, "Funü jiezhihui shiye 婦女節制會事業 [The Work of the WCTU]," 141.
[249] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, *Kuaile jiating* 快樂家庭 [The Happy Family], 82.

Wang described how she envisioned the Great Unity coming about in *The Chinese Women's Movement*. One aspect of this process that she mentioned was the importance of overcoming racial divisions and discrimination, and to help achieve this, Wang advocated inter-racial marriage. She also believed that capitalism needed to be replaced by socialism, arguing that the former led inevitably to class divisions, surplus production, unemployment, and imperialistic policies, whereas the latter resulted in the fair distribution of resources. Wang spoke of the need for women's suffrage around the world, which she considered vital to bringing about a socialist order free from the scourge of war. And she advocated adoption of birth control in order to prevent overpopulation and the wars that she believed resulted from it.[250]

The final element that Wang regarded as essential to achieving the Great Unity was religion. In her understanding, both Buddhism and Confucianism were compatible with the modern socialist democracy that she expected to be the basis of the Great Unity, but her main focus was on the contribution that Christianity could make to the emergence of this golden age. Reflecting her eclectic and not altogether orthodox views of Christianity, Wang quoted at length from the secular thinker H. G. Wells, who argued that the core of Jesus' teaching centered on such liberal ideas as the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, as well as

[250] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, "Zhongguo funü yundong 中國婦女運動 [The Chinese Women's Movement]," 167-74.

opposition to narrow nationalism, the economic class system, private property, and special privileges. She also mentioned Jesus' emphasis on the duty of human beings to believe in and obey the Creator of truth, beauty, and goodness. Wang believed that the power of religion to "train the human heart" was crucial to achieving true world peace. She lamented that the growth of science had led only to the rapid advance of material civilization, while cultivation of the human spirit lagged far behind. The result was that people continually fought with each other and were unable to enjoy the benefits of science. Wang was convinced that only religion could solve this problem.[251]

Conclusion

Wang Liming stands as a striking example of the powerful links between Protestantism and modernity in Republican China. The important role of mission institutions in transmitting modern ideas to Wang is evident both in her schooling, which clearly shaped her life calling to elevate the position of women in Chinese society, and her decades of service as the head of the WCTU, which was initially a transplant of Western missions in China. But Wang was hardly an appendage of Western missionaries. On the contrary, her embrace of Protestantism and strong leadership of the WCTU were very much guided by her own

[251] Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明, "Zhongguo funü yundong 中國婦女運動 [The Chinese Women's Movement]," 177-79.

concerns as a Chinese woman, were to advance legitimate Chinese interests, and were done with minimal support from Western missionaries.

Wang Liming's life and work embodied the Protestant-modernity overlap. As a mother of three children in a nuclear family structure, and at the same time leader of a major social reform organization, she was in many ways a prototype of the modern Chinese woman. Her work with the WCTU promoted modern ideas and practices across a broad range of social spheres, from women's rights and birth control to monogamy, free choice in marriage, and the nuclear family. Wang's views on many of these issues had deep roots in Protestant teaching and her impact in the area of women's issues generally is an important example of the larger influence that Christianity had on this aspect of Chinese modernity. Likewise, her impact on China's nascent civil society as a result of Protestant ideals of social service was another aspect of Chinese modernity significantly shaped by Christianity.

Wang's Protestant vision of modernity had both points of overlap and of conflict with secular conceptions of the modern. For instance, she affirmed many aspects of the May Fourth view of the "new woman," such as the importance of women being educated, having multiple career options, and cultivating individual personhood. Yet at the same time, her insistence on the value of women's role as mothers and her emphasis on

chastity prior to marriage for both men and women clearly clashed with mainstream May Fourth thinking. Likewise, Wang identified with major elements of Communist policy regarding women, including equality of the sexes, concern for poor women, and support for structural change of society in order to improve the position of women. However, her approach to attaining these goals was almost diametrically opposed to that of the CCP, since she emphasized religious faith, efforts in the sphere of civil society, and democratic principles.

Though Wang's focus was on helping Chinese women, her vision of modern China and of the modern Chinese woman was not a narrow one. Rather, her efforts had the larger goal of empowering women to contribute in all the various domains of society, so they could work together with men to build a modern Chinese nation. Wang's aim in promoting women's rights was not to create competition between men and women, but to advance the good of the whole society. She was one of a group of prominent Protestant women in the Republican period who were trained in mission institutions and went on to significantly impact Chinese society. As the only woman among the three case studies in this work, Wang Liming demonstrates that the link between Protestantism and modernity was as true for these women as it was for their male counterparts, even if the number of elite women was far fewer.

Chapter Five

Liu Tingfang, the Protestant Church, and the New Chinese Society

Introduction*

Liu Tingfang 劉廷芳 (Timothy Tingfang Lew, 1892-1947) was a prominent educator and minister in the Chinese Protestant church during the Republican period. Born in Wenzhou, Zhejiang to a devout Christian family, he was educated at mission schools and later at top universities in the United States. Liu's training in the fields of theology, education, and psychology provided him with deep exposure to Protestant teaching as well as a broad range of modern ideas. Upon returning to China in 1920 following his graduate studies, he actively propagated these ideas as an educator, editor, and Protestant minister. Liu's educational work was based at Yanjing University in Beijing, which he had a major hand in making one of the leading Protestant colleges in China. His efforts in the sphere of religious and social commentary centered on editing the important Protestant journal *Truth and Life*, which disseminated modern ideas among educated Chinese Protestants at the same time that it

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* An abbreviated version of this chapter has previously been published. See John Barwick, "Liu Tingfang and the Protestant Quest for Modernity in Republican China," in *Jidujiao yu Zhongguo shehuiwenhua: disijie guoji nianqing xuezhe yantaohui lunwenji* 基督教與中國社會文化: 第四屆國際年輕學者研討會論文集 [Christianity and Chinese Social Culture: Collected Essays from the Fourth International Young Scholars' Symposium], ed. Liu Zhongming 劉忠明 and Wu Xiaoxin 吳小新 (Xianggang 香港: Xianggang zhongwen daxue 香港中文大學 [Chinese University of Hong Kong], 2010).

contributed to the building of a modern public sphere in China. Liu was also prominent as a leader and international representative of mainstream Chinese Protestantism, which exerted considerable influence in Republican society. This chapter will explore how Protestantism and modernity were woven together in Liu's life and writings. In particular, we will examine Liu's thinking and activities related to the public sphere, the nation state, and the issue of gender and family. Liu's work had a significant impact in these areas, particularly on young intellectuals within the Protestant orbit, and helped to shape the emergence of a modern China.

Biography

Liu Tingfang was born on 23 December 1892 in Wenzhou in Zhejiang Province.[1] He was a third generation Protestant on his father's

[1] "Lew, Timothy Tingfang," Box 2, Timothy Tingfang Lew Papers, Missionary Research Library, New York. There is some dispute over what year Liu was born, but the evidence favors 1892. Liu himself stated on at least two occasions that he was born in 1892. One of these was in an address he gave to American pastors during the Second World War (see Liu Tingfang, "To American Christian Ministers on Postwar World," Box 5-1, Timothy Tingfang Lew Papers, Missionary Research Library, New York, 3). The other was in an article that Liu wrote which mentions that he was fifteen years old at the time of the Zhejiang Railway affair in 1907 (see Liu Tingfang 劉廷芳, "Zhongguo Jidutu aiguo wenti de pingyi 中國基督徒愛國問題的評議 [An Appraisal of the Issue of Chinese Christian Patriotism]," *Shengming yuekan* 生命月刊 [Life Journal] 4, no. 8 (August 1924), 3). Some other sources place Liu's birth in the year 1891: see Howard L. Boorman, ed. *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China* (New York: Columbia University Press,1968), 416-17; also Wu Changxing 吳昶興, "Liu Tingfang zongjiao jiaoyu linian zhi shijian yu Zhongguo shehui bianqian, 1891-1947 劉廷芳宗教教育理念之實踐與中國社會變遷, 1891-1947 (The Implementation of Liu Tingfang's Philosophy of Religious Education and China's Social Transition, 1891-1947)" (dissertation, Xianggang zhongwen daxue 香港中文大學, 2001), 27. The latter discusses this issue in detail.

side of the family and fourth generation on his mother's side, which was highly unusual at a time when Protestant Christianity had been in China for less than a century and there were fewer than eighty thousand Protestants in the whole country. Liu's paternal grandmother, whose surname was Ye 葉, figured prominently in the family history. She had received some Confucian education at a time when few women in China had such an opportunity. After losing her wealthy husband to opium addiction at a young age, Ye converted to Christianity after coming into contact with missionaries from the China Inland Mission. Her decision to convert infuriated her husband's family and they promptly disowned her and took possession of most of her inherited wealth. Destitute yet resolute in her faith, Ye and her young son were taken in by the CIM missionaries and she was soon appointed headmistress of a girls' school that had recently been established by the mission. In this capacity, she thrived and became an influential figure in the Wenzhou Christian community.[2]

Ye's son, Liu Shikui 劉世魁, grew up and was trained by the CIM as a doctor in North China, returning to Zhejiang to found a CIM mission hospital.[3] He married a young woman from a Christian family of "Heaven-

[2] Philip West, *Yenching University and Sino-Western Relations, 1916-1952* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), 59-60.
[3] Liu Tingfang, "Religious Education in the Chinese Christian Home," Box 6, Timothy Tingfang Lew Papers, Missionary Research Center, New York, 1-3.

fearing peasants" who had studied at his mother's school.[4] Her name was Li Ruyu 李汝玉, and together the couple had six children.[5] Liu Tingfang was the eldest child, and at the time of his birth was dedicated by Grandmother Ye to be a Christian minister.[6] Liu Shikui continued his labors as a medical doctor in Zhejiang for ten years, but at the end of 1901, his health broke down. After being ill for year, he died in November 1902, when Liu Tingfang was only nine years old.[7] Left with six young children to care for, Liu's mother took over as headmistress of the CIM women's school from her own mother-in-law, whose example of piety and devotion to education had deeply influenced her.[8]

Liu Tingfang was an unusually intelligent child, quick to learn and possessing a remarkable memory. By the age of seven he had written his

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[4] Liu, "To American Christian Ministers on Postwar World," 3b. In addition see the untitled and anonymous eulogy to Liu Tingfang's mother in Box 6, Timothy Tingfang Lew Papers, Missionary Research Library, New York, 1.

[5] Zha Shijie 查時傑, "Liu Tingfang: duocai duoyi de jiaohui jiechu lingxiu 劉廷芳: 多才多藝的教會傑出領袖 (Liu Tingfang: A Versatile and Outstanding Church Leader)," in *Zhongguo Jidujiao renwu xiaozhuan* 中國基督教人物小傳 [Short Biographies of Chinese Christians] (Taibei 台北: Zhonguo fuyin shenxueyuan chubanshe 中國福音神學院出版社, 1983), 240. Wu received a letter from Liu's grandson referring to his great-grandmother as Li Bi 李璽, see Wu Changxing 吳昶興, "Liu Tingfang zongjiao jiaoyu linian zhi shijian yu Zhongguo shehui bianqian, 1891-1947 劉廷芳宗教教育理念之實踐與中國社會變遷, 1891-1947 (The Implementation of Liu Tingfang's Philosophy of Religious Education and China's Social Transition, 1891-1947)," 31.

[6] Liu, "To American Christian Ministers on Postwar World," 4.

[7] Liu, "Religious Education in the Chinese Christian Home," 3.

[8] Liu Tingwei 劉廷蔚, "Yanjing daxue zongjiao xueyuan 燕京大學宗教學院 [Yanjing University School of Religion]," in *Xuefu jiwen--sili Yanjing daxue* 學府紀聞—私立燕京大學 [Record from an Institution of Higher Learning--Privately Established Yanjing University], ed. Dong Nai 董鼐 (Taibei 台北: Nanjing chuban youxian gongsi 南京出版有限公司, 1982), 48. Liu Tingwei was Liu Tingfang's younger brother, who studied at Yanjing University and did graduate work at Cornell before becoming head of the Biology Department at Hujiang University in Shanghai, which was one of the Christian colleges in China.

first poem, and by the age of nine he could recite by memory the *Liji* 禮記 (Book of Ritual) and had already become familiar with many of the Chinese classics.[9] Subsequently, he studied at Wenchou College (*Wenzhou yiwen zhongxue* 溫州藝文中學), a secondary school that had been started in 1897 by English missionaries of the Methodist Free Church and within ten years had grown to a size of approximately two hundred students.[10] Liu graduated from the school, probably in 1906, and spent the following year as a teacher there.[11]

During Liu's year as a teacher at Wenchou College, an outcry erupted in Zhejiang province over the matter of railway rights. The Qing dynasty decided to renew a lapsed deal with the British to develop a railway in Zhejiang financed by British money and designed by British engineers, taking this potentially lucrative project away from a local merchant-gentry corporation that had already invested money and

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[9] Dr. Rowland M. Cross, "Dr. Timothy Tingfang Lew: A Tribute," General Materials: Memorial Service, Timothy Tingfang Lew Papers, Missionary Research Library, New York, 4. Also see Zha Shijie 查時傑, "Liu Tingfang: duocai duoyi de jiaohui jiechu lingxiu 劉廷芳: 多才多藝的教會傑出領袖 (Liu Tingfang: A Versatile and Outstanding Church Leader)," 240.

[10] Wenzhou shizhi biancuan weiyuanhui 溫州市志編纂委員會 [Wenzhou City Annals Compilation Committee], ed., *Wenzhou shizhi* 溫州市志 [Wenzhou City Annals] (Beijing 北京: Zhonghua shuju 中華書局, 1998), 474. See also D. MacGillivray, *A Century of Protestant Missions in China* (New York: American Tract Society, 1907), 132-33.

[11] Liu, "To American Christian Ministers on Postwar World," 4. Liu does not say exactly what year he graduated from Wenchou College, but the year 1906 best fits the chronology of his youth. It was common for Christian colleges in China at the time to give their best students an opportunity to teach for a time after graduation before entering a career or going on to further education.

started work.[12] Liu, who was a precocious fifteen-year-old at the time, recalled how one day at school the missionary headmaster lectured his students on the reasons why British financing and engineering of the railway was such a good thing. “I heard my fill during the day,” Liu wrote, “then went home and that night wrote an emotional essay of over ten thousand words titled ‘A Tearful Proclamation to my Compatriots Regarding the Zhejiang Railway Affair.’”[13] He finished the essay just as dawn was breaking.

Liu immediately mailed his heartfelt plea to a church newspaper in Shanghai run by American missionaries called *Tongwenbao* 通聞報 (Christian Intelligencer), which published it. In the essay, he roundly condemned the British for interfering in the railway project and earnestly reminded his fellow Chinese Christians of their duty to save the nation in its distress, in this case by supporting local control of the undertaking. He even prevailed upon his mother to sell some of the family’s few possessions in order to buy stock in the local company involved in the

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[12] Mary Backus Rankin, *Early Chinese Revolutionaries* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), 198. This railway was to link the cities of Suzhou, Hangzhou, and Ningbo. China’s Qing rulers borrowed money from the British and enlisted their help to build the railway in order to ensure central government control over the project. This was part of a larger plan to bring all regional railways under central control. See Joan Judge, *Print and Politics: 'Shibao' and the Culture of Reform in Late Qing China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 5.

[13] Liu Tingfang 劉廷芳, "Zhongguo Jidutu aiguo wenti de pingyi 中國基督徒愛國問題的評議 [An Appraisal of the Issue of Chinese Christian Patriotism]," 3. Liu tactfully left out the headmaster’s name, but records indicate it was T. W. Chapman.

project.[14] Though still quite young, Liu's response displayed many of those qualities that would characterize his career: an earnest Christian, a fervent patriot, a gifted writer, an independent thinker, and a fearless critic.

Not long after this incident, Liu entered St. John's University in Shanghai, a prestigious Protestant college founded by American Episcopalian missionaries in 1879.[15] St. John's was renowned for its superb education in English and its role in training the sons Shanghai's bourgeoisie.[16] Liu excelled academically at the school and won many scholastic and oratorical honors.[17] He also continued to cultivate his skills as an essayist by writing trenchant critiques on various topics and publishing them. One of these essays, printed again in the *Christian Intelligencer*, called for a new breed of missionary educator who had both respect for Chinese culture and professional training in the field of education. This article caught the eye of John Leighton Stuart, an American Presbyterian missionary and professor at Nanjing Seminary, who later

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[14] Liu Tingfang 劉廷芳, "Zhongguo Jidutu aiguo wenti de pingyi 中國基督徒愛國問題的評議 [An Appraisal of the Issue of Chinese Christian Patriotism]," 4.

[15] He started with the preparatory course at St. John's before actually entering the university. See West, *Yenching University and Sino-Western Relations, 1916-1952*, 60.

[16] For two good descriptions of St. John's and the education it offered, see Wen-hsin Yeh's chapter "St. John's University and the Culture of the Shanghai Bourgeoisie" in Wen-hsin Yeh, *The Alienated Academy: Culture and Politics in Republican China 1919-1937* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990). See also Xu Yihua, "St. John's University, Shanghai as an Evangelising Agency," *Studies in World Christianity* 12, no. 1 (2006): 23-49.

[17] John Leighton Stuart, *Fifty Years in China* (New York: Random House, 1954), 77. At least one of these academic prizes (the Viceroy Medal) was for Chinese language ability. See Wu Changxing 吳昶興, "Liu Tingfang zongjiao jiaoyu linian zhi shijian yu Zhongguo shehui bianqian, 1891-1947 劉廷芳宗教教育理念之實踐與中國社會變遷, 1891-1947 (The Implementation of Liu Tingfang's Philosophy of Religious Education and China's Social Transition, 1891-1947)," 33.

became a towering figure in education circles in China and served as American ambassador to China in the late 1940s. Stuart spoke with Chen Chunsheng 陳春生, Chinese editor at the paper, who arranged for him to meet with Liu and the two began what developed into a lifelong friendship.[18] Liu later became so disenchanted with St. John's education policies that he decided to leave the school before graduating and it was Leighton Stuart who not only arranged for him to study in the United States, but also obtained funds to cover his expenses.[19]

Thus, Liu traveled to America early in 1911 in order to finish his college education and pursue graduate studies. He began with a semester at the McCallie School in Chattanooga, Tennessee, a Presbyterian preparatory school, followed by two years of study at the University of Georgia, from the fall of 1911 to the spring of 1913, during which time he was awarded an academic prize in psychology.[20] Liu then transferred to Columbia University in New York to finish his baccalaureate degree, which he obtained in 1914, followed by a master's degree in 1915 and a

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[18] See Liu Tingwei 劉廷蔚, "Yanjing daxue zongjiao xueyuan 燕京大學宗教學院 [Yanjing University School of Religion]," 48-49. Stuart became a kind of father figure to Liu, replacing the father he had lost as a child.

[19] West, *Yenching University and Sino-Western Relations, 1916-1952*, 60-61. West does not say which education policies Liu was most dissatisfied with, but quite likely he would have considered those mentioned in his earlier critique—i.e. that missionary instructors lacked respect for Chinese culture and sufficient professional training as educators—to be chief among them.

[20] "From Who's Who in China (Revised and up to Date)," Box 7-1, Timothy Tingfang Lew Papers, Missionary Research Library, New York, 1. This award was called the Horace Russell Prize, which was established by the New York judge Horace Russell in 1902 and provided the winner with a fifty-dollar reward. See "Announcement of the University of Georgia for the Session 1922-1923," *Bulletin of the University of Georgia* 22, no. 9 (1922): 30.

certificate in education from Columbia Teachers' College in 1916.[21] The next two years he spent studying theology at Union Theological Seminary in New York, but transferred to Yale Divinity School to finish, graduating with a bachelor of divinity in theology in 1918.[22] Finally, Liu returned to Columbia and in two years completed a Ph.D. in psychology, which he was awarded in 1920 for a dissertation exploring the psychology of learning Chinese characters.[23] The combination of study in theology with advanced training in education and psychology was unusual among Chinese students and indicated the breadth of Liu's interests as well as his continued sense of religious calling.

Liu was diminuative in stature, being only about five feet tall, and suffered from serious sinus problems for most of his life, yet he was a whirlwind of activity.[24] He served as an associate editor in 1915 of the *Chinese Students' Monthly*, which was the official publication of the Chinese Students' Association, the main Chinese student organization in North

[21] Teachers College, founded in 1889, was the first formal school of education established in the United States. It was affiliated with Columbia University, and the educator John Dewey became its most famous and influential thinker. The school trained a remarkable number of Chinese students during the early twentieth century.
[22] According to Liu's friend, Hong Weilian (William Hung), Liu transferred to avoid taking the Hebrew oral exam at Union, which apparently was a requirement for graduation. See Chen Yuxian 陳毓賢, *Hong Ye zhuan:jinshi ruzhe Hong Weilian* 洪業傳：今世儒者洪煨蓮 [A Biography of Hong Ye: Latter Day Confucian William Hong] (Taibei 台北: Lianjing chubanshe 聯經出版社, 1992), 75.
[23] The dissertation was officially titled, "The Psychology of Learning Chinese: A Preliminary Analysis by Means of Experimental Psychology of Some of the Factors Involved in the Process of Learning Chinese Characters" and was 152 pages long.
[24] West, *Yenching University and Sino-Western Relations, 1916-1952*, 59.

America at the time.[25] This position afforded him more opportunities to interact with the broader Chinese student community and also strengthened his ties with former St. John's classmate T. V. Soong 宋子文, who was editor-in-chief of the publication at the time. Liu's primary extracurricular activities during these years, however, were in Chinese student Protestant circles. In 1915 he served as editor of *Liu Mei Tsing Nien* (Chinese Students' Christian Journal), the monthly publication of the Chinese Students' Christian Association (CSCA). This group had been founded in 1909 with the help of the YMCA in order to unite and encourage Chinese Christian students around North America and by 1917 had six hundred members, making it equal in size to the Chinese Students' Association.[26] Liu was President of the organization in 1916.

Liu's blending of patriotic concern for China with a firm commitment to Christian ministry continued to deepen during his years in the United States, as is evident in his 1916 CSCA President's message, which was published in *Liu Mei Tsing Nien*. In his essay, Liu lamented China's failed efforts to establish a stable republican government

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[25] Boorman, ed. *Liu Tingfang*, 416. For background on the associational life of Chinese students in North America during this period (focusing mainly on the Chinese Students' Association, but also with some material on the Chinese Students Christian Association) refer to the chapter "Student Associational Life and Chinese Nationalism" in Ye, *Seeking Modernity in China's Name: Chinese Students in the United States 1900-1927*.

[26] "Minutes of the First Central Executive Board Meeting of the Chinese Students' Christian Association in North America," RG 13, Chinese Students' Christian Assocation in North America, Yale Divinity School, New Haven, 1. The CSCA did not require students to be baptized in order to join. The group held Bible studies and other religious meetings and emphasized social service by helping Chinese communities in North America and assisting other Chinese students. See Ye, *Seeking Modernity in China's Name: Chinese Students in the United States 1900-1927*, 38, 45-46.

following Yuan Shikai's death in 1916. "This should help us to realize more concretely than ever," he declared, "the urgent need of genuine leadership with irreproachable character as it is represented in the life of Jesus Christ. Whether or not we shall be able to stand up as the worthy followers of Christ and cooperate with each other for the creation of a New China, will depend largely upon how well we are developing our Christian character while we are students in this country."[27]

Liu Tingfang found romance during his student days as well. In 1911, while studying at the University of Georgia, he met and fell in love with Wu Zhuosheng 吳卓生 (Katherine Wu), a devoted Christian three years his senior who was studying at LaGrange College, about 120 miles away in central Georgia. Wu was the daughter of a wealthy Shanghai businessman and had been educated at the McTyerie School in Shanghai, a prestigious missionary school for girls, as well as at Hiroshima College in Japan. Before long, Liu and Wu were engaged, and after four years of courtship, they married in 1915 while both were students at Columbia University.[28] A hint of their warm romance can be found in a poem Liu

[27] Liu Tingfang, "President's Message," *Liu Mei Tsing Nien* 12, no. 1 (1916): 6-7. This publication used pinyin for its title rather than Chinese characters.
[28] See Wu Changxing 吳昶興, "Liu Tingfang zongjiao jiaoyu linian zhi shijian yu Zhongguo shehui bianqian, 1891-1947 劉廷芳宗教教育理念之實踐與中國社會變遷, 1891-1947 (The Implementation of Liu Tingfang's Philosophy of Religious Education and China's Social Transition, 1891-1947)," 37. Wu returned to China in 1915 after getting her undergraduate degree at Columbia and served as dean of the Suzhou Kindergarten Normal School for three years, at which point she returned to New York to be with Liu and study for a masters degree in education.

wrote for his wife years later when he returned to the place of their courtship in the state of Georgia:

> Though the sun sets behind the Western hills, (雖然落日西山,)
> Twilight is not far, (黃昏不遠了,)
> Not much writing is left, (篇幅不多,)
> This small scroll will soon be finished. (小小的卷冊將完.)
> But amid boundless romance, (但無邊浪漫裏,)
> How much happiness, (幾許歡娛,)
> The story of those years, (這當年故事,)
> Can it ever seem old? (能嫌太熟嗎?)[29]

Liu Tingfang and his wife returned to China in 1920 after both had earned graduate degrees from Columbia, he with his doctorate and she with a master's degree in education.[30] Liu was also ordained as a minister by the Congregational Church of Manhattan just prior to leaving America.[31] Originally he had intended to join his mentor and supporter, John Leighton Stuart, at Nanjing Seminary. However, this plan changed in 1919 after Stuart was appointed president of the newly formed Yanjing

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[29] Liu Tingfang 劉廷芳, *Shan Yu* 山雨 [Mountain Rain] (Shanghai 上海: Beixin shuju 北新書局, 1930), 122-23. Liu was only 35 when he wrote this poem, but from the contents it would appear that he did not expect to have a long life, which likely reflected his constant struggle with poor health. Indeed, at the time Liu wrote this poem he was in America in order to recuperate from physical exhaustion.

[30] "Katherine Y. T. Lew," Box 339, Folder 5192, RG 11, United Board Papers, Yale Divinity School, New Haven, 1. Wu's degree was from Columbia Teachers College. See Wu Changxing 吳昶興, "Liu Tingfang zongjiao jiaoyu linian zhi shijian yu Zhongguo shehui bianqian, 1891-1947 劉廷芳宗教教育理念之實踐與中國社會變遷, 1891-1947 (The Implementation of Liu Tingfang's Philosophy of Religious Education and China's Social Transition, 1891-1947)," 37.

[31] Dr. Rowland M. Cross, "Dr. Timothy Tingfang Lew: A Tribute," General Materials, Folder: Memorial Service, Timothy Tingfang Lew Papers, Missionary Research Library, New York, 3.

University (Yanjing daxue 燕京大學; also known as Yenching University), a Christian college in Beijing that amalgamated four different mission schools. Stuart was quick to invite Liu to join him at Yanjing, though he was careful not to pressure him.[32] Liu felt a personal sense of loyalty to Stuart and was also drawn the vision he articulated for the school, with a strong emphasis on Christian education, modern knowledge, and equality between Chinese and Western staff as a concrete demonstration of international harmony. Eager to be a part of this experiment in cosmopolitan Christian higher education, Liu declined a number of lucrative job offers from secular schools and government bureaus and joined Stuart at Yanjing in 1920.

Liu initially was a lecturer in the School of Religion and taught courses in his specialty of psychology. But within a year of arriving, his role at Yanjing expanded dramatically. Most important was his appointment as assistant to the chancellor, which placed him at Stuart's right hand and allowed him to exercise wide influence over the direction of Yanjing's development, particularly by finding suitable new faculty.[33] As the first Chinese with a doctorate on the faculty, Liu was instrumental in recruiting other Chinese of high academic caliber to teach at the school. He drew heavily upon his wide circle of contacts, which were especially strong among the Chinese graduates of Columbia University, and

[32] Stuart, *Fifty Years in China*, 77.
[33] Miner Searle Bates, "Liu T'ing-Fang (Timothy Lew)," RG 10, Box 75, Folder 648, Miner Searle Bates Papers, Yale Divinity School Library Special Collections, New Haven, 1.

eventually about one-third of the faculty at Yanjing had ties with this Ivy League institution.[34] Liu was also the key figure in pushing Stuart to raise academic standards at the school by forcing out teachers without adequate qualifications, but naturally this did not endear him to the faculty.[35]

Also in 1921, Liu was made acting head of the School of Religion due to the poor health of W. T. Hobart, the missionary who had been in charge. When Hobart's health failed to improve, Liu was formally appointed to the position in 1922. This was a remarkably swift ascent and all the more notable given the dominance of missionaries in Chinese seminaries at the time. The School of Religion was a central part of Yanjing, with a quarter of the faculty affiliated with it. More liberal in theological outlook and with higher academic standards than most seminaries in China, it also had consistently low student enrollments.[36] Liu's tenure lasted until 1926 and was crucial in shaping the school's longer term trajectory, since during this time he shifted the focus more to research, thoroughly revised the curriculum, and brought in a number of

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[34] Liu hired some of his relatives to teach at Yanjing, including Lu Zhiwei 陸志韋 (who was head of the Psychology Department and later became the first Chinese president of Yanjing) and Xu Shuxi 徐淑希 (who for a time was head of the Political Science Department), both of whom were married to sisters of Liu Tingfang. See Dong Nai 董鼐, ed., *Xuefu jiwen--sili Yanjing daxue* 學府紀聞—私立燕京大學 [Record from an Institution of Higher Learning--Privately Established Yanjing University] (Taibei 台北: Nanjing chuban youxian gongsi 南京出版有限公司, 1982), 183-85.
[35] West, *Yenching University and Sino-Western Relations, 1916-1952*, 117.
[36] Yu-ming Shaw, *An American Missionary in China: John Leighton Stuart and Chinese-American Relations* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992).

superb Chinese scholars, including the theolgian Zhao Zichen 趙紫宸, who was appointed head of the institution in 1928.[37] Liu also helped to establish a separate Psychology Department at Yanjing and served as its chair until 1925.[38]

Stuart later noted the critical role that Liu played in helping Yanjing to improve its faculty while becoming a cross-cultural institution. "With all of these highly qualified Chinese," Stuart wrote about Liu in his autobiography, "he argued that despite their skeptical misgivings this really was a missionary school in which Chinese were to share everything with foreigners as colleagues and that they ought to help in making this novel experiment a successful demonstration."[39] He pointed out as well that Liu's efforts to assemble a qualified faculty "had a very large part in the direction given to Yanjing policy."[40] During these early years of the school's history, Stuart turned to Liu more than to any other Chinese for advice on how to handle the complex social and political dynamics in China and he greatly valued Liu's "incisive appreciation of the larger movements and their significance."[41] As a result of Liu's insightful counsel

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[37] Xu Yihua 徐以驊, *Jiaohui daxue yu shenxue jiaoyu* 教會大學與神學教育 [The Christian Colleges and Theological Education] (Fuzhou 福州: Fujian jiaoyu chubanshe 復健教育出版, 1999).
[38] Wu Changxing 吳昶興, "Liu Tingfang zongjiao jiaoyu linian zhi shijian yu Zhongguo shehui bianqian, 1891-1947 劉廷芳宗教教育理念之實踐與中國社會變遷, 1891-1947 (The Implementation of Liu Tingfang's Philosophy of Religious Education and China's Social Transition, 1891-1947)," 46.
[39] Stuart, *Fifty Years in China*, 77.
[40] West, *Yenching University and Sino-Western Relations, 1916-1952*, 61.
[41] Quoted in West, *Yenching University and Sino-Western Relations, 1916-1952*, 61.

and Stuart's deft leadership and fundraising skills, Yanjing University quickly acquired a fine faculty and a beautiful new campus. By 1926 the school was already established as one of the top Christian colleges in the country.

Yanjing University was influential not only as an educational institution, but as a center of Protestant thought in China. This was evident most clearly in the formation of a group called *Shengming tuanqi* 生命團契 (Life Fellowship), which was composed mainly of faculty from Yanjing and represented the intellectual elite of Chinese Protestantism during the Republican period. With a strong Social Gospel orientation, the group transmitted its thinking primarily by means of a quarterly magazine that they published called *Shengming jikan* 生命季刊 (Life Journal), which was renamed *Zhenli yu shengming* 真理與生命 (Truth and Life) in 1926.[42] Liu was the first editor-in-chief of the journal from 1920 to 1926 and again from 1934 to 1941, while serving as an associate editor during the interim period. This periodical provided Liu with a platform for promoting church reform and communicating modern ideas such as nationalism, democracy, science, and new gender roles. Through his work with the journal, he became a widely known and respected figure in Christian

[42] Samuel D. Ling, "The Other May Fourth Movement: The Chinese 'Christian Renaissance,' 1919-1937" (dissertation, Temple University, 1980), 76. Ling mentions two other Protestant groups—the *True Light Review* Baptist group in Guangzhou and the Chinese Christian Literature Society in Shanghai—but notes that neither of them had the intellectual clout or authority of Life Fellowship and its journal.

circles and significantly shaped the intellectual development of the Chinese Church.

In addition to his already considerable workload with Yanjing University and *Life Journal*, Liu took on many other commitments outside the school. For example, at the same time he began his academic labors at Yanjing in 1920, he accepted a position as dean of the graduate school of education at Beijing Normal University (*Beijing shifan daxue* 北京示範大學) and as professor of psychology and education at Beijing University (*Beijing daxue* 北京大學; also known as Peking University). Not surprisingly, the workload proved to be too much and the following year he had to scale back his role at both schools to that of lecturer.[43] Liu stayed involved in the field of psychology through teaching and as the co-founder and co-director of the Psychological Association of China, but psychology was never his primary focus.[44] He was more prominent in the wider field of education, serving as a contributing editor of the influential secular educational journal *Xin jiaoyu* 新教育 (Journal of New Education) from 1921 to 1925.[45] As an ordained minister, he also maintained modest involvement in church ministry by serving as honorary pastor at Mishi Chinese Christian Church (*Mishi Zhonghua Jidujiaohui* 米市中華基督教會), an independent congregation in Beijing, and by regularly attending

[43] "From Who's Who in China (Revised and up to Date)," 3.
[44] Cross, "Dr. Timothy Tingfang Lew: A Tribute," 2.
[45] "From Who's Who in China (Revised and up to Date)," 2.

leadership meetings of the ABCFM, the interdenominational mission to which the Congregational Church belonged.[46]

Most of Liu's major commitments outside of Yanjing were for the purpose of serving the broader Chinese Church. One of the most significant of these was the role he played in was the National Christian Council (NCC), a major ecumenical organization established by China's mainstream Protestant churches to advance common concerns more effectively. He was instrumental in its founding in 1922, along with Cheng Jingyi and Zhao Zichen, giving one of three keynote speeches at the meeting.[47] One missionary leader later recalled the powerful impact Liu's address had on the proceedings: "At the historic meeting of the Chinese Church in 1922 when it looked as though the Church would fall apart before it came together, Dr. Lew made one of his thrilling speeches in which he used that phrase which has become a watchword in China: 'Let us agree to differ but resolve to love.' That was a clarion call to answer the Master's prayer that they all may be one and carried the meeting through a serious crisis to a successful conclusion."[48]

Liu held high-level positions in the NCC for some nineteen years, serving as a representative of the North China Congregational Church. One of his most significant posts in the organization was as head of the

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[46] Cross, "Dr. Timothy Tingfang Lew: A Tribute," 3.
[47] "Timothy Liu Tingfang," in *Biographical Dictionary of Christian Missions*, ed. Gerald H. Anderson (New York: MacMillan, 1998), 404.
[48] Cross, "Dr. Timothy Tingfang Lew: A Tribute," 3-4.

Standing Committee on an Indigenous Church from 1924 to 1926. In this capacity, Liu became a leading voice among the mission-connected Protestant churches advocating a sinicized form of Christianity in China. He saw this as a way to reduce the social and cultural distance between Christian and non-Christian Chinese and simultaneously deflect the harsh criticism of Christianity by Chinese intellectuals connected with the Anti-Christian Movement, which was a powerful force in China for most of the 1920s.[49]

Another vital arena of Christian endeavor in which Liu invested much time and energy was the larger sphere of Protestant education in China. In 1924, he became the first Chinese to head the Chinese Christian Educational Association (CCEA; *Zhonghua Jidujiao jiaoyu xiehui* 中華基督教教育協會), a very prestigious post given the central role that education had come to assume in the larger mission enterprise. He accepted the position at a crucial time, when anti-Christian thinking was widespread among China's intelligentsia and led to numerous calls for Christian schools to submit to Chinese government control and make their religious activities voluntary. More extreme voices demanded the abolition of all Christian schools in the country.[50] During his three-year tenure, Liu was

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[49] Liu Tingfang 劉廷芳, "Zhongguo Jidutu aiguo wenti de pingyi 中國基督徒愛國問題的評議 [An Appraisal of the Issue of Chinese Christian Patriotism]," 4.

[50] For background on the challenges to Christian education during the 1920s, see Lutz, *Chinese Politics and Christian Missions: The Anti-Christian Movements of 1920-1928*. Chapters Four, Six, and Seven deal specifically with the Restore Educational Rights Movement.

centrally involved in hammering out an agreement with the government that preserved space for Christian education by having the Christian colleges appoint Chinese leaders, register with the authorities, and make all religious courses and activities voluntary.[51] This solution corresponded well with Liu's conviction that genuine religious faith required the freedom to choose. It also reflected his belief that Christian education in China could contribute much to the nation by training young people willing to serve society with self-sacrificing Christian love.[52]

While Liu Tingfang was steadily growing in stature as a Christian leader with significant influence in the sphere of education, his wife Wu Zhuosheng was busy with numerous commitments of her own, professional and otherwise. She was a professor of childhood education at Beijing Normal University from 1921 to 1928 and also taught as a lecturer at Beijing University during the same period. Wu was a leader in many voluntary organizations, most notably the YWCA and the Federation of Women's Clubs of Peking.[53] She also had responsibilities as a mother after their daughter and only child Grace Elizabeth (Liu Lien 劉立恩) was born

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[51] See Timothy Tingfang Lew, "Regarding Registration of Christian Schools with the Government," Box 1, Timothy Tingfang Lew Papers, Missionary Research Library, New York, 1.
[52] Cross, "Dr. Timothy Tingfang Lew: A Tribute," 1. See also Boorman, ed. *Liu Tingfang*, 416.
[53] "Katherine Y. T. Lew," 1.

on 14 February 1924.[54] Fortunately Liu's mother, who lived together with the family at Yanjing for many years, helped to take care of Grace.[55]

Liu Tingfang had an outgoing and dynamic personality, but his tendency to be too direct in his criticism of others and to take on too many extra duties outside of his work at Yanjing seriously strained his relationships with colleagues at the school. Zhao Zichen, a Chinese theologian and friend, seemed to hint at this in a brief portrait of Liu that he penned in 1923. "One thing is utterly true," Zhao wrote in the essay, "and that is he thinks ahead of his time and has to suffer for it. He has to pay for his freedom of self-expression. He loves his friends and despite the many-sided activities which may create a contrary impression, he is honest through and through."[56]

From the fall of 1926 to the spring of 1928, Liu took a leave of absence from Yanjing to travel and lecture in the United States and England. He had a number of reasons for doing so, among them exhaustion from overwork, recurrent sinus and respiratory problems, and tensions with fellow faculty at Yanjing.[57] Liu traveled widely in both countries, speaking on China and the Chinese Church to academic and

[54] "Lew, Grace Elizabeth Li-En," *New York Times* 20 June 2004. Though Liu and his wife gave their daughter a Chinese name, it seems they typically called her by her English name, Grace.

[55] See the untitled and anonymous eulogy to Liu Tingfang's mother, Box 6, Timothy Tingfang Lew Papers, 2.

[56] Zhao Zichen, "A Glimpse at One Chinese Christian Worker," *The Chinese Recorder* 54, no. 12 (December 1923): 744. Zhao joined the Yanjing University faculty in 1925 and in 1928 was appointed dean of the School of Religion, a position he held into the Communist period.

[57] Liu Tingfang, 17 May 1927.

religious audiences. Spending time first in the United States, he was a visiting professor at Boston University, taught as a lecturer at Union Theological Seminary and Hartford Theological Seminary, while giving addresses at numerous schools on both coasts. In addition, Middlebury College and Oberlin College presented him with honorary degrees. In England he spoke at such places as Eton and the Royal Society of International Affairs, as well as at numerous churches in London and around the country.[58] While hardly a vacation, it does seem that the time away had some recuperative effect.

After returning to Yanjing University in 1928, Liu resumed his teaching duties and position as assistant to the chancellor.[59] As second in authority at the school, he was officially in charge when Stuart was traveling, as was often the case.[60] Liu still insisted on teaching part-time at other institutions, which he defended on the grounds that Christian colleges like Yanjing needed to build closer ties with government institutions of higher learning.[61] He also felt considerable financial pressure, since according to Chinese tradition, as the eldest male of the family he had a responsibility to help his younger siblings with education

[58] "From Who's Who in China (Revised and up to Date)," 3-5.
[59] "Timothy Tingfang Lew: A Biography," in *Men and Politics in Modern China: Preliminary 50 Biographies*, ed. Howard L. Boorman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960), 102. See also "Lew, Timothy Tingfang."
[60] "Yanjing daxue 燕京大學 [Yanjing University]," in *Beiping ge daxue de zhuangkuang* 北平各大學的狀況 [The Situation of the Universities of Beiping], ed. Xinchenbao congshushi 新晨報叢書室 (Beiping 北平: Xinchenbao yingyebu 新晨報營業部, 1929), 170.
[61] Cross, "Dr. Timothy Tingfang Lew: A Tribute," 1.

costs and other major expenses.[62] However, other faculty members believed he was setting a poor example and their resentment grew. As chancellor and a personal mentor and friend, Stuart felt compelled to warn Liu in 1929 that if he did not stop teaching at outside institutions, his reputation among colleagues would suffer further damage. Moreover, he would have difficulty fulfilling his administrative duties at Yanjing and might even find it desirable to leave the university altogether.[63] However, Liu refused to relinquish these other commitments, and this was one of the main reasons his tenure as assistant to the chancellor came to an end in 1931.

Without administrative duties at Yanjing to attend to, Liu had more time to put his many and versatile gifts to other uses. His deep conviction concerning the centrality of dignified worship in the Christian life and his fondness for liturgy, not to mention his impressive linguistic skills, led to his being chosen as chief editor of the *Putian songzan* 普天頌讚 (Hymns of Universal Praise), a collection of over 500 hymns that became by far the best selling hymnal in China during the Republican period. Published in 1936, it sold over 300,000 copies by 1940. Liu had written six of the hymns himself, and another 164 were his translations into Chinese.[64] He also continued to develop a journal he had started in 1930 called *Zijing* 紫

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[62] Liu Tingfang to John Leighton Stuart, 17 May 1927, Box 2, Timothy Tingfang Lew Papers, Missionary Research Library, New York.
[63] John Leighton Stuart to Liu Tingfang, Box 2, Timothy Tingfang Lew Papers, Missionary Research Library, New York.
[64] Cross, "Dr. Timothy Tingfang Lew: A Tribute," 2-3.

晶 (Amethyst) that was devoted to developing indigenous liturgies. *Amethyst* was well received, but had a very small circulation and ceased publication with the Japanese invasion of China in 1937.[65] Liu translated considerable quantities of Western Christian works into Chinese, and between 1932 and 1934 published more than sixty articles on a wide variety of subjects.[66]

Liu's prominence as a Church leader made him a frequent representative of Chinese Protestantism on important occasions during the 1920s and 1930s. One of the most significant of these was the private funeral of Sun Yat-sen in 1925, which Liu participated in as the presiding minister, and which will be discussed in greater detail later in the chapter. He also represented the Chinese Church at a number of important international Christian gatherings, including the Conference on Faith and Order at Lausanne in 1927, the World Mission Conference in Jerusalem in 1928, the Oxford Conference on Life and Ministry in 1937, and the Madras Conference on International Christian Education in 1939. Liu's diligent preparation and pointed speeches at these events had a lasting impact on many delegates and helped to make the contribution of the Chinese delegation a valued one.[67]

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[65] "Christian Literature Society Periodicals," *The Chinese Recorder* 69, no. 10 (1938): 519.
[66] West, *Yenching University and Sino-Western Relations, 1916-1952*, 61.
[67] See Cross, "Dr. Timothy Tingfang Lew: A Tribute," 4. See also Frederick A. Wilmot, "World Conference on Faith and Order," Box 4, Timothy Tingfang Lew Papers, Missionary Research Library, New York, 39-42.

Liu was also actively involved in the YMCA, which he had been connected with from his youth. He closely identified with the goals of the YMCA, as did many Chinese Protestants at the time. As he said in a letter written to his friend Dr. John R. Mott, the director of the International YMCA, after Mott was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1946: "My connection with the 'Y' as a member, as an officer in a student association, and as a member of the board of trustees of two metropolitan city 'Y's' and as a member of the national committee, extending over a period of a quarter of a century, has made me a thorough-going believer in the 'Y' movement."[68] The two metropolitan Y's he referred to were in Peking and Shanghai. In addition, his wife Wu Zhuosheng was president for a time of the influential Shanghai YWCA and was a member of the organization's national committee.[69]

Liu enumerated some of the reasons he valued and supported the work of the YMCA in an article he wrote in 1935 to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the group's arrival in China. He praised the group for balancing out what he viewed as an over-emphasis on personal salvation in the churches with a focus on Christian responsibility to society. Liu believed that a healthy Christian faith ought to lead to social

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[68] Timothy Tingfang Lew, RG 45, Box 47, Folder 884, John R. Mott Papers, Yale Divinity School Library, New Haven, 1.

[69] "Katherine Y. T. Lew," 1. This was most likely in the 1930s.

transformation.[70] He also lauded the YMCA for spurring the Church to develop a "national consciousness." In his view, it did this by breaking out of the Chinese Christian enclave into the surrounding society and creating opportunities for Christians and non-Christians to interact and serve society together. Such an approach, in his estimation, "helped society move in a new direction, to break free from many superstitious fetters, thereby enabling Christians and non-Christians to have a common viewpoint."[71] This modernizing Christian impact on the broader society, Liu believed, offered benefits for Chinese people both inside and outside the Church.

In 1936, Liu Tingfang accepted an invitation to become a member of China's *Lifayuan* 立法院 (Legislative Yuan), which was one of five main branches composing the Nationalist Government.[72] This body was not especially powerful, being responsible simply to draft laws based on policies already adopted by the executive committee of the Nationalist Party.[73] Nevertheless, it was a prestigious position, and allowed Liu to continue spending much of his time engaged in religious work, since the

[70] Liu Tingfang, "Qingnianhui duiyu Zhongguo jiaohui de gongxian 青年會對於中國教會的貢獻 [The Contribution of the YMCA to the Chinese Church]," *Zhenli yu shengming* 真理與生命 [Truth and Life] 9, no. 5 (1935): 154-55. This article was written to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Chinese YMCA.
[71] Liu Tingfang, "Qingnianhui duiyu Zhongguo jiaohui de gongxian 青年會對於中國教會的貢獻 [The Contribution of the YMCA to the Chinese Church]," 161-62.
[72] Liu was offered this position by Sun Fo, who headed the Legislative Yuan from 1932 to 1948. Liu was personally acquainted with Sun Fo, having presided at the funeral of his famous father, Sun Yatsen.
[73] The power of the Legislative Yuan was further eroded by the erratic attendance of its members.

Legislative Yuan only met periodically.[74] He decided to move with his family to Shanghai, from which he could easily travel to the nearby capital of Nanking when the Legislative Yuan was in session.

Zhao Zichen, Liu's colleague and friend at Yanjing, was deeply disappointed by Liu's decision to enter politics, which he apparently viewed as inconsistent with Liu's calling as a Christian minister.[75] But Liu saw the position was an opportuntity to more effectively realize his educational and social service ideals. He also maintianed a certain distance from politics by choosing not to join the Nationalist Party, despite the fact that he had personal ties with members of the Soong clan.[76] In some ways, the move reflected Liu's tendency not to sharply separate religion and politics, which was discernable as well in his decision to preside at Sun Yat-sen's funeral. From a personal perspective, it is likely that Liu's decision to leave Yanjing was related to the fact that he no longer had any hope of being appointed as head of the institution, despite the fact that in the 1920s he was widely presumed to be Stuart's successor. Thus, taking the position at the Legislative Yuan allowed him to

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[74] Liu received financial support for his continued religious work from the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, which was the mission arm of the Congregational Church denomination that he was a part of. See Liu Tingfang to Dr. F. F. Goodsell, Box 1, Timothy Tingfang Lew Papers, Missionary Research Library, New York, 4.

[75] Ling, "The Other May Fourth Movement: The Chinese 'Christian Renaissance,' 1919-1937," 70. Ling says that Liu's decision led to Zhao's "disillusionment," but does not give any further details.

[76] See Wu Changxing 吳昶興, "Liu Tingfang zongjiao jiaoyu linian zhi shijian yu Zhongguo shehui bianqian, 1891-1947 劉廷芳宗教教育理念之實踐與中國社會變遷, 1891-1947 (The Implementation of Liu Tingfang's Philosophy of Religious Education and China's Social Transition, 1891-1947)," 61.

avoid the awkwardness of staying at Yanjing and avoided a painful loss of face.

Following Japan's invasion of China in 1937, the Nationalist Government was forced to flee Nanjing and eventually established its wartime capital in Chongqing, deep in the Chinese interior. Liu traveled from Shanghai to Chongqing in April 1939, where he attended weekly sessions of the Legislative Yuan and continued to engage in Christian ministry. Originally he had planned to stay in Chongqing for six months in order to fulfill his responsibilities with the Legislative Yuan, but then in early May the Japanese began heavy bombing of the city. Liu's fragile health was unable to take the strain of incessant air raids and prolonged waiting in cramped and overcrowded bomb shelters. He got a serious sinus infection and, with medical care unavailable, the sinus ruptured. Fortunately, due to his government connections, he was able to get a seat on one of the few planes out of the city and received urgently needed medical treatment in Hong Kong.[77]

By June, Liu was back with his family in Shanghai's International Settlement, which, like Hong Kong, was still free for a time, since it was under Western control. There he continued his work editing *Truth and Life*, writing essays, preaching sermons, and serving on the committees of

[77] Liu Tingfang, "The Work Done since Return from Madras Conference," Box 1, Timothy Tingfang Lew Papers, Missionary Research Library, New York, 1-3.

various Christian organizations such as the NCC, the YMCA, and others.[78] Liu had to be very cautious living in Shanghai given his status as a member of the Legislative Yuan, since the Japanese were spying on prominent Chinese nationalists in the city, and had even assassinated some of them.[79] By early 1941, Liu felt Shanghai had become "too hot" for comfort and decided to take the advice of a friend and flee to the United States.[80] So late that year, Liu moved with his wife and daughter to New York City, where he had many personal ties.[81]

Shortly after Liu's departure from Shanghai, the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor and the Pacific Ocean became a major theater of war, effectively precluding the option of a quick return to China. Consequently, Liu became a member of China's National Relief Commission and labored to gain support in the United States for the Nationalist war effort.[82] As part of this task, he also worked for United China Relief, an umbrella organization that brought together disparate American charities and foundations committed to supporting the Nationalist Government and the

[78] Liu Tingfang, "The Work Done since Return from Madras Conference," Box 1, 3-4.
[79] For more background on the climate of violence and intimidation in Shanghai during this period, see Frederick E. Wakeman, *The Shanghai Badlands: Wartime Terrorism and Urban Crime, 1937-1941* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996).
[80] Liu, "To American Christian Ministers on Postwar World," 7.
[81] Liu's mother, who had lived with the family for many years, died of a stroke in 1940 in Shanghai. See "Mother of Dr. Timothy Lew Dies in Shanghai," Box 2, Timothy Tingfang Lew Papers, Missionary Research Library, New York.
[82] "Dr. Timothy Tingfang Lew," Box 1, Timothy Tingfang Lew Papers, Missionary Research Library, New York, 1.

people of China in their fight against the Japanese.[83] Many of these groups had strong church ties. Liu also continued his usual busy schedule of Christian ministry, frequently addressing different church groups on themes related to China and Christianity.

Liu continued to struggle with poor health during his years in America. He had chronic bronchitis, which caused frequent bouts of coughing and worsened his insomnia.[84] He had multiple sinus operations to try to improve his weak condition, but to no avail.[85] Eventually he contracted tuberculosis and traveled to the much drier climate of Albuquerque, New Mexico in 1947 for rest and treatment at the Southwest Presbyterian Sanitorium.[86] Unfortunately, his health continued to deteriorate, and on 2 August 1947, Liu Tingfang passed away in New Mexico at the age of 56, and was buried at the Church of the Heavenly Rest in New York City, far from the land of his birth.[87]

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[83] See Wu Changxing 吳昶興, "Liu Tingfang zongjiao jiaoyu linian zhi shijian yu Zhongguo shehui bianqian, 1891-1947 劉廷芳宗教教育理念之實踐與中國社會變遷, 1891-1947 (The Implementation of Liu Tingfang's Philosophy of Religious Education and China's Social Transition, 1891-1947)," 63.

[84] Katherine Lew to Dr. Diffendorfer, Box 2, Timothy Tingfang Lew Papers, Missionary Research Library, New York.

[85] Cross, "Dr. Timothy Tingfang Lew: A Tribute." The author says that Liu had 24 sinus operations.

[86] West, *Yenching University and Sino-Western Relations, 1916-1952*, 62.

[87] William H. Gleysteen, "Timothy Tingfang Lew," General Materials, Timothy Tingfang Lew Papers, Missionary Research Library, New York, 26. Liu Tingfang was survived by his wife, Wu Zhuosheng, and his daughter, Grace. Wu Zhuosheng lived in New York City and passed away in 1966. Grace studied at Smith College, after which she did graduate training at the University of Massachusetts, and then worked as a successful pathologist in New York City for over fifty years. She was married and had a son, passing away in 2004. Both Liu's wife and daughter are buried next to him in at the Church of the Heavenly Rest. See "Lew, Grace Elizabeth Li-En."

Life Fellowship, *Truth and Life*, and China's Public Sphere

Liu Tingfang was eager to see how his homeland had changed when he returned to China in April of 1920 after ten years of study in the United States. Outwardly things looked the same when he disembarked in Shanghai, but at a deeper level Liu sensed that profound change was occurring. "I was overwhelmed with a kind of invisible power and atmosphere," he wrote the following year. "I felt that there was life vibrating—a new life which I did not find a few years ago."[88] One evening he roamed through bookstores and newspaper stands in the city and found 47 different kinds of periodicals. To his astonishment, he discovered that the ideas they contained were more up-to-date and the viewpoints more diverse than might have been found in a similar number of magazines back in the United States.

Liu had returned to his homeland at the dawn of the May Fourth era, a time of remarkable intellectual ferment in China when the number of new publications skyrocketed and their pages stirred with debates that would shape China's cultural trajectory for decades to come. This burgeoning of print media, rapid adoption of the vernacular for writing by intellectual elites, promotion of concepts associated with modernity, and emphasis on rational public debate of issues relating to the common good were all part of the modern public sphere that began to emerge and

[88] Timothy Tingfang Lew, "China's Renaissance--the Christian Opportunity," *The Chinese Recorder* 52, no. 5 (1921): 301.

rapidly develop in China during the Republican period. As one of China's leading Protestant intellectuals at the time, Liu would soon make his own contribution to China's modern public sphere as editor of an influential Christian publication called *Truth and Life*.

China and the Concept of a Modern Public Sphere

The concept of the modern public sphere used in this dissertation is based on the thinking of Jurgen Habermas. In his seminal work, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, he examines the rise of the bourgeois public sphere in Western Europe during the seventeenth century and then uses this ideal to critique what he views as a decline of the public sphere in the contemporary West. He describes this European public sphere as the result of individual citizens of the urban bourgeoisie coming together as equals, free of coercion or state control, in such places as coffee houses and salons as well as via print media, to express opinions and rationally debate issues relating to the common good. The public sphere and public opinion that it generated, part of which was eventually institutionalized within the state in the form of parliaments, became a means for citizens in the West to set themselves as a counter-balance to state power, and thereby to regulate the exercise of government authority.[89] While Habermas' book was not without its deficiencies, the

[89] See Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Burger (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1989).

theoretical framework it provided for conceptualizing the public sphere has been of immense value.[90]

Habermas stated explicitly that the European bourgeois public sphere that he described was historically rooted in the development of European civil society and could not be generalized to other social contexts, even if outwardly similar.[91] But a number of studies by American scholars in the 1980s, done before Habermas' book *The Structual Transformation of the Public Sphere* was available in English, utilized a concept of the public sphere that did not necessarily fit with it. William Rowe's carefully researched two-volume study on the city of Hankou and Mary Rankin's work examining elite activism in Zhejiang both showed the expanded involvement of local elites in various forms of extrabureaucratic and welfare activity over the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and especially following the Taiping rebellion. Rowe and Rankin independently argued that this development reflected the emergence of a Chinese public sphere, since the Chinese word used to describe such activity (gong 公) partly overlapped in meaning with the English word

[90] Some of the deficiencies that scholars have pointed to include an overemphasis on economic factors in explaining the rise of the public sphere, ignoring the importance of the religious public sphere that preceded the bourgeois literary variant that Habermas focuses on, failing to recognize that the exclusion of women from this social space was problematic, and not addressing the impact of important issues such as mass literacy and nationalism in his analysis. Habermas has acknowledged many of these criticisms. See Craig Calhoun, ed. *Habermas and the Public Sphere* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2001). The most relevant chapters with regards to this thesis are Calhoun's introduction, Zaret's chapter on "Religion, Science, and Printing in the Public Spheres in Seventeenth Century England," and the conclusion by Habermas.

[91] Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, xvii.

public.[92] In addition to these works, David Strand utilized the idea of a public sphere to characterize the growing number of newspapers, various self-regulating professional associations, and increased participation of average citizens in political discourse through such mediums as the teahouse and public demonstrations.[93]

There was considerable debate among Western scholars during the 1990s over whether the term public sphere could be legitimately applied to China.[94] R. Bin Wong rejected the notion that the Chinese term *gong* was analogous to the English word *public* and dismissed attempts to apply Western ideas like *public sphere* to the Chinese context as Eurocentric.[95] Frederic Wakeman was deeply skeptical that the activity described by Rowe and Rankin and Strand could be characterized as an autonomous public sphere.[96] Other scholars affirmed the basic idea of the public sphere, but felt a different term was needed to fit more closely the Chinese context and avoid the distortion caused by introducing Western teleological ideas into the analysis of Chinese social dynamics. Philip Huang suggested the phrase *third realm* for describing the space between

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[92] See William Rowe, *Hankow: Conflict and Community in a Chinese City* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989). See also Mary Backus Rankin, *Elite Activism and Political Transformation in China: Zhejiang Province, 1865-1911* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1986).

[93] David Strand, *Rickshaw Beijing: City People and Politics in the 1920s* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989).

[94] The main forum in which this debate occurred was the April 1993 issue of *Modern China*. This discussion also included the related concept of civil society, but that element is left out here, since it will be covered in detail in the next chapter.

[95] R. Bin Wong, "Great Expectations: The Public Sphere and the Search for Modern Times in Chinese History," *Chugokushi Gaku (Studies in Chinese History)*, no. 3 (1993).

[96] See Frederic Wakeman, "The Civil Society and Public Sphere Debate: Western Reflections on Chinese Political Culture," *Modern China* 19, no. 2 (1993): 128.

state and society in China; Joan Judge utilized the Chinese term *zhongdeng shehui* 中等社會, translated as *middle realm*, in her study of the new press in late Qing Shanghai; and Bryna Goodman preferred the expression "civic maneuvering" in her article on Republican-era Chinese native place associations in the Republican period.[97]

I argue in this thesis that the concept of a public sphere can be legitimately applied to non-Western cultures only if the main phenomena associated with it are actually evident on the ground. In my view, the appearance of such phenomena in non-Western cultures reflects the universalizing nature of modernity. My main focus in this section is on the public use of reason in small groups and via print media, but I do not deal with the institutionalized form of the public sphere, i.e. parliamentary politics.[98] While admiring the work of Rowe and Rankin, I believe that their use of the term public sphere to describe extrabureaucratic activity in imperial China is not appropriate and produces unnecessary confusion. Not only does such activity has little to do with the public use of reason or print media, but in my view, modernity did not even begin to emerge in China until the very end of the Qing period. Strand's use of the term, on the

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[97] Philip C. C. Huang, "'Public Sphere'/'Civil Society' In China?: The Third Realm between State and Society," *Modern China* 19, no. 2 (1993). Judge, *Print and Politics: 'Shibao' and the Culture of Reform in Late Qing China*. Bryna Goodman, "Creating Civic Ground: Public Maneuverings and the State in the Nanjing Decade," in *Remapping China: Fissures in Historical Terrain*, ed. Gail Hershatter, et al. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996).
[98] For an example of Chinese Protestant involvement in late Qing provincial assemblies, see Ryan Dunch, *Fuzhou Protestants and the Making of a Modern China 1857-1927* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001). Chapter Three, titled "'Welcoming a New China': Protestants in Late Qing Politics," deals directly with this subject.

other hand, is a far more suitable application of the term, since it deals specifically with public demonstrations and print media and is focused on a period when the impact of modernity is already evident. And while the concerns of Huang, Judge, and Goodman that our analysis should be true to the Chinese context are valid, I see nuanced use of *public sphere* preferable to finding a new term.

Naturally, in emphasizing the applicability of the public sphere concept to non-Western countries as a facet of a globalizing modernity, it is also important to note that the form it takes will vary as a result of local cultural influence. Therefore, historians need to be sensitive to the particular dynamics of modernity in different cultural settings. Orsini Francesca provides a good example of this in the Indian context with his study *The Hindi Public Sphere 1920-1940*.[99] He notes that contrary to the European experience, Indian elites involved in building a modern public sphere often insisted that one and only one position on an issue was tenable. He suggests that this difference may well have reflected the fact that under British rule these Indians were a "subordinate elite" that felt compelled to present a united front to the colonial occupier. David Strand shows this nuance in the case of Beijing in the 1920s when he describes the public sphere that emerged there as a "soft" public sphere, one that combined state control and local initiative and lacked the sense of being

[99] Francesca Orsini, *The Hindi Public Sphere 1920-1940: Language and Literature in the Age of Nationalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).

counterposed to state power characteristic of the public sphere in the West.

Development of a Modern Public Sphere in China

The indigenous modern public sphere in China began to develop during the latter part of the nineteenth century. As mentioned earlier, Protestant missionaries were important pioneers in this area. Then were followed in the 1870s a small number of Chinese began to publish "popular newspapers" (*minbao* 民報).[100] This number increased dramatically in the 1890s following China's humiliating defeat in the Sino-Japanese War, as reform-minded gentry actively sought ways to spread their ideas and modern programs. Though many of these papers were shut down following the conservative backlash of 1898, they had already succeeded in establishing a new paradigm of opinion formation in China with a distinctly modern orientation, relying on independent papers and the reading public rather than on petitions to the throne and imperial favor.[101] After the Boxer debacle and subsequent adoption by the Qing of its New Policies in 1901, these new-style papers resumed their important role in promoting reform in China, which continued to the fall of the Qing in 1911. As Judge notes, rather than arising out of capitalism and civil

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[100] The first of these Chinese papers was Wang Tao's *Xunhuan ribao* 循環日報, established in Hong Kong in 1873. See Judge, *Print and Politics: 'Shibao' and the Culture of Reform in Late Qing China*, 19-20.

[101] Xiantao Zhang, *The Origins of the Modern Chinese Press* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 99.

society as in the West, these papers were a response to political needs and helped to form the institutions and practices of civil society.[102]

Prasenjit Duara argues that one of the clearest expressions of an emergent public sphere in the late Qing was the appearance of numerous study societies among both literati and commoners. These groups, which flourished in the decade following the end of the Sino-Japanese War in 1895, were largely autonomous and engaged in critical discussion of political issues. Scholars estimate that there were about seventy-five formally established societies around the country and many others that met informally due to fear of being suppressed by the government. Among the most influential were the *Qiangxuehui* 強學會 (Self-Strengthening Society) in Beijing and the *Nanxuehui* 南學會 (Southern Study Society) in Hunan. The aim of these societies was to save China from crisis by actively fostering public opinion and advancing "popular rights" by means as publications, informal lending libraries, social reform activities, and the like. With the forming of political parties in the early 1900s, most of these groups dissolved.[103]

In the Republican era that followed the 1911 Revolution, further momentous changes occurred that spurred the development of a modern public sphere in China. These began with the New Culture movement

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[102] Judge, *Print and Politics: 'Shibao' and the Culture of Reform in Late Qing China*, 10-12.
[103] Prasenjit Duara, "State and Civil Society in the History of Chinese Modernity," in *China's Quest for Modernization: A Historical Perspective*, ed. Frederic Wakeman and Wang Xi (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 318-19.

(*Xinwenhua yundong* 新文化運動) in 1915, an attempt by elite Chinese intellectuals to promote radical cultural reform. They considered this a prerequisite for building a more democratic political culture, having seen how quickly the new Republic fell back into old authoritarian and reactionary ways. These thinkers, led by Chen Duxiu and his journal *Xin qingnian* 新青年 (New Youth), attacked Confucian culture as outdated and oppressive and called upon Chinese youth to throw off its alleged shackles and embrace Western modernity. In 1917, the movement gained further momentum when Columbia-trained scholar Hu Shi returned to China and helped lead a literary revolution promoting use of the vernacular for all writing, formal and informal, a major innovation in a culture where mastery of classical Chinese had long been crucial to attaining literati status and its privileges. Beijing became the center of New Culture activity, since most of the movement's leading thinkers congregated at Beijing University under the leadership of Cai Yuanpei 蔡元培.[104]

These New Culture ideas ended up entering mainstream Chinese society and dramatically expanding China's modern public sphere, in large part due to the unprecedented mass student demonstrations in Beijing on 4 May 1919. These demonstrations were sparked by the Allied powers awarding German concessions in China to Japan at the end of World War

[104] For background on the New Culture movement, see Tse-tsung Chow, *The May Fourth Movement: Intellectual Revolution in Modern China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967).

One.[105] The May Fourth movement that grew out of these protests was a watershed in the development of Chinese modernity.[106] One indication of its influence can be seen in the remarkable growth of vernacular newspapers and journals that it fostered. Zhou Cezong has shown that from the beginning of the New Culture movement in 1915 until the May Fourth movement was well under way in 1923, the number of vernacular periodicals published in China rose from virtually zero to nearly six hundred, with more than 450 of these founded in or after 1919.[107]

The names and aims of these publications capture something of the spirit of May Fourth, as a few examples demonstrate: *Xinchao* 新潮 (New Tide), advocating liberalism, democracy, and science, as well as a critical attitude toward traditional Chinese culture; *Shaonian Zhongguo* 少年中國; (Young China), aiming "to create a young China by a cultural movement based on the scientific spirit;" *Shuguang* 曙光 (Dawn), seeking "to promote social reform through scientific studies" and with liberal, anarchist, and socialist themes most prominent; *Nüjiezhong* 女界鐘 (Woman's Bell), proposing "to educate women and enable them to take part in the progress of society;" and *Laodongjie* 勞動界 (Labor Circles), striving "to

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[105] For more on Western concessions in China during this period, see Alfred Feuerwerker, "The Foreign Presence in China," in *The Cambridge History of China: Republican China 1912-1949 Part 1*, ed. John King Fairbank and Denis Crispin Twitchett (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

[106] For more on the significance of the May Fourth movement, see Vera Schwarcz, *The Chinese Enlightenment: Intellectuals and the Legacy of the May Fourth Movement of 1919* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986).

[107] Tse-tsung Chow, *Research Guide to the May Fourth Movement* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963), 26-124.

teach Chinese workers to know what they should know about themselves."[108] Though most of these publications were short-lived, some became well established and exerted far reaching influence on the thinking of China's intellectual youth and the broader society.

These new-style journals were usually started and managed by one of a broad range of small and informal study groups that sprung up during the May Fourth period. For instance, of the examples above, *New Tide*, *Young China*, and *Dawn* were each established by study societies of the same name, while *Woman's Bell* was produced by the student union of Zhounan Girl's Middle School in Changsha, and *Labor Circles* by the newly founded Chinese Communist Party.[109] Though scholars in imperial China had often organized informal groups to discuss literature, and during certain periods had even engaged in limited political debate, these May Fourth groups were different.[110] Now, rather than being restricted to imperial officials or those with formal degrees, even ordinary people with no connections to official circles could participate. Moreover, most of these groups sought to influence politics by shaping public opinion, rather than establishing organizations with direct links to the state.[111] This novel

[108] Tse-tsung Chow, *Research Guide to the May Fourth Movement*, 43, 45, 48, 64, 79.
[109] For more on these groups, see Chow, *The May Fourth Movement: Intellectual Revolution in Modern China*, 186-89.
[110] See Hao Chang, "Intellectual Change and the Reform Movement, 1890-1898," in *The Cambridge History of China*, ed. John K. Fairbank and Denis Twitchett (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 331-33.
[111] The one major exception in this regard was the formation of numerous study groups devoted to Marxism in the late 1910s which then became part of the Communist Party's organizational appartus after its founding in 1921. See Arif Dirlik, *The Origins of Chinese*

form of associational life, which had first begun to appear in the final years of the Qing dynasty, was an important element in the development of a modern public sphere in China.

Liu Tingfang and the Protestant Engagement with May Fourth Modernity

This was the dynamic environment that Liu Tingfang encountered when he arrived in Beijing in 1920. Once there, he quickly forged close ties with a network of Protestant intellectuals in the city who sought to engage May Fourth thinking from a Christian perspective. The organizer of this group was a young leader of the Beijing YMCA named Xu Baoqian 徐寶謙. In May of 1919, with the cries of student protesters still reverberating in Tiananmen Square, he founded the *Beijing zhengdaotuan* 北京證道團 (Peking Apologetic Group; PAG) as a vehicle for providing an "apologetic" or defense of the Christian faith to the educated Chinese public and promoting reform of outdated traditions among the churches.[112] Members of the group believed that Christianity could and should influence China's emerging modernity, a conviction that was clearly expressed in the organization's platform: "Christianity is the greatest need in connection

Communism (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989). Part 3 discusses how Comintern used these May Fourth study societies to found the CCP.

[112] Xu Baoqian 徐寶謙, "Beijing zhengdaotuan de zongzhi yu jihua 北京正道團的宗旨與計劃[The Aim and Plan of the Peking Apologetic Group]," in *Zhonghua Jidujiaohui nianjian* 中華基督教會年鑑 [China Church Year Book] (Shanghai 上海: Shangwu yinshuguan 商務印書館), 1921. The statement did not elaborate on what was meant by "outdated traditions."

with the regeneration of Chinese society, and … the spreading of Christianity is our greatest obligation."[113] Similarly, Liu later described the group's purpose as "introducing the truth and power of Christianity to academic circles throughout the country as the contribution of Christians to the new age."[114]

The 29 founding members of the PAG included both Chinese and Westerners, and more than a third of them were part of the Yanjing University faculty.[115] During the early years of its existence, these socially engaged Protestants met on a weekly basis for informal discussions on themes such as the reform and indigenization of the Chinese church and the role of Christianity in the reconstruction of Chinese society. In November 1919, six months after its founding, the group also began publishing a quarterly magazine called *Shengming jikan* 生命季刊 (Life Journal), which became a monthly starting in 1921. Often the topics addressed in its editorials grew out of the discussions of the PAG. Later, in 1924, the group changed its name to Life Fellowship, and in 1926

[113] Zhao Zichen, "Christian Renaissance in China: Statement of Aims of the Peking Apologetic Group," *The Chinese Recorder* 51, no. 9 (1920): 636.
[114] Liu Tingfang 劉廷芳, "Benkan ershi zhounian shouyu 本刊二十週年首語 [Opening Words of the Twentieth Anniversary of this Publication]," *Zhenli yu shengming* 真理與生命 [Truth and Life] 13, no. 1 (1940): 1.
[115] Zha Shijie 查時傑, "Yanjing daxue Jidujiao tuanqi chutan 燕京大學基督教團契初探 [An Initial Inquiry Concerning Yanjing Fellowship]," in *Zhongguo Jiudujiao daxue lunwenji* 中國基督教大學論文集 [Collected Essays on the China Christian Colleges], ed. Lin Zhiping 林治平 (Taibei 台北: Yuzhouguang chubanshe 宇宙光出版社, 1992), 246. Zha only found 26 names listed, including Liu Tingfang, but elsewhere 29 names are mentioned (see Liu Tingfang 劉廷芳, "Benkan ershi zhounian shouyu 本刊二十週年首語 [Opening Words of the Twentieth Anniversary of this Publication])," 1.

renamed its periodical *Zhenli yu shengming* 真理與生命 (Truth and Life), which was published bi-monthly until 1930 and on a monthly basis thereafter. Over time, Life Fellowship grew in size, and by 1932 had reached 65 members. However, the meetings declined in frequency to once a month or less, reflecting the fact that many of the group's ideals had already been successfully implemented within the Yanjing community.[116]

Liu closely identified with the goals of Life Fellowship, and he was appointed the first editor-in-chief of *Life Journal* shortly before returning from his studies in the United States.[117] This journal became the intellectual flagship of Life Fellowship and the group's primary medium for communicating its views to a wider audience. The publication had no formal church or denominational ties and was entirely financed by the contributions of group members to ensure editorial freedom.[118] The journal eschewed any particular Protestant doctrinal tradition, aiming instead to promote the unity of the Chinese Church. In addition, it refused to endorse any political party or platform, but instead advocated the adoption of Christian ethical principles to guide the affairs of government.

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[116] See West, *Yenching University and Sino-Western Relations, 1916-1952*, 18-20, 171-72. See also Ling, "The Other May Fourth Movement: The Chinese 'Christian Renaissance,' 1919-1937," 61.
[117] West, *Yenching University and Sino-Western Relations, 1916-1952*, 59, 253. Hu Xuecheng, a YMCA secretary in Beijing, was the managing editor of the publication from its inception, which explains how the journal began publication before Liu's return to China.
[118] Stuart was a strong supporter of the journal and important source of financial grants. See Shaw, *An American Missionary in China: John Leighton Stuart and Chinese-American Relations*, 89.

The main elements of the magazine's agenda were printed on its cover: to debate issues of religious education, to study the Bible and theology, to investigate social and church issues, and to promote a "Christian Renaissance."[119]

In his position as editor of *Life Journal*, Liu was quick to grapple with the significance of the New Culture movement and to consider how Christians should respond to it. In the September 1921 issue of the journal, an address given by Liu on the second anniversary of the May Fourth protests was reprinted in full under the title "The Responsibility of Missionaries in the New Culture Movement."[120] This article reveals Liu's early attitude towards the May Fourth movement and shows the close affinity he saw between Christianity and the modern ideas it espoused. In it, he expressed warm support for the movement, from its affirmation of

[119] Sumiko Yamamoto, *History of Protestantism in China: The Indigenization of Christianity* (Tokyo: Toko Gokkai, 2000), 81-82. The word "Renaissance" was frequently used during the years of the New Culture and May Fourth movements, and Hu Shi titled a book he wrote on these cultural reform efforts *The Chinese Renaissance*. See Hu Shih, *The Chinese Renaissance: The Haskell Lectures, 1933* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1934). For an analysis of Hu's use of the term, see Lung-kee Sun, "The Other May Fourth: Twilight of the Old Order," in *Beyond the May Fourth Paradigm: In Search of Chinese Modernity*, ed. Kai-Wing Chow, et al. (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2008). Among the members of Life Fellowship, the Chinese typically used the term Christian New Thought Tide (基督教新思潮; Jidujiao xin sichao), while missionaries preferred Chinese Christian Renaissance. See West, *Yenching University and Sino-Western Relations, 1916-1952*, 55.

[120] Liu Tingfang 劉廷芳, "Xinwenhua yundong zhong Jidujiao xuanjiaoshi de zeren 新文化運動中基督教宣教士的責任 [The Responsibility of Christian Missionaries in the New Culture Movement]," *Shengming yuekan* 生命月刊 [Life Journal] 1, no. 9 (1921). Liu was speaking to the China Continuation Committee of the National Christian Council, a group that consisted of both Chinese and Western church leaders which had only recently been formed. This address is closely related to an earlier talk that Liu gave in English on 7 March 1921 to the Missionary Association of Tianjin titled "China's Renaissance—The Christian Opportunity," which was published in the May 1921 issue of the leading missionary journal in China, *The Chinese Recorder*.

science to its active promotion of writing in the vernacular. “The future of the New Culture movement in China is not only one of survival, but of development and increase, without limit, magnificent and vast,” he confidently predicted.[121] Though Liu was aware that many leading New Culture thinkers took a negative view of religion, he was still optimistic that they would be willing to give Christianity a chance to prove if it had something to offer.

Further evidence of the affinity Liu believed existed between Protestantism and modernity can be seen in his argument that the New Culture movement was divinely ordained to assist the development of Chinese Christianity. One of the main ways it did this, he believed, was by battling against the numerous “superstitions” pervading Chinese culture: “For more than a hundred years now Christianity has been fighting against these insidious forces of superstition practically single-handed,” Liu wrote, “and not until today has there been a helper.”[122] He was convinced that the critical and rational outlook of New Culture intellectuals, combined with their vigorous efforts to discredit superstition, would make the Chinese more receptive to Christianity in the future.[123]

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[121] Liu Tingfang 劉廷芳, "Xinwenhua yundong zhong Jidujiao xuanjiaoshi de zeren 新文化運動中基督教宣教士的責任 [The Responsibility of Christian Missionaries in the New Culture Movement]," 15.

[122] See Liu Tingfang 劉廷芳, "Xinwenhua yundong zhong Jidujiao xuanjiaoshi de zeren 新文化運動中基督教宣教士的責任 [The Responsibility of Christian Missionaries in the New Culture Movement]," 29.

[123] Another important factor contributing to the weakening of “superstition” at this time was the appropriation of temple property by the Chinese state in the name of modernity.

Liu believed that the emphasis of many May Fourth leaders on social changes the Church had been advocating for decades—such as "liberating women," "mass education," "prohibiting opium," and "healing the sick"—indirectly enhanced the credibility of the Church and its social agenda. By encouraging youth to serve society, he predicted that the movement would also help Chinese people to better understand the mission of the Church and more willingly support it.[124] Moreover, reflecting his concerns as a Christian writer and editor, Liu also pointed out with satisfaction that, by advocating use of the vernacular, the New Culture intellectuals made it easier for the Church to proclaim its message to the broader society via the printed word.[125] Towards the end of his address, he exhorted his audience to be proactive in seeking contact with

. This policy, which affected groups practicing popular religion, had important roots in the latter part of the nineteenth century, when rural Chinese Christians (who were protected by the Unequal Treaties) refused to pay fees for village-wide religious festivals on the grounds of religious conscience. This broke the monopoly of folk religion in rural villages and at the same time established as legitimate a distinction between sacred and secular affairs. After 1900, this distinction provided justification for the Chinese state to expropriate property belonging to popular religious bodies, which were stigmatized as superstitious, in order to advance its modernizing agenda. This trend was reinforced by the anti-superstitious (and later anti-religious) strain that was a pronounced element in May Fourth thinking. Such policies were taken to their logical extreme during the Cultural Revolution, when even Christianity and other major religions that had been recognized by the state were harshly persecuted and violently suppressed. For two important studies exploring this subject, see Roger R. Thompson, "Twilight of the Gods in the Chinese Countryside: Christians, Confucians, and the Modernizing Chinese State, 1861-1911," in *Christianity in China: From the Eighteenth Century to the Present*, ed. Daniel H. Bays (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996); and Prasenjit Duara, *Culture, Power, and the State: Rural North China 1900-1942* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988).

[124] See Liu Tingfang 劉廷芳, "Xinwenhua yundong zhong Jidujiao xuanjiaoshi de zeren 新文化運動中基督教宣教士的責任 [The Responsibility of Christian Missionaries in the New Culture Movement]," 30.

[125] See Liu Tingfang 劉廷芳, "Xinwenhua yundong zhong Jidujiao xuanjiaoshi de zeren 新文化運動中基督教宣教士的責任 [The Responsibility of Christian Missionaries in the New Culture Movement]," 32-33.

New Culture intellectuals and to frequently engage them in discussion: "You are the awakened among the people! You must not let go of your position! You must guide the direction of the New Culture movement. You have the responsibility to create a new culture."[126]

When Liu Tingfang wrote these words in 1921, the dream of a dialogue between Christian intellectuals and leaders of the New Culture movement still seemed like a realistic possibility. Christianity in China had experienced two full decades of rapid growth, both numerically and institutionally, the number of elite converts had increased, and Protestant colleges around the country were turning out an increasing number of highly trained intellectuals. Indeed, even before Liu took up his position at Yanjing University and began editing *Life Journal*, Xu Baoqian had been promoting interaction with important New Culture thinkers. His efforts culminated in a March 1920 meeting outside Beijing between members of Life Fellowship and such prominent New Culture intellectuals as Hu Shi 胡適, Li Dazhao 李大釗, Cai Yuanpei, and Jiang Menglin 蔣夢鱗, presided over by John Leighton Stuart.[127] While the meeting certainly did not change the secular outlook of these thinkers, it did signal their willingness to afford religion a legitimate place in the May Fourth debates.

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[126] See Liu Tingfang 劉廷芳, "Xinwenhua yundong zhong Jidujiao xuanjiaoshi de zeren 新文化運動中基督教宣教士的責任 [The Responsibility of Christian Missionaries in the New Culture Movement]," 52.
[127] Xu Baoqian 徐寶謙, "Ershi nian xindao jingyan zishu 二十年信道經驗自述 [A Personal Account of Twenty Years of Experience as a Christian]," *Zhenli yu shengming* 真理與生命 [Truth and Life] 8, no. 2 (1934): 81.

Liu sought to maintain these links and continue the dialogue with these New Culture leaders. As a result of his position on the faculty of Beijing University and his outgoing personality, Liu was able to develop relationships with a number of these key figures.[128] On this basis, he convinced Hu Shi, Chen Duxiu 陳獨秀, and Zhou Zuoren 周作人, among others, to share their views on religion and Christianity in the June 1922 issue of *Life Journal*. Though in these essays they explicitly rejected what they regarded as the many superstitious elements of Christianity, they also strongly affirmed the moral teachings and example of Jesus, as well as the social reform efforts of Christians, which they believed could benefit China.[129] However, this marked the last significant exchange between the Protestants thinkers of Life Fellowship and China's elite intellectuals during the Republican era.

The end of this open participation of Christianity in the larger intellectual debates of the period was the result of powerful forces at work in China. The most significant of these was the introduction of Marxist ideas from the Soviet Union, which gained ground quickly following the Russian Revolution and subsequent decision by the Soviet Union in 1919 to relinquish all the special rights in China to land, railways, and Boxer

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[128] Ling, "The Other May Fourth Movement: The Chinese 'Christian Renaissance,' 1919-1937," 70. Ling obtained this information in an interview with Xie Fuya (N. Z. Zia).
[129] "Xinwenhua zhong jiwei xuezhe duiyu Jidujiao de taidu 新文化中幾位學者對於基督教的態度 [The Attitude of Several Scholars in the New Culture Movement Towards Christianity]," *Shengming yuekan* 生命期刊 [Life Journal] 2, no. 6 (1921): 1-10.

indemnities claimed by the previous Tsarist rulers. The formation of the Chinese Communist Party in July 1921 provided a platform for Soviet Comintern agents in China to orchestrate a powerful anti-religion and anti-Christian movement, based on Communist campaigns against the Russian Orthodox Church. In 1922 they oversaw establishment of the Great Anti-Religion Federation, which fiercely denounced Christianity as superstition and a tool of the imperialist West.[130]

Due to these and other factors, Chinese intellectuals began to tilt in favor of anti-imperialist and anti-religious revolution. Reflecting this trend, the mainstream discourse of May Fourth thought increasingly excluded religion from its conception of Chinese modernity. These developments did not bode well for elite Protestants like Liu, who were vulnerable on account of their religious outlook, their ties with the West, and their support for gradual reform rather than revolution. Strong anti-Christian sentiment was ascendant in China for the remainder of the decade, and by the time it finally subsided, the fleeting openness toward Christianity evident during the early years of the New Culture movement had long since passed.

[130] Tao Feiya 陶飛亞, "Gongchan Guoji daibiao yu Zhongguo feiji yundong 共產國際代表與中國非基運動 [Comintern Representatives and the Chinese Anti-Christian Movement]," 70-73. According to Tao's research, the decision to attack Christianity in China was a result of Soviet Communist influence and preoccupations, since the Russian Orthodox Church was one of the Soviet Communist Party's main domestic adversaries.

Truth and Life and the Construction of China's Modern Public Sphere

Though Liu's desire that Christians influence the New Culture movement and its vision of modernity met with disappointment, as the editor of *Life Journal* and *Truth and Life*, he was still able to shape the thinking of those intellectuals within the Protestant orbit. For him and his colleagues, the journal was an important vehicle for communicating a Christian vision of modernity to its readers. This is evident from surveying the types of articles published in the two journals over the years, which included such titles as the following: "The New Thought Tide and Christianity" in February 1921; "Male-Female Social Relations and Sex Education in September 1921; "Jesus and the Nation" in August 1924; "The Place of Religion in China's Social Progress" in January 1926; "Why We Should Promote the Christian Citizenship Movement" in June 1927; "Religion and Science" in May 1928; and "Religious Education and the Family" in March 1931. Such modern themes as individualism, nationalism, citizenship, science, new gender roles and the nuclear family figured prominently in these essays. Though the number of articles on modern subjects decreased somewhat after 1930 as more space was devoted to purely religious topics for younger readers, this aspect of the publication was present throughout its existence.

Liu's work as editor of *Life Journal* and *Truth and Life* was an important part of establishing a modern public sphere among Chinese

Protestants. Moreover, since this was one of many smaller public spheres in China networked together by various discursive connections, his work also contributed to the development of a modern national public sphere in China during the Republican period. Liu's literary labors with these two publications were important because they reached influential members of the Protestant community, in particular students and church leaders. Gu Tingcheng, writing in 1936, confirmed this when he reported that the journal was "well-known among students, pastors, and church workers."[131] These were the ones most likely to shape the thinking of the rank and file in the pews and mediate longer term Protestant influence in the broader society. Moreover, the longevity of these journals, which together were published continuously from 1919 until 1941, translated into greater impact over time. Indeed, few May Fourth periodicals could match this longevity.

Liu's work was significant as well because it had a substantial nationwide readership. In the early 1920s, *Life Journal* had two thousand subscribers in 21 provinces of China, as well as among Chinese communities in Japan, Indochina, and the United States.[132] This number then declined in the 1930s, with the circulation of *Truth and Life* reported

[131] Gu Tingchang, "The Protestant Periodical Press in China," *Zhenli yu shengming* 真理與生命 [Truth and Life] 11, no. 4 (1937), 40.
[132] Stauffer, ed. *The Christian Occupation of China*, 455.

to be one thousand in 1936.[133] However, the actual number of readers was almost certainly considerably higher than these statistics suggest, since it was common practice at the time for magazines or newspapers to circulate widely among friends.[134] Moreover, the large number of students and church workers who read the publication suggests that many of the subscribers were schools and churches, where the potential reading audience was sizeable. It also should be pointed out that since China's modern public sphere was not highly developed during these years, even periodicals with a smaller circulation could produce a lasting impact.

When compared with the wider field of Protestant journals published in China during the Republican period, *Life Journal* and *Truth and Life* emerge as in many ways preeminent. This is no small achievement when one considers how active the Protestants were in publishing. Between 1914 and 1938, the number of Chinese Protestant periodicals rose from 26 to 258.[135] This latter figure represented eight percent of all the periodicals published in China at the time, which is notable for a group that made up less than 0.1 percent of the

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[133] Gu Tingchang, "The Protestant Periodical Press in China," *Zhenli yu shengming* 真理與生命 [Truth and Life] 11, no. 4 (1937), 40.

[134] Andrew Nathan has argued that in late Qing China each newspaper copy had an average of fifteen readers and evidence suggests that such practices continued into the Republican period. For more on this subject, see Andrew Nathan, "The Late Chi'ng Press: Role, Audience and Impact," in *Zhongyang yanjiuyuan guoji hanyu lunwenji* 中央研究院國際漢語論文集, vol. 3 (Taibei 台北: Zhongyang yanjiuyuan 中央研究院, 1981), 1306-07.

[135] Herbert Hoi-Lap Ho, *Protestant Missionary Publications in Modern China 1912-1949: A Study of Their Programs, Operations and Trends* (Hong Kong: Chinese Church Research Centre, 1988), 191.

population.[136] The majority of these publications—about three-quarters—had a circulation under two thousand, which placed *Life Journal* and *Truth and Life* in the medium to large size range compared to other Protestant publications. [137] Most important, though, were their volume and intellectual quality, which gave them special authority among Protestant journals. Each issue had from 120 to 140 pages of creative, substantive, and articulate content, a level that other Protestant efforts simply could not match.[138] Indeed, these two publications compared favorably with high quality secular periodicals.[139]

Life Journal and *Truth and Life* possessed certain attributes characteristic of the modern public sphere. One of these was the fact that they were published in the vernacular. Though the Protestant churches in China had long used the vernacular as their predominant form of written communication to make the teachings of the Bible more accessible to parishioners, its use had generally been looked upon as vulgar by Chinese

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[136] See Gu Tingchang, "The Protestant Periodical Press in China," *Zhenli yu shengming* 真理與生命 [Truth and Life] 10, no. 5 (1936): 6; Gu Tingchang, "The Protestant Periodical Press in China," *Zhenli yu shengming* 真理與生命 [Truth and Life] 11, no. 4 (1937), 41; and Ho, *Protestant Missionary Publications in Modern China 1912-1949*, 191. The figure mentioned here was obtained by use of relevant data in each of these publications.
[137] Gu Tingchang, "The Protestant Periodical Press in China," *Zhenli yu shengming* 真理與生命 [Truth and Life] 10, no. 6 (1936): 11-12. One of the largest Protestant magazines of the period was *Association Progress* (青年進步; Qingnian jinbu), which had a circulation of 7000 in 1921. See Stauffer, ed. *The Christian Occupation of China*, 455. However, this magazine was written at more of a popular level.
[138] Ho, *Protestant Missionary Publications in Modern China 1912-1949*, 220. See also Gu, "The Protestant Periodical Press in China," 13. Only 6 out of 160 Protestant periodicals surveyed by Gu in 1936 had over 100 pages per issue.
[139] Ho, *Protestant Missionary Publications in Modern China 1912-1949*, 203.

literati.[140] But with the abolishing of the old examination system in 1905, a new youthful elite had arisen with no vested interest in the Classical script and a clear recognition of the great promise the vernacular held as a tool for uplifting the masses and modernizing the country. These were the New Culture intellectuals who started a literary revolution by promoting the vernacular. As Liu observed with irony in 1921: "That which is to be honored because it is useful, because it is good for the many, because it is within reach of all, because it can be acquired in a much shorter time, is the very vernacular which they have despised."[141] Liu and his colleagues naturally were only too happy to publish their journals in the vernacular, which helped to build a more accessible public sphere at the same time it allowed them to reach the young elite audience that was their target.

A second characteristic of the journals that was associated with the modern public sphere was their effort to foster the public use of reason in discussing matters of concern to the larger society. They helped to expand discussion of social and political matters beyond the circle of state-linked elites and encouraged open debate on the basis of reason, rather than cultural or political authority. In an editorial printed in the March 1922 issue of *Life Journal*, this conception of the public sphere is specifically

[140] For background on the rise of vernacular Chinese prior to the start of the New Culture movement, see Milena Dolezevola-Velingelova, "The Origins of Modern Chinese Literature," in *Modern Chinese Literature in the May Fourth Era*, ed. Merle Goldman (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1977).
[141] Liu Tingfang, "China's Renaissance," in *China Today through Chinese Eyes* (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1921), 41.

mentioned with regards to the journal's impact: "It has not even been two years since this journal first appeared… however, during that short period of time, our contributors have very successfully debated freely, boldly and openly on the church question. This is the point that makes us most proud of what we have done to date, because in order to carry out a Christian renaissance and build a truly "Chinese" church, the first step is to draw the attention of a broad sector of the people to the issues involved through free and open debate. Debate and study will lead us to the truth, and the truth will set us free."[142] This openness to participation by the educated public and emphasis on rational debate was true of the journal throughout its existence.

A third attribute connected with the modern public sphere evident in these two publications was the effort of Liu and his associates to mobilize readers through their journals in order to accomplish social change. This reliance on print media to stimulate rational debate among the common people in order to achieve specific social reforms clearly reflected the impact of modernity and became common practice during the Republican period. The "opening statement" published in the introductory issue of *Truth and Life* was forthright in declaring this intention to mobilize and foster change. Of the three goals guiding the journal's mission, the second and third were as follows: "2) To unite

[142] Quoted in Yamamoto, *History of Protestantism in China: The Indigenization of Christianity*, 82.

Christian students as a kind of movement in order to release the power of the truth in transforming the heart of society, and to use this journal as the forum for expressing their speech and spirit; 3) To correspond with various localities in the hope that these localities will join us in advancing our goals."[143]

Liu's Tingfang's involvement with Life Fellowship and his years of service editing *Life Journal* and *Truth and Life* demonstrate the active role that Chinese Protestants played in building a modern public sphere in Republican China. By means of small group discussions and the power of the printed word, they made public use of reason in debating issues related to the common good. Their efforts were a fascinating instance of Chinese Protestantism and its engagement with the May Fourth movement, and clearly reflected the affinity between Protestantism and modernity that is the focus of this thesis. This affinity was evident in the emphasis on open debate and the globalizing transcultural ethic of Life Fellowship, and could be discerned as well in reliance on printing in the vernacular to spread both modern and religious ideas. By tracing this history, we recover one of the suppressed voices of the May Fourth era, and show that its dominant discourse of a purely secular awakening to modernity was not the whole picture.

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[143] Wu Leichuan 吳雷川, "Zhenli yu shengming banyuekan fakanci 真理與生命半月刊發刊詞[Opening Words of Truth and Life Bimonthly]," *Zhenli yu shengming* [Truth and Life] 1, no. 1 (1926): 1.

Building the Church, Saving the Nation

One of the most prominent aspects of modernity has been the rise of the nation-state and its ideology of nationalism. These concepts, which were crucial to the expanded power of Western states and Japan, represented a major challenge to the imperial system that had ruled China for centuries. This system was in essence a form of culturalism that made Chinese civilization and its Confucian ideology the basis of a larger political order that partially transcended racial categories. At its center was the emperor, the Son of Heaven, who had absolute authority and ruled by means of a small civil bureaucracy and informal gentry class. In theory, there were no limits on how far this order might spread from its base in East Asia, since the emperor was believed to have authority over "all under heaven" (*tianxia* 天下), but major imperial expansion occurred only under the Mongols and the Manchus. The subjects of this realm were politically passive and their identity was oriented to family and locality, rather than to the larger political unit. By the end of the nineteenth century, dynastic decline, foreign imperialism, and modernity all combined to transform this system and give birth to Chinese nationalism.[144]

[144] Murata Yujiro, "Dynasty, State, and Society: The Case of Modern China," in *Imagining the People: Chinese Intellectuals and the Concept of Citizenship, 1890-1920*, ed. Joshua A. Fogel and Peter G. Zarrow (Armonk: M. E. Sharpe, 1997), 116-18.

The modern nation-state presented a dramatically different vision of human community and political order, and one of far more recent origin than the Chinese imperial system. Most scholars trace the origins of this new way of organizing and unifying society back to the American and French revolutions in the latter part of the eighteenth century. Here we accept Anthony Smith's definition of the nation as "a named human community occupying a homeland, and having common myths and a shared history, a common public culture, a single economy and common rights and duties for all members."[145] Likewise, we find useful his definition of nationalism as "an ideological movement for attaining and maintaining autonomy, unity and identity for a population which some of its members deem to constitute an actual or potential nation."[146] The modern nation-state combines the idea of the nation with the ideological force of nationalism, and adds to these elements a greatly expanded bureaucracy, clear territorial boundaries, and the idea of citizenship, which both calls forth sacrifice from and confers benefits upon members of the nation.

Other important aspects of the nation-state that scholars have described and which relate to the argument being made here are also worth mentioning. Ernest Gellner, in his early and important book *Nations and Nationalism*, points out that nations are the construct of intellectual

[145] Anthony D. Smith, *Nationalism: Theory, Ideology, History* (Malden: Polity Press, 2001), 13.
[146] Smith, *Nationalism: Theory, Ideology, History*, 9.

elites using the materials of pre-nationalist culture and history, and therefore are contingent rather than being self-evident and necessary political entities.[147] Eric Hobsbawm, in *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780*, argues for the existence of a “proto-nationalism” prior to the emergence of nation-states that explains why patriotic sentiment can be generated so quickly. He regards language, ethnicity, and religion as the sources of this proto-nationalism, but points out that often they did not fit the category of nation very neatly.[148] And Benedict Anderson, in his influential monograph *Imagined Communities*, analyses the importance of print capitalism in facilitating the emergence of national identity on a large scale. He observes that once the model of the nation-state had been successfully constructed in the latter part of the eighteenth century, it was available to be copied by elites in many other parts of the world, and it was.[149]

Many of these elements of the nation and nationalism started to become evident in China from the end of the nineteenth century. The main catalyst that convinced Chinese elites that the old system of culturalism was doomed and that they had to find a way to transform China into a modern nation was the threat of imperialism, which was made undeniably clear by the humiliating loss to Japan in the Sino-Japanese War of 1895.

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[147] Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983), 48-49.
[148] See Eric J. Hobsbawn, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).
[149] See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (New York: Verso, 1991). See especially Chapters 3, 5, and 6.

The transition to a modern state was messy and gradual. One major aspect of this process was the rise of a political press propagating a discourse of modernity. This started in 1895, grew rapidly during the final decade of Qing rule, and was expanded much further by the May Fourth movement and its use of the vernacular for writing. This rhetoric included an explicit rejection of Chinese culturalism and embraced a new identity for China as one nation among many. It also produced a strong sense of national community and powerful nationalist sentiment among China's elite and educated youth, which led to explosive displays of patriotic fervor in the 1920s.[150]

Another dimension of this transition can be seen in how intellectual elites in China embraced Western models of the nation, while adapting them to the Chinese context. This was apparent, for instance, in the attempt to develop a constitutional monarchy during the last years of the Qing dynasty, a move that was justified by using the terminology of *fengjian* 封建 (feudalism), which was rooted in China's ancient pre-imperial past.[151] It was most obvious, of course, in the adoption of a republican form of government after the overthrow of the Qing in 1911, which ended with a decline into warlordism. This leads to the third key

[150] See Xu Guoqi, "Nationalism, Internationalism, and National Identity: China from 1895 to 1919," in *Chinese Nationalism in Perspective: Historical and Recent Cases*, ed. C. X. George Wei and Liu Xiaoyuan (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2001), 102-05.
[151] See Duara's interesting chapter on the discourse of *fengjian* titled "The Geneology of *Fengjian* or Feudalism: Narratives of Civil Society and the State" in Prasenjit Duara, *Saving History from the Nation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995).

facet of China's attempt to construct a modern political order, namely the effort of elites to establish a state apparatus that could effectively unify and govern the territory of the nation. The focus of late Qing elites was to strengthen regional authority through provincial assemblies to check Manchu power, but with the forming of a republic under Han Chinese control, the emphasis shifted to building a powerful central state, which is where it stayed until 1949 and beyond.[152] Soviet assistance for the KMT from 1922 to 1927 was a primary factor in the emergence of a relatively successful centralized party-state in China prior to 1937.[153]

With nationalism and attempts to build a modern nation-state taking center stage in China during the first half of the twentieth century, elite Chinese Protestants were naturally caught up as well in grappling with these issues. From 1900 to 1922, and again after 1930, the general climate in China was relatively favorable towards Christianity and Protestants were able to take a more visible role in efforts to build the nation. During most of the 1920s, however, Chinese Protestants were on the defensive because of their association with the imperialistic West on the one hand and their belief in "unscientific" religion on the other, the latter weakening their perceived connection with modernity. Scholars to

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[152] John Fincher, *Chinese Democracy: The Self-Government Movement in Local, Provincial, and National Politics, 1905-1914* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981). Also, Fitzgerald's chapter "One State, One Party: Liberal Politics and the Party-State" in John Fitzgerald, *Awakening China: Politics, Culture, and Class in the Nationalist Revolution* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996).

[153] See C. Martin Wilbur and Julie Lien-ying How, *Missionaries of Revolution: Soviet Advisers and Nationalist China, 1920-1927* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989).

date have done very little research on the relationship between Chinese Protestants and nationalism in China during this period, which reflects the general lack of attention that has been devoted to this group.

The main work on this subject is a 1992 issue of the journal *Republican China* devoted to the topic of Christianity and nationalism in the early Republican period, an article by Peter Wang about the response of YMCA leader Yu Rizhang to the nationalism of the turbulent 1920s, and most significantly, the chapter in Ryan Dunch's study of Fuzhou Protestants titled "Protestants and the Symbols of Nationalism."[154] In this chapter, Dunch argues convincingly that Chinese Protestants in Fuzhou during the first two decades of the twentieth century were an important source of some of the symbols and ceremonies that nationalists used to build a modern nation-state in China. He suggests that this was a result of their education in mission schools and participation in Protestant church culture, which naturalized the category of the nation state in their thinking and exposed them to Western ceremonies, flags, and anthems. This view fits well with the argument being made in this thesis about the role of Protestantism as a conduit of modernity in early twentieth century China. The one major difference is that here we explore not just how

[154] See Lawrence D. Kessler, "Introduction: Christianity and Chinese Nationalism in the Early Republican Period," *Republican China* 17, no. 2 (April 1992): 1-4. In addition, see Wang, "A Patriotic Christian Leader in Changing China: Yu Rizhang in the Turbulent 1920s." Another relevant work is Dunch, *Fuzhou Protestants and the Making of a Modern China 1857-1927*.

Protestantism and nationalism combined in their social practice, but in their thinking as well.

Founding a Secret Christian Brotherhood

Liu Tingfang clearly embodies this close blending of patriotism and piety in the lives of Chinese Protestants. One interesting example of this was his leading role in the founding of a secret brotherhood called the Cross and Sword Society in 1917. The group had seven founding members, including Hong Ye 洪業 (William Hung), who was close friends with Liu and later his colleague at Yanjing University for many years. Hong later recalled how the group began: "We were so young then. We wanted to emulate the Jesuits, to transform society through education and politics. Cross, for Jesus's 'Take up your cross and follow me'; Sword, to recall the Crusades. We adopted some Masonic rites and had vague intentions of recapturing the spirit of the Sworn Brotherhood celebrated in *The Romance of the Three Kingdoms*."[155] Liu was chosen as president of the group in one of its early elections.[156]

The brotherhood's slogan was simple and to the point: "We Unite for the Uplift of China." They also formulated a basic constitution of sorts,

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[155] Susan Chan Egan, *A Latterday Confucian: Reminiscences of William Hung (1893-1980)* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987), 59-60. Hong directed the Harvard-Yenching Institute and became one of China's leading Sinologists during the Republican period.

[156] According to Hong Ye, Liu won the election by one vote after casting a vote for himself, which Hong considered a violation of Confucian propriety. See Susan Chan Egan, *A Latterday Confucian: Reminiscences of William Hung (1893-1980)*, 60.

which consisted of two sections: "1) Purpose: Through research, planning, and cooperation, to raise China's position in the world; members should increase among the brothers a spirit of belonging to the same collective body, being united with, assisting, and looking after one another; in the same manner as American brotherhoods, each brother is sworn to the strictest secrecy regarding all the matters of the Society. 2) Members: Any Chinese male may join the Society, but he must have the following three qualifications: fine character, a clear life goal, and leadership qualities. Moreover, new members must be unanimously voted in by the current members, and if the person has not yet been baptized, they cannot be opposed to Christianity."[157]

The Cross and Sword Society drew its members primarily from among Chinese students in the United States who had some level of exposure to and identification with Christianity. Since roughly half of the estimated 1200 Chinese students in North America in 1917 were part of the Chinese Student Christian Association, this was a sizeable pool.[158] The Cross and Sword Society also found recruits among likeminded figures back in China who were already well established. The men who entered the ranks of the brotherhood were generally more "serious minded" in their outlook and combined Christianity and nationalism with a deep

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[157] See Wu Xiangxiang 吳相湘, *Minguoshi zonghengtan* 民國史縱橫談 [A Wide Ranging Discussion of Republican History] (Taibei 台北: Shibao wenhua chubanshe 時報文化出版社, 1980), 147.

[158] Ye, *Seeking Modernity in China's Name: Chinese Students in the United States 1900-1927*, 9, 45.

commitment to advancing the modernization of China. Quite a few members became prominent in Republican society. Two examples are Jiang Tingfu 蔣廷黻, the future Chinese ambassador to the Soviet Union and representative to the United Nations, and Zhang Boling 張伯令, the educator from Tianjin and soon-to-be founder of Nankai University.[159]

In the first two years after the founding of the Society, several men joined who also belonged to a similar brotherhood that had been founded in 1907 called the David and Jonathan Society.[160] Like the Cross and Sword Society, most of its members were Christians and they even had the same motto: "We unite for the uplift of China." The David and Jonathan Society also had many members who became influential figures in Republican China and by 1917 some of them had already begun to attain prominence.[161] One of them was Wang Zhengting 王正廷, who was Vice-

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[159] Egan, *A Latterday Confucian: Reminiscences of William Hung (1893-1980)*. Two other founding members of the group along with Liu and Hong were Chen Heqin 陳鶴琴, who later became a prominent educator in Shanghai, and Tu Yuqing 涂羽卿, who taught physics at the University of Shanghai for many years and was a prominent leader in the YMCA . Some of the more established members of the group included Zhou Yichun 周貽春 , who served for a time as president of Tsinghua University, and Nie Qijie 聶其潔, founder of the Greater Shanghai Textile Corporation and chairman of the Shanghai Chamber of Commerce.

[160] David and Jonathan, of course, were two Old Testament figures who enjoyed a deep friendship.

[161] Some of these prominent members included Wang Chonghui (王寵惠), who was Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and later served as a judge on the Court of International Justice at the Hague; Guo Bingwen (郭秉文), who became president of Southeast University in Nanjing; Yu Rizhang (余日章; David Yu), who was the long-time general secretary of the Chinese YMCA; and Kong Xiangxi (孔祥熙; H. H. Kung), who was Finance Minister and held other high posts under Chiang Kaishek. In addition to the posts mentioned above, Wang Zhengting also led the Chinese delegation at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919 and served as Minister of Foreign Affairs under the Nationalists.

Speaker of the Senate under early Republican cabinets in China. In 1918, while Wang was in the United States seeking recognition for Sun Yat-sen's Canton government, he was invited to a meeting of the Cross and Sword Society in a Brookly hotel, where he publicly disclosed the existence of the David and Jonathan Society. Liu Tingfang subsequently proposed that the two groups unite and the idea was eventually approved in 1920. The new group was given the name *Chengzhihui* 成志會 (Association for Accomplishing Ideals; AAI).[162]

The Association for Accomplishing Ideals went on to become the leading secret fraternity among Chinese students in America, with some 270 members by 1936.[163] Chapters were established first in major American cities and then later in Peking, Shanghai, and Hong Kong. Instead of being primarily a social community like most American fraternities, the AAI was centered on and united by the ideology of nationalism and secondarily by Christianity. A sense of the fraternity and its ethos can be gleaned from the recollections of a member named Fang Xianting 方顯廷. Fang described his first AAI meeting, a weeklong convention that he was invited to by a graduate student in economics at Yale named He Lian 何廉 (Franklin Ho), as being filled with nationalist

[162] Egan, *A Latterday Confucian: Reminiscences of William Hung (1893-1980)*, 61. According to Hong, Liu believed the groups should unite, since members of the Cross and Sword Society would be able to receive help in their careers from those in the David and Jonathan Society. Hong himself opposed the move on the grounds that the fraternity should not be used for personal advancement.
[163] Ye, *Seeking Modernity in China's Name: Chinese Students in the United States, 1900-1927*, 46.

rhetoric. After the meeting, He Lian assisted Fang in transferring to Yale, and after Fang returned to China, He helped him land a job at the economic research institute at Nankai University where he was in charge.[164] It appears that most AAI members, like Fang and He, returned to China and helped to advance the careers of fellow members. According to Egan, the group eventually "deteriorated into a loose, innocuous association of academics, referred to jokingly as the 'Ph.D. Club.'"[165]

Liu's central role in these two secret brotherhoods suggests there was a close affinity between Protestantism and devotion to the modern idea of the nation. At the time he helped to found the Cross and Sword Society, Egan notes that Liu "had a vision of a China transformed by Christianity." [166] Thus, it seems that to Liu the secret Christian brotherhoods represented a way to achieve this vision. His sense of calling to Christian ministry and formal study of theology, which were rare among elite Chinese intellectuals, may help to explain his important role in

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[164] Xianting Fang, *Reminscences of a Chinese Economist at 70* (Singapore: South Seas Society, 1975).

[165] Egan, *A Latterday Confucian: Reminiscences of William Hung (1893-1980)*, 61. Other members of this fraternity worth noting (most of whom have been mentioned previously in this thesis) are Dong Xianguang (董顯光; Hollington K. Tong), a leading journalist and ambassador to Japan and the United States for the Republic of China after 1949; Lu Zhiwei (陸志韋; C. W. Luh), professor of psychology at Yanjing University and later dean and first Chinese president of the institution; Bei Zuyi (貝祖詒), general manager of the Bank of China in Shanghai and later chairman of the board of the Central Bank; Yan Yangchu (晏陽初; James Yen), founder of the Mass Education Movement and important rural reformer; and Liang Hongsheng (梁鴻生), a successful businessman and philanthropist in Shanghai. Information about this group only became available after the pledge to secrecy was abolished in 1946. See Wu Xiangxiang 吳相湘, *Minguoshi zonghengtan* 民國史縱橫談 [A Wide Ranging Discussion of Republican History], 154-58.

[166] Egan, *A Latterday Confucian: Reminiscences of William Hung (1893-1980)*, 59.

the groups, since he possessed crucial ideological resources that were needed to energize members with a sense of higher purpose and mission. Perhaps this is why his fellow "brothers" referred to him with good-natured humor as the "Great Bishop of China."[167] That two such groups uniting nationalism and Christianity arose within ten years of each other, and combined to become the largest secret brotherhood among Chinese students in America, indicates that there was a widespread link between Protestant Christianity and nationalism in the minds of elite Chinese Protestants of this generation.

Presiding at Sun Yat-sen's Funeral

Liu's role as the presiding minister at Sun Yat-sen's private Christian funeral in 1925 was another instance of his blending Protestantism and nationalism. Sun had traveled to Beijing in December 1924 for meetings with important political leaders in an effort to promote the reunification of China, but in January he was diagnosed with terminal cancer. Sun spent his last weeks with family and close associates before passing away on 12 March 1925 at the age of 59. His family decided that Sun should be given a private Christian funeral at the chapel of the Peking Union Medical Center (PUMC) where he had been treated, with a secular

[167] Wu Xiangxiang 吳相湘, *Minguoshi Zonghengtan* 民國史縱橫談 [Wide Ranging Discussion of Republican History], 148.

public funeral to follow.[168] Liu was asked to be the officiating minister for this Christian ceremony and to work out a program of service for it, since he had close ties with the Song family.[169] Indeed, he campaigned vigorously and successfully behind the scenes to ensure that Sun was given a Christian burial.[170]

Years later, Liu vividly recalled Sun's funeral service in an address he gave at a church dedication in North Carolina.[171] In his remarks for the occasion, Liu noted that Sun died at the height of the anti-religious movement in China and influential party members had opposed the request of Sun's family for a Christian funeral, worrying that it would limit

[168] Bergere, *Sun Yat-Sen*, 407. According to Bergere, Sun's wife, Soong Qingling, and his son, Sun Fo, were both in favor of Sun having a Christian funeral. Opposing them were those in the KMT who equated the revolution and its anti-imperialist goals with a rejection of Christianity. This group was indignant at the thought of their "formidable leader" being portrayed as a "humble and repentant Christian." They planned to turn Sun's Christian funeral into a political demonstration, but relented after it was decided that two separate ceremonies would be held on the same day, 19 March 1925, the first private and religious and the second public and secular.
[169] See Timothy Tingfang Lew, "Address Given at Dedication of the Charlie Jones Soong Memorial Building of Fifth Avenue Methodist Church, Wilmington, November 1, 1942," Box 2, Timothy Tingfang Lew Papers, Missionary Research Library, New York, 8. Liu noted that he knew T. V. Soong from their student days together, that his wife knew one of the Soong sisters from her time at McTyerie School, and that they had both gotten to know all three of the Soong sisters while studying in Georgia. There were other reasons that Liu was an ideal candidate to officiate at the ceremony: he was a prominent leader in China's Protestant circles, was based in Beijing, and was ordained by the Congregational Church, which was the denomination Sun had been baptized into while studying medicine as a youth in Hong Kong.
[170] Egan, *A Latterday Confucian: Reminiscences of William Hung (1893-1980)*, 100. Hong Ye was opposed to Sun being given a Christian burial, since in his view Sun's divorce of his first wife and marriage to Soong Qingling proved that he had repudiated Christian beliefs. He regarded such a ceremony as the exploitation of a famous name and found Liu's "strategy of forging an alliance between Christianity and the emerging political forces" to be "abhorrent."
[171] The church Liu spoke at was Fifth Avenue Methodist Church in Wilmington, North Carolina, which is where Charlie Soong, father of Sun Yat-sen's second wife Soong Qingling and patriarch of the powerful Soong family in China, had been baptized as a youngster. See Sterling Seagrave, *The Soong Dynasty* (New York: Harper and Row, 1985), 25-27.

Sun's posthumous appeal to the broader masses of Chinese people. But Sun Yat-sen's wife and son both insisted on a Christian funeral and eventually a compromise was reached to permit it a private Christian service for the family. Liu reported that Soong Qingling "took a deep interest in the service," recommending the hymns to be sung and insisting on a vested choir, "because Dr. Sun sang in a choir in his boyhood days."[172] Despite threats of violence against the proceedings, the funeral went ahead as scheduled and according to one eye-witness, "Everything was done with dignity, propriety, and the joy and beauty of a Christian Service…."[173] For Liu, the event was not only a source of pride as a Chinese Christian, but also a sign of the central role that Christianity could play in building a new China: "But a fact like this remains an important incident in the history of China," he noted, "that the first President of China was a Christian, died a Christian, with a funeral service unmistakably Christian, conducted in the name of the church, by her servants, and it was done because both the Sun and the Soong family wanted to have it done."[174]

Liu strongly affirmed Sun's political achievements in an article he wrote for *Life Journal* shortly after the funeral in Beijing. Titled "The Contributions of Sun Zhongshan," his essay identified three of the

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[172] Lew, "Address Given at Dedication of the Charlie Jones Soong Memorial Building of Fifth Avenue Methodist Church, Wilmington, November 1, 1942," 6-7. Qingling requested the Charles Wesley hymn "Jesus, Lover of my Soul," Tennyson's "Crossing the Bar," and "Wonderful Words of Life."
[173] Gleysteen, "Timothy Tingfang Lew," 27.
[174] Lew, "Address Given at Dedication of the Charlie Jones Soong Memorial Building of Fifth Avenue Methodist Church, Wilmington, November 1, 1942," 7.

deceased leader's accomplishments that Liu considered most significant. The first of these was Sun's success in universalizing the concept of republicanism: "Over the past forty years, [he has] caused men and women, young and old, rich and poor, wise and foolish, all to know that republicanism exists, to know that it is absolutely necessary."[175] Secondly, he lauded Sun for his genius in building political organizations to advance his political goals, whether by uniting the secret societies to engage in revolution, establishing the Revive China Society, or melding the Nationalist Party into a centralized bureaucratic machine. Finally, Liu praised Sun for his ability to formulate strategy, by which Liu meant a framework of ideas to guide action and achieve political reform. He pointed to Sun's use of republican ideas to resist Qing authoritarianism as an example and also his development of the Three People's Principles, though Liu acknowledged them to be far from perfect.[176] These three contributions—republicanism, new forms of political organization, and modern political ideology—are all associated with a modern nation-state. In commending Sun for these achievements in a Christian publication, Liu signaled his conviction that Protestantism was compatible with such efforts.

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[175] Liu Tingfang 劉廷芳, "Sun Zhongshan de gongxian 孫中山的貢獻 [The Contributions of Sun Yatsen]," *Shengming yuekan* 生命月刊 [Life Journal] 5, no. 6 (1925): 86.

[176] Liu Tingfang 劉廷芳, "Sun Zhongshan de gongxian 孫中山的貢獻 [The Contributions of Sun Yatsen]," 88. Liu did not specify what these imperfections are, but said that Sun's political ideology had quite a few points that required further discussion and correction.

Liu Tingfang wrote another article for the same issue of *Life Journal* that defended both Sun Yat-sen's Christianity and his efforts to build a modern nation-state in China. Sun was a controversial figure among Chinese Christians at the time, not only because of his activities as a revolutionary and political leader, but because he had divorced his first wife to marry the much younger Soong Qingling. While Liu acknowledged in his essay that Sun had moral failings, he also reminded readers of Sun's notable virtues, which included financial probity, diligence, sincerity, and perseverance. He believed that Sun's confession of faith was genuine: "Christians should remember that Sun Yat-sen was a believer. From the time he was baptized as a youth, he never denied the faith."[177] Liu explained that the reason Sun had kept his distance from the churches was because of his work as a revolutionary and also because of dissatisfaction with institutional Christianity: "He believed Jesus was a revolutionary who wanted to help people change society, to make a world where love was put into practice. The Chinese Church, from Sun Yat-sen's perspective, was not worthy to be called the Church of Jesus because it did not have a revolutionary spirit and appeal."[178]

Liu noted that it was widely acknowledged Sun drew strength for his life work from Christianity and he reported how, just a few days before

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[177] Liu Tingfang 劉廷芳, "Zhonghua Jidutu yu Sun Zhongshan 中華基督徒與孫中山 [Chinese Christians and Sun Zhongshan]," *Shengming yuekan* 生命月刊 [Life Journal] 5, no. 6 (1925): 91.
[178] Liu Tingfang 劉廷芳, "Zhonghua Jidutu yu Sun Zhongshan 中華基督徒與孫中山 [Chinese Christians and Sun Zhongshan]," 91.

his death in Beijing, Sun had told his brother-in-law Kong Yongzhi 孔庸之 (also known as Kong Xiangxi 孔祥熙), "I am a messenger sent by God to fight against evil" and prayed together with him.[179] Liu implied that he believed this was true by then comparing Sun to Moses: both had a clear sense of calling from God; both delivered their people from oppressive rulers; both had to struggle in the "wilderness" for decades to achieve their vision, yet died before entering the Promised Land; and both left a final testament calling their people to finish the work they had begun. "Fellow believers in one Lord," Liu said in his closing exhortation, "read Sun's *Political Testament*, then wipe away your tears, and press on into Canaan!"[180]

There are two elements here that suggest a close connection in Liu's thinking between Protestantism and nationalism. By defending Sun's faith as a Christian, and emphasizing that his religious belief was inseparable from his lifelong quest to see China become a modern and democratic nation-state, Liu was in effect declaring that this goal represented a legitimate expression of the Christian desire to seek improvement of the world. This was reinforced by the closing call to fellow Chinese Christians to continue the work that Sun had begun in building a modern and just political order in China. In addition, by using

[179] Liu Tingfang 劉廷芳, "Zhonghua Jidutu yu Sun Zhongshan 中華基督徒與孫中山 [Chinese Christians and Sun Zhongshan]," 93.
[180] Political Testament refers to the document that Sun signed on his deathbed, which constituted his final words to his followers. For helpful background on this text, see the chapter titled "Sun Yat-sen's Death and Transformation" in Bergere, *Sun Yat-Sen*.

biblical language related to Moses and the Israelites as a metaphor for Sun and China, Liu demonstrated the powerful ways in which Protestant religious language could naturalize the modern category of the nation and its ideology of nationalism across cultural and geographical boundaries, thereby facilitating its spread.

Christianity and New Birth in Nationalist China

Liu spoke in more detail on the issue of how Christians might contribute to building a modern China in an address that he gave at the chapel of the Peking Union Medical Center in 1929. Both the location and the timing of his talk had symobolic significance. The PUMC was a Protestant missionary institution that received major funding from the Rockefeller Foundation and had become the leading center for advanced Western medicine in China. Liu spoke there on New Year's Day in 1929 according to the Western calendar, which was less than three months after the Nationalist Party under the leadership of Chiang Kaishek had finally succeeded in nominally unifying China and establishing a new government based in Nanjing.

Liu opened his address by recalling for his listeners how in 1912 China's new republican government had chosen to adopt the Western calendar and observe the Western New Year, which he interpreted as "an expression of determination to make all things new in the life of the

nation."[181] Liu was convinced that the current New Year was the most meaningful and important one since 1912, given that China had now achieved formal political unification under a republican government and was under the rule of a party "created by revolutionary spirit working toward the high ideal of making China anew."[182] Though this government was only a few months old, and Liu admitted it was too early to predict its future, he was optimistic because he believed it had "sound heredity written all over it."[183] He also saw Christians, both Chinese and foreign, as playing a part in this "new nation in the making."[184]

Liu considered the main contribution that the Church had to offer was the spiritual renewal of the individual: "You must realize there can be no new nation unless there are individuals whose lives are made anew. The mere introduction of a new government, the mere adoption of a new calendar, the decoration of every city and every street with new slogans will not necessarily make a new nation. To make a new nation, we must make all things anew, and first of all our hearts."[185] For Liu, the life and teachings of Jesus Christ defined how the person with a renewed heart ought to behave, and the willingness to sacrifice for a higher cause was of primary importance. Moreover, this change of heart needed to embrace all

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[181] Liu Tingfang, "New Year's Address to Peking Union Medical College," Box 6, Timothy Tingfang Lew Papers, Missionary Research Library, New York, 1.
[182] Liu, "New Year's Address to Peking Union Medical College," 6.
[183] Liu, "New Year's Address to Peking Union Medical College," 6.
[184] Liu, "New Year's Address to Peking Union Medical College," 21.
[185] Liu, "New Year's Address to Peking Union Medical College," 21.

of society: “Unless all individuals are made anew, there can be no new nation. Unless all activities, great or small, are performed in a new spirit, the spirit of love, there can be no new future for any nation, and no new order can be ushered in.”[186] He closed with an uplifting declaration to the staff and students at PUMC that every service they rendered in a spirit of faith and love, no matter how insignificant it might seem, would ultimately contribute to “that great accomplishment of making China anew.”[187]

Liu here describes a Protestant version of the modern citizen ideal that occupied such a central a place in the political thought of intellectual elites during the Republican period. The emergence of this citizen, according to John Fitzgerald, was the result of an awakening to the new categories “self” and “nation” as the basis of identity, as well as to “the communion of self and nation, served by the state.”[188] However, Liu’s vision of the new citizen differed in important ways from that of thinkers such as Liang Qichao and Chen Duxiu. Rather than positing a dominant state and basing individual value on membership in the nation, Liu emphasized a “spirit of love” as central, which implied a respect for the individual as human that counterbalanced the power of the state. In his vision, the sacrifice of citizens was a voluntary act, rather than one coercively extracted in the name of state interests. Moreover, he argued

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[186] Liu, "New Year's Address to Peking Union Medical College," 25.
[187] Liu, "New Year's Address to Peking Union Medical College," 26.
[188] John Fitzgerald, "The Invention of the Modern Chinese Self," in *Modernization of the Chinese Past*, ed. Mabel Lee and A. D. Syrokomla-Stefanowska (Canberra: Wild Peony, 1993), 40.

that true inner commitment to the idea of the nation could not be accomplished by state power and ideology alone, but required grassroots initiative and spiritual resources as well.[189]

Christianity and a Democratic China

The first half of the twentieth century in China witnessed numerous attempts to establish a liberal democratic culture and political system, though none of them succeeded in putting down lasting roots. With the collapse of the republican order that replaced the Qing, most Chinese elites were concerned primarily with building a strong centralized state in an effort to quickly unify the country and successfully fend of the forces of imperialism, particularly Japan. Nevertheless, democracy was still a prominent part of elite discourse during the May Fourth movement, and an important minority of elites continued to advocate democratic reform and human rights throughout this period.[190] Chinese Protestants appear to have been prominent among the ranks of liberal democrats. While little research has been done on this subject, available evidence suggests that Protestants in some areas were actively involved in late Qing parliamentary politics, as well as in early Republican

[189] Fitzgerald, "The Invention of the Modern Chinese Self," 31-36.
[190] See Fung, *In Search of Chinese Democracy: Civil Opposition in Nationalist China, 1929-1949*.

political institutions.[191] The three Protestants in this study were all advocates of democracy, though only Wang Liming joined efforts to promote it outside the confines of the Nationalst Party.

Liu Tingfang was a steadfast supporter of the Nationalist Party, and his post in the Legislative Yuan starting in 1936 was not an example of democratic participation, since the Legislative Yuan was not an elected body and the Nationalist regime was in effect a dictatorship. Nevertheless, it was a way to bring very limited civilian influence to bear on the KMT's exercise of political authority. Liu's sympathies clearly lay in the direction of liberal democracy and he was wary of the dangers of one party rule. For instance, in the address at the PUMC mentioned above, he expressed his view of the Nationalist Party's monopoly on power in this way: "It is a necessity for the history of the last eighteen years has proven it, but this necessity has created many latent dangers."[192] And later, during a talk he gave in the United States during the Second World War, he expressed his concern about the power of the modern nation-state, implying the need for its democratic regulation: "But the modern idea of the State, claiming the individual loyalty of the people, asking for all their possessions, time, relationships, exacting almost as much as God, implies a tinge of

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[191] See Chapter 3, "'Welcoming a New China': Protestants in Late Qing Politics" in Dunch, *Fuzhou Protestants and the Making of a Modern China 1857-1927*. See also Chen Chunsheng 陳春生, "Jidujiao duiyu shijie zuijin zhi gailun 基督教對於時潔最近之概論 [The Most Recent Christian Overview of the World]," in *Zhonghua Jidujiaohui nianjian* 中華基督教會年鑑 [The China Church Year Book] (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1914), 10-14.

[192] Liu, "New Year's Address to Peking Union Medical College," 19.

totalitarianism in almost every modern State which in the name of efficiency is almost inexorable."[193]

Liu discoursed eloquently on the importance of democracy during a speech he gave on the eve of China's National Day in 1925. Liu's audience for the occasion was the Yanjing Fellowship, which was a regular meeting of Yanjing University faculty.[194] He gave his talk was the grounds of the graceful Temple of Heaven 天壇 in Beijing, where for hundreds of years the Chinese emperors had offered winter and spring sacrifices to Heaven. Liu stated that his aim was to "consider briefly our fellowship from the point of view of the Chinese nation." He started by referring to Yanjing Fellowship as "the fellowship of faith in democracy,"[195] since it included Western faculty hailing from a variety of democratic countries who shared with Chinese members of the group a belief in the validity of democracy. Yet he had doubts about whether this faith in democracy was real.

[193] Liu, "To American Christian Ministers on Postwar World," 14.
[194] Liu mentions that the Committee on Faculty Fellowship Meetings had asked him to speak for the occasion. See Liu Tingfang, "Address to Yenching Fellowship," Box 6, Timothy Tingfang Lew Papers, Missionary Research Library, New York, 1. Yanjing Fellowship should not to be mixed up with Yanjing University Christian Fellowship, which was a voluntary group consisting of Yanjing faculty, students, and other members of the university community that Stuart first organized in 1926; nor should it be confused with Life Fellowship, which consisted both of Yanjing University faculty and many others outside the university. See Zha Shijie 查時傑, "Yanjing daxue Jidujiao tuanqi chutan 燕京大學基督教團契初探 [An Initial Inquiry Concerning Yanjing Fellowship]." See also Shaw, *An American Missionary in China: John Leighton Stuart and Chinese-American Relations*, 90-92.
[195] Liu, "Address to Yenching Fellowship," 3.

In Liu's view, a genuine faith in democracy required three presuppositions. First was a belief in the reasonableness of democracy. On this point, he expressed dismay that many missionaries who grew up accepting democracy implicitly back in the West began to tolerate authoritarian ideas after they arrived in China, and he pointed to this as a cause of conflict between Westerners and Chinese within various Christian institutions in China. The second presupposition was a belief in the practicality of democracy. It was not enough simply to believe that democracy was reasonable; it also necessary to be put into practice. Rounding out this trilogy, Liu underscored the need for faith in the universality of democracy. He had little patience for those who believed that democracy could not work in China and who viewed the Chinese as being "beyond the pale of democracy."[196] As he saw it, "Whether democracy will really live in this world and conquer the world and become the ultimate form of the world's government will depend upon whether it is in its final analysis universally applicable to all mankind or not."[197]

Liu was saddened by the dysfunctional state of China's Republic at the time, but he also recognized there had been progress and challenged his colleagues to look to the future of China's Republic: "Yes, this nominal

[196] Liu, "Address to Yenching Fellowship," 12.
[197] Liu, "Address to Yenching Fellowship," 13.

thing is just the beginning, and it is given as our task to make it real…."[198] He then turned to the spiritual aspect of his subject. "Our fellowship is a fellowship of faith in democracy," he declared, "because our fellowship is also a fellowship of faith in the eternal purpose of God."[199] He considered the fact that this group of faculty had come together in Beijing with a desire to help make the Republic a real one to be a sign of God's providential care: "Unless we believe that this Universe is a mad whirling of mind and matter, aimless and purposeless, and we mere toys of fate and playthings of destiny, then we are forced to admit that we are part of the eternal purpose of God, who is ruling, guiding, and planning, and who intensely cares for what we do."[200] In concluding his address, he called upon those assembled to rededicate themselves to God in order to fulfill God's eternal purposes for China.

Liu's message makes abundantly clear that he saw close links between the Protestant faith he shared with his listeners and the goal of bringing democracy to China. Though he does not state explicitly what these links are, the fact that he viewed democracy as being universally applicable and a part of God's eternal purpose for humanity suggests that he regarded it as intimately tied to Christian ethics and moral principles, which claim universal validity. Liu's perception of a connection between Protestantism and democracy is also clearly revealed in his conviction that

[198] Liu, "Address to Yenching Fellowship," 17.
[199] Liu, "Address to Yenching Fellowship," 17.
[200] Liu, "Address to Yenching Fellowship," 18.

the work of Yanjing University directly contributed to the goal of establishing democracy in China. Presumably he based this conviction on the fact that Yanjing was training young men and women with a Christian outlook who would advance democratic values in Chinese society. In short, then, Liu's speech demonstrates the ways in which Protestant discourse and action facilitated the spread of democratic ideals in China during the Republican period.

Liu's concern with limiting the potential for abuse of power by the modern nation-state was evident not only in his support for democracy, but in his insistence that true patriotism at times required public criticism of the authorities for their failures. Consistent with this view, Liu believed that while the Chinese Church should be engaged socially and help the nation overcome whatever difficulties it might face, it also had a moral duty to play a prophetic role in challenging the moral shortcomings of the state and society for the sake of the larger good. One instance of this came in 1931 when the Japanese army invaded and took control of Manchuria. Many Chinese responded with both fear and fury, their patriotic fervor at a high pitch. Liu took the opportunity to write an article for *Truth and Life* on "The Mission of the Church in the Present National Crisis," which grappled with the question of how the Church could practically help the nation in its distress.

Liu suggested that there were two things the churches needed to do. The first was to strengthen the people's faith that justice would prevail. "In the midst of this kind of bitter pain," Liu wrote with feeling, "what we hear and see daily makes it nearly impossible for people to believe there is truth in the universe, to believe there is a difference between good and evil, to believe in the possibility of peace, to believe in God."[201] In the face of this harsh reality, he believed the Church had a vital message to proclaim: "The Church must speak with an unhesitating, unwavering, powerful and courageous voice to instruct the people, that all might remember there is truth in the universe and that truth will triumph."[202] The second part was more surprising, namely that the Church must severely rebuke the "sins" of China. Liu then proceeded to explain: "If we believe that there is a God in the universe, and supposing this God is just and upright, then in the end he must certainly punish the aggression of Japan. But if this God is truly fair and impartial, then he must also punish the sins that we see in China today."[203] And among these, he viewed the "sins" of Chinese officials, which he left unspecified, as the most egregious.

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[201] Liu Tingfang 劉廷芳, "Guonan zhong de jiaohui de shiming 國難中的教會的使命 [The Calling of the Church in the Midst of the National Disaster]," *Zhenli yu shengming* 真理與生命 [Truth and Life] 6, no. 3 (1931): 2.
[202] Liu Tingfang 劉廷芳, "Guonan zhong de jiaohui de shiming 國難中的教會的使命 [The Calling of the Church in the Midst of the National Disaster]," 2.
[203] Liu Tingfang 劉廷芳, "Guonan zhong de jiaohui de shiming 國難中的教會的使命 [The Calling of the Church in the Midst of the National Disaster]," 3.

Liu was firmly convinced that apart from the moral renewal of the Chinese people, there was no hope for the nation. Therefore, he was deeply troubled that the Church had often not only failed to condemn the misdeeds of Chinese officials, but had in many cases cravenly sought their favor. He noted with irony that only the Communists had shown the courage to speak out against KMT corruption, even if their motives were often less than pure. He concluded by challenging the Church to take up its calling as "a voice in the wilderness," to speak words of comfort and of moral admonition not only to Chinese officials, but to all the Chinese people.[204] Thus, the compatibility that Liu saw between Protestantism and the nation did not make an absolute value out of patriotism. Rather, it placed patriotism and the ambitions of the nation-state within a larger moral framework rooted in Christian faith.

Protestantism and Internationalism

Internationalism was a manifestation of globalization and thus an integral component of Chinese modernity in the Republican period. It flourished in the flow of people and goods into and out of China, the forming of transnational networks, the construction of cross-cultural identities, and the effort to promote harmony among nations.[205] As a

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[204] Liu Tingfang 劉廷芳, "Guonan zhong de jiaohui de shiming 國難中的教會的使命 [The Calling of the Church in the Midst of the National Disaster]," 6.
[205] For a good treatment of the vibrant internationalism of this period in China, see Frank Dikotter, *The Age of Openness* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008).

global faith, Protestantism was intimately involved in many of these developments, and as a Chinese Protestant, Liu Tingfang embodied in many ways the intersection between them. The connections were numerous: he attended one of the Christian colleges started by missionaries in China; he spent ten years studying in the United States and another six years there at the end of his life; he worked for years at Yanjing University and wholeheartedly endorsed the school's vision of fostering Christian cosmpolitanism; and he attended many international Christian conferences as a representative of the Chinese Church. As a transcultural and transnational faith, Protestantism provided Liu with an intellectual basis for international identity at the same time that it drew him into a rich network of global relationships.

Liu's Protestant internationalism, and how it affected the expression of his strong nationalist sentiments as a Chinese, were displayed in how he handled the sensitive issue of the Unequal Treaties. These treaties, which China had been forced to sign after humiliating military defeats by the Western powers in the nineteenth century, had given foreigners in China extra-territoriality, concession areas in designated treaty ports, and control over China's maritime customs.[206] As Chinese nationalism exploded in the 1920s, the Unequal Treaties were bitterly attacked as symbols of foreign imperialism. Since Protestant work

[206] For more on the unequal treaties, see Dong Wang, *China's Unequal Treaties: Narrating National History* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2005).

in China depended on the treaties for protection, Western missionaries and Chinese Protestants were unable to avoid becoming targets of criticism. In the midst of this nationalist agitation, Liu spoke forcefully on the issue of the Unequal Treaties in an address he gave to the International Friendship Promotion Committee of the World Council of Churches that was meeting in July 1927 in Konstanz, Germany.

For his Western audience, Liu enumerated what he considered to be the three main aspirations of the Chinese people: politically, they wanted to build a unified nation under a representative national government; economically, they desired to free China's masses from the grip of poverty; and diplomatically, they were determined to recover self-respect and equality with other nations. He then observed that the Unequal Treaties were a major hindrance to all three of these ambitions. The fact that they permitted foreign troops to be stationed on Chinese soil was especially problematic, Liu believed, and helped explain the outpouring of nationalistic fury by Chinese students. He predicted that this patriotic tide would sweep the entire country within a few years and worried about where it might lead. "China is now still at a crossroads," Liu stated. "Perhaps she will become a rabidly nationalistic country, following after the Great Powers…; or perhaps after she has come through her great struggle and has herself become a powerful nation, she will still be able to

further international friendship."[207] Either way, he was sure that the outcome would have profound implications for the world.

Liu declared that Chinese Protestants not only wanted China to recover her dignity as a nation, but to become a force for promoting international friendship. He envisioned Chinese Christians playing an important part in China's emergence as a benevolent power that advanced the cause of world peace. With a deep regard for what he characterized as China's heritage of promoting peace, Liu explained that Chinese Protestants "… view the pacific aspect of their national inheritance as an unsurpassed treasure, and they desire to help their compatriots retain it and offer it to the world."[208] He was convinced that international comity was reinforced by the Christian belief in a loving God who created all people, a belief he claimed had been confirmed for many Chinese Protestants by their experience of genuine cooperation with missionaries from many different countries. Therefore, while acknowledging that only one in a thousand out of China's vast population were Protestant, he still was convinced they could make a significant contribution.

However, Liu greatest concern was that the opportunity for Protestants to exert influence in China was being drastically vitiated by

[207] Liu Tingfang 劉廷芳, "Zhongguo de Jidujiao yu Zhongguo de guoji wenti 中國的基督教與中國的國際問題 [Chinese Christianity and China's International Problems]," *Zhenli yu shengming* 真理與生命 [Truth and Life] 2, no. 11 (1927): 291.
[208] Liu Tingfang 劉廷芳, "Zhongguo de Jidujiao yu Zhongguo de guoji wenti 中國的基督教與中國的國際問題 [Chinese Christianity and China's International Problems]," 292.

the injustice of the Unequal Treaties. He was brutally frank in his assessment of the problem: "The missionaries who proclaim a Gospel of peace and love come from countries that use military force to commit political and economic aggression against China."[209] Decrying this state of affairs, Liu earnestly appealed to the Western Protestant leaders assembled before him to pass a resolution calling for just treatment of the Chinese in accord with Christian principles and to publicize the resolution widely as a way to influence their rulers and the architects of Western policy toward China.

The International Friendship Promotion Committee was "deeply moved" by Liu's address and responded to his appeal by publishing a resolution on 29 July 1927 that wholeheartedly affirmed China's legitimate quest for unity, freedom, and equality, while calling unambiguously for the abrogation of the Unequal Treaties and all special privileges. In addition, the delegates solemnly pledged themselves to strive for the reversal of these policies back in their home countries. Though the abrogation of the Unequal Treaties signed with the major powers of Britain, France, and the United States did not occur until 1943, Liu's speech and its careful balancing of national and international

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[209] Liu Tingfang 劉廷芳, "Zhongguo de Jidujiao yu Zhongguo de guoji wenti 中國的基督教與中國的國際問題 [Chinese Christianity and China's International Problems]," 292.

concerns was nevertheless an important moral victory for China and international Protestantism.[210]

Gender, Family, and Protestant Modernity

In the previous chapter on Wang Liming, we examined in detail issues related to gender and family, which had a prominent place in the Chinese modernity that developed during the Republican era. There we saw how Protestant ideas in the thinking of Wang and in the culture of the WCTU were closely connected with the modern agenda for women and the family they adopted. In addition, that chapter highlighted how individual Christians and parachurch organizations were active advocates of these causes. In this section of our chapter on Liu Tingfang the focus will be different. We will examine Liu's views on how Protestant churches in China contributed to change in the areas of gender and family, and how they can do more in these areas. His wide experience as a Chinese Christian leader lends his thoughts on this subject considerable authority. Moreover, since Liu was an intellectual with theological training and a specialist on religious education, we will also analyze in detail his Protestant vision of the modern Chinese family.

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[210] Some of the Unequal Treaty agreements with smaller nations were ended by 1930, and minor changes were negotiated in treaties with the major powers in the early 1930s as well. However, the Unequal Treaties with Britain, France, and the United States were not officially abrogated until 1943, in part due to the difficulty of the Nationalist regime in establishing a stable political and legal order. See Edmund S. K. Fung, "The Chinese Nationalists and the Unequal Treaties 1924-1931," *Modern Asian Studies* 21, no. 4 (1987).

The Church and Reform of Social Relations Between the Sexes

Liu believed the Christian Church in China should be a leader in promoting the reform of social relations between the sexes. He forcefully laid out his views in an article published in *Truth and Life* in 1926 titled, "Christianity in China and the Problem of Social Relations Between the Sexes." In this essay, Liu argued that the Chinese Church should make it a top priority to resolve problems regarding how men and women relate in society. He believed that a failure to effectively address this issue would threaten the credibility of the Church's claim to offer "abundant life." "If we want to say nothing about abundant life, fine," he remarked wryly, "but if we want to talk earnestly about abundant life, then we absolutely cannot dismiss the issue of social relations between the sexes."[211]

Liu recognized that this meant confronting a whole series of difficult issues, such as the taking of concubines, the purchase of maids, the practice of prostitution, the matter of gambling and entertainment (which typically involved "unwholesome" socializing between the sexes), and the question of coeducation.[212] Yet despite the challenge this involved, he considered it imperative that the Church actively address these

[211] Liu Tingfang 劉廷芳, "Jidujiao zai Zhongguo yu 'nannü guanxi' de wenti 基督教在中國與'男女關係'的問題 [Christianity in China and the Issue of 'Male-Female' Relationships]," *Zhenli yu shengming* 真理與生命 [Truth and Life] 1, no. 6 (1926): 161.
[212] Liu Tingfang 劉廷芳, "Jidujiao zai Zhongguo yu 'nannü guanxi' de wenti 基督教在中國與'男女關係'的問題 [Christianity in China and the Issue of 'Male-Female' Relationships]," 161.

problems, because he was convinced that the wellbeing of the Chinese people depended on successfully resolving them. His reasoning was as follows: "A history of the Chinese people is a history of Chinese male-female relations—because the rise and fall of a people cannot be separated from the rise and fall of families; the morality of a people is a picture made up of the sum of individual lives; and the improvement of a people depends on the attitude that men take towards women and the way in which they treat women."[213]

Liu reminded his readers that Christianity in China had played a pioneering role in the area of social relations between the sexes, and he argued that the Church should not retreat from its leadership position. In responding to intellectual critics of religion who accused the Protestant churches of oppressing women, he pointed to eight areas in which Christianity had clearly helped to improve the position of women in Chinese society:

Opposition to concubinage: He suggested that one major reason why so few elite Chinese had joined the Church over the past one hundred years was because the Church refused to tolerate the practice of taking concubines, a practice that was associated with the upper classes of society. Moreover, church members who took concubines were expelled from their congregations.

[213] Liu Tingfang 劉廷芳, "Jidujiao zai Zhongguo yu 'nannü guanxi' de wenti 基督教在中國與‘男女關係’的問題 [Christianity in China and the Issue of 'Male-Female' Relationships]," 162.

Opposition to buying female servants: He acknowledged that resistance to this practice by the churches was less strict than with concubines, but he was glad that because such maids could not be made into concubines, the "evil root" of this practice had been effectively removed.

Opposition to prostitution: Declaring Christian antagonism to this practice to be more than mere show, he noted that the churches "uniformly disapproved of those who boasted in such degenerate behavior."[214]

Opposition to abuse of child brides: He observed that female missionaries were staunch critics of this practice and frequently took such children under their protection, as well as criticizing church members who engaged in such behavior.

Promotion of women's education: He described this as "the largest contribution, the most effective contribution, the most lasting contribution" of the Church to improving the place of women in Chinese society.[215] The Protestants had been the first to establish schools for women in China, he observed, and even to the present day their institutions were considered among the best of their kind in the country.

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[214] Liu Tingfang 劉廷芳, "Jidujiao zai Zhongguo yu 'nannü guanxi' de wenti 基督教在中國與'男女關係'的問題 [Christianity in China and the Issue of 'Male-Female' Relationships]," 165.

[215] Liu Tingfang 劉廷芳, "Jidujiao zai Zhongguo yu 'nannü guanxi' de wenti 基督教在中國與'男女關係'的問題 [Christianity in China and the Issue of 'Male-Female' Relationships]," 165.

Promotion of a woman's right to choose her own marriage partner: Women's schools were major centers for spreading this notion, he remarked, since "a woman who has received an education undergoes an awakening and will naturally insist on the right to choose her own marriage partner."[216]

Promotion of freedom for widows to remarry: He confessed that of all the Church had done to improve the lives of women, this was the area in which it had done the least, a fact which he attributed to a desire to avoid directly challenging the Chinese notion of female chastity that was so central to the Qing moral order. Yet Liu also pointed out that unlike the broader society, widows in the Church could freely marry again, and indeed, the churches even helped them to remarry.

Promotion of flexible social interaction between the sexes: Though he did not consider Christianity to have had a major impact on this facet of Chinese society, he nevertheless viewed the assembling together of men and women at church each week for worship, and the various church meetings in which men and women met to discuss church business together, as important precedents for interaction between the sexes.

Liu then offered his conclusion: "These various aspects of the Church's work have all had influence on relations between the sexes in China. We can only accuse the Church of not being thorough enough, of not

[216] Liu Tingfang 劉廷芳, "Jidujiao zai Zhongguo yu 'nannü guanxi' de wenti 基督教在中國與‘男女關係’的問題 [Christianity in China and the Issue of 'Male-Female' Relationships]," 166.

continuing to progress, but we have to admit that over the past fifty years, the Church has been an important leader in society for improving relations between the sexes and promoting change."[217] Two things are especially worth noting here. The first is that Liu clearly acknowledges that in order to improve the position of women in society, it was necessary to first change the attitude of men towards women, and his call to the churches to effect such a change reflected his conviction that this was in accordance with Protestant teaching. The second thing is the high degree of overlap between the impact of the churches on the role of women in society and the work of Wang Liming and the WCTU described in the last chapter. This correlation suggests a broad consensus among Protestants regarding the role of women in society, and one that fit closely with the contours of modernity.

Liu Tingfang's Analysis of the Changing Chinese Family

As an intellectual with his pulse on the changes occurring in Chinese society during this dynamic period, Liu produced a first-hand account of how modernity was transforming the Chinese family, and his understanding of how Protestantism had contributed to these changes, in a 1931 essay titled "The Family." He began this article by describing the large multi-generation family typical of the upper classes in imperial

[217] Liu Tingfang 劉廷芳, "Jidujiao zai Zhongguo yu 'nannü guanxi' de wenti 基督教在中國與‘男女關係’的問題 [Christianity in China and the Issue of 'Male-Female' Relationships]," 166.

China, where as many as four or five generations lived together. He saw it as a strict hierarchy ordered by three fundamental principles: male over female, older generation over younger generation, and (within the same generation) elder relative over younger relative. Liu identified two ideological pillars that supported the system. The first of these was Confucianism, which emphasized filial piety and maintaining proper hierarchical relationships, in particular between father and son, husband and wife, elder son and younger son. The second was ancestor worship, which he regarded as the glue holding the broader family clan together.[218]

Liu next proceeded to quote at length from an anonymous and previously unpublished article called "Wanted—Small Families," which he described as "a thoughtful analysis of the old family."[219] This essay looked at both the advantages and disadvantages of the traditional Chinese family. According to the author, the strengths of the traditional family were that it cared for all its members, motivated its members to achieve for the glory of the family, and emphasized the importance of having a son to carry on the family line. But it had serious drawbacks, including burdening stronger members of the clan with the need to support the weaker, failing to cultivate a sense of loyalty to the larger collective

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[218] Liu Tingfang, "The Family," in *As It Looks to Young China*, ed. William Hung (New York: Friendship Press, 1932), 17-20.

[219] Liu says that he had received permission from this anonymous male author to quote from his article, which suggests that the person was likely a member of his circle of friends, and perhaps a colleague at Yanjing. Liu describes the article as impassioned, and he quotes over seven pages of material from it at the start of his own essay.

(whether it be the imperial government or nation-state), and seeing women as a liability and often treating them accordingly. The title of the piece made perfectly clear which system the author, and no doubt Liu as well, preferred.[220]

Liu then turned his attention to the powerful forces that in his estimation were causing the traditional Chinese family to disintegrate, a view that reflected his perspective as an urban elite. The first of these was modern commerce, which he believed undermined the old system by creating new material wants among family members by means of advertising and salesmanship that the heads of traditional families would simply be unable to satisfy. The other three forces, meanwhile, undermined the joint family structure by fostering geographical separation: industrialization drew masses of people from the villages into cities to work at factories; modern travel increased mobility, which encouraged the formation of nuclear families; and modern education often required residing far from home for long periods of time.[221] Liu believed that as a consequence, young people in China were "beginning to dismantle the edifice of the whole system."[222] He saw evidence of this in the growing preference of the young for a simple civil ceremony over the expense and ancestor worship of the traditional marriage banquet, their insistence on equality between men and women, and their choice to have

[220] Liu, "The Family," 21-28.
[221] Liu, "The Family," 31-32.
[222] Liu, "The Family," 33.

fewer children to the point of even discarding the age-old Confucian duty of bearing a son.

Liu now turned to considering what he termed the "movements of thought and action which are affecting the lives of young people," and he considered these ideologies to be where "the old family system meets the greatest challenge."[223] He regarded the Communist vision of modernity to be the "most spectacular," with its insistence on the equality of men and women, its promise of a new social order that would eliminate the evils of the old family system, and its radical call for the young "to discard all human ties, even the parent-child relationship" for the sake of the party's agenda. Clearly Liu was alarmed by the "ruthless" nature of their program and its potential for destruction.[224] He had a decidedly more favorable view of the "renaissance movement" that started in 1919 and was known popularly as the May Fourth movement, which he saw as having far wider influence than Communism. For Liu, the implication of its promotion of vernacular Chinese was revolutionary: "It strikes at the roots of the traditional ideas of the family by overthrowing the dominance of the classical teachings and substituting a new medium."[225]

As one would expect, Liu was most partial to the Christian vision of the modern family. He pointed out that Christianity had been at work in China longer than the other two movements, and argued that it had

[223] Liu, "The Family," 42.
[224] Liu, "The Family," 42.
[225] Liu, "The Family," 43.

contributed in major ways to the modernization of the Chinese family. One aspect of its impact, he believed, was the insistence of the Church on monogamy and its refusal to tolerate concubines, so that "today monogamy has become the ideal of the younger generation."[226] Another important influence was the role of the Church in educating women, since it raised their position and power in the family. Finally, Liu was convinced that the strong opposition of Christianity to the practice of ancestor worship had also undermined the old family system. "One of the first conditions a convert has had to comply with before being admitted to church membership," Liu explained to readers, "has been the dismantling of the family altar for ancestors, as a proof that the worship had ceased."[227] Since Liu viewed ancestor worship as the basis of clan unity, he quite reasonably concluded that Christian opposition to this practice had weakened the larger clan structure and promoted the emergence of the nuclear family.

Liu's analysis of the Chinese family under the impact of modernity leaves little doubt that he believed the traditional family model was doomed, and that he welcomed the emergence of a modern and monogamous nuclear family. Yet, as Liu watched the disintegration of the old family and the rise of powerful ideologies that threatened to undermine kin relations more generally, he was concerned that the forces

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[226] Liu, "The Family," 44.
[227] Liu, "The Family," 44-45.

of modernity might go too far and destroy even the positive dimensions of China's family tradition. In his mind, Protestantism offered the greatest promise for promoting a modern Chinese family while also preserving what was good in China's heritage, a sentiment that found clear expression in the closing lines of his essay: "There is a growing recognition that Christianity has definite contributions to make to Chinese family life. Let us hope that these will be increasingly in the direction of conserving the permanent values in the old system while continuing to interpret the values in the new."[228]

Liu Tingfang's Conception of the Modern Chinese Family

As a Protestant educator devoted to issues of religious pedagogy, Liu quite naturally was concerned with how Christianity ought to shape the Chinese family. His thoughts on this subject, along with those of his educator wife Wu Zhuosheng, offer important insights into his conception of the modern Christian family. One element central to Liu's thinking was the need for women to be educated so that they could more effectively train their children. In a talk on religious education in the home, Liu expressed this conviction with a depth of feeling that was doubtless rooted in his own upbringing: "But let me repeat once more the precious word 'mother.' All other forms of religious education we need and each of them help to make the composite whole, but the religious education given

[228] Liu, "The Family," 45.

by a devoted mother cannot be surpassed. Religious education work in China will never come to its full bloom until the womanhood of the church is given—as a part of its necessary and required training—scientific technique and passionate zeal for religious education, through which to express their devotion to Christian work."[229]

Liu's goal in advocating education for women was not only to help them become better mothers, but also to open up more opportunities for them in the broader society, an aim he saw as closely tied to Protestant values. Speaking once to a group of young American Christians, Liu said: "The eminent leadership of Christian women, though a minority in number in China today, and the readiness of the Chinese nation as a whole to accept modern ideas of women's rights, written into the constitution and the laws of the nation; the acceptance of the co-education principle to insure women's opportunity in society—these and other signs of accomplishment are eloquent testimony to the realization of the revolutionary program of the Christian church."[230] Liu's wife shared her husband's sentiment that women, while usually focused primarily on family, should also have opportunity for widened spheres of activity. She said, "Family life can never approach the ideal if the daughters do not have

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[229] Liu Tingfang, "Religious Education in the Chinese Christian Home," 24.
[230] Liu Tingfang, "Address on Finishing the Work of Christian 'World Revolution,'" Box 6, Timothy Tingfang Lew Papers, Missionary Research Library, New York, 3.

the same rights as the sons and if the wives are exclusively confined to the kitchen and nursery."[231]

Liu's vision of the modern Christian family put a strong emphasis on the individual. This was strikingly evident in his 1931 essay "Religious Education and the Family," in which he described his view of the relationship between the family and the individual as follows: "The family is established for the sake of the human person, rather than the human person being born for the family. The family exists for the human person, rather than the human person living for the family."[232] Liu obviously did not intend to repudiate the importance of family here, but rather to invert the order of priorities characteristic of traditional Chinese culture. Thus, instead of making the interests of the group and family supreme, Liu insisted that full development of the individual should be the main goal.

Along with this increased prominence of the individual, Liu stressed the relationship between family and the wider society. This view was implicit in his statement of what he considered to be one of the primary purposes of the family: "The family prepares the individual on

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[231] Mrs. T. T. Lew, "Christianity and Family Life in China," *Christian China* 7, no. 2 (1920): 187. The journal *Christian China* was published monthly (except for January, July, August, and September) by the Chinese Students Christian Association.

[232] Liu Tingfang 劉廷芳, "Zongjiao jiaoyu yu jiating 宗教教育與家庭 [Religious Education and the Family]," *Zhenli yu shengming* 真理與生命 [Truth and Life] 6, no. 6 (1931): 9. This article is not a Chinese translation of Liu's talk titled "Religious Education in the Chinese Christian Home" that was referred to earlier, but is a separate and very different essay.

behalf of society, making them into a useful member of society."[233] Thus, the family was no longer the primary focus, but found its purpose in relation to the larger social whole. Wu Zhuosheng expressed similar sentiments in a paper that she presented to the Chinese delegation at the Student Volunteer Convention in Des Moines, Iowa in January 1920.[234] In it she argued that Christianity improved family life in China because of its "recognition of the proper relation of the family to the greater social whole."[235] She also affirmed the emphasis of Christianity on service to society, which she saw as helping the Chinese overcome their narrow focus on family interests. "It does not destroy family loyalty," she said, "and still less does it teach the shirking of family responsibility, but it has put great emphasis upon social service."[236]

Finally, Liu's conception of the modern Christian family assumed that the individual members who composed it possessed a fundamental equality as human persons. He enunciated this idea in a speech to an American church group that he gave during World War Two: "Finally, one of the distinctive characteristics of the family is the equality of personalities. Age, sex, and every other individual difference may exist in pronounced form, but a family cannot have normal growth and attain its

[233] Liu Tingfang 劉廷芳, "Zongjiao jiaoyu yu jiating 宗教教育與家庭 [Religious Education and the Family]," 9.
[234] The editors noted that this talk was one of the two or three best papers presented to the Chinese delegation at the conference.
[235] Mrs. T. T. Lew, "Christianity and Family Life in China," 189.
[236] Mrs. T. T. Lew, "Christianity and Family Life in China," 190.

ideal development unless there is persistent recognition of the equality of all the personalities in it."[237] While Liu recognized the need for authority structures within the family, his stress here on an underlying human equality among family members challenged the notion of fundamental hierarchical distinctions central to Confucian ideas of the family. This view naturally tended to moderate the more authoritarian aspects of the old family model and to promote greater egalitarianism instead.

Liu Tingfang presents us with a picture of the Chinese Protestant family that possesses certain distinguishing marks of modernity. Chief among these is emphasis on the individual, which was an especially dramatic change in the Chinese context. This elevation of the value of the individual over the small group of the family made more natural a reorientation of the individual to the larger social field of the nation that has been such a pronounced part of modernity, not least in the Chinese case. But in sharp contrast to the secular and centralizing Nationalist state that sought to tightly control the actions of its subjects and require their passive submission, the model sketched here implies internally guided and volitionally engaged citizens serving society. Finally, Liu's notion of the underlying equality of family members reflects the egalitarianism associated with modernity, which writ large undergirds such modern concepts as democracy and human rights. Liu Tingfang's thinking on

[237] Liu Tingfang, "The Family of Nations in the Kingdom of God--One in Christ," Box 7-1, Timothy Tingfang Lew Papers, Missionary Research Library, New York, 8.

family clearly has deep roots in a Protestant emphasis on the individual and in the Christian notion of all human beings as bearers of the divine image. Thus, he illustrates how Protestantism facilitated the emergence of the modern Chinese family in the Republican period.

Conclusion

Liu Tingfang is the only Protestant minister to be included in this study, which is significant for two reasons. First, since he was theologically trained and often had to speak on religious issues, he expressed more directly than the others the connection between Protestantism and modernity. Second, as a minister Liu demonstrates convincingly that the Church in China was an active promoter of modernity, rather than simply a passive spectator. Thus, even though the large institutional infrastructure of the Church was in some respects relegated to the periphery of Chinese society, it was still directly and significantly engaged in the broader process of modernization that was transforming Chinese society. The points of intersection between Protestantism and modernity in Liu's life are numerous and profound. He played a leading role in the establishment of Yanjing University as a center of modern education in China and a tangible demonstration of internationalism. As editor of *Life Journal* and *Truth and Life*, he contributed to the building of a modern Chinese public sphere at the same time that he communicated modern

ideas to Protestant leaders and intellectual youth. He seamlessly blended Protestantism and nationalism in his founding of Christian secret societies and his role in Sun Yat-sen's Christian funeral. In these and many other ways, Liu Tingfang illustrates how Protestantism and modernity intersected in Republican China, and the important role Chinese Protestants played in constructing a Chinese modernity.

Chapter Six

Zhang Boling, the YMCA, and the New Chinese Citizen

Introduction*

Zhang Boling 張伯苓 (Chang Po Ling, 1876-1951) was a leading Protestant laymen and a pioneering modern educator in Republican China. He was born in Tianjin in 1876 and educated at the local Beiyang Naval Academy, but after China lost the Sino-Japanese war in 1895, he decided to forego a naval career and became an educator instead. His goal was to make a new kind of Chinese citizen capable of turning China into a modern nation. To accomplish this, Zhang founded a school called Nankai that later developed into a system of schools that went all the way from the primary to the graduate level. At Nankai, Zhang pioneered many aspects of modern education in China, and trained an influential elite committed to modernizing the country.

During his early years as an educator in Tianjin, Zhang came into contact with the YMCA, a Western Protestant organization that combined Christianity and elements of modernity such as science and physical fitness in a dynamic program of progressive social reform. The YMCA appealed to Zhang, not only because its program fit with his commitment

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* An abbreviated version of the biographical section of this chapter has been previously published. See John Barwick, "Zhang Boling: The Making of a New Chinese Citizen," in *Salt and Light: More Lives of Faith That Shaped Modern China*, ed. Carol Lee Hamrin and Stacey Bieler (Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2010).

to modern education, but also because of the moral power that he saw in Christianity, and he converted to Protestantism. Subsequently he had a significant impact on the development of the YMCA in China, helping to make it one of the most important Protestant organizations of the Republican era. At the same time, Christianity and the YMCA powerfully shaped Zhang's social reform efforts and his educational work at Nankai. Thus, Protestantism and modernity were closely linked in Zhang's life, and together they were central to his achievements as an educator and his contribution to the emergence of a Chinese modernity during the first half of the twentieth century.

Biography

Zhang Boling was born in Tianjin on 5 April 1876. At the time, Zhang's home city had become a treaty port open to the Western powers following China's defeat in the Second Opium War of 1857-1860, and both Britain and France established concessions in the city.[1] Zhang's was a poor family, yet still had some claim to China's proud scholarly tradition. While Zhang's grandfather had made a living selling dry goods, his father, Zhang Jiu'an 張久庵, attained the coveted ranks of the literati by passing the first

[1] Tianjin eventually had as many as eight different foreign concessions, the most of any city in China. These included concessions belonging to Britain, France, Japan, Italy, Germany, Belgium, Russia, and Austro-Hungary, though only the first four survived beyond the First World War. See Rogaski, *Hygienic Modernity: Meanings of Health and Disease in Treaty-Port China*, 10-11.

level of the civil service examinations.[2] Zhang Jiu'an was a man with a zest for life, skilled both at archery on horseback and in playing the pipa, a Chinese harp. However, he squandered most of the family fortune pursuing the pleasures of life and failed to reach the next level in the civil service exams that would have qualified him to hold political office. As a result, he was forced to work as a private tutor to try to make ends meet, while his wife helped by selling needlework.[3]

Viewing his life as a failure, Zhang Jiu'an was determined that Zhang Boling, his eldest son by a second marriage, should receive a fine education and be instilled with the strict moral discipline that he wished he had received as a youth.[4] So it was in his father's small private school that the young Zhang Boling first received his grounding in the Chinese classics and absorbed by osmosis the basic principles of pedagogy, since the elder Zhang was a very gifted teacher. Zhang Boling remarked many years afterward that the methods of instruction his father practiced intuitively he later learned as scientific theories of education while at Columbia University.[5]

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[2] Sarah Coles McElroy, "Transforming China through Education: Yan Xiu, Zhang Boling, and the Effort to Build a New School System, 1901-1927" (dissertation, Yale University, 1996), 4. In addition, see T. H. Sun, "Chang Poling of Nankai," Box 163, Folder: Po-Ling Chang, Biographical Records, Kautz Family YMCA Archives, Minneapolis, MN, 2.

[3] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Sishi nian Nankai xuexiao zhi huigu 四十年南開學校之回顧 [A Look Back at Forty Years of Nankai School]," in *Zhang Boling jiaoyu yanlun xuanji* 張伯苓教育言論選集 [Selected Speeches of Zhang Boling on Education], 242.

[4] Shih Hu, "Chang Poling: Educator," in *There Is Another China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1948), 4-5.

[5] Sun, "Chang Poling of Nankai," 2. Zhang did not enjoy the benefit of being taught by his father for very long, since the elder Zhang was forced by financial circumstances to take

Zhang was an exceptional student, but since his family did not have enough money to finance the long years of study needed to pass the civil service exams, he took the entrance examinations for Beiyang Naval Academy (*Beiyang shuishi xuetang* 北洋水師學堂) in Tianjin in the fall of 1889, at the tender age of thirteen, and passed them. Beiyang was a school that had been founded in 1880 by Li Hongzhang 李鴻章, the influential Qing dynasty statesman and a leading promoter of China's Self-Strengthening reform movement. Li started the institution to train Chinese men in Western knowledge who could staff the modern Chinese navy that he was constructing in Tianjin. To attract talented candidates, he not only covered the costs of tuition, room and board for students, but provided a generous monthly stipend, which was a key reason Zhang applied to the school.[6]

Students at Beiyang were required to study not only the Confucian classics, but also English and the natural sciences, and most of the teachers for these latter subjects were Westerners.[7] As one of the

on many other students and eventually had to send his son to study at a Confucian elementary school founded by one of his relatives. See Hou Jie 侯杰 and Qin Fang 秦方, *Bainian jiazu: Zhang Boling, Zhang Pengchun, Zhang Xilu* 百年家族: 張伯苓, 張彭春, 張錫祿 [One Hundred Years of Family History: Zhang Boling, Zhang Pengchun, Zhang Xilu], ed. Li Xisuo 李喜所(Shijiazhuang 石家莊: Hebei jiaoyu chubanshe 河北教育出版社, 2004), 5-7.

[6] Hou Jie 侯杰 and Qin Fang 秦方, *Bainian jiazu: Zhang Boling, Zhang Pengchun, Zhang Xilu* 百年家族: 張伯苓, 張彭春, 張錫祿 [One Hundred Years of Family History: Zhang Boling, Zhang Pengchun, Zhang Xilu], 8.

[7] Liang Jisheng 梁吉生, *Yungong yunneng, rixin yueyi: Nankai daxue xiaozhang Zhang Boling* 允公允能, 日新月異: 南開大學校長張伯苓 [Public Spirited and Capable, Changing

youngest and most promising students at the school, Zhang succeeded in landing a place in the prestigious Navigation Class, and he consistently took top honors on school exams.[8] Some indication of Beiyang's ideological orientation is evident from the fact that in 1890, during Zhang's first year at the school, Yan Fu 嚴復 was promoted to be superintendent of studies. In fact, it was during Zhang's time there that Yan embarked on his ambitious program of translating important Western works into Chinese, including Thomas Huxley's *Evolution and Ethics*, John Stuart Mill's *On Liberty*, and Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations*.[9] Thus, Zhang's education during these early and formative years was at a military school, included "modern" subjects, and emphasized the pursuit of national wealth and power. This experience fixed permanently in his mind a link between modernization and the quest for national strength.

Study at Beiyang also brought Zhang into contact with Western athletics, and sparked his lifelong love of sports and fitness. The school was modeled on military academies of the West and not only integrated many of their sports and physical fitness programs, but hired Western instructors to teach them. One of Zhang Boling's favorite teachers, a Scotsman named William McLeish, was one of these instructors and a

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Day and Night: Nankai University President Zhang Boling], ed. Zhang Kaiyuan 張開元, Zhongguo zhuming daxue xiaozhang shuxi 中國著名大學校長書系 [Famous Chinese University Presidents Series] (Jinan 濟南, Shandong 山東: Shandong jiaoyu chubanshe 山東教育出版社, 2003), 11.

[8] Hu, "Chang Poling: Educator," 5.

[9] Jonathan D. Spence, *The Search for Modern China* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1990), 239.

great sports enthusiast. When McLeish first attempted to introduce soccer to the students, Beiyang's Chinese directors banned the sport as "unsuitable for gentlemen."[10] But by the time Zhang attended the school, soccer and many other physical activities were widespread. These included martial sports like fencing and boxing; track and field events like the hurdles, high jump, long jump, and balance beam; and outdoor exercise like ice skating and hiking.[11] While Zhang honed his athletic skills during these years, he also grew in physical stature to the height of six feet, and was a "splendidly proportioned" young man who towered over most of his fellow Chinese.[12]

After five years of study at Beiyang, Zhang graduated at the head of his class in the fall of 1894, only eighteen years old and with a very promising career in the navy ahead of him. As fate would have it, though, the Sino-Japanese War broke out just months before Zhang's graduation in July 1894. This conflict, in which a rapidly modernizing Japan successfully challenged Chinese hegemony in Korea, resulted in devastating losses for China's Beiyang naval fleet. Defeat in a major battle with the Japanese navy near the mouth of the Yalu River in September 1894, combined with the Japanese capture six months later of the heavily protected port of

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[10] Wu Chih-Kang, "The Influence of the YMCA on the Development of Physical Education in China" (dissertation, University of Michigan, 1956), 103. Later, when the YMCA arrived in Tianjin, McLeish was an active supporter of its athletic activities, as was Zhang.

[11] Luo Shiming 羅時銘, *Aoyun laidao Zhongguo* 奧運來到中國 [The Olympics Come to China] (Beijing 北京: Qinghua daxue chubanshe 清華大學出版社, 2005), 5-6.

[12] Austin O. Long, "Brooklyn Central: An Oriental Visitor," Box 163, Folder: Po-Ling Chang, Biographical Records, Kautz Family YMCA Archives, Minneapolis, MN, 3.

Weihaiwei where the remainder of the Beiyang fleet had retreated, the northern portion of China's modern navy was almost entirely decimated.[13] This disastrous turn of events had immediate practical ramifications for Zhang, who had been due to start an extended internship aboard a naval vessel after graduation. With no boats available for training, he had to spend a year at home waiting for assignment.

While Zhang was at home, his parents took the opportunity to arrange a marriage for him. Towards the end of the year in 1894, he was wedded to a woman surnamed An 安.[14] Unfortunately she had long suffered from poor health, and in a tragic turn of events, she passed away only eighteen days after the wedding.[15] Undaunted by this setback, Zhang's parents quickly arranged another marriage in February 1895, this time to a woman named Wang Shuzhen 王淑貞, the daughter of a Confucian scholar who was friends with Zhang's father. Three years older than Zhang, she lacked formal education and had grown up with bound feet. Nevertheless, their marriage proved to be a happy one, and would

[13] See S. C. M. Paine, *The Sino-Japanese War of 1894-1895: Perceptions, Power, and Primacy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003). Chapters Five and Six, titled "Japan Triumphant" and "China in Disgrace" respectively, describe the naval losses that China suffered during the war.

[14] Liang Jisheng 梁吉生, *Yungong yunneng, rixin yueyi: Nankai daxue xiaozhang Zhang Boling* 允公允能, 日新月異: 南開大學校長張伯苓 [Public Spirited and Capable, Changing Day and Night: Nankai University President Zhang Boling], 400.

[15] Hou Jie 侯杰 and Qin Fang 秦方, *Bainian jiazu: Zhang Boling, Zhang Pengchun, Zhang Xilu* 百年家族: 張伯苓, 張彭春, 張錫祿 [One Hundred Years of Family History: Zhang Boling, Zhang Pengchun, Zhang Xilu], 12. According to Hou and Qin, the cause of her death was tuberculosis.

last more than fifty years, until Zhang's death.[16] Wang Shuzhen was a very capable woman who took charge of practically every aspect of their new household, which freed Zhang to focus his considerable energy on the challenges of career.[17]

Soon after marrying, Zhang was assigned to serve as a cadet officer on the training vessel *Tongji* 通濟.[18] This turned out to be a difficult time for Zhang, who was appalled by the poor character of his comrades in the navy. "I'm someone with naval training," he said later, "and after I graduated from Beiyang Naval Academy I saw with my own eyes how the sailors were listless and without vigor, sunken in degradation, without a concept of the nation, thinking only of profit and promotion, passing their days in brothels and gambling dens, and oh how it pained me to the heart!" [19] Zhang's sense of frustration with the perceived moral deficiencies of his compatriots was further exacerbated by a keen awareness of China's humiliating weakness in the face of foreign

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[16] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Sishi nian Nankai xuexiao zhi huigu 四十年南開學校之回顧 [A Look Back at Forty Years of Nankai School]," in *Zhang Boling jiaoyu yanlun xuanji* 張伯苓教育言論選集 [Selected Speeches of Zhang Boling on Education], 244. See also Chih Meng, "Recollections of Chinese-American Cultural Persons: A Sampling," *Chinese Studies in History* 11, no. 2 (1977).

[17] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Sishi nian Nankai xuexiao zhi huigu 四十年南開學校之回顧 [A Look Back at Forty Years of Nankai School]," in *Zhang Boling jiaoyu yanlun xuanji* 張伯苓教育言論選集 [Selected Speeches of Zhang Boling on Education], 245.

[18] Hu, "Chang Poling: Educator," 5.

[19] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Wu ren yingyou zhi renzhi yu nuli 吾人應有之認知與努力 [The Knowledge and Effort We Should Have]," in *Zhang Boling jiaoyu yanlun xuanji* 張伯苓教育言論選集 [Selected Speeches of Zhang Boling on Education], ed. Wang Wenjun 王文俊, et al. (Tianjin 天津: Nankai daxue chubanshe 南開大學出版社, 1984), 194.

imperialism, which had become more aggressive following China's loss in the Sino-Japanese War.

This lesson hit home for Zhang especially hard when the *Tongji* was given orders to sail to Weihaiwei to officially receive back control of the large naval base from the Japanese. The purpose was not to recover the base for use by the Chinese navy, but to hand it over the next day to the British, who had demanded leasing rights to the base in order to counter Russia's earlier takeover of the Chinese port of Lushun. The profound effect of this event on Zhang's thinking changed the direction of his life. He recalled later: "I was there and saw the flags over Weihaiwei change color twice in two days. I saw the Dragon Flag replace the Rising Sun; and on the very next day I saw the Dragon replaced by the Union Jack. Sorrow and indignation set me to thinking. I arrived at the firm conviction that our national survival in this modern world could depend only upon a new kind of education which would produce a new generation of men. And I resolved to dedicate my own life to this task of national salvation through education."[20] Zhang had found his calling: to strengthen China by creating new citizens educated in the ideas and practices of modernity.

At this crucial turning point in his life, Zhang was fortunate to cross paths with a prominent educational reformer named Yan Xiu 嚴修 (also known as Yan Fansun 嚴範孫), who was a friend of Zhang's father. Yan

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[20] Hu, "Chang Poling: Educator," 6.

was devoted to the Confucian moral tradition, and embodied in many ways the scholar-official ideal. Born in Tianjin in 1860 to a wealthy family involved in the salt trade, he had steadily worked his way up the intensely competitive civil service examination ladder until he succeeded in attaining the highest degree of *jinshi* 進士 in 1883, a rare achievement, especially at such a young age. Three years later he was appointed a member of the prestigious Hanlin Academy, China's premier scholarly institution. While serving as Commissioner of Education in remote and impoverished Guizhou Province, Yan had the courage to petition the throne to expand the traditional Confucian curriculum to include such modern subjects as English, mathematics, and political economy, which he believed were vital if China was to successfully resist the forces of imperialism. However, his reformist ideas earned him enemies in high places, who had him stripped of his Hanlin post in 1898. That same year, not long before the start of the Hundred Days Reform Movement and ensuing conservative crackdown, Yan returned to Tianjin.[21]

Zhang and Yan first met in the latter part of 1898. Zhang had just left the navy to enter the field of education, and Yan had recently decided to open a "new-style" elementary school in his home for members of his own clan as a way to promote Western learning. When Yan discovered that Zhang had been trained in the new-style learning and was committed

[21] McElroy, "Transforming China through Education: Yan Xiu, Zhang Boling, and the Effort to Build a New School System, 1901-1927," 2-3.

to modern education, he decided to put him in charge of his new school.[22] For his part, Zhang saw Yan as a kind of contemporary sage and was deeply impressed by his integrity and sincere concern for society.[23] Hu Shi later described the vital part that Yan's support played in helping Zhang to get established as an educator: "His faith in education, his open-mindedness to the new learning of a new age, and his great moral prestige in the Tientsin district and in Chihli (Hebei) Province were of immense help to the youthful Chang in building up his educational enterprises."[24] The extraordinary partnership they formed would last for three decades.

The new institution, which opened its doors in November 1898 with five students, was named the Yan School. Though it started out on a decidedly modest scale, it grew steadily as a result of Zhang's gifted leadership. In 1901, Zhang took responsibility for teaching at another home academy, the Wang School, which had been founded by a leading citizen of Tianjin named Wang Guichang. At both of his schools, Zhang was a zealous practitioner of modern education, and his curriculum included English, mathematics, natural science, history and geography.[25] He made physical exercise a vital part of school life through such varied means as

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[22] Yan Xiu 嚴修, *Yan Xiu Nianpu* 嚴修先生年譜 [A Chronicle of Yan Xiu's Life], ed. Yan Renzeng 嚴仁曾 (Jinan 濟南: Qilu shushe 齊魯書社, 1990), 127.

[23] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Nankai de mudi yu Nankai de jingshen 南開的目的與南開的精神 [The Purpose of Nankai and the Spirit of Nankai]," in *Zhang Boling jiaoyu yanlun xuanji* 張伯苓教育言論選集 [Selected Speeches of Zhang Boling on Education], ed. Wang Wenjun 王文俊 et al. (Tianjin 天津: Nankai daxue chubanshe 南開大學出版社, 1984), 185.

[24] Hu, "Chang Poling: Educator," 7.

[25] Sun, "Chang Poling of Nankai," 2.

promoting Western sports, showing his students how to play billiards, and teaching them to ride a bicycle. He was close to his students, most of whom he knew by name, and they often turned to him for counsel. His personal interaction with students was another radical departure from traditional Chinese pedagogy.[26] Zhang's reputation in Tianjin as a modern educator began to grow steadily.

In 1904, Zhang accompanied Yan on a two month trip to Japan to investigate the education system there, and shortly after their return he formed a secondary school (*zhongxue* 中學; literally translated as middle school) to complement his two primary schools.[27] The goal of the school was to help train a new elite that would be capable of leading the nation's modernization, and to fill a gap in China's slowly emerging system of modern education between modern primary schools and the small number of modern government universities. He called this school Respect Studies School (*Jingyeguan* 敬業館), which was changed the following year to Tianjin First Private Middle School (*Tianjin sili diyi zhongxuetang* 天津私立第一中學堂), since the government required that the source of

[26] "Chang Po Ling: 'I See a Future Full of Bright Hopes,'" RG 145, Box 1, Folder 24, John Hersey Papers, Yale Divinity School Day Missions Library, New Haven, CT, 6. See also Hu, "Chang Poling: Educator," 7-8.
[27] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Sishi nian Nankai xuexiao zhi huigu 四十年南開學校之回顧 [A Look Back at Forty Years of Nankai School]," in *Zhang Boling jiaoyu yanlun xuanji* 張伯苓教育言論選集 [Selected Speeches of Zhang Boling on Education], 248.

funding be included in the name and Zhang's was the first private middle school in Tianjin.[28]

Zhang was now in sole charge of the school, as Yan Xiu had accepted an important education post in Peking. It started with 73 students and four teachers, though Zhang supplemented the faculty ranks by having some of the more advanced students teach part-time. In 1906, a wealthy local patron donated two acres of land in a suburb south of Tianjin called Nankai, and a large sum of money was also raised to construct two large buildings for the school, which were completed in 1907. That same year, after Zhang and the school's 150 students had moved to the new campus, the powerful reformist governor of Zhili, Yuan Shikai, visited the school and donated money for an auditorium. Four years later, Zhang changed the name of his institution to Nankai Middle School (*Nankai zhongxuetang* 南開中學堂) and from that point forward the name Nankai was always associated with his educational work.[29]

Zhang's school was flourishing and his stature as a modern educator was steadily growing when he surprised many by converting to Christianity in 1908, a story that will be recounted in detail in the next section. His conversion was the result of contact with the YMCA, which promoted a Protestant vision of modern social reform that fit closely with

[28] Chang Peng Chun, "How Nankai Began," Box 30, Folder: Chang Po-Ling, Biographical Records, Kautz Family YMCA Archives, Minneapolis, MN, 2-3.
[29] Hou Jie 侯杰 and Qin Fang 秦方, *Bainian jiazu: Zhang Boling, Zhang Pengchun, Zhang Xilu* 百年家族: 張伯苓, 張彭春, 張錫祿 [One Hundred Years of Family History: Zhang Boling, Zhang Pengchun, Zhang Xilu], 34-37.

Zhang's own aims. His embrace of Protestantism was fairly rare among elite Chinese of his era, most of whom viewed Christianity with suspicion and sometimes even hostility. Yet Zhang considered Christianity "a powerful force for good" that was fully compatible with his ambition of building a modern China through educating a new kind of citizen.[30] When asked later in life what motivated his work at Nankai, Zhang responded: "To live not for myself but for others…. Christianity is a way of life and I am trying to express myself in that way."[31]

Zhang believed Christianity was highly compatible with strengthening China, but that Chinese Christians needed to take the lead in order for this to happen. For this reason, soon after Zhang was baptized in July 1909 at a Congregational church in Tianjin, he played a central role in the founding of an independent Chinese church in the city.[32] At the time, practically all Protestant churches in China were directly or indirectly controlled by Western mission boards. A key reason for this was that the Qing government refused to give Chinese Christians the legal right to construct or own church buildings.[33] The Tianjin church that Zhang helped

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[30] Hu, "Chang Poling: Educator," 11.

[31] Frank B. Lenz, "The Mystery of Personality," Box 30, Folder: Chang Po-Ling, Biographical Records, Kautz Family YMCA Archives, Minneapolis, MN, 435.

[32] Zheng Zhiguang 鄭致光, ed., *Zhang Boling zhuan* 張伯苓傳 [Biography of Zhang Boling] (Tianjin天津: Tianjin renmin chubanshe 天津人民出版社, 1989), 24.

[33] See Daniel H. Bays, "A Chinese Christian 'Public Sphere': Socioeconomic Mobility and the Formation of Urban Middle Class Protestant Communities in the Early Twentieth Century," in *Constructing China: The Interaction of Culture and Economics*, ed. Kenneth G. Lieberthal, Lin Shuen-fu, and Ernest Young (Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, University of Michigan, 1996). See also Thomas Cochrane, "Needs of the New Era in China," *International Review of Missions* 1 (1912): 295.

to start was the first congregation in North China entirely under Chinese auspices.[34] Efforts to establish an independent congregation in Tianjin had started around 1900, but for various reasons had failed to bear fruit. After the YMCA started work in the city, however, there were a growing number of converts from among the higher classes of the city. These Chinese developed deeper ties to the YMCA than they did to any particular mission denomination and they were determined to manage their own affairs, rather than depending on the missionaries.[35] As Zhang expressed it later, “We Chinese should look after our own religious needs.”[36]

This independent church had its start in 1910. The first step was taken when missionaries of the Congregational Church in Tianjin offered Chinese members of the denomination the chance to take over a struggling church in the Cangmenkou district of Tianjin. These Congregational believers felt unprepared to take such a step by themselves, but asked for and received permission to start an independent church in cooperation with Chinese Christians from other mission

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[34] Jonathan T'ien-en Chao, "The Chinese Indigenous Church Movement, 1919-1927: A Protestant Response to the Anti-Christian Movements in Modern China" (dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1986), 79-81.

[35] Charles E. Ewing, "The Chinese Christian Church in Tientsin," *The Chinese Recorder* 43, no. 5 (1912): 283. As a laymen’s organization, the YMCA founded local chapters rather but not churches, so that Christian members seeking to worship on Sunday needed to find a church to join, but naturally would prefer a church not controlled by Western missionaries.

[36] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Disanjie yuandong yundonghui guilaiji 第三屆遠東運動會歸來記 [Notes After Returning from the Third Far Eastern Games],” in *Zhang Boling jiaoyu yanlun xuanji* 張伯苓教育言論選集 [Selected Speeches of Zhang Boling on Education], ed. Wang Wenjun 王文俊, et al. (Tianjin 天津: Nankai daxue chubanshe 南開大學出版社, 1984), 53.

denominations. Consequently a meeting was held at the city YMCA that brought together leading Protestant laymen from the main denominations in the city to discuss how to proceed with such a venture. Zhang Boling was chosen to head a group of fifteen trustees and given responsibililty for proposing, in consultation with American Congregational missionary Charles Ewing, the form that such a church ought to adopt to win the support of the missionaries.[37]

Zhang's plan cleverly allowed members of different church denominations who joined the venture to maintain their original denominational affiliation, while also permitting Christians from all major denominations in the city to participate in important church meetings. In this way, Zhang won the favor of the missionaries and the church began meeting in November 1910, having adopted the deliberately unadorned name Chinese Christian Church.[38] Zhang continued his service on the church's Board of Trustees for many years, during which time the Tianjin church became a flourishing congregation that occupied a prominent place in the religious life of the city. With some one thousand members

[37] Charles E. Ewing, "The Chinese Christian Church in Tientsin," *The Chinese Recorder* 43, no. 5 (May 1912): 82-83.

[38] Charles E. Ewing, "The Chinese Christian Church in Tientsin," 283. The Congregational Church in Tianjin, which was the denomination that Zhang initially joined, was the dominant member of an interdenominational mission called the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, or ABCFM for short. See also Zhong Weiyi 仲偉儀, "Tianjin Zhongguo Jidujiaohui jilue 天津中國基督教會記略 [A Record of the Tianjin Church of Christ in China]," in *Zhonghua Jidujiaohui nianjian* 中華基督教會年鑑 [The Chinese Church Year Book], ed. Zhonghua xuxing weibanhui 中華續行委辦會 (Shanghai 上海: Shangwu yinshuguan 商務印書館, 1915), 147.

meeting in five different locations by 1934, it represented a significant contribution to the development of civil society in the city.[39] Moreover, Chinese churches based on the Tianjin model later sprang up in other cities around China, from Manchuria in the north to Hunan in the south, and from Jiangsu in the east to Gansu in the west. By 1936, there were 42 such churches in China.[40]

Zhang considered his work with the Chinese Christian Church as another way to help create new citizens to build a modern China. He expressed this sentiment during a dedication ceremony that marked the opening of the Cangmenkou Church in November 1910, which was attended by more than three hundred people. Zhang started his remarks by noting that the new church had been established to assist in spreading the true way and cultivating the qualifications of citizenship among the people. He believed this would be of benefit in the transition to a constitutional monarchy, which China's Qing rulers had recently announced as a formal political goal. Zhang, who had made his first trip to the United States and Europe just the previous year as part of a government delegation, noted that education in Western countries considered theology to be the highest discipline. The lesson he drew from

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[39] Harry Kingman, "A Story of Chinese Achievement," *The Chinese Recorder* 58, no. 8 (1927): 512. See also Hou Jie 侯杰 and Qin Fang 秦方, *Bainian jiazu: Zhang Boling, Zhang Pengchun, Zhang Xilu* 百年家族: 張伯苓, 張彭春, 張錫祿 [One Hundred Years of Family History: Zhang Boling, Zhang Pengchun, Zhang Xilu], 63.
[40] Chao, "The Chinese Indigenous Church Movement, 1919-1927: A Protestant Response to the Anti-Christian Movements in Modern China," 85-86.

this is that when true religion inhabits the human heart, all else will be in order. He concluded his talk by encouraging the audience to learn about Christianity so that they might be instructed in the truth and become "new citizens."[41]

The other Christian organization in which Zhang invested his energies was the YMCA, which he was active in both locally and nationally for over four decades.[42] He became a member of the Board of Trustees of the Tianjin YMCA shortly after his baptism in 1909, and he served as President of the Board from 1911 until Japan's invasion of China in 1937.[43] Three times Zhang was chosen to be chairman of the National Convention of the YMCA—in 1912, 1920, and 1926.[44] He also served as president of the Board of Directors of the National YMCA in 1913 and for a number of subsequent years.[45] In addition, Zhang was a popular speaker at student

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[41] "Zilihui yanshuo 自立會演說 [Independence Assembly Speeches]," *Xingqibao* 星期報 [Weekly News] 9, no. 28 (1910): 3-4.

[42] For background information on the YMCA, see Howard Hopkins, *History of the YMCA in North America* (Association Press, 1951); Shirley Garrett, *Social Reformers in Urban China: The Chinese YMCA, 1895-1926* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970); Jun Xing, *Baptized in the Fire of Revolution: The American Social Gospel and the YMCA In China, 1919-1937* (Cranbury: Lehigh University Press, 1996); and also Zhao Xiaoyang 趙曉陽, *Jidujiao Qingnianhui zai Zhongguo: bentu he xiandai de tansuo* 基督教青年會在中國: 本土和現代的探索 [The YMCA in China: A Quest to Indigenize and Modernize] (Beijing 北京: Shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe 社會科學文獻出版社, 2008).

[43] Zheng Zhiguang 鄭致光, ed., *Zhang Boling zhuan* 張伯苓傳 [Biography of Zhang Boling], 24. See also Lenz, "The Mystery of Personality," 401. See also D. Willard Lyon to Eugene E. Barnett, 1 January 1946, Box 30, Folder: Chang Po-Ling, Biographical Records, Kautz Family YMCA Archives, Minneapolis, MN, 1-2.

[44] Eugene E. Barnett, "Some Impressions of the Tenth National Convention of the YMCAs of China, Tsinan, August 4-10, 1926," *The Chinese Recorder* 57, no. 9 (1926): 674.

[45] "Zhonghua Jidujiao Qingnianhui zuhe 中華基督教青年會組合 [The Chinese YMCA Constituted]," in *Zhonghua Jidujiaohui nianjian* 中華基督教會年鑑 [The Chinese Church Year Book] (1913), 104. See also Kingman, "A Story of Chinese Achievement," 512.

retreats organized by the YMCA and his eloquence and flair for conveying simple moral truths with emotional power made him an influential spokesman for Christianity.[46] In many respects, the YMCA provided an ideal outlet for Zhang's religious faith. Its combination of practical Christianity and modernity fit well with Zhang's outlook. Moreover, the organization was quick to develop Chinese leadership and actively encouraged working together with non-Christians to improve Chinese society.[47] Even after 1930, when Zhang was less involved with the YMCA due to his higher national profile and need to focus more on the development of Nankai, he still remained an active supporter of the group.[48]

Zhang Boling's commitment to creating a modern Chinese citizen was a constant throughout his long career. One manifestation of this commitment was Zhang's tireless efforts to promote physical fitness and athletics in a society where the elite had long looked with disdain on physical exertion.[49] Indeed, he became one of the leading advocates of popular exercise in Republican China. Zhang's logic was simple enough:

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[46] Howard L. Boorman, *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968), 104.

[47] Eugene E. Barnett, "Chang Po Ling's Fifty Years with the YMCA," Box 30, Folder: Chang Po-Ling, Biographical Records, Kautz Family YMCA Archives, Minneapolis, MN, 4.

[48] Zheng Zhiguang 鄭致光, ed., *Zhang Boling zhuan* 張伯苓傳 [Biography of Zhang Boling], 24. Hou Jie 侯杰 and Qin Fang 秦方, *Bainian jiazu: Zhang Boling, Zhang Pengchun, Zhang Xilu* 百年家族: 張伯苓, 張彭春, 張錫祿 [One Hundred Years of Family History: Zhang Boling, Zhang Pengchun, Zhang Xilu], 64.

[49] For background on the development of physical culture in Republican China, including the influence of the YMCA and of Zhang Boling, see Andrew D. Morris, *Marrow of the Nation: A History of Sport and Physical Culture in Republican China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004).

"To strengthen the nation we must first strengthen the race, and to strengthen the race we must first strengthen the body."[50] In 1912, Zhang linked up with the Beijing YMCA and Tsinghua University to establish the North China Athletic Association (NCAA; *Huabei yundonghui* 華北運動會). The NCAA grew to include not just North China, but Northeast and Northwest China as well. In the mid-1920s, with nationalist fervor in China growing exponentially, Zhang succeeded in shifting control of the NCAA from the missionaries in the YMCA and Christian colleges to the Chinese themselves, which also had the effect of bringing sports more into the mainstream of Chinese society. When a nationwide athletic organization was formed in 1924 called the Chinese National Physical Fitness Association (Zhonghua quanguo tiyu xiejinhui 中華全國體育協進會), Zhang was chosen as its honorary president and held that post until at least 1948. He was also an avid promoter of the Olympics in China and it was primarily due to his hard work that national teams were sent to participate in the 1932 and 1936 Olympics.[51]

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[50] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Sishi nian Nankai xuexiao zhi huigu 四十年南開學校之回顧 [A Look Back at Forty Years of Nankai School]," in *Zhang Boling jiaoyu yanlun xuanji* 張伯苓教育言論選集 [Selected Speeches of Zhang Boling on Education], 245.

[51] Liang Jisheng 梁吉生, *Yungong yunneng, rixin yueyi: Nankai daxue xiaozhang Zhang Boling* 允公允能, 日新月異: 南開大學校長張伯苓 [Public Spirited and Capable, Changing Day and Night: Nankai University President Zhang Boling], 211-20. Zhang was the first Chinese to call publicly for the Olympics to be held in China, which he did in 1907. His vision was likely the result of interaction with the YMCA and C. H. Robertson in particular, who at the time had initiated a campaign urging Chinese people to participate in the Olympics and to invite the Olympics to China. See "Report of C. H. Robertson," in *Annual Reports of Foreign Secretaries of the International Committee,* October 1907 to September 1908, Kautz Family YMCA Archives, Minneapolis, MN, 163.

Zhang's educational work at Nankai, which was the major focus of his effort to advance modernity in China, continued to develop and flourish. The school grew from 150 students in 1907 to 260 in 1912, and reached 1000 by 1916.[52] The rapid growth of Nankai reflected Zhang's administrative ability as well as the favor of the provincial government, which twice mandated other schools to merge with Nankai, once in 1911 and again in 1914.[53] From a broader perspective, Nankai's expansion was also closely tied to the disintegration of China's traditional order. The decision by the Qing dynasty in 1905 to abolish China's ancient civil examination system supplied a huge boost to schools promoting the new learning. Just as significant, though, was the fact that the final years of the Qing dynasty and the early years of the Republic that followed were characterized by a weak central government with very limited ability to enforce its educational dictates, providing local educational reformers with a great deal of freedom to innovate and experiment.[54]

The only significant aspect of Zhang's early educational initiatives to meet with failure was his effort to expand into the realm of higher education. He tried without success to establish a normal school in 1908, a

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[52] Nankai daxue xiaoshi bianxiezu 南開大學校史編寫祖 [Nankai University School History Compilation Group], ed., *Nankai daxue xiaoshi 1919-1949* 南開大學校史 1919－1949 [Nankai University School History 1919-1949], (Tianjin 天津: Nankai daxue chubanshe 南開大學出版社, 1989), 7.

[53] Liang Jisheng 梁吉生, *Zhang Boling jiaoyu sixiang yanjiu* 張伯苓教育思想研究 [Research on Zhang Boling's Thinking About Education] (Shenyang 沈陽: Liaoning jiaoyu chubanshe 遼寧教育出版社, 1994), 28. See also Chang, "How Nankai Began," 3.

[54] McElroy, "Transforming China through Education: Yan Xiu, Zhang Boling, and the Effort to Build a New School System, 1901-1927," 106.

university in 1912, a college of foreign languages in 1914, and a technical school in 1916. In each case, the main difficulty that frustrated his plans was the development of a stable financial base.[55] Zhang was determined to overcome this obstacle. In August 1917, he made what was his second trip to the United States, this time to study at Columbia University and learn the nuts and bolts of tertiary education in America. Columbia offered him an honorary scholarship and waived his tuition. Zhang audited courses in education, networked with Chinese students, and took field trips to investigate first hand how American schools operated.[56] Upon his return to China at the end of 1918, Zhang tried once again to found a university and this time succeeded.[57]

Nankai University officially opened its doors in 1919, with one hundred students and divisions in the liberal arts (*wen* 文), natural sciences (*li* 理), and business (*shang* 商). The liberal arts division had majors in politics, economics, history, philosophy, and educational psychology. The science division offered majors in mathematics, physics, chemistry, and biology. The business division, meanwhile, had majors in domestic and foreign trade, bank administration, and business

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[55] Sun, "Chang Poling of Nankai," 3. See also Harry Kingman, "A Story of Chinese Achievement," *The Chinese Recorder* 58, no. 8 (August 1927): 509.
[56] Liang Jisheng 梁吉生, *Yungong yunneng, rixin yueyi: Nankai daxue xiaozhang Zhang Boling* 允公允能, 日新月異: 南開大學校長張伯苓 [Public Spirited and Capable, Changing Day and Night: Nankai University President Zhang Boling], 58-62.
[57] Sun, "Chang Poling of Nankai," 3.

organization.[58] Zhang emphasized practical and technical knowledge at Nankai, since he believed that these were what China needed most, and thus gave little attention to literature or the humanities. Some educators criticized Zhang for this, but he was unapologetic.[59] In 1922, a generous donor gave Zhang more than one hundred acres of land at Balitai, three miles south of Tianjin, and by 1923 the university had moved to this new location.[60] Two years later student enrollment reached 600.[61] Nankai University soon gained a reputation as one of the foremost universities in North China, owing to its solid academic instruction and a strong emphasis on practical training.[62]

Another way in which Zhang promoted modernity through his work at Nankai was by opening the school to women. Though not a pioneer in this regard, Zhang did quickly embrace the new trend. Nankai University had begun accepting women students in 1920, at the same time

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[58] Liang Jisheng 梁吉生, *Zhang Boling jiaoyu sixiang yanjiu* 張伯苓教育思想研究 [Research on Zhang Boling's Thinking About Education], 212-14.

[59] Liang Jisheng 梁吉生, *Yungong yunneng, rixin yueyi: Nankai daxue xiaozhang Zhang Boling* 允公允能, 日新月異: 南開大學校長張伯苓 [Public Spirited and Capable, Changing Day and Night: Nankai University President Zhang Boling], 340. Nankai University did not have an English major, but it did have classes for studying English, and English was heavily used for instruction at the school until the mid-1920s, when strong nationalistic sentiment among the students, along with Zhang's desire to make Nankai more relevant to Chinese conditions, led to the adoption of Chinese as the sole language of instruction. See Liang Jisheng 梁吉生, *Yungong yunneng, rixin yueyi: Nankai daxue xiaozhang Zhang Boling* 允公允能, 日新月異: 南開大學校長張伯苓 [Public Spirited and Capable, Changing Day and Night: Nankai University President Zhang Boling], 109-13.

[60] Kingman, "A Story of Chinese Achievement," 510. Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Sishi nian Nankai xuexiao zhi huigu 四十年南開學校之回顧 [A Look Back at Forty Years of Nankai School]," in *Zhang Boling jiaoyu yanlun xuanji* 張伯苓教育言論選集 [Selected Speeches of Zhang Boling on Education], 249.

[61] McElroy, "Transforming China through Education," 235.

[62] Boorman, *Zhang Boling*, 102.

as government universities, but a lack of higher quality middle schools for women in Tianjin meant that few female students had the qualificiations to be admitted. Zhang had recognized this need for some time, so when a group of women students petitioned him about this issue in 1922, he rapidly took steps to open a middle school division for women in the fall of 1923 with 80 students.[63] Zhang believed strongly that education for women was the key to improving their position in society. Only a few months after opening the women's middle school, he said, "In Chinese society today, people often talk about issues like women participating in politics and publicly engaging in social activities. However, I believe that if we can increase women's knowledge, then their ability and character will also be improved, and these secondary issues can easily be resolved."[64]

In the late 1920s, a number of Nankai University's leading professors were lured away by China's two top universities, Qinghua and Beijing University. This greatly angered Zhang, but after further reflection, he decided that rather than trying to compete directly with them, he would shift the focus of Nankai more to practical knowledge and closer ties and cooperation with local business. In line with this, Zhang started two graduate-level institutes at Nankai in the early 1930s. The first of

[63] McElroy, "Transforming China through Education," 225-26.
[64] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Zai Yuan Tai furen zhuidiaohui shang zhide kaihuici 在袁太夫人追掉會上致的開會詞 [Opening Words Delivered at the Memorial Service of Mrs. Yuan Tai]," in *Zhang Boling jiaoyu yanlun xuanji* 張伯苓教育言論選集 [Selected Speeches of Zhang Boling on Education], ed. Wang Wenjun 王文俊, et al. (Tianjin 天津: Nankai daxue chubanshe 南開大學出版社, 1984), 100.

these was the Institute of Economics (*Jingji xueyuan* 經濟學院), founded in 1931 to promote the use of modern Western methods of economic analysis in China. Scholars at the institute began by conducting research on Chinese economic organization and gradually expanded into statistics and comparative economic history. They also published a journal that became a leading authority on Chinese economic matters.[65] The other graduate-level endeavor was the Research Institute of Applied Chemistry (*Yingyong huaxue yanjiusuo* 應用化學研究所), founded in 1932, which was dedicated to helping Chinese industries improve the quality of their exports by engaging in research and development.

In 1935, Zhang began to expand Nankai beyond the confines of Tianjin, establishing a branch middle school for boys in far-inland Sichuan Province. This move was part of a much larger plan that Zhang had to spread his Nankai model of education throughout China. However, it was also a shrewd precaution against the threat of Japanese military aggression in North China, which had become palpable after Japan's annexation of neighboring Manchuria in 1931.[66] Zhang in particular had good reason to take such a step, since under his leadership Nankai had become a major center of resistance to Japanese imperialism in North China.

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[65] J. B. Condliffe, "One Nankai Experiment," in *There Is Another China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1948), 18-21.
[66] Kingman, "A Story of Chinese Achievement," 509-10.

One dramatic example of how Nankai actively fostered patriotic opposition to Japanese aggression in China occurred at a major athletic meet in Tianjin in 1934 that was organized by the NCAA. More than thirty thousand spectators were present for the occasion, among them high ranking Chinese officials and the consular representatives of foreign nations with concessions in Tianjin, including Japan. During the opening ceremony, five hundred Nankai student cheerleaders, both men and women, used black and white placards to form in large characters such slogans as "Don't Forget the National Humiliation" (*wuwang guochi* 勿忘國恥) and "Recover Our Lost Territory" (*shoufu shidi* 收復失地), while shouting patriotic slogans in perfect unison, eliciting wild applause from the large crowd. When the Japanese representative angrily protested to Zhang, he replied that Chinese students had the freedom to engage in patriotic activities on their own soil, and foreigners had no authority to interfere.[67]

Zhang's work at Nankai made him one of China's most influential figures in the realm of modern private education during the Republican period.[68] By 1935, he had built a system of schools ranging from the primary to the graduate level, with some 3000 students hailing from every

[67] See Liang Jisheng 梁吉生, *Yungong yunneng, rixin yueyi: Nankai daxue xiaozhang Zhang Boling* 允公允能, 日新月異: 南開大學校長張伯苓 [Public Spirited and Capable, Changing Day and Night: Nankai University President Zhang Boling], 216-17.
[68] Garrett refers to him as "the father of modern private schooling" in China. See Garrett, *Social Reformers in Urban China: The Chinese YMCA, 1895-1926*, 97.

province of China and a number of foreign countries as well.[69] Zhang's achievement was all the more impressive given that he had to raise most of the funds from private sources. As John Leighton Stuart, the long-time President of Yanjing University, noted, "Dr. Chang was a pioneer in a nation where higher education had always been a matter for the State and where the recently established colleges of modern type were supported from national or provincial sources."[70]

Zhang cultivated a diverse range of financial supporters, including local governments, wealthy individuals, returned Boxer indemnity funds, and the Rockefeller Foundation.[71] In addition, he established an alumni network that reputedly was one of the best in the country, rivaling even that of Whampoa, the military school whose graduates formed the cornerstone of Nationalist Party power in China.[72] The very difficult economic climate of the 1930s forced Zhang to turn to the Nationalist Government for part of Nankai's funding. This reflected not only the impact of the Great Depression, but also the effect of the Japanese threat to

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[69] Kingman, "A Story of Chinese Achievement." See also Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Sishi nian Nankai xuexiao zhi huigu 四十年南開學校之回顧 [A Look Back at Forty Years of Nankai School]," in *Zhang Boling jiaoyu yanlun xuanji* 張伯苓教育言論選集 [Selected Speeches of Zhang Boling on Education], 250.
[70] J. Leighton Stuart, "Introduction," in *There Is Another China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1948), 1.
[71] Hu, "Chang Poling: Educator," 9.
[72] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Nankai xiaoyou yu Zhongguo qiantu 南開校友與中國前途 [Nankai Alumni and the Future of China," *Zhang Boling jiaoyu lunzhu xuan* 張伯苓教育論著選 [Selected Works of Zhang Boling on Education], ed. Cui Guoliang 催國良 (Beijing 北京: Renmin jiaoyu chubanshe 人民教育出版社, 1997), 295. Nankai alumni chapters were founded all over China, as well as in the United States and other parts of the world. See T. H. Sun, "Chang Poling of Nankai," 1.

North China. Nevertheless, Nankai still received at least two-thirds of its financial support from private sources even during these lean years.[73]

Zhang and his wife Wang Shuzhen had five children, four of them sons. The eldest, Zhang Xilu 張錫祿, was born in 1901 and later studied at the University of Chicago, following which he returned to China to become a math professor. The second son, Zhang Xiyang 張錫羊, was born in 1907 and after studying business at Nankai engaged in trade and commerce. Zhang Xizuo 張錫祚, born in 1908, suffered from poor health until his thirties and then was involved in a variety of occupations. Finally, Zhang's youngest and favorite son, Zhang Xihu 張錫祜, was born in 1913 and went on to study as a bomber pilot at the Central Aviation Academy, graduating in 1934.[74]

Zhang raised all four of his sons very strictly and did not appear to be very close to his children. No doubt part of the reason for this was that his wife did most of the work in raising them while Zhang was busy with his work at Nankai and other activities. She also managed all the other important aspects of the home, including cooking and cleaning, managing the family finances, and caring for elderly parents. Zhang was deeply

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[73] Hou Jie 侯杰 and Qin Fang 秦方, *Bainian jiazu: Zhang Boling, Zhang Pengchun, Zhang Xilu* 百年家族: 張伯苓, 張彭春, 張錫祿 [One Hundred Years of Family History: Zhang Boling, Zhang Pengchun, Zhang Xilu], 289.

[74] Hou Jie 侯杰 and Qin Fang 秦方, *Bainian jiazu: Zhang Boling, Zhang Pengchun, Zhang Xilu* 百年家族: 張伯苓, 張彭春, 張錫祿 [One Hundred Years of Family History: Zhang Boling, Zhang Pengchun, Zhang Xilu], 289. No mention was made of Zhang's daughter in available sources.

grateful for all she did for the family and compared her favorably to the "new-style wives" who wanted their husbands to serve them. "I am really fortunate to have such a wife," he said on the occasion of their fortieth wedding anniversary. "If she wasn't such a person, I'm afraid I would have accomplished nothing in this life."[75]

In July of 1937, the Japanese invaded China and the nation was plunged into war. Tianjin, being a major city close to Japanese-controlled Manchuria, quickly came under attack. On 28 July 1937, Japanese bombers carried out an aerial assault on the campus of Nankai University in an effort to break any will to resist among the populace. Later Japanese troops were sent to burn what was left of the school.[76] Zhang was in the Nationalist capital of Nanjing when the attack occurred and, upon hearing the news, was overcome with grief.[77] President Chiang Kaishek went in person to see him and offer condolences. Two months later, he had recovered from the blow enough to send a telegram to Nankai alumni expressing his resolve: "The enemy has destroyed what they could—the physical campus of Nankai; what they cannot destroy is the spirit of

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[75] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Sishi nian Nankai xuexiao zhi huigu 四十年南開學校之回顧 [A Look Back at Forty Years of Nankai School]," in *Zhang Boling jiaoyu yanlun xuanji* 張伯苓教育言論選集 [Selected Speeches of Zhang Boling on Education], 245.

[76] Liang Jisheng 梁吉生, *Yungong yunneng, rixin yueyi: Nankai daxue xiaozhang Zhang Boling* 允公允能, 日新月異: 南開大學校長張伯苓 [Public Spirited and Capable, Changing Day and Night: Nankai University President Zhang Boling], 71-72.

[77] Sun, "Chang Poling of Nankai," 3.

Nankai."[78] Shortly after this, Zhang suffered the loss of his beloved youngest son, Xihu, whose bomber crashed in Jiangxi Province on the way back from a combat mission. In Chongqing at the time, Zhang responded to the news with relative equanimity, saying to friends and family, "I have long since offered that boy to the country. What has happened is therefore by no means unexpected. It is an obligation fulfilled rather than a loss to be lamented."[79]

With the onset of war, many institutions and individuals fled to the far interior of China to escape the Japanese. The Nationalist government moved its wartime capital to Chongqing, which was also where Zhang had started a middle school in 1935. Many students from the Tianjin campus now found their way there, so that by 1938 the school had roughly 1500 students. Meanwhile, the Nationalist Government ordered Nankai University to combine with Beijing University and Tsinghua University to form what eventually came to be called National Southwest Associated University (*Guoli xinan lianhe daxue* 國立西南聯合大學; abbreviated as *Lianda* 聯大, or Associated University), which was located in Kunming, the capital of Yunnan.

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[78] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, Zhi quanguo Nankai xiaoyou dian 致全國南開校友電 [A Telegram to Nankai Graduates Throughout the Nation], *Zhang Boling jiaoyu lunzhu xuan* 張伯苓教育論著選 [Selected Works of Zhang Boling on Education], ed. Cui Guoliang 催國良 (Beijing 北京: Renmin jiaoyu chubanshe 人民教育出版社, 1997), 282.
[79] Sun, "Chang Poling of Nankai," 3. See also Hou Jie 侯杰 and Qin Fang 秦方, *Bainian jiazu: Zhang Boling, Zhang Pengchun, Zhang Xilu* 百年家族: 張伯苓, 張彭春, 張錫祿 [One Hundred Years of Family History: Zhang Boling, Zhang Pengchun, Zhang Xilu], 345.

In theory, Zhang Boling of Nankai, Mei Yiqi of Tsinghua, and Jiang Menglin of Beijing University, as the presidents of their respective schools, were to administer this new university together and as equals. But in reality, Mei Yiqi became the one who actually managed the institution. In part this was because Tsinghua, besides being a prestigious school, also had by far the most faculty and students at Lianda. Beijing University also enjoyed high esteem, of course, but Jiang Menglin was not strongly inclined to the practical details of administration and decided to invest his energies elsewhere. Though Zhang was a highly gifted administrator, Nankai was the youngest and least prestigious of the three universities and since Mei was an early graduate of Nankai Middle School, Zhang's involvement there would have put Mei in the awkward position of feeling obligated to defer to his former teacher.[80] Thus, Zhang opted to spend most of his time in Chongqing, where he managed his middle school, reestablished the Economic Institute in 1939 and opened a primary school in 1940.[81] In addition, Zhang faithfully attended church every Sunday and continued his frequent Bible reading.[82] He also still served as chairman of the National YMCA.[83]

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[80] John Israel, *Lianda: A Chinese University in War and Revolution* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 128-29.

[81] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Sishi nian Nankai xuexiao zhi huigu 四十年南開學校之回顧 [A Look Back at Forty Years of Nankai School]," in *Zhang Boling jiaoyu yanlun xuanji* 張伯苓教育言論選集 [Selected Speeches of Zhang Boling on Education], 252.

[82] Zheng Zhiguang 鄭致光, ed., *Zhang Boling zhuan* 張伯苓傳 [Biography of Zhang Boling], 25. The name of the church was *Jidu kaige*.

[83] Barnett, "Chang Po Ling's Fifty Years with the YMCA," 7.

Zhang's other major area of involvement during his time in Chongqing was in the political arena, which represented a new direction for him. Prior to the war, he had been careful to avoid politics so that he could focus on his work at Nankai.[84] Now, with the country at war and his university no longer independent, he felt the time was right to get involved. When the KMT organized the quasi-democratic People's Political Council in 1938 as a way to unite the country behind the war effort, Zhang was appointed to its ranks, and in 1941 he also became a Party member.[85] He was soon voted Deputy Speaker of the PPC and later served on its Presidium, a select group whose role was similar to that of a standing committee. Throughout the war years he faithfully discharged his duties with the PPC and he hardly ever missed a meeting of the Presidium, even though they were held twice a week. He also received high marks from the delegates for his performance. Zhang was convinced that, despite its imperfections, the PPC was a worthwhile experiment in democracy. However, his democratic ideals and faithful service in the PPC had little impact on the nature of KMT rule, which remained highly autocratic.[86]

After the war in 1946, the seventy-year-old Zhang received an honorary doctorate from Columbia University, which he accepted while he

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[84] Hu, "Chang Poling: Educator," 14.

[85] Wang Wenjun 王文俊, ed., *Nankai daxue xiaoshi ziliao xuan, 1919-1949* 南開大學校史資料選 [Select Historical Materials on the History of Nankai University] (Tianjin 天津: Nankai daxue chubanshe 南開大學出版社, 1989).

[86] Sun, "Chang Poling of Nankai," 3. See also Hou Jie 侯杰 and Qin Fang 秦方, *Bainian jiazu: Zhang Boling, Zhang Pengchun, Zhang Xilu* 百年家族: 張伯苓, 張彭春, 張錫祿 [One Hundred Years of Family History: Zhang Boling, Zhang Pengchun, Zhang Xilu], 288-92.

was in New York receiving treatment for a serious gland condition.[87] That same year, despite Zhang's efforts to keep Nankai private, the Nationalist regime decided to make the school a government university, while still allowing Zhang to remain at the helm.[88] However, the authorities were unwilling to give him a free hand in running the school, with education officials limiting both the size and funding of the institution. Though Zhang was not keen to return to politics, it appears that the hope of gaining more political support for Nankai led him reluctantly to accept Chiang Kaishek's request that he serve as president of the Examination Yuan (*Guomin zhengfu kaoshiyuan* 國民政府考試院) for the latter half of 1948, on the condition that he could keep his position as head of Nankai.[89] Ironically, no sooner had he formally relinquished his administrative duties at Nankai after taking up this new post than the head of the Department of Education announced publicly that Zhang had resigned, thus effectively removing him from his position at Nankai. Zhang was deeply wounded by this political maneuver.[90]

[87] Liang Jisheng 梁吉生, *Yungong yunneng, rixin yueyi: Nankai daxue xiaozhang Zhang Boling* 允公允能, 日新月異: 南開大學校長張伯苓 [Public Spirited and Capable, Changing Day and Night: Nankai University President Zhang Boling], 332.
[88] Boorman, *Zhang Boling*, 104.
[89] The Examination Yuan was one of five main branches of the central government, which placed Zhang in the upper echelons of political power. However, the timing could hardly have been worse, since Nationalist rule on the Mainland was beginning to unravel due to civil war with the Communists and a rapid deterioration of the nation's economy.
[90] Liang Jisheng 梁吉生, *Yungong yunneng, rixin yueyi: Nankai daxue xiaozhang Zhang Boling* 允公允能, 日新月異: 南開大學校長張伯苓 [Public Spirited and Capable, Changing Day and Night: Nankai University President Zhang Boling], 336-45. Hou and Qin note that Department of Education rules did not permit currently serving university presidents to be head of the Examination Yuan and this was why they refused to go along with Chiang's

In November 1948, as it became increasingly clear that the Nationalists would lose the civil war with the Communists, President Chiang visited Zhang in Nanjing and urged him to flee to Taiwan and start a Nankai school there. Zhang, still smarting over his recent ouster, was non-committal.[91] Later that month, he asked for sick leave and traveled to his school in Chongqing to be around students again and escape from politics. A year later the Communists took control of Chongqing, and Zhang quickly donated his school to the new regime. The following spring of 1950, Zhang suffered a minor stroke and, while recovering, applied with his wife to return to Tianjin. Zhou Enlai, the recently appointed premier of the new Communist regime and a graduate of Nankai, personally approved his request and even sent a plane to transport them to Beijing in May 1950.[92]

Back in Tianjin by September, Zhang and his wife stayed at the home of their third son, Xizu. However, Zhang soon discovered to his dismay that he had become a political liability. When he went to visit his

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plan. This suggests that both Chiang and officials at the Department of Education did not want Zhang exercising control at Nankai. See Hou Jie 侯杰 and Qin Fang 秦方, *Bainian jiazu: Zhang Boling, Zhang Pengchun, Zhang Xilu* 百年家族: 張伯苓, 張彭春, 張錫祿 [One Hundred Years of Family History: Zhang Boling, Zhang Pengchun, Zhang Xilu], 313.

[91] See Chongqingshi Shapingbaqu weiyuanhui 重慶市沙坪垻區委員會 [Chongqing City Shapingba District Committee), ed., *Wenshi ziliao xuanji--di yi ji--Nankai zhongxue zhuanji* 文史資料選集——第一集——南開中學專集 [Selected Cultural and Historical Materials—Volume One—Special Nankai Middle School Volume] (Chongqing 重慶, 1982), 57.

[92] Liang Jisheng 梁吉生, *Yungong yunneng, rixin yueyi: Nankai daxue xiaozhang Zhang Boling* 允公允能, 日新月異: 南開大學校長張伯苓 [Public Spirited and Capable, Changing Day and Night: Nankai University President Zhang Boling], 346-47. See also Chae-Jin Lee, *Zhou Enlai: The Early Years* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 209.

Nankai schools, only a few of the older faculty gave him a positive reception, while the large majority of both teachers and students were either indifferent or hostile to him, since he had not supported the Communist revolution. Worse yet, school officials refused to let him attend Nankai's annual anniversary celebration in October. Zhang was profoundly saddened to find that he was rejected at the school he had founded and had given so much of his life to build. Equally hard to accept was the fact that he had no place in the "New China" which the Communists had brought into being, despite his decades of effort as a patriotic educator committed to helping China become a strong and modern nation.

An exile in his own country, Zhang spent the final months of his life mostly at home, taking his grandchildren to school, reading newspapers, receiving occasional guests, but saying very little and sighing often. He suffered a second stroke, this time serious, on 14 February 1951, and soon thereafter, on 23 February 1951, he passed away at the age of seventy-five. In his will, he praised the Communist Party for its patriotism and upright governance, but in a significant omission, did not apologize for failing to support the Communist cause prior to 1949. Fittingly, Zhang's funeral was held at the Tianjin Christian Church that he had helped to

establish and two thousand people followed his coffin to its final resting place at Beicang Martyr's Cemetary.[93]

Conversion and Modernity

Zhang Boling was one of the most prominent converts to Protestantism in China during the early twentieth century. When he was baptized in 1909, very few among the higher classes in China were willing to embrace Christianity. The Qing dynasty was still in power and to publicly challenge its ideology of Confucianism through conversion to Christianity was to seriously jeapordize one's social position, to say nothing of opportunities for future advancement. Thus, the question of why Zhang, with his deep sense of patriotism and promising future as a modern educator, was willing to take such a step is one that deserves careful investigation. Below, we will examine in detail the process of Zhang's conversion in an effort to better understand what motivated his

[93] Liang Jisheng 梁吉生, *Yungong yunneng, rixin yueyi: Nankai daxue xiaozhang Zhang Boling* 允公允能, 日新月異: 南開大學校長張伯苓 [Public Spirited and Capable, Changing Day and Night: Nankai University President Zhang Boling], 347-48. See also Hou Jie 侯杰 and Qin Fang 秦方, *Bainian jiazu: Zhang Boling, Zhang Pengchun, Zhang Xilu* 百年家族: 張伯苓, 張彭春, 張錫祿 [One Hundred Years of Family History: Zhang Boling, Zhang Pengchun, Zhang Xilu], 317-21. Zhang was survived by his wife, Wang Shuzhen, and four of his five children. Wang Shuzhen passed away in 1962 at the age of 89, her health apparently weakened by the poor diet that resulted from the Great Leap Forward. Zhang's three sons were all badly beaten during the Cultural Revolution: Zhang Xilu survived, but was bed-ridden for the rest of his life and died in 1988; Zhang Xiyang was killed; and Zhang Xizuo lived through the ordeal, but died in 1976. See Hou Jie 侯杰 and Qin Fang 秦方, *Bainian jiazu: Zhang Boling, Zhang Pengchun, Zhang Xilu* 百年家族: 張伯苓, 張彭春, 張錫祿 [One Hundred Years of Family History: Zhang Boling, Zhang Pengchun, Zhang Xilu], 337-43.

decision to become a Christian and how this surprising change was closely linked to the impact of modernity.

Zhang Boling's Conversion to Christianity

Zhang Boling's embrace of Protestant Christianity was a result of the YMCA's work in Tianjin. The first YMCA secretary to be sent to China by the group's International Committee was David Willard Lyon, who began work in Tianjin in 1895, the same year that Zhang Boling graduated from Beiyang Naval Academy. Lyon was drawn to Tianjin in large part because it had become the center of progressive education in China as a result of Li Hongzhang's reform efforts in the province of Zhili.[94] He hoped that by communicating the message of Christianity to these students who were gaining exposure to modern knowledge, the YMCA could influence China's future development. Lyon got the YMCA work in Tianjin off to a solid start by teaching English, opening a reading room, organizing debates and lectures, and leading Bible studies.[95]

Lyon received support in 1898 when a new YMCA secretary named Robert Gailey arrived and took his place as head of the Tianjin YMCA,

[94] For background on the history of Tianjin, see Rogaski, *Hygienic Modernity: Meanings of Health and Disease in Treaty-Port China*. See also Gail Hershatter, *The Workers of Tianjin, 1900-1949* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1986). In Chinese, see Lai Xinxia 來新夏, ed., *Tianjin jindai shi* 天津近代史 [The History of Modern Tianjin] (Tianjin 天津: Nankai daxue chubanshe 南開大學出版社, 1987).
[95] Garrett, *Social Reformers in Urban China: The Chinese YMCA , 1895-1926*, 54-68.

freeing Lyon to focus on student work.[96] Gailey proved to be a valuable addition to the fledgling work. A graduate of Lafayette College in Pennsylvania, he had done a year of graduate work at Princeton Theological Seminary (including some classes at Princeton University) and was also a former all-American center on Princeton's 1896 football team.[97] Energetic and extroverted, with a genuine respect for the Chinese and impressive facility in speaking Mandarin, he quickly won the trust and friendship of many literati in the city. In 1901, not long after the Boxer uprising had ended, some of these gentry asked Gailey for help in establishing the first modern middle school in Tianjin, which was named the Putong School (*Putong xuexiao* 普通學校). Subsequently the Putong School became an independent YMCA institution with optional religious instruction and earned a very good reputation in the city.[98]

It was around this time, early in the first decade of the new century, that Zhang Boling first met Gailey. He had already started his small modern school at Yan Xiu's home and though outwardly all appeared to be going well, Zhang wrote later that he felt a deep pessimism about life. He was troubled by all the suffering he saw in the world and to him it seemed that the only way to solve the problem was for everyone to stop having

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[96] R. R. Gailey, "Association Annals," *Tientsin Young Men* 8, no. 23 (1909): 3.
[97] "Facts Concerning Mr. Gailey," Box 68, Folder: Robert Reece Gailey, Biographical Records, Kautz Family YMCA Archives, Minneapolis, MN, 1.
[98] Garrett, *Social Reformers in Urban China: The Chinese YMCA , 1895-1926*, 69, 93-94. The Putong School became a YMCA institution after the Zhili Provincial Government set up a middle school in the city in 1903.

children and thus put an end to the race. He looked for hope in such diverse places as modern psychology and the Four Books of the Confucian canon, but neither gave him the help he desired.[99] Seeking answers, Zhang attended the Bible class that Gailey taught at the Anglo-Chinese College (*Yinghua shuyuan* 英華書院) in Tianjin in 1903.[100] But though Zhang liked Gailey and regarded him as a friend, he found the Chinese translation of the Bible to be of a low literary quality and its teachings difficult to accept. Nevertheless, he considered Christianity worthy of further research, and maintained his contact with the YMCA.[101] When he turned his home academy into a formal middle school in 1904, Zhang asked Gailey for help in finding foreign teachers and Gailey happily obliged, even teaching part-time at the school himself. With Zhang's permission, he also started a YMCA student association at the school.[102]

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[99] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Zhang Boling xiansheng zishu xindao zhi liyou 張伯苓先生自述信道之理由 [Zhang Boling's Own Account of Why He Has Become a Christian], *Zhang Boling jiaoyu lunzhu xuan* 張伯苓教育論著選 [Selected Works of Zhang Boling on Education], ed. Cui Guoliang 催國良 (Beijing 北京: Renmin jiaoyu chubanshe 人民教育出版社, 1997), 3.

[100] Chang Po Ling, "Why I Became a Christian: Notes of an Address," *Tientsin Young Men* 8, no. 20 (1908): 2. See also R. R. Gailey, "Association Annals," *Tientsin Young Men* 8, no. 23 (1909): 1. The British missionary Lavington Hart was head of the Anglo-Chinese College at the time.

[101] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Zhang Boling xiansheng zishu xindao zhi liyou 張伯苓先生自述信道之理由 [Zhang Boling's Own Account of Why He Has Become a Christian], *Zhang Boling jiaoyu lunzhu xuan* 張伯苓教育論著選 [Selected Works of Zhang Boling on Education], 3. See also Hou Jie 侯杰 and Qin Fang 秦方, *Bainian jiazu: Zhang Boling, Zhang Pengchun, Zhang Xilu* 百年家族: 張伯苓, 張彭春, 張錫祿 [One Hundred Years of Family History: Zhang Boling, Zhang Pengchun, Zhang Xilu], 53. See also Chang, "Why I Became a Christian: Notes of an Address," 2.

[102] Garrett, *Social Reformers in Urban China: The Chinese YMCA , 1895-1926*, 95, 102.

Another promising YMCA secretary arrived in Tianjin in 1905. His name was Clarence H. Robertson, a professor of mechanical engineering at Purdue who had been recruited by John R. Mott.[103] "Big Robbie," as he was called, stood 6'2" and weighed 200 pounds. He had been captain of both the football and track teams, as well as an all-American high jumper, during his graduate student days at Purdue. Mott had sought him out specifically for the purpose of presenting lectures on science to Chinese literati and so opening the door to YMCA influence among them. Robertson was uniquely suited for such work. Apart from his scientific training and dexterity with mechanical devices, he was also a natural communicator with a fine instinct for drama and had an "unusually winsome" personality. One colleague described him as "Big Robbie: inventor, scientist, revivalist, athlete, Barnum!"[104]

After his arrival in China in 1902, Robertson spent three years in the central Chinese city of Nanjing learning Chinese and developing a series of science lectures that he presented to the literati there. These lectures, which included dramatic live demonstrations of such new technologies as the X-ray and the wireless telegraph, turned out to be a great success.[105] Robertson's effectiveness as a lecturer was due to more

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[103] "Robbie's 87 Years Full of Thrills and Rewards," Box 171, Folder: Clarence Hovey Robertson, Biographical Records, Kautz Family YMCA Archives, Minneapolis, MN.
[104] Garrett, *Social Reformers in Urban China: The Chinese YMCA , 1895-1926*, 99. See also Eugene E. Barnett, "Copy of Statement Phoned to Cliff Petitt," Box 171, Folder: Clarence Hovey Robertson, Biographical Records, Kautz Family YMCA Archives, Minneapolis, MN.
[105] Garrett, *Social Reformers in Urban China: The Chinese YMCA , 1895-1926*, 91-93.

than simply his creative use of live demonstrations, but reflected intangible factors such as his infectious enthusiasm and keen sense of drama. Moreover, he not only thought through his lectures very carefully from a pedagogical perspective in an effort to maximize the impact they would have on his audience, but constantly refined them and added in new technologies as they became available.[106]

Robertson's first aim with each lecture was to demonstrate to his audience the great power of science and its potential for application to life, in order to stir within them a sense of wonder and positive expectation. He described his approach thus: "There is for me in science a marvelous beauty, a great exultation, an inexpressible enthusiasm that make these experiences seem priceless, and I have a great yearning that each of my friends in the audience shall also experience such hopefulness and optimism."[107] Robertson's second goal was to convince his listeners that despite the power and potential of science, it was "inadequate for the greater things." He noted that "science gives us materials, forces, powers and principles…, but it carries the limitation of indifference to moral issues."[108] He would then state his conviction that only "true religion" could provide the moral principles and guiding spirit capable of protecting

[106] J. W. Esterline, "The Work of C. H. Robertson: Some New Inventions and Discoveries in the Art of Informing, Inspiring and Transforming Men," Box 171, Folder: Clarence Hovey Robertson, Biographical Records, Kautz Family YMCA Archives, Minneapolis, MN, 18.
[107] J. W. Esterline, "The Work of C. H. Robertson: Some New Inventions and Discoveries in the Art of Informing, Inspiring and Transforming Men," 19.
[108] J. W. Esterline, "The Work of C. H. Robertson: Some New Inventions and Discoveries in the Art of Informing, Inspiring and Transforming Men," 20.

human dignity and ensuring the use of science for the good of humanity. In this way, he sought to pique interest in both science and Christianity and judging from the positive response he received, it would appear he often succeeded.

In April 1905, Robertson was transferred to Tianjin in order to help with YMCA work in the city, but he also had the opportunity to more rigorously test his science lectures by making presentations to various groups of officials, scholars, and modern students of the city over an extended period of time.[109] He gave lectures on subjects such as wireless electricity that were aimed at drawing students to the city branch of the YMCA.[110] Eventually, he incorporated modern forms of technology such as the stereopticon, movie projector, and gyroscope.[111] Zhang himself attended at least one of these demonstrations and they aroused in him a deeper interest in Christianity.[112] Moreover, he was quick to perceive that someone of Robertson's caliber and training was a very rare commodity

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[109] J. W. Esterline, "The Work of C. H. Robertson: Some New Inventions and Discoveries in the Art of Informing, Inspiring and Transforming Men," 7. See also Garrett, *Social Reformers in Urban China: The Chinese YMCA , 1895-1926*, 98.

[110] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Qingnianhui zai Zhongguo de diwei 青年會在中國的地位 [The Position of the YMCA in China]," *Chongqing qingnian* 重慶青年 [Chongqing Youth] 24 (1936): 6. See also "Report of C. H. Robertson," in *Annual Reports of Foreign Secretaries of the International Committee*, October 1905 to September 1906, Kautz Family YMCA Archives, Minneapolis, MN, 118.

[111] "Report of C. H. Robertson," in *Annual Reports of Foreign Secretaries of the International Committee*, October 1907 to September 1908, Kautz Family YMCA Archives, Minneapolis, MN, 164. See also Garrett, *Social Reformers in Urban China: The Chinese YMCA, 1895-1926*, 116. A stereopticon is a slide projector that combines two images in order to create the impression of three dimensions, or to dissolve one image into another.

[112] Long, "Brooklyn Central: An Oriental Visitor," 4.

and lost no time in arranging for him to teach physics at Nankai.[113] Zhang told Robertson how much he appreciated the work of the YMCA and said, "I see clearly that your movement is going to flourish alongside our new education movement in China."[114]

Another common interest that brought these two men together was the desire to introduce modern sports to China. The YMCA had already started doing athletic work among Tianjin youth in 1902 and Robertson was highly effective in expanding the Association's efforts in this area.[115] In October 1905, only six months after his arrival in the city, the Tianjin YMCA's third annual athletic meet drew an unprecedented crowd of five thousand people.[116] In 1907, when Zhang moved his school to its new location at Nankai, he asked Robertson to design an athletic field on the campus grounds and to develop a modern sports program for the students. This proved to be highly popular. The following year, Robertson and the YMCA in Tianjin began a campaign to promote the Olympics in China, which included asking when China would host the Olympics. Zhang eagerly joined the effort and became the first Chinese to

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[113] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Qingnianhui zai Zhongguo de diwei 青年會在中國的地位 [The Position of the YMCA in China]," 6. Also, C. H. Robertson, "Chang Po Ling and the Man of Galilee," Box 171, Folder: Clarence Hovey Robertson, Biographical Records, Kautz Family YMCA Archives, Minneapolis, MN, 1.
[114] "Report of C. H. Robertson," in *Annual Reports of Foreign Secretaries of the International Committee*, October 1905 to September 1906, 119-20.
[115] "Report of R. R. Gailey," in *Annual Reports of Foreign Secretaries of the International Committee*, October 1907 to September 1908, Kautz Family YMCA Archives, Minneapolis, MN, 154-55.
[116] "Report of C. H. Robertson," in *Annual Reports of Foreign Secretaries of the International Committee*, October 1905 to September 1906, 119.

publicly advocate for China's participation in the Olympic games. Given their many overlapping interests, it is not surprising that Robertson and Zhang quickly developed "a profoundly affectionate mutual regard."[117]

Zhang was impressed by the useful knowledge of these Westerners, but he suspected that their morals would be inferior to those of the Chinese.[118] Much to his surprise, however, he found them always diligent and cheerful in doing good, a power that he felt he himself lacked. Though certainly not consumed by a quest for fame or riches, Zhang struggled to persevere in doing worthwhile tasks that offered no promise of obtaining these things. Moreover, he was still plagued by pessimism, especially after his father became ill. Admiring the optimistic and cooperative spirit exhibited by Robertson and Gailey, Zhang strongly desired to acquire the same thing for himself and for China's leaders.[119] One day Zhang asked Robertson and Gailey what was the secret of their positive outlook and power for doing good. "Prayer and faith in God," they replied.[120] This answer did not satisfy Zhang, who was inherently skeptical of "religious

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[117] Garrett, *Social Reformers in Urban China: The Chinese YMCA , 1895-1926*, 100-02. See also "Report of C. H. Robertson," in *Annual Reports of Foreign Secretaries of the International Committee*, October 1907 to September 1908, 163. In addition, see Liang Jisheng 梁吉生, *Yungong yunneng, rixin yueyi: Nankai daxue xiaozhang Zhang Boling* 允公允能, 日新月異: 南開大學校長張伯苓 [Public Spirited and Capable, Changing Day and Night: Nankai University President Zhang Boling], 182.
[118] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Zhang Boling xiansheng zishu xindao zhi liyou 張伯苓先生自述信道之理由 [Zhang Boling's Own Account of Why He Has Become a Christian], *Zhang Boling jiaoyu lunzhu xuan* 張伯苓教育論著選 [Selected Works of Zhang Boling on Education], 4.
[119] Robertson, "Chang Po Ling and the Man of Galilee," 1-3.
[120] Chang, "Why I Became a Christian: Notes of an Address," 2-3.

superstition."[121] However, he perceived that Christianity had great power to motivate people to do good for its own sake, rather than simply to gain some tangible benefit.

When Zhang came down with typhoid fever in 1907, Robertson visited him several times in the hospital and gave him some books to read. One of them was *Practical Idealism*, a work on Christian philosophy written in 1897 by William Hyde, the president of Bowdoin College. This book, with two main sections on "the natural world" and "the spiritual world," analyzed various aspects of human existence and reflected on how people ought to live. Hyde encouraged readers to rise above the lesser goods of selfish desire to the greater good of serving others and regarded Christian teaching as the key to achieving this. Zhang later said that reading the book "gave him a grasp of life as he never saw it before."[122] Another book that Robertson recommended to Zhang was *His Life*, a collaborative effort by three Chicago pastors that was published in 1905. This work wove together materials from the four gospels of the New Testament to present a unified account of Jesus' life. As he read it, Zhang

[121] Frank B. Lenz, "Chang Po Ling: China's Great Christian Layman," Box 163, Folder: Po-Ling Chang, Biographical Records, Kautz Family YMCA Archives, Minneapolis, MN, 2.
[122] Chang, "Why I Became a Christian: Notes of an Address," 3. Zhang had learned to read English while studying at Beiyang Naval Academy, so he could read English books like *Practical Idealism* without great difficulty. For the original work, see William DeWitt Hyde, *Practical Idealism* (New York: MacMillan, 1897).

was drawn by the unique personality and sacrifice of Jesus, which moved him deeply, but he was still not willing to become a Christian.[123]

Soon after this, Zhang was appointed by the Zhili Board of Education to be a delegate to the Fisheries Convention in Washington DC in September 1908. He was chosen for this task because the revenue generated by the Zhili fisheries monopoly was used to fund government schools.[124] For Zhang, the trip was also a valuable opportuntity to investigate modern education in the West.[125] Quite naturally he turned to his contacts in the YMCA for help in planning his itinerary and making the necessary arrangements. In order to discuss these plans, and because of their close friendship, Robertson invited Zhang to join him and the other YMCA secretaries and their families for a week at the seaside resort of Beidaihe 北戴河 in late July, an offer which Zhang gladly accepted.[126] When Gailey pressed Zhang on when he would make a decision about

[123] Lenz, "The Mystery of Personality," 401. For the original work, see William E. Barton, Theodore G. Soares, and Sydney Strong, *His Life* (Chicago: Hope Press, 1905).
[124] McElroy reports that Zhang was given this opportunity because he had worked for the provincial government college in Baoding in 1906 (she does not specify in what capacity). See McElroy, "Transforming China through Education: Yan Xiu, Zhang Boling, and the Effort to Build a New School System, 1901-1927," 95. No doubt Zhang's excellent spoken English and his familiarity with Westerners also made him an attractive candidate for this task. See G. Herbert Cole, "A Chinese Christian Patriot," Biographical Box CL-CON, Yale Divinity School Day Mission Library, New Haven, CT, 1.
[125] C. H. Robertson to friends, 27 July 1908, Box 163, Folder: Po-Ling Chang, Biographical Records, Kautz Family YMCA Archives, Minneapolis, MN, 2. After attending the conference in Washington DC, the delegation also planned to travel to England and France.
[126] Chang, "Why I Became a Christian: Notes of an Address," 3. Beidaihe 北戴河 is a seaside resort about 150 miles northeast of Tianjin.

becoming a Christian, Zhang said he would decide during the upcoming week at Beidaihe.[127]

Zhang entered in "splendidly" to the week with his YMCA friends at the seashore.[128] He enjoyed "unhurried leisure to ponder the deep things of life and the world," and spent hours in conversation and reading his Bible with hopes of gaining insight into spiritual things.[129] But by the end of the week, Zhang had still not made a decision. The last evening at the shore, before everyone departed the following morning, the YMCA secretaries gathered together on the wide verandah of Gailey's residence for their daily devotional time. Outside a heavy rain was falling. There was disappointment in the air, because they had all hoped that Zhang would decide to become a Christian that week. Then, to everyone's great surprise, Zhang came from his quarters more than a mile away through the rain. "I have come to make that decision," he announced.

After some brief discussion, Gailey asked Zhang if he understood the step he was taking and when he answered in the affirmative, they all knelt in a circle and each prayed in turn for Zhang. Then Zhang himself prayed to become a Christian, offering himself fully to God and asking for

[127] Cole, "A Chinese Christian Patriot," 6.
[128] G. Herbert Cole to Eugene Barnett, 2 January 1946, Box 30, Folder: Po-Ling Chang, Biographical Records, Kautz Family YMCA Archives, Minneapolis, MN, 1.
[129] Chang, "Why I Became a Christian: Notes of an Address," 3. Also see Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Zhang Boling xiansheng zishu xindao zhi liyou 張伯苓先生自述信道之理由 [Zhang Boling's Own Account of Why He Has Become a Christian], *Zhang Boling jiaoyu lunzhu xuan* 張伯苓教育論著選 [Selected Works of Zhang Boling on Education], 4.

spiritual understanding.[130] It was a dramatic turning point. Zhang recalled later that it was as if a light filled his soul and he suddenly found that he could grasp the spiritual meaning of Christianity.[131] "Ever since," he said, "I have found myself viewing life through new eyes, the eyes of an optimist."[132] That night Zhang was so overcome with joy that he was unable to sleep. Before leaving the next morning, he gave a note to Robertson, part of which said, "I will try to do the great good instead of the little good that I have been trying to do for many years…. I earnestly pray God through Christ to take me and use me as a sacrifice for the benefit of the world."[133]

Response to Zhang Boling's Conversion

After returning to Tianjin, the first person Zhang told about his conversion to Christianity was his dear younger brother Zhang Pengchun, after which he informed the rest of his family. That same day in the afternoon, there was a meeting of Nankai alumni and teachers at Yan Xiu's house. Zhang used the opportunity to announce that he had become a Christian, but the news was not well received. When he met with Nankai's

[130] Chang, "Why I Became a Christian: Notes of an Address," 3. See also G. Herbert Cole to Eugene Barnett, 2 January 1946, 1.
[131] Sherwood Eddy, *The New Era in Asia* (New York: Missonary Education Movement of the United States and Canada, 1913), 122. See also Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Zhang Boling xiansheng zishu xindao zhi liyou 張伯苓先生自述信道之理由 [Zhang Boling's Own Account of Why He Has Become a Christian], *Zhang Boling jiaoyu lunzhu xuan* 張伯苓教育論著選 [Selected Works of Zhang Boling on Education], 4.
[132] Barnett, "Chang Po Ling's Fifty Years with the YMCA," 3.
[133] C. H. Robertson to friends, 27 July 1908, 2.

Board of Directors the following day and explained to them that he had converted to Christianity, they responded with even greater consternation. Members of the board feared his conversion would be a source of much embarrassment for the school's benefactors. The situation was further complicated by the fact that, for religious reasons, Zhang felt he could no longer participate in school ceremonies that involved bowing to the tablet of Confucius, even though they were required by the Qing government. Consequently, Zhang concluded that it would be best for him to resign his position at Nankai and start a new institution elsewhere, even though few wanted to see him leave the school.[134]

The next day Zhang left for Beijing to see his revered mentor and patron Yan Xiu, who was now the acting Minister of Education for the Qing dynasty.[135] Yan was astounded when Zhang told him about his conversion and his plans to resign and attempted to dissuade him from the decision. Zhang replied that he would be willing to give up anything in the world for his friend, but not his Christian faith.[136] This put Yan in a quandary, since he had no one else even close to Zhang's caliber who could replace him. So he urged him to be a Christian secretly, believing in his heart but still taking part in the school's Confucian rituals. Zhang politely but firmly

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[134] C. H. Robertson to friends, 27 July 1908, 3. When Robertson received Zhang's letter about his plan to resign, he quickly sent a telegram urging him to delay the decision and seeking to arrange a time to meet with Zhang and discuss the situation. See also Eddy, *The New Era in Asia*, 123.
[135] C. H. Robertson to friends, 27 July 1908, 3.
[136] G. Herbert Cole to Eugene Barnett, 2 January 1946, 1.

replied that he could not. Altogether Zhang spent a week in the capital explaining his views to Yan, which convinced him that Zhang's change of outlook was real.[137] Reluctantly, Yan decided that he would have to turn the school over to the government.

When officials from the Department of Education arrived to arrange for the transfer of the school to government control, however, they were unwilling to proceed with the plan. This unexpected change occurred because they realized they would be unable to run the school nearly as well or as cheaply as Zhang had and they wished to avoid a loss of face. In the end, it was decided that Zhang's assistant would be in charge of Nankai while Zhang was away, as had originally been planned, and the question of Zhang's status would be decided upon his return.[138] So Zhang departed by boat for the United States on 19 August 1908.[139] In the meantime, as news of his conversion spread, it raised a "profound stir" among influential Chinese in Tianjin, Beijing, the Zhili provincial capital of Baodingfu and beyond.[140] Gailey reported that the Confucian president of the Imperial University in Peking called it by far the most significant conversion in Tianjin since Protestant missionary work had begun there

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[137] Eddy, *The New Era in Asia*, 123.
[138] Robertson, "Chang Po Ling and the Man of Galilee," 3.
[139] "Notice of Chang Po Ling Departure for America," *Tientsin Young Men* 7, no. 20 (1908): 4. Zhang reported his conversion to the provincial officials who had appointed him to travel to America for the fisheries convention and to research education there, and they expressed their continued support for his appointment. See Robertson, "Chang Po Ling and the Man of Galilee," 2-3.
[140] "Report of C. H. Robertson," in *Annual Reports of Foreign Secretaries of the International Committee*, October 1907 to September 1908, 166.

forty years earlier. Veteran missionaries in North China took a similar view.[141]

When Zhang returned to Tianjin early in 1909, a large crowd gathered at the station to greet him.[142] The students and teachers at Nankai were eager to have him resume leadership of the school. The assistant who had taken Zhang's place while he was gone had been unable to win the loyalty of the faculty as Zhang had and some of the teachers had left as a result. Meanwhile, the cost of running the school had risen sharply and morale had plummeted.[143] Though other universities, and even the Chinese navy, eagerly offered Zhang positions, he did not make any promises.[144] When Yan Xiu asked Zhang to return as principal of Nankai, Zhang reminded him that, as a Christian, he could not bow before the tablet of Confucius. Yan told him that they would find a way to make sure

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[141] "Report of R. R. Gailey," in *Annual Reports of Foreign Secretaries of the International Committee*, October 1907 to September 1908, 154-55. Gailey did not mention the president's name, but records indicate that it must have been Liu Yanchen 劉延琛, who was head of the institution from January 1908 to December 1911. See Xiao Chaoran 蕭超然, "Fubiao yi: yibajiuba nian zhi yijiusijiu nian Beijing daxue lijie fuze renyuan mingdan xingming renzhi shijian 附表一: 一八九八年至一九四九年北京大學曆屆負責人員名單姓名任職時間[Appendix 1: 1898 to 1949 Beijing University Name List of All Those in Charge and Their Time in Office]," in *Beijing daxue xiaoshi: 1898-1949* 北京大學校史：1898－1949 [The History of Beijing University, 1898-1949] (Beijing 北京: Beijing daxue chubanshe 北京大學出版社, 1988).
[142] Robertson, "Chang Po Ling and the Man of Galilee," 3.
[143] G. Herbert Cole to Eugene Barnett, 2 January 1946, 2.
[144] "Report of C. H. Robertson," in *Annual Reports of Foreign Secretaries of the International Committee*, October 1908 to September 1909, Kautz Family YMCA Archives, Minneapolis, MN, 204.

he was not obliged to participate, while urging him to come back and bring his Christianity with him.[145] So Zhang did.

In July 1909, several months after returning to Nankai, Zhang was baptized by the Reverend C. A. Stanley, a Congregational missionary who had labored in Tianjin for more than forty years. The impressive ceremony was held in the newly completed Xiyu Congregational Church, which was officially dedicated that same day.[146] When Robertson asked Zhang afterward why he decided to stay and continue his work in Tianjin, despite earlier plans to start a new school elsewhwere, Zhang replied, "Tienstin [Tianjin] used to know a man by the name of Chang Po Ling. There was an old Chang Po Ling here, but the old Chang Po Ling is here no more and I want them to get to know what the new Chang Po Ling is like."[147]

<u>Protestant Conversion and the Construction of Modern Identity</u>

Zhang's conversion opens a valuable window into his life and thinking, one that makes possible more informed reflection on why he embraced Protestantism. At one level, as with most conversions, Zhang's turning to Christianity was part of a personal spiritual quest. Clearly he

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[145] Robertson, "Chang Po Ling and the Man of Galilee," 3.
[146] "Report of R. R. Gailey," in *Annual Reports of Foreign Secretaries of the International Committee*, October 1908 to September 1909, Kautz Family YMCA Archives, Minneapolis, MN, 186.
[147] "Report of C. H. Robertson," in *Annual Reports of Foreign Secretaries of the International Committee*, October 1908 to September 1909, 204.

struggled with pessimism, which was due to the suffering he saw in the world, no doubt exacerbated by China's weakness in the face of foreign imperialism. He also felt a lack of personal moral power that made it difficult to remain committed to high ideals without immediate worldly rewards. In addition, Zhang was obviously attracted by the person of Jesus and concerned with larger questions about the meaning of life. These inner needs and desires motivated him to explore the claims of Christianity. Moreover, the firmness of Zhang's faith after he finally became a Christian suggests that his conversion was rooted in personal spiritual experience and largely fulfilled the inner needs that had contributed to this change.

Yet beyond this personal and spiritual dimension, Zhang's conversion was intimately related to the phenomenon of modernity. Lewis Rambo, in his book titled *Understanding Religious Conversion*, analyzes the impact of context on conversion and posits a number of useful hypotheses. Among these, he suggests that societies with a stable and resilient culture will experience relatively few conversions, but in those societies undergoing a severe cultural crisis, individuals will be more open to alternatives.[148] Without a doubt, China in the early years of the twentieth century was experiencing such a cultural crisis, and on an unprecedented scale. This crisis was not simply the result of internal dynastic decline, but

[148] Lewis R. Rambo, *Understanding Religious Conversion* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 41.

at a more fundamental level reflected the systemic challenge of modernity. Therefore, it is reasonable to understand Zhang's conversion as a response to the breakdown of Chinese culture, including the weakening of the Chinese state in the face of modernity. Likewise, his particular choice of Protestantism can be seen as a function of its relative affinity with modernity, which Zhang perceived in such particulars as the commitment of the YMCA secretaries to science, sports, and modern education.

Rambo also notes that in societies undergoing cultural crisis, some of the most talented and creative individuals may take the lead in converting, since they perceive benefits for themselves and for the larger society.[149] Clearly Zhang was such an individual. With his passion for improving Chinese society and raising China's position in the world, it is safe to assume he would not have considered conversion to Christianity unless he were fully convinced that it offered significant advantages both for himself and for China as a whole. There is little question that for Zhang, one of the primary benefits of Protestantism was its affinity with modernity, which he viewed as vitally necessary to rejuvinate Chinese culture and society. Indeed, Zhang was part of a growing number of elite converts to Christianity during the first two decades of the twentieth century, many of whom were drawn by its links with modernity. This trend was evident not only in treaty port cities such as Tianjin and

[149] Rambo, *Understanding Religious Conversion*, 41-42.

Fuzhou, but also more broadly, as indicated by the rapid nationwide growth of the elite-focused YMCA during this period.[150]

Gauri Viswanathan, in her book on religious conversion titled *Outside the Fold*, offers some further insights that are useful in understanding Zhang's turn to Protestantism and its connections with modernity. In particular, she argues that converts benefit from the "multiple affiliations" opened up by embrace of another faith. As an example, she cites the case of an Indian Brahmin named Tilak who converted to Christianity and then used his new religious vantage point to seek reform of Hinduism and to resist British colonialism, both in the name of a modern and inclusive Indian nationalism.[151] Zhang's conversion to Protestantism performed a similar function. On the one hand, it gave him critical distance from Confucianism without losing his Chinese identity, thus facilitating his efforts to reform Chinese culture. On the other hand, it moved him ideologically closer to modernity without having to adopt a Western identity, so that he could more effectively resist foreign imperialism. And like Tilak, he justified both positions in the name of modern nationalism, which he saw as fitting well with his Protestant worldview.

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[150] See Ryan Dunch, *Fuzhou Protestants and the Making of a Modern China 1857-1927* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001). For further evidence of this trend, see Zhao Xiaoyang 趙曉陽, *Jidujiao Qingnianhui zai Zhongguo: bentu he xiandai de tansuo* 基督教青年會在中國: 本土和現代的探索 [The YMCA in China: A Quest to Indigenize and Modernize] (Beijing 北京: Shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe 社會科學文獻出版社, 2008).
[151] Gauri Viswanathan, *Outside the Fold: Conversion, Modernity, and Belief* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 39-41.

Viswanathan also urges a shift away from the missionary-centered focus that she sees as prevailing "overwhelmingly" in anthropological and historical studies of conversion. Such an approach is typically concerned only with uni-directional influence in such encounters, from the missionary to the convert to the wider society. Instead, she advocates a subject-centered view that understands conversion as a kind of exchange between different individuals.[152] This is an important point and one worth applying to the case of Zhang's conversion. In part, this means asking what it was that he gained from conversion, besides a framework of spiritual meaning. And significantly, the main answers are all connected with modernity: first, he gained a new worldview that had a higher level of affinity with modernity than the Confucian framework with which he had grown up; second, he gained the spiritual strength he needed to persevere in his work of modern education at Nankai; and third, he gained access to the resources of the YMCA as a platform for advancing Christianity and modernity in China. The point here is that Zhang's conversion was not simply a response to missionary influence and initiative, but was motivated by his own concerns and needs and was part of an active effort to advance his own agenda.

A final area in which Zhang's turning to Christianity correlated closely with modernity was through its empowerment of the individual. Talal Asad has written perceptively about how Christianity, modernity,

[152] Viswanathan, *Outside the Fold: Conversion, Modernity, and Belief*, 42.

and individualism intersect in his chapter "Comments on Conversion" in the book *Conversion to Modernities*. In a critique of the Comaroff's work on Christian missions among the Tswana of South Africa, Asad argues that the key dimension of the missionary encounter was not a colonization of consciousness, but rather the opening up of a whole new range of distinctly modern possibilities for the constitution of the self.[153] Zhang's dramatic conversion is one example of the self-conscious construction of hybrid identity that could result from engagement with the missionary message. His deliberate choice of a new religious identity despite its conflict with local cultural tradition and rejection by mainstream elites shows how Christianity could foster in very tangible ways the ideal of the autonomous individual so central to modernity.

The YMCA and Civil Society

After Zhang's conversion to Christianity, he became one of the YMCA's most active and prominent lay supporters in China. His vigorous efforts on behalf of the organization not only reflected a strong religious commitment, but also his belief that the group was an effective vehicle for advancing modernity in China. This link in Zhang's mind between the YMCA and modernity is abundantly evident in a short speech that he gave at the Tianjin YMCA's tenth annual banquet in December 1910, about

[153] Talal Asad, "Comments on Conversion," in *Conversion to Modernities: The Globalization of Christianity*, ed. Peter van der Veer (New York: Routledge, 1996), 263-65.

eighteen months after his baptism. The dinner was a gala occasion held at the Astor House Hotel, a large brick and wood structure that stood across from Victoria Park in the British Concession. Guests gathered in a hall decorated with the modern novelty of electric lights, as well as mirrors, garlands, and palms. Between courses the guests enjoyed musical performances by YMCA members, and after the meal was finished there were several speakers and a slide show.[154]

When it was Zhang's turn to speak, he quoted an ancient Chinese saying that six things were needed to make a beautiful home, among them a canopy for shade, a fish pond, and a pomegranate tree. He then used this to segue into a discussion of the six things a society needs to be considered "civilized." This was based on his own recent experiences traveling in the United States and Europe, during which he had toured such cities as Washington, New York, Boston, and Worcester. In the latter city, he was given a comprehensive tour, including stops at city hall, a hospital, a fire station, public schools, colleges, churches, the YMCA, parks, and factories.[155] He concluded that there were six things that make a city "civilized" in the modern sense: modern schools, a parliament, electric lights, railways, parks, and a YMCA.[156] As Zhang's statement indicates, he

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[154] "The Tenth Annual Banquet," *Tientsin Young Men* 9, no. 32 (1911): 1.
[155] "Chang Po Ling in America," *Tientsin Young Men* 7, no. 16 (1908): 4.
[156] "Di shici nianyan jilue 第十次年宴紀略 [Record of the Tenth Annual Banquet]," *Xingqibao* 星期報 [Weekly News] 9, no. 32 (January 1911): 4.

considered the YMCA to be an integral part of the modern city and an organization closely linked with modernity.

China and the Concept of Civil Society

Perhaps the most important connection that Zhang saw between the YMCA and modernity was its contribution to the development of civil society. Civil society here refers to voluntary self-organizing by members of a society apart from state control in order to promote constructive social ends. This concept is closely tied to the particular Western European historical context in which it arose. Especially relevant in this regard was the fact that for many centuries after the fall of Rome, political power in Europe was largely fragmented, while ideological power was concentrated in the hands of the Catholic Church, allowing a tradition of significant local autonomy to develop. In addition, when the religious wars that followed the Reformation ended in stalemate, elites pushed successfully for the privatization of religion, which led to the recognition of religious pluralism and eventually to the valuing of social diversity necessary for civil society. Finally, a full-fledged civil society based on individual rights, freedom of association, and notions of civility arose in conjunction with dramatic state expansion during the eighteenth century, as non-state elites gradually succeeded in regulating state power by such

means as constitutions, laws, market principles, and the public sphere.[157]

Chinese society, like Western Europe, had a vibrant associational life, but it developed in ways that were strikingly different. In rural areas during the late imperial era, there were organizations with a strong religious orientation devoted to such causes as village protection, crop watching, irrigation management, and drama performance, as well as specifically religious groups such as temple societies.[158] In urban settings, meanwhile, there were groups such as native place associations, merchant associations, guilds, literary clubs, religious bodies, and benevolent societies. The chief difference with associational life in the Chinese context was the central role played by the state. Unlike Western Europe, the state in China had long held pre-eminence in both the political and ideological realms. As a result, the idea of permitting a large degree of autonomy at the local level lacked a solid cultural basis. Instead, the state sought to manage this realm and its activity, either by having local gentry with ties to the state oversee it or by co-opting non-state elites through bestowal of official recognition and the prestige it conferred. Consequently, this realm of voluntary action was not autonomous, but rather highly attuned to state

[157] See John A. Hall, "In Search of Civil Society," in *Civil Society: Theory, History Comparison*, ed. John A. Hall (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995).
[158] For a useful classic study about these and others aspects of village life centered on North China in the early twentieth century, see Sidney D. Gamble, *North China Villages: Social, Political and Economic Activities before 1933* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963).

priorities and naturally oriented to following state leadership. It typically expanded when the state was weak, and willingly retreated when the state was strong.[159]

Given the marked differences between China and Western Europe, it is not surprising that scholars have debated the validity of applying the term civil society to the Chinese case. This debate has had close ties with discussions about the public sphere mentioned earlier, reflecting the fact that in Western social theory the public sphere is considered an extension of civil society.[160] Viewpoints on the issue vary widely. William Rowe argues against using the concept to analyze China on the grounds that the Chinese language lacks a clear equivalent for the term "civil society," and its use can lead to the ethnocentric view that China should be like the West, or the orientalist position that China is incapable of attaining Western standards of social behavior.[161] Frederic Wakeman also takes a skeptical view on the basis that associational life in Chinese society has lacked autonomy from the state, an essential component of the concept.[162]

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[159] Timothy Brook, "Auto-Organization in Chinese Society," in *Civil Society in China*, ed. Timothy Brook and B. Michael Frolic (Armonk: M. E. Sharpe, 1997), 20, 44.

[160] Thus, Habermas speaks of "the public sphere of civil society." For one example, see Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Burger (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1989), 124. In this thesis, I understand civil society as voluntary associational activity aimed at promoting the public good, and the public sphere as the social space in which citizens engage in rational discussion and via various forms of mass media shapes public opinion. Thus, I see the former term as connected with social action and the latter with public communication, while both domains are autonomous from the state in their ideal forms.

[161] William Rowe, "The Problem Of 'Civil Society' In Late Imperial China," *Modern China* 19, no. 2 (1993): 140-43.

[162] Wakeman, "The Civil Society and Public Sphere Debate: Western Reflections on Chinese Political Culture."

But other scholars are more positive. Timothy Brook, for instance, sees the element of autonomous organization that is integral to the notion of civil society as being evident in China from the imperial period up to the present.[163] And Mary Rankin considers the model relevant to China starting from the last decade of the Qing dynasty, when Western ideas and institutions related to civil society first began to appear there.[164]

The position I adopt here is that the concept of civil society, like that of the public sphere, can be legitimately applied to China when understood as part of a globalizing modernity. The dramatic impact of modernity on China in the early decades of the twentieth century, combined with the lack of a powerful central state throughout the period, produced social changes that are consistent with notions of civil society. Therefore, I see this concept as a useful analytical tool for investigating changes in Chinese society during these decades. However, I believe it is problematic to use the civil society paradigm for China prior to 1895, since traditional forms of voluntary organization under the imperial order depended on state-sanctioned elites and reflected state priorities, which meant that the element of autonomy so central in models of civil society was largely absent. Likewise, the concept has only limited applicability to China today because the Communist state has succeeded in exercising

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[163] Brook, "Auto-Organization in Chinese Society."
[164] Mary Backus Rankin, "Some Observations on a Chinese Public Sphere," *Modern China* 19, no. 2 (1993): 159.

considerable control over most of the nation's associational life, resulting in a weak and atrophied civil sector.

Development of Civil Society in China

It is worth taking some time at this point to trace briefly the development of civil society in China from the late Qing through the Republican period. These changes were evident mainly in China's larger urban areas, which had easier access to modern ideas and a higher concentration of modernizing elites. Brook points out that even before the collapse of the Qing dynasty in 1911, the legal framework of Chinese urban associational activity was undergoing transformation. In 1902, Qing rulers allowed propertied individuals to associate for public causes and called on urban officials to start chambers of commerce. In 1903 the registration category of "legal group" (*fatuan* 法團) was formally established, which made possible the emergence of professional associations for such groups as lawyers, bankers, and industrialists. These changes, along with the weakness of the Qing state, spurred a rapid increase in associational activity.[165]

The growth of urban civil society was even more dramatic after 1911. On the one hand, more traditional forms of social organization, such as native place associations and guilds, continued to be active into the

[165] Brook, "Auto-Organization in Chinese Society," 30-32.

Republican period and were no longer so closely tied to the state and its priorities. On the other, there was a large expansion of new types of associational life that Brooks categorizes under the rubric "fellowship," indicating that they were based on common interests rather than such non-elective ties as a shared birthplace. These organizations, which included religious groups, churches, charities, athletic and youth clubs, private schools, alumni societies, and so on, had deep roots in China's older patterns of associational life.[166] Added to this was another important dimension of urban civil society in the Republican period, namely the appearance of mass mobilization activities, which were large-scale and relatively short-lived movements often tied to the cause of nationalism.[167]

The Republican state sought to exercise control over this flourishing of civil society by requiring groups to register with the government, which gave it the authority to decide which groups could legally exist and what activities they could properly engage in. The Nationalists, after they came to power in 1928, were more vigorous in requiring groups to register and support the regime's ideology. They also sought to infiltrate those groups deemed to have a political purpose, which naturally had a dampening effect on the expansion of associational life.[168] Thus, compared to the development of civil society in the West, China's civil society was characterized by a greater interpenetration of

[166] Brook, "Auto-Organization in Chinese Society," 31-36, 42.
[167] Bergere, "Civil Society and Urban Change in Republican China," 326.
[168] Brook, "Auto-Organization in Chinese Society," 32.

state and society, a more dominant role for the state, and a notable lack of legal protections. However, because the state was weak throughout the Republican era, many civil organizations succeeded in retaining considerable autonomy, which is why the term civil society remains relevant in analyzing this period of Chinese history.

The relatively lively growth of civil society in the cities was not matched in the villages, according to the research of Prasenjit Duara focusing on North China. He shows how the efforts of the modernizing Chinese state in the early decades of the twentieth century to extend its reach into rural society had the effect of dismantling traditional elite power structures without establishing any effective replacement for them. The resulting power vacuum led to the rise of many predatory power brokers who oppressed local society. These trends led to a breakdown of rural social order and traditional forms of associational life and thus were inimical to the emergence of a modern civil society. Duara argues that traditional forms of auto-organization could have contributed to the development of rural civil society had a more decentralized approach to state building been adopted, one that worked with, rather than undermined, local elites.[169]

The relatively autonomous sphere of civil association that grew in China during the Republican period was fragile and not destined to survive for long, since a healthy civil society requires a strong state

[169] Duara, "State and Civil Society in the History of Chinese Modernity," 305-15.

committed to liberal values, and neither of these things was true at the time. Nor were the prospects for the future of civil society at the time very bright. Partly this was the result of China's native tradition, which favored authoritarian rule and did not have a strong tradition of individual rights. But external factors played a major role as well. Among these probably the most important was the impact of imperialism, which convinced Chinese elites that a powerful centralized state was vital to protecting the nation's independence. Once this became the primary goal of Chinese elites at both the national and provincial levels during the first decade of the twentieth century, the days of a vibrant civil society were numbered.[170]

Zhang Boling and the YMCA Ethos of Serving Society

Elite Chinese Protestants, as an influential urban group, were a vital part of this burgeoning civil society in Chinese cities during the Republic, and Zhang Boling's involvement in the YMCA is an excellent illustration of this fact. Indeed, the Chinese YMCA was a central part of the Protestant contribution to this urban civil society. Zhang discussed the role of the YMCA and its impact on China in an important speech in 1935 titled "The Position of the YMCA in Chinese Society," which was delivered at the Chongqing YMCA. Zhang had traveled to the city to establish a new branch of his Nankai Middle School and, given his prominence as a lay

[170] Duara, "State and Civil Society in the History of Chinese Modernity," 315-24. See also Wakeman, "The Civil Society and Public Sphere Debate: Western Reflections on Chinese Political Culture," 131-32.

leader in the YMCA, the Chongqing branch of the Association invited him to address its members. This speech shows how Zhang's conception of civil society reflected the influence of modernity and how closely it was linked with his support for the YMCA.

For one thing, the speech shows that Zhang was determined to promote a major expansion of associational activity in Chinese society. In his view, the space between family and the state was woefully underdeveloped in Chinese society. As he explained: "Because you could say that as far as 'social endeavors' (*shehui shiye* 社會事) are concerned, the average Chinese is completely lacking in understanding and does not know what social endeavors are; Chinese social organization on a small scale has the family and on a large scale has the lineage, but there is nothing larger than that."[171] It is striking that Zhang here makes no mention of such organizations as native place associations, guilds, or temple societies, though they had long been prominent in traditional Chinese society. Why this omission? We can only speculate, but quite likely Zhang regarded these groups as having too narrow a social vision and being too small in scope to qualify as modern "social endeavors."

What is clear is that Zhang believed this realm of society between family and the state required significant expansion in order for China to become a strong and modern nation. In an obvious allusion to the West, he

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[171] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Qingnianhui zai Zhongguo de diwei 青年會在中國的地位 [The Position of the YMCA in China]," 6.

noted that other nations had become wealthy and powerful not simply because they had good political systems, but because they possessed mature social organizations. According to Zhang, in these societies many people were involved in activities for the benefit of society, unlike in China, and this then shaped his answer to the pressing question of how to make China strong. “Naturally political reform is a vital factor,” he readily acknowledged, “but reform of social organization is even more vital.”[172] Thus, it would appear that Zhang saw the modern West as embodying a kind of normative ideal in which a strong state and strong society were combined to produce a powerful nation, and he wanted China to follow a similar path.

In Zhang’s estimation, reliance on political leaders to build a strong nation was inadequate, not least because enlightened political leaders were few and far between. Instead, he called for an expansion of civil society by getting the masses actively involved in serving society. Zhang was very clear on this point: “If we rely only on enlightened rulers or political leaders, it is not enough; what we ought to have is all the people of society able to take the initiative to help society, since only then will there be great progress.”[173] He went on to recall that when the YMCA first arrived in China at the end of the Qing dynasty, many Chinese realized that

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[172] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Qingnianhui zai Zhongguo de diwei 青年會在中國的地位 [The Position of the YMCA in China]," 6.
[173] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Qingnianhui zai Zhongguo de diwei 青年會在中國的地位 [The Position of the YMCA in China]," 6..

their country was poor, but most people simply blamed the emperor or the political elites; very few actually thought about their own responsibility to effect change or made a significant effort to serve society. But Zhang saw the YMCA as offering a path out of such passivity: "The sole purpose of the YMCA is to promote serving society, and for this reason I was very willing to join the YMCA and help, because we need to know that to work for society is to work for oneself, and to help others is at the same time to save oneself."[174]

Building the YMCA Organization

Zhang believed that a modern civil society required not only a great increase in the number of people serving society, but also the development of strong organizations that could channel this energy and extend influence over large areas. This conviction was evident in his Chongqing speech when he noted in reference to the relief work of the YMCA that "…while enthusiasm is necessary, organization is even more necessary…."[175] Certainly Zhang was eager to continue expanding the work of the YMCA in China. As he told his audience, "The YMCA is a group that serves society, an institution that is critical to improving our social organization. Therefore, everyone should do their utmost to ensure the

[174] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Qingnianhui zai Zhongguo de diwei 青年會在中國的地位 [The Position of the YMCA in China]," 6.
[175] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Qingnianhui zai Zhongguo de diwei 青年會在中國的地位 [The Position of the YMCA in China]," 8.

group develops in a sound way. The YMCA national committee, presently in Shanghai, currently has the task of establishing YMCA chapters in every province and county of the nation."[176] This type of sophisticated national organization in the sphere of private charity was a new phenomenon in China, and a clear reflection of the impact of modernity.

Zhang had a direct role in building the YMCA into a powerful organization, both in Tianjin and nationally. After becoming head of the Tianjin YMCA in 1911, he remained in that position until 1936, overseeing its growth into a chapter with more than 3000 members.[177] And as mentioned earlier, he also served on the national Board of Directors. David Willard Lyon, the first YMCA secretary in China, believed that Zhang's influence on the development of the YMCA in China was profound. He credited Zhang with clearly recognizing and constantly emphasizing the YMCA's role in China as an interpreter of "applied Christianity," which kept the group focused on practical social action.[178] He also noted that Zhang played a key role in making the YMCA an organization that fostered cooperation between Christians and non-Christians in order to promote the welfare of society. Finally, he recalled how Zhang helped to steady the

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[176] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Qingnianhui zai Zhongguo de diwei 青年會在中國的地位 [The Position of the YMCA in China]," 7.

[177] "Tianjin Zhonghua Jidujiao Qingnianhui sishi zhounian jiniance 天津中華基督教青年會四十週年紀念冊 [Tianjin YMCA Fortieth Anniversary Commemorative Volume]," Shanghai shi dangan guan 上海市檔案館 [Shanghai Municipal Archives], Shanghai 上海, 20.

[178] "Applied Christianity" was a term commonly used at the time to refer to the application of Christian principles to solve social problems and improve the functioning of society, as opposed to engaging in abstract theological discussions.

YMCA’s approach to politics in a volatile era by encouraging the interest of members in political issues while maintaining neutrality as an organization.[179]

Zhang’s exceptional gifts as a public speaker were another means by which he built up the work of the YMCA, and his powerful messages delivered at numerous conferences sponsored by the group helped to motivate members in their work of serving society. One instance of this was when Zhang was elected chairman of the YMCA’s national convention in 1912, which was held in Peking soon after the founding of China’s Republic. Christianity in China was growing in stature, and the new president, Yuan Shikai, honored the YMCA delegates with a reception at the Forbidden City. Zhang gave the opening address for the assembly on the topic of “Young Men and the Nation.” Eugene Barnett, an important YMCA leader who was there for the occasion, later described the impact of the speech: “With disarming informality he quickly established and then maintained rapport with his great audience drawn from many quarters and fused them into an enthusiastic unity, of which one saw evidence for years afterward.”[180]

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[179] D. Willard Lyon to Eugene Barnett, 1 January 1946, 2.
[180] Barnett, "Chang Po Ling's Fifty Years with the YMCA," 6.

Strengthening the Autonomy of the YMCA

Zhang's work with the YMCA contributed to another important facet of a modern civil society in China by increasing the autonomy of social organizations in the Chinese context. Of course, the YMCA and mission churches possessed a certain advantage in this regard, since as Dunch points out, "the treaty provision of extraterritoriality provided them a degree of independence from the Chinese government which purely Chinese public associations did not enjoy."[181] But apart from this external factor, Zhang's speech in Chongqing makes clear that his work with the YMCA was driven by powerful inner convictions about the need to cultivate an autonomous space for social action on behalf of the public good, one that would be open to all citizens. Indeed, in the course of his three thousand word speech, Zhang declared five times that the audience should not look to politics or depend on political elites to resolve their problems, but should instead take the initiative to serve society themselves. Along these same lines, he spoke positively about how the Tianjin YMCA had proactively raised funds to provide relief after recent major floods in the city, rather than waiting for the authorities to act. Nor did Zhang at any point urge those in attendance to be attuned to the priorities of the state in serving society, despite the fact that by 1935 the Nationalist Government was already well established and making

[181] Dunch, *Fuzhou Protestants and the Making of a Modern China 1857-1927*, 198.

vigorous efforts to remold China. In short, Zhang conveyed the strong impression that civil society should be a realm of autonomous activity.

One practical way that Zhang promoted the autonomy of the YMCA was by helping to raise funds for the Association in Tianjin. As a leading citizen of the city, he exercised considerable influence over the larger community and this made him quite effective in promoting the work of the YMCA there. This was evident as early as 1909, when the Tianjin YMCA began a fundraising drive, having been promised money for their own building by an American businessman if local members were able to first raise enough funds to purchase the land.[182] At that time none of the Associations in China had attempted to erect their own facility, given the financial challenge it represented. Zhang played a key role in the success of the undertaking by personally persuading one large donor named Ouyang Bianyuan to give 20,000 taels, which was almost half the total sought. When asked why he was willing to contribute such a large sum, Ouyang said, “When I see men like Chang Po Ling actively supporting this Association, I know it is a good work and that it will prove helpful to the young men of our city.”[183] The new building, a sizeable structure with 206

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[182] To compare with fundraising by the YMCA in Fuzhou, see Dunch, *Fuzhou Protestants and the Making of a Modern China 1857-1927*, 156-64.

[183] Barnett, "Chang Po Ling's Fifty Years with the YMCA," 5. Ouyang Bianyuan was baptized the following year. See "Report of R. M. Hersey,” in *Annual Reports of Foreign Secretaries of the International Committee*, October 1909 to September 1910, Kautz Family YMCA Archives, Minneapolis, MN, 183.

rooms, was completed in 1914.[184] Zhang continued to raise funds on behalf of the YMCA for many years, doing so even when finding donors for his Nankai school was difficult.[185]

Zhang also advanced the autonomy of the YMCA by cultivating indigenous leadership. To its credit, the YMCA was quick to take steps to transfer leadership to the Chinese, but it was thanks to the efforts of men like Zhang Boling that this policy so quickly bore fruit. As a result, the Chinese YMCA increasingly reflected the priorities of the Chinese themselves. Zhang remarked on this shift to Chinese leadership in his Chongqing speech, noting that previously there were fifteen American secretaries helping the Tianjin YMCA, but recently there were none. He saw this as a sign that the Chinese themselves were taking responsibility for the work because they recognized the need for such an organization in China.[186] Zhang had previously overseen a similar shift to native leadership when he became head of the Board of Directors of the Tianjin YMCA in March 1911. His elevation to the position also marked a transition from a board composed mostly of Westerners to one made up entirely of Chinese, a transition that Zhang himself had no doubt actively

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[184] Hou Jie 侯杰, "Zhang Boling yu Jidujiao Qingnianhui 張伯苓與基督教青年會 [Zhang Boling and the YMCA]," in *Dierjie jindai Zhongguo Jidujiaoshi yantaohui* 第二屆近代中國基督教史研討會 [The Second Symposium on Modern Chinese Christian History] (Hong Kong: 2001), 8.
[185] Boorman, *Zhang Boling*, 103.
[186] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Qingnianhui zai Zhongguo de diwei 青年會在中國的地位 [The Position of the YMCA in China]," 7.

sought to bring about.[187] In addition, Zhang used the resources of his Nankai school to promote the development of the Tianjin YMCA by having some of the faculty give lectures at the city Association and, more significantly, recommending many Nankai graduates to serve on its staff.[188]

Expanded Social Concern and the YMCA

Zhang's labors on behalf of the YMCA in China also helped to spread a new concept of charity focused not simply on the family circle, which had long been the dominant concern, but on the larger community and nation. Here again Zhang's Chongqing speech was critical of China's traditional culture: "As for serving society, I myself highly commend it, because the people of this country, apart from caring for their own family and relatives, pay no heed to the affairs of the township, the village, or the county, and in fact completely lack this concept."[189] In an effort to promote reform, Zhang encouraged his audience to cultivate concern for the affairs of others and referred to his own experience in this regard: "This year I am already sixty years old, so of course today I need rest and sleep, but twenty years ago, apart from my own work I also had energy to do many

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[187] Zheng Zhiguang 鄭致光, ed., *Zhang Boling zhuan* 張伯苓傳 [Biography of Zhang Boling] 24. See also "Report of R. M. Hersey," in *Annual Reports of Foreign Secretaries of the International Committee*, October 1909 to September 1910, 213.
[188] Hou Jie 侯杰, "Zhang Boling yu Jidujiao Qingnianhui 張伯苓與基督教青年會 [Zhang Boling and the YMCA]," 6.
[189] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Qingnianhui zai Zhongguo de diwei 青年會在中國的地位 [The Position of the YMCA in China]," 6.

things on behalf of others…. This is the YMCA spirit, and also what China presently needs.”[190]

One expression of this broader concept of social service was Zhang’s effort to spread popular education through the YMCA, which he specifically mentioned in his Chongqing address: “I am a person involved in education, but I feel that in the same way the YMCA is also involved in education. Our educational institution is the school and those who are educated are the students. Their educational institution is the YMCA, and those who are educated are the masses of the entire society.”[191] For Zhang, the idea of using the YMCA as a vehicle for advancing popular education was appealing, since it allowed him to reach a much broader audience with his ideas than his work at Nankai alone would allow. Thus, he made vigorous efforts to develop this aspect of the Association’s work. For instance, apart from his role as head of the Board of Directors of the Tianjin YMCA, Zhang also served for many years in the Learning Department of the Tianjin Association, and was head of the department from 1911 to 1920.[192] Lyon observed that Zhang was instrumental early on in helping the YMCA in China break away from its American traditions

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[190] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Qingnianhui zai Zhongguo de diwei 青年會在中國的地位 [The Position of the YMCA in China]," 7.
[191] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Qingnianhui zai Zhongguo de diwei 青年會在中國的地位 [The Position of the YMCA in China]," 7.
[192] Hou Jie 侯杰, "Zhang Boling yu Jidujiao Qingnianhui 張伯苓與基督教青年會 [Zhang Boling and the YMCA]," 7.

regarding the proper nature and scope of educational work.[193] And Barnett said of him, "As in the Nankai schools he became the embodiment of modern progressive education in China, so through the YMCA he has helped to build in his country an effective instrumentality of informal education among youth and of adult education throughout the community."[194]

One colorful example of how the Tianjin YMCA under Zhang's leadership used popular education to build a modern civil society can be found in the group's mobilization of students to help fight tuberculosis in 1914.[195] The campaign started with some six hundred students from more than twenty of the leading schools in Tianjin gathering at the YMCA building on Dongma Street. From there, they marched in parade formation, accompanied by two brass bands, along the wide ring road where only fifteen years earlier the ancient city wall had stood. The students carried flags on which were written large characters telling people how to avoid tuberculosis and stay healthy. In addition, the

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[193] D. Willard Lyon to Eugene Barnett, 1 January 1946, 2.

[194] Barnett, "Chang Po Ling's Fifty Years with the YMCA," 4. Zhang was part of a larger effort within the YMCA to promote popular education using a variety of means, which included the scientific demonstrations of C. H. Robertson, the Lecture Bureau led by David Yui, the mass health campaigns of Dr. W. W. Peter, and the literacy work of James Yen. Another important element in this regard was the YMCA magazine *Progress* (*Jinbu 進步*), which disseminated knowledge to many within the group's orbit. One typical issue of the monthly from October 1914 dealt with such topics as the history of the steel industry, the age of marriage in China, family hygiene, and the "wonders" of science. See "Table of Contents," *Progress* 36 (1914): 1.

[195] Zhang's involvement at some level is quite likely since at the time he was head of the Board of Directors of the Tianjin YMCA and was also in charge of the Learning Department. Moreover, as the president of Nankai Middle School and a leading educator in Tianjin, he had links to the other schools in the city that provided the student volunteers for the campaign.

students handed out flyers to the thousands of curious spectators with simple information about how to prevent tuberculosis. At major intersections, trained student lecturers armed with charts and standing on raised platforms explained the dangers of the disease. After they returned to the YMCA building, one hundred thousand "tuberculosis calendars" were divided up among them for distribution throughout the city. Students from each school were assigned to different sections of the city, so the calendars were disseminated very efficiently, and demand outstripped supply.[196] The modern aspects of this campaign are quite striking and included its reliance on techniques of mass mobilization, its expanded sphere of social concern, and its transmission of scientific knowledge.

Christianity and the YMCA Power to Serve

Zhang believed that Christianity was a crucial ingredient in the successful efforts of the YMCA to build civil society in China, arguing that it

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[196] "Report of R. M. Hersey," in *Annual Reports of Foreign Secretaries of the International Committee*, October 1914 to September 1915, 485. Hersey does not specify whether the health campaign was held in 1914 or 1915, but most likely it was 1914, since the YMCA organized student-run health campaigns in Peking and Changsha in 1914, and the campaign in Tianjin was likely part of this larger effort. W. W. Peter and his assistant G. H. Cole, based in Shanghai, were just getting the YMCA Health Division started, and public health campaigns were central to their approach. Therefore, it is highly probable that they were the ones who suggested using the student groups to engage in such a campaign and devised the strategy that was used. Beginning in January 1915, Peter and Cole conducted health campaigns in Shanghai, Changsha, and Nanjing, and later in many other cities as well. In 1920, they led a major anti-cholera campaign in Fuzhou that was a resounding success. See Garrett, *Social Reformers in Urban China: The Chinese YMCA , 1895-1926*, 141-48, 57.

provided strong movitation for members to overcome "selfishness" (*si* 私) and seek "the common good" (*gong* 公). Zhang's talk at the YMCA in Chongqing made this point explicitly: "But how is it that the YMCA is able to have this kind of power? As I see it, probably for no other reason than that the YMCA is not selfish in what it does, but works for the public good. The reason they are able to be this way is because they have a motivation. And what is this motivation? It is Christianity."[197] In attempting to explain this dynamic, Zhang focused on the founder of Christianity, Jesus Christ. Jesus and Confucius were similar, he suggested, in that both proclaimed a simple message, but unlike the Chinese sage, the Jewish rabbi had numerous believers throughout the world. "What power accounts for this?" Zhang asked his audience. "This is because Jesus was willing to sacrifice for others."[198] He then summed up his argument: "The reason the YMCA works for society and that leading figures defend the YMCA is that they have all learned from Jesus the spirit of sacrificing for others."[199]

Zhang was convinced that Chinese society stood in great need of this type of commitment to serving the common good. "We want to get rid of selfishness, we want to serve the public good, this is right," Zhang declared to his audience in Chongqing. "But to change the common public

[197] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Qingnianhui zai Zhongguo de diwei 青年會在中國的地位 [The Position of the YMCA in China]," 7.
[198] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Qingnianhui zai Zhongguo de diwei 青年會在中國的地位 [The Position of the YMCA in China]," 7.
[199] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Qingnianhui zai Zhongguo de diwei 青年會在中國的地位 [The Position of the YMCA in China]," 8.

sentiment of an entire society is no easy task."[200] In order to further highlight this need for change, he mentioned Sun Yat-sen's statement that political revolution by itself was not enough, but a social revolution was also required. Zhang interpreted this "social revolution" to mean a gradual reformation of public sentiment, which he believed would lead to a bright future for China. But how could such a change be achieved? For Zhang, the best strategy was for local chapters of the YMCA all around China to take the lead in uniting the masses to serve society. In short, Zhang regarded the Christian spirit of service embodied in the YMCA as a catalyst to foster civil society in China.

Further evidence that Zhang considered Protestantism an essential part of the YMCA's work can be found in his zealous efforts to promote Christianity via the organization and its activities. For instance, when YMCA evangelist Sherwood Eddy visited Tianjin for a religious campaign in 1911, Zhang was actively involved. Eddy later described Zhang's impact with characteristic melodrama: "Night after night he presided at the evangelistic meetings and swayed a vast audience of two thousand students as he gave his ringing testimony for Christ with such sweet reasonableness and joyous fervor that repeatedly that great audience of non-Christian government students broke out into applause."[201] On another occasion, when Zhang visited the northern city of Jilin in 1917, he

[200] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Qingnianhui zai Zhongguo de diwei 青年會在中國的地位 [The Position of the YMCA in China]," 8.
[201] Eddy, *The New Era in Asia*, 124.

not only addressed eager students at many of the city's schools, but also gave two evangelistic addresses. The first of these was at a local YMCA hall packed with 350 students. "A splendid apologetic for Christianity was offered and an appeal made for enrollment for further study," *The Chinese Recorder* later reported, with 91 students responding to the appeal. The next day, a Sunday, Zhang spoke at a public hall in the afternoon to an audience of two hundred and this time 39 people signed up to study the Bible.[202]

As Zhang Boling demonstrates, Chinese Protestants were major contributors to the development of a modern civil society in China during the Republican period. They worked hard to expand the ranks of those involved in social service, clearly favored autonomy for organizations engaged in such efforts, and drew on Christian notions of love and sacrificial service to promote an expanded view of charitable activity that extended far beyond the traditional bounds of kin and locality. Their labors suggest that Christianity had important resources to offer that could help increase autonomous associational activity and counter-balance the expansion of the state associated with modernity. This was especially significant in the context of Chinese culture, where such a concept of civil society was quite weak. However, their dream of fundamentally changing the dynamics of Chinese society failed to

[202] "Mr. Chang Po Ling's Visit to Kirin," *The Chinese Recorder* 48, no. 1 (January 1917): 68-69.

materialize, due to the small size of the Protestant community, the deep roots of Chinese culture, and the overwhelming focus of elites on constructing a powerful state.

Christianity and Modern Education at Nankai

Zhang Boling was determined to forge a new Chinese citizen by means of modern education and this is what motivated his prodigious efforts at Nankai. His strategy was simple: to train Chinese youth in the knowledge and principles of modernity, and through them to transform and modernize the wider society. But how to produce an educational environment that would most effectively achieve these goals was not so simple. Zhang had an expansive vision and he sought to create an institution that was well rounded and could help students achieve their full potential. Initially this vision was purely secular in its orientation, but after Zhang's conversion, Christianity became an important force in shaping Nankai, both directly through its active presence on campus and indirectly through its influence on Zhang's thinking about education.[203] Indeed, it is striking the extent to which he regarded Christianity as either compatible with, or actively helping to, promote modernity. To understand how, we need to explore more carefully Zhang's philosophy and practice of education at Nankai.

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[203] Lee, *Zhou Enlai: The Early Years*, 49. Lee notes that Christianity was "one of the basic features of Zhang's educational program."

The Critique of China's "National Character"

Following China's loss to Japan in the war of 1895, many Chinese elites were deeply troubled by the weakness of their country and their concern was reflected in the frequently asked question: "What is wrong with China?" Attempts to answer this question often revolved around the issue of China's "national character" (*guominxing* 國民性).[204] This discourse was fueled by China's slowness in coming to grips with modernity, especially when compared with neighboring Japan. It was also fed by the numerous critical evaluations of Chinese character made by foreigners, including missionaries. While Chinese intellectuals made some efforts to defend their culture, many of them accepted the criticism as valid and sought to draw on the resulting sense of shame for motivation to change. Thus, the Chinese response to modernity was complex, frequently generating a sense of inferiority at the same time that it empowered individuals with new ideas.

Liang Qichao was one of the first Chinese intellectuals to take up the issue of national character. In his essay "On the Origins of China's Weakness" written in 1900, he examined the subject of Chinese customs at length and identified six characteristics of the Chinese people that he believed kept them from building a strong nation. These included the

[204] Other equivalent terms included *guomin de pinge* (國民的品格), *guomin de xingge* (國民的性格), and *minzuxing* (民族性).

following: a *slavish mentality* (*nuxing* 奴性), which permeated politics and social relations and was a significant obstacle to achieving self-government; *ignorance* (*yumei* 愚昧) due to illiteracy and resulting in poorly informed citizens; *selfishness* (*weiwo* 唯我), meaning each person doing as they pleased rather than working together; *deceitfulness* (*haowei* 好偽), referring to corruption and lack of honesty; *timidity* (*qienuo* 怯懦), making it difficult for the Chinese to defend themselves in a dangerous world; and *passivity* (*wudong* 無動), which meant the Chinese easily allowed others to oppress them. Liang followed this essay with many other similar articles dealing with the issue of Chinese character.[205]

Liang Qichao was certainly not alone in asserting that deficiencies in Chinese character were to blame for China's weakness and suggesting ways to remedy them. Sun Yat-sen offered a similar list of Chinese shortcomings in 1917, which like Liang highlighted servility, ignorance and selfishness, while also adding lack of regard for freedom.[206] Sun's aim was to promote change in the Chinese character by means of political reform. Another example was the writer Lu Xun, whose famous 1921 work *The True Story of Ah Q* made its protagonist a vivid embodiment of the supposedly flawed Chinese character. Such a reading makes sense

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[205] Referred to in John Fitzgerald, *Awakening China: Politics, Culture, and Class in the Nationalist Revolution* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 117-18.
[206] Sun Zhongshan 孫中山, "Jianguo fanglüe 建國方略 [A Constructive Scheme for Our Country]," in *Sun Zhongshan xuanji* 孫中山選集 [Selected Works of Sun Zhongshan] (Beijing 北京: Renmin chubanshe 人民出版社, 1956), 170-77.

given Lu's professed aim of curing the weaknesses of the Chinese through literature.[207] And leading May Fourth intellectual Hu Shi, writing in 1929, identified the five great national enemies of the Chinese as poverty, disease, ignorance, corruption and disorder, which he viewed as a result of Chinese behavior rather than of the natural environment or imperialist aggression.[208] Hu's efforts in the area of cultural reform were obviously intended indirectly to ameliorate these problems.

Zhang Boling shared with these influential thinkers the conviction that Chinese national character suffered from deep defects, but he looked to modern education as the best way to achieve reform. He identified five major "illnesses" afflicting the Chinese: *foolishness* (*yumei* 愚昧), meaning an overly conservative temperament and lack of scientific knowledge leading to widespread superstition; *weakness* (*nuoruo* 懦弱), seen in an over-emphasis on refinement at the expense of martial qualities and the refusal of elites to engage in manual labor; *poverty* (*pinqiong* 貧窮) caused by frequent natural disasters, a lack of productivity, and pervasive corruption; *disunity* (*buhe* 不合), referring to an inability to organize and unite due to two thousand years of autocratic rule and a failure to understand that only the united are strong; and *selfishness* (*zisi* 自私), the

[207] Lu Xun 魯迅, "Zi xu 自序 [Author's Preface]," in *Lu Xun quanji* 魯迅全集 [Complete Works of Lu Xun] (Beijing 北京: Renmin chubanshe 人民出版社, 1981), 5.
[208] See Hu Shi 胡適, "Women zou na tiao lu? 我們走哪條路？[Which Road Should We Take?]," *Xinyue* 新月 [Crescent Moon] 2, no. 10 (1929).

most serious flaw of all, which places individual interests above those of the group and has a weak concept of the nation. Zhang's philosophy of education was specifically aimed at addressing these weaknesses with the following steps: an *emphasis on physical education* to counter physical weakness; an active *promotion of science* to dispel superstition and fight poverty; *group organization* (i.e. the formation of student groups) to overcome disunity; *moral education* to reduce selfishness; and the *cultivation of strength to save the nation* by inculcating patriotism.[209]

Modern Education and the YMCA at Nankai

Zhang's vision of modern education at Nankai shared a large degree of overlap with the philosophy of the YMCA and was no doubt in part influenced by it. The YMCA from early in its history developed what came to be called the "four-fold" program, an approach based on Christian notions of educating the whole person that aimed to build up young men physically, spiritually, mentally, and socially.[210] The YMCA secretaries in China actively propagated this four-fold program. For instance, when D. Willard Lyon spoke at the first meeting of the Tianjin YMCA in 1895, he

[209] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Sishi nian Nankai xuexiao zhi huigu 四十年南開學校之回顧 [A Look Back at Forty Years of Nankai School]," in *Zhang Boling jiaoyu yanlun xuanji* 張伯苓教育言論選集 [Selected Speeches of Zhang Boling on Education], 243-47.

[210] Hopkins, *History of the YMCA in North America*, 106. These four elements were often abbreviated to three—the physical, spiritual, and mental aspects of human nature, leaving out but assuming the social dimension. These three elements were the basis for the triangle that became part of the YMCA logo. "Spiritual" in the YMCA view referred to Christian faith and moral character.

described the organization as "a body of young men banded together to help other young men along the four lines of physical, social, mental, and spiritual improvement."[211] Zhang affirmed the effectiveness of the YMCA four-fold approach in cultivating wholeness of character among youth and considered it as helpful in realizing his own educational ideals.[212] In what follows, we will utilize these four categories to examine how Zhang promoted modernity through his educational work at Nankai and the part Christianity, as represented by the YMCA, played in these efforts.

Physical Education

Physical fitness and athletics were a prominent aspect of modern education at Nankai. Andrew Morris, in his interesting study on physical culture in Republican China titled *Marrow of the Nation*, points out that the Chinese developed numerous indigenous forms of physical endeavor over the course of their long history, from chariot riding and archery to wrestling and martial arts, though these were very limited in terms of social participation. Those still in existence at the dawn of the twentieth century were quickly displaced by modern forms of mass exercise and athletic competition imported from the West during the years of the late

[211] See Wu, "The Influence of the YMCA on the Development of Physical Education in China," 73-74. In Chinese the four-fold program was translated as *ti* 體 (physical), *qun* 群 (social), *zhi* 智 (mental), and *de* 德 (moral). Note that with this last term, the emphasis in the Chinese is more on the moral dimension than on the religious aspect.

[212] Hou Jie 侯杰 and Qin Fang 秦方, *Bainian jiazu: Zhang Boling, Zhang Pengchun, Zhang Xilu* 百年家族: 張伯苓, 張彭春, 張錫祿 [One Hundred Years of Family History: Zhang Boling, Zhang Pengchun, Zhang Xilu], 59.

Qing and early Republic.[213] This modern physical culture, popularly called *tiyu* 體育, was committed to inculcating discipline, improving health, increasing productivity, enhancing cooperation, and, above all, strengthening the nation. Further marks of modernity are evident in its rational structure, complex rules, rigorous training, and ties to global culture. Zhang Boling was a leading proponent of the new practices, which he believed would remedy what he regarded as a major deficiency in Chinese society: "Our citizens have weak bodies and lack energy; their work efficiency is low and their years of service short. While there are many reasons for this, the main one is that our citizens do not emphasize physical education."[214]

Zhang aggressively promoted modern sports at Nankai as part of his efforts to create a new Chinese citizen. Despite limited resources, by 1929 Nankai's campus had 15 basketball courts, five soccer fields, six volleyball courts, 17 tennis courts and two 400-meter tracks, which was unheard of among Chinese schools at the time.[215] Zhang explained the objective of his policy as follows: "… my reason for promoting exercise

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[213] Morris, *Marrow of the Nation: A History of Sport and Physical Culture in Republican China*, 61-66. China's martial arts tradition was one of the few categories of indigenous physical culture to undergo modernization and maintain a strong presence both in China and globally, albeit it on a much smaller scale than major global sports such as soccer.
[214] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Sishi nian Nankai xuexiao zhi huigu 四十年南開學校之回顧 [A Look Back at Forty Years of Nankai School]," in *Zhang Boling jiaoyu yanlun xuanji* 張伯苓教育言論選集 [Selected Speeches of Zhang Boling on Education], 244.
[215] Liang Jisheng 梁吉生, *Yungong yunneng, rixin yueyi: Nankai daxue xiaozhang Zhang Boling* 允公允能, 日新月異: 南開大學校長張伯苓 [Public Spirited and Capable, Changing Day and Night: Nankai University President Zhang Boling], 186.

was not only for school, but for society; not only for a small number of select students, but for the whole student body."[216] To this end, Zhang established minimum standards of physical fitness that all students were required to achieve and encouraged broad participation in intramural sports. Nankai also boasted a formidable athletics program, with school teams often taking the lion's share of trophies in interscholastic competition. Hu Shi remarked: "There is no doubt that, of all the non-missionary schools in China, Nankai has been the most famous and most successful school in athletics."[217]

The YMCA played a central role in Zhang's implementation of this program.[218] Three American YMCA secretaries taught physical education at Nankai on a regular basis during the institution's early years, and as mentioned previously, this is also when "Big Robbie" Robertson designed a modern athletic field and sports program for the school. Shortly after the 1911 Revolution, another American YMCA secretary named Meclog stayed at Nankai for more than a month to develop a comprehensive program of physical instruction and extracurricular athletic activity. Later Zhang

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[216] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Sishi nian Nankai xuexiao zhi huigu 四十年南開學校之回顧 [A Look Back at Forty Years of Nankai School]," in *Zhang Boling jiaoyu yanlun xuanji* 張伯苓教育言論選集 [Selected Speeches of Zhang Boling on Education], 244.

[217] Hu, "Chang Poling: Educator," 10.

[218] The earliest influence on Zhang in the area of physical education was his time at Beiyang Naval Academy, where he learned a variety of Western sports and fitness techniques. However, his reliance on the YMCA for assistance with physical education at Nankai indicates that the knowledge he gained during this period was fairly rudimentary. See Liang Jisheng 梁吉生, *Yungong yunneng, rixin yueyi: Nankai daxue xiaozhang Zhang Boling* 允公允能, 日新月異: 南開大學校長張伯苓 [Public Spirited and Capable, Changing Day and Night: Nankai University President Zhang Boling], 184.

hired Chinese staff with professional training from the YMCA in the area of physical education, starting in 1922 with an instructor for calisthenics, soccer, and track and field named Dong Shouyi.[219] The YMCA was the main vehicle in Republican China for disseminating the Anglo-American version of modern athletics, which focused on team sports with ball games and track and field. This was the dominant form of physical education at Nankai and by the end of the 1910s, had become the leading form of modern physical culture across China, decisively displacing the calisthenics and gymnastics (*ticao* 體操) imported from Germany and Sweden.[220] Zhang did not include any indigenous forms of sport in the program at Nankai, since in his view such exercises did not use "scientific" methods.[221]

The YMCA pioneered larger regional and national athletic events in China, which expanded geographical boundaries of identity for participants and produced large public spectacles.[222] These very modern phenomena represented another way in which the YMCA impacted

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[219] Liang Jisheng 梁吉生, *Yungong yunneng, rixin yueyi: Nankai daxue xiaozhang Zhang Boling* 允公允能, 日新月異: 南開大學校長張伯苓 [Public Spirited and Capable, Changing Day and Night: Nankai University President Zhang Boling], 193-94. Dong had studied at Springfield College, the YMCA training school in Springfield, Massachusetts.
[220] Morris, *Marrow of the Nation*, 17.
[221] Liang Jisheng 梁吉生, *Yungong yunneng, rixin yueyi: Nankai daxue xiaozhang Zhang Boling* 允公允能, 日新月異: 南開大學校長張伯苓 [Public Spirited and Capable, Changing Day and Night: Nankai University President Zhang Boling], 192.
[222] Morris, *Marrow of the Nation*. See especially Chapters 1 to 3.

Nankai, since Zhang eagerly involved his students in these activities.[223] As early as 1904, he led a team from Nankai to participate in the YMCA's annual citywide athletic meet in Tianjin, a tradition started in 1902 that by 1905 was drawing up to five thousand spectators.[224] When the YMCA held a large regional athletic meet for central China in 1907, Zhang took a group of students from Nankai all the way to Nanjing to attend. He did the same thing in 1910 when the YMCA organized China's first ever national-level athletic meet, again in Nanjing, which saw crowds of more than forty thousand people per day. Zhang also worked with the YMCA in founding the Far Eastern Athletic Association, which from 1913 onwards organized a major international athletic meet every two years for the nations of the Far East, and he took Nankai teams to compete on several occasions.[225]

Moral Education

Moral education was a vital part of Zhang's approach to modern training at Nankai. "The scope of education absolutely must not be limited to book learning or to knowledge learning," he said, "but must especially

[223] Wu, "The Influence of the YMCA on the Development of Physical Education in China," 112. Morris, *Marrow of the Nation*, 198.
[224] Wu, "The Influence of the YMCA on the Development of Physical Education in China," 97. See also "Report of C. H. Robertson," in *Annual Reports of Foreign Secretaries of the International Committee*, October 1905 to September 1906, 119.
[225] Liang Jisheng 梁吉生, *Yungong yunneng, rixin yueyi: Nankai daxue xiaozhang Zhang Boling* 允公允能, 日新月異: 南開大學校長張伯苓 [Public Spirited and Capable, Changing Day and Night: Nankai University President Zhang Boling], 208-13.

emphasize character education and moral education."[226] Indeed, because of his belief that morality was essential to human flourishing, Zhang referred to moral education as "the root of everything."[227] This strong emphasis on moral instruction contributed in important, albeit indirect ways to the spread of modernity in China. This connection is related in part to the greater complexity of modern societies, which requires higher levels of trust to function properly, as Anthony Giddens has noted.[228] Such trust is rooted in social capital, a sociological term that Francis Fukuyama has defined as "an instantiated informal norm that promotes cooperation between two or more individuals."[229] Social capital is generated in part by the moral ideals of a society, which is what Zhang was helping to strengthen.[230] In addition, Zhang's moral training advanced modernity by inculcating values and practices conducive to this new form of social organization, such as cultivation of personal discipline, respect for abstract rules of behavior and concern for the interests of the larger group and nation.

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[226] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Sishi nian Nankai xuexiao zhi huigu 四十年南開學校之回顧 [A Look Back at Forty Years of Nankai School]," in *Zhang Boling jiaoyu yanlun xuanji* 張伯苓教育言論選集 [Selected Speeches of Zhang Boling on Education], 246.

[227] Liang Jisheng 梁吉生, *Yungong yunneng, rixin yueyi: Nankai daxue xiaozhang Zhang Boling* 允公允能, 日新月異: 南開大學校長張伯苓 [Public Spirited and Capable, Changing Day and Night: Nankai University President Zhang Boling], 146.

[228] This aspect of modernity was mentioned as part of the larger theoretical discussion on the subject in Chapter One. For more on trust and modernity, see Anthony Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990).

[229] Francis Fukuyama, "Social Capital and Civil Society," in *IMF Working Paper* (Washington DC: IMF Institute, 2000), 3.

[230] See Robin Gill, *Churchgoing and Christian Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

Zhang utilized various means to inculcate moral character in his students. The most basic was the threat of expulsion for those who broke rules prohibiting such vices as smoking, drinking, gambling, and visiting prostitutes. A simple but effective technique he found for encouraging discipline was to hang a large mirror next to the entrance of the main building on campus with a list of reminders about proper appearance written on it. As students entered the building, they would see their reflection in the mirror along with the reminders: face clean, hair combed, clothes tidy, nose blown, head high, shoulders even, chest extended, back straight; not haughty, not violent, not idle; amiable, quiet, serious. However, the primary method Zhang used to form character was a weekly lecture on moral cultivation, which he described in this way: "I expounded on how to carry oneself in the world, on seeking learning and on patriotism, and spoke many warnings so that students would be well able to follow the proper way and avoid mistakes."[231] Chae-jin Lee reports,

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[231] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Sishi nian Nankai xuexiao zhi huigu 四十年南開學校之回顧 [A Look Back at Forty Years of Nankai School]," in *Zhang Boling jiaoyu yanlun xuanji* 張伯苓教育言論選集 [Selected Speeches of Zhang Boling on Education], 246. Zhang occasionally made reference to the Bible in these lectures, but just as often quoted from works in the Confucian canon, since his goal was moral instruction rather than proselytism. He also promoted religious freedom at his school. When Cai Yuanpei visited Nankai in 1917, he specifically commended the school for allowing freedom of belief, rather than forcing students to accept Yan Xiu's Confucianism or Zhang Boling's Christianity. See Nankai daxue xiaoshi bianxiezu 南開大學校史編寫祖 [Nankai University School History Compilation Group], ed., *Nankai daxue xiaoshi 1919-1949* 南開大學校史 1919－1949 [Nankai University School History 1919-1949], 50.

"Zhang Boling's eloquent weekly speeches mesmerized Nankai students, and many remembered them for the rest of their lives."[232]

Christianity fit well with Zhang's focus on the moral dimension of modern education, given its insistence on disciplined moral conduct, belief in universal ethical principles and commitment to the common good. Thus, it comes as no surprise that Zhang supported the formation of a YMCA student group at Nankai, which became the primary source of direct Christian influence at the school.[233] The group, which will be described in greater detail in a subsequent part of this chapter, had Bible studies, morning prayers, discussion groups, and special revival meetings. One sign of the impact that this moral training had on the students involved in the group can be found in a statement they issued early in 1912 just after the founding of the Republic. In it, they expressed deep concern over the moral decadence of the younger generation and urged the founding of more YMCA groups in government schools across China to improve the situation: "We hope the Christian Church will quickly recognize this situation and specifically establish YMCAs in each school…. Then apart from physical and intellectual education, moral education could also be given attention. By means of Bible study and consecration meetings, these groups could reform students' current behavior and cultivate their

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[232] Lee, *Zhou Enlai: The Early Years*, 45.
[233] Hou Jie 侯杰 and Qin Fang 秦方, *Bainian jiazu: Zhang Boling, Zhang Pengchun, Zhang Xilu* 百年家族: 張伯苓, 張彭春, 張錫祿 [One Hundred Years of Family History: Zhang Boling, Zhang Pengchun, Zhang Xilu], 59.

spiritual natures, and by engaging in mutual discussion, they could train student youth in moral matters."[234]

The YMCA had a major impact on another aspect of moral instruction that Zhang actively embraced at Nankai, namely the notion of good sportsmanship. "The sense of sportsmanship has been one of the most valuable lessons that I learned in my contacts with the West," Zhang remarked, "and I have tried to make it basic in my system of education."[235] The idea that sports could serve as a powerful tool for building moral character and teamwork among youth was an important element of the YMCA ethos, and was rooted in the Christian morality that animated the group's activities.[236] Liang Jisheng reports that cheating and a disregard for the rules were rampant during the early phase of modern athletics in China and that Zhang saw this as reflecting corrupt aspects of the broader society that he was determined to change. To this end, he used every opportunity he had to instruct Nankai students in the principles of sportsmanship, such as urging them not to use improper means to take advantage of opponents and to value character more than winning or losing. He also developed a list of 21 practical rules for Nankai sports

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[234] "Tianjin Nankai zhongxuetang Jidujiao Qingnianhui dui wai xuanyan shu 天津南開中學堂基督教青年會對外宣言書 [Tianjin Nankai Middle School YMCA Declaration]," *Tianjin qingnian bao* 天津青年報 (Tianjin Youth News) 11, no. 6 (1 June 1912): 5.

[235] "Chang Po Ling: 'I See a Future Full of Bright Hopes,'" 5. John Hersey, the well-known author of the book *Hiroshima* whose father served with the YMCA in Tianjin, wrote this brief and interesting (but undated) biography of Zhang's life.

[236] Hopkins, *History of the YMCA in North America*, 264-67. Wu, "The Influence of the YMCA on the Development of Physical Education in China," 110.

teams that spelled out clearly how athletes ought to behave.[237] Zhang's attempt to influence society by teaching his students the idea of fair play was one small and indirect way of inculcating in them the modern notion of respect for the rule of law.

<u>Intellectual Education</u>

Zhang made science a central part of the intellectual dimension of modern education at Nankai from the time he founded the school, since he regarded it as indispensable to achieving his goal of reforming and modernizing Chinese culture. "Our nation's science is undeveloped, our material culture is inferior to others," he said on the occasion of Nankai's fortieth anniversary. "So when I first started my school, I did my utmost to promote science. The purpose was to open people's minds, to get rid of superstition and by this means to elicit the interest of my compatriots in science and advance the development of our material civilization."[238] To this end, starting as early as 1904, Zhang bought scientific equipment for his high school so that students could learn to do experiments and he continued to add to it over the years so that every student could

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[237] Liang Jisheng 梁吉生, *Yungong yunneng, rixin yueyi: Nankai daxue xiaozhang Zhang Boling* 允公允能, 日新月異: 南開大學校長張伯苓 [Public Spirited and Capable, Changing Day and Night: Nankai University President Zhang Boling], 201-05.
[238] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Sishi nian Nankai xuexiao zhi huigu 四十年南開學校之回顧 [A Look Back at Forty Years of Nankai School]," in *Zhang Boling jiaoyu yanlun xuanji* 張伯苓教育言論選集 [Selected Speeches of Zhang Boling on Education], 244.

participate.[239] Thus, Zhang was an early pioneer of science education in China. The majority of Chinese intellectuals, with their own native tradition of science, were slow to embrace the more rigorous Western empiricism and most Chinese schools during the late Qing did not teach Western science. This state of affairs only began to change more broadly after the 1911 Revolution, when New Culture and May Fourth thinkers attacked Chinese traditions as outdated and promoted popular acceptance of Western science.[240]

Zhang's commitment to promoting science and eradicating superstition was not a result of his Protestant faith, but there is no doubt he considered Christianity to be compatible with these goals. Obviously a crucial influence on Zhang's thinking in this regard was his interaction with the YMCA mentioned earlier, including his attendance at Robertson's science lectures and his reliance on Robertson and other YMCA secretaries to teach some of his science courses at Nankai.[241] Even before his contact with the YMCA, Zhang reports that exposure to Western science as a youth at Beiyang Naval Academy had helped lead him toward belief in God. "On

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[239] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Sishi nian Nankai xuexiao zhi huigu 四十年南開學校之回顧 [A Look Back at Forty Years of Nankai School]," in *Zhang Boling jiaoyu yanlun xuanji* 張伯苓教育言論選集 [Selected Speeches of Zhang Boling on Education], 244-45. This practice was rare even in Western high schools at the time.

[240] For more on China's native tradition of science and how it was displaced by Western science, see Benjamin A. Elman, *A Cultural History of Modern Science in China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006). Also, for background on the expanded influence of Western science during the May Fourth period and the resulting rise of scientism in China, see Danny Kwok, *Scientism in Chinese Thought, 1900-1950* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965).

[241] See pages 406-410 in this chapter.

studying the sciences, I found order prevailing everywhere," he said. "This helped me to a vague conception of the Supreme Power."[242] After he converted to Christianity, Zhang came to the conclusion that human beings are made up of body, mind, and spirit, each with its own particular domain. While the body could perform physical tasks and the mind could explore intellectual and scientific questions, he believed that only the human spirit could come into contact with God through sincere faith, since God is spirit.[243] Thus, he saw Christianity and science as compatible, but pertaining to different spheres.

Social Education

A striking feature of Zhang's approach to modern education at Nankai was his fostering of extracurricular activities and student organizations from early in the school's history. This was a dramatic change from China's traditional *sishu* 私塾 (private academies), which were concerned almost exclusively with transmitting knowledge of the Confucian classics and teaching essay writing skills.[244] Zhang's purpose in encouraging such voluntary groups was to strengthen teamwork and cooperation among the students, since he believed these qualities were

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[242] Barnett, "Chang Po Ling's Fifty Years with the YMCA," 3.

[243] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Zhang Boling xiansheng zishu xindao zhi liyou 張伯苓先生自述信道之理由 [Zhang Boling's Own Account of Why He Has Become a Christian], *Zhang Boling jiaoyu lunzhu xuan* 張伯苓教育論著選 [Selected Works of Zhang Boling on Education], 4.

[244] Thomas H. C. Lee, *Education in Traditional China: A History* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 21-23.

woefully lacking in the broader society. At the same time, these student organizations were seedbeds of modernity, providing a training ground for students in the practices of democracy, civil society, and a modern public sphere. Moreover, the sheer diversity of groups encouraged them to make choices according to their own preferences and desires and thus nurtured individualism.

A special issue of *Nankai Weekly* published in 1924 to commemorate the school's twentieth anniversary gives some indication of the impressive scale and vigor of this dimension of the Nankai community. The section on extracurricular organizations listed more than thirty different student societies, which were classified according to four main categories. The "academic" types included such groups as the Education Research Association, the Literature Association, the Science Association, and the Debate Club. The "enterprise" heading listed major student organizations like the Nankai University Students' Association, the Alumni Association, the Women's Self-Governing Association, and the student YMCA group. The "entertainment" category included the school band, the Glee Club, and the New Drama Club. And the "athletics" grouping had the School-Wide Athletic Association and specific intramural groupings for soccer, basketball, baseball, and tennis.[245]

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[245] "Liu nian lai zhi Nankai daxue 六年來之南開大學 [Nankai University During the Past Six Years]," *Nankai zhoukan: Nankai xuexiao ershi zhounian jinian hao* 南開週刊: 南開學校二十週年紀念號 [Nankai Weekly: Nankai School Twentieth Anniversary Commemorative Edition] (1924): 5-7.

The student chapter of the YMCA at Nankai was a dominant presence in the school's extracurricular life, as even a cursory reading of the twentieth anniversary issue of *Nankai Weekly* mentioned above makes abundantly clear. Five major clubs at the school provided an account of their activities in the publication, ranging in length from two to five pages each. The YMCA summary, on the other hand, which had both a history of the group until 1924 and information about its current work, totaled 29 pages! Hou Jie observes that the YMCA group "… not only trained the students in organizing and self-government, but at the same time strengthened their ability to serve society and their spirit of unity."[246] The impressive development of the group at Nankai reflects Zhang's support and his firm belief that Christianity could contribute in significant ways both socially and spiritually to the life of the school.

Zhang founded the YMCA student group at Nankai in 1909, probably soon after his baptism, which occurred in July 1909. He put his younger brother, Zhang Pengchun 張彭春, whom he had led to Christian faith that year, in charge of the group.[247] It was initially christened the

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[246] Hou Jie 侯杰 and Qin Fang 秦方, *Bainian jiazu: Zhang Boling, Zhang Pengchun, Zhang Xilu* 百年家族: 張伯苓, 張彭春, 張錫祿 [One Hundred Years of Family History: Zhang Boling, Zhang Pengchun, Zhang Xilu], 59.

[247] Hou Jie 侯杰 and Qin Fang 秦方, *Bainian jiazu: Zhang Boling, Zhang Pengchun, Zhang Xilu* 百年家族: 張伯苓, 張彭春, 張錫祿 [One Hundred Years of Family History: Zhang Boling, Zhang Pengchun, Zhang Xilu], 59. Roscoe Hersey, a YMCA secretary in Tianjin closely involved with Nankai Middle School, reports in 1909 that Zhang won his younger brother and his father to Christianity. See "Report of R. M. Hersey," in *Annual Reports of Foreign Secretaries of the International Committee*, October 1908 to September 1909, 196. Since Zhang did not return from travel in the United States until February 1909, his

Bible Reading Association (*Dushengjinghui* 讀聖經會), but in 1910 was renamed the Christianity Research Association (*Yejiao yanjiuhui* 耶教研究會), and consisted of about a dozen students who met weekly in Zhang Pengchun's office to study the Bible.[248] The group encountered some early resistance when fellow students formed a Righteous Great Light Society (*Zhengda guangming hui* 正大光明會) in an effort to oppose them.[249] But Zhang and the others successfully defended their Christian beliefs and, as

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brother must have converted to Christianity sometime shortly after this time. It may well be that Zhang made plans to start the group over the summer and then launched it in September at the beginning of the new school year, though this is speculation. Interestingly, no mention is made of the Association chapter started by Gailey at the school in 1904 (see Garrett, *Social Reformers in Urban China: The Chinese YMCA, 1895-1926*, 95, 102). It would appear that this earlier group was short-lived.

[248] Hou Jie 侯杰 and Qin Fang 秦方, *Bainian jiazu: Zhang Boling, Zhang Pengchun, Zhang Xilu* 百年家族: 張伯苓, 張彭春, 張錫祿 [One Hundred Years of Family History: Zhang Boling, Zhang Pengchun, Zhang Xilu], 59. Zhang Pengchun was born in 1892, making him sixteen years younger than Zhang Boling, and seventeen years old at the time he helped found this Bible study group. He had just graduated from Nankai Middle School in 1908, after which he spent a year studying at a Chinese college in Baoding. In the fall of 1910, he left for overseas study, first at Clark University and then at Columbia University. Thus, it would appear that during this transition year, he was helping out at Nankai and also preparing to take the Tsinghua exam that landed him a scholarship for overseas study. See Hou Jie 侯杰 and Qin Fang 秦方, *Bainian jiazu: Zhang Boling, Zhang Pengchun, Zhang Xilu* 百年家族: 張伯苓, 張彭春, 張錫祿 [One Hundred Years of Family History: Zhang Boling, Zhang Pengchun, Zhang Xilu], 193. The account of the Nankai YMCA's history that appeared in the twentieth anniversary edition of the *Nankai Weekly* says the group started with only six or seven members, none of whom were baptized. See "Zhongxuebu Qingnianhui lüeshi 中學部青年會略史 [A Brief History of the Middle School YMCA]," *Nankai zhoukan: Nankai xuexiao ershi zhounian jinian hao* 南開週刊: 南開學校二十週年紀念號 [Nankai Weekly: Nankai School Twentieth Anniversary Commemorative Edition](1924): 5. Apparently when the group first began, it did not have official ties to the YMCA, though it made a seemless transition to that status in 1912. It is not clear why the group started out without such a link, but one likely reason is that in 1909 the Tianjin YMCA was still controlled by Westerners, whereas three years later the board was already entirely in Chinese hands, making Zhang more comfortable with the idea of a direct connection.

[249] Little information about the Righteous Great Light Society is given, but likely it was oriented toward defending traditional Chinese values, since the Qing dynasty was still in power. It appears that after debating with the Christians and failing to discredit their beliefs, the group gave up, since there is no further record of their activity at Nankai.

a result, were greatly strengthened in their faith. By 1911, the number of members had grown to thirteen, and eight students were baptized.[250]

With the founding of the Republic in 1912, the group grew to more than fifty members and became a student association of the YMCA on a trial basis. Three years later, its status was official and the organization had begun to blossom.[251] Roscoe Hersey, a YMCA secretary in Tianjin, captured the vitality of the group well in his 1915 annual report: "The record of the Nan Kai School Student Association stands out as one of the triumphs of the past year. In this government school there has been a most earnest group of Christian workers who have proved that Christianity can be enthusiastically proclaimed without the supervision or help of the foreigner."[252] Membership in the group increased dramatically, reaching 280 in 1916 and peaking at more than three hundred in 1919. This made the Nankai Association one of the largest student groups on campus.[253]

Zhang assisted the development of the Nankai YMCA in a variety of ways. On the administrative front, he provided the group with its own

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[250] "Zhongxuebu Qingnianhui lüeshi 中學部青年會略史 [A Brief History of the Middle School YMCA]," 5.
[251] "Zhongxuebu Qingnianhui lüeshi 中學部青年會略史 [A Brief History of the Middle School YMCA]," 6.
[252] "Report of R. M. Hersey," in *Annual Reports of Foreign Secretaries of the International Committee*, October 1914 to September 1915, 481.
[253] The impact of Christianity on Nankai during this period was further heightened by the fact that some members of the faculty were active Christians who exerted indirect influence on the students, including Zhang Pengchun, Ma Qianli, and Kang Nairu. See Lee, *Zhou Enlai: The Early Years*, 49.

office in the auditorium building.[254] He also actively supported YMCA activities on campus. For instance, in 1920 he hosted at his home fifteen student members of the organization who were candidates for baptism and spoke to them about the importance of their decision.[255] And in 1921, at a special meeting celebrating the sixth anniversary of the group becoming an official YMCA student association, Zhang gave a speech on the great need for Christianizing Chinese society.[256] The Nankai Association eventually built an impressive organizational structure, with ten different administrative divisions covering such diverse areas as Bible study, athletics, a library, and social service. However, when strong anti-Christian sentiment swept through China in the early 1920s, group membership declined sharply, with only 150 students on the rolls in 1924. Even with this reduced number, though, the YMCA was still one of Nankai's largest and most active student organizations.[257]

The Nankai YMCA, more than any other student group on campus, initiated members into the practices of a modern civil society by encouraging self-organized service. The Association promoted service not only through the group's numerous religious activities, but also by means

[254] Lee, *Zhou Enlai: The Early Years*, 49.
[255] "Zhongxuebu Qingnianhui lüeshi 中學部青年會略史 [A Brief History of the Middle School YMCA]," 15.
[256] Hou Jie 侯杰 and Qin Fang 秦方, *Bainian jiazu: Zhang Boling, Zhang Pengchun, Zhang Xilu* 百年家族: 張伯苓, 張彭春, 張錫祿 [One Hundred Years of Family History: Zhang Boling, Zhang Pengchun, Zhang Xilu], 64.
[257] "Zhongxuebu Qingnianhui lüeshi 中學部青年會略史 [A Brief History of the Middle School YMCA]," 8-9.

of practical service to those outside the group. "Serving society is the calling of our generation," wrote the author of the twentieth anniversary history.[258] Though constrained by the demands of their studies, group members still took such ideals seriously and actively sought opportunties to help those in need. On campus, they provided numerous forms of assistance to new students, offered tutoring for struggling classmates, and gave Mandarin instruction to those who came from regions of China that spoke another dialect. Off campus, they started an "open air school" for the poor children that idled away their time playing near the school gate and also established a refugee relief group to help the needy when disaster struck, which seemed to be an all too frequent occurrence.[259]

Patriotism and Protestantism

The final element of Zhang's approach to the social dimension of modern education at Nankai was nationalism, which was the macroscopic complement to the strong sense of teamwork and cooperation that he cultivated within the Nankai community. Zhang described his efforts to inculcate patriotism among his students in the following manner: "Regarding international affairs, great world events, and the reasons for China's extreme weakness, as well as how to remedy this situation, I

[258] "Zhongxuebu Qingnianhui lüeshi 中學部青年會略史 [A Brief History of the Middle School YMCA]," 24.
[259] "Zhongxuebu Qingnianhui lüeshi 中學部青年會略史 [A Brief History of the Middle School YMCA]," 23-29.

frequently admonished and instructed my students in order to infuse them with a national consciousness and strengthen their concept of the nation."[260] It would not be going to far to say that even the other aspects of Zhang's philosophy of modern education discussed above—physical education, moral education, science, and group organization on campus—can be seen as primarily concerned with the goal of strengthening the nation, albeit more indirectly. This comes as no surprise, given that Zhang's reason for entering the field of education in the first place was to strengthen China and put an end to the country's humiliation at the hands of foreigners.

Zhang blamed China's weak concept of the nation on the centrality of the family under the traditional Confucian order. He expressed this sentiment clearly in 1916 at Nankai, on the same day he instituted a policy requiring students to bow three times to the national flag during their weekly moral lecture: "In the past our nation relied on filial piety to rule all under heaven. This was quite correct. Since filial piety is the essence of being human, to lose this meant the decline of morality. However, the extension of this principle frequently led to the mistake of emphasizing the concept of family at the expense of concern for the broader society."[261]

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[260] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Sishi nian Nankai xuexiao zhi huigu 四十年南開學校之回顧 [A Look Back at Forty Years of Nankai School]," in *Zhang Boling jiaoyu yanlun xuanji* 張伯苓教育言論選集 [Selected Speeches of Zhang Boling on Education], 247.
[261] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Tan aiguo 談愛國 [Discussing Patriotism]," in *Zhang Boling jiaoyu yanlun xuanji* 張伯苓教育言論選集 [Selected Speeches of Zhang Boling on

In a later talk, shortly after his return in 1918 from more than a year at Columbia University, Zhang echoed the argument of Liang Qichao in suggesting that to solve this problem, the old system would have to be dismantled and then rebuilt. "The old family system could be called a jumble of indistinguishable units incapable of becoming a republic," he argued, "so today we should break it up and turn people into individuals, then bring them back together again as a society, as a nation."[262]

Yet Zhang was also convinced that a reconstructed Chinese familism could play an important part in unifying China as a nation. He acknowledged that the Chinese people needed a common bond to unify them, but saw race, religion, and society as inadequate for the task. Instead, once again making arguments similar to those of Liang Qichao, Zhang declared that patriotism was the best way to accomplish this goal and could become a form of modern-day filial piety, as it were. "Today we need to broaden familism," he said, "so that with regards to the country, this devout filial piety can become faithfulness to the nation. Then, having this patriotic heart, the people of our nation, whether from north, south,

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Education], ed. Wang Wenjun 王文俊, et al. (Tianjin 天津: Nankai daxue chubanshe 南開大學出版社, 1984), 30.

[262] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Fang Mei ganxiang 訪美感想 [Reflections on Visiting America]," in *Zhang Boling jiaoyu yanlun xuanji* 張伯苓教育言論選集 [Selected Speeches of Zhang Boling on Education], ed. Wang Wenjun 王文俊, et al. (Tianjin 天津: Nankai daxue chubanshe 南開大學出版社, 1984), 62. Liang Qichao, in his essays of the early 1900s calling for a new kind of Chinese citizen, advocated replacing traditional identities based primarily on family, locality, and occupation with a new individual identity built first and foremost on the foundation of the nation-state. See Hao Chang, *Liang Ch'i-Ch'ao and Intellectual Transition in China, 1890-1907* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), 155.

east, or west, can be said to have a common bond that ties them together."[263] Zhang considered it the duty of educators like himself to inculcate such patriotism in their students: "I believe the most important purpose of China's new education is to train young people to serve society," he told the audience, "… we should teach young people not only to serve their families or those they have ties with, but to serve their country."[264]

Zhang considered Christianity to be highly compatible with the kind of nationalism that he sought to instill in his Nankai students, and in a speech at the Peking Union Medical Center in 1925, referred to his own Christian experience to support this view. Speaking at the height of the anti-Christian movement in China, Zhang opened his remarks with a bold declaration: "The reason I became a Christian is because of my

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[263] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Aiguoxin shi lianhe guomin de gonggong shengsuo 愛國心是聯合國民的公共繩索 [Patriotism is the Public Tie that Unites Citizens]," in *Zhang Boling jiaoyu yanlun xuanji* 張伯苓教育言論選集 [Selected Speeches of Zhang Boling on Education], ed. Wang Wenjun 王文俊, et al. (Tianjin 天津: Nankai daxue chubanshe 南開大學出版社, 1984), 58. Liang Qichao likewise rejected ethnic identity as a legitimate basis for the nation, and spoke of Chinese "familism" (*jiazuzhuyi* 家族主義) as being functionally compatible with modern nationalism. See Fitzgerald, *Awakening China: Politics, Culture, and Class in the Nationalist Revolution*, 86-87. See also Charlotte Furth, "Intellectual Change: From the Reform Movement to the May Fourth Movement, 1895-1920," in *An Intellectual History of Modern China*, ed. Merle Goldman and Leo Ou-fan Lee (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 53-54.

[264] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Aiguoxin shi lianhe guomin de gonggong shengsuo 愛國心是聯合國民的公共繩索 [Patriotism is the Public Tie that Unites Citizens]," in *Zhang Boling jiaoyu yanlun xuanji* 張伯苓教育言論選集 [Selected Speeches of Zhang Boling on Education], 58.

patriotism."[265] He then described his conversion to Christianity to explain what he meant: "… I often read *His Life* (*Yesu yanxinglu* 耶穌言行錄), and seeing how Jesus lived moved me deeply. This book helped me a great deal, and because of the encouragement it gave me, I did not give up half way, but overcame all kinds of difficulties to continue promoting education, in other words, to change our Chinese people…. It was because I received the help of Jesus Christ that I started to believe in Christianity." [266] Zhang's logic here is straightforward: he accepted Christianity because it helped him to persevere in his work of education, which in turn was motivated by his patriotic desire to modernize China. Therefore, he concluded unequivocally, "If we speak fairly, Christianity has no point of conflict with patriotism."[267]

Zhang went on to address a hypothetical objection to Protestant faith, and in the process further revealed the harmony he saw existing between Christianity and nationalism. This objection argued that Christianity was not suitable for China, because China was weaker than other countries and needed to grow strong through nationalism, whereas

[265] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Jidujiao yu aiguo 基督教與愛國 [Christianity and Patriotism]," in *Zhang Boling jiaoyu yanlun xuanji* 張伯苓教育言論選集 [Selected Speeches of Zhang Boling on Education], ed. Wang Wenjun 王文俊, et al. (Tianjin 天津: Nankai daxue chubanshe 南開大學出版社, 1984), 143.
[266] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Jidujiao yu aiguo 基督教與愛國 [Christianity and Patriotism]," in *Zhang Boling jiaoyu yanlun xuanji* 張伯苓教育言論選集 [Selected Speeches of Zhang Boling on Education], 144.
[267] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Jidujiao yu aiguo 基督教與愛國 [Christianity and Patriotism]," in *Zhang Boling jiaoyu yanlun xuanji* 張伯苓教育言論選集 [Selected Speeches of Zhang Boling on Education], 144.

the message of Christianity was one of love that lacked any concept of the nation. Zhang's reply left little doubt where he stood: "But ladies and gentlemen, please know that the Christianity I am speaking about today, which is the real meaning of Christianity, is not only talking about theology and praying to God. We must also use the power of Christianity to change society and make the position of our nation not inferior to that of other countries."[268]

Zhang's response suggests that for him the value of Christianity was as much in its practical power to change Chinese society and make China a strong nation as it was in the spiritual ideas on which it was founded. This was likely also the understanding of Christianity that was predominant within the Nankai YMCA group. It reflected the pragmatic approach of the YMCA as an organization led by laymen that was more concerned with addressing concrete social problems than engaging in deep theological reflection. The danger, of course, was that Christianity would end up being reduced to little more than a divinely sanctioned path to national strength, thereby subverting both its spiritual vision and reformative power.

[268] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Jidujiao yu aiguo 基督教與愛國 [Christianity and Patriotism]," in *Zhang Boling jiaoyu yanlun xuanji* 張伯苓教育言論選集 [Selected Speeches of Zhang Boling on Education], 144.

Nankai, Democracy, and Internationalism

The nationalism that Zhang promoted at Nankai did not advocate blind support for a powerful state, but was deeply committed to the modern ideal of democracy and limits on the exercise of state authority. Zhang demonstrated his support for democratic principles at Nankai by administering the school in a very transparent manner and encouraging student self-government.[269] In his mind there were close connections between democracy and Christianity and he discussed these in an address at the Hotel Savoy in New York in 1918. Zhang recounted in this talk what a "great scholar" in Tianjin had told him in 1903 about Christianity and its likely impact: "He said that if this new doctrine spread in China then there would be no room for the emperor to exist, because in the teaching of Jesus Christ you would find the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. He was quite right. This new idea of democracy, of equality, came to us from the teaching of Christianity."[270] Zhang then pointed out that while Confucius said government ought to be *for* the people, and that it ought to be *of* some of the people, he never said it should be *by* the people. So

[269] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Zai Nankai xuexiao quanti jiaozhiyuanhuishang de kaihuici 在南開學校全體教職員會上的開會詞 [Opening Words at a Meeting of All Nankai School Faculty]," in *Zhang Boling jiaoyu yanlun xuanji* 張伯苓教育言論選集 [Selected Speeches of Zhang Boling on Education], ed. Wang Wenjun 王文俊, et al. (Tianjin 天津: Nankai daxue chubanshe 南開大學出版社, 1984), 79-82.
[270] Chang Po-Ling, "The Struggle for Democracy in China," *The Missionary Review of the World* (May 1918): 348. Quite possibly the "great scholar" Zhang refers to was his mentor and patron, Yan Xiu.

Zhang concluded, "His conception of democracy is not so full, not so strong as in the teaching of Christianity."[271]

Zhang's support for modern notions of democracy and his conviction that these ideas had important roots in Christianity no doubt influenced the students at Nankai, particularly those in the YMCA group. Evidence of this can be found in a statement published by the chapter soon after the advent of the Republic in 1912, which reflected the same intersection of Christianity, democracy, and the nation so prominent in Zhang's thinking. In it, the students expressed deep concern about the sustainability of the Republic in light of the "moral corruption" of Chinese society and customs: "The reason a republican political system is attractive and valuable is because of its spirit, not because of its structure, and this spirit depends upon the morality of the people," the document said.[272] After lamenting the moral decadence of China's masses and educated youth, it came to its conclusion: "What is the remedy for this situation? To place within them a civilized religion."[273] Needless to say, the religion they had in mind was Christianity.

Zhang advocated internationalism as another vital restraint on unbridled patriotism. He told one interviewer, "I don't want our young men to be selfish, nor do I want my country to be motivated by a selfish

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[271] Chang, "The Struggle for Democracy in China," 349.
[272] "Tianjin Nankai zhongxuetang Jidujiao Qingnianhui dui wai xuanyan shu 天津南開中學堂基督教青年會對外宣言書 [Tianjin Nankai Middle School YMCA Declaration]," 4.
[273] "Tianjin Nankai Zhongxuetang Jidujiao Qingnianhui dui wai xuanyan shu 天津南開中學堂基督教青年會對外宣言書 [Tianjin Nankai Middle School YMCA Declaration]," 5.

nationalism."[274] He was critical of those who believed patriotism justified hating or even killing foreigners, viewing such an attitude as harmful both to the individual and the nation.[275] Instead, Zhang worked hard to instill a progressive form of nationalism through his work at Nankai, one with a strong global orientation: "Although our school instruction aims to unite the power of our citizens, even more do we desire to make Chinese youth not just good citizens of China, but healthy members of the world. Given how close national borders are today, we should think about how to teach youth to make the harmony of all nations their goal."[276]

Zhang's cosmopolitan approach to education helps to explain why many Nankai students went overseas for graduate study, and why a considerable number entered the field of diplomacy.[277] Zhang believed that Christianity provided valuable resources for fostering this kind of international patriotism, as he noted in his 1925 speech at the Peking Union Medical Center mentioned earlier: "Therefore, I believe that patriotism should not be narrow, but should use a broad method to save

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[274] Frank B. Lenz, "The Mystery of Personality," Box 30, Folder: Chang Po-Ling, Biographical Records, 435.

[275] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Jidujiao yu aiguo 基督教與愛國 [Christianity and Patriotism]," in *Zhang Boling jiaoyu yanlun xuanji* 張伯苓教育言論選集 [Selected Speeches of Zhang Boling on Education], 144.

[276] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Aiguoxin shi lianhe guomin de gonggong shengsuo 愛國心是聯合國民的公共繩索 [Patriotism is the Public Tie that Unites Citizens]," in *Zhang Boling jiaoyu yanlun xuanji* 張伯苓教育言論選集 [Selected Speeches of Zhang Boling on Education], 58.

[277] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Sishi nian Nankai xuexiao zhi huigu 四十年南開學校之回顧 [A Look Back at Forty Years of Nankai School]," in *Zhang Boling jiaoyu yanlun xuanji* 張伯苓教育言論選集 [Selected Speeches of Zhang Boling on Education], 253.

the country. What method is that? None other than the way of using Christianity, as I have been saying."[278] The YMCA played a major part in shaping Zhang's cosmopolitan outlook, since it not only modeled Christian internationalism, but also connected him with a large and sophisticated global network that he drew on extensively.

Zhang's democratic and cosmopolitan ideals were put to the test during the difficult years of the 1930s and 1940s. Though he genuinely desired international harmony, Zhang was certainly not a pacifist, and he wholeheartedly supported the war against Japan after their invasion of China in 1937. Adapting his democratic ideals to the reality of Chinese domestic politics was a far messier business. In the bitter rivalry between the Nationalists and the Communists during this period, Zhang threw his support squarely behind the KMT and worked vigorously to promote national unity under their leadership against the Japanese.[279] He was a loyal defender of Chiang Kaishek, despite the Generalissimo's frequent failure to uphold democratic principles and his consistent reluctance to forcefully challenge Japanese aggression.[280] For Zhang, the Nationalists

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[278] Zhang Boling 張伯苓, "Jidujiao yu aiguo 基督教與愛國 [Christianity and Patriotism]," in *Zhang Boling jiaoyu yanlun xuanji* 張伯苓教育言論選集 [Selected Speeches of Zhang Boling on Education], 144.

[279] For instance, when Zhang was elected deputy speaker of the PPC in 1938, he gave a speech in which he made a very powerful and moving appeal for unity. See Sun, "Chang Poling of Nankai," 3.

[280] Zhang first met Chiang in 1930, and from that time on strongly endorsed him. Zhang influenced one of Tianjin's major newspapers, *Da gong bao* (大公報), to shift from opposing Chiang to supporting him. When Marshall Zhang Xueliang 張學良 kidnapped Chiang in 1936 during the famous Xi'an Incident, Zhang Boling sent important cables to both Marshall Zhang (with whom he had good relations) and Zhou Enlai (his former

were the legitimate rulers of China and their vision of a democratic and modern nation, tenous though it often was, represented the best hope for the future of the country. While Zhang must have been troubled by some of Chiang's policies and even more by the KMT's deep corruption during the Chongqing years, he likely attributed this primarily to China's difficult external environment. His positive view of Chiang changed only after his ouster from Nankai in 1948 and was dramatically evident in his decision not to go to Taiwan in 1949.

Christianity and the Problem of Modern Chinese Identity

In concluding this section, we return briefly to the important question of China's "national character," this time to consider the impact that Christianity has had upon this discourse. Lydia Liu, in her influential study *Translingual Practice*, examines the issue of how the translation of modern terms into Chinese, often via Japanese works, shaped the development of Chinese modernity. Part of her work deals with the missionary critique of Chinese character and how it affected China's preeminent modern writer Lu Xun. She refers in particular to the book *Chinese Characteristics* by the American missionary Arthur Smith, which was the most influential of the missionary treatises about the Chinese and

student), urging that Chiang be released. Zhang also spoke frequently with Zhou Enlai during the war years in Chongqing, when both were members of the PPC, and requested that Zhou use his influence with Mao to encourage CCP support for Chiang's leadership. See Sun, "Chang Poling of Nankai," 3. Also see Lee, *Zhou Enlai: The Early Years*, 209.

one that Lu Xun himself was quite familiar with. Liu characterizes Smith's book as demeaning in its portrayal of Chinese character and argues that it helped to establish a negative perception of the Chinese not only among Westerners, but also among the Chinese intelligentsia. Thus, she regards Lu's literary creation Ah Q, whose ignorant and degraded state is so subtly and powerfully exposed by the narrator of the story, to embody this negative view of the Chinese character and to reflect a self-loathing at the heart of Chinese modernity.[281]

Liu is correct in observing that the missionaries could at times be demeaning, or even racist, towards the Chinese, like other Westerners during this period, though she fails to note that most of them had a genuine affection and respect for the people they had devoted their lives to. But the larger problem with Liu's analysis is that it assumes that the Christianity proclaimed by the missionaries unfairly condemned the Chinese and fostered a negative self-image among them. What Zhang Boling shows us is that such a description significantly distorts the nature of the Christian impact on elite Chinese in the early twentieth century. Zhang did not consider the message of Christianity to be a fundamental repudiation of Chinese character or culture. Rather, he viewed it as a call to necessary moral change and an invitation to enter into a progressive vision of modernity. Moreover, he found within it the power to effect such

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[281] See Lydia Liu, *Translingual Practice: Literature, National Culture, and Translated Modernity--China, 1900-1937* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), 51-76.

change at both the personal and social level. While the transition to modernity is always fraught with challenges as culture and identity are renegotiated, Christianity clearly helped Zhang to navigate these shoals and construct a new identity that was both proudly Chinese and fully modern.

Conclusion

Zhang Boling illustrates how the affinity between Christianity and modernity could work in both directions. He was the only one of these three case studies to convert to Protestantism as an adult, and his exposure to modernity occurred well before he became a Christian. Yet interestingly, it was precisely Zhang's embrace of modernity that made Protestantism so appealing to him, since the YMCA emphasis on science, athletics, and civil society had convinced him that Protestantism and modernity were compatible. After his conversion, influence flowed in the opposite direction, as Protestantism shaped his understanding of modernity, particularly in such areas as citizenship, civil society, nationalism, and education. The YMCA was the dominant source of Protestant influence in Zhang's life and deeply imprinted his thinking and praxis as a modern educator, while also providing a major channel for his efforts to build up a Chinese civil society. Moreover, Christianity supplied Zhang with the moral power he needed to persevere in his work of

modern education at Nankai. While Zhang's fervent patriotism at times threatened to reduce his faith to merely a means of strengthening the nation, his religious worldview also acted as a counterbalance to this nationalism by encouraging him to forge links with a global community and nurturing a commitment to harmony between nations and peoples. Zhang, as one of China's most prominent Protestant laymen and one of its foremost practitioners of modern education, thus embodied in a multiplicity of ways the affinity between Protestantism and modernity during the Republican era.

Conclusion

Reflecting on the lives of Wang Liming, Liu Tingfang, and Zhang Boling, it is evident that the spiritual and ideological resources of Protestantism lay at the heart of their quest to build a new and modern China. Spiritually all three of them found inner strength and motivation for their modernizing work in Protestant faith, while ideologically Protestant concepts and categories harmonized with and reinforced their commitment to modernity. Whether Wang's devotion to the cause of women's rights, Liu's contribution to a modern public sphere, or Zhang's efforts to build up civil society, their actions and thinking reveal a synergistic connection between Protestantism and modernity. We see, then, that Christianity provided these individuals with a powerful religious sanction in their pursuit of modernity, and provides a key to understanding why elite Protestants became such vigorous and prominent modernizers during the Republican era.

The stories of Wang, Liu, and Zhang vividly demonstrate how Protestant institutions became major conduits of modernity. For all three, participation in these organizations profoundly impacted the development of their religious faith while also nurturing within them a Christian vision of modernity. Wang was converted to Christianity as a result of attending Protestant schools, and committed her life to fighting for women's rights

as a response to the influence of the WCTU. Liu became a Christian as a result of his family upbringing, but it was missionary schooling that deepened his nationalist sentiments and oriented him towards a modern understanding of the public sphere. Zhang's conversion to Christianity in his mid-thirties was a result of contact with the YMCA and though this was well after he had devoted himself to the cause of modern education, the YMCA still deeply shaped his approach to modern education and the vision of modernity he pursued. Without a doubt, Protestant mission institutions were a rare avenue of direct contact with the West, and the Chinese who entered their orbit gained privileged access to modernity.

These case studies also clearly illustrate how Protestant mission institutions often became important vehicles through which Chinese converts extended the reach of modernity into the surrounding society. In Wang's case, she spent more than three decades at the helm of the WCTU and built the organization into one of the major women's organizations of the Republican period. Liu, meanwhile, was a leading figure at Yanjing University for more than fifteen years, and played a vital role in engineering the school's development into one of the most reputable institutions of modern higher education in China. And Zhang labored indefatigably to advance the work of the YMCA for more than thirty years, which had no small part in producing the group's remarkable success in China. These individuals demonstrate convincingly that such

indigenization made Protestant organizations much more effective and sustainable, while contributing to the development of a hybrid modernity containing both Chinese and Western elements.

Competing Visions of Modernity in Republican China

Elite Chinese Protestants had a distinctive vision of modernity, one that competed with other views to influence the kind of modern China that would emerge. The stakes were high. It was these early decades of the twentieth century that witnessed, as it were, the birth of Chinese modernity, but exactly what kind of ideology would guide its development was far from a settled matter. Intellectuals debated a huge number of different ideas, ranging from pragmatism and anarchism to republicanism and nativism. In the midst of this contentious process, Chinese Protestants sought to make their voice heard above the din and to influence the direction of China's development. Of course, they did not all speak in perfect unison, but based on the case studies we have examined here, certain common themes do emerge which appear to have been typical of the broader elite Protestant milieu. This Protestant vision of modernity was one important substrand in the larger tapestry of a new China that was being stitched together at the time.

One of the most prominent elements in this Protestant conception of the modern was a fervent commitment to the idea of the nation, which

is not surprising given China's internal weakness and the significant external threat of imperialism, particularly Japan's militaristic expansionism. Yet this nationalism was combined with numerous other aspects of their Protestant outlook to produce a vision of modernity that went beyond simply a quest for wealth and power to seek a constructive and sustainable order, both domestically and globally. Some of these other major emphases included the following: a devotion to building a robust civil society that was rooted in a Protestant ethos of service; support for women's rights as crucial to the full development of a modern society; dedication to the ideal of democracy as vital to a stable and prosperous society; an internationalism that sought practical ways to ensure peace among nations; belief in the rule of law as necessary for the proper functioning of a modern society; regard for a modern public sphere and the related principle of rational debate and free expression; a conviction that an ethically informed science promotes the flourishing of society; and a commitment to the protection of individual rights and dignity.

For most of these categories of modernity, good examples can be found in all three of our case studies. With civil society, for instance, the following illustrations are relevant: Wang's work with the WCTU, including the establishment of programs to help poor women; Liu's strengthening of the Protestant churches in China by helping to found and then serving on the National Christian Council; and Zhang's contribution

to developing the YMCA and its various forms of social service. In the case of democracy, we can refer to the following: Wang's leadership role in the campaign for women's suffrage and her support for the Chinese Democratic League; Liu's speech at the Temple of Heaven in 1925 in favor of democracy; and Zhang's address in New York in 1918 on democracy and Christianity, along with his leadership in the People's Political Council.

This Protestant vision of modernity both harmonized and clashed with other conceptions of modernity influential in China at the time. Obviously one of the most important of these was the May Fourth movement, which exerted such a profound impact on Chinese intellectuals. Of course, there were many elements that made up May Fourth modernity and certainly not all of them were consistent with one another, but much of mainstream May Fourth thinking fit surprisingly well with Protestant ideas. The extensive overlap between them in the early phase of the movement explains why Liu Tingfang was so positive in his evaluation of it that appeared in *Life Journal*. Among the aspects of modernity that both movements supported were nationalism, individualism, science, democracy, the emancipation of women, use of the vernacular, and a modern public sphere.

As the May Fourth movement developed, however, certain points of conflict soon became evident. Most of the leading May Fourth thinkers adopted a Western Enlightenment perspective of religion as inherently

counter to reason, while also accepting the idea of the all-sufficiency of science, which effectively marginalized Protestant intellectuals. Also, many May Fourth supporters ended up jettisoning individualism in favor of building a strong Chinese state that would be capable of resisting imperialism and restoring China's place in the world as a major global power, but this goal in many ways ran counter to the Protestant affirmation of individual rights, civil society, and democracy. Finally, May Fourth thinking was intensely iconoclastic and its major advocates routinely called for the wholesale rejection of traditional Chinese culture, whereas many Protestants took a less radical view and sought to preserve those elements of Chinese culture that they deemed compatible with modernity.[1]

The Nationalist vision of modernity that held sway in China during the Nanjing Decade was another major ideology that Protestants had to engage with. Nationalist thought had many different schools covering the ideological spectrum, but its core elements drew on May Fourth ideas and the thinking of Sun Yatsen, to which Party ideologues like Chen Lifu added notions such as Bergson's vitalism and a reconstructed Confucianism.[2]

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[1] Schwarcz, *The Chinese Enlightenment: Intellectuals and the Legacy of the May Fourth Movement of 1919*. Liu Tingfang illustrates well the desire of many Chinese Protestants to maintain elements of the Chinese tradition, since he was head of the NCC committee on the indigenization of Chinese Christianity and actively supported the growth and development of the Harvard-Yenching Institute at Yanjing University, which was devoted to the rigorous academic study of China's ancient culture.

[2] For a useful study on the Nationalist vision of modernity, see Terry Bodenhorn, ed. *Defining Modernity: Guomindang Rhetorics of a New China, 1920-1970* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002).

There were many ingredients in this potpourri that the majority of Protestants could support. Among them were a strong emphasis by the KMT on nationalism, science, and industrialization. Somewhat weaker elements in the Nationalist vision that were favored by Protestants included the issues of democracy, religious freedom, and women's rights. With the first, the Party adopted a democratic constitution, but long delayed its implementation;[3] with the second, they allowed considerable space for formally organized religions while in various ways that restricted and suppressed popular religion;[4] and with the third, they passed laws giving women rights in marriage, divorce, and inheritance, but their impact was limited to urban areas.[5]

There were certain aspects of the Nationalist conception of a modern China, though, that conflicted with the views of the three Protestants examined in this dissertation, the most obvious being the emphasis on construction of a powerful party-state at the cost of significantly diminished individual rights, democracy, and civil society. However, their dissatisfaction with this was partly mitigated by such factors as the limited reach of the Nationalist bureaucracy during the 1930s and the need for unity in the face of Japanese aggression. In

[3] Edmund S. K. Fung, *In Search of Chinese Democracy: Civil Opposition in Nationalist China, 1929-1949* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).
[4] Rebecca Nedostup, *Superstitions Regimes: Religion and the Politics of Chinese Modernity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009).
[5] Kathyrn Bernhardt, "Women and the Law: Divorce in the Republican Period," in *Civil Law in Qing and Republican China*, ed. Kathyrn Bernhardt and Philip C. C. Huang (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994).

addition, the more positive view of Christianity and the West that came to predominate in Nationalist circles after 1930 helped to win support from Chinese Protestants, as well as the missionaries.[6] This more favorable official attitude was a dramatic contrast from the Qing era that preceeded it and the Communist era that followed. It helps to explain why all three individuals studied in this dissertation enjoyed good ties with the KMT throughout the 1930s, and in the case of Liu and Zhang, during most of the 1940s as well.

The third major vision of modernity during this era, and the most radical, was that of the Chinese Communist Party. A few aspects of the Party's Marxist-Leninist ideology aligned with Protestant notions and moral ideals, such as the strong commitment to nationalism, support for women's rights, and concern for the poor. Yet the contradictions between the two were both more numerous and more profound than was the case with either the May Fourth or Nationalist visions. At the most basic level, Communism was an atheistic ideology that took a deeply negative view of religion, particularly in the case of Christianity, which was considered to be an integral part of Western imperialism. Though Mao spoke of democracy, the CCP's insistence on the centrality of the party-state and the "dictatorship of the proletariat" (later also referred to as the "people's democratic dictatorship") was very much at odds with the liberal

[6] See James C. Thomson, *While China Faced West: American Reformers in Nationalist China, 1928-1937* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969).

democracy favored by most Protestants. CCP preference for the masses over the individual, and for class conflict over social harmony, also ran counter to their ideals. Moreover, Communist ideology firmly rejected the whole notion of civil society, with its "bourgeois" distinction between state and private society, and adopted instead the Marxist ideal subsuming all of society under the purview of the state. Even seeming agreement on women's rights obscured deeper contradictions, with many Chinese Protestants hoping to preserve women's central role in the family, while the CCP was more concerned with making them into awakened and revolutionary members of the proletariat.[7]

In view of these deep differences, most Chinese Protestants were critical in their views of the CCP, particularly prior to 1937. All three of my case studies reflect this fact, since their loyalties were primarily aligned with the Nationalists prior to the war with Japan, and in the case of Liu and Zhang, this orientation did not change. However, as the example of Wang Liming indicates, a minority of elite Chinese Protestants did support the CCP. Wang's decision was driven in no small measure by her disillusionment with the Nationalists, but was certainly also related to her strong socialist leanings, which meant her views on economic and social

[7] Michael Y. L. Luk, *The Origins of Chinese Bolshevism: An Ideology in the Making, 1920-1928* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990). See also Christina K. Gilmartin, *Engendering the Chinese Revolution: Radical Women, Communist Politics, and Mass Movements in the 1920s* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995). For background on the years immediately preceding the founding of the Chinese Communist Party in 1921, see Dirlik, *The Origins of Chinese Communism*.

policy overlapped in various ways with the CCP. She was certainly not alone in being attracted by the Communists' more proactive stance in fighting the Japanese and their better record in rooting out corruption as a result of ideological discipline. The CCP's more moderate approach and policies prior to 1949 also helped to expand the Party's appeal among Chinese intellectuals, most of whom were not Marxist in outlook. However, though Protestants like Wang with a strong Social Gospel orientation were more likely to sympathize with the CCP program of reform, only a very small number of them actually adopted Communist beliefs or officially joined the CCP.[8]

The Social Impact of Elite Chinese Protestants

Based on the research presented in this dissertation, I believe that the influence wielded by these socially privileged Chinese Protestant as a national group in the early twentieth century was much greater than many scholars have realized. As we have previously noted, the relative openness of this era afforded Chinese Protestants an unprecedented opportunity to be involved in the broader society and many of them were

[8] For the most part, the Protestants who embraced Communism had ties with the YMCA /YWCA or with the Christian colleges. Most were deeply disillusioned with Chiang Kaishek's Nationalist regime and considered evangelical Christianity to be socially irrelevant, and saw Communism as the only viable solution to China's problems. For a discussion of Communist influence in the YMCA, see Jun Xing, *Baptized in the Fire of Revolution: The American Social Gospel and the YMCA In China, 1919-1937* (Cranbury: Lehigh University Press, 1996). The sixth chapter, titled "From a Social Gospel to a Revolutionary Gospel: 1934-1937" is most relevant. For more information on covert Communist activity at St. John's University from the late 1930s, see Xu, "St. John's University, Shanghai as an Evangelising Agency," 178-82.

highly motivated to do so by the strong emphasis on social reform and service that was characteristic of mainstream Protestantism at the time. Wang Liming, Liu Tingfang, and Zhang Boling all embodied this activist and socially engaged form of Protestantism. Their lives powerfully attest to the fact that Chinese Protestants were an integral part of mainstream Chinese history during this period, not somehow divorced from it or marginal figures or consigned to marginal status because of their religious identity. They also illustrate just how deeply Protestants were involved in the project of constructing a Chinese modernity.

The influence of these elite Protestants was not limited to Chinese Christian circles, but extended out into the larger society and helped to catalyze social changes that were integral to the new and modern China that was emerging. This broader impact was abundantly clear in our case studies. For instance, with Wang Liming, her labors with the WCTU to help poor women and provide limited access to birth control, her promotion of women's suffrage and constitutional rights, and her involvement in the People's Political Council and the Chinese Democratic League were all important ways in which her influence reached beyond Christian confines. In the case of Liu Tingfang, we could point to his role in founding the Achieving Goals Society, his key part in the rise of Yanjing University, and his time serving in the Legislative Yuan as endeavors that affected the larger society. And for Zhang Boling, most of his many accomplishments

were outside of Christian circles, including his pioneering Nankai school system, his promotion of athletics, his support for the YMCA's social reform programs, and his leadership in the People's Political Council.

Given the notable impact of elite Protestants on Chinese society during the early twentieth century, why have scholars so often missed this phenomenon or underestimated its importance in the emergence of Chinese modernity? One reason may be the tendency in much modern scholarship to regard religion as a mere adjunct of historical change, rather than at times being itself a powerful driver of such change through the system of values and vision of society it articulates. Whether or not this is the explanation, the fact remains that few historical works have examined the subject of elite Chinese Protestants and the nature of their impact on Republican society. This lack of academic research then reinforces the impression that Chinese Protestants were entirely marginal to the development of modern China.

But perhaps the main reason that the influence of this group of Protestants has been overlooked is that the full extent of their impact was in some respects hidden. For instance, while it is widely known that such prominent figures as Sun Yatsen and Yan Yangchu were Protestants, far fewer people would be aware of the degree to which Protestant ideas and convictions informed their efforts to change Chinese society. In the case of more nominal Protestants such as T. V. Soong or Wu Chonghui, the role of

Christianity in shaping some of the basic contours of their worldview and vision of modernity would be still less evident. My thesis is concerned with bringing this hidden Protestant influence in Republican China more fully out into the open, in particular by showing how Christianity and modernity were intertwined in the lives of elite Chinese Protestants. The fact that such links were evident in the lives of the three devout Christians I look at in my case studies strengthens the argument that Protestant ideas and assumptions were also likely to foster a commitment to modernity among those of nominal faith, who identified with Protestantism enough to get baptized. Indeed, it is reasonable to postulate that even those Chinese who did not get baptized, but had prolonged exposure to the Protestant milieu, were shaped by these ideas and therefore more likely to embrace modernity.

Another dimension of Protestant influence during this period that has been partially hidden from view is the vital role that Chinese Protestants played in the rise of modern education in China. As our analysis of the 469 Chinese Protestants from Bates' list earlier in this dissertation revealed, the most common occupation among this group was education, with roughly forty percent of them teaching at Christian schools and another quarter at secular schools for some portion of their lives. Indeed, two of the three case studies I examine in this thesis labored for many years in the field of education. Thus, elite Protestants helped

meet a pressing need in early twentieth century China for educators with modern training. In this capacity they conveyed knowledge and skills to many thousands of students, which multiplied their impact far beyond the limited boundaries of China's Protestant community and was vital to the continuing development of Chinese modernity.

Though the extent of Protestant influence in Republican China was greater than many realize, care must also be taken not to overstate the case. After all, since no more than one in a thousand Chinese was a baptized Protestant at the time, even their disproportionate influence was still limited. Their power as a group relative to the larger society was probably at its peak during the first two decades of the twentieth century, owing to the fact that these urban Protestants were early adopters of modernity and enjoyed privileged access to its resources. While the number of Protestants continued to grow right up until 1949, their disproportional influence as pioneers of modernity in China gradually began to decrease starting from the 1920s as the wider society started to advance more quickly and a growing number of Chinese intellectuals turned to Communism, and thus became more hostile toward Christianity. Certainly there was never a chance that this Protestant elite could attain the kind of power as an ideological movement that the Communists came to possess, since they were a decentralized network of individuals and organizations with primarily a religious and cultural focus, rather than

being a centralized political party replete with the tools of military coercion.

Protestantism and Modernity in Contemporary China

The experience of Chinese Protestants during the Republican era provides a valuable point of reference in reflecting on the issue of Protestantism and modernity in contemporary China. As the country's reform and opening policy enters its fourth decade, Chinese leaders are still searching for how to build a modern society that is prosperous, stable, and able to successfully deal with the "problem" of religion. These early decades of the twentieth century serve as a practical exhibit of a modernizing China that allowed greater freedom for Protestants to participate in the development of society than we see today. Though relatively few in number, these Christians were active contributors to the tentative flowering of civil society and flourishing of global cultural exchange that characterized China during those years. Their example indicates that when given the opportunity, Christianity can help supply vitally needed social capital for the construction of a modern and morally sustainable social order. It also leads us to wonder if a new Protesant elite could arise in China today and influence the trajectory of Chinese modernity.

Such a thought is by no means idle speculation. Post-Mao China has seen a dramatic resurgence of religion and Protestantism has become the fastest growing of China's official religions.[9] Few would have predicted such an outcome when the Communist Party came to power in 1949. The CCP had moved quickly to bring the churches under state control, which it accomplished in the early 1950s through the establishment of a state-sanctioned association of Protestant churches called the Three-Self Patriotic Movement (TSPM; *Sanzi aiguo yundong* 三自愛國運動).[10] The churches that joined this organization in the 1950s were primarily former mission congregations, and therefore the TSPM congregations have preserved many of the Western-style structures and traditions of these churches, though not their denominational divisions. As implied by the name, the TSPM put a premium on "patriotism," which meant support for the Communist Party and its policies. Indigenous sects such as the Little Flock were also pressured to affiliate with the TSPM, but most chose not to, and as a result their leaders were imprisoned and their churches closed, which led some of these believers to start underground meetings instead.

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[9] Alan Hunter and Kim-Kwong Chan, *Protestantism in Contemporary China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 2.

[10] Three-Self refers to self-governing, self-supporting, and self-propagating (zizhi 自治, ziyang 自養, zichuan 自傳), which many missionaries in China prior to 1949 identified as the three defining characteristics of a truly indigenous church and embraced as the goal of their own church planting efforts, though it was rarely achieved in practice.

The height of CCP persecution, however, did not occur until the Cultural Revolution, when the state adopted a policy of militant suppression of religion. At that time, even the handful of TSPM-connected churches that remained open in China were forced to close their doors for more than a decade. Many of those Protestants attending undergound meetings found the environment too dangerous to continue. There was also a very heavy human toll as a result of the persecution. Tens of thousands of Christians were accused of being "counterrevolutionaries" and denounced in "struggle meetings." Many believers were sent to prison or makeshift detention centers, while numerous others were beaten, or in some cases even killed by rampaging Red Guards.[11]

Yet remarkably, a rebirth of Chinese Protestantism was starting to occur right in the midst of this dark time, even before the Cultural Revolution had officially come to an end. An increasing number of Chinese Protestants began to meet in secret from the early 1970s, when public meetings of Christianity or any other religion were still forbidden. Some of these Protestants had been involved in churches tied to the TSPM, others had been members of indigenous groups that started prior to 1949, and still others represented new streams of indigenous Chinese Protestantism

[11] Xi Lian, *Redeemed by Fire: The Rise of Popular Christianity in Modern China* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010). 204-05. Lian refers to the research of Chinese historian Gu Changsheng, who estimates that 250000 Protestants and Catholics were killed during the Cultural Revolution, though there is no way to officially confirm this figure. Lian also notes that usually religion was often not the only basis for attacking Christians, since many other factors such as family background, economic status, and former ties with the KMT could all constitute sufficient grounds for accusing someone of being a counterrevolutionary.

that were born during these years.[12] With the rise of Deng Xiaoping, Communist religious policy became more tolerant and the TSPM structure was revived in order to help bring Protestant activity back under the umbrella of Party control. This policy has proved partially successful, since the number of churches affiliated with the TSPM has grown rapidly and today have approximately 21 million members.[13]

But many Protestants have been unwilling to register with the TSPM out of fear that it would lead to intrusive government control. These autonomous groups, often referred to as house churches, run the risk of persecution in the form of heavy fines, arrests, beatings, and even prison terms for maintaining their indepedence from the state and its religious bureaucracy. Today some of these autonomous churches have developed into large national networks with many thousands of members.[14] There are no reliable statistics available on the size of the autonomous church movement, but informed observers estimate that it could have anywhere from ten to thirty million or more Christians in its ranks.[15] If we take the mean of twenty million members in the autonomous churches, then the

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[12] Zhao Tianen 趙天恩 and Zhuang Wanfang 莊婉芳, *Dangdai Zhongguo Jidujiao fazhanshi* 當代中國基督教發展史 [Development of Contemporary Chinese Christianity] (Taibei 台北: Zhongguo fuyinhui chubanshe 中國福音會出版社, 1997), 228-35.

[13] Tony Lambert, *China's Christian Millions* (Grand Rapids: Monarch Books, 2006), 233.

[14] For a detailed study of one autonomous church network, see Yalin Xin, *Inside China's House Church Network: The Word of Life Movement and Its Renewing Dynamic* (Lexington: Emeth Press, 2009).

[15] See Daniel H. Bays, "Chinese Protesant Christianity Today," in *Religion in China Today*, ed. Daniel L. Overmyer (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003). It should be noted that there is a certain degree of overlap between the TSPM and the autonomous churches, since some Protestants attend both kinds of meetings.

total size of China's Protestant community today would be about forty million persons, which would represent approximately three percent of the population of 1.3 billion.

Just as important as the increasing number of Protestant converts in China are the sectors of the population among which the church is expanding. From the mid-1970s to the mid-1990s, a great deal of Protestant growth occurred in rural areas of China, but more recently urban churches have begun to proliferate, in part reflecting the rapid urbanization of Chinese society.[16] Moreover, whereas relatively few young people or intellectuals joined the churches prior to 1989, since then their numbers have increased rapidly. These trends are borne out in an important study by Fenggang Yang detailing the composition of Protestant churches in a southern coastal city he calls "Nanfang," which he has corroborated with evidence from other parts of China. Yang discovered that more than half of the Protestants in this city were under the age of forty, with the number of conversions rising sharply in 1989 and remaining high since then. In analyzing the social makeup of these converts, he found that a quarter of them were white-collar clerks or professionals, seven percent were students, five percent were Communist Party cadres, and four percent were business owners.[17] In a further sign of rising interest in Christianity among Chinese intellectuals, a 2001 survey

[16] David Aikman, *Jesus in Beijing* (Lanham: Regnery, 2003), 302.
[17] Fenggang Yang, "Lost in the Market, Saved at Mcdonald's: Conversion to Christianity in Urban China," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 44, no. 4 (2005): 427-29.

of four hundred students at People's University in Beijing reported 3.6 percent were Protestants, and 61 percent wanted to learn more about Christianity.[18]

In view of these trends, the position of Protestantism in China is in some important respects stronger today than it was during the first decades of the twentieth century, given the much larger number of Protestants and the stronger interest of the elite. And there are other ways in which China's current context favors greater Protestant influence than was the case in the Republican era. For instance, Christianity benefits from the fact that it is no longer associated with imperialism, and has now become a thoroughly indigenized faith. The increasing globalization evident in China also facilitates the spread of Protestantism through such means as travel overseas, visits from overseas Chinese Christians, use of the Internet, and access to Christian materials produced overseas.[19] Moreover, many Chinese youth perceive a strong link between Protestantism and modernity that makes conversion to Christianity an appealing option.[20] Taken together, these factors suggest a high potential for a new group of Protestant elites wielding considerable social influence to arise in China.

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[18] Aikman, *Jesus in Beijing*, 254.

[19] One good example of this globalizing dynamic is Yuan Zhiming 遠志明, a leader of the student democracy movement in 1989 who afterwards fled to the United States, converted to Christianity, and now produces films about Christianity and the Chinese Church that have been widely distributed in China. See Aikman, *Jesus in Beijing*, 245-49.

[20] Yang, "Lost in the Market, Saved at Mcdonald's: Conversion to Christianity in Urban China," 437-39.

Yet there are good reasons to be cautious about embracing this optimistic scenario too quickly. Unlike the pre-1949 period, when China did not have a strong central government, today the Communist Party has established a powerful regime with a massive bureaucratic infrastructure that exercises varying levels of control over every aspect of Chinese society, not least in the sphere of religion. The CCP has consistently used this power to try to restrict the growth of Christianity, which they fear as potentially subversive to their rule.[21] Thus, it is safe to assume that the Party would resist any attempt by elite Protestants to organize and openly engage the broader society in the name of Christianity. Indeed, the CCP has long curtailed civil society in China, and has insisted that religious groups not "meddle" in this area or in the realm of education. Nor is there much chance that Protestants would be able to exert any appreciable influence within the CCP, at least for some time to come, since the Party officially espouses an atheistic ideology and specifically forbids its members to be religious believers.[22]

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[21] For background on the CCP's religious policy, see Hunter and Chan, *Protestantism in Contemporary China*. The chapter titled "The Social and Political Context" is most relevant. Another source is Carsten Vala, "Failing to Contain Religion: The Emergence of a Protestant Movement in Contemporary China" (dissertation, University of California Berkeley, 2008). Chapters 5 to 8 discuss CCP religious policy towards Protestantism in the post-Mao period.

[22] Tony Lambert refers to various sources in Hong Kong and China that indicate that a growing number of CCP cadres are interested in or have converted to Christianity. For instance, the Hong Kong magazine *Zhengming* (爭鳴), which Lambert says has "excellent" sources in China, reported in 2004 that three to four million cadres (out of a total Party membership of approximately 63 million) had become members of Protestant or Catholic churches or attended church services. If such reports are accurate, and cadre conversions continue to multiply, then Protestants could eventually exert some indirect influence within the Communist Party. See Lambert, *China's Christian Millions*, 153-61.

As a result of the CCP's religious policies, institutional Protestantism in China today is limited almost entirely to its local congregations, whether they belong to the TSPM or are autonomous. This represents a striking contrast to the first half of the twentieth century, when Protestants had such a diverse range of powerful institutions. As a result, their ability to project influence into the wider society has been heavily circumscribed.[23] Though violent persecution of Christians has significantly declined and some Party officials even recognize that the churches can contribute positively to social development, the basic attitude of the CCP toward Christianity still remains negative and distrustful.[24] Compounding the problem, long years of social isolation in an unfriendly political environment have resulted in a narrow spiritual focus among Protestant congregations similar to that of the indigenous churches prior to 1949. This mindset displays little interest in social engagement and is especially common among the rural believers, who make up the majority of the Protestant community.[25] Here again we see a sharp contrast with Protestant churches during the Republican era, when involvement in social reform was a mainstream phenomenon.

Despite these challenges, disparate groups of elite Protestants have begun to appear in China and are making efforts to engage the wider

[23] Bays, "Chinese Protesant Christianity Today," 192-94.
[24] Nanlai Cao, *Constructing China's Jerusalem: Christians, Power, and Place in Contemporary Wenzhou* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011), 62.
[25] Hunter and Chan, *Protestantism in Contemporary China*, 77.

society with their vision of modernity. Bishop K. H. Ting (Ding Guangxun 丁光訓), the long-time leader of the TSPM, represents an early example of this. Throughout the 1980s, he pushed vigorously to increase the autonomy of China's registered churches based on his generous reading of offical religious policy. In the late 1980s, Ting used his influential position in the National People's Congress to support the more liberal policies of Zhao Ziyang and to argue in favor of democratic reform. He also publicly praised the participation of TSPM seminary students from Nanjing in the 1989 pro-democracy demonstrations, which later were brutally suppressed. More problematically, toward the end of the 1990s, he endeavored to strengthen Protestant support for the CCP's program of economic development and social harmony, as required by the Party. However, his willingness to undermine basic church doctrine in an effort to achieve this goal reflected the contradictions involved in promoting reformist values from within the official religious bureaucracy.[26]

[26] Philip L. Wickeri, *Reconstructing Christianity in China: K. H. Ting and the Chinese Church* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2007). Part Three, titled "Reconstruction and Renewal of Church and Society, 1977-2006," is the most relevant. See also Hunter and Chan, *Protestantism in Contemporary China*, 88-104. In addition, see Carsten T. Vala, "Pathways to the Pulpit: Leadership Training In "Patriotic" And Unregistered Chinese Protestant Churches," in *Making Religion, Making the State*, ed. Yoshiko Ashiwa and David L. Wank (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), 100. Bishop Ting initiated the Theological Construction Movement in 1998 in order to align Protestantism more closely with the CCP's economic policies. A central part of this campaign was an effort to weaken the doctrine of justification by faith, which Ting argued divided believers from unbelievers and reflected a theology that was backward and fundamentalist, and to replace it instead with a focus on morality and ethics. This stirred a great deal of controversy in the TSPM churches, since most Chinese Protestants have a conservative and evangelical theological outlook.

The autonomous churches have managed to protect their religious activities from direct government control by going underground, in the process establishing one of the few genuinely autonomous spheres of civil society in contemporary China.[27] However, until recently these church groups had few intellectuals in their ranks and exhibited little interest in social engagement. Now this appears to be changing as the number of elite converts to Christianity gradually increases. One recent example of this was the high-quality online Christian journal *Aiyan* 愛宴 (Love Feast), which is described by Gerda Wielander in her article "Protestant and Online."[28] Produced by autonomous church intellectuals in Beijing, this publication came out a few times a year from 2002 until early 2008. Each issue had articles on subjects such as religious freedom, the rule of law, and legalization of autonomous churches, as well as a science and religion column, numerous personal testimonies, assorted news items, and letters to the editor. It was very popular among the autonomous churches. The magazine was connected with the Federation of Chinese House Churches that was founded in 2005 to promote cooperation between urban and rural underground congregations across seventeen different provinces.

[27] For a discussion of how Protestantism in contemporary China contributes to civil society, see Ryan Dunch, "Protestant Christianity in China Today: Fragile, Fragmented, Flourishing," in *Christianity in China: Burdened Past, Hopeful Future*, ed. Stephen Uhalley and Xiaoxin Wu (Armonk: M. E. Sharpe, 2001), 210-14.
[28] Gerda Wielander, "Protestant and Online: The Case of Aiyan," *China Quarterly*, no. 197 (2009).

One of the key leaders of the journal was arrested in 2003, and today it appears that production of *Love Feast* has ceased.

Another fascinating and important expression of Chinese elite interest in Christianity today is the phenomenon of so-called Cultural Christians (*wenhua jidutu* 文化基督徒). Frederik Fällman, who examines this group in his book *Salvation and Modernity*, notes that it is composed of Chinese intellectuals who are drawn to Christian culture and have made it an object of academic study, although only a small minority openly profess faith in Christianity, and fewer still have been baptized or go to church.[29] During the 1990s, when scholars began to link the study of religion to the broader subject of culture, religious studies became very popular in academic circles. As a result, more than twenty institutes devoted to the study of Christianity were established at major universities throughout China.[30] In addition, there are small informal groups of intellectuals that study the Bible and Christianity at many campuses. Cultural Christians such as Liu Xiaofeng 劉小楓, a prolific writer and translator of Western Christian works into Chinese, believe that Christianity can renew Chinese culture and society by providing a new framework of values along with the possibility of a new faith at the personal level. Members of this group typically see the individual as

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[29] See Fredrik Fällman, *Salvation and Modernity: Intellectual and Faith in Contemporary China* (Lanham: University Press of America, 2008).
[30] Aikman, *Jesus in Beijing*, 252.

central, encourage serving society, and believe that "religious culture" is necessary for the realization of democracy in China. However, while Cultural Christians speak of reform, most stay aloof from the common people and have little interaction with the Chinese churches in advancing their ideals.

Socially privileged Protestants in China are not limited only to the churches and halls of academia. A growing number of them are also found in the corporate offices that drive China's impressive economic growth. One recent book, titled *Constructing China's Jerusalem* by Nanlai Cao, examines Christian entrepreneurs in Wenzhou, a city that some call "China's Jerusalem" because of its large Protestant population.[31] This study shows how "Boss Christians" (*laoban jidutu* 老闆基督徒) successfully combine their Protestant faith with a commitment to the free market, connections with state officials, rationalism, and a prosperous Western lifestyle to construct a religious vision of modernity that differs sharply from the secular ideal espoused by the Communist authorities. Many are members of autonomous churches and provide a large portion of the funds these congregations need to buy property or hold large and glitzy evangelistic banquets. Some even start churches in their own factories as a way to win their migrant employees to the faith and in the process make them better workers. For these "Boss Christians,"

[31] Cao, *Constructing China's Jerusalem: Christians, Power, and Place in Contemporary Wenzhou*.

Protestantism provides a moral framework conducive to capitalism, as Methodism did in early industrial England.

What impact will this rising generation of elite Chinese Protestants have on the future development of modern China? It is a question well worth pondering. From the examples discussed above, we can readily discern some key contours of their vision of a modern China. It is a conception that shares much in common with the understanding of modernity embraced by many Chinese Protestants in the first half of the twentieth century: democracy, the rule of law, freedom of religion, civil society, an open public sphere, individualism, capitalism, and science.[32] Since these ideas and their related forms of social praxis have a close affinity with the underlying Protestant outlook of these groups and individuals, it is likely that they will remain committed to pursuing these goals despite some very powerful contrary currents within Chinese culture and the broader political context of contemporary China. This could make them an important strand in a future alliance of different social groups that may well emerge, united by the desire to shift the trajectory of Chinese modernity in a more progressive direction.

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[32] There also appear to be some interesting differences in which elements of modernity Protestants emphasize today as compared to in the Republican period. For instance, the nation is no longer the dominant focus for Chinese Protestants now that it was back in the early decades of the twentieth century, when China faced serious threats to its existence. Similarly, the concern for women's rights is not as intense, since the position of women in Chinese society has dramatically improved. Meanwhile, the elite Protestant emphasis on capitalism has grown much stronger, since China's capitalist development is much more advanced now than it was a century ago.

Though educated urban Protestants in China are still a very small minority, it appears highly probable that their numbers will significantly increase in the years ahead, which could greatly expand their impact. One of the key reasons that their numbers are likely to multiply is that Communism has lost credibility as a viable belief system for the vast majority of people in China. Consequently, many Chinese are seeking a substitute that can provide meaning and moral direction for their lives, which is evident in the great revival of religion in China over the past three decades. Protestantism is an appealing option for many of them, and especially for elite types, because they tend to associate it with global modernity, view it as highly compatible with capitalism and economic advancement, and admire its universalized system of personal and social ethics.

If the current trend of Christian conversion among elite Chinese continues, and it appears to have only just begun, then within one or two decades this group could well grow large enough to exert a discernible influence on many sectors of Chinese society. Given their higher levels of education and economic resources, these urban Chinese Christians will no doubt wield far greater cultural clout than their rural counterparts, even if the latter remain more numerous, as is likely to be the case. Thus, I disagree with Xi Lian's argument in his recent book *Redeemed by Fire* that the popular Christianity of the rural masses will be the defining aspect of

Chinese Protestantism in the years to come. Rather, I believe it is more probable that educated urban Protestants will once again rise to cultural dominance in the Chinese church, as they did during the Republican era.[33]

Yet the full impact of elite Protestants on the continuing development of Chinese modernity is not likely to find expression until there is a fundamental change in China's current political climate. Exactly how or when such a change might happen is, of course, impossible to predict. But for the time being, Chinese Protestantism exists in an environment that in some respects resembles that of the late Qing dynasty, when the state was also ideologically opposed to Christianity and prohibited Protestant participation in key sectors of the society. Moreover, just as elite Protestants in the late Qing served as important catalysts of liberal change by introducing new ideas and values, they may well play a similar role in Chinese society today. However, they are far more likely to do so as gradual reformers than as revolutionaries, since the great majority of Chinese Protestants view acceptance of state authority as part of their religious duty, not to mention the fact that the Communist Party possesses vastly more powerful tools of social control than the Qing emperors ever did.[34]

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[33] Lian, *Redeemed by Fire: The Rise of Popular Christianity in Modern China*, 244. Fenggang Yang believes that Christianity among urban elites is "very likely to continue to grow" because it fits the needs of many Chinese people in the current context of a globalizing market economy and ongoing political repression. See Yang, "Lost in the Market, Saved at Mcdonald's: Conversion to Christianity in Urban China," 439.
[34] Aikman, *Jesus in Beijing*, 291-93.

Whenever change does finally come to China, it will hopefully be of a benevolent nature, and will find a more receptive environment for its subsequent development than was the case in 1911. If such a scenario unfolds, it could potentially mark the dawn of a new “golden age” for Protestantism in China, similar to a century ago when the founding of the Republic gave Christians significantly greater freedom to engage Chinese society at both the institutional and ideological levels. In such an environment, we would surely once again see Chinese Protestants emerge as an important force in the public domain to promote their vision of a modern society shaped by Christian values and thereby influence the trajectory of China’s future development. Thus, it may well be that the most important chapters in the story of the Protestant quest for modernity in China have yet to be written.

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