

# **MISSIONARIES AND INDIGENOUS CULTURE IN NINETEENTH CENTURY CHINA.**

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# MISSIONARIES AND INDIGENOUS CULTURE IN NINETEENTH CENTURY CHINA.

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## I DIVINE PROVIDENCE ASSISTED BY FORCE AND HUMILIATION

19<sup>th</sup> century Protestant Christians, mostly British, American and Northern European evangelicals<sup>1</sup>, saw the ‘opening’ of China to Protestant Christian missions as, ‘an inevitable issue not of the will of man altogether, but ... of the Providence of God’.<sup>2</sup> The Church Missionary Society observed, ‘The herald of the Gospel of Peace would never use, or wish to use, the arm of carnal force... but He...employs the unconscious powers of this world to advance His purposes.’<sup>3</sup> A Chinese diplomat told a European audience that China was brought into the community of nations ‘through cannons and warships’.<sup>4</sup> A popular but anti-religious 19<sup>th</sup> century Australian newspaper editorialised, following the 1895 massacre of Anglican missionaries at Huashan, in Fujian Province:

The missionary is forced upon the Chinaman by brute force and insolent aggression ... The missionary, because he is backed up by foreign ambassadors and foreign ironclads and foreign bayonets, is a symbol of conquest.<sup>5</sup>

It is undeniable that foreign missionary access was achieved ‘at the butt-end of a musket’<sup>6</sup> or that the British opened the door for other foreign powers, not least the United States and Japan, ‘at the

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- 1 Bebbington, D W, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain, A History from the 1730s to the 1980s*, (London, Unwin Hyman, 1989)
  - 2 Allen, Rev. Young J, ‘The Changed Aspect of China,’ *Address to Records of the General Conference of the Protestant Missionaries of China* held at Shanghai, May 7-20, 1890, (Shanghai, American Presbyterian Mission Press, 1989), pp 12-22. The standard history of missions in China is Latourette, K S, *A History of Christian Missions in China*, (London, Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, 1929).
  - 3 Church Missionary Society, *The Church Missionary Atlas: Maps of the Various Missions*, (London, Seeley, Jackson, and Halliday, 1862), p 48.
  - 4 Xue Hanquin, (2004), *China’s Open Policy and International Law*, a Public Lecture delivered on twenty-three September 2004 by Her Excellency Xue Hanquin, Ambassador of the People’s Republic of China in The Netherlands at the Institute of Social Studies, The Hague, The Netherlands, p 2. Published in the *Chinese Journal of International Law*, Vol 4, 2005, pp 133-139.
  - 5 *The Bulletin*, Sydney, Saturday, 17 August 1895, Editorial. See Rolfe, Patricia, (1980), *The Journalistic Javelin, An Illustrated History of The Bulletin, 1880-1980*, Sydney, Wildcat Press.
  - 6 Rt. Rev. James Moorhouse, Second Anglican Bishop of Melbourne, *The Church of England Messenger*, 2 December 1979, p 5.

cannon's mouth.'<sup>7</sup> China was forced to sign more than two hundred 'unequal' treaties between the Treaty of Nanking in 1840 and the nominal end of the treaty system in 1943. Foreign warships continued to operate inside China until the late 1940s.<sup>8</sup> For most of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries China experienced a profound sense of national humiliation that still influences its foreign policy. In 2014-2105 China reasserted ancient territorial claims in the South China Sea that illustrate what others see as an aggressive spirit but the Chinese regard as a recovery of national rights and dignity.<sup>9</sup>

Shenk writes of the Protestant missionary era that: 'No one asked whether mission and modernity might be irreconcilable,' nor questioned that the values and institutions of Euro-American society were superior to all other civilisations.<sup>10</sup> Most missionaries had 'little information about the objects of their ministrations or genuine comprehension of the conditions ... and set sail ... with a kind of blind faith.'<sup>11</sup> A commentary on American missionaries in Korea applies equally to foreign missionaries China.

Missionaries built a miniature American middle-class community ...and live safe and comfortable lives. They were converts not only to Christ, but also to the spirit of industrial commercialism.<sup>12</sup>

Mao Zedong (Mao Tse-tung), drawing on 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century Chinese experience, declared:

Communists do not fight for personal military power ... but they must fight for military power for the Party, for military power for the people. As a national war of resistance is going on, we must also fight for military power for the nation. Where there is naivety on the question of military power, nothing whatsoever can be achieved. It is very difficult for the labouring people, who have been deceived and intimidated by the reactionary ruling classes for thousands of years, to awaken to the importance of having guns in their own hands. ... Every Communist must grasp the truth, '**Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun.**'<sup>13</sup>

Chinese humiliation arising from superior foreign military force has influenced most secular assessments of the missionary contribution to China but recent developments in China suggest that

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- 7 King, Archdeacon Robert L, (1888), 'Our Chinese Brethren,' pp 7-9 in *Australasian Missionary News*, Sydney, Vol. 1 No 6, 1 June 1888.
- 8 Fung, Edmund S K, (1987), 'The Chinese Nationalists and the Unequal Treaties 1924-1931. pp 793-819 in *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol 21 No 4. Wang Dong, (2005), *China's Unequal Treaties: Narrating National History*, Lanham, Lexington Books. Wang's book, from primary sources, provides a comprehensive discussion of the meaning of the term.
- 9 Puska, Susan M., *New Century, Old Thinking: the Dangers of the Perceptual Gap in U.S.-China Relations*, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, April 10, 1998.
- 10 Shenk Wilbert R., *Changing Frontiers of Mission*, (Maryknoll, Orbis Books, 1999), p 65. See discussion on missions and culture from pp 68-71
- 11 Chin, Carole C, (2003), 'Beneficent Imperialists: American Women Missionaries in China at the Turn of the Twentieth Century,' p 333 in *Diplomatic History*, Vol 27 Issue 3, June 2003.
- 12 Dae Young Ryu, 'Understanding Early American Missionaries in Korea (1884-1890): Capitalist Middle-Class Values and the Weber Thesis,; pp 93-117 in *Archives de Sciences Sociales des Religions*, Vol 113, January-March 2001. The preference of missionaries to live within the foreign concessions is indicated. Lodwyk, Kathleen L., ' "Just Like At Home": Church Buildings, Houses, Tennis Courts, and Garden Plants: The Presbyterian Missionaries on Hainan Island, China, Shape Their Environment.' A paper presented to the Yale Divinity School/University of Edinburgh Conference, Edinburgh, 29 June -1 July 2006.
- 13 Mao Zedong, 'Problems of War and Strategy.' 6 November 1938), *Selected Works*, Vol. II, p. 224.

Christianity, free of foreign domination since the early 1950s, is now part of contemporary indigenous Chinese culture.<sup>14</sup>

Of some 20,000 English-speaking foreigners in China by the 1920s about 8000 were Protestant missionaries with an unknown but very small, number of English-speaking Catholics.<sup>15</sup> These missionaries sought to change China through Christianity as it was understood in their home countries, overwhelmingly Great Britain and the United States of America.<sup>16</sup> Although China was the best resourced of all Protestant missionary fields a Chinese Anglican minister in Ningbo (Ningpo) told the Church Missionary Society in London that their evangelistic ‘efforts are to a great extent expended in vain.’<sup>17</sup> A former American missionary, reviewing the end of the China missionary era in 1952 and believing that Christianity was doomed wrote:

Considering the vast amount of money, personnel, thought and devotion that has gone into the Christian schools and colleges of China, our intellectual failure is remarkable... It became obvious to all that among educated Christians there was an intellectual vacuum...Christianity has come to China mainly in a somewhat extreme liberal Protestant or a somewhat extreme conservative Protestant version.<sup>18</sup>

## II MISSIONARIES, MERCHANTS AND DIPLOMATS

Protestant missionary history in 19<sup>th</sup> century China has been overshadowed by assumptions about the foreign exploitation of China that concludes that missionaries were willing participants in ‘cultural imperialism.’<sup>19</sup> Western historiography of China dismisses the motivation and methods of missionaries as merely subsidiary elements of foreign intervention.<sup>20</sup> The Rev. John Mahood of the Anglican Church Missionary Society (CMS) in Fujian Province wrote that most Chinese could not believe that ‘men can be so disinterested as to give themselves up to the preaching of the Gospel

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14 Dunch op cit in *History and Theory*, No 41, October 2003. See also Dunch, Ryan, (2002), ‘Reflections on Missionary Education in Modern China’, Conference Paper, Wesleyan University, 19-20 September 2002.

15 Dikotter 2008, op cit, pp 40 and 48. Stanley, Brian, (1990), *The Bible and the Flag: Protestant missions and British Imperialism in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, Leicester, *Apollos*, p 140.

16 One of the most influential missionary journals among Victorian and Tasmanian Anglican churchgoers was the Rev. H B Macartney’s *The Missionary, At Home and Abroad*. On missionary publishing generally see Johnston, Anna, (2003), *Missionary Writing and Empire, 1800-1860*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press. On Christian publishing in China see Lai, Tze-pang, (2005), *The Enterprise of Translating Christian Tracts by Protestant Missionaries in Nineteenth Century China*, P. Phil., University of Oxford. See also Schaff, Philip, *New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, Vol. IX: Petri – Reuchlin, online (25 August 2008), [http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/encyc11/Page\\_476.html/](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/encyc11/Page_476.html/)

17 Rev. Tzing Ts-sing, Ningpo, 24 December 1877. CMS East Asia Archives, C CH 030.

18 A China Missionary (David M Paton), (1952), ‘First Thoughts on the Debacle of Christian Missions in China’, pp 34-41 in *African Affairs*, Vol 51 No 2, January 1952, p 33.

19 Said, Edward (1993), *Cultural Imperialism*, New York, Knopf. For two critical appraisals see: McInnes, Neil, (1993), ‘Review of Culture and Imperialism’, in *The National Interest*, 22 September 1993 and Dunch, Ryan, (2002), ‘Beyond Cultural Imperialism: Cultural Theory, Christian Missions and Global Modernity’, pp 301-325 in *History and Theory*, No 41, October 2003. Chinese resistance to foreign missionaries is discussed in Cohen, Paul A, (1961), ‘The Anti-Christian Tradition in China, pp 169-180 in *Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol 20 No 2, (February 1961). See also Cohen, Paul A, (1963), *China and Christianity: The Missionary Movement and the Growth of Chinese Anti-Foreignism, 1860-1870*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press.

20 Varg, Paul A, (1954), ‘Motives in Protestant Missions, 1890-1917, pp 68-82 in *Church History*, Vol 23 No 1, March 1954.

without some selfish design in view'.<sup>21</sup> The Rev. Llewellyn Lloyd, a CMS colleague, stated several times that the Chinese were focused on money making (i.e., economic survival) and had little interest in religious discussions.<sup>22</sup> The impact of the Communist Revolution of 1949-1951 and the Cold War era, notably the Korean War, reinforced scholarly emphasis on 'conflict rather than cooperation' as the focal point in the relationship between China and foreigners.<sup>23</sup>

There was nothing incidental about missionary links to material culture as mission activities in health, education and general welfare demonstrate.<sup>24</sup> Chinese of all economic and social backgrounds willingly accepted foreign products and knowledge and the elite embraced the intellectual window on the world provided through foreign Christian institutions and literary works.<sup>25</sup>

The first Australian missionary of the China Inland Mission, the Rev C. H. Parsons of Melbourne, described a room in the Chinese Magistrates House in Paoning.

We are in splendid quarters, occupying what is called the "Flowery Parlour," a fine room, 44 feet by 18, with a carpet in the center, two full length mirrors, and two of the finest Rochester lamps I have ever seen. Some beautifully mounted scrolls hang on the walls, and a foreign clock stands on a side table.<sup>26</sup>

Missionaries knew that their presence was inseparable from foreign aggression. They were dismissive of the everyday morality of many foreign business people and distrustful of the consular and diplomatic representatives of foreign governments.

Shanghai & Hankow & their open ports are places where the people seem most bloodthirsty & I am afraid our fellow countrymen in those places do not exhibit a very Christian like spirit. Most of the foreigners in the open ports are a most ungodly lot.<sup>27</sup>

Mahood's dislike of foreign merchants gave him a reputation among his missionary colleagues in Fuzhou (Foochow) of 'unwarrantable interference with matters of no business of his' and they were embarrassed by his assertion that the British Minister in Beijing (Peking) in 1868, Sir Rutherford Alcock, was an enemy of evangelical Christianity.<sup>28</sup> Mahood summed up his views:

I believe it is much better for missionaries to have as little to do with the Consuls as possible,

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21 Mahood, Rev. John, 25 January 1871, CMS East Asia Archives, C CH 060.

22 Lloyd, Rev. Llewellyn, 24 December 1877, CMS East Asia Archives, C CH 058.

23 Hirono, Miwa, 'Framing Interaction: Transnational Religious Actors and Ethnic Communities in China', Australian National University, p 1. Online (2 September 2008) at [rspas.anu.edu.au/ir/Oceanic/OCISPapers/Hirono.pdf](http://rspas.anu.edu.au/ir/Oceanic/OCISPapers/Hirono.pdf)

24 'A China Missionary' (Rev. David M Paton)... op cit, p 33.

25 Stuntz, Hugh, (1944), 'Christian Missions and Social Cohesion,' pp 148-188 in *The American Journal of Sociology*, Vol 50 No 3, November 1944. For a recent view of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Chinese response to the outside world see Dikotter, Frank, (2008), *The Age of Openness: China Before Mao*, Hong Kong, Hong Kong University Press.

26 Melbourne, *The Missionary, At Home and Abroad*, Vol XXII No 21, September 1895, pp 354-5.

27 Frank Burden to Mary Burden from Ganking, 19 October 1891. Letter Book 2, Letter 46, p. 22, with permission of his grandson. (Copy held by Ian Welch).

28 Sedgwick, Rev. J H, in Stock, Eugene, (1877), *The Story of the Fuh Kien Mission of the Church Missionary Society*, London, Seeley, Jackson and Halliday. (1st edn), p 60.

yet there are times when our lives may be placed in such danger that we are compelled to ask for that protection which the Government at home professes to give us.<sup>29</sup>

Many (but not all) merchants and diplomats saw missionaries as irritants and queried their sense and achievements of missionaries and, more particularly, the sincerity of their converts.<sup>30</sup> The comments of the Australian journalist, G E 'Chinese' Morrison about missionaries are too lengthy to quote in this paper but his initial dismissal of them reflected the opinions of many expatriates.<sup>31</sup>

The protection of isolated missionaries<sup>32</sup> in China was a secondary task for diplomats committed to pursuing national political, military<sup>33</sup> and economic interests.<sup>34</sup> Missionaries annoying patterns of behavior included:

- Putting themselves at risk by going to isolated places (notably the members of the China Inland Mission);
- Meddling in Chinese domestic affairs;
- Involving themselves in legal disputes over property;
- Demanding consular assistance when Chinese officials failed to protect them;
- Asserting their divine purpose and moral ascendancy even when 'providence' was apparently unwilling to bail them out.<sup>35</sup>

A conspicuous example of missionary nuisance involved two Australian women, Miss Molloy and Miss Sears, who refused consular instructions to leave their work at a time of serious local unrest. Miss Molloy tried to repudiate her status as a British subject—a statement with no legal

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29 Mahood was nearly murdered near Gutian in Fujian Province in September 1871 as a result of a false report that foreign missionaries had been issuing a white powder to kill Chinese (The Shan Sin Fan plot). Mahood to Fenn, CMS London, 8 September 1871, CMS East Asia Archives, C CH 060. National Library of Australia, Microfilm 1915.

30 Mahood, Rev. John, 5 February 1872, CMS East Asia Archives, C CH 060,

31 Morrison, G E, *An Australian in China: being the narrative of a quiet journey across China to Burma*, (London, Horace Cox, 1895). See Chapter VI. The City of Suifu—The China Inland Mission, with some general remarks about missionaries in China. Ernest George 'Chinese' Morrison was an Australian journalist with *The Times*, London and advisor to the Chinese Republican Government. He was present at the Siege of the foreign legations in Beijing during the Boxer Rebellion. For accounts of Morrison's life see: Pearl, Cyril, *Morrison of Peking*, (Sydney, Angus and Robertson, 1968), and Thompson, Peter and Robert Macklin, *The Life and Adventures of Morrison of China*, (Crow's Nest, NSW, Allen and Unwin, 2004),.

32 US Minister Charles Denby reported in 1895 that missionaries were the 'only Americans residing in the interior.' Denby to Secretary of State, 14 November 1895. US State Department, Despatches from United States Ministers to China, 1843-1906. National Library of Australia, mfm 3773-3903 Rolls 100, 101.

33 By 1868 the China Station was the largest single station in the Royal Navy in terms of the number of warships on station. In 1880, British merchant vessels made almost 12,400 entries and clearances at China ports carrying over 9.6 million tons of cargo. Harding, R., A Jarvis and A Kennerley (eds), 'British Ships in China Seas: 1700 to the Present Day', Society of Nautical Research & National Museums of Liverpool, Review in *Journal of Maritime Research*, February 2005.

34 American official and diplomatic activities in regard to the American Protestant missionary movement is the focus of Reed, J (1972), 'American Foreign Policy, the Politics of Missions and Josiah Strong', pp 230-245 in *Church History*, Vol 41 No 2, 1972. A contemporary view of events by an American missionary is Brown, Arthur Judson, *New Forces in Old China: An inevitable awakening*, (New York, Chicago, F. H. Revell Co, 1904, 2nd edn), Chapter XX. American economic interests are discussed in Varg, Paul A, 'The Myth of the China Market', pp 742-758 in *The American Historical Review*, Vol 73 No 3, February 1968.

35 Welch, Ian, (2006), *Missionaries, Murder and Diplomacy in late 19th Century China: A Case Study*, Online — <http://anglicanhistory.org/asia/china/> See Table 2, p 17 for a listing of Protestant missionary murders in 19th century China. See also Wyman, Judith, 'The Ambiguities of Chinese Antiforeignism: Chongqing, 1870-1900', pp 86-122 in *Late Imperial China*, Vol 18 No 2, 1998.

effect. The British Supreme Court for China ordered her deportation, with Miss Sears, to Australia.<sup>36</sup>

In the aftermath of the murders of nearly two hundred British missionaries during the Boxer Uprising the British Minister in Beijing declared that:

I hope I may be left to pursue my own line in respect of missionaries, and to say to my colleagues: as I did yesterday, that tho' I have no prejudices against the missionaries, I regard the insertion in the Tientsin treaty of clauses about mission work as the most impolitic thing ever done in China.<sup>37</sup>

### III MISSIONARY EXPANSION

The impact of missionary 'providence' meant that following the Treaty of Tientsin (1856-1860) there was a numerically small but growing missionary influence across China far beyond the initial limits of the five coastal Treaty Ports permitted by the 1840 Treaty of Nanking, a treaty that made no provisions for missions or missionaries.<sup>38</sup> In 1858 there were one hundred foreign missionaries and thirty-six Protestant mission stations located in the 1840 Treaty Ports. By 1895 there were just over one thousand (about half were wives) and over eight thousand by 1925, half being single women, i.e., women outnumbered men three to one.<sup>39</sup> 132 mission stations were opened in sixty-five locations over the next twenty or so years, and it was common to find several missions competing in the same city.<sup>40</sup> In Fuzhou (Foochow) there were missionaries of the London

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36 Sydney Morning Herald, 2 February 1912. See entry under M. Molloy, Ch 19, 1896.

37 Ernest M. Satow, British Minister to China (1900-1906) to Francis Bertie, 1 November 1990, PRO 30/33/14/11, cited in Young, Leonard K, *British Policy in China, 1895-1902*, (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1897), p 234.

38 Cole, H M, 'Origins of the French Protectorate Over Catholic Missions in China,' pp 473- 491 n *The American Journal of International Law*, Vol 34 No 3, July 1940, p 478. A comprehensive overview of the negotiations by which Catholic and consequently Protestant missionaries, secured travel and residence rights in China during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The protection of missionaries, the most widespread foreign residents, was a minor element of the interests of, in particular, France and Britain.

39 There were at least forty distinct treaty ports, concessions, and leased areas in China by 1900, located on inland rivers and generally within reach of foreign gunboats.

40 Missionary families had a natural preference to work where Western medical assistance was readily available, particularly for women and children. Dr Wilcox, who preceded Dr J. J. Gregory at the American Methodist Episcopal Mission at Gutian, observed that stationing a doctor was a *sine quo non* for locating missionary families. Personal communication Dunch to Welch, 8 March 2006. See Dunch, Ryan, *Fuzhou Protestants and the Making of a Modern China*, (New Haven, Yale University Press, 2001).

The young (just 18 years old) Australian missionary, Topsy Saunders described a health insurance arrangement with the American Methodist Episcopal hospital in Gutian, Fujian Province. 'They do such a queer way here with doctors' every house pays them a certain amount a year, and they come and see everybody all round once a week whether they are sick or not'. Berry, Digby Marsh, *The Sister Martyrs of Ku Cheng: Memoir and Letters of Eleanor and Elizabeth Saunders*, (London, James Nisbet & Co, 1895), p 33.

The major work on missionary health in China remains Lennox, William G, *The Health and Turnover of Missionaries*, (New York, The Foreign Missions Committee, 1933). A more recent paper is Lutz, Jessie G., 'Attrition among Protestant Missionaries in China, 1807-1890,' *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, Vol 36 No 1, January 2012, pp 22-27. There is a discussion of women's health in Welter, Barbara, 'She Hath Done What She Could: Protestant Women's Missionary Careers in Nineteenth Century America,' pp 624-638 in *American Quarterly*, Vol 20, No 3, Special Issue: Women and Religion, Winter 1978. See also Tucker, Ruth A, and Walter L. Liefeld, *Daughters of the Church: Women and Ministry from New Testament Times to the Present*, (Grand

Missionary Society (LMS); the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM); the American Methodist Episcopal Mission (AME); the English Anglican Church Missionary Society (CMS) and its close affiliates, the Church of England Zenana Missionary Society (CEZMS) and the Female Education Society (FES).<sup>41</sup> By the 1890s there were nearly five hundred mission stations sharing 345 provincial and prefectural cities among perhaps a million Chinese villages, towns and cities.<sup>42</sup>

It was impracticable for the foreign powers to give physical protection to missionaries in trouble in remote locations.<sup>43</sup> In the case of the Chengdu riots in Sichuan (Szechuan) Province of June 1895, for example, the nearest US Consul was three months travel away in Shanghai and American naval and military forces were in the Philippines.<sup>44</sup> The ‘gunboat’ accusation, while real enough on major rivers, rarely influenced local problems. It also ignores the policies of the foreign powers in relation to China’s internal affairs as well as the incompetence and deceptiveness of the ruling dynasty in China. As early as 28 December 1868 the British Government instructed all diplomats and military officers to avoid ‘blockade, reprisal, landing armed parties, or other forms of coercion.’<sup>45</sup>

#### IV CHINESE RESISTANCE

The 19th century Chinese response to missionaries was marked by obstruction and riots led by the Chinese literary/administrative elite.<sup>46</sup> Liu observes it was the foreign presence that was at the heart of the opposition of the Chinese elite, the scholar-gentry or literati.<sup>47</sup> Immediate opposition centred on property issues as the literati sought to obstruct the spread of foreign influence. As missionaries

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Rapids. Zondervan, 1987), pp 296-298.

41 For an introduction to the Female Education Society see Griffiths, Valerie, ‘Biblewomen from London to China: The transnational appropriation of a female mission idea’, pp 521-541 in *Women’s History Review*, Vol 17 No 4, September 2008 pp 524-525.

42 Latourette, op cit, pp 226; 245.

43 There were no roads other than narrow footpaths requiring movement in single file. Anyone wanting to understand the difficulty of cross-country travel in China until very recent times should read any of the accounts of the Chinese Communist ‘Long March’ 1934-1935. An introduction will be found in Wikipedia online (2 September 2008) [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Long\\_March](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Long_March)

44 Charles Denby, US Minister, Peking to Washington, 1 July 1895, *Foreign Records of the United States*, No 2278, p 89.

45 Fairbank, J K, ‘Patterns behind the Tientsin Massacre’, *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, Vol 20, No 3/4, Dec 1957, pp 488-9. The Germans had reached the same conclusion. Dr. Cord Eberspaecher Odenburg, Germany, to Ian Welch, 12 January 2005. On the limited military resources of the foreign powers in Wehrle, Edmund S, *Britain, China, and the Antimissionary Riots, 1891-1900*, (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1966), pp 30-31.

46 Website Saint Michael Center for the Blessed Virgin Mary. Online 1 September 2008 at [www.smcenter.org/chinese\\_martyrs.htm](http://www.smcenter.org/chinese_martyrs.htm)

47 Lu Shihch’ang, Review of Liu Kwang-Ching, ‘The Causes of the Anti-Christian Movement Among Chinese Officials and Gentry, 1860-1874’, pp 136-137 in *Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol 27 No 1, November 1967.



were the people most interested in establishing themselves outside the Treaty Ports they bore the brunt of local elite opposition.<sup>48</sup>

The difficulties which missionaries experience in securing the enjoyment of their Treaty rights in leasing land or houses in the interior are largely attributable to the factious opposition of the literati, too often acquiesced in, if not actively supported, by the local authorities.<sup>49</sup>

Examples of literati intervention, and there were many, can be illustrated by a riot over property involving the Church Missionary Society's 'lease' of a temple site within the Chinese city of Fuzhou. It led to a serious riot, the invasion and destruction of property and eventually a hearing before the British Supreme Court for China brought, successfully, by Chinese literati.<sup>50</sup> The CMS subsequently joined other foreigners on Nantai Island in the Min River but Archdeacon Wolfe, the senior missionary, maintained his rage over the affair, attempting as late as 1895 to recover the property as compensation for the murders of Robert and Louisa Stewart and nine others at Huashan in August 1895.<sup>51</sup> Following the hundreds of murders in the Boxer uprising at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Protestant missionaries declared:

The history of foreign relations with China has all along been that of hereditary prejudice on the one hand and force on the other. The government of China has never given a friendly reception to foreigners... This long-standing ill will was deeply intensified by the political humiliation and loss of Territory which followed the war [1894-1895] with Japan.<sup>52</sup>

Most literati were intellectually opposed to Christianity because they believed that missions, or more specifically the foreign presence, threatened their status as leaders of Chinese communal life, i.e., missionaries represented a fundamental challenge to indigenous culture and its authority system.<sup>53</sup> Most literati soon concluded that missions were not really a genuine threat but nonetheless their collective attitude was disorientation and anti-foreign feeling.

They find the ground slipping from under them by the impact of Western civilization, which is forcing upon them reforms, the trend of which is all towards great changes in their cherished beliefs, customs, learnings, and methods, and they cannot see whereunto all this is

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48 Zongli (Tsunli) Yamen (Chinese Foreign Office) to US Minister Charles Denby, US State Department Archives, Despatches from US Legation, Peking, 31 August 1895. Townsend, James, 'Chinese Nationalism,' pp 97-130 in *Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs*, No 27, January 1992. On the Catholic missionary situation in Sichuan Province see Daigle, Jean-Guy, 'Challenging the Imperial Order: The Precarious State of Local Christians in late-Qing Sichuan', pp 1-30 in *European Journal of East Asian Studies*, Vol 4 No 1, 2005.

49 British Minister Nicholas O'Connor to British Consul in Fuzhou (Foochow) Mansfield, 19 January 1895. See also letter by G. Owen of the London Missionary Society, 17 January 1895 explaining how Protestant missions sought to overcome the problem of securing property. Foreign Office Archives, FO228/1194 1895,

50 Her Britannic Majesty's Supreme Court for China, *The Wu Shih Shan Trial*, (1879), Report of the Case of Chow Chang Kung, Lin King Ching, Loo King Fah, Sat Keok Min, Directors of the Aou Shan Kwan Temple, at Wu Shih Shan, Foochow versus Rev. John R Wolfe of the Church of England Missionary Society, (Reprinted from the 'HongKong Daily Press.'

51 Welch 2004 & 2006 op cit.

52 McIntosh, Gilbert, *Is There anything in it? Some after-crisis vindications*, (London, Morgan and Scott, Shanghai, American Presbyterian Mission Press, 1902), p 50.

53 Lloyd, Rev. Llewellyn, 5 December 1877, 10 December 1877, CMS East Asia Archives, C CH 058.

leading them.<sup>54</sup>

Chinese traditional education was focused on conserving the traditional system of Chinese government. Preserving the past is a process that has always troubled societies and is thriving among conservatives in contemporary Australia.<sup>55</sup>

Educational achievement in Imperial China was measured by a comprehensive system of examinations at three distinct levels: district, provincial, and national.<sup>56</sup> Official positions were few and usually transitory against the number of educated men and many who had failed the bottom level district examinations provided the backbone of Chinese district or prefectural administration as base level clerks and village teachers. Each prefecture included a vast number of villages where authority and local influence was family-based with literati controlling affairs.<sup>57</sup> Success in the first level qualified men for official employment within local Chinese administration.<sup>58</sup> A small number found work with missions as language teachers, translators and very occasionally, catechists and clergy.<sup>59</sup> Wylie's account of the early generation of missionaries shows how active they were in translation work and all of them, from Robert Morrison<sup>60</sup> onwards, relied on Chinese assistants.<sup>61</sup>

The second level examinations qualified men for junior provincial appointments. The third, and highest, level comprised national examinations in Beijing from which the successful men qualified for the most senior provincial and national positions. Few officials at any level held office for long periods and self-interested taxation measures generated frequent discontent that often threatened officials.<sup>62</sup>

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54 Gracey to Robert Bacon, Assistant Secretary of State, 6 December 1906, cited in Varg, (1968), op cit, p 747.

55 Wong Kam-cheung, 'Culture and Moral Leadership in Education,' pp 106-125 in *Peabody Journal of Education*, Vol 73 No 2. On the situation in Australia see discussion online — <http://insidestory.org.au/dtente-donnelly-wiltshire-and-the-national-curriculum>

56 Miyazaki, Ichisada, *China's Examination Hell: The Civil Service Examinations of Imperial China*, London and New Haven, Yale University Press (1976),. Chang Chung-li, *The Income of the Chinese Gentry*, (Seattle, University of Washington Press, 1962),. Chang Chung-li, *The Chinese Gentry: Studies in Their Role in Nineteenth Century Chinese Society*, (Seattle, University of Washington Press, 1967).

57 Esherick, Joseph W, and Mary Backus Rankin, eds, *Chinese Local Elites and Patterns of Dominance*, (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1990).

58 Ch'u T'sung-tsu, *Local Government in China under the Ch'ing*, (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1969),

59 Mahood, Rev. John, 1 April 1874; Lloyd, Rev Llewellyn, 8 June 1877, CMS East Asia Archives, C CH 058. Berry, op cit, p 93. For many references to the role of Chinese literati as teachers of Anglican missionaries see: Stock, Eugene, *The Story of the Fuh Kien Mission of the Church Missionary Society*, (London, Seeley, Jackson and Halliday, 1890-2nd & 3rd edn). The China Inland Mission had a language school at Anking using a Chinese textbook written by a missionary: See Baller, F W, *A Mandarin Primer*, (London and Shanghai, China Inland Mission, 1887, new edition, 1911). The CIM school followed the universal practice of missionary societies in employing local Chinese literati for practical language experience — Frank Burden, Anking, to Charles Goode, Adelaide, Letter Book 1, No 4, pp 11-12, 19 January 1891; Letter Book 1, No 14, p 33, 27 February 1891. (Collection Ian Welch).

60 Robert Morrison (1782-1834) was the first Protestant missionary in 19<sup>th</sup> century China. See Hancock, Christopher, *Robert Morrison and the birth of Chinese Protestantism*, London, T & T Clark, 2008).

61 Wylie, Alexander, *Memorials of Protestant Christian Missionaries to the Chinese*, Shanghai, American Presbyterian Mission Press, 1867 reprinted Taipei, Ch'eng-wen Publishing Co, 1967). Lists the early missionaries with details of translations and publications.

62 Attacks on the District Magistrate of Gutian during 1894 and 1895 were initially linked to the imposition of

The later 19<sup>th</sup> century anti-foreign responses by the Chinese literati were confronted with a new intelligentsia educated in Chinese and overseas higher education institutions operated mainly by American mission agencies who by the early 20<sup>th</sup> century had abandoned, for ideological and practice reasons, individual evangelism for the greater goal of social reconstruction.<sup>63</sup> The growing emphasis upon Western-style higher education was something that Chinese, especially those with overseas experience, valued highly.<sup>64</sup>

The effectiveness, numerically, of foreign Protestant evangelism in China from 1949 onwards can be measured by the expansion in Chinese Protestant Christianity. There were just 100,000 in 1900, and less than a million by 1960. Since foreign missionaries departed in the early 1950s, indigenous Protestant Christianity has grown with suggestions that it may now exceed 40 million adherents.<sup>65</sup> Religious interest in modern China is not restricted to Protestant Christianity and includes Buddhism, Confucianism, Islam, Daoism and other traditional practices.

Rather than ‘cultural imperialism’ the term ‘religious colonisation’ has been used to describe the process by which foreign missionaries sought to express their religious beliefs and ecclesiastical conventions within the Chinese cultural context.<sup>66</sup> Apart from crediting a missionary influence that does not match the reality, the question that still arises is why people, often illiterate and familiar only with their local culture, voluntarily chose to abandon ancestor and idol worship. Part of the answer can be found in the testimonies of Chinese converts in 19<sup>th</sup> century Australia.

This is a grateful statement of Mark Bu Ah Cow, an applicant for baptism, aged twenty-nine years, and born in the village of On-Wo, in the district of Sin-Ning, in Canton province. During my youth I went to school and studied five years. Although I am not possessed of wisdom, yet, when I grew up, then I knew that the idols were made by the hand of man. As they were false Gods, I would not worship them, but, alas ! I am an uneducated man, and my

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taxes. Welch 2004, ‘Nellie, Topsy and Annie...’ op cit.

63 Dikotter, op cit, pp 50-51. Beaver 1957, p 22. See also Lutz, Jessie Gregory, *China and the Christian Colleges, 1850-1950*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1971), Lutz, Jessie G. Chinese Nationalism and the Anti-Christian Campaigns of the 1920s, pp 395-416 in *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol 10 No 3, 1976. Bieler, Stacey, ‘Patriots’ or ‘traitors?’ *A History of American-educated Chinese*, Armonk, NY, M E Sharpe, 2003), On late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century Chinese see Thompson, Peter and Robert Macklin, *The Life and Adventures of Morrison of China*, Crow’s Nest, NSW, Allen and Unwin, 2004),.

64 See Yu Renqiu, (n.d.), ‘Chinese American Contributions to the Educational Development of Toisan (Taishan) 1910-1940’ online (1 August 2008) at <http://www.apex.net.au/~jgk/taishan/education.html>. See also a history of Xiamen (Amoy) University online (1 September 2008) at <http://www.xmu.edu.cn/english/founder.asp>

65 Lee, Joseph Tse-hei, ‘Christianity in Contemporary China: An Update,’ pp 227-304 in *Journal of Church and State*, Vol 49 No 2, Spring 2007. Wong, Elinor and Francis Wong, ‘Just How Many Christians and Communists are there in China?’ *Ecumenical News Service*, World Council of Churches, Online (26 August 2008) at <http://www.eni.ch/articles/display.shtml?05-0691/> Xu, Xuchu ‘To register or not to register? Unregistered Christians in china under increasing pressure’, pp 01- 209 in *Religion, State and Society*, Vol 25 No 2, 1997), More recently see Albert, Eleanor, ‘Christianity in China,’ *CFR Backgrounders*, US Council on Foreign Relations, 7 May 2015. See also <http://www.brookings.edu/~media/events/2014/06/03-christianity-in-china/corrected-transcript--christianity-in-china.pdf>

66 Pfister, Lauren, (2005), ‘Protestant Ethics among Chinese Missionaries, Problems of Indigenization, and the Spirit of Academic Professionalization,’ pp 93-114 in *Journal of Classical Sociology*, Vol 5 No 1, March 1 2005. Online — <http://www.cfr.org/china/christianity-china/p36503>

dwelling is among those who follow evil customs, and who worship idols, so that I cannot find the true God anywhere.

LEE MAN CHING. When a boy, I was at school nearly three years, and learned a few characters; but from poverty, I was obliged to give up the idea of an education, and betake myself to farming. I was always desiring riches, and prayed to the Gods and to Buddha for secret help to enter the path of wealth; so, when once I heard of the goldfields, I vowed to these false Gods that, if I was successful, I would speedily return to my native land, and present offerings to them. I came to the goldfields, and have been a digger nine years, and sometimes I got hold of money, but I was never satisfied; so I did not return to China. ... On recalling my disposition to worship idols, I now see that it arose out of my covetous desires, as I only asked them to help me to wealth and profit by directing me to the right ticket in the lottery.<sup>67</sup>

There is not space in this paper to pursue the complexities of what conversion to Christianity involved although the testimonies indicate that it definitely involved abandoning traditional customs and behaviours.<sup>68</sup> Tradition and family was so strong that most Chinese took little interest in Christianity and many foreign missionaries found their distinterest frustrating physically and emotionally. After ten years in Fuzhou, for example, the Church Missionary Society (CMS) nearly decided to abandon its Fukien Province mission altogether because of the poor response from the local people. ‘Religious colonization’ is clearly an overstatement.

## V MISSIONS AND WOMEN

One of the, until quite recently, hidden issues of Protestant missionary work, in China as elsewhere, was the rapid and dramatic shift in the gender makeup of missions<sup>69</sup> because, as Haggis puts it, Euro-American women were increasingly seeking ‘meaningful work.’<sup>70</sup> The exemplary nature of the behaviour of foreign women was not lost on some Chinese females.

Linda Wilson, discussing this ‘transference of women’s traditional abilities’ refers to the church as a ‘third sphere’ offering a community beyond the home which was not the ‘world’ and, by facilitating a transition from private to public involvement, forming an acceptable link between the two domains.<sup>71</sup>

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67 Appendix10, ‘Selected Testimonies of Chinese Christian Converts, Victoria, in Welch, Ian, *Alien Son: the Life and Times of Cheok Hong Cheong (Zhang Zhuoxiong) 1851-1928*, PhD thesis, Australian National University, Online — <http://hdl.handle.net/1885/49261>

68 Lutz, 2012, op cit. See discussion in Van Rooden, Peter, (1996), ‘Nineteenth-Century Representations of Missionary Conversion and the Transformation of Western Christianity’, Ch 3 pp 66 ff in Van Der Veer, ed, *Conversion to Modernities: The Globalization of Christianity*, New York, Routledge, 1996). See also Yang Fenngang, ‘Chinese Conversion to Evangelical Christianity: The Importance of Social and Cultural Contexts’, pp 237-258 in *Sociology of Religion*, Vol 59 Issue 3, Fall 1998.

69 Murray, Jocelyn, ‘Anglican and Protestant Missionary Societies in Great Britain: Their Use of Women as Missionaries from the Late 18th to the Late 19th Century’. *Exchange* 21, no. 1 (April 1992): pp 1–20.

70 Haggis, Jane, ‘A heart that has felt the love of god and longs for others to know it’: conventions of gender, tensions of self and constructions of difference in offering to be a lady missionary’, pp 171–193 in *Women's History Review*, Vol 7 No 2, 1998, p 171.

71 Wilson, Linda, *Constrained by Zeal: female spirituality amongst Nonconformists, 1825–1875* Carlisle, Paternoster Biblical and Theological Monographs, p. 210, cited in Hill, Myrtle, (2007) ‘Gender, Culture and ‘the Spiritual Empire’: the Irish Protestant female missionary experience’, pp 203-226 in *Women's History Review*, Vol 16 No 2, April 2007, p. 208.

A reading of missionary archives reveals less about a feminist revolution than an evolutionary story of subtle reordering of existing norms and values that allowed single women to take active roles in missions while sustaining the cultural elitism that characterised their male colleagues.<sup>72</sup> The gender shift in the China Protestant missionary workforce reflected changes for women not simply in female education, child care, home hygiene, etc but, more importantly, by creating opportunities for indigenous women in one of the most important developments in the human resource history of the Christian Church.<sup>73</sup> The impact on just one province in China shows that by 1895, married and single women outnumbered male missionaries. It is most noticeable in the case of the Anglicans where the influence of the Irish couple, Rev. Robert and Mrs. Louisa Smyly Stewart, drew in single women not only from England but also from Ireland and Australia.

**Table 1**  
**Protestant Mission Statistics, Fujian, 1895**<sup>74</sup>

Mission	Foreign Missionaries			Chinese Members
	Male	Wives	Single Women	
American Board (Congregational)	16	8	2	1102
American Reformed (Presbyterian)	7	8	7	1187
English Presbyterian	10	6	7	1251
CMS/CEZMS (Anglican)	13	7	39	6540
London Missy Soc (Congregl)	4	3	6	2034
US Methodist Episcopal	9	6	13	4898
	58	38	74	

Single women missionaries enjoyed a level of autonomy in their day-to-day work that was denied them at ‘home’ although the length of missionary service of women may have been much shorter, perhaps about half, that of men.<sup>75</sup>

A key factor in the evangelical Protestant Christianity in China, as elsewhere, was the almost total reliance of foreign missionaries, male and female, upon indigenous people.<sup>76</sup> Preaching in the streets in the early days, or later in chapels and other institutional settings needed the daily guidance

72 Haggis, op cit, p 172.

73 Benson, Linda (2005), *Women with Attitude: A Women’s Mission in Northwestern China*, pp 183-188 in *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, Vol. 29, No. 4, October 2005. On women missionaries and their work in China see Welch, Ian, (2005), ‘Women’s Work for Women: Women Missionaries in 19th Century China’, A Paper presented to the Eighth Women in Asia Conference, Women’s Caucus of the Asian Studies Association of Australia, University of Technology, Sydney, 26-28 September 2005. Online (22 April 2008) at <http://anglicanhistory.org/asia/china/welch2005.pdf/>.

74 *The Chinese Recorder*, November 1896, p 530.

75 Hill, op cit, p 208. Many single women missionaries married and became ‘wives’ and no longer appeared on the list of women missionaries even though they continued to serve to many years. Chin op cit, p 321. Marriage of single women is indicated in Welch, Ian, “*Consecrated Amazons.*” *Australian and New Zealand Single Women Missionary Pioneers in Asia, 1875-1900*, Online — <http://hdl.handle.net/1885/13074>

76 Sedgwick, op cit, pp 60-61. See also Welch 2005, ‘Women’s Work for Women...’, op cit.

and assistance of local native speakers.<sup>77</sup> Chinese men were active in colporteur work (distributing Bibles, tracts and other contribution, usually charging a small price) but also as catechists (religious teachers and lay preachers) and ordained ministers, roles that were closed to women. Single women were completely dependent on Chinese assistants most notably in their itinerations where they relied on Chinese carriers (*ding dang* coolies) to carry them and their goods. They were usually accompanied by a trusted Chinese Christian man in conformity with Chinese culture that women did not travel alone without a male escort.

The need for local support expanded as single women became the predominant force in the foreign mission population. By the 1890s, the place of 'Biblewomen' as village evangelists and interpreters and companions for itinerating Protestant single women missionaries was firmly established.<sup>78</sup> Schooling for Biblewomen contributed to breaking down the Chinese belief that education for women was irrelevant and with it a commonly held belief that women were too stupid to learn.<sup>79</sup> The main drive for the adoption of the Biblewoman model in the CMS work in Fujian Province was Louisa Smyly Stewart.<sup>80</sup> She wrote in 1886 that it was the:

Best hope for reaching the vast numbers filling the numerous towns and villages throughout our province, and accordingly some eight years ago we commenced a small Training Home in the city of Foo-chow ... Our first object in the Home is to teach the Christian women themselves the truth 'more perfectly,' and then to train them to teach others, and to express their thoughts clearly. Practical training they also get by visiting in the heathen villages round about. This work originated with themselves.<sup>81</sup>

The concept of 'Biblewomen' emerged during the early 19<sup>th</sup> century evangelical revivals in England where working class women went into the homes of poor families where middle class women were unwelcome or socially uncomfortable.<sup>82</sup> In the Fuzhou school, the first established by the Church of England Zenana Missionary Society<sup>83</sup> in Fujian Province, women could remain in

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77 Pfister 2005, op cit, p. 7.

78 Welch 2005, 'Women's Work for Women...', op cit. For a general report to mission supporters in America see Davis, J A, *Leng Tso, The Chinese Bible-Woman*, Philadelphia, Presbyterian Board of Education, 1886).

79 Wood, Vanessa, 'The Part Played by Chinese Women in the Formation of an Indigenous Church in China: insights from the archive of Myfanwy Wood, LMS missionary', pp 597-610 in *Women's History Review*, Vol 17 No 4, 2008. Lee Wong Yin, 'Women's Education in Traditional and Modern China', pp 345-367 in *Women's History Review*, Vol 4 No 3, September 1995.

80 Wife of the CMS missionary, Rev. Robert Warren Stewart. See Watson, Mary E, *Robert and Louisa Stewart In Life and in Death*, (London, Marshall Brothers, 1896). Stewart was the acknowledged leader of the Irish CMS clergy (sent by Dublin University Fuh-Kien Mission) and Supervising Secretary of the Church of England Zenana Missionary Society in Fujian Province. Louisa was widely respected by other missionay women because of her family's wealth and high status in Dublin but also because she proved exceptionally able, and the intellectual and organisational equal of her husband.

81 Barnes, op cit, p 43.

82 Davins, Delia, 'British Women Missionaries in Nineteenth Century China,' in *Women's History Review*, Vol 1 No 2, 1992, p 260. See also Griffiths, Valerie, 'Biblewomen from London to China: The transnational appropriation of a female mission idea', pp 521-541 in *Women's History Review*, Vol 17 No 4, September 2008.

83 A separate organisation, the Church of England Zenana Missionary Society, a society of single Christian women missionaries for women, was a very close working partner of the Church Missionary Society. Another body closely associated with the CMS and CEZMS, and later amalgamated with CMS, was the Society for Promoting Female Education in the East. See Society for Promoting Female Education in the East, *Female Agency among*

residence for up to two years but this was very rare with most staying three months or less. The Chinese trainee Biblewomen were taught to read and write in a Romanised form of Chinese.<sup>84</sup> Nellie Saunders explained Romanisation to her mother:

Now, if you get the Romanised, which every one can have (only some of these people are dead set against it), you can see exactly how to pronounce the character, and then somebody can tell you the English, and there you are. You never forget that, but how can you remember a hieroglyphic of which you can't remember the sound, and never knew the meaning? My teacher waxes eloquent on the subject. He says it is not of the slightest use to read on and on till you nearly turn into an automaton. (He did not say exactly these words; Chinese teachers are a wee scrap like automatons themselves). He wants very much to learn Romanised. Topsy [Topsy Saunders] has taught him a little, and when we get on a bit we will teach him some more.<sup>85</sup>

The 'Station Class' was an innovative evangelistic and training tool introduced to Anglican missions of the CMS in Fujian Province in 1893 by Florence [Flora] Codrington who credited the idea to the American Methodists.<sup>86</sup> Nellie Saunders believed the station-class concept had reduced the widespread fear of foreigners but it also presented Chinese women with an alternative worldview:

Miss Codrington had been having a station class, or rather a series of them. For a station class, you get from twelve to sixteen young women and feed them for three months, getting them either to live in the house with you or renting one next door ... Mrs. Stewart says it shows how God has worked here in opening the way for missionaries to work, because a few years ago you could not get any women at all to come and live like that, or any way approaching to it, for love or money.<sup>87</sup>

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*the Heathen*, (London, Edward Suter, 1850). There were CMS/CEZMS auxiliaries in the Colony of Victoria, Australia that merged in the 1890s. The two societies merged in the UK in 1957.

Established originally for work in India and later Sri Lanka (Ceylon) the CEZMS was brought to China through the representations of Mrs. Louisa Smyly Stewart with the strong support of her husband, Rev. Robert W Stewart. See Hook, Marion, 'Save Some': *C.E.Z.M.S. Work in Fuh-Kien*, (London, Church of England Zenana Missionary Society/Marshall Bros, c1900). Darley, Mary E, *The Light of the Morning: The Story of the C.E.Z.M.S, Work in the Kien Ning Prefecture of the Fuh-Kien Province, China*, (London, Church of England Zenana Missionary Societ, 1903),

On the recruitment of single women missionaries in England (and Ireland indirectly) is Morawiecki, Jennifer, 'The Peculiar Mission of Christian Womanhood': the Selection and Preparation of Women Missionaries of the Church of England Zenana Missionary Society, 1880-1920, D Phil, University of Sussex, (unpublished).

The first Australian Anglican single women missionaries were sent to India in the 1880s to work with CEZMS. In China, as a result of conflicts about foreign women missionaries wearing Chinese costume, the women of the Church Missionary Association of Victoria, the Victorian auxiliary of the CMSE, were seconded to work with the CEZMS. The first two Australian women were Nellie and Topsy Saunders. For a short account of Nellie (Elinor) and Topsy (Elizabeth) see Welch 2004, 'Nellie, Topsy and Annie ... op cit

84 The choice of romanised Chinese rather than English is a further challenge to the view that missionaries in 19<sup>th</sup> China were engaged in cultural imperialism. Although missionaries did teach English, as in institutions training clergy, it was to provide access to theological works unavailable in Chinese, a situation that still applies in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. For a critique of contemporary 'Teaching English as a Missionary Language' see Pennycook, Alistair and Sophie Coutand-Marin, 'Teaching English as a Missionary Language, (TEML), pp 337-353 in *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, Vol 24 No 3, 2003

85 Berry, op cit, p 74.

86 Biblewomen in were introduced to Fujian (Fukien, Fuh Kien) Province by missionaries of the American Methodist Episcopal Mission. Barnes, op cit, p 54. See also Carlson, Elsworth C, *The Foochow Missionaries*, (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1974),.

87 Nellie Saunders to Mrs. Eliza Saunders, January 1895, Berry, op cit, pp 183-184. Topsy Saunders description of

In her account of CEZMS work in Fujian Province an Englishwoman, Marion Hook, explained how married women could leave their homes for three months to attend a station class. Family approval, especially that of husbands and mothers-in-law, was essential.

It is not so difficult as it would be in England, for many members of a Chinese family live together, often three and four generations under one roof, and in large houses even as many as one hundred persons. Thus there is always a relative who will undertake to care for the husband and children and cook and food, and so set the wife and mother free.

She added

Many of the women when they first come to us are deplorably ignorant. They have never had any education, and most of them have never left their own village. One who came knew absolutely nothing, except how to cook the rice and do a few things about the house. She had spent all her life away in the hills, and when we spoke of the Emperor, she had never heard of such a being, and equally ignorant was she of such a place as Peking. In the Bible lesson one day came the story of the boats by the sea of Galilee; but she had never seen one, and could not imagine what a boat was like.<sup>88</sup>

Great care was taken by the missionaries not to defy local laws and customs.<sup>89</sup> Nellie Saunders described a situation in Florence [Flora] Codrington's class where a wife of just a few months, whose claim to be separated from her husband had been confirmed by her parents, was taken by her husband and sold into prostitution. The missionaries could not intervene.<sup>90</sup> The woman, like so many who became Christians around the world during the missionary era, remains unnamed. Pfister makes the important observation that:

It remains one of the ironies of the specialized study of missionary history that it has largely forgotten the converted while emphasizing the converter... Most converts remained hidden under unpronounceable and misspelled transliterations, vague references spiced with evangelical rhetoric, abbreviated names, and later on, a growing trend to employ comparative

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a station-class at Sek Chek Du was published in Australia in the influential missionary newsletter, *The Missionary, At Home and Abroad*, Vol XXII, No 23, September 1895, pp 353-354.

"There is much need for a 'Station Class,' the people are simply longing for one. 8 is the number — there are reasons for the limit — but we could have quite 20. I must explain. A 'Station Class' only lasts three months; there is work to be done, and books to be read, with an examination at the end. We go round, look out suitable women, take their names, selected the few best fitted afterwards to lend a helping hand, and call them in when the time comes."

88 Hook op cit, p 33.

89 The efforts of the Rev. Robert Stewart to avoid involvement in disputes involving Chinese is discussed, briefly, in Welch 2004, "Nellie, Topsy and Annie..." op cit. Following the Gutian/Huashan massacre discussed in that paper, the combined Protestant missions of Fujian issued a Pastoral Letter to all their congregations setting out the position of the missions on involvement in Chinese legal disputes. Wehrle 1966, op cit, pp 62-63 comments: "Without a doubt the pastoral constituted a worthy statement of principles for the conduct of missionaries and their fold . . . it was a good instrument and it gave the [British] Foreign Office a renewed opportunity to take up the question of missionary conduct. True to form, the Foreign Office chose to remain passive. No attempt was made to use this pastoral as a guide for missionary conduct throughout China."

The Foreign Office sought to tone down the references to superstitious beliefs and the inevitability of the transformation of China by Christianity. The CMS was asked to eliminate the objectionable portions of the pastoral letter but it was not an exclusively CMS pastoral letter.

Wehrle states (63) that after 1897 the Foreign Office gave up its various ideas about controlling missionaries in China. Lord Salisbury was not receptive to any suggestion that might extend official responsibility and control.

90 Nellie Saunders to Mrs. Eliza Saunders, January 1895, Berry, op cit, pp 184-186.



statistics with a modicum of personal details.<sup>91</sup>

Missionary letters demonstrate that while local people generally ignored the religious teachings of foreign missionaries they showed great interest in details of their lives and their reasons for being in China. Nellie Saunders, and numerous others, wrote:

Just about noon we passed through one village, rather a large one, and immediately there was a crowd around us — men, women, and children — whose curiosity was something astonishing.<sup>92</sup>

A prodigious 19<sup>th</sup> century traveller, Constance Gordon-Cumming, wrote of a stay in a village inn:

Very often the only sleeping room of a village hotel is a loft to which access is obtained by a rickety ladder. It is so low in the roof that an average sized man cannot stand upright . . . every corner from which a glimpse of the foreigner can be obtained is eagerly secured, and every detail of washing, dressing, praying, eating, is a subject of keen interest to the spectators.<sup>93</sup>

Despite their obvious anxieties about travelling in a new and uncertain environment foreign single women travellers reported that they were safer in China, with Chinese servants, than they would have been on the streets of Euro-American cities.<sup>94</sup> George Ernest [Chinese] Morrison, an Australian journalist, wrote of his overland journey from Shanghai to Burma that:

I went to China possessed with the strong racial antipathy to the Chinese common to my countrymen, but that feeling has long since given way to one of lively sympathy and gratitude, and I shall always look back with pleasure to this journey, during which I experienced, while traversing provinces as wide as European kingdoms, uniform kindness and hospitality, and the most charming courtesy.<sup>95</sup>

## VI MISSIONARIES ARE PEOPLE TOO!

Observations about the role of missionaries have tended to ignore deep differences not only in gender but between individual missionaries. Personalities, theology, ethics, places of origin, social class, education and particular missionary occupations were widely varied.<sup>96</sup> The motivations that

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91 Pfister, Lauren, 'The Proto-Martyr of Chinese Protestants: Reconstructing the Story of Ch'ea Kam-Kwong, pp 187-244 in *Journal of the Hong Kong Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Vol 42, 2002. Wood, Vanessa, 'The Part Played by Chinese Women in the Formation of an Indigenous Church in China: Insights from the Archive of Myfanwy Wood, LMS missionary', pp 597-610 in *Women's History Review*, Vol 17 No 4, 2008, p 597.

92 Berry, op cit, pp 40-41 and pp 80-90

93 Constance Florence Gordon-Cumming's 19<sup>th</sup> century wanderings included Africa, Asia, the United States and Australia. She noted during her China visit in 1879-1880 that invitations to visit homes were frequent. Gordon-Cumming, Constance Frederica, *Wanderings in China*, (Edinburgh, W Blackwood & Sons, 1886), pp 104 and 109.

94 Welch, Ian, (2005), 'Women's Work . . .', op cit

95 Morrison, op cit, Ch 1

96 See [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_Protestant\\_missionaries\\_in\\_China](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Protestant_missionaries_in_China). Online (28 July 2008) for a list of Protestant mission groups. On mission attitudes to Chinese law and culture see Ku Wei-yang, 'Conflict, Confusion and Control: Some Observations of the Missionary Cases in Nineteenth Century Taiwan, pp 11-38 in De Ridder, Koen, *Footsteps in Deserted Valleys: Missionary Cases, Strategies and Practices in Qing China*, Leuven Chinese Studies, Vol 8, Leuven, (Belgium, Leuven University Press, 2000). On the selection process for

took people abroad as missionaries were as varied as in any other arena of human endeavour and extended far beyond ‘preaching the Gospel’.<sup>97</sup> For most 19<sup>th</sup> century evangelical Protestant missionaries the desired transformation of Chinese spiritual values was directly linked to transforming the world by changing individuals without directly challenging established social, economic or political arrangements.<sup>98</sup>

In China, the majority of 19<sup>th</sup> century missionaries were evangelicals and sought individual conversions but towards the end of the century the ideal of conversion broadened into two distinct and ultimately divergent streams—individual and societal. Individual conversion was the primary goal of the conservative evangelical societies such as the China Inland Mission and the Anglican Church Missionary Society. Evangelism was directed, for the greater part, towards ordinary working people—peasants, shopkeepers, transport workers, women at home, etc.<sup>99</sup> Individual conversion remains, as Yang has indicated, the contemporary goal of Chinese Protestant congregations at home and among the diaspora.<sup>100</sup>

Statistics reveal a wide gap between the number of Chinese baptised and the number who became active church members, usually measured by regular participation in the Holy Communion. There was an even wider gap between the number of ‘enquirers’ or ‘adherents’ and those actually baptised. A major difficulty for evangelicals has been measuring the reality of individual ‘conversion’ and still less how converts can change society.<sup>101</sup> At least one experienced China missionary, Griffith John of the London Missionary Society, expressed his reservations about Chinese converts in an address to the 1877 Shanghai Conference of Protestant Missionaries. He emphasised:

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the increasing number of single women missionaries see Haggis op cit, and Morawiecki, Jennifer, *The Peculiar Mission of Christian Womanhood: the Selection and Preparation of Women Missionaries of the Church of England Zenana Missionary Society, 1880-1920*, D Phil, University of Sussex, (1998), (unpublished).

97 Williams, C P, ‘Not Quite Gentlemen’, an Examination of “‘Middling Class’ Protestant Missionaries from Britain”, pp 301-315 in *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, Vol 31 No 3, July 1980.

98 Van Rooden, Peter, ‘Nineteenth-Century Representations of Missionary Conversion and the Transformation of Western Christianity’, Ch 3 pp 66 ff in Van Der Veer, ed, *Conversion to Modernities: The Globalization of Christianity*, (New York, Routledge, 1996), p 66-69.

99 Chang, Ning J, ‘Tension Within the Church: British Missionaries in Wuhan, 1913-1928,’ pp 421-444 in *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol 33 No 2, 1999. Yao Xinzong, ‘Success or Failure? Christianity in China,’ pp 7-16 in *History Today*, Vol 44 Issue 9, September 1994. On theological and methodological divisions between evangelicals and liberals in China see Austin, Alwyn J, *Saving China: Canadian Missionaries in the Middle Kingdom*, (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1986). For a more general view see Lutz, Jessie, G, ‘China and Protestantism: Historical Perspectives, 1807-1949,’ in Stephen Uhalley, Jr. and Xiaoxin Wu, eds, *China and Christianity: Burdened Past, Hopeful Future* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2001).

100 Yang Fenggang, *Sociology of Religion*. Washington: Fall 1998, Vol 59 Issue 3, 1998, pp 237-258. There is a reported trend in the ‘official’ Chinese Protestant culture towards a broader theology. See Chen Zemin, ‘Intensify Theological Reconstruction in the Chinese Church’, *Chinese Theological Review*, 14. Online (25 August 2008), <http://www.amitynewsservice.org/page.php?page=356>

101 The essentials of evangelical belief have remained constant over the period from the late 18th century to the present. See discussion in Bebbington, D W, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain, A History from the 1730s to the 1980s*, (London, Unwin Hyman, 1989),.

The lack of spiritual discernment on the part of the great hulk of his converts... The truths that are lodged in their intellects, and which they accept as unquestionable verities, do not appear to move them deeply. Their spiritual nature is not intensely quickened and greatly expanded by the things of the Spirit of God, neither are their moral activities powerfully energised by them.<sup>102</sup>

Most missionaries struggled to separate genuine believers from those who became nominal Christians for other reasons such as a good job with the missionaries ('rice' Christians); a superior 'western' education with English language skills leading to jobs with foreign companies or Chinese businesses associated with foreigners; access to better health and welfare services; for some kind of edge over relatives or neighbours; or for some other personally advantageous reason. Protestant missionaries measured a convert's sincerity by their rejection of Chinese traditional practices, such as idol and ancestor worship, footbinding or seasonal rituals including fertility and appeasement of malevolent spirits.

Missionaries came from a wide range of backgrounds, in the case of the British, from the poorest as in the unique case of Gladys Aylward, to the very wealthy as in the case of C T Studd.<sup>103</sup> English and Irish Anglican clergymen of the CMS and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG), relatively few numerically, tended to be university graduates but most had not completed secondary school and had minimal preparation in missionary colleges.<sup>104</sup> British (including Australian) missions tended to emphasise personal 'spirituality' rather than formal higher education.<sup>105</sup> Spirituality was measured by the opinion of referees and participation in evangelical activities at home.<sup>106</sup> The majority of British and Australians came from the lower middle class without personal wealth. Frank Burden of the China Inland Mission, a shop assistant in Australia, was totally financed by his wealthy businessman uncle, Charles Goode and this was not uncommon. Protestant women, married or single, rarely had more than a modest level of secondary-level education although a number of the American women had attended well-respected female academies.<sup>107</sup>

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102 Cited in Michie 1891, op cit, p 3. See also van Rooden, op cit, p 69. Van Rooden mentions a Dutch missionary in Indonesia who used to eavesdrop on converts at night.

103 Burgess, Alan, *The Small Woman*, (New York, Dutton, 1957). Aylward, Gladys, *Gladys Aylward: Her Personal Story, (as told to Christine Hunter)*, (London, Coverdale House, 1971). Erskine, John T, *Millionaire for God: the story of C. T. Studd*, (London, Lutterworth Press, 1968). Grubb, Norman P, *C T Studd, Cricketer and Pioneer*, (London, Religious Tract Society, 1934).

104 Welch, Ian, *Australian and New Zealand Missionary Training Homes*. Online — <http://hdl.handle.net/1885/12034>

105 Williams 1980, op cit, p 301.

106 Brotchie, Phillip, (2003), *The Importance of the contribution of Australians to the penetration of China by the China Inland Mission in the period 1888-1953, with particular reference to the work of Australian Women Missionaries*, PhD Deakin University, Victoria. On Christian missions to the Chinese in Victoria see Welch, Ian (1980), *Pariahs and Outcasts, Christian Missions to the Chinese in Australia*, MA, Monash University. See also Welch, Ian, (2003), *Alien Son: The Life and Times of Cheok Hong CHEONG, 1851-1928*, PhD, Australian National University. <http://thesis.anu.edu.au/public/adt-ANU20051108.111252/index.html>

107 On Anglican women missionaries of the Church of England Zenana Missionary Society see: Morawiecki op cit and Haggis, op cit. On the London Missionary Society see: Thorne, Susan, *Congregational Missions and the Making of an Imperial Culture in Nineteenth-century England*, (Stanford, Ca, Stanford

American men characteristically had a college education, and most were from upwardly mobile backgrounds. Their education encouraged Americans to be more aware of changing theological views and changing missionary methods.<sup>108</sup>

Missionaries became 'folk heroes' of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Protestant churches and their deeds were widely disseminated and even more widely read, creating a popular internationalism without precedent in Euro-American culture. The 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century Protestant missionary audience was serviced by a publishing and distribution system that utilised 'a canny manipulation of textual and media technologies'<sup>109</sup> to serve the 'peculiarly religious side of the missionary enterprise'.<sup>110</sup> Missionary publishing sought:

To inculcate public support for missionary endeavours; to ensure an ongoing supply of donated funds from individuals, institutions, and governments; to cultivate a community of like-minded ... citizens who would stand up for missionary interests ... and to encourage a community of potential missionary recruits.<sup>111</sup>

Mission publishers did not publicise difficulties such as the personal missionary-to-missionary conflicts found in private letters, still less the moral or theological changes in outlook or behaviour.<sup>112</sup> The short missionary life of William Fleming a Scotsman recruited in South Australia by the Australian auxiliary of the China Inland Mission provides one striking example of interpersonal conflict.<sup>113</sup> His fellow recruit from South Australia, Frank Burden, wrote to a fellow

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University Press, 1999), and Johnston, Anna, *Missionary Writing and Empire, 1800-1860*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2003),. On Irish women missionaries see Hill, Myrtle, 'Gender, Culture and 'the Spiritual Empire': the Irish Protestant female missionary experience', pp 203-226 in *Women's History Review*, Vol 16 No 2, April 2007. On Canadian women missionaries see: Semple, Rhonda Anne, *Missionary Women: Gender, Professionalism, and the Victorian Idea of Christian Missions*, (Rochester, NY, Boydell Press, 2003),. On China see: Hunter, Jane, *The Gospel of Gentility: American Women Missionaries in turn-of-the-century China*, (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1984),. On Australian women missionaries see Allen, Margaret, 'White Already to Harvest': South Australian Women Missionaries in India,' pp 92-107 in *Feminist Review*, Vol 65 No 1, Summer 2000. is Cupit, Tony, Ros Gooden and Ken Manley, *From Five Barley Loaves: Australian Baptists in Global Mission 1864-2010*, (Oakville CA, Mosaic Press, 2013).

108 Flynt, J Wayne and Gerard Berkley, *Taking Christianity to China: Alabama missionaries in the Middle Kingdom, 1850-1950*, (Tuscaloosa, University of Alabama Press, 2003).

109 Johnston, Anna, 'British Missionary Publishing, Missionary Celebrity and Empire,' pp 2-47 in *Nineteenth Century Prose*, Vol 32 No 2, Fall 2005, p 30. (Copy provided by author).

110 Warneck, Gustav, (1879), *Modern Missions and Culture: The Mutual Relations*, cited in Shenk, op cit, p 69.

111 Johnston, Anna, *Missionary Writing and Empire, 1800-1860*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2003). p, 7. See extended comments on the London Missionary Society; Johnston, Anna, 2005, op cit. Bickers, Robert A and Rosemary Seton, eds, *Missionary Encounters: Sources and Issues*, (Richmond, Curzon Press, 1996), cited in Lindenfield, David, 'Indigenous Encounters with Christian Missionaries in China and West Africa, 1800-1920: A Comparative Study,' *Journal of World History*, Vol 16 No 3, 2005, p 327. See also Haggis, Jane and Margaret Allen, 'Imperial emotions: affective communities of mission in British Protestant women's missionary publications c1880-1920,' pp. 691-716 in *Journal of Social History*, Spring, 2008.

112 Some examples may be briefly mentioned. (1) The argument between Hudson Taylor and the Home Committee of the China Inland Mission over control of the mission. (2) The bitter arguments between the Rev. Robert Stewart and the Rev. William Banister with Archdeacon John Wolfe over various issues in the Church Missionary Society mission in Fujian Province, China. (3) The creation of the Anglo-Chinese College at Malacca denounced by the London Missionary Society officers in London. See also discussion in Johnston 1995, op cit, pp 33-35. Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur, India, was critical of other missionaries. See Hill op cit, p 214.

113 Fleming was a Scottish seaman who deserted his ship in Adelaide, was converted through the YMCA, and attended Australia's first 'Bible College', Angas College in Adelaide. He is described as 'very slow of intellect'

missionary:

Fleming has also left for good ... his departure is a great relief to my mind and to the household generally.<sup>114</sup>

In a later note, Burden described the poisonous relationship between himself and Fleming.

The reasons for my asking that he might be removed were, 1<sup>st</sup>, that he was a direct hindrance in the work by the way in which he treated the natives and had he stayed it would have been difficult to keep any of them on the premises, they all want to leave on his account. 2<sup>nd</sup>, that he seemed unable for some reason unknown to me to be able to have fellowship with me (would not even respond to my prayers or when I asked a blessing at meals) so breaking the unity of the home. I tried several times to seek an opportunity of a quiet talk with him but he always seemed to avoid it, even in conversation at meal times I latterly found it best to refrain speaking with him more than necessary as a cause for exhibiting of temper was so easily found in this way. These were the reasons for my desiring his removal which I mentioned to you though other reasons such as difficulty in settling money matters and opening my private letters increased my desire that he should go elsewhere.<sup>115</sup>

A few months later, (November 1898) William Fleming was killed and became the first CIM martyr.<sup>116</sup> A report in the Adelaide press noted that he was an ex-seaman who was 'not exceptionally well-educated' and was considered dubious missionary material who had to pay his own way to China.<sup>117</sup>

Another example of tension between missionary colleagues was revealed in the correspondence of CMS missionaries in Fujian Province over the behaviour of the senior missionary and their nominal ecclesiastical superior, Archdeacon John Richard Wolfe, across a number of issues. Tensions centred on Wolfe's claim to be the unquestioned Anglican authority in Fujian Province that was later confirmed by an his attempt to persuade Chinese clergy to support his wish to become the first Anglican Bishop in Fujian Province. Wolfe insisted that all 'official' missionary correspondence with the British Consul in Fuzhou should first be submitted to him and in this the CMS Committee in London supported him. He had no hesitation in opposing the views of his

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and 'thick as a brick.' Fleming made his own way to China to work with the China Inland Mission. Peterson, Dr Bob, 'Darkest Adelaide,' Paper presented to a State History Conference, Adelaide, South Australia 26-28 May 2006. For background on Angas College see Calvert, John David, (2000), A History of the Adelaide Bible Institute (ABI) 1924-1962, MA Thesis, University of South Australia.

114 Frank Burden, Tu San Tseo, Kuei Cheo, to Rev. W. Cooper, Letter Book 7, No 9, p 51, 10 August 1897, with permission of his grandson. (Copy held by Ian Welch).

115 Frank Burden, Chungking, to George Andrew, Letter Book 7, No 16, p. 83, 2 March 1898, with permission of his grandson. (Copy held by Ian Welch).

116 Fleming's death is described in Clarke, Samuel R, (1911), *Among the Tribes in South-West China*, London, China Inland Mission. His death was linked to the deaths of three other Australians in the Huashan or Kucheng Massacre of 1 August 1895. Wehrle, Edmund S, (1966), *Britain, China, and the Antimissionary Riots, 1891-1900*, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, p 110.

117 *The Chronicle*, (Adelaide), 26 November 1898. It has been suggested that missionary service offered a chance for 'middling' class people to improve their social status and, incidentally, their financial position. , Frank Burden of the China Inland Mission was a shop assistant who became, as a result of missionary experience and the opportunity to take a medical course in the United States, a prominent medical practitioner in Adelaide. The CMS believed that people from the 'educated classes' were less willing to offer for missionary service. Williams, op cit, p 302-303

colleagues when they wanted to pursue policies he did not support. His relationship with Robert Stewart was rarely cordial because of differences over the costume issue and Stewart's personal financial independence. His lower class origins in Ireland contrasted with the Stewart's wealth and his lack of a university education when almost all, if not all, the other clergymen were graduates. Wolfe had no missionary authority over the single women of the Church of England Zenana Missionary Society but he had no reservation about interfering in their affairs, most notably in his determination, unsuccessful as it turned out, to force them to wear European rather than Chinese costume. This soured his association with the Rev. William Banister when Wolfe exceeded this authority in seeking to direct two women of the CEZMS.

## VII THE 'SOCIAL GOSPEL' AND CULTURAL ADAPATION

The initial goal of Protestant missionaries in 19<sup>th</sup> century was to bring individuals to a personal faith in Christ and the provision of health, education and other services were incidental. The Protestant 'liberal' strand labelled the 'social gospel' arose with a shift in American theological outlook in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>118</sup> It was a strong stand of liberal social thinking that the Christian message should eliminate social injustice.<sup>119</sup> In China, the social justice movement's primary goal was the transformation of Chinese traditional culture through higher education and reforming institutions such as the Chinese Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA).<sup>120</sup>

By the early 20<sup>th</sup> century Americans had become the largest Protestant missionary grouping in China and more than half of the Americans were engaged in mostly secular higher education.<sup>121</sup> One American conservative missionary reported:

In the great city of Canton, for example, there is not a single missionary out of two hundred who have their headquarters there set apart for purely evangelistic work in the city itself. All the missionaries are engaged in institutional work of one kind or another.<sup>122</sup>

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118 Hopkins, C. Hoard, *The Rise of the Social Gospel in American Protestantism, 1865-1915*, (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1961).

119 For an Australian evangelical voice endorsing the linkage of social justice and evangelism see Wittenbach, H A, 'The Necessity of Social Justice,' pp 296-298 in *The Chinese Recorder*, Vol 68., 1937.

120 Hutchinson, William R, 'The Americanness of the Social Gospel: An Inquiry in Comparative History', pp 367-381 in *Church History*, Vol 44 No 3, September 1975. A seminal work is Rauschenbusch, Walter, *Christianity and the Social Gospel*, (Louisville KY, Westminster John Knox Press, 1991), first published 1901. Hall, R. O., *TZ Koo: Chinese Christianity Speaks to the West*. London, (SCM Press, 1950). A useful modern analysis is Jun Xing, *Baptized in the Fire of Revolution: The American Social Gospel and the YMCA in China*, (Bethlehem PA, LeHigh University Press, 1996), On the YWCA see Garner, Karen, 'Redefining Institutional Identity: The YWCA Challenge to Extraterritoriality in China, 1925-30', pp 409-434 in *Women's History Review*, Vol 10 No 3, 2001.

121 See Pfister 2005, for a discussion of a German Lutheran missionary's (Richard Wilhelm) contact with Chinese philosophy.

122 Anderson, Harold E, 'Modernism in China,' *Friends' Witness*, Third month, 1921, p. 20. For an early account of the conservative theological reaction to liberal theologies (the Social Gospel) on American missionaries see Hutchinson, Paul, 'The Conservative Reaction in China,' pp 337-361 in *The Journal of Religion*, Vol 2 No 4, July 1922.

The substantive challenge for all missionaries was the culture and language(s) of their new home. The Instructions of the English Church Missionary Society (CMSE) to Amy Oxley, an Australian missionary nurse sent to Fuzhou (Foochow) China in 1895 stated:

The study of the language of the country will be your first employment, and it is a rule of the Society that no Missionary should enter upon any responsible charge until he or she has passed an examination in the Vernacular.<sup>123</sup>

James Hudson Taylor, founder of the China Inland Mission, believed that the first twelve months of missionary service put the ideals of new missionaries to the test.<sup>124</sup> In a sermon in November 1891, the Rev. George Hunter of the China Inland Mission referred to the

External difficulties facing newly arrived missionaries such as learning the language, customs & thoughts of the people & getting experience in things Chinese etc.<sup>125</sup>

Miss Leslie, an English CMS missionary, gave an account of her language that is similar to those of other missionaries:

'Hammering away at the tones is all we are doing at present; this sort of thing: the teacher says 'Eng ' in a high voice, and I have to imitate him; then he says it in a low, firm voice then in an ascending way, like asking a question, then in four other ways each meaning something different. He goes- over this about fifty times, and then chooses another monosyllable, and the whole thing begins again. You don't understand what the meanings are generally; so you can fancy what uninteresting work it is, and one cannot ask any question to make a variety because the teacher doesn't understand a word of English.<sup>126</sup>

There were, broadly speaking, two distinct ways by which 19<sup>th</sup> century foreigners learned Chinese. First, and minimally, the majority of foreigners employed domestic servants although most did not get beyond superficial words in what became known as 'Pidgin English'.<sup>127</sup> The everyday language skills acquired by foreign children from Chinese nurses and house servants, a daily 'immersion' process, was usually lost by being sent 'home' to monolingual (usually English-speaking) family members in Europe or America, or to an English-language missionary school in China.<sup>128</sup>

The second method, taking priority over all other mission activities, was a minimum of a year of intensive language study with the assistance of a Chinese scholar, many of whom did not speak any

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123 Rev. B Baring-Gould, Church Missionary Society, London, to Miss Amy Oxley, 18 October 1895, CMS East Asia Archives, National Library of Australia, Microfilm 1915,

124 Wigram, Edward Mervyn, (2007), *The Bible and mission in faith perspective: J.Hudson Taylor and the early China Inland Mission*, PhD, Thesis, University of Utrecht, p. 180. Online (26 May 2008) at <http://igitur-archive.library.uu.nl/dissertations/2007-1003-203300/index.htm/>

125 Hunter, Rev. George, Address given at an all day conference held at the Training Home, Ganking, on Thursday Nov, 10th 1891, cited by Frank Burden, Australian 'First Party' Book 2, Letter 50, p 35, (Collection Ian Welch). Ganking is known today as Anqing in Anhui Province.

126 Barnes 1896, op cit, p.26.

127 Yule, Henry and A C Burnell, *Hobson-Jobson: A Glossary of Colloquial Anglo-Indian Words and Phrases...* London, Murray cited in Selby, Anne and Stephen, (1995), 'China Coast Pidgin English, pp 113-141 in *Journal of the Hong Kong Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, online — <http://sunzi1.lib.hku.hk/hkjo/article.jsp?book=44&issue=440048>

128 Martin, G, *Chefoo School, 1881-1951*, (Braunton, Devon, Merlin Books, 1990).

English. The China Inland Mission established a language school at Anqing (Ganking, Anking) in the Yangzi (Yangtze) Valley. Despite their early formal studies of Chinese language with Chinese teachers only a few foreign missionaries bothered with classical Chinese learning. The Rev. Dr. Ernst Eitel, a German-born missionary, later Director of Education in Hong Kong who later settled in Adelaide, South Australia, viewed the language claims of most missionaries, including himself, as exaggerated. He wrote: ‘What is a European Sinologue without his teacher?’<sup>129</sup>

None of the 19<sup>th</sup> century missionaries sent to China appear to have received language training before they left for China. The biggest enduring challenge for any missionary, after acquiring a measure of competence in spoken Chinese, was how to best convey the value of Christianity. Translations of the Bible and other religious material and secular literature into indigenous languages was a key process. Another means to evangelism was encouraging their converts, including women, to read translations of basic Christian literature and other literature, not all religious, into Romanised (alphabetical) formats of local dialects.<sup>130</sup> Missionaries knew that Romanisation was not part of the traditional Chinese culture but this was only an abstract issue for ordinary Chinese with a very limited knowledge of the traditional written language beyond, in the case of males and very rarely of females, a limited vocabulary of characters.<sup>131</sup> Every group of missionaries’ developed local orthographies and a system developed by Presbyterians in Taiwan is still in use.<sup>132</sup> In mainland China the *pinyin* system has replaced earlier Romanisation most notably the well-known Wade-Giles system.

To achieve conversions missionaries needed to meet indigenous culture in different ways. Almost all missionaries provided medical care to open the door for Christian evangelism. For some missionaries, such as the Australian Frank Burden of the China Inland Mission, early experience with providing medical aid led to professional medical training and a long career in medicine in Adelaide, South Australia. Medical missionaries introduced modern hospitals and professional nursing. Education varied widely, from small village primary schools, usually for boys, to the opening of medical schools and universities.<sup>133</sup>

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129 Ernst Eitel, ‘Fairlea’ North Adelaide, to James Cheong, Melbourne, 1 March 1898. (Collection Ian Welch).

130 Missionaries of the China Inland Mission were instructed to use a system of Romanisation devised by the mission’s founder, James Hudson Taylor. Baller 1911, op cit, p. vii.

131 Testimonies of Chinese converts to Christianity in the Methodist Mission in 19th century Victoria (Australia) suggest that few men completed even village primary schools. *The Wesleyan Chronicle*, 20 December 1865, pp 183-186.

132 There are numerous articles on Romanisation in various parts of China. Taiwan still uses a Presbyterian missionary Romanised form of a Southern Min (Fujian) dialect (Peh-oe-ji). Chiang, Wi-vun Taiffalo, ‘Peh-oe-ji, childish writing?’ Paper presented at the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual North American Taiwan Studies Conference, June 16-19, 2000, Harvard University. See also Chiang, Wi-vun Taiffalo, ‘Romanization and Language Planning in Taiwan,’ in *The Linguistic Association of Korea Journal*, Vol 9, Issue 1, 2001.

133 Hill op cit, p 211.



The final outcome of the commitment to social justice or reconstruction, according to at least one former missionary, was neither the conversion of China or a marked overall improvement in the conditions of most Chinese.<sup>134</sup> In contemporary China, where the State provides all social welfare and educational services, the growth of Protestant Christianity is attributed to personal conversions.

This discussion closes with one or two issues that seem minor at first appearance but symbolize the way that molehills can become, by accident or ignorance or just bull-headedness, mountains. In an effort to overcome the perceived cultural gap between indigenes and foreign missionaries, the China Inland Mission had a firm policy established by James Hudson Taylor that CIM missionaries should live as close to ordinary Chinese as possible.

Those of us who belong to the China Inland Mission wear the same clothes, eat the same food and live in the same kind of houses as the Chinese ... We find that by living in this way the people do not think us so strange but look upon us as being something like themselves and so think less about us and pay more attention to what we have to tell them.<sup>135</sup>

The insistence on various levels of identification with the indigenous population proved controversial. The disapproval of the experienced Anglican missionary, Archdeacon John Wolfe, has already been mentioned. One of the CEZMS missionaries wrote to her father describing a recreational visit to the missionary hill-station at Kuliang, above Fuzhou (Foochow).

We are wearing English dress for this trip, because it is so near Foochow, and as the missionaries there all wear English dress, we thought it would be better.<sup>136</sup>

Hairstyle was another surprising cultural issue for both male and female missionaries. Some men grew their hair and plaited a queue similar to that worn by Chinese. Other missionaries purchased a queue and sewed it inside their hat.<sup>137</sup> A couple of weeks after his arrival at the China Inland Mission language school at Anqing (Ganking, Anking), Frank Burden wrote to his sister.

As my hair, which had grown rather long during the voyage, was being shaved off my head, I must say I felt rather strange and did not altogether relish it but the thought came. It's all for Jesus, so it didn't matter. For some days my pigtail (commonly called) would persist in being caught in every door as I closed it behind me, and when I sat down to meals generally managed to sit on it, so when I went to lean forward got pulled up short.<sup>138</sup>

The Rev. J S Collins and his colleague the Rev. Llewellyn Lloyd of the CMS amused the Chinese with their queues.

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134 See 'A China Missionary' (Rev. David M Paton)... op cit.

135 Frank Burden, Tuh San Tseo, Rwei Tseo, to Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour, Flinders Street Baptist Church, Adelaide, South Australia, 8 April 1895. Letter Book 5, No 40, p 67, with permission of his grandson. (Collection Ian Welch).

136 Marshall c1903, op cit, p. 138.

137 Morrison 1895, op cit, Ch 1 refers to this practice. Morrison suggests that the Chinese were in no way confused by the missionary adoption of Chinese costume.

138 Frank Burden, Anking, to Mrs. Louisa Swinstead, London, 6 February 1891. Letter Book 1 No 9, pp 23-25, with permission of his grandson. (Collection Ian Welch).

Mr. Collinss ... pigtail is one of which he is rather proud, as he grew it himself, and having fair hair it is rather un-Chinese.<sup>139</sup>

Women missionaries were equally sensitive to the need to accommodate Chinese cultural feelings and relied on the advice of Chinese when facing new situations. The Saunders Sisters were invited to visit the private quarters of a Chinese official, a rare privilege. Nellie wrote to her mother:

It is not every one who gets invited to the Mandarins. We did not know exactly what to do about our clothes, because, as our work is almost entirely among the poorer classes, we have very simply-made garments of chiefly blue cotton; but in the summer we have white muslin, which we brought with us, made into jackets, trimmed with blue, and red cotton skirts, with braid on them. But this would not do for society in Foochow; if you were to go dressed like that to any of their houses you would most likely never be asked again. We did not know exactly what to do, but at last, acting on the advice of Mr. Stewart's teacher, who is a Ku Cheng literary man, we decided to go in our white jackets, as he said they would know we were foreigners, and so not up to their customs. Our hair was magnificent to behold, done in Chinese fashion with flowers and pins.<sup>140</sup>

An American, Hattie Yates Cady, described her adoption of Chinese dress.

Miss Annber tells me that [the Chinese women] all admired me so much, said I wore Chinese clothes just like a Chinese woman ... and walked exactly like a Chinese woman. The only thing needed to make me complete was to do my hair in Chinese style.<sup>141</sup>

Food was also a cultural issue. Sweets, or 'lollies', were items of deep emotional value to the expatriate 'British' community.<sup>142</sup> Missionaries had to make other small adjustments.

Imagine us eating rice and milk for breakfast, and thoroughly enjoying it! Of course we had other things, such as eggs and bread, but we had tea instead of coffee. Now, if there is one thing on this earth that used to make me feel ill, it was tea for breakfast.<sup>143</sup>

Many everyday items Australians considered normal were available but western-style groceries were expensive and while generally hard to come by were highly valued by foreigners. 'Most of the missionaries send home for groceries and I will do the same. Things are too dear out here'.<sup>144</sup>

Almost every missionary wrote about the 'unusual' food they were offered. Burden wrote of his initial journey upriver from Shanghai to the CIM Training (Language) School at Anqing: 'The Chinese food which was brought to our cabin twice a day was by no means enticing, and all except the rice was generally left untouched'.<sup>145</sup> After six months, however, he was feeling more comfortable with his diet and with the Chinese although still critical on some issues.

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139 Berry, op cit, pp 60-61.

140 Ibid, pp 130-131.

141 Hattie Yates Cady to her sister Helen, 19 August 1895, cited in Chin, op cit, p 327. No matter how foreigners dressed, they remained foreigners. Wolfe, somewhat amusingly, said that European women in Chinese dress always gave themselves away because of their big feet.

142 'Lollies', an abbreviation of 'lollypops', is used in Australia for any form of sweets or candy. Amy Oxley, CMS, New South Wales, wrote to relatives in Victoria that she intended, like other missionaries, to import groceries from Australia. Amy Oxley, *The Godown*, Foo Chow, February 19<sup>th</sup> 1896. (Collection Ian Welch).

143 Berry, op cit, p 32.

144 Amy Oxley to Isabel Hope, 'Darriwill', Victoria, 19 February 1896. (Collection Ian Welch)

145 Frank Burden, Anqing, to Charles Goode, Adelaide, 30 January 1891. Letter Book 1 No 7, pp 17-20, with permission of his grandson.

As to the native food, what we get here is very good and can be well enjoyed although in many places it is greatly inferior & more scarce, but that I shall be able to tell you more about when in active service. As far as likes & dislikes are concerned, one cannot afford to think of them in China but just eat what is put before him & ask no questions for conscience sake. It would certainly be rather more pleasant mixing with the people if they used a little more water for their bodies, clothes & houses, but these things must not be a hindrance but should tend to draw out our hearts in deeper pity & love for them.<sup>146</sup>

The Christian faith presented by evangelical foreign missionaries inevitably clashed with the traditional family focused ideals and practices of the Chinese. Filial piety (duty to elders and ancestors) and the associated ritual of ancestor worship were cultural issues that confronted Chinese Christianity with many Chinese remarking that Christians seemed to have little respect for their parents and ancestors.<sup>147</sup>

A parallel issue was the Chinese practice of *feng shui*. By the late 1880s and 1890s disputes over geomancy were major causes of anti-Christian riots across China.<sup>148</sup>

Frank Burden gave this appraisal of the enduring cultural challenge for all foreigners in China:

The Chinese cannot understand why we go out just for the sake of walking without having a special place to go to. Most of them think we go out to seek all sorts of precious things which are hidden in the earth and I have many times been asked on returning from my walk what I have been able to see and if the precious stones etc are many or few. They really believe that our eyes are different to theirs and that we are able to see three feet under the earth but cannot see through water.<sup>149</sup>

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146 Frank Burden, Anking, to Mrs. Louisa Swinstead, London, 22 June 1891. Letter Book 1 No 32, pp p. 89, with permission of his grandson. (Collection Ian Welch).

147 A well-footnoted summary of Chinese beliefs about ancestors will be found online (23 May 2008) at: <http://www.deathreference.com/Ce-Da/Chinese-Beliefs.html>

148 A valuable source of foreign views of Chinese anti-foreign thinking is *North China Herald*, (1892 reprint 2007), *The Anti-Foreign Riots in China in 1891*, Whitefish, Montana. Daigle, Jean-Guy, 'Challenging the Imperial Order: The Precarious State of Local Christians in late-Qing Sichuan', pp. 1-30 in the *European Journal of East Asian Studies*, Vol 4, Number 1, 2005.

149 Frank Burden to Charles Goode, from Tu San Tseo, December 4th 1894, Book 5, Letter 36, p 60, with permission of his grandson. (Collection Ian Welch).