

**Christian Women and the Making of a Modern Chinese  
Family: an Exploration of *Nü duo* 女鐸, 1912–1951**

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A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of The  
Australian National University

February 2019

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Except where otherwise acknowledged, this thesis is my own original work.

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to express my deep gratitude to my supervisor Dr. Benjamin Penny for his valuable suggestions and constant patience throughout my five years at The Australian National University (ANU). His invitation to study for a Doctorate at Australian Centre on China in the World (CIW) not only made this project possible but also kindled my academic pursuit of the history of Christianity. Coming from a research background of contemporary Christian movements among diaspora Chinese, I realise that an appreciation of the present cannot be fully achieved without a thorough study of the past. I was very grateful to be given the opportunity to research the Republican era and in particular the development of Christianity among Chinese women.

I wish to thank my two co-advisers—Dr. Wei Shuge and Dr. Zhu Yujie—for their time and guidance. Shuge's advice has been especially helpful in the development of my thesis. Her honest critiques and insightful suggestions demonstrated how to conduct conscientious scholarship.

I would also like to extend my thanks to friends and colleagues who helped me with my research in various ways. Special thanks to Dr. Caroline Stevenson for her great proof reading skills and Dr. Paul Farrelly for his time in checking the revised parts of my thesis. I am also grateful to members at my church who remembered my study in their prayers. Kelly Liu and Wenju Wu especially for their generous help for technical assistance.

My study would have been less smooth without the kind support of the staff at CIW. The working environment at CIW could not be more ideal for PhD students: well-equipped facilities, sufficient research funding, spacious offices, and most importantly, a space for friendship.

Colleagues I met at academic conferences also enriched my research and academic life. I wish to thank for their comments and support that assisted the development of my thesis. The list of names includes but is not limited to: Prof. Lian Xi, Prof. Kwok Pui-lan, Prof. Joseph Tse-hei Lee, Dr. Li Ji, Dr. Wong Wai-yin Christina, and Dr. Wang Zhixi.

My archival research was greatly assisted by the following institutions: Shanghai Municipal Archive, the United Methodist Archives Center at Drew University, Special Collections and Archives at Hong Kong Baptist University Library, the National Library of Australia, School of Theology Library at Boston University, Burke Library at Columbia University, Tōyō Bunko, and the British Library.

Finally, I wish to thank my husband, my parents and parents-in-law for their support and encouragement throughout my study.

## Abstract

This thesis examines the Christian attempt to transform the institution of the Chinese family by investigating the ideal Christian domesticity portrayed by *Nü duo*. The religious nature of this magazine together with its reliance on Western financial and literary sources made it a modernising force with different ideas on the family from that promoted by the non-Christian intelligentsia. Unlike the reformist ambitions of prominent Chinese intellectuals and politicians, *Nü duo* advocated a family model founded on a religious vision as the basis for modern life. It addressed questions of contemporary life and galvanised the domestic sphere with Christian ideals, ranging from a theological rationale for women's household obligations to modern ways of childrearing and domestic management. An exploration of *Nü duo* adds to the existing knowledge on modernising attempts in the domestic sphere.

As the notion of an ideal womanhood penetrated the secular family-reform discourse, this thesis pays special attention to the advocacy of the ideal woman's role put forward by *Nü duo*, which targeted educated Chinese women. With China embarking on the building of a modern nation-state, notions of gender equality and an escalating national crisis demanded that female citizens, either directly or indirectly, join the nation-building process. Traditional social and cultural restrictions on women were greatly challenged in the Republican era. Amidst the changing perceptions of women's social and domestic roles, I look at relevant discussions recorded in *Nü duo* to understand its uniqueness in reconfiguring an ideal womanhood when compared with the non-Christian community.

This research centres on the primary question of how *Nü duo* reflects the interplay between the Western notion of a Christian domesticity and the local perception of a Chinese Christian domesticity. A study of *Nü duo*, I argue, reveals the self-awakening process of educated Chinese Christian women who were at the same time confined by the missionary legacy, wittingly or unwittingly. Chinese Christian women, unlike their male counterparts, experienced a two-fold struggle as a result of a conflict between the Victorian notion of womanhood, with that of traditional patriarchal gender ethics in the nation-building process. In the wake of Chinese nationalism, a shift occurred from relying on Western notions of Christian womanhood to the formation of a Chinese Christian notion of womanhood among local female converts. This thesis will show that this Chinese notion of an ideal Christian womanhood, however, is a contested concept that differs from individual to individual. The plural understandings of women's relationship with the nation reflect a lack of theological, historical, and cultural models for women's political and national roles.

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## Chapter 1 Introduction



Cover image of *Nü duo* (April 1912)

Shortly after the establishment of the Republic of China, a Christian woman's magazine entitled *Nü duo* (女鐸 *The Woman's Messenger*) was launched in April 1912.<sup>1</sup> In its first issue, the cover depicted a Chinese family where both parents and their two daughters are reading the magazine. The decoration of the house illustrates the coexistence of traditional and Western elements. Most striking is the Western pendulum wall clock which informs us that the time is nine o'clock, most likely in the morning.

While the family members depicted wear traditional mandarin jackets and long gowns, their act of reading displays a modern Western mindset which is different from their predecessors. Family gatherings at this time indicate reading could be a family habit. Sitting on Western bentwood chairs, they are so engaged in reading that even the little child wants to reach the magazine. This modern

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<sup>1</sup> From its first issue in April 1912 to March 1927, the Chinese title changed from 女鐸報 *Nü To Pao* to 女鐸 (with no romanisation). For a brief period, the magazine also used a subtitle 家庭月刊. 女鐸, nevertheless, remained its primary title until its last issue in February 1951. For the purpose of consistency, this thesis adopts 女鐸 and uses *Nü duo* to refer to this magazine throughout.



spirit embodies a desire for new knowledge, an intelligent womanhood, and significantly a new magazine for Republican families. Situating the magazine as the focal point of the whole family mirrored readers' engagement with the magazine. By reading *Nü duo*, a reader became by association and participation, a member of the ideal family depicted on the cover. A family reading *Nü duo* on its own cover represents a reflexive mode which was popular in women's periodicals at this time and depicted the editor's ideal image for reading the magazine.<sup>2</sup>

This thesis examines *Nü duo*, the first Christian woman's magazine published by the Christian Literature Society (CLS) in Shanghai from 1912 to 1951. Founded by its editor, the American Methodist missionary Laura M. White (1867–1937),<sup>3</sup> the magazine covers a tumultuous period when Chinese society was undergoing multi-faceted changes following the overthrow of the Qing dynasty in 1911. Appeals made by Republican intellectuals for China's modernisation through the adoption of Western education and values, focused, in part, on the traditional institution of the Chinese family. The nature of *jia* (home and family), a core concept in the traditional Chinese value system, was examined and challenged, with various groups seeking to reform the institution of the family as the foundation of Chinese society. While attention fell on the model of the Western family, the importance of Christian values on its constitution was ignored. The launch of the first issue of *Nü duo* in April 1912, therefore, was responsible for addressing this inattention. A belief in the transformative power of Christianity aimed specifically at the family unit was addressed to women in their role as mothers and homemakers. Recurring themes in *Nü duo* included religious education, family worship, Christian ideas on marriage, motherhood, childrearing, and the nation. The theme of an ideal Chinese Christian family as the foundation stone of Chinese society, reflects a wider goal of the religious conversion of China.

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<sup>2</sup> *Funü shibao* 婦女時報 (*Women's Eastern Times*) adopted the same technique for the cover of its first issue published in May 1911 by the Shibao guan 時報館 in Shanghai, where two girls were looking at an image of themselves on the cover of its first issue. See Joan Judge, *Republican Lens: Gender, Visuality, and Experience in the Early Chinese Periodical Press* (Oakland, Calif.: University of California Press, 2015), 1–4.

<sup>3</sup> Laura M. White is known in Chinese as Liang Leyue 亮樂月. *Liang* means light or bright. While the word 'white' would be translated as *bai* 白, White probably adopted *liang* to emphasise her role in enlightening Chinese women who were in darkness. *Le* and *yue* were probably chosen because their pronunciation is close to Laura, in addition to the positive meanings of these two characters.

An examination of *Nü duo* throughout the forty-year period of its publication, reveals its dual aspirations towards the domestic and the national, and demonstrates its importance beyond being a magazine simply targeting the daily concerns of women.

### **Family: a Contested Space for a Modern Nation**

The family institution was a contested space in the process of building a modern nation and serves as a critical case to reflect the multi-levelled changes of the Republican era. As historian Patricia Buckley Ebrej points out, the family institution in Chinese society was affected by developments in the state, economy, religion, and culture.<sup>4</sup> The peak of family-reform discussion occurred during the May Fourth era (1915–1925), also known as the New Culture Movement or the Chinese Enlightenment, a period when Chinese intellectuals were actively involved in reshaping the cultural landscape of the nation, manifested in their constant negotiations between traditional values and modern concepts. The New Culture Movement was initially launched as a protest against Yuan Shikai's 袁世凱 (1859–1916) attempted restoration of the monarchy in 1915, and was later fuelled by political demonstrations on 4 May 1919, when citizens and students in Beijing demonstrated in the streets to protest over China's loss of Shandong Province at the Versailles Peace Conference.

Historiography on the New Culture Movement conventionally identifies a prominent narrative centring on tradition and modernity.<sup>5</sup> The issue of reconciling traditional Confucian-dominated notions with Western-driven modern ideas became an imperative facing Chinese intellectuals of the time. While this binary framework might overlook the complexity of discussions underpinned by

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<sup>4</sup> Patricia Buckley Ebrej, *Women and the Family in Chinese History* (London: Routledge, 2003), 2.

<sup>5</sup> Prasenjit Duara notes that in the discourse of China's modernity there is an antagonistic relationship between the modernist values of the Enlightenment and the exclusivist values that are called nativist and traditional. While the relationship between traditional and modern addressed in studies of China and the West often has this juxtaposition, historian Paul Cohen challenges this overgeneralisation. See Prasenjit Duara, "Knowledge and Power in the Discourse of Modernity: The Campaigns against Popular Religion in Early Twentieth-Century China," *The Journal of Asian Studies* Vol. 50 No. 1 (February 1991): 68–71; Paul A. Cohen, *Discovering History in China: American Historical Writing on the Recent Chinese Past* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984). For a recent review of the New Culture Movement, see Ouyang Zhesheng, "Expanding the discursive domain of research on the New Culture Movement: An incomplete review of studies on the New Culture Movement," *Chinese Studies in History* Vol. 49 No. 2: 90–101.

concerns other than notions of traditional values and modernity, it, nevertheless, captured a prominent attitude of many influential Republican intellectuals in their search for building a strong nation. This discourse reflects a process of collision and intersection of values categorised as the old and new, the traditional and progressive, and the Western and the Oriental.

Discussions on the family circulated in the writings of the New Culture Movement demonstrate that the family institution a contested, paralleling the debate between traditional values and modern ideas. Perceiving the traditional family structure as a hindrance to national rejuvenation, May Fourth intellectuals spilled a lot of ink in asserting the backwardness of the traditional family system in light of Western notions. Fu Sinian 傅斯年 (1896–1950), a leading iconoclast, saw the traditional family as “the root of all evil.”<sup>6</sup> In his article published in the first issue of *Xin chao* 新潮 (January 1919–March 1922, *The Renaissance*), a monthly magazine established in Peking University in 1919, Fu used vehement words to denounce the traditional family institution. Like many other reform-minded intellectuals who were inspired by a humanist perspective from Western liberalism, Fu concentrated his critique on the “inhumanness” (*fei ren* 非人) of Confucianism.<sup>7</sup> In his view, the concept of “the individual” (*ge xing* 个性) denoted a will to independence, the lack of which would make it difficult to judge a person’s deeds. Fu thus argued that the greatest force destroying individuality was the traditional Chinese family—and this was, thus, the root of all evil. He then singled out home education and financial dependence nurtured in the traditional family system as the two primary factors that ruined one’s individuality. Consequently, Fu envisioned a new domestic model that valued the cultivation of independence and individualism.

Amidst such iconoclastic fervour, a new set of ethics and ideals emerged to challenge Confucian social regulations (*li jiao* 礼教). The dominant family-reform rhetoric was underpinned by a nation-building

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<sup>6</sup> Meng Zhen 孟真 (a pseudonym of Fu Sinian 傅斯年), “Wan e zhi yuan” 萬惡之原 (The Root of All Evil), *Xin chao* 新潮 Vol. 1 No. 1 (1 January 1919).

<sup>7</sup> Wang Zheng, *Women in the Chinese Enlightenment: Oral and Textual Histories* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 11.

concern. A number of studies have identified the nature of family reform proposed in the pursuit of a modern nation during the Republican period.<sup>8</sup> Susan L. Glosser's monograph, *Chinese Visions of Family and State 1915–1953*, focuses on the political importance of the family during this transitional period. She argues that there were four competing visions of Chinese “small families” (that is, the conjugal family) at a time of nation-building. These were prompted by the New Culture intellectuals, the Nationalist government during the Nanjing decade (1927–1937), Shanghai entrepreneurs in the 1930s, and the Communist regime in 1949.

According to Glosser, the New Culture radicals rejected Confucian-based family values and traced the root of Western strength to the conjugal family, a model that was believed to foster individual independence and enterprise.<sup>9</sup> The Nationalist government contributed to the conjugal family model by promoting its New Family Law, which emphasised individual enterprise and self-determination to “free much of the adult population from the joint family and thus encourage greater participation in the social and political sphere.”<sup>10</sup> By the mid-1930s, the discourse of the conjugal family had been complicated by Shanghai entrepreneurs who “manipulated the linking of nation, individual, and productivity” through commercial family magazines. By examining the magazine titled *Jiating xingqi* 家庭星期 (*Family Weekly*) published by a Shanghai dairy entrepreneur called You Huaigao 尤懷高 (1889–?), Glosser concludes that You utilised the magazine as a vehicle to “‘rationalise’ (*he li hua* 合理化) urbanites’ habits of production and consumption.”<sup>11</sup> This entrepreneurial approach, however, was rejected by the Communist regime in 1949. Glosser analyses the family reform conducted by the CCP as one of many means designed to strengthen its legitimacy.

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<sup>8</sup> Some early works adopted a sociological method to investigate the family system in China. See Olga Lang, *Chinese Family and Society* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1946); Marion J. Levy, *The Family Revolution in Modern China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1949); William J. Goode, *World Revolution and Family Patterns* (London: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1963). For an anthropological approach, see Arthur P. Wolf and Chieh-shan Huang, *Marriage and Adoption in China 1845–1945* (California: Stanford University Press, 1980).

<sup>9</sup> Susan L. Glosser, *Chinese Visions of Family and State 1915–1953* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 9, 23.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 135.

Helen M. Schneider's research focuses on the role of the institution of the family as an economic unit in the making of a modern nation. In her monograph titled *Keeping the Nation's House: Domestic Management and the Making of Modern China*, Schneider argues that the family as an economic unit was crucial to a new society by tracing the origin and development of home economics in relation to the national rejuvenation.<sup>12</sup> Apart from her examination of different types of publications that aimed to conjure up a "happy family" ideology, Schneider observes that intellectual women were active agents who played an important role in translating and transmitting "their own ideas of society based on overlapping concepts of rational homes and ideal communities."<sup>13</sup> The discipline of home economics, according to Schneider, was useful for political mobilisation because:

Home economics addressed the fundamentals of human life... [which was]... a field where political actors and social reformers contested their differing agendas about how best to save the nation, how to imagine women's contributions to society, and how to efficiently and rationally manage and develop China's population.<sup>14</sup>

### **Reconfiguring a Domesticated Womanhood: a Male-dominated Narrative**

The cultural transformation of the May Fourth era was closely associated with the question of women's proper roles, which generated heated debate in discussions associated with negotiating between Chinese tradition and Western modernity. New ideas of an ideal womanhood challenged Confucian views on women's domestic obligations, which in turn, led to discussions on family reform.

The pursuit of a notion of a new modern woman was most evident in the monthly magazine entitled *Funü zazhi* 婦女雜誌 (January 1915–December 1931, *The Ladies' Journal*). Established by the influential Commercial Press in Shanghai, *Funü zazhi* was a major journal that enjoyed a wide circulation with a focus on the problems women faced and which addressed them from various

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<sup>12</sup> Helen M. Schneider, *Keeping the Nation's House: Domestic Management and the Making of Modern China* (Canada: University of British Columbia Press, 2011).

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

perspectives. From the beginning, *Funü zazhi* emphasised the importance of women's education. Its contributors believed that the journal should "facilitate the exchange of knowledge between women and that such education would teach women to be virtuous mothers and good wives for the sake of the nation."<sup>15</sup> In her research on *Funü zazhi*, Wang Zheng has noted an emerging discourse on gender during the May Fourth era that advocated both women's feminine virtues and progressive feminist ideas. At the height of the May Fourth movement, the conventional standpoint of *Funü zazhi* correspondingly shifted from the notion of virtuous mother and good wife to a liberal feminism.

Writings discussing an ideal womanhood, however, were fundamentally a male-dominated narrative. A female contributor to *Funü zazhi* who analysed pre-1923 women's movements, found that they consisted largely of students and teachers. She noted that, "Students constituted the majority and most of them were men. So the central elements of the women's movement, in a narrow sense, were male students."<sup>16</sup> Although there were some female students and teachers involved in producing "their own publications to advocate new ideas, ... women's publishing activities were often deemed of low value by the men who ran influential publications."<sup>17</sup> The contemporary historian Tani Barlow shrewdly points out:

The problem is that *nüzi*, the necessary agent of national liberation, must presuppose three absolute sine qua non—free social intercourse (*shejiao gongkai*) [社交公開], meaningful work, and equal education—none of which are actually available to women at the present moment. Put more starkly, Chinese women are, in this theory stream, primary actors in the task of transforming national history, but the conditions for their predication as adequate social agents do not prevail yet; they therefore remain deficient

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<sup>15</sup> Wang, *Women in the Chinese Enlightenment*, 68.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 96.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 98.

as subjects of their own liberation and, even worse, their deficiencies and predicative nonexistence may doom the progressive evolution of the nation itself.<sup>18</sup>

Unlike the male-dominated narrative in the discourse on gender ethics in secular discussions, the following section introduces a group of Christian reformers, whose work for Chinese women fell squarely on the shoulders of Christian women.

### **Transforming China: an Evangelical Zeal**

In addition to Republican politicians and reform-minded intellectuals, the missionary enterprise in China also joined in the building of a new nation. The political and cultural upheavals in the Republican period provided opportunities for missionaries to conduct evangelical work. Protestant Christianity played an active role in transforming Chinese society in the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century. In the field of education, Jessie G. Lutz has traced the origins, expansion, and challenges of Christian colleges from 1850 to 1950.<sup>19</sup> The conference volume entitled *Zhongxi wenhua yu jiaohui daxue* 中西文化与教会大学 (Sino-Western Culture and Christianity Universities) examines the cultural, educational, and social impact of Christian universities on Chinese society.<sup>20</sup> Other scholarship concentrates on the missionary Protestant print press, and its influence on the emergence of the modern Chinese press. Zhang Xiantao has demonstrated the impact of missionary publications on changing traditional print culture and technology in the late Qing period.<sup>21</sup> Ho Hoi-lap's book entitled *Protestant Missionary Publications in Modern China 1912–1949* offers an overview of the history of the missionary press as it developed in local settings in the Republican period.<sup>22</sup> Recent scholarship promotes an interdisciplinary approach to the study of Christianity in China. A series of

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<sup>18</sup> Tani Barlow, *The Question of Women in Chinese Feminism* (Durham and London: Duke University, 2004), 96.

<sup>19</sup> Jessie G. Lutz, *China and the Christian College: 1850–1950* (N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1971).

<sup>20</sup> See Zhang Kaiyuan 章开沅 (ed.), *Zhongxi wenhua yu jiaohui daxue* 中西文化与教会大学 (Sino-Western Culture and Christian Universities) (Wuhan: Hubei jiaoyu chubanshe, 1991).

<sup>21</sup> Zhang Xiantao, *The Origins of the Modern Chinese Press: The Influence of the Protestant Missionary Press in Late Qing China* (New York: Routledge, 2007).

<sup>22</sup> Ho Hoi-lap, *Protestant Missionary Publications in Modern China 1912–1949: A Study of their Programs, Operations, and Trends* (Hong Kong: Chinese Church Research Centre, 1988).

publications under the title of *Zongjiao yu lishi* 宗教与历史 (*Religion and History*) adopts such an approach to explore the encounter of Christianity with local Chinese society from multiple perspectives, including politics, society, linguistics, and the specific features of East Asia.<sup>23</sup>

In the historiography of Christianity in China, a paradigm shift occurred from a missiological and Eurocentric approach in the 1960s to a China-centred approach in the 1980s, enabling scholars to focus more on the actions and responses of Chinese Christians and less on the deeds and overall success of foreign missionaries.<sup>24</sup> Works by Daniel H. Bays, Jessie G. Lutz, Lian Xi, and Kwok Pui-lan not only shed light on the influence of local Protestant converts, both men and women, in church service and evangelical work, but also offered new approaches to the study of Chinese history.<sup>25</sup> A recent volume entitled *China's Christianity: From Missionary to Indigenous Church* mainly discusses the question of the Christian experience (both Catholic and Protestant) in China when the foreign mechanisms of control shifted to Chinese Christians.<sup>26</sup> By restoring the voices of local evangelical workers, this new paradigm highlights the importance of local context and the agency of Chinese Christians.

Based on the new paradigm, there is a growing awareness of the work of Chinese Christian women in the fields of education and journalism, and in social movements. The shift in the study of women's mission work in China from a Western perspective to a China-centred one sheds new light on the role

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<sup>23</sup> Tao Feiya 陶飞亚 (ed.), *Zongjiao yu lishi: 1 Zhongguo jidujiaoshi yanjiu* 宗教与历史: 1 中国基督教史研究 (Shanghai: Shanghai daxue chubanshe, 2013); Tao Feiya and Yang Xiongwei 杨雄威 (eds.), *Zongjiao yu lishi: 2 Zhongguo jidujiao qingnian xuezhe luntan* 宗教与历史: 2 中国基督教青年学者论坛 (Shanghai: Shanghai daxue chubanshe, 2014); Tao Feiya and Shu Jian 舒健 (eds.), *Zongjiao yu lishi: 3 jidujiao yu zhongxiwenhua qingnian boshi luntan* 宗教与历史: 3 基督教与中西文化青年博士论坛 (Shanghai: Shanghai daxue chubanshe, 2014); Tao Feiya and Yang Weihua 杨卫华 (eds.), *Zongjiao yu lishi: 6,7 hanyu wenxian yu zhongguo jidujiao yanjiu* 宗教与历史: 6, 7 汉语文献与中国基督教研究 (Shanghai: Shanghai daxue chubanshe, 2016).

<sup>24</sup> Nicolas Standaert, "New Trends in the Historiography of Christianity in China," *The Catholic Historical Review* LXXXIII.4 (1997): 573–5.

<sup>25</sup> Daniel H. Bays, "Foreign Missions and Indigenous Protestant Leaders in China, 1920–1955," in Brian Stanley (ed.), *Missions, Nationalism, and the End of Empire* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 144–64; Daniel H. Bays, "Chinese Protestant Christianity Today," *The China Quarterly* No. 174 (June 2003): 488–504; Jessie G. Lutz (ed.), *Pioneer Chinese Christian Women: Gender, Christianity, and Social Mobility* (Bethlehem: Lehigh University Press, 2010); Lian Xi, *Redeemed by Fire: The Rise of Popular Christianity in Modern China* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010); Kwok Pui-lan, *Chinese Women and Christianity 1860–1927* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992).

<sup>26</sup> Anthony E. Clark (ed.), *China's Christianity: From Missionary to Indigenous Church* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2017).



of previously overlooked local female agency. Kwok Pui-lan explores the encounter of gender and religion in China. In her work entitled *Chinese Women and Christianity: 1860–1927*, Kwok discusses why Chinese women joined the church, how they adapted to church life with its unfamiliar rituals and new prescriptions for women, and whether their Christian identity affected the development of a feminist consciousness.<sup>27</sup>

Studies on Christian women in China have also demonstrated their active roles in the making of a Christianised nation, especially in the cultural sphere. As gender exclusion in church service prohibited women from church ministry, female missionaries were “engaged in the kinds of work most subject to accusations of cultural imperialism.”<sup>28</sup> An edited volume entitled *Women’s Work for Women* particularly addresses the tangible impact Western women missionaries had on the lives of Asian women from the late 1860s.<sup>29</sup> Another work entitled *The Gospel of Gentility* by Jane Hunter, explores the work and life of American woman missionaries in turn-of-the-century China. Hunter depicts a living environment where single and married female missionaries performed their evangelical roles in the domestic sphere. It also touches on the issues of imperialistic evangelism and cultural superiority among missionaries in their encounter with local women. The book entitled *Xingbie yu lishi: jindai zhongguo funü yu jidujiao* 性别与历史：近代中国妇女与基督教 (Gender and History: Modern Chinese Women and Christianity) is a collection of essays that examines the religious and social life of Chinese Christian women as well as the transcultural experience of foreign missionary women. It incorporates articles on Christian women’s publications, organisations, and education.<sup>30</sup>

Research on Christian women in China, however, has so-far largely failed to examine their relationship with the nation-building project. By contrast, the role of Christian men in the making of a modern

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<sup>27</sup> Kwok, *Chinese Women and Christianity 1860–1927*.

<sup>28</sup> Barbara Reeves-Ellington, Kathryn Kish Sklar, and Connie Anne Shemo (eds.), *Competing Kingdoms: Women, Mission, Nation, and the American Protestant Empire, 1812–1960* (Durham, NC; London: Duke University Press, 2010), 4.

<sup>29</sup> Leslie A. Flemming, “Introduction: Studying Women Missionaries in Asia,” in Leslie A. Flemming (ed.), *Women’s Work for Women: Missionaries and Social Change in Asia* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1989).

<sup>30</sup> Tao Feiya (ed.), *Xingbie yu lishi: jindai zhongguo funü yu jidujiao* 性别与历史：近代中国妇女与基督教 (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 2006).

China has received far greater attention. In examining the tangled relationship between missions, Protestant Christianity, and Chinese nationalism, the historian Lian Xi focuses on Republican Protestant political nationalists such as Sun Yat-sen 孫逸仙 (1866–1925), Chiang Kai-shek 蔣介石 (1887–1975), and Feng Yuxiang 馮玉祥 (1882–1948) in searching for Christian salvation for China.<sup>31</sup> In his other monograph entitled *Redeemed by Fire*, Lian also explores the grassroots development of Christianity through indigenous church leaders who were prompted by the rise of nationalism and millenarianism in twentieth-century China. In his book entitled *Fuzhou Protestants and the Making of a Modern China*, Ryan Dunch investigates identities and social-political activities of members of the local Protestant male elite in the nation-state building project. By investigating a number of representative events and institutions, Dunch vividly explains the syncretistic belief where Chinese Christians infused a local concern into their religious vision and took up the social and political roles in the modernising process. Such a strong social concern resulted in their cooperation with members of local elites and government officials in many joint-ventures. Daniel H. Bays even concludes that the presence or absence of a strong state is “the biggest single factor in tracing the essence of Chinese Christian history” in his recent reflection on Protestantism in modern China. In Bays’ view, missionaries were not as influential as the state although he did acknowledge their general importance.<sup>32</sup>

### *Nü duo*

This thesis fills the gap of existing knowledge on Christian women’s roles in the nation-building project through examining a Christian woman’s magazine entitled *Nü duo*, the first and longest-running magazine for Chinese home life, covering the entire Republican period. As nationalism was a crucial factor in the development of Christianity in China and domesticity was a concept closely intermingled with the nation, examining *Nü duo* provides a window through which to look at how Christian women

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<sup>31</sup> Lian Xi, “Western Protestant Missions and Modern Chinese Nationalist Dreams,” *East Asian History* 32/33 (December 2006/June 2007): 199–216.

<sup>32</sup> Daniel H. Bays, “Reflections on Protestantism and Modern China: Problems of Periodization,” *The Chinese Historical Review* Vol. 20 No. 1 (2013): 14.

perceived their roles in the family and understood their relationship with the nation. Produced in a most dynamic period of modern Chinese history, *Nü duo* created a destination for educated Christian women of the time in their search for guidance on home life. Issues of *Nü duo* also serve as a rich archive for contemporary scholars to explore the changing ideas advocated by these Christian women, including the editorial board and occasionally the views of its readers. The following section briefly discusses the attempts of home reform in the Protestant Christian community to contextualise the role of *Nü duo* in the Christianising home movement.

### **A Christian Family for China**

Despite a growing scholarship on the encounter between Christianity and China, there has been little research on the group of missionary women and Chinese Christian women who perceived building Christian homes as their evangelical mission. The influence of Christian ideals on the family model in the Republican period was evident in the writings of Ernest G. Osborne, the family life educator at Columbia University who had travelled to China with his wife in 1946. Working as a child welfare consultant for the China Aid Council, an affiliate of United Service to China,<sup>33</sup> Osborne published an article in 1947 entitled “Problems of the Chinese Family.” He argued that Western culture, and in particular Christianity, had influenced Chinese home life as many college-educated young people had established families that were characteristic of those in Britain and America.<sup>34</sup>

The idea of the Christian home, the historian Dana L. Robert argues:

[was] an enduring component of Anglo-American mission theory because it combined the social and evangelistic functions of missions... [which] ... provided a rationale for the

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<sup>33</sup> Richard N. Hey, “Ernest G. Osborne, Family Life Educator,” *Journal of Marriage and Family* Vol. 27 No. 2 (May 1965): 136.

<sup>34</sup> Ernest G. Osborne, “Problems of the Chinese Family,” *Marriage and Family Living* Vol. 10 No. 1 (February 1948): 8.

participation of women in all aspects of mission work... [and] ... validated a Protestant lifestyle that met the personal needs of expatriate missionary communities.<sup>35</sup>

In the industrialisation and the evangelical revival of the early 1800s, “domesticity was the ‘dominating discourse’ about middle-class women’s roles in both the United Kingdom and the United States.”<sup>36</sup>

This concept of the Christian family later developed into a mission ethos found in missionaries’ encounter with non-Western cultures.<sup>37</sup>

China was no exception to the missionary strategy of promoting a Christian home. The Christian community in China had made several attempts to transform Chinese families in the early twentieth century. The Christian Endeavour Society, for example, was an institution established to promote a purer home life. The Woman’s Christian Temperance Union was another institution devoted to protecting and improving the domestic lives of women. The China Sunday School Union, another Christian organisation, placed special emphasis on family worship and designated a Home Welfare Week starting on 12 May in 1918.<sup>38</sup> Other efforts made in the second decade of the twentieth century, included the introduction of domestic science at the Girls’ Boarding School in Chengdu,<sup>39</sup> as well as courses on scientific temperance and home economics conducted at the Union Bible School for Women in Beijing.<sup>40</sup> The Tianjin-Christian Union also organised a series of meetings on home service.<sup>41</sup>

Surveys conducted in the early Republican era also suggested a need to improve Chinese home life. A survey conducted in 1916 investigated communicant membership in Hangzhou 杭州 and enquired into the influences that led to conversions. 33% of a total number of 849 respondents listed the

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<sup>35</sup> Dana L. Robert, “The ‘Christian Home’ as a Cornerstone of Anglo-American Missionary Thought and Practice,” in Dana L. Robert (ed.), *Converting Colonialism: Visions and Realities in Mission History, 1706–1914* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Publication Co., 2008), 136.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 139.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 142.

<sup>38</sup> *The China Mission Year Book* (Shanghai: CLS, 1911), 407, 452; *The China Mission Year Book* (Shanghai: 1918), 294–5.

<sup>39</sup> *The China Mission Year Book*, 1911, 434.

<sup>40</sup> *The China Mission Year Book* (Shanghai: CLS, 1916), 488.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 251.

influence of preaching while 20% chose home influences, representing the second primary reason for the communicants' conversion.<sup>42</sup> According to other surveys on Chinese families conducted by the China Continuation Committee's Special Sub-committee on Family Worship in 1918:

... [they] found conditions which seemed to indicate that probably two-thirds of the church membership lived in homes where the influence was predominantly non-Christian and where probably little if any family worship was conducted. Even in homes where Christian influence predominated not half reported regular family worship. This statement need not necessarily be regarded as true of the whole Christian Church in China, but it indicates certain general needs and possibilities.<sup>43</sup>

On a wider scale, the home life campaign of the Christian community gained momentum in the 1920s, concomitant with the growing influence of the social gospel that advocated the social engagement of Christian individuals to improve general conditions of life in China. In 1924, the National Christian Council, a national interdenominational organisation for Chinese Christians, recognised the consequences of the mixing of different cultural streams on Chinese traditional life and pointed specifically to the impact made by the introduction of modern industry which imposed "dangers to the home life and some of the most significant social institutions of China." With its aim of assisting the Church in the creation of a Christian home life, the Council put home-reform work as a main line of activity, considering "the Christian conception of home life as the only way out of the present confusion" that was achievable within a short period.<sup>44</sup>

This proposal received encouraging responses from many parts of the nation. The review of records and literature from 1924–1925 shows that the Christian home was one of the eleven most prominent questions addressed at the time.<sup>45</sup> The West China Christian Conference held in 1925 put better

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 461–4.

<sup>43</sup> *The China Mission Year Book* (Shanghai: CLS, 1918), 294.

<sup>44</sup> *The China Mission Year Book* (Shanghai: CLS, 1924), 149–50, 157.

<sup>45</sup> *The China Christian Year Book* (Shanghai: CLS, 1929), 161–2.

homes as one of its five themes.<sup>46</sup> Local federations, a common form of activity in China that united churches and other Christian institutions in a city, placed the better home campaign on their agenda, such as the Peking Christian Union which promoted a model home movement. Furthermore, the Hangchow Union Committee (Christian Council), also set up a sub-committee on Christian Homes in 1925.<sup>47</sup>

The place of Chinese homes remained an important item on the agenda of the Christian community in China in the following years: in 1929 Wade Crawford Barclay, the secretary of religious education of the Methodist Episcopal Church in China, advocated for Christian conceptions of the family being a necessary basis for a Christian society.<sup>48</sup> In the 1930s, the National Christian Council of China launched a five-year campaign from 1929 to 1934 where one of the six items on its agenda was Christianising Chinese homes.<sup>49</sup> This nation-wide campaign, nevertheless, waned in the following decade when China was engaged in full-scale war with Japan.

Compared with the temporary efforts that aimed to Christianise Chinese families, *Nü duo* distinguished itself as an ongoing project targeting women and the family. Its cooperation with several Christian organisations, however, also made it a channel that reflected the general Protestant Christian movement in China. As a magazine edited by Christian women including foreign missionaries and Chinese converts, writings published in *Nü duo* recorded the interplay of two different cultures. The following section sets out the goals of this thesis and its research questions.

## Research Aim and Questions

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<sup>46</sup> *The China Christian Year Book* (Shanghai: CLS, 1926), 107.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 95, 103–4.

<sup>48</sup> *The China Christian Year Book* (1929), 291.

<sup>49</sup> The initiation of the Christianising Home movement by the NCCC was based on the prevalent interpretation among leading Chinese Christians that the basic unit of Chinese society was the home. Fundamentally, to win China for Christ required Chinese homes to be Christianised. See *Zhonghua quanguo jidujiao xiejinhui dishijie dahui baogao* 中華全國基督教協進會第十屆大會報告 (The Tenth Report of the NCCC) (Shanghai: NCCC, July 1935), 46. Shanghai Municipal Archive: u123-0-19-69.

This thesis examines the Christian attempt to transform the institution of the Chinese family by investigating the ideal Christian domesticity portrayed in *Nü duo*. The religious nature of this magazine together with its reliance on Western financial and literary sources made it a modernising force with different ideas on the family from that promoted by the non-Christian intelligentsia. Unlike the reformist ambitions of prominent Chinese intellectuals and politicians, *Nü duo* advocated a family model founded on a religious vision as the basis for modern life. It addressed questions of contemporary life and galvanised the domestic sphere with Christian ideals, ranging from a theological rationale for women's household obligations to modern ways of childrearing and domestic management. An exploration of *Nü duo* adds to the existing knowledge on modernising attempts in the domestic sphere.

The joint effort of foreign missionaries and Chinese converts involved with producing *Nü duo* makes this a fascinating study, revealing the manner in which Western influence and local autonomy were constantly in negotiation with each other. According to Choi Hyaeweol and Margaret Jolly, "the nature of missionary encounters with indigenous populations was in no way a simple matter of transmission and acceptance."<sup>50</sup> Being mindful of this multi-directional process, this thesis attempts to reveal the complexities in the making of an ideal Christian home through exploring the ideas and activities of the magazine's three chief editors, as well as referencing articles from across the forty years of the magazine's publication.

As the notion of an ideal womanhood penetrated the secular family-reform discourse, this thesis pays special attention to the advocacy of the ideal woman's role put forward by *Nü duo*. With China embarking on the building of a modern nation-state, notions of gender equality and an escalating national crisis demanded that female citizens, either directly or indirectly, join the nation-building process. Traditional social and cultural restrictions on women were greatly challenged in the

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<sup>50</sup> Choi Hyaeweol and Margaret Jolly (eds.), *Divine Domesticities: Christian Paradoxes in Asia and the Pacific* (Canberra, A.C.T.: ANU Press, 2014), 3.

Republican era. Amidst the changing perceptions of women's social and domestic roles, I look at relevant discussions recorded in *Nü duo* to understand its uniqueness in reconfiguring an ideal womanhood when compared with the non-Christian community.

In the process of discussing Christian women's relationship with the nation, the term nationalism needs further clarification. Although the 'nationalism' of Christian women in China is under researched, work on the Protestant Christian community in China that primarily focuses on Christian men, is useful in offering a parallel. 'Nationalism' denoted varied meanings to different groups of Chinese Christians.<sup>51</sup> For Pentecostal leaders of indigenous churches in China, for example, 'nationalism' was demonstrated by its anti-foreign attitude, emphasising the principles of independence and autonomy from Western missionaries and their institutions. For Republican Christian politicians, on the other hand, 'nationalism' was embodied in their efforts to modernise and strengthen China through political debate in line with the notion of religious citizenship.<sup>52</sup> The multiple foci of 'nationalism,' in this light, calls for an open-ended approach to identify its variants among local Christian converts. In this thesis, I look for its plural expressions over the course of the forty-year circulation of *Nü duo*.

This research centres on the primary question of how *Nü duo* reflects the interplay between the Western notion of a Christian domesticity and the local perception of a Chinese Christian domesticity. Two sets of questions are asked. Fundamental questions examine the kind of Chinese Christian family *Nü duo* was aiming to promote. In particular, what were the roles of women portrayed in an ideal religious home life? In addition to drawing on articles published by the magazine, I examine the social and historical context of the time, within which *Nü duo* was launched, moulded, and circulated. Covering the entire Republican period, it was published during the warlord era, Japan's invasion, the

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<sup>51</sup> The relationship between nationalism and Christianity is an on-going discussion in contemporary China. Cao Nanlai's research on contemporary Wenzhou Christian entrepreneurs acknowledges a spiritual nationalism that took the initiative in the state-engineered market economy and the expansion of the presence of Chinese Christians in the global Christian community. See Cao Nanlai, "Elite Christianity and Spiritual Nationalism," *Chinese Sociological Review* Vol. 45 No. 2 (winter 2012–13): 27–47.

<sup>52</sup> Vincent Goossaert and David A. Palmer, *The Religious Question in Modern China* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2012), 71–3.



civil war, and the start of the Communist regime. Other questions include: how did the concept of an ideal home life evolve in response to changing social and political settings? In the whirlpool of the May Fourth Culture Movement from 1915 to 1925, how did *Nü duo* situate itself in the non-Christian intellectual debate on family reform? What was its response to the growing national calamity of the 1930s? In a politically unstable environment of the 1940s, how did *Nü duo* address home life to its female readers? As the nation-state underpinned the discourse of family reform in the non-Christian community, the question of how *Nü duo* addressed national concerns serves as a crucial index to understand the similarities and differences between *Nü duo* and the secular press.

The second aspect focuses on its three chief editors, including their interconnection with each other and their impact on the magazine. Following White's retirement in the early 1930s, Li Guanfang 李冠芳 (1896–1937?) and Liu Meili 劉美麗 (1906–?), White's two students from the Nanjing Huiwen Girls' School 南京匯文女子中學, succeeded to the editorship in different periods. Laura White edited the magazine from 1912 to 1929 when she was replaced by her student Li Guanfang. Although White continued in her position at the CLS and did not retire until 1935. Li, a social activist, resigned the editorship in 1935 to pursue social work. Her position was filled by another student of White's, namely Liu Meili, who remained the editor until 1951. The respective editors in different periods of the magazine's circulation reflect their various views of women, family, and nation shaped by the ideas and political developments of the time.

This thesis advances two understandings. Firstly, together with the debate on family reform in the non-Christian community, *Nü duo* advocated a religious approach to transforming home life based on Christian values. Its advocacy of such a platform reflected a Victorian notion of domestic virtue and firmly associated women's obligations with domesticity. This functioned to disconnect women from any social or political engagement in the nation. In its initial stage, it will be seen, *Nü duo* under the editorship of Laura White focused on religious reform rather than promoting a political agenda.

Secondly, the exclusive emphasis on women's domestic virtues conflicted with the rising tide of nationalism that developed during the national crisis of the late 1910s and especially of the mid-1930s, when Chinese Christians struggled to accommodate Victorian Christian ideals with their Chinese identity. Reflecting a strong sense of national humiliation, local Christians who were active in the making of a new China in light of Christian ideals were also driven by a strong desire to save the nation from foreign imperialism. Chinese Christians turned away from Western notions of Christian womanhood and developed and adopted their own understandings of what it meant to be a Chinese Christian woman. Discussions in *Nü duo* show when the idea of a non-political Victorian domesticity became controversial and out-dated compared with the rise of women's social and national engagement. These two understandings demonstrate the developments and changes of *Nü duo* at different periods of time, showing how Christian women were involved in the nation-building discourse through the making of a Christian domesticity.

This on-going dilemma for Chinese Christian women—whether this remained a purely domestic concern or was extended to embrace wider political activism—is reflected in tensions portrayed in *Nü duo* during its forty years of publication. Christian women's domestic virtues as well as their relationship with the nation intertwined like two threads in the Republican period and beyond.

A study of *Nü duo*, I argue, reveals the self-awakening process of educated Chinese Christian women who were at the same time confined by the missionary legacy, wittingly or unwittingly. Chinese Christian women, unlike their male counterparts, experienced a two-fold struggle as a result of a conflict between the Victorian notion of womanhood, with that of traditional patriarchal gender ethics in the nation-building process. In the wake of Chinese nationalism, a shift occurred from relying on Western notions of Christian womanhood to the formation of a Chinese Christian notion of womanhood among local female converts. This thesis will show that this Chinese notion of an ideal Christian womanhood, however, is a contested concept that differs from individual to individual. The plural understandings of women's relationship with the nation reflect a lack of theological, historical,

and cultural models for women's political and national roles. This explains the differences found in Chinese Christian women's relationships with the nation, as well as the paradoxical process by which Christian women responded to the changing social and political conditions of the times. The unexpected and contingent nature of Christian women's encounters with local circumstances are thus a non-linear process.

### **Methodology and Chapter Outline**

Researchers on a particular theme tend to extrapolate from relevant articles from different periodicals over a span of time to identify a discourse on that theme. In her research on *Funü shibao*, Joan Judge criticises this approach by pointing out its artificial nature.<sup>53</sup> Referring to this approach as "vertical," Judge proposes a horizontal method to examine a range of materials on a particular topic in a single journal. Materials examined in her work include different "cultural registers" such as articles, advertisements, and pictures, thus restoring the ecology of the journal. In addition to this horizontal approach, Judge also examines print culture at the time in order to compare this journal with other competing women's journals. She then takes a broader perspective and situates the contents of *Funü shibao* in relation to its cultural, historical, and global context.

Judge's approach of examining a particular theme in one magazine is innovative. In light of her approach, this study explores the discourse of family reform through a single magazine, *Nü duo*, to restore its ecological textual milieu. Unlike the short-lived *Funü shibao*, however, the long-lived *Nü duo* experienced a turbulent era when changing ideas and national crises encountered each other. Based on the horizontal method, I thus employ a chronological framework to examine *Nü duo* in four historical periods, which are demarcated by the May Fourth Movement and shifts in editorial policy and personnel.

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<sup>53</sup> Judge, *Republican Lens*, 2015.

While periodisation is arguably artificial, a chronological approach is helpful to detect changes and for tracing the dynamics that internally and externally shaped the discourse of family reform advocated by this magazine. Aside from editorial changes, it will show that a changing social and cultural ethos and increasing national crisis all contributed to the momentum that led to changes in each phase. The contextualisation conducted in each chapter enables a dialogical interpretation of the encounter between foreign missionary women and their local counterparts as well as between the Christian community and wider Chinese society. Furthermore, a chronological framework highlights the impact of changes occurring in different periods on the magazine, presenting an evolving picture of its course.

This thesis has seven chapters. Chapter Two examines the social and historical background that paved the way for the birth of *Nü duo*, and provides a detailed account of *Nü duo* focusing on its publisher, editors, readership, and circulation. The following four chapters illustrate the respective focal points of *Nü duo* in the respective periods. In addition to textual analysis, special attention is paid to the evangelical work of its editors, White, Li, and Liu, outside of their work with *Nü duo*. General questions are examined: who were these chief editors and what motivated them to devote their time and energies to evangelical literature? What Christian ideals were emphasised and how did they react to the changing environment? What kind of connections did they have? These are crucial questions that I attempt to answer.

Chapters Three and Four explore the magazine under White's editorship. Chapter Three covers the period from 1912, when *Nü duo* was first published, to 1915 when the New Culture movement was launched, and concentrates on articles emphasising the creation of an ideal Christian domesticity in China. Chapter Four investigates proposals for family reform in *Nü duo* and in the non-Christian press during the May Fourth Movement. This chapter analyses articles published until 1929 when Li became the editor. During this period, the magazine was buffered by an influx of ideologies. To cope with the dynamic tides, it changed its original title *Nü duo* to *Nü duo: jiating zazhi* 女鐸：家庭雜誌 in 1927. Presenting the dialogical conversation between *Nü duo* and the secular debate on family reforms,

shows, I argue, that the emergence of articles on women and nation in *Nü duo* indicated the growing awareness of a national consciousness among Chinese women.

Chapter Five examines *Nü duo* under the editorship of its first Chinese editor Li Guanfang from 1929 to 1935. As a Western-trained intellectual, Li took an active role in evangelical literature and social movements. During her editorship, *Nü duo* was involved in the national campaign for Christianising Chinese families initiated by the National Christian Council of China. In this post-New Culture Movement period, I focus on Li's impact on the magazine as well as how and to what extent this campaign was reflected in *Nü duo*. Meanwhile this chapter will demonstrate how Li was confined by the Victorian missionary legacy, a frustration manifested through her writings in the magazine. Due to her passion for social work, Li eventually resigned and left the CLS in 1935.

Chapter Six looks at *Nü duo* under the editorship of Liu Meili from 1935 to 1951. While the intervention of the Second Sino-Japanese War interrupted a systematic nation-wide attempt to Christianise the Chinese domestic world, this chapter provides a narrative of the continuing efforts in transforming Chinese domesticity put forward by *Nü duo*. The promotion of Christian love through translated Western Gospel literature incorporated by the magazine put into sharp contrast readers' letters that questioned the issue of divine justice during the wartime period—which indicated the lack of consideration of social and political concerns in imported Western ideas on God's love. The legacy of ideas of Victorian womanhood was most evident in the ambiguous stance of *Nü duo* with political authorities during the civil war period as well as Liu's struggle with the atheist authorities after the Communist victory in 1949.

The concluding chapter reviews the religious family model portrayed by *Nü duo* as an alternative to the discourse of a modern secular family. It examines the discourse of a religious family embedded in the broader discourse of mission history and local context. I single out problems in the making of a Christian domesticity along with the discourse of the nation-building project promoted by a group of educated Chinese Christian women. The three chief editors—while all were involved in Christian

literary work—in their different perceptions of Christianity, which emerged in different social settings, demonstrate that the changing local milieu increased the complexity of being a Christian in China. It points further to the historical and theological roots that resulted in the plural responses of Christian women to changing politics and the national crisis.

This dissertation primarily draws on articles published in *Nü duo*. While the magazine covered a variety of topics,<sup>54</sup> for this study, I focus first on articles with a direct relevance to home life. One way for distinguishing these is to search in titles with key words as *jia* 家 (home) and *jia ting* 家庭 (family). The other method is to select articles addressing recurrent themes centred on home life, including marriage, motherhood, and childrearing. Secondly, I look at discussions on women and their relationship with the family and the nation. Thirdly, I pay attention to articles in the editorial column. These articles were crucial to capture the primary viewpoint of *Nü duo* not only because they appeared first in the magazine but also because they were usually written by the chief editors as expressions of their standpoints regarding major social issues.

In addition, I look at the works of its three editors in other publications. Personal writings such as letters and personal information recorded by the mission board supplement our understanding of their evangelical work. Secondary resources from the publisher of *Nü duo*, the missionary society Laura White belonged to, and other important Christian organisations function to contextualise the historical settings in which the magazine was circulated. They include the annual reports of the Christian Literature Society, the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and National Christian Council of China, as well as newspapers and magazines directed at the Chinese intelligentsia.

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<sup>54</sup> Sections in *Nü duo* that were less relevant to domesticity were school poems, games, jokes, and school learning.

## **Chapter 2 The Birth of *Nü duo***

This chapter aims to set out the social and historical background that paved the path for the establishment of *Nü duo*, the first Protestant Christian magazine for Chinese women, established in 1912. It explores the evangelical work of the Protestant missionary community and the role played by gender, and examines the debate on the role of women among late Qing reformers. The focus then shifts to investigate the events leading to the establishment of *Nü duo*, comprising a detailed sketch of its purpose and its targeted audience. Attention falls on its publisher and respective editors, as well as its circulation numbers. It will be seen that amidst the reform fervour of the time, *Nü duo* promoted a vision of an ideal modern woman founded on Christian values, and the Western female missionaries' concept of an ideal Chinese Christian home.

### **The General Historical Context of *Nü duo***

The late Qing period underwent a surge of reforms that implicitly and explicitly challenged traditional gender ethics. A strong desire to regain China's strength in the face of foreign rivals ushered in the need for change in the minds of the gentry class and reform-minded intellectuals, resulting in a decades-long "Self-Strengthening Movement" (1862–1894). China's defeat to Japan in 1895, further advanced the revival movement in the form of the "Reform Movement of 1898" or "Wuxu Reform," marking the heyday of reform fervour in the closing years of the Qing dynasty. The reform movement received strong support and leadership from the young Guangxu Emperor (1871–1908), who issued more than a hundred decrees during the hundred days from 11 June to 21 September 1898, endeavouring to initiate social and political change. Aside from social and political reforms, late Qing reformers started to reassess traditional values and practices based on Confucian ethics, such as loyalty to the monarch, filial piety, and wifely devotion to husbands. Debate took place specifically on the role of traditional values for governing the social order and the institution of the family and their negative impact on gender relations for the modernisation of Chinese society. Accompanying these concerns was a desire to reconfigure the notion of an "ideal womanhood" which became a major topic

of discussion at the turn of the twentieth century. At this time, traditional values and morals based on gender received unprecedented reassessment within the male-dominated gentry class as well as among late Qing female reformers. Their interest may be read specifically as a characteristic of a growing sense of self-empowerment and nationalist fervour.

The Rev. Dr. Robert Morrison, the first Protestant Missionary sent by the London Missionary Society (LMS), arrived at Guangzhou 廣州 in 1807. His endeavours to convert the Chinese people to Christianity were immediately thwarted by Imperial Decree, which forbade foreign missionaries evangelising in China. As a result, early Western missionaries spent much time in South East Asia and Macau working on religious printed material in Chinese, which became a crucial tool for introducing Christian ideals and Western knowledge to nineteenth-century China. Matters changed in 1842 with the signing of the Treaty of Nanking following China's defeat in the First Opium War. The establishment of treaty ports at Shanghai 上海, Ningbo 寧波, Xiamen 廈門 (formerly known as Amoy), Fuzhou 福州, and Guangzhou, opened China up to Western missionary activity. Formal government restrictions were eased, resulting in an influx of Western missionaries and their wives. The number of Protestant missionary societies consequently increased to 27 in China by 1860.<sup>55</sup> When the Convention of Peking in 1860 was signed after the Second Opium War, foreign travel was permitted throughout the Qing Empire, enabling thousands of missionaries, both male and female, to come to China to fulfil their evangelical vocations.

China's growing desire for new knowledge after 1895 and changing ideas about gender, empowered by the print media, provided a context for the birth of *Nü duo* in 1912, the first Christian magazine for Chinese women.

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<sup>55</sup> Daniel H. Bays, *A New History of Christianity in China* (Malden, Mass.: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 48.



## Proselytising China: Gendered Missiology, Missionary Women, and the Late Qing Period

Gender divisions in the Protestant church ministry as well as the norms of traditional social ethics operated to confine the work of female Protestant missionaries in China. While the Treaty of Nanking in 1842 allowed the wives of missionaries to settle in the five treaty ports with their husbands, single missionary women were limited by traditional biblical interpretations of the role of women's ministry, which prevented them from serving overseas unless they were married to missionaries.<sup>56</sup> The Christian women's movement in the West during the nineteenth century challenged this gender segregation in the missionary enterprise. In response to conservative churchmen, women missionaries started to form their own mission boards aiming to send women missionaries to overseas mission fields.<sup>57</sup> However, on arrival, they faced a mission field dominated by their male counterparts, where they could only work with their own sex in the private sphere. *Women's Work for Women*, the title of the magazine of the Woman's Foreign Mission Society of the American Presbyterian Church dating from 1870, was a catchphrase that applied to the work of women missionaries from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth century. Embodied in this catchphrase was a woman's missiology, the basic aim of which was to evangelise local women and bring them to salvation.<sup>58</sup>

Failure to reach an agreement on the significance of the position and role of women in church ministry resulted in a gendered division of labour within the missionary enterprise. *The Chinese Recorder* published a debate on women's place in the church in 1896. C. H. Judd, a British Protestant missionary with the China Inland Mission stationed at Ninghai 寧海, in Zhejiang 浙江 Province, advocated equality between men and women, listing several supportive passages from Scripture.<sup>59</sup> He offered an alternative interpretation of Paul's teaching: "Let the women keep silence in the churches; for it is not

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<sup>56</sup> Mary Keng Mun Chung, *Chinese Women in Christian Ministry: An Intercultural Study* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2005), 39.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>58</sup> Dana L. Robert, *American Women in Mission: a Social History of Their Thought and Practice* (Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 1996), 130.

<sup>59</sup> C. H. Judd, "Woman's Place in the Church as Taught in Holy Scripture," *The Chinese Recorder* (June 1896): 261–6.

permitted unto them to speak,” that was often invoked by the opponents to women’s work to oppose women’s preaching.<sup>60</sup> Judd proposed that to “keep silence” literally meant not to speak, but not necessarily not to teach or pray. Since female prophets were mentioned in the Bible, he maintained, it would make more sense to adopt the literal meaning of the passage to be consistent with other teachings. H. M. Woods, from the American Presbyterian Mission (South), stationed at Qingjiangpu 清江浦, Jiangsu 江蘇 Province, opposed Judd’s view.<sup>61</sup> He published an article based on his reading of biblical teachings, arguing that women should be confined to their God-appointed sphere.<sup>62</sup> Although public roles for women were mentioned in the Bible, their position in the congregation, he maintained, was “undoubtedly subordinate.”<sup>63</sup> In Woods’s article, according to “the original order of creation,” women’s evangelical work was placed in the context of a divine separation of sexes where women worked in the domestic and private sphere, while men’s duties lay in public.<sup>64</sup>

As this debate continued, the Baptist Association in Guangdong 廣東 and Guangxi 廣西 but not the Shantou 汕頭 (formerly romanised as Swatow) mission, passed a resolution in 1896 approving women’s work. A Chinese pastor, Rev. Fung Chak 馮察, published his opinion on this subject at the request of the association in an article entitled, “Need for Women Missionaries.”<sup>65</sup> Fung enumerated the benefits of Western women’s work for girls’ education such as teaching the gospel and providing appropriate training for daughters, as well as improving national manners. As this article seems to represent only one voice from the local Christian community, Rev. Fung’s long service in mission work among overseas Chinese in Portland in the United States might not reflect the viewpoints of the

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 265.

<sup>61</sup> *Directory of Protestant Missionaries in China, Japan, and Corea for the Year 1904* (Hong Kong: The Hong Kong Daily Press Office, 1904), 6.

<sup>62</sup> H. M. Woods, “Woman’s God-appointed Sphere as Set Forth in Scripture,” *The Chinese Recorder* (October 1896): 467–75.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 473.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., 472.

<sup>65</sup> R. H. Graves, “Women as Missionaries,” *The Chinese Recorder* (August 1896): 392–4.

majority of Chinese pastors who had no Western experience.<sup>66</sup> Despite encouraging examples such as these, the reality for women's mission work in China was that it continued to be segregated on gender lines. Many women worked outside the church where, as Kwok Pui-lan has shown, their jobs concentrated in three areas of work, namely evangelism, female education, and medical care.<sup>67</sup>

If biblical teachings indicated that women could only teach their own sex, it followed that only female missionaries could reach Chinese women. Strategies to reach women were discussed at the first missionary conference in 1877 under a session entitled "Woman's Work for Woman." Martha F. Crawford (1830–1909), the wife of the American Baptist missionary, T. P. Crawford (1821–1902), highlighted the importance of women's work declaring that "the men can never be Christianized unless the women also are Christianized."<sup>68</sup> By associating women's work with men's work, she undoubtedly intended to catch the attention of missionary men and claim legitimacy for women's work within a male-dominated structure. Although missionary women managed to break the barriers preventing them moving overseas, they remained excluded from church ministry in the mission field and were restricted to evangelising in private.

Female missionaries' work among local women was also confined by ideas of gender segregation in Confucian ethics, which admonished women to be cloistered in their houses and discouraged from attending public events. Although Dorothy Ko's work revealed travelling as a common phenomenon among women from scholar-official families in seventeenth-century Jiangnan 江南,<sup>69</sup> Zang Jian maintains that Confucian ethical thinking reflected "the social mores held by the masses in an agrarian

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<sup>66</sup> J. C. Baker, *Baptist History of the North Pacific Coast with Special Reference to Western Washington, British Columbia, and Alaska* (American Baptist Publication Society, 1912), 354–5.

<sup>67</sup> Kwok, *Chinese Women and Christianity 1860–1927*, 15.

<sup>68</sup> *Records of the General Conference of the Protestant Missionaries of China in Shanghai in 1877* (Shanghai: Presbyterian Mission Press, 1877), 152.

<sup>69</sup> Dorothy Ko, *Teachers of the Inner Chambers: Women and Culture in Seventeenth-Century China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 219.

society.”<sup>70</sup> Compared with the Song 宋 period (960–1279), women in the Ming 明 (1368–1644) and Qing (1644–1911) dynasties were more burdened by Confucian strictures as patriarchal family regulations proliferated.<sup>71</sup> When Western Protestant missionaries arrived in the Qing period, Confucian gender ethics served as the predominant social moral code in Chinese society. There are records of missionaries giving Chinese women “cart money” to avoid the chance of being ridiculed and teased on their way to and from the church with their bound feet.<sup>72</sup>

Traditional gender rules hindered the evangelical work of male missionaries among Chinese women as those rules effectively prevented Chinese women from attending church services. Preaching to women took place at home, in private. Following the establishment of the first girls’ mission school by the British missionary Mary Ann Aldersey in Ningbo in 1844,<sup>73</sup> more mission schools for girls were established in the following years, where missionary women proselytised local women through education. Literary work for Chinese women at the time, however, as the following section will show, received limited attention.

### **Evangelical Literature for Chinese Women**

Literary work for local women comprised a relatively small part of work among missionary women. One early work for educated Chinese women was written by female missionary Sophie Martin, which was published in Singapore in 1832.<sup>74</sup> The sister of Mrs Medhurst, the wife of the English missionary W. H. Medhurst (1796–1857), Martin lived with the couple in Batavia (present-day Jakarta) and assisted in missionary work for the LMS.<sup>75</sup> The dogma advocated by ancient Chinese wise men that led

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<sup>70</sup> Zang Jian, “Women and the Transmission of Confucian Culture in Song China,” in Dorothy Ko, JaHyun Kim Haboush, and Joan R. Piggott (eds.), *Women and Confucian Cultures in Premodern China, Korea, and Japan* (California: University of California Press, 2003), 124.

<sup>71</sup> Zang, “Women and the Transmission of Confucian Culture in Song China,” 137–8.

<sup>72</sup> Kwok, *Chinese Women and Christianity*, 12.

<sup>73</sup> Gu Xuemei 谷雪梅, “Jidujiao chuanjiaoshi yu jindai Zhejiang nüzi jiaoyu” 基督教传教士与近代浙江女子教育 (Missionaries and Contemporary Women’s Education in Zhejiang), *Ningbo daxue xuebao* 宁波大学学报 (教育科学版) (*Journal of Ningbo University (Educational Science Edition)*) Vol. 5 (2008): 32.

<sup>74</sup> *The Chinese Repository* Vol.1 (June 1832): 77.

<sup>75</sup> Si Jia 司徒佳, “Jidujiao nüxing sanzijingti budao wenben chutan” 基督教女性三字经体布道文本初探 (An Exploration of the Three-character Genre of Christian Women’s Literature Work), *Higashi aja bunka kosho*

to the degradation of women's character, in Martin's belief, could be changed by obeying the word of the Christian God. Modelled on the Chinese classic *Sanzijing* 三字經 (*Three Character Classic*), Martin wrote a book entitled *Xunnü sanzijing* 訓女三字經 (*Three Character Classic for Girls*), which teaches love, obedience to parents, and the commandments of God.

The volume of women's literature published in standard Chinese and local dialects increased after the signing of the Treaty of Nanking in 1842. For example, Ningbo was one of the two centers of missionaries' attempt to publish in local dialects from the 1850s to the 1860s. The historian Guo Hong 郭红 has surveyed the number of publications in Ningbo during this period and estimates there were approximately fifty missionary publications. Twelve of these were produced by missionary wives, most of which centred on religious stories and were translations of children's books such as *The Lost Lamb* and *Henry and His Bearer*.<sup>76</sup> However, the idea of founding a Christian woman's magazine did not appear until the late Qing reform period when long-cherished moral codes regarding women were exposed to criticism. This period is the focus of the following section.

### **Gender in Late Qing Reform: Nationalism and Beyond**

Modern Chinese historiography has extensively studied a group of well-known male reformers and their attempts to strengthen the nation by reassessing the Chinese cultural system during the late Qing reform. Leading reform-minded scholars such as Kang Youwei 康有為 (1858–1927) considered the centuries-cherished Confucian values a hindrance to national strength, and pointed out in his book *Da tong shu* 大同書 (The Book of Great Harmony) that the seemingly harmonious relationship within the family was, in essence, a contradictory one because of its foundation being deeply rooted in the dictatorship of patrilineage.<sup>77</sup> Kang's comrade Tan Sitong 譚嗣同 also attacked the cornerstone of

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kenkyu 東アジア文化交渉研究 Vol. 4 (2011): 245.

<sup>76</sup> Guo Hong 郭红, "19 shiji zhongqi chuanjiaoshi yu Ningbo fangyan pinyin" 19 世纪中期传教士与宁波方言拼音 (Missionaries and the Ningbo dialect in Mid-Nineteenth Century), in *Zongjiao yu lishi: 1 Zhongguo jidujiaoshi yanjiu*, 130, 138.

<sup>77</sup> Wang Yubo 王玉波, *Zhongguo jiazhangzhi jiatingzhidushi* 中国家长制家庭制度史 (Tianjin shehui kexueyuan chubanshe: Xinhua shudian Tianjin faxingsuo faxing, 1989), 301–2.

Confucian ritualism, especially the principle of *sangang wuchang* 三綱五常, which disciplines relationships and moral obligations for a harmonious society.<sup>78</sup> Tan believed the abolition of this paternalistic order should be the starting point of reform. Earlier research has noted that the leading male intellectuals' critique of traditional gender ethics was likewise driven primarily by a national concern. Examples of such criticism are found in the writings of Liang Qichao 梁啟超 (1873–1929) and Kang Youwei against the practice of footbinding and the lack of women's education. These concerns, the historian Noriko Kamachi has noted, were determined largely by nationalist aspirations.<sup>79</sup>

Late Qing women reformers, however, complicate the narrative of the socio-political transformations of the time. While many of them attempted to strengthen the nation like their male counterparts, the engagement of Chinese women went beyond nationalistic discourse. The writings and activities of late Qing women demonstrate their desire for education for self-empowerment as well as their struggle in winning equality with men. Their voice and lives show that, far from being mere subjects of the reform movement, women of the late Qing period were active agents in discussions on gender, although confined by the socio-political circumstances of the time. Qian Nanxiu's pioneering work on Xue Shaohui 薛紹徽 (1866–1911), for example, reveals that the political and cultural activities of a group of late Qing women writers were not driven merely by nationalistic concerns. Through tracing the writings and activities of Xue and other women in her intellectual networks, Qian paints a vivid picture of the mental journey of these female reformers in their search for an ideal female figure whose education Xue viewed as vital for women's self-improvement. In contrast to male reformers

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<sup>78</sup> *Sangang* refers to the three cardinal principles between the following three key relationships, the emperor and his ministers, father and son, husband and wife. *Wuchang* refers to the five virtues: benevolence (*ren* 仁), righteousness (*yi* 義), propriety (*li* 禮), wisdom (*zhi* 智), and trust (*xin* 信). See Alex Chu Kwong Chan and Angus Young, "Confucian Principles of Governance: Paternalistic Order and Relational Obligations Without Legal Rules," *SSRN Electronic Journal* (17 January 2012).

<sup>79</sup> For Kamachi's discussion, see "Woman and Reform," in Paul A. Cohen and John E. Schrecker (eds.), *Reform in Nineteenth-Century China* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1976), 248. For original articles, see Liang Qichao, "Jiechanzuhui xu" 戒纏足會序 (Preface for the Anti-Foot Binding Society), *Shi wu bao* 時務報 No. 16 (3 January 1897); Liang Qichao, "Shiban buchanzuhui jianming zhangcheng" 試辦不纏足會簡明章程 (Constitution of the Foot Emancipation Society), *Shi wu bao* No. 25 (2 May 1897); Zhang Zhidong 張之洞, "Buchanzuhui xu" 不纏足會敘 (Preface for the Anti-Foot Binding Society), *Zhixin Bao* 知新報 No. 32 (26 September 1897).

who promoted education for women out of a national concern, Xue and her cohort prioritised women's own development through education.<sup>80</sup>

The case of the 1897–1898 campaign for women's education, Qian notes, illustrates the vision of female reformers that contrasted with that of male reformers. When the late Qing entrepreneur Jing Yuanshan 經元善 (1840–1903) initiated a project for establishing a school for girls in 1897, Jing and other influential men such as Liang Qichao and Kang Guangren 康廣仁 (1867–1898)<sup>81</sup> envisioned a strong Chinese economy and powerful military state resulting, in part, from reforms in women's education.<sup>82</sup> A meeting of the men led to concrete plans including financial support, female-only recruitment, and using this girls' school to facilitate more similar schools across China.<sup>83</sup> As a result, three reformist projects were established, namely, “the association *The Society for Women's Learning* (*Nü xue hui* 女學會, established in 1897), the journal *Chinese Girls' Progress* (*Nü xue bao* 女學報)<sup>84</sup> and the *Girls' School* (*Nü xue tang* 女學堂).<sup>85</sup> The Girls' School was launched in Shanghai in 1898 as the first Chinese girls' school, ending the monopoly of girls' education by missionaries.<sup>86</sup> Shortly after its establishment, the school launched its magazine both in Chinese (*Nü xue bao*) and English (*Chinese Girls Progress*).

However, due to the circumstances of the time and place, male reformers had to later “relinquish control of the Girls' School to women.” Qian assesses that the transfer turned the previous politically

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<sup>80</sup> Qian Nanxiu, *Politics, Poetics, and Gender in Late Qing China: Xue Shaohui and the Era of Reform* (Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2015).

<sup>81</sup> Kang Youwei's younger brother.

<sup>82</sup> Qian, *Politics, Poetics, and Gender in Late Qing China*, 125.

<sup>83</sup> Dusica Ristivojevic, *Gender and Internationalization in China: The Case of Nüxue bao (1898)* (PhD diss., Central European University, 2012), 120–2.

<sup>84</sup> This journal is different from the other journal also entitled *Nü xue bao* 女學報 founded in 1902 by Chen Xiefen 陳擷芬 (1883–1923). Its original name was *Nü bao* 女報, which was established in 1899 by Chen to promote women's rights and female education. See Ma Yuxin, *Women Journalists and Feminism in China 1898–1937* (Amherst, New York: Cambria Press, 2010), 59.

<sup>85</sup> Ristivojevic, *Gender and Internationalization in China*, 2. By referring to the words of an active contributor to *Nü xue bao*, Ristivojevic explained the interconnection between these projects: society was its root, the school its fruit, and the journal its leaves and blossoms. See Ristivojevic, *Gender and Internationalization in China*, 154.

<sup>86</sup> The first girls' mission school was established by British missionary Mary Ann Aldersey in Ningbo in 1844. See Gu, “Jidujiao chuanjiaoshi yu jindai Zhejiang nüzi jiaoyu,” 32.

centred project into “something more active, optimistic, and poetic.” She argues that the Shanghai campaign for women’s education displays the women’s intention to “promote their own cultural ambitions rather than assuage men’s political humiliation.”<sup>87</sup> While the Girls’ School aimed to cultivate future wives and mothers with feminine virtues, it also taught modern subjects such as maths, geography, and medicine in English. *Chinese Girls’ Progress*, the school magazine, was not confined to issues within campus but rather served as a starting point to fight for equal rights for Chinese women. As the first Chinese woman’s magazine, *Nü xue bao* was edited and published by an all-female editorial board,<sup>88</sup> reflecting reformist ideas about desirable social and political engagements for women that emphasised women’s agency, which consequently served as a platform to circulate women’s social and political visions of China through discussions of possible reforms during the Wuxu period.<sup>89</sup>

The late Qing era also witnessed the growth of pioneer feminist movements that prioritised women’s self-empowerment. One woman’s magazine that diffused progressive feminist thought was *Nüzi shijie* 女子世界 (*Women’s World*) established in 1904. In one of its early articles, the male chief editor Ding Chuwo 丁初我 (a pseudonym of Ding Zuyin 丁祖蔭) addressed a revolutionary approach for women to transform their family.<sup>90</sup> Ding believed that both the nation and every family in it suffered directly or indirectly from a dictatorship of three thousand years. Ding thought a family revolution was fundamental as the family was the basic unit of a nation, and this fell squarely on the shoulders of Chinese women. Ding singled out the lack of freedom of marriage as the most urgent problem and identified this as the starting point in the revolution to promote women’s rights. *Shenzhou nübao* 神州女報 (*The Woman’s Paper of the Great Land*) established in 1907 was another magazine that

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<sup>87</sup> Qian, *Politics, Poetics, and Gender in Late Qing China*, 124, 128.

<sup>88</sup> Qian Nanxiu, “The Mother *Nü xue bao* versus the Daughter *Nü xue bao*: Generational Differences between 1898 and 1902 Women Reformers,” in Nanxiu Qian, Grace S. Fong, and Richard J. Smith (eds.), *Different Worlds of Discourse: Transformations of Gender and Genre in Late Qing and Early Republican China* (Leiden Boston: Brill, 2008), 260.

<sup>89</sup> Ristivojevic, *Gender and Internationalization in China*, 15–6, 95–6.

<sup>90</sup> Ding Chuwo 丁初我, “*Nüzi jiating geming shuo*” 女子家庭革命說 (On Women’s Family Revolution), *Nüzi shijie* 女子世界 Vol. 4 (1904): n.p.



circulated feminist ideas.<sup>91</sup> It argued that “new women” should possess an independent personality (*ren ge* 人格) and make a complete break with the old family system to reform the institution of the family.<sup>92</sup>

Compared with Xue Shaohui, the feminists of the late Qing period were more radical regarding the promotion of equal rights for women and their role in the nation. One prominent feminist was Chen Xiefen 陳擷芬 (1883–1923), the female editor of the Shanghai monthly magazine entitled *Nü bao* (女報), who diagnosed that China’s weakness was rooted in the lack of education for women.<sup>93</sup> This magazine, established in 1899, aimed to promote women’s rights and female education but lasted only for a brief period. It resumed its monthly circulation in 1902 under the new title of *Nü xue bao*.<sup>94</sup>

The discourse of feminism at the turn of the twentieth century was essentially underpinned by a nationalist framework. Although some feminists such as He Zhen 何震 (1884–1920) adopted anarchism, which aimed at the liberation of women from any political structure,<sup>95</sup> the prime motivation for many feminists revolved around a notion of nation-building. Acknowledging feminists’ advocacy of women’s rights, however, was not the only means for nation-building. Louise Edwards argues that the connection with national rejuvenation enhanced the feminist campaigns of the time, as demonstrated in her study on late Qing feminists’ struggle for suffrage.<sup>96</sup>

The swarm of new ideas on gender ethics unnerved conservative minds in the Qing court. The fear of gender anarchy generated an urgent need to revive traditional morality. In a sharp contrast to progressive feminism, the Japanese concept of *Ryosai kenbo* 良妻賢母, a compound of good wife and wise mother, seemed to be a perfect ideal in the ideological chaos. As the historian Andrew Gordon

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<sup>91</sup> *Shenzhou* literally means ‘divine land,’ which was a poetic name for China.

<sup>92</sup> Zhang Shudong 张树栋, Li Xiuling 李秀领, *Zhongguo hunyin jiating de shanbian* 中国婚姻家庭的嬗变 (The changes of Chinese marriage and family) (Hangzhou: Zhejiang renmin chubanshe, 1990), 215.

<sup>93</sup> Chen Xiefen, “Jin li” 尽力 (Trying One’s Best), *Nü xue bao* Vol.2 (1903).

<sup>94</sup> Qian, “The Mother *Nü xue bao* versus the Daughter *Nü xue bao*,” 257.

<sup>95</sup> For the English translation of He Zhen’s writings, see Lydia H. Liu, Rebecca E. Karl, and Dorothy Ko (eds.), *The Birth of Chinese Feminism: Essential Texts in Transnational Theory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013).

<sup>96</sup> Louise Edwards, *Gender, Politics, and Democracy: Women’s Suffrage in China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008), 37.

notes, women in Meiji Japan were required to be educated to raise children well and their service at home “was valued as a form of service to the state.” By doing so, the state publicly demanded of women, who “had been seen as relatively unteachable and not much in need of formal education,” a role of importance in the domestic sphere.<sup>97</sup> The Qing government likewise proposed this concept to deal with anxieties about gender anarchy and to create a desire in loyal subjects to submit to imperial authority. This reform process highlighted the importance of a modern curriculum, especially the importance of courses in domestic science for women.

Three channels, according to the contemporary scholar Sudō Mitsuyo 須藤瑞代, helped to transfer the concept *Ryosai kenbo* from Japan to China; namely, the presence of Chinese female students in Japan, the movement of Japanese teachers dispatched to China, and the systematic introduction of the concept *Ryosai kenbo* by the Qing government. Compared with the former two channels, the official promulgation demonstrated an institutional effort to implant the concept. Along with various attempts to modernise the nation, the Qing government issued a series of regulations on family education: for example, a regulation drafted in 1903 which recommended the introduction of Shimoda Utako’s 下田歌子 (1854–1936) *Domestic Science (Kaseigaku)* 家政學 in school curriculums.<sup>98</sup> Shimoda was an active Japanese female educator who endeavoured to popularise girls’ education. The Jissen Women’s College (Jissen joshi gakkō 実践女子學校), established by Shimoda in 1899, was the main college targeting Chinese female students in Japan at the turn of the twentieth century, having a total number of students of between 125 and 149 from 1907 to 1910.<sup>99</sup> Shimoda published several books on techniques of household management and mental preparation in 1893, which were introduced a decade later by the Qing government as part of the official establishment of family education for

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<sup>97</sup> Andrew Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan: From Tokugawa Times to the Present* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 111.

<sup>98</sup> Sudō Mitsuyo 須藤瑞代, *Zhongguo “nūquan” gainian de bianqian* 中國“女權”概念的變遷 (Beijing: Shehuikexue wenxian chubanshe, 2010), 128. For a detailed discussion on Shimoda, see Joan Judge, “Talent, Virtue, and the Nation: Chinese Nationalism and Female Subjectivities in the Early Twentieth Century,” *The American Historical Review* Vol. 106 No.3 (June 2001): 765–803.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, 121.

women in 1905 when the imperial examinations were abolished. Two years later the government issued concrete regulations and courses for women's education.<sup>100</sup>

From the views of the gentry class and male intellectuals to an increasingly large group of female reformers, the late Qing period witnessed both contestation over gender and the emergence of women as agents in the public sphere. At this stage, the debate on the institution of the Chinese family was normally intertwined with the reconfiguration of womanhood. It is evident that the strong desire to rejuvenate the nation, women's growing agency, and the availability of women's education coupled with the new print technology, when taken together, played a significant role in unsettling long cherished gender norms. It was amidst this changing social ethos that the idea of a Christian women's magazine began to take place in the mind of the British missionary, Timothy Richard (1845–1919). His encounter with Laura White is discussed in the following section.

### **Towards a Christian Woman's Magazine**

Timothy Richard, according to available documents, was the first to propose a Christian magazine for Chinese women. Associated with the Baptist Missionary Society, Richard first came to China in 1870 and worked in Zhifu 芝罘 (formerly known as Chefoo, present-day Yantai 烟台 in Shandong 山東 Province) for several years during which time the famines in the 1880s greatly influenced his evangelical approach. Being an active administrator in famine relief, Richard believed "that only Western scientific expertise could avert similar disasters and that the right approach in China was to target the educated and religious elite with a message that yoked Christianity to the attractions of Western civilisation."<sup>101</sup> In the following years, Richard had visited high officials such as Zuo Zongtang 左宗棠 (1812–1885), Zhang Zhidong 張之洞 (1837–1909), and Li Hongzhang 李鴻章 (1823–1901). He was also known to reform-minded literati such as Weng Tonghe 翁同龢 (1830–1904, the Minister

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<sup>100</sup> Ibid., 124.

<sup>101</sup> Brian Stanley, "Richard, Timothy," in Gerald H. Anderson (ed.), *Biographical Dictionary of Christian Missions* (New York: Macmillan Reference USA, 1998), 567–8. For a detailed account of Timothy Richard, see Eunice V. Johnson, *Timothy Richard's Vision: Education and Reform in China, 1880–1910* (Cambridge: The Lutterworth Press, 2015).

of Revenue), Kang Youwei, and Liang Qichao. In 1896, Weng asked Richard to write a brief proposal for the Wuxu Reform and later showed his scheme to the Guangxu Emperor which was approved. Richard advocated “educational reform, economic reform, internal and international peace, and spiritual regeneration” as key objectives of his agenda.<sup>102</sup>

Richard also focused on the role of women in Chinese society. He had been involved in supporting *Nü xue hui* during the 1897–1898 campaign for women’s education in Shanghai. In her work on *Nü xue bao*, Dusica Ristivojevic notes the significant role Richard played supporting the society, the school, and the journal. His wife, Mary Richard, was also involved in the establishment and operation of *Nü xue tang*.<sup>103</sup>

Aside from promoting women’s work in the non-Christian community, Richard also concentrated on his evangelical work among Chinese women. During the mid-1890s, a few years after being appointed the General Secretary of the Christian Literature Society in Shanghai,<sup>104</sup> Richard believed the time was ripe for a Christian women’s magazine. He had met Laura White at a conference of the Christian Endeavour Society (CES) in Shanghai around 1894 and invited Laura White to work with him on a project of Christian literature for women.<sup>105</sup> At the first convention of the CES, White held the position of Correspondent Secretary while Richard was on its Publication Committee. White also attended the Second Annual Christian Endeavour Convention in Shanghai from 22 to 24 June the following year, where she addressed the meeting on the doctrines of charity and unity.<sup>106</sup> Despite her dispute with Richard at one of the conferences, Richard invited White to his home for dinner and asked her to work

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<sup>102</sup> William E. Soothill, *Timothy Richard of China: Seer, Statesman, Missionary & the Most Disinterested Adviser the Chinese ever Had* (London: Seeley, Service & Co. Limited, 1924), 220–1.

<sup>103</sup> Ristivojevic, *Gender and Internationalization in China*, 64, 118.

<sup>104</sup> For the death of Rev. Dr. A. G. Williamson, see *The Third Annual Report of the CLS* (Shanghai: CLS, 1890), 7. For the appointment of Timothy Richard, see *The Fourth Annual Report of the CLS, 1891* (Shanghai: CLS, 1891), 7. For the resignation of Timothy Richard, see *The Twenty-eighth Annual Report of the CLS, 1915* (Shanghai: CLS, 1915), 6.

<sup>105</sup> As an interdenominational organisation, the CES’s work in China was an extension of the original movement in Williston, Maine, U.S.A., in 1881. The aim of the organisation was to promote an earnest Christian life among its members. For principles of the CES, see Rev. W. P. Bentley, “The Christian Endeavor Society,” *The Chinese Recorder and Missionary Journal* (June 1894): 296–8.

<sup>106</sup> *The Chinese Recorder* (August 1895): 399; (June 1894): 296–8.

on women's literature. Although White declined Richard's invitation due to the demands of her primary evangelical work in female education, Richard, according to White, "kept up his interest in me until he asked the Methodist Church if they would lend me to the Christian Literature Society for literary work for one year."<sup>107</sup>

Despite declining Richard's invitation, White maintained her friendship with him and started to work partially on women's literature before becoming the editor of *Nü duo* in 1912. After reading the work of Leo Tolstoy (1828–1910) "Walk in the light while there is light," published in 1891, she was inspired with an idea to place the story in a Chinese context. As the original argument was, in her words, "against imperialism, militarism, and Roman and Greek philosophies," White thought it "could easily be changed into appeals for Christianity against Buddhism and Confucianism." She took her finished book to "her great and wise friend Dr Timothy Richard" for his advice.<sup>108</sup> Deeply confused about the nature of her work, White asked him what she should call the book, as it was neither a translation nor an adaptation. The following is an excerpt from their conversation:

White: "What shall I call the book?"

Richard: "My dear child, you have written an original story."

White: "But there is hardly an original thought in it."

Richard: "I would not expect it. Only two or three new thoughts are born in a century."<sup>109</sup>

Richard's encouraging words further assured White of the value of her work. The book, which later turned out to be a success, was published in a serialised form under the title of "Wu geng zhong" 五更鍾 ("Five Calls"<sup>110</sup>) in *Tong wen bao* 通問報 (*The Chinese Christian Intelligencer*), a Christian weekly

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<sup>107</sup> *The Thirty-third Annual Report of the CLS for China, 1920*, 44.

<sup>108</sup> Laura M. White, "Women and Children Last: The Story for Christian Literature for the Chinese," *The Missionary Review of the World* (December 1929): 904.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>110</sup> Although the English title for the monograph of *Wu geng zhong* was recorded as "Five Calls," the Chinese term *wu geng zhong* means 3–5 a.m.

periodical established in 1902 and published in Shanghai by the Presbyterian Missions in China. It announced in the 249<sup>th</sup> issue in April 1907 that the monograph would be published the following month following requests from its readers.<sup>111</sup> Eventually the book went through twenty printings. Its success, illustrating the power of the print media, opened White's mind to the possibility of expanding the circulation of Christian ideals beyond its hitherto narrow role of confining these to teaching in mission schools. Buoyed with the popularity of her book, White revealed that she now had the courage to "say 'Yes'" when asked subsequently by the Christian Literature Society to edit a magazine for women and girls."<sup>112</sup>

Another force that facilitated a change in White's evangelical vision was the emergence of journalism as a mechanism for facilitating new ideas of reform among Chinese women at the turn of the twentieth century. Late Qing female writers engaged in social, economic, and cultural issues of the day through printed works.<sup>113</sup> Writings on gender often intermingled with home reform, some of which prioritised women's rights as part of family revolution. Emphasis was placed on free marriage choice as the fundamental basis of gender equality or as a way of strengthening a nation's civilisation.<sup>114</sup> Benefiting from a modern Western education, a group of progressive feminist women were no longer content with being confined to household affairs. Some became involved in military organisations while others found their passion in the political arena. Women advocating a revolution in the home and family associated individual freedom with political revolution. In some cases, familial revolution was considered as a fundamental step on the road to political revolution.<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Song Lihua 宋莉华, "Meiyimeihui chuanjiaoshi liangleyue de xiaoshuo chuanguo yu fanyi" 美以美会传教士亮乐月的小说创作与翻译 (The Literature Work of the American Methodist Missionary Laura White), *Shanghai shifan daxue xuebao* 上海师范大学学报 (哲学社会科学版) (May 2012): 95.

<sup>112</sup> White, "Women and Children Last," 904.

<sup>113</sup> Qian, "The Mother *Nüxue bao* versus the Daughter *Nüxue bao*," 257–91.

<sup>114</sup> Fengchengrongjun nüshi 鳳城蓉君女史, "Hunyin ziyoulun" 婚姻自由論 (Discussion on the Free Marriage Choice), *Qing yi bao* 清議報 (19 April 1901); Wang Yuzhen 汪毓真, "Lun hunyin ziyou de guanxi" 論婚姻自由的關係 (Discussion on the Importance of the Free Marriage Choice), *Nüzi shijie* (10 September 1904).

<sup>115</sup> Wang, *Zhongguo jiazhangzhi jiatingzhidushi*, 306.

White recognised the importance of the role of print media, through which she expected Christian ideals would play a leading role in changing the notion of gender. A private letter written in the early 1900s indicates such a change in White's evangelical approach when she was the head of a Union College in Nanjing. In the letter, she mentioned that she was preparing a woman's magazine and asked the recipient to send her articles, books, and old magazines about women, children, domestic science, hygiene, kindergarten songs, and plays. She said:

I think there is a turn of ways just now in woman's work in China. The time has come when an appeal is not only to be made to the individual woman, but when we must furnish new ideals, new customs, new paths of service for a whole nation of women who have rejected the old ways, who demand freedom, who wish to enter every path that men tread.<sup>116</sup>

With the popularity of her work "Wu geng zhong" and the growing recognition of the importance of literature among the Protestant missionary community,<sup>117</sup> White now concentrated on evangelical literature. From 1912, she worked in Nanjing on the monthly magazine *Nü duo* as a part-time editor for the Christian Literature Society in Shanghai.<sup>118</sup> Probably due to the good sales of the magazine,<sup>119</sup> or her increasing faith in evangelical literature, or both, White left Nanjing in 1914 and became an associate worker for the Society in 1915.<sup>120</sup> The following section shifts to the making of *Nü duo*.

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<sup>116</sup> Helen Barrett Montgomery, *How to Use a Handbook to Accompany China's New Day* (West Medford, Mass.: the Central Committee on the United Study of Missions, 19--?), 51–2.

<sup>117</sup> Many missionaries at the time also saw the growing importance of literature. Appealing for financial support and more workers for Christian literature was one agenda point at the China Centenary Missionary Conference in Shanghai in 1907. See *China Centenary Missionary Conference in Shanghai in 1907* (Shanghai: Centenary Conference Committee, 1907), 589–603.

<sup>118</sup> According to the Twenty-fifth Annual Report of the CLS, White joined the Society in 1912. Her name came under the column of editorial and distributing staff. From 1912 to 1915, she worked as a part-time staff member.

<sup>119</sup> The circulation of *Nü duo* surpassed two major periodicals of the CLS—*Da tong bao* 大同報 founded in 1904 and *Zhongxi jiaohui bao* 中西教會報 founded in 1891. The latter changed its title to *Jiaohui gongbao* 教會公報 in 1912. The annual copies of *Nü duo* for 1916 was 15,000, while *Da tong bao* was 8,400 and *Jiaohui gongbao* was 9,600. For more details on circulation, see 55–6.

<sup>120</sup> According to the official minutes of the 1913 China Central Conference, White was the principal of a girls' boarding school. According to the twenty-eighth annual report of the CLS, White went on furlough and returned to her editing work in 1915. The certificate of registration of American citizenship in 1915 notes that White left the United States on 23 July 1915 and arrived in Shanghai on 1 September 1915. Her address was McTyeire

## **Nü duo: a Detailed Sketch**

### ***The Publisher***

*Nü duo* was published by the Christian Literature Society (CLS). The CLS was the primary Protestant press in China. It dated from 1877 when the idea of a Christian literature press was proposed at the General Conference of the Protestant Missionaries of China in Shanghai, resulting in the establishment of the School and Text-Book Committee.<sup>121</sup> The secretary of the Committee, the Scottish Protestant missionary Alexander Williamson (1829–1890), played a leading role in the founding of the CLS. In 1884, Williamson organised the Chinese Book and Tract Society in Glasgow and later founded the Society for the Diffusion of Christian and General Knowledge among the Chinese (SDCK) in Shanghai in 1887. Five years later the SDCK succeeded the Tract Society in Glasgow, changed its Chinese name “Tongwen shuhui” 同文書會 to “Guang xue hui” 廣學會 in 1894, and adopted the “Christian Literature Society” as its new English name in 1906.<sup>122</sup>

Many missionaries in the late nineteenth century “believed that in introducing new knowledge about modern education, health, history, law, and a variety of practical matters, a path would be opened to receiving Christ’s gospel.”<sup>123</sup> The CLS reflected the collective will of the missionary community that aimed:

to continue the publication and circulation of literature based on Christian principles throughout China, her Colonies, Dependencies, and wherever Chinamen are found—

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School at 4 Thibet Road. Source: Consular Registration Certificates, compiled 1907–1918. ARC ID: 1244186. General Records of the Department of State, 1763–2002, Record Group 59. National Archives at Washington, D.C.

<sup>121</sup> *The Seventh Annual Report of the CLS, 1894*, 7.

<sup>122</sup> *The Eighteenth Annual Report of the CLS, 1905*, xi; *The First Annual Report of the CLS, 1887*, 3. The new English name was early proposed by Timothy Richard in 1884 at a conference of the Shanxi 山西 missionaries. See Johnson, *Timothy Richard’s Vision*, 29.

<sup>123</sup> Dorothy E. Jones, “A Brief History of the CLS and Its Contribution to China,” in *100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Christian Literature Society, 1887–1987* 基督教文藝出版社慶祝廣學會創立一百周年特刊 (Hong Kong: The Chinese Christian Literature Council, 1987), 53.



especially Periodical literature adapted for all classes as the resources of the Society may permit.<sup>124</sup>

In this light, the Society produced a wide arrange of publications with an aspiration of enlightening “the governing classes and students” with the “vital forces of universal progress” to help them place China “in the race of nations for progress.”<sup>125</sup> In its early years, the Society published books primarily on history and science. Contemporary scholar Ho Hoi-lap has noted that two hundred out of a total of three hundred publications were about history, geography, sociology, politics, ethics, and science.<sup>126</sup> Such an approach was rooted in the belief that through transforming the isolated Chinese into people aware of the whole world, China would eventually understand the works of God and thus be brought into conformity with God’s will. The logic underpinning this strategy was that China had disconnected herself from global history and needed to find the missing pieces of the puzzle to better understand the outside world in order to react appropriately. The task for the CLS was thus to inform the Chinese about Western civilisation, world history, and Christianity. An understanding and appreciation of the civilising role of Christianity would alert the Chinese, the Society thought, to the fact that China was destined to be the next country to undergo the civilising process. The CLS noted in their annual report of 1912 that the Society aimed to “reconstruct China on a new basis of universal brotherhood as part of one world-family.”<sup>127</sup>

Japan’s status as a rival to be China’s intellectual mentor at the turn of the twentieth century also alerted the CLS to the necessity of addressing the relationship between civilisation and religion. With the establishment of government schools that introduced works from Japan, as well as a number of Chinese overseas students, Japan functioned as a major influence on the Chinese intelligentsia at this

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<sup>124</sup> *The Seventh Annual Report of the CLS, 1894*, 7.

<sup>125</sup> *The Twenty-fifth Annual Report of the CLS, 1912*, 18.

<sup>126</sup> Ho Hoi-lap 何凯立, Chen Jianming 陈建明 and Wang Zaixing 王再兴 (tr.), *Jidujiao zaihua chuban shiye 基督教在华出版事业 (1912–1949) (Protestant Missionary Publications in Modern China)* (Chengdu: Sichuan daxue chubanshe, 2004), 75–6.

<sup>127</sup> *The Twenty-fifth Annual Report of the CLS, 1912*, 3.

time. According to the missionary conference in Shanghai in 1907, Chinese scholars had translated many works from Japanese and English that advocated materialism and evolution. These ideas were popular not only in mission schools but also in government schools.<sup>128</sup> Japan's influence continued into the new century. The CLS's annual report of 1915 stressed that the Japanese were establishing educational institutions in Shanghai and had a huge influence over the local press, which propagated Japanese ideas of civilisation and progress.<sup>129</sup>

The foci of publications from 1912, Ho notes, shifted from extolling the virtues of enlightened Western civilisation to concentrating on issues of illiteracy and promoting Christian family education. A majority of such publications centred on the life and teachings of Jesus, church history, and other religious work for students, Bible schools, children, pastors, and church workers.<sup>130</sup> While concrete reasons for the change in publication strategy were unstated, it can be assumed that the change was made to deal with the changing needs of China, as perceived by the staff of the CLS at the time.

The CLS was an inter-denominational organisation. The cooperating boards in 1923, for example, comprised those of the English Baptist Missionary Society, the Methodist Episcopal Church (South), the Canadian Presbyterian Church, the Wesleyan Methodist Society, the Methodist Episcopal Church (North), the Church Mission Society, the Scotch United Free Church, the London Missionary Society and the Presbyterian Church of the United States (North).<sup>131</sup> A list of the number of societies affiliated with the CLS categorised chronologically by nationality is as follows.

Affiliated Societies 1912–1947						
Year	Britain	America	Canada	China	Others	Total
1912	4					4
1914	4	3	1			8
1920	3	1	1			5
1924	2	3	1			6

<sup>128</sup> *China Centenary Missionary Conference in Shanghai in 1907*, 601.

<sup>129</sup> *The Twenty-eighth Annual Report of the CLS, 1915*, 3.

<sup>130</sup> Ho, *Protestant Missionary Publications in Modern China*, 91.

<sup>131</sup> *The Thirty-sixth Annual Report of the CLS, 1923*, 6–7.

1927	3	3	2			8
1929	3	4	2		1	10
1930	5	4	2		1	12
1933	3	3	3		1	10
1935	5	4	2			11
1937	7	3	3	2		15
1939	4	6	3			13
1940	6	5	4	1		16
1946	6	9	4			19
1947	8	6	5	1		20

Source: Ho Hoi-lap, *Protestant Missionary Publications in Modern China 1912–1949*, 84.<sup>132</sup>

With the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War in 1937, the CLS had planned to establish a new office in Sichuan 四川. However, chronic paper shortages, lack of housing, printing facilities and the isolation of Sichuan led the CLS to relocate its offices to Kunming 昆明. After negotiating with the British and Foreign Bible Society for the privilege of leasing a piece of land on its compound, the Society opened up a new depot in Kunming in 1938 and during the war period, part of the CLS office moved from Shanghai to its new depot in Kunming and later moved to Chengdu 成都 in Sichuan Province.<sup>133</sup> The Pearl Harbour attack in 1941 further hindered the work of the CLS in Shanghai, when the British and American members were forced to resign.<sup>134</sup> When the Communist Party took over China in October 1949, the CLS together with other Christian publishing organisations, were involved in a series of political campaigns and eventually closed down in the early 1950s.<sup>135</sup>

### **Purpose**

<sup>132</sup> Ho, *Protestant Missionary Publications in Modern China*, 84.

<sup>133</sup> *The Fifty-first Annual Report of the CLS, 1938*, 3–4.

<sup>134</sup> *The Fifty-ninth Annual Report of the CLS, 1946*, 4.

<sup>135</sup> Previously, CLS staff had established the Council on Christian Literature for Overseas Chinese in Hong Kong in 1951 to provide religious and reference books to serve Chinese Christians overseas. See [http://www.cclc.org.hk/about\\_hist.php](http://www.cclc.org.hk/about_hist.php) Accessed on 25 May 2018.

*Nü duo* launched its first issue in April 1912 in Shanghai and did not close down until February 1951. As the first Christian magazine for Chinese women, *Nü duo* was closely connected to the objectives of the CLS, which aimed to unite the spiritual world and the natural world “as God in His Providence has developed them and as they exist in the most enlightened and advanced Christian nations to-day.” In Richard’s belief, “the spiritual world and the natural world are not antagonistic to one another, but complementary parts of the one harmonious Universe of God, mind and matter, body and soul, for time and eternity.”<sup>136</sup> This sheds light on Richard’s address at the annual conference of the Society after the 1911 Revolution at the time of the launch of *Nü duo* and the translation of *Biographies of Eminent Christian Statesmen*. Richard emphasised that these publications were established “in the hope that under the blessing of God they may be of some help to the Chinese who are struggling to get out of the shell of obsolete national civilization into the liberty of universal life, using all the gifts of God for the uplift of man.”<sup>137</sup> The aspiration for the magazine was, therefore, to acculturate struggling Chinese women to the liberty of universal life.

The purpose of the magazine, as its first editor White addressed, was to eliminate inbred customs (*ji xi* 積習) and increase wisdom and morality (*zhi de* 智德) among Chinese women (*nü jie* 女界).<sup>138</sup> The Chinese characters *Nü duo* 女鐸 mean ‘woman’s bell.’ Wooden bells were used in ancient China at the issuing of proclamations while bronze bells were used to announce the outbreak of war. The announcement of the first issue explained why it adopted the name:

*Zhou li* 周禮 (*The Rites of Zhou*) says, “The ancients declared new proclamations to the public with the wooden bell.”<sup>139</sup> In a transitional period when China is entering a stage of change and revival, this magazine will make a declaration to the women of China.

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<sup>136</sup> *The Twenty-fourth Annual Report of the CLS, 1911, 24.*

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>138</sup> Laura White, “*Nü duo* bao bianji dayi” 女鐸報編輯大意 (Editorial Message), *Nü duo* (April 1912): 1.

<sup>139</sup> While *Nü duo* said this quotation is from *Zhou li*, it is actually from a commentary written by Zheng Xuan (127–200) on “Tian Guan” 天官 in *Zhou li*.

Therefore, *Nü duo* is the wooden bell for women both in the home and at school, educated or uneducated, to awaken them with messages sent out in the magazine.<sup>140</sup>

This ‘bell’ was intended to bring light to Chinese women in their “darkness.” For White, the “darkness” was both the shallowness caused by poor education, as well as the mistaken ideas of progressive women who were inspired by secular Western ideologies and advocated women’s emancipation, gender equality, “freedom of love,” and “companionate marriage.”<sup>141</sup> While traditional moral discipline confined women to the inner chambers of the home, White thought progressive ideas held by female reformers were dangerous and considered it imperative to correct these notions and enlighten Chinese women with Christian ideals.<sup>142</sup> In her words, the aim of the magazine was to teach a spirit of womanhood that was inspired by the spirit of sacrificial service, which sought “To give, not take; To serve, not rule; To nourish, not devour; To help, not crush; if need [be], to die, not live.”<sup>143</sup> It was not too long before *Nü duo* was viewed as a “sweet, clear voice, ... calling the women of the country to plain home duties, to the care and training of children, to Christian temperance, to social virtues” within the Protestant Christian community.<sup>144</sup>

The incorporation of appreciations from Chinese politicians in *Nü duo* also illustrated its goal of correcting what its sponsors saw as gender anarchy. Three of these were published in 1912 and 1913 and each criticised the recklessness of interpreting freedom and equality in the women’s sphere to a degree that crossed the boundary of traditional decorum and praised the magazine for its aim of teaching women morally, intellectually, and physically.<sup>145</sup> The longest one was written by Ding

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<sup>140</sup> Xu Nailu 許耐廬, “Fakan ci” 發刊辭 (Announcement), *Nü duo* (April 1912): 2.

<sup>141</sup> Li Guanfang, “Beginning Our Twentieth,” *Nü duo* (June 1913): 121.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*, 121–2.

<sup>143</sup> *The Thirty-third Annual Report of the CLS, 1920*, 15. The advocacy of self-sacrifice echoed the motto of White’s affiliated society, the Woman’s Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, North (WFMS), “Saved for Service”. A detailed examination of the history and purpose of WFMS and White’s background will be discussed in the next chapter.

<sup>144</sup> Mrs T. C. Chu, “Magazines for Chinese Women,” in *The China Mission Year Book 1917* (Shanghai: CLS, 1917), 456.

<sup>145</sup> Ding Baoquan 丁寶銓, “Zhu ci” 祝詞 (An Appreciation), *Nü duo* (April 1912): 3; Hu Jingyi 胡景伊, “Chuandu huishu” 川督惠書 (A Letter from the Governor of Sichuan), *Nü duo* (March 1913): 1; Zhao Weixi 趙惟熙, “Gansu dudu huishu” 甘肅都督惠書 (A Letter from the Governor of Gansu), *Nü duo* (April 1913): 1.

Baoquan 丁寶銓 (1866–1919), who was the ex-governor of Shanxi 山西 and was invited to be the Chinese Councillor for the CLS “to advise them what should be translated, what were the needs of the Chinese people now.”<sup>146</sup> As a reform-minded literatus himself, Ding was one of many late Qing governors with whom Richard had worked, and who had showed an interest in modern education.<sup>147</sup> While promoting normal schools for the training of teachers in Shanxi province, Ding believed that women’s fundamental responsibility was “home education” (*jiating jiaoyu* 家庭教育) and perceived the emergence of “women’s socialism” (*nüzi shehui zhuyi* 女子社會主義) as the pursuit of freedom of marriage and gender equality, which were carried beyond rules of “traditional decorum” (*li fa* 禮法). The establishment of *Nü duo*, in Ding’s view, thus provided an ideal platform to introduce ideas and norms appropriate for Chinese women.<sup>148</sup>

*Nü duo* strongly advocated women’s domestic duties, particularly under the editorship of Laura White from 1912 to 1929. Its contents during this period typically consisted of: editorial, home making, popular education, popular science, religion, temperance, phonetics, serial stories, short stories, biographies, and other topics such as school news, school essays, poetry, women’s world, church news, games, puzzles, and an English page.<sup>149</sup>

During the May Fourth period and the anti-Christian movement in the 1920s, however, *Nü duo* shifted its focus to the domestic sphere. In July 1926, its title changed to *Nü duo: jiating zazhi* 女鐸: 家庭雜誌 (*Home Beautiful*<sup>150</sup>). An editorial announcement published in March 1927 explained that such a concentration on home life was designed to highlight its contributions to domesticity and through this

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<sup>146</sup> *The Twenty-fifth Annual Report of the CLS, 1912*, 38.

<sup>147</sup> Timothy Richard, *Forty-five years in China* (Britain: Frederick A. Stokes Company, 1916), 309.

<sup>148</sup> Ding, “Zhu ci,” 3.

<sup>149</sup> *The Thirty-third Annual Report of the CLS, 1920*, 12–3.

<sup>150</sup> The new English title *Home Beautiful* recalls periodicals in the United States at the time. For example, *Home Arts* from the last decade of the nineteenth century, the *Ladies’ Home Journal* founded in 1883, *Woman’s Home Companion* founded in 1873, and *House Beautiful* founded in 1896. However, no available source indicates the connection of the new English title with an existing magazine of the time. For women’s magazines in the twentieth century, see Theodore Peterson, *Magazines in the Twentieth Century* (Urbana: The University of Illinois Press, 1956).

change, *Nü duo* aimed to demonstrate how it had moved with the times and was determined to refresh its content for those who criticised it as “a stubborn old man” (*lao wan gu* 老頑固). After the change, the contents generally comprised three parts: domestic science, childrearing, and church affairs.<sup>151</sup> By adding more Chinese elements such as calligraphy and painting, the magazine aimed to adjust to the surrounding anti-Christian, and thus anti-foreign, sentiment.<sup>152</sup> This indigenisation became most prominent under the editorship of Li Guanfang (1929–1935). Detailed analysis of this change will be given in Chapter Five.

*Nü duo* kept the new name and concentrated on domestic issues until its last issue in February 1951. In celebrating the twentieth year of the magazine, Li Guanfang, the first Chinese chief editor, commented in 1931 that “the ‘Woman’s Messenger’ has been a Magazine devoted to Christian ideals to make the home beautiful with the idea of cleanliness, neatness, and attractiveness.”<sup>153</sup> Even during wartime, its stated purpose was to help women form a correct idea of domesticity and thereby to improve their lives.<sup>154</sup> These issues are explored in Chapter Six, a period when Liu Meili was the editor. The following section will elaborate on the editorial policy of *Nü duo*.

### ***Editorial Policy, Editors, and Contributors***

The CLS had members and a Board of Directors. While the Board had power to arrange meetings, appoint trustees, and oversee the operations of the Society, its editorial policy was only clarified in 1916 when the Society established a Publications Committee. According to the Constitution of the CLS published that year, “The Board shall elect annually a Publications Committee, consisting of the Editorial Staff, and of at least three other members who need not be members of the Board.”<sup>155</sup> It continued:

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<sup>151</sup> “Benkan xuanyan” 本刊宣言 (Editorial Announcement), *Nü duo* (April 1927): 7.

<sup>152</sup> “Benkan xuanyan” 本刊宣言 (Editorial Announcement), *Nü duo* (March 1927): 67.

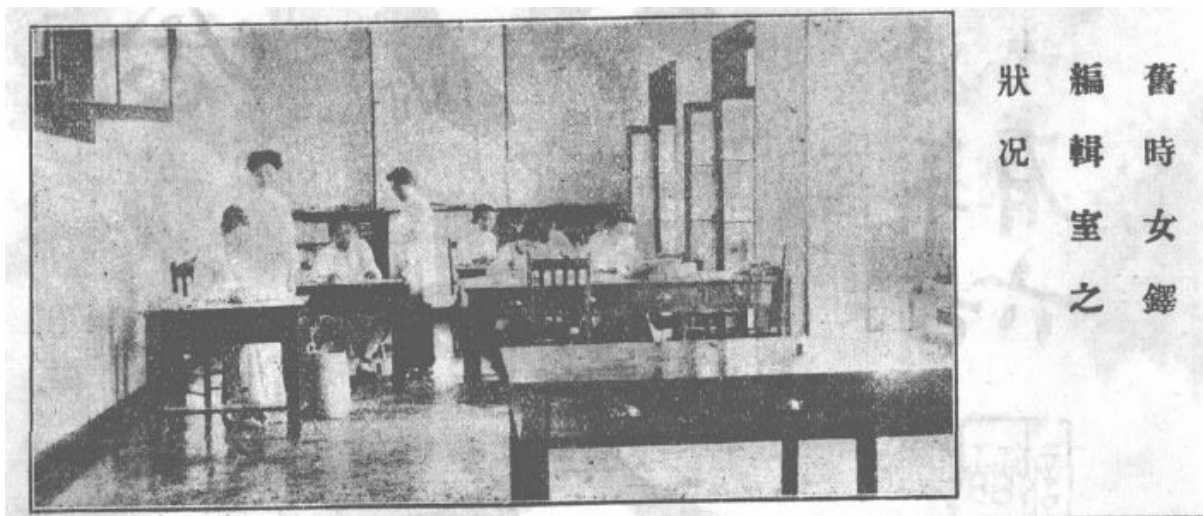
<sup>153</sup> Li, “Beginning Our Twentieth,” 121–2.

<sup>154</sup> Bianzhe 編者 (Editor), “Fukan ci” 復刊詞 (Resuming the Publication), *Nü duo* (July 1944): 3.

<sup>155</sup> *The Thirtieth Annual Report of the CLS, 1917*, viii.

The Publications Committee shall select works to be prepared for publication; examine all manuscripts and books presented to it; recommend what manuscripts or books should be printed, the number of copies to be issued, and fix the selling price; and, in general, shall supervise the publications department.<sup>156</sup>

Furthermore, the Publications Secretary was assigned to take charge of all manuscripts, proofs, and the business of the Publications Committee. Under these principles, *Nü duo*, like all the other publications of the CLS, was subject to the examination of the Publications Committee. However, each of the three editors of *Nü duo* were either Committee members or Board members throughout the life of the magazine.<sup>157</sup> This suggests that the editor of *Nü duo* might have enjoyed more freedom in choosing the content than those who were not members of the Publications Committee or Board of Directors.



“Jiushi *Nü duo* bianjishi zhi zhuangkuang,” 舊時女鐸編輯室之狀況 (Conditions of *Nü duo*'s Editorial Office in the Past), *Nü duo* (June 1931): n.p.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid., x.

<sup>157</sup> Annual reports of the CLS from 1916–1940, 1946–1947. In detail, from 1916 to 1920, Laura M. White was member of the Publications Committee. From 1921 to 1925, she was one of the many Editorial Secretaries (no mention of the Publications Committee). From 1926 to 1930, there was no mention of a Publications Committee. From 1930 to 1934, Li Guanfang, White's successor, was on the Board of Directors. From 1935 to 1947 (unclear with 1941–1945), the third editor Liu Meili was on the Publications Committee.



From 1912 to 1929, Laura White worked as the chief editor of *Nü duo*. The last decade of her editorship was interrupted by illness and during her absence for treatment in the United States, Mrs Elizabeth MacGillivray, Li Guanfang, Zhu Yizhu, and Martha Pyle helped with the editing work of the magazine. Both Li and Zhu were students from the Ginling Woman’s College (Jinling nüzi daxue 金陵女子大學). Li Guanfang succeeded to the editorship after her Masters’ study at Boston University, where she majored in religious education and literature. She returned to Shanghai in 1929 and was on the Board of Directors of the CLS until 1934 when she left to take up social work.<sup>158</sup> Liu Meili (also known as Mary Liu), White’s student and also a graduate from the Ginling Women’s College, edited the magazine from 1935 to 1951.



THE EDITORIAL STAFF  
Miss Yuan at Miss White's Right and Miss Li at Her Left

Mary Ninde Gamewell, “A Day at Joyfield,” *Woman’s Missionary Friend* (June 1918): 196.

Early contributors were female teachers and students from the Nanjing Huiwen Girls’ School, where White was the principal from 1907 to 1913,<sup>159</sup> and other mission schools where she once taught. The following table lists her students who contributed from 1912 to 1930.

White's Students as Contributors from 1912 to 1930	
School	Students

<sup>158</sup> Office Bearers for 1928-29, in *The Forty-first Annual Report of the CLS, 1928; The Forty-seventh Annual Report of the CLS, 1934*, 16.

<sup>159</sup> *Official Minutes of the Central China Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church held at Nanking China, 1907 to 1913* (Shanghai: Methodist Publishing House, 1907–1913).

Nanjing Huiwen Girls' School 南京匯文女子中學	Yuan Yuying 袁玉英, Gao Zhangzhu 高掌珠, Liu Fazhi 劉發芝, Hong Qilin 洪麒麟, Zhou Chelang 周澈朗, Chen Fengzi 陳鳳姿, Huang Fuxiu 黃馥秀, Li Xianzhen 李賢貞, Li Leji 李樂吉, Gao Huazhu 高華珠, Xu Zhubao 徐珠寶
St. Mary's Hall in Shanghai 聖瑪利亞女中	Zheng Shenhua 鄭申華
Ginling Women's College 金陵女子大學	Zhu Yizhu 朱懿珠, Kuang Ruisheng 鄺瑞生, Hu Zihua 胡自華, Li Jun 李濬, Zhao Tiemei 趙鐵梅, Liu Meili 劉美麗
Zhejiang Hu Jun Girls' School 湖郡女子中學	Shen Junying 沈駿英
McTyeire School 中西女塾	Xie Zuyi 謝祖儀, Li Zhishi 李志實, Pan Huiyuan 潘慧元, Li Guanfang 李冠芳

Source: Li Guanfang, "Nü duo yuekan ershizhou jinian zhi huigu," 女鐸月刊二十週紀念之回顧 (Looking Back on Nü duo's Twentieth Anniversary), *Nü duo* (June 1931): 8.

Well-known contributors on domesticity included Nie Zeng Jifen 聶曾紀芬 (1852–1942), the youngest daughter of Zeng Guofan 曾國藩 (1811–1872), and Ding Ling 丁玲 (1904–1986), the famous female writer<sup>160</sup>. Other writers mentioned are the female educator Mrs T. C. Chu (also known Hu Bingxia 胡彬夏, 1888–1931) and Mrs Arnold Foster of the LMS.<sup>161</sup> On an institutional level, contributors came from the Yunnan Mission (a joint mission between the Vandsburger Mission and the Liebenzeller Mission within the China Inland Mission),<sup>162</sup> the Salvation Army, as well as girls' schools in Beijing, Tianjin 天津, Zhenjiang 鎮江, Jiujiang 九江, and Guangzhou.<sup>163</sup> The Women's Christian Temperance

<sup>160</sup> While Ding Ling was known as a cadre of the League of Left-Wing Writers in the 1930s (a league that was influenced by the Chinese Communist Party founded in 1921), her work at this time focused on women's temperance. See Ding Ling's articles in the jie zhi 節制 (Temperance) column in *Nü duo*: "Kuangyedi de yi xiaohai" 狂野地的一小孩 (A Child in the Wild), April 1921; "Zhongguo diyici dageming" 中國第一次大革命 (The First Great Revolution in China), June 1921; "Huo de jiqi" 活的機器 (A Living Machine), July 1921; "Shamo lüxing" 沙漠旅行 (A Trip in Desert), August 1921; "Zuida famingjia" 最大發明家 (The Greatest Inventor), September 1921. For a detailed biography of Ding Ling, see "Ding Ling," in Barbara Bennett Peterson (ed.), *Notable Women of China: Shang Dynasty to The Early Twentieth Century* (Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 1999), 381–8.

<sup>161</sup> *The Thirty-fifth Annual Report of the CLS, 1922, 22.*

<sup>162</sup> For the background of the Yunnan Mission, see "NJ-30," in Xiaoxin Wu (ed.), *Christianity in China: a Scholars' Guide to Resources in the Libraries and Archives of the United States*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (London; New York: Routledge, 2017).

<sup>163</sup> *The Thirty-fifth Annual Report of the CLS, 1922, 22.*

Union, an organisation linked to the editorial board of *Nü duo*, also prepared materials and maintained a long cooperation with the magazine until the late 1930s.<sup>164</sup>

During the 1930s, *Nü duo* shifted focus due to international tensions leading up to the Sino-Japanese war of 1937. Original contributions to *Nü duo* decreased and news content increased, indicated by the fact that there were only nine news items reported in August 1928 compared to thirty-two published in August 1933. The lack of original contributors is also shown by the fact that *Nü duo* later relied on illustrations, women's news, and miscellaneous items such as book reviews and announcements to fill its pages as substitutes for original writings. While it resumed collecting letters from readers in the mid-1940s, they are meagre compared with the number in its first two decades. This reflects, of course, the difficulty of attracting contributors at a time of instability and political turmoil in China.

### ***Financial Support and Distribution***

*Nü duo* received financial support from many sources. Its major financial backer was the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church (WFMS) which provided Laura White's salary and rent, and which later supported Li Guanfang and Liu Meili. The WFMS funded the work of 'Christian literature for oriental women' and established a committee for its promotion. An example of its support was the sum of US\$200 allocated for the publication of a CLS children's magazine entitled *Fu you bao* 福幼報 (*Happy Childhood*). The Society further contributed an additional US\$50 for White's work in 1915, at a time when she actively sought financial support from other societies in the United States. Her speech at an interdenominational meeting in Boston in March that year, and at the Northfield Summer School of Foreign Missions in July, was warmly received and resulted in contributions of over US\$400 for *Nü duo* and other literary work.<sup>165</sup> A decade later in 1925 the budget for *Nü duo* from the Committee amounted to US\$2,199 per year.<sup>166</sup> Other financial supporters of *Nü*

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<sup>164</sup> *The Chinese Recorder* (October 1938): 515.

<sup>165</sup> *The Forty-sixth Annual Report of the WFMS, 1915* (Boston, Mass.: Miss Annie G. Bailey, 1915).

<sup>166</sup> *The Fifty-seventh Annual Report of the WFMS, 1926* (Boston, Mass.: Miss Annie G. Bailey, 1926), 111.

*duo* were the Women's Federated Mission Boards of America<sup>167</sup> and the Ladies Auxiliary of Glasgow and Edinburgh.<sup>168</sup>

The CLS adopted various approaches to stimulate the circulation of *Nü duo* and its many other publications. In the early years, the CLS used discounts to encourage sales and to attract a wider circulation. Such discount announcements were printed in *Nü duo*. For example, in the July issue of 1913, the Society awarded a two-dollar prize to anyone who could sell ten copies in one year.<sup>169</sup> Given the annual subscription of *Nü duo* was 1.2 Chinese dollars, the prize offered was a substantial amount of money. Another announcement published in November 1921 announced that those who subscribed to ten copies of *Nü duo* would receive a one dollar discount while those who subscribed to twenty copies would be rewarded by the Society with gifts of watches or pens.<sup>170</sup>

In the early 1920s, the CLS incorporated various groups of people primarily in Shanghai and cities surrounding Shanghai, to distribute the magazine. A list of distributors was circulated in *Nü duo* from 1919 to 1920, which included pastors from cities like Zhenjiang, Wuhu 蕪湖, Nanjing 南京, and Yangzhou 揚州.<sup>171</sup> In 1921, the CLS asked the Mission Book Company to be its sales agent and also posted an advertisement which lasted for six months in *The Shanghai Daily*.<sup>172</sup> In 1922, the CLS opened up sales to all booksellers in Shanghai or elsewhere who wished to sell the magazine and other literature with a generous discount.<sup>173</sup> Additionally, there were superintended colporteurs engaged in selling books. The word 'colporteur' derives from the two French words *col* (neck) and *porter* (to carry). It originally was used to denote a peddler or hawker. Later, 'colporteur' became a word in English denoting almost exclusively a man engaged in selling or distributing the Bible. At the turn of the twentieth century, the colportage system was adopted by the British and Foreign Bible Society, which

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<sup>167</sup> *The Thirty-ninth Annual Report of the CLS, 1926, 15.*

<sup>168</sup> *The Thirty-third Annual Report of the CLS, 1920, 26.*

<sup>169</sup> "Benguan tebie gaobai" 本館特別告白 (A Special Announcement), *Nü duo* (July 1913): 59.

<sup>170</sup> "Jiang pin" 獎品 (Prize), *Nü duo* (November 1921): 54.

<sup>171</sup> "Benbao daishouchu timinglu" 本報代售處題名錄 (List of Distributors), *Nü duo* (from April to October, December, 1919; from January to March, September, 1920).

<sup>172</sup> Annual reports of the CLS from 1921 to 1923.

<sup>173</sup> *The Thirty-fifth Annual Report of the CLS for 1922, 24.*

was the largest Chinese Bible distributor.<sup>174</sup> Unlike the Bible Society, the CLS had only three or four colporteurs by 1925.<sup>175</sup> In 1924, the Society experimented with a new way of distribution by sending books to about twenty lighthouses and lightships along the coast after obtaining permission from the authorities. Additionally, specimens of new books were sent to members of the CLS which had 350 members in 1924. In 1925, a Chinese circulation manager was put in charge of the Chinese churches and pastors.<sup>176</sup>

The distribution of *Nü duo* was often disturbed by fluctuations in postal prices, disruption to transportation and especially political turmoil and warfare. An example of such volatility is shown by the Society's balance sheet in 1923 when postal rates doubled.<sup>177</sup> Further difficulties were encountered in 1927 when the distribution routes of the magazine were cut to the province of Gansu 甘肅. New arrangements had to be made to dispatch copies to Gansu via the Manchurian Railway to Harbin and from there across the Mongolian desert to Gansu.<sup>178</sup> During the war period, obstacles were manifold. As the annual report of the CLS in 1939 wrote:

1. Many ports and cities have been closed since the war broke out.
2. As a war-time measure, there is a censorship in the places which have been occupied, and in some places no books can get through, while in others books along certain lines are prohibited.
3. The high rate of book or parcel post due to the high cost of transportation in general.
4. Less frequent sailing of boats and the disruption of railway lines are other factors in the problem of transportation.<sup>179</sup>

The Rev. Myron E. Terry, the distribution secretary of the CLS, was a crucial figure in circulating the magazine in the 1930s. Appointed by the China Council of the Presbyterian Church in the United States

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<sup>174</sup> Philip Clart and Gregory Adam Scott (eds.), *Religious Publishing and Print Culture in Modern China: 1800–2012* (Berlin, Germany: De Gruyter, 2015), 18–9.

<sup>175</sup> *The Thirty-eighth Annual Report of the CLS, 1925*, 12.

<sup>176</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>177</sup> *The Thirty-sixth Annual Report of the CLS, 1923*, 16.

<sup>178</sup> *The Fortieth Annual Report of the CLS, 1927*, 16.

<sup>179</sup> *The Fifty-second Annual Report of the CLS, 1939*, 11.

to secure a wider circulation of Christian literature,<sup>180</sup> he set about visiting secular bookstores in many cities.<sup>181</sup> Terry also had many personal contacts with Christian workers of all kinds. Under his leadership the Society improved its selling strategies and adopted many changes. The institute of the Society in Jinan employed an agent in connection with the “Circulating Library” and grants of books to libraries and mission stations were made in 1933. The Society modified its policies on gifts to members in 1934 due to the rapidly growing number and diversity of the published books.<sup>182</sup> That year the Society developed a plan using circulating libraries and mission station book shops for more effective distribution of literature than could be achieved by the ordinary colportage system. As a result, there were around 80 shops selling CLS books by 1936.<sup>183</sup>

The full-scale outbreak of the war with Japan in 1937 led to a fall in sales of CLS publications to 15% of pre-war figures. In war-torn Shanghai, the CLS had planned to establish a new office in Sichuan. The location was later changed to Kunming due to the lack of printing paper in Sichuan and a new depot was established in 1938 after the CLS’s negotiation with the British and the Foreign Bible Society for the privilege of leasing a piece of land on its compound. Consequently, books were sent to Kunming from the Shanghai headquarters. Mr C. Y. Sun of the Shanghai office was appointed a superintendent of the depot in Kunming.<sup>184</sup>

The following chart shows copies printed per year. The annual price for the monthly magazine was 1.2 Chinese dollars.<sup>185</sup>

year	1912	1914	1916	1922	1925	1926	1927	1929	1931	1938	1939	1940	1946	1947
copy (1000s)	23	21	15	13.7	16.8	19	16	10.2	19.2	0.59	0.85	1.382	0.85	3

Source: Annual reports of the CLS from 1912 to 1947 (1941–1945 missing).

<sup>180</sup> *The Forty-sixth Annual Report of the CLS, 1933, 17.*

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid., 18.*

<sup>182</sup> *The Forty-seventh Annual Report of the CLS, 1934, 14.*

<sup>183</sup> *The Forty-ninth Annual Report of the CLS, 1936, 18.*

<sup>184</sup> *The Fifty-first Annual Report of the CLS, 1938, 3–4.*

<sup>185</sup> There were price changes during the inflation period of the late 1940s.

*Nü duo*'s circulation in year it was launched was 23,000 copies and it maintained a circulation of over 10,000 copies per year until the outbreak of Sino-Japanese war. Its relatively wider circulation compared with other women's periodicals is remarkable when compared with the popular monthly magazine, *Funü zazhi* 婦女雜誌 (*The Ladies Journal*). Published by the Commercial Press from 1915, *Funü zazhi* commenced with a circulation of around 3,000 and it was not until the 1920s that its circulation reached 10,000 copies.<sup>186</sup>

### **Readership**

The scholarly consensus is that the literacy rate in China in the late Qing period was approximately 10%<sup>187</sup> with a majority coming from the gentry-literati class. Evelyn Rawski speculates that women's literacy rate was around 2–10% by the mid-nineteenth century,<sup>188</sup> but with the increase of girls' schools at the turn of the twentieth century, it is likely that this may have risen slightly. Joan Judge's study of *Funü shibao*, however, reveals that the level of literacy among Chinese women in early Republican era was around 2%. According to Gao Kelan 高克蘭, a contributor to *Funü shibao* who wrote an article on women's customs in Jiangxi Province, only "20 percent of males and 1 to 2 percent of females are literate in China," and literacy does not "reach families below the middle level."<sup>189</sup> Another female contributor to *Funü shibao*, called Fanzhen 返真, noted that the majority of Chinese women were incapable of writing an "informal note [*bian tiao* 便條] or a simple letter, nor can they

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<sup>186</sup> Zhang Xichen 章锡琛, "Cong banxuexiao dao jinru shangwu bianyisuo" 从办学校到进入商务编译所 1897–1992 (From Establishing Schools to Becoming an Editor of the Commercial Press), in *Shangwu yinshuguan jiushiwu nian* 商务印书馆九十五年 (The Ninety-five Years of the Commercial Press) (Beijing: Commercial Press, 1992), 102.

<sup>187</sup> Zhang Kaiyuan 章开沅, Ma Min 马敏, and Zhu Ying 朱英 (eds.), *Zhongguo jindaishixue de guanshen shangxue* 中国近代史上的官绅商学, (Wuhan: Hubei renmin chubanshe, 2000), 660.

<sup>188</sup> Evelyn Rawski, *Education and Popular Literacy in Ch'ing China* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: The University of Michigan Press, 1979), 6–7, 140.

<sup>189</sup> Judge, *Republican Lens*, 68. For Gao Kelan's article, see "Jiangxi nüsu tan" 江西女俗談 (Women's Customs in Jiangxi), *Funü shibao* (August 1916): 37–41.

keep accounts or read a newspaper.”<sup>190</sup> An article published in *Nü duo* in 1944 also recalled that women’s literacy rate was 2% in the early Republican period.<sup>191</sup>

The target readership of *Nü duo* comprised female students from schools and literate girls at home.<sup>192</sup> Given the low literacy rate of women at the time, its readership was mostly from the middle and upper classes. It is no surprise then to see a reference to a Chinese merchant noted in a missionary report in 1919, who “read ... [*Nü duo*] as regularly as ... [his] wife and daughter.”<sup>193</sup> Miss M. E. Faithful-Davies from the Church Mission Society in Fujian, who was also a contributor to *Nü duo* under the name of Zhou Yingzhu 周瑩珠, also provided a detailed account of readers from the genteel class in 1912:

Of all the changes brought by the Revolution, the strangest is that in the mental outlook of Chinese women. That women are the equals of men is now a fact accepted by people of all classes. The city of Foochow leads the van of progress in the province of Fuh-Kien. ... These few facts will show the changed conditions of the work among the upper classes and I will now tell a little of new methods of work. At Dr. Timothy Richard’s suggestion, I started about three months ago a reading club for Chinese ladies. ... I am the president... members promise to read the appointed book for half an hour a day and the Club meets at the house of one or other of the members every Thursday afternoon... we call ourselves “The Foochow City Ladies’ Reading Club.” ... “The Woman’s Messenger,” which started in April, has articles in classical Chinese on hygiene, the care of children, and educational subjects, with also good fiction, and plenty of Christian teaching. I sent for a number of sample copies to distribute, and my first subscriber was the wife of the

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<sup>190</sup> Judge, *Republican Lens*, 69. For Fanzhen’s article, see “Lun furen zhi dangwei” 論婦人之當為 (On What Should Women Do), *Funü shibao* (September 1912): 8–14.

<sup>191</sup> Editor, “Fukan ci,” 3.

<sup>192</sup> White, “*Nü duo* bao bianji dayi,” *Nü duo* (April 1912): 1.

<sup>193</sup> Mary Ninde Gamewell, “The influence of Christian Literature,” in *New Life Currents in China* (New York: Missionary Education Movement of the United States and Canada, 1919), 165.



Governor of the Province. Now in many heathen homes of this city the “Woman’s Messenger” arrives monthly and is eagerly read.<sup>194</sup>

The fact that *Nü duo* was aimed predominantly at the middle and upper classes was most evident when the CLS launched another women’s monthly entitled *Nü xing* 女星 (*The Woman’s Star*) in 1932. Unlike *Nü duo*, *Nü xing* (1932–1937, 1946–1949)<sup>195</sup> targeted women with a limited knowledge of characters and was written in simple Chinese.<sup>196</sup> *Nü xing* was a magazine for women in rural and urban areas. The foreword to its first issue reads:

All women who live in villages, towns, and cities, please listen! We now have a new monthly magazine. We are certain that this magazine will be helpful in your daily life. ... Reporters know you are occupied with housework and farm work. However, aside from your physical body, you also have souls and brains. ... Chinese characters are very difficult to learn. It could take years to master them. Now someone has selected one thousand characters used in daily life. This magazine mostly uses those one thousand words with phonetic symbols.<sup>197</sup>

A large group of *Nü duo*’s readers, it has been shown, were female students in mission schools. In her report on women’s work at Rong xian 容縣 in Guangxi, the missionary Eliza Marshall recorded that the local mission school subscribed to *Nü duo* in 1925 where its fourteen students enjoyed it very much.<sup>198</sup> The magazine’s popularity in mission schools can be gauged by reference to a survey sent to

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<sup>194</sup> Miss M. E. Faithfull-Davies, “The Daughters of New China,” *India’s Women* (September 1912): 170–1.

<sup>195</sup> From 1916 onwards, the title was changed to *Renmin zhi xing* 人民之星 (*People’s Star*).

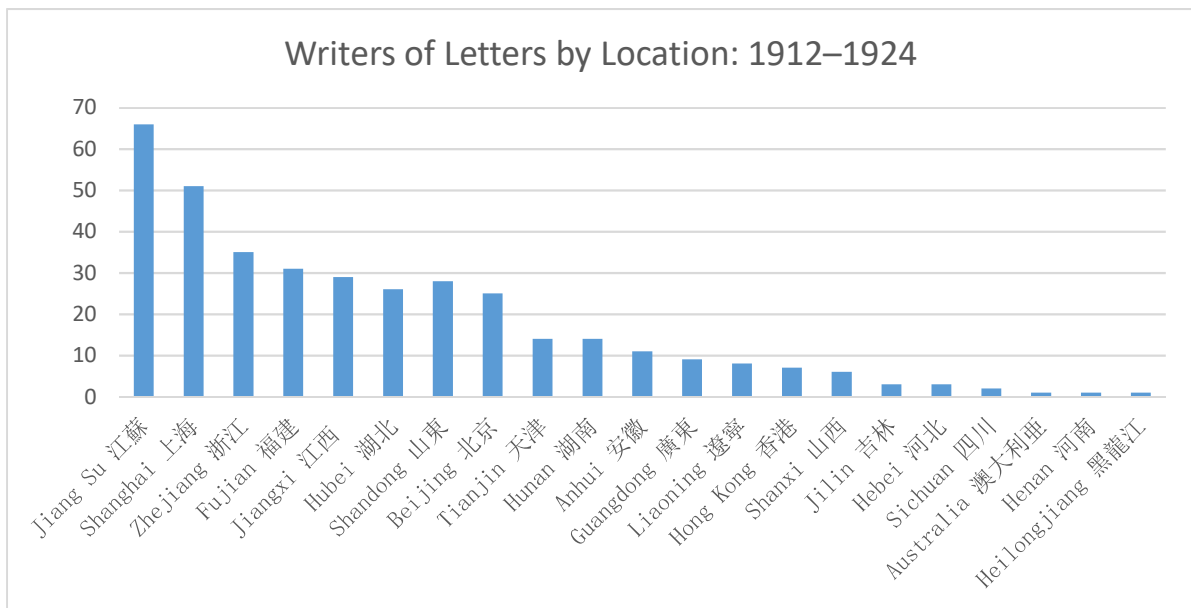
<sup>196</sup> *The Forty-ninth Annual Report of the CLS, 1936*, 13.

<sup>197</sup> Ma Changlin 马长林 Yang Hong 杨红, “Zongjiao, jiating shehui—mianxiang nüxing jidutu de xuanjiao—yi *Nü duo*, *Nü xing*, *Nü qingnian bao*, *Fu nü wei zhongxin*” 宗教、家庭、社会——面向女性基督徒的宣教——以《女铎》、《女星》、《女青年报》、《妇女》为中心 (Religion, Family, Society—Proselytising Female Christians—a Study of *Nü duo*, *Nü xing*, *Nü qingnian bao*, *Fu nü*), in *Xingbie yu lishi: jindai zhongguo funü yu jidujiao*, 39–40.

<sup>198</sup> Eliza Marshall, “Women’s Work—Junghsien,” *The West China Missionary News* (January 1919): 53–4.

junior and senior students in fourteen mission colleges and universities in 1925, which listed *Nü duo* as one of the most helpful magazines for informing their religious lives.<sup>199</sup>

Statistics referring to the number of prizes allocated to readers who sent in English translations or solutions to puzzles found in the English page of *Nü duo*, also provides insights into its readership and their place of residence. From 1912 to 1924, the magazine encouraged readers to participate in translations and quiz tests by offering prizes such as books and money. Letters were sent mainly from girls' schools and churches in Shanghai, Nanjing, Hangzhou, Guangzhou, Fuzhou, Beijing, and Tianjin. The frequency of places mentioned during this period demonstrates that *Nü duo* had an influential circulation not only in Chinese coastal cities and interior provinces such as Jiangxi and Hubei, but had also reached Hong Kong and Australia. A detailed list of readers' name and their institutions is incorporated in Appendix 1.



Source: *Nü duo* from 1912 to 1924

Publication time	Area	Reader's name	Address
June 1912	Anhui 安徽	Yao Yunxian 姚雲仙	Wuhu 蕪湖
July 1912	Jiangsu 江蘇	Cai Sujuan 蔡蘇娟	Suzhou Jinghai Laura Haygood Memorial School for Young Ladies 蘇州景海女學堂

<sup>199</sup> "What Students are Reading," *The Chinese Recorder* (May 1925): 307–9.

August 1912	Anhui 安徽	Yao Yunxian 姚雲仙	Wuhu 蕪湖
September 1912	Hong Kong 香港	Wang Qinglian 王清蓮	Hong Kong Ying Wa College 香港英華書院
October 1912	Jiangsu 江蘇	Yuan Ying 袁瑛	Nanjing 金陵
	Zhejiang 浙江	Ling Weiyong 凌慰英	Shuanglin Church 雙林耶穌堂
	Fujian 福建	Liu Suqi 劉素奇	Fuzhou Huangxiang Huaying Girls' School (student) 福州黃巷華英女學堂學生
	Shandong 山東	Liu Renguo 劉任國	Jinan 濟南
	Guangdong 廣東	Zhang Zhenmei 張真美	Guangzhou Xiushan Shiqi Anlan Street Church 廣州秀山石岐安瀾街福音堂
	Guangdong 廣東	Luo Xiuyun 羅秀雲	Rouji Women's Hospital 柔濟女醫院

Source: *Nü duo* for year 1912<sup>200</sup>

For example, *Nü duo* received ten readers' letters in 1912 and some of the readers lived in coastal cities such as Fuzhou and Guangzhou. The magazine also reached Ying Wa College in Hong Kong, a Protestant mission school associated with the LMS. When *Nü duo* ceased the prize essay competition in the mid-1920s, however, sources on the demography of its readership are difficult to find.

The designated distribution sites of the CLS also indicate the readership of *Nü duo*, which included the YMCA and YWCA in China, government schools, Dr Kellers's Autumn Bible School in Hunan, the Canadian Methodist Mission at Chengdu, as well as wounded soldiers in hospitals and refugees in Shanghai in 1921.<sup>201</sup>

Editors, writers, and readers of magazines that reprinted articles from *Nü duo* formed another audience. In addition to Christian magazines that advertised *Nü duo* and reprinted its articles,<sup>202</sup> the non-Christian press was familiar with it. The monthly journal *Zhongxi yixue bao* 中西醫學報 (*The International Medical Journal*) serves as one example. Being established by medical doctor and scholar Ding Fubao 丁福保 (1874–1952) in Shanghai in 1910, this journal aimed to revive medical studies in China through disseminating medical knowledge. It reprinted *Nü duo*'s articles on mothercraft,

<sup>200</sup> Except where otherwise noted, occupations of readers were unmentioned.

<sup>201</sup> *The Thirty-fourth Annual Report of the CLS, 1921, 23.*

<sup>202</sup> These Christian periodicals include *Shizhao yuebao* 時兆月報, *Ming deng* 明燈, and *Nü xing* 女星.

adenoids and tonsils in children, and contagious diseases.<sup>203</sup> *Shehui jiaoyu xingqi bao* 社會教育星期報 (*Weekly News of Society and Education*), founded in Tianjin in 1915, was another non-Christian magazine that published an abridged version of an article in *Nü duo* to cultivate traditional ethics (*jiuyou daode* 舊有道德) and correct evil customs (*buliang fengsu* 不良風俗).<sup>204</sup> While the article narrated the story of Lady Kang, who was filial to her parents out of a self-sacrificing spirit, the author of the original version in *Nü duo* raised the issue of jealousy among Chinese women.<sup>205</sup> An article published on 26 March 1923 in *Xiandai funü* 現代婦女 (September 1922–August 1923), a journal published every ten days which was well known for its advocacy in birth control and women’s liberation, responded to White’s essay published in the same month in *Nü duo*, which suggested its continuing influence among some of educated women.<sup>206</sup>

### A Radical Nature, a Moderate Approach

Despite sharp differences between an ideal Christian family and a traditional Chinese family, *Nü duo* seemed to downplay its radicalness in the promotion of a new family model that featured a monogamous structure. Instead, the magazine spilled a lot of ink in drawing similarities between traditional gender norms and Victorian notions of femininity. Its criticisms, as discussed in the section on the purpose of *Nü duo*, concentrated on ‘inbred customs’ among Chinese women. In particular, the magazine published many articles on the issues of alcohol and opium, thanks to its cooperation with the Women’s Christian Temperance Union. By contrast, only a few articles attacked the practices found in traditional customs.<sup>207</sup> Regarding the issue of remarriage, the magazine only briefly

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<sup>203</sup> “Shengyu xuexiao” 生育學校 (Reproduction School), originally printed in February 1913 in *Nü duo*, was reprinted in *Zhongxi yixue bao* 中西醫學報 in Vol.5 No.2 (September 1914): 1–3; “Bihe houhe” 鼻核喉核 (Adenoids and Tonsils), originally printed in August 1912 of *Nü duo*, was reprinted in Vol.6 No.7 (1916): 1; “Ganchu shuo” 感觸說 (Explaining Infection), originally printed in August 1912 in *Nü duo*, was reprinted in Vol.6 No.7 (1916): 3–4.

<sup>204</sup> “Kang xiao nü” 康孝女 (A filial lady called Ms Kang), *Shehui jiaoyu xingqi bao* 社會教育星期報 Vol. 14 (1915): 8.

<sup>205</sup> Xi Yuan 息園, “Gujin xiannü zhuan” 古今賢女傳 (History of Virtuous Women), *Nü duo* (December 1914): 51.

<sup>206</sup> See Chapter Four for a detailed analysis.

<sup>207</sup> Bian Yuying 卞豫英, “Lun quqie yu weiqi zhi louxi” 論娶妾與爲妻之陋習 (The Corrupt Practice of Taking Concubines), *Nü duo* (October 1914): 2–8; Yin Qindao 殷勤道, “Hunyin zhi lousu” 婚姻之陋俗 (The Corrupt

advocated for a cautious stance that was neither too liberal nor too conservative in the practice of remarriage.<sup>208</sup>

A primary reason for *Nü duo's* moderate approach to family reform was caused by its focus on female students. As mentioned in the section on the target readership, the magazine was designed to address issues that interested literate girls, the majority of whom attended mission schools. From the perspective of Laura White, school girls—who were inclined to embrace new ideas—were more likely to be influenced by the tide of new gender ethics advocated by progressive feminists. Therefore, instead of concentrating on attacking the corrupt customs in the institution of the traditional family, *Nü duo* published many articles to admonish female students to fulfil their domestic obligations. The following chapter will further discuss White's critique of the promotion of women's suffrage movements by female reformists.

It is noteworthy that *Nü duo's* cautious approach also indicates a departure from the family rhetoric prompted by the New Culture radicals. Like the religious family model promoted by *Nü duo*, non-Christian reformists also promoted a conjugal family. This concept, however, was often intermingled with new gender ethics that emphasised women's economic independence, posing a contrast to *Nü duo's* advocacy on women's domestic roles. As Glosser notes, Western-inspired reformists vehemently attacked the patriarchy found in the Confucian family ideal. They upheld the concept of individual freedom and even advocated for toppling the patriarchy.<sup>209</sup> This anarchist inclination and progressive stance of the family reform can be seen as counter-Christian as Christianity also featured a patriarchal structure. Mindful of not being progressive like the New Culture radicals, *Nü duo's* careful

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Customs of Marriage), *Nü duo* (February 1920): 2–8.

<sup>208</sup> Kuang Yuyuan 匡愚原, "Xuhun jian" 續婚鑑 (Warning about Remarriage), *Nü duo* (May 1921–March 1922); "Funü shoujie zhi shangque shu" 婦人守節之商榷書 (Writings on Should a Widow Remarry), *Nü duo* (March 1923): 11; Jue Xian 絕孀, "Funü zaiqiao wenti zhi yanjiu" 婦女再醮問題之研究 (Discussing the Issue of Women's Remarriage), *Nü duo* (February 1929): 1–4.

<sup>209</sup> Glosser, 38–44.

search for a proper niche consequently led to its moderate approach in promoting a religious family model that radically challenged the traditional family model.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has examined the historical context of *Nü duo*. The growth of the print media and changing attitudes toward gender in the late Qing period gave rise to debate on the role of women in Chinese society. Western Christian concepts of “ideal womanhood,” promoted especially by foreign missionaries, became entwined with intellectual discussions on China’s modernisation and found expression in popular periodicals such as *Nü duo*. However, compared with the non-Christian intelligentsia, the Christian community in China led by foreign missionaries at this time, was driven less by the desire to strengthen China and more by a religious zeal to convert China to Christianity. Various reasons such as political restrictions and different evangelical strategies had resulted in mission activities that had introduced Western knowledge. A surge in the publication of secular woman’s magazines during this period convinced Laura White of the necessity of a Chinese Christian magazine. Her enthusiasm was fuelled by the growing number of Western female missionaries who worked primarily in mission schools, as well as being encouraged by the success of her own published works.

An exploration of the establishment of *Nü duo* highlights the leading role played by Western missionaries in financing, designing and circulating the magazine. Their collective efforts in producing it indicate that the Christian ideals promoted in it were representative of the missionary’s vision of an “ideal womanhood.” The fact that this vision largely influenced students in mission schools is evidenced by the subject matter of its early Chinese contributors. The following chapter examines this process in detail showing that Laura White set the tone for *Nü duo*, and that Chinese student contributors were, initially, receptive to their Western mentor.

### Chapter 3 Adapting Victorian Domesticity: 1912–1915



Joyfield — Where Miss White Lives and Works

Laura White's House in Shanghai

Mary Ninde Gamewell, "A Day at Joyfield," *Woman's Missionary Friend* (June 1918): 194.

...periodical which should go regularly into the homes, with not only good, clean fiction through which truth might be taught, but also instruction in hygiene, child-training, economic administration of the home, articles illustrating the beauty of filial piety so dear to the Chinese heart, tales of self-denial of those whose moving impulse has been the love of One who made the great renunciation, a printed messenger that would be sent far beyond where the voice of the missionary could go.

Laura M. White, 1918<sup>210</sup>

The collapse of the Qing dynasty in 1911 saw a series of dramatic socio-political transitions during the 1910s and the 1920s. Individuals started to be disengaged from their previous bonds and social obligations found in traditional society, resulting in social and political instability.<sup>211</sup> This period of fragmentation, as Mayfair Yang suggests, began at the time of the 1911 Revolution and ended only at the conclusion of the Cultural Revolution in 1976.<sup>212</sup> On the other hand, this allowed space for

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<sup>210</sup> *The Forty-Ninth Annual Report of the WFMS, 1918* (Columbus, OH: Ohio State Journal Printing Establishment, 1918), 96.

<sup>211</sup> Terry Bodenhorn (ed.), *Defining Modernity: Guomindang Rhetorics of a New China 1920–1970* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 2002), 48.

<sup>212</sup> *Ibid.*, 49.

alternative beliefs, values, and ideas for individuals to choose. According to Max Weber, the presence of a diverse set of beliefs and the choice and attitudes these generated, was a hallmark of modernity.<sup>213</sup> In this sense, the establishment of a popular Christian and Protestant magazine, *Nü duo*, directed at educated Chinese women, presented them with choices for a non-traditional life-style perceived as appropriate for the modernisation of Chinese society.

At the turn of the twentieth century, thousands of Western women sailed to China to fulfil their evangelical ambitions, including the American Methodist missionary, Laura M. White (1867–1937), who embarked on her journey to China on 8 October 1891.<sup>214</sup> White was to become a leading Western advocate for social change in China through her role as the editor of *Nü duo*. Articles in *Nü duo* in the period before the iconoclastic May Fourth period is the focus of this chapter. Their emphasis on the institution of the Chinese family and the need to inculcate Christian values in order to restructure it for the new nation, raises the following questions: What kind of Chinese-Christian family did *Nü duo* aim to promote and which aspects did it emphasise? How was an ideal home life promoted for the newly established nation? How did White adapt Christian ideals in vernacular form?

Articles on the family, women, and the nation are singled out as these were the three major recurring themes in *Nü duo*. A comparative analysis of ideas circulating in non-Christian magazines will be included to see how *Nü duo* differed from, or agreed with, secular discussions on family reform. By exploring *Nü duo* under White's editorship, this chapter will reveal a Victorian notion of domesticity that was congruent with traditional Chinese gender ethics in a way that excluded women from social and political engagement in the nation-building process. The image of the ideal Christian woman portrayed by *Nü duo*, situated firmly within the restrictive confines of the family home, granted her a limited role in China's national revival.

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<sup>213</sup> Duara, "Knowledge and Power in the Discourse of Modernity," 69.

<sup>214</sup> "Personal Mention," *Heathen Woman's Friend* (November 1891): 107.



A full appreciation of White's role requires an examination of her American background and the historical forces which shaped her Christian values. Attention then shifts to China and the specific context of *Nü duo* and its agenda which addresses the questions raised above and explains why White thought the time was ripe to reach educated Chinese women through journalism.

### **A Kingdom at Home: Laura M. White and her Evangelical Vision**



Laura M. White

United Methodist Church Mission Biographical Series ID 2411, the United Methodist Archives Center, Drew University

Laura M. White was born on 13 October 1867 in Woodbury, near Baltimore, Maryland.<sup>215</sup> Her family later moved to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where she attended the Girls' High and Normal School, graduating in 1882.<sup>216</sup> The school, established in 1818, was the first secondary public school for girls

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<sup>215</sup> National Archives and Records Administration (NARA); Washington D.C.; NARA Series: *Emergency Passport Applications, Argentina thru Venezuela, 1906–1925*; Box #: 4487; Volume #: *Volume 004: Shanghai*.

Ancestry.com. Pennsylvania, Death Certificates, 1906–1963 [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2014. Original data: Pennsylvania (State). Death certificates, 1906–1963. Series 11.90 (1,905 cartons). Records of the Pennsylvania Department of Health, Record Group 11. Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

Laura had a brother named Ralph H. White who was two years younger. The whole family depended on some form of pension because her father suffered from a disability and her mother was a housekeeper. See Year: 1880; Census Place: Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Roll: 1184; Family History Film: 1255184; Page: 256D; Enumeration District: 534; Image: 0513.

<sup>216</sup> White's education background is found on her application for the overseas mission. See United Methodist Church Mission Biographical Series ID 2411, the United Methodist Archives Center, Drew University.

in Pennsylvania, and the first municipally supported normal school in the United States. In 1860, its name was changed to The Girls' High and Normal School to reflect more accurately its institutional purpose of educating teachers with a curriculum concentrating on academic subjects.<sup>217</sup> Seven years after her graduation from high school, White entered Wellesley College and graduated a year later in 1890 with a Bachelor of Arts degree with First Class honours.

Immersed in the values of Christian culture, White had become a committed Christian at the age of eleven and in 1878 joined the Presbyterian church which she left in 1883 when she transferred her allegiance to the Methodist denomination. In 1890, she received the "divine call"<sup>218</sup> and joined the Philadelphia branch of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church (WFMS).<sup>219</sup>

As a future missionary, White embarked on a one-year training course at the Chicago Training School for City, Home, and Foreign Missions, a training institution established in 1885 to prepare missionary women for evangelical work.<sup>220</sup> This missionary preparatory school, as Dana L. Robert points out, functioned as a primary force in the education of Methodist missionary women until the 1920s. Early courses centred on the Bible, church history, nursing, and medicine.<sup>221</sup> After training, White was dispatched by the Philadelphia Branch of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, to reinforce the mission work for girl's education in Zhenjiang<sup>222</sup> and sailed to China in 1891 on the steamer *Belgic*.<sup>223</sup>

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<sup>217</sup> For a brief history of the Philadelphia High School for Girls, see <http://webgui.phila.k12.pa.us/schools/g/girlshigh/about-us/our-history> Accessed on 13 Feb 2018.

<sup>218</sup> United Methodist Church Mission Biographical Series ID 2411, the United Methodist Archives Center, Drew University.

<sup>219</sup> When White submitted her application one year earlier, her application was declined because she was under the required age as a candidate. See "Report of Committee on Missionary Candidates," *The Twenty-first Annual Report of the WFMS, 1889–1890* (Rochester, N. Y.: Democrat and Chronicle Press, 1890), 88. The committee placed further consideration of this case in the hands of the Philadelphia Branch Corresponding Secretary. One year later, the Reference Committee accepted White's application. See *The Twenty-second Annual Report of the WFMS, 1890–1891* (Boston, Mass.: Office of "Heathen Woman's Friend," 1891), 9, 95.

<sup>220</sup> *Announcement of the Chicago Training School for City, Home and Foreign Missions, 1893–94* (Chicago: n.p., 1894), 36.

<sup>221</sup> Robert, *American Women in Mission*, 143, 153–5.

<sup>222</sup> For a brief history of the China mission of the WFMS, see Miss Frances J. Baker, *The Story of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church 1869–1895* (New York: Eaton & Mains, 1898), 262–314; Robert, *American Women in Mission*, 170–88.

<sup>223</sup> *Heathen Woman's Friend* (November 1891): 107; *Heathen Woman's Friend* (January 1892): 163–4.

Her ideas on the role of women in society which she took with her, meanwhile, were rooted firmly in the ethos of mid-nineteenth century American Christian values.

### ***Victorian Virtues in Nineteenth-century America and their Impact on American Missionary Activity***

The Victorian notion of womanhood resembled traditional Confucian teachings regarding women's domestic roles. As the first years of the Republican era witnessed a revival of Confucianism, *Nü duo* may have found support from pro-Confucian groups. However, unlike the family reform discussed in secular circles, *Nü duo* outlines religious ideas that aimed to transform the Chinese family into one undergirded by Christian ideals and modern knowledge. Mostly, it concentrated on the promotion of an ideal womanhood embodied in Victorian feminine virtues.

The work and lives of American missionary women were based on Victorian virtues present in nineteenth-century America. Wives who travelled with their missionary husbands on early overseas missions were imbued with a belief that their chief objective was embodying the virtues of Christian families. Dana L. Robert has traced the development of the importance of the theme of "the home" in missionary strategy in Hawaii. Thus, as early as 1822, a member of the London Missionary Society, William Ellis and his wife Mary, arrived in Oahu to work with American missionaries among the indigenous people. Mary Ellis suggested that missionary wives were ideally placed to act as role models in family matters for the local population thereby justifying their presence in a difficult and often dangerous environment. This principle was later promoted by Rufus Anderson, the secretary of the American Board, who considered this model to be a justification for the presence of missionary wives in the field; to guide heathen women onto the path of becoming a virtuous wife and mother.<sup>224</sup>

Victorian middle-class classifications of women were firmly established by the 1840s. Women's primary role in society, according to the British and American popular press, was that of a domestic

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<sup>224</sup> Robert, *American Women in Mission*, 65–9. For a detailed analysis of the ideal of "Christian Home," see Dana L. Robert, "The 'Christian Home' as a Cornerstone of Anglo-American Missionary Thought and Practice," in *Converting Colonialism*, 134–65.

goddess. Similarly, British government reports portrayed middle-class working women who followed occupations outside the home as unnatural and immoral. The British historian, Catherine Hall, traces the origins of such perceptions to the 1780s at the time when British society was in transition from “an aristocratic and mercantile capitalist society, where land was still the major source of power, to an industrial capitalist society with a large and influential bourgeoisie.” Accompanying the change in British society was the new idea of women as primarily wives and mothers. Hall notes that evangelical movements, in particular, played a crucial role in reforming the moral landscape of British society where the domestic role of women, based on a biblical interpretation of St Paul’s teachings, “guiding the house,” was promoted.<sup>225</sup> In like manner, American views on the role of women were consistent with Victorian British views. In industrial America, the definition of women was characteristic of the Victorian notion of womanhood.<sup>226</sup> From 1820-1860 the term, the “Cult of True Womanhood,” as noted by the historian Barbara Welter, frequently appeared in women’s magazines. Denoting an ideal concept of Victorian womanhood that cherished “piety, purity, submissiveness and domesticity,” it had at its core the notion that a woman’s virtue was determined by her religious piety. Women were conceived to “be another, better Eve, working in cooperation with the Redeemer, bringing the world back ‘from its revolt and sin’.” Moreover, purity was viewed as essential to femininity and was the “chief means of discharging her duty to save the world.” Female chastity was articulated as a divine gift and a moral privilege that empowered women in “guiding humanity aright in its long, varied, and perilous voyage.” Women’s submissiveness to men was based on a biblical interpretation which believed the unequal relation between the sexes was the natural order of the Universe. The most valued virtue espoused by women’s magazines was domesticity, defined as women’s proper sphere.

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<sup>225</sup> Catherine Hall, “The Early Formation of Victorian Domestic Ideology,” in Sandra Burman (ed.), *Fit Work for Women* (Canberra, A.C.T.: Australian National University Press, 1979), 15–32.

<sup>226</sup> Victorianism as a transnational culture was further reinforced by the expansion of printed communication in the 1830s and the subsequent laying of the transatlantic cable. See Daniel Walker Howe, “American Victorianism as a Culture,” *American Quarterly* (December 1975): 508.

Staying at home kept women away from the degrading environment of the outside world, which in turn, reinforced women's purity and her role in morally guiding the family.<sup>227</sup>

In post-Civil War America, conceptions of ideal womanhood changed along with education reform and the emergence of women's missionary organisations. In her research on a woman's "proper place," Sheila M. Rothman traces at least two changes in the definition of womanhood from 1870 to the 1900s in the United States.<sup>228</sup> "Virtuous womanhood" was a concept which prevailed in the post-Civil War era. While it was reminiscent of the pre-war decades, Rothman notes a new ideal took hold in childrearing where it changed from being a motherly duty to a relationship based on love and affection dependent on the mother-child bond.<sup>229</sup> In the 1890s, the ideology of "educated motherhood" was advanced with the expansion of the kindergarten movement that aimed to popularise the new ideas on childhood. The movement also intended to "bring its knowledge of child training to all American families, to become the great transmitter of the ideology of educated motherhood to all classes."<sup>230</sup> In this sense, raising a child required not only affection but also knowledge and skills.

### ***The Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church***

The Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church (WFMS) was influential for American Protestant missionary women from the late nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century. The WFMS was established in March 1869 when the Rev. E. W. Parker and his wife returned to the United States following their missionary work in India. A meeting with Dr William Butler in Boston and Mr and Mrs Lewis Flanders of the Tremont Street Church on 14 March, was followed by a later gathering of the three wives who met to discuss the necessity of improving the condition of women in India. Realising that male missionaries were prohibited from close contact with local women, Mrs Parker "expressed her deep conviction that unless Christian women took up this work as a special

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<sup>227</sup> Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820–1860," *American Quarterly* Vol.18 No.2 (Part 1, 1966): 151–63.

<sup>228</sup> Sheila M. Rothman, *Woman's Proper Place* (New York: Basic Books, 1978).

<sup>229</sup> *Ibid.*, 21–2.

<sup>230</sup> *Ibid.*, 103.

and separate duty, it would not be practicable to evangelise India to any great extent.”<sup>231</sup> Noting the establishment of a woman’s society of the Congregational Churches, Mrs Parker and Mrs Butler proposed the formation of a woman’s foreign missionary society within the Methodist Episcopal Church. Mrs Flanders volunteered to present the subject to the ladies of the Tremont Street Church to seek wider cooperation.<sup>232</sup>

The meeting of the Ladies’ Benevolent Society of that Church discussed the proposal on 16 March where a favourable response was received and a committee, which included Mrs Flanders, was formed. On 23 March, Mrs Parker and Mrs Butler were invited to discuss the importance and the practicability of such a society. This second meeting marked the official beginning of the WFMS which was established with a written constitution and elected officer bearers. As historian Robert Pierce Beaver notes:

Forty-four women in seventeen states were made vice-presidents in order to involve as many persons as possible. Branches and auxiliaries were organized immediately, and, because of the desirability of decentralization, the branches came to be treated as quasi-autonomous societies federated nationally.<sup>233</sup>

The purpose of this Society was documented in its first annual report of the New York Branch for the year 1869–1871. According to its Constitution, the WFMS was “to engage and unite the efforts of Christian women in sending female missionaries to women in the foreign mission fields of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and in supporting them and native Christian teachers and Bible readers in those fields.”<sup>234</sup> On 26 May 1869, the Society held its first public meeting and dispatched Miss Isabella Thoburn to carry out evangelical work in India.<sup>235</sup> The Society also launched a monthly

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<sup>231</sup> Baker, *The Story of the Woman’s Foreign Missionary Society*, 15.

<sup>232</sup> *Ibid.*, 13–5.

<sup>233</sup> Robert Pierce Beaver, *American Protestant Women in World Mission* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1968), 96.

<sup>234</sup> *The First Annual Report of the New York Branch of the WFMS, 10 June 1869 to 16 March 1871* (New York: Printer and Blank Book Manufacturer, 1871).

<sup>235</sup> Beaver, *American Protestant Women in World Mission*, 96.

newspaper titled the *Heathen Woman's Friend* (1869–1896) at this time to promote its missionary work. Its title was changed later to the *Woman's Missionary Friend* (1896–1940) after Methodist missionaries in Japan argued that the original title was a “misnomer” and “a ‘hindrance’ to their work.”<sup>236</sup>

In its early years, the WFMS had to seek counsel and approval for all its work from the Methodist Missionary Society (MMS) even though it was not an auxiliary of it. This occurred at the General Conference of 1884 when the WFMS was recognised as an official organisation of the Methodist denomination,<sup>237</sup> which secured the autonomy of the WFMS in its missionary work. Despite its humble beginning, as Lisa J. Shaver notes, the WFMS later became the largest organisation in the wider woman's foreign mission movement.<sup>238</sup> By the end of the nineteenth century its work in foreign missions had expanded to Africa, China, India, Italy, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, South America, as well as Bulgaria, Switzerland and Germany.<sup>239</sup> The following section focuses on Laura White's association with the WFMS as well as her early years of missionary work in China.

### ***Laura White and the WFMS***

Born in the post-Civil War period, Laura White was raised in a time when Victorian virtues influenced womanhood both inside and outside the missionary enterprise. As mentioned above, White enrolled in the Chicago Training School where she took courses in biblical studies including church history, Christian doctrine, domestic economy, temperance and mission fields. A specific objective of the

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<sup>236</sup>Jane H. Hunter, “Women's Mission in Historical Perspective: American Identity and Christian Internationalism,” in *Competing Kingdoms*, 34.

<sup>237</sup> Beaver, *American Protestant Women in World Mission*, 96–7.

<sup>238</sup> Lisa J. Shaver, *Beyond the Pulpit: Women's Rhetorical Roles in the Antebellum Religious Press* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2014), 88.

<sup>239</sup> Before the WFMS enjoyed autonomy in its missionary work after 1884, the WFMS sent female missionaries to places where the Methodist Episcopal Church had already sent male missionaries. In fact, the initiative of its establishment was a call to proselytise women in India by missionary wife Mrs Lois Parker, whose husband worked as missionary in the 1860s in India. See Baker, *The Story of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society*, 13. After its establishment in 1869, the WFMS soon sent two single women to a new mission previously founded by the Methodist church in North China to organize a girls' boarding school and conduct work among women. See Robert, *American Women in Mission*, 173. Even after the 1884, the WFMS seemed to continue this overseas mission strategy. See annual reports of the WFMS from 1885 to 1900.

school was the promotion of domesticity in order to promote an “ideal home” governed by Christian and missionary influence. Emphasis was placed accordingly on practical training in domestic work and management.<sup>240</sup> Specific emphasis focused on the importance of educated women in maternal affection for their children.

White, it needs to be noted, was raised at a time when American missionaries were active on a global stage. As Beaver has stressed, American Protestantism during the second half of the nineteenth century saw the rise of foreign missions, which grew from a total of only five major boards and five minor ones in 1860 to 94 with 43 supporting agencies by 1900. A growing number of women were attracted to the missionary movement and by 1890 their numbers made-up two-thirds of American missionaries working in overseas missions, governed by 41 American boards in 1900.<sup>241</sup> The goal of these American women, as Patricia R. Hill argues, was to “uplift heathen woman, to elevate her to the heights inhabited by Christian womanhood in America.”<sup>242</sup> The following section examines White’s views on the role of women in society.

### ***White’s Evangelical Views of the Role of Women: Domesticity and Mothercraft***

American female missionaries in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries were not a homogenous group, with some members demonstrating adherence to evangelical work in social causes while others were involved in political education and lobbying.<sup>243</sup> Within the education field in China, the historian Sasaki Motoe identifies two groups which she refers to as the “homemakers” group and the “new leaders” group. White belonged to the former group of female missionaries who emphasised homemaking crafts. Matilda Calder Thurston (1875–1958), a member of the “new leaders” group, was disdainful referring to White as “full of sentiment” in her support of “mother-craft” rather than higher education for women. From the viewpoint of Thurston, who believed in the importance of Western

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<sup>240</sup> *Announcement of the Chicago Training School*, 7.

<sup>241</sup> Beaver, *American Protestant Women in World Mission*, 87–8; “Introduction,” in *Competing Kingdoms*, 2.

<sup>242</sup> Patricia R. Hill, *The World Their Household: The American Woman’s Foreign Mission Movement and Cultural Transformation 1870–1920* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1985), 23.

<sup>243</sup> *Competing Kingdoms*, 2, 36–7, 53–4.



modernity for the future of Chinese women, White “belonged to a bygone Victorian generation that could not cope with the development of a new form of female subjectivity in China.”<sup>244</sup>

Thurston’s views sharply capture White’s emphasis on the role of mothercraft which had developed during her first twenty years in China when she worked in girls’ schools. From 1891 to 1906, she worked at the Girls’ Boarding School in Zhenjiang helping Miss Mary Robinson in teaching music and gymnastics, as well as sewing, cooking, maths, church history, and Christian classics.<sup>245</sup> In 1901, she was also invited to teach music at the McTyeire School in Shanghai.<sup>246</sup>

During her time in Zhenjiang, White had written several articles published in the United States, which demonstrated her affection for children. In one article titled “Some Bits of China” published in *Heathen Woman’s Friend* in June 1893, White wrote about girls from the Zhenjiang Boarding School. Most of the girls were abandoned by their parents, some shortly after they were born, and were placed in the nursery. A Chinese baby even comforted White on one occasion when she felt particularly homesick. When White was looking at her with her red eyes, the girl smiled and said, “Liang Sien Seng [xian sheng, teacher] is very bad; she cries, and needs a whipping.”<sup>247</sup>

In another account, White wrote about a little girl whom she looked after until her death at four. The little girl, who was afterwards named Florence Randall, was disobedient in the beginning and later became gentle and affectionate after White’s prayer for her. When Florence became ill and White attempted to administer some medicine, she said to her, “Darling, my heart is sorrowful because I

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<sup>244</sup> Sasaki Motoe, *Redemption and Revolution: American and Chinese New Women in the Early Twentieth Century* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2016), 49–51. Motoe quotes this from a private letter, which I was unable to obtain. Motoe’s research is based on the letters of Matilda Thurston, 1 March 1914, folder 2854, box 143, RG 11, UBCHEA, Yale Divinity School Library.

<sup>245</sup> Annual reports of the WFMS from 1890 to 1906.

<sup>246</sup> “McTyeire School,” *Woman’s Missionary Advocate* (August 1901): 48.

<sup>247</sup> The word ‘whipping’ deserves clarification. It seems odd for a child to say such a sentence to her teacher. As White considered this little girl as “our humorist,” it is likely that the child was trying to comfort White in a humorous way. See Laura M. White, “Some Bits of China,” *Heathen Woman’s Friend* (June 1893): 278.

must give you this bitter medicine.” The little girl also liked to lie in White’s lap and sang songs like “Jesus loves me” and “I am Jesus’ little lamb” with the other babies.<sup>248</sup>

*Gilt-edged Bits of China*, a collection from the *Children’s Missionary Friend*, included an article written by White describing the lives of Chinese children in Zhenjiang. In this article, White introduced four children in a tone suitable for children in the United States. She vividly depicted their lives with photos and a description of their names, family members, personalities, and vignettes of their daily life.<sup>249</sup>



*Gilt-Edged Bits of China and other Stories, compiled from the Children’s Missionary Friend* (Boston: Woman’s Foreign Missionary Society Methodist Episcopal Church, n.d.).

As mentioned in the previous chapter, White arrived in China at the time when Protestant mission schools pioneered girls’ education and were in competition with government-sponsored girls’ schools in the closing years of the Qing dynasty. Surrounded by a growing number of government girls’ schools, White endeavoured to promote Christian women’s education, especially when serving as the Principal of the Nanking Huiwen Girls’ Boarding School (also known as the Nancy Lawrence High School) from November 1907 to 1913.<sup>250</sup> In particular, she aimed at “the bringing up of a girls’ school to college grade.”<sup>251</sup> Instructed by Bishop Bashford, White centred on pedagogical work to develop the school

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<sup>248</sup> “A Little Child Shall Lead Them,” *Heathen Woman’s Friend* (December 1893): 197.

<sup>249</sup> *Gilt-Edged Bits of China and other Stories, compiled from the Children’s Missionary Friend* (Boston: Woman’s Foreign Missionary Society Methodist Episcopal Church, n.d.), 7–9.

<sup>250</sup> Annual reports of the WFMS from 1907 to 1913.

<sup>251</sup> “Philadelphia Branch Quarterly,” *Woman’s Missionary Friend* (November 1910): 402.

as rapidly as possible into a woman's college.<sup>252</sup> Noting the growth of government schools, missionaries believed the mission schools could play a leading role in setting "the standards and train the teachers for the future schools of China".<sup>253</sup> From 1907 to 1908, she worked at laying the foundations of a college for women, which was expected to be a union college consisted of high school graduates and pupil teachers from five different denominational schools.<sup>254</sup> At the beginning of 1908, classes were established for the training of teachers. Classes ranged from ten to twenty students in each.<sup>255</sup>

In May 1909, White attended the sixth triennial meeting of the Educational Association of China and read a paper on "Cooperation between schools of different missions in the same locality." Her article was later published in the July issue of the *Educational Review*.<sup>256</sup> In the winter of 1911 to 1912, she joined a conference held in Shanghai as one of the eight missionary women who appealed for a union college. As a result of this appeal, a union college for women was established in Nanjing in 1913, known as Ginling College.<sup>257</sup>

Unlike Thurston, another member on the committee for the union college who upheld "academic training" rather than domestic science,<sup>258</sup> White's intention of promoting educated womanhood was to encourage female students to apply pedagogical techniques to household management. In her speech titled "A Union Woman's College" delivered before the Central China Educational Union at Guling 牯嶺 in Jiangxi Province in August 1911, White stated:

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<sup>252</sup> *The Thirty-ninth Annual Report of the WFMS, 1908* (Boston, Mass.: Miss Annie G. Bailey, 1908), 142.

<sup>253</sup> "Editorial," *Woman's Missionary Friend* (September 1908): 314.

<sup>254</sup> *Ibid.*, 314–5.

<sup>255</sup> *The Thirty-ninth Annual Report of the WFMS*, 142.

<sup>256</sup> "The Educational Association of China," *The North-China Herald and Supreme Court & Consular Gazette (1870–1941)* (22 May 1909): n.p.; Laura M. White, "How can different schools in the same locality co-operate," *Educational Review* (July 1909): 7–11.

<sup>257</sup> Mrs Lawrence Thurston and Ruth M. Chester, *Ginling College* (USA: United Board for Christian Colleges in China, 1955), 4–5.

<sup>258</sup> Motoe, *Redemption and Revolution*, 51.

... the need in our College is to set the standard of womanly ideals for the new China. Our students need to obtain visions of the loveliness that may be builded into the Woman's Kingdom of Home. And our college must be a miracle-working institution! First, it must prepare physicians to work miracles of healing, nurses and future homemakers to work miracles of sanitation, hygiene, and domestic science. ... We want women understanding normal and kindergarten methods, child psychology; and who realize that you educate a child, not by what you pour into him, but by what you make out of him.<sup>259</sup>

White rejected the college education modelled on "an American young man" and insisted that "our College is to set the standard of womanly ideals for the new China."<sup>260</sup> As Motoe notes, White was displeased with the new generation of missionaries especially those from women's colleges in Northeastern America which modelled their education on that offered in men's colleges. Thurston, a graduate of Mount Holyoke College, criticised White's approach as "a kind of anachronism". What Thurston and the "new leaders" proposed was to empower Chinese women with Western modernity rather than Victorian norms, which they considered as the key to raise the undesirable status of Chinese women. To White, however, the education those newcomers received seemed to be "an inappropriate model for young Chinese women."<sup>261</sup>

White's idea of the evolving history of women was largely inspired by the Scottish theologian George Matheson (1842–1906), Church of Scotland minister of Innellan.<sup>262</sup> Despite his blindness from youth, Matheson was a well-known minister in his hometown. He was once invited by Queen Victoria to preach before her at Balmoral in Scotland. During his last years, Matheson's work received high praise in "almost every newspaper in England and Scotland, indeed throughout the British Empire and America."<sup>263</sup> In 1885, Matheson published a book entitled *Can the Old Faith Live with the New?* with

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<sup>259</sup> Laura M. White, "A Union Woman's College," *The Chinese Recorder* (November 1911): 646.

<sup>260</sup> Ibid.

<sup>261</sup> Motoe, *Redemption and Revolution*, 45, 51.

<sup>262</sup> Stewart J. Brown, George Newlands, G. M. Newlands (eds.), *Scottish Christianity in the Modern World: In Honour of A. C. Cheyne* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000), 83.

<sup>263</sup> D. MacMilan, *The Life of George Matheson* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1907), 14, 359.

his views on reconciling the Christian faith with Darwinism.<sup>264</sup> He argued that Christianity could co-exist with the new theory of evolution “by examining the points revelation appears to come in contact with evolution.”<sup>265</sup> Matheson divided the stages of human life into three periods. The first stage was “the period in which the life of the man is in some sense analogous to the life of the plant” and “may be called the stage of spontaneity.” The second “may be best described as its period of non-spontaneity.” During this stage, “the life of man begins to experience an absence of perfect harmony with its environment, and begins to enter on those efforts at readjustment which make the greater part of human existence a life of labour and struggle.” In the third stage, the life of man “returns to a rest which is no longer a mere state of spontaneity, but a state of conscious possession, in which the life becomes aware of its peace by the very fact of its cessation from war.” Matheson thought that “This final stage of natural existence is the stage in which the vital principle begins to realise somewhat of the joy of being in harmony with its environment.”<sup>266</sup>

Similarly, Matheson elaborated on the evolving process of “the Spirit of life” in three stages. The initial work of the Spirit was manifested to human beings behind the consciousness. At this stage, “every being not only can, but actually does ... live without knowing that it lives.” The second stage was when “the life of spontaneity passes away, and is replaced by a life of struggle.” The “greatest inward struggle is not the period when the new life dawns upon him, but the time when it is nearing its meridian.” The “meridian” here referred to an increasing sense of sin “in proportion to his advance in holiness, and his feeling of distance from the goal becomes more pronounced and painful in proportion as the goal itself is neared.” The third stage “is a calm restored, and restored no longer as a state of spontaneity, but as a state of consciousness.” According to Matheson, “Christianity terms it distinctively the peace of God,” which was not reached “by any act of asceticism” nor “by any actual

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<sup>264</sup> George Matheson, *Can the Old Faith Live with the New? Or The Problem of Evolution and Revelation* (Edinburgh and London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1885). Matheson’s argument on evolution and religion was influenced by the Scottish evangelist Henry Drummond (1851–1897), whose work also influenced Laura White. Detailed discussion on Drummond see the section on “*Motherhood: an essential virtue*” in this chapter. For discussion on Matheson and Drummond, see *Scottish Christianity in the Modern World*, 83.

<sup>265</sup> *Scottish Christianity in the Modern World*, 83.

<sup>266</sup> Matheson, *Can the Old Faith Live with the New?*, 285–7.

cessation from the conflict of life, but by a change of mental attitude towards that conflict.” With the conviction of “the presence of a Divine life within him,” “his sense of sin becomes his comfort because it implies the diminution of the sin itself.”<sup>267</sup>

Echoing Matheson’s writing on evolution, White introduced to the audience at the Shanghai conference the three periods in the history of every woman. The first was the period of innocence or the primitive stage in the history of sociological development, followed by the second period with “an awakening to self-consciousness, to a realization of her powers ... [when] ... personal vanity, ambition, and a desire for self-expansion are aroused.” Chinese women, in White’s viewpoint, had passed the first period and “entered upon paths of progress and science,” but they refused to enter the third period, “that of voluntary self-contraction.” Noting this trend, White told her colleagues in the education field that “the art that the educated woman needs to learn is that of reigning over the unattractive little kingdom from which she would escape because she has been walled in too long, the *Kingdom of Home*.”<sup>268</sup>

In White’s viewpoint, missionaries working in the education field were concentrating on meeting the demands of the Chinese for modern knowledge rather than focusing on Christian ideals. In her article entitled “Missionary Temptations” published in the *Woman’s Missionary Friend* in February 1905, White warned of the temptation of modern education for missionaries:

An educated missionary’s attention is constantly directed to rocks which with a few scientific blows may be converted into gold for himself and bread for the multitude. In his philanthropic desire to feed China, he forgets the Saviour’s words that “man shall not live by bread alone.”<sup>269</sup>

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<sup>267</sup> Ibid., 289–6.

<sup>268</sup> White, “A Union Woman’s College,” 645.

<sup>269</sup> Laura M. White, “Missionary Temptations,” *Woman’s Missionary Friend* (February 1905): 49.

As an educated missionary herself, White was also aware of a waning spiritual pursuit among female students. Seeing the hard work of Chinese college girls, White came up with a “soul test” at the close of the final exams in 1910. She wrote a few questions on the blackboard and asked the students to report the results only to Christ. Questions comprised “How much more of the Bible do you know this term than last?” “How much time have you given to prayer and meditation during review and examination weeks?” and “In which have you done better work this term: acquiring spiritual culture, or mere intellectual knowledge?”<sup>270</sup>

Apart from promoting educated motherhood, White sought every available opportunity to conduct and promote Victorian virtues. She was involved with many missionary-organised societies such as the Natural Foot Society, The Educational Association, the Women’s Christian Temperance Union, and The Union Church Ladies’ Society.<sup>271</sup> She once humorously called herself “a wee bit of a feminist” that was under “the principle of personal sacrifice for the general welfare.”<sup>272</sup> For instance, she attended the Women’s Conference on the Home Life of Chinese Women in January 1901 and the meeting of the Natural Foot Society in March.<sup>273</sup> At the March meeting, she reported on the prize essay competition held in Zhenjiang in 1900. Under the subject of “Which is preferable, natural or bound feet, and Why?”, 230 essays were received and all “contended that the custom was a sin against Heaven, an offence against their country, that bound feet were ugly, that the custom made women deceitful and artful,

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<sup>270</sup> “From the Foreign Mail Bag,” *Woman’s Missionary Friend* (November 1910): 403.

<sup>271</sup> For Natural Foot Society, see “The Tien Tsu Hui: Members Meeting,” *The North-China Herald and Supreme Court & Consular Gazette* (20 March 1901): 537. For Educational Association, see “The Educational Association,” *The North-China Herald and Supreme Court & Consular Gazette* (28 May 1902): 1054. The Women’s Christian Temperance Union was headquartered in White’s house in Shanghai in 1920. See “Dr. Mary Stone-China’s First Woman Doctor,” *Millard’s Review of the Far East (1919–1921)* (28 August 1920): 707. According to *The Shanghai Times*, White delivered a paper to the members of the Union Church Ladies’ Society. See “Local and General,” *The Shanghai Times (1914–1921)* (6 April 1916): 7.

<sup>272</sup> “Christian Literature Society,” *The North-China Herald and Supreme Court & Consular Gazette* (11 November 1922): 381.

<sup>273</sup> Mrs J. L. Stuart, “Women’s Conference on the Home Life of Chinese Women,” *The Chinese Recorder and Missionary Journal (1868–1912)* (1 January 1901): 31. “The Tien Tsu Hui: Members Meeting,” *The North-China Herald and Supreme Court & Consular Gazette*, 537.

and the family hard-hearted.”<sup>274</sup> At a later meeting of the Shanghai Women’s Christian Temperance Union in 1916, she spoke on “Some Phases of Woman’s Social Service” and traced:

... the history of the activity of women in religious and social reform from the earliest days down to the present time. Her address was made very interesting by the use of short biographies, historical references and present day incidents. Back of the wide differences between men and women, their likes and dislikes, their qualities of character and temperament lie certain fundamental principles, but it would be better if men to-day would give more time and thought to the interests and welfare of others while women should be more willing to contribute to their own support.<sup>275</sup>

Another example was White’s protest against prostitution. On 8 February 1917, White attended a meeting at the Union Church Hall and addressed members of the Women’s Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) on prostitution and cruelty to children. Believing that Shanghai “needs civic mothers just as much as any other city of the world.” she suggested members of the WCTU should consider the best steps to deal with the matter.<sup>276</sup>

While saying “the hope of China was to be found in Chinese women,”<sup>277</sup> White’s proposal of an ideal womanhood was underpinned by domestic obligations where a woman’s primary duty in life was to protect and purify the home.<sup>278</sup> At the annual meeting of the CLS in 1926, she spoke of the reform she wished to bring about to the home life of the Chinese<sup>279</sup> and “outlined plans for stressing the spiritual and the beautiful in China’s home life with a view to offsetting to some extent existing literature of a

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<sup>274</sup> “The Tien Tsu Hui: Members Meeting,” *The North-China Herald and Supreme Court & Consular Gazette*, 537.

<sup>275</sup> “Women’s Temperance Union: April Meeting,” *The Shanghai Times (1914–1921)* (10 April 1916): 6.

<sup>276</sup> “Shanghai Needs Mothering,” *The Shanghai Times* (9 February 1917): 7; “The Seamy Side of Shanghai,” *The North-China Herald and Supreme Court & Consular Gazette* (10 February 1917): 284.

<sup>277</sup> “The Modest Violet: Which Yet is The Hope of China, 1928,” *The North-China Herald and Supreme Court & Consular Gazette* (26 May 1928): 355.

<sup>278</sup> “Women’s Christian Temperance Union: The Second Birthday Party,” *The North-China Herald and Supreme Court & Consular Gazette* (19 May 1917).

<sup>279</sup> “Christian Literature Society,” *The North-China Herald and Supreme Court & Consular Gazette* (4 December 1926): 454.



more depressing and debasing nature thereon.”<sup>280</sup> In particular, she emphasised motherhood. In a further paper presented to the Literary Department of the American Women’s Club in 1919, White presented some stories on China’s noble women circulated in *Nü duo* to show that “in many cases the great men of China were great because their mothers were greater.”<sup>281</sup>

White’s ideal of womanhood and self-sacrifice reflected the mission spirit of her era. When American Protestant women formed their mission board of the Methodist Episcopal Church and went overseas to proselytise local women, they were involved in the process of transporting a sense of ideal femininity. The Christian feminine virtues were crystallised in the motto of the WFMS “Saved for Service,” which highlighted the spirit of self-sacrifice and self-denial.<sup>282</sup> Under this spirit, White endeavoured to promote a Victorian notion of womanhood that cherished domesticity. As Hill notes, although the massive foreign mission crusade by female missionary societies had exercised a certain freedom of choice in selecting foreign missions as a sacred cause, they were to a certain degree restricted within parameters defined by prevailing religious and cultural ideologies such as the sanctification of motherhood in Victorian culture.<sup>283</sup> Although many American missionary women like Laura White worked substantially outside the domestic sphere, they justified their extended range of activities “by employing a loose interpretation of what constituted the private sphere.” They argued that “their inherent traits of nurturance, morality and compassion made them uniquely fit to serve in this expanded sphere.”<sup>284</sup> White’s most influential work, however, lay before her. In 1912, she accepted Timothy Richard’s invitation to edit *Nü duo*, the first Christian magazine catering specifically for Chinese women and published in Shanghai. The magazine provided the ideal platform for airing White’s views on her ideal concept of womanhood for a modern China.

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<sup>280</sup> “On the Field,” *The Chinese Recorder* (January 1927): 76.

<sup>281</sup> “American Woman’s Club: ‘Ancient and Modern Chinese Women,’” *The North-China Herald and Supreme Court & Consular Gazette* (14 June 1919): 726.

<sup>282</sup> Patricia R. Hill notes that the theological assumptions of the Methodist WFMS particularly highlighted women’s capability of practicing the Christian virtue of self-sacrifice. See Hill, *The World Their Household*, 69.

<sup>283</sup> *Ibid.*, 39.

<sup>284</sup> Gael Graham, *Gender, Culture, and Christianity: American Protestant Mission Schools in China 1880–1930* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 1995), 74–5.

### **White as Editor of *Nü duo***

*Nü duo* was launched at a time of debate in China over gender equality and women's rights in politics and education. As historian Charlotte Beahan has noted, the Qing court's commitment to reform after the Boxer Rebellion "contributed to a climate supportive of new ideas." Beahan describes the three major types of women's groups found in China in the first years of the twentieth century, namely, a "women's rights group, [a] philanthropic group, and [several] nationalist organizations." Accompanied by the emergence of women's groups in public, "a number of women's journals had appeared to lend support for an improvement in women's lot."<sup>285</sup> In 1912, for example, at least five women's magazines promoting women's suffrage were published. Many of these were initiated by Chinese women who upheld gender equality and suffrage.<sup>286</sup>

Noting the growth of secular women's magazines, White believed that the time was ripe for reaching educated Chinese women through journalism.<sup>287</sup> At the end of the first year of editing *Nü duo*, White assessed that "It seems to meet the approval [of the time] especially of the young men and women."<sup>288</sup> With agreement on the importance of evangelical literature from her mission board, White was released from her teaching position in Nanjing and moved to Shanghai to work as a full-time member of the CLS in 1915.<sup>289</sup> White and her Chinese helpers lived together in her dwelling called "Joyfield" on

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<sup>285</sup> Charlotte Beahan, "In the Public Eye: Women in Early Twentieth-Century China," *Historical Reflections* 8:3 (Fall 1981): 215–38.

<sup>286</sup> For instance, *Nüzi guoxuebao* was a biweekly magazine published in Tianjin in April. It was the mouthpiece of a society called *Nüzi guoxue she* 女子國學社 (Women's National Learning Society). According to its principles, members were women who were interested in accommodating traditional learning to a new Republican state with a particular emphasis on women's suffrage. *Minguo nübao* 民國女報 (*Republican Women's Views*) was established in December 1912 in Shanghai. It was a biweekly published and edited by Liu Shunying 劉舜英 of Shanghai *nüzi canzheng hui* 上海女子參政會 (the Shanghai Women's Suffrage Society). *Nüquan yuebao* 女權月報 (*Women's Rights Monthly*) was established in December 1912 in Shanghai, edited by Wen Dian 文典, Le Qin 樂勤, Zi Sheng 滋生, and Leng Ya 冷垂. See Ma, *Women Journalists and Feminism in China*, 96–8.

<sup>287</sup> "Educational Notes," *The Spirit of Missions* 80:4 (April 1915): 287.

<sup>288</sup> White's comments were taken from her tribute published in *Woman's Missionary Friend*, the institutional magazine of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society. See Elizabeth S. Masland, "A Tribute," *Woman's Missionary Friend* (April 1937): 140. It is intriguing for White to mention "men" here as *Nü duo* targeted female readers. It is likely that what White referred here were male colleagues in the CLS, male contributors, and male readers who had shared similar viewpoints of the ideal notion of womanhood addressed in *Nü duo*.

<sup>289</sup> Masland, "A Tribute," 140.

30 Kinneer Road (currently known as Wuding xilu 武定西路), which was built in 1917 with her own inherited money.<sup>290</sup> It was also the office where White and Chinese staff edited *Nü duo*.<sup>291</sup>

White viewed progressive ideas concerning gender equality and women's emancipation among female reformists as dangerous. *Nü duo*, unlike secular women's magazines, aimed to advocate women's domestic virtues within the context of Christian ideals. In White's view, Chinese women needed to be enlightened through a spirit of self-sacrifice and the teaching of Christian virtues. *Nü duo* proclaimed such appeals. Although women's journals, as noted by Ma Yuxin, dropped the topic of suffrage and became politically conservative by turning to the good wife and wise mother model of womanhood due to the Press Laws in 1914,<sup>292</sup> the religious nature of *Nü duo* defined its agenda as a unique approach to family reform.

### ***Nü duo*: a Divine Domesticity**



“Jiating daogao tu shuo” 家庭禱告圖說 (Illustration of Prayer at Home), *Nü duo* (May 1912): 23.

The ideal family portrayed in *Nü duo* is Christian, with religious faith at its core, where all family members submitted to a Christian God and led a life governed by Christian ideals. Such a “divine domesticity” was characterised by a separation of familial roles based on gender where men were in

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<sup>290</sup> “Dr Mary Stone—China’s First Woman Doctor,” *Millard’s Review of the Far East* (August 28, 1920): 707. As her dwelling was very close to the McTyeire Girls’ School of the Methodist Church South, White rented half of the building to missionaries of the McTyeire School to pay off the mortgage. See Mary Ninde Gamewell, “A Day at Joyfield,” *Woman’s Missionary Friend* (June 1918): 193–4.

<sup>291</sup> Masland, “A Tribute,” 140.

<sup>292</sup> Ma, *Women Journalists and Feminism in China: 1898–1937*, 96–7.

charge of a family's external affairs, and women were responsible for household management. This domestic principle echoes Confucian patrilineal ethics epitomised in the saying *nan zhu wai nü zhu nei* 男主外，女主内 (men are in charge outside, women are in charge inside). While traditional gender norms placed women in an inferior status to men and confined women to the inner chambers, *Nü duo* stressed women's crucial role in safeguarding the household's spirituality. As a wife, a woman should submit to her husband and assist him in domestic affairs, but as a mother, she should spare no effort in nurturing the next generation with Christian ideals. The home was the sphere where she exercised her own agency and fulfilled divine obligations.

### **A Good Wife**

Identifying a bad wife is complementary to understanding what a good wife is. In a story published in *Nü duo* in August 1913, Laura White wrote about a couple who argued over household affairs.<sup>293</sup> Mr Yao, the husband, came back from work exhausted, only to find a messy house and his wife with dishevelled hair and a dirty face—the rice was overcooked and the oil lamp soon died out. Eventually, the husband complained to his wife but Mrs Yao ignored him as she was busy taking care of the baby. Mr Yao became angry and argued that he had fulfilled his responsibilities by providing clothes, shelter and food to the family, and insisted that laundry, cooking and cleaning were women's duties. Mrs Yao argued back and complained that she was overburdened with chores. Mr Yao proceeded to lecture her on how to manage a household and pointed out that diligence was the key principle in household management. If domestic income was limited, then thriftiness was the way to manage household expenditures. "If a wife fails to fulfil her duties, then what is the use of having her?" said Mr Yao. To prove his point, Mr Yao mentioned Mr Wang, who ran away with his lover. Mr Yao believed it was Mrs Wang's fault because she had been neglectful in her duties and had turned their house into a filthy and unpleasant place. When a husband saw the corrupt aspects of his wife's character, such as laziness,

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<sup>293</sup> Laura White, "Fufu zhi bianlun" 夫婦之辯論 (The Dispute between Husband and Wife), *Nü duo* (August 1913): 11–4.

arrogance and extravagance, he would be attracted to women who were gentle and whose houses were clean and tidy. At the end of the story, Mrs Yao expressed her shame and promised to serve her husband in the proper manner in the future. In response, Mr Yao laughed and said he would remain.

The majority of readers of *Nü duo* comprised women from middle and upper classes who were soon to be, or were already, housewives. The example of Mr Yao's expectations instructed these women that they were responsible for the domestic sphere and there was no excuse for a messy house. In White's view, a wife was expected to manage her household by pursuing principles of diligence and thrift where a failure to do so reflected a lax and lazy attitude. This, White warns, could result in dire consequences for the family as a wife's negligence in the household might even lead to the alienation of mutual affection.

In another essay, White addressed the issue of a good wife from a more positive perspective.<sup>294</sup> In response to a woman's question on how to win her husband's respect, White stated the qualities of a good wife. For a low-income family, the wife should be diligent in spinning and weaving, sweeping the floor, and cooking and pointed out that managing a household did not necessarily require much money. As long as the house was clean and everything was in order, the husband could then find peace and calm at home. For a wealthy family, while the wife might not be required to engage in household chores, she was required to get up one hour earlier in the morning to oversee her servants. Ultimately, an ideal wife must be humble, peaceful, and kind both within and outside the house.

Fundamental to White's concept of ideal womanhood was for women to fulfil their duties at home. The concept of *tian zhi* 天職, 'heavenly duty,' was a recurrent term in White's articles. Husbands were charged with financially supporting his family while his wife's heavenly duty was to manage the household well. Far from considering domesticity as confinement for women, White thought it was a women's privilege to obey this divine design. Since it was a heavenly occupation, women were

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<sup>294</sup> Laura White, "Neizhu tan" 內助談 (Discussion about Wives), *Nü duo* (September 1912): 5–7.

endowed with the talent to manage the household. In this sense, it was natural for women to stay at home and work on domestic chores.

White legitimised her views by resorting to a study of Western civilisation to argue that domesticity for women was a universal truth. Her serialised work entitled “History of Notable Women” was such an attempt. Sharing an equal relationship with each other, White considered both men and women had their specialities.<sup>295</sup> In one article, White praised the German family model of the Renaissance where she asserted that the deeds of German women were beneficial to their husbands. The German women’s industrious housework skills were exemplified in the long hours they spent weaving, managing meals for the family and helping the poor. A German wife was houseproud and a German mother would spare no effort in caring for her children and their needs, especially in areas such as health, hygiene and education.<sup>296</sup>

Theology underwrote the concept of *tian zhi* in White’s writings and is present in many articles in *Nü duo* which were part of a series featuring Christian ideals of marriage and the home. The Chinese title for this series was “Funü zhi tianzhi” or “Women’s Heavenly Duty.” The articles were translated and compiled by Mrs MacGillivray, a missionary dispatched by the London Mission Society in 1898<sup>297</sup> and who joined the CLS from 1900. The series was published in five separate articles from 1915 to 1916.<sup>298</sup> Issues covered the institution of marriage, the role of husband and wife, the character of the home, as well as the domestic and social duties of women. In the series, Mrs MacGillivray articulated that Christianity valued women’s status in marriage. The Christian ideal for women was to help their husbands and raise their offspring. Together with the biblical teaching that man was created before women, the gendered home was interpreted as a reflection of divine will. Nevertheless, women’s

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<sup>295</sup> Laura White, “Nüzu zuizhu zhi lishi” 女族最著之歷史 (History of Notable Women), *Nü duo* (May 1913): 1–4.

<sup>296</sup> Laura White, “Nüzu zuizhu zhi lishi” 女族最著之歷史 (History of Notable Women), *Nü duo* (December 1913): 4–8.

<sup>297</sup> John D. Meehan, *Chasing the Dragon in Shanghai: Canada’s Early Relations with China, 1858–1952* (Vancouver, Toronto: UBC Press, 2011).

<sup>298</sup> Mrs MacGillivray, “Funü zhi tianzhi” 婦女之天職 (Women’s Heavenly Duty), *Nü duo* (September, October, November, and December 1915; January, February, and March, 1916).

domestic obligations did not mean putting women in an inferior position to men. Instead, they possessed an essential duty that had divine imprimature.

While White emphasised women's household duties, she was not against women's agency in forming organisations to improve women's lives. From 1912 to 1919, *Nü duo* introduced several women's societies and institutions to its readers, such as the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), and a relief society founded for women and children. One article published in September 1912, for example, introduced a woman's seminar in Fuzhou organised by Miss M. E. Faithful-Davies (also known as Zhou Yingzhu 周瑩珠), a missionary from the Church Mission Society in Fujian. The purpose of the seminar was to increase women's awareness and social inclusion and those who were not at school were encouraged to join for regular reading sessions<sup>299</sup> where *Nü duo* was one of the selected readings.<sup>300</sup>

Magazines that followed Confucian principles shared White's promotion of women's role as homemaker as a heavenly duty. The term *tian zhi* can be seen in early Confucian writings. According to the "Discourse on Heaven," the seventeenth Chapter of the *Xunzi* 荀子, *tian zhi* is defined as "that which is accomplished without anyone's doing it and which is obtained without anyone's seeking."<sup>301</sup> As an essay on the nature of heaven, it emphasises consistent principles in the natural world such as the cycle of the four seasons. In early twentieth-century magazines, *tian zhi* was often linked to women, denoting their role of homemaking as a heavenly principle. In October 1910, a female student studying in Japan wrote an article entitled "Nüzi zhi tianzhi" (Women's Heavenly Duty) in the magazine *Nü xue sheng* 女學生 (*Female Students*, 1910–1912) published in Shanghai.<sup>302</sup> With the rise of female education, the author criticised the fact that women were now competing with men and argued

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<sup>299</sup> "Fuzhou chengnei funü yanjiuhui guizhang" 福州城內婦女研究會規章 (Regulations for Women's Study Group in Fuzhou), *Nü duo* (September 1912): 30.

<sup>300</sup> Miss M. E. Faithfull-Davies, "The Daughters of New China," *India's Women* (September 1912): 170–1.

<sup>301</sup> The original Chinese is "不為而成，不求而得，夫是之謂天職。"《荀子 天論》. For the English translation, see Eric L. Hutton, *Xunzi: The Complete Text* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 175.

<sup>302</sup> Sun Shixiong 孫世雄, "Nüzi zhi tianzhi" 女子之天職 (Women's Heavenly Duty), *Nü xue sheng* (October 1910): 2.

instead, that they should concentrate on their heavenly duty of childrearing and household management. Women's declining status in society was caused by a lack of knowledge rather than the restraint of Confucian moral ethics which advocated women's obedience and modest manner in the home. Compared with progressive ideas in magazines such as *Nü xue bao* and *Nüzi shijie*, *Nü xue sheng* promoted a traditional notion of womanhood.

*Funü zazhi* (*The Ladies' Journal*, 1915–1932) was an influential woman's magazine published by the Commercial Press in Shanghai, which aimed to promote the concept of ideal womanhood and its role in household management. In an article on women's heavenly duty published in *Funü zazhi* in February 1915, women were discouraged from being active in society because men would lose a virtuous wife and mother. The article referred to the teachings of Mencius, "The birth of a son occasions the wish that he should have a wife; the birth of a daughter occasions the wish that she should have a marital home."<sup>303</sup> Thus, it argued that women's heavenly duty focused on family while men focused on external society. It concluded with an appeal for women to fulfil their domestic duties to strengthen the nation.

The emphasis on women's domestic role as a heavenly duty in these pro-Confucian articles resonated with the positions advocated in *Nü duo*. The differences lay in the two different belief systems. *Nü duo* drew its authority from the Victorian notion of biblical teachings. Non-Christian Chinese magazines carried on the belief in Confucian doctrine. Thus, in regard to views on a woman's role in early Republican China, religious women's magazines were aligned with pro-Confucian intellectuals. At the beginning of the transition period, the Victorian notion of womanhood seemed to be less alien to local readers as they echoed long-cherished traditional ideas.

### ***Motherhood: an Essential Virtue***<sup>304</sup>

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<sup>303</sup> Wang San 王三, "Funü zhi tianzhi" 婦女之天職, *Funü zazhi* 婦女雜誌 (February 1915): 3. The original Chinese is, "丈夫生而願為之有室, 女子生而願為之有家。"《孟子 滕文公章句下》 For the English translation, see Irene Bloom (tr.), *Mencius* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 63–4.

<sup>304</sup> While bringing children up as Christians was regarded as a responsibility of mothers, *Nü duo* seemed to put





“Jinggao xin minguo nüzi” 敬告新民國女子 (Announcement to the New Republican Women), *Nü duo* (April 1912): 4.

The picture above appeared in the editorial column of the first issue of *Nü duo*. It was inserted in an article entitled “Jinggao xin minguo nüzi” 敬告新民國女子 (Announcement to the New Republican Women) by Laura White. The Chinese mother with her baby in her arms illustrated the ideal image of a new Republican female citizen. As her early evangelical work demonstrated, White had been an active promotor of motherhood and a firm believer in feminine virtue.

Influenced by the Scottish evangelist Henry Drummond (1851–1897), White viewed the world from the perspective of two great motivating factors, nutrition and reproduction. These two concepts were introduced in Drummond’s two essays entitled “The Struggle for Life” and “The Struggle for the Life of Others.”<sup>305</sup> According to Drummond, the fundamental struggle for human beings, as well as all other living creatures, was the problem of nutrition. Its object was to secure the life of the individual. In contrast, reproduction was the struggle for the life of others and its object was to secure the life of the species. As Drummond argued, “The first has a purely personal end; its attention is turned inwards;

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great emphasis on an educated mother who applied modern knowledge to raise children. Regarding the religious cultivation of children, *Nü duo* relied on the translations of religious novels. Compared with White, her colleague Elizabeth MacGillivray (?–1936), the wife of Donald MacGillivray (secretary of the CLS from 1919–1930), concentrated more on religious literature for children. Mrs MacGillivray was the editor of *Fu you bao* 福幼報 (*Happy Childhood*) from 1917 to 1929, a monthly magazine for children published by the CLS. See Song Lihua 宋莉华, “Cong wanqing dao ‘wusi’: chuanjiaoshi yu zhongguo xiandai ertong wenxue de mengnie” 从晚清到“五四”: 传教士与中国现代儿童文学的萌蘖, *Wenxue yichan* 文学遗产 No. 6 (2009): 90–1; Song Lihua 宋莉华, *Chuanjiaoshi hanwen xiaoshuo yanjiu* 传教士汉文小说研究 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2010), 159–96.

<sup>305</sup> Henry Drummond, *The Ascent of Man* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1894), 241–341.

it exists only for the present. The second in a greater or less degree is impersonal; its attention is turned outwards; it lives for the future.”<sup>306</sup> For Drummond, man’s life was determined primarily by the struggle for nutrition and woman’s life by the struggle for reproduction. In this sense, the gender divisions followed the principle that:

Man satisfies the one by going out into the world, and in the rivalries of war and the ardours of the chase, in conflict with Nature, and amid the stress of industrial pursuits, fulfilling the law of Self-preservation; Woman completes her destiny by occupying herself with the industries and sanctities of the home, and paying the debt of Motherhood to her race.<sup>307</sup>

In agreement with Drummond, White believed the female principle was the nobler of the two motive factors and claimed that it was “the prototype of all motherhood, –yes, of love itself.”<sup>308</sup> Motherhood in White’s view referred to both reproduction and a spirit of self-sacrifice, altruism, and love. Although White remained single throughout her life, she adopted the principle of self-sacrifice and advocated the concept of ideal motherhood in her evangelical work.

Under White’s editorship, *Nü duo* thus spilled much ink in promoting an ideal motherhood to local readers. In White’s mind, the new mother that China needed was an educated mother who was equipped with pedagogical methods. Compared with mothers in the past, new mothers surpassed the old ones in two ways.<sup>309</sup> Firstly, a new mother would enlighten her child in a benevolent, gentle, and patient way. Instead of forcing her child to obey, a new mother would guide the child and infuse a willing heart in him or her to listen to mother. She would observe the child’s nature and encourage him or her to develop hobbies and habits as long as they were reasonable. Chinese mothers in the past used to forbid their children doing things on their own. Children’s unauthorised actions worried

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<sup>306</sup> Ibid., 283.

<sup>307</sup> Ibid., 330.

<sup>308</sup> Laura M. White, “Two Holy Wars,” *Woman’s Missionary Friend* (January 1915): 9.

<sup>309</sup> Laura White, “Zhongguo jianglai zhi xin muqin” 中國將來之新母親 (The New Mother for China), *Nü duo* (July 1915): 4–8.

traditional mothers as children lacked experience in new things. A new mother, however, would allow the child to try new things. Even when the child was unable to fulfil the task, or the task was inappropriate for the child, she would point out the problem and guide the child onto the right track.

Secondly, an ideal mother would often read scientific and psychological research. She would gather other mothers together to discuss childrearing to learn from each other. Such an educated mother would understand children's development better than those who did not read. For instance, when a child grew up and was not much like its parents, an educated mother would not be surprised and worried, as she knew the theory of heredity. According to the observations of Gregor Mendel (1822–1884), the Austrian scientist and the founding father of the modern science of genetics, the skin pattern of a mouse was not found in its parents but its grandparents. Mendel then expanded the theory to human beings. By citing Mendel, White explained that a child might be more like its grandparents than its parents due to heredity. Knowing this, a new mother would then treat her child like a friend and keep it close to her.

One primary problem with Chinese mothers at that time, in White's view, was hygiene. In an article on a mother's duty to herself published in August 1912, White advised mothers to pay attention to their unkempt appearance.<sup>310</sup> Housewives occupied with domestic chores often cared less about themselves. Seeing her bedraggled appearance, a husband might forget she was his wife and children would despise her as a household maid. An educated woman, however, would be able to preen herself as well as manage a great deal of housework in a neat and orderly way. In this way, her husband would love her, and her children would respect her. White then referred to the story of a female college graduate who married a poor man. As they could not afford to hire a household maid, the wife was in charge of all the domestic work. Seeing her doing the laundry one afternoon, White asked her whether she was tired or not. The lady replied that she wanted to finish the laundry quickly so that she could

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<sup>310</sup> Laura White, "Jie wei ai yu jing zhi yuan" 潔為愛與敬之源 (Hygiene is the Source for Love and Respect), *Nü duo* (August 1912): 7–10.

change her clothes and sweep the floor to wait for her husband and child. White praised the lady for her understanding the importance of hygiene. Washing her face and changing clothes brought not only pleasure to her husband and child but also comfort to herself. Therefore, White concluded that cleanness was the source of love and respect.

To exemplify an appropriate role model for motherhood, White referred to Mary, the mother of Jesus. In addition to incorporating the biblical story into an article entitled “Maliya zhi yu Guanyin” 馬利亞之與觀音 (Mary Compared with Guanyin) in December 1912, White stressed Mary’s motherhood in raising her child as well as her obedience to the divine being.<sup>311</sup> Some content was not only made up but also contradicted the original text. The original emphasises Jesus’s growth in wisdom and stature, and barely mentioned his parents’ influence on him. Moreover, in some cases, the biblical texts show Mary’s failure in understanding Jesus’s behaviour.<sup>312</sup> Nevertheless, White showed Mary to be a caring mother. For instance, Mary paid much attention to physical training (*ti yu*) as she thought the Holy Spirit would guide Jesus morally and intellectually. She did not tell Jesus about the Holy Spirit and gave him great freedom when he grew up. When Jesus was crucified, Mary was not depicted as being sorrowful. Rather she thought this fulfilled Jesus’s will. After Jesus was resurrected, Mary then devoted the rest of her life to preaching. All these descriptions reflected White’s intention to highlight Mary’s motherhood.<sup>313</sup>

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<sup>311</sup> Laura White, “Maliya zhi yu Guanyin” 馬利亞之與觀音 (Mary Compared with Guanyin), *Nü duo* (December 1912): 1–4.

<sup>312</sup> See Luke 2: 41–52 (KJV). At the age of twelve, Jesus was taken by his parents to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast. When his parents returned, the child Jesus stayed in Jerusalem. When they noticed Jesus was not with them, they came back to Jerusalem and found he was asking questions in the temple. All were astonished at his understandings and his mother said to him, “Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? Behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing.”

<sup>313</sup> The veneration of Mary in Catholicism has been severely criticised by Protestant churches. However, in her book on the Virgin Mary, Elizabeth Hayes Alvarez argues that Mary became a symbol of Christian motherhood and womanhood in nineteenth-century America. Alvarez reveals that Mary was a culturally constructed symbol of idealised womanhood for both Catholics and Protestants. Despite the fact that Mary was absent from American Protestant churches, Marian imagery in visual and literary print culture increased from mid-nineteenth century. Reproduction of Raphael’s paintings of Mary, for instance, were popular and best sellers at the time. Alvarez further notes that the emphasis on Mary’s motherhood and domesticity by both American Catholics and Protestants developed as “a counterbalance to the harshness of the emerging capitalistic market”. See Elizabeth Hayes Alvarez, *The Valiant Woman: The Virgin Mary in Nineteenth-Century American Culture* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016), 1–16. Although the origin of White’s interpretation of Mary is hard to

White attributed the veneration of Mary among Western women to their showing respect and the worship of Guanyin among Chinese women to their despicable status. In her belief, Chinese women should have a place in society (*li shen* 立身) because they were gentler than all the other women in the world. Her interpretation was based on Matthew 5:5 (KJV), “Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.” In this light, women in China should be blessed as they were gentle. Their ignorance of Mary and worship of Guanyin were causes of their miserable situation. White then drew a comparison between Mary and Guanyin. She perceived Guanyin as the daughter of God (*shangdi zhi nü* 上帝之女), who came to the world to redeem women from misery. She was born to a family in India as their third daughter. At the age of sixteen, she refused to marry and focused on religious practice as she thought her body was unclean (*bu jie* 不潔). She died under the pressure of her father who urged her to marry. After her death, she went to hell and saved many miserable souls there. She then revived and became a nun. Her father later became ill and was told by a monk that he could only be saved by making a medicine from his own daughter’s hands and eyes. With the guidance of the monk, her father met Guanyin but did not recognise her. Guanyin agreed to sacrifice herself to heal her father. At that time, an angel transformed Guanyin into one with thousands of hands. When Guanyin finished admonishing her two sisters to conduct religious practice, she then ascended into the heaven.

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trace, it is reflexive of the popular image of Mary that conveyed purity and maternity. White’s influence from Marian culture can be seen in the circulation of popular Marian paintings by Raphael as well as writers who contributed to the Marian literature such as John Ruskin (1819–1900) in *Nü duo*. For the translated work of John Ruskin, see “Funü de le yuan” 婦女的樂園 (Women’s Paradise), *Nü duo* (October 1925). The original work was “Of Queen’s Gardens” in *Sesame and Lilies* published in 1865. For the reproduction of Raphael’s paintings in *Nü duo*, see “Maliya tu shuo” 馬利亞圖說 (The Illustration of Sistine Madonna), *Nü duo* (April 1912): 22; “Sheng Mageruite tu shuo” 聖瑪革銳圖說 (The Illustration of St. Margaret), *Nü duo* (May 1912): 1; “Maliya zhi yu Guanyin” 馬利亞之與觀音 (Mary Compared with Guanyin), *Nü duo* (December 1912): 1.



“Maliya zhi yu Guanyin” 馬利亞之與觀音 (Mary Compared with Guanyin), *Nü duo* (December 1912):  
1–2.<sup>314</sup>

Guanyin saving people from misery was noble and praiseworthy, but Mary surpassed Guanyin in her attitude towards women. According to White, Mary viewed women with respect while Guanyin despised women. When each was asked to marry and give birth to a child, Mary chose to obey the divine will and became a mother while Guanyin chose to remain single to conduct religious practice by herself. In White’s belief, men were born out of women and therefore women who admired Mary would think they were much purer than men. In contrast, women who worshipped Guanyin considered themselves unclean and even washed their clothes separately from men’s clothes. White compared Guanyin’s purity to the north side of a snowy mountain which was cold and useless and Mary’s to the south side of the mountain where the snow melted and became a creed to nurture living things.<sup>315</sup>

### **Childrearing**

Modern ideas of childrearing took hold during the late Qing dynasty as part of the national rejuvenation campaign, however, detailed instructions were discussed heatedly in the women’s

<sup>314</sup> The picture of Mary and Child in *Nü duo* was a reprint of the Renaissance painter Raphael’s “Madonna della seggiola” (Madonna with the Child and Young St. John).

<sup>315</sup> White, “Maliya zhi yu guanyin,” 4.

magazines and domestic magazines of the May Fourth period.<sup>316</sup> Writings on childrearing in *Nü duo* in the 1910s serve as one of the few voices before the May Fourth Movement that touched on infant care and children's domestic education. Several articles focused on infant nutrition and introduced advice for a proper diet for babies at different stages.<sup>317</sup> According to one article in April 1912, a baby should have only breast milk in its first year but could be fed cow's milk mixed with boiled water on reaching nine months old. After twelve months, a baby could have porridge, soup, and eggs. A typical daily meal for a baby under fifteen months was as follows:

At 6:30 a.m., six or seven ounces milk, two or three ounces porridge

At 9:00 a.m., orange juice

At 10:00 a.m., ten or twelve ounces of milk and porridge

At 2:00 p.m., a little beef broth or egg white.

At 6:00 p.m., same food as that of 10:00 a.m.

At 10:00 p.m., same food as that of 6:30 a.m.<sup>318</sup>

The new style of child nurturing introduced in *Nü duo* and other print media in the 1920s and 1930s was distinct from traditional methods in two aspects, namely, as Lo Shukying points out, feeding the infant at a fixed time and with a fixed amount. Although Lo also notes that cow's milk feeding was another feature of the new method,<sup>319</sup> *Nü duo* prioritised breastfeeding. The article published in January 1914 discussed the pros and cons of milk and breastfeeding.<sup>320</sup> In the story, an educated young mother rejected breastfeeding and fed her baby only with cow's milk as she thought it was clean and nutritious. Despite the high price of the milk and the care taken with it in storage, the baby

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<sup>316</sup> Shukying Lo, *Mother's Milk and Cow's Milk: Infant Feeding and the Reconstruction of Motherhood in Modern China, 1900–1937* (PhD diss., The Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2009).

<sup>317</sup> Peide 佩德, "Yuying wenda" 育嬰問答 (Questions and Answers about Childrearing), *Nü duo* (April 1912): 6–8; Huang Fuxiu 黃馥秀, "Yong niuru fa" 用牛乳法 (Methods of Cow's Milk Feeding), *Nü duo* (May 1912): 8–9; Li Xianzhen 李賢貞, "Renru yu niuru zhi youlie" 人乳與牛乳之優劣 (Good and Bad Features of Breast Feeding and Cow's Milk Feeding), *Nü duo* (January 1914): 15–6; Laura White, "Yuying xuzhi" 育嬰須知 (Points for Childrearing), *Nü duo* (May 1914): 18–20; Chen Zheng Yujiao 陳鄭玉嬌, "Yuying xuzhi" 育嬰須知 (Points for Childrearing), *Nü duo* (June 1914): 15–7.

<sup>318</sup> Peide, "Yuying wenda," 1–3.

<sup>319</sup> Lo, *Mother's Milk and Cow's Milk*, 73–80, 213.

<sup>320</sup> Li, "Renru yu niuru zhi youlie," 15–6.

was weak and often sick. In contrast, her maid's baby had nothing but breast milk and was very healthy. When the young mother consulted the doctor, she was told that breastfeeding was better than milk because it contained several good elements for the baby, such as phagocytes which were anti-toxins and protected the body from stomach pain and diarrhoea. Cow's milk, on the other hand, was not easy for babies to digest and could be contagious as cow's nipples were exposed to the open air. Also, the article advised mothers to choose to breastfeed because this would also enhance intimacy with their babies.

Another aspect of infant care was hygiene. One article introduced appropriate methods to make babies like bathing.<sup>321</sup> Instead of forcing babies to bathe, mothers were advised to be patient and gentle so as not to scare their babies. In order to provide a peaceful environment, mothers were told to place porcelain dolls in the bathtub, use perfumed soap and to have clean clothes at hand. Another way was to prepare a few toys and tell the baby that he or she could only play with them after the bath. By applying these methods repeatedly, a baby's fear of bathing would be removed and a love of bathing would be instilled.

To guide Chinese mothers in their children's domestic education, *Nü duo* published several translated articles. "Mengyang zhunsheng" 蒙養准繩 or "As the Twig is Bent" was one representative series published in the magazine from November 1913 to November 1914. Originally published by the American writer Susan Chenery in 1901, it was a story for mothers and teachers that dealt with the first seven years of a child's life regarding the cultivation of character and the teaching of truthfulness, obedience and honour.<sup>322</sup> The book comprised fourteen chapters and chiefly adopted a conversational form with a dialogue between a school teacher and her sister called Helen during a family holiday. Observing the good manners of her sister's two children, five-year old Margery and four-year old Frank,

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<sup>321</sup> Xu Zhubao 徐珠寶, "Ling ertong xi yu fa" 令兒童喜浴法 (Methods to Make Babies Like Bathing), *Nü duo* (May 1919): 22-4.

<sup>322</sup> Susan Chenery, *As the Twig is Bent* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1901).



the teacher recorded the daily events of the family to share with her readers thereby revealing appropriate pedagogical methods for raising children.

When the story was translated into Chinese, a few changes were made for local readers. The school teacher was called Ms Nong 農女士, and Helen was called Tan shimu 譚師母. Margery was called Langui 蘭桂 and Frank was Baohua 寶華. Ms Nong taught at a mission school in Tianjin and was invited by her sister Tan shimu to her house in Suzhou for the summer. The rest of the storyline was similar to that of the original version. While Ms Nong stayed at Tan shimu's house, she discussed childrearing with Tan shimu. Conversations around specific themes took place when Tan shimu or occasionally Ms Nong was dealing with the two children. In one scenario, for instance, when the two children were fighting over toys, Tan shimu used this situation to teach them unselfishness. A fight occurred when Langui was told by Ms Nong to give her picture blocks to Baohua. When Langui asked Baohua to give the blocks back, and Baohua did not listen to her, she became upset and pulled them away while Ms Nong was out of the room. When Tan shimu came back and heard about what had happened, she told Ms Nong that Langui would easily become selfish and therefore she would patiently guide Langui to share her toys with her brother. The method was as follows:

I say, "Langui, that is yours, and you need not give it to Baohua if you do not wish to; but I think it would be very nice for you to surprise him in a few minutes when he doesn't expect it." Or I say to Baohua in her hearing, "Langui is a dear kind sister, and she lets you take a great many of her things. I shouldn't be surprised if in a few minutes she would let you take it. However, she need not if she does not wish to." This has generally brought about a voluntary act of kindness.<sup>323</sup>

The appropriate method in this scenario was to assure the child of his or her ownership of the toys and ask him or her to respect the similar rights of the others. Additionally, the mother then should

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<sup>323</sup> A modification of the original source in Chenery, *As the Twig is Bent*, 24. Yuan Yuying 袁玉英, "Mengyang zhunsheng" 蒙養准繩 (*As the Twig is Bent*), *Nü duo* (December 1913): 16.

guide the child to enjoy the pleasure of sharing one's toys with others. The article also discussed other issues including honesty, obedience, temper, good habits, happiness and children's thoughts on religion. The concluding chapter entitled "Ping an shi" 平安室 or "the Chamber of Peace" in *Nü duo* was absent from the original.<sup>324</sup> Created by the editorial board, the final part of the story elaborated on reasons why Tan shimu was patient in childrearing. It asserted that an excellent domestic education lay in whether parents were able to create peace. Tan shimu was inspired by her visit to a mission school in Shandong Province with three American women of her own age where she noticed a room for prayer furnished only with a chair, a table and a picture of Christ praying at Gethsemane. Tan met a student called Song Ailian 宋愛蓮 who went to the prayer room and later became a good friend. After her marriage, Song established a prayer room as a respite from the tedium of daily household chores and the stresses of social relationships. In this way, the article highlighted the benefits of living a religious life, especially for mothers.

In addition to the inclusion of translated serials aimed at promoting guidelines for domestic education, *Nü duo* also provided women with practical suggestions on childrearing. From 1913 to 1915, White had translated a series of questions printed in American women's magazines and published a few questions in English and Chinese.<sup>325</sup> Readers were encouraged to contribute their ideas and those who answered more than five questions would be published and rewarded.<sup>326</sup> The interaction with Chinese readers functioned as one platform for sharing ideas on childrearing.

Answers from many readers were printed in the following issues. A few questions raised were how a child could be taught to be generous, how a child who is always late could be taught to be punctual, and how children can best be taught love from reading the Bible.<sup>327</sup> One response to the first question

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<sup>324</sup> "Mengyang zhunsheng" 蒙養准繩 (As the Twig is Bent), *Nü duo* (November 1914): 13–8.

<sup>325</sup> Laura White, "Fudaohui wenti" 婦道會問題 (Questions that Mothers Ask), *Nü duo* (October to December, 1913; January to June, October to December, 1914; January, 1915).

<sup>326</sup> White, "Fudaohui wenti," *Nü duo* (October 1913).

<sup>327</sup> The first question was published in October 1913 in *Nü duo*. The second and third questions were published in November 1913 in *Nü duo*.

from a reader was that children tended to be mean and suggested parents should teach them to share food or toys with their friends. Once such a habit was formed, the child would consider it reasonable to give away his or her food or toys. An alternative was to tell the child stories of generous people so that he or she could imitate these good examples.<sup>328</sup> Regarding the second question, one reader traced the reasons for a child's punctuality problem to a desire to remain playing outside rather than returning home. Accordingly, parents were told to establish a time limit for outdoor activity. A clean home and a conducive atmosphere, on the other hand, would encourage children to stay home and play.<sup>329</sup> Regarding the third question, one suggestion advised that biblical stories be related in simple words and that reading be encouraged in the home by parents reading the Bible with their children.<sup>330</sup>

### ***Against the Tide***

Women's domestic role, as promoted in *Nü duo* and pro-Confucian magazines, represented a sharp contrast with writings on women's social and political roles in the wider community. Women's magazines in the non-Christian community were saturated with arguments for women's suffrage and gender equality. Despite women's participation in the revolution against the Qing dynasty, the new Republican constitution did not incorporate gender equality nor recognise women's political rights. Seeing the injustice against female citizens, many intellectual women identified journalism as an ideal way to promote women's involvement in politics. From 1912 to 1917, Yuxin Ma calculates, more than thirty women's magazines emerged. Many of the female journalists who contributed to the 1911 revolution were enthusiastic about women's political rights in the new regime.<sup>331</sup>

Many educated women formed their own associations and published their institutional journals. One representative example was the Shenzhou nǚjie xiejishe 神州女界協濟社. Its predecessor was the

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<sup>328</sup> "Diqice fudaohui wenti da'an" 第七冊婦道會問題答案 (Answers to Questions that Mothers Ask, published in the seventh volume), *Nü duo* (November 1913): 11.

<sup>329</sup> "Dijiuce fudaohui wenti da'an" 第九冊婦道會問題答案 (Answers to Questions that Mothers Ask, published in the ninth volume), *Nü duo* (January 1914): 11–2.

<sup>330</sup> "Dibace fudaohui wenti da'an" 第八冊婦道會問題答案 (Answers to Questions that Mothers Ask, published in the eighth volume), *Nü duo* (December 1913): 11.

<sup>331</sup> Ma, *Women Journalists and Feminism in China 1898–1937*, 94–5.

Shanghai nüjie xiezanhui 上海女界協贊會, which was used to raise money for the 1911 revolution.<sup>332</sup> Reformed in March 1912 in Shanghai, Shenzhou nüjie xiejishe aimed to “popularise education, advocate industry, promote political knowledge among women, cultivate comprehensive citizens, and facilitate the cause of republic.”<sup>333</sup> Its weekly was titled *Shenzhou nübao* 神州女報 (*Shenzhou Women’s News*, November 1912–July 1913). The forward criticised the deprivation of women’s civil rights (*gongquan* 公權) and keenly promoted gender equality and women’s suffrage.<sup>334</sup> Nüzi guoxuehui 女子國學會 was another case in point. It was formed in 1912 to launch research on the Chinese classics in light of the notion of natural rights (*tianfu renquan* 天賦人權) in order to reinterpret the classics and uproot cultural and political practices that degraded women’s status.<sup>335</sup> Its institutional biweekly entitled *Nüzi guoxuebao* 女子國學報 circulated letters to prominent political figures such as Sun Yat-sen and Yuan Shikai with the first issue. The key message was to appeal for women’s political rights and obligations in the construction of the new nation. Articles circulated in it therefore advocated women’s political and social rights. One article selected was a reprint of a female representatives’ appeal to President Sun Yat-sen, which urgently requested women’s suffrage.<sup>336</sup>

Speeches and activities of the Nüzi canzheng tongmenghui 女子參政同盟會 (Women’s Suffrage Alliance) had been widely circulated in the press. It was established in Nanjing in April 1912 under the leadership of Tang Qunying 唐群英 (1871–1937), who was the first female member of the Tongmenghui 同盟會 (Chinese Revolutionary Alliance). The purpose of this Alliance, according to the

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<sup>332</sup> Tan Sheying 談社英, *Fuyun si shi nian* 婦運四十年 (Forty Years of the Women’s Movement) (n.p., 1952), 3–4.

<sup>333</sup> Liu Renfeng 刘人鋒, “Minguo chuqi lizhu funü canzheng de funü kanwu—*Shenzhou nübao*” 民国初期力主婦女參政的婦女刊物——神州女報 (The Women’s Magazine that Advocated Women’s Suffrage in Early Republican China—*Shenzhou nübao*), *Zhonghua nüzi xueyuan xuebao* 中华女子学院学报 (October 2010): 101. Translation by author.

<sup>334</sup> Zhang Zhaohan 張昭漢, “*Shenzhou nübao* fakan ci” 神州女報發刊詞 (The Forward to *Shenzhou nübao*), *Shenzhou nübao* 神州女報 Vol. 1 (November 1912). Reprinted in *Zhongguo jindai funü yundong lishi ziliao 1840–1918* 中国近代妇女运动历史资料 1840–1918 (n.p.: Zhongguo funü chubanshe, 1991), 296–7.

<sup>335</sup> “Faqi Zhonghua minguo nüzi guoxuehui qi” 發起中華民國女子國學會啓 (Statement Initiating the Republican Nüzi guoxuehui), *Nüzi guoxue bao* 女子國學報 Vol. 1 (April 1912): 2.

<sup>336</sup> “Nüjie daibiao shang Sun zongtong shu” 女界代表上孫總統書 (Female Representatives’ Appeal to President Sun Yat-sen), *Nüzi guoxue bao* Vol. 1 (April 1912): 1–3.

regulations circulated in its institutional journal *Nüzi baihua xunbao* 女子白話旬報 (*The 10-day Women's Vernacular News*, October 1912–May 1913), was to implement gender equality and women's suffrage.<sup>337</sup> It had launched several petitions for women's civil rights to the government, resulting in the delivery of indignant speeches. An example of the mood generated at this time is seen on the occasion when Tang and other members of the Alliance went to the senate to demand women's suffrage on 9 December 1912. After being rejected by the security guards on grounds that the senator was in a meeting, Tang and the other representatives began raging and roaring (*dasi paoxiao* 大肆咆哮). Eventually, they entered the senate chamber and waited for the senator Wu Jinglian 吳景濂 (1873–1944). During the meeting, female representatives strongly criticised the senator's opposition to women's suffrage and protested that:

Senators were born by women. Women had been secret detectives and formed bomb squads in the revolutionary movement. Women sacrificed their lives and property like their male counterparts. Why are women abandoned when the revolution is achieved? ... Even if President Yuan Shikai disapproves of women's suffrage, there is no need to recognise Yuan as the President. We will be coming to the senator in three days for the ultimate resolution. ... otherwise, women will resort to militant force to solve the problem.<sup>338</sup>

Later the Alliance published critiques of the Yuan government in *Nüzi baihua xunbao*. As anti-government activities escalated, Yuan suppressed the organisation and closed down its journal. Yuan Shikai's attempt to restore the monarchy, however, saw the nationalist legislators curbed and military

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<sup>337</sup> "Nüzi canzheng tongmenghui jianzhang cao'an" 女子参政同盟會簡章草案 (Draft for the Women's Suffrage Alliance), *Nüzi baihua xunbao* 女子白話旬報 Vol. 3 (November 1912): 37.

<sup>338</sup> "Nüshi da ma canyiyuan" 女士大罵參議員 (Female Representatives Strongly Criticised the Senator), *Ai guo bao* 愛國報 (11 December 1912). Reprinted in *Zhongguo jindai funü yundong lishi ziliao 1840–1918*, 609–10.

gatherings prohibited. The Press Laws of 1914 placed a limit on political advocacy, and the press was censored.<sup>339</sup>

White was more of an opponent of women's rights than a supporter of the cause. From her viewpoint, those who advocated for increasing women's rights were inclined to contend with men, which would lead to disharmony in the domestic domain.<sup>340</sup> Noting the involvement of female reformists in organisations such as the Military Society (*junshituan* 軍事團) and the Fund-raising Society (*xiezanhui* 協贊會), White reminded Chinese women that their heavenly duty was in the home and advised women to form groups to study domestic science.<sup>341</sup> She encouraged school girls to learn and prioritise mothercraft above other courses.<sup>342</sup> To emphasise women's maternal role, in 1912 White translated a message to women from Elisabeth of Wied (1843–1916),<sup>343</sup> who was the Queen of Romania (1881–1914). Although the Chinese title literally indicated that this letter was from the Romanian Queen to Chinese women ("Lumaniya nüwang zhi Zhongguo nüzi shu" 魯瑪尼亞女王致中國女子書), its English title on *Nü duo's* cover page suggests that this 'letter' was adapted by White, which was "Message to Women (adapted) by her Majesty Elizabeth, Queen of Roumania."<sup>344</sup> White's adaptation made it difficult to identify to what extent the article actually represented the Queen's ideas. The main message of this 'letter' promoted women's household roles. It discouraged Chinese women's political and military engagement and wrote:

The reason for current Chinese women to join military groups was the previous oppression of women, treating them like slaves and playthings. Once they regained freedom, they became indulged in their rights and would not concede to men. One ought

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<sup>339</sup> The Press Laws of 1914 were reprinted in *Jiangsu jiaoyu xingzheng yuebao* 江蘇教育行政月報 Vol. 16 (1914): 1–5. Ma, *Women Journalists and Feminism in China*, 94.

<sup>340</sup> White, "Nei zhu tan," 7.

<sup>341</sup> Laura White, "Jinggao xinminguo nüzi" 敬告新民國女子 (Announcement to the New Republican Women), *Nü duo* (April 1912): 3–4.

<sup>342</sup> White, "Zhongguo jianglai zhi xinmuqin," 4.

<sup>343</sup> Also known as Carmen Sylva.

<sup>344</sup> *Nü duo* used 'Roumania,' which is the old-fashioned spelling of 'Romania,' in its English title. Laura White, "Lumaniya nüwang zhi zhongguo nüzi shu" 魯瑪尼亞女王致中國女子書 (Letter from Romanian Queen to Chinese Women), *Nü duo* (September 1912): cover page.

to know that God created women not to do things men can do but to do things men cannot. The most important thing God designed women to conduct was motherhood.<sup>345</sup>

Despite the fact that the Romanian Queen barely mentioned Chinese women in her writings, she was well-known as the author Carmen Sylva who had written several articles on feminine virtues.<sup>346</sup> White's intention in adapting Sylva's ideas could not be more obvious: to introduce a female political figure who cherished feminine virtues, thereby counteracting those Western feminist ideas Chinese female students encountered. White's attitude towards feminism echoed that of Queen Elizabeth of Romania, who "had much sympathy with feminism and stimulated higher education for women in Romania ... but drew the line where political rights were concerned."<sup>347</sup> The Queen's attitude on this matter was manifested in a letter to her friend, the Empress of the Austro-Hungarian Empire where she expanded her views on the differences between men and women. She commented that "[N]ature has not given us male strength nor male logic—of course female labour should be better paid—but political rights seem quite unnecessary to me."<sup>348</sup> It indicated that the Queen of Romania disagreed with the women's suffrage movements. The 'letter' published in *Nü duo*, while certainly emphasising the importance of women's role in motherhood, was primarily focused on the filial virtues of selflessness and benevolence.

White thought notions of equality and demands for suffrage distracted Chinese women from their domestic obligations.<sup>349</sup> The meaning of freedom, for White, had both a spiritual and physical manifestation which was an uplifting experience as it brought one closer to God. She categorised the process into four stages; benevolence (*ai* 愛), a love for work (*hao gongzuo* 好工作), a reborn soul

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<sup>345</sup> White, "Lumaniya nüwang zhi zhongguo nüzi shu," 1.

<sup>346</sup> For instance, "'The Woman's Vocation and other Poems' and other Poems," *North American Review* (March 1900): 446–7; H. Sutherland Edwards (tr.), *Thoughts of a Queen* (London: Eden, Remington & Co., 1890); H. Sutherland Edwards (tr.), *Golden Thoughts of Carmen Sylva* (London: John Lane, 1911).

<sup>347</sup> Monique Leyenaar & Jantine Oldersma, "Introduction: Representation and Inclusion," *Representation* Vol. 43 No. 2 (2007): 70.

<sup>348</sup> *Ibid.* For the original letter, see Carmen Sylva, *Briefe einer einsamen Königin* (München: Braun und Schneider, 1916).

<sup>349</sup> Laura White, "Nüzu zuizhu zhi lishi" 女族最著之歷史 (History of Notable Women), *Nü duo* (December 1913): 8; White, "Jinggao xinminguo nüzi," 4–5.

(*linghun fuzao* 靈魂復造), and devoutness (*jing qian* 敬虔).<sup>350</sup> To elaborate this evolving process, White published a series on the history of noteworthy women, including Spartan mothers, women in the golden age of Greece, Roman matrons, women in the early Christian church, women of the dark ages, women of the Renaissance, Teutonic women and Anglo-Saxon women.<sup>351</sup> This historical exploration aimed to persuade Chinese women that true freedom came “only as a woman exchanges the earthly for the heavenly, as the Eve within is converted into the Mary.”<sup>352</sup>

Regarding women’s suffrage, while White sympathised with Chinese women’s lack of political rights, she objected to resorting to militant force to obtain them. In her report to the *Woman’s Missionary Friend* in February 1913, she confessed that she was a moderate non-militant suffragist.<sup>353</sup> In her view, Chinese women should imitate American women who she argued gained such rights due to their moral standing and education. In an article in *Nü duo* titled “Meiguo nüzi dequan zhi yuanyin” (美國女子得權之原因 Reasons Why American Women Obtained Suffrage), White related how American women formed clubs and promoted social service to improve the community. Their activities included cleaning up streets, establishing parks, fundraising for public affairs, and rescue homes for children. White thought that such noble actions had gained the respect of men resulting in being granted suffrage. In this way, virtue and learning had succeeded where violence, propagated by some Chinese women, would fail to achieve their goals and was hence, inappropriate.<sup>354</sup>

Positions such as this that opposed the revolutionary tide in the non-Christian community were the foundation of *Nü duo* during this period. It attempted to awaken women with an emphasis on their domestic obligations from the viewpoint of Christianity. Articles about, by, and for women sent out one consistent message: women’s heavenly duty in the household transcended time and space. This

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<sup>350</sup> Laura White, “Nüzu zuizhu zhi lishi” 女族最著之歷史 (History of Notable Women), *Nü duo* (August 1918): 3.

<sup>351</sup> Laura White, “Nüzu zuizhu zhi lishi” 女族最著之歷史 (History of Notable Women), *Nü duo* (May 1913): 1–2.

<sup>352</sup> White, “A Union Woman’s College,” 645.

<sup>353</sup> Laura M. White, “Not a Chinese Suffragist,” *Woman’s Missionary Friend* (February 1913): 60.

<sup>354</sup> Laura White, “Meiguo nüzi dequan zhi yuanyin” 美國女子得權之原因 (Reasons Why American Women Obtained Suffrage), *Nü duo* (February 1915): 1–5.



received support from former late Qing gentry officials. Appreciations from politicians in Shanxi, Sichuan, and Gansu in 1912 and 1913 criticised the recklessness of promoting freedom and equality in the women's sphere and praised *Nü duo* for teaching women with domestic morals. For instance, in his congratulatory letter, Ding Baoquan, ex-governor of Shanxi, wrote that women's responsibilities were to the family and stressed the importance of home education (*jiating jiaoyu* 家庭教育) and the four virtues (*si de* 四德) as the foundation of the family. The "four virtues" remained the fundamental principles of women's teaching and were based on Confucian doctrines that emphasised women's "virtue" (*de* 德), "carriage" (*rong* 容), "speech" (*yan* 言), and "work" (*gong* 功).<sup>355</sup> Regarding women's rights to demand free marriage and gender equality, Ding considered that these crossed the boundary of *li fa* 禮法 (rules of etiquette).<sup>356</sup> Hu Jingyi 胡景伊 (1878–1950), a government official in Sichuan in the late Qing and the early Republican era, noted that women were obsessed with Westernisation (*zuixin ouhua* 醉心歐化) and believed they misunderstood the principles of freedom and equality. In Hu's view, wise men were disappointed at this phenomenon and were eager to save the situation. He, therefore, wrote a letter to *Nü duo* to commend it for assisting women's moral, intellectual, and physical development.<sup>357</sup> A similar message is given in a letter by Zhao Weixi 趙惟熙 (1859–1917), governor of Gansu. Zhao praised White's work in awakening women who were "dazzled" (*xuan* 眩) by concepts of equality and freedom rather than concentrating on their heavenly duty.<sup>358</sup>

With the issue of the Press Law of 1914 報紙條例 (*baozhi tiaoli*) by the Republican government, the promotion of women's political rights and equality with men eased. The new law was based on the earlier Press Law of 1907 大清報律 (*daqing baolü*), which aimed to control and censor the publishing industry. A summary of the new press law was published in the influential newspaper *Shen bao* 申報 (*Shanghai News*). According to the new regulations, publishers were required to register their articles

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<sup>355</sup> The English translation is taken from a reprint of James Legge's translation of *Li ji*. See James Legge (tr.), Ch'u Chai and Winberg Chai (eds.), *Li Chi: Book of Rites, Vol. II* (N.Y.: University Books, 1967), 432.

<sup>356</sup> Ding, "Zhu ci," 3.

<sup>357</sup> Hu, "Chuandu huishu," 1.

<sup>358</sup> Zhao, "Gansu dudu huishu," 1.

with the local authority stating the title of the article, describing its style, and including the name of the publisher and the editor one day before going to press. Articles should not defame the government, damage public safety, or corrupt morals.<sup>359</sup> Similar to the Press Law of 1914 issued in April, the Republican government later issued a Publication Law 出版法 (*chu ban fa*) in December 1914, with twenty-three articles.<sup>360</sup> Under the new publication regulations, as Ma notes, many women's journals "dropped the topic of suffrage ... [and] turned to the 'good wives and wise mothers' model of womanhood."<sup>361</sup>

## Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated that *Nü duo* articulated views on the domestic duty of women from a religious perspective, believing that this was the natural order and doing so would eventually lead to a prosperous future and a strong nation. Discussions on family, women, and the nation projected an ideal female figure for a new nation whose duty lay in the domestic world. The emphasis on the domestic roles of women, especially mothers, articulated by Laura White, was reminiscent of the Victorian notion of motherhood in nineteenth-century America that promoted women as homemakers.<sup>362</sup> Debate on the role of women in Chinese society underwent continued revision in the following decades, specifically in the period following the end of the first World War. The manner in which this was reflected in articles in *Nü duo* is the subject of the following chapter.

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<sup>359</sup> "Xin baolü neirong zhi gailue" 新報律內容之概略 (A Summary of the New Press Law), *Shen bao* 申報 (*Shanghai News*) (4 April 1914).

<sup>360</sup> "Chu ban fa" 出版法 (The Publication Law), *Shen bao* (8 December 1914).

<sup>361</sup> Ma, *Women Journalists and Feminism in China*, 96–7.

<sup>362</sup> Although Western missionary women had freedom to form foreign missions, Patricia R. Hill argues that they were restricted within parameters defined by prevailing religious and Victorian cultural ideologies such as the sanctification of motherhood of the time. See Hill, *The World Their Household*, 39.

## Chapter 4 Contending with New Gender Ethics: 1915–1929

The euphoria of Western-inspired Chinese intellectuals over the 1911 Revolution had waned by the second decade of the twentieth century. Yuan Shikai's attempted restoration of the monarchy in 1915 alarmed a group of intellectuals, who advocated democracy and science as Republican ideals as alternatives to the revival of imperialist thinking. In response, they launched a cultural challenge to Confucianism. This cultural movement, historically known as the New Culture Movement or later, the May Fourth movement (1915–1925), witnessed a plethora of new ideas. These significantly challenged Confucian values, the dominant value system determining domestic life. Discussions on the institution of the family were inspired by competing ideologies including nationalism, communism, liberalism, and cosmopolitanism among others. Gender ethics, in particular, generated a heated debate in the contest between Chinese tradition and Western modernity.

This chapter examines how the debate on gender ethics was represented in *Nü duo*. It investigates how the magazine wrestled with new ideas on the role of women while retaining its agenda of upholding Victorian feminine virtues. *Nü duo's* on-going efforts to promote an ideal of a Victorian "womanhood" reveal that it was more than a frivolous magazine catering simply for the daily interests of women. Rather it contended with proponents of changing the nature of the family and women's domestic roles. Its articles were concerned with important national questions, specifically with the role of women in the new Republic and their contribution to Chinese patriotism.<sup>363</sup> A careful examination reveals a gendered division where male Christians were active in promoting a religious

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<sup>363</sup> "Aiguo ge" 愛國歌 (Patriotic Song), *Nü duo* (May 1912): 20; "Zhonghua aiguo ge" 中華愛國歌 (Chinese Patriotic Song), *Nü duo* (July 1912): 15; "Xingguo ge" 興國歌 (Song for National Revival), *Nü duo* (February 1913): 17–9; "Aiguo ge" 愛國歌 (Patriotic Song), *Nü duo* (February 1916): 35–6; "Biye ge" 畢業歌 (Song for Graduation), "Aiguo ge" 愛國歌 (Patriotic Song), *Nü duo* (April 1917): 29–32; "Qinpu: aiguo ge" (琴譜) 愛國歌 (Music Script for Patriotic Song), *Nü duo* (November 1917): 22–3; Yuan Yuying 袁玉英, "Zhen aiguo zhi yanshuo" 真愛國之演說 (A Speech on True Patriotism), *Nü duo* (December 1917): 2–6; Sun Guangdou 孫光斗, "Jidujiao jiuguolun" 基督教救國論 (Christianity Can Save China), *Nü duo* (May 1918): 30–7; Sun Guangdou, "Jidujiao jiuguolun," *Nü duo* (July 1918): 28–31.

formula for national revival while Christian women focused on feminine virtues, in parallel with Victorian notions of the role of woman in the home.

An indigenous movement among Chinese Christians in the 1920s, however, resulted in a growing tension between the Victorian feminine virtues held dear by *Nü duo's* editor Laura White, and patriotism among the Chinese Christian women, and are reflected in *Nü duo*. Following the national humiliation of 1919 when China lost Shandong to Japan at the Versailles Peace Conference, the anti-Christian movement of the 1920s further compelled Chinese Christians to demonstrate their loyalty. *Nü duo's* incorporation of articles on the social and political engagement of Chinese women displays a growing patriotism among local people, indicating a fracture in its advocacy of women's domestic duties. The conflict began to intensify following the May Thirtieth movement of 1925 when Chinese Christians rebelled against the foreign missionaries' monopoly of the Christian enterprise in China. Writings in *Nü duo*, nevertheless, display its vulnerability to the growing tide of nationalism among Chinese Christians. Rather than simply advocating a Victorian Christian family model, *Nü duo*, as this chapter demonstrates, manifested a compound of ideas inspired by complex interactions between Western notions and local sentiment.

### **Attacking Confucian Gender Ethics**

Conventionally, the historiography of the May Fourth Movement identifies two seemingly opposed ideologies, tradition and modernity. Debate among leading Chinese intellectuals of the time focused on the worth and place of a Confucian-dominated traditional culture while embracing modern Western ideas. Following the farce of the attempted restoration in 1915, a wide array of magazines emerged criticising Confucian ritualism and promoting Western notions of democracy and science. This was seen in the increasingly popular May Fourth period newspapers, where the critical attitude of iconoclastic intellectuals resembled the nationalism of Shanghai's news media earlier in the

twentieth century.<sup>364</sup> Barbara Mittler contends that this nationalist sentiment was not xenophobic but “idiophobic”—one that was against “the self.”<sup>365</sup> Hu Shi 胡適 (1891–1962), a leader of the New Culture Movement, foreshadowed Mittler’s argument and identified the new trend of thought (*xin sichao* 新思潮) as “an attitude of judgement” (*pingpan de taidu* 評判的態度). Specifically, Hu explained that this attitude was one that questioned traditional customs and teachings and reassessed them in a new society where Western teachings prevailed as the guiding principles.<sup>366</sup>

A humanist perspective from Western liberalism was evident in the writings of the New Culturalists as seen clearly in the monthly *Xin qingnian* 新青年 (*New Youth*).<sup>367</sup> They concentrated their attack on the “inhumanness” (*fei ren* 非人) of Confucianism.<sup>368</sup> *Xin qingnian*’s editor Chen Duxiu 陳独秀 (1879–1942) published several articles attacking the principle of *sangang wuchang*, the canon of Confucianism, and described it as a “slave morality” (*nuli daode* 奴隶道德). In Chen’s view, the monarch enslaved the public, father enslaved son, and husband enslaved wife, which resulted in a lack of individual autonomy and independence.<sup>369</sup>

Lu Xun 魯迅 (1881–1936) was a regular contributor to *Xin qingnian*. His work entitled *Kuangren rijì* 狂人日記 (*A Madman’s Diary*, published in 1918) exposed the nature of Confucian dogma through the eyes of a madman who saw “cannibalism” in his family, his village, and in the Confucian classics.<sup>370</sup> According to Lu Xun, this madman actually saw reality more clearly than others, noting that the corruption of traditional doctrines and ritualism had infiltrated Chinese families. When the madman

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<sup>364</sup> Mo Zhibin 莫志斌, Guo Xiaomin 郭晓敏, “Jin san shi nian lai guanyu ‘wusi qianhou baokan’ yanjiu zongshu” 近三十年来关于“五四前后报刊”研究综述 (Summary of Research on ‘May Fourth newspapers’ over the Past Three Decades), *Huaihua xueyuan yuebao* 怀化学院学报 Vol. 34 No. 4 (April 2015): 63–6. According to this article, around 200 newspapers were established during the May Fourth period.

<sup>365</sup> Barbara Mittler, *A Newspaper for China? Power, Identity, and Change in Shanghai’s News Media, 1872–1912* (Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard University Press, 2004), 363.

<sup>366</sup> Hu Shi 胡适, “Xin si chao de yiyi” 新思潮的意義 (The Meaning of the New Trend of Thought), *Xin qingnian* 新青年 Vol. 7 No. 1 (1 December 1919): 6.

<sup>367</sup> The original title was *Qingnian zazhi* and was changed to *Xin Qingnian* in September 1916.

<sup>368</sup> Wang, *Women in the Chinese Enlightenment*, 11.

<sup>369</sup> Chen Duxiu 陳独秀, “Yi jiu yi liu” 一九一六年 (1916), *Qingnian zazhi* 青年雜誌 Vol. 1 No. 5 (1916): 1–4.

<sup>370</sup> Lu Xun 魯迅, “Kuangren rijì” 狂人日記 (*A Madman’s Diary*), *Xin qingnian* Vol. 4 No. 5 (15 May 1918): 415–24.

turned to historical scholarship, he found the two words “chi ren” 吃人 (eat people) between the lines of the writings on “renyi daode” 仁義道德 (benevolence, righteousness, and virtue). In the end, the madman proclaimed the most pressing need as “Saving the children as they may not have been instilled with traditional culture.”<sup>371</sup>

In the attack against Confucian regulation, gender ethics became one of the fronts in the ideological battle, as seen in the writings of *Xin qingnian*.<sup>372</sup> In 1916 Chen Duxiu published an article entitled “Kongzi zhi dao yu xiandai shenghuo” 孔子之道与現代生活 (The Way of Confucius and Modern Life) where he highlighted individual independence embodied in the right of women to remarry. He thought women's participation in politics was an integral part of women's life in a modern civilisation.<sup>373</sup> Like Chen, who opposed the chastity of widows, Lu Xun criticised this practice in an article entitled “Wo zhi jielieguan” 我之節烈觀 (My Views on Chastity) published in the August 1918 issue of *Xin qingnian*. The long cherished moral code for women, Lu Xun pointed out, was deeply flawed in arguing that unchaste women posed a threat to society and that women should shoulder the burden of improving the world.<sup>374</sup>

His introduction to Henrik Ibsen's play, *A Doll's House* in the June 1918 issue of *Xin qingnian* advanced the discussion of how women were trapped by tradition and male domination. Ibsen's central theme of the inferior status of married women arising from their place in a patriarchal society which offered little opportunity for personal fulfilment, caught the attention of Lu Xun. Reflecting on the status of Chinese women at the time, he referred specifically to Ibsen's play and asked the question, “What happened after Nora left?” (“Nala zouhou zenyang” 娜拉走後怎樣) in a speech delivered at Beijing Woman's Normal School in 1923. Lu Xun, inspired by Ibsen, pin-pointed the fact that the fundamental

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<sup>371</sup> Ibid., 417, 424. Translation by author.

<sup>372</sup> Zhu Ping, “The Phantasm of the Feminine: Gender, Race and Nationalist Agency in Early Twentieth-Century China,” *Gender & History* Vol. 26 No. 1 (April 2014): 148.

<sup>373</sup> Chen Duxiu, “Kongzi zhi dao yu xiandai shenghuo” 孔子之道与現代生活 (The Way of Confucius and Modern Life), *Xin qingnian* Vol. 2 No.4 (1 December 1916): 1–7.

<sup>374</sup> Lu Xun, “Wo zhi jielieguan” 我之節烈觀 (My Views on Chastity), *Xin qingnian* Vol.5 No.2 (15 August 1918): 92–101.

problem concerning the status of women in China lay in the absence of social and economic opportunities for them.<sup>375</sup>

The aim of a cultural transformation of China promoted by the May Fourth iconoclasts was closely associated with their nationalist vision for China. The old, traditional notion of womanhood was considered a hindrance to national rejuvenation. May Fourth intellectuals spilled a lot of ink revealing the backwardness of traditional gender ethics. Despite their attempts at emancipating women, the implicit problem with “May Fourth men’s representations of women is the fact that they viewed women’s emancipation as serving larger purposes rather than as being an end in itself.” Their goals for solving women’s problems were associated with grand causes such as “overthrowing feudalism, advancing the nation toward modernity, overcoming imperialism, and later, saving the nation.”<sup>376</sup> In their discussions of how women could achieve emancipation, “few examined men’s problems in achieving their own emancipation, especially psychological emancipation from the constraints and construction of the patriarchal culture.”<sup>377</sup>

### **Searching for a New Woman**

Aside from exposing women’s oppression, a great deal of discussion centred on the concept of the “new woman” (*xin nüxing* 新女性). Focus on the issue was assisted by the growth in the publishing industry, especially in Shanghai where thirty-one women’s periodicals had been published by 1927,<sup>378</sup> as well as the rise of the New Culture Movement which challenged ideas on the traditional role of women.

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<sup>375</sup> Lu Xun, “Nala zouhou zenyang” 娜拉走後怎樣 (What Happened after Nora Left?), *Funü zazhi* (August 1924): 1218–27.

<sup>376</sup> Wang, *Women in the Chinese Enlightenment*, 63.

<sup>377</sup> *Ibid.*, 64.

<sup>378</sup> Huang Sha 荒砂 Meng Yan 孟燕, *Shanghai funü zhi* 上海婦女志 (Shanghai: Shanghai shehuikexueyuan chubanshe, 2000): 488–501.

The monthly entitled *Funü zazhi* encapsulated the surge of discussions on what a new woman should be like. Targeted specifically at middle and upper class women,<sup>379</sup> the magazine published by the influential Commercial Press in Shanghai, became very popular. A major journal that enjoyed a wide circulation and discussed women's problems from various perspectives, an examination of *Funü zazhi's* content can be used to shed light on discussions of gender ethos during the May Fourth Era.

### ***Funü zazhi***

From its beginning, *Funü zazhi* promoted a concept of an ideal womanhood for the modern homemaker and manager. Wang Yunzhang 王蕴章 (1884–1942), its chief editor from 1915 to 1920, set the basic tone in two columns, namely *xueyi* 學藝 (learning) and *jiazheng* 家政 (domestic science).<sup>380</sup> As Jacqueline Nivard notes, *Funü zazhi* during this period continued “the thought of late imperial Confucian reformers” and “feminist ideas from the beginning of the century.”<sup>381</sup>

In the 1920s, however, *Funü zazhi* shifted from an image of a womanhood modeled on traditional ethics to one inspired by the notions of freedom of love and gender equality.<sup>382</sup> At the height of the May Fourth Movement, the leaders of the Commercial Press considered a humanist standpoint was necessary in the changing environment. As a result, Zhang Xichen 章錫琛 was appointed as the new editor of *Funü zazhi* on the recommendation of Qian Zhixiu 錢智修, another editor in the Commercial Press. Zhang took up the position in 1921 and was instrumental in adjusting its focus and content on liberal causes. Accordingly, special issues published during this period concentrated on divorce (1920), family reform (1923), spouse selection (1923), and gender understanding (1924). The circulation, according to Zhang, increased from 2,000–3,000 to 10,000 copies.<sup>383</sup> Up until Zhang's resignation in

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<sup>379</sup> Wang, *Women in the Chinese Enlightenment*, 68.

<sup>380</sup> Liu Huiying 刘慧英, “Bei zhebi de funü fuchu lishi xushu—jianshu chuqi de *Funü zazhi*” 被遮蔽的妇女浮出历史叙述—简述初期的《妇女杂志》, *Shanghai wenxue* 上海文学 Vol. 3 (2006): 71.

<sup>381</sup> Jacqueline Nivard, “Women and the Women's Press: The Case of the Ladies' Journal 1915–1931,” *Republican China* Vol. X (November Number 1b): 39.

<sup>382</sup> In the 1920s, the circulation reached 10,000 copies. See Zhang Xichen 章錫琛, “Cong banxue Xiao dao jinru shangwu bianyisuo,” 102.

<sup>383</sup> Zhang Xichen 章錫琛, “Cong shangren dao shangren” 從商人到商人 (From Business Person to Business Person), *Zhong xue sheng* 中學生 Vol. 11 (January 1931): 109.



1925, the content characterised a new dynamic that promoted free marriage, free divorce, love, morality, and sexuality.

Zhang Xichen, therefore, transformed *Funü zazhi* into a medium that promoted a “new feminism” based on gender difference that encouraged the role of each sex.<sup>384</sup> Contrasting with the old one that attempted to remove the gap between men and women, the goal of the feminist movement, according to another article published in *Funü zazhi* in 1923, was not to compete with men in areas of politics, law, society, and industry but to reform attitudes towards gender relations, which was considered as fundamental to the society and the ideal family.<sup>385</sup>

Many articles in the journal, nevertheless, aimed at reforming women’s gender views and not those of men. An example was its circulation of the work of Ellen Key (1849–1926), a Swedish writer who advocated freedom of marriage while upholding the significance of women’s motherhood. Key argued that women were natural mothers and should stay at home to focus on their children. The selection of Key’s work in *Funü zazhi* is no surprise as it fits well with the ideal womanhood upheld by the supporters of this new feminism. Contemporary scholar Liu Huiying notes that it was in essence an imaginary version of womanhood from a male-dominated perspective,<sup>386</sup> as seen in an article written by Zhang Xichen in 1921:

... therefore those who advocate for women’s emancipation often move on from equal rights for men and women to women’s masculinisation (*nanzi hua* 男子化). This is indeed a fallacy of overcorrection. Of course, there should be equal rights between men and women. However, women are assigned a more significant task than men. That is the “motherhood” in Ellen Key’s work. Her “motherhood” means more than bringing up

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<sup>384</sup> Genda Minoru 原田実, Wei Xin 味辛 (tr.), “Fuminieshimu gaishuo” 弗彌涅士姆概說 (A General Summary of Feminism), *Funü zazhi* (May 1922): 71.

<sup>385</sup> Gaoshan 高山, “Xinren de chansheng” 新人的產生 (The Birth of New Person), *Funü zazhi* (October 1923): 4.

<sup>386</sup> Liu Huiying 刘慧英, “‘Funü zhuyi’: wusi shidai de chanwu—wusi shiqi Zhang Xichen zhuchi de *Funü zazhi*” “妇女主义”: 五四时代的产物——五四时期章锡琛主持的《妇女杂志》 (*Funü zazhi* under the Editorship of Zhang Xichen), *Nankai xuebao* 南开学报 (哲学社会科学版) Vol. 6 (2007): 1–8.

children like birds and animals would do for their offspring. Rather, it means to pay attention to the children from both physical and spiritual perspectives so that human beings as well as human culture can evolve from generation to generation. ... Key's advocacy of morality and love, freedom of divorce, and gender equality aims at protecting motherhood and expanding mother's rights.<sup>387</sup>

Zhang Xichen's ideas eventually incurred antagonism from the Chinese intelligentsia. In January 1925, *Funü zazhi* published a special volume entitled *The New Sexual Morality*. It was an issue aiming at reconstructing the concept of morality based on the notions of liberal love and individual will. One article, written by Zhang Xichen under the title of "What is the new sexual morality?", argued that as long as it does no harm to the society or any individual, marriage between one husband and two wives, or two husbands and one wife, was not immoral if permission from both sides was obtained.<sup>388</sup>

Chen Bainian 陳百年, a professor at the Peking University, wrote an article entitled "Yifuduoqi de xin hufu" 一夫多妻的新护符 (A New Phylactery for Polygamy) in 1925, in the influential weekly periodical *Xiandai pinglun* 現代評論 criticising Zhang's ideas.<sup>389</sup> In Chen's opinion, this "new sexual morality" was parallel to the polygamy of the old society. He pointed out that polygamy was closely related to the problem of sexual indulgence and upheld monogamy as an ideal family model. Chen's criticism was seriously assessed by the Commercial Press, which resulted in its dismissal of Zhang Xichen.<sup>390</sup>

The concept of the "new woman" indicated the rejection of Confucian values in the new China and a belief that the status of women was "despair." Ching-kiu Stephen Chan notes discussions on the "new women" reflected "the dilemma of modern Chinese realism as a crisis in the formation of 'self' for the

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<sup>387</sup> Se Lu (Zhang Xichen) 瑟庐 (章錫琛), "Ailunkai nüshi yu qi sixiang" 愛倫凱女士與其思想 (Ellen Key and Her Ideas), *Funü zazhi* (February 1921): 27.

<sup>388</sup> Zhang Xichen, "Xin xingdaode shi shenme" 新性道德是什麼 (What is New Sexual Morality?), *Funü zazhi* (January 1925): 6.

<sup>389</sup> Chen Bainian 陳百年, "Yifuduoqi de xin hufu" 一夫多妻的新护符 (A New Phylactery for Polygamy), *Xiandai pinlun* 現代評論 Vol. 1 No. 14 (1925): 6–8.

<sup>390</sup> Zhang, "You shangren dao shangren," 109.

women within a ‘new’ sociocultural space still very much organized by a language that spoke of despair through the patriarchal voice.”<sup>391</sup> In the search for a new set of gender ethics, articles in *Funü zazhi* following the May Fourth Incident promoted and reinforced the discourse of a “new feminism,” which reflected male-dominated ideas on how to achieve women’s emancipation. The following section examines how the manner of the secular debate on gender morals was reflected in *Nü duo*.

### ***Nü duo*: Defending Victorian Feminine Virtues**



Cover image of *Nü duo* (November 1923)

In contrast to the new gender ethics, *Nü duo* persisted in advocating for Victorian feminine virtues. Laura White insisted, “[O]nly as the daughters of Eve are transformed into daughters of Mary that they can receive the truth that alone makes free, and the power to save their own Country by raising it a little nearer God.”<sup>392</sup> In November 1923, *Nü duo* reprinted a famous painting, “St Margaret and the Dragon,” by Renaissance painter Raphael. St Margaret is portrayed as a victorious saint who escapes from Satan who was in the form of the dragon. The selection of this painting, as elaborated in another reprint in May 1912, was to encourage Chinese women to imitate St Margaret in her holiness. In White’s belief, the purity of St Margaret helped her triumph over the power of Satan. In

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<sup>391</sup> Ching-kiu Stephen Chan, “The Language of Despair: Ideological Representations of the ‘New Woman’ by May Fourth Writers,” in Tani E. Barlow (ed.), *Gender Politics in Modern China: Writing and Feminism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), 30.

<sup>392</sup> *The Thirty-third Annual Report of the CLS, 1920*, 15.

this light, the noble and ideal Republican female citizen portrayed by *Nü duo* should be characterised by purity, gentility, and benevolence.<sup>393</sup>

White's persistence with focusing on women's domestic roles involved her in the debate with secular voices that advocated women's emancipation. On 24 January 1923, the weekly *Funü pinglun* 婦女評論, a supplement of *Minguo ribao* 民國日報 (1916–1947, *the Republican Daily*), published a special issue commemorating the life of Han Duanci 韓端慈 (1893–1923). Arranged by her sister-in-law, Han married a man named Mao Cixiu 毛辭修 from her hometown in Sichuan. Han left her husband shortly after their wedding to pursue the arts while her husband wanted to be a military officer. She travelled to Beijing to pursue an education and later attended art school in Shanghai, graduating in 1922. She later taught classes at two women's schools in Shanghai and was associated with *Funü pinglun she* 婦女評論社 (the society of *Funü pinglun*). Her death, however, followed on 19 January 1923 after a bout of depression brought about by her husband's refusal to grant a divorce.<sup>394</sup> While Han's death was also caused by pneumonia, the commemorative issue depicted Han as a model of the new woman who had embraced modern Western ideas and challenged traditional gender ethics. She was portrayed as an independent and benevolent woman who helped other people and served society.



“Han Duanci nüshi zhuidaohao” 韓端慈女士追悼號 (The Special Issue Commemorating the Life of Han Duanci), *Funü pinglun* (24 January 1923): 1.

<sup>393</sup> Laura White, “Sheng ma ge rui tu shuo” 聖瑪革銳圖說 (Picture of St. Margaret), *Nü duo* (May 1912): 1–3.

<sup>394</sup> Chen Wangdao 陳望道, “Han Duanci nüshi di shengya” 韓端慈女士底生涯 (The Life of Han Duanci), *Funü pinglun* 婦女評論 (24 January 1923): 4.

Han's life and death, however, was criticised by Laura White, whose article opposing the special issue of *Funü pinglun* was published in *Nü duo* two months later.<sup>395</sup> Worrying about the praise of Han, White wrote an essay on Han's faults to serve as a warning to Chinese women. Han's death, in White's view, was an extreme case that could have been avoided if Han had followed three courses of action. Firstly, Han should have fought against her sister-in-law over the arranged marriage, seen as inappropriate in the Republican era. She was "silly" (*hutu* 糊塗) enough not to resist. Secondly, Han was unwise to abandon her family. According to White, Han despised her husband because he was not talented and therefore she requested a divorce, whereas her husband asked for her return and begged for her forgiveness. In this sense, White considered her husband was wiser than Han because she failed to understand two crucial things in life appreciated by her husband, namely, the importance of love and service. Although Han was benevolent to other people, she treated her husband like a stranger, which White viewed as a phenomenon caused by modern education that instilled arrogance into women. Thirdly, there were other solutions for saving the marriage even if it was a mismatch. White mentioned that many talented women in the United States happily married less-educated men based on their noble characters. There were even educated women who were willing to adopt a frugal life-style after college graduation in order to assist their husbands in pursuing further study.

Noting that Han's course of action was shared among many educated Chinese women at the time, White believed that obtaining education immediately meant that Chinese women, who had been deprived of education for thousands of years, became arrogant and indulgent. She criticised educated women who were only too hasty to ask for divorce describing them as people who "received education but forgot the sense of shame" (*shou le jiaoyu fan wang le xiuchi* 受了教育反忘了羞恥). If Han had truly understood Christian principles, she would have known her duty and would have concentrated on issues such as influencing her family members by managing the household.

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<sup>395</sup> Laura White, "Du *Minguo ribao* Han nüshi zhuan kan shuhou" 讀民國日報韓女士專刊書後 (After Reading the Special Issue on Ms Han), *Nü duo* (March 1923): 1–5.

White's critique of Han received further criticism from an author called Xi Ming 奚明 on 26 March 1923, whose article was published in *Xiandai funü* 現代婦女, a magazine circulated every ten days which was well known for its advocacy of birth control and women's liberation.<sup>396</sup> The author argued that White's comment was pointless and wrong because Han had resorted to divorce not because Mao was untalented but because they shared different hobbies and faiths. The author sympathised with Han and thought it was appropriate for her to pursue her own life. Regarding love, Xi believed one was only capable of loving his or her beloved one and serving that person. This differed from White's perception of love, which denoted a spirit of self-sacrifice rather than individual passion.

In the debate on liberation and women's rights, *Nü duo* counteracted the progressive trend of feminism and continued its advocacy of a family model where the traditional Chinese concept of a woman's domestic role was reintroduced, reemphasised, and remolded in line with Victorian views on femininity. Under the editorship of White, *Nü duo* carried over its advocacy for an educated motherhood from the previous period to the May Fourth era. Noting the circulation of liberal thought among educated Chinese women, White categorised them into three factions; the conservative, the middle, and the new.<sup>397</sup> White used the word "yuchun" 愚蠢 or foolishness, to describe the 'new' group that adored vanity and chased fashion. What White observed was the negative impact from the new group who followed the tide of liberty, emancipation, women's rights, and strikes. The development of personhood and independence among new women went beyond the expectations of contemporary mothers and teachers. White believed, therefore, the imperative for Chinese women was to adjust their ways of educating children. For example, one common mistake prevalent among mothers and teachers was a lack of tolerance that led to their daughters' rebellions. Mothers should

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<sup>396</sup> Xi Ming 奚明, "Du *Nü duo* bao" 讀女鐸報 (Reading *Nü duo*), *Xiandai funü* 現代婦女 Vol. 20 (26 March 1923): 1.

<sup>397</sup> Laura White, "Xinshidai de jiaonü fangzhen" 新時代的教女方針 (Home Education in the New Era), *Nü duo* (December 1925): 7.

grant freedom to them in accordance with their age. Furthermore, instead of making decisions for their daughters, mothers should pay attention to children's autonomy.

Aside from the cultural revolt that attacked traditional gender ethics, with which Victorian womanhood had parallels, the discourse of family reform in the secular press of the time demonstrated a nation-centered concern that sometimes intermingled with political reform. The following section explores the discourse of family reform that featured nationalist aspirations.

### **Family Reform and its Nationalist Dimension**

The relationship between family reform and nation-building had been noted by contemporary scholars as well as Chinese intellectuals of the time.<sup>398</sup> Although nationalism was not the only impulse that drove family reform, as pointed out by Susan Glosser in her work on the impact of socioeconomic changes on family-reform intellectuals, it, nevertheless, pervaded family-reform rhetoric in the process of the search for a strong nation.<sup>399</sup>

An examination of articles discussing family reform in the secular press of the time, demonstrates the national concern of Chinese intellectuals who engaged in debate over Western concepts such as the institution of a nuclear family, freedom and individual property. Wu Guanyin 吳貫因 (1879–1936), a close comrade of the reformist Liang Qichao, was one such figure. As a former member of Tong Menghui, Wu was deeply influenced by the concept of the modern nation-state. When Liang founded a journal *Yongyan* 庸言 (December 1912–June 1914) in Tianjin to spread political ideas, Wu worked as the chief editor and proposed several reforms on constitutional issues for the national interest.<sup>400</sup>

In order to oppose Yuan's restoration plans, Liang founded another monthly journal in Shanghai

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<sup>398</sup> Sun Mingqi 孫鳴琪, "Gailiang jiating yu guojia you miqie zhi guanxi" 改良家庭與國家有密切之關係 (The Close Relationship between Family Reform and Nation), *Nüzi wenti* 女子問題 (1917). For nationalist discourse of family reform in the New Culture Movement, see Chow Tse-tsung, *The May Fourth Movement: Intellectual Revolution in Modern China* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1960).

<sup>399</sup> Glosser, *Chinese Visions of Family and State, 1915-1953*.

<sup>400</sup> Wu Guanyin 吳貫因, "Xianfa wenti zhi shangque" 憲法問題之商榷 (Ideas on the Constitutional Issues), *Yongyan* 庸言 Vol.1 No.10 (1913): 6.

entitled *Da Zhonghua* 大中華 (January 1915–December 1916). One of Wu’s articles published in *Da Zhonghua* in 1915 proposed reforming the family to strengthen the nation. Wu argued that the ancient and deeply rooted social institution of the Chinese family impeded national progress.<sup>401</sup> He noted that there existed a gulf between the central political regime and local citizens. When conflicts arose, people tended to solve them within their families instead of resorting to the legal system. This autonomy was criticised by another scholar who wrote under the nom de plume, “CZY,” as a barbaric practice from the viewpoint of civil law where individual freedom was often subject to violation.<sup>402</sup> Wu mentioned the issue of arranged marriage and pointed out the problem of endowing parents with the right of decision-making, relying solely on the words of a matchmaker. As this practice often led to unhappy marriages where one side was dissatisfied with the choice of partner, Wu was concerned that society would ultimately suffer through the reproduction of weak offspring. The imperative of producing a strong and robust population was especially important at a time when Western powers were circling China, whose needs could not be met by an antiquated patriarchal system.

Although Wu considered that a revolution could not usher in change in the institution of the Chinese family, he still believed reform was necessary. His programme of family reform was composed of several strands. He was critical of the size of traditional families arguing its nature and structure had nurtured dependence and idleness among all family members except the head of the household. As the sole financial source for his extended family, Wu thus asserted that a government official was bound to be corrupt in order to cope with the needs of his many family members. The traditional system thus hindered the political power of a nation. Wu also attacked the system of shared property in a traditional Chinese family as he believed individual ownership of property led to financial independence which he believed would contribute to the overall wealth of the nation. He suggested an imitation of the Western model of a nuclear family for the cultivation of individual independence,

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<sup>401</sup> Wu Guanyin 吳貫因, “Gailiang jiazu zhidu lun” 改良家族制度論 (On Reforming Family Regulations) *Da Zhonghua* 大中華 Vol.1 No. 3 (1915): 1.

<sup>402</sup> CZY, “Gailiang jiazu zhidu lun” 改良家族制度論 (On Reforming Family Regulations), *Jia yin* 甲寅 Vol.1 No.6 (1915): 3–4.



although he disapproved of some aspects such as abortion.<sup>403</sup> Wu also viewed rituals such as the three-year mourning custom as problematic because it prevented individuals from contributing to the society and thus obstructed the nation from progress.<sup>404</sup>

In contrast to Wu's critical attitudes toward the traditional family, Du Yaquan 杜亜泉 (1873–1933) attempted to seek a compromise between Western and Chinese cultures. As the editor of the influential magazine *Dongfang zazhi* 東方雜誌 (*The Eastern Miscellany*, March 1904–December 1948) popular among Chinese intellectuals after 1910, Du published articles advocating preserving the traditional family system and modifying it in light of the Western model. One article titled “Jiating yu guojia” 家庭與國家 (Family and Nation) was published in 1916 in *Dongfang zazhi*.<sup>405</sup> In Du's view, the traditional cooperative system supported the sick and the poor and the young and the old. Du praised its social benefits in the absence of institutions such as hospitals and insurance companies. The unlimited responsibilities of parents in the old system, nevertheless, were inclined to generate a habit of dependence among young people and a greedy desire for more material wealth among the old. Du proposed the adoption of an independent spirit within the traditional cooperative system. In another article in *Dongfang zazhi*, Du elaborated on a series of compromise suggestions for an ideal family.<sup>406</sup> He proposed modifying the old family system by incorporating advantages found in the Western model. Du agreed on the abolition of early marriage and acknowledged the rights of children in choosing their future spouse. Parents were also advised to grant freedom to their married children, but he still thought that parents should reserve the right to interfere with their children's decisions on significant issues.

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<sup>403</sup> Wu, “Gailiang jiazhu zhidu lun,” *Da zhong hua* Vol.1 No. 3 (1915): 11.

<sup>404</sup> Wu, “Gailiang jiazhu zhidu lun,” *Da zhong hua* Vol.1 No. 5 (1915): 3–6.

<sup>405</sup> Cang Fu 儻父, “Jiating yu guojia” 家庭與國家 (Family and Nation), *Dongfang zazhi* 東方雜誌 (*The Eastern Miscellany*) Vol.13 No.3 (1916). Du Yaquan was also known as Cang Fu.

<sup>406</sup> Cang Fu 儻父, “Nannü yu jiating” 男女與家庭 (Men, Women, and the Family), *Dongfang zazhi* Vol.14 No.1 (1917).

In addition to the issues mentioned above, Du argued for his family reform in another article entitled “Jiating zhi gaige” 家庭之改革 (Reform of the Family), in which he clarified his position as one not aiming to replace the traditional family with the Western nuclear model, but rather to remove the negative aspects of the old system.<sup>407</sup> One problem was the traditionally-espoused notion of a harmonious family. He believed the connection between family members should lie in mutual affection rather than being bound under the same roof, which deprived people of their individual freedom. As a solution, he advised parents to allow their children to have a separate dwelling and grant them a small portion of property. While Du acknowledged the strenuous burden of ancestor worship, he promoted a simplified form to demonstrate reverence. He also highlighted the importance of benevolence and generosity for a harmonious domestic sphere. His support of traditional culture, however, incurred criticism amidst the rising tide of anti-traditionalism during the May Fourth period and he was forced to resign from the editorship of *Dongfang zazhi* in 1919.

Xia Daozhang 夏道漳 disagreed on the proposals published in *Jia yin* and *Da Zhonghua* for failing to take China’s situation into consideration.<sup>408</sup> Xia, a less well-known intellectual, emphasised the necessity of examining economic, ethical, and social perspectives in which the family system should be reformed. To Xia, the proposal of abandoning the old system and adopting the individual family model was superficial. Xia argued from the point of view of social welfare. Although he understood the ultimate goal was to establish a nuclear family, he suggested concrete proposals should be made according to the current situation at that time in a transitional period.

The introduction of Communism added a political dimension to the discourse of family reform driven by nationalism. The victory of the October Revolution in Russia in 1917 was introduced in *Minguo ribao* on 10 November under the title “Turuqilai zhi E’guo da zhengbian” 突如其來的俄國政變 (The Unexpected Coup d’état in Russia). Inspired by Soviet communism, early Chinese Communists

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<sup>407</sup> Gao Lao 高勞, “Jiating zhi gaige” 家庭之改革 (Reform of the Family), *Dongfang zazhi* Vol.14 No.4 (1917).

<sup>408</sup> Xia Daozhang 夏道漳, “Zhongguo jiating zhidu gaigetan” 中國家庭制度改革談 (Discussing Chinese Family Reform), *Xin qingnian* Vol.6 No.4 (15 April 1919).

endeavoured to transform their society in the light of Marxism. Li Dazhao 李大釗 (1889–1927), a prominent leader in spreading Marxism, cofounded *Meizhou pinglun* 每周評論 in December 1918 with Chen Duxiu, who was also inspired by communist revolutionary ideas. This weekly published several influential articles on Marxism and recorded a debate between Li Dazhao and Hu Shi on the issue of problems and ideologies (*wenti yu zhuyi* 問題與主義) in 1919. The debate helped to propagate Communism on a wider scale among the Chinese intelligentsia. Under Chen's influence, *Xin qingnian* also circulated Marxist ideas. In July 1921, the Communist Party was established, and Li and Chen became its leaders.

While the primary goal of the Chinese Communists was to transform the political landscape of China, their notion of a proletarian family complicated the Republican debate on domesticity. Shen Yanbing 沈雁冰 (1896–1981, also known by his pen name Mao Dun 茅盾), who joined the Communist Party in 1921, played an important role in producing Communist literature. In 1920, Shen translated the work of Russian communist revolutionary Alexandra Kollontai (1872–1952), who wrote an article about the family in Communist society. Published in *Dongfang zazhi* in 1920,<sup>409</sup> Shen's translated work entitled "Family in the Future Society" (*weilai shehui zhi jiating* 未來社會之家庭) addressed Communism and the family from three perspectives, namely, the effect of working-class women on the family, the necessity of housework, and the responsibility of childrearing. According to this article, women in Russia had been forced to seek employment outside the family with the advent of capitalism. Women working as hired labourers necessitated radical changes in the traditional family structure, in which women were occupied with domestic duties such as housekeeping and bringing up children. With more women going out to work, the old family structure became more vulnerable.

The traditional family of those times in Russia was gradually replaced with a new form of family model that enabled women to pursue freedom. As Russian women worked outside the family, individual

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<sup>409</sup> Shen Yanbing 沈雁冰, "Weilai shehui zhi jiating" 未來社會之家庭 (The Family in Future Society), *Dongfang zazhi* Vol.17 No.9 (1920): 62–74. Originally published in the second issue of *Komunistka* in 1920. See <https://www.marxists.org/archive/kollonta/1920/communism-family.htm> Accessed on 25 May 2018.

housework would fall on the shoulders of a group of women who specialised in domestic work. Therefore, traditional housework ceased to be necessary for women. In Soviet Russia, women labourers enjoyed the same comfort (*antian* 安恬), light, hygiene, and beauty because “public restaurants,” “central kitchens,” and “central laundries” were available to working-class women. Similarly, the obligation of bringing up children would shift from parents to the society. In the case of Soviet Russia, the Commissariats of Public Education and those of Social Welfare made great efforts in assisting childrearing. The author listed institutions like day nurseries, children’s colonies, and children’s homes for sick children. Beneath these efforts was a belief that the social education of the young generation was fundamental to the law and customs of the new society.<sup>410</sup> Norms like solidarity (*quanti yizhi* 全體一致), comradeship (*tongye guanxi* 同業關係), and mutual help (*huzhu* 互助) were adopted to address the communal faith.

At the core of Communist belief was the notion of a collective society where everyone was equal and independent. In a new family, the relationship between man and woman was one of “affection” (*qing’ai* 親愛) and “comradeship” (*jiaoyi* 交誼). In a communist society, it was the union of two equal persons (*ren* 人) who were independent workers. Aside from highlighting the merits of a communist society, the article criticised bourgeois society that benefited wealthy people and marginalised the position of the working class. Shen’s translation of Kollontai’s work thus pointed to the collective family replacing the egotistic nuclear family model with a concept of a universal family composed of members who were comrades.

One common feature that underpinned Communism in discussions on the family was the need to abolish the hierarchical system and replace it with one founded on universal values such as equality. In this light, the family was a collective unit rather than an individual institution. It encouraged a collective effort in dealing with domestic issues and called for a sense of comradeship inside and outside of the family institution, aiming at the making of a society without class. This ideology severely

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<sup>410</sup> Ibid., 72.

challenged not only the traditional family, but also any form of nuclear family, including the Christian one advocated in *Nü duo*. The following section explores how the secular debate on family and nation was discussed in *Nü duo*.

### ***Nü duo*: Women, Domesticity, and the Nation**

Compared with the nationalist writings on home reform in the secular press, articles on domesticity and Victorian womanhood portrayed by *Nü duo* were more loosely connected with the nation. Promoting the apparently non-political Victorian virtues that assigned women to the domestic sphere, it asserted that domestic womanhood was divinely ordained and underpinned by Christian principles, consequently alienating them from political mobilisation. Women's contribution to the nation, as indicated in the writings of *Nü duo*, was to achieve a Christian home life. As shown in the previous chapter, White believed feminine virtues were essential to national prosperity and the noblest achievement for women was one that was in line with Victorian principles, with an emphasis on domesticity and Christian belief.<sup>411</sup>

The ultimate feminine virtue, according to White, was motherhood, one that denoted a spirit of self-sacrifice and altruism. She believed a virtuous mother contributed more to the country than a well-educated intellectual woman without a family. She even admitted that paying too much attention to college education instead of mother's education was a mistake while she was the headmaster of a middle school.<sup>412</sup> In the article entitled "Zuo muqin de zeren" 做母親的責任 (The Responsibility of Being a Mother) published in 1926, White recalled her mother's contribution to the country through a comparison with her unmarried aunts.<sup>413</sup> White's mother received the same education as her aunts. White's father abandoned them when Laura White was little and her mother took on the responsibility of bringing up the children. In her opinion, she was more influenced by her mother than her aunts and

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<sup>411</sup> Laura White, "Funü duiyu shehui zhi guanxi" 婦女對於社會之關係 (Women's Relation with the Society), *Nü duo* (July 1918): 3–4.

<sup>412</sup> Laura White, "Zuo muqin de zeren" 做母親的責任 (The Responsibility of Being a Mother), *Nü duo* (October 1926): 5.

<sup>413</sup> *Ibid.*, 4–7.

the unmarried teachers she encountered on the grounds that knowledge was at best received by the brain and a mother's love reached her children's hearts.<sup>414</sup> The American women who upheld celibacy at the time were at most delivering only a temporary benefit. By contrast, mothers acted for the benefit of the next generation. To White, political men or unmarried women used their brains to adjust themselves for opportunities (*tiaoting shiji* 調停時機) while mothers used their hearts to solve practical problems. Therefore, White asserted that mothers could save China, especially Christian mothers.<sup>415</sup>

In another article published two months later, White clarified her definition of motherhood. The word *mu* 母 (mother in English) was not confined to the biological mother.<sup>416</sup> Rather a broader interpretation of the word also included those women who teach and guide children as if they were their own children as "mothers." White believed that this kind of motherhood was the responsibility of each woman. She despaired over the phenomenon of Chinese women competing with their male counterparts in the workforce. Her attitude to women who abandoned their maternal duty was clear-cut, as White commented:

Some fashionable women only focus on present public opinion. With limited education, they desire an active role in society. Some want to be a medical doctor, some want to be a lawyer. ... Once they start to talk, it is about patriotism, national salvation, heartless traitors, and imperious warlords. In fact, traitors and warlords were once brought up by women. If you really love the nation and want to save it, you should try your best to cultivate good little citizens. ... Dear fellow women! Dear Christians, what is patriotism? What is God's command for us? We should try our best to do it!<sup>417</sup>

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<sup>414</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>415</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>416</sup> Laura White, "Zhongguo funü jiqi zeren: mudao" 中國婦女及其責任 (二) 母道 (Chinese Women and Their Responsibilities: Motherhood), *Nü duo* (December 1926): 7.

<sup>417</sup> Ibid., 8–9.

White thought that logically prior to women's rights came an understanding of women's strengths and duties. She proposed that motherhood and mothercraft were the most important jobs in the world and the work only a woman could do was designed by the divine being. Since the virtues of the next generation were in the hands of mothers, she asserted that this was the only way for women to perform better than men.<sup>418</sup>

In White's view, Chinese women had entered the second period of the three evolving stages of every woman. They had moved from "the period of innocence" to "an awakening to self-consciousness" and "to a realization of her powers," but refused to enter the third period "of voluntary self-contraction."<sup>419</sup> Uplifting women's spirituality thus pervaded White's evangelical literature and became a dominant feature of *Nü duo's* message to Chinese households.

Yuan Yuying 袁玉英, White's student from Nanjing Huiwei Girls' School and also a regular contributor to *Nü duo*, personified the impact White's views had on a younger generation of Chinese women. She was not interested in promoting women's political rights but rather agreed with White that a woman's main contribution to her country was through proper household management, which focused on home education, nutrition and hygiene, needlecraft, and establishing harmonious relationships with neighbours. Women, as the mothers of a nation, were the true patriots, who demonstrated their love for the country through the promotion of households based on temperance. Even after the acceptance of the Twenty-One Demands, Yuan wrote an article in *Nü duo* that linked Victorian feminine virtues with patriotism. Under the title of "Zhen aiguo zhi yanshuo" 真愛國之演說 (A Speech on True Patriotism), the author encouraged women to take up household chores as the key expression of their patriotism.<sup>420</sup>

*Nü duo* stressed the important role of Christianity in the nation-building process in articles written primarily by men. Two articles written by Sun Guangdou 孫光斗 (literary name Kuige 奎閣) advocated

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<sup>418</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>419</sup> White, "A Union Woman's College," 645.

<sup>420</sup> Yuan, "Zhen aiguo zhi yanshuo."

the role of Christianity in strengthening the nation. Sun, a teacher from a missionary school in Suqian 宿遷 in Jiangsu, was a former member of the Jiangsu Tongmenghui. After converting to Christianity at an evangelical meeting, Sun believed that it was Christianity that made Western countries powerful.<sup>421</sup> He thought that Christianity could also play a crucial role in strengthening China through solving problems that caused national weakness, namely, the ruined consciousness (*tianliang* 天良) of human beings and the death of people's spirit (*renxing* 人性).<sup>422</sup>

Sun invoked biblical accounts to support his argument that Christianity could save China. When Jesus wept over Jerusalem, Sun believed that he was crying for the people who had stubborn hearts. Sun drew a further analogy between Jerusalem and the contemporary nation and criticised the indifference of the Chinese people to their country's crisis. In Sun's view, efforts in the political field, industry, and education could only have a limited effect. He criticised industrialists' attempts to strengthen China as only promoting material wealth and the pursuit of luxury. Rather, he promoted the power of Christianity to achieve salvation in three key areas, namely, saving the nation from a spiritual death, correcting wicked customs, and uprooting corrupt habits. He pointed to the progress achieved in South Africa where missionaries had transformed 'barbaric countries' (*fengsu exian zhi di* 風俗惡險之地) into 'civilised domains' (*binbin youli* 彬彬有禮). Based on the interpretation that Jesus endeavoured to establish a heavenly kingdom rather than a political regime, Sun argued that China could not be saved by political reform alone but needed to achieve a spiritual reform guided by Christian doctrine.

Sun's belief in the moral power of Christianity was clearly present in another article published in *Nü duo* in July 1918. He asserted that Christian teaching not only transformed human hearts but also

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<sup>421</sup> Sun Kuige 孫奎閣, "Wo xin jidujiao sanshinian de huigu" 我信基督教三十年的回顧 (A Review of My Thirty-year-long Christian Faith), *Zhenguang zazhi* 真光雜誌 (*True Light Review*) (August 1935): 57–8. For Sun's membership in the United League, see the article written by his grandson in the following website. <http://www.crt.com.cn/news2007/news/HYKZJSJNKZSLQSZNZW/15429175135EEE7512HB63DFAH2G3H9.html> Accessed on 16 February 2018.

<sup>422</sup> Sun, "Jidujiao jiuguolun," *Nü duo* (May 1918): 30–7.



regenerated them.<sup>423</sup> China's salvation depended not only on government initiatives in education, industry, shipping and railways, but required a change in the moral values of its people. Christianity was uniquely appropriate for this important role in that it could steer individuals away from corruption. Wider evangelical preaching, he hoped, would purify the Chinese people and imbue them with Christian ideals.

Another article claiming that Christianity could save China was written by Zhang Tingjing 章廷敬, a less well-known scholar who was probably the second headmaster of a local school in Haining 海寧 in Jiangsu.<sup>424</sup> Echoing Sun's views, Zhang asserted that China could be saved only through the adoption of Christianity. He highlighted the vital role of Christian ideals including honesty, universal love, justice, and morality in the nation-making process. In response to the hostile attitudes of some Chinese towards this foreign religion, Zhang cited the doctrine of universal equality in Christianity to indicate how its application crossed all borders. For example, he traced the important role Christian gatherings played in the history of the American Constitution. In the case of Japan, he also referred to the Japanese politician Ōkuma 大隈 who once wrote that Christianity indirectly benefited Japan.<sup>425</sup>

While *Nü duo* barely discussed national politics, consistent with its Victorian notions, the abolition of the institution of the family advocated in Communism unnerved the editorial board. From time to time, *Nü duo* published articles on Russia's disastrous experiment with the abolition of marriage to serve as a warning to its educated readers. For example, in 1927 the Christian scholar Xie Songgao 謝頌羔 contributed to a translation of an article based on an anonymous Russian woman's work.<sup>426</sup> The nine-page essay emphasised the message that free love was detrimental to the nation. It outlined a proposed set of regulations to abandon the marriage system in Soviet Russia. In October 1925, a

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<sup>423</sup> Sun, "Jidujiao jiuguolun," *Nü duo* (July 1918): 28–31.

<sup>424</sup> *Jiaying Zhengxie* 嘉兴政协 Vol. 24 (2011): 33.

<sup>425</sup> Zhang Tingjing 章廷敬, "Jidujiao jiuguolun" 基督教救國論 (Christianity Can Save China), *Nü duo* (June 1918): 31–4.

<sup>426</sup> Xie Songgao 謝頌羔, "Su e zhuzhang feichu hunyinzhidu zhi xianzhuang" 蘇俄主張廢除婚姻制度之現狀 (Russian's Disastrous Experiment with the Abolition of Marriage), *Nü duo* (February and March 1927).

Russian committee drafted a suggestion that registration for marriage should be abandoned. Prior to this, the term “illegitimate children” was abolished by the Bolshevik regime in 1917. Under this new regulation, children of married women or unmarried women possessed the same legal rights. If a man wanted a divorce, he could do so by financially providing his wife with one-third of his salary. As ideal as it sounded, the original author believed, in reality, this regulation only made it easier for people to divorce rather than providing protection for women and children. The article referred to a case of a man who married twenty times. Each of the wives of this man produced a child. However, the man accepted no responsibility for any of his wives or children. Drawing attention to the 300,000 orphans living in Russia at the time, the author saw radical ideas such as marriage without any commitment as the central cause of the paralysis of the family system in Russia.

### **A Fracture in the Notion of Domestic Womanhood**

While *Nü duo* aimed to promote Victorian feminine virtues amidst a growing nationalism, a careful examination of the magazine reveals a sub-text in several articles that encouraged female readers to demonstrate their allegiance to the country through engagement in social and political movements. As women’s education and female literacy were integral to the idea of a new citizenry in China,<sup>427</sup> girls’ education in the early twentieth century nurtured a group of educated women who were actively involved in constructing the model of a new woman for a new China alongside their male counterparts. During the May Fourth Movement, Chinese women had demonstrated an active engagement in the nationalist cause. In fact, “many female students had taken action soon after the May Fourth Incident. They not only participated bravely in the patriotic movement against international imperialism and the weak response of the Chinese government, but also worked for women’s emancipation.”<sup>428</sup>

An example of such participation is referred to in a letter printed in *Nü duo*. Written by two delegates of the Tianjin Women’s Patriotic Comrades in October 1919, it recorded the brutal response of the Xu

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<sup>427</sup> Susan Mann, “Introduction,” in Grace S. Fong, Nanxiu Qian, and Harriet T. Zurndorfer (eds.), *Beyond Tradition & Modernity: Gender, Genre, and Cosmopolitanism in Late Qing China* (Leiden Boston: Brill, 2004), 4.

<sup>428</sup> Wang, *Women in the Chinese Enlightenment*, 97.

Shichang 徐世昌 government to one of their patriotic petitions.<sup>429</sup> In an attempt to save China from being annexed, some delegates travelled from Tianjin to Beijing to lobby for the cancellation of martial law operating in Shandong province. They also demanded that the government punish the Shandong governor, Ma Liang 馬良, who was denounced as being hostile to the patriotic movement at the time. However, the government authorities rejected their petition and resorted to violence. When thirty-five representatives gathered at the Xinhua Gate 新華門, the gate of the presidential residence, one governor asserted that:

The martial law operating in Shandong has been implemented to prevent banditry. You are not allowed to interfere with national administration. Ma Liang resorting to shooting the demonstrators was an appropriate action. Far from punishing his deeds, he should be rewarded. You, instead, are the same as bandits and are therefore disqualified from meeting the president.<sup>430</sup>

The representatives were arrested immediately. A further thirty-two delegates launched a peaceful petition demanding the release of their friends but they too were arrested and denied provisions of food and water. Petitions had not worked and the vice president of the Beijing Women's National Salvation Society (*Beijing nüzi tongzhi jiuguotuan* 北京女子同志救國團) was stabbed, and fell into a coma. The president, Xu Shichang, eventually released the eighty prisoners but refused to meet with them and declared that any further contact between the Tianjin delegates and the Beijing authorities was forbidden. The letter printed in *Nü duo* ended with an appeal to compatriots to rally for a fight for the nation.

Another example of *Nü duo's* interest in women's participation in social and political movements was the reprint of the manifesto of the Chinese Women's National Salvation Society (*Zhongguo nüzi*

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<sup>429</sup> "Tianjin nüdaibiao gao tongbaoshu" 天津女代表告同胞書 (Letter from Delegates in Tianjin to Fellow Countrymen), *Nü duo* (October 1919): 3–6.

<sup>430</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

*jiuguohui* 中國女子救國會) in August 1922.<sup>431</sup> The manifesto was also circulated in *Funü zazhi* in August and *Funü pinglun* in June that year.<sup>432</sup> The Society was established in Shanghai by a lesser known suffragist called Liu Shaobi 劉少璧. The manifesto stated that the purposes of the Society were three-fold, namely, to emancipate women through women's participation in national affairs, to nurture robust citizens by allowing women to shoulder national responsibilities, and to correct lopsided male-dominated politics by incorporating women as participants. The Society adopted four principles including gender equality (*nannü pingquan* 男女平權), non-violent democracy (*feiwuli de minzhuzhuyi* 非武力的民主主義), socialist nationalism (*guojia shehuizhuyi* 國家社會主義), and women's independence (*nüzi zilizhuyi* 女子自立主義).<sup>433</sup>

One article published in *Nü duo* referred to a biblical story to highlight women's allegiance to the country. Entitled "Nüzi aiguo tan" 女子愛國談 (Women Who Love Their Country) published in 1919, the author Di Jianxiong 翟健雄, a teacher at the Songjiang Bible School, described the heroic deeds of Esther, who risked her life to answer the call to save the Jews from the hands of Haman.<sup>434</sup> The author admired Esther's two virtues of a willing heart and an earnest attitude. As a woman of a conquered nation, Esther remembered her compatriots and sacrificed her personal interests to save her people. Learning that they were in danger, Esther made her decision to see the king for the sake of the Jewish nation. Di compared the Chinese students' patriotic movement with Esther's deeds. He encouraged them to boycott imported goods, to instill a patriotic spirit in their countrymen through literary work, and to commemorate diplomatic failures. An additional positive approach, Di suggested, could be to

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<sup>431</sup> "Zhongguo nüzi jiuguohui xuanyan" 中國女子救國會宣言 (The Manifesto of the Chinese Women's National Salvation Society), *Nü duo* (August 1922): 57–8.

<sup>432</sup> Liu Shaobi 劉少璧, "Zhongguo nüzi jiuguohui xuanyan" (The Manifesto of the Chinese Women's National Salvation Society), *Funü zazhi* Vol.8 No.8 (1922): 124–5; "Liu Shaobi faqi nüzi jiuguo" 劉少璧發起女子救國 (Liu Shaobi Initiated Women's National Salvation), *Funü pinglun* No.46 (1 June 1922).

<sup>433</sup> "Zhongguo nüzi jiuguohui xuanyan," *Nü duo* (August 1922): 58.

<sup>434</sup> Di Jianxiong 翟健雄, "Nüzi aiguo tan" 女子愛國談 (Women Who Love Their Country), *Nü duo* (July 1919); "Gehui tongxun: Di Jianxiong xiansheng zhi budao (Jiangsu)" 各會通訊: 翟健雄先生之佈道 (江蘇) (Correspondence: The Preaching of Di Jianxiong), *Xing hua* 興華 Vol. 17 No. 32 (25 August 1920): 18. On the story of Esther, see the Book of Esther in the Jewish Bible.

manufacture domestic goods, to nurture good citizens by focusing on children's education, and to support the nation through financial donations.

The circulation of nationalist ideas within and outside of the Chinese Christian community in *Nü duo*, had two implications. It challenged Victorian feminine virtues by reporting patriotic activities to its middle-class readers, sending the message that Christians were united with their non-Christian compatriots. Lian Xi has noted that Christianity was often viewed as a remedy for national chaos both by secular intellectuals and "Cultural Christians" at the time.<sup>435</sup>

Anti-foreign sentiment in the 1920s, however, brought a demand among Chinese Christians for a rationale for the presence of Christianity in China. This was reflected in discussions over home reform within and outside of the pages of *Nü duo*. The following sections examine how the Chinese Christian community responded to anti-Christian sentiment in the 1920s.

### **The Anti-Christian Movement in the 1920s**

The anti-Christian movement of the 1920s served to push the Chinese Christian community to reflect on positioning Christianity in a local context. Triggered by the imminent eleventh World Student Christian Federation 世界基督教學生同盟 (WSCF) meeting at Qinghua University in April 1922, a group of students in Shanghai formed an Anti-Christian Student Federation 非基督教學生同盟 in February.<sup>436</sup> The Chinese YMCA undertook responsibility for the preparation of the Conference and published a special volume in its magazine *Qingnian jinbu* 青年進步 in February, which was also

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<sup>435</sup> Lian Xi, "'Cultural Christians' and the Search for Civil Society in Contemporary China," *The Chinese Historical Review* (May 2013): 82–3.

<sup>436</sup> For the anti-Christian movement in China, see: Tatsuro and Sumiko Yamanoto, "The Anti-Christian Movement in China, 1922–1927," *Far Eastern Quarterly* (1 February 1953): 133–47; Lewis Hodous, "The Anti-Christian Movement in China," *The Journal of Religion* (October 1930): 487–94. Luo Weihong 罗伟虹, "Ping 'feijidujiao' yundong" 评“非基督教”运动 (Commenting on the Anti-Christianity Movement), *Shanghai shehui kexueyuan xueshu jikan* 上海社会科学院学术季刊 Vol. (1991): 169–74. Ye Renchang 叶仁昌, *Wusi yihou de fandui jidujiao yundong* 五四以后的反对基督教运动 (The Anti-Christianity Movement in post-May Fourth Period) (Taipei: Jiuda, 1992); Yang Tianhong 杨天宏, *Jidujiao yu minguo zhishifenzi: 1922–1927 zhongguo fei jidujiao yundong yanjiu* 基督教与民国知识分子: 1922年–1927年中国非基督教运动研究 (Christianity and Republican Intellectuals: Research on the Anti-Christianity Movement from 1922 to 1927) (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2005).

circulated by other Christian periodicals. In response to the event, the Anti-Christian Student Federation drafted its regulations in March and published them together with its declaration in *Xianqu* 先驅 (*The Pioneer*), the institutional magazine of the Communist Youth League of China, in a special issue entitled “Anti-Christian Student Federation” in the same month. The declaration’s specific goal was to oppose the WSCF as Christianity and the churches “assisted the bourgeoisie in plundering the proletariat and supported the former to suppress the latter.”<sup>437</sup> This anti-Christian sentiment was soon echoed in Beijing, where on 11 March the Anti-Religion Federation 非宗教大同盟 was formed at Beijing University.<sup>438</sup> Although the federation in Beijing targeted religion in general and upheld science, its criticisms of Christianity infused the anti-Christian campaign with another force. Shortly after the anti-Christian movement in Shanghai and Beijing, other areas such as Guangdong, Nanjing, and Hunan responded actively in their denunciation of Christianity.<sup>439</sup>

The agitation against Christianity experienced another wave in the early 1920s, manifested in the movement for gaining education rights from mission societies. The publication of *Zhongguo jidujiao jiaoyu shiye* 中國基督教教育事業 (*Christian Education in China*) in 1922, a survey conducted by mission boards and societies, encouraged the spread of nationalist sentiment among local intellectuals especially those working in educational institutions.<sup>440</sup> In March that year, Cai Yuanpei 蔡元培 (1868–1940), the president of Beijing University and a man of liberal thinking, advocated the separation of religion and education in an article entitled “Jiaoyu duli yi” 教育獨立議 (On the Independence of Education).<sup>441</sup> Two years later, the movement for gaining education rights from mission societies escalated after the British headmaster at the Anglican Trinity College in Guangzhou

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<sup>437</sup> “Fei jidujiao xueshengtongmeng xuanyan” 非基督教學生同盟宣言 (Declaration of the Anti-Christian Student Federation), *Xianqu* 先驅 Vol. 4 (15 March 1922): 1.

<sup>438</sup> Yang, *Jidujiao yu minguo zhishifenzi*, 108–9.

<sup>439</sup> *Ibid.*, 118–37.

<sup>440</sup> For the Chinese version, see *Zhongguo jidujiao jiaoyu shiye* 中國基督教教育事業 (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1922). For the English version, see *Christian Education in China: The Report of the China Educational Commission of 1921–1922* (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1922).

<sup>441</sup> Cai Yuanpei 蔡元培, “Jiaoyu duli yi” 教育獨立議 (On the Independence of Education), *Xin jiaoyu* 新教育 Vol. 4 No. 3 (March 1922): 317–9.

prohibited the formation of a student union and expelled some dissident students on 22 April. Other students later escalated the incident into an anti-imperialist movement, which ignited an on-going campaign for gaining education rights from Western missionaries during the following years.<sup>442</sup>

The nationalist campaign that was confined initially to education was later channelled into forces that resuscitated anti-Christian sentiment. As a result, a political joint force was formed. In August 1924, the Anti-Christian Federation (Fei jidujiao datongmeng 非基督教大同盟) was established, including three Communist Party members and one Kuomintang (KMT) member amongst its five committees.<sup>443</sup> In the spirit of science and patriotism, the Federation aimed to oppose Christianity and all of its causes.<sup>444</sup> *Minguo ribao* 民國日報 (*The Republican Daily*), the official newspaper of KMT, functioned as a crucial medium for the campaign, which launched a special issue on the anti-Christian movement on 19 August 1924. In its ninth issue that year, one of the committee members called Li Chunfan 李春蕃 proposed an anti-Christian week from 22 to 27 December. Li appealed for a collective effort of anti-Christianity comrades to launch protests, public lectures, and publications.<sup>445</sup>

Together with the following May Thirtieth Movement in 1925 that fuelled anti-Christian movement with anti-imperialist sentiment, the Christian community suffered from constant disturbance and devastation during the KMT's Northern Expedition.<sup>446</sup> The anti-Christian movement ebbed in 1927 when Chiang Kai-shek moved the KMT from an alliance with the Communist Party of China to becoming anti-Communist. The nationalist government persecuted Communist members and banned students' gatherings and protests. Yang Tianhong 楊天宏 notes that Chiang's antagonistic position towards the Communist Party discouraged the anti-Christian movement in which Communist

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<sup>442</sup> Yang, *Jidujiao yu minguo zhishifenzi*, 207–8.

<sup>443</sup> Ye, *Wusi yihou de fandui jidujiao yundong*, 85; “Fei jidujiao datongmeng xuanyan” 非基督教大同盟宣言 (The Manifesto of the Anti-Christianity Federation), *Juewu* 覺悟 (Supplement of *Minguo ribao*, the Special Issue on anti-Christianity) (19 August 1924): 7.

<sup>444</sup> “Fei jidujiao datongmeng xuanyan,” 6.

<sup>445</sup> Li Chunfan 李春蕃, “Fei jidujiao zhou” 非基督教周 (The Week of Anti-Christianity), *Juewu* (9 December 1924): 2.

<sup>446</sup> Yang, *Jidujiao yu minguo zhishifenzi*, 326–31.

members functioned as key players. Furthermore, the perceived need to solidify the KMT government following the victory of the Northern Expedition meant that public movements, which the ruling regime regarded as a threat to its authority, were banned.<sup>447</sup> Although the anti-Christianity movement waned in the late 1920s, it advanced discussions about indigenisation in the Chinese Christian community and made a long lasting impact on the shape of Christianity in the history of modern China.

### **Towards an Indigenous Church**

The growing nationalism of the 1920s intensified the desire of Western missionaries to present the Protestant church as a Sinicized venture, which facilitated the formation of many Chinese-led interdenominational organisations.<sup>448</sup> While legally protected by the Unequal Treaties, the foreign missionary community was nevertheless surrounded by hostile sentiment from parts of the local society. In particular, this anti-foreignism became an alarming threat in March 1927, following the looting of foreign houses and the killing of the Vice-President of the University of Nanking, the American missionary Dr J. E. Williams. *The Chinese Recorder* wrote that only 3,000 of the original 8,000 Protestant missionaries were still in China by the middle of 1927. The *Christian Century* even interpreted the situation caused by anti-foreign sentiment as “a missionary debacle.”<sup>449</sup>

The growing tide of nationalism accompanied by the hostility of Chinese society against foreign missionaries stirred up a series of discussions in missionary publications. George A. Hood points out that articles in *the International Review of Missions* from 1925 to 1928 mainly dealt with the Chinese Church, the future of Christianity in China, the use of the term “indigenous,” the significance of the present situation in China for missionary administrators, and Treaties and Missions in China.<sup>450</sup> Foreign missionaries also paid close attention to the thinking of local Christians concerning mission work. For

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<sup>447</sup> Ibid., 366–73.

<sup>448</sup> Lian Xi, *Redeemed by Fire: The Rise of Popular Christianity in Modern China* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2010): 109.

<sup>449</sup> “Missionary Debacle in China”, *The Christian Century* (29 April 1927): 519–21.

<sup>450</sup> George Hood, *Neither Bang nor Whimper: The End of a Missionary Era in China* (Singapore: The Presbyterian Church in Singapore, 1991), 15–7.



example, *The China Christian Advocate* published a translated article entitled “The Place of the Western Missionary” from a Chinese Christian magazine *Zhenli yu shengming* 真理與生命 (*Truth and Life*) in 1927.<sup>451</sup> This article listed three possible positions for foreign missionaries in their work in China. One was the position of superintendent, where missionaries were shepherds and Chinese Christians were their sheep. The second was the cooperative position where foreign missionaries shared joint authority over management and administration with Chinese converts within the church. The third was the position of assistant, where Chinese had power of administration and management in the church. Some mission societies such as the Methodist Episcopal Church expressed their willingness for more indigenous control, embodied in their proposals at the 1927 Shanghai Conference.<sup>452</sup>

Although by 1877 most Protestant missionaries had accepted the concept of an indigenous church in China at the first missionary conference in Shanghai,<sup>453</sup> a nation-wide mobilisation for indigenisation did not take place until the 1920s when the anti-Christian movement provided a critical context for Chinese Christians to reflect on their national identity. The term “Zhongguo bense jiaohui” 中國本色教會 (Chinese indigenous church) was a popular catchphrase in the 1920s that reflected a primary movement among Chinese churches. The term “indigenous” at the time referred to “a Christianity that has possession of the Christian spirit and expresses itself in Chinese fashion.”<sup>454</sup> As Jonathan T’ien-en Chao notes, the term “Chinese indigenous church” expressed:

the idea that the Church in China must be of the Chinese people, for the Chinese people, and by the Chinese people—a church marked by Chinese characteristics—as opposed to the various concepts of churches imported and controlled by foreign missionaries and characterized by their respective ethnic characters.<sup>455</sup>

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<sup>451</sup> *The China Christian Advocate* (April 1927): 16.

<sup>452</sup> *The China Christian Advocate* (1 June 1927): 5.

<sup>453</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>454</sup> T. C. Chao, R. O. Hall, and Roderick Scott, *The Christian Movement in China in a Period of National Transition* (Mysore City: Wesley Press and Publishing House, 1938), 62.

<sup>455</sup> Jonathan T’ien-en Chao, *The Chinese Indigenous Church Movement 1919-1927: A Protestant Response to the Anti-Christian Movements in Modern China* (PhD diss., The University of Pennsylvania, 1986), 4–5.

## Towards a Chinese Christian Family

The anti-Christian context gave rise to the sinicization of the discourse on family reform in the Chinese Christian community. Wang Zhixin 王治心 (1881–1968), an active Christian writer at the time, was a pioneer in advocating family reform from a local viewpoint.<sup>456</sup> Wang stressed the purpose of family reform was neither to religionise into Christianity (*jidujiao hua* 基督教化) nor to Westernise (*xiyang hua* 西洋化) but to transform the family into a Christlike one (*jidu hua* 基督化).<sup>457</sup> Instead of negating traditional ethics, Wang attempted to seek similarities between the principles of Christianity and the traditional family in his article on how to Christianise the family, written in 1926. He asserted that the fusion of these two was possible on grounds that they were both eastern ideologies (*dongfang sixiang* 東方思想), which geographically originated and culturally developed in an “eastern” context. The development of Indian Buddhism in China, in his view, manifested the possibility of an eastern religion redeveloped in China, the doctrines of which surpassed the place of origin. The encounter of Christianity with Chinese thought, he believed would be able to likewise surpass the achievements of the encounter of Christianity with the West. In this way, Wang emphasised local agency in the development of Christianity. Conflicts between the Christian family and the traditional family occurred over issues such as the nuclear Christian family versus the extended Chinese family, divorce versus chastity, and utilitarianism versus frugality. Wang attributed these conflicts to a misinterpretation of the nature of the Christian family, which mistakenly believed that the Western model of the family was based on Christian institutions. Wang therefore appealed for the separation of Occidentalism from Christianity so that Christianity could be better adapted to a Chinese context. As far as Christianising Chinese homes was concerned, one method Wang suggested was to replace the existing concept of celestial reverence with the “Heavenly Father,” emphasising the importance of filial piety

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<sup>456</sup> Wang Zhixin 王治心, “Ruhe shi jiating jiduhua” 如何使家庭基督化 (How to Christianise Home), *Shenxue zhi* 神學誌 Vol. 12 No. 1 (1926): 107–14.

<sup>457</sup> *Ibid.*, 107.

found in the Bible, and transforming the practice of ancestor worship into the worship of God by the family.

Wang's discussion of the family was influenced by his concerns about the indigenisation of Christianity in China. Although he highlighted *Chineseness* as an essential element of Christianity in China, he refuted the idea that this was associated with either nationalism or exclusivism.<sup>458</sup> Specifically Wang wrote that:

The role of an indigenised church (*bense jiaohui* 本色教會) is to transform the westernised church into a Chinese church that successfully suits the spirit of the Chinese race (*Zhonghua minzuxing* 中華民族性).<sup>459</sup> This transformation will not undermine Christian truth but will reconcile Chinese traditional culture with Christian truth so that the religious life of Chinese Christians accords with Chinese conditions.<sup>460</sup>

The following section shows how *Nü duo* responded to the indigenisation movement in the Chinese church.

### ***Nü duo*: the Indigenous Wake**

In its response to the emerging anti-Christian movement, *Nü duo* published a proclamation written by Donald MacGillivray, the General Secretary of the CLS (1919–1930), to the Anti-Christian Student Federation in May 1922. Believing that both Chinese Christians and anti-Christian Chinese were patriotic, MacGillivray appealed for co-operation in the spirit of love that would redeem the nation.

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<sup>458</sup> Wang Zhixin 王治心, "Zhongguo bense jiaohui de taolun" 中國本色教會的討論 (Discussion on Chinese Indigenous Church), *Qingnian jinbu* 青年進步 Vol. 79 (1925): 11.

<sup>459</sup> The term *minzu* in the modern era was often used in the compound *minzuzhuyi*, a term from the Japanese *minzokushugi*, denoting "a nationalist vision based on race." Although "nation and race overlapped in the term *minzu*," this thesis adopts 'race' as the translation of *minzu* to express the racial imagery of Chinese reformers at the time. For a detailed discussion on the term *minzu*, see Frank Dikötter, *The Discourse of Race in Modern China* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1992), 97–125.

<sup>460</sup> Wang, "Zhongguo bense jiaohui de taolun," 13.

He advocated the patriotic sentiment that the communities should cooperate with each other for the purpose of national salvation.<sup>461</sup>

On being informed that some female students had joined the Anti-Christian Student Federation, MacGillivray suggested that a correct understanding of Christianity was required. He focused on four points of relevance to Chinese women. First, a woman's happiness was founded in the family, organised and maintained by divine love. Secondly, women of the day enjoyed more rights than their ancient ancestors due to the prevalence of Christianity, signified by the growing number of female students enrolled in Christian schools. He criticised those women who held anti-religious ideas as ignorant of the contribution made by Christianity to China. Thirdly, religion served to safeguard women from men because women were protected from men's desires by the constraints of divine law. Fourthly, Jesus Christ had emancipated women from slavery. By highlighting the benefits of Christianity to women, his essay discouraged women from joining the anti-Christian movement and encouraged women's embrace of Christianity.

In response to anti-Christian sentiment, *Nü duo* clarified its focus on domesticity in 1926.<sup>462</sup> In mid-1926 its name was changed from *Nü duo (The Woman's Messenger)* to *Jiating zazhi (Home Beautiful)*. This reflected its central focus on domesticity. Several months later, it reverted to its original title of *Nü duo* with *Jiating zazhi* demoted to a subtitle in response to feedback from its readers.<sup>463</sup>

The change in title sent out the clear message that its focus was on home life. As the annual report of the CLS, 1926 to 1927, stated, "Despite China's upheaval the circulation of the *Home Beautiful (Nu To Pao)* has not materially decreased. Perhaps one reason is that politics has had a small place in the magazine. We still believe that after all a woman's best field of service is along the line of the home, the child and religious work."<sup>464</sup> By concentrating its focus squarely on the home, *Nü duo* also clarified

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<sup>461</sup> Donald MacGillivray 季理斐, "Jinggao fei jidujiao xuesheng tongmenghui" 敬告非基督教學生同盟會 (Proclamation to the Anti-Christian Student Federation), *Nü duo* (May 1922): 8.

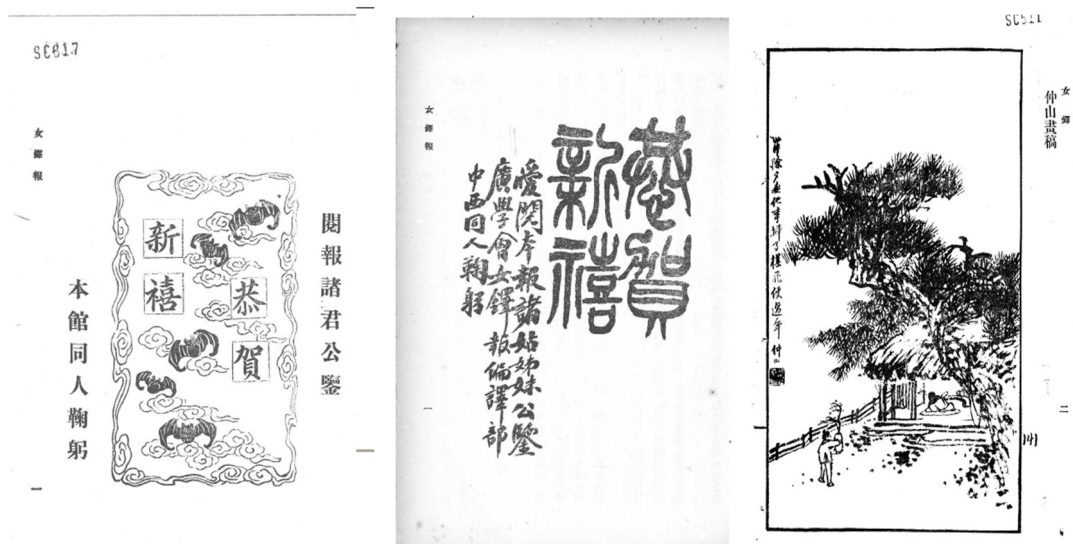
<sup>462</sup> "Jiating yuekan xuanyan" 家庭月刊宣言 (Declaration of *Jiating yuekan*), *Nü duo* (March 1927): 67.

<sup>463</sup> "Benkan xuanyan" 本刊宣言 (Declaration of This Magazine), *Nü duo* (April 1927): 7.

<sup>464</sup> *The Fortieth Annual Report of the CLS, 1927*, 10.

that it was not seeking to initiate a general transformation of Chinese culture. This clarification of its aims operated to diffuse charges of cultural imperialism, which had been generated by the anti-Christian campaign. The announcement accompanying the title change addressed the magazine's new agenda:

[The magazine's name has]... changed to *Jiating yuekan* 家庭月刊, ..., its content features articles on women's heavenly duty with a sole purpose of expounding the truth. Efforts should be made to eliminate misunderstandings caused by the propaganda of the anti-Christian movements and other confusing assertions.<sup>465</sup>



Left: January 1926; Middle: January 1927; Right: January 1928 in *Nü duo*

The magazine also started to include articles featuring Chinese cultural elements such as calligraphy, poems, and paintings as a token of its respect for the national essence (*guocui* 國粹).<sup>466</sup> In January 1927, *Nü duo* circulated its New Year wishes to its readership in traditional Chinese calligraphy and mentioned ritual bows (*jugong* 鞠躬)<sup>467</sup> from its Chinese and Western members of the editorial board. Furthermore, in January 1926, it used Chinese characters to express its New Year greetings. In January

<sup>465</sup> "Jiating yuekan xuanyan," 67.

<sup>466</sup> Ibid.

<sup>467</sup> Bowing is a common ritual practice in wishing somebody a Happy New Year during Chinese lunar New Year.

1928, *Nü duo* reprinted a painting by well-known artist Wang Kun 汪琨 (1877–1946). On the left was a short Chinese poem describing men living in the mountains, plucking plum blossoms to celebrate New Year (山中除夕無他事，插了梅花便過年 Shorn of all wordly cares in the mountains on New Year’s Eve, I plucked plum blossoms to welcome the New Year).<sup>468</sup> These inclusions were made in response to prevailing anti-Christian propaganda.

The need for *Nü duo* to adjust its editorial policy can only be fully understood, however, when examined within the context of a surge of anti-Western sentiment prevalent in the wider Chinese community.

### **A Nationalist Quest, an Internal Split**

The May Fourth period witnessed a growing nationalist sentiment among Chinese Christians, who, like their non-Christian compatriots, were active in the national salvation movement. While *Nü duo* expressed its firm patriotic stance based on its interpretation of Christian teachings,<sup>469</sup> its editor Laura White was opposed to the participation of Chinese Christians in patriotic movements. Following the May Thirtieth Incident in 1925 in Shanghai, when the British police opened fire on the crowd and killed several protesters who gathered in the International Settlement to seek the release of imprisoned students, White wrote to Liu Meili, a student at the Ginling Women’s College, to discourage her from attending patriotic movements.<sup>470</sup>

White, however, failed to see that this notorious incident had further endangered the fragile relationship between China and foreign powers.<sup>471</sup> Realising the implications of the incident for the

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<sup>468</sup> Translation by author.

<sup>469</sup> Cai Sujuan 蔡蘇娟, “Jiuguo de zhuyin zimu” 救國的注音字母 (Phonetic Symbols to Save the Nation), *Nü duo* (September 1919): 20–4; “Wei guo qiu jiu ge” 爲國求救歌 (Song to Save the Nation), *Nü duo* (October 1920): 20–1.

<sup>470</sup> Liu Meili, “Kongsu meidiguozhuyi dui wo de duhai bing ziwojiantao” 控訴美帝國主義对我的毒害并自我檢討 (Accusing American Imperialism and the Harm It Has Done to Me as well as My Self-criticism), *Tian feng* 天風 Vol. 12 No. 9 (1951): 128.

<sup>471</sup> Triggered by a dispute between Japanese employers and Chinese workers in the No. 8 Mill of the Naigai Wata Kaisha 内外綿會社 in early February that year, the conflict escalated when a worker named Gu Zhenhong 顧正紅 was shot dead by a Japanese foreman. In response, students in Shanghai demonstrated and supported the

Christian community, the National Christian Council of China (NCCC), a national interdenominational organisation for Chinese Christians, immediately held a special meeting the following day. On 8 June, the NCCC drafted an official letter to the Shanghai Municipal Council, urging a thorough investigation and to secure “harmonious relations between the Chinese and foreign communities in this cosmopolitan centre and throughout China.”<sup>472</sup> In its message to Chinese Christians dated 16 July, the NCCC stated that “a Christian should be the highest type of patriot and the noblest example of citizen.”<sup>473</sup>

The political activities of the NCCC stirred up a heated discussion within the missionary community. One missionary expressed his disappointment and regretted “that the N.C.C. has turned aside from the high level of distinctly religious work [to] the lower level of political activities.”<sup>474</sup> Another thought the municipal action and the statement of the NCCC was inclined to “damage the British in general and to aid the boycott.”<sup>475</sup> As the NCCC facilitated the indigenisation movement and advocated for the abolition of Unequal Treaties, the China Inland Mission withdrew from the Council in March 1926.<sup>476</sup> The NCCC advanced its strict policies on foreign powers and foreign missions at this time. At the fourth meeting of the NCCC from 13 to 20 October 1926, two resolutions were adopted:

1. That the Christian Church and Christian Missions should preach the Gospel and perform Christian service in China upon the basis of religious liberty freely accorded by the Republic of China, and that all provisions in the treaties with foreign countries for special privileges for the churches or missions should be removed.

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strike and several of them were arrested and scheduled for trial on May 30. See Hung-Ting Ku, “Urban Mass Movement: The May Thirtieth Movement in Shanghai,” *Modern Asian Studies* Vol. 13 No. 2 (April 1979): 201.

<sup>472</sup> *The Bulletin of the National Christian Council* (July 1925): 1–4.

<sup>473</sup> “Message of the National Christian Council to the Christians in China,” *The Bulletin of the National Christian Council* (July 1925): 2.

<sup>474</sup> “Correspondence,” *The North-China Herald* (8 August 1925): 136.

<sup>475</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>476</sup> J. D. Macrae, “The Significance of the National Christian Council,” *The Chinese Recorder* (November 1926): 818; “The National Christian Council and The China Inland Mission,” *The Bulletin of the National Christian Council* (June 1926): 2.

2. That the present treaties between China and foreign Powers should be revised on the basis of freedom and equality.<sup>477</sup>

On 6 February 1927, a thousand Christians gathered in Shanghai and made a statement before their missionary co-workers at the Executive Committee of the NCCC. The message was sent throughout the country in envelopes bearing the name of the NCCC.<sup>478</sup> It urged:

1. That immediate representations be made by missionaries, either through deputations going back to their home countries or through other means, calling for an immediate readjustment in treaties with China by economic equality and mutual respect for each other's political and territorial sovereignty.
2. That all branches of Christian work be placed under the administrative charge of Chinese Christian bodies. ...<sup>479</sup>

The missionary community, however, criticised this statement which became known as the Shanghai Christian Manifesto. With 99% of the population untouched by Christianity, it seemed from the perspective of one missionary that the Chinese Christian leaders who endeavoured to abolish the treaties were motivated "more [by] jealous anti-foreign feeling than for any real harm which is being done by them at present."<sup>480</sup> In response to a series of political activities of the NCCC, a large group of prominent missionaries issued a statement on 7 April 1927, criticising the NCCC and asserting that the Council has lost the confidence of a large part of the missionary body due to its political activities. Laura White, together with many other missionaries, signed the statement and urged the NCCC to limit its activities to its proper duties as defined by its constitution.<sup>481</sup>

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<sup>477</sup> "Christians and International Relationships," *The Chinese Recorder* (November 1926): 764.

<sup>478</sup> "Shanghai Christians' Manifesto," *The North-China Daily News* (9 March 1927): 5.

<sup>479</sup> "To Our Missionary Co-workers," *The Bulletin of the National Christian Council* (March 1927): 4–5.

<sup>480</sup> "Shanghai Christians' Manifesto," *The North-China Daily News*, 5.

<sup>481</sup> "Missionary Group Criticizes National Christian Council for Political Activities," *The China Press* (12 April 1927): 6.



White's non-political stance in this matter demonstrates her failure to understand the concern of local Christians and their desire to safeguard national pride through political means. Under her influence, *Nü duo* maintained an outwardly apolitical attitude. In contrast, *Nü qingnian*, the monthly journal of the Chinese Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), published a proclamation from Chinese Christians in Shanghai to their fellow Christians in March 1927, which expressed their agreement with the NCCC on the abolition of the Unequal Treaties.<sup>482</sup> From the perspective of Chinese Christians, foreign missionaries were, if not associated with, at least beneficiaries of the Unequal Treaties. While Western missionaries such as White were driven by an evangelical zeal, local converts perceived and shaped Christianity based on their concerns deeply embedded in a local context. In a time of crisis, salvation became more than an individual issue but rather a national concern to many Chinese Christians.

## Conclusion

This chapter has examined the transformation of ideas about the family set against the background of ideological and cultural flux during a most dynamic period of modern Chinese history. It was a time when past and present clashed and when the old and new underwent a radical fragmentation which had repercussions for both daily life and the cultural and intellectual spheres. Belief in the values and norms of the traditional family system were shaken to their core under attack from reform-minded intellectuals. While women's rights, freedom, and equality were fully embraced by May Fourth intellectuals, the editors of *Nü duo* nevertheless pursued a cautious path toward reform.

The May Fourth period, however, did witness some crucial changes to *Nü duo*. In the wake of patriotism among Chinese Christians, *Nü duo* reported responses from the Chinese Christian community to the national crisis. Its circulation of information regarding women's engagement in political mobilisation, however, contradicted its advocacy of non-political Victorian feminine ideals.

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<sup>482</sup> "Shanghai Zhonghua jidutu dui tongzong tongbao xuanyan" 上海中華基督徒对同宗同胞宣言 (Declaration of Chinese Christians in Shanghai to Christian Fellows and Chinese), *Nü qingnian* 女青年 (March 1927): 53–4.

The tension between a group of conventional missionaries, including Laura White, and a group of nationalist Chinese Christians, eventually led to a split in plans for Christianising China following the May Thirtieth Incident. With a growing tide of nationalism surging through the Chinese Christian community, *Nü duo* had to find a way to cope with the new situation while maintaining its principles established by White. The tension between ideals of Victorian femininity with women's social and political agency became especially evident after Japan's encroachment into China escalated in the 1930s. The next chapter will examine the magazine at a time when Li Guanfang took over the editorship in 1929 and played a crucial role in indigenising the course of *Nü duo*.

## Chapter 5 Searching for a Chinese Christian Domesticity: 1929–1935

An indigenising movement in the Chinese Christian community continued actively following the 1920s. Various attempts were made by Chinese Christians at the time to infuse Chinese cultural elements into theological studies and institutional development.<sup>483</sup> However, the role of Christian women in the shaping of Christianity has received only limited scholarly attention until recent years.<sup>484</sup> An examination of *Nü duo* adds to the knowledge of the voices of Chinese Christian women who shared a similar history as their male counterparts in the process of indigenising Christianity.

From 1929 onwards, Chinese Christian women took over the editorship of *Nü duo*. In studying the encounter of Chinese women with Christianity, Kwok Pui-lan argues that an appropriate investigation must be conducted into the wider social and political context of modern China. She points out that Chinese women were an integral part of local communities of the time.<sup>485</sup> Thus, this chapter and the following chapter will examine the discourse surrounding family reform in *Nü duo* through paying close attention to Chinese Christian women's activities in their local and historically specific contexts. This chapter focuses on the period from 1929 to 1935 when *Nü duo* was under the editorship of Li Guanfang (1896–c.1937). Li was its first Chinese female editor and a close friend of Laura White. She had contributed several articles to the magazine earlier.

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<sup>483</sup> For the indigenising movement among Chinese Christians in the Republican period and beyond, see Cole Carnesecca, "Revolution and Religious Reform: The Indigenous Church Movement in Republican China," *Ching feng* 景風 Vol.12 No. 1/2 (2013): 57–74; Dennis Tak Wing Ng, "Chinese Christianity: The Study of Indigenous Theology in Twentieth-Century China," *The Journal of World Christianity* Vol. 7 No.2 (2017): 101–22; Daniel H. Bays (ed.), *Christianity in China: from the Eighteenth Century to the Present* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1996); Peter Tze Ming Ng, *Chinese Christianity: an Interplay between God and Local Perspectives* (Leiden: Brill, 2012); Chloë Starr, *Chinese Theology: Text and Context* (New Haven (Conn.); London: Yale University Press, 2016); Anthony E. Clark (ed.), *China's Christianity: From Missionary to Indigenous Church, 2017*; Lian, *Redeemed by Fire*, 2010.

<sup>484</sup> Kwok, *Chinese Women and Christianity 1860–1927; Xingbie yu lishi: jindai zhongguo funü yu jidujiao*, 2006; Lutz (ed.), *Pioneer Chinese Christian Women: Gender, Christianity, and Social Mobility*; Christina Wong Wai-Yin (eds.), *Women's Work for Women: Chinese Christian Women and Western Missionaries in Canton, South China, 1847–1938*, (PhD diss., the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California, 2015); Wai Ching Angela Wong and Patricia P. K. Chiu (eds.), *Christian Women in Chinese Society: The Anglican Story* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2018).

<sup>485</sup> Kwok, "Chinese Women and Protestant Christianity at the Turn of the Twentieth Century," 198.

The transfer from Western to local editorship, however, was far from seamless. In August 1929, *Fuyin zhong* 福音鍾 (*The Gospel Bell*), a monthly bulletin of Zhonghua guonei budaohui 中華國內布道會 (The Chinese Home Missionary Society), published an announcement on the editorial shift. Associated with the NCCC, the Chinese Home Missionary Society, to a certain degree, reflected the collective will of a sizable group of Chinese Christians who desired to take their place in evangelical work. According to the announcement, the Chinese editorial board of *Nü duo* acknowledged White's instrumental role in introducing western-style domesticity to Chinese readers. However, the board considered it bad practice for foreigners to edit the magazine due to cultural differences between Chinese people and westerners. Referring to the traditional idiom *xuanbin duozhu* 喧賓奪主, "a presumptuous guest usurped the role of the host," the announcement emphasised the urgent need to correct this by passing the editorship to local people and concentrating on the production of original literature.

This chapter outlines the process of searching for a distinctively Chinese Christian domesticity that fitted with *Nü duo*. It will demonstrate that the legacy of Victorian gender ethics did not fit well with growing local patriotic sentiment. Nationalist sentiment subsequently came into fundamental conflict with the Victorian rhetoric of womanhood that had previously featured in *Nü duo*. This rhetoric rapidly ceased to appear relevant in the changing socio-economic circumstances and the growing national calamity enveloping China. Li Guanfang, whose earlier writings had demonstrated a strong social and national concern, brought this conflict to a head. Although Li was influenced by the Christian teachings of mission schools that embraced a Victorian notion of womanhood, she committed herself to socialist ideals in the 1930s when she adopted a reformist approach to the family. The tension between the missionary legacy of Victorian femininity and Chinese women's desire for social and national engagement became critical with the outbreak of the full-scale Second Sino-Japanese War, resulting in Li's resignation from the editorship in 1935. The indigenisation process exemplified in *Nü duo* suggests a complex interaction between inheritance and resistance among educated Chinese Christian women in the first half of the 1930s.

Understanding the Chinese Christian family portrayed by *Nü duo* requires an investigation of the ideas and activities of its first Chinese editor Li Guanfang. This chapter explores her life before 1929 and then shifts to examining the discussion on the nature of the family, both within and outside of *Nü duo* under her editorship until 1935.

### Li Guanfang, Christian Literature, and a New China



Left: *Nü duo* (June 1917): 47; Right: *Nü qingnian yuekan* 女青年月刊 Vol.13 No.8 (1934).

Coming from a low social background, Li Guanfang was born in 1896 as the eldest of nine siblings and grew-up in Lujiang 瀘江, Sichuan. Her father Li Chunfan 李春蕃 had taught Chinese to the British Bishop Thomas James, who introduced him to the gospel and baptised him. He named his first daughter “Guanfang” (冠芳) to send a two-fold message: Li’s father wanted to express his preference for daughters in contrast to the feudal patriarchal view which favoured sons, and hoped she would be a leader among his daughters and girls in general (he referred to his daughter as *qunfang zhi guan* 群芳之冠, meaning “queen of flowers”). As this chapter will show, throughout Li’s life, she was determined to take the lead to transform Chinese society, a spirit of leadership that echoed her father’s expectation as bestowed in her name. Unfortunately, her father’s involvement in a lawsuit forced him to abandon his family (date unknown). The family received no news until 1906 when they received a letter informing them that he had met the Rev. Spencer Lewis of the American Presbyterian

Mission North and was currently co-translating the New Testament in Nanjing. He asked Li and her younger sister to enroll in the Nanjing Huiwen Girls' School which proved instrumental in exposing Li to a Christian environment.

Li's subsequent involvement with Christian literature can be traced to her relationship with Laura White, who-as noted above-was the principal of the Nanjing Huiwen Girls' School from 1907 to 1913. From 1912 White, as we have seen, was also the chief editor of *Nü duo*.<sup>486</sup> White's editorial work opened-up new opportunities for her students, including Li, who was among the several students chosen to help with the magazine's production. Available accounts show that Li maintained a close relationship with her Western mentor. One of Li's articles mentioned that she once accompanied White to the popular summer resort of Mount Mogan 莫干山 in Zhejiang Province in 1916.<sup>487</sup> In addition, when White moved to her Shanghai dwelling in autumn 1917, Li together with Yuan Yuying (another of White's students) celebrated their teacher's birthday and gave her a housewarming party. They later lived with White and worked on the magazine at White's Shanghai house. A missionary colleague described the girls' relationship with White as her "devoted friends" and "most capable helpers."<sup>488</sup> Li's talent, as shown in her later literary work, together with her close relationship with White, led to her continuing involvement with the CLS.

Li's name first appeared in *Nü duo* in 1914, the year of her graduation from the Nanjing Huiwen Girls' School. Her work consisted mainly of translating stories and biographies of famous Christian women. One article that illustrates her religious attitudes at this stage was her graduation essay. Words of gratitude exemplified her humility and willingness to serve God. Li said that God's grace to her was such that she could not help but kneel down in thanks.<sup>489</sup> During her tertiary study at Ginling Women's

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<sup>486</sup> *Official Minutes of the Central China Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church held at Nanking China, 1907 to 1913*, 54 (1907), 68 (1908), 18 (1912), 13 (1913).

<sup>487</sup> Li Guanfang, "Xianmu taotai ruren xingzhuang" 先母陶太孺人行狀 (In Memory of My Mother), *Nü duo* (June 1917): 48.

<sup>488</sup> Mary Ninde Gamewell, "A Day at Joyfield," *Woman's Missionary Friend* (June 1918): 193-4.

<sup>489</sup> Li Guanfang, "Ni biye xiezhu enwen" 擬畢業謝主恩文 (Essay on Gratitude to the Lord), *Nü duo* (August 1914): 44-5.

College, Li carried on her literary work for the magazine. Li's work began to feature in editorial columns, indicating a growing recognition and acceptance from her colleagues.

Unlike White's emphasis on women's domestic roles, Li showed a social concern in her early writings published in *Nü duo*. Many of her articles addressed matters of equality, revealing her deep concern for social issues.<sup>490</sup> The following extract from an article entitled "Zhongguo shehui ruhe keyi pingdeng" 中國社會如何可以平等 (How Can China Achieve Equality?) illustrates this:

The term "equality" originated in Christianity. Christ says that we are all God's children regardless of our social status and knowledge. Although undertaking different roles such as father and son, or master and slave, we are all equal in God's eyes. If equality is a wish that current Chinese society has, the attempt will be far from successful unless everyone accepts Christian education. It is understandable that those who oppress others would refuse to believe in Christ because their status would be lowered by converting to Christianity, which advocates that all human beings are equal. For those who live under the yoke of oppression and have experienced indescribable bitterness, even if that person is not competing with the others or not pursuing power, he or she is still instructed by God and shall not bear any humiliation. If that person is under the control of the authority that abuses power, it is not only disgraceful but also sorrowful. Why not safeguard his or her personhood with Christ? If one believes in Christian education, it should not be difficult for him or her to use Christ's moral spirit to fight against the violence exerted by people with power. The oppressed will win eventually by holding onto the truth.<sup>491</sup>

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<sup>490</sup> Articles written by Li Guanfang published in *Nü duo* include: "Zhongguo shehui ruhe keyi pingdeng" 中國社會如何可以平等 (How Can China Achieve Equality?), (September 1920): 4–8; "Shenme jiaozuo shunming" 什麼叫做順命 (What is Called Obedience?), (October 1920): 10–13; "Shaonian shidai zhi zongjiao jiaoyu" 少年時代之宗教教育 (Religious Education of Adolescents), (March 1921): 21–5; "Wo duiyu jidujiao quanguo dahui de ganyan" 我對於基督教全國大會的感言 (My Thoughts on the National Christian Conference), (July 1922): 3–7; "Nüzi de zhen jinbu" 女子的真進步 (The Genuine Progress of Women), (February 1923): 4–12.

<sup>491</sup> Li, "Zhongguo shehui ruhe keyi pingdeng," 6–7. Translation by author.

Li attributed social problems such as inequality to a lack of Christian education. In her belief, the latter would help bring about an ideal society where equality would prevail. Influenced by her teacher, Dr Pirong 皮榮,<sup>492</sup> Li believed that there was an urgent need for education to become more accessible in China. She was willing, like her teacher, to make the task of educating the general public her life's work and envisioned a Christian-based religious education as the vehicle for this objective. In her view, "The only beautiful education in the world is Christ."<sup>493</sup> The acceptance of this principle was essential for achieving true equality in China.

Although the emphasis in Li's writing extended beyond White's household-centred perspective and revealed an impassioned concern for the state of local society, her early writings indicate the impact of Christian education on her view. It is worth noting that Li's approach to achieving social equality barely echoed republican ideas that discussed "the rise and fall of imperial power, the concept of democracy, and the evolution of people's rights."<sup>494</sup> The contemporary scholar Wang Fansen notes that after the 1911 Revolution, new textbooks promoting republican ideals such as equality were adopted in schools throughout the nation.<sup>495</sup> Furthermore, Li's perception of equality did not resemble the typical ideas of Chinese feminists in the early twentieth century. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the May Fourth iconoclasts and socialist activists promoted women's emancipation, which was inspired by Western ideals that featured a non-Christian humanist legacy. By contrast, Christian education greatly shaped Li's understanding, which advocated for the role of Christianity in creating equality. Empowered with the philosophy promulgated by a modern education while simultaneously believing in the idea of Christianity serving to provide a religious redemption for China, Li focused on the importance of morality. This approach, however, would be seriously challenged by the escalating national calamity in the 1930s.

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<sup>492</sup> I was unable to find documents describing Dr Pirong's background.

<sup>493</sup> Li, "Zhongguo shehui ruhe keyi pingdeng," 8.

<sup>494</sup> Wang Fan-sen, "Preface," in Tze-ki Hon and Robert J. Culp (eds.), *The Politics of Historical Production in Late Qing and Republican China* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), viii.

<sup>495</sup> Ibid.



## Li's Career 1921–1928

Li worked as a co-editor of *Nü duo* in Shanghai from 1921<sup>496</sup> and two years later returned to Ginling College in Nanjing to complete her Bachelor of Arts Degree.<sup>497</sup> During her years in Shanghai, she continued to demonstrate her social concern by being associated with the Chinese Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), and was elected as a board member in January 1923.<sup>498</sup> After graduating from Ginling College, she travelled to Boston University in 1925, made possible by an award from the McDowell Fellowship of US\$1,000. Her goal was to prepare herself for further literary work to which she felt called.<sup>499</sup>

On 22 August 1925, the 29-year-old Li embarked on the S.S. *Empress of Asia* in Shanghai,<sup>500</sup> landing first in Canada and then transferring to the S.S. *Princess Kathleen* for the voyage to Seattle, where she landed on 9 September. Her belief in the importance of Christian literature is evident in her speech given to the general executive committee of the WFMS in Illinois in October 1926, where she pleaded “for the preparation in increasing quantities of a Christian literature.” She added:

Literature is spiritual food. The Christian life is just like the physical life, we cannot live without food. The literary productions of philosophers and poets are not for the newborn babe. There is one literature, the like of which the world has never produced, the Gospels [which are] the work of a perfect personality. From that [these] we will produce a new literature of the world that will touch everybody from the little child to the most exalted.<sup>501</sup>

Li's overseas study demonstrated her continuous interest in the role of Christian literature in Christian education. She spent two years studying at the School of Religious Education and Social Service for a

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<sup>496</sup> *The Thirty-fourth Annual Report of the CLS, 1921*, xi.

<sup>497</sup> *The Thirty-sixth Annual Report of the CLS, 1923*, 5.

<sup>498</sup> *Shen bao* (14 January 1922; 17 January 1923).

<sup>499</sup> *The Fifty-seventh Annual Report of the WFMS, 1926* (Boston, Mass.: Miss Annie G. Bailey, 1926), 111, 151.

<sup>500</sup> Library and Archives Canada; Ottawa, Ontario, Canada; *Passenger Lists, 1865–1935*; Series: RG 76-C; Roll: T-14882.

<sup>501</sup> *The Fifty-seventh Annual Report of the WFMS, 1926*, 14, 22.

Master of Religious Education as well as attending the College of Liberal Arts at the University of Boston, where she graduated with a Master of Arts. Her two masters' theses exemplified and extended her undergraduate pursuit of Christian education, the ideal society, and the democratic nation.<sup>502</sup>

Li's thesis entitled "The Contribution of Religious Education to the Democratization of China" highlighted the potential contribution of religious education to both the individual and the nation.<sup>503</sup> It claimed that religious education was fundamental to the democratisation of China. In Li's view, religious teaching would help citizens to acquire the qualities and attributes required for a democratic country.<sup>504</sup> She concluded with a comment, revealing that she shared the same prayer as Miss Betty Hu,<sup>505</sup> who once prayed, "God, give us a leader who can lead like Moses of old and make every Chinese man and woman real working citizens."<sup>506</sup> Echoing Hu's vision, Li envisioned future leaders like a Calvin, Luther, and Knox emerging in China to educate the people with Christian teachings. She believed that democracy embodied salvation and religious education would facilitate the best functioning of democracy in China. She highlighted how Christianity could contribute primarily to the upbringing of the individual and secondly to the democratisation of China. Such thinking galvanised her editorial policy in the following years.

### **Becoming the Editor**

Encouraged with a vision of a new China guided by Christianity, Li sailed back to China on the SS *Minnesota* on 7 May 1928.<sup>507</sup> Upon her arrival, Li was keen to initiate social change and became

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<sup>502</sup> Her first thesis was entitled "Chinese Literature and Christian Religious Education" for the degree of Master of Arts, in partial fulfilment of requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, 1926, Boston University, College of Liberal Arts.

<sup>503</sup> In partial fulfilment of requirements for the degree of Master of Religious Education, 1927.

<sup>504</sup> *Ibid.*, 128.

<sup>505</sup> According to Li, Betty Hu contributed an article "What Can Girls Expect to Contribute toward the Reconstruction of a New China" to the *Chinese Christian Student*. *Ibid.*, 133.

<sup>506</sup> *Ibid.*, 133.

<sup>507</sup> Ancestry.com. *UK, Incoming Passenger Lists, 1878–1960* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2008. Original data: *Board of Trade: Commercial and Statistical Department and successors: Inwards Passenger Lists*. Kew, Surrey, England: The National Archives of the UK (TNA). Series BT26, 1,472 pieces. Class: BT26; Piece: 873; Item: 134.

involved in several organisations. She continued to work for the CLS and was introduced as a new member at the forty-first annual meeting of the CLS on 23 November 1928, where she made a “witty and warm-hearted speech.” Li’s comment that she intended to “evolute not revolute”<sup>508</sup> provided some context to her new approach, combining her Western experiences with her interpretation of China’s situation, which led her to propose a gradual transformation of the nation’s mindset to meet the needs of the time. Although the CLS expected Li to devote herself to full-time literary work, she also worked part-time at the McTyeire Girls’ High School in 1928.<sup>509</sup>

When Li returned to Shanghai following the completion of her Masters’ Degree in religious education at Boston University in 1928, White was on furlough due to illness. White returned to Shanghai on 9 December 1929, where her poor physical condition appears to have provided a convenient excuse to shift editorship.<sup>510</sup> From 1929, Li became the editor of *Nü duo*, but she also devoted much of her time to various organisations including the Chinese Home Missionary Society, the WCTU, the NCCC, the Shanghai YWCA, and the National Child Welfare Association of China (Zhonghua Ciyou Xiejihui 中華慈幼協濟會, NCWA).

As the recipient of a Christian education in both China and America, Li was among the group of pioneer Chinese female converts who obtained social mobility and international experience thanks to their relationship with missionaries.<sup>511</sup> Her perception of Christianity, albeit distinguished from her Western mentor, Laura White, manifests the legacy of Western Christian education that concentrated on morality. Surrounded by a Christian environment, it would have been difficult for Li to be exposed to

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<sup>508</sup> *The Chinese Recorder* (January 1929): 60.

<sup>509</sup> *The Forty-first Annual Report of the CLS, 1928*, 9.

<sup>510</sup> After a period in the hospital, White left Shanghai in 1931 and in the summer of 1934, she sailed to the United States and died on 24 January 1937. See “Farewell to Local Residents,” *The North China Herald* (30 June 1928): 569; “Passenger List in Brevities: Local and General,” *The China Press* (4 December 1929): 21; “List of United States Citizens sailing from Shanghai on 8 April 1931,” Ancestry.com. *Washington, Passenger and Crew Lists, 1882–1961* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2006; *The Forty-fourth Annual Report of the CLS, 1931*, 16; *The Forty-seventh Annual Report of the CLS, 1934*, 16; *The Forty-eighth Annual Report of the CLS, 1935*, 22; “Certificate of Death,” Ancestry.com. *Pennsylvania, Death Certificates, 1906–1963* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2014.

<sup>511</sup> Emily Honig, “Christianity, Feminism, and Communism: The Life and Times of Deng Yuzhi,” in *Christianity in China*, 243; Connie A. Shemo, *The Chinese Medical Ministries of Kang Cheng and Shi Meiyu, 1872–1937: On a Cross-Cultural Frontier of Gender, Race, and Nation* (Bethlehem: Lehigh University Press, 2011).

non-Christian ideals. When Li wrote the article on equality in 1920 and her thesis in 1927, the socialist movement in China was in its infancy. However, as the concept of equality was pivotal to socialist ideals, a shared concern for social problems in China later drew Li more into the socialist campaign in the early 1930s, and by 1935, she had joined the Communist Party. The following sections investigate a series of changes in the discussion of family reform included in *Nü duo* under Li's supervision.

## ***Nü duo*: Inheritance and Resistance**

### ***The Missionary Legacy***

*Nü duo* faced several challenges in the late 1920s. It was a time when a new notion of “the modern girl” emerged in the print media. Many female leaders who were politically active were persecuted during the KMT's White Terror after the split between the KMT and the CCP in 1927. Perceiving feminist movements as a challenge to national order, the KMT also targeted reform-minded female leaders in its campaign against the CCP. With the deterioration in the strength of women's movements, however, a new image of “the modern woman,” depicted wearing expensive and fashionable clothes, began to appear in the print media.<sup>512</sup>

The term “modern girl” (*modeng nüzi* 摩登女子) was a widespread phenomenon and a symbol of modernity, as seen in many magazines and newspapers of the time. Features of a modern girl usually included wearing make-up, dressing up in new clothes, purchasing imported goods, and believing in free love. The spread of such an idea of a new female figure also invited comment from literary critics, who discussed social problems in relation to modernity and expressed anxieties associated with the modern way of life.<sup>513</sup>

Many ideas encapsulated in the notion of the modern girl contradicted those advocated by *Nü duo*. One influential magazine that advocated modern life and enjoyed a popularity among female students

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<sup>512</sup> Louise Edwards, “Policing the Modern Woman in Republican China,” *Modern China* Vol. 26 No.2 (April 2000): 116–9.

<sup>513</sup> Sarah E. Stevens, “Figuring Modernity: The New Woman and the Modern Girl in Republican China,” *NWSA Journal* Vol. 15 No. 3 (Gender and Modernism between the Wars, 1918–1939) (Autumn 2003): 82–103.

was *Linglong* 玲瓏, a weekly women's magazine published by the San he (三和 Triple Harmony) Publishing House from 1931 to 1937 in Shanghai. The famous female writer, Eileen Chang (1920–1995), once commented on its popularity that “in the 1930s, each female student held a copy of *Linglong*.”<sup>514</sup> It depicted modern urban girls and their concerns, aiming to be the voice for women's interests and serving as a guide for their lives. It is likely that its urban middle class readership potentially also included that of *Nü duo*.

While some articles in *Linglong* discussed women's domestic duties,<sup>515</sup> it is noteworthy that it promoted an ideal notion of womanhood that was not confined to the household. In fact, *Linglong* opposed the idea of women's role as homemakers. As Gao Yunxiang explains, contributors to *Linglong* were deeply worried when they noted an international trend advocating the “women going home movement.” Opposing the notion of “the good wife, and wise mother,” the magazine expressed the view that China should not let “Nora,” referring to women who were confined by patriarchal gender ethics, return to her darkness.<sup>516</sup>

Facing the new gender ethics, *Nü duo* continued its emphasis on Victorian virtues. An article published in November 1929 proposed a conservative female model in contrast to current debates on women's freedom.<sup>517</sup> It argued that freedom should be the purpose for the women's movement rather than a means to “indulge” and “debauch,” which the author perceived was a common problem among women fighting for freedom. The essay instead encouraged readers to pursue hard work, frugality, and knowledge. Women inspired by the notion of liberation were encouraged to take the initiative to

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<sup>514</sup> Zhang Ailing 張愛玲, “Tan nü ren” 談女人 (Discussing Women), in *Liuyan* 流言 (Hong Kong: Xianggang huangguan chubanshe, 1998), 84.

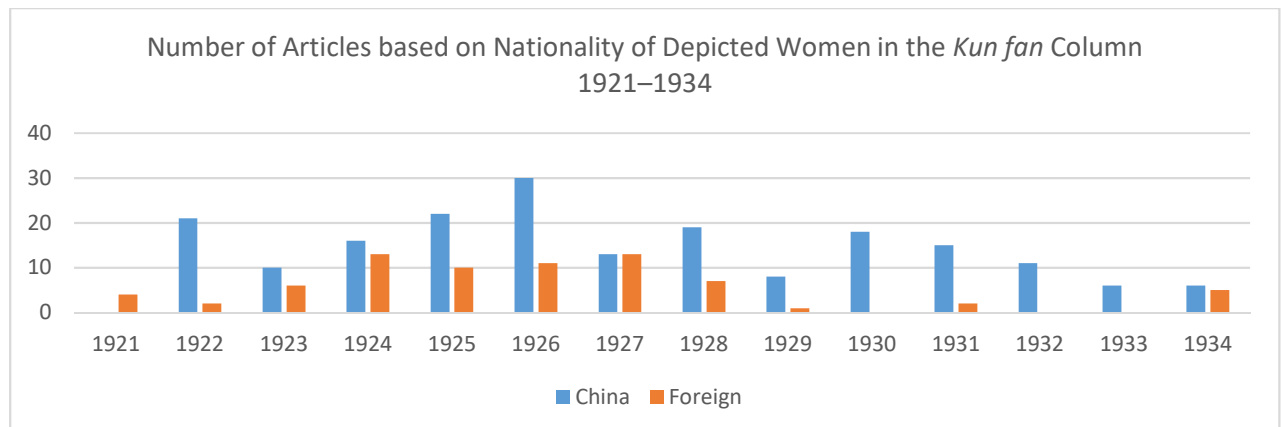
<sup>515</sup> Zhang Pinghui 張娉慧, “Jiating de zuzhi yu weichi” 家庭的組織與維持 (The Organisation and Maintenance of Family), *Linglong* 玲瓏, Vol. 1 No. 28 and No. 33 (1931); Yi Mei 逸梅, “Funü jiefang yu ertong gongyu” 婦女解放與兒童公育 (Women's Emancipation and Children's Public Education), *Linglong* Vol. 5 No. 33 (1935).

<sup>516</sup> Yunxiang Gao, “Nationalist and Feminist Discourses on Jianmei (Robust Beauty) during China's ‘National Crisis’ in the 1930s,” in Dorothy Ko and Wang Zheng (eds.), *Translating Feminisms in China: a Special Issue of Gender & History* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 110.

<sup>517</sup> Shanzhai 善齋, “Taolun nüzi de jiefangzhuyi” 討論女子的解放主義 (Discussing Women's Liberalism), *Nü duo* (November 1929): 4–10.

change old customs rather than “following the crowd” (*suizhe dazhong* 随着大眾) to achieve their personal desires.

A departure from the predominance of representations of Victorian femininity can be seen in the growing number of stories about Chinese women published by *Nü duo*. Thus, it increased the number of Chinese women depicted as role models; the numbers of stories about local women increased in the column called *Kun fan* 坤範 (“Female Models”), in a column that lasted from 1921 to 1934. This column often comprised biographies of Christian female leaders or ordinary Christian women who lived up to the Christian ideals of womanhood. In the beginning, the column introduced many articles on foreign women. For example, in December 1921, it told the life story of Miss Grace L. Coppock, who played a leading role in the development of the YWCA in China. After a brief mourning of her recent death, the article praised Coppock’s fifteen-year work in China that had concentrated on nurturing Chinese women’s leadership in serving society.<sup>518</sup> However, during Li’s editorship (1929–1935), the number of articles on foreign women decreased significantly, as shown in the following chart.



On the other hand, the Chinese women in these stories demonstrated an adherence to the notion of domestic womanhood. One representative Chinese figure, for example, was Nie Zeng Jifen (also known as Mrs Nie). She was promoted as a role model for preserving traditional social norms such as

<sup>518</sup> Miss Grace L. Coppock was also known as 顧恩慈. See Zhu Hubingxia 朱胡彬夏, “Zhongguo nüzi de mofan” 中國女子的模範 (A Model for Chinese Women), *Nü duo* (December 1921): 35.

frugality. Born into an upper-gentry family, Mrs Nie was the youngest daughter of Zeng Guofan, a high-ranking official in the late Qing period. She married Nie Qigui 聶緝槩 (1855–1911) in 1875, who was from another gentry family.<sup>519</sup> In 1910, her niece visited her and introduced Christianity to her. Noting that “world affairs were worsening because men were so absorbed in the pursuit of pleasure,” Mrs Nie believed that loving others as oneself was the resolution to “sav[ing] men’s hearts from such temptations.” In February 1915, she was baptised at the Methodist Episcopal Church in Shanghai.<sup>520</sup>

Conversion to Christianity introduced Mrs Nie to the concept of loving all humanity and reaffirmed her ambition to help the poor. After her conversion, Mrs Nie followed biblical teachings and donated one-tenth of her wealth to support charitable works.<sup>521</sup> Her understanding of an ideal womanhood, nevertheless, reflected the influence of her gentry family background, which molded her belief in the value of Confucian feminine virtues. In particular, she was deeply influenced by her father who insisted on the principle of frugality.<sup>522</sup> Reprinted in the November issue of *Nü duo* in 1928, Zeng’s manuscript Family Admonitions written in 1868, for example, highlighted such virtues as thrift and diligence:

If a family is diligent, it will prosper. If a person is diligent, he will be strong. If one can be both diligent and thrifty, then one’s fortunes will never decline.<sup>523</sup>

To effect her father’s instructions on the running of a household, Mrs Nie held a weekly family meeting at her house to discuss domestic matters.<sup>524</sup> Her father’s Admonitions were also published in *Nü duo*, as shown below.

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<sup>519</sup> *Testimony of a Confucian Woman: The Autobiography of Mrs. Nie Zeng Jifen, 1852–1942*, translated and annotated by Thomas L. Kennedy, Thomas L. Kennedy and Micki Kennedy (eds.), (Athens, Georgia: The University of Georgia Press, 1993), 36–9.

<sup>520</sup> *Ibid.*, 90.

<sup>521</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>522</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>523</sup> *Ibid.*, 24. “家勤則興，人勤則健；能勤能儉，永不貧賤。”

<sup>524</sup> “Ji Nie Zeng Jifen” 記聶曾紀芬 (In Memory of Mrs Nie), *Nü duo* (August 1932): 99. Mrs Nie was also the editor of the book entitled *Kaseigaku* 家政學, originally written by the Japanese educator Shimoda Utako 下田歌子. See Shanzhai 善齋, “Nie tai furen jiazhen xiaoji” 聶太夫人家政小紀 (Vignette of Household Management by Mrs Nie), *Nü duo* (November 1928): 1–4.



照玉人夫太聶

早飯後 做小菜酒醬之類 食事  
 已午刻 紡花或績麻 衣事  
 中飯後 做針黹刺繡之類 細工  
 酉刻 做鞋女鞋或縫衣 粗工  
 吾家男子於書讀字作四字缺一不  
 可婦女於衣食粗細四字缺一不可  
 吾已教訓數年總未做出一定規矩  
 自後每日三宮功課親自驗功食  
 事則每日驗一次家事則三日驗一次  
 紡步驗線子績步驗我葛蛋細工則  
 五日驗一次粗工則每月驗一次每月  
 須做成男鞋一雙女鞋不驗  
 右驗功課單諭兒姪婦滿女知之  
 勿婦到日亦照此遵行  
 同治七年五月廿四日  
 家勤則興人勤則健  
 能勤能儉永不貧賤  
 〔單課功驗墨遺公正文會〕

Photo of Mrs Nie, handwriting of Zeng Guofan, *Nü duo* (November 1928).

As a believer in both Confucian and Christian ethics, Mrs Nie greatly valued women’s feminine virtues. In November 1928 *Nü duo* published a vignette of her family life to resist the contemporary trend of materialist moral degradation. On each Sunday at her house in Shanghai, the magazine reported, at Mrs Nie’s family meetings she affirmed that the virtues of diligence and frugality were at the heart of household management. She encouraged female members of the household to practice housework, including setting the table for meals, washing the dishes, learning how to cook and wash clothes.

The growth of urban life and the promotion of freedom of choice in selecting a spouse in the early 1930s unnerved Mrs Nie. She contributed an article on the issue of chastity to *Nü duo* in June 1933. She perceived that the popular slogan “women’s emancipation” represented a crisis for women in China because it meant abandoning chastity which, in her view, was essential for the family, society, and the nation. Considering many women had fallen victim to new ideas, Mrs Nie appealed for parental consultation in the process of choosing a husband.<sup>525</sup> Amidst an influx of foreign ideologies and material goods, she upheld Confucian teachings centering on feminine virtues, which resonated with White’s advocacy of Victorian virtues.

<sup>525</sup> Nie Zeng Jifen 聶曾紀芬, “Lun nüzi zhi weiji” 論女子之危機 (Discussing Women’s Crisis), *Nü duo* (June 1933): 4–5.



Aside from inheriting the notion of a domestic womanhood, the following sections examine new agendas adopted by *Nü duo*. These reveal that the nature of home life in the Chinese Christian community reflected the changing socio-economic conditions of the time. It shows that new ideas challenged and eventually resisted the missionary legacy of Victorian notions.

### ***Reaching Families of All Classes***

In the first half of the 1930s, *Nü duo* participated in the Christianising Home Campaign launched by the Home Committee of the NCCC. Growing attention to family reform in the Christian community<sup>526</sup> was evident in the 1920s under the influence of the social gospel. The social gospel was an influential ideology aiming for a social transformation based on Christian doctrines. The term “social gospel” first appeared in Charles O. Brown’s book entitled *Talks on Labor Troubles* published in 1886 in New York, which developed into a “religious social-reform movement prominent in the United States from about 1870 to 1920.”<sup>527</sup> Core to the social gospel theory was the notion of the Kingdom of God on earth that targeted the whole society as the mission subject.<sup>528</sup> Walter Rauschenbusch (1861–1918), a social gospel theologian and a well-regarded scholar among Republican Chinese Christians, pointed out that “The intention of religion is to facilitate the Christianisation of social life as well as the reconstruction of social ethics.”<sup>529</sup>

The Chinese YMCA, according to Xing Jun, “was the pioneering and leading force in carrying the social gospel message in China’s industrial reform and rural reconstruction, and in promoting international goodwill.”<sup>530</sup> Parallel to the Chinese YMCA was the establishment of YWCA at the turn of the twentieth

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<sup>526</sup> The term Christian community here refers to a group of people who were either believers or pro-Christian intellectuals. It is hard to confirm whether some authors were converted Christians due to their ambiguous standpoints in the articles and the lack of relevant documents. According to their work, nevertheless, they were pro-Christian for a certain period and in some cases they were engaged in Christian literature work.

<sup>527</sup> <http://www.britannica.com/event/Social-Gospel> Accessed on 28 May 2016.

<sup>528</sup> Wang Jingqiang 王京强, “Shehui fuyin sixiang zai jindai zhongguo de chuanbo tanxi” 社会福音思想在近代中国的传播探析 (An Exploration of the Development of the Social Gospel in China), *Shijie zongjiao yanjiu* 世界宗教研究 Vol. 6 (2014): 131.

<sup>529</sup> Zhao Zhensong 赵真颂 (tr.), *Raoshenbushi shehui fuyin ji* 绕申布士社会福音集 (A Collection of Rauschenbusch on the Social Gospel) (Hong Kong: jidujiao wenyi chubanshe, 1996), 165.

<sup>530</sup> Xing Jun, *Baptized in the Fire of Revolution: The American Social Gospel and the YMCA in China: 1919–1937* (Bethlehem: Lehigh University Press, 1996), 43.

century. With the establishment of the Shanghai branch in 1906, more YWCA branches emerged in cities such as Guangzhou, Tianjin, Beijing, Changsha, Fuzhou, and Nanjing in the following years. With the purpose of serving society, the YWCA was actively involved in organising sports, seminars, and meetings to promote women's physical, moral, and intellectual development.

Christian leaders of the Chinese YWCA were pioneers in advocating for the need for reform in Chinese families. At the annual national Christian conference held in 1922, the theme of the Christianising of the home was proposed as an imperative for Chinese churches.<sup>531</sup> Mrs Mei Huaquan 梅華銓, the YWCA representative from Jiangsu Province, put forward a blueprint for an ideal Christian family. It comprised three aspects. First, familial relations were based on Christian teachings. Secondly, she focused on how to transform the family into a moral institution by advocating Christian ideals. According to Mrs Mei, Christian families should be the “mainstay” (*zhongliu dizhu* 中流砥柱) of society and resist evil customs such as the practices of concubinage and prostitution. The third aspect was to serve as a centre for mutual service, aiming at the Christianisation of China. In particular, Mrs Mei highlighted the role of Christian women in reconciling conflicts between traditional values and Christian teachings. She believed that the primary feature that distinguished Christian families from secular ones was their religious nature. However, a nation-wide survey covering the first two decades of the twentieth century (1901–1920), showed that few women had received a Christian education. She, therefore, appealed for an enhancement of a Christian-oriented religious education programme for Chinese women, who would become a positive and beneficial factor for Christianising homes.<sup>532</sup>

Shortly after this conference, the NCCC established the Home Committee in 1923. It aimed to construct a Christian family through conducting research on family problems, promoting home reform, and publishing home materials.<sup>533</sup> In 1930, the Home Committee launched a nation-wide Home Week

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<sup>531</sup> The report was reprinted in the monthly Christian magazine *Zhonghua guizhu* in 1928. “Jiaotang yu jiating de guanxi” 教堂與家庭的關係 (The Relation between Church and Family), *Zhonghua guizhu* 中華归主 No. 88 (1928): 4.

<sup>532</sup> *Ibid.*, 4–6.

<sup>533</sup> Wang Jie 王杰, *Min'guo shiqi de jiduhua jiating yundong yanjiu* 民国时期的基督教化家庭运动研究 (Masters thesis, Shandong daxue, 2010), 9–10.

campaign and held a conference for the leaders of the Christianising home movement. In the same year, the movement was incorporated into the Five Year Movement (1929–1934) initiated by the NCCC,<sup>534</sup> a revival campaign established in response to the anti-Christian movement of the 1920s. The Five Year Movement had a dual purpose, namely, to enhance believers' knowledge of Christ and to double the number of believers in five years.<sup>535</sup> The Christianising home campaign was one of the six proposed items, the initiation of which was based on a prevalent interpretation among leading Chinese Christians who perceived the basic unit of Chinese society was the family. Correspondingly, Christianising Chinese homes became the prerequisite of "winning China for Christ."<sup>536</sup>

The Home Committee was comprised of a group of female leaders with a background in Western education. For example, Guan Cuizhen 管萃貞 (Miss T. C. Kuan), a graduate of Yenching University, was employed as the secretary of the Home Department in 1929. Before her participation, Guan had worked on family issues for three years at the YWCA. From 1929 to 1932, she travelled to areas in north, central, and east China holding meetings and visiting local leaders, especially women leaders.<sup>537</sup> From 1932 to 1934, she travelled to the United States for further study, where she spent the first year at Pendle Hill, a Quaker institution founded by Henry Hodgkin, and the second at the Hartford School of Religion.<sup>538</sup>

In 1933, Mrs Chen Xia Suqiu 陳夏素秋 (also known as Eugenia Chen) of the Methodist Mission in Suzhou, was invited to work as a full-time secretary of the Home Committee.<sup>539</sup> Mrs Chen was a

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<sup>534</sup> The initiation of the Christianising Home movement by the NCCC was based on the prevalent interpretation among leading Chinese Christians that the basic unit of Chinese society was the home. Fundamentally, to win China for Christ required Chinese homes to be Christianised. See *Zhonghua quanguo jidujiao xiejinhui dishijie dahui baogao*, 46.

<sup>535</sup> "Nüqingnianhui wei wuyun shi tonggao suoshu gehui" 女青年會為五運事通告所屬各會 (Announcement of YWCA to Its Members About the Five-year Movement), *Nü duo* (March 1930): 78.

<sup>536</sup> *Zhonghua quanguo jidujiao xiejinhui dishijie dahui baogao*, 46.

<sup>537</sup> "Jiduhua jiating yundong de qianzhan yu huigu" 基督化家庭運動的前瞻與回顧 (Looking Back and Looking Forward of the Christianising Home Movement), *Zhonghua guizhu* No. 129 (1932): 2.

<sup>538</sup> "Zhonghua quanguo jidujiao xiejinhui nianbao" 中華全國基督教協進會年報 (Proceedings of the Tenth Meeting Organisation of Meeting) (Shanghai: NCCC, July 1935). Shanghai Municipal Archive: u123-0-20, 52.

<sup>539</sup> "Benhui jiduhua jiating xin'ganshi" 本會基督化家庭新干事 (New Leaders of Christianising Family committee), *Zhonghua guizhu* No. 139 (1933): 9.

graduate of Columbia University, specialising in domestic problems and children's education. In addition to travelling between south and east China, Mrs Chen was also responsible for compiling and preparing the Home Week materials for 1934. Mrs Chen was succeeded by Guan Cuizhen in the same year due to Chen's departure with the arrival of her first child.<sup>540</sup>

*Nü duo's* editor Li Guanfang was also a leading member involved in the evangelical work of the Home Committee. In 1930, Li attended a conference on leadership training organised by the Committee at the Mothercraft School (Minde funü xuexiao 民德婦女學校 Minde Women's School) in Zhejiang.<sup>541</sup> A total of 90 representatives from different denominations, institutions, and publishers attended the conference from 6 to 16 December. 31 participants were men. The remaining 59 participants were women whose occupations included pastors, teachers, editors, and church leaders. Li delivered speeches on the necessity of literature for Christian homes. In addition to speeches, groups were divided into discussion groups where they examined such topics as worship, literacy rates, hygiene, and religious education at home.<sup>542</sup> From 1931 to 1935, she had attended three annual NCCC conferences as a member of staff listed under its Home Committee. As the Chairman of the Home Committee, Li assisted in organising several conferences for the Home department.<sup>543</sup> At the time, she had travelled to several places in south and east China where she held meetings and delivered speeches. *Jinsheng yuekan* 金聲月刊 published one of her speeches on "the Resolution of problems on Christianising the Home."<sup>544</sup> She explained that the Christianising process (*jidu hua* 基督化) should be integrated and natural and penetrate every aspect of life. She refuted a narrow interpretation of

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<sup>540</sup> "Zhonghua quanguo jidujiao xiejinhui nianbao," 66–7.

<sup>541</sup> "Jiduhua jiating yundong de qianzhan yu huigu," 2.

<sup>542</sup> *Report of the East China Conference for Leaders of the Christianising the Home Movement* (Shanghai: NCCC, March 1931), 4, 7–8. Shanghai Municipal Archive, u123-0-161-23.

<sup>543</sup> *Zhonghua quanguo jidujiao xiejinhui dibajie dahui baogao* 中華全國基督教協進會第八屆大會報告 (The Eighth Report of the NCCC) (Shanghai: NCCC, 1931), 14, 16. Shanghai Municipal Archive, u123-0-18.

*Zhonghua quanguo jidujiao xiejinhui dijiujie dahui baogao* 中華全國基督教協進會第九屆大會報告 (The Ninth Report of the NCCC) (Shanghai: NCCC, 1933), 14, 44–5. Shanghai Municipal Archive, u123-0-19-1.

*Zhonghua quanguo jidujiao xiejinhui dishijie dahui baogao* 中華全國基督教協進會第十屆大會報告 (The Tenth Report of the NCCC) (Shanghai: NCCC, 1935), 20, 58–9. Shanghai Municipal Archive, u123-0-19-69.

<sup>544</sup> *Jinsheng yuekan* 金聲月刊 Vol. 3 No. 4 (1933): 11–9.

the Christianising process that was confined to the practices of Bible reading and prayer. Furthermore, she focused on the production of magazines and stories for Home Week, a crucial campaign of the Home Committee.<sup>545</sup>

One characteristic event of the Home Campaign was the Christianising Home Week (*jiduhua jiating yundong zhou* 基督教化家庭運動周), held annually from 1930 by the Home Committee. In the case of Shanghai, it was reported that the Home Week, held from 9 to 15 November 1930, was well received by local churches and communities. Nineteen churches participated in the movement, and approximately six to seven hundred people attended the daily meetings.<sup>546</sup> In Henan, around five hundred people had attended the daily gatherings held from 9 to 16 November 1930. Aside from morning prayers, each day was packed with speeches on different topics on marriage, for example, sanitation, and spiritual formation.<sup>547</sup> By 1935, various places had responded to the Home Week movement. In Sichuan, a subcommittee and mothers' association was established; in Hunan, churches cooperated with middle schools and hospitals to develop their home movements; in Guangdong, the Christian mothers' association was founded to promote knowledge and training on maternal care; in Gulatingyu, the Church of Christ in China established schools for women; in Wuhu, Sheng Gong Hui 聖公會 organised groups to study family issues; a Christian union on rural families was founded in Hebei, Shandong, Shanxi, and Henan.<sup>548</sup> The following table lists the theme of each year dating from 1930 to 1940.

Period	Themes
26 October–1 November 1930	worship, education, ethics, sanitation, economics, entertainment, children's happiness

<sup>545</sup> Ortham Lane, "The 'Christianizing the Home Movement' in China," *Woman's Missionary Friend* (March 1933): 86.

<sup>546</sup> "Jiduhua jiating weiyuanhui baogao" 基督教化家庭委員會報告 (Report of Christianising Home Committee), in *Zhonghua quanguo jidujiao xiejinhui dibajie dahui baogao*, 50.

<sup>547</sup> Wang Ruzhen 王儒珍, "Shiguan jiaohui jiduhua jiating yundong (He Nan)" 石棺教會基督教化家庭運動 (河南), *Xing hua* Vol. 27 No. 48 (17 December 1930): 31.

<sup>548</sup> Guan Cuizhen 管萃貞, "1935 nian zhi jiduhua jiating yundongzhou" 一九三五年之基督教化家庭運動周 (The Christianising Home Week for 1935), *Zhonghua quizhu*, No. 159 (1935): 9.

25–31 October 1931	“Bring children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord” (KJV, Ephesians 6:4); “One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity” (KJV, 1 Timothy 3:4)
30 October–6 November 1932	Home worship and parent education
28 October–4 November 1933	Children’s spiritual life, children’s entertainment, and children’s physical being
28 October–4 November 1934	Christian homes and society
27 October–3 November 1935	Rural families, parent education, and literacy rates
25–31 October 1936 (–1940)	Parent education and a new China

Period and Themes of Home Weeks<sup>549</sup>

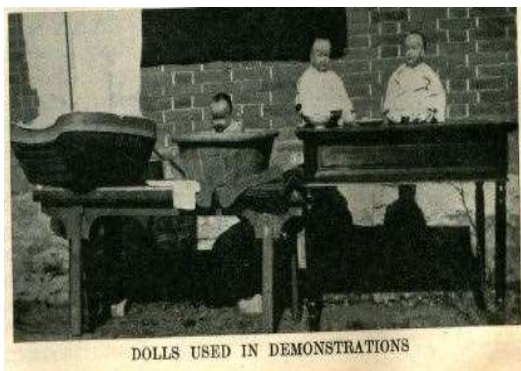
Initiated to regain evangelical vigour, the national home campaign featured a social approach. Mrs Eugenia Chen, the secretary of the Home Committee in 1934, proposed that the fundamental principle for Christians was social concern.<sup>550</sup> In particular, she advocated for the Christianising Home Week to adopt a social approach enabling educated Christian women to encounter local families, including Christian families and non-Christian households. As a result, the Home Week movement would involve participation from local converts and possibly non-Christian Chinese who were attracted by the form and content of the campaign.

A glimpse of the work of Christianising Chinese homes is referred to in an article published in the *Woman’s Missionary Friend* in March 1933. As the theme for year 1933 was children’s physical and spiritual welfare, the article reported the visit of Christian home workers in Changli 昌黎, a county in northeastern Hebei Province. The aim of this “Better Home Campaign” was to “visit all the homes of

<sup>549</sup> Guan Cuizhen, “Jiduhua jiating yundongzhou xiaoxi yiwen” 基督教化家庭運動周消息一聞 (News on the Christianising Home Week), *Zhonghua guizhu*, No. 108 (1930): 15; “Jiduhua jiating yundongzhou” 基督教化家庭運動周 (The Christianising Home Week), *Zhonghua guizhu*, No. 119 (1931): 4; “Disanjie jiduhua jiating yundongzhou tonggao” 第三屆基督教化家庭運動周通告 (Announcement of the Third Christianising Home Week), *Zhonghua guizhu* No. 129 (1932): 8; “Jiduhua jiating yundongzhou richeng” 基督教化家庭運動周日程 (Schedule of the Christianising Home Week), *Zhonghua guizhu* No. 139 (1933): 3–6; “Bennian jiating yundongzhou cailiao yuzhi” 本年家庭運動周材料預誌 (Materials for Christianising Home Week of This Year), *Zhonghua guizhu* No. 147 (1934): 14; Guan, “1935 nian zhi jiduhua jiating yundongzhou,” 3–4; Guan Cuizhen, “Benhui jiduhua jiating yundongzhou (1936)” 本會基督教化家庭運動周 (一九三六年) (The Christianising Home Week for 1936), *Zhonghua guizhu* No. 167 (1936): 16.

<sup>550</sup> Chen Xia Suqiu 陳夏素秋, “Jiduhua jiating he shehui” 基督教化家庭和社會 (The Christianising of Family and Society), *Zhonghua guizhu* No. 149 (1934): 2–3.

church members, and talk with the women about religion and education in the home and child welfare.”<sup>551</sup> Furthermore, Christian workers concerned with home reform aimed to visit as many homes as they could regardless of whether they were church members. They stayed at the home of fellow church members or at local Christian compounds. Local churches and evangelical workers cooperated in the work. Teaching equipment included scales for weighing children, a medicine box, an obstetrics bag, dolls and printed materials. Home visits involved medical examinations of female children and classes instructing people on the prevention of illness, the necessity of fresh air in bedrooms, the benefits of boiled drinking water, and measures to control flies and mosquitoes.



Viola Lantz, “Working Toward Better Homes,” *Woman’s Missionary Friend* (March 1933): 91–2.

In some places, the workers “examined school children and taught the teacher how to treat the eyes and to correct any other defects.”<sup>552</sup> At the mother’s meeting, they used four dolls to demonstrate how to wash a baby in a bath, how to use a bib while the child was eating, how to cover a child’s bed with mosquito netting and how to make simple and comfortable children’s clothes.<sup>553</sup>

The Home Week campaign also aimed at mobilising educated Christian women for visits to rural Chinese families. When Mrs Chen left the Committee due to her pregnancy, Guan Cuizhen returned from overseas studies and succeeded to the leadership of the Home Committee in 1934. Under her instruction, the Home Committee began to focus on rural households. The annual conference report

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<sup>551</sup> Viola Lantz, “Working Toward Better Homes,” *Woman’s Missionary Friend* (March 1933): 91.

<sup>552</sup> *Ibid.*, 92.

<sup>553</sup> *Ibid.*, 90–3.

of the NCCC in 1935 recorded that Guan persuaded the Committee to realize that the Home movement should henceforth concentrate its activities on two objectives: an emphasis on the importance of parent education and the extension of the work pertaining to the Christianising Home movement to rural areas. The Committee therefore appointed a sub-committee to focus on the work with rural families and invited workers with rural experience to study the problems associated with village families.<sup>554</sup>

To support the Home Campaign, the CLS served as a primary hub that published a wide range of materials including texts, songs, slogans, and posters. For example, the Child’s Evening Prayer depicted “a picture of a little three-year-old Chinese boy at his mother’s knee for his bedtime prayer.” Thousands of copies of this poster, according to one missionary of the time, could be found “throughout China on the walls of homes, Sunday school rooms, primary schools, kindergartens and children’s wards in hospitals.” Yearly orders for each of these posters reached as high as 20,000 or more.<sup>555</sup>



Left: Illustrations of Christian families in seven framed graphics, NCCC, 193?; Middle: *Woman’s Missionary Friend* (March 1933): 86; Right: Poster of the Christianising Home Week<sup>556</sup>

<sup>554</sup> “Zhonghua quanguo jidujiao xiejinhui nianbao,” 67.

<sup>555</sup> Lane, “The ‘Christianizing the Home Movement’ in China,” 86.

<sup>556</sup> Online source. <http://chineseposter.com/poster/tc/posterdetail/id/3256> Accessed on 27 November 2017.



By distributing printed materials from the Christianising Home Committee to local areas, a unified message was relayed during Home Week. An increase in the sale of Home Movement publications is evidence of a positive response from local churches. Within several months from September 1930 to January 1931, subscriptions came from Nanyang 南洋, Mongolia 蒙古, Hong Kong, Dalian 大連, Korea, and from fifteen other provinces that were closer to Shanghai.<sup>557</sup>

*Nü duo* also played a role in promoting the national Christianising Home Campaign. In fact, during the early stages of the Home movement, *Nü duo* published several articles and essays to get its message of a Christian home life across to its readers.<sup>558</sup> The first three essays contributed by the Home Committee to *Nü duo* in 1929 were concerned with introducing the concept of mothers' meetings with notes on its program and organisation. Two drafts of the mothers' program listed singing, prayer, speech, discussion, and refreshment on its agenda.<sup>559</sup> It suggested that talented women should take up the role of initiating mothers' meetings in order to lead local women to reform their family life.

To provide guidance for its female leaders, *Nü duo* published an essay in December 1929, introducing a mothers' meeting organised by a woman who was a kindergarten instructor. The meeting was established to advance domestic knowledge and social skills. Members comprised neighbors as well as those whose husbands were teachers. The essay further described two mothers' meetings held in Beijing and Shanghai. The Beijing meeting appears to have been a popular social event where more than 100 members attended. Arrangements followed a set procedure. Invitations were sent to members a week in advance; halls were decorated with flowers and members wore their best clothes. Lectures related primarily to issues of disease prevention, childrearing, Bible stories depicting examples of virtuous women, and sunlight therapy. By contrast, at a monthly mothers' meeting in

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<sup>557</sup> "Gedi jiaohui fenfen caiban jiayun kanwu" 各地教會紛紛採辦家運刊物 (The Popularity of Materials for Home Movement among Local Churches), *Nü duo* (January 1931): 75.

<sup>558</sup> Guan Cuizhen, "Jiduhua jiating yanjiuhui de banfa" 基督化家庭研究會的辦法 (Methods of Conducting Christianising Home Meetings), *Nü duo* (October 1929): 9.

<sup>559</sup> *Ibid.*, 10; "Jiduhua jiating yanjiuhui zhixu" 基督化家庭研究會秩序 (The Order of Christianising Home Meetings), *Nü duo* (November 1929): 11–2.

Shanghai, a guest speaker or fellow member would deliver a speech first and then members would conduct discussions based on the topic.<sup>560</sup>

*Nü duo* also circulated articles written by leaders of the Christianising home movement. In 1931, it published Guan's report on the conference for leaders of the Christianising home movement in 1930.<sup>561</sup> The concerns of articles published in *Nü duo* included training for parents, religious education for children, agendas for Home Week, family worship, and suggestions on ancestral worship. Guan concluded with a summary of primary problems relating to each aspect and sought comments from the audience.

*Nü duo's* circulation of articles on the Home Movement indicates its engagement in the social mobilisation initiated by the NCCC. Those writings circulated in the magazine, though small in number, conveyed a message that the magazine was beginning to place its emphasis on transforming the conditions of Chinese families of all classes. Home reform, in this sense, was closely connected to the local social environment and household needs perceived by Chinese Christian leaders at the time. The following section explores another change documented in *Nü duo*—the emergence of socialist and feminist thinking among a group of educated Christian women.

### ***Caring Women in the Workforce***

In the early 1930s, a surge of female workers migrated to China's cities. The declining economy of the time, especially in the countryside, was an impetus for many rural women to seek work in the new industries of the urban areas. Statistics from the Ministry of Trade and Industry of the Republican Government in 1930 show that there were more female than male workers, namely, 374,117 female

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<sup>560</sup> "Jiduhua jiating yanjiuhui zhi zuozhi" 基督教家庭研究會之組織 (The Organisation of the Christian Mothers' Meeting), *Nü duo* (December 1929): 10–3.

<sup>561</sup> Guan Cuizhen, "Huadongqu jiduhua jiating yundong lingxiu yanjiuhui jilue" 華東區基督教家庭運動領袖研究會紀略 (About the meeting for leaders of the Home Week in East China), *Nü duo* (February 1931): 71–7.

workers in 28 cities compared with 372,626 male workers.<sup>562</sup> In the case of Shanghai, two-thirds of the factory workforce were women by the early 1930s.<sup>563</sup>

The Great Depression of the 1930s also functioned to prompt Chinese women to seek paid work. For example, it was estimated that by March 1935, around 1,000 companies in Shanghai were bankrupt and around half a million people were unemployed.<sup>564</sup> With no other source of income, women had to work outside the family to make a living. The outbreak of hostilities resulting from the Second Sino-Japanese war in 1931 also forced many women to join the workforce. While their male compatriots joined the armed forces, women were left with more responsibilities and opportunities in society.<sup>565</sup>

Given the tremendous change in the traditional gender division of labour, a debate centred on women returning home took place. As historian Zang Jian points out, it was initiated by Lin Yutang's 林語堂 (1895–1976) speech entitled “Hunjia yu nüzi zhiye” 婚嫁與女子職業 (Marriage and Women in the Workforce) at the McTyeire School in Shanghai in 1933,<sup>566</sup> which was published on 13 September that year in *Shishi xinbao* 時事新報 (*Current Affairs Daily*) and stimulated a debate in *Shishi xinbao* and other periodicals.<sup>567</sup> Its English version was published earlier in *The China Critic* on 19 June 1930, which was translated by *Nü duo* and published in its February 1931 issue.<sup>568</sup> Lin, a well-known Chinese writer

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<sup>562</sup> Meng Ru 孟如, “Funü yu jiating lan: cong zhiye huidao jiating ma” 婦女與家庭欄 從職業回到家庭嗎 (Women and Family Column: From Career to Family?), *Dongfang zazhi* Vol. 30 No. 23 (1933): 2.

<sup>563</sup> Emily Honig, *Sisters and Strangers: Women in the Shanghai Cotton Mills, 1919–1949* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1986), 1.

<sup>564</sup> Yan Quan 严泉, “Minguo jingjishi yanjiu de xinshijiao—du *Daxiaotiao shiqi de zhongguo: shichang, guojia yu shijie jingji*” 民国经济史研究的新视角—读《大萧条时期的中国：市场，国家与世界经济》 (A New Perspective to Research on Republican Economics—Reading *China During the Great Depression*), *Shixue lilun yanjiu* 史学理论研究 No. 1 (2013): 134–9; Shiroyama Tomoko 城山智子, Meng Fanli 孟凡礼 and Shang Guomin 尚国敏 (tr.), *Daxiaotiao shiqi de zhongguo: shichang, guojia yu shijie jingji* 大萧条时期的中国：市场，国家与世界经济 1929–1937 (Nanjing: Jiangsu renmin chubanshe, 2010).

<sup>565</sup> Luo Jiurong 羅久蓉, “Zhanzheng yu funü: cong Li Qingping hanjian’an kan kangzhan qianhou de liangxing guanxi” 戰爭與婦女：從李青萍漢奸案看抗戰前後的两性關係 (War and Women: Exploring Gender during the Anti-Japanese War through the Case of National Traitor Li Qingping), in Lü Fangshang 吕芳上 (ed.), *Wushengzhisheng(I): jindai zhongguo de funü yu guojia (1600–1950)* 無聲之聲 (I): 近代中國的婦女與國家 (1600–1950) (Tai bei: Zhongyang yanjiuyuan jindai yanjiusuo chuban, 2003), 163.

<sup>566</sup> Zang Jian, “‘Women Returning Home’—A Topic of Chinese Women’s Liberation,” in Mechthild Leutner and Nicola Spakowski (eds.), *Women in China: The Republican Period in Historical Perspective* (Münster: LIT, 2005), 377.

<sup>567</sup> *Ibid.*, 377–81.

<sup>568</sup> Yu Hualong 于化龍, “Nüzi jiehun yu zhongshenzhiye” 女子結婚與終身職業 (Women’s Marriage and Career),

and translator, disagreed with the idea of “Literature as a Profession” promoted by the McTyeire school. Instead, he argued that women should consider marriage as a career. His reasons for this were three-fold. Firstly, literature was perceived as a means of leisure associated with the upper classes and could not become a profession. Secondly, as women were mistreated in male-dominated society, Lin believed that marriage was the best life-long career for women. Referring to the salary gap between male and female teachers, he highlighted the unequal treatment of women in society. Marriage, therefore, was better than any other career for women. Thirdly, women were viewed as more capable household managers than men. After marriage, nevertheless, women, especially educated women, could seek an independent life. While Lin advocated marriage as a woman’s main priority, he also encouraged the return of married women to society instead of remaining at home.

It is not surprising to see Lin’s article published in *Nü duo* as it appealed to its target readership. However, it also spilled a lot of ink demonstrating its support for women in the workforce. One article traced women’s lower economic status by looking into the evolving history of human beings. “Funü de jingji diwei jiqi jianglai” 婦女的經濟地位及其將來 (Women’s Economic Standing and Its Future), was a translated essay published in January 1933.<sup>569</sup> This essay adopted a historical approach to women’s social and economic standing.<sup>570</sup> By examining the progress of women in six periods, namely those of hunting, nomadism, agriculture, handicraft work, war, and industry, the article argued that the reasons for women being treated as the inferior sex were the social and cultural settings that hindered women’s development. Once these boundaries became less strict and education became more accessible for women, their talents would come to the fore, especially in areas such as industry

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*Nü duo* (February 1931): 5–10.

<sup>569</sup> The translated article was from a chapter in the book entitled *The Sociology of Life Insurance* written by American writer Edward A. Woods, who was also the president and manager of The Edward A. Woods Company. The translated article changed the chapter title from “The Influence of Life Insurance Upon The Status of Women” to “Women’s Economic Standing and Its Future” (“Funü de jingji diwei jiqi jianglai” 婦女的經濟地位及其將來). For the original work, see Edward A. Woods, *The Sociology of Life Insurance* (New York: Appleton-Century, 1928), 53–75. For the Chinese version of this book, see Guo Peixian 郭佩賢 and Chen Keqing 陳克勤 (tr.), *Renshou baoxian shehuixue* 人壽保險社會學 (n.p.: Zhonghua renshou baoxian xiejinshe, 1934).

<sup>570</sup> Chen Keqing 陳克勤 (tr.), “Funü de jingji diwei jiqi jianglai” 婦女的經濟地位及其將來 (Women’s Economic Standing and Its Future), *Nü duo* (January, February, 1933): 15–21; 8–14.

and commerce. The article, therefore, opposed the notion of women governing the domestic domain. Instead, it upheld the principle of women's liberation and advocated education for women.

Another essay published in April 1933 by the economist Tang Qingzeng 唐慶增 (1902–1972) focused on women's roles in economic development.<sup>571</sup> Tang obtained his Master's degree in economics from Harvard University in the early 1920s and returned to China in 1925 where he taught economics in various universities in the following years.<sup>572</sup> In his article, Tang pointed out an ignorance about women's economic contributions in recorded history. The economic history in China showed that a gendered division of labour had contributed to the development of an agricultural society. If women had not pursued household duties such as weaving, it would have been impossible for men to labour in the fields. In the new transition era of the 1930s, Tang appealed for the participation of Chinese women in social and economic reform. He proposed several ventures including establishing women's banks, studying commerce, and obtaining women's suffrage. China's economy, in his view, would benefit from women's contributions, especially from their care and frugality.

Two other translated articles published in *Nü duo* in 1934 attempted to find the root causes of women's failure in the workforce. One article was written by Mary Borden, originally printed in February 1933 in the British magazine *Good Housekeeping*. A year later, *Nü duo* translated selections from this article to provide a comparison with the West.<sup>573</sup> While acknowledging progress in women's rights, the author focused on its stagnation and attributed several reasons for this. The majority of women of all classes, she claimed, had been indifferent to the women's movements promoting women's causes. The situation changed with the outbreak of the First World War. With the movement of men into the armed forces, women entered the workforce where many enjoyed financial independence for the first time. With the advent of peace and the demobilisation of men, however,

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<sup>571</sup> Tang Qingzeng 唐慶增, "Zhongguo funü yu jingji" 中國之婦女與經濟 (Chinese Women and Economics), *Nü duo* (April 1933): 37–41.

<sup>572</sup> Ma Tao 馬濤, "Tang Qingzeng yu qi Zhongguo jingji sixiang shi" 唐庆增与其《中国经济思想史》 (Tang Qingzeng and His *Chinese history of economy*), *Jingji sixiang shi pinglun* 经济思想史评论 Vol. 1 (2006): 262.

<sup>573</sup> Bai Hua 柏華, "Funü jingji duli de yuanyin" 婦女經濟獨立的因果 (The Cause and Effect of Women's Financial Independence), *Nü duo* (February 1934): 1–6.

men returned to their civilian jobs and women once more reverted to being fulltime housewives. According to Borden, many men had been concerned about the newly independent financial status of their wives at this time. She insisted that women must be financially self-sufficient and able to contribute to the family's financial security, especially in the event of husbands becoming unemployed. Chinese female readers, therefore, were encouraged to pursue an occupation.

The other article was a selective translation of an essay written by Lorine Pruette, published in *The Outlook and Independent* on 12 August 1931.<sup>574</sup> Under the title of “Funü shiye weishenme shibai” 婦女事業為甚麼失敗? (Why the Women's Cause Failed),<sup>575</sup> the essay argues that a primary cause for women's failure in social engagement was found in the different psychological attitudes of both sexes. When a man struggled at work he was “under such pressure from his pride and from his knowledge of the group's expectations that he says to himself, ‘I can't fail, I can't fail—I've got to put it over.’”<sup>576</sup> By contrast, when a woman gave up in the middle of a struggle, she would say “I can fail—there's always an excuse.”<sup>577</sup> Furthermore, the article explained that opposition from their husbands also prevented women from achieving success in the workplace. Childhood education and social expectations shaped a tangible and intangible framework centred on gender. In a departure from the original essay, the translated article explained that women and men were fundamentally the same although there were differences in their psychological make-up. Change occurred due to the imposition of social norms at different times in history. The article, while not condoning Victorian notions of an ideal womanhood, nevertheless, at least raised questions about the status quo and women's poor economic and social status.

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<sup>574</sup> *The Outlook and Independent* (1928 to 1932) was a weekly magazine published in New York City. The magazine was established from 1870 under the title of *The Christian Union* and lasted until 1935 under the title of *The New Outlook*.

<sup>575</sup> Chen Wei 陳薇 (tr.), “Funü shiye weishenme shibai?” 婦女事業為甚麼失敗? (Why the Women's Cause Failed?), *Nü duo* (August 1934): 1–4.

<sup>576</sup> Lorine Pruette, “Why Women Fail?,” *The Outlook and Independent* (12 August 1931): 461.

<sup>577</sup> *Ibid.*

With regard to the issue of women remaining in the home, *Nü duo* shows sympathy for the idea of women's social engagement, as seen in an article entitled "Jiating funü he shiye" 家庭婦女和事業 (Household Woman and Professions) published in March 1934.<sup>578</sup> A female contributor called Chen Weijiang 陳維姜, a YWCA leader, wrote the article. Chen believed that women were equal to their male counterparts. In her view, women's weaknesses were a reflection of the era rather than the nature of their gender.<sup>579</sup> Women were seen as self-confident and Chen addressed the question whether women should be encouraged to have a career outside the home. In her article on marriage and professions, she refuted the idea that household work was the only occupation for women and criticised those who considered women merely as child bearers.

In addition to the domestic sphere, Chen called for women to take up other roles in society, enabling "a discovery of oneself" and contributing to "a benefit to humankind."<sup>580</sup> Although Chen agreed with the notion of men ruling the outside and women the inside, her proposal highlighted women's social contributions and promoted the enhancement of confidence in women. Her logic was that without experiences outside the home, a woman would not reach her full capacity nor develop a confidence of mind leading to independence. An appreciation of her self-worth, brought about by participation in the wider society through holding an occupation, would benefit and improve the institution of the family. Mothers-in-law, in particular, would certainly become more open-minded by having a job in society and being exposed to a wider world which would alleviate jealousy when her children left home and started a family of their own.

Why did *Nü duo* incorporate articles in favour of women's participation in the work force? A plausible reason was the prevalence of "socialist ideas of workers' organization and feminist ideas of women's empowerment" among the female leaders of the YWCA,<sup>581</sup> an association Li Guanfang was actively

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<sup>578</sup> Chen Weijiang 陳維姜, "Jiating funü he shiye" 家庭婦女和事業 (Household Woman and Professions), *Nü duo* (March 1934): 1–3.

<sup>579</sup> Chen Weijiang, "Funü bushi ruozhe" 婦女不是弱者 (Women Are Not the Weak Ones), *Nü duo* (April 1934): 1–3.

<sup>580</sup> Chen, "Jiating funü he shiye," 3.

<sup>581</sup> Elizabeth A. Littell-Lamb, "Engendering a Class Revolution: the Chinese YWCA industrial reform work in

associated with. From 1928 to 1935, Li was one of the national executive members of the YWCA in China. Although she resigned from the executive position from 1928 to 1933, Li was involved with the literature subsection of the Association throughout this time, when liberal writers such as Tao Xingzhi 陶行知 (1891–1946) were also members.<sup>582</sup>

When Li was a leading member of the YWCA in Shanghai, she was exposed to an atmosphere of increasing concern for working class women. According to Elizabeth A. Littell-Lamb, one key development in the Shanghai YWCA from 1927 to 1933 was its industrial work, which focused on the improvement of the working conditions of the working class women. Although women's movements ebbed due to political intervention during the White Terror, there was a growing politicisation among the leadership and staff within the Association in response to "the Nationalist government's failure to accomplish viable political and economic reforms."<sup>583</sup> Littell-Lamb argues that the YWCA industrial secretaries in Shanghai helped promote "a fundamental change in the Association's class identity, social orientation and social perspective."<sup>584</sup> Originally, the YWCA was designed as an organisation for female members from schools and the urban middle-class. Littell-Lamb notes that leaders of the Chinese YWCA, however, started to integrate all women, especially those from the working class, to the organisation. Many of the leaders concerned with industrial work in the YWCA embraced leftist and socialist ideas. Deng Yuzhi 鄧裕志, the National Industrial Secretary of the time, was one crucial figure that challenged the middle-class orientation of the Association and advanced the Association's support for working women.<sup>585</sup>

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Shanghai, 1927–1939," *Women's History Review* Vol. 21 No. 2 (April 2012): 189.

<sup>582</sup> "Wunian lai quanguo xiehui weiyuan ji ganshi yilan" 五年來全國協會委員及干事一覽 (A List of National Committee Members for the Past Five Years), in *Wunian jianshu (1928–1933) 五年簡述 (1928–1933)*, Shanghai Municipal Archive, y3-1-166, 95–6. *Directory of Young Women's Christian Association of China, 1934–1937*, Shanghai Municipal Archive, u121-0-3-50.

<sup>583</sup> Littell-Lamb, "Engendering a Class Revolution," 190; Karen Garner, *Precious Fire: Maud Russell and the Chinese Revolution* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003), 108–30.

<sup>584</sup> Littell-Lamb, "Engendering a Class Revolution," 190.

<sup>585</sup> *Ibid.*, 189–209.



Working for the YWCA provided Li with a platform to exercise her social conscience. In 1933, she attended the third annual conference of the YWCA, which took its theme as constructing a new society.<sup>586</sup> In her address on the organisation's progress, Li pointed to her in-depth knowledge of the YWCA and proposed a broader approach to the application of Christian teaching, which was to “Qu qi zaopo, qu qi jinghua 去其糟粕，取其精華，” Chinese idioms meaning “to reject the dross and assimilate the essence.”<sup>587</sup> Although she did not explain what she meant by dross, judging from her approval of the YWCA's positive social engagement it seems fair to conclude that she meant to get rid of the useless western manifestations of Christianity and use the essence of Christianity for the benefit of China. The YWCA's desire for social progress marked it out as one good example of the philosophy of engagement in action. In her opening speech at this annual conference, Li encouraged members of the YWCA to pool their wisdom to overcome the current miserable situation. By referring to a Chinese poem written in Song Dynasty (960–1279) “Shanqiong shuijin yi wulu, liuan huaming you yicun 山窮水盡疑無路，柳暗花明又一村，”<sup>588</sup> translated as “Where the hills and streams end and there seems no road beyond, amidst shading willows and blooming flowers another village appears,”<sup>589</sup> she appealed to each member to overcome the difficulties in transforming Chinese society and work together to improve it. The mission for each Chinese person was to help with constructing a new society. She declared, “with a solemn sense of my responsibility, I pledge myself.”<sup>590</sup> The social gospel movement enabled Li to engage in the building of a new society while maintaining her Christian identity; for her, the essence of Christianity was defined by its social implications.

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<sup>586</sup> “Zhonghua jidujiao nüqingnianhui disanci quanguo dahui jilu” 中華基督教女青年會第三次全國大會紀錄 (The Record of the Third National Meeting of the YWCA), 21–29 August 1933, 11. Shanghai Municipal Archive, u121-0-7.

<sup>587</sup> Zhang Xueying 张学英 (ed.), *Hanyu xiyu dacidian* 汉英习语大词典 (A Complete Dictionary of Chinese Idioms with English Translation), (Wuhan: Hubei jiaoyu chubanshe, 1998), 876.

<sup>588</sup> The poem, “You shan xi cun” 游山西村, was written by Lu You 陸游 (1125–1279).

<sup>589</sup> *Hanying cidian* 汉英词典 (A Chinese-English Dictionary) (Beijing: Waiyu jiaoxue yu yanjiu chubanshe, 1994), 868.

<sup>590</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

Li's social concern was also evident in her leadership of the NCWA, an organisation for children's welfare. Established in 1928 in Shanghai, the NCWA viewed its establishment as a fundamental step towards national construction and considered that every Chinese person was obliged to be part of the nation-building process. As the happiness of children was the foundation of the nation, the purpose of the NCWA was to protect children's welfare and prevent them from falling into a state of bitterness and misery.<sup>591</sup> She worked as a committee member of the NCWA and contributed articles on childrearing to their monthly *Ciyou yuekan* 慈幼月刊 (*Child Welfare Monthly*).<sup>592</sup>

### **A Half-hearted Attempt**

The connection with the YWCA infused Li with a concern for the working class with her articles in *Nü duo* dealing with women's work. In an article published in October 1931, she stated that everyone should work at his or her occupation in addition to serving at home and in schools.<sup>593</sup> She criticised those who had a decent job, as defined in the secular world, yet failed to possess adequate ethics in employment. She disagreed with the idea of taking a job without the appropriate capabilities. This would necessarily lead to malicious competition once the person was given a position beyond his or her ability. Li also criticised an attitude of muddling along with one's work in a company or an institution. She believed that one should try one's best to fulfil one's job obligations, be it a temporary position or not.

Li continued her argument on the ethics of work in another article published in *Nü duo* in January 1932.<sup>594</sup> Believing that one's work revealed one's character and personhood, she addressed the issue

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<sup>591</sup> Wu Weide 吳維德, "Zhonghua ciyou xiejihui zhi huigu yu qianzhan" 中華慈幼協濟會之回顧與前瞻 (Looking Back and Looking Forward of the National Child Welfare Association), *Shen bao* (6 November 1930); "Zhonghua ciyou xieji nianhui" 中華慈幼協濟年會 (The Annual Meeting of the National Child Welfare Association), *Zhenguang zazhi* (June 1929): 80–1.

<sup>592</sup> "Ciyou xiejihui bihui jiyao" 慈幼協濟會閉會紀閉要 (Summary of the closing meeting of the National Child Welfare Association), *Shen bao* (14 February 1929); Li Guanfang, "Younian muzhituan zhi yiyi" 幼年母職團之意義 (The Meaning of the Mothers' League), *Ciyou yuekan* 慈幼月刊 (May 1930); Li Guanfang, "Yuying changshi" 育嬰常識, *Ciyou yuekan* (August, November 1930).

<sup>593</sup> Li Guanfang, "Zhiyeshang de daodeguan" 職業上的道德觀 (Ethics in Employment), *Nü duo* (October 1931): 8–14.

<sup>594</sup> Li Guanfang, "Zhiyeshang de daodeguan" 職業上的道德觀 (Ethics in Employment), *Nü duo* (January 1932):

of the ethics of work more from the perspective of social responsibility. According to Li, every individual in an institution was a part of the whole entity and an individual's morality was crucial to the success of that institution and by extension, to society. Using the example of a modern passenger ship, she pointed out that each member of staff had to have high standards of work to ensure the safety and security of each passenger. Regarding the contribution of women in society, Li wrote in another essay published three months later of the importance of the characteristics of honesty, cooperation, and the control of emotion.<sup>595</sup>

Under Li's editorship *Nü duo* started to address issues focusing on working class women, however, it confined its attention to educated female workers rather than focusing on the massed ranks of uneducated female labour in the factories. Such a selection of subject matter suggests the limitation of the magazine in reaching out to women of the lower class.<sup>596</sup> Despite Li's effort in integrating working class issues into the discussion, a great deal of *Nü duo's* content carried on advocating the Victorian notion of women's domestic virtues. By clinging onto these values, it shunned the possibility of mobilising different classes. Such exclusiveness on the part of the magazine resulted in it disconnecting itself from engaging in issues confronting a changing society as well as the struggles facing women in the workforce. In this sense, Li's efforts in bringing issues of the working class into *Nü duo* were not surprisingly half-hearted.

In Li's view, her attempts to make *Nü duo* bridge the gap between classes were perhaps an optimistic first step, indicating the possibility for further change. However, the escalating national calamity was an urgent call for Chinese men and women to safeguard their country from invasion. When Li was about to commit herself to the national salvation cause, she started to realize the crucial nature of the conflict between her new idea of how a Chinese woman should behave and the ideal Victorian

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<sup>595</sup> Li Guanfang, "Nüzi zai shehuifuwu yingyou de ren'ge" 女子在社會服務應有的人格 (Women's Appropriate Characters to Serve the Society), *Nü duo* (April 1932): 1-4.

<sup>596</sup> While the literacy rate among women of the lower class was low, attempts had been made by the CLS to reach them through the women's monthly *Nü xing*, which was established in 1932 and written in simple Chinese, as noted in Chapter Two.

Christian woman portrayed in *Nü duo*. The following section examines *Nü duo* adjusting to wartime conditions.

### ***Saving the Nation: a Failed Experiment***

Previous chapters have demonstrated that concerns regarding the nation were a recurring theme in *Nü duo*. In the early years, it adopted a gendered formula for national revival. It encouraged Christian women to contribute to the nation primarily through fulfilling their household obligations, while writings by Christian men in *Nü duo* linked their faith directly with the nation. The social and political circumstances of China changed considerably during the chaotic 1920s. May Fourth iconoclasm and anti-Christian nationalism were two primary forces affecting not only foreign missionaries but also Chinese Christians. Sandwiched between a connection with the West and their non-Christian Chinese compatriots, Chinese Christians faced “dilemmas of national and religious identity, personal and institutional loyalties, impulses both to dependence and autonomy.”<sup>597</sup> Chapter Three described the dilemma confronting *Nü duo*'s editorial staff regarding women's domestic roles amid these upheavals. The report on patriotic movements organised by Chinese Christian women contained an implicit critique of the Victorian notion of womanhood. As the national calamity intensified in the 1930s, irreconcilable differences surfaced between Victorian virtues and a growing desire to participate in national redemption.

Before Japan's invasion of Northern China in September 1931, the idea of saving the nation portrayed by *Nü duo* was associated with the role of Christianity. In February 1931, it published an essay entitled “Jiduhua jiating shi qiangguo de jichu” 基督化家庭是强國的基础 (The Christianised Home is the Foundation of Strengthening the Nation).<sup>598</sup> It was a reprint of a public speech by Cheng Jingyi 誠靜怡 (1881–1939), the NCCC general secretary, in 1930. Li Guanfang transcribed Cheng's address

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<sup>597</sup> Bays, “Foreign Missions and Indigenous Protestant Leaders in China, 1920–1955,” 146.

<sup>598</sup> Speech of Cheng Jingyi 誠靜怡, noted by Li Guanfang 李冠芳, “Jiduhua jiating shi qiangguo de jichu” 基督化家庭是强國的基础 (The Christianised Home is the Foundation of Strengthening the Nation), *Nü duo* (February 1931): 1–5.

afterwards.<sup>599</sup> In this essay, Cheng highlighted the fundamental role of the family in the nation. He argued that one should look at the merits of both Christian and non-Christian families. By referring to Christ's teachings such as "I am not come to destroy but to fulfil" and ideas from Confucian philosophy such as "the state is based on family" and "ruling the world with filial piety," he suggested selecting doctrines that were beneficial to the nation.<sup>600</sup> In particular, Chen believed that the young generation nurtured in Christianised families was the hope of China.<sup>601</sup>

The Mukden Incident in 1931, however, became a watershed in the editor's vision of national salvation. Previously, Li had believed in the power of Christian literature. In her address at the NCCC Conference in 1930, she maintained that "the spiritual manna of religious education could be only obtained through literary work" and that "the success of Sun Yat-sen's revolution was not achieved through military force but through the advocacy of words."<sup>602</sup> This speech was later republished in *Nü duo* in March 1931, where she advocated that women take up the task of producing Christian literature for home life.<sup>603</sup>

During China's war with Japan, however, Li became an active writer promoting patriotic sentiment. Shortly after the Mukden Incident on 18 September 1931 (also known as the September 18 Incident), she joined the Women's National Salvation Alliance (Funü jiuguo tongmenghui 婦女救國同盟會, WNSA) established on 1 October in Shanghai.<sup>604</sup> Many influential intellectual Christian women such as Ding Shujing 丁淑靜 and Liu Wang Liming 劉王立明 were leaders of this Alliance. Li was one of seven members in the propaganda department.<sup>605</sup> One month later, she delivered a patriotic speech at the

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<sup>599</sup> *Public Addresses of the East China Conference for Leaders of the Christianizing the Home Movement* (NCCC, 6–16 December 1930; March 1931).

<sup>600</sup> "Jiduhua jiating shi qianguo de jichu," 3.

<sup>601</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>602</sup> *Public Addresses of the East China Conference for Leaders of the Christianizing the Home Movement*, 44–5.

<sup>603</sup> Li Guanfang, "Jidutu jiating wenzhi de xuyao" 基督徒家庭文字的需要 (The Necessity of Christian Literature for Christian Family), *Nü duo* (March 1931): 2–4.

<sup>604</sup> "Zuori funüjie chengli jiuguo datongmeng" 昨日婦女界成立救國大同盟 (The Establishment of Women's National Salvation Alliance Yesterday), *Shen bao* (2 October 1931).

<sup>605</sup> "Ji funü jiuguo datongmeng zhi shenghui" 記婦女救國大同盟之盛會 (Report on the Gathering of Women's National Salvation Alliance), *Nü duo* (November 1931): 80–1.

meeting of the WNSA to commemorate the death of compatriots. In the speech, she appealed for women to realize their obligation to the nation and promoted a collaboration between the Chinese people to save the nation even at the cost of one's life.<sup>606</sup> *Nü duo* circulated a similar commemoration of the WNSA in May 1932, which used the poetic four-beat rhythm to express vehement sorrow and grief.<sup>607</sup>

Li's patriotic and political work was a departure from the previously non-political stance of *Nü duo*. In response to the Japanese occupation of Northern China, she contributed a detailed essay to *Nü duo* in November 1931 on how Chinese people could fight against Japan to save the nation. Out of righteous indignation (*yifen tianying* 義憤填膺), Li enlisted several strategies to strengthen the nation. One way was to clarify the understanding of the situation. Despite Japan's victory, she believed pride goes before a fall, and Japan's swagger predicted its failure. Furthermore, imperialism was an outdated ideology, and eventually the government in imperial Japan would collapse. Chinese people were citizens of a grand nation, but Japanese people were "sneaky" (*guigui suisui* 鬼鬼祟祟) and all they possessed was military force.

Li encouraged her countrymen to regain their spirit and march forward. She criticised the policy of non-resistance and called for a united and organised effort in the battle against Japan. Aside from severing economic relations with Japan, she suggested adding military training in colleges and universities. In her view, students, both male and female, were the backbone of the nation, possessing the most vigorous patriotic sentiment. Regarding the millions of refugees and the unemployed, Li proposed a self-strengthening approach by recruiting them as builders of infrastructure. This would provide them not only with an income but also would supply the nation with goods and food. She also thought that propaganda should serve to educate the Chinese people about Japanese atrocities and

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<sup>606</sup> "Funü jiuguo tongmenghui zhuidao sinan tongbao" 婦女救國同盟會追悼死難同胞 (Mourning of the Women's National Salvation Alliance for the Deceased Compatriots), *Shen bao* (21 November 1931).

<sup>607</sup> Huang Shaolan 黃紹蘭, "Funü jiuguo datongmeng tongren jisi guonan tongbao wen" 婦女救國大同盟同人祭死國難同胞文 (Commemorating the Deceased Compatriots by the Women's National Salvation Alliance), *Nü duo* (May 1932): 74–6.

its plans for invasion. Li advocated making speeches on these topics in families, schools, and society at large to awaken the Chinese people. The article concluded with an oath that China would never surrender to brutal Japan (*bao Ri* 暴日). Circumstances required fighting to the end. Only then could Chinese people be dignified with the label *huo ren* 活人, “living people,” and as descendants of the Chinese race (*Zhonghua minzu* 中華民族).<sup>608</sup>

Influenced by Li’s clear-cut nationalist stance, *Nü duo* published articles on the need for women’s political campaigns to redeem the nation. Two months after Li’s article opposing the non-resistance policy in January 1932, it published a message from the Women’s Political Council (*Nüzi canzhenghui* 女子參政會) to protest against the election of Zhang Xueliang 張學良 (1901–2001) as a member of the Control Yuan (*Jian cha yuan* 監察院). Established in February 1931, the Control Yuan was the one of the five branches of the Republican government that monitored all the other branches of the government. As Zhang insisted on a policy of non-resistance, the Women’s Political Council demanded the government annul Zhang’s election.<sup>609</sup>

As armed hostilities continued, Li Guanfang became more involved with the self-strengthening movement. Aside from literature, she devoted part of her time to social reform. In April 1934, she delivered a speech at the establishment of the Saving the Beggars Association (*Jiugai xiehui* 救丐協會) in Shanghai.<sup>610</sup> She had been chosen as a team leader in the Improving National Life Society (*Zhonghua minsheng gaijinshe* 中華民生改進社), which was founded in 1932 in Shanghai to improve the national economy and the people’s livelihood.<sup>611</sup> The fortnightly *Minsheng* 民生 had circulated her articles on rural reform in Yutang 俞塘 in 1934 in Shanghai. Li reported on the progress of the rural experiment

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<sup>608</sup> Li Guanfang, “Kangri jiuguo de renshi yu nuli” 抗日救國的認識與努力 (Effort to Fight against Japan and Save the Nation), *Nü duo* (November 1932): 10–9.

<sup>609</sup> “Nüzi canzhenghui fandui Zhang Xueliang dangxuan zhongwei” 女子參政會反對張學良當選中委 (The Women’s Political Council Protesting against the Election of Zhang Xueliang as the Member of the Control Yuan), *Nü duo* (January 1932): 65.

<sup>610</sup> “Jiugai xiehui zuori chengli” 救丐協會昨日成立 (The Establishment of the Saving the Beggars Association Yesterday), *Shen bao* (11 April 1934).

<sup>611</sup> “Zhonghua minsheng gaijin she xiaoxi” 中華民生改進社消息 (News on Improving National Life Society), *Shen bao* (3 August 1934).

with its program of teaching scientific methods to villagers and providing them with financial support.<sup>612</sup>

Despite Li's patriotic stance, Victorian femininity did not die out in *Nü duo*. Writings on home life permeated it with articles promoting women's contribution to national strengthening through domesticity remaining. Two months after the Mukden Incident, for example, *Nü duo* published an article written by Lin Zongsu 林宗素 (1878–1944) with advice to the women of China facing the national crisis. As an early member of the Tongmenghui, Lin was an active, educated female suffragist and revolutionary. When the Republic of China was established, she organised the Women's Suffrage Alliance (Nüzi canzheng tongmenghui 女子参政同盟會) and pleaded for women's equal rights with men.

However, the following two tumultuous decades discouraged Lin, who stayed away from politics. Seeing the national weakness and the outbreak of war, she stood up again and advised women to accept their responsibilities to save the nation through household management, in which nurturing healthy female citizens was a crucial prerequisite. While noting that women's financial independence was an important criteria for a strong nation, Lin stressed the importance of women bearing children and criticised abortion and contraception. Furthermore, she advised women to abandon modern fashions such as wearing makeup and pursuing luxurious lifestyles, advocating instead a life of frugality and thrift.

Lin admired women who wished to join in the fight in Northern China. However, she pointed out that their greater contribution lay in filling occupations left vacant by men who had left to join the armed forces. Women's physical constitution, as well as the domestic nature of their work, meant that their main contribution to the war effort was to ensure a stable domestic environment for the nation.<sup>613</sup>

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<sup>612</sup> Li Guanfang, "Shanghaixian yutang nongcun gaijin shiye zhi yilan" 上海县俞塘农村改进事业之一览 (An Overview of Rural Reform in Yu tang, Shanghai), *Minsheng* 民生 Vol. 2 No. 13–14 (1934): 2–4; Vol. 2 No. 15–16 (1934): 2–3.

<sup>613</sup> Lin Zongsu 林宗素, "Gao quanguo nütongbao shu" 告全国女同胞书 (A Message to Female Compatriots), *Nü*



*Nü duo* also upheld the importance of morality for national salvation. Mrs Nie wrote several articles for *Nü duo* promoting her belief in traditional values. In the national crisis, Mrs Nie advocated frugality as a way to save the nation. In an article published in June 1932, she argued that the spirit of the nation and the national character was founded on *jian* 儉 and *de* 德 (frugality and morality) based on Confucian teachings. Observing a massive deficit in foreign trade and a growing extravagance in society, Mrs Nie appealed for a return to traditional virtues.<sup>614</sup> Rather than promoting Chinese goods, she believed a better approach was to encourage citizens to nurture the traditional values of loyalty, filial piety, chastity, and righteousness, which were crucial elements in forming a sense of responsibility.<sup>615</sup>

Highlighting the role of morality in national salvation was an extension of women's household virtues. One example is an editorial published in *Nü duo* in March 1932. This admonished women to take up the responsibilities of consoling soldiers, caring for injured soldiers, and rescuing refugees. Rather than encouraging women to join the army, women were encouraged to work behind the scenes, donating money and goods such as towels and soap for soldiers; working in hospitals; attending to injured soldiers by reading newspapers and singing patriotic songs; and forming organisations to rescue refugees and providing them with shelter and occupations.<sup>616</sup> This caregiver image echoes the discourse of the "new woman" promoted during the following years of the May Fourth movement. While women's traditional roles were criticised by male intellectuals, "women's public roles as

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*duo* (November 1931): 5–10.

<sup>614</sup> Nie Zeng Jifen 聶曾紀芬, "Lianjian jiuguoshuo" 廉儉救國說 (Saving the Nation through Thrift), *Nü duo* (June 1932): 1–11.

<sup>615</sup> Nie Zeng Jifen, "Guohuo yu yiwuxin zhi yangcheng" 國貨與義務心之養成 (National Goods and the Cultivation of Obligation), *Nü duo* (March 1934): 4–6; Nie Zeng Jifen, "Nieshi jiaxun" 聶氏家訓 (Family Admonitions), *Nü duo* (February 1935): 7–8; Nie Zeng Jifen, "Gaizao xinguanian tichang yiwuxin shuo" 改造新觀念提倡義務心說 (On Reforming New Ideas through Promoting Obligation), *Nü duo* (May, June, 1934): 6–13; 10–5.

<sup>616</sup> Hui An 慧庵, "Zai kunnan de huanjing zhong nüzi yingdang zuo shenme?" 在困難的環境中女子應當作什麼? (What Should Women Do in Difficult Times?), *Nü duo* (March 1932): 1–4.

teachers, nurses and other types of caregivers were to be a natural extension of her domestic womanhood, which was subject to the regulation of the patriarchal state.”<sup>617</sup>

### ***A Divorce from Victorian Womanhood***

The growth of Li’s patriotism and ideas of Victorian femininity in *Nü duo* collided in 1935, when she resigned from the editorship. She left the CLS and devoted herself to social service, marking her departure from the centre of evangelical work to the national strengthening campaign. A petition presented in December 1935 signed by twenty-eight Chinese Christians including Li, demonstrated the importance of the nation as a priority in her thinking:

We believe that every people has a right to existence and to the preservation of their national integrity. Recent events in North China made it plain that all our sufferings and compromises, all our yielding since September 18 1931, have not only failed to satisfy the insatiable demands of our aggressor, but have almost brought our nation into the depths of an unfathomable abyss. ... We are against any action that will lead to unnecessary sacrifice, but we are not afraid to shed our blood for the sake of truth and justice. We pledge ourselves to back up to the utmost nation-wide movement of resistance which has arisen throughout the country.<sup>618</sup>

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<sup>617</sup> Xiaofei Kang, “Women and the Religious Question in Modern China,” in Jan Kiely, Vincent Goosaert, and John Lagerwey (eds.), *Modern Chinese Religion II: 1850–2015*, Vol. 1 (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 508–9.

<sup>618</sup> *The Chinese Recorder* (February 1936): 123. For the original Chinese version, see *Xinwen bao* 新聞報 (24 December 1935).



Li (far right) in Fukien Christian University in Fujian (1938), electronic resource of Yale Divinity Library,

[http://findit.library.yale.edu/catalog/digcoll:1605830?\\_ga=2.26844218.68732313.1542776811-1603140339.1539579585](http://findit.library.yale.edu/catalog/digcoll:1605830?_ga=2.26844218.68732313.1542776811-1603140339.1539579585) Accessed on 18 December 2018<sup>619</sup>

In 1936, Li was appointed Dean of the Women's Department and lecturer in Sociology at Fukien (Fujian) Christian University.<sup>620</sup> While working there, she displayed less of her Christian identity and more of her Chinese identity, which led to threats from the local authorities. Fujian was then under the rule of the KMT who succeeded in gradually encircling and suppressing the Communist Party there. In March 1935, the Fujian government reissued the prohibition on anti-Japanese publications to curtail any further demonstrations.<sup>621</sup> However, this stirred up various forms of protests among intellectuals. The establishment of the National Salvation Association of Fuzhou Cultural Circles (Fuzhou wenhuajie kangdi houyuanhui 福州文化界抗敌後援會) following the Marco Polo Bridge Incident on 28 July 1937 and its patriotic journals not only mirrored the strong national sentiment in cultural fields but also generated and encouraged a kind of passion, which led to strengthening the nationalist movement.<sup>622</sup>

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<sup>619</sup> "Faculty & administrators—Miss Eunice Thomas and Dean Li Gwan Fang right with group of students in front of Arts Hall."

<sup>620</sup> *Fukien Christian University Weekly Bulletin* (4 January 1936).

<sup>621</sup> Liu Min 刘敏, "Kangzhan zhong de fuzhou wenhuajie jiuwang xiehui" 抗战中的福州文化界救亡协会 (The National Salvation Association of Fuzhou Cultural Circles during the Anti-Japanese War), *Lilun xuexi yuekan* 理论学习月刊 No. 2 (1990): 61.

<sup>622</sup> Fuzhou wenhuajie kangdi houyuanhui 福州文化界抗敌後援會 was later changed to Fuzhou wenhuajie jiuwang xiehui 福州文化界救亡協會 on 17 October 1937. See Chen Songxi 陈松溪, "Yu Dafu yu Fujian kangri jiuwang yundong" 郁达夫与福建抗日救亡运动 (Yu Dafu and the Anti-Japanese Movement in Fujian), *Fujian dangshi yuekan* 福建党史月刊 No. 6 (1988), 53.

Little of Li's work from this turbulent period survives apart from one article written in 1936 entitled "Yifu maochong bian hudie de Zhongguo xianxiangtu" 一幅毛虫變蝴蝶的中國現象圖 (A Picture of China—from Caterpillar to Butterfly).<sup>623</sup> This metaphor originated with Liang Qichao and suggested that the future of China was bright while the current great pain was temporary. Li adopted a sociological approach to address the situation in China by firstly analysing the many causes of China's economic difficulties. From an external perspective, the Unequal Treaties justified an economic invasion and paralysed aspects of the Chinese economy such as agriculture, mining, industry, trade and transportation. Internally, warlords and natural disasters caused huge economic losses. She suggested that the invasion was a natural consequence of a colonised economy, which featured monopolisation, division and joint control. She stated that the Chinese people were obliged to build up the nation's political structure. As far as the structures of religion and morality were concerned, Li insisted there was no need for outsiders to meddle in their construction (*wuxu wairen yuezudaipao* 無須外人越俎代庖). Ultimately, she expressed her determination to expel the imperialists and spare no effort to save the country from the national crisis.

A recent article in *Fuzhou wanbao* 福州晚报 describes Li's patriotic activities in Fujian.<sup>624</sup> It says that she was active in anti-Japanese movements and often advocated that female students take up the cause of responsibility for the nation. She became a member of the National Salvation Association of Fuzhou Cultural Circles, members of which were also Communist Party members. Thus, the Association provided Li with the opportunity to work with Communist writers such as Yu Dafu 郁達夫 and Lou Shiyi 樓适夷. It was through Lou that Li was invited to join the Communist Party. One memoir spoke of how Li unmasked the corrupt deeds of the KMT in classes and in public,<sup>625</sup> while another

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<sup>623</sup> Li Guanfang, "Yifu maochong bian hudie de zhongguo xianxiangtu" 一幅毛虫變蝴蝶的中國現象圖 (A Picture of China—from Caterpillar to Butterfly), *Xieda xuesheng* 協大學生 No.12 (1936).

<sup>624</sup> "1937 nian Fujian xiehe daxue nüjiaoshou xisheng qianhou" 1937年福建协和大学女教授牺牲前后 (About the Death of the Female Professor of Fukien Christian University in 1937), *Fuzhou wanbao* 福州晚报 (16 March 2014): A16.

<sup>625</sup> Guo Yuling 郭毓麟, "Xieda simian xuesheng shenghuo de huiyi" 协大四年学生生活的回忆 (In Memory of the Four-year Study in Fukien Christian University), in *Wenshi ziliao xuanbian* 文史资料选编—基督教天主教编, Vol. 5 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2003), 384–5.

described her as an underground Communist party member. She was friends with Sun Shuzhen 孫淑貞, headmaster of the Fuzhou Wenshan Girls' School (Fuzhou wenshan nüzi zhongxue 福州文山女子中學),<sup>626</sup> and under Li's influence, Sun encouraged her students to join the anti-Japanese movement. Li's growing public influence led to her arrest by the Nationalist Party in 1937.

After Li's arrest, her comrades made protests to the Nationalist government. Everyone believed after her sudden disappearance she was killed by the KMT. However, an item in the magazine *Zongjiao jiaoyu jikan* 宗教教育季刊 from June 1938 provides us with a totally different story: she was seen in Shanghai in March of that year by Bao Zheqing 鮑哲慶 (1893–1957), a pastor of the American Baptist Mission in Hangzhou.<sup>627</sup> In his letter to the president of Fukien Christian University in September 1938, Frank T. Cartwright, Associate Secretary for Eastern Asia of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church, mentioned his visit to Li's brother. Cartwright learned of the death of Li's father "as a partial result of her tragic disappearance" and expressed that he could not "imagine any adequate reason why she should be spirited away and probably killed by a patriotic organization."<sup>628</sup> Cartwright's letter thus indicates that neither he nor Li's brother knew what eventually happened to her.

## Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated how articles on both women's domestic roles and social and national engagement were published in *Nü duo*. Writings from 1929 to 1935 reveal an escalating struggle

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<sup>626</sup> Deng Biyu 邓碧玉, "Fuzhou sili wenshan nüzhong bainian xiaoshi jianjie" 福州私立文山女中百年校史简介 (A Brief History of the One Hundred-year History of Fuzhou Private Girls' School), in *Wenshi ziliao xuanbian* 文史资料选编—基督教天主教编 Vol. 5 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2003), 544–6.

<sup>627</sup> "Qiyou xiaoxi" 契友消息 (News of Fellowship Members), *Zongjiao jiaoyu jikan* 宗教教育季刊 (June 1938): 30. Shanghai Municipal Archive, u123-0-82-3. For Bao Zheqing, see James Shih-Chieh Cha 查時傑, *Zhongguo jidujiao renwu xiaozhuan* 中國基督教人物小傳 (Concise Biographies of Important Chinese Christians) (Taiwan: China Evangelical Seminary Press, 1983), 248.

<sup>628</sup> For Cartwright's letter to President C. J. Lin of Fukien Christian University on 12 September 1938, See Microfilm Edition of the Administrative Files Series of the Board of Missions of the Methodist Church, Reel 317, Fukien Christian University 1937–1938, The General Commission on Archives and History of The United Methodist Church in Drew University.

between the inherited Western notion of womanhood and the rapidly changing local context. Its involvement in the nation-wide Christianising Home Campaign exposed the magazine to Chinese families of all classes. However, the focus of *Nü duo* remained limited to women of the middle and upper classes, as exemplified in its editor's writings on the morality of work. To a certain degree, the inclusion of writings on women in the workforce in *Nü duo* echoed socialist and feminist ideas circulating among educated Christian women at the time. Nevertheless, the editor's attention on the morality of work for educated women indicated her weakness in addressing women of the working class, which was probably caused by the inherited Victorian ideals within and outside of *Nü duo*.

Wartime experience, however, exposed the lack of any response by the middle and upper classes confined by Victorian notions of womanhood to the national crisis. Li was no longer content with sitting at a desk editing a household magazine. Eventually she left her editorial position in the CLS and immersed herself in social service and later a teaching career at Fukien Christian University.

With Li's resignation, Liu Meili, another student of White's, succeeded to the editorship and worked in that capacity until the last issue of *Nü duo* was published in February 1951. While both Li and Liu went to mission schools and worked for the magazine, their experiences with foreign missions and their exposure to Christianity were very different. Sandwiched between the anti-Japanese war and the civil war, the next chapter examines how *Nü duo* responded to the national crisis. It explores the last period of the magazine in one of the most turbulent periods in modern Chinese history.

## Chapter 6 *Nü duo* Surviving in Tumultuous Times: 1935–1951

Amidst the political upheavals and intermittent warfare in the 1930s and 1940s, debate on the institution of the family was imbued with patriotic sentiment. The promotion of the conjugal family ideal, promoted in articles published by commercial magazines dating from the mid-1930s until the Communist victory in 1949, attempted to resolve the tension between individualism and nationalism. According to Glosser, “one contributed to the nation through economic productivity,” which was achieved by “living out the entrepreneurial *xiao jiating* [small families] ideal.”<sup>629</sup>

In response to the national crisis, many women joined the armed forces with the rise of Communism in the 1930s and the 1940s.<sup>630</sup> Nicola Spakowski argues that the “changing historical circumstances that called for different military and political approaches ... assigned women a particular role in revolution.” This new reality, according to Spakowski, was evident in “the Three-Year Guerrilla War from 1934 to 1937,” when “political and military activities depended largely on the support of women because they were less conspicuous than men.”<sup>631</sup>

The escalating national catastrophe invites the question: What was *Nü duo*'s editorial policy during such a chaotic era? This chapter explores the interplay between Christianity, war and politics recorded by *Nü duo*. It seeks to understand how gender figured in its editorial policy. Articles published during this time demonstrated the strong legacy of the ideal of a Victorian domestic womanhood. *Nü duo* carried on its family-centred concerns and remained impassive to the encroachment of Japanese forces in China. The imperial legacy of the magazine was also evident in the sharp contrast between its readers' concerns about life under wartime conditions, whose questions were published in new columns addressing specific wartime issues, and the lack of discussions reflecting on issues of justice. Despite its readers' doubts over suffering, translations published by *Nü duo* promoted a firm belief in

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<sup>629</sup> Glosser, *Chinese Visions of Family and State 1915–1953*, 165.

<sup>630</sup> Nicola Spakowski, “Women’s Military Participation in the Communist Movement of the 1930s and 1940s: Patterns of Inclusion and Exclusion,” in *Women in China: The Republican Period in Historical Perspective*, 129–71.

<sup>631</sup> *Ibid.*, 131–2.

the humanity of Jesus. In particular, its ambiguous relationship with different political regimes further attested to the lack of reference to politics in the notion of a Victorian womanhood, which discouraged women from social and national engagement. An investigation of the magazine in its last two decades reveals the complex situation of a group of educated Chinese women in the turbulent years of 1935–1951.

Liu Meili, the second Chinese editor of *Nü duo* and a member on the Publication Committee of the CLS, assumed a crucial role in its policy. Her encounter with Christianity and Christian literature needs to be understood for a full appreciation of the course of *Nü duo*.

### **A Heroine of the Missionary Enterprise**

Liu Yungyung was born in Nanjing on 28 January 1907.<sup>632</sup> Her father, an opium addict, sold her as an indentured servant four years later to Li Jingmai 李經邁 (1876–1938), the youngest son of Li Hongzhang. Her mistress in the Li household was a fifteen-year-old girl whose bad temper had serious repercussions for Liu's well-being. A tragedy occurred one night. While Liu was fanning her mistress, she fell asleep and injured her own nose causing it to bleed. Her mistress was furious. She had little Liu beaten and thrown out into the courtyard with her hands and feet tied.<sup>633</sup> It was not until the following morning that little Liu was found outside Li's house, having spent a freezing winter's night outside in mid-February Nanjing. Several days later, Li's servants sent Liu to the Methodist Ginling Hospital where the missionary doctor, Dr Robert Beebe, treated her for severe frostbite. Unfortunately, operations were necessary on Liu's arms and legs. Beebe was able to save a small

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<sup>632</sup> Liu Meili's original Chinese name was Liu Yung-yung, which is probably Liu Yongyong. Thanks to detailed documentation by the American journalist Edward Hunter, we know many details of Liu's life. Accounts of Liu's early life were based on Hunter's interview with Liu in Hong Kong in the 1950s. See Edward Hunter, *The Story of Mary Liu* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1957). For Liu's birth date, see Liu, Mary Mei-Li 1964, Microfilm Edition of the Mission Biographical Reference Files, Methodist Church (U.S.). Board of Missions, 1469-4-8:01, The General Commission on Archives and History The United Methodist Church in Drew University, 1.

<sup>633</sup> Laura M. White, "Winged Victory," *Woman's Missionary Friend* (August 1926): 272–3.



portion of Liu's right-hand thumb and performed a limited amputation on her legs, successfully keeping them both "the same length."<sup>634</sup>

After failing to find Liu's parents after the surgery, Dr Beebe had a meeting with Li Jingmai. Learning of Liu's mistreatment for the first time, Li Jingmai denied any complicity in the matter and implied that the foreign missionaries should look after the little girl as "they had saved her out of the goodness of their hearts."<sup>635</sup> In response, Dr Beebe suggested opening a public fund-raising initiative for the little girl. Li, however, did not agree to this proposal, because he was concerned that publicising her story would damage his family's reputation. Eventually he agreed on compensation of 3,000 taels to replace the public campaign.<sup>636</sup> As 3,000 taels was a significant amount of money at the time, Dr Beebe deposited it in a bank for Liu's future schooling and living expenses.

After Liu recovered from the frostbite, she was sent to the kindergarten affiliated with the Methodist Girls' High School in Nanjing where she completed elementary and secondary school, and several years of college training. Her handicap made Liu strong willed. In kindergarten, she learned many techniques to compensate for her disabilities, including holding chopsticks with the stub of her left arm and right thumb. In her first year at the elementary school, she used a modified baby pram for mobility and later learned how to run and walk on her knees. She also learnt to sew, knit, and do calligraphy. For her, "what was important was not a person's hands, but the use made of those hands."<sup>637</sup> When she overheard a teacher's comment that the best she would be able to achieve was to teach in the mission school, she became determined to get the highest teaching qualifications so she could find employment in any educational establishment, from kindergarten to college.<sup>638</sup>

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<sup>634</sup> Hunter, *The Story of Mary Liu*, 23.

<sup>635</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

<sup>636</sup> Hunter explained that taels were a silver coin used as the standard of measurement. A total of 3,000 taels was worth about US\$5,000 at the time.

<sup>637</sup> Hunter, *The Story of Mary Liu*, 52.

<sup>638</sup> *Ibid.*, 53.



Laura M. White, "Winged Victory," *Woman's Missionary Friend* (August 1926): 273.

In 1925, Liu attended Ginling College after graduating from the Methodist Girls' High School in June 1924.<sup>639</sup> Her study in liberal arts and sociology was sponsored partially by the Methodist mission and partially covered by the interest accruing from Li's compensation. College study introduced her to the social problems facing Chinese women and children at the time. She had once worked at a clinic, which was part of the "home doctor" course designed by the College to meet the needs of Chinese families for medical service. During her college years, both the local press and missionary publications had printed articles on Liu's life. When she graduated from Ginling College in 1929, an article published in the weekly *Shenghuo* 生活 (*Life*) reported her achievements despite her misfortunes.<sup>640</sup>

### **More than a Religious Conversion: Liu Meili, Laura White, and Christian Literature**

Liu had been exposed to a Christian-centred environment from an early age. She recounted later that the principal, as well as all the teachers of English and of religious education, were missionaries in the Methodist Girls' School in Nanjing. Most of the other Chinese teachers were also graduates of Christian schools. In Ginling College, she received guidance from both missionary professors and many Chinese Christian instructors. In her account, Liu expressed her gratitude for the help offered by the

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<sup>639</sup> White, "Winged Victory," 273.

<sup>640</sup> Zhang Manjun 張曼筠, "Jinling nüda biyesheng zhong de qicai" 金陵女大畢業生中的奇才 (Talent in Ginling Women's College), *Shenghuo* 生活 Vol. 4 No. 35 (28 July 1929).

Methodist church and the care given by missionaries and Chinese Christians to meeting her needs, as well as their showing her the way to a Christian life.<sup>641</sup>

Although it is unknown when Liu converted to Christianity, she mentioned in her biography that a change took place regarding her attitude to religious activities. She recalled that students got up at 6:30 and then read the Bible aloud in each room with a student leading the prayer. After attending their first classes of the day, they attended chapel from 10:15 to 11 am. At night, they held voluntary prayer groups immediately after supper while everyone attended the regular prayer meeting on Wednesday evening. From 9 to 10 am each Sunday, students attended Sunday school at a church located ten minutes away from their school, followed by a Sunday sermon. Liu kept her thoughts on such a full religious schedule to herself, but she believed that religion should be “best absorbed when the individual was led to seek it out himself, and that beyond providing the environment, organised religion could not effectively go.”<sup>642</sup> Concerning revival meetings and public confession, she had early doubts over the role of religious ceremony. Nevertheless, in her later years, Liu formally joined the church after realising that religious formality could be “some expression of faith” as long as “that expression was genuine.”<sup>643</sup>

An article written by a missionary woman, who once visited Liu in the early 1920s, adds to our knowledge of Liu’s religious views. It recorded that during her study in middle school, the principal—a foreign missionary called Miss Golisch—perceived Liu to be an earnest Christian. There was one occasion when Liu helped the principal to convince the mother of a Christian student to allow her daughter to have a Christian wedding. The girl’s mother, a Buddhist follower, initially insisted on a non-Christian wedding and the principal was unable to persuade the girl’s mother. The principal subsequently asked Liu for help. Liu visited the girl’s mother, together with the principal and other

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<sup>641</sup> Liu, Mary Mei-Li 1964, Microfilm Edition of the Mission Biographical Reference Files, Methodist Church (U.S.). Board of Missions, 1469-4-8:01, The General Commission on Archives and History The United Methodist Church in Drew University, 3.

<sup>642</sup> Hunter, *The Story of Mary Liu*, 55.

<sup>643</sup> *Ibid.*, 57.

students, and convinced her to allow her daughter to have a Christian wedding to be held at the school chapel.<sup>644</sup>

Laura White, who had previously been the principal of the Methodist Girls' School in Nanjing for several years, had a great impact on Liu's life. When Liu was transferred from the hospital to the Methodist Girls' School, White was considered her guardian and named the little girl Mary. The Chinese given name "Meili" was later chosen by Liu.<sup>645</sup> White took over the responsibilities of caring for her, and paid special attention to raising her self-confidence and restoring her physical health. When little Liu suffered from tuberculosis (she does not mention in which year this occurred), White took her to her bungalow in the Guling 牯嶺 Mountains in Jiangxi Province and attended to her all that summer.<sup>646</sup> Even when White left for the position of full-time editor in Shanghai in 1915—when Liu was still in secondary school—she still cared about Liu's health and one day she sent someone to take little Liu to her dwelling in Shanghai to have artificial legs and hands fitted.



Mary Ninde Gamewell, A Little More About "Winged Victory," *Woman's Missionary Friend* (November 1926): 387.

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<sup>644</sup> Mary Ninde Gamewell, "A Little More About 'Winged Victory,'" *Woman's Missionary Friend* (November 1926): 388.

<sup>645</sup> Liu had several Chinese names. She came up with the name Meili (美麗, beautiful) to replace the previous one rendered as Mow-ray (maorui 茂睿, prosperous and clever) and used this name for the rest of her life. See Hunter, *The Story of Mary Liu*, 46.

<sup>646</sup> White, "Winged Victory," 273.

From Liu Meili's perspective, White was a caring yet busy woman who was committed to evangelical work. Liu sensed that her foreign guardian was "too busy with administrative matters" with little time to devote to her personal care. Her attitude toward Liu was often ambivalent. White would at times address Liu as "my protegee" while at others refer to her as "Mary Liu, a student." Sometimes White would sign a letter "Mother Teacher" or just her name. Many of White's letters to Liu offered guidance and direction in life, which seemed to Liu "impersonal" but succeeded in providing her "with much of that indestructible confidence."<sup>647</sup> Nevertheless, when White was in Nanjing, she spent a certain amount of time with Liu, reading books together and even teaching Liu to play checkers.<sup>648</sup>

The close relationship between White and Liu paved the way for Liu's literary career. When Liu knitted a sweater and gave it to White as a present, White was deeply touched, and Liu sensed motherly feelings toward her.<sup>649</sup> When Liu wrote a letter with the Chinese brush for White's fiftieth birthday in 1917, White was so pleased that she reprinted the letter titled "Jianren zhi xiaoguo" 堅忍之效果 (The Effect of Perseverance) and published it in *Nü duo* in November that year.<sup>650</sup> In this article, White expressed her sincere wish that "I hope that this girl when she grows up, will become the editor of *Nü duo*."<sup>651</sup> Reading White's encouraging words, the little girl became determined to be the editor from that day on.<sup>652</sup>

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<sup>647</sup> Hunter, *The Story of Mary Liu*, 39.

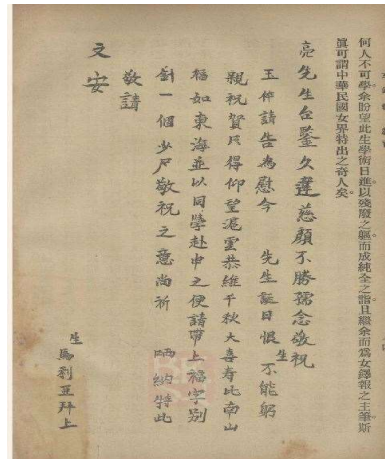
<sup>648</sup> White, "Winged Victory," 274.

<sup>649</sup> Hunter, *The Story of Mary Liu*, 51.

<sup>650</sup> Laura White, "Jianren zhi xiaoguo" 堅忍之效果 (The Effect of Perseverance), *Nü duo* (November 1917): 13–4.

<sup>651</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>652</sup> Hunter, *The Story of Mary Liu*, 67.



Laura White, “Jianren zhi xiaoguo” 堅忍之效果 (The Effect of Perseverance), *Nü duo* (November 1917): 13–4.

After her graduation from Ginling Women’s College in 1929, Liu joined the CLS’s Staff and was financially supported by the WFMS (the department of the Methodist Episcopal Church for women’s work) that appointed her as its representative in the CLS.<sup>653</sup>

### Liu Meili as the Editor

In 1935, Liu Meili took over from Li Guanfang as the editor of *Nü duo*.<sup>654</sup> Li’s sudden resignation caused little disturbance, as Liu had known the magazine from the beginning and had worked as a contributing editor since her graduation. To revive *Nü duo*, Liu proposed several reforms. One change was to reduce the number of staff employed on a voluntary basis because “other Society publications constantly borrowed The Women’s Messenger members” as “it was overstaffed and could spare them.”<sup>655</sup> Liu asked those who remained to focus only on *Nü duo*. Another change was the cancellation of an internal check conducted by senior colleagues. By doing so, Liu aimed to publish the magazine on time. According to Liu’s biography:

She [Liu] insisted, too, that the magazine must always come out on time. By making this a rule, she helped to solve another annoying problem that had arisen since Miss White’s

<sup>653</sup> *The Annual Report of the CLS in 1946*, 8.

<sup>654</sup> *The Annual Report of the CLS in 1935*, 22.

<sup>655</sup> Hunter, *The Story of Mary Liu*, 90.

departure. Old timers in the Society had developed the habit of looking over the material before publication; they had days, and had kept it up. They all had their own ideas, naturally enough, and trying to please them all dulled the Editor's initiative and detracted from the vigour of what was finally printed. Mary explained that, with her reduced staff, there would not be time for this extra checking-up and criticism. Either she would edit the magazine herself, or they must get another editor.<sup>656</sup>

In this way, Liu exercised more control over the editorial policy of *Nü duo* than Li Guanfang had. This is further supported by the fact that Liu had a position on the Publication Committee for a period of twelve years from 1935 to 1947, in contrast to Li who was on the Board of Directors for only four years dating from 1930 to 1934. Although the Board had the power to elect the Publication Committee, its primary work was more concerned with administrative duties rather than dictating editorial policy.<sup>657</sup>

### ***Nü duo's* Wartime Circulation**

The regular circulation of *Nü duo* suffered from the outbreak of full-scale war between China and Japan in 1937. It had reduced its content from about 60 pages to 30 by early 1938 but regained its former size later that year. It remained at about 60 pages until late 1941 when the outbreak of war between Japan and the United States resulted in the departure of missionaries into China's hinterland, thereby affecting the magazine's production.<sup>658</sup> With the end of the Isolated Island Era (12 November 1937 to 8 December 1941), the British and American members of the CLS in Shanghai were forced to resign and were thrown into detention camps in 1941.<sup>659</sup> Under the Japanese occupation, *Nü duo* published only four issues irregularly from 1942 to 1943. It was not until 1944, when the CLS depot was established in Chengdu, that circulation numbers increased. During the civil war period from 1945 to 1949, it resumed its monthly publication from February 1946 when the CLS's staff returned to

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<sup>656</sup> *Ibid.*, 90–1.

<sup>657</sup> For the editorial policy of the CLS, see the section "Editorial Policy, Editors, and Contributors" in Chapter Two.

<sup>658</sup> Bays, *A New History of Christianity in China*, 142.

<sup>659</sup> *The Annual Report of the CLS in 1946*, 4.

Shanghai from “Free China and Occupied China.”<sup>660</sup> Circulation in 1946 returned to the 1939 level of 850 copies per year and increased to 3,000 copies in 1947.<sup>661</sup> When the Communists took over China in 1949, the magazine carried on its publication until 1951 when the Korean War broke out.

### **Reconcentrating on Home Life: a Glimpse of the Readers**

Compared with the previous period, *Nü duo* under Liu’s editorship reoriented its focus to family issues and maintained its promotion of women’s domestic virtues. Probably due to a lack of regular contributors during the war, the magazine began two new columns, the Readers’ Mailing Box (*duzhe xinxiang* 讀者信箱) and the Readers’ Column (*duzhe yuandi* 讀者園地) which called for readers to share their concerns about home life. Issues from the readers’ letters primarily pertained to household problems addressed from an individual perspective.

The Readers’ Mailing Box appeared in issues published from June to December 1938. In this column, the magazine responded to readers who were troubled with different personal issues. In one case, a thirty-year-old single woman, who was introduced to a widower with two children, expressed her fear at becoming a stepmother.<sup>662</sup> The columnist, writing under the *nom de plume*, “C A,” replied that a happy marriage, in this case, would be based on her love for the widower and her compassion for his children. Also, the author advised the reader to conduct a self-check such as asking whether she would continue to love his children when she had her own children and whether or not she was jealous.

In another case, a reader sought advice about whether to seek revenge on her friend for having destroyed her child’s reputation.<sup>663</sup> Seeing the child stealing candies from a local shop, her friend

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<sup>660</sup> Ibid., 2. In May the same year, the UCP moved its headquarters to Shanghai to restore Christian publication. See *The Annual Report of the CLS in 1946*, 18.

<sup>661</sup> *The Annual Report of the CLS in 1946*, 8; *The Annual Report of the CLS in 1947*, 12. Note: price for each issue rose to 20 yuan around year 1944. See “Benkan qishi” 本刊啟示 (Announcement), *Nü duo* (September 1944): 40. However, price increased slight to 1.2 yuan since January 1941. See “Zengjia tonggao” 增價通告 (Announcement on Price Rise), *Nü duo* (August 1940): 18. The price for each issue was increased to 30 yuan in March 1945. See “*Nü duo tanhuashi*” 女鐸談話室 (*Nü duo* Chatting Room), *Nü duo* (February 1945): n.p.

<sup>662</sup> “Wo pa zuo jimu” 我怕做繼母 (I Fear Being a Step-mother), *Nü duo* (June 1938): 5.

<sup>663</sup> “Yige baofu de wenti” 一個報復的問題 (A Question about Revenge), *Nü duo* (June 1938): 6.



reported the child to the shop keeper and then spread the news in the neighborhood instead of telling the child's mother in the first place. When the reader later found out about a shameful thing (unmentioned in the article) done by the friend's husband, she wondered whether to expose it or not. She therefore wrote to *Nü duo* to seek an opinion. In response, the columnist under the *nom de plume*, "A C," (this may or may not be the same writer as "C A" mentioned above) argued that mothers were inclined to protect their children and to resent those who would harm them. The columnist thought that it had been inappropriate for the friend to report the child to the shop keeper instead of to the reader. On the other hand, the columnist advised the reader to practice the Christian virtue of not holding grudges against others and encouraged her to repay the friend's misdeed with kindness.

The Mailing Box column often covered issues of childrearing. One reader wrote to the magazine that her aunt, who lived with her, refused to use gentle words to guide her five-year-old son.<sup>664</sup> When the reader's child became naughty, her aunt would threaten the child by saying things like a tiger was coming to get him, or the doctor would cut off his four limbs, and monsters were going to eat him. In response, the columnist "M C" criticised this intimidating approach to children because it would hinder their healthy psychological development. For example, when a child got sick, he or she would become very fearful after hearing so many intimidating things about the doctor. Therefore, the author suggested that the reader have a frank talk with her aunt.

Another reader was concerned with teaching children about air raids.<sup>665</sup> Although there had been no air raids in the area where the reader lived, she was worried as the war escalated. "M C" responded that it was necessary to teach children about air raids and how to protect themselves when dangerous thing happened. However, the author warned the reader not to put fear into their minds in the teaching process, as their nervous systems were not fully developed.

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<sup>664</sup> "Jiating zhong ertong jiaoyu wenti" 家庭中兒童教育問題 (A Question about Home Education), *Nü duo* (September 1938): 6.

<sup>665</sup> "Women yingfou jiao ertong fangbei kongqi de zhishi" 我們應否教兒童防備空襲的知識 (Do We Need to Teach Our Children about Air Raids?), *Nü duo* (October 1938): 8.

A letter published in December 1938 raised a more general question about childrearing.<sup>666</sup> The reader was confused after reading an essay on children's education published in another magazine, which suggested parents should allow children to do what they wanted, otherwise they would be incapable of doing those things when they reached adulthood. As this method required constant parental guidance, the reader was worried about whether she was able to follow such advice. In its response, the *Nü duo* columnist suggested a case-by-case approach. One way was to ask children reasons for their behavior while showing them the appropriate method. If children were too small to understand your explanation, the author advised parents to demonstrate the process while not asking their children to engage in it. In cases of danger, the author encouraged parents to gently explain the reasons for not allowing their children to engage in such activities.

In the Readers' Column, many problems reflected the anxiety of modern women in the workforce. The tension between career and domestic responsibilities, however, was barely discussed in other women's magazines at the time.<sup>667</sup> While the emergence of intellectual occupations opened up new opportunities for educated Chinese women, traditional values seemed to confine women to the household, further hindering their careers. Chinese women living in urban areas faced the difficulty of balancing household obligations and occupations. Several of the readers' letters published in *Nü duo* described the struggles of those women.

A letter published in 1939 in *Nü duo* under the title of "Yihun yu weihun nü'er de jiating zeren" 已婚與未婚女兒的家庭責任 (The Household Duties of Married and Unmarried Daughters) reflected such a dilemma.<sup>668</sup> In the letter, the reader called Miss Wu asked *Nü duo* for advice on whether to quit her job in order to take care of her mother. Miss Wu worked as a housekeeper. She used to visit her

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<sup>666</sup> "Wo yinggai zenyang jiao wo de haizi" 我應該怎樣教我的孩子? (How Should I Teach My Child?), *Nü duo* (December 1938): 14.

<sup>667</sup> "Zhiye funü yu jiating de zeren" 職業婦女與家庭的責任 (Career Women and Their Household Responsibilities), *Nü duo* (June 1940): 8.

<sup>668</sup> "Yihun yu weihun nü'er de jiating zeren" 已婚與未婚女兒的家庭責任 (The Household Duties of Married and Unmarried Daughters), *Nü duo* (November 1939): 1–2.

mother, who lived by herself, once a week and helped with the housework. Her two other married sisters, however, insisted that married women should take care of their own families instead of their mother. When Miss Wu's mother required constant care, her two married sisters suggested Miss Wu quit her job to fulfil the responsibility of single daughters. In response, the columnist expressed her understanding if Miss Wu decided to quit her job to take care of her mother. Nevertheless, the author viewed the issue more from a practical perspective. She encouraged Miss Wu to keep her job and increase the frequency of visits. Otherwise, she might face financial problems in the long term. The author criticised her two married sisters for their egotism. An ideal solution, in the author's view, was to share the obligations with the other two daughters and take turns to show their filial piety.

*Nü duo's* response to Miss Wu's conundrum triggered another question from a reader under the *nom de plume*, "M C".<sup>669</sup> In her letter, the reader agreed with the author's suggestions and considered it unfair for the single daughter to take care of her mother by herself. The reader then asked the columnist to elaborate on the issue of egotism in domestic life. The columnist replied that she agreed on the necessity for family members to look after those in need in the family. Showing sympathy, care, and love to their aged parents was an undisputable obligation for children. Problems occurred when daughters started to work outside the home. One key to solving this problem, the columnist proposed, was to have a selfless heart. While acknowledging the nobility of love-driven self-sacrifice, the author had no intention of encouraging women to resign their jobs. Noting that it was difficult for women to find employment, the columnist proposed that society adopt the same attitude towards employed women as their male counterparts. She added:

Parents have no right to demand their daughters make such a sacrifice. Thoughtful parents would not accept such a sacrifice from their daughters. Without urgent matters, daughters do not need to go home. When sons have occupations that make it difficult to

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<sup>669</sup> "Du yihun yu weihun nü'er de jiating zeren zhi hou" 讀《已婚與未婚子女的家庭責任》以後 (Reading 'The Household Duties of Married and Unmarried Daughters'), *Nü duo* (January 1940): 2-4.

go back home every day or every evening, they would never give up their occupations even if their parents were sick. A son would either financially support his parents or ask someone else to take care of them. Therefore, a daughter who has a job should follow the example of a son in this situation. This should not be considered as her responsibility.<sup>670</sup>

The columnist argued using the idea of gender equality. She continued by addressing the circumstances that led to the egotism of sons. As many mothers only asked their daughters to help with housework, this generated an attitude of selfishness among sons. The article implies that the mothers' character was crucial to the nurturing of the character of their children.

Instead of promoting a dichotomous attitude to women's roles in the family and the society, *Nü duo* seemed to promote a realistic approach. An article in the *Readers' Column* published in 1943 argued that such a position was meaningless given the burdens of wartime life because many women at the time, in addition to their housework, had to find a job to make a living. The author suggested an industrious attitude to deal with the difficult reality.<sup>671</sup>

The circulation of readers' letters on home life in *Nü duo* reveals the internal struggles facing educated Chinese women in a wartime context. Dilemmas were more likely to arise in areas of childrearing and maintaining feminine household virtues in modern life. The following section explores another emerging question raised by *Nü duo*'s readers, which cast doubt over Christian faith.

### **Wartime Ordeal, Christian Love, and the Issue of Justice**

In a war-torn China, writings on women intended to mobilise women's participation in national redemption, as seen in the Communist discourse around "funü" 婦女 (women) that signified a

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<sup>670</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>671</sup> "Xiandai funü yingdang zouxiang shehui qu ne? haishi huidao jiating qu ne?" 現代婦女應當走向社會去呢？還是回到家庭去呢？ (Should Modern Women Go to Society or Return to Family?), *Nü duo* (August 1943): 20–1.

collective mobilisation of women in the revolution that began in the late 1930s.<sup>672</sup> Wartime popular culture presented women as being “the fallen, heroic, or sacrificed heroine” that symbolised the invaded nation.<sup>673</sup> The dominant nationalist rhetoric on gender was criticised by Republican female novelist Xiao Hong 蕭紅 (1911–1942), who as Lydia Liu points out, subverted the storyline to challenge the nation-centered, masculine critical tradition through her novel *Sheng si chang* 生死場 (*The Field of Life and Death*) that depicted a Chinese man who raped the female protagonist on the eve of the Anti-Japanese War.<sup>674</sup>

Unlike the secular publications that associated women with the nation, *Nü duo* manifested a primary concern raised by its female readers that centred on their ordeals during wartime. Letters from its female readers showed that their faith was challenged by the silence of God in relation to their sufferings. Some Christian readers even doubted God’s supreme power over war. In response, the editor Liu Meili co-translated Leslie D. Weatherhead’s (1893–1976) work *Why Do Men Suffer?* originally published in 1935. Weatherhead was a famous English preacher in London. Liu believed that his discussion of suffering, in general, might be helpful to the wartime ordeals of the Chinese people.<sup>675</sup>

The urgent need to address the current sufferings of Chinese believers gave Weatherhead’s book a specific relevance in wartime. From November 1937 to January 1940, *Nü duo* published a series of translations of Weatherhead’s work under the title of “Ren weishenme shou tongku?” (Why Do Men Suffer?).<sup>676</sup> A comparison of the original and the translation shows that the editor produced a faithful translation. Central questions include: Is God omnipotent?; Why does God allow suffering?; Is

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<sup>672</sup> The term “funü” originally referred to “the collectivity of kinswomen in the semiotics of Confucian family doctrine.” See Barlow, *The Question of Women in Chinese Feminism*, 37–8.

<sup>673</sup> Prasenjit Duara, “The Regime of Authenticity: Timelessness, Gender, And National History in Modern China,” *History and Theory* Vol. 37 No.3 (October 1998): 287–308.

<sup>674</sup> Lydia Liu, “The Female Body and Nationalist Discourse: Manchuria in Xiao Hong’s Field of Life and Death,” in Angela Zito and Tanie Barlow (eds.), *Body, Subject, and Power in China* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994), 157–200.

<sup>675</sup> Bianzhe 編者 (Editor), “Women de xinxin” 談餘—我們的信心 (Our Confidence), *Nü duo* (July 1939): 1.

<sup>676</sup> The series was later published in a monograph by the CLS in April 1940. The CLS later published his religious viewpoints on discipleship, psychology, and healing the soul. See “Bianzhe de hua” 編者的話 (The Message from the Editor), *Dao sheng* 道聲 Vol. 12 No. 7 (1941): 1.

suffering the will of God?; and What is God's attitude to our suffering? The answer, as addressed in the preface, was in the verses in Psalm 97: 1–2 that praised the ultimate sovereignty of God and his righteousness.

Weatherhead's book acknowledged the limited wisdom of human beings and highlighted the friendship of Jesus, who offered himself to help every human with the spiritual power of God's grace. The author endeavored to convince Christian readers of the value of prayer in suffering. He wrote, "Its [prayer in suffering] value is seen in the rich fellowship which the sufferer has with God through it." Because of this fellowship, the sufferer can become patient and "is able to co-operate with God so that whatever happens the eyes are lifted to the glory of God and the final consummation of His purposes."<sup>677</sup> Overall, Liu Meili believed Weatherhead's analysis offered "a satisfactory answer to the question 'Why Do Men Suffer?'"<sup>678</sup>

The publication of Weatherhead's work in *Nü duo*, however, failed to meet the needs of all its readers. After reading a series of articles on humanity's suffering, one female reader wrote to the editorial board on why God treated his children so unfairly. The following is a translation of her letter quoted in *Nü duo* published in February 1940:

... If God is indeed our dear father, is he the same as our earthly fathers who show favoritism to their children? If you say "No," then how do you explain why some people are so rich and some are so poor? Why some people meet with misfortune continuously and some people have no misfortune at all? This evidence demonstrates God's favouritism. If you still say "No," how then can you explain it?<sup>679</sup>

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<sup>677</sup> Leslie D. Weatherhead, *Why Do Men Suffer* (London: Student Christian Movement Press LTD, 1935), 180. For the corresponding translation, see Liu Meili, "Ren weishenme shou tongku?" 人為甚麼受痛苦? (Why Do Men Suffer?), *Nü duo* (July 1939): 9.

<sup>678</sup> The cover page of the translated Chinese monograph "Why Do Men Suffer?". See Liu Meili 劉美麗 and Ye Bohua 葉柏華 (tr.), *Ren weishenme shou tongku?* 人為甚麼受痛苦? (Shanghai: CLS, April 1940).

<sup>679</sup> M C, "Shangdi dui rensheng tongku de taidu" 上帝對人生痛苦的態度 (God's Attitude towards Mankind's Suffering), *Nü duo* (February 1940): 31.

The author “M C” replied that the reader’s criticism of God was incorrect. With a firm belief in God’s love and wisdom that surpassed that of human beings, the author advised readers to understand that one’s burden was only known to that person. The article stated that there were tangible burdens such as illness and poverty and there were intangible burdens that worried one’s heart. The author suggested readers have faith in God and consider their suffering as a way to steel themselves.<sup>680</sup>

Aside from the question of suffering, *Nü duo*’s readers raised specific questions about their wartime experience. Many readers’ letters concerned wartime privations. Some of these letters were sent from the occupied territory, which mentioned that the Japanese bombing had destroyed their properties. Some readers cried out at the loss of family members. In their escape from war-torn zones, many women had been insulted, as well as encountering other difficulties such as losing jobs and suffering from illness. The editor encouraged these readers to share their sorrows with their friends. She then referred to the biblical story of the last supper, indicating that by sharing food and drink with his twelve disciples, Jesus was sharing his pain with his followers.<sup>681</sup>

Addressing the question of why good people die, the editor responded that many people died of their own “stupidity and ignorance” (*yumei wuzhi* 愚昧无知). As no verse in the Bible promised that good people would have a long life, the editor thus claimed that one should not blame God for the death of good people. Noting that the Japanese air raids had killed many civilians including both the good and the bad, the author explained that misery was mostly caused by those human beings who had abused their “free will” (*ziyou de yizhi* 自由的意志). However, she insisted that God would bring goodness out of humanity’s sins. Although sometimes it was difficult to understand the reasons for some matters, she called for a continuous belief in God’s love.<sup>682</sup>

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<sup>680</sup> Ibid.

<sup>681</sup> Bianzhe 編者 (Editor), “Gei shou tongku de ren” 給受痛苦的人 (Message for the Suffering), *Nü duo* (August 1938): 1.

<sup>682</sup> Bianzhe 編者 (Editor), “Haoren heyi zaosi?” 好人何以早死? (Why Do Good People Die at a Young Age?), *Nü duo* (July 1938): 1–2.

One female reader seemed to be unsatisfied with *Nü duo's* interpretation of God's power and humanity's suffering. She wrote to the editorial board:

You often advise us to believe in God and trust in his almighty power. [You point out that] God is sympathetic to humanity's pains. Many sufferings are generated by human beings and therefore one should not blame God. Once pain is caused, it will take a certain period for God to rescue you. God might use this suffering to weave clothing to glorify Him. But I think God should be responsible for the suffering of the innocent.<sup>683</sup>

The author "M C" referred to the biblical verses on Jesus and a man born blind. Jesus said the man's illness was not caused by the sins of the man or his parents, but to display God's work in him. The author suggested readers learn from Jesus and believe in God's love. The article stated that God would never punish the criminal activities of people through illness, rather the reason why we were punished was often due to the law of cause and effect (*yinguo dinglü* 因果定律), meaning punishment was caused by one's own misconduct.<sup>684</sup>

Concerning the anti-Japanese war, the author continued, Chinese people prayed to God for national victory but so did Japanese people. As both Chinese and Japanese were God's children, God might be using his powers to justly arrange the affairs between China and Japan. The author indicated that God thinks in a way different from human beings. Yet God revealed himself and his love toward us through Jesus so that humanity could understand that God would not punish us through suffering.<sup>685</sup>

Rather, *Nü duo* elaborated on the issue of plight from a positive perspective. Under the title of "Kunan yu rensheng" 苦難與人生 (Misery and Life), an article published in December 1940 in *Nü duo* suggested that the suffering of Jesus throughout his earthly life was to prepare himself for his salvation mission. The author referred to the similar teaching in *Mencius*, which stated:

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<sup>683</sup> M C, "Shangdi yu rensheng de tongku wenti" 上帝與人生的痛苦問題 (God and Men's Suffering), *Nü duo* (November 1939): 13.

<sup>684</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>685</sup> *Ibid.*



When Heaven intends to confer a great responsibility upon a person, it first visits his mind and will with suffering, toils his sinews and bones, subjects his body to hunger, exposes him to poverty, and confounds his projects.<sup>686</sup>

In dealing with suffering, the magazine, in particular, recognised women as being emotionally weaker than men. In reply to a female reader who suffered from depression, *Nü duo* said that women were more likely to have depression as they attached more importance to emotions than men, which was partially caused by physical weakness. Aside from seeking help from doctors, it suggested that female readers search for God's guidance in their life. With spiritual guidance, women were believed to be able to control their temperament.<sup>687</sup>

Instead of addressing the issue of suffering, *Nü duo* spilled a lot of ink promoting Christian love. From February 1940 to December 1941, it published a series of articles under the title of “Yesu de renben zhuyi” 耶穌的人本主義, ‘The Humanism of Jesus,’ a translation of the monograph *The Humanism of Jesus: A Study of Christ's Human Sympathies* written by the Scottish biblical scholar Robert Henry Wishart Shepherd (1888–1971).<sup>688</sup>

Shepherd published his work *The Humanism of Jesus* in 1926 to argue his belief in God's love across races. As an ordained minister of the Church of Scotland, Shepherd began as a missionary to South Africa in 1918.<sup>689</sup> He later worked as the director of the Lovedale Press from 1930 to 1955. During his

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<sup>686</sup> Wan shi 頑石, “Kunan yu rensheng” 苦難與人生 (Misery and Life), *Nü duo* (December 1940): 29. The original Chinese is “天將降大任於斯人也，必先苦其心志，勞其筋骨，餓其體膚，空乏其身。”《孟子·告子下》。For the English translation, see *Mencius*, 2009, 143.

<sup>687</sup> M C, “Zongjiao yu rensheng” 宗教與人生 (Religion and Life), *Nü duo* (June 1941): 18–9.

<sup>688</sup> The term “humanism” requires clarification. *Nü duo* translated humanism as *renben zhuyi*, a term that acquired more precise meanings in contemporary times. As He Guanghu clarifies, humanism is equivalent to *renwen zhuyi* 人文主義 in Chinese, which centralises human agency and concerns morality as well as the rights and freedom of human beings. The Chinese term *renben zhuyi* is equivalent to anthropocentrism in English, which is often aligned with a nontheistic life that is contrary to theocentrism and materialism. See He Guanghu 何光滄, “Jidujiao yu renwenzhuyi: cong wujie zouxiang duihua” 基督宗教與人文主義：從誤解走向對話” (Christianity and Humanism: from Misunderstanding to Dialogue), *Tong xun* 通訓 of the Centre for Sino-Christian Studies (Zhonghua jidu zongjiao yanjiu zhongxin 中華基督宗教研究中心) No. 4 (April 2004). [http://cscs.hkbu.edu.hk/n\\_v4\\_he.html](http://cscs.hkbu.edu.hk/n_v4_he.html) Accessed on 2 June 2018.

<sup>689</sup> *Contemporary Authors: A Bio-Bibliographical Guide to Current Authors and Their Works*, Vol. 1, Clare D. Kinsman (ed.), (Detroit, Mich.: Gale Research Co., 1975), 573.

directorship, the Press published African writings to cater to African needs, making it a crucial press at the time that promoted African literature and African consciousness.<sup>690</sup> In his book, Shepherd highlighted Jesus as a humanist who “carried a yearning of sympathy and love for every human being as such.”<sup>691</sup> In fifteen chapters, the book focused on Jesus’s encounters with different groups of people such as the poor, enemies, the gentiles, and children. *Nü duo* faithfully translated thirteen chapters of the book, leaving out the two chapters, namely, the one on Jesus and the world of nature and the other on Jesus and the cross. In this way, it foregrounded the humane care of Jesus.<sup>692</sup>

The translation of Shepherd’s work in *Nü duo* likewise advocated a Christian humanism that transcended time, space, race, and nationality. By humanism, Shepherd emphasised the importance of *humanitas* that demonstrated God’s love for all humanity. The Latin term *humanitas*, according to Shepherd, was rendered by Jerome in the Vulgate to translate the Greek concept of “philanthropy” to describe the kindness local people showed to Paul when “Paul and his fellow-travellers escaped the storm and landed on Melita” recorded in the *Acts of the Apostles*. Instead of highlighting this kindness, both Jerome and Shepherd stressed the depth and breadth of the sympathy Jesus had for all humankind, “Roman, Greek, Samaritan, Canaanite, Jew; rich, poor, learned, ignorant, sickly, healthy, fallen, saintly.”<sup>693</sup>

The Chinese term for *humanitas* that *Nü duo* used was *ren ai* 仁愛, benevolence and humanity. The term *ren ai* also resembles Confucian terms, as *ren* is a crucial concept in the Confucian classics. An emphasis on the Confucian teachings on humanity was encapsulated in the notion of *renzhe airen* 仁者愛人 (“one who is humane loves other people”).<sup>694</sup> Writings in *Nü duo* suggest the term *ren ai*

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<sup>690</sup> Tim White, “The Lovedale Press during the Directorship of R. H. W. Shepherd, 1930–1955,” *English in Africa* Vol. 19 No. 2 (October 1992): 69–84.

<sup>691</sup> Robert H. W. Shepherd, *The Humanism of Jesus: A Study in Christ’s Human Sympathies* (London: James Clarke & Co., 1926), 9.

<sup>692</sup> In the monograph entitled *Yesu de renben zhuyi* 耶穌的人本主義 published by the CLS in 1948 in Shanghai, however, included the last two chapters. See *Yesu de renben zhuyi* (Shanghai: CLS, 1948).

<sup>693</sup> Shepherd, *The Humanism of Jesus*, 9–11.

<sup>694</sup> This notion was in *Mencius* (Book IV Part B). For the English translation, see *Mencius*, 2009, 92. For a brief summary of the discourse of *ren* and Christian missionaries’ attempts in translating it, see Kang Taiyi 康太一, “Ci jian ren ai,” 此间仁爱 (Love in this world), *Dushu* 读书 No. 11 (November 2015): 168–72.

denoted the universal love for all humanity in Christian teachings that exceeded any tangible or intangible boundary.

In addition to delineating Jesus' humanism through the translation of Shepherd's work, *Nü duo* encouraged readers to follow the steps of Jesus and exercise hospitality during times of political and social upheaval. Several articles advocated that readers provide hospitality to refugees and injured soldiers. For example, an article published in the editorial column in September 1938 discussed the fundamental feature that distinguished Christians from non-believers. Liu Meili stressed that *you ai xin* 有愛心 or 'having a loving heart' was the defining feature of Christians.<sup>695</sup> In her belief, *ai* 愛, love, was the foundation of the gospel as well as that of Christian faith and behavior. Liu cited 1 John 4: 11–12:

Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.<sup>696</sup>

The most challenging group of people for Christians to offer hospitality to, perhaps, was the enemy, namely the Japanese military. On 7 July 1937, the Japanese army provoked the Marco Polo Bridge Incident and escalated the conflict with China into a full-scale war. The Incident deeply troubled some Chinese Christians' faith in pacifism. Wu Yaozong 吳耀宗 (1893–1979), a leading pacifist figure, became alienated from non-resistance and started to appeal for intervention from the international community to resist Japan's invasion of China.<sup>697</sup>

In contrast to growing nationalist sentiment and waning support for pacifism among male Protestant Christians, *Nü duo* published an article entitled "Ni ai ni de diren me" (Do You Love Your Enemy?) two

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<sup>695</sup> Bianzhe 編者 (Editor), "Zenyang caisuan shi jidutu?" 怎樣纔算是基督徒? (Who Is a Genuine Christian?), *Nü duo* (September 1938): 1–2.

<sup>696</sup> The verses in the article are in John I, 4:11-12, KJV. The Chinese version in *Nü duo* is "親愛的兄弟阿，上帝既是這樣愛我們，我們也當彼此相愛。從來沒有人見過上帝，我們若彼此相愛，上帝就住在我們裏面，愛他的心在我們裏面得以完全了。"

<sup>697</sup> Yao Xiyi 姚西伊, *Zhongguo jidujiao weiaizhuyi* 中國基督教唯愛主義 (*The Protestant Pacifist Movement in China*) (Hong Kong: Logos Publishers, 2008), 177–9.

months after the Incident. The article elaborated on the concept of *ai* 愛 from three perspectives: namely, erotic love, friendship, and the love for your enemy. While the first two kinds of love were easy to understand, the article addressed loving one's enemy as the ultimate teaching of Christianity, which moved beyond hatred and affection and entered into rational thought. This type of love was exemplified in the infallible love of Christ, which embodies God's love for human beings. As God forgives your sins, you should likewise forgive the sins of other people and treat them in the same way God treated you. Loving your enemy, according to the article, did not mean to love their sinful deeds but rather to accept them as God's children and forgive them. While individualism and nationalism encouraged a love for oneself and one's country, the article admonished its readers to love everyone even one's enemy.<sup>698</sup>

To promote the concept that God's love was universal, *Nü duo* referred to the writings of the Japanese pacifist Kagawa Toyohiko 賀川豊彦 (1888–1960).<sup>699</sup> Kagawa was a well-regarded Japanese Protestant who promoted love and peace in militarist Japan. In 1934, the CLS published his monograph entitled *Ai de kexue* 愛的科學 (*Love, The Law of Life*). In the preface, Kagawa asked Chinese readers for their forgiveness and appealed to the doctrine that God's love transcended races.<sup>700</sup> In October 1940, *Nü duo* published an article that drew on Kagawa's thinking. Under the title of "Zhengfu yiqie de shi ai!", 'Love Conquers All!', the article rejected violent resistance and instead advocated the concept of love. It cited Kagawa's attitude on love from *Love, The Law of Life*:

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<sup>698</sup> Xian Chao 顯超, "Ni ai ni de diren me" 你愛你的敵人麼 (Do You Love Your Enemy), *Nü duo* (September 1937): 36–8.

<sup>699</sup> Research shows that Kagawa declared himself no longer a pacifist after the outbreak of the Pacific War in 1941. See Liu Jiafeng 刘家峰, "Jindai zhongri jidujiao hepingzhuyi de mingyun—yi Xubaoqian yu Hechuanfengyan wei ge'an de bijiao yanjiu" 近代中日基督教和平主义的命运——以徐宝谦与贺川丰彦为个案的比较研究 (The fate of contemporary Christian pacifism in China and Japan), *Zhe jiang xue kan* 浙江学刊 2 (2007): 102.

<sup>700</sup> Kagawa Toyohiko 賀川豊彦, Yu Kangde 俞康德 (tr.), *Ai de kexue* 愛的科學 (*Love, The Law of Life*), (Shanghai: CLS, 1934), 2. The title literally translates as *The Science of Love*.

I oppose any knowledge, organisation, government, arts, and religion that rejects love; I oppose any church that take pride in faith yet fails to practice love; I oppose any politician that relies on violence and is ignorant of love.<sup>701</sup>

Through promoting the notion of Christian love and hospitality to strangers in the midst of national crisis, Chinese Christian women were encouraged to extend their domestic hospitality to broader society. The advocacy of hospitality and the radical love of the enemy, in particular, suggests an unconditional love that transcends class, religion, and nationality. The promotion of Jesus as a humanist by *Nü duo* encouraged Christian women to develop a broader identity outside domesticity. The promotion of love in *Nü duo* in a wartime context was, nevertheless, an extension of women's traditional caregiver role, in which women were encouraged to extend their care to strangers in accordance with God's commandments on love, echoing the discourse on the "new woman" in years following the May Fourth movement. While women's traditional roles were criticised by male intellectuals, as discussed in Chapter Four, women's public roles were still subject to the regulation of the patriarchal state.

The readers' letters in *Nü duo* showed that suffering was a primary concern of Chinese Christian women. Readers' voices were in a sharp contrast with the editorial board that solely concentrated on the notion of God's love and supreme power. Even in difficult times, *Nü duo* sent out a message that God still cared for humanity and ordeals could be transformed into goodness. It barely touched on the issue of justice that was raised by many of its readers. *Nü duo* therefore adopted a relatively passive stance about the role of Christians in national salvation. Rather it highlighted God's power and advocated an ongoing belief in the love of God despite the great sufferings of Chinese people at the time. It pointed to Jesus as the one who endured great suffering to fulfil his redemption plan for

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<sup>701</sup> Cai Yinuo 蔡以諾, "Zhengfu yiqie de shi 'ai'!" 徵服一切的是“愛”! ('Love' Conquers All!), *Nü duo* (October 1940): 35. For the original text in the Chinese translation, see Kagawa Toyohiko, *Love, The Law of Life*, 4.

humankind. The Gospel literature in *Nü duo* thus had a one-sided notion of Christian love for all humanity, leaving out the issue of justice that its readers raised.

### **The Imperial Legacy of Gender Ethics**

The readers' letters on sufferings touch on the issue of justice, absent from the magazine. One plausible reason might lie in the development of Christianity in China. When foreign missionaries came to China, they were associated with Western imperialism, wittingly or unwittingly. The international situation put foreign missionaries in an awkward and often a hostile situation with the local Chinese people. Rather than discussing God's justice during the two Opium Wars, Western missionaries viewed it an opportunity for evangelical work and found themselves busy with the establishment of churches and missionary institutions in China. The priority of preaching the Gospel to the Chinese people in the context of Western imperialism often complicated their evangelical efforts and galvanised them with a critique of cultural imperialism.

Unlike Western missionaries who were not attacked directly in the Sino-Japanese War in the 1930s, Chinese Christians were victims of the war. Their experiences of wartime suffering called Christian love into question, as seen in the readers' letters to *Nü duo*. However, despite the editorship being in the hands of Chinese Christian woman, it seemed not to question the notion of universal Christian love depicted by Western Christians. Its translations of Christian literature on suffering barely touched on the issue of the wartime context. In this sense, it simply addressed humanity's suffering in a general doctrinal manner that failed to take into consideration the historical, social and political contexts in which the Gospel literature was generated in the first place. The translations were produced in a context of trauma from the war, which inflicted enormous mental and physical pain on Chinese people. *Nü duo* thus showed an imbalance between Christian love and God's justice even under the editorship of a local convert, consciously or unconsciously.

This was particularly evident in Liu Meili's responses to the question of suffering, which still relied heavily on Western sources that did not take into account the context of war. By contrast, *Nü duo's*

readers had more nuanced ideas concerning human suffering and God's silence than the editor. If God was good, then why was there so much suffering or inequality in the world? The classic problem of evil raised by readers forms a sharp contrast with the editor's dogmatic response. It indicates the imperial lens that the editor unconsciously saw through, which prevented her from addressing war from the perspective of its victims. The following sections illustrate the imperial legacy of gender ethics from a political perspective.

### **Changing Politics, Changing Views**

Life is like a game of chess. Once the opening move is made, the following steps, unlike the liberty enjoyed in making the first one, will be more or less checked. The very first move influences the final move of each game of chess. Therefore, we must be careful to avoid a wrong first step.

Liu Meili, February 1935<sup>702</sup>

Shortly after Liu Meili succeeded to the editorship of *Nü duo* in 1935, she wrote an essay admonishing the readership to be wise in discerning right and wrong based on Christian teachings. The metaphor of the game of chess adopted in her essay pointed to the uncertainty of life and called for a cautious stance in decision-making. This kind of warning shrouded the closing years of *Nü duo*, a turbulent time in modern China, when *Nü duo* and its editor Liu Meili had to be cautious of each move made under different regimes.

### ***Madame Chiang and the New Life Movement***

On 19 February 1934, Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek launched the New Life Movement (*xinshenghuo yundong* 新生活運動, NLM) in Nanchang 南昌, the capital of Jiangxi Province. The launch of the NLM in Nanchang, according to Federica Ferlanti, had an anti-Communist implication, as Nanchang had

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<sup>702</sup> Bianzhe 編者 (Editor), "Shi yu fei" 是與非 (Right and Wrong), *Nü duo* (February 1935): 3.

been the military headquarters during the campaigns against the Communists in surrounding areas.<sup>703</sup> To uproot Communist influence in areas previously governed by them, the NLM proposed a set of ethics and values centered on the Confucian virtues of *li* 禮 (propriety), *yi* 義 (righteousness), *lian* 廉 (honour), and *chi* 耻 (shame).<sup>704</sup> It later changed the aim from improving individual morality and living conditions to “the transformation of the entire society.”<sup>705</sup> Contemporary research has also demonstrated its association with the national revival movement.<sup>706</sup>

Despite its common ethical ground with Christianity, the NLM received a divided reaction from the Christian community. Some worried about the consequences of aligning with the regime as this massive political campaign had been labelled “fascist” at the time.<sup>707</sup> Some showed support to the movement because it resonated with local practical objectives.<sup>708</sup> When the leadership of the NLM shifted to Madame Chiang 蔣夫人 (1897–2003, also known as Soong Meyling 宋美齡) and “the more American, Christian-oriented elements” were found in the KMT from 1936 onwards, “church and missionary organizations came to play important roles in the movement.” Arif Dirlik notes that this “shift was formalized when the veteran missionary reformer George Shepherd was placed in charge of the movement in early 1936.”<sup>709</sup>

According to Shepherd’s report on the NLM in 1937, a crucial change was adopted to ensure that the NLM “shall not become a political instrument in the hands of any party or clique.”<sup>710</sup> On 6 May 1937, Madame Chiang made a strong appeal for the churches’ cooperation with the NLM at the national conference of the NCCC, emphasising the contribution of Christian churches and institutions to the

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<sup>703</sup> Federica Ferlanti, “The New Life Movement in Jiangxi Province, 1934–1938,” *Modern Asian Studies* Vol. 44 No. 5 (September 2010): 963–77.

<sup>704</sup> *Ibid.*, 963.

<sup>705</sup> *Ibid.*, 964.

<sup>706</sup> Li Guannan, “Reviving China: Urban Reconstruction in Nanchang and the Guomindang National Revival Movement 1932–37,” *History China* Vol. 7 No. 1 (2012): 106–35. Ferlanti, “The New Life Movement in Jiangxi Province, 1934–1938,” 961–1000.

<sup>707</sup> “Fascist Methods of Salvation,” *The North China Herald* (18 April 1934).

<sup>708</sup> Ferlanti, “The New Life Movement in Jiangxi Province, 1934–1938,” 972–7.

<sup>709</sup> Arif Dirlik, “The Ideological Foundations of the New Life Movement: A Study in Counterrevolution,” *The Journal of Asian Studies* Vol. 34 No. 4 (August 1975): 948.

<sup>710</sup> *The China Mission Year Book, 1936–1937* (Shanghai: CLS, 1937), 76.



work of improving the people's livelihood. The NCCC correspondingly passed resolutions to cooperate with the movement and expressed its satisfaction with the fact that "the emphasis of the New Life Movement is increasingly upon making it a spontaneous movement of and among the people of China, rather than upon developing its organizations or relating it politically to the Government."<sup>711</sup>

The NLM had four departments, namely, administration, promotion, students, and training. It also maintained "a Women's New Life Movement Advisory Committee," of which Madame Chiang was the Director-General in addition to nine other women leaders on the Advisory Committee.<sup>712</sup> The majority of members who played a leading role in the Committee were wives of senior KMT officers and women of the Nationalist Party. Many members were Communists, who were forced to withdraw from the Committee following the New Fourth Army Incident in January 1941, marking the end of the cooperation between the KMT and the CCP. Christian women, many of whom were associated with the YWCA, formed another group that worked to implement the NLM among Chinese women.<sup>713</sup>

In the case of the CLS, it embraced the moral aspects of the movement at an early stage, believing "the energising Spirit of God is at work, revealing the eternal value of the things that make for righteousness and sober living."<sup>714</sup> "Nourishing The New Life" even became the theme of its annual report for year 1934.<sup>715</sup> *Nü duo* likewise took a supportive stance. As the NLM emphasised women's work in families, *Nü duo* became a useful platform to promote the movement. On the one hand, it cooperated by circulating news about the progress of women's involvement in the NLM. For example, in June 1936 it incorporated a report on the establishment of the Women's NLM Advisory Committee in February that year.<sup>716</sup> Two months later, *Nü duo* published news on local responses to the

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<sup>711</sup> Ibid., 77.

<sup>712</sup> Ibid., 72.

<sup>713</sup> Song Qinghong 宋青红, "Xinshenghuo yundong cujin zonghui funü zhidao weiyuanhui yanjiu" 新生活运动促进总会妇女指导委员会研究 (1938–1946) (Research on Women's New Life Movement Advisory Committee) (PhD diss., Fudan University, 2012), 99–103.

<sup>714</sup> "The New Life Movement," in *The Forty-seventh Annual Report of the CLS, 1934* (Shanghai: CLS, 1934), 2.

<sup>715</sup> Ibid.

<sup>716</sup> "Xinyun zonghui she funü zhidaohui" 新運總會設婦女指導會 (The Establishment of the Women's NLM Committee), *Nü duo* (June 1936): 44. The committee launched a monthly entitled *Funü xinshenghuo yuekan* 婦運新生活月刊 in November 1936 in Nanjing.

establishment of the Women's NLM Committee. It reported that many women's organisations formed the Promotion Committee of the NLM in their regions.<sup>717</sup>

On the other hand, *Nü duo* did not promote the NLM in an obvious way. Few articles in important columns such as the editorials advocated direct support for the NLM. Many articles instead admonished readers to work hard and endure hardships in difficult times.<sup>718</sup> For example, one article entitled "Xinnian de ganxiang" (Thoughts for the New Year) published in January 1935 mentioned the NLM in its conclusion. It noted:

If we can keep the new page (i.e., the new year) clean with enthusiasm for the NLM, we then must make constant progress. Therefore, the family will not be bankrupt, society will not be in chaos, the nation will not be in civil war, and the League of Nations will not need any meeting on reducing military forces.<sup>719</sup>

It is worth noting that the article as a whole discussed how one should cherish time and make progress in the coming year. It did not openly encourage the readership to become involved in the NLM or emphasise its specific concerns. Instead, it stressed that readers needed to reflect on their weaknesses to advance daily in the New Year.

*Nü duo's* implicit support for the NLM was shown by spotlighting Madame Chiang. From July 1935 onwards, the magazine used her calligraphy, including her name, as the cover image. In February 1936, Madame Chiang became the leader of the Women's NLM Committee. She was involved in literary work, giving speeches, and was active in various organisations. In 1937, the CLS published Madame Chiang's speech delivered on 6 May at the eleventh annual conference of the NCCC. It stressed the close relationship between Christianity and the NLM. As a Christian, Madame Chiang believed social

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<sup>717</sup> "Funü xinyun cujinhui chengli" 婦女新運促進會成立 (The Promotion Women's Committee of the NLM), *Nü duo* (August 1936): 41.

<sup>718</sup> Bianzhe 編者 (Editor), "Xinnian de ganxiang" 新年的感想 (Thoughts for the New Year), *Nü duo* (January 1935): 1–2; Sheng You 勝忧, "Zai niantou jinggao duzhe" 在年頭敬告讀者 (A Message to Readers), *Nü duo* (January 1936): 1–2; Hua 華, "Rensheng jihe?" 人生幾何? (The Meaning of Life), *Nü duo* (February 1938): 1.

<sup>719</sup> Bian zhe, "Xinnian de ganxiang," 2.

reform revealed the divine will, and that Chinese Christians should respond to the call of the NLM and live a renewed life.<sup>720</sup>

From March 1935 to February 1947, though interrupted by the Second Sino-Japanese War (October 1939 to 1943), *Nü duo* kept Madame Chiang's calligraphy as its cover image. The magazine began using her calligraphy one year after the official launch of the NLM, establishing its long relationship with the ruling authorities. In 1941, Madam Chiang even wrote a letter to the Committee on Christian Literature for Women and Children in Mission Fields in America, showing her support for magazines targeted at women and children around the world including *Nü duo*. She expressed her sincere appreciation of the values of *Nü duo* and her gratitude to the Committee for their work on women's literature.<sup>721</sup>

An exploration of writings on Madame Chiang in *Nü duo* reveals a strong inclination to promote her as a role model for Chinese Christian women. Apart from the publication of her calligraphy, the number of reports about Madame Chiang in *Nü duo* surpassed those of the NLM even though there were overlaps between them. In the *News Column*, there were reports on her activities. Apart from her engagements in social welfare and in the religious mobilisation of the NLM, *Nü duo* also published other news about her. For example, it reported the honorary degree granted by Mount Holyoke College to Madame Chiang in March 1937. Three months later, it printed a translation of an invitation from the Federation of Tokyo Women's Organisations (Tokyo rengō fujinkai 東京聯合婦人會) sent to Madame Chiang, who was invited to Japan to improve Sino-Japan diplomatic relations.<sup>722</sup>

However, *Nü duo* did not publish her speeches on the promotion of the NLM. Nor did it attempt to echo its nationalist ideology. Further evidence of its ambiguous relationship with Madame Chiang can

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<sup>720</sup> Madame Chiang Kai-shek 蔣介石夫人, *Jidujiao yu xinshenghuo* 基督教與新生活 (Christianity and the New Life) (Shanghai: CLS, 1937).

<sup>721</sup> "Letter From Madame Chiang," *New Orleans Christian Advocate* (26 June 1941): 7.

<sup>722</sup> "Meiguo masheng daxue zenghuo jiangfuren mingyu xuwei" 美國麻省大學贈蔣夫人名譽學位 (The Honorary Degree Granted by Mount Holyoke College to Madame Chiang), *Nü duo* (March 1937): 47; "Dongjing lianhe furenhui yaoqing jiangfuren dongdu lianluan" 東京聯合婦人會邀蔣夫人東渡聯歡 (Invitation from the Federation of Tokyo Women's Organisations), *Nü duo* (May 1937): 45.

be found in its not publishing her speech entitled “Gao nütongbao shu” 告女同胞書 (A Letter to Female Compatriots), delivered at a national women’s gathering in 1938. In the speech, Madame Chiang appealed for women’s patriotic engagement in the fight against Japan, while some other woman’s magazines published her nationalist call and her other writings promoting anti-Japanese resistance.<sup>723</sup> This suggests that *Nü duo* had an ambivalent yet close relationship with Madame Chiang as well as the regime she represented.

### ***Under Japanese Occupation***

The Pearl Harbour Attack on 7 December 1941 ushered in a period of total war between Japan and the United States. In Shanghai, the Japanese armies entered the International Settlement and the French Settlement where many foreign institutions, including the CLS, were located. In response, the Christian community established the United Christian Publishers in Chengdu in 1943 to continue religious publication and the CLS was one of its seven members. From 1944 to 1945, the CLS published *Nü duo* in Chengdu.<sup>724</sup>

While some CLS staff moved to the new depot in Kunming which had been established in 1938, Liu was unable to travel to “Unoccupied China” because of her physical handicap.<sup>725</sup> She stayed in Shanghai and performed her duty as the editor of *Nü duo*, believing in the role of the magazine for the improvement of women’s family lives. Liu continued her editing work in occupied Shanghai after the Pearl Harbour Attack and throughout Japan’s occupation of the International Settlement. Her

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<sup>723</sup> Ji Zi 季子, “Du jiangfuren ‘gao nütongbaoshu’” 讀蔣夫人“告女同胞書”(Reading Madame Chiang’s “A Letter to Female Compatriots”), *Funü* (Shanghai 1938) 婦女 (July 1938): 6; “Jiating funü canjia zhanshi gongzuo jiangfuren lingdao fahui” 家庭婦女參加戰時工作蔣夫人領導發揮 (Household Wives Attending Meetings Led by Madame Chiang During War), *Funü gongming* 婦女共鳴 (March 1938): 16; Jiang Song Meiling 蔣宋美齡, “Kangzhan jianguo yu funü wenti” 抗戰建國與婦女問題 (Anti-Japanese War, Nation-building, and Women’s Problem), *Funü gongming* (February 1938): 3; Jiang Song Meiling 蔣宋美齡, “Funü tanhuahui yanjiangci” 婦女談話會演講辭 (Speech on Women’s Gathering), *Funü shenghuo* (Shanghai 1935) 婦女生活 (June 1938): 6–7; Jiang Song Meiling 蔣宋美齡, “Funü jiefang yu minzu jiefang” 婦女解放與民族解放 (Women’s Liberation and National Liberation), *Funü xinyun* 婦女新運 No. 2 (1939): 7–11.

<sup>724</sup> *Annual Report of the United Christian Publishers for January 1945 to April 1946*, 2. Shanghai Municipal Archive, u130-0-1.

<sup>725</sup> *The Annual Report of the CLS in 1946*, 8.

American Methodist Mission Board (WFMS) salary was disrupted due to Japanese blockades, yet Liu managed to obtain half-pay through a local network and, thanks to her English capabilities, she found work as a confidential assistant for a real estate dealer.<sup>726</sup>

With the outbreak of the Asia-Pacific War, Japan strengthened its religious control over occupied regions to solidify support from religious groups, who were supposed to promote the concept of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. On 2 April 1942, the Japanese government established the Prospering Asian Religious League (Kōa shūkyō dōmei 興亞宗教同盟) to serve this purpose. According to the declaration of this alliance, its mission was to expel British-American and Soviet power in Asia and establish the Co-Prosperity Sphere by implementing the true meaning of the Emperor's Way (Kōdō no honi 皇道の本義).<sup>727</sup> In China, the Central China Religious League (Chūshi shūkyō daidō renmei 中支宗教大同連盟, CCRL) was established in February 1939 by the Special Military Agency (Rikugun tokumubu 陸軍特務部) to promote the unification and integration of Japanese and Chinese religious groups in occupied China as well as fostering Sino-Japanese cooperation between them. It also initially aimed to correct the public opinion toward Japan among Western missionaries.<sup>728</sup>

Matsutani Yosuke points out that the CCRL achieved little progress until the outbreak of the Pacific War. By the end of August 1942, urban Sino-Japanese Christian leagues had been formed in at least fourteen cities in central China including Shanghai and Nanjing. Under the leadership of the CCRL, the Central China Sino-Japanese Christian League (Kachū nikka kirisutokyō renmei 華中日華基督教連盟) held its opening ceremony on 26 August in Shanghai, which aimed to facilitate Sino-Japanese

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<sup>726</sup> Hunter, *The Story of Mary Liu*, 112–4.

<sup>727</sup> Matsutani Yosuke 松谷暉介, 中国占領地域に対する日本の宗教政策: キリスト教を中心とした政策・組織・人物の連関性 (*Japan's Religious Policies during its Occupation of China: the Interconnections between Policies, Organizations and Individuals with Respect to Christianity*) (PhD diss., The University of Kitakyushu, 2013), 63–4.

<sup>728</sup> Matsutani Yosuke 松谷暉介, 日中戦争期における中国占領地域に対する日本の宗教政策—中支宗教大同連盟をめぐる諸問題 (*Japan's Religious Policies during its Occupation of China: "Central China Religious League" and related Issues*), 社会システム研究 (*Social Systems Studies*) No. 26 (March 2013): 49–82.

cooperation among Christian groups in central China in the spirit of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperty Sphere.<sup>729</sup>

Surrounded by new political circumstances, Liu Meili maintained a neutral tone in her dealings with the puppet Religious Affairs Office in Shanghai, neither supporting nor explicitly opposing the regime. When the Japanese military launched a religious unification campaign, Liu knew that all the Christian groups, while purportedly equal, were so only in the sense that all submitted to the “protection” of the Japanese and deferred to Japan. She found it difficult to remain true to her Christian faith amidst overtures to serve the Japanese government, yet she managed to avoid censure from the authorities for two years. Meanwhile, she was looking for a moment to withdraw from the editorship “without being forced to make any public proclamation which the Japanese propagandists would be bound to interpret as a challenge to their might.”<sup>730</sup> One afternoon in 1943, as she recollected, a representative of the puppet government visited her. The officer pointed out how all faiths should do their part of achieving “co-prosperty,” and *Nü duo* should serve this new ideology. Liu recalled:

I merely said how fortunate it was he had come to me at just this time when I was about to take a course [and] I wanted to be sure [I] would not be misunderstood. I told him I had been wondering how to go about it, and here he was, at the psychological moment. As his office undoubtedly knew, the magazine’s funds were nearly exhausted. I had no alternative, I said, but to give up my editorial work and live on what little capital I had.<sup>731</sup>

When the officer left, Liu sent off the proofs for the next issue and packed a few remaining papers. She left the office in the CLS building and lived on her wages from the estate agent job for the rest of the war. The last issue of *Nü duo* under Liu’s editorship was August 1943.

### ***In Unoccupied China***

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<sup>729</sup> Yosuke, 中国占領地域に対する日本の宗教政策, 136–9.

<sup>730</sup> Hunter, *The Story of Mary Liu*, 115.

<sup>731</sup> *Ibid.*, 116.

*Nü duo* ceased for a year and resumed publication from July 1944 to August 1945 with three issues for 1944 and six issues for 1945, published by the CLS branch in Chengdu under the editorship of Margaret Brown, Huang Shufen 黃淑芬, and Chen Peilan 陳佩蘭.<sup>732</sup> As Margaret Brown was also the editor of a children's magazine published by the CLS and Chen Peilan coedited only a few issues, Huang Shufen was the primary editor during this period. In its foreword in July 1944, *Nü duo* reaffirmed its commitment to providing women with ideas on a correct household and improving their outlook on life.<sup>733</sup> Compared with the period under Liu's editorship, however, more writings during this period discussed the political situation and stressed women's equal status with their male counterparts. It encouraged Christian women to contribute to the nation and society and admonished female fellows to cherish their values by becoming involved in social affairs.<sup>734</sup> The increasing content on issues outside domesticity even attracted male readers. As Margaret Brown recorded in 1945, there was one country evangelist who came to her to order extra copies of *Nü duo* and said everyone enjoyed reading it. Brown wrote, "The young women turn first to the 'Letter Box'; the older women turn first to the devotional articles and those on religious subjects. The men turn to the current events."<sup>735</sup>

Unlike its ambiguous attitude towards politics in the previous period, *Nü duo* for the first time published political discussions and expressed its anticipation of a united military force to fight Imperial Japan. From January to August 1945, the magazine added a column on current affairs. Chen Guohua 陳國樺 (1910–1970), the contributor, was a graduate in the department of foreign languages in Yenching University,<sup>736</sup> who had edited the magazine *Fengtu shizhi* 風土什志 or *Records of Culture*

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<sup>732</sup> In July 1944, Margaret Brown returned from West China to Shanghai to coedit *Nü duo* with Huang Shufen (at least the issue for November 1944 and the issue for August-September in 1945 with a third co-editor Chen Peilan). "*Nü duo* yuekan" 女鐸月刊 (The Monthly *Nü duo*), *Nü duo* (November 1944; August and September 1945); *Annual Report of the United Christian Publishers for January 1945 to April 1946*, 11.

<sup>733</sup> "Fukan ci" 復刊詞 (Resuming Publication), *Nü duo* (July 1944): 3.

<sup>734</sup> Kai Ling 凱玲, "Jinri de zhongguo jidutu nüzi" 今日的中國基督徒婦女 (Christian Women Today), *Nü duo* (July 1944): 6–8.

<sup>735</sup> Margaret H. Brown, "Letter to Dr. Cartwright" (16 May 1945), 2. See Christian Literature Society of China, China Conference 1940–1949, Microfilm Edition of the Administrative Files Series of the Board of Missions of the Methodist Church, The General Commission on Archives and History The United Methodist Church in Drew University.

<sup>736</sup> Shang Xiaoming 尚小明, "Jindai zhongguo daxueshixue jiaoshou qunxiang" 近代中国大学史学教授群像

*and Custom* published in August 1943 in Chengdu.<sup>737</sup> Chen was a professor at the West China University (Huaxi daxue 華西大學) in the 1940s.<sup>738</sup> Compared with his articles on cultures and customs, Chen's work in *Nü duo* put a central focus on the war situation in China, the Malay Peninsula and Indonesia (*nanyang qundao* 南洋群島), as well as Europe. One reason for reporting current affairs, Chen said, was to stabilise public sentiment. Due to the Qiannan Incident 黔南事变 (the Japanese intrusion into south China in late 1944), rumours sprang up that the Japanese military would then invade Sichuan. To clarify the situation, Chen explained that the purpose of the Japanese military was to open-up inland transport as its navy had suffered a massive loss in the past eighteen months according to official American reports.<sup>739</sup> Chen's articles in *Nü duo* also commented on domestic politics. He anticipated that all political parties, especially the CCP and the KMT, would eliminate political opposition and work together to launch an overall attack against the Japanese military.<sup>740</sup>

While many articles still concentrated on women's domestic skills, the circulation of Chen's political comments and reports in *Nü duo* signified a drastic change in two areas. Firstly, by incorporating political discussion, it indicated that Chinese woman should be made aware of current affairs rather than having a narrow focus on the household. Secondly, this new idea of Chinese womanhood contradicted the long-held model of Victorian femininity espoused in the magazine.

This editorial change was brought about by the new editor Huang Shufen, also known as Sophie Huang. Leaving her hometown in Fuzhou, Huang joined the CLS in 1940 and worked briefly in Shanghai during

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(The Group of Professors of History in Modern Chinese Universities), *Jindaishi yanjiu* 近代史研究 No. 1 (2011): 84.

<sup>737</sup> Due to the warfare as well as the economic and social turmoil, *Fengtu shizhi* published irregularly until October 1949. It collected information on local conditions and customs. It also delineated the social environment of the time and traced historical and geographical causality. See Li Guotai 李国太, "Yifen bugai yiwang de minguo zazhi—Chengdu *Fengtu shizhi* jiqi 'fengtu qingjie'" 一份不该遗忘的民国杂志——成都《风土什志》及其“风土情结” (A Republican Magazine that Should Not Be Forgotten—*Fengtu shizhi* and Its Fengtu Complex), *Baise xueyuan xuebao* 百色学院学报 Vol. 26 No. 2 (March 2013): 66–71.

<sup>738</sup> *Dujiangyan wenshi ziliao di shiliu ji* 都江堰文史资料第十六辑 (September 2004), 109.

<sup>739</sup> Chen Guohua 陳國樞, "Shishi shuping" 時事述評 (Comments on Current Issues), *Nü duo* (January 1945): 1–3.

<sup>740</sup> Chen Guohua, "Shishi shuping" 時事述評 (Comments on Current Issues), *Nü duo* (February 1945): 3; (March 1945): 1.



the early months of the Japanese occupation. When she found the situation in Shanghai intolerable, she went to Chengdu to continue her work at the CLS. There she made friends with famous Chinese writers and persuaded them to contribute to *Nü duo*. The annual report of the CLS in 1944 recorded that with Huang's effort, "the contents of any issue shows a substantial number of famous names."<sup>741</sup>

A famous female writer at the time that contributed to the magazine was Xie Bingying 謝冰瑩 (1906–2000), who was well-known for her writing promoting women's military service.<sup>742</sup> Huang Shufen's article published in the September issue of 1944 in *Nü duo* offered a detailed account of Xie's current life.<sup>743</sup> At their first encounter in 1936, the editor was introduced to Xie through a common friend, and met her again in Chengdu. Although Xie was occupied with writing, teaching, childrearing, and other household affairs at the time, she still demonstrated a strong concern for women's roles. When the editor presented her with a copy of *Nü duo*, Xie commented, "This is the only women's magazine published in Chengdu. You should garden this field with great care. With only a pitiful number of female writers in China, we need to unite to show each other mutual respect and encouragement. We should fulfil our obligations by standing firmly for women's position in society."<sup>744</sup>

In her article published in the following issue (November 1944), Xie Bingying recounted her struggle with illness. Despite her hardships, she expressed a strong will to serve on the frontline and attend to wounded soldiers.<sup>745</sup> In her view, the title of "woman soldier"<sup>746</sup> was not addressed only to herself but also to every female citizen in China. In another article published in February 1945, Xie proposed that

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<sup>741</sup> "Christian Literature Society for China, Chengtu 1944," in *Christian Literature Society of China, China Conference 1940–1949*, Microfilm Edition of the Administrative Files Series of the Board of Missions of the Methodist Church, The General Commission on Archives and History The United Methodist Church in Drew University, 7.

<sup>742</sup> A few works by Xie Bingying by the early 1940s include: *Congjun riji* 從軍日記 (1929, *War Diary*), *Xin congjun riji* 新從軍日記 (1938, *New War Diary*), and *Zai Riben yu zhong* 在日本獄中 (1940, *Inside a Japanese Prison*).

<sup>743</sup> Bianzhe 編者 (Editor), "Gei guanxin Xie Bingying nüshi de pengyou" 給關心謝冰瑩女士的朋友 (To Friends Who Care About Xie Bingying), *Nü duo* (September 1944): 21–3.

<sup>744</sup> *Ibid.*, 21–2.

<sup>745</sup> Xie Bingying 謝冰瑩, "Wo zuijin de shenghuo" 我最近的生活 (My Current Life), *Nü duo* (November 1944): 17–8.

<sup>746</sup> Louise Edwards used the term "women soldiers" to refer to Xie Bingying's literary work and notion of womanhood. See Louise Edwards, *Women Warriors and Wartime Spies of China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 66–90.

women should be involved in military service.<sup>747</sup> In response to doubts over women's military participation, she argued that women were equal to men, who enjoyed the right to fight for the country. Women soldiers in the past had demonstrated their contribution in attending to wounded soldiers, dealing with political affairs in the army, and working on wartime propaganda. Consequently, women's status was brought up to men's through their wartime service. Xie referred to the story about a thousand female soldiers joining the army in a recent government enlistment drive and praised them. She hoped that they would endure their future hardships for the independence of the country, national survival, and women's liberation.

The editorial change of *Nü duo* was well received by socially and politically active Christians. Wu Yaozong, the chairperson of the United Christian Publishers in Chengdu, praised Huang's work. After reading the first issue under Huang's editorship, Wu commented that she was the right person in the right place. Wu's comments may refer to the incorporation of current affairs in *Nü duo* as Wu was an active Christian leader who discussed current political affairs with students during his stay in Chengdu in the early 1940s. He even travelled to Chongqing to visit Zhou Enlai 周恩來.<sup>748</sup> Winifred Galbraith, an English missionary and the student secretary of the National Committee of the YWCA in China, assessed that "the magazine [*Nü duo*] was even better than when published in Shanghai and that many who had not cared to read it before were subscribing to it now."<sup>749</sup> As the Chinese YMCA and YWCA engaged in wartime relief work,<sup>750</sup> Galbraith's comments were most likely pointing to *Nü duo's* advocacy for women's involvement in wartime service.

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<sup>747</sup> Xie Bingying 謝冰瑩, "Funü weishenme yao congjun" 婦女為甚麼要從軍 (Why Should Women Join the Military), *Nü duo* (February 1945): 3.

<sup>748</sup> Guo Weilian 郭偉聯, "Wu Yaozong yu jidutu xuesheng: cong minguo zhishifenzi jiaodu jiedu" 吳耀宗與基督徒學生：從民國知識分子角度解讀 (Wu Yaozong and Christian Students: a Perspective from the Identity of Republican Intellectual), in Ying Fuk-Tsang (ed.), *Dashidai de zongjiao xinyang: Wu Yaozong yu ershishiji zhongguo jidujiao* 大時代的宗教信仰：吳耀宗與二十世紀中國基督教 (Abiding Faith for a Nation in Crisis: Y. T. Wu and Twentieth-century Chinese Christianity), (Hong Kong: Jidujiao zhongguo zongjiao wenhua yanjiushe, 2011), 260.

<sup>749</sup> *The Fifty-seventh Annual Report of the CLS, 1944*, 7.

<sup>750</sup> For a brief account of the Chinese YWCA and YMCA's work during warfare, see Winifred Galbraith, "China: The War and the Student," *The Spectator* (29 April 1938): 741–2.

In contrast to Liu's editorial policy, the magazine in this period reflected an open attitude toward political discussions and even an appeal for women's participation in national affairs. The circulation of articles such as those written by Xie Bingying reaffirmed women's equal obligations to their male counterparts, mobilising their participation to save a war-torn China.

### ***During the Civil War***

When Japan surrendered in August 1945, the whole nation celebrated. The CLS anticipated a collaborative political regime between the KMT and the CCP for the new nation. This is evident in its 1946 invitation to Zhang Qun 張羣 (1889–1990), the governor of Sichuan Province, to become its Honorary President. According to its annual report of that year, Zhang “was the man chosen by the Generalissimo to negotiate with the Communists because he was of the liberal group of the Kwo Min Tang [KMT] and known to be the man most acceptable to the Communists.” The Society believed that it would be helpful to its work for Zhang to be its Honorary President because he was both a Christian and a political figure close to the CCP.<sup>751</sup>

*Nü duo* echoed the political stance of the CLS.<sup>752</sup> In its announcement written by Margaret Brown for the resumption of its publication in February 1946, the magazine changed its focus on domestic

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<sup>751</sup> *The Fifty-ninth Annual Report of the CLS, 1946*, 5.

<sup>752</sup> There occurred a debate over women's return to the household after the second Sino-Japanese war. Women's magazines in KMT-ruled areas advocated a domestic womanhood and those published in Communist-ruled areas promoted women to have careers. *Nü duo* acknowledged both women's roles in society and family. As a household magazine, it nevertheless focused more on home life. There was one reader, who lost her job because of her marriage, who wrote to *Nü duo* to say that she did not want to return to household chores. In her reply, Liu Meili reminded the reader of the equal importance of household management as the family was a social unit. Women could stay at home were it not for financial reasons. Those who wished to join social activities were advised to choose flexible working environments such as social welfare or church service. If their husbands opposed the idea of their having a job, Liu suggested the wife should compromise for the sake of a harmonious household atmosphere. The standpoint regarding women's domestic duties changed little from the previous wartime period. For research on women's magazines during the civil war period, see Li Xieli 李谢莉, “Zhongguo funü baokan de pengbo fazhan 1937–1949” 中国妇女报刊的蓬勃发展 1937–1949 (The rigorous development of Chinese women's magazines: 1937–1949), in *Zhongguo funü baokan yanjiu 1898–1949* 中国近代妇女报刊研究 1898–1949 (Masters thesis: Sichuan daxue, 2003), 43–54. For relevant articles in *Nü duo*, see Chen Peilan 陳佩蘭, “Funü yu jiazheng” 婦女與家政 (Women and Household Management) (January 1945): 11–5; Wang Yuanfu 王元輔, “Zenyang dakai funü zhiye jihui de chulu” 怎樣打開婦女職業機會的出路 (How to Open the Gate for Women to Find a Career) (January 1945): 15–7; Chen Peilan 陳佩蘭, “Zaitan nanzhiwai nüzhinei de wenti” 再談男治外女治內的問題 (Discussing the Issue of Men Ruling the Outside and Women the Inside again) (June 1945): 4–7; Chen Peilan 陳佩蘭, “Wei zimeimen buchong jijuhua” 為姊妹們補充幾句話 (A Few Words for

activities and announced that its purpose was to make Chinese women aware of their national responsibilities and to address their selfless spirit in social service to the nation.<sup>753</sup> The article entitled “Tongyi minzhu heping tuanjie” 統一民主和平團結 (Unification, Democracy, Peace, and Unity) in the editorial column encapsulated its new attitude towards politics.<sup>754</sup> It praised General Chiang’s great leadership in the anti-Japanese war, which had led to the glorious national victory and world peace. As the title suggested, the article reveals a deep concern for China’s peaceful unity. Regarding the Political Consultative Conference (PCC, Zhengzhi xieshang huiyi 政治協商會議) in January 1946, the author believed, inspired by God, General Chiang had been patient and wise in dealing with political leaders of other parties. The article praised the achievements of the PCC, one of which was the establishment of the Programme for a Peaceful National Reconstruction (*Heping jianguo gangling* 和平建國綱領). It stated its objectives as follows:

1. Follow the instructions of the Three Principles of the People as the highest principle for national reconstruction.
2. The whole nation is under the leadership of General Chiang for a unified, democratic, and liberal new China.
3. Acknowledge General Chiang’s advocacy of “zhengzhi minzhuhua” 政治民主化 (to democratise politics), “jundui guojiahua” 軍隊國家化 (to nationalise the military force), and the equality and legitimisation of political parties as the only way to achieve peaceful national reconstruction.
4. Use political methods to solve political conflicts to maintain the peaceful development of the nation.<sup>755</sup>

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Women) (August 1945): 11–3; Jue Chen 絕塵, “Tantan jinri de funü yundong” 談談今日的婦女運動 (Discussing Current Women’s Movement) (April 1946): 4–6; Lin Zhizhen 林芝貞, “Wo buyuanyi huidao chufang!” 我不願意回到廚房! (I Don’t Want to Return to the Kitchen!) (June 1946): 20.

<sup>753</sup> Margaret Brown or Bo Yuzhen 薄玉珍, “Fukan ci” 復刊詞 (Resuming Publication), *Nü duo* (February 1946): 1.

<sup>754</sup> Bianzhe 編者 (Editor), “Tongyi minzhu heping tuanjie” 統一民主和平團結 (Unification, Democracy, Peace, and Unity), *Nü duo* (February 1946): 2.

<sup>755</sup> *Ibid.*

“We believe,” the article said, “that China is bound to achieve unification, democracy, peace, and unity” based on the strong statements of General Chiang as well as the Communist representative Zhou Enlai at the PCC.<sup>756</sup>

It is worth noting that the editorship for the February issue was given as *Nü duo she* 女鐸社 (The *Nü duo* office). Liu Meili resumed her editorship and edited the following issues published in March and onwards. It seems that she also embraced the notion of a democratic China. The magazine under her editorship continued to publish articles that embraced democracy yet kept a distance from the political arena. One article published in March 1946 associated the family with building democracy.<sup>757</sup> It advocated for Christians having a firm belief in democracy. It pointed out that although ordinary Christians lacked much interest in politics, they had familiarised themselves with democratic methods in their affiliated organisations and practised democracy at home. To construct a democratic nation, Christians should focus on serving society in their daily life rather than participating in politics. While the article admonished Christians to raise their political awareness, it argued that the institution of the family was the fundamental arena where Christians could practise democracy in daily life rather than in the political arena. Democratic families were closely connected with a democratic nation because it was through family that one first encountered democracy. A democratic domesticity would nurture believers in democracy and future leaders for the promotion of democracy.

Specifically, the article encouraged readers to transform their families following three requirements: respect for the public will, recognising the equal status of each member, and practising harmony. In particular, it emphasised the role of housewives in the process of forming a democratic political regime through domesticity. Instead of encouraging women to engage in politics, it encouraged a cautious response to involvement in the public realm.

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<sup>756</sup> Ibid.

<sup>757</sup> Jue Chen 絕塵, “Minzhu shiyanchangsuo—lianghao jiating” 民主實驗場所——良好家庭 (Good Family as an Area for Exercising Democracy), *Nü duo* (March 1946): 2–3.

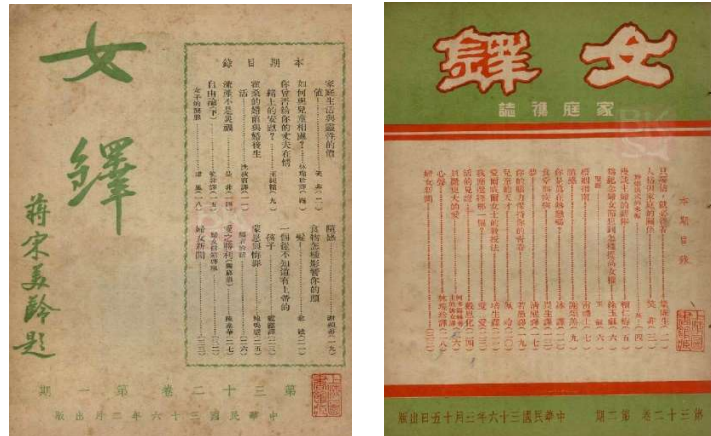
However, when political conflict increased, *Nü duo* seemed to be less confident of a democratic China and altered its political stance. Despite the ceasefire agreement and the Programme for a Peaceful National Reconstruction initiated at the PCC, battles regularly broke out between the KMT and the CCP. The fight intensified from mid-1946, and an outbreak of Civil War seemed inevitable, signalled by the failure of the Marshall Mission in January 1947, which had aimed at negotiating a merger of the CCP and the KMT.<sup>758</sup>

From mid-1946 to the month before the establishment of the People's Republic of China, the magazine mentioned little of the political situation and focused primarily on domestic life. Several articles on the civil war show a desire for peace. The article entitled "Laobaixing de hua" 老百姓的話 (Words from Ordinary People) in June 1946 was a case in point.<sup>759</sup> By comparing *jia* 家 (different schools of thought) with the Western notion of *dang* 党 (party), it argued that *jia* joined philosophy and politics while *dang* was simply politics. Despite their differences, these two types of political groupings both generated factional conflicts and gathered their own followers, and both often resulted in bureaucratic corruption and harm to ordinary people. To conclude, it hoped that whichever party ended up ruling, it should prioritise the concerns of ordinary people rather than the interests of the party.

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<sup>758</sup> General Marshall was the American ambassador sent to China in 1945 to assist reconstruction in post-war China in line with the American vision of democracy and peace. See Suzanne Pepper, "The KMT-CCP Conflict 1945–1949," in *The Cambridge History of China* Vol. 13, part 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 729–37.

<sup>759</sup> Jue Chen 絕塵, "Laobaixing de hua" 老百姓的話 (Words from Ordinary People), *Nü duo* (June 1946): 2–3.



Left: *Nü duo* (February 1947); Right: *Nü duo* (March 1947).

The changing relationship between *Nü duo* and the KMT was evident in its removal of Madame Chiang’s calligraphy from the cover. From March 1947 onwards, *Nü duo* put the subtitle *jiating zazhi* (*The Home Beautiful*) under the main title. Although it circulated news on Madame Chiang from time to time in the news columns, the removal indicated its attempt to be politically neutral but not to such a degree as would endanger its relationship with her.

One article published in September 1946, however, seemed to contradict the attempts to remove *Nü duo* from politics, namely, a translation from the work of the British idealist philosopher Alfred Edward Taylor (1869–1945).<sup>760</sup> Under the title of “Jidutu weishenme buyi zuo gongchandang?” 基督徒為甚麼不宜作共產黨? (Why Should Christians not Join the Communist Party?), the article pointed out the fundamental conflict between Christianity and Communism, claiming that the former aimed to contribute to society while the latter aimed to use violence to achieve its ends. As long as Christians were constructive in serving God and the people, it did not matter what their opinions were regarding politics and the economy. By contrast, Communism was an ideology of economic dictatorship (*jingji de ducai de zhuyi* 經濟的獨裁的主義). It seized political power and forced other people to obey its rules. Thus, Christianity prioritised spiritual life while Communism was a materialist ideology. Anti-

<sup>760</sup> A.E.Ta[y]lor, 編者譯 (Translated by the editor), “Jidutu weishenme buyizuo gongchandang?” 基督徒為甚麼不宜作共產黨? (Why Should Christians not Join the Communist Party?), *Nü duo* (September 1946): 3.

religious movements took place in Communist-ruled places such as the Soviet Union. The secular nature of Communism signified no possibility for any cooperation with Christianity. The article ended with a conclusion that “We [Christians] cannot stand on both sides.”

Why did *Nü duo* publish this article when in other ways *Nü duo* adopted a less political stance? One plausible reason was the change in editor. Liu Meili left Shanghai on 1 September 1946 to study at the Union Theological Seminary in New York for a year.<sup>761</sup> During her absence, Gao Lingying 高麟英, a graduate of Yenching University, helped with the editing.<sup>762</sup> Gao left the editorial board of *Nü duo* in 1947—no available records explain why.<sup>763</sup> As the translator of the article on Christianity and Communism was “the editor” 編者 (*bianzhe*), it was likely that this referred to Gao, although Liu’s name appeared as the chief editor throughout her absence. Lack of documentation on Gao’s ideas and politics, nevertheless, prevents further support for this postulation. Overall, *Nü duo* adopted a non-political stance from mid-1946 to the end of the civil war.

The various political stances taken by *Nü duo* were the result of difficult choices made during this chaotic period. Shortly after the end of the Second Sino-Japanese War, *Nü duo* presented a positive attitude towards a democratic China and incorporated political commentary. Later when the KMT-CCP split escalated, it retreated from political discussion from mid-1946 to the end of the civil war. These fluctuations reflect an ambiguous stance in dealing with the changing political milieu. Liu Meili commented very little on politics during this period. Instead, she focused on translating foreign novels. To a certain degree, this demonstrated her unwillingness to engage in politics. One plausible reason for Liu’s cautious stance might be the influence of her Western mentor and guardian Laura White. As mentioned in Chapter Four, White was opposed to political patriotic activities during the May Thirtieth

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<sup>761</sup> Liu received a scholarship from the Woman’s Division of Christian Service of the Methodist Church in the United States. See *The Fifty-ninth Annual Report of the CLS, 1946, 8*; *Nü duo* (November 1946): 16. In the Union Theological Seminary, Liu had studied pastoral counselling, theology, and missions. See Liu, Mary Mei-Li 1964, Microfilm Edition of the Mission Biographical Reference Files, Methodist Church (U.S.). Board of Missions, 1469-4-8:01, The General Commission on Archives and History The United Methodist Church in Drew University, 1.

<sup>762</sup> *The Fifty-ninth Annual Report of the CLS, 1946, 8.*

<sup>763</sup> *The Sixtieth Annual Report of the CLS for China, 1947, 4.*



Incident in 1925. Liu Meili recalled that White had written to discourage her from attending patriotic activities when she was studying at Ginling Women's College, in particular, the patriotic demonstration at Ginling University after the May Thirtieth Incident.<sup>764</sup>

While we do not know to what extent *Nü duo* reflected Liu's ideas towards politics, it would be unwise to assess the magazine without taking the influence of the chief editor into consideration. The following section further discusses the struggles between Chinese Christians and political authority, manifested through the fate of *Nü duo* and its editor Liu Meili.

### ***Embracing the New Era***

When the Communist Army was approaching Shanghai in 1949, staff members of the CLS, including Liu, moved to Hong Kong in May to ensure the on-going publication of Christian literature.<sup>765</sup> During her stay in Hong Kong, Liu was informed that "the magazines continued to appear quite normal[ly] in Shanghai" and "the new [Communist] authorities stressed their firm intention not to upset normal life, or to interfere with free enterprise."<sup>766</sup> Feeling that their publications should continue on the mainland, Liu went back to Shanghai, which had been occupied by the Communist army since 27 May. She thought she could accept the statements of the new government at face value. As her work was "entirely non-political, wholly aimed at the betterment of conditions among simple people," Liu believed it was "what the new officials declared they wanted most."<sup>767</sup> Liu probably was more assured of Communist promises when the Common Program of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference was issued on 29 September 1949, further guaranteeing religious freedom.

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<sup>764</sup> Liu Meili, "Kongsu meidiguozhuyi dui wo de duhai bing ziwojiantao," 128.

<sup>765</sup> Hunter, *The Story of Mary Liu*, 131; Liu, "Kongsu meidiguozhuyi duiwo de duhai bing ziwo jiantao," 9.

<sup>766</sup> Hunter, *The Story of Mary Liu*, 131.

<sup>767</sup> *Ibid.*, 132. In her self-criticism, Liu said it was at the request of CLS headquarters that she chose to return to Shanghai from Hong Kong. Her self-criticism was a patchwork of facts saturated with political slogans and ideology. In the absence of other documents, Hunter's monograph is the only reliable document available on Liu Meili's thought in 1949. Such an interpretation was further echoed in Liu's articles expressing supportive attitudes toward the government after her return.

October 1949 marked a new phase for Christianity in China. The Christian community was deeply concerned about the future of their faith under the religious policies of the CCP. Some Christians known as “patriotic democrats,” in fact, had been dealing with the CCP and its religious policy makers at an early stage. Wu Yaozong was a leading Christian democrat who exchanged opinions on Christianity with the Communist Party in early 1949. With little publicity, Wu arrived in Beijing on 9 March where he stayed for around three months. The NCCC later launched a meeting and invited Wu to report on the attitudes of the Communist Party. The gist of Wu’s report is as follows:

The Communist party shows sincerity to Christianity. The Party repeatedly emphasises the long-term policy of religious freedom, which is by no means an expedient. Although discriminating (*pai chi* 排斥) against religion, the Party believed it was wrong to persecute religion, because according to Marxism, religion is the product of the loss of social order. Once the society resumes orderly functioning, religion will be extinguished naturally. Furthermore, the regime has realised that churches are a social force that cannot be ignored (*buke hushi de shehui lilian* 不可忽視的社會力量), therefore, it wishes to cooperate with churches in the framework of the United Front.<sup>768</sup>

As noted by Liu Jianping, Wu’s report highlighted the reconstruction of Chinese churches in light of the principles of self-government (*zizhi* 自治), self-support (*ziyang* 自養), and self-propagation (*zichuan* 自傳). Furthermore, Wu stressed that the new regime only acknowledged institutions governed by Chinese Christians and suggested the NCCC issue a public declaration to respond to the government.<sup>769</sup> Between 25–27 October 1949, the NCCC held the first meeting of the executive committee in Shanghai. One outcome of the meeting was the organisation of “Christian visiting teams” (*jidujiao fangwen tuan* 基督教訪問團), which were designed to facilitate the National Christian

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<sup>768</sup> Liu Jianping 刘建平, “Wu Yaozong yu xinzhongguo chengli chuqi de jidujiao fangwentuan” 吴耀宗与新中国成立初期的基督教访问团 (Wu Yaozong and the Christian Visiting Mission in Early PRC), in *Dashidai de zongjiao xinyang*, 374.

<sup>769</sup> *Ibid.*, 375.

Congress (*quanguo jidujiao daibiao dahui* 全國基督教代表大會) among different denominations to discuss issues like relationships with Western missionary societies.<sup>770</sup>

In April 1950, the NCCC organised teams to visit northern China. Their members included Wu Yaozong, the manager and editor of the Association Press in the Chinese YMCA's publication department, Liu Liangmo 劉良模, the secretary of the National YMCA, and Wu Gaozi 吳高梓, the general secretary of the NCCC.<sup>771</sup> In May 1950, Prime Minister Zhou Enlai met the delegates and expressed the CCP's attitudes to religion and especially to Christianity. Echoing the fundamental principles of the party's position toward Christianity established at the First National Conference on the United Front Work in March 1950 in Beijing, Zhou commented:

... first, "religion must sever its relationship with imperialism;" second, "religions in China should be run by the Chinese;" and third, while fighting against imperialism, the State's actions toward religion should avoid "being involved in the issue of religious beliefs."<sup>772</sup>

With signs indicating potential cooperation between the Chinese Christian community and the Communist regime, *Nü duo* expressed its support for the government. The article entitled "Qingzhu xin Zhongguo de dansheng" 慶祝新中國的誕生 (Celebrating the Establishment of a New China) published in the editorial column in October 1949, said:

Under the leadership of Chairman Mao and the Central People's Government, under the joint effort of the whole nation, all difficulties can be overcome to construct an independent, democratic, peaceful, unified, and prosperous new China.<sup>773</sup>

The magazine also published several articles to encourage Christians to embrace the new era. Some of these articles attempted to convince its Christian readers of the similarities between Christian

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<sup>770</sup> Ibid., 385.

<sup>771</sup> Ibid.,; Hunter, *The Story of Mary Liu*, 136.

<sup>772</sup> Ying Fuk-Tsang, "The CPC's Policy on Protestant Christianity, 1949–1957: an Overview and Assessment," *Journal of Contemporary China* Vol. 23 No. 89 (2014): 89, 887.

<sup>773</sup> Zong Han 宗漢, "Qingzhu xin Zhongguo de dansheng" 慶祝新中國的誕生 (Celebrating the Establishment of a New China), *Nü duo* (October 1949): 2.

values and Communism. Some articles elaborated on the relationship between a new era and Christianity.<sup>774</sup> By highlighting the compatibility of Christian faith with an atheist ruling party, *Nü duo* advocated for Christians, especially Christian women, to embrace the new era. Liu Meili's article entitled "Xinshidai funü duiyu jiating yingyou de renshi" 新時代婦女對於家庭應有的認識 (Women's Appropriate Understanding of Family in the New Era) published in October 1949 was a case in point.<sup>775</sup> In this article, Liu suggested that women should step forward to embrace the new era to see in which ways they could cooperate with it. Believing that family was women's central concern, she thought that women's proper understanding of domesticity remained a crucial issue under the Communist regime. She assured readers of the serious stance of the Communist Party towards the institution of the family by referring to publications such as *Zhongguo jiefangqu funü yundong wenxian* 中國解放區婦女運動文獻 (Documents of Chinese Women's Movements in the Liberated Area) and *Sulian dui muxing ji ertong de baohu* 蘇聯對母性及兒童的保護 (Protections over Mothers and Children in Soviet Union).<sup>776</sup>

In a new era guided by the ideology of New Democracy, Liu signalled three aspects that should be preserved in the new era, namely, monogamy, marriage based on love, and parental love. Ideas that went against the new era such as gender inequality and corrupting lifestyles that were materialist oriented should be abandoned. She believed that the new political ethos paralleled Christian ideals

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<sup>774</sup> Liu Meili, "Xinshidai funü duiyu jiating yingyou de renshi" 新時代婦女對於家庭應有的認識 (Women's Appropriate Understanding of Family in the New Era), *Nü duo* (October 1949): 3–5; Written by Edmund Hsu, translated by Jin Yuan 謹源試譯, "Jidujiao yu gongchanzhuyi" (Christianity and Communism) 基督教與共產主義, *Nü duo* (February 1950): 5–6; Diwo 滌我, "Jidujiao funümen! Women yao zhudong de qu peihe shidai" 基督教婦女們! 我們要主動的去配合時代 (Christian Women! We Need to Embrace the New Era), *Nü duo* (April 1950): 2–5; Diwo 滌我, "Xinshidai de jingshen yu jidujiao shi chongtu de ma?" 新時代的精神與基督教是衝突的嗎? (Does the New Era Conflict with Christianity?), *Nü duo* (May 1950): 2–5; Yuehan 約翰, "Jidutu funü yu xinshidai" 基督徒婦女與新時代 (Christian Women and the New Era), *Nü duo* (May 1950): 12–3; Diwo 滌我, "Jidujiao funü zai zhe xinshidai ying zhisuozichu" 基督教婦女在這新時代中應知所自處 (Christian Women Should Know Their Place in This New Era), *Nü duo* (July 1950): 2–5; Diwo 滌我, "Qing ting xinshidai de zhaohuan" 請聽新時代的召喚 (Listen to the Call of the Era), *Nü duo* (September 1950): 2–3.

<sup>775</sup> Liu, "Xinshidai funü duiyu jiating yingyou de renshi," 3–5.

<sup>776</sup> *Zhongguo jiefangqu funü yundong wenxian* 中國解放區婦女運動文獻 (Documents of Chinese Women's Movements in the Liberal Area) (Shanghai: Xinhua shudian, 1949); M. Gavrilina, *Sulian dui muxing ji ertong de baohu* 蘇聯對母性及兒童的保護 (Protections over Mothers and Children in Soviet Union) (n.p.: Shidai wenyi chubanshe, 1947).

and the contributions of Christianity to domesticity met the needs of the new era. By interweaving Christian virtues with the new ideology, Christian readers were encouraged to be part of the new society as the two belief systems had shared goals and similar ideas in the field of domestic life.

While *Nü duo* published articles supportive of the Communist regime, a cautious stance with political power was a more accurate evaluation of *Nü duo's* editorial policy.<sup>777</sup> Caution in discussions on sensitive political issues was evident. In six articles on Christians' collaborative stance in the new China, the use of terms such as "the new era" (*xin shidai* 新時代) and "the era" (*shidai* 時代) in titles and contents were used as substitutes for "Communism." While these words were in fact interchangeable with Communism, that term was only mentioned in one article titled "Xinshidai de jingshen yu jidujiao shi chongtu de ma?" (Does the spirit of the new era conflict with Christianity?) published in May 1950 where it pointed out once that "the new era" was Communism.<sup>778</sup>

Liu's caution regarding politics was evident in another article published in March 1950. It admonished preachers, including pastors and ordinary Christians, to avoid political speeches and solely preach the truth of Jesus Christ.<sup>779</sup> In the end, Christian readers were advised to refrain from political statements, as they were not experts on politics but missionaries of Christian truth.<sup>780</sup>

On her return to Shanghai from Hong Kong, Liu believed the promises of the new regime such as the protection of basic freedoms. She attempted to convince readers to embrace the new era as well. Her supportive attitude to the government was less of a compromise with her beliefs and more of her desire to continue to spread Christian ideals. Through carefully adjusting the contents of the magazine to the new era, she believed that *Nü duo* should assume the role of contributing to household issues

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<sup>777</sup> Although *Nü duo* published in February in 1946 an article by the editor entitled "Tongyi Minzhu Heping Tuanjie" (Unification, Democracy, Peace, and Consociation) praised the Nationalist Party, as noted by Zeng Yangqing in his article on changes of political stance in *Nü duo* during and after the civil war period, it should be noted that the editor for the February issue was *Nü duo she* not Liu Meili.

<sup>778</sup> Di, "Xinshidai de jingshen yu jidujiao shi chongtu de ma?", 3.

<sup>779</sup> Ge Yang 歌揚, "Du da gong bao liang feng dui jidujiao budao zhizexin hou" 讀《大公報》兩封對基督教佈道指責信後 (Reading Two Denouncing Letters against Christian Preaching Published in *Da gong bao*), *Nü duo* (March 1950): 13–4.

<sup>780</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

in Communist China. Her belief in the possibility of Christians' cooperating with the government can be also seen in her participation in the Christian Visiting Mission of East China (*huadong jidujiao fangwentuan* 華東基督教訪問團). From 7 to 11 December 1949, Liu travelled with Hu Zuyin 胡祖荫, the General Secretary of the CLS, to inform local Christian communities of the government's policies and discuss plans of Christianity with them.<sup>781</sup>

### The Beginning of an End

While Liu Meili, like many other Christians, endeavoured to find a niche in the new regime, the outbreak of the Korean War in June 1950 escalated anti-American sentiment and further questioned the patriotism of Chinese Christians. Ying Fuk-Tsang points out that in July 1950 the CCP ordered the party to send loyal and reliable members to work in the churches and secure its leadership. Moreover, they were allowed to conceal their party memberships if necessary.<sup>782</sup> In August that year, the Party Central Committee issued the "Directive on the Issues of Catholicism and Protestantism."<sup>783</sup> In the Directive, the CCP defined the problem of Christianity as a combination of religion and imperialism. Although Marxist followers held the view that religion was harmful to people, religions with many followers were considered as a social problem and a mass problem (*shehui wenti, qunzhong wenti* 社會問題 羣衆問題). Instead of implementing a top-down approach to deal with religious issues, the CCP adopted a technique that aimed to transform the churches from being a tool of imperialism to a religion of, and run by, the Chinese people.

The fifth item of the Directive praised the patriotic Christian Wu Yaozong and encouraged local party and government institutions to sponsor a patriotic signature campaign. The manifesto titled

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<sup>781</sup> See Liu, "Wu Yaozong yu xinzhongguo chengli chuqi de jidujiao fangwentuan," 385; Song Jun, *Making Choices in the Midst of Change: The End of the National Christian Council of China (1949–1951)* (Hong Kong: Christian Study Centre on Chinese Religion and Culture, 2017), 105–6, 111.

<sup>782</sup> Ying, "The CPC's Policy on Protestant Christianity," 89, 889–90.

<sup>783</sup> "Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu tianzhujiao jidujiao wenti de zhishi" 中共中央關於天主教，基督教問題的指示 (Directive on the Issues of Catholicism and Protestantism, 19 August 1950), *Jianguo yilai zhongyao wenxian xuanbian diyice* 建国以来重要文献选编第一册 (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, May 1992). Source: <http://cpc.people.com.cn/GB/64184/64186/66655/4492592.html> Accessed on 25 May 2018. For the reference of English title, see Ying, "The CPC's Policy on Protestant Christianity," 887.

“Zhongguo jidujiao zai xin Zhongguo jianshe zhong nuli de tujing” 中國基督教在新中國建設中努力的途徑 (Ways of Christian Efforts in the Construction of a New China) was sent to Chinese Christians throughout China at the end of July 1950, to seek nation-wide approval. *Tian feng* circulated the manifesto in its August issue. On 23 September, *Renmin ribao* 人民日報 (*The People's Daily*) in Beijing printed the manifesto and reported responses from Protestant institutions with a long list of signatories and their positions. The declaration defined the primary task of Chinese Christians in this way:

Chinese churches and organisations thoroughly embrace the Common Program and resist imperialism, feudalism, and bureaucratic capitalism under government's guidance and endeavour to establish an independent, democratic, peaceful, unifying, and prosperous new China.

According to *Renmin ribao*, around 1,527 Christians had signed onto the declaration by the end of August.<sup>784</sup> In October 1950, the NCCC held its fourteenth annual conference in Shanghai and passed a resolution that endorsed the manifesto and called for a nation-wide signature campaign. The resolution further set up the goal for churches and church organisations to achieve the three-self principles within five years.<sup>785</sup>

In November 1950, the CCP launched the “Resist America, Aid Korea” campaign. On 16 December, the US government froze all assets held in America by residents of China. In response, the Chinese government declared it would cut off US financing of religious organisations and other cultural, educational, and medical institutions and promote a self-support campaign among institutions funded

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<sup>784</sup> “Fangzhi diguozhuyi liyong jiaohui weihai zhongguo renmin” 防止帝國主義利用教會危害中國人民 (Protecting Imperialists to Utilise Churches to Harm Chinese People), *Renmin ribao* 人民日報 (23 September 1950).

<sup>785</sup> Zhao Fusan 趙復三, “Jiaohui gexin sanzì yundong qianlun” 教會革新三自運動淺論 (On the Three-self Movement), *Zhenli yu shengming* (March 1951): 1.

by America. In particular, the report referred to the close relationship between America and churches in China.<sup>786</sup>

The theme of the Second National Conference on United Front Work from 16–25 January 1951 was the Resist America campaign. Lu Dingyi 陸定一, the director of the Central Propaganda Department, said in his address to religious groups that the focus was to “sever the political and organisational relationships of [Christian churches] with imperialism ...[where] ... the fundamental rule is that we should make all believers unite with us, except the counterrevolutionary ones.”<sup>787</sup>

The government’s policies made the Christian churches into either patriotic allies or imperialistic counterrevolutionary enemies. Articles in *Renmin ribao* reported responses from Protestantism and Catholicism. On 20 March, a group of 66 Catholic leaders gathered in Tianjin and accused a Dutch priest of destroying a notice calling for the churches to reform and become independent.<sup>788</sup> Two days after this incident, Catholic believers in Chongqing 重慶 and Ya’an 雅安 parish (in Sichuan) publicly denounced imperialists who distributed counterrevolutionary documents to destroy the independence movement in the churches. The public declaration upheld the three-self patriotic campaign and claimed it was a way to safeguard the purity and freedom of Catholicism.<sup>789</sup>

While advocating nationalism, this patriotic stance within Christian churches developed into a movement intent with wiping out religious scum (*bailei* 敗類) representing a preliminary form of accusation meetings (*kongsu hui* 控訴會).<sup>790</sup> From 16–21 April 1951, the State Administrative Council’s Culture and Education Commission held a meeting on the issue of Christian organisations

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<sup>786</sup> “Guanyu chuli jieshou Meiguo jintie de wenhua jiaoyu, jiuji jiguan ji zongjiao tuanti de fangzhen de baogao” 關於處理接受美國津貼的文化教育、救濟機關及宗教團體的方針的報告 (Report on the Principles for Cultural and Religious Organisations on the Issue of Receiving American Subsidies), *Renmin ribao* (30 December 1950).

<sup>787</sup> Ying, “The CPC’s Policy on Protestant Christianity,” 888.

<sup>788</sup> “Tianjin tianzhujiao renshi jihui” 天津天主教人士集會 (Gatherings of Catholics in Tianjin), *Renmin ribao* (23 March 1951).

<sup>789</sup> “Tianzhujiao zhong diguozhuyi fenzi” 天主教中帝國主義分子 (The Catholic Imperialists), *Renmin ribao* (23 March 1951).

<sup>790</sup> “Sugqing zongjiaojie de bailei” 肅清宗教界的敗類 (Eliminating Scum in Religious Sphere), *Renmin ribao* (27 March 1951).



and their acceptance of American funding. The campaign to reform Protestant Christianity was referred to as “sweeping the house” (*dasao fangzi* 打掃房子) in an opening speech. As noted by Ying Fuk-Tsang, one important outcome was the establishment of the Preparatory Committee for the Resist America, Aid Korea Three-Self Reform Movement of the Protestant Church in China. Another influential outcome was “the mobilisation of church leaders to participate in denunciation meetings.”<sup>791</sup> During the meeting, accusations of imperialism and counterrevolution were made against Christian delegates from different organisations.<sup>792</sup> Hu Zuyin, the director of the CLS, attended the meeting as the delegate of the CLS.<sup>793</sup> His statement was published in *Jiefang ribao* 解放日報 (*The Liberation Daily*) on 15 June 1951, in which he denounced the way imperialism used the CLS to encroach on China. The article was included in a collection of articles by Protestant leaders in August 1951, accusing America of invading China through Christianity.<sup>794</sup>

It was not long before Liu Meili was “invited” to be an accuser. She was urged to make a public accusation at the Canidrome, previously a greyhound-racing stadium in the French concession where many accusation meetings were held.<sup>795</sup> According to Liu, her accusation was jointly written by the whole staff of the CLS, which were divided into three sections:

One section was given the responsibility of going through all the files, reading line by line every business or personal letter in search of material—often a mere phrase, always more or less out of context—that might be used to support some accusation. Another section had the job of poring through all the books and publications ever put out by the Society, as far back as our files went, in an effort to find anything which might bolster up

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<sup>791</sup> Ying, “The CPC's Policy on Protestant Christianity,” 889–90.

<sup>792</sup> “Zai chuli jieshou Meiguo jintie de jidujiao tuanti huiyishang” 在处理接受美國津貼的基督教團體會議上 (In Dealing with Christian Organisations on the Issue of Receiving American Subsidies), *Renmin ribao* (21 April 1951).

<sup>793</sup> Hunter, *The Story of Mary Liu*, 151.

<sup>794</sup> Hu Zuyin 胡祖蔭, “Kongsu diguozhuyi liyong guangxuehui qinlue Zhongguo” 控訴帝國主義利用廣學會侵略中國 (Accusing Imperialism that Utilised the CLS to Invade China), *Jiefang ribao* 解放日報 (15 June 1951); *Kongsu Meidiguo zhuyi liyong jidujiao qinlue Zhongguo de zuixing* 控訴美帝國主義利用基督教侵略中國的罪行 (Huadong renmin chubanshe bianji, August 1951).

<sup>795</sup> D. E. Mungello, *The Catholic Invasion of China: Remaking Chinese Christianity* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015), 57.

the charges that there had been a “cultural invasion” of China under the cloak of religion. ... The third section of the staff was set to work inspecting the minutes of all the meetings ever held by the Society.<sup>796</sup>

Liu’s manuscript had been approved firstly by an internal examination, secondly by the CLS’s advisory Accusation Committee, and thirdly by the Three-Self Committee and the Bureau.<sup>797</sup> On the day of the joint accusation and self-criticism meeting, around four hundred people attended, including reporters, police, Bureau officials and representatives of other church bodies. Liu was scheduled as the last speaker for “a better impression.”<sup>798</sup>

The September issue of *Tian feng* in 1951 reprinted Liu’s accusation.<sup>799</sup> In it, Liu emphasised a drastic change in her attitude towards foreign missionaries after attending learning groups, forums, and accusation meetings. From having doubts over the imperialistic nature of foreign missionaries to a complete awareness of their cultural imperialism, she revealed how missionaries, Laura White in particular, injected toxins (*duyao* 毒藥) into her mind through having high expectation of Liu (*qizhong* 器重), benevolence (*cishan* 慈善), and granting small favours (*xiaoen xiaohui* 小恩小惠). After realising the horrifying nature of imperialist elements, Liu confessed her previous speeches and actions were harmful to people and therefore required a thorough accusation and self-criticism. She was determined to transform (*gaizao* 改造) herself to become a “new person” (*xin ren* 新人) under the guidance of the Communist Party and the principles of the Resist America, Aid Korea Three-Self Reform Movement of the Protestant Church.

Liu’s accusation was integral to the official documents on the patriotic transformation of Christianity. However, it was rather a collective approach prompted by political pressure on the CLS. Liu was singled out for especially intense scrutiny to unearth evidence of imperialist aggression and to assert her firm

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<sup>796</sup> Edward Hunter, *The Story of Mary Liu*, 178–9.

<sup>797</sup> *Ibid.*, 185.

<sup>798</sup> *Ibid.*, 207, 209.

<sup>799</sup> Liu, “Kongsu Meidiguozhuyi duiwo de duhai bing ziwo jiantao,” 128–30.

stance on the side of the people. In an interview with American journalist Edward Hunter in Hong Kong in the 1950s, Liu recalled the process by which she got involved in the accusation campaign. Realising that her refusal to participate in the accusation meeting would bring disaster onto the CLS, she replied to Hu Zuyin that she would think it over. From the viewpoint of the desperate Hu, her ambiguous response was reviewed as life-saving consent. Knowing of her situation, Liu even thought of committing suicide by taking sleeping pills. However, her suicide would likewise implicate many other people in the “mind reform” campaign.<sup>800</sup> In such a complex situation, she worked with her “helpers” in drafting the accusation.<sup>801</sup>

Political censorship was also centralised within the religious publishing industry. Following the five resolutions on publications issued in October 1950,<sup>802</sup> a series of reforms and mergers in Christian publishing took place in 1951. In February, the National Publishing General Administration of the Central People’s Government (NPGA, *zhongyang renmin zhengfu chuban zongshu* 中央人民政府出版總署) invited Wu Yaozong to address it on religious publications. Wu suggested holding a conference between Christian publishing institutions and central government officials in March and nominated a few leaders. The Administration agreed on Wu’s proposal and held a Conference of Christian Publishers in Beijing in March.<sup>803</sup> In Liu’s view, this was to “take up the question of the production of literature and its distribution, in every field from magazines to books, from printers to bookshops.”<sup>804</sup> One resolution from the Conference was to establish a united publishing organisation and abolish those who joined this organisation.<sup>805</sup> In response, *Zhonghua jidujiao chuban xiehui* 中華

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<sup>800</sup> Hunter, *The Story of Mary Liu*, 176–8.

<sup>801</sup> This account was written some years later when Liu Meili was outside China. It may not accurately reflect her real feelings and motivations in 1951.

<sup>802</sup> “Zhongyang renmin zhengfu chuban zongshu fabu diyijie quanguo chuban huiyi de wuxiang jueyi” 中央人民政府出版總署發佈第一屆全國出版會議的五項決議 (Five Resolutions on Publications by the Publication Bureau of the Central Government), *Jiefang ribao* (30 October 1950).

<sup>803</sup> “Zhongyang renmin zhengfu chuban zongshu bangongting” 中央人民政府出版總署辦公廳 (The Publication Bureau of the Central Government), 發文編號 51? 字第 45 號, 3. Shanghai Municipal Archive, B1-1-1992.

<sup>804</sup> Hunter, *The Story of Mary Liu*, 151.

<sup>805</sup> “Zhongguo jidujiao lianying shudian de zuzhi yuanqi he choubei jingguo” 中國基督教聯營書店的組織緣起和籌備經過 (The Origin and Process of the United Christian Publication Organisation), 25, Shanghai Municipal Archive, B1-1-1992.

基督教出版協會 (The Chinese Christian Association Press, CCAP) launched investigations in mid-1951 into Christian literature work conducted by 17 primary Christian publishers such as the CLS, *Jinhui shuju* 浸會書局 (The Baptist Publication Society), and Qingnian xiehui shuju 青年協會書局 (The Press of the Youth Association).<sup>806</sup> The result was reported to Shanghai xinwen chubanchu 上海新聞出版處 (The Press and Publication Bureau of Shanghai), the Religious Bureau of East China, and the NPGA in Beijing in September. The report documented the progress of the investigation. Among the long list of “problematic” publications, many published by *Nü duo she* were labelled as containing toxic elements and being outdated.<sup>807</sup>

What was also detrimental to the publication of *Nü duo* was the issuing of principles by the central government on 29 December 1950, on the reception of American funds by cultural and religious organisations.<sup>808</sup> As noted above, this was a response to the American government’s declaration on 16 December 1950 of freezing China’s properties in the United States and to protest against the “Resist America, Aid Korea” campaign in China. Guided by these principles, religious organisations together with other cultural and education institutions in China who received financial support from the United States were compelled to implement a policy of self-support. In an announcement published in the last issue of *Nü duo* in February 1951, the CLS admitted to its financial crisis due to its heavy dependence on overseas funds.<sup>809</sup>

Due to ongoing political censorship, Liu realised that she could not contribute to Christian literature. She resigned from the CLS and registered her personal details at a police station, having noticed a

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<sup>806</sup> Only three primary Christian publishers did not send their reports to the CCAP, namely, *Zhongguo xinyihui shubaobu* 中國信義會書報部 (The Publication Department of the Chinese Lutheran Church) in Hankou 漢口, *Budao zazhishe* 佈道雜誌社 (The Evangelism Press) in Chongqing 重慶, and *Endian yanjingshe* 恩典研經社 (Endian Bible Study Society) in Guangdong 廣東. See *Jidujiao chuban jiguan shukan shencha yundong diyici zonghe baogao* 基督教出版機關書刊審查運動第一次綜合報告 (The First Comprehensive Report on Censoring Christian Publications) (Zhonghua jidujiao xiejinhui, September 1951), Shanghai Municipal Archive, u130-0-6-14, 1.

<sup>807</sup> Ibid., 4–5, 8–9.

<sup>808</sup> “Guanyu chuli jieshou Meiguo jintie de wenhua jiaoyu, jiuji jiguan ji zongjiao tuanti de fangzhen de baogao,” *Renmin ribao* (30 December 1950).

<sup>809</sup> “Guangxuehui jinji qishi” 廣學會緊急啟示 (An Emergent Announcement of the CLS), *Nü duo* (February 1951): 5.

government announcement for the employment of promising unemployed intellectuals. However, Liu soon recognised there was no suitable niche for her in China. An internal struggle occurred in her mind: whether to leave China or stay. To Liu, staying in China meant that she could never be her real self and would be forced to have to continue saying things she did not believe. However, leaving China meant leaving her home and friends. To resolve this conundrum, she wrote to her colleague from the CLS, Margaret Brown, who was in Hong Kong at the time, for permission to enter Hong Kong. For Liu, Hong Kong would be a desirable exit from the web of political centralisation. When the entry visa was granted, she applied for permission to leave Shanghai on 24 January 1952, giving as her reason the need to repair her artificial legs. After several political investigations, Liu obtained her visa and left Shanghai on 21 February.<sup>810</sup>

## Conclusion

This chapter has investigated the course of *Nü duo* from the Second Sino-Japanese War to the Communist takeover of China, when it was primarily edited by Liu Meili. Writings in the wartime *Nü duo* encouraged its readers to reshape their idea of self-hood in a broader social context, while it also held firm to the idea that domesticity should be Chinese women's primary concern. Although the crisis of war called women to join in the cause of national salvation, writings from readers and *Nü duo's* responses to the war demonstrated what confronted Chinese Christian women at the time was not national concerns, but rather internal struggles foregrounded by war. Unlike its readers who were deeply troubled by their sufferings and those of others, the magazine failed to address the issue of justice while still promoting Christian love. In this sense, *Nü duo* was an historical artefact clinging to the imperial legacy of Western missionaries of the turn of the twentieth century.

The Victorian notion of womanhood that shaped the Christian faith for Chinese women was characterised by individual concerns. By excluding the nation from the daily manifestation of individual faith, the faith of Chinese Christian women was less likely to be affected by political

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<sup>810</sup> Hunter, *The Story of Mary Liu*, 234–7.

upheavals. At the same time, the individual dimension of their religious commitment also made them vulnerable to changing social and political contexts, with which they lacked the theological capacity to cope. Liu Meili's encounter with the CCP in the early 1950s specifically highlights the absence of any political understanding in the Victorian notion of womanhood. The following chapter reviews the forty-year course of *Nü duo* with a synoptic analysis.

## Chapter 7 Conclusion

This thesis has explored the role of an under-researched religious magazine in the making of the modern Chinese family. Following the collapse of the Qing dynasty in 1911, China embarked on the path of a modern nation-state. The concept of family, so fundamental to the traditional Chinese social and ethical system, was the focus of an unprecedented debate. In addition to secular discussion on the family institution, *Nü duo* distinguished itself as a platform that introduced modern methods of household management intertwined with religious doctrine.

An examination of the forty-year history of *Nü duo* reveals an evolving process of interaction between the notion of a modern religious family and the political, social, and cultural upheavals of the time. Looking back to its editorial article titled “Jinggao xin minguo nüzi” 敬告新民國女子 (Announcement to the New Republican Women) published in the first issue in April 1912, *Nü duo* proposed that what China needed was a new generation of modern women embodying Victorian feminine virtues. This interpretation of China’s needs was primarily based on Laura White’s promotion of the universal value of an ideal domesticated modern woman. Two decades later, writings in *Nü duo* had constructed an ideal of womanhood as imagined by Chinese writers, set within a local social and cultural context. From the notion of an ideal womanhood for China to the search for an ideal modern woman to aid China’s development into a modern state, there arose fundamental problems arising out of the interplay between the views of Western missionaries and Chinese Christians.

In this concluding chapter, I look first at the contribution made by this thesis for the field of family studies in modern China. This section reflects on the role of *Nü duo* in the discourse about what constituted a modern Chinese family by highlighting its advanced ideas on household management. The second section focuses on readers’ responses to the magazine, whose writings offer a genuine sense of the condition of families of educated Chinese women at the time. The data, though limited in quantity and often fragmented in content, serves as a unique lens to look into the domestic world of a sizable group of Chinese women. Furthermore, readers’ engagement with the issues that *Nü duo*

promoted suggests the magazine had a notable impact on its readers. This chapter then moves on to examine differences and difficulties in the making of a Christian family as advocated in the pages of *Nü duo*. Aside from reviewing the changes found in its proposals, I concentrate on the activities and ideas of the three chief editors, who played a crucial role in its history. The fourth section evaluates the interplay between the Western notion of Victorian domesticity and the local perception of a Chinese Christian domesticity. I conclude with some reflections on Christianity in the new era.

### **A Modern Domesticity for a Christianised China**

*Nü duo* was launched at a time when young Republican China urgently sought to address the spirit of modernity, a new force obtained through Western learning to strengthen the nation and compete with her neighbours.<sup>811</sup> *Jia* 家, a core concept in the traditional Chinese value system, was examined and challenged amidst the revolutionary fervour. Various groups of people attempted to revive the nation through advocating family reform. While many looked to the Western family model, they tended to ignore the religious force of family life. The launch of *Nü duo* at this historical moment introduced a set of Christian ideals, aiming at guiding Chinese home life while offering a modern option for China.

Being the first Christian magazine for Chinese women, *Nü duo* was a pioneer in introducing an ideal Christian domesticity to local female readers, a large number of whom came from mission schools. Unlike the first Chinese woman's magazine entitled *Nü xue bao* that advocated women's social and political engagement, *Nü duo* under the editorship of Laura White promoted an ideal vision of woman's virtues embodied in fulfilling her domestic duties, which provided an alternative to the revolutionary voice of progressive feminist movements of the time.

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<sup>811</sup> Paul-François Tremlett, *Religion and the Discourse on Modernity* (London; New York: Continuum, 2008), 18. For a detailed discussion on problems of Chinese modernisation among Republican intellectuals, see the special issue on Chinese modernisation in *Shenbao yuekan* 申報月刊 (15 July 1933).



*Nü duo* developed a position that provided evangelical workers of the time with an ideal notion of the modern woman in a Christian family that was centred on household management in the widest sense. Several factors gave rise to this emphasis on women's domestic capabilities. One major ideological force was the predominance of Victorian virtues in the ideas of women missionaries in nineteenth-century Britain and America. The hierarchy of the missionary enterprise that prohibited women from ministry was another impetus that reinforced the primacy of women's work in the social and cultural sphere. Furthermore, when Western missionaries arrived in the late Qing period, Confucian gender ethics served as the predominant social and moral code in Chinese society, cloistering Chinese women in their inner chamber. Home thus became an ideal domain for local female converts to practice their faith and proselytise future generations. Although the beginning of the Republican era witnessed movements that challenged traditional gender roles, gender segregation in the church ministry, new thinking on social and moral ethics, and the surge of print media worked together to propel the birth of *Nü duo*.

Despite its congruence with the traditional emphasis on women's household roles, this religious rationale distinguishes *Nü duo* as a radical agent in family reform. The promotion of the Victorian notion of an ideal womanhood in the magazine was driven by White's belief in the divine design of gender hierarchy. Far from promoting an idea that detrimentally confined women to the family, *Nü duo's* rhetoric on women's domestic role as a 'change agent' went in parallel with their religious promotion of the glory to be achieved through fulfilling heavenly assigned obligations. Religious ideas transformed the passiveness of women who stayed at home into a legitimised empowerment with religious authority that fundamentally assured them of their equal status with men.

The longevity of *Nü duo* and its popularity among a female readership who were not all necessarily Christian was in part due to its emphasis on scientific methods applicable to the home. Throughout its course, it introduced modern scientific knowledge on infant hygiene, nutrition, and provided guidelines for domestic education. Articles on domestic science and appropriate ways of childrearing

provided its female readers with advanced knowledge that was fundamental to the formation of a modern family.

*Nü duo's* promotion of modern household practices became critical to the discourse of constructing a modern Chinese family. Writings on new practices of childrearing point to the importance of an educated motherhood for a new nation. For example, *Nü duo* advised its readers to maintain breastfeeding instead of feeding babies with cow's milk. *Nü duo* incorporated translations about nurturing a children's character and teaching them virtues such as truthfulness and honesty. Through introducing modern ideas on domestic education, it helped to transform mothers' thinking in how to raise their children in a 'scientific' manner. As the newly established nation was eager to accelerate progress to catch up with foreign rivals, information on modern ways of household management in *Nü duo* made it an important magazine amongst the many non-Christian journals that aimed to rejuvenate the Chinese family.

### **Voices on the Ground: Readers' Responses**

*Nü duo* collected and published responses from its readers throughout its forty-year history. In the beginning, the majority of readers' letters were published in the prize columns, a strategy adopted by the editorial board to encourage the involvement of its female readers. From 1912 to 1924, readers' responses in the prize column including translations and quizzes totalled 385 letters. In addition to these responses of a more academic nature, the magazine also published letters with suggestions on childrearing from its readers. As discussed in Chapter Three, from 1913–1915 White had translated questions from American women's magazines for her Chinese readers and encouraged readers to share their ideas on childrearing. The most appropriate answers chosen by White were published in the following issues of *Nü duo*. To a certain degree, the responses of *Nü duo's* readers indicates its success at providing guidance on family matters by mobilising its female readers to share their experiences and to address the issues the magazine was promoting.

While readers' responses in *Nü duo* reduced in the late 1920s and early 1930s, the wartime period did see three new columns in the magazine that called for readers to share their concerns on home life. Living in an era of rapid change, Chinese women were surrounded by different ideas on gender and changing social and political circumstances. As discussed in Chapter Six, readers' concerns revealed a private dimension, manifested in the internal struggles of a group of educated Christian women, who were grappling with the question of how to apply Christian principles to their domestic life. Many readers touched on the issue of how to raise their children. One reader, for example, even wrote to the editorial board to seek advice on whether to marry a man with two children from his previous marriage. One common problem that worried Chinese women at the time was the difficulty of balancing their occupations and domestic obligations. In one scenario, a single female reader was confronted with the dilemma of whether to resign from her job to take care of her mother. While *Nü duo* promoted the role of women in their married family life, its response to this reader suggested an empathy for women in the workforce and encouraged the reader to maintain her employment while increasing the frequency of visits to her mother. These practical issues centring on home life provide us with a valuable source for understanding the preoccupations and life challenges of Chinese women at the time.

Despite the relatively small number of readers' responses, *Nü duo's* incorporation of these letters indicates its impact on its readers, a group of whom shared their personal stories in relation to marriage, childrearing, and career in search of advice. Individual concerns mentioned in readers' letters further point to the trust they had in the editorial board. With such a bond of trust established, the magazine likely affected how its readers led their daily lives. In this sense, the significance of *Nü duo* is found not only in the intellectual transformation of the Chinese family but also in the transformation of people's lives in line with its Christian and modern ideals.

### **The Making of *Nü duo*: Persistence, Struggles, and Conflicts**

Articles in *Nü duo* demonstrate the consistency of its views on the Victorian notion of womanhood but also circumstances when these views were challenged. The Victorian feminine virtues it promoted focussed on women's domesticity, the spirit of self-sacrifice, and an educated motherhood and child rearing. *Nü duo's* persistence in promoting these virtues was most evident during the early years of the New Culture Movement, when Chinese intellectuals called for reforms to revive national strength and the notion of what constituted a modern family generated heated debate. While reform-minded intellectuals searched for ways to achieve national rejuvenation, *Nü duo* persisted with its advocacy of a domesticity that cherished women's domestic roles and criticised women who abandoned family duties to engage in social and national affairs.

With a growing social gospel movement and an indigenising movement in the Chinese Christian community of the 1920s, however, *Nü duo* reflected the divided opinions circulating at the time regarding women's relationship to the nation. Following the growing nationalist sentiment after the May Fourth Incident, it started to include articles on national salvation. An example of this change is found in *Nü duo's* response to the Republican government's failure at the Paris Peace Conference of 1919. It consequently incorporated articles on concrete ways to strengthen the nation, such as boycotts of Japanese goods, promoting domestic products, organising patriotic speeches, and patriotic savings funds. *Nü duo* also reported on patriotic movements in the Chinese Christian community and circulated news about patriotic movements organised by Chinese women. The incorporation of articles on Christian women's involvement in national affairs was at odds with its advocacy of the Victorian notion of womanhood, which reflected a disenchantment among Christian women that drove many to passionate expressions of patriotism.

The tension between women's "heavenly duty" at home and their identification with the new Chinese republic became more tangible in the early 1930s when Japan invaded China. On the one hand, *Nü duo* continued to address Victorian femininity and promote women's role in transforming Chinese families. It also served as a publicity tool for the nation-wide Christianising Home Campaign initiated

by the NCCC. On the other hand, *Nü duo* started to adopt a supportive stance in regard to women's social and national engagement. With an increasingly tolerant attitude towards women's employment, it started to circulate articles providing guidance for women in the workforce, and advocated women's involvement in national salvation. When Japan invaded China's northern territory in September 1931, *Nü duo* made its position clear—fight against Japan and save China.

Contrary to writings in its early years that admonished Chinese women not to involve themselves in political movements, *Nü duo* started to publish articles that touched on politics during the national crisis of the early 1930s. In December 1931, it published news about a plea launched by Chinese women in Beijing to declare war on Japan.<sup>812</sup> In January 1932, it published an item of news reporting an announcement of the Women's Political Council opposing the election of Zhang Xueliang as a member of the Control Yuan.<sup>813</sup> From 1931 to 1935, women's responsibilities in both society and to the nation during wartime were promoted in *Nü duo* on an unprecedented scale.

Patriotic sentiment and news on politics in *Nü duo* waned from the mid-1930s and disappeared from the late 1930s to the 1940s primarily due to the occupation of Shanghai by the Japanese military from 1937–1941, the civil war between the Nationalist Party and the Communist Party, and the relocation of the CLS office from occupied Shanghai to Kunming. When the Communist Party took power, *Nü duo* adopted a cautious stance in supporting the new regime and refrained from sensitive discussions on political issues.

An understanding of the changes in *Nü duo's* writings on women's roles requires an examination of its three editors. As noted in Chapter Two, all three editors were either members of a Board of Directors or the Publication Committee, indicating a certain amount of administrative power in addition to their roles as the chief editor. The American Methodist missionary Laura M. White laid down the basic tone for *Nü duo*. Profoundly influenced by the Victorian notions of domesticity of her era, White aimed to

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<sup>812</sup> "Beipingshi nüjie qingyuan dui Ri xuanzhan" 北平市女界請願对日宣戰 (A Plea for Declaring War on Japan by Women in Beijing), *Nü duo* (December 1931): 79.

<sup>813</sup> "Nüzi canzhenghui fandui Zhang Xueliang dangxuan zhongwei," 65.

promote this ideal to Chinese women. Throughout her editorship, it emphasised women's domestic virtues and obligations. It promoted a divine domesticity where educated Christian women, with the spirit of self-sacrifice, would apply modern knowledge to household management and become important 'change agents' in the push towards modernisation. In particular, White emphasised an educated motherhood, which determined her evangelical work and writing within and outside *Nü duo*.

According to White, women's domestic roles were incompatible with social and political engagement. Regarding the women's social movements that promoted equality and freedom at the time, White was critical of their motivations. In her vision, women could surpass men and enjoy equal status only through moral and spiritual uplift. She believed that fulfilling household duties was a fundamental way for women to live up to their noble status and become agents for modernisation. In other words, women contributed to the nation through fulfilling their duty at home.

To a certain degree, White's perception of an ideal womanhood and the Victorian family model resonated with traditional Chinese virtues. They both highlighted feminine virtues and the gender hierarchy where men ruled outside and women inside. Cultural familiarity combined with Western knowledge made it easy for *Nü duo* to find a niche in the early years of the Republican era, when the newly established nation was anxious to promote modernity while the traditional value system still remained a strong force. However, challenges arose when the Victorian domestic ideal seemed to be out of the tune with the growing tide of nationalism and the need for service in support of the nation. The May Fourth period turned out to be a difficult time for *Nü duo* to remain relevant as Chinese women became aware of the need for social and political actions in the building of a strong nation. In particular, when the NCCC's patriotic movements became political after the May Thirtieth Incident in 1925, White and many other leading missionaries protested against any political movements involving Chinese Christians.

When the Victorian domestic ideal for women introduced by the first editor started to encounter the escalating national crisis of the 1930s and the 1940s, her two Chinese students who succeeded to the

editorship in turn responded more from a local perspective. White's non-political stance posed a sharp contrast with her successor, Li Guanfang. As a firm believer in the social gospel, Li devoted much of her time to the transformation of Chinese society. At an early stage, she had demonstrated her concern for religion and nation, which was evident in her work at Boston University. After her return to China, she was involved with various Christian organisations. In addition to the editorship of *Nü duo*, she worked with the NCCC and the YWCA. Travelling sharpened her awareness of local social circumstances. Working with Christian leaders exposed her to major debates among the local Christian community and to socialist ideas held by the YWCA industrial leaders.

Under Li's editorship, *Nü duo* witnessed an increase in writings on women's social and national engagement. This became most evident when China's war with Japan broke out in 1931. Li appealed through the magazine to readers to help save the nation. She became a member of the Women's National Salvation Alliance established shortly after the Mukden Incident in 1931. Also, she spent much time in promoting rural reform as part of the self-strengthening movement. Li's nation-centred social concerns were in contrast with the Victorian notion of a domestic womanhood. However, despite signs of change, much of the writing in *Nü duo* continued to stress women's domestic roles. Domesticity, society, and nation coexisted until Li resigned from the CLS and devoted herself to social service.

Li's dramatic life demonstrated how an early twentieth-century Chinese woman perceived Christianity, found her social niche, and responded to the nation's struggles. Her waning commitment toward Christianity was accompanied by an increasing sense of her identity as Chinese. Initially, Li believed the contribution of Christianity to a powerful China could be achieved when its citizens nurtured their character and morality through religious literature and education. For her, Christianity was a mechanism to transform Chinese people's minds. The national weakness, however, drew Li increasingly into the social gospel movement, connecting Christianity with the constructing of a new China. When the national crisis escalated, she joined the Communist Party. It is evident throughout

her life that for her being Chinese was closely bound up with the fate of the nation. In this light, Li represented a type of patriotic Christian whose centre of belief was the nation, and whose faith was developed by patriotism.

By contrast, the third editor Liu Meili represented a group of Christians who were neither active in patriotic movements nor political campaigns. Her life story suggests that White was an influential figure to her. Inheriting the legacy of her Western mentor, she faithfully continued her literary mission in chaotic times. Except for the issues published in Chengdu in the 1940s, Liu edited the magazine from 1935 until its last issue of February 1951. Unlike Li, Liu had never openly expressed national concerns during the Second Sino-Japanese War. Under her editorship, *Nü duo* adopted a passive stance in promoting patriotic sentiment. Instead, it advocated for its readers to endure the war with a firm belief in Christian love.

For Liu, producing Christian literature for Chinese women was her central mission. She maintained a neutrality and remained impassive under the KMT and the Japanese Puppet regime. When the Communist Party took over, however, Chinese Christians were compelled to show their loyalty to the new regime. Liu correspondingly attempted to demonstrate her support for the new government in a cautious way. Writings in *Nü duo* reflected her political sensitivity.

The change of editorship from foreign missionary to local convert paralleled an increasing openness in *Nü duo's* attitude toward women's social and national obligations. It is understandable that local Christians understood Christianity more from a local perspective. Chinese Christians not only struggled over church control with foreign missionaries but also endeavoured to find a suitable niche in the local society. Unlike their Western mentors, their concerns were complicated by their Chinese identity, which made them more sensitive to the changing environment. When the nation was in crisis, their patriotic feelings were fundamental in demonstrating their identity with their non-Christian countrymen and women.



When Laura White came to China at the turn of the twentieth century with her religious zeal, she would never have thought that her notion of Victorian femininity was about to be challenged and even dismantled by her Chinese students. While both Li Guanfang and Liu Meili maintained a long-lasting relationship with White, received mission educations, and were associated with the Methodist denomination, they edited the magazine in social settings different from their Western mentor. The changing local circumstances increased the complexity of being a Christian in China and created differences in their perceptions of Christianity, perceptions that were complicated by the national crisis and political conformity, which in turn revolved around the question of Chinese identity and women's relations with political authorities.

This growing self-awareness, nevertheless, was complicated by the missionary legacy, knowingly or unknowingly. As manifested in the course of *Nü duo*, when Li Guanfang attempted to reach out to women of the lower class, she was constrained by the middle-class nature of the Victorian femininity that discouraged women from social engagement. Even when she endeavoured to bring the topic of women in the workforce into the magazine, her focus on the morality of work for educated women likely limited her capacity to speak for women working in factories. Li's missionary education background and her Christian literary work prevented her from approaching the illiterate majority. In response to readers' questions on war and justice, Liu Meili's writings in *Nü duo* simply followed the dogmatic Christian response that suffering was brought about by humanity's own actions, which failed to take the historical and socio-political dimensions of the Gospel literature into consideration and identify the issue of justice in the interpretation of Christian love. The political ambiguity of this stance manifested in the last two decades of *Nü duo's* publication further attests to the irrelevance of notions of Victorian womanhood to the contemporary need for women's social and national engagement.

### **From a Victorian Womanhood to a Chinese Christian Notion of Womanhood, and Beyond**

*Nü duo's* different messages over time invite three observations. Firstly, it shows that Christian women's domestic virtues as well as their relationship with the nation intertwined like two threads in

the nation-building process. The Victorian femininity advocated in the early years of *Nü duo* encountered a growing awareness of Chinese identity, especially during the national crisis of the 1930s. The magazine gradually opened itself up to discussions on women's social and national engagement moving from opposition, compromise, and acceptance of women's social and national roles. As much scholarly work has explored women and nation in the non-Christian community, this study adds to our knowledge of Christian women in Republican China, who were involved in the nation-building project along with their non-Christian fellows. On top of the scholarship that argues that nationalism was a significant factor in the shaping of Christianity in China, this study reaffirms the nation-state as a critical factor in examining Chinese women's encounter with Christianity.

Secondly, this thesis has demonstrated the complexity of transmitting Christianity in the changing socio-political settings of modern China through examining the interplay between Western missionaries and Chinese Christians. Mindful of the shift from a missiological and Eurocentric approach to a Sinocentric approach in the historiography of Christianity in China, I have paid special attention to the role of changing local conditions in the shaping of Chinese responses to Christianity. Noting a growing scholarly concern on the agency of Chinese Christians,<sup>814</sup> I have also examined how Chinese Christians inherited and resisted the missionary legacy. An exploration of the ideas and activities of *Nü duo's* three editors, who played a crucial role in shaping it, reveals that the adoption of Christianity comprised an intricate process of transmission and negotiation between foreign missionaries, local agents, and the nation-state. Examining the lives of the key players has enabled us to trace this encounter not necessarily from a binary viewpoint but instead viewing it more as an evolutionary process in response to different social contexts. By doing so, the vicissitudes of Chinese Christians' encounter with local circumstances are better understood. The shifting conception of being Chinese, which was manifested in the two Chinese editors' different responses toward the national crisis, complicates the trajectory of Chinese Christianity, indicating that conflicts with the missionary

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<sup>814</sup> Standaert, "New Trends in the Historiography of Christianity in China," 573–5.

legacy were more likely to arise when local Christians prioritised nation, willingly or unwillingly. Kenneth M. Wells has elaborated this tension as one between the universalistic nature of Protestant faith and the particular demands of nationalism.<sup>815</sup> The struggles of these three Christian women thus help our understanding of the development of Christianity in China and other young nations where nationalism is a powerful force.

Thirdly, this study reveals an imperial legacy in the discourse of Christianity in China primarily embodied in the question of the relationship between Christianity and political power. The political upheaval during the last two decades of *Nü duo* attests to its problematic relationship with the ruling authority, manifesting itself in a disjointed and ambivalent attitude. When the KMT launched the political and social mobilisation of the NLM, *Nü duo* used Madame Chiang's calligraphy for its cover image. It did publish news on the NLM but did not urge to its readers to become involved in the political campaign. When the Japanese armies occupied Shanghai, it did not cooperate with the puppet government but remained politically neutral. During the civil war, it warmly embraced the concept of democracy, galvanised homemaking with a sense of its democratic contribution, and yet kept a cautious distance from politics. This political commentary did not last beyond the escalation of the civil war after mid-1946. Except for one article published in September 1946 that criticised the violent governance and anti-religious policy of Communism, *Nü duo* refrained from commenting on politics. Several months later, it also removed Madame Chiang's inscription from its cover image. Overall, it maintained a neutral stance until the Communist victory.

A complex and ambiguous attitude toward ruling authority raises a problem rooted in the course of mission history. As imperialism enabled Western missionaries to enter China and conduct evangelical work, it was often awkward for missionaries to appeal to political power as it may have caused controversy and conflict with local people. Being cautious of their association with political power, a

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<sup>815</sup> Kenneth M. Wells, *New God, New Nation: Protestants and Self-reconstruction: Nationalism in Korea 1896–1937* (North Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1990).

large group of missionaries expected Chinese converts likewise to adopt a non-political attitude. Consciously or unconsciously, the relationship between Christian faith and politics was far less substantial than that with traditional cultures and local religious practice. Laura White was a good example of this. Her apolitical viewpoint was evident within and outside *Nü duo*. When Chinese Christians became more involved in political activities after the May Thirtieth Incident, she signed a statement in 1927 urging the NCCC to refrain from activities not defined by its constitution. When the national crisis and political pressure escalated, Chinese Christians, especially Christian women who were inhibited by traditional gender ethics and Victorian notions of female virtues, were put in a difficult situation where historical or theological references provided little or no guidance. This lack of theological rationale resulted in a series of contradictory responses among the local Christian community in response to political changes.

Christian women's responses to changing social and political situations were governed by uncertainty due to the lack of historical or theological guidance, which could direct them to act as both social and national agents. Their historical experience questioned the applicability of a predominantly domestic role defined by Victorian gender ethics. Despite their attempts to accommodate to the local environment, Chinese Christian women were constrained by the legacy they inherited from their Western mentors. It is through this complex process of inheritance and subsequent self-awakening that made *Nü duo* a powerful influence, conveying a model of an ideal womanhood for a modern nation, the shortcomings of which were revealed by the stark choices confronting Chinese women through both external invasion and internal political strife.

### **Christianity in a New Era**

As Christianity was largely the religion of Western nations that pursued colonialism in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the trajectory of missionary history was tainted by its associations with imperialism in the non-Western world. With the rise of nation-state in the post-colonial world, anti-colonialism was usually juxtaposed with nationalism. In Republican China, nationalist sentiment in the

Chinese Christian community took varied forms. As opposed to research that concentrates on male Christian leaders in the indigenising and self-strengthening process, this study throws light on Chinese Christian women's encounter with nationalism. The forty-year history of *Nü duo* demonstrates how Christian women's relationships with nationalism intermingled with the missionary legacy and contained conflicts, adaptations, paradoxes, and uncertainties.

The waning power of Western imperialism after the Second World War also caused the decline of missionary movements in the non-Western world. With the exodus of foreign missionaries from China in the early 1950s, the course of Christianity in China as well as many other nations entered a new era. Under a totalitarian government, Chinese Christians faced a testing time regarding their allegiance to the new regime. Subject to numerous social and political campaigns of the new Maoist regime, the Christian church in China concentrated on the eradication of its imperial past.

In a Communist China, the religious nature of *Nü duo* and its relationship with foreign missionary societies led to its closure in 1951. The Korean War in 1950 demanded Christians' loyalty to the ruling authorities and rendered it as an inevitable prerequisite for the legitimacy of Christianity in China. With this political centralisation, Liu Meili was compelled to declare her political stance. Officially, Liu separated foreign missionaries from Christianity by criticising the former with harsh words and associating the latter with the new political ideology. Although Liu criticised foreign missionaries, especially White, during the self-criticism and accusation meetings, she was also coping with internal struggles and was under considerable personal political pressure.

After the self-criticism and accusation meeting, Liu found herself in a country that was no longer tolerant of foreigners. In an environment of growing suspicion against Christians, she chose to go to Hong Kong in 1952. For several years, she continued her Christian literature work in the Council on Christian Literature for Overseas Chinese located in Hong Kong, an institution established in 1951 by previous CLS staff to provide religious and reference books to serve Chinese Christians overseas.<sup>816</sup>

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<sup>816</sup> [http://www.cclc.org.hk/about\\_hist.php](http://www.cclc.org.hk/about_hist.php) Accessed on 25 May 2018.

She also lived in Singapore, the Malay Peninsula, and the United States in the 1950s.<sup>817</sup> With the help of Christian mission boards in the United States, Liu Meili eventually obtained her visa under the Refugee Relief Act and arrived in the United States in 1956.<sup>818</sup> On the other side of the ocean, however, the patriotic transformation of Christianity in China continued as it endeavored to obtain a secure niche under the Communist regime.

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<sup>817</sup> See Miss Louise Robinson, "Southeast Asia and China," in *Fourteenth Annual Report 1952–53 of the Woman's Division of Christian Service of the Board of Missions of the Methodist Church* (New York: Women's Division of Christian Service of Board of Missions The Methodist Church, 1953), 98; Miss Clara M. French, "China and Southeast Asia," in *Fifteenth Annual Report 1953–54 of the Woman's Division of Christian Service of the Board of Missions of the Methodist Church* (New York: Women's Division of Christian Service of Board of Missions The Methodist Church, 1954), 79; Miss Clara M. French, "Southeast Asia and China," in *Sixteenth Annual Report 1954–55 of the Woman's Division of Christian Service of the Board of Missions of the Methodist Church* (New York: Women's Division of Christian Service of Board of Missions The Methodist Church, 1955), 144.

<sup>818</sup> Liu, Mary Mei-Li 1955–1959, Records of the United Methodist Committee on Relief 1933–1981, Methodist Church (U.S.). Board of Missions, 2046-3-1:19, The General Commission on Archives and History The United Methodist Church in Drew University.

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**Appendix 1 List of Readers' Name and Their Institutions mentioned in *Nü duo* (1912–1924)**

Publication time	Area	Reader's name	Address
June 1912	Anhui 安徽	Yao Yunxian 姚雲仙	Wuhu 蕪湖
July 1912	Jiangsu 江蘇	Cai Sujuan 蔡蘇娟	Suzhou Jinghai Laura Haygood Memorial School for Young Ladies 蘇州景海女學堂
August 1912	Anhui 安徽	Yao Yunxian 姚雲仙	Wuhu 蕪湖
September 1912	Hong Kong 香港	Wang Qinglian 王清蓮	Hong Kong Ying Wa College 香港英華書院
October 1912	Jiangsu 江蘇	Yuan Ying 袁瑛	Nanjing 金陵
	Zhejiang 浙江	Ling Weiyong 凌慰英	Shuanglin Church 雙林耶穌堂
	Fujian 福建	Liu Suqi 劉素奇	Fuzhou Huangxiang Huaying Girls' School (student) 福州黃巷華英女學堂學生
	Shandong 山東	Liu Renguo 劉任國	Jinan 濟南
	Guangdong 廣東	Zhang Zhenmei 張真美	Guangzhou Xiushan Shiqi Anlan Street Church 廣州秀山石岐安瀾街福音堂
	Guangdong 廣東	Luo Xiuyun 羅秀雲	Rouji Women's Hospital 柔濟女醫院
January 1913	Beijing 北京	n.n.	Beijing Women's Teaching School 北京女子師範學堂
April 1913	Shandong 山東	He Meili 何美麗	Qingdao Beijing Street YWCA 青島北京街青年會
	Shanghai 上海	Niao Hanfang 烏翰芳	Saiwei medicine shop at No. 44 Sichuan Road 四川路四十四號賽威大藥行
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Zhu Meiyu 朱美玉	Church at Ximen Neiyantou Street in Zhenjiang 鎮江西門內堰頭街基督聖教
	Zhejiang 浙江	Hu Bixi 胡彼息	Hangzhou 杭州
	Anhui 安徽	Chen Hualu 陳化魯	
	Zhejiang 浙江	Chen Yumei 陳毓霖	Hangzhou Zhencai Girls' School in Dataer Lane 杭州大塔兒巷貞才女校
	Shandong 山東	Li Huanwen 李煥文	Yantai Yuhuangding Lutheran Girls' School 煙臺玉皇頂信義女學堂
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Ren Enci 任恩慈	Huiwen Girls' School (senior student) 匯文女子大學堂高等學生
	n.p.	Jiang Qingru 姜清如	Women's School (teacher) 婦女學堂教習
	Hunan 湖南	Wang Jiechen 王潔臣	Chenzhou Presbyterian Girls' School 郴州長老會女校
	Guangdong 廣東	Si Ganying 司甘英	
	Guangdong 廣東	Huang Jie'an 黃傑安	Ruth Girls' School at Duobao Street (teacher) 多寶大街路得女校教員
	Tianjin 天津	Huang Xiqiong 黃錫瓊	
	Hunan 湖南	Wang Wanqing 汪萬清	Xiangtan Presbyterian Hospital 湘潭長老會醫院
	Beijing 北京	Fan Wang Yulan 樊王玉蘭	Lugouqiao Church 盧溝橋福音堂
June 1913	Zhejiang 浙江	Su Chengzhao 蘇承昭	Ningbo Chongde Girls' School 寧波崇德女校
	Fujian 福建	Zhang Zheng Shanduan 章鄭善端	Fuzhou Tainan 福州臺南

	Fujian 福建	Chen Xinde 陳信德	Xinghua fu Peide Girls' School 興華府培德女校
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Liu Xiangyun 柳翔雲	Nanjing 南京
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Jiang Benhui 姜本蕙	Huiwen Girls' School 匯文女子大學堂
	Zhejiang 浙江	Hu Bixi 胡彼息	Hangzhou 杭州
	Beijing 北京	Ma Yanting 馬延廷	Methodist Episcopal Church 美以美會
	Fujian 福建	Chen Hengqing 陳恆卿	Luozhou 螺洲
	Zhejiang 浙江	Hu Meifu 胡美福	Hangzhou Feng's Girls' School in Zijinguan Lane 杭州紫金觀巷馮氏高等女校
	Guangdong 廣東	Liang Shufang 梁淑芳	Guangdong Women's Primary Teaching School at Dashi Street (student) 大石街廣東女子初級師範學校學生
	Fujian 福建	Qiu Qinglian 邱清濂	Funing Peide Girls' School 福寧培德女校
	Fujian 福建	Xu Shaoqi 許紹琪	Gulangyu 鼓浪嶼 (pastor's wife)
	Beijing 北京	Tao Jilan 陶季蘭	Beijing Congregational Church (student) 北京公理會學生
	Australia 澳洲	Ms Lei Wang 雷王氏女士	Melbourne 美利賓埠
July 1913	Beijing 北京	Tao Jilan 陶季蘭	Beijing Congregational Church (student) 北京公理會學生
	Beijing 北京	Kong Xiangda's child 孔祥達幼童	Beijing No.1 Parenting School 北京第一蒙養院
August 1913	Tianjin 天津	Liu Yongsheng 劉永昇	
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Huang Cuilin 黃翠琳	Huiwen Girls' School (student) 匯文女校師範生
	Guangdong 廣東	Chen Lajie 陳拉結	Ruth Girls' School at Duobao Street 多寶大街路得女校
	Tianjin 天津	Chai Chen Shuzhen 柴陳淑貞	
	Zhejiang 浙江	Hu Meifu 胡美福	Hangzhou Feng's Girls' School in Zijinguan Lane 杭州紫金觀巷馮氏高等女校
	Fujian 福建	Qiu Qinglian 邱清濂	Funing Peide Girls' School 福寧培德女校
October 1913	Beijing 北京	Tao Jilan 陶季蘭	Beijing Congregational Church (student) 北京公理會學生
	Shanghai 上海	Liu Zhu Huiying 劉朱蕙英	
	Fujian 福建	Yin Xuefan's daughter 殷雪帆先生娘	Gulangyu 鼓浪嶼
	Beijing 北京	Li Yunying 李韻英	
	Hubei 湖北	Xia Mingru 夏明如	Hankou YWCA 漢口基督教青年會
	Beijing 北京	Cheng Guanyi 誠冠怡	Cuizhen Girls' School 萃貞女校
	n.p.	Li Lianzhen 李蓮珍	Baoyang Presbyterian Church (middle school student) 保陽長老會中學生
	Shandong 山東	Tan Luoda 譚羅大	Qingdao Women's Evangelical Fellowship at Tianjin Street 青島女佈道會 青島天津街

	n.p.	Hu Tingzhang 胡庭樟	Zhangdefu Presbyterian Church 彰德府長老會堂
	Shanghai 上海	Wu Huiqing 吳慧卿	Nanmen Qingxin Girls' School (student) 南門清心女學堂學生
	Anhui 安徽	Cai Jinyu 蔡金玉	Cuiying Girls' School 萃英女學校
	Anhui 安徽	Zheng Bojie 鄭伯節	Cuiying Girls' School 萃英女學校
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Wan Renxian 萬人賢	Nanjing 南京
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Hao Ershi 郝耳士	Nanjing 南京
November 1913	Beijing 北京	Cheng Guanyi 誠冠怡	Cuizhen Girls' School 萃貞女校
	Shandong 山東	Li Huanwen 李煥文	Yantai Yuhuangding Lutheran Girls' School 烟臺玉皇頂信義女學堂
	Hong Kong 香港	Song Yunjiao 宋雲嬌	Ying Wa Girls' School 英華女校
	Beijing 北京	Ma Yanzhen 馬艷真	Muzhen Girls' School 慕貞女學堂
	Zhejiang 浙江	Chen Yumei 陳毓霖	Hangzhou Zhencai Girls' School in Dataer Lane 杭州大塔兒巷貞才女校
	Zhejiang 浙江	Zhang Enfu 張恩福	Hangzhou Zhencai Girls' School in Dataer Lane 杭州大塔兒巷貞才女校
	Zhejiang 浙江	Hu Bixi 胡彼息	Hangzhou 杭州
	Shanxi 山西	Peng Yuhua 彭毓華	Women's Teaching School (student) 女子師範學堂學生
December 1913	Henan 河南	Hu Yuqi 胡玉琪	Weihui fu Presbyterian Church (preacher) 衛輝府長老會教士
January 1914	Jiangsu 江蘇	Ren Wenying 任文瑛	Huiwen Girls' School 匯文女校
	Zhejiang 浙江	Chen Yumei 陳毓霖	Hangzhou Zhencai Girls' School in Dataer Lane 杭州大塔兒巷貞才女校
April 1914	Shanghai 上海	Qu Nie Shuyu 瞿聶叔瑜	
June 1914	Beijing 北京	Tao Jilan 陶季蘭	Beijing Congregational Church (student) 北京公理會學生
July 1914	Jilin 吉林	Zhang Yixian 張挹嫻	Shuangcheng County Women's Teaching School (student) 雙城縣女師範學生
September 1914	Jilin 吉林	Liu Wenrui 柳文瑞	Haerbin Christian Women's School (teacher) 哈爾濱基督教女學校教員
December 1914	Zhejiang 浙江	Huang Xuhua 黃許華	Hangzhou Women's Teaching School (杭州女子師範學校)
	n.p.	Tong Shumin 童淑敏	Chongshu Girls' School 崇淑女校
	n.p.	Xu Changfu 徐長福	Chongshu Girls' School 崇淑女校
	n.p.	Yang Xiuzhu 樣秀珠	Jingwei Girls' School 經緯女校
	n.p.	Huang Yaonan 黃耀南	Yuncao Chuying School (teacher) 運漕福音堂儲英學校教習
	n.p.	Wang Sanchun 王三春	Yuncao Church 運漕福音堂
	n.p.	Zhu Zhenjun 朱震鈞	Yuncao Church 運漕福音堂
January 1915	Beijing 北京	Tao Jilan 陶季蘭	Beijing Congregational Church (student) 北京公理會學生
	n.p.	Hu Yuqi 胡毓祺	Christian School 基督教福音堂學校
	Fujian 福建	Wang Yali 王雅麗	

March 1915	Beijing 北京	Tao Jilan 陶季蘭	Beijing Congregational Church (student) 北京公理會學生
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Chen Jiazhen 陳家珍	Nanjing ? Girls' School (student) 南京?清女校學生
April 1915	Zhejiang 浙江	Xie Wenqiu 謝文秋	Hangzhou 杭州
	Beijing 北京	Tao Jilan 陶季蘭	Beijing Congregational Church (student) 北京公理會學生
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Ni Yunxian 倪芸仙	Nanjing 南京
	Fujian 福建	Wang Yali 王雅麗	
May 1915	Beijing 北京	Tao Jilan 陶季蘭	Beijing Congregational Church (student) 北京公理會學生
August 1915	Beijing 北京	Tao Jilan 陶季蘭	Beijing Congregational Church (student) 北京公理會學生
	Shanghai 上海	Tao Guizhu 陶桂珠	Songjiang Tian'en Church 松江天恩堂
February 1916	Beijing 北京	Tao Jilan 陶季蘭	Beijing Congregational Church (student) 北京公理會學生
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Yao Fuqin 姚福琴	Changzhou 常州
	Shanghai 上海	Kuang Cui'e 鄺翠娥	McTyeire School 中西女塾
May 1916	Beijing 北京	Ms Yanxia 燕俠女士	
	Beijing 北京	Fan Rui'en 范瑞恩	Dengshikou Muman Girls' School 燈市口目滿女子學校
September 1916	Hubei 湖北	Lu Feng Fuying 盧馮傅英	Wuchang 武昌
November 1916	Zhejiang 浙江	Ma Aixi 馬愛惜	Ningbo Beimen Rende Girls' School 寧波北門仁德女校
December 1916	Hubei 湖北	Lu Feng Fuying 盧馮傅英	Wuchang 武昌
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Yuan Baoqun 袁保群	Jiangyin Dongwai Fushi Girls' School (teacher) 江陰東外輔實女校教員
	Hunan 湖南	Tan Zuwu 譚祖武	Yuezhou Zhenxin Girls' School 岳州貞信女校
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Wang Shuzhen 王淑貞	Suzhou Tiancizhuang Women's Medical School 蘇州天賜莊女醫學校
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Lu Shuying 魯淑音	Nanjing Gulou Christian Girls' School 南京鼓樓基督女校
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Feng Cui'e 馮翠娥	Nanjing Laifu Girls' School (student) 南京來復女校學員
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Liu Meiyong 劉美英	Nanjing Laifu Girls' School (student) 南京來復女校學員
	Shanghai 上海	Li Linbiao 李林標	Yuxiu Zhongxi Girls' School 育秀中西女校
June 1917	Hubei 湖北	Shen Shuzhen 沈淑貞	Wuchang St. Hilda Girls' School 武昌聖希理達女校
	Shanghai 上海	Chen Lijuan 陳麗娟	McTyeire School 中西女塾
	Beijing 北京	Yuan Baoyi 苑保懿	No. 5 Public Girls' School 公立第五女校
	Zhejiang 浙江	Jin Mengfang 金夢芳	Deqing 德清

July 1917	Hubei 湖北	Li Xuehua 李雪華	Huangzhou Teaching School (student) 黃州師範學生
	Hubei 湖北	Chen Zhongshu 陳忠恕	Huangzhou Teaching School (student) 黃州師範學生
	Hubei 湖北	Hou Guangyi 侯廣懿	Huangzhou Teaching School (student) 黃州師範學生
November 1917	Hunan 湖南	Zeng Huan 曾煥	
	Shandong 山東	Zhengzhisheng 正之聲	Beiling Jesus's Church 北嶺耶穌教堂
	Jiangxi 江西	Wangjiwo 忘記我	Nanchang 南昌
December 1917	Hebei 河北	Woweshei 我為誰	Zhili No. 1 Public Middle School 直隸省立第一中學
January 1918	Shanghai 上海	Qian Zhongying 錢鍾英	
	Hubei 湖北	Ju Chaohua 居超華	Wuxue Boji Hospital (medical practitioner) 武穴博濟醫院醫士
	Zhejiang 浙江	Chen Yulin 陳毓林	Hangzhou Christian Kindergarten 杭州基督教幼稚園
	Jiangxi 江西	Wang Bingling 王炳靈	Nanchang Church 南昌福音堂
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Zhang Wenying 張文英	Kunshan 崑山
	Tianjin 天津	Woweshei 我為誰	Zhili No. 1 Public Middle School 直隸省立第一中學
	Shandong 山東	Jiang Fenglü 姜奉呂	Meihua Presbyterian School in Jiao County 膠縣基督教長老會美華學堂
	Shandong 山東	Ms Wenyu 文玉女士	Meihua Presbyterian School in Jiao County 膠縣基督教長老會美華學堂
	Shandong 山東	Wang Wudian 王無玷	Meihua Presbyterian School in Jiao County 膠縣基督教長老會美華學堂
	Shandong 山東	Zhengzhisheng 正之聲	Meihua Presbyterian School in Jiao County 膠縣基督教長老會美華學堂
	Hunan 湖南	Zeng Yisan 曾異三	Hunan Chinese Christian Church 湖南中國基督教會
April 1918	Shanghai 上海	Zhang Weizhen 章衛貞	Songjiang Muwei Girls' School 松江慕衛女塾
May 1918	n.p.	Wang ?chong 王?重	Guankou Government Nanny School (graduate) 管口官立保姆學堂畢業生
	Tianjin 天津	Bian Yanzhi? 卞嚴智?	
	Fujian 福建	Lin Lanxin 林蘭馨	Putian Xianyi Girls' School 莆田咸益女校
June 1918	Jiangsu 江蘇	Wang Chengxian 王誠賢	Suzhou Smith Girls' School 蘇州斯密女校
	Fujian 福建	Ye Shuzhu 葉淑珠	Fujian City Peide Girls' School 福建城內培德女校
	Jiangxi 江西	Wu Kaiti 吳愷悌	Jiujiang Ruli College Middle School (student) 九江儒勵書院中學學生
	Jiangxi 江西	Chang Cuixian 常萃賢	
	Beijing 北京	Yan Renqing 嚴仁清	
	Jiangxi 江西	Gao Guixian 高貴仙	Jiujiang Ruli College 九江儒勵書院
	Shandong 山東	Zhengzhisheng 正之聲	Meihua Presbyterian School in Jiao County 膠縣基督教長老會美華學堂
July 1918	Jiangsu 江蘇	Ms Xu 徐女士	Suzhou Smith Girls' School 蘇州斯密女校
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Ms Chen 陳女士	Suzhou Smith Girls' School 蘇州斯密女校
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Ms Yin 殷女士	Suzhou Smith Girls' School 蘇州斯密女校

	Tianjin 天津	Bian Xuejin 卞學錦	
August 1918	Jiangxi 江西	Chang Cuixian 常萃賢	
September 1918	Jiangxi 江西	Chang Cuixian 常萃賢	
	Tianjin 天津	Bian Xuejin 卞學錦	
October 1918	Tianjin 天津	Bian Xuejin 卞學錦	Zhongxi Girls' School (student) 中西女學堂 學生
	Shandong 山東	Wang Wudian 王無玷	Meihua Presbyterian School in Jiao County 膠縣基督教長老會美華學堂
	Jiangxi 江西	Chang Cuixian 常萃賢	Jiangxi Hanxing Girls' School 江西漢興女校
	Hunan 湖南	Zeng Yisan 曾異三	
	Fujian 福建	Lu Jingzhong 廬靖忠	Fuzhou Yuying Girls' School 福州毓英女塾
	Shandong 山東	Jiang Xisheng 姜希聲	Meihua Presbyterian School in Jiao County (teacher) 膠縣基督教長老會高初兩等小學 教員
	Guangdong 廣東	Zhou Deying 周德英	Guangzhou Shuzheng Girls' School 廣州淑 正女學校
	Liaoning 遼寧	Guan De'en 關德恩	Fengtian (Shenyang) Dongguan Christian Women's Teaching School 奉天東關基督教 女師範學校
	Zhejiang 浙江	Hu Meiyue 胡美月	Hangzhou Hongdao Girls' School 杭州弘道 女學校
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Yang Qingyan 楊青岩	Xuzhou Jesus's Church 徐州耶穌堂
	Hubei 湖北	Sun Danjie 孫丹階	Methodist Church 循道會福音堂
	Jiangxi 江西	Chang Cuixian 常萃賢	
January 1919	Liaoning 遼寧	Li Jingru 李靜如	Fengtian (Shenyang) Dongguan Christian Women's Teaching School (student) 奉天東 關基督教女師範學校學生
	Hubei 湖北	Chen Liyuan 陳立遠	Huangzhou Yifan School (student) 黃州懿範 學校學生
	Zhejiang 浙江	Dai Dehua 戴德華	Hangzhou Peide Girls' School 杭州培德女校
	Zhejiang 浙江	Chen Zhisheng 陳志聲	Hangzhou Peide Girls' School 杭州培德女校
	Shanghai 上海	Jinhui 金蕙	
February 1919	Shandong 山東	Jiang Fenglü 姜奉呂	Meihua Presbyterian School in Jiao County 膠縣基督教長老會美華學堂
	Shandong 山東	Wang Wudian 王無玷	Meihua Presbyterian School in Jiao County 膠縣基督教長老會美華學堂
March 1919	Shanghai 上海	Ni Meiyi 倪美溢	
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Li Guanyuan 李冠媛	Zhenjiang Chongshi Girls' School 鎮江崇實 女校
	Tianjin 天津	Lu Qingshan 廬青山	
	Jiangxi 江西	Chang Cuixian 常萃賢	
April 1919	Hubei 湖北	Fan Yuhe 范玉荷	Wuchang St. Hilda Girls' School 武昌聖希理 達女校
	Shanghai 上海	Dai Qingxiu 戴清秀	Wuchang St. Hilda Girls' School 武昌聖希理 達女校
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Guo Meide 郭美德	Nanjing Teaching School 南京高等師範
	Shanghai 上海	Zheng Huamei 鄭懷美	Ximen Biwen Girls' School 西門裨文女校
	Shanghai 上海	Yu Yanzhu 餘岩竹	McTyeire School 中西女塾

	Jiangsu 江蘇	Yin Lüzhen 殷履貞	Suzhou Qimen Smith Girls' School 蘇州齊門 思密女校
	Shanghai 上海	Chen Meijia 陳美珈	Suzhou Qimen Smith Girls' School 蘇州齊門 思密女校
	Shanghai 上海	Sha Renyan 沙詡言	Suzhou Qimen Simi Girls' School 蘇州齊門 思密女校
	Hebei 河北	Chen Guozheng 陳國政	Zhili Cangzhou Church 直隸滄州福音堂
	Zhejiang 浙江	Hu Meiyue 胡美月	Hangzhou Hongdao Girls' School 杭州弘道 女校
	Hunan 湖南	Zhao Fuchu 趙福初	Changsha Fuxiang School 長沙福湘學校
	Hunan 湖南	Hu Aifang 胡愛芳	Changsha Fuxiang School 長沙福湘學校
	Shanghai 上海	Zuo Shumin 左淑民	
	Shanghai 上海	Li Yurong 李玉蓉	
	Jiangxi 江西	Chang Cuixian 常萃賢	
	Zhejiang 浙江	Dong Chengkang 董承康	Hangzhou Pishixiang Zhengze School 杭州 皮市巷正則學校
	Anhui 安徽	Liu Suzhen 劉素貞	Wuhu 蕪湖
	Anhui 安徽	Zheng Bojie 鄭伯節	Wuhu 蕪湖
May 1919	Shanghai 上海	Yan Juanzi 嚴絹子	
	Shanghai 上海	Bian Xuejin 卞學錦	St. Mary's Hall 聖馬利亞女書院
June 1919	Anhui 安徽	Zhong Ying 鍾英	Wuhu 蕪湖
	Hunan 湖南	Zhang Runan 張如楠	Liuyang Church 瀏陽福音堂
August 1919	Tianjin 天津	Lu Qingshan 廬青山	
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Chen Meijia 陳美珈	Suzhou Chongdao Girls' School 蘇州崇道女 校
	Shandong 山東	Jiang Wang Ruyu 姜如玉	Meihua Presbyterian School in Jiao County 膠縣基督教長老會美華學堂
	Shandong 山東	Zheng Zhisheng 正之聲	Meihua Presbyterian School in Jiao County 膠縣基督教長老會美華學堂
	Jiangxi 江西	Du Mingdi 杜銘欵	Jiujiang 九江
September 1919	Shanghai 上海	Cheng ?de 程? 德	Sanyu School 三育學校
	Tianjin 天津	Gao Jingzhen 高靜貞	
October 1919	Jiangsu 江蘇	Wu Tongle 吳同樂	University of Nanjing (student) 金陵大學學 生
	Hong Kong 香港	Guo Xiangwen 郭湘雯	
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Yao Ruolan 姚若蘭	Suzhou 蘇州
	Zhejiang 浙江	Zhoutang 週棠	Hangzhou 杭州
November 1919	Shanghai 上海	Xu Zhao 許昭	Zhiben Girls' School 知本女校
December 1919	Shanghai 上海	Dong Zhang Mei'en 董張 美恩	
	Fujian 福建	Lu Jingzhong 廬靖忠	Fuzhou Yuying Girls' School 福州毓英女塾
	Hong Kong 香港	Guo Xiangwen 郭湘雯	
	Liaoning 遼寧	Zhao Huanyu 趙煥玉	Fengtian (Shenyang) Dongguan Christian Women's Teaching School 奉天東關坤光師 範女校
	Hunan 湖南	Yin Bin 印濱	Taoyuan Yuannan School 桃源沅南學校
January 1920	Hunan 湖南	Zhou Zhang Enfu 周張恩 福	Changde Guangde Hospital 常德廣德醫院
	n.p.	Lu Anle 陸安樂	Yuncao Chongde Girls' School 漣漕崇德女 校

	Jiangsu 江蘇	Quan Yu 全瑜	Suzhou 蘇州
	Zhejiang 浙江	Zhu Fu 諸馥	Hangzhou 杭州
February 1920	Anhui 安徽	Zheng Biwu 鄭碧梧	Hefei Sanyu Girls' School 合肥三育女學校
	Shanghai 上海	Wu You 鄔右	
April 1920	Shanghai 上海	Bao Xianqiang 鮑咸鏘	
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Hu Zongmei 胡宗玫	Zhenjiang Chongzhen No. 1 Girls' School 鎮江崇真第一女子學校
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Wu Xiaorong 吳孝榮	Church at Youxin Street Zhenjiang 鎮江又新街福音堂
	Shandong 山東	Jiang Zhengzhi 姜正之	Jiao County Primary School (teacher) 膠縣小學教員
	Shandong 山東	Jiang Wang Ruyu 姜王如玉	Meihua Presbyterian School in Jiao County 膠縣基督教長老會美華學堂
June 1920	Jiangxi 江西	Wu Haoqiu 吳好求	Jiujiang Nuoli College 九江諾立書院
	n.p.	Zhao Zhusheng 趙竹笙	Songbu Evangelical Covenant Girls' School 宋埠行道會女子學校
	Jiangxi 江西	Song Yude 宋玉德	Jiujiang Ruli Girls' Middle School 九江儒勵女子中學
	Shanghai 上海	Yu Da? 俞大?	
	Zhejiang 浙江	Huang Xinde 黃信德	Ningbo Rende Girls' School 寧波仁德女校
	Shandong 山東	Gao Jiang Shushen 高姜淑身	Weixin Hospital 維新醫院
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Shao Jingsan 邵鏡三	Nanjing Huashi Street Christian Church 南京花市街基督教堂
July 1920	Jiangxi 江西	Yang Zhang Yuying 楊張毓英	Guling Puren Hospital 牯嶺普仁醫院
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Li Guanshu 李冠姝	Zhenjiang Chongshi Girls' School (student) 鎮江崇實女校附屬高等女生
	Jiangxi 江西	Zhang Dunjie 張敦潔	Jiujiang Nuoli College 九江諾立書院
	Jiangxi 江西	Zhang Yingpeng 張映鵬	Jiujiang Nuoli College 九江諾立書院
	Shandong 山東	Chen Yulian 陳玉蓮	Qingzhou Chongdao College 青州崇道書院
	Shandong 山東	Gu Shude 顧淑德	Qingzhou Chongdao College 青州崇道書院
August 1920	Jiangsu 江蘇	Shao Jingsan 邵鏡三	Nanjing Huashi Street Christian Church 南京花市街基督教堂
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Huang Shaoji 黃紹箕	Nanjing Huashi Street Christian Church 南京花市街基督教堂
	Hubei 湖北	Chen Ciqing 陳次青	Hankou Yangzi Machine Company 漢口揚子機器公司
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Hu Zongjiu 胡宗玖	Zhenjiang Chongde School 鎮江崇德學校
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Huang Guiqing 黃軌清	Suzhou Huiling Girls' School 蘇州慧靈女校
	n.p.	Zhao Zhusheng 趙竹笙	Songbu Evangelical Covenant Girls' School 宋埠行道會女子學校
	Shanghai 上海	Nie Guangchi 聶光坻	
	n.p.	Zhou Zhenying 周貞英	Haishan Pingtan Yuxian Girls' School 海山平潭毓賢女校
	n.p.	Ding Suxin 丁素心	Haishan Pingtan Yuxian Girls' School 海山平潭毓賢女校
	Tianjin 天津	Bian Xuejin 卞學錦	Zhongxi Girls' School 中西女學
	Shanghai 上海	Wu Tianze 吳天擇	
September 1920	n.p.	Qiling Wengai 乞靈文丐	Lazarus Newspaper (manager) 拉撒路書報社經理



	Zhejiang 浙江	Luohan Diaoyin 羅漢鈞 隱	Zhejiang-European Association (member) 浙 歐會文社社員
	n.p.	Zhao ? 趙某	Songbu Christian Girls' School 宋埠福音堂 女校
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Gao Zhenyu 高振譽	Huai'an 淮安
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Gao Shiyu 高世譽	Huai'an Furong Girls' School (graduate) 淮 安福榮女校畢業生
	Shanghai 上海	Xu Zhao 許昭	Zhiben Girls' School 知本女校
	Shanghai 上海	Xu Yuying 許毓英	Shenzhou Girls' School 神州女學
	Shanghai 上海	Ding Suxin 丁素心	Haishan Pingtan Yuxian Girls' School 海山平 潭毓賢女校
	n.p.	Zhou Zhenying 周貞英	Haishan Pingtan Yuxian Girls' School 海山平 潭毓賢女校
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Zhang Juru 張菊如	Suzhou 蘇州
October 1920	Hubei 湖北	Li Ronghua 李榮華	Sui County Xunhua Girls' School 隋縣訓華 女校
	Jiangxi 江西	Zhu Wenyao 朱文耀	Guling 牯嶺
	n.p.	Zhou Zhenying 周貞英	Haishan Pingtan Yuxian Girls' School 海山平 潭毓賢女校
	Shanghai 上海	Nie Guangchi 聶光坻	
	Shanghai 上海	Wu Cuilin 吳翠琳	
	Shanghai 上海	Xu Yuying 許毓英	Shenzhou Girls' School 神州女學
November 1920	Hunan 湖南	Yin Bin 印濱	Taoyuan Yuannan School 桃源沅南學校
	n.p.	Qi Runru 漆潤如	Xinxiang Zhenxin Girls' School 新祥貞信女 校
	Shanghai 上海	Xu Yuying 許毓英	Shenzhou Girls' School 神州女學
December 1920	Hubei 湖北	Chen Daotan 陳道坦	Huangzhou Yifan School (student) 黃州懿範 學校學生
	Hubei 湖北	Li Ronghua 李榮華	Sui County Xunhua Girls' School 隋縣訓華 女校
	Fujian 福建	Qiu Biying 邱碧瑛	
	Fujian 福建	Chen Qiguang 陳其光	Jianning Chong'an Church 建寧崇安教堂
	n.p.	Zhou Zhenying 周貞英	Haishan Pingtan Yuxian Girls' School 海山平 潭毓賢女校
	Shanghai 上海	Xu Yuying 許毓英	Shenzhou Girls' School 神州女學
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Gui Xiujun 桂秀君	Nanjing No.1 Girls' Teaching School (student) 南京第一女師校中學科學生
January 1921	Hunan 湖南	Ma Jing'an 馬靜安	湖南嶽陽新祥貞信女校
	Shanghai 上海	Xu Yuying 許毓英	Shenzhou Girls' School 神州女學
	Fujian 福建	Weng Zhujiao 翁珠嬌	Fuzhou Tainan Xunzhen Girls' School 福州 南台尋珍女校
February 1921	Jiangsu 江蘇	Fan Lisheng 范麗生	Nanjing No.1 Girls' Teaching School 南京第 一女子師範
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Xu Yun 許蘊	Nanjing No.1 Girls' Teaching School 南京第 一女子師範
	n.p.	Zhou Zhenying 周貞英	Haishan Pingtan Yuxian Girls' School 海山平 潭毓賢女校
	n.p.	Ding Suxin 丁素心	Haishan Pingtan Yuxian Girls' School 海山平 潭毓賢女校
March 1921	Jiangsu 江蘇	Hu Zongmei 胡宗玫	Zhenjiang Chongzhen No. 1 Girls' School 鎮 江崇真第一女子學校

	Jiangsu 江蘇	Huang Guiqing 黃軌清	Suzhou Huiling Girls' School 蘇州慧靈女校
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Xu Zhiqun 徐智群	Jiangsu No.1 Girls' Teaching School 江蘇第一女子師範學校
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Hu Zongmei 胡宗玫	Zhenjiang Chongzhen No. 1 Girls' School 鎮江崇真第一女子學校
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Lu Qinyin 魯琴音	Nanjing Christian Girls' School 南京基督女學校
	Jiangxi 江西	Zhang Yuying 張毓英	Guling Shanren Women's Hospital 牯嶺善仁女醫院
	Hubei 湖北	Chen Ciqing 陳次青	Hankou Yangzi Machine Company 漢口揚子機器公司
	Anhui 安徽	Zhu Lüguang 祝履光	Anqing Tongren Women's Hospital (nurse) 安慶同仁女醫院看護士
	Shanghai 上海	Yu Dacai 俞大綵	
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Xia Youzhi 夏佑之	Nanjing Huashi Street Christian Church 南京花市街基督教堂
	Tianjin 天津	Lu Qingshan 廬青山	
	Fujian 福建	Ni Guizhen 倪閩貞	Fuzhou 福州
April 1921	Jiangsu 江蘇	Lu Baorong 魯葆榮	Nanjing Shejing Girls' School 南京畚靖女校
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Xu Zhiqun 徐智群	Jiangsu No.1 Girls' Teaching School 江蘇第一女子師範學校
	Shanghai 上海	Liu Huaping 劉華屏	St. Mary's Hall 聖馬利亞女校
	Shanghai 上海	Xu Yuying 許毓英	Shenzhou Girls' School 神州女學
	Hubei 湖北	Kang Fangchen 康方琛	Jingzhou Xingdao Girls' School 荊州行道女校
	Jiangxi 江西	Wang Hexiu 王和秀	Nanchang Baofeng Girls' School 南昌葆豐女校
	Jiangsu 江蘇	夏佑之	Nanjing Huashi Street Christian Church 南京花市街基督教堂
	Hong Kong 香港	Ouzhang Shulan 歐張淑蘭	
	Hubei 湖北	Sun Chang'en 孫昌恩	Wuchang Bowen College 武昌博文書院
	Jilin 吉林	Wang Jinrong 王金榮	Dongguan Wenhua Girls' School 東關文化女校
	Shanxi 山西	Wang Yurun 王玉潤	Fenyang Chongdao Girls' School 汾陽崇道女校
	n.p.	Li Tao 李陶氏	Yuying Girls' School 毓英女校
	Shanghai 上海	Yu Da? 俞大?	St. Mary's Hall 聖馬利亞書院
	n.p.	Lu Qianzhong 盧倩忠	Yuying Girls' School 毓英女校
	Fujian 福建	He Shuying 何淑英	Yanping Shuxin Girls' School 延平淑馨女校
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Hu Zongmei 胡宗玫	Zhenjiang Chongzhen No. 1 Girls' School 鎮江崇真第一女子學校
	Jiangxi 江西	Qiu Shuying 裘淑英	Nanchang Hui'an School 南昌惠安學校
	Hubei 湖北	Su Qiaozhen 蘇巧珍	漢口揚子公司
	Shandong 山東	Liu Ruilan 劉瑞蘭	山東安邱萃文女校
	Zhejiang 浙江	Xu Shizhu 徐師竹	Hangzhou Hongdao Girls' School 杭州弘道女學校
May 1921	Hebei 河北	Cui Wenhuan 崔文煥	Zhili Xiaozhang Deshun Girls' School 直隸蕭張德順女校
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Xu Zhiqun 徐智群	Jiangsu No.1 Girls' Teaching School 江蘇第一女子師範學校

	Shanghai 上海	Xu Yuying 許毓英	Shenzhou Girls' School 神州女學
	Heilongjiang 黑龍江	Chen Guangxin 陳廣信	Haerbin Xingtongji Factory 哈爾濱興同記工廠
	Jiangxi 江西	Wang Anfu 王安福	Jiujiang City Danfude Women's Hospital 九江城內但福德女醫院
	Fujian 福建	Lu Qianzhong 盧倩忠	Fuzhou Yuying Girls' School 福州毓英女校
	Liaoning 遼寧	Xie Ruifang 謝瑞芳	Fengtian (Shenyang) Jin County Yumei Girls' School 奉天錦縣育美女校
	Zhejiang 浙江	Xu Shizhu 徐師竹	Hangzhou Hongdao Girls' School 杭州弘道女學校
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Shen Zanping 沈贊平	Nanjing No.1 Girls' Teaching School 南京第一女子師範
	Guangdong 廣東	Chen Cuiying 陳萃英	Guangzhou Xuzheng School 廣州激正學校
	Shanghai 上海	Cheng Ji Chuangde 程季創德	
	Hong Kong 香港	Ouzhang Shulan 歐張淑蘭	
June 1921	Fujian 福建	Huang Guiqing 黃軌清	Fuzhou 福州
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Fan Lisheng 范麗生	Nanjing No.1 Girls' Teaching School 南京第一女子師範
	Zhejiang 浙江	Xu Shizhu 徐師竹	Hangzhou Hongdao Girls' School 杭州弘道女學校
	Shanxi 山西	Jia Minying 賈敏英	Hedongdao Huo County China Inland Mission Girls' School (student) 河東道霍縣內地會女校學生
	Zhejiang 浙江	Mr Buzhi 不知先生	Zhewenhui Literary Society 浙溫會文社
	Zhejiang 浙江	Lü Weizhi 呂衛之	Zhewenhui Literary Society 浙溫會文社
	Fujian 福建	Lu Qianzhong 盧倩忠	Fuzhou Yuying Girls' School 福州毓英女校
	Fujian 福建	黃德秀	福建泉州培英女校
	Jiangxi 江西	Qiu Shuying 裘淑英	Nanchang Hui'an School 南昌惠安學校
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Xu Zhiqun 徐智群	Jiangsu No.1 Girls' Teaching School 江蘇第一女子師範學校
July 1921	Jiangsu 江蘇	Xu Zhiqun 徐智群	Jiangsu No.1 Girls' Teaching School 江蘇第一女子師範學校
	Zhejiang 浙江	Xu Shizhu 徐世竹	Hangzhou Hongdao Girls' School 杭州弘道女校
	Zhejiang 浙江	Lü Weizhi 呂衛之	Zhewenhui Literary Society 浙溫會文社
August 1921	Shanghai 上海	Xu Yuying 許毓英	Shenzhou Girls' School 神州女學
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Zheng Quan 鄭權	Suzhou 蘇州
September 1921	Hubei 湖北	Zeng Huan 曾煥	
	n.p.	Zhao Zhusheng 趙竹笙	Songbu Evangelical Covenant Girls' School 宋埠行道會女子學校
	Zhejiang 浙江	Ma Meiyong 馬美英	Hangzhou 杭州
	Hubei 湖北	Chen Ciqing 陳次青	Hankou Yangzi Machine Company 漢口揚子機器公司
	Fujian 福建	Huang Dexiu 黃德秀	Quanzhou Peiying Girls' School 泉州培英女校
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Xu Yun 許蘊	Nanjing No.1 Girls' Teaching School 南京第一女子師範
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Zheng Jumei 鄭菊美	Nanjing Huazhong Public School 南京華中公學

	Shandong 山東	Wang Wudian 王無玷	Meihua Presbyterian School in Jiao County 膠縣基督教長老會美華學堂
	Shandong 山東	Guo Yulian 郭毓廉	Tai'an Dezhen Middle School 泰安德貞中學
	Shanghai 上海	Yu Da? 俞大?	St. Mary's Hall 聖馬利亞書院
	Hubei 湖北	Sun Chang'en 孫昌恩	Wuchang Bowen College 武昌博文書院
	Beijing 北京	Tao Zhongqing 陶中清	
	n.p.	Gao Peiru 高佩如	Ruihua Girls' School 瑞華女校
	Jiangxi 江西	Yang Hui'ai 楊惠愛	Hui'an Girls' School 惠安女校
	Anhui 安徽	Mei Meili 梅美麗	Anqing Peiyuan Girls' School 安慶培媛女校
January 1922	Shanghai 上海	Gu Aiyong 顧愛英	Pudong 浦東
	Jiangxi 江西	Zhang Nuo 張諾	Jiujiang Ruli College 九江儒勵書院
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Dai Songyi 戴頌一	Changzhou Yude Girls' School 常州育德女校
	Beijing 北京	Zhu Aizheng 朱愛正	Cuizhen Girls' School 萃貞女校
	Shandong 山東	Guo Yulian 郭毓廉	Tai'an Dezhen Middle School 泰安德貞中學
	Shanxi 山西	Hu Jin Huiying 胡靳慧英	Jiexiu County Church 介休縣福音堂
	Jiangxi 江西	Wang Anfu 王安福	Jiujiang City Danfude Women's Hospital 九 江城內但福德女醫院
	Fujian 福建	Chen Furong 陳芙蓉	Yanping Church 延平福音堂
	Fujian 福建	Lin Yu? 林玉?	Jixiang Mountain Xiehe Teaching's School for Kindergarten 吉祥山協和幼稚師範學校
	Hunan 湖南	Li Ming 黎明	Yiyang Lutheran Girls' School 益陽信義女學 校
	Beijing 北京	Li Guizhen 李貴珍	Cuizhen Girls' School 萃貞女校
	Liaoning 遼寧	Ma Liangyu 馬良玉	Jinzhou Yuying Girls' School 錦州育英女校
	Liaoning 遼寧	Wang Yubao 王玉寶	Jinzhou Yuying Girls' School 錦州育英女校
	Liaoning 遼寧	An Baozhen 安寶珍	Jinzhou Yuying Girls' School 錦州育英女校
	Liaoning 遼寧	Liu Yuzhen 劉玉珍	Jinzhou Yuying Girls' School 錦州育英女校
	Sichuan 四川	Pan Yuqing 潘玉清	Xu County Shuliang Girls' School 敘縣淑良 女校
April 1922	Hubei 湖北	Yin Lei 殷雷	Christian School in E city 鄂城福音堂學校
May 1922	Jiangsu 江蘇	Li Guanyuan 李冠媛	Zhenjiang Chongshi Girls' School 鎮江崇實 女校
	Fujian 福建	Zhao Bingguang 趙炳光	Fuzhou 福州
June 1922	Shandong 山東	Jiang Fenglü 姜奉呂	Meihua Presbyterian School in Jiao County 膠縣基督教長老會美華學堂
July 1922	Fujian 福建	Zhao Congde 趙從德	Fuzhou Yihe Bank 福州義和洋行
	Jiangxi 江西	Song Yude 宋玉德	Jiujiang Ruli Girls' Middle School 九江儒勵 女子中學
	Shanghai 上海	Zhang Baohui 張寶慧	Yan Mo Girls' School 晏摩氏女校
	Guangdong 廣東	Liu Biyao 劉碧瑤	Guangzhou 廣州
	Jiangxi 江西	Lu Zhisheng 陸智生	Jiujiang City Danfude Women's Hospital 九 江城內但福德女醫院
October 1922	Zhejiang 浙江	Huang ?qing 黃? 卿	Hangzhou 杭州
	Shanghai 上海	Luo Meiqin 羅美琴	
February 1923	Shanghai 上海	Cai Shoudao 蔡守道	
	Fujian 福建	Qiu Qinglian 邱清濂	Fuzhou Taoshu Girls' School 福州陶淑女校
	Hubei 湖北	Peng Sujie 彭素潔	Huangzhou Yifan School 黃州懿範學校
	Fujian 福建	Shao Feibi 邵非比	Fuzhou Magaoai Hospital 福州馬高愛醫院

	Hubei 湖北	Zhao Meizhen 趙梅珍	Huangzhou Yifan School 黃州懿範學校
	Shandong 山東	Cui Lang Suqin 崔郎素琴	
January 1924	Shanghai 上海	Chen Luming 陳鹿鳴	
	Zhejiang 浙江	Xu Suqing 徐素青	Ningbo Rende Girls' School 寧波仁德女校
	Hong Kong 香港	Zhao Lifen 趙麗芬	
	Tianjin 天津	Tang Yao 唐瑤	
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Lu Meiyong 魯美英	Nanjing Gulou 南京鼓樓
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Jiang Ruogui 姜若貴	Suzhou Yiyong Girls' School 蘇州義由女校
	Fujian 福建	Lin Fule 林福樂	Fuzhou Linghou Taoshu Girls' School 福州嶺後陶淑女校
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Zhang Youshu 張由淑	Nanjing Qing Girls' School 南京清女校
	Hubei 湖北	Bo Yongxiang 卜詠香	De'an fu Jinming Girls' School 德安府進明女校
	Jiangsu 江蘇	Pan Baolin 潘寶麟	Nanjing Xiaguan Cuiqun Girls' School 南京下關萃群女學
	Shanxi 山西	Lü Mingying 呂明英	Shuzhen Girls' School 淑貞女校
	Shanxi 山西	Niu Xinghua 牛興華	Xinjiang County Christian Church 新絳縣基督教堂
	Sichuan 四川	Zhang Xuewu 張學武	Shude Girls' School 淑德女校
	Jiangxi 江西	Weng Huiqing 翁惠卿	Jiujiang Chengwai Christian Girls' School 九江城外福音女校