

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION IN CHINA

A RETROSPECTIVE



by Jessie G. Lutz

During the past decade or so, the historiography of Christianity in China and of China missions has gained in legitimacy and has attracted increasing interest. Numerous studies have appeared on missionaries as cultural brokers, on Chinese nationalist responses, and on Chinese Christians with or without institutional affiliation. Researchers in Taiwan and China as well as in the West have been amassing the factual detail necessary to a more accurate picture of the encounter. Scholars are simultaneously searching for a balanced reassessment of the successes and failures, of the positive contributions along with the negative consequences of the interaction.

Coming together during the 1970s and 1980s to stimulate research on Chinese Christianity were a variety of events and individuals. The renewal of U.S. China diplomatic relations was, of course, a first step, to be followed by China's "opening to the West" and moves toward liberalization. These changes did more than facilitate the exchange of information and persons. Chinese Christians gained in confidence and visibility. Not only had Christianity survived the Cultural Revolution and the Gang of Four, but Chinese Christians were amenable to contacts

with Christians abroad. The policy of the four modernizations encouraged Chinese leaders once again to import technology and science from the West. Historical memories of the self-strengthening movement of the Tongzhi period and of the prestige of Western learning during the first two decades of the twentieth century revived.



China's recent emphasis on pragmatism and expertise permitted, even necessitated, the rehabilitation of many intellectuals with previous Western experience or contacts. Such was the case both in the selection of scholars with the requisite English facility to study abroad and the quest for leadership of research projects, academic institutions, and professional associations at home. Graduates of Peking Union Medical College, for example, were prominent, even dominant, in the China Medical Association, in the biomedical section of the Chinese Academy of Science, in the headship of medical schools, and in the list of contributors to medical journals. Until a new generation could be trained, the gap left by the wounded generation had to be filled by older scholars.

In the West, the growing attention accorded cultural and social history has contributed to interest in the history of religion and missions, including their relation to Western expansionism. John K. Fairbank of Harvard University has been indefatigable in insisting on the importance of research on China missions and Christianity and in steering scholars into the field. With the overall maturing of Western historiography on China have come increased knowledge and appreciation of the complexity and diversity of China. Monographs on minority and marginal groups, on heterodoxy and on minor strains within Confucianism have appeared; among these are studies of Chinese Christians, their backgrounds and their role in China.

The hundred years of unequal relationship between China and the West from the 1840s to the 1940s continue, nevertheless, to cast a shadow. The antagonism and disillusionment pervading U.S.-China relations as the Chinese Communist Party rode to victory, and the hostile rhetoric during the non-relationship of the 1950s and 60s have left scars. Emotion often lies close to the surface in any attempt to assess the impact of Christian missions.

Autonomy and a sense of self-identity and self-worth on the part of Chinese Christians today perhaps make it easier for them to delineate and acknowledge the contributions of Western Christians, but sensitivity

to any implication of patronage remains. Bishop K.H. Ting, Anglican chairman in the China Christian Council and the Three-Self Movement, president of Nanjing Union Theological College, and member of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, in 1984 denied that the Three-Self Movement was anti-foreign and claimed that Chinese churches were just as much a part of the universal church as the Anglican or American churches. He quickly added, though, "We only wish to stop being merely a dot on the missionary map of Western churches." Jiang Wenhan, member of the National Three-Self Movement Committee and research scholar at the Institute for Historical Studies, Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, briefly recapitulated in 1981 the history of Christianity in China before 1949. Not only did he view Chinese Christians as subordinate to authoritarian missionaries, but he expressed personal resentment over the fact that as a mission school student during the 1920s, he had been restricted in his participation in patriotic student movements.

When Bishop John B. Wu visited China in 1985, he expressed the hope that Hong Kong Catholics could serve as a bridge in restoring relations between the universal Catholic church under Vatican leadership and Chinese Catholics as represented by the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association. Chinese leaders voiced appreciation of his sentiments while politely and firmly stating that they would set the terms for renewal of contacts. Other Catholics in the People's Republic of China have been more open in expressions of resentment. Some bluntly accused the Vatican of treating Chinese Catholic churches like colonies and calling on Chinese Catholics to oppose the People's Republic of China and Chinese Communist Party leadership. Loyalty to the nation and loyalty to the faith were, thereby, placed in opposition to each other.

In a delicate ballet with ever present chances for misstep the research and reassessment continue. A Chinese Christian took some pride in the fact that the number of references to cultural aggression had been reduced by half in the second edition of his history of missions in China. Western in-house histories of Christian missions in China no longer concentrate on such themes as, What did we do wrong in China? What methodology would have produced more numerous converts?

A personal note will serve to introduce the more specific subject of the reassessment of the role of the Christian colleges in China. Some research on the Christian colleges using archival material in China has already been initiated by scholars in such widely scattered areas as Shanghai, Suzhou, Chengdu, Hangzhou, Nanjing and Beijing. Though the

Chinese historians often refer to the subject as the "invasion of the imperialist culture", they are clearly seeking an evaluation that is more complex than the wholesale condemnations of parochial schools prevalent during the 1950s and 1960s. To one or more of these scholars, it seemed that my general history of the Protestant colleges in China, based on sources available in the West, might be a useful base of in-depth studies. Once a translation was made, however, the question of the title, CHINA AND THE CHRISTIAN COLLEGES, 1850-1950, posed problems. The term Christian carried a whole freight-load of connotations. Obviously, the institutions were under the dominance of Western Christendom and foreign missions. Were they Christian within the current Chinese context of Christianity? Could one attribute positive contributions by institutions that operated under extraterritoriality and were inextricably a part of the whole unequal treaty system? At length, the decision was made to publish the work under a title which translates roughly as "History of Denominational Universities in China".

Any reassessment of the role of the Christian colleges, therefore, must remain tentative. Events and leaders with their own agenda alter perspectives and priorities. New data is being unearthed. Awaiting research are important facets of Christian college history; for example, the role of Fu Jen and St. John's in occupied China during World War II, the significance of feeder schools and attached middle schools, the career patterns of graduates, the relation of the colleges to the Chinese Christian churches and the sinification of Christianity. A monographic study of the Roman Catholic institutions, Zhen Dan or Aurora University, Fu Jen or Catholic University, and Hautes Etudes Industrielles et Commerciales (later, Tsinku University) should have high priority. Chinese and Western histories almost inevitably express the cultural values of the authors, but the prognosis for more insightful and balanced monographs is good.

Developments in the fields of cultural anthropology, sociology, and psychology as well as history help us understand the process of cultural exchange better. Even though our understanding is far from perfect, we recognize something of the psychic cost of importing from a wealthier and more powerful civilization. We are aware of the social, cultural, and psychological burdens of Christian conversion in a non-Christian civilization. Not only was the convert obliged to renounce many aspects of his heritage, veneration of the ancestors for instance, but he lacked the support mechanisms that Westerners took for granted. Told that he should not work on Sunday, he might well wonder how he

could compete with his compatriots, who observed no such day of rest. In a very real sense, a Chinese Christian became a marked person, set apart from his fellows. The same holds true in the People's Republic of China today.

In the nineteenth century, missionaries came to China as bearers of truth to the heathen, as teachers to a "backward" people. Evangelists had little compunction about the disruptions their doctrines and practices caused in the Chinese countryside, in the culture and the polity. A superstitious people needed to be shaken loose from corrupt practices and erroneous beliefs. For an American minister, a church building was a rectangular clapboard structure with a steeple reaching for the heavens. When Chinese villagers protested that the steeple disturbed the spirits of wind and water with the result that disaster rained upon them, the evangelist was apt to take this as further evidence of the importance of combating pagan superstitions. Arrogant mandarins should not be permitted to deter the preaching of the Gospel. As bearers of the truth, missionaries were answerable to a higher authority, not to the laws of a heathen monarch.

Missionaries soon discovered, however, that the bulk of the Chinese were singularly indifferent to their message. Chinese assumed that they had their own truths and so saw little need for the alien, heterodox Christian religion. Until the late nineteenth century, most Chinese were not much interested in the West and its culture. How could there be civilization without Confucian morality, they asked. Westerners were called yi (barbarians) or long noses. The first term indicated that Westerners came from primitive societies lacking the benefit of Confucian teachings; the second indicated that Westerners deviated from the physical norm. Among those few Chinese who did convert, a sizable per cent failed to abide by the demands of the faith as defined by the missionary; too often, it seemed, they found the sacrifices of church membership overwhelming and fell away. Missionaries, for their part, tended to attribute their limited success in converting Chinese to some defect in the Chinese character.

And so, partly out of frustration, evangelists founded schools. They desired to gain an audience and particularly to gain an audience with whom they would have sustained contact. Street-corner preaching to shifting groups of listeners had produced few Christians; it was hoped that the pupils would become converts. Children of Christians would not have to attend heathen schools and be indoctrinated in Confucian teachings. Building a Christian community might help sustain converts.

The early parochial schools in China, therefore, were viewed as aids to evangelism. In American Protestantism, close ties between education and the church had been characteristic. With the Bible as the centerpiece of the faith, literacy was particularly important to Protestants; most of the early American colleges had been established primarily to educate ministers and other professionals. Despite the fact that some evangelists and home boards objected to using mission funds for educational activities, many missionaries turned to education as a natural supplement of their work.

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Roman Catholic orders also founded schools, but in this activity, as in almost every other aspect of China missions, Protestants and Catholics went their separate ways. The two were frequently represented by differing nationalities speaking variant languages. They not only used different Chinese characters to designate God and the Holy Spirit, but were, in fact, often referred to by dissimilar terms: Religion (or teaching) of the Lord of Heaven (Tianzhu jiao-Catholic) and Religion of Jesus (Yesu jiao-Protestant). Catholics relied on celibate priests, monks, and sisters, whereas the overwhelming majority of Protestant ministers had wife and family. Since Protestant and Catholic missionaries in China had infrequent personal contact and, during the nineteenth century at least, regarded each other as competitors, many Chinese thought of the two as separate religions rather than as branches of a common Christian faith.

Catholic priests ordinarily preferred to educate a family into the faith rather than encourage an emotional conversionary experience by individuals. Catholic sisters devoted much of their energy to orphanages, where they could nurture children in a Christian environment and arrange their marriages to Christian spouses at any early age. The majority of the Catholic schools, therefore, were at the primary level and of the catechismal type, unlikely to evolve into institutions of higher education. Though theological academies for Chinese candidates for the priesthood existed, most seminarians completed their advanced training in Rome or elsewhere in Europe. The number of middle schools and middle school students did increase significantly during the twentieth century and several institutions approximated junior college standards, but Catholic orders were slow to move into the university realm. The founding dates for the three Roman Catholic universities are: Aurora, 1903; Hautes Études, 1923; and Fu Jen, 1925. As in the case of the Protestant colleges, enrollments remained low until the Sino-Japanese War of 1937.

The first era of parochial education in China lasted from the 1850s 'til the 1890s and, during this period, the schools were for most Chinese an unwelcome alternative to the norm. The norm was study of the Confucian classics and commentaries as preparation for taking the civil service examinations. The goal was to train a male elite to staff the government bureaucracy. Since mastery of the Confucian heritage and intimate acquaintance with Confucian orthodoxy were essential to pass the examinations, the curriculum was basically humanistic. Mathematics and science, the social sciences and professional training received scant attention. In the parochial schools, of course, classes on the Bible and Christian religion had pride of place. Western science, mathematics, history, literature and geography were also included, and, somewhat later, study of the English language became important.

The study of the Confucian classics was necessary, however, for attaining literacy and much of the parochial pupil's time in the early primary grades was devoted to memorizing such traditional texts as the Thousand Character Classic (Qian zi wen), the Trimetrical Classic (San zi ching), and the Hundred Names (Bai jia xing). Though missionaries criticized both texts and pedagogy as inefficient and heathen in content, though they even composed Christian substitutes for the Trimetrical Classic, they were, during the nineteenth century, heavily dependent on native classical scholars who generally employed the traditional primers and techniques. Students, upon progressing to the Four Books and Five Classics, were often provided with glosses pointing out the errors and deficiencies of Confucianism. Divergences between the curriculum of the parochial schools and of the Chinese schools increased once the pupil had acquired the basic reading and writing skills and as Western learning commanded greater attention.

In institutional structure as well as curriculum, the two systems differed. Without a national primary educational program, Chinese families, lineages, and other groups hired private tutors for their sons. Young pupils studied on a one to one relationship with the tutor, proceeding at their own pace instead of following a graded progression from class to class. The parochial schools, on the other hand, set up graded classes with a regularized schedule for all. In sequential progress marked by qualifying examinations, the pupil moved through the system toward formal graduation and receipt of a degree. Neither teacher nor school certified graduation in traditional Chinese education. Advanced students might go on to academies where they honed their skills under the guidance of eminent scholars or dissident literati, but the

civil service examination was the closest equivalent to graduation. It was quite separable from the schools.

Following a schedule and a calendar tailored to individual needs, the tutor might teach in a room situated in a private home or in a lineage shrine. Evangelists preferred, if possible, to have their own school buildings set apart from society. When some of the schools evolved into colleges, the emphasis was on a residential campus: a walled academic community with its own faculty homes, dormitories, dining hall, classrooms, chapel, dispensary, extra-curricular activities, etc. Many of the institutions were located on the fringes of a city, insulated from the flow of Chinese intellectual and political life.

Until the twentieth century, most ambitious Chinese students remained uninterested and unimpressed with the Christian institutions. Their goal was to enter the bureaucracy, while the training in the Chinese classics provided by the mission schools was rarely sufficient to enable one to pass the examinations. Sharpening the confrontation between parochial schools and traditional Chinese schools was the fact that both had an ideological purpose. Indoctrination in a specific orthodoxy was a major function of each, Christianity in the case of the parochial school, Confucianism in the case of the traditional school. It is understandable that during the nineteenth century the Christian schools grew slowly. The number of students was small and they did not come from influential sectors of society. By 1900 there were some 2,000 Protestant schools, mostly primary, with some forty to fifty middle schools and six institutions claiming the status of college or university. Approximately 40,000 students attended these schools, not an insignificant number, but only a tiny fraction of the total student population of China. Even though over 75% of the Chinese lived in agrarian villages, most of the Protestant institutions would be found in cities and market towns. Student totals in Catholic schools were actually greater than in the Protestant ones, but the overwhelming majority were at the lower primary range or in "prayer schools". In addition to a few middle schools, 64 seminaries of various levels reported 1,640 pupils in 1906.

The parochial schools, nevertheless, served several functions even as they operated on the margins of Chinese society. Since they charged little or no tuition during the nineteenth century, they could provide an avenue of mobility for families with modest income and little hope of placing a son in the civil service. This was particularly true of those

schools teaching English. By the turn of the century, the increasing complexity of Chinese society required and rewarded a greater diversity of skills; thus, youths from parochial schools found a number of employment possibilities: acting as interpreters or translators for government bureaus or Chinese businesses dealing with foreigners, serving as clerks or scribes for Western firms in the treaty ports, becoming compradors or middlemen for some of the British or American trading companies, or even working as houseboys for foreign families. With the diversification of urban society came professional opportunities in such fields as journalism, modern banking, commercial law and engineering.



Some students discovered that the technical, scientific, and mathematical knowledge they acquired enabled them to secure positions in new government departments: the telegraph service, railway administration, maritime customs, and navy, for example. Since they could not hold high rank in the civil service without passing the government examinations, they generally did not gain policy-making positions; but as non-degree men, they definitely moved up in society. A number were able to purchase lower degrees or secure positions in the entourage of reformist officials like Li Hongzhang. Because of their foreign language facility and acquaintance with Western mores, parochial school students came to fill diplomatic posts in Europe and America by the early twentieth century; this was particularly true of those who used their Chinese parochial education as a spring board for study abroad.

The missions, furthermore, tended to employ their own; their protégés often staffed the Christian hospitals, orphanages, churches, and schools in a variety of jobs ranging from teacher to cook, from pastoral assistant to gatekeeper. Probably the majority of those who stayed to graduate from the senior middle schools or colleges entered mission employ.

In a number of academic areas, Christian educators were innovators. One area was formal education for women. So far in this essay, the male orientation has dominated and he/she alternatives have not been necessary. The reason is quite simply the fact that females could not take the civil service examination and since this was the primary purpose of traditional Chinese education, there seemed little point in educating Chinese women at all. Some rich gentry families might enable their daughters to acquire the literary and artistic graces and some indulgent parents might allow their daughters to sit in on their son's

instruction, but literacy was considered no asset for a woman; in fact, it was ordinarily looked upon as just the opposite. Missionaries, and more specifically Protestant missionary wives and single women, pioneered in schools for girls as part of an overall program. Though many of the schools emphasized religion and the domestic arts, they were based on the assumption that female education was not only legitimate but standard. The mission argument in favor of women's education was often similar to the one that would later be employed by Chinese nationalists: educate a mother in order to determine the values of the next generation. Even so, parochial middle schools frequently acquired a life and ambition of their own. Christian missionaries were the first to offer collegiate education for women in China. Chinese universities accepted co-education in universities in 1919 after graduates of North China Union [Christian] Women's College applied for and gained admission to Beijing National University. Even after Chinese government institutions acquiesced in higher education for women, the Protestant schools continued to educate a significant per cent of the women seeking college training.



Although female missionaries were not advocates of women's liberation in the late twentieth-century sense, their example of personal autonomy provided alternative role models. That single female missionaries should be labeled "she tigers" reveals much about their image. Their inculcation of professional ambition and a sense of social responsibility as a privileged vanguard helped inspire a high per cent of the graduates from women's Christian colleges to pursue graduate studies and a career. As with traditional Chinese tong xue, the early female graduates of parochial middle schools and colleges retained a sense of comradeship contributing to a consciousness of mission.

Christian evangelists also worked to bring modern medical and dental education to China and to establish formal certification requirements for doctors and nurses. Though special facilities for the physically and mentally ill were not unknown in dynastic China, the concept of a hospital with isolation wards, trained nurses, operating rooms, and professional control by doctors represented an innovation. Medical missionaries, as they founded hospitals, quickly realized the need for aides and began to instruct Chinese assistants in the course of their rounds. Informal teaching grew into medical schools and so formal professional medical education was introduced to China. Since there was a prejudice against male doctors examining female patients, the need for female physicians called forth Chinese women practitioners at a time when female doctors were still a rarity in the West. Eventually the

Medical Missionary Association, in cooperation with the newly founded national medical association, helped implement a medical certification program in China. For doctors and hospitals, trained nurses were required. Despite great reluctance to accept nurses as other than servants, the dedicated example of Catholic sisters and Protestant mission nurses, the organization of a Nurses' Association of China, and the needs of modern medicine established nursing as a profession in China.



In their lives and works missionary families served as a source of information regarding many aspects of Western civilization. Even if they were not necessarily the best or the least biased cultural intermediaries, even if they touched only a minority of Chinese, they were historically important transmission instruments. They wrote and translated textbooks, and if it is difficult to know how many were reprinted, evidence seems to indicate that the works often found their way into the hands of reformers and later into private and government schools. The School and Textbook Committee and the Society for the Diffusion of Christian and General Knowledge, for example, reported a spectacular rise in sales, especially of mathematical and scientific books, during the 1870s and again during the 1890s.

As they published secular materials, they helped develop the vocabulary of science, medicine, geography, and so forth. Such confusion reigned in the devising of Chinese translations for concepts, chemical elements, biological and anatomical nomenclature, and place names that there were instances of four different terms for Arabia, Australia, Calcutta, etc. and the use of identical terms for different chemical elements. Missionary educators finally organized terminology committees to initiate the difficult task of formulating and securing agreement on uniform lists. The process proved to be so disputatious and lengthy that government and professional organizations took over the project in the twentieth century.

Personal contacts, journals, and the very life style of missionaries contributed to a changing Chinese concept of the world and humankind. Missionaries facilitated the realization by educated Chinese that alternative societies and civilizations, though different from the Confucian, could be both respectable and legitimate. Missions were, in other words, a disruptive force in the traditional Chinese landscape. As such, they were simultaneously a part of the modernizing process and a source of unhappiness and antagonism. The education

of women and their entry into professions are probably essential to a modern society, but not all Chinese, male or female, welcomed the change. Always necessary, of course, is the caveat that missionaries and their work influenced only a fraction of the total Chinese population, a dynamic and influential urban sector, but still a tiny per cent. Offsetting the positive was the role of missions in fostering a negative attitude toward Western importations and resistance to change involving loss of heritage and identity.



As reform and revolutionary movements gathered momentum at the turn of the century, Christian education in China entered a new phase. For a brief period from the 1890s to the 1920s, parochial schools enjoyed a new-found popularity. Not only did they have more applicants than they could accept, but many of the students came from gentry families; their graduates were sought after as teachers and consultants. In 1905 the government abolished the traditional civil service examinations and began to move toward a Western educational structure and curriculum. No longer was study of the Confucian classics sufficient to open the door to government employment. Enterprising youths rushed to acquire modern learning at home or abroad; educators struggled to devise a national educational system. By this time, of course, Chinese were turning directly to the West and Japan for information so that the first national educational blueprint followed the Japanese pattern. The mission schools in China were, nevertheless, accessible models; their textbooks were in print and they were used. For those Chinese who could not afford to study abroad, the schools offered the Western training many sought. Youths were willing to pay the price of matriculation, i.e., required religion courses and attendance at church services, even if they had no interest in Christianity.

For those seeking admission to European and American schools, the parochial institutions offered some of the best Western language instruction in China. Many of those "returned students" who moved rapidly into responsible positions during the Republican period, had gained the necessary language facility in the mission schools. The reputation of St. John's University and its attached middle school, for instance, rested heavily on the ability of its graduates to pass the English language sector of the Boxer Indemnity examinations and to gain entry to American universities. Aurora University and Catholic academies in Beijing, Shanghai, and Shandong provided French and German language instruction for those desiring study on the European continent, law and medicine being favored fields.

As a result, the mission schools were able to expand and raise their standards. By 1920 Protestant schools ranging from primary through the middle level enrolled approximately 200,000 pupils, while the twenty colleges then in existence had slightly over 2,000 students. Catholic schools reported 259,000 pupils in 1924, the great majority at the primary level, with less than 6,000 in middle school and above. In terms of the total number of Chinese students, of course, those associated with the parochial schools were few. Far more students went to Japan to study than to Europe or America. Even though the number of college level students in the Christian institutions almost doubled between 1920 and 1925, government universities enrolled eight times as many students as did the Christian colleges.



Scattered information would indicate that Christians had an influential role in the reform and revolutionary campaigns that led to change and finally to the displacement of the monarchy by a republic in 1911. Prominent reformers read the mission journals and secular translations, while several had personal contacts with missionary educators. Liang Qichao met with Timothy Richard during 1895-96 and Liang, Kang Youwei, and Song Yuren apparently were acquainted with Richard's Chinese language writings and with Young J. Allen's Wan guo gong bao ("Review of the Times"). In addition to Sun Yat-sen, a number of Christian converts and parochial school graduates are known to have participated in revolutionary activities. Though the names of many revolutionaries are lost and many were reticent about revealing any religious commitment, occasional references would suggest that some branches of the Tong Meng Hui included significant numbers of Christians or of Chinese having contact with missionary educators. Perhaps because Christians were already marginal to mainstream Chinese society, they found it easier to accept abandonment of tradition and easier to break with the establishment. Before any definitive conclusions can be reached, however, a great deal more research will be required.

During the early twentieth century, the Social Gospel emphasis gained favor. Advocates of the Social Gospel talked of Christianizing Chinese society and they cherished the belief that Christian good works and a Christian environment would make conversion less of a social trauma. They called for even greater attention to education, particularly the training of teachers. Parochial pupils, they argued, would always remain a fraction of the total, but Christians could extend their influence by educating teachers for the national schools. As they joined in campaigns against foot-binding, prostitution, concubinage,

infanticide, child labor, and opium smoking, they hoped to demonstrate the virtues of the Christian faith. They were trying to convey the message that Christianity meant service to Chinese society. As they gave increasing attention to secular education, to mass literary campaigns, to famine relief, education of the blind and the deaf, and havens for lepers and the mentally ill, they set forth an ideal of social service. The activities of James Y.C. Yen and Y.M.C.A. in devising a mass education program are perhaps the best known of the Social Gospel works. They are also typical in that they were limited in scope and effectiveness.



Without political power and a nation-wide institutional structure, they could at best present a social vision, while aiding a limited number of individuals. Christian women's schools, for example, generally made abandonment of foot-binding a condition for entry and thereby gave impetus to a concern already attracting the attention of Chinese gentry families. YMCA and YWCA branches, the Catholic Youth Association, and numerous Protestant youth groups set up evening schools in which some hundreds of factory workers gained literacy; they provided recreation facilities for children of certain Shanghai laborers; they organized classes on health care, nutrition, sanitation and epidemic control. Implementation of social reform on a broad scale would, however, await a government committed to total revolution. As is frequently the case, the greatest impact may well have been on the student participants themselves. Alumni in their memoirs often stressed the dedication, personal concern, and inspiration of their teachers as well as the friendships developed during social service projects. For some Christians in the 1940s communist leadership was acceptable, even desirable, because the Chinese Communist Party appeared willing and able to carry out much of the reform program of the Social Gospel. The leadership of the Three-Self Movement was drawn from such Christians.

The era of good will toward Christian education was cut short by the nationalist drive for unity and sovereignty during the 1920s. Chinese patriots condemned the schools as infringements on Chinese sovereignty. An independent state, they said, had a right to regulate all education within its borders, whereas the parochial schools were completely autonomous, setting their own standards, determining their own curriculum, and granting their own degrees. They claimed they were part of the unequal treaty system which had to be abrogated. They were islands of extraterritoriality, as symbolized by the walled compounds under the protection of the foreign flag. Because the Christian religion and modern science were deemed incompatible, the schools were censured

as deterrents to the reconstruction of China. An oft-repeated criticism was that the missionaries used education as a bribe; their real aim was to proselytize and they subordinated their educational program to this goal. Nationalists accused the schools of cultural aggression. The institutions were said to be foreign in administration, in support, in atmosphere, and in course content. Washington and Napoleon were more familiar to parochial students than such Chinese heroes as Qu Yuan and Su Shi; graduates of the Christian colleges could write English better than they could classical Chinese. In sum, the students had been denationalized.

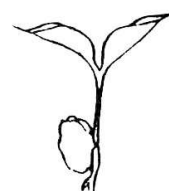


Central to the antagonism was the inequality of the relationship between Westerner and Chinese. In the colleges, there was a dual salary structure; there were differences in housing and other benefits; all the college presidents and most of the department chairpersons were Westerners. College budgets depended heavily on foreign funding, with the result that Chinese had even less influence on policy than their numbers or positions would indicate. In almost every facet, the Westerners were the teachers and the benefactors; the Chinese were the learners and beneficiaries. Chinese Christians as well as anti-Christians were emotionally bruised by the relationship, and resentment drew on sensitivities heightened by personal experiences. The parochial students might be criticized as denationalized because of their adoption of foreign customs, dress, and intellectual framework, but many had also been nationalized as they chafed under the burden of inequality. It is worth noting that many Chinese teachers and pupils in the Christian schools participated in the national movements of the 1920s.

Young intellectuals organized Anti-Christian Federations and launched anti-Christian campaigns demanding the registration of parochial schools with the Chinese government, the discontinuance of all religious requirements in schools, and placement of Chinese rather than Westerners in leadership positions. They called on parochial students to give proof of patriotism by joining such nationalist ventures as the May Thirtieth Movement of 1925 and the Northern Expedition. The enormous drawing power of anti-imperialist nationalism made it a highly effective weapon of attack and, however apolitical some missionaries might be, there was no denying the intimate association of Christian missions and Western expansionism; the heyday of China missions coincided with the unequal treaty era.

Cognizant of the popularity of such issues, the Guomindang, the Chinese Communist Party, and the Young China Party all tried to coopt

the anti-Christian movements. They provided guidance, publicity outlets, and funds. They sometimes incorporated branches of the Anti-Christian Federation or the Educational Rights Association into the party or into their youth leagues. Feeding hostility was the slowness of missionary educators and the home boards to appreciate the broad and deep emotional dimensions of the campaigns and the urgency of making some concessions to Chinese nationalism. Missionaries, furthermore, were not accustomed to having their authority challenged by young students and, as a rule, they maintained that academic responsibilities should have priority over political and patriotic activities. Many of the Christian colleges were paralyzed by student strikes in 1925, strikes which had external support from the National Student Union and the political parties, but strikes which were initiated by the Christian college students themselves. In the confrontation at St. John's, a large portion of the students and Chinese faculty withdrew to found a new institution, Guang Hua University.



The Northern Expedition of 1926-1927 precipitated the departure of most missionaries from the interior and either the closure of the Christian colleges or assignment to Chinese Christian leadership. As the Guomindang assumed control of the national government, student radicalism and political activism ceased to be acceptable. Members of the Chinese Communist Party and the Communist Youth League were driven underground. Christians were numbered among the governing elite while Christian colleges once again enjoyed a degree of influence and popularity.

By the late 1920s Chinese and Westerner alike had recognized the necessity for sinification of Christian education in China. Though the process was still incomplete when the People's Republic was established in 1949, considerable progress had been made during the 1930s. Most of the institutions registered with the national government and accepted state regulations concerning standards, curriculum, degree requirements, etc. Religious activities were generally voluntary even if memorial services for Sun Yat-sen were required. Chinese held a high proportion of the administrative posts, though Western financial support gave weight to Western voices in policy decisions. Research and data-gathering enabled scholars to make a start toward sinifying the course content of subjects like sociology, political science, and history. Much, doubtless, remained to be done, but at least a few of the examples and concepts in texts came from the Chinese heritage rather than from the Western.

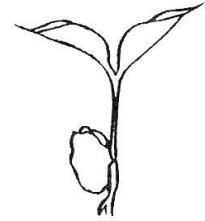
Some of the first scientific archaeological explorations were conducted by Christian college graduates and Yenching professors. Christian institutions sponsored pioneering surveys of land tenure, peasant incomes and budgets, family and village structure. Concentrating on distinctively Chinese problems, researchers studied parasitology, silkworm disease, rice smut, etc. Even in architecture, sinification was under way. Sweeping tile roofs and great red columns graced the buildings of Ginling College, while Yenching University's water tower assumed the guise of a Buddhist pagoda. One indication of momentum toward incorporation of Christian college students into the mainstream of intellectual and national life was the prominent role of Yenching students in the initial phases of the anti-Japanese movement of December 9, 1935.



Certain areas of weakness remained, however. Excellence in Chinese language and literature proved an elusive goal, partly because students and teachers with this interest preferred the government institutions. Attempts to expand the minimal engineering offerings foundered because of high costs. Though there were important research findings in agriculture, medicine, and health care, delivery remained slow and limited. Few Christian college students entered the ministry so that the churches continued to depend heavily on foreign pastors and priests or, in the case of the Protestants, relied on Chinese ministers of such modest educational background that they had difficulty appealing to Christian college graduates. The diminishing proportions of Christians in the total student enrollment of the colleges, combined with the fact that only a minority attended the voluntary religious activities, brought into question the very nature and function of religious schools.

All of the mission organizations had overbuilt their institutional structure in terms of the ability of the Chinese Christian constituency to support it. With the stringencies of the depression, mission boards faced the dilemma of how best to use their limited funds and resources. Most were reluctant to cut back on their commitments and any proposal to reduce the educational sector met with resistance by Christian college personnel. The tendency was to stretch budgets as far as they would go instead of concentrating on fewer activities. In contrast, Peking Union Medical College, supported by Rockefeller funds, opted for a research and training role, with the result that it produced only a few dozen M.D.s. Those who advocated a lower level of training for greater numbers contended that PUMC neglected the needs of the masses in favor of the elite.

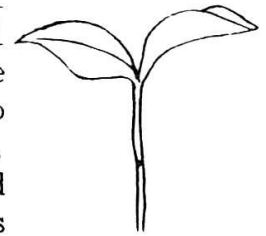
During the 1930s the Christian colleges were supplementary to the national educational system, enrolling 12 to 15 % of the total number of students. Better than many of the provincial and private institutions of higher education, most of the colleges could not equal the leading Chinese universities in equipment or level of faculty qualification. In certain specific fields, however, they still played the role of innovators. They had helped initiate professional education in music, library science, dentistry, journalism, agriculture, physical education, archaeology and sociology. Both in research and instruction, they continued to make a contribution in these fields. Indicative of the importance of their work is the recent renewal of educational ties between Chinese and Western institutions in these subjects. Christian institutions continued to emphasize the education of women and to give special attention to the training of physicians and nurses. They continued to provide mobility for a small elite through their concentration on foreign language training.



The second Sino-Japanese War and World War II brought new challenges, to which the Christian colleges responded in diverse ways. Many of the institutions joined government universities in making the great trek beyond Japanese lines into interior China. There, they trained students who, according to the Guomindang, were cultivating talent for service in post-war China. Students and teachers made heroic sacrifices in an attempt to carry on academic work under deplorable conditions while also participating in war relief work. Under extraterritorial protection, many of the old campuses served as refugee centers for Chinese and Westerners. In the West the thrilling story of the Great Trek was repeated over and over. It helped garner financial and moral support for the Guomindang regime in Chongqing as well as raise funds for the Christian colleges. Though deterioration in conditions and morale accelerated as the war stretched on, such negative information received much less publicity. Many Western backers were thus unprepared for the realities of Guomindang weakness when it was revealed during the civil war between the Guomindang and the Chinese Communist Party, 1946-1949. Disillusionment, frustration, and even a sense of betrayal described the reaction of many.

A number of colleges chose to use their extraterritorial status in order to continue operation in east China. After the criticisms of the 1920s, there was a certain irony in their reliance on the privileges of the unequal treaties, but they thereby offered an alternative for students reluctant to enroll in Chinese institutions subject to Japanese

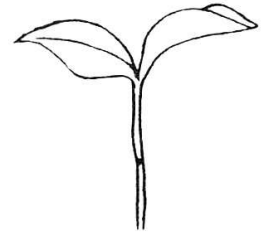
pressure. Yenching University, by flying the American flag over its gate and distancing itself from political activities, was able to remain open in Beijing until 1941. Lingnan, after 1938, collaborated with the University of Hong Kong, where its enrollment expanded to 800. After vain attempts to function on the home campus, Suzhou, the University of Shanghai, and Hangzhou joined the Associated Christian Colleges in Shanghai's International Settlement. With Pearl Harbor, however, Americans lost both extraterritoriality and their status as neutrals so that all of these institutions either closed, conducted underground classes, or joined the migration to the interior. For a few years, they had served youth in east China, expanding even more rapidly than their physical facilities would warrant. Some students even saw themselves making a nationalist statement by boycotting those schools required to disseminate Japanese culture and values in favor of the Christian colleges.



In east China after 1941 Fu Jen and St. John's remained the major private universities retaining a degree of independence. Notwithstanding some unease over the compromises necessary, many youths flocked to these institutions. Enrollments grew by leaps and bounds despite extra summer sessions and evening classes. Enrollment at Catholic institutions of higher education, which altogether had totaled 395 students in 1936-37, shot up to 10,669 by 1941, with Fu Jen accounting for over 6,000 of these. After 1941, pressures for admission to St. John's and Fu Jen became so intense that they often overrode misgivings about the maintenance of academic standards. Though further research on the careers of these war-time graduates is needed, it appears that, whatever the deficiencies, a significant proportion later attained prominence in their professions either at home or abroad.

The post-war period in China proved to be a time of political uncertainty, economic hardship, and civil war. All the dreams and hopes of a return to normalcy vanished in the midst of the deadly conflict between the Guomindang and the Chinese Communist Party. In the long run, the parochial schools could not and would not have a primary role in the economic and social revolution that swept China as the communist party took charge of the modernizing process. With the state assuming monopoly control of all social service activities, the church was confined to strictly religious functions. All but a handful of missionaries departed China, many of them accused of being spies for their native land after Chinese soldiers entered the Korean War. The parochial schools were designated superfluous and subversive institutions. They were

amalgamated into a national educational system, whereby they lost their identity and were completely sinified.

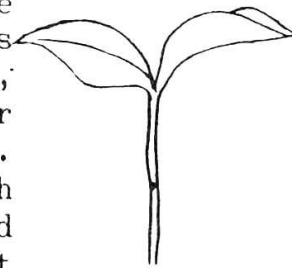


Perhaps, however, the colleges continued to make a contribution as their campuses were taken over and many of their social service goals were assumed by a new regime with the power to implement social change and reassert political unity and sovereignty. A Chinese Christian leadership had been nurtured, enabling the church to survive the travails of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution of the 1960s and the subsequent rule of the Gang of Four. Though Chinese Christians had often lamented a lack of intellectual leaders, graduates of the Christian schools provided the personnel for the Three-Self Movement, which continues as official spokesman for Protestant Christianity in China. Currently, they take pride in the creation of what they designate post-denominational Chinese Christianity. As the leadership of the Catholic church in China aged, devoted Catholics demanded the ordination of younger priests and bishops to perform the sacraments, despite the lack of relations between the Vatican and Beijing.

Even today, many successor schools on the mainland retain the emphases of their Christian component. Nanjing Normal College, located on the former campus of Ginling College, has special strength in music, physical education, and teacher training, for example. The study of journalism, introduced as an academic discipline by Yenching, has been invigorated by Beijing University's revival of former ties with the University of Missouri. In 1979 French Jesuit professors of medicine were invited to teach at Aurora University's successor. With the aid of the United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia, Wuhan has once again become a center for the study of library science. The list could be extended. Also suggestive was a recent move by China Union Medical College to resume the proud title of PUMC.

Successor institutions abroad should also be mentioned. Though under Chinese leadership and control, they have often tried to retain some of the distinctive characteristics of their forerunners. Tunghai University on Taiwan, for example, has continued to require basic liberal arts training before academic specialization, despite contrary trends by national competitors. Fu Jen University on Taiwan grants advanced degrees in philosophy and maintains the strong science component of earlier days in Beijing. Expanding programs in economics, computer science, business administration, and law by Soochow build on previous offerings.

During the past few years, alumni associations have been revived and, in addition to the renewal of ties between Western universities and mainland successors, discussions of the possibility of links between successor institutions abroad and on the mainland have occurred. Some interesting statements are being made in such developments. The fact that St. John's alumni abroad and in China would hold a joint reunion indicates that graduation from a Christian college is no longer seen as automatic proof of denationalization. One legacy of the colleges is revealed in alumni's comments on the importance of teacher-student relationships, on the sense of fraternity built up in the college compound, and on their conception of themselves as a privileged few with an obligation to society and nation. Religion per se is mentioned less frequently, though it would be possible to argue that the distinctiveness of the colleges rested in part on their secular expression of Christian values. Another interpretation might be that the colleges had their greatest impact when they harmonized with Confucian teachings on elite responsibilities with respect to the welfare of the people.



Even such renewals of ties are fraught with tensions and difficulties. To what extent are they motivated by the hope of financial aid? To what extent does the eagerness of Western institutions and individuals to offer aid include a hidden agenda, i.e., a demonstration of Christian charity, if nothing more?

The possibility of education as an instrument of evangelism no longer exists on the mainland. The operation of parochial schools for converts or the offering of parochial education in the sense of instruction within a Christian environment is unacceptable to current political authorities. Ever since Matteo Ricci, Western missionaries have tried to gain an entrée to China by offering science, technology, and social services. Success in the primary goal, christianizing China, has been limited at best. With the more stringent restrictions of the present government, it would seem that the future of Christianity in China rests almost exclusively with the Chinese Christians themselves. Many Chinese Christians would add that this is the way it should be.