Christianity and the Modern Woman in East Asia

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Edited by

Garrett L. Washington

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List of Contributors

Connie Shemo
is Associate Professor of history at Plattsburgh State University. She is the author of *The Chinese Medical Ministries of Kang Cheng and Shi Meiyu: On a Cross-Cultural Frontier of Gender, Race, and Nation* (Lehigh University Press, 2011), and the co-editor of *Competing Kingdoms: Women, Mission, Nation, and the American Protestant Empire, 1812–1960* (Duke University Press, 2010). Her articles have appeared in the *Journal of Women's History, History Compass*, the *Chinese Historical Review*, and the *Journal of American-East Asian Relations*. Her current project is a study of American missionary medical education in China.

Aihua Zhang
earned her doctoral degree in history from the State University of New York at Stony Brook. Currently she is teaching at Stockton University (NJ) as a Visiting Assistant Professor. Her teaching and research interests include modern China, women and gender, China-related transnationalism, and society and culture in East Asia. She contributed in the editing of a document cluster for Kathryn Kish Sklar and Thomas Dublin, eds., *Women and Social Movements in Modern Empires Since 1920* (Alexander Street, 2017). Her dissertation and subsequent research deals with the organization, programs, and impacts of the Beijing Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA).

Anthony E. Clark
is Edward B. Lindaman Endowed Chair and Associate Professor of Chinese history at Whitworth University. His publications include *China's Christianity: From Missionary to Indigenous Church* (Brill, 2017); *Heaven in Conflict: Franciscans and the Boxer Uprising in Shanxi* (University of Washington Press, 2015); *Zhonghua Tianzhujiao xundao jianshi* 中華天主教殉道簡史 [A Concise History of Catholic Martyrdom in China] (Ciyouhui Press, 2013); *A Voluntary Exile: Chinese Christianity and Cultural Confluence since 1552* (Lehigh University Press, 2013); *China's Saints: Catholic Martyrdom During the Qing (1644–1911)* (Lehigh University Press, 2011); *Beating Devils and Burning Their Books: Views of China, Japan, and the West* (Association for Asian Studies, Inc., 2010); and *Ban Gu's History of Early China* (Cambria Press, 2008).

Rui Kohiyama
is Professor of American and Gender Studies at Tokyo Woman's Christian University in Japan. She is the author of *Amerika Fujin Senkyoshi: Rainichi no Haikei to Sono Eikyo* [American Women Missionaries: the Background and Their Influence] (Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 1992) and coeditor/coauthor of *Amerika Gender-shi Nyumon* [Introduction to the History of Gender in the United States] (Aoki Bookstore, 2010). Her new book on the American women's ecumenical missionary endeavor in 19th and 20th centuries will be published in 2018. She has been writing a biography of Sasaki Toyoju in a series in a journal, *Kirisutokyo Bunka* [Christian Culture] since 2013.

Elizabeth D. Lublin
holds a B.A. in history and East Asian Studies from Yale University, an M.A. in Japanese Studies from the University of Michigan, and a Ph.D. in modern Japanese history from the University of Hawaii at Manoa. While in graduate school, she also attended the Inter-University Center for Japanese Language Studies in Yokohama and was a research student at Japan Women's University in Tokyo. She joined the faculty at Wayne State University in Detroit, MI, in 2001 and teaches survey courses on modern East Asia along with upper-level classes on premodern and modern Japan, gender in modern East Asia, Japanese popular culture, and Hiroshima and Nagasaki in history and memory. Her first book explored the activism of the Japan Woman's Christian Temperance Union in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and she is now working on a second on the tobacco industry during the same Meiji period.

Garrett L. Washington
holds a Ph.D. from Purdue University. He is Assistant Professor of History at the University of Massachusetts Amherst where he primarily teaches courses on modern and traditional Japan, Japanese women's history, Japanese imperialism, US-Japan relations, and the interplay of race, religion and nation in East Asia. He has published articles on the Japanese Protestant churches in Tokyo, Buddhism's response to Protestant church space in Tokyo, and the role of St. Luke's Hospital in the rise of public health in Tokyo in *Japanese Studies, Crosscurrents: East Asian History and Culture Review E—Journal, Health and History*, and an edited volume titled *Encountering Modernity: Christianity in East Asia and Asian America* (University of Hawaii Press, 2014). His current book project utilizes a new space-centered approach to demonstrate that

the Japanese Protestant church space was central to Christianity's capacity to reach and influence society in imperial Japan (1868–1945).

Haeseong Park
received her Ph.D. from Purdue University and is an Assistant Professor in the Department of History and Political Science at Charleston Southern University. She specializes in transcultural lives of the Korean women during the modern period with particular interests in gender and religion. Her dissertation deals with Korean women who came to the United States for higher education before 1945. Her three published articles all situate women in transnational discourses during the early twentieth century. She is also engaged in some translation work. She is currently working on positioning Korean female martyrs in nationalist and religious contexts. She is also involved in a five-year project contextualizing the Korean War (1950–1953) in the light of Christianity.

Heejeong Sohn
holds a Ph.D. from Stony Brook University where she teaches in the Department of Asian and Asian American Studies. Her teaching and research involve the history of Modern Korea, modern visual culture, representational techniques, mapping and landscape, contemporary digital communications, and gender issues. She also serves as Assistant Director for the Center for Korean Studies at Stony Brook University where she has designed and directed research & programming grants for academic and cultural projects.

Lee-Ellen Strawn
Born in Seoul, Korea to missionary parents, Lee-Ellen Strawn earned her master's degree from Harvard University and doctoral degree from Yonsei University. She has taught at Yonsei University College of Theology and Graduate School of Theology, and at various international schools in the capacity of social sciences teacher and Korean language teacher. Lee-Ellen's primary area of academic research involves the role of the Korean Protestant church in the empowerment of women in the early 20th century with a focus on women's *anpang* (inner room) networks. Currently, as a clergy person in the United Church of Christ, Lee-Ellen is the school chaplain and a faculty member of the Religious Studies and Philosophy department at Northfield Mount Hermon in Massachusetts, the cradle of the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions that started in 1886. Lee-Ellen and her husband have three daughters, who were also all born in Seoul, Korea.

Editor's Introduction

> When [New Women] go out and lecture … teach in schools, write, even do business, and do work no different than men, they [tend to] neglect the affairs of the home. They say since kitchen work is tiresome, leave it to servant girls. They say looking after children is annoying, so leave it to the wet nurse.[1]

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Protestant Evangelist Kanamori Michitomo (1857–1945) echoed the views of many Christian men and women in East Asia when he wrote this statement in 1914. Like them, however, he also believed that Christianity offered hope for women seeking to balance traditional responsibilities and modern opportunities. Through participation in the Salvation Army, women could practice an active Christianity that left them "no different than men" yet aware of their roles as women. This was, in his view, the "model of the complete woman." To illustrate his point, he described a female Salvation Army officer "standing at the pulpit with a child on her back," preaching with confidence.[2] Christianity as a double-edged sword that could liberate women but also condition their use of that liberation was a motif that appeared in many speeches, writings, and programs not only in Japan but throughout East Asia and beyond.

Western Christianity, touted by many today and in the past as an emancipatory force for East Asian women, in many cases actually stifled the efforts of those very women to free themselves from patriarchy and gender-based norms. Western missionaries came on the wings of American and British imperialism, in their view, to free the region's peoples from the constraints and weight of their traditions.[3] Missionaries and mission boards alike specifically pointed to the condition of women in East Asia as an indication of the backwards

1 Kanamori Michitomo, *Kyūseigun-kan: Ichimei, yo ha naze kyūseigun ni hairishiya* 救世軍観：一名・余は何故救世軍に入りしや [*Salvation Army Perspective: Or Why I Entered the Salvation Army*] (Tokyo: Kyūseigun Nihon honei, 1914), 62.

2 Ibid.

3 Some outstanding works exploring this connection include Ian R. Tyrrell, *Reforming the World: The Creation of America's Moral Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010) and Emily Conroy-Krutz, *Christian Imperialism: Converting the World in the Early American Republic* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015).

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condition of East Asian countries and the need for Western Christian intervention. In fact, in their new East Asian contexts missionaries often arrived with and imposed European and American forms of gender inequality.

Far from being anomalous, the experiences of East Asian women were part of a global trend in the modern Christian missionary movement. For instance, the "model of femininity" Ghanaian women received from Basel Mission evangelists in some ways "contributed to the subjugation of women."[4] Similarly, British and American missionary attitudes and indigenous gender ideologies in South India coalesced to form a gendered "discourse of respectability" that confined lower-caste and outcaste Hindu women converts as much as it liberated them.[5] A volume of essays edited by Hyaeweol Choi and Margaret Jolly explores the contours of this phenomenon throughout the Asia-Pacific region.[6] The contributing authors of that work describe the various ways in which missionary morality served to structure and delimit gendered identities and behaviors for the very Asian women that evangelists came to set free. Central to Christian missionary projects for women across the globe was the ideal of domesticity. As pioneering China missions historian Jane Hunter has demonstrated, women missionaries preached "the same domestic ideology" to Chinese converts that defined their own roles as missionaries.[7] From Africa to Asia, the work of Dana L. Robert has shown that this ideology included the high prioritization of "the Christian home" and women's domestic roles as wife and mother.[8]

Yet there was also another important facet of Christianity's influence as well. American missionary women subscribed to the idea of evangelical motherhood, a nineteenth-century concept that idealized women as selfless nurturers not only within but also beyond the home.[9] Women, then, were not only allowed but encouraged to teach and lead in the context of their Christian duties. In the case of China, Jessie G. Lutz, Ling Oi-Ki, Cai Xiang-Yu, and others

4 Ulrike Sill, *Encounters in Quest of Christian Womanhood: The Basel Mission in Pre-and Early Colonial Ghana* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 11.

5 Eliza Kent, *Converting Women: Gender and Protestant Christianity in Colonial South India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 4.

6 Hyaeweol Choi and Margaret Jolly, eds. *Divine Domesticities: Christian Paradoxes in Asia and the Pacific* (Canberra, A.C.T: Australian National University Press, 2014).

7 Jane Hunter, *Gospel of Gentility: American Women Missionaries in Turn-of-the-Century China* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1984), 176.

8 Dana L. Robert, "The 'Christian Home' as a Cornerstone of Anglo-American Missionary Thought and Practice," in *Converting Colonialism: Visions and Realities in Mission History, 1706–1914*, ed. Dana L. Robert (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008), 134–165.

9 Anne M. Boylan, "Evangelical Womanhood in the Nineteenth Century: The Role of Women in Sunday School," *Feminist Studies* 4, no. 3 (1978): 65.

have shown that the gendered separation of spheres in fact fostered more active cultural and secular roles for Chinese Christian women, from teaching the Bible and other subjects to founding and administering orphanages.[10] This conditional form of liberation resonates with the vision of Kanamori that opened this introduction. Yet even within these limiting parameters, non-Western women in countries such as China improved their social position and envisaged new careers.[11] In the greater Asia-Pacific region, women appropriated missionaries' messages and imitated missionary women in empowering ways that at times challenged Victorian conceptualizations of domesticity.[12] Existing scholarship in fact points to examples of real agency among Christian women in Asia who saw opportunity between the lines prescribed by domestic ideology.

Drawing insight and inspiration from Lutz, Choi, Elizabeth Dorn Lublin, and others, this volume seeks to focus new attention on Christianity's role in the empowerment of East Asian women.[13] These scholars have shown that although the relationship between women and Christianity in East Asia was often antagonistic, it could also be advantageous. While contributing to gender dynamics that disprivileged women in East Asia, Christianity was also directly related to the appearance of new definitions and embodiments of modern womanhood in the region. Even as Christian discourse like that of Kanamori sought to criticize and remediate the New Woman in East Asia, Christianity played an integral part in her development as well. Increasingly East Asian women with intimate ties to Christianity problematized the assumptions defining women's place in the home by lecturing, by organizing, and by working as teachers, doctors, and nurses.

In important ways, these ties can be traced back to Western Christianity's arrival and early propagation in East Asia during the early nineteenth century. After only a trickle of European and American immigration for decades, the Treaty of Nanjing in 1842 opened China to an unprecedented surge of westerners and Western ideas. That year China became the first country in the region

10 See introduction and chapters by Lutz and Ling in Jessie G. Lutz, ed., *Pioneering Chinese Christian Women: Gender, Christianity, and Social Mobility* (Bethlehem, PA: Lehigh University Press, 2010), 19. See also Cai Xiang-Yu, "Christianity and Gender in South-East China: The Chaozhou Missions (1849–1949)" (PhD diss., Leiden University, 2012).

11 Lutz, *Pioneering Chinese Christian Women*, 14.

12 Choi and Jolly, *Divine Domesticities.*

13 Lutz, *Pioneering Chinese Christian Women*; Hyaeweol Choi, *Gender and Mission Encounters in Korea: New Women, Old Ways* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009); Choi and Jolly, *Divine Domesticities*; and Elizabeth Dorn Lublin, *Reforming Japan: The Woman's Christian Temperance Union in the Meiji Period* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2010).

to accept the type of unequal treaty that would characterize the relationship between East Asian and Western nations for over half a century.[14] Soon Japan and Korea too were forced to open their doors more widely to the people and ideas of the U.S. and Western Europe. Hundreds of the newcomers in East Asia were missionaries and other westerners with evangelical tendencies. For their East Asian students, Western Christians coupled Christianity with Western knowledge, underlining the former as the foundation for the latter. These men and women presented Christianity as the necessary element for bridging the power differential between East and West and as the only suitable vehicle for embarking on the road to modernization. At the same time, their Christian ideals invariably colored the importation of new Western ideas into the region.[15] While these ideas had repercussions throughout East Asian societies, they were particularly visible in discourses on gender.

Although several different sources bombarded East Asians with new, or sometimes simply reformulated, gender ideology, Christianity's place in this development cannot be overstated. The religious movement had an especially notable impact on the profile and handling of "The Woman Question." In China, Japan, and Korea, deeply institutionalized Confucian morality located women far beneath men in status. Significant change began when new people, ideas, and movements abruptly broke open the visible cracks in this system. Arriving westerners promoted a new, reformist Christian morality that disapproved of women's traditional place in East Asian families, communities, and states. Attributing this to the backwardness of East Asia, and ignoring the myriad forms of discrimination against women in their own more "advanced" home countries, these westerners sought to change local societies. While there were notable differences among women in these countries, their gendered encounters with discourses and experiences of modernity were shaped in similar, roughly contemporaneous ways by Christianity. Women in East Asia often used Christianity to formulate responses to modernization in similar ways.

The longstanding argument that a singular, received Western Christianity and Western missionaries liberated East Asian women from a Confucian tyranny of and for men is no longer tenable.[16] Over the past two decades,

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14 For the most thorough treatment of this topic in English, see John K. Fairbank, *Trade and Diplomacy on the China Coast: The Opening of the Treaty Ports, 1842–1854*. 2 vols. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1953).

15 For an example of this development in the Japanese setting, see Joseph M. Henning, *Outposts of Civilization: Race, Religion, and the Formative Years of American-Japanese Relations* (New York: New York University Press, 2000), ch. 2.

16 Pierce R. Beaver, *American Protestant Women in World Mission: A History of the First Feminist Movement in North America* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1980).

scholars have demonstrated that Chinese, Japanese, and Korean women were themselves actively engaged in applying Christian ideals to the issues facing their societies. Works by China scholars Ryan Dunch and Kwok Pui-Lan, Korea scholars Hyaeweol Choi and Kelly H. Chong, Japan scholars Elizabeth Dorn Lublin and Barbara Rose, and others have made this abundantly clear.[17] This body of scholarship highlights missionaries' Chinese, Japanese, and Korean students, as well as East Asians with experience in the West who were dynamic and proactive actors. They in fact show the significant agency that local men and women exercised in Christian social reform movements surrounding women's issues. The current volume presents chapters that confirm these country-specific findings while also seeking to develop a broader argument about the relationship between Christianity and women's movements in modern East Asia.

This book argues that Christianity was fundamental in the development of new, influential definitions of womanhood in modern East Asia. Chinese, Japanese, and Korean women took advantage of distinct new opportunities and connections provided by Christianity. Indeed, East Asian women challenged conventional gender norms, developed ties to Western people and knowledge, vocally participated in the public sphere, and pursued careers outside the home. By the 1910s, women associated with Christianity in East Asia had significantly expanded women's intellectual and economic horizons and increased the visibility of women's issues. Their efforts also provided momentum for new movements aimed at truly improving women's lives. In these and various other ways, then, Christianity played a crucial role in the emergence of new perspectives on women's rights, abilities, and responsibilities—perspectives that helped catalyze the rise of the New Woman in East Asia.

The "New Woman," a phrase pronounced differently as *shin fujin* in Japanese, *xin nuxing* in Chinese, and *sin yŏsŏng* in Korean, refers to a common phenomenon that appeared concurrently in these separate cultural contexts. In many ways, the phenomenon in East Asia mirrored developments in the West, where the term originated. Elite, well-educated women with occupations, public voices, and considerable autonomy caught the imagination of Anglo-American author Henry James who popularized the phrase in the late

17 Ryan Dunch, *Fuzhou Protestants and the Making of a Modern China, 1857–1927* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2001); Pui-Lan Kwok, *Chinese Women and Christianity, 1860–1927* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1992); Choi, *Gender and Mission Encounters in Korea*; Kelly H. Chong, *Deliverance and Submission: Evangelical Women and the Negotiation of Patriarchy in South Korea* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press in 2008); Lublin, *Reforming Japan*; and Barbara Rose, *Tsuda Umeko and Women's Education in Japan* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992).

nineteenth century.[18] Like these European and American women, East Asian women also explored the new promises and challenges of modernity. Unlike their Western counterparts, however, New Women in China, Japan, and Korea were facing something entirely new. With tremendous speed, a confluence of modernization and Westernization rushed into their countries leaving novel discourses and institutions in its wake. It is therefore all the more noteworthy that hundreds of East Asian women managed to confront the advent of Western modernity head-on and achieve relative social and economic empowerment.

This volume contends that Christianity was an important tool in the development of these new, modern iterations of womanhood. New Women in China, Japan, and Korea and the pioneering women who preceded them successfully mobilized opportunities and networks related to Christianity. This religious movement, then, was a common thread running through women's responses to the Woman Question in these three very distinct East Asian contexts. Although the New Woman of the 1920s and 1930s often projected for herself a predominantly secular image, Christianity was deeply ingrained in the DNA of the women's movement from which it emerged.[19]

The nine chapters that follow show that it was largely Japanese, Chinese, and Korean women associated with Christianity who raised the profile of the Woman Question, framed the contours of that debate, and crafted original responses. Appropriating belief, but also knowledge, networks, and institutions related to Christianity, East Asian women sought new opportunities for women. They fought for women's self-realization and access to the public sphere, education, health, and even love. Working with or independently from Western Christians, they utilized a Christian lens to define and address the new dilemmas imposed on members of their gender in the name of modernization. Armed with increased visibility and resources, these women cultivated new, distinct, and emboldened identities and used them to highlight and address the situation of women in their countries.

These essays explore the experiences of women as students and professional trainees in missionary schools and as educators, professionals, and activists

18 Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, *Disorderly Conduct: Visions of Gender in Victorian America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 176.

19 Japanese author-activist Hiratsuka Raichō, for instance, is often represented as the epitome of secular feminism. See Sharon Sievers, *Flowers in Salt: The Beginnings of Feminist Consciousness in Modern Japan* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1983) and Hiroko Tomida, *Hiratsuka Raichō and Early Japanese Feminism* (Boston: Brill, 2003). Inspired by Hiratsuka, Korean author-activist Kim Wŏnju (Iryŏp) (1896–1971) also promoted a secular feminist perspective. See Yung-Hee Kim, "From Subservience to Autonomy: Kim Wŏnju's 'Awakening'" *Korean Studies* 21 (1997): 1–21.

deeply influenced by Christians and Christianity. In all of these capacities, East Asian women invoked Christian ideals as they grappled with new conceptualizations of the self and their roles as private and public individuals. They developed novel perspectives on society and the role of women as agents of change within it. Whether these women conformed to missionary-approved gender models, rebelled against them, or found themselves somewhere between those two extremes, they invariably developed personal strength, fellowship, and agency through their interactions with Western Christians. As individuals or working together through institutions, the women studied here left indelible marks on their societies in general and their societies' responses to the Woman Question in particular. Their stories make a valuable contribution to our understanding of the relationship between women and modernization in not only East Asian but transnational and global women's history.

While the essays in this comparative work are relatively diverse, covering women associated with Protestantism and Catholicism in China, Japan, and Korea, together they illuminate substantial commonalities. They demonstrate that the ambiguous relationships between Christianity and the modern women's movement in East Asia yielded unprecedented opportunities for women. More specifically, the chapters emphasize local women's opportunities to acquire new knowledge, build new networks, actively participate in and lead organizations, and access a broadly defined public sphere. Building on previous scholarship, these essays all shed light on the processes through which East Asian women themselves applied the education that they acquired from Christian individuals and institutions. Education, however, went beyond lessons acquired in missionary classrooms, self-study, and study abroad. Each of this volume's contributors also examines the knowledge that East Asia women gained when they were exposed to new modes of work, socializing, and self-perception through Christianity. Their encounters with Western teachers and East Asian Christians also gave these women new opportunities to connect with one another. These chapters all shed light on women's involvement in networks linked with Christianity.

Ranging from the local to the transnational, these connections allowed women in China, Japan, and Korea to exchange ideas and develop projects for the improvement of self and society. Through education and networks linked to Christianity, East Asian women also availed themselves of opportunities to occupy active and often leading roles in institutions and organizations. These chapters show that, although not the only road, Christianity was among the earliest and most frequently taken pathways to organizing, activism, and leadership for women in the region. The subjects of this book were participants and leaders in churches, schools, charitable institutions, and national women's

organizations. These types of roles gave hundreds of women in China, Japan, and Korea new forms of access to the public sphere. Mobilizing their acquired knowledge, networks, and organizational skills, East Asian women worked to publicize women's causes and instigate positive social change. The chapters that follow argue that Christianity offered women new doors into the public sphere of a highly misogynistic environment and new tools and experiences with which to open them.

What follows is far from an exhaustive survey of the myriad ways in which Christianity was implicated in local understandings of and responses to the Woman Question in modern East Asia. This volume aims instead to be exploratory. The chapters focus on cases that illustrate the religious movement's important and complex role in conceptualizing and actualizing new visions of modern womanhood in China, Japan, and Korea.

The three chapters in this volume on China describe the transformation of Western Christian ideals and priorities for women into Chinese Christian associations and institutions. Catholic and Protestant missionaries disapproved of Chinese women's seclusion and inferior status in general and opposed an array of attitudes and practices that contributed to both. These included customs that harmed Chinese women's bodies, such as footbinding, female infanticide, and the denial of proper medical care.[20] Norms such as concubinage, arranged marriage, and barriers to education that curbed women's social and intellectual life also greatly preoccupied these observers. Their views aligned with Chinese reformers who, since the late nineteenth century, at times had blamed the ignorant and oppressive situation of Chinese women for China's national misfortunes.[21] In response, Western Christian communities offered Chinese women new forms of education and association.

As these chapters demonstrate, however, Chinese hands were deeply involved in the development and influence of these initiatives. From students to activists to leaders in women's organizations to women in religious vocations, Chinese women used Christianity to participate in and promote women's education and social reform. Throughout China's repeated and rapid transformations during the first decades of the twentieth century, Christian women embodied and advocated new womanhoods. To achieve these goals, they embraced the opportunities presented by Christians and Christian institutions.

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20 Kwok, *Chinese Women and Christianity*, ch. 1.

21 See Ryan Dunch, "'Mothers to Our Country': Conversion, Education, and Ideology among Chinese Protestant Women, 1870–1930," in Lutz, *Pioneering Chinese Christian Women*, 324–350.

Connie Shemo's chapter complicates the prevalent view that Protestant American missionaries singlehandedly launched the initiative of introducing medical education for women to China. While missionary schools were indeed the sole providers of Western medical education for Chinese women in the nineteenth century, Southern Methodist medical education for Chinese women did not originate solely from American impetus. Instead, it emerged in response to Chinese pressures, priorities, and interests and through relationships formed between American missionaries and Chinese women and men. The result was an empowerment of Chinese women that expanded one of their traditional roles as healers and demonstrated China's advanced level of modernity.

Similarly concerned about the transition of Chinese women towards modernity, the China YWCA studied by Aihua Zhang championed the spirituality of Christianity and the ideals of the social gospel as a solution to the modern challenges facing Chinese women. The Y cooperated across religious, gendered, and national boundaries to empower Chinese women to develop physically, mentally, socially, and spiritually in ways synchronous with new, modern demands and opportunities. Complementing previous research on the China YWCA, Zhang shows that Christianity played a critical role in the ways leaders thought about and acted to change women's lot in Republican China.

Underlining the relationship between Christianity, women, and social change in China's capital city, Anthony Clark explores the pioneering reformism of women's Catholic orders. Among them were fully Chinese orders and both European and American orders that prioritized recruiting Chinese nuns. Beyond operating orphanages and primary, middle, and secondary schools for more than a thousand girls in Beijing, these bodies advocated for a radical new modern vision of a Chinese womanhood liberated from the imperial-era restrictions of arranged marriage and bound feet. Their efforts made a subtle but significant contribution to the new horizons available to Chinese women.

Also dealing with expanding horizons, the three essays on Japan examine Christianity's relationship with women's efforts to challenge gender norms that dampened expectations and limited opportunities. Beginning in the 1870s, Japanese women gained unprecedented access to new forms of knowledge through encounters with Western and Japanese Christians.[22] Often, elite Japanese women learned, like their male counterparts, to conflate Christianity

22 Noriko Kawamura Ishii, *American Women Missionaries at Kobe College, 1873–1909: New Dimensions of Gender* (New York: Routledge, 2004).

with both Western civilization and modernity and to disdain the cultural foundations that, allegedly, held Japan back. Paying special attention to women's status, Japanese and Western Protestant educators, missionaries, and religious leaders informed Japanese women that they were barometers of civilization.[23] Disapprovingly, these same figures underlined Japan's gender-related shortcomings and then presented Protestant ideals as a panacea.[24] Through observation, listening, reading, and discussion, many Japanese women became convinced of this social remedy's effectiveness.

By the turn of the twentieth century, however, many Western and Japanese Christian voices expected Japanese women to rein in their ambitions. Like Kanamori, they echoed the dominant secular discourse that asked women to temper the desire for new opportunities in education and employment with their gender-based responsibilities to the local and national community. As the three Japan essays in this book demonstrate, Japanese women nevertheless found social and intellectual empowerment through Christianity and consciously used these tools to offer their own responses to the Woman Question. Alone and in collaboration with westerners, the women studied here drew on Christian experiences and beliefs to contravene restrictive, gendered conceptualizations of law, love, and education and realize new womanhoods.

Rui Kohiyama examines Sasaki Toyojū (1853–1901), and her daughter Sasaki Nobuko (1878–1949), a mother and daughter who drew on their exposure to the emotion, ethic, and etiquette of romantic love at missionary schools to define and seek romantic love. Each developed amorous relationships that contradicted Christian normative teachings of chastity and obedience but reflected Protestant notions of companionship, love, and free will. Kohiyama demonstrates that decades before feminist authors and cultural critics hailed "romantic love" as a fundamental pathway to modernity for the New Woman, Christian ideals and institutions introduced and promoted the concept.

Elizabeth Dorn Lublin analyzes the movement to promote another closely related concept deeply rooted in Christianity, that of monogamy. American

23 On the relationship between civilization and idealized women's roles in the thought of Christian educator Nakamura Masanao, see Koyama Shizuko, *Ryōsai Kenbo: The Educational Ideal of "Good Wife, Wise Mother" in Modern Japan*, trans. Stephen Filler (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 33–34.

24 On Christian author-editor Iwamoto Yoshinaru's emphasis on Christianity as the foundation of the ideal modern home, see Michiko Suzuki, *Becoming Modern Women: Love and Female Identity in Prewar Japanese Literature and Culture* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2010), 66; Rebecca L. Copeland, *Lost Leaves: Women Writers of Meiji Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2000), 10; and Emily Anderson "Tamura Naoomi's The Japanese Bride Christianity, Nationalism, and Family in Meiji Japan," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 34, no. 1 (2007): 219.

and Japanese Woman's Christian Temperance Union members sought to demonstrate that polygamy subjugated Japanese women and represented the antithesis of national modernity. At the core of their legal and civilizational arguments for women's right to monogamous marriages, however, were Protestant Christian social ideals and an early Christian model of the "modern" Japanese woman.

Similarly, the subject of Garrett L. Washington's chapter, the educator, author-editor, and college president Yasui Tetsu (1870–1945), promoted a modern womanhood for Japanese girls. Yasui shifted from abhorring the religion to embracing Christian faith and social ideals. She then mobilized this perspective to offer her own response to the Woman Question in Japan. In particular, she fused Christian theology and ideals with progressive modern philosophy to argue that young Japanese women deserved to obtain "true education," equal to that of men.[25] They were to then use it to fulfill their modern, gendered roles as wives, mothers, and citizens but also as individuals.

The three chapters on Korea in this volume deal with the relationship between Christianity and the introduction of women into the public sphere in word, action, and image. Of the countries in East Asia, the seclusion of women within the private space of the home in Korea was particularly conspicuous to native and foreign observers.[26] Upon gaining access to Korea in the early 1880s, Western missionaries immediately condemned the restrictive conditions of Korean women. The foreigners then devoted considerably energy over the next six decades to emancipating those women from what, in Western eyes, constituted a suffocating, traditional society. To this end, missionary institutions offered education and professional training to women, becoming the first to do so in Korea.

After decades of laudatory academic writing on missionaries' contribution to women's liberation in Korea, however, very recent scholars have adopted a more critical perspective. They point out the oversimplification inherent in viewing solely the positive and unproblematized impact of missionary efforts on Korean women. More complex analyses show that missionary perspectives on and prescriptions for Korean women were largely influenced by gender- and race-based limitations. In some cases, these two types of constraints worked together as missionaries promoted conservative gender

25 Yasui Tetsu 安井哲, "Makoto ni kyōiku aru fujin 真に教育ある婦人 [Truly Educated Women]," *Shinjokai* 1, no. 9 (Dec. 1909): 1.

26 See Choi, *Gender and Mission Encounters*, ch. 3.

ideology and upheld traditional gender norms for Korean women.[27] And yet, several Korean Christian women "moved into public, sometimes global, positions through educational and transnational Christian alliances."[28]

The essays on Korea that follow concentrate on Korean women who used Christian education and faith to move into the public sphere. While adding depth to scholarship on this phenomenon, however, these authors also seek to clarify its place within the larger narrative of women's liberation in Korea. More specifically, they demonstrate that Korean women who navigated the ambiguous Christian messages, ideals, and promises and arrived in the public sphere played foundational roles in the development of the Korean New Woman. Haeseong Park describes the life of Esther Park (1877–1910), Korea's first female Western-style doctor, who used her missionary education and networks to make her way into the public sphere. While empowering in important ways, Park's relationship with her missionary mentor also proved limiting in others and greatly determined her definition of modernity and her cultural identity.

Heejeong Sohn's chapter likewise explores how Korean young women navigated ambiguous relationships with missionaries and found roads into the public sphere. Sohn is especially interested, however, in the insights that missionary photography can provide into the stories of Korea's first modern medical professionals: nurses Kyŏngsŏn Lee and Grace Lee and physician Esther Park. While such photographs served moralizing and financial purposes for American missionaries, Korean women expressed aspirations and pride, depicted agency, and portrayed changing self-identities through them as well. Like these Korean women who found empowerment within the heavy missionary gaze, the Korean Bible women examined in Lee-Ellen Strawn's chapter developed new opportunities even as they worked beneath missionaries. Through their church tasks, Bible women acquired literacy, organizing, and public speaking skills. They also cultivated social exchanges and networks in homes and at church that contributed to a new, modern Korean womanhood. In this endeavor, the *anpang*, the women's inner room, became a positive resource for women as a formative and interpretive community for women's change. Strawn traces Korean Bible Women's influence on the Korean Christian New Women of the next generation who led Ewha University and the Korean YWCA.

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27 Chong Bum Kim "For God and Home: Women's education in early Korean Protestantism," *Acta Koreana* 11, no. 3 (Dec. 2008): 9–28.

28 Choi and Jolly, *Divine Domesticities*, 5.

These essays only provide a glimpse into the figurative spaces connecting Christianity and modern womanhood in East Asia. Even as readers open this book, new scholarship relevant to this theme will be appearing in print. Purposefully an incomprehensive treatment of this constantly evolving topic, this book aims to provide insights that can inform the entire body of research concerned with this question. The chapters that follow show that Christianity was more than simply a vector of Western imperialism or a liberating gift from West to East. The truth lies somewhere in-between, and in seeking it out, this book offers a path between the two contrasting and often conflicting narratives of praise and postcolonial critique that typify the study of Christianity in the region. Here, we see that in addition to all of its other competing, complex meanings in East Asia, Christianity became a pathway and a tool for East Asian women. They often encountered modernity through Christian institutions and relationships, and they used Christian networks, ideals, and media to shape their responses to modernity. In the cases described here, we see East Asian women utilizing these tools to craft new, modern definitions of womanhood that became foundational in women's efforts to establish identity, status, and rights in the early twentieth century.

CHAPTER 1

Christianity, Modernity, and Women Physicians in China: the Southern Methodist Commitment to Medical Education for Chinese Women in Suzhou, 1891–1918

Connie Shemo

Scholars writing in both English and Chinese have agreed that American missionary medical education for Chinese women contributed to the creation of a "modern Chinese woman" (近代妇女). From the late 1870s until the 1910s, American Protestant missionaries provided the majority of (and before the twentieth century, virtually all of) the education for Chinese women trained as physicians in "Western" medicine. One scholar suggests that physicians and nurses were the first professions undertaken by Chinese women in the late nineteenth century and attributes the development of these professions to the teaching and example of Western women missionaries.[1] American missionary medical education for Chinese women, therefore, could seem to be a clear example of how Christianity contributed to the development of "modern

1 Li Chuanbin 李传斌, *Tiaoyue techuan zhidu xia de yiiao shiye: Jidujiao zai Hua yiliao shiye yanjiu 1835–1937* 条约特权制度下的医疗事业: 基督教在华医疗事业研究 [Healing Under Treaty Port Privileges: A Study of Christian Medical Work in China, 1835–1937] (Changsha: Hunan Renmin Chubanshe, 2010), 293–295; Peng Shumin 彭 淑敏, "Zhongguo Jidujiao jindai nǚzi gaodeng yixue jiaoyu de chuanli: Fu Mali yisheng ji Xiage Nǚzi Yixueyuan" 中国基督教近代 女子高等医学教育的创立: 富马利医生及夏葛女子医学院, [The Chinese Christian Church and the Establishment of Medical Education for Modern Chinese Women: Fu Mali (Mary Fulton) and the Hackett Medical College for Women], in *Jidujiao yu Zhongguo shehui wenhua: di san jieguo ji nianqing xuezhe yantaohui lun wenji* 基督教與中國社會文化: 第三屆國際年青學者研討會論文集 (The Christian Church and Chinese Society and Culture: Third International Young Scholars Symposium), ed.Wu Ziming and Wu Xiaoxin 吳梓明. 吳小新 (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Institute for the Study of Religion and the Center for the Study of Religion in Chinese Society, 2008), 319–354; Sara Tucker, "A Mission for Change in China: The Hackett's Women's Medical Center of Canton, China, 1900–1930," in *Women's Work for Women: Missionaries and Social Change in Asia*, ed. Leslie Fleming (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1985), 137–158; Xu Guangqiu, *American Doctors in Canton: Modernization in China, 1835–1935* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2011), chapter 3; Motoe Gayle, Sasaki, *Redemption and Revolution: American and Chinese New Women in the Early Twentieth Century* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, 2016).

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women" in China. As Haeseong Park and Heejeong Sohn demonstrate in their chapters for this volume, nursing education for Korean women likewise contributed to the cultivation of new, "modern" conceptions and realities of womanhood. For Korea and China, the influence of such endeavors has gained more visibility in the historiography only recently.

It is important to note, however, that few denominations undertook formal medical education for Chinese women. The best-known example of foreign mission boards involvement in women's medical education was the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society (WFMS) of the Methodist Episcopal Church, North, which sent five Chinese women to medical schools in the United States from the 1890s to 1905. Less discussed, but impacting a larger number of women and less elite women, were the three missionary medical schools within China that offered training to Chinese women. The Canton Medical College, run by the American Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, admitted women beginning in 1879, and Presbyterian missionary physician Mary Fulton (1854–1927) opened a medical college for women there in 1899. The school was named the Hackett Medical College in 1901 in honor of a large donor. The North China Union Medical College for Women, begun in 1908, was run by the women's foreign mission societies of the Methodist Episcopal Church, North, the American Presbyterian Missions, and the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (Congregationalists). Finally, the smallest endeavor was the Southern Methodist Board of Foreign Missions and Women's Foreign Missionary Society (WFMS), which opened a co-educational school in 1895 in Suzhou, out of which developed the Woman's Medical College of Suzhou in 1907.

This essay focuses on this last example, the Southern Methodist medical education for women in Suzhou. The school graduated only about twenty women physicians before closing in 1918. In contrast, by this time in its history the largest medical school for women in China, the Hackett, listed 104 graduates.[2] As I will argue in this essay, however, the Southern Methodist school was influential far beyond what its number of graduates would suggest. Missionary medical schools for Chinese women in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were important not because of the numbers of women physicians produced or their specific educational content, but because they established that, at the inception of the introduction of Western medicine, Chinese women would have access to the title of "physician." Moreover, the history of the school poses an important question for those studying medical education for women in China. Why did Southern Methodists make the

2 "Hackett Medical College for Women/Turner Training School for Nurses, Canton," *China Catalogue 1925–26, 27–29*, Schlesinger Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.

unusual choice to undertake medical education for women at all? Besides the fact that the Southern Methodist Board of Foreign Missions was much smaller in terms of both membership and money than the other denominations involved, the American South was the region of the United States most hostile to educating women as physicians. How did the Southern Methodist vision of spreading Christianity in China come to include offering women the chance to become physicians?

The answer I offer stems from a broader argument about American missionary medical education for Chinese women in China. All examples of American missionary medical education for Chinese women emerged out of relationships between Chinese Christians and American missionaries, and, less directly, American mission boards and mission supporters. American missionary medical education for Chinese women was not simply or even primarily a cultural transfer from the United States, but rather in part grew out of existing traditions of Chinese female healers. While American mission boards emphasized the ways that Christianity would "uplift" and improve the lives of "heathen" women, offering women education as physicians was not originally part of the plans of any American mission boards (and was not undertaken by mission boards of any other nation).[3] In the case of the WFMS, North which sent Chinese women abroad for medical education, it was Chinese Methodist pastors who advocated for greater educational opportunities for Chinese women, including medical education.[4] In Guangzhou, it was Chinese women who first requested admission into the Canton Medical School.[5] The North China Union Woman's Medical College opened in part because it was too expensive for the co-operating mission boards to respond to all the Chinese

3 For more on the importance of the "uplift" of women to the missionary enterprise, see Joan Jacobs Brumberg, "Zenanas and Girlless Villages: The Ethnology of American Evangelical Women, 1870–1910," *Journal of American History* 69 (September 1982): 347–371, 348, 367; Jane Hunter, *Gospel of Gentility: American Women Missionaries in Turn-of-the-Century China* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1984); Dana Robert, *American Women in Mission: A Social History of Their Thought and Practice* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1997); "Introduction," in *Competing Kingdoms: Women, Mission, Nation, and the American Protestant Empire*, ed. Barbara Reeves-Ellington, Kathryn Kish Sklar, and Connie Shemo (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), 1–16.

4 Connie Shemo, *The Chinese Medical Ministries of Kang Cheng and Shi Meiyu: On a Cross-cultural Frontier of Gender, Race, and Nation* (Bethlehem: Lehigh University Press, 2011), chapter 1.

5 Tucker, "A Mission for Change in China;" Xu, "American Doctors in Canton," 137. For more on the broad interest in Guangzhou in education for women, see Dong Wang, *Managing God's Higher Learning: U.S.-China Cultural Encounter and Canton Christian College* (*Lingnan University*)*, 1888–1952* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2007), chapter 4.

requests to send Chinese women abroad to medical school, and there was no medical education for Chinese women available in the Mandarin Chinese spoken in Northern China.[6]

In the case of Southern Methodists, however, the centrality of Chinese influence is particularly striking. According to the recollections of the founders of the WFMS, South, the idea that Christianity should empower women to enter the public sphere at all was not widely accepted in the denomination as a whole. Additionally, the history of the Southern Methodist Board in China, especially the early reliance on Chinese for support when the home church was unable to support foreign missionaries during the Civil War, had fostered close relations between some prominent Southern Methodists and elite Chinese. Most importantly, Young J. Allen (1836–1907) and elite Chinese reformers supported education for women as a means toward strengthening China. The Southern Methodists provide the clearest case of a mission board responding to Chinese demands to establish medical education for Chinese women.

Understanding the Chinese influence on the development of missionary medical education for Chinese women has important ramifications for an exploration of the part that Christianity—and specifically Christian missionary education—played in the development of a "Modern Woman" in China. Much scholarship has challenged the idea that Christianity in China can be seen simply as an export from the West.[7] Rather, from its inception, Chinese involved with the missionary enterprise have shaped Christianity in China. This is especially true in regards to notions of "Christian womanhood."[8] The question of what the Christian Bible indicates about the proper sphere of action for women was intensely contested in the late nineteenth and twentieth

6 There were a few other individual women missionaries who gave training to Chinese women and called them "physicians," but this practice did not continue into the twentieth century or receive the kind of official recognition as the medical schools for women. See, for example, Wong K. Chimin and Wu Lien—the, *History of Chinese Medicine being a Chronicle of Medical Happenings in China from Ancient Times to the Present Period* (Shanghai: National Quarantine Service, 1936), 443.

7 See, for example, essays in Daniel Bays, ed., *Christianity in China: From the Eighteenth Century to the Present* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996); Ryan Dunch, *Fuzhou Protestants and the Making of a Modern China, 1857–1927* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2001); Jospeh Tse-Hei Lee, *The Bible and the Gun: Christianity and South China, 1860–1900* (New York: Routledge, 2003); Wu Ziming, *Chinese Christianity: An Interplay Between Global and Local Perspectives* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2012).

8 This point is made as well in various essays in Jessie Lutz, ed., *Pioneer Chinese Christian Women: Gender, Christianity, and Social Mobility* (Bethlehem, PA: Lehigh University Press, 2010).

centuries. Debates about this subject in fact continue today.[9] While missionaries often portrayed Chinese as more conservative than Westerners on issues of women, Chinese Christians, and other Chinese involved with the missionary enterprise lobbied missionaries in favor of Chinese women becoming physicians (a title that was ambiguous in both the United States and China in the late nineteenth century). The contributions that Christianity made to the development of modern women in China must therefore be seen in the context of engagement between Chinese and missionaries. I will return to this idea in my conclusion.

1 The WFMS, South and Medical Work for Chinese Women

The difficulties faced by women in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South in beginning a women's foreign missionary society indicate how controversial some members of the denomination found women assuming any kind of public role to be. The WFMS, South began in 1878, nine years after the WFMS of the much larger Methodist Church, North, and after a cluster of other denominations had inaugurated women's boards of foreign mission in the late 1860s and early 1870s.[10] The devastation of the economy of the American South during the U.S. Civil War partly explains this later start. At the same time, writing a history of the organization in 1904, Mrs. F.A. Butler, the editor of the official journal of the WFMS, South, pointed to "a chivalrous feeling that Southern women should retain their old-time unobtrusiveness, without any desire to assert their own personality, even in Christian work, or engage in anything, other than social obligations, that would call them out of their sheltered homes" as an impediment faced by the founders in developing a women's foreign missionary society.[11]

9 For more on these debates in the nineteenth century, and how they continue today, see Kristin Kobes Du Mez, *A New Gospel for Women: Katharine Bushnell and the Challenge of Christian Feminism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015).

10 For more on American women's foreign mission boards, see Patricia Hill, *The World their Household: The American Woman's Foreign Mission Movement and Cultural Transformation, 1870–1920* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1985).

11 Mrs. F.A. Butler, *History of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, Methodist Episcopal Church, South* (Nashville: Pub. House of the M.E. Church, South, Smith and Lamar, agents, 1904), 13. A 1990 dissertation on the Southern Methodist women's missionary work also emphasizes that "according to southern tradition, women had a crucial role to play in the moral and religious life of the community; most church leaders, however, expected this to be a private role. Restrictions imposed by the church severely limited the ability

Butler gave several reasons why the General Board agreed to a separate women's society, but she suggested that the "most potent factor of all" was the money collected by those advocating the WFMS. Some of the women who formed the WFMS had originally raised thousands of dollars in the 1870s for Mary Lambuth (1832–1904), the wife of James Lambuth (1830–1892), a missionary for the Southern Methodist Board, for her educational work among Chinese women in the 1870s. Having focused on China because of Lambuth, the WFMS raised money to send a single woman missionary and found a missionary candidate. The ability of the WFMS board members to raise money was, in Butler's words, "irresistible" to the General Board.[12]

For the first decade of WFMS, South, work in China, the prominent male missionary Young J. Allen managed the affairs of the society and made reports to the board members. Allen's distinctive vision for China missions thus strongly influenced the direction of the WFMS, South. Soon after the beginning of the U.S. Civil War in 1861, the Southern Methodist Board of Foreign Missions was no longer able to support its foreign missionaries. Allen and Lambuth, the two Southern Methodist missionaries left in China, took positions as translators with the Chinese government. Allen rose in the ranks of government service, becoming known as the "missionary mandarin" until his resignation from service to the Chinese government in 1881 to take over superintendency of the reconstructed Southern Methodist missions in China. Scholars have emphasized Allen's influence on prominent Chinese reformers such as Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao, especially through a newspaper he published for Chinese intellectuals, *The Globe* (Wanguo Gongbao 万国公报).[13] However, Allen's experience as a government employee, and the relationships he formed with elite Chinese as a result, also powerfully impacted his philosophy of missions in ways that were to shape the Southern Methodist Mission in China, including the WFMS. Lacking financial support and needing employment with the Chinese government, Allen had become fluent in writing and reading Chinese to a degree unusual for missionaries. Even Western missionaries fluent in spoken Chinese as a rule relied on Chinese translators for written communication.[14]

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of women to act in the public sphere." Sara Joyce Myers, "Southern Methodist Women Leaders and Church Missions, 1878–1910" (PhD diss., Emory University, 1990), 15.

12 Butler, *History*, 13.

13 Adrian Bennett, *Missionary Journalist in China: Young J. Allen and his Magazines, 1860–1883* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1983). For a Southern Methodist internal history of Allen's ideas, which also emphasizes the stress he laid on elite conversions, see Edward Pell, *Adventures of Faith in Foreign Lands: A Glance at the Salient Events in the History of Southern Methodist Missions* (Nashville: Press of Smith and Lamar, 1919), 69–79.

14 Dunch, *Fuzhou Protestants*, 33.

This ability enabled Allen to engage with educated Chinese in a way that relatively few missionaries could, making him more open to their influence. Having become convinced that the only way to introduce Christianity to China was to appeal to elite Chinese, Allen presented Christianity as a broader part of Western "civilization," which included Western science, teaching English, and providing Western medical care.

Allen was certainly not unique among missionaries during this time in hoping that missionary medical work would stimulate Chinese interest in Christianity. In the 1830s and 1840s, the celebrated medical missionary Peter Parker (1804–1888) described literally bringing sight to the blind with eye surgery, especially the removal of cataracts.[15] As surgical traditions had not developed in Chinese medicine, Parker's ability to perform these operations gave his accounts of his medical work a messianic quality and promoted the view among Parker's listeners in the United States and Europe that Western medicine was far advanced compared to Chinese. In fact, aside from surgery, throughout the nineteenth century most Chinese did not find that the medical care offered by missionaries provided an improvement on the wide array of medical practices already available in China. However, by the late nineteenth century, as Bridie Andrews suggests, elite Chinese did express some interest in Western medicine as a means to "bolster the position of the Chinese government vis-à-vis the imperial dynasty," among other reasons.[16]

Allen's determination to introduce Western "civilization" to Chinese elites in part accounted for his determination to open a hospital, one of the most expensive ventures a mission board could undertake. Dr. Walter Lambuth (1854–1921), son of James and Mary Lambuth, had returned to China as a medical missionary for the General Board in 1877 after receiving a medical degree from Vanderbilt. The Southern Board of Foreign Missions, however, was still in the process of recovering from the impact of the Civil War. The support of the WFMS was thus key to the building of the hospital. In an 1881 report, Allen asked the WFMS leaders to appropriate $2500 or $3000 towards "land, wall, and buildings" for a hospital in which a men's hospital would be connected to a hospital for women by a corridor. While in theory he was asking WFMS board members to build a women's hospital, as they were contributing to the land for both hospitals, as well as the wall around the hospitals, they would essentially

15 Edward Gulick, *Peter Parker and the Opening of China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973).

16 Bridie Andrews, *The Making of Chinese Medicine, 1850–1960* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2014), 54, 11. See also Ruth Rogaski, *Hygienic Modernity: Meanings of Health and Disease in Treaty Port China* (Berkley: University of California Press, 2004), chapter 4.

be helping to fund the entire medical work. To run the women's hospital, he asked the WFMS to pay for the medical training of a woman willing to go to Suzhou as a missionary physician, promising that this investment would yield "grand results."[17]

Allen's request for a woman missionary physician was part of his broader project of appealing to Chinese elites. In 1879, in the northern city of Tianjin, Dr. Leonora Howard (1851–1925) of the WFMS, North, had successfully cured the wife of Li Hongzhang (1823–1901), one of the most powerful officials in China.[18] While medical missionaries frequently denigrated Chinese medical traditions in general, a particular critique was that Chinese women had no access to medical care, and thus required women missionary physicians. As a number of scholars have emphasized, in fact there were entire schools of medical thought and a plethora of medical texts devoted to the health of women.[19] Nonetheless, the cure of his wife convinced Li Hongzhang that Western women missionaries could contribute to the health of Chinese women in new and valuable ways, and also increased his receptivity to the value of Western medicine more generally. Of particular importance to Allen, Howard's successful treatment of Li Hongzhang's wife gave her the kind of access to official circles that Allen deemed key to the introduction of Christianity. In his report to the WFMS Allen brought up Howard's treatment: "The recent successful visit of Dr. Howard, a medical lady missionary in the employ of the M.E. Church, to the wife one of the highest Chinese officials, has opened a door to reach the educated women, hitherto closed to foreigners."[20] The interest in medical work for women demonstrated by a high Chinese official motivated Allen to request that the WFMS of his own board begin medical work.

Educating women missionaries as physicians was not a part of how most Southern Methodists at this time viewed Christian womanhood. Anne Walter Fearn (1867–1939), who graduated from the Woman's Medical College of

17 *Second Annual Report of the Woman's Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, Held in Nashville, Tenn. May 4–7, 1880* (Nashville: Southern Methodist Publishing House, 1880), Bridwell Library, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, TX (hereafter BL), 15.

18 Margaret Negodaeff-Tomsik, *Honour Due: The Story of Dr. Leonora Howard King* (Ottowa: Canadian Medical Association, 1999).

19 Francesca Bray, *Technologies of Gender: Fabrics of Power in Late Imperial China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997); Charlotte Furth, *A Flourishing Yin: Gender in China's Medical History, 960–1665* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999); Yi-Li Wu, *Reproducing Women: Metaphor, Medicine, and Childbirth in Late Imperial China* (Berkley: University of California Press, 2010).

20 *Second Annual Report of the Woman's Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South*, 15.

Pennsylvania in 1893 and ran the medical work in Suzhou from 1893 to 1896, described women physicians as "distinctly taboo in the South." She noted that when she became interested in studying medicine in the 1880s, "it was a question of propriety as to whether they should even be discussed in polite society."[21] Since the American South was not monolithic, Fearn's comments may be more applicable to the Deep South, as she was from Mississippi. Nonetheless, the idea that spreading Christianity to Chinese women would necessitate funding medical education for women in the United States was a radical departure for Southern Methodists, one which grew out of a broader focus in the Southern Methodist mission to appeal to elite Chinese.

Allen was an important supporter of women's mission work at a time when other Southern Methodist church leaders were openly suspicious or hostile.[22] He therefore wielded a powerful influence with WFMS leaders, who responded to his request for involvement in medical work with alacrity. By the next annual report, in 1881, WFMS board members reported that they were paying for the medical education at the Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania of Mildred Phillips (1860–1914), a candidate who had agreed to go to China as a medical missionary. They paid $300 for the first year and then $400 a year for three years for her medical course (a reduced rate for missionary candidates.) The following year, in 1882, they had appropriated $2,000 to help purchase the land for both the men's and women's hospital. To put this in context, the WFMS budget for China was $16,845, and the entire WFMS budget for all mission stations, which at this time included Mexico and Brazil, was $40,730.[23] In 1885 they appropriated $6,000 to build a women's hospital, at a time when the budget for China was $22,780 and the total of all work $51, 327.[24] Through the rest of the 1880s and into the 1890s, the WFMS records mention every year looking for another woman willing to attend medical school, at WFMS expense, and

21 Anne Waltner Fearn, *My Days of Strength: An American Woman Doctor's Forty Years in China* (New York and London: Harper Brothers and Publishers, 1939), 12.

22 As Myers emphasized, "without vote or voice in ecclesiastical matters of governance, the women depended on male supporters to present their views and to act as advocates for their causes." Sara Joyce Myers, "Southern Methodist Women Leaders and Church Missions, 1878–1910" (PhD diss., Emory University, 1990), 33.

23 *Third Annual Report of the Woman's Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, Held in St. Louis, Mo, May 9–13, 1881* (Nashville: Southern Methodist Publishing House, 1881), BL; *Fourth Annual Report of the Woman's Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, Held at Nashville, TN, May 18–25, 1882* (Nashville: Southern Methodist Publishing House, 1882), BL, 83, 99.

24 *Seventh Annual Report of the Woman's Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, with Minutes of the First Meeting of the General Executive Association Held at Knoxville, TN, June 1885*, BL, 73.

go to China. After planning to pay for medical school for several candidates only to have these plans fall through, they began funding the medical education of Margaret Polk (1860–1932) in 1889. The WFMS, South, was therefore investing a considerable portion of its resources in medical work. As Michelle Renshaw has pointed out in her study of mission hospitals in China, the majority of mission hospitals in China were established between 1880 and 1910. The WFMS, South, hospital in Suzhou, completed in 1887, was one of the earliest women's hospitals in China, although not the first.[25] The WFMS, South, was an important mission board in establishing medical work for Chinese women.

The WFMS also focused on encouraging women to become missionary physicians in the official WFMS journal, *Woman's Missionary Advocate.* In an 1882 issue, the editor queried the readers: "Who among our many devoted, highly-cultured young ladies will respond to this appeal? The distressed millions of our sex in heathen lands, shut off from all ordinary means of relief from physical suffering, appeal eloquently and loudly to Christian women to come with gentle tone and touch, and all the modern appliances of science and knowledge, to minister to their bodily infirmities."[26] These kinds of appeals appeared regularly in the *Woman's Missionary Advocate.*[27] Allen's perception that missionary medical work for women would provide an entry into the homes of "educated" women led him to encourage the WFMS to make the substantial investment in educating missionary candidates as physicians and building a hospital.

2 Medical Education for Chinese Women

It is surprising enough that the WFMS, South would fund the medical education of American women missionary candidates, given prevailing attitudes towards women physicians in the South during this period, and given that even beginning a women's foreign mission board was controversial in the denomination. It is even more counterintuitive, therefore, that in the nineteenth century the Southern Methodists would offer professional medical education to Chinese women. And yet, in 1895, Dr. Anne Walter Fearn (1867–1939), the physician for the WFMS, South, and William Park, the physician from the

25 Michelle Campbell Renshaw, *Accommodating the Chinese: the American Hospital in China, 1880–1920* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 11 and 160. The first was opened by the WFMS, North, in Fuzhou in 1875.

26 *Fourth Annual Report*, 1882, 5.

27 See, for example, "Medical Work," *Woman's Missionary Advocate* (Oct. 1901), 100.

Southern Methodist General Board, began a medical school which taught both Chinese men and women.

Walter had taken over the medical work in Suzhou in 1893. At the end of 1891, Phillips left to be married to a physician of another mission board, and so left the hospital. The hospital remained in the care of the wife of one of the General Board missionaries, who was not a physician, but ran the hospital with the help of Chinese women whom Phillips had given some rudimentary training in nursing. The WFMS South had been funding the education of Margaret Polk at the WMCP in the hope that she would join Phillips as a second physician. The plan after Phillip's resignation was for her to take over the hospital herself. However, right before her 1893 graduation, Margaret Polk's sister-in-law died, and she felt compelled to spend a few years helping her brother's family until he could remarry. Walter was not a member of the Southern Methodist Church but agreed to take over the medical work for three years until Polk could come out herself. After Polk came to China in 1896, she took over running the women's hospital and teaching in the medical school. Having married a missionary physician of the Southern Methodist Board, Dr. John Fearn (1871–1926), Walter would remain in China with the Southern Methodist Board after Polk took over the medical work. In the subsequent decade, Walter resumed control over the school and hospital several times when Polk was unavailable.[28] Margaret Polk and Anne Walter Fearn would thus both be involved in medical education for Chinese women through the first decade of the twentieth century.

There is evidence that in the decision to offer Chinese women education as physicians, Southern Methodists were responding to requests from Chinese who already had some familiarity with Chinese women acting as traditional Chinese physicians. As early as 1886, Phillips wrote in her annual report to the WFMS board, "I have had numerous applications from young women and their parents, wishing me to take them personally, or their daughters, as students of medicine. But I find here I must be wary."[29] It is difficult to discern exactly what Phillips, or the Chinese women and their parents, were envisioning with this request. However, earlier in the report, after announcing, "I cannot and will not attempt to run a hospital without a few Chinese that I shall train as nurses," she proposed to take a few Chinese women and pay them a small monthly salary to help her in the hospital. It is therefore probable that the Chinese women and their parents had in mind more educational content than Phillips was providing the girls she was training to help her in the hospital.

28 Fearn, *My Days of Strength*, 18–24.

29 *Eight Annual Report f the Woman's Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 1886*, 15–16.

"Nurse" was still a term loosely applied in the United States at this time. There was a distinction between "trained nurses," who had gone to one of the nursing schools that had opened since the 1870s in the United States, and the more numerous "untrained nurses," who had no formal education.[30] Women missionary physicians and nurses were part of efforts to create a nursing profession in China, but these efforts did not begin until the 1890s and took shape in the first decade of the twentieth century. Phillips seems to have been looking for help in the more menial aspects of running a hospital rather than developing a nursing profession. The request that she take young Chinese women as "students of medicine" struck her as a fundamentally different proposal, one that caused her to be "wary."

By 1891, however, Phillips proposed that offering such training could be a legitimate part of her missionary work. In her report for that year, she asserted, "God has greatly enlarged our borders in the direction of giving medical training to the Chinese in China," predicting that "the day must soon come when this department of work will give a large increase to our work in China." She went on to explain that while "for the women hitherto I have not sought" medical training, "of late I cannot shut my eyes to the fact that it is an open door of rich promise." She expressed a hope of beginning medical training in the next year, teaching some of her nurses alongside a class of three other women, adding, "Only last night I had a letter from Hangchow in which was the information that the parents of one of these young women gladly accepted the proposition for her daughter to begin studying, we furnishing only her board ($1.50) and the $1 which she could use in paying her tuition."[31] Leaving the medical work to get married later that year, Phillips did not put this plan into effect. However, a list of personnel at the hospital for 1891 included a reference to four "native nurses" and two "nurses studying medicine."[32] It appears that Phillips decided to give two of her nurses more advanced education, although this project ended when she left the mission. The "open door" of Chinese interest in medical education led Phillips to expand her conception of what bringing Christianity to Chinese women could entail.

At least some of the nurses remained after Phillips left. Fearn emphasized the importance of the nurses in helping her run the hospital when she first arrived. She described them as "bright and engaging … staunchly loyal to

30 Susan M. Reverby, *Ordered to Care: The Dilemma of American Nursing, 1850–1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

31 *Thirteenth Annual Report of the Woman's Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 1891*, 28.

32 "Hospital Report," *Woman's Missionary Advocate* (Sept. 1891), 112.

their teachers and determined to succeed.... Without them I could have done nothing."[33] Most of them, according to Fearn's recollections, were graduates of the mission school. In a later essay, Polk commented that their "assistants" were usually from mission schools and were from the "poorer classes."[34] Fearn, however, discussed one student, Ling Tsu, who spoke English fluently, the daughter of an "American educated Chinese doctor" and, later, the aunt of the first president of Soochow University. It is likely that she meant Yui Sing Tsu, who is referred to elsewhere as the adopted daughter of an American missionary, and later became known as the prominent Chinese evangelist Dora Yu (1873–1931).[35]

Fearn's discussion of the Southern Methodist medical school opening in 1895 showed a greater focus on educational content than Phillips had described. The original course of study consisted of a series of lectures that she and Park gave, along with some English instruction by other missionaries, between November 1895 and June 1896. As Fearn related in her 1935 memoir, they hung a curtain down the middle of the hall that separated the men's hospital from the women's hospital. The women entered from the women's hospital and the men from the men's hospital, so while all the students listened to lectures together, there was no actual contact between male and female students. Unlike the Presbyterian medical school in Guangzhou, which taught in the local language of Cantonese, this school taught in a mixture of Chinese (in the Suzhou dialect) and English, thus limiting the number of students who could take the course. It was perhaps for this reason that there was a high attrition rate even though the course was only about six months long. Fearn wrote that they started with six women and sixteen men, while two women and three men graduated.[36] The women graduates had been assistants in the hospital. Along with the English-speaking Ling Tsu graduated Zak Foh-me (also written as Zoh Fo-me 石福妹) (d. 1907).[37] Ling Tsu went with her adopted mother to open missionary medical work in Korea before moving

33 Fearn, *My Days of Strength*, 29.

34 Margaret Polk, "Women's Medical Work," *China Medical Missionary Journal* 25 (April 1901): 112–119, 113–114. It is important to distinguish these mission schools from the well known McTyiere school run by the Southern Methodists, opening in 1893, which explicitly appealed to elite girls. For more on McTyiere, see Heidi A. Ross, "'Cradle of Female Talent': The McTyeire Home and School for Girls, 1892–1937," in Bays, ed., *Christianity in China*, 209–227.

35 Fearn, *My Days of Strength*, 30. For more on Dora Yu, see Silas Wu, *Dora Yu and Twentieth Century Revival* (Boston: Pishon River Publications, 2002).

36 Fearn, *My Days of Strength*, 62–65.

37 Missionary sources do not have characters for her name, but Wong and Wu provided characters in *History of Chinese Medicine*, 522. In modern Pinyin, the name would be Romanized as Shi Fumei.

on to a career as an independent evangelist, while Zak Foh-me worked as a physician in the mission. She still had the status as "assistant" to the foreign physicians, but Fearn and Polk both emphasized how crucial she was to the continuation of the hospital.

While the first two graduates worked with missionaries, a later report showed a graduate joining a family medical practice. In the 1903 report, Polk indicated that while one of the graduates would remain working in the hospital as a pharmacist, the other "went to her home in Changshu to practice medicine. Her father is a native physician, so she will be there with him."[38] While Polk did not make this entirely clear, it appears that the graduate would be combining her training in Suzhou with her father's "native" medical knowledge. While missionaries frequently wrote about Western and Chinese medicine as opposing systems of thought, this suggests an awareness of the possibility of medical syncretism.

A 1901 article by Polk and a 1902 one by Fearn provide more direct evidence of women physicians in Suzhou, suggesting that women becoming physicians would not in and of itself have been completely unfamiliar to people in that city. Writing for the *China Medical Missionary Journal*, a journal for missionary physicians in China, Polk reported meeting three Chinese "women physicians—not midwives and not from foreign institutions." One was "the wife of an old physician who had taught her the secrets of her profession." The son was a physician as well. The family "lived elegantly," with the mother owning a sedan chair and earning "rather large fees for her visits." A second, also an older woman, possessed "a pair of obstetric forceps and said that she had at home a speculum for local applications to the vagina." The third was a "dignified woman about thirty-five, beautifully dressed" from an official family. "I admired her," Polk noted, "and her family treated her with marked respect." She used these examples to emphasize that "there is no foundation for the belief that education for women in medicine is an innovation.... If I have seen these three in my limited experience there must be a considerable number of women in China who are practicing medicine."[39]

Fearn's 1902 essay, "Medical Schools for Chinese Women," was published in the Southern Methodist *Review of Missions*, read not only by supporters of the WFMS, South, but by the broader community of Southern Methodists interested in foreign missions. The opening of the essay suggested that Fearn saw her audience as skeptical about the propriety of medical education for any women: "Many among you possibly doubt the advisability of professional

38 Margaret Polk, "Hospital Report," *Woman's Missionary Advocate* (Apr. 1903), 377.

39 Polk, "Women's Medical Work," 116.

women among westerners; how much greater, then, will you think the undesirability of Chinese women in medicine!" She countered, however, that "the time has come when the educated women of China will find, as many have already found, their vocation along the lines of their special training and inclination." After discussing the need for Chinese women physicians in mission hospitals, she notes, "It surprised me no little when I found that among the native women, not midwives, but practicing physicians!" The mother of one of the male medical students, in fact, was a "distinguished ophthalmologist."[40] Fearn went on to bring in the other examples cited by Polk in her article the previous year.

Rather than presenting Chinese women as lacking access to health care providers, as was typical in missionary literature, Polk and Fearn brought up several examples of women physicians in order to support their arguments that medical education for Chinese women was an important part of missionary work. This observation echoes the findings of scholarship that has shown that there were women physicians in late imperial China, usually from families that practiced medicine.[41] Because the idea that Christianity improved the status of Chinese women was a key part of missionary rhetoric, it would have been difficult for Southern Methodists to argue that their mission board should oppose medical education for women when Chinese women were already becoming physicians. The opposition to professional women in the denomination at large led these Southern Methodist missionary physicians to offer a different picture of the medical landscape of China than did most missionaries, revealing the ways in which Chinese in Suzhou were familiar with the concept of female physicians before the arrival of missionaries.

Even though the Southern Methodists did not introduce the idea of women becoming physicians to Suzhou, the Southern Methodist medical school opening in 1895 was nonetheless an innovation in the city. According to Fearn, the first graduation ceremony attracted considerable attention. She recalled that at the ceremony "officials of the highest rank mingled with the crowd who came to witness this, the first thing of its kind to take place in China." The valedictorian spoke on "the efficacy of new things in general and of roentgen rays in particular."[42] Even without medical licensing laws, the elaborateness of the ceremony imparted a degree of authority to the graduates, conveying that

40 Mrs. J.B. Fearn, M.D., "Medical Schools for Chinese Women," *Review of Missions* 22 (Oct. 1902), 195–202, 195, 197.

41 Wu, *Reproducing Women*, 18–19; Angela Ki-che Leung, "Women Practicing Medicine in Pre-Modern China," in *Chinese Women in the Imperial Past: New Perspectives*, ed. H. Zurndorfer (Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers, 1999), 101–134.

42 Fearn, *My Days of Strength*, 62–65.

Chinese women could achieve the title of "physician" in the system of medicine introduced by missionaries.

The next few hospital reports to the WFMS, South, after Polk had taken over the hospital from Fearn, listed one or two medical students without discussion of any graduations. In the wake of the 1900 Boxer Uprising, graduations from the school became more elaborate affairs. Ruth Rogaski marks the post-Boxer period as the era in which Chinese elites began to focus on "hygienic modernity" as key to China's political survival. In the wake of the Qing defeat by a coalition of eight foreign powers—which included European countries, the United States, and Japan—many Chinese reformers feared that China would be dismembered by the victorious nations. A growing interest in Western, or "modern" medicine was part of the broader effort to create a "New China" able to resist imperialism. This resulted in a greater interest among Chinese officials in missionary medical schools, including the Southern Methodist school in Suzhou.[43]

The 1903 and 1904 reports of the medical work of the WFMS, South emphasized both the presence of officials and the support of important members of the Southern Methodist Church at the graduation ceremonies for those years. In 1903, when "two young ladies and one young man received certificates," Polk reported, "Bishop Galloway delivered the address, and the governor of the province presented the certificates." Fearn provided a more elaborate description of the 1904 ceremony, when "seven boys and two girls" graduated: "His Excellency, En Snow, Governor of the Province and ruler of twenty million people, and all of the officials of the province graced the occasion, which was a most brilliant one, with their presence. His Excellency presented the diplomas with a few well-chosen words of congratulation and advice for each." There was a total of forty-nine officials "in gorgeous array of satin and peacock feathers" on the graduation platform. Young J. Allen gave the address.[44] Again, we see that the graduation ceremonies received more attention than the numbers of graduates might seem to warrant. The officials were supporting the education of Chinese students as physicians in Western medicine as a concept more than the graduation of a particular class, which in and of itself could not have a significant impact on providing medical care to the population of Suzhou, let alone all of China. In personally handing the diplomas to all of the students, the governor was also signifying his approval of Chinese women becoming physicians.

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43 Rogaski, *Hygienic Modernity*, chapter 6.

44 Polk, "Hospital Report," 377; Mrs. J.B. Fearn, "Hospital Report," *Woman's Missionary Advocate* (Nov. 1904), 177.

3 Scientific Medicine and Women's Medical Education

While the first years after the Boxer Uprising initially seemed full of promise to missionary physicians, they actually began the marginalization of missionaries in the introduction of Western medicine to China. In spite of concerns about Japanese imperialism, the Japanese provided the most compelling model to the Chinese government officials who sought to reform China in the post-Boxer era.[45] Following the Japanese victory in the 1905 Russo-Japanese War, where the Japanese defeated a European power (albeit the least industrialized one), Chinese interest in the "Japanese model of East Asian modernity" grew even more.[46] The Japanese example made it clear to Chinese that Christianity was not an essential ingredient in achieving a strong, modern nation able to resist imperialism.[47]

While medical missionaries pleaded with their mission boards for more money in order that their medical work would not fall behind new government hospitals, it became apparent that the demands of "scientific medicine," with the extensive laboratory equipment and knowledge of biology, physics, and chemistry as prerequisites, would be beyond the capacity of any one mission board. Smaller medical schools began to combine. In 1909, the Southern Methodist Board closed their medical school in Suzhou, instead sending their male mission school graduates who wished to become physicians to the more elaborately equipped medical school at the University of Nanking.[48]

However, as the University of Nanking did not admit women during this period, the WFMS, South, continued to provide medical education for Chinese women and grant the title of "physician." They opened a separate medical school for Chinese women, the Woman's Medical College of Suzhou.[49] The school tried to meet the new standards of scientific medicine, incorporating laboratory work and including a four-year course of study. The school

45 Xi Gao, "Foreign Models of Medicine in Twentieth Century China," in Andrews and Bullock, eds., *Medical Transitions in Twentieth Century China*, 173–201.

46 Andrews, *Making of Modern Chinese Medicine*, 70.

47 For an exception where a mission hospital made an important impact on Japanese medicine, see Garrett Washington, "St. Luke's Hospital and the Modernization of Japan," *Health and History* 15, no. 2 (Dec. 2013), 5–28.

48 John Snell, "Hospital Report, Oct. 1, 1934–Sept. 30, 1935," Missionary Files, BL; Wong and Wu, *History of Chinese Medicine*, 544–555.

49 *Annual Report of the Woman's Missionary Council of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 1911*, 283–284; Noreen Dunn Tatum, *A Crown of Service: A Story of Woman's Work in the Methodist Episcopal Church: South, from 1878–1940* (Nashville: Parthenon Press, 1960), 103.

took in five students every other year, because of the limited equipment they possessed. Southern Methodist medical missionaries also opened a nursing school in 1909 for Chinese women who wanted to study Western, or "modern" medicine but could not speak English or did not have the necessary educational preparation for the higher standards set in the medical school.[50]

Around this same time, Chinese women who wanted to become physicians had an increasing number of options. In addition to the Hackett, in Guangzhou two private medical schools accepted Chinese women, the Guanghua Medical School in 1910 and the Gongyi Medical School in 1912.[51] There were also more opportunities for women to study abroad. With the opening of the Tokyo Woman's Medical University in 1900, Chinese women could study in Japan. New routes apart from Christian missionary efforts, such as the Boxer scholarships, also emerged for Chinese women to study medicine in the United States and Europe. Moreover, the expense of providing medical education continued to increase.

In 1914, the Rockefeller Foundation had sent the First Rockefeller Commission to explore efforts at promoting Western medicine in China, followed by a second commission in 1915. The commissions were critical of most of the medical schools, whether missionary, government, or private, for inadequately teaching the precepts of scientific medicine. The report referred critically to the three missionary medical schools for women, citing the "meagre and sometimes antiquated equipment" and the "insufficient" preparation of the students, advocating the closure of the schools.[52] The Rockefeller Foundation set up the China Medical Board (CMB), which in 1921 opened the Peking Union Medical College (PUMC), a medical school with the same standards as Johns Hopkins University, the U.S. medical school most devoted to teaching scientific medicine. The CMB became the most important source of funding upgrades for medical schools and hospitals in China, and so became very influential among missionary and Chinese medical educators alike.[53]

By 1916, the missionary physicians in charge of the Woman's Medical College of Suzhou had realized that they could not credibly continue to grant the title

50 "Mary Black Hospital, Suzhou," n.d. (internal evidence dates 1916), Pamphlet, Ethel Polk Alumnae files, Women in Medicine Archives, Drexel University College of Medicine, Philadelphia, PA.

51 Xu, *American Doctors in Canton*, 152–153.

52 "The Medical Education of Chinese Women," 3, in "Report of Second China Medical Commission to the China Medical Board of the Rockefeller Foundation, 1915," folder 245, box 27, series 601, record group 1.1, Rockefeller Foundation Archives, Rockefeller Archive Center (RAC), Sleepy Hollow, New York.

53 Mary Brown Bullock, *An American Transplant: Peking Union Medical College and the Rockefeller Foundation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980).

of "physician" with their facilities as they stood. Yet the school's growing enrollment attested to the demand among Chinese women and their families for women's education as physicians. A 1916 fundraising pamphlet for the WFMS, South's medical work in Suzhou described school's growing popularity in "New China," noting that they were currently "expecting the largest and best prepared Freshman class in our history."[54]

Nonetheless, the WFMS, South decided to close the medical school in 1918, re-opening a union medical school for women in conjunction with other mission boards in Shanghai in 1924. Yet by the time the new medical school opened, co-education in medical education was becoming more common. More Chinese government and private medical schools had begun admitting women. A 1922 report on Christian education in China stated that ten out of the twenty-nine medical schools then in China were co-educational.[55] Most importantly, the CMB had decided to open PUMC to female students, thus giving Chinese women access to the most advanced medical education in China.

The way that the CMB arrived at this decision demonstrates the key role of early missionary medical education in establishing Chinese women as physicians. While the CMB reports did not express opposition to women becoming physicians per se, a 1914 report voiced the concern that offering women medical education might draw the best educated women away from nursing schools. As CMB members believed that educated women nurses were important to establishing "modern" hospitals that adhered to the principles of hygiene, they viewed this possibility as highly undesirable and originally recommended against admitting women to the school of medicine. Women who were "peculiarly fitted" to become physicians could study abroad, the report suggested.[56] However, in a 1915 report, the CMB conceded that "there seems to be a definite place in Chinese society for well-trained women physicians."[57] While the report criticized the medical schools for Chinese women then in existence, the growth of these schools pointed to a clear interest in women becoming physicians, rather than nurses. Despite their small number of graduates, the

54 "Mary Black Hospital, Suzhou."

55 Chinese Educational Commission, *Christian Education in China: A Study Made by an Educational Commission* (New York: Committee of Reference and Counsel of the Foreign Missions Conference of North America, 1922), 178.

56 Francis Weld Peabody, "Education of Women Physicians," 44–45, Report of the China Medical Commission to the Rockefeller Foundation, 1914, folder 243, box 27, series 601, Record Group 1.1, RAC.

57 "The Medical Education of Chinese Women," 3.

schools had established that Chinese women could participate in "modern" or "new" medicine as physicians.

4 Conclusion

The Chinese women who studied in medical schools abroad received the most publicity and became leaders in promoting "modern" medicine in China. The fame of these women made it clear that women could be successful physicians in China. The fact that these women were so exceptional, however, also justified the marginalization of Chinese women in the medical profession, as can be seen in the Rockefeller Commission's original proposal that only a few Chinese women "peculiarly fitted" for medical study go to medical schools abroad. The missionary medical schools for women within China established the broader demand by Chinese women and their families for education that would lead to the title of physician. Even with their small number of graduates, the official attention given to the women graduates in Suzhou showed a willingness among at least some Chinese elite to accept women physicians, thus countering claims that China was "not ready" for women physicians. Therefore, these schools contributed to Chinese women having access to the title of physician in "modern" or "new" medicine, and consequently to positions of authority within scientific medicine as it developed in China. Christian medical missionary work can thus be seen as contributing to the development of a "modern woman" in China.

Yet, as this essay has argued, the idea that introducing Christianity to China should include providing Chinese women with education as physicians did not originate with nineteenth-century mission boards in the United States. Rather, it developed from engagement with Chinese Christians and other Chinese who interacted with missionaries. The fact that one of the two medical schools for Chinese women begun in the nineteenth century, albeit the smallest one, was run by a mission board from a region in the United States where medical education for women was unpopular shows the importance of Chinese influence.

The history of medical education for Chinese women suggests that Christianity's role in modernity for Chinese women can in at least some cases be viewed not as the result of an imposition of a foreign religion but as evolving from interpretations of Christianity that arose in the context of relationships between foreign missionaries and Chinese who engaged with the missionary enterprise. These interpretations could in turn shape visions of "Christian womanhood" among supporters of foreign missions in the United

States, suggesting that changes in ideas about appropriate spheres of action for women could flow both ways.

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CHAPTER 2

Chinese Christian New Women's Practicality, Social Service, and Broad Cooperation: a Case Study of YWCA Women in the 1920s and 1930s

Aihua Zhang

In Republican China, the New Woman as a Western ideological import was highly contested in discourse and diversely manifested in practice. Forces that were simultaneously radical, conservative, and commercial competed to formulate and propagate their versions of the New Woman in order to monopolize the image for their own vested interests.[1] Women, however, were not passive recipients of male propaganda. Prior to the formal introduction of the concept, there had already been new-style women in China. When the term New Woman was publicly introduced in 1918, women embraced it but adapted it to fit their own experiences.[2] Although New Women in China had much in common such as the pursuit of a modern education and modern Western-style clothing, women enacted many different variations of new womanhood. In the case of the China Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), the largest group of Chinese Christian women, new womanhood meant developing a new, broader social awareness and addressing the modern promises and dilemmas facing their country through Christian faith and ideals. This approach defined their particular form of new womanhood and also distinguished them from their secular counterparts. YWCA women differed from other types of Chinese New Women, from the consumerist and conservative New Women with less social awareness to more theoretically and journalistically inclined liberals and radicals. The Chinese YWCA cooperated broadly across religious, gendered, and national boundaries to carry out social work targeting the improvement and advancement of social welfare. Through widespread cooperation at the local, national, and international levels, they diversified their efforts, pursued outreach, and participated in international feminist activism.

1 See Louise Edwards, "Policing the Modern Woman in Republican China," *Modern China* 26, no. 2 (2000): 115–147.

2 Hu Shi 胡适, "American Women," *Xin qingnian* 新青年 5, no. 3 (Shanghai: Xinqingnian she, 1918): 222. As one of the renowned forerunners of the New Culture Movement, Hu first introduced the term New Woman to the public, which defined new-style women as those with lofty thoughts, sharp speech, and radical behavior.

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Although focusing primarily on women, the organization increasingly sought to apply the Social Gospel to the needs of China as a whole. In doing so, these women made a significant contribution to the country's modernization experiment in the early twentieth century.

There are a number of scholarly works on the New Woman in the Republican era, but the majority of them address the topic without taking religious influences into account.[3] Concerning the YWCA in China, some scholars direct their attention to the influences of the American YWCA's overseas work on their Chinese fellow members.[4] Others focus on Chinese leadership and agency. In "Christianity, Feminism, and Communism: The Life and Times of Deng Yuzhi," Emily Honig exposes the neglected contribution of the YWCA to China's communist movement.[5] Building on her discussion of the Y women's political consciousness and engagement, this chapter, however, focuses on the role of the association in transforming Chinese women into Christian New Women. In her dissertation entitled "Going Public: The YWCA, 'New' Woman, and the Social Feminism in Republican China," Littell-Lamb discusses the Y women's New Womanhood, yet her concentration is on the power relations in leadership levels between Chinese and Western secretaries, and between the older and young generations of Chinese women within the National YWCA.[6] Regarding their New Womanhood, she uses social feminism to define it, by which she "refers both to the area of women's activism (in the social rather than political area) and to the rationale for entering that arena."[7] The rationale mentioned here is republican motherhood, which in her view justified women's entry into public space through providing nurturance and guidance

3 Relevant works include Edwards, "Policing the Modern Woman in Republican China"; Wang Zheng, *Women in the Chinese Enlightenment: Oral and Textual Histories* (Berkley: University of California Press, 1999); Kristine Harris, "The New Woman: Image, Subject, and Dissent in 1930s Shanghai Film Culture," *Republican China* 20, no. 2 (1995): 55–79; Sara Stevens, "Figuring Modernity: The New Woman and the Modern Girl in Republican China," *National Women's Studies Association (NWSA) Journal* 15, no. 3 (2003): 82–103.

4 See Jane Hunter, *The Gospel of Gentility: American Women Missionaries in Turn-of-the-Century China* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1984); Nancy Boyd, *Emissaries: The Overseas Work of the American YWCA, 1895–1970* (New York: The Woman's Press, 1987); and Karen Garner, *Precious Fire: Maud Russell and the Chinese Revolution* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts University Press, 2003).

5 Emily Honig, "Christianity, Feminism, and Communism: The Life and Times of Deng Yuzhi," in *Christianity in China: From the Eighteenth Century to the Present*, ed. Daniel H. Bays (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996).

6 Elizabeth Littell-Lamb, "Going Public: The YWCA, 'New' Women, and Social Feminism in Republican China" (PhD diss., Carnegie Mellon University, 2002).

7 Ibid., 13.

for the "great social household."[8] The Y women's modern engagements, as is shown in this chapter, went beyond the social sphere and republican motherhood. Moreover, the emphasis on the maternal ideal of social feminism tends to obscure the distinction of the Christian New Women from their secular liberal counterparts who equally utilized the maternal ideology to legitimate their public lives. With that being said, I use the term Christian feminism instead of social feminism to define the YWCA's new womanhood in that the word "Christian" (referring specifically to liberal Protestant Christian) suggests the identity of the Y women and the guiding role of religious faith in their activities, while "feminism" is a richly associative term encompassing a wide range of women's efforts to achieve human and social progress.

In "The Role of the YWCA in the Development of the Chinese Women's Movement, 1890–1927," Alison Drucker argues that while awakening many Chinese to women's issues, the YWCA provided women with leadership skills that fueled the more politicized women's organizations of the late 1920s. She contends that the YWCA declined after 1927 because it ceased to capture young imaginations.[9] I show instead that the YWCA still remained active thereafter. With Chinese members assuming the leadership, the YWCA began to orient its programs to the practical needs of Chinese women and society.

Complementing and building on these scholarly works on the New Woman and the YWCA, this chapter explores how the Y women forged their new womanhood through their modern endeavors under the guidance of their Christian beliefs during the 1920s and 1930s. Although they were equipped with the elements commonly found among their secular counterparts, such as a modern appearance and western-style education, what distinguished the Y women collectively was their practicality, social service, and broad cooperation despite key differences such as marital status. These three features embodied the Y women's application of their Christian faith into practice along modern lines and their indigenization of the Social Gospel to meet China's particular needs.

1 The Chinese YWCA Women as New Women

The Chinese YWCA was the largest women's Christian association in the country, and it was the first with nationwide membership. Despite its foreign origin, the YWCA was gradually transformed into a native one. Boasting a number of

8 Littell-Lamb, "Going Public," 13.

9 Alison Drucker, "The Role of the YWCA in the Development of the Chinese Women's Movement, 1890–1927," *Social Service Review* 53, no. 3 (1979): 421–440.

educated, capable, and passionate Chinese staff and board members, it took the lead in promoting the rights and welfare of the needy, especially disadvantaged women. Its status as representative of the Chinese Christian New Women was justified due to the dominance of Chinese constituents, the transference of leadership from Western to Chinese women, and the adaption of programs to national and local needs.

In actuality, the rise of the Christian New Women was inseparable from the surge of Protestant missionary work that took place at the turn of the twentieth century. With the door of China forced open by the Opium War in the mid-1800s, the missionary fervor of Protestant Christendom found one of its greatest outlets in this "heathen" land. The early years of the Protestant mission were devoted to converting the Chinese. Later, motivated by the Social Gospel Movement, missionaries began to be concerned with social problems and ills as a strategy to attract more followers and increase their influence.[10]

The Social Gospel arose in late nineteenth-century America as a reform ideology in response to social problems that were created by industrialization, immigration, and urbanization. At the end of the century, American missionaries brought it to China in order to apply Christian ethics to such pressing issues as poverty, child labor, bad hygiene, and slums. In Xing Wenjun's words, it culminated "in three major areas of activity: operating schools; running hospitals; and developing the Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations."[11] Born out of the Social Gospel movement, the YWCA added new dimensions to the movement as a result of its sinicization as well as its creative mobilization of American-type programs to the demands of China's modernization.

The YWCA first appeared in 1890 at the Girls' School of the Southern Presbyterian Mission of Hangzhou. In 1899, the National Committee of the YWCA was formed in Shanghai, but not until 1903 was the first secretary appointed by the American YWCA and the World YWCA (London).[12] The year 1905 marked the affiliation of the committee with the World YWCA and the coming of the first national secretary, Miss A. Estelle Paddock (1874–1940). Initial activities such as English and cooking classes were organized among students and women of some leisure. The outbreak of the 1911 Revolution found the YWCA a small group of some twenty student associations, one city association (Shanghai, 1908), one Chinese secretary, and eight foreign secretaries. By

10 Pui-Lan Kwok, *Chinese Women and Christianity, 1860–1927* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992), 102.

11 Xing Wenjun, "Social Gospel, Social Economics, and the YMCA: Sidney D. Gamble and Princeton in Peking" (PhD diss., Carnegie Mellon University, 1992): 11.

12 Secretary is the YWCA terminology for executive officers in charge of administering a program.

1923 when the First National Convention was held—which signaled the formal organization of the National YWCA of China[13]—"there were more than eighty student Associations, twelve city Associations, fifty-one Chinese secretaries, and eighty-seven foreign secretaries."[14] The convention was a turning point for the transformation of the YWCA from foreign to Chinese leadership: "The national committee, which has proceeded with its work by self-appointment, has been changing in its personnel from foreign to Chinese, and the new national board as elected at the convention has but seven foreign members in a total membership of forty-six. It is truly a time of 'taking-over' by the Chinese."[15] The total number of foreign secretaries was also decreasing because of the postwar financial depression, and the changing conditions in China contributed to the decrease.[16] Generally, from 1928, the number of Chinese secretaries began to exceed that of their Western colleagues.[17]

Moreover, in 1926 Ding Shujing was elected as general secretary of the National YWCA, and Chinese women have occupied this position since then. Under the leadership of Ding, the YWCA moved from initially focusing on women of the upper class and female students toward expanding its connection with the working classes and poorer women. They put more effort into social change and reform programs, which included mass education, the Better Home Campaign, and vocational training. Though many of the programs the Chinese Y women adopted were created by Western associations, they were

13 The convention was then conducted every five years and there were suspensions during the Pacific War (1937–1945) and the second part of the Chinese Civil War (1946–1950).

14 The National Committee of the Young Women's Christian Association of China, *A Study of the YWCA of China, 1890–1930* (Shanghai: the Shanghai Municipal Archives, File no. U121-0-35), 11. This work also appeared in a series of articles as Tsai Kuei and Lilly K. Haass, "A Study of the Young Women's Christian Association of China: 1890–1930," *Chinese Studies in History* 10, no. 3 (1977): 73–88; Tsai Kuei and Lilly K. Haass, "A Study of the Young Women's Christian Association of China: 1890–1930," *Chinese Studies in History* 11, no. 1 (1977): 18–63; and Tsai Kuei and Lilly K. Haass, "A Study of the Young Women's Christian Association of China: 1890–1930," *Chinese Studies in History* 11, no. 4 (1978): 48–71.

15 *The Young Women's Christian Association in a Changing China* (Shanghai: The National Committee of the Young Women's Christian Associations of China, 1924), 67.

16 The changing conditions mainly refer to the Anti-Christian Movement (1922–1924) and the Northern Expedition (1926–1928), both of which were hostile to Christianity and equated it with imperialism. Facing threats, some foreign secretaries chose to return home and some prospective foreign secretaries delayed or cancelled their plans to come to work in China.

17 For each local or city Association, Chinese participation in decision-making was more noticeable. In addition to secretaries, they had boards of ten to fifteen directors for policy, finance, secretariat, and programs, and these consisted almost entirely of Chinese members from the beginning. For this reason, the assumption of local leadership by Chinese women came earlier than at the national level.

nonetheless well suited to the country's situation, as China was experiencing socioeconomic and ideological upheavals similar to those the West had known in its initial phases of industrialization. Thus, it can be safely said that since the mid-1920s the YWCA in China had evolved into an indigenous association in terms of staff, leadership, policy-making, and program design.[18] It is this evolution that propelled and empowered the Chinese-led YWCA to adapt Western programs to address the most pressing issues facing Chinese women and society.

Being educated in modern or Western-styled schools, a defining characteristic of the New Woman in China, was typical for YWCA leaders, most of whom had received secondary or higher education. Among them were those, like Ding Shujing, who graduated from Western colleges and universities. Born in Linqing, Shandong province, Ding received her early education in the schools of the American Board Mission in Dezhou and Tongzhou, where she converted to Christianity. Then she attended Peking Union College for Women, later a part of Yenching University, where she was one of the three female members of the first graduating class. After some years teaching at the Bridgeman Academy in Beijing, she went to the United States and got acquainted with the work of the YWCA. Upon returning to China, she became General Secretary of the Beijing YWCA, where she remained until 1922 when she was invited to Shanghai to help prepare for the First National Convention. In 1926, she became National General Secretary of the YWCA and held the position until her untimely death of septicemia in 1936. Education aided the YWCA women to make their first step toward identification with the New Woman and equipped them with intellectual abilities to apply progressive ideals and knowledge to their organization's undertakings.

With education, young Chinese Christian women became self-sufficient, securing jobs mainly in schools, hospitals, and social-welfare institutions that were often run by missions. In the YWCA, the recruited secretaries earned salaries for their work. Different from foreign staff who were funded by their own countries, the Chinese usually got their pay from domestic sources raised through finance campaigns, membership fees, and donations.[19] Many paid secretaries chose to remain unmarried all their lives, including Ding Shujing, Qian Changben (Beiping YWCA), and Luo Youjie (Canton YWCA), to name just

18 Also from the late 1920s, more and more finance was raised in China and reached two thirds of the total.

19 The National Committee of the Young Women's Christian Association of China, *A Study of the YWCA of China, 1890–1930*, 19.

a few.[20] According to Jane Hunter, female graduates from missionary colleges and universities were more likely to stay single or celibate. She contends that "the overlapping forces of mission and nationalist influence proved particularly powerful in the lives of female graduates of the new women's colleges, who remained single and pursued vocations in high numbers."[21] Since female missionaries who volunteered to teach in China were frequently single women, they had an influence on their students' vocational choices by setting an example of nondomestic womanhood. Hunter adds, however, that the example set by missionaries was not the entire motivation: "The decision to remain single, like other student actions of the early twentieth century, took place in the name of national survival and the context of peer solidarity."[22]

Unlike the paid secretaries, Y branch board members or directors were usually married celebrities who volunteered their time. Their husbands were influential figures in officialdom, or in intellectual, industrial, and financial institutions. They shared much with but at the same time differed from the figure of the *taitai*—a term for wives of officials or the rich. According to Wang Zheng, while a *taitai* could be associated with modernity because she could read, write, dance, play the piano, and have a social life, she was not a New Woman because she depended on her husband for a comfortable and consumerist life. She lacked the quality "most essential to the new women: *duli renge* (independent personhood)."[23] Tani Barlow confirms Wang's view by examining Republican-era progressive intellectuals' discourses on the importance of *renge* to women's subjectivity, independence, and social action.[24] Merely concerned with herself and her family, *taitai* had no sense of serving others and society. Y board members and city branch directors were *tatai* insomuch as they did not need to seek a paid job to support their families. They also attended many social events either along with their husbands or for their own entertainment.

Unpaid Y leaders, however, were both New Woman and *taitai*, in a sense. Their Christian version of new womanhood took them beyond the typical norms of the *taitai.* They were well educated. They had a meaningful, if unremunerated, career and wielded power in the YWCA related to policy making, program design, and fundraising. In entering the public sphere as social

20 Beijing was renamed Beiping in 1928 and the Beijing YWCA changed its name to the Beiping YWCA accordingly.

21 Hunter, *The Gospel of Gentility*, 248.

22 Ibid., 249.

23 Wang, *Women in the Chinese Enlightenment*, 20.

24 Tani Barlow, *The Question of Women in Chinese Feminism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 114–126.

reformers and leaders and committing themselves to a cause they loved, they exercised considerable agency. Moreover, taking advantage of their husbands' fame and influence in society, they were able to attract more donations for the association and see the programs they helped devise be implemented. The latter was critical to the existence and expansion of local YWCAs, considering that their budgets completely relied on the board's fundraising. They produced social value as wage-earning workers did. But the difference consisted in that they did not need income for subsistence, which, along with the funds they raised, they voluntarily contributed to the YWCA. In this sense, they were New Women who balanced their roles as wives with their responsibilities as directors, thus redefining the concept of *taitai*.

However, for most Chinese women, the social demands and pressures of married life for women were incompatible with having a career. This reality helps explain why many Y secretaries were unmarried. In a newspaper interview, Qian Changben, general secretary of the Beiping YWCA in the 1930s, held that being single was the result of men's unwillingness to marry a capable woman and of her persistent search for her "ideal" man—her soul mate.[25] Furthermore, for women intent on professional development, marriage meant an end to their career pursuits, which was more pronounced in missionary institutions. For instance, in the Peking Medical Union Hospital, women, once married, would be deprived of the chance to receive advanced training abroad because it was believed that married women would finally return home. Thus, providing them training did not pay off in the long run.[26] As Haeseong Park demonstrates in her chapter for this volume, the Western missionaries who ran Ewha Women's College in Korea encountered a similar dilemma. Parents, relatives, and East Asian society-at-large placed enormous pressure on women to marry early and well, and then after marriage pressured women to focus on homemaking. In response, the China YWCA, gave priority to unmarried candidates when employing its secretaries, expecting them to devote themselves wholeheartedly to their work without domestic distraction.

All of these factors contributed to a higher rate of unwed professional Christian women among the YW paid leadership. Linked with economic independence, remaining unmarried was often a defining choice for New Women. Women were not willing to risk staying single for their whole lives unless they were confident of their ability to support themselves. Thus, it is

25 Han Ying 含英, "Qian Changben nüshi fangwenji 钱长本女士访问记 [An Interview with Ms. Qian Changben]," *Shijie ribao*, Mar. 13, 1936.

26 Zhang Qingping 张清平, *Lin Qiaozhi* 林巧稚 (Tianjin: Baihua wenyi chubanshe, 2005), 114.

understandable that it was primarily professional women who could afford to take the risk. China Y women fit this mold.

Whether married or unmarried, however, China Y leaders were able to be active participants in the public sphere thanks to their positions in the organization. As an institution, the YWCA constituted what Estelle Freedman has characterized as a "female public sphere."[27] This was a sort of middle realm that linked the domestic world of women to the public world of men. It mediated women's entry into male-dominated society. For instance, Y women used the name of their Association to carry out their activities in society and seek cooperation with other organizations. According to Freedman, this type of "female public sphere" was important because women had jurisdiction over it and were free to create their own forms of personal, social, and political relationships through it. In the case of China where relatively rigid gender norms restricted women's access outside of the private sphere of the home and family, the YWCA was transformative and empowering for Christian New Women. Through the YW, they joined secular New Women who were also finding new ways of breaking into the masculinized public sphere.

In addition to the realms of education and career, YWCA women embodied the Chinese New Woman in terms of appearance as well. In the Republican era, the renovated form-fitting *qipao* (Cheongsam) as "an authentic indigenous modern form of female dress,"[28] along with Western skirts and blouses, bobbed hair, and Western-style heeled shoes were regarded as external manifestations of the New Woman. The YWCA women followed this modern fashion trend, which is evident in the outfits the delegates wore at the YWCA conference in 1927.

In the photo below, the YWCA women were dressed either in *qipao* or a blouse with a skirt, wearing bobbed hair and low-heeled shoes. These trappings gave them the look of the New Woman. But compared with the fashionable and consumerist Modern Girl, who preferred form-fitting floral *qipao* with a high slit, as well as perms and high-heeled shoes, the YWCA women dressed more modestly. Their fashions corresponded to the more restrained demeanor and appearance promoted by their missionary educators. Nevertheless, China Y women had much in common with the Modern Girl in China in that both consumed modern Western-style clothing.

27 Estelle Freedman, "Separatism as Strategy: Female Institution Building and American Feminism, 1870–1930," *Feminist Studies* 5, no. 3 (1979): 514.

28 Richard Gunde, *Culture and Customs of China* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2002), 135.

FIGURE 2.1 The YWCA Secretaries at the 1927 Conference
SOURCE: *THE CHINESE RECORDER* LVIII, NO. 10 (1927): 648

2 The YWCA and the Chinese Women's Movement

As mentioned earlier, the introduction of the YWCA to China occurred mainly in response to the Social Gospel Movement that surged in Western countries at the turn of the twentieth century. In light of the Social Gospel, the YWCA in China began to transform the social ideals of Christianity for the purpose of advancing women's well-being and status. With the indigenization of leadership, the association, while still primarily targeting women, broadened its focus to providing service to the whole society. The China Y also began stressing cooperation, which was reflected in its changing platforms. In 1919, the National Committee announced that "The purpose of the YWCA is to unite Chinese girls and women for advancement along spiritual, mental, social and physical lines and for service to God and country, according to the teachings of Jesus Christ." At the time, the cooperation was confined by limits of gender and nationality. At the First Convention in 1923, this purpose was modified in favor of cooperation across gender lines within the church. This was apparent in the organization's revised mission "to advance the spiritual, mental, physical and social well-being of women, in order to cooperate with the church in leading women to attain fullness of life in the Savior Jesus and to help bring in the

Kingdom of God on earth."[29] This modification signaled the YWCA's willingness to work more openly with men, albeit within religious boundaries.

With the Chinese assumption of Y leadership at the Second Convention of 1928, the purpose underwent revision again. The organization's new mission was:

> In the spirit of Christ, it helps to develop the local Associations throughout China and seeks to unite with the YWCA of all countries in the common effort to promote the moral, intellectual, physical and social development of womanhood, in order to attain healthy and ideal personality and the spirit of fellowship for the purpose of rendering service to society and promoting the welfare of mankind.[30]

Behind these constant changes was the YWCA's persistent reliance on Christianity as a source of spiritual guidance. The new statement pointed to YWCA women's enlarged commitment, which extended from female welfare to social service and international cooperation. It turned out that this expansion constituted the core of their new womanhood.

Considering its initiatives to address women's problems through practical social work and extensive cooperation, the YWCA can be regarded as the forerunner of the women's movement in China. In Alison Drucker's view, the term "women's movement" refers "collectively to a broad range of efforts united only in their expression of a conscious desire by women to advance the cause of their sex" and "it is highly inclusive, incorporating efforts undertaken in connection with religious faith as well as those undertaken in connection with 'feminism,' 'the doctrine advocating social and political rights of women equal to those of men.'"[31] During the first three decades of the twentieth-century, China witnessed an array of such efforts, including the suffragists' campaign for voting rights on the basis of gender equality, Marxist feminists' call for women's participation in the Communist Party's revolution for ultimate liberation, and the liberalists' espousal of female subjectivity, education, citizenship, and choice. These made up the women's movement of which the YWCA was a part, due to its devotion to women's interests. This was also clear why Deng Yuzhi was able to combine her leadership role in the China YWCA with Communist ideals. Essentially a Christian organization and guided by the teachings of

29 The National Committee of the Young Women's Christian Association of China, *A Study of the YWCA of China, 1890–1930*, 17.

30 Ibid.

31 Drucker, "The Role of the YWCA," 422.

Jesus Christ, the association displayed its Christian feminism with an aim and approach distinct from other groups.

In contrast with secular feminists, who were concerned with gender issues like political equality, equal access to education, and companionate marriage, Y women occupied themselves with the practical improvement of Chinese women's lives. Before 1923, they concentrated on offering English and other courses like Chinese and foreign cooking, typewriting, and home nursing; providing physical education to female students by establishing a Normal School of Physical Education (the Predecessor of Physical Education Department of Ginling Women's College); and organizing fellowship among school students to discuss the relationship of Christianity to life, liberty, and responsibility. Beginning in 1923, they began to pay more attention to those less advantageously placed and made their programs more pragmatic. They launched campaigns against girl enslavement, concubinage, and prostitution; carried out adult education for urban and rural illiterate women; gave lectures to housewives on child care, hygiene, and domestic science; offered vocational education; and opened night schools for factory workers.[32] Diverse as they were, these programs served a common goal—to develop the physical, mental, social, and spiritual phases of women's lives, which was in accord with modern trends.

While China YWCA shared much with other women activists, their efforts to work out different solutions for women of difference statuses set them apart. This stood in contrast to women activists who tended to address women as a whole when handling the Woman Question. The beneficiaries were from various social strata, encompassing women in rural areas and cities, factory women, female students, and housewives. This was significant both at the national and the international level. For one thing, an organization in China had never created such a stratified approach to deal with the different needs of women. For another, the YWCA departed from its Western model, whose focus was on students, business girls, and working women, and served an overwhelmingly large number of women at home and in rural areas—another indication of its adaption to Chinese conditions.[33]

In addition, these Christian New Women generally preferred moderate reform to radical revolution in bettering women's situations, which differentiated them from radical feminists who usually employed demonstration, petition, and protest in an attempt to attain gender equality and women's

32 The National Committee of the Young Women's Christian Association of China, *A Study of the YWCA of China, 1890–1930*, 138–139.

33 Ibid., 41.

rights. This preference, nonetheless, cannot be taken as tantamount to their indifference to politics. Thanks to the formation of the Woman's Suffrage Association and the Women's Rights' League in 1922, issues such as political gender equality, female education, and marriage based on love received attention within the YWCA.[34]

With more Chinese stepping into leadership positions in the late 1920s, the YWCA became more involved in politics, as demonstrated by the shifting emphasis of the YWCA Labor Bureau. Until the early 1920s, the bureau "had focused on attracting women mill workers to sing, crochet, learn to read, and engage in Bible study, with the hope of 'developing workers who would carry on Christian work.'"[35] Influenced by the Chinese Communist Party's activism in organizing workers to join unions and participate in strikes, some members of the Labor Bureau advocated a greater emphasis on educating women workers. The shift found its strongest expression when Deng Yuzhi became head of the Labor Bureau in 1930.[36] Under her leadership, night schools for women workers were set up in China's major industrial centers. Besides teaching literacy, Deng devoted her time to raising a working-class and feminist consciousness among the workers.[37] Moreover, owing to her efforts, the bureau played a prominent role in urging the Nationalist government to enforce a law to protect women and children hired in the factories.[38] Therefore, the YWCA women were not lacking political consciousness and passion especially among its Chinese members.

3 The YWCA and Social Work

In spite of their political engagement, what made the Y women stand out and gain widespread fame was their extensive social work and reform at the community level:

> It is giving aid to those in need, such as in our hospital and dispensary work, and in getting rid of bad conditions in a community, such as in our

34 Herman C.E. Liu, "The Chinese Woman's Movement and Magazine," *The Chinese Recorder* LXV, no. 2 (1934): 85.

35 Honig, 254.

36 Deng was known to her Western friends as Dora Deng. She was a graduate from Ginling Women's College. In 1929, she went to the London School of Economics to study labor economics for one year. In 1941, she was awarded master degree in economics at the State University of New York.

37 Honig, 243.

38 Ibid.

> educational work, which aims at the elimination of ignorance—one of the worst conditions in any community. Stated in terms of missionary enterprise, social work is the salvaging of missionary endeavor. It is not the hospital, the schools, the churches in their regular functions that is [*sic*] meant. Rather, social work begins where these fail.[39]

Under the guidance of the Christian tenet "to serve and not to be served," the Y women concentrated their social work on what other modern institutions paid little attention to or simply ignored.[40] Women were a generally underserved group due to inequitable social structures, and the lack of support for orienting them to a world of rapid change attracted the YWCA's attention. Aside from free literacy classes for adult women and "Better Home" lectures for housewives, there were, for instance, hostels for female students and single women who left home for big cities to seek employment and vocational training, bathhouses and salons for women clients, and summer camps for female students to build their bodies and characters.[41] In creating these structures, the YWCA contributed to women's well-being and improvement in China by addressing women's problems that other organizations and institutions overlooked.

Children from destitute families and impoverished people benefited from the YWCA's services as well. The organization set up free playgrounds, kindergartens, and schools. The Y also introduced to adults some basic sanitary knowledge and practices to prevent diseases. Also, as Christians, they understood it to be part of their Christian ethics to conduct relief work. Among the destitute and homeless, they distributed food and clothes and provided shelters. At times, floods, famines, and wars diverted their attention, and they gave generously of their time and energy to the victims and refugees of these natural and human disasters.[42] Furthermore, by holding charity events, the Y women entered into the traditionally domain of men. In imperial China, charity work was men's work, administered chiefly by the government, temples, and clan heads.

In addition to creating new facilities and activities to serve a wide underprivileged population, YWCA women also employed scientific research to

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39 D.H. Kulp, "Social Work and Christian Propaganda," *The Chinese Recorder* LIV, no. 3 (1923): 147.

40 Wang Yuhua 王毓华, *YWCA—Yige lishi youjiu de funü tuanti: Beijing jidujiao nüqingnianhui huishi* YWCA 一个历史悠久的妇女团体：北京基督教女青会会史 [*The YWCA—A Women's Organization with A Long History: The History of the Beijing YWCA*] (Beijing: the Beijing YWCA, 2000), 10.

41 The National Committee of the Young Women's Christian Association of China, *A Study of the YWCA of China, 1890–1930*, 38–40.

42 Ibid., 38.

justify their actions. The YWCA women in Beiping set a good example in this regard:

> [They] became aware of the deplorable conditions under which the women employees in barber shops and restaurants were living and working and determined to do something about them. A campaign of investigation was first initiated in which the employees, not the managers, were interviewed, looking to a compilation of reliable facts, upon which an effort to arouse public opinion will be based, looking to improving their conditions.[43]

To collect real and reliable data, they interviewed the disadvantaged employees rather than the powerful management. Vulnerable and normally muted, these employees hardly had opportunities to speak out. Regardless of the impact on public opinion, the rational and scientific method used in the YWCA's investigation merit note. The application of such research and the nature of their assorted programs offer evidence of the YWCA women's modern consciousness and conscientious attitude toward social service. They furthermore justify characterizing China Y women as New Woman with socially aware minds and public spirits.

Meanwhile, the YWCA's practice of Christian faith along modern lines differed from that of the Christian church in China. The latter did "not seem to have a definite effective up-to-date program of service and propaganda to face modern China."[44] Aside from its proselytizing mission, the Christian church in China confined itself to palliative or relief service. In contrast, the YWCA put Christian teachings into practice rather than making converting people to Christianity its principle aim. They also established definite connections with modern society in the hopes of making religion and life one.[45] While emphasizing the importance of its Christian values, the YWCA was more appealing to the public owing to its modernity. As Hu Shi commented, the survival and development of missionary institutions like the YWCA relied on their modern elements. In his opinion, "no one was deeply impressed with the Christian ideas of the YWCA but with its activities, its recreation facilities, its hostels, etc.

43 Gertrude Steel-Brooke, "A Woman's Service Organization," *The Chinese Recorder* LXV, no. 2 (1934): 92.

44 T.C. Chao, "The General Religious Situation in China Today," in *A Study of the YWCA of China, 1890–1930* (Shanghai: Shanghaishi danganguan, File no. U121-0-35), 93.

45 Chao, "The General Religious Situation in China Today," 93.

that were all modern."[46] It was these modern programs that enabled the YWCA to break with traditional religious institutions and enter the rank of progressive organizations.

For YWCA administrators, social service was an integral element in the ideal of the New Woman that the organization aimed to promote. This was especially clear in the articles on the topic in the National YWCA's official organ, *The Green Year*. In an article entitled "My Opinion on the New Woman," the author Changshi claimed that the so-called New Woman was the one who was able to serve society just as men did. To gain that ability, a woman had to undergo some mental and physical training, develop a free will, and receive a respectable degree of education. Only in this way could she become a New Woman to fulfill her duty of social service.[47] Another author, Biyao, expressed a similar view on the centrality of social service to the New Woman. In "The Knowledge the New Woman should Possess," she pointed out that the New Woman should organize her housework in a simple, scientific, and efficient way so as not to let it hinder her participation in social work. "To serve society is to improve and reform the collective life she lives in," which required her to master three major types of knowledge: social, political, and scientific knowledge. Otherwise, she was not fit for social service.[48] Moreover, in the promotion of social service as the New Woman's occupation, Biyao criticized the commercial and the conservative versions of the New Woman. To her, the commercial New Women, obsessed with fashion, were commercially objectified for male consumption, while the conservative New Women could not truly reject the conventional role of their sex as submissive and obedient. Both versions actually meant turning back the wheel of history.[49]

Although it is hard to ascertain the identity of the two contributors and to know whether or not they were YWCA members, the magazine asserted that all of its articles represented the principles and ethos of the YWCA.[50] In addition to contributions by members, co-workers and sympathizers often submitted pieces as well.[51] This assertion reinforced the discursive notion of social service

46 Hu Shi offered this description of the YWCA in a 1932 interview. Ruth Frances Woodsmall Papers Series V. Professional Activities: Laymen's Foreign Mission Inquiry Box 41.

47 Changshi 尝试, "Duiyu xinfunü de xiaojianjie 对于新妇女的小见解 [My Opinion on the New Woman]," *Nüqingnian* VIII, no. 4 (1934): 26.

48 Biyao 碧遥, "Xinnüxing ying jüyou de zhishi 新女性应具有的知识 [The Knowledge the New Woman Should Possess]," *Nüqingnian* VIII, no. 9 (1934): 2.

49 Ibid., 3.

50 The National Committee of the Young Women's Christian Association of China, *A Study of the YWCA of China, 1890–1930*, 46.

51 Ibid.

as a requirement of Christian new womanhood—a set of ideals and behaviors embodied and promoted primarily by YWCA women in China. Thus, the YWCA embraced social service both in action and discourse.

In the view of YWCA supporters, the concrete social activism of Y women set them apart from radical or revolutionary Chinese New Women as well. Focusing on political agitation, activism, and revolution, the radicals seldom had time and energy to do more practical work. More specifically they did not seem to "have any tactical concern for specific women's issues."[52] The social service activities of YWCA women, however, did and in doing so filled an important gap and made up for the omission or lack of concern. Its significance can be perceived, to some degree, through the remarks of an author writing on the 30th anniversary of the Beijing YWCA. She wrote,

> We have seen many women feminists, activists, and politicians with loud slogans and compelling rhetorics, but few of them bother to do solid work that can provoke gratitude and admiration from heart. The YWCA has no watchword and empty talk but practical spirit. Against big talkers, the YWCA deserves recognition for its low profile, its conscientious performance of duty, its sound foundation, and its orderly organization.[53]

Finding a niche in society for their contribution, the YWCA garnered a reputation for their down-to-earth work. Even so, there was no doubt that both groups played a part in social and national advancement, though in different ways and under different ideological inspirations.

4 The YWCA and Broad Cooperation

The YWCA women were also well known for their widespread cooperation. The Confucian ideal that "good" women limited their interactions with people outside the family, especially men, contributed to a lack of cooperation beyond the home. There were important exceptions. For instance, as Dorothy Ko and Susan Mann argue, some elite women in the Ming and Qing dynasties

52 Kay Ann Johnson, *Women, the Family, and Peasant Revolution in China* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 43.

53 It is quoted from "Wo yu nüqingnianhui 我与女青年会 [The YWCA and I]," written by an author called Dian 钿 who recorded her feelings after she visited the Beiping YWCA. The article appears in *Beiping jidujiao nüqingnianhui sanshi zhounian jiniankan* 北平基督教女青年会三十 年纪念刊 [*The Beiping YWCA's 30th Anniversary Commemorative Volume*] (Beijing: Beiping YWCA, 1946).

organized poetry societies as a venue for empowering themselves.[54] These societies, while stretching the domestic sphere to new limits, ultimately made no effort to aid the public or reform society. In general, however, Chinese women were confined to the home and had little opportunity to encounter new people or cooperate with others on large-scale social improvement projects. In cooperation with various organizations, agencies, and groups, the YWCA subverted women's traditional image as secluded, and acted against long-enforced barriers to communication with the outside world.

The China YWCA was by nature and by choice, an organization based on the practice of cooperation. The association itself was an outcome of Western and Chinese women's cooperation. From the very beginning, the YWCA of the United States provided financial support and sent a secretary to China in 1890. This transnationalism was further enhanced and broadened by the YWCA's affiliation with the World YWCA in 1905, as a result of which, more countries sent volunteers as secretaries to help build up the association in China. Even as Chinese staff took over the leadership of the organization, cooperation remained central to the YWCA. Chinese Y leaders traveled abroad for professional training and to attend World YWCA's meetings, among other things. The interactions facilitated exchanges in knowledge, work, and experience for Chinese members and widened their horizons. The Chinese Y women were exposed to new practices, like social service in response to the country's needs, and to progressive and feminist ideas such as gender equality and freedom. Though their exposure to Christian teachings and beliefs were clearly instrumental, the transnational experiences and networks in which Y women participated were important in their efforts for women's emancipation and national strengthening in China.

At the same time, the Y women introduced China's situation and their work to their foreign associates, whom they asked for help. In 1919, the Shanghai YWCA sent a letter "to the mission boards in America asking that in the future all evangelistic missionaries should be given training in sociology and economics, and some practical social work in this country before sailing."[55] Upon receiving the request, a team was dispatched, including Lelia Hinkley, a graduate from the University of Colorado at Boulder in 1915. She arrived in China in 1920 and soon became secretary of the national board of the YWCA.

54 See Dorothy Ko, *Teachers of the Inner Chambers: Women and Culture in Seventeenth-Century China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995) and Susan Mann, *Precious Records: Women in China's Long Eighteen Century* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997).

55 Katherine Gerwick, "A Christian Feminism for the World," *The Association Monthly* XIV, no. 11 (1920): 553.

During her stay, she, along with her Chinese colleagues, established medical clinics, playgrounds, and free schools in rundown neighborhoods.[56]

Because of their transnational cooperation, YWCA women no longer regarded themselves merely as citizens of a particular nation. Instead, they developed a sense of world citizenship through the international friendships they established. They were able to have discussions with foreigners about questions that confronted women and people all over the world, such as gender discrimination, inequality, and poverty. Karen Garner has written that, "YWCA conferences fostered cooperation, cross-cultural communication, and personal friendships between Chinese and western women. The conferences brought together women from disparate backgrounds in a setting where they could, and did, discover and celebrate shared interests."[57] As a result, feminist internationalism was growing.

One paragon in this arena was Ding Shujing. During her term as general secretary of the National China YWCA, she committed herself to working towards the creation of a world community. To that end, she had insisted on a joint staff consisting of westerners and Chinese in order to accomplish world fellowship, even when facing the substantial withdrawal of foreign subsidies. It was through this fellowship that she got to know friends and fellow workers from various nations. Her interests extended from community building across nationalities to broader coalitional causes. Ding "also believed in the pursuit of peace, a cause taken up by transnational women's groups, including the World YWCA."[58] Armed with this belief, she led the Chinese YWCA in joining the World YWCA's petition for peace at the Geneva Disarmament Conference in the 1930s, thus integrating the organization into international feminism.

Ding's internationalism won her colleagues' appreciation. In the eyes of Talitha Gerlach, one of the few Western secretaries who dedicated their whole lives to China, Ding was always an internationalist. Gerlarch wrote that Ding "remained confident that only by an honest facing of basic issues in the international scene could national antagonism be transcended."[59] Another colleague confirmed this view, "by thinking with … [fellow workers around the world] through problems common to all, she [Ding] had become a world citizen with

56 CU Heritage Center at University of Colorado, "Americans in a Changing China: 1920–2008," accessed August 12, 2016. https://cuheritage.org/exhibits/china/.

57 Garner, *Precious Fire*, 26.

58 Elizabeth A. Littell-Lamb, "Ding Shujing: The YWCA Pathway for China's 'New Women'" in *Salt and Light: Lives of Faith that Shaped Modern China*, ed. Carol Lee Hamrin and Stacey Bieler (Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2009): 94.

59 Talithia Gerlach, "Glimpses" in "Some Appreciations of Ting Shu-Ching (Ding Shujing), Late General Secretary of the Young Women's Christian Association of China, 1926–1936," Group 8: Miscellaneous Personal Paper, Ruth White Carr File: YWCA, Who's Who 1936 (China Records Project, Yale Divinity School Library).

a far reaching view."[60] Shepherded by Ding, the YWCA women cultivated and mobilized many transnational alliances. Their transnational cooperation and universal outlook found no parallel in other women's groups and organizations in China.

Back at home, the YWCA women set up an extensive network of coordination with an array of bodies including the church, the YMCA, universities, women's groups, and government agencies. Some of the cooperative activities were launched at the national level, but most of them took place locally. These efforts were led by the city chapters with occasional participation by the National YWCA. The Y women assisted churches with Sunday schools and later opened girls' clubs with the church's approval.[61] They also worked with the YMCA in developing social programs, including putting up public playgrounds and spreading hygienic practices among the underprivileged.[62] As a member of the National Anti-Opium Association, the YWCA also took part in the temperance crusade.[63] They formed a partnership with Yenching University, offering experienced staff to train social workers and thus contributing to the development of social work as a modern profession.

In addition to launching its own activism, the YWCA took part in other women's campaigns. As an influential association with many years of practical experience and demonstrated strength and skill in organizing women's activities, many groups in China sought collaborations wih them. In Canton and Shanghai, for instance, such collaborations with the YWCA were critical to the unfolding of the women's movement.[64] In this way, the YWCA's support of and cooperation with other women's activism, along with its own initiatives, contributed to the growth of the women's movement in the early decades of twentieth-century China.

Clearly, cooperation was a two-way process. It enabled the YWCA to conduct some projects which would otherwise have only been possible to achieve on a much smaller scale or even impossible due to the lack of funds, locations, and

60 "Ding Shujing," in "YWCA of China, General History, and Bio, 1936," Box 58 (Records, Sophia Smith Collection, Smith College, Northampton, Mass.).

61 The YWCA organized girls' clubs to meet the needs of girls in primary schools and planned the clubs' activities based on modern educational principles. In the early years of its development, the YWCA heavily relied on the church to carry out its programs including girls' clubs.

62 Sidney D. Gamble, *Peking: A Social Survey* (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1921): 398–399.

63 The National Anti-Opium Association was instituted in 1924 in Shanghai by activists both in and outside of the Chinese Christian community in an attempt to rid China of opium.

64 The National Committee of the Young Women's Christian Association of China, *A Study of the YWCA of China, 1890–1930*, 57.

expertise. In return, Y women gave their support to their cooperative partners in terms of personnel and experience. The YWCA women's wide-ranging and far-reaching cooperation not only helped them weather political and social instabilities and financial plights, but it also enriched their repertoire of programs and enlarged their influence nationwide and in larger transnational movements worldwide.

It should be noted that the YWCA's acceptance of plural memberships was instrumental in broadening Y women's cooperation. The YWCA was not the sole institution through which the organizations' members formulated their new identities. In fact, Y members were allowed to join, start, and lead other organizations. Besides serving the YWCA, for example, Ding Shujing kept her active membership on the Executive Council of the Child Welfare Association, the Executive Committee of the National Christian Council, and the Boards of Directors of the Bridgeman Academy and Ginling College. Wang Ziwen, board member of the Beiping YWCA, established the Society for Promoting Women's Service. The multiple roles that YWCA women assumed gave them an even broader social network. Through it, they further fulfilled the China YWCA's cooperative policy, building and widening the space available for women in society.

5 Conclusion

The Chinese Christian New Women of the YWCA created a model of Christian feminism, which sought to facilitate social, national, and international betterment with a primary focus on women. This model had much in common with the secular New Woman. Christian feminists had a modern appearance, albeit a relatively understated one. Y women also received a decent education, like their fellow New Women. In particular, they shared the most with New Women who maintained political awareness and participated in social activism and reform. Paid Y staff typically supported themselves, leaving them less susceptible to the constraints and authority of the traditional Chinese household. However, even the married women in unpaid positions such as branch directors or on local Y boards who did not fully fit the prevalent definition of New Women mobilized their social and political awareness for social change. Collectively YWCA leaders carved out a terrain featuring practicality, social work, and an extensive national and international fellowship. These features resulted from the adaptation of their Christian faith to China's real needs and from an indigenization of the Social Gospel through the mediation of modern knowledge, pragmatic programs, and scientific methods. Put another way,

Y women's approaches coupled Christianity with modernity, thus establishing them as Christian New Women. As such, they embodied a distinct form of new womanhood in twentieth-century China that contributed to the women's movement in that country as well as broader efforts to raise social awareness and instigate social reform.

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CHAPTER 3

"Saving the Children": Catholic Sisters and Social Reform in Republican China

Anthony E. Clark

On Easter Sunday, 1901, Alicia Little (1845–1926), founder of the Anti-Footbinding League, recorded what she saw as she walked around Beijing's once grand Catholic cathedral:

> But now its façade riddled with shot, its isles propped up by beams, the trees behind with their bark gnawed off—one of the Sisters said "by our mules" but higher surely than any mule could reach—the tumble down masses of brick and mortar behind the broken walls, the great pits where the mines exploded, engulfing children by the hundred….[1]

A year earlier, on August 21, 1900, only five days after the cathedral, Beitang (North Church), had been liberated from its two-month siege, the Superior of the Daughters of Charity who had survived the Boxer attacks collapsed at her desk.[2] Sr. Hélène de Jaurias, DC (1824–1900) and her fellow sisters had cared for more than 500 Chinese children during the siege. They all ate and slept in their school, orphanage, workshops, clinic, and chapel while cannon and landmines exploded below and around them. After the violence of the Boxer Uprising (1898–1900) had ended on August 16, 1900, all of the Catholic properties that belonged to the Daughters of Charity were in ruins, and almost all of the children died within months from injuries, starvation, and stress.[3] As the next Mother Superior of the Beitang nuns described the remaining children: "Those who survived were little more than shadows."[4] After the Boxer Uprising,

1 See Mrs. Archibald Little [Alicia Bewicke Little], *Round About My Peking Garden* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1905), 10–11.

2 See Henry Mazeau, *The Heroine of Pe-Tang: Hélène de Jaurias, Sister of Charity (1824–1900)* (New York: Benziger Brothers, 1928), 246.

3 Ibid., 249.

4 Quoted in Ibid., 249. Regarding the correct nomenclature of "nun" versus "sister," according to Catholic custom and canon law the term "nun" properly refers to women religious living within a monastic cloister, while "sister" more accurately refers to women religious engaged in a more public apostolate. See, for example, *Code of Canon Law* (Washington, DC: Libreria

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and the crippling reparations imposed on the Qing (1644–1911) court by foreign governments, the empire was also little more than a shadow. After 1912, which marks the beginning of the Republican Era (1912–1949), China's imperial capital, Beijing, began uneasy attempts to reconstruct what had been demolished in 1900, and the small group of Catholic sisters there—both Western and Chinese—began to rebuild schools, churches, and lives in the debris of the fallen empire.

The aftermath of the Boxer and regular army siege against North Church was disastrous, both in terms of property and human suffering. In a prodigious collection of French missionary history during the nineteenth century, the six volume *Les Missions Catholiques Françaises au XIX^e Siècle*, the outcome of the North Church defense is described in disheartening terms: "Six among the French were killed and nine were injured; among the Italians only two remained unharmed, and six were wounded; among the Italians only two were untouched, while six were killed and three were wounded."[5] And the loss of Chinese lives was "nearly 400 dead; thirty-eight men were killed in battle; 100 women died of deprivation or by bullets, and the number of [dead] children was almost 200."[6] Given that all of the other Christian establishments in the capital—Protestant and Catholic—were entirely destroyed during the Sino-Western conflicts of 1900, the French Minister to China during the siege, Stephen-Jean-Marie Pichon (1857–1933), asserted that, "Of all the defenses held during the siege, the one of the Beijing Diocese was most remarkable."[7] During the two months of attacks against the church and accompanying buildings, the defenders counted some 2,500 artillery projectiles, several million rounds of ammunition, a large number of incendiary explosives, and a steady wave of attacks from 8,000 to 10,000 Boxers and Qing soldiers against their protective walls.[8] In a photograph included in *Les Missions Catholiques Françaises* accompanying the account of the Boxer siege against Beitang, a funeral Mass is seen for those who died during the attacks with a large group of Catholic sisters sitting in the front, near the coffin of one of the victims.[9] There was an air of despair as the nuns confronted the task of recovering what had been lost.

Editrice Vaticana, 1983), Canons 607§2 and 667§3. Since these terms are commonly used interchangeably, I have decided to use them interchangeably in this study to avoid the problem of awkward syntax and repetition of the same term.

5 J.B. Piolet, SJ, ed., *Les Missions Catholique Françaises au XIX^e Siècle, Vol. 3* (Paris: Librarie Armand Colin, 1901), 117.

6 Piolet, *Les Missions Catholique Françaises*, 117.

7 Ibid., 118.

8 Ibid.

9 See Piolet, *Les Missions Catholique Françaises*, 117.

From the view of China's Catholics, there appeared little hope of reconstruction. However, when one considers the magnitude of rebuilding in the ruins of the Boxer Uprising, the Christian presence in China has grown at an unprecedented global rate, despite the setbacks of the Maoist era (1949–1976). The demographic situation in China underscores how dramatic the Christian recovery has been: While it is almost impossible to be absolutely accurate, scholars estimate that there are at least 12 to 15 million Catholic Christians in China today. While this is less than one percent of China's total population, the sheer number of Roman Catholics in China is more than double the size of Ireland's Catholic population.[10] Perhaps the most ambitious estimation for Christian growth in China is provided by Rodney Stark and Wang Xiuhua, who predict that at its present rate of expansion China will have around 580 million Christians by 2040, nearly double the entire population of the United States.[11] At the advent of the Republican Era, there were only around three million Catholics, so we can see at the outset that the reconstruction efforts after 1912 have been effective, and among the most active protagonists in this reinvigoration of Christianity in China have been women sisters, too seldom mentioned in accounts of Sino-Missionary history.

When Beijing entered its post-imperial era, the majority of Catholics lived outside the city. The city itself functioned chiefly as a base of operations for several missionary orders, mainly the French Vincentians and Daughters of Charity, who had arrived in China in 1848.[12] Orders of Catholic sisters brought with them a wide portfolio of skills from running dispensaries and medical clinics to administrating orphanages and running schools of education and workshops of trade-skills. The indigenous Catholic presence at that time, however, consisted mostly of poor, rural peasant families; there were few individual converts who had attended colleges, or any schools at all, for that matter.[13] Even the comparatively educated Chinese Catholics in Beijing were aware that illiterate believers from villages outside the city outnumbered them.

The social conditions of most Catholics, especially women, were tragically low during the Republican Era, and European nuns were appalled by arranged

10 See Richard Madsen, "Catholic Revival During the Reform Era," *The China Quarterly*, No. 174 (June 2003): 468.

11 Rodney Stark and Wang Xiuhua, *A Star in the East: The Rise of Christianity in China* (West Conshohocken, PA: Templeton Press, 2015), 115.

12 Wu Xiaoxin, ed., *Christianity in China: A Scholars' Guide to Resources in the Libraries and Archives of the United States* (New York: Routledge, 2015), 297.

13 See Rob Carbonneau, "The Catholic Church in China 1900–1949," in *Handbook of Christianity in China, Volume Two: 1800 to the Present*, ed. R.G. Tiedemann (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 517.

marriages, illiteracy, poverty, and the remnants of footbinding that still haunted China after the collapse of the Qing. Chinese Catholics were still Chinese after all, and the problems confronted by non-Catholic Chinese women also afflicted Catholic Chinese women who occupied the same cultural landscape. Catholic women of the Republican Era were, perhaps, even more interested in reform than reconstruction. A British member of the Daughters of Charity stationed in China during the end of the Qing was dismayed by the inhumane treatment of young girls that she witnessed. She wrote about a, "paralyzed girl with a rope around her neck … being dragged [away] to be drowned in a canal." The girl was rescued and brought to the Catholic sisters, who lamented that they had "nowhere to put the women," since they had already run out of space.[14] As much as Western missionary nuns wished to reform the lives of women in China, native Chinese Catholic women were still more determined to enact change, for they had grown up in this context from birth. As the twentieth century commenced, various reform movements grew swiftly, fueled in part by a growing disdain among Protestants and Catholics for the practice of footbinding.

At the advent of the Republican Era, Catholic women were taking note of what Protestant Christians had been saying about China for several years, namely, that as Madeleine Yue Dong has noted, "China was undergoing a transition from the 'ancient to modern.'"[15] It was an era of collective realization that "modernity" corresponded with cultural changes that could empower women to improve their status in a society that had long restricted their potential for enfranchisement. Sidney Gamble (1890–1968) of the Procter & Gamble family visited China for extended periods during the early twentieth century while performing Christian social work for the YMCA. This transition, he argued, would most effectively be accomplished within the context of institutional education, in the vein of Western pedagogy and science:

> With a country changing from an ancient empire to a modern democracy, with the ancient gilds [*sic*] beginning to feel the pressure of new industrial methods, with the passing of the old education and the coming of the new, with the gradual discarding of the age long primitive methods of philanthropy and the opening of new, well organized institutions, one can hardly imagine a situation where accurate detailed facts and a

14 M.L.H., *Sister Xavier Berkeley (1861–1944): Sister of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul: Fifty-Four Years a Missionary in China* (London: Burns Oates, 1949), 54.

15 Madeleine Yue Dong, *Republican Beijing: The City and Its Histories* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 212.

> strong social program are more important or more necessary for those who would help China, whether they be students, officials, social workers, educators or missionaries.[16]

Despite Gamble's evident Western egotism, his recommendation that China's improvement would come in the form of modern institutions founded in the West was an ambition shared by both missionaries and native Chinese. For Catholic sisters, this appeal to improve lives through formal education and remunerative employment was viewed precisely as the manifestation of "modernity" that could unfetter women from their cultural restraints.[17] Catholics, as much as Protestants, envisaged sweeping social reform in the wake of the fallen empire.

1 Women at the Forefront of Reform

Whereas Protestant women missionaries more often made journeys to China as single women or in the role of accompanying their husbands, Catholic women missionaries arrived in China in groups affiliated with particular religious orders, and generally with a specific task, such as to teach in a school or orphanage. Their roles were thus progressive in the eyes of the native Chinese. In additional to the gospel and Western medicine and education, what these foreign women and priests brought to China was a new view of womanhood.

Among the Catholic reform movements in Beijing was the Young Christian Workers Movement, or "Jeunesse Ouvrière Chrétienne," which was founded by a Belgian priest named Joseph Cardijn (1906–1965).[18] Father Cardijn's Movement was established in 1925 to mobilize young Catholics to a more upright life of ethical work, and to re-Christianize the world's working forces. In China, the Young Christian Workers Movement was intended to, as Sister Xavier Berkeley, DC (1861–1944), described it, "draw in pagans as well as the Christians, women and children, teaching them trades and providing them with employment."[19]

16 Sidney D. Gamble, *Peking: A Social Survey* (New York: George H. Doran, 1921), 25.

17 There is currently a growing body of scholarship on the role of women in emerging modernity and Chinese feminism of the twentieth century. See, for example, the works of Tani Barlow, Madeleine Dong, Uta Poiger, Priti Ramamurthy, Lynn Thomas, Alys Weinbaum, and Angela Zito.

18 See Michael de la Bedoyere, *The Cardijn Story: A Study of the Life of Mgr. Joseph Cardijn and the Young Christian Workers' Movement which He Founded* (London: Longmans, 1958).

19 M.L.H., *Sister Xavier Berkeley*, 55.

The principal skill taught by participants in the movement to young girls in Beijing's Catholic schools and orphanages was embroidery, which may not appear to be very "liberating" from today's point of view. While girls were taught needlework, boys were taught to be "designers and silk and satin weavers." Thus, working with textiles was among the principal tasks of Chinese children mobilized by the Jeunesse Ouvrière Chrétienne movement. The sisters believed that these children were being saved from the "perils" of non-Christian China. As one nun said: "These small boys, who were on the high road to becoming a disgrace to society at large, are now perched by their looms, as serious as judges, working like men and doing so well."[20] In any case, Beijing's Catholic reconstruction, early on, included little by way of social reform of what was considered "women's work." Chinese girls were employed, yes, but at skills deemed appropriate for women reaching as far back as the Zhou dynasty (1045 BCE–221 BCE).

Footbinding was one of China's cultural traditions that the sisters did not, however, wish to continue. Some young girls were brought to the sisters with complications related to botched footbinding procedures so severe that their feet had to be amputated.[21] By the Republican Era, despite continuing pressures otherwise, no Chinese girl in the sisters' care was allowed to have bound feet. Other than footbinding, Catholic women were, like other women, confronted by the practice of arranged marriage. Perhaps this issue more than any other began to form into an idea that Catholic revival in China would have to rely on thorough social reforms, which themselves could only come about if education was made more available and was better organized. Thus, priority was given to building schools for women.

While it can be said in general that Protestants established more universities in China than Catholics, Catholics were no less concerned about reform and reconstruction than their Protestant contemporaries.[22] Protestants established universities, while Catholics established orphanages and schools for boys and girls under college age. The Sisters Servants of the Holy Ghost, who operated a middle school, were among other orders of missionary women that sought to educate and reform during the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s.[23]

The Daughters of Charity operated a primary and secondary school for girls named after Joan of Arc, which was very near Fu Jen University in Beijing (then

20 Ibid., 59.

21 Ibid., 45.

22 See John Shujie Chen, "Catholic Higher Education in China: The Rise and Fall of Fu Ren University in Beijing" (PhD diss., Boston College, 2003), 42.

23 Sandhaas, Joseph A. Sandhaas, SVD, *Catholic Peking*! (Beijing [Beiping]: The Catholic University Press, 1937), 37.

Beiping).[24] In 1937, this school run by the French sisters had 175 students, and the old orphanage at Beitang, which also provided instruction for girls, had by then been rebuilt and housed about 800 children.[25] While Fu Jen University is still the most celebrated and studied Catholic institute of higher learning founded in Beijing, nuns had established smaller schools throughout the city to educate and raise younger Chinese children, mostly girls. In addition to running schools, the Daughters of Charity in Beijing sought financial support for, rebuilt, and operated five other institutions during the Republican Era, including an expanded convent, a hospice for the elderly, and three hospitals. The Daughters of Charity managed one of Beijing's most modern and well-equipped hospitals, the Central Hospital, and most of the patients they served were non-Christian.[26] This hospital was the most respected medical facility in the city, and it attracted frequent visits from Chinese and foreign dignitaries.

Perhaps the most uneasy transition during this era of Catholic social reform in Beijing, and the one that caused a great deal of consternation among the sisters, was the growing desire of Chinese women to create new communities of Chinese nuns. Missionaries came from orders established in the West; Chinese women wanted orders established in their native China. Beijing then became the testing ground for a new order of sisters that was founded in Beijing, and still survives today, while all foreign orders have officially left.

2 A Native Order of Nuns

When the French Vincentian Bishop Louis-Gabriel Delaplace, CM (1820–1884) arrived in China during the mid-nineteenth century, he was distressed by the conditions that women lived under. He was especially concerned for the many infant girls he discovered who were abandoned to die. Several of his letters contained disquieting accounts of poor parents killing their babies because of destitution or sickness; one letter includes an account of a father killing his sickly infant so that the, "*hun* [spirit] of this child would fasten upon another," and "have no desire to remain any more under his roof."[27] Bishop Delaplace determined that the most effective method of transforming China's hallowed superstitions and the persistent practice of female infanticide was to inaugurate a community of educated Chinese sisters who would be better prepared to access native women in Chinese families, and perhaps inculcate in them a

24 See Ibid., 36–37.
25 Ibid., 37.
26 Irish Sisters, ed., *The Pioneer Sisters of Charity in China* (Dublin: St. Vincent's, 1921), 23.
27 Quoted in Ibid., 16.

more modern view that was better aligned with Christian and Western ideals of the significance of human life.

Delaplace apprehended well that Chinese and European women, including nuns, had different cultural behaviors and attitudes, and he knew also that when Chinese women joined Catholic religious orders that were founded and operated by westerners, disagreements were inescapable. As early as the mid-seventeenth century, Catholic women identified as Consecrated Virgins in China were encouraged to, as Robert Entenmann states, dedicate themselves "to a life of celibacy and religious contemplation."[28] While not actually members of a formally-established Catholic order, these Virgins were employed to provide catechism lessons to other women, women who were ensconced within the confines of there homes, accessible only to other women in order to uphold traditional Chinese principles of modesty and virtue. In Beijing these women had been useful to the propagation of Catholic belief to other women, and unlike other areas, such as Shanxi, the European and American Daughters of Charity had comparatively few incidents of conflict between themselves and the Chinese Consecrated Virgins who served with them. Even though Western nuns and Chinese Virgins collaborated well in Beijing, Delaplace's strategy of social reform in China required Chinese women vowed to an officially recognized religious order, which would seamlessly fit into the Church's long tradition of sisters living in communities. These sisters would be particularly well equipped to understand and transform China's cultural understanding and treatment of women.

What Bishop Delaplace imagined was quite radical for his time and context. He envisioned "a community of Chinese religious under the patronage of St. Joseph, to be called 'Josephines,' with a view to the Christian education and catechetical formation of other women."[29] This would be the first ever Roman Catholic order of sisters founded and operated by Chinese women. While attending the sessions of the First Vatican Council (1869–1870), Delaplace conferred with other bishops about his desire to create an order of Chinese sisters in Beijing, but he received little support. As R.G. Tiedemann notes, "most … [thought] it impracticable."[30] A few of his fellow bishops, such as his Vincentian confrere, Bishop François-Ferdinand Tagliabue, CM (1822–1890), agreed with his plan and encouraged him to found the Joesphines in spite of the resistance

28 Robert E. Entenmann, "Christian Virgins in Eighteenth-Century Sichuan," in *Christianity in China: From the Eighteenth Century to the Present*, ed. Daniel H. Bays (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 181.

29 *Annales de la Congrégation de la Mission*, vol. 127, nos. 503–506 (1963): 192.

30 R.G. Tiedemann, "Catholic Religious Communities of Chinese Women," in *Handbook of Christianity in China, Volume Two: 1800 to the Present*, ed. R.G. Tiedemann (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 589.

FIGURE 3.1 The Sisters of St. Joseph, or the "Josephines." Bejing, ca. 1925–1930
SOURCE: ARCHIVES HISTORIQUES CONGRÉGATION DE LA MISSIONS, PARIS

of most other prelates.[31] While some sources suggest that Delaplace founded the Josephines based on the encouragement of his few supporters, he himself attributed his final decision to another reason [Figure 3.1]. He recounted that he was conclusively motivated to realize his ambition of creating an order of Chinese nuns by a miracle he experienced while hearing confessions in the Beijing chapel of the Daughters of Charity. Delaplace recorded that on a day in February 1872 while in the confessional he had an unusual female visitor. The woman told him that she "did not come to confess her sins," but that she had "words placed into her heart that she was compelled to tell the bishop." Delaplace insists that, "the woman explained things to me that I had never discussed with another soul in the world," and among her statements was that God required him to form the first order of Chinese sisters. The bishop stepped out of his confessional to identify the mysterious woman, but she had disappeared.[32]

31 See Jean-Marie Planchet, CM (a.k.a. A. Thomas), *Histoire de la Mission de Pékin* (Paris: n.p., 1925), 560.

32 Ibid.

Given this clear and preternatural sign from God, Delaplace discounted the disagreements of his fellow bishops and erected the all-Chinese Catholic Sisters of St. Joseph, or Josephines, in Beijing in 1872.[33] The order was born at the famous Nantang, or South Church, where Matteo Ricci, SJ (1552–1610) had settled his Jesuit chapel in 1605, and the new Chinese Sisters of St. Joseph first resided at St. Vincent Hospital with the Daughters of Charity, to whom their early formation was assigned.[34] The first Motherhouse of the Josephines was constructed near the hospital so that the French sisters could continue to oversee the progress of the new order, which, as Jean-Marie Planchet, CM (1870–1932) recounted, flourished with new recruits. "Vocations were so numerous," he stated, "that it was impossible to accept all aspirants."[35] Once this community of Chinese sisters was established, the undertaking of social reform was commenced with alacrity and enthusiasm.

The Sisters of St. Joseph in Beijing became the prototype for future Chinese orders of sisters, largely due to the exemplary success of their role in the restoration of Beijing's Catholic institutional presence in the ruins of the Boxer Uprising.[36] Like the communities of European women, the Josephines, too, had lost their property and many lives during the summer attacks of 1900. By 1937, however, the Chinese sisters had rebuilt their community and an imposing new assemblage of properties. They then had forty residences with a total of 130 sisters; a primary school with 1,345 students; and 137 students in their secondary school. They also instructed 135 students in their school of prayer.[37] Josephine convents were established in other Chinese cities, such as Tianjin and Zhengding, and eventually these Chinese sisters were invited to serve at all the principal Vincentian churches in the Beijing Vicariate.[38] By the advent of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the Sisters of St. Joseph had doubled their size; Delaplace's hopes in an order of native women had succeeded beyond his expectations. After their property around Nantang had been demolished in 1900, the Josephines relocated to Beitang, where their Motherhouse is still located today.

33 R.G. Tiedemann, *Reference Guide to Christian Missionary Societies in China* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2009), 101.

34 *Annales de la Congrégation de la Mission* Vol. 127, nos. 503–506 (1963): 192.

35 Planchet, 561.

36 Betty Ann McNeil, DC, ed., *The Vincentian Family Tree: A Genealogical Study* (Chicago: Vincentian Studies Institute, 1996), 77.

37 Vicariate Apostolique de Pékin: *État de la Mission* (Beijing: Congregation of the Mission, 1937), 36.

38 Tiedemann, "Catholic Religious Communities of Chinese Women," 589.

By 1941 there were 241 Josephines operating schools and health centers in China, and in 1951 the number had grown to 266.[39] Despite the new government's confiscation of all their properties and the enforced disbandment of all their convents during the beginning of the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976) in 1966, the Sisters of St. Joseph resurfaced in 1984; they had patiently remained underground until the political situation became more tolerant of Roman Catholic religious communities.[40] In 1987, the Josephine novitiate was officially restored, and twelve novices entered the order at a temporary convent at Beijing's Nangangzi church, dedicated to the famous Carmelite nun and patron of Catholic missions, St Thérèse of Lisieux (1873–1897).[41] When the community returned to its old location at Beitang in 1992, 24 more women joined the Josephines. Since then the sisters have continued to serve in parishes, retirement centers, and health clinics throughout Beijing, continuing their reform and service-minded activities [Figure 3.2].[42]

3 Reformers in Collaboration

When Louis-Gabriel Delaplace envisioned establishing the Sisters of St. Joseph, it was not because he believed that only Chinese women could enact social reform on behalf of women, but rather that they would have less hindered access to the complexities of Chinese culture as it related to his aims. He did not intend native sisters to replace Western ones, but that their works would supplement the efforts of the nuns sent to China from abroad. Western sisters had already perceived the challenges confronted by native women and had written to their superiors about their exasperation with practices such as infanticide, footbinding, and arranged marriage. The Italian Franciscan Missionary of Mary (FMM), Sr. Marie-Hermine de Jésus, FMM (1866–1900) wrote to her Motherhouse in Rome about what she witnessed in 1899, shortly after her arrival to China:

> Poor little Chinese! Women are truly to be pitied in China, even among Christians, and we cannot completely eliminate old Chinese customs. Bishop Fogolla told me yesterday the story of a girl of sixteen who was obliged to marry.... Consulting a woman is a little known thing in the

39 Tiedemann, *Reference Guide to Christian Missionary Societies in China*, 101.

40 Zhang Jinhua, ed., *Beijing jiaoqu Ruose xiunuhui* [*The Beijing Diocese Sisters of St. Joseph*] (Beijing: Roman Catholic Diocese of Beijing, 2004), 1.

41 Ibid.

42 Ibid.

FIGURE 3.2 The present-day "Josephines" in Beijing, 1996
SOURCE: PRIVATE COLLECTION OF THE AUTHOR

> Celestial Empire, and all indications are that little Mary was not asked about her feelings.... She wrote to her family at the earliest opportunity and declared that she would not marry.... "This is obstinacy," her father said, striking her with such violence that blood flowed, though nothing could shake the child's determination.[43]

Even a Catholic family is seen here treating this young girl according to the traditional Chinese mores of that time; arranged marriage was conducted

43 Letter from Marie-hermine de Jésus, FMM, 6 September 1899, Archive of the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary, Rome (AFMM). See also Anthony E. Clark, *Heaven in Conflict: Franciscans and the Boxer Uprising in Shanxi* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2015), 93.

without the consent of the future bride, and protestations, even with the support of the nuns, were in vain. Experiences such as this fueled the zeal with which Catholic sisters dedicated themselves to the cause of cultural change.

Other than the Daughters of Charity, the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary (FMM) sisters were among the most active European women in China to work for social change. In Republican-Era Beijing, it was the French FMMs who established an active venue for reform, the Maison Sacré-Ceour School for both Chinese and Western children [Figure 3.3]. The French FMM sisters also hosted a large school in Tianjin, but it was in Beijing that their order was able to more visibly influence the community around them. As early as 1914, the FMM Motherhouse in Rome began correspondence with the French bishop in Beijing, Stanislas-François Jarlin, CM (1856–1933), to construct a residence there. By 1925 their ambition was finally underway to establish a Catholic school to provide a Western education to more children in China's former capital.[44]

The sisters also collaborated with the apostolic delegate of the Holy See, Celso Costantini (1876–1958), who had arrived in China in 1922 with a personal objective to indigenize clergy and religious sisters, and empower the Catholic Church in Asia. Costantini and the sisters desired both the indigenization of the Chinese Church as well as the social reform of cultural practices inimical to the lives of women. Costantini was fond of quoting an assertion published by the Propaganda Fide in 1659, which affirmed that missionaries should "not search for any reason to persuade the people to change their customs, except where these are overtly contrary to religion and to morality."[45] In other words, the Church's official position regarding culture, Costantini reminded, was to honor anything within a culture that was already indigenous when missionaries arrive, but that reform was necessary of elements of that culture which endangered human dignity or the teachings of Christianity. The FMM sisters and Bishop Celso Costanini followed enthusiastically in the footsteps of Bishop Delaplace and set themselves to rectifying Chinese practices they considered impediments to authentic reform. By the 1930s, the FMM sisters had a growing number of Chinese nuns serving at their mission stations.

The Maison Sacré-Ceour became a center for the education of young girls and women in Beijing, who far outnumbered the male students admitted to

44 See the correspondence and various records in AFMM, Folder: "Province Christ Roi, Maison Sacré-Ceour, Pekin, Chine," especially nos. 1–12.

45 In Celso Costantini, "L'Université de l'art chrétien," *Collectanea Commissionis Synodalis*, vol. 5, no. 1 (1932): 411. See the piece translated in Jeremy Clarke, *The Virgin Mary and Catholic Identities in Chinese History* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2013), 124.

FIGURE 3.3 A Chinese Sister of the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary and children at La Maison Sacré-Ceour. Beijing, 1927
SOURCE: ARCHIVES OF THE FRANCISCAN MISSIONARIES OF MARY, ROME

attend classes. Educating young Chinese and Western children in Republican China was not only a project of the Church, but it was supported by the Minister of France, who helped assure that the education given was "suitably French." Reform was not only the improvement of lives; it was also, at least in French-operated schools, the Gallicization of Asia. The records of Maison Sacré-Ceour, now held at the FMM archive in Rome, are informative. In a 1928 chronology of distinguished guests who visited the school and students who had earned high honors, we can see a cross-section of what was learned at the school and what was esteemed by the sisters.[46] Between 1925 and 1928, twenty-nine students of the school are identified as winners of academic distinction; fifteen are Chinese and fourteen are European. These students were enrolled in various courses, including art, science, math, literature, and language, and after passing rigorous examinations they were awarded diplomas according to the degree of their competencies. Their curriculum was decidedly Western,

46 See "Chronique du Pensionnate," 1928, in AFMM, Folder: "Province Christ Roi, Maison Sacré-Ceour, Pekin, Chine."

and the bulk of the awards of distinction, sometimes granted by the Minister of France in person, were in the areas of French language and French studies. All but four of the awardees were female, and the slight majority were Chinese. In 1925, for example, diplomas and certificates of French language mastery were awarded to Phoebe Liang, Suzanna Liao, Barbe Tang, Aline Tang, and Lily Wang, and in 1928, the French Minister awarded a Silver Medal to Lilliane Wang and Bronze Medals to Suzanne Liao, Barbe Tang, and Aline Tang.[47] Most of the award winners were Chinese girls who had received a Western education and had attained an advanced level in spoken French. Photographs of Maison Sacré-Ceour School classrooms feature FMM sisters, almost all of whom were European, teaching classes that consisted of Chinese and European children, tidily dressed in Western uniforms. Like their European female classmates, the Chinese girls are neatly attired in skirts, blouses, and Western coiffures.[48] Social reform meant liberation from "backward" Chinese practices, but it also involved the conversion into a Westernized woman, which sometimes made returning to Chinese society after graduation a challenging integration.

The Irish Sisters of St. Columban was another community of sisters who envisaged social reform in China; they were especially alarmed by what they perceived to be unsanitary conditions within which women and young girls lived. Describing the sisters' reaction to such conditions, mission scholar Edward Fischer wrote that, "Chinese home life was not attractive to the women from a Western culture." He remarked, however, that by and large, the nuns saw that Chinese children seemed quite happy.[49] The main concern for these Irish sisters was the promotion of modern health care. The "lack of education" in the "scientific basis of modern nursing" motivated them to train Chinese women in Western nursing programs.[50] By 1927, only a year after the Columban sisters had left for China, Chinese nurses were beginning to serve in modern hospitals, and the professionalization of women in China's medical industry had begun. Since the nurses mostly served in Catholic hospitals, they did not discriminate against political allegiances; they treated Nationalist, Communist, and warlord military men who had been wounded in conflicts. The Columbans also tried to enact social reforms on the domestic level, and in one instance saved a woman who had attempted suicide by swallowing opium after a quarrel with her husband.[51]

47 "Chronique du Pensionnate," 1928.

48 See AFMM, 31.1, Pekin.

49 Edward Fischer, *Maybe a Second Spring: The Story of the Missionary Sisters of St. Columban in China* (New York: Crossroad, 1983), 70.

50 Ibid., 51.

51 Ibid., 99.

Italian, French, and Irish sisters of various orders all directed their attention to similar areas of reform: arranged marriage, footbinding, education, health care, and sanitation. Most of the European sisters, however, were more interested in engaging the culture themselves rather than enlisting Chinese women into their orders to fulfill these changes within their own culture. The Josephines were successfully established by the Vincentians to function as their own independent Chinese order, but American sisters had other ideas for the implementation of social change.

Rather than emphasize the education and Westernization of their students and orphans, American nuns largely directed their efforts toward the enrollment of Chinese women into their orders, which they hoped would render them more influential agents of change. Among the more active American communities of reformer nuns were the Sisters of Providence from Indiana, who operated a mission in China after 1920. One Sister of Providence wrote that:

> From the beginning, the missionaries realized that no matter how diligently or how devotedly they struggled to learn the language of the people, they would never be able to speak the language or understand the psychology of the Chinese people as completely as native sisters could. Daily occurrences wherein the American sisters felt their inadequacy convinced them more and more strongly that some day there must be Chinese young women who would give their lives to the service of their own people.[52]

The view of the American Sisters of Providence was similar to the view of Louis-Gabriel Delaplace, who had founded the Josephines. Native sisters, they argued, would have greater *entrée* into the psychology of their fellow Chinese than foreign nuns. But their view departed from Delaplace in that they desired to incorporate Chinese women into their already established communities rather than establish new orders of Chinese-only sisters. In addition, the American sisters desired their conseours to earn university degrees so that their influence would be appropriately modern. Not only would a university education be helpful, they reasoned, but women from cultured metropolitan centers would also be an asset to the project of reform. One of the most anticipated candidates, therefore, was a young Beijing woman named Theresa Ying, who had "completed an education in classical Chinese, and had a little experience in teaching."[53] Perhaps the most successful native sisters were those who

52 Ann Colette Wolf, SP, *Against All Odds: Sisters of Providence Mission to the Chinese, 1920–1990* (Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, IN: Sisters of Providence, 1990), 83.

53 Ibid., 86.

had been educated in both the Western and Chinese systems; they were an effective bridge between the cultures.

Another order of American sisters who encouraged the admission of Chinese nuns into their community was the Adorers of the Blood of Christ, whose China mission spanned from 1933 to 1945. In a letter written in 1935, one sister spoke of the need to "keep the balance between natives and American sisters" in order to better facilitate their work of ushering modernity into China.[54] Soon after indigenous sisters were recruited for the order, two women, Mary Cho and Agnes Kiang, were accepted into the novitiate, later becoming Sisters Margaret and Helen.[55] The Adorers believed that the most effective way to inculcate modernity into the Chinese novices was to send them to the United States for their religious formation and education, so they were sent to their grand convent in the small American town of Ruma, Illinois. There the Chinese sisters were prepared to return "to China and take charge of schools."[56]

Stereotypes that Chinese women were not well suited for more "male pursuits" were difficult to overcome, however, and the American sisters persisted in their views that "feminine work" was still more befitting native girls under their care. In a letter to her Mother Superior in 1939, Sr. Sophie Gartner, ASC, wrote of a young Chinese student, Agnes Kiang, that she "is talented (I should say skilful with the needle and good in drawing …)."[57] Despite the stereotypes common of the 1930s, the Adorers in China provided the financial support for Agnes Kiang to travel to the Unites States, where she enrolled at St. Louis University and prepared to join the sisters back in China to help educate other Chinese women.

The most prominent group of American sisters to have served in China were the Maryknolls, who arrived there in 1921. As Penny Lernoux puts it: "The Maryknoll Fathers, who had already established mission centers in South China and Hong Kong, wanted the Sisters to evangelize among Chinese women, who were inaccessible to priests because of the rigid separation of the sexes."[58] Once the first six Maryknoll sisters had arrived, the condition of women's lives in China inspired them, as with other orders, to provide

54 Quoted in Regina Siegfried, ASC, *"Missionaries More and More": The History of the China Mission of the Adorers of the Blood of Christ, 1933–1945* (Bloomington, IN: Author House, 2005), 61.

55 Ibid., 61.

56 Ibid., 68.

57 Sophia Gartner, ASC, to Mother Vincentia, ASC, 1 June 1939, Archives at the Ruma Center of the Adorers of the Blood of Christ.

58 Penny Lernoux, *Hearts on Fire: The Story of the Maryknoll Sisters* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1993), 46.

"Chinese peasant women a sense of worth" and to encourage husbands "to show greater respect for wives."[59]

Even with their ambitious aims to reform women's lives in China, the superstitious culture of remote China made change a gradual procedure. The use of Western medicine in Maryknoll clinics, for example, was both a testament to modern science, and also the cause of rumors that the sisters were capable of performing miracles. Sr. Cornelia Collins, MM (1913–1987) recalled an example of how the sisters were admired for their apparent "supernatural" abilities:

> One day there was a group of people waiting at the clinic door when all of a sudden I heard a thump. A man had passed out. Everybody screamed and ran including my helper.... I got some spirits of ammonia and held it under the man's nose and poured some down his throat. And he came to. When the people came back to the clinic, a woman said, "He was dead and she brought him back to life." So my reputation spread.[60]

Such superstitious responses to simple medical procedures did attract interest in Christianity, but it also perpetuated uneducated views that the sisters were attempting to eradicate.

Genuine social reform according to the Maryknoll model entailed, as Bishop Francis Ford, MM (1892–1952) is known to have said, entering into the domain of Chinese kitchens. Sr. Paulita Hoffman, MM, recorded Bishop Ford's exhortation to the sisters: "We are never going to get to these people until we get into their kitchens. The women really have the feel of the sentiment of the children. They instill knowledge into those children—into their hearts. We won't know them until we get into the kitchen."[61] The recurring theme through all of the Catholic sisters who worked for social reform in China was to empower women to help empower other women, and to create a cultural bridge between the East and West in order to transform worldviews. Beijing was the center and origin of these reforms, beginning with Delaplace's desire to create an order of Chinese nuns who could access the kitchens described in Bishop Ford's appeal. Only women could access Chinese women, and Chinese nuns were the best key into "the kitchen," where change could occur. Christianity was not only a religious identity to be promulgated in Asia but also a platform for social reform. Catholic sisters in China, perhaps even more than their male counterparts, represented and promoted the modernity that could advance the status

59 Ibid., 52.

60 Maryknoll Mission Archives (MMA), TS33, Sr. Cornelia Collins, MM, 15–16. Quoted in Jean-Paul Wiest, *Maryknoll in China: A History, 1918–1955* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1988), 136.

61 MMA, TS51, Sr. Mary Paulita Hoffman, MM, 21.

and living conditions of Asian women. American sisters, as much as European sisters, contributed to the task of reform.

4 Conclusion

From 1919 to 1920, the British playwright and novelist William Summerset Maugham (1874–1965) took a trip along China's Yangze River and published a memoir of his travels in a small book entitled *On a Chinese Screen.*[62] In one passage he reflected on "being revolted at the way in which Chinese women were treated," and he recounted a meeting he had with a Catholic nun whose work was committed to the improvement of women's lives in China.[63] When he arrived at the convent he was greeted by the Mother Superior, who showed him "the orphans who were in her charge, busy at the lace-making which the nuns had taught them, smiling shyly."[64] The Mother Superior had lived in China for twenty years, and she had attempted to convert worldviews as well as souls so that women might receive better treatment. She lamented, however, that with all the skills the girls had been taught in their school and orphanage, Chinese men merely "sought them as wives," because "after they were married they could earn a little money by their needles."[65] Even the nuns themselves were viewed as second-class persons in China's patriarchal culture. "A nun in their eyes is only a woman," the Mother Superior quipped, and concluded, "You must not ask more from people than they are capable of giving."[66] The work of social reform was difficult and often discouraging, and progress was made slowly. But it is important to recall that Catholic sisters were among the vanguard of women who envisioned a China more sensitive to equality and the dignity of human life.

It appears that China's changing political and cultural landscape as it was transformed from empire to a Republic, afflicted by warlords and revolution, was served well by the small but ambitious group of Catholic women, both Western and Chinese, who helped usher Chinese women from an era of restriction and dismissal into one of liberation and acceptance. In many ways, among the most empowering positions for women in Republican-Era China was to become a Catholic nun, wherein one was able to free herself from the cultural confinements of traditional Chinese expectations, such as arranged

62 William Summerset Maugham, *On a Chinese Screen* (London: Mandarin, 1991, first published in 1922).
63 Ibid., 35.
64 Ibid.
65 Maugham, *On a Chinese Screen*, 36.
66 Ibid.

marriage or concubinage. In Plato's *Republic*, he presents an ideal that, "If women are expected to do the same work as men, we must teach them the same things." This idea was the bedrock ideology of Catholic social reform during the Republican Era—for the Daughters of Charity, who traveled to China from Europe and America, and the Sisters of St. Joseph, who were born and raised in the area of Beijing, as well as other religious orders for women, teaching girls the same things that were taught to boys was the surest avenue toward social improvement. In the closing line of his famous short story, "A Madman's Diary," Lu Xun (1881–1936) wrote a simple but poignant appeal to "Save the children."[67]

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67 Lu Xun, "A Madman's Diary," in *Lu Hsun: Selected Stories*, transl. Yang Hsien-yi and Gladys Yang (New York: W.W. Norton, 2003), 18.

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CHAPTER 4

New Women before the "New Woman": Sasaki Toyoju and Sasaki Nobuko in Meiji Japan

Rui Kohiyama

"Romantic love" was one of the hallmarks for the New Woman in Japan, who gained sudden prominence in the journalistic scene at the end of the Meiji Period. Hirotsuka Raicho, the New Woman incarnate, was well known for her double suicide attempt in 1909 during her younger days. Later, she famously took a *de facto* husband five years her junior rather than marrying him, and she then bore him two children and maintained the relationship until his death in 1964. The ideology and practice of romantic love soon became the epitome of modernity, and the notion of the supremacy of love acquired nationwide popularity and interest among the general public as shown in the fact that Kuriyagawa Hakuson's *Kindai no Renaikan* [*Romantic Love in the Modern Age*] (1921) became a best seller, enabling the author, a professor of English literature at Kyoto Imperial University, to buy a second house in Kamakura—frequently referred to in jest as the "Romantic Love Palace."[1]

A great deal has already been written about the origin of romantic love in modern Japan, especially by scholars of Japanese literature in the Edo and Meiji Periods. This chapter examines what the previous scholarship has not examined in detail: the role of Christianity and women missionaries in bringing the romantic love ideology to Japan. In other words, the chapter claims that one of the most important impacts of Protestant Christianity[2] in modern Japan relates to the reconfiguration of the relationship between men and women, particularly the introduction of the romantic love ideology. To show how Protestant women missionaries and Japanese Christians were forerunners in the introduction and nurturing of this ideology in Japan, this chapter explores the experiences of a mother and daughter, Sasaki Toyoju and Sasaki Nobuko, in the context of the transitional Meiji period.

1 As for popularity of *Kindai no Renaikan*, see Kanno Satomi 菅野聡美, *Shōhisareru Renai-ron* 消費される恋愛論 [Question of Romantic Love Consumed] (Tokyo: Seikyū-sha, 2001), 112. As for his second house, see Fujisa-shi Sōgō Toshokan 藤沢市総合図書館, *Toshokan Dayori* 図書館便り [Library Bulletin], 160 (Feb. 20, 2009), 3.

2 This essay explores Protestant influences. Catholic influences should definitely be considered separately in the future.

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Drawing on scholarship in the field of literature, the first section describes the *iro* tradition and marital practices in the Tokugawa Period. This section is the spadework for gauging the North American influence on the construction of the romantic love ideal in modern Japan.[3] The second section examines the experience of Hoshi En (later Sasaki Toyoju)[4] with Mary E. Kidder, the first single woman missionary sent to Japan, with particular emphasis on early mission school education in which domestic skills, social exchanges, entertaining guests, and new marital customs were taught and advocated. This section depicts how the emotion, ethic, and etiquette of romantic love were nurtured in the early Christian community. The third section discusses how Hoshi En's illicit relationship with Itō Yūken[5] (later Sasaki Motoe) developed under Christian influences, finally culminating in their formal marriage. Lastly, the chapter explores how Toyoju brought up her daughter Nobuko to be something of a New Woman in Japan using the Protestant Christian wife as a model of a Western womanhood that combined the separate worlds of practical everyday companionship and playful fantasy. Decades before feminist authors and cultural critics hailed "romantic love" as a fundamental pathway to modernity for the New Woman, Christian ideals and institutions played an important role in introducing and promoting the concept of romantic love.

1 *Iro* and Marriage in the Tokugawa Period

Although the prevalent and yet diverse phenomenon of the heterosexual relationship defies any easy categorization and abstraction, the normative constructs of *ie* and *iro* are important for understanding relationships between men and women in the late Tokugawa period.[6] In defining the relationship

3 The North American influences in this respect were real and important as most of missionaries in Japan in those days were from North America. See Kohiyama Rui 小檜山ルイ, "Amerika niokeru kaigaidendōkenkyū no bunmyaku to sono genzai アメリカにおける海外伝道研究の文脈とその現在 [Research on Foreign Missions: The State of the Field in the U.S.]," *Bulletin of the International Research Center for Japanese Studies* 30 (March 2005): 80–81.

4 Hoshi En later changed her first name to Toyoju and became Sasaki Toyoju upon marriage, the name that she is better known by. Additionally, to avoid confusion with her daughter Sasaki Nobuko, both women will be referred to by their first names, Toyoju and Nobuko.

5 Motoe whose name was Itō Yūken when he was in Yokohama later changed his name back to his surname at birth, Sasaki, but will be refereed to as Motoe throughout this article hereafter.

6 There are many writers on the topic from early on. Here I just mention the major writers in the latter half of 1990s and early 2000s when scholarly discussion on the topic enjoyed a boomlet: Saeki Junko, Koyano Atsushi, and Tanaka Yūko (literature); Ueno Chizuko, Yamada

between men and women, the *ie* or the household was crucial in this period. The *ie* was a kind of *oikos*, an economic unit meant to assure the survival of family members, which included relatives and servants living under the same roof. The *ie*'s continuity over generations was particularly important, and a male heir needed to be secured for this purpose. This was especially true for the warrior-class because the *karoku*, the allowance originally given to the founder of the *ie* for his distinguished military service, was secured for the family as long as, and only as long as, the *ie* continued. Without a male heir, the *ie* and its allowance were discontinued. Although the rule was applicable only to the warrior class, the value attached to the continual maintenance of the *ie* as an economic entity by securing a male heir seems to have been common among people of other classes, except for the very poor.[7]

In the warrior class, therefore, parents took initiatives to make binding marital arrangements early on. Often, men and women met for the first time on their wedding day. If no male heir was born or survived out of the marriage, there were at least three choices: divorce and remarriage, concubinage, and adoption. The last choice had several variations. When a couple had a daughter, they adopted a man who would marry her (*mukoyōshi*). When they had no children at all, they adopted a boy/man preferably from relatives and had him get married. Once adopted, the man had to consider his adoptive parents as his real parents.

Under this system, the value of chastity was not fostered for both sexes in spite of Confucian teachings regarding female chastity. First, divorces were common and thus remarriages were encouraged to provide security for a woman, and sexual purity was seen as nothing but an obstacle. Second, the nominal continuity of the *ie* was more important than the maintenance of the pure male bloodline for which women's chastity was crucial. The Japanese did not distinguish between spiritual and carnal desires within recorded history till the end of the Tokugawa period. The spiritual and the carnal came together for the Japanese when men and women fell in *koi* (yearning) with each other. To the Japanese, *koi* did not last long however intense it might be. It was changeable and fast-fading and therefore, too unstable to be the basis for marriage, the foundation of the *ie*. Thus, in marriage, sentiments, emotion,

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Masahiro, and Kanno Satomi (sociology); and Osawa Mayuki (philosophy). In history, edited volumes by multiple writers have been the norm in writing about family and marriage, each person specializing in a specific period.

7 Sonoda Hidehiro 園田英弘, Hamana Atsushi 濱名篤, and Hirota Teruyuki 廣田照幸, *Shizoku no rekishishakaigakuteki kenkyū* 士族の歴史社会学的研究 [Historical and Sociological Studies on the Warrior Class] (Nagoya: Nagoya Daigaku Shuppan-kai, 1995), chap. 5.

and passion for the marital partner were only secondary. Although there were exceptions,[8] the supremacy of the *ie*'s continuity over sentiments, emotion, and passion for the parties involved was the basic rule.[9]

In order to inspire and satisfy the emotion of *koi*, therefore, men and women had to seek relationships outside of marriage, which were openly available for men who were allowed to keep concubines. They could also pay for encounters with licensed or unlicensed prostitutes. Yoshiwara was the place in Edo for licensed prostitution where men could enjoy a pseudo *koi* affair following intricate rules unique to Yoshiwara.[10]

The real tragedies and sufferings, the part and parcel of prostitution and human trafficking, should be discussed elsewhere. For the purpose of this chapter, it is important to remember that Yoshiwara was also the cultural center for play and fashion. Without a high value placed on chastity, the top-ranking prostitutes were adored for their beauty and sophistication and often selected as models for *ukiyo-e* arts. In this place, something that might be called the culture of *iro* (literally meaning "color") had been cultivated in which the fleeting sentiments, emotions, and passions of *koi* were defined as *uwaki* (capriciousness). A man should have an illicit relationship, on the presumption of *uwaki*, never losing his head over the woman with whom he got involved. This attitude was called *iki* (sophistication) and regarded highly in the *iro* culture. On the other hand, the wallowing in such a relationship was called *yabo* (unsophistication).

In this culture, women were basically divided into two kinds: *yūjo* (women of play) and *jionna* (women of the earth or ground). The latter were described by famous seventeenth-century storywriter Ihara Saikaku as ordinary women without charm: they were "unimaginative, irritatingly repetitive in speaking, somewhat mean, writing letters differently, drinking *sake* (wine) awkwardly, unable to sing, gawky in outfits, unstable in manners, tottering, talking about miso and salt when sleeping in the same bed and stingy enough to use tissue paper one by one sheet."[11] In the *iro* formulation, *jionna* were thus denied

8 In fact, the custom varied according to the class and the region. For details, see Sekiguchi Yūko 関口裕子, Hattori Sanae 服部早苗, Nagashima Junko 長島淳子, Hayakawa Noriyo 早川紀代, and Asano Tomie 浅野富美枝, eds. *Kazoku to kekkon no rekishi* 家族と結婚の歴史 [History of Family and Marriage] (Tokyo: Moriwa-sha, 2000), 97–108.

9 Ibid., 94–137.

10 As for Yoshiwara, see Watanabe Kenji 渡辺憲司, *Edo 300-nen Yoshiwara no shikitari* 江戸三〇〇年吉原のしきたり [The Conventions of Yoshiwara for 300 years in the Edo Period] (Tokyo: Seishun Shuppan-sha, 2004).

11 Ihara Saikaku 井原西鶴 *Seken munasanyō* 世間胸算用 [Worldly Calculation] as quoted in Tanaka Yūko 田中優子 *Edo no koi* 江戸の恋 [Koi in Edo] (Tokyo: Shuei-sha, 2002).

sexuality and were in charge of the "real life," maintaining the *ie* as wives and mothers. Meanwhile *yūjo* were denied motherhood and represented a womanhood of fantasy and illusion for men.

Although the culture of *iro* was nurtured in Yoshiwara and other places of licensed prostitution, its influence went beyond. *Iro* influenced ordinary people through such media as popular literature in defining their sentiments, emotion, passion, and attitude toward the other sex and marital decisions.

2 A Missionary and Her Protégé

Upon this landscape of *ie* and *iro* traditions, North American missionaries began to arrive in the latter half of the nineteenth century carrying their own cultural baggage. It included the romantic love ideology—an ideology that ignored the high prioritization of the continuity of *ie* and valorized more the eternal continuity of love and the individual. It also negated the distinction between two kinds of women, *yūjo* and *jionna*, while making distinctions between carnal and spiritual love. Missionaries, especially women missionaries, sought to intervene in the cultural landscape and diffuse the romantic love ideology into Japanese society. From the arrival of the first single Western women missionaries in the late 1860s, they sought to replace the Japanese traditional *ie* with the "home," the bastion of Protestant Christianity in nineteenth-century America. Jumping ahead to the 1910s, however, these efforts to transform Japanese social and cultural mores surrounding love and marriage had clearly born mixed fruit.

In 1916 at the forth annual meeting of the National Woman's Christian Educational Association (NWCEA), Protestant women missionaries and Japanese teachers at mission schools resolved to establish a committee to prepare a guidebook for appropriate conduct between a man and a woman upon a proposal by missionary Charlotte B. De Forest, president of Kobe College. According to the resolution, such a guidebook was necessary because "recent exchanges among young men and women in Japan imitate superficially the Western style and the freedom in the relationship goes beyond the limit and presents danger."[12] The next year, De Forest as the chairperson of the Committee for the Study of Relationships among Young Men and Women

12 "Nihon Kirisutokyo Joshi Kyōikukai dai 4-kai taikai hōkoku 日本基督教女子教育会第4 回大会報告 [Report of the Fourth Meeting of Women's Christian Educational Association]" held at Kobe Jogakuin on Oct. 14, 1916. Available in Nihon Kirisutokyō Joshi Kyōikukai File, stored at Kirisutokyō Gakkō Kyōiku Dōmei, Nishiwaseda, Japan.

announced that the NWCEA would recommend that 1) the member secondary schools should provide a class to teach Christian principles and manners for heterosexual relationships, 2) Christian coeducational schools and boys' schools would introduce such a class, 3) lectures on the relationship should be held in public in order to awaken Christian organizations as well as Christians to taking responsibility for guiding young people in this regard, and 4) pamphlets on this topic should be printed.[13]

These efforts must be seen as evidence of failure. Christian education had not succeeded in cultivating the types of relationships between Japanese men and women that missionaries and Japanese Christians with significant experience in the West had hoped for. Had they been successful, such specific remedial action would not have been proposed. The Taishō era provided plenty of well-known examples of marriages and couples whose ties to Christianity had not made them ideal. In 1916, for instance, Kamichika Ichiko stabbed Ōsugi Sakae, a well-known anarchist and dandy in a love entanglement (*Hikage-jaya jiken*).[14] A member of Hiratsuka Raichō's Bluestockings Society, Kamichika was also a mission school graduate. It was also no accident that these arguments and proposals were made at the NWCEA soon after Arishima Takeo published a serial story based on a scandalous love affair of yet another woman, this time a Christian who had acquired education at a mission school, with a married man. Sasaki Nobuko's affair with Takei Kanzaburō took place between 1911 and 1913 before the two became long-term but unmarried life partners (See 102–3 in this chapter), and was further evidence of a missionary vision unrealized.

While missionaries and Japanese Christians complained of these kinds of problems as recent developments, such a perspective can be misleading. Sasaki Nobuko's mother, Sasaki Toyoju, herself an early mission school attendee in the early 1870s, had conceived Nobuko in a scandalous and difficult extramarital relationship as well. These two cases point to Christian influences and impacts that clearly went beyond the limits of missionary educators and Christian leaders. They point to an environment that exposed Japanese young women to new ideals of and models for love and marriage and equipped them

13 Kirisutokyō Gakkō Kyōikudōmei Hyakunen-shi Hensan Iinkai キリスト教学校教育同盟百年史編纂委員会, ed., *Kirisutokyō gakkō kyoikudōmei hyakunen-shi* キリスト教学校教育同盟百年史 [One Hundred Years' History of the Association of Christian Schools in Japan] (Tokyo: Kirisutokyō Gakkō Kyōiku Dōmei, 2012), 57–58.

14 Kamichika was at Kwassui Jogakuin, a mission school run by Methodist women missionaries in Nagasaki from age sixteen to twenty-one and then moved to Tokyo to enter Tsuda College. As for Kamichika and the incident, see Kamichika Ichiko 神近市子, *Kamichika Ichiko jiden* 神近市子自伝 [An Autobiography of Kamichika Ichiko] (Tokyo: Kōdan-sha, 1972).

with spiritual and cultural tools for pursuing romantic love-based partnerships themselves.

The first single woman missionary, Mary E. Kidder, came to live in Japan in 1869 as a representative of the American Dutch Reformed Church. In 1870, she took over a group of Japanese students in Yokohama who had been cared for by Clara Hepburn, the wife of a Presbyterian missionary doctor, James C. Hepburn. The next year, Kidder began to teach only female students. The school acquired its permanent establishment in 1875 on the hill overlooking the port of Yokohama and adopted the formal name, Ferris Seminary.[15]

As is well known, running schools for women was one of the most successful enterprises launched by North American Protestant women missionaries. This was especially the case during the latter half of nineteenth century, as denominational women's boards and societies were established one after another and single women missionaries were sent overseas to meet the need at such schools. In Japan, the coming of single women missionaries coincided with a drastic change in society in and after the turmoil of the Meiji Restoration. Its impact on people of the warrior class was particularly grave. As they had lost their masters as well as the *karoku*, some of them, and particularly those who had supported the defeated Tokugawa Shogunate, quickly gathered around Protestant missionaries in their quest for economic and spiritual survival. Under the new Meiji government, they could not expect lucrative employment, but missionaries offered a solution. People of the warrior class were like those of the later middle class, keenly aware of the usefulness of education. They harbored high social and political ambitions and had typically already received a high level of traditional education.[16] In the 1870s and 1880s, capable students, both male and female, from this class flocked to the homes and schools of female and male missionaries, a rarity in the history of modern world missions.[17]

In the autumn of 1872, Kidder's school was moved from J.C. Hepburn's clinic to a temporary space provided by the acting governor of the Kanagawa prefecture on the Ise Hill where functionaries of the local government congregated.

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15 Ferris Jogakuin Hyakunen-shi Henshū Iinkai フェリス女学院100年史編集委員会, ed. *Ferris Jogakuin hyakunen-shi* フェリス女院 百年史 [The History of 100 Years of Ferris Jogakuin] (Yokohama: Ferris Jogakuin, 1970), 3–31.

16 This argument is based on Yamaji Aizan 山路愛山, "Gendai nihon kyōkai-shi ron 現代日本教会史論" as quoted in Imanaka Kanji 今中寛司, "Yamaji Aizan no shisō to kirisuto-kyō 山路愛山 の 思想 と キリスト教 [The Thought and Christianity of Yamaji Aizan]," *The Study of Christianity and Social Problems* 11 (March 1967): 175.

17 In mission fields in other parts of the world such as China and India, North American Protestant missionaries usually got native followers among poor and uneducated people in the lower class.

During this early period, Kidder's female pupils varied in age and educational background. They sometimes came from backgrounds that Kidder hardly understood. For example, the young "wife" of the acting Kanagawa governor, Ōe Taku, was one of the students. But in fact, she was the woman with whom Ōe lived in the early 1870s before his formal marriage with a daughter of Gotō Shōjirō, a famous royalist, politician, and entrepreneur. Kidder did not know his "wife" was only a temporary live-in partner[18] and commented, "The governor has a nice little wife.... She is very anxious to learn to do just as we do."[19] There were also children like Okuno Hisa, a daughter of one of the earliest Christians in Yokohama and Ōkawa Kashi, a daughter of a low-ranking warrior of the defeated Aizu *han* (domain) adopted by a merchant. Kashi later became the first graduate of Ferris Seminary and acquired fame as a translator and writer under the pen name Wakamatsu Shizuko. Kidder had about twenty-eight students in June 1872 and about fifty a year later. Most of the students lived on and around the Ise Hill and commuted. By October 1872, K.M. Hecqembourg, another single woman Reformed missionary had arrived in Yokohama to assist Kidder.[20]

Hoshi En (Sasaki Toyoju) joined this group as a student around June 1872.[21] She was born in Sendai in 1853, the fifth daughter of Hoshi Yūki. Toyoju's *ie* had been endowed with a *karoku* by the Sendai (Date) *han* for generations. In addition, her father was employed by the Sendai *han* as a judge, a financier and, in the latter half of 1850s, an officer at a station of Sendai *han* in Ezo (Hokkaido). Therefore, Toyoju (En) was raised in relative comfort until about 1870 when her father retired in the turmoil of the Meiji Restoration. According to Sōma Kokkō, Toyoju's niece who later established a prosperous bakeshop, Toyoju's parents saw a "man-like capacity" in Toyoju and "raised her like a boy without

18 I speculate that the "wife" had been picked up by Ōe among geishas as such cases can be often found among leading men in the early Meiji period and as there is an episode in which a policeman mistook Ōe's "wife" for a prostitute for foreigners. See Saiga Hiroyoshi 雑賀博愛 *Ōe Tenya denki* 大江天也伝記 [A Biography of Ōe Tenya] (Tokyo: Ōzora-sha, 1987), 160–161.

19 Letter from Mary to Family (abridged) dated Sept. 30, 1872, stored at Ferris Jogakuin archives.

20 Mary E. Kidder, *Kidder shokan-shū* キダー書簡集 [Kidder Correspondance Collection], ed. and trans. Ferris Jogakuin フェリス女学院編訳 (Tokyo: Kyōbunkan, 1975), 55–59, 61, 166, note 76; *Ferris Jogakuin hyakunen-shi*, 29–30.

21 The date is inferred from Samuel Brown's letter to J.M. Ferris dated June 24, 1872, in S.R. Brown, *S.R. Brown shokan-shū* S·R· ブラウン書簡集 [Letters of S.R. Brown], ed. and trans. Takaya Michio 高谷道男編訳 (Tokyo: Nihon Kirisutokyōdan Shuppan-kyoku, 1965), 269. See also Kohiyama Rui 小檜山ルイ "Sasaki Toyoju to sono jidai (1) 佐々城豊寿とその時代 (1) [Sasaki Toyoju in Her Days]," *Kirisutokyō bunka* (Spring, 2013), 146.

restriction, gave as much education as they could, and encouraged her to hone her talent."[22] *The Biographical Dictionary of Sendai* describes Toyoju as a "virtuous, strong-minded woman.... [A]ged 17 or 18 at the dawn of the Meiji Era, always in a male samurai costume ... she sprinted around the town on sweaty horseback and enjoyed disciplining rascals who feared her as a she-devil."[23]

Around 1871 at age 18, dressed in a male *samurai* costume, Toyoju left Sendai for Tokyo for further study. She had already begun to learn English in Sendai despite resistance from her relatives and friends. She persuaded her father to apply for her admission to Tokyo Girls' School (*Tokyo Jogakko*), the government girls' school to be opened in January 1972. On arriving in Tokyo, however, Toyoju found that she was too old to be enrolled in the school and went to Yokohama to attend Mary Kidder's school instead.[24]

Toyoju probably lived near the Ise Hill and commuted to Kidder's school, which did not yet have a dormitory. Toyoju's younger brother, Nisaburo, quickly followed to live and to study with her in Yokohama. Kidder entrusted two younger pupils to Toyoju's care probably to offset her tuition and lodging.[25] Toyoju began to learn English and homemaking skills.

At Kidder's school, the morning classes consisted of Bible study in Japanese, hymn singing, reading, spelling, writing, history, geography, and arithmetic in English with some translation.[26] In the afternoon, sewing, knitting, embroidering, etc. were taught and then conversation about American customs followed. On Friday, the entire class prepared for the Sunday school of which Kidder served as a headmistress.[27] She attached importance to social gatherings such as Christmas parties at Sunday school.[28] For the thriving Japanese Christian

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22 Sōma Kokkō 相馬黒光, *Mokui* 黙移 [*Moving in Silence*] (Matsumoto: Kyōdo shuppansha, 1981), 103.

23 Kikuta Sadasato 菊田定郷, *Sendai jinmei daijisho* 仙台人名大辞書 [The Biographical Dictionary of Sendai] (Tokyo: Rekishitosho-sha, 1974), 440.

24 Ushioda Chiseko 潮田千勢子 "Sasaki Toyoju joshi (1) 佐々木豊寿女史 (1) [Mrs. Sasaki Toyoju]," *Fujoshinbun* 59 (July 24, 1901), 4. As for Toyoju's father's biography, see Sōma, *Mokui* and Sōma Kokkō, *Hirosegawa no hotori* 広瀬川の畔 [By the Hirose River] (Tokyo: Joseijidai-sha, 1939).

25 As for the younger brother and the two girls, see Ushioda Chiseko 潮田千勢子, "Sasaki Toyoju joshi (2) 佐々木豊寿女史 (2) [Mrs. Sasaki Toyoju (2)]," *Fujoshinbun* 60 (July 1, 1901), 4.

26 Mary E. Kidder, *Kidder kōshiki shokan-shū* キダー公式書簡集 [Letters from Kidder to the Board of Missions], ed. and trans. Ferris Jogakuin Shiryōshitsu (Yokohama: Ferris Jogakuin, 2007), 84.

27 Kidder, *Kidder shokan-shū*, 59–61.

28 Before marriage, Mary Kidder was always busy preparing a Christmas tree in December. Kidder, *Kidder shokan-shū*, 56.

community in the port town, a social gathering sponsored by a woman was a novelty and source of attraction for the religion.[29]

Toyoju learned to read English well and probably became versed in simple English conversation.[30] She learned to sew and knit and later made Western clothes for herself and organized a knitting circle in Tokyo.[31] She also learned to host home parties and entertain guests, although such skills were traditionally reserved for professional female entertainers (*yujo* and *geisha*) in Japan. She would later put these entertaining skills to use in building a network for social and political reforms.[32] Toyoju became fond of hymn singing and later composed verses of her own to use in social gatherings for reform. She also engraved in her heart the duty of giving to others, giving liberally not only her time and labor but also money for the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) in Tokyo, Nijima Jō's Dōshisha University, Indian women's social reform advocate Pandita Ramabai, and others.[33] With Mary Kidder, Toyoju was thus trained in running a "home."

3 The Idea of Romantic Love Inspired by Mary E. Kidder

Toyoju seems also inspired by the idea of romantic love: its sanctification of the will of the woman involved in the relationship, its tendency to glorify and seek everlasting love, and it's insistence on chastity outside the sacred and exclusive sexual relations between husband and wife—a chastity that especially eschewed concubines, "yūjos" or "geishas." As Toyoju was a young woman, at the fully marriageable age of nineteen, the idea of romantic love must have made a stronger impression than on the younger students.

29 For example, William E. Griffis, the author of *The Mikado's Empire*, wrote on February 12, 1872, about a gathering held on Sunday evening at the American Mission Home (*Yokohama Kyōritsugakuen shiryō-shū* 横浜共立学園資料集 [Records of Yokohama Kyōritsu Gakuen] (Yokohama: Yokohama Kyōritsu Gakuen, 2004), 166).

30 Toyoju later translated a pamphlet published by the Woman's Christian Temperance Union and published it as *Fujin genron no jiyū* 婦人言論之自由 [Freedom of Speech for Women] in 1888.

31 See Kohiyama Rui 小檜山ルイ "Sasaki Toyoju to sono jidai (4) 佐々城豊寿とその時代 (4) [Sasaki Toyoju in Her Days (4)]," *Kirisutokyō bunka* (Spring 2015), 176–182.

32 For examples of her use of home parties, see Kohiyama Rui 小檜山ルイ "Sasaki Toyoju to sono jidai (5) 佐々城豊寿とその時代 (5) [Sasaki Toyoju in Her Days (5)]," *Kirisutokyō bunka* (Autumn, 2015), 222–223.

33 For details of Toyoju's service and donations, see Kohiyama Rui 小檜山ルイ "Sasaki Toyoju to sono jidai (4) (5) (6)" 佐々城豊寿とその時代 (4) (5) (6) [Sasaki Toyoju in Her Days (4) (5) (6)]," *Kirisutokyō bunka* (Spring 2015, Autumn 2015, and Spring 2016), 174–202; 193–229; 116–134.

In general, Protestant North American women missionaries all over the world were very concerned about the marriages of their protégés, believing that they would decide the outcome of the entire missionary project. Without marriages between "native" Christian men and women, there would not be "native" "Christian homes," the basis of Christian nurturing almost equal to church in the U.S. context in the ninteenth century.[34] As is well known, "home" in this case was not only a material space in which family members resided, but also an ideological construct. At home, women reigned as "moral guardians" inspired by Christianity; they educated their children and "purified" their husbands. Christianity was the absolute necessity in this endeavor, and thus the cult of true womanhood hailed piety along with purity, domesticity and obedience.[35]

Christianity allowed relatively free exchanges between young men and women provided that they adhered to intricate rules that protected women's chastity until marriage. Out of such controlled and thus theoretically pure or spiritual exchanges, young people were supposed to choose marital mates, and once they made their own choices, they should not cast them away easily. As women controlled courtship and marriage in the U.S., it was only natural for women missionaries to feel responsible in this regard. In the first place, mission schools for girls were established to produce educated Christian women to become wives of native Christian men, particularly pastors.[36] Mission schools for boys and girls were sometimes built next to each other, facilitating spontaneous exchanges among students under missionary supervision.[37]

In Japan, in the early 1870s, American Mission Home (later, Kyōritsu Girls' School), operated by three older women missionaries sent by the nondenominational Woman's Union Missionary Society, was a center for Christian gatherings and social exchanges among young men and women. In prayer

34 A lot of works in English support this thesis. A brief summary can be found in David D. Hall, "Women and Religion in American History: Social Practice and the Politics of Gender," *Gender Equality and Multicultural Conviviality in the Age of Globalization* (GEMC) *Journal*, no. 4 (March 2011): 76–83.

35 Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood," *American Quarterly* 18, no. 2 (Summer 1966): 151–174.

36 In fact, Mary E. Miller (née Kidder) pointed out, "And indeed is it but a little matter that the girls should have a Christian Education in order to furnish proper companions to our native pastors or Christian teachers?" See Mrs. E.R. Miller, "Education of Women," in *Proceedings of the General Conference of the Protestant Missionaries of Japan held at Osaka, Japan, April 1883* (Yokohama: R. Meiklejohn & Co., 1883), 223.

37 A typical example can be found in the Presbyterian compound named "Courtyard of the Happy Way" in Weihsien, Shantung, China. It was used as an internment camp by the Japanese during WWII.

meetings in the school, young students practiced singing hymns together before attending the meetings under missionary Louise Pierson's supervision.[38] In 1880s, it was quite common for mission schools and churches to provide social occasions of this sort. Uchimura Kanzō (1861–1930), who had enjoyed them, later remembered sarcastically:

> Fresh from my country church, with childish innocence and credulity, I plunged myself into the Turkish-bath-society of metropolitan Christianity, to be lulled and shampooed by hymns sung by maidens, and sermons that offended nobody. God's kingdom was imagined to be one of perfect repose and constant free exchange of good wishes, where tea-parties and love-makings could be indulged in with the sanction of the religion of free communions and free love.[39]

And yet, "native" Christian couples were difficult to make in Japan. Parents determined their children's marriages when they were very young in order to maintain the *ie*. This was especially true among people of the warrior class, from whom missionaries acquired many pupils and students. The custom was problematic particularly for women missionaries as many of their students quit school to marry non-Christian men selected by their parents. Mary Kidder wrote to her family in the U.S. about a pupil leaving school to marry:

> Goshi is a mere child and very small. She did not wish to be married but wished to return to school; however her father desired it and she was obliged to consent.... The marriage customs here are horrible.[40]

In order to prevent parents' intervention, women missionaries prepared their students to resist by inculcating them with the ideology of romantic love as a decisive element in marriage. "Love" had to be divided into at least two categories: the spiritual level, which included sentiments, emotion, and passion; and the carnal level. The first must be cultivated and seriously counted in the process of decision-making, and the second must be experienced for the first time

38 Ibuka Kajinosuke to Sono Jidai Kankō Iinkai 井深梶之助とその時代刊行委員会, ed., *Ibuka Kajinosuke to sono jidai vol. 1* 井深梶之助とその時代 vol. 1 [Ibuka Kajinosuke and His Age vol. 1] (Tokyo: Meiji Gakuin, 1969), 298, 304–305; Helen Ballhatchet, "Christianity and Gender Relationships in Japan: Case Studies of Marriage and Divorce in Early Meiji Protestant Circles," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 34, no. 1 (2007), 180–181.

39 Uchimura Kanzō, *How I Became a Christian?* In *Uchimura Kanzō zenshū 3* 内村鑑三全集 3 [The Complete Works of Uchimura Kanzō 3] (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1933), 72.

40 Letter from Miller (née Kidder) to Family dated Sept. 9, 1875, in Ferris Jogakuin archives.

in marriage in which the spiritual and the carnal "love" would be united and develop into something like *agape* to embrace the whole family. This formula was totally new to Japanese women in the *iro* tradition. Once successfully inculcated, students would resist against parents although it was by no means easy.

A chance for such inculcation happened early in Mary Kidder's missionary career. In July 1873, Kidder at thirty-nine married Edward Rothesay Miller, a Presbyterian missionary and Princeton graduate nine years her junior who arrived in Yokohama in June 1872. Her marriage caused trouble in the tiny missionary community in the Yokohama-Tokyo area because she refused to change her affiliation from her own, the Dutch-Reformed mission, to her husband's Presbyterian mission in accordance with missionary custom. She insisted on continuing schoolwork under the Dutch Reformed mission and her husband acquiesced.[41] Although Kidder's students were in no way aware of such trouble, they must have been impressed with her marriage, for Kidder invited all of them to her wedding to "show … a Christian wedding and the spirit in which Christians approach the solemn rite."[42]

The wedding ceremony took place on July 10, 1873, at the home of Colgate Baker, a wealthy American merchant whose wife was a friend of Kidder. Samuel R. Brown presided over the ceremony. Kidder invited only a few foreigner friends to whom she "felt indebted for great kindness," but most of her pupils attended and were "much gratified," each giving Kidder a present.[43] Kidder tried consciously to convey a message of "romantic love," exemplified in her own wedding. As Rebecca Copeland has argued, Kidder "effectively offered [her students] a new model for marriage. She had married for love—not for procreation, nor for protection. And she had married a man who supported *her* goals (in the guise of God's goals) and not one who demanded that she yield to his."[44]

Okada Kō clearly got the message. Kō had been Kidder's student from the very beginning of her school, when it had been held at J.C. Hepburn's clinic. She was a daughter of a former low-level vassal of the Tokugawa Shogun. The family had become very poor following the Meiji Restoration although her father taught Chinese literature in a school supported by the local government

41 On this trouble, see Kohiyama Rui 小檜山ルイ *Amerika fujin senkyōshi* アメリカ婦人宣教師 [American Women Missionaries] (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppan-kai, 1992), 252–262.

42 Letter from Miller (née Kidder) to Family dated July 20, 1873, in Ferris Jogakuin archives.

43 Letter from Miller (née Kidder) to J.M. Ferris dated Aug. 22, 1873, in Ferris Jogakuin archives.

44 Rebecca Copeland, "All Other Loves Excelling: Mary Kidder, Wakamatsu Shizuko and Modern Marriage in Meiji Japan" in *Divine Domesticities: Christian Paradoxes in Asia and the Pacific*, eds. Hyaeweol Choi and Margaret Jolly (Canberra, A.C.T: Australian National University Press, 2014), 108.

in Yokohama. She was a kind, cheerful, sympathetic, and good student. Then in 1875, Okada's father received an offer of marriage with a son of a wealthy former daimyo (feudal lord). Although her father declined the offer because he could not afford the dowry and suitable preparation, the former daimyo promised to pay for everything Okada needed. It was a very favorable offer and her parents decided to accept. Okada hesitated to accept because she had not seen the man but soon accepted. However, as the discussion proceeded, the groom's family told Okada and her parents that she should abjure Christianity. Okada firmly rejected the offer, ignoring her parents' pleas and threats. According to Kidder (Miller), Okada never flinched and declared, "this life is very short compared with eternity, and, though they kill her, she will not marry a man who asks that she shall give up her religion." This discussion is evidence that Okada valued and sought Kidder's opinion, and Kidder wrote that she encouraged Okada, telling her that she had done the right thing.[45] Kidder had acquired by this time influence on her students' marital decision-making. Her early student, Ōkawa Kashi (Wakamatsu Shizuko) too, later chose to marry Christian educator and publisher Iwamoto Yoshiharu rather than the Christian naval officer Kidder had chosen for her. She had also gotten Kidder's message—to the extent that she prioritized her own choice over the wishes of her missionary mentor.[46]

Although Kidder did not leave a clear statement of her vision for marriage, she articulated in an 1883 speech the various shortcomings of the Japanese marriage system for Japanese women. She then highlighted the important role of Western missionaries working to improve the system.

> The government of Japan does not realize that the women and girls need, above and more than all else, a Christian education.... By a knowledge of the pure teachings of Christ, our women and girls would learn that they must not live only to minister to the selfishness and sensual gratification of us [sic] lords; they should learn that the marriage ties are sacred and should be as enduring as life. We would be compelled to make new marriage laws, and we are not ready for this.
>
> Just what is woman's position in the marriage relation?.... She must at all times obey her lord, her mother-in-law, and, as far as possible, all

45 *Kidder kōshiki shokan-shū*, 92–94, 96, 118–120; the quote is from the original letter by Mary E. Miller to J.M. Ferris dated Feb. 10, 1875 in Ferris Jogakuin archives.

46 Sōma Kokkō, *Meiji shoki no san josei* 明治初期の三女性 [Three Prominent Women in the Meiji Period] (Tokyo: Kōseikaku, 1940), 227–231; Copeland, "All Other Loves excelling."

> her husband's family, without reasoning or question.... She must not only obey, but absolutely please her husband.... If she fail [sic] in this, she may at any time be divorced.... It has been said, perhaps with truth, that before the introduction of Protestant Christianity into Japan, there were but few chaste-minded Japanese women, —as Christian women count chastity—of mature years, in all this country....
>
> Who shall plead for them? The women of England, the women of America! And we their representatives must work for this end.[47]

It is reasonable to assume that Toyoju was among the students present at Kidder's wedding in 1873.[48] Although Toyoju left Yokohama to pursue more advanced education in Tokyo around 1874, her experience in Yokohama and Kidder's conviction for romantic love and marriage had a decisive impact on her future.

4 Mother and Daughter

After moving on from Kidder's school, Toyoju continued her studies in Tokyo where she too pursued romantic love and where her ideas on the subject encountered a new, more complex intellectual environment. During her sojourn in Yokohama, Toyoju met Itō Yūken (Sasaki Motoe), a doctor from Sendai who had studied with James C. Hepburn in the 1860s and was again in Yokohama in 1872. He joined the Church of Christ in Japan on April 28, 1872. Motoe was born in 1843 and took part in the battle in Hakodate on the side of the Tokugawa Shogunate in 1868 and 1869, engaging in relief work as a doctor. He married Itō Chiyo, whose family had served as doctors for the Sendai *han*

47 Miller, "Education of Women," 220–221.

48 According to the family register, Toyoju lived in Tokyo in 1874. On April 24, 1874, she took a photo with her brother and a young male relative in Asakusa, Tokyo. She was in a male attire and the photo looks like a commemoration for their new adventure in Tokyo where Toyoju studied at Dōjinsha, a famous school run by Nakamura Masanao, a Confucian scholar and translator of Samuel Smiles' *Self Help*, the bestseller in those days. Dōjinsha began to accept female students in autumn 1874 supervised by the wife of George Cochran, the first missionary sent by the Methodist church in Canada. All in all, it is reasonable to assume that Toyoju was still in Mary Kidder's school in July 1873 and attended the wedding. See Utsu Kyoko 宇津恭子, *Saisō yori, yorifukai tamashii ni* 才藻より、より深き魂に [For a Soul, Deeper than a Literary Talent] (Tokyo: Nihon YMCA Dōmei Shuppan-bu, 1983), 42; Letter by George Cochran dated March 23, 1876 in *Missionary Notices of the Methodist Church of Canada*, 3rd series, no. 8 (June 1876): 127; Copeland, "All Other Loves Excelling," 104.

for generations, and became a *mukoyōshi*. They had two sons by the beginning of 1870s.[49]

As both of their *ie* had served for the Sendai *han*, Toyoju and Motoe must have been close to each other when both lived in a small Christian and missionary community in Yokohama in the beginning of 1870s. Motoe likely studied at either the Shūbunkan, a local government-sponsored school where Dutch Reformed missionary Samuel R. Brown was schoolmaster, or at Ranshajuku-Takashima Gakko, a private school established by Takashima Kaemon, a local business tycoon. In the latter, Dutch Reformed Church missionary James H. Ballagh and his brother John C. Ballagh taught in the English department in early 1870s.[50] As explained previously, Motoe converted to Christianity in 1872.

Motoe and Toyoju continued their acquaintance at the Dōjinsha, the Tokyo school established in February 1873 by Nakamura Masanao (1832–1891). There, Motoe worked as an English teacher,[51] and Toyoju enrolled as a student in 1874. Changing her name from En to Toyoju, she pursued an education at the Dōjinsha that went beyond the English education she had received under Kidder's supervision to include Japanese and Chinese. Although her brother Nisaburō who had followed her to study in Yokohama and Tokyo died on Aug. 15, 1875, she continued her studies.[52] Meanwhile, Motoe brought his wife and children to Tokyo, and their third son was born in July 1875.

Toyoju did well at the Dōjinsha. Nakamura Masanao, the president of Dōjinsha, who had converted to Christianity on Christmas Day, 1874, introduced students to a mixture of Chinese (Confucian) and Western knowledge together with Christianity. The Bible, Samuel Smiles' *Self Help*, and John Stuart Mill's *Considerations on Representative Government* and *Subjection of Women* were probably on Toyoju's reading list. Leaving the mission school, Toyoju was now thrown into the sea of ideological confusion typical of that period in Japan. Protestant women missionaries would have never thought of putting Mill's *Subjugation* or *Representative Government* on the reading list for their students. Missionaries never talked of equality between men and women; for them, women were different from men and were even superior to men in their self-sacrificial obedience to husbands. Nor would missionaries have thought

49 On Motoe's biography, I relied on Itō Nobuo 伊東信雄, "Itō Yūken shōden 伊東友賢小伝 [A Biographical Sketch of Itō Yūken]," *Tōhoku Gakuin Daigaku Tōhoku Bunka Kenkyūjo kiyō* 6 (December 1974), 63–73.

50 Both of these schools were located close to Mary E. Kidder's school on the Ise Hill. See *Nihon Kirisutokyō rekishi daijiten* 日本キリスト教歴史大事典 [Historical Dictionary of Christianity in Japan] (Tokyo: Kyobunkan, 1988), 657, 822–823.

51 Utsu, *Saisō*, 42.

52 Utsu, *Saisō*, 217n9.

of politics as a proper field of study for women, although they might not have opposed reading such political works to expand their knowledge. Women, like pastors, did their best to stay away from politics in order to maintain their moral authority, the basis of their indirect political power.[53] Nakamura disagreed, however, and assigned whatever he thought stimulating or instructive without much regard to the Western context in which these works emerged. While it is unknown if Toyoju read these works, this was the intellectual milieu of Dōjinsha, and she absorbed the idea of relative equality between men and women. Later, as an author and activist she would insist on not only monogamy but also the equal division of property between husbands and wives, inviting furious criticism in Tokyo's Christian circles.[54]

At the same time, Nakamura Masanao was known for his admiration of the American ideal of home. In 1871, Nakamura stayed at the American Mission Home in Yokohama and was impressed with the way in which American women missionaries ran the home. He published a famous essay, "Zenryōnaru haha wo tsukuru no setu [Creating a Good Mother]" in 1875, echoing ideals like those that were enshrined in Republican Motherhood in early nineteenth-century America. Nakamura also wrote an essay titled "Jōshi ron [On Double Suicide]" in 1871 which revealed his almost sentimental sympathy toward devotion that a man and a woman might offer to each other. At Dōjinsha, Toyoju's understanding of romantic love was thus reinforced, and somewhat transformed to embrace not only equality but also almost reckless romanticism.[55]

Toyoju was well on her way to a career as an educator and public speaker. She spoke, for instance on "Skills for Domestic Economy" at a women's meeting at Tokyo Normal School for Women, the new public normal school that opened in 1875 with Nakamura Masanao as the commissioned superintendent.[56] In 1877, Toyoju received an appointment at this normal school to teach English or the Chinese classics, which "amazed people in Sendai and deepened their admiration."[57]

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53 See Rui Kohiyama 小檜山ルイ, "Josei to seikyō bunri: gyakusetu no seiji bunka 女性と政教分離—逆説の政治文化 [Women and Separation between Church and State: A Paradoxical Political Culture]," in Ōnishi Naoki and Chiba Makoto, eds., *Rekishi no naka no seikyō bunri* 歴史のなかの政教分離 [Separation between Church and State in History] (Tokyo: Sairyu-sha, 2006), 209–239.

54 See Kohiyama, *Amerika fujin senkyōshi*, 276–277.

55 Kohiyama Rui 小檜山ルイ, Sasaki Toyoju to sono jidai (3) 佐々城豊寿とその時代 (3) [Toyoju Sasaki in Her Days (3)]," *Kirisutokyō bunka* (Spring 2014), 162–174.

56 *Tokyo nichi-nichi shinbun* 東京日日新聞 [Tokyo Daily Newspaper] (Nov. 15, 1876), 1070.

57 The quote is from Sōma, *Mokui*, 106. See also Ushioda, "Sasaki Toyoju (2)," 4. According to Sōma, Toyoju taught the Chinese classics while according to Ushioda, she taught English.

But Toyoju's teaching career abruptly ended about six months later because of "illness," a common euphemism for pregnancy.[58] It turned out that Toyoju had prioritized her romantic love for Motoe over propriety. This had "caused a triangular love affair while Toyoju frequenting the Itōs … a very unpleasant thing to remember," according to Motoe's third son with his first wife Chiyo.[59] In 1876 or 1877, although he still belonged to the Itō family as *mukoyōshi*, it appears that Motoe began to use Sasaki, his original family name, while his companion Toyoju disappeared from her own family's register. Toyoju soon bore Motoe a daughter on July 20, 1878, named Nobuko, followed by two sons and another daughter over the next eight years. Meanwhile, Chiyo and the three children she had with Motoe returned to Sendai where her parents lived. The two divorced in 1880, and Chiyo got remarried. One of Toyoju's sons died in 1884 and Toyoju was baptized in 1885. Finally in December 1886, Motoe and Toyoju were formally married after Motoe dissolved his adoptive reltionship with Itō Chiyo's family and acquired his own family register under the name of Sasaki on which Toyoju's name was inscribed together with the children she had had with Motoe.[60]

From at least 1877 until 1886, Toyoju and Motoe lived in a precarious situation, both administratively and socially. More than the question of their legal status as individuals or a couple, they likely endured social scorn and reproach. If the words of Abe Mitsuko are to be believed, this was very trying for the couple. Mitsuko, whose mother was in the Christian network to which Sasaki Toyoju and her daughter Nobuko belonged and whose recollections correspond with later scholarly works on Toyoju, wrote for instance that Toyoju could not have Nobuko enter a public school because she was illegitimate.[61]

Much about the couple's decisions reveal their priorities. First, they valued "love" or their own choice far more than the traditional conventions of marriage in Japan and the security that came with adhering to them. While this situation could have been resolved by concubinage, a typical solution to extramarital relationships, they chose not to pursue that course. Similarly, Motoe chose to divorce his wife and separate himself from her family in spite of the debt of gratitude, and obligation, he owed to the Itōs as a *mukoyōshi* (adopted son). These types of choices would have been unimaginable had both Toyoju and Motoe not been exposed to the Christian ideal of a romantic love-based

58 Ushioda, "Sasaki Toyoju (2)," 4.

59 Quoted in Utsu, *Saisō*, 46.

60 Ibid., 46–49; Utsu Kyōko 宇津恭子, "Sasaki Toyoju saikō" 佐々城豊寿 再考 [Revisiting Sasaki Toyoju], *Seisen Jogakuin Tankidaigaku kenkyū kiyō* 3 (March 1985), 70–71.

61 Abe Mitsuko 阿部光子, *"Aru Onna" no shōgai* 『或る女』の生涯 [Life of *A Certain Woman*] (Tokyo: Shinchō-sha, 1982), 27.

partnership in theory and in practice. Following Toyoju's regularization in status, she in any case made very clear her stance on the importance and sacredness of marriage. While their relationship itself represented a critique against the traditional marital arrangement as well as the separate realms for the two kinds of women (*yūjo* and *jionna*) constructed by the *iro* ideology, Toyoju also became actively involved in that critique after marriage. She became aggressively involved in the Tokyo Fujin Kyōfū Kai (Woman's Christian Temperance Union) in which she attacked concubinage and insisted on monogamy as the only acceptable form of marriage in Japan.[62] Having herself lived in a situation not entirely dissimilar in the public gaze from concubinage, she was particularly adamant about the dangers and weaknesses of the system of polygamy.

The current of romantic love also appeared prevalently in the life of Toyoju and Motoe's first child, Nobuko. Whatever disadvantages she may have suffered as a child born out of wedlock, she went on to an impressive education as a young woman. Toyoju emphasized the importance of Christianity and a Christian education. Nobuko attended Kaigan Girls' School, an institution run by American Methodist women missionaries in Tokyo.

Her mother, who was very good at not only sewing and knitting but at Japanese and Western style cooking as well, also made sure that Nobuko acquired practical domestic skills.[63] She also learned music, especially singing under Nōsho Benjirō (1865–1936), a famous music composer and Toyoju's friend. Nobuko was even trained in speaking and singing in front of an audience.[64] In general, Toyoju expected her daughter to be a good hostess and entertainer at social and home environments. Toyoju was an enthusiastic promoter of social gatherings and entertainment; the mother and daughter showed that men and women could have fun without alcoholic beverages and *geisha*s. These parties were not only a tool to enhance camaraderie but were part and parcel of Toyoju's activism for social reform. By the beginning of 1890s, her daughter had grown to be a young woman equipped with good practical housewifery skills and the abilities of a bold entertainer like a *geisha.* She had been educated to break the divide between *jionna* and *yūjo* and represented a new womanhood,

62 I do not have space to fully explain Toyoju's activism in Tokyo WCTU in which she was one of the first members to attack concubinage and prostitution. See Kohiyama, "Sasaki Toyoju to sono jidai (4), (5), (6)"; Kohiyama Rui 小檜山ルイ, "Sasaki Toyoju to sono jidai (7) 佐々城豊寿とその時代 (7) [Sasaki Toyoju in Her Days (7)]" *Kirisutokyō bunka* (Autumn 2016), 149–174.

63 Sōma, *Mokui*, 106.

64 As for Nobuko's singing lesson, see Uemura Tamaki 植村環, "Watashi no kyōiku no aru bubun 私の教育の或部分 [A Certain Part of My Education]," in Saba Wataru, ed. *Uemura Masahisa to sono jidai* 植村正久と其の時代 [Uemura Masahisa and His Age] (Tokyo: Kyōbunkan, 1976), 765; Abe, "*Aru Onna*" *no shōgai*, 43.

a maiden with potential for sexuality, wifehood, motherhood, or a career. Sōma Kokkō, Nobuko's cousin who was two years her senior, wrote:

> I, coming out of the countryside, was no match for Nobuko, who was so clever and skillful. Especially when her mother had a lot of guests, Nobuko got all the attention with her skillful hospitality, ample stock of topics for conversation and innocent, proud and sophisticated look.[65]

It was at a home party that Nobuko met her future husband. On the evening of June 10, 1895, Toyoju held a party to show her apprecation for reporters of the *Kokumin shinbun* and *Mainichi shinbun*, two newspapers that had covered the Sino-Japanese War. Toyoju's close friend and president of *Kokumin shinbun*, Tokutomi Sohō was invited with his staff including Kunikida Doppo, an ambitious novice who had just obtained fame through his correspondence onboard a navy battleship. Such a home party was Toyoju's routine tool for social activism to reinforce bonds and friendship among participants. And on that particular evening in 1895, Toyoju had Nobuko, then reaching seventeen, participate by singing "*Yuki no shingun* [Marching in Snow]," a popular war song with a cheerful, almost childish melody.

The young woman whom Toyoju had raised clearly shared her mother's appreciation for and prioritization of romantic love. At that event, Kunikida fell in love and quickly began to make advances. Nobuko responded naively and yet with interest.[66] Both Christians, Kunikida and Nobuko took a walk in the woods of Musashino (the suburb of Tokyo) and vowed that their "love will be eternal."[67] Although Toyoju and Motoe frantically opposed Nobuko's proposed marriage with Kunikida whose future looked unstable, their protests were in vain. Not long after formalizing this romantic love relationship with marriage, Nobuko became pregnant and then went through a divorce before the end of that pregnancy.

Later, Nobuko continued her pursuit of romantic love. She initially agreed to an arranged marriage that her parents and relatives strongly supported. But after her parents' sudden deaths, she began a relationship with a man other than her betrothed. Soon after agreeing to marry Mori Hiroshi, a graduate of Sapporo College of Agriculture, Sasaki Nobuko began a relationship with

65 Sōma, *Mokui*, 107.

66 Kunikida, "Azamukazaru no ki 欺かざるの記 [Records without Deception]," in *Kunikida Doppo-shū* (Tokyo: Kadokawa shoten, 1970), 356–373. Takano Shizuko 高野静子, *Sohō to sono jidai* 蘇峰とその時代 [Sohō and His Age] (Tokyo: Chūōkōron-sha, 1988), 202.

67 Kunikida, "Azamukazaru," 373–395; the quote is from 384.

Takei Kanzaburō that was reported in a newspaper and whispered about in Christian circles. In fact, it was on her way to join Mori in Seattle in 1901 that she encountered Takei, a married father who was the chief clerk for the ship. This scandal provided the inspiration for novelist Arishima Takeo, Mori's close friend in Sapporo, to write his novel, *A Certain Woman* (1911–1913, 1919). He capitalized, then, on the story of a woman who dared to choose romantic love over all else and to endure the adverse consequences.[68]

No sources shed clear light on Nobuko's spiritual journey or intellectual rationale for these decisions. However, according to Abe Mitsuko, when Oma Akira, Doppo's colleague at the newspaper company asked Nobuko for an autograph, she promptly wrote, "Only God can judge," apparently depending upon James 4:12, and signed. Although Abe does not give the source for this episode, it sounds like truly Nobuko, who acted only in accordance with God's voice as she heard it.[69]

5 Conclusion

From her own education to the educational choices and the ideals that she prescribed for her daughter, Toyoju embraced the concept of romantic love. Her missionary mentor Mary Kidder and other Christian voices around her loudly criticized Japanese marriage practices, presenting the modern Christian marriage as a far superior alternative. In doing so, however, they were not entirely able to untangle their model of the ideal male-female relationship from the body of Enlightenment ideals and assumptions inherent within it. The existence and prioritization of the individual, the concept of rights, rationality, and individual (if not free) will undergirded North American Protestant Christian notions about marriage. In practice, of course, in marriage as on the mission field, women were not treated as equals of men. Conservative gender norms proved stronger than ideals and came to aim for the modification rather than the complete destruction of gender traditions in Meiji Japan. As Hyaeweol Choi, Rebecca Copeland, and others have argued, however, non-Western women often found the example of Western missionaries to speak as loudly as their words, if not louder. Powerful single Protestant women demonstrated that they were not entirely bound by the gendered limitations male

68 For the basic information on Nobuko's life after Toyoju's death, I rely on Abe, "*Aru Onna*" *no shōgai*.

69 Abe, "*Aru Onna*" *no shogai*, 110. James, 4:12 runs, "There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the one who is able to save and destroy. But you—who are you to judge your neighbor?"

missionary leaders often tried to place upon them. Among the most important messages communicated by their actions was that marriage should be a sacred partnership based largely on the romantic love between husband and wife. Mary E. Kidder and her new husband E. Rothesay Miller provided a prime example of this notion. They chose to marry despite her being almost ten years his senior, and they prioritized her professional objectives over his.

In her own romantic life, and then in the abilities and values she instilled in her daughter Nobuko, Toyoju demonstrated the high value she placed on women as individuals. She believed that women had the right to find and pursue love and to formalize it in the form of a marriage by choice. This perspective expressed itself in her opposition to concubinage and advocacy of monogamy with the Tokyo WCTU, a campaign described by Elizabeth D. Lublin in her chapter for this volume. Unlike the revolutionary New Women who often disdained the constraints and conservative ideas embodied in the institution of marriage, Toyoju championed marriage. This chapter has argued, however, that her understanding of marriage was shaped by potentially revolutionary ideas about love—ideas she herself applied in her relationship with Motoe.

While it is difficult to know precisely what conceptualization of love and marriage Toyoju passed on to Nobuko, it is very clear that she transmitted a new vision of wifehood to her daughter. Opposing the differentiation between women as homemakers and women as participants in intimacy, Toyoju ensured that Nobuko was well prepared to occupy both roles simultaneously. In these efforts and through her own example as an organizer and hostess for mixed social gatherings, Toyoju demonstrated that women's priorities as wives and as individuals were not mutually exclusive. Nobuko evidently took at least parts of these messages to heart and sought love despite the social and financial consequences.

It has been relatively easy to assign Christianity in the lives of Toyoju and Nobuko, and in the development of the New Woman in Japan, a role of coincidental correlation. As the National Woman's Christian Educational Association's project to publish a book outlining proper conduct between men and women makes clear, however, they saw Christianity as a definitive factor in stories like these. Far from constituting the only source of new ideas about love, Christian influences nevertheless deserve in-depth consideration in efforts to understand the rise of free or romantic love in imperial Japan. American and Japanese Christian teachers, Christian knowledge, Christian beliefs, and social interactions in Christian contexts facilitated the cultivation of alternative conceptualizations of romantic love and women's entitlement to seek it and act to preserve it in Japan.

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CHAPTER 5

The Woman's Christian Temperance Union, Monogamy, and Defining "Modern" for Women and Japan

Elizabeth D. Lublin

In the spring of 1868, shortly after the emperor decreed a restoration of imperial power and the end of nearly three centuries of military rule, the small group of reformist samurai behind that proclamation issued the Charter Oath. This was intended to calm domestic and foreign concerns about Japan's future, yet the vagueness of some of its five clauses left the specific objectives and plans of the new government open to interpretation. That same ambiguity enabled and emboldened Japanese to demand a voice in defining and achieving the same. The clause calling for the abandonment of customs of old drew particular attention from Christian converts, enlightenment thinkers, and moral and social reformers, who shared common ground in seeing the relatively low status of women as a root cause of Japan's backwardness.[1] Licensed prostitution, the practice of concubinage, more limited educational opportunities for women, and restrictions on inheritance by daughters and family headship by widows were emblematic of that position and stemmed from attitudes informed by Confucian ideas of women's inferiority, Buddhist practices espousing women's impurity, and the affiliated notion of *danson johi* or "respect men and despise women."

While American Protestant missionaries and progressive Japanese men initiated the public conversation about the need to elevate women's position and remove such impediments, Japanese wives, sisters, mothers, and daughters soon raised their voices, took up their brushes, and organized societies for the explicit purpose of bringing about redress. One of the most active moral and social reform organizations agitating on behalf of women was the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU). Its members couched many of their calls for change in attitudes, customary practice, and law in the same

1 Article four specifically stated that "evil customs of the past shall be broken off and everything based upon the just laws of Nature." William Theodore de Bary, Ryusaku Tsunoda, and Donald Keene, eds., *Sources from Japanese Tradition*, vol. 2 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964), 137.

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nationalistic language that men used and, like their brethren, sought to play a role in defining what "modern" Japan would look like. In the process, they also offered up a model of "modern" Japanese womanhood, one that asserted a woman's right and responsibility to be informed and publicly engaged in the project of nation building. This chapter will explore the WCTU's fight against polygamy to illustrate this argument. An opening section on the early writings of members of the Meirokusha (Meiji Six Society) in favor of improved status for women and an end to concubinage followed by a brief look at Protestant missionary outreach will set the stage by highlighting the ideological foundations and public models on which the WCTU built.

1 The Meirokusha and the Early Meiji Discussion of Concubinage and Women's Rights

Following more than two centuries of a prohibition on the practice of Christianity and the expulsion of Christian missionaries, Japan opened its doors for the return of the faith in 1859 when the U.S.-Japan Treaty of Amity and Commerce went into effect. Clauses not only stipulated the opening of treaty ports to foreign residence, established fixed tariffs, and granted the right of extraterritoriality, but also extended to Americans the right to build churches and worship within their port communities. Quick to take advantage of this opening, six Protestant missionaries settled themselves in two of the ports just months later and inaugurated the American Protestant mission effort to convert the Japanese. Because the Tokugawa shogunate still banned Japanese from professing their belief in this foreign faith and proscribed direct proselytization, American Protestant missionaries used educational and medical outreach as one way to build a native following. Circumventing law, they infused that outreach with theological content, such as the hanging of the Ten Commandments on dispensary walls and using translations of Christian texts in the classroom. Their efforts did little to lessen suspicions of Christianity as evil and akin to black magic. They failed to dissuade the new Meiji government from continuing the Tokugawa-era policy of religious intolerance and persecuting the few who did convert along with recently discovered descendants of Catholics who had gone underground in the 1600s.[2]

2 Otis Cary, *A History of Christianity in Japan, vol. 2: Protestant Missions* (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1909; reprint, Rutland, VT: Charles E. Tuttle, 1976), 36–78; Winburn T. Thomas, *Protestant Beginnings in Japan: The First Three Decades, 1859–1889* (Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle,

While the Meiji state faced intense criticism from foreign diplomats in the treaty ports and their governments back home for this harsh stance, it only lifted the ban on Christian practice by Japanese and allowed for open proselytization five years later. The turning point occurred during a government-led mission to the United States and Europe from 1871 to 1873. Official delegates sought to engage in talks to revise the U.S.-Japanese Treaty of Amity and Commerce, along with other unequal treaties that Japan had been pressured to sign during the last decade of Tokugawa rule. At each turn, they were snubbed. Among the most often cited reasons was Japan's lack of religious tolerance, which in the eyes of the Western powers revealed how unenlightened the country remained and thus how undeserving of a position of equality. The desire for just such a position overrode official hostility to Christianity, and the state's decision to lift the ban in 1873 reflected neither support for nor validation of the inherent merits of the faith but rather a utilitarian decision taken to advance national interests.[3]

That same rationale informed the thinking of most men who joined the Meirokusha, which was established in 1873. The society was the brainchild of Mori Arinori, Japan's first ambassador to the United States. Time spent overseas, including nearly a year living in a religious community in western New York, had made him favorably disposed to Christianity and informed his decision to pen an appeal to the Japanese government for religious toleration in 1872 and to rent a Tokyo house to American Baptist missionaries for use as a girls' school in 1874.[4] In 1873, he also issued a pamphlet praising the Bible, claiming that it "contains an overpowering force of liberty and justice, guided by the united strength of wisdom and goodness."[5] Charter Meirokusha member Nakamura Masanao went even farther than Mori in his support of religious toleration and Christianity. First drawn to the faith while on a shogunate-backed study tour of England in 1867, back in Japan he sought out the guiding hand of Edward Ballagh, a missionary of the Dutch Reformed Church, and joined a Bible class run by Christian layman Edward Warren Clark. That contact led him to write an 1871 appeal to the emperor urging freedom of religious expression and even suggesting that the emperor consider baptism.

1959), 117–127; Hamish Ion, *American Missionaries, Christian* Oyatoi, *and Japan, 1859–73* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2009), 15–17, 75–83, 94–125.

3 Notto R. Thelle, *Buddhism and Christianity in Japan: From Conflict to Dialogue, 1854–1899* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1987), 14–15.

4 Cary, *A History of Christianity in Japan*, 81–82, 106.

5 Quoted in Otis Cary, *Japan and Its Regeneration* (New York: Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions, 1899), 91.

Nakamura himself publicly converted two years later.[6] Mori and Nakamura aside, the principal members of the Meirokusha did not espouse Christianity as a faith. Nonetheless, members were attracted to many of the moral values and social customs of believers. They viewed the adoption of these practices as a way to bring civilization and enlightenment to their compatriots, and in turn, equality for Japan in relation to the Western powers. American Protestant missionaries' assertions that the lowly status of women prevented such progress resonated with special force with Meirokusha members. Despite members' general lack of support of Christianity, they played a major role in promoting a Christian image of what modern Japan should become through their advocacy of women's improved position in society.

The men of the Meirokusha had come together to engage in discussions of current issues and to share opinions of and solutions to those issues with fellow Japanese. Vehicles for the dissemination of their progressive ideas and the resulting edification of the public included lectures and publications, the most important of which was the society's own journal, *Meiroku zasshi* (Meiji Six journal). Forty-three issues of the periodical appeared between the spring of 1874 and the fall of 1875. Each had on average twenty pages and a circulation of three thousand, although the practice of sharing print materials extended the readership far beyond that figure. Those who contributed to *Meiroku zasshi* addressed a wide range of topics, including reform of the Japanese language, freedom of the press, the judicial system's use of torture and the death penalty, popular participation in politics, the adoption of paper currency, and even the rewriting of Japanese music to make the melodies more harmonious and the lyrics more rhythmical. This body of articles contained thirteen that were devoted specifically to women. They were collectively penned by five of the society's ten charter members and by one frequent contributor to the journal. It is clear therefore that the elevation of women's status was, for the members of the Meirokusha, seen as an important step towards creating a modern, enlightened Japan.[7]

On the surface, Sakatani Shiroshi's November 1874 piece in favor of women's right to determine their own hairstyle may appear as a superficial approach to women's advancement. Several years earlier, however, the Meiji government had begun urging men to chop off their traditional topknots and sport the shorter look common among westerners, asserting that cropped hair reflected

6 Ion, *American Missionaries, Christian* Oyatoi, *and Japan*, 255–262.

7 This figure of thirteen includes five parts of one article by Mori. William Reynolds Braisted, trans., *Meiroku zasshi: Journal of the Japanese Enlightenment*, assisted by Adachi Yasushi and Kikuchi Yūji (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976), vii–xiv, xvii–xxi.

progress and an openness to change. Long hampered by the time and skill required to maintain traditional coiffures, some women heeded this same call, even though it was not directed at them. In 1871, a group even formed the Sokuhatsukai, a society devoted to the promotion of bobbed hair for women. The government's response was to make short hair on women illegal in 1872. Sakatani labeled that reaction "absurd." He also described it as "unfair" and "unjust" because it applied just to women, and he called for women's right to decide how they styled their own hair for the sake of their "independence and liberty."[8] In her seminal study of the origins of feminism in Japan, Sharon Sievers went a step further in characterizing the ban as a "denial of [women's] right to participate in and contribute actively to" the creation of a new, progressive Japan.[9] Thus, far from being superficial, Sakatani's criticism of the ban signaled support for women's right to determine far more than their own appearance. To those with ears so attuned, it even rang as an endorsement for women's right to play a visible role in the national project of modernizing Japan, to decide for themselves what that role would be, and to have a voice in determining what modern Japan should look like.[10]

Although Sakatani's words had radical implications, he was by no means an advocate of full equality, as he made clear in an article on concubinage in a March 1875 issue of *Meiroku zasshi.* In that piece, he shared his belief that marriage served as the foundation of a nation and informed the moral conduct of all. For any number of marriages to include polygamy was to be decried as an impediment to Japan's advancement.[11] Sakatani went so far as to refer to the practice of concubinage as "ugly," "barbaric," and "evil." Although he endorsed the passage of laws to ban sexual promiscuity, he did not advocate an immediate legislative resolution to outlaw concubines. He said instead that achieving the "virtue" of universal monogamy had to follow apace with the enlightenment of the people and that elevation in turn required that the upper classes and officials in particular had to set an example by first giving up their own concubines and thus correcting their own behavior. Sakatani's reasoning rested on his worry that equal rights in marriage would give rise to equality in

8 Sakatani Shiroshi, "Female Decorations," in *Meiroku zasshi: Journal of the Japanese Enlightenment*, 269–274, quoted from 272.

9 Sharon L. Sievers, *Flowers in Salt: The Beginnings of Feminist Consciousness in Modern Japan* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1983), 14–15, quoted from 15.

10 I make this point elsewhere in Elizabeth Dorn Lublin, *Reforming Japan: The Woman's Christian Temperance Union in the Meiji Period* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2010), 184.

11 Adding another caveat, Sakatani argued that the emperor should be exempt from any end to the practice of keeping concubines in order to maintain an unbroken imperial line.

all things and in all arenas. In his mind, such an outcome would violate the natural order of gender relations, as "it is naturally proper for the strong man to protect the woman … [and] right for the woman to obediently serve the man."[12]

Sakatani was not alone among the contributors to *Meiroku zasshi* in espousing the idea that men and women were inherently different and in arguing for less than full equality. In an April 1875 issue of the journal, Tsuda Mamichi criticized those who repeatedly called for "equal rights of husbands and wives" on the grounds that such inequality in fact still existed in Western countries. He argued that Western civil law did not actually grant wives individual rights over such things as property and implied that Japan should thus not feel compelled to enact such laws. For Tsuda, equality within the marital relationship was sufficient.[13] In an issue the previous month, Katō Hiroyuki went further in attacking what he considered to be excesses in the treatment of women in the West under the guise of equal rights.[14] He termed improper the practice of letting a wife go through a door before a husband and asserted that allowing a woman to determine when and where a man smoked to be a violation of a man's own rights. In his view, men who had their wives sit down before them and in a better position were not contributing to the elevation of women's status but rather just trying to "court the favor of women with flattery."[15]

Other articles on the topic of women's rights, including those by Fukuzawa Yukichi and Mori Arinori, also equivocated on concubinage.[16] Appearing in

12 Sakatani Shiroshi, "On Concubines," in *Meiroku zasshi: Journal of the Japanese Enlightenment*, 392–400, quoted from 393, 395.

13 Tsuda did not elaborate on what he meant by equality in marriage. Tsuda Mamichi, "Distinguishing the Equal Rights of Husbands and Wives," in *Meiroku zasshi: Journal of the Japanese Enlightenment*, 435–436.

14 One of the Meirokusha's more outspoken opponents of Christianity as a religion, Katō gave a lecture in 1907 in which he labeled acceptance of the faith as antithetical to devotion to one's own nation. As Otis Cary explained, Katō claimed that Christianity "demands that all shall recognise and serve the one God whom it proclaims. It places that God above the national rulers; but Japanese should never acknowledge that any being is higher than the Emperor." Cary, *A History of Christianity in Japan*, 346–347, quoted from 347.

15 Katō Hiroyuki, "Abuses of Equal Rights for Men and Women," parts one and two, in *Meiroku zasshi: Journal of the Japanese Enlightenment*, 376–379, quoted from 379.

16 Fukuzawa made explicit his opposition to Christianity as a faith in 1881 when he delivered a speech asserting that conversion would prevent a Japanese from being a good, patriotic citizen as adoption of this foreign religion would incline the believer to "consider everything Christian and that comes from Christian nations as very good, and … be disposed to take the side of foreign nations." Just three years later, he reversed himself and said that Japan should wear the "religious dress uniform" of Christianity, in other words, should claim to be a Christian nation. He explained that only if Japan did so would Western

the same issue as Katō's piece, Fukuzawa's suggested that any final resolution on full equality be postponed until all could achieve a better understanding of what the term "rights" constituted. He then shifted his attention to the topic of concubines, claiming that this one impediment to women's rights could be settled easily for it required no deep philosophical reasoning or moralistic argumentation. Instead, he posited, the problem was one of simple math. The number of women in Japan was roughly equal to the number of men. For one man to have more than one wife deprived a countryman of the opportunity of marriage and was not just "unfair" but, depending on the number of concubines taken, "unreasonable." Fukuzawa, however, provided a loophole. He wrote that any man who could not grasp the math should be allowed "to keep concubines or take *geisha*" provided that these women were secluded from public view. He rationalized this dodge with the assertion that the need to hide would induce shame and "being ashamed naturally is the beginning of voluntary abstention."[17]

Of all the Meirokusha contributors to tackle the subject of concubines, Mori expended the most ink, publishing five parts of an article from May 1874 to February 1875. Presaging Sakatani, he opened part one with an unequivocal statement that the nation would be moral only if the marital relationship, on which it rested, was likewise. While he did not use the same vitriolic adjectives as Sakatani to describe concubinage, he shared his contemporary's conviction that the keeping of concubines was immoral and both "injure[d] our customs and obstruct[ed] enlightenment."[18] He pointed a finger at the wealthy men who desired concubines and the poor parents who turned over their daughters for money as contributing to the perpetuation of the practice. In his view, however, the real blame should be placed on misguided legislation that gave wives and concubines equal rights and treated the children of both alike, in other words, that sustained concubinage by legally protecting it.

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countries extend respect. He added, though, that Japan only needed to go through the motions of being Christian and only 1 percent needed to convert to achieve the intended objective. Cary, *A History of Christianity in Japan*, 156–157, 172–174, quoted from 157.

17 Fukuzawa Yukichi, "The Equal Numbers of Men and Women," in *Meiroku zasshi: Journal of the Japanese Enlightenment*, 385–388, quoted from 386. For more on Fukuzawa's views on women, see Fukuzawa Yukichi, *Fukuzawa Yukichi on Japanese Women: Select Works*, trans. and ed. Eiichi Kiyooka and with an intro. by Keiko Fujiwara (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1988); Mikiso Hane, "Fukuzawa Yukichi and Women's Rights," in *Japan in Transition: Thought and Action in the Meiji Era, 1868–1912*, ed. Hilary Conroy, Sandra T.W. Davis, and Wayne Patterson (Rutherford, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press; Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Presses, 1984), 96–112.

18 Mori Arinori, "On Wives and Concubines," part one, in *Meiroku zasshi: Journal of the Japanese Enlightenment*, 104–105, quoted from 105.

In part two of his series, published in June 1874, Mori elaborated on the evils of existing law. As stipulated by the 1870 Civil Code, then in effect, a concubine enjoyed the same lawful status as a wife and any of her male children could legitimately assume the headship of the father's family. Mori took great issue with this inheritance right of a child born outside of wedlock. He likened the unfairness of an illegitimate son perpetuating the father's family name to the injustice of the legal code's precluding a legitimate daughter from doing the same simply because she was a girl. In his view, such a situation not only dishonored the blood line but also undermined the sanctity of marriage. Moreover, the practice of forcing a childless wife to accept the son of a concubine as heir created an untenable living environment. Already restricted from enjoying the "pleasures of normal social intercourse outside" of the home, the wife had to recognize as her son a child who did not truly love and admire her. In Mori's opinion, "cruel and unjust" best described this circumstance.[19]

Mori used the same adjectives in August 1874's part three to characterize a husband who expected his wife to be obedient and chaste while he satisfied his sexual desires with one or more concubines and visits to the licensed quarters. Mori lambasted such a husband for violating the basic tenets of marriage and, in November 1874's part four, asserted that such licentious behavior and treatment of women as "playthings" made Japan the "most immoral country in the world."[20] Mori proposed adoption of a set of marriage laws as one way to rectify this deplorable status and offered a draft with ten articles as the final part of his series, published in February 1875. His introduction to the draft noted that he had consulted laws pertaining to marriage in foreign countries, a comment likely intended to lend authority to his proposals. Among the fundamental assertions that he made were that marriage should be based on the free will of both the husband and wife, involve the signing of a contract stipulating the rights and responsibilities of each party, and be certified by a government official with a witness present. He added that marriage contracts between close relatives violated basic morality and should be banned. Moreover, "once the marriage is consummated, should either party have intimate relations with a third person or should either suffer unbearably immoral treatment from the other, the [injured party] may bring suit before an official, receive a monetary settlement, and secure a divorce."[21] This statement appeared as article seven and represented Mori's verdict against concubinage and prostitution. More significantly, it presented a monogamous marriage as a basic right of a wife and

19 Ibid., part two, 143–145, quoted from 144.

20 Ibid., part three, 189–191, and part four, 252–253, quoted from 253.

21 Ibid., part five, 331–333, quoted from 332.

proposed empowering her with the legal means to protect this right. Overall, the draft suggested that monogamy could and should be achieved through the law. That message with all of its parts resonated among the reform-minded and provided one route to eliminate concubinage as part of the larger blue print for modernizing and civilizing Japan.

Nakamura Masanao's March 1875 article titled "Creating Good Mothers" served as a companion call to women to participate in that project. In this piece, he focused on the role that women played in nurturing the minds and morals of children. He asserted that women needed to receive an education equal to men if they were to be able to fulfill this responsibility. Countering naysayers to such an investment in women's learning, he argued that the Japanese as a people "must invariably have fine mothers if we want effectively to advance the people to the area of enlightenment and to alter their customs and conditions for good." With these words, Nakamura placed responsibility for turning Japan into a "splendid country" very squarely on the shoulders of women and thus privileged their role.[22]

Nakamura clearly saw women as having dominion over the domestic sphere and as being more suited to the raising of children than men, a line of thinking that mirrored Victorian ideas regarding womanhood.[23] As Mara Patessio has pointed out, his advocacy of mothers provided fodder for those who supported greater educational opportunities for women during the Meiji period. His rationale reinforced the arguments of those who considered the home to be the only proper place for women as well and consequently was used to justify efforts to exclude them from the public sphere. Yet, Nakamura's idea of the "good mother" also provided a justification for women to be active within the larger society, particularly in efforts to achieve reform.[24] Such ills as concubinage and licensed prostitution threatened the very moral foundations of the home and by extension the ability of women to raise enlightened and upstanding future generations. Only by eliminating those threats could mothers fulfill their duties to the nation, and, if such required public activism, then

22 Nakamura Masanao, "Creating Good Mothers," in *Meiroku zasshi: Journal of the Japanese Enlightenment*, 401–404, quoted from first 401 and then 402.

23 In a long list of scholarly writings on Victorian womanhood and separate spheres are Joan N. Burstyn, *Victorian Education and the Ideal of Womanhood* (London: Croom Helm, 1980); Colleen McDannell, *The Christian Home in Victorian America, 1840–1900* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986); and, Nancy F. Cott, *The Bonds of Womanhood: "Women's Sphere" in New England, 1780–1835* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1977).

24 Mara Patessio, *Women and Public Life in Early Meiji Japan: The Development of the Feminist Movement*, Michigan Monograph Series in Japanese Studies, no. 71 (Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, 2011), 29.

women had a right and a responsibility to make themselves heard outside of the home. While Nakamura did not intend for his words to bear this radical potential, they did, and Japanese women in the following decades utilized it frequently. They took advantage of their positions as protectors of the home to justify their demand for greater rights, for a say in what Japan should become, and for a role in helping the country to achieve their vision.[25]

2 The Woman's Christian Temperance Union and Its Campaign for a Monogamous Japan

In the years after the establishment of the Meirokusha and the lifting of the ban on Japanese worship of Christianity and open proselytization, American Protestants made proportionally great strides in their effort to turn Japan into a nation of morally upstanding believers. That the size of the missionary community more than doubled played a significant role, as did the opening of mission work outside of the treaty ports and the expansion of educational outreach through the founding of new schools funded by both foreign mission societies and Japanese converts.[26] Single Protestant missionary women occupied a sizeable percentage of those newly appointed to the Japan field, thanks to a more than fourfold increase from a dozen in 1873 to fifty-six in 1882, and their number was likely exceeded by the wives of male missionaries.[27] These

25 In addition to his writings in *Meiroku zasshi*, Nakamura used the classroom as a venue in which to share his opinions about women's role in modernizing Japan. Notable among the women whom Nakamura influenced were Sasaki Toyoju at his own Dōjinsha in the 1870s and Yasui Tetsu at Tokyo Women's Normal School the following decade. For more on Sasaki and Yasui, see the respective chapters by Kohiyama Rui and Garrett Washington in this volume.

26 Illustrative of this growth was formal Japanese membership in churches. That number leaped from 16 in 1872 to 5,634 in 1882 to 24,131 in 1888. Thelle, *Buddhism and Christianity in Japan*, 53–54.

27 Otis Cary has broken down the numbers of Protestant missionaries from the United States, Canada, and Britain active in Japan in 1873 into categories of men, married women, and single ladies, but replaced the middle category with single men in a table for 1882, making an accurate counting of the total number of foreign women impossible based on his statistics. That almost 75 percent of men were in Japan with their wives in 1873 makes reasonable the assumption that at least most of the 81 married men stationed in Japan in 1882 similarly resided with their spouses. Supporting this inference is Kohiyama Rui, who wrote that roughly two-thirds of all Protestant missionaries in Japan from 1859 to 1882 were women. Cary, *A History of Christianity in Japan*, 105, 163; Kohiyama Rui 小檜山ルイ, *Amerika fujin senkyōshi: Rainichi no haikei to sono eikyō* アメリカ婦人宣教師：来日の背景とその影響 [*American Women Missionaries:*

female Christian envoys indelibly shaped the thinking and actions of Japanese women and not just through profession of their religious beliefs. Single missionaries provided example of independent, publicly active, and socially aware women, who had devoted themselves to improving the lot of Japanese women and society. Unmarried female missionaries also exhibited a morally upstanding lifestyle, which married foreign women reinforced through "practical evidence of Christian family life in their daily lives."[28] Together, these two groups suggested that Japanese women should likewise strive to live virtuously and should feel a sense of responsibility to contribute not just to their own advancement but also to the enlightenment of all Japanese.[29] Mirroring the words in Nakamura's *Meiroku zasshi* article on how to produce good mothers, that inspiration produced a cohort of Japanese women ready and willing to seek greater rights for women and to help build a nation that lived righteously.

The middle-class members of the WCTU were among the most active in pursuing this agenda. The society itself was founded following an organizational tour of Japan in 1886 by Mary Clement Leavitt, the first round-the-world missionary of the World WCTU. During her four months in the country, she gave dozens of public and private talks claiming that Japan's advancement depended on the elevation of women's status and on purification through temperance and monogamy. Her words found a receptive audience, especially among Christian converts as well as students, teachers, and alumnae of mission schools, as did her call to women to organize their own societies for the purpose of moral and social reform. Fifty-one women joined hands to establish the Fujin Kyōfūkai or WCTU in Tokyo in December 1886, pledging to "reform the evil ways of society, to cultivate morals, to prohibit drinking and smoking, and to promote women's dignity."[30] To achieve these objectives, the WCTU pursued

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The Background of Their Coming to Japan and Their Influence] (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 1992), 186–187.

28 Helen Ballhatchet, "Christianity and Gender Relationships in Japan: Case Studies of Marriage and Divorce in Early Meiji Protestant Circles," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 34, no. 1 (2007): 180. In her chapter in this volume, Kohiyama Rui also briefly discusses the notion of the "Christian home," which had as its foundation a monogamous union between a Christian man and a Christian woman. For WCTU members, their right to a sexually exclusive union represented yet another right of a modern Japanese woman.

29 As Noriko Kawamura Ishii has argued, Japanese women were motivated by foreign missionary women to seek "new ways of positioning themselves" so that they could contribute to Japan's progress outside of the home. Noriko Kawamura Ishii, *American Women Missionaries at Kobe College, 1873–1909: New Dimensions of Gender* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 146.

30 *Jogaku zasshi* no. 44 (December 15, 1886): 76. Fujin Kyōfūkai literally translates as the Woman's Moral Reform Society. I use WCTU instead primarily because members saw

a wide-ranging agenda and one that evolved and expanded over the course of the Meiji period. Wartime saw them provide consolation to the bereaved families of those killed in action and send comfort bags to the deployed, while in peace time they submitted petitions to close or relocate brothel districts, operated a dry rest house at the 1903 National Industrial Exposition in Osaka, ran homes for the "rehabilitation" of former prostitutes, and promoted Scientific Temperance Instruction among youth. They also appealed to the government to ban smoking by minors, provided relief to victims displaced and impoverished by the polluting of the Watarase River, and called for the establishment of monogamy as the normative marriage model.[31]

The WCTU's first major strike against the scourge of polygamy came in 1889. That year, and in collaboration with the Fujin Hakuhyō Kurabu (Woman's White Ribbon Club), members drafted a petition to be presented to the Genrōin, a national assembly made up of peers and leading bureaucrats who were appointed by the emperor to make recommendations regarding legislation.[32] Specifically, they sought revision of the civil and criminal codes. As mentioned previously, the Civil Code dating from 1870 bestowed on concubines legal status equivalent to wives and permitted the sons of concubines to succeed their fathers as household heads. It also stipulated that only a husband could claim adultery as a reason for divorce. The Criminal Code, in effect since 1882, eliminated concubines' legal standing by excluding them from household registries.[33] However, it also defined adulterers in such a way as to exclude

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themselves as working in the tradition of the World WCTU and included those initials on the cover of the society's periodical when publication began in 1888.

31 For a much more comprehensive history of the WCTU during the Meiji period, see Lublin, *Reforming Japan*; Rumi Yasutake, *Transnational Women's Activism: The United States, Japan, and Japanese Immigrant Communities in California, 1859–1920* (New York: New York University Press, 2004), 41–103; Nihon Kirisutokyō Fujin Kyōfūkai 日本キリスト教婦人矯風会, ed., *Nihon Kirisutokyō Fujin Kyōfūkai hyakunenshi* 日本キリスト教婦人矯風会百年史 [*A One-Hundred-Year History of the Japan Woman's Christian Temperance Union*] (Tokyo: Domesu Shuppan, 1986), 27–308.

32 A founding member of the WCTU, Sasaki Toyoju spearheaded the establishment of the Woman's White Ribbon Club or Fujin Hakuhyō Kurabu in early 1889 following a power struggle within the WCTU. Its membership included a handful of of other WCTU members who were eager to pursue a more political agenda. Notable among their activities was a vigorous campaign against the 1890 Law on Assemblies and Political Associations, which banned women's membership in political organizations and attendance at political meetings. For more on Sasaki's activism within the WCTU, see Lublin, *Reforming Japan*, 51–58. For more on women's political activism in 1890, see Marnie S. Anderson, *A Place in Public: Women's Rights in Meiji Japan* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2010), 142–193.

33 Marnie S. Anderson, "Critiquing Concubinage: Sumiya Koume and Changing Gender Roles in Modern Japan," *Japanese Studies* 37, no. 3 (2017): 317.

husbands who had concubines and cavorted with prostitutes, thus freeing them from charges of and fines for illicit behavior with women other than their wives. From the perspective of the WCTU, such definitions of adultery and the absence of any penalty for keeping a concubine provided legal sanction for and protection of polygamy, and advertised the government's validation of the practice as well, regardless of the removal of concubines from registries.

The exact text of the WCTU's petition is not extant, but an article by founding member Yuasa Hatsuko published in the May 1889 issue of *Jogaku zasshi* (Woman's education magazine) articulated its main points, a fact attested to by an appeal for supporters just two pages later.[34] Using the format of an itemized list, Yuasa devoted much of her text to highlighting the harm that concubinage did to individuals, the family, and the nation. She opened by calling polygamy a violation of nature and referenced the ratio of men to women in Western countries to infer that a man with multiple wives damaged the marriage prospects of fellow countrymen. Several points later in the list, she more emphatically made this assertion when she noted that, per population registers for 1886, Japan had almost 400,000 more men than women or ninety-seven potential wives for every 100 men. For one man to claim for himself more than one wife did more than defy the laws of nature; according to Yuasa, such a practice served as a barrier to the establishment of families. She added that a husband's dalliances with other women ran counter to notions of human kindness and desecrated the basic relationship between husband and wife, which had as its foundation spousal affection. Such liaisons constituted adultery. Indeed, Yuasa argued, if a wife in a relationship with a man other than her husband was guilty of infidelity, as the criminal code asserted, common sense stipulated that so was a husband who likewise ventured from his marital bed. In case such logic failed to convince, Yuasa also strategically played to the nationalist drive to gain the respect of the Western imperialist powers. She did so by mentioning that not only had the U.S. government banned polygamy among Mormons, but even Arabs, who traditionally allowed four wives for a single husband, had recently become content with monogamous marriage.[35]

Roughly a third of the way into her text, Yuasa shifted from the generalizations above to a discussion of six more specific detrimental effects of concubinage. First, she claimed, a polygamous husband tyrannized his wife,

34 "Keihō minpō ni kansuru no seigan 刑法民法にかんするの請願 [The Petition Regarding the Criminal and Civil Codes]," *Jogaku zasshi* no. 161 (May 11, 1889): 32.

35 Yuasa Hatsuko 湯浅はつ子, "Rinri no motoi no yōshi 倫理の基の要旨 [The Fundamental Principles of Morality]," *Jogaku zasshi* no. 161 (11 May 1889): 30; reprinted in Nihon Kirisutokyō Fujin Kyōfūkai, ed., *Nihon Kirisutokyō Fujin Kyōfūkai hyakunenshi*, 62–65.

created an unhappy household, and caused couples to live separately. Second, such a man sacrificed the greatest pleasure that people could have, namely the enjoyment that came from a family unit of parents and children, just to satisfy his own carnal desires. Third, concubines themselves contributed to the destruction of harmonious homes because of their aspirations for their own sons to succeed to the head of the household and to gain control of the family wealth. Fourth, children in polygamous families grew up to be eccentric and disingenuous. They needed an education that would enable them to benefit society and the Imperial Household, yet their home environment inhibited their development. Fifth, the family represented the building block of the nation, and discontent arising from within due to polygamy would spread and unsettle all of society. Making the situation even more dire was the threat that concubinage would become more pervasive as Japanese commoners took up the practice in emulation of the social and economic elite. Sixth, as if the future were not bleak enough, children's tendency to model their actions after their fathers meant that the evils of adultery would continue to harm future generations.[36]

According to Yuasa, two possible solutions existed to rescue Japan from its plight. Buddhism most certainly did not represent one, because its tenets posited that women were inherently wicked and because many enthusiastic believers in Buddha themselves had multiple wives. Instead, Christianity with its promotion of monogamy should be followed. Just as Yuasa's open proselytization of Christianity was uncharacteristic of much WCTU writing as this time, so was her forceful condemnation of Buddhism. She may well have included these comments in a nod to the WCTU's core constituency and a bid to acquire their signatures. Undoubtedly conscious of the fact that neither would win her many supporters within the Genrōin, she did not belabor her religious rhetoric and quickly turned to the second solution, which she identified as revision of the criminal and civil codes. Specifically, she recommended that clause 252 in the criminal code be rewritten to stipulate that both husbands and wives who committed adultery, as well as their paramours, be imprisoned with hard labor for a period between six months and two years, notably adding not just husbands but also one month to the minimum jail term. She also expressed her hope that the civil code or any law pertaining to marriage would explicitly define adultery as sexual contact both between a married man and a woman other than his wife, and between a married woman and a man other than her husband. To avoid any ambiguity about who the "other woman" might be, she specifically named concubines, maidservants, geisha, and prostitutes. She also

36 Yuasa, "Rinri no motoi no yōshi."

requested that the non-offending party be able to file a complaint against their spouse in court, to seek financial compensation not to exceed half of the other's property, and to list adultery as a justification for divorce.[37]

This text and the formal petition itself attracted notable attention in May and June of 1889. Only the year before, the first draft of a revised Civil Code had been completed, with a second draft closely following on its heels. That second draft was the subject of heated discussion beginning in 1889, and newspaper coverage ensured that the public was well informed.[38] The WCTU both took advantage of that press and added to it. Most likely Yuasa published, if not the exact text of the WCTU's monogamy petition, then at least a summary similar to that described above in the society's own periodical, *Tōkyō fujin kyōfū zasshi* (Tokyo woman's moral reform magazine).[39]

First issued in April 1888, *Tōkyō fujin kyōfū zasshi* enjoyed a circulation through December of that same year of just over 4,500 copies, with roughly a third of those distributed outside of Tokyo. Such sales placed the magazine in the middle of the pack for periodicals written by and for women, and established it as an important vehicle for spreading the society's message.[40]

The decision to advertise the petition in *Jogaku zasshi* was a sound strategy. Since the beginnings of WCTU activism in Japan, its founder, Iwamoto Yoshiharu, had used its pages to call for improvement in women's rights and status and to urge women to become publicly engaged themselves. His agenda had attracted a readership of many who shared some, if not all, of the WCTU's goals. The fact that *Jogaku zasshi* also had a circulation of 13,000 copies in 1888 ensured a wider audience for Yuasa's article.[41] Regional newspapers such as

37 Ibid.

38 Noriyo Hayakawa, "Sexuality and the State: The Early Meiji Debate on Concubinage and Prostitution," in *Feminism and the State in Modern Japan*, ed. Vera Mackie, Paper of the Japanese Studies Centre, no. 22 (Melbourne: Japanese Studies Centre, Monash University, 1995), 33; Nihon Kirisutokyō Fujin Kyōfūkai, ed., *Nihon Kirisutokyō Fujin Kyōfūkai hyakunenshi*, 65.

39 The most probable issue for advertising the WCTU's first monogamy petition was that of May 1889, which is missing from a multivolume collection of extant copies published by Fuji Shuppan in 1985 and 1986.

40 Kindai Josei Bunkashi Kenkyūkai 近代女性文化史研究会, ed., *Fujin zasshi no yoake* 婦人雑誌の夜明け [The Dawn of Women's Magazines] (Tokyo: Ōzorasha, 1989), 16.

41 The fact that the WCTU published just nine issues in 1888 compared to approximately three issues each month for all twelve months in 1888 for *Jogaku zasshi* deserves highlighting. Ibid. For more on Iwamoto's contributions to the early WCTU, see Lublin, *Reforming Japan*, 27–34. For more on Iwamoto and *Jogaku zasshi*, see Nobeji Kiyoe 野辺地清江, *Josei kaihō shisō no genryū: Iwamoto Yoshiharu to "Jogaku zasshi"* 女性解放思想の源流：巌本善治と"女学雑誌" [*The Origins of Thinking about Women's Liberation: Iwamoto Yoshiharu and* Jogaku zasshi] (Tokyo: Azekura Shobō, 1984).

Osaka's *Shinonome shimbun* (Newspaper of the dawn) likewise spread the word by reprinting her text verbatim or in slightly revised form and by issuing calls for supporters. The WCTU's example prompted others from Kobe to Sapporo to write and submit separate appeals through local governments, while some eight hundred men and women provided their names to the society's own formal petition, including a who's who list of the most prominent figures in the Christian community.[42]

Nonetheless, this first effort by the WCTU ultimately failed to convince the government to privilege monogamy as the norm for marriage. Far from being deterred by this outcome, the society's members remained firm in their belief that polygamy harmed the family and the nation, and that its eradication was essential for Japan's development, not to mention the elevation of women's status. In the following years, articles espousing fidelity within marriage occasionally appeared in the pages of the WCTU's periodical, renamed *Fujin kyōfū zasshi* (Woman's moral reform magazine) in 1893 and then *Fujin shimpō* (Woman's herald) in 1895.[43] Society-sponsored lecturers took up the call, and members even used the occasion of the Crown Prince's engagement in 1900 as an opportunity to advocate for monogamy. For example, the opening article in that year's February issue acclaimed the wording of the engagement announcement and inferred that the inclusion of "promise" meant that the Crown Prince had made an oath to be faithful to his future wife. The lead article three months thereafter went further in asserting that the imperial marriage would set an example of a monogamous union and, in so doing, uplift the nation's morals.[44]

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42 Suzuki Yūko 鈴木裕子, ed., *Nihon josei undō shiryō shūsei* 日本女性運動資料集成 [*A Collection of Materials on the Japanese Women's Movement*], vol. 1 (Shisō, seiji) (Tokyo: Fuji Shuppan, 1996), 26; *Jogaku zasshi* no. 167 (June 22, 1889): inside front cover; ibid. no. 168 (June 29, 1889): 26; ibid. no. 171 (July 20, 1889): 26.

43 Articles include: "Kyōfū no jigyō ni nimen ari 矯風の事業に二面あり" [There Are Two Facets to Moral Reform], *Tōkyō fujin kyōfū zasshi* no. 38 (20 June 1891): 2–4; Miura Yasuichirō 三浦泰一郎, "Ippuippu no shinri 一夫一婦の眞理 [The Truth about Monogamy]," *Fujin shimpō* no. 13 (1 March 1896): 1–4. Among the lectures was a public meeting held at a youth hall in Tokyo's Kanda ward in March 1896. *Fujin shimpō* no. 23 (December 15, 1896): 29.

44 "Tōgū gokekkon no seiyaku 東宮御結婚の成約 [The Promise of the Crown Prince's Marriage]," *Fujin shimpō* no. 34 (February 25, 1900): 1; "Gokeiji to ippuippuron 御慶事と一夫一婦論 [The Imperial Wedding and the Argument for Monogamy]," ibid. no. 37 (May 25, 1900): 1. I discuss this praise as part of the WCTU's repeated appropriation of events in the lives of Imperial Household members as opportunities to advance its reform agenda in Lublin, *Reforming Japan*, 148–155.

While these activities manifested the WCTU's belief in the importance of converting public opinion, members remained convinced that a legislative solution was absolutely essential in order to achieve a monogamous Japan. They thus persisted in petitioning annually for revision of the civil and criminal codes both before and after new versions went into effect in 1898 and 1907 respectively.[45] The drive for supporters in 1891 garnered approximately seven hundred signatures for the petition submitted to the newly opened Imperial Diet, while the names on the appeal in 1895 were closer to eight hundred and totaled 820 in 1905.[46] An editorial published in *Tōkyō fujin kyōfū zasshi* in connection with the 1891 petition offered up a prayer for its success and issued a vow to continue the fight even if it took ten, twenty, or one hundred years. This article also unequivocally denounced polygamy as a significant cause of misfortune because the custom "gave Japan a bad name around the world and greatly impeded social progress."[47]

The lead article in the March 1897 issue of the WCTU's periodical emphasized that the society should carry on petitioning for explicit proscription of polygamy. According to its author, petitions submitted in previous years had barely received a glance from those legislators in charge of deciding whether appeals should be taken up by the entire Lower House. That the most recent one had been duly considered was a positive development, and that it had been voted down by a difference of just one ballot was indeed worthy of some rejoicing. Yet, the fact that a single vote had prevented its advance to the floor of the House of Representatives also revealed how much work the WCTU still had to do to "elevate public morals." The author urged the society's local branches to redouble their efforts to draw attention to the need for revision of the civil and criminal codes, stressing that their ability to lead successful petition campaigns would tip the scale. The same author also reasoned that the

45 The 1898 Civil Code permitted fathers to legally recognize offspring with any woman, not just the registered wife. Moreover, to quote Sheldon Garon, it "fell short of strictly protecting the wife's marital position," because it maintained the old double standard regarding adultery. This in effect provided a legal loophole for the continuation of concubinage. Sheldon Garon, *Molding Japanese Minds: The State in Everyday Life* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), 99. See also Anderson, "Critiquing Concubinage," 318; Ludwig Lönholm, trans., *The Civil Code of Japan* (Tokyo: Kokubunsha, 1898); Wilhelm Röhl, ed., *History of Law in Japan since 1868* (Leiden: Brill, 2005).

46 *Tōkyō fujin kyōfū zasshi* no. 44 (December 19, 1891): 6; *Fujin shimpō* no. 3 (April 28, 1895): 32; "Ippuippu no seigan 一夫一婦の請願 [The Monogamy Petition]," ibid. no. 106 (February 25, 1906): 1.

47 "Teikoku gikai ni oite ippuippu no kenpaku no tsūka sen koto o inoru 帝國議会に於いて一夫一婦の建白の通過せんことを祈る [We Pray that Our Monogamy Petition Will Pass through the Imperial Diet]," *Tōkyō fujin kyōfū zasshi* no. 44 (December 19, 1891): 2–3, quoted from 3.

WCTU needed to make better use of its periodical as a forum for promoting monogamy.[48]

In 1888, when the society began issuing *Tōkyō fujin kyōfū zasshi*, government regulations stipulated that women could only publish periodicals dealing with learning and the arts. Members circumvented this proscription by listing as the publisher and editor the names of male supporters and paying the necessary fee for addressing current social and political topics, all the while maintaining total control of the content. Following the establishment of a national WCTU in 1893, the society decided to stop the charade and to list members as the publisher and editor, in large part to forego the financial burden of paying the guarantee money. As one consequence of the related change in subject matter in 1893, the magazine lost much of its value as a vehicle for promoting the WCTU's reform agenda. In fact, an awareness of that fact contributed to the decidedly political tone and content of the March 1897 editorial discussed previously.[49] Government officials read that same article as taking up contemporary issues. Considering the article to to be a violation of regulations about permissible content, the government ordered the WCTU to halt publication one month after the article appeared.[50]

In May 1897, the WCTU launched a revised periodical, still under the name *Fujin shimpō*, but in accordance with the requirements for discussing social and political issues. The opening editorial that month explained that decision, saying that the prohibition on women publishing and editing print media dealing with contemporary topics was in and of itself a very serious problem related to women's rights. To "advance those rights and to improve the conditions of the country," the society had to be able to use the printed word to pursue its reform agenda by arguing against polygamy, licensed prostitution, and drinking, among other customs damaging Japanese virtue.[51]

The lead article in the February 1906 issue epitomized the nature and agenda of the revised *Fujin shimpō* with its discussion of the WCTU's monogamy petition. Without any ado, it opened with a forceful critique of the existing civil and criminal codes, highlighting the double standard inherent in the clauses

48 "Sara ni kokoro o tsukusu beshi 更に心を尽すべし [We Must Exert Ourselves Even More]," *Fujin shimpō* no. 26 (March 15, 1897): 1–2, quoted from 1.

49 Changes in the content of the WCTU's periodical resulted in part from the fluctuating fortunes of the society and the identities of the editors, as discussed in Lublin, *Reforming Japan*, 41–42, 73–74, 90.

50 *Fujin shimpō* no. 371 (February 1, 1929): 38; Nihon Kirisutokyō Fujin Kyōfūkai, ed., *Nihon Kirisutokyō Fujin Kyōfūkai hyakunenshi*, 117–120.

51 "*Fujin shimpō* kaikan no ji 婦人新報改刊の辞 [A Word Regarding the Revised Publication of *Fujin shimpō*]," *Fujin shimpō* no. 1 (May 26, 1897): 1–2, quoted from 2.

that penalized a wife's adultery but not a husband's and granted a husband but not a wife a divorce on the grounds of infidelity. Its author further lambasted the "unbalanced rules" for subordinating women to men, treating them like playthings, and ignoring their existence. The author noted that the year before the WCTU's petition had in fact made it beyond the subcommittee level to the floor of the House of Representatives but had been vetoed by the latter. Given that the civil and criminal codes fundamentally infringed on women's position, she added, the fight for revision was ongoing, and all Japanese women had a duty to contribute.[52]

WCTU members continued to petition for a legislative privileging of monogamy until the immediate postwar period and the 1947 issuance of revised civil and criminal codes. They did so in part because they believed in the power of the state to dictate proper conduct in the home and hoped to harness that authority to their own cause. They also were convinced that Japanese families needed to become monogamous because, in their minds, marital fidelity represented enlightenment, equated to improved rights for women, and was essential for Japan to win the respect of the world. Moreover, as Yuasa Hatsuko's text from 1889 highlights, they aimed to do more than simply deter men from infidelity and to ensure that husbands paid a price if guilty of adultery. They sought to empower women with legal prerogatives and to provide themselves and their sisters with the economic means to escape an oppressive marriage. Their choice of petitions represented yet another strategic move in that their written appeals to first the Genrōin and then the Imperial Diet implied that they had a right to influence official policy and thus a legitimate claim to public and political engagement.

3 Conclusion

As Harald Fuess has highlighted in his study of divorce in early modern and modern Japan, the official sanction of concubinage and prostitution convinced many foreign visitors to the country in the last decades of the nineteenth century that sexual promiscuity by men was quite prevalent.[53] That perception was not entirely off base if strictly applied to licensed prostitution. As of 1897, 546 officially registered quarters were in operation and housed

52 "Ippuippu no seigan 一夫一婦の請願 [The Monogamy Petition]."

53 Harald Fuess, *Divorce in Japan: Family, Gender, and the State, 1600–2000* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2004), 54–55.

49,208 prostitutes in 10,172 brothels.[54] Those figures reflected significant growth from the 1870s for a variety of reasons. The ranks of the impoverished swelled in the face of heavy taxes and deflationary government policies, and family exigency, combined with the notion that a filial daughter should do any work to help her family, forced many a girl into the trade. The government also came to recognize that the licensed system was a potential source of significant revenue, and at the local and national levels officials actively encouraged the building of new quarters. While some of these districts went up on the outskirts of towns and cities, others were located near business centers, schools, residential neighborhoods, and train stations, in other words, in highly visible places and areas visited by foreigners. Osaka's Sonezaki was one such "conveniently" situated quarter, and, in 1910, together with other red light districts in Osaka, Kyoto, and Tokyo, it drew nearly ten million visitors.[55]

The very public nature of licensed prostitution lent credence to claims of rampant male sexual immorality, and foreign visitors during the Meiji period presumed that concubinage bore equal responsibility for such a disreputable state of affairs. Concubines were, however, far from numerous. As Fuess has stressed, the practice of having a "secondary" wife existed primarily among the elite of Japanese society and overwhelmingly in urban areas. He cited the following statistics from population records as proof: "In 1880, the ratio of concubines to male heads was 4:10 for the high nobility (*kazoku*), 4:1,000 for samurai (*shizoku*), and 5:10,000 for commoners (*heimin*)."[56] While a desire and need to maintain harmonious households played a role in these ratios, economics did much more to limit the practice of concubinage. Indeed, for the

54 Takai Susumu 高井進, ed., *Toyama-ken joseishi: Oni to onna wa hito ni mienu zo yoki, ka* 富山県女性史：鬼と女は人に見えぬぞよき、か [A history of Toyama women: Are demons and women invisible to others?] (Toyama: Katsura Shobō, 1988), 158.

55 Fujime Yuki 藤目ゆき, *Sei no rekishigaku: Kōshō seido, dataizai taisei kara baishun bōshihō, yūsei hogohō taisei e* 性の歴史学：公娼制度、堕胎罪体制から売春防止法、優生保護法体制へ [*A History of Sex: From a System of Licensed Prostitution and Illegal Abortions to the Prostitution Prevention and Eugenic Protection Laws*] (Tokyo: Fuji Shuppan, 1997), 92–98, 113; Sabine Frühstück, *Colonizing Sex: Sexology and Social Control in Modern Japan* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003), 7; Garon, *Molding Japanese Minds*, 91–95; *Japan Evangelist* 16, no. 9 (September 1909): 357; *Fujin shimpō* no. 148 (September 15, 1909): 5. In 1909, after a fire destroyed Sonezaki, the WCTU launched a campaign to ensure that it would be not rebuilt within Osaka proper. For a discussion of this campaign and its importance as a component of the organization's larger attack on prostitution, see Lublin, *Reforming Japan*, 101–125.

56 Fuess, *Divorce in Japan*, 55.

great majority of Meiji Japanese or commoners, the financial burden of keeping a concubine was just too onerous.

The reality of concubines' numbers aside, the perception that they were plentiful informed foreign and domestic views of Japan's level of civilization. American Protestant missionaries were among the first to label Japan backward and to blame that state on the low status of women. In their opinion, true enlightenment required not just education for women but also the elimination of such immoral systems as concubinage and licensed prostitution, which abused women's virtues and ensured their subjugation. Early Meiji progressive thinkers shared this position, and, as discussed earlier, the founders of the Meirokusha expended much ink in expounding on it. Although their words came up short of advocating for full equality for women, they collectively and Nakamura Masanao especially asserted that women had an important role to play in the project of building a strong, modern nation-state.

The members of the Japan Woman's Christian Temperance Union agreed that they had a role to play in Japanese nation-building and claimed the right to define what that role would be. Notably, their definition did not confine them to the home. Quite to the contrary, they actively engaged in the public sphere as founders of organizations, conveners of meetings, lecturers, editorialists, and writers, signers, and submitters of petitions. In so doing, they contested the state's attempts to exclude them from political engagement. They also challenged the government's unilateral claim to decide what the country needed to become an equal of the Western powers. The WCTU firmly believed that to become truly modern Japan had to unshackle itself from such traditional immoral practices as concubinage and other forms of male adultery. In espousing that conviction, members of the Japan WCTU not only made their voices heard but also asserted that their voices should be heard. In the process, they offered themselves up as a model for the modern Japanese woman.

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CHAPTER 6

Christianity and "True Education": Yasui Tetsu's Contribution to Women's Education in Imperial Japan

Garrett L. Washington

FIGURE 6.1 Yasui Tetsu ca. 1933
TOKYO WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY, *SŌRITSU JŪGO-NEN KAISŌROKU* 創立十五周年回想録 [REMINISCENCES ON THE FIFTEENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF THE TOKYO WOMAN'S CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY]. (TOKYO: TOKYO WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY, 1933)

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Standing in a plain kimono with her unembellished hairstyle, looking sternly ahead, educator Yasui Tetsu (1870–1945) projected an aura of seriousness, calm, and composure. According to Aoyama Nao, a former student, historian, and author of Yasui's biography, Yasui was much like the person portrayed in this image. This strict and quiet demeanor led many of the young women she taught over her five decades as an educator to characterize her as someone who did not like to talk very much.[1] Clearly some students found Yasui impressive and sought to emulate her. On Yasui's inauguration as president of Tokyo Woman's Christian University on June 7, 1925, for instance, one student reportedly said, "I hope to grow … as modest, serious, and religious as the new president."[2] For most of her students, however, Yasui was a well-respected but distant figure who they believed did not understand them.[3] While they admired and listened carefully to her as an educator, in their view she differed greatly from the modern Japanese women they hoped to become.

As was the case with her students, scholarship on Yasui has been more interested in her educational contributions than her stance on women's issues, typically drawing a definitive line that separates the two. In the history of Japanese women's education, Yasui Tetsu today occupies a prominent place as a pioneer. After attending the best institutions open to women in Meiji Japan, she became one of the very few Japanese women who studied abroad in the West before 1900. She then returned to a distinguished career teaching at top women's colleges in Tokyo before becoming Japan's first female university president in 1925. Along the way, her prolific writings on the education and moral development of young women confirmed her status as a leading expert on these topics.

While Yasui's influence on women's education is well established, her role in the women's movement in Japan is much less so. Yasui was an educator to hundreds of Japan's brightest young women and an editor and an author who reached thousands more. Nevertheless, her position on the woman question and the wider repercussions of that position remain unexplored. This continues to be the case despite the fact that an article by Yasui is included in the 1998 National Diet Library's *Taisho-Era Woman Question Reference Collection*

1 Aoyama Nao 青山なを, *Yasui Tetsu to Tokyo Joshi Daigaku* 安井哲と東京女子大学 [Yasui Tetsu and Tokyo Woman's Christian University] (Tokyo: Keio Tsūshin, 1982), 9. Also see the earlier version of this biography. Aoyama Nao 青山なを, *Yasui Tetsu den* 安井哲伝 [Biography of Yasui Tetsu] (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1949).

2 Publicity Committee of the Japan Mission of the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society and the Woman's American Baptist Foreign Mission, *Facing 1926: Being The Japan Baptist Annual for 1924 and 1925* (Tokyo: Japan Mission Office, 1925), 43.

3 Aoyama, *Yasui Tetsu to Tokyo Joshi Daigaku*, 9.

(Taishō-ki fujin mondai bunken shūsei).[4] In fact, in a 1960 article about her teacher, former student Takamizawa Junko hailed Yasui as an educator who "put the Women's Liberation Movement into practice."[5] Yet, scholars have focused more on outspoken or controversial feminists who struggled overtly to improve the legal situation of Japanese women, and much less on Yasui, who did not. She continued to focus, too narrowly according to some, on morals and education even as the number of pressing problems related to women's civil rights in Japan multiplied. Regarding her publications, literature scholar Otsuka Noyuri has argued that Yasui was disengaged from the current events of the times.[6] This may in part explain why scholars have assigned Yasui to a different narrative of the development of the woman question in Japan than well-known author-activists of the early twentieth century such as Hiratsuka Raichō, Itō Noe, and Yamakawa Kikue. Even compared to less confrontational activists, such as fellow Christian and social reform advocate Sasaki Toyoju of the Japan Woman's Christian Temperance Union, Yasui's approach seemed conservative.

Yet today historians realize that the women's movement in Japan was not confined to revolutionary women. Sheldon Garon asserts correctly that the history of women in imperial Japan has for many years focused primarily on suffrage in particular and opposition to state power and ideology in general.[7] Although, in her groundbreaking 1983 book on the origins of Japanese feminism, Sharon Sievers consciously chose not to write about "the great [women] educators of Meiji and Taishō," they are an important part of the story as well.[8] Aware of this, a small body of scholarship has sought over the past three decades to accurately situate comparatively uncontroversial leaders in women's education within the Japanese women's movement. B. Winston Kahn, Elise Tipton, Sally Hastings, Barbara Rose, Linda Johnson, and Tomiko Okuda

4 Kokuritsu Kokkai Toshokan 国立国会図書館 ed., *Taishō-ki fujin mondai bunken shūsei* 大正期婦人 問題文献集成 [Taishō-era Reference Collection on the Woman Question] (Tokyo: Nihon Tosho Senta-, 1998).

5 Takamizawa Junko 高見沢潤子, "Yasui Tetsu (1870–1945)," in *Gojin no senseitachi* 五人の先生たち [Five Teachers], ed. Nihon Kirisutokyōdan (Tokyo: Nihon Kirisutokyōdan Shuppanbu, 1960), 61.

6 Ōtsuka Noyuri 大塚 野百合, "Yasui tetsu to Joshi Kōtō Kyōiku no Kaitakusha," in *Purotesutanto Jinbutsushi—Kindai Nihon no Bunka Keisei* プロテスタント人物史ー近代日本の文化形成 [History of Protestant Figures: The Formation of Modern Japanese culture], ed. Kirisutokyō Bunka Gakkai (Tokyo: Yorudansha, 1990), 412.

7 Sheldon Garon, "Women's Groups and the State," *Journal of Japanese Studies* 19, no. 1 (Winter 1993): 6.

8 Sharon Sievers, *Flowers in Salt: The Beginnings of Feminist Consciousness in Modern Japan.* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1983), 8.

have demonstrated that women educators such as Hani Motoko, Hatoyama Haruko, and Tsuda Umeko did indeed make substantial contributions to the movement for Japanese women's rights.[9]

Like these women, whom Sievers mentioned by name, Yasui Tetsu was an influential proponent and provider of women's education. She dedicated herself to elevating the situation of the young women with whom she was in contact. Unlike those other educators, however, she has largely escaped the notice of the handful of scholars interested in the relationship between women's education and the Japanese women's movement. This chapter aims to change that by using autobiographical articles, letters, church publications, school periodicals, and other sources to situate Yasui within conversations about modern Japanese womanhood. In doing so, it builds on the thorough and painstakingly detailed biographical scholarship of Aoyama Nao to more deeply analyze and more broadly historicize Yasui's perspective on women's issues and the impacts of that perspective in imperial Japan.

Relatively old-fashioned, Christian, and in no way a provocateur, Yasui Tetsu did make an important contribution to the Japanese women's movement. In her speeches, articles, conversations, classes, and administrative decisions, she demonstrated her commitment to the advancement of Japanese women. She sought to offer young Japanese women guidance as they navigated the unprecedented changes for their gender that accompanied their nation's efforts to modernize. Yasui encouraged her female listeners and readers to obtain broad knowledge and mobilize it to fulfill their modern, gendered roles as wives and mothers as well as citizens but also as individuals. At the same time, she worked to awaken young Japanese women to their new modern rights and responsibilities.

As she addressed the woman question, Yasui advocated a modern Japanese womanhood that was firmly based on Christian morality. Christianity played a defining role in her personal development amid the changes that were so rapidly reshaping Japan into a modern nation during the late nineteenth century.

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9 B. Winston Kahn, "Hani Motoko and the Education of Japanese Women," *The Historian* 59, no. 2 (Dec. 1997): 391–401; Elise Tipton, "How to Manage a Household: Creating Middle Class Housewives in Modern Japan," *Japanese Studies* 29, no. 1 (April 2009): 95–110; Sally Hastings "Hatoyama Haruko: Ambitious Woman," in *The Human Tradition in Modern Japan*, ed. Anne Walthall (Wilmington, Del: Scholarly Resources, 2002), 81–98; Barbara Rose, *Tsuda Umeko and Women's Education in Japan* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992); Linda Johnson, "Tsuda Umeko and a Transnational Network Supporting Women's Higher Education in Japan during the Victorian Era," *American Educational History Journal* 37, nos. 1–2 (2010): 473–491; Linda Johnson "Evangelists for Women's Education: The Collaboration of Tsuda Umeko and Alice M. Bacon," *Asian Cultural Studies* 38 (2012): 1–16; Okuda Tomiko 奥田富子, *Tsuda Umeko* 津田梅子 (Tokyo: Nihon Bungakukan, 2013).

Experiences with Japanese and Western Christians and a deep Christian faith influenced Yasui's personal responses to the Woman Question. Then as an educator and author, she mobilized this perspective, rooted so strongly in Protestant morality, as she reached out to young women through her classes, through other media at the women's university that she administered, and in her publications. Regardless of their feelings towards Yasui, her students consistently indicated that she left an indelible impact on them not only as students, but also as young women.

1 Yasui's Modern Education and Christianity

Although she was born in 1870, just two years after the new modern government took power and established Tokyo as its new capital, Yasui Tetsu's childhood and early adolescence were largely defined by tradition. She was born to the weapons instructor for the former daimyo of Koga domain, Viscount Doi Toshitomo (1851–1929). Yasui grew up amid plum and persimmon trees on the spacious Doi grounds in the Akebonomachi neighborhood of Tokyo's Hongō ward.[10] Largely raised by her grandparents who were devout Buddhists, Yasui developed a strong religious awareness from a young age. From frequent temple visits to sutra chanting to talks with the priest about karma, traditional Japanese religion was an integral part of her childhood.[11] Even as she embraced the new opportunities provided by the Meiji government's program for modernization, Yasui remained deeply attached to these experiences and her traditional beliefs.

Yasui belonged to the first generation of Japanese women to enter the doors of modern public education. Confident that a modern nation required a modern education system, the new Ministry of Education enacted sweeping changes relating to women's learning. After its Fundamental Code of Education in 1872 mandated compulsory elementary education for both sexes, the ministry and prefectural offices created institutions for educating young women such as Tokyo Women's School (1872–1877), Tokyo Women's Normal School (1875), and Tokyo Women's Higher School (1882).[12] Furthermore, the ministry proposed aid to prefectural governments that followed its model in establishing

10 Yasui Tetsu 安井哲, "Waga shōjo no hi わが少女の日 [The Days of My Youth]," *Shōjo no tomo* 35, no. 8 (August 1942): 26–44.

11 Aoyama, *Yasui Tetsu to Tokyo Joshi Daigaku*, 20.

12 For an overview, see Mara Patessio, "Women Getting a 'University' Education in Meiji Japan: Discourses, Realities, and Individual lives," *Japan Forum* 25, no. 4 (April 2013): 556–581.

local schools for women in 1877.[13] After completing primary school at the nearby elementary school, Yasui attended Tokyo Women's Normal School and Tokyo Women's Higher Normal School, graduating in 1890.[14] She studied many subjects, but she was particularly captivated by Takamine Hideo's courses in Psychology and English.[15]

The more Yasui succeeded and progressed in her studies, the further she drifted from the traditional institutions and values of her childhood. Yasui's education, like the majority of public and private education in Meiji Japan, took place in a highly Westernized setting. The nascent education system established by Education Minister Mori Arinori (1847–1889) and vice minister Tanaka Fujimarō (1845–1909) blended American and French models in the late 1870s. Their projects relied heavily on their own experience in the West and on American education advisors in Japan such as David Murray (1830–1905) and Marion McCarrell Scott (1843–1922).[16] By 1890, this collaboration had yielded public primary and secondary schools, a national university, and normal schools like the one Yasui was attending. Her preferred subject psychology was itself a new import to Japan.[17] Like the Japanese scholar who introduced psychology to Japan, Yasui's teacher Takamine had also studied abroad in the West after his selection by Vice Minister Tanaka to study teacher education in the United States in 1876.[18] Upon his return from Oswego College in New York, he introduced psychology into the curriculum at Tokyo Women's Higher Normal School.[19] Outside the classroom, Yasui would also have taken part in a variety of activities that exposed her to Western culture as well. During the 1880s, the school hosted Western-style dances and students performed the Edo-era play *Chūshingura* in English, among other events.[20]

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13 *Annual Reports of the Department of the Interior—Report of the Commissioner of Education, Vol. 2* (Washington, DC: Government Printing, 1904), 1258.

14 Aoyama Nao, *Yasui Tetsu to Tokyo Joshi Daigaku*, 28.

15 Ibid., 26.

16 Benjamin Duke, *The History of Modern Japanese Education, 1872–1890* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2009), ch. 5.

17 On Nishi Amane and the founding of psychology in Japan, see Y. Nishikawa, "An Overview of the History of Psychology in Japan and the Background to the Development of the Japanese Psychological Association," *Japanese Psychological Research* 47, no. 2 (2005): 63–72.

18 Duke, *The History of Modern Japanese Education*, 182. Also see Tokiomi Kaigo, "The American Influence on Education in Japan" *The Journal of Educational Sociology* 26, no. 1 (Sept. 1952): 10–11.

19 M. Takasuna, "The Origins of Scientific Psychology in Japan," *Physis: rivista internazionale di storia della scienza* 43, no. 1–2 (2006): 319–31.

20 Tokyo Joshi Kōtō Shihan Gakkō 東京女子高等師範学校, ed. *Tokyo Joshi Kōtō Shihan Gakkō 60-nen shi* 東京女子高等師範学校六十年史 [The 60-year History of Tokyo Women's Higher Normal School] (Tokyo: Tokyo Joshi Kōtō Shihan Gakkō, 1934), 15.

Although not explicitly part of the curriculum, the recently legalized Western religion Christianity was discernibly present on the campus of Yasui's school as well. Nakamura Masanao (1832–1891), founding principal of Tokyo Women's Normal School, was a well-known scholar, author, educator, and Christian. After his conversion while studying in England in the 1860s, the prominent educator, philosopher, and translator frequently argued that Christianity was the foundation for the political and economic success of Western nations.[21] This view and various Christian ideals clearly found their way to students. Yasui recalls reading his translation of social thinker Samuel Smiles's 1871 work *Character.*[22] The book, beginning with a quote from Protestant Reformation leader Martin Luther, is filled with Protestant-infused morality about the formation of good character.[23] Many among the faculty, Japanese and foreign, were also Christians.[24]

As interested as Yasui was in Western subjects and culture, she was entirely uninterested in Christianity. Thinking back on her school years, she wrote that "I originally hated Christianity."[25] She felt that the foreign religion was ill-suited to Japanese education and the purposes of the national government. This bias, understandable, given the important place of Buddhism and the Confucianist Tokugawa social order in Yasui's upbringing, put Yasui in a difficult position as she developed friendships with other young women. Yasui became a close friend of Noguchi Yuka (1866–1950) soon after her enrollment at Tokyo Women's Normal School in fall 1885.[26] In 1888, while still a student there, Noguchi became a Christian.[27] Despite her animosity towards Noguchi's religion of choice, Yasui remained a dear friend of Noguchi and wrote letters to her throughout her life. Even as Yasui left the normal school, she encountered the same problem again. She graduated from and taught at the Tokyo

21 A. Hamish Ion, *American Missionaries, Christian Oyatoi, and Japan, 1859–73* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2009), 90.

22 Yasui Tetsu 安井哲子, "Kyōdan no Hansei 教壇の半生 [Half a Life of Teaching]," *Fujin kōron* 26, no. 11 (Nov. 1941): 84.

23 Samuel Smiles, *Character* (London: John Murray, 1871).

24 On Tokyo Women's Normal School teacher and Christian Andō Ryutarō (1843–1880), see Ion, *American Missionaries*, 267 and 299.

25 Yasui Tetsuko 安井哲子, "Waga shinkō no keireki 吾が信仰の経歴 [The Personal History of My Faith]," *Shinjin* 18, no. 6 (June 1917): 82.

26 Aoyama, *Yasui Tetsu to Tokyo Joshi Daigaku*, 27.

27 On Noguchi's conversion, see Kaide Sumiko 貝出寿美子, *Noguchi Yuka no shōgai* 野口幽香の生涯 [The Life of Noguchi Yuka] (Tokyo: Kirisutokyō shinbunsha, 1974). On Noguchi's life, also see Kathleen S. Uno, *Passages to Modernity: Motherhood, Childhood, and Social Reform in Early Twentieth Century Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1999).

Women's Normal School for a few years before accepting a teaching position at the Prefectural Normal School (Jinjō shihan gakkō) in Iwate Prefecture. There, Yasui befriended Hani Motoko, who, like Noguchi, was a Christian. Hani, yet another woman of the former samurai class, taught at the First Girls Higher school in Morioka.[28] Thinking back to this time, Yasui recalled, "In those days I for some reason thought that Christianity posed a danger to our country, and when my friends believed in it … it was painful for me."[29] She never thought that she would come to believe in this religion.[30]

This remained Yasui's attitude when she received the opportunity of a lifetime to travel to the West. After sending five women to study abroad in the U.S. as part of the Iwakura Embassy in 1871, Japan's new government periodically sponsored Japanese women to follow in their footsteps.[31] The rarity of such opportunities, however, underscores both the inherent gender discrimination that Japanese women faced and the exceptional promise of those women selected. Of the 600 individuals sent abroad by the government between 1889 and 1912, only eight were women.[32] Yasui became one of them when she received a scholarship from the Ministry of Education to attend England's prestigious Cambridge University.[33] As was the case for most of Japan's first women to study abroad, Christianity played an integral role in Yasui's experience.

From the first days of the two-month journey Yasui felt bombarded by Christian culture. "From 10:45 every Sunday there is service. In a first-class cabin, there is a lecture by one of the ship's passengers, a bishop. Since I

28 Aoyama, *Yasui Tetsu to Tokyo Joshi Daigaku*, 32; also see Shibanuma Akiko 柴沼晶子, "Eikoku ryūgaku de etamono: Yasui Tetsu to Ōe Sumi no baai wo 英国留学で得たもの：安井てつと大江スミの場合を [The Formation of Educational Thought for Women by Studying Abroad in England: A Comparative Study of Tetsu Yasui and Sumi Oe]," *Keiwa Gakuin Daigaku kenkyū kiyō* 8 (Feb. 1999), 245.

29 Yasui Tetsu 安井哲, "Ogikubo yawa 荻窪夜話 [Ogikubo Night Chat]," *Tokyo Joshi Daigaku dōsōkai geppō* nos. 2–7 (Feb.–July 1937): 1.

30 Yasui, "Waga shinkō no keireki," 82.

31 On the Iwakura Embassy, see Kunitake Kume, comp., Chushichi Tsuzuki and R. Jules Young eds., *Japan Rising: The Iwakura Embassy to the USA and Europe, 1871–1873* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); On the first Japanese women to study abroad, including the youngest, Tsuda Umeko, see Rose, *Tsuda Umeko and Women's Education in Japan* and Sally A. Hastings, "Japanese Women as American College Students," in *Modern Girls on the Go: Gender, Mobility, and Labor in Japan*, eds. Alisa Freedman, Laura Miller, and Christine Yano (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013), 193–208.

32 Robin Kietlinski, *Japanese Women and Sport: Beyond Baseball and Sumo* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013), 38.

33 Yasui, "Ogikubo yawa," 2.

boarded this ship, I am usually confined to my bed by sickness on Sundays."[34] Even if Yasui's Sunday seasickness conveniently spared her from attending service for several weeks, she frequently encountered Christianity in other forms on the ship. For instance, through an introduction by friend and educator Tsuda Umeko (1864–1929), Yasui became acquainted with an English missionary who was returning home on the ship after a four-year sojourn in Japan.[35] The negative, condescending comments that this missionary repeatedly made about the shortcomings of the Japanese wounded Yasui's pride in her homeland and greatly deepened her distrust of missionaries and antipathy towards Christianity.[36]

By the time Yasui returned to Japan three years later in 1900, however, she was prepared to convert to Christianity. This about-face was not due to evangelistic zeal or to shame stemming from the cultural condescension that Yasui associated with her disastrous encounter with missionaries.[37] In fact, she found that at Cambridge no one bothered to ask her about her religious affiliation.[38] Instead, the change was due to conclusions that Yasui herself came to draw about the religion and, in her view, its more admirable adherents. Attending church each Sunday in Rochester with her widowed host and her daughter, the international student soon became impressed with the church's blind pastor, a man of high moral character in Yasui's estimation. The Christians she met "exhibited perfect behavior in front of her throughout the day," again demonstrating the relationship between moral character and the religion.[39] She also spoke at length with her teacher, Hughes Hall principal Elizabeth Hughes (1851–1925), and Ms. Hughes brother, Methodist pastor Hugh Brice Hughes.[40] She also conversed with Japanese Christians in England, and despite having "lost all faith in missionaries" Yasui warmed to Christianity through observation and informal discussions.[41] Based on these experiences and intensive studying on her own, Yasui came to believe that Christianity could provide its adherents with a strong moral foundation, and that it "exerted an influence on education."[42] She came to the conclusion that Christianity and education were

34 Yasui Tetsu 安井哲, *Nikki* 日記 [*Diary*] (Feb. 28, 1897), transcribed in Aoyama, *Yasui Tetsu to Tokyo Joshi Daigaku*, 38.

35 Ibid.

36 Ibid.

37 See Yasui Tetsu 安井哲, "Watashi no kyō ni Itaru made 私の今日に至るまで [My Path to Today]" *Kyōiku* 3, no. 10 (Jan. 1935): 208–225.

38 Aoyama, *Yasui Tetsu to Tokyo Joshi Daigaku*, 64.

39 Yasui, "Waga shinkō no keireki," 83.

40 Ibid.

41 Aoyama, *Yasui Tetsu to Tokyo Joshi Daigaku*, 64.

42 Ibid.

mutually reinforcing: "Religion maintained peace in the hearts of the weak and was a good instrument for inspiring hope … in a world full of agony."[43] Though it could not match education in terms of its ability to unify society, it could influence and perfect that education.

Upon her return to Japan, she accompanied her close friend Noguchi Yuka to Hongō Church, a few blocks from Tokyo Imperial University and soon became a member. Yasui wrote that she chose Hongō for a simple reason. "I thought that I'd like to join a church that had no connection with foreign missions," she explained, clearly recalling her negative experience with Western missionaries during her voyage to England.[44] Hongō, an independent Japanese church, represented precisely the type of institution that Yasui sought, and she was baptized there soon after her return to Japan in 1900.[45] Furthermore, the church's charismatic pastor Ebina Danjō (1856–1937) was renowned for sermons and writings that adapted Protestant Christianity to the Japanese historical and cultural context.[46] For Yasui, who sought to reconcile her traditional upbringing with her wealth of modern, highly Westernized knowledge and experiences, Ebina and Hongō were a good fit. Her conversations and soul searching about religion left her feeling that "the warrior's spiritual education" she had received was "unendurable."[47] In the end, Christianity proved to be better suited to Yasui's modern problems. Reminiscing about her time at the church in the Meiji and Taishō periods, she wrote that "Hongo Church made a deep spiritual impression on me, and it is an unforgettable … place."[48]

Hongō was also an extremely social place for Yasui, in part because hundreds of Japanese men and women in the educated elite flocked to that same church.[49] The thirty-year-old Yasui found herself in a church that was "full

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43 Yasui Tetsu 安井哲, "Noguchi Yuki ate no tegami 野口幽香宛の手紙 [Letter to Noguchi Yuka]" (July 13, 1898), transcribed in Aoyama, *Yasui Tetsu to Tokyo Joshi Daigaku*, 64.

44 Yasui Tetsu 安井哲, "Hongo Kyōkai to watashi 本郷教会と私 [Hongō Church and I]" in *Hongō kyōkai sōritsu gojū-nen shi* [The Fifty Year History of the Establishment of Hongō Chuch], ed. Nihon Kumiai Hongō Kirisutokyōkai (Tokyo: Nihon Kumiai Hongō Kirisutokyōkai, 1936), 155.

45 Aoyama, *Yasui Tetsu to Tokyo Joshi Daigaku*, 425.

46 See Garrett Washington, "Preaching Modern Japan: National Imaginaries and Protestant Sermons in Meiji and Taishō Tokyo," in *Encountering Modernity: Christianity in East Asia and Asian America*, eds. David Yoo and Albert Park (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2014), 197–223; and Iwai Shuma, "Japanese Christianity in the Meiji Era: An Analysis of Ebina Danjo's Perspective on Shintoistic Christianity," *Transformation* 25, no. 4 (October 2008): 195–204.

47 Yasui, "Ogikubo yawa," 2.

48 Yasui, "Hongō Kyōkai to watashi," 157.

49 On the youth attending Hongō see, Garrett Washington, "Pulpits as Lecterns: Discourses of Social Change inside Tokyo's Protestant Churches, 1890–1920," *Japanese Studies* 29, no. 3

of promising youth who later became well-known scholars and successful businessmen."[50] Among them were old friends from her days of studying in the capital, like former classmate Noguchi. Yasui also formed many new, strong friendships and collaborations. For instance, she worked with Ebina Miya (1862–1952), the wife of the church's pastor, to launch a church-published monthly periodical on women's issues. *Shinjokai* (New Women's World) became a defining experience for Yasui. In large part due to her work on this publication, Yasui developed camaraderie and "a life full of hope, gratitude, and vigor."[51] Yasui was a member and frequent speaker for the church's *fujinkai* (women's group) and a founding member of the church's *kangofukai* (Nurses' Women's Group).[52] Like the students of Christian medical schools in China and Korea discussed by Connie Shemo, Heejeong Sohn, and Haeseong Park in this volume, Yasui found in Christianity new means for reaching into the public sphere.

At church, Yasui combined regular, frequent social interaction and deep religious experiences. Using both, she developed a distinct Christian moral stance that informed her perspective on the woman question in modern Japan. Yasui remained a Christian and a member of Hongo throughout her life,[53] even while acting as principal of the Raijini Girls School in Bangkok, Thailand (1904–1907) and studying abroad again in Great Britain at Wales University (1907–1909). Back in Japan, Yasui served as a teacher at the Peeresses' School (*Gakushuin*) and Tsuda Umeko's English School (*Joshi eigaku juku*) from 1909 to 1910. Yasui then taught at Tokyo Women's Normal School (*Tokyo joshi kōtō shihan gakkō*) from 1910 to 1918, before helping to found and lead Tokyo Woman's Christian University. Regardless of her location or her position, Yasui carried and sought to implement a moral stance that resonated with her Protestant ideals. In addition, this morality shined through in the many publications that she authored between 1900 and 1945.

(December 2009): 381–399; and Matsuo Takayoshi 松尾尊兌, *Taishō demokurashii no kenkyū* 大正デモクラシーの研究 [A Study on Taishō Democracy] (Tokyo: Aoki Shoten, 1966), 170–176.

50 Yasui, "Hongo Kyōkai to watashi," 155.

51 Ibid.

52 See Yasui Tetsu 安井哲, "Fujinkai ni nozomu [Hopes for the Women's Group]," *Shinjokai* 5, no. 6 (June 1913): 2–5.

53 Aoyama, *Yasui Tetsu to Tokyo Joshi Daigaku*, 79.

2 Imagining Modern Japanese Womanhood

Soon after returning from her travels abroad in 1909, Yasui Tetsu dove into the world of journalism. In secular and Christian publications, she expressed her views on a range of issues that she considered to be of the utmost importance to the nation and its citizens. In her writings, Yasui drew on her experiences studying and teaching in Japan and abroad and her extensive knowledge of the latest Western theories in education, psychology, and practical philosophy. Whether addressing fellow church members and other Christians or larger general audiences, she urged her readers to cultivate a progressive, principled, moral stance and to act in accordance with it. Education, she argued repeatedly, was the critical pathway that could enable Japanese individuals to think and behave honorably.

Although relatively few of her more than one hundred publications explicitly advocate the religion, many of the ideals that she promoted are rooted in or especially compatible with Protestant Christianity. For Yasui, it was precisely "[B]ecause we are people who serve a loving God … and experience this inviolable righteousness and unfathomable love" that she and her Christian readers could "reconcile justice with compassion and act impartially"[54] Writing about Christian British students that she had observed closely at Cambridge, Yasui argued that "their … brave, kind character was the consequence of their piety."[55] This perspective, expressed in her articles in a Christian periodical, reappears in her secular writing as well. Her contribution to the guidebook published by the Greater Japan Household Management Study Group (Dai Nihon kasei gakkai) is a good case in point.[56] In a chapter intended to advise and inspire Japan's young women, Yasui addressed hygiene, exercise, obedience, and fine arts. When she discussed moral cultivation, however, her Christian humanitarianism was particularly evident as she implored her readers to strive "so that others are happy," to show "kindness to those in need," and to act with fairness and love in interactions with others.[57]

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54 Yasui Tetsu 安井哲, "Kōhei to dōjō 公平と同情 [Justice and Compassion]," *Shinjokai* 4, no. 12 (December 1912): 4.

55 Yasui Tetsu 安井哲, "Kami wo osoreyo 神を畏れよ [Fear God!]," *Shinjokai* 2, no. 3 (March 1910): 3.

56 On the Household Management movement, see Elise Tipton, "How to Manage a Household: Creating Middle Class Housewives in Modern Japan," *Japanese Studies* 29, no. 1 (April 2009): 95–110.

57 Yasui Tetsu 安井哲, "Musume no kan 娘の巻 [A Volume for Daughters]," in *Fujin Bunko: Katei no Shiori* 婦人文庫：家庭の栞 [*Women's Library: Household Guidebook*], ed. Uchida Yasuzō 内田安蔵 (Tokyo: Dai Nihon Kasei Gakkai, 1909), 86, 88, 98–100.

While this religiously informed perspective appears in Yasui's writing for secular publications, it is most pervasive in her Christian publications. Greatly outnumbering her pieces for secular outlets, Yasui's articles in Christian media constitute an ideal source for examining her views on the Woman Question. Yasui's largest publication project was the journal *Shinjokai* (New Woman's World), published by the members of Hongō Church. The journal was meant to be a tool to "encourage wholesome morals and manners,"[58] in response to the modern difficulties facing the world of women's education (*jogakkai*).[59] Like "yeast on flour," church pastor Ebina wrote, the addition of Western learning and cultural influence greatly "disturbed" young Japanese women already lacking a steady moral foundation. As church pastor Ebina Danjō, executive editor of the journal explained, this publication proposed to "harmonize the virtues of eastern and western women" and to evaluate and selectively apply modern Western progressive thought.[60]

Yasui acted as managing editor, a position technically beneath that of Ebina. From its founding, however, the journal largely reflected the priorities and prerogatives of Yasui. Readers and the scholars who have studied *Shinjokai* agree that the journal was "centered around one person."[61] Technically, this was most true between 1909 and 1917, when Yasui herself edited the journal. After she stepped down to assume her new responsibilities at Tokyo Woman's Christian University,[62] the journal continued under the leadership of Ebina Miya until the end of 1919.[63] Beyond her editorial role, however, Yasui was also the journal's most frequent contributing author, writing more than 130 pieces.[64] Despite her influential role in the development and tone of *Shinjokai*, dozens of Japanese Christian men and women also wrote articles that constituted most of the publication. While Hongō Church members and attendees were the most frequent authors, members and leaders of other churches in the

58 Ebina Danjō 海老名弾正, "Henshū dayori 編輯だより [From the Editor]," *Shinjin* 9, no. 12 (December 1908): 67.

59 Ebina Danjō 海老名弾正, "Hakkō no ji 発行の辞 [A Word on this Publication]" *Shinjokai* 1, no. 1 (April 1909): 2.

60 Ibid., 2.

61 Ōtsuka, 412; Sano Yasuto 佐野安仁, "*Shinjokai* ni okeru Yasui Tetsuko no shisō 新女界に於ける安井哲子の思想 [Yasui Tetsuko's Thought in *Shinjokai*]," in *Shinjin Shinjokai no Kenkyū* 「新人」「新女界」の研究 [A Study of *Shinjin* and *Shinjokai*], ed. Doshisha Daigaku Jinbunkagaku Kenkyūjo 同志社大学人文科学研究所 (Kyoto: Jinbun shoin, 1999), 369.

62 Aoyama, *Yasui to Tokyo Joshi Daigaku*, 143.

63 Aoki Tsugihiko 青木次彦, ed., *"Shinjokai" kaisetsu • mokuroku* 『新女界』解説・総目次 [New Woman's World: Commentary • Index] (Tokyo: Yūai Shobō, 1975), 7.

64 Sano, 368.

capital and beyond were well represented as well. The journal was, therefore, a collaborative endeavor. Like its authors, the readership of the journal was also varied. At the end of the journal's inaugural year, Yasui reported a steady readership of 2,000 people located throughout Japan, and in Taiwan, China, Hawaii, and continental America. Among them she noted, the vast majority were "rooted in rural churches, normal schools, and women's higher schools."[65]

It is clear from the quantity and content of her articles in *Shinjokai* that Yasui's quiet demeanor did not mean she had nothing to say. What Yasui did have to say was largely anchored to her appreciation for British Idealism (*risōshugi*), as educational philosophy scholar Sano Yasuto has noted. This stance stemmed directly from her courses with philosophy professor John Stuart Mackenzie (1860–1935) of the University of Wales in Cardiff, a scholar who like his mentor Thomas Hill Green (1836–1882) argued that humans were politically equal.[66] In Yasui's case, she interpreted the idealist theory of equality for all as an ancillary to the equality of all humankind as God's children. In *Shinjokai* she wrote that one who hopes to obtain true happiness must abandon a life focused on oneself and must devote all their energy to the happiness of those around them.[67] This was because, in her view, all people were part of a larger "ideal self" (*risōtekiware*).[68] By also rendering this concept as "divine self" (*shinsei no ware*), however, Yasui leaves little doubt that this concept is as much based in Christianity as it is in British Idealism.[69] The model for Yasui's self cultivation in the interest of the greater good, as Sano accurately discerns, is Jesus Christ.[70] So it is within this framework that the *Shinjokai* editor and author offered her opinions, insights, and advice to her readers.

While Yasui addressed a number of different topics in *Shinjokai*, she was particularly vocal on issues relating to Japanese women. Her articles drew a line between a past in which women were isolated and a modern present that demanded of Japanese women that they emerge from seclusion and make connections. She repeatedly told her readers that they were responsible for knowing themselves and developing moral strength so that they could lead lives with purpose—a purpose she defined as contributing to the happiness and benefit of the greater society. She instructed not only men but also

65 Aoki, "*Shinjokai" kaisetsu • mokuroku*," 2.

66 Sano, 369.

67 Yasui Tetsu 安井哲, "Shūi no hito ni shinsetsu nare 周囲の人に親切なれ [Being Nice to Those Around You]," *Shinjokai* 1, no. 7 (October 1909): 4.

68 Yasui Tetsu 安井哲, "Seinen jidai no tsuikai 青年時代の追懐 [Recollections of Youth]," *Shinjokai* 4, no. 10 (October 1912): 22.

69 Ibid.

70 Sano, 386.

women in October 1912 to "be aware that you have a responsibility to educate yourselves."[71] This aligned well with her frequent entreaties to women to, out of responsibility to the family and society, "by all means be self-aware."[72] Elsewhere she warned against "misguided self-awareness," instead arguing that young women should "comprehend their nature and calling."[73] While Yasui clearly promoted the greater purpose of improving the happiness and wellbeing of others, she also believed in women's ability to discern how they might best accomplish that. Such messages of self-determination, although a far cry from the more controversial feminist voices in imperial Japan, nevertheless encouraged women to exercise agency in their lives.

This, Yasui admitted in many of her essays, was not an easy or brief task. Instead, it required the constant "training" (*kunren*)[74] and preparation (*junbi*)[75] of the "mind and body" (*shinshin*)[76] and of the "spirit" (*seishin*).[77] Yasui elsewhere explained that women could work towards these goals through education. "[I]t is only through the power of education," Yasui argued, "that women can know themselves and, consequently, make clear their responsibilities."[78] Among those responsibilities, Yasui frequently promoted service to the nation in particular while invoking the ideal of republican motherhood.[79] For Yasui, as for advocates of women as citizens like Judith Sargent Murray (1751–1820) and others whom Linda Kerber has studied, education was an essential tool for women to realize their patriotic purposes.[80] "Educated women are particularly important for the education of children," Yasui wrote in 1915, and upon them

71 Yasui Tetsu, "Seinen jidai no tsuikai," 22.

72 For example, see Yasui Tetsu 安井哲, *Hisakatachō ni te* 久堅町にて [From Hisakatachō] (Tokyo: Keiseisha, 1915), 206.

73 Yasui Tetsu 安井哲, "Fukōnaru fujin 不幸なる婦人 [Unhappy Women]," *Shinjokai* 4, no. 11 (Nov. 1912): 2.

74 Yasui Tetsu 安井哲, "Makoto ni kyōiku aru fujin 真に教育ある婦人 [Truly Educated Women]," *Shinjokai* 1, no. 9 (Dec. 1909): 1.

75 Yasui Tetsu 安井哲, "Yūki 勇気 [Courage]," *Shinjokai* 3, no. 10 (October. 1911): 3. It is worth noting that in republishing this article in a collection of essays later, Yasui retitled the piece "Joshi no yūki 女子の勇気 [Women's Courage]." See Yasui, *Hisakatachō ni te*, 148.

76 Yasui, "Makoto ni kyōiku aru fujin," 1.

77 Yasui Tetsu 安井哲, "Kontei fukaki seikatsu 根底深き生活 [Life With a Deep Foundation]," *Shinjokai* 7, no. 2 (February 1916): 3.

78 Yasui, *Hisakatachō ni te*, 207.

79 Linda K. Kerber, *Women of the Republic: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980); Linda K. Kerber "The Republican Mother: Women and the Enlightenment-An American Perspective," *American Quarterly* 28, no. 2 (Summer 1976): 187–205.

80 Kerber, *Women of the Republic*, ch. 7.

largely depended the "fate of [our] precious children."[81] In the new Japan, where busy fathers left mothers to undertake the entire work of raising children, this very fate was at stake. "Isn't this the reason that women's education has become necessary?" she asked readers.[82] Without explicitly calling for the abolition of gender roles and discrimination, Yasui justified educating women. Such statements resonate with her message that "as human beings men and women, high and low, equally have the right to receive an education.[83] Ideally, this would be a "true education" because this was the kind of education that allowed people to "lead valuable lives."[84]

"True education," for Yasui, had a very specific meaning, in part defined by what it was not. In early twentieth-century Japan, a number of voices advocating education for women held relatively narrow views on the types of learning appropriate for members of that sex. The boundaries of their perspective corresponded perfectly with the pervasive modern ideal of *ryōsai kenbo* (good wife, wise mother). When Nakamura Masanao conjured this phrase out of early modern Confucian ideology and coined the term in 1875, he envisioned religious and moral education for the guardians and educators in the home.[85] By the 1880s, however, this phrase had come to represent something entirely different from the vision espoused by the principal and teacher at Yasui's alma mater.[86]

Adapting this concept to the modern needs of the Japanese state, many Japanese promoted practical education that would prepare women to manage households.[87] *Kajika* or *kasei* (domestic science) became the basis for a new curriculum, administered by educators and praised by both officials and journalists, for the training of professional housewives (*shufu*).[88] Just as in the United States, such curricula and facilities empowered women within their homes while reinforcing the barriers that confined them to those

81 Yasui Tetsu, "Makoto ni kyōiku aru fujin," 2.

82 Yasui Tetsu 安井哲, "Kankyo no kiken 閑居の危険 [The Danger of a Secluded Life]," *Shinjokai* 7, no. 5 (May 1916): 2.

83 Yasui, "Seinen jidai no tsuikai," 22.

84 Yasui, "Makoto ni kyōiku aru fujin," 2.

85 Sievers, *Flowers in Salt*, 23.

86 On the nature and development of the *ryōsai kenbo* ideal, see Shizuko Koyama, *Ryōsai Kenbo: The Educational Ideal of "Good Wife, Wise Mother" in Modern Japan*, trans. Stephen Filler (Leiden: Brill, 2013).

87 Susan Newell, "Women Primary School Teachers and the State in Interwar Japan" in *Society and the State in Interwar Japan*, ed. Elise K. Tipton (London: Routledge, 2002), 20.

88 See Jordan Sand, *House and Home in Modern Japan: Architecture, Domestic Space, and Bourgeois Culture, 1880–1930* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), ch. 2.

spaces.[89] Ōe Sumi (1875–1948), a fellow Tokyo Women's Normal School graduate and professor who studied domestic science in England and later established Kasei Gakuin (The Institute of Domestic Science) epitomized this trend.[90, 91] Agreeing with parts of Nakamura's perspective while disagreeing with the domestic science movement, Yasui argued that *kasei* was not "true education."[92]

Rather, women, including housewives, required "refined" education in Yasui's opinion.[93] This was because, she wrote, "a housewife must deal with various affairs other than cooking and sewing."[94] Nowhere was this more apparent than in raising children, a set of tasks that "definitely require other training than [learning] to cook and sew."[95]

> I have seen first hand the skill with which women with trained minds organize housework. [I]t is thought that female students who excel at math and science in comparison make less adequate wives than students who are only good at sewing and handwriting, but the truth is exactly the opposite. Intelligent women devise various solutions, handle complicated tasks, [devise] various ingenious solutions, handle complicated household tasks, and are even skilled with finances.[96]

The firsthand experience that Yasui mentioned in this and other articles came during her time in England where "[she] observed many families."[97] Contrary

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89 On the development of home economics, see Sarah Stage "Ellen Richards and the Social Significance of the Home Economics Movement" in *Rethinking Home Economics: Women and the History of a Profession*, ed. Sarah Stage and Virginia Bramble Vincenti (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997), 17–33.

90 Kashiwagi Hiroshi 柏木博, *Kaji no seijigaku* 家事の政治学 [*The Political Science of Housework*] (Tokyo, Seidosha, 1995), 94; also Hiroko Takeda "Governance Through the Family: The Political Function of the Domestic in Japan," in *Contested Governance in Japan: Sites and Issues*, ed. Glenn D. Hook (New York: Routledge, 2005), ch. 12.

91 Hiroshi Kashiwagi, "On Rationalization and the National Lifestyle: Japanese Design of the 1920s and 1930s," in *Being Modern in Japan: Culture and Society from the 1910s to the 1930s*, eds. Elise K. Tipton and John Clark (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2000), 66.

92 On the relationship between Ōe and Yasui, see Nakamura Nobuko "Ōe Sumi no sumai: Ōe Kaseigaku to Kaseigakuin no Sosetsu made 大江スミの住まい：大江家政学と家政学院の創設まで [Ōe Sumi's Residence: Until Ōe's Domestic Science and the Establishment of Kasei Gakuin]," *Journal of Tokyo Kasei Gakuin University* 31 (July 1991): 8.

93 Yasui, *Hisakatachō ni te*, 207.

94 Yasui Tetsu "Hitomane to fuichō 人真似と吹聴 [Imitation and Spreading Rumors]," *Shinjokai* 5, no. 11 (Nov. 1913).

95 Yasui, "Makoto ni kyoiku aru fujin," 2.

96 Aoyama, *Yasui Tetsu to Tokyo Joshi Daigaku*, 155.

97 Ibid.

to the domestic science emphasis, women in these families had studied Greek and Latin in institutions of higher education. Despite studying subjects with "little relationship to practical life," however, Yasui observed that these women devoted themselves fully to their duties as housewives.[98] These duties included educating children, choosing schools, and running the household, but this also often involved selfless sacrifice for "the husband, [and] for the child."[99] So, for Yasui, an education that could equip wives and mothers for both of these realms, the practical and the moral, was ideal.

The education that Yasui idealized in her various articles was one that taught women to think through their responsibilities rather than how to simply perform them. It prepared women to "correctly judge things … and to act on that judgment."[100] A truly educated woman, she wrote, "thinks what must be done and has the courage to do it."[101] This was all the more urgent in what Yasui viewed as a distinctly modern time, a time when life had become "extremely "complicated."[102] Unlike in the past, she explained, now there are instances where "the child of a farmer becomes a scholar, and the child of a merchant becomes a politician."[103] While Yasui hoped that well-educated Japanese women would make the best mothers and would equip their children to take advantage of these new opportunities, she did not advocate tailoring women's education to motherhood. Instead, she envisioned a curriculum that endowed women with an awareness of their multi-faceted, modern identities and the ability to handle their various responsibilities.

3 Yasui's Idealism and Women's Education

Yasui finally had the opportunity to fuse her religious ideals with education explicitly thanks to the founding of Tokyo Woman's Christian University in 1918. This new institution grew out of conversations held at the 1910 Edinburgh World Missionary conference. There, four of Japan's most prominent Protestant leaders spoke and participated in critical board meetings. Others, including Yasui, attended the conference as well and helped to describe for Western Protestant audiences a new Japan in which Christianity contributed significantly to

98 Yasui, "Makoto ni kyoiku aru fujin," 3.
99 Ibid.
100 Ibid.
101 Ibid.
102 Yasui, "Atarashiki haha," 4.
103 Ibid.

social and moral improvement.[104] While delegates from the United States and Great Britain noted frequently the strong desire among Japanese Protestants for more autonomy from missionary control, westerners and Japanese alike favored the continuation of missionary education. In a process reminiscent of earlier instances of religion-related geographical partitioning, the conference divided global Christian education responsibilities between US and British mission organizations, with Japan lying in the US sphere of influence. Despite the clear overtones of a religious imperialism that Japanese Protestants vehemently opposed, those Japanese present agreed to this division and worked with their American supporters to establish new Christian schools in Japan.

The combined planning and fundraising of Presbyterian, Canadian Methodist, Methodist Episcopalian, Baptist, Reformed, and Church of Christ missionary bodies eventually transformed the objectives discussed at the 1910 conference into reality.[105] The Japanese imprint on the enterprise, however, was also highly visible, leading Miss Lila Halsey, an American Presbyterian missionary, to recommend that Yasui become the new school's president. Building on these bases of cooperation, the Tokyo Woman's Christian University that opened its doors in 1918 was a thoroughly collaborative and international endeavor. At work alongside Yasui, who refused the presidency, and prominent Christian diplomat, author, and educator Nitobe Inazō (1862–1933) in the founding of Tokyo Woman's Christian University was American Presbyterian missionary A.K. Reischauer (1879–1971). Having arrived in Japan in 1905, Reischauer believed strongly in the ability of the Japanese and Americans to work together for the spiritual and intellectual advancement of Japan.[106] He imagined mission work "in Japan, for Japan, and with Japan."[107] In the dedicated Japanese Christian educator Yasui, and in progressive Quaker author and educator Nitobe, Reischauer found ideal partners for his mission objective.[108] As for Yasui, Reischauer's approach stood in stark contrast to her early

104 On the Japanese invited to the conference see, Brian Stanley, *The World Missionary Conference: Edinburgh 1910* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009), 111–118.

105 Yasui Tetsu 安井哲 "Tokyo Joshi Daigaku enkaku daiyō 東京女子大学沿革大要 [Outline of the Development of Tokyo Woman's Christian University]," *Gakkyūkai* 1 (1922): 1.

106 Kohiyama Rui 小檜山ルイ, "'Teikoku' no Riberarizumu—'Midōru Guraundo' to shite no Tokyo Joshi Daigaku 「帝国」のリベラリズム—「ミドゥル・グラウンド」としての東京女子大学 ['Imperial' Liberalism: Tokyo Joshi Daigaku as 'Middle Ground']," in *Teikoku to Gakkō* 帝国と学校 [*Empire and Schools*], eds. Komagome Takeshi and Hashimoto Nobuya 駒込武, 橋本伸也 (Kyoto: Shōwa-dō, 2007), 305–307.

107 Ibid., 307.

108 Ibid., 314. On Nitobe's contribution to women's education in Japan, see Hideko Omori, "Religious Education Leading to Higher Education for Women: Historical Insights on Modern Japan," *Religious Education* 108, no. 5 (Nov. 2013): 529–541.

experiences with condescending missionaries who held little interest or respect for Japanese culture. The new institution represented a pathway between Western and Japanese culture rather than a conduit of superior Western civilization toward Japan and valorized both Western and Japanese knowledge. While the institution stated its commitment to English language study, still integral to the university's mission today, Japanese culture also received considerable emphasis. Courses in English language and English literature as well as Japanese history, literature, and language were required in each of the four years of the curriculum from the school's foundation period.[109]

While these three, and many others, worked together to found the new women's college, the priorities of Yasui were particularly apparent from the school's founding. As with her prominent voice in *Shinjokai*, Yasui's views played a definitive role in shaping the character of Tokyo Woman's Christian University. As Nitobe explained in a 1918 issue of *Shinjokai*, it was through speaking with Yasui who expressed herself "passionately about women's education" and universal ideals of Christian "humanism" that his "anxiety completely disappeared."[110] It was through exchanges such as this that Yasui, who became dean of the new institution, left an indelible mark on the nature of the school from the beginning. Among the strongest messages that ran through this institution at its founding was one that Yasui had developed in numerous articles in that very publication. Women deserved the opportunity to pursue a "true education"[111] that went beyond equipping them for their duties as wives and mothers. While Nitobe and Reischauer clearly agreed with Yasui, it was Yasui who had so adamantly and frequently made this argument. The influence of Yasui's stance was particularly clear in the original objectives of the school. In the inaugural issue of the university's monthly periodical, *Gakkyūkai zasshi* (Students' Association Magazine), Dean Yasui reiterated these goals. First the school would "place a strong emphasis on character education based on Christianity." Second, she continued, the school would "contribute to the development of the Family, nation, [and] humanity" through the cultivation of "high ideals." Thirdly, Yasui highlighted the institution's commitment to "independent study to foster creative intellectual ability."[112]

The curriculum at Tokyo Woman's Christian University translated these ideals into courses that provided women with a relatively well-rounded Christian

109 Yasui, "Tokyo Joshi Daigaku enkaku daiyō."

110 Yasui, "Watashi no kyō ni itaru made".

111 Yasui, "Makoto ni kyōiku aru fujin," 3.

112 Yasui Tetsu, "Kyōiku no hōshin 教育の方針 [Educational Objectives]," *Gakkyūkai* 1 (1922): 3.

liberal education. In the first year, students were required to take "practical ethics, Bible studies, Japanese and English, Japanese geography and history, math, singing, [and] physical education." Over the next three years, students were required to take courses in "Japanese literature, Chinese literature, practical ethics, Bible studies, psychology, ethics, philosophy, literary criticism, linguistics, art and art history, history of civilization, English, physical education, religion, education, economics, health, sociology, and law." These courses set Tokyo Woman's Christian University apart from Japan Women's University, the first women's university in Japan. There courses in the liberal arts were offered but not required. That school's founder Naruse Jinzō (1858–1919) was a Japanese Protestant educator committed, like his colleague Nitobe, to education for women as well. He once argued that men and women should be educated to become "complete human beings.... There should be no difference between the sexes."[113] In practice, however, Naruse imagined women in the household and emphasized courses that prepared them for that role.[114] While students could, and did, take classes in the humanities, most focused on domestic science and related subjects. For this reason, by the 1920s, the school had gained a reputation as a finishing school for elite wives and mothers-to-be.[115] Tokyo Woman's Christian University, on the other hand, prioritized the liberal arts for women at a time when comparable institutions did not, even encouraging women to pursue careers through electives on "education and pedagogy, library studies, and journalism."[116] While these course titles clearly reflect Yasui's stance on women's education—the field in which her efforts are most frequently discussed—they also reflect her general responses to the woman question. In terms of status and rights, she emphasized to her students and others that there was no difference between women and men.[117]

While historians have largely underplayed Yasui's contribution to the women's movement in Japan, her students' reminiscences should prompt scholars to reconsider their position. As a teacher at Tsuda Umeko's English school between 1909 and 1910, Yasui had a profound impact on the young Yamakawa Kikue (1890–1980). Long before she became a leading activist in the feminist and socialist movements, she was a student in Yasui's psychology course. Although one of the most frequently read texts on women's history in imperial Japan includes an excerpt from Yamakawa's memoirs in which she recalls

113 Gail Lee Bernstein, *Isamu's House: Three Centuries of a Japanese Family* (Berkeley: University of California, 2005), 89.

114 Ibid., 90.

115 Ibid.

116 Yasui Tetsu, "Kyōiku no hōshin," 3.

117 Takamizawa, 62.

Yasui's anti-socialist stance and her warnings against reading Tolstoy, other, less often cited parts of her memoir paint a different picture.[118] For instance, despite her frustration in learning that the only qualified students that the Imperial University admitted were male students, Yamakawa did have an opportunity to go listen to a lecture there. In "classroom 32," a detail that betrays the importance that this event must still have held for her as she looked back decades later, she attended a talk by Imperial University psychology professor Fukurai Tomokichi (1859–1962). The recommendation that Yamakawa attend came from none other than Yasui Tetsu.[119] It was no coincidence that a young woman so committed to the freedom and independence of women had as a teacher an advocate of women's equality like Yasui.

Students also noted often her insistence that women deserved and needed to embrace the opportunity of a challenging education. Having returned to school as an adult, the mother of author and translator Matsuoka Hisako[120] wrote her daughter explaining that a speech by Yasui had truly motivated her to study hard.[121] Reading these happy words from her mother, Matsuoka remarked that she must have been "profoundly inspired" by Yasui.[122] Similarly, for Yamakawa Kikue, Yasui's words on the status of women students "remain[ed] clearly in [her] memory." On the last day of her psychology course, she recalled Yasui saying:

> From now you will also have male teachers. Please study hard so that they don't say women are inferior. Male teachers come with the assumption that women are inferior … but they must teach women just like they are teaching to male students.[123]

This recollection echoes comments that another of Yasui students, the author and playright Takamizawa Junko, recalled. In the 1920s, when Kyoto Imperial University literature and philosophy professor Amano Teiyū (1884–1980) came to serve briefly as a visiting professor at Tokyo Woman's Christian University,

118 Ibid., 66.

119 Yamakawa Kikue 山川菊栄, "Ai Subeki Hito Yasui Sensei 愛すべき人安井先生 [Lovable Professor Yasui]," in *Yasui Tetsu sensei tsuisōroku* 安井てつ先生追想録 [Reminiscences of Professor Yasui Tetsu], ed. Aoyama Nao, 青山なを (Tokyo: Yasui Tetsu Sensei Kinen Shuppan Kankōkai, 1966), 16.

120 Matsuoka Hisako wrote on children's education and translated Pearl Buck's *The Mother* among other accomplishments.

121 Aoyama, ed. *Yasui Tetsu sensei tsuisōroku*, 22.

122 Ibid., 23.

123 Yamakawa, "Ai subeki hito Yasui sensei," 16.

he reportedly expressed his worry that, having only taught men, he had no idea how to teach women. According to Takamizawa, Yasui responded with authority that, "whether they are women students or male students, it is the same." For women, she explained, "there is no need to adjust or lower the level."[124] It is for these reasons that many, like Takamizawa, praised Yasui not simply for her strength as an educator or her general humanism but for her contribution to the women's liberation movement.[125]

4 Conclusion

In retrospect, it should not be surprising that Yasui held and advocated a relatively progressive stance on the woman question in modern Japan. While students remember her as quiet and very traditional, this perspective overlooks the modern, international, norm-breaking life that Yasui led. She attended the first secondary institutions open to women in Japan, traveled abroad, lived with westerners, and studied in one of England's first colleges to admit women. She acted as first principal of the royal Rajini Girls school in Bangkok, Thailand, for four years before returning to Japan to teach many of the capital's brightest young women and edit Japan's leading Christian periodical on women's education. Subsequently, Yasui become dean and then president of Japan's first Christian women college, Tokyo Woman's Christian University (Tokyo Joshi Daigaku). By the time that Yasui entered the history books as Japan's first woman college president in 1925, she had lived a life that clearly contradicted those who defined her in terms of silence and tradition. Yasui in fact had much in common with the Christian New Women who held leadership positions in the China YWCA. The women Aihua Zhang has examined in this edited volume were, like Yasui, unmarried, socially aware, and active in the public sphere.

Like better-known participants in the Japanese women's movement, Yasui Tetsu too wrestled with the place that women should occupy in Japan's new modern national context. Whereas most of those voices promoted political equality or the abolition of institutions such as prostitution that debased women, however, Yasui remained focused on the cause of equal education. True education, which she defined as a well-rounded, empowering liberal education, was in Yasui's view the right of all Japanese women. In contrast to the practical, gendered learning that proposed to prepare women for

124 Takamizawa, 62.
125 Ibid., 61.

being wives and mothers, Yasui promoted the less tangible goal of enabling women to think for themselves. To this end, she dedicated the journal that she edited to the question of an appropriate education for young Japanese women and the college that she helped found to the provision of that true education to women students.

Running through her endeavors as an educator, education administrator, and author is the strong and visible thread of Protestant Christianity. Beginning with her education featuring Protestant ideals, Japanese Protestant teachers, administrators, and friends, this religion played an integral part in Yasui's intellectual development. This continued as Yasui observed a correlation between strong, active morality and Christian faith in England. Back in Japan, Yasui converted to Christianity and became part of a nationwide community of believers who shared many of her ideals. In particular, the women's group at her church provided her with the community of writers and organizers that made *Shinjokai* possible, and it was the greater Japanese Protestant community that served as its audience. In the pages of this journal, Yasui advocated self-reform and self-cultivation based on the teachings of Christ, and she specifically mobilized the ideal of Christian egalitarianism to argue for equality of educational opportunity. Then, in co-founding and administrating Tokyo Woman's Christian University, Yasui built a curriculum based on these ideals and objectives rooted in Protestant Christianity. Although not alone among numerous other influences on Yasui, beliefs, ideals, and networks relating to Protestant Christianity demonstrably played a pivotal and consistent role in Yasui's personal convictions and educational approach. In other words, through her experience with Protestant Christianity, Yasui came to conceive of "true education" as the answer to the woman question in modern Japan.

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CHAPTER 7

Esther Park, Obedient Rebel: Subjectivity, Submissiveness, and Korean Christian Women in Korea's Early Modern Period

Haeseong Park

In contrast to the West, where Christianity was a time-honored spiritual tradition, Christianity was a messenger of modernity in East Asia. Some East Asians at that time were interested in and attracted by the practicality of Christianity as a potent tool to advance individuals and nations through new knowledge and ideas, material support, and social and political connections. Power dynamics are another set of aspects to be considered in research on Christianity. The history of Christianity reveals that its close relationship with and service to the social and political establishment could at times justify classism and sexism. In the specific historical context of modern East Asia, imperialism and racism were added to the already complicated and conflicting practices and ideas of Christianity. This complexity also existed in early Protestant Christianity in Korea. On one hand, there existed a longing for personal development and national progress among some Koreans in the midst of their search for spiritual salvation. On the other hand, missionaries' intentional and unintentional service to imperialism and racism persisted despite their sincere desire to labor in the name of God.

Korean scholarship on modernity, including early Protestant Christians, centers around modern nation building with particular attention to Korean subjectivity and the independence movement.[1] Recent scholarship, embracing minority and multi-layered identity issues, has begun to utilize gender as a tool to examine Korean modernity and Christian history. New Women, the conspicuous and rebellious bearer of modernity—notoriously modern in their sexuality—attracted much attention then and now. Many scholars such as Kim Gyŏng-il Ch'oi Hye-shil, Kim Su-jin, and Mun Ok'-p'yŏ have examined

1 A colonial modernity debate sparked by *Colonial Modernity in Korea* in 1999 revealed the undertone of Korean scholarship on modernity, particularly its sharp focus on subjectivity and the independence movement. See Gi-Wook Shin and Michael Edson Robinson, eds., *Colonial Modernity in Korea* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 1999).

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New Women.[2] Korean Christian history has also focused on Christian New Women, the first fruit of Korean mission schools who blurred the boundary between Christianity and modernity.[3] In recent attempts to account for the perspective of minorities, Theodore Jun Yoo surveyed the voice of modern Korean women from New Women to female workers.[4] Hyaeweol Choi, who first cast her view on Chrisian New Women, broadened her interests into early Korean Bible Women who were less educated and usually from a lower class

2 Kim Gyŏng-il 김경일, *Yŏsŏngŭigŭndae, kŭndaeŭiyŏsŏng: 20-segi jŏnbangi sinyŏsŏngwa* kŭndaesŏng 여성의 근대, 근대의 여성: 20세기전반기 신여성과 근대성 [Women's Modernity, Modern Women: New Women and Modernity in the Early 20th Century] (Seoul: P'urŭn Yŏksa, 2004); Mun Ok-pyŏ 문옥표 ed., *Shinyŏsŏng* 신여성 [New Women] (Seoul: Ch'ŏngnyŏnsa, 2003); Ch'oi Hye-shil 최혜실, *Sinyŏsŏngdŭrŭn muŏsŭl kkumkkwŏsŭlkka* 신여성들은 무엇을 꿈꿨을까? [What Did New Women Dream?] (Seoul: Saenggak'-ŭi Namu, 2000); Kim Su-jin 김수진, *Sinyŏsŏng, kŭndaeŭi kwaing: singminji Chosŏnŭi sinyŏsŏng damnon'gwa gender jŏngch'i, 1920–1934* 신여성, 근대의 과잉: 식민지 조선의 신여성담론과 젠더정치 [Excess of the Modern: The New Woman in Colonial Korea, 1920–1934] (Seoul: Somyoŏng, 2009); Kim Gyŏng-il 김경일, "Singminjisigi sinyŏsŏngŭi Migukch'ehŏmgwa Munhwasuyong: Kim Maria pagindŏk, hŏjŏngsugŭl chungsimŭro 식민지시기 신여성의 미국체험과 문화수용: 김마리아, 박인덕, 허정숙을 중심으로 [New Women's Experience of the United States and Their Cultural Appropriation of America in Colonial Korea: Kim Maria]," *Han'gung munhwayŏngu* 11 (2006), 45–91; Jiyoung Suh, "The 'New Women' and the Topography of Modernity in Colonial Korea," *Korean Studies* 37 (2013): 11–43; Kim Ji-yŏn and Kim Gyun 김지연, 김균, "Singminji gŭndae sinyŏngsŏnŭi Damnonyŏngu 식민지근대 신여성의 담론연구 [Discourse and New Women in Colonized Korea: A Critical Analysis of Advertisements in the 1920–1930s]," *Han'guk kwangbo hongbo hakpo* 한국광보홍보학보 [The Korean Journal of Advertising and Public Relations] 17 (2015): 194–226; Lee Hang-hwa and Lee Gyŏng-gu 이행화, 이경규, "Ilche-gangjŏmgiŭi chosŏn sinyŏsŏng insige kwanhan ilgoch'al: Yŏsŏng japchi 'Sinyŏsŏng'ŭl chungsimŭro 일제강점기의 조선 신여성 인식에 관한 일고찰: 여성잡지 '신여성' 을 중심으로 [Cultural/Historical Perception towards the New Woman in Colonial Korea emerged through the 'New Woman' Magazine]," *Ilbon'gŭndae hak' yŏngu* 일본근대학연구 [Modern Japanese Studies] 15 (2016): 201–215.

3 Hyaeweol Choi, *Gender and Mission Encounters in Korea: New Women, Old Ways* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009); Kang Sŏn-mi 강선미, *Han'gukkŭndaech'ogi Feminism yŏngu* 한국근대초기 페미니즘연구 [*Study on the Rise of Feminist Consciousness at the Turn of the 20th Century in Korea*] (Seoul: P'urŭn Sasangsa, 2005); Lee Yun-mi 이윤미, "Ilcheha kidokkyo sinyŏsŏngŭi kŭndae insikkwa kŭndaesŏnge taehan chaego" 일제하 기독교 신여성의 근대인식과 근대성에 대한 재고 [Reconsideration of Christian New Women's Modernity and Understanding of Modernity]," in *Ilcheha sŏgumunhwaŭi sŏgu suyonggwa kŭndaesŏng* 일제하 서구문화의 서구수용과 근대성 [Adoption of Western Culture and Modernity in the Japanese Colonial Period], ed. Jŏng Yong-hwa 정용화 (Seoul: Hyean, 2008), 151–187.

4 Theodore Jun Yoo, *The Politics of Gender in Colonial Korea: Education, Labor, and Health, 1910–1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008).

than New Women.[5] There is much biographic research particularly on independence fighters, prominent educators, and several politicians who entered the government after Korean independence, in continuous search of national identity and nation building. For instance, Park Young-ok has done in-depth research on Kim Maria who has been admired as a Korean Joan of Arc, and Han Sang-kwŏn composed books about Cha Mirisa who founded Tŏksŏng Women's University.[6]

Recently Esther Park, the first western medical woman doctor in Korea, has begun to receive scholarly attention. Previously known primarily in the context of her work with missionary physician Rosetta Hall, new scholarly interest in the history of common people and women has led to works that focus on Park alone. Lee Pang-wŏn and Yun Sŏn-cha have written the most extensive scholarly works on Esther Park, focusing on her medical achievements and pioneer status.[7] As accurate as the new works related to Esther Park are,

5 Hyaeweol Choi, "The Missionary Home as a Pulpit: Domestic Paradoxes in Early Twentieth-Century Korea," in *Divine Domesticities: Christian Paradoxes in Asia and the Pacific*, ed. Hyaeweol Choi and Margaret Jolly (Canberra: ANU Press, 2014), 29–55; Hanguk' Gidokkyo-yŏksa Yŏn'guso 한국기독교역사연구소, *Han'gukkyohoe jŏndobŭin jaryojip*한국교회 전도부인자료집 [*Sourcebook on Korean Bible Women*] (Seoul: Hanguk' Gidokkyo-yŏksa Yŏnguso, 2010); Jang Sŏng-jin 장성진, *Han'gukkyohoeŭi Ich'yŏjin ŭyagi: Ch'ogi Han'guk kaesin'gyosŏngyowa Kyohoe sŏngjange sŏŭi Jŏndobŭine kwanhan yŏngu, 1892–1945* 한국교회의 잊혀진 이야기: 초기한국 개신교선교와 교회성장에 서의 전도부인에 관한 연구, 1892–1945 [Forgotten Story in Korean Church History: Study on Bible Women's Role in Early Korean Protestant Churches] (Seoul: Han'guk hakkul chŏngbo, 2008).

6 Park Yong-ok박용옥, Kim Maria: Na-nŭn taehanŭi tongnipkwa kyŏrhonhaetta 김마리아, 나는 대한의 독립과 결혼했다 [Kim Maria: I Marry Korean Independence] (Seoul: Hongssengsa, 2003); Yun Jŏng-ran 윤정란, "Singminji Han'gugyŏsŏng Ch'a Gyŏngsinŭi minjog undongyŏn'gu 식민지한국여성 차경신의 민족운동연구 [Study on Cha Gyŏngsin's Independence Movement under Japanese Imperialism]" Han'guk tongnip undong yŏngu 한국독립운동연구 [*Korean Independence Movement Studies*] 21 (2003), 151–186; Han Sang-kwŏn 한상권, *Cha Mirisa P'yŏnjŏn: Ilche Gangjŏmgi Yŏsŏng Haebang-undong-ŭi Sŏnguja* 차미리사: 일제강점기 여성해방운동의 선구자 [*Cha Mirisa: Pioneer in Women's Liberation Movement during Japanese Colonial Rule*] (Seoul: Purun Yeoksa, 2008); Ibid., Cha Mirisa Jŏnjip 차미리사전집 [*The Collected Works of Cha Mirisa*] (Seoul: Dŏksŏng Yŏja Daehakkyo Cha Mirisa Yŏnguso, 2009); Kim Sung-ŭn 김성은, "Ilche-sigi Kim Hwallanŭi yŏgŏnŭi sikkwa yŏsŏng gyoyukron 일제시기 김활란의 여권의식과 여성교육론 [Kim Hawallan's Thought on Women's Rights and Korean Women's Education]," Yŏksawa Gyŏnggae 역사와 경계 [*History and Border*] 79 (2011): 183–226.

7 Lee Pang-wŏn 이방원, "Park Esther ŭi saengaewa ŭiryo hwaltong (1877–1910)" 박에스터의 생애와 의료활동 [Life and Medical Missionary Activities of Esther K. Pak]," *Ŭisahak* 의사학 [*Medical History*] 16 (2007), 193–213; Yun Sŏn-ja 윤선자, "Hanmal Park Esther ŭi Migugyuhakkwa ŭiryo-hwaltong 한말 박에스더의 미국유학과 의료활동 [Esther Park's Medical Career and Studying Abroad at the end of Joseon Dynasty]," *Yŏsŏng-gwa Yŏksa* 여성과 역사 [*Women and History*] 20 (2014): 141–179.

however, they narrate her story without analyzing and contextualizing important forces at work within it. In particular, these scholars have not examined and problematized the roles that Christianity and Western conceptualizations of modernity played in Park's life.

Throughout her life, from her education to her marriage to her career, Esther Park relied on Christian faith, people, and institutions to set her path and to walk it. These elements played ambiguous roles in her life, limiting her in important ways, but empowering her in others. They also greatly informed her definition of modernity and her cultural identity. In the end, it was this body of tools that permitted her to achieve so many firsts before women's subjectivity, national identity, education, and professions were considered possible in Korea. Understanding the emergence of Korean New Women in general and Korean Christian New Women in particular requires new insights into the relationship between women and modernity that this study can at least begin to provide.

1 Beginnings

Esther Park was the first Korean woman who had a chance to receive an American college education. This opportunity and her later achievements were possible only because, in addition to her strong will and intellect, Park had a strong connection with Christianity. She was born to Kim Hong-t'aek whose poverty forced him to work for the American Methodist missionary, Henry Gerhard Appenzeller.[8] The same conditions influenced Kim Hong-t'aek's decision to send Esther Park—Kim Chŏm-tong at that time, his eldest unmarried daughter—to Ewha Haktang (梨花學堂 Pear Blossom School), the first mission school for Korean women, which was founded in May 1886 by Mrs. Mary Fletcher Scranton, another American Methodist missionary.[9] Park, at the age

8 Henry Appenzeller, the first American Methodist missionary to come to Korea, arrived on March 31, 1885. He was preceded by the first resident Protestant missionary, Horace Newton Allen, an American Presbyterian who arrived in Korea on September 22, 1884. Mission work was not allowed in Korea when Allen first arrived. Allen was advised to hide his real intention for mission work, so he introduced himself as a physician to the American Legation. Gunshik Shim, "Methodist Medical Mission in Korea," *Methodist History* 46 (October 2007): 35; Leighanne Yuh, "Education, the Struggle for Power, and Identity Formation in Korea, 1876–1910" (PhD diss., UCLA, 2008), 103.

9 Rosemary Skinner Keller, *Spirituality and Social Responsibility: Vocational Vision of Women in the United Methodist Tradition* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993), 186–187; Rosetta Sherwood Hall and William James Hall, *The Life of Rev. William James Hall, M.D.: Medical Missionary to the Slums of New York, Pioneer Missionary to Pyong Yang, Korea* (New York: Press of Eaton &

of ten, became the fourth student at Ewha in November 1886, which meant her father had one less mouth to feed.

This somewhat accidental encounter with Christianity led to the discovery of Park's intellectual gifts, a discovery that given the lack of traditional education for lower-class women in early modern Korea, would otherwise not have been possible. Park soon "outstripped all the other girls" at school and was chosen to help and interpret for Dr. Rosetta Sherwood (later Dr. Rosetta Hall), a Methodist medical missionary who arrived in Korea without any knowledge of Korean on October 10, 1890.[10] On the second day after her arrival, Dr. Rosetta Sherwood started to work at the Women's Hospital and Dispensary—Poku Yŏkwan (保救女館)—and soon formed a medical training class for one Japanese and three Korean girls.[11] Park, one of four girls, learned physiology

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Mains, 1897), 197. It is unclear when Esther Park's father started to work for Rev. Appenzeller, but it must have been soon after Rev. Appenzeller's arrival. Mrs. Mary Scranton—Dr. William Scranton's mother—as well as her daughter-in-law and granddaughter came to Korea in company with the Appenzellers in June 1885. During this early Open Port period, Koreans suspected, feared, and avoided westerners. Western missionaries only could reach out to the very poor and orphans. Mrs. Mary Scranton expressed her frustration, saying missionaries' presence "was often times the signal for the rapid closing of doors and speedy retreat behind screens, while children ran screaming with as much lung power as they could bring to bear on the occasion." Kim Hong-taek was penurious enough to work for suspicious western missionaries and had worked long enough to clear the suspicion and to entrust his daughter to them. *The Korean Repository* 3 (January 1896): 3–4.

10 Hall and Hall, *The Life of Rev. William James Hall*, 200; Sherwood Hall, "Pioneer Medical Missionary Work in Korea," in *Within the Gate*, ed. Charles A. Sauer (Seoul, Korea: YMCA Press, 1934): 97; Rosetta Sherwood, "Woman's Medical Mission Work, Seoul, Korea," *The Gospel in All Lands* (1893): 334–335.

11 Hall and Hall, *The Life of Rev. William James Hall*, 200; Ewha 100 nyŏnsa P'yŏnch'an Uiwŏnhoe 이화 100 년사 편찬위원회, *Ewha 100 nyŏnsa* 이화 100 년사 [*The 100-Year History of Ewha*] (Seoul: Ewha Women's University Press, 1994), 57; Sherwood Hall, *With Stethoscope in Asia: Korea* (McLean, VA: MCL Associates, 1981), 47–48; Horace Allen, the first resident Protestant missionary who arrived in 1884, was a physician and followed by many male medical missionaries. However, they soon realized that the strict Korean social dictum of sexual segregation prevented Korean women from coming to see male medical missionaries. In 1886, Mrs. Mary Scranton started to ask the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church to send women medical missionaries to Korea. In response, the society sent the first woman medical missionary, Dr. Meta Howard, who arrived at Korea in December 20, 1887, and started to see patients in December 31 at Dr. William Scranton's hospital. A year later in November 1933, Dr. Howard opened a hospital for Korean women and Korean Empress Myŏngsŏng—Queen Min—bestowed a name, Pokuyŏkwan (保救女館) which meant "Caring For and Saving Women's Hospital." Dr. Rosetta Sherwood was the second woman missionary who served at Bogu Yeoguan. Lee Pang-wŏn 이방원, "Pokuyŏkwan ui sŏllipkwa hwaldong보구여관의 설립과 활동 [Establishment and Activity of Bogu Yeogan]," *Uisahak* 7 (2008): 38–39.

and pharmacology, while receiving practical lessons in the dispensary.[12] At first, Park shrank away from surgery, but after assisting in an operation for correcting a cleft palate she found her passion for medicine—not oriental herbal medicine but western medicine. Like the Chinese medical students examined by Connie Shemo in this volume, a missionary institution provided Park with the unprecedented opportunity to pursue a career in modern, Western medicine.

2 Missionary Influences

Although Christianity introduced new knowledge and a space in which Park was able to realize her competency and enthusiasm and build a new identity, the rationale behind it was not at all as modern as it seemed on the surface. Christianity continued to cherish notions of Victorian womanhood that destined women to be a mother and wife at home.[13] The belief that marriage was good for women prevailed by and large in the West during the modern period, holding that marriage improved women's character and increased women's authority: "[Marriage] puts her under the best possible tuition, that of the affections, and affords scope to her active energies,... it gives her higher aims, and a more dignified position."[14] Louisa Christina Rothweiler, a woman missionary who taught Esther Park at Ewha, asserted that,

> We must act under the supposition that in Korea domestic life is her sphere and destiny.... They [Korean girls] must learn to prepare food, cut, make and repair their clothing, keep themselves and their room neat.... Our educational aim is not only to rescue women from a life of ignorance and superstition but also to make them good housewives who have neat and tidy habits.[15]

12 Hall and Hall, *The Life of Rev. William James Hall*, 200; Louisa Christina Rothweiler, "Women's Work in Episcopal Methodist Mission in Korea," *The Gospel in All Lands* (1893): 106; Rosetta Sherwood, "Woman's Medical Mission Work, Seoul, Korea" *The Gospel in All Lands* (1893): 335.

13 Hyaeweol Choi, *Gender and Mission Encounters in Korea: New Women, Old Ways* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 12–13.

14 Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820–1860," *American Quarterly* 18 (Summer 1966): 171.

15 Louisa Christina Rothweiler, "What Shall We Teach in Our Women's School?" *The Korea Repository* 1 (1892): 90; Louisa Rothweiler had been sent to teach at Ewha at Mary Scranton's request and arrived in Korea on October 31, 1887, when Park was studying

Despite their belief that women's ultimate place was in the home, both western missionaries and Korean reformers agreed that early marriage was a vice to be eradicated. Among all the areas of mission work, this custom had the most detrimental effect on mission schools for Korean girls. Ewha School operated for twenty-two years before it could hold a formal graduation ceremony in 1908 although it had taught about two hundred girls by then. In its early years, Ewha accepted seven—and eight-year-old girls as students and taught them until they married, so a student's wedding was her graduation ceremony.[16] To retain its students, Ewha confined students in a school dormitory and allowed them to visit their home only once a year. Non-Christian students were accompanied by a chaperone called a *kisu* (旗手) to make sure they returned to school. Dr. Rosetta Hall (formerly Rosetta Sherwood) bemoaned the loss of two Korean girl assistants in 1893 who were not yet even fifteen to the custom of early marriage.[17]

After the loss of the two Korean girl assistants, Esther Park who was the only girl assistant except for a Japanese girl, became very valuable to Dr. Rosetta Hall, who could not speak Korean at all. Soon, Park changed from valuable to indispensable to Dr. Rosetta Hall when her newly-wed husband, Dr. William Hall, was appointed to the Pyŏngyang mission circuit in August 1892. Dr. Rosetta Hall was eager to follow her husband and work for the women of Pyŏngyang, but she needed the help of Park. She not only knew Korean language and customs but was also accustomed to Hall's working style and had some basic medical knowledge. Because Dr. Rosetta Hall knew of the Korean tradition that deemed leaving ancestral land or parents as being unfililal and sinful, Dr. Rosetta Hall carefully asked Park whether she was willing to go to Pyŏngyang to work for Jesus. Park answered "I will go wherever Lord open the door [*sic*] for me.... I give my body and soul and heart to the Lord.... I do not hope I get rich or have many pretty things, but I want work for Jesus most of all."[18]

Regardless of Park's determination and brilliance, the traditional pressure of marriage loomed large. In 1892, Esther Park was sixteen years old. Although missionaries argued that marriage must be delayed until the age of eighteen,

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there. Ewha Yŏksagwan 이화역사관, *Ewha Old and New: 110 Years of History, 1886–1986* (Seoul: Ewha Woman's University Press, 2005), 26.

16 Ewha Yŏksagwan, *Ewha Old and New*, 26, 30–31.

17 Rosetta Sherwood, "Woman's Medical Mission Work, Seoul, Korea," *The Gospel in All Lands* (1893): 334; "Sketches of Deceased Methodist Episcopal Missionaries: William J. Hall M.D., Missionary to Korea," *The Gospel in All Lands* (1901): 226–227.

18 Rosetta Sherwood, "Woman's Medical Mission Work, Seoul, Korea" *The Gospel in All Lands* (1893): 336; Hall and Hall, *The Life of Rev. William James Hall*, 205.

a bride of sixteen was not considered a victim of early marriage at that time.[19] Park's mother and relatives started to threaten Dr. Rosetta Hall that they would marry her off to whatever suitable man they could find, which meant a non-Christian.[20] A Christian woman who married into a Confucian Korean household would likely suffer physical and emotional abuse.[21] Western missionary teachers who were well aware of this situation, therefore, tried to match their school girls with Christian families in their efforts to secure their mission work as well as to protect their girls.[22] In fact, Mrs. Scranton, the principal of

19 Josephine O. Paine and Lulu E. Frey, "Report 1-Ewa Haktang, Seoul," *The Third Annual Report of Korea Woman's Missionary Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church* (1901): 1; The Korean government started a reform—called the Gabo Reforms—in 1894, promulgating many decrees that touched both politics and society in general. The reform banned early marriage and the legal age for marriage was set at twenty for men and sixteen for women.

20 Hall and Hall, *The Life of Rev. William James Hall*, 202; Sherwood Hall, *With Stethoscope in Asia: Korea*, 114.

21 In Korean early Protestant history, it was often women who first came to believe and then sometimes succeeded in converting their family, relatives, and neighbors. In any cases, they often first met with severe persecution. Ju Lulu (a.k.a. Lulu Chu Kim), one of the early female Protestant Christians, was beaten and almost killed by her husband. Another female Christian, Park Won-sin, was also beaten by her husband and father-in-law, and her relatives descended on her house, hurling insults and stones at it and sometimes storming into it and smashing furniture. In the end, many of Park's relatives became elders and deacons. This persecution and estrangement forced some women to take passage to Hawaii, becoming part of the first massive Korean emigration to the United States from 1903 to 1905. Mattie Wilcox Noble and Chi Hyong Sah, *Victorious Lives of Early Christians in Korea* (Seoul: Gyujang Munhwasa, 1985) 61–62, 125; Hong Sŏkch'ang 홍석창, Han'guk Kiddokyo inmul tamgu 한국기독교인물탐구 [*Search for Korean Christians*] 1 (Seoul: Gidok Gyomunsa, 1988), 25–27; Alice Chai, "Korean Women in Hawaii, 1903–1945: The Role of Methodism in Their Liberation and in Their Participation in the Korean Independence Movement," in *Women in New Worlds: Historical perspectives on the Wesleyan tradition*, vol. 1, ed. Hilah F. Thomas and Rosemary S. Keller (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1981): 330; Esther Kwon Arinaga, "Contribution of Korean Immigrant Women," in *Montage: An Ethnic History of Women in Hawaii*, ed. Nancy Foon and Judy R. Parrish (Honolulu: General Assistance Center for the Pacific, 1977): 74; Paine and Frey, "Report 1-Ewa Haktang, Seoul," 1.

22 A typical marriage arrangement for mission school girls was that of Rose, whose Korean and family names were unknown, probably because she was an orphan. Rose studied and lived at Ewha dormitory. When she became nineteen in 1903, Ewha teachers found a man from the same denominational Methodist church, Chemulpo Wesleyan Church, a.k.a. Nae-ri 內里 Methodist Church. The man's mother visited Ewha dormitory to examine Rose. Upon approval of her would-be mother-in-law, Rose married ten days later without seeing the face of her future husband. Josephine O. Paine and Lulu E. Frey, "Ewa Haktang, Seoul," *The Fifth Annual Report of Korea Woman's Missionary Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church* (1903): 8.

Ewha School, was also anxious for Esther Park, who she considered, "such a big girl."[23] It was prevalent during the early years of Korean girls' mission schools for missionary teachers to wield parental authority over their students who were often orphans or who had socially and financially disadvantaged parents. In the case of Park, whose father died early and did not have any brothers, Park's mother relinquished her right to find her daughter's husband to the missionaries, notwithstanding her initial threats.[24]

Dr. Rosetta Hall's choice of a husband for Esther Park is interesting in that it illustrates the power dynamics between western missionaries and Korean converts as well as between husbands and wives. Dr. Rosetta Hall chose one of her husband's servants, Pak Yu-san Wilson, a factotum who had run away from home.[25] Before proposing a marriage with Park, Dr. William Hall asked him whether he "preferred one who worked faithfully to serve God, or one who could only cook and sew well for me [him]."[26] Park Yu-san's choice of the former satisfied the Halls, while Park and her mother were unhappy with Park Yu-san's low social status.[27] It is unclear whether Park's initial unhappiness with her husband was due to his status or to her rejection of marriage itself, or both. It was certain that she "feared" that marriage would interfere with her dream of being a medical doctor, but at the same time she might have considered other issues in the deep recesses of her mind.[28] She wrote to Dr. Rosetta Hall that the impending marriage troubled her mind, even if, as she explained, "I do not care about rich or poor, or high or low." This does suggest in any case that Park at least thought of these issues. However, she and her family did not reject the Halls' choice. Esther Park and Pak Yu-san Wilson married in Chŏngtong Church, a Methodist church, on May 24, 1893, when she was seventeen

23 Sherwood Hall, *With Stethoscope in Asia; Korea*, 114.

24 It was unclear when Esther Park's father died but by 1892, he was already gone. Her two older sisters were also already married off even before Park entered Ewha School. Park's father adopted a son, but he was mentioned only once in Park's life. There is high possibility that Park's mother worked for a missionary since she did not have male family members to support her, and mission work and missionary's households provided many different employment opportunities to Korean women. The same situation could be found in the case of Byeol-dan, the second permanent student at Ewha. Thanks to Byeol-dan's connection to missionaries, her whole family ended up working for missionaries and secured their livelihood. Hall and Hall, *The Life of Rev. William James Hall*, 197, 200; "From Missionary Letters," *The Heathen Woman's Friend* 19 (July 1887), 12; Ewha, *Ewha 100 nyŏnsa*, 51.

25 Hall and Hall, *The Life of Rev. William James Hall*, 392.

26 Ibid., 394.

27 Sherwood Hall, *With Stethoscope in Asia: Korea*, 115.

28 Hall and Hall, *The Life of Rev. William James Hall*, 202.

and her husband was twenty-six.[29] The marriage ceremony was all paid for by Ewha School.

3 Missionaries and Marriage

The Halls chose Park Yu-san not because of their ignorance of Korean social hierarchy but because of their knowledge of it. Missionary teachers, as parental figures, worked to find good spouses for their school girls and made nearly every girl marry into a higher class. Dr. Rosetta Hall felt sorry for Esther Park who had married down.[30] The Halls chose to prioritize Park's autonomy, however, over giving her a more comfortable life, so that she could continue to study and work in public. It was unthinkable, or at least un-Confucian to take an unmarried girl far away from her parents. In fact, Mrs. Mary Scranton had to pledge to her first student's parents not to take the student more than twenty-five miles away.[31] Married Korean women, who had more independence and access to a wider range of social activities than unmarried girls, were still under the strict control of usually unsympathetic in-laws. The marriage with Park Yu-san—an unattached runaway Christian whose father was already dead—was a perfect solution. Dr. Rosetta Hall confessed that after the marriage Esther Park "became more useful than ever" because Park now could accompany her on visits to her patients' houses where they listened to the words of Park, as a married woman, with respect.[32] The Halls could now, in accordance with the dictates of both Confucianism and Christianity, bring along the newly wed Parks to Pyŏngyang, as well.

For all her initial dissatisfaction, her marriage with Park Yu-san paved the way for Esther Park to become the first woman western medical doctor in Korea. The lack of accounts makes it difficult to understand the nature of the relationship between Esther Park and Park Yu-san. However, scant as they are, the extant texts indicate that Park Yu-san was not a typical Korean patriarchal husband. On the contrary, he respected his wife, probably because of her intellectual gifts and personality. Park Yu-san ran away from his father, a traditional Confucian-oriented private school teacher who tried to educate him to

29 Ibid., 203.

30 Sherwood Hall, *With Stethoscope in Asia: Korea*, 115.

31 Ehwa 100 nyŏn-sa p'yŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe 이화백년사편찬위원회, *Ehwa 100 nyŏn-sa 1886–1986* 이화백년사 [*The 100-year history of Ewha, 1886–1986*] (Seoul: Ehwa yŏcha kotŭng-hakkyo, 1994), n.p.

32 Hall and Hall, *The Life of Rev. William James Hall*, 203.

be a traditional Confucian scholar.[33] Park Yu-san, despite his disinclination to study, likely placed a high value on scholarship considering his family background and social norms. Esther Park's academic achievements, including a good command of English, probably helped to earn her husband's respect and later support for her study in the United States. Park Yu-san wrote that Esther Park "taught" him a lot.[34] Shared Christian belief was another source of influence that Esther Park could apply whether consciously or unconsciously. She in a sense carried the authority of her missionary sponsors who, unlike traditional in-laws in Korea, valued her advancement more than they did that of her husband.[35]

It was only after her marriage that she truly became Esther Park, as she had been born Kim Chŏm-tong 金點童. When Esther Park first came to Ewha, she was not a Christian. It took about a year before Esther Park accepted Christianity, and in 1891 she was finally baptized and received a Christian name, Esther.[36] When she married in 1893, Esther changed her family name from Kim to Park, which was not a Korean but a Western custom. From then on, she appeared as "Esther K. Pak/Park" in western writings and was called "Park Esŭt'ŏ" by Koreans. Esther Park's choice of her name, whether unconsciously or consciously done, showed both her defiance and submission in an early modern Korean context. Early western missionaries reported the deplorable condition of Korean women including their namelessness; Korean women had only a baby name and after having a child they were referred to as the mother of that child.[37] Esther Park's birth name of Chŏm-tong does not convey any specific meaning: Chŏm (點) means a dot or a word for counting and tong (童) simply means a child. This temporary identifier given by her parents could hardly help Esther Park build a respectful sense of identity, while Esther—the name of an ancient queen in the Bible who saved her nation—might encourage self-respect.

Bearing a Christian name during the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries cut two ways, as it marked one as being both associated, negatively, with suspicious westerners, and, positively, with modernity. The Western

33 Lee Pang-wŏn "Park Esther ŭi saengaewa ŭiryo hwaltong," 198.

34 Esther Park did not teach him academic matters but "patience and self-denial." Park Yu-san later studied hard to learn English. Hall and Hall, *The Life of Rev. William James Hall*, 207, 394.

35 Dr. Rosetta Hall wrote that Park Yu-san had fewer advantages than Park Esther did. Ibid., 207.

36 Ibid., 199, 201.

37 Ibid., 177; Mrs. T.J. Gracey, "Something about the Koreans," *The Heathen Woman's Friend* 23 (June 1892): 282–283; Noble, *Victorious Lives of Early Christians in Korea*, 82, 103.

custom of changing a family name upon marriage was also considered modern and became popular among reform-minded Koreans. However, both trends were reversed by the 1920s when Korean women were given proper names when they were born and a modern Korean national identity. Even those who initially followed these earlier trends changed their names back to a Korean style by transliterating their Christian name and returning to a maiden surname. Helen Kim—a famous never-married educator and the first Korean president of Ewha College—started to call herself Kim Hwallan 金活蘭. Cha Mirisa 車美理士—the third Korean woman to receive an American college education—changed her name from Melissa Kim in 1936.[38] Esther Park or Esther Kim Park mirrored her own identity and social circumstances. Christianity and Western missionaries were rarely challenged and their authority was readily accepted at the turn of the twentieth century. Esther Park's name revealed her indiscriminate acceptance of Christianity and the West *in toto* in the course of her quest for self-identity and self-respect.

4 Missionaries and Opportunity

Directly and indirectly Christianity provided important foundations for Park's pursuit of educational opportunity in the United States. In 1894 when the unfortunate death of Dr. William Hall prompted Dr. Rosetta Hall's decision to return to the United States, Esther Park "begged" her to bring her there.[39] Dr. Hall did so, and they traveled together to her hometown of Liberty, New York.

38 In a 1928 interview with a magazine, Cha Mirisa—at that time she was still known as Kim Mirisa—said that she changed her family name from Cha to Kim to follow Christian custom. She went on in the interview to say that she had used Kim for a long time so it was hard to change now but she wanted readers to know that her real family name was Cha. It is interesting that Cha Mirisa reclaimed her maiden family name eight years after the interview in 1936, the year when General Minami Jirō—an extreme militarist and former commanding officer of the Kwantung Army—arrived in Korea as the new seventh Governor-General of Korea and started to reverse previously tolerant policies, forcing Koreans to participate in Shinto worship and launching a total assimilation campaign "Japan and Korea as One Entity." It is also interesting that Cha Mirisa, who spent eight years in the United States, equated the West with Christianity, saying in the interview that changing a woman's family name upon marriage was not a Western tradition but a Christian custom. Han Sang-kwŏn 한상권, *Cha Mirisa P'yŏngjŏn: Ilche Gangjŏmgi Yŏsŏngaebang undong ŭi Sŏnguja* 차미리사평전: 일제강점기 여성해방운동의 선구자 [*Critical Biography of Cha Mirisa: A Pioneer of Women's Liberation Movement during the Colonial Period*] (Seoul: Purun Yŏksa, 2008), 420; Kim Marisa "Chunp'ung ch'uu 50 nyŏngane Dalu dahan han Naui Yŏksa 춘풍추우 50년간에 다루다한한 나의 역사 [My Deplorable and Tearful 50-Year History]," *Byŏlgŏngon* 11 (February 1928): 54.

39 Hall and Hall, *The Life of Rev. William James Hall*, 207.

While Park Yu-san worked at Sherwood farm—owned by Hall's parents—to earn his wife's tuition, Esther Park entered the public high school at Liberty and then Nursery and Child's Hospital of New York City to prepare for medical college.[40] Notwithstanding difficulties, including Park Yu-san's death in 1899, Esther Park's gritty determination and intellectual prowess allowed her to complete her studies at Women's Medical College of Baltimore—now Johns Hopkins University—without interruption, from September 1896 to May 1900. Esther Park wrote to Dr. Rosetta Hall: "I do not have a mind that I will give up learning to be a doctor.... I know I will have no other chance if I give it up now.... I will try all my best."[41]

In the same letter, Esther Park continued, "Mr. Pak wants me to learn to be a doctor more than anything."[42] The emotional encouragement and financial help of Park Yu-san, the lowborn runaway with whom her missionary mentors paired her, must not be underestimated. Park Yu-san worked at farms and restaurants to support Esther Park and was able to save "enough from his earnings to help his wife quite subsequently."[43] His hard work unfortunately led to his death of tuberculosis three weeks before Esther Park's graduation.[44] Park Yu-san's case could be viewed as extraordinary, but gender boundaries, particularly when involved in relationships with westerners, could become porous during this early formative period of Korean modern nationhood. Western dominance and Park Yu-san's admiration for it in the early Korean modernization process inspired Park Yu-san to relinquish his patriarchal privileges, at least for a while.

Esther Park did realize her dream of studying medicine in the United States, the wildest dream that a Korean woman with little means could have ever dreamt. She came back to Korea as the first Korean woman doctor who held an American bachelor degree in early October 1900. Her rare academic achievement and public engagement were closely associated with masculinity. However, Esther Park, like other professional women missionaries who were widowed or unmarried, covered her agency and confidence in the name of Christian love. Her work was justifiable as a selfless sacrifice to save, cure, and enlighten Korean women's bodies and spirits. The traditional role of women as caregivers, particularly caring for women themselves and children, made

40 Ibid., 207–208; Helen Young Snyder, *Mother of Pyong Yang* (n.p.: n.p., 1926), 5.

41 Hall and Hall, *The Life of Rev. William James Hall*, 208.

42 Ibid.

43 Ibid., 207–208; Kim Il-pyŏng J. 김일평, *Dae Nyuyok Hanin 100-nyŏnsa 1903–2003* 대뉴욕 한인 100년사 1903–2003 [*The 100-Year History of Korean Immigration to the United States 1903–2003*] ([Seoul]: [s.n.], 2004), 381; Sherwood Hall, *With Stethoscope in Asia: Korea*, 196.

44 Sherwood Hall, *With Stethoscope in Asia: Korea*, 196.

it possible for women missionaries and their indigenous female followers to successfully carve out a public presence. Although Western missionaries promoted women's domesticity, single women missionaries provided especially influential role models as participants in the public sphere for not only Korean, but East Asia women as a whole. Mary Kidder (1834–1910), a Japan missionary-teacher who remained single until her late thirties and who maintained an active career in education after marriage, was just such a mentor for Wakamatsu Shizuko (1864–1896). Both Wakamatsu Shizuko and Mary Kidder were able to pursue and build their independent and respectful careers via missionary connections.[45]

Acknowledging the importance of Christianity in paving the road to the public sphere by providing the feminine cloak and perch, it was Esther Park's own ability and sincerity that strengthened her foothold in public. Without adequate rest and recuperation, she started to see patients on October 26, 1900, at Pyeongyang.[46] Even on her way there, she stayed in Seoul to help at the Baldwin dispensary, an institution founded by Dr. Rosetta Hall.[47] She treated 1,360 in-and out-patients, including outcalls, during her first six months in Pyŏngyang.[48] The following year, she treated 3,328 Korean women and children.[49] The number of patients continued to grow each year: 3,377 in 1903; 4,857 in 1904; and 8,638 in 1905.[50] Even after a clinic closed or on Sundays, she had to see patients who came to her house and begged her to give them medicine.[51] Outside the clinic, Esther Park took care of Ewha students when she was in Seoul and taught physiology and hygiene to Korean women and girls when

45 See Rebecca Copeland, "All Other Loves Excelling: Marry Kidder, Wakamatsu Shizuko and Modern Marriage in Meiji Japan," in Choi and Jolly, eds., *Divine Domesticities*, 85–122.

46 Rosetta Sherwood Hall, "Report IX-Medical-Evangelistic Work for Women, Pyong Yang," *The Third Annual Report of the Korea Woman's Missionary Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church* (May 9–14, 1901), 20, 23.

47 Lillian Harris, "Report V. Baldwin Dispensary, Seoul," in *The Third Annual Report of the Korea Woman's Missionary Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, 12.

48 Rosetta Sherwood Hall, "Report IX-Medical-Evangelistic Work for Women, Pyong Yang," *The Third Annual Report of the Korea Woman's Missionary Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, 23.

49 Esther K. Pak, "Report III Chong Dong Dispensary, Seoul," *The Fourth Annual Report of the Korea Woman's Missionary Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church* (1902): 6.

50 The fiscal year of the Methodist Episcopal Church ended in April so the statistical data covered the period from May of the previous year to April of the following year. For example, the figure of 1903 reflects the total number of patients from May 1902 to April 1903. Lee Pang-wŏn, "Life and Medical Missionary Activities of Esther K. Pak," 205; Esther K. Pak, "Chong Dong Dispensary, Seoul," *The Fifth Annual Report of the Korea Woman's Missionary Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church* (1903): 13.

51 Esther K. Pak, "Chong Dong Dispensary," 13.

she was in Pyŏngyang.[52] Besides medical work, Esther Park was actively engaged in evangelistic work, such as teaching the Bible and leading prayer meetings. She also trained Bible Women who, as Lee-Ellen Strawn's chapter in this volume demonstrates, gained new access to literacy and basic ministry education through missionaries. Bible women were particularly important in carrying the ideals and beliefs of Christianity inside the relatively closed world of women's space within the home. In addition, Park sometimes made missionary journeys to remote areas in northern Korea.[53]

5 Recognition

Both Korean society and missionary circles recognized Esther Park's achievement and dedication. Esther Park reported her own medical and missionary work to a mission board on a regular basis under her own name, which had never happened before and would not happen again.[54] Esther Park's graduation from medical college was officially observed by the two Korean government representatives from Washington DC.[55] By royal command, she received a gold medal and was invited to a public celebration to mark her achievement and services along with two other Korean women who studied abroad in April 29, 1909.[56] Esther Park was also a missionary officially appointed and commissioned by the Philadelphia branch of the Methodist Episcopal Mission

52 Rosetta Sherwood Hall, "Report IX-Medical-Evangelistic Work for Women, Pyong Yang," *The Third Annual Report of the Korea Woman's Missionary Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church* (1901): 23; Josephine O. Paine and Lulu E. Frey, "Report 1-Ewa Haktang, Seoul," *The Fourth Annual Report of Korea Woman's Missionary Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church* (1902): 3.

53 Lee Bang-won, "Life and Medical Missionary Activities of Esther K. Pak," 208.

54 Ha Ran-sa, also known as Nancy Ha, was the second Korean women to receive an American bachelor's degree. She also belonged to the Woman's Board of Foreign Mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church but did not report her mission, medical, or educational work directly to the organization. Ehwa 100 nyŏnsa P'yŏnch'an Ŭiwŏnhoe, *Ehwa 100 nyŏnsa*, 109.

55 "Medical News" *The Journal of the American Medical Association* 34, no. 21 (May 26, 1900): 1351.

56 Choi Eŭn-hŭi, 최은희, *Yŏsŏng ŭi nŏmŏ anak'-ŭi nŏul-ŭl bŏtko: Hanguk' ch'ŏch'o-ŭi yŏgija ch'ugye Ch'oi Eŭn-hŭi gaehwa yŏsŏng yŏlchŏ* 여성을 넘어 아낙의 너울을 벗고: 한국최초의 여기자 추계 최은희의 개화여성열전 [Overcoming Femininity and Taking Off a Veil: The First Korean Woman Reporter Chugye Choi Eŭn-hŭi's Biographies of Korean Modern Women] (Seoul: Munijae, 2003), 132, 143; "Hwanyŏnghoe Sŏnghwang 환영회성황 [Great Success of the Reception]," *Hwangsŏng Sinmun* (May 5, 1909); George E. Crosley Hilton, "Women's Work," *The Sabbath Recorder* 76 (March 1914): 272.

Board.[57] Western women missionaries in Korea referred to Esther Park as one of their colleagues, assigned her jobs that recognized that status, and granted her a good deal of autonomy. Cha Mirisa, who was of noble birth, reminisced how much she envied and was inspired by Esther Park to pursue education.[58] Esther Park, a girl from a destitute commoner family sent to a mission school for food, became for some the embodiment of successful modern womanhood. American missionaries even went so far as to publish Esther Park's short biography.[59]

And yet her success was not enough to propel her beyond persistent race-and gender-based limitations. Although she might have been near the top among her fellow Korean sisters, she was still the lowest on the social totem pole, under the authority of Korean men and westerners. It was true that Christian teachings and women missionaries' work conveyed certain feminist aspects in the process of Korean modernization. Churches and mission schools provided Korean women with new access to knowledge and the public domain that they had previously been denied. Many women missionaries were never-married independent professionals who became role models and inspirations for Korean women. However, the cult of domesticity in the missionary enterprise confirmed and strengthened the Confucian gender order in important ways.

Women missionaries' professionalism rarely reached beyond their own gender, often referred to as "women's work for women." Mission schools aimed to educate Korean girls to be good Christian mothers and wives, not to be independent career women.[60] Both of these factors meant that even the most public positions created by mission work, such as Bible Women and teaching positions, were also confined to gender specific areas. Although the public sphere that Christianity opened for Korean women in the modern period was unarguably a breakthrough for members of their gender, it did not challenge the ideology of separate spheres. Instead it essentially extended the women's

57 *Methodist Episcopal Church, Eighty-third Annual Report of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church for the year of 1901* (New York; J.C. Totten, 1902), 410; *Thirty Second Annual Report of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1900–1901* (Boston: Pauline J. Walden, 1901), 61, 216, and 225.

58 H Gija H 기자, "Myŏngsa jesshiŭi Haksaeng-shidae Hoego" 명사제씨의 학생시대 회고 [Celebrities' Reminiscence about Their School Days]," *Samch'ŏnri* 5 (April 1935) in *Cha Mirisa Jŏnjip* 2, ed. Han Sang-gwŏn (Seoul: Dŏksŏng Yŏja Daehakkyŏ Cha Mirisa Yŏnguso, 2009), 234–235.

59 Rosetta Sherwood Hall, *Mrs. Esther Kim Pak, M.D.: Korea's First Woman Doctor* (Boston: Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, Methodist Episcopal Church, 1900).

60 See Louisa Christina Rothweiler, "What Shall We Teach in Our Women's School?" *The Korea Repository* 1 (1892): 90.

sphere so that it reached into the public sphere. Kang Sŏn-mi, who studied Korean early feminism, emphasized the prominent—both positive and negative—role that mission education and women missionary teachers played in forming Korean feminism. Kang argued that while implanting nuanced feminist ideas, many women missionary teachers sided with the established gender role and imperialist world order. This predictably created friction with Korean women who strengthened their national, individual, and feminist identities, particularly after the 1920s.[61]

Although Esther Park independently reported her work to the Methodist Episcopal women missionary conferences in Korea, her name never appeared as a member of the conference. The membership of the conference was strictly restricted to westerners, including women whose role was that of missionary wife. Despite their altruistic dedication, Western missionaries often found it difficult to cut across racial lines during the modern period. Agnes Davis, an American woman who came to Korea in 1934 to marry a Korean man whom she had met on an American campus, was troubled by American missionaries' racist attitude and exclusiveness.[62] Esther Park, who took on the same responsibilities as Western women missionaries, received much less, earning $200 and later $240 per year, whereas Western women medical missionaries received from $750 to $850 per year and other women missionaries received $600 to $800 per year.[63] Furthermore, some extra money in addition to the

61 Many missionaries sincerely believed that Japanese imperial rule was beneficial to the Korean Peninsula. Frank Herron Smith, an American missionary to Japan and then Korea, wrote in his letter to his colleague in the United States in October 15, 1919 after a nationwide Korean independence movement that "They [the Koreans] are not ready for independence. They are like a baby crying for cake or candy.... They have none of the qualifications necessary to stand alone." Lulu E. Frey, the fourth president of Ewha School from 1907 to 1921, wrote to her mother on February 23, 1904, saying: "I hope that Japan continues to succeed because they won't interfere in our work." Frank H. Smith, "Letter to Sidney L. Gulick, Oct. 15, 1919," in Mission and Relations. Secretaries Files: Korean Mission, 1903–1972, Record Group 140, 16:14, Presbyterian Historical Society (Philadelphia); Kang Sŏn-mi 강선미, *Hanguk'ŭi Gŭndae-ch'ogi Feminism-yŏngu* 한국의 근대초기 페미니즘연구 [Study on Korean Feminism during the Early Modern Period] (Seoul: P'urŭn Sasangsa, 2005), 144.

62 Donald N. Clark, *Living Dangerously in Korea: The Western Experience, 1900–1950* (Norwalk, CT: East Bridge, 2003), 186.

63 Methodist Episcopal Church, *Thirty Second Annual Report of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1900–1901* (Boston: Pauline J. Walden, 1901), 94, 100, 103; *Thirty Third Annual Report of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1901–1902* (Boston: Pauline J. Walden, 1902), 176, 180; *Thirty Fourth Annual Report of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1902–1903* (Boston: Pauline J. Walden, 1903), 192.

regular salary was allotted to western missionaries for incidentals, but very rarely for Esther Park. Her salary did place her above Korean women and teachers. Korean Bible Women and teachers at mission schools only earned $50 to $60 per year.

6 Identity and Legacy

Esther Park's hard work won her renown in mission circles and even royal recognition in Korea, but it did not guarantee the maintenance of her legacy. Esther Park dedicated her life to saving Korean people, and literally worked herself to death. Combining medical service and evangelical work without proper rest, she contracted tuberculosis in 1905. Although she eventually spent two years in Nanjing, China, trying to recover her health before returning to work in 1907, Esther Park never fully recovered.[64] On April 31, 1910, she passed away.[65] Korean contemporaries forgot her quickly. Surely her short life is partially to blame for how limited her long-term influence and recognition outside the mission enterprise was, even in the years just after her death. Her intimate affiliation with American missionaries, however, may also be responsible.

Through her relationships and experiences, Esther Park came to identify very strongly with American missionaries. Having grown up in a missionary household and both worked and studied among Americans, she deeply believed in Western and, in particular, American cultural superiority relative to Korea, and she adopted disparaging American views on Korea. Especially in the realm of medicine, she believed that Korea needed a paradigm shift from the Asian to the Western. As a physician, for instance Esther Park saw no merit in Asian herbal medicine and thought it should be replaced by Western scientific medicine. Esther Park felt that acupuncture, which she referred to simply as "the needle," was harmful and ineffective. Adopting the disapproving tone of Western missionaries, she reported:

> I have a case of a five-year-old girl who sprained her ankle. The mother took her to a native doctor who used the needle, the favorite remedy in all such ailments. Consequently the entire joint will be lost.... Our methods of treatment are a great surprise to them [Koreans]. The thought of washing ... has never entered their [Korean] minds.... I was surprised to see them carefully preserving this rice [from a patient's mouth]. Asking

64 Lee Pang-wŏn, "Life and Medical Missionary Activities of Esther K. Pak," 209.
65 Sherwood Hall, *With Stethoscope in Asia: Korea*, 223.

> why this was done, I was told it was a specific remedy for malaria.... This is one of many instances showing the ignorance of the Korean people.[66]

As in this example, Esther Park's medical reports to the Woman's Board of Foreign Missions emphasized traditional Koreans' surprise at Western methods and their effectiveness and deplored the ignorance of the Korean people and their reliance on herbal medicine. Making clear where she herself was situated, she appropriated Western techniques as "our" methods.

Armed with such distance and disdain relative to Korea, Esther Park did not seek to directly affect major change for Korea as a whole. She sought to heal and minister to her compatriots rather than to galvanize or inspire or unify them. Honored at the same royal ceremony in 1909 as Esther Park was Ha Ran-sa (also known as Nancy Ha), whose name and secular impact are more widely celebrated in Korea. A former kisaeng and concubine, Ha Ran-sa, like Park, attended Ewha, studied in the United States, and returned to mission work in Korea.[67] Unlike Park, however, Ha often fell out with Western missionary teachers who slighted Korean students, and she maintained close relations with Korean independence activities.[68] She also developed a close relationship with the royal family on which she capitalized to promote the need and importance of new institutions for women's education.[69] Furthermore, taking her leave of the Christian community in Seoul, Ha set out for the Paris Peace Conference in 1919 to advocate in favor of Korean national sovereignty by way of Beijing, where she was assassinated. Her shortened life and tragic martyrdom has come to be associated with modernity and the Korean New Woman while Esther Park, whose words and actions showed no regard for Korean independence, has not.

This essay, however, discourages the exclusion of Esther Park from narratives of the development of modern womanhood in Korea. As American as her

66 Esther K. Pak, "Report III Chong Dong Dispensary, Seoul," *Fourth Annual Report of the Korean Woman's Missionary Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church* (Seoul: Methodist Publishing Company, 1902), 6.

67 Ehwa 100 nyŏnsa P'yŏnch'an Ŭiwŏnhoe, *Ehwa 100 nyŏnsa*, 128.

68 Ha Ran-sa kept in contact with independence activists, such as Son Chŏng-to, a Methodist minister who was deeply involved in the nationwide independence movement of March First Movement in 1919 and the Korean Provisional Government in Shanghai. An Hye-ryŏng 안혜령, *Son In-shil: Sarang-gwa Gyŏmhŏ-ŭi Hyanggi* 손인실: 사랑과 겸허의 향기 [Son Il-shil: Love and Modesty] (Seoul: Ewha Womans University Press, 2001), 22; Min Suk'-hyŏn and Park Hye-gyŏng 민숙경, 박혜경, *Han-'garam Bom-baram-e: Ehwa 100-yŏn yasa* 한가람봄바람에: 이화 100 년야사 [Han-river and Spring Wind: One-hundred-year Unofficial History of Ewha] (Seoul: Jiinsa, 1981), 501.

69 Ehwa 100-nyŏnsa P'yŏnch'an Wiwŏnhoe, *Ehwa 100 nyŏnsa: 1886–1986*, n.p.

models and assumptions were, she was still a Korean woman—a reality that her position and salary continued to demonstrate. As conformist or passive as Esther Park might appear in the unequal missionary-convert relationship or in the larger relationship between American imperialism and Korea, she was nevertheless a proactive trailblazer. Through difficult, often isolating choices, diligence, and perseverance, she broke through countless gendered barriers that confined Korean women. In accomplishing this, she relied on Christian institutions and networks from which she apparently held little critical distance.

And yet her trajectory and identity were undeniably modern and Korean. Colonial and imperial subjects often experienced a sort of cultural alienation as they encountered the particular modernity offered or imposed by foreigners.[70] This "cultural cringe" is entirely emblematic of imperialistic encounters in the modern era.[71] Park, like so many men and women in turn-of-the-century Korea, was subject to informal Western and, increasingly, formal Japanese imperialism. Koreans from the oppressed classes found new opportunities and horizons in the modern ideals and institutions of Christianity, but often developed negative views of their own culture. Park culturally immersed herself in highly self-assured circles of American missionaries and physicians, which clearly led to her cultural alienation. These same elements, however, facilitated her ambitions and her realization of them, proving to Western missionaries and Korean women aware of her efforts that change and success were possible for their gender in that country. Building on, but often unaware of, these foundations, the Korean New Women and the Korean Christian New Women in the 1910s and 1920s increasingly integrated national awareness and pride into their quest for women's empowerment.

70 Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994); Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back: Theory & Practice in Post-Colonial Studies* (London: Routledge. 1989), 9–10.

71 See A.A. Philips, *On the Cultural Cringe* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2005).

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CHAPTER 8

Revisiting the Mission Subject: the First Protestant Women and Photography in Korea between 1880 and 1910

Heejeong Sohn

Social progress, as reflected in the visual representation of Korean women, developed very slowly under the Confucian rule of the Chosŏn dynasty (1392–1910). This changed in 1876. That year saw the official opening of the country that ended more than two centuries of self-seclusion and brought about an influx of new culture and ideas that accelerated certain developments already underway in Chosŏn. Increased commercial activities and consumption, in particular, were key contributors to the disintegration of the status system. They propelled the formation of a modern concept of "self" based on individualistic interests, motivations, and experiences that brought visibility, in terms of physical presence as well as in image, to traditionally marginalized groups in Korea. Among them, Korean women gained the most visibility in public space in an unprecedented manner, and evangelical Protestant missions played a significant role in this development. The Protestant church officially entered Chosŏn in the late nineteenth century with the country's opening and actively undertook projects to "modernize" Korean women through their religion. They aimed to inspire Korean women with American Enlightenment ideals of equality, the pursuit of happiness, self-assurance, liberty, and civilization.

It was no mere coincidence that as evangelical Protestantism entered the country, Korean women gained greater visibility in public spaces. In late nineteenth-century Korea, Western Protestant missionaries' efforts to bring modernity to Korea through their religion coincided with the introduction and distribution of photography and the camera to the country. Many American missionaries in Korea utilized cameras as a means of documentation. In this, they used cameras no differently from field correspondents for newspapers or professional photographers of the period.[1] The photographic images were actively incorporated into church materials and used as educational tools in

1 Although there is no statistical data or textual information on how missionaries incorporated photography into their work, the size of image archives and the missionaries' use of images in many Christian publications and events indicate that cameras were popular

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print, publications, and magic lanterns. The visual archive thus registered a complicated matrix of evangelical passions, civilizing visions, racial bias, and sympathy for indigenous people and culture.[2] Consequently, Protestant missionaries' active engagement with the public and their use of the visual technology of the camera were directly related to the explosion in the number of images of Korean women and the diversity of media through which Korean women displayed themselves in public.

At the same time, these cameras also portrayed the unprecedented opportunities that missionaries made available to a small number of Korean women and recorded the transformative images of those pioneering women who took advantage of them. These Korean women in the gaze of missionaries gained firsthand access to the transnational dissemination and reception of nineteenth-century American middle-class values and ideas, rooted in Protestant capitalism. Moving from the classroom, some became trailblazers in defining and practicing forms of modern Korean womanhood. Through the medium of photography, they and their missionary photographers collaborated to project the images of Korean women into the public sphere, even when that was confined to small Christian circles. This image was one of "progress" away from the traditional, premodern and secluded space afforded women in the Chosŏn dynasty and towards self-realization, independence, and professional achievement. Over time, the reasons and contexts for which these images were produced and utilized became more diverse. In the end, both the sitters and photographers practiced photography in ways in which they exhibited their respective aspirations, hopes, and intentions.

Notwithstanding their presumable immediacy as records, the use of historical photography as a reliable source for academic research on Korea has posed challenges for years. Most notably, the fact that Koreans were more often the objects captured in photographs than their consumers and that most photographs were possessed, both symbolically and materially, by foreign photographers have led scholars to view precolonial period photography in the same category of colonial photography. Indeed, alluring and forbidding

possessions for individual missionaries and churches during this period. Angus Hamilton, *Korea* (London: William Heinemann, 1904), 264.

2 The images of "pagans," especially pagan women, from remote heathen lands created powerful reactions when they were used for the American audience at home. Mission reports were published with images, and touring lectures were conducted around the U.S. showing those images. The images were instrumental in fundraising for overseas mission projects and increasing awareness of the need for more missionaries in the Korean field. Hyaeweol Choi, "The Visual Embodiment of Women in the Korea Mission Field," *Korean Studies* 34 (2010): 103–104.

portrayals of Koreans and Korean society in photographs were instances of the imperial gaze. The majority of images of Chosŏn and its people from this early period reflect a masculinist perspective and an apparent sense of superiority on the part of the photographers. This perspective, however, obscures key differences between precolonial- and colonial-era photography in Korea.[3] During this period, the Chosŏn dynasty was not yet under a official colonial power that exercised coercive modern techniques over its population. Despite public suspicions about the visual technology practiced by visiting foreigners that duplicated reality, photo-taking quickly became a fetishized popular modern activity.

Missionary photographs of Korean Christian women demand specific attention. These images offer signs and glimpses of Chosŏn's rapidly shifting society that provide indispensable visual information for better understanding it, especially changing positions of women in the society. Despite lingering skepticism and concerns about photography's potential misrepresentation of the real with power, cultural critic Roland Barthes emphasizes photographs' power of historicity and the medium's potential for photographed subjects. He argues that photographic authenticity exceeds its power of representation.[4] Resisting the temptation "to join the troupe of those (the majority) who deal with Photography-according-to-the-Photographer," Barthes contends that photographic experiences should not only focus on that of "the subject observing,"

3 Thanks to the relative abundance of resources and theoretical approaches available in colonial photography, the colonial period has attracted the most research attention. However, precolonial photography has rarely been written about as a main research topic. Writers on early photography include Lee Kyung-min. He wrote articles to draw public and institutional attention to the building of a modern photography archive, such as "Sajinak'aibŭŭi hyŏnhwanggwa p'iryosŏng koch'al 사진아카이브의 현황과 필요성 고찰 [A Study on the Current Status of the Photo Archive and Its Necessity]," *Yŏksa Minsŏkhak* 14 (2002): 55–82. His publications on colonial photographs include *Kyŏngsŏng, sajine pakhida* 경성, 사진에 박히다 [Kyŏngsŏng Caught in Photographs] (Sanch'aekcha Publishing, 2008), and *Chegugŭi renjŭ* 제국의 렌즈 [Colonizer's Lens] (Sanch'aekcha Publishing, 2010). Research on mission photography is even more rare. The latest publications include Donald Clark, ed., *Missionary Photography in Korea: Encountering the West through Christianity* (New York: The Korea Society, 2009) in conjunction with the exhibition held at the Korea Society in New York City, May 19 to August 14, 2009, and Sung Deuk-Oak 옥성득, *Han'guk kŭndae kanho yŏksa hwabojip, 1885–1945* 한국 근대 간호 역사 화보집 [A Pictorial History of Modern Nursing in Korea] (Seoul: Taehan Kanho Hyŏphoe, 2012); and Sung Deuk-Oak, *Hanbando taebuhŭng: sajin ŭro ponŭn Han'guk kyohoe, 1900–1910* 한반도 대부흥: 사진으로 보는 한국교회 1900–1910 [The First Great Revivals: A Pictorial History of Korean Protestant Christianity, 1900–1910] (Seoul Korea: Hongsŏngsa Publishing, 2009.) Also see Choi, "The Visual Embodiment of Women."

4 Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1981), 76–77.

but also open up to those of "the subjects observed." He further insists that the camera captures additional information about a subject, but "must in no way alter the precious essence of my individuality: what I am, apart from any effigy."[5] His discourse-shifting statement on photography strongly demands that we turn our analytical focus towards the native Koreans and their lives embedded in and outside the photographic frame as objects. Drawing upon his approach, the following examines historical photography not simply as a genre, but as a medium that has recorded memory and time and has also channeled the identities and self-images of the people observed and caught in images. In order to do so, this research intentionally avoids excessive semiotic analysis of images.[6] Instead, it treats photography as a historical medium of communication and experience that was developed and intertwined with the transnational cultural history of Korea and the United States.[7]

To describe and analyze photographs of Korean Christian women, this essay draws inspiration from Hyaeweol Choi who suggests two important ways in which missionary photography can be useful for understanding modern Korean history. First, she argues that missionary photography "can provide an alternative means to give voice to people who were illiterate or not equipped to express their thoughts and experiences in writing."[8] As will be clear in the paragraphs that follow, this was especially true for Korean women who studied medicine under missionary guidance. From disprivileged backgrounds and greatly conditioned by restrictive social contexts, these first Korean female medical students did not speak up or write profusely about their experiences despite their undisputable role as pioneers. Through photographs, however, it is possible to gain some insight into their priorities and hopes in life. Choi also points out that missionary photography can provide a unique window through which to apply the lens of gender to the analysis of modern Korean women's bodies. Through their interactions with Western Christian individuals, these women's bodies entered a transformative process of intercultural

5 Ibid., 11.

6 W.J.T. Mitchell, *Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 5.

7 Contemporary scholars of photography, such as José van Dijck, distinguishes today's digital photography as a device for communication while relegating older photography predominantly to a tool for remembering the past. This view tends to fixate old photographs only as records of the past. My research, in contrast, suggests that readers place their perspective in the historical time and consider photography's function as a tool to express and create identity, experience, and communicate, both for the photographer and the photographed. Jose van Dijck, "Digital Photography: Communication, Identity, Memory," *Visual Communication* 7 (2008): 57–76.

8 Choi, "The Visual Embodiment of Women," 91.

negotiation. Choi aptly demonstrates that missionary photographs can be useful in unpacking the multiple representations and realities that characterized the relationship between American female missionaries and Korean native women.[9]

These insights prove useful in examining the roles that the modern visual technology played in registering interactions between these two groups and how both missionaries and native women used photography to advance and express their interests and desires as modern citizens. This chapter focuses specifically on how the visual technology of the camera captured the aspirations and priorities of Korea's first nursing school graduates. Drawing largely on early Methodist and Presbyterian mission repositories, this analysis reveals how both groups used early photography as a gendered mechanism to express the new and changing identities and accomplishments of modern Korean women.

1 Visualizing Women—a Korean Context

In the Chosŏn dynasty, women were largely invisible—not only in public space but also in knowledge production and visual documentation. In general, the upper-class male *yangban*, a class of Confucian bureaucrats, monopolized education, and accordingly most women were relatively immobile and discouraged from participating in public spaces outside the home. Even upper-class women rarely had an education beyond the level that was required to inculcate their children with Confucian norms. More importantly, in relation to the topic of this chapter, Chosŏn's visual culture registered women in disproportionate and biased ways. Women in premodern Chosŏn were largely invisible, and, in limited visual depictions, they were confined as supplementary characters to men who advocate the socioeconomic success of their male patriarchs, or as sexual objects of male desires—all of which were to be consumed by a male-centered patriarchal society.[10] This, by all means, should not

9 Ibid.

10 The *kyehoe-do* (paintings of gatherings), the *hoehonlye-do* (paintings of the sixtieth wedding anniversary), and the *p'yŏngsaeng-do* (paintings of celebrated life) are good examples of artwork that depicted upper-class women. The *kyehoe-do* paintings were drawn to commemorate special events of scholar-officials in public and private meetings, but the female servants in these paintings are shown attending gatherings and catering to the daily necessities of men. In the *hoehonlye-do* and the *p'yŏngsaeng-do* paintings, women were drawn either as mere companions to successful husbands or sons. As wives to successful men (*hoehollye-do*) or mothers of successful sons (*p'yŏngsaeng-do*), women

be taken simply to imply that women's power and position in Chosŏn were invariably insignificant and suppressed. Afterall, history records cases of some upper-class women with intellectual ability and political influence.[11] However these visual materials reflect a general attitude towards women in Chosŏn society. They inform us about how the patriarchal society used visuals to dictate female desires, prescribe their proper location in society, and uphold its fundamental values.

Visual media experienced a revolution during the eighteenth century when the lives of common men and women emerged as popular subjects in arts and literature. Genre paintings depicted the everyday lives of ordinary men and women, from banal aspects to scenes of revelry, who had never before been the object of visual depiction and production. The resulting pieces often embraced repressed sexuality, emotions, gender, concubinage, corrupt religion, and status conflicts as lived by the commoner class. Art historian Chŏng Byŏng-mo contends that the genre paintings were not simply expressions of pleasure: "they were songs of the modern spirit."[12] Indeed, these genre

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were represented as attendants or mere supplementary companions to socially successful and highly achieving husbands and sons. *Kisaeng* (female entertainers or courtesans) were the frequent subject of traditional Korean genre and pornographic paintings—often depicted as sexual objects. Visual renderings of *kisaeng*s explored female sexuality in order to entertain the male gaze. The Chosŏn state published illustrated books to inculcate women about their such position in the society through the concepts of filial daughter, chaste widow, wise mother, and good wife, that includes *Samgang haengsil-do* (Illustrated Conduct of the Three Bonds), *Sok samgang haengsil-do* (Continued Illustrated Conduct of the Three Bonds), and *Tongguk sin samgang haengsil-do* (New Illustrated Conduct of the Three Bonds in Korea). These books also taught women to be frugal and hard-working. With effective illustrations, they idealized women who diligently worked on various house chores and home-bound jobs that could bring extra financial income for the house, as well. On women in Chosŏn paintings, see, Kang, Myŏng-gwan 강명관. *Kŭrimŭro ingnŭn chosŏn yŏsŏngŭi yŏksa* 그림으로 읽는 조선 여성의 역사 [Women's History in Chosŏn Korea as Viewed through Paintings] (Seoul: Humanist, 2012).

11 As one of few publications in the English language that discusses agency and creativity of the Chosŏn women, Young-Key Kim-Renaud's edited volume title *Creative Women of Korea: The Fifteenth through Twentieth Centuries* introduces six articles that feature contributions of creative Chosŏn women to humanities such as Sin Saimdang, Hŏ Nansŏrhŏn, Lady Heogyŏng, and Kim Iryŏp. (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 2003).

12 Chŏng Byung-mo 정병모, "Chosŏnhuki p'ungsokhwa wa etositae ukkiyoe ŭi pikyo yŏnku 조선후기 풍속화와 에도시대 우끼요에의 비교 연구 [A Comparative Study on the Genre Paintings of the Late Chosŏn period and the Ukiyoe of the Edo Period]," *Han'guk kŭnhyŏndae misulsahak* 7 (1999): 119–156.

paintings show distinct continuity, affinity, and relevance in subject matter with early photographic images in Korea.[13]

In the late nineteenth century, Korea experienced an explosion in the number of visual images in all forms, many of which were photographic. The visual spectrum of women captured during this period consists of a wide array of images, from lower-class women with bared breasts, to women in *chang-ot*, a long jacket used to cover the face and body during women's trips outdoors, vulnerable *kisaeng* (female entertainers) and women *mudang* (shamans), upper-class female gentility, girls on school field trips and graduation ceremonies, and women in modern professional jobs. Images of women during this era outnumbered those of men. This attests to the growing popularity of sexuality as a subject matter in the new medium and, at the same time, indicates women's increasing presence in public spaces. It further informs us that considerable changes for empowering women were underway in the society.

The signing of unfair treaties with several countries stirred the Chosŏn government to modernize the state. The modernizing efforts of the government provided opportunities as well as pressure for women to change, which started affecting the perception, if not the practice, of gender roles both in private and public spaces. Many reform-minded male intellectuals were vocal about the need to elevate women's status through modern education and called for the abolishment of antiquated discriminatory practices, which shows that the women's issue was on the list of male modernizers.[14] Such men were instrumental in bringing missionaries to the country who began their work with the modern education of Korean women. The first mission schools for women, such as Ewha and Chŏngsin, were founded in the 1880s and 1890s, which was followed by the founding of Chinmyŏng, and then Sukmyŏng in the 1900s under the auspices of the court.

The rapid change in gender practices was observed initially in the upper class, the class that was first exposed to Western consumerism and practices. In 1899, over 300 upper-class women in Pukch'on, Seoul, gathered together

13 The genre paintings were revolutionary in the fact that they shined a spotlight on the lives of the commoners where there had never been one before. The practice of depicting average people's lives continued throughout the late nineteenth century to painters such as Kim Chun-gŭn (under the penname of Kisan), who produced thousands of paintings of commoners as a result of an increased demand for images of Korea by foreign visitors. Boudewijin Walraven. "Korean Genre Paintings in the Netherlands and around the World," in Korean National Commission for UNESCO *Traditional Korean Painting* (Seoul: YBM Sisa Publishers, 1983), 67–81.

14 See Park Yŏng-hyo 박영효, "Kŏnbaeksŏ 건백서 [A Memorial to the King of 1888]"; Yu Kil-chun, *Sŏyu kyŏnmun* 서유견문 [Travels in the West] (Seoul: Sŏhae Munjip, 2004; first published in 1895).

to issue a historic declaration of women's rights titled "Yŏgwŏn t'ongmun" (Manifesto on Women). In this document, they claimed that women should share equal rights with men, be able to participate fairly in the state's modernization and civilization programs, be entitled to jobs and economic activities outside the home, and have access to the same education as men. They proceeded to establish the first women's organization, Ch'anyanghoe (Leverage Society), and then pressed the government to support the establishment of the first women's public school.[15]

Protestant missions, like this native women's organization, promoted ideals such as female education, gender equality, women's mobility, social participation, etc. They were distinguished only by their religious doctrine and strategic focus on the lower-class population. As a matter of fact, Protestant missionaries were invited to Korea not as evangelists but as modernizers and supporters of the government's modernization projects: they came as educators, medical doctors, nurses, and scholars, though they were recruited and sent through the interdenominational American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) or the Methodist Episcopal Church's Women's Foreign Missionary Society (WFMS). American missionaries largely consisted of northern Presbyterians, southern Presbyterians, northern and southern Methodists, and Baptists. In Korea, they embarked on projects of building modern schools, hospitals, and orphanages often in close consultation with and support from the Chosŏn court. To them, such non-religious activities justified their stay in Korea and proved instrumental in spreading Protestantism across classes, genders, ages, and geographical regions. To many Koreans as well, their projects helped to give rise to the notion that American Christianity was progressive, modern, and beneficial.

The missionaries were obliged to document and report on every aspect of their field missions and engagements with the natives to their home

15 This was the first attempt to build a public grade school for girls. However, *Ch'anyanghoe*'s efforts failed to motivate the government to act. In support of the founding of the school, *The Independent* urged, "Women should not be discouraged by the government's negligence for support; instead they should use the energy to push forward to establish a private school. We hope they will be able to invite excellent female foreign teachers and start educating girls to announce the equality of rights for both men and women," (Sept. 21, 1899). With the expectation that government support would soon follow, they opened Sunsŏng Girls School with private support. However, it did not last long, as the government failed to provide the funding they had promised. Regarding the Sunsŏng Girls School's short history and controversies, see Cho Kyung-wŏn 조경원, "Kaehwaki yŏsŏng kyoyuklon ŭi yangsang punsŏk, 1876–1910 개화기 여성 교육론의 양상 분석 [The Trend and Characteristics of Views of Women's Education During 1876–1910]," *Kyoyukkwahakyŏnku* 28 (1998): 23–42.

FIGURE 8.1 A group of girls, teachers, and aides at Ewha Haktang
SAUCE: HISTORICAL PHOTO ARCHIVES OF EWHA GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL, 1893

headquarters. The camera was an indispensable device, and, as avid recorders, the missionaries sent thousands of photographs back to the United States along with records on their daily missions. As a result, the Protestant community developed somewhat distinct photographic archives. Christian archives developed images of Korean women, often with information about who they were and when, where, and why the photographs were taken (Fig. 8.1). Some women were in multiple photographs taken during different time periods in commemoration of major junctures of their lives. Many women in the images seem to have belonged to lower-class families and often had dreadful life experiences. Many of these images, often with powerful conversion stories, were circulated within churches, across denominations, and with the mission headquarters in the United States.[16]

16 Korean Protestant historian Seung Deuk Oak has documented conversion stories of Korean women in early history of Protestantism in Korea and translated many of them into English. *Tasi ssŭnŭn ch'odae han'guk kyohoesa* 다시 쓰는 초대 한국 교회사 [A New History of Early Korean Protestantism]. (Seoul: Holy Wave Press, 2016).

At the same time, these Korean women actively engaged in the act that exhibited their changed lives with a new religion. While to many people, photography was still an object of curiosity, suspicion, and exorbitance, these women differed. Consciously posing for missionaries, they became the first Koreans who voluntarily and subjectively "practiced" photo-taking. They posed to commemorate, celebrate, record, and publicize their jobs and newly gained identities as individuals, women, regular members of society, professionals, and citizens. Photography was a medium that recorded their new identities as modern citizens as well as Christians.

2 American Missions, Self-Formation, and New Womanhood in Photography

The Western missionaries in Korea were viewed as modernizers and civilizers. However, Protestant missionaries differed from the European Catholic fathers of the previous generation in their aggressiveness and the support they had received from the Chosŏn court as they entered the country at the government's invitation. Their abstract messages were often embodied and delivered in material media through the consumption of modern goods and the use of scientific tools and technologies, including not only bicycles and microscopes but also visual devices of cameras, films and lantern slides.

American missionaries, in particular, differed also from contemporary Protestant missionaries who came from other countries such as Canada, Australia, and the United Kingdom, in terms of the supports they received from their country and the ways in which they displayed their modern lifestyle. Sponsors in the United States paid American missionaries overseas more generously than most other Americans in Korea during the same period. They could frequently reach out to their fellow Americans at home for additional funding and support for their work. Most American missionaries lived in spacious houses, enjoying occasional banquets, social gatherings, vacations, and servants. Many American missionaries furnished their homes with imported household items: beds, furniture, sewing machines, organs, utensils, carpets, and curtains. They also enjoyed food exotic to native Koreans such as ice cream, coconut pies, whipped cream, and popcorn.[17]

17 According to Ryu Dae-young, male missionaries in Korea were paid between $700 and $900 a year if single and $1,100 and $1,200 if married. Inclusive of family allowances, some received up to $2,000 a year, which was quite good, compared to an average salary of $782–$1,177 for pastors and $663 for other religious workers in 1906 in the United States.

The level of their material consumption and possession in Korea might not have been on par with that of their home country, but it was lavish enough, especially amid the simplicity and primitive conditions of a country like Korea.[18] Ryu Dae-young, a scholar of Christian history, makes an analogy between the missionary compound and an "oasis in the middle of a sand desert."[19] According to Ryu, the greatest extravagance these American Protestant missionaries could display was the image of a Christian home with children.[20] Without a doubt, missionaries' residences were a constant source of curiosity for Koreans. Knowing that, the missionaries occasionally made use of their living spaces as educational tools. Their display of the opulent American "middle-class" home and lifestyle captivated the minds of many Korean "heathens," especially those of women, and inspired many to convert.[21]

Missionary photography aimed to depict Korean women in modern American spaces such as churches, homes, schools, and hospitals in order to convey their material as well as their moral and intellectual progress. In this image surrounded by Western objects is Yi Kyŏngsŏn, a Korean woman who converted to Christianity in 1909 (Fig. 8.2). This photograph of Yi in a

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During the same period, Korean evangelist men were paid $50–$60 a year and evangelist women about half of that. There was a huge gap between American and Korean staff members, but it was considered still decent, stable, and regular income for Koreans. Ryu Dae Young, "American Protestant Missionaries in Korea, 1882–1910: A Critical Study of Missionaries and Their Involvement in Korean American Relations and Korean Politics," (Ph.D. diss., Vanderbilt University, 1998), 81–85.

18 The unfavorable conditions for missionaries were not limited to material goods, hygiene, and medical conditions. Donald Clark notes how anti-foreign rumors and threats were rampant during these early years. *Living Dangerously in Korea: The Western Experiences, 1900–1950* (2011), 14–15.

19 Based on research on the lifestyles, religious behaviors, entrepreneurial engagement, and capitalist values found in the lives of early missionaries, Ryu argues that Protestant foreign missions from the United States during this period were a socioreligious phenomenon of white middle-class Protestants. Ryu, "American Protestant Missionaries in Korea," 56–60.

20 Ryu reports that, in 1892, for example, there were a total of nineteen American children in the town of Seoul, out of which eighteen belonged to American missionaries.

21 Koreans' curiosity about the houses and lifestyles of these 'crazy foreigners' astonished many foreigners living in the country. George Gilmore, a Presbyterian who came as a teacher at Yukyŏng kongwŏn, mentions that some Americans, especially the missionaries who were well aware of this, often threw "open a part of their houses for inspection" by these curious natives and asserted that "mere contact with foreigners often produces a wonderful change in the ways of looking at things" among the natives. Gilmore introduces an example of his Korean teacher who asked Gilmore to invite his curious wife to Gilmore's house. Upon their visit to his house, Gilmore took a photograph of the couple and published it in his book. *Korea from Its Capital: With a Chapter on Missions* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication and Sabbath-School Work, 1892), 86–88.

FIGURE 8.2 Yi Kyŏngsŏn sitting in a missionary residence, right after her conversion to Christianity in 1909.
SOURCE: GENERAL COMMISSION ON ARCHIVES & HISTORY OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, MADISON, NJ

missionary residence was taken right after her conversion. Yi is sitting in a Western-style room filled with Western furniture and décor, such as curtains, carpets, lamps, and wallpaper. Many framed photographs are displayed on the wall behind her, showing that pictures were an integral part of the missionary's life and activities. Despite the material objects in the background that invoke the images of the "West" and "Christianity," her appearance would hardly evoke her new Christian identity without the label on the image. The United Methodist Archives and History Center houses a few more pictures of Yi, however, that capture the transformation that her identity underwent in the period after conversion.

Yi was trained as a junior nurse at Pokuyŏkwan (The Salvation of All Women Hospital Nursing School), the first hospital for women in Korea, and was capped as a nurse on May 28, 1914 (Fig. 8.3). King Kojong (r. 1863–1907) named the hospital "Pokuyŏkwan" upon its inauguration, just as he had named the first government-sponsored hospital Chejungwon and many other Christian schools. Although Christianity had not been officially legalized, its

FIGURE 8.3 Yi Kyŏngsŏn graduating as a junior nurse on May 28, 1914
SOURCE: GENERAL COMMISSION ON ARCHIVES & HISTORY OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, MADISON, NJ

activities often received the state's endorsement in the form of financial support or special honors, such as the appointment of a name and signboard. The Pokuyŏkwan was also a missionary medical enterprise under the auspices of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society (WFMS) of the Methodist Episcopal Church of America in conjunction with the Ewha Haktang. Yi, like other motivated young women who sought a novel set of professional and personal horizons through education, applied to the institution.

A 1906 article in the women's magazine, *Kadyŏng chapchi* (*Family Magazine*) reiterated that becoming a trained nurse at the Pokuyŏkwan was a way to participate in and contribute to the country's modernization. The author explained,

> Pokuyŏkwan is a hospital for women in Chŏngdong, Seoul, and known for its warm care of sick women suffering from various ailments. They also have an affiliated nursing school. This school, unlike other schools, does not teach such subjects as geography and history; instead, they select smart girls and teach them how to treat various diseases and how

> to identify such diseases by training their eyes, ears, and hands. Besides, it is known that they invite many prominent doctors and teachers to teach there and make their students work very hard.... Our country needs more of these professionals, so it is wished that many adult women check this opportunity out and contribute to the wellness of the country by becoming nurses.[22]

Professional women such as those who matriculated at Pokuyŏkwan cultivated a sense of duty and pride in their perceived role as a driving force for the nation's modernization projects. Of equal importance, however, was their introduction into the public sphere in terms of their new, public professions and their publicized photographic images.

In one of the photographs (Fig. 8.3) taken during her capping ceremony with fellow nurses and a couple of other photographs of her as a nurse at work, Yi Kyŏngsŏn shows a completely different aura. In these images, Yi did not need background signs or symbols to render her new identity visible. Instead, her firm posture, the nursing cap that is perched assertively on her head, professional uniform, and the diploma in her hand suffice as reminders of her changed being. Her images, captured over a decade, recorded her moments from conversion to professional rebirth. This visual epiphany represents a two-step transformation: from a heathen woman to a Christian, and from a Christian to an educated and independent professional nurse who does the work of God. Yi's images delivered a strong message about the ideal Korean woman in the religious circles of the period. Her visual records vividly illustrate revolutionary opportunities, facilitated by Christian programs, that Korean women took to transform themselves.

The images of Korean women in the public sphere were arresting, especially those in uniforms performing professional activities. To a great extent, photography drastically altered the contexts for images of women in late nineteenth-century Korea. The most frequently archived and widely publicized women in missionary photography were those who were abandoned, orphaned, disabled, sick, widowed, abused, and of low birth. Their conversion stories were of socioeconomic uplift and represented challenges to the social status system as well. They cut across boundaries of gender, class, and race and appealed to the American audience as success stories of their missionary and civilization projects. As seen in the case of Yi Kyŏngsŏn, many women reappear multiple times in the archives, showing that they were photographed numerous times. Intended or not, the transformations in their lives were

22 *Kadyŏng Chapji* 가뎡 잡지 1, no. 4 (Sept. 1906): 31.

recorded and monitored within the frame of mission activities. Yi Kyŏngsŏn's "before-and-after images" were used in the lanternslide lectures for fundraising events in the United States for a long time.[23]

Following the foundational period for American missionary activities in the 1880s, missionary activities gained momentum starting in 1891. With the entrance of several new missionaries into the country, organizations set out to extend their purview beyond the capital.[24] In doing so, they offered new possibilities to an increasing number of women to study at school, travel, and speak in public. Some managed to organize associations and take professional jobs through mission programs. Among them were Esther Park (1877–1910), born to a poor family, who became the first female medical doctor with an American license; Nancy Ha (1968–1919), concubine to a rich man, who then studied at Ohio Wesleyan University, received a B.A. degree from Ewha Haktang, and became the institution's first female faculty member; lowborn Mary Yŏ (b. 1872), who became an educator after studying in the United States and missionary Mary Scranton's stepdaughter. These women fought against inner inhibitions, gave up conventional dreams of husbands, children, and families, or left the comfort of their country to study abroad in America. They had done so as they chose to adopt an illegal religion and American names—both decisions that often led to ostracization by most other Koreans. These choices point to Korean women who embraced the new opportunities made available to them through Christianity.

Professional Korean women in general and women trained in medicine in particular were emblematic of this development. Images of such women stand out in missionary archives in terms of quantity in general and in quantity of photos of the same women over time. Another good example is Grace Lee (b. 1882), a disabled and orphaned slave, who was treated in Pokuyŏkwan and went on to embody this phenomenon. After studying in Ewha Haktang, Lee became an assistant in Pokuyŏkwan and was later admitted as one of the trainees when its nursing school was opened in December 1903 in response to the

23 Yi's images were included among slides for a standard lecture and used by missionaries. "Korea," Slide No. 56 & 57, Lecture Notes, General Commission on Archives & History of the United Methodist Church.

24 Lillias Underwood recorded that the total number of converts by "Methodists and Presbyterians together up to 1889 numbered only a little over one hundred" in *Fifteen Years Among the Top-knots* (Boston, New York: American Tract Society, 1904), 33. Alongside the new arrival of missionary forces in the early 1890s, George Paik explains that the Sino-Japanese War in 1894–1895 in particular caused an increase in American influence in Korea that prompted a rise in the number of Christian converts. *The History of American Missions in Korea, 1832–1910* (Seoul: Union Christian College Press, 1929), 171.

hospital's increasing demand for nursing staff. The opening was widely publicized in newspapers and magazines. *Cheguk sinmun* (Imperial Post) reported, "The Pokuyŏkwan in Chŏngdong [an area in downtown Seoul] has operated for several years, curing many sick Korean women and children. Now the hospital has just opened a nursing school to train nurses to care for sick patients."[25]

Daily training at the Pokuyŏkwan was regimented and rigorous. It included eight to twelve hours of nursing fieldwork and evening lectures.[26] In addition, daily Bible study and English lessons were also among the requirements for nurse trainees.[27] The selection of novice trainees was thus strict and involved a careful examination of parental agreement, medical status, and recommendation from a church. Students' willingness to accept all the rules and guidelines of the school was critically considered as well. Once admitted, students began a two-month-long probationary training session, after which they could advance to a three-year-long regular junior nursing training program.[28]

Grace Lee was one of the first five students admitted to the school. *The Korean Methodist* published a picture with an introduction stating that five Korean students were in training in a newly opened nursing program, which had been founded under the auspices of the WFMS of the Methodist Episcopal Church (Fig. 8.4). The five students are posing with their American missionary teachers. The photo's caption identifies these students as "Mattie; unsatisfactory, dropped; Ellen; Grace; Martha."[29] Dressed in white uniforms, their gazes convey mixed messages: they look uncertain and tired, but at the same time hopeful and confident about what they were doing. One salient aspect of this group, though, is their unitary adoption of American and Christian names. Adopting American names, a practice among nurses and nurse trainees in Pogŭyŏgwan, represented a high level of cultural emulation. It clearly stemmed from their intimate relationships and shared sense of collegiality with American teaching faculty.

Grace Lee and Martha Kim from this picture were the first who were capped as junior nurses after completing the first three-year program in 1906. The

25 *Cheguk shinmun* 제국신문 (Nov. 24, 1904).

26 Mary Cutler and Margaret Edmund, "Po Ku Nyo Koan-Hospital and Nurses' Training School, Seoul," *The Annual Meeting of the Women's Conference of the M.E.C. in Korea* (1906), 19–20.

27 Margaret Edmunds, "Nursing in Mission Station: An Open Letter," *American Journal of Nursing* 8, no. 4 (Jan. 1908): 285.

28 Lee Bangwon 이방원. "Pokuyŏkwanŭi sŏllipkwa hwaltong, 1903–1913 보구여관의 설립과 활동, 1903–1913 [Founding and Operation of Nursing School of Pokuyŏkwan, 1903–1913]," *Korean Journal of Medical History* (2011): 360–361.

29 The name of the student who was unsatisfactory and dropped was not included.

FIGURE 8.4 A group of the first Korean students, along with their instructors, in the Nurse Training School of the Salvation of All Women Hospital (Pokuyŏkwan).
SOURCE: THE KOREAN METHODIST (JUNE 10, 1905)

camera caught Lee and Kim's capping ceremony, with their teachers and fellow classmates in attendance (Fig. 8.5). The authoritative presence in the images of American missionary Mrs. Margaret J. Edmunds, head nurse and their mentor, gives their training the aura of legitimacy associated with the modern and foreign.[30] The graduates' attire contributed to this aura as well. Caps were traditionally a sign of power and authority in rituals and public service. Although worn exclusively by men in traditional Korean contexts, this connotation carried over to the modern era.[31] These women in caps and uniforms heralded

30 Margaret J. Edmonds, a registered nurse, graduated from the Nursing School of the University of Michigan in 1893 and came to Korea in 1903 to take responsibility as the founding director of the nurse training program at Pokuyŏkwan. She established the nursing program by developing curriculum, compiling textbooks, designing the uniforms, and other foundational work. Edmunds also translated the word "nurse" into a Korean term, *kanhowŏn*. Mary Cutler (1865–1948) came to Korea in 1893 and served as the second director of Pokuyŏkwan hospital until 1901 and ran the hospital's nursing program until 1909. Sources of Nursing History in Korea, 1886–1911, 89, 161–162.

31 One exception was female shamans who wore hats and dresses similar to the official uniforms of government officials. Korean shamans were Confucianized in appearance and civilized in their performances, compared to their counterparts in Siberian shamanism

FIGURE 8.5 Capping Ceremony for Grace Lee and Martha Kim in 1906. From the left, Ellen Kim, Grace Lee, M.J. Edmunds, Martha Kim, and Mattie Chung
SOURCE: GENERAL COMMISSION ON ARCHIVES & HISTORY OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, MADISON, NJ

their entrance into public service in a modern and professional context. These photos helped to capture the advent of modern nursing in Korea.

Two years later, the two nurses successfully finished the entire training program and graduated as the first senior nurses. The completion of a long and arduous training program deserved special celebration with guests to honor their accomplishment. There are several pictures in the archives, including one in which the two women proudly hold framed diplomas that are big enough to cover almost half of the entire image (Fig. 6).[32] The diplomas first and foremost attest to the accomplishments of these women, who had broken the confines on women in traditional Korean society and transformed themselves into modern independent human beings. The fact that these women had been especially marginalized in their society as a disabled woman born to a slave family and an abused and abandoned wife by her family made their achievements all the more impressive.

(Korean Confucianism's origin). It is one of the major characteristics that distinguish Korean shamanism from other types of shamanistic cultures.

32 General Commission on Archives & History of the United Methodist Church, Madison, NJ.

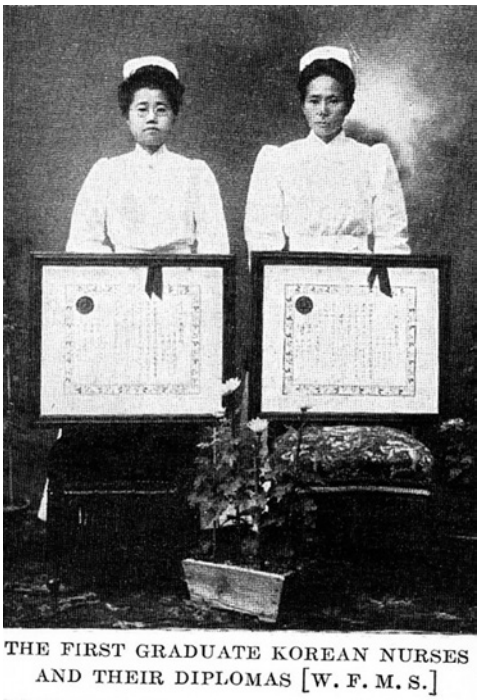

FIGURE 8.6
Grace Lee and Martha Kim, graduating from the Nursing Program of Pogu yŏgwan, November 1908
SOURCE: GENERAL COMMISSION ON ARCHIVES & HISTORY OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, MADISON, NJ

To these otherwise hopeless women, the church became a relief organization that cured and sheltered them. Their stay in the church and hospital, as well as close observation of the lives of missionaries, led them to new lives as women and Christians. Missionaries educated them and offered them jobs. Their jobs involved serving as home care professionals, assisting missionary doctors, operating kitchens and dispensaries, and teaching patients about Christianity and how to read and write. They successfully transformed themselves from poor, uneducated, traditional Korean women confined to the private sphere into caregivers, managers, medical assistants, and even teachers and leaders who embraced modern Christian womanhood.

Missionary photographs allow us to see the extent to which these women associated their intellectual and professional transformation with their new social and cultural identities. Capturing momentous events in the personal lives of Korea's first nursing school graduates, for instance, photographs reveal that these women belonged to a new transnational and multicultural community that embraced Western and Korean culture at the same time. Grace Lee's wedding took place with colleagues, teachers, and guests (Fig. 8.7). In this image as well as in another photo of Grace Lee and her groom, evangelist Hayŏng Yi, however, Lee appears dressed as a professional and not as a

FIGURE 8.7 The wedding of Grace Lee and an evangelist Yi Hayŏng, January 30, 1907
SOURCE: GENERAL COMMISSION ON ARCHIVES & HISTORY OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, MADISON, NJ

bride. Instead of a ceremonial traditional dress or a Western wedding dress, she proudly wore her nursing uniform with a cap (Fig. 8.7 and Fig. 8.8). It is clear from these images that Lee strongly identified with her profession, down to the clothing she wore, and that she maintained her new identity as a professional nurse even on her wedding day. As this single example demonstrates, the cap and uniform could act as signifiers of not only professional but also personal transition.

These wedding images also hint at Lee's stance on the relationship between her new marriage and her profession. First, Lee and Yi were married on January 30, 1907, after the school's second year capping ceremony.[33] The decision to have the wedding not only after her professional ceremony, meaning that she would have obtained her degree, but immediately after, speaks to the

33 See Margaret Edmund's memoir on Grace Lee, *Han'guk kanho yŏksa charyojip, Volume I: 1886–1911* 한국 간호역사 자료집 I [Sources of Nursing History in Korea, Volume I: 1886–1911] (Seoul: Taehan Kanho Hyŏphoe, 2011), 170–171.

FIGURE 8.8 The wedding of Grace Lee and Yi Hayŏng with guests, January 30, 1907
SOURCE: GENERAL COMMISSION ON ARCHIVES & HISTORY OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, MADISON, NJ

importance that she placed on her new career—a career that she would not abandon after marriage. In fact, as Rev. G.H. Jones asserted in *The Korean Mission Field*, Lee was determined to continue pursuing her career after marriage, and so her marriage would not hinder her study and professional pursuits. He wrote:

> In Korea, the conditions of social life are such that marriage is essential for all young ladies and this event, taking place in the midst of her training for work, will neither interfere with her finishing her course nor practicing her profession afterward.[34]

Grace Lee did not choose a very typical path for women of the time. In that sense, Lee's wedding was nothing short of a declaration of her rebirth as an independent woman. Lee was a trailblazer who broke the threshold of multiple, conventional boundaries in her native society. Photographic images mirror Lee's reshaping of herself as an equal, independent modern individual with the right and ability to mediate between the often-competing priorities of marriage and work. After becoming the first Korean senior nurse, Lee later became a licensed medical doctor during the colonial period.

3 Conclusion

The Pokuyŏkwan, alongside its nursing school, was short-lived as it merged with the Lilian Harris Memorial Hospital in Tongdaemun in 1914.[35] However, Pokuyŏkwan was unique in the sense that women performed all essential and nonessential tasks for the treatment of sick women. It was truly "woman's work for women."[36] As some research indicates, of course, there existed fundamental and even discriminatory discrepancies between the women missionaries and native women in terms of salary, working conditions, and

34 Rev. G.H. Jones. "The Capping of the Nurses," *The Korea Mission Field* 3, no. 4 (1907): 50.

35 It was started as a dispensary by two doctors, Lilian Harris and Rosetta Hall, in Pokuyŏkwan and became the present-day Hospital of Ewha Woman's University. See Shim Gunshik, "Methodist Medical Mission in Korea," *Methodist History* 46, no. 1 (October 2007): 41–44.

36 There were six American missionary nurses who helped the foundation and operation of the nursing school: Margaret J. Edmunds, Alta I. Morrison, Naomi A. Anderson, E.S. Roberts, M.M. Rogers, and E.T. Rosenberger. "From Missionary Letters," *Heathen Women's Friend* 19, no. 1 (July 1887): 11–12.

promotions.[37] The Pokuyŏkwan was no exception to this. However, the images of Yi and Lee point to the new, modern womanhood that Korean students cultivated through these unequal relationships. Missionary programs offered Korean women a new vision and a chance to become independent socially and financially from repressive family members and societal restrictions that abandoned and marginalized them. They allowed them to achieve self-realization and create a community of like-minded women outside the home. The female converts, colporteurs, as well as the Bible women discussed in the next chapter of this volume were the driving force behind various programs in schools, hospitals, and churches. Conversion gave them a chance to become literate and taught them about service for others, spiritual sensitivity, and religious life, thus introducing them to the modern world.

Early missionary photography documented the emergence of these professional Korean women into the public sphere. While missionaries sought to project specific images of their Korean women students, the women photographed also participated in the creation of those images. This did not, of course, mean that Korean women gained complete and open access to the public sphere. Only certain public professions were open to Korean women and even those would be domesticized under missionary and Korean pressure in coming decades. These constituted what Hyaeweol Choi describes as the limitations that Victorian notions of domesticity and the separation of gendered spheres placed upon Korean women's liberation through Christianity.[38] Beyond representing missionaries' will to document and publicize the activities of Korean converts, however, photographs were a reflection of Korean women's desires to externalize their unprecedented public hopes and dreams. These photographs captured Korean women socioeconomically emerging in public sphere, a new precedent at the time. In that sense, Christianity was responsible for allowing Korean women to open a door that, despite consistent efforts from many native and foreign directions, could not be reclosed once ajar.

37 Ryu, "American Protestant Missionaries in Korea," 85.

38 Hyaeweol Choi, *Gender and Mission Encounters in Korea: New Women, Old Ways* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009).

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- *Cheguk shinmun* 제국신문
- *Kadyŏng Chapji* 가뎡잡지
- *The Independent*

– General Commission on Archives & History of the United Methodist Church, Madison, NJ
– *Heathen Women's Friend*
– Historical Photo Archives of Ewha Girls' High School
– *The Korean Methodist*

CHAPTER 9

Christian New Women of Modern Korea: Inheritors of the Bible Women's Legacy

Lee-Ellen Strawn

The end of the nineteenth century was, without question, a time of momentous change in Korean society. The opening of Korea to the West and to modern imperial ambitions started a particular chain of events that forever altered traditional Korea and the lifestyles of its people. The introduction of Protestant Christianity, beginning right before the landmark *kapsin coup* of 1884, paralleled the desire for modernity among an influential, yet controversial group of Koreans. Thus, the timely confluence of Protestant evangelization and the quest for a modern Korean society helped to bring about profound change for many lower-class and marginalized Koreans, including women.

This modern empowerment of Korean women began with Bible Women in women's inner rooms (*anpang*) and in Protestant churches through the teaching of literacy skills for the reading of religious texts and through the gathering of women in public church meetings. By living out their faith through their work in society, the Christian New Women (*kidokkyo sin yŏsŏng*) of the 1920s and 1930s, a subgroup of the New Women (*sin yŏsŏng*), inherited the Bible Woman's legacy. If Bible Women were the grassroots pioneers in the formation of a modern new womanhood acting largely in religious circles, the Christian New Women carried their voice into the secular sphere while maintaining a religious and professional identity.

Beginning with an explanation of the Bible Woman system in Korea and its ripple effects, this chapter reveals the positive connection between new opportunities for women emanating from Protestant Christian circles and women living out non-traditional lifestyles and engaging in sociopolitical action for change in twentieth-century Korea. The chapter shows the influence Bible Women had on the Christian New Women who followed in their footsteps a few decades later and highlights the significance of the woman's *anpang* and public women's interpretive communities for women's social transformation.

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1 Who Were the Bible Women?

Yang Mi-kang and other scholars hold that Mary F.B. Scranton, the first Protestant woman missionary to Korea appointed in her own right,[1] started the Bible Woman system in Korea. Scranton was appointed by the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, left her home in Belchertown, Massachusetts, and arrived in Korea in 1885. She initiated the Bible Woman system in 1888 by employing two women from her Bible class.[2] Although official employment of these first Bible Women who remain unnamed happened later in the year 1888, the first Bible Woman was carrying out her responsibilities without remuneration at least as early as January 1888. The very first woman to serve as a Bible Woman for the work of the Methodist mission was the sister of a male colporteur who had been brought to Mary Scranton. Scranton trained this woman for Bible Women's work, and in a letter dated January 1888, which was published in *Heathen Woman's Friend* later that year, Scranton wrote, "[All this woman] has done thus far has been without compensation, but I expect to give her at least enough to pay for her chair coolies, as she is a woman of such position that she could not walk on the streets by day. I know of ten whom she has induced to read the book."[3] Scranton, thus, pioneered the beginnings of a Bible Woman system for Korea.

Although Bible Women represented various sectors of society, most had in common the fact that they operated less centrally within the family system than other Korean women. The Christian newspaper *Kippŭn Sosik* (*Joyful News*) points to the desirability of older and less encumbered women for the work of Bible Women[4] and *The History of the Korean Bible Society*, too, explains

1 Yang Mi-kang 양미강, "Ch'ogi Chŏndo Puin ŭi Sinanggwa Hwaldong 초기 전도부인의 신앙과 활동 [Faith and Activities of Early Bible Women]," *Han'guk Kidokkyo wa Yŏksa* 2 (1992): 91–109.

2 *Annual Report of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1888*, 340 as cited in Yun Ch'un-byŏng 윤춘병, *Han'guk Kamnigyo Kyohoe Sŏngjangsa* 한국 감리교 교회 성장사 [The History of the Growth of the Korean Methodist Church] (Seoul: Methodist Publishing House, 1997), 104, 288.

3 Mary F. Scranton, letter dated January 1888, *Heathen Woman's Friend* 19, no. 10 (April 1888): 271 as cited in Katherine H. Lee Ahn, *Awakening the Hermit Kingdom: Pioneer American Women Missionaries in Korea* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2009), 183–184.

4 "Isangjŏk Chŏndo Puin 이상적 전도부인 [The Ideal Bible Woman]," *Kippŭn Sosik* 4 no. 7 (July 1937): 17. Several of the graduating women students who were to become Bible Women compiled a list of desired characteristics for a Bible Woman that appear here. They include "chŏndo puinŭn chanyŏradŭnji tallinŭn kajoki mank'e toemyŏn chayusŭrŏun yŏksanŭn maeu kidae hagi ŏryŏpta" ("If a Bible Woman has many children or dependents, it is very hard to expect that she will be able to freely carry out her work").

that usually it was those women in their middle ages who were less beholden to household responsibilities than other women who became Bible Women initially.[5] Moreover, Methodist missionary Lulu Frey reported about the five Bible Women working with her in 1902 that, "[t]hey are all women unencumbered by household duties giving their whole time to their work."[6]

Yet, to suggest that Bible Women were freer than other women also meant that they were women who were on the margins of society for various reasons (either economically, or socially due to marital status, or both), and therefore, may have come from any of the social classes.[7] Bible Woman (*chŏndo puin*) Chŏn Sam-dŏk, the first Korean woman to be baptized in the north of Korea, was born into the elite *yangban* class, while Bible Woman Chu Lulu's upbringing is one of continuous poverty, which both her mother and maternal grandmother tried to escape by becoming shamans.[8]

As her granddaughter Pauline Kim recounts, Chŏn Sam-dŏk was born in 1843 into a yangban family in the P'yŏngan South Province. Her marriage to a civil servant became lonely when her husband took a concubine. At the time, her neighbor was O Sŏk-kyŏng, an assistant to missionary Dr. William J. Hall. Through her neighbor and her acquaintance with Dr. Hall, Chŏn Sam-dŏk was introduced to the "Jesus doctrine," and later in 1895 she was baptized by Rev. Dr. William Scranton. Pauline Kim, a significant and devoted church worker in her own right, explains the revolutionary way in which her grandmother was baptized: so as to preserve the Confucian cultural norm for *yangban* men and women that they should not be in the company of each other, nor even be seen by each other, Chŏn Sam-dŏk was baptized by putting her head half-way through a hole in a curtain hung in the middle of the room. After her baptism, Chŏn Sam-dŏk attended church services in P'yŏngyang as often as possible and participated in Bible Institutes, mulit-day or multi-week programs of Bible

5 Yi Man-yŏl, Oak Sung Deuk, and Yu Tae-yŏng 이만열, 옥성득, 유대용, *Taehan Sŏngsŏ Konghoesa II: Pŏnyŏk, Panp'owa Kwŏnsŏ Saŏp* 대한 성서 공회사 II: 번역 반포와 권서 사업 [The History of the Korean Bible Society II: Translation, Distribution and the Work of Colporteurs] (Seoul: Korean Bible Society, 1994), 377.

6 Lulu E. Frey, "Report II.—Evangelistic Work of First Church, Seoul," in *Fourth Annual Report of the Korea Woman's Missionary Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church Held At Pyeng Yang, May 16 to 21, 1902* (Seoul: Methodist Publishing House, 1902), 4.

7 In addition to Chŏn Sam-dŏk 전삼덕, the well known British and Foreign Bible Society Bible Woman, Sara Kim, was another strong example of a Bible Woman born into the yangban class. British and Foreign Bible Society, *Report of the Korea Agency for 1917* (Seoul: The Bible House, 1918), 12.

8 Mattie W. Noble, ed., *Victorious Lives of Early Christians in Korea: The First Book of Biographies and Autobiographies of Early Christians in the Protestant Church in Korea* (Seoul: The Christian Literature Society, 1927).

study, some of which were started by Dr. and Mrs. Noble in 1897. Chŏn was asked by Methodist missionary Ethel Estey to work as a Bible Woman, and, with gratitude for the transformation in her life due to her immersion in the church, she continued her labors tirelessly for the growth of the Korean Methodist Church for thirty years.[9]

Bible Woman Chu Lulu, however, had a very different life trajectory from Chŏn Sam-dŏk. Chu Lulu was born in 1879 into a poor underprivileged family in Kyŏn'ggi Province and given the name Chu P'o-ki. Chu Lulu did not have an easy childhood and was married off to a poor farmer at an early age. Due to her difficult married life, Chu Lulu considered becoming a shaman as a way to escape her abusive married life, even though shamans were in the lowest of social classes. The ensuing story of Chu's conversion to Christianity is colorful and complicated, but as it is recounted in Mattie Wilcox Noble's *Victorious Lives of Early Christians in Korea*, Chu Lulu had a unique conversion experience and was baptized in December 1905 by Rev. Critchett.[10] At the request of Methodist missionary Miss Hillman, Chu Lulu became a *han'gŭl* (Korean script) teacher at the Haeju Ŭijŏng School for Girls started by the Haeju Ŭp Church, and in 1907 became a Bible Woman.

Class status, therefore, was clearly not the determining mark for assuming Bible Woman responsibilities; Bible Women need not have come from a lower, or a higher social class. Nonetheless, aristocratic *yangban* women may have been significantly discouraged from assuming Bible Women responsibilities by

9 Pauline Kim, *Chunimi Hamkkehan 90 nyŏn* 주님이 함께한 90년 [90 Years with the Lord] (Seoul: Poisŭsa, 1989), 40–50; Noble, *Victorious Lives of Early Christians in Korea*, 27–38.

10 Noble, *Victorious Lives of Early Christians in Korea*; Rhie Deok Joo 이덕주, *Han'guk Kyohoe Ch'ŏum Yŏsŏngdŭl* 한국 교회 처음 여성들 [Early Christian Women in Korea: Life Stories of 28 Women Who Loved Christ and Her Nation] (Seoul: The Christian Literature Press, 1990), 75–90. When Chu Lulu became gravely ill, her grandmother, who had become a Christian through contact with a Bible Woman, came to her home one evening and prayed and sang hymns to heal her. Chu Lulu considered becoming a Bible Woman herself as a result of this experience, yet this was not to be. A fateful experience of being followed by a strange man leading a cow as she was journeying through the hills with her son to her mother's home traumatized Chu Lulu who consequently became mentally insane. She attended church with her mother and grandmother but often had to be physically restrained because of her irrational outbursts.

After having been forcefully returned to her husband's house, she was kept in her room. One day in her confinement, she happened upon a Catholic tract and baptismal water that her mother-in-law had left with the last hope that her mentally ill daughter-in-law might benefit from such Western religious paraphernalia. Chu Lulu was intrigued as she perused the materials, and she had the miraculous experience of realizing that Jesus Christ was her savior. This was Chu's conversion experience that led to subsequent faithful church attendance, baptism and then to work as a Bible Woman.

their families as was the case of Dora Ye, who nevertheless became an important Bible woman. In the 1927–1928 Annual Report of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Mrs. R.L. Thomas shares that "Dora [Ye]… has fought opposition from her well-to-do home, to stay in this little place and build up the school."[11]

P'yŏngyang Bible Woman Sadie Kim was one who knew the pain of widowhood, not once but twice. She was born in 1865 and her first husband died early in their marriage. She remarried and lived in P'yŏngyang.[12] Despite opposition from her family, Sadie regularly attended the women's prayer meetings and Bible classes (*O Il Hoe*) held by Mattie Wilcox Noble in P'yŏngyang. Moreover, she learned to read the Korean script and her Bible by attending such classes. Sadie Kim was baptized in 1896 and first appointed as a Bible Woman in 1899.

In this way, ultimately regardless of social class, many Bible Women often assumed their position after experiencing tribulations, which their faith was able to pull them through. In a sense, becoming a Bible Woman was an avenue for overcoming difficulty and consequently obtaining social mobility; the opportunity to work for the church gave the Bible Woman a new respectability within church circles and allowed her a modest income and thus, a new-found economic ability. For example, if the Bible Woman had been a *kisaeng* (dancing girl), as was the case of Chŏng Sang-ssŭne[13] who shared her testimony in *Kippŭn Sosik* (*Joyful News*), or a *mudang* (shaman), or a widow, like Sadie Kim,[14] becoming a Bible Woman was a way to regain social standing.

Being a Bible Woman gave women standing in the church and mobility outside the home and into society. Nevertheless, assuming such a position in the church during the early days of Bible Women often led to familial persecution. The Protestant "Jesus doctrine" was still regarded as suspicious especially in a social environment of *wijŏng ch'ŏksa* ("defend orthodoxy and reject heterodoxy") in late nineteenth-century Korea. Rhee Syngman [Yi Sŭngman], well-known Korean-American minister of the Presbyterian Church USA (PCUSA) and one-time head of the National Council of Churches in the United States, recalled that his paternal grandmother, Kim Hyo-Shin [Kim Hyo-sin],

11 Methodist Episcopal Church, *Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, Annual Report, 1927–28*, 64.

12 Noble, *Victorious Lives of Early Christians in Korea*, 129, 130.

13 Chŏng Sang-ssŭne, "Ki Saengŭi Momŭro Chŏndo Puin Toegi Kkaji—2 기생의 몸으로 전도부인 되기까지—2 [From Dancing Girl to Becoming a Bible Woman—2]," *Kippŭn Sosik* 4, no. 11 (Nov. 1937): 5–7. Chŏng Sang-ssŭne's testimony illustrates her life from a *kisaeng* through her husband's death and then to becoming first a self-supported volunteer Bible Woman and then a formally trained Bible Woman.

14 Noble, *Victorious Lives of Early Christians in Korea*.

a Bible Woman in the Sosongri Church in P'yŏngyang was greatly persecuted by his staunchly Confucian grandfather and, at times, not even allowed to enter her own house.[15] Tuksun Kim [Kim Tŏk-sun], in *Victorious Lives of Early Christians in Korea*, also shared that her "husband was determined to make [her] give up her faith."[16]

Thus, Bible Women in the late nineteenth century had to cope with striking contradictions emanating from changing social situations. While they benefitted from a degree of social mobility and economic independence because of their new profession, they also had to contend with the social suspicion, if not outright disapproval, toward their newfound Western, barbaric faith. Yet, it might also be said that Bible Women's seniority among women accorded them clout in a Confucian Korean society that valued *changyu yusŏ* ("there is an order between the elder and child") allowing them to assert their voices and successfully work through these contradictions.

However, the portrayal of the Bible Woman as an older, socially marginal woman was most accurate for the early Bible Women of the Protestant Church in Korea. With the Great Revival of 1907[17] and the prevailing social mood calling for change to save the nation from peril, the number of Protestant adherents increased. Consequently, with the development of the Protestant churches, Bible Women also became more numerous and more socially accepted for their religious convictions. As a result, the age of many of the students at training schools for Bible Women decreased to a much younger average age than the first Bible Women of the late nineteenth century.[18] This indicates a significant change in the demographics of Bible Women from its beginnings, which corresponds to the growth of the Protestant Church, to the advancement of women's education in Korea, and to the changing social perception of Bible Women's work as legitimate and worthwhile.

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15 This story appears in an article that Rhee shared with the author's mother, Sonia Strawn, a Methodist missionary to Korea from 1967 to 2014 who worked closely with him. Rhee Syngman 이승만, "Na ŭi saengae wa sinhak 나의 생애와 신학 [My Life and Faith]," *K'ŭrisŭch'an Sinmun* (April 25 and May 2, 1992).

16 Tuksun Kim, "Through Faith a Conqueror," in Noble, *Victorious Lives of Early Christians in Korea*, 166.

17 The Great Revival that started in 1907 emanated from the northern part of the peninsula and spread throughout Korea. It was likely a response to Japanese encroachment and was expressed as a movement of corporate repentance and renewal in the Korean churches that resulted in an increase in the numbers of Protestant adherents.

18 Kamnigyo Sinhak Taehakkyo, *Chayuwa Pit Kamsin 120 nyŏnui Palchach'wi: Kamnigyo Sinhak Taehakkyo 120 Chunyŏn Hwabojip* 자유와 빛 감신 120년의 발자취: 감리교 신학 대학교 120 주년 화보집 [Freedom and Light, The Trace of the 120 Years of Methodist Theological University: MTU 120th Anniversary Photo Album] (Seoul: Kamnigyo Sinhak Taehakkyo Ch'ulp'anbu, 2008), 104.

2 What Did Bible Women Do?

As assistants who could communicate with missionaries and accompany them on their itinerating trips throughout the Korean peninsula, Bible Women functioned as cultural liaisons and advisors to the women missionaries. This was a significant source of assistance, especially as Bible Women were able to provide women missionaries entry into the *anpang* (inner room), the physically secluded Korean woman's sphere. It was in these inner rooms that Bible Women, western women missionaries and Korean women joined together to learn about one another and to converse across cultural and ideological boundaries.

As local Korean churches grew, Bible Women worked independently but under the direction of missionaries visiting the *anpangs* in the homes of parishioners and non-Christians alike to attend to the sick or troubled, to read to women and their families, to teach the Korean script to illiterate parishioners and desirous onlookers, and to cast out domestic evil spirits and destroy fetishes. In terms of church gatherings, Bible Women sometimes cooked food for church functions as Jane Barlow shared in her 1929 report: "[where] there is no other leader I have seen one of [the Bible Women] act as pastor,… cook for guests, and sleep, in any corner at special times in order that the church and circuit might be blessed."[19]

At times, Bible Women also stepped in for the pastor to preach when the pastor was not available. This was often the case after the 1919 March 1st Independence Movement when many ministers were jailed for their participation in the demonstrations. Actually, many Bible Women themselves, such as O Yun-hŭi, also participated directly in the March 1st demonstrations,[20] pointing to Bible Women's patriotic commitment. But, as opportunity arose "[Bible Women] have been preacher, Sunday school teacher and Bible [W]oman combined."[21]

Bible Women were often called upon to lead prayer meetings for women and to assist with, or lead Bible classes for women. About her work in P'yŏngyang in 1910, Maude Rufus, a Methodist missionary, explained, "[my] bible woman O-si-Sin-do reports as follows:—That she has held nine classes in which 1327

19 Jane Barlow, "Haiju Evangelistic Work," in *Thirty First Annual Report of the Korea Woman's Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church Pyengyang—June 1929* (Seoul: Y.M.C.A. Press, 1929), 24–25.

20 Chang Pyŏng-uk 장병욱, *Han'guk Kamnigyo Yŏsŏngsa*, 1885–1945 한국 감리교 여성사, 1885–1945 [Korean Methodist Women's History 1885–1945] (Seoul: Sung Kwang Publishing Co., 1979), 346–351.

21 Methodist Episcopal Church, Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, *Annual Report, 1926* (Boston: Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, 1926), 88.

women were under instruction."[22] That one Bible Woman might reach so many women is indeed noteworthy. Additionally, Hanna Scharpff wrote in 1924 that, "[the] Bible women were faithful in teaching many Bible classes,"[23] and Jane Barlow wrote about the Haeju area in her 1926 report that, "the Bible women have held classes in eight of the country churches."[24] Many such reports of the instructional leadership of Bible Women in women's classes at churches can be found pointing to yet another sizeable aspect of Bible Women's work.

As part of Bible Women's work for women, Bible Women also helped in organizing Ladies' Aid Societies, which were significant for formally gathering women together in the public sphere. In fact, the first woman's association in Korea was the Protestant "Joyce Chapter" (*cho isŭ hoe*), established at Chŏngdong Methodist Church in 1897 as the female counterpart to the male Epworth League.[25] Moreover, the first women's society for home and foreign missions "was formed in 1898 by the original women members of the first church established in Pyen Yang."[26] In all of these associations for women, Bible Women, the only professional female church workers, played significant leadership roles.

Certainly, Bible Women were also sent to work in dispensaries and hospitals to counsel and console patients and their families, to assist with or lead prayer meetings in the dispensary or hospital, and generally to care for the spiritual well being of those who visited the dispensary or hospital. Follow-up contact with the patient after their departure from the hospital was also often part of this pastoral care package.[27] Sue Hopkins wrote about the East Gate Hospital in Seoul in 1918, "[in the waiting room] Mabel, the Bible-woman, meets the people as they come in, talks of Jesus to all, and gets addresses and

22 Maude S. Rufus, "Evangelistic Work Pyeng Yang," in *Korea Woman's Conference 1910: Twelfth Annual Report of the Korea Woman's Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Seoul May 11–19, 1910* (Seoul: Methodist Publishing House, 1910), 72.

23 Hanna Scharpff, "A Day of Itinerating," in *Annual Report of the Korea Woman's Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church 1924* (Seoul: Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1924), 20.

24 Barlow, "Haiju Evangelistic Work," 27.

25 Rhie Deok Joo 이덕주, Ch'ogi Han'guk Kidokkyosa Yŏn'gu 초기 한국 기독교사 연구 [Research on the History of Early Korean Christianity] (Seoul: Korean Christian History Research Center, 1995), 58.

26 Margaret Best, "Fifty Years of Women's Work," in *The Fiftieth Anniversary Celebration of the Korea Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.* (Seoul: Han'guk Kidokkyo Yŏksa Yŏn'guso, 2000), 91.

27 Methodist Episcopal Church, Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, *Annual Report, 1930–1931* (Boston: Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, 1931), 54.

names so she can do 'follow-up work' later."[28] In the 1926 Annual Report of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Mrs. R.L. Thomas writes concerning medical work at the Lillian Harris Memorial Hospital, "[the] faithful Bible women have come in touch with ten-thousand women during the year, and have followed up the work in 1,233 houses."[29]

Furthermore, Bible Women worked as teachers in day schools, often in the mornings and then carried on the more traditional work of itinerant evangelization in the afternoons. Mattie Wilcox Noble's example of Bible Woman Dora Kim illustrates this type of dual activity. "Our beloved Dora Kim has spent over a year as Bible woman and school-teacher in Chinnampo.... Dora teaches only one half of each day, devoting the rest of the time to regular Bible woman's work."[30] Mary Hillman's and Lula Miller's report also give such evidence of Bible Women teaching and evangelizing. In 1904 they wrote, "[w]e have asked Elizabeth to do itinerary day-school teaching as well as Bible-woman's work."[31] Sometimes a Bible Woman additionally worked as a house matron in a school's dormitory.

The establishment of kindergartens for young children, many of which were functional because of Bible Women, was yet another important outreach of the church, especially the Methodist church in Korea.[32] The hitherto ignored education of young boys and girls under the age of seven, the age when traditional studies began only for boys, had a far-reaching impact in Korean society. Such attention to young children was then also taken up by the followers of the indigenous religion *ch'ŏndogyo* (the later form of the *tonghak* movement). These efforts centered around the efforts of Pang Chŏng-hwan, through their

28 Sue Hopkins, "A Day with Dr. Mary Stewart," *The Korea Mission Field* 14, no. 8 (Aug. 1918): 167 and 168.

29 Methodist Episcopal Church, Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, *Annual Report, 1926* (Boston: Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, 1926), 88.

30 Mattie Wilcox Noble, "Report X.—Schools on the North Korea District," in *Fourth Annual Report of the Korea Woman's Missionary Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church Held At Pyeng Yang, May 16 to 21, 1902* (Seoul: Methodist Publishing House, 1902), 24.

31 Mary Hillman, Lula Miller, "Chemulpo Church, Day Schools and West Korea District," in *Korea Woman's Conference 1904: Reports Read at the Sixth Annual Session of the Korean Woman's Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church Held at Chemulpo, April 30, 1904* (Seoul: Methodist Publishing House, 1904), 26.

32 Blanche Bair, "Report of Social Evangelistic Center," in *Twenty-Eighth Annual Report of the Korea woman's Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church 1926* (Seoul: Chang Moon Christian Press Ltd., 1926), 60–61.

initiative to establish *orini nal* (children's day) as a holiday.[33] Bible Women's work was part of this valuation of children in modern Korea.

Regardless of where Bible Women were stationed, the main objective of Bible Women was to spread the Bible message to women, most of whom were illiterate. Thus, a crucial role that Bible Women played was that of teaching many Korean women to read *han'gŭl*, the Korean script. Yu Ŏp-jin, a retired Bible Woman born in 1901 and living in the *Ansik Kwan*, a Methodist retirement home for women workers of the church, wrote in a 1984 autobiographical synopsis: "I taught writing and singing to the adults who gathered to watch."[34] Additionally, many missionary reports spoke to the literacy work of the Bible Women and accounted for the tens of thousands of women that were read to by Bible Women in any given year. Therefore, a valuable by-product of reaching out to women in order to evangelize was the Bible Women's efforts at decreasing female illiteracy. It would be fair to say that spreading the Gospel to women empowered women to feel personal responsibility for their faith, which meant that they ought to be able to read and know the Bible for themselves.

Along with teaching women to read—a skill that set many women and their daughters on the path to continued education—Bible Women worked with women missionaries to teach ideas of more efficient home management, hygiene, and healthy baby-rearing methods. Myrtle Cable reported that "[b]esides teaching [the women] to read [Eunice, the Bible woman] also teaches them to be neat and clean."[35] Moreover, in 1929, a portion of the curriculum at the Pyeng Yang Woman's Bible Training School for Bible Women included a course in sanitation and first aid.[36] Such social work for women was, in effect, a significant aspect of the Bible Woman's work, not to mention more institutionalized forms of social work. In fact, Bible Women were also sent to work at what were called "women's centers" (*yŏja kwan*) where a variety of social services for women and children were provided.

Bible Women across Korea were aware of Korean women's daily hardships and made their difficulties a concern for evangelization and a means of

33 Han'guk Pang Chŏng-hwan Chaedan 한국 방정환 재단 [Korea Pang Chŏng-hwan Foundation]. Last Accessed June 7, 2018, at https://www.korsofa.org:44315/sub_1_1.php.

34 Yu Ŏp-jin 유업진 in *Ansik Kwan Kŭl Moŭmjip* 안식관 글 모음집 [*Collected Writings of the Inhabitants of the Methodist Retirement Home for Women Workers of the Church*] (Seoul: unpublished work, 1984).

35 Myrtle Elliott Cable, "Evangelistic Work West Korea District," in *Fifth Annual Report of the Korea Woman's Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church Held at Seoul, May 1903* (Seoul: Methodist Publishing House, 1903), 39.

36 Henrietta P. Robbins, "Report of the Pyeng Yang Woman's Bible Training School," in *Thirty First Annual Report of the Korea Woman's Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church Pyengyang—June 1929* (Seoul: Y.M.C.A. Press, 1929), 27.

reaching out to share the good news of the Gospel as they understood it for a better life. Alice Appenzeller explains, "[one] Bible Woman, who consecrates her time and private means to her Master and carries the sorrows of her suffering sisters on her heart, runs a sewing society where poor women make and sell Korean garments. There are doubtless many others who are trying to do something constructive to better the economic condition of the women."[37] Bible Women, motivated by their religious fervor, were, thus, advocates for women's change in practical observable ways.

3 Bible Women to Christian New Women

The Bible Women's impact had resulted significantly from their efforts to promote literacy and education among Korean women through the transmission of the Bible text via the *anpang* network. Evidence of the effect of these pioneer Bible Women on the transformation of Korean women can be found in identifying a lineage of women's "conscientization" (critical consciousness formation) from Bible Women to the New Woman Movement of the 1920s. Specifically, the link is between Bible Women, Protestant educational institutions for women, and the Christian New Women (*kidokkyo sin yŏsŏng*). Christian New Women, the generation of Protestant women to succeed Bible Women, were ideologically empowered by the same Protestant evangelism and educational efforts for women that had enabled Bible Women.

As an introductory note to Christian New Women, it is helpful to point out that in the 1920s, education for women in Korea was carried out in three strands: in the Japanese colonial government schools for girls, in the private Protestant schools for girls such as Ewha, and in the non-Protestant private schools for girls founded and run by Koreans. Of those who studied at Protestant institutions (including schools for the training of Bible Women specifically and those for women's education in general), some became *kidokkyo sin yŏsŏng* (Christian New Women).[38] Certainly, the Protestant schools were initially founded for the purpose of raising and training good Christian women; in the case of the Bible Training Schools, the objective was to professionally train women evangelists and church workers. However, not all of the graduates of such Protestant

37 Alice Appenzeller, "The Need of Social Work Among the Women of Seoul," *The Korea Mission Field* 14, no. 4 (Apr. 1918): 78.

38 Yi Yun-mi 이윤미. "Ilcheha Kidokkyo Sin Yŏsŏng ŭi Kŭndae Insik kwa Kŭndaesŏnge taehan Chaego 일제하 기독교 신여성의 근대 인식과 근대성에 대한 재고 [A Reappraisal of the Christian "New Women" and the Question of Western Modernity]." *Kyoyuk Sahak Yŏn'gu* 교육사학 연구 15 (2005): 137–169.

educational institutions went into church work; some dedicated their lives to academia, to medicine, to journalism, or to writing and the arts, often living a public and non-married lifestyle that was seen as novel and radical by many. Thus, these Protestant institutions served as a conduit for bringing forth a new kind of woman in Korean society, the *kidokkyo sin yŏsŏng*.

4 Emergence of Kidokkyo Sin Yŏsŏng

The *Sin Yŏsŏng* New Woman Movement, as one that promoted women's self-determination and agency, was criticized by many in society as immoral or ill conceived, especially with regard to the perception that *sin yŏsŏng* advocated for free love and marriage. In point of fact, the free love issue unduly became the salient characteristic of the movement in the eyes of many. Some asserted that, "[t]hese educated women, whom reformers had nurtured and upheld as symbols of modernity, civilization, and nationalism, were undermining the stability of the family, compromising sexual morality, and degrading national character."[39] It is understandable that women advocating for a relationship arrangement outside of conventional boundaries would be suspect. Yet, the free love position essentially was to liberate women from the sole role of procreation and to allow women greater psychological and emotional freedom; they were not advocating irresponsible relationships. Rather, they were promoting an ethos that emancipated women from the confines of patriarchy and that viewed women as independent, self-determining agents capable of charting their own fate just as men. Yet, many New Women led dissatisfied lives because their convictions were neither well understood nor accepted in Korean society.

This understanding, that women were self-determining persons as were men, was the foundational view for those *sin yŏsŏng* who were Christian, as it was for all *sin yŏsŏng*. But, to differentiate themselves from the perception that *sin yŏsŏng* were radical libertines, Christian New Woman called themselves *kidokkyo sin yŏsŏng*. Yi Yun-mi used this nomenclature for these women in her article, reappraising Christian New Women and modernity.[40] This distinction was important since many of the women who constituted this group of New Women graduated from Protestant educational institutions and saw themselves as upstanding, moral members of the community. Moreover, as

39 Theodore Jun Yoo, *The Politics of Gender in Colonial Korea: Education, Labor, and Health, 1910–1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 59.

40 Yi, Yun-mi "Ilcheha, Kidokkyo Sin Yŏsŏng."

products of Protestant churches or schools, Christian New Women were carrying on the legacy of Bible Women, who had been empowering Korean women a generation earlier to see themselves as responsible for, and self-determining of their own lives of faith.

The archetype of the *kidokkyo sin yŏsŏng* was Helen Kim (Kim Hwallan), the first Korean woman to earn a doctoral degree and, as a graduate of Ewha herself, the first Korean woman president of Ewha Womans University. Helen Kim was, thus, an independent professional woman who did not marry. In appearance she resembled *sin yŏsŏng* to a degree, in that she wore her hair short. But beyond that, her dress was modest, and her Christian lifestyle was one of faithful celibacy in her vocation as an educator. While a controversial figure in modern Korean history, her life and work reveal a radical conception of women's abilities that were influenced by her Christian beliefs.

In Helen Kim's autobiography, *Grace Sufficient: The Story of Helen Kim*, she describes the influential conversion of her mother by a local Bible Woman, also a Helen Kim. This story of Helen Kim's upbringing and her mother's new-found faith illustrates how Protestant Christianity and the Church permeated women's lives and produced a transformation in Korean families that was certainly pertinent to the sociohistorical changes in Korean society at the beginning of the twentieth century. Helen Kim (the author) wrote, "Mrs. Kim was a visiting Bible woman who assisted the pastor of the Christian church. The pastor, being a man, could not visit the women in their homes. As mother became friendly with Mrs. Kim and heard from her about the Christian message, she became an earnest seeker after the truths of the Christian religion."[41] Thus it was that Helen Kim's mother came to accept Christianity and then brought the entire family into the Church.

Moreover, the introduction of church life into Helen Kim's family inspired her mother to pursue education for her daughters, including Helen, a notion that ran contradictory to Confucian womanly virtues of retiring decorum and obeisance to male authorities. Helen Kim writes about her mother, "[in] her evening prayers she would thank God for giving her daughters the privilege of learning, which had been denied to her. Her prayers … were always, 'Father, help them to become better servants of Thine than their mother could ever be.'"[42] Helen Kim's mother, thus, understood education for her daughters to be essential to being good Christian women, an attitude that was heretofore uncommon for Korean women and one that was clearly the impetus for

41 Potts, J.M., ed., *Grace Sufficient: The Story of Helen Kim* (Nashville: The Upper Room, 1964), 10.

42 Ibid., 16.

sending Helen to Ewha, the first modern school for girls in Korea. In this way, the beginnings of Helen's Kim's education are easily traced to the influence of the Bible Woman who forged a friendship with her mother and helped to bring about profound change in her family.

The Bible Woman Helen Kim was one of many such women who entered into the cloistered women's quarters and greatly affected the lives of many Korean women at the turn of the twentieth century. And Helen Kim, the Ewha president, the first Korean woman to earn a PhD degree and serve as a representative of her country to the United Nations, was one of many Korean women who, through the advent of Christianity in their homes, were empowered to take extraordinary strides for Korean women and thus, for modern Korean society.

Ch'a Mirisa, too, was baptized in the Methodist Church, and as a product of the Methodist emphasis on women's education and as a theological school graduate, she was an active educator for Korean women.[43] Although widowed at an early age, she, also, was a model *kidokkyo sin yŏsŏng.* Kim Maria, graduate of *Chŏng Sin* Girls School and a leader in the independence movement against Japan,[44] and Pak In-dŏk, graduate of Ewha, educator, one time travelling secretary for the Student Volunteer Movement Organization from 1928 to 1929, and the first woman in Korea to divorce her husband for infidelity also are examples of New Women in Korea who were Christian.[45]

Kim Pillye, a main organizer of the Korean Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) is a further example of a *kidokkyo sin yŏsŏng.* As a daughter of a Bible Woman and as a graduate of one of the Presbyterian mission schools for girls in Seoul, Kim Pillye felt that "the most literate, enlightened, educated group of Korean women [in her time were] in the Church and the schools of the Church."[46] As a *kidokkyo sin yŏsŏng*, Kim Pillye valued the philosophy of women's empowerment and social transformation that educated New Women understood as essential for the emerging modern Korean society. Despite the distinction of being Christian, *kidokkyo sin yŏsŏng* were a new kind of woman in Korean society. They were *sin yŏsŏng* motivated by their faith and working outside the home developing patterns for women's lives that were

43 "Ch'a Mirisa 차미리사," *Encyclopaedia Britannica Online Korea*, last accessed June 7, 2018 at http://preview.britannica.co.kr/bol/topic.asp?article_id=b20c1505a.

44 "Kim Maria," in *Han'guk Kŭnhyŏndaesa Sajŏn 1860–1990* 한국 근현대사 사전 1860–1990 [The Dictionary of Modern Korean History 1860–1990], ed. Yi I-hwa 이이화 (Seoul: Karam Kihoek, 1990), 157.

45 Choi, Hyaeweol, *Gender and Mission Encounters in Korea: New Women, Old Ways* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 159 and 160.

46 Harry A. Rhodes, ed., *History of the Korea Mission Presbyterian Church U.S.A. Vol. 1 1884–1934* (Seoul: The Presbyterian Church of Korea Department of Education, 1934), 262.

different from conventional ones. They held up the importance of women's education, the importance of a woman's personal responsibility for her beliefs and of expressing her convictions, for speaking up for other women, and the importance of joining in community. These *kidokkyo sin yŏsŏng* were women who had been educated at mission schools and thereby point to the strong influence of the work of Bible Women and Protestant educational institutions on the appearance, and work of, Christian New Women in Korean society. *Kidokkyo sin yŏsŏng* show that mission schools and Protestant education for girls, including the early literacy work of Bible Women, were a conduit for producing a new type of woman in Korean society.

But, for many Protestant Koreans and many in the western missionary community, *kidokkyo sin yŏsŏng* were suspect by virtue of the fact that they did not seem to value the traditional Korean family structure. The decision of many *kidokkyo sin yŏsŏng* to remain single was difficult for Korean Protestants to absorb. This new lifestyle of celibacy that many *kidokkyo sin yŏsŏng* adopted and their continuing venture into the public arena did not sit well with Korean Protestants' strict adherence to gender roles. If women were being educated for the sake of raising good families, this was at least palatable and acceptable on the grounds that it promoted nationalism. But if women's efforts were solely for asserting their voice in society without direct connection to this "nationalist mandate" promoted by Korean male intellectuals and many missionaries,[47] this was regarded with suspicion. Kim Pillye's assertion that women not only have the right to an education, but also more liberty in marriage relations,[48] were radical ideas even in Korean churches, which were patriarchal and functioned within the traditional Korean family system. Therefore, even though *kidokkyo sin yŏsŏng* distinguished themselves from *sin yŏsŏng* as a whole, there was still tension in Protestant circles about the emergence of this new group of Korean women who had been educated in Protestant schools.

5 Formation of an Interpretive Community of *Kidokkyo Sin Yŏsŏng*: the Korean Young Woman's Christian Association

Despite any societal reservations, the lives and work of *kidokkyo sin yŏsŏng*, illustrated that through education women were bettering themselves and coming together in public forums for mutual empowerment. The public gatherings of *kidokkyo sin yŏsŏng* find historical precedence in the meetings for

47 Hyaeweol Choi, *Gender and Mission Encounters in Korea*, 20.
48 Rhodes, 262.

women in the early Korean Protestant churches. The opening of the *Choisŭ Hoe* ("Joyce Chapter"), the female counterpart to the male Methodist Epworth League, in October 1897 in Chŏngdŏng Methodist Church is credited as the first women's modern public meeting. Other informal, yet nonetheless public women's gatherings took place in the church such as various *puin ch'inmokhoe* (women's fellowship gatherings) as early as 1901.[49] Additionally, the *Poho Yŏ Hoe* (Ladies Aid Society) founded in the Methodist Church for the purpose of organizing church women to help other women was another influential woman's association.[50]

The Korean Young Woman's Christian Association (YWCA) founded in 1922 is a strong historical example of the formation of an interpretive community by various *kidokkyo sin yŏsŏng* for Korean women. Founded upon Protestant ideals, the YWCA drew its leaders from at least fifteen different women's organizations in Korean society at the time,[51] many of which would have had organizational roots in the early women's meetings in Protestant churches with Bible Women in leadership roles. In Helen Kim's own words, the Korean chapter of the YWCA was founded as a "means to release [women's] pent-up patriotism and to follow up the awakening of the … women in particular, with some concrete measures."[52] *Kidokkyo Sin Yŏsŏng* Kim Hwal-lan (or Helen Kim) and Kim Pillye along with Yu Kak-kyŏng were the main organizers, but they were also assisted by Kim Sŏng-sil, Kim Hap-na, and Sin Ŭi-kyŏng.[53] According to Chŏng Yo-sŏp, Kim Hwal-lan gathered sixty plus women leaders from around the Korean peninsula for ten days in June 1922 to prepare for the establishing of the YWCA. This historic meeting was held in a woman's Bible Institute (*yŏja sŏnggyŏng hagwŏn*), and of the women leaders gathered some were Bible Women (*chŏndo puin*).[54] Thus, even from the YWCA's formation, the connection between Bible Women and the *kidokkyo sin yŏsŏng* is prominent.

Therefore, the influence of Bible Women on the new type of woman emerging in Korean society at the time was significant. The main organizer of the YWCA, Kim Hwal-lan (Helen Kim), traces her devotion to women's education and empowerment back to the influence of a Bible Woman on her mother

49 Hwang Sil Meri (Mary Whang), "Puin Ch'inmokhoe 부인 친목회 [Women's Social Gatherings]," *Sin Hak Wŏl Po* 1, no. 5 (April 1901): 196–197.

50 "Po Ho Nyŏ Hoe Syŏllip Ham 보호녀회 셜립함 [Account of the Woman's Mutual Benefit Society—By One of the Members]," *Sin Hak Wŏl Po* 1, no. 9 (Aug. 1901): 344.

51 Chŏng Yo-sŏp 정요섭, *Han'guk Yŏsŏng Undongsa* 한국 여성 운동사 [The History of the Korean Women's Movement] (Seoul: Ilchokak, 1974), 135–138.

52 Helen Kim (J.M. Potts), ed., *Grace Sufficient*, 52.

53 Chŏng Yo-sŏp 정요섭, *Han'guk Yŏsŏng Undongsa*, 135–138.

54 Ibid.

and family. Moreover, the fact that Helen Kim used a woman's Bible Institute (*yŏja sŏnggyŏng hagwŏn*) for the initial gathering of female leaders suggests that Bible Institutes, which produced Bible Women, were seen as centers for women's change and leadership, and that Protestant women were interested and engaged in projects for women's transformation. Thus, the mobilizing of women at a woman's Bible Institute has great symbolic value, and underlies the fact that certain Bible Women were actively involved in the YWCA project, which was a *sin yŏsŏng* project in its fundamental ethos and vision for Korean women.

In the period of the Japanese occupation, the YWCA supported local products and the movement to abolish early marriage and licensed prostitution.[55] Since that time, the YWCA has continued to be an important source of change for women in Korean society by starting widows' homes and orphanages, by contributing to literacy and educational campaigns, fighting for increased women's rights in the work force in urban and rural settings, struggling for increased democracy in the periods of military dictatorship,[56] and promoting female leadership through social, ecological environmental awareness for women and families.[57] While there were other women's groups some of which were church related, what set the YWCA apart was both its connection to a broader international woman's organization and to Protestant churches through the *kidokkyo sin yŏsŏng.*

The principles advocated by the YWCA and by the *kidokkyo yŏsŏng*, who were its leaders, championed women's education and women's agency. The YWCA stressed women's subjectivity and ability to affect change. After its founding, teachers in the YWCA taught "*han'gŭl* and English to women in night schools and worked to improve the economic and educational conditions of women in the countryside."[58] Education was, therefore, highly prioritized in the YWCA. Additionally, the YWCA also "intervened in … labor disputes to protect [women] laborers' rights and focused on … programs to develop [working women's skills]."[59] Such intervention has been understood as helping to build

55 "The History of the YWCA Korea." Last accessed June 7, 2018 at http://eng.ywca.or.kr/sub.asp?maincode=470&sub_sequence=483&sub_sub_sequence.

56 Donald N. Clark, "Christianity in Modern Korea," *Education About ASIA* 11, no. 2 (Fall 2006), 37.

57 Last accessed Aug. 20, 2009, at http://ywca.ywca.or.kr/home/english/intro_4.asp.

58 You Kak Kyunghee 유각경희, "Seoul Young Women's Christian Association," *Korea Mission Field* 21, no. 6 (June 1925): 132, as cited in Yoo, *The Politics of Gender in Colonial Korea*, 67.

59 "The History of the YWCA Korea." Last accessed June 7, 2018 at http://eng.ywca.or.kr/sub.asp?maincode=470&sub_sequence=483&sub_sub_sequence.

women's agency and efficacy in society. These activities and other social welfare and environmental campaigns were some of the many types of transformative social outreach that the YWCA has achieved throughout its ninety-five-year history.

As an active voluntary women's organization established to perceptively understand women's lives in society and then implement change in a positive direction, the Korean YWCA has been, and continues to be, a successful interpretive community of the biblical texts in a modern Korean society working to assure that women have a rightful place in the evolving social landscape. Like its founders, many of its leaders have been *kidokkyo sin yŏsŏng* who held close the connection between women's education and social transformation.

6 Lineage of Women's Transformation through Bible Women and *Kidokkyo Sin Yŏsŏng*

The Korean YWCA is a prominent example of the New Woman (*Sin Yŏsŏng*) Movement of the 1920s and 1930s as embodied in the *kidokkyo sin yŏsŏng.* As a women's interpretive community in an emerging modern Korean society, the YWCA advocated women's self-determination and historical agency, and, by implication, interpreted new gender roles and ideologies of womanhood.[60] Many of the *kidokkyo sin yŏsŏng* who were active in the YWCA were educated in Protestant educational institutions for women. Thus, the work of Bible Women and Protestant educational institutions for women is significant as a channel for the social transformation of women. The link between Bible Women, *kidokkyo sin yŏsŏng*, and the Protestant Church is clearly illustrated in the specific example of a YWCA chapter in 1928 hosted by the Union Methodist Women's Bible Training School in Seoul.[61] It is not a stretch to see that the confluence of these organizations would allow students valuable opportunities to develop and exercise their leadership skills in preparation for work in society.

To neglect the connection between Protestant Christianity and the New Women of the 1920s and 1930s would be unfortunate. Despite ambivalent feelings among western missionaries and some Korean Protestants about women's empowerment, the Bible text propagated to Korean women first by Bible

60 Yoo, *The Politics of Gender in Colonial Korea*, 60; Yoo uses the term "ideologies of womanhood."

61 F.E.C. Williams and G. Bonwick, *The Korea Missions Year Book Issued Under the Direction of the Federal Council of Missions in Korea* (Seoul: The Christian Literature Society of Korea, 1928), 215.

Women and then in Protestant educational institutions helped to fuel a wave of change in Korean women. Feminist scholar Kang Sŏn-mi also concurs that the New Women were not the first feminists in Korea as some might claim, but that an early form of modern Korean feminism was formed in the mission schools for girls.[62] Many of the graduates of these schools, some of whom were taught by Bible Women or became Bible Women themselves, ventured out into the public square as *kidokkyo sin yŏsŏng* embracing new opportunities and a new lifestyle for Korean women. Thus, whether or not it was articulated as such, Korean Bible Women, through teaching women to read a book—the Bible—with novel notions about men and women, were early leaders in a process of women's modern social transformation that continued in the radical work and lifestyles of Christian New Women.

7 From the *Anpang* to Women's Interpretive Communities: Bible Women to Christian New Women

The underlying question focusing this discussion has been how Bible Women were able to reach and influence the lives of Korean women within the context of a conservative traditional society adhering to the *nae woe pŏp* (rule for the inner and outer spheres: women in the inner, men in the outer). The seeming incongruity between the cultural dictate that the woman's voice is only to be audible within the walls of her own *anpang* and the effective work of Korean Bible Women and later Christian New Women has been the guidepost for reflecting on where and how these women were able to initiate change for other women. Such tension between the outward and visible aspects of Korean society and the culturally authentic and successful work of Korean Bible Women for other Korean women helps to illuminate in greater depth the connection between Bible Women and Christian New Women. Moreover, this tension between a traditional patriarchal society and an emerging women's consciousness, as embodied in Bible Women and Christian New Women, shines new light on women's agency and the dynamics of Korean culture as a whole in the midst of dramatic changes in twentieth-century Korean society.

62 Kang, Sŏn-mi 강선미, "Chosŏn P'agyŏn Yŏsŏn'gyosawa (Kidok) Yŏsŏngŭi Yŏsŏng Chuŭi Ŭisik Hyŏngsŏng, 조선 파견 여선교사와 (기독) 여성의 여성주의 의식 형성 [Women Missionaries to Korea and The Formation of Christian Women's Feminist Consciousness]" (PhD diss. Ewha University, 2002).

The question of how Bible Women were able to read, teach, and mediate the Bible text to other women in a way that led to the formation of women's interpretive communities has persisted for many years.[63] The answer lies primarily in the Bible Women's choice of the female *anpang* network to transmit the Bible text. This *anpang* network, a resource that was thoroughly Korean and thoroughly female, was, in effect, Korean women's first interpretive community. Moreover, it was the most powerful resource available to Bible Women. That the *anpang* network was seminal for the work of Bible Women is an important contribution to understanding not only the Protestant movement in Korea at the turn of the twentieth century, but also to the ways in which Bible Women worked for the social transformation of women in society at large.

Korean women's increasing literacy was clearly related to their developing Protestant religiosity which in turn impacted those women's efforts to change Korean society. Through teaching women to read in their own *anpang*, Bible Women were able to prompt in their students a personal responsibility to their newfound faith to study the Bible text and to transform their lives in service to church and community. In this way, the *anpang* network became a grassroots network for women's change that was widespread in scope.

Thus, the ingenuity of the Korean Bible Women was in their Bible text transmission through the anpang network. This led to the formation of women's interpretive communities (Bible Classes, Institutes, Training Schools, women's mission societies, the YWCA, and schools for girls such as Ewha) which unpacked the meaning of the text for its members and translated the message into practical outreach in the public sphere. In this sense, the work of Bible Women and later that of the Christian New Women who were leaders in women's interpretive communities certainly reflect the notion of reading as a cultural, semiotic, interpretive exercise and dialogical process between the textual signals and social expectations that "shapes the meaning of the text."[64]

In this manner, Bible Women helped to bring about change in the women's *anpang* network, even as they adeptly used it for their evangelization.

63 "Interpretive communities" are defined as communities founded by women to help each other "interpret" the text of modernity; these are communities to help women work with the demands of modernity and to assure, or fight for their rights as equal participants in society.

64 Robert Darnton, "What is the History of Books," in *The Book History Reader*, ed. David Finkelstein and Alistair McCleery (London: Routledge, 2002), 9–26 and Roger Chartier, "Reading Matter and 'Popular' Reading: From the Renaissance to the Seventeenth Century," in *A History of Reading in the West.* ed. Guglielmo Cavallo and Roger Chartier (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1999), 269–283.

Without doubt, the *anpang* was a powerful resource in the Protestant project for women. It was the Korean woman's authentic interpretive community as well as a space powered, designed, and kept by women. In the 1920s and 1930s with the emergence of the Christian New Women, this *anpang* community extended into public places with the formation of women's organizations, such as the YWCA.

Christian New Women, who held leadership positions in these interpretive communities, presented an alternative lifestyle to what was traditionally available to women, emboldened as they were by the religious ideas they espoused and the educational opportunities provided to them through Protestant church circles. In these Protestant church circles, first there had been the Bible Woman teaching or modeling empowerment. From her influence, the Christian New Women would follow a generation later to strengthen women's voice and to broaden the scope of the woman's *anpang* to public women's organizations.

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